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BOOK APPOINTMENT

Sinking Homes, Shattered Lives: The Slow Death Of Srinagar's Floating Homes

Nida Sadiq

Srinagar: On a quiet evening along the Jhelum River, Ghulam Qadir sits by the water's edge, staring at the place where his home once floated. The river, once a source of life and livelihood, now carries his deepest sorrow. His houseboat—a piece of his family's history—was reduced to wreckage by a storm in May 2023. Years of restrictions on renovations had left it in ruins. When the



government finally lifted the ban, it was too late. Now, they live in a makeshift tent by the riverbank.

“At night, dogs and mice enter our tent. The cold is unbearable. Sometimes, we sleep hungry,” he says. “Does no one see our suffering? Are we not

humans?” Their story is not unique. It's the shared plight of 86 families clinging to a precarious existence, their floating homes threatened by the relentless currents of change on the Jhelum River.

A Silent Disappearance

For centuries, houseboats have been more than just floating homes in Srinagar—they have been cultural landmarks,

symbols of Kashmir's heritage. But today, they are disappearing, taking with them the hopes and histories of those who call them home.

The Jhelum alone had over 800 houseboats, each intricately designed, offering a glimpse into the region's history and culture. The Hanji community, which has lived on water for generations, depended entirely on these floating homes for their livelihood.

Today, fewer | [More on P6](#)

Jamia Masjid Sealed On Shab Barat: Auqaf

Observer News Service

Srinagar: The authorities have disallowed the congregational night prayers at Srinagar's historic grand mosque on Shab-e-Baraat, one of the holiest nights in the Islamic calendar. The police also put Mirwaiz Umar Farooq under house detention.

Anjuman Auqaf Jamia Masjid has expressed profound disappointment over this decision and strongly condemned these repressive measures. Anjuman Auqaf said that following Asr prayers, authorities abruptly closed the gates of Jama Masjid Srinagar, while police personnel asked worshippers to vacate the mosque premises.

The Auqaf was further informed that the observance of Shab-e-Baraat would not be permitted at the Jama Masjid.

Terming the ban a repressive measure, the Anjuman Auqaf said, “It is deeply unfortunate that every time an important religious occasion | [More on P6](#)

Waqf Amendment Bill

JPC Report Tabled In Parliament Amid Uproar

Press Trust Of India

New Delhi: The joint parliamentary committee report on the Waqf Amendment Bill, 2024 was tabled in the Rajya Sabha on Thursday amid demands for its withdrawal and a brief adjournment of the proceedings followed by a heated debate between the treasury and opposition benches.

Opposition MPs led by Leader of Opposition Mallikarjun Kharge alleged that dissent notes were deleted

from the report, a charge denied by Union Parliamentary Affairs Minister Kiren Rijju.

A corrigendum to Appendix 5 of the report was also tabled in the House during the post-lunch sitting, prompting the opposition to claim that it was done under their pressure.

Chapter 5 of the Appendices of the report pertains to “notes/minutes of dissent received from the Members of the Joint Committee”, and contains the notes that were redacted in the earlier tabled report. | [More on P6](#)



Will Run Nationwide Movement If Bill Passed: AIMPLB

With the report of the Joint Committee on Waqf (Amendment) Bill tabled in Lok Sabha, the All India Muslim Personal Law Board (AIMPLB) on Thursday alleged that the panel has completely ignored the opinion of | [More on P6](#)

J&K Yet to Frame Rules Under Central Waqf Act

Despite the Waqf Act of 1995 becoming applicable to Jammu & Kashmir in 2019, the Union Territory government has neither framed rules under the law nor constitute tribunals under it. This disclosure was made by the Ministry of Minority Affairs (MoMA) before the Joint Parliamentary Committee on the Waqf (Amendment) Bill-2024. | [More on P6](#)



People lit candles on graves at Babamazar graveyard at Zadibal on the occasion of Shab-e-Barat. PTI Photo

LG Directs Stronger Measures To Protect Borders

Chairs Second Security Meeting In Two Days



Observer News Service

Jammu: Directing for stronger measures to protect the borders amid a ceasefire violation and a major IED attack in

the recent past, Jammu and Kashmir Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha on Thursday said all security agencies must work together to counter the cross-border threats. | [More on P6](#)

Govt Committed For Welfare Of Artists, Their Families

Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha on Thursday said that the state's administration is committed to the welfare of artists who, through various forms of art, folk music, theatre, cinema and literature, have strengthened the spirit of 'Ek Bharat Shreshtha Bharat.' Inaugurating 'Jashn-e-Jammu Kashmir,' Sinha appreciated | [More on P6](#)

CM Optimistic On Statehood Restoration 'I Believe That Time Has Come Now': Omar

Press Trust Of India

Srinagar: Jammu and Kashmir Chief Minister Omar Abdullah on Thursday expressed optimism about the restoration of statehood, saying, “I believe that time has come now.”

Asked if he had raised the issue during his meeting with Union Home Minister Amit Shah in Delhi earlier this week, Abdullah said the process of statehood restoration was underway and urgently needed to be taken to its logical conclusion.



When the Supreme Court upheld the Centre's decision of abrogating Article 370, it made a general mention about statehood being | [More on P6](#)

Why Not Call Man A 'Divorcer'?

HC Frowns Over Use Of 'Divorcee' Title Against Woman In Court Cases

M Ahmad

Srinagar: The High Court of J&K and Ladakh on Thursday called for crushing 'bad practice' of labelling a woman as "divorcee" and called for issuance of circular-instruction that if any motion, petition or appeal was found to have the cause-title with such word or expression against the name of woman, such plea should not be diarized or registered.

“It is very painful to see how a woman, even as of today, is being treated,” said a bench of Justice Vinod Chatterji Koul.

“If a woman is being labelled and shown as 'Divorcee', as if it is her Surname/Caste, then a



man, who divorces his wife, is also to be called and suffixed as 'Divorcer', which, however, would be a bad practice,” the court said, adding, “Such a practice should be stopped rather crushed”.

The court also directed that henceforth if any motion/petition/appeal indicates and reflects in its cause-title the word

“Divorcee”, against the name of a woman, such a motion / petition/appeal should not be diarised or registered muchless entertained.

“To stop such a practice, a circular-instruction is required to be issued, instructing that if any motion/petition/appeal is found to have the cause-title with the word/expression 'Divorcee' against the name of woman, such a petition/motion/appeal should not be diarized/registered,” the court said, adding, “Such instructions should also be issued/transmitted to the Subordinate Courts.” In this regard, the court directed the Registrar Judicial to place the present judgement | [More on P6](#)

Mysterious Deaths In Rajouri

350 Villagers Return Home After 22 Days

Observer News Service

Jammu: At least 350 members of 70 families, who were shifted to two separation facilities last month owing to mysterious deaths in their village, returned home in Rajouri district of Jammu and Kashmir on Thursday, officials said.

Seventeen members of three families, including 13 children, died under mysterious circumstances after falling sick in remote Badhaal village of Kotranka Sub-division between December 7 and January 19.

After spending 22 days in the separation

centres - Government Nursing College Building in Rajouri and Government Boys' Higher Secondary School Rajouri - all the 350 members of 70 families were sent back to their homes on Thursday, the officials said.

However, over 30 more persons belonging to victim families, who are under observation at Government Medical College hospital in Rajouri, are not moving out for the time being, the officials said.

Though the exact cause of the deaths in the village remained unclear so far despite authorities roping in experts from premier health institutions across | [More on P6](#)

Govt Allocates Rs 5,835 Cr To J&K For Power Infra

Agencies

Srinagar: The Union Government has allocated Rs 5,835 crore for Jammu and Kashmir and Rs 876 crore for Ladakh to strengthen power infrastructure under various central schemes.

The information was provided in an official response in the Lok Sabha, outlining the financial support extended to the two Union Territories through government initiatives.

In Jammu and Kashmir, Rs 5,835 crore allocation is being utilized under several schemes, including the Revamped Distribution Sector Scheme (RDSS), which aims to reduce power losses and improve the efficiency of



electricity distribution, the response reads.

Also, the Integrated Power Development Scheme (IPDS) focuses on strengthening the urban electricity network, while the Deen Dayal Upadhyaya Gram Jyoti Yojana (DDUGJY) is | [More on P6](#)



PUBLIC NOTICE

My name has been wrongly written in my Adhaar card as Wazira while my correct name is Vazeera Farooq which needs to be corrected. If anybody has any objection in this regard they may file in the concerned office within seven days. After that no objection shall be entertained.
 Vazeera Farooq
 W/o Riyaz Ahmad Mir
 R/o Om Buran Tehsil. Singhpora

FKO

Office Of The Naib Tehsildar Kreeri

Sub: Application of Gh Hassan Malik S/o Gh Nabi Malik R/o Reshipora for issuance of income Dependent certificate.

NOTICE

Regarding the subject cited above in this context. As per the death certificate and report submitted by the patwari concerned which reveals that the applicant's family consists of 05 members and the annual income of the applicant family from all sources consists of Rs 875000 / year. Moreover, family structure of the applicant is as under

S. NO	NAME OF DEPENDENT	RELATION WITH DECEASED	AGE	OCCUPATION
1	Ashia Begum	W/o	55	H/W
2	Mehmooda Bano	Daughter	25	H/w
3	Kulsooma Hassan	Daughter	23	H/W
4	Rehana Akhter	Daughter	21	Student

It is further submitted that GH Hassan Malik S/o Gh Nabi Malik is labour by profession and is sole earning hand in the said family. The applicant needs income dependent certificate in favour of mehmooda bano for marriage assistance. The applicant has applied for issuance of Dependent certificate. As such the instant matter is published through news paper, if any one is having any kind of objection may approach this office within 7 days (Seven Days of the publication of this notice after passing of stipulated time of 7 days (Seven Days), no objections will be entertained.
 fko Naib Tehsildar

From the office of Advocate Nasir Ahmad

Lie. No. 175/2019
 Chamber No. 01 in District Court Complex Budgam
 Cell No. 6005165675

- (1) Ghulam Mohamad S/O Ghulam Rasool Khan
- (2) Mohammad Abdullah S/O Jaffer Sheikh
- (3) Manzoor Ahmad Khan S/O Ghulam Mustafa
- (4) Nissar Ahmad Dar S/O Mohammad Qazim
- (5) Tanveer Hussain S/O GHulam Mohammad Dar
- (6) Ashiq Hussain Dar S/O GHulam Mohammad Dar
- (7) Ghulam Mohammad S/O Ali Mohamad Mir
- (8) Mujtaba Hussain S/O Asgar Hajam
- (9) Gulzar Ahmad Khan S/O Ghulam ahmad
- (10) Irfan Hussain S/O Bashir Ahmad Khan residents of Hardu Panzoo Beerwah Budgam Vs.

Public at Large

Caveat petition in terms of section 14B-A of Cpc

The caveator has reasons to believe/apprehension that the non-caveator may institute/file any lis in the form of appeal/suit/application or any other proceedings before this hon'ble court against the caveator by the non-caveator. The caveator be put to notice through his counsel and be heard before passing of any order therein.
 mcb Sd/- Advocate

ANNAMALAI UNIVERSITY

(Accredited with "A+" Grade by NAAC)
 Annamalai nagar- 608 002, Tamil Nadu, India

RESULT NOTIFICATION
DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

Rashid Manzoor Bhat S/o Manzoor Ahmad Bhat bearing University Registration No. 2102050013, who pursued Ph.D Programme on (Full-Time) basis in the Department of History, Faculty of Arts submitted thesis titled "Social and Economic History of Early Medieval Kashmir with Special Reference to Karkotas" under the supervision of Dr. R. Rajeshwari, Assistant Professor (Deputed), Department of History, Annamalai University, is declared qualified for the award of Doctorate Degree (Ph.D) on 17-12-2024.



Ref. No: DARE/2024

Dated: 24-12-2024

SD
 Director-DARE

jvd

ANNAMALAI UNIVERSITY

(Accredited with "A+" Grade by NAAC)
 Annamalai nagar- 608 002, Tamil Nadu, India

RESULT NOTIFICATION
DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

Showkat Ahmad Dar S/o Ali Mohammad Dar bearing University Registration No. 2003080004, who pursued Ph.D Programme on (Full-Time) basis in the Department of Political Science and Public Administration, Faculty of Arts submitted thesis titled "Role of Mobile Governance in Public Services Delivery In Kupwara District, Jammu and Kashmir: A Study" under the supervision of Dr. P. Sakthivel, Professor in Department of Political Science and Public Administration, Annamalai University, is declared qualified for the award of Doctorate Degree (Ph.D) on 27-09-2024 and As per the university regulations, the thesis has undergone a rigorous evaluation process by both a distinguished Indian examiner and an eminent foreign examiner.



Ref. No: DARE/2024

Dated: 04-10-2024

SD
 Director-DARE

jvd

'Exposure To Passive Smoking Can Induce Changes In Children's Genes, Similar To Active Smoke'

Press Trust Of India

A second-hand or passive exposure to cigarette smoke could change how children's genes express themselves, similar to that in active smokers, thereby making them more vulnerable to disease as adults, according to a study. The findings, published in the journal Environment International, highlighted why children's exposure to second-hand smoke needs to be reduced. "Our study shows that second-hand smoke during childhood leaves its mark at the molecular level and can alter the expression of genes that influence disease susceptibility in adulthood", first author Marta Cosin-Tomas, a researcher at the Barcelona Institute for Global Health (ISGlobal), said. While genes in one's DNA act as an instruction manual for the body, environmental factors, such as tobacco smoke, can affect 'gene expression', or how the manual is read. Gene expression is how information in a gene translates into observable behaviour. 'DNA methylation' is one of the main processes involved that can turn a gene 'on' or 'off'. In certain cases, DNA methylation can silence specific genes and contribute to disease development. Analysing blood samples of nearly 2,700 children aged 7-10 years from across eight European countries, including Spain and France,

the team found an increased DNA methylation in 11 regions on the genome -- one's entire DNA -- among children exposed to passive smoking. Most of these regions have been previously linked to a direct or first-hand exposure to tobacco in active smokers or during pregnancy, the researchers said.



Further, six of these 11 regions were found to be associated with diseases, such as asthma or cancer, the risk of which is known to increase with smoking. "The results suggest that second-hand smoke in childhood leads to epigenetic changes (changes in gene expression) similar to those observed with intrauterine exposure to tobacco or active smoking," senior author Mariona Bustamante, an ISGlobal researcher, said. "This underlines the urgency of implementing comprehensive measures to reduce childhood exposure to tobacco smoke, both at home and indoors," Bustamante said. The participants were recruited from the 'Pregnancy and Childhood Epigenetics' (PACE) Consortium.

NOTICE FOR GENERAL PUBLIC

This is information for the general public that in Adhaar card bearing number 943605672105 of my daughter the name is entered as HANIYA AADIL while her actual name is ANABIA AADIL. Now I want its correction, in this regard if anybody having any objection may contact Concern department with in a period of seven days. No objection shall be entertained after that.

AADIL HAMEED
 F/o ANABIA AADIL
 R/o SONERGUND ICHIKOTE
 BUDGAM CELL. 7006777298

mcb

NOTICE

I Shahid Bashir F/o Aamina Shahid R/o Soura Bilal Colony Srinagar want to correct name of my Daughter in her Adhaar Card bearing Aadhar no:- 8795 4029 3827 from Haizah Shahid to Aamina Shahid. I want to re-issue for the same. Regard this, if anybody is having any objection He/She may file the same to the Concerned Adhaar centre within a week at the most, after that no claim shall be entertained.
 Media Line

Government of Jammu & Kashmir
DIRECTORATE OF FLORICULTURE (G&P) KASHMIR
 Tel-0194-2474234 Fax-2482032 - email:- kashflori@rediffmail.com

GIST of Fresh e- Tender Notice No.04 of 2025
 Dated:- 12/02/2025

For and on behalf of the Lt. Governor, Union Territory, J&K, bids are invited (In Single cover system) from the interested bidders/Registered Firms with J&K State/Central Govt. for the following work:-

S. No.	Name of Work/ Contract	Reserve Bid (In Rs.)	Earnest Money Deposit (EMD) @ 10% (in Rs.)	Cost of Tender Documents in shape of Demand Draft (Non-Refundable) (In Rs.)	Validity of Contract
01.	Outsourcing of Fast Food Point at vacant space as is where basis at Pratap Park Srinagar near water body	4,59,800/-	45,980/-	1,000/-	One year and renewal for further 2 years subject to terms and conditions with enhancement of 15% of cumulative approved bid for each year.

The bidding document(s) consisting of qualifying information, eligibility criteria, BOQ (Bill of quantity) terms and conditions and other details can be seen/downloaded through the Departmental website www.dofkashmir.com/www.jktenders.gov.in as per schedule of date given below:-

1.	Period of downloading of bidding document	12.02.2025 from 03:30 PM to 04.03.2025 up to 02:00 PM
2.	Bid submission Start Date	12.02.2025 from 04:00 PM
3.	Bid submission End date	04.03.2025 up to 02:00 PM
4.	Date and time of Opening of Tenders (Online)	07.03.2025 at 02:00 PM

DIPK-11963/24
 dated: 13-02-2025

Sd/-
 Accounts Officer,
 (Member Secretary)
 Floriculture Department,
 Kashmir.

Govt. of Jammu & Kashmir
Govt. Unani Medical College & Associated Hospital
Nawabagh, Ganderbal Kashmir

SHORT TERM TENDER NOTICE

Sealed tenders affixed with revenue stamp worth Rs. 5/-, are invited from the reputed/registered electric contractors for supply, installation and fixing (including labour) of following, electric items to the Govt. Unani Medical College Cum Hospital, Nawabagh, Ganderbal, Kashmir, for making the 11 KV Trivactor meter functional within the college campus:-

S.No	Name of the item	Quantity
01	11KV PT (ISI standard)	01 No.
02	11 KV cable (3 Phase) XLPE 70 mm square	15 meters
03	KIT set	02 No.

The tenders should reach to the office of the Accounts Officer, Govt. Unani Medical College cum Hospital, Nawabagh, Ganderbal, Kashmir, within a period of seven (07) days from the date of publication of this notice.

TERMS AND CONDITIONS:-

- (i) The tenders must be submitted in properly sealed envelope
- (ii) The rates should be quoted inclusive of all taxes, duties, freight and labour
- (iii) The rates quoted should be written legible without any cutting, overwriting, interpolations, erasers, and in case only of these is found, the tender shall not be entertained. Besides the tenderer should submit the filed copies of GST/Income tax of the last quarter paid,
- (iv) The tender will be opened in the office of the Accounts Officer GUMC, Nawabagh Ganderbal on 22nd Feb. 2025 (Saturday) at 3.00 PM in presence of the bidders which wish to be present.
- (v) The total amount for the supply of aforementioned items may be restricted to Rs. 0.68 lakhs only.
- (vi) The payment shall be released in favour of the contractor only after the successful inspection of proper functioning of the Trivacto meter, by Assistant Executive Engineer, Electric Sub Division Tulumulla.

N o:- GUMC/Admn/86/2024
 DIPK-11947/24 Dated:- 13-02-2025

(Gh Qadir Wani)
 Accounts Officer

Government of Jammu & Kashmir
Office Of The Executive Engineer (R&B)
Electric Division Kashmir, Engineering
 Complex Srinagar Rajbagh.
 Near Silk Factory Srinagar-190008.

NOTICE INVITING TENDER
 E-NIT No.199/R&B/Electric Division Kashmir of 2024-25 issued under Endorsement No: ERB/10075-83
 DATED:11-02-2025.

Forandonbehalf of TheGovernment of J&K(U/T)e-tenders(InDoublecoversystem)are Invitedonpercentage basis from approved and eligible Contractors registered with J&K UT Govt. CPWD, Railways and other State/UT/Central Government Departments for the following works:-

Sl. No.	Name of Work	Estimated Cost (In Lacs)	Cost of Tender Doc. (In Rs.)	2% Earnest Money (In Rs.)	Time of Complete Job (Calendared Days)	Class of Contract	Major Head of Account	Remarks
01	Construction of Additional Accommodation for HSS Humhama BWO Providing of Internal Electrification.	Rs. 13.098/= Lacs	Rs. 600/=	Rs. 26,200/=	30 Days	"A1" Class Electrical	Capex Budget	Accord of Administrative Approval Accorded by Director School Education Kashmir vide order No.852-DSEK of 2021 Dated:-16-11-2021

1. Date of Issue of Tender Notice: 11-02-2025
 2. Period of downloading of bidding documents: 12-02-2025 from 02.00 PM
 3. Bid submission Start Date: 12-02-2025 from 02.00 PM
 4. Bid Submission End Date: 22-02-2025 upto 12.00 PM
 5. Date & time of opening of Technical Bids (Online): 22-02-2025 at 02.00 PM in the office of Executive Engineer R&B Electric Division Kashmir, Engineering Complex Srinagar Rajbagh.
 6. Date & time of opening of Financial Bids(Online): To be notified after technical bid evaluation is completed.
- The bidding documents consisting of qualifying information, eligibility criteria, specifications, drawings, bill of quantities (BOQ), 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:
 Note:- The Bidders are advised to read all conditions laid down in the E-NIT carefully before uploading softs copy.
 As per Circular issued by the Government of Jammu and Kashmir Civil Secretariat/Finance Department vide No. OM No. 674/2021 dt. 07.02.2021 in this regard:-
 a). Furnishing of Hard Copies of bids immediately after submission of e-tenders is dispensed with. The same should be obtained only from the Bidder who's declared 1st Lowest (L-1) after opening of financial bids.
 b). The cost of tender document should be collected by introducing Treasury Challan (Receipt).
 1.1. The successful Bidder has to produce Performance Security Deposit @5% of contract value in the shape of CD/ FDR/BG after issuance of Letter of Acceptance which shall be released after successful completion of work with DLP. The EMD @ 2% of successful bidder will be released only after the submission of 5% performance Security deposit.
 1.2. The bidder who so ever participate the e-tenders floated by this office will submit Additional Performance security in shape of CD/ FDR/BG in case the bidder has Submitted the below Percentage Bid against the Advertised Cost for the work as per below mentioned percentage Breakup in order to avoid unbalancing of e-tender and shall be released after 70% completion of work:

S.No.	% age of Unbalanced bid Viz-a-viz advertised cost on account of Low Rate.	Additional Performance security to be Deposited on quoted bid by
1.	Upto and including 15%	NIL
2.	Greater than 15% upto& including 20%	5%
3.	Greater than 20% upto& including 25%	10%
4.	Greater than 25% upto& including 30%	15%
5.	Greater than 30% below	20%

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 the Executive Engineer R&B Electric Division Kashmir, Srinagar (Tender receiving authority)

2. The bids for the work shall remain valid for a period of 120 days from the date of opening of bids.
3. The Employer reserves the right to invite fresh tender without any Prior Notice to the Bidders.
4. The earnest money (EMD) shall be released in favour of unsuccessful bidders only after submission of Treasury Challan.
5. The earnest money may be forfeited if:-
 a. Any bidder/ tendered with draws his bid/ tender during the period of bid validity or makes any modifications in the terms and conditions of the bid.
 b. Failure of Successful bidder to furnish the required performance security within the specified time limit.
 c. Failure of successful bidder to execute the agreement within 28 days after fixation of contract.
6. Instruction to bidders regarding e-tendering process.
- 6.1. Bidders are advised to download bid submission manual from the "Downloads" option as well as from "Bidders Manual Kit" on website www.jktenders.gov.in to acquaint bid submission process.
- 6.2. To participate in bidding process, bidders have to get "Digital Signature Certificate (DSC)" as per Information Technology Act-2000. Bidders can get digital certificate from any approved Vendor.
- 6.3. The bidders have to submit their bids online in electronic format with digital Signature. No bid will be accepted in physical form.
- 6.4. Bids will be opened online as per time schedule mentioned in Para-1.
- 6.5. Bidders must insure to upload can need copy of all necessary documents with the bid.
7. The department will not be responsible for delay in online submission due to any reasons.
8. 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.
- 8.1. Price escalation and Taxes:-The percentage quoted by the bidder entirely in Indian Rupees and the percentage rates quoted shall be deemed to include price escalation and all taxes upto completion of the work, unless otherwise specified. 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.
9. Bidders are advised to use "My Documents" area in their user on R&B e-Tendering portal to stores much documents as are required.
10. In case of CRF and any other specified project the relevant guidelines/ standard bidding document shall be followed.
11. Bidders should note that if the documents uploaded/submitted on the basis of which the contract has been awarded are found fake/not genuine at any time, the contract shall be cancelled and the contractor/bidder shall be blacklisted for participation in this division for a period of five years besides the performance security deposited for the said work shall be forfeited.
12. Instructions to Bidder (ITB)
 12.1. All bidders shall include the following information and documents with their bids:-
 a. All the bidders shall upload the Scanned copy of the Latest Enlistment/Registration/Contractor License duly renewed for the current year.
 b. Scanned copy of GSTIN Registration No. certificate with return clearance certificate (Form GST-3B) for the month of December 2024 for Quarter October to December.
 c. Scanned copy of PAN card (As reflected in GST Regd./GST Form-3B).
 d. Scanned copy of valid contact number/E-mail-id.
 e. All bidders shall upload Treasury Challan (Tender document cost) (dated between the bid submission start date and the Bid submission End date) by debit to M.H.0059 in favour of Executive Engineer (R&B) Electric Division Kashmir (Tender Inviting Authority). Mentioning NIT No./S.No/Name of the work/Name of the division as per Annexure I.
 f. Scanned copy of Earnest money in shape of CD/FDR/BG/Pledged to Executive Engineer (R&B) Electric Division Kashmir (Tender Inviting Authority) (dated between the bid submission start date and the Bid submission End date).
 g. The successful bidder shall submit the scanned copy of Latest renewed JKPWDOMS Contractor card valid for the current year before issuance of contract allotment.
 h. The successful bidder shall to execute the agreement and subsequently submit the same to this office within same day after issuance of formal allotment order for commencement of work as per the terms and condition laid.

No.ERB/10075-83
 DIPK-11932/24 DATED:-13-02-2025

SD/-
 Executive Engineer,
 (R&B) Electric Division Kashmir
 Engineering Complex Srinagar
 Rajbagh

New Criminal Laws Ensure Transparency, Accountability: SSP Srinagar

Agencies

Srinagar: Senior superintendent of police, Srinagar, Imtiyaz Hussain Mir on Thursday said that the criminal justice system will be people-centric and that these new laws ensure transparency and accountability.

Speaking with reporters on the sidelines of an awareness programme, the SSP said that the aim of the programme was to make people aware and educate them about the transition of

criminal laws from a colonial legacy to a democratic legacy.

He said that previously, India had the Indian Penal Code (IPC), which has now been replaced with the Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita (BNS). "The shift from 'penal' to 'Nyaya' represents a transition from punishment to justice, making the system more citizen-centric," he added.

He also said that after every 15 days, a programme will be conducted to educate people—(KNO)

Property Worth Lakhs Attached Under NDPS Act: Police

Observer News Service

Srinagar: In yet another significant measure towards combating drug abuse and dismantling illicit drug networks, Police in Srinagar on Thursday said to have attached a residential property valuing about Rs 18 lakhs belonging to a notorious drug peddler Javid Ahmad Wani son of Ali Mohammad resident of Gasoo Tehsil Hazratbal under the provisions of Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances (NDPS) Act 1985.

"The accused person stands implicated in several drug related cases including case FIR No. 136/2022 u/s 8/20 NDPS Act of Police Station Nigeen and Case FIR No. 27/2024 u/s 8/20, 21 NDPS Act of Police Station Zakoora. Pertinent to mention here that the accused person has been a chronic drug peddler selling drugs and narcotic substances in the area, especially targeting the youth, which created a challenging environment for public safety and order," a police spokesman said in a statement.

The aforementioned property which has been acquired from the proceeds of illegal drug trade has been attached under section 68F

of the NDPS Act with confirmation from the competent authority and administrator, Smugglers and Foreign Exchange Manipulators-Forfeiture of Property Act (SAFEA), New Delhi. In compliance to section 68E and 68F of NDPS Act, the immovable property acquired by the accused person through illegal means which stands seized and attached, shall not be transferred/sold/purchased or otherwise dealt with without the prior permission of the competent authority, police said.

This stern action represents a significant move in J&K Police's ongoing efforts to disrupt drug trafficking operations and confiscate assets acquired through illegal narcotics activities and by targeting the financial foundations of drug networks, J&K Police aims to curb the spread of this menace in society, police said.

"J&K Police reaffirms its commitment to protecting the community from the dangers of drug abuse and pledge to continue taking stringent action against those involved in this illegal trade. Public cooperation is crucial in this fight, and anyone with information about drug-related activities is urged to contact the nearest police station," police added.



Shab-E-Barat

Devotees Throng Hazratbal Shrine To Seek Mercy

Agencies

Srinagar: Devotees across the valley and Muslims all over the world will seek divine mercy on Shab-e-Barat tonight, as thousands observe this night with deep religious devotion, offering night-long prayers and seeking divine mercy at major shrines and mosques.

The largest congregation is expected to take place at Hazratbal Shrine, where worshippers have started gathering in large numbers to mark the sacred occasion. Meanwhile, locals have also expressed disappointment over the closure of Jama Masjid Srinagar for Shab-e-Barat observance.

For many believers, Shab-e-Barat is a time when "Allah records destinies and showers His mercy upon those who seek forgiveness."

Devotees engage in Quranic recitations and supplications, praying for peace and prosperity.

Sahil, a worshipper from Srinagar, said, "This night holds immense significance as it is believed that destinies are recorded, and Allah's mercy is at its peak. We seek forgiveness and guidance for the times ahead."

Another devotee, Jibran, said the atmosphere at Hazratbal is going to be electric and deeply spiritual. "There

Eidgah To Be Ready By Eid: Andrabi

Srinagar: The Jammu and Kashmir Waqf Board has directed that the ongoing construction at Eidgah Srinagar be completed before Eid ul Fitr, ensuring that the historic prayer ground is ready for public use.

Chairperson Dr. Darakhshan Andrabi, while inspecting the site, emphasized the importance of maintaining the Eidgah in a well-organized and aesthetically pleasing condition. She stated that all necessary instructions had been given to the concerned authorities to expedite the construction work.

"We want Eidgah to be in its best condition so that people can offer prayers without any inconvenience," Dr. Andrabi said. However, she clarified that holding Eid prayers at the site would depend on the prevailing situation and weather conditions on the day.

is something special about standing in prayer tonight, along with thousands of others, all united in devotion and hope," he said. Moreover, at Hazratbal Srinagar and other major shrines, authorities have made elaborate arrangements to facilitate worshippers. "Security personnel have been deployed, sanitation teams have worked through the night, and lighting arrangements are in place to ensure a smooth observance of the occasion," said an official from the Waqf Board.

He said that as thousands are expected to participate in the prayers tonight at Hazratbal, all arrangements have been made to accommodate the gathering. Lastly, it is believed that on the

14th night of the Islamic month of Sha'ban, Shab-e-Barat is a night when "Allah records destinies and showers His mercy upon those who seek forgiveness." Devotees spend this night in prayer, asking for spiritual and worldly blessings.

In Shia-dominated areas, Shab-e-Barat was observed with zeal, as the community holds the night in high esteem. They illuminated homes and shrines across Kashmir.

The cemeteries in Shia populated areas became a focal point for dua (supplication), Quran recitation, and seeking forgiveness. Devotees lighted lamps and offered special prayers for the departed souls. (KNO)

- TRAFFIC POLICE : 9419993745, 01998-266686
- PCR: 0194-2452092,2455883
- PDD: 0194-2450213
- FIRE AND EMERGENCY SERVICES : 2479488,2452222,2452155
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RAILWAYS

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

HIGHWAY STATUS

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

PRAYERS	
FAJR	5: 53
ZUHR	12:45
ASR	4: 34
Magrib	6:16
ISHA	7: 38

HIJRI CALENDAR
15 Shaban
1446

This Day In History

- 1747- Astronomer James Bradley presents his discovery of the wobbling motion of the Earth on its axis to the Royal Society, London
- 1794- 1st US textile machinery patent granted, to James Davenport, Philadelphia
- 1797- Battle of Cape St. Vincent: British fleet under Admiral Sir John Jervis defeats larger Spanish fleet under Admiral Don José de Córdoba y Ramos near Cape St. Vincent, Portugal. Captain Horatio Nelson distinguishes himself.
- 1803- Apple parer patented by Moses Coats, Downingtown, Pennsylvania
- 1803- Chief Justice John Marshall declares that any act of U.S. Congress that conflicts with the Constitution is void
- 1804- Karadjordje leads the First Serbian Uprising against the Ottoman Empire
- 1831- Ras Mallye of Yejju marches into Tigray and defeats and kills Dejazmach Sabagadis in the Battle of Debre Abay
- 1849- In New York City, James Knox Polk becomes first serving US President to have his photograph taken (by Matthew Brady).
- 1876- Alexander Graham Bell and Elisha Gray apply separately for telephone patents, the Supreme Court eventually rules Bell the rightful inventor
- 1879- Chilean troops occupy Antofagasta
- 1894- Venus is both a morning star & evening star
- 1896- Austro-Hungarian Zionist Theodor Herzl publishes "Der Judenstaat" (The Jewish State), encouraging Jews to purchase land in Palestine
- 1896- George Lohmann takes a hat-trick for England v South Africa, 8-7 for inning - their lowest ever
- 1900 - Russia responds to international pressure to free Finland by tightening imperial control over the country.
- 1914 - High Council of Labor forms in Hague Netherlands.
- 1918 - USSR adopts New Style (Gregorian) calendar (originally Feb 1).
- 1919 - The Polish-Soviet War begins.
- 1925 - State of emergency crisis in Bavaria ends, NSDAP re-allowed.
- 1941 - German Afrika Korps lands in Tripoli, Libya.
- 1942 - WWII: Battle of Pasir Panjang contributes to the fall of Singapore.
- 1943 - German offensive through de Faid-pass Tunisia
- 1943 - Soviets recapture Rostov
- 1943 - World War II: Rostov-on-Don, Russia is liberated.
- 1944 - Anti-Japanese revolt on Java.
- 1945 - Second day of the bombing of Dresden by Allies air forces.
- 1945 - Peru, Paraguay, Chile & Ecuador joins UN.
- 1945 - World War II: Prague is bombed probably due to a mistake in the orientation of the pilots bombing Dresden.
- 1945 - World War II: Mostar is liberated by Yugoslav partisans.
- 1950 - USSR & China sign peace treaty.

Office of the Naib Tehsildar Pattan

Sub.. Issuance of registration order in respect of delayed birth..

Public Notice

The registrar birth EO MC pattan has submitted a case file pertaining to birth of Shah Arhan S/o Ghulam Hassan Shah R/o Palhallan Tehsil Pattan distt baramulla with verified date of birth 17/01/2024 occurred at SDH pattan in this connection if any body having objection for issuance of said certificate he may contact to this office within 04 days after that no objection shall be entertained.

SD
fko Naib Tehsildar Pattan

PUBLIC NOTICE

It is informed to the general public that in Aadhar card bearing No 643162802508 by name and DOB of was wrongly entered as Ulfat Jan instead of Ulfat Johan. While DOB is wrongly entered as 12/09/1979 instead as 09/04/1979. Now it needed to be corrected. In this regard any body with any objection he/she may file his/her objection at Executive officer MC Pulwama within a period of one week from the date of publication of this notice after the due date no objection will/ shall be accepted or entertained.

Name: Ulfat Johan
WO: Nazir Ahmad Sheikh
RO: Prichoo Pulwama

fko

خاندان رضویہ سادات نابدی پورہ
کو صدمہ جانکاہ

یہ خبر نہایت ہی خون و ملامت کے ساتھ دیجاتی ہے کہ ہمارے چشم و چراغ سید عمران رضوی فرزند سید اعجاز رضوی نے مختصر عیالات کے بعد داعی اجل کو لبیک کہا۔ مرحوم کا انتقال تمام خاندان، لواحقین، والدین کے لئے صدمہ عظیم ہے۔ مگر وعدہ حق کہ کل الینا راجعون کے پیش نظر سر رضا و تسلیم فرم ہے۔ انشاء اللہ رسم قیل جمعہ المبارک 14 فروری 2025 بوقت صبح 7:45 بجے آبائی مقبرہ گلستان بابا مزار نابدی پورہ پر منعقد ہوگی بعد ازاں مجلس تعزیت حسینیہ آستانہ الحاج آقا سید حسن طالب ثراہ میں دن بھر جاری رہیگی۔

بذریعہ حملہ سوگواران خاندان
سادات رضویہ نابدی پورہ
9469207373

Office of the Naib Tehsildar Pattan

Sub.. issuance of registration order in respect of delayed birth..

Public Notice..

The registrar birth EO MC pattan has submitted a case file pertaining to birth of Tufail Bashir Sofi S/o Bashir Ahmad Sofi R/o Aram Mohalla Pattan Tehsil Pattan distt baramulla with verified date of birth 28/08/ 2000 occurred at home in this connection if any body having objection for issuance of said certificate he may contact to this office within 04 days after that no objection shall be entertained.

SD
fko Naib Tehsildar Pattan

PUBLIC NOTICE

Nazir Ahmad Khan, S/o Mohd Ashraf Khan, R/o Muran Tangwari, Tehsil Wagora, District Baramulla, intends to construct a shopping complex on land situated at Delina, Khasra No. 4698 min, near Hyundai Motors Baramulla. If any person has any objections regarding the proposed construction, they may submit their concerns to the office of the Block Development Officer (BDO) Baramulla within seven (07) days from the date of publication of this notice.

Nazir Ahmad Khan
S/O Mohd Ashraf Khan
R/O Muran Tangawari
Tehsil Wagora
District Baramulla

jm

PUBLIC NOTICE

Bahaar Ahmad Bhat, S/o Mohd Ramzan Bhat, R/o Sultanpora Kandi, Tehsil Wagora, District Baramulla, intends to construct a shopping complex on land situated at Delina, Khasra No. 4698 min, near Hyundai Motors Baramulla. If any person has any objections regarding the proposed construction, they may submit their concerns to the office of the Block Development Officer (BDO) Baramulla within seven (07) days from the date of publication of this notice.

Bahaar Ahmad Bhat
S/O Mohd Ramzan Bhat
R/O Sultanpora Kandi, Tehsil Wagora
District Baramulla

jm

Office of the Naib Tehsildar Pattan

Sub.. issuance of registration order in respect of delayed birth..

Public Notice..

The registrar birth EO MC pattan has submitted a case file pertaining to birth of Abdul Rashid Mian S/o Mohd Shabna Mian R/o Mian Mohalla Pattan Tehsil Pattan distt baramulla with verified date of birth 10/02/1939 occurred at home in this connection if any body having objection for issuance of said certificate he may contact to this office within 04 days after that no objection shall be entertained.

SD
fko Naib Tehsildar Pattan

Office of the Naib Tehsildar Pattan

Sub.. issuance of registration order in respect of delayed birth..

Public Notice..

The registrar birth BDO Khore Sherabad has submitted a case file pertaining to birth of Tajwar Aziz Khanday D/o Tariq Aziz Khanday R/o Hanjiwera Bala with verified date of birth 10/07/2020 occurred at home in this connection if any body having objection for issuance of said certificate he may contact to this office within 04 days after that no objection shall be entertained.

SD
fko Naib Tehsildar Pattan

PUBLIC NOTICE

I have applied for the issuance of a "D Class Contractor Card." If anyone has any objections in this regard, he or she may file an objection in the office of the ACD Baramulla within seven days. After that, no objections shall be entertained.

Name: Umar Bashir
S/o: Bashir Ahmad Mir
R/o: Dazna, Rafiabad District: Baramulla

phw

PUBLIC NOTICE

I want to change my name on my Aadhaar card, bearing the number 8509 4135 6979, as well as on my other documents from Towseefa (old name) to Toiba Fayaz (new name). If anybody has any objection in this regard he/she may file in the concerned office within seven days. After that no objection shall be entertained.

Toiba Fayaz

JVD

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Street Food Vigilance

Who is Responsible for Food Vigilance in Kashmir?

Dr. Fiaz Maqbool Fazili

The state of street food safety in Kashmir has long been a matter of concern, yet little to no action has been taken to address this growing issue. A recent horrifying incident involving rats discovered floating in boiling cooking oil at a street vendor's stall has sent shockwaves through the community. It raises critical questions about the responsibilities of health authorities and food safety regulators. Who is accountable for ensuring that the food consumed by the masses is safe? How many more such incidents go unnoticed? Are we waiting for an even larger catastrophe to finally act?



Health Authorities and Their Laxity

Recipe for Disaster.

One cannot help but question the role of public health authorities in maintaining food safety standards. Their duty is to monitor, inspect, and enforce hygiene regulations, but what we witness is a blatant disregard for public health. The presence of contaminated and adulterated food is not an isolated incident but a reflection of a systemic failure that has existed for years. The lack of stringent monitoring allows vendors to continue their hazardous practices without fear of consequence. Do we really need more such terrifying discoveries, like an elephant floating in oil, before we take this issue seriously?

Adulterated Food: A Silent Killer in Kashmir

The surge in cancer cases in Kashmir is alarming, and while several factors contribute to it, one undeniable common denominator is food adulteration. Street food, often cooked in reused, overcooked oil, is a known carcinogen. Chemically ripened fruits, artificially colored vegetables, and contaminated dairy products are widely consumed. What makes matters worse is that most of this food is stored in unhygienic conditions, handled with bare hands, and exposed to the elements. Food handlers often lack basic hygiene training, and their health status remains unchecked. With diseases like hepatitis, tuberculosis, and gastrointestinal infections rampant, the consequences of consuming unhygienic food are dire.

An Overlooked Crisis

The popularity of street food in Kashmir is undeniable. Be it the bustling lanes of shrines, festivals, food streets like Boulevard and Khayam Chowk, street vendors in Hyderpora, Bemina Chowk, Lal Bazar, Buchpora, or local markets around SMHS or SKIMS hospitals, they attract thousands of customers daily. From traditional delicacies like 'Tujh' and fish fries to fried snacks like pakoras, samosas, and parathas, street food is deeply embedded in Kashmiri culture. However, the hygiene practices of these vendors remain questionable. Food is often prepared in makeshift stalls with little regard for sanitation, and the source of ingredients is rarely verified. Consumers, unaware or indifferent, continue to indulge in these food items, oblivious to the potential health hazards.

How Many Have Fallen Sick? A Question We Cannot Ignore

The mere thought of consuming food cooked in oil contaminated with rats is nauseating. But if rats were discovered floating in oil, it is only logical to assume that many

must have already consumed that contaminated food before the discovery was made. How many people have suffered from food poisoning, stomach cramps, nausea, and vomiting due to such negligence? How many incidents like this go unreported? The truth is, the lack of accountability in food safety is costing people their health, and in some cases, even their lives.

Lack of regular/periodic surprise inspections is a systemic failure. The responsibility of ensuring food safety lies with health and food regulatory authorities. But how frequently are inspections actually conducted? Are food samples routinely tested? Are food handlers required to obtain health check certificates or vaccination records? The sad reality is that inspections are often conducted only after a disaster has already occurred. There is no proactive approach; instead, authorities wake up only to go back to sleep once the outrage subsides.

The Role of Social Media in Exposing Unhygienic Practices

With the rise of social media, videos, reels, and reports of unhygienic food practices are frequently surfacing. From bakeries using standard ingredients to street vendors selling stale, contaminated food, the reality is grim. The fact that such reports generate outrage online but fail to translate into concrete action speaks volumes about the inefficiency of food regulatory bodies. If food safety violations are so easily captured on camera, why are they not being addressed with immediate and strict legal action?

The Psychological Impact of Food Contamination

Beyond the physical consequences of consuming contaminated food, there is also a psychological impact. The knowledge that people may have unknowingly eaten food cooked in oil contaminated with rats is enough to induce nausea and distress. The fear of food contamination creates anxiety among consumers, making them question every meal they eat. It is not just about one incident—it is about the continuous erosion of trust in the food industry and regulatory authorities.

What Needs to Be Done?

Vigilance. Addressing this crisis requires a multi-faceted approach:

- Strict Food Safety Regulations – Authorities must enforce stringent hygiene and food safety regulations for all food

- Regular and Surprise Inspections – Routine checks must be conducted without prior notice to ensure compliance with hygiene standards.
- Health Certifications for Food Handlers – Every individual involved in food preparation or handling must undergo regular health checkups and be certified fit to handle food.
- Public Awareness Campaigns – Consumers need to be educated on the risks of consuming unhygienic food and encouraged to demand better standards.
- Heavy Penalties for Violators – Food vendors found violating safety regulations should face severe consequences, including heavy fines and license revocation.
- Encouraging Safe Street Food Practices – Instead of an outright ban on street food, authorities should work on creating designated zones where hygiene can be strictly monitored.

Will Accountability be Redefined?

It is time to stop shifting blame and demand accountability from those responsible for food safety. The authorities in charge of food regulation, health inspection, and public safety must take this issue seriously. They need to ensure that no more harm comes to the public due to negligence and incompetence. The question remains—will we act now, or will we wait for an even greater disaster before taking responsibility?

A Call to Action!

The crisis of unhygienic street food in Kashmir is not just an isolated problem—it is a reflection of a larger issue of negligence and lack of accountability. Every citizen deserves access to safe, hygienic food, and it is the duty of regulatory authorities to ensure that. The floating rats in cooking oil are just the tip of the iceberg; what lies beneath is an unchecked system riddled with corruption, indifference, and inefficiency. We must wake up before it is too late. The time to act is now. May Allah help us all.

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

The author is a surgeon at Mubarak Hospital, Certified and Qualified International Expert on Healthcare Standards of Quality and Safety. He can be reached at drfiazfazili@gmail.com

KO VIEW

Proposed Prohibition

A bill proposing a complete ban on the advertisement, sale, purchase, consumption, and manufacture of alcohol in Jammu and Kashmir has been submitted by the ruling National Conference MLA Ahsan Pardesi and also by the PDP MLA Kupwara, Fayaz Ahmad Mir. The bills call for a ban on the rising trend of alcohol consumption, in view of its negative fallout on society. It is heartening that leaders from all political parties, including from the BJP, have voiced support for the ban despite their political disagreements.

Alcohol is already prohibited in Bihar, Gujarat, Mizoram, and Nagaland, as well as the union territory of Lakshadweep. The proposed ban in Jammu and Kashmir shows a broader concern about the dangers of the easy availability of alcohol on the community, particularly the young generation. The ban is also being pursued out of a desire to align with cultural and religious values of the place, as it is in the other states of the country where prohibition is in force. Pardesi rightly said that the repercussions of alcohol drinking reverberate across society, and that in a region already grappling with a severe drug crisis, access to alcohol will only exacerbate the problem. In 2023, the Standing Committee on Social Justice and Empowerment conveyed to the parliament that approximately 13.50 lakh drug abusers are estimated to be in Jammu and Kashmir, with the majority falling within the age range of 18 to 75 years.

Prohibition, according to critics, may have unforeseen repercussions, such as leading to the illegal booze trade. These worries are legitimate, but they shouldn't take precedence over the main goal of protecting society from the harmful effects of alcohol. These problems can be successfully resolved by a strict enforcement of the ban combined with education campaigns.

However, the ban is not only a moral imperative as it leads to many social evils and intimate partner violence, it also has far-reaching health benefits. According to WHO, alcohol consumption increases risk factors for premature mortality. In 2016, alcohol consumption was linked to approximately 3 million deaths worldwide, accounting for 5.1% of the global burden of disease and injury. The studies have found that drinking alcohol increases the risk of liver cirrhosis, and several other non-communicable diseases and mental health conditions. Importantly, younger individuals are more adversely affected by alcohol compared to older adults. So, strict alcohol regulation policies may yield significant population level health benefits for frequent drinkers, especially the younger generation. It is thus time that the ban goes ahead for the sake of our young population. We are already hemmed in by the drug crisis, so can't afford to overlook the potential exacerbation of substance abuse issues that the availability of alcohol might bring.

“One cannot help but question the role of public health authorities in maintaining food safety standards. Their duty is to monitor, inspect, and enforce hygiene regulations, but what we witness is a blatant disregard for public health. The presence of contaminated and adulterated food is not an isolated incident but a reflection of a systemic failure that has existed for years”



Did You Know?

Avoid The Trap Of Unrealistic Returns: Invest Safely

Irshad Mushtaq

In India, regulatory bodies like SEBI (Securities and Exchange Board of India), RBI (Reserve Bank of India), and IRDA (Insurance Regulatory and Development Authority) are dedicated to safeguarding the financial interests of investors. They aim to prevent the public from falling prey to schemes with suspiciously high returns, commonly known as "Ponzi schemes." These schemes promise unrealistically high returns, while regulated instruments usually offer more moderate, safer gains.

The Role of Regulation and Professional Advice

Trusting in unregulated schemes can be financially disastrous. Even if a scheme appears to be legitimate, it's wise to consult a fee-only certified financial planner (CFP) for investment advice. Such professionals are trained to align investment choices with your financial goals and risk tolerance, ensuring a well-balanced portfolio.

Achieving Sustainable Wealth

There is no shortcut to accumulating lasting wealth. Quick gains are appealing but may not result in financial stability. It's crucial to differentiate between planned investments, driven by strategy and analysis, and emotional investments, driven by greed or fear. Overconfidence in one's ability to manage investments without professional help often leads to suboptimal returns.

Embrace Sound Strategies

Focusing on secure avenues like trusted financial services and sound investment houses is essential. A disciplined approach to investing, guided by thorough research and professional advice, prevents rash decisions and cultivates long-term financial health.

The Benefits of Professional Financial Services

Investing in shares, ETFs (Exchange-Traded Funds), and mutual funds offers benefits like liquidity, allowing for easy access to your investments irrespective of market conditions. Such flexibility is less common in other asset classes, making professional guidance even more crucial.

Read the full article on our website: <https://kashmirobservers.net>

Learn from the insights of @Irshad Mushtaq, Writer, Investor, Entrepreneur & Founder of M I Securities! Connect for valuable financial advice at misecurities@bp.sharekhan.com



All letters intended for publication must include the writer's name and address, even if a pseudonym is used. Letters are edited as clarity, space and accuracy of expression require. Our publishing a letter does not mean we agree with everything or even anything in it. -EDITOR

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The Need to Monitor Social Media Use Among Teenagers in Kashmir

I'm writing to share my growing concern about the impact of social media on teenagers in Kashmir. While social media has undeniably become a significant part of our lives, for many young people, it's becoming a space of risk rather than reward.

Teenagers here are particularly vulnerable to the pressures of online platforms, where the type of content

can lead to a very negative impact on young impressionable minds. It may also increase their need for approval, which can lead to harmful behaviors like cyberbullying, unrealistic body image standards, and even addiction. What's even more worrying is the amount of time they spend online, which often comes at the expense of their studies, physical health, and face-to-face relationships with family

and friends.

I believe it's time for us to take action. Parents and schools need to play an active role in monitoring social media use. Schools could introduce programs to help students understand the risks of the digital world, and parents must be more involved in setting limits and encouraging open conversations about online experiences.

By doing this, we can ensure that teenagers in Kashmir aren't just using social media but are doing so in a way that's healthy, informed, and balanced. It's crucial that we help them navigate this digital world before it overwhelms them.

Junaid Bhat
Pampore

After Drugs, Alcoholism Could Threaten Kashmir

Umair Ashraf

Kashmir is now grappling with an alarming rise in alcohol consumption. While the tourism industry has undoubtedly brought economic prosperity, the unregulated spread of alcohol poses a severe threat to the local population. Unsupervised access to alcohol in emerging tourist hubs has created an environment where both visitors and locals engage in its consumption, leading to a concerning trend. Recent incidents of alcohol consumption near sacred sites, widely shared on social media platforms, further highlight the moral and cultural dilemmas surrounding this issue. The impact on the younger generation is particularly worrisome, as exposure to such behavior normalizes alcohol use and conditions their mindset to perceive it as an enjoyable social activity. However, what begins as a mere indulgence can quickly spiral into addiction, setting the stage for future law enforcement challenges, criminal offenses, and rehabilitation efforts. If left unchecked, Kashmir may soon face an alcohol epidemic similar to the drug crisis it has long struggled with.

Tourism: Profit or Poison?

Tourism has played a pivotal role in Kashmir's economy, generating employment and bringing prosperity to many. However, the unchecked introduction of alcohol as a part of the tourism boom raises serious concerns. The commercialization of tourism without stringent regulations has led to an increase in alcohol outlets, bars, and liquor stores, making alcohol more accessible to the local population. Many young people, influenced by the party culture promoted by tourists and social media, see alcohol as a symbol of modernity and enjoyment. This shift is particularly alarming as it stands in stark contrast to Kashmir's traditional values and religious beliefs. If this trend continues, the region could see a deep moral and social transformation, eroding the cultural fabric that has defined Kashmiri society for centuries.

Why Are Kashmiris More Susceptible to Alcoholism?

Several factors make Kashmiris more vulnerable to falling into the trap of alcoholism. The region's history of prolonged conflict has left deep psychological scars on its people, leading to widespread stress, anxiety, and trauma. Many individuals struggling with these issues may turn to alcohol as a temporary escape from their mental distress. Additionally, unemployment, financial instability, and late marriages have contributed to a sense of hopelessness among the youth, making them more likely to experiment with alcohol. Once introduced to alcohol, the cycle of addiction becomes hard to break, particularly in a society where



“Public awareness campaigns must educate people about the risks of alcohol addiction, especially targeting the youth who are most vulnerable. The government needs to regulate alcohol sales more strictly, ensuring that tourism benefits do not come at the cost of societal damage. Community-based support systems, including counseling services and rehabilitation programs, should be made widely accessible to those at risk.”

mental health support systems are still limited. The lack of awareness about the dangers of alcohol further exacerbates the problem, making it easier for people to fall into addiction without realizing the long-term consequences.

The Impact of Smart Cities and Modern Lifestyles

The introduction of smart city projects,

shopping malls, nightlife, and high-end restaurants in Kashmir has brought rapid modernization, but it has also paved the way for lifestyle changes that were once alien to the region. The increasing acceptance of night-life culture, where alcohol consumption is often glorified, is shifting societal norms. Many young people, eager to fit into this new urban culture, see drinking as a status symbol. This cultural

shift is dangerous, as it directly contradicts the values upheld by the majority of Kashmiris. With every passing day, the line between modernity and moral degradation blurs, making it essential to have a balanced approach that allows progress without compromising the region's cultural and religious identity.

Alcohol's Devastating Impact on the Brain and Behavior

Scientific research has long established that chronic alcohol consumption has severe consequences on the brain. Neuroimaging studies reveal that excessive drinking leads to a reduction in brain volume, particularly in the prefrontal cortex, the part responsible for decision-making, impulse control, and rational thinking. This means that long-term alcohol users often suffer from impaired judgment, emotional instability, and reckless behavior. Additionally, alcohol alters dopamine pathways in the brain, reinforcing compulsive drinking and making it difficult for individuals to quit. Over time, alcohol dependence leads to heightened aggression, anxiety, and depression, contributing to deteriorating mental health. Early exposure to alcohol in the 20s, when neurogenesis (the process of new neuron formation) is still occurring, disrupts brain circuits, making addiction more likely and rehabilitation more challenging. If this trend is not curbed, Kashmir's youth could face long-term cognitive and emotional consequences, affecting their ability to contribute meaningfully to society.

Family and Social Breakdown Due to Alcoholism

Alcoholism does not just harm the individual—it wreaks havoc on families and society as a whole. Families dealing with alcohol addiction often experience domestic violence, financial instability, and emotional distress. Marriages suffer, with increasing cases of divorce and family breakdowns linked to alcohol abuse. Children raised in households where alcohol is consumed excessively are particularly vulnerable, as they grow up witnessing erratic behavior, neglect, and sometimes even violence. The psychological trauma they endure manifests in different ways later in life, increasing their risk of developing anxiety, depression, or substance use disorders themselves. The social stigma associated with alcohol addiction further isolates affected families, making it difficult for them to seek help. If left unaddressed, the consequences of rising alcoholism will extend beyond individuals, destabilizing the very fabric of Kashmiri society.

A Community in Distress

Kashmir, with its deep-rooted religious values and spiritual heritage, faces a unique challenge in dealing with alcoholism. The increasing visibility of alcohol

consumption, especially near religious and historically significant sites, is a major cause of concern for the local Muslim population. Islam strictly prohibits the consumption of intoxicants, and the presence of alcohol in a region known for its Sufi traditions deeply offends religious sentiments. Many religious leaders and scholars have expressed their dismay over this growing trend, urging the community to take a stand against the normalization of alcohol. If proactive measures are not taken, the moral and ethical identity of Kashmir may be at risk, leading to widespread distress among the faithful.

The Need for Early Intervention

Alcohol consumption in Kashmir requires urgent intervention at multiple levels. Public awareness campaigns must educate people about the risks of alcohol addiction, especially targeting the youth who are most vulnerable. The government needs to regulate alcohol sales more strictly, ensuring that tourism benefits do not come at the cost of societal damage. Community-based support systems, including counseling services and rehabilitation programs, should be made widely accessible to those at risk. Schools and religious institutions must play an active role in preventing the normalization of alcohol by reinforcing cultural and ethical values. If swift action is not taken, Kashmir could soon find itself battling an alcohol epidemic that will be far more difficult to control than the drug crisis it already faces.

Conclusion: A Call to Action for Kashmir's Future

Alcoholism is not just a social issue—it is a neurological, psychological, and moral crisis that threatens the very foundation of Kashmiri society. What may seem like a harmless trend today could turn into a full-blown addiction crisis if left unchecked. The impact of alcohol on brain development, decision-making, and mental health is severe, leading to long-term consequences for individuals and families. The erosion of cultural and religious values, the breakdown of families, and the rise in addiction-related crimes are all warning signs that Kashmir cannot afford to ignore. As the region balances economic growth with cultural preservation, strict policies, community engagement, and mental health awareness must be prioritized. If proactive measures are not taken now, the damage will be irreversible. The time to act is now—before alcoholism becomes yet another crisis that Kashmir struggles to recover from.

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Detoxing From Dopamine

Mark S. Gold

Some experts believe many psychological problems stem from excessive outside intrusions rather than inner conflicts. Anna Lembke, professor of psychiatry at Stanford University, contends that many human problems today stem from a world increasingly designed to overstimulate the brain's dopamine system—and that includes artificial intelligence. Not least among our challenges is finding balance in an environment loaded with dopamine-rich stimuli.

From Fast Food to Pornography

In her 2021 book *Dopamine Nation: Finding Balance in the Age of Indulgence*, Lembke identifies the excessively high dopamine stimuli now throwing lives out of balance: digital media, pornography, processed foods, and addictive substances. Dr. Lembke combines neuroscience with patient stories demonstrating how high levels of dopamine can affect behavior and offers strategies for achieving contentment by regulating dopamine levels.

Artificial intelligence (AI), she contends, has created new avenues for dopamine stimulation, particularly through personalized content algorithms. She is concerned that by creating hard-to-resist AI-

driven individualized stimuli, AI will have even greater potential to target the person and their weaknesses and trigger addictive behaviors.

Dopamine Fasting

Lembke encourages dopamine fasting—abstaining from activities such as social media for a set period as a way to restore the brain's natural responsiveness to pain and pleasure—an approach similar in many ways to traditional addiction treatment models. Dopamine fasting—typically for 30 days, but at least five to 10 days—entails a break from old behavioral patterns, whether that means going back to nature for months or entering rehab. The goal is resetting the brain's reward system by abstaining from highly stimulating activities.

After fasting, the goal is controlled reintroduction of the activity or substance. For example, the individual may adopt healthy alternative behaviors with sustainable dopamine boosts, such as from exercise, social interaction, or meditation. The person also may adopt new hobbies, such as playing board games with friends.

Activities involving some effort and delayed gratification help rebuild a balanced reward system. Dopamine fasting is not a medical detox. Instead, it's simple, structured, and a self-imposed abstinence changing thought patterns and

reducing exposure to high-dopamine triggers. Dopamine fasting is not cognitive-behavioral therapy (CBT), which offers long-term psychological tools to manage addiction and other issues. Instead, dopamine fasting is a reset and harm-reduction strategy.

When to Use Dopamine Fasting vs. Other Treatments

Behavioral addictions are a growing phenomenon, and within the world of medicine the field of behavioral addictions is gaining acceptance. Compulsive video gaming, excessive pornography use, and constant social media use are legitimate concerns today.

Dopamine fasting is best applied as a treatment for behavioral addictions such as to social media, video games, pornography, food, and online shopping. It's useful for managing overconsumption and uncontrolled repetitive behaviors. However, for severe addictions, evidence-based treatments such as CBT, medication-assisted treatment (MAT), and peer support programs are proven effective.

How Dopamine Fasting Helps

Many individuals, particularly in tech-heavy environments, report improved focus and mental clarity after a dopamine fast from social media, video games, and smartphone use. Tech entrepreneurs in Sil-

icon Valley have popularized dopamine fasts, some claiming they feel less anxious, more productive, and better able to enjoy simple pleasures after a break from constant digital stimulation.

Young adults, particularly men, report reduced compulsion to use pornography and improved relationships after abstaining for a period. Similarly, reducing social media use helps reduce anxiety and depression in some individuals, no longer be trapped in constant comparison to others. Many who successfully complete dopamine fasts say they enjoy small things again, like reading a book, going for a walk, or having a distraction-free conversation. (Yes, you can ignore your phone. Turn it off!)

Limitations of Dopamine Fasting

Critics argue that you cannot "detox" from dopamine, a naturally occurring neurotransmitter essential for survival. The real issue, they contend, is dopamine overstimulation, not dopamine itself. And while dopamine fasting may work for mild compulsions, it's no substitute for real addiction treatment. Some researchers suggest that the reported benefits of dopamine fasting might be a placebo effect: People expect a reset, so they feel one. However, even if this is the case, it can still be of value if it helps

people change their habits.

And then there are those who take dopamine fasting to extremes, avoiding all pleasurable activities, including socializing, listening to music, even making eye contact. This is not what Lembke recommends. Instead, she encourages moderation, not total deprivation. While a dopamine fast may provide short-term relief, critics note, in the absence of long-term habit changes, people often relapse into old patterns.

Similarities Between Lembke and Other Researchers

Lembke's work on dopamine and addiction builds upon and aligns with my own dopamine hypothesis of addiction, extending it to behavioral addictions and treatment. In 1984, I hypothesized that drugs artificially flood the brain with dopamine, first overwhelming but ultimately depleting natural reward pathways. Repeated drug use physically changes dopamine receptors, reducing sensitivity and leading to tolerance (needing more of the substance to achieve the same effect). Over time, natural rewards (like food and social interaction) become less pleasurable, reinforcing drug-seeking behavior. Withdrawal symptoms occur because the brain adapts to chronic dopamine overproduction and struggles to function without the drug.

Lembke and I agree that dopamine imbalances drive compulsive behavior. I focused on addiction to drugs and on anhedonia, the inability to feel pleasure, while Lembke expands the model to behavioral addictions, offering practical treatment applications.

Some people may be especially vulnerable to addictive behaviors because of what Kenneth Blum, Ph.D., calls reward deficiency syndrome: They seek out substances/activities to boost their dopamine action. Blum offers evidence that breakdowns of the cascade of reward in neurotransmission are fairly common, due to genetic and epigenetic influences.

The Behavioral Addiction Expert's View

I asked Marc Potenza, M.D., Ph.D., the nation's top expert on gambling and other behavioral addictions, for advice on treating behavioral addictions.

Getting some distance from an out-of-control behavior by taking a vacation or unplugging can be very liberating and allow the person to re-exert control, he says. "Psychotherapies have the most empirical support for helping people with gambling and gaming disorders and other conditions or behaviors involving excessive use of digital technologies. In particular, cognitive behavioral therapy has demonstrated efficacy in

multiple studies, and its effects appear particularly durable, perhaps because it provides people skills they may use and optimize over time."

Potenza is concerned that excessive use of digital technologies may influence brain development, adaptation, and addictions. His research underscores the importance of monitoring and regulating young people's exposure to rewarding online activities, as they can lead to desensitization and impede relationships.

Summary

Lembke's work on dopamine and addiction builds upon and aligns with my 40-plus-year-old dopamine theory of addiction, extending it from theory and the lab to behavioral addictions, and to patient evaluation and treatment. She emphasizes developing self-control and discipline to reassert control over dopamine-driven behaviors, building new skills to overcome addictive tendencies.

Unplug, detox, and reset, might be Lembke's mantra. She encourages exposure to natural rewards—intentionally engaging with people, exercising or walking in nature, and cold exposure—to rebalance the brain's reward system and promote resilience.

The article was originally published by Psychology Today

Sinking Homes

than 800 houseboats remain across all of Kashmir, a stark decline from their former glory. On the Jhelum, the situation is even more dire, with only 61 still afloat, many in a dilapidated state.

The decline began in 1988 with a government ban on new houseboat construction, citing environmental concerns. This was followed by an even more devastating blow: a restriction on renovations. Over time, denied essential repairs, the structures weakened and decayed. By the time the government finally reversed its policy, the damage was often irreversible. Now, the cost of repairing a houseboat ranges from Rs 2 lakh to Rs 3 lakh, a sum far beyond the reach of most owners.

Haleema, a single mother of three, embodies this desperate struggle. Perched on the edge of her crumbling houseboat, she stares into the murky water below. "I am not afraid to die," she whispers, her voice barely audible. "But what about my children? Where will they go?"

She once eked out a living renting rooms to tourists. Now, no one ventures near. With each passing day, as the wood groans louder, Haleem's fear deepens.

"My houseboat is falling apart," she laments. "First, they wouldn't let us repair it. Now they say we can, but with what money? Tourists don't stay in sinking homes."

A Struggle for Recognition and Rehabilitation Ghulam Qadir's routine is a wearying one. He walks from one government office to another, a worn file clutched in his hand. His shoulders slump, his feet drag, but he can't afford to stop. For months, he's been pleading for help – rehabilitation and compensation – but the doors keep shutting on him. Back home, his teenage son, Mohammad Anees, has given up on college. He spends his days near Srinagar's Tourist Reception Center, trying to find tourists and earn a few rupees by guiding them. "My father runs from office to office, and I run after tourists," Anees says. "He should be resting, and I should be studying. But we have no choice. Our home is gone."

"We are not asking for anything unreasonable," Qadir says. "We just want to survive. But it feels like no one cares if we sink or swim."

Houseboat owners have spent years demanding rehabilitation, but most of their pleas have gone unheard. The only policy that offered relocation was introduced during Mufti Mohammad Sayeed's government, where some families received three marlas of land. But the majority of affected families were left behind.

In 2023, Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha announced a policy allowing houseboat owners to renovate their homes. However, the reality on the ground remains unchanged. Many owners lack the financial resources, and there has been no concrete financial assistance from the government.

"We have met officials, filed applications, and waited," says Manzoor Ahmad Pakhtoon, chairman of the Houseboat Owners Association. "But time is running out. If nothing is done soon, these houseboats and the people who depend on them will be gone forever."

The Looming Threat of Water Transport As houseboat owners struggle to keep their homes standing, a new fear has emerged.

The government is introducing a water transport system on the Jhelum, a project aimed at easing traffic congestion in Srinagar. But for houseboat owners, this could be the final blow.

"When even small boats pass, our houseboats shake," says Farooq Ahmad Ghazi, another houseboat owner. "Imagine what will happen when large transport boats start moving through these waters daily."

He said that the waves from these boats will crash against the already weak structures, causing further damage.

"We barely survived the renovation ban," Ghazi says. "Now, we fear that the few remaining houseboats will collapse, one by one."

Jamia Masjid

arrives, people in large numbers who visit the Jama Masjid are left disappointed to find the grand mosque forcibly closed and Mirwaiz Umar Farooq barred from fulfilling his religious responsibilities. Such repeated restrictions not only hurt the sentiments of the people but also infringe upon their fundamental religious rights.

Chief Minister Omar Abdullah called the restrictions at the grand mosque "unfortunate" and said they indicate a "lack of confidence in law and order machinery."

"It is very unfortunate that the security establishment has taken the decision to seal the historic Jamia Masjid, Srinagar, on one of the holiest nights in the Islamic calendar – Shab-e-Baraat. This decision betrays a lack of confidence in the people and a lack of confidence in the law and order machinery that calm won't prevail without extreme measures. The people of Srinagar deserved better," he posted on X.

Notably, this is the sixth consecutive year that police have not allowed Shab-e-Baraat prayers at the Jamia Masjid. The prayers have been stopped since 2019.

Chief Minister Omar Abdullah called the sealing of Jamia Masjid on Shabe Baraat unfortunate and lack of confidence in the law & order machinery.

"It is very unfortunate that the security establishment has taken the decision to seal the historic Jamia Masjid, Srinagar on one of the holiest nights in the Islamic calendar – Shab-e-Baraat. This decision betrays a lack of confidence in the people & a lack of confidence in the law & order machinery that calm won't prevail without extreme measures. The people of Srinagar deserved better," Chief Minister Omar Abdullah wrote on X.(KNS)

JPC Report Tabled

Shortly after the House met at 11 am, the JPC report was tabled by the BJP's Medha Vishram Kulkarni, a member of the panel, followed by uproar from the opposition members. The clamour continued as Chairman Jagdeep Dhankhar tried to read out a message from President Droupadi Murmu, forcing a brief adjournment.

When the Upper House reconvened at 11.20 am, many opposition members stood from their seats and some trooped towards the chairman's

podium, pressing for the report's withdrawal, even as Dhankhar threatened them with serious action.

Chairman Dhankhar named Samirul Islam, Nadimul Haque and M Mohamed Abdulla for creating "chaos and disruption in the House". Kharage was then called to speak.

The Congress chief claimed the dissent notes of opposition MPs in the report on the Waqf bill were redacted from the report.

"The report of the joint committee of Parliament on Waqf... in which several members had given their dissent note has been taken out. Bulldozing the report by only keeping the views of the majority members is not right. It is condemnable, anti-democratic," he said.

Calling it a "fake report", Kharage said it should be withdrawn and sent back to a committee.

"This is not about any individual... These MPs are not protesting for their own sake, they are protesting for the community against which injustice is being done," Kharage said.

DMK's Tiruchi Siva and AAP's Sanjay Singh also objected to the alleged removal of dissent notes from the report.

Union Minister for Environment Bhupender Yadav quoted rules and said the JPC chairman can expunge words, expressions and phrases from the dissent note if they are inappropriate and unparliamentary.

On the other hand, Minister for Parliamentary Affairs Kiren Rijju denied the Opposition's allegations and said everything has been kept on the floor of the House and nothing has been removed from the report.

"There is no deletion or removal of any part of the report. Don't mislead the House. Opposition members (are) making unnecessary issues. The allegation is false," he said.

Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman also accused the opposition parties of misleading the Upper House, prompting another heated exchange between the treasury and the opposition benches.

The Congress' Syed Nasir Hussain accused Rijju -- who is also the Union minority affairs minister -- of misleading the House and said, "My own dissent note has been redacted."

Trinamool Congress member Saket Gokhale demanded that Rijju should respond if any redaction was done in the dissent note.

Rijju reiterated that the report had all annexures and nothing was taken out. The opposition MPs then staged a walkout.

Soon after the walkout, Nadda accused the opposition of being "anti-national" and indulging in politics of appeasement.

"The aim of the opposition was not to debate, it was to score political points. It is unfortunate that even though the Parliamentary Affairs Minister said nothing has been deleted... the chairman has the right to delete anything, but nothing has been deleted. This is the politics of appeasement... Some people are trying to fight against the Indian state," he said.

"It should be on record that the walkout by the opposition today is an expression and medium to promote anti-national activities. The opposition is strengthening those who want to divide the country," Nadda said.

Dhankhar, meanwhile, compared the report on the Waqf Amendment Bill with the Mandal Commission report, and said, "A major change in social justice occurred when the Mandal Commission report was implemented in a way. The Waqf issue is becoming a similar chapter."

However, in the post-lunch sitting, Kulkarni tabled a corrigendum in Appendix 5 of the report, prompting opposition MPs to say it proved the House was misled by a minister earlier.

Thanking the government for the corrigendum, Dhankhar said, "I express my gratitude to the government because the matter was brought to my notice." Opposition MPs, however, were heard saying that it was done under their pressure.

In a post on X, Trinamool Congress' Rajiya Sabha MP Saket Gokhale said the government was "forced to table the Waqf JPC with un-redacted Opposition dissent notes."

TMC MP Ritabrata Banerjee spoke on similar lines, and in a post on X, said the corrigendum that was tabled had the dissent notes.

"A corrigendum of the Appendix of the Waqf Amendment Bill Report has now been tabled in the House. It is now clear that the Union parliamentary affair minister and other ministers were misleading the House in the morning," he said.

LG, CM Extend

night reminds us to follow the path of truth, humility, compassion and righteousness. It is also a sacred occasion to reaffirm our responsibility towards the underprivileged sections of the society.

I pray for peace, happiness and joy for everyone".

Chief Minister Omar Abdullah has extended his warm greetings to the people on the auspicious occasion of Shab-e-Baraat, the sacred night dedicated to seeking forgiveness, mercy and blessings from Almighty Allah.

In his message, the Chief Minister highlighted the spiritual significance of Shab-e-Baraat, emphasizing that it is a night of introspection and prayer when Muslims seek divine pardon and guidance.

He urged people to embrace the spiritual essence of the occasion and pray for the well-being of all humanity.

The Chief Minister also prayed for peace, prosperity and progress to the people of Jammu and Kashmir.

Will Run Nationwide

Indian Muslims and unilaterally moved ahead with an "arbitrary undemocratic process".

The AIMPLB said if the Waqf bill is passed, it will run a nationwide movement against it within the framework of the Constitution.

The board urged the government not to move forward with any such bill on Waqf and withdraw its steps.

Addressing a press conference here, AIMPLB president Khalid Saifullah Rahmani said the founding fathers of the country dreamed that this would be a country which is different from other nations in the world as people of different religion, language, culture and traditions live here.

He said a lot of lies have been spread on the Waqf issue and the Waqf bill is based on

"religious discrimination".

"It is our constitutional right to live our life according to our religion and run institutions as per our customs and traditions," he said.

Rahmani pointed out that the religious places of Sikhs and Hindus are run by members of the respective communities.

"We have no objection to that. The management of the religious places be done by people of that religion but we should have the same rights. The mosques, cemeteries and other places must be run by Muslims," he said.

"The current government spreads lies and dislikes truth. They propagate that Waqf will take over all properties and can take any land. When there are courts in the country how someone can take over any property like this," Rahmani asked.

The Waqf issue is not a fight between Hindus and Muslims or between minority and majority but it is a fight for justice, the AIMPLB chief said.

Rahmani said AIMPLB representatives had conveyed their message to BJP allies --JD(U) chief Nitish Kumar and TDP president N Chandrababu Naidu -- to not support the bill and side with justice.

Deputy Ameer Jamat-e-Islami Hind Malik Moatasim Khan said if Kumar and Naidu do not pay heed to the calls against the bill, they will have to pay a political price for it.

Speaking at the presser, Jamiat Ulema-e-Hind president Arshad Madani slammed the government over the Waqf issue and said it was against the Constitution.

Their remarks came after the report of the Joint Committee on Waqf (Amendment) Bill was tabled in the Lok Sabha on Thursday.

The report of the joint committee of Parliament on the Waqf (Amendment) Bill was submitted to Lok Sabha Speaker Om Birla on January 30.

In a statement, the AIMPLB said it is unfortunate that the Waqf Amendment Bill was presented in Parliament.

"The way the ruling party, its allies and the Joint Parliamentary Committee (JPC) have completely ignored the stance and opinions of Indian Muslims, views of opposition members within the JPC and have unilaterally pushed their arbitrary undemocratic process is highly condemnable," the AIMPLB said.

"We believe that the government still has an opportunity to not bring this bill, which poses a direct threat to Waqf properties and aims to deprive Muslims of their mosques, eidgahs, madrasas, dargahs and graveyards etc.," it said.

The government must act responsibly and uphold its stated commitment of 'Sabka Saath, Sabka Vikaas', the Muslim body said.

"Muslims across India, including scholars from various sects, religious and community organisations, prominent madrasas and intellectuals have collectively opposed this bill. Crores of Muslims have submitted their objections via email, presenting well-reasoned arguments. In matters of this nature, the opinions of the affected stakeholders hold paramount importance, as this is a fundamental democratic principle. However, these voices have been completely ignored," it alleged.

"We urge all opposition parties and even the ruling BJP's allies to ensure that this bill is not passed in Parliament," the AIMPLB said.

The Muslim body also said it will not accept the bill even if it is passed and will pursue all "peaceful, legal and democratic" options.

The AIMPLB also hit out at the implementation of the Uniform Civil Code (UCC) in Uttarakhand.

"Another alarming move by the ruling party is the Uttarakhand government's enforcement of the UCC. Following this, the Gujarat government has also formed a committee to draft UCC in its state. We categorically state that no state has the authority to enforce UCC on its own," it said.

"We strongly oppose the Uttarakhand government's imposition of this flawed, unnecessary and religiously biased law, which is nothing more than an anti-Muslim and replication of Western cultures," it said.

The AIMPLB said it will challenge this so-called UCC in court and launch a united movement against it with all religious communities.

"We call upon the Muslims of Uttarakhand to remain steadfast in adhering to Shariat and to uphold their faith with patience," the statement said.

J&K Yet to Frame

According to the report of the JPC, which was tabled in the Parliament on Thursday, Jammu & Kashmir is yet to frame rules under the existing Waqf Act, which became applicable to J&K from October 31, 2019.

"...07 States/UTs are yet to make rules (namely Dadra & Nagar Haveli (UT), Delhi (UT), Jammu & Kashmir, Jharkhand, Lakshadweep (UT), Madhya Pradesh, and Uttar Pradesh)," reads the report.

The report also reveals that Jammu & Kashmir has not constituted Waqf Tribunals for resolving disputes related to Waqf properties. "The primary purpose of the Tribunal is to resolve disputes related to Waqf properties and administration. The parties need not be Muslims alone. As per information received from the States/UTs Waqf Boards (as on 9th Sept. 2024), 25 States/UTs have constituted Waqf Tribunals while 3 States/UTs (Andaman & Nicobar Islands, Jammu & Kashmir, and Manipur) have not constituted Tribunals," the report states.

The Central Waqf Act became applicable to J&K UT after two state laws governing the management of Waqf properties were abolished by the Parliament. The Jammu & Kashmir Wakf Act-2001 and The Jammu and Kashmir Muslim Specified Wakfs and Specified Wakaf Properties (Management and Regulation) Act 2004 governed the management of Muslim Shrines and properties in the erstwhile state of J&K.(KNO)

LG Directs Stronger

He also called for intensified efforts to wipe out terrorism from Jammu province and said every perpetrator and supporter of terrorism must pay the price.

"We must strengthen border security against asymmetric threats due to porous border with riverines and difficult mountain range and all the security agencies must work together to provide necessary back-up support," the lieutenant governor said, chairing a high-level meeting to review

the security scenario in Jammu division.

This was the second security review meeting chaired by the lieutenant governor in as many days. On Wednesday, Sinha presided over a high-level security review meeting in Srinagar for Kashmir valley.

The back-to-back security review meetings took place amid a series of incidents along the Line of Control (LoC) in Jammu division over the past couple of days.

While two army personnel, including a captain, were killed in a powerful Improvised Explosive Device (IED) explosion triggered by the terrorists in Akhnour sector of Jammu on February 11, a soldier was injured in cross-border firing in Rajouri sector a day earlier.

The Pakistani troops also violated ceasefire by resorting to unprovoked firing on the army posts in Poonch sector on Wednesday, prompting a befitting reply by the Indian Army.

The security review meeting in Jammu was attended by senior police officers led by DGP Nalin Prabhat, who along with Inspector General of Police, Jammu zone, Bhim Sen Tuti, briefed the chair on the future action plan and the proposed measures to tackle the security challenges to ensure a safe and secure environment for the common citizen, an official spokesman said.

He said the IGP railways also gave a detailed presentation on the security architecture of railways and the roadmap put in place to strengthen the security of stations and the tracks.

"Our focus should be on complete wipe-out of terrorism from Jammu division. We should not even have remnants of terrorism in Jammu region," the lieutenant governor said, addressing the meeting.

He called for effective steps to wipe-out terrorism and ensure complete dismantling of the infrastructure and local support of terrorism.

The lieutenant governor directed the police officials to take strongest possible action against those providing logistical and financial support to terrorism.

"Every perpetrator and supporter of terrorism must pay the price. We need to equip ourselves with credible intelligence and act more effectively to neutralise the terrorists and ensure the security of citizens," he said.

Sinha directed the police officials to make sure that acts of individuals or groups trying to create fear in the society are termed as "terrorist action" and they should be punished as per the law.

He discussed a roadmap for technology driven policing, area domination plan, inter-agency coordination, action against narco-terrorism, capacity building of police force and innovative strategies to improve cyber patrolling and monitoring capabilities.

The lieutenant governor stressed on credible intelligence gathering, sharing of real time operational intelligence and anti-terror operations based on precise inputs.

He also called for strengthening the legal framework to deal with terror propagandists and strengthening of police establishment at local level for modern and efficient policing.

Govt Committed

the collaborative efforts of the J&K Academy of Art, Culture and Languages and the Jammu Kashmir Artists Association.

"Jashn-e-Jammu Kashmir is an occasion to recall our rich folk culture, which is a source of pride for the nation and strengthens the ideals of unity in diversity. Around 350 artists participating in this event represent different arts, a variety of folk dances, and expressions that reflect the soft power of India and its ancient civilization," he said.

Speaking about the extraordinary journey of Jammu and Kashmir over the past few years, the Lt Governor said that the government, under the guidance of the Prime Minister, is working with the resolve of 'Vikas Bhi Virasat Bhi' (development and heritage together).

"It is a matter of pride that, on one hand, industries and infrastructural development have reached new heights, while on the other, J-K has witnessed the revival of art and culture," he said, reiterating the administration's commitment to the welfare of artists and their families.

"I want our gifted artists to play a leading role in nurturing society. Artists provide new perspectives to citizens and energise social progress. In order to maintain the pace of development, it is necessary that teachers, scientists and artists work together and serve the nation," he said.

Referring to the peaceful conduct of parliamentary and legislative assembly elections in J-K last year, the Lt Governor said there was no rigging or repolling during the democratic exercises.

"Many anticipated violence and loss of life, but not even a single stone-pelting incident was reported," he said.

The Lt Governor felicitated various artists for their valuable contributions in the field of art and culture.

'I Believe That

restored "as soon as possible", he said.

The Centre abrogated Article 370, which granted special status to Jammu and Kashmir, and reorganised the erstwhile state into the Union territories of Jammu and Kashmir, and Ladakh in 2019.

"It was discussed as soon as possible and that was over a year ago. We feel that time has arrived now," Abdullah said in an exclusive interview with PTI Videos.

The chief minister also said he had a "very good conversation" with the home minister. "It's part of an ongoing conversation and I am very hopeful that statehood will be restored soon."

Asked if the distance between Delhi and Jammu and Kashmir had reduced since he took office last year, the chief minister said sometimes some incidents occurred that widened the gap, pointing to the recent killings of two individuals in north Kashmir's Sopore and in Billawar in Jammu's Kathua district.

"...both incidents were unfortunate and I feel that they could have been prevented. They shouldn't have occurred in the first place and now there is a necessity that they be investigated transparently. If someone is held guilty, the law has to take its course," Abdullah said.

In Billawar, a 26-year-old man accused of

being involved in militancy allegedly committed suicide on February 4 following "police harassment". The day after, a truck driver was killed in army firing when he allegedly refused to stop at a checkpoint in Sopore in Baramulla district.

Following the two deaths, the chief minister had said that such incidents "risk alienating the very people who we need to carry with us on the road to complete normalcy".

Abdullah told PTI Videos that although security and police were not the direct responsibility of the elected Union Territory government, it was still their combined responsibility to ensure such incidents did not happen.

"As far as the people are concerned, the government is there. They are not going to say who's responsible in the government. It's our collective duty and it should be our aim that such incidents don't happen. That is why this was a major part of my conversation with the home minister," he said.

Abdullah also brushed aside criticism of his government by the People's Democratic Party (PDP), saying it was only reacting to its recent electoral loss.

"I don't expect it to applaud us," he said, showing that he does not usually react to such remarks.

Looking back on his administration's time in office, which has now exceeded 100 days, Abdullah said, "No one voted for us for 100 days. People voted for us for five years, so let us do our work."

He admitted that it was challenging to govern Jammu and Kashmir, saying, "Ruling Jammu and Kashmir is never easy. It wasn't easy between 2009 and 2015. It's not easy now and I don't believe any chief minister of Jammu and Kashmir can say that their tenure was easy."

"Everyone faces some difficulty or the other. In this case, this is a new experience for us. We are a Union Territory. We are learning, Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha also learned to work in these conditions," he added.

Asked if he was facing any heat from the central government, Abdullah -- who is also the National Conference vice-president -- replied humorously and spoke about the challenges posed by the weather rather than political pressure, expressing concern over the potential for severe water shortages in the coming summer.

"There's too much heat; not from the Centre, not from the lieutenant governor, not from any officer but from the weather. This heat is actually worrying me. If it continues, we will have a shortage of water during the summer. It is going to be our biggest problem, bigger than any other problem," Abdullah said.

He emphasised the urgency of preparing for these shortages and said he had called a meeting with the departments concerned to address the issue, praying for much-needed rain or snow in the coming days.

"I pray it rains or snows in the coming days. But at the moment, the day temperature feels like that of March or April. I am really fearful that this heat will have a direct impact on us," he added.

HC Frowns Over

before the Chief Justice for passing of "kind orders and issuance of circular instructions, in view of above."

The court made the observations while dismissing a review petition against its judgment on 18 October 2022 in a case essentially pertaining to matrimonial dispute.

"It may not be out of place to make a mention that it appears that this Court while rendering the judgement dated 18th October 2022 did not stare at the cause-title of the appeal styled by appellant as (P A Khan) v.(Divorcee)," the court said, adding, "However, while perusing Review Petition, this Court has found that the expression "Divorcee" has been attached and used by appellant/review petitioner with the name of respondent, which is unbecoming of and reflects his mindset."

The court also imposed Rs.20,000 as cost on the review petitioner within one month from today. "In the event he fails to do so, the Registry (of the court) shall take all steps for its recovery."

350 Villagers Return

the country, some neurotoxin in the food chain is suspected as the main cause for the mysterious disease.

While people were provided all kinds of facilities at the separation facilities, dedicated teams of officials were also stationed in the village to take care of livestock of the shifted families.

Rajouri Deputy Commissioner Abhishek Sharma personally saw the return of the villagers to their homes on the advice of the experts.

"Our task is not completed yet, we will continue our monitoring mechanism at the village till the Special Investigation Team (SIT) of police submits its report. Over 180 government officials are posted in the village, monitoring daily activities," he said.

Sharma said over 700 other households in the village are under watch, while all the pesticide shops in the entire district were closed as a precautionary measure.

He said all the stock of grains and dry ration in the houses were replaced by the food, civil supplies and consumer affairs department by fresh stocks. (PTI)

Govt Allocates

dedicated to rural electrification and feeder segregation, it added.

The Prime Minister's Development Package (PMDP) is also being implemented to enhance overall infrastructure in the region.

Ladakh, which has received Rs 876 crore, is focusing its investments on improving electricity transmission and last-mile connectivity, particularly in remote and high-altitude areas.

A significant portion of this funding is also being directed toward renewable energy projects, leveraging Ladakh's potential in solar and hydropower generation.

The financial support under these schemes is part of the government's broader strategy to enhance electricity availability, reduce losses, and improve the efficiency of the power sector in both Union Territories.

However, the Lok Sabha response did not specify the exact timelines for project completion or provide an update on the progress of implementation. (KNO)

Ceasefire Along LoC In J&K Remains Intact, Says Army



Agencies

SRINAGAR: The Indian Army Thursday confirmed that the ceasefire along the Line of Control (LoC) in Jammu and Kashmir remains intact and continues to be observed as per the mutual understanding with the Pakistan Army.

"While tensions have arisen due to stray incidents of cross-LoC firing and a suspected IED blast targeting an Indian patrol, these are being addressed through the established mechanism," the Army said.

Clarifying that no recent exchange of heavy-calibre weapon fire has occurred along the LoC, the Army said that minor incidents are not unprecedented.

"Concerns have been raised with the Pakistan Army at the appropriate level," the Army said, adding that the situation remains stable and under close monitoring, with the Indian Army maintaining a high state of alertness and dominating the LoC.

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Since the reaffirmation of the ceasefire agreement between India and Pakistan in February 2021, the Line of Control (LoC) in Jammu and Kashmir has experienced a significant reduction in hostilities.

According to official reports only three minor incidents of ceasefire violations were recorded along the LoC after the agreement.

Overall, the situation along the LoC has remained relatively stable, with only minor incidents reported since the 2021 agreement—(KNO)

Centre Spent Rs 29,903 Cr On National Highways In J&K

Agencies

The Centre has spent Rs 29,903 crore on the development and maintenance of national highways and has constructed 1,003 km of roads in Jammu and Kashmir during the past five years.

In response to a question, Union Minister for Road Transport and Highways, Nitin Gadkari, informed the parliament that several ambitious projects, including the four-laning of highways and construction of many tunnels are part of this ongoing push to modernize road networks in both Jammu and Kashmir and Ladakh.

The Minister provided a state-wise breakdown of the expenditure

incurred and the length of national highways constructed over the past five years.

"Improved highways are expected to reduce travel time, ensure year-round connectivity, and strengthen security infrastructure in the region," the minister said.

"With continued investments in infrastructure, the central government is set to accelerate highway construction in J&K and Ladakh. The focus remains on making travel safer and more efficient, while also supporting economic growth and regional development," he said. Meanwhile, Gadkari said that Ladakh received Rs 1,608 crore, leading to the construction of 143 km of road length in the Union Territory—(KNO)

ACB Arrests Patwari For Accepting Bribe

Observer News Service

SRINAGAR: Anti-Corruption Bureau (ACB) on Thursday said to have trapped and arrested Patwari of Halqa Khanpur in Tehsil Marheeh, Kathua for demanding and accepting a bribe of Rs 15,000.

A spokesman in a statement issued to *Kashmir Observer* said that Jammu and Kashmir ACB received a complaint, alleging therein that public servant namely Sudershan Khajuria, Patwari Halqa Khanpur Tehsil Marheeh District Kathua demanded illegal gratification for correction of Girdawari entry in revenue record from the complainant.

The accused had initially demanded a bribe of Rs 30,000 from the complainant for correction of Girdawari entry in revenue records and in case, the complainant failed to provide the bribe amount, the said Patwari intimidated the complainant to tamper his revenue record and will change the entries of his name, reads the statement.

"Under compelling circumstances, the complainant had given Rs 5,000 to the said Patwari.

After negotiation, the accused has agreed to take a bribe amount of Rs 15,000 instead of agreed Rs 25,000 from the complainant for doing the needful."

Since, the complainant didn't want to pay a bribe and he approached Anti-Corruption Bureau for taking legal action against the accused public servant under law, the statement added.

"On receipt of the complaint, a discreet verification was conducted, which confirms the demand of bribe by the public servant concerned and accordingly, a case FIR No. 01/2025 U/S 7 of Prevention of Corruption Act, 1988 was registered in Police Station ACB Jammu and investigation taken up," it reads.

"During the course of investigation, a trap team headed by was constituted. The team laid a successful trap and the accused public servant was caught red-handed while demanding and accepting a bribe amount of Rs 15,000 from the complainant in the presence of independent witnesses. The accused was arrested on the spot by the ACB team after following due process of law.

Apple Growers Reap Profits As Demand For Cold-Stored Fruit Surges

Agencies

PULWAMA: Apple growers in Kashmir are witnessing strong returns as demand for their produce stored in cold storage units continues to rise. The increased demand has led many growers to release their apples earlier than usual to ensure good profits.

Traditionally, the dispatch of apples from Controlled Atmosphere (CA) storage units would begin in mid-February. However, this year, growers started selling as early as January to capitalise on favourable market conditions.

Growers said that demand has surged in the last 20 days, leading to higher earnings. Javid Ahmad Reshie, a fruit grower from Shopian, said that a standard 10-kilogramme apple box is currently selling for Rs 1,300-Rs 1,500, while larger 16-kilogramme boxes are fetching Rs 1,800-Rs 2,000. By October 2024, cold storage facilities in Pulwama and Shopian had reached full capacity as growers stored their produce, anticipating better market rates.

Last year, nearly 20% of the apple stock remained unsold in cold storage facilities after nine months, partly due to an influx of imported apples.



However, this year has started on a positive note, with growers hopeful for consistent demand and profitable returns.

Growers emphasised the critical role of cold storage facilities in providing the flexibility to sell their produce in response to market demand. They called for further expansion of such infrastructure to stabilise supply chains and market prices.

The demand saw a temporary dip due to the Delhi elections, but prices have rebounded, bringing relief to growers, they said. Many are optimistic that the upward trend will continue, allowing them to recover from last year's losses when it took more than nine months to clear stored stock.

Mehraj Ahmad, a cold storage unit manager, said

these facilities give growers greater control over their sales. "Kashmiri apples are among the most delicious in the world but there is a need for improved packaging and grading to compete with imports, which attract customers with superior presentation," he said.

Kashmir currently has around 50 cold storage units, primarily in SIDCO Lassi-pora. The region produces an average of over 20 lakh metric tonnes of apples annually, sometimes reaching up to 25 lakh metric tonnes. Approximately 3 lakh metric tonnes of apples are currently stored in CA facilities across the Valley.

With demand soaring, growers remain hopeful that the trend will persist, ensuring a profitable season ahead—(KNO)

“KASHMIRI APPLES ARE AMONG THE MOST DELICIOUS in the world but there is a need for improved packaging and grading to compete with imports, which attract customers with superior presentation,”

Intensive Food Safety Inspections Held

Observer News Service

SRINAGAR: Following the directions of Deputy Commissioner (DC) Srinagar, Dr Bilal Mohi-Ud-Din Bhat, Food Safety/ Drug and Food Control Organisation held intensive food safety inspections in various areas of City ensuring strict adherence to hygiene and sanitary standards by food business operators.

In this regard, a food safety inspection drive was conducted in Batamalo, Tangpora, Mominabad and other adjoining markets by a team led by Assistant Commissioner Food Safety Srinagar, Yameen ul Nabi.

The main focus of the inspection was on food stalls selling ready-to-eat food and roadside eateries. During the inspection, some food business operators were found using artificial colors in Biryani, which was destroyed

on the spot. The team also initiated action against the defaulters under the relevant rules.

Additionally, the team provided awareness on food safety aspects to all food business operators in the Khayam area, emphasizing good handling and storage practices and the importance of using natural colors in prepared food.

Another team, which included food safety officers Syed Dilpazir, Khalid Bashir, Hakeem Adil, and Fayaz Ahmad, also inspected various areas.

According to officers of Food Safety the inspections will continue across Srinagar City and those found not complying with standards of hygiene and standards act, which even can lead to closure of their business.

Immovable Property Attached Under UAPA In Kulgam

Observer News Service

SRINAGAR: In a significant move to counter terrorism, Police in Kulgam on Thursday said to have attached a property "fully damaged (double-storied residential house)" under section 25 of the Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act, 1967 (UAPA), which has been used by terrorists for their shelter and stay in addition to all other logistic support provided by the owner.

The property is registered in the name of Safdar Ali Dar son of Ali Mohd Dar resident of Modargam, Kulgam (Survey No. 214 Min), a police spokes-

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The property is registered in the name of Safdar Ali Dar son of Ali Mohd Dar resident of Modargam, Kulgam (Survey No. 214 Min), a police spokesman said in a statement issued to *Kashmir Observer*.

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The attachment is linked to case FIR No. 100/2024 of Police Station Kulgam and was executed in the presence of a duly constituted Police team and the Executive Magistrate,

ensuring full compliance with legal protocols. The property is now under official seizure, prohibiting any transfer, lease, disposal or alteration without prior permission from the designated authority, police said.

"This action represents a significant milestone in the ongoing investigation into unlawful and subversive activities in the district. It highlights the firm commitment of Kulgam Police to neutralize threats to national security and maintain peace and order and underscores the unwavering commitment of Kulgam police to dismantle terrorist networks," police added.

Past Govt's 'Weaponized' Passport Verification: Sajad Lone

Agencies

SRINAGAR: Peoples Conference President and MLA Handwara Sajad Lone Thursday sharply criticized the National Conference, Congress, and the People's Democratic Party for paradoxically welcoming the recent High Court judgment, which ruled that individuals cannot be denied passports solely because a family member was involved in militancy.

Lone, in a strong rebuke, accused these parties of being the architects and enforcers of a system of collective punishment that destroyed thousands of lives.

"Can those Kashmiris who weaponized the passport verification system, who actually facilitated the process of collective punishment, shut up for the moment and not spoil the party?", Lone wrote on X.

Calling the verdict a potential turning point, Lone categorized Kashmiris into three groups: victims who suffered under this unwritten rule, those unaffected by it, and those who exploited it against their own people. He revealed that he himself had been denied a passport for four years without any legal justification.

He reminded the public that before 2019, passport verification was under state jurisdiction, with the police deciding whether to issue an adverse or favorable report.

"Let all Kashmiris know that,



in the pre-2019 era, passport verification was a state matter. It was the state police that decided whether to give an adverse or favorable report," he wrote.

Lone denounced the National Conference and Congress for their blatant role in institutionalizing this injustice, calling it an unforgivable betrayal of the people.

"How dare they welcome this judgment when they were the masterminds of this very injustice? They were the ones who set this sinister precedent in J&K. Is this shameless hypocrisy, or have they conveniently erased their own crimes from memory?" he said.

Lone hailed High Court Judge M. A. Chowdhary for delivering a landmark judgment and expressed hope that future rulings would further dismantle this oppressive practice.

However, he asserted that those responsible for enforcing this system in the past had no right to celebrate its undoing. "This moment belongs to the victims, not the perpetrators," he declared.—(KNS)

'79% Of Rural Households Have Access To Tap Water Connections'

Observer News Service

SRINAGAR: The Jal Jeevan Mission (JJM), launched in 2019 to provide tap water connections to all rural households in India, has made significant progress in Jammu & Kashmir and Ladakh, the government of India said on Thursday.

According to the data presented by Union Jal Shakti Minister C.R. Patil in the Lok Sabha, a copy of which lies with *Kashmir Observer*, over 80% of rural households in J&K and 96% in Ladakh now have functional tap water connections.

"At the start of the mission in August 2019, only 5.75 lakh (29.92%) rural households in Jammu & Kashmir had access to tap water. Over the past five years, 9.80 lakh additional households have been connected, bringing the total to 15.55 lakh, covering 80.87% of the rural population."

In Ladakh, the coverage was even lower in 2019, with just 1% of rural households (4,100) having tap water. Since then, 38,000 more households have been connected, increasing the total coverage to 96.05%, the data reads.

Despite the progress, officials have identified several challenges in implementing the mission, especially in re-

mote and high-altitude areas. The lack of dependable water sources, difficult terrain, harsh weather conditions, and the presence of geo-genic contaminants in groundwater have slowed implementation in some regions, it added.

Additionally, delays in securing statutory clearances and technical capacity gaps at the local level have posed hurdles.

To overcome these issues, the government has launched multiple initiatives, including financial assistance under the Special Assistance to States for Capital Expenditure program, setting up State and District Programme Management Units (SPMUs and DPMUs), and training local personnel through the "Nal Jal Mitra Programme." The Jal Shakti Abhiyan: Catch the Rain campaign has also been implemented to encourage rainwater harvesting and groundwater recharge, with a special emphasis on the role of women in water conservation, the data added.

With just a few months left for the mission's 2024-25 deadline, both J&K and Ladakh are on track to achieve full rural tap water coverage. While Ladakh has already surpassed 96%, efforts are being intensified in J&K to bridge the remaining gap.

PRESS NOTE



Ayush Health and wellness center Heerpora has been awarded with award of appreciation on occasion of Unani Day-2025 organized by Directorate of Ayush J&K U.T. The AHCW Heerpora is headed by Dr. Manzoor Ahmad Mir whose untiring work has made it possible that his team had performed better all related activities (OPD, NCD, Palliative care)

Dr. Manzoor and his team had visited to those hopeless persons who are either suffer my from life threatening diseases or are due to their age related problems (Geriatric Care)

Ayush Sector Shopian is highly thankful to Director Mam Mrs. Nuzhat Bashir shah and Asst. Director Dr. Shuja Sahab For recognizing the team work of AHCW Heerpora

Fko

Tourist Spot Sarthal Lags Behind In Development

Agencies

SRINAGAR: Sarthal, a scenic tourist spot along the Pathankot-Bhadrawah road in Kathua district, remains largely underdeveloped despite its immense potential. Due to a lack of infrastructure and basic amenities, both locals and visiting tourists continue to face hardships.

Residents of the area said that Sarthal, located in Bani tehsil, attracts a large number of tourists, yet suffers from the absence of essential facilities both en route and at the destination itself.

Mudasar Ali, a local social activist, said despite the challenging conditions, hundreds of tourists visit the region, proving its poten-

tial as a prime tourist destination. He compared Sarthal's natural beauty to that of Pahalgam and Gulmarg but lamented that it receives little government attention.

One of the most pressing issues, he said, is the complete lack of mobile network coverage along a 30-kilometre stretch. This poses serious risks, as travellers are left without any means of communication in case of emergencies, he said.

"If a vehicle breaks down, the nearest repair facility is at least 20 to 25 kilometres away. Although a mobile tower was installed in the area following repeated pleas from the residents, it remains non-functional for unknown reasons," Ali added.

Locals from Bani and nearby areas stated that Sarthal lacks basic infrastructure, with the landscape currently dominated by rocks rather than proper tourist facilities. They urged the government to take immediate action to develop the spot and bring other nearby places, such as Chattergala, Lowang, Roulka, Dhaggar, Duggan, Panyalang, Machedi and Malhar, onto the tourism map.

Many residents belong to financially weaker backgrounds and believe that the development of Sarthal could boost the local economy by creating employment opportunities. They demanded essential amenities like public toilets, night stay facilities and road improve-

ments to enhance the tourist experience. They also called for the construction of the Chattergala Tunnel, a Gondola project, fountains and other attractions to make the area more appealing.

Locals sought the intervention of higher authorities, including Chief Minister Omar Abdullah and officials from the Tourism Department. They said the Jammu and Kashmir government recently initiated feasibility assessments for skiing at seven new tourist destinations—four in Kashmir and three in Jammu, including Sarthal. However, despite repeated government assurances, no significant development has taken place on the ground—(KNO)

NORTHERN RAILWAY

E-AUCTION NOTICE

The Senior Divisional Commercial Manager, Northern Railway, Firozpur for and on behalf of President of India invites E-Auction from eligible and registered bidders for the following works over Firozpur Division:

Catalogue No.	Auction Start	Name of work
EAZR-OH25-5	25.02.25 at 11:00 Hours	Allotment of contract for Commercial Advertisement rights through: 1) Exterior of Overhead of Water Tanks at Sahnewal, Amritsar & Jalandhar City Railway Station. 2) Static media at Level crossings adjoining to Verka, Jaintipura, Batala, Bhagatwala & Patti Railway Station. 3) Static media at Goraya & Lohian Khas Railway Station. 4) Static media/overhead of water tank at Makhu & Nakodar Railway Station.
EAZR-MIS25-3	25.02.25 at 11:30 Hours	Allotment of contract for Peaceful/Relaxed Zone by installation, operation and maintenance of Body Relief chairs at Railway station Amritsar, Jalandhar City & Pathankot Cantt.
EAZR-PRK25-3	25.02.25 at 12:30 Hours	Allotment of Parking lot on contract adjoining to Railway colony Banga Railway Station.
EAZR-OH25-6	27.02.25 at 11:00 Hours	Allotment of contract for Commercial Advertisement rights through: 1) Static media at Madhopur Punjab & Bhogpur Sirwal Railway Station. 2) Static media/overhead of water tank at Samba, Pathankot, Baramulla Sopur, Budgam, Srinagar, Anantnag, Qazigund & Banihal Railway Station. 4) Static media at Level crossings adjoining to Chhina, Railway Station.
EAZR-PNU25-3	28.02.25 at 12:30 Hours	Allotment of contract for operation & maintenance of Pay & Use Toilets at Phagwara and Phillaur Railway Stations.
EAZR-MPS25-3	28.02.25 at 12:30 Hours	Allotment of contract for Multi-Purpose stalls (MPS) at Jalandhar Cantt. Railway Station.

For other details and registration, please visit Railway website www.ireps.gov.in

No. MC/38015/Pub/E-Auction/FZR/22 Date: 13.02.2025

Sr. Divisional Commercial Manager

Northern Railway, Firozpur

SERVING CUSTOMERS WITH A SMILE

Families Not To Travel With Team India For Champions Trophy

Press Trust of India

NEW DELHI: Families will not be accompanying the Indian cricket players heading to Dubai on February 15 for the ICC Champions Trophy as the BCCI's new travel policy comes into effect for the first time with this tournament.

The Indian team starts its campaign in Dubai against Bangladesh on February 20, followed by the marquee clash against arch-rivals Pakistan (February 23) and the final preliminary face-off with New Zealand on March 2. The Rohit Sharma-led squad will play its games in Dubai while the rest of the tournament unfolds from February 19 in Pakistan across



three venues.

Given that the duration of the tour is just over three weeks even if the final on March 9 is taken into consideration, the BCCI will not allow families to

accompany the players. As per the new policy, families can be with players for a maximum of two weeks during a tour which is of 45 days or more. "If anything changes then it is

different but as of now, the players are unlikely to be accompanied by their wives or partners for this tour. One of the senior players had enquired about it and he was told that the policy decision will be followed," a senior BCCI source told PTI on conditions of anonymity.

"Since the tour is of less than one month, families won't be accompanying the players. But if exceptions are made, I think that individual will have to bear the full expenses as BCCI won't be covering any cost," he added.

The BCCI policy document states: "Players absent from India for more than 45 days during overseas tours can be joined by their partners and children (under 18) for one visit

per series (format wise) of up to a two-week period.

"Any deviation from this policy must be pre-approved by the coach, captain and GM Operations. Additional expenses outside the visitors' period will not be covered by the BCCI."

However, families will be there with the team during the five-Test tour of England in June-July-August as the five-Test. The window for their two-week stay during the trip will be worked out later.

The new rules were drafted after India's horror tour of Australia during which the team was outplayed 1-3, leading to speculation about lack of discipline and cohesion in the dressing room.

Short TAKES

Gill Up To 2nd, Rohit 3rd In Latest ICC ODI Rankings

India opener Shubman Gill gained one place to move to second spot in the latest ICC ODI rankings for batters with his captain Rohit Sharma at third spot on the back of timely centuries from both of them in the home series against England. The Indian duo closed in on star Pakistan batter Babar Azam who maintained a narrow lead at the top of the chart.

Gill, who made 112 in the Ahmedabad ODI on Wednesday, is just five rating points adrift of Babar while Rohit is within 13 rating points of the Pakistan right-hander following his splendid century (119) in Cuttack on February 9.

With just one week remaining until the start of the Champions Trophy in Pakistan and the UAE, it sets up a tight race for the premier position for batters in 50-over cricket during the eight-team tournament.

Just 18 rating points separates Rashid Khan, Maheesh Theekshana, Bernard Scholtz, Shaheen Afridi and Kuldeep Yadav in the top five for ODI bowlers.

Afghanistan veteran Mohammad Nabi maintains a narrow lead at the top of the ODI rankings for all-rounders.

RCB Names Rajat Patidar As Captain For IPL 2025

IPL franchise Royal Challengers Bengaluru on Thursday named Rajat Patidar as its captain for the upcoming season starting March 21, replacing South African Faf du Plessis who was released from the squad last year.

Patidar was among RCB's retained players before the mega auction in November, 2024 and has the experience of leading Madhya Pradesh in the Syed Mushtaq Ali Trophy (T20) and the Vijay Hazare Trophy (ODI).

The 31-year-old, who signed up with the franchise in 2022, guided Madhya Pradesh to the Syed Mushtaq Ali Trophy final where his side lost to Mumbai by five wickets last year.

The right-hander was also the second highest run-getter in the premier domestic T20 tournament, behind Ajinkya Rahane, scoring 428 from 10 matches at an average of 61 and a strike-rate of 186.08.

Services Tops Overall Medal Tally At 38th National Games

Services continued its dominance in the National Games as it topped the medal tally at the 38th edition in Uttarakhand, achieving the feat for the fifth time in the last six Games, after a rather low key final day of competitions here on Thursday.

Services bagged nine more medals on Thursday, including three gold, for a Games total haul of 121 (68 gold, 26 silver, 27 bronze). It had finished second behind Maharashtra in the 2023 edition in Goa.

Before that, it had topped the medal tally in four successive National Games (2007, 2011, 2015 and 2022).

Maharashtra won more medals than Services with 198 (54 gold, 71 silver, 73 bronze) but the lesser number of gold meant that it ended at second spot.

Even Haryana got more medals than Services with 153 (48 gold, 47 silver, 58 bronze) but had to be content with a third-place finish.

Himalayan Freeride Event Enthralled Foreign Skiers In Gulmarg



Observer News Service

SRINAGAR: Slopes of Gulmarg came alive for foreign skiers from the United States, England, Australia, New Zealand, France, Japan, Hong Kong, Russia and Nepal participate in the first-of-its-kind Himalayan Freeride Event, organised by the J&K Sports Council. The event saw skiers from different nationalities explore the diverse landscape, showcasing their expertise while embracing

ing the unique adventure and challenges that make Gulmarg a premier winter sports destination.

In the male category, Sam (Australia), Roro (France), and Francois Mortier (United States) secured the first, second and third positions. In the female category, Virginia Michele Winstone (New Zealand), Laura (United States) and Melanie Anderson (Hong Kong) claimed the top three spots.

A key highlight of the

event was an interactive session with international athletes and experts, where valuable insights were shared on Gulmarg's growing stature as a global winter sports hub. Rebecca, an American skier, remarked, "The powder snow here, combined with the breathtaking backdrop of the Himalayas, is unmatched. Nowhere else in the world offers such a unique and exhilarating experience."

Many athletes praised the friendliness and generosity of the local community, expressing gratitude for the way they were welcomed and hosted. "The people of Gulmarg have been incredibly kind and hospitable. Their warmth made this experience even more special," said Vermeil Sebastian, a skier from France.

Many participants also thanked the J&K Government for organizing such a prestigious event.

Shaheen, 2 Others Fined For Breaching ICC Code Of Conduct



Press Trust of India

KARACHI: International Cricket Council (ICC) has slapped Pakistan's Shaheen Afridi, Saud Shakeel and Kamran Ghulam with fines and a demerit point each for their belligerent behaviour during the tri-series match against South Africa here.

Shaheen was fined 25 per cent of his match fee for breaching Article 2.12 of the Code, which pertains to "inappropriate physical contact with a Player, Player Support Personnel, Umpire, Match Referee or any other person (including a spectator) during an International Match."

The incident occurred in the 28th over of South Africa's innings when Shaheen deliberately obstructed batter Matthew Breetzke as he ran a single, resulting in physical contact and a heated exchange between the two players on Wednesday.

The ICC had imposed a similar 20 per cent match fees fine and one demerit point on Indian star Virat Kohli for barging into Australia's Sam Konstas during the Border Gavaskar Trophy series.

The tall fast bowler admitted after the match that he had been trying to rile up and disturb Breetzke for a while in the match but once it was over everything was forgotten and both shook hands.

In another incident, Shakeel and substitute fielder Ghulam were fined 10 per cent of their match fees for celebrating too closely to batter Temba Bavuma following his run-out in the 29th over.

Both players were found guilty of breaching Article 2.5 of the Code, which relates to "using language, actions or gestures which disparage or which could provoke an aggressive reaction from a batter upon his/her dismissal during an International Match."



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