

LG Sacks 3 Govt Employees For Terror Links

Observer News Service

Srinagar: Jammu and Kashmir Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha on Saturday dismissed three government employees including a jailed policeman for their alleged terror links, officials said.

The sacked employees have been identified as police constable Firdous Ahmad Bhat, Union Territory teacher in school education department Mohammad Ashraf Bhat and orderly in forest department Nisar Ahmad Khan who was earlier arrested in connection with the killing of a National Conference minister in 2000,

they said.

The officials said the LG invoked Article 311 (2) (c) of the Constitution to terminate the services of the three employees after investigation by law enforcement and intelligence agencies clearly established their terror links.

Over 70 government employees have been fired by the LG in the Union Territory for their terror links in the past few years.

The termination of the three government employees comes close on the heels of two back-to-back security review meetings by the LG in the twin | [More on P10](#)



Law Says Everyone Innocent Until Proven Guilty:CM

Chief Minister Omar Abdullah on Saturday questioned arbitrary dismissal of government employees for their alleged terror links by the Lt Governor saying that the law says that "every accused person is innocent until proven guilty" in the court. Lt Governor Manoj Sinha invoked Article 311 (2) (c) of the Constitution to terminate | [More on P10](#)

Dismissals Persist Even After Govt Formation: Mufti

People's Democratic Party (PDP) president Mehbooba Mufti on Saturday said "arbitrary and summary" dismissal of employees was continuing even after an elected government had taken office in Jammu | [More on P10](#)

Waqf Bill To Safeguard Muslim Properties: Rijju

Says Budgetary Allocations According To UT Status | 'No Timeline For Statehood Restoration'

Observer News Service

Srinagar: Union minister Kiren Rijju on Saturday said that the Waqf (Amendment) Bill is for transparent management of properties for the benefit of Muslims. "There is no way that anyone can snatch the properties," Rijju said.

Rijju claimed that Andhra Chief Minister N Chandrababu Naidu and his Bihar counterpart Nitish Kumar were on board with the government's decision.

Asked if Naidu and Kumar were supportive of the bill, the minister replied in the affirmative saying several Muslim MPs too have privately supported it.

"Several Muslim MPs have expressed support (for



KO Photo | Abid Bhat

the bill) while thousands of Muslims, including women, have welcomed it," Rijju said.

He said Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Home Minister Amit Shah have made it clear that statehood to Jammu and Kashmir will be

restored in due course of time.

However, Rijju, who holds the parliamentary affairs and minority affairs portfolios, declined to give a timeline for the restoration of statehood to the Union Territory.

"The prime minister and

the home minister made clear indications in the past that in due course of time, statehood will be restored (to Jammu and Kashmir) and the powers and functions will be demarcated very clearly," Rijju told reporters here.

The Lok Sabha MP from Arunachal West said he would not like to comment on the timeline for restoration of statehood or division of powers between the lieutenant governor and the elected chief minister at this time as his visit to Kashmir was confined to the Union Budget.

"Therefore, I would not like to venture into the political and governance side... I can only say that Jammu and Kashmir is within the status of a Union | [More on P10](#)

J&K No Longer Conflict Zone, Hopes Soaring High: Dhankhar

Says Art 370 Was Temporary Provision, Ambedkar Refused To Draft It

Observer News Service

Jammu: A new journey began in Jammu and Kashmir after the "historic" abrogation of Article 370 in 2019 with the sacred region no longer considered a conflict zone and the hopes of its people soaring high, Vice-President Jagdeep Dhankhar said on Saturday.

He reiterated that Article 370 was a temporary provision and Dr B R Ambedkar, the architect of the Indian Constitution, had refused to draft it.

Addressing a gathering



during the 10th convocation ceremony of Shri Mata Vaishno Devi University (SMVDU), the vice president said, "Where there was once disorder, we now witness real order and

stability."

"The aspirations of generations found wings when the constitutional walls of separation crumbled in 2019 with the historic abrogation of Article 370. In the sacred land of Mata Vaishno Devi, a new pilgrimage began -- the journey from isolation to integration. Article 370 was a temporary article in the Constitution," he said.

B R Ambedkar, the architect of the Constitution, drafted all articles except Article 370, he said.

"I would urge | [More on P10](#)

NC Leader's Remark On Liquor Stir Controversy

Syed Mohammad Burhan

Srinagar: National Conference Chief Spokesman and MLA Zaidib, Tanvir Sadiq, has sparked controversy following his recent comments advocating for consultations before implementing a liquor ban in Jammu and Kashmir. His remarks have drawn sharp criticism from activists, politicians and constituents, many of whom see his stance as contradictory to the prevailing sentiment in the Kashmir Valley.

During a media interaction, Sadiq highlighted the significance of tourism for the region's



economy and cautioned against an outright ban on liquor, citing potential negative effects on the tourism industry.

"Jammu and Kashmir is heavily dependent on tourism, and we must carefully assess how a liquor ban | [More on P10](#)

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پیر خاندان کی دھڑ اور افسوس کے ساتھ ہی جاتی ہے مرحوم محمد یاسین شاہ ساکنہ مشوارہ
کیلبر شویپان 14 فروری 2025 بروز جمعرات دارفانی سے رحلت کر گئے۔ یہ محمد
یاسین شاہ Ex. BJP District President کا والد محترم اور جاوید
احمد قادری کے تقریبی ساتھی محمد یاسین شاہ محترم بھی ہے۔
سوگوار خاندان

PUBLIC NOTICE
This is information for the general public that in School records of my son the name is entered as MOHAMMAD AREEZ while his actual name is MOHAMMAD AREEZ WANI. Now i want its correction, in this regard if anybody having any objection may contact PRINCIPAL DELHI PUBLIC SCHOOL BUDGAM with in a period of seven days. No objection shall be entertained after that.
TARIQ AHMAD WANI mcb
F/o MOHAMMAD AREEZ WANI R/o LAKHRIPORA BUDGAM
CELL. 6006221241

OFFICE OF THE ASSISTANT REGIONAL TRANSPORT OFFICER BUDGAM
Subject:- Necessary Correction/change in address in data to the License No.JK-0420170036604 issued in favour of ALTAF AHMAD Parentage GH MOHD MALIK
Whereas an application has been received by one ALTAF AHMAD Parentage GH MOHD MALIK wherein he claimed that the Fathers Name has been wrongly recorded in the records of Driving Licenses as ALTAF AHMAD MALIK Parentage GHULAM MOHAMMAD MALIK Which needs to be changed as ALTAF AHMAD Parentage GH MOHD MALIK.
Now therefore it is notified for the information of the general public that objections if any in this regard shall reach in written in the office of the Assistant Regional Transport office Budgam within a period of 7 days from the date of publication of this notice in the daily newspaper. After expiry of stipulated time no objection will be entertained.
Assistant Regional Transport officer
Budgam Kashmir
mcb

Subject. Grant of registration of the proposed Homestay under the name , M/s Plam Paradise Homestay situated at Raj Bagh Srinagar
PUBLIC NOTICE
Whereas I Mr./ Imran Ahmad Shah S/o Mohammad Amin Shah R/o G.I. Co-operative colony peer bagh Srinagar intends to apply in the Department of tourism for registration of my proposed Homestay under the name and style" Palm Paradise Homestay situated at, Raj Bagh Srinagar under Tourist Trade Act1978/82/2011-12.
Whereas, I will submit state subject/Domicile certificate, Qualification Certificate, Pan card, Experience certificate (minimum 05 years), Character certificate (Police department), Bank statement (minimum balance 1000), site plan, Affidavit, Rent Deed duly attested sub-registrar, printing Material (Letter Head/Visiting), Photograph of the unit (indoor and Outdoor) and Two Passport size photograph to the department of tourism as prescribed checklist prior to registration of my unit as an Excursion Agency/Adventure tour operation.
Now as per J&K Registration of Tourist Trade Act 1978/82/2011-12, before my case is processed for registration by the competent Authority the matter is hereby notified for information of general public/financial institutions/Ban/ Organisation, etc for objection, if any and the same should reach to the deputy director tourism Registration (e-mail ID:- ddtreg123@gmail.com) within a period of 7 days from the publication of this notice in leading local newspaper/newspaper of the valley. No objection beyond a period of 7 days shall be entertained
fko

Subject. Grant of registration of the proposed Homestay under the name , M/s Cresta Place Homestay situated at Rainawari Kralyar Srinagar
PUBLIC NOTICE
Whereas I Mr./ Shahnaz W/o Altaf Ahmad Sofi R/o Naidyar Rainawari Srinagar intends to apply in the Department of tourism for registration of my proposed Homestay under the name and style" Cresta Place Homestay situated at, Rainawari Kralyar Srinagar under Tourist Trade Act1978/82/2011-12.
Whereas, I will submit state subject/Domicile certificate, Qualification Certificate, Pan card, Experience certificate (minimum 05 years), Character certificate (Police department), Bank statement (minimum balance 1000), site plan, Affidavit, Rent Deed duly attested sub-registrar, printing Material (Letter Head/Visiting), Photograph of the unit (indoor and Outdoor) and Two Passport size photograph to the department of tourism as prescribed checklist prior to registration of my unit as an Excursion Agency/Adventure tour operation.
Now as per J&K Registration of Tourist Trade Act 1978/82/2011-12, before my case is processed for registration by the competent Authority the matter is hereby notified for information of general public/financial institutions/Ban/ Organisation, etc for objection, if any and the same should reach to the deputy director tourism Registration (e-mail ID:- ddtreg123@gmail.com) within a period of 7 days from the publication of this notice in leading local newspaper/newspaper of the valley. No objection beyond a period of 7 days shall be entertained
fko

Subject. Grant of registration of the proposed Travel unit under the name , M/S Arsalan Tour and Travels " situated at HMT Shaltang Srinagar
PUBLIC NOTICE
Whereas I Mr Hilal Ahmad Bhat R/o Maloora Srinagar Tour and Travels intends to apply in the Department of tourism for registration of my proposed Travel unit under the name and style" M/ s Arsalan Tour and Travels "situated at Shaltang HMT Srinagar Kashmir under Tourist Trade Act1978/82/2011-12.
Whereas, I will submit state subject/Domicile certificate, Qualification Certificate, Pan card, Experience certificate (minimum 05 years), Character certificate (Police department), Bank statement (minimum balance 1000), site plan, Affidavit, Rent Deed duly attested sub-registrar, printing Material (Letter Head/Visiting), Photograph of the unit (indoor and Outdoor) and Two Passport size photograph to the department of tourism as prescribed checklist prior to registration of my unit as an Excursion Agency/Adventure tour operation.
Now as per J&K Registration of Tourist Trade Act 1978/82/2011-12, before my case is processed for registration by the competent Authority the matter is hereby notified for information of general public/financial institutions/Ban/ Organisation, etc for objection, if any and the same should reach to the deputy director tourism Registration (e-mail ID:- ddtreg123@gmail.com) within a period of 7 days from the publication of this notice in leading local newspaper/newspaper of the valley. No objection beyond a period of 7 days shall be entertained
fko

Subject. Grant of registration of the proposed Homestay under the name , M/s Heavens Villa & Resort Homestay situated at Lal Bazar Srinagar
PUBLIC NOTICE
Whereas I Mr./ Hammad ur Rehman S/o Salim ur Rehman R/o Lal Bazar Srinagar intends to apply in the Department of tourism for registration of my proposed Homestay under the name and style M/S Heavens Villa & Resort Homestay situated at, Lal Bazar Srinagar under Tourist Trade Act1978/82/2011-12.
Whereas, I will submit state subject/Domicile certificate, Qualification Certificate, Pan card, Experience certificate (minimum 05 years), Character certificate (Police department), Bank statement (minimum balance 1000), site plan, Affidavit, Rent Deed duly attested sub-registrar, printing Material (Letter Head/Visiting), Photograph of the unit (indoor and Outdoor) and Two Passport size photograph to the department of tourism as prescribed checklist prior to registration of my unit as an Excursion Agency/Adventure tour operation.
Now as per J&K Registration of Tourist Trade Act 1978/82/2011-12, before my case is processed for registration by the competent Authority the matter is hereby notified for information of general public/financial institutions/Ban/ Organisation, etc for objection, if any and the same should reach to the deputy director tourism Registration (e-mail ID:- ddtreg123@gmail.com) within a period of 7 days from the publication of this notice in leading local newspaper/newspaper of the valley. No objection beyond a period of 7 days shall be entertained
fko

Scholarships This Week
Kashmir Observer in association with Buddy4Study.com presents scholarships available for the meritorious students of Jammu and Kashmir

Scholarship Name 1: South Asia Undergraduate Excellence Award Scholarship 2025
Description: South Asia Undergraduate Excellence Award Scholarship 2025 is an opportunity provided to students holding an admission offer from the University of Nottingham for their undergraduate degree programs. This programme aims to support the aspirations of students excelling academically.
Eligibility: Applicants must be specified as an 'Overseas' student for tuition fee purposes. They must hold an admission offer for any full-time undergraduate degree program for September 2025. They should have a proper working knowledge of the English language.
Prizes & Rewards: 6,000 GBP in the first year towards tuition fees.
Eligibility: This is open to Indian nationals below 45 years on the application closing date. Applicants must hold a PhD/MD/M.Tech or equivalent degree in specified fields. Applicants with outstanding publications and international awards are mandatory requirements.
Prizes & Rewards: A fellowship of 1,35,000 per month and other benefits.
Last Date to Apply: 28-02-2025
Application mode: Online Applications Only
Short Url: www.b4s.in/observer/NUES1
QR Code: https://d2w711p59qkl0r.cloudfront.net/static/images/scho-media/south-asia-undergraduate-excellence-award-scholarship-20251734676436.png
Scholarship Name 2: Ramalingaswami Re-entry Fellowship 2024-25
Description: Ramalingaswami Re-entry Fellowship 2024-25 is offered by the Department of Biotechnology, Ministry of Science & Technology, Government of India, to students with relevant PhD/MD degrees or equivalent.
Prizes & Rewards: 6,000 GBP in the first year towards tuition fees.
Last Date to Apply: 28-02-2025
Application mode: Online Applications Only
Short Url: www.b4s.in/observer/RFIB2
QR Code: https://d2w711p59qkl0r.cloudfront.net/static/images/scho-media/ramalingaswami-re-entry-fellowship-2024-251738912909.png

PUBLIC NOTICE
I have applied for the issuance of DOB certificate in favour of my daughter Rehana Majeed D/o Ab Majeed Mir who was born on 11-02-2024. If anybody has any objection in this regard he/she may file his/her objection in the office of the Naib Tehsildar Palhallan within seven days. After that no objection shall be entertained.
Abdul Majeed Mir fko
F/o Rehan Majeed
R/o Lolipora Pattan

Office of the Naib Tehsildar Pattan..
Sub.. issuance of registration order in respect of delayed birth..
Public Notice...
The registrar birth BDO pattan has submitted a case file pertaining to birth of Basharat Rashid Kumar s/o Abdul Rashid Kumar R/o Zangam Pattan Tehsil Pattan distt baramulla with verified date of birth 28/05/2013 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
Naib Tehsildar Pattan
FKO

Government of Jammu and Kashmir
OFFICE OF THE CHIEF ENGINEER
KASHMIR JAL SHAKTI (PHE) DEPARTMENT SRINAGAR
(Tele. No's, & Fax No. 01942311835, 01942311835 E. Mall. kmrphed@gmail.com)
Subject: Tentative Seniority list of qualified Orderlies of Jal Shakti PHE Department Kashmir as it stood on 01.01.2025.
WHEREAS, the final seniority list of qualified Orderlies as it stood on 01.01.2021 was circulated among all the concerned staff through concerned Superintending Engineers/Executive Engineers vide this office letter No: JSD/Estt/28451-86 dated: 21.01.2025.
WHEREAS, there are many appointments which have been made in this Department after 01.01.2021 and accordingly the tentative seniority list as it stood on 01.01.2025 is hereby issued as per the annexure enclosed so that newly appointed qualified Orderlies can be incorporated in the updated final seniority list. The Superintending Engineers/Executive Engineers concerned will circulate the Seniority list among the concerned for their information.
WHEREAS, any official aggrieved with the position assigned to him/her in the tentative seniority list, may submit representation /objection, if any, to this office through proper channel within a period of (07) seven days from the date of issuance of this letter alongwith documentary proof.
No: JSD/Estt/30917-52
DIPK-12039/24
dated: 15-02-2025
(Dr Brahan Jyoti Sharma)
Chief Engineer Kashmir
JS (PHE) Department Srinagar/ Kashmir

Govt of Jammu & Kashmir
OFFICE OF THE EXECUTIVE ENGINEER
(R&B) MECHANICAL DIVISION SOUTH KASHMIR
E.Mail:- xenbmdsk@gmail.com
ADDENDUM
No:- (R&B)MDSK/ 1498-1502 Dated:-15/02/2025
Subject:- Supply, Installation, Testing and commissioning of Auto Claves and other allied CSSD Equipment for 50 bedded hospital at Pahalgam. Reference:- eNIT No: 20/ R&B/MDSK /2024-25 Dated: 20-01-2025.
All the equipment mentioned in the BOQ / detailed scope of work, shall comply with relevant BIS and ISO standards. Also, the equipment should comply with the Central Drugs standard control organization (CDSCO or CE) certifications.
Sd/-
(Er. Mohd idrees Kathwari)
Executive Engineer (R&B)Mechanical
Division South Kashmir
DIPK-12048/24
dated: 15-02-2025

(Government of Jammu and Kashmir)
OFFICE OF THE EXECUTIVE ENGINEER (R&B) PROJECTS
DIVISION IInd PANTHA CHOWK SRINAGAR.
NO/EE/R&B/PD2nd/310-12 Dated:14/02/2025
Corrigendum/Addendum
Subject: Design, Construction and Comprehensive Annual Maintenance CAM for 05 Years of Extension Block at Lalla Ded Hospital Srinagar for Infertility Gynaecology (Balance work) (on EPC mode) and Extension of time in Bid submission end date and Bid opening date with reply to the Bidder queries during the Pre-Bid meet and amendments to the Bidding Document thereof.
Reference:1. TENDER ID: 2025_PWDJK_270631_1, Dated: 18/01/2025
2. E- BID No: - IN-RnB JnkPIU-1-462384-CW-RFB
Apropos to subject cited supra it is notified in general, to ensure the broader participation in the tendering process of the subject work and as requested by the potential bidders during the Pre-Bid meeting the Bid submission end date and Bid opening dates are hereby extended as under.
S.No. Critical Dates Existing Date & Time Revised Date & time
1. Bid submission End Date & Time 17th February 2025 4:00PM 28th February 2025 4:00PM
2. Bid Opening Date & Time 17th February 2025 4:30PM 28th February 2025 4:30PM
Further the reply to the queries expressed by the potential bidders during the Pre-Bid meet and amendments which were found necessary for inclusion in the bidding document are enclosed in the prescribed formats of world Bank.
Sd/
Executive Engineer
(R&B) Projects Division 2nd
Panthachowk Srinagar.
DIPK-12029/24
dated: 15-02-2025

Government of Jammu & Kashmir
DEPARTMENT OF ANIMAL HUSBANDRY, JAMMU
E-mail: director;ahdj@jk.gov.in Ph.0911-2505552,2505247,2502252(Fax)GolePully, TalabTilloo, Jammu -180002
Sub:- Cancellation of appointment as "Driver" in Animal Husbandry Department, Jammu.
ORDER:- 41 -DAHJ of 2025
DATED:- 13 - 02-2025
Whereas, on the recommendation of Jammu & Kashmir Service selection board conveyed vide communication No:- JKSSB-Scry/4/2024-03(E-7411217) dated:- 30.05.2024, pursuant to Administrative Department's communication No:- ASHF/AHON-GAZ/29/2024 (C.No.222528) dated:- 25.06.2024 and on the basis of the Character & Antecedents report received from the Criminal Investigation Department, J&K, Sh. Abid Hussain Malla S/o Mohammad Hayat Malla R/o H.No: 80, Mukdam Mohalla, Zalpura, Sonawari, Bandipora was appointed as Driver, Division Cadre-Jammu, under OM Category, vide this office Order No:- 365-DAHJ of 2024 dated:- 23.11.2024; and
Whereas, Sh. Abid Hussain Malla was supposed to report to Directorate of Animal Husbandry, Jammu within the stipulated period of twenty one (21) days from the date of issuance of appointment order; and
Whereas, Sh. Abid Hussain Malla failed to report/join in the Directorate of Animal Husbandry, Jammu within the stipulated period of twenty one (21) days; and
Whereas, through a Notice No:- DAHJ/Adm-107/2024-05/9279-82 dated:- 30.12.2024 published in Hind Samachar dated:- 01.01.2025 at Page No:- 05, the appointee was again directed to report to Directorate of Animal Husbandry, Jammu within seven (07) days from the date of issuance of the notice, failing which his appointment order will be cancelled ab-initio; and
Whereas, again appointee has failed to report/join in the Directorate of Animal Husbandry, Jammu within the stipulated period of seven (07) days.
Now, therefore, appointment of Sh. Abid Hussain Malla S/o Mohammad Hayat Malla R/o H.No: 80, Mukdam Mohalla, Zalpura, Sonawari, Bandipora as Driver, Division Cadre-Jammu, under OM Category, in Animal Husbandry Department, Jammu issued vide Order No:- 365-DAHJ of 2024 dated:- 23.11.2024 is hereby cancelled ab-initio.
(Dr Davinder Kumar)
Director
Animal Husbandry Deptt., Jammu
No:- DAHJ/Adm-107/2024-05
DIPK-12023/24 dated: 15-02-2025

SSP Srinagar Calls For Collective Action To Combat Drug Menace



Agencies

SRINAGAR: Senior Superintendent of Police (SSP) Srinagar, Intiyaz Hussain Mir has urged society to come together to fight drug menace.

Speaking to news reports at a sports event in the city's North Zone, the SSP stressed that while the police play an important role in tackling the illegal drug trade, it's essential for everyone in society to actively participate in addressing the root causes of the problem.

"The participation of the public, especially children, in this event shows that everyone is committed to

ensuring peace and our children must have a future free from the dangers of drugs," the SSP said.

The event also highlighted the Jammu and Kashmir Police's efforts to fight the drug epidemic.

He said that the police are working hard to stop the spread of drugs, however, emphasized that ending this crisis requires more than just law enforcement.

"We can only move forward as a society if we raise our children well, especially our daughters, and encourage them to succeed in every field, including sports," the SSP stated.

He also mentioned some recent police initiatives, like providing financial help to a school for the deaf and mute, and giving a laptop to a girl in need, showing that the police are committed to supporting the community beyond just their law enforcement duties. (KINS)

Peoples Panel Plans Varsity On Open Land

KO Web Desk

SRINAGAR: A group of citizens who have gathered under the banner of "Elaqae Coordination Committee Jamia Imambargah Shalimar" have announced the decision to establish "Imam Jaffar Sadiq University" on vacant land between Ishbar and Lashkari Mohalla.

The body claims that the land was originally designated for rehabilitation of Dal dwellers but the plan was later shelved and those re-

located from Mir Behri area of Dal were instead shifted to Rakh-e-Arth Bemina.

Vast tracts of vacant land, according to the statement signed by committee chairman Muhammad Yusuf Wadood, will be utilised for the university and a hospital. The statement has also disclosed the name of a former High Court judge as proposed varsity's Vice Chancellor. Besides, it has named some departments of the proposed university after some distinguished late scholars and leaders.

Police Arrest 5 Persons For Causing Public Disturbance

Observer News Service

SRINAGAR: Srinagar Police arrested five individuals for engaging in a fight at Kadi Kadal, Srinagar.

Police in a statement said, "Police Station Nowhata registered a case under FIR No. 08/2025 U/S 194 BNS after five people were found involved in a physical altercation, causing a disturbance in the public. The arrested

individuals have been identified as Moieed Baba, son of Shabir Ah Baba, a resident of Firdous Colony, Eidgah; Farhan Shah, son of Shahnawaz Ah Shah, a resident of Gojwara; Junaid Shahnawaz, son of Shahnawaz, a resident of Gojwara; Moien Manzoor Kak, son of Manzoor Ah Kak, a resident of Kak Mohalla; and Shahid Mukhtar, son of Mukhtar Ah Bhat, a resident of Shampora.

Shameema Firdous Distributes ₹3 Lakh Among Fire-Affected Families

Observer News Service

SRINAGAR: The Jammu and Kashmir National Conference Women's Wing President and MLA Habba Kadal Shameema Firdous Saturday distributed cheques worth ₹3 lakh among eight fire-affected families of Mughal Mohalla, Chattabal.

This financial aid was provided through the Chief Minister's Relief Fund.

In a show of support and solidarity, Shameema Firdous addressed the victims and assured them of further assistance. She emphasized

the government's unwavering commitment to their welfare.

Following the distribution of aid, Shameema Firdous visited various areas within her constituency. She listened to public grievances and reassured constituents that the Omar Abdullah-led government remains steadfast in fulfilling all promises outlined in the party manifesto. Accompanied by administrative officials from JK Revenue, PDD, and SMC, Shameema Firdous demonstrated her dedication to serving the people of her constituency.



HUNDREDS OF PEOPLE attended the MIRCHI food festival on the second day of its commencement.
KO PHOTO, FAISAL KHAN

CEO SSCL Reviews Implementation Of Intelligent Traffic Management System

Observer News Service

SRINAGAR: In a significant step towards modernizing traffic management in Srinagar, the CEO SSCL, Dr Owais Ahmed convened a meeting at SMC Central Office Karan Nagar to discuss the implementation of the Intelligent Traffic Management System (ITMS). This initiative aims to enhance road safety, reduce congestion, and improve the overall traffic flow in the city.

The meeting was attended by SSP traffic Srinagar, Additional CEO SSCL, Chief Engineer SSCL and other Senior officials from SSCL to review the proposed strategies for integrating advanced technology into Srinagar's traffic management framework.

The ITMS is designed to utilize real-



time data analytics, smart signaling, and automated monitoring systems to optimize traffic conditions and respond swiftly to incidents.

The CEO emphasized the importance of adopting innovative solutions to tackle urban traffic challenges. Implementing the ITMS will not only improve the efficiency of our traffic system but will also contribute to a cleaner and more sustainable environment, he said.



THE ITMS IS DESIGNED TO UTILIZE REAL-TIME DATA ANALYTICS, SMART SIGNALING, and automated monitoring systems to optimize traffic conditions and respond swiftly to incidents.

GDC Srinagar Celebrates Oral & Maxillofacial Surgery Day

Observer News Service

SRINAGAR: Govt Dental College and Hospital, Srinagar celebrated Oral & Maxillofacial Surgery Day. Oral & Maxillofacial Surgery (OMFS) is celebrated internationally. This year the theme of the program is "Early Detection of Oral Cancer & Self Examination" by the patients themselves. The program, organised by the Department of OMFS, was attended by the faculty, staff and students of the GDC.

On the occasion Principal/ Dean Prof (Dr) Ajaz Ahmad Shah, delivered a lecture on oral cancer screening methods and incorporation of AI technology into the early screening.

The faculty of the Department of OMFS Dr Irshad & Dr Altaf H Malik rolled out the campaign for the



day with a pledge to teach common masses about self examination of their oral cavity for any potential changes & early self referral for oral cavity examination to the concerned doctors for further follow-up.

The Department of Oral & Maxillofacial Surgery praised Prof. (Dr) Ajaz Ahand Shah, for his role in bringing

up the department to tertiary care level for treatment of Oral & Maxillofacial defects, disorders, disease and his role in starting the state of art care in this field.

The department awarded Prof. (Dr) Ajaz Ahmad Shah was celebrated 'Maxillofacial surgeon' of the state.

500 Bedded Pediatric Hospital Bemina: A Premier Healthcare Institution

Observer News Service

SRINAGAR: Government Children Hospital Bemina, a 500-bedded hospital, is a premier healthcare institution catering to the population of Kashmir Division, Chenab Valley, Poonch, Rajouri and UT of Ladakh. The hospital provides comprehensive healthcare services to approximately 1200 patients daily in its Out-patient Department (OPD), with around 80-90 admissions in its Inpatient Department (IPD). Additionally, the hospital witnesses a significant footfall of around 6000 people, including patients & attendants.

The hospital has the highest number of critical care beds in the whole UT, and critical care provided in NICU and PICU is of national and international standard.



The hospital has a fellowship programme for doctors and nurses approved in neonatology and pediatric neurology.

Further to ensure high end critical care free of cost, the government enhanced the fund allocation to the hospital and all very costly drugs like IVIG, ALBUMIN

and Surfactant are available free of cost for patients.

It is the only hospital where OPD services are available even on Sunday's. There is a vibrant programme for congenital anomalies and various disabilities under DEIC and NHM.

The Ayushman Bharat sehat

coverage is more than 95 percent for IPD cases.

At present the department of General Pediatrics, Pediatric Surgery, Pediatric Hematology, Pediatric Microbiology, Pediatric Nephrology, Pediatric Ophthalmology and Pediatric Radiodiagnosis & Imaging are functional at 500 Bedded Pediatric Hospital.

The hospital has 134 faculty members/specialists, Medical Officers, Senior Residents/PGs across various specialties, including General Pediatrics, Pediatric Surgery, Pediatric Hematology, Pediatric Microbiology, Pediatric Nephrology, Pediatric Ophthalmology, and Pediatric RadioDiagnosis & Imaging.

The hospital has adequate para medical staff including lab Technician, Nursing officers, Technical staff, sanitation staff, and outsourced security personnel.

The hospital has a faculty strength comprising 06 Professors, 06 Associate Professors, 08 Assistant Professors, 03 Consultants, 23 Medical Officers, 32 Senior Residents, 02 Fellows, and 54 Postgraduates.

Currently only one Associate professor is eligible for promotion to the post of Professor and orders in his favour will be issued very shortly.

The Pediatric Surgery Department at the hospital operates on all days, including emergency surgeries. The department has been performing complex surgeries, including neonatal surgeries, which has been a big relief for patients. The department is equipped with state-of-the-art equipment and a team of experienced surgeons who provide comprehensive care to pediatric patients.

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

AIRPORTS

SHIEKH UL ALAM AIRPORT: 01942303311

RAILWAYS

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

HIGHWAY STATUS

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



HIJRI CALENDAR
17 Shaban
1446

PRAYERS

FAJR	5: 51
ZUHR	12: 45
ASR	4:36
Magrib	6:18
ISHA	7:40

This Day In History

- 1917 - 1st synagogue in 425 years opens in Madrid
- 1918 - Lithuania declares independence from Russia & Germany (National Day).
- 1923 - Allies accept Latvia's occupation of Memel territory.
- 1927 - US restores diplomatic relations with Turkey.
- 1929 - KID-AM in Idaho Falls ID begins radio transmissions.
- 1932 - 1st patent for a tree issued to James Markham for a peach tree
- 1934 - Austrian Civil War ends with the defeat of the Social Democrats and the Republican Schutzbund.
- 1940 - British search plane finds German supply ship Altmark, used to accommodate allied sailors from vessels sunk by the Graf Spee, off Norway.
- 1942 - German submarines attack Aruba oil refinery
- 1943 - World War II: The USSR reconquers Kharkov.
- 1945 - US restores land on Corregidor, complete conquest on March 3
- 1945 - Venezuela declares war on Nazi Germany
- 1948 - Miranda, famous moon of Uranus, photographed for 1st time.
- 1959 - Fidel Castro becomes the 16th Prime Minister of Cuba after overthrowing Fulgencio Batista
- 1961 - China uses its 1st nuclear reactor
- 1961 - US satellite Explorer 9 is launched
- 1965 - Pegasus 1 launched to detect micro-meteors
- 1966 - France performs underground nuclear test at Ecker, Algeria
- 1968 - Beatles George Harrison, John Lennon and their wives fly to India for transcendental meditation study with the Maharishi Mahesh Yogi
- 1978 - 1st Computer Bulletin Board System (Ward & Randy's CBBS, Chicago)
- 1982 - Assembled STS-3 vehicle moves from Vandenberg AFB to launch pad
- 1989 - Egypt, Iraq, Jordan & North Yemen form common market

From KO Archives

Tower Blasts Deepen Power Crisis

Qazigund Fault Forces Extra Shedding

Observer News Service

SRINAGAR: Power supply to the valley seemed to take a turn for the worse this evening with possibility of total darkness looming in event of blasted transmission towers near Banihal town collapsing under the impact of heavy snowfall in the region. Authorities were keeping their fingers crossed in anticipation of the damaged towers withstanding heavy snowfall or fierce winds. They were under stood to be charting desperate contingency measures, including temporary restoration, to tide over the grim situation arising out of the blasts. The picture would be dear by tomorrow.

According to reports, mysterious blasts reportedly triggered by some 'unidentified persons' on Sunday and Monday morning damaged the double circuit 132-KV Udhampur-Srinagar transmission tower in 220-KV Kishenpur Pampore transmission tower in Banihal area. All the four legs of the 132-KV tower are damaged while the 220-tower, though standing, has tumbled towards one side. Their total collapse can cut off the entire power import to the valley, leaving it with a mere 70 megawatts (mw) - 50 mw from uri project and 20 mw from other power stations - barely sufficient for the essential loads only.

When contacted, the power development commissioner, Vinod Sharma, told Kashmir Observer this evening a of engineers led by a superintending engineer visited the spot yesterday and, after collecting some equipment, left Udhampur again today to start restoration of the damaged towers, possibly tomorrow. Strengthening of the 220-KV tower and re-erection of the 132-KV tower would be taken up simultaneously. He said it would require a minimum of three days to effect the repairs.

Meanwhile, Sharma said, extra curtailment was resorted to in the valley this evening following a snag in one of the circuits of 220-KV transmission line between Qazigund and Wanoh. With a big question mark hanging over the 17-hour relief in six days provided to the valley consumers last week, the availability of energy is likely to be badly disrupted. At present, the power import has come down to 230 mw which includes 50 mw from Uri project. The availability had gone up to 350 mw last week, mainly due to fall in demand, facilitating the 17-hour relief.

Sharma said one of the double circuit 132-KV Udhampur-Srinagar transmission line had been in a state of disrepair for the past two years. This leaves the department with only one circuit of this line besides the 220-KV Kishenpur-Pampore transmission line to import power to the valley. However, Sharma insisted the valley was getting "more than 55 per cent" of the available power against Jammu's 45 per cent. He attributed the longer spells of darkness in Kashmir to tighter consumption compared to Jammu region's load.

It may be recalled two transmission towers of both 132-KV and 220-KV lines at Qazigund were blasted in similar circumstances on the night between January 13 and 14 last year followed by blasting of 400-KV tower at Kutpora near Wagoora in Budgam district a day later. The power supply to the valley was disrupted for more than a fortnight till the temporary restoration equipment was airlifted from Delhi for erect the damaged towers. Curiously, the blasts have been taking place only in winter.

(Kashmir Observer, 16 February, 2001)

CBSE 10th, 12th Board Exams 2025 Begin Today

Over 42 Lakh Students To Appear

Agencies

New Delhi: The Central Board of Secondary Education (CBSE) exams for Class 10 and Class 12 will begin on Saturday.

Around 42 lakh students will be appearing for the 2024-25 Board exams. As per data shared by the Board, the Class 10 and Class 12 exams will be held in as many as 7,842 exam centres across the country and 26 countries abroad.

The Class 10 exams will run until March 10, 2025, while the Class 12 exams will follow a similar schedule. Both exams will be held in a single shift, from 10:30 am to 1:30 pm.

According to the CBSE 2025 date sheet, the Class 10 Board exams will begin with English (Communicative) and English (Language and Literature) and the Class 12 exams will be held for the entrepreneurship paper on the first day.

For the first time, CBSE organised a live webcast to brief key exam functionaries such as centre superintendents, deputy superintendents, assistant superintendents, city coordinators, and observers on the examination guidelines.

The webcast will also cover evaluation processes and the responsibilities of exam officials.

It was available on CBSE's official YouTube channel,

“For the first time, CBSE organised a live webcast to brief key exam functionaries such as centre superintendents, deputy superintendents, assistant superintendents, city coordinators, and observers on the examination guidelines.”

from 2:30 pm Friday. The session lasted for two hours.

Students appearing for the exams must carry their admit cards and school ID cards to the exam centres. The CBSE 2025 admit cards contain vital details, including exam timings, subjects, and the exam centre information.

These measures aim to ensure smooth conduct and security for the large number of students participating in this year's exams.

With preparations in place, both students and authorities are geared up for the successful conduct of the CBSE 2025 Board exams, which are expected to be a significant event for the academic community.

F-35 Modi Wants to Buy from US Costs Rs 28 Lakh/Hr: Cong



Press Trust Of India

New Delhi: Congress general secretary Randeep Surjewala on Saturday raised several questions on whether the country required expensive fighter jets like F35 aircraft from the US and if security experts and armed forces were consulted in the national interest.

During Prime Minister Narendra Modi's recent visit, India and the US unveiled an ambitious plan to sign a new 10-year defence partnership and pursue co-production of key weapons and platforms with President Donald Trump announcing that Washington would increase sales of military hardware to New Delhi by millions of dollars including possible supply of F-35 stealth fighter jets.

In multiple posts on X, Surjewala claimed there are many flaws in the F-35 aircraft and many accidents have happened, with some calling them "junk" and others "useless".

"There is a lot of discussion about Prime Minister Modi buying F-35 fighter aircraft from America, but did the Modi government consider these aspects in the interest of the country," he asked. The cost of flying an F 35

fighter aircraft is USD 35,000 per hour, i.e. Rs 28,00,000 per hour, he said, adding F 35 is the most expensive fighter aircraft in the world and the cost of one aircraft is approximately USD 110 million, or Rs 968 crore.

"Does the Modi government think that the cost of Rs 28 lakh per hour is right for India and was the opinion of the Indian Air Force and defence experts taken in this regard," Surjewala asked.

"Prime Minister Modi is buying F-35 fighter aircraft from America, but did the Modi government consider these aspects in national interest before taking a unilateral decision to buy F-35 aircraft at the behest of President Trump. Does the Indian Air Force want to buy F-35 fighter aircraft in accordance with the country's defense interests? Was the Air Force's opinion taken," the Congress leader asked in another post in Hindi.

He also asked why the committee of Indian Air Force pilots and defence experts not investigate and recommend the purchase of F 35 fighter aircraft, or did the 'Defense Acquisition Council' that decides on defense purchase deals make any such recommendation.



Munich Security Conference Jaishankar Slams West's 'Double Standards' On Democracy

Press Trust Of India

New Delhi: External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar took a dig at the Western countries for treating democracy as a "Western characteristic," accusing them of not practising abroad what they valued at home.

Jaishankar made these remarks on Friday at a panel discussion titled "Live to Vote Another Day: Fortifying Democratic Resilience" at the Munich Security Conference.

He also said that "if you do want democracy eventually to prevail, it's important the West also embraces successful models (democracy) outside the West." "There was a time — I have to say this in all honesty — when the West treated democracy as a Western characteristic and was busy encouraging non-democratic forces in the Global South. It still does. Everything you value at home, you don't practice abroad."

"So, I do think the rest of the Global South will view the successes, shortcomings and the responses of other countries," he said. He also said India, for "all the challenges that we have had, even at a low income, we have stayed true to the democratic model, which is almost if you look at our part of the world. We are pretty much the only country that has done that." "So I think it's something the West should look at, because if you do want democracy eventually to prevail, it's important the West also embraces successful models outside the West," he said at the conference.

"Started the #MSC2025 with a panel on 'Live to Vote Another Day: Fortifying Democratic Resilience'. Joined PM @jonasgahrstore, @ElissaSlotkin and @trzaskowski."

Highlighted India as a democracy that delivers. Differed with the prevailing political pessimism. Spoke my mind on foreign interference," he posted on X.

Apart from Jaishankar, the panel comprised Norway's Prime Minister Jonas Gahr Store, US Senator Elissa Slotkin and War-

say Mayor Rafal Trzaskowski.

Jaishankar also said that India gives nutrition support to 800 million people thus countering US Senator Elissa Slotkin's remark that democracy "doesn't put food on the table".

"Senator, you said that democracy doesn't put food on your table. Actually, in my part of the world, it (democracy) does. Today, since we are a democratic society, we give nutrition support, and food to 800 million people. That is a matter of how healthy they are and how full their stomachs are. So, the point I want to make is that different parts of the world are going through different conversations. Please do not assume that this is a kind of universal phenomenon, it is not," he said.

"There are parts where it is working well. Maybe there are parts where it's not and the parts which are not. I think people need to have honest conversations about why it's not," the External Affairs Minister said.

3 Israeli Hostages Freed In Gaza, Israel Releases 369 Palestinians In Exchange

Agencies

Jerusalem: Hamas released Israeli hostages Iair Horn, Sagui Dekel Chen and Sasha (Alexander) Troufanov in Gaza on Saturday and Israel freed some 369 Palestinian prisoners and detainees in exchange, after mediators helped avert a collapse of the fragile ceasefire.

The three Israelis were led onto a stage with Palestinian Hamas militants armed with automatic rifles standing on each side of them at the site in Khan Younis, live footage showed, before they were taken back into Israel by Israeli forces.

Shortly afterwards, buses carrying freed Palestinian prisoners and detainees departed Israel's Ofer jail in the Israeli-occupied West Bank. The first bus arrived in Ramallah to a cheering crowd, some waving Palestinian flags. Freed Palestinian prisoners

gesture from a bus after being released by Israel as part of a hostages-prisoners swap and a ceasefire deal in Gaza between Hamas and Israel, in Khan Younis, in the southern Gaza Strip, February 15, 2025. (Reuters)

"We didn't expect to be freed, but God is great, God set us free," said Musa Nawarwa, 70, from the West Bank town of Bethlehem, who was serving two life terms for killings of Israeli soldiers in the West Bank.

Buses carrying some of the hundreds of Palestinian freed prisoners and detainees, some flashing victory signs as they hung from the windows, arrived later at the European Hospital in Khan Younis in the southern Gaza Strip.

A few were returning to an enclave they have not seen for years, before it was blasted into rubble by Israeli airstrikes and shelling in 15 months of war. But

most were rounded up after the Hamas-led October 7, 2023 attack on Israel.

The ceasefire's second phase would usher in negotiations to return the remaining living hostages among the 251 seized that day, and complete an Israeli military withdrawal before a final end to the war and the reconstruction of Gaza.

Argentina-born Iair Horn, 46, was taken captive together with his younger brother Eitan. Horn appeared to have lost considerable weight in captivity.

The swap of the three Israelis for the 369 Palestinians allayed growing alarm that the ceasefire agreement could unravel before the end of the 42-day first stage of the truce pact in effect since January 19.

In what has become known as Hostage Square in Tel Aviv, people broke into cheers and tears after hearing the Red Cross was on its way to deliver the three to Israeli military forces.

OpenAI board Rejects Musk's \$97.4 Billion Offer

Agencies

Washington: OpenAI on Friday rejected a \$97.4 billion bid from a consortium led by billionaire Elon Musk for the ChatGPT maker, saying the startup is not for sale and that any future bid would be disingenuous.

The unsolicited approach is Musk's latest attempt to block the startup he co-founded with OpenAI CEO Sam Altman — but later left — from becoming a for-profit firm, as it looks to secure more capital and stay ahead in the artificial intelligence race.

"OpenAI is not for sale, and the board has unanimously rejected Mr. Musk's latest attempt to disrupt his competition.

Any potential reorganization of OpenAI will strengthen our nonprofit and its mission to ensure AGI benefits all of humanity," it said on X, quoting OpenAI Chairman Bret Taylor on behalf of the board.

Musk's lawyer Marc Toberoff, in a statement, responded that OpenAI is putting control of the for-profit enterprise up for sale, and said the move will "enrich its certain board members rather than the charity."

OpenAI in late December had outlined plans to revamp its structure, saying it would create a public benefit corporation to make it easier to "raise more capital than we'd imagined," and remove the restrictions imposed on the start-up by its current nonprofit parent.

Altman on Monday had rebuffed the consortium's offer with a "no thank you" posted on X, prompting Musk to retort: "swindler."

On Tuesday, Altman told news website Axios that OpenAI



was not for sale.

Musk's lawyers, in a court filing on Wednesday, said the consortium, which includes Musk's own AI startup xAI, would withdraw its bid for OpenAI's non-profit arm if it drops plans to become a for-profit entity.

"Two days ago, you filed a pleading in court adding new material conditions to the proposal. As a result of that filing, it is now apparent that your clients' much publicized 'bid' is in fact not a bid at all," the OpenAI board said, according to a letter signed by William Savitt, a lawyer representing the company, and sent to Toberoff on Friday.

Other investors in the consortium include Valor Equity Partners, Baron Capital and Hollywood power broker Ari Emanuel. Altman and Musk have been at loggerheads for years.

After Musk's departure in 2019, OpenAI created a for-profit arm that has drawn billions of dollars in funding, sparking allegations from Musk that the startup breached its original mission by putting profit ahead of the larger public good.

Musk sued Altman, OpenAI and its biggest backer, Microsoft, in August last year for alleged breach of contract.

In November, Musk asked a federal court for a preliminary injunction to block OpenAI from moving to a for-profit structure.

Envoy Confirms Iran's Indirect Contact With Syria's De Facto Rulers

Agencies

Tehran: The Iranian foreign minister's special envoy for Syria has confirmed that Tehran is indirectly in contact with the ruling Hay'at Tahrir al-Sham (HTS) administration in Syria, more than two months after the militant group captured Damascus.

Mohammad Reza Raouf Sheibani's announcement on Saturday came after remarks by Syria's de facto foreign minister Asaad Hassan al-Shibani about the exchange of "positive messages" between the two Muslim states.

The seasoned Iranian diplomat highlighted that Tehran has a forward-looking approach vis-à-vis developments in Syria and seeks restoration of ties with Damascus.

Iran is closely and patiently monitoring the status quo in Syria and will take its appropriate decisions in due time, Sheibani said.

He underlined the need for all Syrian political parties to have a role in shaping Syria's future.

"The Islamic Republic of Iran's positions concerning the developments in Damascus are clear. Given Syria's special position in the West Asia region, we believe that its future



and fate must be decided by its own people with the involvement of all political currents," Sheibani stated.

He emphasized that Syria's stability and peace are of paramount importance to Iran, and the Islamic Republic is opposed to any foreign intervention in the internal affairs of the Arab country.

Sheibani also noted that he has discussed Syria with the Russian president's special envoy for Syria Alexander Lavrentiev and Russian Deputy Foreign Minister Sergey Vershinin during a recent visit to Moscow.

Tehran and Moscow share views about a series of issues regarding Syria, he stated.

Syria's de facto foreign minister said on Wednesday that his country had received positive messages but wanted further reassurance from Russia and Iran.

NEWS MAKERS

Kejriwal's 'Sheesh Mahal' To Be Probed Over Renovation Of 'Lavish' Bungalow: BJP

The Central Vigilance Commission has directed the Public Works Department of Delhi government to conduct a detailed probe into the alleged merger of properties to expand the 6, Flagstaff Road bungalow and the expenditures incurred on its interiors, BJP leader Vijender Gupta said on Saturday.

The bungalow labelled as "Sheesh Mahal" by the BJP for alleged corruption was occupied by Arvind Kejriwal as the chief minister of Delhi from 2015 till the first week of October last year.

No immediate reaction was available from the Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) or its convener Kejriwal on the matter.

Gupta said the Central Vigilance Commission (CVC) took cognisance of his two earlier complaints and sought factual reports from the Public Works Department (PWD) based on which it has now directed to conduct a detailed probe.



The bungalow labelled as 'Sheesh Mahal' by the BJP for alleged corruption was occupied by Arvind Kejriwal as the Delhi CM from 2015 till the first week of October 2024. PTI file

Groom Collapses on Horse, Dies During Wedding

Sheopur: A 26-year-old man collapsed and died on a horse during his wedding procession in Madhya Pradesh's Sheopur district, an official said on Saturday.

The incident occurred on Friday night and a video capturing the man's last moments surfaced on social media on Saturday.

The groom was identified as Pradeep Jat, the former district president of the National Student Union of India (NSUI), the student wing of the Congress.

District hospital's civil surgeon Dr RB Goyal said family members rushed Jat to the medical facility but he was already dead by the time. The groom, a resident of Soonwada village, possibly died due to a heart attack, he said.

The video shows Jat, dressed in traditional attire, going towards the stage on a horse. He slowly leans forward and becomes unresponsive. A relative tries to dismount him from the horse but Jat collapses before that.

In his second complaint to the CVC, the newly-elected BJP MLA from Rohini alleged that Kejriwal flouted building regulations to construct a lavish mansion covering 40,000 square yards (8 acres) of land.

Government properties, including plot Nos. 45 and 47 on Rajpur Road (previously housing senior officials and judges in Type-V flats) and two bungalows (8-A and 8-B, Flag Staff Road) were demolished and merged into the new residence, violating ground coverage and floor area ratio norms and lacking proper layout plan approvals, Gupta alleged.

In his second complaint, Gupta alleged "extravagant spending" on the renovation and interior decoration of the bungalow on 6, Flag Staff Road. He also claimed "massive financial irregularities" and expenditure of crores of rupees from the taxpayers' money on luxurious amenities in the bungalow.

Wrong TOOTH Removed?

Srinagar Dental College Doctor Suspended Amid Inquiry

Dabirah Hassan

SRINAGAR: A controversy has erupted at the Government Dental College (GDC) in Srinagar after a patient alleged that a doctor extracted the wrong tooth during a procedure. The incident, which has sparked public outrage, led to the suspension of the involved doctor and the formation of a three-member inquiry committee to investigate the matter.

The patient, Nadeem Ahmad,

surprise at the later accusation of extracting the wrong tooth, especially since the patient had indicated the upper tooth and didn't object during the anaesthesia process. Dr. Meeran also highlighted that the consultant had confirmed the extractions were correct, but the patient later changed his statement. He performs numerous extractions daily and questions why only this case is being scrutinized. He maintains implied consent was obtained.

"A three-member committee, led by a senior professor and including the Medical Superintendent and Administrative Officer, has been formed to investigate the matter. The committee has been directed to submit its findings within three days."

claimed that the doctor mistakenly removed his healthy upper right tooth instead of the problematic lower right tooth. Following the procedure, Ahmad took to social media to share his ordeal, which quickly garnered widespread attention and criticism from the public.

In response to the allegations, the Principal of GDC Srinagar, Professor Aijaz Shah, confirmed that the doctor involved in the incident has been suspended pending the outcome of the inquiry. "A three-member committee, led by a senior professor and including the Medical Superintendent and Administrative Officer, has been formed to investigate the matter. The committee has been directed to submit its findings within three days," Dr. Shah stated.

He further emphasized that GDC Srinagar is committed to providing the best possible care to its patients and assured that there would be no compromise on patient care under any circumstances.

Dr. Meeran, the suspended doctor, speaking to Kashmir Observer, explained that the patient presented with his assistant professor, and the case had been discussed with the consultant, Dr. Altaf, who had devised a treatment plan. Dr. Meeran said he was asked to extract the upper right tooth.

He described the procedure, noting that he asked the patient which tooth was bothering him, and the patient pointed to the upper tooth. Dr. Meeran administered anaesthesia, with the patient's attendant and his own assistant present. He claims the patient was satisfied after the extraction and left without complaint. He expressed

"During anaesthesia, the patient's attendant was present, as was my anaesthesia assistant. If the patient had any concerns, he could have stopped me at that stage. The extraction went smoothly, and the patient did not express any discomfort at the time. Later in the day, I received a call claiming that the wrong tooth had been extracted. However, my consultant, Dr. Altaf, reviewed the case and confirmed that the extraction was correct," the suspended doctor said.

Dr. Altaf Hussain Malik, Assistant Professor at the Dental College, corroborated Dr. Meeran's account. He explained that Nadeem Basheer presented with pain and was examined by Dr. Meeran. Dr. Altaf stated that the upper third molar was malposed, while the lower right molar was carious but erupted. He explained that while the upper molar was sound, it was decided to extract it due to its position, a procedure known as therapeutic extraction. He emphasized that such extractions are sometimes necessary to prevent future problems, like infections or discomfort.

He defended Dr. Meeran's qualifications and experience, stating he has full faith in him and that the doctor acted according to accepted practice.

"Dr. Meeran documented the procedure and even gave the extracted tooth to the patient. He cautioned against rushing to judgment without considering the doctor's qualifications and the rationale behind the extraction," he said. He reiterated that not all sound teeth are extracted, but sometimes malposed or impacted teeth are removed for the patient's benefit.

Achabal Garden Dries Up Amid Climate Change



Agencies

ANANTNAG: For the first time, the historic Mughal garden at Achabal, once a lush marvel known for its cascading waterfalls and natural spring, is facing an unprecedented crisis as its water sources dry up due to climate change. The iconic garden, built by Empress Nur Jahan in the 17th century, is struggling with severe water scarcity, leaving its fountains and streams barren.

Shabir Ahmad, a local resident and social activist, said, "We have never witnessed such a change in the Mughal Garden at Achabal drying up. This is the first time we are seeing such a disheartening scene." He said the spring has completely dried up, leading to a shortage of drinking water. "Our sins—how we are polluting the water bodies—along with a decline in rain and snowfall due to climate change, are the main reasons for this worsening situation," he said.

When asked about the future situation, he said, "When water is not available, how can we irrigate our land? Both horticulture and agriculture depend on water, and

this situation will have a severe impact. Shortages have already started in nearby areas, and people are suffering as they now rely on water tankers. It is time to unite and work together to preserve our water bodies from pollution."

"Achabal Garden is our heritage, a part of our identity. Seeing it dry up is heartbreaking," said Mushtaq Ahmad, a local resident. "If immediate action is not taken, we fear it may never be the same again."

Experts attribute the crisis to rising temperatures, deficient rainfall, and depleting groundwater levels. "Climate change has altered precipitation patterns in Kashmir, affecting the natural springs that have sustained Achabal Garden for centuries," Dr. Masoom A. Beig, a geographer, told KNO. "The reduction in snowfall and prolonged dry spells have further worsened the situation."

Gowhar Ahmad, AEE Jal Shakti Achabal, said that the Achabal spring catered to over a dozen villages, with as many as 15 water supply schemes depending on the source. However, after the spring dried up, the villages are now being served by tanker services.—(KNO)

Need A Fresh Look At Teaching-Mentoring System For 'Viksit Bharat': LG

Press Trust Of India

KATRA: Jammu and Kashmir Lt Governor Manoj Sinha said Saturday a fresh look is needed at the teaching-mentoring system to seize future opportunities in science and technology for 'Viksit Bharat'.

He said skills and knowledge must contribute towards improving the lives of people.

"To seize future opportunities in science and technology, we need to take a fresh look at our teaching-mentoring system because it will have a direct bearing on the journey of Viksit Bharat," Sinha said, addressing the 10th convocation ceremony of Shri Mata Vaishno Devi University (SMVDU) here.

He asked the teaching community to focus on harnessing the capacity of students and transform the educational institutions into the most potent instrument to build a prosperous India.

"It is the responsibility of our teachers and educational institutions to initiate innovative educational programmes and nurture curiosity, promote critical thinking, creativity and innovation. Teachers should share their own life experience to inspire students," he said.

He expressed gratitude to Vice President Jagdeep Dhankhar for being among the graduating SMVDU students and said "today's moment will remain etched in students' memories for a lifetime".

He called upon the youths to carry forward the country's development and make it the world largest economy.

"The strength of our nation will be determined by the values, innovation and knowledge and I strongly believe the young men and



women graduating in this 'Amrit Kaal' will shape the destiny of our nation. Those stepping out today into the real world have a unique opportunity of nation building," the Lt Governor said.

He said the advances in humanities, arts, science and technology have opened new areas of opportunities and the knowledge and learning of the graduating students will help them achieve success.

"Today our youth are equipped with special knowledge and skills that can be properly utilised to transform rural areas. This mission calls for dedication and determination. Above all, our youth needs to be rooted in ancient culture and must have faith in their abilities and wisdom of our culture," he said.

Extending his best wishes for a productive and a bright future to all the graduating students, Chief Minister Omar Abdullah in his address asked the students to seek success but never compromise on values.

"Give back to society, because true success is in service," he said, adding success is not just about achieving milestones, it is also about how

you overcome challenges, stay true to own principles and uplift others along the way.

"Mata Vaishno Devi's journey to the Thakuta Hills symbolises patience, courage and righteousness, values that each of you should carry as you step into the next phase of your life."

"You are entering a world that is rapidly evolving, a world of artificial intelligence, climate change, start-ups and global competition. Your degree is not just a piece of paper, it is your key to making a difference. India and the world need ethical, compassionate and responsible leaders," he said.

Abdullah said the journey ahead will not always be easy. "There will be setbacks, failures and moments of self-doubt. But remember, failure is not the opposite of success, it is a part of success."

"Every great leader, scientist or entrepreneur you admire has faced rejection before achieving success. Stay curious, stay humble and embrace change with an open mind. As you step out of these gates, remember, dream big, but work even harder. Stay grounded, but aim for the stars," he said.

"IT IS THE RESPONSIBILITY OF OUR TEACHERS AND EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTIONS TO INITIATE innovative educational programmes and nurture curiosity, promote critical thinking, creativity and innovation. Teachers should share their own life experience to inspire students"

Deputy CM Reviews Development Projects In Anantnag

Calls For Ensuring The Benefits Of Welfare Schemes Percolate To Grassroots Level



Observer News Service

ANANTNAG: Deputy Chief Minister, Surinder Choudhary on Saturday directed the officers to ensure that the benefits of welfare and development schemes percolates to the grassroots level.

"The district is having a diverse topography and officers should ensure that the benefits of welfare initiatives and infrastructural development percolates to the grassroots level and the last habitable hamlets", emphasised the Deputy Chief Minister.

The Deputy Chief Minister was addressing the officers during a review meeting to assess the progress on developmental activities in Anantnag district.

The meeting was attended by MLA Dooru, Ghulam Ahmad Mir; MLA Kokernag, Zafar Ali Khatana; MLA Anantnag West, Abdul Majeed Bhat; MLA Bijbehara, Bashir Ahmad Shah Veeri; MLA Shangus-Anantnag East, Riyaz Ahmad Khan and MLA Pahalgam, Altaf Ahmad Wani besides District Development Commissioner, Syed Fakhrudin Hamid; Heads of Departments (HODs) and sectoral officers.

During the review of progress on various works, the Deputy Chief Minister was informed that the district administration has focussed on

transforming the infrastructure, grievance redressal, heritage protection and priority based planning. He was apprised that as per standard practice, the district administration undertook quality analysis of grievances received in the district on JK Samadhan-Raabta to ensure that people's grievances are addressed in a timely and quality manner.

While reviewing the status of proposed projects of public importance such as Mini Secre-

Works Department (PWD), Pradhan Mantri Gram Sadak Yojana (PMGSY), Jal Shakti, KPDCL and others.

The Deputy Chief Minister emphasised the importance of maintaining high quality standards and adhering to project deadlines. He directed the officials to prioritise the pending projects and ensure early completion in all sectors. He instructed the officers to adhere to technical specifications and safety standards as well.

The Deputy Chief Minister, while assessing the social sectors such as health, education, social welfare, ICDS, POSHAN, emphasised that deliverables under these developmental initiatives needed to be made accessible to the beneficiaries to ensure effective implementation. In this regard, he issued specific directions with regard to functioning of hospitals, health care centres, Jan Aushadhi stores, Samagra Shiksha, PM SHRI, National Social Assistance Programme and POSHAN Abhiyan, among others.

The Deputy Chief Minister called for holding regular meetings with the elected representatives for effective monitoring and evaluation of all ongoing works to ensure transparency and accountability.

Earlier, the Deputy Commissioner presented a detailed overview of the developmental scenario of the District.

ISLAMIC GLOBAL SCHOOL STUDENTS GET RELIEF

Govt To Allow 22 Students To Appear In exams: Edu Minister

Agencies

SRINAGAR: Jammu and Kashmir Education Minister Sakina Masood Itoo on Saturday assured the class X students of Islamic Global School Srinagar that their academic year won't be wasted.

Itoo said that the academic year of the students is precious and the government will ensure that 22 students of the Islamic Global School appear in the Board examinations of class Xth.

"I am holding an important meeting tomorrow regarding the denial of registration to the students of the school. I ensure that students don't suffer due to the mistake of the school management," Itoo said.

She further said that the government will take strict action against the private schools for putting the career of the students on stake.

In the meantime, the Srinagar Court has asked the Jammu and Kashmir Board of School Education (JKBOSE) Chairman and its joint secretary (General) to permit the students of the Islamic Global School to appear in the annual regular examination of

Xth.

Meanwhile, President of Private School Association of Jammu and Kashmir (PSAJK) G N Var said, "JKBOSE is targeting Islamic Global School particularly. There are many other schools that are also facing the same situation."

Peoples Conference chairman Sajad Lone expressed solidarity with the students and wrote on X: "What arrogance? Why can't someone from government facilitate the implementation of a court order? Allowing kids to sit in class X exams. Or are they being punished for having the audacity to approach the court and get an order. That is a v common disease when in power." (SIC)

Director of School Education Kashmir G N Itoo said "The issue has been resolved by intervention of the Education Minister. The decision has been taken in the interest to safeguard the academic year of the students."

However it has been decided that strict action will be taken against the private school for violating the norms, he added—(KNO)

NEP-2020 Opens More Avenues For Innovation In Universities: Sakina Itoo

Agencies

SRINAGAR: Education Minister, Sakina Itoo on Saturday said that the implementation of New Education Policy (NEP-2020) has opened more avenues for innovation in the universities in Jammu and Kashmir.

Addressing the gathering at Shri Mata Vaishno Devi University, Itoo said that "Today, we did not come only to celebrate the convocation of the university but also the remarkable development of the institute which has itself established as a beacon of excellence in India."

She said that under the leadership of former Chief Minister Dr Farooq Abdullah, SMDU has

grown naturally since its inauguration with a motive to revive the higher education sectors that have been severely affected due to turmoil in the past.

"The establishment of this university and others like IUST, BGSU have ensured the higher education opportunities for the youth of Jammu and Kashmir and in addition a culture of innovation and research among the qualified youth," she said.

She also commended the university for securing 31st position in the architecture in 2024 NIRF ranking. The education minister further said that the implementation of NEP-2020 has opened more avenues for innovation in the universities—(KNO)

Ayushman Bharat Scheme

Pvt Hospitals Association Urges Govt To Take Them On Board

SRINAGAR: Private Hospitals Association on Saturday demanded that the government must take them on board before taking any decision regarding Ayushman Bharat Scheme, a health insurance programme that provides free or low-cost care to eligible families.

Members of the private hospital association said that the reservation of four surgical procedures for public hospitals, a 10% reduction in UT-specific incentives, and the implementation of HBP 2.2 instead of HBP 2022 are not in their interests.

"These measures are anti-private sector and will push many hospitals to the verge of bankruptcy, given that we have already been suffering for the past ten months," they said.

They said that the government owes them over Rs 100 crore and despite that they have always cooperated and are ready to cooperate in future also.

They said that the pre-bid offer of the government to the insurance company must be delayed and the government must take the private hospitals association on board as they are the important stakeholders in the scheme. "The government's plan to exclude key surgeries such as gall bladder, hemorrhoids, appendectomies and fissure from the scheme and restrict them to government hospitals is a concern as these surgeries constitute around

50-60% of total surgical cases."

They added that excluding these procedures would not only defeat the purpose of providing free healthcare but also increase patient suffering, as government hospitals already have long waiting lists.

They warned that financially stable patients may opt for private hospitals and pay for their treatment, while economically weaker patients would be forced to wait for months for their turn at public hospitals and they may have to sell their assets to avail treatment.

They cautioned that staff layoffs would become inevitable as private hospitals are likely to experience a 50-60% drop in surgical procedures, worsening the unemployment crisis in the region.

The association urged the authorities to implement the reforms to ensure the sustainability of the SEHAT scheme. "These reforms include implementation of HBP 2022 (approved by the National Health Authority in 2022), special rate revision for dialysis patients to reflect rising operational costs, no reservation of surgical procedures for government hospitals so that patients retain the right to choose between public and private healthcare under PMJAY, adherence to National Health Authority guidelines to ensure fair reimbursement practices," they said.—(KNO)

Darul Uloom Gulshan Raza Hosts Dastaar Bandi Ceremony

Observer News Service

SRINAGAR: A grand Dastaar Bandi (turban tying) ceremony was held at the Madrasa Darul Uloom Gulshan Raza, located in Pathan Toli Charuye Par Noor Sarai, Nalanda District, Bihar. The event was graced by a distinguished guest Mohammad Sabir Niyaz Khan, who is the General Secretary of the Bazaar Committee, Musalapur Yard.

During the event, Khan emphasized the importance of educating children in both world-

ly and religious knowledge. He encouraged the parents to ensure that their children receive a balanced education, focusing not only on secular subjects but also on religious teachings that would help them grow up to be responsible individuals in society.

The ceremony witnessed the participation of numerous attendees who were inspired by Khan's speech, which highlighted the significance of imparting moral and spiritual education alongside academic learning.

Kashmir's Faith and Media Ethics Crisis

The Waripora Kunzar Incident Exposed the Deep-Rooted Fault Lines of Kashmiri Society

Ummar Jamal

The recent incident in Waripora Kunzar Tangmarg, Baramulla, where a psychologically unwell man attempted to construct a replica of the Kaaba and invited people to perform Umrah there, sparked widespread outrage across Kashmir. In addition to making false religious claims, he also likened himself to the revered Kashmiri saint Sheikh-ul-Alam (RA). The public backlash prompted authorities to demolish the structure and arrest the individual.

This episode raises several critical concerns. It highlights the issue of religious gullibility, the media's role in sensationalizing sensitive matters for social media traction, and the shifting perception of Hajj and Umrah—from deeply spiritual acts to symbols of affluence and status. These aspects warrant thoughtful reflection and discourse.

Religious Gullibility

Kashmir has a rich history of spiritual reverence, with countless people devoted to saints and Sufis who played a major role in shaping the region's religious consciousness. However, this deep-rooted faith sometimes borders on gullibility, allowing fraudulent individuals to exploit religious sentiments. The Waripora Kunzar incident is a prime example of how quickly some people can start following a mentally distressed individual without questioning his legitimacy.

In recent years, self-anointed "peers" have proliferated across Kashmir, claiming esoteric knowledge and divine ordination, amassing significant wealth, influence, and followership by preying on religious sentiments. The unsettling ease with which many Kashmiris deify such individuals—blindly accepting them as Wali-A-Khuda (friends of God)—reflects a disconcerting trend.

Even in this instance, despite the man's overt mental disorders and the absurdity of his claim to establish an alternative Umrah, a faction of people still entertained his narrative. While the broader community denounced and repudiated his actions, the very occurrence of such an episode signals a systemic issue. Islam enjoins rationality and vigilance in recognizing religious authority, yet many continue to fall victim to pseudo-spiritual figures who exploit faith for personal gain.

The Waripora Kunzar incident underscores the need for critical thinking in matters of faith. Blind reverence without discernment allows fraudulent individuals to manipulate religious sentiments for personal gain. The lesson here is to question, verify, and not follow blindly. Faith should be rooted in knowledge, not superstition. People must educate themselves to distinguish genuine spirituality from deceit, ensuring that devotion does not become a tool for manipulation in the hands of opportunists.



A man in north Kashmir built a replica of the Kaaba, but was arrested and the structure swiftly removed by authorities

The fundamental question remains: if the man was of unsound mind, why were his claims afforded a public platform? The Waripora Kunzar case serves as a stark indictment of social media-driven journalism, which often prioritizes sensationalism over ethical reporting

Yellow Journalism

Another alarming aspect of this incident is the role of journalism. The increasing trend of sensationalizing sensitive events for social media engagement is deeply concerning. Instead of immediately reporting the issue to religious scholars or police, many journalists and social media pages took to filming and uploading videos. They prioritize likes, shares, and views over ethical responsibility. They turned the situation into an entertainment spectacle. The footage of an unsound man making absurd claims became viral content, drawing reactions ranging from mockery to outrage.

Just yesterday, on my way from the university to the hostel, I saw several schoolchildren mock-

ing the man in question, with many imitating his tone of recitation. This troubling scene highlighted the unintended consequences of media sensationalism. Had journalists acted responsibly, the negative impact of such incidents on children and society at large could have been mitigated. These kids, unaware of the gravity of their actions, were not just mocking a man but unknowingly disrespecting the Quran.

The press and digital media have an obligation to inform and educate rather than exploit such incidents for engagement. This event should have been handled with sensitivity, ensuring that a person with mental health issues was not made a subject of ridicule or hysteria. True journalistic responsibility would have entailed immediately alerting police and refraining from amplifying

baseless religious assertions.

The fundamental question remains: if the man was of unsound mind, why were his claims afforded a public platform? The Waripora Kunzar case serves as a stark indictment of social media-driven journalism, which often prioritizes sensationalism over ethical reporting.

The Changing Nature of Hajj

Perhaps the most ironic dimension of this controversy lies in the pseudo-peer's justification—offering an alternative Umrah for those unable to afford travel to Mecca. While his proposition was patently fraudulent, it inadvertently exposes an uncomfortable reality: has Hajj and Umrah devolved into rituals of social elitism rather than acts of piety?

The proliferation of repeat pilgrimages, often undertaken as indulgent retreats rather than transformative spiritual journeys, inadvertently reinforces the notion that access to this sacred rite is contingent upon financial privilege, thereby diluting its intrinsic sanctity and relegating it to a mere token of opulence.

The Waripora Kunzar incident indirectly raises the question: If pilgrimage were not increasingly associated with financial capability, would people even entertain the idea of an alternative Umrah?

Would it not be more virtuous to allocate these funds toward alleviating poverty rather than indulging in multiple pilgrimages? Should not resources be directed towards enabling financially disadvantaged believers to fulfill their Hajj obligations rather than being spent on redundant trips by the affluent? These pressing ethical questions merit introspection.

Conclusion

The Waripora Kunzar incident is symptomatic of deeper societal issues that demand urgent redress. As a community, Kashmiris must cultivate discernment in matters of faith, ensuring that religious devotion does not devolve into blind subservience. Equally imperative is the call for journalistic accountability—demanding reportage that upholds integrity rather than perpetuates sensationalism. The truth is this incident was not merely an isolated act of religious deception; it was a mirror reflecting the broader vulnerabilities of society.

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

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There is, in principle, nothing wrong in placating a powerful world leader who has been described variously as narcissistic, egotistic, even solipsistic. But placating is different from an overzealous endorsement of positions and policies that have raised many questions and worries across the globe. India started with the former by praising Trump as an inspiring leader. But somewhere this slipped into different territory when the idea of a Viksit Bharat (developed India) got transcribed into the language of MAGA politics.

This is how Modi put it: "If I say in the language of America, developed India means Make India Great Again, i.e. 'MIGA'. When the United States and India work together, i.e. 'MAGA' plus 'MIGA', the 'mega' partnership for prosperity is formed. And this mega spirit gives new scale and scope to our goals." The effusive language came despite the fact that Trump unhesitatingly announced reciprocal tariffs that would clearly impact India and in fact, underlined the tariffs in his remarks with Modi, calling out India as "just about the highest tariffs nation in the world". He added for good measure that "whatever India charges, we will charge them."

It was always clear that Trump would play by his own rules, and put India under pressure, as indeed he has done with other nations. Some of his ways are based on simplistic ideas set out in his book *Art of the Deal* – a cocky real estate developer's manual stretched thin to apply to other fields, and to life itself. Chapter 2 of the vintage 1997 book, republished in a mass market edition in 2005, is titled *Trump Cards: The Elements of the Deal* and it begins thus: "My style of deal making is quite simple and straightforward. I aim very high, and then I just keep pushing and pushing and pushing to get what I'm after. Sometimes, I settle for less than I sought, but in most cases I still end up with what I want."

American foreign policy has always been about American interests, marked by short-termism and an instrumentality that has many of its claims to principles of openness, democracy or peace sound hollow. Now, the mask is off, the pretence of values is gone, and naked power-play is at work. India will

India Must Not Bend To Please Trump

It should instead use the Trump playbook and push its own set of non-negotiables

Jagdish Rattanani

need to carefully navigate this partnership, expecting to be pushed, and so has to be ready with its own list of asks and redlines and non-negotiables. In short, the Trump playbook will have to be used against Trump.

Politics in play

Modi, and India, would be helped in this if the nation has a foreign policy approach that all political parties could sign up and profess as the agreed Indian consensus. In this, the BJP needs the Congress and other parties on its side to make strong, clear and specific demands on Trump instead of caving in on every ask made from the other side. But political bitterness has been brought even to foreign affairs, the bureaucrat-turned-foreign minister S Jaishankar personally feeding into some of it with barbs against Opposition leaders that apparently secure his position in the BJP and with the Prime Minister. Without this forced injection of bitterness, it should not have been difficult to have an all-party consensus to publicly condemn the way the Trump administration has begun the deportation of unauthorised Indians.

The use of a military plane, with Indian citizens

India should condemn the US for treating Indians thus. The Prime Minister chose not to speak out on this openly. However, he correctly pointed out that gangs who help smuggle people illegally across borders must be curbed and that those who are poor are being misled and lured into a trap. This is the correct position

under deportation orders set in chains, and the act duly promoted in a video by the US agencies, is in poor taste and tries to showcase a negative image of India at the cost of dignity and rights of Indian citizens. It is shocking that Indians are being treated no different from migrants who have been called "high threat criminal illegal aliens".

India should condemn the US for treating Indians thus. The Prime Minister chose not to speak out on this openly. However, he correctly pointed out that gangs who help smuggle people illegally across borders must be curbed and that those who are poor are being misled and lured into a trap. This is the correct position. But the next logical step is to ask Americans not to treat Indians found to be undocumented as criminals, or put them in shackles as they are sent back. Instead, the Indian foreign minister has earlier been quoted as saying that this is normal procedure for the US. "The standard operating procedure for deportations by aircraft used by ICE (Immigration and Customs Enforcement of the US) that is effective from 2012, provides for the use of restraints," he said. How does this help at all? Is Jaishankar, the foreign minister of a Vishwaguru nation not ashamed about this treatment of ordinary Indians?

The planned deportation of 20,000 Indians from the US will require an endless stream of flights, if all are to be sent back, not to speak of more who are being caught as raids by US immigration continue. None of them should be allowed to be detained without access to lawyers, medical aid and humane conditions at the facilities they are kept in. None of them should be allowed to be sent back in chains. This is not to speak of other issues on which Trump will continue to push as teams from the two nations iron out energy deals and defence supplies. India can play along but only up to a point. It is important to draw a clear line beyond which India will not give in.

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Between Discipline and Chaos

Syed Mudasir Mushtaq

The entire universe operates under divine discipline. From the movement of planets to the cycle of life, everything follows a set order. The sun rises and sets on time, the seasons change in a fixed pattern, and nature sustains itself through balance. This discipline ensures harmony, stability, and continuity. If the world itself follows discipline, humans must also adopt discipline in life to maintain peace, success, and sustainability. When we act against this natural order—through greed, pollution, or irresponsibility—chaos follows. Just as God sustains creation with discipline, we must uphold discipline in our actions, relationships, and responsibilities to live a fulfilling and meaningful life. Discipline is the foundation of a successful and meaningful life. It shapes our character, builds consistency, and fosters harmony in our surroundings. Without discipline, life descends into disorder, causing problems at personal, societal, and environmental levels. Just as nature follows a disciplined order—seasons changing on time, rivers flowing in their course—humans must cultivate discipline to achieve success and maintain balance in life. Discipline is essential for both life and nature. In life, discipline shapes character, builds consistency, and helps achieve goals. It teaches self-control, responsibility, and perseverance. Without discipline, chaos and failure become inevitable. In nature, discipline is evident in the order of seasons, the cycle of life, and the balance of ecosystems. Every organism follows a natural rhythm, ensuring harmony and sustainability. When humans disrupt this discipline—through deforestation, pollution, or over-consumption—nature reacts with disasters like climate change and resource depletion. Learning from nature's discipline can help us lead better, more balanced lives. Just as the sun rises and sets without fail, maintaining personal discipline in habits, ethics, and responsibilities ensures long-term success and peace.

Discipline begins in childhood. Parents and elders instill discipline through routines, values, and responsibilities. A child learns self-control by following rules, respecting others, and maintaining good habits like waking up early, studying on time, and helping at home. Discipline at home is not about punishment but about guiding and teaching children to make responsible choices. By establishing clear expectations, utilizing positive reinforcement, and practicing consistent consequences, parents can create a nurturing environment that fosters self-discipline and promotes a child's overall development. Schools reinforce discipline by setting schedules, encouraging punctuality, and teaching moral values. As individuals grow, discipline becomes self-imposed, helping them make wise decisions and achieve long-term goals.

Discipline in schooling is essential for creating an environment where students can learn effectively, develop



good habits, and grow into responsible individuals. It helps maintain order, respect, and focus, ensuring that both students and teachers can perform their roles effectively. A disciplined school environment not only improves academic performance but also shapes students into responsible and respectable citizens.

Discipline in Society

Discipline is the foundation of a well-functioning society. It ensures order, stability, and mutual respect among individuals. Without discipline, chaos and lawlessness can take over, making it difficult for people to coexist peacefully. Discipline maintains law and order, promotes respect and cooperation, builds moral values, and ensures fairness and justice. Discipline is not about restricting freedom but about creating an environment where people can live safely, fairly, and productively.

Discipline in the Workplace

Workplace discipline is essential for maintaining professionalism, efficiency, and a positive work environment. It ensures that employees adhere to company or department policies, respect their colleagues, and fulfill their responsibilities. A disciplined workplace fosters a culture of respect, efficiency, and growth, benefiting both employees and the organization.

Discipline in Socio-Political Affairs

Discipline in socio-political affairs is crucial for maintaining stability, justice, and progress in a nation. It ensures that political leaders, government institutions, and citizens act responsibly, uphold laws, and contribute to the common good. A disciplined socio-political system leads to a just, peaceful, and progressive society where both leaders and citizens work towards national development.

Discipline in National Integrity

Discipline plays a vital role in upholding national integrity, which refers to the unity, honesty, and ethical values that bind a nation together. A disciplined society ensures that citizens, leaders, and institutions work towards the common good, fostering peace, development, and trust. When discipline is upheld, national integrity remains strong, leading to a peaceful, just, and prosperous society.

Discipline with Nature

Discipline in our relationship with nature is essential for preserving the environment, ensuring sustainability, and maintaining harmony between humans and the natural world. It involves responsible behaviors, conservation efforts, and respect for natural resources. When individuals and societies maintain discipline with nature, they contribute to a healthier planet and a sustainable future for all living beings.

Discipline in Religion

Discipline in religious life is essential for maintaining faith, moral values, and spiritual growth. It helps individuals follow ethical principles, respect religious teachings, and contribute to a harmonious society. Religious discipline not only nurtures individuals' faith but also fosters unity, morality, and peace in society.

Discipline in Interaction with the Opposite Gender

Discipline in interactions between opposite genders is essential for fostering respect, equality, and healthy relationships in society. It ensures that individuals communicate and behave in a manner that upholds dignity, mutual understanding, and ethical values. Discipline in gender interaction leads to a society where both men and women coexist with dignity, fairness, and mutual respect.

Indiscipline Leads to Chaos

Indiscipline, whether in personal behavior, society, the workplace, or governance, disrupts order and creates instability. When people disregard rules, ethics, and responsibilities, it leads to confusion, conflict, and dysfunction.

- Breakdown of Law and Order** – When individuals or institutions ignore laws and ethical guidelines, crime and corruption increase, leading to societal unrest.
- Decline in Productivity** – In workplaces or schools, a lack of discipline results in inefficiency, missed deadlines, and poor performance.
- Erosion of Moral Values** – Indiscipline weakens respect, honesty, and accountability, fostering selfishness and unethical behavior.
- Conflicts and Misunderstandings** – Poor discipline in gender relations, politics, or religious practices can lead to discrimination, harassment, or even violence.
- Environmental Destruction** – Indiscriminate exploitation of natural resources without discipline causes pollution, climate change, and ecological imbalance.
- Weakened National Integrity** – A nation without discipline faces corruption, political instability, and social division, leading to internal chaos and decline.

Conclusion

Discipline is the foundation of a stable and progressive society. Without it, disorder prevails, leading to inefficiency, injustice, and turmoil. A disciplined approach to life ensures peace, development, and harmony in all aspects of society.

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OBITUARY

A Tribute to My Beloved Grandfather

A Life of Love, Wisdom, and Faith

Mohammed Ijaz ul Haq Kanth

As I sit down to write this tribute, a storm of emotions rises within me—grief that feels unbearable, gratitude that knows no bounds, and love that remains unshaken. The past few days have been a blur of sorrow and reflection as we bid farewell to a man who was not just our grandfather but the heart of our family, the foundation upon which our world was built. His presence was a gift, his wisdom a guiding force, and his love a shelter that protected us from life's storms.

My dear LALA, yesterday, when the house finally fell silent after the last of our guests had departed, I stepped into my room for the first time in days. The emptiness was suffocating. My eyes wandered across the room and fell upon the wall clock you had gifted me and in that moment, time itself seemed to pause. The familiar ticking, which once faded into the background of our conversations, now echoed in the silence, a painful reminder of what I had lost.

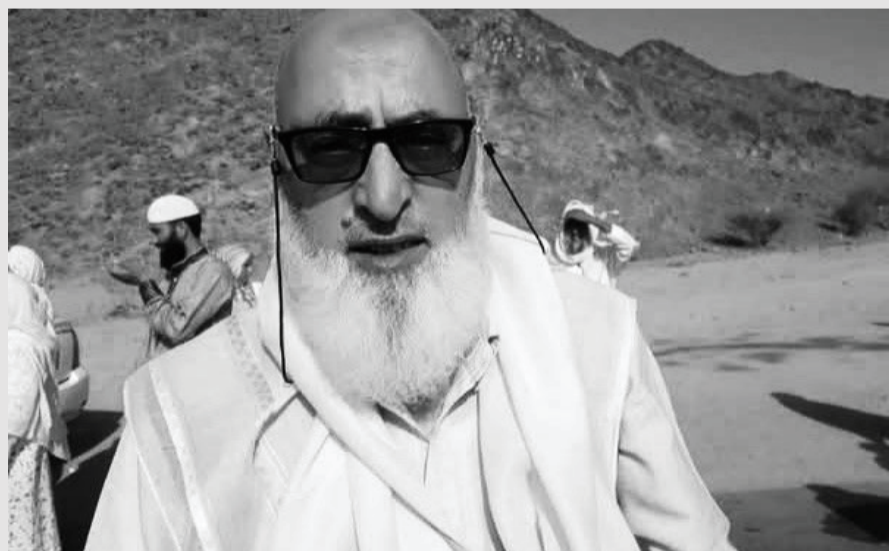
Memories came rushing back—the warmth of your voice, the wisdom in your words, the way your eyes crinkled with laughter, the gentle yet firm reprimands that shaped me into who I am today. I could almost hear you calling my name, as you so often did, with love, with patience, with a sincerity that only you possessed.

So, I began to write—not to mourn your departure, but to celebrate your life. Not to dwell on the pain of losing you, but to honor the love, the wisdom, and the unwavering faith that defined you. No words can truly capture the depth of your kindness, the weight of your absence, or the irreplaceable role you played in our lives. But if this tribute can be a small reflection of the love you gave us, then I hope it does justice to the extraordinary man that you were.

The Pillar of Our Family

Your presence in our family was more than just a blessing—it was a gift from Allah, a source of strength, love, and unwavering guidance. You were the anchor that kept us steady, the silent force that held us together, the foundation upon which we all stood. Without you, there would have been no center, no binding thread weaving us into one. Your love was limitless, your concern for each of us never wavered, no matter how far we were or how busy life became.

One of your most cherished habits was your daily ritual of calling each family member who lived away from home. No matter the distance, no matter how hectic life got, we



always knew that at some point in the day, a call from you would come. A simple check-in, yet one filled with warmth, gentle advice, and an unspoken reminder that no matter where we were, we were never alone. Those conversations—once routine, once so easy to expect—now feel like treasures we didn't know we were collecting, precious moments whose true worth we only understand in their absence.

Your absence is not just felt, it is lived in every quiet corner of the house, in every unspoken moment where your voice should have been. The familiar creak of your walking stick, once a sound that reassured us you had arrived home safely, is now an echo of what we have lost. The way you would call out to us before we left for work, asking if we had everything we needed, praying for our safety—those small, everyday moments have now become the memories we cling to. Even your scoldings, which we may not have fully understood then, now reveal themselves to be disguised blessings—lessons wrapped in love, subtle nudges toward becoming better versions of ourselves.

And perhaps, more than anything, I carry with me a regret—a heavy, aching regret—that I could not achieve something truly big while you were still here to witness it. You always believed in me, always encouraged me, always longed for the day I would rise to my full potential. I know how much it meant to you, how much you wanted to see me accomplish something significant. It pains me deeply that I couldn't fulfill that wish in your lifetime, that you didn't get to see me become the person

you always believed I could be.

But I promise you, Lala, your dreams for me will not go in vain. I will strive with all my heart, not just for myself, but for you—for the man who saw my worth before I ever did, for the man whose faith in me never wavered. I will try my best to make you proud, to walk the path you wished for me, to carry forward the legacy of honor, integrity, and strength that you left behind.

And yet, amid the pain of regret, there is one solace I hold close to my heart—that you witnessed my Nikah, a moment that mattered deeply to both of us. You were there, present with your wisdom and prayers, and you wrote the Nikah papers with your own hands. That memory, that blessing, is one I will cherish forever. It gives me peace to know that, in at least that moment, I fulfilled a part of my dream—to make you proud, to have you by my side in one of the most significant chapters of my life.

Even as you are no longer with us in this world, your presence remains, woven into our souls, etched into our lives. You were, and will always be, the pillar of our family.

A Heart Overflowing with Love

Your love for children was one of the purest, most beautiful expressions of your kindness—a love so boundless, so tender, that it could be felt in the smallest of gestures. You delighted in their innocence, their laughter, their tiny hands reaching out for you. The joy in your eyes when they surrounded you, the way your face would light up when they ran to you with open arms—it was as if, in those moments, the weight of the world lifted, and only love remained.

You would often ask them to kiss your face, holding them close, savoring the warmth of their affection. And when they did, the happiness that spread across your face was uncontainable. You cherished those fleeting moments, capturing them in videos, watching them over and over again—not just to relive them but to hold onto the magic of their innocence, the purity of their love.

Whenever you traveled, no child in the family was ever forgotten. You would carefully choose gifts for each of your sons' and daughters' children, ensuring that every little one had something to unwrap with joy. It was never about the material value—no, it was about the love behind it.

Each gift was a reflection of your thoughtfulness, a silent yet powerful reminder that they were cherished, that in your heart, no one was ever left out.

But more than anything, you taught us that love is found in the simplest, most unassuming moments. It is in the warmth of a shared laugh, in the silent understanding of a knowing glance, in the way your hands would rest gently on our heads in silent prayer. You reminded us, without ever needing to say it, to embrace life with wonder, to find joy in the moments most people overlook, to hold on to the small, beautiful fragments of everyday life—because in the end, those are what truly matter.

Your love was not loud, nor demanding—it was steady, unwavering, ever-present. And though you are no longer here to gather the children in your arms, to ask for kisses with that same playful smile, we will carry your love forward. We will pass it down, just as you did, ensuring that the warmth you gave us never fades, but instead, grows and lives on in the generations to come.

A Mind That Never Stopped Learning

Your thirst for knowledge was insatiable, your curiosity boundless. Despite the generational gap, you never shied away from change—you embraced it with open arms, eager to understand the world as it evolved. While many found comfort in old ways, you found excitement in discovering the new. You were fascinated by modern technology, not just as an observer but as a participant, always eager to learn, always asking questions, always striving to understand the advancements that others of your age might have dismissed as too complex.

But your intelligence wasn't just theoretical—it was deeply practical. You had an uncanny knack for electronic gadgets, a natural gift for fixing and understanding things that others might have called an expert for.

Whether it was the geyser in winter, the transformer during a power fluctuation, an inverter that refused to work, or an LED light flickering out of place—before anyone could call for help, you would roll up your sleeves and get to work. There was a quiet satisfaction on your face when you solved a problem, a sense of fulfillment in restoring something to order. You never saw it as a chore but as a challenge, a puzzle to be solved with patience and skill.

A Final Goodbye, Until We Meet Again

You lived with grace, and you left this world with dignity. The immense gathering at your funeral was a testament to the life you led, to the countless hearts you touched, and to the deep love and respect people had for you. Each tear shed, each prayer whispered, each heavy-hearted embrace shared in your absence spoke volumes of the impact you had on this world.

But this is not truly goodbye. It cannot be. Death may have separated us in this life, but our bond remains unbroken, transcending time and space. It does not feel like you have left this world; it feels as though you have embarked on another journey, much like the ones you often took for Umrah—only this time, you are on the most sacred of all journeys, returning to the One you devoted your entire life to.

Our hearts ache, our souls tremble, and our chests feel heavy with grief, longing for one more conversation, one more glance, one more moment in your presence. Yet, our Shariah reminds us to be patient, to surrender to the will of Allah, and to place our trust in His divine wisdom. We find solace in the promise of reunion, in the certainty that this separation is temporary, that beyond this fleeting world, in a realm untouched by sorrow, where love is eternal, we will be together again.

Until that day, we will carry you with us—in our prayers, in our choices, in the way we treat others, and in the way we live. Your legacy will continue in the kindness we show, in the faith we uphold, and in the lessons you left behind.

May Allah grant you the highest ranks in Jannah, reunite us in gardens of everlasting peace, and allow us to honor your memory by walking the path you paved for us.

Ameen.

Read the full obituary at kashmirobserver.net

Mirchi 98.7 Hosts First-Ever Grand Food Festival

Syed Mohammad Burhan

Srinagar- In an initiative to bring food lovers together, Mirchi 98.7 has initiated a Mirchi Food Festival at Sher-i-Kashmir Park, offering a diverse range of cuisines from small street food vendors to renowned Kashmiri food brands.

The festival, which commenced on Friday, features an array of dishes including Indian, Chinese, Kashmiri, and Continental delicacies, creating a culinary paradise for visitors.

Speaking to Kashmir Observer, RJ Madeeha described the festival as the first of its kind in Kashmir, bringing together local, national, and international flavors under one roof.

“The festival has everything a food lover desires. From traditional Kashmiri wazwan to global cuisines, there is something for everyone. There’s even a separate zone for children, making it a perfect family outing,” she said.

Renowned Chef Yaseen Reshi, who is also part of the festival, emphasized the importance of such events in fostering a food culture in the Valley.

“This food festival is a golden opportunity for people to come together, enjoy good food, and make memories with their families. I encourage everyone to visit and relish the experience,” he urged.

Adding to the festival’s vibrance, popular food vlogger Muskan Khan lauded the initiative, highlighting the platform it provides to small-scale food vendors and established restaurants alike.

“It is incredible to see both small street food owners and big restaurant chains participating. This festival is truly unique, and events like these should be held more frequently in Kashmir. It not only

attracts food enthusiasts but also helps boost local businesses,” she stated, appreciating Mirchi 98.7 FM for the initiative.

The Mirchi Food Festival, which runs until February 16, 2024, is expected to attract a significant footfall, including tourists and food bloggers eager to explore Kashmir’s rich culinary heritage alongside international flavors.

Organizers say that the visitors can explore a wide range of Kashmiri delicacies, authentic street food, and gourmet dishes while soaking in the lively atmosphere of Sher-i-Kashmir Park.



Office of the Naib Tehsildar Pattan..

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

Public Notice..

The registrar birth BDO pattan has submitted a case file pertaining to birth of Masrat Sultan D/o Mohd .Sultan Ganie R/o Ganiepora Buran Tehsil Pattan distt baramulla with verified date of birth 04/03/2000 occurred at home in this connection if any body having objection for issuance of said certificate he may contact to this office within 03 days after that no objection shall be entertained..

FKO SD 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 Lalpora has submitted a case file pertaining to birth of Simrah Jaan D.o .B 04/03/2016 And Aiyman Jaan D.o.B 06/03/2014 D/o Shames u din Sheikh R/o Mamoosa Tehsil Pattan distt baramulla occurred at home in this connection if any body having objection for issuance of said certificate he may contact to this office within 03 days after that no objection shall be entertained.

FKO SD 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 Ghulam Mohd Wani s/o Abdul Gani Wani R/o Shirpora Tehsil Pattan distt baramulla with verified date of birth 03/04/1965 occurred at home in this connection if any body having objection for issuance of said certificate he may contact to this office within 03 days after that no objection shall be entertained..

FKO SD Naib Tehsildar Pattan

The Jammu & Kashmir Bank Limited
IAPM Department,
Zonal Office Budgam,
Ganderbal (Mortgagor/Guarantor), 3) Abdul Majid Reshi S/O Ghulam Mohammad Reshi R/O Repora, Lar, Ganderbal (Guarantor) and 4) Sonallah Wani S/O Ghulam Ahmad Wani R/O Takiyabal, Theeru, Ganderbal (Guarantor) to repay an amount of Rs. 25,62,111.07 (Rupees. Twenty Five Lac Sixty Two Thousand One Hundred Eleven & Paise Only) being the balance outstanding as on 29.01.2024 in the accounts of the Borrower, within 60 days from the date of the said notice together with the future interest and other charges thereon.

POSSESSION NOTICE

Notice under Section 13 (4) of the SARFAESI ACT, 2002 read with Rule 8 (1) of the Security (Enforcement) Interest Rules, 2002

Whereas, the Authorized Officer of the Jammu & Kashmir Bank Limited under the Securitization and Reconstruction of Financial Assets and Enforcement of Security Interest (SARFAESI) Act, 2002 and in exercise of powers under section 13(2) of the said Act read with Rule 3 of the Security Interest (Enforcement) Rules 2002, issued Demand Notice dated 30.01.2024 thereby calling upon 1) Shabir Ahmad Wani S/O Sonallah Wani R/O Takiyabal, Theeru, Ganderbal, Prop. M/s S.A. Traders, (Borrower), 2) Ghulam Ahmad Wani S/O Ali Mohammad Wani R/O Takiyabal, Theeru, Ganderbal (Mortgagor/Guarantor), 3) Abdul Majid Reshi S/O Ghulam Mohammad Reshi R/O Repora, Lar, Ganderbal (Guarantor) and 4) Sonallah Wani S/O Ghulam Ahmad Wani R/O Takiyabal, Theeru, Ganderbal (Guarantor) to repay an amount of Rs. 25,62,111.07 (Rupees. Twenty Five Lac Sixty Two Thousand One Hundred Eleven & Paise Only) being the balance outstanding as on 29.01.2024 in the accounts of the Borrower, within 60 days from the date of the said notice together with the future interest and other charges thereon.

The said borrower having failed to repay the said amount, notice is hereby given to the said borrower in particular and the public in general that the undersigned being authorized officer of the J & K Bank Ltd. has taken possession of the mortgage property described herein below, in exercise of the powers conferred on me under section 13 (4) of the said Act read with Rule 8 of the said Rules, on this the 15th day of February of the year 2025.

The said borrower in particular and the public in general are hereby cautioned against dealing with the said property in any manner whatsoever and any dealings with the said property will be subject to the charge of the J&K Bank Limited for the amount in aggregating to Rs.17,11,413.06 (Rupees Seventeen Lacs Eleven th only) together with future interest thereon from 01.02.2025 and other charges incurred or to be incurred. The borrowers attention is invited to the provisions of Sub-section (8) of Section 13 of the Act, in respect of the time available, to redeem the secured assets.

Description of the Immovable Property

Residential house along with land underneath and appurtenant thereto measuring 01 Kanal falling under Khasra No.878/128, Khata No. 72 and Khewat No.10 situated Mouza Theeru, Tehsil Lar and District Ganderbal, standing in the name of Ghulam Ahmad Wani S/O Ali Mohammad Wani R/O Theeru, Lar, Ganderbal.

(Ishfaq Rashid Bala)
Authorized Officer

OFFICE OF THE CHILD DEVELOPMENT PROJECT OFFICER POSHAN PROJECT BIJBEHARA

Provisional Selection list for the Post of Sahayikas (Anganwadi Helpers) of Anganwadi centres vide Advertised Notice No.:10 of 2024 Dated:16.12.2024 followed by Re-Advertisement Notice No: 11of 2025 Dated: 04.01.2025

S. No	Name of Candidate	Parentage/Spouse Name	Residence	Date of Birth	AWC for which Provisionally Selected/Tentative	Ward	Qualification	Max Marks as per 10th class	Marks Obtained	%age	Addl.02 points as per HR Policy	Total Merit	Remarks
1.	Sumi Jan	D/o Gh Rasool Tantray W/o Mudasir Ahmad Wani	Liver	09.12.1989	Liver "C"	2	10th	500	250	50.00%	0		Selected
2	Tasleema Akhter	D/o Gul Mohd Tantray W/o Shabir Ahmad Bhat	Krandigam	01.01.1990	Krandigam "A"	1	10th	500	192	38.40%	0	38.40	Selected
3	Insha Nazir	D/o Nazir Ahmad Najar	Kanelwan	02.04.2003	Kanelwan "D"	7	10th	500	356	71.20%	0	71.20	Selected
4	Gowsey Jan	D/o Gh Mohi ud din Bhat	Kanelwan	05.03.1990	Kanelwan "F"	9	10th	500	179	35.80%	0	35.80	Selected
5	Heena Jan	D/o Gulam Nabi Dar W/o Naseer Ahmad Bakshi	Sakhrass	24.03.1999	Sakhrass "D"	1	10th	500	370	74.00%	0	74.0	Selected
6	Shaheena Akhter	D/O Mohd Ramzan Ganie	T.M Shah	28.05.1999	T.M Shah	7	8th	600	332	55.00%	0	55.0	Selected

sd/= Child Development Project Officer Poshan Project Bijbehara Member Secretary

No:- CDPO/Poshan/Bij/2024-25/1992-2007
DIPK-12055/24
Dated:- 15/02/2025.

ED Seizes 'Biggest' Crypto Fund Worth ₹1,646 Crore In PMLA Case

Press Trust Of India

NEW DELHI- The Enforcement Directorate (ED) has seized its biggest-ever cryptocurrency worth Rs 1,646 crore as part of a "mega" money laundering investigation into a fraud investment scheme where numerous depositors were duped in the name of securities investment, official sources said.



The agency tracked "numerous" web wallets and gathered ground intelligence to zero-in on the wallets and the premises where the digital devices containing the said crypto currencies were available, they said.

The Ahmedabad office of the federal probe agency has also seized Rs 13.50 lakh in cash, an SUV and a number of digital devices after it concluded a fresh round of searches on Saturday in the case related to "fraudulent" and unregistered offering and sale of securities in the form of investments through 'BitConnect lending program'.

Sources told PTI that cryptocurrencies worth Rs 1,646 crore were seized and transferred into a special crypto wallet of the agency making it the biggest-ever seizure of virtual digital assets in a mega money laundering investigation which is still going on.

It was found that many transactions were carried out through the "dark web" to make the transactions untraceable, the sources said.

The ED case, filed under the Prevention of Money Laundering Act (PMLA), stems from an FIR of the Surat Police crime branch which said the alleged fraud that took place between November 2016 - January 2018 (after demonetisation).

The agency deployed a team of its tech-savvy experts who examined the "complex web" of transactions carried out in "numerous" crypto wallets to unmask the origin and controllers of these crypto wallets.

It was found that many transactions were carried out through the "dark web" to make the transactions untraceable, the sources said.

The agency found during the probe that the founder of BitConnect, an unincorporated organisation, established "a worldwide network of promoters, and rewarded them for their promotional efforts by paying them commissions."

In order to "induce" investors to deposit funds in the form of cash and Bitcoins, into the purported lending program, BitConnect represented, among other things, that it would deploy a purported proprietary "volatility software trading bot" (Trading Bot) that, they claimed would use investor funds to generate returns as high as 40 per cent per month, the ED found.

New India Cooperative Bank's General Manager Held For 'Misappropriation' Of ₹122 Crore

Press Trust Of India

MUMBAI- The Mumbai police on Saturday arrested Hitesh Mehta, General Manager and Head of Accounts of the New India Cooperative Bank, for allegedly misappropriating Rs 122 crore from the bank, officials said.



Mehta was placed under arrest by the Economic Offences Wing (EOW) of the city police after being questioned for more than three hours, an official said.

He was called to record his statement before the probe agency at its south Mumbai office in connection with the case registered against him and others, he said.

Mehta will be produced before a local court on Sunday, the police official added.

The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) on Friday superseded the cooperative bank's board for a year and appointed an administrator to manage its affairs. A day prior to that, it imposed several restrictions on the lender, including on withdrawal of funds by depositors, citing supervisory concerns emanating from the recent material developments in the bank, and to protect the interest of its depositors.

Acting Chief Executive Officer of the bank, Devarshi Ghosh, on Friday lodged a complaint against Mehta and others at the Dadar police station in central Mumbai for alleged misappropriation of the bank's funds, the police said.

"Based on the complaint, the police registered a case in the wee hours of Saturday, which was then transferred to the EOW for investigation," another official said.

As per the complaint, Mehta along with other associates hatched a conspiracy and embezzled Rs 122 crore from the safes of Prabhadevi and Goregaon offices of the bank, he said.

A case under the Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita (BNS) sections 316 (5) (criminal

breach of trust by public servants, bankers, and others in positions of trust), 61(2) (criminal conspiracy) was registered, he said.

During the investigation, it came to light that the misappropriation of the funds had started soon after the COVID-19 pandemic broke out. While the accused embezzled Rs 112 crore from the safe in Prabhadevi, Rs 10 crore were siphoned off from the Goregaon branch, he said.

"As Mehta's involvement in the crime came to the fore, the EOW placed him under arrest," the official said.

New India Cooperative Bank has 28 branches and most of them are located in Mumbai, while two are in Surat in neighbouring Gujarat and one in Pune.

"BASED ON THE COMPLAINT, THE POLICE REGISTERED A CASE IN THE WEE HOURS OF SATURDAY, which was then transferred to the EOW for investigation," another official said.

Income Tax Dept Activates Section Wise Mapping Of I-T Act, Tax Bill

Press Trust Of India

NEW DELHI- Income Tax payers can now match the sections of the I-Tax Act, 1961, with the corresponding clauses in the simplified I-T Bill, 2025, on the tax department portal.



Also, Section to Section mapping as per Income Tax Act, 1961 and Section number as per New Income Tax Bill has been uploaded on the I-T department's website.

A simplified Income Tax Bill, 2025, was introduced in the Lok Sabha on February 13 by Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman. The Bill, once enacted, will replace the 64 years old Income Tax Act which has become bulky over time with its traditional style of drafting and numerous amendments.

The simplified Bill has a word count of 2.6 lakh, lower than 5.12 lakh in the I-T Act. The number of Sections is 536, as against 819 effective sections in the existing law.

The number of chapters also have been halved to 23 from 47 currently. The Bill has 57 tables, compared to 18 in the existing act, besides formulae which make it easier for a taxpayer to calculate tax liability. It has removed 1,200 provisos and 900 explanations.

In a post on X, the department on February 14 said it has activated the utility to check Section of the Income Tax Act, 1961, vis-a-vis corresponding clause of the new Income Tax Bill. A taxpayer can select the section of I-T Act, 1961, from a

drop down menu and accordingly the corresponding clause in the I-T Bill will appear.

Besides, a section wise mapping has been given in tabular format for taxpayer convenience.

The Bill uses shorter sentences and has been made reader-friendly with the use of tables and formulae. Tables have been provided for provisions relating to TDS, presumptive taxation, salaries, and deductions for bad debt.

The Bill introduces a new concept of 'tax year' as the 12-month period beginning from April 1. This would replace the present concept of assessment and previous year. Currently, income earned in the previous year (PY) say in the year April 2024 to March 2025 will be assessed in assessment year (AY) 2025-26.

The Bill will come into effect from April 1, 2026, after it is vetted by a Select Committee of the Lok Sabha and cleared by Parliament.

The new bill has omitted redundant sections, like those relating to Fringe Benefit Tax. The Bill is free from 'explanations or provisos', thereby making it easier to read and comprehend.

'International Finance Corporation Increasing Equity Investment In Pakistan'

Press Trust Of India

ISLAMABAD- The World Bank's private investment arm, the International Finance Corporation (IFC), is increasing equity investments and focusing on large-scale infrastructure financing in Pakistan, a media report said on Saturday.

According to IFC Chief Makhtar Diop, who is visiting Pakistan, the investment plan could unlock up to USD 2 billion annually over the next decade, reported The Express Tribune. His visit to Pakistan follows the

Diop highlighted the IFC's interest in Pakistan's agriculture, infrastructure, finance, and digital industries.

Additionally, Diop noted that equity-based transactions will play a larger role as the country's development as the IFC increases its equity investments globally, including in Pakistan.

According to Radio Pakistan, Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif while talking to Diop, who called on him here on Friday, lauded the IFC's role in fostering private investments in Pakistan.



World Bank's announcement of a USD 20 billion Country Partnership Framework, with the IFC matching this allocation.

Diop emphasised that the USD 2 billion annual investment is not significant for Pakistan, which needs extensive infrastructure development in sectors such as energy, water, ports, and international airports.

Diop expressed confidence that within a few months, progress on key projects will signal Pakistan's readiness to receive large-scale financing for critical infrastructure.

The prime minister encouraged the IFC to enhance its support in key areas, including infrastructure and logistics, outsourcing of large airports, agriculture, information technology, mining, climate resilience, healthcare and water and sanitation.

Sharif stressed export-led growth and underlined the need for digitization of the entire ecosystem of Pakistan's economy. Ongoing digitalization efforts of the Federal Board of Revenue were also highlighted.

PM Modi's US Visit To Strengthen Bilateral Trade, Investment Ties: CII



Press Trust Of India

NEW DELHI- Prime Minister Narendra Modi's visit to the US is a major milestone that will strengthen bilateral trade, investment, defence, and technology partnerships, industry body CII said on Saturday.

Welcoming the recently concluded visit, the Confederation of Indian Industry (CII) said it eyes stronger trade and tech ties.

CII noted that the wide-ranging joint statement and initiatives announced during the visit under the framework of US-India COMPACT have set a clear forward-looking agenda for India-US relations, creating new opportunities for Indian industry and economic growth.

"A new chapter has been added to the India-US partnership, enabling much stronger collaboration in strategic sectors including defence, energy, semiconductors, space and emerging technologies like artificial intelligence (AI), quantum computing, advanced ma-

terials, and biotechnology.

"This creates an environment for the private sector on both sides to flourish in true partnership. The visit is especially significant as it will boost manufacturing in India, attract increased foreign direct investment and create jobs," said Chandrajit Banerjee, Director General, CII.

Prime Minister Narendra Modi's discussions with President Trump strongly reaffirmed a commitment to expand trade and investment between the two countries, it stated.

CII welcomed the decision to work on the first phase of a bilateral trade agreement to reduce trade barriers and streamline regulatory processes, laying a strong foundation for increasing two-way trade.

It also expects that easier market access and regulatory harmonization will emerge from the proposed bilateral trade agreement dialogues, helping Indian products and services find greater foothold in the US market and vice versa.

Sebi Issues Rules For Related Party Transaction Disclosure

Press Trust Of India

NEW DELHI- Markets regulator Sebi has introduced industry standards for the minimum information that listed entities are required to provide to the audit committee and shareholders when seeking approval for the related party transactions (RPT).



The Industry Standards Forum (ISF) comprising representatives from three industry associations -- ASSOCHAM, CII and FICCI -- have formulated these standards for minimum information to be provided for review of the audit committee and shareholders for approval of RPTs in consultation with Sebi under the aegis of the stock exchanges.

The industry associations and stock exchanges will publish these standards on their websites to facilitate a uniform approach and assist listed entities in complying with the requirements, the Securities and Exchange Board of India (Sebi) said in a circular on Friday.

The new disclosure requirements will come into effect from April 1, it added.

Under Sebi's LODR (Listing Obligations and Disclosure Requirements) rules, related party transactions (RPTs) require approval by the audit committee and from the shareholders as well, if material.

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As per the modifications, Sebi said the listed entities are required to provide the audit committee with the information as specified in the industry standards while placing any proposal for review and approval of a related party

transaction.

Similarly, the explanatory statement accompanying notices sent to the shareholders seeking approval for any RPT will include the information in addition to requirements under the Companies Act, 2013, the circular said.

Further, the regulator has directed the stock exchanges to bring the contents of this circular to the notice of the listed entities to ensure compliance, it added.

On Friday, Sebi launched a dedicated RPT portal to enhance transparency in corporate transactions.

"This portal will simplify investor access to critical governance data on RPTs. It will ensure that transparency in related party transactions is no longer a privilege reserved for institutional investors but a right accessible to all," Sebi's whole-time member Ashwani Bhatia said.

Trump's Reciprocal Tariffs And WTO Rules: An Explainer

Press Trust Of India

NEW DELHI- American President Donald Trump has announced imposing reciprocal tariffs on its major trading partners including China that levy higher import duties on goods shipped from the United States.

He has already announced a 25 per cent duty on steel and aluminium imports, which will come into effect from March 12.

While announcing the new tariff policy, the president has also spoken about how India is "right at the top of the pack" when it comes to tariffs.

With all these countries being members of the global trade body World Trade Organisation (WTO), the decisions of the US may challenge the WTO principles.

A list of Q & A (questions and answers) to explain the wider implications of the US move:

Q. What is WTO?

A. The 166-member Geneva-based WTO is a multilateral body which formulates rules for global trade and adjudicates disputes between the countries. Its main objective is to promote smooth, predictable and free flow of goods.

Both India and the US have been members since 1995.

The nations have signed multiple agreements governing trade in goods, services, and intellectual property. These pacts set rules and guidelines for international trade.

Q. What are tariff commitments under WTO?

A. One of the key principles of the WTO is tariff binding, which ensures predictability and stability in global trade.

Bound tariffs are the maximum tariff rates that a WTO member commits to under its Schedule of Concessions. These commitments are legally binding, meaning a country cannot impose tariffs above this level without renegotiation.

Applied tariffs are the actual tariff rates a country levies on imports.

These can be lower than the bound rate but cannot exceed it without violating WTO rules.

Q. What if a country imposes higher tariffs than the bound duties?

A. If a member country imposes a tariff higher than its bound commitment, it violates Article II of GATT (General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade) 1994, which says that members must not impose duties or charges exceeding those listed in their schedules and they cannot impose any other duties or charges that are not specified in their schedules.

Affected countries can file a complaint with the WTO Dispute Settlement Body (DSB) against high duties.

The first step to resolve the dispute under DSB rules are bilateral consultations. If consultations fail, the complainant country may be allowed to impose retaliatory tariffs or other trade countermeasures after receiving approval from the WTO.

Q. Can a WTO member increase its

bound tariff rates?

A. Yes. But only by negotiating that with affected countries under GATT Article XXVIII (Modification of Schedules), where it must offer compensatory concessions or by invoking emergency provisions like safeguards, or national security exceptions in specific cases.

The US under the previous Trump regime, had introduced additional tariffs of 25 per cent on steel and 10 per cent on aluminium products, on grounds of 'national security' under section 232 of its Trade Act. It had cited threats to domestic steel production capacity. However, the WTO has ruled against this measure in multiple cases.

India had also imposed retaliatory duties on 28 American goods.

The Global Trade Research Initiative (GTRI) said that the WTO dispute panel stated that national security exceptions cannot be used arbitrarily and must be linked to real security concerns during war or emergencies.

Q. What did the US do in response?

A. According to the GTRI, America refused to comply with the WTO ruling, arguing that it has the sovereign right to determine its national security policies. It has also blocked the WTO Appellate Body, preventing an appeal resolution.

Q. Why countries like India have high import duties and developed countries like the US have low tariffs?

A. Developing countries like India maintain high import duties primarily to protect domestic industries, generate revenue, and support economic development.

These nations often rely on tariffs to shield their emerging sectors from foreign competition, promote self-sufficiency, and manage trade imbalances.

On the other hand, developed countries like the US have lower tariffs because their industries are already globally competitive, and they benefit from open markets that allow their businesses to access foreign consumers with minimal trade barriers.

Historically, according to the GTRI, when the WTO was established in 1995, developed nations agreed to let developing countries retain higher tariffs in exchange for commitments on Trade-Related Aspects of Intellectual Property Rights (TRIPS), services trade liberalization, and agricultural rules that primarily favoured wealthier nations.

Q. What is the special and differential treatment under WTO?

A. The WTO agreements contain special provisions which give developing countries special rights and allow other members to treat them more favourably.

For example, developing countries like India can take more time to reduce its tariffs and export subsidies than more rich nations.

Q. Does India have a right to fight the 25 per cent tariffs on steel and aluminium and the threat of reciprocal tariffs at the WTO?

A. Yes, according to RV Anuradha, Partner, Clarus Law Associates.

LG Sacks 3 Govt

capital cities of Srinagar and Jammu, directing the security agencies to intensify anti-terror operations to neutralise terrorists and terror ecosystems.

The officials said the dismissed policeman, who was arrested in May last year, was initially appointed as Special Police Officer (SPO) in 2005 and subsequently promoted as constable in 2011.

Currently lodged in Kot Bhalwal Jail, Bhat was posted at a sensitive position of Electronic Surveillance Unit in the J-K Police but started working for terror outfit Lashkar-e-Taiba (LeT).

However, he got exposed when two terrorists -- Waseem Shah and Adnan Beigh -- were arrested in Anantnag with a pistol and a hand grenade as they were planning to attack non-local civilians and tourists, the officials said.

During the interrogation, Bhat revealed his sinister design and led to the recovery of a sizable quantity of arms including pistols, ammunition and explosives from his residential quarter in Police Housing Colony in Srinagar and a newly constructed house in Mattan, Anantnag.

According to the officials, 3 kg of charas was also recovered from his residence which was dropped by Pakistan-based LeT terrorist Sajid Jutt alias "Saifullah" through a drone in Samba district a few days earlier.

Using his police constable cover, he was transporting arms, ammunition and explosives for terrorists and investigation also revealed that he was also working for Hizbul Mujahideen's Commander Khurshid Dar and LeT terrorist Hamza Bhai and Abu Zarrar besides Jutt.

"He not only provided classified information about security forces movement, collection, storage and delivery of arms ammunition but also guided terror attacks," the officials said.

They said he was also found involved in an attack on a police party in 2020 which led to the killing of sub-inspector Ashraf Bhat, an attack on a group of tourists in Pahalgam on May 18 last year that left two persons injured.

The officials said he was also involved in radicalising and luring the youth to join terror ranks besides using terrorists to blackmail government officials including his colleagues and businessmen.

They said Ashraf Bhat, a resident of Reasi who was appointed as 'Rehbar-e-Taleem' Teacher in 2008 and later regularised in June 2013, was affiliated with LeT.

"For many years his activities were undetected but eventually came to light in 2022 and he was arrested and currently lodged in district jail, Reasi," the officials said.

During the course of investigation, it was revealed that Bhat's handler was the most wanted LeT terrorist Mohd Qasim, who is based in Pakistan.

"LeT found him to be very useful because as a teacher Bhat was best placed to radicalise youth and carry out terror activities. He helped LeT to raise finances for terror activities and coordinated transport of arms, ammunition and explosives," they said.

Khan, who joined the forest department in 1996 as a helper and currently posted as an orderly at the forest range office, Verinag (Anantnag), was found working for Hizbul Mujahideen, the officials said.

They said his links with the outfit first came to light in the year 2000 when a landmine blast in Anantnag killed the then power minister Gulam Hasan Bhat and two policemen.

"Khan and another accused had provided logistical support to the terrorists to carry out the attack. He also helped in smuggling RDX used in the blast," the officials said, adding he was arrested, chargesheeted but later acquitted in 2006 due to "witnesses backtracking, intimidating environment inside and outside the courts".

However, despite his acquittal in 2006, Khan continued his work for the terror group. His role was once again exposed in 2016 when he played a central role during the valley's unrest following the killing of Hizbul terrorist Burhan Wani, the officials said.

They said he also mobilised mobs and youth for stone pelting and arranged weapons to attack security forces and is named in four FIRs.

After the killing of another terrorist Yawar Nisar Wagay in 2017, he once again played a key role in organising violent protests and was subsequently detained under the Public Safety Act for eight months.

Law Says Everyone

the services of the three employees on Saturday after investigation by law enforcement and intelligence agencies accused them of terror links.

So far, over 70 government employees have been dismissed on the charges of terror links over the past few years.

"If there is a proof against them (dismissed employees) and they have been given an opportunity to clear the allegations but failed... if such steps are taken without hearing them, the law says that every person accused of any crime is considered innocent until proven guilty," Abdullah told reporters on the sidelines of a function here.

He was reacting to a question on the latest dismissal of the government employees accused of terror links by the Lt Governor and said everyone is getting an opportunity to speak in the court.

"There should be a court hearing and if they fail to prove their innocence, take whatever action they want," the chief minister said.

On Bhagwant Mann's remarks over the centre choosing Amritsar as the landing site for Indian deportees from the United States, Abdullah said he is the chief minister of Punjab and obviously, he will be concerned for his state, especially when it is not only the people of Punjab who are being deported from America.

"There are other states and compared to Punjab, they have more number (of deported persons). Despite this, the American planes are landing in Punjab and so if he had any apprehensions or complaints, it is justified," Abdullah said.

He also expressed his displeasure over the tabling of the Waqf bill and said "this law is against Muslims of the country and there is no other reason for such a law".

Asked about his maiden budget, he said it is better to wait. "The (assembly) session will start on March 3 and the budget will likely be presented on March 7."

Dismissals Persist

and Kashmir. Lt Governor Manoj Sinha, earlier in the day, invoked Article 311 (2) (c) of the Constitution to terminate the services of the three government employees after investigation by law enforcement and intelligence agencies accused them of terror links.

In a post on X, Mehbooba said, "Arbitrary and summary dismissals of government employees has become a daily occurrence since 2019. What is perhaps most surprising and puzzling is that it continues unabated despite an elected government in power that had promised to put an end to such practices once in office."

The former chief minister said the people had pinned hopes on the National Conference government, expecting some relief.

"People had pinned their hopes on the new government expecting at least some relief through vigorous advocacy of these issues with the LG," she added.

JKPC Chief and Handwara legislator, Sajad Gani Lone said that "the termination of three employees is a stark reminder of our continued disempowerment."

"This will not work. More than the termination it is disdain and contempt of Delhi towards Kashmiris, that's revealed through these actions. These actions have not worked in the past. They will not work in the future. It will only widen the gulf and make it even more vicious," he said.

Mirwaiz Umar Farooq said that the termination of three more state employees in such an authoritarian manner is highly condemnable. "Do the rulers want to remove all Kashmiris slowly and steadily from government services and render them jobless? It is the duty of the elected representatives to take up this issue urgently with the concerned as they have committed in their manifesto, and stop this harassment. Also cracking down on Islamic literature and seizing them from bookstores while condemnable is ridiculous. Policing thought by seizing books is absurd to say the least, in the time of access to all information on virtual highways," he wrote in a post on X.

BJP senior leader Abhijeet Jasrotia said those aiding terrorism are more dangerous than terrorists and must face strict laws.

He urged strict action against terror sympathizers, blaming Pakistan for J&K's turmoil and advocating intensified crackdowns. He emphasized government efforts for peace, highlighting discussions with traders and stakeholders. "Fear of violence has decreased, enabling development. We aim to restore a peaceful Kashmir," he stated.

Meanwhile, Awami Ittehad Party (AIP) senior leader and MLA Langate, Sheikh Khurshid also condemned the move, calling it a grave injustice and a violation of natural justice.

Sheikh Khurshid questioned the government's selective approach, stating: "Prime Minister Narendra Modi ji says 'Nation is one, Law is one,' but then why are government employees in Jammu and Kashmir being arbitrarily dismissed without even being given a chance to defend themselves? Why are we being treated differently? This discrimination must end."

He urged Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha to adhere to the commitments of PM Modi and ensure that people in J&K are not let down. He emphasized that arbitrary dismissals undermine faith in the system and create an atmosphere of uncertainty among government employees.

So far, over 70 government employees have been dismissed on the charges of terror links over the past few years.

Waqf Bill To Safeguard

Territory at this time. The lieutenant governor is the administrative head of the UT but we have also elected a government. We have a very successful government which was elected very recently," he said.

On the reduction in budgetary allocation for Jammu and Kashmir for the 2025-26 fiscal, Rijju said the provisions have been made as per the spending capacity of the Union Territory in the current fiscal.

"The budgetary allocations are according to the Union Territory status. The finance minister has made it clear that the allocation is as per spending capacity. She also said whatever money is needed will be provided. It does not include the centrally-sponsored schemes. There is no dearth of resources," he said.

The minister also said that there was relief for horticulture farmers and handicraft artisans of Jammu and Kashmir in the Budget.

"J&K has a special situation. There is a lot of relief for horticulture and handicrafts. Special mission mode announcements have been made to enhance exports of handicrafts and Kashmiri art," Rijju said.

After this Budget, small-scale and medium-scale industries will get a boost in Jammu and Kashmir, he added.

Rijju also highlighted the provisions of the 2024-25 Union Budget, calling it a significant step towards achieving the vision of a "Viksit Bharat" (Developed India).

"In this budget, India's middle class has received a major relief as income up to Rs 12 lakh has been made tax-free. This is a big step towards the welfare of the people, allowing the middle class to live without financial hassles," he said, congratulating the middle-class citizens on the reform.

The Minister further pointed out that the budget has prioritized industrial growth, both for small and large-scale industries, while also taking major steps for farmers. "The Kisan Credit Card limit has been enhanced to Rs 5 lakh, ensuring better financial support for farmers," he said.

He credited Prime Minister Narendra Modi for prioritizing J&K's development, stating that PM Modi had instructed his cabinet ministers to engage with the region at the grassroots level. "The day is not far when Jammu and Kashmir will be counted among the most developed places in the world. Over the last decade, I have seen how the region has changed."

He said, "There is no shortage of resources from the Centre. Earlier, the infrastructure budget was Rs 1,000 crore, but today it has been increased to Rs 11,000 crore."

Rijju said that the Centre has put relentless efforts to transform Jammu and Kashmir during the past few years. "The Union Territory has witnessed remarkable infrastructure development, with express highways and railway connectivity linking Kashmir with the rest of the country," he said. "The events like the Khelo India Winter Games have put the region on the global tourism map."

The Minister also emphasized that the PM Modi led government has provided a clean and corruption-free administration. "No minister in our government has been found involved in any scam or corruption. If any act of corruption is detected, strict action will be taken. There are no loopholes in governance," he assured.

HC Orders

said, adding, "The Supreme Court has issued a slew of comprehensive directions in larger public interest to streamline urban development and enforcement."

The Supreme Court, the Bench said, in a catena of decisions has categorically held that illegality of unauthorized constructions cannot be perpetuated.

"If a construction is made in contravention of the Acts/Rules, it would be construed as illegal and unauthorized construction, which has to be necessarily demolished," the court said, adding, "It cannot be legitimized or protected solely under the ruse of the passage of time or citing inaction of authorities or by taking recourse to the excuse that substantial money has been spent on the said construction."

In the ultimate analysis, the Bench said, the Supreme Court opined that constructions put up in violation or deviation of building plan approved by local authority and constructions which are audaciously put up without any building planning approval, cannot be encouraged.

"Each and every construction must be made scrupulously following and strictly adhering to the rules," the court said, adding, "If any violation is brought to the notice of the Courts, it has to be curtailed with iron hands and any lenience afforded would amount to showing misplaced sympathy."

The Supreme Court has also observed that unless the administration is streamlined and the persons entrusted with implementation of the act are held accountable for their failure in performing their statutory obligations, violations of this nature would go unchecked and become more rampant, the Bench said.

"If the officials are let scot-free, they will be emboldened and would continue to turn a nelson's eye to all the illegalities resulting in derailment of all planned projects and pollution, disorderly traffic, security risks, etc."

The court underlined that the Supreme Court issued a slew of directions and mentioned them. Among others, the Top court has said that while issuing the building planning permission, an undertaking be obtained from the builder/applicant, as the case may be, to the effect that possession of the building will be entrusted and/or handed over to the owners/beneficiaries only after obtaining completion/occupation certificate from the authorities concerned.

The builder/developer/owner shall cause to be displayed at the construction site, a copy of the approved plan during the entire period of construction and the authorities concerned shall inspect the premises periodically and maintain a record of such inspection in their official records, the court said.

"Upon conducting personal inspection and being satisfied that the building is constructed in accordance with the building planning permission given and there is no deviation in such construction in any manner, the completion/occupation certificate in respect of residential / commercial building, be issued by the authority concerned to the parties concerned, without causing undue delay," the court said,

adding, "If any deviation is noticed, action must be taken in accordance with the Act and the process of issuance of completion/occupation certificate should be deferred, unless and until the deviations pointed out are completely rectified."

Referring to case in hand in which two brothers raised construction in Srinagar in "blatant violation of terms and conditions of building permission", the court said, authorities were required to take stern action against the officials and officers who were at the helm of affairs at the relevant point of time when the violations were committed by the duo.

J&K No Longer

you to go into the historical perspective to know the background as to why he declined," he said, adding that another "towering giant" of Indian political firmament, Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel, took upon himself the task of integrating physical states except the state of Jammu and Kashmir.

"Now, the winds of change have brought peace and progress. There was a demand by a great son of the soil for 'Ek Desh Mein Ek Nishan, Ek Vidhan, Ek Pradhan' and that has been accomplished," Dhankhar said.

Stating that he first came to Jammu and Kashmir in the early 1980s when he visited Gulmarg, Sonamarg and other places along with his family, the vice-president said, "The second visit was a very painful experience. I was elected to Parliament in 1989. I came to Srinagar as a member of the council of ministers. We did not see even dozens of people on the streets of Srinagar and the scene was one of gloom.

"Look at where we are now. It was a glorying moment for me in Rajya Sabha when it was declared that more than two crore tourists had been to Jammu and Kashmir."

Dhankhar also said that Jammu and Kashmir, which had the highest voter turnout in 35 years during the 2024 Lok Sabha polls, witnessed a 30-point increase in voter participation in the Valley.

"Democracy has found its real voice, its real resonance. The region is no longer a story of conflict; every investment proposal in new Kashmir is not just about capital, it is about trust being restored, faith being rewarded.

"The change is not imperceptible; it is perceptible. Perception has changed, ground reality is changing, hopes of the people are soaring," he said.

In just two years, Dhankhar said Jammu and Kashmir received investment proposals worth Rs 65,000 crore, signalling strong economic interest in the region.

"For the first time since 2019, foreign

direct investment (FDI) has entered Jammu and Kashmir with multiple international companies showing interest. The region is a confluence of confidence and capital," the vice-president said.

"The visit of over two crore tourists in 2023 gave a tremendous boost to the local economy. What was once called heaven on earth is now a symbol of hope and prosperity. The winds of change have brought peace and progress. Let us be the architects of a new dawn for Jammu and Kashmir and for Bharat," he added.

NC Leader's Remark

would impact this sector. Even several Arab countries have regulated alcohol policies," he stated. He further emphasized the necessity of involving stakeholders, including travel agents and tourism representatives, in discussions before making a final decision.

His remarks, however, have been met with opposition from many of his voters and activists advocating for the ban. Imran Ali, a resident of the constituency, expressed his disappointment, saying, "It is disgraceful that an elected representative would make such a statement. Just some time ago, he performed the holy pilgrimage, and now he defends the sale of liquor. This is shameful." Ali further stressed that an overwhelming majority of Kashmiris support a ban on alcohol due to religious and cultural reasons.

Social activist Hakim Suhail Abbas, who hails from Zadibal, also voiced his opposition, arguing that the interests of local inhabitants should take precedence over tourists. "The land of Jammu and Kashmir belongs to its natives, not tourists. Lawmakers must take a stand to preserve the social and cultural fabric of the region by supporting a liquor ban," he asserted.

Former Mayor of Srinagar, Junaid Azim Matto, also took a jab at Tanvir, criticizing the National Conference's stance on the issue. Taking to social media, Matto remarked sarcastically, "As for NC's stand on a liquor ban and J&K being made a 'Dry State'—here we go. Since tourism and Arab countries, ergo 'Yes' to alcohol in Kashmir. Congratulations to the 'stakeholders' lobbying for free-flowing alcohol and the patron-party of everything rotten in Kashmir."

The controversy arises at a time when a private members' bill, proposed by PDP legislator Fayaz Mir and NC legislator Ahsan Pardesi, is set to be tabled in the upcoming budget session. The bill aims to implement a complete liquor ban in Jammu and Kashmir, in line with the cultural and religious sentiments of the majority population.

Despite repeated calls and messages Tanvir Sadiq did not respond to this reporter's request for a comment.

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Focus On Rohit & Kohli As Team India Lands In Dubai For Champions Trophy

Press Trust of India

DUBAI: The Indian team made its touch down in the city on Saturday, hoping to bag the ICC Champions Trophy, starting from February 18, for the second time since 2013.

India had last won the ICC marquee event in England 12 years back under the legendary MS Dhoni.

The players and support staff trooped into a waiting bus, in line with the new BCCI diktat of travelling as a group, before proceeding to the designated team hotel.

Earlier, dressed nattily in a white T-shirt and black tracks, Rohit Sharma got down from his car, and walked towards his teammates at the departure lounge amid loud calls of 'Rohit bhai' and 'Rohit sir' by fans waiting near the Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj International Airport entrance in Mumbai.

Most of the squad members arrived in the team bus includ-



ing head coach Gautam Gambhir, vice-captain Shubman Gill and star batter Virat Kohli, and the stars obliged some fans by signing autographs or waving at a few of them.

Soon, the team boarded an afternoon flight to Dubai amid heightened optimism of netting another global trophy after

winning the T20 World Cup last June.

A Jasprit Bumrah-less India will open their campaign against Bangladesh on February 20 in Dubai before the much-anticipated blockbuster against traditional rivals Pakistan on February 23, and then the Men in Blue will take on New Zea-

land on March 2 to round off their league engagements.

The confidence -- of the fans and the team -- has been boosted by India's recent 3-0 ODI series whitewash at home over England.

Those supporters assembled at the Mumbai airport will be hoping that the icons, led by

Rohit and Kohli, will pull off another triumph like they did in the West Indies last year.

One Last Opportunity For Greats?

India will need some runs from Rohit and Kohli, who have copped heavy criticism after repeated failures in Test cricket.

But they replied in kind, as Rohit made a characteristically fluent hundred -- a 90-ball 119 in Cuttack ODI against England -- and Kohli his 73rd fifty in Ahmedabad.

This might have brought them a temporary relief but a productive outing in the Champions Trophy is mandatory in the context of the duo's future in top-flight cricket.

With the emphasis firmly on hitting the next World Test Championship cycle from June and building a team for the 2027 50-over World Cup the Ajit Agarkar-chaired selection panel will closely observe how the two veterans fare in Dubai.

Short TAKES

IPL 2025: Opening Match Set To Feature KKR, RCB

The IPL 2025 is set to begin on March 22 with a match between title holders Kolkata Knight Riders and Royal Challengers Bengaluru at the Eden Gardens, also the designated venue for this year's final on May 25.

The PTI has learned that this year too, Dharamsala and Guwahati will host a couple of IPL matches.

Dharamsala will be the second home venue of Punjab Kings after Mullanpur, while Rajasthan Royals will set up their base in the North Eastern City apart from regular venue Jaipur.

The BCCI is yet to release the schedule but it is expected that the governing body will announce the full list of venues and matches early next week.

In IPL 2024, Punjab had hosted Chennai Super Kings and RCB and had lost both the matches. However, this year the picturesque venue might get an additional match.

The Royals played PBKS and KKR at Guwahati last year, while they lost the match against Punjab, the match against the Knight Riders ended in a washout.

Five-time champions Super Kings, set to be led by Rituraj Gaikwad, will open their IPL 2025 campaign on March 23 against Hardik Pandya-led Mumbai Indians, who also owns five titles in the league.

England Opener Ben Duckett Declared Fit Ahead Of CT

England received a timely boost ahead of the ICC Champions Trophy, with opener Ben Duckett being declared fit for the tournament, beginning on February 19.

Duckett, who had sustained a groin injury while fielding during the third ODI against India in Ahmedabad last Wednesday, underwent scans, and the results confirmed that the injury was not serious.

"Scans on a left groin injury have confirmed that England men's batter Ben Duckett is fit and available for the ICC Champions Trophy," the England Cricket Board said in a statement.

England endured a 0-3 whitewash against India in the ODI series following a 1-4 loss in the five-match T20I series, and they will begin their Champions Trophy campaign on February 22.

"The England squad will arrive in Pakistan on 18 February ahead of their opening match of the tournament against Australia in Lahore on Saturday, 22 February," ECB said.

Man City's Ederson Sets Assist Record For GKs In PL

Manchester City's Ederson set a Premier League record for goalkeepers Saturday against Newcastle by providing his sixth assist in the competition.

Ederson's long ball up the pitch in the 19th minute fell to Omar Marmoush, who calmly lobbed Newcastle goalkeeper Martin Dubravka for the opening goal at the Etihad Stadium.

The Brazil international surpassed former Leeds, Tottenham and Blackburn goalkeeper Paul Robinson, who delivered five assists in the Premier League.

It was Ederson's third assist of this season, which according to stats provider Opta is also a Premier League record in a single campaign.

Marmoush completed a first-half hat trick for City to put the hosts 3-0 up by the 33rd minute.

FA Charge Slot, Liverpool, Everton Over Derby Day Chaos

The English FA has charged Everton and Liverpool as well as Liverpool manager Arne Slot and assistant manager Sipke Hulshoff after a chaotic end to Wednesday's 2-2 Premier League draw.

Abdoulaye Doucoure's taunting of Liverpool fans following a 98th-minute equaliser by James Tarkowski set off a scuffle between players with Doucoure and Liverpool's Curtis Jones being sent off by referee Michael Oliver. Slot, who appeared to say something to the referee after the match concluded, was given a red card, as was Hulshoff.

"It is alleged that both clubs failed to ensure their players and/or technical area occupants did not behave in an improper and/or provocative way following the final whistle," the FA said in a statement on Friday.

"The Liverpool manager allegedly acted in an improper manner and/or used insulting and/or abusive words and/or behaviour towards both the match referee and an assistant referee after the match had finished."

J&K Athletes Shine At 38th National Games, Clinch 24 Medals



Observer News Service

SRINAGAR: J&K athletes delivered an exceptional performance at the 38th National Games, held in Uttarakhand from January 28 to February 14, securing 24 medals, including 5

gold, 6 silver and 13 bronze.

The National Games, inspired by the Olympics, brought together top athletes from 28 states, 8 Union Territories and SSB, competing in 34 different sports disciplines. J&K's contingent, comprising 108 athletes (87 male and 21 female), demonstrated their skills across 14 sporting events, including Wushu, Boxing, Netball, Fencing, Gymnastics, Judo, Yoga, Cycling, Water Sports, Archery, Shooting, Taekwondo, and Wrestling.

Their participation was made possible through the support of the J&K Sports Council, which played a pivotal role in sponsoring coaching camps, equipment, technical support and ensuring the athletes had the necessary resources to compete at the highest level.

Minister for Youth Services and Sports, Satish Sharma, congratulated the athletes on their outstanding achievements, calling it a proud moment for J&K. He reaffirmed the government's commitment to enhancing sports infrastructure, coaching facilities and training programs.

Sarmad Hafeez, IAS, Secretary, Youth Services and Sports, also extended his heartfelt congratulations to the athletes and their coaches.

Sportstar Ace Awards

Downtown Heroes Win 'Sports For Social Good' Award



Observer News Service

MUMBAI: Downtown Heroes FC was honoured with the "Sports for Social Good" award at The Hindu Group's Sportstar Ace Awards on Friday in a grand ceremony at the Taj Mahal Hotel, Mumbai. The award was presented by Nirmala Lakshman, Chairperson of The Hindu Group, to the club's founders Kaiser Bhat, Mushtaq Bashir and Hinan Manzoor.

Recognizing DHFC's impact on youth development and social transformation through football, Lakshman praised the club's management and its achievements, emphasizing its role in promoting sports as a force for good.

Founded in 2020 with a mission to inspire and uplift young talent in Kashmir, Downtown Heroes FC has become a beacon of hope, fostering resilience, inclusivity and sportsmanship in the region. Through their initiatives, the club has provided a platform for aspiring footballers, promoting positive engagement and community development.

DHFC has emerged as a powerhouse for grassroots football, providing world-class training and opportunities for young players. The club, known for its motto "Players are bred, not born", has played in

prestigious tournaments like the Durand Cup and won the Srinagar Premier League in 2023.

The award ceremony saw sporting legends like Baichung Bhatia, Viswanathan Anand and Olympic medallist P.V. Sindhu in attendance, all applauding DHFC's commitment to excellence. As the club's journey was showcased, the hall resonated with appreciation.

Expressing his gratitude, Kaiser Bhat said, "This award strengthens our resolve to use football as a tool for social change." Mushtaq Bashir added, "This is just the beginning; our dream is to take DHFC to greater heights." Hinan Manzoor remarked, "Our success is a testament to the talent and determination of our players, and we are committed to building a legacy."

With its unwavering vision, Downtown Heroes FC is set to redefine football in India, inspiring the next generation of athletes and change-makers.

The Sportstar Aces Awards, hosted annually by Sportstar, celebrate excellence in Indian sports, recognizing athletes, teams, and organizations that contribute significantly to the sporting landscape.

Jay Shah, Chairman of the International Cricket Council, was the chief guest of the function.

No Official Decision Yet On KIWG 2025 Postponement: Secy YSS

Agencies

SRINAGAR: Contrary to reports suggesting the postponement of the 5th Khelo India Winter Games 2025, Secretary of Youth Services and Sports, Sarmad Hafeez, has denied any such decision.

Sarmad Hafeez termed the reports as mere rumours,

stating that no official decision has been taken regarding rescheduling the event.

Earlier, there were reports claiming that the Winter Games, originally scheduled to be held in Gulmarg from February 22-25, had been pushed to the first week of March due to insufficient snow accumulation. A state-

ment attributed to the Winter Games Association of J&K had also mentioned that new dates for athlete screenings would be announced soon.

However, Hafeez's clarification now puts the speculation to rest, reaffirming that the event's schedule remains unchanged unless an official decision is made. (KNS)

Ashwin Slams Superstar Culture In Indian Cricket

Press Trust of India

NEW DELHI: Stop treating Indian cricketers as demigods and "normalise things" going forward so that they remain grounded and relatable to common people, spin legend R Ashwin said while slamming the prevailing superstar culture in the team.

Ashwin, India's most successful off-spinner with 765 international wickets across formats, said batting maestros such as Virat Kohli and Rohit Sharma scoring a century should be considered "business as usual" as they have already achieved so much in their career.

"It is important to normalise things in Indian cricket. We must not encourage this superstardom and super celebrities within the Indian cricket team," Ashwin said on his Hindi YouTube channel, 'Ash Ki Baat'.

"We must normalise all these things going forward. We are cricketers. We are not actors or superstars."

"We are sportspersons, and we must be someone that the common people should resonate with, and can compare them-



selves with."

In recent times, Indian men's team's head coach Gautam Gambhir has also strongly spoken against the superstar culture in the team, and like Ashwin, urged that the focus should be on team effort rather than individual achievements.

Gambhir, himself a successful former India player who has rubbed shoulders with legends such as Sachin Tendulkar, Rahul Dravid and Anil Kumble, has made it his mission to end Indian cricket's affinity for superstardom.

Ashwin, who retired from international cricket after a glittering 14-year career, further said, "For example if you are a Rohit Sharma or a Virat Kohli, who have achieved so much. When you hit one more century, it is not just about your achievement anymore. It should be the business as usual, and our goals should be bigger than these achievements."

Ashwin believed that personal milestones should not overshadow the ultimate goal of winning tournaments for the country. The spin great also raised con-

cerns over the Indian selectors' decision to name five spinners in the team for the upcoming ICC Champions Trophy.

India have picked Kuldeep Yadav, Axar Patel, Washington Sundar, Ravindra Jadeja and Varun Chakravathy in the final squad for the mega event starting in Pakistan on February 19.

"Five spinners in Dubai? I don't know. I think we are one spinner too many if not two," he said.

"The two left-arm spinners are your best all-rounders alongside Hardik Pandya."

"So both Axar Patel and Ravindra Jadeja are going to play. Hardik will also play and Kuldeep will play."

"If you want Varun Chakravathy in the team, then you will have to make a pacer sit out and use Hardik as your second pacer. Else you will have to drop a spinner to bring in a third seamer," Ashwin said.

The Tamil Nadu player, who finished his career with 537 wickets in 106 Tests, 156 scalps in 116 ODIs and 72 in 65 T20Is, decided to retire abruptly from all forms of cricket after the drawn third Test against Australia in Brisbane.

Merino Scores Late Double As Arsenal Beats Leicester 2-0

Agencies

LEICESTER: Mikel Merino solved Arsenal's attacking problems with two late goals off the bench to secure a 2-0 win at relegation-threatened Leicester in the Premier League on Saturday.

With Arsenal's makeshift front three struggling to create chances, Merino -- a central midfielder -- came on in the 69th minute to play as a striker and quickly got on the end of two good crosses to decide the game.

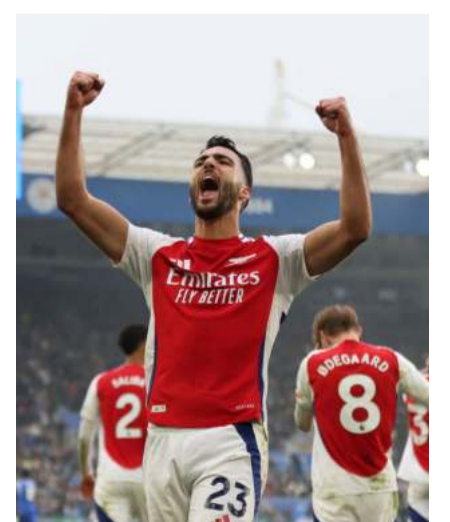
The Spain international headed home a pinpoint ball into the box from 17-year-old Ethan Nwaneri in the 81st and then steered in a low cross from Leandro Trossard in the 87th.

Merino said manager Mikel Arteta only told him when he was about to go on that his job was to play up front.

The win puts Arsenal within four points of leader Liverpool, which can restore the gap to seven points when it hosts Wolves at home on Sunday.

It was Arsenal's first game since leading scorer Kai Havertz sustained a season-ending hamstring tear in training in Dubai, joining striker Gabriel Jesus and winger Bukayo Saka on the long-term injury list.

While the front three of Trossard, Raheem Sterling and Nwaneri struggled to



create chances, the latter produced another impressive performance to further boost his rapidly growing reputation.

The teenager hit the woodwork twice, shaving the top of the crossbar from outside the area on the hour mark and then hitting the post with a fierce strike in the 76th. And after scoring two spectacular recent goals against Girona in the Champions League and Manchester City in the league, Nwaneri turned provider this time for Merino's breakthrough goal.

'I thought I was dead': Kayaker swallowed by humpback whale recounts 'strange' incident

Agenceis

A huge humpback whale briefly scooped a kayaker in its mouth in the seas off the coast of southern Chile before spitting him out unscathed in a dramatic incident caught on camera.

The kayaker, Adrian Simancas, was out with his father last weekend in the seas off the town of Punta Arenas, when the whale surfaced and scooped him up in his mouth. "I felt like I was being lifted, but it was clearly too strong to be a wave," said Simancas.

"When I turned, I felt something blue and white passing close to my face, like on one side and above. I didn't understand what was happening. Then everything... I went under and thought I had been swallowed."

Luckily, the whale

quickly spat out Simancas unharmed. His father, in another kayak, caught the whole thing on camera.

Watch the video here as shared by user Neniethisisme on X:

"I turned on the camera and heard a wave crash behind me, loudly. When I turned, I didn't see anything," said his father, Dell Simancas.

"So that was the only moment of real fear because I didn't see Adrian for about three seconds. Then he suddenly shot out without the packraft, and a second later, the packraft emerged, and then I saw the fin of something."

Adrian Simancas was sure he was going to die during the ordeal.

"I thought I was done for, that I was dead. It was like three strange seconds down there," he said.

Pakistan couple kill 13-year-old maid over missing chocolate

Agenceis

A Pakistani couple appeared in court on Thursday accused of murdering a child maid, who police said they beat with a rolling pin for allegedly stealing chocolate.

Thirteen-year-old Iqra, who had only one name, was taken to hospital in the garrison city of Rawalpindi on Tuesday in a critical condition and later died of severe injuries.

A spokesman for Rawalpindi police said Rashid Shafiq and his wife Sana, who also goes by one name, were charged with murder and remanded in custody for four days to allow for an investigation.

"Initially it was ascertained that the lady used a rolling pin for torture," spokesman Sajjad ul Hassan told AFP.

"The victim had multiple fractures; legs, ankle, arms, head. All this happened due to a missing chocolate," he said.

Child labour in domestic work remains widespread in Pakistan, according to an International Labour Organisation report from 2022, with one in every four households employing a child in domestic work, predominantly girls aged 10-14.

It is illegal to employ individuals under the age of 15 but it remains

a common practice, with impoverished parents often sending their young daughters to work.

Iqra's father Sana Ullah, who lives in a rural Punjab village, told AFP that his daughter had been working with the couple for the past 22 months, during which they paid him 8,000 rupees (around \$28) a month.

"The beasts tortured my daughter in a way that no human could ever do," he told AFP.

"I demand justice for this brutality."

Domestic workers frequently face exploitation, violence and sexual abuse, with Pakistan's patriarchal and rigid social-class structure leaving them without a voice.

In the past, parents frequently forgave the accused through out-of-court settlements under Islamic law, which allows the victim's heirs to either seek retribution or accept compensation in the form of blood money.

Prosecutions for housemaid abuse are rare despite media attention on high-profile cases, with perpetrators facing few or no consequences.

In 2020, a couple in the same city was arrested for allegedly murdering their seven-year-old maid, who was blamed for letting a pet bird escape.

Gautam Adani, His Wife Offer 'Chadar' At Ajmer Sharif Dargah

Ajmer (Rajasthan): Adani Group Chairperson Gautam Adani, accompanied by his wife, Priti Adani, visited Ajmer Sharif Dargah in Rajasthan. They offered "makhamali chadar" and flowers at the revered shrine. The Ajmer Sharif Dargah is considered to be among the holiest Muslim shrines in India and is also a famous landmark in Ajmer. Khwaja Moin-ud-din Chishti, a Sufi saint from Persia, is enshrined here. In keeping with his secular teachings, its doors are open to people of all

faiths and religions.

Made of marble and gold plating, the actual tomb is guarded by a silver railing and a marble screen. During his reign, Emperor Akbar is known to have made a pilgrimage to Ajmer every year. He, as well as Emperor Shah Jahan, built mosques inside the shrine complex.

Minister of Minority Affairs Kiren Rijiju had last month presented a sacred chadar on behalf of Prime Minister Narendra Modi at the revered shrine of Khwaja Moin-ud-din Chishti in Ajmer.



ADVERTORIAL

MAHAKUMBH 2025

A Grand Confluence of Unity and Diversity

It is our responsibility to facilitate pilgrims journey. To achieve this, seamless coordination with the Railways must be maintained to ensure continuous train operations. Extra buses from the transport corporation are deployed to accommodate the rush. Please take your holy bath at the ghat nearest to you and avoid heading towards the Sangam Nose. Follow all instructions issued by the administration and help to maintain law & order

-Yogi Adityanath
Chief Minister Uttar Pradesh

51+ CRORE PILGRIMS took holy dip till 15.02.2025

The safeguard of the devotees at the Mahakumbh is the state government's top priority, and it adopts a multi-pronged approach to ensure the safety of devotees and tourists. From traffic management to security enhancements, every aspect of the grand spiritual gathering is meticulously monitored for all those present at the 'largest congregation of humanity.' With these comprehensive initiatives, Mahakumbh 2025 aspires to be not only a significant religious gathering but also a global celebration of spirituality, culture, safety, sustainability, and modernity.

This festival of Mahakumbh celebrates unity in diversity. People from all over India and the world gather on the sands of Sangam. There is no discrimination or casteism anywhere in this tradition that has been going on for thousands of years. Everyone takes a dip in the Sangam, has a community feast together and takes Prasad together. That is why Kumbh is the Mahakumbh of unity.

-Narendra Modi
Prime Minister

Extra Security Measures for Pilgrims Safety



- **Seven-Tier Security Framework:** A highly organized security system, including AI-driven surveillance, intelligence squads and drone monitoring, ensures a safe environment.
- **Enhanced Crowd Management:** Key areas with high footfall have been reinforced with additional security personnel, one-way routes, and strategic diversions to control congestion.
- **Strict Checkpoints:** Every entry point to the fairground is secured with paramilitary forces, barricades, and thorough screening of visitors.
- **River Safety:** The deployment of 3,800 Water Police personnel, remote-controlled life buoys and underwater drones has strengthened security at the Sangam and other bathing ghats.

Uninterrupted Traffic Flow & Safe Return of Pilgrims

- Authorities to ensure smooth traffic movement in and around Prayagraj.
- Additional Mela Special trains and Transport Corporation buses deployed for hassle-free travel.
- Increased patrolling on all major routes to prevent congestion.



- 26 Cities Directly air connected
- 7000+ new buses and 550 shuttle buses
- 13000+ trains with over 3300 special trains
- 1850 hectare parking area
- 1.60 lakh tents
- 88 holding areas to regulate crowd flow
- Over 1.5 lakh toilets installed



Holding Areas & Public Amenities

- Separate pathways for devotees to reach the Sangam and return after the holy dip.
- Border holding areas set up to manage crowd pressure in the fair zone.
- 200+ water ATMs, supplying 12,000-15,000 liters of drinking water daily.
- To prevent overcrowding at Prayagraj stations, deployment of more Mela Special trains.
- Additional buses & holding areas to manage returning pilgrims.
- Patrolling & traffic control enhanced across Prayagraj's main entry & exit routes.

Advanced Measures for Security

- The Uttar Pradesh Fire and Emergency Services Department deploys 04 articulating water towers (AWTs) in the fair area to prevent and address fire incidents.
- Over 351 fire-fighting vehicles are deployed in the Mahakumbh Mela area.
- Over 2,000 trained personnel, 50+ fire stations, and 20 fire posts are deployed for the Mahakumbh.



- Over 50,000 police personnel station themselves to ensure the safety of attendees.
- 57 permanent & 13 temporary police stations, along with 23 checkpoints.
- 700 boats equipped with security forces for 24/7 river surveillance.



Enhanced Crowd & Security Management

- Authorities in Ayodhya, Varanasi, Mirzapur, and Chitrakoot instructed to strengthen security.
- 07 Special Officers assigned to oversee operations until February 12.

Traffic & Road Management

- VIP movement restricted on key bathing days for pilgrim priority
- Strict enforcement of one-way traffic routes to maintain order.
- Relocation of street vendors to prevent roadblocks.
- Extensive use of barricading and signages to guide pilgrims.

UPCOMING HOLY DIP DAYS

26th February 2025, Maha Shivaratri

Super Speciality Healthcare in Mahakumbh Nagar

- Over 1000 Medical Personnel deployed
- Over 50 hospitals, staffed with 380+ doctors stationed at the Super Speciality Hospital in Mahakumbh Nagar
- High-tech arrangements for Minor Operations to Major Surgeries
- Over 2 lakh patients have already availed OPD services
- Over 2.5 lakh Pathology Tests conducted in Mahakumbh Nagar



- 24x7 high-tech health facilities with 6,000 beds, 125 ambulances, 07 river ambulances & 01 air ambulance.
- Dedicated health camps for elderly pilgrims and children focus on mobility assistance, hydration support, and emergency care.
- 12 CHC-PHCs, situated along the routes leading to the event, will be equipped with advanced technology to improve service quality.
- A 100-bed Central Hospital and 10 additional hospitals, including those in Jhansi and Arail, provide comprehensive healthcare for devotees & saints.
- "Bhishma Cubes" treat up to 200 people simultaneously & an AI-enabled 10-bed Intensive Care Unit (ICU) operates at the Central Hospital.
- Tele Medicine services offer remote consultations and prevent crowding in medical camps and hospitals.
- Collaboration with NGOs, health organizations, and private medical companies ensure additional medical support.



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