

Climate Change Tightens Grip

Kashmir's Rivers At Record Lows Amidst Dry Spell



File Photo

Agencies

Srinagar: The snowless winter and prolonged dry spell have deterred the recharging of water reservoirs with majority of the streams and river Jhelum flowing at below 'zero level'.

River Jhelum, the lifeline of Kashmir, continues to witness the receding water level.

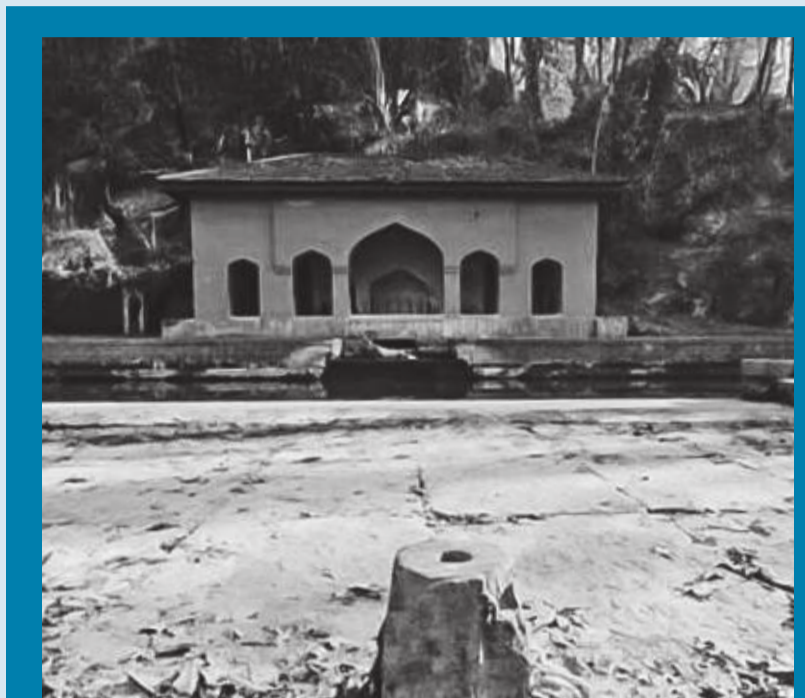
At Sangam, the Jhelum's water level has touched -1.01 ft, which

is below the Reduced Level (RL) of zero of gauge while at Ram Munshi Bagh, it stood at 3.52 feet and at Asham, the level has fallen to 0.75 feet.

As per the Irrigation & Flood Control Department's 'Kashmir Flood Watch', some of the nallahs including Lidder, Rambiyara, Ferozpora (Drung) and Pohru (Seelu) are also flowing below the RL of zero of gauge.

The officials | [More on P10](#)

- 79% rainfall deficit cripples water reserves
- 65% of water sources face severe depletion
- Jhelum's water level dips below zero at Sangam
- Lidder, Rambiyara, and Pohru streams drying up
- Baglihar Hydel Project struggles with low water flow
- Khelo India Winter Games postponed
- Foreign tourist arrivals plummet.
- Environmentalists warn of worsening droughts
- Lack of snowfall threatens Kashmir's agriculture, horticulture
- Govt struggles to ensure drinking water supply
- Unchecked urban expansion worsening crisis



Kashmir's Vital Achabal Spring Runs Dry

The famous Achabal spring, a vital water source in Kashmir, has completely dried up, leaving many people struggling for drinking water. Reports indicate that 65% of water sources across the region are facing severe depletion, contributing to drought-like conditions.

Environmental experts attribute this crisis to climate change and global warming, which have significantly

impacted the lower Himalayan region. "The Jhelum River, Kashmir's main water source, has recorded its lowest levels in decades. Other water sources, including subsoil water, are also drying up," environmentalist Aijaz Rasool said.

While some wetlands, such as Hokersar, have shown improvement due to temporary conservation measures, experts | [More on P10](#)

Hydropower Generation Dips By 84%

Owing to the less snowfall and low water level, in the past one month, the hydel power generation from the power plants across Jammu and Kashmir has further reduced by five percent. Overall, the hydro power generation from the local plants in Jammu and Kashmir has reduced by 84.17 percent. In the month of January, the Power Development Department (PDD) was generating nearly | [More on P10](#)

Lack Of Snowfall Hits Kashmir's Winter Tourism

The prolonged dry spell has significantly impacted the tourism industry, with a noticeable decline in bookings and a rise in cancellations, particularly in Gulmarg, a top winter destination. Aqib Chaya, a prominent hotelier and President of the Hoteliers Club Gulmarg, highlighted that the severe shortage of snowfall this season has affected business across the valley. Chaya said that the postponement of the | [More on P10](#)

Fresh WD Likely To Bring Rain, Snow

The Meteorological department Srinagar has said that Jammu and Kashmir is set to receive light to heavy rainfall and snowfall as fresh western disturbance is approaching.

The disturbances are expected to cause widespread precipitation across the Union Territory. The weather is expected to remain mostly dry today with no significant rainfall predicted. However, light rain is anticipated on February 18. By February 19, a more widespread spell of rain is likely, with moderate rainfall forecasted for several districts. On February 20, the intensity is expected | [More on P10](#)

HM To Review Implementation Of New Criminal Laws In J&K

LG, CM To Attend High-level Meet In Delhi

Observer News Service

Srinagar: In a significant development, Union Home Minister Amit Shah will chair a high-level meeting on Tuesday to review the implementation of new criminal laws in Jammu & Kashmir.

Sources said that the meeting will be attended by Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha, Chief Minister Omar Abdullah, and top officials from the central government and Jammu and Kashmir as well.

They said that the meeting will start at 11 am in the ministry of Home Affairs office in North Block, New Delhi.

A close aide to Chief Minister Omar Abdullah confirmed that he has been invited to attend the meeting.

The Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita, the Bharatiya Nagarik Suraksha Sanhita and the Bharatiya Sakshya Adhinyam replaced the colonial-era Indian Penal Code (IPC), the Code of Criminal Procedure CrPC and the Indian



Evidence Act of 1872 after new criminal laws came into effect from July 1 last year.

Notably, Union Home Minister Amit Shah has been chairing similar review meetings on the implementation of three new criminal laws in other states. He asked the states to establish a model Directorate of Prosecution system in line with the new criminal laws.

The Home Minister said that the Narendra Modi government is committed to providing a speedy and transparent justice system to the countrymen.

He said that to strengthen law and order, it | [More on P10](#)

Army Fully Capable To Handle Any Border Challenge: LG

Observer News Service

Jammu: Amid several incidents of cross-border firing and an IED attack along the LoC recently, Jammu and Kashmir Lt Governor Manoj Sinha on Monday said the Indian Army is fully capable of dealing with any type of situation on the borders and is giving a befitting response to enemy forces.

He also asserted that there will be no pause in anti-terror operations as clear directions have been given to security agencies to wipe out the menace and ensure peace and tranquillity in the region.

"Indian Army is fully capable and giving a befitting



response on the border," Sinha told reporters on the sidelines of a sports event here.

He was responding to a question on the recent incidents on the Line of Control (LoC) in Jammu region where two army personnel, including a captain,

were killed in an Improvised Explosive Device (IED) attack carried out by suspected terrorists in Akhnoor sector of Jammu region on February 11.

Two army personnel were also injured in separate incidents of cross-border firing along the LoC in Rajouri and Poonch districts, while one more army personnel was injured in a landmine explosion last week.

Indian Army's retaliatory action also resulted in "heavy casualties" on the Pakistani side.

Ceasefire violation along the borders in J&K is rare ever since India and Pakistan renewed | [More on P10](#)

Stresses On Public-Private Partnerships

Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha on Monday emphasised the role of public-private partnerships to empower youth by improving infrastructure, providing opportunities and opening up new avenues in diverse sectors in the Union

Territory. "Public-Private Partnerships can provide us an extensive network of skilling and entrepreneurship projects and we can take these facilities to the grassroots levels," Sinha said. Addressing a gathering after inaugurating the | [More on P10](#)

In Rare Gesture, PM Receives 'Brother' Qatar Emir At Airport



KO Web Desk

New Delhi: Emir of Qatar Sheikh Tamim Bin Hamad Al-Thani, who arrived here on Monday on a two-day state visit to India, will meet President Droupadi Murmu and hold talks with Prime Minister Narendra Modi on February 18.

Extending a rare gesture of hospitality, PM Modi went to the airport to receive the Emir of Qatar, who arrived in Delhi in the evening.

"Went to the airport to

welcome my brother, Amir of Qatar H H Sheikh Tamim Bin Hamad Al Thani. Wishing him a fruitful stay in India and looking forward to our meeting tomorrow," the prime minister said in a post on X.

The Emir of Qatar's visit will provide "further momentum to our growing multifaceted partnership", the Ministry of External Affairs (MEA) said in a statement on Saturday.

The Emir of Qatar will be accompanied by a high-level delegation, | [More on P10](#)

Lack of Coordination Stalls Schemes In J&K: Rijju

Observer News Service

Srinagar- Union Minister for Parliamentary Affairs and Minority Affairs, Kiren Rijju, said that a lack of coordination between Jammu and Kashmir administration and the ministry of Minority Affairs had affected the implementation of schemes and disbursement of funds.

Speaking to the media, Rijju said that ministry-related meetings were held, and officers from J&K's social welfare department provided updates about ongoing schemes. "Earlier, there was not enough funding, I have seen where the problem is," he said.

Rijju stated that projects and schemes must be uploaded on the portal before they can be considered for funding.

He said that the ministry aimed to provide support in the health, education, and sports sectors, as well as in local handicrafts and handloom. He also mentioned that a project has been proposed | [More on P10](#)

ARMS LICENSE SCAM

Court Seeks MHA Decision On 3 IAS Officers' Prosecution

Agencies

Srinagar: The Jammu Kashmir and Ladakh High Court has directed the Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA) to submit its final decision on the prosecution sanction of three IAS officers allegedly involved in the arms license scam.

A Division Bench comprising Chief Justice Tashi Rabstan and Justice M.A. Chowdhary ordered the MHA to file an Action Taken Report regarding Dr. Shahid Iqbal Choudhary, Niraj Kumar, and Yasha Mudgal, all former District Magistrates of Udhampur, before the next hearing.

The J&K government had forwarded their prosecution sanction request to MHA on December 27, 2024.

The court's directive came in response to a Public Interest Litigation (PIL No.



09/2012) filed by Sheikh Mohammad Shafi and others, highlighting delays in granting prosecution sanctions against eight IAS officers allegedly involved in the scam. The petitioners' counsel, Advocate S.S. Ahmed, argued that both MHA and the J&K government were deliberately stalling the process to shield high-profile officers, despite the CBI's recommendation for prosecution. Earlier, the MHA had

granted prosecution sanction against Rajeev Ranjan, former DM Kupwara, in a related case. However, Ahmed pointed out that the J&K government had advised against prosecution in its status reports dated December 5 and December 20, 2023, exposing what he termed a "malafide intention" to protect bureaucrats.

Senior Additional Advocate General (AAG) Mohsin Qadri, representing the J&K government, stated that the status report from the General Administration Department (GAD) was yet to be considered by the court. The Division Bench, however, referred to a hard copy of the report previously submitted in open court.

Directing the MHA to clarify its stance, the court scheduled the next hearing for March 20, next month. (KNT)

Accused Gets 27 Yrs RI for 'Rape of Minor'

Observer News Service

Srinagar: A trial court in Ganderbal district has sentenced a man to 27 years of rigorous imprisonment for raping and abducting a minor. The court convicted Mohammad Saleem Taploo for offences under section 4 of the Protection of Children from Sexual Offences Act (POCSO) and section 363 of the Ranbir Penal Code (RPC), a police spokesperson said.

"The court convicted the accused for both the offences with the quantum of punishment being rigorous imprisonment for a term of seven years and a fine of Rs 25,000 for kidnapping which would run separately with a rigorous imprisonment for a term of 20 years and a fine of Rs 50,000 for the offences against POCSO," the spokesperson said.

In a separate case, police secured a conviction against



Amir Ashraf Zargar for offences under sections 363 of the RPC (abduction) and 376 of the RPC (rape). "The court sentenced the accused to imprisonment for a term of seven years and a fine of Rs 10,000 for kidnapping and seven years term and a fine of Rs 25,000 for the offence of rape. Both sentences will run concurrently," the spokesperson said.

In the third case, registered under 8/20, 29 NDPS Act, Ganderbal Police secured conviction against two accused persons namely Sahil Ahmad Khan son of Manzoor Ahmad Khan | [More on P10](#)

Govt Probing Kathua Deaths: CM

Observer News Service

Srinagar: Chief Minister Omar Abdullah on Monday expressed grief over the mysterious deaths of two men in a remote village in Kathua district and said he has asked the concerned officers to probe the matter.

Bodies of Roshan Lal, 45, and Shamsheer, 37, were retrieved from the banks of a stream in Batheri village in Billawar on Sunday and preliminary information revealed that the deceased had been strangled to death.

"Deeply anguished by the tragic death of two persons at Billawar, Kathua. My thoughts and prayers are with their families during this difficult time. My office is in touch with the local MLA and the concerned officers have been asked to investigate the cause of these deaths," Abdullah wrote on X.

Station House Officer of Billawar Police Station, Jitender Singh, said police had already registered a murder case in the incident | [More on P10](#)



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Apply For The 13th Batch Of SBI Youth For India Fellowship

- Open to Indian citizens, Overseas Citizens of India (OCIs), and citizens of Nepal and Bhutan
A 13 month Paid Fellowship Programme offers fresh graduates and young professionals the chance to create sustainable solutions for rural development.

Jammu: SBI Foundation, the CSR arm of the State Bank of India Group, has announced the registrations for the 13th Batch of its flagship program, the SBI Youth for India Fellowship, inviting applications from young, dynamic individuals eager to contribute to rural development.

development objectives in rural areas. Emphasizing the significance of the Fellowship in empowering youth to contribute to India's progress, Mr. Sanjay Prakash, Managing Director & CEO, SBI Foundation said, "The SBI Youth for India Fellowship aligns with the vision of a 'Viksit Bharat' by empowering the youth to drive transformative change in rural India.



ment across these key areas. The program has positively impacted more than 1,50,000 lives through various grassroots interventions and community engagement initiatives in over 250

villages spanning 20 States across India. Some of the notable SBI Youth for India alumni include Siddharth Daga (YFI 2016-17 Batch), Co-founder of NeoMotion, which customises Tech-Enabled Wheelchairs, who recently drew appreciation from Hon'ble Prime Minister Narendra Modi for the vision.

Water, Technology, Women's Empowerment, Self-Governance, Social Entrepreneurship, Traditional Craft, and Alternate Energy. Fellows work on one of these themes based on their interests during the 13-month program.

Office of the Naib Tehsildar Pattan
Sub... issuance of registration order in respect of delayed birth.. PUBLIC NOTICE...
The registrar birth BDO Singapore has submitted a case file pertaining to birth of Hameeda Akhter D/o Zaffar Ali Dar R/o Trikbal Hanjiwera Tehsil Pattan distt baramulla with verified date of birth 31/12/2017 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.. fko

LOST OF WALLET
I Mohammad Ashraf Ganai S/o Late Noor Mohammad Ganai R/o Ellahi Bagh Buchpora 90 feet Road Soura, Srinagar have lost my wallet while travelling from Ahmad Nagar to Soura. My wallet contains Driving license, Aadhar Card, ATM cards and some Important Document. If anyone finds it, please contact me. Otherwise, I will be applying for a duplicate. 7006311817

NOTICE
I Assad Dar S/o Gh Qadir Dar R/o Naina b Bijbehara Anantnag, want to transfer my Electricity Connection bearing Consumer Id 0209010009475 from Assad Dar S/o Gh Qadir Dar R/o Naina b Bijbehara Anantnag To Mohammad Saleem Dar S/o Assadullah Dar R/o Naina Gund Baba Khalil Sangam, Bijbehara Anantnag 192124. In this regard, if anybody is having any objection may file his/her objection in the Sub division Office Bijbehara within a weeks time after that no objection will be entertained. Media Line Ads

Government of Jammu & Kashmir
OFFICE OF THE EXECUTIVE ENGINEER JAL SHAKTI (PHE) DIVISION SHOPIAN
NOTICE INVITING E-TENDERS

Notice Inviting E-Tenders-NIT No.19/JSDS of 2024-25 Dt:-15.02.2025
For and on behalf of Lt. Governor of Jand K U.T, e-tenders on percentage basis are invited in Single cover system from approved and eligible contractors registered with J&KUT Govt. for the following works:-

Table with 8 columns: S. No., NAME OF WORK, Advertised Amount (Rs in lacs), Earnest Money (EMD) Rs, Time for completion, Class of Contract, Cost of Tender document (Rs), Major Head of Account, Tender opening authority

1. The NIT Consisting of qualifying information, eligibility criteria, specifications, bill of quantities (BOQ) set to terms and conditions of contract and other details can be seen/downloaded from the departmental website www.jktenders.gov.in from :-

Table with 3 columns: S. No., Publishing date, Download Date Starts, BID Submission Date Starts, BID Submission Date Ends, Date of opening of tenders

The bids shall be deposited in electronic format on the website www.jktenders.gov.in and The bids uploaded shall be opened online on above mentioned date by the Executive Engineer JAL SHAKTI (PHE) DIVISION SHOPIAN in presence of the bidders who may wish to be present. In case of holiday or office happening to be closed on the basis of opening of the bid, the same will be opened on the next working day at the same time and venue.

- 2. Bidders must ensure to upload scanned copies (on 100dpi) of all necessary documents like Cost of Tender document in the form of Treasury Challan (MH-0215) in favour of Executive Engineer JAL SHAKTI (PHE) DIVISION SHOPIAN / latest GST clearance certificate /Registration card duly renewed along with Verification/BID Security in the form of EMD as per above. The date of CDR/FDR/BG should be between the date of start of bid and bid submission end date. After opening of tenders online, the 1st lowest bidder shall be asked to deposit the CDR/FDR pledged to tender receiving authority and other documents in original. The CDR/ FDR and other documents in original shall be deposited within two Days positively after opening of tenders. The EMD in the shape of CDR/FDR of the successful bidder will be retained as performance security deposit till expiry of defect liability period, whereas the EMD of unsuccessful bidders will be returned latest by 30 days after award of the contract. The check list of documents is attached with the NIT & bidders are advised to recheck the uploaded documents as per the Check list.
3. Contractor / Bidder who fails to submit the CDR/FDR / Treasury Challans as required; there EMD will be forfeited besides they will be barred/prohibited from participating in the Tendering process for a period of Six Months (06 Months) in the first instance. Their online uploaded tenders will not be considered for the said period.
4. Contractor who shall be allotted the work has to start the work within the stipulated time period after the date of allotment as the work is of very important nature.
5. The department shall not be responsible for delay in online submission of bids due to any reason what so ever.
6. The tenders shall remain valid for 90 days (Ninety Days)
7. As soon as the contract is fixed with the successful bidder, he has to enter into an agreement with the department.
8. The earnest money shall be forfeited if:-
a. Any bidder withdraws his bid during the period of bid validity or makes any modification in terms & condition of the bid.
b. The successful bidder fails to execute an agreement with the department within 10 days after fixation of contract.
9. The tender opening authority reserves the right to accept/reject the bid without assigning any reason there of.
10. The work is to be completed within the time limit specified in the NIT. In case of delay in completion of work due to contractors fault beyond stipulated time of completion the contractor shall be liable to pay liquidated damages at the rate of 0.5 % of the contract value (half percent) per week of delay. However, such liquidated damages shall not exceed 10% of the total contract value of the item, or a part thereof, delayed.
11. The contractor has to dump the sufficient quantity of pipes in the Divisional store as directed by Engineer-in-Charge for use in exigencies. The payment for supply item will be paid as per relevant item of BOQ.
12. No price escalation will be paid for completion of the work within stipulated time or extended date of completion due to any reason whatsoever.
13. Retention money/Security deposit shall be 10% of the contract value. The Security Deposit is to be recovered at the rate of 10% of bill amount from Running Account Bills and shall be released after completion of the defect liability period i.e. 12 months after the issuance of completion certificate by the Engineer-in-Charge.
14. All items of works shall conform to Specifications as per Relevant IS codes and as directed by the Engineer-in-Charge.
15. The contractor shall be solely responsible for carrying out the mandatory tests required or as decided by Engineer-in-charge for the quality control at his own costs. The cost of conducting all tests shall be borne by the contractor and shall be deemed to have been included in the quoted percentage rate tendered. Nothing extra shall be payable on this account.
16. The pipe material on order shall be inspected by 3rd party like M/S CEIL or M/S RITES in case of GI/DI pipes and M/S CIPET in case of HDPE Pipes. The 3rd party inspection & testing of HDPE pipes shall confirm to the following quality control and testing parameters.
Type-PE-100PN-10HDPE pipes
Technical specifications: IS4984/14151/12786/13488-1
The quality of the pipes including 3rd party certificates shall be examined and approved finally by the Executive Engineer QCPD Srinagar.
17. In case of tie for the position of 1st lowest bidder the bids should be out rightly rejected and the work shall be put to fresh tenders
18. The date of start of work shall be reckoned within one week from the date of issuance of LOI/Contract allotment as the case may be.
19. The contract shall be terminated, in case contractor fails to start /complete the work within the stipulated time period, his CDR/Earnest Money/additional performance deposit shall be forfeited after termination of the contract. Besides, defaulting contractor shall be barred/ Prohibited from taking part in future tendering process in PHE Department at least for Six Months
20. The employer may terminate the contract if the contractor causes a fundamental breach of the contract. The fundamental breach of contract will include:-
a) Continuous stoppage of Work for a period of 07 days without authorization of Engineer in-charge.
b) The contractor fails to start /complete the work within the stipulated time period.
Pursuant to the process of termination of defaulted contract, the employer reserves the right to invite fresh tender for the balance work at the risk and cost of defaulter contractor. Besides, his Performance Security/Retention Money shall be forfeited after termination of the contract and defaulter contractor shall be debarred from taking works in PHE Department at least for one year.
21. Any kind of damage which may occur to any work during the course of execution due to torrential rains/havy snow fall/cyclone/floods etc. shall be the responsibility of the bidder till the work is finally handed-over to the Department.
22. The taxes viz. Income tax, GST & Cess shall be deducted from the bidders' claims as admissible under rules.
23. The bidders are advised not to make any change in BOQ (Bill of Quantities). In no case they should attempt to create similar BOQ manually. The BOQ downloaded should be used for filling percentage rate inclusive of all taxes & it should be saved with the same name as it contains.
24. Instructions to Bidders:-
a) Bidders are advised to download bid submission manual from the "Downloads" option as well as from "Bidders Manual" on website www.jktenders.gov.in acquaint bid submission process.
b) To participate in bidding process bidders have to get Digital Signature Certificate (DSC) as per information Technology Act 2000
c) Bidders can get Digital Signature certificate from approved vendors.
d) The bidders have to submit their bids online in electronic format with digital signature. No financial bids will be accepted in Physical form.
e) Bidders must ensure to upload scanned copies of all necessary documents like PAN/TIN/ E-Chalan/ Tenderers Address Format / Registration Card fully renewed.
f) The percentage rates quoted by the bidder shall be entirely in Indian Rupees and the rates quoted shall be deemed to include price escalation and all taxes upto completion of work unless otherwise specified.
25. The payment shall be made only after the funds are received on this account from higher authorities under Major Head of Account as shown against each.
26. Photographic evidence during, before and after the execution of work is a must and shall be the sole responsibility of the contractor.
27. Other terms & conditions shall be the same as laid down in the PWD Form-25.

Position of AAA:-Accorded vide No's:-Accorded by Chief Engineer PHE Kashmir vide order No:-CE/PHE/DB/12 of 07/2024 Dt:-08.07.2024
No:-JSDS/3462-75
DIPK-12065/24 Dated:-17.02.2025 EXECUTIVE ENGINEER, JAL SHAKTI (PHE) DIVISION SHOPIAN

UNION TERRITORY OF JAMMU & KASHMIR
SKILL DEVELOPMENT DEPARTMENT
GOVERNMENT POLYTECHNIC COLLEGE, BANDIPORA
Email: gpcbandipora@gmail.com URL: www.gpcbandipora.org

NO: Gpc-Bpr/Estt/2024-25/856 DATED: 15-02-2025
EXPRESSION OF INTEREST

Expression of Interest is invited from the Book Sellers/Suppliers/Publishers registered with Association of Indian Publishers and Book Supplier or Federation Publishers and Booksellers Association of India to supply Textbooks/reference/Journals/E-books/E-Journals to this institution quoting therein the rates of discount and quality. The Expression of interest accompanied with the CDR of Rs. 6000/= must reach this office within five days from the issuance of this notification. Suppliers need to produce registration certificates of AIPBS/FPBAL in original with attestation copies of GST Registration and latest ITR. The application form along with Terms and Conditions and book list shall be available in office of the undersigned during office hours and on College website (www.gpcbandipora.org) S/d Principal Government Polytechnic College Bandipora
DIPK-12091/24 dated: 17-02-2025

Govt. Of Jammu & Kashmir (U.T)
OFFICE OF THE EXECUTIVE ENGINEER PWD(R&B) DIVISION VAILOO
NOTICE INVITING TENDERS
NIT No.88/8433-42 of R&B/Vailoo /2024-2025/e-tendering/ DATED:17/02/2025

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

Table with 8 columns: S. No., Name of Work, Approved Amount (Rs. In Lacs), Cost of T/ Doc.in form of Treasury challen / Receipt (in Rs.), Earne st Mone y(2% of Adv.Cost) (in Rs.), Time of completion, Project Intending Department, Class of Contractor, Major Head of account

Position of AA: Accorded
Position of TS: Accorded

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

Table with 3 columns: S. No., Date of Issue of Tender Notice, Period of Downloading of bidder documents, Bid submission Start Date, Bid Submission End Date, Date & time of opening of Bids (Online)

- 1. Bids must be accompanied with cost of Tender document in shape of Treasury Receipt/ challan remitted in Head-0059 and Earnest Money for 2% of Advertised Cost in shape of CDR/ FDR only. Pledged to Executive Engineer PWD (R&B) Division vailoo (tender receiving authority) (Name of work or ENIT no. and Item No. to be mentioned on the Treasury receipt/ challan (The date of Treasury receipt /Challan should be between the date of start of bid end Bid submission End date) pledged to Executive Engineer PWD(R&B) Division Vailoo (Tendering Inviting Authority). 5% Performance Security of the allotted cost in the shape of CDR/ FDR by the Successful bidder. Minimum of Two bids are necessary to decide L-1 bidder in case of Contractors.
2. The 1st Lowest Bidder has to produce an amount equal to 5% of allotted cost as performance Security in the shape of CDR/FDR within 07 days before fixation of contract and shall be released after successful completion of defective liability period of the work.
3. The EMD of 2% of successful bidders shall be released after receipt of 5% Performance Security.
4. Only those contractors are eligible for taking part in the bidding process whose contractor registration card is enrolled online on the JKPWDOMS portal.
5. The Advertised is cost is inclusive of GST@18%. The bidder has to quote the rate exclusive of GST.
6. Security Deposit shall be deposited by the contractor within 10 days of issuance of LOI, failing which the concerned tender shall terminate the contract and issue a fresh tender after imposing penalties viz forfeit security/LD as per T&C of the Bid document and recommend contractor for blacklisting.
7. The work shall be completed by the concerned contractor as per the timeline stipulated in the bid document/agreement, failing which action shall be initiated against contractor by forfeiting EMD and shall be recommended for blacklisting.
8. The date and time of opening of Bids shall be notified on Web Site www.jktenders.gov.in and conveyed to the bidders automatically through an e-mail message on their e-mail address. The bids of Responsive bidders shall be opened online on same Web Site in the Office of Executive Engineer R&B Division vailoo (tender receiving authority).
9. The bids for the work shall remain valid for a period of 120 days from the date of opening of Technical bids
10. The earnest money shall be forfeited, if:-
a. Any bidder/ tenderer withdraws his bid /tender during the period of bid validity or makes any modifications in the terms and conditions of the bid.
b. Failure of Successful bidder to furnish the required performance security within the specified time limit.
c. Failure of Successful bidder to execute the agreement within 28 days after fixation of contract.
11. The intending bidders should write the name of work / serial No. of NIT and Item No. on the Treasury receipt / challan while uploading their bids.
12. All other terms conditions are as per PWD Form 25 (Double agreement Form)
13. DIPK-12080/24 dated: 17-02-2025 Sd/- Executive Engineer PWD(R&B) Division Vailoo

PUBLIC NOTICE
This is information for the general public that in Adhar card bearing number 437505891673 the name is entered as SAHIL ABBAS BHAT while my actual name SUHAIL ABBAS. Now i want its correction, in this regard if anybody having any objection may contact Concern department with in a period of seven days. No objection shall be entertained after that. SUHAIL ABBAS S/o FIRDOUS AHMAD BHAT R/o DAFPORA BUDGAM CELL. 7889906052 mcb

From Office of the Advocate M. Afzal Najar
In the case of 1.Peerzada Ghulam Jeelani 2. Peerzada Tanveer Ahmad Both Sons of Peerzada Ghulam Ahmad R/o Tapper wari para Tehsil Pattan District Baramulla. Vs Public At Large In the Petition in terms of Section 148-A
The caveators have reason to believe that Non-Caveator may file any Application, Petition, Ap- peal, Suit or any other type of proceeding before the Hon'ble Court and on the ground of distorted facts/misrepresentation and cooked story and may seed in obtaining some relief/order at their back/in exparte against the caveators and in such eventuality the caveators will be put in irrepa- rable loss and inconvenience. It would be proper that caveators be given an opportunity of being heard by the Hon'ble court before passing any order. fko Sd/advocate

PUBLIC NOTICE
I have applied for the issuance of Pesticides License. If anybody has any objection in this regard he/she may file his/ her objection in the office of the Plant Projection Officer Lal Mandi Srinagar within seven days. After that no objection shall be entertained. Irfan Ahmad Dar S/o Ghulam Rasool, Dar R/o Pathallan Pattan Baramulla fko

PUBLIC NOTICE
I, Ishfaq Ah Mir, proprietor of Mustafa Agro Pesticides, located at seeloo spore, hereby declare that I am applying for a pesticide license as per the applicable laws and regulations. If any individual or authority has any objections regarding this application, they may submit their concerns to the relevant authorities within 15 days from the date of this notice. For any queries, please contact: [9149861297] Ishfaq Ah Mir Proprietor Of Mustafa Agro Pesticides fko

PUBLIC NOTICE
My name has been incorrectly written on my Aadhaar card as Irshad Ah Chopan, whereas my correct name is Arshid Ahmad Chopan. I now wish to correct the same. If anyone has any objections in this regard, he/she may file them in the concerned office within seven days. After this period, no objections shall be entertained. Arshid Ahmad Chopan S/o Munwar Chopan R/o Sindoo Shirmal, Tehsil Keegam, District Shopian fko

Commissioner SMC Chairs Revenue Committee Meeting



Observer News Service

SRINAGAR: Dr. Owais Ahmed IAS, Commissioner SMC, convened a pivotal meeting today with the Revenue Committee members to discuss strategies, aimed at enhancing the organization's financial performance. The meeting was attended by the Joint Commissioner (Adm), FA/CAO, Joint Commissioner Planning, Chief Revenue Officer, Additional Law Officer, Estates Officer, and other senior officials of the Corporation.

ties facing the corporation's revenue streams. Committee members engaged in productive dialogue, sharing valuable insights and proposing innovative solutions to boost efficiency in revenue generation.

The committee reviewed current revenue reports and explored best practices, alongside discussing potential policy changes that could enhance revenue collection and management processes.

The Commissioner emphasized the importance of transparency and accountability in all financial operations, ensuring that the SMC remains committed to responsible governance.

Dr. G. N Itoo Inspects Facilities In Examination Centers



Observer News Service

SRINAGAR: As the annual examination of class 10th commences, Director School Education Kashmir (DSEK) Dr. G.N. Itoo visited several examination centers of district Srinagar to inspect facilities provided to students during examination.

DSEK visited Presentation Convent Higher Secondary School Rajbagh, Boys Higher Secondary School Jawaharnagar and several other schools of district Srinagar.

On the occasion, he interacted with students and enquired about the facilities provided to

them during examination. Dir expressed satisfaction with the overall arrangements made in the examination centers. He stated that the department is committed to provide every possible facility to the students across the valley.

It is pertinent to mention that 636 examination centers have been established for the annual examinations of class 10th in Kashmir Division, in which about 74 thousand students are appearing and more than 4 thousand staff members have been engaged for the smooth conduct of examination.

DLSA Organizes Awareness Prog On Senior Citizens' Rights Under NALSA

Observer News Service

SRINAGAR: District Legal Services Authority (DLSA), Srinagar, organized an awareness programme at AhateWaqar, a day care and recreation centre for senior citizens, focusing on the legal rights and benefits under the NALSA Senior Citizens Scheme.

The event aimed to empower senior citizens by providing them with comprehensive information on their legal entitlements and welfare benefits.

The programme was held under the chairmanship of Jaffer Hussain Beg, Chairman DLSA Srinagar and Principal District & Sessions Judge, Srinagar, and supervision of Nusrat Ali Hakak, Secretary DLSA Srinagar.

The program commenced with a soulful tilawat of the Quran by Qazi Abdul Rashid, who also captivated the audience with a few lines from his latest poetry. His recitations set a reflective tone for

the proceedings. Urba Rashid, Assistant Legal Aid Defence Counsel & the resource person emphasized the importance of spreading awareness about the schemes offered under the National Legal Services Authority (NALSA) for senior citizens, which are designed to ensure their protection, dignity, and access to justice.

She also elaborated on the legal remedies available in case of elder abuse and the various state and national-level benefits offered to senior citizens.

The participants expressed their gratitude for the informative session, which encouraged them to stay informed and utilize the benefits available for their welfare.

The DLSA reiterated its commitment to organizing more such programmes to ensure that all vulnerable sections of society are made aware of their legal rights and protections.

Research Reveals Stress Phases In Critically Endangered Kashmir Hangul

Agencies

SRINAGAR: A groundbreaking scientific study has, for the first time, mapped the reproductive seasonality and stress patterns of the critically endangered Kashmir Hangul (*Cervus hanglu*) using non-invasive physiological monitoring.

The findings of the research provide crucial insights for conservation efforts and the establishment of captive breeding programs.

The study, conducted in Dachigam National Park—the last viable habitat of the Kashmir Hangul—used fecal hormone analysis to determine reproductive cycles and stress levels in both male and female deer. Researchers monitored oestrogen, progesterone, testosterone, and glucocorticoid metabolites, offering a baseline for future conservation strategies.



No Water Crisis For Wildlife In Dachigam National Park: Officials

Agencies

Amid the low precipitation, the officials on Monday assured that the wildlife in Dachigam National Park remains 'unaffected'. A top official stated that the impact of the ongoing water crisis on wildlife was "negligible".

He said that most of the park's wildlife resides in the southern aspects of the region, where water remains accessible. "There is adequate snowfall in higher reaches like Gulmarg, Sonmarg, Baltal, and the upper areas of Dachigam, ensuring a steady water supply for wild animals," he said.

He further clarified that while the human population might face difficulties due to reduced water levels, the ecological balance remains intact. "Nature has its own system—first, wild animals and plants sustain themselves, and then human settlements follow," he said.

He said that the changing climate has altered the movement patterns of animals in winter, stating that previously, heavy snowfall forced animals to migrate to lower elevations in search of food. However, this winter, with relatively less snowfall in some areas, animals have been able to find food at medium elevations, reducing their downward movement.

The official also highlighted that vegetation was expected to flourish due to early foliage, ensuring ample food availability for wildlife.

"The ecosystem is functioning naturally, and wildlife will not face any crisis due to water scarcity," he said. While the wildlife officials currently dismiss concerns over water scarcity for wildlife, the concerns, however, remain regarding the overall water availability for human consumption, as depleting water sources continue to worry residents across the valley—(KNO)

REPRODUCTIVE SEASONALITY

The study highlights that reproductive cycles in Hangul, a species inhabiting subtropical latitudes, differ significantly from their counterparts in higher northern latitudes. Female Hangul exhibited dispersed mating and birth patterns, while males had a more synchronised rutting season from October to December.

Elevated progesterone levels in females between January and March indicated pregnancies, with a sharp drop in April signalling parturition.

Unlike other red deer species that follow tightly synchronised reproductive cycles, the Hangul displays an extended and variable mating season, likely influenced by food availability and environmental factors. The results suggest that females time their reproductive cycles to ensure that birthing coincides with peak forage availability.

STRESS HORMONE PATTERNS

Both male and female Hangul exhibited increased stress levels associated with reproductive activities. Males experienced a significant spike in glucocorticoid levels during the rutting season (October–December), aligning with increased competition for mates. A second peak in stress was observed in May, coinciding with seasonal migrations and disturbances caused by livestock herders moving into higher elevations.

Female Hangul showed elevated stress levels during parturition in April and May, further highlighting the importance of minimising disturbances during these critical periods.

IMPLICATIONS FOR CONSERVATION

The study underscores the urgent need to implement conservation measures tailored to Hangul's unique reproductive strategies. Key recommendations include

Minimising Human Disturbances: The timing and duration of mating and birthing seasons should be taken into account to keep Dachigam National Park free from anthropogenic disturbances, particularly livestock grazing and tourism.

Establishing a Captive Breeding Program: The research provides a critical baseline for initiating Hangul breeding programs, which have so far remained ineffective due to a lack of physiological data.

FURTHER RESEARCH USING CAMERA TRAPS

The study calls for the use of camera trapping surveys to further authenticate the timing of mating and birthing, ensuring more precise conservation strategies.

Since Hangul populations remain isolated due to habitat fragmentation, connectivity corridors

should be developed to enhance genetic diversity and reduce inbreeding risks.

With fewer than 400 Hanguls left, this study serves as a wake-up call for policymakers and conservationists. It highlights the need for a multi-faceted conservation approach that integrates ecological research, habitat protection, and stringent policies to curb human-induced stress on this critically endangered species.

The researchers stress that further studies were needed to validate the hormone analysis techniques used, given the absence of captive Hangul populations for comparison.

Nonetheless, this study marks a significant step forward in understanding and conserving the Kashmir Hangul, offering hope for its survival—(KNO)

RESEARCHERS MONITORED ESTROGEN, PROGESTERONE, TESTOSTERONE, and glucocorticoid metabolites, offering a baseline for future conservation strategies

آہ! محمد شفیع وانی رحلت کر گئے

یہ خبر انتہائی دکھ اور افسوس کے ساتھ دی جاتی ہے کہ محمد شفیع وانی ولد مرحوم عبدالاحد وانی ساکنہ پٹال کالونی شاہراہ روڈ قمر واری سربنگر 16 فروری 2025ء بروز اتوار رحلت کر گئے۔ اللہ تعالیٰ مرحوم کو جوار رحمت میں جگہ دے اور لواحقین کو یہ صدمہ برداشت کرنے کی توفیق عطا کرے۔ مرحوم کی انتہائی فاتحہ خوانی

19 فروری 2025ء بروز بدھوار 10.30 بجے ان کے آبائی مقبرہ واقعہ اربیدہ منٹھلی شاہ صاحب گورنل چیمبرل سربنگر میں انجام دی جائے گی۔

مواورال اہلجاں زیب وانی، شاہ زیب وانی
فون نمبرات 9797217780, 700664740
بذریعہ: عابد حسین

OBSESSIVE COMPULSIVE DISORDER
8 WEEK FREE GROUP THERAPY

I did wash my hand ... but... did I clean it enough? Wash it again? Is it clean now?

It's not just RECURRENT HANDWASHING AND CHECKING BUT UNSEEN PAIN, distress, myths and stigma associated with OCD

KASHMIR / Kashmir American Society of Healthcare, Medical Education & Research in collaboration with HPV-T Help Poor Voluntary Trust is initiating a free 8 weeks Group therapy for the individuals suffering with OCD by a team of consulting clinical psychologists led by leading consultant clinical psychologist of I & K.

If you or some one you know is experiencing symptoms of OCD, seeking professional help is crucial.

You do not have to fight your battles alone.

There is no need for referral, simply call us for registration.

Happy & Healthy minds Office, HPV-T Building (First Floor), Daresh Kadal Chowk, Srinagar
9070806160

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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
SHIEK UL ALAM AIRPORT: 01942303311 ✈

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

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

PRAYERS

FAJR 5: 52
ZUHR 12: 45
ASR 4: 37
Magrib 6: 19
ISHA 7: 41

HIJRI CALENDAR
19 Shaban
1446

This Day In History

- 749- Smoke Shell ascends to the throne of the Maya city of Copán
- 1219- Jerusalem re-taken by the Christian Crusader kingdom in a peace treaty between Holy Roman Emperor Frederick II and Egyptian ruler Al-Kamil
- 1268- The Livonian Brothers of the Sword are defeated by Dovmont of Pskov in the Battle of Rakovor.
- 1332- Amda Seyon I, Emperor of Ethiopia begins his campaigns in the southern Muslim provinces.
- 1478- George, Duke of Clarence, convicted of treason against his older brother Edward IV of England, is privately executed in the Tower of London (allegedly by being drowned in a butt of Malmsey wine).
- 1503- Henry Tudor (later Henry VIII) appointed Prince of Wales, heir apparent to the English throne
- 536- Francis I, King of France and Suleiman I of the Ottoman Empire sign military and trade agreement against King Charles V, Holy Roman Emperor
- 1713- French invade under Jacques Cassard on Curacao
- 1814- The Battle of Montereau; victory of French under Napoleon Bonaparte against Austrians and Württembergers under the King of Württemberg.
- 1879- Arabs capture Egyptian premier Nubar Pasha
- 1879- French Sculptor Frédéric-Auguste Bartholdi is awarded a US patent for his design for the Statue of Liberty [1]
- 1884- Russian police seize all copies of Leo Tolstoy's book "What I Believe in"
- 1896- Cave of Winds at Niagara Falls goes almost dry for first time in 50 yrs
- 1900- Battle at Paardeberg, 1,270 British killed/injured
- 1900- British troops occupy Monte Christo, Natal
- 1901- Winston Churchill makes his maiden speech in the British House of Commons.
- 1908- 1st US postage stamps in rolls issued
- 1908- The American ambassador to Japan is given a note by the Japanese in which they agree to restrict Japanese emigration to the US; this becomes known as the 'Gentlemen's Agreement'
- 1911- The first official flight with air mail takes place in Allahabad, British India, when Henri Pequet, a 23-year-old pilot, delivers 6,500 letters to Naini, about 10 km away.
- 1913- President Francisco Madero of Mexico is overthrown
- 1915 Germany begins a blockade of Britain
- 1916 The last German garrison in the German colony of Cameroons surrenders
- 1917 First major strike of the Russian "February Revolution" starts at the giant Putilov factory in Petrograd [NS=Mar 3]
- 1918- Germany renews its offensive against the Russians, making dramatic gains against disorganized and dispirited Russian troops
- 1924- US Secretary of the Navy Edwin Denby resigns due to Teapot Dome scandal
- 1927- US & Canada open diplomatic relations
- 1930- US astronomer Clyde Tombaugh discovers Pluto
- 1932- Japan declares Manchuria independent
- 1951- Nepal becomes a constitutional monarchy
- 1965- The Gambia becomes independent from the United Kingdom
- 1974- NASA launches Italian satellite San Marcos C-2 (235/843 km)
- 1977- Space Shuttle above a Boeing 747 goes on its maiden flight
- 1979- NASA launches space vehicle S-202
- 1979- President Zia ur-Rahman's National Party wins elections in Bangladesh
- 2003- Comet C/2002 V1 (NEAT) makes perihelion, seen by SOHO.
- 2003- Nearly 200 people die in the Daegu subway fire in South Korea
- 2004 - Up to 295 people, including nearly 200 rescue workers, die near Neyshabur in Iran when a run-away freight train carrying sulfur, petrol and fertiliser catches fire and explodes.
- 2014 - Ukrainian Revolution of 2014 begins as protesters, riot police and unknown shooters take part in violent events in the capital, Kiev, culminating after five days in the ouster of President Viktor Yanukovich
- 2016 - Pope Francis questions US Presidential hopeful Donald Trump's Christianity over his call to build a wall on the Mexican border

Iran Says High-Level Delegation To Attend Sayyed Nasrallah's Funeral

Agencies

Tehran: Iranian Foreign Ministry spokesperson Esmail Baghaei says Iran is engaging with Syria's new administration through its allies and various countries.

Iran's nuclear program remains peaceful and fully compliant with the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT), Iranian Foreign Ministry spokesperson Esmail Baghaei reaffirmed on Monday.

During his weekly press conference, Baghaei stressed that Iran will not back down from its rights under international regulations.

He also noted that Iran is in

Foreign Minister Abbas Araghchi held what he described as "positive talks" with his Lebanese counterpart regarding the ongoing crisis over flights between the two countries, assuring him that Iran will not allow third-party interference in this matter.

In recent days, the vital Beirut Airport Road witnessed protests against the Lebanese authorities' continued refusal to allow Iranian planes to land in Lebanese territory, which resulted in Lebanese citizens being stranded in Iran, as of yet.

Calls to protest and block the airport road spread across social



consultations regarding the timing and venue of the next round of negotiations with the European Troika.

Responding to a question on whether Iranian officials would attend the funeral of Hezbollah's former secretary-general martyr Sayyed Hassan Nasrallah on February 23, Baghaei confirmed that Iran will participate at a high level in this "extremely significant ceremony."

He also revealed that Iranian

media, condemning the decision, which came a day after Avichay Adraee, the spokesperson for the Israeli occupation military, posted on X claims that Beirut airport was being used to transfer funds to Hezbollah via Iranian planes.

On Sunday evening, Iran's Civil Aviation Organization announced the cancellation of flights from Tehran to Beirut Airport until February 18, following a request from the Lebanese government.

Australia Mulls Relocation Of Cocos Islands Residents

Agencies

Sydney: The Australian government is contemplating the relocation of hundreds of residents from the Cocos Islands within the coming decades as the threat of rising sea levels accelerates, sparking outrage among inhabitants.

This proposal, unveiled in January, outlines the potential movement of not just the islanders, but key infrastructure—such as power stations, roads, water resources, and shops—within a 10 to 50-year timeline.

The Cocos Islands, a remote archipelago of 27 small atolls located 2,936 kilometres (1,824 miles) west of Australia, face mounting dangers from coastal erosion and rising seas—phenomena driven by the escalating impacts of climate change. Government projections estimate that by 2030, sea levels around the islands could rise by 18 centimetres (7 inches) compared to 1992 levels.

The proposal, framed as a "long-term managed retreat," has been presented as the most "viable option to protect lives in a socially, economically, and environmentally respectful way." However, this suggestion has ignited fierce backlash among many residents, who fear that such a drastic move would dis-

rupt their way of life.

The big picture

With a population of roughly 600, the islands' residents are primarily descendants of Malay workers brought by the British in the 1830s to work on the coconut plantations. The islands were colonized by the British in 1857, and their sovereignty was transferred to Australia in 1955. For many, leaving would sever deep-rooted cultural and ancestral ties to a land they've inhabited for generations.

Frank Mills, chief executive of the Shire of Cocos Islands, voiced his profound disappointment at the government's decision to overlook long-term climate adaptation strategies, such as infrastructure upgrades, that might allow residents to remain in their ancestral homes.

For the islanders, the decision to leave their homes is far from simple. "That is not an overnight decision," Mills explained. "Everything is involved in that decision: where they would go? Generations of people are buried on Home Island—would they be relocated to a suitable place on the mainland?"

The Australian government has pointed out that the proposal is still in its early stages and remains open for community consultation.



U.S. Secretary of State Marco Rubio, left, and Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu shake hands during a news conference Sunday at the Prime Minister's office in Jerusalem

Netanyahu Signals Moving Ahead with Trump's Gaza Plan

Agencies

JERUSALEM: Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu on Sunday signaled that he was moving ahead with US President Donald Trump's proposal to transfer the Palestinian population out of Gaza, calling it "the only viable plan to enable a different future" for the region.

Netanyahu discussed the plan with US Secretary of State Marco Rubio, who kicked off a Middle East visit by endorsing Israel's war aims in Gaza, saying Hamas "must be eradicated." That created further doubt around the shaky ceasefire as talks on its second phase are yet to begin.

Rubio, in his upcoming stops in Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates, is likely to face more pushback from Arab leaders over Trump's proposal, which includes redeveloping Gaza under US ownership. Netanyahu has said all emigration from Gaza should be "voluntary," but rights groups and other critics say that the plan amounts to coercion given the territory's vast destruction.

Netanyahu said he and Trump have a "common strategy" for Gaza. Echoing Trump, he said "the gates of hell would be open" if Hamas doesn't release dozens of remaining hostages abducted

in the militant group's attack on southern Israel on Oct. 7, 2023, that triggered the 16-month war.

The ceasefire's first phase ends in two weeks. Negotiations were meant to begin two weeks ago on the second phase, in which Hamas would release dozens of remaining hostages in exchange for more Palestinian prisoners, a lasting truce and the withdrawal of Israeli forces.

Trump's special Middle East envoy, Steve Witkoff, told Fox News that "phase two is absolutely going to begin" and he had "very productive" calls Sunday with Netanyahu and officials from Egypt and Qatar, which serve as mediators, about continuing talks this week. He also said hostages to be released include 19 Israeli soldiers and "we believe all of them are alive."

Netanyahu's office said Israel's security Cabinet would meet Monday to discuss the second phase.

Trump later told journalists it is "up to Israel what the next step is, in consultation with me."

In another sign of closing ranks, Israel's Defense Ministry said it received a shipment of 2,000-pound (900-kilogram) MK-84 munitions from the United States. The Biden administration paused a shipment of such bombs last year over concerns about civilian

casualties in Gaza.

Resuming the war could doom hostages

This week marks 500 days of the war. Netanyahu has signaled readiness to resume the fighting after the ceasefire's current phase, though it could be a death sentence for remaining hostages.

Rubio said peace becomes impossible as long as Hamas "stands as a force that can govern or as a force that can threaten by use of violence," adding, "It must be eradicated."

Hamas reasserted control over Gaza when the ceasefire began last month, despite suffering heavy losses.

Netanyahu has offered Hamas a chance to surrender and send top leaders into exile. Hamas has rejected that scenario and insists on Palestinian rule. Spokesman Abdul Latif Al-Qanoun told The Associated Press the group accepts a Palestinian unity government or a technocratic committee to run Gaza.

Netanyahu instructed negotiators to leave for Cairo on Monday to discuss further implementation of the ceasefire's first phase, as issues over delivery of shelter materials continue.

From Snakes, Crocodiles To Trimming Beard: US Deportee Recalls 'Donkey Route'

Press Trust Of India

Chandigarh: Promised a legal entry into the US, Mandeep Singh's life was at risk after he was made to deal with crocodiles and snakes, trim his beard despite being a Sikh, and having to go without food for days.

But his dream to secure a better life for his family in Amritsar came crashing down on January 27 when he was arrested by the US Border Patrol while trying to sneak into America via Tijuana in Mexico.

Mandeep was part of 112 Indians to be deported by a US military aircraft that landed

at the Amritsar airport late on Sunday, the third such batch of Indians to be sent back amid a crackdown by the Donald Trump administration against illegal immigrants.

The deportees' arrived within 24 hours of a US military aircraft bringing back a batch of 116 Indians living illegally in that country.

Instead of a legal entry as promised, Mandeep's travel agent put him on the 'donkey route'—an illegal and risky pathway used by migrants to enter the US.

Speaking to reporters in Amritsar, Mandeep (38) showed several videos of the perilous

journey his travel agent and sub-agents put him through.

"When I spoke to my agent, he said within one month I will be taken to the US in a legal way," Mandeep said.

The agent demanded Rs 40 lakh, which he paid in two instalments. The journey began from Amritsar to Delhi last August on a flight.

"From Delhi, I was taken to Mumbai, then Nairobi, and onwards to Amsterdam through another nation. From there, we were taken to Suriname. When I reached there, the sub-agents demanded Rs 20 lakh, which was paid back home by my family," he said.

War Hero Abdul Hamid's Name Removed From UP's Ghazipur School Gate

Agencies

The family members of Param Vir Chakra awardee Abdul Hamid have expressed strong displeasure over the removal of the war hero's name from the main gate of a primary school in Ghazipur where he once studied.

According to officials, after a recent painting work, the school in Dhamupur village in the district was renamed 'PM Shri Composite School'.

Jameel Ahmed, the grandson of Hamid, said the school was repainted four days ago. 'PM Shri Composite School' was painted at the entrance, replacing 'Shaheed Hamid Vidyalaya', he added.

When Ahmed and his family raised an objection with headmaster Ajay Kushwaha, he directed them to approach Basic Education Officer Hemant Rao.

According to the family members, Rao informed them that Hamid's name had been painted on one of the school's external walls. However, the entrance remained unchanged, the family claimed.

Dissatisfied, they filed another complaint on Saturday, demanding that the martyr's name be reinstated at the school's



entrance. While Rao assured it would be done "immediately", Ahmed claimed that the name was still not displayed at the entrance, as of Monday, leaving the family "deeply hurt".

During the 1965 India-Pakistan war, the US supplied Pakistan with Patton tanks which were believed to be invincible. Hamid, displaying extraordinary bravery, destroyed three of these tanks, forcing the enemy to retreat.

In recognition of his valour, the president posthumously awarded the Param Vir Chakra to his wife, Rasoolan Bibi.

When contacted, Rao said, "Shaheed Abdul Hamid's name would soon be reinstated at the school's main entrance, adding that it had already been inscribed on an external wall."

Why Did Delhi Experience An Earthquake?

Here's what experts have to say

Press Trust Of India

New Delhi: The tremor that jolted the national capital early Monday was a result of naturally occurring variation in the geological features of the region and not due to plate tectonics, a senior scientist said.

The 4.0 magnitude earthquake had its epicentre at Jheel Park region near Dhaula Kuan and the shallow focal depth made citizens in nearby areas hear loud sounds as the earth shifted slightly this morning.

Delhi region in northern India experiences frequent tremors due to both far-field and near-field earthquakes from the Himalayan and local sources, respectively.

The Dhaula Kuan region had experienced a 4.6 magnitude earthquake in 2007. However, its impact was not felt as strongly as Monday's tremor because it took place at a depth of 10 km, National Centre for Seismology Director, O P Mishra said.

Delhi is placed in seismic zone IV in the seismic zoning map of India, the second highest in the country.

The national capital region is exposed to moderate to high risk seismic activity due to Himalayan earthquakes such as the 7.5 magnitude Garhwal Himalaya quake in 1803, 6.8 magnitude Uttarkashi earthquake in 1991, 6.6 magnitude Chamoli earthquake in 1999, 7.8 magnitude Gorkha earthquake in 2015 and a few moderate earthquakes from the Hindukush region.

Local earthquakes recorded in the region include 6.5 magnitude Delhi earthquake in 1720, 5 magnitude Mathura earthquake in 1842, 6.7 magnitude Bulandshahr earthquake in 1956 and 5.8 magnitude Moradabad earth-

The Dhaula Kuan region had experienced a 4.6 magnitude earthquake in 2007. However, its impact was not felt as strongly as Monday's tremor because it took place at a depth of 10 km, National Centre for Seismology Director, O P Mishra said.

quake in 1966.

"The epicentre of Monday's earthquake was at Jheel Park in Dhaula Kuan, it was a 4.0 magnitude earthquake. It was in the depth of 5 km, it is called shallow depth, hence people felt the effect," Mishra said.

Earthquakes have happened earlier in the region and seismologically, it is not a new region "Earlier, there was a 4.6 magnitude earthquake in 6 km periphery, but it was deeper, with 10 km depth. There is a difference. It was not a plate tectonic earthquake, it was due to in-situ material heterogeneity, it was due to local effect," Mishra said.

In-situ material heterogeneity means it occurred due to variation in geological features in the region.

NEWS MAKERS

Running Late For Exam; Student Paraglides To College

A 20-year-old student's ingenuity to reach his college in time for an exam by paragliding over a 'ghat' in Maharashtra's Satara district came to the fore after a video of his feat went viral on social media on Monday.

First Year B.Com student Samarth Mahangde said the incident took place on December 15 and was necessitated after he realised late that he had his first-semester exam on Natural Disaster Management in a few minutes time.

It helped that he knew paragliding operators in the area, said Mahangde, a resident of Pasarani village.

A video showed Mahangde taking a pilot-operated paragliding ride from Harrison's



Folly, a flat plateau located about 5 kilometres before Panchgani on Wai-Panchgani road in Satara, at Kisan Veer College.

"I work at a sugarcane juice centre near Harrison's Folly. That day, at 2pm I re-

alised I had a paper at 2:15pm. I forgot about it since the exam timings and date had been rescheduled a few times earlier. I knew road was not an option due to Sunday traffic and ongoing work in the

ghat section and my college is 12 kilometres away," he said.

"I knew paragliding operators in the area. One of them, Govind Yevale, asked a pilot to fly me to the college," the collegian said.

"After wearing all the mandatory safety equipment, he and our pilot managed to land at an open ground near the college in exactly five minutes," Yevale told PTL.

Mahangde said he could answer his exam in time also because his friends had got his hall ticket, identity card and uniform.

Kisan Veer College authorities confirmed about the exam and that Mahangde did appear for it.

"But, we cannot confirm if he paraglided here," a college official said.

Singapore's Indian-origin Opposition leader found guilty of lying in Parliament

Singapore's Indian-origin Leader of the Opposition, Pritam Singh, was found guilty on Monday of giving a false testimony to a parliamentary committee, a verdict that could see him disqualified from Parliament and contesting a general election this year.

In the verdict delivered in the State Courts, Deputy Principal District Judge Luke Tan convicted Singh of the two charges against him.

The charges against Singh relate to his handling of Raeesah Khan, a former lawmaker from his party, who lied to Parliament in a separate case.

Singh, 48, was accused of wilfully giving two false answers to the Committee of Privileges (COP) during its inquiry into Khan's case on December 10 and December 15, 2021.

The case stems from Singh's handling of Khan's false claim in Parlia-



ment about accompanying a sexual assault victim to the police station.

Singh faces up to three years in jail, a fine of up to SGD7,000 (USD 5,290), or both for each charge.

Singh's trial began four months ago. Politically, the conviction could disqualify Singh from his parliamentary seat and rule out his standing in the next general election which must be called by November 2025.

'Prolonged Dry Spell May Lead To Early Flowering'

Agencies

SRINAGAR: Fruit growers in Kashmir are seriously concerned as experts warn that the prolonged dry spell and rising temperatures may trigger early sprouting of flowers, which would ultimately affect both the quality and quantity of fruit production.

Experts said the continuous lack of rainfall and snowfall this winter has heightened worries among farmers. They said

affected, leading to reduced flowering and lower fruit yield, he said.

The lack of rainfall has also lowered the water table, creating concerns for irrigation. Since most orchards in Kashmir depend on rainwater, the prolonged dryness could further affect fruit quality.

According to experts, frost conditions at night could also damage new fruit plantations, particularly saplings in both lower and upper hills. They said

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"If early flowering occurs and is followed by erratic spring weather, including sudden rainfall or snowfall, pollination will be disrupted, which will lead to a significant drop in fruit production,"



the early rise in temperatures, combined with insufficient soil moisture could severely impact fruit-bearing trees, especially apple orchards.

"Prolonged dryness reduces soil moisture, which is crucial for healthy flowering and fruit-setting. Any disruption at this stage could lead to lower yields and affect the overall quality of the fruit," they said.

Dr Parvez, a scientist at SKUAST Srinagar, said that, as of now, the situation remains manageable, but any continued dryness beyond February 20, coupled with further temperature rise, could lead to premature flowering and poor fruit-setting. "If early flowering occurs and is followed by erratic spring weather, including sudden rainfall or snowfall, pollination will be disrupted, which will lead to a significant drop in fruit production," Dr Parvez said.

Another expert from the Department of Botany at the University of Kashmir said that adequate chilling hours are crucial for proper bud formation. If trees do not receive sufficient cold exposure, bud development will be adversely

dry weather may further increase the risk of pest infestations, making fruit trees more vulnerable to diseases.

Growers across Kashmir are anxious, fearing heavy losses due to flower shedding in spring, which could reduce fruit yield.

Dr Tariq, another scientist at SKUAST, said, "While dryness and warm weather have certain advantages—such as reduced fungal diseases—these conditions also favour insect pests and can lead to deficiencies affecting fruit size, colour and overall quality."

He advised, "Prolonged heat exposure can cause sunburn on fruits and tree stems. To mitigate these effects, farmers should focus on increasing organic matter in the soil, which helps retain moisture. Mulching can also help regulate temperature and protect roots."

Notably, Jammu and Kashmir has witnessed an 80% rainfall deficit over the past several months. If the dry spell continues, experts warn of not only agricultural losses but also an impending shortage of drinking water—(KNO)

Changing WEATHER Patterns

No Water Crisis In Kashmir's Wetlands: Official

Agencies

SRINAGAR: Amidst the changing weather patterns and concerns over reducing water levels in the water bodies of the Kashmir region, officials have assured that the region's wetlands are currently in a 'stable' condition with no immediate threat to the bird population.

A top official overseeing wetland management in the valley confirmed that while Kashmir's overall water regime faces challenges due to the ongoing weather conditions, the wetlands—home to migratory and resident birds—were not experiencing any shortage.

"We have enough water in the wetlands, in fact, there is an abundance. We might even have to regulate the water levels by opening exit gates," the official said.

The top officer said that wetlands like Hokersar, Shallabugh

and others were maintaining their required water levels, typically between 2 and 3 feet, which was essential for supporting avian populations. He, however, added that the Mirgund wetland was an area of some concern, but not because of the required water levels.

"Wetlands function differently when it comes to water retention. Unlike other water bodies, they hold water effectively due to limited exit flow," the official said.

The wetlands serve as crucial habitats for migratory birds that arrive from Central Asia and Siberia during the winter. Any fluctuation in water levels directly impacts their survival and Kashmir's ecological balance.

While the wetlands are currently stable, experts, however, cautioned that continued monitoring was essential as climate patterns shift, impacting Kashmir's water resources at large—(KNO)

Solid Waste Management Shed In Cherwan Turns Into Dumping Yard

Agencies

KANGAN: A Solid Waste Management shed in Cherwan area of Kangan, in Central Kashmir's Ganderbal district, has turned into a dumping yard as the heaps of garbage remain unsegregated, locals alleged on Monday.

Residents said that while the construction of the shed was an appreciable move, the Rural Development Department (RDD) has failed to manage and segregate the waste dumped there.

"The shed emits a foul smell, making it difficult for us to access our land for necessary work," said a local resident. He added that the garbage is piling up in the shed without proper segregation by the Block Development Office (BDO) Kangan, and despite repeated concerns, the authorities have not taken any action.

"If they built a waste management shed, why are they not segregating the waste?" questioned another resident.

Officials, however, claim that they have a plastic management unit in place, which was recently cleaned and brought back into use with the help of machines.

"The garbage collection vehicle has also resumed operations in Block Kangan after previous issues were resolved," an official said.

He further added that there are nearly six to seven segregation sheds in the block, out of which two are currently non-operational.

"All garbage is being segregated at the Plastic Management Unit (PMU) in Wussan," he assured, adding that if any waste management shed is found to have unsegregated garbage, the department will ensure it is cleaned—(KNO)

Court Convicts 'Faith Healer' For Sexual Abuse Of Minors

Agencies

SOPORE: After nine years of trial Chief Judicial Magistrate (CJM) Sopore on Monday convicted a self-proclaimed faith healer in a sexual assault case.

According to the details available, the said case was registered in 2016 under FIR No. 22/2016 U/S 377 of the erstwhile Ranbir Penal Code (RPC) at Police Station Bomai after the victim's father lodged a complaint with the then SSP Sopore, alleging that his son had been subjected to "unnatural sexual assault" by the accused, Aijaz Ahmad Sheikh, also known as Aijaz Molvi of Mundji village.

Given the sensitivity of the matter, a Special Investigation Team (SIT) was constituted under the supervision of Ashish Mishra, who is now serving as Superintendent of Police (SP).

Following a thorough investigation, statements of witnesses were recorded,

and a charge sheet was filed before the Chief Judicial Magistrate (CJM) Sopore.

The trial proceeded with the prosecution presenting all relevant evidence, while the defence produced six witnesses in its attempt to counter the charges.

After extensive arguments from both sides, the court delivered its verdict today, convicting the accused.

The case has now moved to the stage of determining the quantum of punishment, for which further arguments will be heard.

Speaking on the development, prosecuting officer, Mirza Zahid Khalil said that the conviction serves as a significant step toward justice, encouraging victims of such crimes to come forward and seek legal recourse.

Authorities have urged the public to make use of legal avenues to report such crimes, stressing that timely action can help curb social offenses and bring perpetrators to justice.

Meanwhile, the court has directed the Superintendent of

Police, Sopore, to immediately facilitate the registration of separate FIRs concerning other victims, ensuring that each victim's claims are adjudicated separately.

Additionally, the District Legal Services Authority (DLSA) has been requested to provide immediate legal aid to these victims to safeguard their access to justice.

A compliance report must be filed within 90 days, detailing the steps taken for separate FIR registrations and investigations, the court said—(KNO)



THE CONVICTION SERVES AS A SIGNIFICANT STEP toward justice, encouraging victims of such crimes to come forward and seek legal recourse'

'27 years Rigorous Imprisonment Among 3 Convictions Secured By Gbl Police'

Observer News Service

SRINAGAR: Police in Ganderbal on Monday said to have secured convictions in three different cases against four accused persons involved in a Rape Case of PS Kangan, POC- SO Case and NDPS Case of P/S Ganderbal.

In a landmark judgement, conviction was obtained against one accused namely Mohammad Saleem Taploo son of Mohammad Maqbool Taploo resident of Anchar Sura A/P SaidPora, Eidgah Srinagar, for offences under section 363 RPC and Section 4 of POC- SO against a minor survivor. The Hon'ble court convicted the accused for both the offences with the quantum of punishment being rigorous imprisonment for a term of 07

years and a fine of Rs 25,000/- for kidnapping which would run separately with a rigorous imprisonment for a term of 20 years and a fine of Rs 50,000 for the offences against POC- SO, a police spokesman said in a statement said.

In the second case, Ganderbal Police secured conviction against Aamir Ashraf Zargar son of Mohammad Ashraf Zargar resident of Waripora Safapora, for offences under sections 363 RPC and 376 RPC. The court sentenced the accused to imprisonment for a term of 07 years and a fine of Rs 10,000/- for kidnapping and concurrently with imprisonment of 07 years and a fine of Rs 25,000/- for the offences of rape, the statement added.

"In the third case, regis-

tered under 8/20, 29 NDPS Act, Ganderbal Police secured conviction against two accused persons namely Sahil Ahmad Khan son of Manzoor Ahmad Khan and Rizwan Ahmad Khan son of Gulam Hassan Khan, both residents of Khan Mohalla Pati Shallabugh Ganderbal. The court sentenced both the accused to imprisonment for a term of 06 months and a fine of Rs.10,000. This conviction has been obtained within 3 months."

These convictions reflect the unwavering commitment of J&K Police towards 'securing the ends of justice'. These convictions will act as a deterrent to the individuals who act against the law of the land and to a sense of security to the society as a whole, police said—(KNO)

Fear Returns To LoC villages Amid Cross Border Firing Debate

Agencies

SRINAGAR: For the first time in four years, fear is creeping back into the villages along the Line of Control (LoC) in Jammu and Kashmir as debates over cross-border firing raise concerns that tensions between the Indian and Pakistani armies could escalate, endangering the fragile peace since the 2021 ceasefire.

The 2021 ceasefire agreement between India and Pakistan had brought an unprecedented sense of security, allowing residents to rebuild their lives without the constant fear of shelling but the current discourse has reignited anxieties about a return to violence.

"A fresh exchange of fire occurred along the LoC in Poonch's Pir Panjal Valley on Sunday, with no casualties reported," officials said.

In Rajouri district, residents said they lived without the terror of mortars falling on their homes in the past four years.

"Now, with these discussions, we fear being caught in the crossfire again," Mohammad Suleiman, a local, said.

Similarly, in Poonch, Kashmir Khan, a local farmer, said the ceasefire gave their children a future. "If hostilities resume, we will be forced to flee, and their studies will suffer," he said.

"Business had picked up as people felt safe to move around. We've rebuilt our lives and livelihoods. The mere thought of returning to those dark days is distressing."

Another resident of Poonch added, "A potential breakdown



of the ceasefire agreement is deeply unfortunate for border residents like us. We are the ones who bear the brunt of shelling, losing our homes, livelihoods, and sometimes our loved ones."

Mushtaq Ahmad, a resident of Karnah, said the recent debates over cross-border firing have gripped LoC residents with fear. "We have lived in peace for four years, but now uncertainty looms over our lives once again," he said.

Meanwhile, locals in Gurez Valley expressed a strong desire for the ceasefire along the LoC to remain intact, saying it has brought much-needed stability to their lives. "We pray and hope that peace continues, as it has allowed our areas to witness significant development," said Ajaz Ahmad.

"Infrastructure has improved, and even border tourism has gained momentum, benefiting local businesses and providing employment," he added.

Deputy Chief Minister Surinder Kumar Choudhary said the cross-border firing has caused immense suffering since 1947.

Speaking with reporters in Baramulla, the Deputy CM

said, "It is unfortunate that we have been witnessing it since 1947. It has ruined lives whenever it erupts. Hopefully, we will get rid of it."

Speaking to the media after inaugurating the first edition of the Sikh Cricket Premier League at Jammu University, Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha said the Indian Army is fully capable of giving a strong and appropriate response on the border. "The Indian Army is effectively responding to the situation," he said when asked a question about the recent violence along the Line of Control (LoC).

The comment came a day after Pakistan troops targeted Indian posts along the Line of Control (LoC) in the Gulpur sector of Poonch, which was retaliated with equal calibre.

The fresh tensions between both nations escalated along the LoC in the past few days.

On Feb 11, an army jawan was injured in a sniper shot suspected to have been fired from across the border in the Keri area of Akhnor sector.

On Feb 11, a young captain and a soldier were killed while another was injured in an IED explosion near the LoC in Akhnor sector. —(KNO)

Entrepreneurship Festival 2025

Experts See JK's Potential As IT Hub

Agencies

JAMMU: The Entrepreneurship Festival 2025 at IIT Jammu has sparked new optimism about the region's potential to emerge as an IT hub, with entrepreneurs from Bengaluru and Hyderabad expressing their confidence in the changing business landscape of Jammu and Kashmir.

The event showcased immense opportunities for young innovators and startup enthusiasts, with industry leaders pledging investment and mentorship support for budding entrepreneurs.

At the festival, prominent investors and startup founders, who initially viewed Jammu and Kashmir as an unlikely destination for tech-driven enterprises, were struck by the enthusiasm and innovation among the region's youth. "After coming here, my perception completely changed. JK has the potential to become an IT hub. We are thinking of mentoring the youth here," says an IIT Roorkee graduate and MBA from Chicago, who has already invested in 32 startups across India and is now eager to support young innovators in Jammu.

"We had heard about IIT and AIIMS in Jammu, but we assumed that enthusiasm for startups here would be low. However, interacting with the youth changed our view. The energy and innovation we witnessed assure us that Jammu has full potential to make a mark in the IT sector," he said.

Meanwhile, Saurabh Raj, Founder of Nuvo, a company specializing in data privacy, announced plans to launch a smart card scheme in Jammu. "We are working on how to securely transfer people's data, especially in rural areas where phones are not acces-

sible. Within two weeks, we are planning to launch a new initiative in Jammu. The Entrepreneurship Festival has made me realize that while Jammu and Kashmir has long been known for tourism, its future as an IT hub is bright," Raj said.

The second day of Udyanotsav 2025, a festival of innovation and collaboration, saw schoolchildren exhibiting their scientific creativity alongside industry leaders. Students from various government and private schools displayed their self-developed innovations, proving that the entrepreneurial spirit in Jammu and Kashmir begins at a young age.

The Indian Army also participated in the expo, showcasing cutting-edge innovations developed for security and defense.

The Entrepreneurship Festival will conclude with Union Minister of State Dr. Jitendra Singh as the chief guest. The closing ceremony will feature a guest talk, panel discussions, and cultural programs.

Earlier, last month, the Jammu and Kashmir Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha highlighted the transformative initiatives of the government through the Department of Industries & Commerce that have redefined innovation and entrepreneurship ecosystem and empowering youth of the UT.

"In the past few years J&K's Industrial ecosystem has witnessed an unprecedented surge, supporting the culture of innovation, research & development and scientific advancements. I want to see our youth among the top-notch entrepreneurs of the country, contributing to its growth," the Lieutenant Governor said. He added that the sincere efforts and policy interventions of the government have made J&K a vibrant startup hub—(KNO)

CS Scrutinises 'Sehat App' Before Its Formal Launch



Observer News Service

JAMMU: Chief Secretary, Atal Dulloo, had an in-depth analysis of the features and functioning of the 'Sehat App' before it was dedicated to the public.

The application, which was developed by BISAG-N on the request of the Health & Medical Education Department, would serve as a single stop solution for availing all patient and health practitioner related services in J&K.

During a live demonstration of this application, the Chief Secretary assessed several of its features and appreciated both the Health Department and BISAG-N for making it a reality. He observed that this first version is itself a comprehensive application offering certain better services to the patients and health practitioners through their smartphones.

The Chief Secretary further enjoined upon the concern for onboarding all the health practitioners on this portal in order to make the application more comprehensive and useful for the users. He also advised them to look into making certain upgrades regarding registration of doctors/ paramedics for home support and tele consultation.

Regarding other services, the Chief Secretary asked for adding information about the high-end services of chemotherapy, dialysis available in both public and private sectors here. He also directed for offering the insurance services extended through schemes like Pradhan Mantri Jeevan Jyoti Yojana and Pradhan Mantri Suraksha Bima yojana.

The Chief Secretary also asked to introduce an inventory of professionals certified in providing 'Basic Life Support (BLS)' support in case of emergencies and those of Advanced Life Support (ALS) givers also to build the capacity of BLS givers in order to enhance their number and reach in different parts of the UT.

The Chief Secretary under-

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The Chief Secretary underscored the need of enriching it with the details of blood donors besides having API integration with other applications like e-WIN, ABDM and other relevant ones.

scored the need of enriching it with the details of blood donors besides having API integration with other applications like e-WIN, ABDM and other relevant ones. He called on them to further augment it with services like home delivery of drugs, activity calendars of different Medical Colleges and National Institutions for the benefit of medical students and practitioners.

The Chief Secretary also asked for introduction of payment gateway in the same application so that users do not have to look helter-skelter to complete their appointments or carry out diagnostic tests in medical facilities. He asked for sending health alerts to the users at times of need or any emergency.

Secretary, H&ME, Dr Syed Abid Rashid Shah, gave a detailed description of the features embedded in the 'Sehat App'. He revealed that the application has been developed on the lines as envisaged by the Chief Secretary himself. He gave out that it is a comprehensive one stop solution for different services offered by the Department in addition to extending resources to the medics for building their capacity and training.

He further said that the app offers patient services, facilities for the general public, facilities for healthcare professionals, medical students, their skill development, health insurance and helpline assistance to people for different purposes together with a chat bot to ask queries and seek customised answers.

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Alcohol: A Social Evil or an Economic Necessity?

Syed Zameer Raza Safvi

The debate over banning alcohol remains a contentious issue in today's world. While many support a ban, others argue that alcohol should not be prohibited, especially in tourist destinations. However, the key question is: Is alcohol the only way to boost tourism? Are the consequences and negative effects of alcohol worth the economic revenue that states earn from it?

Dr. Marc Schuckit from the University of California, San Diego, has explored the link between alcohol consumption and aggression, impulsivity, and criminal behavior. Studies indicate that alcohol impairs judgment and increases the likelihood of violent or reckless actions.

Apart from religious reasons, there are many social and physical arguments for banning alcohol consumption. Overall, alcohol is seen as a negative influence on society. Not only does it impact health, but irresponsible consumption is one of the main concerns associated with alcohol use.

When it comes to health concerns, numerous studies by medical professionals highlight the dangers of alcohol consumption.

For example, Dr. Charles S. Lieber of Harvard Medical School conducted extensive research on alcohol's effects on the liver, leading to significant findings on alcoholic liver disease, including fatty liver, hepatitis, and cirrhosis. His studies from the 1960s to the 1980s demonstrated how alcohol impacts liver metabolism and enzyme production.

Alcohol consumption is also linked to heart and cardiovascular issues. Additionally, Dr. Jennie Connor from the University of Otago, New Zealand, published a study in *Addiction* (2016) confirming that alcohol consumption is directly associated with cancers of the liver, breast, esophagus, and colon.

Other studies suggest that alcohol weakens the immune system, making individuals more susceptible to infections such as pneumonia.

Economic profit should not be the sole consideration; moral standards also play a crucial role in society. Above all, the safety and well-being of people should be the top priority.

During the 19th and early 20th centuries, the temperance movement—a social movement advocating for temperance or total abstinence from alcohol—gained prominence in many countries, particularly in English-speaking, Scandinavian, and majority-Protestant nations. This movement eventually led to national prohibitions in Canada (1918–1920), Norway (spirits only, 1919–1926), Finland (1919–1932), and the United States (1920–1933), as well as provincial prohibition in India (1948–present). Several temperance organizations continue to promote alcohol abstinence.

In India, several states enforce alcohol prohibition, commonly referred to as "dry states." These include Bihar, Gujarat, Mizoram, and Nagaland.

According to the Bihar government, within a year of implementing prohibition, the number of murders and gang robberies decreased by 20%. Additionally, riots declined by 13%, and traffic accidents were reduced by 10%. The economic impact was also notable, with household spending increasing. Sales of milk



“Economic profit should not be the sole consideration; moral standards also play a crucial role in society. Above all, the safety and well-being of people should be the top priority.”

rose by 10%, cheese by 200%, two-wheeled vehicles by 30%, and electrical appliances by 50%. This data aligns with Dr. Marc Schuckit's study on the effects of alcohol prohibition.

Alcohol may contribute to the economy, but it can never justify the crimes committed under its influence. Every day, we hear about crimes, many of which are carried out by individuals under the influence of alcohol. Crimes such as robbery, murder, and rape are among the offenses often linked to alcohol consumption.

A study conducted by researchers Dr. Anitha Rayirala, Dr. K. Sudha Rani, Dr. Divija Bunga, and Dr. Umashankar stated: "It is remarkable to note that none of the offenders exhibited other psychiatric symptoms apart from substance dependence and intoxication at the time of committing the crime. Our study found that 58.4% of subjects had alcohol dependence, and most of the crimes were committed against relatives, primarily spouses. The majority of these offenses were directly or indirectly linked to alcohol consumption, as no other psychiatric illnesses or underlying personality disorders could be diagnosed."

As the debate over alcohol bans intensifies across India, data from an IndiaSpend analysis of the 2013 National Crime Records Bureau (NCRB) report—the latest available—reveals that 15 people die every day, or one person every 96 minutes, due to the effects of alcohol consumption.

Furthermore, according to a World Health Organization (WHO) report, per capita alcohol consumption in India increased by 38%, from 1.6 liters in 2003-05 to 2.2 liters in 2010-12. The report also highlighted that over 11% of Indians are binge drinkers, compared to the global average of 16%.

The Indian Penal Code (IPC)

of 1860 clearly establishes a direct and distinct relationship between alcoholism and criminal behavior. The acute consequences of alcohol consumption are reflected in the rising number of serious crimes, including:

- Culpable homicide (Section 304 IPC)
- Death due to rash and negligent acts (Section 304A IPC)
- Hurt (Section 323 IPC)
- Grievous hurt (Section 325 IPC)
- Assault (Section 351 IPC)
- Attempted suicide (Section 309 IPC)
- Rape (Section 376 IPC)
- Sexual assault (Section 354 IPC)
- Public nuisance (Section 268 IPC) and
- Vandalism.

These statistics and legal provisions highlight the undeniable link between alcohol consumption and crime, emphasizing the need for stricter regulations and awareness to mitigate its harmful effects on society.

In conclusion, banning alcohol would be beneficial for both individuals and society, leading to a healthier and more positive environment. Tourism is not about alcohol consumption or intoxicated behavior; rather, it is about enjoying good experiences, visiting beautiful places, and spending quality time with family and friends. Hill stations are often referred to as health resorts—what is the purpose of a health resort if people visit only to drink?

Views expressed in the article are the author's own and do not necessarily represent the editorial stance of Kashmir Observer. The author is a freelance writer and can be reached at Raza.zameer@gmail.com

KO VIEW

PM Modi's US visit

As expected, Prime minister Narendra Modi's visit to the US has been a great success, something also acknowledged by the senior Congress leader Shashi Tharoor. The meeting was dubbed as "bromance" in some media outlets as the two leaders have always displayed a strong liking for each other. In his previous term, Trump had organized the Howdy Modi event in Houston, billed as one of the largest ever receptions of a foreign leader in the US. And in his spectacular second term, PM Modi is one of the select foreign leaders, Trump has met during the first month of his office. And the summit lived up to its hype. The US president announced US military sales to India, including F-35 jets, which will give a major boost to India's defence capabilities. Both sides agreed to negotiate a trade deal and finalise a new defence framework. What is more, Trump also approved the extradition of Tahawwur Rana, a Chicago businessman accused of playing a role in the 2008 terror attack in Mumbai.

However, the meeting did confront India also with some challenges: Trump also announced oil and gas exports to India to narrow the trade deficit. And what is more, the issue of mutual tariffs is yet to be resolved but after the visit, India expects the US to reconsider the decision. Overall, the visit has worked to India's advantage. In his second term, the Trump administration is expected to further deepen the relationship. Ever since the former US president Bill Clinton's visit to India in 2000, when the US decisively reached out to India, the relations between the two countries have moved to the next level. Economy apart, their cooperation across a broad array of geo-political issues has intensified. Besides, regional dynamics have changed fast over the past two decades. The US-Pakistan ties, on the other hand, have lost their old raison d'être. China's rise and expanding clout together with India's importance as a regional counterweight has redrawn the US priorities in the region. In the ongoing gradual shift from a unipolar to a bi-polar world, India is asserting itself as a global and regional power, and the established great powers can't ignore this fact.

It is true that Trump has been a disruptive influence in global affairs. In some aspects America under him has drastically departed from its long standing policies on rules-based world order. For example on the climate deal that the US unilaterally chose to reject under him, or for that matter, the global health. But as the summit with PM Modi will have us believe, the US under Trump has shown a distinct partiality towards India. Overall, PM Modi's visit has strengthened India-US ties, and while challenges remain, the growing cooperation between the two nations points to a mutually beneficial partnership in the next four years.

“Alcohol may contribute to the economy, but it can never justify the crimes committed under its influence. Every day, we hear about crimes, many of which are carried out by individuals under the influence of alcohol”



Did You Know?

SIP in Mutual Funds Benefits: Thriving in a Declining Market

Irshad Mushtaq

Investing in mutual funds through a Systematic Investment Plan (SIP) can be particularly advantageous when the market is bearish. Here's why you should remain focused and optimistic about your SIP investments even when the market trends down:

Leverage Cost Averaging:

A falling market allows you to capitalize on cost averaging. Your investments are made at lower prices, decreasing the average cost per unit over time. This strategy enhances your returns in the long run, as you're buying more units when prices are down and fewer when prices are high.

Think Long-Term:

Patience is key. SIPs are designed for long-term wealth creation, with horizons of 5 to 10 years. In the initial years, deep market corrections offer opportunities to accumulate more units at lower prices. Resist the urge to track daily market fluctuations; focus on your long-term financial goals instead.

Automated Wealth Building:

Your SIP works autonomously. Trust that your contributions are being effectively deployed. Over time, and with disciplined contributions, your investments will appreciate, leveraging the natural recovery and growth cycles of the market.

Ignore Short-Term Volatility:

It is crucial for mutual fund investors to avoid reacting impulsively to short-term market volatility. Do not let temporary economic conditions sway your commitment to investing. Historically, markets recover and grow, benefiting those who remain consistent and patient.

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

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Concern Regarding Warmer Winters in Kashmir This Year

I am writing to express my concern about the unusually warm winter experienced in Kashmir this year. As an area renowned for its cold, snowy winters, the recent weather pattern is causing significant environmental and socio-economic impacts, both of which deserve immediate attention.

Kashmir's winters have traditionally been marked by heavy snowfall, which plays an essential role in the local economy, particularly for

agriculture, tourism, and water resources. However, this year, there has been a noticeable lack of snowfall, and temperatures have remained higher than usual. This is worrying, as it could signal larger trends related to climate change, which could have long-term consequences for the region's delicate ecosystem.

The absence of snow is not just an environmental concern; it also affects the livelihood of thousands of people dependent on tourism, es-

pecially in the winter months. Ski resorts and other winter activities are struggling, resulting in a loss of income for businesses and workers who rely on this season for their earnings. Furthermore, the reduced snowfall could potentially impact water resources, as the melting of snowpack in the spring is a key source of water for the region.

I urge the concerned authorities to investigate this anomaly in the climate and take proactive steps to

address the underlying causes. Public awareness about climate change and its impacts is critical, and efforts should be made to implement sustainable practices that can help mitigate these adverse effects.

It is essential that we take these environmental concerns seriously in order to preserve the unique beauty and resources of Kashmir for future generations.

Yusra Wani
Srinagar

The Secret to Happy Parenting

Prioritize Time With Your Kids and Avoid the Ripple Effect of Conflict

Aulfat Parveen

Parenting has always been one of life's most rewarding yet challenging journeys. In today's fast-paced, technology-driven world, the dynamics of parenting have shifted dramatically. With smartphones, social media, and endless work demands, finding quality time to spend with children has become increasingly difficult. Yet, the secret to happy parenting remains timeless: prioritize time with your kids and avoid the ripple effect of conflict. This article explores why these two principles are crucial in the modern era, how they've evolved over time, and actionable steps to implement them in your daily life.

In the past, families often lived in close-knit communities where extended family members played a significant role in child-rearing. Parents had more time to engage with their children, and life moved at a slower pace. Fast forward to the 21st century, and the picture looks vastly different. Parents are juggling demanding careers, financial pressures, and the constant pull of digital distractions. Children, too, are growing up in a world where screens often replace face-to-face interactions.

The result? A growing disconnect between parents and children. Studies show that children today spend significantly less time with their parents compared to previous generations. This lack of quality time can lead to feelings of neglect, low self-esteem, and behavioral issues in children. On the flip side, parents often feel overwhelmed, guilty, and stressed, struggling to balance their responsibilities.

Spending quality time with your children isn't just about being physically present—it's about being emotionally available. Time spent together fosters trust, communication, and emotional intimacy. Whether it's play-



ing a game, reading a book, or simply talking about their day, these moments create lasting memories and strengthen your relationship. Children who feel loved and supported are more likely to develop resilience, confidence, and a positive outlook on life. Quality time reassures them that they are valued and secure.

Parenting can be stressful, but spending time with your kids can also bring joy and fulfillment. It's a reminder of what truly matters and can help you reconnect with your own inner child. Through shared activities, children learn important life skills like problem-solving, empathy, and teamwork. These lessons are far more impactful when taught through experience rather than lectures.

While spending time with your kids is essential, how you behave during that time is equally important. Conflict between par-

ents—whether it's frequent arguments, silent treatments, or passive-aggressive behavior—can have a profound impact on children. This phenomenon, often referred to as the "ripple effect," can shape a child's emotional and psychological development in ways that last a lifetime.

Children are highly perceptive and can sense tension even when parents try to hide it. Witnessing conflict can lead to anxiety, fear, and a sense of instability. Over time, these emotions can manifest as behavioral issues or mental health challenges. Children learn how to navigate relationships by observing their parents. If they grow up in a conflict-ridden environment, they may struggle with trust, communication, and emotional intimacy in their own relationships later in life.

The stress of parental conflict can affect a

HAPPINESS DOESN'T ALWAYS COME FROM GRAND GESTURES.

SOMETIMES, it's the little things—like a hug, a laugh, or a shared joke—that leave the biggest impact. Prioritizing time with your kids and minimizing conflict isn't just about creating a happy home in the present—it's about setting the foundation for a brighter future

child's ability to concentrate, leading to difficulties in school. It can also impact their social skills, making it harder for them to form healthy friendships. Looking back at previous generations, there are valuable lessons to be gleaned. In the past, families often prioritized togetherness, whether it was through shared meals, community gatherings, or simple activities like gardening or storytelling. Conflict, while inevitable, was often handled more discreetly, with an emphasis on maintaining harmony for the sake of the children.

While modern life doesn't always allow for the same level of togetherness, the underlying principles remain relevant. The key is to adapt these lessons to fit today's realities. Designate specific times or areas in your home where screens are off-limits. Use this time to engage in meaningful conversations or activities with your kids. In a busy world, spontaneity can be

challenging. Block out time in your calendar for family activities, whether it's a weekly game night or a weekend outing.

Be fully present when you're with your children. Put away distractions, listen actively, and show genuine interest in their thoughts and feelings. Disagreements are a natural part of any relationship, but how you handle them matters. Demonstrate respect, empathy, and effective communication when resolving conflicts with your partner. Parenting is a team effort. Don't hesitate to lean on your partner, family, or friends for support. If conflicts persist, consider seeking professional help to address underlying issues.

Happiness doesn't always come from grand gestures. Sometimes, it's the little things—like a hug, a laugh, or a shared joke—that leave the biggest impact. Prioritizing time with your kids and minimizing conflict isn't just about creating a happy home in the present—it's about setting the foundation for a brighter future. Children who grow up feeling loved, supported, and secure are more likely to thrive academically, socially, and emotionally. They're also more likely to carry these positive experiences into their own parenting journeys, creating a ripple effect of love and harmony for generations to come.

In a world that often feels chaotic and unpredictable, the simple act of being present for your children can make all the difference. It's a reminder that, despite the challenges of modern life, the heart of parenting remains unchanged: love, connection, and the unwavering commitment to your child's well-being. So, take a deep breath, put down your phone, and embrace the joy of parenting. After all, the secret to happy parenting isn't a secret at all—it's right there in front of you, waiting to be cherished.

The author is an Anganwadi worker in (ICDS)

Are We Overdoing Mental Health Awareness?

Too much focus on mental health can fuel more distress, not less

Ian MacRae

Over the past decade, discussions about mental health have exploded across public discourse. From social media campaigns to corporate wellness initiatives, the message is clear: Talk more, share more, and reduce stigma. This increased visibility has undeniably helped many seek support, normalize conversations, and break down harmful misconceptions.

But are we talking too much about mental health? And more importantly, is the way we're talking about it always helpful? There is growing concern that excessive awareness may have unintended consequences, including amplifying distress, interfering with natural coping mechanisms, and even exacerbating certain mental health challenges.

The Risks of Overexposure

Mental health awareness campaigns aim to inform and support, but they may sometimes do the opposite. A well-documented example comes from suicide research: Studies have shown that excessive or misguided public discussion about suicide can lead to increased instances of suicidal behavior, a phenomenon known as the Werther effect. This is why organizations like the World Health Organization (WHO) and media regulators have developed strict guidelines on how to discuss suicide responsibly.

The same caution applies to certain self-harming behaviors. Publicizing them in an unstructured or sensationalized manner can inadvertently encourage imitation rather than prevention.

These findings are a matter of ongoing debate. But if we recognize that some mental health topics require careful handling to avoid harm, shouldn't we consider whether other aspects of mental health awareness campaigns might also be counterproductive? Even if efforts are well-intentioned, that does not mean they are effective.

Awareness, Oversaturation, and Inflation

There is a fine line between raising awareness and overexposing individuals to mental health discussions in a way that may reinforce distress. Constant but unproductive discussions can heighten self-focus, making individuals more preoccupied with their emotions and perceived struggles rather than developing constructive strategies for resilience and well-being. This can fuel rumination, the repetitive dwelling on distressing thoughts, which is linked to increased anxiety and depression rather than improved mental health.

Another potential issue is the prevalence inflation hypothesis which suggests that increased mental health awareness may paradoxically contribute to rising reports of mental health issues. While more people recognizing their symptoms can be beneficial, excessive focus on mild distress can shift normal emotional responses into pathology, reinforcing distress rather than promoting

resilience. As awareness amplifies, this cycle may become self-reinforcing, further driving the perceived mental health crisis.

Even if awareness and openness are important, we must consider whether social media (where all posts function as commercial content designed to drive ad revenue) is the right space for these complex, nuanced, and personal conversations. Digital awareness campaigns can have unintended consequences, particularly when they are disseminated on social media platforms that neither creators nor consumers can fully control.

The Importance of Forgetting

A growing body of evidence highlights the importance of forgetting in resilience and mental health recovery. Forgetting is an essential psychological process that supports emotional well-being. Letting go of painful memories, severed relationships, or past mistakes can be a necessary part of coping and development. Yet digital technology makes forgetting increasingly difficult.

Recent research challenges the belief that thought suppression is inherently harmful. Instead, training individuals to suppress distressing thoughts can reduce their emotional intensity and make them less likely to intrude over time.

This suggests that controlled forgetting can be a valuable tool for mental health, benefiting both clinical disorders like post-traumatic stress disorder and everyday emotional regulation. In fact, decades of evidence indicate that some mental illnesses like PTSD involve impaired inhibitory control, meaning recovery may partly depend on improving one's ability to forget effectively.

However, when social media algorithms and device notifications dictate which memories resurface, there may be a serious problem if individuals lose (or never develop) the ability to manage their own processes of memory and forgetting, making emotional recovery more difficult.

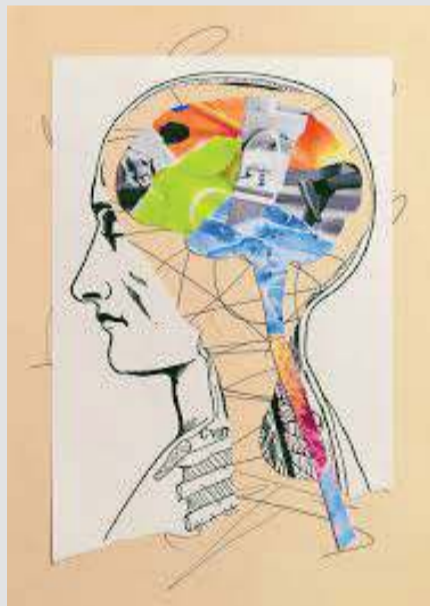
The Difference Between Public and Personal Conversations

It's also important to differentiate between where and how conversations about mental health take place. There's an important distinction between:

Public awareness campaigns that promote broad discussions but may lack depth, nuance, and expertise.

Personal, high-quality conversations within meaningful relationships that allow for empathy, connection, personalized understanding, and support.

Over the past decade, discussions about mental health have exploded across public discourse. From social media campaigns to corporate wellness initiatives, the message is clear: Talk more, share more, and reduce stigma. This increased visibility has undeniably helped many seek support, normalize conversations, and break down harmful misconceptions.



MENTAL HEALTH PROFESSIONALS AND RESEARCHERS AREN'T beyond criticism, nor should they be the only voices on the topic. Psychology has had its share of theories later found to be weak or unable to be replicated.

But are we talking too much about mental health? And more importantly, is the way we're talking about it always helpful? There is growing concern that excessive awareness may have unintended consequences, including amplifying distress, interfering with natural coping mechanisms, and even exacerbating certain mental health challenges.

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Public discussions, especially on social media, may at times do more harm than good. Well-meaning individuals, or even those with self-serving motives, can take on the role of mental health advocates despite lacking formal training. Some influencers use mental health discussions to gain visibility, sell products, or promote personal brands. Others, while genuinely trying to help, may oversimplify complex issues or share information that is useful for them but counterproductive for others in fundamentally different situations.

On the other hand, direct, personal conversations between friends, family members, colleagues, and trusted individuals are qualitatively different. These interactions allow for mutual understanding, tailored support, and real-time responses, making them far more meaningful than generic online discussions that amplify problems without offering real solutions.

Rethinking Awareness

The quality, context, and medium of mental health discussions matter.

Mental health professionals and researchers aren't beyond criticism, nor should they be the only voices on the topic. Psychology has had its share of theories later found to be weak or unable to be replicated. Our understanding of mental health is still evolving, and ongoing discussions, research, and evidence remain essential. Superficial, self-serving, or poorly evidenced awareness efforts can do more harm than good.

Likewise, individuals have valuable insight into their own mental states. Introspection, self-awareness, and social context are crucial but often flattened by awareness campaigns that fail to account for these nuances.

But perhaps we need less raising of awareness at superficial levels and a stronger focus on developing healthy interpersonal relationships that are not curated for public consumption.

The article was originally published by Psychology Today

'Warmth Promotes Dengue Spread; Effects Of Rainfall On Its Outbreak Can Vary'

Press Trust Of India

While rising temperatures consistently promote the spread of dengue, rainfall could either increase or decrease the spread, depending on how long a region has experienced a dry season, a study has found.

As warmer, humid conditions, driven by climate change, increase dengue outbreaks, including in countries previously unaffected, the study, published in the journal *Science*, detailed how temperature and rainfall interact, and affect disease spread.

Researchers, led by those from Korea Advanced Institute of Science and Technology and the Institute for Basic Science, stressed on the role of local climate conditions in spreading dengue, thereby warranting tailored strategies in preventing disease.

Dengue is a viral infection, caused by the bite of an infected mosquito. Climates of tropical and sub-tropical regions are known to favour the disease's spread, mostly in urban and semi-urban areas.

Focussing on 16 regions of the Philippines, known for their diverse climate, the researchers analysed five years' data, recorded between January 2015 and December 2019.

While rising temperatures were con-



sistently related with a higher rate of dengue spread across the regions, rainfall was found to increase disease spread in eastern regions and decrease it in western ones.

The team explained that the contrasting effects of how rainfall affected the spread of dengue depended on a "previously overlooked" critical factor—'variation in dry season length', which refers to the differ-

ences in how long a dry season (with little to no rainfall) lasts between varied geographic regions.

In regions seeing fewer changes in the duration of dry season, rainfall tended to flush out stagnant water, reducing breeding sites for mosquitoes, thereby suppressing dengue spread, the researchers said.

However, in regions experiencing more



We found that temperature consistently increased dengue incidence throughout all the regions, while rainfall effects differed depending on the variation in dry season length, a factor previously overlooked

changes in dry season length, sporadic rainfall created new breeding sites and weakened the flushing effect, thereby driving an increase in mosquito populations and dengue cases.

"Our findings provide robust evidence for how climatic factors influence dengue transmission in diverse environments. This represents a significant step toward understanding how climate change may impact mosquito-borne diseases globally," first author Olive R. Cawiding, from Korea Advanced Institute of Science and Technology and the Institute for Basic Science, said.

To validate their findings, the researchers extended their analysis to Puerto Rico, another region with diverse climate patterns. Data from municipalities, including San Juan, Adjuntas, and Ponce, covering a 20-year period from 1986 to 2005 was analysed.

The findings revealed similar patterns in how rainfall regulated the spread of dengue and "aligned with the results from the Philippine data".

"We found that temperature consistently increased dengue incidence throughout all the regions, while rainfall effects differed depending on the variation in dry season length, a factor previously overlooked," the authors wrote.

"Our findings emphasise the need for tailored prevention strategies based on local climate conditions, rather than a one-size-fits-all approach," they wrote.

'US FDA-Approved Diabetes Drug Shows Promise Against Heart Attacks, Strokes'

IAN S

A team of researchers, led by one of Indian origin, has found that a drug recently approved by the US Food and Drug Administration (FDA) to treat type 2 diabetes can also reduce heart attacks and stroke.

The international clinical trial involving more than 10,000 participants showed that the drug -- Sotagliflozin which is also approved to treat kidney disease -- can additionally also reduce cardiovascular risk among these patients.

Sotagliflozin is a sodium-glucose cotransporter (SGLT) inhibitor. It blocks the function of two proteins, known as SGLT1 and SGLT2, which move glucose and sodium across cell membranes and help control blood sugar levels. Other SGLT2 inhibitors do not as significantly block SGLT1.

"These results demonstrate



a new mechanism of action -- combined blockade with sotagliflozin of the SGLT1 receptors (found in the kidney, gut, heart, and brain) and SGLT2 receptors (found in the kidney) -- to reduce heart attack and stroke risk," said Deepak L Bhatt, Director of Mount Sinai Fuster Heart Hospital and Professor of Cardiovascular Medicine at the Icahn School of Medicine at Mount

Sinai, US. "The benefits seen here are distinct from those seen with the other very popular SGLT2 inhibitors in widespread clinical use for diabetes, heart failure, and kidney disease," Bhatt said.

The randomised, multicenter trial included 10,584 patients with chronic kidney disease, type 2 diabetes, and additional cardiovascular risk fac-

tors; and analysed the ability of sotagliflozin to reduce the risks of life-threatening cardiovascular outcomes. The participants were followed for an average of 16 months.

The results, published in *The Lancet Diabetes and Endocrinology*, showed that people in the sotagliflozin group had a 23 per cent reduction in the rate of heart attacks, strokes, and deaths from such cardiovascular causes compared with the placebo group.

Bhatt said that sotagliflozin was approved to reduce the risk of deaths from cardiovascular causes, hospitalisations for heart failure, and urgent heart failure visits for patients with either heart failure or type 2 diabetes, chronic kidney disease, and other cardiovascular risk factors.

"The new data show that it additionally reduces the risk of heart attacks and strokes, and we could see more widespread use as a result."

PUBLIC NOTICE

I, Fayaz Ahmad Pir, S/O Nizam U Din Pir, R/O Putukha Muqam, PIN - 193201, hereby declare that I have changed my name from Peer Zada Fayaz Ahmad to Fayaz Ahmad Pir. Henceforth, I shall be known and recognized by my new name for all official and personal purposes.

If anyone has any objections to this name change, they may contact the Passport Office, Srinagar within seven (7) days from the date of this notice. After this period, no objections will be entertained.

Name: Fayaz Ahmad Pir
S/O: Nizam U Din Pir
R/O: Putukha Muqam, PIN - 193201

fko

Office of the Naib Tehsildar Pattan..

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

The registrar birth BDO Singapore has submitted a case file pertaining to birth of Mohd Owais Khan s/o Ali Mohd Khan R/o Trikbal Hanjiwera Tehsil Pattan distt baramulla with verified date of birth 21/03/2013 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
fko Naib Tehsildar Pattan

Public Notice

My name has been incorrectly written on my Aadhaar card as Saima Begum, whereas my correct name is Khalida Begum, which needs to be corrected. If anyone has any objections in this regard, he/she may file them in the concerned office within seven days. After this period, no objections shall be entertained.

Khalida Begum
W/o Abdul Rashid Hajam
R/o Hajam Mohalla, Palhallan, Tehsil Pattan

fko

Government of Jammu & Kashmir

OFFICE OF THE EXECUTIVE ENGINEER JAL SHAKTI PHE GROUND WATER DIVISION SRINAGAR

Bagh-i-Ali-Mardan Nowshera Srinagar, e-mail: phegwd@yahoo.com

PUBLIC NOTICE

Attention all individuals, firms, industries, factories, Institutes, organizations, workshops (Government/semi government / Private) Constructing /operating/using Ground water within their Premises / Jurisdiction In Kashmir Province !

As per the regulations outlined by the Jammu & Kashmir Water Resources Regulatory Authority (JKWRA) in 2010 and 2011, with the latest amendments, it is mandatory- for all individuals, firms, industries, factories, institutes, organizations, workshops (whether government, semi-government, or private) constructing, operating, or using bore wells or production wells within their premises or jurisdiction in Kashmir to register these wells with the Department of Public Health Engineering (PHE), Ground Water Division Srinagar. This registration must occur within 15 days from the date of construction. However, most of these entities have failed to do so until now. Therefore, all users are directed to register their bore wells (if they are more than 65 feet deep) upto 31st March 2025. Failure to comply will result in strict action against defaulters as per the rules governed by JKWRA.

Additionally, users already registered with the department are urged to clear any past dues upto 31st March 2025. Failure to do so will lead to the publication of defaulting users' names in newspapers, followed by strict actions in accordance with the rules. We also seek cooperation from everyone to help regulate and control ground water assets in the Kashmir province. Please report any direct or indirect misuse of ground water in various districts and areas of Kashmir province.

For any information, assistance, complaints, or suggestions, please contact the Nodal Officer at the PHE Ground Water Division: Er. Syed Iqbal Rizvi #9906629565

NO: PHE/GWD/12181-90
DIPK-12075/24
Dated: 17/02/2025

Executive Engineer,
PHE ground Water Division, Srinagar

NORTHERN RAILWAY

E-Tender Notice

DEN-III/FZR acting for and on behalf of The President of India invites open tenders (E-Tenders) against below titled tenders and available on www.ireps.gov.in with closing date- 10.03.2025 up to 15:00 Hrs. Bidders will be able to submit their original/revised bids up to closing date and time only. Manual offers are not allowed against this tenders, and any such manual offer received shall be ignored. Contractors are allowed to make payments against this tender towards tender document cost and earnest money only through only payment modes available on www.ireps.gov.in portal like net banking, debit card, credit card etc. Manual payments through Demand draft, Banker Cheque, Deposit receipts, FDR etc. are not allowed. For more information logon to www.ireps.gov.in.

Tender Type	Tendering Section	Bidding System
Open	Works	Single Bid System
Date of Uploading Tenders	Bid Starting Date	Bid Closing Date/Time
14.02.2025	24.02.2025	10.03.2025/15:00 Hrs

S.No.	Tender No.	Details of Tender				
1.	313-2024-25-ADEN-IASR	Upgradation/Improvement in infrastructure & augmentation of manufacturing capacity of Amritsar Mech. Workshop.	Advertised Value (Rs.)	Earnest Money	Validity of Offer	Period of Completion
			1,42,35,336.56/-	2,21,200,00/-	60 Days	06 Months
Similar nature of work :- "Any civil work other than track work."						

Note 1:- Before bidding, bidders to check for any corrigendum issued against tender. Tender No:- 313-2024-25-ADEN-IASR Date: 17.02.2025

SERVING CUSTOMERS WITH A SMILE

Government of Jammu & Kashmir UT

OFFICE OF THE EXECUTIVE ENGINEER PW(R&B) DIVISION CHRARI-SHARIEF

Near: Nowhar (Iqbal Abad) Charar-I-Sharief E-mail: xenrmbchar23@gmail.com

NOTICE INVITING E-TENDER

Single cover system

Fresh E-NIT No.46/RNB/CHAR of 2024-25/ Dated:17/02/2025

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

SN	Name of Work	Adv. Cost (Rs. In Lacs)	Cost of T/Doc. (In Rupees)	Earnest Money (In Rupees)	Time of completion (days)	M.H OF Account	Class Of Contractor
1	Construction of Settle point at Yousmarg	6.93	300/-	13860/-	25 Days	Capex Budget 2024-25	C/D

Position of AAA:- Accorded
Position of funds:- Committed
Position of TS:- Sanctioned

Project Authority: CEO Yousmarg Development Authority.

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

1	Date of Issue of Tender Notice	17/02/2025
2	Period of downloading of bidding documents	17/02/2025
3	Bid submission Start Date	17/02/2025
4	Bid Submission End Date	27/02/2025 upto 4.00 PM.
5	Date & time of opening of Technical Bids	28/02/2025 at 11:30 AM in the office of Executive Engineer R&B Division Chararisharief

Note :- The Bidders are advised to read all conditions laid down in the NIT carefully before uploading softcopy. Any short fall found in the soft copy will render the Bid rejected.

As per Circular issued by the Government of Jammu and Kashmir Civil Secretariat Finance department vide No.OM No.A/24(2017)-651 dt.07-06-2018 which reads as under :-

a) Furnishing of Hard Copies of bids immediately after submission of e-tenders is dispensed with. The same should be obtained only from the Bidder who's declared 1st Lowest (L-1) after opening of financial bids.

b) The Cost of tender document should be collected by introducing Treasury Challan (Receipt).

2. Bids must be accompanied with cost of Tender document in shape of Treasury Challan (deposited in MH: 0059) in favour of Executive Engineer R&B Division Chararisharief (Tender Inviting Authority) and Earnest money / Bid security in shape of CD/R/FDR/BG pledged to Executive Engineer R&B Division Chararisharief (Tender Receiving Authority). The Bank Guarantee should be valid for 45 days beyond bid validity.

Note:- The Date of Treasury Challan and Earnest Money / Bid security must be between the date of start of bid and Bid Submission End date. Any deviation shall render the bidder as Non-responsive.

3. The 1st lowest bidder has to produce an amount equal to 5% of contract as Performance Security in the shape of CD/R/FDR/BG in favour of Executive Engineer R&B Division Chararisharief (Tender Receiving Authority) within 07 (Seven) days after the date of receipt of letter of acceptance and shall be released after successful completion of DLP.

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

5. The date and time of opening of Financial Bids of a responsive bidder shall be notified on Web Site www.jktenders.gov.in and conveyed to the bidders automatically through an e-mail message on their e-mail address.

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

7. The earnest money (EMD) shall be released in favour of unsuccessful bidders only after submission of original Treasury Challan.

8. The earnest money/performance Security shall be forfeited if:-

a) Any bidder/ tenderer withdraws his bid/ tender during the period of bid validity or makes any modifications in the terms and conditions of the bid.

b) Failure of Successful bidder to furnish the required performance security within the specified time limit.

c) Failure of Successful bidder to execute the agreement within 28 days after fixation of contract.

No.5557-66
DIPK-12110/24
Dated:17/02/2025

Sd/-
Executive Engineer
R&B Division Chararisharief

Exports Contracts 2.38% In Jan; Trade Deficit Widens To USD 23 Bn



Press Trust Of India

NEW DELHI- India's exports declined for the third month in a row in January, falling by 2.38 per cent year-on-year to USD 36.43 billion, while the trade deficit widened to USD 22.99 billion in the month.

Imports rose by 10.28 per cent year-on-year to USD 59.42 billion in January due to an increase in gold shipments, according to the Commerce Ministry data.

The trade deficit was USD 21.94 billion in December and USD 16.55 billion in January last year.

Commerce Secretary Sunil Barthwal told reporters that despite economic uncertainties in the world, India's exports are doing better in both goods and services sectors.

He said that sectors like electronics, pharma, rice and gems and jewellery are registering health growth rates during the month under review.

"Despite conflicts, and tariff

retaliation around the world, we are doing well," Barthwal said, adding India's goods and services exports would cross USD 800 billion in 2025-25.

Total exports were worth USD 778 billion in 2023-24.

In January, gold imports rose to USD 2.68 billion from USD 1.9 billion in the same month last year. Gold imports were USD 4.7 billion in December 2024.

Crude oil imports fell to USD 13.43 billion from USD 16.56 billion in January 2024 and USD 15.27 billion in December 2024.

The data showed that the estimated value of services exports for January 2025 was USD 38.55 billion compared to USD 31.01 billion in January 2024. Imports, on the other hand, are estimated at USD 18.22 billion compared to USD 14.84 billion in January 2024.

On the goods front, key export sectors, including petroleum, and chemicals, have registered negative growth during the month under review.

Crude oil imports fell to USD 13.43 billion from USD 16.56 billion in January 2024 and USD 15.27 billion in December 2024.

Sensex, Nifty Eke Out Gains In Volatile Session, End 8-Day Losing Run



Press Trust Of India

MUMBAI- Stock markets snapped the eight-day losing run in a volatile session on Monday with benchmark Sensex closing higher by 57 points on the back of value buying in blue-chip stocks HDFC Bank and Reliance Industries.

Helped by fag-end buying, the 30-share BSE Sensex climbed 57.65 points or 0.08 per cent to settle at 75,996.86. During the day, the barometer tanked 644.45 points or 0.84 per cent to 75,294.76. The NSE Nifty rebounded 30.25 points or 0.13 per cent to 22,959.50.

Reports that the US and India will meet soon to decide on broad contours of a trade agreement for reducing tariffs supported buying in metal, pharma and financial shares, analysts said.

From the 30-share blue-chip pack, Bajaj Finserv, Power Grid, IndusInd Bank, Adani Ports, UltraTech Cement, HDFC Bank, Zomato and Tata Motors were among the major gainers.

Mahindra & Mahindra, Bharti Airtel, Tata Consultancy Services, Infosys, ICICI Bank, and ITC were the biggest laggards.

Foreign portfolio investors (FPIs) offloaded equities worth Rs 4,294.69 crore on Friday, according to exchange data.

The total outflow by FPIs has reached Rs 99,299 crore -- near Rs 1 lakh crore -- in 2025 so far, data with the depositors showed. FPIs pulled out Rs 21,272 crore in the first two weeks of this month, driven by global tensions after the US imposed tariffs on imports. This came following a net outflow of Rs 78,027 crore in January.

"Markets eked out modest gains in late recovery in a highly volatile trade, but most importantly it managed to halt the 8-session losing streak.

"Positive Asian and European indices aided sentiment, while gains in select banking, oil & gas, metal and power stocks helped local benchmarks recover from their early lows," Prashanth Tapse, Senior VP (Research), Mehta Equities Ltd, said.

Gold Retreats From All-Time High, Down ₹1,200 To ₹88,200 Per 10 Gm

Press Trust Of India

NEW DELHI- Gold prices retreated from all-time level in the national capital on Monday, with the precious metal declining Rs 1,200 to Rs 88,200 per 10 grams due to emergence of fresh selling from stockists and retailers.

According to the All India Sarafa Association, the yellow metal of 99.9 per cent purity had soared Rs 1,300 to hit an all-time high of Rs 89,400 per 10 grams on Friday.

Gold of 99.5 per cent purity pulled back from its record level and depreciated Rs 1,200 to Rs 87,800 per 10 grams. It closed at Rs 89,000 per 10 grams in the previous trading close.

Silver prices also faced selling pressure and slipped below the Rs 1 lakh-mark by losing Rs 1,800 to Rs 98,200 per kg on Monday.

Traders said fading demand from jewellers as well as retailers at domestic spot market at existing levels weighed on the precious metal prices.

However, in futures trade on the MCX, gold contracts for April delivery climbed Rs



431 to Rs 85,118 per 10 grams. Silver futures also increased Rs 234 to Rs 95,820 per kg on the Multi Commodity Exchange (MCX).

Comex gold futures for April delivery appreciated USD 11.25 per ounce to USD 2,911.95 per ounce in the global markets.

"COMEX gold rebounded, following a sharp decline in the previous session as US retail sales figures, coupled with hopes for a lower-than-expected PCE data, which have prompted money markets to price in around 40 basis points of Fed interest rate cuts in

2025," Kaynat Chainwala, AVP-Commodity Research at Kotak Securities, said.

Meanwhile, spot gold at Comex traded 0.49 per cent higher at USD 2,896.68 per ounce.

"Gold resumed trading on a positive note, aided by a pullback in US Treasury yields and a softer US dollar. The dollar index stayed near a two-month low after falling more than 1 per cent last week, dragged down by weaker-than-expected US economic data," Saumil Gandhi, Senior Analyst of Commodities at HDFC Securities, said.

GOLD OF 99.5 PER CENT PURITY PULLED BACK FROM ITS RECORD LEVEL and depreciated Rs 1,200 to Rs 87,800 per 10 grams. It closed at Rs 89,000 per 10 grams in the previous trading close.

SC To Examine NFRA's Plea On Powers To Probe, Penalise Misconduct Of CAs, Accounting Firms

Press Trust Of India

NEW DELHI- The Supreme Court on Monday agreed to consider a plea of National Financial Reporting Authority (NFRA) relating to its power to issue show cause notices, investigate and penalise misconduct of chartered accountants and accounting firms.

The NFRA approached the top court assailing certain directions of the Delhi High Court in a judgement delivered on February 7.

The high court upheld the validity of Section 132(4) of the Companies Act, 2013 which empowers the NFRA to initiate disciplinary proceedings against individual partners and CAs but also auditing firms in respect of any audit.

It, however, quashed the show-cause notices issued to several auditing firms, such as Deloitte Haskins and Sells LLP and Federation of Chartered Accountants Association, on the ground that the procedure adopted by the NFRA "clearly lacked attributes of neutrality and a dispassionate appraisal".

The high court said that the same officials of NEFRA, who issue the show cause notices to the auditing firms and the CAs, cannot adjudicate on penalty after probing the issues.

The Supreme Court bench



"Issue notice. Returnable on April 28. Reply shall be filed within three weeks and rejoinder thereafter," the bench said.

comprising Chief Justice Sanjiv Khanna and Justice Sanjay Kumar issued notices to the auditing firms and others on the plea of NFRA against the high court judgement after taking note of the submissions of Solicitor General Tushar Mehta, appearing for the NEFRA.

The top court, however, prima facie did not agree with the submissions that the three officials of the NFRA be allowed to continue with the probe adjudication process

following the issuance of the show cause notice to auditors and the high court verdict be stayed in the meanwhile.

"This is a detailed judgment which we cannot stay like this," the CJ said, adding that under the customs and excise law, the officials, who issue show cause notice, do not assess the case later and it has to be someone else.

The bench highlighted the importance of having different investigating and the adjudicatory arms for ensuring fairness in the actions of NEFRA.

"There are the only three members in NEFRA. They are the only members," the law officers said, adding that the functioning of the body will be affected due to the high court judgement.

"Issue notice. Returnable on April 28. Reply shall be filed within three weeks and rejoinder thereafter," the bench said. The high court had rejected a challenge to the provisions on the power of the NFRA to investigate and penalise the misconduct of chartered accountants.

It had dismissed petitions filed by individual chartered accountants and auditing firms, such as Deloitte Haskins and Sells LLP and Federation of Chartered Accountants Association, saying there was no merit in their challenge.

Vice President Calls For Revitalization Of Rural Economies Through Micro Industries

Press Trust Of India

CHANDIGARH- Vice President Jagdeep Dhankhar on Monday called for the revitalization of rural economies through micro industries that add value to agricultural and dairy products.

"There must be evolution of a mechanism in a village or in a cluster of villages where you have micro industries at the farm that add value to the agro produce, that add value to the livestock produced, milk produced. This will help evolve a sustainable society and the nutritional food value will certainly go up.

"What stops us from having entrepreneurial skills to produce ice creams, paneer, sweets, and the like in village clusters? This is very important because it will generate employment and satisfy rural youth," Dhankhar said.

Dhankhar was the chief guest at the inauguration of Advanced Entrepreneurship Skill Development Program (A-EDSP) on "Functional Foods, Nutraceuticals and their Safety" at National Agri-Food and Biomining Institute in Mohali.

Emphasising that technology must be integrated into farming practices to improve efficiency and productivity, the vice president said, "startups are there in Tier-2 and Tier-3 cities. They have to trickle to villages now because agriculture produce is lifeline of economy, raw material for industry. And when this takes



place, close to the farmland in the rural firmament, evolving as a cluster, economy will take a jump, and people will believe in the farmland."

Urging farmers to stay informed about advancements in technology and its potential benefits, he said, "A farmer is by and large clinging to his tractor for as long as it can last, ignorant of the fact that new technology is becoming environment-friendly, fuel-efficient, multifunctional, and highly subsidized."

He said there has to be an awareness campaign to tell the farmers that you don't need anybody's help. "You only have to know your inner strength to change your economy to a very high level. Form small groups, market your product at a price of your choice; you can.

"But by and large, I see farm produce is sold when it is not farmers' market, it is buyers' market. The government provides facilities to hold on to the stock by massive warehousing and cooperative movement. I can tell you the farm policies of the government are so helping the farmer.

Profit Booking Leading FII To Sell Indian Equities: FM

Press Trust Of India

MUMBAI- Seeking to assuage concerns over foreign institutional investors (FII) selling Indian equities lately, Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman on Monday attributed the action to profit booking.

Speaking to reporters in the financial capital, Sitharaman said the Indian economy is one where the investors are bagging better returns which leads to profit booking.

"FIIs also go out when they are able to or in a position to book profits. Indian market today, Indian economy today, has an environment in which investments are also yielding good returns and profit booking is also happening," she said.

It can be noted that FIIs have sold over Rs 1.56 lakh crore of stocks since October last year, including nearly Rs 1 lakh crore in 2025 itself, which has led to a sharp correction on the indices and wiping out investor wealth.

Finance Secretary Tuhin Kanta Pandey said FIIs are not moving from one emerging market to other, and added that in times of global uncertainties like the one being witnessed right now, they tend to go back to the country of origin, which is mostly the US.

He also hinted that these shifts may be temporary, and added that Indian markets are resilient.

Explaining that apart from demand-supply issues, growth prospects also influence investor be-



havior, Pandey said India remains the fastest growing large economy and added that the recently announced Budget has a slew of growth-oriented measures.

"We have faced global headwinds in the past, and will continue to face them. But I think India is in a strong position to handle it," he added.

Ajay Seth, Secretary of the Department of Economic Affairs, dismissed any idea of a government interference in the market because of the heavy sell-offs, stating that such a move can be carried out only if there is any evidence of market failure, which is not the case at present.

Seth said equities do not function on government policies alone, and added that foreign investors go to developed or bigger markets in periods of uncertainties.

He said that while India has shown resilience when it comes to world events in parts, it is not fully de-coupled either.

To a question on the US posturing on tariffs, Sitharaman said India is working towards becoming more investor friendly and pointed to recent budget announcements on reforms in customs duties.

Agri Deptt Organizes Two-Day Awareness Prog On 'Scientific Beekeeping'

Observer News Service

KULGAM- The Department of Agriculture & Farmers Welfare Department Kulgam Monday organized a Seminar cum Awareness programme on "Scientific Bee Keeping", under National Beekeeping & Honey Mission (NBHM) at Community hall here at DH Pora Kulgam.

This programme was inaugurated by the Deputy Commissioner (DC) Kulgam Athar Aamir Khan.

The programme was attended by Sub Divisional Magistrate Bashir-ul-Hassan, Tehsildar DH Pora, Chief Agriculture Officer, District Agriculture Officer, Coordinator, Scientists from KVK Pombay and other officers besides farmers, beekeepers and unemployed youth.

Addressing the occasion, the DC stressed upon the concerned authorities to extend their range of operation and involve more farmers especially the unemployed youth under various welfare programmes sponsored by the department so that they can avail benefits from their sustainable livelihood.

He emphasized to disseminate awareness among the people regarding various new and scientific beekeeping cultivation methods so that productivity is increased.

He also urged the concerned to ensure handholding of farmers not only in increasing the production but to work on marketing aspect to fetch best prices of their products.

5-Day HRD Programme On Integrated Pest Management Takes Off

Observer News Service

JAMMU- A Five-Day Human Resource Development (HRD) Programme on Integrated Pest Management (IPM) was inaugurated today at Kisan Kendra, Talab Tillo.

The event, organized by the Central Integrated Pest Management Centre Jammu, was inaugurated by Director Agriculture Jammu, S. Arvinder Singh Reen.

The participants included Joint Director (Extension) Agriculture, Satish Sharma; Professor & Head of Plant Pathology, SKUAST-J, Dr. Vishal Gupta; Deputy Director (Training), Alok Pandotra; Plant Protection Officer (PPO) Jammu, Madan Lal; Assistant Director Law Enforcement (ADLE), Kuldeep Singh; and Deputy Director (Plant Protection) CIPMC Jammu, Dr. Mithilesh Kumar Arya.

The HRD programme has been designed to enhance participants' understanding of the safe and judicious use of pesticides, promote the use of CIB&RC-approved pesticides, and highlight the role of botanicals in agriculture for achieving sustainable agricultural practices. Specifically, the programme aims to provide practical insights and technical knowledge to 40 pesticide dealers and progressive farmers from the Jammu Division. In his inaugural address, the Director emphasised the crucial importance of adopting best practices for Integrated Pest Management (IPM) to maintain environmental sustainability and enhancing crop productivity.

Group Of 35 Farmers Leaves For Inter-UT Agro-Exposure Visit

Observer News Service

DODA- Deputy Commissioner (DC) Harvinder Singh Monday flagged off a group of 35 farmers for an inter-UT agro-exposure visit within Jammu and Kashmir. The initiative is being organised under the Department of Seed & Seed Multiplication Chain by the Department of Agriculture Production & Farmers Welfare Doda.

The DC interacted with the farmers, emphasizing the importance of such exposure visits in enhancing their knowledge about modern agricultural practices and boosting agro-entrepreneurship. He encouraged the participants to make the most of the opportunity by learning advanced techniques and innovations that can be implemented in the district to improve agricultural productivity and profitability.

Chief Agriculture Officer Anil Gupta, along with officers and officials of the Agriculture Department were also present at the flag off event. The participating farmers drawn from different parts of the District expressed enthusiasm for the visit and its potential to positively impact their farming practices.

This exposure visit aims to strengthen the farmers' understanding of progressive farming methodologies and promote the adoption of innovative agro-techniques across the district.

Sebi Notifies Procedure To Amend Rules, Mandates Public Consultation

Press Trust Of India

NEW DELHI- To bring more transparency, markets watchdog Sebi has specified a new procedure for making regulations, mandating public consultation and for engagement of stakeholders for modifying norms.

In a gazette notification, the regulator has notified Sebi (Procedure for making, amending, and reviewing of regulations) Regulations, 2025.

To make regulations, Sebi will publish on its official website the proposal containing the suggested changes to the policy; a statement of the regulatory intent and objectives of the proposed regulations; and the manner, process and timelines for receiving public comments.

"A minimum of 21 calendar days shall ordinarily be provided for receiving public comments", Sebi said. On receipt of public comments, the rationale for rejection, if any, of comments will be published on the Sebi's official website.

Thereafter, the proposed regulations and the related agenda paper will be considered by Sebi. If the agenda paper has been prepared following a public consultation, it will include a systematic compilation of comments received or a summary of such comments, and the remarks thereon of Sebi.

Kashmir's Rivers

from I&FC Department stated that the water level is low due to the snowless winter. "The persistent deficit rainfall has affected the recharging of the water reservoirs across the Valley," they informed.

Notably, Jammu and Kashmir has recorded a total deficit rainfall of 29 per cent so far with the highest deficiency recorded in the month of January 2024 at 91 per cent.

Also, in the first two months till February 12, all the districts across the Union Territory have recorded a large deficit of rainfall.

The Union Territory has recorded a deficit rainfall of 79 per cent as against the normal precipitation of 140 mm, the rainfall of just 29.8 was recorded from January 01 to February 12, 2025.

In the meantime, the ongoing situation has landed Jal Shakti Department (JSD) in a manageable position to provide drinking water facility to the households of Kashmir region.

A top official of Jal Shakti Department said that "We are in a situation wherein I cannot say that we have sufficient or insufficient drinking water availability for the consumers of Kashmir region."

"As of now, we are in a good position to manage the supply of drinking water to almost all areas of Kashmir region," he said.

Asked about the backup plan or alternative in case of any water scarcity, the official said that the government has ensured every backup for the PHE and consumers. (KNO)

Fresh WD Likely

to increase, with light to moderate rainfall over most parts of Jammu and Kashmir, and some areas predicted to receive heavy rain or snow. The forecast indicates that weather conditions will improve on February 21, with dry conditions expected across the region.

In the Kashmir Valley plains, rain is expected initially, though a sharp drop in temperatures could lead to snowfall especially in scattered higher reach areas if heavy precipitation persists. Temperatures are predicted to remain between 15 and 18°C on February 19 before falling further below to 7°C on February 20.

As per the forecast, the Jammu region is expected to record higher rainfall than the Kashmir Valley with Ramban, Kishtwar, and Doda districts in the Chenab Valley likely to see moderate to heavy rainfall.

The Pir Panjal range is expected to receive heavy snowfall, particularly in popular destinations such as Gulmarg, Sinthan Top, Peer Ki Gali, and areas along the Mughal Road.

With relatively higher temperatures, lightning and thundershowers are likely in the Jammu region. Weather conditions are expected to improve from February 21 onwards after the anticipated wet spell.

Kashmir's Vital Achabal

warn that without a comprehensive water management policy, the crisis will worsen. "We need a holistic approach to manage water resources, particularly for rivers like Jhelum and Chenab. A structured policy would help regulate water

release and conservation," Rasool emphasized.

The impact of global warming is visible worldwide, with extreme weather patterns causing floods and droughts.

Experts suggest that conserving wetlands, lakes, and rivers could mitigate climate change effects.

Rasool urged both the government and citizens to take immediate action to prevent further environmental degradation. "Pollution in our riverbanks must be stopped at every level—from households to municipal authorities. Sustainable conservation efforts are crucial for the survival of our water bodies," he said.

With no official water management policy in place, experts stress the need for immediate intervention to safeguard Kashmir's water resources and prevent a deeper crisis. (KINS)

Hydropower Generation

250 Megawatts of power from the local hydel projects that amounts to 20 percent of the total generation capacity. However, in the ongoing month, the power generation has further reduced by five percent.

A top official of the department said, "In the month of January, PDD on an average was generating nearly 250 MWs of power from the power plants across Jammu and Kashmir."

"However, the power generation has further decreased with the officials saying that the department was able to generate only 190 MWs of power in the ongoing month," the official said.

It also said that in the month of February, the department was facing less production. "As of now, we are generating around 190 MWs of power across Jammu and Kashmir out of a total generation capacity of 1200 MWs."

The official further admitted that the department was not able to generate power as in previous years during the peak time. We are reeling under global warming and climate change.

"Over a period of time, we have not been able to generate the normal power that we used to generate in previous years because of less water availability. Water availability period is also shortening," the official said.

It also said that the generation capacity cannot be measured in one day only. "The power generation varies. We reserve the water in the daytime to generate power during the peak hours. In the peak time, we are generating 50 MWs of power from the lower Jhelum and 5 MWs during the regular time. Besides, we are able to generate only 8 MW of power from the Kangan and 6 MWs from Sumbal power projects respectively," the official said.

In Jammu and Kashmir we have a total of 1200 Megawatts (MWs) hydel power production capacity of which 900 MW is from the Baglihar Hydroelectric Power Project.

"Across Jammu and Kashmir, as far as snowfall occurrence and early winters are concerned, last year we were in the same situation with regard to the power generation in the month of February," the official said. Adding, "This year we look forward to at least generating what we did last year. If the snow occurs now onwards there will be the added advantage of power generation."

The official also said, "We have made some of the machines functional that were earlier defunct in the shut-down period. We are hoping that we get a good outcome from it." (KNO)

Lack Of Snowfall

2025 Khelo India Winter Games has further dented the tourism sector, leading to substantial cancellations.

He added that beyond the Khelo India event, the lack of snow has resulted in a 20-30% decline in business in Gulmarg and a 50% dip in other destinations like Pahalgam and Srinagar. "The industry, which usually thrives on winter tourism, is struggling due to the unseasonal dry spell," he said.

Chaya highlighted concerns that mounting 'unorganised' and 'unchecked' commercial expansion in the region is a term for worsening climate change factors.

"We have been vocal about the need for sustainable and green architecture. The government must prioritise eco-friendly infrastructure to preserve Kashmir's fragile ecology," the industry expert, Chaya, added.

He said that the impact extends beyond tourism, with warnings of water scarcity affecting agriculture and horticulture due to reduced snowfall, urging immediate policy interventions to mitigate long-term damage to both tourism and the environment.

Manzoor Pakthoon, Chairman Kashmir Houseboat Owners Association (KHOA), also highlighted the challenges faced by stakeholders this year.

"Our winter economy depends on snowfall. People visit Kashmir for winter activities and snow-covered landscapes, but this year, there was hardly any snow. As a result, we saw a significant number of cancellations. Tourists, who expected snow through March, had to change their plans," Pakthoon said.

According to Pakthoon, foreign tourist arrivals also witnessed a steep decline, particularly from Europe and Russia, which were key markets in previous years.

"Last year, even with slightly less snowfall, tourists still came. However, this year, due to the unfavourable weather conditions, many international visitors cancelled their plans. The decline in foreign tourists has been significant," he added.

Chaya said while Gulmarg previously boasted full occupancy in peak winter, this season saw only around 60% bookings. The industry was relying on February to recover losses, but low snowfall dashed those hopes.

He highlighted that as climate change was tightening its grip on Kashmir, the tourism sector faces an uncertain future, warning of greater economic setbacks if sustainability measures are not implemented soon.

HM To Review

is essential for crimes to be registered so that there should not be any delay in filing FIRs.

HM Shah emphasised that efforts should be made to achieve over 90 per cent conviction rate in cases with sentences of more than 7 years and that the police, government lawyers, and judiciary

should work together to ensure that the guilty are punished as swiftly as possible.

The Home Minister reiterated that senior police officers should regularly monitor cases of organised crime, terrorism, and mob lynching to prevent the misuse of the sections related to these crimes.

Army Fully Capable

the ceasefire agreement on February 25, 2021.

The Lt Governor said police and other security agencies are working in a close synergy and they have been given clear directions to wipe out terrorism and end this ecosystem.

"There will be no pause in anti-terrorism operations as the top priority is to maintain peace and tranquillity in J&K," he said.

Stresses On

first-edition of Sikh Cricket Premier League here, the lieutenant governor said he strongly believes that socio-economic goals of development and empowerment of youth should be made through public-private partnerships.

"In 2020 I had initiated public-private partnership projects. Even today, we are also creating an enabling policy environment in which youth's concerns can be reflected and redressed in a speedy manner," he said.

He congratulated the All J&K Sikh Coordination Committee for playing a vital role in empowering the Sikh community and preserving its rich heritage through such innovative programs, while fostering a sense of pride and responsibility towards the society and the nation among its youth.

"Today, Jammu Kashmir is working for inclusive growth, which means socio-economic growth of all sections of society. Such initiatives hold the key to equitable growth and socio-economic change. It also promotes the ideals and values of unity, discipline and harmony," the lieutenant governor said.

"Our youth from the Sikh community represent the very pivot around which socio-economic growth and transformation of the society takes a new shape and to ensure this we are working with dedication for mainstreaming of Sikh youth into the development process," he added.

Sinha asked the youth to follow the footsteps of their great ancestors and make the entire Sikh community and the nation proud.

The lieutenant governor also highlighted his resolve to develop a robust ecosystem where the Sikh community members, especially the youth have access to opportunities and make meaningful contributions to the society.

"It is not just a sporting event but a cultural and social initiative that reflects the commitment to holistic community development and aims to build a brighter future for the youth of Sikh community in J&K," he said.

In Rare Gesture,

including ministers, senior officials and business leaders, it said.

According to a media advisory issued by the MEA on Monday, External Affairs Minister S

Jaishankar will call on the Emir of Qatar later in the evening.

On Tuesday morning, the Emir of Qatar will be accorded a ceremonial welcome at the forecourt of the Rashtrapati Bhawan, followed by his meeting with PM Modi at the Hyderabad House.

The talks between the two leaders will cover various aspects of the bilateral relations, the MEA said on Saturday.

An exchange of memoranda of understanding (MoUs) is scheduled for Tuesday afternoon, after which the Emir of Qatar will meet Murmu, according to the advisory.

The Emir of Qatar's visit comes at the invitation of PM Modi. This would be his second state visit to India. He earlier visited India in March 2015, the MEA said.

India and Qatar have deep-rooted historical ties of friendship, trust and mutual respect. In recent years, the ties between the two countries, including in the areas of trade, investment, energy, technology, culture and people-to-people relations, have continued to strengthen.

The Indian community residing in Qatar forms the largest expatriate group in that country and is "appreciated for its positive contribution in the progress and development of Qatar", the MEA said earlier.

Lack of Coordination

to address drinking water issues in certain areas.

"We also provide facilities for training," he said, adding that two key schemes—Pradhan Mantri Jan Vikas Karyakram (PMJKV) and PM Vikas—play a central role in infrastructure development and skill training.

"In PMJKV, we sanction a lot of infrastructure, and in PM Vikas, we focus more on training and skilling," he said.

Rijji further stated that schemes for 18 districts were ready and would be prioritised. "There is a committee headed by the chief secretary. He will clarify the project and then talk to us," he said.

Accused Gets 27

and Rizwan Ahmad Khan son of Ghulam Hassan Khan, both residents of Khan Mohalla Pati Shalbagh Ganderbal. The court sentenced both the accused to imprisonment for a term of 06 months and a fine of Rs.10,000. This conviction has been obtained within 3 months.

These convictions reflect the unwavering commitment of J&K Police towards 'securing the ends of justice'. These convictions will act as a deterrent to the individuals who act against the law of the land and to a sense of security to the society as a whole, reads the statement.

Govt Probing

and further investigations are on to bring the culprits to book.

He said a terror angle in the case cannot be ruled out.

Last year, several parts of Kathua, including Billawar, witnessed terror activities including an attack on an army patrol that left five soldiers dead.

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Real Kashmir Lock Horns With Namdhari At TRC Ground Today

Observer News Service

SRINAGAR: Real Kashmir Football Club is set to face Namdhari FC in a high-stakes I-League match at the TRC Ground here on Tuesday.

Both teams are vying for the second spot on the points table, with Namdhari FC currently ahead with 25 points from 14 matches, followed closely by Inter Kashi with 24 points and Real Kashmir with 23 points from the same number of games. A win for the Snow Leopards would see them climb to second place with 26 points.

Addressing a pre-match press conference on Monday, Real Kashmir head coach Ishfaq Ahmad acknowledged the challenge posed by Namdhari FC but expressed confidence in his team's performance.

"Namdhari FC is a strong opponent. They have been playing well both at home and away. But we are playing on our home turf and will give our best to achieve a positive re-



sult," he said. Ishfaq expressed satisfaction with RKFC's performance in the league so far, emphasizing the financial constraints the club faces compared to other teams. "There is a massive budget

difference between RKFC and other I-League teams, but we have been performing well despite the odds," he noted.

Responding to queries about RKFC's star striker, Gnohere Krizo, who is yet to break into

the starting lineup, Ishfaq explained that the team had already established a combination before signing him late.

"Krizo was one of our best players last season and has a great reputation in India. But

there is tough competition. He has been helping us. But if he wants to be in the starting XI, he has to prove himself again. We can't select players based on past performances," he said, adding that two other strikers have been performing well.

On the development of local players, he stressed the need for greater professionalism.

"Foreign players are more committed on and off the field. They follow strict routines regarding diet and rest, which our local players must adopt to reach their level," he said.

RKFC, owned by Arshid Shawl, is the only club from Jammu and Kashmir competing in the I-League. The team consists of a mix of local and foreign players. Namdhari FC head coach Harpreet Singh also addressed the media.

The match is scheduled to start at 2:00 PM for which adequate arrangements have been made and will be live telecast on Sony Sports 2 and SSEN app and website.

Short TAKES

DYSS, District Admin Hold Tug Of War Competition In Budgam

The Department of Youth Services and Sports, in collaboration with District Administration Budgam, conducted a Water Shed Yatra Program at Raiyar Doodpathrie on Sunday.

In this connection, a Tug of War competition was held, which was inaugurated by ADC Budgam Hilal Ahmed with in charge activity Hardpanzoo Farooq Ahmed Sheikh, in which a large number of boys from various schools of Zone Hardpanzoo participated with great enthusiasm.

At the end of the event medals and certificates were distributed among the participating students. ADC Budgam Hilal Ahmed appreciated the efforts of DYSSO Budgam for conducting various types of event in the district.

Naqvi Sells VIP Box, To Watch India Game From Stands

Pakistan Cricket Board (PCB) chairman Mohsin Naqvi has decided to watch the Champions Trophy match against India from the stands, after selling the 30-seat VIP Hospitality Box offered to him for around 400,000 dirhams (INR 94 lakh), and putting the proceeds into the PCB's coffers.

According to a report in Pakistan media, Naqvi was offered the premium seating for himself, his family, and guests for the matches in Dubai. However, he chose to sell the box and watch the game, including the game against India, from regular enclosures to experience the atmosphere with the fans.

Naqvi apparently has informed the ICC and Emirates Cricket Board that he will prefer to watch the match with the crowd and experience how they back the Pakistan team on match days.

The PCB chairman has also mentioned that the board will cover the expenses of approximately 18 billion rupees on the upgrade of the stadiums in Karachi, Lahore and Pindi by using the gate money and other seating receipts from the ICC.

The Champions Trophy, which marks the first major global tournament hosted by Pakistan in nearly 30 years, will kick off on February 19 in Karachi.

Australian Team Arrives In Pakistan For Champions Trophy

The Australian cricket team arrived in Pakistan on Monday to participate in the upcoming ICC Champions Trophy.

The tournament begins with a match between hosts Pakistan and New Zealand in Karachi on Wednesday. Pakistan are also the defending champions having won the last edition of the tournament in 2017 in the UK where they beat India in the title clash.

The team landed in two separate groups. The first batch, which included captain Steve Smith, coaches, and support staff, arrived from Colombo via Dubai.

The second group, comprising 15 players and two additional members of the support staff, followed the same route and reached Lahore later the same day.

After their opener against traditional rivals England, Australia will play their second match against South Africa on February 25 at Rawalpindi Cricket Stadium, followed by a final group-stage outing against Afghanistan on February 28, again at Gaddafi Stadium.

Big Boost For Pakistan: Haris Rauf Back In The Nets

Pakistan's injured fast bowler Haris Rauf said on Monday he has resumed bowling in the nets and was feeling comfortable, adding that it was up to the team management to decide on his selection for the Champions Trophy opener against New Zealand.

"I have started doing exercises a few days back and also resumed bowling since yesterday," Haris told reporters at the National Stadium.

"I am feeling comfortable and my body is okay now the team management will decide about my playing in the opening match," he said.

Haris, who remains one of Pakistan's key fast bowlers with his express pace and ability to take wickets in the middle overs, sustained a muscular strain in his lower chest wall in the first match of the recently-held three-nation event.

But he has remained with the squad despite the selectors calling up uncapped Akif Javed as a back-up after the first game against New Zealand.

DPS Srinagar Hosts Snow Ski Courses 2025 At Gulmarg



Observer News Service

SRINAGAR: Delhi Public School Srinagar organised its Snow Ski Course 2025 at Gulmarg in tandem with the Winter Games Association J&K. The event was held from January 27 to February 10 and featured a 15-day Basic Course and an eight-day Introductory Course, conducted in two groups.

A total of 35 students from grades 3rd to 9th standard participated in this event. The student team was accompanied by two sports teachers, Abriq and Nusrat, as well as two medical staff members, Abrar and Ishfaq, who provided expert guidance and support throughout the event.

The felicitation ceremony was graced by Brigadier Deepak Chaubey (High Altitude Welfare School Gulmarg), Syed Ebad Qadri, KAS Tehsildar Tangmarg, Abbas Wani (Ex MLA, Chief Patron, Winter Games Association, J&K), Dr Samar Altaf, Kajal Chaubey, Dr Neetu Sharma (Colonel) and Renu Bamrara (Assistant Director, IISM Gulmarg).

Skiing instructors Sandy Khakan Rigzin, Mohammad Abid Bhat and Tajinder Singh (Skiing Coordinator, Delhi Public School Srinagar) guided the participants throughout the event.

The results of the first introductory course, which took place from January 27 to February 3 were as follows:

TECHNIQUE CATEGORY: The first position went to Aaeesha Umar from 4th G; the second place was secured by Khalil Wani from 4th A, and the third place was taken by Sheikh Mohammad Hamza from 3rd H.

SLALOM RACE: Saira Khawar from 5th B achieved first place, Ahmad Shafat from 4th B came in second, and Ibrahim Wani from 3rd I finished third.

The second introductory course, held from February 3 to 10, featured the following results:

TECHNIQUE CATEGORY: First place was awarded to Hisham Hussaini from 3rd F, Aleeza Bhat from 4th E secured

second, and Mohammad Zayan Kachkar from 4th C secured the third.

SLALOM RACE: Hafsa Nissar from 4th E claimed first place, while Mohammad Zain Khan from 4th D took second place, and Sheikh Ahmad Saad from 4th A secured the third.

The basic course that ran from January 27 to February 10 featured the following results:

TECHNIQUE CATEGORY: Zain Bin Khalid from 6th C secured first place, Syed Shaam Murtaza from 6th E took second, and Abdul Azeem Adnan from 6th E came third.

SLALOM RACE: Sheikh Mohammad Ibrahim from 6th A came first, Mohammad Siddiq from 6th G achieved second place, and Saira Khawar from 5th B finished third.

Delhi Public School Srinagar and the Winter Games Association congratulated all the participants and winners for their outstanding achievements.

National SnowShoe Championship Kicks Off In Sonamarg



Observer News Service

SRINAGAR: The 9th National SnowShoe Championship 2025 got off to a grand start at wintery Sonamarg on Monday. The event organised by J&K SnowShoe Association in collaboration with Department of Tourism, under the auspices of SnowShoe Federation of India, is being held with the aim to promote Sonamarg as the next best wintersport destination.

The championship got off to a grand start with former J&K cricketer turned Social Activist Sayim Mustafa inaugurating the opening races along with CEO Sonamarg Development Authority Gh. Mohammad Bhat and Tourism Officer Basharat Ahmed.

Around 110 athletes representing around 15-17 States and Union Territories are participating in the event.

Terming it a new beginning and a new hope for the wintersport in J&K, Sayim Mustafa said that he is happy to see such an event being hosted in Sonamarg.

SnowShoe Federation of India President Mir Mudassir later visited the race venue along with former international skier Shabir Wani and

took stock of the events and interacted with visiting athletes.

Meanwhile on Monday, long distance races in both male and female sections were held.

In Men Long Distance race, Waseem Raja of J&K bagged gold medal while as Javed Bashir of J&K bagged silver. Nasrullah Elya of Ladakh bagged bronze.

In Long Distance junior boys race, Ladakh dominated by making clean sweep. Mohammad Baqir, Asif Ali and Bilal Abbas of Ladakh bagged gold, silver and bronze medals.

In senior women long distance race, Dhanalakshmi of Karnataka bagged gold, Latha A of Karnataka bagged silver while as Medeha of J&K bagged bronze medal.

In junior girls long distance event, J&K made clean sweep. Shaista of J&K bagged gold medal while as Yasmeena and Aamina Mukhtar both of J&K bagged silver and bronze medal respectively.

The competitions will continue on Tuesday with sprint and relay races scheduled. The medal ceremony is also scheduled later in the evening with MLA Kangan Mian Mehr is scheduled to be chief guest at the ceremony.

LG Inaugurates First Sikh Cricket Premier League in Jammu



Observer News Service

JAMMU: Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha on Monday inaugurated the first-edition of Sikh Cricket Premier League in Jammu.

In his address, the LG extended his felicitations and best wishes to all the players participating in the tournament.

"It is not just a sporting event but a cultural and social initiative that reflects the commitment to holistic community development and aims to build a brighter future for the youth of Sikh community in J&K," the Lieutenant Governor said.

He congratulated the All J&K Sikh Coordination Committee for playing a vital role in empowering the Sikh community and preserving its rich

heritage, through such innovative programs, while fostering a sense of pride and responsibility towards the society and the nation among its youth.

The LG emphasised the role of Public-Private Partnerships to empower youth by improving infrastructure, providing opportunities and opening up new avenues in diverse sectors.

The Lieutenant Governor also highlighted his resolve to develop a robust ecosystem where the Sikh community members, especially the youth have access to opportunities and make meaningful contribution to the society.

He further asked the youth to follow the footsteps of their great ancestors and make the entire Sikh community and the nation proud.

Gulmarg's Khelo India Games Postponed Due To Lack Of Snow



Agencies

SRINAGAR: The 5th edition of the Khelo India Winter Games (KIWG), which was set to be held in Gulmarg from February 22 to 25, has been postponed due to inadequate snowfall.

A fresh assessment will be conducted once snow conditions improve, and a revised schedule will be announced accordingly.

Officials said that in consultation with the technical conduct committee, they have decided to postpone the event, as key ski slopes at Affarwat and Bowl lack sufficient snow.

"The required amount of snowfall for competitive games is not there, which is why we had to postpone the event. Unless there is fresh snowfall, it is not possible to conduct the games", Rauf Trambo, President

Winter Games Association of Jammu and Kashmir (WGJK) told KNO.

Trambo added, "We had a detailed meeting on this, and it was decided that the next decision will be taken after February 19, as the weathermen have predicted wet weather conditions, with Gulmarg expected to receive snowfall."

Around 700 participants, including 650 technical staff, delegates and local athletes were expected to attend the event. This year, 19 teams representing states, Union Territories, and institutional outfits are competing across six disciplines, including alpine skiing, nordic skiing, ski mountaineering and snowboarding.

Earlier, the J&K government constituted two high-level committees to ensure the successful organisation of the games. (KNO)

Manu Bhaker Wins BBC Sportswoman Of The Year Award

Press Trust of India

NEW DELHI: Star Indian pistol shooter Manu Bhaker was named the BBC Indian Sportswoman of the Year on Monday, following her outstanding performance at the Paris Olympics.

Manu was among five nominees for the award, alongside golfer Aditi Ashok, para shooter Avani Lekhara, India women's cricket vice-captain Smriti Mandhana, and wrestler Vinesh Phogat -- each recognised for their exceptional contributions to Indian sport.

The nominees were shortlisted by an eminent jury of sports journalists and writers.

Now in its fifth edition, the IS-WOTY Award celebrates and honours remarkable achievements of women athletes in India.

Manu, 22, won the award for winning two bronze medals at the Paris Olympics, becoming the first Indian athlete since Independence to win multiple medals at a single Games.

She secured bronze in the 10m air pistol individual event as well as the 10m air pistol mixed team event.

In 2018, Manu made history as the youngest Indian shooter to win a World Cup gold at just 16.



A recipient of the Arjuna Award, she previously won BBC's Emerging Player of the Year award in 2021.

Other award winners on the night included para archer Sheetal Devi (BBC Emerging Player of the Year), former India women's cricket captain Mithali Raj (BBC Lifetime Achievement Award), and para shooter Avani (BBC Para Sportswoman of the Year).

Chess player Tania Sachdev was conferred with the BBC Changemaker Award.

Manu expressed gratitude for the recognition and reflected on her journey to Olympic success.

"I thank BBC for honouring me. A few years ago, I won the Emerging Player award and now this year I got the big one. My journey was full of ups and downs," Manu said in her address.




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