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This cutting-edge technology effectively reduces dark spots, melasma, and sun damage, revealing a radiant complexion with minimal downtime



BNSS Rollout

70 FIRs Registered Via SMS, Emails

Agencies

Srinagar: Jammu and Kashmir police on Friday said to have regis-tered 70 FIRs after receiving the complaints through SMS, emails on Citizen Service Centers and through Web Portal/ Internet under new Criminal laws Bhartiya Nagarik Suraksha Sanhita (BNSŠ).

A police spokesman said that under BNSS, the citizens have been provided with the facility of lodging their complaints in any of the electronic forms like, SMS, email, WhatsApp, Citizen Service Centers, Web Portal/ Internet (Eforms), in addition to verbal, telephonic or written complaints.

"As on date 52 complaints have been received through SMS and Email in different police stations of UT. In addition to the above 64 complaints have been received on Citizen Service Centers and 10 complaints from Web Portal/ Internet (Eforms) and more than 70 such complaints have been converted into FIRs. As per the section 173 BNSS, any complaint (electronic) received by police shall be entered in the records; however, the complainant has to sign that complaint (electronic) within three days," police said.

With regard to ZERO FIR, so far more than 100 such FIRs have been registered | More on P6

Deficit Falls, Water Levels Rise

4-Day Wet Spell Brings Relief to J&K



Observer News Service

Srinagar: The ongoing wet spell in the Kashmir Valley due to a "mega" western disturbance has brought a major relief for Jammu and Kashmir residents, bringing down the rainfall deficit from 80 per cent to 42 per cent, officials said on Friday. According to the local weather office, the Valley witnessed above-normal between precipitation

normal precipitation

Rainfall deficit reduced from 80% to 42%

3-4 feet increase in Jehlum water levels Dry weather from

March 4-8. Jammu-Srinagar NH closed

remain

Mughal Road, Sinthan Pass blocked Climate concerns

February 26 and 28.

'While the normal precipitation for the period would have been 15.5 mm, Jammu and Kashmir | More on P6

> "The weather will remain generally dry in J&K from March 4 to March 8," he added. Meanwhile, in its advisory, the MeT said that temporary disruption of surface transportation is expected mainly over Sadhna pass, Razdan Pass, | More on P6

> > **Agencies**

Ramazan.

PDD To 'Avoid' Power

The

Development Department

power curtailment at Sahr and

Îftar times in the feasible

areas in the holy month of

regard is likely to hold the

important meeting on

Saturday to discuss the

mechanism and strat-

A top official of PDD

said that we have re-

duced the power cur-

tailment in almost all areas

but in the month of Ramazan,

we will try to avoid the curtail-

ment at Sehri and Iftar times."

The official further said that

in case there will be overload

egy to implement the

new schedule for the

month of Ramazan.

The department in this

Curtailment At Sahr, Iftar Times

Power

MeT Predicts

Rains Till Mar 3

eatherman on Friday predicted that Jammu and

Kashmir would receive more

rain and snow till March

department (MeT), Dr

Mukhtar Ahmad said,

3. Director Meteorological

"There is a forecast of light

rain and snow at isolated to

rain and snow is expected at

scattered places till March

2 while light to moderate

many places on March 3."

More Snow,

Ramazan To Start From Tomorrow

Observer News Service

Srinagar: The holy month of Ramazan will commence in Jammu and Kashmir on Sunday, March 2, as the crescent moon was not sighted on Friday night.

Grand Mufti, Nasir-ul-Islam Friday said that the crescent moon has not been sighted, thus, the first day of Ramazan will be on Sunday (March 02).

The Grand Mufti said that no witnesses or evidence were received from anywhere about the sighting of Ramadan moon today. "Therefore, the first day of fasting will be on Sunday," he said.

Meanwhile, as the Valley prepares for the sacred month, fruit and vegetable markets in Kashmir are already stocked with fresh arrivals, ensuring a smooth supply for the holy month.

Kashmir Valley Fruit Growers Dealers Association (KVFGDU) Chairman Bashir Àhmad Basheer on Thursday said the Valley has sufficient stock to meet the growing demand.

"Every day, around 5,000 to 6,000 fruit boxes reach Kashmir, with 400-500 boxes per vehicle. As temperatures rise, the demand for fruits like watermelons and melons, especially during Ramazan, will increase, and supply from outside | More on P6

Roads, Rail & Air Traffic Hit

he continuous inclement weather in the Kashmir Valley on Friday morning disrupted the national highway, air travel, and rail connectivity, officials said here. The Jammu-Srinagar National Highway remains closed for traffic on Friday as authorities intensify efforts to clear shooting stones and mud slush that have

Vacations Extended, Exams Rescheduled

he Jammu and Kashmir government has announced an extension of winter vacations for schools in the Kashmir division, with all educational institutions now set to reopen on March 7. Minister for Health and Medical Education. Social Welfare, and Education, Sakeena Itoo, stated that the decision was taken in view of the prevailing | More on P6

Future Without AI Cannot Be Imagined: LG

Urges J&K Universities To Set Up AI Labs



Observer News Service

Srinagar: Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha on Friday urged the universities in Jammu and Kashmir to set up artificial intelligence (AI) labs for research and innovation, saying a future without AI cannot be imagined.

"It (AI) will have a profound impact on every aspect of our lives, and that's why it is critical to enable our youth to develop their AI knowledge...to keep up with AI trends and to make J&K Union Territory more competitive," he said while addressing the 'National Science Day' seminar at the University of Kashmir.

He said these AI labs could become a separate entity within the Department of Science and Technology and coordinate with local industries for integration of new discoveries and innovation of AI into various sectors and businesses.

The LG also asked the universities to offer short-term Al courses and stressed on the need to conduct workshops and weekly training modules so that the workforce in J-K becomes AI literate and leaders from various sectors are also better equipped to make the right decision. | More on P6

Identify & Deport Rohingyas, Bangladeshi Intruders: Shah

Press Trust Of India

New Delhi: Union Home Minister Amit Shah Friday the Delhi Police to take stringent action against the networks that help illegal Bangladeshis and Rohingyas entering India, saying it is an issue of national security and should be dealt with strictly.

Chairing a meeting to review the national capital's law-andorder situation, he said strict action should also be taken against police stations and sub-divisions that consistently perform poorly.

Shah said it should be the Delhi Police's priority to eliminate interstate gangs in the city ruthlessly. Action must be taken with "top to bottom and bottom to top approach" in



narcotics cases and such drug networks should be disman-

tled, he said "Strict action should be taken against the entire network that helps Bangladeshi and Rohingya intruders enter the country, get their documents made and facilitate their stay here. The issue of illegal intruders is also related to national security and it should be dealt with strictly. They should be identified and deported," he told the meeting.

The meeting was also attended by Delhi Chief Minister Rekha Gupta, Delhi's Home Minister Ashish Sood, Delhi Police Commissioner Sanjay Arora and other senior officials.

Referring to the BJP winning the Delhi assembly polls this time after a gap of over 26 years, the Union home minister asserted that the double-engine government in Delhi will work with double speed for a developed and safe capital as expected by Prime

Minister Narendra Modi. He made it clear that per-

mission from Delhi Police will not be required in matters related to construction and for quick disposal | More on P6

in any feeder, then the department will have to curtail further power. About the local power generation from the plants of Kashmir

region, the official said that the

production has slightly improved

post fresh rain and snowfall.

"In the previous weeks, the average power generation was nearly 40-45 Megawatts from (PDD) has decided to avoid the the local power plants of the Kashmir region. However, as of now we are generating nearly 70 MWs of power,"

the official said. The official further said that power generation capacity is likely to improve further in the coming weeks.

Notably, the hydel power generation from the power plants across lammu and Kashmir has further reduced by five percent—owing to the low water level, in the past one month,

Overall, the hydro power generation from the local plants in Jammu and Kashmir had reduced by 84.17 percent.

In the month of January, the Power Development Department (PDD) was generating nearly 250 Megawatts of power from the local hydel projects that amounts to 20 percent of the | More on P6

Rohingya Children Can Approach HC If Denied Admission: SC

■he Supreme Court on Friday said that Rohingya children can approach government schools for admission and in case of denial, they can move the high court. A bench of Justices Surya Kant and N Kotiswar Singh disposed of a plea seeking direction to the authorities of Delhi government to grant admission to Rohingya children having UNHCR (United Nations High | More on P6

J&K Budget Session

MLAs Asked To Maintain Decorum During LG's Address

Observer News Service

Jammu: The Lieutenant Governor (LG) of Jammu and Kashmir Manoj Sinha will address the Members of the Legislative Assembly (MLAs) at the Assembly complex in Jammu on March 3, 2025, at 10:00 AM.

As such, the MLAs have been directed to maintain dignity and decorum during the LG's address. They are also directed to take

their seats five minutes before the



reminded to listen attentively with respect and uphold the solemnity of | More on P6

BJP Holds 2-day **Training For Party MLAs**

s the Jammu and Kashmir Assembly is scheduled to meet here for the budget session on March 3, the BJP on Friday started a two-day training workshop for its 28 legislators, majority of whom are

first-timers, with focus on ensuring their effective participation in the proceedings. The two-day 'Vidahayak Prashishan Shivir' was jointly inaugurated by BJP national general secretary B L Santosh | More on P6

14 In Race for Posts of JKBOSE Chairman, SCERT Head

Observer News Service

Jammu Srinagar: The Kashmir Education Department has shortlisted 14 candidates for the posts of Chairman JKBOSE and Director SCERT, calling them for an interaction on March 5.

As per an official notification issued by the School Education Department (SED), a copy of which lies with JKNS, a meeting of the Search Committee, headed by the Financial Commissioner/Additional Chief Secretary of the Higher Education Department, was held on February 17, 2025.

The shortlisted candidates include Munshi Tehmina Yousuf, Principal, Islamia of Science and Commerce, Srinagar; Dr. Sunil Gupta, Principal, GDC Basohli;

Raj Kumar, Joint Registrar, University of Jammu; Naveen Anand, Dean, Academic Affairs. Cluster University of Jammu; Dr. Satinder Kour, Dean, Cluster University of Jammu; Dr. Manisha Kohli, Principal, Higher Education Department, J&K; Syed Zahoor Ahmad Geelani, Dean & Head, School of Education, Central University of Kashmir; and Dr. Shehnaz Iqbal Quraishi, Deputy Registrar, Islamic University of Science & Technology, Awantipora.

Other candidates include Dr. Twinkle Suri, Principal, GDC Samba; Jahangir Iqbal Tantray, Co-Coordinator/Head, Department of Persian, University of Kashmir; Hussain, Additiona Commissioner, Divisional Commissioner Kashmir's office; Sindhu Kapoor, Joint Director, **IKSCERT**; | More on P6

Terrorists Seized

Properties Of 5 PoK-based

Press Trust Of India

Jammu: Jammu and Kashmir Police has seized nearly 2.9 acres of land belonging to five operatives of the proscribed terrorist group Hizbul Mujahideen under the Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act in the Gool area of Ramban district, an official spokesman said on Friday.

The five -- Saraj Din (48) of Sangaldan, Reyaz Ahmed (45) of Dalwah, Farooq Ahmed (46) of Banj Bhimdassa, and Mohd Ashraf (50) and Mushtaq Ahmed (47) of Moila -- have crossed over to Pakistanoccupied Kashmir (PoK) and are operating from there, he said.

They were trying to sell these assets to fund militant activities, the spokesman added.

"The seizure of immovable properties belonging to these

five exfiltrated terrorists of the Gool area is a decisive step in dismantling terror funding networks and preventing the resurgence of militancy in the region.

"It sends across a strong message to the terrorists operating from PoK that their attempts to revive terrorism in Jammu and Kashmir will not be tolerated," he said.

seized immovable properties include agriculture land measuring 15-kanal and 17-marla registered in the name of Reyaz Ahmed valued at Rs 43 lakh, land measuring 1 kanal and 3-marla in the name of Din valued at Rs 6.34 lakh, land measuring 1 kanal and 11-marla of Ashraf with a value of Rs 8.67 lakh, land measur-

ing 3-kanal and 4-marla in the name of Mushtaq valued at Rs 17.90 lakh, and land measuring 1 kanal and | More on P6

No 5- Dal Lake Boulevard Srinagar, 190001, Kashmir

Monday - Saturday (9am - 6pm)

Office of the **Naib Tehsildar Pattan**

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

PUBLIC NOTICE...

The registrar birth EO MC pattan has submitted a case file pertaining to birth of Khadim Gul D.o.B 18/06/2018 and Zainab Gul D.o.B 14/02/2017 S/d/o Ghulam Mohammad Sheikh R/o Wanigam Bala Tehsil Pattan distt baramulla occurred at SDH pattan in this connection if any body having objection for issuance of said certificate he may contact to this office within 04 days after that no objection shall be enter-

Naib Tehsildar Pattan fko

PUBLIC NOTICE

I intend to avail the electricity connection to my newly installed bore well for irrigating my orchards, so if anybody has any objection in this regard may file the same to The Concerned Deptt. within a period of seven (07) days, after which no claim will be entertained.

> Ab. Rashid Wani S/o :- Lt. Mohammad Abdullah Wani R/o :- 90 Feet Road Owanta Bhawan

PUBLIC NOTICE

I have applied for the issuance of license to sell or exhibit for sale or distribute insecticides for my business unit under the name and style KASHMIR ORCHARD SOLUTIONS. If anybody has any objection in this regard he/she may file his/her objection in the respected office of the PLANT PROTECTION OFFICER LALMANDI SRINAGAR within seven days. After that no objection shall be entertained.

Prop.: BILAL AHMAD BHAT. S/O.: BASHIR AHMAD BHAT. R/O.: PALHALLAN, PATTAN, BARAMULLA.

PUBLIC NOTICE

My Date of Birth was wrongly mentioned in Aadhaar Card as 13-05-1977, while my Date of Birth as per service record is 01-01-1976. Now I want to change the same. If any body have any objection, please contact within in seven days at Block Development Officer Devsar Kulgam. After seven days no objection will be entertained.

Mohd Igbal Bhat S/o Ab Rehman Bhat **Gund Tankipora Devsar** Distt Kulgam

PUBLIC NOTICE

To Whom It May Concern,

It is hereby notified that I, Mohammad Ayoub Khan, son of Late, Mohd Akram Khan, intend to transfer the electricity connection installed at our residence: Sheikhpora, Budgam J&K 91111 from the name of my Father, Mohd Akram Khan to my name. Mohammad Avoub Khan.

Any person having any objection to the proposed transfer should submit their objection in writing to the undersigned within 7 (seven) days from the date of publication of this notice.

If no objection is received within the stipulated period, it will be presumed that there is no objection to the proposed transfer, and the electricity connection will be transferred in the name of Mohammad Ayoub Khan.

Date: [28/02/2025] Mohammad Ayoub Khan dbko

PUBLIC NOTICE

Public Notice I have applied for the issuance of DOB certificate in favour of my daughter namely Usmaan Farooq S/o Farooq Ahmad Nadaf who was born on 09-09-2012. If anybody has any objection in this regard he/she may file them in the office of the Naib Tehsildar Palhallan within seven days. After the given period no objection shall be entertained.

Ateeqa Begum W/o Farooq Ahamd Nadaf R/o Palhallan

PUBLIC NOTICE

This is information for the general public that in Adhar card bearing No 677497948910 of my daughter the name is entered as SYEDA SHUFA while her actual name is SHIFAAT ZEHRA. 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.

SYED YOUSUF F/o SHIFAAT ZEHRA R/o WAHABPORA BUDGAM CELL. 9906454129

mcb

Quantum Navigation Could Transform How We Travel. So What Is It, And How Does It Work?

The Conversation

uantum technology is no longer confined to the lab - it's making its way into our everyday lives. Now, it's about to transform something even more tal: how we navigate the world.

Imagine submarines travelling beneath the ocean, never needing to surface for location updates. Planes flying across continents with unshakeable precision, unaffected by signal disruptions.

Emergency responders could navigate smokefilled buildings or underground tunnels with flawless accuracy, while autonomous vehicles chart perfect courses through dense urban environments.

These scenarios might sound like science fiction, but they can all be made possible with an emerging approach known as quantum navigation. This game-changing tech will one day redefine movement, exploration and connectivity in ways we're only just beginning to imagine. So,

Satellite navigation is at the heart of many things Global navigation satellite systems, like GPS, are deeply embedded in modern society. We use them daily for navigation, ordering deliveries and tagging photo locations. But their impact goes far beyond convenience.

Timing signals from satellites in Earth's orbit authenticate stock market trades and help balance the electricity grid. In agriculture, satellite navigation guides autonomous tractors and helps muster cattle.

Emergency services rely on navigation satellite systems for rapid response, reducing the time it takes to reach those in need.

Despite their benefits, systems like GPS are quite vulnerable. Satellite signals can be jammed or interfered with. This can be due to active warfare, terrorism or for legitimate (or illegitimate) privacy concerns. Maps like GPSJAM show real-time interference hotspots, such as those in the Middle East, areas around Russia and Ukraine, and Myanmar.



The environment of space isn't constant, either, The Sun regularly ejects giant balls of plasma, causing what we know as solar storms. These emissions slam into Earth's magnetic field, disrupting satellites and GPS signals. Often these effects are temporary, but they can also cause significant damage, depending on the severity of the storm.

An outage of global navigation satellite svstems would be more than an inconvenience – it would disrupt our most critical infrastructure. Estimates suggest a loss of GPS would cost just the United States economy about USD 1 billion per day (A\$1.5 billion), causing cascading failures across interconnected systems.

Ouantum navigation to the rescue

In some environments, navigation signals from satellites don't work very well. They don't penetrate water or underground spaces, for exam-

If you've ever tried to use Google Maps in a

built-up city with skyscrapers, you may have run into issues. Tall buildings cause signal reflections that degrade accuracy, and signals are weakened or completely unavailable inside

This is where quantum navigation could step in one day.

Quantum science describes the behaviour of particles at scales smaller than an atom. It reveals mind-boggling effects like superposition - particles existing in multiple states simultaneously – and entanglement (when particles are connected through space and time in ways that defy classical understanding).

These effects are fragile and typically collapse under observation, which is why we don't notice them in everyday life. But the very fragility of quantum processes also lets them work as exquisite sensors.

A sensor is a device that detects changes in the world around it and turns that information into a signal we can measure or use. Think automatic doors that open when we walk near them, or phone screens that respond to our touch.

Quantum sensors are so sensitive because quantum particles react to tiny changes in their environment. Unlike normal sensors, which can miss weak signals, quantum sensors are extremely good at detecting even the smallest changes in things like time, gravity or magnetic fields.

Their sensitivity comes from how easily quantum states change when something in their surroundings shifts, allowing us to measure things with much greater accuracy than before. This precision is critical for robust navigation

Our team is researching new ways to use quantum sensors to measure Earth's magnetic field for navigation. By using quantum effects in diamonds, we can detect Earth's magnetic field in real time and compare the measurements to pre-existing magnetic field maps, providing a resilient alternative to satellite navigation like GPS.

Since magnetic signals are unaffected by jamming and work underwater, they offer a promising backup system.

The future of navigation

The future of navigation will integrate quantum sensors to enhance location accuracy (via Earth's magnetic and gravitational fields), improve orientation (via quantum gyroscopes), and enable superior timing (through compact atomic clocks and interconnected timekeeping systems).

These technologies promise to complement and, in some cases, provide alternatives to traditional satellite-based navigation.

However, while the potential of quantum navigation is clear, making it a practical reality remains a significant challenge. Researchers and companies worldwide are working to refine these technologies, with major efforts underway in academia, government labs and industry.

GOVERNMENT OF JAMMU AND KASHMIR

JAMMU & KASHMIR SERVICES SELECTION BOARD

CPO Chowk Panjtirthi, Jammu/Zamzam Complex Rambagh Srinagar.

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NOTICE

Subject: Written Examination for the post of Panchayat Secretary, Rural Development and Panchayati Raj Department held on 27.02.2025 -Provisional Answer key regarding.

The Jammu and Kashmir Services Selection Board (JKSSB) conducted the Written Examination for the post of Panchayat Secretary, Rural Development and Panchayat Raj Department advertised vide Advertisement Notification No. 01 of 2023, under Item No. 01, 02, 03 and 04 on 27th February, 2025. The Provisional Answer Key of the question paper (Series A, B, C, D) for the above said examination is provided at Annexure "A" to this notice for the information of the candidates.

Any candidate having objection(s) to the answer key, may submit his/her objection(s)/representation(s) in respect of such question(s) on prescribed format/proforma annexed herewith as Annexure "B" along with the

documentary proof/evidence substantiating the claim (hard copies only) and a fee of ^200/- (in the form of demand draft) per question (refundable in case of genuine/correct representation/objection) in favour of the Accounts Officer, J&K Services Selection Board. In case, the objection is found correct, the Answer Key will be revised accordingly in respect of all candidates. No candidate will be informed about the acceptance/nonacceptance of his/her objection individually.

The objections/representations can be submitted in offline mode only, in the office of JKSSB, CPO Chowk, Panjtirthi, Jammu/JKSSB, Zamzam Building, Rambagh, Srinagar on three working days starting from 03.03.2025, during office hours only. The Board shall not entertain any such representations/objections after the expiry of the stipulated period or through any other mode.

(Dr. Neha Sharma) JKAS **Under Secretary**

No.: JKSSB-COE0EXAM(UT)/9/2025-03 (7650128) DIPK-12496/24 Dated:28/02/2025

Series B

Series A

Text Booklet

Question No.

ANNEXURE-"A"

Provisional Answer Key of the Written Examination for The post of Panchavat Secretary conducted on 27.02.202.5

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(Dr. Neha Sharma) JKAS

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		ANNEXUR	E - "B"		

J&K Bank Opens New Branch At Umerabad

Observer News Service

Srinagar: Deepening its footprint further to extend latest banking services to the people, J&K Bank today commissioned a new branch at Umerabad near HMT on the outskirts of Srinagar.

MD & CEO Amitava Chatterjee formally inaugurated the state-of-the-art branch in presence of Zonal Head (Srinagar) Raja Zafar Khan, Cluster Heads Shabir Ahmad Bulla and Asmat Ara, and Branch Head amid a gathering of valuable customers, senior citizens, local residents and other officials of the Bank.

Speaking on the occasion, MD & CEO Amitava Chatterjee said, "Our business expansion is solely guided by our strategic focus on providing convenient and affordable financial solutions to the people, especially in the upcoming business and residential centres across our areas of operation.

"And given the rapid commercial and residential growth in and around this area, bringing world-class banking services was the need of the hour. With this new branch, we are committed to serve the evolving financial needs of businesses and residents by ensuring seamless access to our banking solutions,"

Reiterating the customer-centric ethos, the MD & CEO added, "At J&K Bank, our customers are at the core of our operations. And we are determined to empower our customers with financial tools that drive individual prosperity along with the economic growth of the country.

He urged the branch staff to deliver best customer service, emphasizing that trust is built through continued care and commitment. "Make customer service the currency of your success. In the end, it's the quality of our service that truly sets us apart, as our growth relies on the goodwill and support of our customers," he added.

Zonal Head Raja Zafar Khan encouraged local traders and residents to utilize the full suite of financial services available at the new branch. He said, "I urge everyone to explore the entire range of our banking services and support us by making us partners in your growth journey."

The inauguration ceremony witnessed enthusiastic participation from residents, who welcomed the Bank's initiative to enhance access to the latest banking services in the area. They expressed gratitude and assured full cooperation for the growth of the branch.

ACS Education Inspects Exam Centres In City

Observer News Service

SRINAGAR: Additional Chief Secretary (ACS), Education, Shantmanu visited different schools in Srinagar district and inspected several examination centres of class XI and reviewed the facilities being provided to the students there.

During the inspection, the Additional Chief Secretary was accompanied by Director School Education, Kashmir, Dr. G N Itoo, who briefed him about the arrangements made by the department in connection with the ongoing examinations for class XI.

While inspecting the examination centre at Girls Higher Secondary School Kothibagh, the ACS interacted with the students and enquired about the examination papers and other facilities being provided to them.



LG Attends Heritage Festival At Kashmir Haat

'Welfare Of Artisan Community & Folk-Artists One Of My Prime Objectives'

Observer News Service

SRINAGAR: Lieutenant Governor Shri Manoj Sinha attended the Srinagar Heritage Festival 'Soan Meeraas' at Kashmir Haat on Saturday.

In his address, the Lieutenant Governor extended his felicitations to all the participating artisans & artists, and appreciated the collaborated initiative by the District Administration Srinagar and Indira Gandhi National Centre for Arts (IG-NCA), Regional Centre J&K. He said, the Srinagar Heritage Festival commemorates the achievements and contribution of our great artisans. folk artists, writers and honours our unique and diverse cultural heritage which will inspire the future growth.

The Lieutenant Governor reiterated his resolve to revive the cultural and artistic heritage of Jammu Kashmir and drive positive changes in the lives of the citizens, especially those associated with the world of art, crafts and culture.

Welfare of artisan community and folk-artists is one of my prime objectives. I also wish to see that every child is connected to the roots

Preservation and promotion of heritage is crucial for sustainable development of the cities and to improve urban quality of life. I believe culture is a way of life and we must involve young generations, inheritors of our rich legacy, to protect cultural and natural heritage

and every youth carrying the rich legacy of artisan community is empowered to contribute in J&K's economic growth," he said.

The Lieutenant Governor highlighted that, in the last four and a half years, under the guidance of Hon'ble Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi, well-planned policies and their time-bound implementation has ensured that our craftspeople, artisans and artists are provided with better resources and opportunity to prosper and flourish.

The Lieutenant Governor also spoke on the emergence of Srinagar city as the cultural nerve centre of Jammu Kashmir. He shared the dedicated measures taken by the government to transform the cities of the Union Territory into the confluence of ancient traditions and modern facilities.

He further emphasised the important role of youth, artists community and enlightened citizens in preserving the cultural heritage, and also spreading awareness on environmental protection.

"Preservation and promotion of heritage is crucial for sustainable development of the cities and to improve urban quality of life. I believe culture is a way of life and we must involve young generations, inheritors of our rich legacy, to protect cultural and natural heritage," the

Lieutenant Governor said. On the occasion, the Lieutenant Governor released a book titled "Iconic Women of J&K". He also felicitated the students and artists participating in Srinagar Heritage Festival.

TRAFFIC POLICE: 9419993745, 01998-266686 PCR: 0194-2452092,2455883 PDD: 0194-2450213

FIRE AND EMERGENCY SERVICES: 2479488.2452222.2452155 CAPD: 18001807011

SMC HEALTH OFFICER: 9469409081 Ambulance: Kashmer EMS Service: +91 94841 00200

AIRPORTS

SHIEK UL ALAM AIRPORT: 01942303311



RAILWAYS

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

HIGHWAY STATUS



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



PRAYERS FAJR 5:38 **ZUHR** 12:43 **ASR** 4:45 Magrib 6:29 **ISHA** 7:49

This Day In History

- 1504 Christopher Columbus uses a lunar eclipse to frighten hostile Jamaican Indians
- 1644- Abel Tasman sets out on his second exploratory expedition for the VOC to the southern Pacific from Banda, in the Moluccas, with three ships (will chart northern coast of New Holland / Australia)
- 1692 First people are accused of witchcraft in Salem, Massachusetts - Sarah Good, Sarah Osborne and Tituba, a West Indian slave
- 1696 English ex-premier Earl Danby accused of corruption
- French & Indians attack Deerfield, Massachusetts, kill 50, abduct 100 1768 - Polish nobleman Casimir Pulaski joins the
- Bar Confederation to defend the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth against Russian influence 1892 - Britain & US sign treaty on seal hunting in
- 1904 Theodore Roosevelt, appoints 7-man Panama
- Canal Commission to proceed with completing a canal at the Isthmus
- 1936 US President FDR signs 2nd Neutrality Act 1940 - Finland initiates Winter Warpeace negotiations
- 1944 5 leaders of Indonesia Communist Party sentenced to death
- 1944 US troop land on Los Negros, Admirality Islands 1952 The island of Heligoland is restored to German autnority.
- 1956 Islamic Republic forms in Pakistan
- 1956 US President Eisenhower announces he will seek a 2nd term
- 1960 Agadir earthquake in Morocco kills a third of the population (12,000-15,000)
- 1964 Cincinnati's Jerry Lucas and Oscar Robertson combine for a rare 40-40 performance as the Royals beat host Philadelphia 76ers, 117-114; NBA MVP Robertson has 43 points; Rookie of the Year Lucas, 40 rebounds
- 1964 Australian swimmer Dawn Fraser records the fastest 100m freestyle of her brilliant career; smashes her own world record 58.9s in Sydney; goes on to win her 3rd straight gold in the event at the Tokyo Olympics
- flights with nuclear bombs

644/2025

- 1968 National Advisory Commission on Civil Disorders (Kerner Comm) reports against racism & demands aid given to blacks 1972 - Future Baseball Hall of Fame right fielder Hank
- Aaron becomes first player to earn \$200,000 average annual salary; signs 3-year deal with Atlanta Braves after one of his best seasons - .327 average, 47 HRs and 118 RBIs
- 1976 American driver Richard Petty wins the only Winston Cup race run on Leap Day, taking the Carolina 500 at Rockingham by 2 laps over Darrell Waltrip 1984 - Pierre Trudeau announces he is stepping down
- after 15 years as Canadian Prime Minister
 - 1984 Swedish center Patrik Sundström scores a goal and adds 6 assists as Vancouver Canucks beat the Penguins 9-5 in Pittsburgh; just the 3rd player in NHL history to record 6 assists in a road game
- 1988 New Zealand cricket batsman Mark Greatbatch scores an unbeaten 107 on debut to rescue a draw in 2nd Test v England at Eden Park, Auckland
- 1988 Nazi document implicates Waldheim in WW II deportations
 - 1992 Boston's Ray Bourque becomes just the 3rd defenseman in NHL history to score 1,000 career points with a goal and 2 assists in the Bruins' 5-5 tie with Washington Capitals at Boston Garden 1996 - Soyuz TM-23, lands
- 1996 Serb forces withdraw from Sarajevo, ending
- the siege after 1,425 days, the longest siege of a capital city in the history of modern warfare
 - 2004 Jean-Bertrand Aristide resigns as President of Haiti following popular rebel uprising.

SMC Seals Commercial Structure At Nawab Bazar

Observer News Service

SRINAGAR: In a proactive measure to uphold building regulations in Srinagar, the Srinagar Municipal Corporation (SMC) has sealed a commercial structure located at Shah Mohalla Nawab Bazar.

This decisive action follows directives from Commissioner SMC, Dr. Owais Ahmed, in response to sig-

Budgam

Banihal

139 <u>|</u>

Contract Type Works

Note :- Rest of the instructions will hold good.

04688

04687

nificant violations of approved building permission.

The enforcement operation was executed under the stringent supervision of the Enforcement Wing of SMC, ensuring compliance with established protocols. The sealed structure was found to be in violation of the guidelines set forth by the competent authority, underscoring

EXTENSION OF PERIODICITY OF SPECIAL TRAIN

It is notified for the information of rail passengers that Northern Railway

has decided to extend the periodicity of the run of Train No. 04688/04687

Budgam-Banihal-Budgam Vistadome Special Train as per details given below:-

Days of Run

Except Friday

Except Friday

to legal building practices.

Commissioner the urgent need for adherence

28.02.25

28.02.25

reiterated the corporation's zero-tolerance policy towards building violations. He urged the residents of Srinagar to strictly comply with approved permissions and regulations, stating, "This action serves as a clear message that the SMC is dedicated to enforce compliance and safeguard the interests of the community.

Period of Extension

01.03.25 to 31.03.25

01.03.25 to 31.03.25

NORTHERN RAILWAY

Your Convenience - Our Concern

NORTHERN RAILWA **E-NOTICE INVITING TENDER**

S. No	Tend Notice		Name of work				Approx Cost (Rs.)	Earnest Money (Rs)	
1	OT-05- 202		1,10,00,00,000,000				2,24,600.00		
	Date of opening 21.03.2025 Bidding start date on IREPS 07.03.2025 to 21.03.2025 Cost of tender form Rs 0		Completion period of work	10 Months					
Date & Time for submission of Tender and opening of tender: Up to 15:00 hrs on dates shown against each and									

opening of tender there after at 15:00 hrs on same date; Website Particulars where complete details of Tender can be seen & downloaded: The detailed e-tender notice is available on Northern Railway web site i.e. anrailways.gov.in and tender document is available on www.ireps.gov.in. No.80-W/30/Bridg

SERVING	CUSTOMERS	WITH A SWILE	

NORTHERN RAILWAY **E-AUCTION NOTICE**

Auction from eligible and registered bidders for the following works over Firozpur Division

Catalogue No.	Auction Start	Name of work
EAFZR-SLR 25-31	13.03.2025 at 11:00 hrs.	Allotment of contract for leasing of parcel space in Train No. /SLR compartment: 14624/ F1, 14028/F2, 14630/F1, 14730/F1, 14730/R1, 14630/R1, 14028/R1, 14730/F2, 14028/ F1 & 20434/F1
EAFZR-SLR 25-32	14.03.2025 at 11:00 hrs.	Allotment of contract for leasing of parcel space in Train No./SLR compartment: 12242/F1, 14634/F2, 14505/F1, 14634/R1, 14633/F2, 14633/R1, 14634/F1, 14616/F1, 14633/F1 & 19614/F1.
EAFZR-SLR 25-33	17.03.2025 at 11:00 hrs.	Allotment of contract for leasing of parcel space in Train No./SLR compartment: 22424/ F1, 14674/F1, 19108/F1, 14604/F1, 22432/F1, 20986/F1, 22402/F1, 22942/F1, 14650/ F1 & 14618/F1.
EAFZR-SLR 25-34	18.03.2025 at 11:00 hrs.	Allotment of contract for leasing of parcel space in Train No./SLR compartment: 12460/ F1, 22462/F1, 12238/F2, 19804/F1, 12014/F1, 14036/R1, 12030/F1, 16788/F1, 14036/ F2 & 14036/F1.
EAFZR-SLR 25-35	19.03.2025 at 11:00 hrs.	Allotment of contract for leasing of parcel space in Train No./SLR compartment: 15098/F1, 22552/F1, 11450/F1, 15532/F1, 12238/R1, 14632/F1, 14632/R1, 16318/F1, 12498/F1 & 12478/F1.
EAFZR-SLR	20.03.2025 at	Allotment of contract for leasing of parcel space in Train No./SLR compartment: 12266/ F1, 12446/F1, 12752/F1, 14612/F1, 12422/F1, 22446/F1, 19028/F1, 22430/F1, 12476/

F1 & 12470/F1. or other details and registration, please visit Railway website www.ireps.gov.in

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NORTHERN RAILWAY E-TENDER NOTICE

Helpline No. www.railmadad.indianrailways.gov.in

Br. DSTE/FZR acting for and on behalf of The President of India invites E-Tenders o https://www.ireps.gov.in against Tender Notice no. 433-Sig-T-49-24-25 Closing Date/Time 24.03.2025 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 tender and any such manual offer received shall be ignored.

То

Banihal

Budgam

For any kind of information such as detailed Time-Table of other stations enroute

and composition etc., passengers are requested to contact RailMadad Helpline No

139 or visit Indian Railways website https://enquiry.indianrail.gov.in or NTES App.

Visit RailMadad Website:-

Download RailMadad app.

Contractors are allowed to make payments against this tender towards tender document cost and earnest money **only through online payment modes** available on IREPS portal like Net banking, debit card, credit card etc. Manual payments throug Demand draft, Banker cheque, Deposit receipts, FDR etc. are not allowed. **NIT HEADER**

Name of Work	Comprehensive Annua	Comprehensive Annual Maintenance contract of Hitachi Rail STS			
	India Private Ltd. make Electronic Interlocking System installed a				
	stations on FZR-BTI section & 1 station on FZR-JUC section for				
	three years.				
Tender Closing	24.03.2025	Date Time of	27.02.2025		
Date Time	15:00	Uploading Tender	11:02		
Advertised	10509461.13	Bidding Start Date	10.03.2025		
Value (Rs.)		as per IREPS			
Earnest	202600.00	Period of	36 Months		
Money (Rs.)		Completion			
Tender Notice I	No: 433-Sig-T-49-24-25	Date:- 27.02.2025	Closing Date/Time :		

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GOVERNMENT OF (U.T) JAMMU & KASHMIR OFFICE OF THE EXECUTIVE ENGINEER JAL SHAKTI (PHE) DEPTT.

GROUND WATER DIVISION SRINAGAR Baghi-Ali-Mardan, Nowshara Srinagar.

E-mail:-phegwd@yahoo.com

EXTENSION NOTICE 3RD

Subject: Construction of 200mm dia Production Well by ODEX Method at Kasnard Pannard Sangnard Well No. 2 District Anantnag.

Reference: This office e-NIT No.51-JS-PHE/GWDS/Mech. of 2024-25, issued vide endorsement No: JS-PHE/GWDS/24-25/ Corrs./10291-303, dated: 08-01-2025. Bearing Tender ID No. 2025_PHE_269914_2.

Due to "No Response" for the above mentioned works advertised videe-NIT No. and Tender ID No's under reference. Which was scheduled to be downloaded till 25-02-2025 Up-to 11:00 AM are extended as per the details given below:

S.No.	Item	Fresh Date
1.	Period of submission of bids	05-03-2025 Up-to 11:00 AM
2.	Date of opening of tenders	06-03-2025 11.00 AM

All other terms and conditions shall remain same as laid down in the aforesaid e-NIT issued vide above referred endstt: nos.

DIPK-12522/24 dated: 28-02-2025

Sd/-**Executive Engineer** Jal Shakti (PHE) Deptt. Ground Water Division Srinagar.

Tel./FaxNo:-0194-2411285

Rural Sanitation Distress

An Inevitable Disaster

Dr. Mushtaq Rather

"

Why are we witnessing these extreme weather patterns? The primary reason appears to be increased anthropogenic activities. Every visible sight in rural hamlets is filled with solid waste trash. What is the practical mechanism in place to mitigate this solid waste? Who has the mandate to clear this mess?

he carrying capacity of rural eco-systems, in terms of accommodating solid waste, is receding with each passing day due to the accumulation of huge piles of waste and the inefficient, non-scientific mechanisms for disposal. In a fragile ecosystem like Kashmir, even small-scale anthropogenic interference can have serious environmental ramifications, and in fact, it has already started casting shadows, as is evident from the current trend in the weather. A record 79% deficient rainfall in the peak winter months this year has sent alarm bells ringing for everyone. Due to climate change, we are witnessing extreme weather phenomena in this part of the world. Spring is almost a month ahead of schedule. The tragic tale is the drying up of prominent water bodies in the month of February. Imagine the catastrophic consequences of water scarcity in the upcoming summer months. The recent incident of the drying up of the perennial spring at Mughal Gardens, Achabal, Anantnag is trending on social media, and the octogenarian people of the area were moved to tears when they saw the pathetic condition of the spring. They recalled their ordeal, mentioning that they had never seen the drying up of this serene water body in their lifetime. This is not an isolated incident; the majority of the region's water

Why are we witnessing these extreme weather patterns? The primary reason appears to be increased anthropogenic activities. Every visible sight in rural hamlets is filled with solid waste trash. What is the practical mechanism in place to mitigate this solid waste? Who has the mandate to clear this mess? Every open space is littered. Our water bodies—be it rivulets, streams, springs, or rivers—are choked with non-biodegradable waste, such as diapers, sanitary pads, and single-use plastic. Look at the daily consumption of these items; they keep piling up in the environment. The problem with diapers is that they hardly decompose and cannot be reduced to ashes at normal temperatures. Incinerators can do this job, but their use

bodies have receded to their lowest levels.



is still on a small scale.

In the Khoveripora block of district Anantnag, the rural sanitation program is invisible on the ground. For a time, garbage collection vehicles were introduced along several routes to collect household garbage on a daily basis, but the initiative was shelved midway without specifying the reasons. The mandate of rural sanitation falls under the Rural Development Department (RDD) as part of the Swachh Bharat Mission 2.0. The Government of India has infused a lot of money for rural sanitation to make rural areas open defecation-free, litter-free, and to support the de-siltation of water bodies. The entire hamlet of Akura in Khoveripora block has heaps of garbage that have unfortunately not been cleared for a couple of years. The banks of the majestic Lidder River, which flows through this hamlet, have become dumping sites for garbage collected from diverse areas of Anantnag, which is a clear violation of the Solid Waste Management Rules, 2016. The majority of waste

segregation sheds constructed by the RDD have been built either on the banks of water bodies or at picturesque spots, which also goes against the guidelines of the SWM Rules 2016.

The author brought the rural sanitation issue to the notice of the Secretary of RDD, who has directed the officials at the district level to intervene. The RDD officials have acknowledged the problem and assured that they will work to mitigate the rural sanitation issue in the entire Khoveripora block. There must be a well-thought-out strategy on the part of the RDD, with the active cooperation of the public, to render our environment congenial and aesthetic.

The views expressed in the article are the author's own and do not necessarily represent the editorial stance of Kashmir Observer The author can be reached for feedback at aroushfatimamar15@gmail.com

The New Spring of US-Russia Ties

M. K. BHADRAKUMAR

hat emerges from the dramatic happenings of the past week is that the 3-year chronicle of US-Russia rivalry and the NATO's proxy war in Ukraine was a crisis engineered with great deliberation by the Anglo-American nexus per a pernicious agenda conceived by the neocon liberals wedded to globalism ensconced in the Washington and London establishment to inflict a strategic defeat on Russia.

In less than a month since President Donald Trump returned to Oval Office, in a series of bold moves, he began dismantling the Iron Wall that descended on Central Europe. Its impact is already visible, as communication channels with Moscow have been flung open, as evident in the new US Secretary of State Marco Rubio's call to his Russian counterpart Sergey Lavrov on Saturday and their agreement to meet at delegation level in Saudi Arabia next week.

The Trump administration will allow the resumption of normal diplomatic work as well as discuss the early return of diplomatic properties unilaterally seized by the Obama – Biden administrations in wanton acts of motiveless malignity and hubris, in violation of Vienna accords.

Trust Russia to reciprocate!

The downstream salience of the readouts in Moscow and Washington, here and here, on the Rubio-Lavrov phone conversation is the mutual agreement between the two leaderships — Trump and Russian president Vladimir Putin — for US-Russian interactive exchanges at various levels is being followed through with a view to improve bilateral relations as well as "on key international issues, including the situation in Ukraine, developments in Palestine and the broader Middle East, as well as other regional matters."

Furthermore, a team designated by the White House comprising apart from Rubio, the US National Security Advisor Mike Waltz and the president's Middle East envoy (who also works on Ukraine-Russia issues) Steve Witkoff will meet a Russian team led by Lavrov as early as this week ahead. The inclusion of Witkoff, a 'result-oriented', pushy negotiator

and old friend of Trump is particularly interesting. Witkoff flew into Moscow for an unpublicised solo visit last week, which appears to have been productive.

Clearly, Trump has drawn lessons from this first term and is determined not to get emasculated again in the Washington 'swamp'. This is where Witkoff comes in.

Trump's approach and political style is utterly fascinating. Trump began shifting gear no sooner than he managed to put together a team of like-minded people who are "loyalists" to head the Justice Department, Pentagon, the Treasury, etc.—and, importantly, to forcefully regenerate the authority of the attorney gen-

likely look for a deal with Chinese President Xi Jinping at some point.

Such an approach necessitates cutting down the role and influence of the Deep State which had throttled Trump's presidency through the 2016-2020 period. The challenge facing Trump is formidable, given the nexus between the Democratic Party and the Deep State, and the mischief potential of mainstream media which is largely under their control and hostile towards Trump.

Trump has repeatedly expressed distrust of US intelligence agencies. According to CNN, all employees (approx. 22,000 people) at the CIA have received letters

The Trump administration will allow the resumption of normal diplomatic work as well as discuss the early return of diplomatic properties unilaterally seized by the Obama – Biden administrations in wanton acts of motiveless malignity and hubris, in violation of Vienna accords. Trust Russia to reciprocate!

eral and the national intelligence agency to serve his agenda.

Thus, in the final analysis, it is immaterial that his administration is packed with pro-Israel figures or has a sprinkling of hardliners on China. For, it is Trump who will call the shots. Surprises could be in store in policy twists and turns.

This should already give sleepless nights to Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu whom Trump has sensitised apropos his intention to improve relations with Iran. To my mind, Trump may not even follow through his dramatic announcement of "taking over" Gaza, et al.

The pattern appearing with regard to relations with Russia is that Trump levels with Putin first and passes down decisions to the state department and other agencies to follow through. Equally, the mechanism of summitry is being revived as the locomotive of big power relations. There is already talk of Trump holding summit meetings with Putin in Saudi Arabia and with Xi Jinping. Trump will

whereby they are given two options: to continue his/her service without guarantees of job retention in the future or to leave under the so-called deferred dismissal program at own request, while retaining salary and additional preferences until end-September.

Interestingly, a code was sewn inside these letters that tracks the re-sending of the letter by the recipient, as a guarantee against leaks which was the practice used when dismissing employees of the former Twitter after its acquisition by billionaire Elon Musk, who is now considered one of Trump's closest advisers and heads the quasi-Department of Government Efficiency overseeing the reduction of federal government!

Again, the disbandment of USAID, which traditionally worked as the "B Team" of the CIA to promote colour revolutions and regime changes, etc. can also be seen in the light. According to Vladimir Vasiliev, chief researcher at the Institute of USA and Canada of the Russian

Academy of Sciences, who closely studies this topic, Trump has declared war on CIA, which he blames for his electoral defeat in 2020.

Vasiliev estimates that so far, the fight against the deep state in foreign and domestic intelligence is proceeding steadily, but will now "accelerate" with the confirmation of former Congresswoman Tulsi Gabbard for the post of head of national intelligence, and Kash Patel for the post of FBI director.

On the other hand, the Delhi grapevine, which is dominated by fellow travellers of the defunct Biden regime is that Deep State will ultimately have the last laugh and Trump may not even be allowed to complete his 4-year term. But to my mind, that is wishful thinking.

Trump's grit should not be underestimated. Nor the seamless resources and tools at his command to queer the pitch of the disarray within the Democratic Party, which traditionally provided the requisite political cover for the Deep State.

There is, conceivably, a method in Trump's provocative moves, with some able help from Elon Musk and Steve Bannon, to stir up the pot in European politics, including Germany and Britain, who constitute the high ground of Euroatlanticism in the continent, which serves to prevent a coalescing of liberal-globalist cliques within the transatlantic system.

Patel has hinted that sufficient incriminating evidence of misuse of power is available to damn the Old Guard all the way up to Biden himself. Trump cannot be unaware of the high importance of pre-empting a Democratic backlash. The federal judges in Democrat-ruled states are openly challenging Trump's methods. Suffice to say, Trump's credibility to entrap the Old Guard in a cobweb of protracted litigation will be a game changer.

The latest poll shows that Trump enjoys a soaring 77% support for cleaning up the swamp. The optic of this crusade is going to be hugely consequential to Trump's ability to push both his domestic and foreign policy programme.

The views expressed in the article are the author's own and do not necessarily represent the editorial stance of Kashmir Observer. The article was originally published by India Punchline

When Your Own Sink Your Boat

Bilal Ahmad Khanday

he idiom "Es Ghar Ko Aag Lag Gai Ghar Key Chirag Sey" is one of the most famous and handy idioms in the Urdu language, used when your own people sink your boat, suppress your voice, conspire against you, or pull your leg. It refers to the inestimable loss and damage caused by your own people—when you expect that they would help you, but instead, they create hurdles. This idiom is applicable and relevant in almost every field, but to keep my article short and lucid, I would like to confine it to the administrative sphere only.

As we all know, most of the officials in every government department of the UT belong to Jammu and Kashmir. But unfortunately, they are compounding issues that are simple and need fast redressal, despite being highly paid for the services they are supposed to render. When you see their cold response time and again, you truly realize the meaning of "Es Ghar Ko Aag Lag Gai Ghar Key Chirag Sey." Even if you visit an office with a simple application for some petty but genuine issue, you have to wait for months to get a proper response. Then, if your application is entertained, you have to wait a couple of months more to get it addressed.

Two months ago, I, along with one of my relatives, visited an office of the administration with an application for his need to sell a piece of his land. After properly submitting the details online, as the portal asked, he received a confirmation for his application. Within a week's time, he received a response that there was a minor problem in one of the documents he had submitted online. For its legal rectification, he submitted another application to the concerned de-

It refers to the inestimable loss and damage caused by your own people—when you expect that they would help you, but instead, they create hurdles. This idiom is applicable and relevant in almost every field

partment, where he was told to provide a document to support his claim. The very next day, he found the document at home and rushed to the concerned department. Unfortunately, he returned home exhausted and disappointed because the concerned official was not present that day. The next day, he was hopeful to get his work done, but unfortunately, the official who would endorse the document was on leave. After many visits to the department, his document was finally endorsed, but his frequent visits somehow 'irritated' the officials, who, on one pretext or another, began to dodge him for some unknown reason.

After about a month, one fine day, he left his home with a resolve to get his work done. When he reached the concerned office, he dared to ask one of the officials outside his chamber if his work needed some 'Chai'—which literally means 'tea' but is actually a term for 'bribery' in Kashmiri language—to which the official nodded. He then greased the palm of the official and got the document rectified from the concerned office in just a day or two. He then submitted the rectified document on the portal and is now waiting for a response from the concerned department.

A few days ago, when I visited him and asked about the status of his application, he said that he would wait for some more days. If his work is still not done, he will resort to the second option of 'Chai.'

Since then, I have been wondering whether the officials serving in different departments are the 'Ghar ke Chirag' or if my relative is the 'Ghar ka Chirag.' The readers will decide for themselves...

The views expressed in the article are the author's own and do not necessarily represent the editorial stance of Kashmir Observer In fact, we've

implemented a cesarean

weekly, and monthly. All

hospitals are required

to submit cesarean

section formats with

justifications for why

they performed the

surgery. This audit

system is part of the

Welfare's directives

to ensure that every

medically necessary

cesarean performed is

Ministry of Health and

section audit system,

which is done daily,

Public Health in Jammu and Kashmir

An Insightful Interview with Dr. Qazi Haroon

KO Web Desk

In an exclusive interview with Dr. Qazi Haroon, a public health expert in Jammu and Kashmir, we dive into the current state of healthcare in the region. With over 15 years of experience, Dr. Qazi offers invaluable insights into the challenges, successes, and ongoing efforts to improve health outcomes in Jammu and Kashmir.

KO: How do you overview the public health scenario in Jammu and Kashmir?

Dr. Qazi: The core of public health is divided into three key areas: Preventive, Promotive, and Curative healthcare. We always strive to prevent illness before it occurs. Prevention is the pillar on which public health stands. There are various aspects to prevention, such as educating people about the factors that can cause illness. As we all know, prevention is better than cure. So, in public health, we always focus on disease prevention from the very start. Now, if, God forbid, a disease occurs, we then assess its ramifications, the economic burden it places on the society, and how the community will be impacted. This remains a primary concern for public health experts.

For example, when COVID-19 hit, it impacted the entire world. At that point, the curative aspect took precedence. However, those who were not affected by the virus benefited from the preventive measures in place.

There are various programs under the Ministry of Health and Welfare that target different diseases. For instance, if we talk about immunization, the world now understands its importance. Before immunization was widespread, many children died due to a lack of vaccines. Once vaccines were introduced, the death rate among children significantly decreased.

I personally had the privilege of being involved in the 2018 Measles Rubella Campaign. Initially, we thought it would be an easy task, but once we got into the field, we realized how different program management is compared to sitting in an office. Despite the challenges, we vaccinated 38 lakh children in just 6 weeks, making it one of the best performances in the country. We were even awarded for our efforts. My point here is that these are some of the preven-



tive measures the UT (Union Territory) or State should implement to avoid future cases of measles. Today, the number of measles incidents has reduced drastically.

Further on immunization, there have been campaigns like Mission Indradhanush, which targets children who have missed vaccines. By focusing on these left-out or dropout children, we've been able to achieve 100% immunization coverage in Jammu and Kashmir, making it one of the best UTs in India in terms of immunization rates. This is a significant achievement.

KO: You are currently posted in a remote area. You've worked on immunization and family planning. When you go into the field, you see a lot of disconnect. Do you think there is something like that?

Dr. Qazi:Working at the state level, district level, division level, and block level is very different. But I've seen that the health department in Jammu and Kashmir is doing exceptionally well because of the doctors, paramedics, and other people who are implementing these policies and programs on the ground. I wouldn't say there is a disconnect, but I would say that certain areas need improvement in terms of training, remuneration, and overall program management.

Jammu and Kashmir has some of the best health indicators in the country. I've traveled a lot in my 15 years and visited many states like Odisha and Rajasthan. I can tell you that our primary and secondary healthcare system is one of the best in the country. Yes, there are some challenges with human resources (HR) in certain places, but the infrastructure and facilities are well-established. However, we need to understand that doctors

and healthcare workers do not have a magic wand. In Western countries, people are more aware of what is needed in a hospital. There needs to be greater awareness in our communities about what is expected in hospitals and health centers. I'm not saying that our patients expect luxuries, but they should understand that healthcare providers also have basic human needs.

In 2009-2010, I was posted in a hospital in Srinagar, and after a very hectic night shift, I finally got a chance to eat. As I started having my meal, a patient came knocking at my door, and when they saw me eating, they were surprised. The patient then told me they had been experiencing itching in their hand. While the concern was genuine, I was surprised by the urgency, as it was not an emergency. This is why we often witness doctor-patient conflicts. People need to realize that healthcare providers are working 24/7, they too have families, and they also get tired.

KO: You were also the program manager for NHM (National Health Mission). Given your extensive experience, why do we see a high rate of cesarean sections, especially in private hospitals? Why are these cesareans unchecked?

Dr. Qazi: I was the state program manager for NHM, particularly focusing on maternal health, for at least three years. During this time, we worked hard to reduce the cesarean section rates. In my opinion, there are multiple reasons behind the high rate of cesarean sections. It's not just about the decision of the mother; the whole family is often involved in the decision-making process. In the past, women were more inclined to go

for normal delivery, but today, many view cesarean as a quicker, less painful option.

Even though we've tried very hard over the past 3-4 years to reduce the cesarean section rates, we still have one of the highest rates in the country—over 60%, compared to the WHO recommended range of 20-25%. However, there has been some decline, with Pulwama district showing the highest rate.

KO: How harmful is a cesarean section, and how beneficial is normal delivery?

Dr. Qazi: Normal delivery is always preferable. It allows for a smoother recovery and a healthier outcome for the mother and child. A cesarean section, on the other hand, leaves a permanent scar, and future deliveries are likely to require cesarean sections. There are also risks associated with cesarean sections, such as infections and other complications. Over the past 5-6 years, we have implemented a communication strategy during the first ANC (Antenatal Checkup), where we educate patients about the benefits of normal delivery and the risks of cesarean sections. It's important not only for the health department but also for the family to understand the merits and demerits of each option.

KO: There have been reports of corruption and malpractice in private hospitals regarding cesarean sections. Do you think there should be stricter checks by the government?

Dr. Qazi: It's not that the government is not checking private institutions. In fact, we've implemented a cesarean section audit system, which is done daily, weekly, and monthly. All hospitals are required to submit cesarean section formats with justifications for why they performed the surgery. This audit system is part of the Ministry of Health and Welfare's directives to ensure that every cesarean performed is medically necessary. I was also part of this program where we audited every cesarean conducted, whether in centralized hospitals or peripheral ones.

KO: Do you think there's a need to revive the concept of midwives? And what is the role of ASHA workers?

Dr. Qazi: During my time with NHM, I was involved in the Mid-

wife Initiative, where we aimed to train nurses as midwives to facilitate normal deliveries. Many Western countries still use midwives as an integral part of their healthcare systems. We need to focus on ensuring that women go into delivery with the mindset that normal delivery is the best option. In Kashmir, the rise in cesarean sections is concerning, and this mindset shift is essential.

ASHA workers play a crucial role in supporting normal deliveries at the grassroots level. We need to empower and train them to promote normal deliveries and assist women effectively.

KO: Drug addiction has reached alarming levels in Kashmir. Recently, we received data showing a large number of distress calls from families of drug addicts. Through the Genesis program, what can you say about the magnitude of this issue?

Dr. Qazi: I was part of the Tele MANAS program from the start, and it has proven to be a lifeline for people in Jammu and Kashmir. We didn't initially realize that it was just the tip of the iceberg. We have many people struggling with anxiety and depression, and through Tele MANAS, we were able to connect with them. Tele MANAS is a helpline where people can reach out anonymously, and the program uses a three-tier system of counselors, clinical psychologists, and psychiatrists to provide support.

There's still a stigma around mental health in Jammu and Kashmir. People are hesitant to seek help due to the fear of being labeled as 'insane.' Through Tele MANAS, we've received a massive response, and many young people—aged 13 to 18—have reached out with issues like career concerns, family problems, and academic stress. Last year, we received over 70,000 calls.

KO: Do you think raising awareness about mental health will be a game-changer?

Dr. Qazi: Absolutely! If more people avail themselves of mental health services, many cases can be reversed. They don't always need to visit a doctor. By educating people and offering anonymous support, we can address mental health issues more effectively and reduce the stigma surrounding them.

Ekta Ka Mahakumbh – the Dawn of a New Era

Shri Narendra Modi

The Mahakumbh has successfully concluded in the holy city of Prayagraj. A grand Mahayajna of Unity has been completed. When the consciousness of a nation awakens, when it breaks free from the shackles of a centuriesold mindset of subjugation, it breathes freely in the fresh air of renewed energy. The result of this was witnessed at the Ekta Ka Mahakumbh (Mahakumbh of Unity) in Prayagraj since January 13.

On January 22, 2024, during the Pran Pratishtha of the Ram Mandir in Ayodhya, I spoke about Devbhakti and Deshbhakti - devotion to the divine and to the nation. During the Mahakumbh in Prayagraj, Gods and Goddesses, saints, women, children, youth, senior citizens and people from all walks of life came together. We witnessed the awakened consciousness of the nation. This was Ekta Ka Mahakumbh, where the sentiments of 140 crore Indians converged at the same place, at the same time, for this sacred occasion.

In this holy region of Prayagraj is Shringverpur, a sacred land of unity, harmony and love, where Prabhu Shri Ram and Nishadraj met. Their meeting symbolized the confluence of devotion and goodwill. Even today, Prayagraj inspires us with the same spirit.

For 45 days, I witnessed crores of people from every corner of the country making their way to the Sangam. The wave of emotions at the confluence kept rising. Every devotee came with one purpose – taking a dip in the Sangam. The holy confluence of Ganga, Yamuna, and Saraswati filled every pilgrim with enthusiasm, energy, and confidence.

This Mahakumbh in Prayagraj is a subject of study for modern management professionals, planning, and policy experts. Nowhere in the world is there any parallel or example of this scale.

The world watched in wonder how crores of people gathered at Prayagraj at the banks of the confluence of rivers. These people had no formal invitations, no prior communication on when to go. Yet crores of people left for the Mahakumbh of their own accord and felt the bliss of taking a dip in the sacred waters.

I cannot forget those faces radiating immense joy and satisfaction after the holy dip. Women, elders, our Divyang brothers and sisters – everyone found a way to reach the Sangam.

It was particularly heartening for me to see the overwhelming participation of India's youth. The presence of the younger generation at the Mahakumbh sends a profound message that the youth of India will be the torchbearers of our glorious culture and heritage. They understand their responsibility towards preserving it and are committed to carrying it forward.

The number of people who arrived in Prayagraj for this Mahakumbh has undoubtedly created new records. But beyond those physically present, crores of people who could not reach Prayagraj were also deeply connected emotionally to the occasion. The sacred water brought back by pilgrims became a source of spiritual bliss for millions. Many of those returning from the Mahakumbh were received with respect in their vil-

lages, honoured by society.
What has happened in the last few weeks is unprecedented and has laid a foundation for centu-



ries to come.

More devotees arrived in Prayagraj than anyone had imagined. The administration had estimated attendance based on

estimated attendance based on past experiences of the Kumbh. Nearly twice the population of the United States participated in this Ekta Ka Mahakumbh.

If scholars of spirituality analyse the enthusiastic participation of crores of Indians, they will find that India, proud of its heritage, is now surging ahead with a new-found energy. I believe this is the dawn of a new era, which will script the future of a new India.

For thousands of years, the Mahakumbh has strengthened India's national consciousness. Every Purnakumbh used to witness a gathering of saints, scholars and thinkers deliberating upon the state of society in their times. Their reflections used to provide a new direction to the

nation and society. Every six years, during the Ardhkumbh, these ideas were reviewed. After 12 Purnakumbh occurrences spanning 144 years, obsolete traditions were given up, newer ideas were embraced, and new traditions were created move ahead with the times.

After 144 years, in this Mahakumbh, our saints have once again given us a new message for India's development journey. That message is Developed India – Viksit Bharat.

At this Ekta Ka Mahakumbh, every pilgrim, whether rich or poor, young or old, from villages or cities, from India or abroad, from the East or the West, from the North or the South, irrespective of caste, creed and ideology, came together. This was an embodiment of the vision of Ek Bharat Shreshtha Bharat that filled confidence in crores of people. Now, we must come together

in the same spirit for the mission of building a developed India.

I am reminded of the incident where, as a little boy, Shri Krishna revealed a snapshot of the whole universe within His mouth to His mother Yashoda. Similarly, in this Mahakumbh, the people of India and the world have witnessed the massive potential of India's collective strength. We must now move forward with this self-confidence and dedicate ourselves towards building a developed India.

Earlier, the saints of the Bhakti movement had identified and encouraged the strength of our collective resolve across India. From Swami Vivekananda to Sri Aurobindo, every great thinker reminded us of the power of our collective resolve. Even Mahatma Gandhi experienced it during the freedom movement. Post-independence, if this collective strength had been cor-

rectly recognised and harnessed towards boosting the welfare of all, it would have become a great force for a newly independent nation. Unfortunately, it was not done earlier. But now, I am gladdened to witness the way in which this collective strength of the people is coming together for a developed India.

From the Vedas to Vivekananda, from the ancient scriptures to modern satellites, India's great traditions have shaped this nation. As a citizen, I pray that we draw new inspiration from the memories of our ancestors and saints. May this Ekta Ka Mahakumbh help us move ahead with new resolutions. Let us make unity our guiding principle. Let us work with the understanding that service to the nation is service to the divine.

During my election campaign in Kashi, I had said, "Maa Ganga has called me." This was not just an emotion but also a call of responsibility, towards the cleanliness of our sacred rivers. Standing at the confluence of the Ganga, Yamuna, and Saraswati in Prayagraj, my resolve became even stronger. The cleanliness of our rivers is deeply linked to our own lives. It is our responsibility to celebrate our rivers, big or small, as life-giving mothers. This Mahakumbh has inspired us to keep working towards the

cleanliness of our rivers.

I know that organizing such a massive event was no easy task. I pray to Maa Ganga, Maa Yamuna, and Maa Saraswati to forgive us in case there were any shortcomings in our devotion. I see Janata Janardan, the people, as an embodiment of divinity. In case there has been any shortcoming in our efforts to serve them, I also seek the forgiveness of the people.

Crores of people came to the Mahakumbh with a feeling of devotion. Serving them was also a responsibility that was carried out with the same feeling of devotion. As a Member of Parliament from Uttar Pradesh, I can proudly say that under the leadership of Yogi Ji, the administration and the people worked together to make this Ekta Ka Mahakumbh a success. Be it the state or Centre, there were no rulers or administrators and instead, everyone was a devoted sevak. Sanitation workers, police, boatmen, drivers, people serving food - everyone worked tirelessly. The way the people of Prayagraj welcomed the pilgrims with open hearts despite facing many inconveniences was particularly inspirational. I express my heartfelt gratitude and appreciation to them and the people of Uttar Pradesh.

I have always had unwavering confidence in the bright future of our nation. Witnessing this Mahakumbh has strengthened my conviction manifold.

The way 140 crore Indians turned the Ekta Ka Mahakumbh into a global occasion is truly wonderful. Moved by the dedication, devotion and efforts of our people, I will soon visit Shri Somnath, the first among the 12 Jyotirlingas, to offer the fruits of these collective national efforts to Him and to pray for every Indian.

The physical form of the Mahakumbh may have culminated successfully on Mahashivratri, but just like the eternal flow of the Ganga, the spiritual strength, national consciousness and unity that Mahakumbh has awakened will continue to inspire us for generations to come.

The author is the Prime Minister of India

CUKashmir's Science campus celebrates National Science Day

Departments of Biotechnology, Sciences, Chemistry, and Animal Sciences, (Science in collaboration with Directorate of Students Welfare, Central University of Kashmir (CUKashmir) celebrated National Science Day here

The theme of the event for this year was, "Empowering Indian Youth for Global Leadership in Science and Innovation for Viksit Bharat".

Addressing the participants, Director Campus and Dean Faculty of Life Sciences, Prof. Abid Hamid Dar stressed the importance of promoting scientific temper and rational thinking among the students. He emphasized that the dream of

Viksit Bharat can only be realized through the collective efforts of all. He deliberated on the global impact of Nobel Prizes in Sciences on the field of medical Sciences. Prof. Abid highlighted how Nobel Prize-winning discoveries have significantly influenced healthcare practices and advancements around the world, leading to improved treatments and diagnoses for the diseases affecting people glob-ally. He thanked Vice Chancellor, Prof. A Ravinder Nath, Dean Academics Affairs, Prof. Shahid Rasool and Registrar, Prof. M Afzal Zargar for their guidance and motivation.

In his speech, Dean Physical and Chemical Sciences, Prof. M Yousuf encouraged students to think differently and



embrace innovation to drive India's development in Science & Technology. He spoke about the need for creative thinking to propel India forward in the scientific realm.

Dr. Dharmendra, Associate Prof. Deptt. of Biotechnology spoke about Research-Industry partnerships, Startups India, Digital India and other programmes to harness the collective potential of Indian Youth.

Dr. Anil Chandra, Assistant Prof. Deptt. of Biotechnology emphasized the importance of inspiring the youth to actively participate in realizing the vision of a Viksit Bharat. He praised the skill, talent and abilities of Indian youth and the ways to nurture this generation

of innovators and leaders in shaping the nation's future.

Dr. Rifat Akbar, Assistant Prof. Deptt. of Chemistry spoke about, 'Empowering Indian Youth: the key to global leadership'. She emphasized on various initiatives taken by the Government of India to empower youth.

Earlier, in her welcome address, Dr. Shahnaz Perveen, Assistant Prof. Deptt of Plant Sciences gave insights on how Science & Technology should work hand in hand to solve the current societal issues. The programme was attended by faculty members and students of the aforementioned departments.

Dr. Shaiesta Shah, Assistant Prof. Deptt of Plant Sciences proposed the vote of thanks.

CONTD. FROM PAGE 1

4-Day Wet Spell

has witnessed 78.4 mm precipitation which is 407 per cent above the normal," a weather department official said.

The current wet spell has brought the deficit down from 80 per cent to nearly 42 per cent," he said.

According to the details provided by the Meteorological Centre Srinagar, "As per the cumulative precipitation during February 25-28, the highest snow depth of 113 cms has been recorded at famous ski-resort, Gulmarg followed by Sonamarg with 75 cm."

In North Kashmir Kupwara and Bandipora districts recorded a rainfall of 79.33 mm and 81.4 mm respectively, while in South Kashmir, Anantnag, Kulgam, Shopian and Pulwama districts recorded a rainfall of 49.6 mm, 60 mm, 26.8 mm and 31.7 mm respectively.

Srinagar recorded 30.5mm precipitation during the last 24 hours while Batote recorded the rainfall of 163.7 mm, highest in all the districts, followed by 118mm in Katra and 100 mm in Banihal.

With the deficiency reducing to 42 per cent only from January 01, 2025 to February 28, 2025. the lowest deficit at present is recorded in Kulgam with 69 per cent and followed by Shopian and Srinagar, the summer capital of Jammu and Kashmir at 64 percent each.

The lowest deficiency has been recorded in Rajouri and Udhampur at just 3 and 4 per cent respectively till today. Samba, as per the details is the only station across Jammu and Kashmir with average normal precipitation as against the normal rainfall of 91.6 mm, the district has received 91.5 mm till today.

Moreover, for the first time in the past three months, the river Jhelum has recorded a rise in water level by almost 3-4 feet.

From -1.01 ft till February 25, the water level at Sangam station was recorded 2.31 ft at 7:01 PM while at Ram Munshi Bagh, the water was flowing at 4.75 ft. The other streams too have recorded the rise in water level including Vishow Nallah where the 1589.6 m gauge was recorded this evening while Lidder was flowing at 1954.2 m and Doodhganga at 1585.3 m.

An Independent Weather Forecaster, Faizan Arif Keng in a statement has mentioned that following heavy rainfall in Jammu region the water levels of the Tawi River, along with other rivers and streams, have risen significantly, now just a few feet below the alert level. "Residents are advised to exercise caution and refrain from going near the rivers until conditions improve," he said.

Pertinently, the weatherman had predicted a four-day wet spell from February 25 to February 28 while 'yellow and orange' alerts were also issued for the four days.

For the next three days till March 03, the weatherman here has predicted light rain and snow at isolated to scattered places

Weather experts said the wet spell has been brought by a "mega" western disturbance that Jammu and Kashmir needed badly. "Although the dry weather situation cannot be reversed, this spell has improved the situation," said

Faizan Arif, a weather expert. He, however, said this does not change the bigger picture as the looming threat of climate change remains as urgent as ever.

"Immediate action is crucial. Strong policies addressing climate challenges and climate adaptation must be implemented without delay. This is not just important, it is the defining issue of our time.

"Investing in climate action now will pay off in the long run. The costs of disasters, compensation, and recovery will far exceed the expenses of proactive measures. By acting early, governments can ultimately save millions/billions while protecting lives and livelihoods," he

Apprehensions of a drought had increased among the people in Jammu and Kashmir as the Union territory experienced its driest year in five decades in 2024 with below-normal precipitation continuing for the fifth consecu-

Several water bodies were lowering below the zero level mark while some springs in south Kashmir had dried up completely due to the receding water table.

In 2024, the rainfall levels plunged to 870.9 mm against the normal annual average of 1,232.3 mm. The previous year recorded 1,146.6 mm rainfall level which was seven per cent below the normal precipitation.

The deficit had led to a concern in the government with Chief Minister Omar Abdullah calling for a more proactive approach and collective efforts towards water management and conservation.

Earlier this month, Abdullah warned people that Jammu and Kashmir has been staring at a

"It's not a recent phenomenon. Actually, it's been building up for a few years now. While

the government will have to adopt a more proactive approach towards water management and conservation, it can't just be a governmentcentric approach. All of us will have to change the way we take water for granted," Abdullah had said on X.

Roads, Rail & Air

significantly disrupted movement along the vital route.

An official said that the highway was closed for traffic on Thursday due to incessant rain, shooting stones, landslides, and mudslides between Nashri and the Navyug Tunnel. Moreover, a section of the road sank at Mehad, Ramban.

The situation worsened on Friday due to persistent rainfall, which continues to trigger frequent stonefall from the surrounding hill slopes, making it difficult for authorities to restore the road.

The ongoing inclement weather has not only slowed down clearance operations but has also posed a safety risk to workers on the ground.

Traffic police officials have strongly advised against traveling on the highway until further notice.

"The safety of travelers is our primary concern. Given the unstable weather and continuous stonefall, the highway is currently unsafe for vehicular movement. We urge everyone to avoid traveling until conditions improve, and the road is cleared for safe passage," one of the top traffic police officials said.

The decision on whether the highway will open will be made in the morning, following assessments by the concerned authorities. Authorities have deployed heavy machinery and specialized teams to clear the debris and restore connectivity, but due to the unpredictable nature of the weather, no definitive timeline for reopening has been given.

Commuters are urged to stay updated through official channels and reconsider their travel plans until clearance operations are completed and the highway is confirmed safe

The other roads including Kishtwar-Sinthan-Anantnag road, Srinagar-Sonamarg-Gumri, Mughal Road and Bhaderwah-Chamba road also remained closed, officials said

Moreover, the train services were also affected this morning. Train services were partially affected due to snow accumulation

The fresh spell of rains and snowfall led to the cancellation of two morning flights at Srinagar International Airport on Friday while all the major roads including Srinagar-Jammu National Highway continued to remain closed for the second straight day.

Two flights including 6E 2641 from Delhi and 6E 262 from Srinagar were cancelled this morning due to inclement weather conditions. However, an official said that other morning flights faced a delay of 30 to 50 minutes.

Vacations Extended.

cold weather conditions in the region.

Earlier, schools were scheduled to reopen on March 1, but the prolonged winter prompted authorities to extend the break. The move is aimed at ensuring the well-being of students amid the harsh weather.

The extension applies to all government and private schools in the Kashmir division.

Meanwhile, the authorities have extended winter vacation for all schools in the Gurez Valley of north Kashmir till March-8.

The decision comes in wake of heavy snowfall, and prevailing weather conditions across Jammu and Kashmir.

"Due to severe weather, movement of students and school staff has been disrupted. The decision to extend winter vacation has been taken for the wellbeing and safety of students and staff," an official said.

He said that heads of all institutions within the subdivision have been directed to ensure compliance with the extended winter vacation

In the meantime, following the bad weather conditions, JKBOSE Friday postponed all exams of 10th to 12th classes scheduled on March 01 and March 03 in hard zones.

JKBOSE in an order said, "In view of inclement weather, the examinations for classes 10th, 11th and 12th scheduled to be held on 01-03-2025 and 03-03-2025 as per date sheet already issued, are hereby postponed and rescheduled.'

The board said that the examinations that were earlier scheduled to be held on March-01 for classes 10th and 11th will be held on

In case of 12th standard, the examinations that were scheduled to be held on March-01 will be held on March-24.

JKBOSE in the meantime further said that the time and venue of the examinations will

remain unchanged.

MeT Predicts

Sonamarg-Zojila-Gumri axis, Mughal Road, Sinthan pass & other major roads of hilly dis tricts in the coming days.

Tourists, travelers and transporters are advised to plan accordingly & follow administration and traffic advisory, it reads, adding that the farmers are advised to suspend irrigation & other farm operations.

Landslides, mudslides and shooting stones at vulnerable places, it reads and added that there is a possibility of snow avalanches over higher

A massive avalanche hit a road in Beigpura area Chhatroo in Kishtwar Friday afternoon, however, no immediate loss of any life or property was reported. Another avalanche hit the Pingrari area of Dachhan in Kishtwar, however, it happened at some distance from the hamlet.

Ramazan To

will also go up," Basheer said.

He said vegetables are also available in good quantities, and prices will remain stable. "Even if the weather plays spoilsport and the highway gets blocked, we have enough stock to keep the markets running," he added.

70 FIRs Registered

in different Police Stations of UT of J&K. Out of these 83 FIRs were transferred to different police stations outside J&K, police said.

"As the general public is well aware about the cyber crime trends, checks and balances have been introduced at various levels, so that the facility of eFIR etc. provision cannot be misused by any miscreant," police said. (KNO)

Future Without

In his address, the LG also stressed on using this revolutionary technology to the benefit of local needs and said the students and the faculty members should work on a five-year plan to use AI in the development of JK.

"Our focus should also be on such innovations that provide solutions to the challenges of different sectors at the local level," he said and cautioned that AI technology should be free from any kind of bias.

On the occasion, Sinha also inaugurated a synthetic athletic track surface at the Kashmir

National Science Day is celebrated every year to mark the discovery of the Raman Effect by physicist Sir C V Raman on February 28, 1928.

This year, the theme for National Science Day is "Empowering Indian Youth for Global Leadership in Science and Innovation for Viksit

Identify & Deport

of the 2020 riots cases. The Delhi government should appoint special prosecutors so that these cases can be disposed of soon, Shah

"The Delhi Police should start the recruitment process for additional posts soon. DCPlevel officers should visit police stations, organise public hearing camps and solve their problems," he said.

The Union home minister said new security committees should be formed in II clusters for the safety of women and children there.

The Delhi Police should identify the places witnessing traffic jams daily, Shah said, adding the Delhi police commissioner and chief secretary should meet and find a quick solution to

He also asked the Delhi government to prepare a 'Monsoon Action Plan' to deal with water-logging.

During the review meeting, several measures and suggestions to strengthen the safety of women, children and senior citizens, improve law and order in the national capital and control crime were discussed in detail.

Shah directed officials that to prevent traffic jams caused by bus breakdowns, the Delhi Transport Corporation should deploy quick response teams and coordinate with other departments to seek immediate help and reduce the response time in removing the traffic obstruction.

Efforts should be made to make Mandoli and Tihar jails of Delhi model prisons, he said.

The home minister said Delhi can be made an ideal capital only with cooperation between the Delhi Police and the Delhi government.

He suggested working towards making joint efforts on traffic management, strengthening law enforcement infrastructure, women and child empowerment, mutual cooperation between civic departments, curbing corruption, community policing, maintenance and integration of CCTV cameras, among others.

It is very important to know the level of people's satisfaction with various other activities of the Delhi Police through third-party surveys, like lost and found, police clearance certificate, character verification, traffic management, the safety of senior citizens and Himmat App, Shah

The review by a third party will help improve the efficiency of these initiatives, he added.

Rohingya Children

Commissioner for Refugees) cards in public

"We want the children to first approach the government schools. If they are denied admission, they can move the high court," the bench told senior advocate Colin Gonsalves, appearing for the NGO 'Rohingya Human Rights

The bench said it passed a similar order in another PIL seeking the same relief.

Gonsalves said the court may record its direction in the order which will pave the way for 500 students to get admissions in government

"I have been fighting for this cause since 2018 and with one direct order, the court will be granting admission to 500 students," he submitted.

The bench said it is passing the same order, which it passed on a PIL raising a similar cause

of Rohingya children. "We want the children to make the first move," the bench said.

On February 12, the top court said that no child will be discriminated against in getting

The plea sought a direction to the Centre and the Delhi government to grant Rohingya refugees in the city access to public schools and The top court earlier sought to know about

the area in which these refugees were residing along with their particulars. On January 31, the top court asked the NGO

to apprise the court where the Rohingya refugees settled in the city, and the facilities accessible to them.

It also asked Gonsalves to file an affidavit in-

dicating their places of settlement in Delhi. Gonsalves had said the NGO sought access to public schools and hospitals for Rohingya refugees, as they were denied the same due to lack of Aadhaar cards.

"They are refugees having UNHCR cards, and therefore they can't have Aadhaar cards. But for want of Aadhaar they are not being granted access to public schools and hospitals," he had submitted

Gonsalves had said that Rohingya refugees resided in Shaheen Bagh, Kalindi Kunj and Khajuri Khas areas of Delhi.

"In Shaheen Bagh and Kalindi Kunj, they are residing in slums, while in Khajuri Khas, they are residing in rented accommodations," he

had submitted. The top court had said it asked the questions to understand if they lived in camps, as the nature of relief would be different than the one mentioned in the PIL.

The PIL sought a direction to the authorities to grant admission to all Rohingya children free of cost, irrespective of Aadhaar cards and allow them to participate in all examinations, including Classes 10 and 12 and graduation, without government's insistence on ID proof.

The PIL also sought extension of all government benefits such as free health services in government hospitals, subsidised food grains as available under the Antyodya Anna Yojana, and benefits under the Food Security Act to the Rohingya families as available to other citizens, irrespective of their citizenship.

PDD To 'Avoid'

total generation capacity.

However, in the ongoing month, the power generation has further reduced by five percent.

MLAs Asked

the occasion.

The National Anthem will be played upon the LG's arrival at the dais and again at the conclusion of the address. All relevant parties, including the Chief Minister, the Speaker, and various administrative departments, have been informed of the event".

The address will be broadcast and telecast by Doordarshan Kendra and All India Radio, ensuring wide coverage across both Jammu and

BJP Holds 2-day

and Jammu and Kashmir BJP president Sat Sharma at a hotel in Katra town, 45 kms from Jammu, a party leader said.

The meeting was attended by BJP national general secretary and party's J&K incharge Tarun Chugh, MP Jugal Kishore and MP (Rajya Sabha) Ghulam Ali Khatana apart from Leader of Opposition Sunil Sharma and other party legislators, 19 of whom are first timers and require guidance on handling debates, countering opposition arguments and presenting the party's stance effectively, he added.

BJP national president J P Nadda and Union Minister Jitendra Singh are expected to join the workshop, having a total of 10 sessions, on the concluding day on Saturday, the leader said, adding the senior party leaders will familiarize the legislators with knitty-gritty of the legislature proceedings and raising of public issues besides the proactive approach inside and outside the assembly.

Earlier on February 23, Union Minister Jitendra Singh held a luncheon meeting with the BJP legislators here to discuss the strategy for the budget session, which is taking place for the first time after 2018 when the PDP-BJP government collapsed in the erstwhile state.

"It is the tradition of the BJP to hold such types of meetings with the elected representatives so that the vital public issues are raised forcefully in the assembly," Singh said during the meeting.

The BJP had won 29 assembly seats, all from Jammu region, in the assembly elections held last year. However, one of their elected members Devender Singh Rana passed away in October, just two weeks after the formation of the National Conference led government in the Union Territory.

14 In Race for

Dr. Jatinder Khajuria, Finance Officer, University of Jammu; and Dr. Sudhir Singh, Joint Secretary,

The notification states that all shortlisted applicants must appear before the Search Committee for an interaction on March 5, 2025, at 12 noon in the Committee Meeting Room, 3rd Floor, Main Building, Civil Secretariat,

The J&K government had reconstituted the Search Committee on December 13, 2024, to recommend candidates for the positions of JKBOSE Chairman and Director of the Jammu and Kashmir State Council of Educational

Research and Training (SCERT). The committee is led by the Administrative Secretary of the Agricultural Production Department, with members from the School Education Department (SED), General Administration Department (GAD), and Higher Education Department (HED). Additionally, the Vice-Chancellors of the University of Kashmir (KU) and the University of Jammu (JU) are part

Prof. Parikshat Singh Manhas was appointed as JKBOSE Chairman on deputation for two years, starting January 25, 2023, and was expected to vacate the office on January 25, 2025. However, despite no extension orders from the Chief Minister, the J&K government extended his tenure for another month, which ended on

February 25, 2025. Currently, JKBOSE remains headless amid the crucial period of final board examinations. The evaluation process and results of Class 10th, 11th, and 12th must be completed within 45 days, as per government directions following the reversal of the academic session. (in-

puts from agencies) **Properties Of 5**

18-marla of Farooq with a value of Rs 3.75

The spokesman said that security forces remain committed to ensuring long-term peace, stability and development in Jammu and Kashmir while taking firm action against those trying to destabilise the region.

According to police, the five terrorists crossed over to PoK to receive arms training and carry out militant activities in India.

Intelligence reports suggested that they were attempting to sell their immovable properties in Jammu and Kashmir with the intention of using the proceeds to finance terrorist activities and lure local youth into militancy, the spokesman said.

The seizure order, issued by the sub-divisional police officer in Gool, prevents the sale, lease or any other form of transaction involving these properties without the permission of the J-K Police or other designated authorities, he said.

The seizure will cut off a potential source of terror funding that would have been used to revive Hizbul Mujahideen's influence in the region, he added.

Police said the families of the five terrorists will now face legal and financial constraints, preventing them from providing indirect support to militant activities.

The Jammu and Kashmir administration has been proactively cracking down on terror funding, overground worker (OGW) networks and exfiltrated terrorists, significantly weakening the terror ecosystem in recent years, the spokesman said.

The latest action aligns with the government's zero-tolerance policy towards terrorism, he added.

India Proving Scientific Prowess Globally With Landmark Missions: Jitendra Singh



Agencies

NEW DELHI: Union Science and Technology Minister Dr. Jitendra Singh emphasized India's growing global stature in science and technology, citing Chandrayaan-3, the Aditya-L1 solar mission, and the recent Space Docking Experiment (SpaDeX) as key milestones. He made these remarks while addressing a gathering on the occasion of National Science Day 2025 in New Delhi.

The theme for this year's celebration, "Empowering Indian Youth for Global Leadership in Science and Innovation for Viksit Bharat," underscores the importance of youth empowerment, capacity building, and preparing them for leadership roles on the global stage. Dr. Singh highlighted India's

rising influence in international scientific collaborations, referencing the India-EU meeting as an example of how the world is now acknowledging India's advancements in science and technology. He also noted that while India was previously not recognized for its therapeutic precision-based healthcare, it is now seen as a global leader in preventive healthcare.

Reiterating Prime Minister Narendra Modi's vision, he recalled the PM's appeal in his Mann Ki Baat program to celebrate National Science Day with the same enthusiasm as any major festival. He further revealed that, according to a global survey, over 5,300 Indian scientists were ranked among the world's top two percent scientists last year, reflecting the nation's strong scientific contributions.(KINS)

Congress Salls Its Legislature Party Meeting On March 2

Observer News Service

SRINAGAR: Ahead of the budget session of the J&K Assembly, the Congress party has scheduled a meeting of its legislature party on March 2 in Jammu.

In a letter, the party's chief whip and MLA Bandipora, Nizamuddin Bhat, invited all MLAs to attend the meeting on Sunday at 2:00 PM at the party headquarters in Jammu.

"Ahead of the upcoming assembly budget session, the high command of the J&K unit of the Indian National Congress has desired to convene a meeting of party legislators. All Honourable members of the Congress legislature party are requested to ensure their presence at the meeting scheduled for Sunday, March 2, at 2:00 PM at the Congress party headquarters, Jammu," reads the letter, a copy of which is in

possession of Kashmir Observer. As previously reported, the National Conference (NC) has also scheduled its legislature party meeting around the same time at the Chief Minister's official residence on Wazarat Road, Jammu.

Meanwhile, Congress lead-ership stated that they have not been officially informed by the National Conference about any joint meeting of legislators of the ruling alliance. "We have not been informed about it yet," said Pradesh Congress Committee president and MLA Central Shalteng, Tariq Hamid Karra, when asked whether any joint meeting of the ruling allies has been scheduled ahead of the budget session—(KNO)

Fire Destroys House, Shops In Hajin

Observer News Service

BANDIPORA: A residential house and I eight shops were damaged in a massive fire that broke out on intervening night of Thursday-Friday in Hajin area of north Kashmir's Bandipora district, officials said here. An official said that the fire

broke out in one of the residential structures and later spread to a nearby shop, resulting in the complete destruction of a residential house and eight

Efforts by locals, the fire and local police prevented the fire from spreading further, he said.

The official said there was no loss of life or injuries in the incident; however, the cause of the fire is being investigated.

School Education Department Organizes Conference on Transforming Education



Agencies

SRINAGAR: The National Education Policy 2020 is being implemented in Jammu and Kashmir and feedback is being sought from all the stakeholders to address the challenges faced in this regard.

It was expressed by the Financial Commissioner and Additional Chief Secretary of School Education and Higher Education Departments Shantmanu while participating as the Chief guest in the one-day conference titled "Transforming Education for a Future -Ready Generation" at Women's College Srinagar today.

Addressing the conference, the Additional Chief Secretary said that when we talk about Transforming Education for a Future-Ready Generation, it is imperative that we all should work together to get positive re-

sults in this regard. Shantmanu said that it is the responsibility of all government institutions, NGOs, other stakeholders, I mean all of us to see what has been done so far in the field of Transforming Education and what more needs to be done in the future.

ACS asked the students to actively participate in curricular as well as extra-curricular activities, because these are the requirements which are useful at every step in real life.

During the conference, Director School Education Kashmir Dr. G.N. Itoo summarized the progress being made in implementing the National Education Policy 2020. In his speech, DSEK said that during the upcoming session, all steps will be taken to implement NEP 2020 and the teaching staff, school heads and students will be informed about the adoption of various tools to deal with the challenges faced in this regard.

Dr. Mushtaq Marghoob, a renowned psychiatrist of the valley, also expressed his views during the conference. A panel discussion on the topic, "Transforming Education" was also held during the conference in which Professor Seema Naz, Principal of Institute of Advanced Study (IASE) also participated. (ANB)

J&K Has Additional Agri Credit Potential Of Nearly Rs 3000 Cr: CS



Observer News Service

JAMMU: Chief Secretary, Atal Dulloo, while taking stock of progress registered under different credit linked schemes of the Agriculture Production Department (APD) said that the agriculture sector in J&K has an additional credit potential of around Rs 3000 crore if tapped optimally by the financial institutions here.

Besides Principal Secretary, APD and MD, J&K Bank, the meeting was attended by MD, HADP/JKCIP; DG, Budget; Deputy Commissioners; HoDs of APD; Convenor, UTLBC; representatives from BISAG-N and other concerned officers while outstation officers participated virtually. The Chief Secretary im-

pressed upon the Deputy Commissioners and the concerned department to be in close coordination with J&K Bank in order to enhance the approval and disbursement rate of the applications. He said that there is still greater potential of growth in this sector as the banks could tap additional Rs 3000 crore business by laying more focus on it. He advised the financial institutions to tap this potential for there is lesser NPA rate as well.

He maintained that almost half of the applications re-

ceived by the department on the portal should be credit linked as the products are highly attractive guaranteeing the interest subvention and moratorium period that is not available anywhere else.

Dulloo enjoined upon the Bank to designate some of their best human resources to look after the progress on these schemes to improve their uptake and increase their number proportionate to the total number of applicants registered on the official portal. He also reviewed scheme-wise progress and pendency in each district and enquired from respective DCs about the reasons of poor performance, if found anywhere. He took note of the applications pending from more than 100 days and directed the banks to clear the backlog without any further delay.

The Chief Secretary also sought suggestions from the Department , DCs and the Bank officers about the measures needed to be taken to improve the overall performance of these schemes for these are in vogue now for the 2nd year. He asked them to further improve the progress in high density plantation, distribution of smart cards under KCC, KCC term loans, PM Kisan, AIF, AHIDF, PMFBY

On the occasion, Principal Secretary, APD, Shailendra Kumar, informed the meeting that the Department targets coverage of 13 lakh farmers under KCC scheme which currently hovers at around 10.82 lakh active customers. He also revealed that the Department in coordination with the banks is in a process of streamlining the credit availing facility for farmers by developing an IT solution named 'Khetscore' to determine the credit worthiness of each farm. He made out that

and other similar schemes.

graphical factors into account. MD, HADP, Rahul Yadav, informed the meeting about other measures being taken by the Department to improve the uptake of these schemes by the farmers. He also threw light on the over-all progress of these schemes over the past few months.

the same would be done based

upon historical data, external

risk assessment and taking geo-

The MD also enumerated certain measures including launching of IT tools like credit scheme advisor, DPR generating portal and Grievance redressal portal with banks for real time registration and tracking of credit related grievances by the banks and administration on the directions of the Chief Secretary.



"THE CHIEF SECRETARY ALSO SOUGHT SUGGESTIONS FROM THE **DEPARTMENT, DCS AND THE BANK OFFICERS** about the measures needed to be taken to improve the overall performance of these schemes for these are in vogue now for the 2nd year.

Secy RDD Reviews MGNREGA Draft Annual Action Plan

JAMMU: Secretary Rural Development Department and Panchayati Raj (RDD &PR), Mohammad Aijaz Asad conducted a comprehensive review of the draft Annual Action Plan (AAP) and Labour Budget (LB) for MGNREGA for the fiscal 2025-26, focusing on 10 districts of Kashmir division.

Secretary in RDD & PR Department, Rachna Sharma; DG Rural Sanitation, Anoo Malhotra; Mission Director JKRLM, Shubhra Sharma; Director Panchayati Raj, Sham Lal; Director Finance, Umar Khan; Director, RDD Kashmir, Shabir Hussain Bhat; Chief Executive Officer, IWMP, Rajnish Kumar; Additional Secretary RD&PR, Waseem Raja; Superintending Engineer REW Kashmir, Aamir Ali; Director Social Audit, Shafia Naqshbandi; Assistant Commissioner(s) Development and Executive Engineers of Kashmir division attended the meeting.

During the meeting, the Sec-

retary emphasized the importance of realistic and achievable plans. He urged the officials to adopt a "people-centric" approach to planning, emphasising that communities should be actively involved in planning and execution of projects.

The meeting also addressed several areas including geotagging, use of the National MGNREGA Management System (NMMS), timely wage payments, implementation of the Area Officer app, compensation status, identification of Amrit Sarovar sites for Phase II and ensuring that PMAY beneficiaries receive the mandated 95 days of work until their houses are completed.

The Secretary laid emphasis on Category B works and stressed that every PMAY-G beneficiary must be guaranteed 95 days of labor support under MGNREGA. He also instructed the district authori-



survey by March 31st, ensuring that all eligible beneficiaries are included.

The Secretary emphasised the need to utilise MGNREGA funds for repairing and maintaining Panchayat Ghars, ensuring they function effectively as community hubs. He mentioned the establishment of Community Sanitary Complexes (CSCs) along highways to



The Secretary also called for retrofitting single-pit Individual **Household Latrines** (IHHLs) to double pits under the Swachh **Bharat Mission-**Gramin (SBM-G).

improve sanitation services for rural communities, ensuring better hygiene and accessibility.

The Secretary asked the districts to prioritise livelihood activities, such as constructing orchard footpaths, desilting water bodies and planting fruit bearing trees to boost rural productivity. He asked them to prioritise low maintenance, cost effective and high revenue generating activities.

He also highlighted the importance of convergence in all allied works. He emphasized convergence with the Holistic Agriculture Development Programme (HADP) to boost agriculture and allied sectors.

ate professional workspaces for Self Help Groups (SHGs) in every panchayat, focusing on employment opportunities and boosting product sales.

The Secretary stressed on making panchayats self-reliant by generating revenue through sustainable initiatives. He also called for utilisation of convergence strategies to build marriage halls and community facilitation centres, enhancing social infrastructure in rural areas. He called for identifying and allocating land for dumping sites, incorporating these into development plans to ensure proper waste management.

The Secretary also called for retrofitting single-pit Individual Household Latrines (IHHLs) to double pits under the Swachh Bharat Mission-Gramin (SBM-G). He recommended promotion of fruitbearing trees to enhance rural economic activity.

He emphasized the urgent need to prioritise identification and preparation of Amrit Sarovar sites for Phase II, issuing clear instructions to ensure that the groundwork is completed without any delay.

Additional Secretary RD&PR, Waseem Raja, provided a detailed presentation on the Annual Action Plan (AAP) for MGNREGA 2025-26, prepared with due consultation of the stakeholders highlighting key focus areas and challenges.

Earlier, the Secretary had conducted a thorough review of the Annual Action Plan (AAP) for ten districts in the Jammu division.

Kashmir Gears Up For Ramazan



SRINAGAR: As the sacred month of Ramazan approaches and today marked the last Friday of Sha'ban, Kashmir was abuzz with preparations. The valley's mosques were filled with worshippers offering Friday prayers, while the streets resonated with anticipation for the blessed month.

Across the valley, devotees express their joy at the arrival of Ramazan, a time of spiritual reflection, fasting and togetherness. "This month is a blessing for us. We eagerly wait for it all year to cleanse our souls and seek Allah's mercy," Sahil, a local resident said.

In downtown Srinagar, women preparing for Ramazan said the month represents the spirit of unity and generosity. "The best part of Ramazan is how it brings everyone together— whether for prayers, iftar or helping the less fortunate," said Nusrat Jan from Rainawari, Sri-

At Srinagar's historic Jama Masjid, devotees gathered in large numbers, hoping for a peaceful and uninterrupted Ramadan. "We come here for spiritual guidance. It is important that our places of worship remain open and accessible during this holy month," said Bilal Ahmad from Hawal.

Meanwhile, the Anjuman Augaf Jama Masjid (AAJ) has urged authorities to ensure unrestricted religious gatherings. The organisation also expressed hope that Mirwaiz-e-Kashmir, Dr Molvi Mohammad Umar Farooq, will be allowed to carry out his religious duties freely.

With the first Taraweeh (special night prayers) set to begin, Kashmiris look forward to a spiritually fulfilling Ramazan, marked by devotion, charity and communal harmony—(KNO)

Tullamulla Villagers Seek **Proper Drainage System**

Observer News Service

SRINAGAR: Residents of Tullamulla village, located just four kms from the district headquarters of Ganderbal in central Kashmir, here have alleged that the issue of faulty drainage system has not been resolved, thus leaving them to lurch at large.

Local residents said that after a light rainfall, the drainage system failed to function properly, causing water to flow onto the roads.

One local resident, Ghulam Ahmad, said "Even a small amount of rain causes havoc here. The drains overflow onto our roads, making it impossible to walk or drive without getting wet."

Social activist, Bilal Bhat, said, "This has been a persistent problem. We have raised this issue before, but nothing has been done. We need proper drainage before the situation gets worse. He said he raised the issue in all Back to Village programmes, Block Diwas Programmes and Public Darbar programmes so far."

He urged the concerned authorities and local communities to come up with a permanent



tion has raised concerns among the villagers, as the improper drainage infrastructure is leading to flooding, even with minimal rainfall.

Locals have called for immediate action from authorities to address the problem and prevent further disruptions.

Residents fear that if the issue is not resolved promptly, it could worsen with heavy rainfall, leading to more severe flooding and inconveniences in the area.

Residents of Tullamulla appealed to the Deputy Commissioner, urging them to address their concerns by providing a proper drainage system. "We seek a resolution so that we can heave a sigh of relief," he said

MLA Banihal Reviews Post-Snowfall Restoration Efforts

Agencies

SRINAGAR: Ahead of the holy month of Ramadan and in response to the recent heavy snowfall, MLA Banihal Sajjad Shaheen chaired a high-level review meeting with the Sub-Divisional administration to assess preparedness and restoration efforts in the Banihal-Gool

constituency.
During the meeting, MLA Shaheen directed officials to expedite the restoration of essential services, including electricity, water supply, and road connectivity, which have been disrupted due to snowfall. He emphasized the need for uninterrupted access to ration supplies, healthcare, and transport facilities during Ramadan, ensuring that the community's religious observances are not

He instructed authorities to keep emergency response teams on standby, maintain an adequate stock of essential commodities, and deploy additional personnel as needed. Special attention was given to ensuring uninterrupted power supply during Sehri and Iftar hours and prioritizing snow clearance in affected areas.

Reaffirming his commitment to public welfare, MLA Banihal assured close monitoring of the situation and urged residents to report any grievances related to essential services for prompt resolution.(KINS)

Man Trains Youth To Revive Traditional Fur Art

Agencies

SRINAGAR: A man, hailing from Srinagar, has been making efforts to revive the traditional fur art in Kashmir by providing training to the local youth.

Tahir Åhmad Kalwal, a resident of Onta Bhawan area Soura, Srinagar, who returned to Srinagar during Covid-19, has been training women artisans and youth in making fur products in Kashmir.

Kalwal said that raw hides are available in Kashmir in plenty, so is the demand for leather and its products but Kashmir has no proper tanning factory to turn raw hides into raw leathers. He said that he is making fur items from sheep herds only, adding that around 8000 sheep are being consumed in Kashmir on a daily basis but their hides are mostly getting wasted.

Kalwal said that none from his family was associated with the iob and he was sent to Delhi during the initial stage of militancy in Kashmir, where their family friend was doing this work and got interested in it. "Slowly, I started a workshop there," he said.

He said that though an industry was started in Kashmir in late 80s but it got closed due to several reasons and later the number of fur artisans declined as well. He said that this work has the great demand across the world, especially in Kashmir but the artisans associated with the work are very few.

Kalwal said currently fur work is being done through a recycling process but this work is being done at limited places in the world but the demand is high everywhere as sheep hides aren't being used for making leather items only but fur also.(KNO)

F1 Academy Picks Racer Atiqa Mir, 10, For Its Driver Program

Press Trust of India

PORTIMAO: 10-year-old karting sensation Atiqa Mir on Friday became the first Indian and Asian to be signed by Formula 1 Academy for its driver program, a testament to her rapid growth in the world of motorsport.

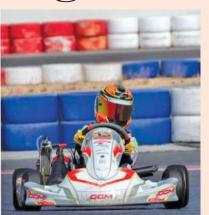
F1 Academy, a female only racing series owned by Formula 1, has decided to take Atiqa on board for its Discover Your Drive Program (DYD) after closely tracking her stellar performances on the karting circuit.

The racer from Srinagar, Kashmir, is only one of three drivers in the mini category (age 8-11) worldwide to be chosen for the DYD program.

Atiqa will represent Formula 1 Academy at the Champions of the Future Academy Program Championship with six rounds in Europe and Middle East,



starting this weekend. F1 Academy is investing in Atiqa's rare talent by providing financial and techni-



cal support, covering her fitness, driving and mental preparation. Being signed by F1 Academy is a ma-

jor stepping stone in Atiqa's blossoming racing career and she duly realises the significance of this opportunity.

"I'm so excited to hear this amazing news. To be chosen by Formula 1 Academy is a huge honour for me and for us here in India. I will work hard and perform at my best and repay the faith out in me by Formula 1 Academy. It is massively encouraging for me and I take great pride in representing my country," said Atiqa.

Formula 1 created the F1 Academy with the sole purpose of developing and preparing female drivers to progress to higher levels of single seater racing.

With the announcement on Friday, Atiqa entered a select club of female racers who are out to break that barrier. Last month, Atiqa became the first Indian female to sign for a full season with

World Series Karting.

India's Dubai Advantage In CT: 'No Point Dwelling On That'



Press Trust of India

DUBAI: New Zealand offspinner Michael Bracewell on Friday brushed aside any talks about India getting an unfair advantage in the ongoing Champions Trophy by playing all their games in Dubai, simply saying that his team was "excited to try and play in different conditions".

Rohit Sharma's team is playing all its matches in Dubai, and even the final will be held here if India goes the distance.

New Zealand will be playing

their first match of the tournament in Dubai -- against India on Sunday -- after their last two games were held in Pakistan.

Some cricketers, including South African top-order batter Rassie van der Dussen and former Australia skipper Pat Cummins, have said India are in an advantageous position as they have played all their games at one venue while other teams have had to travel to different venues in Pakistan.

"Look, it is what it is. It's been decided, and that's the way it is, and there's no point dwelling on that," said Bracewell, when asked if India have unfair advantage in Dubai.

"It's part of what makes it exciting. I personally think it's coming to a different ground and trying to figure out those different conditions. Yeah, not much more to say on that other than we're excited to try and learn and play in different conditions," added the 34-year-old off-spinner.

The New Zealander opined that the pitches in Dubai would aid spin and it would be a good idea to train hard before the game against India.

"The wickets here have looked like they've taken a bit of a spin. So, it'll be good to try and get used to the wickets as quickly as we can. We've obviously enjoyed the pitches in Pakistan.

"And I think we've got a pretty well-balanced side to play in any condition. So hopefully, we can continue to do that and adjust to what's in front of us. I think that's been the strength of our side, adjusting to the surface. So, hopefully, we continue to do that as a side," he added.

South Africa Look To Seal CT Semis Spot Against England



Press Trust of India

KARACHI: As the battle for the semifinals intensifies in Group B, topranked South Africa will aim to assert their dominance and secure a spot in the final four when they face a struggling England in a high-stakes Champions Trophy clash here on Saturday.

Unlike Group A wherein two best sides -- India and New Zealand -- have sailed through with ease into the knockouts, Australia, Afghanistan and South Africa in Group B are locked in for an intense battle over the two days for the remaining two semifinal berths.

A crushing loss by eight runs to Afghanistan not only sent England out of the contention for the semifinals but also kept the Asian team's hopes alive

of making to the final four, which has kept both South Africa and Australia on tenterhooks.

South Africa (3 points, 2.140 NRR) are likely to progress if Australia (3 points, 0.475 NRR) beat Afghanistan (2 points, -0.990 NRR), even if the Proteas lose to England because of their healthy NRR.

A favourable result should not be too difficult for South Africa who have all their bases covered and more importantly, have their key players in-form compared to a misfiring England, who are overly dependent on Joe Root.

In their only completed contest so far — South Africa split points with Australia after a washout in Rawalpindi — the Proteas had crushed Afghanistan by a massive 107 runs.

Short TAKES

Buttler Quits As England White-Ball Skipper After CT Exit

os Buttler on Friday said he will step down as England white-ball captain after their last Champions Trophy group match against South Africa on Saturday, taking responsibility for his team's exit from the eight-team tournament.

England crashed out of the eight-team Champions Trophy after losing to Afghanistan on Wednesday. They play against South Africa in their last Group B match here on Saturday. "I'm going to stand down as England captain. It's the right decision for me and the team," the 34-year-old Buttler said at a press conference here.

"It's quite clear. This tournament was important, results-wise, for my captaincy, and obviously, two losses and being out of the tournament, with a bit of a hangover from past tournaments, I think it just probably reached the end of the road for me and my captaincy, which is a shame," he said.

Islamabad United v Lahore Qalandar In PSL Opener On April 11

The PCB on Friday announced that the 10th edition of the Pakistan Super League will begin on April 11 with a clash between defending champions Islamabad United and two-time champions Lahore Qalandars at the Rawalpindi Cricket Stadium.

Lahore's Gaddafi Stadium will host 13 matches, including two Eliminators and the final on May 18.

The confirmation of the PSL schedule means it will will clash with the bigger and more lucrative Indian Premier League, which is scheduled to be held between March 22 and May 25.

tween March 22 and May 25.

The PSL will feature 11 matches at the Rawalpindi Cricket Stadium including Qualifier 1 on May 13.

Karachi's National Bank Stadium and Multan Cricket Stadium will host five matches each.

The marquee event will also feature three double-headers, with two matches on weekends (Saturday)

and one on a national holiday (Labour Day).

Peshawar Zalmi will play their five matches at the
Rawalpindi Cricket Stadium, while the winners of the
fourth edition, Quetta Gladiators will play five matches
at the Gaddafi Stadium.

Mourinho Banned For 4 Games, Fined For Turkish Refs Comment

Fenerbahce manager Jose Mourinho was given a four-match ban and fined by the Turkish Football Federation following his comments about Turkish referees after a match at Galatasaray.

The Turkish federation on Thursday fined the 62-yearold Portuguese coach 1.6 million Turkish lira (\$44,000) after he criticized the match officials in a media conference following a 0-0 Super Lig draw on Monday.

Mourinho served one of his suspended four games on Thursday when he was absent from the bench for Fenerbahce's 4-1 Turkish Cup win at Gaziantep. Fenerbahce will appeal the four-game ban.

In his postgame interview on Monday, Mourinho welcomed the decision to bring in a foreign referee for the game and also praised Slavko Vincic of Slovenia for a "top performance."

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