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BOOK APPOINTMENT

J&K BUDGET SESSION DAY 1

Promises, Protests & Political Undercurrents

People's Statehood Aspiration Recognized: LG



Observer News Service

Jammu: Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha on Monday said the government remains committed to addressing the statehood aspiration of the people of Jammu and Kashmir.

Addressing the first Budget session of Jammu and Kashmir Assembly in seven years, Sinha said the session is not merely a legislative formality but a reflection of their commitment to good governance, transparency, and inclusive development.

"One of the foremost

aspirations of the people of Jammu and Kashmir is the restoration of full statehood. My government remains steadfast in its commitment to addressing this aspiration," he said.

He said the government recognises the emotional and political significance of this aspiration and is committed to engaging with all stakeholders.

"This budget carries historic significance as it is the first in seven years to be presented by an elected government in Jammu and Kashmir. It symbolises the power of the people, prepared | [More on P6](#)

KEY HIGHLIGHTS FROM LG'S ADDRESS

- » First Budget in 7 Years
- » Peace & Inclusivity Focus
- » Empowering Local Governance
- » Reservation for OBCs & STs
- » Kashmiri Migrant Rehabilitation
- » Fast-Tracking Infrastructure
- » Digital Governance & Transparency
- » Economic Growth & Employment
- » Balanced Economy, Ecology & Equity
- » Boosting Recruitment & Transparency
- » Strengthening Grievance Redressal
- » Dignified Rehabilitation For Migrants
- » Healthcare Overhaul In J&K
- » AIIMS Kashmir Nears Completion
- » 15 Lakh Free Treatments Under SEHAT
- » Expanding MBBS & PG Seats
- » War On Drug Abuse Intensifies
- » Boosting J&K's Energy Sector

'Govt Transforming J&K Into Education Hub'

Observer News Service

LG Sinha said that the government is focusing on transforming Jammu and Kashmir into an educational hub with strategic investments in higher education. Addressing the Budget Session of J&K Legislative Assembly here, LG Sinha, said the government is dedicated to strengthening healthcare infrastructure across the Union Territory, ensuring quality, accessible and affordable medical services for all.

"Prestigious institutions such as AIIMS - Jammu and AIIMS - Kashmir, along with newly-established paediatric and cancer hospitals, are transforming tertiary healthcare delivery. The expansion of critical care facilities, dialysis centres and telemedicine services is significantly improving access to affordable and specialised care, | [More on P6](#)

Resolution On Special Status Not Rejected: CM

Press Trust Of India

Jammu: The resolution on special status passed by the Jammu and Kashmir Assembly in its first sitting last year has not been rejected by the Central government which is a big thing, Chief Minister Omar Abdullah said on Monday and asserted that there was no need to bring any other resolution on Article 370, which was abrogated in August 2019.

The chief minister said all legislators need to work together to help the government to fulfill its priorities for public welfare.

"What we have to do was done in the first (assembly) session (in November, 2024). The resolution is still holding after being passed by the House. The PDP and others helped | [More on P6](#)

No Mention Of Art 370 Oppn Slams NC Over 'Ideological Overlap' With BJP

Observer News Service

Peoples Conference president Sajad Gani Lone on Monday lashed out at the National Conference over Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha's speech, saying it is indistinguishable from a possible speech. In a post on X, Lone said that the LG's address is indistinguishable from a possible BJP speech, had they been in power.

"There seems to be total ideological overlap," he said, adding that the speech doesn't even remotely talk about Article 370, Article 35 A. "No mention of 5 August 2019. No mention of the reorganisation Act," he said. The LG's speech is drafted by the elected government to outline its policy and achievements

Lone the NC government has finally | [More on P6](#)

Most Misunderstood Leader: CM On Dr Singh

Omar Abdullah said on Monday that India and Pakistan came closer to resolving the Kashmir issue during the Manmohan Singh-led UPA | [More on P6](#)

Langate MLA Protests Against Civilian Killings



Independent MLA Sheikh Khurshid Ahmed on Monday held a protest in Jammu and Kashmir Assembly premises | [More on P6](#)

THIS BUDGET CARRIES HISTORIC SIGNIFICANCE AS it is the first in seven years to be presented by an elected government in J&K.

Higher Reaches Receive Snow, Rain In Plains

Another Wet Spell in J&K From March 10: MeT

Observer News Service

Srinagar: The parts of Jammu and Kashmir once again received fresh snowfall on Monday while the rains lashed the plains, bringing down the mercury further.

The higher reaches of north and south Kashmir received fresh snowfall today. Srinagar, the summer capital of

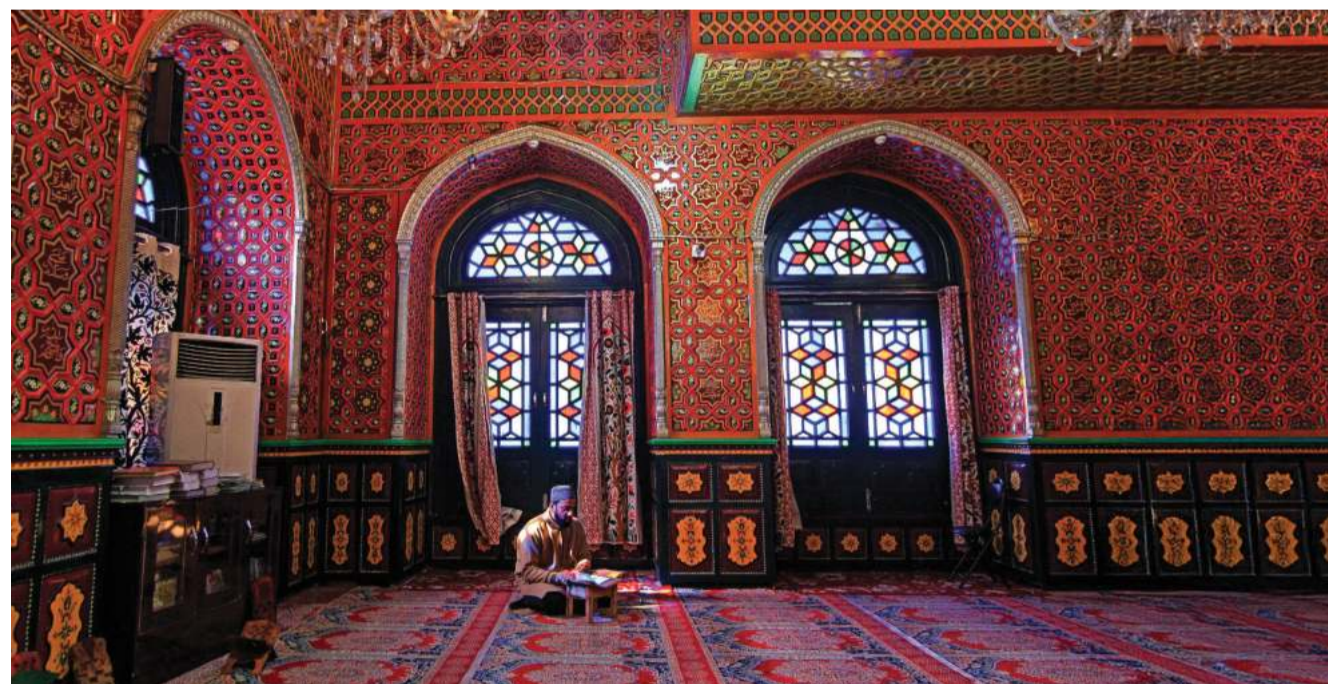
Jammu and Kashmir, however was lashed by the rains intermittently since the morning.

Sadhna Top and Razdan Top have received a snowfall of one feet while Zojila pass and Sonamarg have received a snowfall of 10 inches today, said an Independent Weather Forecaster, Aadil Maqbool. As per the | [More on P6](#)



Avalanche Warning For 5 Districts

Given fresh snowfall, Jammu and Kashmir Disaster Management Authority (JKDMA) on Monday issued an avalanche warning in the higher reaches of five districts of Union Territory during the next 24 hours, officials | [More on P6](#)



A devotee recites the Quran inside Dastgeer Sahib shrine in Srinagar on second day of Ramadan. KO Photo By Faisal Khan

ECI Hails J&K For Record Voter Turnout

Observer News Service

Srinagar: The Election Commission of India (ECI) has recognized the services of Chief Secretary, Atal Dulloo, for successful holding of elections for the 18th Lok Sabha in the UT of J&K.

The Chief Secretary, J&K was presented with a 'Certificate of Exemplary Leadership' signed by the Chief Election Commissioner and two of the Election Commissioners for his excellent service towards successful conduct of the 18th Lok Sabha Elections-2024 in J&K.

This appreciation by the Commission was received by the Chief Secretary for holding of trouble free elections in the UT in which | [More on P6](#)

'Remote Testimony, Protected Waiting Areas, In-Camera Proceedings' High Court Issues New Guidelines To Protect Vulnerable Witnesses

Agencies

Srinagar: The Chief Justice of the Jammu & Kashmir High Court has approved updated guidelines for recording the testimony of vulnerable witnesses. The new framework aims to shield witnesses from intimidation and make the legal system more accessible to those facing challenges in testifying.

According to a notification issued by the Registrar General, these guidelines apply to children, persons with disabilities, survivors of sexual violence, and individuals under threat.



Recognizing the difficulties such witnesses often face in traditional court settings, the new rules introduce several safeguards. Courts can now conduct in-camera proceedings to restrict public access to testimonies, ensuring privacy for those who may feel vulnerable

while deposing. Witnesses will also have the option to testify via live video conferencing from a remote location, reducing their distress and fear of confrontation with the accused. Additionally, they may be accompanied by a guardian or a legal aid volunteer during their testimony to provide emotional and legal support.

To further enhance their security, separate waiting areas will be designated to prevent direct encounters between witnesses and the accused. Courts have also been directed to ensure that witnesses | [More on P6](#)

Er Rashid's Plea To Attend Parliament Delhi Court Seeks NIA's Response

Press Trust Of India

New Delhi: A Delhi court on Monday asked the NIA to respond to a plea of jailed Jammu and Kashmir MP Engineer Rashid who sought to attend the upcoming Parliament session.

Additional sessions judge Chander Jit Singh asked the National Investigation Agency (NIA) to file its reply by March 5 on Rashid's plea.

The application, filed by advocate Vikhyat Oberoi for Rashid on February 27, sought the relief on the grounds that

Rashid was a parliamentarian and needed to attend the upcoming session to fulfil his public duty.

Sheikh Abdul Rashid, popularly known as Engineer Rashid, defeated Chief Minister Omar Abdullah in the 2024 Lok Sabha polls in Baramulla.

Rashid's regular bail application is currently pending before the court.

The second part of Parliament's Budget session would begin on March 10 and end on April 4.

The judge on September 10 granted interim | [More on P6](#)

DGP Reviews Security Situation



Observer News Service

Srinagar: Jammu and Kashmir Director General of Police (DGP) Nalin Prabhat on Monday chaired a meeting here to review the crime and security situation in the Union Territory.

"The focus of the meeting

was to assess the current security situation and evaluate the effectiveness of crime management strategies across the region," a police spokesperson said.

IGP Kashmir, Range DIGs and district SSPs from the Kashmir Zone | [More on P6](#)



Genetic Study Reveals How Extreme Heat Can Accelerate Ageing In Older Adults

Press Trust Of India

New Delhi- A genetic study has shown how exposure to extreme heat can alter the way genes express themselves, and potentially accelerate ageing among older adults. Extreme heat has been linked to negative health outcomes, including heart disease and increased mortality. However, its impact on biological ageing remains unclear, researchers at the University of Southern California, US, said.

People living in neighbourhoods experiencing more days of high heat show greater biological ageing on an average than residents of cooler regions, senior author Jennifer Ailshire, a professor of gerontology and sociology at the University of Southern California, said.

"It's really about the combination of heat and humidity, particularly for older adults, because older adults don't sweat the same way. We start to lose our ability to have the skin-cooling effect that comes from that evaporation of sweat," she explained.

Biological age reflects the body's functioning at the molecular, cellular, and organ levels. A higher biological age relative to chronological age (based on birth date) is considered a risk factor for various health conditions.

The study, published in the journal *Science Advances*, analysed blood samples from more than 3,600 adults aged 56 and above, over a six-year study period from 2010 to 2016.

The team analysed the samples for the way



genes are turned 'on' or 'off' by a common epigenetic process called DNA methylation. An epigenetic process is how information stored in a gene gets translated into observable behaviour.

Patterns in DNA methylation helped the researchers estimate the participants' biological ages at each time point, changes in which were compared with their location's history of heat index and heat days, as reported by the US' National Weather Service.

"Participants living in areas where heat days, as defined as 'Extreme Caution' or higher levels (over 32 degrees Celsius),

occur half the year, such as Phoenix (in the state of) Arizona, experienced up to 14 months of additional biological ageing compared to those living in areas with fewer than 10 heat days per year," co-author Eunyoung Choi, a postdoctoral scholar at the university said.

The link between extreme heat exposure and accelerated ageing remained significant regardless of socioeconomic and demographic differences, as well as lifestyle factors like physical activity, alcohol consumption, and smoking, the researchers said.

"Just because you live in an area with more

heat days, you're aging faster biologically," Choi said.

The authors wrote, "We demonstrated that short, mid, and long-term ambient outdoor heat can significantly accelerate epigenetic aging within a diverse, nationally representative cohort of older adults."

The findings can guide public policy and climate mitigation measures, and help develop targeted public health interventions, the team said.

The participants were recruited under the Health and Retirement Study (HRS), a long-term study to address challenges and opportunities of ageing.

From Office Of The Advocate Muneer Ahmad Dar

- In the case of
1. Nazima Nazir D/O, Nazir Ahmad Bhat R/O, Matipora Pati Kripalpora Tehsil Singhpora
 2. Rafiq Akhter W/O, Fiza Ahmad Misgar R/O, Gunbagh Lalbazar Srinagar
 3. Safiya Qayoom W/O, Mohammad Qayoom Lone R/O, Matipora Kripalpora Sari Singhpora
 4. Mudasir W/O, Zahoor Ahmad Hakak R/O, Pir Haji Mohammad Sahib Tehsil and district Srinagar A/P, Sheikh Hamza colony Safiya Masjid Lalbazar Srinagar
 5. Zahoor Ahmad Hakak S/ Ghulam Ahmad Hakak R/o Lalbazar Srinagar.
 6. Fiza Ahmad Misgar S/o Ghulam Mohammad Misgar R/o Umer Hall Srinagar.
 7. Nazir Ahmad Lone S/o Ali Mohammad Lone.
 8. Nazir Ahmad Bhat S/o Ghulam Ahmad Bhat
- Both residents of Singhpora

(Caveator)

V/s
Public at large

In the Petition in terms of Section 148-A

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

fko Sd/advocate

Public Notice

It is for the information of general public that I Fatimah Ramzan D/o Mohd Ramzan Dar Have Been Married To Mr Ghulam Rasool Dar S/O Abdul Rahim Dar R/O Rakh Doshi Pora Singhpora Pattan due to my marriage with Mr Ghulam Rasool Dar my name and addresses has been changed from Fatima D/o Mohd Ramzan R/o Arampora Pattan to Fatimah Ramzan W/O Mr Ghulam Rasool Dar R/o Rakh Doshi Pora Singhpora Pattan

Now want to update my husband name and new address and in my Bank account for which I am using this public notice if anybody has any objection same may be reported with in 7 days no objection will be entertained after expiry of stipulated period

Fatimah Ramzan
W/o Mr Ghulam Rasool Dar
R/o Rakh Doshi Pora Singhpora Pattan

bmj

'Third Of Newborns Admitted To District Hospitals With Sepsis Can Die'

Press Trust of India

More than a third of newborns diagnosed with sepsis, a life-threatening condition triggered by an infection, could be expected to die, a study conducted across five district hospitals in India has found.

The study, which analysed data from over 6,600 newborns, found that the overall incidence of sepsis ranged from 0.6 to 10 per cent across the hospitals. The incidence was higher among newborns referred from other hospitals than in those born at the same facility.

The findings, published in *The Lancet Global Health* journal, underscore the need to strengthen infection prevention and control measures while implementing programmes that ensure a judicious use of antibiotics, researchers said.

Researchers, including those from the All India Institute of Medical Sciences, New Delhi and Raipur, said that data of sepsis in newborns from district hospitals in low- and middle-income countries is scarce.

Sepsis occurs when one's immune system produces an extreme response to an

infection, thereby damaging tissues and organs. It can lead to multi-organ failure and can be potentially life-threatening.

Antibiotic resistance, in which infection-causing germs become immune to the drugs designed to kill them, is a major challenge to managing sepsis.

More than 39 million are projected to die due to antibiotic-resistant infections during the next 25 years, with most of them estimated to occur in South Asia, including India, Pakistan and Bangladesh, according to a 2024 analysis, published in *The Lancet* journal.

The study enrolled neonates admitted to newborn care units in five district hospitals, including Government Hospital, Cuddalore, Tamil Nadu, in India between October, 2019, and December, 2021.

Blood samples of the newborns were taken for developing cultures and diagnostic tests were conducted on suspected sepsis cases, identified in newborns based on signs such as lethargy, refusal to feed and severe chest in-drawing.

"The incidence of culture-positive sepsis was 3.2 per cent (213 of 6612). It varied among the study sites, ranging from 0.6 per cent to 10 per cent," the authors wrote.

PUBLIC NOTICE

I have changed my name from (old name) Hamza Khalid Khan to (New name) Mohammad Hamzah Khan. In future I will be known as (new Name) Mohammad Hamzah Khan.

If any body having any objection he/she may contact Passport Office, Srinagar within 7 days. After 7 days no objection will be accepted.

Mohammad Hamzah Khan
S/o Khalid Bashir Khan
R/o Sector B Umarabad, Peerbagh Hyderpora Srinagar

mcb

PUBLIC NOTICE

I have changed my name from (old name) Hamza Khalid Khan to (New name) Mohammad Hamzah Khan. In future I will be known as (new Name) Mohammad Hamzah Khan.

If any body having any objection he/she may contact Passport Office, Srinagar within 7 days. After 7 days no objection will be accepted.

Mohammad Hamzah Khan
S/o Khalid Bashir Khan
R/o Sector B Umarabad, Peerbagh Hyderpora Srinagar

mcb

PUBLIC NOTICE

The name of my Seeds shop licence has been wrongly written as M/S. Seeds while the correct name is M/S. The Nooripora Primary Agricultural Cooperative credit society Ltd. Which needs to be updated. If anybody has any objection in this regard he/she may file his/her objection in the office of the chief agriculture Officer Baramulla Kashmir within seven days. After that no objection shall be entertained.

Mushtaq Ahmad Malla,
S/o Ali Mohammad Malla
R/o Nooripora

fko

PUBLIC NOTICE

The name of my Seeds shop licence has been wrongly written as M/S. Seeds while the correct name is The Pattan Primary Agricultural Cooperative Credit Society Ltd. Which needs to be updated. If anybody has any objection in this regard he/she may file his/her objection in the office of the chief agriculture Officer Baramulla Kashmir within seven days. After that no objection shall be entertained.

Rafiq Ahmad Ganie S/O Habibullah Ganie
R/O Ganie pora Buran

fko

PUBLIC NOTICE

This is information for the general public that in Adhar card bearing No 935076104261 of my name is entered as SANLAULAH BEIGH Fathers name GHULAM MOHI UD DIN BEIG while my actual name is SONA BEIGH Fathers name MOHI UDIN BEIGH. 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.

SONA BEIGH S/O MOHI UDIN BEIGH
R/o GOGOO HUMHAMA SRINAGAR PIN 190021

mcb

OFFICE OF THE NAIB TEHSILDAR KREERI

Subject: Application of Ab. Hamid Khan S/o Gulzar Khan R/o Bangdara Reshipora Tehsil Kreeri for the issuance of EWS (Economically Weaker Section)

PUBLIC NOTICE

Regarding the subject cited above, the applicant has submitted the file in the office of the undersigned for the issuance of EWS in favor of his Ulfat Hamid, Suhail Ahmad, Akash Hamid. In this connection, a report of patwari halqa concerned has been sought which reveals that the applicant is currently residing in village Bangdara Reshipora. The details of the family of the applicant are as follows:

S. No	Name of the Family Member	Relation with the Family Head	Age	Occupation	Annual Income
01	Ab. Hamid Khan	Head	55 Yrs	Govt. emp.	1,70,000/-
02	Mst. Robana	Wife	52 Yrs	Housewife	—
03	Ulfat Hamid	Son	21 Yrs	Student	—
04	Suhail Ahmad	Son	21 Yrs	—	—
05	Akash Hamid	Son	18 Yrs	—	—

According to the report of patwari concerned, the applicant's family has not more than 5 acres of land and does not have greater than 1000 sq ft Residential House. The applicant has not any Residential house or Residential plot in a municipal area, the applicant's Residential plot is not more than 200 sq ft and the applicant's family income is not more than 8 lacs per year. Moreover, the applicant does not belong to any Backward Area.

Therefore, through this Public Notice, objections are being sought from the general public. If any person has any objection, he/she can submit their objections in the office of the undersigned within 07 days (Seven days) positively from the date the notice has been published. No objection shall be entertained after the stipulated time period.

TEHSILDAR
Executive Magistrate
fko

Office Of The Advocate Yakoob Hussain Sofi J&K High Court Srinagar

CHAMBER NO. 07 MUNSIF/JMFC AT MAGAM
Cell No. 9906517553, 9419068005

- In the case of.
1. Bashir Ahmad sheikh aged 60 years S/O Mohammad Sultan sheikh R/O Hazarpora Aripantnan
 2. Showkat Ah wani S/O Gh Mohi ud din wani R/O Lalpora Beerwah

...Caveators

Versus
PUBLIC AT LARGE

... Non-caveators

IN THE MATTER OF:
Caveat Petition in terms of Section 148-A of C.P.C. The Caveators have reasons to believe/apprehension that non-Caveator (s) may file a suit/application/petition or any other type of proceedings before the Hon'ble High Court, District Courts, Revenue Courts or any other forum and may succeed in obtaining some relief/order at their back/ex-parte against the caveators and in such eventuality, the caveators will be put to an irreparable loss and inconvenience. It would be proper that caveators may be given an opportunity of being heard by the Hon'ble Court before passing any order or direction.

Yakoob Hussain Sofi
Advocate
bmj

PUBLIC NOTICE

I have applied for the issuance of Seed licence. If anybody has any objection in this regard he/she may file his/her objection in the office of Chief Agriculture Office Baramulla within seven days. After that no objection shall be entertained.

Shayista Nazir
R/o Palhallan Pattan

fko

ISLAMIC UNIVERSITY OF SCIENCE & TECHNOLOGY
 AWANTIPORA, KASHMIR.
 Tel: 01933-247954/247955 Website: www.iust.ac.in

NOTICE INVITING TENDERS

For and on behalf of Hon'ble Vice Chancellor, Islamic University of Science and Technology, Awantipora UT, E-Tenders (in Two cover system) are invited on percentage basis, from registered suppliers or OEMs:

SUPPLY, INSTALLATION, TESTING AND COMMISSIONING OF 6-DOF INDUSTRIAL ROBOTIC ARM AND ASSOCIATED ROBOT EQUIPMENT AT IUST CAMPUS-1, AWANTIPORA.

ENIT No & Date	Advertised Cost of Construction	Class of Contract
IUST/25/TEND/DOME/01 Dated: 01-03-2025	Rs. 28,00,000.00	OEM/OEM Authorised Dealer/ Reseller

Bid submission End Date: 10-03-2025 Up to 10:00 am
Bids shall be opened at IUST on 10-03-2025 at 02.00 pm

Sd/- Head, Department of Mechanical Engineering, IUST Awantipora

RE-TENDER NOTICE

The tender issued vide E-NIT No. IUST/CREST/TEND/25/01, dated: 04-02-2025 is hereby retender due to low bidder participation. The important dates are as follows:

ENIT No & Date	Advertised Cost of Construction	Class of Contract
IUST/CREST/TEND/25/01-A Dated: 28-02-2025.	Rs. 21,00,000.00	Class "A"

Bid submission End Date: 10-03-2025 Up to 10:00 am
Bids shall be opened at IUST on 10-03-2025 at 02.00 pm

Tender Details are available www.iust.ac.in and <https://jktenders.gov.in>.

Sd/- Coordinator, CREST, IUST Awantipora

DIPK-NB-3619/24 dated: 03-03-2025

GOVERNMENT OF JAMMU And KASHMIR
OFFICE OF THE GENERAL MANAGER DISTRICT INDUSTRIES CENTRE SRINAGAR
 email: srinagardic@gmail.com/gmdic-srinagar@jk.gov.in

Public Notice

M/s Glitters forever Housekeeping service Pvt. Ltd. I/E Khunmoh stands formally registered with this office under No.: 01/03/08880/PMT/MSME dated 05-10-2015 for the activity of "Manufacturing of paper and hard paper boxes with its board of Directors 1. Syed Mohammad Shafat Naqashbandi. 2. Mohammad Saleem Naqashbandi and 3. Nashia Ahmad Wakil residents of Brain Nishat Srinagar. The unit due to misfeasance was allowed change in name and style from exiting to M/s Valley fresh Packaging Industries Pvt. Ltd. I/E Khunmoh instead of transfer of lease hold rights vide this office order No.: DIC/Sgr/SWCS/2019/1268-69 dated. 22-10-2019. and as such, this office now intends to withdraw/cancel the said order.

Furthermore, the promoter of M/s Glitters forever Housekeeping service Pvt. Ltd. I/E Khunmoh intends to transfer of lease hold rights of their unit at I/E Khunmoh to M/s Valley fresh Packaging Industries Pvt. Ltd. with its board of directors namely 1. Mohammad Arif Mir R/o C-37 3rd Floor Lalpat nagar 1st Delhi. 2. Mushtaq Ahmad Mir R/o C-37 3rd Floor Lalpat nagar 3rd Delhi. 3. Obaid Ishaq Zaro R/o Nigeen Srinagar. 4. Ovalec Ishaq Zaro R/o Nigeen Srinagar. 5. Tariq Bazaz R/o Saderbal Kanitar Hazratbal and 6. Mohammad Imran Hamdani R/o Hamdania New Colony Lalbazar Srinagar

Any person having any objection for the proposed changes shall report to the office of General Manager, District Industries Centre, Srinagar within a period of 07 days from the date of publication of this notice, failing which no objection shall be entertained.

Sd/-
General Manager
District Industries Centre
Srinagar

DIPK-12561/24 dated: 03-03-2025

PUBLIC NOTICE

This is information for the general public that in Adhar card bearing No 748728194362 of my daughter the name is entered as SIMRAN NAZIR while her actual name is BISMAL NAZIR. 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.

NAZIR AHMAD SOFI
F/O BISMAL NAZIR
R/O HARDU BATAPORA BUDGAM CELL. 9682333801

mcb

PUBLIC NOTICE

This is information for the general public that in Adhar card bearing No 697756276183 of my name is entered as MEHMOODA AKHTER Husband name Parvaiz Ahmad Bhat while my actual name is MONISA PARVEZ Husband name PAVEZ AHMED BHAT. 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.

MONISA PARVEZ
Husband name PAVEZ AHMED BHAT
R/o CHANAPORA SRINAGAR.

mcb

Ramazan 2025 Date Price Fluctuations Hit City Consumers

Agencies

Srinagar: On the second day of the holy month of Ramazan, the demand for dates has surged across Kashmir, triggering a price war between vendors and shopkeepers in Srinagar and elsewhere in the valley. With enforcement agencies missing in action, consumers are left at the mercy of fluctuating rates.

Despite government claims of price regulation, multiple vendors in Srinagar and other places continue to sell dates at varying rates.

While shopkeepers call their stock the "best dates with all premium varieties", smaller vendors claim to offer better deals. Among them, a local Kashmiri found himself struggling with multiple prices.

A street vendor at Lal Chowk's bustling market said that big shops charge extra for their name, while they offer the same dates at better prices.

A shop owner just a few

steps away claimed their dates are of "premium quality" and are sourced from the best regions, ensuring top quality at reasonable rates.

Consumers, meanwhile, remain caught in the middle with fluctuating prices. "There is no uniform pricing. Every shopkeeper is charging as per their will," said Adil Ahmad, a shopper in Srinagar. He said the government only makes hollow promises and there is no one to check the prices in the market.

Another shopper urged the government to intervene and ensure proper price checks instead of making empty promises from their offices.

"Whenever an official from any department visits the market, they are accompanied by a group of media persons who outnumber the officials. We don't understand if they are here for an inspection or just for publicity," said a resident from Rajbagh, requesting anonymity. (KNO)



A shopkeeper in Srinagar sorts dates as Ramazan shopping picks up. — KO Photo Faisal Khan.

J&K Signs MoU To Turn Srinagar Into Zero Landfill City By 2030

Agencies

Jammu: In a landmark move, Srinagar Smart City Limited signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) under the CITIIS 2.0 program regarding implementation of integrated waste management systems including smart collection networks and AI-driven recycling hubs to transform Srinagar into a zero-landfill city by 2030.

The MoU was signed during the 12th Regional 3R (Reduce, Re-use, Recycle) and Circular Economy Forum in Asia and the Pacific, being held in Rajasthan from March 3 to 5, 2025.

Additionally, the UT government inked a state-level agreement to establish a Climate Observatory, a first-of-its-kind institution in North India. The observatory will monitor climate variables, assess risks and formulate adaptive strategies for vulnerable sectors like agriculture, tourism and water resources.

The event, a flagship platform for advancing sustainable development and resource efficiency, saw J&K highlighting its pioneering initiatives in waste management and circular economy practices, reinforcing its commitment to environ-

mental stewardship.

The Lakes Conservation and Management Authority (LCMA) showcased Jammu & Kashmir's ground-breaking Dal Lake Weed Processing Unit at the forum, drawing widespread attention from policymakers, technocrats and sustainability experts. The project, which converts invasive aquatic weeds into organic manure and biogas, exemplifies the UT's innovative approach towards tackling ecological challenges while promoting circular economy principles.

Dignitaries including Policy Makers, Thinkers, Researchers and Planners from all across the Country visited the J&K stall and applauded the initiative of transforming lake waste into valuable resources adopting sustainable waste management practices.

The J&K delegation, led by senior officials from the Housing and Urban Development Department, engaged in extensive knowledge-sharing sessions with the representatives from other states and Self-Help Groups (SHGs). Key focus areas included "Waste-to-Wonder Technologies", "Waste-to-Energy Innovations" and "Community-Led Circular Economy Models".

The forum offered a wealth of ideas, particularly in decentralizing waste management and empowering local communities. The visit provided an opportunity to explore best practices and modern technologies for potential replication in Jammu & Kashmir.

The participation of Jammu & Kashmir in the forum highlights its unwavering commitment towards sustainable urban development and the promotion of circular economy principles, aligning with the broader vision of environmental conservation and resource efficiency.

Pertinently, CITIIS 2.0 is a flagship initiative driving integrated waste management and climate action. Proposals for integrated waste management in smart cities were invited by the Ministry of Housing Affairs, GoI and 18 proposals worth Rs. 1800 Cr were shortlisted benefiting 18 cities across 14 states of the Country.

The 12th Regional 3R and Circular Economy Forum will continue in the coming days, featuring expert discussions, policy dialogues and collaborative initiatives aimed at shaping the future of sustainable urban development and circularity in the country. (ANB)

Dalgate Bridge Shows Signs Of Structural Distress

Agencies

Srinagar: The Dalgate Bridge over Chunth-Kul on the Khanyar-Hazratbal Road in the Kashmir capital Srinagar has shown alarming signs of structural distress, raising concerns about its stability and potential hazards for commuters. Experts have been urged to conduct an immediate structural assessment as visible gaps in the bridge's columns and footpath indicate possible deterioration.

This pile-founded viaduct with trestle-type has developed noticeable gaps between its columns, a sign of progressive structural displacement that could compromise its load-bearing capacity. Additionally, the 1.5-meter-wide footpath has developed visible fractures at multiple locations, further fueling fears among pedestrians and motorists. Commuters have also reported significant vibrations while crossing the

bridge, suggesting possible dynamic instability.

Constructed at a cost of Rs 13.38 crore, the bridge was completed five months ahead of schedule by JKPC and inaugurated in 2012 by then Chief Minister Omar Abdullah. However, with over a decade of service, concerns are mounting that without expert intervention, the bridge could deteriorate further, leading to a catastrophic failure.

Commuters have urged structural engineers and bridge safety experts to inspect and evaluate the bridge for potential shear failure, settlement issues, or material fatigue. "If left unchecked, the progressive widening of column gaps may compromise the integrity of the entire superstructure, posing a severe public safety risk", commuters said.

Concerned citizens are calling on the authorities to act before a structural collapse turns into a disaster. (KNT)

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


AIRPORTS
SHIEK UL ALAM AIRPORT: 01942303311 ✈️

RAILWAYS

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

HIGHWAY STATUS

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



HIJRI CALENDAR

03 Ramazan
1446


PRAYERS	
FAJR	5: 34
ZUHR	12:43
ASR	4: 47
Magrib	6:33
ISHA	7: 50

This Day In History

- 51 - Nero, later to become Roman Emperor, is given the title princeps iuventutis (head of the youth)
- 1152 - Frederick I Barbarossa elected Holy Roman Emperor
- 1215 - King John of England makes an oath to the Pope as a crusader to gain the support of Innocent III.
- 1790 - France is divided into 83 départements, which cut across the former provinces in an attempt to dislodge regional loyalties based on noble ownership of land.
- 1793 - French troops conquer Geertruidenberg, Netherlands
- 1804 - The Battle of Vinegar Hill, colony of New South Wales (Australia), when Irish convicts (some of whom had been involved in Ireland's Battle of Vinegar Hill in 1798) led the colony's only significant convict uprising.
- 1824 - The "National Institution for the Preservation of Life from Shipwreck" founded in the United Kingdom, later to be renamed The Royal National Lifeboat Institution in 1858.
- 1841 - Longest US presidential inauguration speech (8,443 words), William Henry Harrison
- 1861 - Abraham Lincoln is inaugurated as the 16th US President
- 1865 - Abraham Lincoln inaugurated for his 2nd term as US president
- 1870 - On command of Louis Riel, Thomas Scott is executed by a firing squad. Riel rejects all appeals and requests to intervene in an attempt to demonstrate to the Canadian government that the Métis must be taken seriously
- 1890 - The longest bridge in the Great Britain, the Forth Bridge (railway) (1,710 ft) in Scotland is opened by the Prince of Wales, who later became King Edward VII.
- 1913 - Woodrow Wilson inaugurated as 28th US President
- 1918 - First recorded case of Spanish flu at Funston Army Camp, Kansas; start of worldwide pandemic killing 50-100 million
- 1921 - Warren G. Harding is inaugurated as the 29th President of the United States
- 1923 - Lenin's last article in Pravda (about Soviet bureaucracy)
- 1927 - Babe Ruth becomes the highest-paid player in MLB history when he signs 3-year, \$70,000 per season contract with the New York Yankees
- 1933 - Chancellor Dollfuss dissolves Austrian parliament
- 1933 - Franklin D. Roosevelt inaugurated as 32nd US President, pledges to pull US out of the Depression, "We have nothing to fear but fear itself"
- 1941 - The United Kingdom launches Operation Claymore on the Lofoten Islands, during World War II.
- 1945 - In the United Kingdom, Princess Elizabeth, later Queen Elizabeth II, joins the British Auxiliary Transport Service as a driver.
- 1947 - WWJ (now WDIV) TV channel 4 in Detroit, MI (NBC) begins broadcasting
- 1955 - 1st radio facsimile transmission sent across the continent
- 1968 - Martin Luther King Jr. announces plans for Poor People's Campaign
- 1968 - Orbiting Geophysical Observatory 5 launched
- 1972 - Libya & USSR signs cooperation treaty
- 1977 - West Indian cricket fast bowler Colin Croft takes 8-29 against Pakistan in 2nd Test win at Port-of-Spain; best Test figures by a pace bowler from the West Indies
- 1977 - Earthquake in Romania kills 1,541
- 1979 - US Voyager I photo reveals Jupiter's rings
- 1980 - Robert Mugabe's Zimbabwe African National Union - Patriotic Front (ZANU-PF) comes to power, winning the parliamentary election in Zimbabwe, making Mugabe Zimbabwe's first black prime minister

آہ!

حکیم محمد اقبال دارفانی سے دارلبقاء کو کوچ کر گئے



حکیم محمد اقبال فرزند مرحوم حکیم اسد اللہ سابق سکونت چوندہ پورہ کا دی کدل حال جیلان لین، کنہ تار، اس دارفانی سے کچھ عرصہ بیمار رہنے کے بعد مورخہ 2 مارچ 2025 بروز اتوار نجی قلم رمضان المبارک 1446ھ انتقال کر گئے۔ انا اللہ وانا الیہ راجعون۔

مرحوم کی اجتماعی فاتحہ خوانی مورخہ 5 مارچ 2025 دن کے گیارہ بجے ان کے آبائی مقبرہ واقع چوندہ پورہ جامع مسجد انجام پذیر ہوگی۔ اور بعد ازاں مرحوم کے گھر واقع جیلان لین کنہ تار تقریباً مجلس منعقد ہوگی۔ انشاء اللہ

سوگواران

حکیم جنید حکیم (فرزند ان) 9906789353
برادر اہل قبیلہ

مستورات سے گزارش ہے کہ کسی قسم کے میوہ جات اور مشروبات نہ لائیں۔

Public Notice

The name of my fertilizer shop licence has been wrongly written as M/S. Fertilizer while the correct name is The Pattan Primary Agricultural Cooperative Credit Society Ltd.. Which needs to be updated. If anybody has any objection in this regard he/she may file his/her objection in the office of the Chief Agriculture Officer Baramulla within seven days. After that no objection shall be entertained. Rafiq Ahmad Ganie S/O Habibullah Ganie R/O Ganie pora Buran fko

Public Notice

The particulars of my wards has been wrongly written in their school records as

Particulars of Son		Particulars of Daughter	
Wrong	Correct	Wrong	Correct
Name Danish Javid	Danish Javid	Aamina Javid	Aamina Javid
Parentage Javid Iqbal Hajam	Hakim Javid Iqbal	Javid Iqbal Hajam	Hakim Javid Iqbal
DOB: 31-10-2012	28-08-2011	31-10-2015	25-03-2015

Now I have applied for the correction of the same if anybody has any objection in this regard he/she may file them in the office of the Little Buds School Palpora Pattan within seven days. After that no objection shall be entertained. Hakim Javid Iqbal S/o Hakim Gh Nabi R/O Palhalian Tehsil Pattan fko

Public Notice

The name of my fertilizer shop licence has been wrongly written as M/S. Fertilizer while the correct name is M/S. The Nooripora Primary Agricultural Cooperative credit society Ltd. Which needs to be updated. If anybody has any objection in this regard he/she may file his/her objection in the office of the Chief Agriculture Officer Baramulla within seven days. After that no objection shall be entertained. Mushtaq Ahmad Malla S/o Ali Mohammad Malla R/o Nooripora fko

Public Notice

I, Rukaya Nabi, D/O Gh Nabi Bhat, R/O Prichoo, Pulwama, am going to open a pesticides, fertilizers, and seeds retail store at Prichoo, Pulwama. If anyone has any objections, they are requested to file them with the Chief Agriculture Office, Pulwama within 7 days from the date of this notice. No objections will be entertained after the stipulated period. PHW

Office of the Naib Tehsildar Pattan.

sub.Application of Fareeda Begum W/o Mohd Ramzan Para R/o Para Mohalla Pattan for obtaining Income dependency Certificate...

Public Notice

IT is inform to general public that applicants income dependency Certificate is under process in this office in this matter report Was sought from Patwari concerned which reveals that the applicant is residing in village pattan and occupation of applicant is House work. The dependents of applicant are as under...

Details of Dependent(s)				
Name of Dependent	Age (In Years)	Occupation	Relationship with the Applicant	Marital Status
Adnan Fareed Humaira Jan	22	Student	Son	UNMARRIED
	25	Student	Daughter	UNMARRIED

In this connection if any body having objection for issuance of said certificate he may contact to this office within 04 days after that no objection shall be entertained. SD FKO Naib Tehsildar Pattan

Office of the Naib Tehsildar Pattan..

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

Public Notice...

The registrar birth BDO pattan has submitted a case file pertaining to birth of Sakina Jan D/o Abdul Ahad Malla R/o Nehalpora Tehsil pattan Distt baramulla with verified date of birth 25/02/1993 occurred at home in this connection if any body having objection for issuance of said certificate he may contact to this office within 04 days after that no objection shall be entertained. SD FKO Naib Tehsildar Pattan

Office of the Naib Tehsildar Pattan..

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

Public Notice...

The registrar birth BDO pattan has submitted a case file pertaining to birth of Shahid Nazir S/o Nazir Ahmad Lone R/o Zangam Pattan with verified date of birth 02/01/2011 occurred at home in this connection if any body having objection for issuance of said certificate he may contact to this office within 04 days after that no objection shall be entertained.. SD FKO Naib Tehsildar Pattan

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World Wildlife Day 2025

Wetland Wildlife Under Threat in Kashmir?



Pictured here is a Eurasian Whimbrel. Photo by Reyhan Sofi

KO VIEW

Lost Peace Process

Jammu and Kashmir Chief Minister Omar Abdullah on Monday harked back to the India-Pakistan peace process pursued by the late prime minister Manmohan Singh that had brought the two countries close to a resolution of Kashmir. Speaking during obituary references to Singh and four other former legislators on the first day of the Budget Session of the Assembly, Omar, however, acknowledged that he didn't expect a return to this process in his lifetime. The CM also took care to give credit to the former prime minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee for starting this initiative in the first place, saying Singh only inherited it and carried it forward. Omar also credited Singh with introducing measures for the return of displaced Kashmiri Pandits, including job reservations and the establishment of the Jagti township in Jammu.

Looking back, it now appears a different world. The current state of affairs between India and Pakistan is far from promising, with no direct flights, hardly any visas issued, and no bus or train services. India-Pakistan hostilities seem here to stay and Pakistan bears a fair share of responsibility for this. Dialogue between the two countries has often been subverted by the major attacks in India, causing losses of life. Singh's peace process was cut short by the 2008 Mumbai attack in which 166 people, including 20 security force personnel and 26 foreigners lost their lives.

The situation has considerably transformed since, and in almost every sense: regionally in terms of the growing power disparity between India and Pakistan, and in J&K, which has since been divested of its special status and downgraded into two centrally controlled units, in other words, two union territories. This, in turn, has altered the complexion of the Kashmir issue as we understood it.

And if at all the two countries return to dialogue in the near or medium future, it seems hardly probable that they will revisit the Four Point Proposals that were the basis of dialogue between Singh and his then Pakistani counterpart Pervez Musharraf. But should the two countries choose to go back to them as a broader framework for settlement, they will need to adapt it to the new reality. But again, getting to that point won't be easy. India has already removed Kashmir as an issue to be discussed in any future dialogue with Pakistan. Pakistan has been told in no uncertain terms to temper its expectations. That said, it would certainly be in the interest of the peace in the region if India and Pakistan become normal neighbours.



Dr. Raja Muzaffar Bhat

“They are the abodes of migratory birds, and if our wetlands are destroyed by pollution, it will not only impact our ecosystem and biodiversity but will also destroy our aquatic wildlife

In many countries, wetlands were regarded as wastelands in the past. Even in developed nations, the authorities were hardly concerned about wetlands. On the other hand, the authorities in Jammu & Kashmir, especially during the Dogra Rule (1846-1947), were very much concerned about these biodiversity hubs, and many efforts were made to conserve and protect the wetlands. In a country like the US, it was believed that wetlands were places to be avoided, and it was common to see them filled with waste and used as dumping grounds. What we have done in Kashmir over the last 20 to 25 years, the people of the US did 100 years ago. A study published by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service in 1990 revealed that more than 50% of the 221 million acres of wetlands that existed in the lower 48 states in the late 1700s were destroyed. As scientific research was conducted in later years, we came to understand that wetlands are of great importance for our environment and biodiversity. They not only serve as habitats for fish and other aquatic life but also provide fodder for our livestock. Moreover, the wetlands in Jammu & Kashmir act as habitats for millions of migratory birds who visit Kashmir during the winter months. Thus, the importance of our wetlands, such as Wullar, Dal Lake, Hokersar, Chandhara, Shalbugh, or Gharana in Jammu, increases, as they offer many recreational opportunities like fishing, photography, and bird watching. The wetlands also help purify water by filtering sediment and absorbing various pollutants in surface waters. They also aid in groundwater recharge for the adjoining areas, ensuring a constant water supply through tube wells, bore wells, etc. Wetlands along rivers and streams, such as Wullar and Hokersar, absorb energy and store water during storms, reducing downstream flood damage and lessening the risk of flash floods.

Impact of Doodh Ganga on Hokersar

For many years, this author has been fighting a legal battle in the National Green Tribunal (NGT) over Doodh Ganga, which now resembles a large drain. The pollution in Doodh Ganga has a direct impact on the Hokersar wetland, which is a designated Ramsar site. The solid waste, liquid waste, and illegal riverbed mining have choked and destroyed not only Doodh Ganga but also further impacted Hokersar and its entire biodiversity. This pollution in Doodh Ganga has had an adverse effect on the entire ecosystem of this small river and the Hokersar wetland, as the toxicity has been transferred to humans and the surrounding ecosystem, including plant life, aquatic life, and wildlife (migratory birds). Scientific studies need to be conducted to assess the impact of sewage and water pollution on migratory birds.

As one dozen pump stations set up by the Srinagar Municipal Corporation (SMC) in the last 6 to 7 years have been pumping toxic waste into Doodh Ganga, from Bagh-e-Mehtab to Tengpora bypass, the pollution enters Hokersar, which is merely 8 to 9 kilometers downstream from Chanapora bypass bridge in Srinagar. Doodh Ganga is the main feeding channel for this wetland, which is visited by a large number of migra-

tory birds every winter. The dumping of solid waste, liquid waste, and illegal riverbed mining has resulted in severe water pollution and disrupted water flow, impacting Hokersar. The illegal riverbed mining, using heavy machinery between 2021 and 2024 in the Chadoora area, brought huge silt into the Hokersar wetland. This illegal activity was stopped last year in June, but the damage caused has been immense. On the other hand, illegal pump stations continue to pump liquid waste into Doodh Ganga, and despite repeated assurances from the J&K Government, especially the Administrative Secretary of the Housing and Urban Development Department (HUDD), the work on Sewage Treatment Plants has yet to begin. Pertinently, following the NGT's order, Rs 140 crores were sanctioned, and out of that, administrative approval was given last year for Rs 60 crores, but work is yet to begin on the ground. The water pollution in Doodh Ganga is so severe that the J&K Pollution Control Committee's report indicates that this water is not even fit for bathing. This lab test, conducted on the orders of the NGT last year, revealed that the PHE Jal Shakti Department continues to supply this water to 6 to 7 lakh people in Srinagar's uptown area.

Impact of Wildlife in Wular Lake

In 2019, this author sought the intervention of the National Green Tribunal (NGT) to stop unscientific garbage dumping and encroachments in Wullar, Hokersar, and Kreenchu Chandhara in Pampore. On the western shore of Wullar Lake, the Bandipora Municipality has been using the banks at Zalwan for waste dumping. I am grateful to the Legal Initiative for Forest and Environment (LIFE), which helped me seek NGT's intervention. In the past, lawyers at LIFE have pleaded my case on other environmental issues. Rahul Chowdhary, Ritwick Dutta, Saurabh Sharma, and Meera Gopal, all advocates associated with LIFE, have always provided valuable support for the conservation of Kashmir's environment, especially our wetlands and rivers. The NGT in 2020 directed the Divisional Commissioner of Kashmir to initiate waste management work around wetlands and adjoining villages under the Swachh Bharat Mission (SBM-Gramin) by bringing together the wildlife conservation department and the Directorate of Rural Sanitation on one platform. However, to date, the work has not been carried out on scientific lines. Similarly, the MC Bandipora was penalized under the Polluter Pays Principle (PPP) by the J&K Pollution Control Committee some years back for dumping waste near Wullar's banks. They were ordered to pay Rs 64 lakh as Environmental Compensation. The Municipal Council Bandipora appealed to the NGT, but the tribunal upheld the J&K PCC's order. The MC Bandipora then appealed in the Supreme Court, which dismissed their plea in May 2022, and the civic body was required to pay the compensation. Even after paying this amount, I have been informed that MC Bandipora has resumed dumping waste near Zalwan Wular banks for the past 6 months or more.

Kreenchu Chandhara

There are four wetlands in Pamp-

ore, namely Fashkoot, Chatlam, Kren-tchoo-Chandhara, and Maen Bugh. Sources say that out of 178 acres, more than 20 acres have already been encroached. Some vested interests planned to encroach on 30 acres of wetland (240 kanals+) around Krenchtchu Chandhara, which is located on the eastern side of National Highway (NH-44). This wetland had been earth-filled by an organized group of builders who planned to convert the area into a residential colony, given its location on NH-44. An irrigation canal flowing through the Krenchtchu-Chandhara wetland has also been encroached upon and converted into a motorable road. The revenue extracts accessed by this author in 2019 revealed that a large portion of this wetland, recorded as Abi Awal Nambal under Khasra Nos 787 (287 Kanal, 12 Marlas), 70 (104 Kanal, 9 Marlas), and 318 to 345 (178 Kanal, 12 Marlas), was under direct threat from real estate developers who intended to destroy the wetland, paddy fields, and the natural habitat of migratory birds. I am grateful to the National Green Tribunal (NGT), which intervened in response to my petition in 2019, and the illegal activities were halted. Ironically, over the last 2 years, the mafia has attempted to encroach upon the wetland again, and several attempts have been made in this regard. I have brought this matter to the attention of the District Magistrate of Pulwama. The wetland on NH 44 Pampore was set on fire during the dry weather season last year and again a few weeks ago. This caused massive damage to the wetland and its wildlife. The dry vegetation acts as breeding space for migratory birds, and because of the fire, the birds were charred to death, and their eggs were destroyed. The culprits need to be identified and held accountable by the authorities.

Conclusion

As we commemorate World Wildlife Day, it is important to note that we must ensure the safety and protection of our wetland wildlife as well. The J&K High Court has also passed several orders on wetland conservation in the SC PIL M K Balakrishnan V/S Union of India case. Similarly, a Public Interest Litigation (PIL) filed by the Srinagar-based Environment Policy Group (EPG) resulted in an order to maintain the status quo at Narkara wetland in the outskirts of Srinagar, where the government was planning to construct the Srinagar campus of the Indian Institute of Management (IIM-Srinagar).

Wetlands cover a small portion of the earth, but their carbon-capturing abilities are immense. Wetlands can store 50 times more carbon than rainforests, helping to keep the heat-trapping gas that contributes to climate change out of the atmosphere. Lastly, they are the abode for migratory birds, and if our wetlands are destroyed by pollution, it will not only impact our ecosystem and biodiversity but will also destroy our aquatic wildlife.

Dr Raja Muzaffar Bhat is an Acumen Fellow and Chairman Jammu & Kashmir RTI Movement. Feedback: bhatrajamuzaffar@gmail.com Views expressed in the article are the author's own and do not necessarily represent the editorial stance of Kashmir Observer



Did you know ?

Understanding Dabba especially in Gold Trading : A Cautionary Guide for the People of Kashmir

Irshad Mushtaq

What is Dabba Trading?

Dabba trading refers to an off-market trading practice that involves buying and selling securities without the involvement of official stock exchanges like NSE, BSE, or MCX. In this system, trading takes place directly between two or more parties, bypassing the regulated and legal market infrastructure.

The Risks and Reality of Dabba Trading

Outside Official Exchanges: In dabba trading, transactions do not go through officially recognized exchanges such as MCX. This means trades are not recorded in the official market, making them hard to trace and regulate.

No Billing or Regulations: Unlike official exchanges that require detailed billing and adhere to government regulations, dabba trading lacks these processes, posing significant legal and financial risks.

Limited Margins and Low Brokerage: This system often attracts traders with promises of lower margins and brokerage fees. However, these financial appeals might seem attractive but come with substantial hidden risks.

Broker-Client Risk Dynamic: In this form of trading, if a client loses money, the loss can become the broker's profit. This creates an inherent conflict of interest where brokers might benefit at the expense of their clients' losses.

Legal and Regulatory Status

Illegal and Fraught with Fraud: Dabba trading is considered illegal in India, as it operates outside of legal scrutiny and lacks any protective measures for traders, such as mark-to-market (MTM) losses.

Lack of Counterparty Protection: Unlike legitimate trades conducted through exchanges where a counterparty (often the exchange itself) manages risk, dabba trading offers no such safety net. This leaves traders highly vulnerable.

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

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Ramazan and My Childhood Nostalgia

Peerzada Mohsin Shafi



Back then, digital alarms were a novelty. One cousin unearthed one from an old admirah, and we embarked on a mission to decode Sehri timings. Clueless about predawn hours, we turned to an aunt, who cryptically advised waking "an hour before the Fajr Azan." Unbeknownst to us, the adults conspired to dissuade our efforts, believing us too young for such rigor. Undeterred, we marched to the mosque, scribbled prayer times on paper, and triumphantly set the alarm

Ramazan, the sacred month of fasting and spiritual renewal, is a time that unites the Muslim Ummah in devotion, gratitude, and communal harmony. As one of Islam's five pillars, it transcends mere ritual—its blessings resonate through faith, science, and cherished memories. Modern research now echoes what believers have long embraced: fasting nurtures discipline, detoxifies the body, and sharpens the mind. Yet, beyond theology and science, Ramazan remains, for me, a tapestry of childhood wonder—a time when innocence and imagination turned ordinary moments into lifelong treasures.

The First Stirrings of Devotion

My journey with Ramazan began under the gentle guidance of my parents, relatives, and teachers, who sowed the seeds of faith in my heart early on. I remember the electrifying evening when the radio crackled with news of Ramazan's arrival. I was in 1st grade, and my cousins and I huddled around the device, wide-eyed, as the announcement unfolded. In our youthful zeal, we pledged to fast the entire month, oblivious to the challenges ahead.

Back then, digital alarms were a novelty. One cousin unearthed one from an old admirah, and we embarked on a mission to decode Sehri timings. Clueless about predawn hours, we turned to an aunt, who cryptically advised waking "an hour before the Fajr Azan." Unbeknownst to us, the adults conspired to dissuade our efforts, believing us too young for such rigor. Undeterred, we marched to the mosque, scribbled prayer times on paper, and triumphantly set the alarm.

The next morning, our bleary-eyed determination stunned the family. Reluctantly, they served us Sehri but negotiated an early Iftar at noon. Secretly, we vowed to fast all day—only to be coaxed into eating by 8 a.m. with promises of "starting tomorrow." Even my grandmother's solemn vows to wake us on Shabe-Qadr or Jumaat-ul-Vida dissolved into thin air, a tender ploy to shield our Vigor.

The Gentle Defeats of Childhood Fasting

Every Ramazan, my cousins and I approached fasting with the fervour of novice warriors—armed with de-



AI-generated image for representational purposes only.

termination but outmanoeuvred by the seasoned tactics of our elders. Our daily quest to fast became a playful duel, a dance of innocence versus wisdom. Just as we'd rally our resolve, our grandparents, aunts, and uncles would disarm us with creative logic.

"You skipped Taraweeh prayers last night—how can you fast today?" they'd declare, their faces a mix of mock seriousness and suppressed smiles. Another day, it might be, "You didn't drink water at Iftar! Fasting without hydration isn't allowed!" Their excuses flowed like a well-rehearsed script, each one tailored to gently dissuade us without dimming our enthusiasm. We protested, of course, but their reasons—stitched with care and humour—were impossible to counter.

And so, the month unfolded in this tender tug-of-war: our wide-eyed persistence met with their loving subterfuge. By the time Eid's moon arrived, we'd tally our "failed" fasts

like badges of honour, unaware that the real victory lay in the laughter, the lessons, and the quiet knowledge that their protectiveness was its own act of devotion.

Schoolyard Shenanigans and Ingenious Myths

Ramazan mornings at school were a playground of creativity. We devised a tongue-inspection ritual: a white tongue meant fasting; pink betrayed the "cheaters." To outwit peers, we scrubbed our tongues with chalk or towels, erupting in giggles at our own mischief. My cousin, the self-proclaimed fasting champion, often crumbled minutes before Iftar, blaming hunger. We'd mock his "weakness," only to later discover he'd sneakily broken his fast hours earlier—a secret he wore with pride.

Then there were the raw dates, bought for two a rupee, and the shopkeeper's amused smile as we declared, "These are for Iftar!" We spun myths to navigate the fasting

rules—like believing swallowing saliva invalidated the fast.

A Child's Clever Blackmail: Ramadan Shenanigans

Among my many childhood Ramadan antics, one stands out for its sheer audacity: my ingenious (if mischievous) method of getting my way with my maternal relatives. Whenever they refused my demands—be it a treat, a toy, or some small indulgence—I'd unleash my secret weapon. With a sly grin, I'd threaten to march to the mosque and announce over the loudspeaker that none of them had fasted that day.

The mere thought of such public "exposure" was enough to send them into a flurry of negotiations. "Alright, alright, take it!" they'd say, handing over whatever I'd asked for, their exasperation tinged with amusement. It was a harmless game, of course, but in my young mind, I was a master strategist, wielding the power of reputation to achieve my goals.

Looking back, I realize how much patience and love underpinned their reactions. They could have scolded me or dismissed my threats, but instead, they played along, allowing me to revel in my cleverness. Those moments, filled with laughter and light-hearted bargaining, are now cherished fragments of my Ramadan nostalgia—a reminder of the joy and innocence that once defined this holy month for me.

The Enigma of Sehri-Khan and Midnight Whispers

Our childhood imaginations were fertile ground for Ramadan folklore. Elders spoke of Sehri-Khan, a mystical figure who roamed predawn streets, banging a drum to rouse sleepers for Sehri. We envisioned him as an angelic being, cloaked in mystery, and spent nights peering through windows, hoping to catch a glimpse. The absence of the internet left room for such magic—a testament to an era when trust and wonder trumped skepticism.

One memory still chills me: a solitary Sehri night when I tiptoed to the kitchen, only to hear a mosque announcement of a neighbour's passing. As the family murmured about funeral plans, fear gripped me. I retreated, skipping my meal—a stark reminder of life's fragility amid Ramadan's warmth.

From Innocence to Nostalgia

Today, Alhamdulillah, my cousins and I are adults, yet Ramazan reunites us in laughter over these shared tales. We chuckle at our chalk-dusted tongues, clandestine alarms, and Sehri-Khan's elusive legend. The month now carries deeper spiritual weight, but its essence remains rooted in those childhood days—a blend of devotion, mischief, and unfiltered joy.

Ramazan, for me, is a bridge between past and present. It is the scent of raw dates, the echo of a radio announcement, and the comfort of familial bonds. As we gather for Iftar, our conversations drift to those golden years, reminding us that the truest blessings are often wrapped in memory's embrace.

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Steps to Have a Responsible Ramazan

Ikkz Ikkbal

The month of Ramazan is of profound significance for Muslims worldwide. It encompasses the essence of fasting, mercy, forgiveness, self-introspection and character building. This month provides an opportunity to deepen our connections with our creator, Allah SWT through the guiding light of the Qur'an and the Dua. This month is an opportunity for all of us to embrace self-discipline and character building. From the standpoint of the essence of Ramazan and self-introspection, a few things need to be taken into consideration. Ramazan is not only the month of abstaining from food and water, this is the month demanding discipline and responsibility from us in every aspect.

DISCIPLINING ONLINE ACTIVITIES

Avoid unnecessary online activities or putting statuses and stories during Sehri and Iftar time. Wallahi it is not obligated. The society has got a mindset that if we are not online at Sheri or at Iftar, we are not fasting.

Minimize the use of mobile phones and social media networks. Even though we stop watching unfiltered videos, shorts and reels in the Ramadan, we must stop the unnecessary scrolling too.

We may not filter all the content from the social media Apps, we may not turn Facebook and Instagram Muslim. But we can surely minimize our screen time, to avoid the distractions in our Ibaadah (Prayers).

CONSCIOUS IFTAR PREPARATION

Cook your favorite dishes this Ramazan, but within the



limits. We waste most of the time of our days in deciding what we should buy, cook and eat for the day. Eat less to avoid any disruption and disturbance in your Ramadan Schedule.

Prioritize your family. Decorate your dining table with the best possible dishes but don't forget your neighbors, the less fortunate and those in need in this month of Ramadan. Help them to fill their plates too. Ramadan encourages us to show a spirit of generosity and compassion.

Completely refrain from sharing the pictures of your Iftar and Suhoor tables to



Minimize the use of mobile phones and social media networks. Even though we stop watching unfiltered videos, shorts and reels in the Ramazan, we must stop the unnecessary scrolling too

anyone or post a status on social media. You may be just posting a picture but everyone's circumstances are not the same, so avoid it.

Eat simple light food during Iftar. This helps to maintain energy and positive vibes for your Taraweeh and night prayers, allowing us to fully engage in spirituality without feeling dilly-dallying lazy.

SLEEPING IN MODERATION

Know that sleeping is also considered Ibaadah (good deed) during the month of Ramadan, but also know that only sleeping is not a good deed. Minimize your sleep

schedule this Ramadan to make room for increased prayer schedule. Pray more Salah. Recite more Qur'an. Makes lots of Dua.

MANNERS AT THE MOSQUE

Maintain discipline at the mosque especially during Iftar time. Rather than making dua or reciting Qur'an, people are seen buzzing and creating indiscipline in the mosques which is against the sanctity of the mosque and also against the spirit and essence of Ramadan. Better make a Discipline and Maintenance Committee in every mosque to avoid any disturbances.

In the month of Ramadan some such faces are also seen in the mosques, which are not so familiar to mosques otherwise. Welcome and appreciate them. Avoid asking awkward questions. Ramadan is the month of unity and seeking closeness to Allah SWT together.

And for the locals of the Masjid, perform wuzu (ablu-tion) from home before heading towards the mosque so that guests and passers-by do not face difficulties in performing ablu-tion.

WOMEN IN RAMAZAN

The women in our houses prepare Sehri and Iftar for us effortlessly. They put a lot of hard work so that everything is ready well in time. They deserve a salute. Assist them without making excuses. Wallahi there is no taboo in helping women in the kitchen. A great quality, indeed. Encourage them. Appreciate them.

For our women in the house, do not misuse the water and electricity this Ramadan. It is a sinful act.

It is absolutely okay to through Iftar parties at your homes or at mosques but better is to see your neighbors, find a place around and host a Iftar party to the deserving people too. This is an act of great appreciation.

CHILDREN IN RAMAZAN

Cultivate good habits in you this holy month and stick to them throughout the year. Educate your children about the significance of Ramadan. Make them aware of the virtues and blessings of Ramadan and Fasting. Instill in them the taste, desire and blessings of Ramadan even before they reach the obligatory age. We have to prepare a generation with the highest qualities of

goodness, discipline and responsibilities.

MANNERS OF THE MARKETPLACE

To Shopkeepers, sell ration goods at reasonable prices. Do not take advantage of the opportunity and sell goods at desirable high rates. Wallahi this is a sinful act. Rather, the best of the actions is that the things are sold at a minimum profit price so that even the poorer in the society can easily afford the expenses for the house.

And to the society, do not bargain with someone who is working hard and trying to earn his daily bread for his family. Feels great indeed.

This Ramadan, let's spread Love and Help whatever way we can. Help unconditionally and you will get the best of the rewards, Inshallah.

And get up a little early for Suhoor, even if it's only a few minutes earlier. Pray a few rak'ats of Tahajjud and make dua. Tahajjud is the most beloved worship of Allah SWT.

AND THE REMINDER!

In Ramadan, the reward of every good deed becomes seventy times. Do some good deeds which are witnessed by only you and your Allah SWT and hope for the good rewards, Inshallah.

Hope this Ramadan brings peace in your life that you have never had before, the peace that fills the soul, the peace that connects us with our creator! May this Ramadan fill your life with happiness, peace, contentment, mercy and blessings uncounted.

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Promises, Protests

by their elected representatives," Sinha said. The Lieutenant Governor further affirmed that this budget document is not just financial but also reflects the hopes and aspirations of the masses for a brighter future.

He reiterated the government's commitment to maintaining peace and prosperity and fulfilling promises made to the people.

"The economy has shown notable growth despite challenges. The government is working to make Jammu and Kashmir a progressive economy," he added.

The LG said the Government is committed to preserving the unity in diversity that defines Jammu and Kashmir.

"We take immense pride in our composite culture and centuries-old traditions of amity and brotherhood. My Government is committed to preserving the unity in diversity that defines Jammu and Kashmir. It is firmly committed to maintaining peace and harmony, ensuring that the aspirations of our people are protected from divisive influences and cultivating an inclusive society built on mutual respect and harmony, paving the path to a prosperous and peaceful future," he said.

Sinha said that his Government is committed to strengthening Panchayati Raj Institutions (PRIs) and urban Local Bodies (ULBs) by ensuring timely elections at all levels.

He said the move will enhance grassroots democracy, promote citizen participation in decision-making and empower local governance for more effective development.

The LG said his government has ensured an adequate resource envelope for Panchayati Raj Institutions (PRIs), enabling them to undertake sustainable and inclusive development in their respective areas.

"This commitment empowers local governance, strengthens grassroots democracy, and accelerates holistic regional growth," he said.

Sinha also said that reservation of seats for other Backward Classes in Panchayats, Municipalities and Municipal Corporations have been also granted.

"Reservation of seats in the Legislative Assembly of Jammu and Kashmir has been granted by the Government to the persons belonging to Scheduled Tribes," he said, adding that persons residing in areas adjoining International Border have been given benefits of reservation by the Government, at par with residents of LoC Areas.

"Paddari tribe, 'Pahari Ethnic Group', 'Gadda Brahmin' and 'Koli' have been included as Scheduled Tribes. Valmiki Community has also been included in SC category," he added.

The LG said the government is committed to the dignified rehabilitation of Kashmiri migrants back into the Valley by ensuring a safe and secure environment.

"Efforts will be intensified to accelerate the construction of transit accommodation projects for migrant employees, providing them with suitable housing at designated locations. These initiatives reflect our dedication to restoring confidence, fostering inclusivity, and ensuring a stable and prosperous future for all communities in Jammu and Kashmir," he said.

Talking about the 2025-26 budget, Sinha said that it is a testament to the aspirations of the masses, reflecting their hopes for a brighter future.

He said for the first time, the Chief Minister has personally chaired meetings for all twenty districts, separately, engaging directly with elected representatives to understand their aspirations, regional needs, and development priorities in Budget formulation.

"The voices of the people are again shaping the allocation of resources and the prioritization of development goals. This budget is a true celebration of democracy—an expression of the dreams and expectations of every household, every community, and every region of Jammu and Kashmir. It marks a moment of renewal and empowerment, where the collective efforts of the people's representatives are shaping the future of this land," he said.

He said the budget represents a new era of participatory governance, ensuring that the needs and aspirations of the common man remain at the heart of policy making.

The LG said the Government remains fully committed to implementing its promises made to the people, as a representation of the people's aspirations for further political empowerment, and for creating an enabling environment for employment, sustainable development, social inclusiveness and expansion of the economy for enhancing the overall quality of life.

"It will work relentlessly on the three principles of Economy, Ecology and Equity that will shape our future. We commit ourselves to this balance for a better and brighter future for all," he said.

He said good governance remains the cornerstone of a prosperous and harmonious future for Jammu and Kashmir.

"My Government remains firmly committed to transparent and accountable decision making, ensuring the efficient and effective allocation of resources so that the people of Jammu and Kashmir fully benefit from every penny spent," he said.

He added that innovative initiatives such as digital governance, streamlined public service delivery, effective grievance redressal, and the promotion of socio-economic programs are designed to bridge developmental gaps and strengthen public trust.

The LG said his government's interventions will prioritize youth, women, and farmers, striving to make Jammu and Kashmir a progressive and inclusive economy.

"With unity and a shared commitment, it will work towards the welfare of every section of society, especially the poor and marginalized," he said.

The LG said the infrastructure development remains a key driver of progress, with significant advancements in connectivity.

"The recent inauguration of the Sonamarg Tunnel (Z-Morh) by the Hon'ble Prime Minister, along with the completion of two segments of the Jammu-Srinagar National Highway (Banihal Bypass and Ramban Bypass), has substantially reduced travel time," he said.

He said his government is committed to fast-tracking major connectivity projects by streamlining land acquisition, securing forest clearances, and addressing encroachment issues.

"Ongoing projects, including the Expressway, National Highways, and Ring Roads for Jammu and Srinagar, will be accelerated to ensure their timely completion," he said.

The LG said the Udhampur-Srinagar-Baramulla Rail Link

(USBRL) project will integrate J&K more closely with the rest of India.

"The Udhampur-Srinagar-Baramulla Rail Link (USBRL) project has reached a historic milestone with the completion of its final segment, poised to transform connectivity and development in Jammu and Kashmir, integrating Jammu and Kashmir more closely with the rest of the nation," he said. (inputs from agencies)

'Govt Transforming

ensuring that every citizen benefits from enhanced healthcare facilities," he said.

Under the universal health coverage scheme Ayushman Bharat Pradhan Mantri Jan Arogya Yojana SEHAT, 15.35 lakh free treatments have been provided, offering critical medical support to the people of Jammu and Kashmir, Sinha said.

This initiative has resulted in savings of approximately Rs 2,765 crore in out-of-pocket expenses for patients, ensuring financial protection and improved access to quality health care for all.

To ensure swift and accessible medical assistance, 489 ambulances have been integrated into the 102-108 ambulance network, providing immediate transportation and emergency care, according to the lieutenant governor.

"This initiative has already benefited 4.50 lakh patients, reinforcing my government's commitment to strengthening emergency healthcare services across Jammu and Kashmir," he said.

The lieutenant governor said AIIMS - Kashmir was nearing completion and expected to become operational soon, significantly enhancing healthcare infrastructure in the region.

To further strengthen medical education, the government is taking steps to increase MBBS and postgraduate seats in the 2025-26 session, expanding opportunities for aspiring doctors, he said.

The government is intensifying its effort in the fight against substance abuse by expanding functional drug de-addiction centres, reaffirming its commitment to addressing this critical issue, Sinha said.

"This initiative adopts a comprehensive approach focused on rehabilitation, awareness and prevention, with the ultimate goal of creating a drugs-free and healthier society," he added.

'J&K To Tap Water, Energy Reserves With Centre's Help'

Sinha said Jammu and Kashmir was endowed with an abundance of water resources that were yet to be fully harnessed.

"My government is committed to harnessing the full potential of these water resources so that their economic dividend enhances people's lives and Jammu and Kashmir's financial position. My government will seek the support of the central government to make a significant leap in our energy sector," he said.

Sinha said the Union Territory's energy sector was undergoing a transformative phase, with the government committed to ensuring early completion of key hydroelectric projects, including the Pakal Dul, Kiru, Kwar and the Ratle.

"These projects will collectively add 3,014 megawatt capacity, significantly strengthening the region's energy security. Several other projects such as the Dulhasti-II and the Kirthai-I are in the pipeline, further reinforcing Jammu and Kashmir as a hub of renewable energy," the lieutenant governor said.

He said significant strides had been made in strengthening the Union Territory's power infrastructure.

"Transmission capacity has increased 50 per cent with the successful completion of 28 projects. The distribution capacity has gone up 40 per cent with the execution of 194 projects. Additionally, construction of several receiving and grid stations are being expedited by the government, further fortifying the transmission and distribution network, minimising power losses and enhancing efficiency," Sinha said.

The Abdullah dispensation is committed to installing solar panels on all government buildings in phases, promoting sustainable energy adoption, he added.

Under the PM Surya Ghar: Muft Bijli Yojana, solar panels are being installed in more than 80,000 households in the Union Territory, ensuring access to affordable and clean energy while advancing the region's renewable energy goals, Sinha said.

The government is also committed to achieving 100 per cent smart metering to ensure the reduction of aggregate technical and commercial losses and increasing revenue generation, he added.

Oppn Slams NC

dona away with ornamentalism.

"They don't even want to pretend that they have anything to do with Article 370. I remember how during the election campaign it was all about Article 370, and how all others are BJP. And now the ideological overlap," he said.

He said the LG's address was a visionless statement of the government.

"And if this address was a vision statement of the government, it is as visionless as it can get.

It is a generalised departmental statement without any new political, social or economic initiative. So be prepared for an aimless, visionless spell of governance, bereft of any newness in approach or any creativity," he said.

PDP supremo Mehbooba Mufti also accused the National Conference of "validating" the abrogation of Article 370 and urged Jammu and Kashmir Chief Minister Omar Abdullah to stand up for the rights and self-respect of his people.

The former chief minister of the erstwhile Jammu and Kashmir state also said its problems were not limited to statehood restoration.

Reacting to Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha's address in the Jammu and Kashmir Assembly on the first day of the budget session, Mehbooba said there was no mention of the resolution for the restoration of Article 370 passed by the House in November.

"This government did not dare make a mention of the resolution that it had claimed was for the restoration of Article 370," the Peoples Democratic Party (PDP) supremo said at a press conference.

"Our chief minister says he does not want to be a Kejriwal. No one is asking him to be Kejriwal but, for God's sake, stand up for the rights and self-respect of your people. Why did the people vote for you?" she asked.

The PDP chief was referring to AAP supremo and former Delhi chief minister Arvind Kejriwal, who

spent several months in jail in a liquor policy case.

Mehbooba also said the problems of Jammu and Kashmir were not limited to the restoration of statehood.

"We are faced with the problem of dispossession. We are being dispossessed from our properties, minerals, jobs, etc. People have elected you to set these things right," she said.

Mehbooba said her party ran an alliance government with the BJP from 2015 to 2018 but did not allow the saffron party to enforce its agenda.

"It was our agenda that became the agenda of the alliance -- be it amnesty for stone pelters or writing letters to separatists for holding dialogue. Unfortunately, it seems the National Conference has succumbed (to pressure from the BJP)," she said.

The PDP supremo highlighted that while the BJP got the public mandate in Jammu, the National Conference secured 70 per cent of votes in the valley.

"We are not saying you have to do wonders in three months. The BJP was against the special status for Jammu and Kashmir from day one, even when it had no power. How can you say that you cannot do anything on Article 370? You can at least say that what happened in 2019 was wrong and it should be undone," Mehbooba said.

Resolution On

us in passing the resolution and it is still holding is a big thing," Abdullah told reporters outside the assembly here while responding to a question that some members are planning to bring a fresh resolution to condemn abrogation of Article 370.

The 40-day Budget Session of the Jammu and Kashmir Assembly, having a total of 22 sittings, began on Monday with Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha's address.

The chief minister said some people were thinking that any resolution on special status will get outrightly rejected by the Central government.

"The resolution was not rejected and the fact of the matter is that it is still holding so there is no need to talk further on this," he said.

The Jammu and Kashmir Assembly passed a resolution on November 6, asking the Centre to work out a constitutional mechanism for restoring special status of the erstwhile state.

Abdullah said the National Conference will not repeat what it had already done.

"It is not like that we will repeat this thing. What we have to do was done in the first session. If we had not brought that resolution, then there was a possibility of holding discussions on it. We bought a resolution and the House passed it with majority so what is there to talk further on it," he said.

The chief minister said the House will meet on Tuesday to discuss the lieutenant governor's address and the members are free to raise their issues in the House.

"There will be a talk inside the House and not outside it. This is not the way," he said when asked about the protest by independent MLA Khursheed Ahmed, demanding justice for the families of two persons killed in Sopore and Kathua recently as well as restoration of Article 370 and statehood.

Abdullah said the government will respond to the issues, which will be raised by the members in the House.

"The lieutenant governor was speaking on behalf of the government, highlighting its priorities. The members need to cooperate as we have to achieve the goal together," he said.

The chief minister also ruled out any alliance with the BJP and said there is no scope or need for such a thing.

"We both have different ideologies and there is also a difference of heaven and earth on our approach with regard to J&K," he said.

Most Misunderstood

government and he is not expecting a return to the situation in his lifetime.

During obituary references to Singh and four other former legislators on the first day of the Budget Session of the J&K Assembly which started here, Abdullah lavished praise on Singh and said he practically initiated measures for the return of displaced Kashmiri Pandits and his working groups are still relevant.

The Assembly observed a two-minute silence to pay tributes to former prime minister Manmohan Singh, former minister Syed Ghulam Hussain Geelani, former Rajya Sabha MP Shamsher Singh Manhas and former MLAs Ghulam Hassan Parrey and Choudhary Piara Singh who died after the last assembly session in November.

Speaker Abdul Rahim Rather moved the obituary reference after Lt Governor Manoj Sinha's address. Several members including Sham Lal Sharma (BJP), G A Mir (Congress) and M Y Tarigami (CPIM) also spoke in the House.

"In the last assembly session (in Srinagar), we had a long list headed by former prime minister A B Vajpayee and now after four months, we have a short list headed by another former prime minister Manmohan Singh, who has made an immense contribution for the country," the chief minister said.

Abdullah talked about Singh's journey from a village, which is now in Pakistan, to becoming the Prime Minister of India and his contributions towards making India an economic power by introducing reforms especially related to private sector and social welfare measures.

On J&K, "he tried to address the problem with the outside country (Pakistan). He did not make this initiative but inherited it as the start was made by Vajpayee and (then Pakistan president Gen Pervez) Musharraf. He would have stopped the initiative after taking over as the prime minister (in 2004), but he was well aware that the initiative taken by Vajpayee is a big responsibility to carry forward," the chief minister said.

Singh made sincere efforts despite the deteriorating situation, he said, in an apparent reference to terror incidents.

"May I say that both the countries have come closer to resolving this (Kashmir) problem during that period and I do not see a return to the situation in my lifetime," Abdullah said.

He said when the situation deteriorated in 2010, Singh tried to heal the wounds by setting up working groups, whether related to politics or meant to improve governance, and they are still relevant.

Singh had constituted five working groups on Jammu and Kashmir to grab the initiative for

ushering in a phase of development by creating conditions of permanent peace in the state.

Referring to displaced Kashmiri Pandits, Abdullah said everyone is talking about the community but practical steps for their welfare were taken by the Singh-led government.

"He introduced job reservation for the community in Kashmir and we persuaded them. There was no such effort from anyone else," he said, adding he provided relief to Pandits by setting up Jagti township in Jammu for the community members who were living in tents.

Abdullah said the Lt Governor talked about improved infrastructure of the Jammu-Srinagar national highway. He said it was Singh who gifted this four-lane project to J&K.

The chief minister also spoke about the railway project to connect Kashmir with the rest of the country and said, "We are waiting for the Prime Minister to inaugurate the service and I hope this will happen within days."

Abdullah said he had accompanied the former prime minister to inaugurate the Banihal section of the rail link.

Work on the Chenab bridge, the highest railway bridge in the world, started during his time but "he, unfortunately, is not among us today to travel on the bridge. At least, he will have the satisfaction that the work started by him was completed by the present dispensation", Abdullah said.

He said Singh was the most misunderstood leader and was right in saying that history would judge him more kindly.

Praising Singh's "down to earth" personality, the chief minister said when the situation deteriorated in Kashmir in 2016, he was not at the helm but was there for the people to listen to them.

Remembering an instance during his previous stint as chief minister, Abdullah said he was also prompt in apologising when something had gone wrong from his side.

"I had written a letter to him (Singh) and he was told that I had leaked the contents during an interview which I clarified after he telephoned me. As soon as he realised the mistake, he promptly telephoned and said sorry."

Earlier, Tarigami while paying tributes to the leaders said the question remains as to how to improve relations between India and Pakistan so that both countries can live in peace.

BJP's Sharma said the roadmap for India's economy was laid by Singh, making it possible for the country to become the fifth biggest economy in the world.

Langate MLA

to demand justice for the families of two persons recently killed in Kathua and Sopore, and for the restoration of statehood.

Amid rains, the legislator from Langate assembly constituency sat in the assembly premises carrying a banner and demanding a judicial probe into the two civilian deaths.

He also attempted to enter the Central Hall and display the banner during the Lieutenant Governor's address on the opening day of the Budget session but was prevented from doing so.

"I raised the demand for justice for the families of Waseem Mir and Makhan Din. The police and government are still silent on the matter. Nothing has been done. Even legislators are silent. That is why I raised the issue. We want justice for them," Ahmed told reporters outside the assembly.

He emphasised the need for judicial probes into these incidents. "We urge Lieutenant Governor to order judicial probes. We will also raise this issue in the Assembly," he added.

Mir was shot dead by security forces in Sopore in Baramulla district of north Kashmir after allegedly speeding away from a checkpoint on January 5.

Din, who was allegedly tortured in police custody, consumed poison and committed suicide in Kathua on February 4.

Ahmed also demanded the restoration of statehood, release of political prisoners, cessation of employee terminations, and cessation of the use of the Public Safety Act (PSA) and the Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act (UAPA).

"We demand the release of political prisoners and an end to the use of PSA and UAPA," he further stated.

The Budget session of the Jammu and Kashmir Assembly began on Monday after a seven-year hiatus. This marks the second Assembly session of the Jammu and Kashmir Assembly since the formation of the NC-led government in the Union Territory.

Previously, the Assembly convened in Srinagar from November 4 to 8 last year, just 20 days after the government came to power.

In August 2019, the central government revoked the special status of Jammu and Kashmir under Article 370 and reorganised it into two Union Territories—Jammu and Kashmir, and Ladakh.

Another Wet Spell

details, Gulmarg recorded a snowfall of 8 inches while Doodhpatri recorded 7 inches of snow. Peer Ki Kali recorded 8 inches of snow while Sinthan top recorded 10 inches of snowfall till today, he said, adding that light snow was also reported in some plains of Shopian, Baramulla, Kupwara and Bandipora.

Director Meteorological department (MeT), Dr Mukhtar Ahmad said that the generally dry weather is expected from tomorrow till March 09, adding that a fresh spell of rain and snow is expected from March 10 to 12.

Moreover, the MeT has issued an advisory, predicting a possibility of landslides, rockfall, shooting stones and mudslides over vulnerable places.

It advised the tourists, travellers and transporters to follow administration and traffic advisory and asked farmers to suspend irrigation & other farm operations till 4th March.

Avoid sloppy & avalanche prone areas, it reads

Avalanche Warning

said. An avalanche with a "medium danger" level is likely to occur above 2500 metres over Baramulla, Ganderbal, Doda, Kishtwar, and Ramban districts of Jammu and Kashmir in the next 24 hours.

People living in these areas have been advised to take precautions and avoid venturing into the avalanche-prone areas till further orders.

Higher reaches of Jammu and Kashmir received moderate to heavy snowfall recently and some upper reaches also received a fresh snowfall today prompting authorities to issue a fresh avalanche

warning as a precautionary measure for the people.

The authorities have also asked the people living in these districts to dial 112 for help given any emergency.

ECl Hails J&K

a substantial 58.11% polling was recorded for the first time for the general elections held here since 1989 across the districts of the UT. The same was over 14% more than that of the elections of 2019 during which the overall percentage of polling was just around 44% across the districts of the UT.

Pertinent to mention here that these were the first general elections of the J&K after its reorganization in the year 2019. A total of 87,26,281 voters were eligible to exercise their franchise in these elections. For this purpose, 11,629 polling stations had been established and 80,724 polling personnel had been trained and made available to ECI for holding of elections across the villages and towns of J&K.

Moreover, for the first time administration had established 83 women manned, 70 youth manned, 73 PwD manned, 88 Green Polling Stations, 180 Border Polling Stations, 152 Model Polling Stations and 46 Unique Polling Stations under specific themes in all districts of Jammu & Kashmir. These were aimed to revolutionize the electoral process by ensuring accessibility and representation for all segments of society.

With a special focus on women, youth and Persons with Disabilities these stations were equipped with amenities tailored to meet their unique needs, fostering an environment conducive for their active participation in the democratic process.

High Court Issues

and their guardians are kept informed about the progress of the case, the charges filed, and other relevant procedures. Special attention has been given to child witnesses, with judges required to frame questions in a simple, non-intimidating manner appropriate to the child's age and understanding.

The High Court has also issued directions to criminal courts, Juvenile Justice Boards, and children's courts to prioritize cases involving vulnerable witnesses. Judges have been instructed to minimize delays to prevent witnesses from making multiple court appearances, which can be mentally and emotionally taxing. Hearing schedules should be set with due consideration for child witnesses, taking into account their physical well-being and academic commitments.

In cases of sexual offences, the guidelines prohibit judges from asking survivors to physically demonstrate the location of assault. Instead, they may indicate it on a body outline diagram to avoid further trauma. Courts have also been authorized to provide transportation assistance or reimburse travel costs for witnesses in accordance with High Court policies. Special provisions have been made for witnesses with disabilities, including the use of Braille, sign language, and mobile applications to ensure that legal information is accessible to them.

While these measures aim to protect witnesses, the High Court has emphasized that their rights must be balanced with the defense's right to cross-examination. However, courts have been cautioned to monitor questioning to prevent harassment or intimidation. Additionally, the confidentiality of vulnerable witnesses will be strictly maintained, with their identities protected in court records and any video-recorded testimony secured under judicial orders.

The guidelines take immediate effect and will be enforced across all courts in Jammu & Kashmir and Ladakh, including Juvenile Justice Boards. The High Court has also mandated an annual review of the implementation of these measures, with legal experts and research organizations assessing their effectiveness and suggesting improvements where necessary. (KNT)

Delhi Court

bail to Rashid to enable him to campaign for the assembly elections in Jammu and Kashmir. Rashid surrendered himself before Tihar Jail on October 27.

Rashid has been lodged in Tihar jail since 2019 after he was arrested by the NIA under the Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act in a 2017 terror funding case.

Elections to the 90-member J-K assembly were held in three phases from September 18 to October 1. The results were declared on October 8 in which the National Conference-Congress alliance attained a clear majority with 48 seats.

The Delhi High Court on February 24 directed the sessions judge to expeditiously decide the bail plea of Rashid in the case.

The high court passed the directions in view of a December 24, 2024 order, by which the sessions court requested the district judge to transfer the case to a court designated to try lawmakers.

Rashid's name cropped up during the investigation of Kashmiri businessman Zahoor Watali, who was arrested by the NIA for allegedly funding terrorist groups and separatists in the Kashmir Valley.

The NIA filed a chargesheet against several persons, including Kashmiri separatist leader Yasin Malik, Lashkar-e-Taiba founder Hafiz Saeed and Hizbul Mujahideen chief Syed Salahuddin, in the case.

Malik was sentenced to life imprisonment by a trial court in 2022 after he pleaded guilty to the charges.

DGP Reviews

and other senior officers participated in the meeting, while Jammu Zone officers joined the meeting virtually, the official said.

During the meeting, the DGP emphasised the need for enhanced inter-district collaboration to strengthen law enforcement and security operations.

He also highlighted the importance of a proactive approach and adoption of community-based strategies to build trust and address criminal activities.

The district SSPs presented detailed briefings, outlining the law enforcement and public safety challenges in their respective jurisdictions.

Prabhat also issued directives for the swift investigation and resolution of long-pending criminal cases.

The IGP Kashmir Zone also urged officers to adopt a proactive stance in addressing serious crimes and to collaborate closely with the judiciary and prosecution to expedite case resolutions.

Severe Water Crisis Triggers Protests In Hajin

Agencies

HAJIN: A severe drinking water shortage in Hajin town of north Kashmir's Bandipora district led to protests on Monday, with residents accusing authorities of failing to resolve the crisis despite multiple assurances.

People, including women and children, from Mir Mohallah, Danger Mohallah, Bonikhan, Parray Mohallah and nearby areas staged a protest. They blocked the market road, demanding the immediate restoration of the water supply.

The crisis has intensified during the holy month of Ramadan, causing severe hardships for fasting residents. "We are observing fasts and don't even have water for basic needs. This situation is unacceptable," said Mushtaq Ahmad, a protester.

He said officials had promised to restore the supply, but the issue remains unresolved.



We are forced to rely on alternative sources, including unsafe water, he added.

According to locals, the crisis began last Wednesday when a road collapse damaged the main water supply lines, cutting off water to several parts of Hajin.

Despite repeated complaints, no permanent solution has been provided, residents said.

The protesters have urged Deputy Commissioner Bandipora to intervene and ensure immediate restoration of the water supply before conditions deteriorate further—(KNO)

Enough 'Mutton Stock' In Kashmir For Ramazan

Agencies

SRINAGAR: Amid the holy month of Ramazan, the mutton dealers here have stated that a sufficient stock of mutton was available in the Valley while fresh supplies are arriving on a regular basis.

Mehraj-ud-Din, General Secretary of the Mutton Dealers Association said that around 30 to 35 trucks loaded with sheep arrive in Kashmir every day, each carrying approximately 140 to 150 sheep.

"The stocks are sufficient in the Kashmir Valley, and people

are purchasing good-quality mutton. Supplies continue to arrive regularly," he said.

Din further added that the price of mutton remains stable at Rs 700 per kg, with no complaints of overpricing reported so far. "The price of mutton has been steady, and we have not received any complaints about overcharging," he said.

It is worth mentioning that last year, during Ramazan it was reported that fluctuations in mutton prices due to a surge in demand, with over 800 truckloads of sheep consumed in the Valley—(KNO)

Govt Committed To Upgrade Healthcare Infra Across JK: Dy CM



Observer News Service

JAMMU: Asserting his government's commitment towards upgrading the existing healthcare infrastructure across Jammu and Kashmir, Deputy Chief Minister, Surinder Choudhary, today said that quality health services are being provided to the people with special focus on rural and far flung areas.

The Deputy Chief Minister was addressing the officers during a meeting of "Rogi Kalyan Samiti" (RKS) held to review the functioning and patient care facilities available at Sub District Hospital, Nowshera.

On the occasion, the Deputy Chief Minister, who is also the Chairman "Rogi Kalyan Samiti" was apprised of the progress and performance registered by the SDH under different indicators and financial allocation under RKS.

A brief discussion was held on various services including Maternity and Child Health Services, referral services, Ayushman Bharat, ABHA card status, services under JSY, ambulance service besides status of Hospital's civil works.

BMO Nowshera gave a detailed presentation regarding the facilities, functioning and activities proposed under RKS 2024-25 for infrastructure upgradation and overall advancement of healthcare system in the Hospital.

The Deputy Chief Minister directed the concerned authorities to work on various necessities vital for upgrading the basic infrastructure in the hospital. He directed the BMO to submit a detailed list of department wise requirements so that measures are taken with respect to the facility upgradation of the hospital accordingly.

He directed all the concerned to follow the objectives as envisaged in RKS guidelines. He asked the officials of the health department to work with added zeal and dedication to ensure efficient and prompt healthcare facilities to the people.

Among others the meeting was attended by ADC Nowshera, Babu Ram Tandon, BMO, Executive Engineers of Jal Shakti and R&B, EO, representatives from civil society and other members.

4 Drug Peddlers Arrested: Police

Observer News Service

SRINAGAR: Continuing its efforts to eradicate the drug menace from the society, police on Monday said to have arrested four drug peddlers in Shopian, Kulgam & Budgam and recovered contraband substances from their possession.

In Shopian, a Police Party from Police Station Shopian at a checkpoint established at Nagesharan crossing intercepted a motorcycle bearing registration No. JK02C-8316. During checking, contraband substance like Charas powder was recovered from the first-aid tool kit of the motorcycle. The pillon riders disclosed their identities as Mohammad Lateef Malik son of Mohammad Yousuf resident of Bongam, Shopian & Tauseef Mushtaq son of Mushtaq Ahmad Wagey resident of New Colony, Largam,

a police spokesman said in a statement.

In Kulgam, a Police team from Police Station Qaimoh at a checkpoint established at Khudwani Bypass, intercepted a suspicious person. After searching, 2.5 kilograms of Cannabis Husk-like substance filled in the bag was recovered from his possession. He has been identified as Mohd Amin Bhat son of Mohd Abdullah Bhat resident of Shamsipora, Bijbhara, police said.

Similarly in Budgam, a Police party of Police Station Beerwah at a checkpoint established at Rankipora, intercepted a suspicious person who on seeing the Police party tried to flee from the spot but was apprehended tactfully. He has been identified as Mohammad Saleem Shah son of Mushtaq Ahmad Shah resident of Pati Sail Beerwah, police said.

Rajnath Honours J&K Bank For Supporting Education Of Ex-Servicemen's Children

Observer News Service

SRINAGAR: Union Minister of Defence Rajnath Singh has acknowledged J&K Bank's generous financial contribution under its Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) towards the education of children of ex-servicemen and war widows. During the Armed Forces Flag Day CSR Conclave held today in New Delhi, Defence Minister felicitated the Bank's MD & CEO Amitava Chatterjee in presence of other notable contributors.

In his remarks on the occasion, the Defence Minister Rajnath Singh said, "I want to express my gratitude to those who have contributed, for supporting the soldiers of our country, their families, and the brave women with all their hearts. They have provided every kind of support. And I know that in the development of the country, the public sector, as well as the private sector, both have made a major contribution."

J&K Bank has contributed a significant amount to the Armed Forces Flag Day Fund



(AFFDF) as part of its Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) program. Managed by the Kendriya Sainik Board (KSB) under the Ministry of Defence, the AFFDF provides welfare assistance to families of armed forces veterans across India.

Commenting on the felicitation, MD & CEO Amitava Chatterjee said, "At J&K Bank, we firmly believe in the power of education to transform lives, and this contribution is a small gesture of gratitude to-

wards our armed forces who have dedicated their lives to the nation. We remain committed to supporting education and community welfare through our CSR initiatives."

By supporting this initiative, the Bank reaffirms its commitment to the welfare of those who have served the nation. This contribution aligns with the Bank's CSR focus on education and community upliftment, ensuring financial support for the children of soldiers' families.

Flash Flood Damages Properties In Bandipora's Tulail

Agencies

GUREZ: A flash flood, accompanied by snowfall, hit Barnoi Tulail village in north Kashmir's Bandipora district on Monday, causing damage to several residential properties.

The incident left the area affected as the flash flood and heavy snowfall caused havoc in the village, damaging 14 properties. Murtaza Ahmad, a local, said many homes and storage structures used for ration and other supplies were damaged.

He said Tulail Valley has been experiencing heavy snowfall for the past few days, making snow slides, flash floods and avalanches increasingly common.

Meanwhile, other locals also confirmed that their properties were damaged and urged



the government for support. They said flash floods and snow slides damaged their properties, storage sheds, residential structures, and roads, adding that the area is prone to avalanches.

Residents urged the admin-

istration to provide support for those whose properties were damaged in the natural calamity.

Another resident said that many villages in the area have been without electricity and urged the administration to restore it immediately—(KNO)

People Concerned Over Skyrocketing Prices Of Essentials

Agencies

SRINAGAR: Amidst the holy month of Ramazan, the people across Kashmir have voiced concerns over the skyrocketing prices of essential items, particularly fruits, vegetables, and other daily necessities.

Locals from various districts including Srinagar, Ganderbal, Bandipora, Pulwama, Anantnag, Shopian, Baramulla, and Kupwara expressed their concerns, stating, "Vegetables and fruits have become almost unaffordable for the common man. We urge the authorities, especially the Food and Safety Department, to form squads and conduct regular checks throughout the month of Ramazan. Who is allowing the vendors to raise prices, and why there is no check at all which they claim have made staple items increasingly unaffordable for many, especially during the fasting month."

The residents said that fruits commonly consumed during Ramazan, such as oranges, grapes, pineapples, pomegranates, and bananas, have seen a sharp increase in prices. Similarly vegetables including potatoes, brinjal, peas, capsicum, tomatoes, Onion have also become more expensive.

Locals expressed frustration, pointing out that the vendors, many of whom use load carriers to sell their goods, have raised their prices, further burdening lower-income families.

"This is a time of spiritual reflection and fasting, but the rising prices are making it very difficult for people to afford basic items," said a resident of Srinagar. "The sellers know



that people need these items for iftar and sehri, and they are exploiting that need to make extra profit."

Residents are urging authorities to step in and regulate prices to ensure that essential goods remain affordable, especially during this sacred month of Ramazan. Many are calling for action to prevent price manipulation and ensure

that the holy month remains accessible to all, regardless of financial status.

Locals said, "The authorities should monitor the markets closely and verify the rate lists of shopkeepers. This exploitation during Ramazan is unacceptable. With the commencement of Ramazan, Kashmir's markets have become bustling with shoppers, and shopkeepers have allegedly taken this opportunity to inflate the prices of essential commodities, causing distress among consumers."

Gulzar Ahmad, a local said, "Marketing checks are happening everywhere, but unfortunately, while they check rate lists and other details, and they sell on their own rates no strict action is taken against shopkeepers who fail to follow the listed prices."

"We remain hopeful that swift action will be taken to address the issue and ensure that essential items remain available at reasonable prices throughout the holy month," he said—(KNO)

Man Gets One Year Imprisonment In Cheque Bounce Case

Agencies

SRINAGAR: A local court in North Kashmir's Bandipora district sentenced a man to 1-year simple imprisonment and Rs 12 lakh fine in a cheque bounce case.

According to the details available, the Judicial Magistrate 1st Class court Sumbal sentenced Ghulam Hassan Bhat of Kathpura Hajin to 1-year simple imprisonment and directed him to pay a fine of Rs 12 lakh as compensation to the complainant, Bashir Ahmad Dar.

The case was filed under Section 138 of the Negotiable Instruments Act (NI Act) by the complainant in 2017, alleging that Bhat had issued a cheque that was dishonored due to insufficient funds.

The court, after hearing arguments from both sides, found Bhat guilty and convicted him under Section 138 of the NI Act.

During the sentencing arguments, Bhat's counsel requested the court to take a lenient view, arguing that the offence was financial in nature and did not involve moral turpitude or public safety concerns.

The defence cited Supreme Court rulings that emphasize compensation over punitive punishment in such cases. The

counsel argued that the main objective of the law was to ensure the complainant received the due amount rather than imposing imprisonment.

On the other hand, the complainant's counsel urged the court to impose a strict sentence, citing financial loss, legal expenses, and mental distress suffered by the complainant.

It was argued that a lenient approach would weaken the law's intent, which is to maintain financial discipline in commercial transactions.

The complainant's lawyer further argued that Bhat had been given several opportunities to clear his dues but failed to do so.

The court, after examining the case, found that a balance was needed to be struck between deterrence and compensation. While the maximum sentence was not deemed necessary, the court ruled that merely imposing a fine would not serve the purpose of justice.

Bhat was sentenced to one-year simple imprisonment and ordered to pay Rs 12 lakh as compensation to Dar.

The court further directed that Bhat be lodged in District Jail Pulwama to serve his sentence—(KNO)

DC Budgam Reviews Arrangements For Holy Month Of Ramazan

Observer News Service

BUDGAM: In order to ensure a smooth and hassle-free month of Ramadan, Deputy Commissioner (DC) Budgam, Akshay Labroo convened a meeting with district officers here in the Conference Hall DC Office Complex.

During the meeting, threadbare discussions were held on various arrangements including availability of safe drinking water, uninterrupted power supply, first aid, sanitation, garbage collection, deployment of fire tenders, traffic management and security etc.

Necessary directions were issued to the heads of various departments to ensure foolproof arrangements during the month of Ramadan.

To ensure uninterrupted power supply during Ramadan, the DC instructed the Executive Engineer of the Power Development Department (PDD) to sensitize their field staff and ensure hassle-free electricity supply to consumers, especially during critical times such as Sehri and Iftar.

The Executive Engineer Jal Shakti Budgam and Chadoora were tasked with ensuring a regular supply of drinking water.

Emphasising the importance of consumer protection, the DC directed the formation of special

market checking squads which includes revenue, police and food safety officers to monitor quality check and prevent profiteering, hoarding, and overcharging by shopkeepers during the month.

ARTO was directed to ensure sufficient availability of vehicles during the month, while AD food and Animal husbandry department were directed for ensuring adequate quantity of food grains, poultry and other essential commodities during the month.

To uphold cleanliness in the town and panchayats, the DC directed the ACP and EOs to take proactive measures of sanitation drive and urged public cooperation in maintaining hygiene.

The CMO was directed to ensure health teams along with ambulance availability 24x7 during the whole month in all health and medical institutions to provide medical assistance.

Additionally, the Traffic Police have been instructed to deploy sufficient personnel in high-traffic areas to ensure smooth vehicular movement.

During the meeting, SDMs were directed to regularly monitor market prices and ensure the availability of essential commodities and services within their respective areas. They were directed to conduct routine checks to maintain fair pricing and quality standards in local markets.

DC Shopian Reviews Implementation Of PM Surya Ghar

Observer News Service

SHOPIAN: Deputy Commissioner (DC) Shopian, Shishir Gupta convened a meeting with concerned officers to review the implementation of PM Surya Ghar (Muft Bijli Yojana) in the district.

The scheme aims to enhance the share of rooftop solar capacity and empower residential households to generate their own electricity, supported by significant financial contribu-

tions from the government. The meeting was informed that a substantial number of applications have been received for installation of rooftops in the district.

Gupta emphasized the need to increase registrations under the scheme and directed Tehsildars and officers and officials of KPDC for their cooperation to launch massive awareness campaigns at their respective jurisdiction to motivate the people so that they will be benefited.

Religious Cleric Booked In Shopian

Agencies

SRINAGAR: A religious cleric from Zainapora area has been booked for allegedly making a speech that could incite sectarian disharmony in South Kashmir's Shopian district on Monday.

An official said that a local cleric, a resident of Babapora Shopian, had uploaded a video in which he had spoken against the Barelvi sect.

The speech allegedly contained content that insulted, spread hatred, and caused emotional harm to another sect, thereby posing a risk of sectarian discord, he said.

He has been identified as Mubarak Ahmad Sheikh son of Ab. Salam Sheikh resident of Babapora Zainapora Shopian. "Taking cognizance of the matter, the police have registered a case against the cleric while investigations have been set into motion," he added—(KNO)

Youth Killed In Road Accident

Agencies

SRINAGAR: A youth was killed while his brother was injured in a road accident in South Kashmir's Anantnag district on Monday evening.

An official said that an accident took place at Anzwalla Anantnag between scooty and Auto as they collided with each other resulting in the death of the scooty rider.

He has been identified as Owais Reyaz Khan son of Reyaz Ahmad resident of Shirpora Anantnag.

His brother who was a pillon rider identified as Usman Reyaz Khan received injuries and was shifted to GMC Anantnag from where he was referred to SKIMS Soura Srinagar in critical condition, he said.—(JKNS)

'Pressure On Both Teams,' Says Rohit Ahead Of CT Semifinal v Australia

Press Trust of India

DUBAI: Skipper Rohit Sharma dismissed the thought that India are under added pressure against Australia in the Champions Trophy semifinal, and felt that "pressure to win" will be equal on both the teams.

India have not beaten Australia in the ICC knockouts matches since winning the 2011 World Cup quarterfinal.

"Look, they are a great opposition to play against. All we had to do is what we have been thinking about the last three games and we have to approach that game in a similar fashion. We understand the opposition and how they play and stuff like that," Rohit said in the pre-match press conference.

Rohit also warned of some in-



tense competition in the semifinal to be played here on Tuesday. "We will expect some nervy times as well in the middle. But that is how the game is being played these days. And you are talking about the semifinal. Obviously, the pressure will be on both teams to win that game,"

he added. Rohit said Australia will offer a tough "fight back" even without some big names such as Pat Cummins, but expressed confidence in his side's ability to ward off the Antipodeans' charge.

"But I think the more and

more we focus on what we need to do as a group, as a player, as a batting unit, as a bowling unit, that helps us a lot. Australia has been such a great team over the years. So, we will expect some fight back.

"So, I think it is important for us to just keep focusing on what we need to do, keep doing our things and keep doing those things right. And then the result will come if we keep doing the things that we are supposed to," he signed off.

'This Is Not Our Home'

Rohit Sharma struck down the notion of India having an unfair advantage in the Champions Trophy due to playing all their matches in Dubai.

"Every time, the pitch is giving you different challenges. The

three matches that we played here, the pitch has behaved differently. This is not our home, this is Dubai. We don't play so many matches here, and this is new for us too," Rohit said.

'Four Spinners A Tempting Combination'

India captain Rohit Sharma did not commit to following the four-spinner template in the Champions Trophy semifinal against Australia, but said Varun Chakravarthy's splendid effort against New Zealand has made that option very "tempting."

India played with Chakravarthy, Kuldeep Yadav, Ravindra Jadeja and Axar Patel and the quartet wrecked the Kiwis, sharing nine wickets among them in their team's 44-run win here on Sunday.

Fresh Snowfall Sets The Stage For Khelo India Winter Games In Gulmarg

Agencies

SRINAGAR: After being postponed due to inadequate snowfall, the 5th edition of the Khelo India Winter Games is now set to begin on March 9, 2025, in Gulmarg, following fresh snowfall in the region.

The mega sporting event, initially scheduled from February 22 to 25, had to be put on hold as key ski slopes at Affarwat and Bowl lacked sufficient snow, making it impossible to conduct skiing and other competitive games.

Officials had earlier said that after consultation with the technical conduct committee, they decided to delay the event until favourable snow conditions returned. However, with the region recently receiving fresh snowfall, an official on Monday announced the revised dates for the event. The games will now take place from March 9 to March 12.

Around 700 participants,



including 650 technical staff, delegates and local athletes are competing across six disciplines, including alpine skiing, Nordic skiing, ski mountaineering, and snowboarding.

Notably, the J&K government had earlier formed two high-level committees to oversee the successful organization of the event.

Nuzhat Gull, Secretary of the J&K Sports Council, had earlier assured that all logistical arrangements, including hotel bookings, event management, and infrastructure readiness, had been meticu-

lously completed.

The first leg of the Games was successfully held in Ladakh from January 23 to 27, 2025, where ice hockey and ice skating events took place at NDS Sports Complex and Guphuk Pond.

Meanwhile, Chief Minister Omar Abdullah announced the launch of the official website for the Khelo India Winter Games 2025.

He said the newly established platform will serve as a central resource for event updates, schedules and insights into participating athletes. (KNO)

Real Kashmir Beats Inter Kashi 3-1 To Stay In I-League Title Race

Observer News Service

KALYANI: Real Kashmir FC kept their I-League 2024-25 title hopes alive with a commanding 3-1 victory over Inter Kashi at the Kalyani Stadium West Bengal on Sunday evening.

The win propelled them to 29 points from 17 matches, just two points behind joint leaders Inter Kashi and Churchill Brothers, who both have 31 points.

Inter Kashi started the game on the front foot, with Domingo Berlanga and Bryce Miranda orchestrating early attacks that tested Real Kashmir's defense. However, the visitors absorbed the pressure well and gradually took control, imposing their physical presence before asserting tactical dominance.

The breakthrough came in the 37th minute when Ocran Idan delivered a delicate chip into the box for Abdou Karim Samb. He made no mistake this time, executing a brilliant first-time volley over goalkeeper Arindam Bhattacharya to put Real Kashmir ahead.

Then Real Kashmir pressed further and doubled their lead when Paulo César found the net in stoppage time of the first half. Rising highest to meet a curling free kick from the left, he got the faintest of touches, guiding the ball



past Bhattacharya to give his team a comfortable 2-0 lead at halftime.

Inter Kashi struggled to respond and lacked creativity in the final third. They eventually pulled one back in the fifth minute of stoppage time through Spanish substitute Mario Barco, raising hopes of a dramatic finish.

However, Real Kashmir responded almost immediately. From the restart, Lalramsanga found Gnohere Krizo inside the box, and the Ivorian forward displayed quick footwork before slotting the ball into the bottom corner, sealing a crucial three points for the visitors.

Short TAKES

Connolly Replaces Injured Short In Australia's CT Squad

Young spin-bowling all-rounder Cooper Connolly on Monday replaced injured Matthew Short in the Australian squad for the knock-out stage of the ongoing Champions Trophy.

Top order batter Short was ruled out of the ICC event, being held in Pakistan and Dubai, due to a calf injury sustained during the match against Afghanistan on Friday.

The 21-year-old Connolly, who made his ODI debut in England last year, was initially named as a travelling reserve for the tournament.

The ICC's Event Technical Committee has approved his inclusion in the Australian squad early on Monday.

Connolly has thus far featured in six internationals for Australia, of which three have been ODIs. He's a left-handed batter, who bowls left-arm spin as well.

Short injured his calf on Friday while fielding and appeared hindered when making a quickfire 20 at the top of the order before the match was abandoned due to rain in Lahore.

Ajinkya Rahane Appointed KKR Captain Ahead Of IPL 2025

India batter Ajinkya Rahane will captain defending champions Kolkata Knight Riders in the Indian Premier League beginning on March 22, the franchise announced on Monday.

Rahane replaces Shreyas Iyer as the skipper with the latter tasked to lead Punjab Kings this season.

Venkatesh Iyer, who has been with KKR for a long time, has been made Rahane's deputy.

"It's an honour to be asked to lead KKR, which has been one of the most successful franchises in the IPL. I think we have an excellent and balanced squad. I look forward to working with everyone and taking up the challenge of defending our title," said Rahane in a statement.

Defending champions KKR will face Royal Challengers Bengaluru in the IPL opener at the Eden Gardens on March 22.

Real Madrid Face Rivals Atlético Madrid In Champions League

Real Madrid are all set to host their fellow Spanish opponents, Atlético Madrid in the UEFA Champions League 2024-25 round of 16 first-leg on Tuesday. Diego Simeone's men had a good UCL run, which directly qualified them for the last 16 stage. Real Madrid on the other hand, had to go through the playoffs phase, where they defeated Manchester City.

Carlo Ancelotti's men will be under some pressure even at home. Although they are coming in after taking down Man City in the previous round, Real Madrid lost their last LaLiga fixture against Real Betis, which is going to be a concerning thing for the defending champions of the UEFA Champions League. Los Blancos will surely have some advantage of their home crowd but it will not be an easy matchup for them.

Atlético Madrid will be confident as they recently got back to the top of the LaLiga standings.

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