

No Timeline For J&K Reservation Panel? Omar Steps In With 6-Month Deadline

Observer News Service

Srinagar: The Jammu and Kashmir Cabinet sub-committee formed last year to look into grievances against the current reservation policy in the Union Territory will submit its report in six months, Chief Minister Omar Abdullah said on Saturday.

The decision came after he met a "concerned group of job aspirants". Abdullah said in a post on X, "The Cabinet sub-committee constituted to examine the complicated issue of reservations in recruitment has been given a six-month timeline to complete their report. This timeline was



set by me after I met with a concerned group of job aspirants." "This timeline, however, was not in the initial order setting up the sub-committee. That oversight will be corrected but, rest-assured, the committee is working to complete its task in

Categories issued in past 2 years

Category	Jammu	Kashmir
ST Certificates	4,59,493	79,813
SC Certificates	67,112	0
RBA Villages	1,379	1,229
Border Villages	551	0
ALC Villages	268	16

Office of Chief Minister, J&K @CM_Jnk

The Cabinet sub-committee constituted to examine the complicated issue of reservations in recruitment has been given a 6 month timeline to complete their report. This timeline was set by me after I met with a concerned group of job aspirants. This timeline, however, was not in the initial order setting up the sub-committee. That oversight will be corrected but rest-assured the committee is working to complete its task in the set timeframe.

the set timeframe," he added. Earlier in the day, the Jammu and Kashmir government informed the legislative assembly that no specific timeline has been fixed for the three-member cabinet sub-committee, which was formed last year to

look into grievances against the present reservation policy in the Union Territory.

The information was given by Sakeena Itoo, the minister in-charge social welfare, in a written reply to a starred question by Peoples | More on P6

Reservation System 'Rigged' Against Kashmir: Lone

People's Conference supremo Sajad Gani Lone on Saturday highlighted "stark regional imbalances" in issuing reservation certificates in Jammu and Kashmir and alleged the entire concept of reservation in the Union Territory was "rigged" against Kashmir.

Lone cited the data he had received in response to a question in the assembly to claim that the Jammu region dominated certificate issuances in nearly all categories from April 1, 2023. "The data shows a vast regional | More on P6

Wet Spell Ends Rainfall Deficit In J&K

Weather To Improve From Today: MeT

Observer News Service

Srinagar: Kashmir continued to experience intermittent rainfall and snowfall for the fourth consecutive day on Saturday, significantly recharging water bodies across the region. The water level in the Jhelum River surged past 6 feet, a sharp contrast to last month's -1.01 feet.

According to details, heavy snowfall was recorded in the upper reaches of Shopian, while



Pulwama and other districts in South Kashmir received moderate snowfall since morning. Higher-altitude areas, including the popular | More on P6

J&K Unemployment Drops to 6.1%: Govt

Observer News Service

Jammu: Unemployment rate in Jammu and Kashmir declined from 6.7 per cent in 2019-20 to 6.1 per cent in 2023-24, J&K government said on Saturday, highlighting the various steps taken in this regard, including the generation of 9.58 lakh livelihood opportunities through various schemes.

This improvement is also reflected on the labour force participation rate (LFPR) and workers population ratio



(WPR), which rose to 64.3 per cent and 60.4 per cent, respectively, in 2023-24, showcasing the enhanced employment opportunities and economic activities in the Union Territory, J-K minister Javed Ahmad Dar | More on P6

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'Scrub Typhus Could Be Under-Recognised Leading Cause Of Hospitalisation For Fever In India'

Press Trust Of India

Affecting around a tenth of rural populations in India every year, 'scrub typhus' infection, spread by the bite of an infected larval mite (chigger), could be an "under-recognised" leading cause of hospitalisations for fever, a study has suggested. The study, conducted by the Christian Medical College, Vellore, and London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine (LSHTM), looked at over 32,000 people from across 37 rural villages in Tamil Nadu, with its results published in the New England Journal of Medicine. Chiggers are found on grass, plant litter and bare soil across rural areas of Asia, and usually feed on small mammals such as rats and shrews.

Scrub typhus is caused by the bacterium 'Orientia tsutsugamushi', which belongs to the rickettsia family. Severe illness due to the infection can lead to Acute Respiratory Distress Syndrome (ARDS), shock, meningitis and kidney failure. Rural areas in India are among the most affected by the potentially life-threatening infection, along with those of southeast Asia, Indonesia, China, Japan. "Infections typically occur between August and February," Wolf-Peter Schmidt, principal investigator of the study and clinical assistant professor at LSHTM, said. Symptoms, such as fever, headache, body aches and rash, usually begin around 10 days after infection, he said. Lead author Carol Devamani, from the Christian Medical College Vellore, said,



"After COVID-19, scrub typhus was the most important cause of fever in our study, accounting for almost 30 per cent of fever hospitalisations." "Despite cases being very common and treatable, scrub typhus is often overlooked as a possible cause when patients present with a fever. Diagnostic tests are available at major hospitals but not in the community," Devamani said. For the study, blood samples of people who reported fever were collected every six to eight weeks from August 2020 to July 2022. The samples were then tested for scrub typhus infection. Among those infected, 8 to 15 per cent of the people, developed fever which often required hospitalisation and intensive care due to the severe infection.

"Over a period of two years, we found a high incidence of asymptomatic and symptomatic infection, with some people getting infected twice in as many years. It is not clear why some infections become severe or even life-threatening," Schmidt said. While five cases in our study population died of scrub typhus, it did not record any deaths from malaria, dengue or typhoid fever which are usually thought of as the main causes of severe fever in India, the author added. Devamani said that communities need to be informed about the possible dangers of scrub typhus infection, along with improve diagnostic capabilities for timely treatment. "Only by doing so will we reduce the number of unnecessary hospitalisations and fatal cases," the lead author said.

PUBLIC NOTICE

It is hereby notified for the information of the general public that I, Showkat Ahmad Malik, S/o Mohammad Ishaq Malik, R/o Nooripora (Malmoh), have established a Digital Rice Mill at Nooripora Pattan. If any person has any objection in this regard, he/she may file the same in the office of the Naib Tehsildar, Goom Ahmadpora within seven (7) days from the date of publication of this notice. No objections shall be entertained after the expiry of the said period.
Showkat Ahmad Malik
S/o Mohammad Ishaq Malik
R/o Nooripora (Malmoh) FKO

GOVERNMENT OF JAMMU & KASHMIR
OFFICE OF THE NAIB TEHSILDAR TANGMARG
(Executive Magistrate 1st Class TANGMARG / ASSISTANT COLLECTOR 2nd class)

PUBLIC NOTICE

It is hereby notified that the applicant BASHIR AHMAD KHAN S/O GHULAM RASOOL KHAN R/O SHIRPORA had applied for the issuance of Birth certificate of his SON namely FARHAN AHMAD KHAN. The applicant intends to register the DOB of his Son as per the school record which is 05/09/2013. If anybody is having any objection/claim regarding the same he/she may approach the office of undersigned within a period of seven (07) days from the date of publication of this notice or else any such claim/objection shall not be entertained.

fko NAIB TEHSILDAR TANGMARG

NOTICE

The name and DOB of my son in school records has been wrongly written as Arif Hussain Gania And DOB 19-09-2016 while his correct name is Arif Ali Gania & DOB 05-03-2016 which needs to be corrected. If anybody has any objection in this regard he/she may file them in the office of the GMS Mullshulla within seven days. After that no objection shall be entertained.
Ghulam Hussain Gania
F/o Arif Ali Gania msl

NOTICE

is hereby given to General Public that Muzamil Akhter is applying for DC of 10th Class from Govt High School for Girls, Zadibal. In case if anyone has some objection, please report it to Office of Principal Govt High School for Girls Zadibal within 7 days. Additionally, Miss Muzamil Akhter is also Applying for Parentage Change from Muzamil Akhter D/o Abdul Rashid to Muzamil Akhter D/o Ghulam Ahmad Khan. Any Objection in this regards also should be reported to Office of Principal Govt High School for Girls Zadibal within 7 days.
Applicant
Muzamil Akhter
D/o Ghulam Ahmad Khan
Current R/o Illahi Bagh

OFFICE OF THE NAIB TEHSILDAR KALANTRA/ KREERI

Sub: Application of Irfan Ahmad Gojer Deader S/o Ghulam Qadir Gojer Deader R/o Bandi Bala for the issuance of ST (SCHEDULED TRIBE Gujjar and Bakerwal) in Favour of Spouse namely Shams U Nisa.

NOTICE

Regarding the Subject cited above, the applicant has submitted the file in the office of the undersigned for the issuance of ST in favour of her spouse. In this connection, a report of patwari halqa concerned has been sought which reveals that the applicant and applicant's spouse is currently residing in village Bandi Bala and that the applicant belongs to the Deader Caste and Gojer Community. The details of the family of the applicant are as follows:

S. NO	NAME OF VIDUAL	INDI-REL ATIONSHIP WITH APPLICANT	AGE	OCCUPATION	ANNUAL INCOME
1	Ghulam Qadir Gojer Deader	Father	55	Govt Employee	3529728 = (Thirty Five Lakh, Twenty
2	Zalehka Begum	Mother	54	Housewife	Lakh, Twenty
3	Reshma Begum	Grand Mother	86	Senior Citizen	Nine Thousand, Seven Hundred and Twenty Eight)
4	Irfan Ahmad Gojer Deader	Self	34	Govt Employee	
5	Firdous Ahmad Gojer Deader	Brother	29	Student	
6	Shams U Nisa	Spouse	29	Govt Employee	
7	Tahira Qadir	Sister	21	Student	
8	Arham Irfan Gojer Deader	Son	01	Infant	

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.
fko Naib Tehsildar

Scholarships This Week

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

Scholarship Name 1: IDRBT Summer Internship Programme (ISIP) 2025

Description: IDRBT Summer Internship Programme (ISIP) 2025 is provided by the Institute for Development and Research in Banking Technology (IDRBT). The internship offers graduate and postgraduate students an opportunity to carry out projects in technological field.

Eligibility: Application is open to students enrolled in recognised post-graduate technology/management programs or four-year engineering degree course in reputed Indian institutions. Only those in their penultimate year of studies are eligible.

- Prizes & Rewards: A monthly stipend of 12,500.
- Last Date to Apply: 15-04-2025
- Application mode: Via email: isip@idrbt.ac.in
- Short Url: www.b4s.in/observer/ISIP1
- QR Code: https://d2w711p59qkl0r.cloudfront.net/static/images/scho-media/20251741612487.png

Scholarship Name 2: Fulbright-Nehru Master's Fellowships 2026-27

Description: Fulbright-Nehru Master's Fellowships 2026-27 is offered by the United States-India Educational Foundation (USIEF) to outstanding Indian students. Candidates selected under this fellowship can pursue a Master's degree program in selected US colleges and universities in specified areas of study.

Eligibility: Application is open to students with an equivalent of US Bachelor's degree from a recognised Indian university with at least 55% marks. Applicants should have completed a four-year Bachelor's/Master's degree or a full-time postgraduate diploma if the duration is of less than 4 years. At least 3 years of full-time (paid) professional work experience along with community service and leadership traits is desirable.

- Prizes & Rewards: Funding support for tuition and fees along with other benefits.
- Last Date to Apply: 14-05-2025
- Application mode: Online applications only

Scholarship Name 3: Flipkart Foundation Scholarship 2024-25

Description: Flipkart Group is committed to strengthening the retail sector including the Kirana Stores which form a significant part. As part of our endeavour, the Flipkart Foundation is supporting a scholarship for children of Kirana Store Owners to make them future-ready. This scholarship is dedicated to empowering children of Kirana Store Owners enrolled in professional STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering, Math) undergraduate programs.

Eligibility: Applicants must be currently studying in the 1st year of professional undergraduate STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering, Math) courses at government colleges in India. One parent must be a Kirana Store Owner (KSO). Applicants must have scored at least 60% in their Class 12 exams. The annual family income should not exceed INR 5 lakh from all sources.

- Prizes & Rewards: Fixed scholarship of INR 50,000
- Last Date to Apply: 16-04-2025
- Application mode: Online applications only
- Short Url: www.b4s.in/observer/FLIP1
- QR Code: https://d2w711p59qkl0r.cloudfront.net/static/images/scho-media/flipkart-foundation-scholarship-2024-25174110736.png

• Short Url: www.b4s.in/observer/FNMF1
QR Code: https://d2w711p59qkl0r.cloudfront.net/static/images/scho-media/2026-271741612435.png

Scholarship Name 3: Flipkart Foundation Scholarship 2024-25

PUBLIC NOTICE

I have lost my 10TH Class Marks Card bearing Roll No 391207, Regd No: 02BF314015. Now I have applied for the duplicate of the same. If anybody has any objection in this regard he/she may file them in office of the Govt Girls High School Daurer within seven days. After that no objection shall be entertained.

Ruqaya Banoo
D/o Ab Aziz Nasiro
R/o Markoot Gurez Bandipora iko_r

Office Of Advocate Ishfaq Rasool And Associates

In the case of
1. Gh Rasool kuchey
2. Mohd Akbar Kuchey
Both Sons of Late Mohd Subhan Kuchey.
Both Residents of Tantraypora Palhallan (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, Ap- peal, Suit or any other type of proceeding before the Hon'ble Court and on the ground of distorted facts/misrepresentation and cooked story and may 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

The parentage shown in my driving licence JK-0520150050486 is: Mohd Qasim Shah S/o Mohd Subhan which is incomplete and doesn't match with the complete actual parentage as shown in Aadhaar card as; Mohd Qasim Shah S/o Mohd Subhan Shah So, now when I need to renew and update my driving licence I want to modify the credentials appearing on the driving licence. In this regard if anybody has any objection may submit to ARTO Sopore, within 7 days from the date of publication of this notice after which no objection shall be entertained.
Mohd Qasim Shah
S/o Mohd Subhan Shah
R/o Bomai Zaingeer (Sopore) Baramulla
Driving licence No. JK-0520150050486
Date:- 15/03/25

GOVERNMENT OF JAMMU AND KASHMIR
OFFICE OF THE PRINCIPAL GOVERNMENT DEGREE COLLEGE SOGAM
(NAAC Accredited B+ Grade) Mobile: 9419029971 Ph/Fax: 01955233217

Website: www.gdcsogam.edu.in

No: GDCS/2024-25/190 Dated: 10-03-2025

TENDER NOTICE

Sealed tenders affixed with revenue stamp worth Rs. 05/- are invited from the interested parties having good experience in preparation of dietary-items etc. (laid in the tender documents) for running the College Canteen for the academic session 2025-2026. The tenders accompanied with CDR worth Rs. 3000/- (Rupees Three Thousand only) pledged to the Principal, Govt. Degree College, Sogam should reach to the office of the undersigned during the office hours within seven (07) days after the publication of this notice. The tenders shall be opened on next date in presence of the College Canteen Committee, and the tenderers who wish to be present. The detailed list of items along with the terms and conditions for running the canteen can be had from the office of the undersigned during all working days.

The undersigned reserves the right to accept or reject any tender/tenders without assigning any reason thereof.

DIPK-13086/24
DATED 15-03-2025

PRINCIPAL
GOVERNMENT DEGREE COLLEGE
SOGAM

Government of Jammu & Kashmir
Directorate of Tourism, Kashmir
Tel: 0194-2315378, Fax: 0194-2479548, e-mail: ddtreg123@gmail.com

PUBLIC NOTICE.

Subject: - Application for change in location of the excursion agency under the name and style "Shehr -E- Sada" located at PNB Natipora, Srinagar.

Whereas, proprietor of the excursion agency "Shehr -E- Sada" located at PNB Natipora, Srinagar has approached this office for change in location of his excursion agency from "PNB Natipora, Srinagar" to "Gulshan Nagar Nowgam Bypass Srinagar" as per Section 39 of the J&K Registration of Tourist Trade Act 1978/2011;

Whereas, the said excursion agency is registered with this department under the name and style "Shehr -E- Sada" in the name of Mr. Obair Rashid Hazer S/o Abdul Rashid Hazer R/o Sheilteng, Haba Kadal, Srinagar bearing online registration No. JKEA00000512 dated 01.01.2022 and the same is valid upto 31.12.2023;

Whereas, the applicant has submitted Rent deed (Notarized) dated: 21.10.2024 along with supportive affidavit dated 12.03.2025 duly authenticated by 1st Class Judicial Magistrate, NOC from PNB Bank dated 28.10.2024, photocopy of Registration Certificate and affidavit dated: 12.03.2025 for change in location duly authenticated by 1st Class Judicial Magistrate;

Now therefore, in exercise of powers conferred on me under section 39 of J&K Registration of Tourist Trade Act 1978/2011/2012, before the request of the applicant for change in location of his Excursion Agency from "PNB Natipora, Srinagar" to "Gulshan Nagar Nowgam Bypass Srinagar" is considered, the matter is hereby notified for information of General Public/Financial Institutions/Banks/ Development Authorities/ PHE Department/ Electric Department that in case of any objection, the same should reach the office of undersigned within a period of 07 days from the date of publication of this notice. No objections beyond a period of 07 days will be entertained and the request of the applicant will be considered under rules, after submission of requisite documents.

Sd/-
Assistant Director Tourism,
Registration

No: Reg/T/226/DTK/244
DIPK-13100/24

Fate Of Lawaypora Trauma Hospital Hangs In Balance

Agencies

Srinagar: Nearly 17 years after its sanctioning, the much-hyped Lawaypora Trauma Hospital remains non-functional as a specialised trauma care facility, with the government now considering converting it into a medical accommodation facility or a drug de-addiction and rehabilitation centre.

The issue resurfaced in the ongoing budget session of the Jammu & Kashmir Legislative Assembly in Jammu, when MLA Batamalo Tariq Hameed Karra tabled a question on the status of the trauma hospital Lawaypora.

In response, J&K's Minister in-charge, Health & Medical Education Department, admitted that while the G+3 structure was completed in 2014 at an estimated cost of Rs. 641.00 lacs (with Rs. 541.00 lacs already spent), the facility never became operational due to the unavailability of specialised medical personnel and high-end equipment.

The response added that the proposal for a trauma hospital was not agreed/approved by the Ministry of Health & Family Welfare, Government of India.

The government further added that 108 ambulance (A15/B15) service was operational in the area to cater to emergencies, particularly in accident-prone zones.

The government has now proposed repurposing the building, suggesting two possible uses: Residential accommodation for doctors, paramedics, and medical students (DNB/PG/UG), ensuring the presence of health-care professionals in the area. A drug de-addiction, rehabilitation, and counselling centre, which could help address the rising substance abuse problem in Kashmir.

For now, the facility functions as a New Type Primary Health Centre (NTPHC), providing basic emergency stabilisation, vaccination, maternal health services, and minor injury care. However, it lacks the neurosurgeons, anaesthetists, orthopedic specialists, and advanced trauma care units required for a full-fledged trauma centre.

The government defended its decision, citing the proximity of SKIMS JVC (8 km away) and GMC Srinagar (10 km away) as adequate for trauma and emergency care.

Reacting to the government's response, locals from the area argue that converting the hospital into a hostel or de-addiction centre is a betrayal of the original purpose, as Lawaypora—an accident-prone stretch of the national highway—still lacks dedicated trauma services. Many question why crores were spent on a structure never utilised as intended. KNO



Smart City Project Not To Blame For Traffic Chaos: Govt

Observer News Service

Srinagar: Amid mounting concerns over the implementation of the Smart City Project in Srinagar, the Jammu and Kashmir government on Saturday categorically denied that the project has exacerbated traffic congestion or created bottlenecks in key areas of the city.

The clarification came in response to a starred question raised by MLA Zaidil Tanveer Sadiq, regarding the severe traffic issues faced by residents and the business community in Srinagar, particularly in commercial hubs like Lal Chowk and Jehangir Chowk.

In its reply, the government acknowledged that traffic congestion in Srinagar has been a persistent issue, causing difficulties for daily commuters, emergency service vehicles, and businesses.

However, it firmly rejected the claim that the narrowing of Maulana Azad Road under the Smart City Project has worsened the situation. "No sir," the government stated, refuting the allegation that the project has led to chaos in key areas.

To address the ongoing traffic crisis, the government revealed a proposal for the construction of a Vehicular Overpass (VOP) bridge or flyover from Convent School (Joggers Park) to M.A. Link Road via Shenwari Road over the Jhelum River is under examination by the Public Works (R&B) Department. This project is expected to provide both immediate and long-term relief to the city's traffic woes.

Additionally, the government confirmed that a feasibility study for constructing a parallel flyover along Maulana Azad Road, extending from Dalgate to Jehangir Chowk, has been

completed. The Detailed Project Report (DPR) for this long-term solution is currently under appraisal. If approved, the flyover could significantly alleviate traffic congestion in one of Srinagar's busiest corridors.

Interestingly, on February 25 this year, Tanvir had termed the Smart City as "Smart City Failure". "We had identified the flaws early on and even organised a press conference to address them. The project was rushed, and the timeline provided for such extensive infrastructure projects, such as roads and buildings, was unattainable. Now, we are witnessing the consequences as substandard construction is being revealed. From the beginning, we could discern the poor quality of work in the Srinagar Smart City project. Today, our apprehensions have been validated," Tanvir told reporters last month.

Director IIIM Inaugurates Skill Development Program

Observer News Service

Srinagar: The Council of Scientific and Industrial Research-Indian Institute of Integrative Medicine (CSIR-IIIM) Jammu, in collaboration with the Ministry of Micro, Small, and Medium Enterprises (MSME), inaugurated a seven-day Advanced Entrepreneurship Skill Development Program (A-ESDP) on Saturday at its IIIM Srinagar Branch. The workshop, co-sponsored by CSIR's Integrated Skill Initiatives, aims to foster innovation and self-reliance among farmers and youth through training in medicinal plants, mushroom cultivation, and crop diversification.

Zabeer Ahmed, Director of CSIR-IIIM Jammu spoke about burgeoning culture of agri-startups and entrepreneurship. He underscored the program's alignment with Prime Minister Narendra Modi's vision of Atmanirbhar Bharat and doubling farmers' income. In his address, Dr. Ahmed emphasized the transformative potential of crop diversification in agriculture, citing IIIM's pioneering work in lavender cultivation under the Aroma Mission. "Lavender farming in Jammu and Kashmir has become a success story, empowering farmers and boosting agri-startups. Crop diversification through medicinal and aromatic plants (MAPs) not only enhances income but also builds climate resilience and sustainability," he remarked.

The inaugural ceremony was presided over by Dr.

Wall Collapse At JLNM Hospital Parking Leaves Vehicles Damaged

Syed Mohammad Burhan

Srinagar: A section of a boundary wall at the parking area of JLNM Hospital in Srinagar's Rainawari collapsed on Saturday, damaging multiple vehicles and sparking concerns over the structural integrity of aging infrastructure.

According to eyewitnesses, the incident occurred due to continuous rainfall, which had weakened the wall's foundation. "There was a sudden loud crash, and within seconds, the wall crumbled,

burying several parked vehicles under debris," said one hospital visitor.

The affected vehicle owners voiced their anger, attributing the collapse to poor maintenance and official negligence. "This was a disaster waiting to happen. Had someone been inside the vehicles at that moment, the consequences could have been tragic," said one of the car owners whose vehicle was damaged.

Officials from the hospital administration and Srinagar Municipal Cor-

poration rushed to the site to assess the damage. While no injuries were reported, authorities have assured an investigation into the incident. "We will examine the cause of the collapse and take necessary measures to prevent such incidents in the future," said a hospital official.

With persistent rainfall weakening old structures across Srinagar, residents are urging authorities to conduct immediate structural safety audits of vulnerable buildings and walls in public spaces.

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
BIJHERA: 01932-228243
PAMPORE: 01933-294132
PATTAN: 01954-293507
QAZIGUND: 01951-296153

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

PRAYERS	
FAJR	5:18
ZUHR	12:40
ASR	4:56
Magrib	6:42
ISHA	8:02

This Day In History

- 1527 - Battle of Khanua: Mughal Emperor Babur defeats Rajput forces led by Rana Sanga consolidating Mughal power
- 1731 - Treaty of Vienna signed by Prince Eugene of Savoy, Count Sinzendorf and Count Gundacker, Thomas Stahremberg and the British envoy to Vienna, Sir Thomas Robinson.
- Assassination of King Gustav III
- 1862 - Battle at Pound Gap, Kentucky: Confederates separate battles
- 1865 - Battle of Averasboro North Carolina (1,500 casualties)
- 1867 - First publication of an article by Joseph Lister outlining the discovery of antiseptic surgery, in "The Lancet"
- 1871 - 1st fertilizer law enacted
- rediscovered the bronze age city of Knossos in Crete, home of the legendary Minotaur
- 1917 - Russian Grand Duke Michael, brother of Tsar Nicholas II declines the Russian throne
- 1921 - Britain signs a trade agreement with the USSR and sends a trade mission to Moscow: this goes against the US, who in the same month refused to sign a trade agreement
- 1922 - Egypt achieves independence from Britain, but British troops remain

From KO Archives

Vajpayee Is The Prime Minister

Observer News Service

Srinagar: The soft spoken and moderate face of the right wing Bharatiya Janata Party, Atal Behari Vajpayee is the next prime minister of India. The president K Narayanan, late tonight formally appointed Vajpayee as the prime minister, after Congress president Sonia Gandhi expressed her inability to stake claim to the power as the party didn't have the requisite number to form a government on its own, though "informal consultations" were going on with the like-minded parties. However what seems to have prompted the president to invite Vajpayee to form the government was the statement made by United Front leader and president of Tamil Manila Congress (TMC) GK Moopanar, that the UF had "no role to play in the formation of the government at the center" as the Congress decided against staking the claim for the same.

"Right now OF has virtually no role" Moopanar told newsmen after an hour long meeting of the OF leaders held at prime minister I K Gujral's residence, 7, Race Course Road.

The swearing in ceremony of Vajpayee led government is scheduled to take place on Thursday, March, 19, the prime minister designate told reporters after his meeting with the president. The president has asked Vajpayee to prove his majority within 10 days of being sworn in. Last time Vajpayee was given 13 days' time to prove his majority, which he failed to do and had to resign in a huff. Vajpayee said he would consult his party colleagues and allies on composition of his cabinet and its size.

The number of MPs supporting BJP led coalition comes to just 264, which is short of the half way mark in the house of 539. However when seen in the context of the decision taken by Telugu Desam Party (TDP), to remain neutral when the heads will be counted, the number of 264 does cross that limit required for a simple majority for the BJP led coalition.

Meanwhile, in a volte-face, AIADMK and two of its allies today decided to join a BJP-led coalition ministry at the Centre clearing any last minute hitch which may come in the way of President K.R. Narayanan inviting A.B. Vajpayee to head the next government.

BJP prime ministerial candidate Vajpayee's special emissary Jaswant Singh, who air dashed to Chennai successfully persuaded AIADMK general secretary Jayalalitha to change her mind about not joining the government and extending unconditional support to the BJP.

Congress tonight "accepted" President K.R. Narayanan's decision to invite BJP leader Atal Bihari Vajpayee to form the government but made it clear that it would attempt to defeat the coalition during the confidence motion.

Asked to comment on the development, party spokesman V.N. Gadgil said the president has gone by the text-book and as per Supreme Court judgement of inviting the single largest party to form the government.

"We accept the president's decision. But we will try to defeat the government during the confidence motion."

Meanwhile CPM has charged BJP with going to "any extent" for the sake of power and said it would be difficult for BJP to run a government with its allies laying down various conditions.

Reacting to AIADMK supreme Jayalalitha's decision to join a BJP-led government, CPIM general secretary Harkishan Singh Surjeet said "it is clear that BJP is going to any extent for grabbing power." (Kashmir Observer, 16 March, 1998)

انٹرنیشنل وائٹ ہاؤس

انتہائی افسوس کے ساتھ اطلاع دی جاتی ہے کہ محمد صادق آخون والد مرحوم محمد عبداللہ آخون ساکن چکسدرہ بل، متصل این آئی ٹی، حضرت بل، سری نگر، بروز سنچر، 15 مارچ 2025ء، بمطابق 14 رمضان المبارک 1446 ہجری اس دار فانی سے رحلت فرمائے۔

مرحوم کی فاتحہ خوانی بروز سوموار، 17 مارچ 2025 کو مرحوم کے آبائی مقبرہ واقع حسن آباد میں صبح 7:30 بجے انجام دی جائے گی۔ اس کے بعد مرحوم کے گھر متصل این آئی ٹی پردن بھر مجلس و تعزیت پرسی جاری رہے گی۔

تمام احباب، رشتہ داروں اور متعلقین سے التماس ہے کہ مرحوم کی مغفرت، بلندی درجات اور ایصال ثواب کے لیے دعا فرمائیں۔

اللہ تعالیٰ مرحوم کو جنت الفردوس میں اعلیٰ مقام عطا فرمائے اور لواحقین کو صبر جمیل عطا کرے۔

آمین... صاحب تعزیت محمد حسین آخون و بشیر احمد آخون

8494096255

INF

Kashmir American Society of Healthcare, Medical Education & Research, in collaboration with HPVT (Help Poor Voluntary Trust), is initiating a **Free 8 weeks Group therapy** for the individuals suffering with OCD by a team of counselling clinical psychologists led by leading consultant clinical psychologist of J&K.

OBSESSIVE COMPULSIVE DISORDER

8 WEEK FREE GROUP THERAPY

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

It's not just RECURRENT HANDWASHING AND CHECKING BUT UNSEEN PAIN, MYTHS AND STIGMA associated with OCD

distress

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

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If cleanliness and respect are to be the pillars upon which we build a future of dignity, then must we not allow the expressions of that ethos to remain? After all, how can we claim to value our heritage when the very symbols of our intent are scrubbed away without consideration?

Mahoor Haya Shah

What's wrong with saying 'Don't Litter,' 'Don't Urinate,' or 'Don't Drink' in Public Places? Last month, posters urging tourists to respect local culture and tradition and avoid liquor were removed in Kashmir, the Indian Express reported.

Is it really too much to ask that we respect the sanctity of public spaces? Why does a simple plea to not pollute, not defile, and not indulge in excess become such a bone of contention? Every locality across the globe has these basic rules—preserving cleanliness, ensuring respect & fostering communal living. In fact, it's almost standard to ask people to respect the spaces they enter, anywhere in the world. Yet, in Kashmir, when such modest requests appear on walls, they vanish as quickly as they were put up. Isn't it ironic that something as basic as cleanliness and respect should provoke such heated responses? What



Can a Silenced Poster Speak?

How a humble poster advising tourists on public decency was swept away

are we even protecting if the simple plea for respect and decency is treated as an invasion of personal freedom?

In a city that has learned to speak in hushed tones and murmurs, sometimes even the softest whisper can be a clarion call. Here, amid the storied avenues and resilient alleys of our cherished homeland, a modest message once hung—a quiet entreaty that urged us to honor our shared space, to keep it pristine in a world too often sullied by

carelessness. It was not a manifesto of rebellion nor an outcry of defiance; it was a simple, human reminder, a plea for civility in the midst of chaos.

Yet today, that whisper has been silenced. In an act as indifferent as it is perplexing, the guardians of our public order swept away that humble note without ceremony or thought. And I find myself asking, with a bitterness that only truth can birth: if our collective goal is to safeguard one of the few

sanctuaries of cleanliness and beauty—Kashmir, should we not champion the very expressions that call us to honor that duty?

Take, for instance, the area near the Clock Tower in Lal Chowk—here, every surface speaks of a desire to preserve the inherent dignity of our public spaces. And yet, even here, the relentless tide of neglect makes itself known. Spittle and stray marks by tourists have stained the pavement, a jarring re-

minder of the human indifference that often undermines our best efforts. The red hue of decay creeps in where gentle admonition once reigned.

This simple message, now erased, was more than just ink on paper. It was a quiet covenant between a people and their place—which bore testimony to a communal desire for respect and cleanliness. It was as unassuming as it was essential, a mirror reflecting our own responsibilities back at us. To see it removed, without so much as a murmur of protest, is to witness the erasure of our right to self-expression, even in its most unpretentious form.

And now, in the midst of modernity's sterile march, a gentle reminder of our values has been rendered mute by the cold efficiency of bureaucratic action. The irony is as pungent as the spittle that now stains our beloved streets—a stark, unwelcome contrast to the order we so desperately seek.

What is it about these small tokens of our cultural soul that makes their removal so profoundly unsettling? Perhaps it is that, in these brief lines, we saw a glimpse of ourselves—flawed, tender, and striving. They were not draped in the pomp of grand declarations; they were a humble, earnest call to maintain a measure of decency.

I cannot help but wonder if, in our quest to impose a sterile order on our public spaces, we are inadvertently silencing the very voice that calls for mindful stewardship. If cleanliness and respect are to be the pillars upon which we build a future of dignity, then must we not allow the expressions of that ethos to remain? After all, how can we claim to value our heritage when the very symbols of our intent are scrubbed away without consideration?

So, I ask you: in a land where every red mark tells a story of neglect and every erased word speaks of lost opportunity, can we truly afford to silence these small, but mighty, expressions of who we are? Are we not, as custodians of this fragile beauty, entitled to the right to protect our own territory—to speak our truth in whatever humble form it takes?

In the end, the act of erasing that modest message is not merely an administrative decision. It is a quiet, yet profound, reminder of the delicate balance between order and expression.

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

Make No Mistake, Trump Is Turning the US Into a Police State

JEFFREY C. ISAAC

America, this republic, this democracy in which we are, is a living thing which cannot be contemplated or categorized, like the image of a thing I can make . . . It is not and never will be perfect because the standard of perfection does not apply here. Dissent belongs to this living matter as much as consent does. The limitations on dissent are the Constitution and the Bill of Rights and no one else. If you 'try to make America more American' . . . you can only destroy it. Your methods, finally, are the justified methods of the police, and only the police." —Hannah Arendt, "The Ex-Communists," *Commonweal* (March 20, 1953).

Hannah Arendt, a German-Jewish immigrant, wrote the above words at the high point of McCarthyism in 1950's America. It took courage for her to publish these words. For, as her biographer, Elizabeth Young-Bruehl, reports: "The attorney general of the democracy in which she was living had made a speech three days earlier in which he announced that 10,000 citizens were being investigated for denaturalization and 12,000 aliens for deportation as 'subversives.'"

Indeed Arendt's husband, Heinrich Blucher, was a former communist who was especially vulnerable to the threats of the Attorney General, Albert Brownell. As Blucher himself had written in a letter to Arendt about Brownell's revival of the harsh McCarran-Walters Act: "The acceptance without opposition of the dreadful new immigration bill has demoralized the best people here, so much so that the forces of the Left, which never really were put in motion, are stunned . . . It seems that one can now deprive someone of citizenship with a simple denunciation . . . And how soon these 'Born American' people could become a Master Race."

That was then, and this is now.

Last weekend, U.S. Customs and Immigration Enforcement (ICE) arrested Khalil Mahmoud, a Columbia University graduate student, living in campus housing, who has been one of the leaders of the pro-Palestinian movement on campus. Mahmoud is a Palestinian who was born in Syria, who has been in the U.S. on a student visa, is currently holding a green card, and is married to a U.S. citizen. There is no evidence that he has ever engaged in a violent act. He was apparently arrested in accordance with the Trump Executive Order, "Additional Measures to Combat Anti-Semitism," signed on January 29, 2025, and also in connection with the recently announced State Department

"catch and revoke" policy, which employs AI tools to locate, detain, and deport international students considered to be pro-Palestinian and thus, by definition, "anti-Semitic."

This is not about Hamas or Palestine or Israel or antisemitism. It is about the crackdown on dissent. Period.

Secretary of State Marco Rubio quickly acknowledged the action, announcing that "we will be revoking the visas and/or green cards of Hamas supporters in America so they can be deported." [It must be noted that a U.S. federal judge has just ordered a temporary halt to Mahmoud's deportation. But it must be noted only parenthetically, because the halt is only temporary, and Mahmoud remains in ICE custody, and if there is any domain where the Trump administration can

At the same time, what we are now experiencing is more than an attack on academic freedom and university autonomy. It is nothing less than a wholesale assault on constitutional democracy itself, by an authoritarian administration determined to "Make America Great Again," the Constitution, and democracy, be damned

be relied upon to stick to its metaphorical—and actual—guns, it is this one.]

The arrest of Khalil is a major escalation in a "New Campus McCarthyism" that has beset U.S. higher education for at least the past two years. It follows hard on the Trump administration's cancellation of over \$400 million in Columbia University grants and contracts, and preceded by one day Tuesday's announcement that the U.S. Department of Education has sent letters to 60 universities "under investigation for antisemitic discrimination and harassment."

At the same time, what we are now experiencing is more than an attack on academic freedom and university autonomy. It is nothing less than a wholesale assault on constitutional democracy itself, by an authoritarian administration determined to "Make America Great Again," the Constitution, and democracy, be damned. The arrest and detention of Mahmoud Khalil is a blatant attack on the civil liberties without which there can be no meaningful democracy for anyone. As columnist Michelle Goldberg put it in the *New York Times*, "This is The Greatest Threat to Free Speech Since the Red Scare."

That this arrest and the policy behind it is being justified by this administration—with its Nazi-saluting "DOGE" head and neo-Nazi supporting Vice President and "fine people on both sides" President—as a defense of Jews is beyond cynical. And that many Jewish leaders apparently support

this arrest is simply deplorable. For Trump clearly has no real interest in either Jews or Arabs, and is quite content to disrespect the former while troling the latter, as he did on Elon Musk's X, posting "Shalom, Mahmoud" above a caption that read: "ICE proudly apprehended and detained Mahmoud Khalil, a Radical Foreign Pro-Hamas Student on the campus of @Columbia University. This is the first arrest of many to come." Trump followed up with an even more threatening Truth Social post:

We know there are more students at Columbia and other Universities across the Country who have engaged in pro-terrorist, anti-Semitic, anti-American activity, and the Trump Administration will not tolerate it. Many are not students, they are paid agi-

finied by Donald Trump, in other words, those who oppose what Trump is doing.

This should surprise no one. For Trump promised exactly this, in pretty much every speech he gave on the 2023-24 campaign trail, but never more directly than in his too-easily forgotten 2023 Veteran's Day Speech:

We pledge to you that we will root out the communists, Marxists, fascists and the radical left thugs that live like vermin within the confines of our country that lie and steal and cheat on elections. They'll do anything, whether legally or illegally, to destroy America and to destroy the American Dream. . . the threat from outside forces is far less sinister, dangerous and grave than the threat from within. Our threat is from within.

Trump is now doing what he promised. And all too many Americans are either excited that he is doing so or merely blasé about their president's proud decision to literally take a torch to the U.S. Constitution.

Martin Niemöller's famous saying has been quoted so many times that it is a veritable cliché. All the same, the sentiment it expressed is as true now as it ever was, and it is especially appropriate to note that it is featured on the website of the U.S. Holocaust Museum:

First they came for the socialists, and I did not speak out—because I was not a socialist. Then they came for the trade unionists, and I did not speak out—because I was not a trade unionist. Then they came for the Jews, and I did not speak out—because I was not a Jew. Then they came for me—and there was no one left to speak for me.

The arrest of Khalil Mahmoud is an offense to every citizen of the United States, and it sets a precedent that endangers us all.

Trump is turning the United States into a police state.

Are the tattered and tarnished instrumentalities of democracy still at our disposal sufficient to prevent him from succeeding? And if we do not exercise them now, how much longer will they even persist?

Our dark time is getting darker by the day.

*Views expressed in the article are the author's own and do not necessarily represent the editorial stance of Kashmir Observer.
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Man vs. Beast A Battle Without Borders

Gowher Bhat

It starts with a scream. A child, a farmer, a woman gathering firewood. Somewhere on the edge of the forest, in a village where people live close to the wild. A black bear, a leopard. Someone doesn't make it home.

In Kashmir, this is not a rare event. It happens often enough that people have learned to live with fear. Parents tell their kids to be home before dark. Farmers move in groups, always looking over their shoulders. A rustling in the leaves means something. A wrong turn in the orchard could be the last.

The numbers tell a story. Between 2006 and now, 264 people have died this way. 3,164 have been injured. Some mauled, some left with scars they will carry forever. These numbers, recorded by the wildlife department, don't say everything. They don't tell you about the father who never came back, the child who won't go outside anymore, the mother who still wakes up screaming at night. These numbers don't include the fear, the grief, the quiet funeral gatherings where no one knows what to say because everyone knows it will happen again.

Wild animals are coming closer. People are dying. But why?

Once, there was space for both—people and animals. There were forests that stretched far enough for leopards to hunt, for bears to find food. That space is disappearing. Roads are being built. Houses are going up. Trees are coming down. Between 1990 and 2023, Kashmir lost more than 10,000 hectares of forest to development projects. Every new road, every new settlement pushes the wild closer to the villages. A leopard doesn't know where the forest ends. A bear doesn't understand that this orchard is private property. They only know hunger, and hunger leads them to where the food is.

And food is everywhere. In the villages, waste piles up near homes. Leftover food, fruit peels, half-eaten meals. The black bears smell it. They come at night,



Representational Photo

MAYBE THE REAL QUESTION ISN'T HOW TO STOP ANIMAL ATTACKS. MAYBE THE QUESTION IS—how much more land will we take before there's nothing left? How many forests will we cut before the last leopard, the last bear, has nowhere to go? How many more people have to die before we realize this isn't their fault?

sniffing, searching. In Anantnag, in Baramulla, in Kupwara—everywhere near the forests—you hear stories. Someone saw a bear outside their door. Someone else found a leopard under their porch. The animals are learning. They know where to look. In some places, they have started to come during the day.

It wasn't always like this. Older generations remember a time when leopards stayed deep in the forests, when bears were a rare sight. They speak about how things have changed, how once there were vast stretches of trees between villages and the wild.

Now, the boundary is thin. Now, the wild is at their doorstep.

The result? A woman goes to collect firewood. She doesn't come back. A boy is playing outside, near the fence. He doesn't come back either. And when a wild animal kills, the villagers kill back. People gather. They take whatever they have—sticks, stones, fire. If they catch the animal, they beat it to death. If not, they demand the government to do something.

But what can the government do? Wildlife officials come, tranquilizer guns ready. If they manage to capture the animal, they

take it deep into the forest, release it, and hope it doesn't come back. Sometimes, they relocate it to Dachigam or some far-off place. But leopards have long memories. Bears follow their noses. They return. And then, someone else dies.

There's another reason why this is happening. The seasons aren't what they used to be. Winter doesn't come when it should. Summers stretch longer. The fruits that animals rely on in the forest—wild berries, nuts, and roots—aren't growing the way they used to. A hungry bear doesn't wait. A starving leopard doesn't hesitate. They come down

looking for food. And in that moment, a human life and an animal's instinct cross paths.

It's not just in the remote villages anymore. The conflict is reaching towns, cities. In 2023, a leopard was spotted near a hospital in Srinagar. Another was seen wandering through a university campus. Videos spread on social media—blurry images of a leopard sprinting past a main road, a bear climbing into someone's backyard. The warnings go out: stay indoors, be careful, report any sightings. But by then, it's already too late.

This is a war where no one

wins. People are afraid. Animals are killed. Villagers bury their dead. The forests grow quieter, emptier. But the cycle continues.

What do we do? We can't kill them all. We can't stop living either. Some places have tried new ideas. In some villages, people use motion-sensor lights to scare away animals. In others, waste is stored properly, sealed off so that animals don't get used to human food. Forests are being replanted, but not fast enough. The government offers compensation when someone is attacked. But how much is a life worth? Rs 3 lakh for a death. Rs 1 lakh for an injury. Does that bring someone back?

And then there is the other side. The animals' side. Conservationists warn that killing wild animals is not the answer. Leopards and bears are protected species. If they disappear, the balance of nature shifts. The ecosystem suffers. When a leopard is killed, the smaller animals it once hunted—monkeys, wild boars—multiply rapidly, causing a different kind of damage. When a bear is killed, it doesn't just mean one less predator in the forest. It means an orphaned cub struggling to survive. It means a species pushed closer to the brink.

The Forest Department is trying. They build watchtowers. They set up rapid response teams. They conduct awareness drives, telling villagers what to do, how to react. Don't run. Don't panic. Stand your ground. But when a bear comes charging, when a leopard lunges, does anyone remember those instructions?

Maybe the real question isn't how to stop animal attacks. Maybe the question is—how much more land will we take before there's nothing left? How many forests will we cut before the last leopard, the last bear, has nowhere to go? How many more people have to die before we realize this isn't their fault?

And when that last tree falls, when the last wild thing is gone—will we finally understand? Or will we just build more houses?

The author is an English language instructor based out of Pulwama.

Practical Tips to Safely Fast During Ramazan

Azra Chatur

The holy month of Ramazan is a special month of the year for Muslims around the world. This is a time when Muslims connect more deeply with their religion, reflect on themselves, and give back to their community.

There are different kinds of Muslims and different traditions within the religion. When it comes to Ramazan, fasting is a ritual shared by nearly all.

Fasting during Ramazan involves not eating food or drinking water between sunrise and sunset for the entire month.

Ramazan provides the reward of self-growth and the opportunity to learn more about our religion and ourselves. These spiritual rewards require hard work and dedication to praying, a commitment to charity, and willpower when fasting.

Muslims follow a calendar based on the motion of the moon. Every year, Ramazan falls 15 days earlier than the last. Depending on where you live in the world, the days may be short or long.

The month often begins with an optimistic energy, and practitioners may set many spiritual goals. However, it can be easy to falter as you try to maintain your health while fasting and balancing your regular day-to-day responsibilities.

Here are some practical tips and tricks to support a safe, successful fast during Ramazan.

Don't skip your morning meal. There are only two opportunities to eat during Ramadan: in the early morning before sunrise (*Suhoor*) and after sunset in the evening (*Iftar*).

The morning meal can be easy to skip, as it's difficult to have an appetite so early in the morning.

However, Nazima Qureshi, RD, MPH and author of *The Healthy Ramadan Guide*, explains that it's extremely important that you



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don't skip this meal. The food choices you make will affect your energy throughout the day.

"A lot of times people will turn to simple carbohydrates for the morning meal," says Qureshi. "But simple carbohydrates will not provide long-term energy."

Instead, she recommends eating whole grains paired with healthy fats and proteins as well as fruits and veggies. These include dishes such as:

- Savory oatmeal
- Power pancakes
- Strawberry-chocolate overnight oats

Hydration

Drinking water is vitally important and has many health benefits.

Not drinking enough water can result in poor mood, Trusted Source and increased tiredness, Trusted Source. This can affect energy levels and memory, Trusted Source.

Maintaining water intake can also help manage chronic health conditions and has a role in preventing and treating headaches, Trusted Source, migraines, Trusted Source, kidney stones, Trusted Source, and constipation, Trusted Source, as well as maintaining blood pressure, Trusted Source.

There's also some evidence that staying hydrated lowers appetite. This is especially useful when you can't eat for the entire day!

But how do you stay hydrated when you can't drink water between sunrise and sunset?

Use the time before sunrise and after sunset as an opportunity to rehydrate and meet the recom-

mended water intake. Keep a water bottle close throughout the night and drink whenever possible.

It can also be helpful to pay attention to the foods you're eating. While sweets during Ramadan can be very tempting, try to choose foods with high water content instead.

Qureshi recommends integrating water-filled fruits and vegetables into your evening meal, such as:

- Strawberries
- Watermelon
- Cantaloupe
- Cucumbers
- Zucchini
- Bell Pepper
- Tomatoes

If Ramadan falls during a warmer season, dress cool and try to avoid direct sun.

Be conscious of portions

Traditional foods are very important for Muslims, especially during Ramadan.

I love the traditional foods of-

fered at gatherings during special religious holidays such as Eid and Navroz. However, my family and I always try to be mindful of portions, as our cultural foods can be very oily and heavy. Even though it tastes amazing, I feel exhausted and tired the next day if I overdo it.

Ramadan isn't a one-day event, it's a month-long event.

While breaking the fast is a celebration, eating traditional foods every evening may not be the best idea. After a whole day of not eating and feeling hungry, overeating is also common. This may lead to morning tiredness and weight gain over the month.

Qureshi recommends breaking the fast by eating a date, some fruit, and drinking some water. At this point, she recommends pausing and completing the evening prayer before diving into any food.

"The natural sugars from the fruit will allow your body to register that you have had food. You won't feel like you're starving, and you're less likely to overeat," Qureshi explains.

For the evening meal, Qureshi recommends using your plate as a guide. Try to distribute your food as follows:

- Vegetables or salad: Half a plate.
- Carbohydrates: Quarter of a plate. If you do choose to eat refined carbohydrates, be mindful to keep it to a minimum.
- Protein: Quarter of a plate.

Understand your health

Having a chronic medical condition doesn't mean that you aren't able to fast. It does mean that it's essential to plan ahead and make the necessary adjustments, though.

Wasem Alsabbagh, BScPharm, PhD, a licensed clinical pharmacist and assistant professor at the University of Waterloo, explains that most medications can and should be continued while fasting.

However, the time you take them should be adjusted to fit the fasting schedule of the evening meal and morning meal.

"If fasting worsens the medical condition, even after modifying the medications' schedule, patients should not fast," Alsabbagh says.

This includes critical illnesses like those requiring hospitalization, diabetes that requires consistent supply of food and drink to manage blood sugars, and certain cancers.

People with common medical conditions such as diabetes and hypertension can still fast as long as their conditions are stable and controlled. However, they'll need to closely monitor blood sugars and blood pressure, ensure adequate hydration, and adjust the timing of their medications.

Above all, Alsabbagh encourages an open and communicative relationship with your healthcare professional to ensure that it's safe for you to fast. You should also discuss adjusting medications.

If fasting doesn't align with your health during Ramadan, not to worry. Ramadan can still be honored by making up fasting days later or through charity.

The bottom line

Ramadan is a time for celebration and spiritual growth. It's also a challenging time as Muslims undertake the trial of fasting for the month.

Use these tips to stay energized while fasting during the day and enjoying cultural foods when the sun goes down.

The author is BSc Pharm, is a freelance writer based in Edmonton, Canada. Passionate about writing, she strives to use her evidence-based pharmacy knowledge to promote health and wellness. The article was originally published by Healthline

Staff Shortage At SKIMS A Challenge: Govt

'Theatre Block, ENT Block At SMHS Under Construction'

Agencies

Srinagar: Jammu and Kashmir government on Saturday said that the shortage of staff at SKIMS Soura is a challenge as the patient load at OPD and IPD is increasing with each passing day. Replying to the question of MLA Tanvir Sadiq, Health and Medical Education Department Minister Sakina Itoo said that the patient load at OPD and IPD in SKIMS is increasing day by day, however, the shortage of staff is a challenge.

"In this regard the issue has been raised with concerned recruitment agencies. Furthermore H&ME Department recently notified the recruitment rules 2025 pertaining to SKIMS have been notified vide S.O 29 dated 23.01.2025 which will pave way for promotion of staff in different categories and will cause further vacancies at

entry level," she said.

Regarding SMHS, Sakina said that the Government SMHS Hospital witnesses 3500 patients on a daily basis in causality, OPD & IPD and it is not a fact that the healthcare infrastructure is under severe stress in Government Hospital Srinagar.

"The healthcare infrastructure is the first priority of the administration. Keeping in view, the rise in patient inflow, different projects like "Construction of Theatre block" with project cost of Rs. 5024.74 Lacs, "30 Bedded ENT Block" with project cost of Rs. 499.00 lacs is under construction alongwith up-gradation of Medical causality with estimated cost of Rs. 299.85 lacs and with a proposal for up-gradation of Triage & Augmentation of lifts," she said.

"These projects will provide further facilities like HD Waras

(18 Bed) pre-post-operative wards (37) Drug /CSSD stores (2 each) Blood Bank, Gas Bank which will enhance the healthcare facilities in the said hospital," she added.

Regarding JLN Sakina said that it is a fact that the Hospital has witnessed a sharp rise in patient inflow, for which infrastructure is being developed by the H&ME Department, as one G+4 additional block is under process which shall be completed within short period of time by the executive agency (JKHB).

"More over the CT scan has been installed recently. As far as the manpower is concerned almost all the sanctioned posts of Consultants, Medical Officers are filled, but there are some posts of Paramedics lying vacant in this Hospital, however such shortage is being compensated by the manpower provided under NHM," she added. (KNO)

Ministers Not Obligated To Reply Zero Hour Questions: Speaker

Observer News Service

Jammu: During Zero Hour in the ongoing Assembly session of Jammu & Kashmir Legislative Assembly, Speaker, Abdul Rahim Rather, clarified that, as per established rules, the Ministers cannot be asked to provide impromptu responses to issues raised by the MLAs without prior notice.

He stated that without prior intimation, the concerned Ministers would be unable to present their positions on such matters.

The session witnessed several pressing public issues being highlighted by the MLAs.

Dr. Narinder Singh Raina, MLA RS Pura, sought House's attention towards the notices served to 39 shopkeepers in Satwari for their relocation due to construction of the Delhi-Amritsar-Katra Expressway. He was joined by

MLAs Vikram Randhawa and Sham Lal Sharma in demanding withdrawal of the notices until the affected shopkeepers are rehabilitated as per government assurances.

Dr. Bharat Bhushan, MLA Kathua, raised concerns over increasing accidental deaths in Kathua due to over speeding dumpers carrying construction material. He urged that these vehicles should be restricted from plying through town's interiors to prevent further loss of lives.

The issue of road blockages due to incessant rains and snowfall was one of the major issues brought up by MLAs Sajad Shaheen, Javaid Mirchal and Qaisar Jamshed Lone.

They highlighted the plight of residents in remote areas such as MahuMangit, Gool, and Neel in Banihal, as well as Machil and Karnah in Kupwara district, who are facing hardships due

to road closures. They urged for immediate measures to restore connectivity to these hilly regions. They also demanded quality power supply to these areas especially during sehri and Ifar timings.

Senior Assembly member, Ghulam Ahmad Mir demanded an extension in the deadline for those constructing houses under the Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana (PMAY) in remote areas. He maintained that the people whose land falls under the Forest Rights Act (FRA) are unable to meet the current deadline of March 31, 2025, and should be granted a sympathetic extension, considering their tribal and economically weaker backgrounds.

MLA Bijbehara, Dr. Bashir Veeri, called for initiating the settlement of villages in Anantnag to facilitate modernization and updating of revenue records. He also pressed for

immediate posting of Patwaris in his constituency, as people are facing difficulties in obtaining revenue extracts necessary for securing credit amid the sowing season in the Valley.

Later, MLA Habbakadal, Shamima Firdous, raised the issue of electricity curtailments to several consumers in her area who failed to pay fines being charged by the concerned Department. She demanded sympathetic consideration to their pleas in view of the holy month of Ramadhan and restoring their power connections till they pay their bills.

MLA Chenani, Balwant Singh Mankotia, also raised an issue regarding a bridge declared unsafe in his constituency due to which one lakh population is being affected. He demanded for release of funds for undertaking the necessary repairs so that the people of vicinity would get relief.

CONTD. FROM FRONT PAGE

Omar Steps

Conference legislator Sajad Gani Lone in the House.

The cabinet sub-committee headed by Itoo with ministers Satish Sharma and Javed Rana as its members was constituted in December last year and is going to submit its report to the council of ministers headed by Chief Minister Omar Abdullah.

Member Parliament Syed Agha Ruhuallah Mehdi expressed shock at the government's reply in the assembly. "I hope this line saying 'no specific timeline has been fixed for submitting the report' in the reply is some clerical error or some miscommunication between the department and the Chief Minister's office@CM J&K should clarify this" Ruhuallah wrote on X.

"If it is not, then it is a blatant lie and betrayal with the students who raised the issue with their elected government and showed faith and trust in the word and response given to them," he wrote further.

"There can't be a political catastrophe bigger than this when an elected government deceives its people. I didn't speak on this matter after the students got the assurance from the CM last time because I was expecting the government to do its job in the given time as they had assured. But this response has shocked me. I will not sit quiet on this. I will pick the matter from where I left it after the assurance given to the students," Ruhuallah wrote.

"I hope the government gives some clarity on this matter and assures us that this reply is a result of some mistake not a deliberate blatant lie," he added.

Reservation has become a major issue in Jammu and Kashmir following the Central government's decision to add more communities to the reserved category and expand quotas in the UT over the past five years. There are increasing objections to the Centre's move to push the reservation quota to 70 per cent in Jammu and Kashmir.

"The Cabinet Sub Committee stands constituted vide Government order No. 2061- JKGAD of 2024, dated 10.12.2024 to examine the grievances projected by a section of aspirants for various posts regarding reservation rules. However, no specific timeline has been fixed for submitting the report," the minister said in response to Lone, who had asked whether a six months time period had been granted to the panel to review the existing reservation policy.

Itoo said that a total of 5,39,306 Scheduled Tribe population – 4,59,493 in Jammu division and 79,813 in Kashmir division – have obtained ST certificates in the last two years effective from April 2023, while 67,112 certificates have been issued to scheduled caste population of Jammu region during the same period.

The minister said 1,379 villages in Jammu and 1,229 villages in Kashmir have benefited under Reserved Backward Area (RBA), while 551 villages of Jammu zone have benefited under International Border category. Similarly, 268 villages in Jammu and 16 in Kashmir have benefited under Actual line of Control (ALC) category.

The government has also issued 27,420 certificates to the Economically Weaker Section (EWS) in Jammu division and 2,273 certificates to EWS in Kashmir valley in the past two years, effective from April 1, 2023.

Reservation System

disparity. It highlights stark regional imbalances in the issuance of reservation certificates across Jammu and Kashmir. The findings are a shocker," the Handwara MLA said at a press conference.

He said 100 per cent of the 67,112 Scheduled Caste (SC) certificates issued in the Union Territory had exclusively been in Jammu.

"The Scheduled Tribe (ST) category showed Jammu issuing 4,59,493 certificates (85.3 per cent) while Kashmir issued only 79,813 (14.7 per cent). Similar imbalances exist for Economically Weaker Sections (EWS) – 92.3 per cent in Jammu and 7.7 per cent in Kashmir," he said.

"For the Actual Line of Control, 94.3 per cent certificates have been issued in Jammu and only 5.7 per cent in Kashmir, and 100 per cent in Jammu for International Border categories," he added.

Even in the Reserved Backward Area category, Jammu led with 52.8 per cent of the certificates against Kashmir's 48.2 per cent, Lone alleged.

The Handwara MLA said these disparities revealed a greater loss of quotas to the Kashmiri-speaking population than previously anticipated.

"The whole reservation concept is rigged against the Kashmiri-speaking population and against STs or EWS living in Kashmir," he said.

Lone claimed even ST populations residing in Kashmir were disadvantaged, comprising only 15 per cent of total applicants from the pool.

He criticised the committee established by the Union Territory government on December 10 to address these grievances, saying it lacked a specific timeline for submitting its report despite previous indications of a six-month deadline.

"The biggest perpetrators are the

officers in Kashmir who do not issue such certificates here but are issued in Jammu. Is it a policy or are they doing it on their own? I do not know," he said.

Asserting he was not against reservation, Lone said he was against the "murder of merit".

"There is a reservation of 60 per cent. But within that reservation is a much bigger scam. It is a post-dated cheque for disaster. Kashmiris not making it to the KAS (Kashmir Administrative Service) or other exams is not because they are incompetent. It is the scourge of reservation that is killing their competence," the People's Conference chief said.

"If, for example, 100 candidates appear in an exam, 60 seats are reserved. Out of that, 50.78 seats are for Jammu and 9.22 for Kashmir. So, before you apply reservation, Kashmiris have already been crowded out," he added.

He pinned the blame on all Jammu and Kashmir governments, saying this had silently carried on since 1989.

"Academically, it will take a century to undo the damage," he added.

Lone said the People's Conference would organise a seminar and invite academics to deliberate on the issue.

Wet Spell Ends

ski destination Gulmarg and Sonamarg, also witnessed snowfall for the fourth straight day. Srinagar and other lower regions, however, experienced continuous rainfall throughout the day.

As per official reports, Sadhna Top and Razdan Top received 3 feet of

snowfall, while Zojila and Sinthan Top recorded 2.5 feet. Peer ki Gali, Sonamarg, and Z Gali accumulated 2 feet of snow, whereas Gulmarg and Doodhpatri saw 1 foot each.

The Meteorological Department (MeT) had earlier issued a yellow alert from March 13 to 15. The wet spell has effectively addressed the region's rainfall deficit, which persisted from December to February.

At Sangam station, the Jhelum River was flowing above 6 feet, while at Ram Munshi Bagh, the level was over 5 feet by 6:00 PM. The Asham gauge recorded a water level of 2.40 feet. Several smaller streams and nullahs also witnessed rising water levels, nearing the warning threshold. Vaishow Nallah in Khudwani, for instance, was flowing at 1591.121m—just 3 meters below the alert level.

Other streams in the Valley also recorded a surge in water levels due to the continued precipitation.

The MeT department has predicted brief spells of light rain and snow in some areas until Sunday morning, with weather expected to improve by the afternoon. Director MeT, Dr. Mukhtar Ahmad, forecasted generally dry conditions from March 17 to 25.

Authorities have issued an advisory urging travelers, tourists, and transporters to adhere to administrative and traffic guidelines. Farmers have been advised to halt agricultural activities until March 16, while residents have been warned to avoid avalanche-prone and landslide-prone areas, as mudslides and shooting stones are expected in vulnerable zones.

J&K Unemployment

told the Assembly on Saturday.

Replying to a question by National Conference MLA Mubarak Gul, Dar said on behalf of employment minister Surinder Choudhary that the unemployment rate did not increase drastically in Jammu and Kashmir since 2019.

Quoting J-K's 2025 Economic Survey report, Dar said the unemployment rate was 6.7 per cent in 2019-20, which fell to 5.9 per cent in 2020-21, 5.2 per cent in 2021-22, 4.4 per cent in 2022-23, and 6.1 per cent in 2023-24.

"The steady decline in the unemployment rate together with the increases in LFPR and WPR reflects the success of targeted policies and initiatives aimed at boosting the labour market to sustain economic growth, further reduce unemployment, and elevate the overall quality of life for J&K citizens," Dar said.

Referring to the steps taken to boost employment generation, Dar said 11,526 selections have been made by the J-K Public Service Commission and J-K Services Selection Board in the past two years – 4,836 (1,141 by JKPSC and 3,695 by JKSSB) in 2023, and 6,690 (1,034 by JKPSC and 5,656 by JKSSB) in 2024.

In the private sector, 45,688 unemployed youth were provided jobs in the industrial sector in 2022-23 (15,719) and 2023-24 (29,969), Dar said.

In addition, 9.58 lakh self-employment opportunities were generated through schemes such as 'Mumkin', 'Tejaswani', Prime Minister's

Employment Generation Programme (PMEGP) and Rural Employment Generation Programme (REGP) in the last four years, the minister said, adding that 2,99,266 livelihood opportunities were created in 2021-22, 2,83,664 in 2022-23, 2,38,675 in 2023-24 and 1,36,165 in 2024-25 up to January this year.

Under the Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act (MGNREGA), 3.01 crore person-days were generated up to January 2025, providing employment to 8.07 lakh households, Dar said.

The minister said the government has also taken major initiatives with a focus on youth development, entrepreneurship, and livelihood generation.

The government has initiated 'Mission Yuva' for self-employment and entrepreneurship to identify, support, and empower five lakh potential entrepreneurs through a structured and tech-enabled approach, Dar said.

The key goals of this initiative are to create over 1,37,000 new enterprises across sectors and to generate 4.25 lakh employment opportunities over the five-year programme, he added.

In the last four years, 246 job fairs were organised in which 4,893 placements were made by 2,760 companies, besides recommending 6,640 candidates for skill training, Dar said.

The government is also facilitating self-employment opportunities to job seekers through various line departments, the minister said, adding that it has started imparting skill development training across the Union Territory.



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UNRAVEL KASHMIR

Rohit Could Stay On As Test Captain But Opinions In BCCI Divided

Press Trust of India

NEW DELHI: The Champions Trophy triumph has added to the aura of Rohit Sharma and it won't be a surprise if he travels to England as the leader of the pack even though the selectors are yet to make a decision on the Test tour starting June 20.

It is understood that a consensus has not been reached on Rohit as an automatic choice for captaincy. Jasprit Bumrah's fitness status is an issue and so does the lack of a distinct leadership prospect in the next line of young Indian players.

Rohit was under pressure to perform in Dubai, as a 1-3 series defeat in Australia accentuated his own poor form. But the triumphant run in the UAE has certainly given the skipper breathing space and elbow room.

But the question remains if the national selection committee will consider success in ODI format while deciding on the



more challenging Test format, where the returns have been modest of late.

The team suffered six hard-to-digest defeats in the last World Test Championship cycle.

The new cycle for India will begin with the England series, where the first Test will be played at the Leeds.

"Technically, Rohit remains the Test captain. He voluntarily benched himself from

the last Test in Sydney where he explained that a team can't carry on with multiple out of form batters.

"After Australia Tests, India haven't played any Tests and hence there has been no change in Test captaincy. Also Rohit never said he doesn't want to play Tests," a BCCI source told PTI on the condition of anonymity.

However, he added that the national selection committee hasn't yet decided on the England series.

"The selection committee gets a break during IPL. Obviously with all matches televised, they always don't need to travel unless they have some specific strategy or they want to watch a particular player from up close," the source added.

"So once IPL starts, the blueprint for England series will be drawn at some point. But (coach) Gautam Gambhir's view point will have a lot of weightage," he added.

Short TAKES

Nitish Kumar Reddy To Join SRH After Clearing Fitness Test

All-rounder Nitish Kumar Reddy is all set to join Sunrisers Hyderabad after recuperating from a side strain that kept him on the sidelines since January.

PTI has learned that Nitish successfully completed all the fitness test routines, including the yo-yo test, at the BCCI Centre of Excellence here, and the physios have given him a go-ahead.

The 21-year-old Andhra cricketer's last appearance for India was during the first T20I against England at the Eden Gardens on January 22, but he did not bat or bowl in that match.

Nitish trained at nets ahead of the second T20I at Chennai, but was ruled out of that match and five-match series with a side strain.

Nitish was retained by the Hyderabad outfit for Rs 6 crore ahead of last year's players' auction after he made 303 runs for them from 13 matches at a strike-rate of 143.

Aus F1 GP: Norris Takes Pole In Season-Opener, Hamilton 8th

McLaren's Lando Norris kept his cool on a sweltering afternoon at Albert Park to take pole position at the season-opening Australian Grand Prix on Saturday as his teammate Oscar Piastri joined him on the front row.

Defending champion Max Verstappen will start his Red Bull car third on the grid ahead of fourth-placed Mercedes driver George Russell but it was a disappointing session for Ferrari with Charles Leclerc to start seventh and Lewis Hamilton eighth.

Briton Norris lapped the lakeside circuit in one minute, 15.096 seconds, 0.084 ahead of Melbourne native Piastri, who will hope to become Australia's first home winner since the race joined F1's global calendar in 1985.

Newcastle Aim To Break 70-Year Drought Against Liverpool

Liverpool can win the first trophy of the Arne Slot era in Sunday's League Cup final against a Newcastle side desperate to end the club's 56-year wait for major silverware. In the first final of the English domestic season, runaway Premier League leaders Liverpool head to Wembley aiming to erase the bitter taste of their Champions League exit against Paris Saint-Germain on Tuesday. The Reds were beaten 4-1 on penalties by PSG in the last 16 second leg at Anfield.

It was a rare blow in what has been a successful first season in charge for Slot, who arrived from Feyenoord to succeed Jurgen Klopp last year.

Sitting 15 points clear at the top of the Premier League, the Reds are within touching distance of a record-equaling 20th English title and their first since 2020.

Don't Get Nervous, No Announcements: Kohli Rubbishes Retirement Rumours

Press Trust of India

BENGALURU: Champion batter Virat Kohli on Saturday emphatically said he is not mulling retirement at the moment as he has been enjoying the game, and the "competitive streak" inside him is very much intact.

Kohli displayed the old spark while playing an important hand in India's recent Champions Trophy victory in Dubai, after which skipper Rohit Sharma too dismissed the retirement talks surrounding him.

"Don't get nervous. I'm not making any announcements. As of now everything is fine. I still love playing the game," Kohli said during a talk session at the RCB Innovation Lab.

Kohli said he no longer aspires to achieve milestones, but he is playing cricket for the "pure joy" of it.

"It's pretty much come down



to just the pure joy, enjoyment, competitive streak, and love for the game. And as long as that is there I will continue to play. As

I said today I am not playing for any achievement," he said.

Kohli said that innate "competitive streak" makes it tougher for a sportsman to find the right time to move away from the game.

"You know the competitive streak doesn't allow you to find the answer (for the retirement question). I had a very interesting conversation about this with Rahul Dravid. He said you always have to stay in touch with yourself.

"Figure out where you are placed in your life and the answer is not that easy. You might be going through a lean phase and you feel like this is it. But it might not be. But then when it is time my competitive streak would not allow me to accept it. Maybe one more month.

"Maybe six more months. So I think it's a fine balance. At this point of time in my life I feel pretty happy," he explained.

I Received Threats After 2021 T20 WC: Chakravarthy

Agencies

Indian spinner Varun Chakravarthy has taken the cricket world by storm with his match-winning performances in the just-concluded Champions Trophy.

The last minute entrant into the Indian squad, the mystery spinner took 9 wickets in just three matches as he helped guide India to the title win over New Zealand on March 9.

Now, in an interview, the Tamil Nadu spinner has recalled tough times he endured after his dismal performance at the 2021 T20 World Cup.

Following the team's early exit from the tournament, Chakravarthy said he received threatening calls and thought it was the end of his career.

"It was a very bad time for me. I fell into depression because I felt I wasn't doing justice even after being selected for the World Cup.



I regretted not taking a single wicket in that tournament. After that, I was out of the team for three consecutive years. I felt that a comeback was far more difficult than my debut," he told Gobinath on his YouTube channel.

"After the 2021 World Cup, I received threat calls. People said, 'Don't come to India. If you try, you won't be able to'. People approached my house and tracked me down, and I sometimes had to hide.

"When I was returning from the airport, some people followed me on their bikes. It happens. I can understand fans are emotional," he added.

Dignified Farewell

Transforming Kashmir's Final Rides

In Kashmir, it is a painful irony that the departed, who leave behind a lifetime of earnings, are often transported to their final resting place in load carriers – vehicles they would never have used for commuting while alive. This stark contrast raises a profound question: shouldn't every soul be granted a dignified farewell, just as they lived with dignity? It is time to ensure that the last journey of our loved ones reflects the respect and honor they deserve.

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