

## J&K Women's Support Cells Face Shutdown, Survivors In Lurch

Dabirah Hassan

Srinagar: Thousands of women in Jammu & Kashmir who have sought refuge in the Special Cells for Women are now left in uncertainty, as the National Commission for Women (NCW) has decided not to extend the project beyond March 31, 2025.

The move has raised serious concerns about the fate of survivors of gender-based violence, who rely on these support structures for justice and



rehabilitation. Established under the Violence-Free Home - A Woman's Right initiative, the

**THESE CELLS HAVE SO FAR HANDLED over 9,800 cases of violence and abuse."**

Special Cells have been operational since November 2021, providing critical psycho-social-legal support to women in distress.

Implemented by the Tata

Institute of Social Sciences (TISS) in collaboration with the J&K Home and Social Welfare Departments, these cells have so far handled over 9,800 cases of violence and abuse.

The uniqueness of these Special Cells lies in their strategic location—within the police stations of each district of Jammu & Kashmir. This ensures that women receive smooth access to the criminal justice system with the support of trained social workers, bridging the gap between

survivors and legal redress.

However, with the NCW's decision to discontinue funding, these women may find themselves abandoned mid-process, without support or protection.

"We are not demanding permanent jobs, but we want to continue serving survivors," said a social worker from the project, part of a dedicated team of 40 social workers and two regional coordinators.

"Without these services, countless women | [More on P10](#)

## Spl Judge NIA Raja Tasleem Abbas No More



Observer News Service

Srinagar: Raja Mohammad Tasleem Abbas Khan, Additional District and Sessions Judge, passed away Thursday night, at the Institute of Liver and Biliary Sciences (ILBS) in New Delhi. He was 57. Raja Tasleem, had been undergoing treatment for liver-related ailments at the ILBS for the last several days. His untimely demise comes at the peak of his career. | [More on P10](#)

## NIA Raids 12 Locations In Jammu Agencies

Jammu: Intensifying the crackdown against terror supporters in Jammu sleuths of National Investigation Agency (NIA) carried out raids at 12 locations in the region on Wednesday.

The raids, according to a NIA statement, were held in connection with infiltration of Lashkar-e-Toiba and Jaish-e-Mohammad terrorists.

The statement said that the NIA received information regarding infiltration of LeT and JeM terrorists into India through the international Border (IB) and Line of Control (LoC). "Terrorists were facilitated by Overground Workers (OGWS) and terror associates living in border areas. Besides providing | [More on P10](#)

## Speaker, PDP's Parra Spar Over Cut Motions

Observer News Service

Jammu: The Jammu and Kashmir Assembly on Wednesday witnessed a ruckus over Peoples Democratic Party (PDP) MLA Waheed-ur-Rehman Parra's allegation that his cut motions in the grants were erased.

The supposed grievance prompted Speaker Abdul Rahim Rather to seek an apology from him for allegedly misleading the public and media.

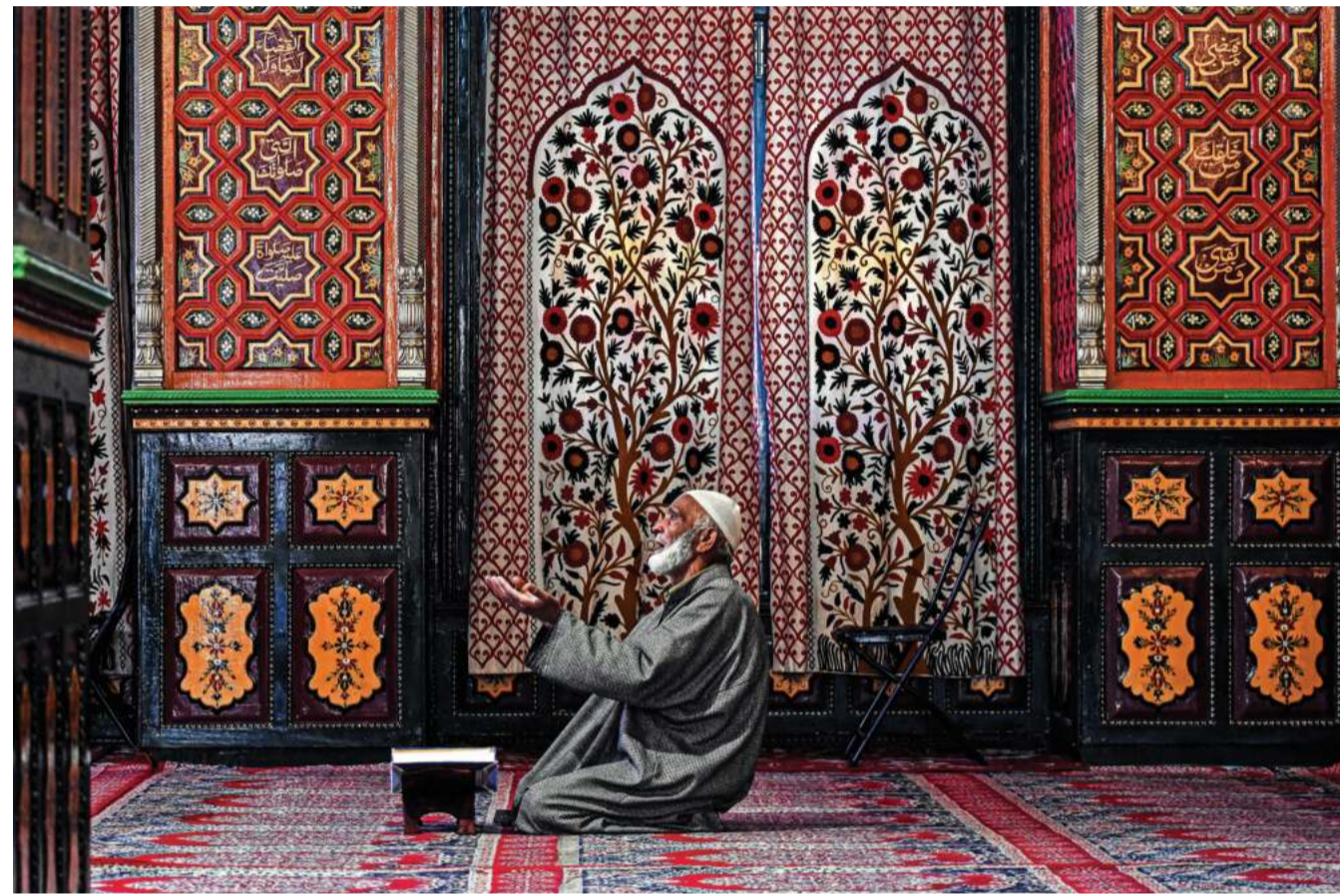
The Speaker clarified that, as per Rule 227 of the Assembly, MLAs must submit cut motions three days before the presentation of grants. However, Parra's motions were received just a day prior.

Referring to Parra's post on X, where he claimed he was denied the opportunity to submit cut motions, the Speaker accused

him of attempting to influence public opinion unfairly. "You are an educated member and should not have misled the public," he said, urging Parra to apologize.

Parra defended his actions, stating that he had followed the same procedure used in previous sessions. His remarks led to a heated exchange with National Conference (NC) members and an Independent MLA, briefly disrupting proceedings.

The Speaker intervened, calling for order and reiterating that cut motions must be submitted in advance to allow time for compilation and responses from concerned departments. He criticized Parra for emailing his submissions at 11:37 PM, just a day before the session, making it difficult to process them in time. Despite the | [More on P10](#)



An elderly man prays inside shrine of Dastgeer Sahib in Khanyar, Srinagar during the holy month of Ramazan. KO photo By Faisal Khan

## Media Biggest Casualty In J&K: Parra



PDP MLA Waheed-ur-Rehman Parra on Wednesday raised serious concerns over press freedom in Jammu and Kashmir, stating that the media has been the biggest casualty in the region. He advocated for | [More on P10](#)

## Stray Dog Menace Warrants Urgent, Serious Attention: HC

M Ahmad

Srinagar: The menace posed by stray dogs warrants immediate and serious attention, the High Court of J&K and Ladakh has said.

Hearing clubbed Public Interest Litigations, a bench of Chief Justice Tashi Rabstan and Justice M.A. Chowdhary said that issues raised in these PILs require urgent deliberation and appropriate remedial measures to mitigate the threat to public safety.

Meanwhile, Ms. Gauri Maulekhi, filed an application, putting forth various suggestions in compliance to order dated February 11 whereby



she was directed to submit her suggestions on the issue of dog population management in the Union Territories of Jammu and Kashmir and Ladakh.

She was impleaded as party respondent last year to assist the court after she contended among others that she is a member of State Animal Birth Control Implementation and Monitoring Committee

of Jammu and Kashmir, Gujarat, Uttar Pradesh, Haryana, Jharkhand, Bihar and Uttarakhand, and has shown keen interest in proper management of the street dogs which has created various issues for the public.

T.M. Shamsi, DSGI, submitted that a compliance report, in terms of order dated 11 February 2025, has been filed. "He shall ensure that a copy of the said report is furnished to Ms. Gauri Maulekhi forthwith, either through e-mail or WhatsApp," the court said.

Bikramdeep Singh, Dy. AG, submitted that in a connected PIL, the Union Territory of Jammu & | [More on P10](#)

## J&K Assembly Erupts Over Rajouri Mystery Deaths

Observer News Service

Jammu: The demand for a Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) probe into the 17 mysterious deaths in Badhal village of Rajouri resonated in the Jammu and Kashmir Legislative Assembly on Wednesday, with MLAs alleging a larger conspiracy behind these fatalities and even linking them with the recent deaths in Kulgam and Kathua. The government informed the House that multiple toxins were detected in samples collected from the area and the viscera of the deceased.

As Question Hour commenced, National Conference

(NC) MLA Javed Iqbal Choudhary pressed for a CBI probe following Minister for Health and Medical Education Sakina Ittoo's revelation that nearly half a dozen toxins were identified in the collected samples.

"Different toxins have been found. It appears they were poisoned with a substantial amount," Choudhary stated, arguing that the deaths should not be seen in isolation from similar incidents in Kulgam and Kathua.

"This seems like an attempt to destabilize peace," he added, urging for a high-level investigation.

MLA Surankote Choudhary Muhammad | [More on P10](#)

## J&K Govt Forms Panel For Worker Regularisation

Observer News Service

Srinagar: The Jammu and Kashmir Government has constituted a panel to examine the issues related to the regularisation of casual, seasoned labourers or other workers in the region.

According to an official order issued by the General Administration

Department (GAD), the committee will be chaired by the Chief Secretary of Jammu and Kashmir and will include senior officials from key departments, including Finance, Planning, Law, and the General Administration Department. The Additional Chief Secretary to the Chief Minister will also be a member. | [More on P10](#)

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**PUBLIC NOTICE**

Where as I AMIR ABBAS BHAT S/O GHULAM RASOOL BHAT R/O BAT PORA ICHIGAM BUDGAM KASHMIR intends to apply in the Department of Tourism for Registration of my proposed Travel Unit under the name and style M/S KHAMENEI JOURNEYS Travel company situated at Ichigam Budgam, Kashmir under Tourist Trade Act 1978/82/2011-12. Whereas, I will submit State Subject/ Domicile Certificate, Qualification Certificate, Pan Card, Experience Certificate (Minimum 05 Years), Character Certificate (Police Department), Bank Statement (Minimum Balance 10000), Site Plan, Affidavit, Rent Deed duly attested by Sub - Registrar, Printing Material (Letter Head/ Visiting Card), Photograph of the Unit (Indoor and Outdoor) and Two passport size photographs to the Department of Tourism as per prescribed checklist prior to Registration of my unit as an Excursion Agency / Adventure Tour Operator. Now as per J&K Registration of Tourist Trade Act 1978/82/2011/12, before my case is processed for registration by the Competent Authority, the matter is hereby notified for information of general Public / Financial Institute/ Bank / Organization, etc for objection, if any and the same should reach to the Deputy Director Tourism Registration within a period of 15 days from the publication of this notice in leading local newspaper of the valey. No objection beyond a period of 15 days shall be entertained.

MCB

**PUBLIC NOTICE**

In Aadhaar Card records under Aadhaar No: xxxx 4609 my daughter's name has been recorded as NEELOFAR Jan D/o Mohammad Afzal wani instead of NEELOFAR afzal D/o Mohammad Afzal wani. Now I want to correct the same if anybody has any objection he/she may contact Concerned Authorities within seven (07) days from the date of publication of this notice after that no objection shall be entertained.

MCB

**PUBLIC NOTICE**

In Aadhaar Card records under Aadhaar No: xxxx 9823 my name has been recorded as subra bano W/o altaf hussain mir instead of sughra bano W/o altaf hussain mir. Now I want to correct the same if anybody has any objection he/she may contact Concerned Authorities within seven (07) days from the date of publication of this notice after that no objection shall be entertained.

MCB

**PUBLIC NOTICE**

In Aadhaar Card records under Aadhaar No: xxxx 4418 my son's name has been recorded as kamer ali ganie instead of qamar ali ganie. Now I want to correct the same if anybody has any objection he/she may contact Concerned Authorities within seven (07) days from the date of publication of this notice after that no objection shall be entertained.

MCB

**PUBLIC NOTICE**

The name of my son has been wrongly written in his DOB certificate issued by MC Pattan as Mohd Arsalan Dar S/o Javid Ahmad while his correct name is Mohammad Arsalan Dar S/o Javed Ahmad Dar which needs to be corrected. If anybody has any objection in this regard he/she may file his/her objection in the office of the MC Pattan within seven days. After that no objection shall be entertained.

MBP

**PUBLIC NOTICE**

I Mohammad YOUNUS CHOCHAN S/o Mohd MAQBOOL CHOCHAN R/o Amshipora Shopian want to change/correct my Son's Name which as per School Record is entered as KIFAYAT YOUNUS instead of correct name as per Aadhaar is KIFAYAT Ahmad. Now correction required.

fk0

**PUBLIC NOTICE**

I, Shahnawaz Ahmad Naikoo S/o Ghulam Qadir Naikoo R/o Vehil Chatawatan Shopian, want to correct my name and parentage on Aadhaar Record which has been wrongly entered as Shah Nawaz AH instead of Shahnawaz Ahmad Naikoo and parentage wrongly entered as Ghulam Qadir instead of Ghulam Qadir Naikoo. Now correction is required. If anybody has any objection, they may contact the concerned Aadhaar Centre Jammu/Srinagar or concerned authorities within 7 days.

fk0-r

**THE JAMMU & KASHMIR BOARD OF SCHOOL EDUCATION**  
**NEW CAMPUS, BEMINA, SRINAGAR**

**PUBLIC NOTICE**

I have passed/appeared in SSE/HSE-U/HSE-II (Class 10<sup>th</sup> under Roll No:139053098 Session: Annual Regular 2023 year: 2023 through Jammu & Kashmir Board of School Education. The error has been committed by School against Father's name as Rameez instead of Rameez Ahmad Wani. Now I have applied for correction in The Jammu & Kashmir Board of School Education, New Campus, Bemina, Srinagar. If any person has any objection in this regard may file the same in the office of the Assistant Secretary, Certificates Kashmir Division within seven days from the date of publication of this notice, after their expiry of said period, no objection will be entertained.



This is published for the information of the general public. The correct particulars be recorded as under:  
 Name: Maarib Rameez Wani  
 Father's name:- Rameez Ahmad Wani  
 Mother's name:- Nusrat  
 D.O.B:- 10/7/2006  
 Residence:- Madina Colony Lane 4, Rangpora Devipora Sgr  
 Mobile No:- 7780853911

Media Line Ads

**PUBLIC NOTICE**

**ATTENTION PLEASE**

This is information for the general public that i have lost my Provisional cum Character Certificate of Class 12th bearing Roll No 317002096. Now i want its Duplicate if any body having any objection contact Principal BABUL ILEM PUBLIC HR SEC SCHOOL Budgam, with in a period of 7 days. No objection shall be entertained after that.

**ADEEL AKHTER**  
**S/O MOHAMMAD IBRAHIM MALIK** MCB  
**R/O DADINA BUDGAM CELL: 6006057310**

**PUBLIC NOTICE**

This is information for the general public that in Birth Certificate of my daughter the name is entered as MEWISH BASHIR while her actual name is MEHWISH BASHIR. Now i want its correction, in this regard if anybody having any objection may contact BLOCK DEVELOPMENT OFFICER BUDGAM with in a period of seven days. No objection shall be entertained after that.

**Bashir Ahmad Wani**  
**F/o Mehvish Bashir** MCB  
**R/o SHOLIPORA BUDGAM**  
**CELL. 7006688559**

**PUBLIC NOTICE**

This is information for the general public that in Birth Certificate of my son the name is entered as HAZIM FIRDOUS while his actual name is MOHAMMAD HAZIM DAR and address is entered as GUND ARJUN KHANSAHIB while address is RETNI PORA BUDGAM. Now i want its correction, in this regard if anybody having any objection may contact BLOCK DEVELOPMENT OFFICER BUDGAM with in a period of seven days. No objection shall be entertained after that.

**FIRDOUS AHMAD DAR** MCB  
**F/o MOHAMMAD HAZIM DAR**  
**R/o RETNIPORA BUDGAM CELL. 7006834162**

**PUBLIC NOTICE**

Where as I MUBASHIR MOHI UD DIN S/O GULAM MOHI UD DIN R/O KHANPORA BUDGAM KASHMIR intends to apply in the Department of Tourism for Registration of my proposed Travel Unit under the name and style M/S BASEEJ HOLIDAYS Travel company situated at Budgam, Kashmir under Tourist Trade Act 1978/82/2011-12. Whereas, I will submit State Subject/ Domicile Certificate, Qualification Certificate, Pan Card, Experience Certificate (Minimum 05 Years), Character Certificate (Police Department), Bank Statement (Minimum Balance 10000), Site Plan, Affidavit, Rent Deed duly attested by Sub - Registrar, Printing Material (Letter Head/ Visiting Card), Photograph of the Unit (Indoor and Outdoor) and Two passport size photographs to the Department of Tourism as per prescribed checklist prior to Registration of my unit as an Excursion Agency / Adventure Tour Operator. Now as per J&K Registration of Tourist Trade Act 1978/82/2011/12, before my case is processed for registration by the Competent Authority, the matter is hereby notified for information of general Public / Financial Institute/ Bank / Organization, etc for objection, if any and the same should reach to the Deputy Director Tourism Registration within a period of 15 days from the publication of this notice in leading local newspaper of the valey. No objection beyond a period of 15 days shall be entertained.

MCB

**PUBLIC NOTICE**

In Aadhaar Card records under Aadhaar No: xxxx 4105 my name has been recorded as harija beigum W/o mohammad ibraheem thoker instead of Hajira bano w/o mohammad ibrahim thoker. Now I want to correct the same if anybody has any objection he/she may contact Concerned Authorities within seven (07) days from the date of publication of this notice after that no objection shall be entertained.

**HAJIRA BANO W/O Mohammad Ibrahim Thokar** MCB  
**R/O Chandapora**  
**Cell no 9103181704**

**PUBLIC NOTICE**

In Aadhaar Card records under Aadhaar No: xxxx 9874 my son's name has been recorded as KUMAIL HUSSAIN WANI S/o Mohammad Afzal wani instead of MASHOOQ hussain wani S/o Mohammad Afzal wani. Now I want to correct the same if anybody has any objection he/she may contact Concerned Authorities within seven (07) days from the date of publication of this notice after that no objection shall be entertained.

**MOHAMMAD AFZAL WANI F/O: MASHOOQ HUSSAIN WANI** MCB  
**R/O POONCHGUND BEERWAH**  
**Cell no 9103181704**

**Researchers Demonstrate New Technique For Boosting Plant Growth With Bacteria**

ANI

Researchers have successfully demonstrated a technique for encapsulating bacteria, which can subsequently be preserved and applied to plants to promote their growth and protect them from pests and infections. The technique paves the way for a variety of crop applications that will enable farmers to use these beneficial bacteria in conjunction with agrochemicals.

"Many of the beneficial bacteria we know of are fairly fragile, making it difficult to incorporate them into practical, shelf-stable products that can be applied to plant roots or leaves," says John Cheadle, co-lead author of a paper on the work and a Ph.D. student at North Carolina State University. "The technique we demonstrate here essentially stabilizes these bacteria, making it possible to develop customized probiotics for plants."

At issue are plant growth-promoting bacteria (PGPBs), which are microbes that benefit plant health and growth, helping plants extract nutrients from the environment and protecting them from pests or pathogens.

"A longstanding challenge for making use of these bacteria has been that if you tried to come up with a single application that combined them with agrochemicals, like pesticides or fertilizers, the bacteria would die," says Saad Khan, co-corresponding author of the paper and INVISTA Professor of Chemical and Biomolecular Engineering at NC State. "We wanted to develop a solution that would allow bacteria to be used in conjunction with chemicals already in widespread use by growers."

"By the same token, a healthy plant microbiome allows the plants to make better use of nutrients available in the soil and more resistant to pathogens," says Tahira Pirzada, co-corresponding author and a research scholar at NC State. "This may allow growers to use less fertilizer and pesticides without hurting crop production."

The new technique revolves around a custom-made emulsion, with only a handful of ingredients. One part of the emulsion consists of a saline solution that contains PGPBs. For the proof-of-concept demonstration, the researchers used the bacteria *Pseudomonas simiae* and *Azospirillum brasilense*. *P. simiae* acts as a biopesticide by promoting pathogen resistance; *A. brasilense* acts as a biofertilizer by fixing nitrogen.

The second part of the emulsion consists of a biodegradable oil and a biodegradable polymer derived from cellulose. The polymer can be loaded with agrochemical active ingredients, which means



**"We wanted to develop a solution that would allow bacteria to be used in conjunction with chemicals already in widespread use by growers"**

the emulsion can incorporate these ingredients without relying on environmentally harmful organic solvents, which are typically used in pesticide formulations. When the two parts of the emulsion are mixed together, the oil is broken into droplets that are distributed throughout the saline solution. The cellulose polymer sticks to the surface of these droplets, preventing the droplets from merging back together.

Essentially, the emulsion is a salad dressing with the oil droplets held in suspension throughout the saline solution. In practical terms, this would allow the PGPBs to be applied simultaneously with agrochemicals using the same emulsion.

To see how well the emulsion worked, the researchers did two tests. First, the researchers compared the survival of PGPBs in the emulsion to the survival of PGPBs in the saline solution alone. Samples of each were stored at room temperature. After four weeks, the population of *P.*

*simiae* in the emulsion was 200% higher than the population in saline; the population of *A. brasilense* in the emulsion was 500% higher. Second, the researchers wanted to see how well pesticides would work when incorporated into the emulsion. For this, the researchers incorporated the pesticide fluopyram into the emulsion. They also added fluopyram to the saline solution by itself. The researchers then introduced *C. elegans* nematodes - which serve as a proxy for pests - into the emulsion and the saline solution.

"Not surprisingly, the pesticide in saline solution killed the pest very quickly - all of the pests were killed within an hour," says Mariam Sohail, co-lead author of the paper and a recent Ph.D. graduate from NC State. "The emulsion worked more gradually, killing 95% of the pests within 72 hours. This is valuable to know, since it suggests our technique could be used strategically to provide sustained protection against specific pests or pathogens."

"Ultimately, we found our technique allows us to incorporate multiple active ingredients into a single delivery system and allows the PGPBs to survive and thrive," Sohail says. "We also demonstrated that the emulsion improved the survival and reproductive success of these bacteria when applied to soil, as compared to applying the bacteria to the soil without the emulsion," Cheadle says. "Next steps will involve greenhouse testing and, later, microplots," says Khan. "We will likely want to evaluate different PGPBs and other active ingredients to see how they perform with different targeted plant species."

**Office of the Executive Engineer Lake Division No. 1st. J&K Lake Conservation and Management Authority Srinagar,**

**ADDENDUM**

Subject:- Solid Waste Management of Dal & Nigeen Lake for the Year 2025\_26.  
 Reference:- This office NIT No.05 of 2024-25 issued vide No.LD-1/3067-3094  
 dt:01.03.2025.

The below mentioned clause is added to the above referred NIT as clause 10;a and the bidders are advised to upload the details in the technical bid accordingly.

Technical Bid: The Technical bid shall consist of items/ documents as indicated below:

Sl. No.	Name of Agency	Name of Agency
1	Name of Agency	Name of Agency
2	Name of proprietor/Director of Agency	Name of proprietor/Director of Agency
3	Full Address of Registered Office	Full Address of Registered Office
	Telephone No.	Telephone No.
	Fax No.	Fax No.
	E-Mail Address	E-Mail Address
4	Full Address of Operating/ Branch Office/contact person	Full Address of Operating/Branch Office/contact person
	Telephone No.	Telephone No.
	Fax No.	Fax No.
	E-Mail Address	E-Mail Address
5	PAN No. of the Company	Attach attested copy of the PAN Card of the Agency)
6	Valid labour registration from the state labour department.	Attach attested copy of the valid Labour License.
7	GST Registration No.	(Attach attested copy of the registration Certificate)
8	EPF Registration No.	(Attach attested copy of the registration certificate)
9	ESI Registration No.	(Attach attested copy of the registration certificate)
10	Experience Certificate	Experience certificate by competent authority not below the rank of Executive Engineer.
11	The bidder should have an average annual turnover of at least 30% of advertised cost, which shall be calculated for the past three years ending 31st March of 2024 including current year.	Copy of the audited Balance Sheet and/or Certificate of the Chartered Accountant for preceding three years.
13	The bidder should have presence/office in the Srinagar Kashmir valley.	Undertaking by the bidder that he has registered office established in the Srinagar Kashmir with office address & proof etc like office rent deed duly attested by 1 <sup>st</sup> class magistrate.
14	The Bidder Company should not Currently have been blacklisted by any Government Department/ PSU or under a declaration of ineligibility for fraudulent or corrupt practices of inefficient/ ineffective performance.	Undertaking in the shape of Affidavit attested by 1st Class Executive magistrate
15	Undertaking of non-forfeiture of performance Security/EMD.	Undertaking in the shape of Affidavit attested by Ist Class Executive magistrate
16	Earnest Money Deposit	Self attested copy of CDR/FDR/BG from scheduled bank.
17	Proof of Tender fee	Self-attested copy of bank pay in slip/transaction slip/Challan etc.
18	Affidavit/ Undertaking (Annexure I)	Self-attested copy.

No: LD-1/3244-71  
 Dated: 18.03.2025

DIPK-NB-3832/24  
 dated:19-03-2025

Sd/-  
 Executive Engineer,  
 Lake Division No. 1st.  
 JK LCMA, Srinagar.

**Union Territory of Jammu & Kashmir, Office of the Executive Engineer PWD R&B Division Kralpora**

**Short Term E tendering NIT No.41/RnB/Kralpora of 2024-25 Dated:- 18-03-2025**

For & on behalf of the Lt. Governor Jammu & Kashmir(UT), e-tenders (In single cover system) are invited on Percentage Rate Basis from Registered Transporters/ Tour & Travel Agencies / Taxi Stand Units for hiring of One No. Vehicle of following type/description (upto March 2026) for office use by the Executive Engineer R&B Division Kralpora.

S.N o	Name of Work	Adt. Cost (In Lacs)	Cost of T/Doc. (In Rupees)	E/ Money	Time of completion	Date and time of opening
1.	Engagement of commercial vehicle for office use of the Executive Engineer PWD (R&B) Division Kralpora for the FY 2025-26	0.00	200/-	2000	FY 2025-26	25-03-2025(12:00 Noon)

No: Div-KRLP/3914-23  
 Date:18-03-2025

1. The bidding documents, which would include qualifying information, eligibility criteria, specifications/drawings, a bill of quantities (B.O.Q), a set of contract terms and conditions, and other details, can be viewed/downloaded from the departmental website [www.jktenders.gov.in](http://www.jktenders.gov.in) on the dates listed below:

1	Date of Issue of Tender Notice	18.03.2025
2	Period of downloading of bidding documents	18.03.2025(5:00 PM) to 24.03.2025 (6:00PM)
3	Bid submission Start Date	18.03.2025 (5:00PM)
4	Bid Submission End Date	24.03.2025 (6:00PM)
5	Date & time of opening of Bids (Online)	25.03.2025 (12:00Noon) In the Office of Executive Engineer R&B Division Kralpora.

- The intending and eligible bidders may submit the tenders online at [www.jktenders.gov.in](http://www.jktenders.gov.in) under single cover in the prescribed proforma. Tenders are to be submitted online only using the e-procurement portal [www.jktenders.gov.in](http://www.jktenders.gov.in)
- The Bidders who have not enrolled/registered in e-procurement portal should enroll/register before participating through the website [www.jktenders.gov.in](http://www.jktenders.gov.in). The portal enrolment is free of cost.
- Interested bidders may submit their bid online on [www.jktenders.gov.in](http://www.jktenders.gov.in) as per the NIT conditions on the website [www.jktenders.gov.in](http://www.jktenders.gov.in). Bidders are requested to follow the instructions carefully as per the tender document and the instructions given in the above said website. All the documents in support of eligibility criteria etc. are also to be scanned and uploaded. **Tender/Bid sent by any other mode will not be accepted.** No tender documents will be accepted after the expiry of stipulated date and time for the purpose under any circumstances whatsoever. Any corrigendum/addendum regarding this tender will be available on the above said website only.
- Bids must be accompanied with Cost of Tender Document in the shape of **Treasury Challan (dated between the bid start date and the Bid Submission End date) deposited in M.H. 0059** in favour of Executive Engineer R&B Division Kralpora, (tender inviting authority). Treasury Challan must be written boldly and clearly with Name of Work, Name of the Bidder along with Contact No, NIT No and Serial No of Work on NIT (if any).
- At the time of tendering, all bidders must upload earnest money/bid security for an amount of Rs 2000/- in the form of CDR/FDR pledged to the tender receiving authority, i.e. Executive Engineer R&B Division Kralpora. Besides that, the successful bidder will have to provide Performance Security for an amount of Rs 5000/- at the time of contract award, strictly in accordance with the Government's circular instructions from time to time. The earnest money/bid security will be released to the successful bidder only after the submission of a Performance Security, which will be released after successful completion of the contract period.
- The 1st Lowest Bidder has to produce an amount equal to Rs 5000/- as performance Security in the shape of CDR/FDR within 07 days before fixation of contract and shall be released after successful completion of the contract.
- EMD of successful bidder shall only be released after receipt of Performance Security.
- This Office reserves the right to amend or withdraw any of the terms and conditions contained in the Tender Document or to reject any or all tenders without giving any notice or assigning any reason thereof. The decision of the Executive Engineer PWD (R&B) Division Kralpora in this regard shall be final and binding on all.
- The Bidder is expected to examine all instructions, forms, specifications, terms and conditions in the NIT. Failure to furnish all information and documents required as per the NIT in every respect will be at the Bidder's risk and shall result in rejection of the bid.

DIPK-13215/24  
 dated: 19-03-2025

Sd/-  
 Executive Engineer  
 R&B Division Kralpora



## Girl Found Dead In Srinagar, Probe On

Observer News Service

**SRINAGAR:** A young woman from South Kashmir's Anantnag district was found dead in Srinagar's Shalteng area on Tuesday morning, prompting the police to launch an investigation. Officials said the body was discovered early in the day, following which law

enforcement authorities reached the scene and initiated legal proceedings.

The deceased has been identified as Asifa Bashir, daughter of Bashir Ahmad, a resident of Kokernag.

Authorities have not ruled out any possibilities, and further details will emerge as the investigation progresses.

## Training Prog For SBDUs, BHDs Concludes

Observer News Service

**SRINAGAR:** A three-day technical training program for members of Small Business Development Units (SBDUs) and Business Help Desks (BHDs) under Mission YUVA for Kashmir Division concluded successfully today at Government Polytechnic for Women, Bemina.

The training program, organized by the Labour and Employment Department, witnessed the participation of over 230 members of SBDUs and BHDs from various districts of Kashmir Division.

Mission YUVA aims to create employment opportunities for youth through entrepreneurship, with a target of establishing 1.37 lakh entrepreneurship units and providing employment to 4.25 lakh youth.

To achieve this goal, 20 SBDUs have been established at the district level, and 80 BHDs have been set up at the sub-divisional/regional level.

These units will provide comprehensive business support services to nano enterprises and MSMEs.

The training program focused on providing complete insight into Mission YUVA, hands-on training for using the app and portal, and preparation of Detailed Project Reports for prospective entrepreneurs.

Officers on special Duty

**6** Mission YUVA aims to create employment opportunities for youth through entrepreneurship, with a target of establishing 1.37 lakh entrepreneurship units and providing employment to 4.25 lakh youth.

Dr Murtaza Rashid & Rashid Raina and expert panels from IIM, J&K Bank, Skill Development Department, NABARD, and other partners covered various topics, including overview of Mission YUVA, institutional business support structure, interactive one stop portal for schemes, credit enablement, capacity building, connectivity, schemes under Mission YUVA, and functioning of SBDUs and BHDs.

Speaking at the valedictory session, Shahzad Alam, Mission Director cum Director Employment, J&K, emphasized the significance of Mission YUVA in driving economic transformation through youth empowerment and entrepreneurship development in J&K.

The training program marks a pivotal step towards institutional strengthening of SBDUs and BHDs, ensuring their effectiveness in assisting entrepreneurs and small businesses.



**SURROUNDED BY A VIBRANT ASSORTMENT OF PICKLES,** a local vendor in Srinagar carefully packs a portion, catering to the growing demand during Ramadan. Alongside classic vegetarian varieties, non-veg pickles like kebab and rista pickles have also gained popularity among locals.

KO PHOTO, FAISAL KHAN

## Reshuffle On Cards At SKIMS, Some Officials Likely To Be Transferred

Observer News Service

**SRINAGAR:** The Sher-i-Kashmir Institute of Medical Sciences (SKIMS) Soura is set for a significant administrative overhaul, with a new Medical Superintendent expected to take charge soon. Sources indicate that the current Medical Superintendent has surpassed the permissible tenure limit, having served nearly a decade—first for three years and then continuously since 2018.

In addition to this change, several other officials occupying key administrative positions beyond their designated tenure are also likely to be transferred, sources revealed. The move is reportedly aimed at streamlining the institute's administration to enhance efficiency and improve patient care.

Insiders revealed that while premier institutions like AIIMS follow a maximum tenure of five years for



such positions, some officials at SKIMS have held their roles for much longer, raising concerns about stagnation.

"The institute has seen significant progress, but the administration is now focused on bringing in fresh faces to further elevate healthcare standards," an insider said.

The revamp is expected to introduce new appointments in the

coming days, with an emphasis on transparency, accountability, and a more result-oriented approach. Despite repeated attempts, SKIMS officials were unavailable to comment on the impending changes. However, sources confirm that the reshuffle is aimed at making the premier healthcare institution more efficient and patient-centric.

**6** THE INSTITUTE HAS SEEN SIGNIFICANT PROGRESS, but the administration is now focused on bringing in fresh faces to further elevate healthcare standards"

## VC LCMA Visits Dal Nigeen Lake

Observer News Service

**SRINAGAR:** The Vice Chairman made a detailed visit to the Dal Nigeen Lake, including the Khushalsar and Gisar, further bolstering his initiative in maintaining ecologically sensitive water bodies. This visit comes on the back of the recent handing over of these water bodies to the Lake Conservation and Management Authority (LCMA).

During the visit, the Vice Chairman, as per a statement issued, examined the present state of Dal Nigeen Lake and its connected water bodies and determined areas where immediate conservation activities



were necessary. Highlighting LCMA's pivotal role, he spoke again about the importance of efficient manage-

ment techniques to make these ecosystems both long-term healthy and sustainable.

The visit also emphasized the need for community involvement in conservation activities. Emphasizing the requirement of an integrated approach, he pointed out the importance of scientific studies, people's participation, and sustainable strategies for the conservation of Dal Nigeen Lake and its connected water bodies.

As a part of the existing conservation efforts, the Vice Chairman ordered the preparation of Detailed Project Reports (DPRs) in time for the conservation, management, and desilting of the lakes.

## Conference Held To Address Crimes Against Women



Observer News Service

**SRINAGAR:** The Govt. College of Education (IASE), M.A. Road, Srinagar launched a ground breaking two-day International Conference titled 'Voices for Change: Addressing and Preventing Crimes Against Women' in collaboration with the Asha Paras for Peace and Harmony Foundation (APPHF) India and Soroptimist International, Srinagar Kashmir.

With the aim to address the pervasive issue of violence against women and girls, the conference brings together experts, policymakers and advocates to share knowledge, experiences, and best practices in preventing and responding to the violence against women.

The objectives include raising awareness of crimes against women, discussing strategies for prevention and intervention, fostering collaboration between policymakers, academics, activists, and community leaders and amplifying women's voices and advocating for systemic change.

The inaugural session commenced with the felicitation of the esteemed dignitaries and welcome address by Prof. (Dr.) Seema Naz, Principal of the host college and the Nodal Principal of Kashmir Division Colleges.

She emphasized the importance of collective action in addressing crimes against women and acknowledged the support of collaborating

institutions.

This was followed by the official release of Smart Digest of the Conference by Prof. (Dr.) Mohammad Mobin, Vice Chancellor, Cluster University Srinagar, and Prof. (Dr.) Sheikh Aijaz Bashir, Director of Colleges, UT of J&K.

The experts provided an overview of the conference's objectives, highlighting the significance of strengthening institutional responses to gender-based crimes, promoting gender equity and preventing violence against women, human trafficking & false marriages.

Experts from law enforcement elaborated on the role of law enforcement in protecting women's rights and ensuring justice. They also deliberated upon the new criminal laws like BNS 2023 (Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita).

The session concluded with a vote of thanks by Dr. Irfat Ara Khan, Head Department of Psychology, who expressed gratitude to the speakers, attendees, and organizers for their contributions to the conference.

Meanwhile, the Wall of Gender Equality curated by Arshid Sualeh, Art Teacher was also inaugurated on the occasion.

The session was moderated by Dr. Shaheena Rasool (Coordinator, Teacher Education) and the proceedings were documented by Dr. Shabina, Head Dept. of English and Shawana Manzoor, Head, Dept. of EVS.

### OBSESSIVE COMPULSIVE DISORDER

#### 8 WEEK FREE GROUP THERAPY

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

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

KASHMIR / Kashmir Anglican 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 consulting clinical psychologists led by leading consultant clinical psychologist of J&K.

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

You do not have to fight your battles alone.

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

Happy & Healthy minds Office, HPVT Building (First Floor), Daresh Kadal Chowk, Srinagar

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- PDD: 0194-2450213
- FIRE AND EMERGENCY SERVICES : 2479488,2452222,2452155
- CAPD: 18001807011
- SMC HEALTH OFFICER: 9469409081
- Ambulance: Kashmir EMS Service: +91 94841 00200

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

**HIGHWAY STATUS**

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

 <b>HIJRI CALENDAR</b> 19 Ramadan 1446	<b>PRAYERS</b> FAJR 5: 12 ZUHR 12: 40 ASR 4: 58 Magrib 6: 45 ISHA 8: 05
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## This Day In History

- 1942 - General Douglas MacArthur vows "I came through and I shall return" after escaping Japanese-occupied Philippines
- 1942 - Major German assault on Malta
- 1943 - German U-384 bombed & sinks
- 1944 - Mount Vesuvius in Italy erupts
- 1945 - US 70th Infantry division and 7th Armour division attack Saar
- 1951 - Indonesian army offensive against Darul Islam on Java
- 1952 - Final ratification of peace treaty restoring sovereignty to Japan by US Senate
- 1956 - Tunisia gains independence from France
- 1956 - USSR performs nuclear test
- 1957 - Britain accepts NATO offer to mediate in Cyprus, but Greece rejects it
- 1964 - ESRO established, European Space Research Organization
- 1968 - Military intervene in South-Yemen (leftist ministers resign)
- 1977 - Communists and socialists win French municipal elections
- 1979 - Columbia flies on Shuttle carrier aircraft to Kennedy Space Center
- 1987 - NASA launches Palapa B2P.

## From KO Archives

### Govt Nod For Mughal Road

**SRINAGAR:** The residents of Kashmir have expressed their happiness over the government's go ahead for the repair of the old Mughal Road that once linked Poonch district of Jammu with the Kashmir Valley.

The government has decided to resume work on the aforesaid alternative road project that will link the Kashmir Valley with Jammu -the state's winter capital. The road is called as Mughal road as it was the route toed by the Mughal's to visit India during the 17th and the 18th century. Asarai (resting place) at Shadimarag is still witness to the grandeur of Mughal caravans passing through this road.

By now, the lone, 300-kilometre national highway was the only link between Jammu and Srinagar, which often gets blocked due to frequent snowfall and landslides.

More than 350 people died this year when the Jammu-Srinagar national highway, the main lifeline, was cut off from the rest of the country due to the worst snowfalls in several decades.

The government has now given go ahead to the Mughal Road, which once completed will link Poonch district of Jammu with the Kashmir Valley. "This road should be constructed. It will greatly help us. It takes us two-three days for us to reach Srinagar. We can reach Srinagar the same day once this road is completed. I am very thankful to the government," said Abdul Rashid at Thanamandi.

Mukhtar Ahmed, another local, said, "Once the road is completed, business activity will also pick up. Roadside hotels will come up as more passengers will come here. Moreover, it will take much less time to reach Kashmir Valley."

Work on the road was stopped due to security concerns, as the army feared that the road may enhance the mobility of the militants in the militancy infested Poonch district.

The 89-kilometre stretch was first taken up for execution in 1979 when there was no sign of militancy in the state. The construction of the road was simultaneously started from two sides- Shopian on the Kashmir side and Bafliaz on the Poonch side. However, the construction was not completed.

Five hundred years ago, Mughal emperor Akbar's legions marched down this road to defeat King Yousuf Shah Chak and integrate Kashmir with the rest of his empire. Now the state is looking again to the 84-km-long Mughal Road for much the same reasons.

The urgency of the Mughal road comes because of the unpredictability of the Jammu-Srinagar highway.

"Unpredictability" is actually a mild term for the vulnerability of the Jammu-Srinagar highway. Scanty rain or heavy snowfall, the sole roadlink between Kashmir and the rest of the country is known to collapse at the least provocation. But the death of more than 200 villager in settlement barely two hours away from the snowed-up highway has perhaps driven home the urgency of the situation like little else could have.

Running past fields of maize, pine groves, lush meadows and gushing streams, 84 km of the Mughal Road will reconnect Shopian in Kashmir to Bafliaz in the Poonch district of Jammu, cutting travel time considerably. At present the road, which cuts through the Pir Panjal mountain range, is motorable upto Sarbal, 20 km from the apple-rich belt of Shopian. While the Srinagar-Jammu National Highway is 300 km long, the Mughal Road between Jammu and Srinagar stretches 190 km.

The Mughal Road apart from shortening the distance of journey between Jammu & Srinagar would also create an environment, which would help in, greater Inter Regional Culture and Economic exchanges. The geographical isolation of the specific areas, which discouraged people to people contacts, will end and greater economic activity between the regions would follow

(Kashmir Observer, 20 March, 2005)



## JFK Assassination Files Released, Sending History Buffs Hunting For New Clues

Agencies

Washington: More than 63,000 pages of records related to the 1963 assassination of President John F Kennedy were released following an order by President Donald Trump, many without the redactions that had confounded historians for years and helped fuel conspiracy theories.

The US National Archives and Records Administration posted to its website on Tuesday roughly 2,200 files containing the documents. The vast majority of the National Archives' collection of over 6 million pages of records, photographs, motion pictures, sound recordings and artifacts related to the assassination have previously been released.

Larry J Sabato, director of the University of Virginia Centre for Politics and author of "The Kennedy Half-Century," said it will take time to fully review the records.

"We have a lot of work to do for a long time to come, and people just have to accept that," he said.

Trump announced the release Monday while visiting the John F Kennedy Centre for the Performing Arts in Washington, saying his administration would be releasing about 80,000 pages.

"We have a tremendous

**The US National Archives and Records Administration posted to its website on Tuesday roughly 2,200 files containing the documents**

amount of paper. You've got a lot of reading," Trump said. Before Tuesday, researchers had estimated that 3,000 to 3,500 files were still unreleased, either wholly or partially. And just last month the FBI said it had discovered about 2,400 new records related to the assassination.

Jefferson Morley, vice president of the Mary Ferrell Foundation, a repository for files related to the assassination, said in a statement posted on the social platform X that the release is "an encouraging start." He said much of the "rampant over-classification of trivial information has been eliminated" from the documents. The National Archives said on its website that in accordance with the president's directive, the release would encompass "all records previously withheld for classification."



## Israeli Raids Kill 400+ in Gaza, Netanyahu Says 'It's Only Beginning'

AGENCIES

The Israeli strikes on Gaza, the largest since a ceasefire took effect in January, killed more than 400 people on Tuesday, with Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu warning Hamas that the attack was "only the beginning".

**Here Are Top 10 Points On Israel-Hamas War:**

Israel carried out its heaviest attacks since the start of the ceasefire on Tuesday, with rescuers reporting more than 400 people killed. Hamas also said the head of its government in the Gaza Strip, Essam al-Dalal, was among a list of officials who were killed in the Israeli strikes on the war-torn territory.

The Gaza health ministry said the bodies of 413 people had been received by "overwhelmed" hospitals, adding "a number of victims are still under the rubble". "They unleashed the fire of hell again on Gaza," a resident said of Israel. "I thought they were dreams and nightmares, but I saw a fire in my relatives' house. More than 20 martyrs and wounded, most of them children and women," said another. Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu, who has vowed to eliminate Hamas for at-

**Israel carried out its heaviest attacks since the start of the ceasefire on Tuesday, with rescuers reporting more than 400 people killed. Hamas also said the head of its government in the Gaza Strip, Essam al-Dalal, was among a list of officials who were killed in the Israeli strikes on the war-torn territory.**

tacking Israel in October 2023, warned the group that this was "just the beginning". "From now on, Israel will act against Hamas with increasing force. And from now on, negotiations will only take place under fire," he said. "Hamas has already felt the blow of our arm in the last 24 hours. And I want to assure you: This is just the beginning."

Hamas, which still holds 59 of about 250 hostages Israel says the group seized in its attack, accused Israel of jeopardising efforts by mediators to negotiate a permanent deal to end the fighting. In a statement, Hamas, which has controlled

the territory since 2007, urged friendly countries to "pressure" the US to bring to an end the strikes by its ally Israel.

In a separate statement, Hamas said Israel had "decided to overturn the ceasefire agreement" brokered by US, Qatari and Egyptian mediators. It also warned that the resumption of violence would "impose a death sentence" on the remaining living hostages. The White House said Israel consulted US President Donald Trump's administration before launching the strikes. A US State Department spokesperson said that "Hamas bears total responsibility... for the resumption of hostilities".

Netanyahu's office had earlier said the operation was ordered after "Hamas's repeated refusal to release our hostages". The truce talks stalled as Israel wanted to extend the first phase of the three-stage ceasefire agreement, while Hamas said it would resume freeing hostages only under the second phase that was due to begin on March 2.

Israel wanted to extend the first phase until mid-April, saying that any transition to the second phase must include "the total demilitarisation" of Gaza and the removal of Hamas.

## Elderly Can Revoke Gift Deed If Neglected: Madras HC

Press Trust Of India

Chennai: Senior Citizens can cancel the gift or settle deeds executed in favour of their children or close relatives if they failed to take care of them, even if it was not explicitly mentioned in the conditions imposed in the deeds, the Madras High Court has ruled.

A division bench comprising Justices S M Subramaniam and K Rajasekar dismissed an appeal filed by S Mala, daughter-in-law of late S Nagalakshmi.

Originally, Nagalakshmi executed a settlement deed in favour of her son Kesavan with a fond hope that he and her daughter-in-law will take care of her till her lifetime. But he failed to take care of her. Her daughter-in-law also neglected her after her son died. Therefore, she approached the RDO, Nagapattinam.

filed the present appeal.

The bench said section 23(1) of the Maintenance and Welfare of Parents and Senior Citizens Act, 2007 was designed to protect senior citizens in situations, where they transfer their property, either through a gift or settlement, with the expectation that the transferee will provide for their basic amenities. If the transferee fails to meet these obligations, the senior citizen has the option to seek a declaration from the Tribunal to void the transfer, the bench added.

The Act acknowledges that property transfers from senior citizens, especially to children or close relatives, were often motivated by love and affection. The senior citizen's decision to transfer property was not merely a legal act but one made with the hope of being cared for in their old age. This love and affection become implied condition in



After recording her statement that she executed the deed out of love and affection and for the future of her son, and after considering the statements of Mala, the RDO cancelled the settlement deed. Challenging this, Mala filed a petition and it was dismissed. Hence, she

the transaction, even if the transfer document itself does not explicitly state it.

If the transferee does not provide the promised care, the senior citizen can invoke Section 23(1) to have the transfer annulled, the bench added.

## Discussion Around Aligning Russia, Ukraine's Needs: Trump



Agencies

Kyiv: US President Donald Trump on Wednesday said he discussed Russian and Ukrainian requests and needs for a peace deal in an hour-long call with Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy. "Much of the discussion was based on the call made yesterday with President Putin in order to align both Russia and Ukraine in terms of their requests and needs," Trump said in a post on Truth Social. "We are very much on track," Trump added.

The Kremlin also said Wednesday that Putin and Trump "trust each other" and want to normalise US-Russia ties after more than three years of Moscow's Ukraine offensive.

"Presidents Putin and Trump understand each other well, trust each other and are intent to gradually move towards the normalisation of ties," Kremlin spokesman Dmitry Peskov said, adding that the pair's phone call Tuesday last

ed around two hours. Zelensky earlier today warned against heeding the Kremlin's calls to halt military aid for his country, announcing that he would speak with Trump about it later.

Putin issued the demand after the call with Trump on Tuesday. "I do not believe that we should make any concessions in terms of assistance for Ukraine, but rather there should be an increase in assistance for Ukraine," Zelensky said at a press conference with his Finnish counterpart Alexander Stubb.

The call between Trump and Putin failed to secure the breakthrough ceasefire that Ukraine has been pushing for after it endorsed the US-led proposal last week.

But the Kremlin said it agreed to halt Russian strikes on Ukrainian energy infrastructure, and Zelensky said he hoped to learn details during the call with Trump.

"Today I will have contacts with President Trump and we will discuss the next steps," Zelensky said.

## Parliament Panel to Centre: Add Heatwaves to Disaster Plans

Press Trust Of India

New Delhi: A parliamentary panel has suggested that the Centre include "new and emerging" disasters, such as heatwaves, in its disaster management plans. The Department-related Parliamentary Standing Committee on Home Affairs, in a report tabled in the Rajya Sabha last week, also recommended setting up a system to regularly review and update the official list of disasters.

"The committee recommends that the ministry may include new and emerging disasters in its disaster management plans, such as those caused by heatwaves etc. It further recommends establishing a formal mechanism for the periodic review and update of the Notified Disasters list to ensure the Act remains relevant and responsive to emerging disaster risks through consultation with experts, stakeholders and affected communities," the report read.

The 31-member committee, headed by BJP's Rajya Sabha MP Radha Mohan Das Agrawal, also urged the ministry to study and plan for long-term disaster preparedness, considering climate change and the increasing frequency of disasters.

It recommended greater investment in disaster-resistant infrastructure, including hospitals, schools and transport systems, to reduce damage and speed up recovery.

Amruta S Nair, Climate Campaigner at Greenpeace India, said the parliamentary committee's recommendation to include heat-

waves in the notified disasters list is a welcome and long-overdue step that highlights the growing severity of the heat crisis.

"It ensures heatwaves are prioritized in disaster management and response, covering prevention, mitigation and recovery. However, for this move to be



truly effective, we must ensure there are no gaps in the financial aspects and execution as well," she said.

Nair called for a dedicated "heat budget" for heat action plans, along with legally binding and time-bound goals for accountability.

She also recommended setting up a specialised body to oversee these efforts and ensure coordination across departments for a unified response. "We need a holistic approach from policy to action to make this move both effective and fruitful." Currently, the notified list of disasters eligible for National Disaster Response Fund (NDRF) and State Disaster Response Fund (SDRF) assistance includes cyclones, droughts, earthquakes, fires, floods, tsunamis, hailstorms, landslides, avalanches, cloud-bursts, pest attacks, frost and cold waves.

## Can't Take UPSC Exam As Both 'Able', 'Disabled' Candidate: SC

Press Trust Of India

New Delhi: The Supreme Court on Tuesday told former IAS probationer Puja Khedkar — who's accused of cheating and wrongly availing OBC and disability quota benefits in the UPSC exam — that she cannot avail separate attempts to clear the test as an "able" as well as a "disabled" candidate. The Bench posted Khedkar's plea for further hearing on April 15 after her counsel sought time to file response to an affidavit of the Delhi Government. The top court also extended the protection from arrest granted to Khedkar on January 15 till April 15.



**The Bench posted Khedkar's plea for further hearing on April 15 after her counsel sought time to file response to an affidavit of the Delhi Government**

reclining stretchers for routine medical checks.

It all started with a flawed Boeing test flight last spring.

The two expected to be gone just a week or so after launching on Boeing's new Starliner crew capsule on June 5. So many problems cropped up on the way to the space station that NASA eventually sent Starliner back empty and transferred the test pilots to SpaceX, pushing their homecoming into February. Then SpaceX capsule issues added another month's delay.

Sunday's arrival of their relief crew meant Wilmore and Williams could finally leave. NASA cut them loose a little early, given the iffy weather

## Sunita Williams Returns To Earth After Being Stuck In Space For 9 Months



All eyes were on Williams's safe return as those in Jhulasan gathered at a village temple to view the event live on a television screen. As soon as she landed, residents celebrated the moment by bursting firecrackers, dancing and chanting 'Har Har Mahadev'. Williams has been in the thoughts and prayers

of the villagers, who were eagerly awaiting her safe return.

Even as Williams was on her way back, the villagers gathered at the temple performed 'yagna' and offered prayers. They said they have been performing yagna and have lit up 'Akhand Jyot' (eternal flame) on the premises for her safe return.

## Gold Bars Worth Rs 80 Crores, 19.66 Kg Jewellery Seized In Ahmedabad

New Delhi: Directorate of Revenue Intelligence (DRI) conducted a search at a residential flat in Paldi, Ahmedabad on March 17, 2025, along with the officers of Gujarat Anti-Terrorism Squad (ATS).

As per a statement from the Ministry of Home Affairs, the search led to the recovery of 87.92 kilograms of gold bars, valued at around Rs 80 crores.

"Majority of the said gold bars bear foreign markings, indicating that these were smuggled into India," the ministry said.

The operation also uncovered 11 luxury watches, including a Patek Philippe watch studded with diamonds, a Jacob & Co timepiece, and a Franck Muller watch; and jewellery weighing 19.66 kilograms, studded with diamonds and other precious/ semi-precious stones.

The valuation of the said jewellery and luxury watches is in progress. In addition, cash amounting to Rs 1.37

crores was also recovered from the said residential premises.

"The search represents a major blow to illicit activities and underscores DRI's commitment to combating economic offences, and safeguarding the integrity and sovereignty of nation. Further investigations are currently underway," the ministry said.

Earlier on March 7, DRI in a joint operation with the Indian Coast Guard (ICG), seized 29.954 kg Hashish Oil worth Rs 33 crore from a tug-barge vessel sailing towards Maldives. DRI officers developed specific intelligence and identified a tug vessel towing a barge laden with rock boulders, which had departed from Tuticorin Old Port. It was revealed that a gang based in Tuticorin covertly loaded significant quantities of Hashish Oil onto the barge mid-sea during its voyage to the Maldives, with the assistance of a crew member from the vessel.

## Sunita Back On Earth, Her Ancestral Gujarat Village Over The Moon

Residents of NASA astronaut Sunita Williams' ancestral village in Gujarat's Mehsana district broke into celebrations on Wednesday morning as a SpaceX capsule carrying her and her colleague Butch Wilmore splashed down off the Florida coast.

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of the villagers, who were eagerly awaiting her safe return.

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## Mother Helpage Brings Daily Community Iftars To Kashmir Hospitals

Observer News Service

**SRINAGAR:** Mother Helpage, a humanitarian non-governmental organization dedicated to serving vulnerable communities, has launched a comprehensive daily Iftar program at major hospitals across North and South Kashmir. The initiative provides nourishing meals to patients, their families, and healthcare workers breaking their fast during the holy month of Ramadan. The program operates daily at Sub District Hospital Sopore in North Kashmir and District Hospital Anantnag in South Kashmir, serving hundreds of individuals who might otherwise go without proper meals while attending to medical needs during this sacred time.

"During Ramadan, families with hospitalized loved ones often face the difficult choice between maintaining their bedside vigil or finding a place to break their fast," said the representatives and volunteers of Mother Helpage. "Our Community Iftar program eliminates this burden, allowing families to remain with patients while fulfilling their religious obligations."

The initiative addresses multiple needs within Kashmir's healthcare environment providing nutritious meals to patients who are fast but far from home and also supports family members who refuse to leave their loved ones. It also offers sustenance to hardworking healthcare professionals during their demanding shifts and creates a sense of community and spiritual connection during a holy period.

The Public in general and so-

cial activists have welcomed the program enthusiastically.

"The daily Iftaar provided by Mother Helpage has made a tremendous difference in the hospital environment, as it has witnessed improved patient morale and family satisfaction," said Ghulam Rasool, an attendant.

At Sub District Hospital Sopore, where resources are more limited, the impact has been particularly significant. Each evening at sunset, volunteers distribute freshly prepared meals featuring traditional Kashmiri Iftar items, ensuring cultural appropriateness and nutritional value.

As Ramadan continues, Mother Helpage is seeking community support to sustain and expand this vital program. The organization aims to extend the Community Iftar program to additional healthcare facilities. Increase meal quantities to meet growing demand. Enhance meal options for patients with specific dietary requirements. Provide take-home food packages for discharged patients and their families.

Your generous contribution can help Mother Helpage continue providing this essential service throughout Ramadan and beyond.

"In the spirit of Ramadan, we invite community members to join us in this blessed endeavor. Your Zakat and Sadaqah contributions during this holy month can bring comfort to those facing medical challenges and earn special blessings during this sacred time of giving," said the Fundraising lead of Mother Helpage. You can send your contributions to JKBank Account 0472010100001092 IFSC JAKAOSAADIQ

## Nursing College For Kupwara Gets Official Nod

Observer News Service

**SRINAGAR:** With a major boost to higher education in Kupwara, administration gave its nod for the establishment of a nursing college at Kashmir University's satellite campus in Kupwara.

The decision was taken during the University's academic council meeting, marking a significant step in expanding professional education opportunities in the region.

Nasir Aslam Wani, Advisor to the chief minister, in a post on X, thanked Professor Neelofar Khan, Kashmir University Vice Chancellor and Professor Peerzada Sharifdin, Dean Aca-

demic Affairs, for considering his request.

Welcoming the decision, CM's advisor said that this milestone would open doors for professional education in Kupwara and he expressed hope for the introduction of more courses, such as pharmacy, in the near future.

The demand for a nursing college in Kupwara was raised by the civil society forum Kupwara, highlighting the need for accessible paramedical and nursing education in the district. Many aspiring students in the region face difficulties in affording such courses outside the district.

## Ask Centre To Hold Talks With Pak: NC MLA To BJP Members

Press Trust Of India

**JAMMU:** National Conference (NC) MLA Ali Mohammad Sagar on Wednesday pitched for holding talks with Pakistan and urged the BJP members in the Jammu and Kashmir Assembly to push New Delhi to engage in dialogue with the neighbouring country.

The NC MLA also took a dig at the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) for communal clashes taking place across the country and said his party follows Mahatma Gandhi's ideology and not Nathuram Godse's.

"Nothing is possible without dialogue. You mentioned that former prime minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee held talks with Pakistan. (Prime Minister Narendra) Modi visited Pakistan. We always say that this is the only way to resolve issues," Sagar said while speaking in the Assembly on the grants announced by Chief Minister Omar Abdullah.

He also emphasised that the NC has always favoured dialogue as the path to achieve peace. "Our respected leader, Dr Farooq (Abdullah) sahab, had given you a suggestion (to hold talks with Pakistan) and I appeal to you with sincerity to pursue this path," he told the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) MLAs.

Seeking support of the BJP MLAs, Sagar said, "Please go to Delhi with this suggestion (of Farooq Abdullah) and tell them to hold talks with Pakistan. God willing, our issue will be resolved," he said.

Calling for reconciliation, the NC leader criticised what he described as attempts to impose

a singular political ideology in the country.

Accusing the BJP of dividing people on the basis of religion and regions, Sagar said, "We do not harbour hatred towards the BJP, but we do not believe in its ideology, which divides people. We reject any thinking that pits a brother against a brother and a state against another state. We believe in Gandhi's India, not in Godse's India."

Taking on the BJP over Jammu and Kashmir's downgraded status, he said, "Even veteran leader Karan Singh (son of Maharaja Hari Singh, the erstwhile ruler of Jammu and Kashmir) has opposed the downgrading of Jammu and Kashmir from a state to a Union Territory. You have not shown respect to Maharaja Hari Singh and insulted his dignity by dismantling his state and dividing it. This is unheard of in the history of any country."

The BJP-led Centre abrogated the provisions of Article 370 of the Constitution, which had given a special status to Jammu and Kashmir, in August 2019 and bifurcated the erstwhile state into Union territories.

Referring to communal tensions in the country, Sagar said, "Communal clashes are taking place across India. We follow Gandhiji, not Godse. You want only one flower to bloom in this country but that cannot happen. We have always rejected communal politics."

He reiterated that talks are the only way forward. "Only talks can lead to a solution to problems. We must talk to Pakistan so that all issues are resolved," he said.

## Govt Strengthens Healthcare Mechanism For Affordable, Accessible Services

Observer News Service

**JAMMU:** The Jammu and Kashmir government has established a robust healthcare framework aimed at making medical services affordable and accessible at the doorstep, Health and Medical Education Minister Sakina Itoo informed the Assembly on Wednesday.

Responding to a query from MLA Ajaz Jan, Itoo emphasized the government's commitment to improving healthcare infrastructure, ensuring adequate manpower, and upgrading medical equipment. Special focus has been placed on maternal and child health, managing communicable and non-communicable diseases, and preparing for future health challenges in line with IPHS and NMC norms.

Highlighting key projects in Poonch Haveli Constituency, she said that a Critical Care Block (CCB) is under construction at District Hospital Poonch at a cost of Rs 23.75 crore under the PM-ABHIM scheme. Additionally, one DIPHL lab at DH Poonch and Block Public Health Units at PHC Loran, PHC

Chandak, and PHC Bandchian are in progress. The construction of SC Kanuyian has been completed under the National Health Mission, and ten projects under District Capex are ongoing, with six already completed. Furthermore, an NTPHC building in Galipindi is now functional.

Currently, 61 healthcare institutions operate in Poonch Haveli, but no further expansions or upgrades are planned due to austerity measures imposed by the Finance Department under Government Order No. 10-F of 2025. The minister revealed that Rs 59.52 lakh has been allocated for 14 healthcare projects under various schemes for 2024-25.

Itoo also highlighted the availability of 719 medical machines and devices in the region, including CT scans, ventilators, dialysis machines,

and X-ray units, while assuring that pending equipment requirements will be addressed based on available resources.

To enhance healthcare accessibility, the government has implemented Telemedicine and e-Sanjeevani platforms. Poonch district has achieved 100% family coverage under Ayushman Bharat-PMJAY, with all 35,325 families in the constituency having at least one member holding an Ayushman Bharat Golden Card.

The minister also addressed the operational challenges at CHC Mandi, where an internal arrangement ensures that a consultant surgeon and anaesthetist visit twice a week. However, vacancies for Consultant Anaesthetist, Consultant Surgeon, and Consultant Gynecologist at SDH Mandi remain unfilled, with recruitment agencies working on prioritizing these appointments.

## Parra Calls For Treating Issue Of Kashmiri Pandits As Matter Of 'Dignity'

Press Trust Of India

**JAMMU:** The Peoples Democratic Party (PDP) MLA Waheed-ur-Rehman Para on Wednesday strongly advocated treating the rehabilitation of Kashmiri Pandits as a matter of "dignity" rather than merely that of "relief or consumer issue".

He also called for the formation of district-level nodal agencies to resolve their problems.

He further urged the government to formulate a transfer policy for the Prime Minister's Special Package employees serving in Kashmir.

"On the issue of relief and



rehabilitation, it is the most important concern, as emphasised by the people here. The issue of Kashmiri Pandits is not just about relief or rehabilitation. It is not a consumer issue—it is about dignity," Para said in the Assembly during a discussion on grants for Chief Minister Omar Abdullah.

He emphasised that the department handling this issue is crucial and should report directly to the chief minister.

"There should be nodal agencies at the district level for this issue under the chief minister's command, as well as in the office of the chief secretary for the resolution of their issues," he said.

Para said that Kashmiri Pandits who have been provided with land, employment, and housing should also have a well-defined transfer policy. "A transfer policy should be formulated to ensure their security. Some Pandits were killed due to the absence of such a policy," he said.

## DGP Holds Public Grievance Redressal Programme In Kashmir



Press Trust Of India

**JAMMU:** To strengthen public-police relations and promote transparency, Jammu and Kashmir DGP Nalin Prabhakar on Wednesday conducted a public grievance redressal programme at the Police Control Room (PCR) in the valley.

The programme was attended by senior police officers, including IGP Kashmir V K Birdi, DIG Central Kashmir Range, SSP Srinagar, and SSP Security and SSP PCR Kashmir.

"The event offered citizens a unique opportunity to engage directly with the top police leadership, voice their concerns, and seek resolutions for their grievances," a police spokesperson said.

Around 200 public delegations, representing individuals and groups from diverse backgrounds, actively participated in the programme. All the grievances were taken note of for appropriate action, the spokesperson said.

The DGP heard the concerns of the citizens, assuring them that their grievances would be addressed promptly and fairly.

He directed the concerned officers to take swift action on the issues and ensure timely follow-up on cases requiring further investigation.

Several applications were addressed and resolved with on-the-spot directions by the DGP, the spokesperson said.

DGP Prabhakar encouraged citizens to maintain open communication with the police and assured them that their concerns would be treated with the highest priority. The officer also emphasised the importance of such direct interactions, urging the public to approach the police without hesitation.

The spokesperson said that these engagements play a vital role in resolving issues at the grassroots level, enhancing community safety, and fostering a positive, collaborative relationship between the police and the public.

## J&K Hospitals Face Shortage Of 290 Consultants

Observer News Service

**JAMMU:** The Jammu and Kashmir government has revealed that 290 consultant posts remain vacant across various hospitals in the Union Territory.

Responding to a query from MLA Arjun Singh Raju, Health and Medical Education Minister Sakina Itoo stated that J&K has a sanctioned strength of 852 consultants, with only 562 currently in position. The remaining 290 vacancies are being filled through a 60:40 recruitment ratio, with 60% directly recruited by the Jammu and Kashmir Public Service Commission (JKPSC) and 40% reserved for promotion.

At District Hospital Ramban, only five out of 22 sanctioned consultant positions are occupied. Despite the hospital's expansion to a 66-bed facility, staffing shortages persist. The government, however, has ruled out new health facility upgrades due to financial constraints, focusing instead on consolidating existing infrastructure.

Emergency Hospital Batote does not qualify for SDH upgradation under IPHS 2022 guidelines, given that Ramban district has a population of only 2,83,713 and already possesses sufficient healthcare facilities, including CHCs, PHCs, and NTPHCs.

## No Plans To Train Educated Youth As Village Pharmacists: Govt

Observer News Service

**SRINAGAR:** The Jammu and Kashmir government has no proposal to train educated youth as pharmacists at the village level, Health and Medical Education Minister Sakina Itoo informed the Assembly on Wednesday.

Responding to a question from MLA Balwant Singh Mankotia, Itoo said that multiple health institutions across various blocks, including Chenani, Basantgarh, and Ramnagar, are actively providing healthcare services. Efforts are underway to ensure that vacant posts in these institutions are referred to recruitment agencies for timely appointments.

To strengthen emergency care, CHC Chenani and SDH Ramnagar have been equipped with upgraded medical facilities and trained personnel, with patients requiring advanced treatment referred to tertiary healthcare centers.

In Kalakote-Sunderbani Constituency, 205 out of 365 sanctioned medical and paramedical posts are currently occupied. A sonologist is available at SDH Sunderbani twice a week, and X-ray services operate round-the-clock at CHC Kalakote and SDH Sunderbani. A new X-ray machine for PHC Trayath is set to be installed at PHC Moughla, but the absence of a sanctioned X-ray technician post means patients requiring X-ray services are referred to SDH Sunderbani and GMC Rajouri.

The minister assured that the health department is actively deploying technical staff to ensure full functionality of medical equipment

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Yeh Mah-e-Ramzan



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### KO VIEW

## Strengthen Food Safety

In a welcome exercise, authorities in Srinagar have been carrying out intermittent food safety inspections to ensure compliance with quality standards by various food manufacturing units and commercial establishments. The officials gather samples from industrial areas, hospital canteens, and local markets and send these for analysis. The people would expect that the results of these samples are also placed in the public domain. We urgently need a strict oversight of food production and distribution across the city and also in other parts of the Valley. This is important to enhance consumer confidence and promote higher food safety standards across the region.

Food safety should not be a privilege but a fundamental right of every citizen. However, going by some recent events, it remains one of the most neglected areas of public health in the Valley. The viral social media video about a dead mouse floating in cooking oil at a street vendor's stall near Hazratbal Shrine should shock us all. It is not an isolated incident but a symptom of a deep-rooted crisis. This was followed by reports of unhygienic practices in bakeries, hospitals, and food markets, which has hit the public confidence in much of the food sold on the market, giving rise to calls for immediate and stringent measures to safeguard public health.

This is an alarming situation. As things stand, street vendors, restaurants and even hoteliers operate with little to no oversight. The roadside vendors have been found to reuse oil multiple times, handling food with bare hands, and often storing it in substandard conditions. Worse, the unchecked use of adulterants in food products poses serious health risks, contributing to a rise in gastrointestinal infections, food poisoning, and even cancer. Although recent activism of food safety authorities should be appreciated, they shouldn't act only after a crisis surfaces. The prevailing situation calls for routine, surprise inspections. We need a preventive rather than a reactionary approach to food safety.

True, the crackdown against the violators of the food safety standards is hampered by the logistical issues. It remains woefully understaffed. And without sufficient manpower, thorough and regular inspections are impossible. This leaves room for food vendors to operate without fear of accountability. So, the need of the hour is for the government to fill up the vacancies in the department quickly. Food safety is not just a regulatory issue; it is a matter of life and death. We cannot afford to wait for another horrifying unhygienic incident to prompt action.



Did you know?

## Understanding Key Financial Terms and Concepts for Indian Investors

Irshad Mushtaq

Investing in the financial markets can be overwhelming, especially for newcomers. This article serves as a comprehensive guide to various financial concepts, ensuring you have a clear understanding of essential terms, structures, and regulations relevant to investing in India.

### What is an IPO?

An Initial Public Offering (IPO) is the process through which a private company offers its shares to the public for the first time. This allows the company to raise capital for expanding operations, paying off debt, or investing in new projects. IPOs provide investors an opportunity to purchase shares before they start trading on a stock exchange.

### Understanding Shares

Shares represent ownership in a company. When you buy shares, you acquire a portion of the company and become a shareholder. Shares are typically bought and sold on stock exchanges, where their prices fluctuate based on supply and demand.

### Stock Exchanges: NSE and BSE

In India, two major stock exchanges facilitate share trading:

- **NSE (National Stock Exchange)** – A leading stock exchange known for its advanced technology and electronic trading.
- **BSE (Bombay Stock Exchange)** – The oldest stock exchange in Asia, offering a platform for trading a wide range of securities.

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# Changing Face of Kashmir's Labor Market

## Tale of Migrant and Indigenous Workforce

Dr. Ashraf Zainabi

One of my mentors, Emeritus Professor S. A. Abbasi, once said, keen observation is the key to producing authentic results and conclusions. This explains that observation is the most authentic source of understanding any natural, social, psychological or economic dynamics.

It is March 2025. In Kashmir, March witnesses vibrant activities in agriculture, construction and other sectors. A keen observer in Kashmir today would notice an unmistakable trend. I too have this habit of observing around (people, politics, education, and the environment). I observed, while much of the local labor workforce remains indoors during the early months of the year, migrant workers/laborers from other states have already taken over labor-intensive spaces in Kashmir. By mid-February 2025, thousands of migrant workers have arrived, setting to work each morning at 8 AM, while indigenous laborers remain largely absent from these job sectors. This phenomenon raises several questions about the work culture, economic dependencies, sociocultural factors, and policy implications surrounding the labor force in Kashmir.

Why do migrants dominate Kashmir's labor market? Is it purely about wages, or are there deeper differences in work ethic and economic drive? Are there alternative income sources that make locals less inclined toward hard labor? And most importantly, does the influx of migrant labor impact employment opportunities for Kashmiris? This article delves into these pressing questions, offering a broader perspective on the evolving labor market in Kashmir.

### Work Culture and Economic Drive

The most apparent difference between the migrant and local labor workforces is the work ethic. Migrant laborers come to Kashmir with a clear purpose: to earn, save, and return home with financial stability. Their approach to work is marked by discipline, punctuality, and an unrelenting drive.

In contrast, a significant portion of the indigenous labor force seems reluctant to engage in the same kind of physical labor, at least during the winter months. This raises the question: is it an issue of work culture or economic necessity? Many local workers may feel less urgency to work because they have alternative sources of income, such as government jobs to one or more family members, land-based earnings, or remittances from family members working abroad. These economic cushions mean that many locals are not in immediate financial distress, making them less willing to take up physically demanding jobs.

Migrant laborers, on the other hand, do not have these financial safety nets. For them, every working day translates into survival and economic progress, making their commitment to labor-intensive work much stronger.

### Better Labor Wages in Kashmir

The daily rate for labour work in Kashmir ranges between INR 600-700. Whereas the same labor work in most of the states outside Kashmir fetches only INR 200-300. In Kashmir, the laborers get daily allowances or complementary benefits such as Chewing Tobacco, Bedi or Cigarette and two time food (vegetarian or non vegetarian based on laborers choice) and tea in addition to the labor rate. Accounting these benefits to the day's labor rate amounts to around INR1000. These benefits are absent in other states. Besides it, the migrant laborers feel protected and respected in Kashmir. These labor wages and benefits in Kashmir force mass migration of labour workforce from other states to Kashmir.

### Climate, Tradition, and Social Perception

Another key factor influencing labor force participation in Kashmir is the region's unique sociocultural setting. Kashmir experiences harsh winters, and historically, this season has been associated with reduced economic activity. Agriculture—the primary occupation for



“Kashmir's labor market is at an interesting crossroads. Migrant workers have become the backbone of many industries, while indigenous workers remain hesitant to take up labor-intensive roles. The reasons range from work culture differences and economic alternatives to social perceptions and wage disparities

many rural Kashmiris—remains dormant, and the tradition of winter hibernation remains deeply ingrained in the local psyche. Many Kashmiris consider winter months as a time for rest, reflection, and religious devotion rather than intensive labor.

For migrant laborers most of these aspects are irrelevant, but extreme winters do force them to go back to their native lands, but not for more than two months. I have also observed, a significant number of migrant laborers stay back in Kashmir, no matter how much extreme cold conditions Kashmir presents. It seems, they acclimatized with winters of Kashmir much better than Kashmiris nowadays.

Additionally, there is a noticeable social perception associated with physical labor in Kashmir. While entrepreneurship and business ownership are respected, manual labor—particularly construction, masonry, and daily wage jobs—is often viewed as a profession of last resort. This contrasts sharply with the mindset of migrant workers, for whom such jobs are a primary source of livelihood, hence no shying away aspect is visible in them. If this social perception remains unchanged, indigenous laborers may continue to shy away from certain jobs, leaving the space open for migrant workers to dominate.

### Impact of Migrant Labor on Employment Opportunities for Locals

One of the most debated aspects of migrant labor dominance is whether it negatively impacts local employment. On the surface, it may seem that migrants are “taking away” jobs that could otherwise be filled by indigenous work-

ers. However, the reality is more complex. Migrant labor has been instrumental in filling critical gaps in Kashmir's workforce. The booming construction industry, for instance, relies almost entirely on migrant workers, as local labor participation remains minimal. Similarly, agricultural activities such as paddy transplantation and apple harvesting see heavy involvement from outside laborers.

However, the presence of migrant labor also creates a paradox. Since they are willing to work for lower wages, but much better than what they get in their native states, employers prefer them over local workers, further discouraging indigenous labor participation. This leads to a cycle where locals step away from labor-intensive jobs, and migrant workers become an irreplaceable part of the economy.

In certain sectors, this trend has resulted in a complete dependence on migrant labor. If for any reason, migrant workers were to stop coming to Kashmir, several industries—construction, brick kilns, horticulture, and road maintenance—would struggle to function efficiently.

### Policy Interventions and the Way Forward

Some of the possible policy interventions can be put in place to strike a balance, and mitigate economic losses to the local economy.

Training local youth in specialized trades such as masonry, carpentry, and machine operations could make them more competitive in the labor market.

Contractors and business owners could be encouraged to hire local labor through wage subsidies or tax incentives.

Changing the perception around manual labor is crucial. If physical work is seen as a respectable and dignified profession, more Kashmiris might be willing to engage in it.

Government-backed projects offering employment opportunities during the winter months could help keep locals engaged in productive work instead of remaining economically inactive.

### Conclusion

Kashmir's labor market is at an interesting crossroads. Migrant workers have become the backbone of many industries, while indigenous workers remain hesitant to take up labor-intensive roles. The reasons range from work culture differences and economic alternatives to social perceptions and wage disparities.

While migrant labor is essential for Kashmir's economy, a balanced approach is needed to ensure that local workers are not left behind. Skill development, policy interventions, and social awareness can help create a labor market where both migrant and indigenous workers coexist without one group entirely overshadowing the other.

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 Teacher and researcher



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## Anantnag Schools Struggle Amid Staff Shortages

An alarming educational crisis has come to light in Anantnag district, where 376 lecturer positions remain vacant, leaving students without proper academic guidance. Adding to the distress, an RTI inquiry has revealed that 12 Higher Secondary Schools are functioning without full-

time principals, severely impacting their administration and overall academic environment.

Among the affected institutions are HSS Gohan, HSS Nowbugh, HSS Gadole, HSS Hardtoru, HSS Soaf, HSS Mantpora, HSS Chittergul, HSS Chaklipora, HSS Uttersoo, HSS Shangan, HSS Hiller, and HSS Nanil. The

absence of permanent leadership in these schools has led to administrative inefficiencies, while the shortage of lecturers has disrupted the academic flow, depriving students of quality education.

With education being the backbone of societal progress, the situation demands immediate govern-

ment intervention. Urgent measures are needed to fill these vacancies and restore stability to Anantnag's education sector. If left unaddressed, the crisis could have long-term repercussions on the academic future of thousands of students.

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# The Sufi Alchemy of Travel

Mir Imtiaz Aafreen

Today, due to the advancement of science and technology, we have taken a lot of innovation in outward travel, but this same technology has made us so encumbered that our souls are imprisoned and our spiritual journeys and social interactions are on a decline. In today's materialistic age, there is a dire need to reconnect with our spiritual roots and embark on the spiritual journey of self-realization. In this era of spiritual and moral crisis, Sufis teach us how to transcend the snares of the lower self (nafs) and to achieve higher goals.

In Islam, this world is looked upon as a temporary transitional stage of man's life and it is reported that Prophet Muhammad (SAW) said, "Be in this world as a stranger or a wayfarer."

The Holy Quran comes up with a command to 'travel through the land' (29:20) and to contemplate over how God began creation and makes it work according to His 'perfect design'.

It clearly makes us understand that this world is one of the greatest miracles of God and if we observe things with a keen eye, there are clear signs in each and everything around us giving a notion that there is a perfect Designer and Planner behind this cosmos. This is the reality that we come across while studying the Holy Quran.

"We will show them Our signs in the horizons and within themselves until it becomes clear to them that it is the truth." (41:53)

However, it is never easy to travel as it is at times challenging and exhausting. There are hardships and trials in travel as is mentioned in a hadith of the Prophet (SAW),

"Travel is a kind of torture."

The Sufis from all the orders, love to travel from one place to another. They involve themselves in meeting new people, learning new things and gathering information regarding all the fields of life. Travel has a humbling effect as it makes us realize what a tiny place we occupy in this world.

Travel is a memorable and insightful experience for those who go for it. The soul dies of dwelling at rest, it becomes more alive by perpetual soaring. Travel offers a chance to connect deeply with God, embodying 'nadhrah bil Ibrahim' - looking through things to understand the reality behind creation. Travellers move beyond 'nadhrah bi Shahwah' i.e., looking at things with a strong desire, seeking the signs of God (Ayatullah) in every leaf, stone, and breeze. Each step becomes a reminder of God's presence, guiding one to reconnect



with the Creator and discover the Ultimate Reality that sustains all of creation.

Maulana Azad once said, "I have gained half of my knowledge from travel. Reading in solitude provided me intellectual growth, but the observations of travel broadened my mental horizons. Those who do not travel live in a limited space of experiences. Travel gives a person indirect knowledge of the history of nations, just as scientists empirically understand the reality of things, in the same way, travel provides practical knowledge of human qualities, moods and natures of different nations."

As far as Sufism is concerned, it is all about the journey of a 'wayfarer' (salik) or conscious human soul towards the Ultimate Reality that lies behind the temporal existence.

The life of a Sufi can be summed up as a quest for the Ultimate Truth, the quest for self-realization as a part of the Divine Plan of existence. Hence, seeking or exploring is an essential part of a Sufi's life. There is a persistent longing for the divine beloved in a Sufi's consciousness as is expressed in the opening lines of Rumi's 'Mathnavi'. Seeking is the practical manifestation of the concept of

Wahdat ul Wujud (The Unity of Being) and in the words of Rumi, "What you seek is seeking you." He tells a 'salik' to have a personal enquiry and to unfold his or her own myth, "Don't be satisfied with stories, how things have gone with others. Unfold your own myth." In most of the Sufi orders, travel is an integral part of the spiritual life of a Sufi.

According to Ibn Arabi, "The whole existence, due to some reasons, is a part of 'world travel' which has no end, neither in this world nor in the hereafter. Man from the time immemorial is a traveller who is not stationary because the basis of existence is 'movement' and if this existence seizes to move, it will return to 'nothingness'... If we understand enough that our existence is established by this movement and its death is in inertness, then we will always make sure that we are on a travel... There are two types of travel: one is the travel that we are not made responsible for, but that is a requirement of our outward state, such as business travel, economic travel, tourism travel, or those travels that sustain our outward existence, such as the travel of our breath for life. The second is the travel for which we have been made re-

sponsible and there is a lot of good in adopting it. It is the journey of [religious life comprising of] Shariya and Tariqah." (Kitab ul Isfar)

Travel is a process of spiritual awakening as it unlocks the mysteries of the path in a splendid manner. Spiritual walks, adventures and getaways refresh minds with a broader insight to look beyond the temporal things and to search for the eternal bestowments.

According to a Sufi poet,

"A [Sufi] friend taught me one thing well  
If you want [spiritual] light, travel  
Following this, I just set out exploring  
Since then, travel has become an integral part  
of my life."

Thus, here have been many globetrotting Sufis like Ibn Arabi, Shams Tabriz, Sheikh Saadi, Rumi, Imam Ghazali, Najmuddin Kubra, Shah Hamadan Mir Syed Ali Hamadani, Makdum Ashraf Jahangir Simnani, Makdum Jahaniya Jahan Gasht, etc. who travelled different parts of the globe for spiritual nourishment. Shah Hamadan in particular is believed to have travelled the whole Islamic world three times and obtained the blessings from the

great scholars and saints of his time. One can easily understand how difficult these travels would have been in those times without the conveniences of the present era. There were no roads, no convenient means of transport and there were the dangers of wild animals and robbers. The mules, horses and camels, were used to travel from one place to other. The unfavourable weather conditions would make the travel more difficult. His travels continued for about 21 years. Actually, travel was an integral part of his 'mujahida' i.e., striving in the path of God.

"And those who strive for Us - We will surely guide them to Our ways. And indeed, Allah is with the doers of good." (29:69)

Hardships offer challenges that are to be undertaken by a Sufi to make his 'tazkiyya' i.e., the spiritual purification. The trials and tribulations act as a barrier against the materialistic propensities and help in attaining higher spiritual goals. Rumi accepts these trials as the essential part of this learning experience,

"If you are irritated by every rub, how will your mirror be polished?"

There is no 'polishing' without 'rubbing' and it is 'rubbing' which enlightens you.

Some Sufis would travel long distances to benefit from other Sufi Sheikhs and gather spiritual blessings. Others would travel to do the ziyarah of Islamic historical places, khanqahs, shrines and holy relics to refresh their faith.

The Sufis undergo a state of spiritual ascension which refers to a sort of spiritual upliftment of an individual towards the metaphysical realms of self-realization. This spiritual odyssey demands complete annihilation (fana) of the ego of the individual to absorb and reflect the divine lights (tajalliyat). The great Sufis like Bayazid Bistami and Ibn Arabi often refer to this state in their expressions.

Travel is always rewarding as it takes an individual close to his purpose or destination. The question is, what can be the best reward for a spiritual odyssey? The answer is 'self-realisation through Godliness' and this is what Sufis are offering.

"And you? When will you begin that long journey into yourself?"

Rumi

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## Podcasts to Listen to During Ramazan

### Amaliah Team

As Ramadan approaches, many of us seek ways to enhance our spiritual journey during this blessed month. There is truly no better time for self-improvement and growth. In recent years, podcasts have emerged as a popular way for achieving these goals. They are free, they are convenient and they provide us with a flexibility to access knowledge and inspiration while we're on the go, saving us time and money.

To make the most of this avenue, you can create playlists that are organised by theme or interest. Consider setting goals for the number of episodes and listen to them each week while commuting, exercising, or relaxing at home. Available on Spotify and Apple, here are some of Amaliah's top picks for Ramadan podcasts to tune into.

#### Nurture the Faith

#### 1. Yaqeen Institute

Series to listen to:  
Qur'an 30 for 30  
Jannah Home at Last  
The Firsts

These episodes offer profound discussions on faith, spirituality, and Islamic teachings. Available on YouTube as well as a podcast, Yaqeen Institute and Imam Omar Suleiman have been delivering stellar series to us year after year. Most of these come with a short guide to reflect upon as you listen to the series. Qur'an 30 for 30, as the name suggests, are quick thirty minute episodes where Imam Omar Suleiman sits down with two more scholars where they share gems from one juz of the Qur'an each day of Ramadan. The daily insightful reflections are a great way to forge a deeper connection with Allah's book in the month it was revealed.

Jannah: Home at Last was released in 2023 that shares awe inspiring descriptions of Jannah, that can truly motivate us to work towards attaining that eternal abode.

The Firsts: The Forerunners of Islam is a series that visits trailblazers of the ummah, diving into the stories of the giants who were the first of their kind in this world, and distinguished in the next. This is a great way to learn more about the personalities buried in history and the importance of doing righteous deeds.

Yaqeen Institute series are a beautiful way to nourish your connection with Allah and His message in Ramadan.

#### 2. Muslim Central

Muslim Central is exactly as the name suggests. An all in one central platform that offers a diverse range of Islamic lectures, sermons, and discussions by prominent scholars and

speakers from around the world.

There are series dedicated to the tafseer of different surahs and an overview of the entire Qur'an, presented by distinguished scholars like Shaykha Taimiyah Zubair, Sh. Dr. Yasir Qadhi, and Mufti Menk.

Imam Ammar Al Shukry shares how to perfect one's salah as well as 10-minute reflections on the 99 Names of Allah, offering insights to know our Creator but if you want to forge a deeper connection, Dr. Bilal Phillips has provided longer reflections on them. If you're planning to go for Hajj, his Hajj chronicles might interest you as well.

The platform also features podcasts on mental health, productivity, and personal development, such as Maryam Lemu's episodes on premarital counselling and guidance for nurturing a healthy marriage.

Whether you seek religious knowledge, motivational talks, or spiritual reminders, Muslim Central has something for everyone.

#### 3. Qalam Institute Podcast (@qalaminstitute)

The Qalam Institute Podcast offers a treasure trove of Islamic knowledge and spiritual insights. From Quranic reflections to practical advice on living a balanced life, this podcast provides valuable guidance for individuals seeking personal and spiritual growth. Their episodes will help you gain a deeper understanding on matters of fiqh, hadith, as well as insights on dealing with life's obstacles and hurdles in a prophetic manner. The podcast's "In his Footsteps" series beautifully explores the life and character of our beloved Prophet , providing lessons for all from the seerah. Another outstanding one is "The Sufficient Answer" by Sh. Mikaeel Smith, that explores the topic of curing spiritual sickness, offering practical solutions and guidance for addressing inner struggles on the basis of the beautiful book Al Jawab Al Kafi by Imam Ibn Qayyim al Jawziyyah ( ). Overall, The Qalam Institute Podcast is a rich resource for Islamic knowledge and spiritual enlightenment that can inshaAllah help you in revitalising your ibadah.

#### 4. Hifdh Status Podcast (@hifdhstatus)

If you have lofty Qur'an goals this Ramadan, then this podcast is for you. Featuring stories from huffadh around the world, it offers impressive accounts that can motivate and inspire listeners on their own memorisation journeys.

Listeners can gather valuable tips and tricks to enhance their memorisation efforts during Ramadan and beyond. Whether you're just starting out or looking to refine your existing memorisation skills, this podcast can provide valuable and practical advice to support your Qur'an memorisation journey.

### Lifestyle & Culture

#### 1. The Digital Sisterhood (@thedigitalsisterhood)

The #1 Podcast in US, UK, AUS in Self-Improvement Category, this award winning podcast harnesses the power of storytelling to create connections as well as discover truths about the world around us.

What sets Digital Sisterhood apart is its authenticity and genuine commitment to uplifting voices that are often marginalised. The discussions are raw, real, and resonate deeply with listeners.

The Digital Sisterhood podcast also addresses a wide range of topics relevant to modern Muslim women. Their upcoming release of Season 4 of their podcast, titled "Fighting for Faith" is a ground-breaking exploration of the resilience, activism, and empowerment of Muslim women globally. "Fighting for Faith" delves into the untold stories of Muslim women who are challenging societal norms. From Sudan to Palestine to Uyghuristan and beyond, each episode showcases the triumphs and struggles of women who refuse to be silenced.

Celebrating sisterhood, and providing a safe space for Muslim women of colour to share their stories, experiences, and insights on their relationship with Islam, what more could you want from a Muslim women centric podcast?

#### 2. Mindful Muslimah Speaks (@mindfulmuslimah)

With an impressive audience of 5.6 million, Mindful Muslimah Speaks believes in empowering Muslim women to live a balanced life by fostering mindfulness and spiritual growth. Over the years she has addressed relevant topics such as personal development, nurturing relationships, overcoming hardship with grace and faith in the modern world. If you're in need of a big sister who gives warm and kind hearted advice then look no further as you can find a wealth of uplifting discussions and practical tips and tricks for thriving instead of just surviving as a modern Muslimah. Her advice is rooted in strong Islamic knowledge, complemented by a nuanced understanding of living in the west. If you're looking for a little "pick me up", then this podcast might be for you.

#### 3. Living With Barakah by Mohammed Faris (@productivemuslim)

Mohammed Faris has built a powerful brand around productivity and living life with purpose in accordance with Islamic principles. The tagline of his book The Barakh Effect is "More with less" and in his podcast he shares exactly that, guiding listeners to understand how they can develop a "barakah" mindset too. Some of

the topics explored include adopting a disciplined work ethic in Islamic practices including praying charity and fasting. Through his insights, he guides listeners to bring gratitude and intentionality into daily life, fostering a sense of Barakah in all that we do.

4. Your Muslim Girl Podcast by Fatima Sabir (@yourmuslimgirlpodcast)

Fatima Sabir's podcast might be just a year old but it stood out as a warm welcoming safe space for sisters seeking advice, growth, and community. With a commitment to addressing topics relevant to young Muslim women in the Western world, Fatima creates a space for authentic conversations and meaningful insights.

Each week, Fatima brings different speakers to explore issues that impact and influence Muslims daily, from navigating identity to pursuing personal and professional goals. Through engaging discussions and occasional moments of levity, Your Muslim Girl Podcast offers valuable advice and guidance for listeners on their journey of self-discovery and empowerment.

What sets Your Muslim Girl Podcast apart is its emphasis on collective learning and growth reminding us that we are not alone in our experiences. Whether it is talking about setting up habits for Ramadan, reflecting on the discomfort that comes with growth or even school and career advice, Your Muslim Girl Podcast offers something for everyone.

#### Spirituality & World

1. The Thinking Muslim by Muhammad Jalal  
One of the top podcasts offering thought-provoking Islamic content, the Thinking Muslim podcast has shown its commitment to providing a clear, logical, and compelling take on complex issues that are not only informative but also highly relevant to the current affairs affecting Muslims globally.

Muhammed Jalal brings on insightful scholars and speakers who offer a wealth of knowledge and expertise on various aspects of the Muslim world, while understanding the essence of Islam. You can find a range of topics here, from spirituality and ethics to contemporary social issues - all approached with an open-mindedness that encourages critical thinking. Moreover, his ability to ask the right questions ensures that listeners are able to gain a deeper understanding of the topics being discussed. He also does an excellent job of bridging the gap between traditional Islamic teachings and modern practice, offering views that are practical and relatable. From Quranic sciences to discussions on contemporary issues facing Muslims, the podcast covers a wide spectrum of topics with depth and nuance.

Whether you're a lifelong Muslim seeking to deepen your faith or someone from a different background curious about Islam's teachings, we recommend that you give this podcast a listen.

2. Sheikhhing it Up with Sheikh Faiyaz

Sheikh Faiyaz is an engaging host who offers commentary on various aspects of Islam, spirituality, humanity, justice, and contemporary issues from the lens of the Qur'an and the sunnah. He offers daily reflections in Ramadan inspiring his listeners to live a meaningful and fulfilling life in accordance with Islamic principles. These are also great for someone looking to reconnect with their faith, specially with Ramadan coming up. Sheikh Faiyaz offers gentle encouragement and daily reminders that can help you take the necessary steps required towards strengthening your deen.

3. The Qarawiyin Podcast (@qarawiyinproj)

The Qarawiyin Project is a global initiative aimed at reviving Islamic discourse among Muslim women. If you have ever questioned your self worth or felt undervalued, you should give a listen to their episode on how to gain spiritual strength and resilience. Or perhaps you are frustrated with the challenges women commonly face when attempting to access even basic information about their deen. Check out their episode with Shaykha Maryam Amir where she dispels misconceptions regarding women reciting the Qur'an, and illustrates the power of reciting and memorising the Word of Allah . Amplifying the voices of Muslim women, this podcast addresses a wide range of topics including Islamic scholarship, feminism, and social justice.

#### 4. The Mohamed Ghilan Podcast

Mohamed Ghilan is a renowned scholar and educator offering thoughtful analysis on topics related to religion, philosophy, science, society, culture since 2016. If you're looking to take a nourishing intellectual journey, where you get to explore the depths of Islamic theology or dissect modern societal challenges, this podcast might be for you. His latest episode offers a discussion on the status of Jerusalem in Islam and the attitude a Muslim should adopt with regards to their relationship to the Holy Land.

If you want something spiritual, check out their weekly live sessions of Al-Andalus Academy's Halaqa series, currently focusing on the study of Sidi ibn 'At -illah's Kitab at-Tanwir (The Book of Illumination). The discussion explores three compelling reasons to relinquish control to Allah, highlighting the illusion of our own agency and understanding. This podcast promises to serve insightful commentary and thought-provoking discussions that encourage reflection and questioning the status quo.

We hope you can enrich your Ramadan days by immersing yourself in valuable discussions, spiritual reflections, and practical advice that will inshaAllah nourish your mind and soul while deepening your connection with Allah SWT. Happy listening and Ramadan Kareem!

The article was originally published by Amaliah



# Study Projects Loss In India's Solar Power Potential Due To Air Pollution

Press Trust Of India

India's capacity to generate solar power could fall by 600-800 gigawatt-hour before mid-century due to air pollution and climate change, a study has projected.

The researchers from the Indian Institute of Technology (IIT), Delhi, found that northern, western and southern power grids -- where most solar parks are currently located -- will experience significant challenges in maintaining performance due to climate change.

Pollutants in the air can absorb and scatter sunlight, thereby lowering the intensity of the sun's radiation reaching the earth's surface.

Further, generating solar power relies heavily on weather and climate, and is, therefore, vulnerable to the effects of climate change.

The findings, published in the journal Environmental Research Letters, "highlight the need for combined climate and pollution mitigation efforts to boost India's photovoltaic potential and secure a sustainable, resilient energy future".

Despite being endowed with abundant solar resources -- India receives nearly 300 clear-sky days every year -- the country has seen a persistent decline in incoming solar radiation, a phenomenon known as 'dimming', the authors said.

Using global climate models, the team projected the country's solar power potential by mid-century (2041-2050) under two scenarios -- one with moderate air pollution and climate change, and the other in which climate change



**Highlight the need for combined climate and pollution mitigation efforts to boost India's photovoltaic potential and secure a sustainable, resilient energy future**

is weakly tackled and air pollution strongly controlled.

The results of the analysis suggested that the national average potential for generating solar power could fall by two to nearly four per cent, compared to that during 1985-2014, mainly due to a reduced radiation and increased temperatures.

Further, temperatures of solar cells could be expected to rise by 1.5-2 degrees Celsius, resulting in efficiency losses and an additional of about 18 days of efficiency de-rating, especially in solar-rich regions.

Based on data of solar power generated during 2023-24, loss in generation capacity was projected to range from 600

gigawatt-hours, under moderately controlled air pollution and climate change, to up to 840 gigawatt-hours, under a weak climate action with strong air pollution control, according to the study.

Solar cells -- used in making solar panels and for converting sunlight into electricity -- would need to be innovated for future assessments looking into India's solar power potential, the team said.

They called for robust measures for controlling air pollution and urgent climate action to mitigate losses in generating solar power.

Further, rapidly transitioning to renewable energy is crucial to mitigating both air pollution and climate change, the authors said.

## PUBLIC NOTICE

I want to change my name in my aadhar card bearing no 8337 4907 2330 from Mohammad Muntaha Kalloo (old name) to Faraz Manzoor (New name). If anybody has any objection in this regard he/she may file his/her objection in the concerned office within seven days. After that no objection shall be entertained.

Faraz Manzoor  
R/O :- Hyderpora Srinagar  
jvd

## PUBLIC NOTICE

I want to change my name in my aadhar card bearing no 4043 8707 0887 from Tahil Mushtaq Zargar (old name) to Tahleel Ahmad Zargar (New name). If anybody has any objection in this regard he/she may file his/her objection in the concerned office within seven days. After that no objection shall be entertained.

Tahleel Ahmad Zargar  
R/O :- Bemina Srinagar  
jvd

## From Office of the Advocate Muneer Ahmad Dar

In the case of  
1. Mohamad Amin Baghat S/O Mohd Sultan Baghat  
2. Mehrajdin Baghat S/O Gh Mohd Baghat  
3. Manzoor Ahmad Baghat S/O Gh Mohd Baghat  
4. Mohd sidiq Baghat S/O Ali Mohd Baghat  
5. Ali Mohd Shiekh S/O Ab Khaliq shiekh  
6. Gh Ahmad Baghat S/O Mohd Ismail  
7. Ab Hamid Baghat S/O Ab Aziz Baghat  
8. Abid Bagath S/O Ab Rahman Bagath  
All Residents of Tilagam Tehsil Pattan

(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 seed in obtaining some relief/order at their back/in exparte against the caveators and in such eventuality the caveators will be put in irrepa- rable loss and inconvenience. It would be proper that caveators be given an opportunity of being heard by the Hon'ble court before passing any order.  
fko Sd/advocate

## PUBLIC NOTICE

I want to change my name in my aadhar card bearing no 5424 5390 6163 from Insar Ahmad Lone (old name) to Ansar Ahmad Lone (New name). If anybody has any objection in this regard he/she may file his/her objection in the concerned office within seven days. After that no objection shall be entertained.

Ansar Ahmad Lone  
R/O :- Kanzalwan ,Gurez Bandipore  
jvd

## NORTHERN RAILWAY E-Tender Notice

Sr.DEN-IV/FZR acting for and on behalf of The President of India invites open tenders (E-Tenders) against below titled tenders and available on www.ireps.gov.in with closing date 08.04.2025 up to 15:00 Hrs. Bidders will be able to submit their original/revised bids up to closing date and time only. Manual offers are not allowed against this tender, and any such manual offer received shall be ignored. Contractors are allowed to make payments against this tender towards tender document cost and earnest money only through only payment modes available on www.ireps.gov.in portal like net banking, debit card, credit card etc. Manual payments through Demand draft Banker Cheque, Deposit receipts, FDR etc. are not allowed. For more information logon to www.ireps.gov.in

Tender Type	Tendering Section	Bidding System	Date of Uploading Tenders	Bid Starting Date	Bid Closing Date/Time
Open	Works	Single Packet System	15.03.2025	25.03.2025	08.04.2025/15:00
S.N.	Tender No.	Details of Tender			
1	08-2024-25-BDGM-DRM-JAT	Repair and maintenance of Bridges including repairing to flooring, protection works, waterway cleaning, raising of drains etc in BAHL-BRML section under the jurisdiction of ADEN/BDGM			
		Advertised Value (Rs.)	Earnest money (Rs.)	Validity of Offer	Period of Completion
		4499979.91	90000.00	60 Days	06 Months
Similar nature of work:- "Nil".					
Note1. Before bidding, bidders to check for any corrigendum issued against tender.					
Tender Notice No:- 770-W/169/WA/FZR/2024-25 Date: 19.03.2025					
859/2025					

Serving Customers With A Smile

# 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.

Since launching a dedicated funeral service in Islamabad in 2014, Mother Helpage now invites you to donate generously to provide these services for Srinagar, Budgam, and Baramulla.



## Donate Now!



UPI ID: JKBMERC00657582@jkb

- Account Name: **Mother Helpage**
- Ac Number : **0472010100001092**
- IFSC : **JAKA0SAADIQ**
- Branch: **Jammu and Kashmir Bank Ltd, Sadiqabad, Anantnag.**

For queries call

**Farooq A Ashai** (Coordinator)

Ph: +91 788-9402837

Email : farooq.ashai@motherhelpage.org



## J&K Bank Wins 'Best Innovation In Digital Lending' Award



Observer News Service

**SRINAGAR-** In recognition of its digital excellence, J&K Bank has been honoured with the 'Best Innovation in Digital Lending' award at the 1st Indian PSU Achievers' Awards 2025, held on Tuesday at the Main Convention Centre, SCOPE Complex in New Delhi.

Notably, Union Minister for MSME Jitan Ram Manjhi was Chief Guest at the prestigious award function, wherein the Bank's General Manager & Divisional Head (Rest of India) Rajesh Gupta along with AGM Dorjey Angchuk received the honour at the hands of dignitaries.

While commenting upon the reception of the award, the Bank's MD & CEO Amitava Chatterjee thanked the organisers for the honour. He further said, "This award signifies our commitment to digital transformation and customer-centric innovation. We thank the organizers for recognizing our efforts in digital lending, which remains a key focus area for us as we enhance financial access-

sibility for our customers."

He also emphasized the Bank's commitment to seamless digital banking services, adding, "With customer expectations evolving rapidly, I believe, we will ensure best digital banking experiences for the people while we continue to innovate. And our commitment remains strong in delivering secure, swift, and user-friendly solutions for our customers across geographies."

Meanwhile, the high-profile award-ceremony witnessed the participation of reputed public sector banks, financial institutions, and PSUs from across the country, underscoring the significance of the platform in recognizing excellence and innovation within the public sector.

The Indian PSU Achievers' Awards 2025 marks a significant milestone, celebrating excellence in the public sector while recognizing innovative contributions from PSUs nationwide. And the Bank's achievement in the digital lending category reflects its growing stature among the country's premier financial institutions.

"With customer expectations evolving rapidly, I believe, we will ensure best digital banking experiences for the people while we continue to innovate. And our commitment remains strong in delivering secure, swift, and user-friendly solutions for our customers across geographies."

## Gold Rallies ₹700 To Hit Fresh Record High Of ₹91,950/10g

Press Trust Of India

**NEW DELHI:** Gold prices advanced Rs 700 to reach a new lifetime high of Rs 91,950 per 10 grams in the national capital on Wednesday on the back of continued buying by jewellers ahead of wedding season, according to the All India Sarafa Association.

Besides, increased tensions in the Middle East and concerns about the US economic slowdown have kept the demand for safe-haven assets intact.

The precious metal prices of 99.9 per cent purity soared by Rs 700 to hit a fresh all-time high of Rs 91,950 per 10 grams. It had concluded at Rs 91,250 per 10 grams on Tuesday.

Gold prices of 99.5 per cent purity also rallied by Rs 700 to hit a record high of Rs 91,500 per 10 grams.

Traders said increased buying by local jewellers to meet festive and wedding season demand and a firm trend in the overseas markets mainly lifted gold prices to this year's highest level.

Silver prices also surged by Rs 1,000 to hit a record peak of Rs 1,03,500 per kg from Tuesday's closing level of Rs 1,02,500 per kg.

In futures trade, gold futures for April delivery rose



by Rs 19 to Rs 88,745 per 10 grams. In the morning trade, it climbed Rs 288 to breach the psychological level of Rs 89,000 per 10 grams.

"Gold prices maintained an overall upward trend but remained range-bound ahead of the highly anticipated Fed policy and statement tonight," Jateen Trivedi, VP Research Analyst - Commodity and Currency at LKP Securities, said.

In the international markets, spot gold rose 0.15 per cent to USD 3,039.22 per ounce. During the session, it hit a record high of USD 3,045.39 per ounce.

Meanwhile, gold futures in the Asian market hours eked out another fresh all-time high by touching USD 3,052.31 per ounce.

"Gold prices have hit re-

cord highs on safe-haven demand as escalating Middle East tensions and fears of a trade war under Trump's administration have created global economic uncertainty comparable to levels seen during the peak of the COVID-19 pandemic.

"This uncertainty has prompted central banks worldwide to stockpile gold at unprecedented levels, diversifying their reserves away from US Treasuries," Chintan Mehta, Chief Executive Officer at Abans Financial Services Ltd, said.

Additionally, inflows into gold exchange-traded funds (ETFs) have surged, with February 2025 seeing record inflows of USD 9.4 billion, further supporting the bullion prices, Mehta added.

**THIS UNCERTAINTY HAS PROMPTED CENTRAL BANKS WORLDWIDE to stockpile gold at unprecedented levels, diversifying their reserves away from US Treasuries"**

## Hyundai, Honda To Hike Vehicle Prices From April

Press Trust Of India

**NEW DELHI-** Hyundai Motor India and Honda Cars India on Wednesday joined the list of automakers planning to hike prices of vehicles from April, second time this year, to partially offset the impact of rising input costs and higher operational expenses.

In a statement Hyundai Motor India Ltd (HMIL) said it will hike prices of its vehicles by up to 3 per cent effective in April 2025. The quantum of price increase will vary based on the variants and models.

The price increase is due to rising input costs, increased commodity prices and higher operational expenses, amongst other reasons, it added.

"At Hyundai Motor India Ltd, we strive to absorb rising costs to the extent possible, ensuring minimal impact on our customers. However, with the sustained increase in operational expenses, it has now become imperative to pass on a part of this cost escalation through a minor price adjustment," HMIL Whole-time Director and Chief Operating Officer Tarun Garg said.

The price increase will be effective in April 2025, he said, adding, "We remain committed to making consistent internal efforts to minimise any future impact on our valued customers."

The company had, in January, hiked prices of its vehicles by



up to Rs 25,000 across its model range due to an increase in input costs, adverse exchange rate and rise in logistics costs.

HMIL sells a range of vehicles from hatchback Grand i10 NIOS to electric SUV IONIQ5 priced between Rs 5.98 lakh and Rs 46.3 lakh (ex-showroom Delhi).

Honda Cars India also said it will hike prices of its entire model range with effect from April in order to partially offset the impact of rising input costs.

The company will revise prices across all models from April 2025 due to rising input costs and operational expenses, Honda Cars India Vice President (Marketing and Sales) Kunal Behl said.

Despite efforts to absorb these costs, some price revision has become unavoidable and will be passed on to customers, he added.

"The price hike will vary by model and variant and will apply to all Honda models, including Amaze, City, City e:HEV, and Elevate," Behl said.

The automaker however did not elaborate on the quantum of the price revision.

## Investors' Wealth Soars Rs 13.82 Lakh Cr As Mkts Take Rally To 3rd Day

Press Trust Of India

**NEW DELHI-** Investors' wealth surged Rs 13.82 lakh crore in three days of market rally after last week's correction faced by benchmark indices.

On Wednesday, the 30-share BSE benchmark Sensex climbed 147.79 points or 0.20 per cent to settle at 75,449.05.

In three days, the BSE benchmark gauge has jumped 1,620.14 points or 2.19 per cent.

Tracking firm trends in equities, the market capitalisation of BSE-listed firms soared Rs 13,82,485.7 crore to Rs 4,05,00,918.63 crore (USD 4.68 trillion). After almost a month, the market capitalisation of BSE-listed firms regained the Rs 400 lakh crore mark.

"Benchmark indices posted gains for the third straight session on Wednesday, in continued relief rally so far this week. Broader mid and small-caps outperformed posting sharp gains for the session," Satish Chandra Aluri, Analyst at Lemonn Markets Desk, said.

Bargain buying and hopes of a rebound lifted sentiment, while foreign investors turned net buyers on Tuesday, easing recent sell-off pressure, he said.

"Focus now shifts to the



Federal Reserve's policy decision, with rates expected to remain unchanged but investors will be keen to parse through updated economic projections for clues on rate cut path and to gauge central bank thinking on tariff impact," Aluri added.

From the Sensex pack, Tata Steel, Zomato, Power Grid, UltraTech Cement, IndusInd Bank, Larsen & Toubro, Adani Ports, NTPC, State Bank of India and Reliance Industries were among the major gainers.

On the other hand, Tech Mahindra, Tata Consultancy Services, ITC, Infosys, HCL Tech, Sun Pharma, Maruti and Nestle were among the laggards.

The BSE midcap gauge jumped 2.28 per cent and small-

cap index climbed 2.17 per cent.

Among the BSE sectoral indices, realty surged 2.75 per cent, industrials (2.55 per cent), services (2.48 per cent), power (2.30 per cent), utilities (2.16 per cent), telecommunication (1.48 per cent) and commodities (1.44 per cent).

BSE Focused IT, IT, tech and FMCG were the laggards.

As many as 3,018 stocks advanced while 1,033 declined and 115 remained unchanged on the BSE.

Foreign Institutional Investors (FIIs) turned buyers on Tuesday as they bought equities worth Rs 694.57 crore, according to exchange data.

Domestic Institutional Investors (DII) also bought equities worth Rs 2,534.75 crore.

## Indian Economy Remains Resilient Despite Global Trade Tensions: RBI Bulletin

Press Trust Of India

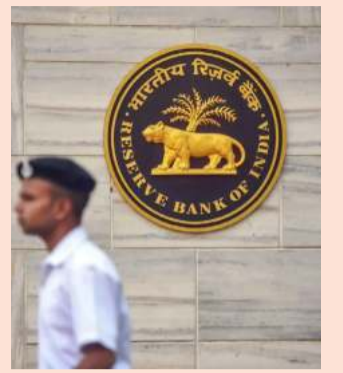
**MUMBAI:** Indian economy continues to demonstrate resilience as evident in the robust performance of the agriculture sector and improving consumption despite escalating trade tensions, the RBI March Bulletin said on Wednesday.

The resilience of the global economy is being tested by escalating trade tensions and a heightened wave of uncertainty around the scope, timing, and intensity of tariffs, said an article on 'State of the Economy' published in the Bulletin.

While engendering heightened volatility in global financial markets, these have also caused apprehensions about the slowdown in global growth, it said.

"Amidst these challenges, the Indian economy continues to demonstrate resilience as evident in the robust performance of the agriculture sector and improving consumption," it said.

The reverberations of a tumultuous external environ-



ment, however, are being reflected in sustained foreign portfolio outflows, said the authors.

The article further said India's macroeconomic strength to face these challenges is bolstered by a decline in headline CPI inflation to a seven-month low of 3.6 per cent in February 2025 on account of a further correction in food prices.

The RBI, however, said the views expressed in this article are those of the authors and do not represent the views of the Reserve Bank of India.

## Trump Group Enters India with ₹2,500 Cr Pune Project



Press Trust Of India

**NEW DELHI:** Realty firm Tribeca Developers has partnered with Kundan Spaces to develop a Rs 2,500 crore worth commercial project 'Trump World Center' in Pune, marking the entry of US-based Trump Organisation in Indian commercial real estate.

Tribeca Developers and Kundan Spaces on Wednesday announced the launch of Trump World Center Pune.

"This new development marks The Trump Organisation's first foray into commercial real estate in India and will join the extensive portfolio of Trump residential properties in the region," said Tribeca Developers, who brought the Trump brand to India.

Trump-branded residential projects are being developed in Pune, Kolkata and Gurugram.

The 4.3-acre project is expected to generate sales exceeding Rs 2,500 crore.

Spanning over a decade, The Trump Organisation and Tribeca have partnered to bringing iconic properties, including residential and now commercial buildings all throughout India.

The project 'Trump World Center Pune' will span over 1.6 million (16 lakh) square feet, featuring two iconic glass towers with over 27 floors of office space.

"One tower will offer for-sale strata offices, while the other will provide larger leasable

offices, catering to a range of business needs," the company said.

Eric Trump, Executive Vice President of The Trump Organisation, remarked: "India has embraced the Trump brand with remarkable enthusiasm. After our successful collaboration on several iconic residential projects, we are proud to launch our first commercial development in India." Trump World Center Pune will set a new standard of sophistication and excellence, reflecting the same commitment to quality that defines Trump properties across the globe, said Eric.

Kalshesh Mehta, Founder of Tribeca Developers, said: "This is a defining moment - not just for Tribeca, but for the evolution of commercial real estate in India. Trump World Center Pune is the culmination of years of vision and refinement, blending the Trump brand's unmatched prestige with Pune's ascent as a global business nucleus." India has become the Trump brand's largest market outside the US.

Ashish Jain, Managing Director of Kundan Spaces, said, "Pune is entering a new phase of commercial growth, and Trump World Center will be an integral part of this transformation." Tribeca Developers has a portfolio of 13 projects spanning 14 million square feet and valued at more than Rs 16,000 crore.

## 'India's Structural Strengths Provide Strong Foundation For Growth'

Press Trust Of India

**MUMBAI-** Sound fiscal policies, a well-calibrated monetary framework, and digital transformation initiatives are expected to provide a strong foundation for long-term sustainable economic growth, said RBI March Bulletin released on Wednesday.

It also said that macroeconomic fundamentals remain strong, and economic growth is poised to sustain momentum driven by robust domestic demand, steady investment activity, and ongoing policy-driven infrastructure development along with a pick-up in government spending.

An article on 'State of the Economy' published in the Bulletin noted that the resilience of the global economy is being tested by escalating trade tensions and a heightened wave of uncertainty around the scope, timing, and intensity of tariffs.

While engendering heightened volatility in global financial markets, these have also caused apprehensions

about the slowdown in global growth.

"Amidst these challenges, the Indian economy continues to demonstrate resilience as evident in the robust performance of the agriculture sector and improving consumption," the article said.

The reverberations of a tumultuous external environment, however, are being reflected in sustained foreign portfolio outflows, it added.

The article further said high frequency indicators suggest that aggregate demand continued to remain resilient in Q4:2024-25. "Activity indicators such as E-way bills and toll collections recorded double digit (y-o-y) growth in February 2025," it said.

Also high frequency food price data for March so far (up to 17th) show an increase in cereal prices, both for rice and wheat. Edible oil prices have firmed up as well - mainly driven by palm, soybean and sunflower oil. Pulses prices, on the other hand, continued to show broad-based moderation.

## Govt Enhances Outlays To Rs 6,190 Cr For Two Schemes To Boost Milk Production

Press Trust Of India

**NEW DELHI-** The government on Wednesday enhanced outlays to Rs 6,190 crore for two schemes aimed at increasing milk production.

Information and Broadcasting Minister Ashwini Vaishnav informed that the Union Cabinet has approved the revised Rashtriya Gokul Mission (RGM) and National Program for Dairy Development (NPDD).

Both the schemes, which seek to enhance milk production and raise farmers' income, will now have a total outlay of Rs 6,190 crore.

Union Cabinet, chaired by Prime Minister Narendra Modi, has approved the revised RGM to boost growth in livestock sector, the minister said.

Implementation of revised RGM, as central sector component of development programmes scheme, is being done with an additional outlay of Rs 1,000 crore, taking the total to

Rs 3,400 crore during 15th Finance Commission cycle from 2021-22 to 2025-26.

The revised NPDD, a central sector scheme, has been enhanced with an additional allocation of Rs 1,000 crore, bringing the total budget to Rs 2,790 crore for the period of the 15th Finance Commission cycle (2021-22 to 2025-26).

The initiative focuses on modernising and expanding dairy infrastructure, ensuring the sector's sustained growth and productivity.

With the implementation of the Rashtriya Gokul Mission and other efforts of the government, milk production has increased by 63.55 per cent in the last ten years, an official release said.

Also, the availability of milk per person, which was 307 grams per day in 2013-14, has increased to 471 grams per day in 2023-24.

Productivity has also increased by 26.34 per cent in the last ten years, it added.

## World Bank Approves USD 102 Mn To Boost Pakistan's Microfinance Sector

Press Trust Of India

**ISLAMABAD-** The World Bank has approved USD 102 million for cash-strapped Pakistan for a project that aims to enhance access to micro-credit and support the resilience of the microfinance sector and its borrowers, particularly in the face of climate-related shocks.

The financing under the 'Resilient and Accessible Microfinance (RAM) project' was approved by the World Bank board of directors on Tuesday, according to a statement issued by the World Bank.

Najib Benhassine, World Bank country director for Pakistan, said in the statement that microfinance is a critical tool for supporting the livelihoods of vulnerable populations in Pakistan.

"This project will help strengthen the resilience of the microfinance sector, particularly in the face of growing climate risks, ensuring that the sector can continue to provide essential financial services to those

who need them most, especially in rural areas," he said.

He also said that this project was part of the Bank's broader commitment to promoting financial inclusion in Pakistan and to increasing resilience to climate change, as spelt out in the new 10-year Country Partnership Framework.

According to the statement, the project will benefit nearly 1.89 million people, including more than 1 million women and over 350,000 youth, and especially those in vulnerable and low-income rural areas.

Through the provision of financial resources to microfinance institutions, the project will ensure that institutions can "continue to provide services even during climate-induced financial pressures".

"The project will provide increased access to microcredit for individuals and small businesses, providing them 'recovery loans' to help them gain financial stability," the statement read.



## Art 370 Was Removed Without Firing Single Bullet: Rajnath Singh

### Agencies

New Delhi: Defence Minister Rajnath Singh said the government successfully removed Article 370 — a significant obstacle — without firing a single bullet, ensuring the complete integration of Jammu and Kashmir with India. This historic move was achieved peacefully while ensuring the security of all stakeholders, he added.

Speaking at the Major Bob Khathing Memorial Event in Delhi on Wednesday, Singh emphasised the government's commitment to administrative reforms through the principles of "minimum government, maximum governance" and "good governance." He highlighted how these initiatives have reduced the gap between the government and the people.

Singh drew a parallel between the government's actions in Jammu and Kashmir and Major Bob Khathing's peaceful integration of Tawang with India. Praising Khathing's contribution to the Northeast, he remarked, "The work done by Major Bob Khathing for the Northeast is similar to what Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel did for national integration." The Defence Minister also

underlined the government's robust foreign policy, which he attributed to the diplomatic acumen of figures like Khathing. "Today, India balances hard power and soft power in a multipolar world. It is a matter of pride that India has strengthened its global position. There was a time when India was not taken seriously on international forums, but today, when we speak, the world listens," he said.

Singh stressed the importance of unity in achieving the goal of making India a developed nation by 2047 and acknowledged the Northeast's role in this journey. He highlighted major infrastructure projects aimed at enhancing regional connectivity, including the Sela Tunnel at 13,000 feet, which links Tezpur in Assam to Tawang in Arunachal Pradesh, and the nearly 2,000 km-long Arunachal Frontier Highway, which will serve

as a strategic and economic asset. The Defence Minister credited these development initiatives for reducing violence and accelerating progress in the Northeast. He also referred to the New York Times' list of "52 Places to Visit in 2025," in which Assam was ranked fourth. Describing Major Khathing as a "great son of India," Singh lauded his legacy of bravery and diplomatic skill. "It is our collective

responsibility to adopt the ideals of such great personalities," he said. The event was attended by Arunachal Pradesh Chief Minister Pema Khandu, Chief of Army Staff Gen Upendra Dwivedi, Chief of Air Staff Air Chief Marshal AP Singh, Director General of Assam Rifles Lt Gen Vikas Lakhera, and Director General of the United Service Institution of India (USI) Major General BK Sharma (retd). 19-20.

### CONTD. FROM PAGE 1

### J&K Women's Support

will be left vulnerable, with no structured system to help them seek justice."

The sudden decision has sparked outrage, with activists questioning why such a crucial initiative is being discontinued when the need for it remains dire.

"Who will take responsibility for the thousands of women who still need help?" asked an expert on gender-based violence.

"Since J&K, as a Union Territory, does not have its own State Women's Commission, it is the responsibility of the NCW to ensure a smooth transition. They must extend their support for a few more months beyond March 31, giving the UT government time to take ownership of the initiative."

With institutional support now uncertain, appeals are being made to the UT administration, Home Department, and Social Welfare Department to step in and ensure the continuity of these essential services. If no alternative funding or extension is secured, experts warn that the absence of the Special Cells will leave a dangerous void in the fight against gender-based violence in Jammu & Kashmir.

As the deadline approaches, all eyes are on the authorities. Will they act to protect the rights and dignity of the survivors, or will they allow this crucial safety net to vanish?

### Spl Judge NIA

leaving his friends and admirers in deep shock.

Hailing from Botraj clan of Nagar princely state, Raja Tasleem assumed charge as the Special Judge for UAPA cases in Baramulla last year following a successful stint as Chief Judicial Magistrate, Anantnag and later Srinagar. His tenure was marked by his commitment to justice and his efforts to uphold the rule of law in the region.

He played a crucial role in adjudicating sensitive cases, earning immense respect for his honesty, upright attitude, and professional integrity. His fearless and fair approach made him a widely admired figure in the judiciary and beyond.

Beyond his judicial responsibilities, Judge Khan was known for his humility, sincerity, and dedication to public service. His colleagues, the legal fraternity, and the community at large remember him as a person of integrity and high moral standards. His passing has left a deep void, with tributes pouring in from across the region, acknowledging his significant contributions to

the judiciary.

Funeral arrangements are being coordinated by his family and he will be laid to rest at his ancestral graveyard at Botraj Mohalla, Inside Kathi Darwaza later on Friday. The loss of Raja Tasleem is deeply felt across Jammu and Kashmir, and his legacy will continue to inspire those in the legal profession and beyond.

### NIA Raids 12

logistical support, food, shelter and money, the suspects were involved in guiding the terrorists through the difficult terrains of Jammu province to ensure their safe passage," it said, adding, "The terrorists were then believed to have made their way to the hinterland districts of Kathua, Udhampur, Doda, Kishtwar, Reasi, Rajouri, Poonch, and also to the Kashmir Valley."

The NIA statement said multiple locations were searched across Jammu. "NIA teams conducted extensive searches at the homes of over ground workers (OGWs) linked with the newly-formed offshoots and affiliates of banned terrorist organisations such as the LeT and JeM," it said, adding, "Premises of sympathizers and cadres of these outfits were also searched as part of the action taken by the anti-terror agency in the case RC-04/2024/NIA/JMU."

The statement said that the case is linked with the series of attacks carried out by terrorists on security forces and civilians some months ago as part of a larger criminal conspiracy by terror organisations to wage a war against the Government of India.

"A total of 12 locations in Jammu district were searched today as part of the operation, and several incriminatory materials linking the terrorists with OGWs were seized. NIA teams are examining the material to unravel the terror conspiracy," it reads.

### Speaker, PDP's

controversy, the Speaker confirmed that 105 of Parra's cut motions had been admitted. When Parra insisted he was told his motions would not be considered, the Speaker challenged him to name the official responsible. "You need to be responsible. I want to close this issue," he remarked.

A day earlier, Parra had posted on X, calling the J&K government "nothing but an extension of the Governor's rule to ratify the August 5 move," further fueling political tensions in the

Assembly.

### Media Biggest

scrapping the media policy in Jammu and Kashmir calling it a tool to suppress free speech in the erstwhile state. "Media was the biggest casualty in Jammu and Kashmir. The transition in the state began with censorship and a communication blockade, effectively snatching away our voices," Parra said in the Assembly.

He further criticized the J&K government's media policy, calling it an attempt to control information rather than regulate journalism. "The current media policy does not need a review; it needs to be completely scrapped. It is a tool of censorship meant to establish a state-controlled press," he asserted.

Parra also raised the issue of the Srinagar Press Club's closure, highlighting the deployment of a police station inside the club and two senior officers in Press Colony. He argued that this move was not about security but a calculated attempt to police the media and suppress independent voices.

"The message was clear: the closure of the Press Club was an attempt to silence journalists and prevent independent reporting in Jammu and Kashmir," Parra stated. "By placing police inside the Press Club, the government has tried to muzzle the media and suppress dissent."

Referring to the challenges faced by journalists in recent years, Parra recalled how the communication blockade had prevented Kashmiri reporters from publishing freely. "When we were all locked inside, the media could not write. And those in independent media who dared to report the truth faced consequences," he said.

Parra urged the J&K government to take a stand for independent journalism by restoring the Srinagar Press Club and relocating the police station. "Restoring the Press Club is not just about reopening a building. It is about ensuring that independent journalism can survive in Jammu and Kashmir," he stressed.

Parra also raised concerns over the allocation of funds for industrial development in Jammu and Kashmir. He pointed out that out of the 20,000 crore allocated for industrial estates over the past five years, 80% had been given to outsiders, leaving little for local entrepreneurs. "The J&K government has no industrial policy," he said, urging the administration to prioritize

the interests of local businesses.

On the issue of land laws, Parra expressed fear and insecurity among the people of Jammu and Kashmir. He called for a revision of the land laws, stating, "We are not here to justify the actions of the past five years."

The PDP leader further highlighted discrepancies in the implementation of the housing scheme, particularly the allocation of land based on the 2018 survey. He criticized the commodification of water resources and opposed the privatization of electricity, calling for a one-time rehabilitation plan for affected communities. Parra demanded a transfer policy for Kashmiri Pandits appointed under the Prime Minister's Package, ensuring their safety and convenience. He urged the government to expedite compassionate appointments for families of deceased government employees. Furthermore, Parra questioned why J&K police personnel were not receiving hardship allowances similar to those given to central paramilitary forces and demanded the removal of such anomalies.

### J&K Govt Forms

"The committee will consist of Chief Secretary, Chairman, Additional Chief Secretary, Member, Administrative Secretary, Finance Department Member, Administrative Secretary, General Administration Department Member, Administrative Secretary, Planning, Development & Monitoring Department Member, Administrative Secretary, Department of Law, Justice & Parliamentary Affairs Member," the order states.

"The Committee shall examine various issues, including humanitarian, legal, and financial, related to the regularization of Casual, Seasonal Labourers or Other Workers etc. in Jammu and Kashmir, and suggest a comprehensive way forward," the order states.

The General Administration Department will service the committee, and it has been tasked with submitting its report within six months.

### Stray Dog Menace

Kashmir has also filed a compliance report. "A copy of the same be also furnished to Ms. Gauri Maulekhi via email or WhatsApp ...." the court said, adding, "Ms. Gauri Maulekhi, shall examine both the compliance reports filed by the Union Territories of Jammu & Kashmir and Ladakh, and may, if she so desires, file her

response and/or additional suggestions, as may be deemed necessary."

Meanwhile a copy of a newspaper report was placed before the court, highlighting that stray dogs have reportedly been roaming unchecked inside the Government College for Women, M.A. Road, Srinagar, causing fear and distress among students.

The menace posed by stray dogs, not only in Srinagar but across both Union Territories, warrants immediate and serious attention," the court said, adding, "The issues raised in these PILs require urgent deliberation and appropriate remedial measures to mitigate the threat to public safety."

### J&K Assembly

Akram echoed the demand, asserting that the lack of clarity around the cause of deaths necessitated a CBI inquiry.

"Nobody is listening to us. A CBI probe is needed," he said.

CPI(M) MLA Muhammad Yousuf Tarigami called for exposing the "invisible hands" behind the fatalities.

"It is ironic that the cause remains unknown. What happened there today could happen anywhere tomorrow," he warned.

In response, Minister Sakina Ittoo stated that the Home Department was already investigating the matter.

"We do not have jurisdiction over the Home Department to order another inquiry at this stage," she said, but assured that further steps would be considered once the current probe is completed.

In a written statement, the minister disclosed that laboratory reports from PGIMER Chandigarh detected traces of aluminum and cadmium, while the CSIR-IITR Lucknow report found Aldicarb sulfate, Acetamidiprid, Diethyldithiocarbamate, and Chlorfenapyr.

Additionally, tests conducted by DRDE-DRDO Gwalior confirmed the presence of Chlorfenapyr and Abrin in food samples, including sattu and maize bread. The National Food Laboratory (FSSAI) in Ghaziabad also found traces of Chlorfenapyr and Chlorpyrifos. The CFSL Chandigarh report confirmed Chlorfenapyr in the viscera samples of all 17 victims.

Notably, the Union Home Ministry has already deployed an inter-ministerial team to investigate the cause of these deaths.



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# BCCI Could Lift Saliva Ban In IPL, Ball In Captains' Court

Press Trust of India

**NEW DELHI:** In a move that could have global impact, the BCCI is considering lifting the ban on applying saliva on the ball in the Indian Premier League beginning March 22.

The proposal has been discussed at length internally within the BCCI and will be floated to captains of all IPL teams in a meeting in Mumbai on Thursday.

The International Cricket Council (ICC) had banned the age-old practice of applying saliva to shine the ball as a precautionary measure during the COVID-19 pandemic. In 2022, the ICC made the ban permanent.

The IPL too included the ICC ban in its playing conditions in the aftermath of the pandemic but its guidelines are outside the purview of the sport's governing body.

"Using saliva on the ball was



part of the essence of the game until COVID hit. Now that we don't have that threat anymore, we feel there is no harm in lifting the ban on saliva in the IPL. "We understand that it makes a bigger impact in red ball cricket but even if it can

help bowlers a bit in the white ball game, it should be allowed in the IPL, which is a trend setting tournament. Let's see what the captains decide tomorrow," a top BCCI official told PTI. If the ban is revoked in the IPL, the ICC too might be

forced to review its stance on the subject.

On the sidelines of the ICC Champions Trophy, senior India pacer Mohammed Shami had spoken about the need to use saliva on the ball in what has become a predominantly bat-

ters' game.

The likes of Vernon Philander and Tim Southree had backed Shami's call.

"We keep appealing that we should be allowed to use saliva so that we can bring reverse swing back into the game and it becomes interesting," Shami had said during the 50-over event in Dubai, where India emerged victorious.

As per the existing rules, if it is a first instance of applying saliva on the ball, the fielding team's captain is summoned and issued a first warning.

"If it is the second instance during an innings, summon the captain of the fielding side and issue a second and final warning to the captain of the fielding side.

"If it is the third or subsequent instance he is subject to a fine, payable to BCCI, of the lesser of 10 lakh or 25% of his match fee," states last year's IPL playing conditions.

## Secretary YSS Chairs Meeting To Deliberate On Sports Budget



Observer News Service

**JAMMU:** Commissioner/Secretary Department of Youth Services and Sports Sarmad Hafeez chaired a meeting of officers in his office chamber here on Wednesday to deliberate on the budget announcements and review the activities and achievements of the department.

The Omar Abdullah-led government recently announced the 2025-26 budget for sports, its highest allocation ever.

The meeting discussed budget announcements and strategic implementation of the same with letter and spirit.

The budget announcements included engaging 75 lakh youth in sports activities across J&K; establishment of National Centres of Excellence for Water Sports at Dal Lake in Srinagar and Basohli in Jammu; setting up of Gymnastics Academy at Gindun Rajbagh and Khel Gaon Nagra; establishment of four state-of-the-art Cricket Academies with budgetary funding of Rs 8 crore; con-

struction of two new Youth Hostels, one each in Jammu and Kashmir divisions for which amount of Rs 10 crore has been kept in the budget.

High performance training centres are being developed in all districts in phased manner to enhance athletes training and performance; hosting of national/international sports events to boost tourism and infrastructure, including the 9th Aerobic Asian Championship in 2025 and the Rafting World Cup in Kashmir for which a separate provision of Rs 4.5 Crore has been kept.

A football exchange programme will also be conducted; focus on empowering coaches by organising specialised capacity building programmes like the football development programme and world coach programme; development of 247 playfields, stadiums and sports courts for enhanced facilities; construction and upgradations of 19 sports buildings across the region; procurements of four sports equipments and generators for stadiums. Provision of Rs 150 crores

for sports infrastructure; commissioning of two swimming pools in both the capital cities, creation of sports facilities for migrants; focus on involvement of rural/tribal population in games and establishment of 100 khelo India Centres.

It was also discussed in the meeting that a Water Sports Festival will jointly be organised by J&K Sports Council in April in collaboration with the Department of Youth Services and Sports.

The enhancement in honorarium and refreshment charges of the players were also discussed in the meeting.

Prominent among others who attended the meeting were Rajinder Singh Tara, Director General Youth Services and Sports; Jyoti Rani Slathia, Special Secretary YSS; Ashok Kumar Khajuria, Director Finance YSS; Nuzhat Gul, Secretary J&K Sports Council; Ashiq Bhat, Joint Director Planning; Ravi Kumar, Deputy Director Planning YSS; Jitender Mishra, Deputy Director Central and Nitin Hangloo, representative of NYK.

## Abhishek, Varun 2nd In T20I Rankings For Batters & Bowlers

Press Trust of India

**DUBAI:** Indian swashbuckler Abhishek Sharma and mystery spinner Varun Chakaravathy continued to hold on to their career-best number two position in the latest ICC T20I chart for batters and bowlers respectively. Hardik Pandya leads the all-rounders' list with 252 points ahead of Nepal's Dipendra Singh Airee (233) and Australian Marcus Stoinis (210). Hard-hitting batter Tilak Varma and India's T20I skipper Suryakumar Yadav occupied the fourth and fifth slot respectively in the rankings released on Wednesday.

Australia's Travis Head leads the chart for batters with 856 rating points with England's Phil Salt placed third with 815 points.

Abhishek has 829 points, Varma has 804 and Suryakumar 739 points.

In the bowling list headed by West Indies' Akeal Hosein (707 points), Chakaravathy is just one point behind at 706, and ahead of England leg-spinner Adil Rashid (705), Sri Lanka's Wanindu Hasaranga (700) and Australian leggie Adam Zampa (694).

India's Ravi Bishnoi is at sixth

place with 674 points, while left-arm seamer Arshdeep Singh held the ninth spot with 653 points.

There has been no movement of late as far as the Indian players are concerned as the team has not played any matches since the series against England at home in January-February.

Meanwhile New Zealand's opening pair of Tim Seifert and Finn Allen, and new-ball bowler Jacob Duffy have made huge gains in the player rankings after helping their team to a 2-0 lead against Pakistan in the five-match T20I series.

Seifert and Allen got fine opening stands in both matches, the highlight being a 66-run blitz in the second match in Dunedin, in which seven of the first eight scoring shots of the innings were sixers as New Zealand chased a target of 136 with 11 balls to spare and five wickets in hand.

Other players to gain in the latest weekly rankings were New Zealand bowlers Ish Sodhi (up two places to 36th), Ben Sears (up 22 places to 67th) and Zakary Foulkes (up 41 places to 90th), and Pakistan's Haris Rauf (up four places to 26th).



## Short TAKES

### With Pandya Out, SKY To Captain MI In IPL Opener v CSK

Suryakumar Yadav will captain Mumbai Indians in their opening IPL match against Chennai Super Kings on Sunday as regular skipper Hardik Pandya will be forced to sit out due to a one-match suspension for over-rate offences committed by the team last season.

Suryakumar is the national T20 captain and recently led the side to a 4-1 triumph over England at home.

However, his batting form wasn't particularly impressive and he managed just 38 runs in the five outings during the series.

"Surya leads India as well. When I am not there he is the ideal choice," Pandya said during MI's pre-season press conference here.

MI head coach Mahela Jayawardene said the BCCI has communicated the one-match ban on Pandya to the team owing to three slow over-rate violations by his team last season.

MI had finished at the bottom of the heap, managing just four wins against 10 losses in 2024, which was Pandya's debut year as captain.

### DG YSS Flags Off Girl Students For Mansar Trekking Camp

Director General Youth Services and Sports J&K Rajinder Singh Tara flagged off a contingent of 141 students and 15 officials for District-Level Trekking Camp at Mansar from MA Stadium, Jammu, on Wednesday.

The officials include 10 females and five males drawn from 14 zones of district Jammu, with one from each Zone.

Speaking on the occasion, the DG said the camp, organised at the picturesque destination of Mansar, would provide a learning experience to the young trekkers.

He advised the trekkers to maintain discipline during the trip and enjoy beauty and serenity of this scenic destination, adding the five-day Trekking Camp was aimed at providing students with an opportunity to connect with nature, build resilience, develop teamwork skills, besides exchanging culture and language.

### India Could Host Italian Super Cup: Serie A Commercial Director

Serie A might consider India as a potential host for the Italian Super Cup, in an effort to broaden the tournament's global audience, the Italian league's commercial and marketing director Michele Ciccarese has said.

The Italian Super Cup, which is played between the winners and the runners-up of the previous season's Serie A and Coppa Italia, was hosted in Saudi Arabia in January where AC Milan defeated Inter Milan 3-2 to win the trophy for the eighth time.

When asked about India's potential to host the Super Cup, Ciccarese confirmed that it aligned with the league's strategy.

"What we do is to bring our international trophy like the Super Cup in all over the world, for a simple reason, to engage a wider audience and bring the best of that culture," Ciccarese said during the RCB Innovation Lab Indian Sports Summit.

"So, that's exactly what we might do, and take the conversation forward to ... come here and play in India."

### Trump Supports Putin's Call For Hockey Matches Between Nations

U.S. President Donald Trump supports Russian President Vladimir Putin's idea of holding ice hockey matches between professional American and Russian players, the Kremlin said after the two leaders spoke on Tuesday.

Russia has been frozen out of international ice hockey competitions after the country's invasion of Ukraine three years ago.

"Donald Trump supported Vladimir Putin's idea to organize hockey matches in the USA and Russia between Russian and American players playing in the NHL and KHL," the Kremlin said.

The National Hockey League is the premier North American hockey league while the Kontinental Hockey League is based in Russia.

The White House statement following the call between the two leaders did not mention hockey and it has not responded to questions about the sport.

The NHL said it was not yet ready to comment.

## Spain Betting On Young Defenders Asencio, Cubarsi & Huijsen

Agencies

**MADRID:** The future is bright for Spain when it comes to its defense.

Some talented young central defenders have emerged recently and coach Luis de la Fuente is not wasting time in adding them to the national team.

Dean Huijsen, the 19-year-old who has been thriving with Bournemouth in the Premier League, was the latest youngster to be called up for "La Roja" this year, joining fellow teenager Pau Cubarsi of Barcelona and Raúl Asencio of Real Madrid.

Cubarsi is an 18-year-old who made his first-team debut with Barcelona when he was only 16 and who today is a regular starter for Hansi Flick's side. He became the youngest defender to play for Spain's national team last year as a 17 year old, surpassing a



record previously held by Sergio Ramos.

Asencio, who turned 22 last month, earned a place in Madrid's squad last October after a series of injuries to his teammates. He quickly became a regular starter for coach Carlo Ancelotti and gained his first senior call-up for Spain's national team ahead of this week's matches against the Netherlands in the quar-

terfinals of the Nations League.

The defending Nations League and European champion, Spain plays at the Netherlands on Thursday and hosts them on Sunday in the second leg.

Huijsen, who last year was called by coach José Mourinho as one of the "best prospects in European soccer," was selected by De la Fuente after a knee

injury to veteran Barcelona defender Iñigo Martínez.

The other central defender called up by De la Fuente for the matches against the Netherlands was Robin Le Normand of Atletico Madrid.

Le Normand played alongside Aymeric Laporte in the Euro 2024 final in which Spain defeated England 2-1. Nacho Fernández and Dani Vivian were the other two central defenders in the squad at the time.

"It's all happened very quickly and I'm adapting to these new situations," Asencio said. "I'm very proud of what I'm achieving."

De la Fuente said Asencio exemplifies some of these young players who can "accelerate processes."

"I've always given opportunities to young players and it's proven that when they are talented they show their worth," De la Fuente said.

## Boxing Champion Khelif Targets Second Olympic Gold In LA

Agencies

Imane Khelif, who won Paris Olympics boxing gold amid a gender-eligibility row, is determined to defend her title at the 2028 Los Angeles Games and says she will not be intimidated by U.S. President Donald Trump.

Trump signed an executive order banning transgender women from female sports in the United States last month and called Khelif "a male boxer" in his speech after signing the order.

"I will give you a straightforward answer, I am not transgender," she told ITV in an interview.

"This does not concern me, and it does not intimidate me."

The International Olympic Committee's executive board recommended boxing's inclusion in the 2028 Games on Monday and Khelif said she dreamed of retaining her title in California.

"Second gold medal, of course. In America, Los Angeles ... I (will) defend with everything this gold medal," she said.

"I believe that if the old Imane oper-

ated at 50% of her potential, then the Imane Khelif of today is even more motivated and determined."

Khelif was disqualified by the International Boxing Association at the 2023 world championships after a test that the body said rendered her ineligible to fight as a woman on the grounds of gender.

The IBA lost its Olympic recognition over governance issues, however, and the International Olympic Committee cleared Khelif to compete in Paris, aggressively defending its position after heavy criticism.

A rival body to the IBA, World Boxing, was given provisional recognition as the international governing body of the sport last month.

The recommendation still requires final approval by the IOC at its session in Greece and outgoing President Thomas Bach said he was confident the session would approve it.

"At this point, I can say that the

IBA is a thing of the past," Khelif said. "As we say in Algeria, those who have nothing to hide should have no fear."

The debate over the inclusion of transgender athletes and athletes with Differences of Sexual Development (DSD) in women's sport has been a key issue in presidential with the elections set for Thursday.







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