

SEPARATION OF TRUSTS FROM WAQF
Muslim-created trusts will no longer be classified as Waqf, ensuring full control over trusts.

ELIGIBILITY FOR WAQF DEDICATION
Only practicing Muslims (for at least 5 years) can dedicate property to Waqf, restoring pre-2013 rules.

WOMEN'S RIGHTS IN FAMILY WAQF
Women must receive their inheritance before Waqf dedication, with special provisions for widows, divorced women, and orphans.

GOVERNMENT LAND & WAQF DISPUTES
Senior officers will investigate government properties claimed as Waqf. Strengthening Waqf tribunals with structured selection processes and fixed tenure for efficient dispute resolution.

REDUCED ANNUAL CONTRIBUTIONS
Waqf institutions' mandatory contributions to Waqf Boards reduced from 7% to 5%.

ANNUAL AUDIT REFORMS
Waqf institutions earning over Rs 1 lakh must undergo audits by State-appointed auditors.

TECHNOLOGY & CENTRAL PORTAL
A centralized system will automate Waqf property management, improving efficiency and transparency.

TRANSPARENT WAQF MANAGEMENT
Mutawallis (caretakers) must register property details on the central portal within six months.

NON-MUSLIM REPRESENTATION
Two non-Muslim members will be included in Central and State Waqf Boards to ensure inclusivity.

APPLICATION OF THE LIMITATION ACT
The Limitation Act, 1963, will now apply to Waqf property claims, reducing prolonged litigation.

ENDING ARBITRARY PROPERTY CLAIMS
Section 40 is removed, preventing Waqf Boards from arbitrarily declaring properties as Waqf.

Lok Sabha Storms Over Waqf (Amendment) Bill

Observer News Service

New Delhi: As the Budget Session of Parliament nears its conclusion on April 4, the government presented the Waqf (Amendment) Bill for consideration and passage in the Lok Sabha on Wednesday. The session saw intense exchanges between the treasury and Opposition benches, with the latter asserting that all INDIA bloc parties stand united in their resolve to "defeat the legislation."

Minority Affairs Minister Kiren Rijiju moved a motion to take up the Bill with amendments, initiating a debate on the matter. Rijiju opened the discussion by outlining the key provisions of the legislation. Originally introduced last year, the Bill was later referred to a joint parliamentary committee for review.

Introducing the bill, Rijiju said the consultation process



of the Joint Parliamentary Committee (JPC) was the largest ever exercise carried out by a parliamentary panel in India's democratic history. He said over 97.27 lakh

petitions, memorandums were received by the JPC through physical and online formats and the JPC had gone through each of them before finalising its report.

The minister said as many as 284 delegations submitted their views on the bill besides the Waqf boards of 25 states and Union Territories. Legal luminaries. | More on P6

Waqf Bill Not Interfering In Religious Rights: Shah Says Non-Muslims In Waqf Boards Only For Administration

Press Trust Of India

New Delhi: Union Home Minister Amit Shah on Wednesday asserted that for vote bank politics, fear is being spread that Waqf bill is interference in religious matters of Muslims and properties donated by them.

Making an intervention in Lok Sabha during a debate on the Waqf amendment bill, he also said that non-Muslims in Waqf council and boards are meant purely for ensuring administration of properties in accordance with stated aims.

He underlined that Waqf is a type of charitable institution where a person donates his property for social, religious or public welfare purposes, without the right to take it back.



THE COUNTRY'S LAW HAS to be accepted by all."

Shah said the word 'donation' has special importance because donation can be done only of that thing which is our own property. No one can donate government property, he asserted. Addressing | More on P6

BJP Calls It Reform, Opposition Calls It Polarization

Observer News Service

The ruling NDA on Wednesday launched a feisty defence of the Waqf (Amendment) Bill in the Lok Sabha amid the opposition's charge that it was unconstitutional and targeted Muslims, as Home Minister Amit Shah asserted that the government had no intention of interfering in their religious matters and was solely driven by the aim of transparent administration of Waqf properties.

Shah's intervention came during the day-long debate that witnessed a fierce exchange between the two sides, with Congress Deputy Leader Gaurav Gogoi alleging that the bill was an attempt to attack the basic structure of the Constitution, defame minorities, disenfranchise them and divide the society.

Minorities Affairs Minister Kiren Rijiju in his opening remarks rejected the allegation that the

Blatant Interference In Faith: J&K Politicians

Political parties in Kashmir have strongly opposed the amendments to the Waqf Act, calling it an interference in religious matters and an attempt to | More on P6

Muslim Organisations' Concerns Not Addressed: Mirwaiz

Hurriyat Conference chairman Mirwaiz Umar Farooq, who is also the chief priest of Jammu and Kashmir, expressed disappointment on Wednesday that the | More on P6

Shah To Visit J&K On April 7-8

Observer News Service

Srinagar: Union Home Minister Amit Shah is scheduled to visit Jammu and Kashmir on April 7 and 8 to assess the security situation in the region, particularly in the wake of the recent gunfight in Kathua that left two militants and four police personnel dead.

Shah's visit is expected to focus on strengthening counter-militancy operations and reviewing security arrangements ahead of Prime Minister Narendra Modi's scheduled visit on April 19. Modi is set to inaugurate the first train to Kashmir from Katra, making infrastructure security a top priority for law enforcement agencies.

During his stay, the home minister will chair a high-level security review meeting with Jammu and Kashmir Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha, top officials from paramilitary forces, intelligence agencies, the J&K Police, and civil administration. | More on P6

UN Office In Srinagar No Longer Needed: LG Says Normalcy In Kashmir Organic, Not Forced

Observer News Service

Srinagar: Jammu and Kashmir Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha has stated that the decision to wind up the United Nations office in Srinagar lies solely with the Centre and the Ministry of External Affairs (MEA). However, he personally believes the office is no longer necessary in Kashmir.

In an interview with a national news channel, he said, "Talking about the UN office in Srinagar is not within my domain. The MEA and Centre have to take a call. I have my boundaries." He added, however, that in his view, "the office is not needed anymore."

Urges Youth To Use Education For Nation-Building

Observer News Service

Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha on Wednesday urged the youth to use the skills acquired at the universities in nation-building and improving people's lives. "Education is a rare opportunity and represents infinite power. Education is the only | More on P6



LG Sinha emphasized that peace cannot be enforced but must be nurtured, praising the security forces for their role in stabilizing the region. "Under Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Union Home Minister Amit

Shah, J&K has seen a drastic transformation. Stone-pelting and shutdown calls dictated by our neighbor are now history. Businesses are thriving, and educational institutions, cinemas, and universities are fully operational. This is all due to peace," he said.

He rejected claims of "forced normalcy," citing the elimination of terror commanders and the drop in local militant recruitment. "Had this been a forced normalcy, schools wouldn't have reopened, Bollywood and Hollywood wouldn't be shooting here, and investors wouldn't be coming to Kashmir," he asserted. According to | More on P6

J&K Govt Sanctions Free 10 Kg Foodgrains For AAY

Observer News Service

Srinagar: The Jammu and Kashmir government has approved the distribution of additional free foodgrains to beneficiaries under the Antyodaya Anna Yojana (AAY) to support poor households.

This initiative aims to enhance the monthly food supply for AAY families under the Public Distribution System (PDS). According to a government order, the additional allocation will be determined case by case, ensuring that no AAY beneficiary receives more than 10 kilograms per month across all PDS schemes, including the National Food Security Act (NFSA).

The quantity of extra foodgrains will vary based on household size. For instance, families with up to 10 members will receive

an additional 35 kg of rice, while larger households may get even more as per a predefined formula. The rice, sourced through the Open Market Sale Scheme (Domestic), will be distributed free of cost.

To implement the scheme, the Finance Department has been authorized to allocate additional budgetary support, which will later be reimbursed into the Revolving Fund (Foodgrains) Accounts of the respective directorates. The government has also signaled that once the Department of Food & Public Distribution resumes wheat sales under the Open Market Sale Scheme, the possibility of providing wheat and wheat flour to AAY households will be considered, pending approval from the Competent Authority. Announcing | More on P6

'Vagueness Vitiates Detention Order' HC Quashes 3 PSA Orders

M Ahmad

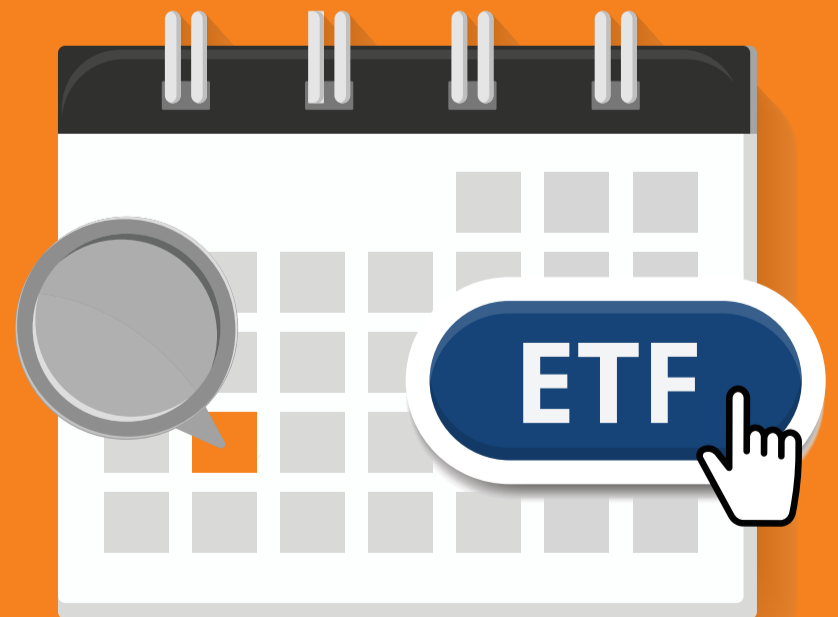
Srinagar: Observing that vagueness of grounds of detention vitiates the order of detention, the High Court of J&K and Ladakh on Wednesday quashed three orders under Public Safety Act and ordered release of the detainees forthwith if not required in any other case.

"...vagueness of grounds of detention strikes at the root of the subjective satisfaction of the detaining authority thereby vitiating the order of detention," a bench Justice Sanjay Dhar said while quashing detention order under PSA passed by District Magistrate Pulwama against one Umer Kabir Mir on 12 May 2023. Justice Dhar | More on P6

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1, 10 Samad Complex, Ma Link Road, Srinagar, Srinagar, Jammu & Kashmir, Srinagar - 190001



'People With Autistic Disorders Are Entitled To Get Gainful Employment'

Press Trust Of India

People with autistic disorders need to be provided with skill training to get gainful employment besides being treated with empathy, feel many domain experts. Globally, the prevalence of neurodevelopmental disorders is rising, with autism affecting one in 100 children according to WHO. Psychotherapist Minu Budhia said. "The focus should be on skill building in a sensory-friendly environment with social communication training. Organisations need to create an inclusive autism-friendly workspace," Budhia said.

Conditions such as ADHD (Attention Deficit and Hyperactivity Disorder), intellectual disabilities and learning disorders also impact millions, making neurodiversity far more common than we realise, Budhia said. Individuals on the autism spectrum do not need pity, she said, adding, "They need our understanding. Empathy to my mind means seeing their strengths, celebrating their abilities, and providing the right support to help the neurodiverse to thrive in a neurotypical world". Budhia, founder of Caring Minds International also said that as a mother to a special child, she witnessed the power of empathy firsthand. "Empathy fuels attitudinal shifts. When teachers, educational institutes, employers and society keep an open



mind, individuals with autism can lead fulfilling lives on their terms," she said. According to rehabilitation psychologist Amrita Panda, people living with autistic spectrum disorder should be imparted with vocational skill training to get gainful employment. "These people should be treated with empathy and not sympathy", she said. Deepranjani Foundation, founded by Panda to empower adolescents and adults with cognitive or behavioural disorders, has identified five areas for skill training and subsequently provides employment. "The five areas where skill training is given to autistic persons are multimedia, bakery, spice making, handicrafts and tailoring," Panda said. She said that the foundation secures

orders from companies in these five areas which are then produced in the units manned by autistic adolescents and adults. A part of the proceeds, which arise from the order supplies, are then distributed as salaries along with statutory benefits like PF and ESI. According to Budhia, parents and educators miss early signs due to lack of awareness. Panda said to spread the perception about such cognitive and behavioural disorders on the occasion of World Autism Awareness Day which falls on Wednesday (April 2), the foundation has tied up with Vaishali Skill Development Centre, a Section 8 company not-for-profit, to enhance skilling opportunities and employability training.

IIT-KGP Study Reveals Rapid Increase In Surface Melting Across West Antarctic Ice Shelves

Press Trust Of India

A study by a team of IIT Kharagpur researchers in collaboration with eminent atmospheric experts of globally known institutes has revealed significant findings about the rapid increase in surface melting across West Antarctic ice shelves over the last two decades. Led by Pranab Deb, Centre for Ocean, River, Atmosphere and Land Sciences (CORAL) at IIT Kharagpur and co-authored by leading atmospheric scientists, the study offers fresh insights into the atmospheric drivers behind "dramatic shifts" in Antarctic ice behaviour, the institute said in a statement. Apart from Prof Pranab Deb, the research has contributions by David Bromwich from the Byrd Center's Polar Meteorology Group and experts Andrew Orr, Arnab



Sen and Kyle R Clem, it said. Using satellite data, climate model simulations, and observational analysis, the researchers were able to trace the role of tropical atmospheric influences in recent ice shelf melt trends. The findings have significant implications for understanding the future of West Antarctica's ice shelves and the broader impacts on global sea levels, the statement said. "The prolonged warm air transport could lead to further destabilisation of the ice shelves, which are crucial in regulating the flow of ice

from the continent into the ocean. As these ice shelves weaken and disintegrate, they could contribute to rising sea levels, potentially affecting coastal communities worldwide," it said. "This research highlights how even distant tropical influences can significantly impact polar regions," Bromwich was quoted as saying in the release. The study also underscores the need to improve climate models by incorporating remote tropical influences, particularly those stemming from the South Pacific Convergence Zone.

OFFICE OF THE ASSISTANT REGIONAL TRANSPORT OFFICER BUDGAM
 Subject:- Necessary Correction/change in address in data to the License No. JK-0420170035331 issued in favour of ARSHEED AHMED MIR Parentage ABDUL REHMAN MIR
 Whereas an application has been received by one ARSHEED AHMED MIR Parentage ABDUL REHMAN MIR wherein he claimed that the Name has been wrongly recorded in the records of Driving Licenses as ARSHAD AHMAD MIR Which needs to be changed as ARSHEED AHMED MIR.
 Now therefore it is notified for the information of the general public that objections if any in this regard shall reach in written in the office of the Assistant Regional Transport office Budgam within a period of 7 days from the date of publication of this notice in the daily newspaper. After expiry of stipulated time no objection will be entertained.
 Assistant Regional Transport officer
 Budgam Kashmir
 mcb

PUBLIC NOTICE
 My name in my adhaar card has been wrongly written as Suraya while my correct name is Suria Rasool which needs to be corrected. If anybody has any objection in this regard he/she may file them in the concerned office within seven days. After that no objection shall be entertained.
 Suria Rasool W/o Ishiyaaq Ahmad Najar
 R/o Qazi Hamam Baramulla
 FKO

PUBLIC NOTICE
 The name of my daughter in her adhaar card has been wrongly written as Sufiya while her correct name is Sufaya Hafeez which needs to be corrected. If anybody has any objection in this regard he/she may file them in the concerned office within seven days. After that no objection shall be entertained.
 Hafizullah Ganale F/O Sufaya Hafeez
 R/O Krank Shivan Colony Sopore
 FKO

PUBLIC NOTICE
 I have applied for the renewal of my fertilizer license under name and style K.M Fertilizers. If anybody has any objection in this regard he/she may file them in the office of the Chief Agriculture Officer District Baramulla within seven days. After that no objection shall be entertained.
 Mohammad Arif War
 S/o Habibullah War R/o Zaloora
 FKO

PUBLIC NOTICE
 I want to change my ward's name in school records from Ziya Farooq to Lone Ainan Farooq. If anybody has any objection in this regard he/she may file them in the office of the Muslim Institute of Education, Badran within seven days. After that no objection shall be entertained.
 Farooq Ahmad Lone
 F/o Lone Ainan Farooq,
 R/o Badran, Tehsil Magam, District Budgam,
 FKO

PUBLIC NOTICE
 I have lost my passport bearing no Y3374812 now I have applied for the duplicate of the same if anybody has any objection in this regard he/she may file them in the concerned office within seven days. After that no objection shall be entertained.
 Umar Rashid S/o Abdul Rashid Ganie
 R/o Tujjar Sharief Sheripora
 bmg

PUBLIC NOTICE
 I want to change my name in my adhaar card bearing no 5170 4987 7848 from Shazia (old name) to Shahzreen Bano (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.
 Shahzreen Bano
 R/O :- Qasbalar Ganderbal
 jvd

PUBLIC NOTICE
 I Khalid Fareed want to change my son's name in his adhaar card bearing no 6952 6637 7635 from Muhammad Huzafia (old name) to Huzafa khalid (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.
 Khalid Fareed
 F/o :- Huzafa Khalid
 R/O :- Gundi Gujran Karnah kupwara
 jvd

OFFICE OF ADVOCATE BASIT ALI DAR J&K HIGH COURT SRINAGAR
 CHAMBER NO. 07 MUNSIF/JMFC AT MAGAM Cell No. 9906517553, 9419068005
 In the case of: 1. Younis Ahmad Kumar aged 35 years S/O Mohammad Ramzan Kumar
 2. Muneer Ahmad Kumar S/o Ali Mohammad Kumar
 3. Nazir Ahmad Kumar S/o Gh Ahmad Kumar
 4. Iqbal Ahmad Kumar S/o Ab Rahim Kumar
 5. Firdous Ahmad Kumar S/o Mohammad Ramzan Kumar
 All residents of Kralpora Magam Tehsil Magam District Budgam
 Caveators
 V/S
 PUBLIC AT LARGE
 ...Non-caveators
 IN THE MATTER OF:
 Caveat Petition in terms of Section 148-A of C.P.C. The Caveators have reasons to believe/apprehension that non-Caveator (s) may file a suit/application/petition or any other type of proceedings before the Hon'ble High Court, District Courts, Revenue Courts or any other forum and may succeed in obtaining some relief/order at their back/ex-parte against the caveators and in such eventuality, the caveators will be put to an irreparable loss and inconvenience. It would be proper that caveators may be given an opportunity of being heard by the Hon'ble Court before passing any order or direction.
 medialine
 ADVOCATE BASIT ALI DAR

V Subject. Grant of registration of the proposed Homestay unit under the name & Style of M/s. STONE HENGE HOMESTAY " situated at Sarai Bala Srinagar
PUBLIC NOTICE
 Whereas I Mr./Mushtaq Ahmad Renzu S/o Abdul Ahad Renzu R/O Anzimar Khanyar Srinagar Srinagar intends to apply in the Department of tourism for registration of my proposed Homestay unit under the name and style " M/s.STONE HENGE HOMESTAY" situated at Sarai Bala Srinagar 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 1000), site plan, Affidavit, Rent Deed duly attested sub-registrar, printing Material (Letter Head/Visiting), Photograph of the unit (indoor and Outdoor) and Two Passport size photograph to the department of tourism as prescribed checklist prior to registration of my unit as an Excursion Agency/Adventure tour operation.
 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 institutions/Ban/ Organisation, etc for objection, if any and the same should reach to the deputy director tourism Registration (e-mail ID: ddtreg123@gmail.com) within a period of 7 days from the publication of this notice in leading local newspaper/newspaper of the valley. No objection beyond a period of 7 days shall be entertained
 fko

Government of Jammu & Kashmir
DIRECTORATE OF FLORICULTURE (G&P) KASHMIR
 Tel:0194-2474234 Fax:2482032 email:kashflori@rediffmail.com
Subject: - Extension Notice No. 02.
 In view of poor response, the Bid Submission end/opening date (Online) of technical/financial bid in respect of e-NIT No. 10 of 2025 dated:-21.02.2025 invited by this office under endorsement No: DOFK-GSOTNDR/12/2024/E-7594415/e-NIT-10 Dated:- 21/02/2025 with regard to "Outsourcing of Entry Ticketing system of Padshahi Bagh Bijbehara" is hereby extended as per details given below:-

1.	Bid Submission End date & time	16.04.2025	up to 02:00 PM
2.	Date & time of opening of Bids (Online)	19.04.2025	at 02:00 PM

 Other terms & conditions shall remain same as laid down in the concerned e-NIT.
 No:-DOFK-GSOTNDR/13/2024/E-7594454/e-NIT-10
 DIPK-28/25 Dated.02.04.2025
 Sd/-
 Accounts Officer,
 (Member Secretary)
 Floriculture Department,
 Kashmir.

Government of Jammu & Kashmir
OFFICE OF THE EXECUTIVE ENGINEER JAL SHAKTI (PHE) DIVISION SHOPIAN
NOTICE INVITING E-TENDERS
Notice Inviting E-Tenders-NIT No. 21/JSDS of 2024-25
 For and on behalf of Lt. Governor of J&K U.T, e-tenders on percentage basis are invited in Single cover system from approved and eligible contractors registered with J&K U.T Govt. for the following works:-

S. NO.	NAME OF WORK	Celling (Rs in lacs)	Earnest Money (EMD) Rs	Time for completion	Class of Contract	Cost of Tender document (Rs)	Major Head of Account	Tender opening authority
1	Annual Maintenance, Repairs, and other emergent works of PHE Sub Division Shopian for the year of 2025-26 with effect from 01-04-2025 to 31.03.2026. (Stage)	10.00	30,000	FY 2025-26	DEE/CEE	500/-	2215 (M&R)	Ex. Engineer
2	Annual Maintenance, Repairs, and other emergent works of PHE Sub Division Zainpora for the year of 2025-26 with effect from 01-04-2025 to 31.03.2026. (Stage)	10.00	30,000	FY 2025-26	DEE/CEE	500/-	2215 (M&R)	Ex. Engineer

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

1.	Publishing date	29.03.2025	05.00 PM
2.	Download Date Starts	29.03.2025	05.00 PM
3.	BID Submission Date Starts	29.03.2025	05.00 PM
4.	BID Submission Date Ends	08.04.2025	12.00 PM
5.	Date of opening of tenders	08.04.2025	01.00 PM

 The bids shall be deposited in electronic format on the website www.jktenders.gov.in and The bids uploaded shall be opened online on above mentioned date by the Executive Engineer JAL SHAKTI (PHE) DIVISION SHOPIAN in presence of the bidders who may wish to be present. In case of holiday or office happening to be closed on the basis of opening of the bid, the same will be opened on the next working day at the same time and venue.
 1. Bidders must ensure to upload scanned copies (on 100dpi) of all necessary documents like Cost of Tender document in the form of Treasury Challan (MH-0215) in favour of Executive Engineer JAL SHAKTI (PHE) DIVISION SHOPIAN/ latest GST clearance certificate/Registration card duly renewed along with Verification/BID Security in the form of EMD as per above. The date of CDR/FDR/BG should be between the date of start of bid and bid submission end date. After opening of tenders online, the 1st lowest bidder shall be asked to deposit the CDR/FDR pledged to tender receiving authority and other documents in original. The CDR/ FDR and other documents in original shall be deposited within two days positively after opening of tenders. The EMD in the shape of CDR/FDR of the successful bidder will be retained as performance security deposit till expiry of defect liability period, whereas the EMD of unsuccessful bidders will be returned latest by 30 days after award of the contract. The check list of documents for cover 1st is attached with the NIT & bidders are advised to recheck the uploaded documents as per the Check list.
 2. Contractor / Bidder who fails to submit the CDR/FDR / Treasury Challans as required; there EMD will be forfeited besides they will be barred/prohibited from participating in the Tendering process for a period of Six Months (06 Months) in the first instance. Their online uploaded tenders will not be considered for the said period.
 3. Contractor who shall be allotted the work has to start the work within the stipulated time period after the date of allotment as the work is of very important nature.
 4. The department shall not be responsible for delay in online submission of bids due to any reason whatsoever.
 5. The tenders shall remain valid for 90 days (Ninety Days) in
 6. As soon as the contract is fixed with the successful bidder, he has to enter into an agreement with the department.
 7. The earnest money shall be forfeited if:-
 a. Any bidder withdraws his bid during the period of bid validity or makes any modification in terms & condition of the bid.
 b. The successful bidder fails to execute an agreement with the department within 10 days after fixation of contract.
 8. The tender opening authority reserves the right to accept/reject the bid without assigning any reason thereof.
 9. The work is to be completed within the time limit specified in the NIT. In case of delay in completion of work due to contractor's fault beyond stipulated time of completion the contractor shall be liable to pay liquidated damages at the rate of 0.5 % of the contract value (half percent) per week of delay. However, such liquidated damages shall not exceed 10% of the total contract value of the item, or a part thereof, delayed.
 10. Normally the DI/GI pipes will be supplied by the department. However, in case of any exigency, the contractor has to supply the pipes with GST invoices and 3rd party inspection Release Notes and dump in the Divisional store as directed by Engineer-in-Charge. The payment for supply item will be paid as per relevant item of BOQ.
 11. No price escalation will be paid for completion of the work within stipulated time or extended date of completion due to any reason whatsoever.
 12. Retention money/Security deposit shall be 10% of the contract value. The Security Deposit is to be recovered at the rate of 10% of bill amount from Running Account Bills and shall be released after completion of the defect liability period i.e; 06 months after the issuance of completion certificate by the Engineer-in-Charge.
 13. All items of works shall conform to Specifications as per Relevant IS codes and as directed by the Engineer-in-Charge.
 14. The contractor shall be solely responsible for carrying out the mandatory tests required or as decided by Engineer-in-charge for the quality control at his own costs. The cost of conducting all tests shall be borne by the contractor and shall be deemed to have been included in the quoted percentage rate tendered. Nothing extra shall be payable on this account. .
 15. In case of tie for the position of 1st lowest bidder the bids should be out rightly rejected and the work shall be put to fresh tenders
 16. The date of start of work shall be reckoned within one week from the date of issuance of LOI/Contract allotment as the case may be.
 17. The Contract shall be terminated, in case contractor fails to start /complete the work, within the stipulated time period, his CDR/Earnest Money/additional performance deposit shall be forfeited after termination of the contract. Besides, defaulting contractor shall be barred/ Prohibited from taking part in future tendering process in PHE Department at least for Six Months
 18. The employer may terminate the contract if the contractor causes a fundamental breach of the contract. The fundamental breach of contract will include:-
 a) Continuous stoppage of Work for a period of 07 days without authorization of Engineer in-charge.
 b) The contractor fails to start /complete the work, within the stipulated time period.
 Pursuant to the process of termination of defaulted contract, the employer reserves the right to invite fresh tender for the balance work at the risk and cost of defaulter contractor. Besides, his Performance Security/Retention Money shall be forfeited after termination of the contract and defaulting contractor shall be debarred from taking works in PHE Department at least for one year.
 19. Any kind of damage which may occur to any work during the course of execution due to torrential rains/heavy snow fall/cyclone/floods etc. shall be the responsibility of the bidder till the work is finally handed-over to the Department.
 20. The taxes viz. Income tax, GST & Cess shall be deducted from the bidders' claims as admissible under rules.
 21. The bidders are advised not to make any change in BOQ (Bill of Quantities). In no case they should attempt to create similar BOQ manually. The BOQ downloaded should be used for filling percentage rate inclusive of all taxes & it should be saved with the same name as it contains.
 22. Instructions to Bidders:-
 a) Bidders are advised to download bid submission manual from the "Downloads" option as well as from "Bidders Manual" on website www.jktenders.gov.in in acquit bid submission process.
 b) To participate in bidding process bidders have to get Digital Signature Certificate (DSC) as per Information Technology Act 2000
 c) Bidders can get Digital Signature certificate from approved vendors.
 d) The bidders have to submit their bids online in electronic format with digital signature. No financial bids will be accepted in Physical form.
 e) Bidders must ensure to upload scanned copies of all necessary documents like PAN/TIN/ E-Chalan/ Tenderers Address Format / Registration Card fully renewed.
 f) The percentage rates quoted by the bidder shall be entirely in Indian Rupees and the rates quoted shall be deemed to include price escalation and all taxes upto completion of work unless otherwise specified.
 23. The payment shall be made only after the funds are received on this account from higher authorities under Major Head of Account as shown against each.
 24. Photographic evidence during, before and after the execution of work is a must and shall be the sole responsibility of the contractor.
 25. Other terms & conditions shall be the same as laid down in the PWD Form-25.
 26. In case any relevant clause is missing in the NIT, the GFR-2017 and Manual for Procurement of Works 2022 shall prevail.
 Remittance Head:-0215
 No.JSDS/ 3878-90
 DIPK-14/25 dated: 02-04-2025
 EXECUTIVE ENGINEER,
 JAL SHAKTI (PHE) DIVISION SHOPIAN

Joggers Park Raj Bagh Defaced By Stray Dogs

Agencies

Srinagar: The Joggers Park in Raj Bagh has been left in shambles as stray dogs freely roam and dig up its green spaces, turning the once-pristine area into a mess. Despite thousands of people visiting the park daily, the Floriculture Department has failed to maintain its beauty, raising serious concerns about accountability.

The park, known for its lush lawns and well-maintained walking tracks, now presents a sorry picture with deep pits dug by dogs, damaged flower beds, and an overall neglected appearance. The presence of a watchman's quarter inside the park has done little to prevent the deterioration, as there seems to be no vigil over the park.

"Instead of jogging, we now have to keep an eye out for aggressive dogs and

avoid the uneven ground ruined by them. The authorities have simply abandoned the park," a regular visitor told the news agency Kashmir News Trust.

Local residents and fitness enthusiasts have expressed frustration over the Floriculture Department's indifference, alleging that no concrete steps have been taken to safeguard the park from stray animals. "This place was meant to be a haven for nature lovers and morning walkers, but it's turning into a dog shelter," said another visitor.

With no intervention from the concerned department, the situation continues to worsen, leaving citizens questioning whether the upkeep of public spaces is even on the administration's agenda. Visitors urged immediate action to restore the park's lost charm and ensure a safe environment for everyone. (KNT)



KO Photo Faisal Khan

Packed Gardens, Brisk Business Mark Eid Celebrations In City

Syed Mohammad Burhan

Srinagar: The Boulevard Road and other major roads of Srinagar city remained choked with traffic for the past three days as people from across the valley thronged the Mughal Gardens to celebrate Eid. With the conclusion of festivities, normal life is gradually returning to routine.

The roads were packed with autorickshaws, cars, private hired vehicles, and bikes, as families and friends stepped out to make the most of the holiday.

The Mughal Gardens, the favourite Eid destination, saw a massive footfall, with visitors enjoying the pleasant weather and scenic beauty. To add to the festive mood, the Tulip Garden of Srinagar, Asia's largest Tulip garden, also attracted a large number of people, further contributing to the traffic congestion.

Tourists from different parts of India also joined in the festivities, enjoying the cultural vibrance of Kashmir. Ramesh Tiwari, a tourist

from Jaipur, said, "I have always heard about Kashmir's beauty, but witnessing it during Eid celebrations is an entirely different experience. The energy, the joy, and the hospitality of the people are heart-warming."

Meera Joshi, a tourist from Mumbai, shared, "The Mughal Gardens are breathtaking. Seeing people in their festive best, the food stalls, and the warmth of the people made our trip truly memorable."

Vikram Sharma, a visitor from Delhi, expressed his delight, saying, "This is my first visit to Kashmir, and I am amazed by the grandeur of Eid here. The streets are lively, the people are welcoming, and the local delicacies are a treat. I would love to visit again."

Anjali Patel from Gujarat echoed similar sentiments, stating, "We came here for a peaceful vacation, but witnessing these celebrations has been an added joy. The Mughal Gardens are spectacular, and the overall atmosphere is full of life."

making their way to the Mughal Gardens and other attractions in large numbers. "I wouldn't have come if not for the free bus travel," said Shaheena Bano, a resident of downtown Srinagar. "It made travel easy and encouraged many women to step out and enjoy the celebrations."

Sakeena Jan, a student from Sopore, shared, "This initiative gave me and my friends the opportunity to visit the gardens without worrying about expenses. We had a fantastic time exploring the beauty of the city."

Shopkeepers and street vendors along the Boulevard also saw brisk business during the celebrations. "Eid brings people out, and that's good for us. Sales were excellent over the last two days," said a street vendor selling snacks.

As the holiday mood fades, businesses, offices, and daily routines are gradually resuming, marking the end of another festive Eid in Kashmir. However, for many, the memories of the bustling gardens, lively streets, and shared joy will linger long after the celebrations have ended.

Commissioner SMC Reviews Swachh Survekshan 2024

Observer News Service

SRINAGAR: Commissioner SMC, Dr. Owais Ahmed, held an in-depth review to evaluate the progress and preparations for the upcoming Swachh Survekshan 2024.

During the meeting, Dr. Owais emphasized the critical importance of upholding high standards of cleanliness and sanitation throughout the city as part of the Swachh Survekshan initiative.

Commissioner reviewed previous performance metrics and highlighted the necessity for continuous improvement in sanitation practices and public awareness campaigns. The officials were encouraged to prioritize sustainable waste management

solutions and to cultivate a strong culture of cleanliness among the residents of the Srinagar city.

Dr. Owais reiterated that achieving a high ranking in the Swachh Survekshan not only demonstrates the city's commitment to cleanliness but also significantly contributes to the well-being and health of its citizens.

The meeting concluded with actionable points aimed at enhancing the city's sanitation efforts, ensuring that Srinagar stands out as a model city in the nationwide cleanliness survey.

The meeting was attended by the Joint Commissioner (Adm) SMC, Secretary SMC and other senior officials of the Corporation.

Mir Imtiaz, Adil Fared Assume Charge Of ADC's

Observer News Service

SRINAGAR: Mir Imtiaz Ul Aziz and Adil Fared Wednesday assumed the charge of Additional Deputy Commissioners (ADCs) Srinagar respectively.

Prior to this, Mir Imtiaz served as the Deputy District Election Officer Srinagar and successfully conducted the elections for Lok Sabha and J&K Legislative Assembly.

While, Adil Fared was holding the charge of Assistant Commissioner Central

in the Office of Divisional Commissioner Kashmir.

After assuming the charges as ADCs Srinagar, both the Officers were welcomed by the senior Officers of District Administration Srinagar and other Officials with assurance of full cooperation for development of the District. Interacting with the Officials, the Officers stressed on adopting a coordinated approach to achieve goals set for development of the District, besides mitigating public issues on priority.

Women Welcome Free Travel In Smart City Buses

Observer News Service

Srinagar: Women in Srinagar have expressed their enthusiastic support for the newly launched free bus services under the Smart City project. The initiative aims to enhance public transport accessibility for residents, especially women, by offering modern, eco-friendly buses at no cost.

Fatima Bhat, a local school teacher, shared her excitement: "This is a significant step toward ensuring women have safe and affordable travel options. It gives us the freedom to commute without worrying about the cost and security, particularly during evening hours."

The service has already received widespread praise from women across the region. Bushra Mir, a student at the University of Kashmir, highlighted the convenience: "I can now attend evening classes without the anxiety of how to get home. The buses are comfortable, and the schedule is punctual, which is a huge relief for students like me."

The initiative is part of the Smart City Mission, which aims to improve the urban infrastructure and provide inclusive growth. The buses are equipped with GPS tracking, air conditioning, and special seating arrangements for women, making them a preferred mode of transportation.

NORTHERN RAILWAY
E-TENDER NOTICE

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 25.04.2025 up to 15:00 Hrs. Bidders will be able to submit their original revised bids up to the closing date and time only. Manual offers are not allowed against these tenders, and any such manual offer received shall be ignored.

Contractors are allowed to make payments against this tender towards tender document cost and earnest money only through payment modes available on the IREPS portal like net banking, debit card, credit card, etc. Manual payments through Demand draft, Banker cheques, Deposit receipts, FDR etc. are not allowed.

Tender Type	Tendering Section	Bidding System
Open	Works	Single Packet System
Date of Uploading Tenders	Bid Starting Date	Bid Closing Date/Time
02.04.2025	11.04.2025	25.04.2025

S.No.	Tender No.	Details of Tender	Validity of offer	Period of completion
1.	332-2024-25-ADEN-JAT	Protection work to the foundation & Guide bund Bridge No 172 at pier No 7, 8, and 9 UP Line and pier 6, 7, 8, 9, and 10 DN line in PTK-JAT Section under ADEN-JAT	60 Days	06 Months
		Advertised Value (Rs.)		
		21674149.74		
2.	333-2024-25-JAT-DRM-FZR	Renovation of ORH Manali and Develop open Gym in the campus of ORH Manali in the section of SSEW/PLMX	60 Days	06 Months
		Advertised Value (Rs.)		
		3046834.44		

NOTE: Contractors are advised to check the IREPS website for any corrigendum issued against this tender before submitting the bids. No-770-W/169/WA-1/FZR-332-2024-25-ADEN-JAT and 333-2024-25-JAT-DRM-FZR

SERVING CUSTOMERS WITH A SMILE 998/25

Office of the Naib Tehsildar Pattan

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

PUBLIC NOTICE..

The registrar birth EO MC pattan has submitted a case file pertaining to birth of Noorain Liyakat S/o Liyakat Hussain Dar R/o Arch-anderhama with verified date of birth 14/05/2021 occurred at SDH pattan in this connection if any body having objection for issuance of said certificate he may contact to this office within 04 days after that no objection shall be entertained.

SD

fko

Naib Tehsildar Pattan

CENTRAL UNIVERSITY OF KASHMIR

EMPLOYMENT NOTIFICATION: 05 of 2025

Online applications are invited in the prescribed format through Samarth e-governance (CU-Kashmir recruitment portal) link <https://cukashmirnt.samarth.edu.in/index.php/site/signup>

from eligible candidates for appointment of Registrar on direct/deputation basis. The detailed notification regarding the eligibility and other terms and conditions are available on the University website www.cukashmir.ac.in. The online applications shall be available on CU-Kashmir recruitment portal w.e.f 12th March, 2025. The last date for submission of online application form/s is 15th April, 2025 & the submission of downloaded application form/s along with annexures is 25th April, 2025. Sd/- Prof. M.Afzal Zargar No. CUKmr/RCT/F.No.486/2025/2445 Registrar Dated: 11-03-2025

نمبر پلیٹ کی گمشدگی

میرے موٹر سائیکل (PULSAR 180) پر نمبر JK04D-8043 کے نمبر پلیٹ (Number) (plate) کبھی گم ہو گئی ہے۔ بہت ڈھونڈنے پر نہیں ملی۔ اگر کسی نے اٹھائی ہو تو وہ برائے انسانیت سمجھوئے ہوئے نمبر پروفن کرے۔ بصورت دیگر اسکی ڈپلیٹ نکالنی مطلوب ہے۔ اس بارے میں اگر کسی کو کوئی اعتراض ہو تو وہ ایک ہفتے کے اندر اندر ARTO ڈیگام کے دفتر میں پیش کریں۔ بعد از میعاد کوئی اعتراض قابل قبول نہیں ہوگا۔

محمد شفیع ولد دلگرام علی الدین نیو ساکن ایچ پی کوٹ ڈیگام۔
فون۔ 9797271582

mcb

TRAFFIC POLICE : 9419993745, 01998-266686
PCR: 0194-2452092, 2455883
PDD: 0194-2450213
FIRE AND EMERGENCY SERVICES : 2479488, 2452222, 2452155
CAPD: 1800180701
SMC HEALTH OFFICER: 9469409081
Ambulance: Kashmir EMS Service: +91 94841 00200

AIRPORTS
SHIEK UL ALAM AIRPORT: 01942303311 ✈

RAILWAYS

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

HIGHWAY STATUS

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

PRAYERS

FAJR 4: 52
ZUHR 12:34
ASR 5: 04
Magrib 6:55
ISHA 8: 18

HIJRI CALENDAR
04 Shawwal
1446

This Day In History

- 1513 - Explorer Juan Ponce de León claims Florida for Spain as the first known European to reach Florida
- 1559 - England & France sign 1st Treaty of Le Cateau-Cambrésis
- 1745 - Austria & Bavaria sign peace
- 1917 - US President Woodrow Wilson asks Congress to declare war against Germany
- 1944 - Soviet Army marches into pro-German Romania
- 1945 - Diplomatic relations between the Soviet Union and Brazil are established
- 1960 - Cuba buys oil from USSR
- 1963 - Explorer 17 attains Earth orbit (254/914 km)
- 1963 - USSR launches Luna 4; missed Moon by 8,500 km
- 1964 - USSR launches Zond 1 to Venus; no data returned

From KO Archives

Basketful Of Apples To Say Thank You

SRINAGAR - Apple growers of Kashmir have sent a gift of 12 cartons of apples to Pakistani and Indian leaders with a message "From Kashmir with Love." Pakistan President Pervez Musharraf, Pakistan Prime Minister Shaukat Aziz, Indian Prime Minister Dr. Manmohan Singh and Congress party president and Chairperson of the National Advisory Council, Sonia Gandhi will be among the recipients.

Apple growers are sending mix cartons of the world famous apples to Pakistani leaders as a thanksgiving gesture for starting the bus service between Srinagar and Muzaffarabad on April 7, which will link divided parts of Kashmir for the first time in 58 years.

Six other cartons are being sent to New Delhi for Dr. Singh and Mrs. Gandhi before both leave for Srinagar to inaugurate the historic bus service next week.

The bus service is being seen as one of the most tangible signs of a fledgling peace between the nuclear rivals after decades of enmity. It will travel 170 km on the highway between Srinagar and Muzaffarabad in the Pakistani sector.

Apple growers say a carton each will be gifted to Musharraf and Aziz, while the other four will be given to other political leaders.

Ghulam Rasool, the President of Fruit Growers Association here, said with the opening of the bus service, there it hope it would revive trade links.

"Kashmir is known in, the world for its fruits. So this time we will gift baskets of apple to Pervez Musharraf, Shaukat Aziz and the Indian High Commissioner in Pakistan. When we had a good trade in apples 1947 the wholesale market was in Rawalpindi and we used to send apples to Amritsar, Delhi Karachi etc front there and when we heard about this (the bus service), we decided then itself that we will give six basket of apples to Pakistan and seven basket of apples for our Prime Minister Manmohan Singh and other leaders which includes Ghulam Nabi Azad and Sonia Gandhi." he said

India had said on Friday it hoped free trade with its nuclear-armed neighbour Pakistan would happen within one to two years, as their sluggish peace process moves forward.

Around 600000 families' are directly involved in the valley's fruit business and if the market opens for their produce in Pakistan, growers are optimistic that both the countries could overtake Gulf countries. Ghulam Mohamed, a senior member of Fruit Growers Association, said fruit trade via Pakistan could also solve the unemployment problem.

"A lot of unemployment problems will also be solved. More youths will be engaged in the work as there is no other viable industry and only Fruit industry is the living industry," said Rasool. With 1.2 million metric tonnes of apple production, Kashmir is the biggest producer of apples in India. Barriers to commerce cemented by more than a half-century of hostility mean companies selling everything from wheat to tyres to Pakistan are forced to make costly detours into countries like Afghanistan and the United Arab Emirates.

Trade is on course to rise more than 150 percent in the financial year which ended in March to about \$500 million, but businessmen predict it could reach 10 billion dollars within five years of signing a free trade agreement.

Pakistan, with 66 million dollars worth of exports to India in the eight months to November, were dwarfed by imports of 315 million dollars. (ANI)

(Kashmir Observer, 03 April, 2005)

KASHMIR OBSERVER™

Printed & Published by Sajjad Haider on behalf of Kashmir Observer LLP
Printed at: K.T Press Pvt. Ltd 120-Electronic Complex, Industrial Estate, Rangreth-Budgam
Published from: 5-Boulevard Srinagar J&K
Editor-in-Chief: Sajjad Haider
News Editor: Farzana Nisar
Opinion Editor: Tooba Towfiq
Online Editor: Syed Hamid
Head Layout & Design: Muntazir Yaseen,
Digital Media Head: Amir Ali Shah
Business & Sales Head: Namisha Raj
Distribution & Advertising: Firdos Ali
RNI Registration No: 69503/98
Postal Registration No-L/159/KO/SK/2014-16
Legal Counsel: Tasaduq Khwaja
Switchboard: (0194) 2502327 | +91 1947969705
Editorial: (0194) 2502327
Email: editor@kashmirobsvserver.net

KO VIEW

Back On Track

Prime Minister Narendra Modi is set to flag off the first-ever Vande Bharat Express from Katra to Kashmir on April 19, and Kashmir Valley will finally be connected to the rest of the country. Started in 1997, the Udhampur-Srinagar-Baramulla rail project has overcome immense geological and topographical challenges to become a reality. Its completion thus testifies to India's engineering prowess. The railway line spans 272 kilometers, and includes 38 tunnels and 927 bridges, with the world's highest railway bridge over the Chenab River.

This is a development of profound significance as it heralds Kashmir's integration into the national rail network, something that is happening for the first time after independence. So far, Kashmir was only connected to the mainland through air and road. This has limited access to essential services, trade opportunities, and economic growth. This is expected to change now. There is hope that the enhanced connectivity will provide local businesses and artisans with direct access to national markets, boosting trade and commerce. Besides, improved logistics will also facilitate the inflow of goods and services into Kashmir. But the impact on the economy will be clear months after the rail service becomes operational.

Tourism, a key driver of Kashmir's economy, stands to benefit more from the operationalization of the railways. The scenic route, passing through Anantnag, Awantipora, Pampore, and other stations, presents a unique opportunity to highlight the natural beauty of the region. The prospect of a Vande Bharat Express running through this picturesque landscape adds an extra dimension to the tourist experience, making Kashmir more accessible for travelers, otherwise held back by the high-priced air tickets.

In the short term, more visitors could also pose challenges for the government. The Valley's existing tourism infrastructure is not in a position to accommodate a disproportionately enhanced inflow of tourists. So, while the tourist infrastructure needs to be upgraded and expanded, an unregulated flow of visitors will not be advisable for the Valley's fragile ecology. But the government can be hoped to take care of any adverse fall-outs of the increased inflow of people to Kashmir.

The train would also make the rest of the country more accessible for Kashmiris. More so, in winter when due to the unreliability of the road transport, the people in the Valley have no option but to travel by air. However, whether the train would run uninterrupted even during the harsh winter months remains to be seen. But the addition of yet another means of connectivity between Kashmir and the rest of the country is full of possibilities. Apart from a boon for tourism and businesses, it would bridge the geographical and emotional gap with the rest of the country. The inauguration of the rail link will mark a significant step in improving connectivity, but its true impact will unfold over time as Kashmir adapts to the changes it brings.



Did You Know?

Kashmir's Wealth Trap: Why Sell, Build Passive Income Instead

Irshad Mushtaq

In Kashmir, many people face financial instability due to a lack of consistent income sources. This compels some to sell their personal assets gradually to meet their everyday expenses like food and rent. Over time, this depletion of assets can lead to financial distress. To avoid this scenario, it's crucial to develop a steady income through passive sources.

Passive income refers to income generated with minimal active involvement. It's a way to earn money without having to work continuously, particularly beneficial when work options are limited. By investing thoughtfully, individuals can ensure a continuous flow of income, allowing them to maintain their current standard of living without depleting their precious assets.

Investment Options for Passive Income

1) Mutual Funds with Systematic Withdrawal Plans:

Balanced Funds: Investing in balanced funds can generate returns in the range of 8-12%, offering a good mix of equity and debt.

Automatic Withdrawal Plans: These allow for setting up regular withdrawals, ensuring you have a consistent cash flow for daily needs.

2) Multi-Asset Allocation Funds:

These funds distribute investments across various asset classes, mitigating risks while aiming for reasonable returns.

3) Real Estate for Rental Income:

Owning property can provide rental income. Although typical returns are around 5-7%, strategic location and property upgrades can enhance yield to up to 10-12%.

Long-term Financial Growth

Creating a passive income stream can help individuals preserve their asset base. By earning a stable return, such as 10% annually, you can sustain daily expenses while also accounting for inflation by reinvesting a portion of the income.

Read the full article on our website: <https://kashmirobsvserver.net>
 - The author is a reputed financial advisor based out of Srinagar.

Mathematics of 2% vs 24%

While employees are crushed by inflation, MPs are bathing in relief



Dr Priyanka Saurabh

“While the government increased the dearness allowance (DA) of government employees by only 2%, it hiked the allowances and salaries of MPs by 24%. This contradiction is creating resentment among employees and the public.”

The impact of inflation is escalating in the country. The prices of vegetables are skyrocketing, the prices of petrol and diesel are making the pocket lighter, and the common man is thinking, “When the next salary comes, which expenses will I have to postpone?”

But in the meantime, the government released two different relief packages for two different sections – Dearness Allowance (DA) was increased by only 2% for government employees. Allowances and salaries of MPs were increased by 24%.

That is, one class is getting a drop in the ocean while the other is getting a feast!

This contradiction is creating deep resentment among employees and the public. The question arises: why does inflation seem to have increased only for MPs?

This decision has clearly been taken to serve the interests of the ruling party, while the general public and employees have been deprived of their rights.

This issue is also in the headlines in the media. Headlines like “Discrimination of 2% vs 24%” are being seen in major news channels and newspapers. Experts are calling it an anti-people policy of the government.

Only 2% for government employees—is this a joke?

The purpose of Dearness Allowance (DA) is to provide relief to employees from rising inflation. But when the retail inflation rate has crossed 6-7%, how will a mere 2% DA increase provide relief to employees? This is just like giving a biscuit to a hungry person and saying, “This is enough!”

The anger of the associations and unions of government employees is justified. They were demanding a fair salary hike and a reasonable increase in dearness allowance for a long time, but the government considered it an avoidable expenditure and made a nominal increase.

Now some big questions have arisen before the employee organisations – Has inflation increased only for MPs? When the DA of employees has to be increased, why does the treasury look empty? Has the con-

tribution of common employees reduced for the government?

24% relief to MPs – from whose money?

Now take a look at the situation of MPs. MPs already get many allowances and facilities – free air and rail travel, government bun-

tries, then in developed democracies there are strict rules on the salary hike of MPs, and it is usually increased in line with the inflation rate.

In countries like America, Britain, and Canada, the salary of MPs is decided by the Pay Commission and independent econom-

“MPs already get many facilities, yet there is a big hike in salary. The government cites “budget shortage” when it comes to providing relief to the general public, but the treasury is open for MPs.”

galows, office-staff facilities and security arrangements in addition to separate medical and pension benefits. Despite so many facilities, they were given a 24% hike in salary and allowances.

This unilateral decision points towards injustice to the public and employees. The question arises that when there is talk of improving the country's economy, then what is the justification for such a huge increase in the salary of MPs?

'This is injustice!'

There is tremendous anger among government employees and the general public regarding this decision. Social media is flooded with memes and posts criticising the government.

On Twitter and Facebook, people are saying, inflation has increased for everyone, but in the eyes of the government, only MPs need relief!

An irked employee said: “Come on, now inflation has also been divided into VIPs and common people!” Another tweet: “If MPs can get a 24% hike, then the same formula should be applied to employees as well!”

This is not just an issue of salary hikes, but it is time to question the priorities of the government. Whenever it comes to giving relief to the general public, the government treasury is said to be empty, but when it comes to increasing the facilities of the MPs themselves, there is no concern about the budget!

Does this happen in other countries as well?

If we talk about other coun-

ic institutions, and not directly by the government.

In India, MPs have the power to determine their own salaries and allowances, which creates this imbalance. This is the reason why this issue repeatedly causes public outrage.

Now what?

The government employee union is preparing to protest on this issue. Efforts are being made to put pressure on the Pay Commission and policymakers so that the DA hike is made in line with the inflation rate.

But the big question is whether the government will take any concrete steps to remove this inequality or if this issue will be suppressed in a few days?

This decision has made it clear that the leaders have the first right to the hard-earned money of the public. Why are such double standards being adopted with the employees and the public? Is this decision justified, or a joke on the employees?

All eyes are also on the government's reaction. From a political point of view, this issue can increase public discontent, which will give the opposition an opportunity to attack the government. If the government tries to justify this decision, it can create more resentment among the employees and the middle class.

- The author is a Research Scholar and is based out of Hisar, Haryana. Views expressed are the author's own and don't necessarily reflect KO's editorial policy.



All letters intended for publication must include the writer's name and address, even if a pseudonym is used. Letters are edited as clarity, space and accuracy of expression require. Our publishing a letter does not mean we agree with everything or even anything in it. -EDITOR

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Empuraan, A Never-Ending Controversy

Empuraan, the film over which a political controversy is raging in Kerala, should not be considered a political vehicle. Empuraan has received support from the Communist Party of India (Marxist) - which governs Kerala - and the Congress party.

The two parties have a strong presence in Kerala, where the nationally powerful BJP has struggled to make inroads. Regarding the 'Empuraan' row, it was widely reported as a controversial film. Starring popular actor Mohanlal in the lead role, this film was directed by Prithviraj Suku-

maran. The film, which was released on March 27, created a sensation by crossing the Rs. 100 crore mark in two days. However, along with the immense success of the film, some controversies are also surrounding it. There is criticism that the film contains some scenes that offend the

sentiments of Hindus. Several Hindu organisations, mainly including the RSS, have objected to this.

Jayanthy Subramaniam,
 RS Puram Coimbatore

Kashmir's Learning Marketplace

'Many families go to extreme lengths—selling land, jewelry, or taking loans—just to pay the exorbitant coaching fees.'

Gowher Bhat

The banners are everywhere—bright colors, bold letters, stretching across walls and stuck on poles. "Your Child, the Next Doctor or Engineer!" they promise. The same message, year after year, with the same words, same colors, and the same promises.

The streets of Kashmir are littered with these declarations of success. Coaching centers spring up like mushrooms after the rain, each one claiming to hold the secret formula to academic excellence. Desperate and hopeful parents pour their hard-earned money into these institutions, believing that the right tutor can unlock their child's future.

What begins as a hopeful pursuit of knowledge soon turns into a business—a highly profitable one. According to the Times of India, Indian families collectively spend approximately ₹25,000 crore annually on private tuitions. While precise regional figures remain limited, the financial burden is keenly felt in Kashmir. Many families go to extreme lengths—selling land, jewelry, or taking loans—just to pay the exorbitant coaching fees. The promise of success comes at a devastating cost.

Inside cramped classrooms, students sit elbow to elbow, their faces buried in books. The air is thick with anxiety and chalk dust. Teachers, often underqualified but marketed as "experts," rattle off formulas and shortcuts. Understanding concepts takes a backseat; rote memorization rules the day. The syllabus is a mountain to climb, and the climb is brutal. Students juggle piles of notes, revision schedules, and mock tests. The goal is never genuine learning; it's about cracking the entrance exams.

And the stakes are high. One wrong answer, one low score, and dreams crumble. Coaching centers know this well. They don't sell education. They sell dreams—packaged, polished, and tied with the promise of success. Fees skyrocket, and scholarship programs are reduced to mere advertisements. For every "topper"



THE COST OF COACHING CENTERS ISN'T MERELY FINANCIAL. The psychological toll on students and their families is devastating. Psychologists across India raise concerns about the mental health impact of the relentless pressure to succeed."

they showcase, there are countless others who have been left behind—drained of both money and confidence. But this crisis brings forth a critical question: Why do students even need private coaching when we have qualified government school teachers?

The Neglect of Government Schools

Government teachers are selected through rigorous exams, proving their merit and dedication. They undergo systematic

training and are often more qualified than the teachers in private coaching centers, who fail to make it through the competitive selection process. Government teachers are the cream of the crop—individuals who earn their positions through hard work and expertise.

So why are parents still rushing to expensive coaching centers instead of trusting the educators in government schools? Is it because government teachers aren't teaching well? Or is it a reflection of a system that fails to support

and motivate them?

Meanwhile, coaching centers lure students with air-conditioned rooms, digital screens, and flashy marketing campaigns. But are these superficial comforts worth the price families pay—both financially and emotionally?

The Toll on Mental Health

The cost of coaching centers isn't merely financial. The psychological toll on students and their families is devastating. Psychologists across India raise concerns

about the mental health impact of the relentless pressure to succeed.

In cities like Kota, known as India's coaching capital, 23 student suicides were reported in 2023 alone. The hyper-competitive environment, coupled with unrealistic expectations, often leads to anxiety, depression, and burnout.

Mental health experts warn that students enrolled in coaching centers are at a higher risk of developing:

Chronic Stress and Anxiety: Continuous pressure to perform leads to emotional exhaustion.

Depression: Fear of failure and self-doubt become pervasive.

Suicidal Ideation: Tragically, some students see no way out.

Parents, too, suffer emotionally and financially. The guilt of not being able to provide "the best"

for their children weighs heavily on them. The societal expectation to produce doctors and engineers only amplifies this stress.

Steps Towards Reform

However, change is not impossible. Sakina Itoo, Minister for School Education and Higher Education, is already altering the equations. Already, 594 lecturer posts in 27 disciplines were referred for recruitment to address teacher shortages.

Moreover, 4,358 schools are merged to optimize resources. Schools are being shifted from rented spaces to permanent buildings for better infrastructure.

These efforts are commendable, but further reforms are needed to break the monopoly of coaching centers. We need to learn from Himachal Pradesh, our neighbouring state that has introduced a free coaching program for 6,800 students to reduce the financial burden and promote equitable access to quality education. Policymakers must prioritize such models to uplift public education in Kashmir.

A Call for Change

The education crisis in Kashmir isn't just about cash machines disguised as coaching centers. It's about reclaiming the essence of learning. It's about giving students the freedom to explore, question, and create. Because true success isn't measured by ranks and scores—it's found in curiosity, resilience, and the courage to follow one's path.

Perhaps it's time the banners said something different: "Your Child, the Next Dreamer. Thinker. Changemaker."

And maybe then, the streets would look a little brighter—not just with colors and bold letters, but with the promise of a generation free to dream beyond the labels forced upon them.

- Views expressed in the article are the author's own and do not necessarily represent the editorial stance of Kashmir Observer. Gowher Bhat is a Pukwama-based writer and English language instructor.

New Tulip Garden Blooms in Kashmir

Often overshadowed by Srinagar's Indira Gandhi Tulip Garden, this newly developed floral haven is now stealing the limelight.

Dr. Waseem Ahmad

For years, Srinagar has been the epicentre of Kashmir's tourism, with attractions like Dal Lake, Mughal Gardens, and the famous tulip garden. However, Kokernag's emerging tourist destination is shifting the focus beyond the capital.

Nestled in the breathtaking landscapes of Anantnag district, the Sagam Tulip Garden is drawing a growing number of tourists, both domestic and international. The vibrant tulip blooms set against the backdrop of lush green mountains offer a mesmerizing view, making it a strong contender in Kashmir's tourism scene.

The Sagam Tulip Garden's growing popularity is a testament to the untapped tourism

potential of South Kashmir. Local authorities and tourism stakeholders have been quick to capitalize on this momentum, promoting the garden through social media and travel campaigns. Visitors are now flocking to Kokernag to witness the stunning floral display, coupled with the region's renowned natural springs and picturesque meadows. Behind this bloom is SKUAST-K's spirit of suitability and sustainability.

The Role of SKUAST-K

Kashmir, despite its fertile land and favorable climate, has long been dependent on imports for various agricultural products, including seeds, fertilizers, and high-yield crop varieties. But this is changing for good now, as SKUAST-K's latest initia-

tive focuses on developing indigenous alternatives that are both suitable for the region and environmentally sustainable. The objective is clear—minimize reliance on external sources while empowering local farmers with homegrown solutions.

Through extensive research, SKUAST-K scientists have identified native crops that can be improved through selective breeding and biotechnology. These efforts aim to produce high-yield, pest-resistant, and climate-resilient crops that reduce the need for imported seeds.

SKUAST-K has also been actively promoting organic farming practices. The university is training farmers in sustainable techniques that enhance soil fertility, reduce

The new garden's growing tourism appeal is decentralizing the region's economic prospects and highlighting the importance of innovation, sustainability, and leadership in shaping a prosperous future."

chemical dependency, and boost yield quality—thereby making locally grown produce competitive in national and international markets.

As water scarcity remains

a major concern for farmers, SKUAST-K has introduced smart irrigation technologies such as drip irrigation and rainwater harvesting to optimize water usage. These techniques not only enhance productivity but also contribute to long-term environmental sustainability.

SKUAST-K's initiative includes IPM strategies that use natural predators, organic pesticides, and crop rotation methods to control pests efficiently. This reduces dependence on imported chemical pesticides while ensuring healthier crops.

SKUAST-K has also launched extensive training programs, workshops, and field demonstrations to educate farmers on best practices. The university has also introduced

digital platforms where farmers can access real-time guidance, weather forecasts, and market trends.

The results of SKUAST-K's efforts are already visible. Many local farmers have successfully adopted these sustainable practices, leading to increased yield and improved soil health. The dependency on imported seeds and fertilizers is gradually declining, and Kashmir is moving toward self-reliance in agriculture. This initiative aligns perfectly with the government's broader mission of Atmanirbhar Bharat (Self-Reliant India), reinforcing the need for local solutions to global agricultural challenges.

A New Era for Kashmir

The rise of Kokernag as a

major tourist destination has had a positive economic impact on local communities. Increased footfall has led to a boom in local businesses, including handicrafts, hospitality, and transportation. Homestays and hotels are witnessing higher occupancy rates, and artisans are finding new opportunities to showcase their craftsmanship.

The new garden's growing tourism appeal is decentralizing the region's economic prospects and highlighting the importance of innovation, sustainability, and leadership in shaping a prosperous future.

-The author is working at Ambri Apple Research Centre, Pahnmo Shopian SKUAST-K, and can be reached at waseembhatspn@yahoo.com



Paras Health Enhances Healthcare Accessibility in J&K with Ayushman Bharat Empanelment

Srinagar: Paras Health Srinagar has taken a significant step towards making quality healthcare more accessible by becoming an empanelled hospital under the Ayushman Bharat Pradhan Mantri Jan Arogya Yojana (PMJAY). With this development, eligible beneficiaries can now avail of cashless and paperless treatment at the hospital, ensuring access to essential medical services without financial strain. The multispecialty hospital is also empanelled with ECHS, CAPF, CGHS, and major PSUs such as

the Airport Authority of India, Power Grid, NHPC, and BSNL, further expanding its reach to serve more patients. The Ayushman Bharat Golden Card, issued under PMJAY, serves as a digital health card that allows beneficiaries to access healthcare services worth up to Rs 5 lakh per family per year. This initiative, aimed at covering economically vulnerable sections, provides comprehensive healthcare support, including secondary and tertiary medical care at empanelled hospitals across the country. The

card enables seamless, cashless transactions and is portable, allowing beneficiaries to receive treatment at any empanelled facility nationwide. Paras Health Senior Official stated, "With our empanelment under Ayushman Bharat, we are taking a major step towards bridging the gap between affordability and advanced healthcare. Our goal is to ensure that no patient is denied essential medical treatment due to financial constraints. This initiative will enable thousands of families to access specialized

care without the burden of hospital expenses." "As an empanelled hospital, Paras Health Srinagar will now provide advanced treatments under this scheme across multiple specialties, including cardiology, orthopedics, urology, internal medicine, cardiothoracic and vascular surgery, emergency care, and dialysis services. Dialysis is covered in our list of specialties under Internal Medicine and is also covered under the Ayushman Bharat Golden Card as part of our commitment to providing

uninterrupted care in this region", he said. With a strong commitment to patient-centric care, the hospital aims to extend high-quality medical services to those who need them the most, reinforcing its position as a trusted healthcare provider in the region. Paras Health Srinagar is known for its best-in-class infrastructure, highly experienced doctors, and trained nursing staff, ensuring superior patient care. To avail of the benefits of Ayushman Bharat at Paras Health Srinagar, individuals can register for the

PMJAY Golden Card by visiting their nearest empanelled hospital or Ayushman Mitra with their identification documents, such as an Aadhaar card. The scheme targets nearly 50 crore people in India, focusing on economically weaker sections to provide them with much-needed financial protection against medical expenses. The PMJAY e-card, which contains necessary patient information, is mandatory for availing treatment at an empanelled hospital. The initiative not only

provides financial security but also ensures equitable access to specialized treatments, covering a broad spectrum of medical conditions. Cashless and paperless transactions eliminate the stress of medical bills, allowing patients to focus entirely on their recovery. Paras Health Srinagar also offers free ambulance services within a 5 km radius of the Emergency Room, ensuring quick and seamless patient transportation. This facility is expected to enhance emergency response and patient inflow.

CONTD. FROM PAGE 1 & 3

Lok Sabha Storms

charitable organisations, academicians and religious leaders, among others, have also submitted their opinions, he said.

"The government is not going to interfere in any religious institution. The changes made in the Waqf law by the UPA government gave it overriding effect over other statutes, hence the new amendments were required," Rijju said amid noisy opposition protest, adding, "You (opposition) tried to mislead the people on issues which are not part of the Waqf Bill."

Rijju also claimed the consultation process of the JPC was the largest ever exercise carried out by a parliamentary panel in India's democratic history. The minister said more than 97.27 lakh petitions and memorandums were received by the JPC through physical and online formats and the JPC had gone through each of them before finalising its report.

As many as 284 delegations submitted their views on the Bill besides the Waqf boards of 25 states and Union Territories, he said.

Legal luminaries, charitable organisations, academicians and religious leaders, among others, also submitted their opinions, Rijju added.

"Waqf is controlling the third largest pool of properties in the country after railways and defence. The railways and defence properties belong to the nation, but Waqf properties are private in nature. It is unfair to compare them with the land banks of railways and armed forces," he said.

The minister further alleged that ordinary Muslims were misled for vote-bank politics for 70 years as no benefits were received by them from such a large pool of land bank.

"Why the Waqf properties are not used for the benefit and welfare of the ordinary, poor and downtrodden Muslims? These properties will have to be used for the welfare of the common Muslims," Rijju said.

As of 2004, a total of 4.9 lakh properties were held by the Waqf and their income was just Rs 163 crore, he said.

After the 2013 amendment, the minister said, the income has gone up by just Rs 3 crore to Rs 166 crore.

"We can't accept such meagre income from such a huge bank of properties. The income should have been at least Rs 12,000 crore. Waqf property has to be used for poor Muslims, and the Waqf Bill is needed to achieve this purpose," he said.

Stating that the law will be prospective, not retrospective, and will not snatch away anyone's property, Rijju said that when the Citizenship (Amendment) Act was enacted in 2019, the opposition claimed the rights of the Muslims will be taken away, and their citizenship rights will be snatched.

"Tell me now, citizenship rights of how many Muslims were taken away ever since the CAA came into force? Not even one. You should apologise for misleading the people on the CAA. The country will remember for ages who is supporting and who is opposing the Waqf Bill," he said.

The minister also said the Waqf Bill will be renamed as Unified Waqf Management Empowerment, Efficiency and Development (UMEED) Bill.

As of now, the number of total Waqf properties is around 8.72 lakh and had they been managed efficiently, fortunes of not only the Muslims, but the whole country would have changed, Rijju said.

"You will see the transformational impact just within a year. A new dawn will come. That is why the common Muslims are wholeheartedly supporting the Bill," he said.

Referring to the power to be vested in the state governments, Rijju said the Waqf boards will be appointed by the states.

"The state governments will have full authority as land is a state subject. The boards will be fully under the state governments, and the Central government will have no control over them," the minister said.

He also said a special provision has been incorporated in the Bill that no properties in the tribal areas could be declared as Waqf property.

The minister went on to describe as "most draconian" Section 40 of the original Act, which empowers the Waqf Board to investigate and decide

whether a property is a Waqf property. Rijju said there were many instances of the "misuse" of the earlier law, citing the examples of a gurdwara in Haryana which was declared as Waqf, and properties of 600 families in Kerala which were also declared the same.

"That is why many organisations, including Christian groups, have sought the act's immediate implementation," he said.

The Limitation Act, 1963, will now apply to Waqf property claims, reducing prolonged litigation, he said.

Rijju also introduced another Bill -- The Mussalman Waqf (Repeal) Bill, 2024 -- for consideration and passage in the House.

According to the Waqf (Amendment) Bill, Waqf tribunals will be strengthened, a structured selection process will be maintained, and a tenure will be fixed to ensure efficient dispute resolution.

As per the Bill, while Waqf institutions' mandatory contribution to Waqf Boards reduced from 7 per cent to 5 per cent, Waqf institutions earning over Rs 1 lakh will undergo audits by state-sponsored auditors.

A centralised portal will automate Waqf property management, improving efficiency and transparency.

The Bill also proposes that practising Muslims (for at least five years) can dedicate their property to Waqf, restoring pre-2013 rules.

Also, women must receive their inheritance before Waqf declaration, with special provisions for widows, divorced women and orphans.

The Bill also proposes that an officer above the rank of collector will investigate government properties claimed as Waqf.

In case of disputes, the senior government official will have the final say on whether a property belongs to Waqf or the government.

This replaces the existing system where such decisions are made by Waqf tribunals.

The Bill also proposes that non-Muslim members will be included in the central and state Waqf boards for inclusivity.

Earlier, Speaker Om Birla rejected the opposition's objections that the government had no power to insert new provisions in the amended Bill.

Intervening in opposition's objections, Union Home Minister Amit Shah said the Bill was tabled after a long process of consultations carried out by the JPC.

Shah said the Bill was first introduced in August 2024 after which, as sought by the House, it was referred to the JPC, which held long consultations on it.

The JPC report was approved by the Union Cabinet before the Bill was tabled in the House.

"This is a democratic committee. This committee did not act like the Congress-constituted committee. It followed proper procedure and consultations," Shah said.

Waqf Bill Not

the House, Shah said vote bank is being created by intimidating minorities and confusion is being spread in the country by creating an atmosphere of fear among the minorities.

There was no provision earlier to include any non-Muslim person among those who run religious institutions, nor is the NDA government going to do so, he said.

"To those who give big speeches that the right to equality has ended or there will be discrimination between two religions or the religious rights of Muslims will be interfered with, I want to tell them that nothing like this is going to happen," the senior BJP leader underlined.

He also said the Waqf law was made 'extreme' in 2013 for appeasement ahead of parliamentary polls and if the law was not tweaked then, the present bill might not have been needed to happen.

"Our principle is clear, we won't bring any law for vote bank, it's for justice. We brought 33% reservation for women in Parliament. We brought provisions to provide housing, electricity, water and health insurance to the poor. We got over one crore suggestions from people, and we brought provisions after that. A member said this is misleading because in the 2013 bill, there was a provision to appeal to the court. It's not true, there was no

provision. There's a provision to show the Constitution, Mr Speaker, you tell me how there can be a provision where you can't appeal in the court," Shah said.

"A member even said the minority won't even accept it. Who are you trying to scare? It's the Parliament's law, everyone will follow and accept it. The country's law has to be accepted by all," he added.

BJP Calls It Reform,

proposed law was an interference in the constitutionally guaranteed freedom in religious affairs.

The bill has nothing to do with religion, but deals only with properties, he said tabling the Bill, which was examined and redrafted by a joint committee of Parliament.

"The government is not going to interfere in any religious institution. The changes made in the Waqf law by the UPA government gave it overriding effect over other statutes, hence the new amendments were required," Rijju said amid noisy opposition protests.

"You (opposition) tried to mislead the people on issues which are not part of the Waqf Bill," she said to the opposition.

Both ministers asserted that the proposed reforms would ensure the welfare of poor Muslims and women.

The BJP was bolstered by a show of support from its key allies like the TDP, JD(U), Shiv Sena and Lok Janshakti Party (Ram Vilas), while the INDIA bloc put up a united show in opposing the bill.

Samajwadi Party chief Akhilesh Yadav claimed that the bill is a BJP's ploy for polarisation following its reverses in the Lok Sabha polls, alleging that it will send a wrong message to the world denting the country's secular image.

The bill will prove to be a "waterloo" for the BJP as some of its allies might be claiming to support the bill but inside they are not happy about the development, he said.

"Bringing Waqf Bill is the BJP's political game, it is a new form of their communal politics. The BJP wants to appease those supporters who are now distancing themselves from the party because of its policies.

After most of the leading opposition leaders had spoken, Shah launched a stout defence of the bill and rejected the most common criticism that the appointment of non-Muslims in the Waqf council and boards violated a community's right to manage its own affairs.

He also warned against instigating Muslims against the law, noting that an opposition MP had said that the minorities will not accept this. "It is the law of the Indian government and Parliament. Everyone will have to accept it."

The bill will become a law after it is notified following its passage in both Lok Sabha and Rajya Sabha.

Shah said the government is not going to have any say in the matters of Waqf, endowments made by Muslims for religiously charitable and pious purposes, adding that the council and boards are aimed at the management of the properties to ensure that they are used in line with the stated aims behind their donation.

He accused the opposition of "fear-mongering" over the bill's provisions, saying this is how they raised a vote bank.

He accused the Congress-led UPA government of effecting many amendments in the Waqf law in 2013 for its appeasement politics, saying these changes made the Act "extreme". Had those changes not been made, the government might not have brought the bill, he added.

He cited a host of instances from across the country about vast properties being claimed by different state Waqf boards, with a section of people involved in their management making personal gains while doing little for the community. The new law will catch such people and throw them out, he added.

"This money is of the poor Muslims not for a few moneybags," he said, citing the meagre income of Rs 163 crore from Waqf properties.

Citing speeches of several opposition leaders, including RJD president Lalu Prasad Yadav, in 2013, he said even they had noted the rampant property grab in the name of Waqf law.

Gogoi argued that the bill had not

been adequately discussed with minority representatives.

"In 2023, four meetings of the Minority Commission were held, and yet, there was no mention of the need for a Waqf amendment bill. I ask the government - was this bill drafted by the Minority Affairs Ministry or some other department?"

The opposition MP also raised concerns over Clause 3, which defines individuals practising Islam.

"Minorities are now being forced to prove their religious identity with certificates. Tomorrow, will people from other faiths also have to do this? This is against Article 26 of the Constitution," he said.

BJP's Anurag Thakur said, "This bill is not about Hindu versus Muslim, this is law versus lawlessness, Constitution versus corruption."

Blatant Interference

disempower Muslims.

The Union Minority Affairs Minister, Kiren Rijju, on Wednesday tabled the Waqf (Amendment) Bill, 2025, in the Lok Sabha, claiming it aims to improve the management of Waqf properties by enhancing transparency and introducing technology-driven governance. However, opposition leaders have slammed the Bill, calling it "unconstitutional" and harmful to the Muslim community.

PDP president Mehbooba Mufti alleged that the Bill was designed to weaken Muslims politically and economically.

"This Bill is meant to disempower Muslims. I have no expectations from the BJP—we have seen for the past decade how Muslims are lynched and mosques demolished. But I urge secular forces, especially our Hindu brethren, to step forward. India is the land of Gandhi, and it should be governed by the Constitution," Mehbooba said.

She warned that if such risks continue unchecked, the country risks heading toward a Myanmar-like situation.

"They (Hindus) must act now if they do not want India to become another Myanmar, if they do not want the same fate for Muslims as what happened to Kashmiri Pandits. People must rise against this injustice and the takeover of the Waqf Board," she added.

People's Conference chairman Sajad Gani Lone also voiced his opposition, calling the amendments a direct attack on religious autonomy.

"Waqf is meant to manage properties collectively owned by Muslims. This amendment is a blatant interference in our faith, aimed at stripping rightful custodians of their authority. Yet another right-wing trespass," Lone said in a post on X.

National Conference vice-president Omar Abdullah reiterated his party's opposition, arguing that the amendments unfairly singled out one religious community.

"Every faith has its own charitable institutions. For Muslims, it is the Waqf. Targeting it in this manner is extremely unfortunate. We cannot support this Bill, and our MPs will strongly oppose it in Parliament," Abdullah said.

"I stand against the Waqf Bill tooth and nail," said Baramulla MP Engineer Rashid, who is attending the Lok Sabha session out on bail.

Rashid criticised both -- the BJP and the Congress -- over the treatment of Muslims. He took up examples of Babri Masjid, UAPA, and the Article 370, and said that while the UAPA, which now is used to prosecute Muslims, was brought about by Congress, the Article 370 was made weak by the same party.

He went on to appeal to the Muslims: "Why should we become vote bank? Why do Indian Muslims need to prove their loyalty?" "This is just a numbers game, and Muslims are getting killed in between," the MP added.

While stating that he is fully against this bill, Rashid called for the Muslim community to introspect of the functioning of the Waqf Board.

However, BJP leader Darakhshan Andrabi welcomed the amendments, questioning why Waqf properties had not benefited ordinary Muslims.

"Waqf owns thousands of kanals of land, yet most Muslims remain poor, homeless, and landless. The government, under Prime Minister Narendra Modi, is addressing these issues to uplift the community," Andrabi said.

The Waqf Bill, which proposes

major structural changes, including increased government oversight, has sparked a heated debate. While the BJP argues that it will bring much-needed reforms, opposition parties see it as yet another attempt to curb the rights of the Muslim community.

Muslim Organisations

Joint Parliamentary Committee tasked with looking into the Waqf (Amendment) Bill had not addressed even one concern of the Muslim scholars from the Union Territory.

"As one watches the ruling party defend the indefensible Waqf Amendment Bill in Parliament, it is very unfortunate and disturbing that not even one of the serious concerns and reservations raised by Muslim organisations, including the Muttahida Majlis-e-Ulema (MMU) which I lead, before the JPC in New Delhi, was addressed by them," the mirwaiz said in a post on X.

He said crores of Muslims in India are haplessly watching their rights and institutions being undermined.

"Today, crores of Muslims in India, like mute spectators, are haplessly watching their rights and institutions being blatantly undermined and feel greatly let down," he said.

Shah To Visit

The discussions will center around counterterrorism measures, border security, and the protection of vital installations.

BJP insiders said Shah's itinerary is being finalized and will be officially announced soon. "He is expected to stay in the Jammu division but may make an unannounced visit to Kashmir as well," a party source revealed.

Security agencies have been put on high alert in anticipation of the high-profile visits, with additional measures being taken to ensure a smooth and incident-free tour.

UN Office In Srinagar

him, Kashmir has moved beyond its troubled past. "If you visit the Jhelum riverfront at night, you'll find youngsters playing the guitar and enjoying coffee. The number of stakeholders in peace has grown significantly," he said.

"Zero Tolerance for Anti-National Elements"

On the government's crackdown on terror sympathizers in state institutions, Sinha said, "We are committed to removing those supporting terrorism from the system."

Referring to the dismissal of Syed Salahuddin's sons and Syed Ali Shah Geelani's grandson from government service, he said, "All were on board that they had to be removed. Terrorist outfits destroyed J&K, and I fail to understand why previous governments engaged in talks with them. Under this regime, there will be no dialogue with such elements."

He also dismissed claims of rising unemployment, stating that over 40,000 government jobs had been provided transparently.

"J&K Elections Held in a Peaceful Environment"

Regarding the recently held 2024 J&K Assembly elections, Sinha said, "The Centre fulfilled its commitment to conduct polls. Our focus has been on establishing peace and driving development, and I hope the elected government continues on this path." He clarified that the J&K Reorganization Act defines the roles of the elected government and the LG administration, ensuring governance within constitutional boundaries.

"India's Global Stature Has Risen"

The LG asserted that India's global standing has strengthened, while Pakistan is increasingly seen as a failed state exporting terrorism. "Bharat ki awaz suni jati hai (India's voice is heard). The world recognizes our neighbor as a failed state exporting terror," he remarked.

On Pakistan-occupied Jammu and Kashmir (PoJK), he said people there are disillusioned with Pakistan and are expressing their desire to join India.

"Kashmiri Pandits Will Return"

Sinha expressed optimism about the return of Kashmiri Pandits, stating that efforts are underway to resolve their issues. "The day is near when they will return to their homeland," he said.

Highlighting economic growth, he pointed out that J&K Bank has gone from a 1,200 crore loss to a 1,700

crore profit under his tenure.

"Connectivity Is Transforming J&K"

The LG credited PM Modi's leadership for completing long-pending infrastructure projects. "Rail connectivity, once a tough challenge, is now a reality, thanks to PM Modi. It will not only enhance development but also bridge emotional distances," he said.

"No Organization Banned Without Evidence"

Addressing concerns over a potential ban on the Awami Action Committee (AAC) led by Mirwaiz Umar Farooq, Sinha said, "No organization is banned without evidence. Earlier, banned outfits would rebrand under a new name. Today, individuals associated with them are also blacklisted to prevent this."

He urged political leaders to act responsibly, saying, "Those who have held high positions and taken oaths on the Constitution must be mindful of their words."

Urges Youth To

asset and it is like a small lamp which has the power to defeat the immense darkness. The youth should explore the spiritual and cultural dimension of education and cherish its value system," Sinha said addressing the alumni meet of Sharda University here.

The lieutenant governor highlighted that alumni play a crucial role in networking and mentorship, building the reputation of the educational institute and helping in knowledge sharing.

"Alumni serve as a role model and inspire young students to achieve their goals. The next two decades is expected to be the best time for knowledge economies in the world. You as the knowledge keeper will be responsible for transferring expertise earned in the university to the economic sector to drive growth and build developed India," Sinha said.

To give back to the society and nation, alumni should promote value-based system in jobs or enterprises, so while developing their full potential, they can also motivate the young generations to contribute towards nation-building, he added.

The lieutenant governor also spoke on the transformation taking place in the educational landscape in Jammu and Kashmir, under the "guidance" of Prime Minister Narendra Modi.

J&K Govt Sanctions

the decision, Chief Minister Omar Abdullah said, "In a major pro-people move, fulfilling the Budget 2025-26 promise, the J&K government will now provide additional free foodgrains to all AAY households under PDS. Each beneficiary will receive up to 10 kg, ensuring greater food security for our most vulnerable families."

HC Quashes

referred to a judgment pronounced last year by the court's division bench that "vague and nonspecific grounds of detention firstly, violates the fundamental right to life and personal liberty of the detainee under Article 21 of the constitution as it summarily curtails the liberty of the citizen based on the subjective satisfaction of the executive which is an exceptional power as against the general law relating to arrest and detention."

Secondly, it deprives the detainee of giving a specific rebuttal to the grounds of detention which may satisfy the detaining authority or the Government that his detention is unlawful and compels him to answer the grounds of detention as "it is incorrect" or "it is false" etc, the court noted. Thirdly, the court observed, vague and generalised grounds in the order of detention, smacks of arbitrariness on the part of the detaining authority rendering the subjective satisfaction arrived at as violative of Article 14 of the constitution.

And fourthly, the court said, vague and non-specific grounds raise the impression that the same has been done deliberately in order to deprive the detainee of giving a precise rebuttal.

Allowing a separate petition, the court also quashed detention order dated 4 April 2024 passed by District Magistrate Baramulla against one Abdul Ahad Alias Ahad Molvi.

The court also quashed the detention order under PSA, slapped against one Mohd. Iqbal Koka, by District Magistrate Anantnag on 1 January last.

J&K Waqf Board Generated ₹40 Crore Revenue Under New Chief: Rijiju

Commends Beautification Of Dargah Hazratbal Shrine

Observer News Service

NEW DELHI: Union Minority Affairs Minister Kiren Rijiju, while addressing the Parliament, praised Jammu and Kashmir Waqf Board Chairperson Dr. Darakhshan Andrabi for her efforts in generating revenue and improving Waqf management in the region. Rijiju highlighted that under her leadership, the board had generated over ₹40 crore in revenue.

Rijiju said, "I was highly impressed during my recent visit to Jammu and Kashmir. I met the new Waqf Board Chairperson and asked her about the condition of the Waqf when she took charge and how it is now. She informed me that when she assumed office, there was no proper record of Waqf properties, and its condition was disorganized. However, after taking over, she has successfully generated ₹40 crore in revenue."

He further appreciated the ongoing restoration and beautification work at the historic Hazratbal Shrine in Srinagar. "I visited the Hazratbal Shrine, and I saw that renovation work is in progress. This is an ancient shrine visited by people from around the world, and I was pleased to see the significant beautification efforts being undertaken in its surroundings," Rijiju said, as per news agency JKNS.

The minister emphasized that effective management of Waqf properties would lead to increased revenue, benefiting everyone. "If we ensure proper maintenance and development, revenue will increase, and everyone will benefit," he added.

Rijiju's remarks come amid the ongoing discussions on the Waqf (Amendment) Bill, 2025, which seeks to enhance transparency and efficiency in Waqf property management across the country.

75,000 People Visit Tulip Garden On Eid Days



Agencies

SRINAGAR: Nearly 75,000 people visited Asia's largest Tulip Garden, located at the foothills of the Zabarwan Mountains here, on the first two days of Eid-ul-Fitr, while the number of total visitors since its opening on March 26 has crossed one and a half lakh mark.

In-charge Tulip Garden, Javid Masood said, "A massive footfall of 44,651 visitors was witnessed on Tuesday (2nd day of Eid-ul-Fitr) while 30,000 to 35,000 people visited the Garden on Monday (Day 1st of Eid-ul-Fitr)," he informed.

Masood said in the last seven days since the garden was formally thrown open by Chief Minister Omar Abdullah on March 26, it has recorded a footfall of 1,56,000 visitors.

"Since the rush is increasing with each passing day, we are expecting that the previous year's record will break this time," he said, adding, "Everything is going smoothly as the public is quite cooperative and have been following the rules and regulations with spirit."

In the meantime, Masood said that e-ticketing has proven beneficial for the visitors as the rush outside the garden for collecting the tickets has reduced to a large extent.

Also, Masood said that the

garden will continue to remain open till the bloom of the Tulips. "In case the weather remains favourable, the garden can remain open for a month," he said.

With 1.7 million bulbs, the garden was thrown open for the general public on March 26.

The famous Indira Gandhi Memorial Tulip Garden is having two more varieties imported from the Netherlands this year. 100 gardeners and casual labourers have made hectic efforts to complete all the processes and make the garden ready for the public.

On the inaugural day (March 26), the garden witnessed an overwhelming response from tourists. It recorded an unprecedented footfall of 17,259 visitors, setting a new record.

Pertinently, 4.5 lakh visitors visited the garden last year, surpassing all the previous records.

It is worth mentioning here that Tulip Garden in summer capital earned a spot in World Book of Records (London) as Asia's largest in 2023.

In 2024, Asia's largest Tulip Garden experienced an extraordinary surge in tourism, with a staggering 4.45 lakh visitors flocking to witness its vibrant blooms, including approximately 2,000 from foreign shores—(KNO)

In 2-years, J&K Records 60% Increase In Dog Bite Cases

Observer News Service

SRINAGAR: Jammu and Kashmir recorded a total of 22,110 dog bite cases in 2022, which increased to 34,664 in 2023.

The reported dog bite cases further rose to 51,027 in 2024, with 4,824 cases recorded in January 2025. Meanwhile, Ladakh saw 2,165 dog bite cases in 2022, rising to 4,078 cases in 2024.

In January 2025, Ladakh recorded 373 reported cases of dog bites.

Importantly, no human rabies-related deaths have been reported in either J&K or Ladakh over the past few years.

These figures were shared by the Ministry of Fisheries, Animal Husbandry, and Dairying in response to an inquiry in the Lok Sabha on April 1, 2025.

The Ministry emphasized that controlling the stray dog population and preventing the spread of rabies fall under the jurisdiction of local bodies in both J&K and Ladakh.

The Animal Birth Control (ABC) Program, which includes sterilization and vaccination of stray dogs, remains the pri-



mary approach for managing this issue.

The government also noted that the National Rabies Control Program (NRCP) collects data on animal bites and provides necessary post-exposure prophylaxis to victims, especially vulnerable groups like children.

While the effectiveness of the ABC Program is yet to be formally assessed, the program's implementation continues across various regions, including J&K and Ladakh, as part of broader efforts to manage the stray dog population and prevent rabies transmission.

The revised Animal Birth Control Rules, 2023, now govern the sterilization and vaccination of stray dogs, with a focus on reducing man-dog conflicts and promoting humane treatment of animals.

CS Reviews ERA Projects For Completion By Extended Deadline

Observer News Service

JAMMU: Chief Secretary, Atal Dulloo chaired a high level review meeting where CEO of the Economic Reconstruction Agency (ERA), Aijaz Asad, presented a comprehensive update on the Jhelum & Tawi Flood Recovery Project (JTFRP).

This update comes after the World Bank granted an extension to complete the remaining works.

Present in the meeting were Secretary, PWD; Commissioner, SMC; Chief Engineer R&B Central Kashmir besides other concerned officers.

The Chief Secretary impressed upon the ERA to ensure regular monitoring of progress on the ongoing works. He asked them to make sure the works are completed in time with no laxity at any level.

Regarding maintenance of quality and adherence to specific timelines, the Chief Secretary asked the R&B department to take penal action against the defaulting contractors as per law or blacklist them for taking up any future contracts.

The Chief Secretary asked for the completion of a 130-bedded additional block at the Government LD Hospital within the extended timeline.

The CEO informed that this additional block aims to significantly enhance the healthcare infrastructure and patient capacity at this crucial healthcare facility. He further apprised that the authorities are closely monitoring



the progress to ensure timely completion of this vital project within the extended project timeframe.

Regarding the remaining work of 5 bridges in North Kashmir, Secretary PWD, Bhupinder Kumar, informed the meeting that the LoA stands issued for each of the bridge to be constructed at Wahidina, Waza Mohallah, Shrakwara and Wagoora. These works are expected to be completed by December 2025.

Regarding completion of the State Emergency Operation Centre (SEOC) at Humhuma, it was divulged that the dormitory building, service block and warehouse have been completed. It was added that the delay in procurement of electromechanical components by the contractor led to termination of the contract with the remaining works to be re-tendered and expected to be completed in seven months at a cost of Rs 40.16 crore.

About the 160-bedded new block of Bone & Joint Hospital, the meeting was apprised that the construction has been fully completed. It was given out that the procurement of additional

equipments are in progress and scheduled to be completed by the end of this month.

Regarding upgradation of 49 Dewatering Stations, Commissioner SMC, Owais Ahmad, informed the meeting that 45 stations are fully functional with 2 stations at Khan Colony and Surnai Mohalla dropped while 2 at Zero Bridge and Peerbagh foreclosed.

With respect to status of the Supervisory Control and Data Acquisition (SCADA) system for these dewatering stations, it was told that the same had been completed at a cost of Rs 32.12 crore and handed over to SMC. This system aims at monitoring and controlling dewatering stations in Srinagar for their efficiency and effective output.

It is worth mentioning here that the total expenditure incurred on JTFRP till date stands at Rs 1,547.5 crore, with the World Bank reimbursing an amount of Rs 1,465.86 crore. The project has been extended until August 31, 2026, allowing completion of the remaining works that were not completed till December, 2024 for different reasons.

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Sakeena Ito Reviews Performance, Functioning Of JKBOSE

Observer News Service

SRINAGAR: Minister for Health and Medical Education, Social Welfare and Education, Sakeena Ito chaired a meeting to review the performance and functioning of Jammu and Kashmir Board of School Education (JKBOSE).

The meeting was attended by Additional Chief Secretary Education and Chairman JKBOSE, Shantamanu; Director School Education Jammu / Kashmir, Special Secretary School Education department, Secretary JKBOSE and other concerned officers.

The Minister evaluated key operational aspects of JKBOSE like examination processes, curriculum implementation and other IT interventions. She emphasized on strengthening board's infrastructure and streamlining administrative mechanisms to ensure smooth academic operations and other related activities of the board.

She urged the JKBOSE to incorporate advanced technological solutions for better accessibility and efficiency in the working of Board. She also underlined the necessity of timely syllabus updates, improved teacher training programs and student-



centric policies to meet the evolving educational needs.

She directed the officers to declare the results of 10th, 11th and 12th classes by the end of this month so that they can join next classes without loss of any academic activities.

She called upon both the Directors to collaborate with JKBOSE for holistic development of the education sector across J&K.

Highlighting the need for robust and student-friendly educational framework across Jammu and Kashmir, Sakeena Ito emphasized on continuous stakeholder engagement and proactive measures to uplift academic standards across the region.

While reviewing other measures of JKBOSE, including Equitable and Inclusive Education facility for Divyang and Children With Special Needs (CWSN), the

Minister called upon both the Directors and JKBOSE authorities to create maximum awareness among these specially abled students about benefits being provided to them.

These included flexibility in academics and assessment, exemption in exam fee for CWSN with 40% or more disability of permanent nature, relaxation of 5% in pass percentage in 10th to 12th class Board examination and others. She asked them to organise regular awareness camps, involving PRLs and other tools like mass media for maximising awareness among the target group.

During the meeting, Secretary JKBOSE gave a detailed presentation on functioning of the board. She also informed the Minister about various IT interventions launched by the board for facilitation of students.

Cancer Cases Surge In J&K Over 67,000 Diagnosed In Five Years

Agencies

SRINAGAR: Cancer cases in Jammu and Kashmir have surged over the past five years, with the Union Territory recording over 67,000 cases between 2018 and 2024. The worrying trend has prompted discussions in the current session of the Rajya Sabha.

Responding to questions raised about the growing number of cancer cases, Prataprao Jadhav, the Minister of State for Health and Family Welfare revealed that the region recorded a total of 67,037 cancer cases from 2018 to 2024. The numbers have steadily risen each year: 12,726 cases in 2020, 13,060 in 2021, 13,395 in 2022, 13,744 in 2023, and 14,112 cases in 2024.

In light of this surge, the government has focused on improving cancer care facilities across the country. As part of efforts to tackle the rising burden of cancer, 19 State Cancer Institutes (SCIs) and 20 Tertiary Cancer Care Centres (TCCCs) have been established nationwide to provide advanced cancer treatment. Additionally, cancer treatment facilities have been approved for all 22 new AIIMS hospitals, equipped with diagnostic, medical, and surgical services.

The Indian Council of Medical Research (ICMR) has been at the forefront of cancer research, funding various projects and initiatives aimed at improving cancer diagnostics, therapeutics, and understanding of cancer biology. The ongoing research emphasizes the development of novel, affordable,

“The incidence of cervical cancer in Jammu and Kashmir has also shown a concerning increase. Data from 2019 to 2023 revealed the following cases: 612 in 2019, 632 in 2020, 648 in 2021, 666 in 2022, and 684 in 2023.”

and accessible cancer therapies. Jammu and Kashmir, in particular, has been making strides in cancer care infrastructure. The region boasts two State Cancer Institutes, two Tertiary Cancer Care Centres, 20 Day Care Centres, and 11 District Hospitals providing Palliative Care services. This network aims to address the growing cancer burden in the region.

The incidence of cervical cancer in Jammu and Kashmir has also shown a concerning increase. Data from 2019 to 2023 revealed the following cases: 612 in 2019, 632 in 2020, 648 in 2021, 666 in 2022, and 684 in 2023.

To combat the rising rates of non-communicable diseases, including cancer, the government has approved Rs 24 crore under the National Programme for Prevention and Control of Non-Communicable Diseases (NP-NCDD) in Jammu and Kashmir under the National Health Mission (NHM) for a period of three years.

The sharp rise in cancer cases calls for intensified efforts in both prevention and treatment, as well as greater public awareness and access to timely healthcare—(KNO)

Over 300 Projects Receive Forest Clearance

Observer News Service

JAMMU: In a significant push to infrastructure and economic growth in Jammu and Kashmir, over 300 development projects, pending clearances at different stages, have received forest clearances.

From key road networks to water supply schemes, tourism, defence and 4G saturation, these approvals will pave the way for enhanced connectivity, economic progress and improved public services.

A total of 302 cases have received final approval and 84 cases have received In-Principle approval from the government between January to March this year. This signifies the government's broader vision of development, prioritising projects that address long-standing infrastructural gaps and further improve the public services.

Delay in land acquisition and forest clearances were some of the reasons for these projects being stalled or running behind schedule and at times leading to cost overruns. A number of projects related to road development have been granted approval, enabling timely implementation of key initiatives.

The diversion of forest land will support construction and improvement of roadways, including highways and local roads. These roads are vital for enhancing connectivity and facilitating the movement of people and goods across Jammu and Kashmir.

Major road and highway projects approved recently included clearance of the remaining patch of Package-17 of Delhi-Katra Expressway in Jammu, Kishtwar-Nildori-Bangus-Gali-

Lokut-Bangus Dangiari Road in Kupwara district by BRO, Jallary to Badharkhet Khaitan road by PWD in Poonch district.

Additionally, the forest land has been cleared for establishment of various water supply schemes under the Jal Jeevan Mission. These projects aim to provide safe and adequate drinking water to every household, especially in rural and remote areas.

The approval for these schemes will contribute significantly towards improving the water infrastructure, making water more accessible to the residents of Jammu and Kashmir.

Across the UT of J&K, in the past three months, 271 Water Supply Schemes have been approved in 7 districts of J&K including Baramulla, Budgam, Doda, Jammu, Kishtwar, Ramban and Udhampur.

Further, in order to ensure 4G Saturation under USOF, 11 proposals for construction of communication towers and 4 proposals for laying of OFC have been approved recently across 8 districts of J&K.

In line with the Forest (Conservation) Act, compensatory afforestation will be undertaken for the forest land diverted for these projects. This will include reforestation of degraded forest land to maintain ecological balance and mitigate any potential environmental impact caused by these developmental activities.

These environmental clearances have been approved following a high level meeting between J&K Minister, Javed Ahmed Rana and Union Minister for Environment, Forest & Climate Change, Bhupendra Yadav, in New Delhi in January 2025.

'Huge Investments Being Made In Solar Power Projects In Ladakh'

Agencies

SRINAGAR: The Government of India on Wednesday told the Parliament that huge investments are being made in solar energy projects in Ladakh.

Union Minister of State for New & Renewable Energy and Power, Shripad Yesso Naik provided details on the ongoing and upcoming energy projects in Ladakh during the ongoing Lok Sabha session.

"One of the major projects underway is a 25 MWac/50 MWdc solar power project with a 40 MWh battery storage, being developed by the Solar Energy Corporation of India Limited (SECI) in Taru, Leh," he said. "The EPC con-

tract for this project has been awarded to M/s Prozeal Green Energy Private Limited. Additionally, a large-scale 13 GW Hybrid Renewable Energy (RE) park is being planned across Pang, Debring, and Kharnak areas, which will include solar, wind, and battery energy storage systems."

Minister Naik also highlighted that the Government is investing Rs. 20,773.70 crore for an Inter-State Transmission System in Ladakh to evacuate power from 13 GW renewable energy projects, with 40% of the DPR cost or awarded cost being provided as central financial assistance through PowerGrid Corporation of India Limited.

In addition to solar projects,



the region is seeing progress in small hydro power generation, with the 2.5 MW Zunkul

Small Hydro Power project and the 0.80 MW Bogdang Small Hydro Power project under construction.

Addressing concerns over the region's sensitive ecology, Naik confirmed that the solar photovoltaic projects are exempt from Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) Notification 2006, meaning no environmental clearance is required for such projects. However, measures are being taken to manage electronic waste (e-waste) generated from solar panels, with the Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change notifying E-Waste Management Rules, 2022. The recycling of solar panels is also mandated by the

Central Pollution Control Board (CPCB) for material recovery.

The Minister assured that these projects aim to reduce reliance on fossil fuels, mitigate greenhouse gas emissions, and provide reliable electricity to the region, boosting the local economy. Additionally, the infrastructure development, such as improved roads and bridges, will aid in the transportation of equipment and enhance accessibility for local residents. SECI's Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) efforts also include supporting education through digitalization, enhancing medical facilities, and promoting environmental sustainability. (KNO)

IPL 2025: Struggling KKR, SRH Look To Reignite Campaign

Press Trust of India

KOLKATA: Defending champions Kolkata Knight Riders and last season's finalists Sunrisers Hyderabad find themselves in troubled waters, having lost two of their last three games, and both teams will be desperate to revive their campaigns when they lock horns in the IPL here on Thursday.

KKR skipper Ajinkya Rahane had initially downplayed concerns surrounding his team following a heavy defeat to Royal Challengers Bengaluru in the season opener, insisting there was "no need to panic".

However, with two losses in three matches -- considering KKR lost just three games across both home and away legs in their triumphant campaign



in IPL 2024 -- the mood in the camp is slightly muted.

Pitched Battle

The focus has now shifted to the Eden Gardens pitch, which has come under scrutiny after KKR's seven-wicket defeat to RCB.

Former KKR opener Phil Salt and Virat Kohli took the home attack to the cleaners, stitching a 95-run stand off just 51 balls in a one-sided chase of 175.

The Cricket Association of Bengal has been under pressure to produce a track that aids

KKR's spin-heavy attack, comprising Sunil Narine, Moeen Ali and Varun Chakravarty.

Chakravarty, fresh from his exploits in the Champions Trophy triumph last month, struggled on a flat deck against RCB, leaking 10.75 runs per over.

Indian great and Lucknow Super Giants mentor Zaheer Khan has also called for home advantage after Punjab Kings outplayed them at the Ekana stadium, criticising the pitch by saying, "It seemed PBKS' curator was out here."

Reports suggest the Eden Gardens pitch curator Sujan Mukherjee had declined KKR's request for a spin-friendly track in their opening match, a decision that seemingly backfired.

Team Strategy

Beyond the pitch, KKR's squad composition has raised questions following the mega auction.

Their batting and bowling units have looked out of sync, with key players failing to deliver.

Sunrisers Hyderabad, after a record-breaking 286/6 in their season opener, have struggled to breach the 200-run mark in their last two games.

Their ultra-attacking batting approach has led to collapses against Lucknow Super Giants (190/9) and Delhi Capitals (163 all out), resulting in consecutive defeats.

Pat Cummins' side will also need to reassess the strategy as they look to avenge their loss in last season's IPL final.

Match starts at 7:30PM IST.

Short TAKES

Samson Set To Lead Rajasthan Royals, Gets NCA Clearance

Sanju Samson is set to return as Rajasthan Royals captain after receiving clearance from the National Cricket Academy to keep wickets in the Indian Premier League.

Samson had undergone surgery on his right index finger after being hit by former RR teammate and England pacer Jofra Archer during India's T20I series against England in February.

He had played in the first three games for Rajasthan Royals only as a specialist batter with Riyan Parag leading the side.

While Samson was substituted in during RR's season-opener against Sunrisers Hyderabad, he was substituted out in the contests against Chennai Super Kings and Kolkata Knight Riders, scoring 66, 13 and 20 runs.

Rajasthan Royals are currently placed second last in the points table with one win and two defeats in three matches.

New Zealand Beats Pakistan By 83 Runs, Leads Series 2-0

Ben Sears took 5-59 as New Zealand bowled out Pakistan for 208 to win the second one-day cricket international by 84 runs Wednesday, taking an unsailable 2-0 lead in three-match series.

Faheem Ashraf top-scored for Pakistan with 73 and put on 60 for the ninth wicket with Naseem Shah, who made 51. Both posted their maiden ODI half centuries as Pakistan was dismissed in 41.2 overs.

Will O'Rourke softened up the Pakistan batters with an outstanding opening spell of 1-8 from six overs on a lively pitch at Seddon Park.

He twice hit Pakistan captain Mohammad Rizwan, once on the top hand and once on the biceps, and he later hit Haris Rauf on the helmet with a searing bouncer. Rauf retired hurt after failing a concussion test and was replaced by Naseem.

Earlier, Mitch Hay was left stranded on 99 as New Zealand made 292-8 after being sent in.

Lionel Messi's Bodyguard Banned From Touchline In MLS

Lionel Messi's bodyguard Yassine Cheuko has been banned from protecting the Argentine forward from the touchline during Inter Miami matches.

The former Navy SEAL gained widespread recognition after social media videos showed him closely watching the crowd to stop potential pitch invaders from harming the eight-times Ballon d'Or winner.

Major League Soccer said on Tuesday that its protocols regarding team security guards had not changed and multiple sides had designated team security guards that are stationed near team benches on the field.

Cheuko will only be permitted in the locker room and mixed zones.

"They don't allow me to be on the field anymore," the bodyguard told Spanish media.

"I was in Europe for seven years, working for Ligue 1 and the Champions League, and only six people invaded the pitch. I came to the USA and in just 20 months 16 people have already done so. There's a huge problem here, let me help Messi."

Ahmedabad, Kolkata, Delhi, Guwahati To Host Tests In 2025

Press Trust of India

NEW DELHI: Ahmedabad, Kolkata, New Delhi and Guwahati will host the four Tests that India will play in the 2025 home season.

India will host the West Indies for a two-Test series with the games scheduled in Ahmedabad and Kolkata starting October 6.

India will also play two Tests against South Africa in New Delhi and Guwahati respectively from November 18. Guwahati will make its Test debut.

The BCCI announced the schedule for the home season on Wednesday.

Besides the Tests, India will host South Africa for three ODIs and five T20s.

T20 Rankings: Varun Slips, Pandya Remains On Top

India's mystery spinner Varun Chakravarty has dropped one place to third spot in the ICC men's T20 bowling rankings, while



Schedule:

West Indies tour of India:

- First Test in Ahmedabad from October 6.
- Second Test in Kolkata from October 14.

South Africa tour of India:

- First Test in New Delhi from November 18.
- Second Test in Guwahati from November 26.
- First ODI in Ranchi on November 30.

- Second ODI in Raipur on December 3.
- Third ODI in Vizag on December 6.
- First T20 in Cuttack on December 9.
- Second T20 in Chandigarh on December 11.
- Third T20 in Dharamsala on December 14.
- Fourth T20 in Lucknow on December 17.
- Fifth T20 in Ahmedabad on December 19.

Hardik Pandya continues to top the all-rounders' chart issued on Wednesday.

With 706 rating points, Chakravarty trails behind leader Jacob Duffy (723) of New Zealand and West In-

dies' Akeal Hosein (707).

Leg-spinner Ravi Bishnoi (674) and left-arm pacer Arshdeep Singh (653) are the other two Indians in top-10 at seventh and 10th positions respectively.

Jaiswal Leaves Mumbai Cricket For Shock Switch To Goa

Press Trust of India

MUMBAI: India opener Yashasvi Jaiswal has decided to make a shock switch to Goa from Mumbai due to personal reasons, leaving a domestic powerhouse that laid the foundation for the left-hander's blossoming international career.

Jaiswal wrote to the Mumbai Cricket Association on Tuesday, expressing his wish to leave Mumbai for Goa, and the governing body swiftly accepted his request.

Jaiswal's shock move will see the left-handed 23-year-old play for Goa from the 2025-26 season where he could be appointed captain, though it remains to be seen how much time he would be able to give to the state side given the packed international calendar.

"Yes, it is surprising. He must have thought of something to make such a move. He has requested us to relieve him and we have accepted his request," a senior MCA official told PTI on Wednesday.

Jaiswal last played for Mumbai against Jammu and Kashmir in their Ranji Trophy Group A league round match from January 23-25 following the strict implementation of the BCCI directives that all India players should play domestic cricket if not on national duty.

In that game, Jaiswal had made his



sole appearance in the Ranji Trophy 2024-25 season along with India captain Rohit Sharma.

The two India stars flopped on their domestic return, with Jaiswal scoring 4 and 26 as Mumbai lost by five wickets to Jammu and Kashmir for the second time in the tournament's history.

Moving from native Bhadohi in Uttar Pradesh at the age of 12 to pursue his cricketing dream, Jaiswal went through several hardships. He spent nights in a tent before he was spotted by coach Jwala Singh who took him under his wings and developed his game.

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