

Kashmir Braces For Hotter Days Ahead

Plains Likely To Hit Record 34°C

Observer News Service

Srinagar: Jammu and Kashmir is gearing up to face a severe heatwave over the next three days, with weather officials forecasting unusually high temperatures, especially on Thursday and Friday.

The plains of Kashmir are likely to witness a significant spike, with maximum temperatures expected to reach as high as 34°C—an unseasonal surge that may break

● **SRINAGAR:** 32.0°C
● **QAZIGUND:** 33.2°C
● **PAHALGAM:** 25.8°C
● **KUPWARA:** 30.0°C
● **KOKERNAG:** 31.5°C
● **GULMARG:** 23.2°C
● **BANIHAL:** 30.4°C

multiple records for this time of the year.

Meteorologists have issued advisories warning of potential heat stress, | [More On P10](#)

Jammu Hottest at 41.4°C, Srinagar 32°C

There is no letup in the heat wave conditions in Jammu and Kashmir as multiple areas, including Jammu, the winter capital of the region, recorded the season's hottest day on Wednesday.

According to the details, amidst the forecast of hot and dry weather conditions, Srinagar, the summer capital of Jammu and Kashmir, recorded a maximum temperature of 32.0 degrees Celsius. | [More On P10](#)

Enemy Brought To Knees: LG Lauds Forces For Op Sindoor Success

Says 140 Crore Indians Proud Of The Valour Of Armed Forces



Observer News Service

Jammu: Jammu and Kashmir Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha on Wednesday said the people of India are proud of the valour of the armed forces and that this sentiment has strengthened after Operation Sindoor.

Within days, the enemy was brought to its knees, Sinha told Army and BSF soldiers stationed in the area during a visit to the Poonch Brigade headquarters.

He distributed sweets among the troops and expressed his gratitude to them for destroying terror infrastructure in Pakistan and | [More On P10](#)

Announces Job For Kin Of Shelling Victims

Jammu: Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha Wednesday visited Poonch and met the grieving family members who lost their loved ones due to unprovoked shelling by Pakistan.

The Lieutenant Governor announced government jobs to the closest kin of Pakistan shelling victims. He said, ex-gratia and other reliefs have been provided and Government of India is committed for further necessary assistance.

“The proper rehabilitation of affected families is my top priority. The J&K administration, under the leadership of Prime Minister Narendra Modi and | [More On P10](#)

JKBOSE Notifies New Academic Schedule

Observer News Service

Srinagar: The Jammu and Kashmir Board of School Education (JKBOSE) Wednesday notified the new academic schedule following the restoration of academic session from March to November.

JKBOSE further clarified that due to change in academic calendar in winter Zone areas in 2024, the Annual regular 2025 examination is scheduled to be held in Oct-Nov of 2025 and in summer zone of Jammu division in Feb-March 2026 respectively. | [More On P10](#)

India Expels Pak High Commission Official

KO Web Desk

New Delhi: India on Wednesday expelled a Pakistani official working at the Pakistan High Commission here on charges of indulging in activities not in keeping with his official status.

The Ministry of External Affairs (MEA) said the official has been given 24 hours to leave the country. | [More On P10](#)

Special Status & Terror Condemnation

NC Working Committee Passes 7 Resolutions

Agencies

Srinagar: The National Conference (NC) Central Working Committee on Wednesday passed seven resolutions, including the immediate restoration of statehood to Jammu and Kashmir.

The meeting was chaired by party president Dr Farooq Abdullah at Nawa-e-Subha.

The meeting also observed a two-minute silence to pay tribute to 26 civilians killed in the April 22 Pahalgam terror attack.

This was the first meeting of the party's highest decision-making body after it came to power in Jammu and Kashmir by winning the 2024 Assembly elections.

Sources privy to the development said that several issues were discussed in the meeting in which nearly 45 members, including Chief Minister Omar Abdullah, his Deputy Chief Minister Surinder Kumar Choudhary, CM's Advisor, Nasir Aslam Wani, legislators and others participated. The meeting discussed threadbare about the shelling hit areas and the necessary compensation to the affected families.

Several legislators present in the meeting also expressed resentment against the dilly-dallying tactics at the administrative level with regard to the public works.

“The legislators raised issues of how the public works are

being delayed and how the mission of the National Conference (NC) is being sabotaged,” one of the participants said.

NC spokesperson, Imran Nabi Dar, when contacted, said that the dual-power system was discussed threadbare. The participants have expressed resentment in this regard and pitched for the restoration of statehood.

He added that the dual-power system is not in favour of the people and thus the statehood must be restored at the earliest.

Meanwhile, the meeting passed seven resolutions, including condemnation of violence and tribute to martyrs, reaffirmation of commitment to special status, | [More On P10](#)

Waqf Islamic Concept But Not Essential To Islam: Centre

Press Trust Of India

New Delhi: The Centre on Wednesday defended the Waqf (Amendment) Act, 2025 in the Supreme Court and said though waqf was an Islamic concept, it was not an essential part of Islam.

Arguing before Chief Justice B R Gavai and Justice Augustine George Masih, Solicitor General Tushar Mehta said, “Waqf is an Islamic concept. But it is not an essential part of Islam.. Waqf is nothing but just charity in Islam.” “Charity is recognised in every religion, and it cannot be regarded as an essential tenet of any religion,” he said.

Earlier in the day, Mehta asserted nobody could claim right over public land by using waqf by user principle which was a

statutory right and the law could take it away.

“Waqf by user” refers to a concept where a property is recognised as waqf based on its long-term use for religious or charitable purposes, even without formal documentation.

Responding to the challenge against the validity of the 2025 law, Mehta argued the amended law dealt with the secular aspects of waqf and activities that were non-essential to Islam.

Mehta said the “waqf by user” concept did not permit “whole-sale takeover of waqf properties” by the state as alleged.

“Waqf by user is not a fundamental right, it is a creature of statute, and what the legislature creates, it can also take away,” he said. | [More On P10](#)

IndiGo Flight To Srinagar Faces Midair Hailstorm

Lands Safely With 227 Onboard

Observer News Service

Srinagar: A Srinagar-bound IndiGo flight from Delhi with more than 220 people on board hit turbulence midair on Wednesday due to inclement weather, prompting the pilot to report the “emergency” to air traffic control at Srinagar. “The flight later landed safely here,” officials said. | [More On P10](#)

No More Gmail: J&K Govt Tells Officials To Go Fully Secure Or Face Action

Ansar Hussain

Srinagar: The government of Jammu and Kashmir has launched a sweeping overhaul of its digital systems, ordering all departments to shut down unofficial websites, abandon personal email use, and report on their cybersecurity readiness within two weeks.

The directive, issued on Wednesday and approved by the Chief Secretary, sets off a race against time for government offices to clean up digital infrastructure that has long been unregulated. Officials are now under pressure to secure their systems against rising threats like phishing attacks, data leaks, and the use of pirated software.

The move follows months



of internal discussions about vulnerabilities across departments, particularly as cyberattacks targeting public infrastructure increase nationwide. But for a region like Jammu and Kashmir, where digital access is tightly interwoven

with both administration and security, the stakes are even higher.

“Government data is too valuable to leave exposed,” said a senior IT officer, who requested anonymity because he wasn't | [More On P10](#)

RS 53 CRORE INVESTMENT FRAUD

Court Denies Bail To 4 Of Family

M Ahmad

Srinagar: A court in Ganderbal district on Wednesday rejected bail plea of four members of a family accused of large-scale economic offence involving over Rs 53.21 crores public money.

The accused persons—Rumaisha Jan, his father Ghulam Nabi Shah and brother Shah Nawaz Ahmad Shah, residents of Kangan Ganderbal and Amir Bashir Magray of Bonizal Haripora Kangan Ganderbal had filed the bail plea, contending that they have not done any offence and their reputation will be maligned as they all belong to the same family.

On the other hand, prosecution said that poor and innocent individuals were dishonestly

induced to invest their money with false promises of high returns, including claims of doubling their investments. The accused, by running an organized online scheme, collected crores of rupees in their bank accounts and subsequently withdrew the entire amount, the prosecution said. While the organized financial fraud caused significant economic harm to the victims, the prosecution said section 4 of PMLA Act has been invoked in the case in view of rank details of huge transactions, ramifications and huge money trail in crores.

“There is extensive and meticulous efforts by the investigating agency to unearth | [More On P10](#)

Poonch Was Under Fire. Now It's Fighting To Heal

Syed Sammar Mehdi

Srinagar: For four days, the shelling did not stop. Now, with the guns silent, families in Poonch are walking back to what is left of their homes.

Some houses have gaping holes in the walls. Others have no walls at all.

The air is still heavy. Not with smoke, but with silence and sorrow.

Many families had no time to pack when they fled. They just ran.

Now, standing in front of what used to be their homes, they are trying to make sense of the loss.

Rashmi Jan was inside when it happened. A sudden blast, then darkness.

“I felt something pierce my leg, then my side. There was blood, but I didn't feel pain right away. Just shock,” she said.

She waited for help for hours. Doctors later removed two splinters. A third one is still lodged in her body.

In another neighbourhood, Mazahir Hussain walked through the debris where children used to play.

“It's not just broken buildings,” he said. “It's broken trust. You don't expect this kind of violence when you're just living your life, sharing meals, walking to school.”

Qari Mohammad Iqbal, a madrasa teacher, lost more than his home. He lost his dignity.



After truce and thaw, families in Poonch return to homes reduced to rubble. With trauma lingering and trust shaken, the road to recovery looks steep.

Faisal Khan/KO

National TV channels flashed his name, wrongly linking him to terrorism. The damage was quick and deep.

“I've lived here for decades. Taught generations of children,” he said quietly. “Now people look at me differently.”

Mehbooba Mufti, former chief minister and leader of the People's Democratic Party, visited Iqbal's home, offering condolences and calling for compensation.

“This cannot become the new normal,” she told locals.

She urged the central government to release at least ₹10 lakh for each affected family.

Chief Minister Omar Abdullah visited as well, meeting the relatives of Zain and Zohaib, two brothers | [More On P10](#)

Last Date: 31st May 2025!

For Mandatory Filing of Annual Return for FY 2024-25
(through FSSAI's FoSCoS portal only)

All FSSAI Licensed Manufacturers, Importers and Manufacturer - Exporter of Food shall submit their Annual Return for the FY 2024-25

- Refer Clause 2.1.13 and Conditions of License 05 of FSS (Licensing and Registration of Food Businesses) Regulations, 2011
- How to File Annual Return:
 - Step 1: Login into FoSCoS portal
 - Step 2: Go to Left Menu -> Annual Return -> Fill Annual Return

Points to keep in view for filing Annual Return:

- Shall be filed even for 'NIL' production during previous financial year.
- Shall be filed even if license is expired or surrendered during the FY 2024-25.
- Shall be filed even if new license obtained before 31st March 2025.
- Repacker and relabeller shall also file annual return.

Consequences for Non-Compliance:

- Penalty: Rs. 100 Per day wef 1st June 2025
- License may be suspended under Section 32 of the FSS Act, 2006

For more details:

- Visit FoSCoS (<https://foscos.fssai.gov.in>)
- Call FSSAI's Helpline @1800112100 from 7:00 AM to 11:00 PM
- Write at helpdesk-foscos@fssai.gov.in

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‘Strong Climate Plans Antidote To Prevailing Economic Uncertainty’

Press Trust Of India

New Delhi- UN climate change chief Simon Stiell on Tuesday said clear and strong climate plans are an antidote to the economic uncertainty gripping the world. Addressing the 2025 Nature Summit in Panama City, he said that at a time when tariffs, trade barriers and slowing growth have been dominating headlines, robust climate policies can help get trade flowing and economies growing. Stiell said that while global supply chains are being fractured, climate chaos will result in even more serious and sustained impacts. "In the Panama Canal, climate change has already driven water

levels lower. Slowing shipping and disrupting trade routes. For the average person, that means costs going up and less money to spend. It also means critical medical supplies delayed for those in desperate need, businesses collapsing and livelihoods vanishing," he said. But amid all the change and disruption, he said, clean energy projects are in pipelines all around the world. "Investors have their fingers on the button, waiting to push go on multi-billion-dollar commitments that will make lives better." Governments just need to give signals to markets and, for that, a new generation of national climate plans or NDCs are utterly essential, he said. Stiell said that unlike in the past,



when climate plans often focused mainly on cuts to greenhouse gas emissions and old-fashioned energy, the new generation of climate plans should be about growth and building a better future where nature is protected.

"Done right, these plans can attract a bonanza of benefits. More jobs. More revenue. And a virtuous cycle of increased investment. But unless it's implemented an NDC is just a piece of paper. That's why political leadership now is so

important," he said.

He added that political and policy signals from almost all of the world's largest economies are very clear: global decarbonization is unstoppable and continues to gather pace and scale. Countries like Brazil, Germany and China are stepping up with ambitious climate plans. Green technologies are growing fast and becoming cheaper, he said. The UNFCCC executive secretary, however, warned that the world cannot afford a two-speed transition, where some countries race ahead with clean energy and climate resilience and leave others behind. "We need to work together to ensure that everyone benefits. That new markets open and new trade routes form," he said.

از نیابت یوٹی

عنوان:- درخواست منجانب عکلیں احمد قیام ولد غلام محمد قیام ساکنہ واڈورہ ہمراد اجرائی
OBC for Central Reservation تحت SRO 176 یکن خود

اشتہار ہر خاص و عام

معاہد مندرجہ عنوان الصدر میں ساکنہ نے ایک درخواست بغرض OBC سرٹیفکیٹ بذمرہ قیام پیش کی ہے جو کہ زیر کاروائی ہے اس بارے میں پٹواری حلقہ سے رپورٹ طلب کی گئی ہے جس سے عیاں ہے کہ ساکنہ واقعی قیام ذات سے تعلق رکھتی ہے اور ساکنہ واڈورہ میں رہائش پذیر ہے اور کبھی بھی ترک سکونت نہیں کی ہے ساکنہ کا کنڈہ بذیل افراد پر مشتمل ہے

غلام محمد قیام ولد علی محمد قیام	مزدوری	60 سال
فاطمہ بیگم زوجہ غلام محمد	گھریلو کام	58 سال
اشیاز احمد پسر غلام محمد	سرکاری ملازم	35 سال
مہینہ اختر زوجہ اشیا ز احمد	گھریلو کام	32 سال
عکلیں احمد پسر غلام محمد	سرکاری ملازم	27 سال
زینت النساء زوجہ عکلیں احمد	گھریلو کام	25 سال
نجمہ النساء اختر غلام محمد	--	24 سال
شاہد محمد ولد غلام محمد	زیر تعلیم	18 سال

ساکنہ مذکورہ OBC سرٹیفکیٹ حاصل کرنے کا خواہاں ہے اور کنڈہ کی سالانہ آمدنی 10,000 روپے تک ہے۔ سرٹیفکیٹ زیر بحث اجراء کرنے میں اگر کسی شخص کو کوئی عذریہ یا اعتراض ہو تو وہ بعد مشتمل اخبار رسالت دن کے اندر اندر اپنے عذر یا اعتراض وادلت ہڈا کو دفتر اوقات کے دوران پیش کریں۔ بعد گزرے میعاد کوئی عذر یا اعتراض قابل قبول نہیں ہوگا۔
FKO نامے تحصیلدار

از نیابت یوٹی

عنوان:- درخواست منجانب معراج الدین ریشی ولد بشیر ریشی ساکنہ -- ہمراد اجرائی
RBA تحت SRO 294 یکن خود

اشتہار ہر خاص و عام

معاہد مندرجہ عنوان الصدر میں ساکنہ نے ایک درخواست بغرض RBA سرٹیفکیٹ پیش کی ہے جو کہ زیر کاروائی ہے اس بارے میں پٹواری حلقہ سے رپورٹ طلب کی گئی ہے جس سے عیاں ہے کہ وہ بذیل رہائش پذیر ہے اور کبھی بھی ترک سکونت نہیں کی ہے ساکنہ کا کنڈہ بذیل افراد پر مشتمل ہے

بشیر الدین ریشی ولد محمد سلطان	مزدوری	65 سال
سعید بیگم زوجہ بشیر احمد	گھریلو کام	62 سال
محمد رمضان ریشی پسر بشیر احمد	مزدوری	37 سال
معراج الدین ریشی پسر بشیر احمد	سرکاری ملازم	30 سال
حاجہ وحیدہ اختر	گھریلو کام	28 سال
رہینہ بیگم اختر	--	27 سال
فریدہ بشیر اختر	--	26 سال
عظیم بشیر اختر	زیر تعلیم	24 سال
زینب بشیر اختر	--	20 سال

ساکنہ مذکورہ OBC سرٹیفکیٹ حاصل کرنے کا خواہاں ہے اور کنڈہ کی مہوار آمدنی 51733 روپے تک ہے۔ سرٹیفکیٹ زیر بحث اجراء کرنے میں اگر کسی شخص کو کوئی عذریہ یا اعتراض ہو تو وہ بعد مشتمل اخبار رسالت دن کے اندر اندر اپنے عذر یا اعتراض وادلت ہڈا کو دفتر اوقات کے دوران پیش کریں۔ بعد گزرے میعاد کوئی عذر یا اعتراض قابل قبول نہیں ہوگا۔
FKO نامے تحصیلدار

PUBLIC NOTICE

I, Nisar Ahmad Kumar, father of Abrar Nisar, resident of Redwani Bala, Tehsil Qaimoh, District Anantnag, Kashmir, currently residing at Quarter No. 09, Back Side, Kashmir House, Rajaji Marg, New Delhi – 110001, through the medium of this notice, wish to correct the name of my son in his Aadhaar card as per his school records. My son is a student of PM Shree Kendriya Vidyalaya, INA Colony, New Delhi, and the details are as follows:
• Aadhaar Card Number: 9692 3087 0865
• Name in Aadhaar Card: Abrar Nisar Kumar
• Name in School Record: Abrar Nisar
Therefore, I intend to correct the name in the Aadhaar card to Abrar Nisar, as per the school record. If anyone has any objection to this change, they may raise it within 07 days from the publication of this notice.

Sd/-
Nisar Ahmad Kumar
F/O Abrar Nisar
inf

OFFICE OF THE REGIONAL TRANSPORT OFFICER KASHMIR

Subject:- Necessary Correction/change in address in data to the License No. JK-0120240003846 issued in favour of NAJEEB RASHEED SHEIKH Parentage ABDUL RASHEED SHEIKH Whereas an application has been recieved by one MOHAMMAD ASSIF Parentage SHEIKH ABDUL RASHID wherein he claimed that the Name has been wrongly recorded in the records of Driving Licenses as NAJEEB RASHID SHEIKH Parentage ABDUL RASHID SHEIKH Which needs to be changed as NAJEEB RASHEED SHEIKH Parentage ABDUL RASHEED SHEIKH.

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 Regional Transport office Kashmir 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.

Regional Transport officer
Kashmir
mcb

Public Notice

This is to inform general public that the name of my daughter, as mentioned in her Aadhaar Card, is incorrectly recorded as Sayyada Zeinab Naqvi while as her actual name is Zeinab Naqvi. Now I want to apply for the correction of same in her aadhaar card bearing Aadhaar no xxxx xxxx 7923 from old name Sayyada Zeinab Naqvi to New Name Zeinab Naqvi. Any person who has any objections or concerns regarding these changes is requested to raise them within 07 days from the date of this notice.
Name: Syed Farman Haider Naqvi
F/O- Zeinab Naqvi
R/O- Nagla Mallah Aligarh UP
bmg

Public Notice

This is information for the general public that in Birth Certificate of my son the name is entered as RAYAN HAIDER while his actual name is RAYAN HAIDER NAJAR. Now i want its correction, in this regard if anybody having any objection may contact EXECUTIVE OFFICER MUNICIPAL COUNCIL BUDGAM with in a period of seven days. No objection shall be entertained after that.
SARWAR AHMAD NAJAR
F/o RAYAN HAIDER NAJAR
R/o CHANA MOHALLA BUDGAM
CELL. 7780874045
mcb

Public Notice

I have changed my name from (Old Name) Syed Athar Murtaz to new name Syed Ather Murtaza in future I will be known as (New Name) Syed Ather Murtaza. If anybody has any objection in this regard he/she may file them in the Office of Passport Officer Srinagar within seven days. After that no objection shall be entertained.
aj

Public Notice

My name has been wrongly written in adhaar card as AISHA BANO while my correct name as per all other documents is AAISHA BEGUM. Now I have applied for the correction of the same if anybody has any objection in this regard he/she may file them in the concerned office within seven days. After that no objection shall be entertained
fko

AAISHA BEGUM
W/O NAZIR AHMAD KHAN
R/O BONGAM, Distt and tehsil Shopian

Public Notice

My name has been wrongly written in my school certificate as jozafa Rasool but my original name is Sameena Rasool . Now I have applied for the correction of the same if anybody has any objection in this regard he/she may file them in the office of the Govt Girls HIGH SCHOOL Bagwanpora within seven dyas. After that no objection shall be entertained.

Sameena Rasool
D/O=Gh Rasool Mir
R/O: Bagwanpora
fko_r

PUBLIC NOTICE

In SBI Mutual Fund Record Bearing Folio No 8567069 my name is wrongly entered as Meema Jahan instead of SHAHMEEMA AKTHER
Now correction required, if any body has any objection may contact SBI Funds Management Ltd (A Joint Venture between SBI and Amundi) C/o SBI Regional Business Office, II Floor Hall No. 3 Mall M.A. Road, Srinagar within 7 days
SHAHMEEMA AKTHER
W/o Zahoor Ahmad Sheikh
R/o Sidiqabad, Shopian
FKO_r



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Div Com Led Panel Reviews Policy For Repairs Near Dal Lake

Observer News Service

SRINAGAR: To frame a comprehensive policy to address the issue of repair & renovation of houses & buildings within 200 meters of Dal Lake, a meeting of committee members was held under the chairmanship of Divisional Commissioner (Div Com) Kashmir, Vijay Kumar Bidhuri.

The meeting was attended by Deputy Commissioner, Srinagar; Vice Chairman, LCMA; Vice Chairman, Srinagar Development Authority; Director, Tourism Kashmir; Member Secretary, PCC; Chief Engineer, UEED; Chief Town Planner, Kashmir and HOD, Department of Environment Science University of Kashmir.

The meeting discussed and deliberated on the agenda points which includes to lay down the norms/eligibil-

ity conditions for declaring a building to have been constructed legitimately, prior to imposition of ban by the Hon'ble High court.

It also discussed norms for granting permissions by the BOCA LCMA for carrying out repair/renovation/reconstruction of the legitimately constructed buildings within 200 meters of the Dal/ Nigeen Lakes, prior to imposition of ban on 19.07.2002.

The members also discussed prescribing norms to be followed by the buildings granted permission for repair/renovation/reconstruction for ensuring scientific and proper waste disposal.

Further, measures for sustainable construction using alternate technologies in order to make the construction process lake friendly and norms for maintaining aesthetics and heritage patterns were also discussed.

DLSA Organises Awareness Programme On LSUM

Observer News Service

SRINAGAR: District Legal Services Authority (DLSA), Srinagar, in collaboration with Vitasta Law College, Srinagar, organized an awareness programme on the legal provisions relating to mental illness and persons with intellectual disabilities (LSUM).

The event aimed to sensitize future legal professionals and the academic community about the legal challenges and support mechanisms available for vulnerable sections of society.

The programme was held under the chairmanship of Tasleem Arief, Principal District and Sessions Judge, Srinagar, and under the supervision of Sajad Ur Rehman, Sub-Judge/Secretary, DLSA Srinagar, besides attended by Rakib Zia, Principal of Vitasta Law College; Fatima Shah and Nosheen Ismail,

Assistant Professors; Advocate Suhaila Ali, Panel Lawyer of DLSA Srinagar & Para Legal Volunteers of the Authority and the Law Students of the Vitasta Law College.

Advocate Laila Khalid, who served as the resource person, conducted an informative session covering crucial legal safeguards and rights of individuals affected by mental illness and intellectual disabilities.

Students namely Shabnam Basheer, Tabiyat Mush-taq, and Midhat from the 4th and 6th semesters also addressed the gathering.

The session concluded with an engaging interactive Q&A segment, fostering meaningful dialogue between the students, faculty, and the resource person.

DLSA Srinagar reaffirmed its commitment to organizing similar initiatives in the future to build a legally aware and inclusive society.

IGP Kashmir Zone Chairs Security Review Meeting

Observer News Service

Srinagar: Inspector General of Police Kashmir Zone V.K Birdi-IPS took stock of the arrangements for SANJY 2025, Muharram and other upcoming events during a meeting held at the Conference Hall of Police Control Room Kashmir.

The meeting was attended by DIG CKR Rajiv Panday-IPS, DIG NKR Maqsood Ul Zaman-IPS, DIG SKR Javid Iqbal Matoo, SSP PCR Kashmir, all district SSSp of Kashmir Zone and other officers.

At the onset of the meeting, participating officers briefed the chair on the security arrangements planned for the smooth and peaceful conduct of Shri Amarnath Ji Yatra-2025, Muharram, and other significant events. The officers shared valuable insights from past experiences, emphasizing the need for robust communication channels, seamless coordination

among forces, and advanced real-time monitoring systems. Discussions focused on strengthening the existing security infrastructure, enhancing surveillance tactics, and optimizing personnel deployment along the key locations.

IGP Kashmir conducted a detailed review of the security framework and directed the officers to ensure the installation of CCTV cameras at all strategic locations. He emphasized the need for adequate manpower deployment at each camp and sensitive areas to maintain a secure environment. V K Birdi also stressed the importance of intelligence-driven operations, timely threat assessments, and proactive measures to mitigate potential risks, ensuring the safety of all participants.

The meeting concluded with a strong commitment from all the officers to ensure smooth and peaceful conduct of the forthcoming events.

Nasha Mukht Bharat Abhiyaan

Police Organizes Medical Camp In City

Observer News Service

Srinagar: Srinagar Police organized free medical camp under the aegis Civic Action Programme (CAP) 2024-25.

This initiative is part of larger "Nasha Mukht Bharat Abhiyan" campaign, launched by the Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment to combat substance abuse and promote a drug-free and healthy society.

Srinagar Police organized a free medical camp for the general public under CAP 2024-25 at Panchayat Ghar, Fakir Gajri, Harwan.

The camp provided free medical consultations and medicines to around 100 residents of the area. The medical camp was inaugurated by SP East Srinagar, and attended by SDPO Nehru Park, SHO Harwan and other officers were also present at the event.



Massive Fire Guts Five Houses In Nawakadal

Syed Mohammad Burhan

Srinagar: A devastating fire tore through the congested Nawakadal locality of Srinagar late Tuesday night, damaging at least five residential houses and reducing the wedding dreams of a local family to ashes. Among the worst affected was a household preparing for the wedding of their daughter, whose trousseau and other wedding items were completely destroyed in the blaze.

The fire, which broke out around midnight, caused widespread panic in the densely packed neighbourhood. Residents described a scene of chaos as flames quickly engulfed multiple structures.

Nazir Ahmad, the bride-to-be's uncle, recounted the harrowing moments. "We were coming out of the masjid when we heard people screaming. In no time, the fire had spread to several houses. The area is so congested that we couldn't even get close to help contain it," he said, his voice trembling.

The family had been preparing for a wedding scheduled for August. "We had collected everything for her marriage—clothes, jewellery, household items. Everything is gone. We had so many dreams for her, and all of them were consumed

by the fire," Ahmad said with tears in his eyes.

Local residents expressed gratitude for the swift action of the Fire & Emergency Services (F&ES) Department, crediting their timely response with preventing an even greater tragedy.

Officials from the Fire Services Department confirmed that five houses—comprising both double-storey and three-storey structures—were involved in the blaze. Preliminary findings suggest an electrical short circuit as the cause.

They said the attic portions,

residents have urged the administration to extend immediate relief to the affected families, particularly those facing significant personal losses just months ahead of major family events.

Admin Reaches Out To The Fire Victims

On the directions of Deputy Commissioner (DC) Srinagar, Dr. Bilal Mohi-Ud-Din Bhat, a team of District Administration, Srinagar led by Additional Deputy Commissioner, Aadil Fareed today visited Narwara Dangerpora in Nawakadal area of the City to provide immediate assis-

“In no time, the fire had spread to several houses. The area is so congested that we couldn't even get close to help contain it,”

roofs, ceilings, furniture, and household goods of two double-storey houses were extensively damaged, while three other houses sustained partial damage, primarily to their upper floors and roofing.

In addition to the structural losses, two scooters bearing registration numbers JK01T-0210 and BL3SDW-1138 were also damaged. Fortunately, there were no reports of injuries in the incident.

An official assessment of the losses is underway. Meanwhile,

tance to the fire affected families whose houses were gutted in a fire incidents here on Tuesday.

The Immediate relief was sanctioned by Deputy Commissioner Srinagar and was provided to the affected families in the form of blankets, mattresses, kitchen sets etc, besides cash amount to each affected families as an interim relief out of the District Red Cross Fund.

The team of district administration Srinagar also expressed sympathy with the affected families on the loss of property.



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


AIRPORTS

SHIEK UL ALAM AIRPORT: 01942303311 


RAILWAYS

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

HIGHWAY STATUS



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

 <div>HIJRI CALENDAR</div> <div>24 Zil-Qadah 1446</div>	PRAYERS	
	FAJR	3: 47
	ZUHR	12:27
	ASR	5: 24
	Magrib	7:33
	ISHA	9: 09

This Day In History

- 334 BC - The Macedonian army of Alexander the Great defeats Darius III of Persia in the Battle of the Granicus
- 1849 - Abraham Lincoln receives a patent (only US President to do so) for a device to lift a boat over shoals and obstructions
- 1902 - US President Theodore Roosevelt signs a treaty with Mexico under which both countries agree to submit a long-standing dispute over interest payments to the Court of Arbitration at The Hague
- 1906 - Wright Brothers are granted a patent for their "flying machine," having applied for one 3 years earlier (patent no. 821,393)
- 1919 - A. E. Douglass establishes the relative dates of two archaeological sites using ancient wood samples, marking a major step forward in the dating of archaeological sites.
- 1926 - Chiang Kai-shek replaces communists in Guomindang China
- 1939 - Adolf Hitler and Benito Mussolini sign "Pact of Steel"
- 1940 - UK Premier Winston Churchill flies to Paris to decide with General Maxime Weygand a strategy to save the city
- 1941 - British troops attack Baghdad
- 1942 - Mexico declares war on Nazi-Germany & Japan
- 1943 - Stalin disbands Komintern
- 1947 - 1st US ballistic missile fired
- 1950 - Celal Bayar elected President of Turkey
- 1955 - Oldest man to drive in the Grand Prix (aged 55) finishes 6th
- 1957 - South Africa's government approves race separation in universities
- 1967 - Egyptian president Nassar closes Straits of Tiran to Israel
- 1972 - Ceylon becomes Republic of Sri Lanka as its constitution is ratified
- 1972 - US President Nixon begins visit to Moscow
- 1973 - President Nixon confesses his role in Watergate cover-up
- 1976 - NASA launches space vehicle S-179
- 1979 - Canadians elect conservatives, Joseph Clark replaces Pierre Trudeau as the 16th Prime Minister of Canada
- Jim Henson
- 1981 - Soyuz 40 returns to Earth
- 1990 - Microsoft releases Windows 3.0
- 1990 - North & South Yemen merge to form Republic of Yemen
- 1992 - India launches its Agni rocket
- 2006 - Results from the Montenegrin independence referendum, 2006 are announced. 55.4% of voters vote to become independent from the Serbia and Montenegro Union.
- 2010 - Polish astronomer Nicolaus Copernicus' remains are reburied in Frombork Cathedral, Poland after a 200 year search for his tomb
- 2014 - Royal Thai Armed Forces, led by General Prayut Chan-o-cha stage a coup in Thailand, suspending the kingdom's constitution and taking control of the government, the 12th since the country's first coup in 1932
- 2015- Pakistan begin the first test-playing nation cricket tour of Zimbabwe since 2009
- 2016- Independent Alexander Van der Bellen defeats Freedom Party's Norbert Hofer by just 31,000 votes to become President in Austrian elections
- 2016- The Tradition Senior Men's Golf, Greystone G&CC: Germany's Berhard Langer wins sixth of 13 Champions Tour majors by 6 strokes from Olin Browne
- 2016- US President Barack Obama arrives in Vietnam for a 3 day tour
- 2017- Japanese researchers from University of Yamanashi report birth of mice from freeze-dried sperm stored on the International Space Station
- 2017- South Africa's Western Cape province declares a drought disaster - worst for 113 years
- 2017- Suicide bombing at Manchester Arena, England, after Ariana Grande concert kills 22 and injures 59

Pakistan To Extend Closure Of Its Airspace For Indian Flights By Another Month: Report

Press Trust Of India

Islamabad: Pakistan has decided to extend the closure of its airspace for Indian flights by another month, a media report said on Wednesday.

Pakistan banned its airspace for India last month after the steps taken by New Delhi in the wake of the Pahalgam terrorist attack on April 22.

The ban was imposed for a month until May 23, as un-

a Notice to Airmen (Notam) will be issued.

The development comes amid heightened tensions between the two neighbours following India's precision strikes under 'Operation Sindoor' on terror infrastructure in Pakistan and Pakistan-occupied Kashmir on May 7.

The Indian military has been maintaining that Pakistan pleaded for stopping the military actions after India hit eight military installa-



der International Civil Aviation Organisation rules the airspace restrictions cannot be imposed for more than one month at a time.

Quoting sources, Geo News reported that the decision to extend the ban is expected to be announced on Wednesday or Thursday, and

tions in Pakistan on early May 10 in response to Pakistan's attempts to target Indian military bases.

This is not the first time Pakistan has imposed such restrictions. Pakistan closed its airspace for Indian flights during the 1999 Kargil conflict and the 2019 Pulwama crisis.

'Lawyers Avoid Work in Vacation, Judiciary Blamed for Case Backlog'

Press Trust Of India

New Delhi : hief Justice of India B R Gavai on Wednesday said lawyers don't want to work during vacation but the judiciary is blamed for the backlog of cases.

A bench comprising Chief Justice B R Gavai and Justice Augustine George Masih got miffed when a lawyer urged listing of a petition after the summer vacation.

"The first five judges are sitting through the vacation and continuing to work, yet we are blamed for the backlog. In reality, it is the lawyers who are unwilling to work during the vacations," the CJI said.

Recently, the top court issued a notification on the benches that will function during the upcoming summer vacation, rechristened as "partial court working days", from May 26 to July 13.

Significantly, there will be two to five vacation benches sitting during the partial court working days and even top five judges, including the CJI, will be holding courts during this period.

Pakistan's attempt to hoodwink world doomed to fail: India on Islamabad's allegations'



Chief Justice of India Bhushan Ramkrishna Gavai. PTI

According to earlier practice, there used to be only two vacation benches during the summer vacation, and senior judges were not supposed to hold courts.

The notification outlined the weekly allocation of justices across benches.

From May 26 to June 1, the CJI, Justices Suryakant, Vikram Nath J K Maheshwari and B V Nagarathna will be heading the five benches respectively.

During this period, the apex court registry will remain open from 10 am to 5 pm for all officers and staff.

The registry will be closed on all Saturdays (except July 12), Sundays, and public holidays.



Basavaraju, Backbone Of India's Naxalite Movement, Killed

Agencies

NEW DELHI: Indian commandos shot dead the Maoist insurgent chief and 26 other guerillas on Wednesday, the country's home minister said, calling it a decisive blow to the decades-long conflict.

India is waging an all-out offensive against the last vestiges of the Naxalite rebellion, named after the village in the foothills of the Himalayas where the Maoist-inspired guerrilla movement began nearly six decades ago.

More than 12,000 rebels, soldiers and civilians have died since a handful of villagers rose up against their feudal lords there in 1967.

At its peak in the mid-2000s, the rebellion controlled nearly a third of the country with an estimated 15,000 to 20,000 fighters.

Prime Minister Narendra Modi said he was "proud of our forces for this remarkable success", adding that the government was "committed to eliminating the menace of Maoism and ensuring a life of

peace and progress".

In the latest incident, 27 rebels were killed in the central state of Chhattisgarh, including Nambala Keshav Rao, alias Basavaraju, the general secretary of the banned Communist Party of India-Maoist group, interior minister Amit Shah said.

"This is the first time in three decades of Bharat's (India's) battle against Naxalism that a general secretary-ranked leader has been neutralised by our forces," he said in a statement.

"I applaud our brave security forces and agencies for this major breakthrough," Shah added, calling Rao the "topmost leader, and the backbone of the Naxal movement".

Shah said that in wider operations 54 people had been arrested, and a further 84 Naxalites had surrendered in the states of Chhattisgarh, Telangana, and Maharashtra.

'Red Corridor'

Shah repeating a vow to crush the rebels, saying that the

"Modi government is resolved to eliminate Naxalism" before March 31 next year.

The firefight broke out deep inside a forest in Chhattisgarh's Narayanpur district, a remote and densely wooded region that has long served as a Maoist stronghold. Senior state police official Vivekanand Sinha said the gun battle took place after intelligence reports indicated the presence of "top Maoist leaders" in the area.

A police commando also died during the fierce action, said local police chief P. Sundarraj.

A crackdown by Indian troops in a stretch of territory known as the "Red Corridor" has killed more than 400 rebels since the beginning of 2024, according to government data.

Police said they had killed 31 Maoist rebels during a three-week operation this month aimed at capturing a strategic hill range.

The conflict has also seen several deadly attacks on government forces. A roadside bomb killed at least nine Indian troops in January.

US Warns Of Syria's Collapse Without Embracing Rebranded Al-Qaeda

Agencies

Washington: US Secretary of State Marco Rubio has appealed for further American and regional support for the Hay'at Tahrir al-Sham (HTS)-led administration in Syria to ward off its "potential collapse" amid the ruling regime's suppression of minorities.

Speaking before the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, Rubio issued the warning about the possible collapse of the HTS regime of Abu Mohammed al-Jolani while defending the removal of US sanctions on Damascus and urging deeper American involvement to prevent another war in Syria.

"Given the challenges they're facing, are maybe weeks—not many months—away from potential collapse and a full-scale civil war of epic proportions, basically the country splitting up," the US secretary of state said.

Rubio stressed that sanctions relief "will not suffice," urging "congressional action or a



Saudi Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman (3-R) hosts a conference call between US President Donald Trump (C), US Secretary of State Marco Rubio (R-C) and Syria's de facto leader Abu Mohammad al-Jolani (2-L) in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia.

broader strategy" to stabilize the country after 14 years of war.

The US official said sanctions relief could enable "neighboring countries to begin to assist the transitional authority to build governance mechanisms that allow them to actually establish a government, unify the armed forces under one banner and the like."

Underlining the necessity of US engagement with the HTS-led

administration in Syria, Rubio said, "If we engage them, it may work out, it may not work out. If we do not engage them, it is guaranteed to not work out."

Acknowledging concerns about Jolani, a US-designated terrorist, and members of Syria's transitional authority, he said, "The bad news is that the transitional authority figures—they didn't pass their background check with the FBI."

Suicide Blast Targets Army School Bus In Balochistan, 4 Children Killed

Agencies

Islamabad: Four children were killed in a blast targeting an army school bus in Pakistan's troubled Balochistan province, a government official said on Wednesday.

"The bus was on its way to a school in an army cantonment," said Yasir Iqbal, the administrator of Khuzdar district, where the incident took place.

Around 40 students were in the bus that was headed to an ar-

“Around 40 students were in the bus that was headed to an army-run school, when the blast took place, Iqbal said, adding that several were injured in the incident.



my-run school, when the blast took place, Iqbal said, adding that several were injured in the incident.

Balochistan is Pakistan's largest province by area, but smallest

by population. The province of some 15 million people in the southwest of the country is home to key mining projects but has been roiled by a decades-old insurgency.

National Herald Case 'Prima Facie' Made Out Against Sonia, Rahul: Probe Agency



Press Trust of India

New Delhi: The Enforcement Directorate on Wednesday told a Delhi court that a 'prima facie' case of money laundering was made out against Congress leaders Sonia Gandhi and Rahul Gandhi, and others in the National Herald matter.

The ED made the submission before special judge Vishal Gogne during the opening submissions on whether to take cognisance of the matter.

The judge, meanwhile, directed the ED to supply a copy of its chargesheet in the matter to BJP leader Subramanian Swamy, based on whose private complaint the ED lodged the present case.

The arguments in the mat-

“The ED made the submission before special judge Vishal Gogne during the opening submissions on whether to take cognisance of the matter.

ter are currently underway.

The ED, which filed its chargesheet recently, began its probe in 2021 after a magistrate court took cognisance of a private complaint filed by Swamy on June 26, 2014.

NEWS MAKERS

Youth Congress sues BJP IT cell chief, Arnab Goswami

An FIR has been registered against BJP IT cell head Amit Malviya and Editor-in-Chief of Republic TV, Arnab Goswami for allegedly running false information, police said.

The case was registered at High Grounds police station on Tuesday, based on the complaint from the Indian Youth Congress's legal cell head Shrikant Swarup B N against the duo under Sections 192 (wantonly giving provocation with an intent to cause riot) and 352 (Intentional insult to provoke breach of peace) of the Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita, they said.

Swarup accused Malviya and Goswami of "masterminding a heinous and criminally motivated campaign to

disseminate patently false information." He alleged that the accused have "maliciously propagated the fabricated claim" that the Istanbul Congress Centre in Turkey is the office of the Indian National Congress (INC).

"This act was executed with clear and undeniable criminal intent to deceive the Indian public, defame a major political institution, manipulate nationalist sentiments, incite public unrest, and undermine national security and democratic integrity," he stated.

Swarup further stated that the actions of Malviya and Goswami are set against the volatile backdrop of strained relations between India and Turkey, driven by the latter's perceived support for Pakistan.

Trump's Sweet Tooth: He Eats 'Good Amount' Of Candy, Likes Pink Starbursts, Tootsie Rolls

US President Donald Trump has a sweet tooth and his favourites are pink Starbursts and Tootsie Rolls.

So said Karoline Leavitt, the White House press secretary, at a briefing Tuesday for the children of reporters who cover the White House. It was part of a day of activities the White House organised as it observed the annual Take Our Daughters and Sons to Work Day event.

The Republican president and his wife, first lady Melania Trump, also held separate events of their own.

One child asked Leavitt about Trump's daily candy consumption. She characterised his intake as a "good amount" and added that "he likes pink Starburst and Tootsie Rolls."



A few questions touched on administration policy, such as the state of the US-Mexico border and what Trump is willing to do about climate change.

But even more questions were about his favourite foods and they led Leavitt to share that Trump also likes to eat a "big, beautiful steak," ice cream sundaes with chocolate sauce and some toppings, and hamburgers and fries from McDonald's.

She appeared to be stumped

by a few of the inquiries, including about the president's favourite soccer player and his favourite child. Trump has five adult children.

"That is a very controversial question and I'm not going to answer it," Leavitt said after the laughter subsided. "I know he loves all of his children very much, and they're all great kids."

Earlier Tuesday, the first lady joined a few dozen children whose parents work in the Executive Office of the President in decorating wooden American flags.

She used a glue stick to attach two silver glittery stars to her red, white and blue flag after she took her seat at one of two tables in the Jacqueline Kennedy Garden on the South Lawn. The first lady admired the children's work and told several that their creations were "beautiful."

Kuwaiti University Student Sentenced To Three Years In Prison For Insulting Emir on X

Dubai: A university student in Kuwait has been sentenced to three years in prison with hard labour after the country's top court upheld her conviction for insulting the Emir and inciting the overthrow of the regime through posts made on the social media platform X.

The Court of Cassation on Monday affirmed earlier rulings by the Criminal Court and the Court of Appeal, which found the student guilty of publishing politically sensitive content using a fake account.

Prosecutors argued that the student had posted a series of articles and comments deemed offensive to the Emir and critical of Kuwait's political system.

Authorities described the content as a clear violation of national laws protecting the dignity of the head of state and preserving public order.

During the trial, the student denied all charges, claiming that her account had been compromised by an expatriate residing outside the country.

She told the court that the individual had threatened her and warned her against removing the posts published under her name.

Shortage Of Vital Vaccines For Children Sparks Concern In Pulwama

Agencies

Pulwama: A severe shortage of essential childhood vaccines has caused distress among parents and health-care workers in south Kashmir's Pulwama district.

According to reports, critical vaccines—including Penta (Pentavalent), IPV (Inactivated Polio Vaccine), RVV (Rotavirus Vaccine), and PCV (Pneumococcal Conjugate Vaccine)—are unavailable at multiple vaccination centres across the district.

A health worker involved in immunisation efforts, speaking anonymously, revealed that the shortage has persisted for the past two months. "We are facing repeated issues, and parents often get frustrated when we have to send them back without vaccinating their children due to unavailability," the worker said.

Parents have raised urgent concerns about the health risks posed by this disruption, fearing that delays in immunisation could leave infants and young children vulnerable to preventable diseases. They said that vaccination sessions are scheduled weekly, and despite the expectation of maintaining adequate stock, the supply chain has been hampered over recent weeks for reasons unknown.

This situation has led parents and local representatives

to seek immediate intervention from higher authorities. They have appealed to Deputy Commissioner Pulwama, Basharat Qayoom (IAS), and MLA Waheed Para to address the crisis immediately.

A concerned parent said, "This vaccine shortage is endangering our children's health. We urge the authorities to restore supply chains, ensure equitable distribution, and keep the public informed about when supplies will be replenished."

Deputy Commissioner Pulwama, Basharat Qayoom, said he has instructed the Chief Medical Officer (CMO) and relevant officials to take immediate steps to ensure the availability of vaccines. "Most vaccines are currently available at several centres, and the supply is expected to be replenished by this Saturday," the DC assured.

It is important to note that the vaccines in question—Penta, IPV, RVV, and PCV—are vital for protecting children against serious diseases. Penta vaccine guards against Diphtheria, Pertussis, Tetanus, Hepatitis B, and Hib. IPV prevents polio, RVV shields against rotavirus-induced diarrhoea, and PCV protects against pneumococcal infections like pneumonia and meningitis. These vaccines are integral to the routine immunisation schedule for infants and young children—(KNO)

Heaps Of Dirt Removed As Watchi Residents Clean Irrigation Canal

Agencies

Srinagar: Residents of a Watchi village in Zainapora hamlet of south Kashmir's Shopian district are expressing outrage after they removed heaps of dirt during the cleaning of a local irrigation canal, which was dumped directly onto the main road, causing significant inconvenience to commuters and pedestrians.

The residents of Watchi said that the road from Watchi to Melhoora has become nearly impassable at several points due to the piles of mud and debris left by the contractor in charge of the desilting operation.

They said that the cleaning was meant to improve water flow to nearby fields, but residents say poor execution has created a new problem.

"Instead of properly disposing of the silt, the contractor dumped it right on the main road," said Ghulam Nabi, a local resident.

"Now people, especially school children and elderly, are finding it hard to walk or drive. The dust and mud are everywhere."

Locals claim they have requested the authorities to intervene and direct the con-

Now people, especially school children and elderly, are finding it hard to walk or drive. The dust and mud are everywhere

tractor not to dump it on the road but no action has been taken yet.

"We are not against canal cleaning, but why should we suffer for their negligence?" asked Shabnam Jan, a local resident. "The road is not just dirty—it's dangerous. Slippery mud makes accidents more likely." Locals have requested concerned authorities to look into the matter and direct the contractor not to dump silt on the road.

Meanwhile, an official told KNO that they have already taken cognizance of the issue and debris will be cleared while no slit will be allowed to put on the road while cleaning of the canal—(KNO)



BSF Foiled Infiltration Bid Of Nearly 50 Terrorists During ‘Operation Sindoor’: DIG Mand

Agencies

Jammu: The Border Security Force (BSF) foiled an infiltration bid of nearly 50 terrorists during "Operation Sindoor" on May 8, a top official of the paramilitary force said on Wednesday.

Deputy Inspector General (DIG) of the BSF, SS Mand, said, "On May 8 a major infiltration attempt involving 45-50 heavily armed terrorists was thwarted by the alert BSF personnel in Samba district."

He said, "The group, attempting to sneak into Indian Territory under the cover of ceasefire violations, was met with a fierce counter-offensive. BSF retaliated with heavy mortar fire, neutralizing enemy positions and forcing the infiltrators to retreat."

"We had prior intelligence that a large group was

attempting infiltration. Our alert troops identified them early, and within 1.5 hours of engagement, the group was repelled with heavy losses. Our forces responded with precision and intensity, degrading their bunkers and suppressing their firepower," DIG Mand said.

He said that in a decisive and calibrated military operation, the BSF destroyed multiple terrorist hideouts in Pakistan's Sialkot sector along the India-Pakistan International Border during Operation Sindoor, launched in response to the April 22 Pahalgam terror attack, which left 26 civilians, mostly tourists dead.

"Even two weeks after the operation, Pakistani Rangers have reportedly abandoned their posts along the international border, signaling the extent of damage and demoralization inflicted by Indian forces," he added.

DIG Mand praised the high morale and preparedness of BSF troops, emphasizing the leadership of officers on the frontline. He also highlighted the commendable performance of women soldiers, who operated shoulder to shoulder with their male counterparts during the high-stakes confrontation. "We are truly proud of our women troops," he said.

Following the setbacks during "Operation Sindoor," Pakistan resorted to drone warfare, attempting to target civilian and military installations in Jammu. However, India's air defense systems and BSF's anti-drone units successfully intercepted these drone incursions. On May 9, Pakistan initiated unprovoked firing along the IB and launched drones aimed at BSF camps and border villages, but all such attempts were neutralized—(KNO)

Disproportionate Assets: ACB Registers Case Against FCS&CA Storekeeper In Sopore

Observer News Service

Srinagar: Jammu and Kashmir Anti-Corruption Bureau (ACB) on Wednesday said to have registered a Disproportionate Assets case against a Storekeeper of Govt. Ration Sale Centre Seer Jagir, Sopore in Baramulla district.

A statement issued to Kashmir Observer, reads that a verification conducted by Anti-Corruption Bureau into the allegations of raising of assets disproportionate to known sources of income by Ajaz Ahmad Bhat, In-charge Storekeeper in FCS & CA department S/o Abdul Rashid Bhat R/o Tarzoo Sopore, at present Sidiq Colony Noorabad By-pass Sopore, District Baramulla revealed that accused was appointed as Depot Assistant

in CAPD Department in the year 1998 & while being posted as In-Charge Store Keeper in various places in district Baramulla during the period 01.01.2008 to 31.12.2016 has accumulated various assets in the shape of immovable or moveable properties in his own name as well as in the name of his family members .

"The assets or expenditures include, Purchased 01 kanal of land falling under survey No. 204 situated at Estate Ranbir Garh Pratap Garh, Mirgund in the year 2008. Purchased 01 Kanal of Land falling under survey No. 3099/1264 min and 3097/1265 situated at NoorabadBy-pass, Estate Nowpora Kalan Sopore in the year 2010. Purchased 07 marlas of land (Plot No. 240 A in Bay 04, size 38' x 50') situated at Rakh

Arath Housing Colony, Bemina Srinagar in the year 2014. Constructed double storey residential house at Rakhi Arth Housing Colony Bemina Srinagar on the above purchased land during 2014 to 2016. Purchased Maruti-800 bearing registration No. JK05B-6670 from Jamkash Vehicleleades Chinnad, Sangrama Baramulla in the year 2013. Purchased Scooty (Aviator) bearing Registration No. JK05D-4662 from JK Stationers, M.A Road Srinagar in the year 2013," the statement reads.

Beside this, the verification conducted also revealed that said storekeeper during check period there were huge cash deposits in his Bank accounts as well as in the bank accounts of his family members, which is subject matter of further investigations.

DC Bandipora Inaugurates Youth Club At Kudara

Observer News Service

Bandipora: In a move to empower the youth of rural areas, Deputy Commissioner (DC) Bandipora, Manzoor Ahamd Qadri on Wednesday inaugurated Youth Club at Kudara Bandipora.

The club has been established under the Nasha Mukth Bharat Abhiyan, a nationwide initiative to create a drug-free India.

The inauguration ceremony was attended by Padma Shri awardee Faisal Ali Dar, President of the Bandipora Youth Federation, and other concerned. Addressing the gathering, DC emphasized the importance of providing opportunities to the youth in the field of sports.

He said, this club will serve as a platform for the youth of this area to showcase their talent and divert their energy towards positive pursuits.

Qadri appreciated the efforts of the Bandipora Youth Federation and Ali's Sports

Academy for providing equipment and instructors to the trainees. He also urged the people of the area to take ownership of the club and ensure its success.

DC highlighted the importance of youth engagement in positive activities, stating, "Channelizing youth energy is our priority."

Padma Shri awardee, Faisal Ali Dar, who is also the brand ambassador of Nasha Mukth Bharat Abhiyan, hailed the initiative as a significant step towards empowering the youth.

"We hope that more such youth clubs will be established in the district in the future, providing opportunities to the youth to excel in the field of sports," he added.

He said Youth clubs are expected to provide a platform for the youth to engage in sports and other activities, helping to divert them from negative influences and empowering them to become positive contributors to society.

IUST Journalism Dept Holds Outreach Program At Mantaqui School



Observer News Service

Awantipora: The Department of Journalism and Mass Communication (DJMC), Islamic University of Science and Technology (IUST), carried out a community outreach initiative at Mantaqui Memorial Waqf Higher Secondary School, here, on Wednesday.

The visit aimed at familiarizing aspiring students with the wide-ranging professional avenues available in the field of media and communication. Faculty members, accompanied by students and staff from the department, interacted with school students and alumni to offer them guidance and practical exposure.

Dr. Rabia Noor, Head DJMC, provided an overview of the Four-Year Undergraduate Programme (FYUGP), structured in accordance with the National Education Policy (NEP), 2020. She underscored the programme's multidisciplinary and skill-enhancing curriculum, designed to prepare students for both employment and entrepreneurial pursuits.

In his address, Dr. Mujeeb Liyakat, Assistant Profes-

sor and Community Connect Coordinator, DJMC, enlightened students about building careers in various media sectors, including journalism, electronic media, advertising and public relations. He also held a creative ideation activity with students and highlighted the success of department alumni working with esteemed local, national and international media houses.

To provide a closer look at real-world media practices, the department shared its student-led publication, Times Echo, along with other platforms curated by students. One-on-one interactions and group discussions helped address student queries and encouraged them to consider careers in media.

Dr. Sayar Mir, Assistant Professor, engaged students in a session on visual communication and design, while Zahoor Ahmad Gilkar, Junior Technical Assistant, delivered hands-on instruction in photography.

Being in close proximity to IUST, the school held a collaborative discussion with the university team on creating academic linkages and future engagement.

22 km Of Neglect Key Shopian Road Turns Nightmare For Commuters

Observer News Service

The narrow road connecting Shopian to Aglar through Trenz, a stretch that links more than twenty villages, has become almost impossible to travel.

The 22-kilometer route, vital for daily commuting, transporting goods, and emergency services, lies in ruins.

Deep potholes and crumbling asphalt turn into pools of water when it rains, making it dangerous for vehicles and pedestrians alike.

For the people who live along this road — in villages like Trenz, Chitragam, Pahnno, and Turkwangam — the

road's condition isn't just an inconvenience. It has become a barrier.

During the rainy season, some villages are nearly cut off, making it harder to reach hospitals, schools, and markets. Local farmers struggle to move their produce on time, and during harvest season, traffic jams choke the road for hours near the IGC Lassipora area, where vehicles barely inch forward.

The situation has drawn the attention of lawmakers. In the most recent Jammu and Kashmir Assembly session, several elected representatives raised the issue, press-

ing for immediate repairs.

The Minister for Roads and Buildings and the Chief Minister assured the house that the work would begin once the weather improved. But with summer already here, there has been no sign of repair crews or equipment on the road.

Imran Dar, who lives in Trenz, said, "Every election we hear promises about fixing this road. Every year, it just gets worse. Ambulances avoid this route, school buses take longer detours, and farmers lose precious time transporting their crops. How much longer do we have to wait?"

‘Land Mafia Looting Karewas From Sholipora To Khansahib’

Agencies

Budgam: In a blatant violation of environmental laws and the Land Revenue Act of 1996, large-scale illegal excavation of Karewas is reportedly taking place from Sholipora to Khansahib in Central Kashmir's Budgam district. Locals have accused the Land Mafia' of looting the mineral-rich soil while the authorities turn a blind eye.

Locals have taken to social media to express their anger, tagging the District Mineral Officer Budgam and questioning the administration's silence on the matter. They allege that despite repeated appeals, no concrete action has been taken to stop

the illegal activity.

"This is not just land theft, it's an environmental disaster in the making. These Karewas are a natural heritage and crucial for horticulture and agriculture. Their destruction will have long-term consequences," said a concerned resident of Khansahib.

Environmentalists have also raised alarm, saying that the unregulated digging has already caused irreversible damage to soil fertility and the local ecosystem.

Locals allege that heavy machinery is being used to dig out earth from the Karewas, which is then sold for construction and landfilling purposes, violating multiple sections of the J&K Land Rev-



This is not just land theft, it's an environmental disaster in the making. These Karewas are a natural heritage and crucial for horticulture and agriculture. Their destruction will have long-term consequences

enue Act and environmental protection laws.

Despite visible destruction and public outcry, the district administration, particularly the Geology and Mining Department, is yet to act decisively. Calls are growing louder for immediate intervention and strict legal action against those involved.

"If the authorities continue to remain inactive, the day is not far when these fertile plateaus will vanish, leaving behind only dust and devastation," a local activist warned.

Concerned locals from Budgam have demanded a halt to the illegal mining and strict enforcement of existing laws to safeguard the fragile Karewa ecosystem. [KN7].

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KO VIEW

Why a Newspaper
Still Matters

In today’s digital age, where information is abundant and misinformation is even more pervasive, the role of a newspaper remains critical. More so, with the rise of social media, which has brought new challenges to the credibility and reliability of public discourse. In this environment, professionally produced journalism, grounded in fact, accountability, and editorial scrutiny has become more necessary than ever.

Kashmir Observer was launched in March 1997, at a time of deep uncertainty and political upheaval. Journalism in Kashmir, then and now, operates under extraordinary constraints. The region’s turbulent history has often left little space for independent, balanced reporting. Despite this, we began publication with a clear editorial objective: to reflect the reality on the ground with integrity, depth, and independence.

We did not aim to merely report events as they occurred. We sought to explain their context, their consequences, and their underlying causes. While others, with few exceptions, focused on press statements and official hand-outs, we chose to focus on the stories behind the headlines, especially those related to the human cost of conflict, the social and economic issues affecting everyday life, and the long-term implications of political developments.

Over the past two quarter of a century, Kashmir Observer has earned its credibility the hard way, by staying committed to facts, fairness, and independence in one of the most difficult media environments in the country. From the beginning, we’ve tried to keep our reporting balanced, to give space to multiple points of view, and to publish analysis that explains rather than provokes. That’s easier said than done. In Kashmir, where resources are limited, and economic survival often depends on fragile revenue streams, independent journalism is always under strain.

The challenges for the media in Kashmir Valley are formidable. The media in the region has a particularly unenviable job to perform. The problems faced by it are both universal to the conflict situations and unique to the region. One of the major problems bedeviling the freedom of expression in the Valley is the economic sustainability of the local newspapers. Being a place with only a small private sector and little industrial presence, government advertising is a predominant source of revenue for the newspapers.

Even with these limitations, we at Kashmir Observer have tried to innovate. Our supplements and thematic pullouts—Young Kashmir, Bazar Observer, Jobs & Careers, and Khyen Chyen—were efforts to both diversify revenue and provide meaningful content to our readers. These platforms have brought attention to culture, employment, education, health, environment, and more, subjects often overlooked in the highly politicized media space.

We also recognize that the media landscape is changing. The digital space has transformed how news is consumed and shared. The shift to digital has made access to news faster, but it has also blurred the lines between fact and fiction. Anyone with a phone and an opinion can now pass it off as news. As a result, facts are often drowned out by half-truths, speculation, and loud claims with little basis. It is here that a newspaper fills in the vacuum. It doesn’t just carry information, it takes responsibility for it. It checks, verifies, and places it in context. It is this process of accountability that separates journalism from noise.. True, a newspaper is not infallible, but it is transparent, regulated, and guided by principles of journalistic ethics.

Today, a newspaper is not just a hard copy but it has also taken on a digital avatar, living across platforms such as e-paper, websites, apps, and social media handles. This digital presence has expanded the reach of traditional news organizations like Kashmir Observer. But here they are not a source of misinformation but play a crucial role in offering verified, accountable journalism. In such a cluttered, noisy environment, a newspaper’s digital presence becomes just as important as its print edition. Kashmir Observer has steadily grown into this space. Our digital edition, along with our social media platforms, now reaches millions across and beyond Jammu and Kashmir. This online reach- among the strongest in the Union Territory - gives us both a responsibility and an opportunity: to bring verified, well-sourced journalism to audiences.

As we move forward, Kashmir Observer will continue to pursue ethical journalism: that is, to report fairly, to reflect reality accurately, and to remain accountable to our readers. In an age where misinformation spreads quickly and truth becomes harder to establish, this mission is more urgent than ever. That said, the media in the union territory has been receiving government ads and also performing its job well like in the rest of the country. True, this also reflects positively on the approach of the successive governments towards the media. And it should stay that way. The alternative is the free run to misinformation and disinformation.



Kashmir’s
Investment Trap

The dream of fast profits is drawing young Kashmiris into risky investments, and into the hands of unverified market “experts.” Here’s what we need to change.

Irshad Mushtaq

In Kashmir, more and more people are talking about stocks, gold, and crude oil these days. With few stable job options, investing seems like a promising way to grow savings. But behind the hopeful stories, a silent crisis is unfolding. Many people are losing their hard-earned money. Not to the markets alone, but to the people they trust to guide them.

I’ve seen cases where investors give full control of their finances to individuals who claim to be market experts. These so-called advisors promise big returns and use technical terms that sound impressive but mean little to everyday investors.

Often, they open trading accounts not in the investor’s name, but in their own, leaving the real investor with no access or protection. When profits come, they celebrate. But when losses hit, as they often do, these advisors blame the market and vanish. The investor is left with regrets and an empty balance sheet.

This pattern is not rare. It is slowly spreading in homes across Kashmir, especially among first-time investors who want better futures but don’t know where to start.

The fix isn’t complicated. Open accounts in your name. Keep your documents updated. Never hand over your passwords or full control. Learn the basics. Read up. Ask questions. And most importantly, check if the person advising you is certified and experienced.

Investing is not gambling. It’s not magic either. It takes patience, knowledge, and caution. If more people in Kashmir take the time to understand how the market really works, we can turn this wave of loss into one of real financial growth.

Author is a Srinagar-based reputed financial advisor.



Fields of Change

The unlikely land reform that began with two men, a field diary, and a forgotten village in South Kashmir.

Mohammad Amin Mir

“
In Kashmir, land is not just property. It’s memory, history, and sometimes the only source of security a family has. To fix land records is to protect that future. That’s what these two men did.

In the folds of South Kashmir, tucked between apple orchards and old boundaries that exist more in memory than on paper, two revenue officials decided they’d had enough of waiting.

The village they worked in hadn’t seen a proper land settlement in years. Not unusual, really. Across India, especially in hilly or rural regions, land records are often a confusing mess — one that fuels family disputes, delays development, and sidelines the poor. But this patwari and girdawar, posted to a sleepy tehsil with no special funds, permissions, or staff, decided to do something rare: they rolled up their sleeves and fixed what they could.

They started small. Every Monday, Wednesday, and Friday, they set aside their routine tasks to work exclusively on this trial settlement. They issued informal notices, called in villagers with old documents and older stories, and began matching what the records said with what the ground showed.

There was no vehicle. They used their own motorcycles, carried their own measuring chains and field books, and paid for photocopies out of their own pockets. They asked for help from the local lumberdar and chowkidar, who spread the word that the officials weren’t here to penalize, just to correct.

The process was patient and physical. They walked every parcel, often accompanied by sons, grandmothers, and neighbors who had their own versions of history. In most cases, the discrepancies weren’t acts of fraud — they were the result of oral gifts, unwritten partitions, or the death of someone whose name remained on record long after they were gone. One elderly widow, for example, had been farming her

late husband’s land for years, yet her name never appeared in the official register. After a quiet field check and verification from neighbors, her name was finally entered. It was a small change, but for her, it meant access to agricultural subsidies, bank credit, and dignity.

Some cases were more tense. Disputes between brothers or cousins over half a kanal of land turned heated, with raised voices and frayed tempers. The officers didn’t act like judges. They listened, kept records, and leaned on the credibility they had built over the years. People trusted them because they had always shown up — not as superiors, but as part of the community.

They didn’t get far each day — sometimes only 5 or 6 survey numbers. But over three months, they had covered more than half the village. By six months, the entire settlement was complete. The result? Dozens of corrections made. Unrecorded possessors brought onto the books. Fewer disputes. More clarity.

And something else happened, too. The villagers began to change how they looked at the revenue system. The patwari wasn’t just a man who came around twice a year with a dusty ledger. He was someone who showed up on foot, listened, and brought the record closer to reality.

This wasn’t a project with a big launch. There were no press releases or photo ops. It was quiet work — field diaries filled in pencil, oral statements noted in margins, and boundaries walked on foot.

But this unassuming work matters. Across India, accurate land records are the bedrock of development. They determine who gets compensation when a road is built, who can ac-

cess government schemes, and who owns what. When they’re wrong — and they often are — the most vulnerable suffer.

The story of this village shows that reform doesn’t always need new laws or big technology. Sometimes it just needs a notebook, a chain, and someone willing to act. It also shows the value of local leadership. These officers didn’t wait for orders. They acted because they saw a problem and believed they could fix it.

Of course, they shouldn’t have to work this way. The system should support such initiatives. Field staff need basic things: fuel, maps, clerical help. A small budget could go a long way. So could recognition — not in the form of medals, but a letter from a senior officer that says, we saw what you did, and it mattered.

There’s also space here for digital tools — apps that help map land, collect images, tag locations. But at the core, it’s still about trust. And trust is built by people who show up and do the work, even when nobody’s watching.

In Kashmir, land is not just property. It’s memory, history, and sometimes the only source of security a family has. To fix land records is to protect that future. That’s what these two men did.

Their story is not big. But it is important. And maybe, if we pay attention, it can be the start of something bigger.

Author writes about the changing land and landscape realities of Kashmir. He can be reached at miramin354@gmail.com



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Kashmir’s Family Crisis Starts with the Elders We Ignore

Not long ago, I watched a young colleague break down in frustration. He kept repeating, “Buddha mar jata”—“If only the old man had died.”

His anger came from a small argument with his grandfather, who had stopped him from going out to play football. But those words cut deeper than the moment.

They reflected a growing truth in Kashmir: we are slowly forgetting the people who once held our families together.

In a place like ours, known for

warmth, respect and tradition, this change is painful. The family system that once protected our elders is collapsing. Extended families are breaking apart, and joint households are giving way to separate lives.

Grandparents, who once sat at the center of every gathering, now sit in silence. Some are gently ignored. Others are sent to age-old homes—an idea once unthinkable in Kashmiri culture.

The reasons are complex. Young people are buried in screens, busy schedules, and the distractions of a digital world. Parents are dealing

with their own stress: economic pressures, intergenerational conflicts, or family disputes. In many homes, the respect for age and experience has quietly faded, replaced by impatience or indifference.

This shift isn’t just social, it’s emotional. It is turning proud elders into lonely figures. According to some reports, the number of abandoned parents is rising in Kashmir. These aren’t strangers. These are people who once walked us to school, shared stories by the fire, and held our hands through life’s first lessons.

They don’t need much. Just a

little time. A cup of noon chai shared at dusk. A short talk. A memory revisited. When we take time to listen, we’re not just comforting them, we’re preserving the emotional fabric of our families. Their words carry quiet truths. Their silence carries pain.

In today’s Kashmir, where much is uncertain, one thing shouldn’t be: how we treat those who came before us. A society that forgets its elders forgets its roots.

*Sincerely,
Ayaan Saroori*

Her Name Was Zoon

Before memes and microphones, there was Zoon Dub—a 20-minute monologue that challenged power, people, and the pulse of times.



Zaheer Majeed

There was a time in Kashmir when Thursdays belonged to Zoon Dub.

At 9:15 PM sharp, everything else stopped: dinner conversations, shop-keeping, even quarrels.

Radios crackled to life across the valley, tuned religiously to what was then Radio Kashmir, Srinagar.

What followed was not just a 20-minute serial drama. It was a collective ritual.

And the plot was simple. Zoon, a village woman with wit and wisdom, offered commentary on everything from politics to patriarchy, often without naming either.

Her world was local, but her insight was universal. What elevated the show, however, was its writing. It was sharp, subversive, and steeped in Kashmiri humour.

And the magnetic voice of Shameem Banu, who played Zoon with such authenticity that listeners felt she lived next door.

The legend has it that people would even skip weddings to hear Zoon. She wasn't merely a character, she was a phenomenon.

Created by Ali Mohammad Lone, one of Kashmir's finest dramatists, Zoon Dub aired for nearly two decades, becoming the longest-running and most popular radio drama in the Valley's broadcasting history.

Its format was deceptively light. A monologue, a few interactions, but its impact was seismic.

Zoon's gentle barbs exposed corruption, critiqued bureaucracy, and challenged regressive customs, all while making listeners laugh.

The legend has it that people would even skip weddings to hear Zoon. She wasn't merely a character, she was a phenomenon.

It was satire that didn't shout, commentary that didn't preach.

The show's success was rooted in its craftsmanship. Lone's scripts were lyrical yet grounded, drawing from Kashmiri folklore, idioms, and everyday speech.

Shameem Banu's delivery turned every line into lived experience. She had no training, but her voice had gravity. She was Zoon.

At the height of its popularity, Zoon Dub rivaled television in influence, especially in rural areas where TV hadn't yet arrived. Listeners wrote letters, sent gifts, and even visited the station hoping to meet Zoon.

Teachers used her quips in classrooms. Politicians tuned in uneasily, aware they might be the next subject of her critique.

But the show's cultural dominance couldn't shield it from institutional decay. As the 1990s strife intensified, key staff

fled, and Radio Kashmir became a guarded, skeletal version of its former self.

When Shameem Banu passed away in the late 2000s, Zoon Dub died with her.

The archives still hold her recordings, but few have heard them in years. The reels—some digitized, many still fragile—gather dust behind locked doors at Radio Kashmir. There is no plan to re-air them, no public memorial for the voice that once united a people.

The tragedy is not just that Zoon Dub ended. It's that we let it vanish without a trace.

In today's Kashmir, where FM channels churn out pop playlists and podcasts cater to urban youth, Zoon Dub feels like a relic.

But its disappearance is not merely a consequence of changing tastes, it reflects a broader cultural amnesia.

The institutions that created such masterpieces are either broken or inaccessible. The drama unit that produced Zoon Dub, once hailed as the finest in India, is barely functional. Writers aren't groomed. Performers aren't supported.

And so, Zoon remains silent.

But for those who remember her, she remains vivid. A reminder of what Kashmiri storytelling once was and what it could still be.

Her laugh, her wisdom, her resilience echo in memory, even if the airwaves have forgotten.

In a valley searching for itself, perhaps it's time to turn the dial back, to Zoon Dub, and the kind of art that spoke truth with a smile.

The writer is a retired lecturer from Budgam.



Vale's Violet Ghost

It came from the edges of Europe, settled in the valley, and now grows like memory—persistent, invasive, beautiful, and slightly wild.

Sajad Hakim

Kashmir is a place where stillness grows tall. The wind carries snow in its sleeves and folds valleys into stories. Mountains keep their secrets under white veils.

And then in spring, something delicate stirs underfoot. Something old, purple, and breathing.

Rhododendron ponticum, they call it. But names, like fences, rarely matter in the wild.

Here, it's less a flower and more a fortitude. It bursts violet against the endless green.

The petals seem lit from within, as if the plant remembers a sun from another country. And perhaps it does.

It is native to faraway lands. Portugal's hills, the ancient slopes of the Caucasus. But it has found something familiar in the Kashmiri chill.

It doesn't shout. It doesn't dominate. It appears: unexpected, steady. In a place hailed as heaven, it simply grows.

The shrub rises like an oath, evergreen leaves gleaming like polished stone. Each flower unfurls with the posture of some-

thing regal and accidental.

The colours—violet, sometimes blue, sometimes bruised with shadow—gather in clusters that drip from the branches like whispered thoughts.

THE SHRUB RISES LIKE AN OATH, EVERGREEN LEAVES GLEAMING LIKE POLISHED STONE. Each flower unfurls with the posture of something regal and accidental.

Botanists call it an invasive species elsewhere, but here it is less threat, more treat.

The plant's history is thick with contradiction. Introduced to Britain in 1763 as a garden darling, it later spilled beyond its borders, seizing forests with such hunger it had to be cut back by hand, hacked at the root, its beauty a kind of blade.

In some places, even the bees avoid it. The nectar is too toxic, the welcome too wild. But Kashmir tells a differ-

ent tale. Here, it decorates the damp woods, anchors the slopes, hums in the language of the land.

It is the state flower, yes, but more than that, it is a mood, a memory of colour in a mystic landscape.

Its presence is poetry with roots. The people say it helps the forest breathe. That it sweetens the silence. That it stands as proof of nature's patience.

Its sap once soothed toothaches. Its nectar, under certain moons, becomes "mad honey", thick with a toxin that slows the heart and brightens the mind. Danger and balm held in the same stem.

That, too, is Kashmir. A place where every beauty is doubled. Where even the flowers hold their breath. Where something as small as a petal might outlive the shade.

So when you walk those slopes, and you find that violet ghost rising beside you, remember: some things bloom not because the land is gentle,

but because the heart insists on colour anyway.

Writer is a Srinagar-based botany teacher. He loves plants and poetry.

When Love Meets Addiction

He uncovered the secret, faced the pain, and chose to stand, for love and for family.

Syed Majid Gilani

Zaffar hated addiction. He'd seen it rot lives from the inside. He swore it would never touch his home. Perhaps that's why he built a life on discipline, love, and clean living in a city corner. But some battles begin where you least expect them, within your own walls.

Zaffar married Zarina with deep love and hope. They had children, and tried to raise them with care and values. But love, as he would learn, is sometimes not enough to protect a family from what hides in plain sight.

Before they were married, Zarina had picked up a habit that, to her, didn't seem dangerous at the time.

In her childhood home, chewing tobacco was as common as a cup of tea. No one questioned it. It passed from one generation to the next like a harmless ritual.

But what began as curiosity slowly turned into something stronger. And when she entered her new home with Zaffar, she carried it with her.

At first, there were only signs. A faint bitter smell, small colourful sachets tucked into strange places, tins hidden in cushions and cupboards.

Then Zaffar noticed the



change. Zarina suddenly became distant, emotionally and physically. He couldn't understand why.

He began putting the pieces together. The growing coldness. The physical signs. The denial. The lies. Zarina would brush him off, sometimes even blame unseen forces. "Someone is do-

ing black magic on us," she once said.

But one day, Zaffar found a carton with nearly sixty tins of chewing tobacco stuffed deep in Zarina's bag. His heart sank.

Hoping for help, he turned to Zarina's family. Maybe they'd speak to her, maybe they'd care. But they didn't. They waved

it off. "It's just a small habit," they said. There was no concern for Zarina's health. No talk of change. Instead, they dismissed Zaffar's pain like it was his fault. He was alone now.

And in that loneliness came a deeper fear: his children. He worried they'd start copying what they saw. He worried that

their visits to their maternal home, where the habit was so normal, would one day shape their choices too.

Zaffar couldn't say all this out loud. It would spark fights. So he stayed silent. He gently discouraged visits to Zarina's home, but she didn't understand. She took the children anyway, stayed for days. The distance between them widened.

One evening, Zaffar sat down with her. No shouting. No anger. Just a voice full of empathy and love.

"It's not just about you anymore," he said. "They watch us. If they see you do this, they might one day follow. And by then, it'll be too late."

Zarina listened. For the first time, really listened. Tears came. She remembered her own childhood, watching her elders chew tobacco without ever thinking it was wrong. Now she stood on the edge of repeating that cycle.

That night, she made a choice. She decided to quit. The days that followed were hard. Headaches. Sleepless nights. Cravings that pulled at her body. But Zaffar stood by her. He brought cardamoms and chewing gum to help with the cravings. He didn't give up. Neither did she.

The house began to change.

The air felt lighter. The children laughed more. Slowly, the habit that once lived in corners and shadows disappeared.

But fear never truly left Zaffar. Every time Zarina visited her family, he worried. Would the old habit call her back? Would she slip? He never said this out loud. He simply stayed silent, hoping she would understand.

Maybe if someone had spoken up earlier, this story would've taken a different path. Maybe if Zarina's elders hadn't treated addiction like tradition, things would've been easier.

Still, Zaffar did what many don't. He faced it. Stayed. Loved. Fought the battle most don't see.

And this story, though personal, is not rare. Across homes, across cities, these small habits, seen as harmless, grow in silence. They pass from hand to hand, room to room, generation to generation. Until someone stops it.

Zaffar did. Not with anger. But with empathy.

Syed Majid Gilani is a government officer and writer. He writes about family, values, and the deep human emotions that shape our lives. He can be reached at syedmajid6676@gmail.com.

What Does It Mean To ‘Accept’ Or ‘Reject’ All Cookies, And Which Should I Choose?

The Conversation

It's nearly impossible to use the internet without being asked about cookies. A typical pop-up will offer to either “accept all” or “reject all”. Sometimes, there may be a third option, or a link to further tweak your preferences.

These pop-ups and banners are distracting, and your first reaction is likely to get them out of the way as soon as possible – perhaps by hitting that “accept all” button.

But what are cookies, exactly? Why are we constantly asked about them, and what happens when we accept or reject them? As you will see, each choice comes with implications for your on-line privacy.

What are cookies?

Cookies are small files that web pages save to your device. They contain info meant to enhance the user experience, especially for frequently visited websites.

This can include remembering your login information and preferred news categories or text size. Or they can help shopping sites suggest items based on your browsing history. Advertis-

ers can track your browsing behaviour through cookies to show targeted ads.

There are many types, but one way to categorise cookies is based on how long they stick around.

Session cookies are only created temporarily – to track items in your shopping cart, for example. Once a browser session is inactive for a period of time or closed, these cookies are automatically deleted.

Persistent cookies are stored for longer periods and can identify you – saving your login details so you can quickly access your email, for example. They have an expiry date ranging from days to years.

What do the various cookie options mean?

Pop-ups will usually inform you the website uses “essential cookies” necessary for it to function. You can't opt out of these – and you wouldn't want to. Otherwise, things like online shopping carts simply wouldn't work.

However, somewhere in the settings you will be given the choice to opt out of “non-essential cookies”. There are three types of these: -functional cookies, related to personalising your browsing experience (such as language or region selection) -analytics cookies, which provide statistical information about how visitors use the website, and -advertising cookies, which track

information to build a profile of you and help show targeted advertisements.

Advertising cookies are usually from third parties, which can then use them to track your browsing activities. A third party means the cookie can be accessed and shared across platforms and domains that are not the website you visited.

Google Ads, for example, can track your online behaviour not only across multiple websites, but also multiple devices. This is because you may use Google services such as Google Search or YouTube logged in with your Google account on these devices.

Should I accept or reject cookies?

Ultimately, the choice is up to you.

When you choose “accept all,” you consent to the website using and storing all types of cookies and trackers.

This provides a richer experience: all features of the website will be enabled, including ones awaiting your consent. For example, any ad slots on the website may be populated with personalised ads based on a profile the third-party cookies have been building of you.

By contrast, choosing “reject all” or ignoring the banner will decline all cookies except those essential for website functionality. You won't lose access to basic features, but personalised

features and third-party content will be missing. The choice is recorded in a consent cookie, and you may be reminded in six to 12 months.

Also, you can change your mind at any time, and update your preferences in “cookie settings”, usually located at the footer of the website. Some sites may refer to it as the cookie policy or embed these options in their privacy policy.

How cookies relate to your privacy

The reason cookie consent pop-ups are seemingly everywhere is thanks to a European Union privacy law that came into effect in 2018. Known as GDPR (General Data Protection Regulation), it provides strict regulations for how people's personal data is handled online.

These guidelines say that when cookies are used to identify users, they qualify as personal data and are therefore subject to the regulations. In practice, this means: -users must consent to cookies except the essential ones -users must be provided clear info about what data the cookie tracks -the consent must be stored and documented -users should still be able to use the service even if they don't want to consent to certain cookies, and -users should be able to withdraw their consent easily.

Since a lot of website traffic is international, many sites even outside the EU choose to follow

GDPR guidelines to avoid running afoul of this privacy law.

Better privacy controls

Cookie pop-ups are tiresome, leading to “consent fatigue” – you just accept everything without considering the implications.

This defeats the purpose of informed consent.

There is another way to address your online privacy more robustly – Global Privacy Control (GPC). It's a tech specification developed by a broad alliance of stakeholders (from web developers to civil rights organisations) that allows the browser to signal privacy preferences to websites, rather than requiring explicit choices on every site.

GPC is not universally available, and it's not a legal requirement – a number of browsers and plugins support it, but broader adoption may still take time.

Meanwhile, if you're worried you may have accidentally consented to cookies you don't want, you can find an option in your browser settings to delete cookies and get back to a clean slate (be warned, this will log you out of everywhere). If you want to learn even more, the non-profit Electronic Frontier Foundation has a project called Cover Your Tracks.

‘Two-Thirds Of Job Seekers Open To New Roles Don't Know What Job Titles Sector To Look For’

Press Trust Of India

Mumbai- Even though 67 per cent of professionals interviewed are open to new opportunities, they do not know what job titles or industries to search for, a report said on Wednesday.

According to research by professional network LinkedIn, 65 per cent of professionals stated they can explain their career goals to a friend but don't know how to search for that role, and 64 per cent find job filters confusing.

"Two-thirds (67 per cent) of professionals in India say they're open to new opportunities, however, they don't know what job titles or industries to search for," the report said.

Another 74 per cent wished they could discover relevant roles they hadn't thought to search for, it said.

As job titles evolve and skills become central to hiring decisions, there is increasing demand among job seekers for easier ways to find opportunities based on their skills and goals, rather than predefined titles or keywords, it added.

The report by LinkedIn is based on inputs from over 2,001 employed and unemployed respondents aged 18-78 years between April 25, to May 6, 2025.

In Stroke Care Structured Rehabilitation Plays Crucial Role: Experts

Press Trust Of India

When a 69-year-old woman slipped into a minimally conscious state after a major stroke last year, her family began preparing for the worst.

Doctors across cities told her son, who had flown in from abroad, that her chances of recovery were slim to none. She was unresponsive, unable to move and showed only faint signs of awareness.

Today, she can sit up, track conversations and respond with gestures. It is not a miracle. It is the outcome of timely neuro-rehabilitation, scientific precision and relentless persistence.

As India marks the World Stroke Awareness Month, the incident underscores a critical yet under-addressed truth in Indian stroke care.

While emergency treatment can save lives, rehabilitation is what gives those lives meaning.

After multiple hospitals expressed helplessness, the patient was admitted to Health Care at Home (HCAH), a chain of recovery and rehabilitation hospitals.

There, she underwent a medically supervised, multidisciplinary neuro-rehabilitation programme led by specialists in Physical Medicine and Rehabilitation (PMR).

Her treatment plan included Multimodal Sensory Stimulation, Hyperbaric Oxygen Therapy (HBOT) and advanced robotic and virtual therapies designed to activate dormant neural pathways and support functional recovery, said Dr Gaurav Thukral, co-founder and chief operating officer, HCAH.



"We see too many lives plateauing after emergency care simply because structured rehabilitation is not started in time," said Dr Thukral.

"At HCAH, the PMR-led model ensures that every therapy is medically prescribed and clinically timed. Whether it is exoskeleton-based gait training, end-effector robotics, virtual reality therapy, or HBOT, these interventions require specialist oversight and infrastructure not available in standard physiotherapy settings," he added.

Dr Varun Rehani of BLK-Max Super Speciality Hospital, Delhi, said that in stroke care, urgency must also extend beyond the emergency room or ICU.

The golden 90-day window after a stroke is when the brain's neuroplasticity is at its highest. Intervening during this time can significantly influence long-term recovery, said Dr Rehani, who is a neurology consultant at hospital's Centre for Neurosciences, Advanced Aneurysm Treatment, Epilepsy,

Parkinson's Disease.

"Delaying rehabilitation risks losing that vital opportunity. Early, intensive, and scientifically guided care that includes neurostimulation and evidence-based therapies can dramatically improve outcomes," he highlighted while talking to PTI.

The woman was diagnosed with a Disorder of Consciousness (DOC), a condition often misunderstood as irreversible. Her progress aligns with emerging global and Indian evidence highlighting the role of early neuroplastic stimulation in recovery, Dr Thukral said.

Dr Arunav Sharma, associate consultant, Neurosurgery, Sir Ganga Ram Hospital, added, "Patients with impaired consciousness are frequently written off. But the brain may still retain the ability to respond if the right areas are stimulated. Through Multimodal Sensory Stimulation, we engage various senses, including touch, movement, sound, smell, taste and vision to activate dormant neural networks. This approach can open up new possibilities in neuro-recovery."

Week by week, signs of improvement emerged. The patient blinked on command.

She began to respond to voices with subtle movements. Eventually, she reached out for her son's hand, a gesture that once felt impossible.

With more than 1.8 million stroke cases annually, India is witnessing a sharp rise in post-stroke disability. Yet, structured rehabilitation, particularly when led by PMR experts, remains underutilised in most parts of the country, Dr Thukral said.

Report: World's Supply Of Critical Minerals For Clean Energy Concentrated In Fewer Countries

Associated Press

Frankfurt (Germany)- The world's sources of critical minerals are increasingly concentrated in just a few countries, most notably China, leaving the global economy vulnerable to supply cutoffs that could disrupt economies and hit consumers with higher prices, a report said Wednesday.

The Paris-based International Energy Agency's report looked at the availability of minerals and metals that may be small in quantity — but large in impact when it comes to shifting the economy away from fossil fuels toward electricity and renewable energy.

It found that for copper, lithium, cobalt, graphite and rare earth elements, the average market share of the three top producing countries rose to 86 per cent in 2024 from 82 per cent in 2020.

China is the leading refiner for 19 out of 20 strategic minerals studied in the report, and has an average share of around 75 per cent. Indonesia showed strong growth in nickel, a key component in making steel and batteries for electric vehicles.

The current trend toward export restrictions and trade disputes increases concerns, the IEA said.

"Critical mineral supply chains can be highly vulnerable to supply shocks, be they from extreme weather, a technical failure or trade disruptions," said IEA executive director Fatih Birol. "The impact of a supply shock can be far-reaching, bringing higher prices for consumers and reducing industrial competitiveness."

Birol cited the energy crisis in Europe after Russia cut off natural gas supplies over the invasion of Ukraine. Another cautionary tale is the global shortage of silicon-based computer chips during and after the pandemic, which disrupted auto production.

"The golden rule of energy security is diversification," Birol told The Associated Press in an interview. "And it goes beyond energy security, it is also economic security."

Market forces are important in developing new sources but won't be enough. "There is a need for well-designed government policies" in the form of financing and other measures, he said.

China is a massive global source of critical minerals required for a wide range of goods that includes computer chips, robots, electric autos, batteries, drones, and military equipment. It also dominates the refining and processing of many of these critical minerals, including lithium, cobalt, graphite and more.

China has placed export limits of many of these key products and tightened controls on others as President Donald Trump's trade negotiations escalate, stifling US industry and the nation's ability to find quick alternatives. Without access to China's significant reserves, US manufacturers have a harder time competing amid mounting global supply tensions.

Trump has made reducing US dependence on foreign critical minerals a core tenet of his first 100 days back in office as part of a national security and economic resilience agenda.

This goes beyond China; the Trump administration finalized a rocky deal with Ukraine granting American access to the nation's vast mineral resources earlier this month.

Trump is also looking to expedite deep-sea mining in international waters, much to the chagrin of environmental groups. He called for a boost in the domestic copper industry in a February executive order alongside other calls for the federal government to fast-track new mine permits; has reviewed a minerals proposal from Congo, a conflict-riddled nation also rich with mineral reserves; and attempted to strong-arm Greenland into providing more of its minerals to the US.

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MD & CEO Inaugurates J&K Bank’s Revamped Corporate Website

Website features upgraded interface, improved user experience to enhance customer engagement



Observer News Service

SRINAGAR- In a step that underscores its ongoing digital transformation journey, J&K Bank Wednesday launched its revamped corporate website – www.jkbank.com – with a renewed focus on user experience, accessibility and seamless functionality.

The Bank’s Managing Director and CEO Amitava Chatterjee inaugurated the upgraded digital interface formally in presence of General Managers, DGMs and other senior officers at the Bank’s Corporate Headquarters. Meanwhile, Divisional Heads, Zonal Heads and Cluster Heads also joined the proceedings through video conferencing.

Speaking on the occasion, MD & CEO Amitava Chatterjee congratulated the team behind the successful revamp of the Bank’s website. He said, “I commend the team for curating such a beautiful and thoughtfully designed website. This launch marks a significant milestone in our digital journey as the website has been re-designed to enhance customer experience across devices, while ensuring greater accessibility and transparency.”

“It reflects our commitment to remain technologically forward-looking and responsive to the evolving needs of our

customers and stakeholders,” he add.

Emphasizing that the platform should benefit both the Bank and its customers, MD said, “It must serve as a one-stop solution for customers – whether it’s for account opening, loan journeys or accessing services that form the bedrock of our customer experience.”

Further, he underlined the importance of responsive service, saying “Today’s customers expect seamless digital experiences. So, we must ensure that grievances received through the website are addressed promptly and systematically.”

Earlier, General Manager (Strategy & IT) Imtiyaz Ahmad Bhat gave a detailed overview of the new website and highlighted its key features. He stated, “The revamped website is fully compliant with regulatory requirements and has been designed to reinforce the Bank’s corporate identity while offering geo-tagged locations of our branches and ATMs. Along with enhanced navigation features, it includes a comprehensive Investor Relations Dashboard to serve our investors, provides complete product-related information for customers and has an improved feedback management system to better serve customer queries and grievances,”

Stock Markets Snap 3-Day Decline On Buying In Banking Shares; Sensex Jumps 410 Pts

Press Trust Of India

MUMBAI- Benchmark stock indices Sensex and Nifty rebounded on Wednesday, snapping their three-day falling streak on the back of buying in blue-chips HDFC Bank and ICICI Bank and a firm trend in Asian peers.

The 30-share BSE Sensex jumped 410.19 points or 0.51 per cent to settle at 81,596.63 with 24 of its constituents ending higher and six ending lower. During the day, it surged 835.2 points or 1.02 per cent to a high of 82,021.64. The NSE Nifty climbed 129.55 points or 0.52 per cent to 24,813.45.

Among Sensex firms, Bajaj Finserv rose the most by 2.02 per cent. Tata Steel, Sun Pharma, Tech Mahindra, Bajaj Finance, NTPC, Nestle, Tata Motors, Hindustan Unilever and Mahindra & Mahindra also advanced.

IndusInd Bank fell the most by 1.39 per cent. Kotak Mahindra Bank, Power Grid and ITC were among the laggards.

Moody’s Ratings said on Wednesday said India is well-positioned to deal with the negative effects of US tariffs and global trade disruptions as domestic growth drivers and low dependence on exports anchor the economy.

In a note on India, the agency



said government initiatives to boost private consumption, expand manufacturing capacity and increase infrastructure spending will help offset the weakening outlook for global demand.

The BSE midcap gauge advanced 0.90 per cent and small-cap index by 0.51 per cent.

Among sectoral indices, capital goods (1.65 per cent), realty (1.58 per cent), industrials (1.35 per cent), healthcare (0.93 per cent) and tech (0.81 per cent) were the gainers.

Consumer durables emerged as the only laggard.

As many as 2,292 stocks advanced while 1,685 declined and 138 remained unchanged on the BSE.

Among Asian markets, South Korea’s Kospi, Shanghai’s SSE Composite index and Hong Kong’s Hang Seng in settled in the positive territory while Japan’s Nikkei 225 index ended lower.

Interim Trade Deal With US Likely By July 8; India For Full Exemption From 26% Additional Tariff

Press Trust Of India

NEW DELHI- India and the US are likely to agree on an interim trade agreement before July 8 with New Delhi pushing for full exemption from the 26 per cent reciprocal tariff on domestic goods, an official said.

The US on April 2 imposed an additional 26 per cent reciprocal tariff on Indian goods but suspended it for 90 days till July 9. However, the 10 per cent baseline tariff imposed by America remains in place.

The government official said India’s endeavour to protect its sensitive sectors may entail some quota or minimum import price (MIP). Such sectors include agri goods and dairy.

Commerce and Industry Minister Piyush Goyal was in Washington earlier this week to give an impetus to trade talks. He met with US Trade Representative (USTR) Jamieson Greer and US Commerce Secretary Howard Lutnick.

In a post on X, Goyal said that he held good discussions with the US Commerce Secretary towards expediting the first tranche of India-US bilateral trade agreement.

“Talks are moving positively. Before July 8, we are looking at concluding an interim deal before the first tranche. It will include goods, non-tariff barriers, some areas of services also like digital. We are trying that the 26 per cent



additional duty and the 10 per cent baseline tariff should not be there for India,” the official said, adding that India is seeking concessions for its labour-intensive sectors such as textiles and leather.

At present, the Trump administration requires approval from the US Congress to bring tariffs below the MFN (most favoured nation) rates. But the administration has the authority to remove the reciprocal tariffs imposed on a number of countries, including India.

India may look at certain commitments from the US on the duty concessions for its labour-intensive sector in the first tranche of the proposed bilateral trade agreement (BTA). Both countries have fixed a deadline to conclude the first phase of the pact by fall (September-October) of this year to more than double bilateral trade to USD 500 billion by 2030.

The minister-level meetings were followed by the

deliberations between chief negotiators of the two countries, which will continue until May 22.

Officials from New Delhi and Washington are looking to take advantage of the 90-day tariff pause window to advance the talks. The US has suspended the additional 26 per cent tariffs on India till July 9. It was announced on April 2 to bridge the widening trade deficit.

To boost bilateral trade, India is seeking duty concessions for labour-intensive sectors like textiles, gems and jewellery, leather goods, garments, plastics, chemicals, shrimp, oil seeds, chemicals, grapes, and bananas in the proposed pact with America.

On the other hand, the US wants duty concessions in sectors like certain industrial goods, automobiles (electric vehicles in particular), wines, petrochemical products, dairy, and agriculture items such as apples, tree nuts and GM (genetically modified) crops.



TALKS ARE MOVING POSITIVELY. Before July 8, we are looking at concluding an interim deal before the first tranche. It will include goods, non-tariff barriers, some areas of services also like digital. We are trying that the 26 per cent additional duty and the 10 per cent baseline tariff should not be there for India,"

India, EU Looking For Early Harvest Trade Agreement By July: Official

Press Trust Of India

NEW DELHI- Negotiations for a proposed trade pact between India and the 27-nation European Union are progressing at a faster pace and both the sides are looking at concluding the talks for an early harvest trade agreement by July this year, a government official said on Wednesday.

The early harvest or an interim trade agreement would include issues such as intellectual property rights (IPRs), government procurement, tariff, and non-tariff barriers, the official said.

An Indian official team from the commerce ministry is visiting Brussels this week for the next round of negotiations on the trade agreement with the European Union (EU). This visit comes in the backdrop of recently-concluded eleventh round of talks between chief negotiators of both the sides on May 16 here in the national capital.

“We are looking for an early harvest. We are trying to do it as early as possible...targeting by July for early harvest,” the



official added.

The two sides have agreed to conclude the agreement in two phases on account of the uncertain global trade environment, particularly due to the US tariff actions under President Donald Trump.

India has followed the practice of negotiating trade pacts in two phases with Australia.

The early harvest pact would lead to a full fledged free trade agreement.

Besides demanding significant duty cuts in automobiles and medical devices, the EU wants tax reduction in products like wines, spirits, meat, poultry and a strong intellectual property regime.

Indian goods’ exports to the EU, such as ready-made garments, pharmaceuticals, steel, petroleum products, and elec-

trical machinery, can become more competitive if the pact gets concluded successfully.

In June 2022, India and the 27-nation EU bloc resumed negotiations for a comprehensive free trade agreement, an investment protection agreement and a pact on geographical indications (GIs) after a gap of over eight years.

It stalled in 2013 due to differences over the level of opening up of the markets.

On February 28, Prime Minister Narendra Modi and the European Commission President agreed to seal a much-awaited free trade deal by the end of this year.

The India-EU trade pact negotiations cover 23 policy areas or chapters, including Trade in Goods, Trade in Services, Investment, Sanitary and Phytosanitary Measures, Technical Barriers to Trade, Trade Remedies, Rules of Origin, Customs and Trade Facilitation, Competition, Trade Defence, Government Procurement, Dispute Settlement, Intellectual Property Rights, Geographical Indications, and Sustainable Development.

PM To Unveil India’s First 9000 HP Electric Locomotive On May 26

Press Trust Of India

AHMEDABAD- Prime Minister Narendra Modi will unveil India’s first 9,000 horsepower locomotive engine, take part in a roadshow and multiple events during his two-day visit to Gujarat starting from May 26, state government officials said on Wednesday.

He will participate in a host of events in Dahod, Bhuj, Vadodara and Gandhinagar after arriving at the Vadodara airport at around 10am on Monday, they said.

The Vadodara Municipal Corporation has planned a one-km-long roadshow near the airport to greet the PM and congratulate him for the success of Operation Sindoor, said VMC standing committee chairperson Sheetal Mistry.

Modi will stay at the airport for around 15 minutes and leave for his main event of the day in Dahod district.

“People of Vadodara, including women, will stand on both sides of the roadshow route near the airport to express their gratitude to the PM for the huge success of Operation Sindoor,” Mistry told reporters.

At Dahod, the PM will visit a Railway locomotive manufacturing unit and inaugurate India’s first 9,000 horsepower locomotive engine made at the facility, which has been set up with an investment of Rs 20,000 crore, said a release by the Gujarat government.

The Railway factory in Dahod, established under the PPP model, will produce 1,200 engines over the next 10 years.



A key feature of these engines is their ability to carry cargo weighing up to 4,600 tonnes. The locomotive engines will be equipped with air conditioning and a toilet facility for drivers, it said.

Additionally, an advanced cover system has been installed to enhance safety and prevent accidents. The 9,000 HP, 6-axle electric engine will have an average speed of 75 km per hour, said the release.

From the factory, the PM will reach an open ground near Kharod village in Dahod district to address a gathering, it said.

From Dahod, the PM will travel to Kutch district to address a public meeting at Mirzapar Road near Bhuj town. Later, he will visit the revered Mata Ashapura Temple at Mata No Madh in Lakhpat taluka of Kutch, according to the release.

He will reach state capital Gandhinagar by evening and stay overnight at Raj Bhavan, it said.

On May 27, the PM will inaugurate as well as lay foundation stones for various development projects at an event to be held at Mahatma Mandir Convention Centre in Gandhinagar before leaving for New Delhi, said the release.

Govt To Decide On Renewing Indigo's Leases Of Turkish Airlines Planes: Indigo CEO

Press Trust Of India

NEW DELHI- IndiGo is fully compliant with all regulatory frameworks and regulations for operating flights with planes leased from Turkish Airlines, IndiGo CEO Pieter Elbers said on Wednesday and also mentioned that it is for the government to decide on the renewal of the leases.

The comments also come against the backdrop of aviation watchdog BCAS, on May 15, revoking the security clearance for Turkish company Celebi Airport Services India Pvt Ltd in the “interest of national security”, days after Turkiye backed Pakistan and condemned India’s strikes on terror camps in the neighbouring country.

Some online travel portals and associations have also issued advisories asking people not to visit Turkiye.

IndiGo is operating direct flights to Istanbul with two leased Boeing 777 aircraft from Turkish Airlines having over 500 seats each. It also offers codeshare seats to more than 40 points in Europe and the US through the codeshare partnership with the Turkish carrier.

To a query regarding renewal of the leases for the two aircraft, Elbers said it is up to the government to decide.

“It is important to recognise that the operation to Istanbul



is taking place in the context of the Air Service Agreement (ASA) between India and Turkiye. IndiGo is fully compliant with all regulatory frameworks and regulations which are there. We have thousands actually of Indian customers booked mostly beyond Istanbul,” he said while discussing the airline’s fourth quarter and 2024-25 full year financial results.

The current leases for the two Turkish Airlines planes are ending this month. Elbers said the renewal of the leases is up to the government to decide and added that, “we have this operations in place for sometime now”.

In response to a question on the possible scenario of the leases not getting renewed, he said that as a good airline, IndiGo makes sure that there are back plans in case of changes.

The ASA allows for carriers of Turkiye and India to operate a total of 56 flights per week between the two countries -- 14 flights from India to Turkiye and 14 flights from Turkiye to India each by Indian carriers and the same number by airlines of Turkiye.

CCPA Issues Notice To Uber Over 'Advance Tip' Feature For Faster Service

Press Trust Of India

NEW DELHI- Consumer protection watchdog CCPA has issued a notice to ride-hailing platform Uber for allegedly “forcing or nudging” users to pay advance tips for faster service.

“The practice of ‘Advance Tip’ is deeply concerning,” Consumer Affairs Minister Pralhad Joshi said in a social media post.

“Forcing or nudging users to pay a tip in advance, for faster service is unethical and exploitative. Such actions fall under unfair trade practices,” the minister wrote.

Joshi emphasised that tipping is meant as a token of appreciation, given after service completion, not as an entitlement beforehand.

Taking cognizance of the issue, the minister directed the Central Consumer Protection Authority (CCPA) to investigate the matter.

“Today CCPA has issued a notice to Uber in this regard, seeking explanation from the platform,” he posted.

Gold Rallies Rs 1,910 To Rs 98,450/10 G Amid Global Uncertainty

Press Trust Of India

NEW DELHI- Gold prices rebounded by Rs 1,910 to Rs 98,450 per 10 grams in the national capital as rising global uncertainties triggered a fresh wave of safe-haven buying.

According to the All India Sarafa Association, the precious metal of 99.9 per cent purity had closed at Rs 96,540 per 10 grams on Tuesday.

Gold of 99.5 per cent purity appreciated by Rs 1,870 to Rs 98,000 per 10 grams (inclusive of all taxes) on Wednesday from the previous day’s close of Rs 96,130 per 10 grams.

“A weak dollar supported gold prices. Investors are also evaluating sovereign risk after Moody’s downgraded the US credit rating due to fiscal deficit concerns,” Abans Financial Services’ Chief Executive Officer Chintan Mehta said.

The downgrade has heightened uncertainty around the long-term stability of US finances, prompting investors to seek safe-haven assets like gold, Mehta said.

In addition, silver prices climbed Rs 1,660 to Rs 99,160 per kg (inclusive of all taxes) on Wednesday. The white metal had finished at Rs 97,500 per kg in the previous market close. On the global front, spot gold rose USD 21.79 or 0.66 per cent to USD 3,311.76 per ounce.

“Gold edged higher on Wednesday reclaiming the USD 3,300 level amid rising geopolitical tensions and US fiscal concerns,” Saumil Gandhi, Senior Research Analyst of Commodities at HDFC Securities, said.

Meanwhile, investor jitters stemming from ongoing uncertainty regarding tariff policies and an upcoming crucial vote on President Donald Trump’s major tax reforms are leading to caution, with the US dollar weakening and gold rising, Gandhi added.

Kotak Securities’ AVP-Commodity Research Kaynat Chainwala said rising geopolitical tensions following reports of a potential Israeli strike on Iranian nuclear facilities supported gold prices.

Domestic Air Passenger Traffic Grows 8% To 143.16 Lakh In April

Press Trust Of India

NEW DELHI- Indian airlines flew 143.6 lakh passengers on domestic routes in April, 8.45 per cent more as compared to the year-ago period, amid rising air traffic demand.

In terms of domestic market share, IndiGo topped the list with 64.1 per cent of the pie, followed by Air India Group (27.2 per cent), Akasa Air (5 per cent) and Spicejet (2.6 per cent), according to the latest data from the Directorate General of Civil Aviation (DGCA).

“Passengers carried by domestic airlines during January-April 2025 were 575.13 lakh as against 523.46 lakh during the corresponding period of the previous year thereby registering an annual growth of 9.87 per cent and monthly growth of 8.45 per cent,” DGCA said in its monthly report.

Domestic air passenger traffic was at 143.16 lakh in April compared to 132 lakh in the same period a year ago.

In terms of On Time Performance (OTP) of scheduled domestic airlines -- computed for the four metro airports at Bengaluru, Delhi, Hyderabad, and Mumbai -- IndiGo’s OTP stood at 80.8 per cent while that of Akasa Air and Air India Group was 77.5 per cent and 72.4 per cent, respectively.

The OTP of Spicejet was at the lowest at 60 per cent, as per the data.

DoT Introduces 'Financial Fraud Risk Indicator' To Fight Cyber Fraud

Press Trust Of India

NEW DELHI- The Telecom Department has introduced the ‘Financial Fraud Risk Indicator (FRI)’ that enables enhanced intelligence sharing with banks, UPI service providers and financial institutions, marking a major step towards tackling cyber fraud and financial crime, an official release said on Wednesday.

This will enhance cyber protection and validation checks in case of mobile numbers flagged with this tool, when digital payment is proposed to be made to such numbers.

FRI allows for swift, targeted, and collaborative action against suspected frauds in both telecom and financial domains, the release said.

“...Department of Telecommunications (DoT) has announced sharing of ‘Financial Fraud Risk Indicator (FRI)’ with stakeholders -- an output from a multi-dimensional analytical tool developed as part of the Digital Intelligence Platform (DIP) to empower financial institutions with advance actionable intelligence for cyber fraud prevention,” it said.

Explaining the ‘Financial Fraud Risk Indicator’, it said this is a risk-based metric that classifies a mobile number to have been associated with ‘Medium’, ‘High’, or ‘Very High’ risk of financial fraud.

IGP Kashmir Chairs Security Review Meeting At PCR

Observer News Service

Srinagar: Inspector General of Police (IGP) Kashmir Zone V.K Birdi took stock of the arrangements for SANJY 2025, Muharram and other upcoming events during a meeting held at the Conference Hall of Police Control Room Kashmir on Wednesday.

The meeting was attended by DIG CKR Rajiv Panday, DIG NKR Maqsood Ul Zaman, DIG SKR Javid Iqbal Matoor, SSP PCR Kashmir, all district SSSP of Kashmir Zone and other officers, a police spokesman said in a statement.

At the onset of the meeting,

participating officers briefed the chair on the security arrangements planned for the smooth and peaceful conduct of Shri Amarnath Ji Yatra-2025, Muharram, and other significant events.

The officers shared valuable insights from past experiences, emphasizing the need for robust communication channels, seamless coordination among forces, and advanced real-time monitoring systems. Discussions focused on strengthening the existing security infrastructure, enhancing surveillance tactics, and optimizing personnel deployment along the key locations.

IGP Kashmir conducted a detailed

review of the security framework and directed the officers to ensure the installation of CCTV cameras at all strategic locations. He emphasized the need for adequate manpower deployment at each camp and sensitive areas to maintain a secure environment.

V K Birdi also stressed the importance of intelligence-driven operations, timely threat assessments, and proactive measures to mitigate potential risks, ensuring the safety of all participants.

The meeting concluded with a strong commitment from all the officers to ensure smooth and peaceful conduct of the forthcoming events.

TMC Delegation Calls On J&K CM

Will Meet People Affected By Shelling Along LoC

Press Trust Of India

Srinagar: A five-member delegation of Trinamool Congress called on Jammu and Kashmir Chief Minister Omar Abdullah at his residence after arriving here on Wednesday to meet people affected by the recent cross-border shelling near the LoC.

The Indian Army struck nine terror hubs in Pakistan and Pakistan-occupied Kashmir (PoK) under its Operation Sindoor in response to the April 22 terror attack in Pahalgam that killed 26 people.

The subsequent retaliation by Pakistan, which included cross-border artillery shelling, killed 27 civilians and injured over 70 people in

the Jammu region, particularly the Poonch sector.

The Trinamool Congress (TMC) delegation called on Abdullah at his residence at Gupkar here this evening.

Speaking to reporters outside the CM's residence, TMC Rajya Sabha MP Sagarika Ghose said the delegation from West Bengal have come to Kashmir on "a journey of solidarity, empathy and sympathy".

"It is the border villages of J-K which have suffered the most. They have suffered due to the shelling from Pakistan. All communities have suffered and the suffering of the border villages, where lives have been lost, where livelihoods have been

lost, have been ignored by the mainstream media," she said.

No one is talking about the suffering of Poonch, Rajouri and the villages next the Line of Control, Ghose said.

The delegation is likely to visit the areas near the Line of Control (LoC) in the valley.

"We have come to tell the people of these border villages that you are not alone. We are standing with you, we will always stand with you and we will bring your plight to the notice of the mainstream media.

"We will work towards rebuilding your lives, we are here for you and we will always be with you in your hour of need," she added.

FROM THE FRONT PAGE

Kashmir Braces

especially for children, the elderly, and those with health conditions. The soaring temperatures have sparked concern among farmers and orchardists, who fear the heat could damage crops if the spell extends.

"This is not typical weather for May in Kashmir. The temperatures we are expecting in the coming days are more characteristic of peak summer in July," a senior official at the Meteorological Department said.

The department has advised people to stay hydrated, avoid direct sun exposure during peak hours, and take preventive measures to reduce the impact of the heatwave.

While Jammu is already accustomed to high temperatures during this season, the unusual heat in the Kashmir Valley, traditionally much cooler, has taken many by surprise.

Authorities are monitoring the situation and have urged people to follow official weather updates and safety advisories over the coming days. (inputs from KNS)

Jammu Hottest

Jammu city has recorded the hottest day of the season at 41.4 degrees Celsius, while Qazigund, a gateway of Kashmir, has also recorded the season's highest day temperature at 33.2 degrees Celsius.

Several other areas also witnessed scorching heat with Pahalgam recording a day temperature of 25.8 degrees Celsius, Kupwara at 30.0 degrees Celsius, Kokernag at 31.5 degrees Celsius and Gulmarg, a famous ski resort, at 23.2 degrees Celsius.

However, in Jammu division, Banihal station recorded a day temperature of 30.4 degrees Celsius, Batote at 30.1 degrees Celsius, Katra at 36.8 degrees Celsius and Bhaderwah at 31.3 degrees Celsius.

Director Meteorological department (MeT), Dr Mukhtar Ahmad said the rise in maximum temperature by 1 to 2 degrees Celsius is expected with the possibility of a heatwave at scattered places of Kashmir division till May 23.

He said that generally hot & dry weather is expected with the possibility of a brief spell of light rain at isolated places mainly towards late afternoon till May 26.

Ahmad said that from May 27 to 31, the weather would remain generally hot & dry with the possibility of a brief spell of light rain and thundershower at scattered places.

Meanwhile, the MeT in its advisory said that a rise in maximum temperature by 1-2 degrees Celsius is expected with possibility of a heatwave at scattered places of Kashmir division till May 23 and fall by 2 to 3 degrees Celsius thereafter.

Also, it reads that a rise in maximum temperature is expected by 2-3 degrees Celsius with the possibility of a heatwave over Jammu division till 26th May.

"Possibility of thunder, gusty winds at isolated places towards late afternoon can't be ruled out," the advisory reads.

Enemy Brought

Pakistan-occupied Kashmir as part of Operation Sindoor. The LG was accompanied by Chief Secretary Atal Dulloo.

During the India-Pakistan military conflict, the Jammu region, including Poonch, witnessed heavy artillery shelling and drone attacks. As many as 27 people were killed and 70 injured between May 8 and 10.

Addressing the troops, Sinha said the 140 crore people of India are proud of the valour of the armed forces. This sentiment has further strengthened after Operation Sindoor, he said.

The whole world knows the armed forces destroyed terror camps in Pakistan, the LG said.

Within days, Sinha said, the enemy was brought to its knees and it started reaching out to the world.

"We are the world's fifth-largest economy and will soon be the fourth-largest. Our neighbour is trying to nurture terrorism with the loans it takes,"

he said, hitting out at Pakistan.

Announces Job

Home Minister Amit Shah, is committed to ensuring proper rehabilitation, enhanced border infrastructure, and security for the residents of border areas.

We are significantly expanding our efforts to construct individual and community bunkers across Jammu Kashmir, under the Security Related Expenditure (SRE)," the Lieutenant Governor said.

During his visit, the Lieutenant Governor paid obeisance at Gurudwara Dera Santpura Nangali Sahib and interacted with the citizens.

He lauded the residents of Poonch, civil society members and all the communities for their display of courage and social harmony.

"Pakistan had shown its cowardice by targeting the sacred Gurudwara Dera Santpura Nangali Sahib. In its despicable act, the terrorist country Pakistan had also targeted temples and mosques. By firing and heavy shelling on our sacred sites, terror state Pakistan had tried to damage our social fabric."

I salute the people of Poonch. Their courage provided moral strength to our brave Soldiers. We are proud of our citizens, Sikh Community, who stand united against the adversary's conspiracy to divide the society on religious lines," the Lieutenant Governor said.

The Lieutenant Governor also reiterated the resolve of the Government of India, J&K Administration and Armed Forces for exemplary action against terrorism and those trying to divide the people on religious and sectarian lines.

He said the people are witnessing that under the leadership of the Prime Minister, every section of society is strengthened and India's unbeatable prowess is shining globally.

Later, the Lieutenant Governor visited the Dungus area affected due to shelling, and also took stock of the situation during a meeting with senior administrative and district officials at Poonch.

The Lieutenant Governor directed necessary measures to ensure restoration of all essential services and supplies and submit an Action Taken Report (ATR) to the Divisional Commissioner's Office and the Chief Secretary's Office.

He further instructed for taking comprehensive assessment for requirements and construction of bunkers, upgradation of medical services at District hospital and strengthening Civil Defence system.

The Lieutenant Governor also appreciated the local administration and security forces for their prompt and responsive measures for the safety and rehabilitation of affected families. The Lieutenant Governor was accompanied by Chief Secretary, Atal Dulloo; IG Jammu, Bhim Sen Tuti; Divisional Commissioner, Ramesh Kumar; Deputy Commissioner Poonch, QDVikas Kundal and other senior officials.

JKBOSE Notifies

The board further said, "Previous academic calendar is restored from the current year (2025) in Jammu & Kashmir and Ladakh Union Territories."

"The Academic session in case of Kashmir division and winter Zone areas of Jammu division and U.T of Ladakh shall be 2024-25, entailing conduct of the Annual Regular Examinations of gth, 10th, 11th and 12th classes in October-November 2025," it reads.

It also said that the Academic Session in case of summer zone of Jammu division shall be

2025-26, entailing conduct of annual regular examination of 9th,10th, 11h and 12th classes in March-April 2026.

India Expels

It said the Charge d'Affaires of the Pakistan High Commission was issued a demarche to this effect.

"He was asked to strictly ensure that none of the Pakistani diplomats or

officials in India misuse their privileges and status in any manner," the MEA said in a statement.

On May 13, India expelled a Pakistani official for allegedly indulging in espionage.

NC Working

demand for immediate restoration of statehood, appeal for sustained peace and dialogue, commitment to manifesto promises and condemnation of targeted harassment across the country.The resolutions include:

Condemnation of violence and tribute to martyrs

The Working Committee strongly condemned the horrific Baisaran attack that claimed the lives of 26 innocent individuals, including a young Kashmiri, Syed Adil Hussain Shah. It also denounced the continued cross-border shelling that took the lives of 23 innocent civilians

The Committee expressed deep sorrow and solidarity with the bereaved families. It also paid heartfelt tributes to the Working Committee members and party activists who have passed away since the last meeting, acknowledging their invaluable contributions and unwavering dedication.

Reaffirmation of commitment to special status

The Working Committee unanimously reaffirmed its unwavering commitment to the restoration of Jammu and Kashmir's special status. The Committee reiterated that this is central to the aspirations and dignity of the people and must be addressed without further delay, and we will continue to fight for its restoration.

Demand for immediate restoration of statehood

The Working Committee also urged the Government of India to restore full statehood to Jammu and Kashmir immediately, as promised on the floor of Parliament and repeatedly echoed in the public domain and also as committed by the constitution bench of the Supreme Court.

Appeal for sustained peace and dialogue

The Committee welcomed the announcement of a ceasefire and called upon both countries to uphold peace and explore long-lasting, peaceful solutions to end violence.

Commitment to manifesto promises

The Working Committee reiterated the party's unwavering commitment to the promises made in its manifesto. It reaffirmed its resolve to continue the political and constitutional struggle for justice, peace, and the rights of the people of Jammu and Kashmir through democratic means.

The Working Committee appreciated the spontaneous and overwhelming support of the people of Jammu and Kashmir in unequivocally condemning the Baisaran attack in Pahalgam. It also acknowledged the compassion and hospitality extended to tourists who found themselves stranded in the Valley during challenging circumstances.

The Committee called upon the Government of India to recognise and respect this powerful expression of solidarity and not squander the once-in-a-lifetime opportunity extended by the people of Jammu and Kashmir. It further cautioned that arbitrary arrests, harassment of youth, targeted use of bulldozers, and intimidation of legitimate media voices will only alienate the very people who have stood firmly for peace and against violence.

Condemnation of Targeted Harassment Across the Country: The Working Committee expressed serious concern over the reports of harassment faced by students, traders, and residents from Jammu and Kashmir in various parts of the country. It strongly condemned their selective targeting in the aftermath of recent events.

The Committee called upon all state governments to ensure the safety, dignity, and protection of the lives and property of all people from Jammu and Kashmir living or working in other parts of India—(KNO)

Waqf Islamic

Any stay of the provision on abolition of unregistered "waqf by user" properties would defeat the purpose of the law which has been enacted to remedy the mischief like usurpation of government land, Mehta added.

"The Centre is the custodian of properties on behalf of 14 crore citizens," he said, "and nobody has the right over government land."

Mehta said, "There is a Supreme Court judgment which says the government can save the property if it belongs to the government and has been declared as waqf."

Contesting the argument of government officers arbitrarily claiming land as government property from now on and override waqf status, he called it "misleading and false."

On the point of an officer above the rank of a district collector deciding the dispute on the claim over an alleged waqf property, he said officer wouldn't finally determine the property's ownership.

Mehta said the eviction or takeover of property could only occur after due process through the Waqf Tribunal proceedings (under Section 83) and subsequent appeals.

The possession would continue with the waqf until the issue was fully adjudicated, he said.

The SG cited the extensive deliberations of the Joint Parliamentary Committee, which held 96 sittings, received 97 lakh representations, and incorporated feedback from 25 Waqf Boards and several state governments.

He said the bill was not rushed or passed mechanically but involved thorough clause-by-clause scrutiny.

"There has been an unprecedented level of consultation. It's not the case that this was done behind closed doors. Many of the suggestions made by stakeholders were either incorporated or reasonably rejected," Mehta added.

The law officer also drew bench's attention to the "historic misuse" of waqf by user to claim ownership of public or private lands without documentation.

"This menace has existed since 1923. The first legislation dealing with waqf property was introduced then to curb this very issue," he said.

On the question whether the law infringed upon Articles 25 and 26 (freedom of religion and management of religious affairs) of the Constitution, he said though waqf was an Islamic concept, it did not constitute an essential religious practice.

Unlike Hindu, Jain religious trusts which deal with religious aspects, temples, priests and their management, waqf may include schools, colleges, etc., Mehta said.

Doctrine of essential religious practices, he added, as articulated by Dr B R Ambedkar must be satisfied before any constitutional protection under Article 25 can be claimed.

"Unless it is shown that waqf is an essential part of Islam, the rest of the arguments cannot succeed," Mehta said. The Centre opposed the claim that the law enabled mass takeover of waqf properties.

"There is no wholesale capturing. The designated officer cannot take possession. At best, the revenue entry changes, which itself is subject to challenge and appeal. Title disputes will continue to be resolved in courts," he said.

Referring to case laws, he said the government could protect public lands even if erroneously entered as waqf, and that mere entry in the waqf register did not confer ownership.

Mehta said no affected parties moved the court and "it is nobody's case that Parliament does not have the competence to pass this legislation".

He said the amended law did not allow waqf by user prospectively.

On the issue over non-Muslims being appointed in the Central Waqf Council and the state waqf boards, he said in the CWC a maximum of four non-Muslims of the total 22 members were allowed.

In state boards, of the total 11 members, a maximum of three non-Muslim members -- except if the ex-officio members was non Muslim then two non Muslims -- could be appointed.

"Non-Muslims can also be aggrieved

or affected or beneficiary and this is the reason that non-Muslims have been included," he said. The hearing would continue on Thursday.

IndiGo Flight

"IndiGo flight 6E2142 en route Delhi to Srinagar experienced bad weather (hail storm), emergency reported by Pilot to AITC SXR (Srinagar)," an official of the Airport Authority of India said in Srinagar.

He said the flight landed safely at Srinagar at 6.30 p.m.

"All Aircrew and 227 passengers are safe and the flight is declared AOG by the Airline," he added. 'Aircraft on ground' (AOG) refers to a plane that is grounded and unable to fly due to technical issues.

No More Gmail

authorized to speak publicly. "We've known for a while that our systems were outdated. Now we're finally being told to fix them." The circular spells out six main actions every department must take, with strict timelines and little room for error.

First, any department still running an official website on a private domain—like ".com" or ".org"—must move it to a government-authorized domain such as ".gov.in" or ".jk.gov.in". Websites hosted without prior approval will be taken down. The National Informatics Centre (NIC), the central agency overseeing IT in government, will help with the transition.

Second, all official communication must now happen through NIC-issued government emails. Any mail sent from private accounts—Gmail, Yahoo, or otherwise—will be ignored. This rule is intended to clamp down on spoofed messages and unauthorized data sharing.

Third, departments are required to conduct thorough audits of their IT systems. This includes checking if the computers use licensed software, updated antivirus protection, and safe network practices. The use of cracked software and unsupported operating systems has been explicitly banned.

Fourth, IT staff across all departments will be required to undergo training sessions. These will cover cybersecurity basics, legal responsibilities under India's IT laws, and protocols issued by the country's cyber emergency response agency.

Fifth, government offices must now stick to standardized guidelines when buying new technology. That means no more outdated or unverified tools, a practice that has left many departments with incompatible or vulnerable systems in the past.

Finally, every department must submit a detailed compliance report within 15 days. Those who fail to do so, or are found in violation later, risk disciplinary action.

This isn't the first time states/union territories have tried to modernize their digital security frameworks. But such orders often get delayed or diluted during implementation. Whether this one sticks will depend on how seriously departments take the threat—and how tightly it's enforced.

Kashmir's unique situation adds urgency. With a history of political instability, internet disruptions, and increased reliance on digital governance, the region has little room for error when it comes to cybersecurity.

Some experts welcomed the changes, especially the mandate to use government-approved domains and emails. "Those two steps alone can reduce the risk of phishing drastically," said a cybersecurity analyst based in Srinagar. "A lot of attacks succeed simply because people think they're clicking on a legitimate link or replying to an official email."

Still, there are concerns. Many departments, especially in rural districts, lack full-time IT teams or even stable internet connections. Bringing their systems up to date in just two weeks could be an uphill task. In some cases, departments still run on decade-old machines, and official communication is done through personal WhatsApp groups and Gmail addresses.

"There's no denying this was

Court Denies

the nexus between the accused persons and other with respect to financial misconduct," Principal Sessions Judge Ganderbal Abdul Nasir said, adding, "there is chance of emerging evidence to see whether the accused are involved in the commission of Money Laundering offences or not, and if it is so established against the accused, it may have a very serious and severe effect on the society and national interest as well."

The court said that it has been found from the record submitted by the police that the accused have indulged in monetary transactions amounting to Rs. 53,21,72,049 and the investigating agency has resorted to inclusion of offences u/s 4 P.M.L.A.

While rejecting their bail plea, the court said that the evidence on record including the financial transactions requires a very deep scrutiny regarding the financial transactions of the accused and the status of their business.

"So the release of the accused at this stage may result in affecting the quality of ongoing investigation and the haze in granting bail to the accused may result in consequences which may pose a grave risk to the society at large and may prejudice the ongoing investigation," the court said.

Poonch Was

killed in the shelling.

Their photographs now hang on a soot-stained wall. The room is quiet, except for the occasional rustle of mourners shifting on the floor.

Despite the devastation, there were small acts of kindness.

Neighbours opened their doors to those with nowhere to go. Community kitchens popped up overnight. People shared water, blankets, even phone chargers.

"We don't ask who someone votes for or where they pray," said Waseem Ali, helping organize aid. "We just show up." But anger is palpable, especially toward some media outlets for running unverified reports that vilified the locals.

Young people from Poonch, studying in Jammu and Delhi, scrambled to push back online, using posts and videos to defend their families and their town.

"It was terrifying watching the news," said Sara Qadri, a law student in Delhi. "We couldn't contact our parents. And when we did, they were crying. Not just from fear, but from feeling blamed for something they didn't do."

Many say what hurts more than the shelling is the silence that followed.

There has been no official investigation into the false media reports. No apology. No promise that it won't happen again.

Amid all this, a few families have started to rebuild.

Bricks are being stacked. Windows repaired. But the deeper wounds are likely to take longer time to heal.

Children still wake up crying. Some refuse to sleep indoors.

And there is no timeline for when therapy or counseling might arrive.

"Right now, people are trying to act normal," said Mazahir Hussain, clearing debris. "But something has changed. You can feel it."

In the silent lanes of Poonch, the sound of hammers has replaced that of shelling. But for many, the fear still lingers, just below the surface.

GT Eye Top-Two Finish As Struggling LSG Look To Salvage Pride

Press Trust of India

AHMEDABAD: Former champions Gujarat Titans will aim to extend their winning streak to solidify a top-two finish when they face a struggling Lucknow Super Giants in their Indian Premier League clash here on Thursday.

With 18 points from 12 matches, table-toppers Titans have already booked their place in the playoffs. However, with Royal Challengers Bengaluru and Punjab Kings close behind on 17 points, the race for a top-two spot is still very much alive.

For Gujarat, everything seems to have fallen into place. Their top-order trio of Orange Cap holder B Sai Sudharsan (617 runs), skipper Shubman Gill (601), and Jos Buttler (500), has been in prolific form, laying the foundation for most of the team's victories.

Together, they have racked up



16 half-centuries and a century, dominating the tournament's batting attacks with clinical consistency.

Such top-order dominance,

however, has left the middle order largely untested.

Gujarat's bowling unit has been equally formidable. Their Indian pace battery has led the

charge, with Prasidh Krishna being the leading wicket-taker this season after snaring 21 wickets. Mohammed Siraj and lanky left-arm spinner R Sai Kishore have chipped in with 15 wickets each.

Adding further firepower to the attack is the return of South African pace ace Kagiso Rabada, who missed most of the season following a suspension for recreational drug use.

On the other hand, Lucknow Super Giants saw their playoff hopes dashed after a comprehensive defeat to Sunrisers Hyderabad on Monday. The Rishabh Pant-led side, now on a four-match losing streak, has endured a campaign riddled with inconsistency and injuries.

LSG have leaned heavily on their overseas recruits -- Mitchell Marsh, Aiden Markram, and Nicholas Pooran -- for runs.

The lack of noteworthy contributions from Pant, who has

endured a woeful season, and the middle order has compounded their problems.

Injuries to key bowlers further derailed their campaign.

Left-arm pacer Mohsin Khan missed the entire season, while express quick Mayank Yadav, who was retained with high hopes, spent most of it on the sidelines.

Avesh Khan and Akash Deep also struggled with fitness, leaving LSG's bowling attack depleted. Pant acknowledged the devastating impact these absences have had on the team.

To make matters worse, LSG will be without their most successful bowler this season -- spinner Digvesh Rathi, who has claimed 14 wickets at an economy of 8.18.

He has been handed a one-match suspension for his on-field altercation with Abhishek Sharma in the previous game, further denting their faltering campaign.

Match starts at 7:30pm IST.

Short TAKES

KKR Question Change In IPL Playing Conditions Over Extra Time

Kolkata Knight Riders have questioned BCCI's decision to change IPL's playing conditions in the middle of the tournament, specifically the extension of the time allowance for completing a full match.

KKR CEO Venky Mysore confirmed to PTI that he has sent a letter to IPL COO Hemang Amin questioning the board's decision to extend the extra time for completing a full game to 120 minutes from 60 minutes.

What prompted Mysore to write the letter to Amin was their rained out game against Royal Challengers Bengaluru on May 17 that effectively ended their slim hopes of making the play-offs.

Mysore feels 120 minutes of extra time on that night may have led to at least a five-over a side contest.

Besides announcing the IPL schedule for play-offs on Tuesday, BCCI also decided to increase the extra time to 120 minutes for the remainder of the tournament. Normally, such a provision is reserved for play-offs but an exception was made considering that monsoon has hit parts of the country.

We Need To Show Some Humility, Says England Coach McCullum

England head coach Brendon McCullum feels his players have lacked humility in their recent public utterances and he would like to see them win back respect from fans ahead of the tough home series against India and the Ashes later this year.

McCullum, while speaking to the media ahead of a lone Test against Zimbabwe starting Thursday in Nottingham, said the players need to be more attuned to public mood. "It's not just about what you do on the cricket field. It's how you carry yourself. It's how you interact with the public. It's the messaging that you give," McCullum told the British media.

"The ability these guys have to be able to play on the biggest stage, under the brightest lights and the pressure that takes is one thing, but also the ability to be humble and show some humility and not feel out of touch with the general population is something I'd like to see us improve on."

England's players have drawn criticism for their seemingly nonchalant attitude towards on-field setbacks, the most recent being a winless Champions Trophy campaign in Pakistan.

Pakistan Recalls Pacer Hasan Ali For T20 Series Against Bangladesh

Pakistan has recalled fast bowler Hasan Ali for this month's Twenty20 home matches against Bangladesh but overlooked senior batters Mohammad Rizwan and Babar Azam for the third successive series.

Hasan played just one T20 international in nearly three years when he returned with expensive figures of 0-42 in three overs against Ireland in Dublin in 2024.

However, the right-arm fast bowler has forced his way back into the squad with a rich haul of 15 wickets in the Pakistan Super League while representing the Karachi Kings.

Salman Ali Agha, who was appointed captain ahead of the T20 series in Australia last year, will continue to lead the side with Shadab Khan as his deputy.

The three-match series will be played in Lahore but the match dates are yet to be announced.

Squad: Salman Ali Agha (captain), Shadab Khan, Abrar Ahmed, Faheem Ashraf, Fakhar Zaman, Haris Rauf, Hasan Ali, Hassan Nawaz, Hussain Talat, Khushdil Shah, Mohammad Haris, Mohammad Wasim, Irfan Khan, Naseem Shah, Sahibzada Farhan and Saim Ayub.

Five Guilty Of Hate Crime For Racist Abuse Of Vinicius, Says LaLiga

Five Valladolid fans who racially insulted Real Madrid star Vinicius Junior in 2022 have been found guilty in the first ruling in Spain that condemns racist insults in a soccer stadium as a hate crime, the league said Wednesday.

A Valladolid court convicted the fans for their insults in a league match, sentencing them to one year in prison plus a fine of up to 1,620 euros (\$1,837). The jail time is suspended on condition they don't commit any offense or visit soccer stadiums hosting official national competitions for three years. The league called Wednesday's ruling "a firm step towards eradicating racism in sport."

Last year, three Valencia fans were handed eight-month prison sentences after pleading guilty to racially insulting Madrid forward Vinicius Junior.

That was the first conviction for racism-related cases in professional soccer in Spain, but it was not based on a hate crime. The Valencia fans were convicted of a crime against moral integrity, with the aggravating circumstance of discrimination based on racist motives.

YSS Budgam Holds Inter-School Competitions Across Multiple Zones

Observer News Service

BUDGAM: Under the directions of District Youth Services and Sports Officer Budgam, Mr. Gh.Hassan Lone, the Department of Youth Services and Sports (DYSS) organized a series of Inter-School Zonal Level Competitions across various zones of the district, promoting fitness, teamwork, and talent identification among students.

Zone Chadoora hosted a Volleyball Event for Boys (All Age Groups) at Open Ground, Ranger. The event was inaugurated by the Zonal Physical Education Officer, Mr. Syed Muzammil Geelani, who motivated students to embrace sportsmanship and discipline.

Zone Dreygam conducted a Volleyball Competition for Boys and Girls U-19 at BHSS Ichigam, inaugurated by Principal Mtr. Rehana Jabeen and Mr. Farooq Sajad



(Zone In-Charge), witnessing active participation.

Zone Khansahib held Chess and Table Tennis competitions (U-19 Boys & Girls) at BHSS Khansahib. The event was inaugurated by Mr. Mushtaq Ahmad (PEM), Mr. Ghulam Mohidin Wani (Lecturer), and Mr. Khan Muneer Aslam (PEL), drawing wide participation

Zone Soibug held U-17 and U-19 Boys competitions in Volleyball, Kabaddi, and Kho-Kho at BHSS Soibug, inaugurated by Principal Syed Zubair Ahmad. The event highlighted the

zone's commitment to nurturing athletic excellence.

Zone Charar-i-Sharief organized a Badminton Tournament for Girls U-14 & U-17 at Sports Stadium Charar-i-Sharief, seeing active participation and showcasing sporting talent.

Zone Nagam hosted a multifaceted Martial Arts Competition (All Age Groups - Girls) including Taekwondo, Wushu, Thang-Ta, Gatka, Boxing, Karate, and Judo at BHSS Nagam. ZPEO Mtr. Jahan Aara and Principal BHSS Nagam delivered inspiring addresses.

Para Sports Mela Uplifts Specially-Abled Athletes In Ganderbal

Observer News Service

GANDERBAL: To promote inclusivity and empower persons with disabilities, the Department of Youth Services and Sports Ganderbal, in collaboration with She Hope Disability Centre, on Wednesday organised a vibrant Para Sports Mela at Government College of Physical Education Gadoora.

The event witnessed enthusiastic participation from around 120 para-athletes, including men, women, and children from across District Ganderbal. The sporting extravaganza featured a wide array of events tailored to suit diverse abilities, including Wheelchair Run, Tennisball Cricket, Tug of War, Carrom, and Chess offering participants a platform to showcase their skills and determination.

The Chief Guest on the occasion, Chief Education Officer Ganderbal Oneel Kumar, lauded the initiative and encouraged participants to continue striving for excellence. He was joined by esteemed dignitaries including Showkat Hussain,



Mushtaq Ahmad Azad and Reshi Kumar, Assistant Professors at Physical College.

DYSSO Ganderbal, Sheikh Shafqat Iqbal, formally inaugurated the event and highlighted the department's commitment to creating an inclusive sports culture in the district. The mela culminated in a prize distribution ceremony, where all dignitaries jointly felicitated the winners, runners-up, and participants with medals, trophies, and words of encouragement.

YSS Anantnag Hosts District Level Sports Events Across Zones

Observer News Service

ANANTNAG: The Department of Youth Services & Sports Anantnag on Wednesday kickstarted Inter-Zonal competitions with the conclusion of the U-14 Girls' Badminton Tournament at SRJ HSS Khanabal. The event marked the resumption of District Level Inter-Zonal Badminton Competitions for U-14 and U-17 girls.

In the U-14 Girls category, players like Saniya Jan and Muntaza Rafiq from Zone Qazigund, along with Seerat Ashraf and Ifra Jan from Zone Dooru, showcased exceptional performances throughout the tournament.

Meanwhile, Zone Bijbehara concluded the Inter-School Zonal Level Football Tournament for



U-14 Girls at PM Shri MS Pazalpura, Bijbehara. In a thrilling final, HS G.B Khalil clinched the championship title, while PM Shri MS Pazalpura and MS Laribal secured the runner-up and third positions respectively.

Zone Dooru organized Inter-School Yoga Competitions for U-14 and U-17 Boys and Girls at MS Chakpath on Wednesday. The event began with participants taking an Anti-

Drug Pledge, promoting the message of a drug-free and healthy lifestyle. A total of 173 students (95 boys and 78 girls) participated in the event.

Zone Doru also conducted Chess and Carrom competitions for specially-abled students at the same venue, reflecting the department's commitment to holistic development through sports.

Vansh Sabre Sports Foundation Signs MOU With Dhanu Sports Pvt Ltd

Observer News Service

JAMMU: Secretary Vansh Sabre Sports Foundation Kuldeep Kumar Gupta signed MOU with Suman Raj, MD Dhanu Sports Private Limited Tamil Nadu, for developing, implementing and promoting technology-driven solutions for all sports including unlimited data analytics, player performance tracking, event management and digital fan engagement.

The fast growing sports identity in Jammu and Kashmir, Vansh Sabre Sports Foundation (VSSF) achieved another milestone by becoming first such sports foundation in the region.

Vansh Sports Foundation



in collaboration with Dhanu Sports Private Limited will also organise sports events in different games with in India and abroad with mutual understanding for the exposure of sports.

Gupta said the Dhanu Sports Private Limited Company engaged in live telecast, sports broadcasting and TSR (Time Scoring Results) Services and moreover the company will also implementation of advance

technology for match analytics, player performance tracking and referees assistance. The line telecast and digital streaming of sports event, event management and regulatory compliance.

Gupta said that the company retains full copyright and intellectual property rights to the live telecast contents, video footage, audio graphics and any associated materials created during the live event.

It's Going To Be A Tough England Tour For India: Former Batting Coach

Press Trust of India

NEW DELHI: Former batting coach Vikram Rathour is expecting a tough England tour for a young Indian side that is now without three stalwarts, who left the Test arena in quick succession.

First it was veteran spinner Ravichandran Ashwin and then skipper Rohit Sharma and Virat Kohli too walked into the sunset, leaving a huge gap.

Shubman Gill will most likely be India's new Test skipper and will have a new-look top and middle order.

The five-match series will begin on June 20 at Leeds, marking the start of a new World Test Championship cycle.

"It's going to be a tough tour. It's not going to be an easy tour because the seniors have retired a lot. So, the young team is leaving. There could be a new captain. So, all these things will add a little bit of pressure," said

Rathour, who spoke after Rajasthan Royals' win over Chennai Super Kings on Tuesday.

"But also it's an opportunity to showcase your talent and your ability."

Rathour, who shared a good rapport with all top Indian batters during his stint, said the fans must respect the decision taken by the senior players.

"All three of them were phenomenal cricketers who retired. So, I would have loved for them to carry on. But it's, again, a very, very personal decision. I'm close to all three of them.

"So, you know, I would have, as I said, I would have loved to see them play more. But, again, it's a very, very personal decision, I think. And if they've taken this decision, we should respect that," he said.

Rathour, who is the batting coach of RR, was expectedly effusive in his praise for their find of the season, the 14-year-old



Vaibhav Suryavanshi, who played a key role in the team signing off with a win against CSK.

Instead of an extravagant approach, he took some time and waited before unleashing his shots on Tuesday.

"We've been working with him for quite some time now, maybe three to four months now. We've seen all these aspects, but it's great to see when he's doing that in a game, in pressure situations, in a big game like even

today. You're right, the ball was doing a bit when he went in, hardly got any balls, didn't get on strike too much in the power play," Rathour said.

"The kind of maturity he showed, the kind of temperament he showed, really good for him. And these kind of experiences will definitely make him a better player in coming time."

Rathour rued that despite having a strong batting unit at their disposal, they lost winnable games and also blamed poor fielding for their misery.

They managed to avoid last-place finish and believe that the worst is over.

"I don't think we fielded very well throughout the tournament. Bowling did let us down a few times where you let them score too many runs, 10, 15 extra runs mostly every game."

"And then again, with batting also, batting was our strength.

We had retained five batters in the squad, and that is, I believe, our strength. And, you know, we got terrific starts at times," he said.

"We got ourselves into the positions where we should have finished the games, but unfortunately couldn't do that. It hurts. It was a little disappointing, but it also gives you a lot of hope for the coming season because I think this was the worst that is over."

Apart from Suryavanshi, Rathour also picked out Dhruv Jurel for special praise.

"He's (Jurel) got great temperament, that kid. He's got great technique as well as a batsman."

England Prepares With First Test Against Zimbabwe In 22 Years

For England, it's little more than a warm-up match ahead of much sterner examinations to come. For Zimbabwe, it means everything.

Trent Bridge in Nottingham will host a four-day test match -- something of a rarity for the usual five-day format but perhaps a sign of the future -- from Thursday when England and Zimbabwe meet for the first time at international level in 18 years since a Twenty20 World Cup match in Cape Town.

You need to go back four more years -- to Chester-le-Street in 2003 when Jimmy Anderson, a 20-year-old with highlights in his hair, was playing in his first series -- for the last test match between the teams.

While Zimbabwe's view is very much about the present, England's sights will be on the future.

Ahead this summer is a five-test series against India and then an Ashes tour Down Under. For England, it doesn't get much bigger than that, so the match against Zimbabwe will be important preparation.

India Lost 18,200 Hectares Of Primary Forest In 2024: Data



Press Trust of India

NEW DELHI: India lost 18,200 hectares of primary forest in 2024 compared to 17,700 hectares in 2023, according to the latest data from a global collaboration of over 100 organisations.

The data provided by the Global Forest Watch and the University of Maryland showed the country has lost 2.31 million hectares of tree cover since 2001, equivalent to a 7.1 per cent decrease in tree cover during this period and 1.29 gigatonnes of carbon dioxide equivalent emissions.

India lost 3,48,000 hectares of humid primary forest (5.4 per cent) from 2002 to 2024, accounting for 15 per cent of its total tree cover loss during the same period, it stated.

The country lost 16,900 hectares of humid primary forest in 2022, 18,300 hectares in 2021, 17,000 hectares in 2020 and 14,500 hectares in 2019, the data showed.

The dataset defines primary forests as "mature natural humid tropical forest cover that has not been completely cleared and regrown in recent history".

GFW researchers classify Landsat satellite images into primary forest data, using a separate algorithm for each region.

Woman Apprehended For Impersonating, Cyberstalking After Suspecting Husband Of Having An Affair

Press Trust of India

NEW DELHI: A 26-year-old woman has been apprehended for allegedly impersonating and stalking another woman by creating a fake social media account using her photographs, police said on Wednesday.

The accused, a resident of Ghazipur in Uttar Pradesh, was allegedly driven by suspicion over her husband's past acquaintance with the complainant. The woman stole pictures from the victim's social media handle and used them to create a fake account in her name, Deputy Commissioner of Police (North) Raja Banthia said in a statement.

The complainant, a 30-year-old woman from Delhi, had approached the cyber police of north Delhi with a complaint that an unknown person had created a fake social media profile impersonating her and was attempting to contact her friends and colleagues through it, he said. Based on her complaint, an FIR was registered and further investigation was taken up during which police obtained details of the fake account and conducted a technical analysis.

"Surveillance revealed that the SIM card linked to the fake account was issued in Ghazipur in Uttar Pradesh. Further analysis helped trace the current location of the accused to Nangloi in Delhi," said the DCP. A team conducted a search operation and apprehended the accused from Nangloi. A mobile phone and SIM card used in the offence were recovered from her possession.

During interrogation, she confessed that she grew suspicious after her husband, whom she married in 2023, shared a photo with friends in which the complainant also appeared. Her husband also followed the complainant on social media, which led her to believe he might be interested in her, the police claimed.

Indian Author Wins International Booker For Story Collection 'Heart Lamp'

Agencies

LONDON: Indian writer, lawyer and activist Banu Mushtaq on Tuesday won the International Booker Prize for her short story collection "Heart Lamp".

The 77-year-old is the first author of Kannada-language literature to receive the prestigious literary award for translated fiction.

"This moment feels like a thousand fireflies lighting a single sky -- brief, brilliant and utterly collective," Mushtaq said at a ceremony at the Tate Modern gallery in London.

"I accept this great honour not as an individuals but as a voice raised in chorus with so many others."

Mushtaq will share the £50,000 (\$67,000) prize with her translator Deepa Bhashti, who also helped choose the stories.

"Heart Lamp" gathers 12 stories originally published between 1990 and 2023. They portray everyday life in Muslim communities of southern India, focusing on the experiences of women and girls.

Critics praised the collection for its dry and gentle humour, its witty, colloquial style and its searing commentary on patriarchy, casteism and religious conservatism.

Mushtaq, based in Karnataka state, southwest India, is known for her advocacy in women's rights and her legal work confronting discrimination.

The jury hailed her characters -- from spirited grandmothers to bumbling religious clerics -- as "astonishing portraits of survival and resilience".

"My stories are about women -- how religion, society, and politics demand unquestioning obedience from them, and in doing so, inflict inhumane cruelty upon them, turning them into mere subordinates," she said.

Max Porter, chair of the judges, hailed "Heart Lamp" as "something genuinely new for English readers."



India's Asiatic Lions Surge 37% To 891 In Latest Census

Agencies

AHMEDABAD: India's Asiatic lion population has increased by over a third to 891, according to a five-yearly census released on Wednesday, boosting efforts to conserve the vulnerable species.

The Asiatic lion - which historically once roamed from the Middle East to India - is now reduced to an isolated population in a wildlife sanctuary in India's western state of Gujarat.

"The Asiatic lion population, which was 304 in 1995, has increased steadily over the past three decades," Gujarat Chief Minister Bhupendra Patel told reporters. "In 2020 it was 674, which has now increased to 891."

The majestic big cats are slightly smaller than their African cousins, and have a fold of skin along their bellies.

Hunting and human encroachment caused the population to plunge to just 20 by 1913, and the lions are now found only in Gujarat's sprawling Gir wildlife sanctuary, where they roam dry deciduous forests and open grasslands.

Following years of concerted government efforts, the lion population is steadily rising.

The latest counting exercise, spread over four days, covered over 35,000 square kilometres (13,513 square miles) across 11 districts in the state.

Priyavrat Gadhvi, a former member of the state wildlife board, said the increase indicated a successful conservation programme.

"Another important factor here is the political will and support of the local people living near the forest areas," Gadhvi said. "They together have helped in conservation of the species."

But while numbers are rising, the conservation organisation WWF warns that the Asiatic lion faces a "threat of genetic inbreeding arising from a single population in one place".

Lions are a source of pride for India, particularly in Gujarat's Saurashtra region, where man and beast coexist.

A cattle-rearing tribe lives among the animals in the sanctuary, and it is not uncommon to see a pride of lions crossing a highway in the region as motorists wait and watch.

Pakistan's Last Elephants Battle Tuberculosis With 400 Pills A Day

Agencies

A team of doctors and vets in Pakistan has developed a novel treatment for a pair of elephants suffering from tuberculosis. The treatment involves feeding the elephants at least 400 pills a day.

The jumbo effort by staff at the Karachi Safari Park involves administering the tablets - the same as those used to treat TB in humans - hidden inside food ranging from apples and bananas to Pakistani sweets. The amount of medication is adjusted to account for the weight of the 4,000-kilogram (8,800-pound) elephants. But it has taken Madhubala and Malika several weeks to settle into the treatment. After spitting out the first few doses, they tasted the bitter medicine and crankily charged their keepers.

"Giving treatment for TB to elephants is always challenging. Each day, we use different methods," said Buddhika Bandara, a veterinary surgeon from Sri Lanka who flew in to oversee the treatment. "The animals showed some stress in the beginning, but gradually they adapted to the procedure," said Bandara, who has helped more than a dozen elephants recover from the illness in Sri Lanka. Mahout Ali Baloch wakes early daily to stew rice and lentils mixed with plenty of sugar cane molasses and rolls the concoction into dozens of balls pierced with tablets. "I know the pills are bitter," the 22-year-old said, watching the elephants splashing under a hose to keep cool.

Four African elephants - captured very young in the wild in Tanzania - arrived in Karachi in 2009. Noor Jehan died in 2023 at 17, and another, Sonia, followed at the end of 2024. An autopsy showed she had contracted tuberculosis, which is endemic in Pakistan. Tests on Madhubala and Malika also came back positive, and the city council - which owns the safari park - assembled a team to care for the pachyderms.



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