

Major Bureaucratic Overhaul

J&K Govt Transfers 134 JKAS Officers

KO Web Desk

Srinagar: Several mid-level bureaucrats were reshuffled by the Jammu and Kashmir government as it ordered the transfer and posting of 134 officials with immediate effect on Tuesday.

Among those who were transferred were special secretary, secretary, the commissioner, director general, managing director, and director-rank officers.

The transfers of Jammu and Kashmir Administrative Services (JKAS) officers were issued by the commissioner secretary general administration department on the order of the Jammu and Kashmir government.

Chief Executive Officers (CEOs) of five Tourism Development Authorities were among those transferred.

While Virender Kumar Manyal was posted as CEO of Tourism Development Authority in Patnitop, Kulbushan Khajuria was posted as CEO of Tourism Development Authority in Rajouri.

Mohammad Rouf Rehman was posted as CEO of Tourism Development Authority in Kokernag, Joginder Singh Jasrotia was transferred and posted as CEO of Bhaderwah's Tourism

Development Authority, and Babu Ram Tandon, was posted as CEO Tourism Development Authority, Bani-Basholi.

Apart from that, notable among the transferred officers were Bashir Ahmad Dar, Managing Director of JKPC, who was transferred and posted as Secretary, J&K Public Service Commission.

Rajinder Singh Tara, the Director General of Youth Services and Sports in J&K, was transferred and posted as Controller in Legal Metrology, while Anuradha Gupta, Controller, Legal Metrology, was posted as Director general, Youth Services and Sports, J&K.

Smita Sethi, Secretary in the Industries and Commerce Department, was posted as Commissioner, Food and Drug Administration, J&K, while Mathora Masoom, Special Secretary to the Government, Tourism Department, was posted as Managing Director, J&K Financial Corporation.

Musheer Ahmed, Special Secretary to the Government, Social Welfare Department, was transferred and posted as Mission Director, ICDS, J&K, while Nawab Din, Regional Director, Survey | [More on P10](#)



A boatman rows on Dal Lake during sunset, silhouetted against the golden sky. KO Photo by Ansar Hussain.

Hajj 2025 Concludes Return Haj Flights From June 17

Observer News Service

Srinagar: As the annual Hajj pilgrimage 2025 concludes, the first batch of pilgrims from Jammu and Kashmir is all set to return on June 17, officials said.

Executive Officer J&K Haj Committee, Dr Shujhat Qureshi said the initial flight will bring back 178 pilgrims, marking the beginning of the return phase for the 3,606 pilgrims from the region who performed the pilgrimage this year.

"Everything has gone smoothly, and we did not witness any major incidents due to the heat-wave or other causes, unlike last year," he said.

Dr Qureshi, however, confirmed that a Kashmir-based female pilgrim, who was already unwell, passed | [More on P10](#)

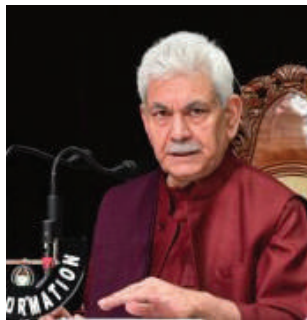
J&K Gets Biggest Ever Rural Road Package Under PMGSY-IV

Becomes First To Secure Sanction

Observer News Service

Srinagar: Jammu and Kashmir has become the first Union Territory to receive sanction under Batch-I of the Pradhan Mantri Gram Sadak Yojana-IV (PMGSY-IV), securing a landmark package of 316 road projects estimated at 4224 crore.

Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha expressed his profound gratitude to Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi and Union



Minister for Rural Development Shri Shivraj Singh Chouhan for this significant development.

This approval marks the biggest-ever package sanctioned

for Jammu and Kashmir under the PMGSY scheme. It aims to provide vital connectivity to 390 eligible habitations across the region, targeting communities with populations greater than 250 individuals.

The approved 1781 kilometers of road length are expected to deliver a substantial boost to rural road connectivity, ushering in a new era of prosperity, particularly in J&K's far-flung and remote areas.

Lieutenant Governor Sinha shared his appreciation on X (formerly Twitter), stating, "Grateful to | [More on P10](#)

India Made Key Defence, Global Strides In 11 Years: PM

KO Web Desk

Srinagar: Asserting that last 11 years of his government have marked significant changes in the defence sector, Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Tuesday said that it's gladdening to see how the people of India have come together with the resolve of making India stronger.

PM Modi wrote on X: "The last 11 years have marked significant changes in our defence sector, with a clear focus on both modernisation and becoming self reliant when it comes to defence production. It is gladdening to see how the people of India have come

together with the resolve of making India stronger."

PM Modi shared a thread from a government's citizen engagement platform, which highlighted the changes in different areas as the Prime Minister completed 11 years in office on Tuesday.

The thread on the social media said, "In just 11 years under Modi's visionary leadership, India has revolutionised its defence capabilities, deepened strategic global partnerships, and achieved historic milestones in space exploration."

"Guided by his (PM Modi's) resolve for 'Aatmanirbhar Bharat', the | [More on P10](#)

Inder Jeet Is Commissioner, Survey and Land Records

The Jammu and Kashmir administration on Tuesday ordered the transfer and posting of Shri Inder Jeet, JKAS, as Commissioner, Survey and Land Records (ex-officio Settlement Commissioner), J&K. According to Government Order No. 684-JK(GAD) of 2025 issued by the General Administration Department (All India Services Section), | [More on P10](#)

CSC Submits Reservation Report, Para Wants It Made Public

Observer News Service

Srinagar: The Jammu and Kashmir cabinet sub-committee examining the region's reservation policy has submitted its report within the mandated six-month period, Education Minister Sakina Itoo announced on Tuesday. "The report will be placed before the Cabinet when it meets," she posted on X.

Formed in December 2024, the Sub Committee was tasked with reviewing the reservation framework following the Centre's



move to grant Scheduled Tribe (ST) status to the Pahari community. The decision sparked widespread protests and legal challenges, with students and aspirants expressing

concern that over 60% of seats were now reserved, leaving limited opportunities—estimated at 30–40%—for open merit candidates.

Responding sharply to Itoo's announcement, PDP MLA Waheed Parra said, "Students are demanding answers, not delays. Why hold back the Cabinet Committee report on merit? After your government's adverse stand on merit in court, intentions, not actions are under question." He called for transparency, noting that

Kashmiris have endured six years under an unelected administration.

Tensions have been building among aspirants. On June 5, representatives of the Open Merit Students' Association (OMSA) met MP Aga Ruhullah Mehdi, reiterating that June 10 was the deadline for the committee's report. The group warned that frustration among open merit aspirants was reaching a breaking point.

Meanwhile, the revised reservation policy, including the | [More on P10](#)

Ruhullah To Hold Talks With Students Today



While the Cabinet Sub-Committee, formed to examine grievances related to the Union Territory's revised reservation policy, has completed its report and is set to

present it before the Cabinet in its upcoming meeting, member of Parliament from Srinagar and National Conference leader Aga Syed Ruhullah Mehdi | [More on P10](#)

Man Held For Posing As SSP CIK

Observer News Service

Srinagar: In a startling case of impersonation and digital fraud, Jammu and Kashmir Police have arrested a man for posing as the Senior Superintendent of Police (SSP) of Counter Intelligence (CI) Kashmir in a bid to pressure gambling platforms into refunding money he had lost online.

According to officials, the accused—identified as Barkat Ali Parray alias BK, son of Ghulam Mohammad Parray and a resident of Gundhassi Bhat, Sheltang, Srinagar—was found using the photograph of the SSP CI Kashmir as his WhatsApp profile picture. Parray allegedly used this fake identity to threaten individuals, including organisers of online gambling platforms.

CI Kashmir acted on credible intelligence and tracked the suspect through his digital footprint. He was apprehended on June 9 at Jahangir Chowk, Srinagar. During a routine check of his mobile phone, police found that his WhatsApp account, linked to his personal number, featured the SSP's image as the | [More on P10](#)

J&K Heatwave: 4 More Searing Days Ahead

Jammu Hits 44.4°C, Srinagar 33.5°C



Observer News Service

Srinagar: Jammu and Kashmir is in the grip of a severe heatwave, with the Meteorological Department forecasting no respite for at least the next four days. Tuesday saw temperatures soar well above normal across both Jammu and Kashmir divisions, disrupting daily life and prompting health advisories.

Jammu recorded its hottest day of the season at a blistering 44.4°C, which is 5.6°C above normal. Other parts of the Jammu region also reported extreme temperatures—Katra at 40.6°C, Banihal at 33.6°C, Batote at 33.3°C, and Bhaderwah at 33.4°C, all several degrees above seasonal averages.

The Kashmir valley too felt the heat. Srinagar, the | [More on P10](#)



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2

UNION TERRITORY OF JAMMU & KASHMIR

OFFICE OF THE EXECUTIVE ENGINEER, PMGSY DIVISION JAMMU

Near DG(P) Residence Bikram Chowk, Jammu,
E-mail:- Executiveengineer61@yahoo.in Ph./Fax:- 0191-2439734

Short Notice Inviting e-Tenders

Invitation of Expression of Interest for Empanelment of DPR Consulting Agency
E-NIT NO:-EE/PMGSY/J/02 OF 2025-26 DATED: 05.06.2025.

Expression of Interest is invited from approved & eligible consulting agencies for preparation of DPRs including Road survey, Traffic survey with automatic traffic counter, soil investigation and vetting of DPRs from State Technical Agency (HOD Civil, GCET Jammu) for PMGSY IV Batch-II Schemes in Division Jammu as per BOQ Uploaded. The Bidding Documents comprising of qualifying information, eligibility criteria and terms of reference of e-NIT and other details can be downloaded from <https://www.pmgstendersjk.gov.in> as per schedule of dates given below:-

S.No.	Name of Work	PIU Name	Cost of Document (in Rs.)	Earnest Money (in Rs.)	Time of Completion	Call	Time and date of opening of tenders	Eligibility Criteria
1	Preparation of DPRs including Road survey, Traffic survey with automatic traffic counter, soil investigation and vetting of DPRs from State Technical Agency (HOD Civil, GCET Jammu) for PMGSY-IV (Batch-II) Schemes of PMGSY Sub Division Jammu as per BOQ Uploaded.	Jammu	1000	50000	30 Days	2nd	17.06.2025 02:00 PM	(Regd. Consultancy / Firm) Consultant having experience of Preparation of Minimum 05 DPRs in the last 05 Years
2	Preparation of DPRs including Road survey, Traffic survey with automatic traffic counter, soil investigation and vetting of DPRs from State Technical Agency (HOD Civil, GCET Jammu) for PMGSY-IV (Batch-II) Schemes of PMGSY Sub Division Akhnora as per BOQ Uploaded.	Jammu	1000	50000	30 Days	2nd		

Schedule of Dates

1	Date of publishing	05.06.2025
2	Document download/Sale start date	05.06.2025 from 4:00 PM to 14.06.2025 upto 05:00 PM
3	Pre Bid Meeting	09.06.2025 at 12:00 Noon in the office of Executive Engineer PMGSY Division Jammu Bikram Chowk, Jammu
4	Bid Submission Start Date	06.06.2025. from 10:00 AM
5	Bid Submission closing Date	14.06.2025 upto 05:00 PM
6	Date and Time of Bid opening (Technical)	17.06.2025 at 02:00 PM
7	Date and Time of Bid opening (Financial)	To be notified after technical evaluation

- Cost of Bid Form: Bids must be accompanied by Treasury Challan / receipt mention above against each work (Non-refundable) deposited in M.H. 0059-PWD(Revenue) mentioning therein the name of work/ e-NIT No. at top pledged to Executive Engineer PMGSY Division Jammu (Tender Inviting Authority) as the cost of the tender document. Any deviation in the specified amount, the bid shall be rejected out rightly.
- Earnest Money Deposit/ Bid Security: At the time of Allotment LI must provided Earnest Money / Bid Security in the shape of CDR/FDR/BG pledged to the tender receiving authority, i.e. Executive Engineer PMGSY Division Jammu shall be retained in the office of Tender Inviting Authority until the completion of PMGSY-IV Batch-II DPRs. Any deviation in the specified amount the bid shall be rejected / forfeited out rightly.
- Bidder must ensure to upload scanned copies of all necessary documents in order to qualify:
 - The tender cost in the shape of Treasury Challan / Receipt with name of work and NIT No. mention at the top.
 - Registration Card of Firm / Agency.
 - Similar Nature as mentioned in Eligibility Criteria of the above mentioned e-NIT i.e. Consultant having experience of Preparation of Minimum 05 DPRs in the last 05 (Five) Years.
 - Photocopy of PAN Card.
 - Photocopy of GST number duly issued by the Commercial Taxes Department with latest GSTR- 3B Return.
- All the terms and conditions will remain same as per SBD Clauses of PMGSY Department of Roads and Bridges to the Lowest bidder.
- The Lowest Bidder will submit the Weekly basis Progress Report to the office of Executive Engineer PMGSY Division Jammu for further submission same to the concerned Quarters for timely Completion of Survey Works of PMGSY-IV (Batch-II).

All other terms and conditions of the e-NIT shall be seen / downloaded from the www.pmgstendersjk.gov.in.

No:-EE/PMGSY/J/658-66
DIPK-2318/25
Dated:- 10.06.2025
For and on behalf of The Government of Jammu and Kashmir.
Executive Engineer PMGSY Division Jammu

GOVERNMENT OF JAMMU AND KASHMIR

OFFICE OF THE CHIEF HORTICULTURE OFFICER SHOPIAN

Tele/fax No: 01933-260280 email:choshopian22@gmail.com

OPEN AUCTION NOTICE

Subject: Open Auction of fruit crop of Fruit Plant Nursery Zainapora of district Shopian for the year 2025.

As a consequence of decision taken by the Directorate of Horticulture Kashmir Srinagar vide No. DHK/ PROD/E-7664636/2025/9107-17, Dated: 23-05-2025, open auction of fruit crop of Fruit Plant Nursery Zainapora for the year 2025 was conducted on 29-05-2025, but due to poor response received from the bidders the auction couldn't be concluded. As such, the fruit crop of Fruit Plant Nursery Zainapora for the year 2025 is again put on open auction. In this connection, the open auction will be conducted as per the scheduled given below:

S.No.	Date	Time	Name of the nursery/ orchard	CDR Amount	Place of auction.
01	14-06-2025 (Saturday)	10:30 am to 12:00 pm	Fruit Plant Nursery Zainapora	4000	Fruit Plant Nursery Zainapora

Terms and Conditions

- The participating bidders shall have to deposit the earnest money as shown above in the form of CDR pledged to Chief Horticulture Officer Shopian before the commencement of auction proceedings.
- The fruit plants earmarked for studies/field trials shall be marked in advance as reserved (not for auction) by the concerned officers.
- The successful bidder shall have to deposit the auction amount in one installment in the office of Chief Horticulture Officer Shopian within a week from the date of communication of acceptance of offer.
- Payments of auction money in the form of cheque will not be accepted.
- In case the committee is not convinced that the highest bid offered is genuine offer for the fruit crop the committee reserves the right to cancel the offer. As such, the highest bid alone should not necessarily make the bidder eligible for the contract or considered as a successful bidder. The committee can make the appropriate arrangements for re-auction of fruit crop/green grass.
- On communicating the approval of bid/offer, if the successful bidder fails to deposit the auction amount and execute the agreement within the specified time limit, it shall be construed as backing out from contract by the concerned. The department, in that case shall be within its rights to decide the matter on its merits or allot the contract to 2nd highest bidder or may re-auction the fruit crop of the respective orchard. Loss, if any, sustained by the Government on this account, shall have to be recovered from the defaulting contractor through the concerned Tehsildar Recoveries and the CDR will be forfeited to departmental revenue besides initiating action against the defaulter.
- On depositing the auction amount in the office of Chief Horticulture Officer, the successful bidder shall have to execute an agreement immediately with the Department on non-judicial paper of Rs.10/- as per the specimen of the Department where after only the approval of the offer and formal authority for taking possession for the fruit crop of concerned orchard/ nursery/ farm will be issued by concerned officer.
- In respect of Departmental orchards/ nurseries where the open auction takes place and full amount of auction money is deposited, a notarized document containing all the safety clauses (as per the specimen to be made available separately) will be obtained by the concerned officer from the on-spot auction bidders before award of the bid formally, to ensure safety of Departmental assets.
- Soon after the bid is allotted to final bidder, he will be responsible for maintaining the orchard which include irrigation and spraying as per the spray schedule of SKUAST (K).
- The concerned bidder will communicate the complete particulars of the representative/ Chowkidar/ Watcher, who will remain in the orchard till harvesting of fruit crops, alongwith photograph to concerned officer within two days of occupation of the place.
- In case the successful bidder does not follow the instructions/ terms/ conditions, the Department will be at liberty to take necessary action against the bidder shall be deemed to have been "Black Listed" for future auction process.
- For smooth implementation of the contract, instructions as may be deemed necessary and issued by the Department from time to time, will be binding on the successful bidder and deemed to be part of contract/ agreement.

Sd/-
Chief Horticulture Officer
Shopian.

No: CHOS/Prod/25/787-98
DIPK-2368/25
Dated: 10-06-2025

OFFICE OF THE NAIB TEHSILDAR PATTAN

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

PUBLIC NOTICE..

The registrar birth EO MC pattan has submitted a case file pertaining to birth of Mohammad Ruhan Wani S/o Mohammad Akbar Wani R/o Haigam Khole with verified date of birth 08/12/2020 occurred at SDH pattan in this connection if any body having objection for issuance of said certificate he may contact to this office within 04 days after that no objection shall be entertained..

SD
Naib Tehsildar Pattan
fko

No. 7-1/2025-UIA Government of India Ministry of Education Department of Higher Education

Vice-Chairman, University Grants Commission - Call for Nominations

Nominations are sought for selection of a new Vice-Chairman of the University Grants Commission (UGC). The UGC is a statutory body with the Ministry of Education, Government of India, entrusted with the task of determination, coordination and maintenance of standards in the University education. Under the provisions of section 5 of the UGC Act, 1956, Vice-Chairman is appointed by the Central Government.

Eminent persons with substantial experience in academics, governance and/or professional management commensurate with the prestige of the position and preferably less than 62 years, may be nominated by the peers. No selfnominations will be accepted.

Clause (b) of sub-section (1) of section 6 of the UGC Act, 1956 provides that the Vice-Chairman shall hold office for a term of three years or until he/she attains the age of 65 years, whichever is earlier. The Vice-Chairman, in addition to being a member of the Commission, also officiates as Chairman, UGC in the absence of the Chairman.

Nominations along with the nominees' curriculum vitae may be emailed to the Director (UGC), Ministry of Education at email ID: ulasection-moe.edu@gov.in on or before 10th July, 2025. Hard copy of the curriculum vitae will not be accepted. The Search cum Selection Committee reserves the right to consider persons of eminence outside the list of such nominations. In accordance with the procedure evolved by the Committee, nominees would be short-listed and the short-listed nominees may be invited for interaction with the Committee

CBC21205/12/0001/2526

PUBLIC NOTICE

The candidate namely Rubia Jan, D/O: Gh. Mohi-ud-Din Dar & Sayeeda Banoo, R/O: Gujnag, Kadipora, Anantnag, whose photograph is above reports that her following qualification certificates have gutted in a fire incident that occurred at Guj Nag, Kadipora, Anantnag on 20.03.2025.

S. No.	Roll No.	Class	Year & Session	Registration No.	Remarks
1.	179434	10th	July, 1998 (Bi-Annual)	A-96-07499-1085	Marks Card
2.	179434	10th	July, 1998 (Bi-Annual)	A-96-07499-1085	Certificate Bearing Number: 831496
3.	119406	12th	2001 (Bi-Annual)	A-96-07499-1085	Marks Card
4.	2951	B.Sc. Final	Jan-2005	9356-AW-2002	All Marks Cards From Kashmir University (Medical), M.card Bearing No. 0435315
5.	15248	B.Ed.	May-2007	9356-AW-2002	All Marks Cards & Certificate From Kashmir University
6.	41749	M.A	May-2010	9356-AW-2002	All Marks Cards & Certificate From Kashmir University
7.	1435	M.Ed.	April-2011	9356-AW-2002	All Marks Cards & Certificate (No. 2584) From Kashmir University

Now the candidate has applied for issuance of duplicate qualification certificates. Before the case is processed under rules, if somebody has any kind of objection, he/she shall approach the office of Deputy Secretary, JKBOSE, Srinagar / Controller or Registrar, University of Kashmir within 07 days from the date of publishing of this notice. After expiry of the said time period, no objection shall be entertained.

inf

Subject: Grant Of Registration of the Proposed Travel unit under the name & Style "M/S Just Married Holiday Tour and Travels situated at Dhoibiwan

PUBLIC NOTICE

Whereas I, Mr. Fayaz Ahmad Khan S/o Ab Ahad Khan R/o Mamoosa Pattan KASHMIR intend to apply in the Department of Tourism for registration of my proposed travel unit under the name & style of M/S Just Married Holiday Tour and Travels situated at Dhoibiwan KASHMIR under tourist trade act 1978/82/2011-12.

Whereas I will submit state subject / Domicile certificate, Qualification Certificate, pan card / Experience Certificate(Minimum 5 years), Police character certificate, Bank statement (minimum balance 10000), site plan, Affidavit, Rent deed duly attested by sub Registrar, printing material (Letter head / Visiting card) Photograph of the unit (indoor and outdoor) and Two passport size photographs to the department of Tourism as per prescribed checklist. Prior to Registration of my unit as an Excursion Agency. / Adventure Tour Operator. Now as per J&K Registration of Tourist Trade Act 1978/82/2011/12 before my case is processed for my registration by the Competent Authority, the matter is hereby notified for information of general public / Financial institutions/Bank/ Organisation, etc for objection, if any and the same should reach to the Deputy Director Tourism Registration (email id: ddtreq123@gmail.com) within a period of 7 days from the publication of this notice in a leading newspaper/newspapers of the valley. No objection beyond a period of 7 days shall be entertained.

bmrg

Office of the Naib Tehsildar Palhallan

Sub.. Application of Ghulam Nabi Shah s/o Fatah Shah R/o Bochu Pattan for obtaining Income dependency Certificate.

PUBLIC NOTICE.

It is inform to general public that applicant's income dependency Certificate is under process in this office in this matter report was sought from Patwari concerned which reveals that the applicant is residing in village Bochu. The applicant is a Labour and monthly income of applicant family is Rs 5000. The family members who dependent on applicant's income are as under:

Name of Dependent	Age (In Years)	Occupation	Relationship with the Applicant	Marital Status
1. Haleema Begum	47	Housewife	wife	Married
2. Sameer Ahmad Shah	23	Student	Son	Unmarried
3. Khurshid Ahmad Shah	19	Student	Son	Unmarried
4. Nayeema Banoo	27	Homework	Daughter	Unmarried

In this connection if any body having objection for issuance of said certificate he may contact to this office within 03 days after that no objection shall be entertained.

SD
Naib Tehsildar Palhallan
fko

FROM THE OFFICE OF ADVOCATE TAWOOS AHMAD PARRAY CHAMBER NO.1 DISTRICT COURT BUDGAM

In the case of:

- Muzzafar Ahmad Bhat
- Ghulam Mohammad Bhat Both sons of Gh Hassan Bhat
- Posha Bano w/o Gh Hassan Bhat
- Fida Hussain Bhat S/o Muzaffar Ahmad Bhat All residents of Gojra Budgam

(Caveators)

Versus
Public at Large

(Non-caveators)

In the matter of:-
CAVEAT PETITION U/S 148A CPC

The caveator has developed reasonable apprehension that the non-caveators may file SUIT/Application or any other proceedings against the caveator before Hon'ble court and may obtain order in ex-parte by concealing of material facts. It would be fair and just if the caveator is given opportunity of being heard by the Hon'ble court before passing any order.

Tawoos Ahmad Parray
Advocate
J&K High Court Srinagar
mcb



Motorists Suffer As Rambagh Road Turns Into A Death Trap



Observer News Service

SRINAGAR: The road stretch near Rambagh Bridge in Srinagar has turned into a virtual death trap, riddled with deep potholes and broken surfaces that have made daily commuting a dangerous gamble for motorists, especially bikers. Despite being one of the busiest road links in the city, the stretch has been left in a state of utter neglect, raising serious concerns about the priorities of the administration.

According to KNT, for the past two years, commuters say the road has been crumbling under their wheels, with no meaningful intervention from the authorities. "It's not just an inconvenience anymore, it's a hazard," said a visibly angry commuter at the site. The potholes are so deep and widespread that even cars struggle to navi-

gate without risking damage to their suspensions, while bikers remain at constant risk of injury or worse.

Muhammad Iqbal, a Natipora resident and daily commuter, shared a harrowing experience with the news agency Kashmir News Trust: "I was riding my bike at full speed during the early morning hours when traffic was light. Suddenly, the front wheel hit a pothole and the bike slipped. I broke my knee and arm. I was lucky to survive." Iqbal is not alone, several similar accidents have been reported in recent months, particularly among two-wheeler riders, some of whom were left with serious fractures and long-term injuries.

Locals question how a road so central to city traffic, which leads to Srinagar Airport, has been allowed to deteriorate to such an extent. They say that repeated complaints to authorities have gone unanswered, and routine patchwork, when done, barely lasts a few weeks before the stretch reverts to its hazardous state.

The situation not only threatens human lives but also highlights the sheer apathy of those responsible for road maintenance in Srinagar. With the stretch being used by thousands daily, including school vans, ambulances, and office-goers, the consequences of inaction could be disastrous.

Mawa Seeks Blanket Ban On Liquor Sales

Observer News Service

SRINAGAR: The Jammu and Kashmir Reconciliation Front staged a protest in Srinagar on Tuesday, urging the government to impose a complete ban on the sale and distribution of liquor in the region.

Led by its president Dr Sandeep Mawa, the protest took place at the Press Enclave where the demonstrators held placards and shouted slogans against the promotion of liquor outlets in Jammu and Kashmir.

"Using revenue deficit as an excuse to justify liquor sales is unacceptable. You cannot sell social decay to fill the coffers," he told reporters during the protest.

According to KNT, he further said that the Kashmiri

Pandit community stands united in its demand for a total prohibition on liquor in Jammu and Kashmir. "If revenue is the concern, the Pandit Samaj is ready to invest in developmental and economic initiatives to bridge that gap, but we will not accept the spread of liquor shops in the name of fiscal planning," he asserted.

In addition to the liquor ban, Dr Mawa also raised concerns over the fate of temple lands in Kashmir, calling for their immediate protection and end to alleged encroachments.

"Liquor is a social evil. It destroys families, promotes crime, and erodes our values. The government must act now and put a full stop to this business before more damage is done," he said.

GMC Conducts Fire Fighting Mock Drill



Observer News Service

SRINAGAR: To enhance emergency preparedness and response among the staff, ensuring a safe environment for patients, visitors and employees, Government Medical College (GMC) Srinagar, in collaboration with the Fire & Emergency department organized a comprehensive fire fighting mock drill at the institution.

The mock drill witnessed active participation from various stakeholders, including the Principal/Dean, Prof. Dr. Iffat Hassan; Administrator Associated Hospitals, M Ashraf Hakak; Chief Accounts Officer and staff members from sanitation, security, mechanical, and electrical departments of GMC and associated hospitals.

During the drill, participants were trained on fire safety procedures, usage of fire extinguishers, and evacuation protocols. The exercise also provided an

opportunity for the staff to familiarize themselves with the firefighting equipment and emergency response systems installed in the institution.

Prof. Dr. Iffat emphasized the importance of fire safety and emergency preparedness.

M Ashraf Hakak appreciated the efforts of the Fire & Emergency department for conducting the mock drill.

The mock drill was conducted in a realistic and safe manner, with the Fire & Emergency department providing expert guidance and support. The exercise concluded with a debriefing session, where the participants discussed the key takeaways and areas for improvement.

GMC Srinagar remains committed to ensuring the safety and well-being of its patients, visitors, and staff. Regular training exercises and drills like this help the institution to stay prepared and respond effectively in case of any emergency.

VC Hails Collective Effort As KU Achieves A++ Accreditation



Syed Mohammad Burhan

SRINAGAR: Marking a significant academic milestone, the University of Kashmir (KU) has been awarded the prestigious A++ grade by the National Assessment and Accreditation Council (NAAC) in its latest re-accreditation cycle, placing the institution among the top-ranked universities in India.

Vice Chancellor Prof Nilofer Khan, while addressing a press conference in Srinagar, said the achievement reflects the collective dedication and relentless efforts of the entire university community. "The University of Kashmir belongs to the society, and it was through months of continuous teamwork by our teaching and non-teaching staff that we were able to reach this level," she said.

Prof Khan emphasized the challenges involved in meeting NAAC's enhanced and more rigorous evaluation criteria. "It was not an easy path, but with a clear vision, hard work, and institutional integrity, we managed to secure the top grade. There was significant support from the government and various stakeholders, and the process was conducted with a high degree of transparency."

Highlighting the broader implications of the accreditation, she added, "I can now confidently say that the University of Kashmir is capable of competing at a global level. This achievement is not the end, but a new beginning as we continue to strive for academic excellence."

The Vice Chancellor reiterated the university's commitment to maintaining the highest standards in education. "Quality has never been compromised at KU," she asserted.

On the institution's academic delivery, Controller of Examinations Dr. Majid Zaman said, "On the examination front, we have been able to issue

KU Organises Seminar On 'Shiksha, Sahitya Aur Sanskriti'

SRINAGAR: The Department of Hindi, University of Kashmir (KU), in collaboration with the Sahitya Sanchay Shodh Samvad Foundation, New Delhi, hosted a two-day International Seminar on the theme "Shiksha, Sahitya aur Sanskriti", which concluded at the university on Tuesday.

Aimed at promoting deeper engagement with the interrelated themes of education, literature and culture, the seminar brought together scholars, academics and students from diverse institutions.

KU Vice-Chancellor Prof. Nilofer Khan, who presided over the inaugural session, lauded the Department of Hindi for organising programmes that are both academically enriching and socially meaningful.

"Literature and education play a crucial role in shaping culturally grounded and socially conscious individuals. Events like these are essential to strengthening our academic frameworks and cultural ethos," Prof. Khan said.

Delivering the keynote address, Dr. Sanjay Kumar, Secretary of Sahitya Sanchay Shodh Samvad Foundation, emphasised the role of these three domains in fostering inclusive development and critical consciousness in contemporary society.

Renowned academican Prof. Rajesh Srivastava also addressed the seminar, calling upon academic institutions to intensify their efforts in preserving cultural heritage through active scholarly engagement.

Earlier, Prof. Rubi Zutshi, Head, Department of Hindi, KU, welcomed the participants and outlined the objectives of the seminar, while appreciating the collaborative efforts that made the event possible.

The proceedings were conducted by Dr. Mudasir Ahmad Bhat and Dr. Shazia Bashir, faculty members at the Department of Hindi. Dr. Suman Rani, Deputy Secretary of Sahitya Sanchay Shodh Samvad Foundation, delivered the vote of thanks.

degrees on time. In recent years, we have issued more than one lakh degree certificates, which reflects our commitment to efficiency and student service."

Also speaking at the event, Prof Musavir Ahmad noted that the institution has taken serious measures to address concerns previously raised in the media. Prof Manzoor Ahmad Shah added that the university strictly adhered to all Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) during the NAAC

visit. "Out of the 65 evaluative parameters, 63 were thoroughly assessed by the NAAC team, and our performance was found to be exemplary."

The University of Kashmir is the first higher education institution in Jammu and Kashmir to be evaluated under NAAC's revised accreditation framework. The institution secured a cumulative grade point average (CGPA) of 3.68—its highest ever—which surpasses the scores of many reputed universities across the country.

This historic recognition underlines KU's growing stature in the national academic landscape and signals its readiness to engage more robustly on the global stage.

IT WAS NOT AN EASY PATH, BUT WITH A CLEAR VISION, HARD WORK, and institutional integrity, we managed to secure the top grade.



OBSESSIVE COMPULSIVE DISORDER

8 WEEK FREE GROUP THERAPY

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

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

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

If you or some one you know is experiencing symptoms of OCD, seeking professional help is crucial. You do not have to fight your battles alone. There is no need for referral , simply call us for registration.

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

AIRPORTS

SHIEK UL ALAM AIRPORT: 01942303311

RAILWAYS

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

HIGHWAY STATUS

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



PRAYERS

FAJR	3:32
ZUHR	12:30
ASR	5:31
Magrib	7:45
ISHA	9:26

This Day In History

- 1774 - Jews of Algiers escape attacking Spanish Army
- 1837 - The Broad Street Riot occurs in Boston, fueled by ethnic tensions between English-Americans and Irish-Americans
- 1864 - The Battle of Trevilian Station, the bloodiest and largest all-cavalry battle of the American Civil War, begins in Louisa County, Virginia
- 1864 - Battle at Cynthiana Kentucky: General Hobsons unit caught
- 1864 - Battle of Laurel Hill, West Virginia
- 1898 - 1st US Marines (600) land at Guantanamo Cuba during Spanish-American War
- 1901 - Cook Islands annexed and proclaimed part of New Zealand
- 1913 - Grand Vizir Mahmud Shevket Pasha is assassinated, resulting in continuing Young Turk terrorism until WWI
- 1917 - King Alexander assumes the throne of Greece after his father Constantine I abdicates under pressure by allied armies occupying Athens
- 1920 - Republicans nominate Warren G. Harding for US president
- 1934 - Disarmament conference in Geneva fails
- 1935 - Inventor Edwin Armstrong gives the first public demonstration of FM broadcasting in the United States, at Alpine, New Jersey
- 1940 - World War II: British forces bomb Genoa and Turin in Italy
- 1940 - World War II: First attack of the Italian Air force on the island of Malta
- 1942 - German army defeated at El-Alamein, North Africa
- 1942 - US and USSR sign Lend-Lease agreement during WW II
- 1943 - British invades Pantelleria (a tiny island south of Sicily)

From KO Archives

Pandits Feel At Home With Old Muslim Neighbours

Observer News Service

JAMMU- They have started visiting their land of birth as tourists. They stay the between 10 days and two months to escape from the scorching heat in the plains. Mohan Lal and his wife spent several days in Srinagar recently. On their return they were excited over the way their friends neighbours and other acquaintances, whom they met after over 17 years received them with love and warmth.

"We found as if we were part of the social fabric," said Mohan Lal. His wife, Laxmi said that we visited our ancestral house in Rainawari.

It brought back the pictures of our childhood days playing with our Muslim neighbours and friends." Mohan Lal said "We met scores of Pandits who had come to Srinagar not only from Jammu but from other parts of the country." They said that scores of families, which had not sold their houses had been staying there for the last two months.

They have decided to spend the summer months and return to the plains sometimes in September.

Dwarika Nath, who belonged to Anantnag district, said, "I have been going to Kashmir for the last three years as a tourist. I do not stay in hotels or houseboats. I feel comfortable in the houses of my Muslim friends and neighbours."

Mohan Lal, who has been living in Jammu and Delhi for the last 17 years, said that "though we crave for returning to Kashmir for many among us the situation has changed to the extent that we may not be able to resettle ourselves permanently." He explained that children of a major section of Kashmiri Pandit community has, after coming out of various professional colleges are suitably settled and hence it will not be "feasible for them to return to Kashmir." Others who have returned from the valley in recent days said besides these domestic issues, the security scenario in Kashmir is still not conducive for their return and rehabilitation.

(Kashmir Observer, 11 June, 2007)

Indian Students At Harvard Navigate Uncertainties

Press Trust of India

New York: Indian students at Harvard say they are navigating a “rollercoaster” of uncertainty and anxiety amid the Trump administration’s relentless battle against the university while also dealing with a dearth of job opportunities.

“It’s just been a time of not quite knowing what to do, whether we should make our moves back home, or whether we should try and figure something out here,” an Indian student, who graduated last month from the Harvard Kennedy School, said, not wishing to be identified.

Indian students at Harvard, speaking to PTI on condition of anonymity, shared their concerns and experiences of the last few months during which the prestigious university has seen relentless attacks by the Trump administration.

The administration’s actions include a freeze of USD 2.2 billion in grants, revocation of the university’s eligibility to enrol international students and suspension of entry of foreign nationals seeking to study or participate in exchange programmes at Harvard.

The Department of Homeland Security (DHS) has said

that Harvard’s leadership has created an “unsafe campus environment by permitting anti-American, pro-terrorist agitators to harass and physically assault individuals, including many Jewish students, and otherwise obstruct its once-venerable learning environment.”

US President Donald Trump, in a proclamation last week, said Harvard had refused recent requests of the DHS for information about foreign students’ “known illegal activity,” “known dangerous and violent activity,” “known threats to other students or university personnel,” and other related data.

Another Indian student, who graduated from the Harvard Graduate School of Design after completing a two-year course, said students come to American institutions with plans of finishing their studies and then finding jobs to work for a few years in the US. But she described the situation of the past few months as being a “rollercoaster.” “With all the uncertainty, I can say that a lot of people who are hiring were generally hesitant of international students, and maybe the Harvard tag helped earlier, but that’s not the same right now at this particular moment,” she said.

Thunberg Accuses Israel Of Kidnap After Gaza Aid Boat Intercepted



Swedish activist Greta Thunberg walks inside a terminal at the Paris-Charles de Gaulle Airport in Roissy-en-France near Paris, France, June 10, 2025. (Reuters)

Arab News

PARIS: Swedish activist Greta Thunberg on Tuesday accused Israel of “kidnapping us in international waters and taking us against our will to Israel” after security forces intercepted a boat carrying humanitarian aid bound for Gaza.

“This is yet another intentional violation of rights that is added to the list of countless other violations that Israel is committing,” Thunberg, 22, told reporters on arrival at Charles de Gaulle airport in Paris after being deported from Israel.

She stressed that her own experience was “nothing compared to what the Palestinians are going through.”

Of the 12 people on board the Maaleen carrying food and supplies for Gaza, five French activists were taken into custody after they refused to leave Israel voluntarily.

But Thunberg, who rose to fame as a schoolgirl activist against climate change and seeks to avoid flying because of its environmental impact, was deported by Israel on a commercial flight of national airline El Al bound for Paris.

“This is not the real story. The real story is there is a genocide going on in Gaza and systematic starvation,” said Thunberg.

Several rights groups including Amnesty International have accused Israel of genocide of the Palestinians in Gaza but Israel vehemently rejects the term.

The vessel carrying French, German, Brazilian, Turkish, Swedish, Spanish and Dutch activists had the stated aim of delivering humanitarian aid and breaking the Israeli blockade on the Palestinian territory.

Israel intercepted the Maaleen about 185 kilometers (115 miles) west of the coast of Gaza.



India’s Population Hits 1.46 Billion, Fertility Below Replacement: UN

Press Trust Of India

New Delhi: India’s population is estimated to reach 1.46 billion in 2025, continuing to be the highest in the world, according to a new UN demographic report, which also revealed the country’s total fertility rate has fallen below the replacement rate.

UNFPA’s 2025 State of World Population (SOWP) Report, The Real Fertility Crisis, calls for a shift from panic over falling fertility to addressing unmet reproductive goals.

Millions of people are not able to realise their real fertility goals, it asserts.

This is the real crisis, not under-population or overpopulation, and the answer lies in greater reproductive agency – a person’s ability to make free and informed 150 per cent choices about sex, contraception and starting a family, it says.

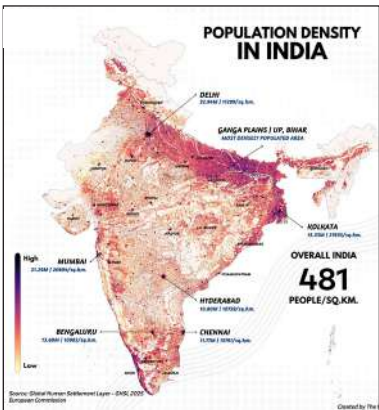
The report also reveals key shifts in population composition, fertility, and life expectancy, signalling a major demographic transition.

This means that, on average, Indian women are having fewer children than needed to maintain the population size from one generation to the next, without migration.

Despite the slowing birth rate, India’s youth population remains significant, with 24 per cent in the age bracket of 0-14, 17 per cent in 10-19, and 26 per cent

in 10-24.

The country’s 68 per cent of the population is of working age (15-64), providing a potential demographic dividend, if matched



by adequate employment and policy support.

The elderly population (65 and older) currently stands at seven per cent, a figure that is expected to rise in the coming decades as life expectancy improves. As of 2025, life expectancy at birth is projected to be 71 years for men and 74 years for women.

According to the UN estimates, India’s population at present stands at 1,463.9 million.

India is now the world’s most populous nation, with nearly 1.5 billion people – a number expected to grow to about 1.7 billion before it begins to fall, around 40

Israel Guilty Of ‘Extermination’ In Attacks On Schools, Mosques: UN

Al Jazeera

Jerusalem: Israel has committed the crime against humanity of “extermination” by attacking Palestinian civilians sheltering in schools and religious sites in Gaza, an independent United Nations commission report says.

The UN Independent Commission of Inquiry on the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem and Israel, made the accusation in a report released on Tuesday.

The report also said Israeli forces have committed war crimes, “including directing attacks against civilians and wilful killing, in

their attacks on educational facilities that caused civilian casualties”.

“We are seeing more and more indications that Israel is carrying out a concerted campaign to obliterate Palestinian life in Gaza,” commission chair Navi Pillay, a former UN high commissioner for human rights, said in a statement.

The report said Israel has damaged or destroyed more than 90 percent of the school and university buildings in Gaza and destroyed more than half of all religious and cultural sites in the territory.

“While the destruction of cultural property, including educational facilities, was

years from now, the report said.

Behind these numbers are the stories of millions of couples who decided to start or expand their families, as well as the stories of women who had few choices about whether, when or how often they became pregnant, the report said. In 1960, when India’s population was about 436 million, the average woman had nearly six children.

Back then, women had less control over their bodies and lives than they do today. Fewer than one in four used some form of contraception, and fewer than one in two attended primary school (World Bank Data, 2020), the report said.

But in the coming decades, educational attainment increased, access to reproductive health care improved, and more women gained a voice in the decisions that affected their lives. The average woman in India now has about two children.

While women in India, and every other country, have more rights and choices today than their mothers or grandmothers did, they still have a long way to go before they are empowered to have the number of children they want, if any, when they want them.

The UN report placed India in a group of middle-income countries undergoing rapid demographic change, with population doubling time now estimated at 79 years.

"Operation Sindoor Biggest Action Against Terror In Indian History": Rajnath

Press Trust of India

Dehradun: Defence Minister Rajnath Singh on Tuesday said the Pahalgam terror strike was not just an attack on our people but also an assault on the social unity of India, as he asserted that Operation Sindoor carried out in retaliation was the “biggest action” taken against terrorism in India’s history.

In his address at an event in Dehradun, he also said that terrorists killed people in Pahalgam asking their religion but “we didn’t ask their ‘dharma’ (religion) but hit back seeing their ‘karma’ (deeds)”.

Mr Singh said in the last 11 years, the government under Prime Minister Narendra Modi’s leadership has bolstered the circle of national security.

“On every matter related to national security, we have changed both attitude and way of action of the government. The world saw this change during the recent Operation Sindoor,” he said.



On April 22, terrorists killed 26 people, mostly tourists, in Pahalgam in south Kashmir.

India launched Operation Sindoor early on May 7 to destroy nine terror infrastructures in Pakistan and Pakistan-occupied-Kashmir in retaliation for the Pahalgam terror attack.

All subsequent retaliations to Pakistani offensives were carried out under this operation. Singh termed it as “big and tough action” by India in response.

“This (Operation Sindoor) was the biggest action taken against terrorism in Indian history, I can say firmly say this,” he said.

Delhi Sizzles At 43.8°c, Records Season's Hottest Day



The humidity levels fluctuated between 39 per cent and 24 per cent, the weather department said.

Press Trust of India

New Delhi: In the grip of extreme heat, Delhi on Tuesday recorded its highest maximum temperature of the season at 43.8 degrees Celsius, 3.6 notches above the season’s average, the India Meteorological Department (IMD) said.

The real-feel temperature - or heat index - was 47.1 degrees Celsius on Tuesday, while the minimum temperature settled at 27.8 degrees Celsius. The humidity levels fluctuated between 39 per cent and 24 per cent, the weather department said.

The IMD on Monday issued an orange alert for the capital city till Wednesday, warning people to stay cautious and take steps to protect themselves from the ongoing heatwave.

According to the IMD, very hot weather will persist in Delhi until at least June 12.

The daytime temperature on Wednesday is expected to hover around the 45-degree Celsius mark, while the nights will also be warm at around 29 degrees Celsius, the IMD said.

Safdarjung, the base observatory of Delhi, on Tuesday recorded a maximum temperature of 43.8 degrees Celsius, while the other monitoring stations, including Lodhi Road, Ridge, and

Ayanagar, recorded heatwave conditions, with the latter recording a high of 45.5 degrees Celsius.

According to the IMD, a heatwave is declared when the temperature exceeds 40 degrees Celsius with a departure of at least 4.5 degrees Celsius from normal, or the maximum crosses the 45-degree mark - as Ayanagar did for the second straight day on Tuesday.

Delhi is also experiencing warm nights with the temperature remaining high even after sunset. This can make it harder for people to cool down, besides increasing the risk of heat-related illness, especially for the elderly, children, and those with health issues.

There may be some relief starting June 12, with the IMD forecasting light rainfall and thunderstorms in parts of Delhi, along with gusty winds between 30 and 40 kmph.

The air quality in the capital was recorded in the ‘poor’ category on Tuesday with an Air Quality Index (AQI) reading of 215 at 4 pm, Central Pollution Control Board (CPCB) data showed.

According to the CPCB, an AQI between zero and 50 is considered ‘good’, 51 and 100 ‘satisfactory’, 101 and 200 ‘moderate’, 201 and 300 ‘poor’, 301 and 400 ‘very poor’, and 401 and 500 ‘severe’.

NEWS MAKERS

Two Indian Women Detained For Theft At Singapore's Changi Airport

Singapore, (PTI): Two Indian women transiting through Singapore’s Changi Airport were detained for allegedly committing a series of shop thefts at different stores, police said on Monday.

The thefts were committed on June 2 by the women, aged 29 and 30, The Straits Times newspaper reported, quoting a police statement.

Both women were detained before they could leave the country.

Police were alerted to the suspected theft case in the departure transit area of Terminal 3. Through the use of CCTV camera footage, airport authorities identified and found the two women within an hour.

A stolen purse, a backpack and a bottle of perfume – all allegedly stolen – were found in their possession. The three items had a total value of SGD 635, according to the report.

“Police were alerted to the suspected theft case in the departure transit area of Terminal 3. Through the use of CCTV camera footage, airport authorities identified and found the two women within an hour.”

The women are expected to be charged in court on June 10, and if convicted, can be jailed for up to seven years, fined, or both.

“The police will continue to work closely with stakeholders and the community to prevent and deter cases of shop theft,” the statement said.

Gurugram Bar Body 'Bans' Non Lawyers From Wearing White Shirt, Black Trousers

The Gurugram District Bar Association has passed a resolution “banning” non-lawyers from wearing white shirts and black trousers in the court premises.

The professional attire is now reserved solely for registered lawyers and authorised law trainees, said a senior members of the bar association while referring to the resolution.

According to the resolution, it was often observed non-advocates or unrecognised law trainees wore white shirts and black trousers in the district court premises.

The scenario, the resolution said, led to “misidentification” and in some cases even disrupted the dignity and discipline of the court proceedings.

The bar association, as a result, “appealed to all concerned” to strictly adhered to the resolution in the interest of maintaining the dignity of the court.



“No other person, including clerks, brokers, litigants or the general public, will be allowed to wear advocate’s dress i.e. white shirt and black pants in any part of the court premises. The Bar Association will coordinate with the court administration and security staff to ensure the dress code. Violation of this can also attract a fine of Rs 5,000,” it read.

Advocate Rahul Dhankar, secretary of the Gurugram District Bar Association, said the resolution aims to check the activities of tout-like persons pretending to advocates in the court premises.

“These types of people wear clothes like lawyers and fool clients by assuring them of legal services and documentation. Security staff at entry gates have been given special instructions to verify the identity of registered lawyers and trainee advocates through Bar Council-issued identity cards or other valid certificates,” he said.

Local lawyers welcomed the initiative and said the rule would curb fraud and ensure clients receive secure, reliable legal services.

“The Bar Association has passed this resolution with the objective of maintaining the sanctity, identity and professional distinction of the legal fraternity within the court premises. Dress code decorum for advocates is for a reason and anyone trying to misuse this must be punished”, said advocate Kulbhushan Bhardwaj, former president of district bar association, Gurugram.

Vande Bharat Will Bring Hearts Closer, Boost Tourism: Dr Farooq



Observer News Service

KATRA: National Conference president Dr Farooq Abdullah on Tuesday hailed the newly inaugurated Vande Bharat Express to Kashmir, calling it a significant step towards bridging emotional and geographical distances while boosting tourism in Jammu and Kashmir.

Speaking to reporters after travelling on the train from Srinagar to Katra, Dr Abdullah said the new rail service fulfils a long-cherished dream of linking the Kashmir Valley with the rest of India. "This train will connect Kashmir with the rest of the country. It can operate even during adverse weather conditions, when roads are closed and airfares skyrocket. People will be spared unnecessary trouble," he said.

He expressed deep gratitude to all those who made the project possible, particularly recalling the contributions of former Prime Ministers Dr Manmohan Singh and Atal Bihari Vajpayee. Calling the Vande Bharat a "blessing" for the region, the former Chief Minister said the train would significantly enhance tourist footfall and provide a direct travel option for visitors from across the country. "This is a step towards reducing 'Dil ki Duri', but more needs to be done to heal the wounds and bridge the gap

completely," he remarked.

After reaching Shri Mata Vaishno Devi Katra Railway Station, Dr Abdullah invoked the spiritual sentiment of the pilgrimage, saying, "Mata ne bulaya hai. Aaya hai bulawa shera wali ka," referring to the call of the revered deity.

He also voiced hope that the train would make travel easier for devotees of the upcoming Amarnath Yatra, facilitating a greater number of pilgrims to visit the holy cave shrine this July.

Dr Abdullah was received at the station by Deputy Chief Minister Surinder Choudhary and NC's Jammu Provincial President Rattan Lal Gupta. He was accompanied on the journey by CM Omar Abdullah's sons Zamir and Zahir Abdullah, Minister Satish Sharma, CM's Advisor Nasir Aslam Wani, and NC Chief Spokesperson Tanvir Sadiq.

He underlined the rail link's potential not just for tourism but also for bolstering the local economy, especially horticulture. With faster transport, Kashmiri produce can now reach markets in distant parts of India like Kanyakumari, Mumbai, Kolkata, and Bihar with greater efficiency.

The NC leader also praised the engineering feats involved in the project, including the world's tallest railway bridge over the Chenab and the Anji cable-stayed bridge.

The Katra-Srinagar-Katra Vande Bharat Express, designed for the region's terrain and climate, runs six days a week (excluding Wednesdays). It offers a high-speed, modern travel experience, completing the journey between Srinagar and Katra in just three hours—providing a new lifeline for tourists, pilgrims, and residents alike.

Srinagar's Kindle Pre-School Launches Swimming Classes For Girls

Observer News Service

SRINAGAR: Tuesday brought a wave of excitement to Mehjoor Nagar Srinagar as a new pre-school opened near the Footbridge, drawing crowds of eager parents and curious children.

But what set the institution apart wasn't just its brightly coloured walls or cheerful classrooms, it was the promise of something rare in this part of the city: swimming classes for young girls.

As word spread, families gathered to glimpse the facility, some marveling at the idea of their daughters learning to swim – a skill often overlooked for girls in the region.

"I never had the chance to learn," said one mother, watching her daughter. "But now, maybe she will."

Director Kulbir Kour spoke on the occasion with a clear mission. "We want every child to step in with wonder and step

out with confidence," she said.

Kindle Pre-School stands out with its focus on sports for tots. Swimming and physical activities top the list, backed by a new 25-foot-long, 4-foot-deep pool. Fenced for safety and watched by lifeguards, it took six months to complete.

The school zeroes in on girls, offering them a safe shot at new skills. A 14-day basic swimming course begins June 18, 2025, for girls over 5.

In Srinagar, pools for kids remain scarce, making this a fresh leap.

Teachers, trained for weeks, guide the children with care, blending play and learning seamlessly.

Amina Bhat, mother to 6-year-old Zoya, radiated pride. "My daughter can't wait to swim and learn here," she said. "It's a safe place, and that means everything."

With 100 families enrolled and more joining, the school buzzes with promise.

DC Pulwama Chairs DLIC Meeting Under Mission Yuva



Observer News Service

PULWAMA: To review and approve applications submitted under the Mission YUVA scheme by SBDU and assess the progress of applications being forwarded by BHDs, Deputy Commissioner (DC) Pulwama, Dr. Basharat Qayoom chaired a meeting of the District Level Implementation Committee (DLIC) under Mission YUVA at the Administrative Complex Pulwama.

During the meeting, a total of 11 cases, verified by SBDU, were placed before the committee for consideration, and were approved for financial assistance and handholding support under Mission YUVA by the DLIC. The committee conducted detailed scrutiny of each application based on eligibility, business viability and the socio-economic background of the applicants.

Addressing the meeting, DC emphasized the importance of promoting self-employment opportunities among local youth, especially those from under privileged and

marginalized sections of society.

He directed all concerned departments to ensure timely disbursement of financial support, continuous monitoring and proper mentoring to ensure the long-term sustainability of the approved ventures. He further stressed the need for enhanced outreach and awareness activities to encourage broader participation under the scheme.

"Strengthen youth-led entrepreneurship and support sustainable livelihood creation through coordinated and effective implementation of Mission YUVA in the district," said DC.

The meeting witnessed the participation of key officials including the Additional Deputy Commissioner, Pulwama (Nodal Officer Mission Yuva); Lead Bank Manager, Pulwama; General Manager, DIC, Pulwama; Assistant Director Employment, Pulwama; District Nodal Officer, JKEDI; District Development Manager, NABARD; DSWO Pulwama and other concerned officers.

LG Visits Sonamarg, Interacts With Stakeholders



Observer News Service

GANDERBAL: Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha on Tuesday visited Sonamarg and interacted with the representatives of Sonamarg Market Association,

Hoteliers, Ponywalas and other service providers for Amar-

nath Yatra.

The members of the delegations put forth various important matters pertaining to the smooth conduct of the forthcoming annual yatra of Amarnath.

The Lieutenant Governor assured the delegations of due

consideration and appropriate redressal of the issues highlighted by them. He also reiterated the commitment of the Amarnath Shrine Board and J&K Administration for the welfare of all the stakeholders associated with the holy pilgrimage.

Operation Sindoor A Defining Blow To Terrorism: Rajnath Singh

Observer News Service

DEHRADUN: Calling terrorism a "curse on humanity" and "an epidemic destined to perish", Defence Minister Rajnath Singh on Tuesday said Operation Sindoor marked the biggest counter-terror offensive in Indian history.

Speaking at a national dialogue on security and terrorism, Singh highlighted the operation as a turning point in India's security posture. The massive cross-border response came in retaliation to the April 22 Pahalgam terror attack that killed 26 civilians. Indian forces targeted nine terror camps in Pakistan and PoK in early May, forcing Pakistan to seek a ceasefire by May 10.

Singh said the Pahalgam attack was aimed at disrupting India's social unity. "India struck back by dismantling terrorist bases. We will not allow such incidents to be repeated," he said.

He asserted that terrorism has no justification—religious, political or ideological—and called Pakistan the "father of global terrorism" for shelter-



ing extremists like Hafiz Saeed and Masood Azhar.

Criticising the UN Security Council's decision to appoint Pakistan as Vice-Chair of its Counter-Terrorism Committee, Singh expressed disbelief. "This country gave refuge to the 9/11 mastermind. It cannot lead a global fight against terror," he said.

The Defence Minister advised Pakistan to seek India's help in fighting terrorism. "If Pakistan can't control terrorism, it should ask for help. Our armed forces have shown their capability during Operation Sindoor," he said.

INDIA STRUCK BACK BY DISMANTLING TERRORIST BASES. We will not allow such incidents to be repeated,"

CS Advocates Solar Shift Under PM Surya Ghar Yojana

Observer News Service

SRINAGAR: Chief Secretary, Atal Dulloo chaired a high level meeting to review the progress achieved under the PM Surya Ghar: Muft Bijli Yojana (PMSMBY), a flagship initiative aimed at promoting solar energy through rooftop installations for the households and solarization of government buildings across the country.

The meeting was attended by Principal Secretary, Power Development Department (PDD); Principal Secretary, Finance; Managing Directors of JPDCL and KPDCIL; Deputy Commissioners; CEO JAKEDA; Chief Engineers of JPDCL and KPDCIL and other senior officials.

Taking stock of the rooftop solar installations across the districts, the Chief Secretary

emphasised the need for time-bound implementation. He directed the DISCOMs, JPDCL and KPDCIL, to ensure that the vendors complete installations in the shortest possible time.

Dulloo impressed upon the Deputy Commissioners to personally monitor the progress on rooftop solar projects in their respective districts and ensure timely completion, enabling the consumers to experience minimal delays. He also reviewed the status of applications and installations district-wise and sought a strategy from each DC to fast-track execution.

To maintain quality and efficiency, he instructed the senior officers of JPDCL and KPDCIL to undertake field visits to inspect the ongoing installations. He stressed the importance of institutional leader-

ship while encouraging the DISCOM employees to set an example by adopting rooftop solar systems themselves.

The Chief Secretary also directed that Common Service Centre (CSC) operators be empanelled to facilitate the consumer registrations at the grassroots level, ensuring ease of access for the rural and remote households.

Reviewing the solarization of government buildings, another critical component of the PMSMBY, the Chief Secretary described it as a prestigious initiative that must be executed with utmost seriousness. He directed the Deputy Commissioners to verify the functionality of each installed rooftop system and submit building-wise status reports by June 30, after coordinating with the JAKEDA for the requisite data.

Muft Bijli Yojana Lights Homes In Frontier Kupwara

Observer News Service

KUPWARA: In the remote and often challenging terrains of the far flung border district Kupwara, a quiet revolution is underway—one that doesn't arrive with noise or fanfare but with rays of sunlight, captured and transformed into power. Thanks to the PM Surya Ghar Muft Bijli Yojana, hundreds of homes in this once energy-starved region now shine brightly with solar-powered electricity.

The scheme, launched to promote clean energy and reduce electricity costs for households, has made a noticeable impact in this district. Through govern-

ment subsidies and the installation of rooftop solar panels, many families have benefited under the scheme.

For Ghulam Mohiddin Peer, a resident of village Drugmulla, the transformation has been life-changing. "Earlier, my electricity bill used to be huge but now it has reduced drastically," said Peer adding, "The scheme provides a good subsidy component and I have also got the subsidy."

Another resident, Haji Farooq Ahmad Malik while appreciating the benefits of the scheme said "I have installed a 3 kv project at home, besides, we have installed the solar sys-

tem in the local masjid also."

Kupwara, due to its remote location and harsh weather conditions, often faces electricity shortages and erratic supply during winter season. However, under this centrally sponsored scheme, households are provided support for panel installation besides also for maintenance and training, enabling locals to manage their systems efficiently.

AEE KPDCIL Kupwara, while highlighting the features and benefits of the PM Surya Ghar Muft Bijli Yojna, appealed to the people to come forward to take benefit of free electricity under the scheme.

Mehbooba Seeks Public Support To Uphold Amarnath Yatra's Spirit

Observer News Service

SRINAGAR: People's Democratic Party (PDP) president and former Chief Minister Mehbooba Mufti has appealed to the residents of Pahalgam to maintain their long-standing tradition of supporting a peaceful and harmonious Amarnath Yatra. She emphasized that while security agencies and administrative measures play their part, the essence of the pilgrimage's safety lies in the commitment and hospitality of the local people.

Addressing a gathering of stakeholders during a public interaction in Pahalgam, Mehbooba acknowledged the logistical efforts of the government and armed forces but highlighted the vital, grassroots-level role of the local population.

"The real guardians of the Amarnath Yatra are not the security forces, but the people of Pahalgam. In every crisis—be it severe weather or natural calamities—they have risen to the occasion, extending shelter, help, and compassion to the pilgrims," she said.

She praised the enduring tradition of communal harmony in the region, noting that the pilgrimage exemplifies Kashmir's inclusive ethos. "The Yatra is more than a religious journey—it reflects our syncretic culture. The hospitality shown by Kashmiris, particularly those in Pahalgam, has preserved the spirit of Hindu-Muslim unity over the decades," she added.

In a pointed critique of the present political landscape, Mehbooba questioned the efficacy of



elected representatives who remain absent during crises. "What is the use of having 50 MLAs and 3 MPs if they are invisible when people need them most? Real governance means action on the ground—not mere statements or social media posts," she said.

Calling for measures to rejuvenate Kashmir's tourism sector, the former Chief Minister urged the administration to immediately reopen public parks and tourist spots that remain closed. She said the continued closure has severely affected the livelihoods of thousands dependent on tourism.

"Tourism in Pahalgam's backbone. When public spaces are locked down, it hits the entire ecosystem—hoteliers, pony operators, shopkeepers, and artisans all suffer. Reopening them would revive the local economy and restore confidence among tourists," she said.

Recalling the deep bond her late father and former CM Mufti Mohammad Sayeed had with the area, Mehbooba said Pahalgam held a special place in his vision for Kashmir. "He saw Pahalgam as more than just a scenic destination—it represented the true soul of Kashmir: peaceful, hospitable, and resilient," she remarked.

FIR Registered Over 'Obscene Acts' In Bandipora Market

Observer News Service

BANDIPORA: Bandipora Police on Tuesday said that an FIR has been registered and a few boys apprehended following inputs about obscene activities taking place in the main market area of Bandipora.

The clarification came in response to widespread speculation on social media suggesting a sex racket had been busted in a restaurant in the locality. Dismissing the rumours, police categorically stated that no female was involved in the incident.

In a statement issued on social media, Bandipora Police said it had received credible inputs indicating that some individuals were engaged in ob-

scene acts, causing public nuisance in the main market.

"Acting on the information, a police team, along with the Executive Magistrate, reached the spot and apprehended a few boys who were allegedly involved in the act," the statement read.

Police further confirmed that no girl was apprehended or found involved in the matter. "An FIR has been registered under relevant sections of law at Police Station Bandipora," the statement added.

Authorities have urged media professionals to avoid circulating unverified information and advised the general public not to fall prey to rumours being spread on social media.

DC Sgr Finalizes Arrangements For Parkash Purab



Observer News Service

SRINAGAR: In order to review the arrangements for the celebration of Prakash Purab marking the birth anniversary of Guru Hargobind Singh Ji being celebrated on June 12, 2025, a meeting was chaired by Deputy Commissioner (DC) Srinagar, Dr. Bilal Mohi-Ud-Din Bhat at Meeting Hall of the DC Office Complex here.

During the meeting, arrangements were finalized for seamless celebrations of the Prakash Purab particularly at Gurdwara Chattipadshi Rainawari where a large number of people are expected to participate in the occasion with religious devotion.

At the outset, DC took a detailed appraisal about the arrangements to be made by different departments for smooth celebrations of the Prakash Purab in the district.

On the occasion, DC directed the officers to ensure fool proof arrangements by their respective departments to facilitate the devotees of Sikh community to celebrate religious festivals with full color. He instructed, for ensuring hassle-free traffic and parking arrangements and uninterrupted supply of power and water.

DC directed the SMC authorities to ensure proper sanitation

measures, besides adequate measures to tackle dog menace around the Gurdwara Chatti Padshahi Rainawari.

DC also instructed concerned officers to make adequate numbers of buses available so that devotees may not face inconvenience while traveling to Chatti Padshahi.

Similarly, Officers of Health, Food Safety, Fire & Emergency and other departments were directed to ensure all requisite measures at Gurdwara Chatti Padshahi Rainawari for the devotees on the day.

Earlier, members of the District Gurdwara Parbandhak Committee who were present in the meeting briefed the DC about the requirements for the occasion.

They sought adequate arrangements for ensuring proper traffic and parking facilities, health facility, security management, cleanliness in and around Gurdwaras particularly Chattipadshahi Rainawari, besides making arrangements for uninterrupted power and water supplies.

Besides Additional Deputy Commissioner, Aadil Fareed, the meeting was attended by SP Security, Superintending Engineers of R&B, PHE, SDM East, SDM West, Chief Sanitation Officer, Tehsildar Khanayr, Executive Engineer PHE and other Officers.

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KO VIEW

Statehood In Limbo

Former Jammu and Kashmir Chief Minister Dr Farooq Abdullah on Monday reiterated the call for restoration of J&K’s statehood, terming it a fundamental demand and an essential step for ensuring governance and development in the region. Speaking to reporters in Ganderbal, Abdullah said that promises made by the Centre in Parliament and before the Supreme Court must be honoured in full.

The demand was also voiced by the NC’s additional General Secretary and Former Minister, Ajay Kumar Sadhotra, who said the continued delay in the restoration of statehood to Jammu and Kashmir is severely obstructing its overall development and undermining the aspirations of its people.

Now, the question is whether the centre has any immediate or near-term plan to reinstate statehood? There is no easy answer to this. If the recent statements by the senior union government leadership are anything to go by, there are no signs to this effect. This is a promise whose reiteration by them has been conspicuously absent from any remarks on Kashmir in recent weeks. Prime Minister Narendra Modi too skipped any mention of the J&K statehood in his recent visit to the region to inaugurate Chenab bridge. This, despite the fact that the Chief Minister specifically made this demand in his speech.

However, the PM didn’t respond to the demand in his speech unlike in January when he visited to inaugurate Z-Morh tunnel in Sonamarg connecting Kashmir Valley in Ladakh. Also, the central government has never given a timeline for the return of statehood. So, there is a section of people in J&K who believe that statehood might take longer than expected. More so, after the Pahalgam attack and the now paused Operation Sindoor, which has fundamentally altered the geopolitical situation in the region. It remains to be seen whether the transformed context has also altered the centre’s priorities in Kashmir. For example, this may have made it more chary of the civilian control of the governance in J&K, especially that of the security situation. But there can also be a counter-argument to this: J&K has been run by a civilian government during its toughest times over the past three decades. And with cooperation from the centre, it could do so again. Ultimately, the question of statehood for J&K may remain unresolved for some time, with both its advocates and detractors watching closely. But eventually, the centre may even pleasantly surprise the people of the union territory.

FINANCIAL FIX

Let Your Money Do the Work

In a region where most families rely on a single income, learning how to build passive income could change everything.

Irshad Mushtaq

In Kashmir, most households still depend on one person to earn for all. Usually, it’s the father or eldest male. His ability to earn often shapes his role in the family. But when that income stops, even briefly, families face real trouble.

That’s because most people only know one kind of earning: active income. It’s the money you make by working. At a job, in a shop, or on a farm. If you can’t work, the income stops. And with rising costs and growing needs, that risk is too high.

There’s another way: passive income. It’s what you earn without showing up every day. Rent, dividends, interest—money that your money makes. It needs planning, yes, but it offers something active income never can: peace of mind.

Here’s a simple example. If you invest 1 crore wisely with a 12% return, you could earn 1 lakh a month, without working. That’s steady income for your family, even if life takes an unexpected turn.

It starts with saving, then investing. Build assets, not just bank balances. Don’t fall into social traps like lavish weddings or luxury spending. Those don’t build wealth. Strategic planning does.

In Kashmir, this shift in mindset could reshape futures. The goal isn’t to get rich fast. It’s to stay secure, even when life gets hard. Passive income gives you that safety net.

If more people start thinking this way, the financial stress on families could ease. Children wouldn’t fear sudden loss. Parents could rest a little easier. And slowly, Kashmir could move from survival mode to financial strength.

The author is a Srinagar-based reputed financial advisor.

This Eid, Kashmiris Celebrated Wisely

Some called it a muted celebration. But in the bakeries, butcher shops and alleyways of Kashmir, people marked Eid with care, restraint and dignity, not absence.



Zahid Sultan

“This year, Kashmiris chose less. But they also chose wisely. They chose deliberately. They chose each other. And in doing so, they reminded us of something we’ve forgotten: that the economy of dignity doesn’t always come with receipts.

Every year, like clockwork, someone says it: Kashmir didn’t spend much this Eid.

It’s said in newsrooms, shop counters, WhatsApp forwards, and expert panels. The logic is simple: fewer fireworks, fewer shopping bags, fewer sales receipts must mean less celebration, less life.

But what if that reading says more about the expectations of the observer than the choices of the people?

I spent this Eid in Pulwama, and what I saw didn’t match the headlines. There was no loud extravaganza, no flood of shoppers choking the roads. But there was movement, warmth, and intention. People bought what they could, and what they needed. A little meat. A pair of sandals for the youngest daughter. Biscuits from the baker, who sold out before noon. There were greetings exchanged, prayers said, homes cleaned, and food shared.

It didn’t look like a spectacle. But it looked like life.

In Kashmir, where trauma has bent the shape of daily routine for decades, ordinary days are never entirely ordinary. And special days like Eid carry even more weight. The idea that Kashmiris didn’t spend enough this time isn’t just wrong — it’s lazy. It reduces the complex moral choices of a people to a ledger sheet.

What exactly does “not spending” mean? Are we talking about retail figures? Card transactions? Or is it a vague sense, picked up from a few malls and media bytes, that things weren’t “bustling enough”? Most of the time, it’s that last one — a kind of soft disappointment that Kashmir didn’t put on a show.

But why should it? What rulebook says joy must be loud to be real? That dignity must wear designer labels?

There’s a quieter kind of celebration that’s easy to miss if you’re not looking closely. In

Pulwama’s markets, I saw men weighing mutton in back lanes, teenagers laughing over plastic bangles, and women bargaining for embroidered scarves. These weren’t big-ticket purchases. But they weren’t nothing. They were what people could afford, what they chose with care.

And in those choices was something deeply human — an economy not of noise, but of meaning.

This isn’t about glorifying scarcity. Kashmiris, like anyone else, want to live well. They want to provide for their families, enjoy their holidays, feel secure. But when money is tight — and dignity is even tighter — people make trade-offs. They celebrate within limits. They make space for others to do the same. That’s not failure. That’s wisdom.

There’s a popular idea in economics that well-being is best measured by how much people consume. It’s a convenient yardstick — neat, countable, visible. But it’s not the only one. And it misses something essential, especially in places like Kashmir.

Kashmir’s economy, especially during festivals, often follows a different script. It’s shaped by things that are harder to quantify — responsibility, memory, restraint. One father told me he bought only one pair of new clothes this year — not for himself, but for his daughter. “That’s enough,” he said. “She’ll remember the day, not the price.”

Some might call that a small gesture. I think it’s a powerful one.

In academic terms, this might be called a “moral economy” — one where spending choices are tied to values, not just prices. But you don’t need jargon to understand what that means. It’s the decision to skip a new outfit so a neighbour can afford meat. It’s the refusal to show off when someone else is barely getting by.

That kind of thinking runs deep in Kashmir. It comes from

generations of living under curfews, shocks, and shutdowns. It comes from remembering what it feels like to have nothing. And from knowing that the measure of a good Eid isn’t how much you spent, but whether everyone had something.

This year, that spirit was alive. You just had to know where to look.

The idea that Kashmir’s celebration was “muted” isn’t just wrong — it’s also telling. It reveals how quickly we confuse visibility with vitality. If it’s not on Instagram, did it really happen? If the shops weren’t overflowing, was there even joy?

But many Kashmiri households marked Eid without posting a single photo. That doesn’t mean they weren’t celebrating. It means they were too busy living.

And maybe that’s the point we keep missing. In a world that pushes us to consume more, show more, and feel more, all at once, choosing less is sometimes the most radical act.

This year, Kashmiris chose less. But they also chose wisely. They chose deliberately. They chose each other. And in doing so, they reminded us of something we’ve forgotten: that the economy of dignity doesn’t always come with receipts.

So the next time someone says Kashmir didn’t spend much this Eid, ask them this: what kind of spending are you looking for? And what kind of economy do you think really matters?

Because from where I stood, among the dust and the chai and the lively exchanges, it didn’t look like absence. It looked like endurance. It looked like care. It looked like home.

The author is a freelance researcher with a PhD in Political Science from the Central University of Kashmir. He can be reached at zahidcuk36@gmail.com

Letter to Editor

20 Years On, Rural Kashmir’s Digital Workers Still Wait

It’s been over twenty years. We are the Community Information Centre (CIC) Operators who have served across rural Kashmir under the Rural Development Department. We were hired to help bring digital services to the farthest corners of the region — to connect people with their government. We did our job. We stayed through floods, shutdowns, power cuts, and policy shifts. Yet our jobs remain temporary, our futures uncertain.

When we started, many of us were young graduates. We believed in the project. We believed in our roles. Most of us were posted in re-

mote blocks where we became the first point of contact for people trying to access public services. We helped villagers apply for ration cards, pensions, birth certificates, and other essential records. Our work was recognized by local officials and welcomed by citizens. But year after year, our job status stayed the same — contractual, unstable, underpaid.

Successive governments gave assurances. Regularization was promised, most clearly during the previous tenure of Chief Minister Omar Abdullah. His party’s election manifesto in 2014 placed our is-

sue high on the list. It meant something to us at the time. We believed change was coming.

But the promise was never fulfilled. We have met every requirement. Our documentation is complete. Many of us have crossed the age limit for other government jobs. We have no safety net, no pension, and in many cases, not enough income to support our families with dignity. We live from one month to the next, unsure if our next paycheck will even arrive.

This isn’t just about employment. It’s about recognition. It’s about honouring the commitment

made to a workforce that played a quiet but essential role in Kashmir’s digital transformation.

We write now with a simple, sincere appeal. Let the government — and especially the Chief Minister Omar Abdullah — remember what was promised. We don’t ask for favours. We ask for fairness. We ask for action.

After two decades, how much longer are we expected to wait?

Sincerely,
CIC Operators, Rural Development Department
Jammu and Kashmir

Did Kashmir Miss the Point of Eid?

Filmed in portrait mode, shared with filters. When did Eid ul Azha become content instead of conviction?



Sheep quivered, eyes wide as moons, pleading from Baramulla to Kulgam. Their bleats, a tongue of betrayal, echoed Kierkegaard's vision of Abraham, riding home, sorrow a silent rider. No tales for sheep, only ropes, only death draped in tradition's cloak. Do we test love's depth, or weigh our wallets?

Syed Eesar Mehdi

Last week, Eid ul Azha drifted through Kashmir, a valley where faith weaves with whispers of ancient winds. Sacrifice, a cry torn from comfort's embrace, arches over the chasm, tying the fleeting to the forever.

Imagine sheep trembling in Srinagar's shadow, ropes taut, knives glinting under a sky soft as a sigh. What sang in this Feast of Sacrifice?

Ibrahim's act lingered, his heart a quivering flame, climbing a mountain, blade in hand, his son a step behind, offered to the unseen.

Kashmir hummed alive. Over 45,000 animals, a butcher from Budgam swore, bowed to the blade, their flesh parted: a share for kin, a share for neighbours, a share for the poor.

The Qur'an murmurs the miracle. Not the ram that spared Ismail, but Ibrahim's pulse, racing to obey. What do we yield?

Rumi, voice of the heart, wondered why we crawl, wings folded, born to soar.

In Anantnag, laughter spilled, children in bright threads darted through lanes, while hands in Shopian stretched mutton to the hungry. 12,000 gifts, an elder reckoned.

Had the fire cooled, dulled to a murmur of habit?

Sacrifice scorns the safe, laughs at ease. Not blood alone, but will: a heart laid bare to the vast. Did we, in Kashmir, shake like Ibrahim?

Sheep quivered, eyes wide as moons, pleading from Baramulla to Kulgam. Their bleats, a tongue of betrayal, echoed Kierkegaard's vision of Abraham, riding home, sorrow a silent rider. No tales for sheep, only ropes, only death draped in tradition's cloak. Do we test love's depth, or weigh our wallets?

In this valley, the chant turned: not what we'd surrender, but what we'd spend.

Eid ul Azha, they sing, teaches yielding. Yet routine carves it hollow. Pride bloomed in Kashmir, thicker than any goat, as youth flashed knives for eyes online, not heaven's gaze.



The blade, once a sacred arc, cut for applause. Kierkegaard dreamed faith a tempest, a leap where obedience dances with madness. Had we, by Dal Lake's ripple, swapped storm for still?

Faiz Ahmed Faiz wept: after the slaughter, sorrow lingers. Sorrow clung, a silent guest, as meat's scent wafted, adhan soaring over Hazratbal.

Generosity flowed—8,000 homes fed, Sore's counters said—but giving, heartless, trades, never redeems.

Sheep, innocent of verse, shivered beneath Kashmir's sun, fear their only song. Thinkers turn away; poets weave odes, yet blood pools. Was Ibrahim's step faith or frenzy?

Kierkegaard named it a divine pause,

right and wrong unmoored. Claim that, and we must kneel to its ache. Don't slay for the day's dawn. Slay because the impossible stares back, like Ibrahim. Or spare them, life brighter than a faded echo.

Rumi begged us cut pride, not flesh. In Kashmir, pride stood, unbloodied, as sheep fell, the rite a whisper without tremble.

Once, sacrifice wove tribes to eternity, blood a vow. Where's our thread? A fleeting prayer, a shared word?

From Habbakadal to Kulgam, meat's aroma rose, but did it lift like incense, or dull our souls?

Sartre spurned heaven's call, swore we're free, bound to choose, obedience a betrayal. He never bled for the hidden. Ibrahim did. Sheep do. Yet a spark glows.

A child, eyes on a goat's fall in Eidgah, asks why. That cry, fragile, fierce, is Eid—certainty bleeds, tradition cracks. Faith, Kierkegaard knew, storms, never rests.

Kashmir's sheep, quaking, turned sacred, a glass to our will, our trial. No choice theirs, but fear made them true. Faiz's sorrow twined faith, two streams in the valley's pulse.

Here, Eid wasn't flesh or rite. It was the mountain—scaling it, love heavy, a knife dreaded. Did we quiver?

- Dr Syed Eesar Mehdi is a Research Fellow at International Centre for Peace Studies, New Delhi, India. The views expressed here are his own. He can be reached @eesar.mehdi@gmail.com

A Helping Hand in the Valley

Without titles or a clinic, a Kashmiri Samaritan helps people name their pain, reach for help, and believe in healing. In a place where silence often hides suffering, his work is changing lives.

Gowher Bhat

Zahid Ashraf lives in a modest neighbourhood tucked between the dusty roads of Zafran Colony, Sempora, a short drive from Srinagar. His home doesn't have a signboard, and he doesn't call himself a therapist. Still, people come.

They come with heavy hearts, scattered thoughts, and stories they haven't told anyone else. Zahid listens. That's where it starts.

"I'm not a doctor," he says, "but I can sit with someone and say: what you're feeling, it's okay. It has a name. And it can get better."

Zahid, 29, studied psychology in college but never pursued a clinical license. Instead, he made mental health his way of serving people. He talks to those who are hurting, gives them books, tells them they're not alone. And sometimes, when they're ready, he connects them to a therapist.

One of them was Ubaid Manzoor, a 22-year-old who used to sit in silence for hours, lost in his own head. "I didn't know what was happening to me," Ubaid says. "I would get angry without reason. I stopped talking to friends. I thought I was broken."

Zahid noticed him during a neighbourhood gathering. They talked. Then they talked again. "He gave me a book on depression," Ubaid recalls. "And he said, read just a few pages. I did. That's when it clicked. This is what I've been going through."

For weeks, Zahid met Ubaid over tea. Sometimes they walked. Sometimes they cooked. Eventually, Zahid helped him book an appointment with a professional. "I was scared," Ubaid says. "But Zahid bhai went with me the first time. He didn't have to, but he did. Now, I smile more. I talk. I feel lighter."

This isn't a formal program. There's no funding, no office, no team. Zahid works alone, often out of his own pocket. He keeps a growing collection of books on anxiety, grief, trauma, and healing. He lends them out, always making sure the person knows they can return it anytime, or keep it.

In his own words, "A book can be the first



friend that tells you: you're not crazy."

Sometimes, he hands people a sketchbook. Or tells them to write a poem. Other times, he teaches them to cook. "Cooking helps you focus," he says. "You cut vegetables, you smell the spices, you stay in the moment." In Kashmir, where food is tied to memory and emotion, he finds it an easy doorway to peace.

His house smells of cardamom most evenings. The living room has more books than furniture. On the wall, there's a framed piece of calligraphy that reads: Sabak phir padh sadaqat ka, adalat ka, shujaat ka — lines from a famous poem about truth, justice, and courage.

Zahid doesn't speak in big statements. He speaks slowly, gently, often pausing mid-sentence to search for the right word. But his actions are clear. He volunteers at the local mosque, calls the azan, helps sweep the floors when no one's watching. Last winter, when heavy snow blocked access to a family's house nearby, Zahid and a few boys cleared the path with shovels.

"Kids in the area respect him," says Imtiyaz, a neighbour. "He never preaches. He just helps."

In recent years, Zahid started travelling to villages outside Srinagar with NGOs. He doesn't take a salary. He teaches children and parents about emotional wellbeing. He talks about what sadness feels like, what stress can do to the body, and why it's okay to cry.

In one session at a rural school in Pulwama, he asked students to draw what fear looked like. One girl drew a locked door. Another drew a shadow. When they talked about the drawings, some of the children started to open up. "One boy said his uncle died in front of him," Zahid recalls. "He'd never spoken about it. Not once."

Mental health services in Kashmir remain scarce. According to a 2015 survey by Médecins Sans Frontières, nearly 45 percent of the population shows signs of psychological distress. Self-harm cases have lately surged. Therapists are too few, and stigma keeps many away.

"People here don't use the word depression," Zahid says. "They say, 'mera dil ghabraata hai'. They say, 'mujhe neend nahi aati'. We have to meet them where they are."

He doesn't claim to fix anyone. "I'm not the solution," he says. "I just help them see that there is one."

What sets Zahid apart isn't just what he does, it's how he does it. There's no urgency, no saviour complex. He waits. He listens. He treats people like they matter, not like they're a case to be solved.

"I think of it like watering a dry plant," he says. "You don't pull the leaves and say, grow. You give it sunlight. You wait."

Back in his neighbourhood, more young people are following his example. A cousin of his recently started reading about trauma and wants to study counseling. A group of local boys have begun volunteering at old-age homes. Zahid doesn't call this a movement. But it's moving.

When asked why he keeps doing this, even with no money or formal backing, he shrugs. "It's just what makes sense to me," he says. "I know how it feels to be lost in your head. If I can sit with someone for an hour and help them feel seen, that's enough."



Zahid doesn't speak in big statements. He speaks slowly, gently, often pausing mid-sentence to search for the right word. But his actions are clear. He volunteers at the local mosque, calls the azan, helps sweep the floors when no one's watching.

In a place like Kashmir, where stories of pain often go unheard, Zahid Ashraf is building an archive of hope. Not in files or statistics, but in faces that start to smile again. In hands that learn to write, or draw, or cook. In voices that say, for the first time, "I think I need help."

He doesn't call it healing. He just calls it being human.

- The author is a Pulwama-based English language instructor.

'Obesity Injections May Have Fewer Weight Loss Effects In Real World'

Press Trust of India

New Delhi: Anti-obesity injections may have smaller effects on weight loss in a real-world context compared to clinical trials, as patients tend to discontinue treatment or use a lower maintenance dose, a study in US patients has found.

Semaglutide, sold under the brand names Wegovy and Ozempic, and tirzepatide (Zepbound and Mounjaro) are prescribed for weight management and treating type 2 diabetes by helping patients regulate blood sugar.

The study, published in the Obesity Journal, examined the effects of anti-obesity injectables on weight reduction and blood sugar regulation (glycaemic control) in a real-world setting.

"Our study shows that patients treated for obesity with semaglutide or tirzepatide lost less weight on average in a regular clinical setting compared to what is observed in randomised clinical trials," lead author Dr Hamlet Gasoyan, a researcher with the Cleveland Clinic, US, said.

"According to our data, this could be explained by higher rates of discontinuation and lower maintenance dosages used in clinical practice, compared to randomised clinical trial settings," Dr Gasoyan said.



The researchers examined 7,881 adult patients with an average body mass index (BMI) of over 39 -- classified as 'severe obesity'. Of these, 1,320 had pre-diabetes at the start of the study, which meant they were at a higher risk of developing type 2 diabetes.

The participants were started on obesity treatments between 2021 and 2023 with semaglutide or tirzepatide injectables.

Following up on the participants a year after starting with the treatment, the average weight loss among those who discontinued injections within three months was 3.6 per cent, compared to 6.8 per cent in those who discontinued within 3-12 months.

"Mean percentage weight reduction at one year was 8.7 per cent, and it was 3.6 per cent with early discontinuation (three months), 6.8 per cent with late discontinuation (3-12 months) and 11.9 per cent with no discontinuation," the authors wrote.

Furthermore, those on a high-maintenance dosage -- the amount required to sustain the effects of the medication -- lost 13.7 per cent of their body weight with semaglutide and 18 per cent with tirzepatide, the researchers said.

Among the participants having pre-diabetes, 33 per cent of those who stopped taking injections within three months experienced normal blood sugar levels, compared to 41 per cent who discontinued within 3-12 months, and 67.9 per cent of those who did not discontinue treatment.

PUBLIC NOTICE

I have changed my name from RESHMI PANDIT to ROZY. It is for the information of the general public and concerned authorities that ROZY and RESHMI PANDIT is the name of the one and the same person . 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.

ROZY W/o CHAND JEE BHATT D/o ARJAN NATH PANDIT,
R/o Q. No. 4 Block-B, Opp. Toll Post TRT camp Nagrota Jammu
fko

PUBLIC NOTICE

This is for the information to the general public that I intend to correct the name in my Passport bearing No N4331988 from Kacho Mohd Ali to Kacho Mohd Ali Khan as per my aadhar card. In this regard if anybody have any kind of objection he/she may file with Passport Office Srinagar within a period of 7 days from the date of publicaiton of this notice. No objection will be entertained afterwards.

ar

OFFICE OF THE DEPUTY GENERAL MANAGER MECHANICAL UNIT J&KPCC LIMITED

BTF Premises opposite SRTC Yard Pampore Srinagar

No: Mech/k/ 111-17
DATED: 10 / 06 /2025

AUCTION NOTICE

It is notified for the information of all concerned that auction of the Krishmi and Grass grown naturally in the premises of Brick & Tile factory (Mechanical Unit) JKPCC Ltd pampore is to be made on 21/06/2025 at 2.00PM. It is obligatory for the participants to deposit cash of Rs:6,500/= (Rupees Six thousand Five Hundred only) in the office of under signed before start of the auction as deposit amount. The minimum reserve bid for the auction is fixed as Rs:65,000/=. (Rupees Sixty Five thousand only) The successful bidder shall have to deposit the full amount within week's time from the date of issuance of allotment in his favour.

The under signed reserves the right to accept or reject any offer or auction without assigning any reason.

DIPK-NB-741/25
dated: 10-06-2025

(Er. Saleem Jan)
Deputy General Manager
Mechanical Unit JKPCC Ltd.

Subject:-Grant of Registration of the Proposed Travel unit under the name and style M/S" Nemat Tour & Travel" Situated at Illahi Bagh Srinagar, 190020.

PUBLIC NOTICE

Whereas, I Mr Mubashir Ahmad Beigh S/o Late Musthaq Ahmad Beigh R/o Illahi Bagh Srinagar, Kashmir intends to apply in the Department of Tourism for registration of my proposed Travel Unit under the name and style "Nemat Tour and Travel" Situated at Illahi Bagh Srinagar, 190020 Kashmir under the Tourist Trade Act 1978/82/2011-12.

Whereas, I will submit State Subject/Domicile Certificate, Qualification Certificate, Pan Card, Experience Certificate (Minimum 05 Years) Character Certificate (Police Department) Bank Statement (Minimum Balance 10000), Site Plan, Affidavit, Rent Deed duly attested by Sub-Registrar, Printing Material (Letter Head/Visiting Card), Photograph of the Unit (Indoor and Outdoor) and Two Passport size photographs to the Department of Tourism as per prescribed checklist prior to Registration of my unit as an Excursion Agency/ Adventure tour Operator.

Now as per J&K Registration of Tourist Trade Act 1978/82/2011/12, before my case is processed for registration by the Competent Authority, the matter is hereby notified for information of general Public/Financial Institutions/Bank/Organization, etc for objection, if any and the same should reach to the Deputy Director Tourism Registration (e-mail id:- ddtreg123@gmail.com) within a period of 7 days from the publication of this notice in leading local newspaper/newspapers of the valley. No objections beyond a period of 7 days shall be entertained.

Media Use Ads

PUBLIC NOTICE

It is hereby notified that the name of my son has been wrongly recorded in his Aadhaar card as Majid Manzoor Ganie. The correct name is Abdul Majid Ganaie, which needs to be corrected accordingly.

If anyone has any objection to this correction, he/she may approach the concerned Adhar centre Srinagar/Jammu within 7 days of this notice. After that, no objection shall be entertained.

Manzoor Ahmad Ganie Fp Abdul Majid Ganaie
R/o Hamray Tehsil pattan

fko

Office of the Naib Tehsildar Pattan

Sub. Application of Mohammad Ramzan Hajam s/o Ghulam Ahmad Hajam R/o Hanjiwera Bala for issuance of income dependency Certificate..

PUBLIC NOTICE

IT is inform to general public that applicants income dependency Certificate is under process in this office in this matter report Was sought from Patwari concerned which reveals that applicant is residing in village Hanjiwera Bala.Applicant is a labour and monthly income of applicant is 5500. The family members who are dependent upon applicant's income are as under .

Name of Dependent	Age (in Years)	Occupation	Relationship with the Applicant	Marital Status
HASEENA BEGUM	46	HOUSEWIFE	WIFE	MARRIED
NAZIR AHMAD	23	STUDENT	SON	UNMARRIED
HAJAM NIGHAT BANO	30	HOMEWORK	DAUGHTER	UNMARRIED
SHABIR AHMAD	19	STUDENT	DAUGHTER	UNMARRIED
HAJAM				

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

SD

Naib Tehsildar Pattan

fko

GOVERNMENT OF JAMMU AND KASHMIR

OFFICE OF THE DISTRICT INFORMATION OFFICER ANANTNAG

Ph. /Fax: 01932-464427

Email: dio.angkmr@gmail.com

SHORT TERM QUOTATION

For and on the behalf of the Government of Jammu & Kashmir, short term quotations are invited from interested registered agencies for providing Commercial Gas Cylinders for SANJY-2025 on requirement basis, which shall conform to the terms and conditions mentioned below:

- The tenders/quotations in sealed envelope should reach this office by or before 17.06.2025 at 02.00 pm during working days personally or through registered post. The bids shall be opened in the presence of bidders or their representatives at 11.00 am on 18.06.2025.
- The rates should be quoted in figures as well as in words without cutting.
- Incomplete/Conditional quotations in any respect will be rejected.
- The bidder must offer discounts on the LPG cylinder rates applicable as per the the Oil Marketing Companies (OMC) approved rates and selection of bidders shall be on the basis of lowest cost per cylinder basis (Ex Anantnag).
- The rates per cylinder shall be inclusive of GST, freight, overhead charges and any other charges etc.

For any clarification, contact the office (Ph. No. 01932-464427) of the undersigned during office hours within the stipulated time.

DIPK-2349/25
dated: 10-06-2025

Sd/-
District Information Officer
Anantnag



The methods used to consume news have changed over time from newspapers, to television, to the Internet on our computers to carrying the news around with us 24/7 on smartphones in our pockets.

Kashmir Observer, with 28 years of experience in news gathering is now available 24x7 on all digital platforms like laptops, cell phones or via Bluetooth on your smart TV's across the world

Kashmir Observer is a one stop information bank for you. Watch live debates, talk shows and documentaries on critical issues facing Kashmir on KO youtube channel.

VISIT

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OR SCAN



OUR SPECIAL PROGRAMMES

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VOX POP

UNRAVEL KASHMIR

Disruption Of Rare Earth Magnet Supplies Beyond 30 Days Can Impact Vehicle Production: Report



Press Trust Of India

A disruption in rare earth magnet supplies lasting beyond a month can impact production of passenger vehicles, including electric models, weighing on the domestic automobile industry's growth momentum, a report on Tuesday said.

Rare earth magnets, low in cost but critical in function, could emerge as a key supply-side risk for India's automotive sector if China's export restrictions and delays in shipment clearances persist, Crisil Ratings said in a statement.

"The supply squeeze comes just as the auto sector is preparing for aggressive EV rollouts. Over a dozen new electric models are planned for launch, most built on PMSM platforms," Crisil Ratings Senior Director Anuj Sethi said.

While most automakers currently have 4-6 weeks of inventory, prolonged delays could start affecting vehicle production, with EV models facing deferrals or rescheduling from July 2025, he added.

A broader impact on two-wheelers and ICE PVs may follow if the supply bottlenecks persist for an extended period, Sethi said.

"The shortage of rare earth magnets is forcing automakers to reassess supply-chain strategies. Despite contributing less than 5 per cent of a vehicle's cost, these magnets are indispensable for EV motors and electric steering systems," said Crisil Ratings Director Poonam Upadhyay.

Automakers are actively engaging with alternative suppliers in countries such as Vietnam, Indonesia, Japan, Australia, and the US, while also optimising existing inventories, she noted.

"With applications across EVs and ICE vehicles, a prolonged supply squeeze could disrupt production of PVs and 2Ws, making this low-cost component a potential high-impact bottleneck for the sector," she said.

Rare earth magnets are integral to Permanent Magnet Synchronous Motors (PMSMs) used in EVs for their high torque, energy efficiency and compact size.

Hybrids also depend on them for efficient propulsion. In internal combustion engine (ICE) vehicles, the use of rare earth magnets is largely limited to electric power steering and other motorised systems.

The shortage of rare earth magnets is forcing automakers to reassess supply-chain strategies. Despite contributing less than 5 per cent of a vehicle's cost, these magnets are indispensable for EV motors and electric steering systems,"

In April this year, China, the world's dominant exporter of rare earth magnets, imposed export restrictions on seven rare earth elements and finished magnets, mandating export licences.

The revised framework demands detailed end-use disclosures and client declarations, including confirmation that the products will not be used in defence or re-exported to the US.

With the clearance process taking at least 45 days, this added scrutiny has significantly delayed approvals.

And the growing backlog has further slowed clearances, tightening global supply chains.

India, which sourced over 80 per cent of its 540 tonnes magnet imports from China last fiscal, has started to feel the impact.

By end-May 2025, nearly 30 import requests from Indian companies were endorsed by the Indian government, but none have yet been approved by the Chinese authorities, and no shipments have arrived.

During the pandemic, rare earth magnet supplies remained stable, unlike semiconductors, reinforcing reliance on just-in-time inventory without building strategic buffers.

However, while semiconductors have a globally diversified supply base, over 90 per cent of rare earth magnet processing is concentrated in China, with limited short-term alternatives.

Recognising the risk, the government and automakers are taking action on two fronts, Crisil said.

In the short term, the focus is on building strategic inventories, tapping alternative suppliers and accelerating domestic assembly under Production Linked Incentive schemes.

'Hmm...Something Seems To Have Gone Wrong': ChatGPT Experiences Global Outage

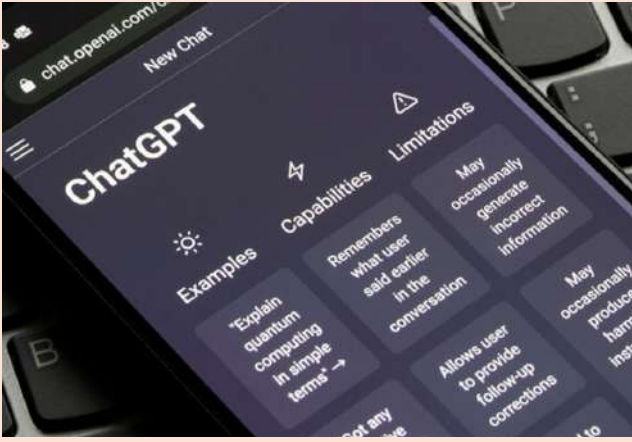
Press Trust Of India

OpenAI's AI chatbot ChatGPT experienced a major global outage on Tuesday, leaving thousands of users unable to access the service across multiple continents, with India and the United States reporting the highest number of disruptions.

According to the real-time monitoring platform Downdetector, user reports of ChatGPT outages surged rapidly around 3:00 PM, with about 800 complaints logged in India alone.

About 88 per cent of complaints from India cited the chatbot not responding to queries, 8 per cent reported issues with the mobile app, and 3 per cent faced API-related problems.

Users attempting to access ChatGPT encountered repeated error messages such as "Hmm...something seems to



have gone wrong" and "A network error occurred. Please check your connection and try again." The outage led to a flurry of activity on social media, with users sharing memes, voicing frustration, and highlighting the growing reliance on AI tools for daily tasks.

OpenAI acknowledged the outage on its system status page, confirming that both ChatGPT and its text-to-video platform Sora were affected. "Some users are experiencing elevated error rates and latency across the listed services. We are continuing to investigate this issue," OpenAI said.

However, it did not provide a specific timeline for resolution.



SOME USERS ARE EXPERIENCING ELEVATED ERROR rates and latency across the listed services. We are continuing to investigate this issue"

US And China Are Holding Trade Talks In London After Trump's Phone Call With Xi

AP

LONDON: High-level delegations from the United States and China met in London on Monday to try and shore up a fragile truce in a trade dispute that has roiled the global economy.

A Chinese delegation led by Vice Premier He Lifeng held talks with US Commerce Secretary Howard Lutnick, Treasury Secretary Scott Bessent and Trade Representative Jamieson Greer at Lancaster House, an ornate 200-year-old mansion near Buckingham Palace.

Wang Wentao, China's commerce minister, also was part of Beijing's delegation.

The talks, which may continue on Tuesday, follow negotiations in Geneva last month that brought a temporary respite in the trade war.

The two countries announced on May 12 they had agreed to a 90-day suspension of most of the 100 per cent-plus tariffs they had imposed on each other in an escalating trade war that had sparked fears of recession.

The US and China are the world's biggest and second-biggest economies. Chinese trade data shows that exports to the United States fell 35 per cent in May from a year earlier.

Since the Geneva talks, the US and China have exchanged angry words over advanced semiconductors that power artificial intelligence, visas for Chinese students at American



universities and "rare earth" minerals that are vital to car makers and other industries.

President Donald Trump spoke at length with Chinese leader Xi Jinping by phone last Thursday in an attempt to put relations back on track.

Trump announced on social media the following day that the trade talks would resume

rare earth elements in April. Resulting shortages sent automakers worldwide into a tizzy. As stockpiles ran down, some worried they would have to halt production.

Beijing indicated Saturday that it is addressing the concerns, which have come from European companies as well as US firms.

Kevin Hassett, a US economic adviser, told CNBC on Monday that he expected a short meeting with "a big, strong handshake" on rare earths.

The UK government says it is providing the venue and logistics but is not involved in the talks, though British Treasury chief Rachel Reeves met with both Bessent and He on Sunday, and UK Business Secretary Jonathan Reynolds was due to meet Wang.

"We are a nation that champions free trade and have always been clear that a trade war is in nobody's interests, so we welcome these talks," the British government said in a statement.

The talks, which may continue on Tuesday, follow negotiations in Geneva last month that brought a temporary respite in the trade war.

Uber To Launch Driverless Taxis In London Next Year

AFP

LONDON: Ride-hailing firm Uber will launch self-driving taxis in London next year when England trials new driverless services, the firm and the UK government said on Tuesday.

Under the Uber pilot scheme, services will initially have a human in the driver's seat who can take control of the vehicle in an emergency, but the trials will eventually transition to being fully driverless.

The government announcement will see companies, including Uber, being allowed to trial commercial driverless services without a human presence for the first time in the UK. They will include taxis and "bus-like" services.

Uber CEO Andrew Macdonald described London's roads as "one of the world's busiest and most complex urban environments".

"Our vision is to make autonomy a safe and reliable option for riders everywhere, and this trial in London brings that future closer to reality," he said.

Members of the public will be able to book the transport via an app from spring 2026, ahead of a potential wider rollout when new legislation -- the Automated Vehicles Act -- becomes law from the second half of 2027, the Department for Transport added.

The technology could create 38,000 jobs, add £42 billion (\$57 billion) to the UK economy by 2025, and make roads safer, it said.

"The future of transport is arriving. Self-driving cars



could bring jobs, investment, and the opportunity for the UK to be among the world-leaders in new technology," Transport Secretary Heidi Alexander said.

"We can't afford to take a back seat on AI.... That's why we're bringing timelines forward today," added Technology Secretary Peter Kyle.

The wider rollout will also allow the sale and use of self-driving, private cars.

Driverless vehicle trials have been underway in the UK since January 2015, with British companies Wayve and Oxa "spearheading significant breakthroughs in the technology," the ministry said.

"These early pilots will help build public trust and unlock new jobs, services, and markets," said Wayve CEO Alex Kendall.

According to the government the forthcoming legislation will require self-driving vehicles to "achieve a level of safety at least as high as competent and careful human drivers".

"By having faster reaction times than humans, and by being trained on large numbers of driving scenarios, including learning from real-world incidents, self-driving vehicles can help reduce deaths and injuries," it said.

CS For Giving Solar Power Push To Energy Sector

SRINAGAR: Chief Secretary, Atal Dulloo, today chaired a high level meeting to review the progress achieved under the PM Surya Ghar: Muft Bijli Yojana (PMSMBY), a flagship initiative aimed at promoting solar energy through rooftop installations for the households and solarization of government buildings across the country.

The meeting was attended by Principal Secretary, Power Development Department (PDD); Principal Secretary, Finance; Managing Directors of JPDCL and KPDCL; Deputy Commissioners; CEO JAKEDA; Chief Engineers of KPDCL/JPDCL and other senior officials.

Taking stock of the rooftop solar installations across the districts, the Chief Secretary emphasised the need for time-bound implementation. He directed the DISCOMs, JPDCL and KPDCL, to ensure that the vendors complete installations in the shortest possible time.

Dulloo impressed upon the Deputy Commissioners to personally monitor the progress on rooftop solar projects in their respective districts and ensure timely completion, enabling the consumers to experience minimal delays. He also reviewed the status of applications and installations district-wise and sought a strategy from each DC to fast-track execution.

To maintain quality and efficiency, he instructed the senior

officers of JPDCL and KPDCL to undertake field visits to inspect the ongoing installations. He stressed the importance of institutional leadership while encouraging the DISCOM employees to set an example by adopting rooftop solar systems themselves.

The Chief Secretary also directed that Common Service Centre (CSC) operators be empanelled to facilitate the consumer registrations at the grassroots level, ensuring ease of access for the rural and remote households.

Reviewing the solarization of government buildings, another critical component of the PMSMBY, the Chief Secretary described it as a prestigious initiative that must be executed with utmost seriousness. He directed the Deputy Commissioners to verify the functionality of each installed rooftop system and submit building-wise status reports by June 30, after coordinating with the JAKEDA for the requisite data.

Speaking on the occasion, Principal Secretary, Finance, Santosh D. Vaidya, stressed the need to involve the local contractors in solarisation drive by registering them as vendors and incentivising their participation. He underlined that the scheme's momentum hinges on the proactive involvement of local players, both from a developmental and entrepreneurial standpoint besides ensuring its completion on time.

Iran Looks for Planes and Partners in Post-Sanctions Order

Agencies

Iran's national airline is preparing for the day when it's finally released from the US sanctions that have worn down its fleet and crimped access to other nations.

With nuclear talks under way between Iran and the US, executives from Iran Air used the annual gathering of the International Air Transport Association in New Delhi last week to sound out potential airline partners and suppliers who were in attendance, according to people familiar with the matter.

Iran Air executives made contact with representatives from Japan Airlines Co., Vietnam Airlines and Royal Air Maroc as it seeks to line up codeshare agreements, the people said, asking not to be named discussing private matters. The encounters were mostly ad-hoc, they said, given the conference-hall setup and the sensitivities of doing business with Iran.

Executives from the state-

owned carrier also dropped into an evening reception sponsored by Boeing Co. as they consider which aircraft Iran Air might acquire should US-made jets become accessible again, the people added.

Tehran-based Iran Air is eager to expand its operations to meet rising travel demand and is actively seeking new aircraft, spare parts and partnerships with carriers that fly to destinations it's currently barred from serving, the people said.

The carrier aims to increase its fleet from fewer than 50 mostly grounded aircraft to at least 100 through direct purchases, if permitted, or by acquiring second-hand jets from foreign markets, the people said.

US President Donald Trump's free-wheeling approach to trade and foreign policy suggests the current diplomatic push could potentially lead to an opening for Iran Air after decades of restrictions. Boeing purchases took center stage in Trump's recent Middle East trip, and were featured



in a trade deal with the UK.

As yet, there's no sign of a breakthrough. Supreme Leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei last week pushed back against US pressure to cease Iran's uranium enrichment programs, calling US demands "arrogant" and vowing not to give in.

Last week's concentration of hundreds of aviation executives at the IATA event presented a prime opportunity for Iran Air to establish contacts, even where agreements aren't currently possible.

Several executives from carriers in countries that have normalized ties with Tehran say they are unlikely to sign pacts that could impair relationships with other airline partners.

For years, the sale of US-origin aircraft or related goods, technology or services to Iran has been barred without prior authorization, with violations subject to civil and criminal enforcement action by the Treasury's Office of Foreign Assets Control. The European Union has also imposed

restrictions.

Under the US-led sanctions, Boeing and Airbus SE can't discuss plane or parts sales with Iran without a license. While there was brief contact between Boeing and Iran Air officials at the IATA reception, there were no commercial discussions, people familiar with the interaction said.

A Boeing representative declined to comment, Iran Air and Vietnam Airlines didn't immediately respond to requests for comment, while a spokesman for Royal Air Maroc said "no contact whatsoever took place between officials from the two companies in New Delhi."

A Japan Airlines spokesman said an Iran Air representative came by, but there was no substantial exchange of information. Iran has faced suspicion for years over its nuclear ambitions and whether it's developing the capability to fire an atomic weapon.

Since returning to the White House, Trump has said he wants a new agreement with Tehran, and the two sides kicked off fresh

nuclear talks in mid-April. He is pouring on "maximum pressure" to speed the slow-moving talks, even drawing in Russian President Vladimir Putin for assistance.

YEARS OF SANCTIONS

Iran Air has a lot to gain from a breakthrough. Since its founding more than a half-century ago, the carrier has struggled to establish itself in a competitive international market.

US sanctions dating back to the 1979 Islamic Revolution have forced the airline to operate aging aircraft, sometimes cannibalizing grounded planes for spare parts, while remaining largely isolated from global markets.

The average in-service aircraft at Iran Air is over 20 years old, according to data from aviation consultancy Cirium.

In 2024, the EU also barred Iran Air from flying into the bloc because of Iran's support for Russia. Among the airlines that still fly into Tehran are Emirates, Qatar Airways, Turkish Airlines and

Deutsche Lufthansa AG.

Unlike most carriers, Iran Air handles nearly all of its own maintenance and relies on a network of brokers to source second-hand parts from carriers around the globe, the people said.

Iran Air is interested in acquiring jets from Boeing and Airbus, and has little appetite for Russian or Chinese alternatives, according to the people. In one recent deal, it obtained two used Airbus A330-200s from China, they said. With expansion in Europe curtailed, the company is looking to add services in Asia, including China, Thailand, Japan, India and Malaysia, the people said.

Iran Air's longstanding maintenance workarounds, use of brokered parts and domestic repair shops present obstacles to a full reintegration with global networks. These practices have kept the fleet flying through the sanctions, though adding operational risks but their hedgepodge maintenance make Iran Air planes difficult to certify.

India's Population Touches 1.46 Billion, Fertility Drops Below Replacement Rate: UN Report

Agenceis

New Delhi, June 10: India's population is estimated to reach 1.46 billion in 2025, continuing to be the highest in the world, according to a new UN demographic report, which also revealed the country's total fertility rate has fallen below the replacement rate.

UNFPA's 2025 State of World Population (SOWP) Report, The Real Fertility Crisis, calls for a shift from panic over falling fertility to addressing unmet reproductive goals.

Millions of people are not able to realise their real fertility goals, it asserts.

This is the real crisis, not underpopulation or overpopulation, and the answer lies in greater reproductive agency – a person's ability to make free and informed 150 per cent choices about sex, contraception and starting a family, it says.

The report also reveals key shifts in population composition, fertility, and life expectancy, signalling a major

demographic transition.

The report found that India's total fertility rate has declined to 1.9 births per woman, falling below the replacement level of 2.1.

This means that, on average, Indian women are having fewer children than needed to maintain the population size from one generation to the next, without migration.

Despite the slowing birth rate, India's youth population remains significant, with 24 per cent in the age bracket of 0-14, 17 per cent in 10-19, and 26 per cent in 10-24.

The country's 68 per cent of the population is of working age (15-64), providing a potential demographic dividend, if matched by adequate employment and policy support.

The elderly population (65 and older) currently stands at seven per cent, a figure that is expected to rise in the coming decades as life expectancy improves. As of 2025, life expectancy at birth is projected to be 71 years for men and 74 years for women.



According to the UN estimates, India's population at present stands at 1,463.9 million. India is now the world's most

populous nation, with nearly 1.5 billion people – a number expected to grow to about 1.7 billion before it begins to fall, around 40 years from now, the

report said.

Behind these numbers are the stories of millions of couples who decided to start or expand

their families, as well as the stories of women who had few choices about whether, when or how often they became pregnant, the report said.

In 1960, when India's population was about 436 million, the average woman had nearly six children.

Back then, women had less control over their bodies and lives than they do today. Fewer than 1 in 4 used some form of contraception, and fewer than 1 in 2 attended primary school (World Bank Data, 2020), the report said.

But in the coming decades, educational attainment increased, access to reproductive healthcare improved, and more women gained a voice in the decisions that affected their lives. The average woman in India now has about two children.

While women in India, and every other country, have more rights and choices today than their mothers or grandmothers did, they still have a long way to go before they are empowered to have the number of children they want, if any, when they

want them.

The UN report placed India in a group of middle-income countries undergoing rapid demographic change, with population doubling time now estimated at 79 years.

"India has made significant progress in lowering fertility rates – from nearly five children per woman in 1970 to about two today, thanks to improved education and access to reproductive healthcare," said Andrea M Wojnar, UNFPA India Representative.

"This has led to major reductions in maternal mortality, meaning million more mothers are alive today, raising children and building communities. Yet, deep inequalities persist across states, castes, and income groups.

"The real demographic dividend comes when everyone has the freedom and means to make informed reproductive choices. India has a unique opportunity to show how reproductive rights and economic prosperity can advance together," she said. (Agencies)

CONTD. FROM FRONT PAGE

J&K Govt Transfers

and Land Records (ex-officio Settlement Officer), Udhampur, was posted as Custodian General, J&K.

Similarly, Mohammad Mumtaz Ali, Director, Rural Development, Jammu, was transferred and posted as Director, Tribal Affairs, J&K, and Rimpay Ohri, Special Secretary in the office of Chief Electoral Officer, J&K was transferred and posted as Director, Public Relations, New Delhi.

Ghalib Mohi-ud-din Shah, Secretary, Royal Spring Golf Course, Srinagar, holding additional charge of Director, SKICC, was posted as Director, SKICC, on full time basis. He shall also hold the charge of the post of Secretary, Royal Spring Golf Course, Srinagar, in addition to his own duties, till further orders, the order said.

The order stated that the transfers and postings were made in the interest of the administration.

Inder Jeet Is Commissioner,

Inder Jeet, who was serving as Managing Director, SIDCO, and also held the additional charge of Managing Director, SICOP, has been transferred in the interest of administration.

He will assume the new role against an available vacancy with immediate effect, the order stated.

Return Haj Flights

away during the pilgrimage. "She was taken to Arafat in Ambulance to complete Waqoof-e-Arafat (Main farz of Haj) and later admitted again in Saudi National Hospital located in Mina where she died on 12th Dhul Hijjah," he added.

Reflecting on the overall arrangements, Dr. Qureshi said, "This year's Hajj went better than expected. The facilities provided, especially during sacred sites, were much improved compared to last year."

Asked about concerns raised regarding

accommodation at certain locations, Dr Qureshi asserted that the Haj Committee acted promptly over the reports. "We did issue clarification when needed. By and large, the arrangements were good," he said.

Dr Qureshi added that 14 pilgrims had cancelled their Hajj at the last moment.

The 2025 Hajj formally came to an end after pilgrims completed the ritual of stoning at the three Jamarat in Mina and then left the Tent City for Makkah to perform the last obligatory Hajj ritual, Tawaf Al-Wida (farewell Tawaf), as over 1.6 million pilgrims participated in this year's Hajj.

It is pertinent to mention that due to heightened tensions between India and Pakistan earlier this year in May, many flights were cancelled for days, resulting in a delay for pilgrims to reach Mecca and Madina.

At least more than 2,200 pilgrims from Jammu and Kashmir were left stranded, prompting the J&K Haj Committee to consider operating additional flights to clear the backlog.

Meanwhile, Hajj authorities in Saudi Arabia have announced the successful conclusion of Hajj 2025, declaring it free of any security, health, or service-related incidents. (KNO)

J&K Gets Biggest

Hon'ble PM Shri Narendra Modi Ji & Hon'ble Union Minister of Rural Development Shri Shivraj Singh Chouhan Ji for sanctioning 316 road projects at an estimated cost of Rs.4224 Cr under Batch-I of PMGSY-IV for providing connectivity to 390 no. of eligible habitations. J&K is first among all States/UTs which got sanction under PMGSY-IV. It is also biggest ever package sanctioned for J&K under PMGSY. The approved 1781 KMs road length will provide major boost to rural road connectivity and usher in a new era of prosperity in far-flung areas."

India Made Key

nation has embraced self-reliant innovation and expanded its influence in trade and technology," it added.

"India's Rise in 11 Years: Power, Partnerships, and Progress," it said, putting out the government's initiatives and subsequent changes in different fields.

India's defence exports have soared to Rs 23,622 crore in 2024-25 from Rs 1,940 crore in 2014-15, the post said, noting the country also unveiled its first indigenous aircraft carrier in INS Vikrant.

It said, "This is the story of India's rise as a confident, decisive, and respected global leader driven by PM Modi's bold vision and unwavering commitment to a stronger Bharat."

India's missile power had its precision and reach elevated, it said, mentioning Brahmos extended range version, which was successfully test-fired from Su-30 MKI, among others.

The thread also highlighted India's robust ties with other countries, noting the inking of its "historic" trade deal with the UK and comprehensive economic power agreement with the UAE.

Highlighting India's commitment to global peace, it said the country stands as a leading force in UN peacekeeping, with over 2.9 lakh troops deployed across 50 missions worldwide.

During the pandemic, India also provided two lakh COVID-19 vaccine doses to UN peacekeepers, supporting health and safety on the frontlines of peace, it added. (KNO)

CSC Submits

newly added Pahari group, is under legal scrutiny in the High Court, where at least three petitions have been filed. One petition calls the policy an "abuse of judicial process" and seeks its complete dismissal.

As the Cabinet prepares to deliberate on the Sub Committee's findings, the issue remains mired in legal, political, and public scrutiny—signaling a potentially turbulent debate on

merit, representation, and equity in the region.

Ruhullah To Hold

has asserted that the recommendations must reflect the concerns raised by students.

Ruhullah—who has been at the forefront of the demand to roll back the revised reservation policy—said he is scheduled to meet with students on June 11 to discuss the issues leading up to the sub-committee's report.

"I expect what the students expect—that their demands, concerns, and grievances are addressed with fairness and transparency. There is a clear call for rationalization of the reservation regime and it must be carried out in line with what the students have articulated," Ruhullah said.

He added that a delegation of student leaders and reservation rights activists is scheduled to meet him on June 11 at 10:30 AM to discuss the issue in detail.

Earlier on Tuesday, Minister Sakina Itoo, who chaired the sub-committee, provided an update on the progress. "The Cabinet Sub-Committee constituted to examine the issue of reservations has drafted its report within the stipulated time frame of six months. The report will be placed before the Cabinet when it meets," Itoo said in a post on X.

The committee was constituted in response to widespread concerns following a March 2024 amendment to the Jammu and Kashmir Reservation Act, 2004, under the administration of Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha. The amendment increased reservations in government jobs from 43% to 70%, largely due to the inclusion of the Pahari community under the Scheduled Tribe (ST) category.

The policy sparked protests and opposition from several quarters, prompting then-Chief Minister Omar Abdullah to establish the Cabinet Sub-Committee to reassess the implications of the move. The panel was given six months to complete its review.

Man Held For

profile picture.

"Preliminary investigation revealed that the accused had downloaded the SSP's photo from the internet with the intent to impersonate a police officer," a police official said.

Further inquiry uncovered that Parry had been involved in online gambling for the past year, actively using platforms like 'Aviator' and '777'. Investigators said he had made advance payments on the '777' platform and later used the impersonated identity to pressure the organisers into refunding the money he had lost.

Authorities are now conducting a deeper analysis of his digital devices to determine if Parry has links to any other criminal or anti-national activities.

Police have urged the public—especially youth—to stay away from online gambling apps, warning that such platforms are often fronts for exploitation and can lead to involvement in illegal or anti-social activities.

J&K Heatwave:

summer capital, touched 33.5°C, significantly above the norm. Qazigund witnessed temperatures 7.3°C above normal, while Pahalgam, Kupwara, Kokernag, and even Gulmarg—usually known for its cool climate—reported unusually high temperatures.

Local authorities have urged residents to stay indoors during peak hours, avoid strenuous outdoor activity, and remain hydrated. Health advisories have been issued to especially caution the elderly, children, and those with pre-existing health conditions.

With temperatures expected to remain high until the weekend, the heatwave is testing public endurance and raising concerns over water scarcity, crop stress, and urban heat exposure.

The Met Department has advised people to remain alert and follow safety guidelines until the heatwave subsides.

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WTC FINAL



Labuschagne To Partner Khawaja As Australia's Openers

Associated Press

LONDON: Marnus Labuschagne has moved one place up the batting order to open with Usman Khawaja for Australia in the World Test Championship final against South Africa at Lord's from Wednesday.

Labuschagne's place in the team was in doubt after a lean 2023-25 WTC cycle — average 28.33 runs — but he was given another shot on Tuesday by Australia's failure to find a permanent replacement at opener for David Warner, who retired from tests in January 2024. Labuschagne will open in a test for only the second time in nine years.

"It's one spot up really. It's not too different to batting three," captain Pat Cummins said. "Marnus has done well here at Lord's (average 45.33) and in England in general (average 39.36).

"Opening the batting can be tough, but it can also be sometimes the best time to bat, before the Dukes ball actually starts swinging. There's an opportunity to score there, so just keeping

that ball in tow I think is going to mean something."

The 19-year-old specialist opener Sam Konstas was left out and Travis Head, preferred in Sri Lanka in February, will drop back to No. 5 in the order. Konstas was disappointed, Cummins said.

"Realistically, he's really young, he's got a long career ahead of him," he added. Fit-again Josh Hazlewood was picked ahead of the unlucky Scott Boland in the pace attack. Boland replaced an injured Hazlewood for the 2023 final and starred as Australia beat India by 209 runs at the Oval.

Nine of that 11 will play consecutive WTC finals.

Cameron Green will bat at No. 3 in his first test since lower spine surgery in October sidelined him for six months, and at No. 6 the two-meter-tall allrounder Beau Webster, who debuted in January against India.

NGIDI AHEAD OF PATERSON

South Africa gave Lungi Ngidi's experience the edge over Dane Paterson as the third seamer.

Ngidi hasn't played a test since August but 19 tests and 55 wickets, including Joe Root's at Lord's in 2022, put him in the pace attack with Kagiso Rabada and Marco Jansen.

Paterson, more deceptive than fast, earned five-fors in his last two tests against Sri Lanka and Pakistan in December and played at Lord's three times

LINEUPS

SOUTH AFRICA: Aiden Markram, Ryan Rickelton, Wiaan Mulder, Temba Bavuma (captain), Tristan Stubbs, David Bedingham, Kyle Verrynnne, Marco Jansen, Keshav Maharaj, Kagiso Rabada, Lungi Ngidi

AUSTRALIA: Usman Khawaja, Marnus Labuschagne, Cameron Green, Steve Smith, Travis Head, Beau Webster, Alex Carey, Pat Cummins (captain), Mitchell Starc, Nathan Lyon, Josh Hazlewood.

in the last two months for Middlesex in the English County Championship second division but that wasn't enough.

"Probably one of the tougher decisions that has been made. We see what Dane Paterson did for us to the end of last season," captain Temba Bavuma said.

Mulder was chosen to bat at No. 3 ahead of Tony de Zorzi, who has more runs but hasn't bowled in a test. Mulder's handy medium pace has taken 30 wickets in 18 matches.

WI Star Nicholas Pooran Announces Retirement At 29



Star West Indies batter Nicholas Pooran on Tuesday stunningly announced his retirement from international cricket at the age of 29 without specifying any reasons but insisted that "much thought and reflection" had gone into taking the call.

His decision came days after he opted out of selection for the T20I series against England.

The swashbuckling left-handed batter finished as West Indies' most capped T20I player with 106 matches and also its highest run-getter, with a tally of 2275 at an average of 26.14 and strike rate of 136.39. In 61 ODI appearances, he scored 1983 runs at an average of 39.66 and strike rate of 99.15.

"After much thought and reflection, I've decided to announce my retirement from international cricket," Pooran, a former West Indies white-ball captain, wrote on his social media pages.

He never played Test cricket for his country. Pooran had recently opted out of selection for West Indies' T20I series against England after playing the full Indian Premier League season for Lucknow Super Giants.

Gambhir Wants 'Good Pitch' As India Prep For Eng Tests

Josh Marden, the head curator at Beckenham County Ground, revealed that India head coach Gautam Gambhir and the management had a clear message regarding their preparations for the highly anticipated England tour: "We want a good pitch", reported Revsportz.

India have begun fine-tuning their preparations for the five gripping Tests in England, which are slated to begin on June 20 at Headingley.

The tourists have hosted a training camp at the South East London venue in Beckenham as they solidify their preparations for the first bilateral Test series without batting bigwigs Virat Kohli and Rohit Sharma, marking the beginning of a new era.

After the internal meeting, Gambhir and the coaching staff spoke to Marden and sent a clear message about the desired pitch conditions. The ask was simple: "a good pitch" that wasn't too flat or too green, a realistic setting that genuinely offered help in preparing for the match.

India Lose 1-0 To Hong Kong In Asian Cup Qualifier

A profligate Indian football team suffered a calamitous 0-1 defeat to hosts Hong Kong after an injury-time goal by Stefan Pereira in a crucial 2027 AFC Asian Cup Qualifier match here on Tuesday.

The referee awarded Hong Kong the penalty after India custodian Vishal Kaith came out of the goal line and tried to palm the ball to safety, only to end up hitting Michael Udebuluzor.

Pereira (90+4) stepped up to take the spot kick and shot the ball to the right of Kaith, who was also shown a yellow card for his injury-time foul.

Earlier, India coach Manolo Marquez kept out veteran striker Sunil Chhetri from the starting XI.

Both India and Hong Kong have had their moments but neither side could convert in a tightly contested first half of this crucial 2027 AFC Asian Cup Qualifier.

The result is a setback for India who came into the game after a goal-less draw against Bangladesh in their first Asian Cup qualifying match, at home in March.

Dortmund Signs Jobe Bellingham, Jude's Younger Brother

The Bellingham name is back at Borussia Dortmund.

Jobe Bellingham signed a five-year-deal on Tuesday with the German club where his older brother developed into one of the world's best midfielders before joining Real Madrid in 2023.

The younger Bellingham, 19, leaves Sunderland just over two weeks after helping it to win promotion back to the Premier League through the playoff final. He reportedly turned down an offer from Eintracht Frankfurt.

Dortmund is evidently hoping Bellingham can have the same impact at the club as his brother, who almost led the club to a Bundesliga title in 2023. Dortmund failed in the final game with Jude Bellingham watching from the sideline as he couldn't play.

Just like Jude, Jobe Bellingham is a central midfielder who likes to get forward and support attacks.

Jobe has followed in his brother's footsteps by coming through the Birmingham City academy and making his senior debut at the age of 16 in 2022. He's also played for England Under-21s.

District Level Volleyball, Kabaddi & Kho-Kho Concludes In Budgam

Observer News Service

BUDGAM: The Department of Youth Services and Sports Budgam concluded its Inter-Zonal District Level competitions for boys in Volleyball, Kabaddi, and Kho-Kho on Tuesday. The grand sporting event was held under the guidance of Director General Youth Services and Sports and District Youth Services and Sports Officer (DYSSO) Budgam Ghulam Hassan Lone.

Teams representing all 12 zones of the district participated with great enthusiasm, showcasing excellent sportsmanship and competitive spirit throughout the event.

On the concluding day, senior officials from the department, including Ghulam Hassan Khanday and Shakeel ur Rehman from the Activity Section DYSSO Budgam, graced the occasion along with other departmental officers and field officials who ensured smooth conduct of the events. The Department reiterated its commitment

to promoting grassroots sports and providing young athletes with a platform to excel.

Under-14 District Handball Tournament Held In Anantnag

The District Youth Services and Sports Office Anantnag concluded its District Level Inter-Zonal Handball Tournament for Boys and Girls in the U-14 age group at Higher Secondary School, Wanpoh, on Tuesday.

After a series of competitive matches, Zone Anantnag emerged as the winner, while Zone Srigufwara secured the runner-up position.

Simultaneously, the Girls' section of the Inter-Zonal Handball Tournament was also conducted at the same venue. Zone Srigufwara clinched the winner's title, while Zone Bijbehara finished as runner-up.

Zone Physical Education Office Achabal organised the "Run for Unity" and Unity Pledge events at High School Brinty and MS Shelipora.



Spectrum King's Pampore Triumphs In Hassanpore Premier League



Observer News Service

PAMPORE: In a nail-biting encounter, Spectrum King's Cricket Club, Pampore emerged victorious against Royal Friends Cricket Club in a highly anticipated cricket match at Hassanpore Premier League. The winning team displayed exceptional skill and determination, piling up a mammoth score of 204 runs.

The team owners, Gowhar Bhat and Sarfaraz Rashid, deserve accolades for their support and vision. Their leadership and commitment to the team have played a pivotal role in their success, and his trust in the team's potential has been a driving force behind their achievements.

The team's performance was a testament to the coaching of former Ranji player Asif Jeelani, who has been instrumental in grooming the team and taking it to great heights. Under his

guidance, the team has consistently demonstrated remarkable improvement, and this win is an example of their hard work and dedication.

Spectrum King Cricket Club Pampore was formed by a group of young, talented local boys from Pampore and Pulwma. The team has risen to prominence with the active support of Coach Asif Jeelani and Secretary Sarfaraz Rashid Bhat defeating a strong team like Royal Friends Cricket Clubs a remarkable achievement, and it speaks volumes about the team's spirit and potential.

"This victory is not just a win for the team, but also a proud moment for Pampore's cricketing community. Spectrum King's Pampore has brought new name and fame to Pampore's cricketing horizons, and we look forward to seeing the team continue to excel in the future," the team management said in a statement.

YSS Fosters Young Sports Talent With District & Zonal Competitions

Observer News Service

SRINAGAR: Department of Youth Services and Sports ongoing District Level Football Competitions for Under-17 Boys in Kupwara witnessed another day of intense action as young athletes competed fiercely for a place in the district team, which will represent Kupwara at the Inter-District Provincial Level.

The day's proceedings were formally inaugurated by the Headmaster of BHS Natnusa, along with the Activity Incharge from the office of DYSSO Kupwara and other senior officials. The competitions are being held in line with the approved Activity Calendar for the year 2025-26.

The matches featured high-octane encounters, with young

footballers displaying exceptional skill, determination, and sportsmanship. The event not only highlighted the raw talent in the district but also underscored the growing enthusiasm for sports among Kupwara's youth.

YSS also successfully inaugurated its Inter-School Zonal Level Tournament for Under-14 Boys at BHSS Pampore, featuring Kho-Kho, Volleyball, and Kabaddi.

The event was inaugurated by the Zonal Physical Education Officer (ZPEO) Pampore in the presence of Departmental officials. A large number of boys from the Government and private educational institutions participated enthusiastically, reflecting the zone's commitment to nurturing sporting excellence.

In central Kashmir's Ganderbal



district, YSS conducted Under-14 Cricket Selection Trials in Kangan Zone.

A total of 56 young cricketers from various schools showcased their skills, aiming to se-



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