

HIV Stigma In Kashmir Leaves Many Undiagnosed, Untreated

Despite rising cases and new mobile testing efforts, HIV/AIDS remains shrouded in stigma and silence in Jammu and Kashmir, leaving many undiagnosed and untreated.



Ansar Hussain

Srinagar: When Sakina Itoo, the Health Minister of Jammu and Kashmir, flagged off two mobile HIV testing vans from Srinagar on June 24, it was more than just a symbolic gesture. It was a silent admission that the Union

Territory's fight against HIV/AIDS is far from over. And perhaps, not as visible as it should be.

For years, the conversation around HIV in Kashmir has been stuck in hesitation. Many still treat it like a distant, unspeakable threat, something that happens to "other people."

Yet official numbers now point to a growing, if largely ignored, concern.

According to the Jammu and Kashmir AIDS Control Society, the region currently has around 4,000 identified HIV-positive cases. But health experts warn that these are only the tip of the iceberg.

"There is no reliable estimate of how many people are actually living with HIV here because a huge section of the population has never been tested," said Dr. Bashir Ahmad, a senior physician involved in HIV counseling in Kashmir. "The social fear is so deep that people | **More on P10**

Srinagar Sizzles At 20-Year June High Met Office Predicts Rain From Today

Observer News Service

Srinagar: A day ahead of a predicted three-day wet spell, Srinagar recorded its hottest June day in nearly two decades as temperatures soared to 35.5°C — the highest for the month since 2005.

According to data accessed this is the highest temperature of the season so far in Srinagar, with a similar reading also recorded on June 20, matching a two-decade-old record.

Several other parts of the Valley also witnessed soaring temperatures. Qazigum recorded 33.6°C, Pahalgam 30.6°C, and Kupwara touched 34.7°C. Kokernag

reported 33.2°C, while Gulmarg — the famous ski destination — was relatively cooler at 26.0°C.

In contrast, Jammu division remained relatively normal, with the winter capital Jammu registering a maximum of 34.1°C. Other areas recorded the following: Banihal 30.6°C, Batote 28.2°C, Katra 30.7°C, and Baderwah 33.2°C.

Meanwhile, the Meteorological Department has forecast a three-day wet spell from June 25 to 27.

According to MeT Director Dr Mukhtar Ahmad, intermittent light to moderate rain and thundershowers are expected across many places, with | **More on P10**



Shaky Cease-Fire Takes Hold In Gulf

Trump ordered Netanyahu to turn IDF jets around in call to salvage ceasefire

KO Web Desk

Srinagar: The ceasefire between Israel and Iran began on a shaky start with US President Donald Trump, the key broker, showing his frustration by using televised expletives against ally Israel for undermining the deal just hours after its announcement.

Despite the formal agreement, tensions flared immediately after nine people were killed in Israeli strikes on the northern Iranian province of Gilan, Iranian state media reported, while five people were killed in Iranian strikes on the southern Israeli city of Beersheba.

President Trump, speaking to reporters before departing for a NATO summit, said both sides had likely violated the fledgling agreement, but he aimed his strongest criticism at Israel, a long-time U.S. ally. "They're making it harder," he said, reportedly using strong language behind the scenes. Later, in an attempt to



What lasting purpose did Israel's initial strike — and the dangerous days that followed — ultimately serve?

stabilize the narrative, Trump claimed the ceasefire had been restored:

"ISRAEL is not going to attack Iran. All planes will turn around and head home, while doing a friendly 'Plane Wave' to Iran. Nobody will be hurt, the Ceasefire is in effect!" he posted on Truth Social.

In Tehran, Iran's top security body, the Supreme National

Security Council (SNSC), declared that Israel had been forced to halt hostilities following a "powerful and determined response" by Iranian forces. In a statement issued Tuesday, the SNSC credited the Iranian armed forces' "exemplary courage" and said their coordinated missile operations — including strikes on U.S.-run Al-Udeid Air Base in Qatar

— brought Israel's campaign to a unilateral end.

"In response to the Zionist enemy's aggression, your brave and self-sacrificing children... heeded the command of the Leader and Commander-in-Chief (Ayatollah Khamenei) and responded with exemplary courage," the SNSC said.

Iran's Foreign Minister Abbas Araghchi offered cautious optimism saying Iran would pause retaliation "provided that the Israeli regime stops its illegal aggression against the Iranian people."

Surprise ceasefire announcement came hours after Iran launched a missile attack on Al-Udeid Air Base — the headquarters of the U.S. Air Force Central Command and a critical American military hub in West Asia. The campaign codenamed Tidings of Victory by Iranian armed forces was in response to US attack on three nuclear sites inside Iran.

The 12-day conflict began on June 13 when Israel launched a strike killing | **More on P10**

G&M Official In ACB Net

Agencies

Srinagar: Jammu and Kashmir Anti-Corruption Bureau (ACB) on Tuesday said to have arrested a Geology & Mining official while demanding and accepting a bribe of Rs 10,000.

"Jammu and Kashmir Anti Corruption Bureau received a written complaint, alleging demand of bribe by an official namely Gh Mustafa (D.H), in-charge of the area, Geology and Mining Department Ganderbal," ACB spokesman .

"The complainant, who owns a JCB machine, stated that he had approached the concerned official for guidance regarding the legal formalities for lifting soil from a particular land.

Instead of providing proper legal assistance, the said official allegedly told the complainant to avoid the lengthy formalities and demanded a bribe of Rs 20,000 for granting unofficial permission to lift the soil for three days. He further demanded Rs 10,000 as an advance | **More on P10**

It's Summer Break for Private Colleges

The University of Kashmir has officially announced summer vacations for all private colleges affiliated with it across the Kashmir Division. According to a notification issued by the Assistant Registrar of the College Development Council, the summer break will be observed from June 25 to July 4, 2025. While students will be on vacation during this period, the notification clearly states that all teaching and non-teaching staff must remain available in their respective

Open To Assembly Dissolution Post-Statehood: CM

Hits Out at 'Planted Stories', Says MLAs Won't Resist Fresh Elections

Observer News Service

Srinagar: Chief Minister Omar Abdullah on Tuesday said he has no objections if the Legislative Assembly has to be dissolved and fresh elections are to be conducted after statehood is restored to Jammu and Kashmir.

"I have read in a newspaper that statehood will be restored but assembly elections would



have to be held afresh. Let them do it, who has stopped them," Omar told reporters at Gulmarg,

'No Local Involvement In Pahalgam Attack'

Chief Minister Omar Abdullah on Tuesday said there was "no local involvement" in the Pahalgam terror attack in which 26 people were killed, asserting that all the assailants were foreign nationals. Omar said this two days | **More on P10**

75th SMVDSB Meet: LG Okays Major Pilgrim Projects

Directs Identification of Landslide-Prone Spots Along Vaishno Devi Track

Observer News Service

Srinagar: Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha on Tuesday chaired the 75th meeting of the Shri Mata Vaishno Devi Shrine Board (SMVDSB) at the Spiritual Growth Centre in Katra, where a series of major infrastructure, safety, and service enhancement decisions were approved to improve pilgrim experience at the holy shrine.

The meeting marked the first for the newly constituted Board, which includes prominent members such as Mahamandleshwar Swami Vishveshvaranand Giriji Maharaj, Sudha Murty, Baleshwar Rai, Dr. Ashok Bhan, Gunjan Rana, Dr. K.K. Talwar, Lalit Bhasin, Kulbhushan Ahuja and Suresh Kumar Sharma. The Lieutenant Governor welcomed the new members and expressed confidence in their contribution to the Shrine's spiritual and infrastructural development. He also acknowledged the valuable services of the outgoing members.



Key Approvals

- Exit track at Bhawan, New Vaishnavi Bhawan, & cottages near Katra.
- Medical College at Kakryal to be operationalized.
- Yatra track widening from Sanjichhat to Bhawan.

Connectivity

- New helipad at Katra approved.
- Shiv Khori helipad deadline set for Oct 2025.

Facilities & Safety

- Inauguration of battery car stand, smart lockers (300), kiosks, cave shed.
- Security boosted with Integrated Control Centres.
- Landslide-prone spots to be secured.

Among the key approvals were the construction of an exit track and the remodeling of the Manokamna area

Sanitation & Sustainability

- 100% sewerage network approved.
- Solar power plan to be expanded.

Pilgrim Experience

- Yatri Feedback System to be scaled up.
- Plan to deploy volunteers for pilgrim guidance.

Temple Projects

- 5 temples to be opened in July 2025.
- 5 new temples approved with uniform design.

Institutional Support

- Funds approved for Gurukul, Medical & Nursing College, Sports Complex.
- New Gurukul dormitory for 32 students inaugurated.

at Bhawan, development of New Vaishnavi Bhawan and cottages near the Katra sports stadium, and the | **More on P10**

PM Modi: 'No Terror Hideout Is Safe Anymore'

Press Trust Of India

New Delhi: Asserting that Operation Sindoor has made clear to the world India's stringent policy against terrorism, Prime Minister Narendra Modi said on Tuesday that his government takes whatever steps are appropriate in national interest.

Weapons manufactured in India showed their impact during the conflict with Pakistan, he said, without naming the country, at an event to mark the centenary celebration of the conversation between spiritual figure and social reformer Sree Narayana Guru and Mahatma Gandhi.

"We have shown that no hideout is safe for terrorists who spill the blood of Indians," he said, adding that his government has worked on the ideals of the revered spiritual figure who wanted a strong India that was free of any discrimination.

Modi said his government has, in the past 11 years, worked to make India strong in social, economic and defence sectors.

He said India's reliance on foreign countries to meet its defence needs is declining and it is becoming "aatmanirbhar" in the defence sector.



Indian military brought the enemy to its knees with made-in-India weapons in 22 minutes, he said of the precision attacks on terror sites in Pakistan and Pakistan-occupied-Kashmir following the horrific killing of 26 civilians by terrorists in Pahalgam on April 22.

The prime minister said he was confident that made-in-India weapons will be feted across the world in future.

Modi cited his government's welfare schemes in housing, drinking water and health insurance among other fields to assert that these have empowered the deprived and backward sections of society.

More number of IITs, IIMs and AIIMS have | **More on P10**

'Human Rights Are Sacrosanct'

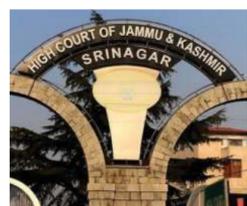
J&K HC Orders Return Of Woman Deported To Pak

Observer News Service

Srinagar: Emphasising that human rights are the most sacrosanct component of human life, the Jammu and Kashmir High Court has directed the Union Ministry of Home Affairs to facilitate the return of a woman deported to Pakistan in the aftermath of the April 22 Pahalgam terror attack.

Justice Rahul Bharti issued the directive while hearing a petition filed by the daughter of Rakshanda Rashid, a Pakistani national married to a resident of Jammu and living in India for nearly four decades on a Long-Term Visa (LTV).

The court observed that Rashid's deportation lacked



due legal process and may have been unwarranted, especially considering her age, medical condition, and long-standing family life in Jammu.

In an order dated June 6, the court instructed the Secretary of the Ministry of Home Affairs to ensure that Rashid is brought back within 10 days and reunited with her husband, Sheikh

Zahoor Ahmed. The court also directed the Centre to file a compliance report by July 1.

"Human rights are the most sacrosanct component of a human life, and therefore there are occasions when a constitutional court is supposed to come up with SOS-like indulgence, notwithstanding the merits and demerits of a case," the court said in its order.

The petitioner, Rashid's daughter, informed the court that her mother is now stranded in Pakistan without support and is suffering from multiple health ailments. She said the deportation has placed her mother's life at serious risk.

Justice Bharti observed that deportation should | **More on P10**



CM Omar Abdullah vows to develop Gulmarg as world-class golf destination- Photo SM



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Study Of Gut Genomes Finds How Antibiotic Resistance Can Differ Between Genders

Press Trust of India

A recent study analysing gut genomes found that trends of antibiotic resistance differ between genders. For instance, in high-income countries, women may have more antibiotic-resistant genes, while in low- and middle-income countries, men may have more. Led by researchers at the University of Turku, Finland, the study analysed over 14,600 gut genomes from across 32 countries, taken from a publicly available dataset. Antibiotic resistance, in which infection-causing germs become immune to the drugs designed to kill them, is a significant public health challenge and is estimated to claim over 39 million lives in the next 25 years, a study published in The Lancet journal in September 2024 said. Furthermore, differences in antibiotic resistance related to gender were found to emerge in adulthood. "This suggests that lifestyle, biological differences or healthcare-related factors may influence these differences more in adulthood than in childhood," author Katariina Parnanen, a postdoctoral researcher at the University of Turku said. "We observed that the association between ARG (antibiotic resistant gene) load and gender was inverted between HICs (high-income countries) and LMICs (low- and middle-income countries): women had higher ARG load in HICs and lower ARG load in LMICs than men," the authors wrote in the study published in the journal



npj biofilms and microbiomes. The findings also reveal that in high-income countries, women had an average of nine per cent higher amount of genes related to antibiotic resistance compared to men. Women may be more frequently exposed to antibiotics, bacteria resistant to antibiotics, or are more often carriers of resistant bacteria, the researchers suggested. Additionally, women in these countries were found to have a slightly higher diversity of antibiotic resistance genes compared to men, suggesting a broader variation in resistance in the gut microbiomes, the team said. "Understanding gender differences in antibiotic resistance is key to designing equitable and effective healthcare interventions. Our study will lay the groundwork for further research to reduce health inequalities related to

antibiotic resistance," Parnanen said. The researchers also found a strong association between age and country of residence and the number and diversity of genes involved in antibiotic resistance. These were particularly high in infants and the oldest age group, they said. High antibiotic use was associated with higher resistance gene loads and greater diversity. High levels of resistance were also found in low-income countries, which may be explained by factors such as poor hygiene and sanitation, the team said. "Our data-driven analyses shed light on global, gendered antibiotic resistance patterns, which may help guide further research and targeted interventions," the authors wrote. The study used data publicly available from datasets 'Sequence Read Archive' (SRA) and European Nucleotide Archive (ENA).

OFFICE OF THE NAIB TEHSILDAR KREERI

Sub: Application of Habibullah Lone S/o, Ab. Gani Lone R/o: Kalantra Bala Tehsil: Kreeri for the issuance of Legal Heir certificate.

NOTICE

Regarding the subject cited above, in this context, a detailed report was sought from the patwari halqa concerned which reveals that Mst Raja Begum W/o Habibullah Lone passed away on 17-04-25. Moreover, the Death Certificate issued by the Competent Authority also depicts the same. Furthermore, the report of Patwari Concerned points out that the deceased has left behind the following Legal Heirs, tabulated as below:

S. No	Name of Legal Heir	Relation with Deceased	Age	Occupation	Marital Status
1	Habibullah Lone	Husband	75	Pensioner	—
2	Parvaz Ahmad	Son	50	Zamindar	—
3	Bashir Ahmad	Son	45	Labour	—
4	Showkat Ahmad	Son	40	Shop-keeper	—
5	Shahzada Begum	D/o	38	H/Manager	—
6	Zahida Begum	D/o	35	—	—
7	Waseem Ahmad	S/o	33	Driver	—

The applicant has applied for the issuance of a Legal Heir certificate. As such the instant matter is published through the newspaper, if anyone has any kind of objection, he/she may approach this office within 7 days (Seven Days) of the publication of this notice. After passing of stipulated time of 7 days (Seven Days), No objections will be entertained.

Naib Tehsildar
Kreeri

fko

OFFICE OF EXECUTIVE MAGISTRATE 1ST CLASS ZAINGEER BOMAI

No: 177/B&D/T2/2025 Date: 24/06/25

Subject: Issuance of registration order in respect of delayed Birth & Death

Public Notice

This office has received a written application from Aamen Farhad Bhat S/o Fayaz Ahmad Bhat R/o Bomai Tehsil Zaingeer for issuance of Birth certificate in favour of self who was Born on 01/01/2015 and as per document evidence produced by the applicant.

In this regard, if anyone has any objection, he/she may file the same before the undersigned within 07 days. After that, no objection whatsoever will be entertained by this office.

Naib Tehsildar
Executive Magistrate
Bomai

fko

OFFICE OF EXECUTIVE MAGISTRATE 1ST CLASS ZAINGEER BOMAI

No: 176/B&D/T2/2025 Date: 24/06/25

Subject: Issuance of registration order in respect of delayed Birth & Death

Public Notice

This office has received a written application from Ahmad Peer S/o Gh Rashool Peer R/o Harwan Tehsil Zaingeer for issuance of Birth certificate in favour of Son namely Mohd Haris Peer S/o Parveez Ah Peer who was Born on 20/05/2013 and as per document evidence produced by the applicant.

In this regard, if anyone has any objection, he/she may file the same before the undersigned within 07 days. After that, no objection whatsoever will be entertained by this office.

Naib Tehsildar
Executive Magistrate
Bomai

fko

OFFICE OF EXECUTIVE MAGISTRATE 1ST CLASS ZAINGEER BOMAI

No: 177/B&D/T2/2025 Date: 24/06/25

Subject: Issuance of registration order in respect of delayed Birth & Death

Public Notice

This office has received a written application from Fayaz Ahmad Dar S/o Abdul Rahim Dar R/o Wadoora Tehsil Zaingeer for issuance of Birth certificate in favour of daughter namely Aayat Batool D/o Fayaz Ahmad Dar who was Born on 13/08/2014 as per document evidence produced by the applicant.

In this regard, if anyone has any objection, he/she may file the same before the undersigned within 07 days. After that, no objection whatsoever will be entertained by this office.

Naib Tehsildar
Executive Magistrate
Bomai

fko

Government of Jammu & Kashmir

OFFICE OF THE EXECUTIVE ENGINEER JAL SHAKTI (PHE) MECHANICAL DIVISION (NORTH) SOPORE

Email: phe.mdns2@gmail.com

Sub: Cancellation of e-tenders.

Ref: This office E-NIT No. PHE/MDNS/NIT/E-49 of 2024-25, S. No. 01, 03 and 05.

With reference to subject matter and reference the above captioned works are hereby rejected as the contractors failed to submit the security deposit before issuance of allotment order and the same shall be floated as fresh tenders. All other terms and conditions shall remain same.

No.: PHE/MDNS/DB/964-66
 DIPK-2894/25
 Dated: 24-06-2025

Sd/-
 Executive Engineer
 Jal Shakti (PHE) Mechanical Division (North)
 Sopore

Office of the Naib Tehsildar Pattan.

Sub.. Application of Mohammad Akbar Mir s/o Gh Qadir Mir R/o Hanjiwera Bala for issuance of legal hair certificate..

Public Notice

IT is inform to general public that applicants father's legal hair certificate is under process in this office in this matter report Was sought from Patwari concerned which reveals that applicants father namely Gh Qadir Mir S/o Ab Gaffar Mir R/o Hanjiwera Bala died on 24/01/2017 and left following legal hairs

Name	Age	Relationship with the Deceased	Marital Status
Mohammad Akbar Mir	60	Son	MARRIED
Hajira Begum	75	Daughter	MARRIED

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

Office of the Naib Tehsildar Pattan

Sub.. Application of Nisaar Ahmad Wani s/o Ali MOHD Wani R/o pattan for issuance of legal hair certificate..

Public Notice

IT is inform to general public that applicants father's legal hair certificate is under process in this office in this matter report Was sought from Patwari concerned which reveals that applicants father namely Ali MOHD Wani s/o Lassa Joo Wani R/o pattan died on 19/02/2006 and left following legal hairs.

Name	Age	Relationship with the Deceased	Marital Status
Nassar Ahmad Wani	60	Son	MARRIED
Riyaz Ahmad Wani	62	Son	MARRIED
Mehmooda Wani	61	Daughter	MARRIED

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

Government of Jammu & Kashmir

OFFICE OF THE EXECUTIVE ENGINEER (R&B) SOPORE NOTICE INVITING E-TENDER

Fresh NIT No. 21 /R&B /Sopore of 2025-26 Dated: 24-06-2025

For and on behalf of the President of India, e-tenders are being invited on percentage basis (as applicable) from approved and eligible Contractors registered with the J&K Government, CPWD, Railways, and other State/Central Governments for the following works:

S. No	Name of Work	Adv. Cost (Rs. In Lacs) incl. cost of tar & GST	Position of Funds available for current year 2025-26 (Rs in Lacs) incl. Contingencies	Cost of T/ Doc. (In Rupees)	Earnest money (In Rupees)	Time of completion	M.H of Account	Class of Contractor
1	Macadamization of Yaseen Colony Chinkipora Mill road including Guass Abad inner links by way of Providing and Laying 75 mm thick Wet Mix, 50 mm thick Bituminous Macadam, 25 mm thick semi-dense incld 6 mm thick IRC type seal coat.	19.437	15.00	800/-	38874/-	180 days	C&T	BEE / CEE
2	Macadamization of road from Bypass to H/O Master GH Mohammad Mir Via Ajjaz Ahmad Mir Near Masjid Noor Sidiq Colony Bypass Sopore by way of Providing and laying 75 mm thick Wet Mix Macadam, 50 mm thick Bituminous Macadam, 25 mm thick semi-dense incld 6 mm thick seal coat.	11.66	10.00	600/-	23320/-	180 days	C&T	DEE / BEE / CEE
3	Macadamization of Umer Colony road connecting Wattab and Magreypora link road Baba Mohalla Dal Wath, Gotingoo Baghat Colony Harpora H/O M Abbas Ganaie by way of Providing and laying WBM Grade-2nd, 75 mm thick Wet Mix Macadam, 50 mm thick Bituminous Macadam, 25 mm thick semi-dense, 6 mm thick IRC type seal coat incld Berm filling by way of Khakbairee filling.	19.607	15.00	800/-	39220/-	180 days	C&T	BEE / CEE
4	Macadamization of Hanfia Colony by way of Providing and laying 75 mm thick Wet Mix Macadam, 50 mm thick Bituminous Macadam, 25 mm thick Semi-dense incld 6 mm thick seal coat.	9.699	8.00	600/-	19400/-	180 days	C&T	DEE / CEE

Project Authority: Chief Engineer, PWD (R&B) North Kashmir
 Position of AAA: Accorded
 Position of TS: Accorded
 Position of Funds: Partially available

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

S. No	Date of Issue of Tender Notice	Period of downloading of bidding documents	Bid submission Start Date	Bid Submission End Date	Date & time of opening of Bids (Online)
1	24-06-2025	24-06-2025	24-06-2025	30-06-2025 4:00 PM	30-06-2025 4:30 PM
2					
3					
4					
5					

Bids must be accompanied by a Treasury Challan (dated between the bid submission start date and the Bid Submission End date) with NIT No., Name of work and Serial No. deposited in M.H. 0059 in the name of Executive Engineer R&B Division Sopore (tender inviting authority) as the cost of the tender document.
 Geotech Photographs: Minimum 03 sets (01 set comprising of photographs before, during, and after execution of work) of size 26 cm x 21 cm to be provided.
 2. At the time of tendering, all bidders must upload earnest money/bid security equal to 2% of the Advertised Cost in the form of CDR/FDR/BG pledged to the tender receiving authority, i.e., Executive Engineer R&B Division Sopore (dated between the bid submission start date and the Bid Submission End date), otherwise the tender will be rejected. The successful bidder will have to provide Performance Security @5% at the time of contract award, strictly in accordance with the Government's circular/instructions from time to time. The earnest money/bid security of 2% will be released to the successful bidder only after the submission of a Performance Security of 5% of the contract cost, in single CDR/FDR/BG which will be released after successful completion of the DLP/Maintenance Period.
 3. The location of the Hot Mix Plant of adequate capacity capable of yielding a mix of proper and uniform quality, from which bituminous macadam is to be transported to the site in clean, tarpaulin-covered vehicles/Tippers, and shall be placed in such a way that the manufacturing, laying/spreading and rolling temperatures are kept within the specified limits.

No:1806-15
 DIPK-2862/25 DATED: 24-06-2024

Executive Engineer Dated:
 R&B Division Sopore

DC Reviews Progress On Heritage Conservation Projects

Observer News Service

SRINAGAR: Deputy Commissioner (DC) Srinagar, Akshay Labroon Tuesday chaired a meeting of the District Level Coordination-cum-Implementation Committee for the revival, restoration, preservation and maintenance of architectural and heritage sites here at the Meeting Hall of the DC Office Complex.

At the outset, the Deputy Commissioner was apprised about the progress of ongoing conservation projects undertaken in Srinagar District for preservation, revival, restoration and maintenance.

The DC took a comprehensive review of the status of the each project taken up under the initiative including restoration, conservation and development of Aali Masjid Eidgah, Khankahi Naqashband Sahib, Zeastha Devi Zeathyar temple, Baba Ghulam-U-Din Shrine Brein Nishat, Narayanmuth Shivji temple Tulsibagh, Ram Man-

dir Safakadal, Syed Mohammad Hussain Mazandarani, Vicharnag temple and Mangleshwar Bheirev Asthapan Baddam.

On the occasion, the DC laid emphasis on collaborative efforts by all line Departments in restoration practices to conserve architecture of the sites on heritage pattern. He also directed them to expedite efforts closely to ensure the effective implementation of heritage preservation projects.

During the meeting, the DC also discussed the new conservation projects identified for current fiscal. The DC asked them to prepare DPRs and estimates at the earliest ensuring all revival, restoration works are carried out while preserving the rich art, culture and heritage of Kashmir.

The DC stressed upon the stakeholder Departments to ensure speedy execution of the works on the heritage conservation projects so that they are completed in a time bound manner.

Agriculture Minister Inspects Muharram, Yatra Arrangements In City



Observer News Service

SRINAGAR: Minister for Agriculture Production, Rural Development Department and Panchayati Raj, Javid Ahmad Dar on Tuesday conducted an extensive visit to Shia-dominated areas in Srinagar to review the arrangements being put in place for peaceful and smooth conduct of Muharram processions.

Accompanied by MLA Lal Chowk, Sheikh Ahsan Ahmed and senior officers from various departments, Javid Dar visited several Imambaras including Balhama, Pandrethan and Guru Bazar.

The Minister emphasized the importance of close coordination among the departments to ensure that all arrangements are ensured well in advance. He stressed the need for uninterrupted electricity and potable water supply, sanitation, medical facilities and effective traffic management.

The Minister also interacted with the caretakers, organizers and devotees, listening to their concerns and suggestions as well.

Javid Dar directed the officials to address the public grievances on priority to ensure a peaceful and comfortable experience for the devotees. He assured that the Omar Abdullah led government is committed towards facilitating peaceful and smooth conduct of religious events in the region.

The Minister also visited the transit camp at Panthachowk, setup for the annual Amarnath Yatra, to review the boarding and lodging, sanitation and medical facilities put in place for the yatris.

The Minister's visit aimed to ensure a peaceful and successful conduct of Muharram and Amarnath Yatra while also addressing the needs and concerns of the local community.

Mian Altaf Inaugurates 2-Day Gojri Cultural Conference

Observer News Service

SRINAGAR: Member of Parliament Anantnag- Rajouri, Mian Altaf Ahmad inaugurated a two day Gojri Cultural Conference at Tagore Hall, Srinagar.

The event, being organized by the Jammu and Kashmir Academy of Art, Culture and Languages (JKACL), witnessed participation from a large number of tribal writers, poets and artists from across J&K. A distinguished panel comprising Er. Khurshheed Ahmed, Member of Legislative Assembly, Dr. Javid Rahi, Chief Editor Gojri and G.D. Tahir, former Director of Doodardarshan Srinagar shared the presidium.

In his presidential address,

Mian Altaf Ahmad emphasized the cultural importance of Gojri language saying that it as the third-largest spoken language in Jammu and Kashmir. He called for its inclusion in the Eighth Schedule of the Indian Constitution and pledged to raise the matter with the Government of India.

He highlighted the wide presence of the Gujjar community across all districts and acknowledged the significant contributions made by Gojri poets, scholars and artists. Commending the Academy's initiative in reviving such a crucial cultural event after a long hiatus, he expressed hope that the conference would help bridge the regional and cultural gaps within the Gujjar community.

Div Com Visits ICCC HMT, Orders Command Centre Rollout

Emphasizes On Effective Surveillance, Dissemination Of Real-Time Information



Observer News Service

SRINAGAR: With the annual Amarnath Yatra approaching, Divisional Commissioner (Div Com) Kashmir, Vijay Kumar Bidhuri on Tuesday visited the Integrated Command & Control Center (ICCC) at HMT to assess the functioning of the centre for hassle-free Yatra.

During the visit, he was informed that all designated officials from the relevant departments were deployed to the ICCC urgently for round the clock functioning of the command centre and effective surveillance and dissemination of real-time information especially exigencies.

He emphasized the need for the operation of hunting line numbers to ensure that pilgrims have access to urgent assistance.

Div Com also called for the daily compilation of surveillance data and call logs reports.

Meanwhile, he also reviewed final arrangements in a meeting with officers to ensure smooth and peace-

HE EMPHASIZED THE NEED FOR THE OPERATION OF HUNTING LINE NUMBERS TO ENSURE THAT PILGRIMS HAVE ACCESS TO URGENT ASSISTANCE.

ful conduct of the Yatra.

The meeting was attended by Director of FCS&CA, Dr Owais Ahmad; Deputy Commissioner Srinagar, Akshay Labroo; Commissioner SMC, Faz Lul Haseeb, and representatives from various departments such as ULB, IMD, PHE, KPDC, I&FC, PWD, R&B, SDRF, NDRF, Fire & Emergency, SRTC, and the Police.

In the meeting, Div Com assessed

preparations across departments to ensure a seamless and spiritual experience for the yatris.

Director FCS&CA informed the meeting that sufficient quantities of essential supplies have been allocated for the Yatra camps, and this will be adjusted as per need as the Yatra progresses.

Chief Engineer KPDC shared that all base camps have been equipped with electricity, and street lighting has been installed to eliminate dark areas. Additionally, officials from Jal Shakti confirmed that water connections have been installed at all camp areas and that all sanitary facilities have been linked to the water supply.

Div Com also reviewed fire safety protocols, and issued a directive to the Fire & Emergency department to ensure accessibility to fire extinguishers.

Health department was instructed to ensure the installation of sufficient oxygen booths and other medical setups at the camps and enroute to the holy cave.

DC, SMC Commissioner Visit Yatra Transit Camp Pantha Chowk

Observer News Service

SRINAGAR: In connection with the upcoming Amarnath Yatra-2025, Deputy Commissioner (DC) Srinagar, Akshay Labroo along with Commissioner Srinagar Municipal Corporation (SMC), Faz Lul Haseeb undertook a visit to Yatra Transit Camp, Pantha Chowk here on Tuesday.

The visit was focused on ensuring robust arrangements for the smooth and seamless conduct of the annual pilgrimage, set to commence on July 3, 2025.

Additional Deputy Commissioner Aadil Fareed, Joint Commissioner SMC, Nuzhat Khurshid, SDPO Panthachowk Zohaib & senior Officers of Police and District Administration Srinagar accompanied the DC during the visit.

On the occasion, the DC reviewed the boarding, lodging, bedding, registration, sanitation, medical facilities at the Pantha Chowk Transit Camp, a halt site for pilgrims traveling to the Amarnath cave. He also took stock of other amenities to ensure they meet the needs of the yatris.

During the visit, the DC issued directives to Officers to expedite preparations and ensure all arrangements are put in place well ahead of the Yatra-2025. Em-



phasizing pilgrim comfort, he stressed the need for seamless coordination among Departments to enhance services at the Camp. Special attention was laid on ensuring proper sanitation facilities, availability of clean drinking water, electricity and setting up of Langars (community kitchens) to provide nutritious meals.

The DC & SMC Commissioner also inspected the readiness of Yatri Facilitation Center, which will handle critical services such as e-KYC verification, RFID card distribution, and

registration to streamline the pilgrimage process.

On the occasion, the DC directed all line Departments to ensure all arrangements and facilities are completed by June 28 to ensure smooth conduct of the annual Yatra for this year.

Later, the Deputy Commissioner along with the Commissioner SMC visited Yatra Bhawan adjacent to the Yatra Transit Camp and inspected the arrangements/facilities being put in place for the Amarnath Yatris.

Shia-Sunni Coordination Committee Meeting Held

Observer News Service

SRINAGAR: Mutahida Majlis-e-Ulema Jammu & Kashmir convened an important meeting of the Shia-Sunni Coordination Committee at Mirwaiz Manzil, Rajouri Kadal.

The meeting witnessed the participation of a large number of prominent religious scholars, spiritual leaders, intellectuals, and notable personalities from society, representing leading religious organizations.

The session was presided over by senior religious scholar Agha Syed Muhammad Hadi Al-Moosavi Al-Safavi.

During the meeting, scholars and representatives from both sects emphasized that, at a time

when the overall situation of Muslims – locally, nationally, and globally – remains extremely vulnerable, it is imperative for Muslims to demonstrate unity and stand together, rising above all differences.

The importance and need to observe the month of Muharram in an atmosphere of mutual respect, religious dignity, and complete harmony was strongly highlighted. The speakers unanimously asserted that Muharram-ul-Haram is a deeply sacred month for the entire Muslim Ummah, and any attempt to provoke sectarian or communal discord will not be allowed. Upholding unity was declared a collective and uncompromising responsibility.

The meeting expressed serious

IT WAS STRONGLY EMPHASIZED THAT ALL BANNERS, POSTERS, AND PUBLIC PROCESSIONS HELD DURING MUHARRAM MUST STRICTLY AVOID CONTROVERSIAL OR PROVOCATIVE LANGUAGE.

concern over the fact that live videos, statements, or images shared on social media in the past have led to misunderstandings and hurt religious sentiments. Therefore, all religious organizations and individuals are urged to act responsibly online and refrain from sharing content that could incite or mislead.

Speakers and religious scholars were urged to strictly avoid any form of personal or sectarian criticism, especially in view of the fact that most religious gatherings and sermons are now live-streamed or uploaded online.

It was strongly emphasized that all banners, posters, and public processions held during Muharram must strictly avoid controversial or provocative language.

The speakers also stressed that no irresponsible remarks against revered Islamic personalities, especially the noble Companions of the Prophet (Sahaba) and the purified members of the Prophet's family (Ahl al-Bayt), will be tolerated. Such statements are deeply hurtful and have the potential to disturb the peaceful atmosphere.

At this critical juncture, scholars and organizations were urged to maintain close contact with the youth and guide them with sensitivity and wisdom.

Prominent participants of the meeting included veteran scholar Moulana Shaikat Hussain Keing, Agha Syed Mujtaba Al-Moosavi Al-Safavi; representative of Moulana Masroor Abbas Ansari – Agha Syed Muhammad Yousuf; representative of Moulana Imran Raza Ansari – Syed Muhammad Tayyib Rizvi; Moulana Khurshheed Ahmad Qanoongo; Ghulam Ali Gulzar; Agha Syed Mudasir Hussain Rizvi; Moulana Sabt Muhammad Shabbir Qummi; Ghulam Hassan Majrooh; Mushtaq Ahmad Sofi; Peer Ghulam Nabi; Muhammad Rafiq Zargar; and Moulana M.S. Rehman Shams, among others.

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

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SHIEKH 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

HIJRI CALENDAR
28 Zil-Hajj
1446

FAJR	3:36
ZUHR	12:33
ASR	5:33
Magrib	7:50
ISHA	9:31

This Day In History

- 253 - St Lucius I begins his reign as Catholic Pope
- 524 - Battle of Vézeronce, the Franks defeat the Burgundians
- 841 - Battle at Fontenay: Louis & Charles beat their brother Lotharius I
- 1080 - Wibbert of Ravenna chosen as anti-pope Clemens III
- 1096 -1st Crusade slaughter Jews of Werleinghofen Germany
- 1139 Battle of Ourique: Afonso I defeats Moors 1139- Battle of Ourique: Afonso I defeats Moors
- 1183- Peace of Konstanz signed between Hohenstaufen Emperor Frederick Barbarossa and Italian Lombard League
- 1638- Lunar eclipse is 1st astronomical event recorded in the American Colonies
- 1667-1st blood transfusion performed by French Doctor Jean-Baptiste Denys
- 1672- 1st recorded monthly Quaker meeting in US held, Sandwich, Mass
- 1678-Elena Cornaro Piscopia, a Venetian, is awarded a doctorate of philosophy - first woman to receive a university doctoral decree
- 1900- Russia mobilizes its army in eastern Siberia preparatory to acting against the Chinese, but also in an attempt to diminish the influence of Japan on the Asian mainland
- 1905-Warsaw & Lodz revolt against Russian occupation
- 1919- 1st advanced monoplane airliner flight (Junkers F13)
- 1940- Adolf Hitler views Eiffel tower & grave of Napoleon in Paris, France
- 1941- Finland declares war on Soviet Union
- 1945-Imperial General Headquarters in Tokyo announce fall of Okinawa
- 1948- Harry Truman signs Displaced Persons Bill (205,000 Europeans to US)
- 1949- Presidential election in Syria (some women allowed to vote)
- 1950- Korean conflict begins; North Korea invades South Korea
- 1950 -UN member states begin using integrated forces against North Korea
- 1953-1st passenger to fly commercially around the world < 100 hours
- 1960- Madagascar gains independence from France
- 1960- Somaliland is granted independence by British government
- 1961- Iraq announces that Kuwait is a part of Iraq (Kuwait disagrees)
- 1966- Kosmos 122, 1st Soviet weather satellite, launched
- 1967- First global satellite television programme - Our World
- 1975-After a prolonged liberation struggle against Portuguese colonial rulers, Mozambique becomes independent as People Republic of Mozambique.
- 1981- Microsoft is restructured to become an incorporated business in its home state of Washington.
- 1991- Slovenia & Croatia declare independence from Yugoslavia
- 2012-33 Syrian army officers defect to Turkey
- 2013 - 37 people are killed after a gold mine collapses in the Central African Republic
- 2017 - Tanker carrying fuel bursts into flames near Ahmedpur East, Pakistan, killing more than 200 people
- 2018 - UK House of Commons votes for a controversial third Heathrow runway
- 2018 - Californian Governor Jerry Brown declares State of Emergency for wildfire spread over 8,200 acres in Lake County
- 2018 - Motorcycle maker Harley-Davidson announces it plans to move some production abroad in response to EU retaliatory tariffs
- 2019- Stephanie Grisham replaces Sarah Sanders as US White House press secretary and communications director - 1st in American history to hold no press conferences; serves until April 2020
- 2020- Australian airline Qantas announces it is cutting 6,000 jobs, a fifth of its workforce because of the pandemic
- 2020 -Liverpool FC clinches first EPL soccer title in 30 years with 7 games to spare as Chelsea beats second-placed Manchester City, 2-1 at Stamford Bridge
- 2020- US Center of Disease Control estimates 20 million people in America have been infected with COVID-19, 10 times higher than confirmed cases

Suspend operation of Air India Boeing fleet pending safety audit: Plea in SC

Press Trust Of India

NEW DELHI: A plea in the Supreme Court has sought suspending Air India Boeing aircraft operations pending a safety audit within two weeks in wake of the recent Ahmedabad air tragedy that claimed lives of 241 passengers and crew on board.

The London-bound Air India flight, Boeing Dreamliner 787-8, with 242 passengers and crew on board, crashed moments after taking off from the Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel International Airport in Ahmedabad on the afternoon of June 12.

The plea sought directions to the authorities, particularly the DGCA, to conduct unannounced audits of entire fleet of Air India and other air carriers operating in India, with public disclosure of findings and imposition of immediate corrective measures or penalties for non-compliance.

The plea filed by petitioner and advocate Ajay Bansal has made the Centre, Directorate General of Civil Aviation (DGCA), Air India Limited and Bureau of Civil Aviation Security (BCAS) as parties.

It also sought directions for stringent security and scientific checks of all planes operating in India and immediate grounding of all aircraft found not fully functional or without prescribed facilities for international passenger service until all defects were rectified and airworthiness recertified.

In the interim, the plea sought to "suspend operation of Boeing aircraft of Air India, pending a safety audit within two weeks, in view of the recent crash and reported main-

tenance backlogs".

A plea in the Supreme Court has sought suspending Air India Boeing aircraft operations pending a safety audit within two weeks in wake of the recent Ahmedabad air tragedy.

Air India Express Jaipur-Dubai flight cancelled after cockpit fault detected moments before take-off

The petitioner further sought within four weeks the formulation and notification of fresh mandatory guidelines prescribing stringent and periodic functional checks of all cabin equipment, engines, airframes and ancillary systems, consistent with best international standards.

"The present petition challenges systemic failures in maintenance, functionality and passenger services on Air India flights, as evidenced by the recent tragic Ahmedabad-London crash, and the petitioner's own business class journey on AI 127 (DEL ORD) on May 20, 2025, where seats, in-flight entertainment and air-conditioning were non-functional," Bansal said, referring to his journey from Delhi to Chicago.

The plea claimed the seats failed to recline properly, the seat-back entertainment systems were entirely non-functional and air-conditioning did not work until cruising altitude.

The recent crash of an Air India Boeing aircraft on the Ahmedabad-London route has further compounded concerns of general public, the plea added.

Calling it a violation of Article 21 of the Constitution, Bansal said the safety and security of all air passengers was subsumed within "life" under the constitutional provision.

Air India, AI Express resume flights to Middle East as airspaces reopen

Press Trust Of India

NEW DELHI: Air India and Air India Express on Tuesday progressively resumed their services to the Middle East, with flights to Dubai and Muscat, respectively, as countries in the region reopened their airspaces.

With escalating tensions in the Middle East, especially after Iran launching missiles against US airbase in Qatar, some countries in the region shut their airspaces resulting in numerous flight diversions and cancellations, including by Indian carriers.

Tata Group-owned carriers — Air India and Air India Express — have restarted flights to cities in the Middle East. Officials said Air India is operating Delhi-Dubai flight and Air India Express is operating Delhi-Muscat service.

On Tuesday, Air India said it will progressively re-

sume flights to the Middle East as airspaces are gradually reopening in the region and most of the operations will resume from June 25.

"Flights to and from Europe, previously cancelled, are also being progressively reinstated from today, while services to and from the East Coast of the US and Canada will resume at the earliest opportunity," the airline said in a statement.

Some flights may experience delays or cancellations due to consequential impacts and extended re-routings/flight times, but we are committed to minimising disruptions and restoring our schedule integrity, it added.

Air India Express, which is one of the largest operators to the Middle East, also said it is progressively resuming services to the Middle East from Tuesday with flights to Muscat, Riyadh and Jeddah.



India On Iran-Israel Truce 'No Alternative To Dialogue, Diplomacy'

Press Trust Of India

NEW DELHI: Hours after US President Donald Trump's claims of an Iran-Israel ceasefire, India on Tuesday said it stands ready to play its part to resolve the situation and insisted on "dialogue and diplomacy" as the way forward.

New Delhi said it remained "deeply concerned" about the overall situation, but welcomed reports of a ceasefire between Iran and Israel.

Though Trump announced the ceasefire between Israel and Iran, later he accused both sides of violating it.

"We have been following developments overnight relating to the conflict between Iran and Israel, including the US action against Iran's nuclear facilities and Iranian retaliation against US military bases in Qatar," the

Ministry of External Affairs (MEA) said.

"While we remain deeply concerned about the prospects for overall and sustained regional security and stability, we welcome reports of a ceasefire between Iran and Israel and the role played by the US and Qatar in bringing it about," it said.

New Delhi again called for resolution of the conflict through dialogue and diplomacy.

"We wish to reiterate that there is no alternative to dialogue and diplomacy in order to address and resolve the multiple conflicts in the region," the MEA said in a statement.

"India stands ready to play its part in these efforts and hopes that all parties concerned will work towards sustained peace and stability," it said.

New Delhi's latest statement came two days after Prime Minister Narendra Modi conveyed to Iranian

President Masoud Pezeshkian India's "deep concern" over Iran's conflict with Israel.

Modi had also called for immediate de-escalation of the situation through "dialogue and diplomacy".

The phone conversation initiated by Pezeshkian on Sunday came after the US bombed three major nuclear sites — Fordow, Natanz and Isfahan — in Iran, bringing itself into the Israel-Iran conflict.

"We discussed in detail about the current situation. Expressed deep concern at the recent escalations," Modi had said in a social media post.

"Reiterated our call for immediate de-escalation, dialogue and diplomacy as the way forward and for early restoration of regional peace, security and stability," the prime minister added.

The US attack on the Iranian nuclear facilities had triggered fears of a wider regional conflict.

Iran Says Taking Measures To Continue Nuclear Programme

Associated Press

TEHRAN: Iran's government said Tuesday it had "taken the necessary measures" to ensure the continuation of its nuclear programme after US and Israeli strikes targeted its facilities.

"We have taken the necessary measures and are taking stock of the damage" caused by the strikes, said the head of the Atomic Energy Orga-

nization of Iran, Mohammad Eslami, in a statement aired on state television.

"Plans for restarting (the facilities) have been prepared in advance, and our strategy is to ensure that production and services are not disrupted," he added.

The United States struck the Fordo, Isfahan and Natanz uranium enrichment facilities on Sunday.

US President Donald

Trump called the strikes a "spectacular military success". The extent of the damage is unknown.

An adviser to Iran's supreme leader, Ayatollah Ali Khamenei, said his country still had stocks of enriched uranium and that "the game is not over". Israel announced on Monday that it had again bombed the Fordo site, buried under a mountain south of Tehran, to "obstruct access routes".

Defence Minister Heads to China Summit

Press Trust Of India

NEW DELHI: Indian Defence Minister Rajnath Singh will travel to China this week for talks with his regional counterparts, New Delhi said Tuesday.

Ties between the world's two most populous nations have improved in recent months, after hitting a low in 2020 over a deadly clash between their troops on the Himalayan border.

Singh will join fellow defence ministers in the eastern city of Qingdao for the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO) summit starting Wednesday.

He will "outline India's vision towards achieving greater international peace & security, call for joint & consistent efforts to eliminate terrorism & extremism in the region", a defence ministry statement said.

Singh will also hold bilateral meetings with his counterparts from China and Russia, which are alliance members alongside Pakistan, Iran, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Uzbekistan and Belarus. Ahead of the two-day SCO

meeting, India's National Security Adviser Ajit Doval held talks in Beijing with Chinese foreign minister Wang Yi.

Doval "underscored the need to promote the overall development of the India-China bilateral relations", New Delhi



said Monday.

Wang said relations have "seen some positive developments" since the two countries' leaders met last year, China's foreign ministry said.

Beijing has granted permission to Indian pilgrims wishing to trek to Mount Kailash in Tibet, a site holy to Hindus and Buddhists, for the first time since the deadly 2020 clash.

The rival countries have also agreed to expedite resuming direct flights.

Shun Double Standards on Terrorism: NSA Doval at SCO Meet

Press Trust Of India

NEW DELHI: National Security Adviser Ajit Doval on Tuesday called for shunning double standards in combating terrorism and urged

"crime against humanity", Doval said.

The NSA specifically called on SCO member states to hold accountable the perpetrators, organisers, financiers and sponsors of acts of cross-border terror and to help bring



members of the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO) to hold accountable the perpetrators, organisers and financiers of cross-border terrorism, seen as a reference to Pakistan.

Doval made the remarks in an address at a meeting of the security council secretaries of the SCO in Beijing.

The NSA conveyed India's deep concern over continued threat from UN-proscribed terror groups such as Lashkar-e-Taiba (LeT), Jaish-e-Mohammed (JeM), Al Qaeda, ISIS and its affiliates. More importantly, Doval highlighted the need to shun "double standards" in the fight against terror.

Any act of terrorism, including cross-border terror, is a

them to justice. Though he directly didn't name Pakistan, his remarks appeared to be directed against it.

The NSA said New Delhi launched Operation Sindoor to dismantle terror infrastructure and deter terrorists from carrying out attacks in India following the Pahalgam terror strike.

Besides India and China, the SCO comprises Pakistan, Iran, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Russia, Tajikistan and Uzbekistan.

In his remarks, Doval pitched for decisive action against terrorists proscribed by the UN and groups such as LeT, JeM and their proxies, as well as dismantling of their "terror eco-systems".

"Travesty Of Justice": Top Court Summons UP Jailor For Not Releasing Man Despite Bail

Press Trust of India

NEW DELHI: The Supreme Court on Tuesday said it was a "travesty of justice" that a man it granted bail to in April in a case under UP's anti-conversion law had not yet been released from jail.

A bench of Justices K V Viswanathan and N Kotiswar Singh took strong exception after the man claimed that he was not released on bail on the ground that a sub-section of a provision of Uttar Pradesh Prohibition of Unlawful Conversion of Religion Act, 2021 was not mentioned in the bail order.

The bench, therefore, directed the superintendent jailor of the district jail Ghaziabad to appear



physically present before it on June 25.

Observing that this case presented a "very unfortunate scenario", the bench further directed the Director General of Prisons of Uttar Pradesh to appear through video-confer-

encing.

The bench noted after the top court granted bail to the man on April 29, a trial court in Ghaziabad on May 27 issued a release order to the superintendent jailor to release the accused from custody upon execution of the

personal bond, unless liable to be detained in some other matter.

"After this order was made, it is stated by the petitioner that he has been unable to secure his liberty because in the order of the (Allahabad) High Court and this court, clause (1) of section 5 of the Uttar Pradesh Prohibition of Unlawful Conversion of Religion Act, 2021 was omitted and because of that, the petitioner could not be released," the bench noted.

The top court called it April 29 order "categorical" and said the appellant should be released on bail during the pendency of trial in the FIR of January 3, 2024 registered with a police station at Ghaziabad, on conditions set by the trial court.

IANS

Jaipur: In a shocking case, a French woman was raped after attending a party in Rajasthan's Udaipur. The Rajasthan Police have registered a case, confirmed officials on Tuesday.

According to police, the incident took place on Monday evening after the victim attended a party at a local cafe, where she met the accused.

The accused, identified as Siddharth, allegedly lured the woman to his rented apartment in Sukher under the pretext of showing her scenic spots in the area. There, he is accused of raping her.

French Tourist Raped In India's Udaipur After Cafe Party; Accused On The Run

The victim later admitted herself to a private hospital, where she is now out of danger and receiving medical care, the official said.

SHO Purna Singh Rajpurohit of Badgaon Police Station confirmed the incident and said an FIR has been registered based on the woman's complaint. The accused is currently absconding, and police teams are actively searching for him, he said.

According to the FIR, the tourist arrived in Udaipur from Delhi on June 22 and was staying at a hotel in the Ambamata police station area. On Monday evening, she attended a party at The Greek Farm Cafe and Restro Cafe at Tiger Hill, where she met the accused. In her state-

ment, the woman said the man approached her during the party and invited her to step outside for a smoke, promising to show her some scenic views.

Despite her repeated requests to return to her hotel, he allegedly insisted otherwise, eventually taking her to his apartment. Once there, he allegedly made advances and, when she refused, forcibly raped her.

She said her phone battery had drained, leaving her unable to call for help.

After the assault, her health deteriorated, and she admitted herself to a private hospital.

Authorities have assured that the accused will be apprehended soon.

NEWS MAKERS

LG Sinha Meets Amarnath Yatra Welfare Society Delegation



Observer News Service

SRINAGAR: A delegation of Amarnath Yatra Welfare Society led by its President Shri Kiran Wattal called on Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha. The members of the delegation also comprised of Shri Anil Gupta, Senior Vice President, Chamber of Commerce & Industry Jammu, discussed various important matters pertaining to the smooth conduct of the

forthcoming Amarnath Yatra. On the occasion, the Lieutenant Governor also unveiled the 2nd edition of a specially designed LED glow Lord Mahadev Shivling Pratima with MP3 audio pre-recorded ancient Katha of Lord Shiva and Maa Parvati, along with Bhakti bhajans and Leelas. Subsequently, representatives of Akhil Bharatiya Mahajan Phagetra Biradari headed by Rajesh Gupta also called on the Lieutenant Governor.

DC Shopian Reviews Anti-Drug & Substance Abuse Measures

Observer News Service

SHOPIAN: District Level Narco Coordination (NCORD) meeting was held on Tuesday at the mini-secretariat here, under the chairmanship of Deputy Commissioner (DC) Shopian, Shishir Gupta.

On the occasion, department wise action taken reports were assessed, and directions were issued to strengthen the fight against drug abuse.

Police action including registration of FIRs and detention of accused persons along with poppy destruction drives and inspections of pharmacies was particularly reviewed.

DC emphasized the importance of keeping strict vigil on students and educational institutions across the district who are the most vulnerable to the menace. The strict enforcement

of COTPA was also stressed upon and department head directed to take more stringent measures against the menace.

He also stressed on the importance of keeping close vigil on poppy cultivation areas and taking strict action against the cultivators besides enhancing poppy destruction drives.

Other departments were instructed for enhancing counselling services and Information, Education, and Communication (IEC) activities to raise awareness about drug abuse, aiming to formulate a comprehensive action plan to curb drug abuse and ensure effective grassroots-level awareness so that the anti-drug message reaches one and all.

ADC, Dr. Zakir Hussain Faaz, ACP, Tehsildars, district officers and other concerned officers of Police were present in the meeting.

Rather Inaugurates Additional Block Of GHSS Pakarpora



Observer News Service

BUDGAM: Speaker Jammu and Kashmir Legislative Assembly, Abdul Rahim Rather, inaugurated the additional accommodation Block of Government Higher Secondary School (GHSS) Pakarpora here on Tuesday.

The project was completed at a cost of Rs 1.60 crore by R&B Division, Charar-i-Sharif.

After inauguration, the Speaker also inspected different blocks of the institution and had an assessment of existing infrastructure.

The Speaker, on the occasion, distributed certificates among the best performing students of the institution. He assured the students that in coming days efforts would be made to establish a library and a play field in the institution.

Later, the Speaker interacted with various public delegations and individuals. They put forth various issues and grievances before the Speaker and sought their immediate redressal. They also demanded school library, fencing of Wall in school premises and widening of road from Pakarpora to Pulwama.

While interacting with these public delegations, the Speaker assured them that their genuine demands will be redressed promptly.

Among others, senior officers of district administration, staff members of the school, locals and a large number of students were also present on the occasion.

JMC Commissioner Chairs Meet On HC Directions Over Encroachments

Observer News Service

JAMMU: In a proactive step towards the effective implementation of the directions issued by the High Court of Jammu & Kashmir and Ladakh in PIL No. 27/2017, the Commissioner, Jammu Municipal Corporation (JMC), Dr. Devansh Yadav today chaired a joint meeting of officers of line departments at the Town Hall, Jammu.

The meeting was convened to ensure coordinated enforcement of the Court's orders regarding removal of illegal encroachments, unauthorized street vending and misuse of public pathways/roads in Jammu City.

During the meeting, Dr. Devansh Yadav directed the concerned officers to immediately identify and focus on hotspot areas in the city suffering from frequent encroachments and obstruction of public and vehicular movement. He further instructed them to hold meetings with stakehold-

ers and sensitise them against placing goods and items outside their commercial establishments, which causes inconvenience to pedestrians and disrupts traffic flow.

The Commissioner emphasized that the strict enforcement is essential not only for compliance with court directions but also to uphold public convenience, ensure pedestrian safety and maintain urban discipline in the city. Jammu Municipal Corporation in coordination with police and other line departments shall continue its dedicated efforts to restore order on the city's streets, he maintained.

Among others, Joint Commissioner (R&E) JMC Subah Mehta, Additional Deputy Commissioner Jammu Anusya Jamwal, Deputy Commissioner (South) JMC Lal Chand, DLR Roopali Puri, Deputy Superintendent Police (Traffic-South), Faisal, SDPO North Vikram Bahu and senior officers from JMC and allied departments attended the meeting.

AIDS Victims Deserve Compassion, Not Condemnation: Sakeena Itoo

Flags off Mobile ICTC Vans Of J&K AIDS Control Society At Srinagar

Observer News Service

SRINAGAR: Minister for Health and Medical Education, Social Welfare and Education, Sakeena Itoo, flagged off Mobile Integrated Counselling and Testing Centre (ICTC) Vans of Jammu and Kashmir AIDS Control Society (JKACS) here today.

The initiative was aimed to strengthen healthcare outreach and awareness among the people of underserved areas and vulnerable communities.

Secretary Health and Medical Education, Dr. Syed Abid Rasheed Shah; Director SKIMS; Project Director, JKACS; Director Family Welfare and Immunization; Director AYUSH; Principal GMC Srinagar; Chief Medical Officers; senior officers of JKACS; health department and other concerned officers were present on the occasion.

Addressing a gathering of health professionals, the Minister emphasized on the urgent need of de-stigmatizing HIV/AIDS persons and ensuring a support-oriented approach for the affected individuals. "People living with HIV/AIDS need to be handled with compassion and dignity. It's not just about medical intervention, it's about restoring hope and trust through proper counselling, awareness and community support", she stated.

She remarked that people affected by this virus need to



be counselled, sensitised and looked after properly, so that those hiding this due to stigma associated with it, can also come forward and seek proper medical treatment.

The Minister further said that these ICTC Vans are high end vehicles which will contribute effectively in fighting this virus. She added that these mobile ICTC Vans are aimed at expanding the reach of HIV/AIDS testing and counselling services to remote and underserved areas of Jammu and Kashmir, particularly targeting the high-risk groups and marginalized populations.

"The launch of these mobile vans is a testament to the Government's resolve to bring best healthcare services to the doorsteps of the most vulnerable. No one should be denied access due to geography or stigma," said the Minister.

Dr. Syed Abid Rasheed called upon all to redouble their efforts for completely wiping out this virus from the region as J&K has minimal cases of this

virus. He also spoke in length about the role of every individual in eradicating this virus from society.

Earlier, in her welcome address, Deputy Director, JKACS, Dr. Monika Vali, spoke about the broader aspects of mobile ICTC Vans.

She further said that this initiative will also help in early detection of this virus among affected individuals as well as strengthen prevention measures due to awareness.

On the occasion, the Minister was also briefed about the specialities of these mobile ICTC Vans. He was informed that these Vans are equipped with facilities for confidential counselling, blood sample collection, rapid testing and IEC (Information, Education and Communication) awareness campaigns.

It was also given out that these vans will be manned by trained healthcare professionals, ensuring both sensitivity and professionalism in every interaction.

CS Pushes Forward J&K's IT Revolution With BISAG-N

Observer News Service

SRINAGAR: Chief Secretary, Atal Dulloo on Tuesday chaired a comprehensive review meeting to assess progress on various digital initiatives spearheaded by the Bhaskaracharya National Institute for Space Applications and Geo-informatics (BISAG-N) across the government departments.

The meeting besides the Administrative Heads was attended by DG, Planning; Commissioner, State Taxes; Director, Employment; MD, JKTDC; CEO, JaKeGA; IT professionals from BISAG-N and representatives from other departments.

The Chief Secretary took stock of the progress made on development of every new initiative taken-up with the BISAG-N along with the dates for their rollout for public usage. He observed that such IT measures would make lives of common citizens largely amenable.

Dulloo underscored the need for developing respective dashboards for people-centric interventions like Mission YUVA and Sehat Mobile app simultaneously. This will help in having peek into their uptake among the masses besides devising subsequent action plans as per the requirements on ground.

He also accentuated the importance of linking the learning of skill development courses with U-Dise data so that the trajectory of every student is known for chiselling his/her career in a better shape.

The review highlighted significant advancements in e-governance, agricultural development, public services and infrastructure mapping, reaffirming J&K's commitment towards digital transformation.

Earlier, the IT Secretary Piyush Singla gave a detailed overview of ongoing, completed and upcoming initiatives, outlining plans for collaboration with BISAG-N to drive project completion. He also detailed out the objectives that have to be achieved after the accomplishment of these projects.

Afterwards, the BISAG-N

presented a detailed overview of its extensive portfolio of projects, emphasizing both the ongoing endeavours and new initiatives aimed at enhancing efficiency, transparency and citizen-centric service delivery.

The major IT projects related to Revenue Department reviewed in the meeting included ongoing digitization of Revenue Maps (5670 villages completed), development of Jambandi portal, Mutation Register, Oracle Database Migration and a GIS portal for Ground Truthing (targeted for completion on June 30, 2025).

A key focus of the meeting was establishment of a Centre of Excellence in Emerging Technologies. This envisages development of high-performance computing (GPUs), robotic kits, drone/UAV innovation capabilities and cloud infrastructure. The revised DPR has been submitted and funding is being pursued from MeitY, J&K government and J&K Bank, the meeting was informed.

DC Ramban Reviews Progress Of PWD, PMGSY Works

Observer News Service

RAMBAN: Deputy Commissioner Ramban Mohammad Alyas Khan on Tuesday chaired a comprehensive review meeting to assess the progress of developmental works being executed by the Public Works Department (R&B) and PMGSY in the district.

The meeting was attended by Chief Planning Officer Dr. Shakeeb Ahmed Rather, Executive Engineers of PWD (Ramban and Banihal), Executive Engineers of PMGSY (Ramban and Banihal), AEEs and AEs from both departments.

During the review, the Deputy Commissioner directed the departments to ensure proper maintenance of the newly completed and already functional roads, buildings, and other infrastructure assets. He emphasized the need to maintain quality standards in the execution of the ongoing developmental projects and instructed for strict monitoring to avoid any compromise on the quality of work.

The DC issued clear directions to take stern action against contractors causing unwarranted delays in the execution of projects of public importance. He stressed the importance of accountability and timely delivery to ensure public convenience and optimal utilization of

resources.

The meeting was informed that 7 NABARD funded road projects have been completed in PWD Division Ramban, while 6 are stalled due to forest clearance and other land related issues.

It was further informed that 14 NABARD road projects have been sanctioned for PWD Division Banihal. The DC directed officials to expedite the tendering process, pursue forest clearance and other issues affecting the execution of the projects.

Reviewing the progress of PMGSY Works, the DC expressed satisfaction and appreciated the progress made in project completion in both divisions.

Taking note of forest clearance issues hindering the projects, the DC directed the Chief Planning Officer to furnish a detailed report on all such pending cases for timely intervention at appropriate levels.

The Executive Engineers were asked to coordinate with the concerned SDMs and Forest Department to secure clearances. The SDMs were further instructed to intervene promptly to resolve local issues amicably by involving civil society.

The Deputy Commissioner also directed both departments to focus on achieving financial and physical targets to avoid last-minute rush and ensure timely completion of all projects.

Rana Emphasizes Collective Efforts Towards Water Conservation

Observer News Service

POONCH: Minister for Jal Shakti, Forest, Ecology & Environment and Tribal Affairs, Javed Ahmed Rana, stressed the need for collective efforts to conserve water for present and future generations.

He was speaking during a meeting of officers held in Poonch during which threadbare discussions were held on various agricultural schemes and related issues.

Rana emphasized the importance of studying successful water conservation models from other parts of the country that can be replicated in Jammu and Kashmir. "There is a need to recalibrate water policies and accelerate water conservation efforts to address the challenges faced by our region," he said.

The Minister underscored the crucial role of local community involvement in water conservation, stating that locals, NGOs and other stakeholders should be engaged in promoting judicious use of water resources and implementing water-saving practices. He called upon the officers to raise awareness about rainwater harvesting, drip irrigation, irrigation scheduling and other



conservation efforts in their respective areas.

The meeting also focussed on assessing progress, addressing challenges and sharing best practices in water conservation and groundwater management.

Rana emphasized the government's focus on revolutionizing agriculture in Jammu and Kashmir, with an emphasis on enhancing farmers' income, productivity and sustainability. During the meeting, the Minister also outlined the efforts to improve and modernise the agricultural practices, increase productivity and benefit farmers in the Mendhar region.

Chief Agricultural Officer, Poonch, Jog Raj Salathia, briefed the Minister about the progress on the ongoing and upcoming agricultural schemes and initiatives to promote sustainable agriculture.

Govt Committed To Save Old Industrial Units: Dy CM

Observer News Service

SRINAGAR: Deputy Chief Minister Surinder Choudhary on Tuesday chaired a meeting with representatives of Federation of Chamber of Industries Kashmir (FCIK) in presence of senior officials from the concerned department at Civil Secretariat Srinagar.

President FCIK, Shahid Ahmad Kamili, apprised the Dy CM of various pressing issues. These included revival of industrial policies, grant of amnesty for regularisation of lease deeds, uniform disbursement of SGST reimbursement, strengthening of industries department, delayed payment, power amnesty, bank related issues and non availability of basic infrastructure like road connectivity, power availability, drainage system as well as financial constraints.

The Deputy Chief Minister gave a patient hearing to the concerns raised by the stakeholders while assuring speedy

redress of the same.

The Deputy Chief Minister said Jammu and Kashmir is an ideal place for investments and the government has undertaken several measures for ensuring that the industrial sector gets the requisite boost. This would result in boosting the economy besides opening employment avenues for the youth, he maintained.

He exhorted that the primary objective of present dispensation is to explore investment and business opportunities, showcase the immense economic potential of Jammu & Kashmir and foster collaborations and partnership for building global pathways for J&K economy.

Surinder Choudhary asserted that the Omar Abdullah led government is working hard to save the old industrial units while promoting the new ventures. We will leave no stone unturned in supporting those who are crucially instrumental in providing livelihood and employment to thousands of people.

AUCTION OF TATA INDICA

1. Public auction of Car TATA Indica Veh No JK-18-0415 will be held at Army Camp near Degree College, Budgam on 26 Jun 25 at 1000hrs. All terms & conditions of public auction shall apply.
2. 10% of the amount will be paid in cash as security deposit and balance 90% will be paid on the day of collection. All rights to decide the final bid are reserved with the auction office.
3. The car can be inspected from 1000hrs to 1300hrs on every working day till 25 Jun 25.
4. For details contact 01933-247035.

Media Line Ads

KASHMIR ELECTRICAL EQUIPMENT MANUFACTURERS ASSOCIATION (KEEMA)

HEAD OFFICE: SRINAGAR, JAMMU & KASHMIR

Email: keema0611@gmail.com

PRESS RELEASE

DATED: 23 JUNE 2025

KEEMA Strongly Condemns Budgam Transformer Blast — Demands Criminal Action and Government Accountability

The Kashmir Electrical Equipment Manufacturers Association (KEEMA) expresses profound grief and outrage over the tragic transformer explosion in Budgam, which has resulted in the loss of a precious life and left several others grievously injured. We extend our deepest condolences to the family of the deceased and stand in solidarity with the injured. Their dedicated service to the public must be honoured not with mere tributes, but with action, justice, and accountability. This is not an accident it is a man-made disaster born out of systemic neglect. Despite KEEMA's repeated warnings to the government and the Power Development Department (PDD), substandard, uncertified electrical materials continue to be used, putting lives at constant risk. This preventable tragedy is a direct consequence of ignoring quality standards, and the cost has been paid in blood.

Preliminary reports confirm that the failed transformer lacked valid ISI certification and was never cleared through standard quality protocols. This is criminal negligence. KEEMA demands that a formal FIR be lodged immediately against both the agency that installed the equipment and the supplier who provided it. Those responsible must be booked under applicable sections of the Indian law without delay. The silence of authorities in the face of such gross dereliction is unacceptable. For over five decades, Kashmir's electrical manufacturers have maintained a flawless safety record

not a single incident has occurred involving KEEMA-certified equipment. Our industry has remained committed to supplying the highest-grade products, fully compliant with ISI standards. This tragedy has once again demonstrated the grave danger of bypassing certified local manufacturers in favour of dubious, uncertified supplies.

We therefore urge Hon'ble Chief Minister Omar Abdullah to take urgent cognizance of this matter and order a comprehensive, independent, and time-bound judicial inquiry into the transformer blast. This probe must establish individual and institutional accountability, fix criminal liability, and ensure that only certified and standardised equipment is used across the power sector going forward. KEEMA reaffirms its willingness to extend full technical assistance and cooperation to the government to help prevent such tragedies. But the time for appeals is over—this is the time for action. Let this be a moment of reckoning, not another entry in a forgotten file. The lives lost were not collateral damage—they were preventable victims of a broken system. Justice delayed is not only justice denied it is death repeated.

Raja Nayeem Ahmed
President
Kashmir Electrical Equipment Manufacturers Association (KEEMA)
Srinagar, Jammu & Kashmir

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KO VIEW

Iran Holds Ground

The fragile but holding ceasefire between Iran, Israel, and the United States brings a rare and much-needed moment of relief. After nearly two weeks of relentless strikes that killed hundreds in Iran and scores in Israel, and triggered a barrage of missiles even at a major US base, a lull in violence feels almost unreal. Yet, the cost of this calm must not be lost on us, nor how Iran turned the tables on the joint brute force of Israel and the US and fought them to a standstill.

It is now clear that Israel's surprise preemptive strikes on Iran's nuclear and military sites were calculated to cripple Iran's capacity. Instead, they triggered an unprecedented direct exchange that laid bare not only Iran's resilience but also its ability to absorb punishment and respond proportionately, despite crippling sanctions and decades of covert warfare. Iran's decision to calibrate its missile attacks, even when targeting American forces, demonstrated not reckless adventurism but a hard-headed realism to avoid a wider regional inferno.

For far too long, military establishments in Washington and Tel Aviv have relied on the perceived vulnerability of Iran to unilateral strikes, confident that regime change, chaos, or at least containment would follow. Iraq, Libya, Syria, and Afghanistan stand as graveyards of such arrogant miscalculations, albeit these nations were destroyed in the process. This time, the confrontation with Iran proved different.

Iran has neither nuclear weapons nor the same level of conventional power as its adversaries, but it has once again shown that military muscle alone cannot subdue a nation forged by revolution and sustained by a deep well of popular and ideological resolve. From the early hours of the conflict to the final moments before the truce, images of ordinary Iranians waving flags in bombed streets showed their resilience unlike those in Israel who took shelter in underground bunkers following every siren warning of Iranian missile barrage.

President Trump's dramatic warnings on his social media and hurried push for a ceasefire reveal what Tehran's steady posture achieved: a forced recalibration of Washington's appetite for a drawn-out conflict it could not win quickly. Israel, too, cannot ignore that it faced real deterrence, a notion that should inform its future security calculations and its relationship with neighbors it has long tried to weaken by covert operations and assassinations.

The region must seize this fragile window to pivot from endless war to dialogue. This ceasefire is not the end of old hostilities nor a guarantee of a peaceful future, but it is a moment to step back from the abyss. It should remind policymakers in the west that the Middle East deserves a security architecture built on mutual respect and non-aggression, not cycles of siege and retaliation.

Above all, Iran, long demonized and squeezed between sanctions and threats, has emerged not as victim but as a country whose endurance and unity turned an imposed war into a stalemate. That must be acknowledged, even by those who once imagined otherwise. May this truce, fragile as it is, be a foundation for the region's leaders to choose dignity, sovereignty, and peace over the fear of the west.

FINANCIAL FIX

Why Rules Matter

A guide for young people to safely navigate money, markets, and digital life.

Irshad Mushtaq

In a world where a few taps on your phone can move money, buy insurance, or even invest in stocks, it's more important than ever for young people to understand the rules that keep these systems running fairly.

Regulatory authorities exist to protect us. The Securities and Exchange Board of India, or SEBI, looks out for investors by making sure companies play fair in the stock market. The Reserve Bank of India helps keep banks stable and money flowing. And the Insurance Regulatory and Development Authority watches over policies that protect us from life's uncertainties.

Even the Goods and Services Tax, GST, affects us daily. It's added to nearly every item we buy, and understanding how it works helps people know what they're really paying for.

Online, things move faster. Apps and websites promise convenience, but not all of them follow the rules. It's crucial to check if these services are properly regulated. If not, the risk of fraud is real.

Many people also skip over legal charges like stamp duty or transaction fees. These aren't hidden costs, they're part of a system designed to ensure fairness. Knowing about them avoids confusion and builds trust.

Teaching these things early matters. Schools and colleges should talk more about how rules shape the systems we use every day. It's not just about staying legal. It's about building a society where fairness and safety come first.

Legal awareness isn't optional anymore. It's a tool young people need to carry with them as they step into a world full of opportunities and risks.

The author is a Srinagar-based reputed financial advisor.

Degrees Without Direction

Thousands of Kashmiri students graduate each year, but with no jobs, no guidance, and little mental health support, they are left searching for a future that seems to be missing.

Each year, thousands of students across Kashmir graduate, hoping for a fresh start.

After years of lectures, exams, and assignments, the degree finally comes. But instead of feeling joy, many of us feel stuck.

The question isn't just about getting a job, it's about not knowing where to go next.

Students in Kashmir often finish their degrees without any real-world experience. There are no internships, no campus placements, no professional mentors. We are called "freshers," but no one wants to hire freshers.

And when we ask, "How do we gain experience?" the answer is usually a shrug. There was never a door open in the first place.

One day, after class, someone in my group asked, "What's next for you?" The room fell silent. Then someone whispered, "I feel like a burden at home." Another said, "I don't know where to even start." Heads dropped. Eyes filled. That day, I realized this is bigger than just career confusion. It's a silent mental health crisis.

In just one year, the Tele-MANAS mental health helpline handled over 55,000 calls, most of them from young people struggling with anxiety, depression, and fear.

On the second day of Eid this year, a day meant for joy, the helpline received 119 distress calls, most of them late into the

night and early morning. Even our happiest days are now clouded with worry.

Behind these calls are real stories. One was from a 26-year-old labourer who was close to harming himself. Areeba, a counselor with Tele-MANAS, answered his call that day. "We made him pause and think," she said. "We helped him see the light at the end of a dark tunnel." He was lucky. Not everyone is.

The pressure isn't just emotional, it's economic.

Rising suicides in the valley are reportedly linked to poor education quality, joblessness, and growing health issues. Many students now look outside Jammu & Kashmir, or even abroad, for better education.

But this comes at a price. Not every family can afford it. Some who leave don't return because life outside offers more stability, better pay, and safer futures. Those who come back often find no jobs waiting for them.

After years of study, they return to a place where they are made to feel useless. Some give up. Some sink into depression. Some, tragically, do not survive the weight of it all.

This is the story of Kashmir's youth in 2025. We are not afraid of working hard, we are afraid of having nowhere to work at all. We are not afraid of growing, we are afraid there is no room left for

us to grow here.

But there are solutions.

Experts have suggested ways to help young Kashmiris find their way. They say the government and private sector should support local startups, offer business-friendly loans, and build co-working spaces where young people can develop their ideas and meet mentors.

We need vocational training that actually connects to today's markets. We need our classrooms to offer skills that match real jobs. We need internships, apprenticeships, and career counseling within Kashmir.

And we need mental health support to be available on campuses, not just in emergencies.

Schools and local communities should talk openly about emotional well-being and offer regular, easy-to-access help.

We don't lack ambition. We don't lack talent. What we lack is a system that understands and supports us. We need fair chances to build our lives, right here in Kashmir.

We have waited long enough. Let this not be another forgotten story.

The author is an undergraduate economics student at Amar Singh College, Cluster University Kashmir. She can be reached at muzmaqadir@gmail.com.

Uzma Qadir Mir

“Experts have suggested ways to help young Kashmiris find their way. They say the government and private sector should support local startups, offer business-friendly loans, and build co-working spaces where young people can develop their ideas and meet mentors.”

For a long time, Kashmir has been caught between its natural beauty and its difficult past.

The mountains have always been here, but life in the valley has often felt stuck. Many young people have grown up with limited chances. Some have found themselves trapped by frustration or pushed toward unhealthy habits. Others have been waiting for safety, work, and something better.

Now, many of them are finding something simple but powerful. They are finding sports.

Whether it's football in village fields, wrestling in local gyms, or skiing on the snowy slopes, sports are opening a door. It's a door to routine, to teamwork, and to the feeling that they can shape their own future.

Playing a sport in Kashmir is not just about winning. It's about having a reason to get up in the morning. It's about learning to stick with something, even when it's hard. It's about losing, trying again, and building trust with people you might not have known before.

On the sports field, life feels more open, more honest. There are rules. There is effort. And there is space to grow.

The impact goes beyond the

Kashmir's Sports Movement Gains Ground, Slowly

In a region marked by conflict and uncertainty, young people are turning to sports to find purpose, belonging, and new opportunities.

Fasil Ali

players themselves.

As more young people get involved in sports, small businesses are also growing, like shops that sell equipment, coaches who train new athletes, local events that bring people together.

Sport is creating work and energy in places where, for a long time, there wasn't much.

Kashmir's landscape is also part of this change. The mountains, lakes, and open meadows are not just places to visit anymore. They are places to play, train, and compete.

When people come from other parts of India or from around the world to join skiing or kayaking events, they are not just tourists. They become part of the place. They get to know the land in a different

way, by moving through it, working with it, by facing its challenges.

This kind of sports tourism brings people together. When young athletes from different countries meet on a Kashmiri river or a mountain trail, they find something in common. They build memories that last longer than political conversations.

But for all this to grow, Kashmir needs better sports spaces.

It needs safe playgrounds, well-equipped training centres, and support for kids who show talent. It also needs a change in mindset.

In many places, sports are still seen as something extra, not as something important. But for many young people in Kashmir, sports can be the thing that keeps them going.

Letter to Editor

Following the Crowd, Kashmir Forgets Its Masters

Over the past few decades, Kashmir's vibrant culture, once built on individual creativity and artisanal excellence, has increasingly succumbed to a pernicious "domino effect": the unthinking adoption of popular trends at the cost of originality and craftsmanship.

What began as a subtle bandwagon effect has escalated into herd mentality, where conformism and social pressure stifle critical reasoning and dilute the region's artistic heritage.

Psychological research describes this phenomenon as a combination of informational social influence, where people follow others because they believe others are better informed, and normative pressure, where the desire for social accep-

tance drives people to conform.

Kashmir is not immune. Across disciplines—culture, career paths, art—young Kashmiris are shepherded by communal norms rather than guided by unique talents and passion.

A 2025 quantitative study of 340 Kashmiri artisans found a sharp decline in craft innovation, citing limited market access, intermediaries' exploitation, and socio-economic pressures as fatal blows to creativity.

Similarly, academic work on human capital in Kashmir's handicraft sector warns that lack of competitive talent erosion has "killed" the industry, condemning it to reproduce relic designs rather than nurture new forms.

Local examples abound. In Srinagar, young artisans often abandon

centuries-old papier-maché techniques in favour of mass-produced souvenirs, believing these sell better.

Graduates flock to engineering and medical fields, not due to aptitude, but to satisfy a herd-driven social narrative of success.

In literary circles, budding poets echo dominant themes—conflict, identity—as if originality is taboo; deviation invites social ostracism.

This growing conformity defames the memory of Kashmiri forebears—masters who once wrote and wove from their own souls. The Mughal-era miniature painters, the papier-maché virtuosos, the Pashmina weavers thrived on uniqueness.

Today, their heirs chase the latest fad, reducing art to hollow imitation. But this trend is not immutable.

There's something valuable in what sports teach: showing up, working hard, handling failure, and learning from it. These things build not just athletes, but stronger people.

When young people run, wrestle, or climb, they aren't just using their bodies. They are building confidence, focus, and a life they can believe in.

For Kashmir, this is not about creating the next superstar. It's about giving young people something real to hold on to. It's about creating a future where they can succeed, lead, and feel they belong.

Sports are now becoming part of Kashmir's everyday life. The rivers, the meadows, the mountains are no longer just scenery. They are part of the movement, part of the change.

When kids race through village streets or row across lakes, they are doing more than playing. They are moving toward something better.

In these simple, determined steps, Kashmir is finding new stories to tell. Stories of effort, growth, and possibility.

Fasil Ali is a Padma Shri awardee in the sports category (2022) and a long-time advocate for youth development through sports in Jammu and Kashmir.

Sincerely,

Nayeem Khalid
Srinagar

This Kashmiri Techpreneur Turned a Lost Notebook into a Cultural Revolution

What began with Wartaav became Dawat Book, a platform where Kashmir's forgotten rituals find new life through care and code.

Aashiq Hussain Andrabi

Kashmiri celebrations are more than events. They are memory, care, and beauty woven into food, gifts, and gathering. But somewhere along the way, many of our traditions began to slip, lost between modern noise and forgotten notebooks. That's where Dawat Book began.

Iqra Nazir didn't set out to build a business. She set out to protect something tender.

She comes from a tech background, but her eyes were always on the small things, like Wartaav, the handwritten record of who gifted what at weddings and Nikkahs. It's a tradition passed from hand to hand, often by women, and often unnoticed.

Iqra saw it written on scraps of paper, the last page of a school notebook. She saw how it held more than just names. It held gratitude, memory, relationships. And she saw how easily it could vanish.

So she built Dawat Book. Not just an app, but a home for that fading tradition. And it grew, into a platform that now celebrates local bakers, women growers, forest foragers. And into a space that replaces plastic bottles with Shahi Sheera, that brings wild greens back to our tables, that invites technology to serve culture, not erase it.

Today, Iqra runs this journey mostly alone. But in her words, every Kashmiri is a part of the team. Every woman baking at home. Every guest who still remembers who came, who cared.

In this conversation, Iqra walks us through her journey, from a fleeting idea to a growing movement, one that hopes to keep the heartbeat of Kashmir alive, celebration after celebration.

What first pulled you toward this work? Why Dawat Book?

I come from a tech background. But I've never looked at technology as just shiny tools. I've always felt that tech should make life more meaningful, not just more performative.

The real beginning was something very simple, Wartaav. I grew up watching my father, my uncles, carefully writing down



who gave what at weddings and family gatherings. It wasn't just bookkeeping. It was a way of remembering people, of honouring connections.

Over time, I could see this tradition slipping away: misplaced papers, forgotten ledgers. It was becoming one of those things we'd lose without even noticing. That bothered me. I wanted to protect it. That's how Dawat Book started, as a digital home for Wartaav.

Was there a particular moment that made this personal for you?

Yes. It was a family function. My mentor and I were watching someone write Wartaav in a small diary, and we joked: what if this diary gets lost?

I suddenly realised how fragile the whole system was. I thought about all the weddings I had helped manage, how much cultural work happened quietly, usually in women's minds, never really seen.

That's when I knew. We needed to build

something that would not only hold this work but also value it.

You've spoken about women's work being invisible in these settings.

Yes, always. Women have kept traditions alive—recording, cooking, organising—but no one called it innovation. No one called it important.

With Dawat Book, I wanted to make that work visible. It's not about glorifying the past. It's about giving our traditions dignity, design, and a proper space.

Did people immediately understand what you were trying to do?

No, not at all. In fact, most people didn't get it. They thought I was making celebrations too formal, too technical. Some laughed, some ignored it.

But those who tried it, they came back and said, "This is exactly what we needed." That's been the most rewarding part. Not

everyone understands it right away, but those who do, they really care about it.

How did the idea of using local ingredients and old recipes become part of Dawat Book?

For me, a dawat is a story. And stories should start from where we come from.

At our events, we began serving wild greens like Obuj and local mushrooms like Kabul Dhingri—ingredients that have always grown here but rarely show up in weddings now. Instead of fizzy drinks, we served Shahi Sheera, an old, rich recipe. And we made herbal teas for diabetic guests, blends prepared by local women growers.

It wasn't about being fancy. It was about care. About remembering that our own land is full of flavour, that we don't need to import culture to impress anyone.

How do you find these ingredients and the people behind them?

We work with women who grow herbs in their backyards. We source from old bakers in downtown Srinagar. Many don't have shops or Instagram pages, but they carry legacy in their hands.

One of the sheermals we served recently came from a young boy trying to revive his family's baking tradition. For me, these people are the real heart of Dawat Book.

Was there a particular event that felt like a turning point?

Yes, a Kashmiri-Mexican wedding we curated recently. We blended cultures in the smallest ways: Kehwa with walnut fudge for the Mexican guests, herbal teas brewed by local women, Shahi Sheera instead of soft drinks, and handmade photo props that mixed sombrero patterns with Kashmiri embroidery.

One guest whispered, "I've never felt so embraced in a place I've never been to before." That's when I knew this was working. You don't need grandeur. You need meaning.

How are people responding now to this shift away from big, showy celebrations?

In the beginning, people hesitated. They thought we were cutting costs. But when they experienced the events, they saw the beauty in the details, intention, and care.

I think people are beginning to want something real now. They're slowly moving toward the Dawat Book way: a celebration that feels like their own, not a borrowed version.

What's your dream for Dawat Book?

I want Dawat Book to grow into a full cultural ecosystem. Not just weddings, but professional events, community gatherings, exhibitions, even ticketing, all with the same rooted care.

I want local vendors to earn more. I want women to be recognised as creators. I want young Kashmiris to see that technology can preserve culture. It doesn't always have to be disruptive.

Maybe one day a Sufi concert or a women-led startup event in Kashmir can be hosted through Dawat Book. That's where I see this going.

What do you hope this blend of tradition and technology inspires?

I hope it tells people, especially young girls, that your roots are not a burden. They're your superpower.

You can write software that honours your grandmother's recipes. You can build businesses around your own stories, not borrowed ones.

Innovation doesn't always look like rockets. Sometimes it looks like digitising Wartaav. Sometimes it looks like offering walnut fudge with kehwa because the bride is Mexican and the soul is Kashmiri.

If even one person sees Dawat Book and feels their story is worth building something around, that's enough for me.

The author is a Pulwama-based senior scribe.

The Sacred Threads of Kashmir

Amidst change and conflict, the ancient arts of Kashmir still carry a spiritual pulse that binds its people to their land, their history, and something far beyond themselves.

Nazim Mushtaq

In the soft morning light of Baharabad, my hometown in Sumbal Bandipora, the sound of looms used to echo through the narrow lanes. There was a time when almost every house hummed with the rhythm of weaving.

Today, that sound has mostly faded. Only a few hands now carry the memory of the pashmina, the art that once kept our community alive, that once felt like a form of prayer.

Kashmir's art has always had a sacred weight. The valley has long been a meeting place of faiths, ideas, and stories, and all of them have found corners inside its crafts.

The famous pashmina shawls, soft as whispers, are not just cloth. They are months of devotion, woven by hands that know the value of patience. Each thread seems to carry a piece of the sky, a memory of the goat grazing high in the cold, lonely mountains. There's a tenderness in this work that feels more spiritual than material.

But in the village today, only a few still sit at the loom. The rest have folded away the wooden frames, pushed aside by the weight of politics, the rush of modern life, and the slow erosion of tradition.

There are people trying to bring the art back, to teach it again, to keep it breathing. Yet, sometimes it feels like holding water in your hands.

Kashmiri carpets still glow with rich colours and intricate patterns. The old paper maché boxes, with their careful flowers and golden vines, continue

to hold their charm. They tell stories without speaking. But it is not just the objects that matter. It is the feeling behind them. In these crafts, time slows down. There is a patience here that the modern world often forgets.

Even in food, you can taste the spirit of the place. The wazwan is more than a feast, it is a celebration of life, of community, of togetherness. The slow-cooked meats, the deep spices, the way people gather around a single large plate, all feel like pieces of the same art that we see in the shawls and carpets—a kind of carefulness, a kind of love.

The music carries it too. The Sufiana Kalam, with its calm, winding melodies, sounds like it comes from somewhere far beyond this world. The Rouf, the women's dance, simple yet full of grace, is like a living poem. The soft clapping, the gentle swaying feels like a conversation with the past, a promise not to forget.

What holds it all together is not just skill. It is the soul. The people of Jammu and Kashmir carry their art like they carry their prayers, with care, silence, and struggle.

Even as the world changes around them, these crafts survive, stubborn and beautiful.

Maybe that's the real story here. In the folds of a pashmina, in the beat of a folk song, in the slow simmer of a wazwan, Kashmir's spirit lives on as a gentle, breathing presence.

The author is a Sumbal Bandipora based political science student.

Home Is the First Frontline

Behind the rising drug abuse in Kashmiri youth are weak systems, unchecked industries, and parenting that struggles to keep pace. Real change starts at home, but must not end there.

Nusrat Hassan

Drug addiction often slips into young lives unnoticed, until the damage is hard to undo. We tell our children to stay away from drugs. But the places that make drugs, and the routes that sell them, remain wide open.

Some of the danger comes from where we least expect it. Drug-producing industries, especially pharmaceutical and chemical companies, continue to release substances that can easily be misused. These are not just the pills you get on prescription. Some end up being misused on the streets, or inside homes where no one is watching.

There are laws, there are rules, but often these systems are not properly checked. Companies keep producing, people keep buying, and somewhere along the way, the line between medicine and misuse gets crossed.

Then there is the illegal side. Drugs flow through street networks and black markets that somehow keep escaping the law. Despite police crackdowns, these chains stay alive, feeding

on weak enforcement and public silence.

Everyone knows where to find the dealers. The problem is, no one really stops them. It's not just a failure of enforcement, it's a failure of communities that look the other way.

But this fight does not start with governments and courts. It starts at home. Parents hold a power that no law can replace. It is not about strict control. It is about building trust, being there when children fall, and showing them they can speak without fear.

Too often, families raise children under the weight of what other people will think, rather than what their child truly needs to grow. Anger when they slip up, silence when they need support push children further into harm.

When bad influences from the past resurface, a good parent does not panic. They listen. They guide. They remind their child of the values that matter. Parenting shines in the middle of mistakes, not just in moments of success.



If we want to protect young people from drugs, we cannot just patch the surface. We must block the supply, fix the gaps in our systems, and create homes where children feel safe to talk. Parenting and policy need to work together. One without the other will never be enough.

At the heart of this crisis is a simple truth: children need love, patience, and protection from the forces that wait to pull them under. If we get that right at home, and fight for it in our streets, we may finally stand a chance to turn the tide.

The author is a GDC, Ganderbal student.

Why Does My Phone Sometimes Not Ring When People Call? A Communications Expert Explains

The Conversation

There's a certain feeling I get in the pit of my stomach when I'm waiting for an important call to come through. You know the type – maybe a call from your boss, a potential new employer or news of a loved one who's due to give birth.

In these situations, I usually stare at my phone, willing it to ring. I make sure – over and again – it's not on silent or “do not disturb” mode. When the screen is out of my sight, I imagine I can hear the familiar ringtone.

Then it pops up – the missed call notification. But the phone never rang. What happened?

How do mobile calls work?

When making a mobile call using 4G or 5G networks, the caller dials a number and their network operator (Telstra or OneNZ, for example) routes the request to the recipient's device.

For this to work, both phones must be registered with an IP Multimedia Subsystem – or IMS – which automatically happens when you turn on your phone. IMS is the system that allows the combination of voice calls, messages and video communications.

Both phones must also be connected to a 4G or 5G cell phone tower. The caller's network sends an invite to the recipient's device, which will then start to ring.

This process is usually very fast. But as generations of cellular networks have evolved (remember 3G?), becoming faster and with greater capacity, they have also become more complex, with new potential points of failure.

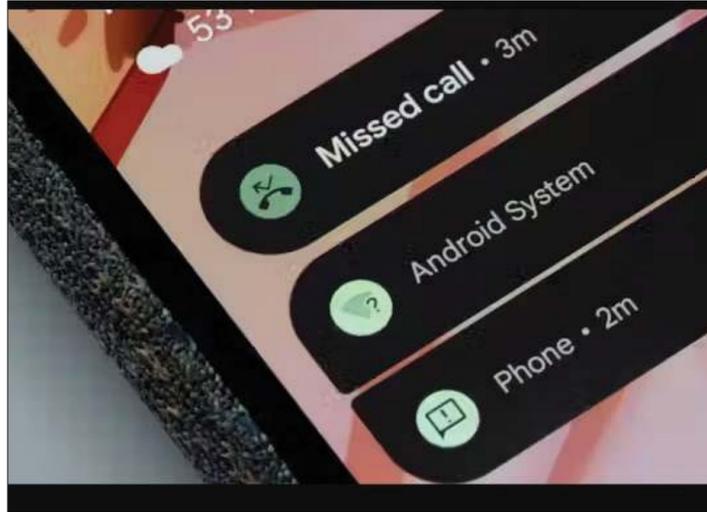
From phone failures to 'dead zones'

Mobile phones use Voice over LTE (VoLTE) for 4G networks or Voice over New Radio (VoNR) for 5G. These are technologies that enable voice calls over those two types of networks and they use the above mentioned IMS.

In some countries such as New Zealand, if either of these aren't enabled or supported on your device (some phones have VoLTE disabled by default), it may attempt to fall back to the 3G network, which was switched off in Australia in 2024 and is currently being phased out in New Zealand.

If this fallback fails or is delayed, the recipient's phone may not ring or may go straight to voicemail.

Another possibility is that your phone may have failed to register with the IMS network. If this happens – due to something like a software glitch, SIM issue, or network problem – a phone won't receive the call signal and won't ring.



“In some countries such as New Zealand, if either of these aren't enabled or supported on your device (some phones have VoLTE disabled by default), it may attempt to fall back to the 3G network, which was switched off in Australia in 2024 and is currently being phased out in New Zealand.

Then there are handover issues. Each cell phone tower covers a particular area, and if you are moving, your call will be handed over to the tower that provides the best coverage. Sometimes your phone uses 5G for data but 4G for voice; if the handover between 5G and 4G is slow or fails, the call might not ring. If 5G is used for both data and voice, VoNR is used, which is still not widely supported and may fail. Mobile apps introduce other potential

problems. For example, on Android, aggressive battery-saving features can restrict background processes, including the phone app, preventing it from responding to incoming calls. Third-party apps such as call blockers, antivirus tools, or even messaging apps can also interfere with call notifications.

Finally, if your phone is in an area with poor reception, it may not receive the call signal in time to ring. These so-called “dead zones” are more common than telcos would like to admit. I live at the end of a long driveway in a well-covered suburb of Auckland in New Zealand. But, depending on where I am in the house, I still experience dead zones and often the WiFi-enabled phone apps will more reliably cause the phone to ring.

What can I do to fix it?

If your phone frequently doesn't ring on 4G or 5G there are a few things you can do:

- Make sure VoLTE/VoNR is enabled in your network settings.
- Restart your phone and toggle airplane mode to refresh network registration.
- Check battery optimisation settings and exclude the phone app you are using contact your carrier to confirm VoLTE/VoNR support and provisioning.

But ultimately, sometimes a call will just fail – and there's very little an everyday person can do about it. Which yes, is annoying. But it also means you have a fail-safe, expert-approved excuse for missing a call from your boss.

Office of the Executive Magistrate 1st Class Narbal District Budgam

Tele fax: 01951-260276 Pin Code 193401
Notice for the General Public

It is hereby notified that applicant namely Zareefa Begum, D/O: Mahada Sheikh R/O: pURNI Suder, Shah Narbal, District: Budgam, had applied for the issuance of Birth Certificate of his/her son/daughter namely Zareefa Begum, D/O: Mahada Sheikh. The applicant intends to register the D.O.B. of his/her son/daughter as per school record/vaccination card: 03/01/1968. If anybody is having any objection/claim regarding the same, he/she may approach the office of undersigned within a period of seven days (07 days) from the date of publication of this notice or else any such claims/objections shall not be entertained.
Dated: 24/06/2025
inf

Executive Magistrate
1st Class Narbal

NOTICE

I have changed my name from Sheikh Ansab Nida to Ansab Nida Neyaz. In future I will be known as Ansab Nida Neyaz.

If anybody is having any objection he/she may contact the Passport Office, Srinagar within 7 days. After 7 days no objection will be entertained.

55

Office of the Naib Tehsildar Pattan

Sub.. Application of Ubaid Nazir sofi s/o Nazir Ahmad sofi R/o Miyan Mohalla Pattan for issuance of legal hair certificate..

PUBLIC NOTICE

IT is inform to general public that applicants father's legal hair certificate is under process in this office in this matter report Was sought from Patwari concerned which reveals that applicants father namely Nazir Ahmad sofi s/o Gh Mohammad sofi R/o Miyan Mohalla Pattan died on 11/07/2024 and left following legal heirs

Name	Age	Relationship with the Deceased	Marital Status
Ubaid Nazir Sofi	28	Son	UNMARRIED
Zubaida Begum	53	Wife	MARRIED
Nuzhat Nazir	33	Daughter	UNMARRIED
Jannat Nazir	19	Daughter	UNMARRIED
Falak Nazir	21	Daughter	UNMARRIED

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.

fko Naib Tehsildar Pattan

OFFICE OF THE PRINCIPAL GOVT. DEGREE COLLEGE FOR WOMEN, SOPORE (J&K)-193201

(NAAC Accredited Grade "B")

Email Id: gdcwsopore@gmail.com Visit us at www.gdcwsopore.edu.com

WCS/025/441

e-NIT NO. 72 OF 2025

Dated: 19/06/2025

Principal, Govt. Degree College for Women, Sopore invites online Expression of Interest (EOI) from registered Members of Federation of Publishers and Book Sellers Association of India for the "Supply of Books/References/Periodicals" at Govt. Degree College for Women, Sopore for the financial year 2025-26. The complete EOI/Tender document consisting of qualifying information, eligibility criteria, and detailed terms and conditions of empanelment can be seen/downloaded from the website www.jktenders.gov.in and www.gdcwsopore.edu.in as per schedule of dates given below:-

1.	Date of issue of EOI Notice	21/06/2025
2.	Period of downloading of EOI documents:	21/06/2025
3.	EOI Bid Submission start date	21/06/2025
4.	EOI Bid Submission end date	05/07/2025 04:00 P.M
5.	Date of opening of EOI Bid online	07 /07/2025

DIPK-2896/25
DATED: 24-06-2025

Sd/- Principal
Govt. Degree College for Women, Sopore



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J&K Bank Introduces API Based Open Banking Services For Corporates

Begins with Khyber Group of Companies in Kashmir



Observer News Service

SRINAGAR— Strengthening its digital capabilities to enable ease of banking for businesses, J&K Bank has revealed its Open Banking initiative for corporate clients across the country, with Khyber Group of Companies becoming its first client under this cutting-edge platform.

Executive Director (ED) Sudhir Gupta Tuesday unveiled the initiative formally in presence of the Bank's General Manager (Cross Selling) Narjay Gupta, General Manager (Govt. Business) Syed Rais Maqbool and General Manager (Strategy & IT) Imtiyaz Ahmad Bhat, DGMS and other senior officers during a function held at the Bank's corporate headquarters.

Senior functionaries from Khyber Group including President Manzoor Ahmad Mir, Head (IT) Mohammad Ashraf Bhat, and CA Haroon Bashir from Khyber Cements along with Chief Finance & Commercial Kaisal Ahmad and Executive (IT) Shabir Ahmad from Khyber Aquaculture were also present on the occasion.

Speaking on the occasion, ED Sudhir Gupta said, "The introduction of Open Banking Services for our corporate partners is another significant milestone in the Bank's digital journey. This also marks the beginning of a new era where banking services are no longer confined within branch walls, but are now embedded seamlessly within the business processes of our partners."

"This milestone reflects our commitment to digital transformation, financial automation, and building a truly partner-centric ecosystem. We are delighted to begin this journey with the Khyber Group, and look forward to enabling many more of our partners to benefit from this technology-based financial solution", he added.

On the occasion, he also congratulated the Bank's IT team along with that of the Khyber Group for making the successful integration of systems possible.

He further said, "Let this be the first of many such successful collaborations."

In his remarks on the occasion, GM Imtiyaz Ahmad Bhat said, "This initiative not only strengthens our commitment to innovation and customer-centric solutions but also empowers businesses to achieve greater efficiency and transparency in their financial operations."

"By rolling out API-driven solutions, the Bank is positioning itself at the forefront of Open Banking Services, enabling business-to-business integration that aligns with the evolving needs of enterprise ecosystem", he added.

While highlighting their long-term close relationship with the Bank, the senior functionaries from Khyber Group commended the Bank for its services and thanked the IT team for cordial and patient support during the integration of systems.

Gold Declines Rs 900 To Rs 98,900/10 G On Iran-Israel Ceasefire Hopes

Press Trust Of India

NEW DELHI— Gold prices plummeted Rs 900 to Rs 98,900 per 10 grams in the national capital on Tuesday as the expectations of a ceasefire between Iran and Israel reduced the precious metal's safe-haven appeal in the global market.

According to the All India Sarafa Association, the precious metal of 99.9 per cent purity had closed at Rs 99,800 per 10 grams in the previous market session.

Gold of 99.5 per cent purity depreciated by Rs 800 to Rs 98,300 per 10 grams (inclusive of all taxes). It had finished at Rs 99,100 per 10 grams on Monday.

"Gold is under pressure as safe-haven demand eases after the US confirmed a full ceasefire between Iran and Israel. The announcement came shortly after Iran attacked a US military base in Qatar, briefly heightening tensions before quickly calming them."

"With fears of further escalation fading, investors are booking profits and pulling back from gold," Abans Financial Services' Chief Executive Offi-



cer Chintan Mehta said.

Silver prices also diminished by Rs 1,000 to Rs 1,04,200 per kilogram (inclusive of all taxes) on Tuesday. The metal had ended at Rs 1,05,200 per kg in the previous market close.

Meanwhile, spot gold fell by USD 46.05 or 1.37 per cent to USD 3,323.05 per ounce in the overseas markets.

"Investors are closely watching Federal Reserve Chair Jerome Powell, who is set to testify before US Congress on Tuesday and Wednesday, which can provide any signals on the future policy path of interest rate cuts," Saumil Gandhi, Senior Analyst - Commodities at HDFC Securities, said

Trade Agreements With US, EU To Be Concluded Soon: Sitharaman

Press Trust Of India

NEW DELHI— Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman on Tuesday said negotiations for the proposed free trade agreements with the US and European Union (EU) are progressing at a fast pace and would be concluded soon.

All efforts are being made to boost exports to achieve the ambitious target of USD 2 trillion by 2030.

India has already signed free trade agreements with the UAE, Australia, and 4-nation EFTA (European Free Trade Association) bloc and negotiations have been completed with the UK, she said adding "with the US and the European Union, negotiations are really intensely going on and should come to conclusion sooner."

The emphasis now is on concluding more free trade agreements, she said while inaugurating Trade Conclave by India Exim Bank here.

She also mentioned Budget announcements of Export Promotion Mission and Bharat Trade Net, a digital public infrastructure which provides a unified platform for trade documentation and financing solutions.

The Budget also proposed a National Framework for Global Capability Centres (GCC) to further support services-led growth in emerging tier 2 cities and Trade Facilitation Measures.

Referring to the country's exports, the finance minister said total exports of goods and services reached a record high of USD 825 billion in FY25, achieving 6 per cent



growth over previous year. This is a significant leap from USD 466 billion in 2013-14.

While global exports grew by only 4 per cent, India's exporters managed to fast-track and cross growth of 6.3 per cent despite global uncertainties on trade front, she said.

Observing that exporters are "swimming against tides", she assured all support to them and urged them to focus on innovation and finding newer markets for their products.

Quoting United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD) World Investment Report 2025, she said, India's position has improved though the global FDI flows dropped 11 per cent.

FDI inflows of nearly USD 668 billion from 2014-24 account for nearly 67 per cent of the total FDI reported in the last 24 years which was USD 991 billion, she said.

India has deepened its participation in global value chains, she said, adding, Apple India's iPhone contract manufacturers have crossed the 20 per cent

domestic value addition (DVA) threshold across variants.

Speaking at the event, Financial Services Secretary M Nagaraju said India's growth prospects remain bright even as the world economy is troubled by geopolitical uncertainties and significant headwinds emanating from it.

"Even amidst all the global headwinds, India continues to be a beacon of hope," he said.

Nagaraju said that India's exports, which the commerce ministry is "trying very hard" to integrate into the global value chain, are doing well irrespective of the challenges.

Exports from the pharmaceuticals and gems and jewellery sectors are showing resilience, he said adding in this endeavour, the finance ministry is committed to extending support through policy, schemes and financial aid.

"Our financial systems are strong with adequate capital and low non-performing assets," he said, adding, this gives strong support to India's financial needs.

NAGARAJU SAID THAT INDIA'S EXPORTS, which the commerce ministry is "trying very hard" to integrate into the global value chain, are doing well irrespective of the challenges.

'India, UK Likely To Sign Trade Pact By July End; Commerce Secy In London'

Press Trust Of India

NEW DELHI— The process of legal scrubbing of the India-UK free trade agreement (FTA) text is progressing at a faster pace, and the pact is expected to be signed by the end of July, an official said on Tuesday.

To give an impetus to the process, Commerce Secretary Sunil Barthwal is in London with his official team.

Barthwal will meet UK Secretary of State for Business and Trade Jonathan Reynolds and other British senior officials during his two-day visit.

The two countries announced the conclusion of the negotiations on May 6. It will remove taxes on the export of labour-intensive products such as leather, footwear and clothing, while making imports of whisky and cars from Britain cheaper, in a bid to double trade between the two economies to USD 120 billion by 2030.

The world's fifth and sixth-



largest economies concluded the deal after three years of on-off negotiations.

Once the FTA is signed, it will require approval from the British Parliament and India's Cabinet before it can take effect. The implementation is likely to take about a year after the signing.

"The agreement is likely to be signed by July end. India's legal team is also there in London for the legal scrubbing of the text. The pact's text would be put in public domain after

signing," the official said, adding the commerce secretary's visit is important, as issues such as the implementation process of the pact would be discussed.

Commerce and Industry Minister Piyush Goyal was also in London earlier this month. He held discussions with Reynolds on issues related to the implementation of the FTA.

Prime Minister Narendra Modi has invited UK Prime Minister Keir Starmer to India.



DGCA Flags Multiple Violations in Airlines, Airports, Aircraft Maintenance Works

Press Trust Of India

NEW DELHI— Aviation watchdog DGCA has detected multiple violations related to airlines, airports, aircraft maintenance works, and repeated defects in multiple cases during its surveillance at major airports, an exercise carried out in less than two weeks after the Air India plane crash.

Without disclosing names of the airlines, airports and other entities in relation to the defects, the regulator on Tuesday said surveillance covered multiple critical areas such as flight operations, airworthiness, ramp safety, Air Traffic Control (ATC), Communication, Navigation and Surveillance (CNS) systems, and pre-flight medical evaluations.

The surveillance was done last week and DGCA is stepping up efforts to strength the overall safety oversight of the aviation ecosystem.

From a faded centre line marking of a runway at an airport to non-updation of obstruction limitation data for three years to a scheduled carrier's domestic flight being held up due to worn tyres, the watchdog came across multiple defects in the aviation ecosystem.

Noting that the comprehensive surveillance will continue in future to detect hazards in the aviation ecosystem, the Di-

rectorate General of Civil Aviation (DGCA) said the findings have been communicated to the entities concerned for taking corrective actions within seven days.

Two teams led by the Joint Director General carried out the surveillance during night and early morning hours at major airports, including Delhi and Mumbai airports.

In a detailed statement about the surveillance findings, DGCA listed multiple cases wherein the reported defects reappeared many times on the aircraft indicating ineffective monitoring and inadequate rectification.

"Ground handling equipment such as baggage trolleys... were found unserviceable; Line maintenance stores, tool control procedures were not followed," it said.

During maintenance of aircraft, the work order was not followed, DGCA said and added that the unserviceable thrust reverser system and flap slat lever were not locked.

"During maintenance, safety precautions found not (to have been) taken by AME (Aircraft Maintenance Engineer) as per AMM (Aircraft Maintenance Manual); at places, AME was not attending to the snag rectification; defect reports generated by the aircraft system, were not found recorded in the technical logbook," the statement said.

EPFO Member May Soon Be Able To Withdraw EPF Money Through ATMs, UPI Directly

Press Trust Of India

NEW DELHI— Retirement fund body EPFO subscribers may soon be able to withdraw their employees' provident fund (EPF) directly from their accounts through ATMs or other modes like UPI after linking their bank accounts with EPF.

A highly placed source said the labour ministry is working on a project where a certain proportion of the EPF will be frozen and a large chunk will be available for withdrawal through their bank account using various modes like UPI or ATM debit cards.

The source also said there are some software challenges to implementing this system, which are being resolved.

Presently, the members of the Employees' Provident Fund Organisation (EPFO) have to apply for withdrawal claims to access their EPF money, which is time-consuming.

Under the auto-settlement mode, the withdrawal claims are settled electronically without manual intervention within three days of filing the application form.

The limit of this auto-settle-



ment mode has been raised to ₹5 lakh on Tuesday from existing ₹1 lakh.

This will facilitate a large number of EPFO members to access their EPF money within three days for illness, education, marriage, and housing purposes.

The EPFO, which has more than 7 crore members, had first introduced online auto-settlement of advance claims during the COVID-19 pandemic to provide quick assistance to those facing financial crunch.

However, all members have to file claims to access their own EPF.

The new system is being evolved to avoid this time-consuming process and reduce the burden of the EPFO, as over 5 crore claims mostly for withdrawal EPF are settled every year.

Pak Aiming At Loans Worth USD 3.3 Billion From Chinese Banks

Press Trust Of India

ISLAMABAD— Pakistan is aiming to secure USD 3.3 billion in the form of two foreign loans — one a syndicated loan and the other a refinancing of commercial loans — from Chinese banks within the next few days, according to a media report Tuesday.

It is expected that the foreign exchange reserves held by the State Bank of Pakistan (SBP) will surpass the USD 14 billion mark if this deal materialises within the outgoing financial year, which ends on June 30.

"Yes, we are still working closely with the Chinese high-ups to finalise modalities of this expected deal. We are expecting the striking of two different foreign loans from Chinese banks till the end of June 2025."

"A syndicated financing of USD 2 billion will be made available to Pakistan by a consortium of Chinese banks for three years," top officials

of the government confirmed while talking to The News here on Monday.

The second loan of USD 1.3 billion will be a refinancing of a commercial loan from the Industrial and Commercial Bank of China (ICBC), which was paid back by Islamabad a few months ago.

In rupee terms, the government will be able to generate approximately Rs 924 billion (USD 3.3 billion), so the maturity of the short-term domestic debt would be cleared till the deadline of the first 10 days of July 2025.

Pakistan's foreign exchange reserves held by the State Bank of Pakistan (SBP) stood at USD 11.7 billion by June 13, 2025 and the expected injection of USD 3.3 billion would help the SBP to jack up the foreign reserves to touch USD 15 billion mark.

However, keeping in view outflow requirements, there are strong expectations that the foreign reserves held by the SBP might be standing at over USD 14.5 billion by the end of June 2025.

Markets Trim Gains On Renewed Geopolitical Tensions In Middle East

Press Trust Of India

MUMBAI— Equity benchmarks Sensex and Nifty on Tuesday gave up most of their sharp intra-day gains due to the emergence of profit-taking as investors turned cautious amid reports of a ceasefire violation between Iran and Israel.

In the morning trade, markets bounced back sharply, mirroring a rally in global peers and a steep decline in crude oil prices amid hopes of a potential de-escalation in the Middle East conflict.

After surging 1,121.37 points or 1.36 per cent to 83,018.16 in intraday trade, the 30-share Sensex later trimmed most of its gains as reports surfaced of the ceasefire plan faltering. But, the benchmark still managed to settle in the green, climbing 158.32 points or 0.19 per cent to 82,055.11.

As many as 2,662 stocks advanced

and 1,339 declined while 143 remained unchanged on the BSE.

On similar lines, the 50-share Nifty rose 72.45 points or 0.29 per cent to end at 25,044.35. The index fell from an intra-day high of 25,317.70.

"Initial gains in the domestic market, driven by the ceasefire announcement and sharp drop in crude prices, were short-lived as renewed geopolitical tensions in the Middle East unsettled investor sentiment."

"Adding to the uncertainty was heightened volatility due to expiry day dynamics. Although the market attempted to break out of its recent consolidation range, persistent global risks continue to impede momentum," Vinod Nair, Head of Research, Geojit Investments Limited, said.

From the Sensex constituents, Adani Ports, Tata Steel, Kotak Mahindra Bank, UltraTech Cement, Bajaj Finserv and Titan were among the biggest gainers.

'Iran-Israel Ceasefire To Stabilise Global Trade Aid India's Exports To Middle East'

Press Trust Of India

NEW DELHI— The ceasefire between Iran and Israel has offered major relief to India, which has over USD 100 billion worth of trade with the Middle East countries and is heavily dependent on energy imports from the Gulf region, experts said.

They said that reduced geopolitical tension lowers the risk premium, stabilises freight costs, and enhances predictability in shipping routes for Indian goods via the Strait of Hormuz, a narrow but key passage between Iran and Oman.

Economic think tank Global Trade Research Initiative (GTRI) said that for India, with over USD 100 billion in the Middle East trade and heavy reliance on Gulf energy imports, the de-escalation offers relief.

"A sustained ceasefire would stabilise energy prices and safeguard vital shipping routes. But any flare-

up would again threaten India's trade flows, energy security, and diaspora interests," GTRI Founder Ajay Srivastava said.

He added that oil prices fell more than 3 per cent, and volatility in the strait, through which a fifth of global oil passes, briefly eased.

However, he said, this ceasefire may prove temporary, as the underlying issues between the US, Israel, and Iran remain unresolved.

Federation of Indian Export Organisations (FIEO) Director General Ajay Sahai said the ceasefire brings welcome relief to global trade and supply chains, particularly across the Middle East, a key conduit for energy and cargo movement.

"This development is particularly beneficial for Indian exporters of engineering goods, food products, textiles, and chemicals to West Asia, and for importers reliant on crude oil and petrochemicals," Sahai said.

HIV Stigma In Kashmir

avoid testing altogether, even when they have clear symptoms."

The newly launched Integrated Counseling and Testing Centre (ICTC) mobile vans are an attempt to break through that silence.

Each van is equipped with testing kits, counseling rooms, and trained health professionals. They are designed to reach remote villages, where health infrastructure is often missing and where social stigma can be even more suffocating.

Jammu and Kashmir's official HIV prevalence rate stands at 0.6 percent, lower than the national average of around 0.22 percent, according to the latest India HIV Estimation report by the National AIDS Control Organisation (NACO).

But officials and independent researchers suggest that these numbers may not fully reflect the scale of the issue in Kashmir, especially because the testing rate remains critically low in rural areas.

The gaps are significant. According to the 2023 NACO report, in Jammu and Kashmir, testing coverage is still heavily concentrated in urban centers. Only a fraction of people in high-risk groups, such as migrant workers, intravenous drug users, and people with multiple sexual partners, have access to regular screening or counseling services.

One of the hidden dangers is the rapid rise of injectable drug use, which is emerging as a serious public health crisis in Kashmir.

A 2022 study by the Government Medical College (GMC) Srinagar showed a worrying increase in the number of young people using injectable narcotics, which sharply increases the risk of HIV transmission through shared needles.

"Injectable drug use is no longer limited to isolated pockets. It's spreading across districts," said a senior official from the J&K State AIDS Control Society. "This is what really keeps us awake at night because HIV is not just a sexual health issue anymore."

The Health Minister's emphasis on early detection and awareness comes at a time when local doctors say the majority of HIV-positive cases in Kashmir are diagnosed late, often when the immune system has already weakened significantly.

Late diagnosis not only worsens patient outcomes but also allows silent community transmission to continue unchecked.

"There is still a lot of fear associated with walking into an HIV testing center," said a counselor with a Srinagar-based ICTC. "People are worried about being seen there. Mobile vans can help because they bring the service to people's doorsteps, reducing the fear of exposure."

But even this solution faces social hurdles.

In conservative areas, the presence of a testing van can invite suspicion and gossip. "Many people would rather stay away from the van altogether than risk being labeled," the counselor added.

Globally, HIV-related stigma is known to be one of the biggest barriers to prevention and treatment. In Kashmir, this stigma is intensified by a lack of open conversation.

Public health campaigns often focus on urban audiences, while rural areas are left out of targeted outreach.

This is why the rollout of the mobile vans is being seen as a critical, though small, step.

The vans will offer confidential testing, on-the-spot counseling, and direct referrals to treatment centers. Health officials hope this will gradually build trust in the system and bring more people forward for screening.

There is also a legal framework now in place. The Human Immunodeficiency Virus and Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome (Prevention and Control) Act, 2017, which protects the rights of people living with HIV and criminalizes discrimination against them, is applicable in Jammu and Kashmir.

But enforcement remains weak, especially in private healthcare settings where refusal of services to HIV-positive patients is still reported.

As the mobile vans begin their journey into the hills and villages of Kashmir, the bigger challenge may not be logistics or resources. It may be the long-held silence that continues to surround the disease.

"Testing alone won't solve this," said Dr. Bashir. "We need to talk about HIV the way we talk about other diseases. Until we break that fear, people will continue to suffer in silence."

The vans are now moving, but for many in Kashmir, the road to ending the stigma is still painfully long.

Shaky Cease-Fire

Iranian military commanders, nuclear scientists, and civilians. The situation escalated sharply on June 22, when U.S. aircraft bombed three Iranian nuclear sites — an act Tehran called a "grave violation" of the UN Charter and the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty.

Now, with the guns momentarily silent, each of the key players — the U.S., Iran, and Israel — is racing to shape the domestic and international narrative in its favour. Trump's administration claims to have "degraded" Iran's nuclear infrastructure. Israel touts its success in targeting Tehran's capabilities. And Iran, in turn, is portraying its survival and counterstrikes as a victory over two military giants.

This public relations battle reflects the modern face of warfare, where victory is often claimed not on the battlefield but in national messaging. For Iran, the conflict has had the unintended effect of unifying a fragmented

society and galvanising nationalist sentiment.

Still, critical questions linger. While U.S. officials say Iran's nuclear program has been seriously damaged, Tehran denies it, and Western intelligence agencies admit uncertainty over the status of Iran's uranium stockpile. Diplomats fear that, far from weakening Iran's nuclear ambitions, the confrontation may have fuelled them further.

For now, the ceasefire offers a welcome reprieve to a region — and a world — rattled by the spectre of a broader Middle East war. But with all sides armed, alert, and declaring victory, the fragile peace appears less like a resolution and more like an intermission. As diplomacy hesitantly re-emerges, analysts are left questioning: What lasting purpose did Israel's initial strike — and the dangerous days that followed — ultimately serve?

Met Office Predicts

heavy showers likely at isolated spots in the Jammu region.

The Met has also issued an advisory warning of potential flash floods, landslides, mudslides, and shooting stones, particularly in vulnerable areas of the Jammu division. Waterlogging in low-lying plains and a rise in river and stream water levels are also anticipated.

The advisory urges farmers to suspend irrigation, spraying, and fertilizer use during this period.

Further rainfall is expected between June 28 and July 2 in scattered spells across the Union Territory, the Met added.

It's Summer Break

institutions as and when required. This is to ensure smooth handling of any academic or administrative responsibilities that may arise.

Additionally, the University has directed that college libraries remain functional throughout the break, enabling uninterrupted access to academic resources for students who may wish to continue their studies.

The announcement comes amid rising summer temperatures and is in line with the university's annual schedule for affiliated institutions.

G&M Official

payment," the statement reads. Acting on the complaint, the ACB conducted a discreet verification through a designated officer. "The verification report confirmed the allegations and substantiated that the public servant had indeed demanded illegal gratification," the statement added.

On the basis of the complaint and verification report, a case under FIR number 10/2025 under Section 7 of the Prevention of Corruption Act, 1988 (as amended) was registered at Police Station ACB Srinagar. Subsequently, a trap team was constituted, and a successful trap was laid.

"During the trap operation, the accused public servant was caught red-handed while demanding and accepting Rs 10,000 from the complainant. He was immediately apprehended on the spot," the statement reads, adding that further investigation in the matter is ongoing. (KNO)

75th SMVDSB

widening of the yatra track between Sanjichhat and Bhawan. The operationalization of the Shrine Board's medical college at Kakryal was also given the green light. The Board reviewed the long-pending helipad project at Shiv Khori, being executed by BRO, and directed its completion by October 2025. A new helipad in Katra was also approved to improve connectivity for pilgrims.

To enhance sustainability and hygiene, the Board approved a comprehensive sewerage network for all Shrine area establishments and instructed the CEO to expand solar energy installations to reduce the Shrine's carbon footprint. The meeting also focused on improving pilgrim safety and feedback mechanisms. The LG directed officials to secure vulnerable stretches of the yatra track prone to landslides and stonefalls and emphasized the expansion of the Yatri Feedback System with monthly monitoring. He also suggested exploring volunteer-based assistance to guide and support pilgrims along the route.

Security measures were further strengthened with the inauguration of an Integrated Command and Control Centre in Katra and seven sub-centres, along with the deployment of modern surveillance equipment for real-time crowd monitoring. The Board also cleared the dedication of five newly constructed temples in Reasi in July and approved the construction of five more temples, maintaining uniform architectural design in line with Shrine Board aesthetics.

Financial assistance was sanctioned for institutions under the SMVD Charitable Society including the Gurukul, Medical and Nursing College, Hospital, and Sports Complex. A new dormitory block for 32 students at SMVD Gurukul, built at a cost of 71.82 lakh, was also inaugurated.

PM Modi: 'No

been opened in the last 11 years than earlier, he said, adding that the country is on the path to becoming the world's third-biggest economy.

He said, "Narayana Guru envisioned a society free from all forms of discrimination. Today, by adopting the saturation approach, the country is working to eliminate every possibility of discrimination."

Missions like Skill India are empowering the youth and making them self-reliant, he said, stressing that he remembers the social reformer every time he takes big decisions for the betterment of the deprived, exploited and

backward sections of society.

In a swipe at previous governments, he said despite decades of independence, millions of citizens were forced to live in extremely difficult circumstances until over a decade back.

Crores of families lacked shelter and lakhs of villages had no access to clean drinking water, while even minor illnesses could not be treated due to lack of health care, he said.

Poor people and women were deprived of basic human dignity, Modi said.

The welfare schemes of his government have addressed these concerns, and now even those at the lowest rungs of society have found renewed hope. "These initiatives are not only changing their lives but also allowing them to play a vital role in nation-building," the prime minister added.

He said the biggest beneficiaries of the new National Education Policy, which "modernises" and makes education more "inclusive", are the underprivileged and marginalised sections of society as it promotes learning in the mother tongue.

Narayana Guru's ideals are a great treasure for all of humanity, he said, lauding him for speaking against social ills at a time few did following centuries of enslavement of the country.

The interaction between him and Gandhi, the face of India's freedom movement, was a historic event that gave a new direction to the stir for independence, rendering it concrete objectives, he said.

The prime minister said it serves as a powerful source of energy for social harmony and for the collective goals of a developed India.

Modi recalled his long association with Sivagiri Math, which was founded by Narayana Guru, and its saints' affection for him.

He noted that when its members and followers were stranded in Kedamath following a natural disaster in 2013, when he was the chief minister of Gujarat, the Math reached out to him, not the central government, for help as they considered him their own.

He said the guru espoused the mantra of "One caste, one religion, one God for mankind", affirming that it has inspired many of his government's global initiatives like "One World, One Health", "One Sun, One Earth, One Grid" and "Yoga for One Earth, One Health", which was this year's theme for the International Yoga Day on June 21.

A government statement said the historic conversation between Narayana Guru and Mahatma Gandhi took place at Sivagiri Math on March 12, 1925, Gandhi's visit.

Open To Assembly

52 kilometres from here.

Omar said that statehood is the right of the people of Jammu and Kashmir.

"I know where the story has come from. I know who planted the story

in a newspaper here.... it was planted only to scare the MLAs. This statehood is not for any MLA or the government. This statehood is for the people of Jammu and Kashmir and we MLAs will not be an obstacle in it.

"If the MLAs are being threatened with the dissolution of the Assembly for the restoration of statehood, then do it. The day the state is established again, the next day we will go to the governor and recommend the dissolution of the Assembly. Don't try to scare us ... statehood is our right and give it (back) to us. Stop planting stories in newspapers, it won't work," he added.

'No Local Involvement

after the National Investigation Agency (NIA) made its first major breakthrough in the case by arresting two local residents — Parvaiz Ahmad Jothar and Bashir Ahmad Jothar — for allegedly harbouring the terrorists responsible for the April 22 attack, which also left 16 tourists grievously injured.

NIA on Sunday said the two accused have disclosed the identities of the three armed terrorists involved in the attack, and have also confirmed that they were Pakistani nationals affiliated to the proscribed terrorist outfit Lashkar-e-Taiba (LET).

"The biggest thing is that there was no local involvement. The gunmen who shot the 26 people were all foreigners," Omar told reporters in tourist resort of Gulmarg.

He said the NIA during the investigation arrested two people for helping the attackers.

He, however, stressed that the duo might have been coerced into helping the militants.

"And maybe the NIA also said that they were forced to help them. Now, let the investigation continue. After that, the charges will be presented to the NIA," he said.

On Monday, the NIA said it has gathered a substantial body of evidence regarding the identities of terrorists involved in the attack based on eyewitness accounts from victims, video footages, technical evidence and even the sketches earlier released by Jammu and Kashmir Police.

The NIA said the identities and further details of the terrorists will be made public at an appropriate time. (Agencies)

J&K HC Orders

not have been carried out without a proper and thorough examination of the woman's visa status and circumstances. The court noted the "exceptional nature" of the case, particularly given the heightened security response following the Pahalgam attack that left 26 people, mostly tourists, dead in Baisaran.

However, it was not immediately clear whether efforts had been made to bring her back or the ministry was going to challenge it in a division bench.

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Duckett Flays India Bowlers To Win 1st Test For England

Press Trust of India

LEEDS: Opener Ben Duckett hit the most defining century of his career, exposing an out-of-depth Indian attack as England comfortably chased down a tricky target of 371 to win the opening Test by five wickets after an intriguing five days of play here on Tuesday.

Duckett's 149 off 170 balls with 21 fours and an audacious reverse-swept six off Ravindra Jadeja, along with Zak Crawley's 65 in an opening stand of 188, followed by Joe Root's composed 53 and Jamie Smith's cheeky 44 made the chase look much easier than it actually was.

Having chased down 378 at Birmingham courtesy Jonny Bairstow in 2022, England once again did the same with elan on Tuesday, leaving India head coach Gautam Gambhir with an even bigger frown on his face.

England lead the five-match series 1-0.

It will be difficult to recall when was the last time that India had five centuries in a single Test and yet lost a game so comprehensively.

Shoddy fielding effort and no support for the peerless Jasprit Bumrah made matters worse for India. Indian bowlers in second innings alone conceded 44



boundaries and three sixes. Add to that the 54 boundaries and five sixes in the first innings.

There will certainly be bowling changes in the next Test but whether that will result in

20 wickets is a million dollar question.

In the final session, Ravindra Jadeja, who enjoys a favourable match-up against Ben Stokes, got the important breakthrough

with the England skipper trying to reverse-sweep from the rough and his opposite number Shubman Gill taking an easy catch.

With 69 runs to get, Root

brought his 150-plus Test experience to play, guiding a young Smith through and through during the unbroken sixth wicket stand that sealed the deal for England.

While this was one of India's worst fielding efforts with Yashasvi Jaiswal alone dropping four catches, skipper Gill's relative inexperience in strategizing and taking on-your-feet decisions also became visitor's undoing.

At one point, it seemed the team's most experienced batter KL Rahul was captaining the side, and Gambhir's record as a coach in traditional format got a tad worse.

In Gambhir's coaching, India have now lost seven Tests out of the 11 that he has been in charge so far. The number of defeats could well go into double digits, considering the only potent match winning bowler Bumrah won't play two of the remaining four games.

With nearly 50 overs bowled in the match, others need to step up if they don't want the world's best fast bowler to have another on-field breakdown.

Not playing a spinner of Kuldeep Yadav's calibre came back to haunt India and they would certainly make corrective measures in Birmingham Test that starts on July 2.

CM Omar Wants To Develop Gulmarg As World-Class Golf Destination

Observer News Service

GULMARG: Chief Minister Omar Abdullah on Tuesday reaffirmed his government's resolve to reestablish Gulmarg as a premier global golf destination, promising focused attention on golfing infrastructure, international-level tournaments and tourism-friendly facilities.

Speaking at an award ceremony for golfers and hoteliers at the Gulmarg Golf Championship, the Chief Minister—who also holds the Tourism portfolio—said, "We want to make Gulmarg a world-class golf destination once again. Special attention will be given to golf, golf infrastructure, and tournaments so that Jammu and Kashmir can be marketed as a pre-eminent golfing destination across the globe."

Acknowledging the effort required, Omar Abdullah said the necessary investment is justified given the economic and tourism potential of Gulmarg. "These are high-spending tourists who don't just play golf—they stay in hotels, go sightseeing, and shop. It's about creating a holistic experience that brings them back year after year," he said.

He recalled the past glory of Gulmarg Golf Course, once a favourite among India's top golfers. "The names of the most iconic professional and amateur golfers still adorn the walls of the Gulmarg Club. Sadly, the decline in the situation led to the neglect. But we are determined to bring it back," he said.

The Chief Minister revealed that the government is actively considering the establishment of a Jammu and Kashmir Golf Development Authority to manage and maintain all major golf courses, including Srinagar, Pahalgam, Gulmarg and venues like Sidhra in Jammu.

Omar also commended his father and former CM, Dr. Farooq Abdullah, a passionate golfer and someone who has built the golf infrastructure in J&K.

Earlier in the day, CM Omar Abdullah inspected the newly constructed Gulmarg Convention Center. On the occasion, the Chief Minister flagged off the Cyclothon, encouraging youth participation in sports and promoting eco-friendly tourism across the Valley.

Later, the Chief Minister laid the foundation stone for a 726-meter ski drag lift at Kongdoori, to be constructed at an estimated cost of ₹6.84 crore.



Pant Charged By ICC For His Dissent At Umpire's Decision



Press Trust of India

LEEDS: India wicket-keeper batter Rishabh Pant has been reprimanded by the ICC for showing dissent at an umpire's decision during the third day's play of the ongoing opening Test against England here.

Pant, who had an exceptional outing with the bat during the Headingley Test with hundreds in both the innings, was reprimanded for his on-field conduct during England's first innings.

The 27-year-old was found to have breached Level 1 of the ICC Code of Conduct.

"Pant was found to have breached Article 2.8 of the ICC Code of Conduct for Players and Player Support Personnel, which relates to showing dissent at an Umpire's decision during an International Match," the ICC said in a statement.

In addition to this, one demerit point has been added to Pant's disciplinary record, for whom it was the first offence

in 24 months.

The incident happened in the 61st over of England's innings, when Harry Brook and Ben Stokes were batting. Pant was seen having a discussion with the umpires regarding the condition of the ball.

When the umpires refused to change the ball after checking it with the ball gauge, the wicket-keeper showed his dissent by throwing the ball on the ground in front of the umpires.

There was no disciplinary hearing as Pant admitted to the offence and accepted the sanction proposed by ICC match referee Richie Richardson.

The charges were brought in by the on-field umpires, Chris Gaffaney and Paul Reiffel, along with the third umpire Sharfuddoula Ibne Shahid and the fourth umpire, Mike Burns.

Level 1 breaches carry a minimum penalty of an official reprimand, a maximum penalty of 50 per cent of a player's match fee, and one or two demerit points.

Expected Stubbornness But Jay Shah Is Honest: Ganguly

Press Trust of India

NEW DELHI: Reflecting on his eventful tenure as BCCI President, Sourav Ganguly has revealed that he expected a "certain kind of toughness and stubbornness" from the then Board secretary and current ICC chairman Jay Shah but was left impressed with his "honesty" and resolve to do things "properly".

Ganguly and Shah were colleagues at the world's richest cricket board from October 2019 to September 2022, navigating a tumultuous phase caused by the COVID-19 pandemic, which



brought sporting activity to a grinding halt for few months.

"He (Jay) had his own way of doing things but the best thing about him was he wanted to do things properly for Indian cricket," Ganguly told PTI in an exclusive interview at his residence in Kolkata.

"See, he had the power, the support, so you expected certain kind

of toughness, stubbornness from him but he would do things for Indian cricket," the iconic former captain explained, referring to Shah's status of being the son of Home Minister Amit Shah.

It was the first time that both Ganguly and Shah held BCCI positions. Before that, Ganguly had headed the Cricket Association of Bengal, while Shah was an office-bearer in the Gujarat Cricket Association.

While Ganguly was replaced by another former Test player Roger Binny in 2022, Shah continued as BCCI secretary till November 2024 before taking over as the young-

est ever ICC chairman at 36 years of age.

Asked about how the power dynamics and relationship was between the scion of a political family and a celebrated cricket star, Ganguly said they shared a cordial equation which has continued to this date.

"Relationship was very good. It's still very good. When he came in September 2019...he was a young boy, straight from Gujarat CA, very cooperative, approachable," he recalled.

"Obviously, he had opinions and rightfully so, he wanted to do things and still does, he is the ICC

chairman and it is a bigger post."

Ganguly believes that with time, Shah became better at his job.

"He is very supportive of players. He got better as he learnt. The good thing about him was he wanted to do good for the game," the soon-to-be-53 superstar said.

The Kolkata-based legend said Shah was acutely aware of his status and always wanted to carry out his work in a principled manner.

"He is very honest, he always had the thought (about) who he was at the back of his mind, what baggage he carried. So, he wanted to do things rightfully and properly all the time.

YSS Issues Summer Break Advisory for Students

With the summer break going on for students in J&K, the Department of Youth Services and Sports on Tuesday issued an advisory for students, emphasizing their physical and mental well-being.

The advisory encourages students to utilize the holiday period for relaxation while also engaging in productive and health-conscious activities. Key recommendations include:

1. Incorporating sports, aerobics, stretching, dancing, or any fitness activity into daily routines.
2. Maintaining proper hydration by drinking adequate water throughout the day.
3. Consuming a balanced diet rich in nutrients.
4. Eating seasonal fruits and preserving seeds for monsoon sowing.
5. Maintaining a personal diary or notebook to record daily activities.

The Directorate of Youth Services and Sports has urged Physical Education Lecturers, Masters, and Teachers to actively support students in adopting a healthy lifestyle. Joint Directors of both the divisions and District Youth Services and Sports Officers have been directed to oversee the implementation of these guidelines. (Observer News Service)



India, England Honour Dilip Doshi Before Start Of Day 5

Players from India and England wore black armbands and observed a minute's silence in the memory of former spinner Dilip Doshi before start of day five of the first Test here on Tuesday.

Doshi, a former India spinner who took 113 wickets in 33 Tests, died of a cardiac arrest in London on Monday. He was 77.

"Both teams are wearing black armbands today in memory of former Indian cricketer Dilip Doshi, who passed away on Monday.

"The teams also observed a minute's silence before the start of Day 5," read a social media post from BCCI.

Doshi carved out a niche for himself despite being in the shadows of Bishan Singh Bedi for the majority of his international career.

He was also a stalwart in English county circuit having plied his trade for more than a decade there. He represented Nottinghamshire and Warwickshire. (PTI)



Wimbledon Champ Murray To Help Design Statue Of Himself

Two-time Wimbledon champion Andy Murray is to help design a statue of himself to mark the grass-court tournament's 150th anniversary in 2027.

Wimbledon organizers said Tuesday they aim to unveil the statue of the British tennis great during the 2027 edition.

"He's got to rightly be very involved in that and him and his team will be," the All England Club chairwoman Debbie Jevans said.

Murray ended Britain's 77-year wait for a home champion in men's singles in 2013 when he beat Novak Djokovic in the final.

The Scotsman won a second title — and his third Grand Slam singles title overall — in the 2016 final against Milos Raonic.

An inspiration for the statue project is the way Rafael Nadal was honored, with Murray in attendance, this month at Roland Garros where he won 14 French Open titles.

A bronze statue of Fred Perry, the previous British men's champion before Murray in 1936, was put up at Wimbledon in 1984 marking 50 years after his first singles title at the tournament.

The 2025 tournament at Wimbledon starts Monday. (AP)

Porto, Al Ahly Eliminated From CWC After a 4-4 Draw

Pepé's goal in the 89th minute gave Porto a 4-4 tie against Al Ahly in a back-and-forth match Monday night, before both teams were eliminated from the Club World Cup on goal differential.

Rodrigo Mora, William Gomes and Samu Aghehwa also scored for the Portuguese team. Wessam Abou Ali had a hat trick for the Egyptian team in front of a crowd of 39,893 at MetLife Stadium, where a sea of red jerseys dominated the stands.

Both teams pushed for a late goal before the final whistle but neither could score again to finish above Inter Miami after its 2-2 draw with Palmeiras.

Porto held an advantage in possession with 56.5% but Al Ahly created more opportunities with a 22-14 advantage on shots.

A penalty just minutes into extra time kept Al Ahly in the lead going into halftime. Porto gained momentum after Gomes sent a right-footed shot from outside the box to the top right corner.

Wessam consolidated his hat trick with a header that sent the ball into the center of the box. (AP)



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