

Kashmir Schools Reopen Amid Timing Row



KO Photo | Faisal Khan

Observer News Service

Srinagar: Five-year-old Zaid clung to his schoolbag at 6:00 a.m., still half-asleep. His mother tried to fix his collar as he rubbed his eyes, already exhausted before the school day even began. The new school schedule, with a reporting time of 7:30 a.m., meant children like Adil had to wake as early as 5:30 a.m. to catch their buses. "How can they expect these little ones to wake up by 5 AM?" his father said.

This sleepy struggle became a symbol of a larger concern on Tuesday as schools reopened across Jammu and Kashmir after a two-week summer break. A mother posted a video, showing her gently trying to wake her toddler, who stubbornly clung to his blanket.

Schools across Jammu and Kashmir reopened on Tuesday after a two-week summer break, just a day after heavy rains brought relief from an intense and prolonged heatwave. But the decision to [More on P10](#)

Timing Not Final, Can Be Reviewed: Minister

Amid a backlash over revised school timings, Jammu and Kashmir Education Minister Sakina Itoo on Tuesday said the decision is not final and can be reviewed. The education department on Monday changed the timings of all schools in Kashmir and the winter zone of the Jammu division. The schools, which were closed for summer vacations due to a prolonged heatwave, reopened on Tuesday. [More on P10](#)

6 THE HEATWAVE IS EXPECTED TO EASE SOON. Until then, why not stick to online classes? It's more practical and safer."

Key Govt Portals Down In Kashmir For 2 Months

Agencies

Srinagar: Several crucial government websites and portals in Kashmir have been non-operational for the past two months, causing severe inconvenience to needy individuals relying on various social welfare schemes.

The disruption is particularly impacting beneficiaries of the Golden Card and other welfare programs. The Food Supplies department's online portal is also affected, preventing the registration for essential services.

Patients suffering from chronic illnesses have expressed urgent need for Golden Cards to facilitate treatment. However, with the online registration process suspended, they are unable to obtain these cards and are compelled to seek medical care in private hospitals, which many cannot afford.

Similarly, the government's Marriage Assistance Scheme (MAS) for poor girls is also facing setbacks as the online portal is non-functional. Registration for this scheme is mandatory



one month prior to marriage.

Many girls with imminent wedding dates are unable to apply, risking exclusion from the scheme if they marry without registration. Complaints have also been received regarding other departments, with citizens demanding clarifications to ensure eligible girls do not lose access to government support.

Sakina Itoo, the Minister in charge, when contacted, admitted that the portals are down at present and that the government is aware of the hardships being faced by the people. "The portals are currently down, and many are unable to [More on P10](#)

Street Protests Against Terrorism A Good Sign For Peace: LG

Two-Phase Ropeway Planned for Amarnath Shrine To Aid Elderly, Differently-Abled' | Says Srinagar Can Surpass Davos With Tattoo Ground

Observer News Service

Srinagar: Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha on Tuesday said that street protests against ordinary citizens against Pakistan-backed terrorism reflect a growing public rejection of violence and are a positive sign for establishing permanent peace in the Valley.

Addressing the Tourism Secretaries' Meet of Union Territories at the Sher-i-Kashmir International Conference Centre (SKICC) in Srinagar, the LG said that a peaceful and secure environment is vital for the sustained development of Jammu and Kashmir tourism sector. "Ordinary citizens are



taking a stand against terrorism. Street protests against Pakistan-backed terrorists is a good sign to establish permanent peace in the Valley," the Lieutenant Governor said. "Entire Jammu Kashmir must rise and make sure terrorists

have no place in this beautiful Union Territory."

The conference was also attended by Union Minister for Culture and Tourism Gajendra Singh Shekhawat, senior officials from the Ministry of Tourism, UT

L G Sinha Tuesday chaired a high-level meeting to review the implementation and progress of Pradhan Mantri TB Mukh Bharat Abhiyaan in the UT of Jammu Kashmir. LG reviewed the strategies and actionable plans aimed at accelerating TB case detection, improving treatment outcomes, identifying

challenges, and ensuring inter-departmental coordination to achieve the national goal of TB elimination. LG called for collaborative efforts towards eliminating tuberculosis. "TB Mukh Jammu Kashmir should be our common goal," the Lieutenant Governor said. LG desired the use [More on P10](#)

TB Free J&K Should Be Our Common Goal: LG

'Illegal' Bungalow Occupation

Govt Issues Show-Cause Notice To Junaid Mattu

Observer News Service

Srinagar: The Jammu and Kashmir administration has issued a show-cause notice to former high profile Srinagar Mayor Junaid Azeem Mattu for allegedly overstaying in a government bungalow at Church Lane, Sonwar, beyond his entitled period.

According to officials, Mattu was allotted Government House No. H.O.D-3 in November 2018 during his mayoral tenure,



with the allotment valid only up to April 2019. "No extension has been granted by the government since then," the notice from Deputy Director Estates Kashmir states. The notice accuses Mattu

of "illegally" retaining the premises without any formal extension order. It adds that multiple notices and verbal requests to vacate the property have gone unheeded.

Mattu had challenged the eviction in the J&K High Court through W.P.(C) No. 2114/2024, but the petition was disposed of on May 9, 2025.

"As on date you are not entitled to retain the premises in absence of any statutory provision," the notice reads, directing him to vacate or submit [More on P10](#)

CM To Visit West Bengal For Tourism Promotion

Agencies

Srinagar: Chief Minister Omar Abdullah is set to visit West Bengal to participate in a tourism-related event and hold key meetings aimed at promoting tourism in the region, sources said.

According to sources, Omar is scheduled to leave for Kolkata tomorrow. During the visit, he will attend a major tourism event organized in the city and is also expected to meet West Bengal Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee on Thursday.

"The Chief Minister is keen on reviving the tourism industry in Jammu and Kashmir, which has suffered setbacks after the Pahalgam terror attack," sources said.

"In Bengal, he is likely to meet key stakeholders and tourism players to brief them about the ground situation in Jammu and Kashmir and to encourage tourist inflow from the state."

Officials said that the Chief Minister's visit is part of a broader outreach plan to dispel apprehensions and promote Jammu [More on P10](#)

'Two Wrongs Cannot Make One Right' HC Upholds Scrapping Of Budgam Class IV Selection

M Ahmad

Srinagar: Observing that two wrongs cannot make one right, the High Court of J&K and Ladakh has upheld the government's decision to withdraw a notification in 2015 regarding filling up of Class IV vacancies in the School Education Department in Budgam district.

While setting aside Central Administrative Tribunal's judgement dated 17 August 2023, a division bench of Justice



Sanjeev Kumar and Justice Sanjay Parihar observed that the decision by the authorities to rescind the selection process was bona fide and aimed at ensuring fair and legally tenable selection process.

"Be that as it may, two wrongs cannot make one right. On facts and on examination of the record we have found that the decision to rescind the selection process in question was bona fide and aimed at ensuring fair and legally tenable selection process," the court said, adding, "The petitioners (authorities) have not acted arbitrarily and have based their decision on an exercise undertaken by them through a duly constituted fact finding enquiry [More on P10](#)

Today's footfall included 13,010 male pilgrims, 4,118 females, 256 children, 174 sadhus, 26 sadhvis, 2 transgender individuals, and 347 security personnel.

Officials confirmed that the pilgrimage is proceeding smoothly from both Pahalgam and Baltal routes, aided by favourable weather and extensive security arrangements. On Tuesday morning, the seventh batch comprising 7,541 pilgrims — including 5,516 men and 1,765 women — departed from the Bhagwati Nagar base camp in Jammu in 309 vehicles, heading for [More on P10](#)

Amarnath Yatra Crosses 1.11 lakh Mark In 6 days

LG Says Yatra Progressing Smoothly Via Baltal & Pahalgam Routes

Observer News Service

Srinagar: The annual Amarnath Yatra continues to witness an overwhelming response, with over 1.11 lakh devotees having performed darshan at the holy cave shrine in the first six days of the pilgrimage. More than four lakh pilgrims have registered so far, officials said.

According to officials, 93,342 pilgrims had visited the sacred site by July 7. On the sixth day of the Yatra alone, an additional 18,633 pilgrims offered prayers at the 3,880-metre-high shrine, bringing the cumulative total to 1,11,975.

Srinagar's Future In Crisis, Say Kashmir's Former Top Officials

In a rare intervention, retired officers warn key Kashmir officials of toxic landfill fumes and unsafe waste handling amid Srinagar's planning failures.

Ansar Hussain Dar

Srinagar: A landfill in the middle of Srinagar may be poisoning thousands, including patients at Kashmir's top hospital.

That was the urgent warning issued on Tuesday by a delegation of retired officers and specialists during a high-level meeting with senior government officials.

The meeting, chaired by the Divisional Commissioner of Kashmir, brought together some of the Valley's top administrators, both serving and retired. On one side sat the Deputy Commissioner of Srinagar, the Srinagar Municipal

Commissioner, senior engineers, the Director of Health Services, and SSP Traffic.

Across from them was the Group of Concerned Citizens (GCC) J&K, led by former Divisional Commissioner Naseem Lanker and made up of retired chief engineers, doctors, town planners, and educationists.

Their message was blunt: Srinagar is sliding into a civic emergency.

The delegation's primary concern was the Achan landfill, located near densely populated neighbourhoods like Eidgah, Lal Bazar, and Soura. They warned that the site is

releasing toxic gases capable of causing cancer, infertility, asthma, and other serious illnesses. Even SKIMS, Kashmir's premier hospital, lies within the possible danger zone.

"The health of entire communities is at stake," one member said. "People are breathing poison, and they don't even know it."

The group demanded an immediate scientific survey of the gas emissions, regular air quality checks, and OSHA-style public advisories so that residents understand the risks and know how to protect themselves. They also called for health departments to issue guidelines to



File photo of Achan dumping site

those most exposed.

But the landfill wasn't the only threat discussed.

In Hyderpora, near Jamkash, the group reported open dumping of garbage where women

are seen sorting through waste with bare hands.

"This is not just undignified, it's dangerous," said one former health official. "We're watching lives being risked in plain sight."

The GCC asked authorities to intervene immediately and ensure that basic safety gear is provided, or such activities are stopped altogether.

The discussion widened to include Srinagar's fragile infrastructure.

The group cited broken drainage systems, unplanned roadwork, and farmland being converted into construction zones without oversight. They warned that flood risks are rising and

that departments are operating without coordination.

Former town planner Er. Hakim Iftikhar told officials that without an integrated approach, Srinagar's rapid urban growth will come at a heavy cost. "We are building blindly," he said. "The system needs reform, not repair."

The elderly group also raised concerns about food safety, urging routine checks on street food, additives, and hygiene standards to safeguard public health.

The Divisional Commissioner responded with assurances, promising swift action and departmental coordination. But no specific timeline was shared.

Tuesday's [More on P10](#)



To place an advertisement

CALL +91-194 2502327

Monday - Saturday (9am - 6pm)

No 5- Dal Lake Boulevard Srinagar, 190001, Kashmir

KASHMIR OBSERVER®

Srinagar | Wednesday | 09-07-2025

2

Doctors Highlight Health Risks Of Vaping, Urge Govt To Take Quick Action

Press Trust Of India

Lungs of teenagers need protection, not pollution from vapes, medical experts have stressed while highlighting the dangers of vaping and the emergence of new-age gateway devices. A group of doctors supporting the movement of Mothers Against Vaping, a collective dedicated to raising awareness about the ill effects of vaping and working to eradicate it, said vaping has health implications, including issues like coughing, dry throat, shortness of breath, or headaches. More alarmingly, it can affect the heart, raising blood pressure, increasing heart rate, and even leading to a heart attack, they said. Dr K K Handa, chairman, ENT, head and neck surgery, Medanta Hospital, said the common myth that vaping is safer than smoking is totally incorrect. "Vaping can damage lungs after prolonged use since vapes contain nicotine, which has a serious addictive potential. Over time vape addic-

tion can cause severe and serious mental issues like depression and anxiety. There is also a physical safety concern, as the devices used for vaping can sometimes catch fire. So, vaping is not safe at all," Dr Handa said. According to Mothers Against Vaping, multiple reputed studies have clearly indicated the health risks of vaping and e-cigarettes. A recent study in April 2025 by Johns Hopkins Medicine analysed medical data gathered from almost 250,000 people over a four-year period. The findings significantly linked the exclusive use of e-cigarettes to chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD) and high blood pressure. The World Health Organisation (WHO) has called for urgent action to protect children and prevent the uptake of e-cigarettes. These products are openly available and are aggressively marketed to young people. Children are being targeted and trapped into early nicotine addiction through the use of e-cigarettes. Dr Harish Bhatia, Director and Head of Respiratory Medicine, MGS Super Speciality Hospital, Punjabi Bagh, said vapes, e-cigarettes, Electron-

ic Nicotine Delivery Systems(ENDS), Heat-Not-Burn (HNB) devices and other Heated Tobacco Products (HTPs) directly damage the lungs. Lungs of teens need protection, not pollution from vapes. And any teen that is vaping needs immediate course correction. Only with good lungs will there be the beginning of Viksit Bharat, Dr Bhatia said. Mothers Against Vaping has been consistently highlighting how teenagers and even children are falling prey to vapes, posing a real danger of losing the next generation to these new-age gateway devices. Dr Rajesh Gupta, Director of Pulmonology at Fortis Hospital, said adolescents often start vaping socially at parties or under peer pressure, believing it is harmless or even better than smoking. But this is a myth, and even occasional vaping exposes the lungs to harmful chemicals, which irritate and inflame their delicate tissues, often leading to serious problems. In children whose lungs are still developing, this damage can be very long-lasting.

And this damage does not stop at the lungs. Nicotine in the e-cigarettes is highly addictive and affects the brain, altering attention, memory, learning, and emotional regulation, Dr Gupta said. "Social vaping can quickly spiral into regular addictive use, resulting in lifelong health consequences. As adults, parents, and educators, we must speak openly with children about the risks and act early. We should not assume that it's just a phase because every casual use is a potential gateway to long-term harm," Dr Rajesh added. On the various ways and means of tackling vaping, Dr Bhavna Barmi, clinical psychologist and founder, Happiness Studio, said, "First of all, it is very important to build emotional literacy because vaping is not just peer pressure; it's also an emotional escape. "When we teach our kids to name their feelings through journaling, mood charts, and open reflections, they will not need to numb them. There is also a need for guidance and awareness among parents, as most of them miss warning signs or respond with shame. We should pro-

vide workshops and conversation guides that encourage calm, curious dialogue. Punishment shuts kids down; understanding opens them up," Dr Barmi stressed. "We also need to unpack the role of social media. Vaping looks glamorous online, but we should teach who profits and what the hidden agenda is. Teaching media literacy helps kids build critical thinking -- their best defence. Replace, don't just remove, should be our key. Let's give our children healthy alternatives - connection, creativity, and a sense of identity beyond grades or popularity. "When our children are going to feel valued, they will stop escaping. Also, addiction recovery is not about control; it is about care, building safe, slow, and non-judgmental therapy spaces," Dr Barmi added. Mothers Against Vaping is a united front of concerned mothers combating the escalating vaping crisis among our youth. The group has also been urgently appealing to the government to take decisive action against the growing

OFFICE OF THE ASSISTANT REGIONAL TRANSPORT OFFICER BUDGAM

Subject:- Necessary Correction/change in address in data to the Registration Certificate bearing No.JK04C - 4438 issued in favour of ZULFKAR ALI KHAN Parentage GHULAM RASOOL KHAN

Whereas an application has been recieved by one ZULFKAR ALI KHAN Parentage GHULAM RASOOL KHAN wherein he claimed that the Name has been wrongly recorded in the records of Registration Certificate asZULFIKAR ALI KHAN Which needs to be changed as ZULFKAR ALI KHAN.

Now therefore it is notified for the information of the general public that objections if any in this regard shal reach in written in the office of the Assistant Regional Transport office Budgam within a period of 7 days from the date of publication of this notice in the daily newspaper. After expiry of stipulated time no objection will be entertained.

Assistant Regional Transport officer
Budgam Kashmir

mcb

NOTICE

I, Imtiyaz Ahmad Dar S/o Abdul Hamid Dar R/o Kursoo Padshahi Bagh, Srinagar have lost my number Plate of Car in Rainawari bearing Reg. No JK01AA8808. Now I want to its Duplicate. Regarding this, if anybody is having any objection may file the same to the RTO office Srinagar within a week time after that no objection will be entertained.

NOTICE

I have lost my discharge certificate of 9th Class and wants to apply duplicate copy of it, if anyone have any objection, he/she can contact concerned department with the period of seven days from the issue of this Notice.

Name: Peer Hilal Ahmad Qadri
S/O:Gh Mohd Qadri
R/O:Poshwani Pattan
Year:1985
School : Government High School Nehalpora Pattan

fko

OFFICE OF THE EXECUTIVE ENGINEER, R&B DIVISION BARAMULLA

No: 2721-24

Dated: 03.07.2025

M/S Shan Constructions,
Prop: Farooq Ahmad Paul,
Samarbugh Lasjan Budgam.

Subject: Construction of 1x 50 m single span trussed Girder Bridge with approaches at Wagila (Balance Work).
Reference: 1. Superintending Engineer PWD (R&B) Circle Baramulla's LOI No: 106-108 Dated: 05.04.2025.
2. Superintending Engineer PWD (R&B) Circle Baramulla's Allotment No: 593-95 Dated: 22.04.2025
3. This office letter No:1339-42 Dated:20.05.2025.
4. AEE R&B Sub-Division Sangrama's No: Camp/AE/T/741-42 Dated:30.06.2025.

FINAL NOTICE

- Whereas, the above subjected work has been allotted in your favour by Superintending Engineer, PWD (R&B) Circle Baramulla vide No: 593-95 Dated: 22.04.2025.
- Whereas, as per LOI/Allotment you are supposed to start the work immediately after issuance of LOI.
- Whereas, you have not started the work after lapse of 2months approximately.
- Whereas, you have abandoned the work due to which this office is facing embracing position before higher-ups.
- Whereas, you have been time to time directed by Sub-Divisional Office as well by this office to start the work immediately latest by the AEE R&B Sub-Division Sangrama vide No: Camp/AE/T/741-42 Dated: 30.06.2025.
- Whereas, as per NIT/SBD you are supposed to complete the project within 180days.
- Whereas, despite lapse of 03months the work on the said project has not been started while as at least 50% of the work should have been completed.
- Whereas, the project is approved under World Bank (JTFRP) & the deadline for completion of the project is ending September 2025.
- Whereas, you are given a last chance gear up and start the work within two days & complete the project well before the targeted time period.
- Whereas, no time extension shall be granted in this behalf which may be noted.
- Whereas, you shall be held responsible for any kind of delay/lapse in the matter and action as warranted shall be taken against you.

DIPK-3398/25
dated: 8-07-2025

Executive Engineer,
R&B Division Baramulla.

PUBLIC NOTICE

I have lost My 12th leaving/discharge certificate Somewhere. Now I Have applied for the duplicate of the same if anybody has any objection in this regard he/she may file them in the office of the GOVT HIGH S S PALHALLAN within seven days. After that no objection shall be entertained.

Fayaz Ahmad Bhat
S/O Muhammad Sultan Bhat
R/O Hamrey Pattan

fko

PUBLIC NOTICE

I Have lost my passport bearing no T0885445 . Now I have applied for the duplicate of the same if anybody has any objection in this regard he/she may file them in the concerned office within seven days. After that no objection shall be entertained.

Mukhtatar Ahmad Mir
S/o Ghulam Mohammad Mir
R/o Redbugh Magam Budgam

bmg

PUBLIC NOTICE

I have lost my official passport, bearing no: 01174327 issued on 16-11-2007, between Mill Stop to Khanbagh Lal Bazar. If anybody has found the same he/she is requested to contact on below given Contact Number.

Mathew Onampallil Jacob
Father Name: Jacob Jacob
Contact Number: 9832063603

FKO_r

GOVERNMENT OF UT JAMMU AND KASHMIR OFFICE OF THE EXECUTIVE ENGINEER PCD(PHQ) J&K JAMMU/ SRINAGAR

INVITING E-TENDER NOTICE
e-NIT No/EE-PCD/PHQ/33/2025-26 Dated: - 07-07-2025

Executive Engineer PCD PHQJ&K JAMMU/SRINAGAR on behalf of The President of India invites tenders by e-tendering on Percentage rate basis from approved and eligible contractors registered with J&K Govt. / CPWD / Railways and other State / Central Governments for the following works.

S. No	Name of Work	Name of Division	Estimated Cost (Rs. In lacs)	Cost of document (In Rs.)	Earnest Money (In Rs.)	Time Allowed for completion	Date of opening of tender	Class of Contractor
1	Repair/ renovation of Quarter No. 03 block 02 NGO old at Gulshan Ground Jammu Under Account Head Repair & Maintenance in Demand-51 Police.	PCD (PHQ) J&K, Jmu/ Sgr	1.79 lacs	200/-	3580/-	60 working days	17-07-2025	"A", "B", "C" & "D"
2	Repair/ renovation of Quarter No. 06 block New G.O's at Gulshan Ground Jammu Under Account Head Repair & Maintenance in Demand-51 Police.	PCD (PHQ) J&K, Jmu/ Sgr	2.08 lacs	200/-	4160/-	60 working days	17-07-2025	"A", "B", "C" & "D"
3	Repair/ renovation of Quarter No. 02 block NGO -02 at Gulshan Ground Jammu Under Account Head Repair & Maintenance in Demand-51 Police.	PCD (PHQ) J&K, Jmu/ Sgr	2.06lacs	200/-	4120/-	60 working days	17-07-2025	"A", "B", "C" & "D"
4	Repair/ renovation of Quarter No. 27 block NGO at Gulshan Ground Jammu Under Account Head Repair & Maintenance in Demand-51 Police.	PCD (PHQ) J&K, Jmu/ Sgr	1.48 lacs	200/-	2560/-	60 working days	17-07-2025	"A", "B", "C" & "D"
5	Repair/ renovation of Quarter No. 17 block NGO at Gulshan Ground Jammu Under Account Head Repair & Maintenance in Demand-51 Police.	PCD (PHQ) J&K, Jmu/ Sgr	1.84 lacs	200/-	3680/-	60 working days	17-07-2025	"A", "B", "C" & "D"
6	Repair/ renovation of Quarter No. 15 block C at DPL Jammu Under Account Head Repair & Maintenance in Demand-51 Police.	PCD (PHQ) J&K, Jmu/ Sgr	2.04 lacs	200/-	4080/-	60 working days	17-07-2025	"A", "B", "C" & "D"

- Date of Publishing 08-07-2025 at 1600 hours.
- The Bidding documents can be downloaded from the website <http://jktenders.gov.in> from 1630 hours on 08-07-2025.
- The Bids shall be deposited in electronic format on the website <http://jktenders.gov.in> from 09-07-2025 to 16-07-2025 upto 1600 Hrs. The bids received will be opened at 1100 hours on 17-07-2025 online.
- The complete bidding process will be online.
- Technical bids of bidders shall be opened online in the office of Executive Engineer PCD PHQ J&K Jammu/ Srinagar on 17-07-2025 at 1100 Hrs.
- The lowest bidder i. e. L1 shall be intimated to deposit the original copy of required earnest money in shape of CDR/ FDR and hard copies of all relevant documents as mentioned in clause 2 of general instructions to the bidders within five days from opening of financial bids.
- In light of Govt. Notification issued by Finance Department Civil Secretariat Vide No. A/24(2017)-651 dated: 07-06-2018, the bidder must upload the copy of challan / receipt on account of cost of tender documents remitted in the treasury concerned for that the bidders must write an application to be addressed to treasury officer concerned requesting therein for remittance of amount as cost of tender documents towards M. H. 0055/ Revenue (others).
- Treasury challan/ receipt indicating the name of work and e-NIT No. favouring Executive Engineer PCD PHQ by crediting to M.H. 0055/Revenue issued after the issuance of advertisement e-NIT No. & dateand upload the same.
- Earnest Money: The earnest money deposit (EMD @ 2% of advertised cost) in the shape of CDR/FDR pledged to Executive Engineer PCD PHQ J&K Jammu/ Srinagar of the successful bidder (L1) shall be released, only after defect liability period, the DLP shall be calculated from the date of successful completion of the work to the satisfaction report of Engineer incharge.
- (The date of Treasury challan/ EMD should be between the date of start of bid submission and bid submission end date).
- Bid documents can be seen at and downloaded from the website <http://jktenders.gov.in> Bid documents contain qualifying criteria for bidder, specifications, bill of quantities, conditions and other details.

No: e-NIT/EE-PCD/PHQ/2025-26/6052-82
DIPK-3378/25
Dated: 08-07-2025.

Sd/-
Executive Engineer
Police Construction Division
PHQ J&K Jmu/ Sgr.

(GOVERNMENT OF INDIA) (UNION TERRITORY OF JAMMU & KASHMIR) OFFICE OF THE EXECUTIVE ENGINEER CITY ROADS (SMC) DIVISION SRINAGAR.

FRESH NOTICE INVITING TENDERS

NIT No:- E-NIT/32/CRD/SMC/SGR/2025-26DATED: 04-07-2025.

For and on behalf of the Commissioner Srinagar Municipal Corporation, e-tenders (in Single cover System) are invited on Percentage basis from approved and eligible Contractors registered with Union Territory of J&K, CPWD, Railways and other State/Central Governments.

S.No	Name of Work	Estm Cost (Rs. In Lacs)	Cost of T/Doc (In Rs.)	Earnest Money Deposit @2% of Adv. Cost	Completion days	Class of Contractor	M.H of A/C
1 st FRESH	Restoration/ upgradation of link road at Maqdam Mohalla Bataporabwo 75mm thick compacted wetmix 50mm thick Macadam, 25mm thick compacted semi grade and 6mm thick seal coat.	15.89	800/-	31780/-	15 Days	BEE/ CEE Class	Capex Budget (2025-2026)
2 nd FRESH	Upgradation/ Development of link road by way of filling and macadamization and construction of 20 mtr drain from house of Shafi wazaShuperbag to the House of Shokat Bhat via Abubakar masjid at Chatterhama.	10.00	600/-	20000/-	12 Days	CEE/ DEE Class	Capex Budget (2025-2026)
3 rd FRESH	Development by way of Macadamization of Lankar Lane (connecting Umer Colony B with main road) at Lal Bazar.	10.00	600/-	20000/-	12 Days	CEE/ DEE Class	Capex Budget (2025-2026)
4 th FRESH	Improvement/ Upgradation of inner link roads of Shah-i-Hamdan Colony SyedporaHamchi colony Talilbalwo p/l bituminous macadam.	23.00	800/-	46000/-	15 Days	BEE/ CEE Class	Capex Budget (2025-2026)
5 th FRESH	Improvement/ upgradation of main link road of Gasoo Danihama via Burzuhama in patches/ stretched two p/l bituminous macadam.	18.00	800/-	36000/-	15 Days	BEE/ CEE Class	Capex Budget (2025-2026)
6 th FRESH	Improvement/ Upgradation of link road around GoriporaNoorbagh Stadium Srinagar by way of macadamization.	18.40	800/-	36800/-	15 Days	BEE/ CEE Class	Capex Budget (2025-2026)
7 th FRESH	Macadamization of link road at Rehmania Colony House of Shahnawaz Sheikh.	2.92	200/-	5840/-	10 Days	DEE Class	NCAP (2024-25)
8 th FRESH	Improvement/ upgradation of Iqbal Colony Aali Masjid Hawal road Eidgah by way of p/l of 75mm thick compacted WMM wetmix, 50mm thick compacted BM, 25mm thick compacted SD with premixed seal coat.	21.17	800/-	42340/-	15 Days	BEE/ CEE Class	Capex Budget (2025-2026)

- The Bidding documents consisting of qualifying information, eligibility criteria, specification, Drawings, bill of quantities, (B.O.Q), Set of terms and conditions of contract and other details can be seen / downloaded from the departmental website www.jktenders.gov.in as per the schedule of dates given below:

Scheduled Dates & Time of Online Tenders.			
1.	Date of Issue of Tender Notice Online.	05-07-2025.	
2.	Period of downloading of bidding documents	FROM 05-07-2025 10:00 A.M	05-07-2025 10:00 A.M
3.	Bid submission Start Date	05-07-2025	FROM 10:00 A.M
4.	Bid Submission End Date	16-07-2025	UPTO 4:00 P.M
5.	Date & time of opening of Bids (Online)	17-07-2025 at 10:00 A.M in the office of the Executive Engineer City Roads SMC Division Srinagar.	

- Bids must be accompanied with cost of tender document in shape of introducing Bank Receipt as a tender fee paid in the Municipal Account No: 02160120000000000000, payable at J&K Bank Branch Dood Ganga Baggarden, Srinagar payable at Srinagar (With NIT No. and S.No. of work mentioned) by simply uploading a copy of necessary Bank Receipt.
- Bids must be accompanied with Earnest Money Deposit (EMD) @2% of the advertised cost in the shape of CDR/FDR/BG pledged to Executive Engineer City Roads (SMC) Division Srinagar which shall be uploaded with the tender documents at the time of tendering. The same shall be released after receipt of 5% of performance security which should be valid till completion of DLP from the successful Bidder.
- The date and time of opening of Bids shall be notified on Web Site www.jktenders.gov.in and conveyed to the bidders automatically through an e-mail message on their e-mail address. The Financial bids of Responsive bidders shall be opened online on same Web Site in the office of Executive Engineer City Roads (SMC) Division Srinagar (Tender receiving authority).
- The bids for the work shall remain Valid for a period of 120 days from the date of opening of bids.
- The lowest bidder (L1) also called the successful Bidder has to produce a performance security amount equal to 5% (five percent) of the contract value in the shape of CDR/ FDR/ BG immediately after the opening of financial bids, but prior to fixation of contract. The validity period of the FDR/ BG for requisite amount shall be upto DLP. Any FDR/ BG having less validity period shall not be entertained. The CDR/ FDR/ BG shall be released after successful completion of the Defect Liability Period (DLP).
- If any bidder / tenderer withdraws/ modified his bid during the period of validity etc, the Department is at liberty to suspend the bidder for one year or as shall be deemed suitable by the tender inviting Authority. Same shall hold good if the bidder fails to produce performance security within the specified time.
- The successful bidder (L1) shall have to furnish hard copy of the uploaded documents viz Registration card duly renewed, Valid GST Registration, PAN Card, GSTR-3B etc. alongwith Treasury Challan Receipt.
- The execution of works falling under the jurisdiction of LAWDA shall be subject to NOC from LCMA (LAWDA) Department.

NIT/32/CRD/SMC/SGR/2025-26/e-tendering/
DIPK-3366/25
dated: 08-07-2025

Executive Engineer,
City Roads (SMC) Division,
Srinagar.

From Office of the Advocate Muneer Ahmad Dar and Associates

In the case of
Ab Majeed Lone
S/o Late Ghulam Qadir Lone
R/o Aglar Pattan, Tehsil Pattan

V/s
Public at large

(Caveator)

In the Petition in terms of Section 148-A

The caveators have reason to believe that Non-Caveator may file any Application, Petition, Ap- peal, Suit or any other type of proceeding before the Hon'ble Court and on the ground of distorted facts/misrepresentation and cooked story and may seed in obtaining some relief/order at their back/in exparte against the caveators and in such eventuality the caveators will be put in irrepa- rable loss and inconvenience. It would be proper that caveators be given an opportunity of being heard by the Hon'ble court before passing any order.

fko Sd/advocate

From the office of the Advocate F.A. Malla and Associates

Lic No. 359/2014

In the case of :-
1. ABDUL RAZAK AHANGER S/O MOHAMMAD AHANGER
2. SANAULLAH AHANGER S/O ABDUL RASHID AH-
ANGER ALIAS RESHI AHANGER
BOTH RESIDENTS OF GOOM AHMAD PORA
TEHSIL PATTAN DISTRICT BARAMULLA

(Caveators)

V/S
PUBLIC AT LARGE

(Non-Caveators)

In the matter of:
Caveat application under section 148-A of CPC
That the caveators have landed property at Chichiloora Tehsil Kawarhama District Baramulla under Survey no. 840, khewat no. 73 and khata no. 308, and caveators have to construct a shopping complex over the said land and have reason to believe /apprehension that Non-Caveators may file a suit or any other type of proceeding before this honorable court and on the ground of distorted facts /misrepresent and cooked story and may succeed in obtaining some relief /order at irreparable loss and inconvenience, it would be proper that the caveators are given opportunity of being heard by this honorable court before passing any order.

Fayaz Ahmad Malla
Advocate (B.A. LL.B. (Hons.), LL.M)
Munsiff Court, Sopore / Baramulla / Srinagar
CAVEATOR'S COUNSEL

bmg



DGCA Vows Airfare Checks; MPs Raise Safety Concerns

Press Trust Of India

New Delhi: Aviation regulator DGCA on Tuesday said it will put in place a mechanism to curb whopping surge in air fare, recently witnessed during the Maha Kumbh and post-Pahalgam terror attack. The issue, coupled with concerns over air safety after the Ahmedabad plane crash, dominated proceedings at a parliamentary panel meeting.

Air India CEO and MD Campbell Wilson told the committee the airline will complete retrofitting of its fleet in two years to address frequent complaints about its seats and other facilities, and underscored its commitment to flight safety, sources said.

Some members of the Public Accounts Committee, led by Congress MP KC Venugopal, demanded an audit of the Bureau of Civil Aviation Security, citing a spate of incidents concerning operational safety, and asked when the probe report into the Ahmedabad crash would be ready.

With the probe still going on, there was no detailed discussion on the Ahmedabad crash, and members confined themselves to broader concerns about safety.

Venugopal told reporters after the meeting that the committee members were all worried about safety issues, with NCP MP Praful Patel noting that several incidents following the crash were reported and that every passenger wants to feel safe about their journey.

Members grilled official agencies over what some of them described as an “arbitrary” surge in air ticket prices and cited a host of exam-

ples, including the manifold hike in fares for planes flying from Srinagar after the Pahalgam terror attack and during the Maha Kumbh in Prayagraj, according to the sources.

When an official said the Directorate General of Civil Aviation (DGCA) will be talking to airlines to have a consensus on developing a mechanism against it, a BJP member shot back wondering if the unfair practice will continue for want of consensus while some other MPs added that the aviation regulator has the remit to take action.

The DGCA said it will be putting guidelines in place to curb any unreasonable surge in prices, the sources said.

Amid complaints of broken or uncomfortable seats in Air India planes and other issues of passenger convenience, an MP in the meeting recalled his recent visit abroad in the business class of the airline, highlighting his discomfort caused by the condition of the seat.

Air India CEO Wilson said his airline is working to address these concerns and will do an overhaul of its fleet in two years.

Some members demanded an overall safety audit of all flights in operation, with the DGCA asserting that it has kept passengers’ wellbeing paramount.

One of the MPs sought to know from the ministry officials about the time frame for completing the analysis of the aircraft’s black boxes, the sources said.

A member, sources said, claimed that while user charges have risen, the convenience for travellers has declined.



Widespread Disruptions To Public Services And Local Transportation Networks Are Expected

Bharat Bandh Likely to Hit Public Services Hard

Over 25 crore workers from various sectors expected to participate in the nationwide general strike today

Trans Asia News

New Delhi: India is bracing for a nationwide Bharat Bandh on Wednesday, July 9, as over 25 crore workers, farmers, and rural labourers are set to strike against what they call the central government’s “anti-worker, anti-farmer, and pro-corporate” policies. The general strike has been organised by a joint platform of 10 central trade unions in collaboration with farmers’ and rural workers’ organisations, including the Samyukta Kisan Morcha.

Major Sectors to Be Affected

The strike is expected to paralyse several critical services across the country. Public sector and cooperative banks, insurance offices, postal services, coal mining operations, factories, and state-run transport services are likely to be hit. According to Amarjeet Kaur of the All India Trade Union Congress (AITUC), more than 25 crore participants are anticipated to join the nationwide action.

The All India Bank Employees Association (AIBE) has confirmed its participation, warning that services such as cheque clearance,

customer support, and in-branch transactions may be severely impacted. Harbhajan Singh Sidhu of the Hind Mazdoor Sabha noted that the disruption will extend to public transport, including buses and possibly even app-based taxi services, as protest marches and road blockades are planned in several cities.

Core Issues and Demands

At the centre of the agitation is a 17-point charter of demands submitted to Labour Minister Mansukh Mandaviya last year. The unions accuse the government of not only ignoring these demands but also failing to convene the Indian Labour Conference for the past decade, which they say reflects a systematic neglect of the country’s labour force.

Among the key issues raised by the unions are:

- Opposition to the four labour codes, which they argue undermine workers’ rights and collective bargaining.
- Rising unemployment and stagnant wages.
- Escalating prices of essential commodities.
- Cuts in public spending on health, education, and welfare.

- Increasing economic inequality.
- A shift in recruitment policy within government departments, favouring the reappointment of retired personnel over the hiring of young professionals, particularly in sectors such as Railways, NMDC Ltd, steel, and education.

Nationwide Mobilisation

Organisers report months of intensive preparation across both formal and informal sectors to ensure maximum participation. Workers from various industries have pledged solidarity, and rural movements are expected to hold demonstrations and rallies in support of the strike.

The organisers have called for peaceful protests and have urged the public to stand in solidarity with the working class and farming communities whose livelihoods, they argue, are being compromised by current government policies.

While no official government holiday has been declared, the scale of participation suggests significant operational impact across both urban and rural India.

US Lifts Terrorist Tag from Syria’s 'Al-Qaeda' Group

Agencies

Washington: The United States will revoke its designation of Hayat Tahrir al-Sham (HTS) as a foreign terrorist organisation (FTO) as Washington softens its approach to post-war Syria following the fall of Bashar al-Assad’s government last year.

The decision, which takes effect on Tuesday, comes as part of US President Donald Trump’s broader strategy to re-engage with Syria and support its reconstruction after more than a decade of devastating conflict.

“This FTO revocation is an important step in fulfilling

meetings with French President Emmanuel Macron and, most recently, Trump in Riyadh in May.

The Trump administration and the European Union have since lifted sanctions on Syria.

“In line with President Trump’s May 13 promise to deliver sanctions relief to Syria, I am announcing my intent to revoke the Foreign Terrorist Organization (FTO) designation of al-Nusra Front, also known as Hay’at Tahrir al-Sham (HTS), under the Immigration and Nationality Act,” Rubio said.

“Tomorrow’s action follows the announced dissolution of HTS and the Syrian govern-



US President Donald Trump meeting with Syrian President Ahmed al-Sharaa in Riyadh on May 14, 2025 [Bandar Al-Jaloud/ AFP]

President Trump’s vision of a stable, unified, and peaceful Syria,” US Secretary of State Marco Rubio said in a statement Monday.

HTS had been designated as a “terrorist” group by the US since 2018 due to its former ties to al-Qaeda.

The group emerged out of the al-Nusra Front, once al-Qaeda’s official branch in Syria, but formally severed those ties in 2016 after HTS leader Ahmed al-Sharaa declared the group’s independence.

Al-Sharaa, who led the opposition forces that removed al-Assad in a lightning offensive last December, has since become Syria’s president.

He has launched what many experts have described as a charm offensive aimed at Western powers, including

ment’s commitment to combat terrorism in all its forms.”

HTS was dissolved in late January, with its forces folded into the official Syrian military and security forces.

Damascus welcomed the US decision as a step towards normalisation. In a statement, Syria’s Ministry of Foreign Affairs said the delisting of HTS was a “positive step toward correcting a course that previously hindered constructive engagement”.

The ministry added that it hoped the move would “contribute to the removal of remaining restrictions that continue to impact Syrian institutions and officials, and open the door to a rational, sovereign-based approach to international cooperation”.

Al Jazeera

India Abstains In UNGA On Draft Resolution On Afghanistan

Press Trust Of India

United Nations; India has abstained in the UN General Assembly on a draft resolution on Afghanistan, noting that a “business as usual” approach is unlikely to deliver outcomes that the global community envisions for the Afghan people.

The 193-member UN General Assembly on Monday adopted the draft resolution, introduced by Germany on ‘The situation in Afghanistan’. The resolution was adopted with 116 votes in favour; two against and 12 abstentions, including India.

India’s Permanent Repre-

sentative to the UN Ambassador Parvathaneni Harish, in the explanation of vote, said that any coherent policy to address a post-conflict situation must combine a mix of policy instruments – incentivising positive behaviour and disincentivising harmful actions.

“An approach focused only on punitive measures, in our view, is unlikely to succeed. The United Nations and the broader international community have adopted more balanced and nuanced approaches in other post-conflict contexts,” Harish said.

Harish stressed that India is closely monitoring the security situation in Afghanistan.

Only 53% of Class VI Students Know Tables Till 10

Press Trust Of India

New Delhi: Only 55 per cent of Class III students can arrange numbers up to 99 in ascending or descending order while only 53 per cent of them in Class VI know tables up to 10, a Ministry of Education (MoE) survey has found.

The Performance Assessment, Review and Analysis of Knowledge for Holistic Development (PARAKH) Rashtriya Sarvekshan, formerly known as the National Achievement Survey (NAS), was conducted on December 4 last year, covering 21,15,022 students from both government and private schools in Grades 3, 6 and 9, across 74,229 schools in 781 districts, spanning 36 states and Union Territories.

The survey said 1,15,022 children from the three grades were assessed and 2,70,424 teachers and school leaders responded through questionnaires.

According to the report, only 55 per cent of students in Class III can arrange num-

bers up to 99 in ascending or descending order while 58 per cent of the students can perform addition and subtraction of two-digit numbers.

In Class VI, only 53 per cent of students understand and visualise arithmetic operations and the relationships among them, know addition and multiplication tables at least up to 10 and apply the four basic operations on whole numbers to solve daily life problems.

In Class VI, an additional subject ‘The World Around Us’, which covers environment and society, was introduced alongside Language and Mathematics. Students scored lowest in Mathematics (46 per cent), while Language averaged 57 per cent and The World Around Us scored 49 per cent nationally.

According to Ministry of Education officials, instances where less than 50 per cent of students were able to answer correctly indicate learning gaps.

Iran Rejects Trump’s Claims It Asked For Relaunch Of Nuclear Talks

Reuters

Tehran: Iran says it has not requested talks with the United States over its nuclear programme, as claimed by US President Donald Trump.

“No request for a meeting has been made on our side to the American side,” Iranian Foreign Ministry spokesman Esmail Baghaei said on Tuesday in comments carried by the country’s Tasnim news agency.

The clarification came a day after Trump, during a dinner in the White House with Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu, said Iran was actively seeking negotiations on a new nuclear deal following the 12-day war with Israel last month, which the US also joined.

“We have scheduled Iran talks. They want to talk,” Trump told reporters. “They want to work something out. They are very different now

than they were two weeks ago.”

Trump’s Middle East envoy, Steve Witkoff – also present during the dinner – had even said the meeting could take place in the next week or so.

Iran’s Foreign Minister Abbas Araghchi wrote in an opinion piece published in the Financial Times newspaper on Tuesday that Tehran remains interested in diplomacy but “we have good reason to have doubts about further dialogue”.

Netanyahu, Accused War Crimes, Nominates Trump for Nobel Peace Prize

Trans Asia News

London: In a stunning display of diplomatic irony, Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu, currently facing war crimes accusations at the International Criminal Court, arrived at the White House Monday evening bearing a gift for President Donald Trump: a formal nomination for the Nobel Peace Prize.

The occasion? A celebratory dinner marking the joint U.S.-Israeli strikes on Iranian nuclear facilities—because nothing says “peace” quite like a synchronized barrage of Tomahawk missiles.

“He’s forging peace, as we speak, in one country, in one region after the other,” Netanyahu declared with a straight face, handing over his Nobel nomination letter across the candlelit table like it was a Hallmark card. “So, I want to present to you, Mr. President, the letter I sent to the



Nobel Prize Committee; it’s nominating you for the Peace Prize, which is well de-

served, and you should get it.”

Trump, appearing genuinely sur-

“He’s forging peace, as we speak, in one country, in one region after the other,” Netanyahu declared with a straight face, handing over his Nobel nomination letter across the candlelit table like it was a Hallmark card

prised that bombing nuclear sites now qualifies as peacemaking, responded warmly: “Thank you very much. This I didn’t know. Wow. Coming from you, in particular, this is very meaningful.” The “you, in particular” line was a nod, presumably, to Netanyahu’s impressive résumé of ongoing military operations and allegations of international humanitarian law violations.

Reporters, summoned for the pre-dinner photo op, watched as the two leaders toasted to their newly achieved “peace through precision strikes” doctrine, while discussions of ceasefires elsewhere remained hypothetical at best.

The optics of a peace prize nomination following an air campaign involving bunker-buster bombs and Tomahawk missiles didn’t go unnoticed. While both leaders characterized the operation as a preemptive strike that would reduce future conflict, critics noted the contradiction in honoring military escalation under the banner of peace.

The nomination also comes at a time of heightened scrutiny for Netanyahu, who is facing war crimes allegations at the International Criminal Court related to the ongoing conflict in Gaza. Nonetheless, he appeared buoyant during his third visit to Washington this year, as he and Trump toasted what they called a “new era” for the Middle East.

Sopore Youth Bags Prestigious Chevening Scholarship

Observer News Service

SOPORE: In a proud moment for Kashmir, Muhammed Daniyal Ubaidullah, a 26-year-old from Sopore, has been awarded the highly competitive Chevening Scholarship, the UK government's premier international award for postgraduate study. He will pursue his postgraduate studies at the prestigious London School of Economics and Political Science (LSE).

The Chevening Scholarship is among the most sought-after international scholarship programmes in the world. This year, over 100,000 applicants from more than 160 countries vied for a limited number of slots, making Daniyal's selection a significant and inspiring achievement.

A product of Sopore's academic talent, Daniyal began his higher education at Hindu College, University of Delhi, earning a BA (Hons) in Sociology. During his undergraduate years, he was elected as a Minister in the Student Parliament. He later went on to study Law at King's College London (KCL), where he led the KCL Human Rights Project as its President from 2019 to 2020, overseeing the publication of a law journal and representing the university

at prominent legal events.

Following his graduation, he was elected Vice President of the KCL Students' Union, where he represented nearly 50,000 students and led campaigns focusing on mental health, student wellbeing, and campus equality.

From 2021 to 2024, Daniyal remained in the UK, working first in the higher education sector and then as a Data Consultant at the Kubrick Group, one of the world's most selective data consultancy firms.

Currently, Daniyal is in the process of transferring his legal practice back to Kashmir and plans to enrol as a litigator at the Jammu and Kashmir High Court upon his return. His long-term ambition is to contribute to meaningful legal and policy change in South Asia.

"This opportunity is not just about academic pursuit—it's a platform to amplify the voices of our region and bring back skills and insight that can help shape a better future," Daniyal shared.

His journey, marked by perseverance and global excellence, offers a powerful example for Kashmiri youth and highlights the heights that can be reached when given the chance to excel.

Dy CM Conducts Inspection Of CE R&B, PMGSY Offices



Observer News Service

SRINAGAR: Deputy Chief Minister, Surinder Choudhary on Tuesday conducted a surprise inspection of Chief Engineer PWD (R&B) and PMGSY offices in Rajbagh, Srinagar to assess the operational efficiency and employee punctuality.

The inspection was aimed at ensuring seamless functioning of the department, with a focus on timely execution of duties and projects.

During the inspection, the Dy CM reviewed the attendance registers to verify the presence of staff across different branches. He emphasised the importance of punctuality, stating that timely arrival at the workplace was essential for maintaining discipline and ensuring smooth operations.

Surinder Choudhary, while interacting with the staff there, maintained that the government is committed to ensure speedy and hassle free delivery of public services to the

people. He directed the employees to strictly adhere to office hours, underscoring that consistent punctuality reflects a commitment to public service and enhanced the department's credibility.

The Dy CM also instructed the officials to avoid any mismanagement in their work and prioritise timely completion of all ongoing projects. He highlighted that delay in project execution could weaken public trust. He stressed that disciplined work ethics are foundational towards achieving the departmental goals.

The Deputy Chief Minister also asked the senior officials to closely monitor the attendance and project progress, ensuring that any lapse in this regard is addressed promptly.

Emphasizing on the need for transparency, timely execution, improved citizen service and cleanliness, the Dy CM stressed for speedy disposal of pending bills for seamless execution of projects without any hindrance.

DC Bla Reviews Progress Under Capex Budget 2025–26



Observer News Service

SRINAGAR: In a proactive initiative to accelerate developmental activities under the Capex Budget 2025–26, Deputy Commissioner (DC) Baramulla, Minga Sherpa, chaired two sector-wise review meetings at the DC Office Baramulla to assess physical and financial progress across departments.

The first meeting focused on key departments including Irrigation, Public Works Department (R&B), Education (Elementary and Secondary), Youth Services & Sports, Health, and Public Health Engineering (PHE). Departmental officers presented PowerPoint presentations highlighting the status of ongoing projects.

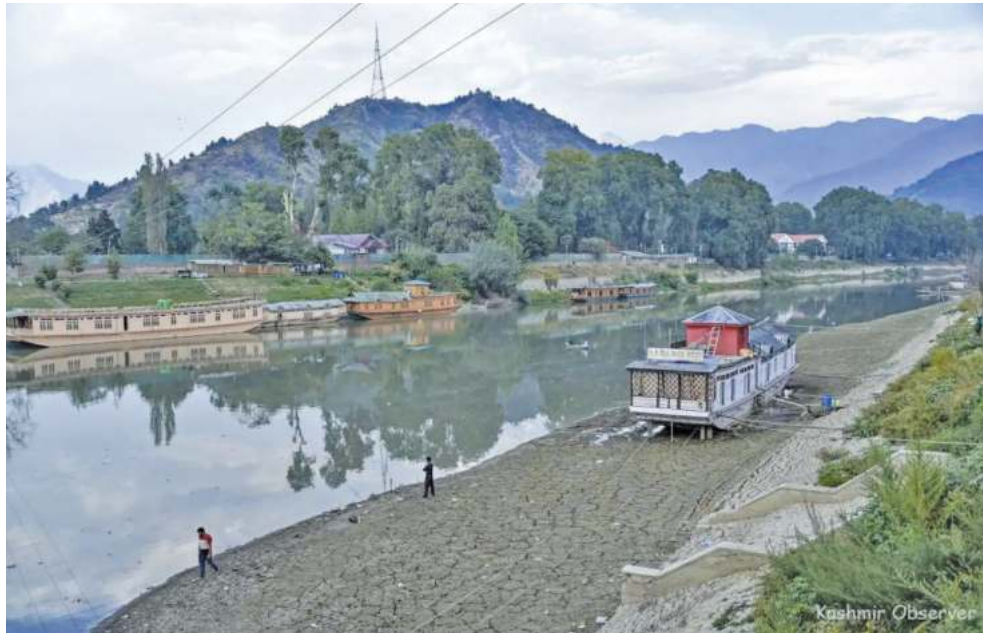
DC conducted a detailed review, stressing transparency,

optimal fund utilization, and strict quality control in project execution.

In the second session, DC engaged with officials from the Rural Development Department (RDD) and Urban Local Bodies (ULB), reviewing the progress of PRI, BDC, DDC, and urban sector works. Emphasis was laid on clearing pending liabilities and ensuring progress aligns with the fund allocation under these critical components.

Highlighting the importance of timely action, DC directed all departments to expedite project execution, regularly update the BEAMS portal, and mandatorily submit detailed plans for new works under the 2025–26 Capex Budget by July 10 to facilitate early administrative approvals.

Water Woes Persist In Kashmir Despite Rainfall



FILE PHOTO

Observer News Service

SRINAGAR: A brief spell of rainfall on Monday brought down soaring temperatures across parts of Kashmir, but the region's worsening water crisis shows little sign of abating. Despite slight increases in river levels, many areas, especially in Srinagar, continue to face acute water shortages, sparking fresh protests.

Data from the Irrigation and Flood Control (I & FC) Department shows that the water level in River Jhelum saw only a marginal rise. At Sangam, the gauge moved from 0.33 feet on July 7 to 0.51 feet on July 8—still below the 0.57 feet recorded previously. Similar modest upticks were seen at Munshi Bagh (from 1.94 ft to 2.11 ft) and Asham (2.14 ft to 2.30 ft). Meanwhile, the level at Wular Lake actually dipped slightly to 1574.75m, compared to 1574.97m on June 30.

'Marginal Rise Means No Relief': Experts

Independent weather forecaster Faizan Arif Keng told Kashmir News Observer that the rainfall was concentrated over central Kashmir, with southern and northern belts receiving little to none. "The rise in Jhelum's water level is negligible—between 0.1 to 0.5 feet. Such a minor change has no real impact," he said.

Keng stressed that only widespread and sustained rainfall across Kashmir will help replenish water bodies and stabilize the flow in the Jhelum and its tributaries.

As taps remained dry in several areas of Srinagar, residents in Gawakadal staged a protest on Tuesday. Women took to the streets, raising slogans against the Jal Shakti Department.

"We've been without drink-

Srinagar Records 31°C, Kupwara Hottest

Most regions across Jammu and Kashmir and Ladakh recorded near-normal to slightly varying maximum temperatures on Monday, according to Kashmir Weather data.

In the Kashmir Valley, Srinagar registered 31.0°C—just 0.3°C above normal. Other areas saw mild deviations: Qazigund recorded 30.6°C (2.0°C above normal), Pahalagam 27.6°C (1.4°C above normal), Kupwara 32.6°C (1.5°C above normal), Koker-nag 29.6°C (1.6°C above normal), while the hill station of Gulmarg remained cooler

at 21.0°C, slightly below normal by 0.8°C.

Meanwhile, the Jammu region saw slightly below-normal conditions, with Jammu city at 33.9°C (1.5°C below normal). Banihal recorded 29.5°C, Batote 27.3°C, Bhaderwah 28.6°C, and Katra 30.2°C—all within 2°C of normal.

In Ladakh, Leh recorded a pleasant 26.5°C, while Kargil was warmer at 31.1°C.

The data suggests that temperatures have largely stabilized across the region following the recent spell of rainfall that ended a prolonged heatwave.

ing water for days. Our children are falling sick in this heat," said Shahzada, a local protester.

Another resident added, "It rained yesterday, but we still don't have water. Authorities aren't listening despite repeated complaints."

Reports of water scarcity have also emerged from other parts of Srinagar, including Habba Kadal, Nowpora, Eidgah, and Chattabal. Many households are being forced to buy bottled water or depend on distant public taps.

The water shortage isn't limited to the capital city. Rural belts and peripheral towns in north and south Kashmir are also witnessing irregular supplies, as drying streams and falling groundwater levels compound the crisis.

In several villages, residents report skipping morning ablutions, school children going without

baths, and livestock struggling without adequate water.

Rain Brings Cool Weather, Not Respite

Monday's downpour brought some meteorological relief, cooling temperatures across the Valley. In Srinagar, the maximum temperature dropped from 34.3°C to around 20°C. However, the rainfall also triggered waterlogging, tree falls, and traffic snarls in parts of the city.

The Meteorological Department has forecast more light to moderate showers till late Tuesday evening. Yet, experts warn that unless the rainfall is widespread and consistent, the hydrological crisis across Kashmir will persist.

"As of now, the situation remains fragile," Keng said, "and if the rains continue to miss large parts of the Valley, both drinking water availability and agriculture could take a severe hit."

MHA To States: Improve Prison Conditions For Aged Inmates

KO Web Desk

NEW DELHI: The Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA) has directed all states and Union Territories to ensure special care, safety, and dignity for elderly prisoners by creating age-friendly facilities inside jails and correctional institutions.

In an advisory issued on July 1, the MHA noted that many jails house vulnerable inmates, including senior citizens who require additional support to carry out everyday tasks in

custody. The advisory was addressed to Chief Secretaries, Directors General, and Inspectors General of Prisons across the country.

Highlighting the need for inclusive custodial environments, the ministry asked states to provide "specially accessible accommodations" for elderly inmates keeping their physical limitations in mind.

The advisory also called for curated meal plans to suit the dietary and medical needs of

older prisoners. It emphasized the availability of adequate healthcare facilities, including mental health services, and recommended that jail staff be sensitized and trained to handle the specific needs of senior inmates with care.

"Special attention must be given to their dietary requirements and healthcare access," the advisory stated, urging swift implementation of the recommendations to improve the quality of life for elderly inmates behind bars.

J&K Tourism Will Match Last Year's Figure Soon: Yasha Mudgal

Observer News Service

SRINAGAR: Commissioner Secretary, Tourism, Yasha Mudgal on Tuesday said the tourist footfall is increasing across Kashmir and the region will match last year's figures of visitor arrivals soon.

Talking to reporters here at SKICC, on the sidelines of the two-day National Secretaries' Conference, Mudgal, according to Kashmir News Observer KNO, said tourist arrivals are gaining at almost all destinations, with visitors from different parts of the country visiting Jammu and Kashmir's destinations like Srinagar, Gulmarg, and Pahalagam.

She said that as footfall increases, they are expecting it to match last year's figures very soon, adding that the tourism sector is bouncing back in Jammu and Kashmir and is once again becoming the preferred and favourite destination for travellers.

Mudgal was responding to a query about the slump in tourism activities following the Pahalagam terror attack. She praised the efforts made by the Lieutenant Governor and government officials for the ongoing revival of the tourism sector.

Regarding the two-day event held at SKICC, the Secretary described it as the biggest event

of the year, saying it has set a tone for the season ahead. "In the event, secretaries from all states and Union Territories participated in a brainstorming session, which was held on the directions of the Ministry of Tourism (MoT), in which

Lieutenant Governor himself participated. Such an event indicates that J&K has been a priority destination for the government," she said.

Notably, the Union Ministry for Tourism organised a two-day Tourism Secretaries' Conference for all States and Union Territories at the Sher-i-Kashmir International Conference Centre (SKICC), Srinagar, on 7th and 8th July 2025, for the first time in Jammu & Kashmir. The national event brought together Tourism Secretaries and Heads from across the country for high-level deliberations on collaborative policy-making and strategic planning in the tourism sector.

The conference focused on key national policy areas such as tourism-related budget announcements for 2025–26, destination development and infrastructure initiatives, review of sanctioned projects, promotion and marketing strategies, investment opportunities, and film tourism promotion.

A special session dedicated exclusively to Union Territories was held on Tuesday.

Online Gambling Pushing Several Families Into Financial Crisis

Observer News Service

SRINAGAR: Online gambling has emerged as a silent but devastating menace in Kashmir, pushing several families into deep financial and emotional crises.

The easy access to gambling apps and websites has lured many—especially the youth—with promises of quick and effortless wealth. Instead, it has left behind a trail of losses, debts, depression, and broken homes.

As per details obtained by KNO, many youths in Kashmir have fallen prey to this addiction. One such youth initially won Rs 10,000 in the first few days, which gave him false confidence. Encouraged, he borrowed lakhs from neighbours and relatives, promising to return double in a matter of days. However, once he staked higher amounts, he lost everything. The youth went missing for several days before his family managed to trace him and clear his huge debts.

Another youth recounted a similar ordeal. "I made Rs 10 lakh quickly at first, and thought I had found a way to get rich. But I soon lost everything, including another Rs 5 lakhs I invested," he said. "I realised too late that even when you win, you end up losing. This addiction has destroyed my business and devastated my family."

While online betting and gambling platforms are legally permitted in India, their addictive nature has had alarming consequences. Many families suffer in silence, too ashamed to come forward due to societal stigma. The pressure to maintain a respectable image in society often forces them to hide their struggles.

Experts say the psychological toll of online gambling can be just as devastating as the financial losses. Victims often

suffer from anxiety, depression, and a deep sense of hopelessness. Relationships within families deteriorate, and the emotional strain weakens the support system.

Dr Altaf Bhat, a psychologist, termed the spread of online gambling "a plague". "People must realise how destructive it is. Even financially sound individuals can lose everything. It's important to have support systems and counselling in place to help such individuals recover and rebuild their lives," he said.

Dr Farooq Ganaie, a psychiatrist, warned about how gaming behaviours often transition into gambling-like habits. "Many online games offer attractive deals, microtransactions, and loot boxes that mimic gambling. These mechanics slowly desensitise children and youth, setting them on a dangerous path," he said. "I've treated adolescents who spent large sums on such games, unaware of the consequences. Stricter regulations and increased parental monitoring are crucial."

Waqar Fayaz, a social activist from Shopian and founder of "We the Kashmir Foundation", expressed grave concern. "Online gambling is becoming more dangerous than drug addiction in Kashmir. While the government, police, and NGOs are fighting drug abuse, who will tackle this new silent destroyer?" he questioned.

Fayaz said hundreds of such cases go unreported, as youth play these games easily on their phones. "They can uninstall apps before parents or police notice, and reinstall them later. The only real solution is a complete ban on such apps," he said.

"I have seen many such instances of online gambling where people have sold their land worth lakhs to clear the debts after playing these games," the social activist added.

as climate change and rising temperatures exacerbate the demand.

It is noteworthy that, MLA Sopore Irshad Rasool Kar on Tuesday convened a crucial meeting with Jal Shakti Department officials, stressing the urgent need to restore and upgrade existing water supply schemes across the constituency.

Expressing concern over the hardships faced by residents, the MLA Kar, directed officials to submit a comprehensive report on infrastructure gaps and delayed projects. The department assured immediate short-term interventions along with long-term solutions under government-approved schemes.

KASHMIR OBSERVER®

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

KO VIEW

A Fair Deal for Apples

Commerce and Industry Minister Piyush Goyal’s recent assurance to apple growers in Kashmir that their concerns over cheap imports will be taken up with urgency is both timely and critical. At stake is not just the economic wellbeing of an entire horticultural community, but also the future of a region where apple farming is not just a major source of livelihood for over three million people, it is a lifeline.

Kashmir produces nearly 75% of India’s apples, yet in recent years, growers have found themselves squeezed from all sides: erratic weather, soaring input costs, poor post-harvest infrastructure, and, most significantly, the growing influx of cheaper imported apples, particularly from countries with whom India has signed or is negotiating free trade agreements (FTAs).

Currently, imported apples are subject to a minimum import price (MIP) of Rs 50 per kg and a 50% import duty. But traders at the FTII Conclave in Srinagar argue this is not enough. They point out that the actual consumer price, after layers of transport, branding, and retail margins, touches Rs 125–150 per kg. In such a scenario, imports priced lower at the wholesale level drastically undercut Kashmiri apples, even though the quality of domestic produce is often superior.

While Goyal was careful to balance the interests of both “growers and consumers,” the government must not ignore the asymmetry at play. Imported apples, which are also well-branded, are subsidized in their respective countries. This is not the case with Kashmiri apple. Kashmiri growers are often hobbled by the lack of cold storage, adequate processing units, and access to premium markets.

While these issues are yet to be taken care of, the reported pressure from the US to ease tariffs on apples as part of ongoing trade negotiations adds another layer of complexity. Trade agreements must not come at the cost of local livelihoods. The government’s priority, as Goyal rightly pointed out, must be to protect both the consumer and the Indian farmer, especially in a place like Kashmir, where horticulture is central to the region’s fragile economy.

There is an opportunity here for meaningful reform: better infrastructure, targeted subsidies for branding and marketing, and an assured procurement mechanism that insulates farmers from market shocks. Cutting the GST on handicrafts, as also raised by traders at the conclave, could provide similar relief to artisans.

For now, the government’s words have offered a sliver of hope. What is needed is swift follow-through. Protecting Kashmiri apples is not just about safeguarding a product, it is about valuing a region and a people who, season after season, keep their faith in the soil.

FINANCIAL FIX

Don’t Let Gold Fool You

Gold glitters, land tempts, but for long-term security, Kashmiri investors must learn to diversify beyond tradition.

Irshad Mushtaq

Gold and land have long been seen as safe bets in Kashmir. Families pass down gold coins and real estate as legacy assets. But in today’s shifting economy, sticking to old ways may not be enough.

Yes, gold gave over 30 percent returns last year. But zoom out a little, and its performance has been uneven. Real estate in the Valley, too, is tied to political winds, conflict, and liquidity crunches. Betting everything on one asset class is risky, especially in a place where stability is never guaranteed.

Diversifying means spreading your investments across different types of assets. This includes not just gold or property, but also equities, mutual funds, ETFs, and even REITs. For instance, investing in a fund that tracks India’s top 500 companies gives you access to strong performers across industries, not just one.

What matters is balance. Some investments offer quick returns but carry high risk. Others, like mutual funds or ETFs, grow slower but steadier. Know the entry cost, how easily you can sell, and what level of risk you’re ready for. Avoid flashy traps like penny stocks or overtrading.

Even if you’re experienced, don’t stop learning. Smart investors use pledging for income, or trade in futures only when they truly understand the game. Guesswork is not a strategy.

The market changes. So should your approach. For Kashmiri investors hoping to build real financial strength, not just survive economic shocks, the future lies in spreading risk, staying informed, and thinking beyond gold and ground.

The author is a Srinagar-based reputed financial advisor.

Kashmiri Kids Deserve
Climate-Ready Schools

As the Valley battles record heat, children return to classrooms unfit for learning or safety. The solution isn’t more holidays. It’s urgent climate-ready school reform.

Ikky Ikkal

This summer in Kashmir has been punishing. The sun beats down without mercy, and the valley finds itself under a sky that offers no relief.

For days on end, the temperature has hovered near all-time highs, the kind of heat we’ve never seen in over a hundred years. While adults retreat indoors or adjust their routines, our school-going children are being packed into metal-roofed classrooms and school buses with broken fans. They’re expected to learn in what can only be described as dangerous conditions.

This isn’t an exaggeration. Classrooms in many schools, especially government ones, are built without even the most basic climate considerations.

Tin roofs trap the heat, turning classrooms into ovens. Ventilation is poor. In some places, there are no fans at all, or they barely function. There is no air conditioning, no insulation, no shade. Water isn’t always available, let alone chilled and clean.

School buses are no better. They’re cramped, poorly ventilated, and scorching by the time the first child steps in. Sitting in them for even ten minutes is difficult for an adult, let alone a child.

The question that keeps coming up: should we extend the summer vacation? But that question is the

wrong starting point. It’s a temporary fix for a permanent failure.

Every year, Kashmir’s academic calendar becomes a tug of war with the weather. First, schools shut in the freezing winter, often with little or no heating. Now they’re shutting again because of unbearable summer heat.

If this is what education has come to - learning only when the weather allows - what are we even doing?

Let’s not forget: these children already lost significant classroom time due to the pandemic. Many in government schools are still catching up. Add to that the political shutdowns, weather-related closures, and now climate extremes, and what’s left is a severely fractured academic year. Every additional day off is a blow to their learning.

This cycle of delay and denial points to something bigger.

What we’re dealing with isn’t seasonal discomfort. It’s structural neglect. Climate change is here. It’s not a distant threat anymore. It’s showing up in our schools, in the form of heatstrokes, headaches, fatigue, and fear. Yet our education system continues to behave like nothing has changed.

Extending holidays is not a policy. It’s a way of avoiding the hard work. What we need is a long-overdue transformation in how we build, maintain, and operate schools in Kashmir.

Start with the basics: working

fans in every room, proper ventilation, water that is both safe and cold, shaded areas for breaks, and heat-resistant roofing. School buses must have proper airflow.

Some private schools have begun addressing these needs, but most government schools remain far behind.

A simple step that can be implemented immediately is shifting to early morning classes during the hottest months. Many states in India already do this. It’s not perfect, but it’s better than shutting down completely.

Ahead of winter, schools must be equipped with proper insulation and heating systems that are functional, not just on paper.

School architecture must change. We need buildings that work with the climate, not against it. Plant more trees around campuses. Introduce shaded walkways and green rooftops. Build classrooms that breathe.

These changes don’t just protect children. They help them learn better.

The government must enforce regulations that apply equally to public and private schools. No school should be allowed to function without climate safety standards. Child safety should not depend on the school’s location or funding status.

But infrastructure isn’t enough. Parents’ Associations across districts must come together and make

coordinated submissions to the Directorate of School Education, Kashmir (DSEK). These submissions must demand more than calendar tweaks. They must call for a long-term climate adaptation strategy for schools. The DSEK must begin conducting yearly climate-readiness audits for all schools under its jurisdiction.

This summer is not an exception. It is a warning. And unless we respond with structural changes, the next extreme season, whether hot or cold, will again catch us off guard.

Education is supposed to prepare our children for the future. But if our schools can’t even protect them in the present, we have already failed. How can a student focus on learning when she’s sweating through her uniform, dizzy from the heat, and unable to drink water?

Our children deserve better than fans that don’t work, buses that overheat, and timetables that collapse under pressure. They deserve classrooms where they can learn, not just survive.

Let’s stop asking if schools should shut. Let’s ask why they still aren’t ready for the world we now live in.

The writer is an educationist, columnist, and founder of Rizq Revolution. He is Principal at Maryam Memorial Institute, Pandithpora Qaziabad.

Kashmir Can Beat Diabetes

A landmark study shows lifestyle changes work better than medicine in preventing diabetes. In Kashmir, where cases are rising fast, this could be our best shot at fighting back.

Sameer Mirza

beat it soundly. Participants who made basic shifts in their routines reduced their risk of developing full-blown diabetes by 58 percent in the first three years. The group that took metformin saw a 31 percent drop.

Two decades later, those lifestyle changes were still paying off. On average, they gained an extra 3.5 diabetes-free years, compared to 2.5 years for those on medication.

Professor Ballabh Raj Shah, one of the study’s senior authors, put it bluntly: “Within three years, we had to stop comparing. Lifestyle was proving more effective than the drug.”

That’s a powerful statement in an age where people often prefer prescriptions to personal change.

This lesson should ring loud in the valley. Walk through Bemina, Rajbagh, or Nowhatta and you’ll spot the symptoms: long lines at diagnostic labs, pharmacies dispensing metformin like candy, and

younger patients complaining of fatigue, blurry vision, or wounds that heal slowly.

What’s less visible is the daily lifestyle that’s feeding the disease.

Kids don’t play outside anymore. Public parks are shrinking, not expanding. Meals are often deep-fried or sugary. Walkability is rare, gyms are unaffordable for many, and work-from-home culture has turned our days into sitting marathons.

Even the food deemed “healthy” is often wrapped in plastic and laced with preservatives.

We are trying to treat a lifestyle disease with medicine. That’s the real problem.

The good news is: lifestyle medicine doesn’t need big money. It needs real commitment. The American study offers a roadmap.

Small, consistent actions can have the same or better impact than

lifelong medication. We should walk 30 minutes a day, eat more fruits and vegetables, skip that second helping of rice, and drink more water.

Local policies can help amplify this. Schools must bring back daily physical activity. Urban planners should focus on walkable neighbourhoods. Government hospitals should offer free or subsidized lifestyle coaching, not just prescriptions. Health isn’t just a matter of drugs. It’s how we live, move, eat, and sleep.

Culturally, Kashmir has always valued movement. Our elders walked to orchards, fetched water from springs, worked in the fields. Food was seasonal, home-cooked, and rarely processed. Somewhere along the way, we traded that for convenience, and we’re paying for it.

Let’s not wait until metformin becomes a part of every household ration card. The real fix doesn’t come in a blister pack. It’s in our kitchen, in our morning walks, in getting off the sofa.

The best medicine isn’t one we swallow. It’s the life we choose to live.

The author is a Srinagar-based gym trainer. He can be reached at s_mirza@gmail.com

Letter to Editor

Development in Kashmir Can't Skip the Small Villages

I write from the folds of the Pir Panjal, from a village you won’t find on most maps, but one that holds tight to the promise of development. Nadora-Kralmad in South Kashmir’s Doru tehsil once believed in that promise.

Two decades ago, when a small but vital link road was laid here, it wasn’t just concrete. It was connection. It linked homes to hospitals, children to schools, and farmers to fields. It brought pride and hope.

Today, that road lies in disrepair. Only half of it was ever macadamised. The rest is now a broken stretch of potholes and dust that turns to slush with the rains. For the elderly, it’s a danger. For schoolchildren, a struggle. For women in labour, a risk. And yet, this is not a letter of anger. It is a reminder, a request, a plea.

We hear of Smart Cities. Of tunnels under the Zojila. Of highways stretching from Srinagar to every

corner of Jammu and Kashmir. But here, in a small cluster of villages, just a few kilometers of road await attention. The cost isn’t high, but the impact would be enormous.

When the “Back to Village” (B2V) program reached our hamlet, it was like the government had finally knocked on our door. Senior officers came. Meetings were held. Our voices echoed in official notebooks. The Nadora-Kralmad road was discussed, acknowledged, even promised. Villagers clapped. There was hope again.

But what followed disappointed everyone. The road remained broken. The officers moved on. The files, perhaps, remain stuck somewhere between intentions and implementation.

There’s more.

Five years ago, a transformer was sanctioned for our village. Iron poles were even erected in Lower Kralmad’s graveyard, a strange but hopeful sight. We thought electricity

was finally coming in full strength. That students wouldn’t have to squint under flickering bulbs during winter. That small businesses wouldn’t collapse under voltage drops. But the transformer never came. The poles now rust. The grass grows around them. The promises, once again, wilt.

These aren’t mega-projects we’re demanding. No crores required. Just a repaired road and a functioning transformer. Just two items already sanctioned. Is that too much for a village of hundreds?

The damage isn’t just physical. When such small projects fail to take shape, they shake trust. They make a mockery of official visits. They erode the credibility of programs like B2V, which otherwise could be a model for grassroots governance. After all, what do we tell our elders when they ask about the poles in the graveyard? What do we tell our children when they fall in

the mud while walking to school?

We are not protestors. We are participants in democracy. We believe in the vision of Sabka Saath, Sabka Vikas. But now, we also ask for Sabka Sunwai, that our concerns be heard, and more importantly, acted upon.

To the Hon’ble Ministers of Roads & Buildings and Power Development, and to the Chief Engineers of both departments: please send a team to survey the road. Please release the funds that were already promised. Please ensure the transformer finds its place.

Let Nadora-Kralmad be a model of how small villages matter. Of how rural Kashmir isn’t just a line item in plans, but a living part of this nation’s promise.

Sincerely,
Mohammad Amin Mir
Anantnag

A Father’s Test in the Valley

When a small accident left his daughter in danger, a Kashmiri father discovered the depth of his love, and the unspoken pain of every father who fears for his child’s future.

Bashir Ahmad Dar

Two years ago, around one in the night, I was woken up by my wife. There was no panic in her voice, just a hesitation, like she wasn't sure if the moment was serious enough to wake me. But when I saw her face, I knew something was wrong.

Our daughter, just three years old at the time, had pushed a tiny silver nose pin deep into her nostril while playing. It was no longer visible from the outside. She just told her mother she had done something “bad.” At that hour, those words hit differently.

The moment I heard what had happened, something shifted in me. I got up and reached for my phone, calling every doctor I could think of. I tried their personal numbers. I called hospitals. I searched online for

emergency contacts. But it was late, and no one answered.

I stood next to my daughter's bed, watching her sleep. I used the torchlight from my phone, hoping to spot the nose pin. I couldn't. And with every passing minute, fear tightened its grip around me.

I imagined the object slipping deeper. I imagined her waking up unable to breathe. I thought of bleeding, infection, hospitals and surgeries. My thoughts ran wild, the way they do when your child is in trouble and you can do nothing but wait.

I didn't sleep that night. I didn't eat the next morning. My body was functioning, but I wasn't really there. It was like I was watching myself from a distance, a father caught in a storm he couldn't control.

As soon as it was light outside, I wrapped

her in a shawl and took her to GMC Anantnag. The roads were cold and mostly empty. At the hospital, we waited for nearly two hours outside the ENT department. Time passed slowly. People came and went. I stayed frozen.

Finally, a doctor came and called us in. He was calm, young, and professional. I explained the whole thing in one breath. He nodded, then asked me to place her on the examination table. She looked small under the harsh lights. Her hand found mine and held on.

He picked up a small spoon-shaped tool and gently inserted it into her nostril. She whimpered at first. Then she cried. A sharp, painful cry that shook me completely. I held her hand tighter. My throat felt dry. My chest hurt.

Then, just like that, he removed it. A tiny silver pin, shining under the light. My daughter opened her eyes and smiled at me. And I finally breathed again. Not the automatic kind of breath, but the kind that makes you feel human again.

I shook the doctor's hand. I tried to thank him. But the words felt small next to the relief I felt. That man, in that moment, became something close to a savior.

Later that day, a Hadith came to my mind. The Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) once said, “Fatima is a part of me. What harms her harms me.” Until that day, I had understood that only in words. Now, I understood it in my soul.

Since that night, I've changed. I see my daughter in every small girl I pass on the street. Their laughter brings back hers. Their tears re-

mind me of the way she cried that day. I've become softer in ways I didn't know I could.

A father gives his best without ever saying much. He works, sacrifices, protects, and watches from a distance. And then, one day, he walks his daughter to a new home. He smiles for her, even when his heart is heavy.

But what happens if she's hurt in that new home? What happens if she is not treated with the love and respect she deserves? What happens to the father who once stayed awake all night over a tiny pin?

I don't know the answer. But I hope those who hear such stories understand the weight a father carries. I hope they protect what he gave them with all the care in the world.

The author is a teacher in Kashmir. He can be reached at darbadhir1234321@gmail.com.

Let Kashmir Speak

In Kashmir’s multilingual classrooms and overlooked villages, communication isn’t about accent or fluency. It’s about creating the right conditions for confidence, connection, and growth.

Sahil Manzoor

Kashmiri kids are growing up in a world where being able to express yourself clearly is no longer optional.

From college admissions to job interviews, from school debates to social media, communication is currency.

But when we talk about how to build this essential skill, we skip the most important part: the surroundings we create for learning.

Let's start at the beginning.

According to the National Education Policy (NEP) 2020, children formally enter school at age six. But by then, their exposure to language has already shaped much of their ability to think and speak.

If a child is surrounded by engaging conversation, songs, stories, and responsive adults, their vocabulary blooms. If not, they struggle to catch up, because their environment failed them.

In my years as a student in Raiyar-Ich, a village nestled in the Khansahib hills, I've seen firsthand how environment shapes communication. In schools with under-resourced libraries and overloaded classrooms, children rarely find space to express themselves. Their confidence shrinks, because no one ever asked them what they think.

Contrast that with schools, even modest ones, where teachers prioritize listening over lecturing, and where activities like storytelling, public speaking, and quizzes are routine.

In such places, even the shyest child learns to form sentences with purpose and clarity. Confidence grows when

curiosity is encouraged and when mistakes aren't mocked but understood as steps in learning.

Kashmiri classrooms are linguistically complex. Students come speaking Kashmiri, Pahari, Gujar, Urdu, sometimes a mix. English is introduced early but often taught mechanically, with little space for natural use.

If we want our children to thrive, we must make our classrooms more flexible, more inclusive. That means using the mother tongue where needed to build concepts, without giving up on English and Urdu, which are essential for national-level opportunities.

This isn't about diluting standards. It's about building strong foundations. Schools must dedicate regular time, even just once a week, to simple, skill-focused activities. Worksheets, language games, math puzzles, and group storytelling sessions help reinforce basics in a way that textbooks alone cannot.

These sessions expose learning gaps, giving teachers a chance to support those who are falling behind.

But what happens beyond school? How do we help those who are already out in the world — youth who are talented, hardworking, deeply knowledgeable in their fields — yet unable to speak with fluency or confidence?

I've met such young people. A mechanic who explains engine design better than a textbook, but stumbles in an interview. A girl in a remote village who writes powerful poetry in Kashmiri but fears speaking in English.

These are the real gems of our Kashmir, but our current systems don't support them. Language becomes a barrier

to opportunity, and communication is mistaken for eloquence instead of clarity and connection.

We need to shift the way we think. Fluency in English is valuable, yes. But it should not be the sole measure of merit. Instead, we must invest in environments — at home, in school, at work — where people can develop these skills at their own pace.

That means creating reading spaces, supporting public libraries, encouraging family storytelling, and above all, removing the shame attached to learning.

And we cannot ignore the role of reading. A habit of regular reading, in any language, expands vocabulary, deepens comprehension, and strengthens expression. Even something as simple as reading a question aloud multiple times can sharpen focus and improve clarity.

In Kashmir, where access to books is often limited, we need community-led solutions. A shelf of books in every mohalla, a reading hour in every school, a culture of listening and sharing are small interventions that could transform how young Kashmiris engage with the world.

At its core, communication is about being heard and understood. It doesn't require perfect grammar or polished pronunciation. It requires the will to express and the support to keep going when we fumble.

So instead of asking our children and youth to “speak better,” let's ask ourselves: Have we given them the space to grow?

The author is based in Raiyar-Ich, Khansahib, Budgam. He can be reached at sahilmanzoor411990@gmail.com

Kashmir’s Viral Problem

From cringe reels to vulgar content, a wave of irresponsible influencers is reshaping how young Kashmiris see fame, values, and success.

Er Aausyf Ibn Farooq

Social media has gone from a digital outlet to a public crisis in Kashmir.

What started as a useful tool for education, connection, and exposure, has morphed into a fast track to viral fame, often at the expense of decency, purpose, and even common sense.

Every day, thousands of young Kashmiris scroll through a flood of reels and videos featuring self-styled influencers lip-syncing to lewd songs, staging pranks in public spaces, or posting clickbait drama.

Many of these accounts repeatedly violate platform rules, get banned, and return under new names, only to grow even faster.

The content isn't just silly. It's often tasteless, sometimes vulgar, and rarely meaningful.

But the rewards are real: attention, followers, sponsorships. For impressionable teens, it's a clear message: why study when clout comes quicker?

This shift didn't happen in isolation.

During the pandemic, smartphones became essential for online learning. Now, the same devices are tools for distraction.

A child who once logged into Zoom class is now hooked on reels. A student once preparing for exams is now mimicking YouTube pranksters.

The social cost is mounting.

Teachers report declining attention spans. Parents feel outpaced by tech-savvy children. Public spaces are turning into stages for filming outrageous stunts.

And most worryingly, harmful content is becoming normalized. Followers defend it. Communities stay silent. But there are exceptions.

Lawyer Muneer Najar, for example, has taken it upon himself to flag offensive material and advocate for cleaner digital spaces. But without broader public support, such efforts won't be enough.

The conversation isn't about banning platforms or moral policing. It's about responsibility.

Influencers, especially those with large followings, have power. What they post shapes what others believe is acceptable. This influence can be used to inform, educate, or entertain responsibly.

But too many are chasing algorithms, not accountability.

Parents, teachers, faith leaders, and the youth themselves need to rethink what's being rewarded online.

Reporting harmful content, encouraging quality creators, and setting digital boundaries are steps we can all take. These aren't abstract solutions. They're basic civic habits in the internet age.

Kashmir deserves better than becoming a content mill of viral absurdity.

Social media can still be a force for good, if used wisely. But that will take a collective shift in priorities, both online and off.

The author is an automation and control engineer based in Saudi Arabia. He can be reached at aasifhussain14@gmail.com

Kashmir’s Health Time Bomb Is Already Ticking

Heart attacks at 25. Diabetes at 20. Depression before 16. A lifestyle-driven epidemic is silently destroying Kashmir’s future, and no one’s paying attention.

Junaid Maqbool

A silent health crisis is unfolding across bedrooms, classrooms, and office cubicles in Kashmir. It creeps in through fatigue, mood swings, headaches, acne, and sleepless nights, often dismissed until it becomes too big to ignore.

And by the time most people realize what's wrong, they're already on medication.

We're talking about non-communicable diseases (NCDs): heart disease, diabetes, obesity, hypertension, cancers, hormonal disorders, and mental illnesses.

Across India, these conditions now account for 60% of all deaths. Globally, the toll is even higher — 74%, according to the World Health Organization.

But statistics don't capture the tragedy unfolding on the ground.

In Kashmir, a region already grappling with stress, unemployment, and political uncertainty, this new epidemic is sinking its roots deep into the younger generation.

You'd expect to find heart disease in a 60-year-old. Today, it's showing up in men under 30. You'd assume type 2 diabetes belongs to someone who's lived on sweets and cigarettes for decades. Today, teenagers

are being diagnosed before they finish high school.

Girls are facing early puberty, irregular cycles, and PCOS in staggering numbers. Boys, too, are reporting chronic fatigue, hormonal imbalances, and mental fog, often misread as laziness or distraction.

The real culprit is a toxic mix of poor diet, screen addiction, sleep disruption, and constant low-grade stress.

Let's be specific.

Start with food. Home-cooked meals once built resilience in Kashmiri households. But now, shelves are stacked with instant noodles, processed snacks, and sugar-loaded drinks.

Energy drinks and chips have become lunchbox staples. Children as young as six are developing signs of fatty liver. At 12, some show insulin resistance.

Next, look at movement. Traditional life in Kashmir was active by design: farming, walking, playing outdoors.

Today, children spend up to eight hours a day on screens, from online classes to gaming. Physical education is either ignored or treated as an afterthought in most schools.

Parents, too, are stuck in sedentary routines. Exercise is rare. Sitting is constant.

Amid all this, mental health is collapsing silently. Anxiety, depression, insomnia, eating disorders are rising. Teenage boys break down after a bad grade. Girls withdraw into social media spirals, comparing themselves to airbrushed influencers and chasing unattainable beauty norms.

There's stigma around therapy and no structure for emotional education in schools. Most kids don't even have the words to describe what they're feeling.

Hormonal disorders are another red flag. Plastic containers, cheap cosmetics, fast food packagings carry endocrine-disrupting chemicals. These interfere with hormones, leading to early puberty, infertility, weight gain, and even certain cancers.

Nobody warns parents about these risks. Labels are ignored. Awareness is almost zero.

Then comes pollution. Winters in Kashmir now bring more than snow. They bring a toxic cloud of smog from coal burners, diesel fumes, and waste burning. Respiratory diseases are rising, but few connect the dots between dirty air and chronic inflammation, heart strain, and reduced immunity.

To make matters worse, our healthcare

system is still reactive, not preventive.

A 25-year-old in Kashmir suffering from chest discomfort is more likely to be told “it's nothing” than offered an ECG. Routine check-ups for blood pressure, blood sugar, thyroid, or vitamin deficiencies are rare unless someone collapses or lands in the ICU. Preventive care is dismissed, even ridiculed.

And let's not forget stigma.

A teen struggling with anxiety is often accused of “overthinking.” A girl with PCOS is blamed for eating too much. A boy with depression is told to “man up.” We don't treat symptoms. We judge them.

So where do we begin?

We should immediately reintroduce fresh vegetables, whole grains, pulses, local fruits. And remove soda, processed sugar, and transfats from school canteens. We must bring back traditional Kashmiri cooking: slow, seasonal, balanced.

Schools must enforce daily physical activity. Colleges and offices need standing desks, walking clubs, or hourly stretch breaks. A 30-minute walk should be a daily routine.

Schools also must introduce regular emotional literacy sessions. Talking to a counselor must feel as normal as going to a dentist. Screen time should be capped at home by re-

designing how families spend time together.

The government must launch NCD awareness drives, especially for the 15–30 age group. Early detection — not just for cancer, but for PCOS, diabetes, fatty liver, hypertension — must become mainstream. NGOs, influencers, teachers, and doctors need to be trained to recognize early signs and speak up.

If we don't act now, we are looking at a future where 30-year-olds are on lifelong medication, where fertility rates decline, where mental illness becomes a generational inheritance, and where disease becomes a defining feature of youth.

This is not about fear. It's about urgency. Kashmir cannot build a healthy economy, a strong civil society, or a productive workforce if its youth is drowning in preventable illnesses. We can't afford another decade of delay.

Health is no longer just about hospitals. It's about habits, homes, and headspace. And the time to fix it is now.

The author is a researcher in immun oncology and a public health advocate. He can be reached at junaidmaqboollectures57@gmail.com

JKEDI Concludes MDPs
In 4 Districts, Trains 81
Entrepreneurs Under RAMP



Observer News Service

SRINAGAR- The Jammu and Kashmir Entrepreneurship Development Institute (JKEDI) has successfully concluded a series of Management Development Programs (MDPs) across four districts under the Raising and Accelerating MSME Performance (RAMP) scheme. The initiative is being funded by the Union Ministry of MSME and implemented in the Union Territory by the Industries and Commerce Department, J&K. The training programs, which commenced on June 30, 2025, were held simultaneously in Budgam, Kupwara, Pulwama and Shopian. A total of 81 aspiring and existing entrepreneurs, including 48 women, participated in the six-day comprehensive training. The MDPs focused on enhancing the managerial, financial and strategic skills of the participants, aiming to help them scale up operations, boost competitiveness and build

sustainable enterprises. The curriculum, meticulously developed by the subject matter experts, featured modules on business planning, marketing strategies, digital tools, financial literacy, legal compliance, innovation and leadership. To provide practical exposure, the programs also included field visits to successful business ventures, interactive sessions with sector specialists and mentorship opportunities. Experts from District Industries Centres (DICs) and the Labour and Employment Department shared insights with participants, helping them align their ventures with current industry practices. The MDPs were monitored by designated Range/Reviewing Officers, who regularly engaged with the trainees and gathered feedback to ensure quality and relevance of the training. This initiative aligns with the broader objectives of the RAMP scheme to strengthen the MSME ecosystem across the Union Territory.

J&K Bank Provides Life-Support
Ambulance To GMC Udhampur



Observer News Service

SRINAGAR- Reaffirming its commitment to people's well-being and healthcare infrastructure in the region, J&K Bank today provided a life-support ambulance to Government Medical College (Udhampur) as part of its Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) initiative aimed at strengthening emergency medical services in Jammu Division. In a brief ceremony held within the college premises, Bank's Zonal Head (Udhampur) Vinay Gupta handed over the key of the fully-equipped ambulance to the Principal GMC (Udhampur) Dr. Parmod Kalsotra in the presence of MLA (Udhampur West) Pawan Kumar Gupta, Deputy Commissioner (Udhampur) Sonali Rai (IAS), Medical Superintendent Dr. Sanjeev Gupta, along with other senior functionaries from both the Bank and the Medical College.

Commending the Bank's initiative, MLA (Udhampur West) Pawan Kumar Gupta said, "This timely contribution by J&K Bank is a welcome step that will go a long way in enhancing the emergency response capacity of GMC Udhampur. I appreciate the Bank's continuous efforts in supporting public healthcare and other vital sectors." Principal GMC Udhampur Dr. Parmod Kalsotra echoed the sentiment, saying, "We are grateful to J&K Bank for this generous gesture. The ambulance will significantly improve our ability to provide swift medical assistance, especially in critical situations." Speaking on the occasion, Zonal Head (Udhampur) Vinay Gupta said, "At J&K Bank, we believe in contributing meaningfully to the societies we serve. Supporting the healthcare infrastructure, particularly life-saving equipment, remains a priority under our CSR program."

Close To Making Deal With
India, Says Trump Amid Fresh
Tariffs On 14 Countries

Press Trust Of India

NEW YORK/WASHINGTON- The US is close to making a trade deal with India, President Donald Trump has said. "Now, we've made a deal with the United Kingdom, we've made a deal with China...We're close to making a deal with India. Others we met with and we don't think we're going to be able to make a deal, so we just send them a letter. If you want to play ball, this is what you have to pay," Trump said on Monday.

The remarks came as the Trump administration sent out the first tranche of "letters" to various countries on Monday detailing the tariffs that the US will impose on products from those countries entering America. The letters warned them to not retaliate by increasing their own import taxes, or else the Trump administration would further increase tariffs. The countries that got these letters, signed by Trump, were Bangladesh, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Cambodia, Indonesia, Japan, Kazakhstan, Lao People's Democratic Republic, Malaysia, Serbia, South Africa, South Korea, Thailand and Tunisia. He set a 25 per cent tax on goods imported from Japan and South Korea, as well as new tariff rates on other nations that would go into effect on August 1. Imports from Laos would be taxed at 40 per cent, Cambodia and Thailand at 36 per cent, Serbia and Bangladesh at 35 per cent, Indonesia at 32 per cent, South Africa and Bosnia and Herzegovina at 30 per cent and Kazakhstan, Malaysia and Tunisia at 25 per cent. "We're sending out letters to various countries telling them how much tariffs they have to pay," Trump said. He added that the countries were "ripping" the US and "were charging us tariffs at levels that nobody's ever seen



before. We have some countries that were charging 200% tariffs and making it impossible to do business. "And what the tariffs are doing is they're driving people in and companies into the United States," he said while speaking to reporters ahead of a bilateral dinner with Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu in the White House on Monday. Trump also repeated the claim that he stopped the war between India and Pakistan by telling the two neighbours that Washington would not do trade with them if they continued the fighting. "We did a job with India and Pakistan, Serbia, Kosovo, Rwanda and the Congo, and this was all over the last three weeks or so... and others that were ready to fight," Trump said. "And we stopped a lot of fights. I think the very big one, frankly, a very, very big one, was India and Pakistan. And we stopped that over trade," he said. "We said we're not going to be dealing with you at all if you're going to fight. And they were maybe at a nuclear stage. They're both nuclear powers. And I think stopping that was very important," Trump added. Trump went on to say that the US is trying to help out with the Russia-Ukraine conflict, calling it a (Joe) "Biden-created monster". "This whole thing that's happening with Russia and

Ukraine, horrible, it's a horrible thing. And I'm not happy with Russian President (Vladimir) Putin at all. But this is something that would have never happened if I were president. This is a war that was never going to happen," Trump said. At the dinner, Netanyahu presented Trump with a letter that he had sent to the Nobel Prize Committee nominating Trump for the Nobel Peace Prize. Previously, Trump has be-moaned that he won't get a Nobel Peace Prize for stopping the war between India and Pakistan or for his efforts in the Russia-Ukraine, Israeli-Iran conflicts. Since May 10, Trump has repeated more than a dozen times his claim that he "helped settle" the tensions between India and Pakistan and that he told the nuclear-armed South Asian neighbours that America will do a "lot of trade" with them if they stop the conflict. India launched Operation Sindoor on May 7, targeting terrorist infrastructure in territories controlled by Pakistan in response to the Pahalgam terror attack. The strikes triggered four days of intense clashes that ended with an understanding on stopping the military actions on May 10. New Delhi has been maintaining that India's fierce counter-attack that day forced Pakistan to plead for ending the hostilities.



WE DID A JOB WITH INDIA AND PAKISTAN, SERBIA, Kosovo, Rwanda and the Congo, and this was all over the last three weeks or so... and others that were ready to fight,"

FASTag Toll Collections Rise To
₹20,682 Cr In Q1 FY26

Press Trust Of India

NEW DELHI- Toll collections across state and national highways through FASTag rose by 19.6 per cent to Rs 20,681.87 crore in the first quarter of 2025-26, as per National Electronic Toll Collection (NETC) data. According to NETC data, the number of toll users also increased 16.2 per cent to 1,173 million in the April-June quarter compared to 1,009.87 million in the year-ago period. The National Highways Authority of India (NHAI) increased toll charges by an average of 4-5 per cent on highway sections across the country from April 1, 2025.



Recently, Union Minister Nitin Gadkari said the government will introduce a FASTag-based annual pass, priced at

Rs 3,000, for private vehicles effective August 15 in a step towards hassle-free highway travel.

Gold Climbs Rs 550 To Rs
99,120/10 G; Silver Remains Flat

Press Trust of India

NEW DELHI- Gold prices climbed Rs 550 to Rs 99,120 nper 10 grams in the national capital on Tuesday due to fresh buying by stockists, according to the All India Sarafa Association. The precious metal of 99.9 per cent purity had closed at Rs 98,570 per 10 grams on Monday. Gold of 99.5 per cent purity increased by Rs 500 to Rs 98,600 per 10 grams (inclusive of all taxes). Additionally, silver prices remain unchanged for the third straight session at Rs 1,04,800 per kilogram (inclusive of all taxes) on Tuesday. Meanwhile, spot gold in the international markets depreciated by USD 11.42 or 0.34 per cent to USD 3,325.09 per ounce. "Gold reversed yesterday's losses and traded higher on Tuesday as concerns about the potential resumption of a trade war grew. This shift in sentiment followed President Donald Trump's announcement of plans to impose 25 per cent tariffs on goods imported from Japan and South Korea, effective August 1. "This decision reflects President Trump's wider initiative to reform US trade policies, which have consistently created uncertainty in the markets. This uncertainty acts as a tailwind for the safe-haven asset gold," Saumil Gandhi, Senior Analyst - Commodities at HDFC Securities, said.

Sensex Advances 270 Pts On Fag-
End Buying In Banking Stocks

Press Trust Of India

MUMBAI- BSE Sensex closed higher by 270 points on Tuesday, helped by late-day buying in banking and select IT shares as well as positive trends in the Asian markets. The 30-share barometer rose by 270.01 points or 0.32 per cent to settle at 83,712.51 with 18 of its constituents ending higher and 12 lower. Sensex hit a high of 83,812.31 and a low of 83,320.95, gyrating 491.36 points. The 50-share NSE Nifty climbed 61.20 points or 0.24 per cent to settle at 25,522.50, after a muted trading session. Stock markets moved in a range for most of the session before the emergence of value buying in the pre-close session. Investors are awaiting definitive progress on the proposed India-US trade even as the US extended the suspension of reciprocal tariffs until August 1, experts said. From the Sensex firms, Kotak Mahindra Bank, Eternal, Asian Paints, NTPC, Bharat Electronics Ltd, Adani Ports, Infosys and State Bank of India were among the major gainers. However, Titan tumbled over 6 per cent. Trent, Axis Bank, Maruti and Hindustan Unilever were also among the laggards. The US is close to making a trade deal with India, President Donald Trump has said.

'ELI Scheme To Promote Job
Creation, Social Security'

Press Trust Of India

KOLKATA- The Employment Linked Incentive (ELI) announced in the budget for 2024-25 with an outlay of Rs one lakh crore, will promote job creation and provide social security, an official of Employees' Provident Fund Organisation (EPFO) said on Tuesday. Regional PF Commissioner-I Randhir Kumar said that the scheme is aimed at incentivising creation of 3.5 crore jobs over a period of two years, that it will be effective from August 1, 2025, and to continue till July 31, 2027. He said out of the total of 3.5 crore, 1.92 crore beneficiaries will be first-timers entering the workforce. Kumar said the thrust of the scheme is on the manufacturing sector, adding that you get benefits under the scheme, the establishments need to be registered with the EPFO. For first-time employees, the scheme provides for a maximum amount of Rs 15,000 per annum to be paid in two instalments. The employers will also get incentives by getting an amount of Rs 3,000 per month for each additional and sustained employment generated, he said. For the manufacturing sector, the benefits will be extended by two years, he said.

Chinese Techies Return, But Apple's
iPhone 17 Plan Remains Unharmd

Press Trust Of India

NEW DELHI- The return of Chinese technology professionals from an Apple vendor's facility will have no impact on the production of the upcoming iPhone 17, sources aware of the development said on Tuesday. iPhone maker Apple continues to be on track to scale up production in India, sources said. According to the sources, Apple vendors in India, Foxconn and Tata Electronics, have also seen easing of capital goods sourcing from China. These capital goods are critical for the production of iPhones. "The return of Chinese professionals from Foxconn has had no impact on iPhone production. The production of iPhone 17 in India will be as per schedule," a source aware of the development on iPhone production told PTI. A query sent to Apple, Foxconn and Tata Electronics did not elicit any response on the matter. Multiple sources have shared that hundreds of Chinese professionals working at Foxconn India units have returned to China in the last two months. According to sources, these engineers were handling assembly lines, factory design and also involved in training talents to handle tools and machines for iPhone production. Another source said that there has been an easing of the supply of capital goods from China as well for iPhones.



EPFO To Credit FY25 Interest
Into Members' Account This
Week: Mandaviya

Press Trust Of India

NEW DELHI- Labour Minister Mansukh Mandaviya on Tuesday said the retirement fund body will complete the process of crediting 8.25 per cent interest for FY25 into members' accounts this week. The interest amount is credited into the EPF members' accounts every year by the Employees' Provident Fund Organisation (EPFO) after ratification of the interest rate by the central government.

"This year, the annual account updation had to be done for 13.88 lakh establishments having 33.56 crore member accounts, out of which till 8th July, interest has been credited in 32.39 crore member accounts of 13.86 lakh establishments. "This translates into completion of annual accounts updation for 99.9 per cent of the establishments and 96.51 per cent of the Member Accounts," the minister said while talking to reporters. For the current year (2024-25), the approval of the central government for crediting of interest at the rate of 8.25 per cent on EPF accumulations came on May 22, 2025. Accordingly, preparatory activities were immediately undertaken, and annual accounts updation commenced from the night of June 6, 2025, he stated. The minister noted that in 2023-24, the process of crediting the interest to members' accounts commenced in Au-

gust and was completed in December. The process has now been optimised for faster processing, due to which the entire exercise has mostly been completed in June itself, he pointed out. It is expected that the annual accounts in respect of such remaining establishments will also be completed within this week, he stated. EPFO, on February 28, had decided to retain the interest rate of 8.25 per cent on employees' provident fund (EPF) deposits for the financial year 2024-25, equal to the rate provided in the preceding fiscal. The approved rate of interest for 2024-25 was sent for the concurrence of the Ministry of Finance. The decision on interest rate was taken at the 237th meeting of the Central Board of Trustees of the EPFO, chaired by Mandaviya in New Delhi on February 28. Compared to many fixed-income instruments, EPF offers relatively higher and stable returns, ensuring steady growth on post-retirement savings. In February 2024, the EPFO increased the interest rate marginally to 8.25 per cent for 2023-24, from 8.15 per cent in 2022-23. In March 2022, EPFO had lowered the interest on EPF for 2021-22 to an over four-decade low of 8.1 per cent from 8.5 per cent in 2020-21. The 8.10 per cent rate of interest on EPF for 2020-21 was the lowest since 1977-78, when it stood at 8 per cent.



Food Safety Connect App on all consumer-facing documents. E-commerce entities were told to disclose details of all warehouses and storage facilities linked to their operations on the FoSCoS portal. The possibility of displaying the "Date of Expiry/Use By" for food products at the consumer interface was also discussed. Rao instructed all e-commerce platforms to maintain strict adherence to hygiene and food safety protocols across all their warehouses and storage facilities. All food handlers involved in the process, including e-commerce personnel, must undergo compulsory FSSAI FoSTaC (Food Safety Training & Certification) training in hygiene protocols. Platforms are required to share their train-

Anti-Constitutional: Dr Farooq On Revision Of Electoral Rolls In Bihar



Press Trust Of India

Srinagar: National Conference president Farooq Abdullah on Tuesday termed as "anti-Constitutional" the decision of the Election Commission to undertake special intensive revision of electoral rolls in poll-bound Bihar.

"More than 1.50 crore Biharis are working outside their state. How will they fill the form (for enrolment)? How will they vote? Where will they get the certificates for their deceased parents?" Abdullah asked.

The former chief minister of Jammu and Kashmir was talking to reporters at Kulgam where he had gone to attend a party event.

"When the Constitution was framed by B R Ambedkar, everyone had a right to vote. Then it was amended to give voting rights to 18 year olds and above. Today, they (ECI) has brought a new law which is against the Constitution. They are trying to please their master. To please their master, they are willing to sacrifice everything," he added.

Abdullah said there was a need to wake up to these "machinations" as it was not acceptable to the people of India.

"Wake up! Regrettably, I say that it is not acceptable to people of India. If they push it through, then there will be an agitation to save the Constitution and it will be bigger than earlier agitation. May Allah grant them wisdom to safeguard the Constitution," he added.

The Election Commission on June 24 issued instructions to carry out a special intensive revision (SIR) of electoral rolls in Bihar, apparently to weed out ineligible names and ensure only eligible citizens are included in the electoral roll. The last such revision in Bihar was conducted in 2003.

According to the EC, the exercise was necessitated by rapid urbanisation, frequent migration, young citizens becoming eligible to vote, non-reporting of deaths, and inclusion of the names of foreign illegal immigrants.

Elections in Bihar are due later this year.

E-Comm Platforms, Online Payments Services Being Abused For Terror Financing: FATF

Press Trust Of India

New Delhi, July 8: Global terror financing watchdog FATF on Tuesday cited the February 2019 Pulwama terror attack, which killed 40 CRPF personnel, and the 2022 Gorakhnath Temple incident to say that e-commerce platforms and online payment services are being misused for terror financing.

In its 'Comprehensive Update on Terrorist Financing Risks', the FATF also flagged 'state sponsorship of terrorism' and said a variety of publicly available sources of information and delegations' inputs to this report indicate that "certain terrorist organisations have been and continue to receive financial and other forms of support from several national governments".

"Delegations reported on this trend by referring to the use of state sponsorship for TF (terror financing) either as fundraising technique or as part of the financial management strategy of the certain organisations engaging in terrorist acts. Several forms of support have been reported, including direct financial support, logistical and material support, or the provision of training," the Financial Action Task Force (FATF) said.

In June, the FATF, while condemning the April 2025, Pahalagam terror attack, in which 26 people killed, and saying such attacks would not have been possible without financial support, had said it would come out with a 'comprehensive analysis of terrorist financing', compiling cases provided by its global network consisting 200



jurisdictions.

Giving the case study of use of e-commerce platform for procurement of materials for terrorist attack in India, the FATF said a key component of the improvised explosive device used in the attack — aluminum powder — was procured through the EPOM Amazon. This material was used to enhance the impact of the blast.

In February 2019, a suicide bombing targeted a convoy of Indian Security forces in Pulwama in Jammu & Kashmir, resulting in the deaths of 40 soldiers. India's authorities concluded that the attack was orchestrated by Jaish-e-Mohammed (JeM).

As a result of the investigation, 19 individuals were charged under relevant provisions of the Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act, including sections related to TF. Among those charged were seven foreign nationals, including the suicide bomber. LEAs also recovered moveable and immovable assets connected to the attack, such as vehicles and terrorist hideouts.

Indian authorities have repeatedly highlighted Pakistan's persistent support for terrorism and its funnelling of multi-lateral funds for arms

procurement. India has consistently held that Pakistan has given safe haven to designated terrorists and according to sources, India views that such action by Pakistan warrants that the country be put in the "grey list" of the FATF.

The FATF report flagged that terrorists have been abusing e-commerce platforms and online market-places and said terrorists have used such platforms for their operational procurement (equipment, weapons, chemicals, 3D-printing material).

EPOMs can also be used by terrorists to sell items to finance their projects and operations, including lower value items that were previously not in demand.

"EPOMs can be used for fund-moving purpose inspired by trade-based money laundering schemes. Traded goods can indeed offer disguise to value being transferred from an accomplice to another member of the network. In such scheme, the first actor would purchase items, send them to his accomplice through an EPOM, for the latter to sell items in another jurisdiction and use profit to finance terrorism," the FATF said.

The FATF in its update on TF risks also highlighted the methods used to raise, move, and manage funds

and other assets for terrorist financing purposes and said online fund transfers using payment services platform offer less traceability and transparency compared to wire-transfer, making it harder to clearly identify initiators and recipients of transfers.

Giving a case study on the use of online payment service and VPNs to fund lone actor terrorist act, the FATF cited the April 3, 2022, Gorakhnath Temple attempted breach incident wherein an individual, influenced by Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant (ISIL) ideology, attacked security personnel leading to immediate arrest.

The financial investigation revealed that the individual transferred Rs 669,841 (USD 7,685) via PayPal to foreign countries in support of ISIL, using international third-party transactions and using VPN services to obscure the IP address. He also received Rs 10,323.35 (USD 188) from a foreign source.

Further financial scrutiny uncovered that the accused had made a payment to a VPN provider through his bank account to secure these services. A comprehensive analysis of the accused's PayPal transactions, obtained via email, indicated that about 44 international third-party transactions totalling Rs 669,841 (approximately USD 7,736) had been made to foreign accounts. Additionally, the accused received funds from a foreign account through PayPal.

The investigation also uncovered that the accused had sent money to multiple individuals identified as ISIL followers in foreign jurisdictions to support terrorist activities.

GMC Srinagar Hosts Multidisciplinary CME On Obstetric Sepsis

Observer News Service

Srinagar: The Department of Obstetrics and Gynaecology at Government Lal Ded Hospital, GMC Srinagar, on Monday organised a Continuing Medical Education (CME) programme titled "Obstetric Sepsis – Fate or Failure to Act", drawing attention to one of the leading causes of maternal mortality.

The CME was formally inaugurated by Principal GMC Srinagar, Prof. Iffat Hassan Shah, who congratulated the organisers for curating a multidisciplinary platform to deliberate on a topic of vital clinical significance. The academic initiative was conceptualised under the guidance and vision of Prof. Syed Masuma Rizvi, HoD at Lal Ded Hospital.

Led by Prof. Samina Sultana,

Dr. Sabahat Rasool, Dr. Irshad, and their dedicated team, the CME featured in-depth academic sessions focusing on obstetric sepsis, delays in care, global health disparities, and the way forward to improve maternal outcomes.

The event brought together a stellar panel of experts, including obstetricians, intensivists, anaesthesiologists, microbiologists, radiologists, nephrologists, gastroenterologists, and infectious disease specialists from SKIMS, making it a truly interdisciplinary effort.

One of the key highlights of the programme was a thought-provoking keynote lecture delivered by Prof. (Dr.) Ajaz Nabi Koul. Engaging panel discussions on obstetric sepsis by Dr. Sabahat Rasool further enriched the discourse.

House Committee On JJM Holds 4th Meet At Srinagar

Observer News Service

Srinagar: The House Committee on Jal Jeevan Mission (JJM) today held its fourth meeting at Legislative Assembly Complex, Srinagar.

The meeting was chaired by Committee Chairman Justice (Retd.) Hasnain Masoodi and attended by members Mohammad Yousuf Tarigami, Ali Mohammad Dar, Altaf Ahmad Wani, Aijaz Ahmad Jan, Ranbir Singh Pathania, Tanvir Sadiq, Javaid Riyaz (Bedar), Muzaffar Iqbal Khan, Rafiq Ahmad Naik and Arjun Singh Raju.

Additional Chief Secretary, Jal Shakti department, Shaleen Kabra; Mission Director JJM; Chief Engineer PHE Jammu/

Kashmir and other senior officers of the department were present in the meeting.

Speaking during the meeting, the Chairman underscored that this Committee has been given an important assignment to look into alleged irregularities in implementation of JJM, a flagship initiative aimed to provide adequate and safe drinking water to the public.

The Chairman also called upon the members of the Committee to conduct field visits of districts in order to gather on ground assessment of various works being executed under JJM.

The members of the Committee, during the meeting, also spoke on different aspects of the JJM.

CONTD. FROM FRONT PAGE

Kashmir Schools

resume classes, and more so, the revised early morning schedule has drawn mixed reactions from parents and students

Education Minister Sakina Masood Itoo had announced that schools within municipal limits would operate from 7:30 a.m. to 11:30 a.m., and those in other areas from 8:00 a.m. to 12 noon. She also introduced two more online classes after a one-hour break to compensate for reduced physical hours.

But not everyone is convinced.

"My son studies in sixth standard and he couldn't wake up in the morning," said Asiya Jan, a parent from Srinagar. "He resisted going to school at that hour. I think this schedule is not suited for all children and should be changed immediately."

Another parent, Abdul Hameed, said his wife had to take a day off from work just to receive their child from school. "The heatwave is expected to ease soon. Until then, why not stick to online classes? It's more practical and safer," he said.

On the other hand, some students and parents defended the new schedule, citing academic urgency. "With annual exams now shifted to November-December, there's little time left to finish the syllabus," said a private school student. "It's essential to have regular classes."

A father from Anantnag agreed. "We can endure a few weeks of inconvenience if it helps our children academically. We should support the system for their future."

Students, too, are voicing frustration. "Let me speak openly and honestly, I didn't like it," said one student. "We come so early in the morning, then go home, and soon after that we have online classes," a student from Srinagar said.

"Our school is so far, students come from places like Budgam and other areas. It takes at least an hour to reach home due to traffic. And then they are expected to log into online classes right after that — how is that possible?"

Responding to the feedback, Minister Itoo acknowledged receiving calls and concerns from various quarters. "The school timing isn't final. If there's a need, we will revise it," she said. "But with the new academic calendar, completing the syllabus on time is our top priority."

Timing Not Final,

According to an education department order, the timings for schools falling within the municipal limits of Srinagar will be from 7:30 am to 11:30 am and the timings for those outside the Srinagar municipal limits will be 8 am to 12 noon.

Prior to the summer break, the schools started around 9 am.

The revised timings evoked a sharp reaction from many quarters, including parents. Opposition leaders also questioned the practicality of the move.

"(I have) received many calls (over the change in school timings). I want to say that these (revised school timings) are not final. If we feel that there is a need to make changes in the timings, then we can do it," Itoo told reporters in south Kashmir's Kulgam district.

In case there is some problem with the timings, adjustments can be made. People and students need not worry, she said.

Itoo said the government wants children to study as examinations are approaching.

"We have the November session and we want them to complete their studies. The endeavour behind reopening the schools after vacations and changing the timings is that the students should complete their syllabus because... examinations are in October," she said.

"We want the students from J&K to study and excel," the minister said.

It is not clear how long the revised school timings -- aimed at countering the heatwave -- will remain in place.

Heavy rains significantly brought down the temperature in Kashmir on Monday. The weather department has forecast more rain over the next 48 hours.

On June 21, authorities in Kashmir announced a 15-day summer break -- from June 23 to July 7 -- for all schools across the valley due to the soaring temperatures.

Street Protests

every corner of the Union Territory.

"We have ensured that tourism transforms lives at the grassroots level. The people of J&K and their warm hospitality make this region a truly fascinating destination," Sinha noted.

He described Jammu and Kashmir as a "living canvas of natural beauty, spirituality and peace" blessed with snow-capped peaks, shimmering lakes, rolling meadows, apple orchards, and historic temples.

Recalling the G20 Tourism Working Group meeting held in Srinagar last year, the LG said it was a defining moment in J&K's journey that helped position the UT as a rising brand in the global tourism sector. He said the successful hosting of major national and international events thereafter has showcased Jammu and Kashmir as a hub for luxury tourism, film shoots, entertainment, and global engagement.

Reiterating the administration's commitment to sustainable tourism, LG Sinha said the UT is implementing the SPREAD initiative—Strategic Promotion and Revamping of Emerging Alternate Destinations—to decongest popular sites and promote lesser-known but equally beautiful areas.

"Our aim is to bring nine emerging destinations onto the national and international tourism map and generate employment for at least 5 lakh people in the first year. These destinations will attract high-value tourists while reducing environmental stress on existing circuits," he said.

The LG also revealed that the administration is exploring the development of a two-phase ropeway to the revered Shri Amarnath Ji Shrine to assist elderly pilgrims and persons with disabilities (divyangans).

"Development of the tourism sector is only possible in a peaceful and secure environment," Sinha stressed. "While security forces have a huge role in ending terrorism, the role of society is no less important. Terrorists' attempts to draw sustenance from society must

be foiled."

With a view to boost high-value tourism and create sustainable destinations, LG Sinha announced the development of a major tourism infrastructure project in Srinagar. "A 146-acre land parcel at Tatoo Ground, being developed by the Government of India will soon become a global tourist hub. I am confident that once this project is completed, Kashmir will attract more tourists than even Davos," he asserted.

Among those present at the conference were Union Secretary for Tourism V. Vidyavathi; Additional Secretary & Director General, Tourism, Suman Billa; Senior Economic Advisor Gyan Bhushan; and Joint Secretary, MHA, Praveen Kumar Rai, along with tourism secretaries and officials from across Union Territories.

TB Free J&K

of various forms of media for generating awareness about all the aspects of TB. He also exhorted the Health Department to ensure that its field functionaries work tirelessly for the success of the programme. This must include close monitoring of all TB patients so that they regularly consume prescribed medicines and do not become drug resistant. Use of IEC in the form of daily SMS and phone calls to the patients for ensuring that they do not miss their daily dose of medicine, was also stressed upon.

LG asked the Health Department to make all efforts to ensure the availability of diagnostic machines including CBNAAT and TrueNat across the length and breadth of the UT.

"This would go a long way in increasing the testing of patients and screening of the population with the aim of achieving TB Mukt J&K and TB Mukt Bharat at the earliest," the Lieutenant Governor said.

LG asked Deputy Commissioners to broaden the IEC and awareness campaigns and take onboard the religious leaders, healthcare professionals, sportspersons, prominent citizens, Self-Help Groups and Social organisations to reduce stigma associated with tuberculosis.

He further directed for mapping of vulnerable populations through screening and testing on priority, enhancing Diagnostics, Treatment, and promoting Early Diagnosis. People should be encouraged to register themselves as Nikshay Mitras, he added.

Haj 2026 Applications

of the pilgrim will attract penalties and may result in financial loss to the applicant. Pilgrims are therefore advised to apply only after careful consideration of their preparedness and commitment to undertake the pilgrimage, it reads.

Govt Issues

valid proof by July 15. Failing that, formal eviction will be initiated under the J&K Public Premises (Eviction of Unauthorised Occupants) Act, 1988.

Amarnath Yatra

the twin base camps in Kashmir.

So far, 4,05,817 pilgrims have registered for the ongoing Yatra. Authorities have reported

four casualties since the pilgrimage began, mostly due to health complications such as cardiac arrest linked to low oxygen levels at higher altitudes.

Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha acknowledged the large turnout, stating on social media platform X. "The journey of faith, holy Shri Amarnath Ji Yatra has surpassed 1 lakh pilgrims within the first six days of pilgrimage.

The post further stated, "The spiritual festivity and Yatra is continuing smoothly on both the Pahalagam and Baltal routes and expected to draw more devotees in the days to come."

Meanwhile, Director General of Police (DGP) J&K, Nalin Prabhat, carried out a detailed security review along the Baltal axis on Tuesday. Accompanied by senior police officials, the DGP evaluated the deployment and preparedness of forces along the Yatra route. The security and logistical arrangements at key camps including Shadipora, Manigam, and Baltal were also reviewed.

The Amarnath Yatra began on July 3 and is scheduled to conclude on August 9.

Key Govt Portals

and Kashmir as a safe and attractive destination for travelers.

"The idea is to assure tourists and travel operators that Jammu and Kashmir is open, safe, and welcoming," one official said, adding that Bengal remains a significant market for Kashmir's tourism sector.

The state government has recently ramped up efforts to boost the tourism economy, with campaigns, roadshows, and partnerships across several Indian states. (KINS)

HC Upholds

Committee."

The court's observation followed a "feeble argument" raised by the counsel appearing for the selected candidates that similar selections undertaken in other Districts were not scrapped by the Government.

"There is no material placed before us with regard to other Districts. Besides, it was also brought to our notice that in other Districts, not only the selection process stood concluded but the candidates selected too had been appointed."

The Chief Education Officer, Budgam Vide notification on 5 February 2014 had invited applications to fill up Class IV vacancies in the School Education Department in the central Kashmir district. As per the eligibility criteria, minimum qualification of 10th Pass and maximum of 10+2 was provided and that no additional weightage shall be given to any candidate for higher qualification in terms of SRO 99 of 2008.

However, it came to the notice of the government that the Selection Committee did not conduct the selection process as per the conditions notified in the advertisement notification and altered the criteria. Subsequently an inquiry committee was set up and based on its report, the government said that it withdrew the entire selection process.

Feeling aggrieved, the candidates who had

Set To Return, Bumrah Has Extensive Session At India Nets

Press Trust of India

LONDON: Jasprit Bumrah looked all set for a return to action as India's pace spearhead had an extensive net session ahead of the Lord's Test, bowling for roughly 45 minutes before switching focus to his batting against left-arm spin and throwdowns.

Captain Shubman Gill had made it clear at Edgbaston that Bumrah will be back in action after missing the second Test due to workload management.

In the team's first session ahead of the third Test, Bumrah seemed to be good spirits, constantly chatting with fellow teammates and at times with the travelling Indian media.

In all likelihood, Prasidh Krishna will make way for Bumrah in the playing XI.

Bumrah gradually bowled full tilt in the session but someone who worked even harder was left-arm pacer Arshdeep Singh, who ran in for close to an hour.

With the pitch expected to post a tougher challenge to the batters, it remains to be seen if India stick to the same XI of Edgbaston that included

two spinners and three pacers with Nitish Reddy being the fourth pace option.

Among the players who were not part of the session were Gill, KL Rahul, Yashasvi Jaiswal, Rishabh Pant, Akash Deep and Mohammed Siraj.

Having played the first two games, Siraj has bowled the most number of overs among Indian pacers.

Though he always gives his 100 per cent on the field, India batting coach Sitanshu Kotak said his workload will be managed at some point.

"The workload management is not only for Bumrah. Every bowler's fitness, every bowler's issues are different. But, I think, there is enough rest in between. After this match, there is a turnaround (long gap). But, Siraj is someone who bowls a lot.

"So, his workload management depends on how much load he is with red ball before coming into the series. So, obviously, the bowling coach and our SNC will keep a track on that," said Kotak.

Among the batters, Karun Nair, who is yet to fire in the series, and Sai Sudharsan, bat-

ted for long.

Kotak Says Lord's Wicket Will Be Challenging

India batting coach Sitanshu Kotak is expecting the pitch for the Lord's Test to be much more challenging for the batters than the flat tracks of first two games but as long his batters don't play "undue shots", it should not be a problem.

The wicket two days before the game had plenty of grass, some of it would be shaved on the eve of the match.

"There is a little green in the wicket, which we saw in the last two matches, it is more than that. But tomorrow, the last cutting they do the day before the match, after that we can talk," Kotak said on Tuesday.

"And generally a Lord's... The scores of the first and second innings are comparatively low. So, we can expect that it will be helpful for bowlers.

"For the batsmen, the same thing, I believe, is the mindset. Spending time on the wickets is the best friend you can have. The more time you spend on the wicket, the more you will adjust to it."



Sports Minister Launches Kashmir Super League 2025 In Srinagar

Observer News Service

SRINAGAR: Minister for Youth Services and Sports Satish Sharma launched Kashmir Super Football League 2025 on Tuesday besides unveiling the tournament trophy and official jerseys.

The launch event, held with great enthusiasm at Hotel Raddison in Srinagar, marks a significant milestone in the sporting calendar of J&K.

Commissioner Secretary Youth Services and Sports Sarmad Hafiz; Secretary J&K Sports Council Nuzhat Gul; Chief Sports Officer Annisa Nabi; senior officers of Sports Council, football veterans and legends of J&K, coaches, participating teams and sports enthusiasts were present on the occasion.

Speaking at the event, Satish Sharma extended heartfelt congratulations to the Sports Department, Sports Council and other

stakeholders for their tireless efforts in promoting sporting activities and building infrastructure across the region.

The Minister highlighted the rich legacy of sports in Kashmir, stating, "Kashmir has always been home to unique sporting talent. It is heartening to see initiatives like the Kashmir Super League reviving and celebrating that culture in a structured and professional manner."

Satish Sharma emphasized that sports is a powerful tool to fight against drug abuse and other social evils.

Reaffirming the commitment of the Omar Abdullah-led Government, the Minister said that the administration is focused on upgrading the sports infrastructure, expanding outreach to rural and border areas and creating sustainable platforms for youth engagement through leagues, tournaments and

grassroots programs.

With six teams participating in the Kashmir Super League 2025, the tournament promises to be a celebration of talent, spirit and unity.

Commissioner Secretary Youth Services and Sports highlighted the importance of conducting such types of sports activities that provide a platform to young and aspiring sportspersons. He said that leagues provide requisite exposure to footballers besides polishing their talent.

Secretary Sports Council, while speaking on the occasion, gave an overview of the sports activities being undertaken by the council. She also gave a brief about the Super League.

The event drew wide public attention, with enthusiastic participation from football lovers, athletes and youth clubs, reflecting the growing popularity of football in the region.



SA Crush Zimbabwe In Heaviest Innings Defeat In 20 Years



AP

BULAWAYO (ZIMBABWE): Wiaan Mulder suitably took the last catch for South Africa to hand Zimbabwe its heaviest innings defeat in 20 years and clean sweep their two-test series on Tuesday.

The recently crowned world test champion Proteas won the second test by an innings and 236 runs inside three days at Queens Sports Club.

South Africa's winning streak was extended to a new record of 10 tests.

Zimbabwe was dismissed for 170 in 43 overs on Monday and, forced to follow on, succumbed on 220 in 78 overs on Tuesday afternoon.

Zimbabwe's match total of 390 runs was just 23 more than Mulder made on his own in his first test as captain in the absence of the injured Temba Bavuma and Keshav Maharaj.

His record-setting 367 not out, the all-time fifth highest individual score, propelled South Africa to 626-5 declared. In a dream game for the allrounder, he also took three wickets and three catches. Mulder was named the player of the

match and series.

Zimbabwe started the day on 51-1 and lost two wickets in the morning, including the dangerous Sean Williams, who tried to block Mulder and lost his off stump on 11.

Before lunch, Nick Welch achieved his third 50 in his fifth test but was out soon after the break for 55 to a slip catch by Mulder off slow left-armer Senuran Muthusamy.

Welch's wicket began a slow collapse of seven wickets for 67 runs in 28 overs, highlighted by captain Craig Ervine's 95-ball resistance for 49.

Corbin Bosch took 4-38, fellow pacer Codi Yusuf 2-38 and Muthusamy 3-77.

Zimbabwe's winless streak in Bulawayo was stretched to 22 tests, 17 of them losses, since 2001.

The series marked South Africa's first test tour in 11 years to its neighbor but the games were not counted in the World Test Championship as Zimbabwe was not in the WTC.

South Africa is hanging around to play Zimbabwe and New Zealand in a Twenty20 tri-series from Monday.

AIFF Appoints Normalisation Committee For JKFA

The All India Football Federation (AIFF) has officially constituted a Normalisation Committee to restore transparent governance and democratic functioning within the J&K Football Association (JKFA). This landmark decision marks a significant step toward revitalizing the football ecosystem in the region.

The JKFA has welcomed this progressive move by the AIFF, which reflects a shared commitment to clean administration, accountability and the long-term development of football in J&K.

Under the supervision of the Normalisation Committee—likely to function under the guidance of retired High Court judges and independent observers—the long-overdue JKFA elections are expected to be conducted in the near future in a fair and transparent manner.

This initiative not only sets the stage for restoring credibility in football governance but also ensures that the interests of players, coaches, clubs, and stakeholders are protected through a lawful and democratic process. (Observer News Service)

Injured Rauf, Shadab To Miss T20 Series v BAN

Pakistan fast bowler Haris Rauf and allrounder Shadab Khan were injured and will miss the Twenty20 series in Bangladesh this month.

Rauf injured a hamstring in Major League Cricket in the United States last week, and Shadab recently underwent shoulder surgery.

Uncapped fast bowlers Ahmed Danial and Salman Mirza were picked in a 15-man squad on Tuesday to supplement Abbas Afridi and fast bowling allrounder Faheem Ashraf.

Left-arm spinner Sufiyan Muqem was also recalled after he was overlooked for the last home series against Bangladesh.

Spin allrounder Mohammad Nawaz has also made his way back into the national squad since last appearing in January 2024 against New Zealand, after impressive performance in the Pakistan Super League.

The three-match T20 series will be played in Mirpur from July 20-24.

Pakistan: Salman Agha (captain), Abrar Ahmed, Ahmed Daniyal, Faheem Ashraf, Fakhar Zaman, Hassan Nawaz, Hussain Talat, Khushdil Shah, Abbas Afridi, Mohammad Haris, Mohammad Nawaz, Sahibzada Farhan, Saim Ayub, Salman Mirza, Sufiyan Muqem. (AP)

Diogo Jota Was Driving Above The Speed Limit



Spanish police believe Liverpool player Diogo Jota was driving over the speed limit when he and his brother died in a car crash last week.

Spain's Civil Guard said on Tuesday that while their investigation into the cause of the crash last Thursday continues, they believe Jota was driving too fast when the Lamborghini veered off course after a tire burst.

Previously, the police had not said if Jota or his brother André Silva were driving. On Tuesday they said that it appeared Jota was.

The siblings died in the car when it burst into flames on an isolated section of highway early in the morning. Portuguese media reported Jota was heading to the northern Spanish city of Santander to take a ferry to England where he would rejoin Liverpool after being advised not to fly following a recent lung procedure. Their funeral was held in Portugal on Saturday. (AP)

Mbappé Drops Harassment Case Against PSG

Kylian Mbappé has dropped the legal proceedings he started this year against Paris Saint-Germain for moral harassment, a person with knowledge of the situation told the Associated Press.

The Paris prosecutor's office last month said Mbappé accused the club in a legal filing, and opened an investigation. A person close to the France captain said on Tuesday that Mbappé's decision to end that legal procedure was linked to a desire for reconciliation with his former club.

The person was not authorized to speak publicly in line with the practice of Mbappé's entourage.

The France captain is at odds with his former club, arguing PSG owes him 55 million euros (\$61 million) in unpaid wages. The person said the end of the criminal proceedings does not affect that ongoing procedure before an industrial tribunal.

Mbappé was unhappy with the way he was treated by the Ligue 1 club when he was sidelined before the 2023-24 season, following his decision not to extend his club contract. But according to his entourage, relations between Mbappé and PSG president Nasser Nasser Al-Khelaifi have been improving for several weeks.

Mbappé joined Real Madrid last summer on a free transfer after scoring a club-record 256 goals in seven years at PSG. He will face his former club in Wednesday's Club World Cup semifinal. (AP)

Tennis Players' Pressure Comparable To WC Games v Pak: Kohli

Press Trust of India

LONDON: Drawing parallels between on-field pressure situations in two vastly different games, former India captain Virat Kohli says what tennis players endure week after week can only be compared to the less frequent "intimidation and pressure" that an Indian cricketer faces in World Cup knockouts and clashes against arch foes Pakistan.

Kohli, who has retired from T20 Internationals and Tests, made the comparison after witnessing Wimbledon action with actor wife Anushka Sharma here on Monday. He was in conversation with tennis legend Vijay Amritraj during the day's proceedings.

"I think the experience (in pressure situations) can be similar. But the intimidation factor and the pressure that would replicate for us in a World Cup game, a World Cup match between India and

Pakistan or a semifinal or a final of the World Cup, your legs are shivering because of sheer pressure," Kohli said during the interview telecast on 'Star Sports'.

"But these players might be facing that from the quarterfinal onwards to the final, which I think is a lot of pressure to handle. I have a lot of respect for tennis players for playing with that composure and maintaining that level of fitness and mental toughness," added the superstar, who spends considerable time in London during his breaks from the game.

One of the all time greats in cricket, retired recently from the red-ball format with 9230 runs from 123 matches that contained 30 hundreds, Kohli said cricketers go through their own challenges on field because of the ever-evolving nature of the sport.

"Different sports have different challenges. In cricket, one of



the challenges is that you have to wait for a long period, you warm-up in the morning and then you come back and wait in the dressing room, as you don't know when you are going to bat," he said.

"Sitting there, reading the game, the situation changes so drastically. Here (in tennis) prob-

ably you have set conditions, you know what you are walking into," he added.

Kohli also feels that cricket offers less chances to stage a comeback into the match than tennis.

"One more challenge regarding my skills in cricket -- batting -- is that you have got only one chance.

You don't have much chance to make a comeback, you make one mistake and you clap for the rest of the day.

"But these guys might be down two sets and a break, but still can come back and win," he said.

The 36-year-old felt that playing in the Wimbledon Centre Court can be considered a more intimidating experience than being at a cricket stadium because of the crowd's proximity to the athletes.

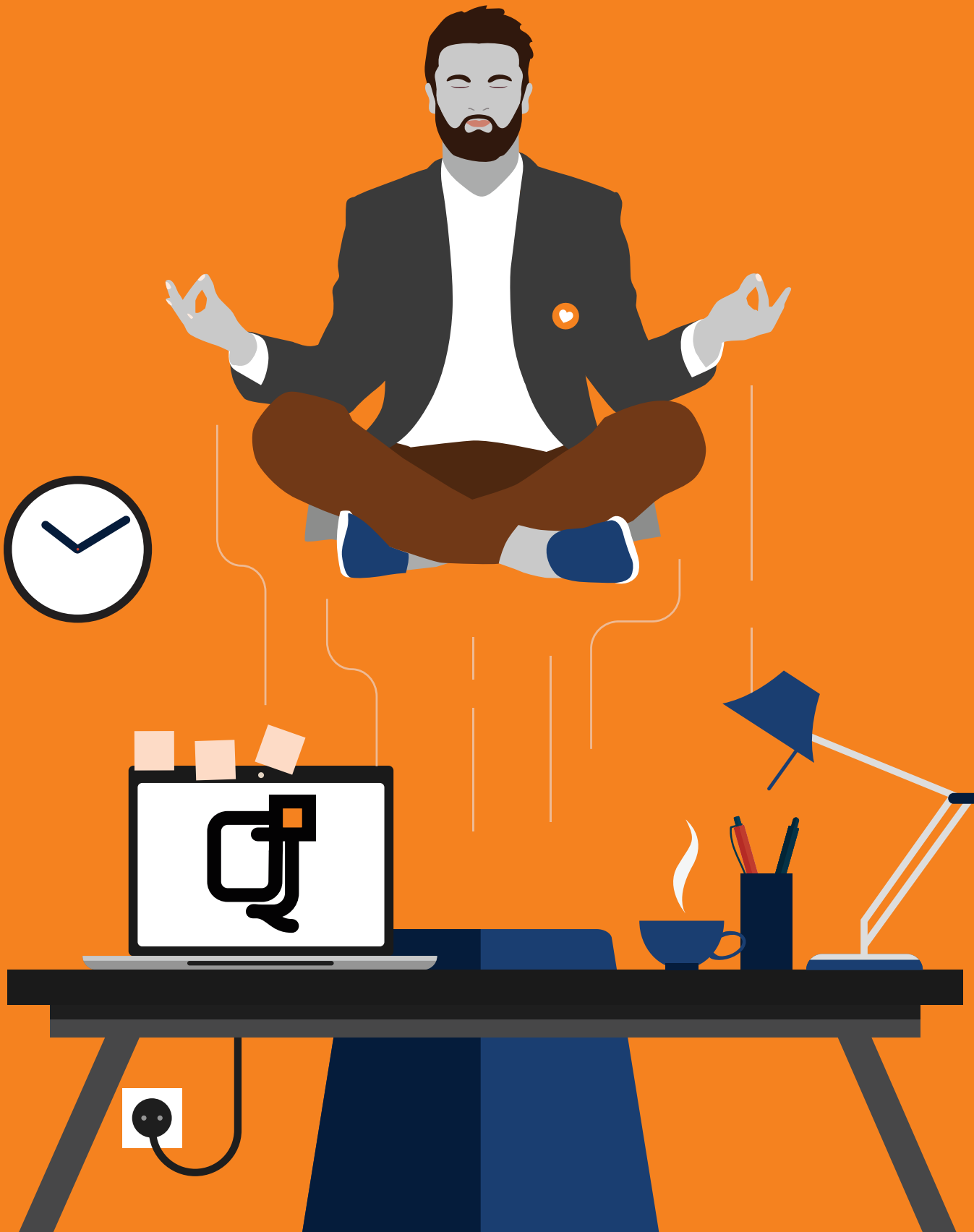
"There are such amazing stadiums to play cricket in the world, and there is a lot of pressure because there are so many people in the stadium. But I would say it was not as intimidating as the Centre Court because of the distance the people are sitting from you," he explained.

"When we are batting on the pitch, the fans are too far away, so you can get lost in your own space. You don't hear the cheers and boos..." he said.

MIRAE ASSET Sharekhan

Stress-free
Investments

Exchange Traded Funds (Shariah Based ETF)



Contact: M I Securities – 9906518342 / 9906684475

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

Registered Office: Sharekhan Limited, The Ruby, 18th Floor; 29 Senapati Ba pat Marg, Dadar (West), Mumbai 400 028, Maharashtra, India. Tel: 022-67502000. Fax No.: 022-24327343. Correspondence Address: 10th Floor, Gigaplex Bldg. No. 9, Raheja Mindspace, Airoli Knowledge Park Rd, MSEB Staff Colony, TTC Industrial Area, Airoli, Navi Mumbai, Maharashtra 400708, India. Tel: 022 -61169000/ 61150000; Fax no. 61169699. SEBI Regn. Nos.: BSE / NSE - CASH/ F&O /CD/ MCX -Commodity INZ000171337; DP: NSDL/CDSL-IN-DP-365-2018; CIN: U99999MH1995PLC087498; Sharekhan Ltd. (AMFI-registered Mutual Fund Distributor) Mutual Fund: ARN 20669 (date of initial registration: 03/07/2004, and valid till 02/07/2026); IRDAI Registered Corporate Agent (Composite) License No. CA0950, valid till June 13, 2027. PMS: INP000005786; Research Analyst: INH000006183; MCX Member id -56125. For any complaints email at igc@sharekhan.com. Compliance Officer: Mr. Joby John Meledan; email id: complianceofficer@sharekhan.com; Tel: 022-62263303. Please refer the Risk Disclosure Document issued by SEBI and go through the Rights and Obligations and Do's and Dont's issued by Stock Exchanges and Depositories before trading on the Stock Exchanges. For commodities derivatives, please note that Commodities Derivatives are highly leveraged instruments. PMS is not covered in Commodity Derivative Segment by Share khan Limited. Before investing in the asset class consider your investment objectives, level of experience and risk appetite carefully. Mutual Fund investment are subject to market risk. Read all the scheme related documents carefully before investing. Brokerage will not exceed SEBI prescribed limit. Mutual Funds are not Exchange traded products and all disputes with respect to the distribution activity would not have access to Exchange investor redressal forum or Arbitration Mechanism. The figures shown above are as of 30th November 2024. Such representations are not indicative of future results. For more details visit www.sharekhan.com. (AP Regn. Nos.: BSE-0107480196720; NSE-206970951)