

Encounter Rages In Kulgam Forests

Agencies

Srinagar: An encounter broke out between terrorists and security forces in the Akhal forest area of Devsar in south Kashmir's Kulgam district on Friday, officials said.

A top police official said that a joint team of police, Army, and CRPF launched a cordon and search operation in the area following specific inputs about the presence of terrorists.

He said during the search operation contact was established with the hiding terrorists. "The exchange of fire is going on and further details | [More on P10](#)

J&K Adds 250 MBBS Seats In 5 Years: Gol

KO Web Desk

Srinagar: The Ministry of Health and Family Welfare (MoHFW) has released the state-wise MBBS seat data for the 2024-25 academic year, showing a significant increase in Jammu & Kashmir and the first-ever medical college for Ladakh.

As per the data, Jammu & Kashmir's MBBS seat count has risen from 1,135 in 2020-21 to 1,385 in 2024-25 | [More on P10](#)

Reasi Land slide LG Mourns Death of SDM, Son

Observer News Service

Srinagar: Jammu and Kashmir Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha has expressed deep shock and grief over the loss of lives in a landslide incident in Dharmari area of Reasi district.

The deceased include Rajinder Singh, a 2011 batch JKAS officer and Sub-Divisional Magistrate (SDM) of Ramnagar in Udhampur district, and his son. Both succumbed to their injuries on the spot.

The Lieutenant | [More on P10](#)

PM, Omar Trade Praise Over Gujarat Visit, Tourism Push

Observer News Service

Gujarat: Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Thursday praised Jammu and Kashmir Chief Minister Omar Abdullah for his visit to Gujarat, stating that it sends a message of unity and encourages domestic tourism.

Modi posted on X: "Kashmir to Kevadia! Good to see Shri Omar Abdullah Ji enjoying his run at the Sabarmati Riverfront and | [More on P10](#)

HC Imposes Rs 50K Fine On 'Unscrupulous' Litigant

M Ahmad

Srinagar: While expressing its disapproval and to discourage the improper use of constitutional remedies, the High Court of J&K and Ladakh has imposed Rs 50,000 fine on a litigant for filing "unscrupulous and dishonest pleadings."

"It is trite law that a party invoking the extraordinary writ jurisdiction of

a constitutional court is expected to approach the Court with clean hands, full candour, and utmost good faith," said a Bench of Justice Wasim Sadiq Nargal while dismissing a plea seeking a declaration that the petitioner—SK Trakroo holds a valid and subsisting allotment of a plot at Rawalpura Housing Colony (now known as Sanat Nagar), | [More on P10](#)

India Refuses Trump's Bait, Brushes Off 'Pakistan Oil' Taunt

KO WEB DESK

Srinagar: A day after US President Donald Trump claimed that Pakistan possesses "massive oil reserves" and floated the idea of Islamabad eventually exporting oil to India, New Delhi responded with restraint, firmly sticking to its long-held position on strategic autonomy in energy decisions.

At a press briefing on Friday, Ministry of External Affairs (MEA) spokesperson Randhir Jaiswal declined to comment on Trump's remarks, saying tersely, "I have no comments to offer in this matter." However, in a subtle yet pointed response, Jaiswal stressed that India's energy policy is dictated solely by market realities and national interest, not external pressures or political rhetoric.



"In securing our energy needs, we are guided by what is on offer in the markets and by the prevailing global circumstances," he said.

Without naming Trump directly, Jaiswal reiterated that India's relationship with Russia is "steady and time-tested," emphasizing that its partnerships are evaluated on merit and not

influenced by "third-country perspectives."

Trump's remarks came in a social media post where he announced a new deal with Pakistan to help develop its "massive oil reserves." In the same post, he mused, "Who knows, maybe they'll be selling oil to India someday!" Despite Trump's

“IN SECURING OUR ENERGY NEEDS, WE ARE GUIDED BY WHAT IS ON OFFER in the markets and by the prevailing global circumstances.”

provocations, New Delhi maintained a composed stance. While acknowledging that the situation is under review, the MEA underlined that the India-US strategic partnership has "weathered many storms" and continues to be built on shared democratic values and converging global interests.

The measured response reflects India's broader diplomatic | [More on P10](#)

Trump Sparks South Asia Shift

Trans Asia News

India will face a 25% tariff on its exports to the US after President Donald Trump issued an executive order listing new duties Washington will impose on exports from various countries. The order, titled "Further Modifying the Reciprocal Tariff Rates," outlines tariff rates for nearly 70 nations.

According to the order, a 25% "Reciprocal Tariff, Adjusted" has been imposed on India. However, it does not mention the "penalty" Trump previously said India would face over its purchases of Russian military equipment and energy. Notably, Pakistan's tariff rate was reduced from 29% to 19%.

On Wednesday, Trump confirmed the 25% tariff on India via | [More on P10](#)

LG To Army Officers: Vow To Eliminate Every Terrorist

Observer News Service

Srinagar: In a strong re-affirmation of civil-military cooperation amid ongoing regional security challenges, Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha on Friday interacted with senior officers from the Army War College, Mhow, who are currently attending the prestigious Higher Command Course-54.

Addressing the officers and faculty at Raj Bhawan, Srinagar, LG Sinha laid emphasis on the urgent need for a coordinated, whole-of-government approach to tackle terrorism and safeguard national



interests. "We must vow to eliminate every terrorist and terrorist organisation that threatens our safety, security and prosperity," he said.

Thanking officers from all three services, he

praised their commitment to national unity and sovereignty. "I congratulate and thank the outstanding officers of the three services for keeping all citizens safe and | [More on P10](#)

J&K Bans Synthetic Colours In Ready-to-Eat Foods

Observer News Service

Srinagar: Drug Administration, Drugs & Food Control Organization, J&K Friday prohibited the use of synthetic food colours in prepared (ready-to-eat) Food Items available in markets.

As per an official statement issued here, it was informed that the recent analytical reports of National

Food Laboratory Ghaziabad has revealed that certain food samples of prepared food viz. Kabab, Biryani, Pickles and Chicken Tikka, have been found unsafe due to the presence of synthetic food colours, like Carmoisine, Tartrazine, and Erythrosine.

"In terms of Regulation 3.1.2 and Appendix A of the Food Safety and Standards | [More on P10](#)

NIT Campus Stalled On Kashmir's Karewa Farmlands

The Proposed NIT Campus In Pulwama Would Have Cleared Orchards And Pastureland. The Government Now Says No Such Plan Exists Yet.

Ansar Hussain

Srinagar: For months, residents of Newa in South Kashmir's Pulwama district watched the news with growing unease. Talk of a new National Institute of Technology (NIT) campus coming up in their backyard had stirred anxiety. Rumours swirled about bulldozers, construction crews,



and trees being cut on the ancient Karewa plateau, land that locals say

has fed their families for generations. On Friday, however,

came a breather.

At a hearing in New Delhi, officials from NIT Srinagar and the Deputy Commissioner of Pulwama told the National Green Tribunal (NGT) that no land had been acquired for the proposed campus at Qariwa Ranbirpora near Newa.

Based on their sworn affidavits, the tribunal dismissed | [More on P10](#)

Amarnath Yatra Suspended Till Aug 3

Observer News Service

Srinagar: The annual Amarnath Yatra was Friday suspended till August 3 in the interest of safety of pilgrims as "urgent repair and maintenance works" are being undertaken on the twin routes of the pilgrimage following heavy rains, officials said.

On Friday morning, while the pilgrimage remained suspended from the Pahalgam route and no fresh batch of pilgrims was allowed to proceed to the cave shrine, the yatra was allowed from the Baltal route, they said.

However, owing to heavy rains, the yatra was later suspended from the Baltal route as well, they said.

The movement of the pilgrims remained suspended from the | [More on P10](#)

60 Judge Positions Vacant In J&K

Observer News Service

Srinagar: The Government of India (GoI) on Friday informed the Lok Sabha that 60 judge positions are vacant across courts in Jammu & Kashmir as of July 2025.

According to the written reply by Minister of Law and Justice Arjun Ram Meghwal, 10 out of 25 sanctioned posts in the High Court of Jammu & Kashmir and Ladakh are vacant, while 15 judges are currently serving as of July 25, 2025.

In the District and Subordinate | [More on P10](#)

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2

OFFICE OF THE NAIB TEHSILDAR PATTAN

Sub.. Application of Gh Nabi Tantray s/o Mukhtar Ahmad Tantray R/o Shirpora bangil for issuance of legal hair certificate..

Public Notice..

IT is inform to general public that applicants son's legal hair certificate is under process in this office in this matter report Was sought to Patwari concerned which reveals that applicants son namely Bashir Ahmad Tantray s/o Gh Nabi Tantray R/o Shirpora bangil died on 23/12/2001 and left following legal hairs..

Name	Age	Relationship with the Deceased	Marital Status
GHULAM NABI TANTRAY	75	FATHER	MARRIED
SAJA BEGUM	70	MOTHER	MARRIED
RAFEEQA BEGUM	56	SISTERS	MARRIED
ABDUL RASHID TAN-TRAY	43	BROTHER	MARRIED
MEEMA BEGUM	40	SISTER	MARRIED
RIYAZ AHMAD TANTRAY	37	BROTHER	MARRIED
HAFIZA AKTHER	31	SISTER	MARRIED
JAMEELA	29	SISTER	UNMAR-RIED
RUBEENA	27	SISTER	MARRIED

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

Naib Tehsildar

fko

GOVERNMENT OF JAMMU & KASHMIR OFFICE OF THE TEHSILDAR KREERI (Executive Magistrate 1st Class)

Subject: Issuance of Registration Orders in respect of delayed Birth/ Death certificate.

PUBLIC NOTICE

The Registrar Births and Deaths (Block Development Officer Wagoora)/ chokedar hassubmitted case file pertaining to Death of MOHAMMAD AKBAR LONE S/O ABDUL RAHMAN LONE R/O KHISIPORA Tehsil KREERI Distt. Baramulla having verified the date of death as 11/10/2002 and event has been shown to be occurred at HOME for issuance of delay order .In this connection .

if anyone have any objection to the issuance of delay order of Death certificate shall present his/her claim this office within 07 days, after that no objection shall be entertaine

Executive Magistrate 1st Class

fko

PUBLIC NOTICE

I have lost Death Certificate of My Son Mohd Ashraf Wani S/O GH Mohd Wani issued on 03-02-2003.Now i am applying for its duplicate if anybody have any objection in this regard He/ She may contact concerned Authorities within seven days from the publication of this notice after that no objection will be entertained.

GH MOHD WANI
F/O LATE MOHD ASHRAF WANI
R/O KREERI BARAMULLLA

fko

BEFORE THE HON'BLE COURT OF CIVIL JUDGE SENIOR DIVISION PATTAN

In the case of:

1. Bashir Ahmad Yatoo S/o Ab Rehman Yatoo R/o Dandoora Pattan

(Caveators)

Versus

Public At Large

(Non-Caveators)

In the matter of:

Caveat application under Section 148-A CPC

1. That the Caveators reasonably apprehend that the Non-Caveators may file suit/application/appeal or other legal proceedings before this Hon'ble Court against the Caveators and may get some interim ex-parte order in their favour by misleading this Hon'ble Court.

That there exists a civil dispute between the Caveators and the Non-Caveators and as such there is every likelihood that the Non-Caveators may file any suit/application/appeal or other legal proceedings before this Hon'ble Court and may obtain an interim ex-parte order against the Caveator.

In the premises, it is as such prayed that in the event of Non-Caveators approaching this Hon'ble Court with a suit/ application/appeal or other legal proceedings, the Caveators may be given reasonable opportunity of being heard by putting him on notice before any order is passed in the matter by this Hon'ble Court.

Caveators Through Counsel

Adv Aaman Habib

FKO

PUBLIC NOTICE

I Mumtaz Ali Manhas S/O Mohd Amin Manhas R/O Chamkote Karnah Kupwara, 193225 am the transferee of Plot No. 1093 in Housing Colony Ompora Budgam and have applied for transfer of lease hold rights to free hold rights of above said plot in my favour, Objection, if any, may be conveyed to the Managing Director, J&K Housing Board, Green Belt Park, Gandhinagar, Jammu within a period of 15 days from the date of publication of this Notice. However, no objection be entertained after the expiry of the above said period.

Mumtaz Ali Manhas
S/o Mohd Amin Manhas
R/O Chamkote Karnah Kupwara 193225.
Cell:9797319536

MCB

Dated: 01/08/2025

From Office of the Advocate Muneer Ahmad Dar

In the case of

Mst Ashmi Begum W/o Abdul Rashid Bhat
D/o Late Reshi Tantray R/o Palhallan Tehsil Pattan at present
Aglar Goshbugh Tehsil Pattan

(Caveator)

V/s

Public at large

(Non-Caveators)

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

PUBLIC NOTICE

It is hereby informed to the general public that the original Death Certificate of my Brother, namely Mohammad Akbar Lone S/o, D/o, W/o Abdul Rahman Lone R/o Khisipora Kreeri has been lost and is reportedly forgotten at Police Station Kreeri.

I am applying for a duplicate Death Certificate from the competent authority. If anyone has any objection, they may kindly inform the undersigned or report to Police Station Kreeri within 7 days from the date of this notice. Failing which, no objection will be entertained in this regard.

Name of Applicant: Ashiq Hussain Lone
Relation to Deceased: Brother
Date of Death: 11-10-2002
Contact No.: 8899878017
Address: Khisipora Kreeri
Date: 30/07/2025

fko

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PUBLIC NOTICE

We, Mohd Shafi and Neelofar Reshi, are jointly holding 1000 shares of J&K Bank Ltd. under Folio No. JKB024591, where our names have inadvertently been recorded as "Mohd Shafi Reshi & Neelofar", both of which are incorrect.

Our correct names are "Mohd Shafi & Neelofar Reshi". In this regard, we are applying for correction of names under the said Folio.

If anybody has any objection in this matter, they may contact J&K Bank Corporate Headquarters within seven days from the date of publication of this notice. After that, no objection shall be entertained.

Mohd Shafi (S/o Ghulam Mohammad Reshi)
Neelofar Reshi (W/o Mohd Shafi)
Both R/o: Iqbal Colony, Indira Nagar, Srinagar

JKB

PUBLIC NOTICE

I have lost the Registration Certificate (RC) of my vehicle bearing registration number JK01AR 3884 while travelling from Hyderpora to Humhama on 25-07-2025. I have now applied for a duplicate of the same.

If anybody has any objection in this regard, he/she may file it in the office of the RTO Srinagar within seven days from the date of publication of this notice. After that, no objection shall be entertained.

Arbaan Khan
S/o Ashiq Hussain Khan
R/o House No. 39, Rehmat Abad Colony,
Hyderpora, Srinagar

RSKT

ازنیات بومی زمینگیر

عنوان:- درخواست مناجب خالد شریف ملہ ولد مرحوم شریف الدین لمساکنہ زالوردہ
برادار اجرائی ڈیپنٹ سرفیکٹ بخت خود

اشتہار ہرخاص وعام

معاملہ مندرجہ عنوان الصدر میں سائل نے ایک درخواست بغرض ڈیپنٹ سرفیکٹ پیش کی ہے جو کہ زیر کاروائی ہے اس بارے میں پٹواری حلقہ سے رپورٹ طلب کی گئی ہے جس سے عیاں ہے کہ سائل کا والد شریف الدین ملہ ولد محمد رمضان ملہ بھلا پٹن ڈسٹھ سرفیکٹ مورخہ 2-08-1998 کو فوت ہوا ہے اور موتی کے وارثان جائزہ میں ہے

خالد شریف پرمرحوم شریف الدین ملہ 28 سال زیر تعلیم پرموتی

زادہ شریف پرمرحوم شریف الدین ملہ 26 سال -- --

اسکے علاوہ موتی کی زوجہ گلشن بیگم نے اپنے شوہر کے فوتگی کے بعد دوسرے شادی کی ہے اور وہ اپنے دوسرے شوہر کے گھر میں آباد ہے اور موتی کا کے وارثان صرف خالد

شریف اولہ زادہ شریف ہے جن کی تصدیق لہر دارو چونکہ راجعہ دینا علی سے عیاں ہے۔ سرفیکٹیکٹ زیر بحث اجراء کرنے میں اگر کسی شخص کو کوئی غریبا اعتراض ہو تو وہ بعد مشتمل

اخبار سات دن کے اندر اندر اپنے غدر یا اعتراض عدالت حذا کو فٹری اوقات کے دوران پیش کریں۔ بعد گزرے میعا کو فی غدر یا اعتراض قابل قبول نہیں ہوگا۔

نائب تحصیلدار FKO

ازنیات بومی

عنوان:- درخواست مناجب محمد حسن گوجری ولد غلام الدین گوجری ساکنہ براٹ براد
عطا کی OBC تحت 176 SRO

اشتہار ہرخاص وعام

معاملہ مندرجہ عنوان الصدر میں سائل نے ایک درخواست بغرض OBC سرفیکٹکٹ بزمہ گوجری پیش کی ہے جو کہ زیر کاروائی ہے اس بارے میں پٹواری حلقہ سے رپورٹ طلب کی گئی ہے جس سے عیاں ہے کہ سائل واقعی گوجری ذات سے تعلق رکھتا ہے اور سائل براٹ

میں رہائش پذیر ہے اور کبھی بھی ترک سکونت نہیں کی ہے سائل کا کنبہ بذیل افراد پر مشتمل ہے

محمد حسین گوجری ولد غلام الدین ذرا بیوہ 37 سال

باقین بیگم زوجہ محمد حسن گھریلو کام 35 سال

محمد سعد گوجری زیر تعلیم 11 سال

زینب بیگم حسن دختر -- 09 سال

جافوہ بنت حسن دختر شہر خواہ

سائل مذکورہ OBC سرفیکٹکٹ حاصل کرنے کا خواہ ہے اور کنبہ کی مہوار آمدنی 7,000 روپے تک ہے سرفیکٹیکٹ زیر بحث اجراء کرنے میں اگر کسی شخص کو کوئی غریبا

اعتراض ہو تو وہ بعد مشتمل اخبار سات دن کے اندر اندر اپنے غدر یا اعتراض عدالت حذا کو فٹری اوقات کے دوران پیش کریں۔ بعد گزرے میعا کو فی غدر یا اعتراض قابل قبول نہیں ہوگا۔

نائب تحصیلدار FKO r

Name of Work	Advertised Cost (Rs.)	Cost of Tender Doc. (In Rs)	Time of completion	Earnest Money (in Rs)	Position of Funds
Establishment of Pasteurized compost making unit (capacity 35T) in Public Sector at Inte-grated Mushroom Development Centre (IMDC) LalMandi Srinagar under HADP	27,10,615	1100	45 days	54,212	Available with the In-tending department

Position of AA: Accorded by Director, Department of Agriculture Kashmir vide order no. 08/P&S/ of 2024. Dt:- 25.01.2024

Position of TS: Accorded by Executive Engineer, R&B Mechanical Central Kashmir vide order no. XENMC/TS/05. Dt:-30.07.2025.

The bidding document consisting of qualifying information, eligibility criteria, specifications, Bill of quantities (B.O.Q), Set of terms and conditions of contract and other details can be seen/downloaded from the Govt. website www.jktenders.gov.in as per schedule of dates given below:

S.No	Particulars	Dated			
1	Date of Issue of Tender Notice	30-07-2025			
2	Period of Downloading of bidder documents	From 31-07-2025 To 14-08-2025	(10:00 hrs)	(16:00 hrs)	
3	Bid Submission Start Date	From 31-07-2025 To 14-08-2025	(10:00 hrs)	(16:00 hrs)	
4	Bid Submission End Date	To 14-08-2025	(16:00 hrs)		
5	Date and time of opening of Technical bid (online)	15-08-2025 at/after 12:00 hrs in the office of Executive Engineer PWD(R&B) Mechanical Division, Central Kashmir.			
6.	Date and time of opening of Financial bid (online)	To be notified after technical bid evaluation is completed.			
7.	Cost of Tender documents	Rs 1100/- (Rupees Eleven Hundred Only)			
8	Tender document to be deposited at	In the shape of e-challan as per details given below Account No:- 0005010200000283. Branch Name:- Residency Road, Srinagar-0005. Branch Code:- CHINAR IFSC:- JAKAACHINAR MICR:- 190051056 or by uploading a copy of treasury challan/receipt in favour of the Executive Engineer, PW(R&B) Mechanical Division, Central Kashmir to be deposited in Major Head 0059. The Authority reserves the right to cross check genuinity of the receipt of tender documents.			
9	Earnest Money Deposit	Rs54,212 in the shape of CDR/FDR pledged to Executive Engineer, R&B Mechanical Division Central Kashmir from a Nationalized/Scheduled Bank.			

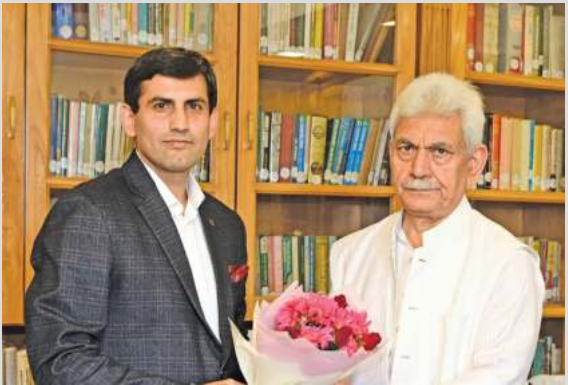
Note:- The bidder must get registered on JKPWDOMS, as no payments shall be made unless the bill is processed on JKPWDOMS in view of circular issued by Finance Department of JK UT. No payment shall be released until and unless bill is processed through JKPW-DOMS application and routed through JKPaysys. However for those bidder who are not yet registered on JKPWDOMS shall submit and undertaking that JKPWDOMS registration will be done well on time before release of payment.

Note:- The tenders should be addressed to the Executive Engineer PWD(R&B) Mechanical Division Central Kashmir. Any tender found to have been submitted by the firm by furnishing false information to the Authority shall be canceled and the firm shall be penalized as and when it comes to the notice of the Authority even during the currency of the contract. The Authority reserves the right to debar/ blacklist such firm(s).

No. XENMC/Sgr/921-26
DIPK-4616/25
Dated: 01/08/2025

Sd/-
Executive Engineer
R&B Mechanical Division
Central Kashmir

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ANUJ VAID, CHAIRMAN, J&K CHAPTER of The Institute of Company Secretaries of India (ICSI) on Friday called on Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha.

D&FCO Cracks-Down On Street Food Vendors



The inspection teams examined the raw materials, ingredients, and finished food products offered by these vendors. Food items deemed unfit for human consumption were destroyed on the spot. Vendors were directed to strictly follow Good Hygienic Practices (GHP) and were instructed not to use newspapers or non-food grade utensils for the preparation or sale of food. The department has reiterated that strict action will be taken against defaulters in accordance with the provisions of the Food Safety and Standards Act. Consumers are encouraged to report any food safety concerns or complaints by calling the toll-free helpline 104.

Capacity Building Program On Rural Enterprise Held At SKUAST-K



transformational platforms that not only enhance local livelihoods but also bridge the rural-urban divide by promoting scalable, inclusive, and sustainable enterprises. He highlighted the key components covered during the week, including branding strategies, digital onboarding, financial management, rural value chain integration, and innovative service delivery models. Dr. Shaheen also acknowledged the active participation and high enthusiasm of the trainees, noting, "the success of this programme lies in the genuine engagement of all participants and their commitment to take forward the ideas of enterprise development in their respective communities. We hope this training serves as a strong foundation for enterprise-led rural transformation."

Prof. S. H. Baba, Head of the Institute of Business and Policy Research (IBPR), Faculty of Horticulture, Sher-e-Kashmir University of Agricultural Sciences and Technology of Kashmir (SKUAST-K) in collaboration with Directorate of Horticulture Planning & Marketing, Govt of J&K, successfully concluded its one-week capacity-building programme titled "Strengthening Rural Enterprise Ecosystems through Rural Business and Service Hubs (RBSHs)" today. Held from July 28th to August 2nd, 2025, the programme brought together a diverse cohort of rural entrepreneurs, agripreneurs, development professionals, and institutional stakeholders from across the districts. The initiative aimed to enhance the managerial, operational, and digital capacities of stakeholders involved in Rural Business and Service Hubs (RBSHs), in line with the vision of sustainable rural enterprise development. The training enabled participants to conceptualize and design localized enterprise solutions, create digital business profiles, and explore collaborations with government schemes and market players. Accommodation and hospitality were arranged by IBPR for all outstation participants, ensuring a conducive environment for immersive learning.

The valedictory session witnessed enthusiastic participation and insightful deliberations, marked by reflections on the learning journey and the way forward. Prof. F. A. Shaheen, Programme Director and Professor at IBPR, delivered the opening remarks during the concluding session. He emphasized the critical role of RBSHs as

Nine-Day Chinara Book Festival To Commence In Srinagar Today



Observer News Service

SRINAGAR: The second edition of the nine-day Chinara Book Festival will commence today featuring over 200 publishers and bookstalls from across the country. Union Education Minister Dharmendra Pradhan and J-K Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha will inaugurate the festival organised by the National Book Trust from August 2-10 at the SKICC overlooking the Dal Lake.

The organisers said that following the overwhelming response to its inaugural edition last year, this year's edition promises an even more expansive celebration of literature in different languages. There will be a wider selection of books, diverse events, and participation of new literary voices at the fair, which seeks to further invigorate the reading culture across the region and provide a vibrant platform for dialogue, discovery and community engagement, they said.

Addressing a press conference here, the organisers said the nine-day festival will feature over 200 publishers and bookstalls from across India, showcasing titles in English, Hindi, Urdu, Kashmiri, and other Indian languages. From bilingual children's books and academic works to regional literature and digital content, the fair promises a rich and inclusive selection for readers of all ages, they added.

"This year's edition extends beyond a conventional book exhibition, positioning the festival as a platform for intellectual engagement, cultural dialogue, and educational enrichment, National Book Trust Director Yuvraj Malik said.

"A notable feature is the Rajtarangini Samvad, a dedicated series of workshops and panel discussions examining the historical, literary and cultural dimensions of the classical Kashmiri text.

"The festival will also feature a national exhibition on the ancient Sharda script and the first-ever Gori translation workshop, which will produce bilingual books in Hindi, Urdu, Dogri, Kashmiri and English, promoting linguistic diversity and inclusion," Malik said.

A major cultural highlight will be the Tamil-Kashmiri Samvad under the Ek Bharat Shreshtha Bharat initiative, focusing on shared cultural and spiritual traditions between the two regions, he said.

The event will have three components every day with a children activities session in the morning, book releases, author and writer interactions in the afternoon, and artistic showcases in the evening where local artistes will perform, he said.

The entry to the fair is free for all and special discounts will be offered on the purchase of books, Malik added.

The director of National Council for Promotion of Urdu Language, Shams Iqbal, said the festival is a historic initiative that will give a new dimension to the promotion of book culture in Jammu and Kashmir and foster harmony and connection among various Indian languages.

Prominent Urdu language publishers will attend the event, he added.

Dogs Create Fear On Rambagh-Mehjoor Nagar Bund

Agencies

SRINAGAR: An atmosphere of fear and anxiety grips the Rambagh-Mehjoor Nagar bund every evening, as large groups of aggressive street dogs take over the otherwise peaceful stretch, chasing pedestrians and vehicles, particularly two-wheelers, with alarming regularity.

What was once a popular walking route for residents, students, and evening joggers has now turned into a dreaded pathway after dusk. Locals say the fear of dog attacks has forced many to avoid the area altogether in the evenings.

"There are dogs everywhere you look on the bund. The moment they hear a scooter or see someone walking alone, they charge. It's frightening," said Adil Ahmad, a resident of Padshahi Bagh. "The situation gets worse after evening prayers. You feel like you are walking through a gauntlet."

Motorcyclists and cyclists, in particular, are frequently chased, often losing control or getting injured in attempts to avoid bites. "They bark and run right into your path. I have seen a rider fall trying to dodge a sudden pack attack," said Waseem Dar, a daily commuter.

Women and the elderly feel especially vulnerable. Some residents revealed they now avoid venturing out for evening prayers or groceries. "Even going to the local masjid becomes a nerve-wracking task," said Bilal Ahmed, a resident of Mehjoor Nagar.

Locals believe the unchecked increase in stray dog population is the result of poor municipal management. "The authorities have completely failed. The sterilization programme is a joke. Every month, the number of dogs seems to grow," said another resident angrily.

While dog bites and chases are being reported informally on a daily basis, no major action has yet been taken. Residents have appealed to the Srinagar Municipal Corporation and the district administration to intervene and make the area safe again immediately.

Similar reports have been reported from Jawahar Nagar, Natipora, Batamalo, Bemina, and other parts of the city. [KNT]

Scooty Rider Dies In Harwan Accident

Observer News Service

SRINAGAR: A 30-year-old man from Dara Harwan died in a road accident at Harwan market area on Friday, officials said.

Officials said that a speeding scooty overturned near Harwan market, resulting in injuries to the rider and his pillion.

He said the scooty was being driven by Bilal Ahmad Bhat, son of Mohammad Ramzan Bhat, a resident of Dara, Harwan.

"Bilal was seriously injured and was immediately shifted to SKIMS Soura for treatment. However, he succumbed to his injuries during the treatment," they said.

Meanwhile, the identity of the pillion rider is yet to be ascertained. Further details into the incident are awaited, while investigations have been taken up.


سابقہ سینئر کنسلنٹ ساکھیری اینڈ نیرو ساکھیری
گورنمنٹ ہیلتھ سروسز کشمیر

سابقہ سینئر ساکھیرسٹ
حماد میڈیکل کارپوریشن
دوحہ، قطر

ڈاکٹر امتیاز حسین منصور
ایم۔ ڈی۔ ڈی۔ اے

ماہر امراض: نفسیات، جنسیت، منشیات، سردرد، ڈپریشن، گھبراہٹ،
مرگی، جنات، بے خوابی، وہم پرستی، نسیان، شک وشبہ، گیس وغیرہ۔

* Florence hospital Chanapora, Srinagar Tuesday 11AM to 1:30PM (0194-2440760)
* Noora hospital Zainakote, HMT Thursday 11AM to 1:30PM (0194 2497600, 871390045)



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

AIRPORTS


SHIEK UL ALAM AIRPORT: 01942303311 ✈

RAILWAYS

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

HIGHWAY STATUS

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



**HIJRI
CALENDAR**
7 Safar
1447

PRAYERS

FAJR	4:06
ZUHR	12: 37
ASR	5:31
Magrib	7:35
ISHA	9:07

This Day In History

- 338 BC - Macedonian army led by Philip II defeats combined forces of Athens and Thebes in the Battle of Chaeronea, securing Macedonian hegemony in Greece and the Aegean
- 216 BC - Second Punic War: Battle of Cannae - Carthaginian army lead by Hannibal defeats numerically superior Roman army under command consuls Lucius Aemilius Paullus and Gaius Terentius Varro
- 257 - St Stephen I ends his reign as Catholic Pope
- 1057 - Frederik van Lotharingen elected as 1st Belgium Pope Stephen IX [X]
- 1100 - King William II of England (William Rufus) is killed by an arrow shot by Sir Walter Tyrell while hunting in the New Forest
- 1542 - French troops leave Flanders
- 1552 - Treaty of Passau: Emperor Charles V accepts Lutheran religion
- 1701 - Great Peace of Montreal signed between New France and North American Indian nations at urging of Huron chief Kondiaronk
- 1718 - Austrian joins Triple Alliance
- 1798 - Battle of the Nile: British Royal Navy under Admiral Horatio Nelson further decimates the French fleet
- 1858 - Government of India transferred from East India Company to the British Crown
- 1903 - Unsuccessful uprising of Macedonians against Turkey
- 1914 - Germany & Turkey sign secret treaty of alliance
- 1914 - Russian troops invade Eastern Prussia
- 1916 - World War I: Austrian sabotage causes the sinking of the Italian battleship Leonardo da Vinci in Taranto.
- 1918 - Japan announces that it is deploying troops to Siberia in the aftermath of World War I.

From KO Archives

Officer Shifted For 7th Time, Goes On Leave

Observer News Service

SRINAGAR - The principal secretary, revenue, Sonali Kumar, has proceeded on leave following the recent transfers and postings in the state administration. The high-ranking bureaucrat has been transferred for the seventh time in the changes announced yesterday.

During the two-and-a-half year tenure of the coalition government, Kumar has been shifted \$ax times from her posts.

Before the coalition government came to power, Sonali Kumar had been made the commissioner secretary, education, on May 1, 2002.

Soon after the new government took over, she was transferred to the technical education department as commissioner secretary in November 2003. In February the next year, she was transferred to industries and commerce, and four months later, in July 2003, to the higher and technical education department.

After serving on that post for one year, she was transferred again in July 2004, and made the principal secretary of the forest department. The government shifted her again in April 2005, this time to the health and medical education department.

Yesterday's revamp, which made her the principal secretary of the revenue department, was the sixth time she was transferred in 2-and-a-half years.

Fed up with the repeated transfers and postings, Sonali Kumar, has gone on leave in protest, sources told the KNS. She has asked the government to grant her leave till October.

(Kashmir Observer, 02 August, 2005)

PM Modi Seeks People's Suggestions Ahead Of I-Day Address

Press Trust Of India

New Delhi- Two weeks before delivering his 12th con-



secutive Independence Day address, Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Friday

asked people to share their thoughts on the themes and ideas they want to be reflected in his speech.

He said on X, "As we approach this year's Independence Day, I look forward to hearing from my fellow Indians! What themes or ideas would you like to see reflected in this year's Independence Day speech?"

He urged them to share their thoughts on open forums on MyGov and the NaMo App.

In his August 15 addresses, Modi covers a broad sweep of issues facing the country and often makes new announcements.

Probe Finds Cause Of Stampede at New Delhi Railway Station

Press Trust Of India

New Delhi: A big headload falling from one of the passengers triggered the New Delhi railway station stampede that killed 18 people, Railway Minister Ashwini Vaishnaw told Rajya Sabha on Friday.

The minister, in a written reply, shared the findings of the high-level committee constituted to examine the circumstances leading to the stampede on February 15.

He said there was a gradual increase of passengers, many of whom were also carrying big headloads.

Samajwadi Party MP Ramji Lal Suman asked the railway minister about the status of the report of the committee constituted to investigate the stampede and the corrective steps taken by the government.

Vaishnaw said the high-level inquiry committee has submitted its report for consideration.

"As per findings of the report, an unfortunate incident on 15.02.25 happened on foot overbridge-3 stairs connecting platform 14/15 at New Delhi railway station. On the day of the incident, sufficient crowd management protocols were in place to handle the overall volume of passengers at the station," he said.

"There was a gradual increase of passenger density on the FOB after 8.15 pm. Many of the passengers were carrying big headloads, affecting smooth movement on the FOB. There was a big headload falling from one of the passengers and the pressure was passed on to the stairs of PF 14/15 stairs, resulting in the tripping of passengers on the stairs. This led to an incident at 8.48 pm on FOB-3, which was limited to the stairs of FOB. Consequently, passengers fell on each other," he said.



Union Minister Ashwini Vaishnaw

There was a gradual increase of passenger density on the FOB after 8.15 pm. Many of the passengers were carrying big headloads, affecting smooth movement on the FOB

The minister informed the House that in the incident, 18 people lost their lives and 15 were injured.

According to Vaishnaw, an ex-gratia amount of Rs 10 lakh to the next of kin of each deceased, an amount of Rs 2.5 lakh each to the grievously injured and Rs 1 lakh each to others injured has been paid.

"Accordingly, a total amount of Rs 2.01 crore has been paid to 33 victims and their family members," Vaishnaw said.

He said the government has taken action to handle the heavy rush of passengers at stations, including the creation of permanent holding areas and access control measures — allowing passengers with confirmed tickets — at 73 identified stations, widening foot overbridges, installing CCTV cameras, developing war rooms at big stations, among others.



₹17,000-Crore Loan Fraud Probe

ED Issues Look Out Circular Against Anil Ambani

Trans Asia News

Mumbai: The Enforcement Directorate (ED) has issued a Look Out Circular (LoC) against industrialist Anil Ambani, chairman of the Anil Dhirubhai Ambani Group (ADAG), amid an ongoing probe into an alleged 17,000 crore bank loan fraud. The LoC, issued on Friday, is aimed at preventing Ambani from leaving the country without prior clearance, according to senior officials.

The central financial crime agency has also summoned Ambani for questioning on August 5 as part of its investigation into alleged fund diversion and loan misappropriation by various ADAG-linked companies.

Massive Loan Fraud, Forged Documents, and Fake Bank Guarantee

The ED alleges that multiple group companies under the ADAG umbrella—operating through the Reliance Anil Ambani Group of Associates (RAAGA)—availed large loans from a consortium of Indian banks and financial institutions, which were later misused or siphoned off. The agency suspects systematic deception involving

“The central financial crime agency has also summoned Ambani for questioning on August 5 as part of its investigation into alleged fund diversion and loan misappropriation by various ADAG-linked companies.”

fabricated bank guarantees and forged documents.

One of the most damning pieces of evidence unearthed involves a fake bank guarantee worth 68.2 crore, submitted to the Solar Energy Corporation of India (SECI) by two ADAG-affiliated firms—M/s Reliance NU BESS Limited and M/s Maharashtra Energy Generation Limited.

The guarantee was falsely presented as being issued by the State Bank of India (SBI), but it was allegedly supported by forged communications and sent from a spoofed email domain—"s-bi.co.in"—closely resembling SBI's official domain, "sbi.co.in".

The ED has sought records from the National Internet Exchange of India (NIXI) to trace the domain registration and digi-

tal trail linked to this fraudulent communication.

35 Raids Across India, 50 Companies Under Scanner

On July 24, the ED launched a nationwide crackdown, conducting searches at 35 premises connected to Reliance Group companies, individuals, and executives. The raids spanned across 50 firms and 25 people, based on a money laundering case that stemmed from a CBI FIR. These actions fall under the purview of the Prevention of Money Laundering Act (PMLA).

According to sources, multiple ADAG executives have already been questioned, and forensic analysis of their transactions is ongoing.

Apart from the PMLA probe, Anil Ambani is also facing a separate investigation under the Foreign Exchange Management Act (FEMA) for alleged violations of foreign exchange laws.

Officials said early findings indicate a "well-planned scheme to siphon public funds" by misleading lenders and investors. The ED suspects the creation of shell entities and circular transactions designed to obscure money trails.

White House: Trump Ended Conflicts Like India-Pak, Deserves Nobel

Press Trust Of India

New York/Washington- Donald Trump should be awarded the Nobel Peace Prize, White House Press Secretary Karoline Leavitt has said, claiming that the US President ended several conflicts around the world including the one between India and Pakistan.

Since May 10, when Trump announced on social media that India and Pakistan had agreed to a "full and immediate" ceasefire after a "long night" of talks mediated by Washington, he has repeated his claim on several occasions that he helped settle the tensions between the two countries.

At a White House press briefing on Thursday, Leavitt

said that Trump has "now ended conflicts between Thailand and Cambodia, Israel and Iran, Rwanda and the Democratic Republic of the Congo, India and Pakistan, Serbia and Kosovo and Egypt and Ethiopia."

She said that the president has brokered, on average, about one peace deal or ceasefire per month during his six months in office.

"It's well past time that President Trump was awarded the Nobel Peace Prize," she said.

Trump has repeated his claim nearly thirty times 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 stopped the conflict.

Prime Minister Narendra Modi said in Parliament this week that no leader of any country asked India to stop Operation Sindoor.

External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar on Wednesday categorically said there was no third-party intervention in bringing about a ceasefire with Pakistan during Operation Sindoor, asserting that the halting of the military action was also not linked to trade as claimed by Trump.

Intervening in the special discussion on Operation Sindoor in the Rajya Sabha, Jaishankar said Prime Minister Modi and Trump did not have any phone calls between April 22, when the Pahalgam terror attack took place, and June 16.

Vice Presidential Election On Sep 9: EC

Press Trust Of India

New Delhi- The election for the post of Vice President will be held on September 9, the poll authority announced on Friday.

The notification for the vice presidential election will be issued on August 7 and the last date for filing nomination papers will be August 21.

The polling, if required, shall take place in room number F-101, Vasudha, on the first floor of Parliament building on September 9 between 10 am and 5 pm. The results will be announced on the same day.

The post of the vice president fell vacant after the resignation of incumbent Jagdeep Dhankhar on July 21.

The Election Commission has appointed the Rajya Sabha Secretary General as the Returning Officer and two officials of Rajya Sabha Secretariat as Assistant Returning Officers for the vice presidential election.

The Electoral College for the vice presidential election comprises members of the Lok Sabha and the Rajya Sabha. The nominated members of the Rajya Sabha too are eligible to vote in the vice presidential election.

The electoral college for the vice presidential election comprises 233 elected members of the Rajya Sabha, 12 nominated members of the Rajya Sabha and 543 members of the Lok Sabha.

There are five vacancies in the Rajya Sabha and one in the Lok Sabha, pegging the effective strength of the electoral college at 782.

The ruling NDA has a comfortable edge in the ensuing poll.

Israel Sharpens UAE Travel Warning For Citizens, Cites 'Terrorist' Threat

Al Jazeera

Jerusalem: Israel's National Security Council (NSC) has sharpened its travel warnings for Israelis visiting and staying in the United Arab Emirates, citing a heightened risk of "terrorist organisations" carrying out attacks in the Gulf State.

In a statement published on Thursday, the NSC cited a growing threat from "terrorist organisations (The Iranians, Hamas, Hezbollah and Global Jihad)" attacking Israeli targets, motivated by Israel's military operations in the Middle East.

"They are driven by heightened motivation to exact revenge following Operation Rising Lion, in addition to the anti-Israel and pro-Palestinian incitement which has intensified since the start of Operation Iron Swords, and even more so in response to Hamas' starvation campaign," it said, using the names for its military assaults on Iran and Gaza.

Israel is facing mounting international pressure over

The 543-member Lok Sabha has one vacant seat — Basirhat in West Bengal — while there are five vacancies in the 245-member Rajya Sabha.

Of the five vacancies in the Rajya Sabha, four are from Jammu and Kashmir, and one from Punjab. The seat from Punjab was vacated after AAP leader Sanjeev Arora quit following his election to the state assembly in a bypoll last month.

The effective strength of both the Houses together is 782 and the winning candidate will require 391 votes, considering that all eligible voters exercise their franchise.

In the Lok Sabha, the BJP-led NDA enjoys the support of 293 of the 542 members. The ruling alliance has the support of 129 members in the Rajya Sabha (effective strength 240), assuming that the nominated members vote in support of the NDA nominee.

The ruling alliance has the support of total 422 members.

A person cannot be elected as the vice president unless he is a citizen of India, has completed 35 years of age and is qualified for election as a member of the Rajya Sabha.

A person is also not eligible if he holds any office of profit under the government of India or a state government or any subordinate local authority.

Article 66 (1) of the Constitution provides that the vice presidential election shall be held in accordance with the system of proportional representation by means of the single transferable vote and the voting at such election shall be by secret ballot.

In this system, the elector has to mark preferences against the names of the candidates.

Gaza's ongoing starvation crisis, caused by the Israeli military's months-long blockade on aid entering the Palestinian enclave.

In 2020, the UAE became the most prominent Arab state in 30 years to establish formal ties with Israel under a United States-brokered agreement dubbed the Abraham Accords. The country's Israeli and Jewish community has grown larger and more visible in the years since the accords were signed.

But the NSC statement said "past experience" has taught Israel that "terrorist organisations often focus their efforts in neighbouring countries".

"In light of this, the NSC is reiterating the possibility that they will try to carry out attacks against Israeli and Jewish targets in the UAE, especially on Jewish holidays and Shabbat," it added.

The NSC's travel alert for the UAE — which remains unchanged at level 3 — strongly advises against non-essential travel and urges Israeli citizens to "seriously reconsider" visiting the Gulf state.

Man Kills First Wife After Secret Second Marriage, Fakes Robbery

Press Trust of India

New Delhi: In a chilling incident in Uttar Pradesh's Bareilly district, a man allegedly killed his wife at the behest of his lover and tried to pass it off as a highway robbery, police said.

Om Saran (38), the accused, has been arrested and sent to judicial custody, they said. After inconsistencies in Saran's initial statement raised red flags, his call records were checked which revealed that he was in touch with a woman named Mannat, prompting police to dig deeper, SSP (Bareilly) Anurag Arya said. The probe eventually led to the unravelling of the murder conspiracy, Arya said.

Saran, a resident of Badaun district, has been booked under Sections 103 (murder), 230 (fabricating false evidence), 238 (causing disappearance of evidence of of-

fence), and 240 (giving false information) of the Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita (BNS), ASP (South) Anshika Verma said in a late-night press briefing on Thursday. The accused initially told the police that on the night of July 31, he was returning home with his wife Amarvati on a motorcycle when they were attacked near Kanthari village by 3-4 unidentified men, who looted their cash and jewellery and fatally assaulted his wife. Saran claimed that the attackers stole Amarvati's mangalsutra, gold earrings, and about Rs 10,000 in cash before fleeing. Police registered an FIR based on Saran's written complaint. As the investigation progressed, police began to suspect Saran's version of events. Upon rigorous questioning, he admitted that he secretly married Mannat, who pressured him to eliminate his wife if he wanted to continue their relationship, the ASP said.

On July 30, Saran took Amarvati on a trip to Purnagiri as part of the plan. On their way back, he stopped at his in-laws' house in Motipur, where he borrowed a motorcycle and a sharp-edged weapon ('banka') from his brother-in-law, Bhagwandas, Verma said. He stopped the bike near a deserted spot in Kanthari village around 12:15 am, and brutally attacked Amarvati with the 'banka', killing her on the spot. To make it look like a robbery, he removed her earrings, mangalsutra and Rs 10,000 from his pocket, and concealed them in nearby bushes. He then called his brother-in-law and a friend, Anil Yadav, and arranged for an ambulance, pretending to be rushing his wife for treatment, Verma said. Police later recovered the murder weapon, and the hidden jewellery and cash based on the accused's disclosure. A mobile phone was also seized during the search, the officer said.

Beloved Children's Author Allan Ahlberg Dies At 87

Associated Press

London: British writer Allan Ahlberg, author of more than 150 children's books, including classics like "Eat Peach Pear Plum" and "The Jolly Postman," has died, his publisher said on Friday. He was 87.

Penguin Random House said Ahlberg died on Tuesday. It did not give a cause of death.

Ahlberg's books introduced generations of young children to reading through simple rhymes, sharp observation and gentle humour. Many were co-created with his illustrator wife Janet Ahlberg, who died in 1994.

"Peepo!" (1981) gave a baby's-eye-view of the world and was interactive in a delightfully analogue way, with peep-holes in the pages to spy the next scenes.

"The Jolly Postman" (1986) was even more inventive, incorporating postcards and letters in envelopes for children to engage with while they followed a letter-carrier delivering mail to fairy tale characters. Penguin Random House said it "pushed at the boundaries of what it is possible for a book to be."



Ahlberg also wrote books of jokes, including "The Ha Ha Bonk Book," and poetry for primary school-age children, including "Please Mrs Butler" and "Hear it in the Playground."

Born in 1938 and raised by adoptive parents in a working-class home in Oldbury, central England, Ahlberg worked as a "postman, plumber's mate and grave digger," according to his publisher, before becoming a teacher. He met Janet at teacher training college and the couple's first book, "Here are the Brick Street Boys," was published in 1975.

CM Omar Pays Tribute To Mahatma Gandhi At Sabarmati Ashram

Press Trust Of India

AHMEDABAD: Jammu and Kashmir Chief Minister Omar Abdullah on Friday paid tributes to Mahatma Gandhi at the Sabarmati Ashram, and said his teachings ring true even today.

Abdullah placed a khadi garland on the statue of Mahatma Gandhi and tried operating a 'charkha' or spinning wheel.

"My visit to Ahmedabad is now complete. I feel both humbled & privileged to have been shown around the Sabarmati Ashram of the Father of the Nation, Mahatma Gandhi. His teachings ring true even today & point us in the direction we should take, but seldom do," wrote Abdullah in a post on X.

In another post, he quoted Gandhi — "True democracy cannot be worked by twenty men sitting at the centre. It has to be worked from below by the people of every village".

Sabarmati Ashram, also known as Gandhi Ashram, was established by Mahatma Gandhi in Ahmedabad in 1917.

Abdullah has been in Gujarat since Wednesday for a tourism event.

Earlier on Thursday, he visited the Statue of Unity and Sardar Sarovar Dam in Narmada



district.

He also interacted with tour operators as part of his government's exercise to boost tourism in Jammu and Kashmir.

Prime Minister Narendra Modi had expressed happiness over Abdullah enjoying his visit to Gujarat and said his visit to the Statue of Unity will inspire fellow Indians to travel to different parts of the country.

In a post on X on Thursday, Modi said, "Kashmir to Kevadia! Good to see Shri Omar Abdullah Ji enjoying his run at the Sabarmati Riverfront and visiting the Statue of Unity. His visit to SoU gives an important message of unity and will inspire our fellow Indians to travel to different parts of India."

Monkey 'Invasion' Sparks Panic In Ganie Mohallah Fraw, Sumbal

Agencies

SRINAGAR: The tranquil village of Ganie Mohallah Fraw in Central Ganderbal district is grappling with a rising concern as monkeys from the nearby forest invade, prompting local residents to abandon their homes.

Over the past several years, a substantial number of these primates have infiltrated the village, seeking refuge near the power house and causing havoc in homes and fields.

Despite repeated pleas from residents to trim the overgrown vegetation around the power house, authorities have yet to take action.

The monkeys, now entrenched in the surrounding

bushes and trees, not only damage crops but also pose a threat to fruit gardens, leaving the community in constant fear.

Especially vulnerable are women, children and the elderly, who find it increasingly difficult to venture outside due to the escalating monkey population.

"We can't even step outside without fear. Our children and elders are the most vulnerable," Bilal Ahmad, a resident of Ganie Mohalla, told KNO. "We appeal to the wildlife department to take immediate action before someone gets seriously hurt."

They appealed for prompt intervention and implemented measures to control the monkey invasion, ensuring the safety and peace of this local town.

After 4 decades, KPs return To Wasak Nag Temple in Chadoora

Observer News Service

SRINAGAR: For the first time in four decades, Kashmiri Pandits performed a Hawan at the Wasak Nag Pracheen Mandir in Wagam village of Chadoora, Budgam, with full support from local Muslims.

The historic event as per KNO also saw the installation of two sacred Murtis – Mata Ganga and Wasaki Mata inside the temple, which was recently renovated by the local administration.

The Hawan marked an emotional return for the Pandit community, many of whom

were visiting their ancestral village after years of displacement. Dozens gathered at the temple and performed Hawan, offered prayers and reunited with old neighbours.

"This day is like a dream come true. Coming back to our roots and being welcomed like this fills our hearts with joy and hope," said Pandit Bablu G, one of the participants, who continuously visited the temple for a long time.

Local Muslim residents played an instrumental role, organizing logistics and ensuring a peaceful environment for the event.

Ladakh's Legal Infra Expands Slowly: GoI

Observer News Service

SRINAGAR: The Ministry of Law and Justice has acknowledged critical gaps in the judicial infrastructure of Ladakh, confirming that more than 30% of sanctioned judicial posts remain vacant and only half of the Union Territory's sub-divisions currently have functioning court infrastructure.

Responding to a question raised by MP Mohammad Haneefa in the Lok Sabha, Union Minister of Law and Justice Arjun Ram Meghwal informed that of the 10 sub-divisions in Ladakh, courts are operational in only five including Zanskari, Sankoo, Khatlasi, Nubra and Drass.

According to government data, 17 judicial officer posts have been sanc-

tioned for the region, but only 10 are currently filled.

11 court halls and four residential units are available, while four additional court halls and two residences are under construction.

Over the last five years, the Centre has released Rs 8.33 crore to Ladakh under the Centrally Sponsored Scheme (CSS) for the development of judicial infrastructure. For the year 2025-26, Rs 2 crore has been earmarked under the CSS specifically for UTs without legislatures.

To address access issues in remote areas, the Ladakh administration has set up Special Mobile Magistrate Courts in Leh and Kargil. Lok Adalats are also held regularly under the framework of the Legal Services Authorities Act.

In the last three years, National Lok Adalats in Ladakh settled 5,375 cases, while State Lok Adalats handled 240 cases, mostly during 2022-23.

In September 2023, a Legal Aid Clinic was opened in Tangtse village of Leh district, as part of efforts to expand grassroots legal support. Overall, 1,540 people including 477 women and 24 children have benefited from various legal aid services across Ladakh in the last three years, according to the Ladakh Legal Services Authority (LLSA).

The government said steps are being taken, in consultation with the High Court, to fill judicial vacancies following Supreme Court guidelines in the Malik Mazhar Sultan case.

injuries in the incident. The family was returning home to Pattiyan from Dharmadi when the tragedy struck.

Rescue teams rushed to the spot, and the injured were shifted to a nearby hospital for treatment.

Cognizance of the incident has been taken and further investigation started. (KNC)

WORLD BREASTFEEDING WEEK

Doctors Emphasize No Formula Matches Benefits Of Mother's Milk

Observer News Service

SRINAGAR: Pediatric experts on Friday said that breastfeeding is an irreplaceable and essential component of infant nutrition, asserting that no food or formula in the world can match the benefits of breast milk in ensuring healthy growth, immunity, and development in children.

Dr Showkat Ahmad Bhat, a leading paediatrician, said breast milk is rich in antibodies that protect infants from a wide range of common illnesses, including respiratory infections, diarrhoea, and ear infections. "Artificial milk can never be a substitute for mother's milk unless there is a medical emergency," he said.

"Breastfeeding supports optimal growth, emotional bonding, and cognitive development. It significantly reduces the risk of asthma, allergies, and sudden infant death syndrome (SIDS), especially when babies are exclusively breastfed for the first six months," Dr Bhat added.

Dr Muzaffar Najar, another paediatrician, said the nutritional value of breast milk is unmatched. "Formula or any alternative cannot even provide one percent of what mother's milk naturally offers. It is nature's perfect food for infants," he said.

He said that breast milk alone provides all the essential energy and nutrients a baby needs in

AFTER SIX MONTHS, COMPLEMENTARY FEEDING WITH SOFT, age-appropriate foods should begin while continuing breastfeeding for up to two years or beyond,"

the first six months of life. "After six months, complementary feeding with soft, age-appropriate foods should begin while continuing breastfeeding for up to two years or beyond," Dr Najar said. "During illness, children require extra fluids and energy—breastfeeding should not only continue but increase during these times."

The paediatrician said breastfeeding mothers require more calories and calcium. "A woman may lose up to 5 percent of her bone mass during breastfeeding, as calcium is redirected to the growing baby. However, this loss is usually recovered after weaning," he said.

Dr Muzaffar further added that breastfeeding stimulates the release of oxytocin, a hormone that helps the uterus return to its pre-pregnancy size and reduces postpartum bleed-

ing. "Long-term benefits for mothers include a lower risk of breast and ovarian cancers, as well as osteoporosis," he noted.

According to KNO, doctors said that breastfeeding has both immediate and long-term health benefits for both mother and baby. "Breastfed babies are at a reduced risk of developing obesity, type 1 diabetes, and various chronic diseases. Mothers, too, benefit with a lower risk of life-threatening illnesses," they said. They expressed concern that many mothers are still unaware or unable to practice exclusive breastfeeding due to a lack of support.

As per the National Family Health Survey-5 (NFHS-5), around 62% of children in Jammu and Kashmir are exclusively breastfed as per WHO guidelines, but only 13% follow all recommended feeding practices.

"We must work towards increasing awareness and support systems to ensure that all children are exclusively breastfed in the initial six months and continue breastfeeding along with complementary foods up to two years," the doctors said.

They emphasised the need for more community-based awareness programs, lactation support in hospitals, and workplace-friendly policies for nursing mothers to achieve this goal and improve overall child health indicators in the region.

DIGITAL DIVIDE:

64% of J&K Students Still Miss Out On Tech-Based Learning

Observer News Service

SRINAGAR: In Jammu and Kashmir, at least 64 percent school students have no access to use and avail the technology for better learning at home.

According to the report of the Ministry of Education (MoE), only 36 percent of school students have a laptop, desktop and tablet for learning at home.

The report further states that only 60 percent of students were using a smartphone for learning at home.

It also said that only 66 percent of students were having internet access at home and 66 percent of schools were having internet connectivity available for the students.

The report further said that only 62 percent of schools were having computers and tablets for students.

"Many students reported having smartphones and internet access at home, making it possible for them to engage with online learning content," it reads.



The report however said that fewer students mentioned having access to laptops or tablets for educational use. Internet connectivity and digital devices like computers or tablets are available in several schools.

"Strengthening access to personal learning devices at home and enhancing the integration of digital tools in classrooms can further support better learning outcomes," it reads.

It also states that most students shared that their schools are equipped with basic facilities such as functional toilets,

clean drinking water, and proper ventilation through working fans and lights in classrooms.

"Access to sports facilities is also reported by many students. However, the availability of functional laboratories for Grade IX students is relatively lower in comparison," reads the report. The MoE report further states that ensuring consistent access to all essential infrastructure is important to create a more enabling environment for learning.

Pertinently KNO already reported that at least 17 percent of students in Jammu and Kashmir engage in family work after completing 10th standard, reveals a report of Ministry of Education (MoE).

Stating the status of 'students outside the educational system' the report said that, "Students exit the education system after Grade 10 because of different reasons like taking up a job, doing an apprenticeship, repeating the grade, and participating in family work."—(KNO)

Fruit Growers Secure Early Bookings Amid Cold Storage Crunch



Observer News Service

SRINAGAR: As the apple harvesting season nears in Kashmir, cold storage facilities are once again proving to be a lifeline for fruit growers who are securing early bookings to preserve their produce.

With a current cold storage capacity of around 4 lakh metric tonnes (MT) in the valley, growers and officials alike are calling for the expansion of storage infrastructure to meet growing demand.

Growers from various fruit-rich areas told KNO that the existing units have helped them fetch better returns in the market, as storing apples for late-season sale significantly boosts prices.

They said there are about two months till the traditional apple season starts, but bookings have begun already as growers have benefited from cold storage units.

"Last year, I stored around 500 boxes of apples in a cold store and sold them in April. The rates were much higher than what I would have received during peak season," said Ghulam Rasool Wani, a grower from Shopian. "But many others couldn't get space due to limited capacity."

According to official data, there are around 85 cold storage units currently operating across Kashmir, mostly located in Pulwama, Shopian, Anantnag, and Srinagar districts. The combined capacity, however, is falling short of the valley's annual production, which crosses 20 lakh MT of apples.

"Every year, we receive far more booking requests than we can accommodate," said Fayaz Ahmad, manager of a leading cold storage unit in Lassipora.

"This year, bookings started as early as July, with many units already partially booked."

Government officials admit the infrastructure needs expansion to support Kashmir's horticulture economy. "Cold storage is vital for post-harvest management. We are encouraging private players and cooperatives to set up more units through subsidies and soft loans," said a senior official from the Horticulture Planning and Marketing Department.

Under the Mission for Integrated Development of Horticulture (MIDH) and other schemes, the government is offering financial assistance of up to a 50% subsidy for setting up cold storage infrastructure, especially Controlled Atmosphere (CA) units.

"We are working to enhance cold storage capacity by another three lakh metric tonnes in the next few years to support growers and reduce post-harvest losses," the official added.

Growers have appreciated the government's support, but insist more needs to be done. "Without adequate storage, we're forced to sell apples at throwaway prices," said Bashir Ahmad Dar, an orchardist from Anantnag. "We urge the government to expedite the clearance process for new units and extend support to small growers forming cooperatives."

With apple production likely to be normal this year despite weather challenges, the demand for cold storage is only expected to rise.

Stakeholders believe that timely investment in this sector can significantly improve incomes and reduce distress sales, thereby strengthening the backbone of Kashmir's rural economy.

PUBLIC NOTICE

This is to inform the general public that the electricity connection bearing consumer ID No. 0204040003525 & Installation Number. 107394 currently registered in the name of my father namely, Late. Ghulam Ahmad Thokar S/O Late. Mohd Jaffar Thokar R/O Gazidori Alamgari Bazar Srinagar-190011. Now, I Rashid Ali S/O Late. Ghulam Ahmad Thokar R/O Gazidori Alamgari Bazar Srinagar-190011., hereby apply for the transfer of the said electricity connection in my favour at the office of the Assistant Executive Engineer Electricity Sub Division, Hawal, Srinagar. If anyone has any objection regarding this transfer, he/she may submit the same to the office of the Assistant Executive Engineer Electricity Sub Division, Hawal, Srinagar within a period of seven days from the date of publication of this notice in the daily newspaper, after that no objection shall be entertained.

Rashid Ali S/O Late. Ghulam Ahmad Thokar
R/O Gazidori Alamgari Bazar, Srinagar-190011
Mobile No. 7006086700

Government of UT of Jammu & Kashmir OFFICE OF THE SUPERINTENDING ENGINEER PMGSY (JKRRDA) CIRCLE SRINAGAR KASHMIR NOTICE INVITING TENDERS (NIT)

e-NIT NO:- 03/SE/PMGSY/S/E-TENDERING-OF 2025-26 Dated:- 29-07-2025

Superintending Engineer PMGSY Circle Srinagar, on behalf of the Government of UT of Jammu & Kashmir, invite online percentage rate tenders on e-procurement portal <http://pmgsytenders.jk.gov.in> from the Contractors registered in appropriate class/category with State P.W.D. or Contractors of equivalent categories registered with other States/ Central Government, Departments, Institutions, Undertakings and Authorities on standard schedule of rate given below for the packages shown in the column 2 of table, for Initial Rectification (IR) /Periodic Renewal (PR)/ Routine maintenance(RM) of the Rural Roads/CDs for five years after completion of Renewal Work on roads, constructed under Pradhan Mantri Gram Sadak Yojana. Contractors not registered with State PWD will have to get themselves registered with them before signing the agreement.

SOR Applicable :- SOR issued by Jammu & Kashmir State Rural Road Development Authority, (JKRRDA) effective from 2023 and amendments up to issue date of NIT

S. No.	Pack age Number	Name of Dist rict	Name of PIU	No. of Ro ads	Total length of Roads (In KMs.)	Estimated Cost (in Rs.)				Total Estimated Cost (In Rs.)	Completion Period of Initial rectification (IR), Periodic Renewal (PR), Routine Maintenance (RM) and Emergency Repairs (in Days)				Cost of Tender Document including 18% GST	Whet her First Call?
						Initial Rehabil itation works (IR)	Routine Maintenance	Renewal of Bitu-minious Surface	Emer-gency Works							
						Part-I	Part-II	Part-III	Part-IV		IR	PR	RM	Emergency Repairs		
01	Jk10-160	Pulwama	PIU Pulwama	Kakpora to Pakher Pora (Kakpora & Rehmo Kamrazpora	11.85	335.63	52.22	147.89	-	535.74	90 days (3 Months)	2 Years *	5 years (60 months)**	As an d when required	6000	1st

- Date of Issue of Notice Inviting Bid , Date-Month-Year 29-07-2025
- Period of availability of Bidding Documents on website www.pmgsytenders.gov.in Date-Month-Year Date-Month-Year, Time Upto From: 30-07-2025, 9:00 AM To 09-08-2025 Time: 4:30 PM
- Time, Date and Place of Pre-bid Meeting, Date-Month-Year Date: 04-08-2025 Time: 11:30 AM
- Time-Hours, Place, (if so required) Place: Office of Superintending Engineer PMGSY Circle Srinagar Kashmir, Engineering Complex Rajbagh, Srinagar
- Deadline for receiving Bids online, including on line payment of bid, security and cost of bid document from a scheduled, Date-Month-Year 09-08-2025 Time: 4:30 PM
- Deadline for scanned copy of affidavits. The on line payment of Bid security and cost of Bid document is to be done simultaneously one- tendering website along with the submission of Bids
- Date of submission of original affidavit. (This Date should be no later than three working days after the submission of Technical Qualification part of the bid). The cost of bid document and Bid security is to be paid on line along with bid submission as mentioned in clause 6.1 above. As such no other document is required to be submitted. Date-Month-Year, 12-08-2025
- Till the online payment system is made functional, following Clauses shall be applicable for off- line submission, clause 6.1, 6.2 is deemed to be replaced as 6.1 (a), 6.2 (a)
- Deadline for Receiving Bids online, including Scanned copy of demand draft of Bid Security and of Demand Bid Document from a Scheduled Commercial Bank and scanned copy of Affidavit. Date-Month-Year 09-08-2025 Draft towards cost of Time Upto, Hours: 04:30 PM
- Date of Submission of original documents such as Bid Security, Cost of Bid document and Affidavit (this date should be no later than three working days after the submission of Technical Qualification part of the bid) Date-Month-Year 12-08-2025

SE/PMGSY/S/DB/e-Tendering/
Dated:- 30-07-2025

DIPK-4624-25
DT: 01/08/2025

Superintending Engineer
PMGSY Circle Srinagar,
Engineering Complex Rajbagh, Srinagar Kashmir.

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KO VIEW

Herding
Opportunity

Kashmir is a highly consumerist community. We buy more than we build, eat more than we grow, and rely on others for even the basics. That dependence showed its full weight this summer when meat disappeared from local markets, triggering panic and silence around kitchen fires.

It started, as such things often do, far from home. In Punjab, a new private contractor took over cattle fairs. Fees changed, tensions flared, and trucks carrying livestock were halted. Kashmiri mutton dealers, stranded and helpless, traveled to Delhi and Punjab to plead for clarity. Back home, meat counters stayed empty.

Eventually, the Punjab government appointed nodal officers to manage disputes. The strike was lifted. For now, meat is back. But the core problem remains untouched: Kashmir does not produce what it consumes.

The numbers are stark. Kashmir consumes over 500 lakh kilograms of mutton every year. Nearly all of it comes from outside. In 2024, local production covered less than 10% of that need.

For a region with lush meadows, alpine pastures, and a tradition of animal rearing, this dependency should be unacceptable. It puts Kashmir's food security at the mercy of border disputes, middlemen, and shifting policies in other states.

Worse, it exposes a failure of imagination. The valley has thousands of unemployed youth, many of them educated, trained, and stuck. They need work. Kashmir needs livestock. The match should be obvious.

The livestock sector, globally and nationally, is a proven engine of employment. It generates steady income, supports allied trades, and builds local economies. It could do even more in the valley: reduce imports, stabilise prices, and offer young people a reason to stay.

The government says it wants startups and innovation. Yet here is a sector crying for a solid intervention, and investment in cold storage units, e-marketplaces, vet clinics, and fodder banks.

Instead of waiting for another disruption to expose these gaps, the administration must act. It must build an ecosystem where livestock farming is seen as smart, modern, and scalable. A 25-year-old graduate should see a future in food production, not just in coding or coaching.

The July meat crisis was about more than supply routes. It was a glimpse of what happens when a region has no control over what it eats. That control won't come through meetings or memorandums. It will come through self-reliance.

Inside Kashmir's Rotten
Meat Crackdown

For years, bad meat passed through official gates. Now, a single seizure has put the entire supply chain on trial.



Dr Raja Muzaffar Bhat

It was there when they opened the cold storage unit in Zakura.

It was a typical July day, the one that wears you down with heat, smell, and exhaustion.

But nothing could've prepared us for what we found behind that shutter.

Piled high in crates was meat - 1,200 kilograms of it: chopped, packed, and decomposing. There was no refrigeration and ventilation. And, the spoiled stock was about to be dispatched to different eateries across the city.

The officers who carried out the raid, from the Food Safety wing of the Drug and Food Control Organisation, said they had never made a seizure this big.

For me, it confirmed what I've long feared: we are eating meat that should have been destroyed, not served.

This latest seizure isn't an isolated incident. It's a sign of a much deeper rot in how food is handled, regulated and consumed in Kashmir.

We are a society that holds meat close. From family dinners to wedding feasts to street-side tujj, meat is at the centre of our plates. Yet, we don't know what we're eating anymore.

We rarely ask questions or look closely. Instead, we trust too easily, and that trust is being taken advantage of every single day.

Over the past few years, I've tracked the unchecked influx of frozen meat, fish and poultry into Kashmir. Much of it arrives in trucks from outside the region, crossing into the valley via Lakhampur or Qazigund. It's rarely inspected.

The meat, often poorly packed and improperly stored, floods markets at rates no local butcher could ever match.

This is how a food stall offers a full meat plate for 100. And this is how food vendors set up shop in every village with deep freezers, not fresh stock.

I posted images of the Zakura seizure on my social media handles. The response was overwhelming.

A man from Maharashtra, who had visited Srinagar recently, said he suffered food poisoning after eating fish at a well-known eatery.

A local user posted a photo of his meal and asked, "How else do you think they can sell all this meat so cheap?"

Another, from Bengaluru, said simply: "This is why I haven't eaten non-veg outside in five years."

There is anger, but also helplessness.



“The seized meat was most likely destined for barbeque stalls. Most of us have eaten it. Many continue to. What we don't see is the journey this meat takes: from slaughterhouses outside Kashmir, through long-distance transport without proper refrigeration, to local storage facilities where standards are ignored.

We've known something was wrong. Now we have proof.

The seized meat was most likely destined for barbeque stalls. Most of us have eaten it. Many continue to. What we don't see is the journey this meat takes: from slaughterhouses outside Kashmir, through long-distance transport without proper refrigeration, to local storage facilities where standards are ignored.

According to FSSAI regulations, all frozen meat and fish must come from licensed vendors and be tested regularly.

But in practice, there are huge gaps.

Many districts lack proper food testing labs. Staff shortages mean inspections are rare. And frozen meat doesn't fall under the same taxation as other goods, making it easier to transport and harder to track.

The result is a perfect storm: cheap, unregulated, and unsafe meat sold freely, and often relished by unsuspecting consumers.

We are already seeing the rise of a dangerous food economy.

From small fast-food joints in villages to barbecue vendors in city centre, frozen meat is the backbone of an industry that feeds thousands every day.

When I spoke with the inspection team after the Zakura raid, they said legal proceedings were being initiated against the food business operators.

I urged them to name and shame, as it is a public safety crisis. The people involved in knowingly distributing rotten meat must be

booked under the Public Safety Act.

These criminals are raking in profits by poisoning the public, repeatedly, and without remorse.

The solution starts with action.

The Health Department must fill staff vacancies and strengthen the Drug and Food Control Organisation. The officers on the ground need resources, equipment, and authority. And there must be permanent food checkpoints at the state's entry points, especially for frozen meat, chicken and fish.

But this is also about awareness.

As consumers, we have a role. We need to ask questions, read labels. We shouldn't choose the cheapest meat without understanding what's behind the price. Our silence has enabled this system to flourish.

I believe the Zakura raid will be remembered as a turning point, if we act. If we don't, there will be another 1,200 kilos, another truck, another illness, and another family wondering what went wrong.

The meat may have been rotten, but so is the neglect that let it travel from the cutting floor to our dinner tables.

And that, too, needs to be seized.

Dr Raja Muzaffar Bhat is an Acumen Fellow and Chairman Jammu & Kashmir RTI Movement. He can be reached at bhatrajamuzaaffar@gmail.com.

For generations, the water flowed without asking in my hometown Mattan. You could lean over a rock, cup your hands, and drink what felt like liquid snow.

But this summer, people woke up to walk farther, carry more, and return with less.

Water is disappearing.

This year, the heat came early, and it came hard. Srinagar hit 37.4°C, hotter than Delhi on some days.

A place where summers used to mean soft sun and cool shadows now feels like it's burning from the inside out. June was the second hottest in over a century. Qazigund recorded its hottest June in more than fifty years.

The hostile heat prompted old men to compare this summer to their childhoods and shook their heads. No one remembers it being this relentless.

Kashmiris are used to the idea of being spared. Surrounded by mountains and meadows, we've long believed we were safe from the worst. Floods might visit, winters may stretch, but something in the landscape always softened the blow. Not anymore.

In my village, taps dried up in April. The traditional nags were empty by May. Even the kunds in the forest, where animals drank and fields were watered, looked like they'd been erased. We had little snowfall during Chillai Kalan, the fiercest stretch of winter. That snow usually melts in summer, feeding our rivers and aquifers. This year, there was barely anything left to melt.

In villages across Khoveripora block, families started queuing near remaining water points. Children, instead of playing before school, waited with cans. For women, water collection replaced rest. Fields began to crack under the sun.

And the farmers, our valley's backbone, watched their work turn to dust.

An apple grower I know in Ashmuqam told me this was the third year in a row he's seen his yield

drop. He has started removing trees from the highest part of his orchard. "They dry too fast now," he said. "It's not worth the spray."

The weather no longer follows a rhythm. Rains fall out of season, or they don't fall at all. When they come, they come with a fury. Hailstorms show up without warning. The pests follow, crops suffer, and debts rise.

These are not one-off events. They're connected.

Climate scientists like Dr. Rajesh Verma from the National Institute of Climate Studies have spoken about how Himalayan regions feel climate change sooner than the plains. The slopes, forests, and rivers here are delicate. Small changes trigger chain reactions. And we're seeing those chains break in real time.

The World Meteorological Organization has warned that between 2023 and 2027, global temperatures could rise up to 1.8°C above pre-industrial levels. That sounds small on paper. But in the mountains, it means earlier glacial melt, fewer snow days,

The Summer the
Valley Lost Its Cool

The myth of Kashmir as a cool, safe haven is fading. Heatwaves, water shortages, and failed harvests now define life in the valley.

Dr. Mushtaq Rather

“This summer was a message. If we don't act now, the future might slip away slowly, until one day we look around and find that what we loved most about this place is no longer here.

and more unpredictable rain.

When the ground stays dry for too long, even a normal shower floods it. There's no sponge left to absorb the hit.

In 2014, we watched Srinagar drown. In 2021, flash floods tore through Kishtwar. These climatic events were signs of what's coming.

Forests, too, are slipping away. Trees that once cooled our air, held our slopes, and filtered our water are being cut down for roads, buildings, and quick profit. With them goes our best defense.

And yet, we keep building.

Tourism has helped thousands of Kashmiris earn a living. But it has also brought pressure. Roads are widened, concrete replaces soil, lakes are choked with plastic, and meadows are turned into parking lots.

We are selling the image of paradise while losing the substance. If tourists stop coming because it's too hot or too dry, what will we sell then?

We can't afford to shrug this off anymore.

We need to bring back traditional water systems: stone tanks, underground storage, terraced irrigation. We must invest in new wells, plant trees where they can grow, and keep forest land intact.

Kashmir was never built to take big hits. It is beautiful because it is delicate. Its economy, identity, and rhythm lean on nature. And that nature is shifting fast.

This summer was a big message.

If we don't act now, the future might slip away slowly, until one day we look around and find that what we loved most about this place is no longer here.

The author is an educator and columnist based in Mattan, Anantnag. He can be reached at aroughfatimamar15@gmail.com.

Roots Over Resumes

After years of job rejections and personal loss, Shugufta Bashir turned to farming, and became a symbol of self-reliance in an unemployment-ridden region.

Gowher Bhat

On a hot summer morning in Banpora village of Pulwama, Shugufta Bashir bends down to check her tomato plants. Her hands are covered in soil, her eyes focused.

A few years ago, she was filling out job forms and chasing interviews. Now, she runs her own farm, and makes a living from the same land her family once left idle.

"I didn't plan this," she said, standing near a sapling she planted last year. "I just knew I had to do something with my life before I lost it to waiting."

At 25, Shagufta is part of a generation of Kashmiri youth raised on degrees and deferred dreams. She holds a postgraduate degree in history and a B.Ed., credentials that once carried hope of a steady teaching post.

That hope faded after years of unanswered applications and failed interviews.

The job crisis in Jammu and Kashmir is severe. According to the Centre for Monitoring Indian Economy, the region's unemployment rate in 2024 remained among the highest in India, often topping 15 percent. The figures are starker for women.



ON MOST EVENINGS, SHE WALKS THROUGH THE ORCHARD BAREFOOT, touching leaves, checking roots, noting which plants have tilted. Her phone remains on silent. Rejection letters don't come anymore, neither do promises.

"I kept thinking, maybe next month, maybe the next list," Shagufta said. "Then another rejection would come."

Around the same time her job hunt was faltering, her engagement ended. Two blows, one personal, the other existential.

She remembers the week clearly: her phone silent, her inbox full of forms and regrets. Something in her snapped. Then something else clicked.

"My house looks out onto the fields. That land was always there, just part of the background," she said. "One day, I thought, what if it's the foreground?"

Her father had spent decades growing paddy on the family's ancestral land. The yields were low, the market uncertain. Farming was seen more as survival than ambition.

But Shagufta began to study crop science. She watched YouTube tutorials on horticulture, attended district agriculture workshops, and started sketching layouts for mixed farming. Apples, she learned, could thrive in this soil, so could seasonal vegetables.

Convincing her father took time.

"He didn't say no," she said. "He just said, 'Don't expect miracles.'"

She didn't get miracles. She got weeds, blisters, broken fences, and slow harvests.

Her first vegetables barely filled a few baskets. The apple trees would take years to bear fruit. She kept going. She learned how to budget input costs, manage drip irrigation, and source manure from local co-operatives.

Most of the work she did herself. Some evenings, her mother helped water the saplings.

"When I first earned 300 rupees selling vegetables at the mandi, it wasn't about money," Shagufta said. "It was the first time I felt useful."

In Banpora, where most girls are ex-



pected to marry early or wait indefinitely for government jobs, Shagufta's decision to farm drew curiosity and commentary.

At first, some villagers laughed. "She's growing potatoes with a degree," one said.

A few months later, they came to ask what she used to keep pests away.

Today, her story is changing conversations. Girls from nearby villages now visit her fields to learn basic sowing techniques. She walks them through the stages: soil testing, composting, market mapping. Some want to grow mushrooms in their backyards. Others have started working with their mothers on unused patches of land.

"There's a shift happening, very slowly," Shagufta said. "When one girl works outside the script, others start asking questions."

Her father, once unsure, now watches

her plants like a partner. "She's made our name known," he said. "Even old men who doubted her now call her brave."

Shagufta is modest about her success. Her farm is still small, her profits fluctuate. She saves carefully, reinvests most of what she earns, and hopes to set up a processing unit to dry and package organic produce.

She continues to apply for jobs, but with less urgency.

"I used to believe a job would make me complete," she said. "Now I believe in work, whatever shape it takes."

She is also helping to train a few younger girls in the area to handle market logistics, basic bookkeeping, and crop cycles. Her informal workshops are simple: field tours, question hours, note-sharing. A few of the girls now earn money selling fresh herbs or onions to local vendors.



SHAGUFTA IS MODEST ABOUT HER SUCCESS. Her farm is still small, her profits fluctuate. She saves carefully, reinvests most of what she earns, and hopes to set up a processing unit to dry and package organic produce.

Government support has been minimal. Shagufta received some seedlings from the horticulture department, but no grants or schemes tailored to women farmers in transition.

Still, she persists. She believes if the story is strong enough, systems eventually follow. "Sometimes people ask me if I regret studying so much," she said. "My answer is no. That education didn't go waste. It brought me here."

On most evenings, she walks through the orchard barefoot, touching leaves, checking roots, noting which plants have tilted. Her phone remains on silent. Rejection letters don't come anymore, neither do promises.

"This is the life I built with both hands," she said, standing in a field of cabbage under a clear Pulwama sky. "No one opened a door for me. I didn't even find one to knock on. So I dug."

And somewhere between rejection and ripening, she found something larger than employment. She found her own use.

- The author is a Pulwama-based educator and writer.

A School of Slates

Against all odds, one Kashmiri primary school has become a model of what real education can look like.

Muntashir Kifayat Hussain

It was almost ten in the morning when I reached the school. The sun had warmed the village of Gundi-Khaleel in Narabal zone, Budgam. The school stood at the riverbank of Sukhnag, with its gate open to the sound of water flowing and birds calling across the trees.

As an academic monitor, I've visited many schools, but this one felt different from the moment I stepped into the lawn.

It was a small space, edged with grass, and in the middle, four children were sitting in a circle. They were between four and six years old, completely focused on something.

As we got closer, they noticed us and stood up in perfect rhythm: "Good morning, sir, you are welcome!"

I asked them to introduce themselves. A little girl responded first. "I am Ujma shirrrr," she said with all the boldness she could gather.

I gently corrected her, thinking she meant Uzma. But she insisted, a little offended, "I am Ujma."

She held her ground like someone used to being heard. I smiled and backed off. The others introduced themselves: Ayaan Ahmad, Abaan Younis, and Aiman Showkat.

On the ground beside them were four traditional slates: takhti, as we call them. Soil-ink bottles and stick pens sat beside each one.

On the slates, I saw beautiful handwriting: clean, careful strokes. Other students nearby were also working on slates, their focus unshaken. The neatness surprised me.

The Head of the Institution (HOI) soon joined us. I asked about the use of slates. His answer has stayed with me ever since.

"In today's digital world, children are often busy with smartphones before they even learn how to hold a pencil," he said. "Slates help them build fine motor skills, develop creativity, and improve handwriting. It's a sensory experience. Using a stick pen on a slate strengthens hand muscles and focus. Plus, slates are reusable."

He wasn't quoting theory, he was showing its effect in real time.

As we walked toward the building, I noticed how well-maintained it was. Four rooms, freshly painted. In the corridor, I stopped to look at a 'biography board', a kind of wall chart where students could record facts about famous people or even characters from stories they read.

Then my colleague pointed toward something at the far end. We followed him to what the school called its cultural corner. The HOI explained that everything in this corner had been collected from the village.



THERE ARE SCHOOLS WITH BIGGER BUDGETS AND Fancier boards. But in Gundi-Khaleel, I saw something better: purpose, care, and a learning you don't always find in classrooms.

There were wooden shoes once worn to walk over snow, a stone grinder, a kangri, a strip of Kashmiri carpet, the kind families once wove for a living.

The corner wasn't decorative. It was a bridge between memory and learning. "This helps children link their culture with their classroom," the HOI said.

Everywhere I looked, the walls were alive, with paintings of fruits, vegetables, birds, and animals. Their names were written beside them in bold, clear script.

I called over Uzma and asked her to read a few. She read each word without hesitation. Then little Aiman, just four, tugged my sleeve. "Sir, main bhi padhti hoon," she said, asking if she could read too.

We entered the pre-primary classroom next. It felt like entering a different world. The teachers had turned the large hall into a joyful place of learning. The walls were covered in colour. There were math toys, Rubik's cubes, musical instruments, dice, sketch pens and bright rings.

The HOI explained, "We bring in these

tools to bring in joy, art, and confidence."

Later, around 12:30, we sat down in the office. That's when we heard the children shouting from the washroom. We rushed out. There, I saw something that both surprised and moved me.

A female teacher stood near the wash area, sleeves rolled up, soap in hand. She was bathing the children, carefully, lovingly. After washing them, she sat down and began feeding them with her own hands.

Back in the office, I asked about the staff. Three teachers for fifty-three students were doing everything themselves: teaching, cleaning, feeding, bathing.

There was a dignity in that work. A belief that children deserve care and attention, no matter how small the school or how limited the staff.

That day reminded me of Rumi's words about the waterwheel, the idea that we must keep moving, giving, turning, without becoming dry inside.

Education too must flow like that. The teacher, like the wheel, must take in knowledge and pour it back out in service, to keep the garden alive.

I left the school with those images etched in my mind: Uzma correcting me with pride, Aiman pulling my shirt for her turn, the teacher bathing her students, and a staff that never said they were doing too much.

There are schools with bigger budgets and fancier boards. But in Gundi-Khaleel, I saw something better: purpose, care, and a learning you don't always find in classrooms.

The author is a teacher and academic monitor, at the Government Boys High School Narabal, Budgam.

When Words Disappear

The language of our grandparents may not reach our grandchildren.

Muskan Shafi Malik

At home, I often feel like an orphan of my own language.

I grew up hearing Kashmiri in its rawest, most beautiful form, from lullabies that my grandmother hummed on cold winter nights to the haunting stories my grandfather told of witches named Rantas and brave men like Sumpa Halwan.

Those words once held magic. They shaped my childhood, wrapped me in warmth, and connected me to something bigger than myself.

But somewhere along the way, I stopped speaking. And now I wonder: Did I stop, or was I made to forget?

Today, when I speak to children, especially the youngest, those of Gen Alpha, I hear a strange mix.

English, Urdu, and Kashmiri all tumble out at once, with Urdu leading the way. There's no single rhythm. The mother tongue, it seems, has become the least spoken in the house. It's fading, not in silence, but in substitution.

Language should be part of Kashmir's quintessential beauty. It should be a living thing. Instead, it's dying.

Even though Kashmiri is the mother tongue of more than seven million people, UNESCO now classifies it as a language in danger.

Look around: in our schools, workplaces, streets, and even homes, communication happens in Urdu or English. It is as if Kashmiri has been boxed away, brought out only for drama performances or cultural functions.

It wasn't always this way.

The Britannica Encyclopedia says Kashmiri began as a Dardic language, though over time, it became more Indo-Aryan. The big shift came during the 19th and 20th centuries, especially when Urdu became the court language.

Slowly, Kashmiri got pushed out. In schools, children were scolded for speaking it. I remember it clearly. We were trained to answer in Urdu, praised when we wrote in English, and slowly made to believe that speaking Kashmiri was somehow shameful.

As a child, I started to hide my mother tongue. I didn't want to sound backward in a classroom. That shame didn't come from inside me, it was planted.

And now I see that same distance growing in the next generation.

Today's children fall asleep to YouTube reels, not wanwun wedding songs or shruks of Sheikh-ul-Alam. Parents, too exhausted or too busy, let screens take over. Even the cartoons they play are in Hindi or English. It starts early, when imitation begins, language

shapes the mind.

Most schools in the valley don't teach Kashmiri. And if they do, it's never at the center. We celebrate English fluency but ignore the richness of the tongue that holds centuries of our soul.

A language carries lullabies, wedding songs, curses, jokes, poetry, and prayer. It carries history, and holds us.

I think often of how Hebrew was revived in Israel, how Eliezer Ben-Yehuda insisted on using it daily, wrote a dictionary, raised his son speaking only Hebrew.

Today, that language stands strong. Or how Dogri, in Jammu, gained new ground with official recognition, school curriculums, and even UPSC aspirants choosing it as a subject.

Can we imagine that for Kashmiri?

Can we imagine YouTube channels with cartoons in Kashur, textbooks that make it fun, school competitions that encourage essays and speeches in our own tongue? Can we have radio shows, podcasts, dramas, all in the language our grandparents knew by heart?

Some steps have begun. The Jammu and Kashmir Academy of Art, Culture and Languages is publishing Kashmiri literature and organizing events. That matters. But it's not enough to rely on institutions alone. The real revival starts at home.

Children should hear their parents speak Kashmiri proudly. We should celebrate those who use it, not treat them like they've been left behind. We need Kashmiri in official speeches, poetry slams, theatre, and songs. We need it to live.

When a language dies, it's not only words that vanish. A whole way of seeing the world disappears. A metaphor your grandmother once used no longer makes sense, a joke no longer lands, and a lullaby goes unsung.

Sometimes, I try to write in Kashmiri. I fail, and it hurts. I can express myself clearly in English and Urdu, but my mother's tongue feels like a ghost in my throat.

I remember her saying to me: "Ho lajya, mouj wandith."

There is no English translation that captures the feeling of that sentence. It doesn't just mean "I love you." It means something deeper, something shaped by snow, sorrow, and survival.

Only the language of home holds the weight of this belonging.

The author is a student at Aligarh Muslim University. She can be reached at muskanshafi-malik@gmail.com.

Realistic Deepfakes On The Rise; Combating Them May Require More AI

Associated Press

The phone rings. It's the secretary of state calling. Or is it?

For Washington insiders, seeing and hearing is no longer believing, thanks to a spate of recent incidents involving deepfakes impersonating top officials in President Donald Trump's administration.

Digital fakes are coming for corporate America, too, as criminal gangs and hackers associated with adversaries including North Korea use synthetic video and audio to impersonate CEOs and low-level job candidates to gain access to critical systems or business secrets.

Thanks to advances in artificial intelligence, creating realistic deepfakes is easier than ever, causing security problems for governments, businesses and private individuals and making trust the most valuable currency of the digital age.

Responding to the challenge will require laws, better digital literacy and technical solutions that fight AI with more AI.

"As humans, we are remarkably susceptible to deception," said Vijay Balasubramanian, CEO and founder of the tech firm Pindrop Security. But he believes solutions to the challenge of deepfakes may be within reach: "We are going to fight back."

AI deepfakes become a national security threat

This summer, someone used AI to create a deepfake of Secretary of State Marco Rubio in an attempt to reach out to foreign ministers, a US senator and a governor over text, voice mail and the Signal messaging app.

In May someone impersonated Trump's chief of staff, Susie Wiles.

Another phony Rubio had popped up in a deepfake earlier this year, saying he wanted to cut off Ukraine's access to Elon Musk's Starlink internet service. Ukraine's government later rebutted the false claim.

The national security implications are huge: People who



think they're chatting with Rubio or Wiles, for instance, might discuss sensitive information about diplomatic negotiations or military strategy.

"You're either trying to extract sensitive secrets or competitive information or you're going after access, to an email server or other sensitive network," Kinny Chan, CEO of the cybersecurity firm QID, said of the possible motivations.

Synthetic media can also aim to alter behaviour. Last year, Democratic voters in New Hampshire received a robocall urging them not to vote in the state's upcoming primary. The voice on the call sounded suspiciously like then-President Joe Biden but was actually created using AI.

Their ability to deceive makes AI deepfakes a potent weapon for foreign actors. Both Russia and China have used disinformation and propaganda directed at Americans as a way of undermining trust in democratic alliances and institutions.

Steven Kramer, the political consultant who admitted sending the fake Biden robocalls, said he wanted to send a message of the dangers deepfakes pose to the American political system. Kramer was acquitted last month of charges of voter suppression and impersonating a candidate.

"I did what I did for USD 500," Kramer said. "Can you imagine what would happen if the Chinese government decided to do this?"

Scammers target the financial industry with deepfakes

The greater availability and sophistication of the programmes mean deepfakes are increasingly used for corporate espionage and garden variety fraud.

"The financial industry is right in the crosshairs," said Jennifer Ewbank, a former deputy director of the CIA who worked on cybersecurity and digital threats. "Even individuals who know each other have been convinced to transfer vast sums of money."

In the context of corporate espionage, they can be used to impersonate CEOs asking employees to hand over passwords or routing numbers.

Deepfakes can also allow scammers to apply for jobs — and even do them — under an assumed or fake identity. For some this is a way to access sensitive networks, to steal secrets or to install ransomware. Others just want the work and may be working a few similar jobs at different companies at the same time.

Authorities in the US have said that thousands of North Koreans with information technology skills have been dispatched to live abroad, using stolen identities to obtain jobs at tech firms in the US and elsewhere.

The workers get access to company networks as well as a paycheck. In some cases, the workers install ransomware that can be later used to extort even more money.

The schemes have generated billions of dollars for the North Korean government.

Within three years, as many as 1 in 4 job applications is expected to be fake, according to research from Adaptive Security, a cybersecurity company.

"We've entered an era where anyone with a laptop and access to an open-source model can convincingly impersonate a real person," said Brian Long, Adaptive's CEO. "It's no longer about hacking systems — it's about hacking trust."

Experts deploy AI to fight back against AI

Researchers, public policy experts and technology companies are now investigating the best ways of addressing the economic, political and social challenges posed by deepfakes.

New regulations could require tech companies to do more to identify, label and potentially remove deepfakes on their platforms. Lawmakers could also impose greater penalties on those who use digital technology to deceive others — if they can be caught.

Greater investments in digital literacy could also boost people's immunity to online deception by teaching them ways to spot fake media and avoid falling prey to scammers.

The best tool for catching AI may be another AI programme, one trained to sniff out the tiny flaws in deepfakes that would go unnoticed by a person.

Systems like Pindrop's analyse millions of datapoints in any person's speech to quickly identify irregularities. The system can be used during job interviews or other video conferences to detect if the person is using voice cloning software, for instance.

Similar programmes may one day be commonplace, running in the background as people chat with colleagues and loved ones online. Someday, deepfakes may go the way of email spam, a technological challenge that once threatened to upend the usefulness of email, said Balasubramanian, Pindrop's CEO.

OFFICE OF THE CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER MUNICIPAL COUNCIL PULWAMA.

Subject: Auction of Entry Fee / Terminal Tax Collection contract for the year 2025-26 w.e.f. 14-08-2025 to 13-08-2026 for a period of 365 days.

AUCTION NOTICE.

E-NIT No: MC/PUL/Tax/2025/35 of 2025

Dated: 31-07- 2025

For and on behalf of the Lt. Governor of J&K UT, term e-tenders (in single cover system) are invited from the interested persons/parties for Auction of Adda/Entry Fee / Terminal Tax of Municipal Council Pulwama, for the year 2025-26 w.e.f. 14-08-2025 to 13-08-2026, for a period of 365 days. The Minimum reserved bid is fixed forRs. 1,57,50,000/- (Rupees One Crore Fifty-Seven Lacs and Fifty ThousandOnly).The Tax/rate schedule of the vehicles is as under and the successful highest bidder is bound to recover Entry Fee as per the same schedule.

S.No	Type of Vehicle	Name of Vehicle	Rate per day
01	Heavy Commercial Vehicle	Truck (14 Tyre and above)s	Rs.300/-
02		Truck / Tipper (12Tyre)	Rs.250/-
03		Truck/ Tipper (10 Tyre)	Rs.200/-
04		Truck (06 Tyre)	Rs.100/-
05		Tipper (06 Tyre)	Rs.80/-
06	Medium Commercial Vehicles	JCB/ Crane /Roller/ Mini tipper	Rs.50/-
07		Tata Mini Bus	Rs.20/-
08		TATA 407	Rs.30/-
09		Tractor	Rs.30/-
10		Passenger Tempo	Rs.50/-
11	Light Commercial Vehicles	Load Carrier auto/ 207 TATA	Rs.20/-
12		Private School Bus	Rs.20/-
14	Passenger Vehicles	Sumo, Scorpio, Tavera, Innova etc	Rs.20/-
15		Auto	Rs.20/-

The bidding documents consisting of qualifying information, eligibility criteria, bill of quantities (BOQ) 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:

1	Date of issue of Tender Notice	30-07-2025
2	Period of downloading of bidding documents	From 30-07-2025 to 11-08-2025
3	Bid submission Start Date	30-07-2025 from 11.00 AM
4	Bid submission End Date	11-08-2025 upto11.00AM
5	Date & Time of opening of Bids (Online)	12-08-2025 at 02.00 PM in the office of the Chief Executive Officer, Municipal CouncilPulwama.
6	Submission of Performance Security (PS)	The highest bidder, has todeposit10% of contact value cost, on spot at the declaration of highest bidder and same will be forfeited, if terms and conditions are breached.
7	Mode of Payment	10% token money on spot after evaluation of successful bidder (Technical/ Financial Evaluation). 65% to be deposited on the time of possession of posts. 25% withinfirst six months from date of possession, for which successful bidder shall submit the irrevocable bank guarantee from any nationalized bank within seven days from the date of possession, failing which the contract shall be cancelled, without any intimation.
08	Submission of Call Deposit Receipt (CDR)	The bidder have to deposit Rs.315000/- pledged to Chief Executive OfficerMC Pulwama at the time of uploading of bid (CDR)and in original at the time of submission of hard copies.

No: MC/Pul/2023-24/1561-64
DIPK-NB-1445/25 Dated: 01-08-2025

Sd/
Chief Executive Officer
Municipal Council
Pulwama.



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KCCI, SGCCI Hold Key Business Meet to Boost Kashmir-Gujarat Trade Ties



Observer News Service

SRINAGAR- In a significant push for cross-regional business cooperation, the Kashmir Chamber of Commerce and Industry (KCCI) held an interactive business meeting with the Southern Gujarat Chamber of Commerce and Industry (SGCCI) in Ahmedabad to explore investment opportunities, identify areas of mutual cooperation, and strengthen business ties between the two regions.

According to a statement, the high-level interaction was chaired by the Chief Minister of Jammu and Kashmir, Omar Abdullah, and aimed at strengthening bilateral trade, investment, and cultural ties between the two regions.

KCCI President Javid Ahmad Tenga, while welcoming the SGCCI delegation, underscored the significance of the Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) signed between the two chambers in 2023 and reaffirmed KCCI's commitment to building sustainable, inclusive and forward-looking partnerships. He said the collaboration with SGCCI is rooted in mutual respect, practical engagement, and shared economic aspirations.

He highlighted key focus areas identified under the MoU—handicrafts, tourism, horticulture, solar energy, IT infrastructure, industrial investments, and cultural exchanges. "We believe this relationship can help overcome regional economic handicaps and open market access for our artisans and entrepreneurs. It's time we moved from potential to execution," Tenga added.

SGCCI President Ramesh

Vaghasia, while addressing the gathering, announced that SGCCI is actively exploring direct investments in Jammu and Kashmir, particularly in the fields of solar energy, information technology, data centres, and electric mobility. He said SGCCI has presence in 84 countries and has built networks of entrepreneurs and investors who are keen to partner with regions like Kashmir. "We aim to help KCCI members showcase their products in Gujarat and also invite Gujarat-based industries to invest in the Valley in high-potential sectors," he said.

Vaghasia further offered to facilitate KCCI's participation in upcoming trade and buyer-seller events in Gujarat, especially in the winter season when handicraft and horticulture products from Kashmir are in high demand.

As a key outcome of the dialogue, SGCCI formally invited the Government of Jammu and Kashmir and the KCCI to participate in the upcoming Global Investment and Tourism Expo being held in Surat from August 23 to 25, 2025. The event will host investors, industrial leaders, and trade representatives from across India and abroad and provide a platform for Kashmir to promote its economic and tourism potential.

Chief Minister Omar Abdullah, in his address, lauded the initiative and emphasised the importance of translating such engagements into actionable collaborations. He said the focus must be on sectors where impact is visible and achievable in the short term. Solar energy, IT, and electric mobility are areas that can bring real transformation and mutual benefit.

Trump Delays Tariff Start to August 7, Adds Fresh Uncertainty

Associated Press

WASHINGTON- For weeks, President Donald Trump was promising the world economy would change on Friday with his new tariffs in place. It was an ironclad deadline, administration officials assured the public.

But when Trump signed the order on Thursday night imposing new tariffs on 68 countries and the European Union, the start date of the punishing import taxes was pushed back seven days so that the tariff schedule could be updated. The change — while potentially welcome news to countries that had not yet reached a deal with the US — injected a new dose of uncertainty for consumers and businesses still wondering what's going to happen and when.

Trump has promised that his tax hikes on the nearly \$3 trillion in goods imported to the United States will usher in newfound wealth, launch a cavalcade of new factory jobs, reduce the budget deficits and, simply, get other countries to treat America with more respect.

The vast tariffs risk jeopardising America's global standing as allies feel forced into unfriendly deals. As taxes on the raw materials used by US factories and basic goods, the tariffs also threaten to create new inflationary pressures and hamper economic growth — concerns the Trump White



House has dismissed.

Questions swirl around the tariffs despite Trump's eagerness

As the clock ticked toward Trump's self-imposed deadline, few things seemed to be settled other than the president's determination to levy the taxes he has talked about for decades. The very legality of the tariffs remains an open question as a US appeals court on Thursday heard arguments on whether Trump had exceeded his authority by declaring an "emergency" under a 1977 law to charge the tariffs, allowing him to avoid congressional approval.

Trump was ebullient as much of the world awaited what he would do.

"Tariffs are making America GREAT & RICH Again," he said on Thursday morning on Truth Social.

Others saw a policy carelessly constructed by the US president, one that could impose harms gradually over time that would erode America's power and prosper-

ity.

"The only things we'll know for sure on Friday morning are that growth-sapping US import taxes will be historically high and complex, and that, because these deals are so vague and unfinished, policy uncertainty will remain very elevated," said Scott Lincome, a vice president of economics at the Cato Institute. "The rest is very much TBD."

The new tariffs build off ones announced in the spring

Trump initially imposed the Friday deadline after his previous "Liberation Day" tariffs in April resulted in a stock market panic. His unusually high tariff rates unveiled then led to recession fears, prompting Trump to impose a 90-day negotiating period. When he was unable to create enough trade deals with other countries, he extended the timeline and sent out letters to world leaders that simply listed rates, prompting a slew of hasty agreements.

Trump Tariff To Impact About Half Of USD 86 Bn Indian Exports To US

Press Trust Of India

NEW DELHI- The imposition of a 25 per cent US tariff will impact about half of India's over USD 86 billion worth of exports to America, government sources said on Friday.

The sectors which could bear the brunt of 25 per cent duty include textiles/ clothing (10.3 billion), gems and jewellery (12 billion), shrimp (USD 2.24 billion), leather and footwear (USD 1.18 billion), animal products (USD 2 billion), chemicals (2.34 billion), and electrical and mechanical machinery (about USD 9 billion).

They said that about half of the goods exported from India to the US are in the exemption category (such as pharma and electronic goods), so, the impact will be only on the remaining half.

"More than half of India's exports to the US will not be impacted by the duty. Due to the Section 232 exemption of the US, only exports worth about USD 48 billion would be impacted with these tariffs," they said, adding the remaining exports will have a little

impact on a country with a GDP of about USD 4 trillion and a consumer base of 140 crore.

In 2024-25, the bilateral trade between India and the US stood at USD 131.8 billion (USD 86.5 billion exports and USD 45.3 billion imports).

According to think tank GTRI, the 25 per cent tariffs will not be applicable on the exempted categories, including finished pharmaceutical drugs, active pharmaceutical ingredients (APIs), and other key drug inputs; energy products such as crude oil, refined fuels, natural gas, coal, and electricity; critical minerals; and a wide range of electronics and semiconductors, like computers, tablets, smartphones, solid-state drives, flat panel displays, and integrated circuits.

According to an exporter, apparel sector that exports USD 5.33 billion worth of goods to the US will be the most impacted.

Sudhir Sekhri, Chairman, AEPC, said: "We request immediate government intervention to offset this huge setback. Exporters have their back against the wall and

will have to sell below cost to keep their factories running and avoid mass layoffs."

Kanpur-based Growmore International Ltd MD Yadvendra Singh Sachan said that exporters should use this opportunity to explore new markets. "We need to diversify our exports," Sachan said.

Federation of Indian Export Organizations (FIEO) Director General Ajay Sahai said that the US order provides relaxation for goods in transit and those loaded on ship for final sailing to the US by August 7.

US President Donald Trump unveiled sweeping new tariffs on dozens of countries, including 25 per cent duties for goods from India, marking a new era of American protectionism that triggered fresh tensions and concerns over a much wider disruption in the global trade landscape.

The US president signed an executive order that raised tariffs for over five dozen countries, with Washington's negotiations for trade deals going down to the wire ahead of the August 1 deadline.



Govt Funds Carding Machine To Revive Namdha Craft

Refurbished machine will reduce manual labour, meet local demand big time

Observer News Service

SRINAGAR- In a significant step toward revival and promotion of the traditional craft of Kashmiri Namdha, the Government has approved funds for refurbishing and installation of a high-capacity Carding Machine at its UNDP wing.

This initiative falls under the larger objective of strengthening the infrastructure and sustainability of traditional handicrafts and handloom sectors in the Valley.

Namdha, a Centuries-old craft involving felting and embroidery of woollen fabric, has been witnessing a steady decline due to various constraints, notably the lack of wool processing facilities, high input costs, and time-consuming manual methods. The refurbishment of the Carding Machine under the Capital Expenditure (CAPEX) budgeting is expected to address these bottlenecks directly.

In a press statement issued here today, Mirza Shahid Ali, Deputy Director, UNDP, stated

that the availability of modernized carding facilities shall reduce manual labour and processing time significantly, making the craft economically viable for artisans and increase production capacity, enabling them to meet the growing domestic and international demand. This step is also expected to attract younger artisans to the trade by improving working conditions and productivity.

"This move aligns with the Government's broader vision to revive languishing crafts, with Namdha recognized as a flagship craft. We will ensure timely refurbishment, installation and operationalization of the machine while providing necessary training to the artisans to maximize utility," he added.

This development is expected to breathe new life into the Namdha sector, preserve its rich legacy and improve the livelihoods of hundreds of artisans dependent on this culturally significant art form, which has a huge demand, both locally as well in outside markets.

J&K Bank Organises Credit Awareness Workshop For FPOs In Jammu



Observer News Service

SRINAGAR- Reiterating its commitment to support the agricultural ecosystem of the region, J&K Bank Friday organised a workshop focused on creating credit awareness among Farmer Producer Organisations (FPOs) in Jammu.

The General Manager NABARD, Vikas Mittal chaired the workshop in presence of Mission Director Shubra Sharma, Bank's General Manager (RAM/GSS) Rakesh Magotra and General Manager & Divisional Head (Jammu) Ashok Gupta and other senior officers from the Bank and JKRLM. The workshop witnessed active participation of representatives from various FPOs promoted by Jammu & Kashmir Rural Livelihoods Mission (JKRLM) across the Jammu region.

In his remarks on the occasion, GM NABARD Vikas Mittal said that FPOs are key to transforming agriculture into a remunerative enterprise. He said, "NABARD has been consistently working to promote and strengthen these collectives across the country. We welcome the initiative by J&K Bank and JKRLM in organising this workshop, which will help sensitise FPOs to financial

products and credit readiness, laying the foundation for enhanced productivity and market linkages."

Asserting that FPOs represent the collective strength of our rural communities, MD JKRLM Shubra Sharma said, "Through JKRLM's sustained efforts, we are promoting inclusive rural development with women and smallholder farmers at the forefront. Our collaboration with J&K Bank and NABARD helps in enhancing financial literacy and unlock credit access—two critical enablers for long-term success of FPOs."

Addressing the participants on the occasion, GM Rakesh Magotra spoke about the growing importance of FPOs in transforming the rural economy through collective enterprise. He said, "Emerging as vital institutions in the country's agricultural value-chain, FPOs are instrumental in empowering small and marginal farmers by enabling better market access, improved bargaining power, and integration into the value-chain. J&K Bank is fully aligned with the national vision of strengthening these institutions through timely credit and handholding support."

White-Collar Job Demand In India Grew By 7% In July: Report

Press Trust Of India

MUMBAI- The white-collar job market in India witnessed a 7 per cent year-on-year rise in July, primarily driven by non-IT sectors like hospitality, a report said on Friday.

The growth was driven primarily by non-IT sectors, with Hospitality leading at over 26 per cent, followed by Insurance at 22 per cent, Education at 16 per cent, and Oil and Gas at 13 per cent, according to a report based on Naukri JobSpeak Index.

Hiring in the IT sector remained stable as compared to the last year. However, artificial intelligence-machine learning (AI-ML) roles continued their strong momentum with over 41 per cent growth, the report said. "Non-IT sectors have

been showing solid hiring momentum for a while now, especially when it comes to fresher roles. It is encouraging to see this consistent demand coming from industries like Hospitality, Insurance, and Education," Naukri's Chief Business Officer Pawan Goyal said.

The Naukri JobSpeak Index report is a monthly index that tracks Indian job market trends and hiring activity based on new job listings and recruiter searches on Naukri.com's resume database.

Further, the report revealed that fresher hiring grew by over 8 per cent year-on-year, while hiring for seasoned professionals with more than 16 years of experience grew by 13 per cent.

Unicorns and startups recorded a double-digit

growth of 23 per cent and 10 per cent, respectively, it added.

A wave of hiring activity swept across western India in July, with growth seen in all major western states like Gujarat, Maharashtra and Rajasthan.

Gujarat's industrial centres Surat and Jamnagar witnessed a hiring surge of over 18 per cent and 12 per cent, respectively, the report said.

Similarly, hiring in Rajasthan's emerging markets, Udaipur and Jodhpur, grew by over 12 per cent and 11 per cent, respectively, it added.

Maharashtra also contributed significantly, with Kolhapur witnessing a 21 per cent growth in hiring, followed by Aurangabad and Nagpur, both recording 15 per cent growth.

Gold Declines ₹400 To ₹97,620/10 G; Silver Tumbles ₹2,500

Press Trust Of India

NEW DELHI- Gold prices dipped Rs 400 to Rs 97,620 per 10 grams in the national capital on Friday due to continuous selling by stockists, according to the All India Sarafa Association.

The yellow metal of 99.9 per cent purity had closed at Rs 98,020 per 10 grams in the previous market session.

In the national capital, gold of 99.5 per cent purity dipped by Rs 300 to Rs 97,500 per 10 grams (inclusive of all taxes) on Friday against the preceding session's closing level of Rs 97,800 per 10 grams.

"Gold traded weak, tracking softness in the international markets, which hovered near USD 3,290 per ounce.

"The decline comes amid pressure from the US Federal Reserve's continued hawkish stance and no indication of near-term interest rate cuts, which has dampened sentiment for safe-haven assets," Jaiteen Trivedi, VP Research Analyst, Commodity and Currency at LKP Securities, said.

As per the Sarafa Association, silver prices also extended the losses for the second straight day and tumbled by Rs 2,500 to Rs 1,09,500 per kilogram (inclusive of all taxes) on Friday.

The white metal had ended at Rs 1,12,000 per kg in the previous market close.

On the global front, spot gold went up 0.12 per cent to trade at USD 3,294.31 per ounce.

"Gold continued to trade with a negative bias on the last trading day of the week and is set to close lower on a weekly basis.

"This decline is attributed to an overall decrease in haven demand and a strong recovery in the US dollar, which surged to a nine-week high, gaining more than 2 per cent so far this week," Saumil Gandhi, Senior Analyst - Commodities at HDFC Securities, said.

Spot silver slipped by 0.75 per cent to USD 36.44 per ounce in New York.

According to Manav Modi, Analyst, Precious Metal Research at Motilal Oswal Financial Services, silver prices stayed subdued amidst the fall in industrial metals while market participants remain cautious due to global tariff uncertainties.

India's Mfg Sector Growth Hits 16-Month High In July On Expansion In Output, Sales

Press Trust Of India

MUMBAI- India's manufacturing sector growth strengthened in July to a 16-month high of 59.1, supported by faster increases in new orders and output amid favourable demand conditions, a monthly survey said on Friday.

The seasonally adjusted HSBC India Manufacturing Purchasing Managers' Index rose from 58.4 in June to 59.1 in July, signalling the strongest improvement in the health of the sector since March 2024.

In the Purchasing Managers' Index (PMI) parlance, a print above 50 means expansion, while a score below 50 denotes contraction.

"India recorded a 59.1 manufacturing PMI in July, up from 58.4 during the prior month. This marked a 16-month high for the Indian manufacturing sector, which benefited from strong growth in new orders and output," Pranjul Bhandari, Chief India Economist at HSBC, said.

As per the survey, overall sales rose at the fastest pace in close to five years. Subsequently, production growth strengthened to a 15-month high in July and outpaced the series trend.

Sonali Mishra Assumes Charge as Director General, Railway Protection Force

Observer News Service

New Delhi: The Railway Protection Force (RPF) welcomes Ms. Sonali Mishra, IPS (1993 batch, Madhya Pradesh cadre) as the new Director General of RPF, marking a historic first in the 143-year journey of the Force.

The Appointments Committee of the Cabinet approved her appointment as DG/RPF until her superannuation on October 31, 2026.

An officer known for her professionalism, dedication and leadership across key policing roles, Mishra brings over three decades of distinguished service to the post. Prior to this assignment, she served as Additional Director General of Police (Selection/Recruitment) with the additional charges of ADG, Police Training & Research Institute, Bhopal and Director of the Madhya Pradesh Police Academy, Bhopal. She has also



served in the CBI, BSF and has international exposure of having served with the United Nations Peacekeeping Mission in Kosovo.

She has been honoured with prestigious awards including the President's Police Medal for Distinguished Service and the Police Medal for Meritorious Service in recognition of her commitment to excellence and professionalism.

The Railway Protection Force, mandated with the security of railway property, passenger safety and crime prevention across one of the world's largest rail networks, stands to benefit

from her visionary and inclusive leadership. Her extensive experience across state and central police organizations is expected to bring renewed momentum to modernization, capacity building and community engagement within the Force.

In particular, her focus will be on strengthening RPF's initiatives in leveraging cutting-edge technology and enhancing its role in preventing organised crime such as human trafficking and crimes against vulnerable passengers.

On assuming charge, Mishra expressed gratitude for the opportunity to serve and re-affirmed her commitment to upholding the values of vigilance, courage and service that define the RPF's motto "Yasho Labhasva".

The Force proudly welcomes its new leader and looks forward to achieving new milestones under her stewardship.

Over 3.25 Lakh Child Abuse Cases Disposed Of By Fast-track Courts: Centre

Press Trust Of India

New Delhi: A total of more than 3.25 lakh cases have been disposed of by 746 fast-track special courts -- including 405 exclusive POCSO courts -- operational across 30 states and Union territories, the Women and Child Development Ministry said on Friday.

The fast-track special courts (FTSCs) have been formed to expedite trials in cases of rape and child sexual abuse, the ministry informed Lok Sabha in a written response on Friday.

These courts have disposed of more than 3.25 lakh cases as of April 30, 2025, the ministry said.

Uttar Pradesh leads with nearly 90,000 disposals, followed by Madhya Pradesh with over 31,000 and Kerala with over 25,000 cases, according to data shared by Minister of State for Women and Child Development, Savitri Thakur.

In response to another question, Thakur said 2 lakh Anganwadi centres have been approved to be upgraded as 'Saksham Anganwadis' for improved nutrition delivery and imparting early

childhood care and education.

"To ensure that the police stations are more women friendly and approachable, as they would be the first and single point of contact for any woman walking into a police station, 14,658 women help desks (WHDs) have been set up, of which 13,743 are headed by woman police officers," she said in response to another question.

To provide help and support to needy women and women in distress, an Emergency Response Support System (ERSS-112) has been established in all the 36 states and UTs for various emergencies, with computer aided dispatch of field/ police resources, Thakur said.

"Since its launch, more than 43 crore calls have been handled so far. In addition to ERSS, a fully-functional dedicated women helpline (WHL-181) is operational in 35 states/UTs except West Bengal.

The WHL has also been integrated with ERSS. So far, the women helplines have handled over 2.10 crore calls and assisted over 84.43 lakh women," the minister said in another written response.

71ST NATIONAL FILM AWARDS

Shah Rukh Khan, Vikrant Share Best Actor Honour; '12th Fail' Is Best Feature Film

Press Trust Of India

New Delhi, Aug 1: Superstar Shah Rukh Khan on Friday won his first National Film Award for best actor for the 2023 blockbuster "Jawan", an honour that he shared with "12th Fail" star Vikrant Massey.

Actor Rani Mukerji was named the best actress for her performance in "Mrs. Chatterjee vs Norway".

"12th Fail", directed by Vidhu Vinod Chopra, was adjudged the best feature film, while the best director honour went to Sudipto Sen for "The Kerala Story".

Filmmaker Karan Johar's "Rocky Aur Rani Kii Prem Kahaani" bagged the award for best popular film for wholesome entertainment, while Meghna Gulzar's "Sam Bahadur" was named best feature film promoting national, social and environmental values.

"Sam Bahadur" was also recognised for costume and make-up honours.

The National Film Awards for the year 2023 was announced by jury head and filmmaker Ashutosh Gowariker.

CONTD. FROM FRONT PAGE

India Refuses

strategy: not allowing partisan rhetoric to derail long standing bilateral ties.

Tariffs To Hit

a consumer base of 140 crore. In 2024-25, the bilateral trade between India and the US stood at USD 131.8 billion (USD 86.5 billion exports and USD 45.3 billion imports).

According to think tank GTRI, the 25 per cent tariffs will not be applicable on the exempted categories, including finished pharmaceutical drugs, active pharmaceutical ingredients (APIs), and other key drug inputs; energy products such as crude oil, refined fuels, natural gas, coal, and electricity; critical minerals; and a wide range of electronics and semiconductors, like computers, tablets, smartphones, solid-state drives, flat panel displays, and integrated circuits.

According to an exporter, apparel sector that exports USD 5.33 billion worth of goods to the US will be the most impacted.

Sudhir Sekhri, Chairman, AEPC, said: "We request immediate government intervention to offset this huge setback. Exporters have their back against the wall and will have to sell below cost to keep their factories running and avoid mass layoffs."

Kanpur-based Growmore International Ltd MD Yadendra Singh Sachan said that exporters should use this opportunity to explore new markets.

"We need to diversify our exports," Sachan said.

Federation of Indian Export Organizations (FIEO) Director General Ajay Sahai said that the US order provides relaxation for goods in transit and those loaded on ship for final sailing to the US by August 7.

US President Donald Trump unveiled sweeping new tariffs on dozens of countries, including 25 per cent duties for goods from India, marking a new era of American protectionism that triggered fresh tensions and concerns over a much wider disruption in the global trade landscape.

The US president signed an executive order that raised tariffs for over five dozen countries, with Washington's negotiations for trade deals going down to the wire ahead of the August 1 deadline.

In the Executive Order titled 'Further Modifying The Reciprocal Tariff Rates', Trump announced tariff rates for nearly 70 nations.

With America, India had a trade surplus (the difference between imports and exports) of USD 41 billion in 2024-25. It was USD 35.32 billion in 2023-24 and USD 27.7 billion in 2022-23.

In 2024, India's main exports to the US included drug formulations and biologicals (USD 8.1 billion), telecom instruments (USD 6.5 billion), precious and semi-precious stones (USD 5.3 billion), petroleum products (USD 4.1 billion), vehicle and auto components (USD 2.8 billion), gold and other precious metal jewelry (USD 3.2 billion), ready-made garments of cotton, including accessories (USD 2.8 billion), and products of iron and steel (USD 2.7 billion).

Imports included crude oil (USD 4.5 billion), petroleum products (USD 3.6 billion), coal, coke (USD 3.4 billion), cut and polished diamonds (USD 2.6 billion), electric machinery (USD 1.4 billion), aircraft, spacecraft and parts (USD 1.3 billion), and gold (USD 1.3 billion).

India's merchandise exports to the US rose 22.8 per cent to USD 25.51 billion in the April-June quarter this financial year, while imports rose 11.68 per cent to USD 12.86 billion.

Amarnath Yatra

Bagwati Nagar base camp in Jammu for the second consecutive day.

"Due to the recent heavy rains, repair and maintenance works are required to be undertaken on the Baltal Axis of Shri Amarnath Ji Yatra route. In the interest of safety of the yatri, no Yatra will be allowed on 3rd August from the Baltal route also," Kashmir Divisional Commissioner Vijay Kumar Bidhuri said.

He said further updates will be issued in the due course of time.

Bhiduri said there have been recent heavy rains in yatra area on both Pahalgam and Baltal axis, and so, maintenance works of urgent nature are required to be carried out on the Baltal Axis following this heavy rainfall.

Torrential rains in Kashmir had rendered the roads unsafe, following which the pilgrimage was suspended on both the Baltal and Pahalgam routes on Wednesday.

The requisite repair and maintenance works are already being carried out on Pahalgam route of the Yatra, the divisional commissioner added.

On July 17, the yatra was suspended due to heavy rains at the twin base camps in Kashmir.

So far this year, more than 4.05 lakh yatrias have paid obeisance at the Holy Cave shrine, he said.

A total of 1,44,124 pilgrims have departed from the Jammu base camp for the Valley since July 2, when Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha flagged off the first batch.

Last year, over 5.10 lakh pilgrims paid obeisance at the cave shrine, which houses a naturally formed ice lingam.

60 Judge Positions

Courts of Jammu & Kashmir, there are 50 vacancies. Out of 322 sanctioned posts, 272 judicial officers are in place, as per data from the Department of Justice's MIS portal on July 28, 2025.

At the national level, the government said that between May 1, 2014, and July 21, 2025, a total of 70 judges were appointed to the Supreme Court, and 1058 new judges were appointed to the High Courts, with 794 additional judges made permanent. The sanctioned strength of High Court judges rose from 906 in 2014 to 1122 by July 2025.

The Centre also clarified that appointing judicial officers in District and Subordinate Courts is the responsibility of the State governments and respective High Courts, under Articles 233 and 234 of the Constitution.

The government added that the Supreme Court's 2007 order in the Malik Mazhar Sultan case prescribes timelines that States and High Courts are required to follow for the timely recruitment of judicial officers.

Trump Sparks South

a post on his social media platform, Truth Social, where he also reiterated an additional penalty linked to New Delhi's purchases from Russia. While August 1 marked the tariff deadline, the new levies will take effect from August 7.

Back in April, Trump had announced a 26% "discounted reciprocal tariff" for India—1% higher than the rate now being imposed.

Wendy Cutler, Senior Vice President of the Asia Society Policy Institute (ASPI) and former Deputy US Trade Representative, stated that India, once seen as a "promising candidate for an early agreement," was now assigned a 25% tariff.

"This casts doubt on the fate of a bilateral trade agreement. The President's frustration with India on trade and broader issues was evident in his Truth Social post," Cutler remarked.

Ajay Sahai, Director General of the Federation of Indian Export Organisations (FIEO), said the order includes some relief for exporters. Goods in transit and those loaded on ships bound for the US by August 7 are exempt. Additionally, products cleared for US consumption by October 5 will not be subject to the new tariffs.

Cutler also noted the logistical challenges US customs will face due to the varying tariffs now imposed worldwide. The seven-day buffer before implementation may help, but importers and businesses should expect initial disruptions.

"US companies will also struggle to navigate this complex new tariff regime, especially amid ongoing uncertainties around additional sectoral tariffs and the risk of more penalties for countries not seen as cooperating fully," she said.

Trump explained in the executive order that some trade partners have made or are nearing meaningful trade and security commitments with the US. Others, he claimed, have not addressed trade imbalances or aligned on key economic and security matters, warranting continued tariffs.

The order states that new tariffs will apply to goods entered for consumption—or withdrawn from warehouses—starting 12:01 a.m. EDT, seven days after the order's issue date. Tariffs range from 10% to 40%: Japan (15%), Laos and Myanmar (40%), Pakistan (19%), Sri Lanka

(20%), and the United Kingdom (10%).

Citing a "massive trade deficit" with India, Trump said, "While India is our friend, their tariffs are too high—among the highest in the world—and they enforce some of the most strenuous and obnoxious non-monetary trade barriers globally."

He also criticized India's military and energy ties with Russia, stating: "They buy most of their military equipment from Russia and are among the largest buyers of Russian energy—alongside China—at a time when the world wants Russia to stop the killing in Ukraine. All of this is not good!"

He continued, "India will therefore be subject to a 25% tariff, plus a penalty, starting August 1."

Trump further attacked the India-Russia relationship, saying, "I don't care what India does with Russia. They can take their dead economies down together, for all I care."

He added: "We have done very little business with India. Their tariffs are too high—among the highest in the world. Likewise, Russia and the US do almost no business together. Let's keep it that way."

Referring to former Russian President Dmitry Medvedev, Trump said, "Tell Medvedev, the failed former President of Russia, who thinks he's still President, to watch his words. He's entering very dangerous territory!"

India responded by saying it would take all necessary steps to safeguard national interests and is examining the implications of the tariffs.

Trump also referenced India's membership in BRICS (Brazil, Russia, India, China, and South Africa), calling it an anti-US bloc.

At a White House event Wednesday, Trump was asked about the penalty related to India's Russian purchases. He replied, "We're negotiating. But yes, BRICS is a factor. It's essentially anti-US, and India is a member—if you can believe it. It's an attack on the dollar, and we're not going to let that happen."

He stated that the tariffs on India stem from both its trade deficit and BRICS affiliation.

Encounter Rages In

will be shared accordingly," he said. Meanwhile, Police in a post on X, informed that SOG, J&K Police, Army and CRPF are on job. "#Encounter has started in the Akhal area of district #Kulgam. SOG, J&K Police, Army and CRPF on job. Further details shall follow," the post reads. (KNO)

J&K Adds 250 MBBS

— a net increase of 250 seats over five years. For the first time, the Union Territory of Ladakh has been allotted 100 MBBS seats, marking its entry into India's network of medical education institutions. The region had long demanded a medical college to address its shortage of healthcare professionals and improve local infrastructure.

Officials attributed the rise in J&K's capacity to the establishment of new colleges and expansion of existing ones under centrally sponsored schemes.

"This is a major step towards strengthening the healthcare system and addressing the doctor-patient ratio in both Jammu & Kashmir and Ladakh," a senior health official said.

With 1,385 MBBS seats in 2024–25, Jammu & Kashmir ranks around 21st among all states and UTs — ahead of smaller and northeastern states like Jharkhand, Himachal Pradesh and Meghalaya, but behind states such as Karnataka, Maharashtra, Tamil Nadu, and Uttar Pradesh. (inputs from KNO)

LG Mourns Death

Governor conveyed his condolences to the bereaved family and directed senior officials to ensure the best possible medical treatment for the injured and all necessary assistance to the family of the deceased officer.

Taking to social media platform X, the Lieutenant Governor posted:

"Extremely saddened by the landslide incident in Dharmari, Reasi in which we have lost an outstanding officer Sh Rajinder Singh, JKAS 2011, SDM Ramnagar and his son. The tragedy is heart-wrenching. My deepest condolences to bereaved family and I pray that the injured recover quickly."

PM, Omar Trade

visiting the Statue of Unity. His visit to SoU gives an important message of unity and will inspire our fellow Indians to travel to different parts of India."

Omar was in Ahmedabad to attend a tourism event. He also shared photos of his morning run along the Sabarmati Riverfront and visit to the Statue of Unity.

"It's one of the nicest places I've been able to run & it was a pleasure to get to share it with so many other walkers/runners. I even managed to run past the amazing Atal Foot Bridge," Omar posted.

Responding to the Prime Minister's message, Omar wrote: "I'm a firm believer that travel broadens the horizons & the mind @nar-endramodi ji. It's especially important for us in J&K as tourism is a crucial part of our economy & has the potential to gainfully employ lakhs of people. That's why I & my colleagues are trying to convince more of our fellow Indians to visit J&K, especially after the tragic events earlier this year."

Speaking to reporters at Ekta Nagar, Omar said, "Both these structures are a true tribute to Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel, who is known as the Iron Man of India. These structures are the symbols of new India. Just imagine that this dam helped us in providing water to arid regions like Kutch. People's lives changed because of this project."

"We (the people of J&K) were not that fortunate, because we could never conceive such projects. Because we were not allowed to stop river waters. Now, when the Indus Water Treaty has been suspended, we are seeing a ray of hope," he added.

LG To Army

safeguarding the unity, integrity and sovereignty of the country," Sinha noted.

He also outlined a range of reforms and initiatives undertaken by the Jammu and Kashmir administration in recent years, aimed at driving inclusive development and ensuring sustained peace and stability in the region.

The delegation, led by Lt Gen Harjeet Singh Sahi, Commandant of the Army War College, included faculty members and senior officers from various security forces. The interaction reflected India's increasing emphasis on joint civil-military preparedness to confront contemporary geopolitical and strategic challenges.

HC Imposes Rs 50K

Srinagar, and that the subsequent auction and allotment of the plot in favour of A F Mir as illegal.

Officials had refuted the petitioner's claim, alleging that the original allotment was cancelled as early as 2001, and his documents in this regard are forged.

"....the Court finds sufficient reasons not only to dismiss the instant writ petition due to misconduct and concealment of material facts but also to levy exemplary costs as a way to express its disapproval and to discourage the improper use of constitutional remedies," the court said and imposed Rs 50000 as costs on the petitioner "in a view to curb such abuse of the judicial process, to deter litigants from engaging in unscrupulous and dishonest pleadings, and to prevent recurrence of such malpractice."

"The said amount shall be deposited before the Registry of this Court within two weeks from today and thereafter shall be released in favour of Respondent No. 8 (Mir) to compensate for the hardship and inconvenience caused to him," the court added.

Earlier the Bench observed the petitioner deliberately suppressed the filing and dismissal of a prior civil suit on the same cause of action, and approached the High Court with a calculated attempt to re-agitate already rejected claims by misleading this constitutional forum.

"The concealment was neither innocent nor incidental; it was a conscious attempt to secure relief by misusing the process of law."

J&K Bans Synthetic

(Food Products Standards and Food Additives) Regulations, 2011, use of Synthetic food colours is prohibited in prepared food items such as Wazwan, Biryani, Pickles, and other meat-based preparations (ready-to-eat)," read the official communication.

The presence of such prohibited synthetic

colours poses a serious risk to public health. In terms of Section 59 of the Food Safety and Standards Act, 2006, such violations are punishable and may attract Imprisonment for a term which may extend to three months, and also with Fine which may extend up to 3,00,000 (three lakhs).

"All Food Business Operators (FBOs) engaged in the manufacture, preparation, processing, sale or service of ready-to-eat food items, especially meat-based products such as Kebabs, Wazwan, Biryani, Chicken Tikka, Pickles, etc, are advised to strictly avoid the use of synthetic food colours in any prepared food items," warned the statement.

Meanwhile D&FCO has sought cooperation of all stakeholders to ensure that only safe, wholesome food reaches the consumer.

NIT Campus Stalled

a petition filed earlier this year by environmental activist Dr. Raja Muzaffar Bhat.

The bench, led by Justice Prakash Srivastava, concluded that the case was premature. But it left a door open.

If authorities move ahead with the project in the future, Dr. Bhat, or anyone else, can return to the tribunal.

The relief was immediate and visible across the cluster of villages bordering the Karewa. "This is our land, our orchards," said Ghulam Nabi, a 62-year-old farmer from Ranbirpora. "The apples and almonds here don't just feed Pulwama, they go across the valley. We were scared this land would be lost in the name of development."

Dr. Bhat, who had filed the petition earlier this year, said the threat was real. "Had I not gone to the NGT, the damage would have been done by now. This order saved our Karewa land and thousands of trees across 4,500 kanals."

In his plea, Dr. Bhat had alleged that authorities were planning to cut down hundreds of mature trees in the horticultural belt of Nawa to build the new NIT campus. The region, known for its layered soil formed by glacial deposits, supports some of the richest orchards in the valley.

Alarmed by the prospect of losing this fragile ecosystem, the NGT had issued a notice in April and sought responses from NIT Srinagar and the district administration.

At that time, the tribunal had also asked for details of any planned construction and an estimate of trees likely to be axed.

The response from NIT Srinagar was categorical.

In its affidavit, the institution said it had not been allotted any land in Nawa. It clarified that the institute continues to function from its current campus in Hazratbal, Srinagar, spread over about 67 acres. "There has been no transfer, no possession, no cutting of trees," the statement said.

The Deputy Commissioner of Pulwama also submitted a similar affidavit, confirming that no steps had been taken to acquire land or start any construction.

The affidavits further added that any future project would follow due process and obtain all necessary environmental clearances.

Still, residents and activists remain cautious.

The Karewas, or plateaus formed by ancient lake beds, are ecologically significant but often poorly protected. In recent years, large tracts have been lost to road expansion, brick kilns, and construction projects.

Experts warn that such changes can damage the region's already fragile groundwater and soil systems.

"This case shows how quickly things can change on the ground in Kashmir," said Abdul Qayoom, an environmental scientist based in Srinagar. "One day, a plan is just on paper. The next, trees are gone, and there's no going back."

For now, the people of Nawa say they'll stay vigilant. Many believe the issue hasn't ended, only paused.

"Today it's the NIT, tomorrow it could be a shopping complex or a housing project," said Razia Bano, a teacher in the village. "The only way to protect this land is to speak up before the first tree falls."

The NGT order may have dismissed the petition on technical grounds, but it has also served as a warning. If development does come to Pulwama's Karewas, it will face a community that's ready to defend its roots.

India Lead By 52 On Day 2 Of Fifth & Final England Test

Press Trust of India

LONDON: Mohammed Siraj produced a lion-hearted spell and Prasidh Krishna cleaned up the tail to script India's spirited comeback after a brutal assault from England openers on day two of the fifth and final Test here on Friday.

After a forgettable opening session where Siraj and Co. were taken to the cleaners by Ben Duckett (43 off 38) and Zak Crawley (64 off 57), the Indian pacers redeemed themselves by bowling out England for 247 in the final session, giving the hosts only a slender 23-run lead.

Both Siraj and Prasidh ended with four-wicket hauls.

India lost the reliable K L Rahul (7 off 28) in their second innings to a rare loose shot from the opener. At close, India were 75 for two in 18 overs, leading England by 52 runs.

Yashasvi Jaiswal (51 batting off 49) battled with aggressive intent despite being dropped twice while Sai Sudharsan (11)



was trapped in front by Gus Atkinson shortly before stumps.

Jaiswal had got going with three fours in Atkinson's opening over including a sublime straight drive before being given a chance on 20 ad 40. He brought up his third fifty of the series with a ramp off Jamie Overton

that went all the way.

Close to stumps, a third catch was dropped when Zak Crawley grassed a regulation chance offered by Sudharsan at third slip.

Before that, England were bowled out in the final session following Harry Brook's belligerent 53 off 64 balls. The highlight of his

effort was a falling sweep off Siraj that went all the way for six.

In the afternoon session, Siraj struck thrice in a fiery eight over spell. At tea, England were 215 for seven, effectively eight down with Chris Woakes not available to bat due to a shoulder injury.

The wickets to fall were Eng-

land's batting mainstay Joe Root (29 off 45), Zak Crawley (64 off 57), stand-in captain Ollie Pope (22 off) and Jacob Bethell (6 off 14).

A heated exchange of words between Root and Prasidh was also among the talking points of the session.

After being blown away by the England opener in the opening session, Indian pacers found their lengths post the break. Prasidh sent back Crawley who mistimed a pull to be pounced at midwicket.

Siraj got rid of Pope and Root with a nip backer before firing an inswinging yorker into Bethell's pads. The pitch continues to provide plenty of assistance to the seamers.

Whether it was targeting the pads with the wobbled seam or producing late swing, Siraj was relentless, displaying that he was not a firm believer of workload management.

Prasidh too was impressive and struck thrice in the session including the wickets of Jamie Smith and Overton at the stroke of tea.

DYSS Anantnag Organises 5KM-Long Walkathon & Kho Kho Tournament

Observer News Service

ANANTNAG: A Walkathon was organised on Friday by the Department of Youth Services and Sports Anantnag, covering a 5-kilometer stretch from Mominabad Crossing to Donipawa Crossing. The event witnessed enthusiastic participation of around 80 staff members from different zones of the district.

The Walkathon was jointly flagged off by the Zonal Physical Education Officer Achabal and the District Activity Incharge. The initiative aimed to

promote fitness, camaraderie and a healthy lifestyle among department staff.

The Department of Youth Services and Sports Anantnag also concluded the District Level Kho-Kho Tournament for U-19 Boys at Middle School Bona Dailgam. The grand finale witnessed an intense and thrilling battle between Higher Secondary School (HSS) Khanabal and HSS Mattan. In a display of outstanding athleticism and teamwork, HSS Mattan emerged victorious, defeating HSS Khanabal in

the final match.

Meanwhile, the officials of the Department of Youth Services and Sports (YSS), Anantnag, held a special Dua-i-Magfirat Majlis at Anantnag, following the culmination of the district-level Walkathon.

The prayer gathering was organized to offer prayers for forgiveness and eternal peace to the departed soul of the wife of Shabir Ahmad Dar, Junior Assistant of Zone Bijbehara, who passed away on Thursday at her residence in Pampora after a prolonged illness.



Durand Cup: Indian Navy Edge Past Real Kashmir FC 2-1



Press Trust of India

IMPHAL: Indian Navy edged past a more fancied Real Kashmir FC 2-1 in a closely contested Group F encounter of the Durand Cup, here on Friday.

Goals from Vijay Marandi (6th min) and Sreyas V G (70th min) ensured full points for the Sailors, while Franck William Sessegnon's 64th-minute strike proved to be a consolation for the Snow Leopards.

The Sailors struck early in the sixth minute when Roshan Panna made a slick run down the right and delivered a low cross into the box.

Marandi timed his run well and tapped it in with his knee, handing Navy the lead amid loud cheers from the local crowd.

The first half saw some end-to-end action, but the score remained 1-0 in Navy's favour going into the break.

Ahteab, who looked lively, was denied twice, once by a tight angle save from Bhaskar and another by misfiring just before the half-time whistle.

Real Kashmir resumed the second half with high-pressure strategy.

Their persistence paid off in the 64th minute when Sessegnon levelled the score. The Ivory Coast player made a sharp run behind Navy's backline to latch onto a sublime long ball from Seila Toure and finished confidently past Bhaskar Roy. But the Sailors were quick to regain their lead. Just six minutes later, in the 70th minute, Panna once again turned provider.

His low diagonal pass found Sreyas V G inside the right edge of the box, who finished with precision from his right foot to restore Navy's advantage at 2-1. In the end, the Indian Navy walked away with all three points and climbed to the top of Group F.

Khalid Jamil Named Indian Men's Football Team Coach

Press Trust of India

NEW DELHI: Khalid Jamil on Friday became the first Indian to become the head coach of the national football team in 13 years as he piped Stephen Constantine and Stefan Tarkovic to grab the coveted post.

The last Indian to serve as the head coach of the national men's team was Savio Medeira, who held the posi-

tion from 2011 to 2012.

The 48-year-old Jamil had guided the unheralded Aizawl Football Club to a famous I-League title in 2017 and has a tough task at hand to turn-around the struggling Indian team's declining fortunes.

A former India international and currently in charge of Indian Super League side Jamshedpur FC, Jamil was selected by the All

India Football Federation's (AIFF) executive committee.

Constantine was a former India head coach while Tarkovic has managed the Slovakia national team in the past.

The AIFF Technical Committee, led by legendary striker IM Vijayan, had shortlisted the three candidates for the executive committee's final decision.

An AFC Pro License Diploma holder, Jamil will succeed Spaniard Manolo Marquez, who parted ways with the AIFF last month following India's recent struggles.

His first assignment in his new role will be the Central Asian Football Association (CAFA) Nations Cup, to be held in Tajikistan and Uzbekistan from August 29.



No Show At The Oval Triggers Debate About Bumrah's Test Future

Press Trust of India

LONDON: India's premier fast bowler Jasprit Bumrah not taking part in the series decider against England at The Oval has sparked a debate over his Test future.

Considering his injury-ravaged body, it is highly unlikely that Bumrah would ever be fully available for a five-match series in the foreseeable future. The next such assignment isn't until 2027, at home against Australia.

He made himself available for three Tests out of five in England and stuck to his side of the bargain but the followers of the game including greats like Anil Kumble were left wanting more with the series on the line in the final Test. Him being released from squad on Friday also had the tongues wagging. India's assistant coach Ryan ten



Doeschate called the subject of Bumrah's availability a complex one but considering the risks associated with his fragile back following two surgeries, the team management decided to honour the pace spearhead's decision that he

took before the start of the series.

In the near future, India play only two-match Test series against the West Indies and South Africa while the important white ball commitments include the Asia Cup in September and the T20 World

Cup at home early next year.

"There is an Asia Cup around the corner, the T20 World Cup is also there. He would want to play those events. Considering his body, he can't play every game. He needs to be managed with extra care. Playing him at The Oval would have been a huge risk.

"Going forward, there needs to be a clear plan on how to manage Bumrah's Test career," said a BCCI source.

The 31-year-old Bumrah bowled 119.4 overs across three Tests and took 14 wickets including two five-wicket hauls at Leeds and Lord's. India's only win of the series thus far came at Edgbaston where Bumrah was rested.

Without a doubt, he figures among the world's best but considering the risks involved, should he be allowed to pick and choose

games? Is that fair on the other Indian fast bowlers?

For context, workhorse Mohammed Siraj has featured in all five games of an intensely-fought series. In the media interaction post day one at The Oval, majority of the questions revolved around Bumrah.

The 31-year-old became a household name with his exploits in the shortest format but it did not take him long to gain respect of the opposition after making his Test debut in 2018.

Post the England series, the Indian team selectors will sit down and review the tour. On top of their agenda would be Bumrah's red-ball future. Should he continue to be used sparingly in an important series or sacrifice one format for the other? The picture should be clearer soon.

Trials For Junior & Senior Yogsana Nationals On Aug 5

The J&K Yogsana Sports Association will conduct selection trials for the upcoming 6th Junior & Senior C National Yogsana Sports Championship 2025-26 (Men & Women), scheduled to take place from September 28 to October 1 at PB Siddhartha Arts & Science College, Siddhartha Group of Institutions, Vijayawada, Andhra Pradesh, under the aegis of Yogsana Bharat.

The selection trials will be held on August 5 at the Yoga Hall, Bakshi Stadium, Srinagar, for eligible athletes from across the J&K.

This initiative aims to identify and field the best Yogsana athletes from J&K for participation at the national level. The association said it is dedicated to ensuring a fair, transparent, and merit-based selection process.

"The J&K Yogsana Sports Association continues to work towards the growth of Yogsana as a competitive sport and strives to create greater opportunities for youth engagement and excellence in this traditional discipline," it added. (Observer News Service)

Chris Woakes Ruled Out For Rest Of Fifth Test

Injury-plagued England were dealt a severe blow on Friday after seamer Chris Woakes was ruled out of the ongoing fifth and final Test against India with a suspected shoulder dislocation.

The all-rounder had to leave the field after landing awkwardly on his left shoulder while saving a ball hit by Karun Nair at long-off late during the opening day of the match on Thursday.

Woakes looked in visible pain as he walked off the field with his left arm wrapped in his sweater.

Earlier on Thursday, Woakes teammate Gus Atkinson said Woakes' injury didn't look good.

"I don't know too much about it, but it doesn't look great," Atkinson said after India reached 204 for 6 at stumps on the rain-affected day.

Woakes bowled 14 overs on the opening day, picking up the crucial wicket of KL Rahul and conceded 46 runs.

Woakes' injury has added to the woes of England, who are missing several key players, including captain Ben Stokes.

Atkinson picked up two wickets from his 19 overs on the opening day, and seemed confident to take up the responsibility in Woakes' absence. (PTI)

UAE To Host Cricket Tri-Series Ahead Of T20 World Cup

The United Arab Emirates will host a Twenty20 tri-series including Afghanistan and Pakistan later this month as part of the teams' buildup for next year's T20 World Cup. Sharjah will host all seven games of the tri-series, starting Aug. 29. Teams play against each other twice before the top two qualify for the final.

Pakistan and Afghanistan have already secured direct qualification for the T20 World Cup to be jointly hosted by India and Sri Lanka. UAE could also qualify but it has to play ICC's Asia-East Asia and Pacific qualifiers in Oman in October.

Afghanistan, which finished seventh in the last T20 World Cup, hasn't played a T20 since a bilateral series against Zimbabwe late last year. Pakistan is currently playing a T20 series against West Indies in the United States.

The tri-series will be followed by the Asia Cup, also scheduled to be held in the UAE, from Sept. 9 when Afghanistan takes on Hong Kong in the opening game.

Galatasaray Break Record To Sign Osimhen From Napoli

Galatasaray have signed striker Victor Osimhen from Serie A side Napoli for 75 million euros (85.74 million dollars), the Super Lig champions announced on Thursday, making the Nigerian the most expensive incoming transfer in Turkish soccer.

Osimhen's transfer shattered the previous record set by Fenerbahce when they signed Youssef En-Nesyri from Sevilla on a five-year contract for 20 million euros in July last year.

As part of the agreement, 10% of any future profit from Osimhen's next transfer will be paid to SSC Napoli, Galatasaray said.



"A four-year contract has been signed with the player, starting from the 2025-2026 season" Galatasaray said.

According to the agreement, the 26-year-old will receive net guaranteed salary of 15.0 million euros for each season.

Osimhen will also get a net loyalty bonus of 1.0 million euros per season and 5.0 million euros as image rights payments — compensating for the use of his name, image, and likeness in the club's branding and promotional activities. Napoli also confirmed the terms of the deal. (AP)









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