



A Child In His Arms: The Image That Defined Kishtwar's Rescue

What began as an act of instinct became the defining picture of Kishtwar's rescue efforts

Sadaket Ali Malik

Srinagar: Shah Nawaz still remembers the weight of the child in his arms. The night was cold, the air smelled of mud and floodwater, and the cries around him mixed with the roar of the mountain stream gone wild.

He had waded into the torrent as part of the State Disaster Response Force (SDRF), searching for survivors after a sudden cloudburst ripped through Chasoti village in Kishtwar's Padder area on August 14. Amid the wreckage, he found the [More on P10](#)

2 More Bodies Recovered, Toll Rises To 63

Two more bodies were recovered from the debris in this cloudburst-hit village in Jammu and Kashmir's Kishtwar district, taking the death toll [More on P10](#)

LG Deploys 10 Senior Officers For Relief Ops

The Lieutenant Governor administration on Monday deployed 10 senior IAS and IPS officers to supervise relief and rescue operations in the cloudburst-hit Chisoti [More on P10](#)

Kathua Cloudburst: MP Seeks PM Relief For Victims

Observer News Service

Srinagar: National Conference (NC) Member of Parliament Mian Altaf Ahmad on Monday said he would

seek compensation from the Prime Minister's Relief Fund for those affected by flash floods in Kathua district, instead of demanding a special package. [More on P10](#)

J&K On Alert: MeT Forecasts Heavy Rain, Flash Flood Risk



Firdaus Ali

Srinagar: Moderate to heavy rains lashed wide parts of Kashmir on Monday, prompting authorities to set up emergency control rooms in vulnerable parts of the valley, officials said.

Heavy rains lashed Srinagar, Kupwara, Baramulla, Anantnag and Pulwama districts of the valley since Monday morning.

They said in the Warnov forest area of Lolab in Kupwara, torrential rains accompanied by thunder forced people to rush

towards safer places, fearing a cloudburst.

The Jammu and Kashmir government has placed authorities and the public on high alert after the Meteorological Department (MeT) forecast moderate to heavy rainfall across several districts in the coming days, heightening fears of flash floods, landslides, and other calamities.

Officials said deputy commissioners, engineers, police, SDRF, and frontline workers have been directed to remain on the "highest level of [More on P10](#)

FORECAST

- Aug 18-19: Widespread rain, thunderstorms in Jammu region.
- Aug 20-22: Hot, humid; heavy showers in pockets.
- Aug 23-25: Fresh wet spell; risk of cloudbursts, flash floods.

MAJOR RISKS

- Cloudbursts in higher reaches
- Flash floods in low-lying areas
- Landslides/mudslides in hilly terrain
- Shooting stones on Jammu-Srinagar NH

GOVT ON HIGH ALERT

- Admin, police & SDRF on high preparedness
- Control rooms set up in vulnerable areas
- Relief camps, food & medicines stocked.

Sonamarg Receives Season's First Snowfall

Sonamarg received the season's first snowfall on Monday, while rains lashed the valley, bringing down the mercury across Kashmir.

Intermittent rainfall continued throughout the day across Kashmir and many parts of Jammu division today, which has brought the mercury down.

The upper reaches of Sonamarg have received

light snowfall today, marking the season's first whiteout.

The highest rainfall has been recorded in Qazigund, a gateway of Kashmir, with 25.0 mm, followed by 19.0 mm at Kokernag, according to the data prepared by the Meteorological department (MeT).

Srinagar, the summer capital of Jammu & Kashmir, recorded a rainfall of 17.2 mm since [More on P10](#)



Admin Issues Advisory

Amid multiple incidents of cloudbursts and heavy rainfall in recent weeks, authorities have sounded a high alert and stepped up disaster preparedness across Jammu and Kashmir. Officials from the J&K Disaster Management Authority (JKDMA) said that preparedness protocols remain always on standby and are fully activated during active [More on P10](#)

Jhelum, Tributaries Below Danger Mark

The authorities on Monday said that water level in the Jhelum and its tributaries is being closely monitored, and there is no immediate flood threat in the Valley. An official said there is currently no flood risk in Jammu and Kashmir, and water level is far below danger mark. According to the latest gauge readings, the river Jhelum stands at: [More on P10](#)

DSEK Issues SOPs

Directorate of School Education Kashmir on Monday issued an advisory for safety of school going students and staff amid inclement weather. According to a notification issued by Directorate School Education Kashmir, "In light of recent cloudburst incidents, all Chief Education Officers and Heads of Institutions (HOIs) are directed to [More on P10](#)

Revenue Official Jailed In 17-Year Old Bribery Case

M Ahmad

Srinagar: Observing that corruption is a malignant affliction that strikes at the very foundation of a democratic polity and the rule of law, Special Judge Anti-Corruption Pulwama on Monday convicted and sentenced a Girdawar (Revenue official) to three and a half years jail in connection with a bribery case registered nearly seventeen years ago.

The case had been registered by Vigilance Organisation Kashmir (now ACB) in 2008 following a complaint by a person that the revenue official, Ghulam Hassan Kumar of Kulgam, demanded Rs

2000 as bribe from him for demarcation of land in 2008. Subsequently, according to the prosecution, the VOK set up a trap and Kumar was caught red-handed while demanding and accepted the money consisting of one currency note of Rs.1000 (now withdrawn following demonetization), one note of Rs.500 and five notes of Rs.100 denomination. Later the VoK submitted the challan under section 5 (2) r/w 5 (1) (d) of J&K P.C Act Svt. 2006 and 161 RPC (taking of illegal gratification by public servant).

".....this court is of the considered opinion that the prosecution has succeeded in proving its case [More on P10](#)

State Child Rights Panel

21 Shortlisted For Top Post, 28 For Members: HC Told

M Ahmad

Srinagar: Authorities have shortlisted 21 and 28 applicants for the post of Chairperson and members respectively of State Commission for Protection of Child Rights, the High Court of J&K and Ladakh has been informed.

Hearing a Public Interest Litigation, a division bench of Chief Justice Arun Palli and Justice Rajesh Oswal adjourned the matter for six week after A.R. Malik, Senior Additional Advocate General,



sought the same to apprise the court about "further development in the matter" pertaining to State Commission for protection of child rights.

Earlier, Senior AAG filed a fresh status report and submitted that 548 applications were received by the authorities for the post of

chairperson. Out of it, he said, 21 candidates have been shortlisted as per the eligibility criteria set out in the advertisement issued way back in June 2023.

He submitted that 28 candidates have been shortlisted for the post of members.

In one of its previous hearings (6 May this year), the court had underlined that Section 44 of The Protection of Children from Sexual Offences Act, 2012 mandates monitoring of effective implementation of the provisions of the Act by the [More on P10](#)

Babar Qadri Murder Case

Ex-Bar Chief Mian Qayoom Charged Under UAPA

KO Web Desk

Srinagar: A special NIA court has framed charges under UAPA against former president of the Kashmir wing of the High Court Bar Association (HCBA), Mian Abdul Qayoom, in connection with the assassination of advocate Babar Qadri in September 2020.

Qayoom, 77, an executive member of separatist amalgam Hurriyat Conference, was arrested on June 25, 2024, as the principal conspirator behind Qadri's killing, allegedly by terrorists of the proscribed 'The Resistance Front' (TRF), a proxy of Pakistan-based Lashkar-e-Taiba.

Earlier, Qayoom's habeas corpus petition and his challenge to the arrest and remand process in the case were dismissed by the Jammu and Kashmir High Court in

February, reaffirming the legal propriety of the arrest and investigation.

He was taken into custody by the State Investigation Agency (SIA) of the Jammu and Kashmir Police, which took over the case in July 2023, after collecting evidence against him.

"In a significant development in the high-profile murder case of Qadri, the special designated court under the NIA Act has formally framed charges under Sections 16, 18, and 38 of the Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act against Qayoom," an official said.

He said the charges pertain to terrorism and conspiracy to commit a terrorist act.

Qayoom is the father-in-law of Jammu and Kashmir and Ladakh High Court judge Justice Javed Iqbal Wani.

The Srinagar police first filed a charge [More on P10](#)

Murder Of 14-Yr-Old Ganderbal Girl Sparks Outrage

Observer News Service

Srinagar: A 14-year-old schoolgirl was found murdered hours after being kidnapped from outside her home in central Kashmir's Ganderbal district on Sunday, officials said.

According to Ganderbal SSP Khalil Poswal, the girl was abducted from Sehpora village while she was out with her elder sister. "She was kidnapped, and now her body has been recovered. Some vital clues have been found. A murder



case under Section 103 of the Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita (BNS) has been registered and an SIT has been constituted for investigation," Poswal said.

The Class 7 student's body,

bearing stab wounds, was recovered near a road in Sehpora Batpora on Sunday morning. The incident triggered protests in the area, with residents demanding the immediate arrest and exemplary punishment of the culprits.

"The girl was attacked when she was with her sister. The elder sister escaped, but the younger one was brutally killed. We demand justice," said a neighbour of the victim's family. Forensic teams collected evidence, with [More on P10](#)

Observer News Service

Srinagar: Fifteen days have passed since authorities seized 12,000 kilograms of rotten meat from different parts of Kashmir, yet questions continue to mount over the fate of the scandal. Despite the scale of the recovery, no substantial follow-up action has been made public, leaving people angry and anxious about accountability.

The seizures — described by officials as "unfit for human consumption" — were reportedly



being transported from outside the Valley to local markets. While the consignment was

destroyed, locals allege that the crackdown ends with seizures alone, with no deterrent

action against those behind the racket. Questions are also being raised about why such large consignments repeatedly enter Kashmir without strict checks or accountability.

While two individuals have been booked so far, the scandal has dealt a heavy blow to the local food industry.

Restaurant owners reported an 80 per cent drop in sales following the scandal, blaming the lack of visible government enforcement in meat markets.

Locals have [More on P10](#)

PUBLIC NOTICE

I Ghulam Nabi Malla S/O Late Ali Mohammad Malla R/O Palhallan want to inform the general public through this notice that mistakenly my son's name registered as Abu Hurair in the date of birth certificate by issuing authority. Now i want to change it from above mentioned name to Mohammad Hadi Malla. Anyone having objection can contact the concerning authority within seven days.

fko

PUBLIC NOTICE

My name has been wrongly written in my University Marks Card as Ab Hamid Bhat while my correct name as per Board 10th, 12th, certificates is Abdul Hamid Bhat . Now I have applied for the correction of the same if anybody has any objection in this regard he/she may file them in the university of Kashmir within seven days. After that no objection shall be entertained.

Abdul Hamid Bhat
S/o Ab Rahim Bhat
R/o Hanji Laway pora Tehsil Beerwah Distt. Budgam

bmg

PUBLIC NOTICE

Notice is hereby given that Nisar Ahmad Bhat S/O Wali Mohd Bhat R/O: Kadder Kulgam intends to establish a new pesticide/fertilise/Seed business at village Kadder Kulgam

Any person or organization having any objection to the establishment of the said business is hereby informed to submit their objections in writing to Concerned Department within 7 days from the date of publication of this notice.

fzko

PUBLIC NOTICE

I Zareena Bano want to correct my name in my pan card bearing no :- ACQPF5889C wherein it has been wrongly written as Zeerina Fayaz while my correct name as per my Aadhar and service documents is Zareena Bano . If anybody has any objection in this regard he/she may file them in the concerned office within seven days. After that no objection shall be entertained.

Zareena Bano

jvd

PUBLIC NOTICE

I, Rafiqa Bano, wife of Late Nazir Ahmad Bhat, resident of Mukdam Mohalla, Near Jamia Masjid Abubakar, SumerBugh Lasjan, Tehsil B.K.Pora, District Budgam, inform that my husband Late Nazir Ahmad Bhat, passed away on 28.01.2023. It is to inform further that my father-in-law, Late Mohd Ramzan Bhat (father of Late Nazir Ahmad Bhat) the original holder of the electricity connection (Consumer No.0201040001584) at the above address passed away on 05.02.2022.

Now, I am applying for a name change on the electricity bill to transfer the connection on my name. In this regard, if anyone has any objection to this change, they may contact the concerned department within 07 days from the issue of this notice.

This 'No Objection Certificate' is issued to facilitate the change of name on the electricity bill and for any legal or official requirements.

Name: Rafiqa Bano
W/o: Late Nazir Ahmad Bhat
R/o : Mukdam Mohalla Near Jamia Masjid Abubakar,
Sumer Bugh Lasjan Tehsil B.K.Pora, Budgam,191101
Date: 18.08.2025

inf

PUBLIC NOTICE

I, Afreena, D/O Mohd. Maqbool Akhoo, R/O Check Sadrabal, Behind NIT, Hazratbal, Srinagar, hereby inform the general public that I am applying for a duplicate 9th Pass Certificate, pertaining to the year 2005, issued by Govt. Girls Higher Secondary School, Khanyar Srinagar. Therefore, If any person has any objection regarding the issuance of the said duplicate certificate, they may submit the same in writing to the office of the Principal Govt. Girls Higher Secondary School, Khanyar Srinagar, within seven (07) days from the date of publication of this notice. After the expiry of the said period, no objections shall be entertained.

inf

ازنیات یومی زنگیر

عنوان :- درخواست تخاب عزل نیر گجری ولرم جم نیر احمد گجری ساکن زاور موراد اجرائی لیگل بیرسٹیفیکٹ بحق خود

اشتہار ہرخاص و عام

معاملمندرجع عنوان الصدر میں سائل نے ایک درخواست بنرض لیگل بیر/ڈیپنڈنٹسٹیفیکٹ پیش کی ہے جو کمزیر کاروائی ہے اس بارے میں پواری حلقہ سے رپورٹ طلب کی گئی جس سے عیاں ہے کہ سائل کا والد نیر احمد گجری مورخہ 01-04-2024 کو فوت ہوا ہے اور متوفی کے ارثاں جائزہ میں ہے

مسماصفورہ بیگم بیوہ نیر احمد گھر یکام 42 سال نیو متوفی

مزل نیر ولد نیر احمد گجری زیر تعلیم 19 سال پیر متوفی

میشر نیر پیر -- 14 سال --

تقوئی نیر دختر نیر احمد -- 17 سال دختر متوفی

اس کے علاوہ اور کوئی دیگر وارثاں موجود نہیں ہے اور اب سائل اپنے حق میں لیگل بیرسٹیفیکٹ حاصل کرنے کا خواہ ہے ۔ سٹیفیکٹ زیر بحث اجراء کرنے میں اگر کسی شخص کو کوئی عریا یا معترض ہو تو وہ بعد مشہر اخبارات دن کے اندر آ پنے معترض اعتراض عدالت حد کو دفتری اوقات کے دوران پیش کریں۔ بعد گزرے میعا کوئی معترض یا اعتراض قابل قبول نہیں ہوگا۔

نائب تحصیلدار

FKO

'Health Professionals' Skills To Detect Benign Tumours Drop After Using Ai For 3 Months'

Press Trust Of India

Frequent reliance on artificial intelligence may lead to the risk of losing skills, as indicated by a study that discovered a 20 per cent decrease in the ability of experienced health professionals to detect benign tumour growths in colonoscopies when not using AI.



Researchers from Poland, Norway, Sweden, and other European nations examined more than 1,400 colonoscopies — approximately 800 were conducted without AI assistance, while 650 utilised AI during the procedure. A colonoscopy is used to inspect the large intestine, encompassing the colon and rectum, for disease.

The study compared colonoscopies performed three months prior to and following the integration of AI. Three months after becoming reli-

ant on AI for support, the detection rate of adenomas -- a non-cancerous tumour -- during standard colonoscopy decreased significantly from 28.4 per cent before to 22.4 per cent after exposure to AI, the authors stated in their study published in The Lancet Gastroenterology and Hepatology journal. While studies have shown that using AI can help doctors and clinicians in improving cancer

detection, the study is the first to "suggest a negative impact of regular AI use on healthcare professionals' ability to complete a patient-relevant task in medicine of any kind," author Marcin Romanczyk, Academy of Silesia in Poland, said.

"Our results are concerning, given that the adoption of AI in medicine is rapidly spreading. We urgently need more research into the impact of AI on health professionals' skills across different medical

fields," Romanczyk said.

Author Yuichi Mori from the University of Oslo, Norway, said the results posed "an interesting question" related to previous trials, which found that an AI-assisted colonoscopy allowed for a higher tumour detection, compared to one that did not use AI's help.

"It could be the case that non-AI-assisted colonoscopy assessed in these trials is different from standard non-AI-assisted colonoscopy as the endoscopists in the trials may have been negatively affected by continuous AI exposure," Mori said. The authors emphasised the necessity for additional research to comprehend the dynamics involved when healthcare professionals and AI systems are not effectively synchronised.

In a commentary article related to the research, Dr Omer Ahmad from University College London, who was not involved in the study, said the findings "temper the current enthusiasm for (a) rapid adoption of AI-based technologies."

The results provide the "first real-world clinical evidence for the phenomenon of deskilling, potentially affecting patient-related outcomes" and "highlight the importance of carefully considering possible unintended clinical consequences," Dr Ahmad said.

"Although AI continues to offer great promise to enhance clinical outcomes, we must also safeguard against the quiet erosion of fundamental skills required for high-quality endoscopy," the author added.

NFR, IIT-Guwahati Collaborate To Introduce Biodegradable Materials To Replace Plastics

Press Trust Of India

The Northeast Frontier Railway (NFR) and IIT-Guwahati have collaborated to introduce biodegradable and compostable materials as a replacement for conven-

25 trains originating from terminals in Assam, West Bengal, Bihar, Tripura and Arunachal Pradesh, it said.

The initiative not only enhances passenger convenience, but also contributes towards reducing landfill waste, lowering the carbon



tional plastic to ensure environmental sustainability, officials said.

As a pilot initiative, NFR has introduced eco-friendly green bed-roll bags on its trains, replacing traditional plastic bags used for distributing linen to passengers. Developed at IIT-Guwahati's in-house research and development facility, the bio-plastic degrades in compost within a short time, according to an official release.

It was formally rolled out on August 15 with around 40,000 such bags to be distributed across

footprint and conserving natural resources, the release said.

The collaboration with IIT-Guwahati, coupled with NFR's eco-friendly measures, marks a practical and scalable approach towards greener railway operations, it said.

Among other measures, NFR has implemented rapid railway electrification, solar energy generation, AI-based intrusion detection systems to safeguard elephants and others, rainwater harvesting, automatic coach washing plants and bio-toilets, the release added.

Jammu & Kashmir State Industrial Development Corporation Limited

(A J&K Government Undertaking) Industrial Estate Khunmoh

AUCTION NOTICE

For and on behalf of J&K State Industrial Development Corporation (SIDCO), sealed offers affixed with Revenue stamps of Rs. 2/- are invited from interested person's/parties for Auction of three numbers of standing Poplar trees of different sizes/girths. The trees are available for auction located at Phase-I I/E Khunmoh. The offers should be accompanied with CDR of Rs. 1,000/- (Rupees One thousand) only pledged to Manager Estates, I/E Khunmoh. The minimum reserve prize of the trees is Fixed to Rs. 4,500/- Rupees Four Thousand Five Hundred) only. The offers received without CDR shall be rejected/not entertained. The proposed trees can be inspected on any working day during office hours. The final Date of receiving the offers is 22.08.2025 upto 2.00 PM at Estate Office Khunmoh. The offers shall be opened on 23.08.2025 at 2.30 PM by the designated committee in the office chamber of Manager Estates in presence of the bidders who wish to remain present. The successful bidder shall have to deposit full bid amount, including the taxes as applicable, within 2 (two) days, failing which CDR shall be forfeited. The trees shall have to be cut/fell down and lift from the premises within 3 (Three) days and the successful bidder shall ensure that there is no loss of the Estates property, 'he auction committee reserves the right to accept or reject any or all offers without assigning any reason thereof.

DIPK-NB-1674/25
dated: 18-08-2025

Sd/-Manager Estate

Jammu & Kashmir State Industrial Development Corporation Limited

(A J&K Government Undertaking) Industrial Estate Khunmoh

AUCTION NOTICE

For and on behalf of J&K State Industrial Development Corporation (SIDCO), sealed offers affixed with Revenue stamps of Rs. 2/- are invited from interested person's/parties for Auction of three numbers of standing Poplar trees of different sizes/girths. The trees are available for auction located at Phase-I I/E Khunmoh. The offers should be accompanied with CDR of Rs. 1,000/- (Rupees One thousand) only pledged to Manager Estates, I/E Khunmoh. The minimum reserve prize of the trees is Fixed to Rs. 4,500/- Rupees Four Thousand Five Hundred) only. The offers received without CDR shall be rejected/not entertained. The proposed trees can be inspected on any working day during office hours. The final Date of receiving the offers is 22.08.2025 upto 2.00 PM at Estate Office Khunmoh. The offers shall be opened on 23.08.2025 at 2.30 PM by the designated committee in the office chamber of Manager Estates in presence of the bidders who wish to remain present. The successful bidder shall have to deposit full bid amount, including the taxes as applicable, within 2 (two) days, failing which CDR shall be forfeited. The trees shall have to be cut/fell down and lift from the premises within 3 (Three) days and the successful bidder shall ensure that there is no loss of the Estates property, 'he auction committee reserves the right to accept or reject any or all offers without assigning any reason thereof.

DIPK-NB-1675/25
dated: 18-8-2025

Sd/-Manager Estate

MLA Chadoora Assures
Action On Alamdar Colony
Drainage Issue



Observer News Service

BUDGAM: As part of his ongoing public outreach programme, MLA Chadoora, Ali Mohammad Dar, on Sunday visited Alamdar Colony Gopalpora, where he interacted with local residents and assured them that their long-pending demands, particularly regarding the colony's faulty drainage system, would be addressed on priority.

The visit was organized by the Welfare Committee Iqbal Lane, Alamdar Bagh Colony Gopalpora, which had invited the legislator to apprise him of the residents' grievances. The members highlighted the pressing issue of frequent waterlogging in the locality, which has caused inconvenience to the people.

Responding to the concerns, MLA Dar assured the gathering that the matter would soon be taken up with the Ministers of Horticulture and Irrigation for

an immediate redressal. He further promised that all internal roads in the colony would be blacktopped and potholes repaired in the coming weeks.

On the occasion, the Welfare Committee President, Abdul Rashid Sofi, and General Secretary, Mushtaq Ahmad Bhat, formally presented a memorandum (Sipasnama) to the MLA. Several prominent citizens, including Abdul Rashid Baba, Mohammad Rafiq Khan, Syed Arshad, Mohammad Afzal Bhat, Dr. Mushtaq Khan, and Farooq Ahmad Bepari, were also present at the meeting.

Social activist and local resident, Dr. Raja Muzaffar, also briefed the MLA about the hardships faced by the community. He urged him to hold consultations with concerned ministers and senior officers to ensure that a comprehensive water drainage system is established for Alamdar Bagh Colony, Gopalpora, Chadoora.

Paras Performs Life-Saving
CRT-D Procedure On
Brazilian Patient

Observer News Service

SRINAGAR: Paras Health Srinagar has achieved a remarkable milestone in advanced cardiology by successfully treating a 30-year-old Brazilian national suffering from life-threatening heart failure through a highly complex Cardiac Resynchronization Therapy Defibrillator (CRT-D) implant. The life-saving procedure was led by Dr. Fayaz Ahmad Rather, Senior Consultant – Interventional Cardiology, and has enabled the young patient to return to Brazil with a significantly improved heart function and prognosis.

The patient had been admitted in a critical state with a severely weakened heart, functioning at only 10–15% capacity, complicated further by Left Bundle Branch Block (LBBB) and a QRS duration of 180 milliseconds. This dangerous combination had drastically reduced the heart's ability to pump blood efficiently. Additional tests revealed the presence of two large left ventricular thrombi, though coronary angiography ruled out arterial blockages as the cause.

Speaking about the case, Dr. Fayaz Ahmad Rather said, "In cases like this, time and the right treatment make all the difference. This young patient had severe dilated cardiomyopathy (DCM), large ventricular clots, and LBBB, all of which put him at extremely high risk. Implanting a CRT-D helped restore his heart's rhythm and



function, and it greatly reduced his chances of sudden cardiac arrest. It is very encouraging to see him recover well, and this reflects our ability at Paras Health Srinagar to manage highly complex cases for patients not only from India but also from across the globe."

The medical team initially placed the patient under intensive anti-heart failure therapy, which included the use of apixaban (a direct oral anticoagulant). Within four weeks, the treatment successfully dissolved the clots. However, because of the persistent electrical conduction abnormality and the severely compromised pumping function, the doctors proceeded with a CRT-D implantation. The device works by restoring coordinated heart contractions and has the ability to deliver life-saving shocks if dangerous arrhythmias occur.

Follow-ups conducted via WhatsApp consultations revealed that the patient's heart function has now improved to 30%, marking a strong and steady recovery from his earlier critical state.

Tanvir Pushes For Early
Completion Of Projects
At JLNm Hospital

Releases ₹10 Lakh From CDF For Hospital Development

Observer News Service

SRINAGAR: Member Legislative Assembly Zadibal, Tanvir Sadiq, on Monday visited the JLNm Hospital, Rainawari and reviewed the RKS Scheme in a meeting here. He also reviewed other upgrades going on at the hospital.

During the Rogi Kalyan Samiti meeting, he released Rs 10 lakh from his Constituency Development Fund to address urgent requirements, including construction of an auditorium and procurement of essential medical equipment.

Sadiq emphasized the need to ensure comprehensive patient care, stressing that patients must be treated with utmost compassion and professionalism. He reviewed the functioning of various departments and assured full support in strengthening both the medical staff and hospital infrastructure.

Acknowledging the dedication of doctors and paramedics, he congratulated them for their services but also cautioned that any dereliction of duty will be dealt



TANVIR ALSO TOOK STOCK OF THE COMPLETION OF THE NEW HOSPITAL BUILDING, noting that the Chief Minister is keen to see it completed on priority,"

with sternly. He further directed the Medical Superintendent to recall paramedics currently posted outside JLNm Hospital so that adequate staff strength is maintained.

Tanvir also took stock of the completion of the new hospital building, noting that the Chief Minister is keen to see it com-

pleted on priority. He spoke to the concerned departments and instructed them to ensure early completion of pending works.

The review meeting was attended by Medical Superintendent, JLNm, Dr. Tariq, Dy. Medical Superintendent, Dr. Asifa Jan, and other senior officials.

Urs of Hazrat Sheikh Hamza Makhdoom Sahib:
Devotees Gather For Night Prayers

KO Web Desk

SRINAGAR: As night falls over Srinagar, devotees from across the Kashmir Valley are converging at the Makhdoom Sahab (RA) shrine for the sacred night prayers, locally called "Shab Khawani," marking the spiritual beginning to the annual Urs of Hazrat Sheikh Hamza Makhdoom Sahib (RA), which will be celebrated tomorrow (Tuesday).

The shrine resonates with the recitation of the Holy Quran, Naats and prayers, creating an atmosphere of serenity and reflection.

According to details families, elderly devotees and youth alike have gathered to offer their prayers and seek blessings.

The occasion is seen as a mo-



ment of shared spirituality for the community.

Ghulam Nabi, a devotee, said Shab Khawani is not just a ritual; it is a night of peace, devotion and reflection. "People from different parts of Kashmir come here to connect spiritually and prepare for the Urs tomorrow."

Shabnam Bano, another devotee from Budgam, shared, the prayers tonight fill the air with

love. It is a moment when our hearts feel close to the teachings and blessings of Hazrat Sheikh Hamza Makhdoom Sahib.

Meanwhile, the authorities have urged attendees to maintain discipline, follow the shrine's guidelines and respect the sanctity of the occasion. Security arrangements and volunteer staff are in place to ensure the smooth conduct of prayers throughout the night.

NIT Srinagar Ranks 32nd In India
Today Engineering Rankings

Observer News Service

SRINAGAR: The National Institute of Technology (NIT) Srinagar has secured the 32nd position among engineering colleges across India in the India Today Rankings 2025, improving slightly from the 33rd rank in 2024.

In the category of Government Engineering Colleges, the institute retained its 23rd position, while among Top Technical Universities in India; it rose to 22nd place from last year's 21st.

The institute scored 23 in Admissions & Student Quality and 23 in

Placement & Career Progression, showing the high standard of students and successful career support.

In other key areas, NIT Srinagar achieved scores of 191.2, 190.2, 176.6, 92.6, and 184.9, reflecting its strengths in academics, research, infrastructure, and student development. The total score across all parameters was 835.5, with a cumulative benchmark of 533.7, resulting in an overall score of 1369.2. These numbers underline the institute's commitment to quality education and overall student growth.

In his message, Director NIT Srinagar Prof. Binod Kumar Kanaujia

said that it is a proud moment for the institute to be recognized nationally. He said over the past year, the Institute has focused on enhancing laboratory facilities, updating curricula, and encouraging students to undertake innovative projects.

"These initiatives, combined with the active participation of our faculty in research and national and international conferences, have contributed significantly to our improved ranking. This achievement also strengthens our resolve to maintain and exceed this performance in the coming years," Prof. Kanaujia said.

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- 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 24 Safar 1447	PRAYERS	
	FAJR	4:24
	ZUHR	12: 35
	ASR	5:20
	Magrib	7:18
	ISHA	8:44

This Day In History

- 627 - Prince Frederik Henry conquerors fort Groenlo
- 1757 - Battle at Gross Jagerndorf: Russian army beats Prussia [NS=Aug 30]
- 1772 -Gustav III seizes effective control of Swedish government & restores full power of monarchy, which had been subordinate to parliament since 1720
- 1791 - Benjamin Banneker sends a copy of his Almanac and writes a letter to Thomas Jefferson criticizing his pro-slavery stance and requesting justice for African Americans using language from the Declaration of Independence
- 1796 - Spain & France sign anti-British alliance
- 1812 - US warship Constitution defeats British warship Guerriere
- 1816 - Java again in Dutch hands
- 1839 - Details of Louis Daguerre's 1st practical photographic process are released in Paris
- 1887 - Dmitri Mendeleev makes a solo ascent by balloon to an altitude of 11,500 feet (3.5 km) above Klin, Russia to observe an eclipse
- 1891 - William Huggins describes astronomical application of spectrum
- 1914 - German fleet bombs English coast
- 1915 - World War I: the Battle of Van begins
- 1919 - Afghanistan declares independence from UK
- 1942 - WWI: Over 4,000 Canadian & British soldiers killed, wounded or captured raiding Dieppe, France
- 1944 - Last Japanese troops driven out of India
- 1944 - Nazis give parts of Paris to Resistance
- 1953 - The democratically elected Prime Minister of Iran Mohammad Mosaddegh is overthrown in a coup orchestrated by the United Kingdom (under the name 'Operation Boot') and the United States (under the name TPAJAX Project)
- 1959 - Satellite Discoverer 6 launched into polar orbit
- 1960 - Sputnik 5 carries 2 dogs, 3 mice into orbit as the first animals launched on a round trip into space (later recovered alive)
- 1960 - The first commercial atomic energy reactor, owned by the Yankee Atomic Electric Company, achieves a selfsustaining nuclear reaction in Rowe, Deerfield River,Massachusetts
- 1966 - Earthquake strikes Varko Turkey: 2,400 killed
- 1982 - Soyuz T-7 launched, Svetlana Savtiskaya 2nd woman in space
- 1985 - Japan launches its 2nd probe of Halley's Comet, Suisei
- 1988 -Iran-Iraq begin a cease-fire in their 8-year-old war (11 PM EDT)
- 1997 - STS 85 (Discovery 23) lands
- 2005 - The first-ever joint military exercise between Russia and China, called Peace Mission 2005 begins.
- 2009- A series of bombings in Baghdad, Iraq, kill 101 and injure 565
- 2012- Plane crash in the mountainous region of Talodi, Sudan, kills 32, including several government officials and staff, en route to the Eid al-Fitr festival, which celebrates the end of the Muslim holy month of Ramadan. 2013- 24 Egyptian policemen are killed in an attack in Rafah
- 2013 37 pilgrims are killed in a train accident in India
- 2014- NASA satellites take photos showing that the eastern basin of the Aral Sea has, for the first time, completely dried up

Condolence



With deep sorrow and grief it is informed by Shabir Ahmad bhat R/o Buchwara Dalgate that his wife Nuzhat Shabir passed away after brief illness. May Almighty Allah grant her a place in her infinite mercy.

In this connection the collective Fateh khawani prayer gathering will be held at the ancestral grave yard Nalla Teng Masjid on 19 August 2025 tuesday at 9:30 AM.

Ladies are requested not to bring any kind of fruit along with them.

Bereaved
Shabir Ahmad Bhat, (Husband).
Cell No : 9103354388.

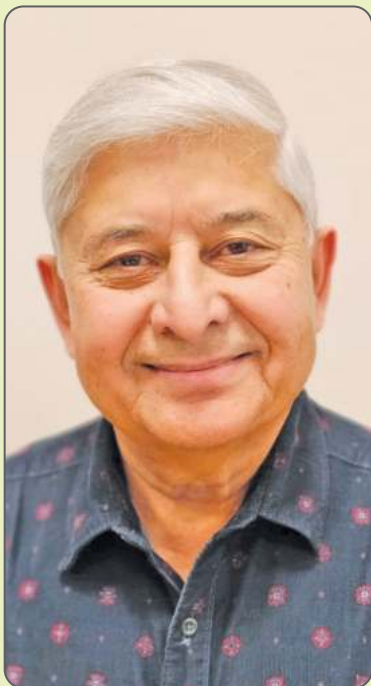
Obituary

The classmates of Govt Medical College (GMC), Srinagar – Batch of 1973, deeply mourn the passing of our esteemed friend and batchmate, Dr. Shakil Ahmed Qureshi.

A distinguished alumnus, Dr. Qureshi dedicated his life to service and compassion. He held the position of Chief Coordinator of the AIDS Control Program with the Ministry of Health, Govt of Kuwait, where he worked with exemplary commitment and integrity. His unwavering dedication to the cause of public health and his faith in humanity remain an enduring inspiration.

Beyond his professional accomplishments, Dr. Qureshi will be remembered as a noble soul who valued and nurtured lifelong friendships. During his visits to the Valley, he always made it a point to reconnect with his batchmates, strengthening the bonds that tied us together since our student days.

His sudden and tragic loss has left a deep void in our hearts. We pray for eternal peace to his noble soul and extend our heartfelt condolences to his family and loved ones.



Batchmates
Govt Medical College, Srinagar – Batch of 1973

China's Top Diplomat Wang Arrives In India

Associated Press

NEW DELHI: China's top diplomat landed in neighboring India on Monday, seeking to bolster long-fraught relations in the face of intense pressure and tariffs from the United States.

Foreign Minister Wang Yi held talks with his counterpart Subrahmanyam Jaishankar, and is also expected to meet Prime Minister Nar-

across South Asia, and fought a deadly border clash in 2020.

But caught in global trade and geopolitical turbulence triggered by US President Donald Trump's tariff war, the countries have moved to mend ties.

Restarting border trade across their icy and high-altitude Himalayan border is expected to feature high on Wang's agenda.



Chinese Foreign Minister Wang Yi is welcomed by an unidentified Indian foreign ministry official upon his arrival at the airport in New Delhi, India, Aug. 18, 2025. (AP)

endra Modi during his three-day visit to New Delhi.

Modi, according to Indian media, might also visit China this month.

India's foreign ministry said in a social media post that "important engagements of the India-China Special Representatives and on bilateral relations" were scheduled over the next two days.

The world's two most populous nations are intense rivals competing for influence

Its resumption would be significant for its symbolism, and follows agreements to return direct flights and issue tourist visas.

India is also part of the Quad security alliance with the United States, Australia and Japan, which is seen as a counter to China.

Warming ties between China and India come as relations between New Delhi and Washington are strained.

Why Pay Toll When Stuck in Jams, SC Asks

Press Trust Of India

New Delhi: The Supreme Court on Monday asked the NHAI why should a commuter be asked to pay Rs 150 toll if it took 12 hours to cover a 65-kilometer highway stretch in Thrissur, Kerala.

A Bench comprising Chief Justice B R Gavai and Justices K Vinod Chandran and N V Anjaria made the remark while reserving its verdict on pleas filed by the National Highways Authority of India (NHAI) and concessionaire, Guruvayoor Infrastructure challenging the Kerala High Court's order suspending toll collection at the Paliyekkara toll plaza in Thrissur.

"Why should a person pay Rs 150 if it takes 12 hours for him to get from one end of the road to the other end? A road which is expected to take one hour, takes 11 more hours and they have to pay a toll as well," the CJI said.

During the hearing, the Bench was informed about a nearly 12-hour traffic snarl on the stretch on the weekend.

The toll suspension was ordered by the high court on August 6 on the ground of poor condition of

the Edappally-Mannuthy stretch of National Highway 544 and severe traffic congestion caused by ongoing works.

"We will consider everything, reserve for orders," the Bench said after hearing Solicitor General Tushar Mehta, appearing for the NHAI, and senior advocate Shyam Divan for the concessionaire.

Justice Chandran said the accident which triggered the block was not a mere "act of God" as argued by Mehta, but caused by a lorry toppling into a pothole.

Mehta said the NHAI provided service roads where underpass construction was underway but admitted monsoon rains had slowed the progress. He also cited a precedent suggesting proportionate toll reduction rather than suspension.

Justice Chandran, however, remarked a 12-hour ordeal was far beyond any proportional adjustment.

The concessionaire said it had maintained the 60 kilometer under its control and blamed third-party contractors, including PSG Engineering, for the service road bottlenecks.



No End to Air India Woes, More Flights Grounded

Trans Asia News

New Delhi: Air India is once again facing turbulence as a series of last-minute flight cancellations, including international routes, have left passengers fuming and raised questions about the airline's assurances on fleet safety.

On Monday, the Tata Group-owned carrier cancelled its Zurich-Delhi flight (AI152) scheduled for August 17, citing "technical reasons" and subsequent night curfew restrictions at Zurich airport. This came just days after the airline claimed to have conducted a detailed inspection of its Boeing 787-8/9 aircraft fleet, with "no issues" detected.

A passenger on board, however, disputed the explanation, stating on social media that the aircraft aborted take-off at the last minute due to an engine problem. "Air India flight from Zurich to Delhi is cancelled: aborted moments

before take-off, technical issue in engine cited," the passenger posted on X.

The Zurich incident followed a similar scare on Sunday at Kochi airport, where a Delhi-bound Boeing 787 carrying Lok Sabha MP and Congress leader Hibi Eden aborted take-off. Eden described the episode on X: "Something unusual with this flight AI504, it just felt like the flight skid on the runway... Air India cancelled AI504 and announced a new flight at 1 am which hasn't still started boarding. Today is the third flight which has been AOG."

Air India confirmed that flight AI504 was rescheduled after the cockpit crew discontinued take-off "following standard operating procedures" when a technical issue was detected. The aircraft was returned to the bay for maintenance checks, officials said.

Earlier, the airline was

also forced to cancel its Milan-Delhi service after a technical snag was detected during pushback.

The spate of incidents has highlighted persistent technical and maintenance issues dogging Air India since it returned to private hands in January 2022. Despite repeated assurances from CEO and MD Campbell Wilson that comprehensive checks had been carried out on the airline's Boeing 787 fleet, including after the AI-171 London-bound flight from Ahmedabad suffered a near-disastrous crash soon after take-off, confidence in Air India's safety claims is being tested.

For affected passengers, Air India has offered alternative flights, full refunds, complimentary rescheduling, and hotel accommodations where required. But the mounting last-minute cancellations are likely to intensify scrutiny of the airline's operational reliability and fleet maintenance.

Marco Rubio: US Monitors India-Pakistan Situation Daily

Press Trust Of India

New York/Washington : The US keeps "an eye" on what's happening between India and Pakistan

on what's happening between Pakistan and India, what's happening between Cambodia and Thailand," Rubio said.

"Ceasefires can fall apart very quickly, especially after



"every single day" as ceasefires can fall apart very quickly, Secretary of State Marco Rubio said.

"...the only way to have a ceasefire is for both sides to agree to stop firing at one another. And the Russians just haven't agreed to that. Beyond that, I would say that one of the complications about ceasefires is they have to be maintained, which is very difficult. I mean, every single day we keep an eye

a three-and-a-half-year war (in Ukraine) like what we're facing now, but I don't think anyone disagrees that the ideal here, what we're aiming for is not some permanent ceasefire. What we're aiming for here is a peace deal so there's not a war now and there's not a war in the future," Rubio said in an interview to NBC News Meet the Press.

In a separate interview

with Fox Business, Rubio again mentioned the recent conflict between India and Pakistan that President Donald Trump has repeatedly claimed he solved.

"And I think we are very fortunate and blessed and should be thankful to have a President who has made peace and the achievement of peace a priority of his administration. We've seen it in Cambodia and Thailand. We've seen it in India-Pakistan. We've seen it in Rwanda and the DRC. And we're going to continue to pursue any opportunities we can find to bring about peace in the world," Rubio said.

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 about 40 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.

Pezeshkian in Armenia for Talks on US-backed Corridor

Trans Asia News

Tehran: Iranian President Masoud Pezeshkian headed to Armenia on Monday for talks on a planned corridor linking Azerbaijan with its exclave near the border with Iran, part of a peace deal signed at the White House.

"The (possible) presence

proposed route, which would connect Azerbaijan to its Nakhchivan exclave, passing near the Iranian border.

Iran has long opposed the planned transit route, also known as the Zangezur corridor, fearing it would cut the country off from Armenia and the rest of the Caucasus while bringing potentially hostile foreign forces close to its borders.



Pezeshkian will be in Armenia to discuss Iranian concerns over US presence in the region, following a US-brokered peace treaty signed by Yerevan and Azerbaijan [Getty/file photo]

of American companies in the region is worrying," Pezeshkian said before departing on a pre-planned trip that also includes a visit to Belarus.

"We will discuss it (with Armenian officials) and express our concerns," he added, according to footage broadcast on state television.

The land corridor, dubbed the "Trump Route for International Peace and Prosperity" (TRIIPP), is part of a deal signed earlier this month in Washington between Armenia and Azerbaijan.

Under the agreement, the United States will hold development rights for the

Since the deal was signed, Iranian officials have stepped up warnings to Armenia, saying the project could be part of a US ploy "to pursue hegemonic goals in the Caucasus region".

On Sunday, Iranian Foreign Minister Abbas Araghchi described it as a "sensitive" issue, saying Tehran's main concern is that it could "lead to geopolitical changes in the region."

"They (Armenian officials) have assured us that no American forces ... or American security companies will be present in Armenia under the pretext of this route," he told the official IRNA news agency.

EC Names 65 Lakh Deleted from Bihar Voter List

Press Trust Of India

Patna: The Election Commission (EC) on Monday came out with the names of 65 lakh people who were removed from the draft electoral rolls published as part of the special intensive revision (SIR) exercise, officials said.

The development came after the Supreme Court directed the EC to publish the deleted names by August 19 and file a compliance report by August 22.

The EC is publishing the names of 'ASD' (Absentee, Shifted, and Dead) voters across polling booths, and is likely to do so online as has been directed by the apex court, they said.

According to the Chief Electoral Officer (CEO), Bihar, ASD lists have been displayed at polling booths in Rohtas, Begusarai, Arwal, Siwan, Bhojpur and other places.

The Supreme Court, in an order on August 14, directed the Election Commission to publish an enumerated, booth-wise list of around 65 lakh electors not included in the draft electoral roll, published on August 1, during the ongoing SIR exercise in Bihar, where assembly elections

are due later this year.

More than 65 lakh enumeration forms were 'not included' in the draft electoral rolls prepared as part of the first phase of SIR by the EC in Bihar, bringing down the total number of around 7.9 crore registered voters to 7.24 crore.

Patna accounted for the highest number of 3.95 lakh non-included enumeration forms, followed by Madhubani (3.52 lakh), East Champaran (3.16 lakh), Gopalganj (3.10 lakh), Samastipur (2.83 lakh), Muzaffarpur (2.82 lakh), Purnia (2.739 lakh), Saran (2.732 lakh), Sitamarhi (2.44 lakh), Katihar (1.84 lakh), Kishanganj (1.45 lakh), according to the EC.

Sheikhpura is the district where only 26,256 enumeration forms were not included in the draft roll, followed by Sheohar (28,166), Arwal (30,180), Munger (74,916) and Khagaria (79,551).

The EC claimed that '22,34,501' people, registered in the electoral roll, were found to be dead during the exercise. Another 36.28 lakh have 'permanently shifted' out of the state or were 'not found' at their stated addresses, and another 7.01 lakh have been found enrolled at 'more than one place'.

NEWS MAKERS

Thieves In Surat Decamp With Diamonds Worth Rs 25 Crore

Press Trust Of India

Surat: Diamonds worth Rs 25 crore were stolen from a Surat-based polishing and export unit by unidentified thieves, who prised open a metal safe using a gas cutter to get hold of the precious gems, police said on Monday.

The incident took place between August 15 and 17 at DK & Sons Diamond Company's office-cum-polishing unit in the Kapodra area of the Gujarat city during which CCTV cameras were vandalised, said Deputy Commissioner of Police (Zone 1) Alok Kumar. Since the company had declared a three-day holiday in view of Independence Day and Janmashatmi, neither employees nor secu-

rity guards were present at the unit when the diamonds were stolen, he said.

"Taking advantage of the situation, thieves first broke the main door of the office on the ground floor of the company's building and then went on the third floor where a metal safe was kept. The safe was then cut open using a gas cutter," said Kumar. The diamond unit owner learnt about the theft when he reached the office on Monday morning after a gap of three days.

"As per a primary estimate, thieves decamped with diamonds worth Rs 25 crore. They also vandalised CCTV cameras and stole the video recorder in an attempt to destroy evidence," said the DCP, adding efforts were on to nab the culprits.

Taking advantage of the situation, thieves first broke the main door of the office on the ground floor of the company's building and then went on the third floor where a metal safe was kept. The safe was then cut open using a gas cutter

KO Web Desk

Srinagar: When it comes to shielding President Vladimir Putin, his security detail leaves no trace behind — not even his waste, according to reports in The Express US citing French magazine Paris Match.

The report claims that members of Russia's Federal Protection Service (FPS) are tasked with collecting the president's faecal matter during foreign trips, sealing it in special containers, and flying it back to Moscow. The measure is said to be aimed at preventing foreign intelligence agencies from obtaining information about Putin's health

Putin's 'Poop Suitcase' a Shield Against Health Snooping



through medical analysis.

French investigative journalists Regis Gente and Mikhail Rubin first reported the practice in Paris Match, noting it occurred during Pu-

tin's visit to France in 2017. Russian journalist Farida Rustamova has also claimed similar arrangements during his trip to Vienna, including the use of a portable toilet. The

unusual protocol is believed to have been in place since Putin's early years in office in 1999.

The revelations come amid ongoing speculation about the 72-year-old leader's health. Observers have pointed to footage of Putin twitching, gripping tables, and jerking his legs during public appearances, with some medical experts suggesting possible neurological issues such as Parkinson's. The Kremlin, however, has consistently denied such claims, dismissing them as rumors.

The so-called "poop suitcase" underscores the extraordinary lengths Russia's security apparatus reportedly goes to ensure that no clue about Putin's health is left behind.

INCLEMENT WEATHER:

Div Com Kashmir Reviews Overall Scenario, Functioning Of Services



Observer News Service

SRINAGAR: In light of incessant rainfall across the Kashmir valley, the incumbent Divisional Commissioner Kashmir, M. Raju, conducted a comprehensive review of the operational status of essential services, including electricity supply, drinking water provision, and road connectivity, during a meeting held here today.

The meeting was attended by SMC Commissioner Fazlul Haseeb, Director Indian Meteorology Department Srinagar, Additional Commissioners of Kashmir, senior officials from KPDCL and PHE, and representatives from other departments.

During the meeting, M. Raju assessed water levels of the river Jhelum and its tributaries to evaluate potential flood threats.

The meeting highlighted that all essential services are functioning smoothly, with restoration efforts underway to address minor outages in certain 11kV electricity lines.

The Divisional Commissioner instructed all departments to submit comprehensive updates on essential service operations by the evening.

He further stressed the importance of maintaining close interdepartmental coordination, ensuring vigilant monitoring, and preparing to respond swiftly to emergencies to mitigate the impact.

The SMC Commissioner provided an update on dewatering efforts across various locations in Srinagar, informing about the deployment of pumps to prevent waterlogging in roads and low-lying areas within the Srinagar city.

High-Density Apple Prices Dip From Rs 150 To Rs 70 Per Kg

Agencies

SRINAGAR: Prices of high-density apples in Kashmir have come down from the peak of Rs 150 per kilogram to around Rs 70 per kilogram this season. However, growers say they are still earning handsome profits compared to traditional apple varieties, thanks to higher yields, lower input costs, and quicker returns on investment.

Scores of farmers across the valley are finding new hope in high-density apple farming, which was introduced in Kashmir around 2015. Unlike traditional apple trees that take nearly a decade to bear fruit, high-density plants begin producing within a year and reach full production by the fourth or fifth year.

"These apples are harvested in August, much before the snowfall season, so we don't suffer losses like in traditional varieties that are harvested till November," Mohammad Ashraf, a grower from Pulwama said.

Ashraf revealed that he replaced his old orchard with Red Galla high-density apples last year. "This year, I earned nearly 12 lakh from just eight kanals of orchard. For 15 years, my traditional trees never gave me such returns," he said.

Farmers say the yield of high-density apples is nearly three times greater than traditional varieties, with up to 80 per cent lower consumption of fertilisers and pesticides. "I invested around Rs 2 lakh in planting high-density apples last year. Within a year, I have already recovered more than half of



it," said Mohammad Ayoub, a farmer from Anantnag.

According to growers, demand remains strong despite the fall in market price. Many customers are even reaching orchards directly to purchase the produce. "Even at Rs 70 per kilogram, the returns are better than what we got from traditional apples," said another grower.

Experts attribute the success of high-density farming to its efficiency and environmental benefits. "Traditional orchards waste huge quantities of fertiliser and sprays due to tree height, which also leads to soil degradation and pollution," explained Ansar-ul-Haq, a manager of a company supplying high-density apple plants.

"High-density orchards consume 70 per cent less fertiliser and 80 per cent less pesticide sprays while producing 50 to 70 tonnes of fruit per hectare by the third year, compared to just 10 to 15 tonnes from traditional orchards," Haq added.

Farmers and experts believe that the model not only ensures higher income but also provides a sustainable future for apple cultivation in Kashmir—(KNO)

Rotten Meat Scare Sparks Surge In Veg Restaurants

Agencies

SRINAGAR: Vegetarian hotels and restaurants across Kashmir are witnessing a remarkable increase in footfall following the shocking revelations about rotten meat being supplied to various parts of the valley.

Many residents, shaken by food safety concerns, are now preferring plant-based meals over traditional non-vegetarian dishes, which have long dominated Kashmiri cuisine.

Kashmir's food culture is historically known for its rich variety of meat dishes, from Rogan Josh to Yakhni. However, the recent crackdown by authorities on unhygienic and rotten meat supplies has created a sense of mistrust, giving vegetarian eateries an unexpected boost.

Several hoteliers running vegetarian restaurants said their sales have doubled in the last few weeks. "Earlier, veg restaurants had a limited crowd, but now people are coming in large numbers. The reports of rotten meat have changed perceptions, and customers are showing more trust in vegetarian food," Ramesh Kumar, owner of a vegetarian restaurant in Srinagar, said.

He said the shift is also linked to growing health awareness. "Vegetarian dishes are not only safer but also better for health in the long run. People are finally understanding this," he said.

Locals, too, are altering their



DOCTORS OFTEN ADVISE EATING LESS MEAT and more vegetables for better digestion. This situation has pushed us to make that change,"

eating habits.

Irfan Ahmad, a resident of Pulwama, said, "I was a regular consumer of non-veg, but after these shocking revelations, my family has decided to eat more vegetables. At least, we are sure about the quality."

Similarly, Naseema Bano from Anantnag said vegetarian meals are proving to be both light and healthy. "Doctors often advise eating less meat and more vegetables for better digestion. This situation has pushed us to make that change," she said.

Hoteliers believe the trend could reshape dietary habits in the valley. "This is an opportunity to promote vegetarianism. It's not just about health, but also about avoiding risks linked with an unhygienic meat supply," said Bashir Ahmad, who runs a vegetarian hotel in south Kashmir.

However, some butchers and non-vegetarian hotel owners argue that the issue lies with regulation, not meat itself. "People in Kashmir are meat lovers. A few cases of rotten supplies should not make everyone suspicious. The government must strengthen inspections so that quality meat reaches the market," said a butcher from Baramulla.

Meanwhile, people across Kashmir are calling on authorities to conduct strict quality checks. Abdul Rashid, from Srinagar, said, "The government must act strongly against those selling unhygienic meat. But until then, people should be cautious and prefer safer options."—(KNO)

DC Gbl Finalizes Arrangements For Gangabal Yatra

Observer News Service

GANDERBAL: Deputy Commissioner Ganderbal, Jatin Kishore on Monday chaired a meeting to review and finalize the arrangements for the upcoming Annual Gangabal Yatra.

At the outset, the DC took stock of the preparedness and finalized arrangements regarding lodging, sanitation, drinking water, firewood, toilet facilities, deployment of SDRF, and other essential requirements to ensure the smooth and safe conduct of the pilgrimage.

The DC directed the concerned departments to put all arrangements in place by or before 26th August, as the Yatra is scheduled to commence on August 30, 2025, from Naranag, with the advance party proceeding towards Gangabal on August 29.

The BMO Kangan was instructed to prepare a detailed deployment plan of doctors, along with adequate medicines, oxygen cylinders, and other essential medical equipment. The Executive Engineer KP-DCL was directed to ensure proper electricity supply and availability of gensets at identified locations.

Bollywood Film Crew Hit By Mass Food Poisoning In Leh, Over 100 Hospitalised

KO Web Desk

SRINAGAR: Leh- Over 100 workers of a Bollywood film crew were hospitalised in Leh after a suspected case of food poisoning late Sunday evening, officials confirmed on Monday.

The workers, none of them local residents, were engaged in the shooting of an upcoming film when several of them suddenly developed severe abdominal pain, vomiting, and headache. They were immediately rushed to the SNM Hospital in Leh, where doctors declared it a case of mass food poisoning.

An official said that nearly 600 people had meals at the location before the incident occurred. "Food samples have been collected for detailed analysis to identify the cause," the official added.

Hospital authorities said the situation was brought under control after an urgent mobilisation of staff



from all departments.

"We managed the influx of patients effectively. The police also stepped in to regulate the overcrowded emergency ward and prevent panic," a senior doctor said.

Doctors confirmed that all patients are in stable condition, and most of them have been discharged after receiving necessary treatment.

Authorities are awaiting the laboratory reports of the food samples to determine accountability, while the incident has raised questions about the safety standards at large-scale shooting locations in sensitive regions like Leh. (KNT)

Committee On Petitions Reviews Progress Of AIIMS Awantipora

Observer News Service

SRINAGAR: The House Committee on Petitions of the Jammu and Kashmir Legislative Assembly on Monday held a meeting at the Assembly Complex, Srinagar, to review the progress of the All India Institute of Medical Sciences (AIIMS), Awantipora.

The meeting was chaired by Committee Chairman, Pirzada Farooq Ahmad Shah, and members including Mushtaq Gu-roo, Salman Sagar, Waheed ur Rehman Para, Mian Mehar Ali, and Thakur Randhir Singh also participated in the meeting.

At the outset, the Committee conducted a detailed review of works related to infrastructure development, procurement of machinery, work force and other allied projects.

The Chairman emphasized that strict adherence to execution timelines is crucial for ensuring the timely commissioning of this prestigious project.

"This project holds immense importance for the people of Kashmir and must be completed at the earliest for their convenience and benefit," the Chairman said.

He directed the concerned



authorities to expedite the pace of all incomplete works and ensure their completion in a time-bound manner.

The Committee further stressed that AIIMS Awantipora should be commissioned as a single integrated unit, with all facilities including OPD and IPD services made operational simultaneously for the general public.

The Chairman also said that the Committee shall also undertake on spot inspection of the project to check quality and pace of work.

Executive Director AIIMS, Dr. S. Mohanty, who was also present, briefed the Committee about the progress achieved so far.

He informed that MBBS courses are expected to commence from July 2026, while OPD and

IPD services are likely to start by the end of the same year.

Meanwhile, the Committee also deliberated on various other issues raised through petitions. Members underlined that every petition would be taken up seriously and reviewed thoroughly to ensure appropriate redressal.

The Chairman stressed upon the officers to comply and submit detailed reports on the issues pertaining to their respective offices, failing which it shall be treated as non-compliance.

The discussions focused on working out practical, effective, and time-bound solutions to the grievances of citizens, with members actively offering constructive suggestions and feedback.

Dy CM Assures Support To Cloudburst-Hit Families

Observer News Service

KATHUA: Deputy Chief Minister, Surinder Choudhary on Monday visited the relief camp established at SIDCO Ghati Industrial Estate, Kathua to take stock of arrangements being extended to the families affected by the recent cloudburst.

The Deputy Chief Minister interacted with the displaced families, heard their concerns and assured them of full government support.

"The government stands shoulder to shoulder with the affected families in this hour of crisis. Every possible measure will be taken to ensure their immediate relief and long-term rehabilitation," the Deputy Chief Minister said while addressing the victims at the relief camp.

During the visit, the Deputy Chief Minister also inspected the nearby bridge connecting the adjoining villages of Ghati which was damaged in the incident. He directed the concerned authorities to take up immediate restoration work. "Restoration of connectivity is the top priority and the administration has been directed to execute works on war footing,"

he asserted.

The Deputy Chief Minister also visited the Military Hospital Pathankot where he enquired about the well-being of the injured admitted following the Ghati cloudburst. He appreciated the timely response of the medical staff and instructed them to provide best possible treatment to the injured till their full recovery.

Later, the Deputy Chief Minister visited Government Medical College Kathua where he met the injured and families affected by cloudbursts and flashfloods at Jakhole and Janglote. He assured them that all necessary assistance including medical care and rehabilitation support, will be extended without delay.

"The safety and well-being of the people is our foremost concern. The Government will leave no stone unturned in providing relief and rebuilding the damaged infrastructure," the Deputy Chief Minister reaffirmed.

He also directed the district administration to maintain round-the-clock monitoring in all calamity-hit areas and ensure timely assistance to the affected population.



HC Urges Due Compliance To Guidelines In Defence Personnel Cases

KO Correspondent

SRINAGAR: The High Court of J&K and Ladakh on Monday issued a warning to Judicial Officers across both Union Territories for failing to adhere to newly issued guidelines concerning the trial and disposal of cases involving Defence and CAPF personnel.

According to a circular issued by Registrar Vigilance, attention of all judicial officers has been invited to the "Guidelines for Trial and Disposal of Cases of Defence Personnel by the Officers of the District Judiciary, 2025" (Notification No. 2376/RG dated 21.07.2025), and the amendments to the J&K General Rules (Civil) of

Svt. 1978 (Notification No. 2449 of 2025/RG/GS dated 25.07.2025). As per the circular, issued by the orders of the Chief Justice, concern has been expressed that some courts have been found violating these guidelines.

"It is impressed upon all the Id. Judicial Officers of UTs of J&K and Ladakh to strictly comply with the provisions of the afore-noted notifications. Any deviation thereof shall be viewed seriously," the circular warned. The directive, issued by order of the Chief Justice, aims to ensure the proper and expedited handling of cases involving Armed Forces and Central Armed Police Forces personnel, the circular noted.

Experts Rule Out 'Mass Fish Death' In Dal Lake



Agencies

SRINAGAR: Reports of large-scale fish deaths in Dal Lake have stirred concern among fishermen and residents, with experts from the Fisheries Department at Sher-e-Kashmir University of Agricultural Sciences and Technology of Kashmir (SKUAST) ruling out the claims, saying that assertions "appear exaggerated."

The locals expressed concern as earlier in the day, a video went viral from Dal Lake Srinagar, where a man in a boat was holding a fish over the paddle, showing that the fish had died in the water of Dal Lake.

"Even a few fish dying in Dal Lake is worrying and we want authorities from the Fisheries Department and LCMA to check it properly. The reason might be the floodgates of Dal Lake, which have been closed for over five days," the man in the viral video said.

Meanwhile, locals requested

the authorities to conduct an investigation and check the reason behind it, while urging the Lake Conservation and Management Authority (LCMA) and the Fisheries Department to carry out thorough monitoring to prevent any ecological or economic losses.

However, the officials here have ruled out the assertions. "The video circulating on social media shows just a single dead fish. If there were a mass die-off, it would be clearly visible. At this stage, the cause cannot be confirmed," Professor Farooq Ahmad Bhat, a SKUAST fisheries official, said.

He added that dirt particles at the Lake bottom and seasonal factors could contribute to isolated deaths.

Meanwhile, KNO also tried to contact LCMA officials regarding the flood gates closure and to record their version, but despite repeated attempts, no response was received—(KNO)

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KO VIEW

Fragile Himalayas

The devastation in Jammu and Kashmir's Kishtwar district, where a sudden cloudburst claimed at least 60 lives and left more than 100 injured, is a grim reminder of how fragile life in the Himalayas has become. In the ongoing operation, soldiers, police, disaster-response teams and local volunteers have scoured debris and riverbanks to find those still missing. Families across villages in Jammu, Samba, Udhampur and beyond are waiting with fading hope.

It was on August 14 that the tragedy struck Chisoti village, leveling a makeshift market, a community kitchen for pilgrims, and a security outpost near the Machail Mata shrine. The dead included security personnel on duty, something that highlights the fury of nature, sparing not even trained men. Omar Abdullah, the J&K Chief Minister, has promised an inquiry into whether warnings from the Meteorological Department were adequately acted upon, a question that must be answered honestly.

But accountability alone will not shield us from the changing reality of the mountains. The numbers tell their own story. A recent study published by the India Meteorological Department's journal, Mausam, records 2,863 extreme weather events in Jammu and Kashmir between 2010 and 2022. This includes cloudbursts, flash floods, lightning strikes, avalanches and heavy snowfall. These incidents have killed over 550 people in just over a decade. Scientists warn that climate change has increased the atmosphere's capacity to hold moisture in higher altitudes by up to 10 percent, making sudden, violent downpours more frequent.

The Machail Yatra route, like other high-altitude pilgrimage tracks, is beautiful but treacherous. Yet year after year, thousands of devotees are allowed to trek, drive and camp along narrow mountain passes with minimal regulation. Local communities welcome them, as it is a source of income, but when tragedy strikes, it is these very communities that suffer the most. Roads, bridges and homes are washed away. Pilgrims perish alongside residents.

It is time to rethink how we open fragile terrain to mass movement. Disaster preparedness cannot remain an afterthought. Stronger weather-tracking systems, early warning mechanisms, regulated pilgrim numbers, designated shelters and trained rescue personnel at critical points are not luxuries, they are necessities.

Prime Minister Narendra Modi said in his Independence Day speech that "nature is testing us." Indeed it is, but this is not a test we can afford to fail. Development in the Himalayas must respect its ecological limits. Unregulated access to high-altitude areas, whether for religious pilgrimage, tourism or construction, is courting disaster. The mountains will not change their nature for us. It is we who must change our approach toward them.

CASH COURSE

Read This Before You Buy Anything

Faith and Finance
in Kashmir

Shariah-compliant funds offer a way to grow wealth without giving up values.

Irshad Mushtaq

Saving money often means gold, land, or bank deposits in Kashmir. These choices feel safe, but they rarely grow fast enough to match rising costs. A new option is taking root: Shariah-compliant investing.

These funds avoid interest-based banking, liquor, and gambling. Instead, they focus on industries like medicine, technology, and consumer goods. The performance has been striking.

Some ethical funds have returned more than 16 percent annually over the past 26 years. That is far ahead of what banks or gold have offered.

What makes them even more appealing is accessibility. A Systematic Investment Plan allows anyone to start with 500 rupees a month. The process is regulated by SEBI and AMFI, linked to PAN and Aadhaar, and reviewed by scholars to ensure compliance. Investors can pause, increase, or withdraw whenever needed. It is flexible, safe, and liquid.

For many families, the idea matters as much as the math. Shariah-compliant investing means growing wealth while staying true to faith. It offers a path out of debt cycles and a chance to plan for the long term.

It can help households think about money with both discipline and dignity.

The lesson is simple: start small, stay consistent, and let ethical investing turn savings into strength.

— The author is a Srinagar-based reputed financial advisor.

Can AI Shield Kashmir
from Cloudbursts

Sudden, devastating cloudbursts have claimed lives across Jammu and Kashmir. Artificial intelligence and real-time monitoring could give residents crucial early warnings.

Khalid Mustafa

The morning of August 14, 2025, in Chositi, Kishtwar, began like any other. Villagers prepared for the Machail Mata Yatra, pilgrims wandered the narrow mountain paths, and the sun shone over the peaks.

By 11:30 a.m., the sky darkened abruptly. Rain poured down in sheets, heavier than anything locals could remember.

Rivers overflowed, sweeping away homes, bridges, and roads. Landslides buried paths, isolating villages. Sixty-three people died. Dozens went missing.

Within minutes, entire villages were flooded by unstoppable torrents. But Kishtwar isn't alone in facing this danger.

Cloudbursts, sudden and intense rainfall events, have become a recurring terror across Jammu and Kashmir. These storms can dump over 100 millimeters of rain in less than an hour, overwhelming narrow valleys and mountain rivers.

Unlike ordinary rain, cloudbursts strike fast and with little warning. Human factors, like risky construction, weak infrastructure, and unprepared communities, make these natural events even deadlier.

The region's geography amplifies the danger. Kishtwar sits atop one of the most tectonically active zones in the world. The Indian and Eurasian plates have collided for 50 million years, pushing the Himalayas skyward. Steep slopes, narrow gorges, and sediment-filled rivers funnel rainfall at terrifying speed.

History offers grim reminders. The 2013 cloudburst in Kedarnath, Uttarakhand, claimed more than 5,700 lives and stranded thousands.

In both Kishtwar and Kedarnath, people were caught unprepared, without early warning systems.

Weather patterns across Kashmir are becoming increasingly erratic. Winters arrive unpredictably, glaciers retreat, and summer rains are more intense than ever. Human activity has accelerated these changes.

Deforestation for urban expansion and infrastructure projects has weakened the land's ability to absorb water. Overharvesting, unsustainable farming, and soil degradation increase runoff, turning even moderate rain into destructive floods.

Every cloudburst now carries more destructive potential than the last.

Technology offers a way to confront this unpredictability.

Artificial intelligence and machine learning can process massive datasets, like historical rainfall, topography, satellite imagery, and real-time atmospheric readings, to detect patterns invisible to humans.

Machine learning models can analyze humidity, temperature, wind, and air pressure to identify conditions that precede extreme rainfall.

These systems could pinpoint high-risk zones in Kishtwar hours before a cloudburst, giving authorities time to evacuate villages or reroute travelers.

Remote sensing strengthens this capability. Satellites and drones capture cloud for-



Cloudbursts reveal the fragility of life in Kashmir mountains. Centuries of settlement remain at nature's mercy. Technology cannot stop the rain, but AI and real-time monitoring can warn people, guide evacuations, and save lives.

mations, rainfall intensity, and atmospheric changes in real time. Systems like NASA's Earth Observing System provide global coverage that feeds AI models for prediction.

Satellites fill a critical gap in a region like Kashmir, where weather stations are sparse.

When AI integrates this data, it can forecast extreme events in specific valleys or passes, offering precision warnings that were impossible a decade ago.

The Internet of Things can take prediction even further.

Sensors across vulnerable areas can measure rainfall, barometric pressure, temperature, and soil moisture. AI processes this data in real time.

If conditions signal a cloudburst, alerts can reach residents' phones, local authorities, and relief agencies within minutes.

Imagine a village in Kishtwar receiving a warning an hour before floodwaters arrive. Families could evacuate, vehicles could be rerouted, and emergency teams could stage rescue operations ahead of time.

Nowcasting, the prediction of extreme weather on very short timescales, demonstrates AI's potential.

In the UK, AI systems monitor thousands of variables to predict flash floods and localized storms. These systems learn continuously, improving predictions over time. Adapted for Kashmir, nowcasting could identify cloudbursts hours or even minutes before they hit, giving communities a chance to act rather than react.

Challenges, however, remain.

Remote terrain, incomplete weather data, and limited infrastructure make forecasting difficult. AI models require computational power and stable internet. Funding, technical expertise, and collaboration are essential to de-

ploy these systems effectively.

Equally important is public awareness. Early warnings only work if people understand them and act quickly. Communities in Kishtwar and across J&K need training and clear response protocols.

The stakes are high. Cloudbursts are not rare. One such killer rain in 2010 triggered floods that killed more than 200 people in Leh. In 2019, sudden rainfall in the Chenab valley destroyed dozens of homes.

Each event highlights the limits of conventional forecasting and the urgent need for better systems.

Beyond technology, environmental stewardship is critical. Deforestation, unregulated construction, and overextraction of resources worsen cloudbursts' impact.

Forests that once absorbed rain and slowed runoff have shrunk. Rivers, once fed steadily by glaciers and springs, now swell violently after brief storms. Climate change accelerates these trends, making the next disaster more likely and lethal.

Cloudbursts reveal the fragility of life in Kashmir mountains. Centuries of settlement remain at nature's mercy. Technology cannot stop the rain, but AI and real-time monitoring can warn people, guide evacuations, and save lives.

Nature cannot be tamed, but with foresight and preparation, tragedies like Kishtwar, Kedarnath, and Leh can be avoided.

Kashmir can endure its storms and protect those who call it home.

The author is a management and IT professional from Jammu and Kashmir, focusing on technology. He can be reached at er.khalidmustafashah@gmail.com

Kejriwal vs Omar: Year
One Report Card

Arvind Kejriwal in Delhi and Omar Abdullah in J&K reveal two strikingly different models of governing union territories.

Sandeep Kotwal

first year is unfolding differently.

Governing a Union Territory stripped of statehood, his approach leaned on structural reform and symbolic politics.

Education reforms included restoring the traditional November–December academic calendar and sanctioning 575 new lecturer posts.

Agriculture received a 5,000 crore Holistic Agriculture Development Program designed to modernize apple, walnut, saffron, and dairy production, sectors that underpin Kashmir's economy.

The poorest families received free electricity under the Antyodaya Anna Yojana, and women were offered free bus travel, much like in Delhi.

In the Assembly, Omar steered through a resolution seeking restoration of statehood, signaling his political priorities.

These moves carry weight, but the pace feels slower to citizens.

Welfare pledges such as monthly

stipends, one lakh jobs, and free LPG cylinders remain promises on paper.

The reforms set a foundation, yet their benefits are not yet touching households in the way Delhi residents felt under Kejriwal.

A sector-by-sector comparison makes the contrast sharper.

In electricity, Kejriwal's subsidy reached every home, while Omar's targeted relief ranked lower on public impact.

On water, Delhi offered free supply while J&K is still awaiting delivery. Healthcare too showed a gap: Mohalla Clinics versus proposed insurance schemes yet to roll out. Education stood balanced, with Delhi pushing infrastructure and J&K reshaping the calendar and staffing colleges.

On jobs, both governments remain on similar ground. In agriculture, Omar gained the edge with the Holistic Agriculture Development Program. In governance, Kejriwal's anti-corruption measures

and decentralization efforts were balanced by Omar's symbolic push for statehood.

The overall impact tells the story.

Kejriwal's governance was felt daily and built quick political capital. Omar's governance is more about laying structural blocks and reminding people of political aspirations that remain unresolved.

The larger question for voters and analysts is whether a government's first year should focus on immediate relief or on laying the groundwork for long-term institutional change.

Kejriwal chose the first path and gained visible popularity. Omar has taken the second path, betting on reforms that may not show results until later.

Both approaches carry lessons. Citizens measure performance differently when relief arrives at the doorstep versus when it is promised for the future.

For a place like Delhi, immediate delivery reshaped public faith in government. For Jammu and Kashmir, where people live under the shadow of disrupted statehood, the test may lie in whether structural reform can eventually rebuild trust.

Sandeep Kotwal is a 25-time India Book of Records awardee, recognized for his exceptional contributions and dedication to the organization. He can be reached at sandeepkotwal@live.in.

Aliabad Sarai Kashmir's Fading Mughal Marvel

Centuries of footsteps echo in stone, as Aliabad Sarai leans into the Pir Panjal, waiting for a second life.

Dr. Waseem Ahmad

The Mughal Road winds through the Pir Panjal like a silver thread, cutting across jagged ridges and green valleys, carrying faint whispers of emperors, queens, and caravans that once traveled its path.

Tucked beneath Ratanpir and beside the gentle Nallah Panchal, Aliabad Sarai leans against the mountains, as if listening to those medieval journeys.

Its walls, once strong and proud, now crumble under moss and wind. The courtyard that once welcomed kings and their cavalry is scattered with rubble. Shepherds and their flocks have taken over rooms that once sheltered royalty.

The air is thick with stories waiting to be heard, echoes stretching across centuries.

The Mughals traveled with care and purpose. Long journeys demanded shelter, safety, and food. Along the road, fourteen sarais rose like small fortified inns, offering rest to caravans and travelers.



THE MUGHALS TRAVELLED WITH CARE AND PURPOSE. LONG JOURNEYS REQUIRED SHELTER, safety, and food. Along the road, fourteen sarais rose like small fortified inns, offering rest to caravans and travelers. Among them, Aliabad Sarai remains the clearest echo of that time, a living memory of journeys long ago.



Among them, Aliabad Sarai remains the clearest echo of that time, a living memory of journeys long ago.

Akbar laid its first stones. Jahangir restored it through his governor Ali Mardan Khan. Noor Jehan may have paused here, gazing at the valley below, listening to the river murmur against stone, feeling the pulse of the mountains.

The architecture still hums with intention.

The south-facing gateway, carved from granite and black stone, opens into guard rooms, a reminder that vigilance was always part of travel.

Beyond the gate, three chambers, likely meant for the emperor and his queen, face a central courtyard. Around it rise twenty-six cells, built of lakhauri bricks and slate, bound with lime-surkhi mortar. The sarai bal-

ances fortress and sanctuary.

Step inside today, and the air carries the smell of earth and stone, faint hints of firewood and horses, and the memory of footsteps long faded.

Though Aliabad Sarai is protected under the Ancient Monuments and Archaeological Sites and Remains Act of 1958, legal protection feels like ink on paper.



ALIABAD SARAI HOLDS HISTORY AND PROMISE. HERITAGE TOURISM COULD BRING JOBS AND

pride to Shopian and Rajouri. Once alive with emperors, it now leans into the wind, waiting. With care, its walls could breathe again, carrying the echoes of the past, and reclaiming their place in Kashmir's story.

Enforcement is rare, and neglect has become routine. The loss is more than physical.

Aliabad Sarai could be a living bridge to the past, a place where travelers, students, and historians walk through the rhythms of Mughal life.

Restoration need not be grand: fencing, signage, and careful conservation could transform it into a space that sparks imagination, where one traces the corridors, hears the clatter of wagons, the murmur of courtiers, and the hush of an emperor pausing in reflection.

This Mughal marvel holds both history and promise. Heritage tourism could bring jobs, pride, and opportunity to Shopian and Rajouri.

Once alive with emperors, it now leans into the wind, waiting.

With care, its walls could breathe again, carrying the echoes of the past and reclaiming their place in Kashmir's story.

— The author is an agricultural scientist. He can be reached at waseembhatspn@yahoo.com

The Long Nights of Study

For thousands of students in Kashmir, reading rooms are more than study spaces. They are places where time is traded for hope, and where ambition often meets its limits.

Khursheed Ahmad Shah

On winter nights, the Allama Iqbal Library at Kashmir University glows like a lantern in the dark.

Rows of students sit in silence under its fluorescent light, their eyes swollen from sleeplessness, and fingers tracing the same pages again and again.

The night outside is thick with frost, but inside the room burns with a different cold, the one that seeps into the heart when the future refuses to unfold.

Every face here carries a private war. A boy bends over his books as though each line could lift the weight his father has carried for decades. A girl keeps vigil through the hours, her dreams tied to an exam that might throw her family out of poverty.

Between them, hundreds of other young men and women sit with open notebooks and closed throats, speaking only through their silence.

Kashmir has always lived with silence. In its reading rooms, that silence feels charged with expectation.

For years, these halls have multiplied across towns and villages, offering desks, lamps, and Wi-Fi. They look like shrines of ambition from the outside. Inside, they resemble battlefields, where students fight fatigue, anxiety, and time itself.

The phrase most often thrown at them is cruel in its casualness: Aazik Jawan tsch Kharab — today's youth is ruined.

As if the long hours under dim light, the borrowed books, and the skipped meals were signs of waste rather than struggle.

What's often forgotten is that these students have given up the best years of their youth for a chance so faint it nearly slips away.

The odds do not lie.

Out of tens of thousands of aspirants who prepare each year for government jobs or professional courses, only a few hundred ever see their names on the final list. The rest disappear into anonymity. Their efforts are dismissed as



TIME IN THESE ROOMS IS BOTH COMPANION AND EXECUTIONER. IT OFFERS LONG HOURS TO PREPARE BUT STEALS AWAY YOUTH IN THE BARGAIN.

Those who falter lose faith along with exams. Even the rustle of pages can feel like betrayal, a reminder of years that gave nothing in return.

failure than tragedy.

They walk into libraries with black hair and full cheeks. They walk out years later with grey at the temples and hollows in their eyes.

The price is not paid by them alone.

At home, parents age in silence, waiting for a success that may never arrive. Many fathers keep working beyond their strength, mothers pray until prayer itself becomes weary.

For some students, the bitterest irony arrives when the long-awaited success coincides with loss: when the parents who prayed for this day are no longer alive to see it.

There is a word that surfaces in those moments like an ember:

Kash — I wish.

Time in these rooms is both companion and executioner. It offers long hours to prepare but steals away youth in the bargain. Those who falter lose faith along with exams. Even the rustle of pages can feel like betrayal, a reminder of years that gave nothing in return.

Still, the rooms remain full. New students arrive each year, armed with sharpened pencils and trembling hope. They learn to cry without sound, pray in whispers, and hide exhaustion behind coffee cups.

A reading room often hums with muffled sobs, suppressed laughter, and the throb of dreams too fragile to name aloud.

To walk past these halls is to miss their burden. Beyond study spaces, they are warehouses of sacrifice, where the most precious currency is the slow ageing of families who wait outside.

Perhaps the lesson of Kashmir's reading rooms is in the resilience carried inside them.

So, before mocking a student or dismissing their struggle, it is worth remembering that each one of them has lived through nights that would break most of us.

— The author is a freelance journalist based in Jammu and Kashmir. He can be reached at shahkhursheed918@gmail.com

When the Hills Break Their Silence

The cloudburst in Kishtwar is a reminder that the mountains hold memory, and they act.



Bilal Ahmad Khanday

Silence in Kashmir takes many forms. It rises with morning prayers, lingers in the grief of empty homes, and stretches through waiting halls. The mountains hold it all.

They rise above Kashmir like guardians, old and unmoving, yet alive with unseen rhythms.

For centuries they have been described in sacred terms. The Quran, in Surah An-Naba, calls them "pegs," anchors hammered into the earth to keep the ground from trembling.

It is a verse often recited in Kashmiri homes, a reminder that the balance of the world depends on the stillness of stone.

That stillness is breaking.

What we call progress has come like a hurried guest, consuming more than the host can offer.

Over the last four decades, Srinagar's population has doubled, spilling beyond its old waterways into filled wetlands and drained marshes. Dal and Wular, once cradles of fish and migrating birds, are choked with sewage and encroachment. The Hok-ersar wetland, once the valley's flood cushion, has been reduced to less than half its size.

Each disappearance has been justified as development, yet each era-

sure removes a shield the valley once trusted.

Deforestation tells the same story. Data from Kashmir University shows that forest cover in the valley has fallen by more than a third. Hills stripped of deodar and pine now slip easily in rains, triggering landslides that bury villages.

The glaciers above Sonamarg and Pahalgam are thinning at record speed. They melt earlier, swell rivers, and then vanish when water is most needed.

This is how silence is broken, with steady erosion, until one day the mountains speak in storms.

This summer, Kishtwar woke to one such voice. The sky cracked, and in the space of minutes, torrents swept through hamlets that had stood for centuries. Families vanished. Crops, animals, homes, everything dissolved in the black water that roared down the slopes.

Cloudbursts are not new, yet their frequency has grown sharper, their destruction heavier. Elders in Ganderbal remember a time when floods came in slow surges, announced by days of rain. Now they arrive unannounced, in bursts so violent that memory itself struggles to keep pace.

The message is not hidden. When wetlands are filled, floods have nowhere to go but into homes. When



RESTORATION IS NOT THAT HARD. IT SIMPLY means replanting what was cut, halting the filling of marshes, even if it displeases contractors.

forests are cut, slopes turn brittle. When glaciers shrink, rivers surge and dry with equal fury.

The mother earth has endured in silence, but patience is not infinite. Excess becomes poison, as the Kashmiri saying goes, and the poison is now in soil, water, and air.

The question is whether we will hear the language before it hardens into verdict.

Restoration is not that hard. It simply means replanting what was cut, halting the filling of marshes, even if it displeases contractors.

It also means teaching children that progress is measured less in roads and malls than in rivers that still flow clear. Above all, it means admitting that what we destroy in years will take centuries to heal.

For now, the mountains still stand, though they remember everything. Their silence is accumulation, not emptiness.

Each flood, storm, and collapse is their way of speaking back.

To live in Kashmir is to know this conversation is ongoing. The only choice is whether to listen.

The author is a writer and observer from Shalabugh, Ganderbal, Kashmir, who explores the intersections of nature, culture, and human resilience.

Hot Humid Days Can Spike Risk Of Heart-Related Emergency Six-Fold Compared To Hot Days: Study

Press Trust Of India

Risk of an emergency visit to a hospital for a heart problem could be six times higher on hot and humid days, compared to hot days with low humidity, according to an analysis of over 3.4 lakh such visits during 2014-2019 in Dhaka, Bangladesh.

Researchers from Tulane University in the US and Bangladesh's National Institute of Cardiovascular Diseases modelled the emergency visits made during summer months against historical data of temperature and humidity in Dhaka.

Findings published in the journal Science of The Total Environment reveal that while heat alone can heighten the risk of a heart-related emergency



by 4.4 per cent, on most humid days -- with relative humidity peaking at 82 per cent -- the risk rose to 26.7 per cent.

"(The study's) findings show we

need to consider heat and humidity together when we discuss any kind of climate change policy," said first author Mostafijur Rahman, an assistant pro-

fessor of environmental health sciences at Tulane University's School of Public Health and Tropical Medicine.

Under continued global warming, the number of hot and humid days in a year is projected to increase, with tropical countries said to be more vulnerable.

Humid conditions -- high moisture in the air -- hampers one's ability to sweat and bring down the body's temperature, forcing the heart to pump harder.

The findings could help develop solutions in Bangladesh and similar countries, where exposure to high heat and humidity can drive up the risk of heat-related illness, the authors said.

"There are billions around the world -- from Southeast Asia to Africa -- who are directly impacted by rising

temperatures but have little access to air conditioning," Rahman said.

The authors wrote, "The effect size of heat increased linearly with increasing (relative humidity) and culminated in a six-fold increase in excess risk on the most humid days (relative humidity ranges between 82 per cent and 97 per cent) as compared to days with normal humidity (between 34 per cent and 69 per cent) [excess risk 26.7 per cent vs 4.4 per cent]."

"Hopefully, governments will be spurred to develop systems to warn cities of dangerous heat and humidity. For average citizens, it's important to develop habits to beat the heat: stay hydrated, stay indoors, wear breathable clothing, and consider visiting air-conditioned public places like malls or libraries," Rahman said.

'Workplace Bullying Hinders Employees' Creative Thinking, Engagement In Side Projects'

Press Trust of India

Workplace bullying and negative behaviour such as being excluded, humiliated or treated unfairly hinders creative thinking and reduces the likelihood of employees engaging in innovative side projects, a study by Indian Institute of Management (IIM), Lucknow has found.

In many organisations, employees work on secret, self-initiated ideas developed without management's knowledge and present them to the management once they are ready to deliver significant results leading to business success, it said. According to officials, the researchers employed a mixed-method approach to gather the necessary data.

In the experimental scenario-based part of the research, the team gathered input from 112 participants. In the survey-based part of the research, input from 313 employees working in IT-enabled companies was gathered.

"Our study sheds light on how subtle forms of workplace mistreatment can silently erode employees' creative potential. Organisations must create an environment where support, respect, and open dialogue are the norm to unlock true innovation," Rishab Chauhan, PhD scholar, IIM Lucknow, told PTI.

IIT Guwahati, ISRO Scientists Decode Flickering X-Ray Signals From Distant Black Hole

Press Trust Of India

Researchers at the Indian Institute of Technology (IIT), Guwahati, in collaboration with UR Rao Satellite Centre, ISRO and Haifa University, Israel, have uncovered a mysterious X-ray signal pattern emitted from a blackhole, located nearly 28,000 light-years from the Earth, according to officials.

Using the data from India's space observatory AstroSat, the researchers observed the X-ray brightness from the black hole alternated between bright and dim phases, each lasting several hundred seconds, they said.

The findings of this research have been published in the prestigious journal, Monthly Notices of the Royal Astronomical Society.

Researchers from across the world are working towards understanding the phenomena of black

holes. While drawing gas from the outer layers of their companion stars, they produce extreme heat and emit X-rays. By studying these X-rays, scientists can learn about the environment near the black hole.

According to Santabrata Das, Professor at the Department of Physics, IIT Guwahati, "We have found the first evidence of rapid X-ray flickering, repeating nearly 70 times per second, occurring during the high-brightness phases of the source. Interestingly, these fast flickers disappear during the low-brightness phases. This new understanding was made possible by AstroSat's powerful, unique observational capabilities."

The researchers observed that the X-ray brightness from the targeted black hole alternated between two distinct phases -- one bright and one dim. During the brighter phases, when the flickers are strongest, the corona

becomes more compact and significantly hotter. In contrast, during the dimmer phases, it expands and cools, causing the flickers to disappear.

"This clear correlation points to the compact, oscillating corona as the likely source of these fast signals. While each phase lasted several hundred seconds and repeated in a regular pattern, a rapid flickering signal appeared only during the bright phase. This discovery shows that the corona around the black hole is not a fixed structure and changes its shape and energy depending on how gases flow into the black hole," he added.

Das explained that the research provides a deeper understanding of the extreme gravitational intensity and high temperature that exist near a black hole's edge. These findings also improve our models of how black holes grow, release energy and affect their surroundings.

OFFICE OF THE NAIB TEHSILDAR PATTAN

Public Notice

The registrar birth EO MC pattan has submitted a case file pertaining to birth of Anika Irshad D.o.B 03/03/2017 ,Tabia irshad D.o B.07/09/2016 daughters of Irshad Ahmad Wani R/o Aram mohalla pattan in this connection if any body having objection for issuance of said certificate he may contact to this office within 04 days after that no objection shall be entertained.

SD
fko Naib Tehsildar Pattan

PUBLIC NOTICE

I have changed may name & parentage from (old name and parentag) Abdul Sattar Bhat S/O Gulam Ahmad Bhat to (New Name & Parentage) Ab Sattar Bhat S/o Gh Ahmed Bhat. In futre I will be known as Ab Sattar Bhat S/o Gh Ahmed Bhat. If anybody has any objection in this regard he/she may file them in the passport office Srinagar within seven days. After that no objection shall be entertained.

FKO

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

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GST Reform Optimism Fuels Market Surge; Auto, Consumer Durables Lead The Rally

Press Trust Of India

NEW DELHI- Stock markets rose sharply on Monday, with Sensex closing higher by 676 points and Nifty climbing 1 per cent on heavy buying in auto and consumer durables stocks, buoyed by plans for big bang reforms in the GST regime by Diwali.

The 30-share BSE Sensex jumped 676.09 points or 0.84 per cent to settle at 81,273.75. During the day, it zoomed by 1,168.11 points or 1.44 per cent to 81,765.77.

The 50-share NSE Nifty climbed 245.65 points or 1 per cent to end at 24,876.95. Intraday, it surged 390.7 points or 1.58 per cent to 25,022.

Global rating agency S&P upgrading India's sovereign credit rating also boosted the sentiment, analysts said.

Among Sensex firms, Maruti zoomed the most by 8.94 per cent. Bajaj Finance, UltraTech Cement, Bajaj Finserv, Mahindra & Mahindra, Hindustan Unilever and Trent were among other major gainers from the pack.

However, ITC, Eternal, Tech Mahindra and Larsen & Toubro declined.

Auto stocks were in high demand, with Hyundai Motor India jumping 8.45 per cent. The BSE auto index jumped 4.26 per cent to 56,233.33.

The Centre has proposed a 2-tier GST structure of 5 per cent and 18 per cent, besides a 40 per cent special rate on a select few items to the GoM on GST rate rationalisation.

The proposal, which entails removing the current 12 and 28 per cent tax slabs, will be discussed at the two-day meeting of the state ministerial panel on August 20 and 21 in the national capital, according to sources.

Prime Minister Narendra Modi had announced the proposal to reform the GST law in his Independence Day speech on August 15 from the ramparts of the Red Fort.

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

European markets were trading in negative territory. The US markets ended mostly lower on Friday.

Global oil benchmark Brent crude climbed 0.62 per cent up to USD 66.25 a barrel.

5,706 Flights Cancelled On Regulatory, Geopolitical Grounds Till June: Data



Press Trust Of India

NEW DELHI- As many as 5,706 flights were cancelled due to regulatory and geopolitical issues this year till June 30. During this time, the number of flight departures stood at 5,72,079, as per the data.

Mohol said airlines incur costs due to delays and cancellations, including additional fuel, crew overtime, maintenance, airport fees, and rebooking expenses.

"Further, airlines are required to provide refunds or compensation to passengers for cancellations or significant delays. Passengers

There were a total of 5,706 flight cancellations due to regulatory and geopolitical issues this year till June 30. During this time, the number of flight departures stood at 5,72,079, as per the data.

Mohol said airlines incur costs due to delays and cancellations, including additional fuel, crew overtime, maintenance, airport fees, and rebooking expenses.

"Further, airlines are required to provide refunds or compensation to passengers for cancellations or significant delays. Passengers

carried by domestic airlines during January-June 2025 registered a growth of 7.34 per cent as compared to the corresponding period of the previous year," he added.

In a separate written reply, the minister said Air India commenced 24 international routes since July 2023 and out of them, 4 routes have been suspended due to commercial reasons.

"Air India's Goa-London (Gatwick) service, which was temporarily suspended, is scheduled to resume in Winter Schedule 2025," he said.

Railways Understated Working Expenses In 2022-23: CAG Report

Press Trust Of India

NEW DELHI- Railway's total earnings and expenditure from its operations when compared with its cross subsidising records showed that it understated its expenditure in the financial year 2022-23 by more than 5,000 crore, the Comptroller and Auditor General's report, recently tabled in the Parliament, has revealed.

The CAG found that while the Railways, after working out its earnings and expenditures, presented a net profit of Rs 2,517.38 crore, when the loss in passenger services was compensated with the profit from freight services, it showed a net loss of Rs 5,257.07 crore.

The audit showed that Railways' total working expenditure (including appropriation to various funds) stood at Rs 2,37,659.58 crore whereas its earnings from passenger, coaching, freight and other services were Rs 2,40,176.96 crore generating a surplus of Rs 2,517.38 crore.

On the other hand, fiscal records related to cross subsidisation of passenger and other coaching services reflected that total expenditure in operation of all types of trains (passenger, coaching and goods) was Rs 2,45,393.71 crore and total revenue receipt (earnings) from all trains and sundry services was Rs 2,40,136.64 crore, incurring a loss of Rs 5,257 crore.

"From the above, it may be observed that the total working expenditure in the summary of fiscal transactions has been understated," the CAG said.

It added, "The understated expenditure will not reflect true Operating Ratio (OR). Taking into account the understated expenditure the OR would be 101.33." The audit found that when taking into account the net profit of Rs 2,517.38 crore, the Railways OR was 98.10 per cent.



"The loss of ₹5,257.07 crore in passenger operations was left uncovered during 2022-23. The profit from freight traffic was utilised to cross-subsidise the loss on operation of passenger and other coaching services."

"A higher ratio indicates a poorer ability to generate surplus. Against the target of 96.98 per cent in the Budget Estimates, the OR of Railways was 98.10 per cent in 2022-23. This meant that Railways spent ₹ 98.10 to earn ₹ 100.00," the report said.

According to the summary of cross subsidisation, Railways generated Rs 74,289.66 crore from all passenger operation services and Rs 1,65,846.98 crore from freight operations, making Rs 2,40,136.64 crore as total revenue receipts in 2022-23.

In so far as its expenses were concerned, its expenditure on goods services stood at Rs 1,11,062.87 crore and passenger services at Rs 1,34,330.84 crore making a total of Rs 2,45,393.71 crore.

The financial record further suggested that the Railway made a loss of Rs 60,041.18 crore from passenger services while it registered a profit of Rs 54,784 crore in goods services.

"The loss of ₹ 5,257.07 crore in passenger operations was left uncovered during 2022-23. The profit from freight traffic was utilised to cross-subsidise the loss on operation of passenger and other coaching services," the audit said.

The report also recorded the biggest operational loss from the Sleeper Class, Ordinary Class, and Second Class which stood at Rs 17,819.21 crore, Rs 17,076.90 crore and Rs 16,357.02 crore.

GST Rate Rejig: Sitharaman To Address Aug 20 GoM Meet To Put Forth Centre's Rate Cut Proposal

Press Trust Of India

NEW DELHI- Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman will on Wednesday address a crucial meeting of a group of ministers of states as she makes a case for the sweeping GST reforms that will slash tax rates and lead to reduction in prices of common use items.

The Centre has proposed a 2-tier GST structure of 5 and 18 per cent, besides a 40 per cent special rate on a select few items to the GoM on GST rate rationalisation.

The proposal, which entails removing the current 12 and 28 per cent tax slabs, will be discussed at the 2-day meeting of the state ministerial panel on August 20 and 21 here in the national capital, sources said.

"The idea is to put forth the Centre's view point behind the GST reform proposal. Although the Centre is not a member of the GoM, Union Finance Minister's presence and her address will give the GoM a better understanding of the idea and thought process behind the Centre's proposal," a source told PTL.

Bihar Deputy Chief Minister Samrat Choudhary is the convener of the six-member GoM. The other members are Uttar Pradesh Finance Minister Suresh Kumar Khanna, Rajasthan



Health Minister Gajendra Singh, West Bengal Finance Minister Chandrima Bhattacharya, Karnataka Revenue Minister Krishna Byre Gowda, Kerala Finance Minister K N Balagopal.

The Centre has proposed two-slab structure of 5 and 18 per cent classifying items under the category of 'merit' and 'standard' and the broad principle followed in the classification is to reduce tax burden for middle class, MSMEs, and the farm sector.

The proposed 40 per cent slab, the highest permissible tax rate under the GST law, will be only for about 5-7 items, including demerit goods like pan masala, tobacco and online gaming.

Goods and Services Tax (GST) is currently levied at 5, 12, 18 and 28 per cent. While food and essential items are either at nil or 5 per cent, luxury and demerit goods are in 28 per cent slab, with a cess on top of it.

Apple Leases Office In Bengaluru, To Pay Rs 6.3 Crore Monthly Rent

Press Trust Of India

NEW DELHI- iPhone maker Apple India has leased around 2.7 lakh square feet of office space in Bangalore for 10 years with a starting monthly rent of Rs 6.3 crore, according to data analytics firm Propstack.

Apple is the biggest exporter of mobile phones from India. It exported iPhones worth about Rs 1.5 lakh crore in the financial year 2024-25. The company has taken multiple floors including car parking space on lease from real estate firm Embassy Group.

The iPhone maker is estimated to pay more than Rs 1,000 crore in rent, car park and maintenance charge over a period of 10 years, as per Propstack, which has reviewed the registration document of this leasing transaction.

Apple declined to comment on an email query. The lease has been signed for a period of 120 months or 10 years with effect from April 3, 2025.

The fresh investment from Apple comes despite US President Donald Trump openly calling out the company for expanding operations in India.

The starting rent of the premise is Rs 235 per square feet per month and made a deposit of Rs 31.57 crore. The rent will escalate 4.5 per cent every year thereby leading to total payment of over Rs 1,000 crore.

According to the documents, the company has leased nine floors starting from 5th till 13th floor in Embassy Zenith.

Javid Dar Assures Support For Saffron Growers

Observer News Service

PAMPORE- Minister for Agriculture Production, Rural Development and Panchayat, Javid Ahmad Dar, Monday visited the saffron belt of Lethpora, Chandhara and Khrew in Pampore, Pulwama district, to engage with the saffron growers and reaffirm the government's commitment to their welfare.

The visit underscores the government's dedication towards preserving and promoting Kashmir's iconic saffron industry.

During his visit, Agriculture Minister interacted with the saffron growers and took stock of their issues and concerns. These included irrigation challenges, real estate pressures and the need for modern agricultural technologies. He assured immediate redressal of their issues and emphasized the government's efforts to strengthen the saffron sector through targeted interventions.

Javid Dar also attended a training program at the India International Kashmir Saffron Trading Centre (IIKSTC) in Dussoo, where he addressed the saffron growers, highlighting the importance of saffron as a cultural and economic asset.

The event was graced by the presence of MLA Pampore, Justice (Retd.) Hasnain Masoodi and others.

Director Agriculture provided a comprehensive briefing to the dignitaries, joined by the Chief Agriculture Officer, Pulwama, the Administrator of IIKSTC and other officials.

Number Of FASTag Annual Pass Users Crosses 5 Lakh-Mark In 4 Days



Press Trust Of India

NEW DELHI- The newly introduced FASTag annual pass facility has crossed the landmark figure of five lakh users across the country within four days, an official statement said on Monday.

FASTag annual pass, applicable on about 1,150 toll collection booths on National Highways and expressways allowing users to cross 200 toll plazas in a year for a one-time payment of Rs 3,000, was launched on August 15. The facility has received an overwhelming response from the National Highway users across the country.

Tamil Nadu led with the maximum number of annual pass purchases in the last four days, followed by Karnataka and Haryana, the statement said.

Besides, maximum transactions through FASTag annual pass were recorded at toll plazas in Tamil Nadu, Karnataka and Andhra Pradesh, it added. The pass is applicable for all non-commercial vehicles with a valid FASTag and gets activated within two hours of the one-time payment using Rajmargyatra app or the NHAI website.

LIC Launches Special Campaign To Revive Lapsed Policies

Press Trust Of India

NEW DELHI- Insurance behemoth Life Insurance Corporation of India (LIC) on Monday announced the launch of a month-long campaign for revival of individual lapsed policies.

This special drive, to be carried out from August 18 to October 17, 2025, is extended to all non-linked policies with very attractive concession in late fee.

Concession is being offered in late fee for all Non-Linked Insurance Plans up to 30 per cent of late fee up to a maximum amount of Rs 5,000 if eligible for revival under the scheme, LIC said in a statement.

There is a 100 per cent waiver of late fee for Micro Insurance Policies to facilitate affordable restoration of risk cover, it said.

Under this Special Revival Campaign, policies can be revived within 5 years from date of the first unpaid premium subject to satisfying the policy terms and conditions, it said.



Policies which are in a lapsed condition during the premium paying term and not completed policy term are eligible to be revived in this campaign.

There are no concessions on medical/health requirements, it said.

The campaign is launched for the benefit of policyholders who were not able to pay premiums on time due to any unfavourable circumstances and policies must be kept in force to get full insurance benefit, the statement added.

"It is always advisable to revive an old policy and restore insurance cover. LIC values its policyholders and their desire to stay protected for the well-being of their family members," it said.

23% Of Total 56.04 Crore PM Jan Dhan Accounts Remain Inactive

Press Trust Of India

NEW DELHI- As many as 23 per cent of the total 56.04 crore Pradhan Mantri Jan Dhan Yojana (PMJDY) accounts are inoperative, Minister of State for Finance Pankaj Chaudhary said on Monday.

Out of 56.03 crore PMJDY accounts at the end of July 31, 2025, 13.04 crore such accounts are inoperative, he said in a written reply in the Lok Sabha.

Uttar Pradesh has the highest number of inoperative Jan Dhan accounts of 2.75 crore, followed by Bihar at 1.39 crore and Madhya Pradesh at 1.07 crore, he said.

As per the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) guidelines dated February 18, 2009, a savings account should be treated as inoperative/dormant if there are no transactions in the account for over a period of two years.

The government has taken various steps to ensure smooth functioning of PMJDY accounts, including Direct Benefit Transfer (DBT). These benefits are transferred even to the inactive accounts.

Banks inform account holders in writing through letters or email or SMS about the accounts which are to become inactive and also contact the holder(s) of the inoperative accounts through letters, email or SMS on a quarterly basis, he said.

The government launches various specific campaigns from time to time for promotion of enrolment under various schemes, as well as for issues like activation of inoperative accounts, he said.

Recently, a Gram Panchayat level Saturation Campaign has been launched from July 1, 2025 to September 30, 2025 across the country wherein Re-KYC of 'inactive PMJDY accounts' is one of the key focus activities of the campaign, he said.

Replying to another question, Chaudhary said there is no proposal to impose transaction

charges on UPI, at present.

"In order to ensure continuity of the UPI services by the ecosystem partners, the government had implemented the incentive scheme during the last four years i.e. FY 2021-22 to FY 2024-25. During this period, the government has extended incentive support of approximately Rs 8,730 crore," he said.

In reply to another question, Chaudhary said Public Sector Banks (PSBs) raise capital from the market to meet their capital requirements from time to time.

The robust financial strength of PSBs has boosted investors' confidence, enabling them to raise capital from the market.

Banks raise capital from the market in the form of equity, Basel III compliant Additional Tier-I and Tier-II bonds.

"Total amount of capital raised by PSBs in the form of both equity and bonds during the last three financial years (FY 2022-23 to FY 2024-25) amounts to Rs 1,53,978 crore (Rs 44,942 crore in FY 2022-23, Rs 57,380 crore in FY 2023-24 and Rs 51,656 crore in FY 2024-25)," he said.

The fresh raising of capital by banks is used for various purposes, which included meeting the capital needs of banks to support credit growth, meeting regulatory requirements for capital adequacy, complying with minimum public shareholding norms by increasing public shareholding, replenishing AT-I bonds due for exercising call option, strengthening the overall capital position of the bank and creating capital buffer for their future business requirements, he said.

Replying to another question, Chaudhary said the ratio of Gross Non-Performing Assets in gold loans to the outstanding gold loans for SCBs has increased marginally from 0.20 per cent in March 2023 to 0.22 per cent in March 2025, while for Upper- and Middle-Layer NBFCs it has increased from 1.21 per cent to 2.14 per cent over the same period.

Gold Trades Flat At Rs 1,00,920/10 G, Silver Climbs Rs 1,000

Press Trust Of India

NEW DELHI- Gold prices remained flat at Rs 1,00,920 per 10 grams in the national capital on Monday, according to the All India Sarafa Association.

On Saturday, the precious metal of 99.9 per cent purity had declined Rs 500 to close at Rs 1,00,920 per 10 grams from Thursday's closing of Rs 1,01,420 per 10 grams.

The Bullion markets were closed on Friday on the country's 79th Independence Day.

In the local market, the yellow metal of 99.5 per cent purity remained flat at Rs 1,00,500 per 10 grams (inclusive of all taxes) on Monday.

"Gold traded flat to volatile as the US-Russia meeting over the weekend did not yield any clear resolution on the Moscow and Kyiv peace process, though the tone of talks was positive."

"This has kept prices in a consolidative phase, as any breakthrough towards peace could pressure gold lower, while prolonged delays in resolution are likely to keep prices supported," Jateen Trivedi, VP Research Analyst, Commodity and Currency at LKP Securities, said.

However, silver prices rallied Rs 1,000 to Rs 1,15,000 per kilogram (inclusive of all taxes) on Monday, as per the Association. It had settled at Rs 1,14,000 per kg in the previous market close.

On the global front, spot gold went up marginally to trade at USD 3,349.29 per ounce in New York.

A Child In His Arms

boy, drenched and alone. The parents were missing. Shahnawaz lifted him, pressed him close, and kept talking.

That night, as India prepared to mark Independence Day, Kishtwar was drowning. A burst of rain from the skies above had turned into a furious flood, sweeping through homes, camps, and the crowded paths of the Machail Mata Yatra. By dawn, roads had been washed away, bridges torn apart, and dozens of families were stranded. The Chenab Valley, known more for its difficult terrain than for headlines, was suddenly a place of tragedy.

Kashmir is no stranger to such fury. Between 2010 and 2022, Jammu and Kashmir reported more than 50 major incidents of cloudbursts and flash floods, according to government data. In August alone, this fragile Himalayan belt has witnessed repeated calamities, from Ganderbal to Kargil.

Chasoti became the latest reminder of how entire communities live at the mercy of changing weather, steep slopes, and a warming climate that intensifies sudden downpours.

The first to respond were soldiers. The 17 Rashtriya Rifles moved before midnight, joined by local police. Over 300 personnel, including doctors, engineers, were on the ground within hours. They carried stretchers across broken tracks, laid temporary planks where bridges had collapsed, and cleared debris with bare hands.

Survivors recall the sight of soldiers handing out water bottles and biscuits to frightened children.

Alongside them came others. Seven ambulances of Ababeel, an NGO founded in 2015 in Kishtwar, maneuvered into the valley before sunrise.

Volunteers distributed food kits, blankets, and medicines, often hiking through slippery paths where vehicles could not go. The group's founder, Advocate Hassan Babur Nehru, describes their work as "answering a moral call."

In a place where caste and religion often divide, Ababeel's relief work has long carried a message: in crisis, humanity stands above all.

The official machinery, too, did not remain distant. Among the faces villagers remember is ARTO Kishtwar, Tasleem Wani. Instead of sitting in his office, Wani spent days on the ground, personally guiding yatriss to buses and helping families find transport out of the disaster zone.

One viral photograph showed him seated by the roadside with a steel plate of rice, a rare break in days of nonstop work. To locals, that image became proof that the administration was walking with them, not standing apart.

Chasoti's people did not wait for help either. Young men from nearby hamlets dug with their hands, searching for missing neighbours. Women opened their kitchens to cook for stranded yatriss. In the face of destruction, the valley's oldest survival code came alive: collective resilience.

By the second day, rescue teams from the National Disaster Response Force (NDRF) joined operations. Helicopters ferried the injured to hospitals, while volunteers kept the ground supplied with essentials.

Yet the losses were heavy. Several villagers remained missing, their names scribbled on lists pinned outside relief camps. Children clung to strangers. Old men stared at the broken lines where houses once stood.

For many in Kashmir, the Chasoti disaster was a haunting echo of earlier floods: 2014 in Srinagar, 2021 in Kishtwar, and countless smaller cloudbursts in the high reaches.

Each time, it is local networks of soldiers, NGOs, and ordinary residents that form the backbone of response.

Scientists at Kashmir University have long warned that the Chenab and Lidder valleys, with their fragile geology and thinning glaciers, are especially vulnerable to sudden cloudbursts. Yet preventive planning and rehabilitation remain slow, leaving communities exposed.

Still, what lingers from Chasoti is not only destruction but also memory of collective, community courage. It showed that in Kashmir's most fragile spaces, humanity can be stronger than any flood.

For Shahnawaz, the SDRF jawan, the image of him holding that child became a symbol of the night. He does not think of it as heroism. "It was only duty," he says, adjusting his cap as he prepares for another field assignment.

Yet for those who watched him carry a life across the waters, it was more than duty. It was the embrace of humanity in the valley's darkest hour.

2 More Bodies

in the natural calamity to 63, officials said, as a large-scale search continued for the fifth day on Monday despite intermittent rains.

Donning rain coats, the rescue teams were working at multiple locations, especially the major impact spot near a langar (community kitchen) site, sifting through the rubble using machinery, including earth movers, and sniffer dogs.

Two bodies, one of them of a woman, were recovered this afternoon, the officials said.

The woman's body was found downstream in a gorge near Kukundra village, while the other body was found buried near a temple.

With the recovery of the two bodies, the death toll in the flash floods triggered by the cloudburst on August 14 in Chisoti, the last motorable village en route to the Machail Mata temple, has risen to 63. The dead included three CISF personnel and one Special Police Officer.

A total of 167 persons were rescued, while the number of missing has dropped to 39 after a fresh revision of the list this morning, the officials said.

Army's Jammu-based White Knight Corps, in a post on X, said five relief columns of the force are engaged in the rescue and relief operations and efforts have been further intensified with additional medical teams deployed.

"Despite adverse terrain and weather, a bridge over Chisoti Nala was completed on August 17, expediting relief and evacuation. Additional equipment is being moved forward to strengthen operations and senior Army functionaries are on ground to oversee relief and rescue," the army said, adding close coordination with civil agencies continues to expedite relief efforts.

Lt Governor Manoj Sinha on Monday announced that 10 senior IAS and IPS officers -- two for each day -- will be posted at Chisoti for the next eight days.

"In order to supervise relief and rescue operations in response to the recent tragic cloudburst, the officers, as per the roster, are hereby deputed to Chisoti in district Kishtwar," read an order issued by Commissioner-Secretary to the Government M Raju.

The officers will be deployed in the hamlet for the next eight days, with one IAS and one IPS officer overseeing operations for two days each.

The flash-floods triggered by the cloudburst left a trail of destruction, flattening a makeshift market, a langar site for the annual Machail Mata yatra, damaging 16 houses and government buildings, three temples, four water mills and a 30-metre-long bridge, besides over a dozen vehicles.

"Today is the fifth day of the operation, and combined efforts are underway to recover the mortal remains of the missing persons. The weather is challenging in view of the rain. We also have a warning (of heavy rains) for the day, but still we are trying our best," a CISF officer said.

The joint teams of police, army, National Disaster Response Force (NDRF), State Disaster Response Force (SDRF), CISF, Border Roads Organisation (BRO), civil administration, and local volunteers are engaged in the rescue efforts.

Army engineers on Sunday built a Bailey bridge over Chisoti nullah, providing much-needed connectivity to the village and the Machail Mata shrine. The Army has also inducted a couple of all-terrain vehicles as part of the efforts to intensify the rescue and relief operation, officials said.

The rescuers conducted half a dozen controlled explosions over the last two days to blow up giant boulders hampering the search.

The annual Machail Mata yatra, which began on July 25 and was scheduled to conclude on September 5, remained suspended for the fifth consecutive day on Sunday. However, authorities have decided to allow a group of devotees carrying 'Charri' from Jammu.

The 8.5-km trek to the 9,500-foot-high shrine starts from Chisoti, located about 90 km from Kishtwar town.

The rescuers are utilising over a dozen earth-movers and other heavy equipment, while the NDRF mobilised its resources, including dog squads, to speed up the rescue operation. (PTI)

LG Deploys 10 Senior

village of Kishtwar district that left 62 people dead.

On August 14, flash floods triggered by the cloudburst 14 in Chisoti – the last motorable village en route to the Machail Mata temple – also left at least 116 people injured.

Eighty-two people – 81 pilgrims and one CISF personnel – are reported missing.

"In order to supervise relief and rescue operations in response to the recent tragic cloudburst, the officers, as per the roster, are hereby deputed to Chisoti in district Kishtwar," read an order issued by Commissioner-Secretary to the Government M Raju.

The officers will be deployed in the hamlet for the next eight days, with one IAS and one IPS officer overseeing operations for two days each.

Principal Secretary Home, Chandraker Bharti, and Inspector General of Police (Operations & Services) Uttam Chand will supervise operations on August 19 and 20, followed by Principal Secretary Anil Kumar Singh and IGP Sujit Kumar on August 21 and 22.

Financial Commissioner and Additional Chief Secretary Shaleen Kabra and IGP Suleman Chaudhary will be deployed on August 23 and 24, followed by Secretary Shahid Iqbal Choudhary and IGP Vivek Gupta on August 25 and 26.

Rescue operation continued amid rain on Monday, the fifth day since the tragedy, to trace those buried under debris in the remote village.

Wearing raincoats, the rescue teams were seen working at multiple locations, especially at the major impact spot near a langar (community kitchen) site. Earthmovers were at work to clear the rubble as police dogs sniffed for signs of life.

The annual Machail Mata yatra, which began on July 25 and was scheduled to conclude on September 5, remained suspended for the fifth consecutive day.

The 8.5-km trek to the 9,500-foot-high shrine starts from Chishoti, about 90 km from Kishtwar town.

Kathua Cloudburst:

Seven members of four families, including five children, were killed in two separate incidents of cloudburst and landslide in Kathua district of Jammu and Kashmir early Sunday, officials said.

The calamity struck Jodh Ghati village of Rajbagh and Bagra village of Janglote amid heavy overnight rains in the district, leading to increase in the level of water bodies and submerging many low-lying areas, they said.

The cloudburst in Kathua came three days after flash floods triggered by cloudburst struck Chisoti village in Kishtwar district of Jammu and Kashmir on August 14, leaving 60 people dead and more than 100 injured.

Altaf said, "The damages have been caused to a small village in Kathua. I know the Centre won't give a special package for this village. But I will seek compensation from the PM's relief fund. When I know it is not possible to get a special package, then why would I ask for one? I would instead ask for compensation from the PM's relief funds."

To provide immediate relief to the affected, Jammu and Kashmir Chief Minister Omar Abdullah announced ex-gratia assistance from the Chief Minister's Relief Fund, in addition to monetary support from the State Disaster Response Fund.

The financial assistance includes Rs 2 lakh each to kin of the deceased, Rs 1 lakh each for those severely injured, and Rs 50,000 each for those with minor injuries.

For structural damages, Rs 1 lakh will be given for fully damaged houses, Rs 50,000 for severely damaged houses, and Rs 25,000 for partially damaged houses.

The chief minister directed the administration to carry out immediate relief, rescue and evacuation measures to ensure safety of the affected families and to extend full support to them.

He said the government stands firmly with the people in this hour of crisis and assured that all possible steps will be taken to mitigate the suffering of those hit by the calamity.

Union Home Minister Amit Shah on Sunday spoke to the chief minister regarding the situation in Kathua and assured all necessary support from the central government.

CM welcomed the assurance and said that joint

efforts of the Jammu and Kashmir government and the Centre will help provide timely relief and rehabilitation to the affected families.

Lt Governor Manoj Sinha on Sunday expressed anguish over the loss of life in rain-triggered landslides in Kathua district, and said Home Minister Amit Shah has been briefed on the rescue and relief operations.

"Deeply anguished by the loss of lives in the devastating rain-triggered landslides in several areas of Kathua. The tragedy is mind-numbing," he said on X.

"Briefed Union Home Minister Amit Shah on rescue and relief operations by the army, NDRF, SDRF, police and administration," Sinha said in a post on X.

"I have directed senior civil and police officials to coordinate and execute rescue and aid efforts in the affected areas and ensure on-site medical assistance. My thoughts are with bereaved families and praying for the swift recovery of those injured," the LG said.

J&K On Alert: MeT

preparedness." Relief camps are being readied, while food, medicines, and drinking water are being stocked in vulnerable areas.

"The government is committed to protecting lives. All departments have been instructed to be on alert. We are prepared to meet any eventuality," an official spokesman said.

Forecast & Risk Areas

According to the MeT bulletin, August 18–19 is likely to see widespread rain and thunderstorms, with intense showers in Jammu, Reasi, Udhampur, Rajouri, Poonch, Samba, and Kathua. Mountainous districts including Doda, Kishtwar, and Ramban, along with parts of the Kashmir Valley, may also face heavy rainfall with gusty winds.

From August 20–22, hot and humid conditions are expected, though isolated heavy showers could hit Jammu, Kathua, and Samba. Another wet spell is predicted for August 23–25, bringing more rain with the risk of localized cloudbursts and flash floods.

The MeT has warned of Cloudbursts in higher reaches, Flash floods in low-lying areas, Landslides & mudslides in hilly terrain, and Shooting stones along vulnerable highway stretches

This advisory has particular relevance for the Jammu–Srinagar National Highway and other interior routes in Chenab Valley, Pir Panjal region, and North Kashmir, which often get disrupted due to landslides during heavy rainfall.

Authorities have instructed police, civil defence, and local volunteers to stay ready for evacuation and rescue. The Irrigation and Flood Control Department has been told to maintain a 24x7 vigil on rivers, canals, and reservoirs, and to share real-time water level updates with district administrations. The government has advised citizens to avoid kachha houses or unstable structures that may collapse due to waterlogging of soil erosion.

Travelers, tourists, and transporters have been strongly cautioned to plan journeys carefully, avoiding hilly roads during heavy showers. "Extreme caution should be exercised while trekking or traveling in mountainous terrain. The public must stay updated with weather advisories and follow instructions from local authorities," an official spokesman said.

The Irrigation and Flood Control Department has been directed to maintain a 24x7 vigil on rivers, canals, and reservoirs. Engineers have been asked to monitor water levels closely and share real-time updates with the district administrations. Emergency response teams will be mobilized if water levels rise beyond danger marks.

Officials said lessons learned from the Kishtwar disaster are being applied immediately, with a greater emphasis on early warning systems, quick mobilization of rescue forces, and coordination among departments.

Sonamarg Receives

this morning till 05:30 PM, while Gulmarg, a famous ski resort, recorded a precipitation of 16.4 mm. In Pahalgam, a rainfall of 17.0 mm was recorded today, while 10.7 mm of precipitation was recorded till this evening.

In Jammu division's Banihal station, a rainfall of 16.0 mm was recorded today. Bhaderwah saw a rainfall of 5.0 mm, Katra 4.6 mm and Batote 1.7 mm.

Moreover, flash floods have been reported in the Ajas area of Bandipora. There was no flood threat anywhere in the rest of the Valley.

The water level has increased in the river Jhelum and multiple streams, but officials have clarified that there is no threat of floods as of now. They said the situation is being monitored constantly.

Meanwhile, as per the weatherman, light to moderate rain and thunder is expected at most places with intense showers and heavy rain at few places of Jammu division, especially in Reasi, Udhampur, Rajouri, Poonch, Samba and Kathua with moderate to heavy and intense showers over Doda, Kishtwar, Ramban & few places of Kashmir division with gusty winds till tomorrow.(KNO)

Extreme Weather

the period.

No deaths have been reported due to the heat-wave conditions. However, 37 cold wave events have claimed seven lives so far across Jammu and Kashmir.

A total number of 409 heavy rainfall events were reported, which have claimed 111 lives in the region, the data revealed.

The highest mortalities of around 60 have been reported from Kupwara, followed by around 50 in Kishtwar. The lowest have been reported in Samba with below 5 deaths.

Srinagar has recorded nearly 20 deaths in the Extreme Weather Events during the period.

Pertinently, the Jammu region recorded back-to-back flash floods triggered by cloudbursts in the last one week. In Kishtwar and Kathua villages, more than 50 people lost their lives, while over 50 are still missing in Kishtwar.

The rescue operations continue for the sixth straight day to trace the missing persons. (KNO)

Ex-Bar Chief Mian

sheet in the case against six accused in the Special UAPA Court, Srinagar, in 2021.

In August 2022, the police conducted searches at Qayoom's residences and those of two other lawyers in Srinagar, seizing various digital devices, bank statements and documents, as part of the ongoing probe.

In September 2023, the SIA announced a

reward of Rs 10 lakh for any information leading to solving Qadri's murder.

The police had alleged the involvement of Saqib Manzoor, a Lt commander, in Qadri's killing. Manzoor was killed during a police encounter in Srinagar alongside another militant commander in 2022.

Qadri, a human rights expert who frequently appeared on television debates, was fatally shot at his residence in the Hawal area of downtown on September 24, 2020. He had narrowly survived an assassination attempt in 2018.

Qadri was a founder of a dissident group known as the 'Kashmir Lawyers Club'. He was actively critical of Qayoom -- particularly accusing him of using the Kashmir Bar Association to further a secessionist agenda.

Earlier in December last year, the SIA filed a 340-page supplementary chargesheet against Qayoom in the special NIA court here for offences under various sections of the IPC and UAPA -- including murder.

The initial chargesheet in the case had been filed before the Special NIA Court, Srinagar. However, in December 2023, the High Court had transferred the trial to Jammu, taking a serious view of the "interference in the judicial process" by Qayoom as well as "intimidation" of the family of the deceased.

According to the SIA chargesheet, Qayoom has a history of being a terrorist sympathiser and die-hard secessionist.

Several cases already stand registered against him for his anti-national activities and he had earned notoriety for treating JKHCB, Kashmir as his fiefdom and virtually converting it into a constituent of All Party Hurriyat Conference (APHC), the SIA chargesheet read.

During the major unrests, post 2008 in Kashmir, he was at the forefront of anti-India demonstrations and his calls for shutdowns coincided with the hartal calendars issued by Hurriyat, it said.

The SIA said he was very close to hardline Hurriyat leader Syed Ali Shah Geelani, whom he regarded as his political 'guru'.

He had also declared in open court during High Court proceedings that he neither considered himself a citizen of India nor believed in the Indian Constitution, the SIA chargesheet had said.

Admin Issues

weather alerts.

They said that the measures include round-the-clock Emergency Operation Centers, CAP Sachet alerts, district-level disaster management plans, pre-positioning of responders, and supervision at the highest administrative level, including Chief Secretary-led Incident Response System (IRS) meetings. The pan-India helpline 112 has also been further strengthened.

The Srinagar district administration on Monday issued an advisory after forecasts of heavy rain, thunderstorms, cloudbursts, flash floods and landslides in parts of Kashmir from August 18 to 19.

According to the advisory, residents, particularly those in Fakir Gupri, its surrounding areas, and Khonmouh, have been advised to avoid slopes, water bodies, and low-lying areas until conditions improve.

It also cautioned tourists, local shikara wallas, and sand miners in the Jhelum River and other water bodies not to attempt crossings without first assessing the condition of the river and its tributaries.

"For any assistance or updates, the public can contact the emergency operation centre (DEOC), emergency response support system (ERSS), or the police control room Srinagar at 0194-2457543, 9103998355, 112, 0194-2477567, 0194-2483651, 9103998356, 0194-2457552, 9103998357," reads the advisory.

Police in Pulwama and Anantnag districts have established emergency helplines to facilitate the general public and to avoid any untoward incident. "General public is advised to exercise utmost caution during the period of weather advisory from 17th to 19th Aug 2025. All the residents living near river Jhelum and local nallahs are urged not to venture into or around water bodies to avoid any activities in their vicinity until the weather improves," the advisory issued by Pulwama police read. A similar advisory was issued by Anantnag police.

Jhelum, Tributaries

Sangam (21°/25 °) = 1.89 ft; Pampore (4.5/5.0) = (-)0.59 m; Munshi Bagh (18°/21 °) = 4.47 ft; Asham (14.0°/16.5 °) = 3.69 ft.

For tributaries, the data shows: Vishow Nallah at Khudwani (7.75/8.50) = 2.44 m; Rambiyara Nallah at Wachi (5.4/5.7) = (-)0.36 m; Lidder Nallah at Batkoot (1.5/1.65) = 0.17 m; Doodhganga Nallah at Barzulla (3.65/3.8) = 0.60 m; Sindh Nallah at Doderhama (3.65/3.9) = 0.75 m.

Meanwhile, independent weather forecaster Faizan Arif Keng also ruled out any possibility of a major flood situation in Jammu and Kashmir.

"There is no flood threat in either the Kashmir or Jammu region. Overall rainfall will remain moderate, though a few pockets may witness intense showers capable of triggering flash floods," Faizan said.

He added cloud formations are currently developing over north Pakistan, where much of the precipitation is expected, though parts of Jammu and Kashmir are also likely to receive considerable rainfall.

"Some models indicate that areas around Bandipora, Ganderbal and Srinagar may experience high-intensity showers by tomorrow morning. Hence, while intense showers or flash floods cannot be completely ruled out, they will remain highly localized," he said.

DSEK Issues SOPs

implement the following Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) to ensure the safety of students and staff:

Heightened Vigilance

HOIs, particularly those in areas identified as vulnerable to natural disasters, must maintain a state of heightened vigilance. Staff should be proactively sensitized and trained on safety protocols related to heavy rainfall, flash floods, and cloudbursts.

Precautionary Measures for Schools Near Water Bodies

Schools located around water bodies, including rivers, streams, and lakes, must be placed on high alert. The concerned HOI shall take all necessary precautions to safeguard the school community and infrastructure. This includes: Monitoring: Establish a system to continuously monitor water

levels and weather forecasts.

Evacuation Plans: Ensure a clear and well-rehearsed evacuation plan is in place, including designated safe areas.

Communication: Maintain open and frequent communication with local authorities and disaster management agencies.

Accountability

The cooperation of all school staff is essential in ensuring that students remain safe under any adverse conditions. Any failure to comply with these directives will be considered a serious lapse. The personal responsibility for any incident or loss resulting from a failure to implement these safety measures will rest solely with the concerned Head of Institution, reads the order.

21 Shortlisted For

concerned State Commission for protection of child rights. However, there has been no such Commission constituted in the UT of Jammu and Kashmir as well as in UT of Ladakh.

Considering the statutory role assigned to the Commission for effective implementation of the Act, non-constitution would be a serious lapse on the part of the authorities concerned, the Court had emphasized. Before issuing specific directions in this regard, the court had directed authorities to place on record the steps taken for the constitution of the Commission.

Revenue Official

against the accused beyond reasonable doubt," Dr Noor Mohammad Mir, Special Judge Anti-Corruption, Pulwama said while convicting Kumar.

Subsequently, the court sentenced him to simple imprisonment for a period of 3 years and 6 months and imposed fine of Rs.20000 on him for offence under section 5 (2) r/w section 5 (1) (d) J&K Prevention of Corruption Act, Svt. 2006. "In default of payment of fine, the convict shall undergo simple imprisonment for further period of 3 months."

Similarly, the court sentenced Kumar to simple imprisonment for a period of one year and imposed a fine of Rs.10000 on him. "In default of payment of fine, the convict shall undergo simple imprisonment for further period of 1 month." However, the court ordered that both sentences shall run concurrently.

The court observed that corruption is a malignant affliction that strikes at the very foundation of a democratic polity and the rule of law.

"It is not a victimless crime. Its invisible wounds bleed the economy, erode public trust and subvert the moral fabric of the state," the court said, adding, "When a public servant entrusted with authority and resources for the welfare of people abuses that trust for personal gain it is not nearly a lapse in integrity, it is a betrayal of the constitution itself."

The consequences of corruption are far-reaching, the court said, underlying that it distorts governance, diverts public funds from developmental priorities and entrenches inequality by allowing influence and wealth to dictate outcomes were merit and fairness should prevail.

"For the honest citizen, corruption becomes an oppressive barrier, a toll exacted at every gate of opportunity, whether for securing a job, obtaining basic civic enmities or accessing justice."

Murder Of 14-Yr-Old

samples sent to Chandigarh and other labs for analysis. Police are also reviewing CCTV footage and mobile tower data, while additional teams from Srinagar have joined the probe.

The victim's sister, who witnessed the abduction, remains in trauma. "We assure the public that the case will be worked out. A board of doctors has also been constituted for detailed examination," SSP Poswal said, appealing to locals to maintain calm and share any leads with the police.

The incident has sparked protests in the girl's native village, with locals demanding swift action against the accused and urging the authorities to ensure justice is delivered without delay.

"We won't rest until the killers are punished. Today it's this girl, tomorrow it could be anyone's daughter," said a protesting woman.

On social media, the outrage was equally sharp. "This is not just a crime, it's barbarity. Culprits must be nabbed, exposed & given the harshest punishment without mercy," wrote one user on X.

Mirwaiz Umar Farooq also expressed grief and outrage over the killing. "This reprehensible act has not only extinguished the life of a young girl and plunged a family into grief, but has also shaken the entire society and exposed the insecurity and vulnerability of women and children, which is very worrying," he said.

Mirwaiz urged authorities to act swiftly. "Immediate action should be taken, the culprits arrested and given exemplary punishment so that this becomes a lesson and restores the confidence of the public, especially young girls," he added.

Meanwhile, Chief Minister Omar Abdullah has expressed deep anguish over the tragic killing of a minor girl in Ganderbal, describing the incident as "inhuman and reprehensible."

Conveying his heartfelt condolences to the bereaved family, the Chief Minister said such heinous acts shock the collective conscience of society.

He stressed that the perpetrators of this crime deserve the severest punishment under the law.

15 Days On, Rotten

also criticised the authorities for withholding lab testing reports. "The authorities are taking their time, but when people start falling sick, only then will they punish the guilty," said a resident. Another questioned, "Is the government waiting for people to fall sick before sharing the results?"

"Even those selling fresh, genuine products are being punished. The government's silence is ruining us," a restaurant owner in Lal Chowk said.

Another local expressed concern, saying, "Who is really behind this, the traders, the officials, or the transporters? If the government doesn't come clean, people will only see it as another cover-up."

Food and Drug Administration (FDA) Commissioner Smita Sethi earlier said that intensified inspections and coordinated enforcement would continue to ensure compliance with safety standards. Despite the assurances, no timeline has been given for further action. The delay has fuelled public anger and renewed debate over food safety monitoring in the Valley, with many calling for stricter checks on suppliers to prevent similar incidents.

Khelo India Water Sports Festival To Bolster Dal Lake's Profile, Impact Lives

Observer News Services

SRINAGAR: The first Khelo India Water Sports Festival is all set to reveal the iconic Dal Lake in a new avatar. Jammu and Kashmir's quest to emerge as a sporting destination will get a major boost when Dal Lake hosts the Water Games, its maiden major national-level open competition, from August 21-23. More than 400 athletes from 36 states and Union Territories will be taking part in three medal events – rowing, kayaking and canoeing. The KIWSF is being jointly hosted by the Sports Authority of India and the J&K Sports Council. The games will also bolster commercial benefits for stakeholders associated within the ecosystem. Particularly, the houseboat owners are really looking forward to the Games. "This is not just an event—it is the beginning of a new era for water sports in our country," said Bilquis Mir, a well-known name in the world of canoeing and kayaking and an Olympic judge. "When I started paddling here as a 10-year-old in the 1990s, I



dreamt of one day representing India. That dream came true when I became the first woman from India to participate in a World Cup," she added. The Khelo India Water Sports Festival 2025 will also showcase three demonstration events --

water skiing, dragon boat race, and the crowd-favourite shikara sprint. But there are bigger aspirations lurking around the KIWSF. For example, Mohsin Ali, a young water sports athlete, is preparing to participate in the kayaking

event. He is a J&K state champion and has won 15 medals, including three gold medals at the national events. Ali, like many others, is training hard. "I am hopeful of fetching a gold medal at these games that we are hosting," he said.

There are more voices that see the water sports festival as a game-changer. Muhammad Imtiyaz, a water sports coach. "It was the Khelo India Winter Sports Games that turned Gulmarg into the winter sports hub in the country. Similarly, Khelo India Water Sports Festival will bring Jammu and Kashmir into the consciousness of the water sports athletes across the country," he said. Dal's cultural signatures have been woven into the Khelo India Water Sports Festival's design language, with the mascot featuring the Himalayan Kingfisher, a bird that can be found looking for its prey in the waters of Dal Lake, and the logo featuring a Shikara on the Dal Lake. Muhammad Rafiq Malla, a Shikarawalla who ferries tourists in his boat and is himself a water sports athlete, is excited about the Khelo India Water Sports Festival. "The Khelo India Water Sports Festival will not only offer opportunities to sports enthusiasts but also to people living in Dal Lake like me," he said.

YSS Budgam Holds Fit India Run Across Various Zones Of District



Dabirah Hassan

BUDGAM: Under the nationwide Fit India Movement initiative, the Department of Youth Services and Sports, Budgam, on Monday organised the Fit India Run across different zones of the district. The event witnessed the participation of a large number of students from various schools. The students carried placards and slogans highlighting the importance of physical activity in daily life. The run was aimed at encouraging young minds to

adopt healthy habits, remain physically active, and contribute towards building a fitter and stronger nation. District Youth Services & Sports Officer Budgam Ghulam Hassan Lone expressed satisfaction over the massive response and lauded the efforts of ZPEOs, activity incharges and field officials for making the event a grand success. The programme concluded with a pledge to continue promoting fitness and healthy lifestyles among students in line with the vision of the Fit India Movement.

Fit India Run, Anti-Drug Campaign Organised By YSS Anantnag

Observer News Service

ANANTNAG: The Department of Youth Services and Sports Anantnag organised a District Level Fit India Run on Monday in which staff and students participated. The run commenced from Mominabad Crossing and concluded at Donipawa Crossing, spreading the message of fitness, health and unity.

On the same day, the

Zonal Physical Education Office Verinag launched a series of Anti-Drug Campaigns at various religious places across Verinag. The initiative aimed at raising awareness about the ill effects of drug abuse among the youth and community. As part of the campaign, the Activity Incharge of ZPEO Verinag along with staff members visited Darul Aloom Verinag where students were sensitised about the

harmful consequences of drug addiction and were encouraged to choose sports and positive activities as alternatives. It is pertinent to mention that both initiatives reflect the commitment of the Department of Youth Services and Sports Anantnag towards fostering physical well-being, mental health and social responsibility among students and the larger community.



Khyber Cement Kashmir Super League Becomes Launchpad For National Dreams

Observer News Service

SRINAGAR: The Khyber Cement Kashmir Super League 2025 has once again proven its impact on shaping the future of Kashmir's football scene. Two of its Emerging Player Awardees have earned a prestigious call-up to the India Under-17 National Team Camp in Goa. Aazim Parvez, a gifted midfielder from Downtown Heroes FC, recently displayed his brilliance with New JK United FC during the Kashmir Super League 2025. Abrar Ali, a proud product of Sports Council Football Academy



(SCFA), represented Aqua Kashmir Avengers FC during the same tournament. Both young stars were recognized as Emerging Players of the First Season of KSL – a testament to their rising talent, hard work and dedication. The league organisers also sent a special acknowledgment to Sajid Yousuf Dar, former Indian women's national team coach, for scouting and recommending these promising youngsters to the national setup. The boys are now in Goa, training and competing alongside the

nation's finest talents, with eyes set on representing India at the highest level. "KSL isn't just a tournament, it's a launchpad for dreams. Aazim and Abrar's journey from Kashmir to the national camp is proof that talent, when given the right platform, can shine on the biggest stage," a KSL spokesperson said. "The Kashmir Super League family congratulates Aazim Parvez and Abrar Ali and wishes them the very best as they continue to make Kashmir proud," they added.

Asia Cup: Gill Mystery Continues As Selectors Spoil For Choice

Press Trust of India

NEW DELHI: How to fit in a brilliant batter like Shubman Gill in a well-oiled T20 set up will be the biggest challenge for India's national selection committee when it gathers on Tuesday to pick the 15-member squad for next month's Asia Cup in UAE. As of now, the prolific Test captain, who had a dream run in England recently, is not organically fitting into the side which will play the continental showpiece from September 9 to 28. For Ajit Agarkar and his colleagues, the major point of deliberation will be how to fix something that doesn't need to be mended. It's a "scary" conundrum for the selectors but Indian cricket right now is a T20 talent factory with at

least 30 players who are ready to come into the national squad with three to four options available for one slot. For the top three positions, there are six cricketers of similar pedigree available. Abhishek Sharma, Sanju Samson and Tilak Varma have been phenomenal in national colours through last season but then the ones who are equally good, if not better, happen to be Gill, Yashasvi Jaiswal and Sai Sudharsan (the IPL Orange Cap winner). In bowling, Kuldeep Yadav, Varun Chakravarthy and Ravi Bishnoi are jostling for one slot. And the craftiest of them all Yuzvendra Chahal has been ignored for long-gest time. But then selectors can pick only 15 and those in decision-making positions of T20 team have an in-



teresting perspective. One important member of team management feels that it would be unfair on anyone who has been a first XI regular during the past season to be deprived to accommodate a bigger brand name or star. The other school of thought

is that Indian cricket works well with one all-format captain who also becomes the biggest marketing brand -- in this case Gill, who is an obvious choice for a lot of stakeholders going forward. But then to assume this will happen smoothly is oversimplification of the issue. Under Suryakumar Yadav's able leadership, the Indian T20 squad has a phenomenal 85 per cent record, winning 17 of its last 20 games. None of these games featured Gill and Jaiswal. But there's a catch too. Before Gill and Jaiswal became busy with Test commitments in the past one year, they were playing T20 Internationals and were doing well including impressive IPLs. Gill was in fact vice captain to Surya before he had to forego

T20Is due to Tests. Axar Patel, the Delhi Capitals skipper, became Surya's deputy and performed decently even though he is not considered a long-term leadership candidate. However, Axar will certainly feel shortchanged if Gill supercedes him as Surya's deputy. On Tuesday, if selectors pick Gill in the 15, then they have to play him in the eleven which means one among Sanju, Abhishek or Tilak will have to compromise their batting slots. To include Shubman in the 15 could also mean dropping Rinku Singh. The big-hitter hasn't done much in head coach Gautam Gambhir's era either for Kolkata Knight Riders or India. In Gambhir's book there's nothing called a designated finisher. So choices won't be easy.

District Anantnag Carrom Championship To Begin From Aug 26

The District Anantnag Carrom Championship 2025-26 will be held August 26 and 27 at the Multi-Purpose Sports Complex, Bijbehara, Anantnag. The championship is being organised by the District Anantnag Carrom Association under the aegis of the J&K Carrom Association, and as part of the "My Youth My Pride" initiative of the J&K Sports Council. "All interested players, schools, colleges & clubs are requested to send their entries through email: jkcarrom@gmail.com or on whatsapp 9906767529 by 25th August 2025. The aim of the event is to provide a strong platform for budding carrom talent of the district to showcase their skills and to promote the game at the grassroots level," the J&K Carrom Association said in a statement. "Entry Format: Name of Player, Father's Name, Date of Birth, Category (Cadet / Sub-Junior / Junior / Senior), Gender (Male / Female), School/Club Representing & Contact Number. For any Information Contact: 9906767529, 9907000093," it added. The association recently concluded its Srinagar and Budgam championships. (Observer News Service)

Ladakh Marathon Returns For 12th Edition In September

The Ladakh Marathon, featuring over 6,000 runners from 30 countries and six races ranging from a 5km community run to two Ultra-marathons, will return for its 12th edition from September 11 to 14. The organisers of the event stated that the world's highest AIMS-certified (Association of International Marathons and Distance Races) event's gruelling Ultra-marathons will cover the 72km Khardung La Challenge and "the pinnacle of endurance racing", the 122km Silk Route Ultra. The full schedule includes the Full Marathon (42.195km), Half Marathon (21km), an 11.2km run, and the 'Run Ladakh for Fun' 5km. The Silk Route Ultra will set off on September 11, sending runners on a 122km course from Kyagar Village at 10,000 ft, over the Khardung La at 17,618 ft, and into Leh Market. "Nearly 300 athletes will take on the Khardung La Challenge on September 12, a 72km route from Khardung Village at 13,000 ft, over the pass, and into Leh. Over 60km of the route are charted above 13,000 ft, making this the highest ultra-marathon in the world and a true test of human potential." All participants must undergo mandatory acclimatisation, arriving in Ladakh at least seven to ten days prior to their race day to adjust to the high altitude conditions. (PTI)

Bangladesh Likely To Replace Pakistan In Asia Cup Hockey

Bangladesh is likely to replace Pakistan in the men's Asia Cup hockey tournament to be held in Rajgir, Bihar from August 29 if the latter fails to confirm participation in the next couple of days, a top Hockey India official told PTI on Monday. The Indian government had already said that it will provide visas to the Pakistani players for Asia Cup, but the Pakistan Hockey Federation (PHF) has refused to travel citing security concerns. The organisers have already approached Bangladesh to fill up Pakistan's place in the eight-team tournament, but Hockey India said the exact scenario will be clear in the next 48 hours. "The Indian government has already said that it is will willing to provide visas to Pakistani players but if they don't want to come to India, it's not our problem. Bangladesh has already been invited to participate in case Pakistan doesn't come but we will have to wait for two more days to get the confirmation," the HI official said when quizzed about the situation. "Neither Pakistan or Bangladesh have confirmed anything to us till now. But Bangladesh are likely replacement for Pakistan," he added. Besides hosts India, the other participating teams in the Asia Cup are China, Japan, Malaysia, South Korea, Oman and Chinese Taipei. (PTI)

Neymar Embarrassed & In Tears After Santos' 6-0 Loss

Embarrassed and in tears after what he called one of the worst days of his life on a soccer field, Neymar gave Santos fans the right to protest and even offend after the team's 6-0 home loss in the Brazilian league. Sunday's defeat to Vasco da Gama prompted Santos to fire coach Cleber Xavier. "Totally disappointed with our game," Neymar said. "The fans have the right to all types of protests, obviously without going over the line. But they have the right to curse, to offend. It's a feeling of a lot of shame, I had never gone through this in my life, but unfortunately it happened." Neymar left the field in tears. He was consoled by one of Santos' backroom staff after a game that saw Vasco's Philippe Coutinho score twice. "The crying was for being upset, for everything," he said. "Unfortunately I couldn't help in any way. We were (expletive), that's the reality." Neymar, the former Barcelona and Paris Saint-Germain star, returned to his boyhood club in January after an underwhelming spell in Saudi Arabia and signed a contract extension in June keeping him at Santos until the end of the year. Xavier took over the club in April. (AP)

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