

Fruits Flow Again

4,873 Stranded Trucks Cleared

Backlog To End Tonight, Says Admin



Photo Credits: Social Media

Observer News Service

Srinagar: Fruit growers in Kashmir heaved a sigh of relief as the administration successfully cleared 4,873 stranded fruit-laden trucks over the past two days, ending the disruption that had hit markets and prices across the Valley.

Of these, 2,239 trucks moved via the Srinagar-Jammu National Highway and 2,634 through the Mughal Road, under

the supervision of IG Traffic M. Suleman Choudhary. The final batch of 500 trucks is set to leave Qazigund tonight, completing the clearance and easing traffic congestion.

"The administration, guided by Chief Secretary Atal Dullo, mobilized all resources to ensure smooth transport of horticultural produce," an official hand-out said. Daily reviews with all stakeholder departments were held to address | [More on P6](#)

Special Train Between Budgam & Katra For 15 Days

Observer News Service

Railway authorities on Thursday announced that the special Vastodom train will operate from Budgam to Katra for next 15 days. An official said that in view of the Jammu-Srinagar national highway closure between September 19 and October 3, 2025, the train number 74688 Vastodom Special will run for the next 15 days. Officials said the decision has | [More on P6](#)

PM Modi's Political Will Behind India's Strike On Terror: Shah 'Art 370 Abrogation Permanently United Kashmir With India'

Observer News Service

Patna: Union Home Minister Amit Shah on Thursday asserted that India, under Prime Minister Narendra Modi, has delivered a decisive blow to terrorism and its sponsors.

Addressing a gathering, Shah said, "Through surgical strikes, air strikes, and Operation Sindoor, our armed forces dismantled terrorist networks inside Pakistan. This was possible only due to Prime Minister Modi's strong



resolve and political will to teach terrorists a lesson." Shah credited Modi with permanently uniting Kashmir with India by removing Article 370, and said

the Congress had previously "spoiled Pakistan's habits" by failing to counter daily attacks.

Highlighting India's economic progress, the Home Minister said, "PM Modi has made India the world's fourth-largest economy. By 2027, we will be the third."

In a veiled reference to Congress leader Rahul Gandhi, Shah contrasted Modi's work ethic with other leaders, saying, "Our leader works tirelessly for the people without | [More on P6](#)

All Exams To Be Held On Time: Itoo

Observer News Service

Srinagar: Education Minister Sakina Itoo on Thursday said that all exams will be held on time and per academic calendar in Jammu and Kashmir. She also said that the government is seeking suggestions from all stakeholders over compensating the academic loss faced by students.

Speaking to reporters, Minister Itoo said that students' studies got badly affected, initially due to a war like situation, heatwave and then a flood-like situation in Jammu and Kashmir.

She also said that some schools in both the regions got affected and damaged by recent floods | [More on P6](#)

Will Take Up Opening of Closed Tourist Spots With HM: CM



Observer News Service

Srinagar: Chief Minister Omar Abdullah on Thursday assured tourism stakeholders

that he will take up their concerns with Union Home Minister Amit Shah and push for the reopening of several tourist | [More on P6](#)

Inaugurates 5 Water Supply Schemes

Observer News Service

Chief Minister Omar Abdullah on Thursday said the recent floods in Union Territory have caused massive damage to public infrastructure, including 330 bridges and 1,500 kilometres of road, and destroyed private properties like homes and fields. Omar inaugurated and dedicated | [More on P6](#)

Lawyer Recuses from Mehraj Malik Case

KO Web Desk

Jammu: Senior advocate Nirmal K Kotwal on Thursday recused himself from representing Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) MLA Mehraj Malik, who was recently detained under the Public Safety Act (PSA), citing videos where the legislator allegedly claimed Jammu and Kashmir was not part of India and praised militants Burhan Wani and Masood Azhar.

"The unity and sovereignty of India are non-negotiable, and any act or statement undermining them cannot be condoned under any circumstances," Kotwal, who also

heads the Jammu wing of the High Court Bar Association, said in a statement.

Malik, 37, was detained on September 8 in Doda for allegedly disturbing public order and is lodged in Kathua district jail. AAP had on September 14 announced a 10-member legal team led by Kotwal to challenge the detention.

Kotwal said the controversial videos were never brought to his notice during the briefing by AAP's legal team. "These utterances, if true, are extremely insensitive, irresponsible, and detrimental to the cause of national security," | [More on P6](#)



A Farmer seen busy harvesting paddy in Budgam, Kashmir. KO Photo By Abid Bhat

J&K Govt Initiated Process To Appoint SEC

Agencies

Srinagar: The Jammu & Kashmir government has begun the process to appoint a new State Election Commissioner (SEC), the authority responsible for overseeing Panchayat and Urban Local Bodies in the Union Territory.

The Department of Rural Development and Panchayati Raj has submitted the matter to the Chief Minister's Office to initiate the selection process. As per the Jammu & Kashmir

Panchayati Raj Act, 1989, the SEC is appointed by the Lieutenant Governor on the recommendation of a committee headed by the Chief Minister. Other members of the panel include a senior minister nominated by the Chief Minister, the Speaker of the Legislative Assembly, the Minister in charge of Panchayats, and the Leader of the Opposition in the Legislative Assembly.

The post has been vacant since April 27, 2025, when B.R. Sharma retired | [More on P6](#)

Vaishnodevi Yatra Resumes After Brief Halt

KO Web Desk

Jammu: Registration for the pilgrimage to the cave shrine of Mata Vaishnodevi resumed on Thursday morning after authorities decided to give a go ahead for the yatra that was briefly suspended due to inclement weather.

After a 22-day suspension due to a landslide and heavy rainfall, the pilgrimage to the shrine atop Trikuta hills in Jammu and Kashmir's Reasi district resumed on Wednesday.

However, it was halted on Wednesday evening due to inclement weather.

With the weather improving, the yatra resumed this morning. Officials said the yatra | [More on P6](#)

Top Climate Activist Brings Doodh Ganga Campaign To Kashmir Campus

Syed Sammar Mehdi

Srinagar: Kashmir's leading eco-campaigner took the Doodh Ganga conservation message to the campus, hoping to catch students young.

At Government Higher Secondary School in Zohama, Dr. Raja Muzaffar addressed students on Thursday, warning that the river, a lifeline for



nearly one million people in Chadoora and Srinagar uptown, is under increasing threat. "The Doodh Ganga is being polluted daily," Dr.

Muzaffar said. "People dump waste into it. Illegal riverbed mining has damaged embankments and weakened irrigation canals. If we do not act now, paddy fields, vegetable farms, and apple orchards will face severe losses."

He also cautioned that Kashmir's glaciers are melting at an unprecedented pace, signaling a looming water | [More on P6](#)

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GOVERNMENT OF JAMMU AND KASHMIR

JAMMU AND KASHMIR SERVICES SELECTION BOARD (JKSSB)

New Building/Complex, Muthi, Akhnoor Road, Jammu / Zam Zam Complex, Rambagh, Srinagar
 www.ikssb.nic.in

Subject: Shortlisting of candidates for Conduct of Physical Standard Test (PST) for the post of Assistant Superintendent Jails, advertised vide Notification No. 02 of 2022, Item No. 41 in the Home Department.

NOTICE

Whereas, the J&K Services Selection Board (JKSSB) conducted OMR based written examination for the post of Assistant Superintendent Jails, advertised vide Notification No. 02 of 2022, Item No. 41, on 13:07-2025; and

Whereas, the result/score-sheet for the above said examination was notified vide Notification No. JKSSB-COEOEXAM(UT)/23/2025-03 (7699962), dated: 04-08-2025; and

Whereas, the J&K Services Selection Board (JKSSB) intends to conduct the Physical Standard Test (PST) of the eligible shortlisted candidates, tentatively in 1st week of October, 2025 at Maulana Azad Stadium, Jammu.

Accordingly, the candidates who are falling in the consideration zone for conduct of the PST for the aforementioned posts have been shortlisted for appearing in PST and are hereby notified as given in Annexure "A" to this notice.

Further, details including the exact date and time of PST shall be informed to the candidates through their Admit Cards which shall remain available for downloading from 30.09.2025. Candidates are advised to regularly visit the official website of the JKSSB.

It is further notified that:

i. Mere calling a candidate for the PST does not confer right upon him/her for selection and that he/she has to fulfil other eligibility conditions, as laid down and decision of the Board in this regard shall be final.

ii. The PST shall be of qualifying nature only.

iii. A candidate, who fails to appear in the PST on the given date, shall forfeit his/her right of consideration at any stage.

iv. Candidates are advised to bring Admit Card, one original photo ID Proof i.e. Aadhar card/Voter Card/Pan Card/Passport etc. mandatorily on the day of PST.

v. In case of any deficiency with reference to eligibility etc., proved at the time of PST, the candidate shall not be allowed to appear in the PST.

vi. Any candidate found guilty of impersonating or submitting fabricated/tampered documents/testimonials or making false and incorrect statements or suppressing material information shall render him/her liable for criminal prosecution under law, which shall include permanent debarment or debarment for a specific period, for consideration of any or all recruitments, made by the Board. Also canvassing/lobbying in any form will entail disqualification of the candidate.

vii. No TA/DA shall be paid for participation in the PST.

Reyaz Ahmad Malik (JKAS)
 Controller of Examinations
 J&K Services Selection Board

No. JKSSB-COEOEXAM(UT)/23/2025-03 (7699962)
 DIPK-6347/25 Dated: 18-09-2025

ANNEXURE "A"

S.No.	Advertisement No.	Application Id	Roll No.	Candidate Name	Father Name	TOTAL	Category	Post	Item No.	Shortlisting Category
1	02 of 2022	1670384	1010267	SHAKTI SINGH	PRITAM SINGH	121.00	OM	Assistant Superintendent Jails	41	OM
2	02 of 2022	1667842	1010142	SONALI JAMWAL	RAJINDER JAMWAL	117.50	OM	Assistant Superintendent Jails	41	OM
3	02 of 2022	1665713	2010034	SINAN AQUIB GULL	GHULAM MOHMD BHAT	114.50	OM	Assistant Superintendent Jails	41	OM
4	02 of 2022	1718057	2010228	AAQIB JAVED	GH MOHD PADDER	114.00	RBA	Assistant Superintendent Jails	41	RBA/OM
5	02 of 2022	1688931	2010134	MOHD ARIF SHAH	MOHD MUBARAK SHAH	107.50	RBA	Assistant Superintendent Jails	41	RBA/OM
6	02 of 2022	1678919	2010083	ASIF MOHID UD DIN	GH MOHID UD DIN GANAIE	105.00	OM	Assistant Superintendent Jails	41	OM
7	02 of 2022	1706393	2010352	AADIL HUSSAIN KHANDAY	MANZOOR AHMAD KHANDAY	104.00	OM	Assistant Superintendent Jails	41	OM
8	02 of 2022	1689087	2010336	SALIKA RAHMAN	AB RAHMAN RATHER	99.00	OM	Assistant Superintendent Jails	41	OM
9	02 of 2022	1694863	2010261	ZAMRUD HAMID THOKROO	ABDUL GANI THOKROO	99.00	OM	Assistant Superintendent Jails	41	OM
10	02 of 2022	1716803	2010323	IDRESS HASSAN MIR	GH HASSAN MIR	96.50	OM	Assistant Superintendent Jails	41	OM
11	02 of 2022	1668664	1010204	AJMIR SINGH BALI	KRISHAN SINGH BALI	96.00	RBA	Assistant Superintendent Jails	41	RBA/OM
12	02 of 2022	1694103	2010021	AASIF MOHI U DIN LONE	GULAM MOHI U DIN LONE	96.00	RBA	Assistant Superintendent Jails	41	RBA/OM
13	02 of 2022	1716728	2010126	IMITYAZ AHMED SHEIKH	ALI MOHD SHEIKH	95.00	RBA	Assistant Superintendent Jails	41	RBA/OM
14	02 of 2022	1676875	2010332	JOHN MOHD KHAN	NAZIR AHMAD KHAN	92.50	OM	Assistant Superintendent Jails	41	OM
15	02 of 2022	1718542	1010132	SACHIN SHARMA	MANGAT RAM SHARMA	92.00	OM	Assistant Superintendent Jails	41	OM
16	02 of 2022	1675422	2010061	MIR ZULKERNAN NAZIR	NAZIR AHMAD MIR	91.50	OM	Assistant Superintendent Jails	41	OM
17	02 of 2022	1698927	2010135	YASIR HAMID PALA	AB HAMID PALA	91.00	RBA	Assistant Superintendent Jails	41	RBA/OM
18	02 of 2022	1707459	1010201	MUKESH RANA	PURAN CHAND	90.50	SC	Assistant Superintendent Jails	41	SC/OM
19	02 of 2022	1733574	1010236	DEEP SHIKHA	RAGHUBIR SINGH	90.00	OM	Assistant Superintendent Jails	41	OM
20	02 of 2022	1710398	2010139	SOFI MUZZAFAR AHMAD	AB RASHID SOFI	90.00	RBA	Assistant Superintendent Jails	41	RBA/OM
21	02 of 2022	1699244	2010157	IRFAN YOUSUF RATHER	MOHAMMAD YOUSUF RATHER	88.50	RBA	Assistant Superintendent Jails	41	RBA/OM
22	02 of 2022	1687321	1010056	KUNAL GANGAL	KRISHAN LAL CHOUHARY	88.00	OM	Assistant Superintendent Jails	41	OM
23	02 of 2022	1685906	2010041	SYED TAFAZUL HUSSAIN	SYED SADIQ HUSSAIN	87.50	PSP	Assistant Superintendent Jails	41	PSP/OM
24	02 of 2022	1678350	2010206	UMER MUKHTAR	SHEIKH MUKHTAR AHMAD	87.50	OM	Assistant Superintendent Jails	41	OM
25	02 of 2022	1725411	1010021	SAHIL BHAGAT	RAVI KUMAR	85.50	SC	Assistant Superintendent Jails	41	SC
26	02 of 2022	1664969	1010252	BACHITTER SINGH	RAM LAL	85.00	RBA	Assistant Superintendent Jails	41	RBA
27	02 of 2022	1697799	1010283	ABID HUSSAIN	ABDUL RASHID SOHIL	82.00	RBA	Assistant Superintendent Jails	41	RBA
28	02 of 2022	1712025	1010077	MOHD YAWER WANI	AKHTER HUSSAIN WANI	79.00	RBA	Assistant Superintendent Jails	41	RBA
29	02 of 2022	1709317	2010058	MOHAMMAD AAMIR MIR	ABDUL AHAD MIR	78.00	RBA	Assistant Superintendent Jails	41	RBA
30	02 of 2022	1698727	2010128	MOHD RAFAQ NAIK	AB RASHID NAIK	77.50	RBA	Assistant Superintendent Jails	41	RBA
31	02 of 2022	1711500	1010149	MOHD IRFAN	MOHD AYOUB	75.50	RBA	Assistant Superintendent Jails	41	RBA
32	02 of 2022	1694719	1010067	SUNIL KUMAR SINGH	SWARN SINGH	66.00	SC	Assistant Superintendent Jails	41	SC
33	02 of 2022	1678064	2010229	AUWASE AHMAD BADANA	ABDUL HAMID BADANA	62.50	ST	Assistant Superintendent Jails	41	ST
34	02 of 2022	1692266	1010222	NAJMA CHOWDHARY	MUKHTAR AHMED	57.00	ST	Assistant Superintendent Jails	41	ST
35	02 of 2022	1675426	1010092	LOVISH BHAGAT	ASHOK BHAGAT	55.50	SC	Assistant Superintendent Jails	41	SC
36	02 of 2022	1694896	1010302	SARFRAZ AHMED	MOHD FAROOQ	49.00	ST	Assistant Superintendent Jails	41	ST
37	02 of 2022	1704067	1010215	NEERAJ KUMAR	ASHOK CHANDER	48.00	SC	Assistant Superintendent Jails	41	SC
38	02 of 2022	1700337	1010121	MANHAZ AKHTER	ABDUL RASHID	48.00	ST	Assistant Superintendent Jails	41	ST
39	02 of 2022	1677552	1010163	SOBIA CHOWDHARY	MUNEER HUSSAIN	47.50	ST	Assistant Superintendent Jails	41	ST
40	02 of 2022	1673415	1010061	SHERAZ AHMED	MOHD LATIEF	46.00	ST	Assistant Superintendent Jails	41	ST
41	02 of 2022	1686874	1010248	SUNIL KUMAR	RULDA RAM	37.00	SC	Assistant Superintendent Jails	41	SC

HANFIA MODEL SCHOOL CHUKER, KUNZER
 Zone Nehalpora

FEE STRUCTURE

The monthly fee structure for classes Nursery to 5th is as follows :

S.NO	Classes	Monthly FEE
01	5th	Rs. 500
02	4th	Rs. 480
03	3rd	Rs. 460
04	2nd	Rs. 420
05	1st	Rs. 420
06	UKG	Rs. 400
07	LKG	Rs. 400
08	Nursery	Rs. 370

Notice:

If anyone has an objection to the fee structure they can contact the fee fixation authority within 7 days from the date of publication of this notification above the stipulated time. No objection shall be entertained.

BMG Sd/Chairman

PUBLIC NOTICE

The name of my daughter has been wrongly written in her adhaar card as Khaifah Jan D/o Tariq Ahmad Ganaie while her correct name as per school records is Kaifa Tariq D/o Tariq Ahmad Ganie . 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 office of the Concerned Adhaar Centre Jammu/Srinagar within seven days. After that no objection shall be entertained.
 Rukhsana Akhter
 W/o Tariq Ahmad Ganie
 R/o Tukroo Tehsil Keegam Dist Shopian fko

PUBLIC NOTICE

The name of my wife has been wrongly written in her Adhaar card as HUMEERA RAFIQ & DOB 5-08-2004 while her correct name is Umaira Rafiq & DOB 07-03-2004. 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 office of the Concerned Adhaar Centre Jammu/Srinagar within seven days. After that no objection shall be entertained.
 Saqib Nazir Gouchi
 Husband Of : Umaira Rafiq
 R/o Trenz Tehsil & Dist Shopian fko

PUBLIC NOTICE

It is hereby informed that Mr. Waqar Ahmad Bhat from Kupwara, who was earlier working as a salesman at our shop F.S Garments, Airport, is no longer associated with us. He is also running his own YouTube channel. Any activities, dealings, or complaints related to him are solely his personal responsibility. F.S Garments will not be liable for the same.
 F. S Garments
 Fayaz Ahmad
 Contact: 6006591199 skt

PUBLIC NOTICE

My name has been wrongly mentioned in my service records of J&K Police Department vide ARP 031504 as Nisar Ahmad Sheikh instead of Nissar Ahmad Sheikh which needs to be rectified. If anybody has any objection in this regard he/she may file them in the IRP 9th Bn within seven days. After that no objection shall be entertained.
 Nissar Ahmad Sheikh
 S/O Jalal ud din R/O Akhal Kangan Ganderbal fko

ILAHYA EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTE
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FEE STRUCTURE FOR SESSION - 2025

CLASS	FEE
PRE-NURSERY	1350
NURSERY	1350
LKG	1350
UKG	1350
1st	1350
2nd	1350
3rd	1350
4th	1350
5th	1350
6th	1350
7th	1350
8th	1350

Sd/ Liaison officer, EI

PUBLIC NOTICE

I have changed my name from (old name) Amina Jan to (new name) Aamina Jan. In future I will be known as my (new name) Aamina Jan.
 If anybody is having any objection he/she may contact Passport Office Srinagar, within 7 days. After 7 days no objection will be accepted.
 Media line advt

The Jammu And Kashmir Board Of School Education
 New Campus Bemina Srinagar

I have passed/appeared in Secondary School Examination (Class- 12th) under Roll No. 321005416 Session: BI-Annual Year 2024 through the Jammu and Kashmir Board of School Education. Due to the error committed by parents against my name as Aadil Ahmad Bhat Baghat INSTEAD OF Aadil Ahmad Bhat Now, I have applied for correction/rectification of error in the Jammu and Kashmir Board of School Education. New Campus Bemina. Srinagar, if any person has any objection in this regard, may file the same in the office of the Assistant Secretary, Certificates-KD within seven days from the date of Publication of this notice, after the expiry of said period no objection will be entertained.
 Name: Aadil Ahmad Bhat
 Father's name: Ghulam Qadir Bhat
 Mother's Name: Misra Begum
 DOB: 11-02-2006
 Residence: Bamurada Budgam Khag
 Mobile no: 9541788938 fko

From Office of the Advocate Muneer

In the case of
 1. Irshad Ahmad Mian
 2. Azad Ahmad Mian
 3. Parvaiz Ahmad Mian
 All sons of Late Mohammad Ramzan Mian
 All residents of Mian Mohalla Pattan
 4. Mst Shagufra Ramzan D/o Late Mohammad Ramzan Mian
 W/o Mohammad Ummar Beigh
 R/o Bemina Srinagar (Caveator)
 V/s
 Public at large
 In the Petition in terms of Section 148-A

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

HANFIA MODEL SCHOOL CHUKER, KUNZER

The details of our managing body members are as follows:

S. No.	Name	Parentage / Husband	Address	Phone No	Designation	Qualification	Occupation
01	Mr. Irshad Ahmad Dar	Gh Nabi Dar	Chukar	9596302911	Chairman	BA	Contractor
02	Khazir Mohd Bhat	Ab Rahim Bhat	Chukar	9596458745	Voice Chairman	10th	Business Man
03	Ab Rashid Dar	Gh Qadir Dar	Chukar	9906427337	Treasury	BA	Shopkeeper
04	Gh Mohammad Teli	Mohd Jamal Teli	Chukar	808281376	Secretary	10th	Baker Shop
05	Riyaz Ahmad Dar	Ab Rashid Dar	Chukar	9906635591	Member	M.Sc, B.Ed, BCA	Private Teacher
06	Tahira Akhter Dar	Jahangir Ahmad Dar	Chukar	9622457244	Member	MA	Private Teacher
07	Waheeda Akhter	Mohd Akbar Dar	Chukar	9906739230	Member	BA	House Wife

Notice:
 Any body having any objection in respect to members of the Managing body can contact with the Chief Education Officer Baramulla Kashmir within 7 days from the date of publication of this notification above the stipulated time. No objection shall be entertained.
 BMG Sd/ Chairman

Couple Hit By Vehicle In City Outskirts; Woman Dies, Driver Held

Agencies

Srinagar: A pedestrian couple from Umerabad HMT area of Srinagar met with a tragic road accident on Thursday evening, resulting in the death of a woman and leaving her husband critically injured. The incident occurred near at Umerabad HMT, when the couple was reportedly crossing the road and was struck by a speeding vehicle.

The injured were immediately shifted to JVC Hospital Bemina, where doctors declared the woman, identified as 50-year-old Fahmeeda, wife of Bashir Ahmad of Umerabad HMT, dead on

arrival. She had sustained severe head trauma. Her husband, Bashir Ahmad, aged 55, remains admitted at the hospital in critical condition.

According to family members, the couple was crossing the road when they were hit by a speeding vehicle that fled the spot. However, police said that swift action led to the arrest of the driver and the seizure of the vehicle involved in the accident.

A police officer confirmed to KNT that legal formalities have been initiated, and further investigations are underway to ascertain the exact circumstances leading to the accident. [KNT]



Srinagar's Growth Reflects J&K's Development: Sakeena

Chairs Developmental Review Meeting Of District Srinagar

Observer News Service

Srinagar: Minister for Health and Medical Education, Social Welfare and Education, Sakeena Itoo on Thursday chaired the review meeting of district Srinagar and took a comprehensive review of ongoing development projects and other welfare initiatives being undertaken across the district.

The meeting was attended by MLAs Ali Mohammad Sagar; Mubarakh Gul; Shamim Firdous; Salman Ali Sagar; Tanvir Sadiq; Mushtaq Ahmad Guroo and Sheikh Ahsan Pardesi; Deputy Commissioner Srinagar, Akshay Labroo; Commissioner SMC, Director SKIMS; HoDs and Directors of various line departments and other senior and district officers of district administration Srinagar.

During the meeting, the Minister took a comprehensive assessment of performance of each department, besides progress on implementation of flagship schemes like Mission Yuva, HADP, PM Surya Ghar, National TB Elimination Programme and others. She also took evaluation of physical and financial progress of various projects

being executed under district CAPEX, MPLAD's, CDF, SASCI, AMRUT 2.0, and other schemes.

While reviewing the status of healthcare infrastructure, rural development, road connectivity, education, and drinking water facilities across the district, the Minister directed the officers to ensure timely completion of projects and called

these vital healthcare institutions.

The Health Minister called upon all the officers to consult local MLAs before any new initiative or project is being undertaken in their respective constituencies. She underlined that the public representatives are the bedrock of any developed society and therefore it should ensure that the local legis-

“Sakeena directed the district administration to devise a plan for upgradation of roads leading to all major hospitals of Srinagar city like SKIMS, SMHS, Bone & Joint, Lal Ded and others.

for a result-oriented approach to address public grievances.

She reiterated the Government's commitment to strengthening health infrastructure and improving emergency care facilities. She directed the district administration to devise a plan for upgradation of roads leading to all major hospitals of Srinagar city like SKIMS, SMHS, Bone & Joint, Lal Ded and others, besides a comprehensive plan should also be framed in consultation with traffic police for decongestion of roads approaching to

lators are taken into confidence before the commencement of any fresh initiative.

While reviewing progress of other flagship schemes, particularly the Mission YUVA, Minister Sakeena emphasized to the officers that all the pending cases under any scheme should be disposed off timely. She stressed upon the officers that the applicants having any deficiencies should be informed timely so that they can rectify the same and take due benefits from these schemes.

PIB Srinagar, Paras Health Host Medical Camp For Journalists



Observer News Service

Srinagar: Press Information Bureau (PIB) Srinagar on Thursday organised a special medical camp for the media fraternity in collaboration with Paras Health as part of the ongoing countrywide Seva Parv.

The camp aimed at providing preventive health check-ups and consultations to journalists, recognising their important role as the bridge between the government and the people. The camp was inaugurated by Qazi Salman, Director, PIB Srinagar, along with Dr. Murtuza Habib, Facility Director Paras Health.

Speaking on the occasion, Qazi Salman said, "The media fraternity plays a vital role in strengthening democracy by acting as a bridge between the government and the people. Their well-

being is of utmost importance, and this camp is a small step to acknowledge their contribution while ensuring their health needs are addressed."

Dr. Murtuza, noted, "Paras Health is pleased to partner with PIB Srinagar in this noble initiative. Journalists often work under immense pressure and stress, and such camps are essential for their health screening and preventive care. We remain committed to supporting initiatives that promote community health and wellness."

During the camp, journalists were examined by a team of doctors from diverse specialisations including Pulmonology, Ophthalmology, Neurology, and Internal Medicine. Health consultations, basic diagnostic services, and awareness interactions were provided as part of the programme.

NORTHERN RAILWAY			
E-TENDER NOTICE			
Tender Notice No: 433-Sig-T-37-25-26	Date:- 18.09.2025		
Closing Date/Time: 09.10.2025 12:30			
Sr. DSTE/FZR acting for and on behalf of The President of India invites E-Tenders on https://www.ireps.gov.in against Tender Notice no. 433-Sig-T-37-25-26 Closing Date/Time 09.10.2025 12:30 Hrs. Bidders will be able to submit their original/revised bids up to closing date and time only. Manual offers are not allowed against this tender, and any such manual offer received shall be ignored. Contractors are allowed to make payments against this tender towards tender document cost and earnest money only through online payment modes available on IREPS portal like Net banking, debit card, credit card etc. Manual payments through Demand draft, Banker cheque, Deposit receipts, FDR etc. are not allowed.			
NIT HEADER			
Contract Type	Works		
Name of work	Interlocking of 5 No's Non-interlocked L-Xing gates having TVUs>5000 over Firozpur Division.		
Tender Closing Date Time	09.10.2025 12:30	Date Time of Uploading Tender	18.09.2025 10:49
Advertised Value (Rs.)	25974461.96	Bidding Start Date as per IREPS	25.09.2025
Earnest Money (Rs.)	279900.00	Period of Completion	9 Months
NOTE	Tenderer should keep himself updated about the Tender amendments, Corrigendum, etc. by remaining in touch regularly with the website.		
SERVING CUSTOMERS WITH A SMILE			2873/25

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

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

PUBLIC NOTICE

The Registrar Births and Deaths (Block Development Officer Wagonora)/ chokedar has submitted case file pertaining to Birth of MUSHTAQ AHMAD MALIK S/O AB JABBAR MALIK R/O ATHOORA RESHIPORA Tehsil kreeri Distt. Baramulla having verified the date of Birth as 24/10/1997 and event has been shown to be occurred at home for issuance of delay order. In this connection if anyone have any objection to the issuance of delay order of Birth certificate shall present his/her claim this office within 07 days, after that no objection shall be entertained

Executive Magistrate 1st Class
 KREERI

fko

OBSESSIVE COMPULSIVE DISORDER

8 WEEK FREE GROUP THERAPY

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

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

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

If you or some one you know is experiencing symptoms of OCD, seeking professional help is crucial.

You do not have to fight your battles alone.

There is no need for referral, simply call us for registration.

Happy & Healthy minds Office, HPVT
 Building (First Floor), Daresh Kadal Chowk, Srinagar
9070806160

- TRAFFIC POLICE : 9419993745, 01998-266686
- PCR: 0194-2452092, 2455883
- PDD: 0194-2450213
- FIRE AND EMERGENCY SERVICES : 2479488, 2452222, 2452155
- CAPD: 18001807011
- SMC HEALTH OFFICER: 9469409081
- Ambulance: Kashmir EMS Service: +919484100200

AIRPORTS

SHIEKH UL ALAM AIRPORT: 01942303311 ✈️

RAILWAYS

- SRINAGAR: 0194-2103259
- ANANTNAG: 01932-228243
- BARAMULLA: 0194-102029
- BUJBHERA: 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

25 Rabi-ul-Awwal
1447

PRAYERS

FAJR 4: 53

ZUHR 12:36

ASR 4: 50

Magrib 6:39

ISHA 7: 58

This Day In History

- 335- Dalmatius is raised to the rank of Caesar by his uncle Constantine I
- 634- Muslim forces led by Khalid ibn al-Walid capture Damascus, 1st major city of Eastern Roman Empire taken by the Rashidun Caliphate
- 1356- English forces under Edward the Black Prince defeat French at the Battle of Poitiers and capture the French King John II during the Hundred Years' War 1523- Emperor Charles I & England sign anti-French covenant
- 1559 Five Spanish ships sink in storm off Tampa, about 600 die
- 1642- Perpignan surrenders to French troops
- 1656- Treaty of Labiau: Sweden gives Prussia, Brandenburg
- 1657- Brandenburg & Poland sign Treaty of Wehlau
- 1755- Great Britain & Russia sign military agreement
- 1848- Hyperion, moon of Saturn - the first non-round moon - discovered by William Cranch Bond, his son George Phillips Bond and William Lassell
- 1863- Battle of Chickamauga, GA (near Chattanooga) begins; Union forces retreat after a couple days of fighting
- 1864- Third Battle of Winchester, Virginia [Opequan], large bloody battle with the Union army defeating Confederate force with over 9,000 casualties
- 1865- Atlanta University founded
- 1870- Siege of Paris by Prussian Forces begins (lasts until January 28 1871)
- 1879- The Blackpool Illuminations are switched on for the first time.
- 1879 Thomas Ray becomes youngest to break a world track & field record pole-vaulting 11' 2 1/2" at age 17 years & 198 days
- en the right to vote
- 1896- Beginning of the Bombay plague epidemic when Dr. Accacio Gabriel Viegas detects the first case in Mandvi. Goes on to spread and kill 12 million in India.
- 1903 - King Leopold II denies Belgian cruelty in Congo
- 1911- Red Tuesday; 20,000 Spanish protest for universal rights
- 1916- Belgian troops conquer Tabora, German East Africa
- 1916- First landing at Schiphol Airport, Netherlands (Farman F-22 of Soesterberg)
- 1922- Queen Wilhelmina assumes Dutch throne with 119 word speech
- 1931- Japanese troops conquer Mukden, South Manchuria
- 1937- Seven convicts take Folsom Prison Warden Clarence Larkin hostage in escape attempt, the warden, a guard, and 2 inmates are killed in ensuing stand-off; 5 remaining prisoners convicted of murder and executed by newly introduced gas chamber in California
- 193-9 British Expeditionary Force reaches France
- 1940- Nazi decree forbids gentile woman to work in Jewish homes
- 1941- 1st meeting of partisan leaders Tito & Draza Mihailovic in Yugoslavia
- 1943- Liberator bombers sinks U-341
- 1944- Armistice between Finland and Soviet Union is signed. (End of the Continuation War)
- 1950 - Great Three acknowledge Bond government as only German government
- 1950 - UN reject membership of China's People Republic
- 1974 - Hurricane Fifi hits coast of Honduras; about 5,000 die
- 1974 - The KGB begin a large-scale operation to discredit Russian novelist Aleksandr Solzhenitsyn and cut his communications with Soviet dissidents
- 1975 - Indonesia sends troops to Portuguese East Timor
- 1981 - Satellites China 10 & 11 launched into Earth orbit by B-1 rocket
- 1984 - Britain & China complete a proposed agreement to transfer Hong Kong to China by 1997
- 1985 - 8.1 earthquake in Mexico City kills an estimated 10,000 and leaves 250,000 homeless

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KO VIEW

Safeguard Kashmir's Apples

Few sights capture the loss of harvest for Kashmiri farmers more vividly than apples turning black in the back of stranded trucks along the Srinagar-Jammu highway. For nearly three weeks this vital lifeline remained shut for heavy vehicles after rain-triggered landslides. Close to 4,000 trucks carrying apples worth millions of rupees lay stranded. Farmers, who had invested an entire year of care into their orchards, helplessly watched their produce collapse under the weight of rot.

Kashmir produces nearly 80 percent of India's apples, contributing to local livelihoods. When the highway closes at harvest time, the loss can lead to financial ruin for the growers. For truckers too, it is a make-or-break moment.

The reopening of the highway for heavy vehicles this week thus comes as a relief. Trucks are finally moving but so much has already been lost. Boxes that once fetched Rs 600 now sell for 400, if they haven't already rotted. Some farmers have been left with nothing but piles of waste along the roadside.

The government has attempted band-aid solutions. A parcel train has been launched from Budgam to New Delhi, but with a capacity of just one truckload per day, it cannot possibly meet the demands of a two-million-tonne industry. Mughal Road was briefly used, but its treacherous terrain is unfit for heavy carriers. Meanwhile, the assurances of "round-the-clock clearance" offered little comfort to those watching their livelihoods decay in real time.

This crisis was not unforeseeable. Kashmir's monsoon patterns are well-known. Landslides and floods along the highway are almost routine. And yet, the same state of affairs repeats itself: year after year, growers face blocked highways, rotting apples, and empty promises. It is unbelievable that the government leaves such a critical sector at the mercy of weather and bureaucratic inertia.

What is needed is foresight, not fire-fighting. The government must treat the apple harvest as a national economic priority. Alternate routes, storage facilities, and cold-chain logistics should be built well before the rains arrive. Dedicated freight corridors, whether rail or road, must be operationalized at scale, not in token form. Above all, contingency plans should be in place so that growers are never again forced to throw away their year's hard work.

If tourism represents Kashmir's fragile peace, apples represent its economic backbone. Allowing them to rot on the roadside is not just a tragedy for farmers, it is a failure of governance. The lesson from this year is clear: next year, the government must be ready before the rains fall.

CASH COURSE

Read This Before You Buy Anything

Fruits Without Fortune

A single drugmaker earns more than an entire region of farmers. The imbalance says everything about Kashmir's fragile economy.

Irshad Mushtaq

Sun Pharma began in 1983 with five products and two salesmen. Today, it earns over 52,000 crore a year, employs 43,000 people, and controls nearly 10 percent of India's pharmaceutical market. Its revenue alone is larger than the entire farm economy of Kashmir.

Agriculture is still the valley's backbone. It supports 70 percent of people, with 3.5 million working in the sector. Yet the total value of this labour is barely 11,000 crore, less than one drug company's annual sales. Apples, walnuts, cherries, and pears drive local trade, but apples alone account for 10 percent of the regional economy. In 2023-24, over 1.3 million metric tons of fruit left Kashmir's orchards.

The contradiction is stark. While apples sustain households, their contribution to the state's GDP has fallen from 28 percent to 20 percent in just fifteen years. Horticulture brings in about 10,000 crore annually, yet poor roads, blocked highways, and weak storage erase much of its potential. A sector that employs millions cannot keep pace with a corporate balance sheet built on pills.

There is another irony. Kashmir has become a growing market for the same pharmaceutical companies it trails in output. Stress, unemployment, and fragile health care have turned the valley into a heavy consumer of medicines.

As of July 2025, Jammu and Kashmir adds only about 8,673.81 crore to India's 22 lakh crore GST pool, mostly from services rather than agriculture. The gap between its human effort and its economic weight is widening.

The lesson is plain. Without investment in roads, storage, and value addition, apples will keep rotting on highways while pharma giants keep growing. The imbalance will only deepen.

The author is a Srinagar-based reputed financial advisor.

Kashmir's Knowledge Exodus

Empty classrooms tell a larger story of lost faith, failed systems, and a generation in search of alternatives.

Amaar Mir

Fewer students are choosing higher education in Kashmir today. College classrooms that once brimmed with ambition are half-empty, and entire departments report falling enrollment.

The shift is striking because it is not caused by a lack of talent. It is rooted in a growing distrust of what universities promise, and what they actually deliver.

Kashmiri students have started asking a hard question: why spend years pursuing a degree that might end in disappointment?

They see their seniors, brilliant and disciplined, clearing national-level examinations like NET-JRF, SET, and GATE, only to remain unemployed.

They see PhD scholars applying for clerical jobs, and postdoctoral researchers forced into low-paying work outside their fields.

For them, higher education no longer looks like a shot to stability. It looks like a trap.

The story of Kashmir education crisis cannot be told without mentioning unemployment. According to government figures, Jammu and Kashmir has one of the highest unemployment rates in India, often above 15%, with educated youth making up the largest share.

This failure cuts deep in a society where families have long seen academic success as the clearest path to respect and security.

Corruption makes it worse. Recruitment processes in universities and government departments are marred by favouritism and nepotism. Merit is pushed aside to make room for political connections or monetary deals.

When deserving candidates



Representational Photo

The decline of higher education in Kashmir is a result of choices, to ignore corruption, undervalue merit, and treat education as a box to tick rather than an investment in the future.

are excluded, the message spreads quickly: hard work alone is not enough. Students watching this unfold have little incentive to commit to long years of advanced study.

The damage is visible in the mental health struggles of young scholars who find themselves stuck in limbo. Depression and anxiety among highly qualified job seekers are a pattern. Society, once proud of its scholars, increasingly views them with sympathy or derision. The role of a researcher or teacher, once prestigious, is now seen as an uncertain gamble.

Meanwhile, other sectors are pulling students away. IT firms, start-ups, and even government jobs unrelated to education are viewed as more secure and rewarding.

These fields promise career growth, paychecks on time, and

recognition for performance, things academia has failed to guarantee.

In cafes around Srinagar, students talk less about research and more about corporate placements or moving abroad. The shift is cultural as much as it is economic.

Universities are already feeling the impact. Declining enrollments mean reduced funding, weaker research, and shrinking academic diversity. Some post-graduate courses struggle to attract even a handful of applicants.

This creates a cycle: as departments lose relevance, even fewer students enroll, pushing the institutions closer to irrelevance.

A valley that once produced celebrated scholars now risks losing its intellectual backbone.

Fewer researchers mean fewer innovations, weaker institutions,

and limited national contribution.

Solutions exist, though they demand political will. Recruitment must be transparent and merit-based, monitored by independent oversight bodies to prevent malpractice. Technology can help - digital platforms that track applications and selections publicly could restore some trust.

Equally critical is connecting research with real-world impact.

When academic work feeds into industry, technology, and policy, it starts being indispensable.

Financial barriers must also be addressed. Many Kashmiri families struggle to fund higher studies, and scholarships, fellowships, and stipends are often limited or delayed.

Expanding these programs could reduce the economic burden and make universities attractive again.

Finally, society must revive its respect for intellectual labour.

Education is essentially about the people who commit their lives to knowledge, teaching, and innovation. When young minds see their seniors celebrated, supported, and placed in meaningful roles, they will once again believe in the power of a university education.

The decline of higher education in Kashmir is a result of choices, to ignore corruption, undervalue merit, and treat education as a box to tick rather than an investment in the future.

If those choices change, so can the story. If they don't, Kashmir universities may continue to empty out, leaving behind hollow buildings and a generation that walked away.

The author is a research scholar at the University of Kashmir. Views expressed are personal.

Kashmiri Youth Deserve Their Moment

Degrees, ideas, and energy are plenty in Kashmir. The missing link is trust and follow-through.

Asra Altaf Koul

The government has rolled out a catalogue of schemes: start-up incentives, skilling missions, entrepreneurship drives. On paper, they look impressive. On the ground, they are tangled in red tape.

A young woman with a plan for an eco-friendly clothing brand discovers that paperwork takes months, approvals are painfully slow, and mentorship is absent. Schemes meant to encourage ambition often suffocate it instead.

And yet, there is energy. A young Kashmiri is using sensors and data analytics to reinvent his family's apple orchard. A self-taught animator picks up contracts from Delhi.

In towns and villages, young Kashmiris are learning skills online and hustling their way into new in-

A generation that keeps asking "what next?" cannot wait forever. The real test of a "New Kashmir" will be whether those words are spoken with despair, or with hope.

These stories show what is possible when ambition finds even a sliver of opportunity.

Kashmiri youth need follow-

through. Schools must introduce career counselling early. Colleges must align curricula with real labour demands. The 20-odd incubation centres in J&K must become bridges to investors and mentors. Banks must treat first-time entrepreneurs as assets. And above all, the state must guarantee reliable internet.

The demands of young Kashmiris go beyond employment. They want dignity, stability, and the sense that their degrees can lead to meaningful work. They want to feel part of the story that is being told about their homeland.

If policymakers are serious about building a "New Kashmir," they must begin by treating the young as stakeholders, not statistics. Invite them into policymaking, listen to their solutions, and give their ideas room to breathe.

The talent is already here. You can see it at hackathons, art collectives, and grassroots ventures. What it needs is recognition and support.

A generation that keeps asking "what next?" cannot wait forever. The real test of a "New Kashmir" will be whether those words are spoken with despair, or with hope.

The author is a student of economics at the University of Kashmir. Views expressed are personal.

Letter to Editor

The Bijbehara Model Offers a Lesson in Professional Service

Aadhaar in today's India is the key to almost everything: scholarships, pensions, ration cards, and bank accounts. At the heart of this digital system are Common Service Centres (CSCs), designed to bring governance closer to the people.

These centres often inspire more frustration than trust in Kashmir. I discovered this myself when my young son's Aadhaar card was suspended because his biometric details were missing. What should have been a quick correction turned into weeks of running from one CSC to another in Qazigund and Doru.

At one centre, the operator barely looked up from his desk. At another, staff admitted they had no idea how to fix the problem. At a third, I was made to feel like my request was a burden. Each failed visit drained time and energy, while my son remained cut off from services he needed.

The breakthrough came when my brother suggested I try the CSC run by Arshid Hussain at the Mini Secretariat in Bijbehara, Anantnag. The dif-

ference was striking. The staff welcomed us with respect, explained the process clearly, and within minutes my son's biometrics were updated.

Talking to Arshid Hussain, I understood why his centre felt different. He saw his work not as a private business but as a public responsibility. He spoke about ethics, accountability, and the trust citizens place in CSCs. "If we don't uphold professionalism here," he told me, "people lose faith in the system itself."

Others at the centre shared similar experiences. An elderly man who had struggled with Aadhaar-related pension issues said two other centres dismissed him with the excuse "system down." In Bijbehara, the problem was solved in 15 minutes. A college student applying for a PAN card said she had braced for delays but was surprised by the patience and guidance she received.

These may seem like small stories, but together they reveal something larger. The Digital India mission cannot rely on technology alone. It needs professionalism: respect for people's time, trans-

parency in fees, and dignity in service.

In Jammu and Kashmir, many complain of CSCs overcharging, ignoring ordinary citizens, or operating with poorly trained staff. Oversight is weak, and accountability often disappears once licences are issued.

Against this backdrop, the Bijbehara CSC shows what can be done when professionalism is taken seriously.

My son's case was resolved because one operator cared enough to do his job well. That single act turned a frustrating ordeal into a moment of trust.

If more centres in Kashmir and across India embraced the Bijbehara model, people would begin to see governance not as a burden but as a service that works.

The lesson is simple: when professionalism enters, trust follows.

Sincerely,

Mohammad Amin Mir
miramin354@gmail.com

Hope, Hustle, and Heartbreak

From tutoring at home to running small shops, Kashmir's graduates are redefining survival, innovation, and dignity amid a stalled job market.

Afreen Manzoor

Burhan thought his future was set. The son of a retired government employee, he worked hard through school, scored 82 percent in his Class 12 exams, and earned a degree in electrical engineering. He dreamed of building grids and lighting homes across Kashmir.

For two years, he prepared for competitive exams, believing that the government jobs his parents had spoken of were within reach.

Then the recruitment process collapsed: delayed, disputed, tied up in court cases.

By the time his father retired, the weight of expectation shifted onto his shoulders.

Today, at 26, Burhan spends his days teaching children at home and recording lessons for YouTube. "I studied to be an engineer," he said, "but I ended up an online tutor."

Burhan's story is echoed in thousands of homes across the valley. Education, once celebrated as the key to opportunity, now feels like a



Economic revival also depends on attracting industries that can absorb educated workers. Without that, the best and brightest will continue to migrate, or worse, lose faith entirely in the idea that hard work leads anywhere.

A stationery shop is seen as enterprise, just like a YouTube channel is viewed as innovation.

For too long, Kashmiri society has equated worth with government service or traditional professions like medicine, teaching, and law. Young people who want to bake, paint, code, or perform find little encouragement. Yet without embracing those paths, the cycle of disappointment will only deepen.

Some reform efforts offer hope. The Art-Based Capacity Building Project is training teachers in 60 schools to use art for emotional healing, introducing children to ways of coping with stress beyond textbooks.

Advocates argue for cluster schools, merging under-enrolled institutions into resource-rich hubs, along with teacher rotation, stronger accountability, and vocational bridges aligned with local economies. The National Education Policy of 2020 envisions holistic training, but in Kashmir, its implementation remains patchy.

Economic revival also depends on attracting industries that can absorb educated workers. Without that, the best and brightest will continue to migrate, or worse, lose faith entirely in the idea that hard work leads anywhere.

For now, young men like Burhan carry the contradiction of Kashmir's promise. His engineering degree hangs on the wall, a reminder of what might have been.

In the afternoons, as he records tutorials for his small YouTube audience, he sometimes scrolls through job portals, scanning listings that rarely match his skills.

"I don't regret studying," he said. "I regret what came after."

— The author is a postgraduate student of Political Science, at the University of Kashmir. She can be reached at afreenmanzoor121@gmail.com.



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door that leads nowhere.

Families pour money into private schools, coaching centers, and degrees abroad, only to watch their

children come back with framed certificates but no work.

The scale of the problem is staggering.

As of March 2025, more than 370,000 educated youth in Jammu and Kashmir are listed as unemployed on the government's employment portal. Among urban job seekers aged 15 to 29, the unemployment rate is 32 percent, the highest in India.

Beyond economic problem, this is an emotional crisis for many families.

Parents who spent years saving for tuition now voice their frustration openly: "We spent so much money on your education. What do

we have to show for it?"

A degree, stripped of its promise, becomes a source of tension at home and stigma in society.

Marriage prospects are also affected.

A government survey found that nearly 29 percent of Kashmiri youth under 29 remain unmarried, many of them dismissed by prospective in-laws as "liabilities."

Degrees without income translate into rejection. For young men in particular, the burden is doubled: the breadwinner label follows them even before they can earn.

The crisis is fed by deeper structural flaws.

Public education in Kashmir,

once the ladder of social mobility, has withered. Over 8,800 schools lack clean drinking water and 12,600 lack functional toilets, according to a March 2025 report.

Labs, libraries, and basic infrastructure remain absent. Even government school teachers confess to sending their own children to private schools, a tacit admission that the system no longer inspires trust.

The fallout reaches beyond classrooms. With degrees piling up, many young people take jobs unrelated to their training, settling for work that barely sustains them.

Peer pressure, family expectations, and low wages drain their confidence and health.

In homes where parents never studied beyond primary school, a well-educated son or daughter can feel like an outsider: admired briefly, then resented when the degree fails to deliver.

Some, like 28-year-old Kamran, choose to rewrite their stories.

A civil engineer by training, he spent years searching for work in power development before giving up. Today, he runs a stationery shop in Kishtwar.

"I didn't want this," he said, "but at least I can support myself." For Kamran, entrepreneurship is survival, not a dream.

Still, there are voices calling for a broader idea of success.

Educators at the Frontline

When teachers believe in the system, entire villages follow. Budgam's experience proves it.

Muntashir Kifayat Hussain

The mist was still hanging over the paddy fields when we parked at the edge of MS Nowpora Payeen in Budgam. The road ended there, so we had to continue on foot, our boots sinking into the wet earth, leaves brushing against our sleeves.

I was heading into a classroom that, by any standard, should have seemed ordinary. Instead, it felt like stepping into a revelation.

Inside, fifth and sixth grades shared a single room, two whiteboards facing different directions. I asked for a marker and called the students to attention, fully expecting the hesitation and timid whispers that usually greet strangers in rural classrooms.

I began writing long, complicated English words on the board, testing both patience and nerve. One by one, the children read them aloud, flawless, and unhesitant.

A thrill ran through me. I was witnessing something rare in government schools: audacity, curiosity, fearlessness. They challenged me, asked questions, and engaged.

A teacher standing at the back pointed to a girl and said, "She's ready." I asked, "Who is she?" and he replied, "My daughter."

The air shifted. I thought of my own children, all of them enrolled in government schools where I work. The realization hit hard: if we, the educators tasked with nurturing faith in public education, refuse to trust the system ourselves, how can we ask society to?

Attitude is malleable, and it begins at home. By enrolling our own children, we send a message parents can understand. The teacher told me that after admitting his daughter, the school roll nearly doubled. Families followed his example, inspired by his faith, by his belief in a system so many dismiss. "People will trust us only when our children study here," he said.

He recited Rumi: When you learn a craft, practice it / That learning comes through hands / There is a fountain inside you / Don't walk around with an empty bucket.

I walked through the rest of the school. Each classroom hummed with purpose. During lunch, teachers served



By the time I left, I realised that change begins in teachers' choices. Governments can build schools, but it is the heart of an educator that turns them into true homes of learning, echoing far beyond the classroom.

every child, moving with effortless rhythm. One female teacher held her six-month-old in one arm while dishing food with the other.

When I asked about leave for child

care, she shook her head gently. "My child is not more important than the sixty children in this school. How can I ignore them? All children are the sons and daughters of the universe, including my own." She walked off, the baby tucked against her bosom.

In that moment, I understood: dedication is measured by the courage to put collective care above personal convenience.

Across the cluster, I have seen schools with the same infrastructure, the same village, the same economy. Yet, outcomes diverge sharply.

Some schools produce children who read and reason at levels on par with the best private institutions, others lag in basic literacy and numeracy.

The difference lies in willpower and ownership. When teachers accept responsibility, engage fully, and set examples by entrusting their own children to government schools, communities follow.

By the time I left, I realised that change begins in teachers' choices. Governments can build schools, but it is the heart of an educator that turns them into true homes of learning, echoing far beyond the classroom.

— The author is an educator and academic monitor based in Budgam, Kashmir, who conducts school visits across the region to observe and improve government education.

The Lost Scholars of Kashmir

Thousands of contractual professors in Jammu and Kashmir have spent over a decade teaching and researching under temporary contracts, an entire generation of intellectual talent slipping through the cracks.

Dr. Syed Irfan Shafi

Dr. Rouf began his academic career like many young scholars in Kashmir, with hope, energy, and a desire to contribute something original.

His first research project promised recognition, impact, and a path forward.

But the citation graphs that once climbed steadily now trace a slow, persistent decline, a visual echo of a system that has not kept pace with its talent.

His story is not unique. It is the narrative of thousands of contractual assistant professors across Jammu and Kashmir, a generation whose promise is slowly fading under institutional neglect.

For over ten years, these scholars have carried the state's education system on their shoulders. They teach large classrooms, manage administrative tasks, grade countless papers, and supervise students' ambitions.

Yet, despite their indispensable role, they remain tethered to temporary contracts. Promotions, research funding, and professional development are privileges reserved for permanent staff.

The result is a system that demands brilliance but offers little support, a model that forces survival over innovation. The toll is deeply personal. Long-term uncertainty erodes confidence, leaving scholars to feel like strangers in their own careers. Every rejection, stalled project chips away at passion.

Dr. Rouf's citations reflect years of potential unrealized, contributions stifled, and intellectual voices silenced. What could have been groundbreaking research now lies dormant, a casualty of systemic oversight.

The region relies on this cadre of contractual professors to educate its youth, shaping Jammu and Kashmir's future while receiving no stability in return.

Decade-long limbo, revolving-door employment, and professional invisibility have created a workforce trapped between commitment and uncertainty. The state gains short-term service but forfeits long-term investment: knowledge that could have elevated institutions, informed policy, or positioned Kashmir in global academic conversations remains untapped.

Dr. Rouf's experience is emblematic of a broader crisis. When societies fail to invest in their intellectual assets, they erode the foundation of progress itself.

Kashmir's contractual professors are the silent architects of education here, yet the system treats them as disposable. Their fading potential is a cautionary tale of talent sacrificed on the altar of bureaucratic inertia.

Kashmir's contractual professors are the silent architects of education here, yet the system treats them as disposable. Their fading potential is a cautionary tale of talent sacrificed on the altar of bureaucratic inertia.

The question Kashmir must confront is urgent: how long will its brightest minds be forced to drift in professional uncertainty before the state invests in the very scholars who sustain its future?

Until that question finds an answer, stories like Dr. Rouf's will continue, over and over, echoing in the halls of universities and in the aspirations of students who deserve teachers empowered to dream as boldly as they do.

— The author is an Assistant Professor (Contractual), at IUST's School of Business Studies.

IIIM Incubator Receives 'Bharat Incubator Award 2025'

Observer News Service

Jammu: The Technology Business Incubator (TBI) of CSIR-Indian Institute of Integrative Medicine (CSIR-IIIM), Jammu, has been conferred with the 'Bharat Incubator Award 2025' at the 4th Bharat Entrepreneurship Summit held at the NDMC Convention Centre, New Delhi. The Bharat Entrepreneurship Summit is a flagship event every year organized by the Entrepreneurs Association of India (EAI). This national-level recognition highlights the IIIM incubator's outstanding contributions towards fostering innovation, supporting startups, and promoting entrepreneurship in the Jammu & Kashmir region.

Dr. Zabeer Ahmed, Director CSIR-IIIM and Chairman of IIIM-TBI, expressed his pride in the institute's tireless efforts and added that CSIR-IIIM is relentlessly working round the clock to support startups in key sectors such as agri-tech, nutrition, healthcare, Phyto pharma, Aroma and Biotechnology etc. "This award stands as a strong validation of our unwavering commitment to fostering innovation and accelerating economic growth in the Jammu and Kashmir



region" he said. Dr. Ahmed credited the achievement to the visionary leadership of Dr. Jitendra Singh, Hon'ble Union Minister of Science and Technology & Vice President CSIR. He noted that the startup revolution in India has gained significant momentum under the leadership of Hon'ble Prime Minister Narendra Modi, who launched the 'Start-up India, Stand-up India' initiative. "Changing mindsets and utilizing local resources are the keys to startup success

in Jammu & Kashmir," Dr. Ahmed emphasized.

Earlier during the ceremony, Dr. Saurabh Saran, Sr. Principal Scientist, CSIR-IIIM and Principal Investigator of IIIM-TBI, highlighted that CSIR-IIIM currently operates three incubation centres (i) BioNEST Incubator at CSIR-IIIM, Jammu (ii) BioNEST Incubator at Industrial Biotech Park, Kathua & (iii) Atal Incubation Centre at IIIM Branch, Srinagar. He informed that under the able guidance of Dr Zabeer

Ahmed, Director IIIM, together, these centres have supported over 125 startups, with more than 20 successfully launching products into the market. Dr. Saran also shared the vision of TBI focus on thematic areas such as the Aroma Mission, Phytopharmaceuticals, and livelihood-linked innovations.

The event was graced by Chief Guest Shri Sardar Manjinder Singh Sirsa, Hon'ble Minister of Industries, Food Supplies,

Environment, Forest, and Wildlife, Government of NCT Delhi. Other dignitaries included Mr. Manoj Kumar Singh, Ex-Chief Secretary of Uttar Pradesh, and senior members of EAI including Mr. Arun Kumar Sharma, Mr. Amitabh Verma, Mr. Vikas Preetam, and Mr. Abhishek Kumar, President, EAI. The Bharat Entrepreneurship Summit 2025 served as a pioneering platform to foster collaboration and innovation among entrepreneurs across India. The summit focuses on economic empowerment through entrepreneurship, especially for youth, farmers, and women.

CSIR-IIIM Technology Business Incubator expressed sincere gratitude to the Entrepreneurs Association of India (EAI) for this national recognition and reaffirms its dedication to advancing science-led entrepreneurship and social progress and actively fostering a vibrant startup ecosystem that promotes sustainable economic growth and generates new opportunities across the J&K region.

Dr. Zabeer Ahmed, Director, CSIR-IIIM & Chairman, IIIM-TBI and Dr. Saurabh Saran, Head, IIIM Incubation Centre posing for a photograph with Citation and Award.

Ito, Ruhullah Clash Over Highway Crisis

KO Web Desk

Srinagar: National Conference (NC) leaders, including Minister Sakina Ito and Srinagar MP Aga Ruhullah Mehdi, engaged in a heated verbal exchange on Thursday, with both criticizing each other over their respective roles and responsibilities.

Minister Ito took a jab at MP Ruhullah for questioning the government over the prolonged closure of the Srinagar-Jammu National Highway, saying he should focus on raising core issues of Jammu and Kashmir in Parliament instead of criticizing the NC-led administration.

Speaking to reporters, Ito said, "Aga Ruhullah contested on an NC ticket and was elected to speak for the people in Parliament. Now he is pointing fingers at us. He should raise the issues he considers crucial and ensure they receive attention at the national level."

The NC patron, Dr. Farooq Abdullah, had earlier defended the government, stating that the challenges faced by fruit growers due to repeated highway closures were caused by natural calamities, not administrative lapses.

In response, MP Ruhullah highlighted his work in Parliament through a post on X (formerly Twitter), emphasizing the issues he has raised publicly. He listed interventions



related to Kashmir's apple and horticulture sector, illegal detentions, encroachments on Waqf properties, road, railway, and health infrastructure concerns.

Ruhullah also cited achievements such as securing CT scan facilities for district hospitals, disbursing over five crore rupees under the MPLADS fund, advocating for the release of detainees with Union Home Minister Amit Shah, and pushing for highway and Expressway development with Union Minister Nitin Gadkari. He further mentioned facilitating hundreds of patients in accessing relief under the Prime Minister's National Relief Fund (PMNRF).

Commenting on Ito's remarks, Ruhullah wrote, "Those who have bent their back in obedience cannot look up to see the work of those challenging oppression. Your comfort came at the cost of leaving Kashmiris to face far harder challenges alone."

Rare But Ruthless: How A Deadly Amoeba Is Claiming Lives In Kerala

Press Trust Of India

Thiruvananthapuram: The mother of a nine-year-old girl who died after contracting the so-called "brain-eating amoeba" says she is still struggling to comprehend the loss.

"I cannot believe my daughter is gone," a sobbing mother said, adding that there was no clear information from health authorities on how the child became infected.

The girl, hailing from Kozhikode, is among those who have succumbed in recent months to Primary Amoebic Meningoencephalitis, a rare but almost always fatal brain infection caused by Naegleria fowleri.

Kerala has been grappling with a rare but deadly disease that has claimed the lives of 19 people in recent months.

The culprit is a microscopic parasite known as Naegleria

fowleri, more commonly called the "brain-eating amoeba", which causes a condition known as Primary Amoebic Meningoencephalitis, or PAM.

The infection is almost always fatal, killing more than 98 per cent of those who contract it. Over 70 cases have been reported in the state this year.

The amoeba is found in warm freshwater such as ponds, lakes, rivers and poorly maintained swimming pools.

According to health officials, it does not cause illness when swallowed, but when water enters the nose the parasite can migrate through the nasal passages into the brain, where it causes devastating inflammation and destruction of tissue.

The disease progresses very quickly.

"What starts as a fever, headache, nausea and stiff neck soon leads to confusion, seizures



and coma. Death usually occurs within one to two weeks," according to a health official.

Doctors say it is often mistaken for bacterial meningitis, and by the time the real cause is recognised it is too late to save the patient.

Kerala Health Minister Veena George told the State Assembly on Wednesday that amoebae exist in most water sources, though only some types are dangerous.

She pointed out that the first case of PAM in the state was

reported in 2016, and since then the government has been working on guidelines to help doctors respond more quickly.

Until recently, the tests needed to confirm the disease were only available at laboratories in Chandigarh and Puducherry, but now Kerala has established its own diagnostic facilities.

Health authorities have directed hospitals to suspect PAM in any patient with sudden meningitis-like symptoms and a recent history of contact with freshwater.

Microbiologists are to be alerted immediately so that cerebrospinal fluid samples can be checked under the microscope or confirmed by PCR testing.

Health officials said that the treatment remains extremely difficult.

There is no single drug that can cure PAM, and survivors worldwide are very few.

Patients who have made it through were treated with a combination of powerful medicines such as amphotericin B, miltefosine and rifampicin, together with therapies to reduce the dangerous brain swelling that accompanies the disease.

In Kerala, doctors now form multi-disciplinary teams to handle confirmed cases, involving neurologists, paediatricians, infectious disease specialists and critical care experts.

Though extremely rare, the disease has sparked anxiety because of its high death rate.

Experts stress that prevention is the best defence.

People are advised not to swim or dive in stagnant or poorly maintained freshwater bodies during the hot season. If swimming is unavoidable, nose clips can reduce the risk of water entering the nostrils.

Children should not play with hoses or sprinklers in a way that forces water up the nose, and garden hoses should be flushed before use.

Daily cleaning of paddling pools, proper chlorination of swimming pools and using only boiled or filtered water for nasal rinsing are also recommended.

Scientists warn that climate change may increase the risk of PAM.

The amoeba thrives in warm water and feeds on bacteria that flourish at higher temperatures. Hotter summers may both expand the parasite's range and drive more people to seek relief in lakes and rivers, raising the chances of exposure.

After the Nipah outbreak in Kozhikode in 2023, Kerala made it a policy to report and investigate every instance of brain fever, including rare infections like those caused by amoeba.

CONTD. FROM FRONT PAGE

4,873 Stranded

growers' concerns and maintain highway operations.

Valley-bound trucks carrying essentials such as LPG, fuel, vegetables, and lifesaving drugs were also facilitated to meet local demand.

President of the Kashmir Valley Fruit Growers and Dealers Association, Bashir Ahmad Basheer also said the movement of fruit-laden trucks, which had been stranded due to the prolonged closure of the Jammu-Srinagar National Highway, has now resumed.

However, Basheer said that fruit-laden trucks stuck for more than 15 days have now been allowed to move, but the actual condition of the produce will only be known once consignments reach mandis outside the Valley. He warned that rising freight rates, which have surged from around Rs 73-75 per box last year to over Rs 200 now, coupled with a shortage of trucks, are adding to growers' and traders' financial burden.

The highway closure had stranded hundreds of trucks and forced fruit markets across the Valley to shut in protest, causing apple prices to plummet. With the backlog cleared, prices are expected to stabilize.

Special Train Between

been taken to facilitate local passengers who are facing difficulties due to the highway shutdown.

The special service will provide an alternative travel option for people during the period of road closure, officials said. They added that necessary arrangements are being put in place to ensure smooth operations and to meet the travel demand on this route.

'Art 370 Abrogation

taking holidays, unlike others who grow restless unless they travel abroad every six months."

Shah also criticized Gandhi's recent "Voter Adhikar Yatra," claiming it aimed to protect infiltrators from Bangladesh. "Should infiltrators enjoy the same rights and benefits as our citizens? Should they get jobs, houses, and free medical treatment meant for Indians?" he asked.

Defending the BJP against allegations of vote theft, Shah called them a "false narrative" and assured that reservations for SCs, STs, and OBCs would remain intact. (KNO)

All Exams

and natural calamities. "But as far as exams are concerned, I want to make it clear that all exams will be held on time," Ito said.

She added that the department is seeking suggestions from all stakeholders over compensating the academic loss faced by students this year due to various circumstances.

"Last year we reversed the academic session from March to November-December, it was a big challenge and now we have streamlined it to a large extent," she further said.

Will Take Up

destinations currently closed for visitors.

Addressing the 17th Annual General Meeting (AGM) of the Travel Agents Association of Kashmir (TAAK) at the Gulmarg Convention Centre, Omar said the closure of major tourist spots defeats the purpose of promotion.

"On one hand we promote tourism, but on the other, many destinations remain closed. When half of Kashmir is shut for tourism, promotion becomes meaningless. What do we tell the tourists — that you can ride the Gondola but the ATV grounds are closed, or that you can visit Pahalgam but not Aru and Betab Valley?" he asked.

He said closing popular destinations creates a negative perception of Kashmir's overall situation. "We must come on one page with the Central Government, otherwise our efforts at promotion will not succeed," he added.

The chief minister said reopening the destinations will build confidence and help attract more tourists.

The chief minister said that when tourists get to know that certain destinations are closed, it creates a negative perception about the overall situation in Kashmir.

"We must come on one page with the central government, otherwise our efforts at promotion will not succeed," he added.

The chief minister expressed hope that autumn and winter seasons would bring some revival, while preparations should begin in earnest for the spring season.

Omar, who inaugurated a convention centre earlier in the day, said it is expected to boost the tourism and provide livelihood opportunities for locals.

"Chief Minister today inaugurated the Convention Centre at Gulmarg. The state-of-the-art facility is expected to boost tourism,

promote MICE activities, and create new opportunities for local youth and businesses," Omar posted on his official X handle.

He said while many more events will be held at the convention centre in future, the AGM of TAAK will have the distinction of being the first.

"We will always remember that the first programme held at the Gulmarg Convention Centre was the 17th AGM of the Travel Agents Association of Kashmir.

"In future, many prestigious programmes of FICCI, CII, Government of India and Government of J&K will be held here, but the first will always remain with TAAK," he added.

Inaugurates 5 Water

to the public five major water supply schemes of the Jal Shakti department in Tangmarg. He said these schemes mark only the beginning of a broader transformation of the Gulmarg-Tangmarg assembly constituency.

Highlighting the hardships caused by erratic weather patterns, Omar said Kashmir has witnessed both drought-like situations and devastating floods within a year.

He underlined the need for rainwater harvesting and better water management to safeguard resources for the coming generations.

Referring to the water supply schemes, he praised the engineers and staff of Jal Shakti department for completing them despite adverse circumstances.

Constructed at a cost of Rs 35.67 crore, the schemes will provide clean drinking water through modern Rapid Sand Filtration Plants to 40 habitations, covering 5,473 households and over 10,000 families with a population of 32,838.

The five projects -- inaugurated at Lalpora, Chichilora, Kralpora, Ferozpora Shrai and Kashipora -- were executed under the Jal Jeevan Mission by the Public Health Engineering department, FBI division, Tangmarg.

The chief minister said ensuring access to safe drinking water was not the government's favour but its responsibility.

"We are only repaying the trust you have placed in us. These schemes will ensure that families no longer have to depend on unfiltered water from rivers and wells. They will now get clean, filtered water right at their doorstep. But, with this comes a responsibility -- to use water judiciously and conserve it for the future," he said.

Omar assured the people that his government

would not stop at water supply projects but was committed to improving roads, healthcare, education and employment opportunities.

"This investment of Rs 35 crore is just the beginning. In the next four years, we will change the map of the Gulmarg-Tangmarg constituency. There will be no village where development does not reach, no household where progress does not knock at the door," he said.

Expressing his deep personal connect with the area, Omar recalled his family's roots in Tangmarg and Gulmarg.

He said it was his grandmother's family that first put Gulmarg on the global tourism map, and vowed to ensure that the region's tourism potential was revived after setbacks caused by floods and restrictions.

Lawyer Recuses

sovereignty, and integrity of India," he said.

Placing "the interest of the nation above all else," Kotwal said he was recusing himself from the case "in keeping with conscience, professional ethics, and commitment to national integrity." (inputs from PTI)

J&K Govt Initiated

upon reaching the statutory age of 65. The SEC's tenure is five years or until the age of 65, whichever is earlier.

Currently, Jammu & Kashmir has no functioning Panchayats, Block Development Councils—the first two tiers of the Panchayati Raj system—or Urban Local Bodies. The elected District Development Councils (DDCs) are set to complete their five-year term on February 24, 2026, having been constituted on February 25, 2021. (KNO)

Vaishnodevi Yatra

was progressing smoothly, they said.

The Shrine Board has made announcements asking pilgrims wanting to use heliservice to book tickets for choppers Devotees thronging Katra, the ase camp of Mata Vaishnodevi temple, said they were happy that the yatra has resumed.

"We are happy that the yatra has begun after a long suspension. We had wished to pay obeisance at the lotus feet of Mata, but the situation here prevented us for over a fortnight due to the suspension. Now as registration has begun again, we are confident of having her darshan and seeking blessings." Tribhavan Deka, a pilgrim from Assam, said.

Deka, who is on a pilgrimage to the shrine with a seven-member group, said, "We pray to Mata to keep the yatra safe and sound for all her devotees." Like him, Savitri Devi of Uttarakhand, who has arrived in Katra along with 11 members, said, "It was the call of Mata for all of us to be here. For years, we were trying to pay obeisance here, but failed to do so. See, when the situation is bad due to heavy rains, we are here — it is her directive." The Shri Mata Vaishno Devi Shrine Board (SMVDSB) announced the reopening of the yatra subject to favourable weather conditions from Wednesday morning, much to the relief of hundreds of devotees who were camping in Katra town — the base camp for the pilgrims visiting the shrine.

However, the respite was short-lived, as the shrine board once again suspended the yatra amid inclement weather Wednesday evening after allowing 2,500 pilgrims during the day, the officials said.

Top Climate Activist

crisis. "The same water that feeds our homes and farms is being contaminated," he said. "This is a war with nature, and we are on the losing side if action is delayed."

The lecture was part of Sewa Parv 2025, a nationwide campaign promoting civic engagement and environmental stewardship.

Principal Abdul Gani urged students to take personal responsibility for protecting water bodies, emphasizing that Doodh Ganga's health is tied directly to local livelihoods and agriculture.

Mushtaq Ahmad Lone, an RTI and eco-activist, encouraged students to participate in rural waste management programs under Swachh Bharat Mission Gramin. "The effort must start with you," he said. "Teachers can guide, but real change begins when students take initiative."

Dr. Muzaffar highlighted that illegal riverbed mining has not only damaged irrigation channels but also worsened the impact of recent floods.

"Small canals that once carried water to fields have been weakened, leaving farmland exposed to floodwaters," he said.

For the students of Zohama, the lecture was a call to responsibility. Doodh Ganga flows through their fields, homes, and futures. Preserving it, Dr. Muzaffar stressed, will require awareness, collective effort, and immediate action.

CS Reviews Functioning Of FCS&CA & Legal Metrology Departments



Observer News Service

SRINAGAR: Chief Secretary Atal Dulloo on Thursday chaired a review meeting of the Food, Civil Supplies & Consumer Affairs (FCS&CA) and Legal Metrology Departments, where Commissioner Secretary Saubhaghat presented an overview of achievements and upcoming targets.

The Chief Secretary lauded progress in digitization, Aadhaar integration, and transparency in food distribution. He called for removing ineligible beneficiaries, strengthening consumer protection, and ensuring timely deliverables for efficient service delivery.

It was informed that the National Food Security Act (NFSA) benefits 102.54 lakh individuals across 25.61 lakh families in J&K. Monthly distribution includes 3.70 lakh quintals under NFSA, 1.59 lakh quintals under non-NFSA, 1.24 lakh quintals under PMGKAY, and 0.20 lakh quintals under SAAY. J&K has achieved 100% Aadhaar seeding of ration cards, with 96.55% authenticated transactions through 6,611 sale outlets, of which 6,362 op-

erate online via e-Pos devices. Under NFSA, 2.21 lakh AAY families (8.76 lakh beneficiaries) receive 35 kg food grains monthly free of cost. Another 14.39 lakh PHH families (58.63 lakh beneficiaries) get 5 kg per person monthly, while 8.11 lakh NPHH families (31.80 lakh beneficiaries) receive subsidized rations.

Bhaghat also highlighted technology-driven reforms under SMART-PDS, including complete FPS automation, Aadhaar-based authentication, and migration to the new RCMS portal with migrant ration card integration underway.

The meeting reviewed e-grievance redressal mechanisms via JK-Grams, toll-free numbers, and WhatsApp services, alongside strict penal provisions against diversion or black-marketing of food grains, with fines up to Rs 8,000/quintal for wheat/ rice and Rs 120/kg for sugar.

Future deliverables include 100% e-KYC by December 2025, full integration of migrant ration cards by November 2025, departmental reorganization, new storage facilities at Bajalta and Srinagar, and PoS machine upgrades by March 2026.

Govt Begins Process To Appoint New State Election Commissioner

Agencies

SRINAGAR: The Jammu & Kashmir government has initiated the process for appointing the State Election Commissioner (SEC), the authority responsible for overseeing Panchayat and Urban Local Bodies in the Union Territory. To begin with, the Department of Rural Development and Panchayati Raj has taken up the matter with the Chief Minister's Office.

As per the Jammu & Kashmir Panchayati Raj Act, 1989, the State Election Commissioner is appointed by the Lieutenant Governor on the recommendation of a committee headed by the Chief Minister. Other members of the panel include a senior minister nominated by the Chief Minister, the Speaker of the Legislative Assembly, the Minister in charge of Panchayats, and the

Leader of the Opposition in the Legislative Assembly.

The post of SEC has been vacant since April 27, 2025, when B.R. Sharma completed his tenure upon reaching the statutory retirement age of 65.

According to the Jammu & Kashmir Panchayati Raj Act, 1989, the SEC is appointed for a term of five years or until the age of 65, whichever comes earlier. As previously, Jammu & Kashmir currently lacks both Panchayats and Block Development Councils—the first two tiers of the Panchayati Raj system—as well as Urban Local Bodies.

The term of the elected District Development Councils (DDCs) will end on February 24, 2026, as their five-year tenure began on February 25, 2021, when they were constituted by the Department of Rural Development and Panchayati Raj—(KNO)

J&K Bank Organizes Customer Meet In Delhi Zone At Noida



Observer News Service

SRINAGAR: As part of its strategic push to expand operations across the rest of India while deepening bonds with existing clientele, J&K Bank today organized a Customer Meet in Noida, bringing together a cross-section of clients from Noida and adjoining areas.

MD & CEO Amitava Chatterjee chaired the meeting attended by the Bank's General Manager & Divisional Head (Rest of India) Khurshed Muzaffar, Zonal Head (Delhi) Rosy Tickoo, and other senior officers. The meet evoked enthusiastic participation of the customers, who recorded their appreciation for the Bank's efforts to strengthen relationships, listen to feedback, and upgrade its services and offerings in line with expectations.

Speaking on the occasion, MD & CEO Amitava Chatterjee underlined the significance of building direct engagement with clients as the Bank sets its sights on contributing half of its business from the rest of the country. He said, "Our vision is clear—we want to see J&K Bank emerge as a truly pan-India institution, where at least 50 percent of our

business comes from markets outside our home territory. For this, places like Noida, Delhi and other business hubs are important growth centres."

He further added, "Customer meets like this help us connect with our valued clients, by listening to their experiences, aspirations and feedback. These interactions help us to improve our processes, products, and strengthen our brand presence in competitive markets."

Highlighting the Bank's strategy, the MD & CEO remarked, "Noida is an emerging hub of business and enterprise. Deepening our relationships here allows us to serve a dynamic customer segment while positioning J&K Bank as a trusted partner for businesses and individuals looking for responsive, customer-centric banking services."

Divisional Head (ROI) Khurshed Muzaffar also spoke about the growing focus of the Bank in rest of India. He said, "Our expansion initiatives are driven by a balance of ambition with care. We aim to enhance accessibility for customers across high-growth regions while ensuring we retain the trust, transparency, and personalized touch that define our Bank's service ethos."

KASHMIR TOURISM

Border Areas See Improved Tourist Footfall Late Summer

Agencies

SRINAGAR: The April 22 Pahalgam terror attack, which claimed the lives of 26 civilians, mostly tourists, led to a sharp decline in tourist inflow to Kashmir's frontier areas, including Gurez, Karnah, and Uri. However, arrivals picked up in July and August, bringing much-needed relief to the local population.

According to the details available, official figures are yet to be released as the season is nearing its end, but locals said tourist arrivals in the areas near Line of Control (LoC) remained low until the summer months brought a boost.

Notably, Gurez, Karnah, and Uri in recent years have been promoted as destinations for offbeat tourism, with May to September considered the peak season. "In May and June this year, there were fewer visitors compared to the same period in previous years. However, the numbers improved in July and August," said a local.

"In May we hardly saw any visitors. Hotels and homestays remained mostly empty. It was only after June that groups began arriving," said Bashir Ahmad, who runs a homestay.

Local traders in Karnah gave a similar account. "The season started late. By July, we began to see more families and trekkers. Before that, the area was quiet," said Abdul Rashid, who



OFFICIALS FROM THE TOURISM DEPARTMENT said the flow of visitors to border areas is increasing overall.

owns a shop in Tangdhar.

Tour operators said border tension increased after the Pahalgam terror attack, which led to tourists. "When people hear of such incidents, they avoid travel for a while. Once things settle, they come. That is what we saw this year," said a Srinagar-based operator who organizes trips to border areas.

Despite the late start, residents said that July and August witnessed steady arrivals. "This was the time when tents were booked and local guides were in demand," said Ghulam Nabi. "It helped many of us recover losses from the early season," he added.

Officials from the Tourism

Department said the flow of visitors to border areas is increasing overall, even if arrivals fluctuate due to security operations or weather. "The department has been promoting destinations like Gurez and Karnah, and we are seeing consistent growth in tourist interest. Border tourism is part of the larger plan to diversify destinations in Kashmir," an official said.

For locals, the late but eventual arrival of tourists brought some relief. "We depend on these few months," said Fayaz Ahmad from Gurez. "Even if the season started late, it ended better than we had expected in the beginning."—(KNO)

Immovable Property Attached Under NDPS In Anantnag: Police

Observer News Service

SRINAGAR: In a significant action against individuals involved in unlawful activities, Police in Anantnag on Thursday said to have attached immovable property in narcoterror case.

The property attachment has been carried out in connection with FIR No. 57/2024, registered under Sections 7/25 of the Indian Arms Act, 13, 18, 39 of the UA(P) Act, Section 5 of the Explosive Substances Act, and Section 8/20 of the NDPS Act at Police Station



Mattan, a police spokesman said in a statement issued to Kashmir Observer.

The attached property comprises land measuring 3 Kanals and 6 Marlas, falling under Khasra No. 283 Min, Khewat No. 16, and Khata No.

155, located at Sangam Bijbehara. The land is registered in the name of Iqra Mushtaq daughter of Mushtaq Ahmad Dar resident of Hugam, Srigufwara, Anantnag, niece of the accused Firdous Ahmad Bhat, the spokesman said.



Outreach on 'Conserve Medicinal Plants' Held at CSIR-IIIM Tangmarg

Observer News Service

TANGMARG: A one-day outreach program on "Conserve Medicinal Plants: Safeguard Nature, Safeguard Life" under the CSIR Mission Mode Project, Bioresource Conservation & Prospection (BioCap), was conducted at CSIR-IIIM Experimental Farm Yarikah, (Tangmarg), Kashmir, which was attended by 70 participants from tribal and farming communities.

The event was graced by Feroz Ahmad, Divisional Forest Officer, Special Forest Range, Gulmarg. The outreach programme was organized under the mentorship and guidance of Dr. Zabeer Ahmed, Director, CSIR-IIIM, Jammu and Er. Abdul Rahim, Chief Scientist and Head, Branch Laboratory, Srinagar.

The main objective of the programme was to make the participants aware about the importance of conserving medicinal plants for human well-being and healthy ecosystems.

Speaking on the occasion, Feroz Ahmad, appreciated the efforts of the CSIR-IIIM towards the con-

servation of the natural treasure trove of medicinal plants. He also emphasized the importance of different departments and indigenous communities, joining hands for the success of this Mission. He also expressed his willingness to enter into an MOU with the Institution for Bioresource conservation.

Dr. Nasheeman Ashraf, Nodal Scientist of the mission project on "Bioresource conservation and prospecting", talked about the objectives of the project and the importance of the community role for its successful implementation. She highlighted the role of this multi-institute project in conserving the rare, endangered and threatened plant species of the North-Western Himalayas.

She also lauded the efforts of the Director, CSIR-IIIM in facilitating the Scientist-Farmer connection for the development of sustainable agro-technologies and science-driven agricultural practices.

Earlier, Dr. Riyaz-ul-Hassan, Senior Principal Scientist, welcomed the participants and dignitaries, and highlighted the role of inter-organismal interaction in maintaining the forest ecosystems.

Court Convicts 2 Engineers In Bribery Case

Press Trust Of India

SRINAGAR: The Anti-Corruption Court (ACC) on Thursday convicted two PWD engineers for demanding and accepting a bribe of Rs 45,000 in Jammu and Kashmir's Doda district.

In 2011, the ACC arrested junior engineer Raja Faisal while demanding and accepting the bribe of Rs 45,000 in the presence of independent witnesses in Doda city.

The investigation further revealed the involvement of assistant executive engineer Syed Ikhtlaq Hussain Peer, an ACC spokesperson said.

Judge Archana Charak, convicted the two engineers under the Prevention of Corruption Act and Section 120B (criminal conspiracy) of IPC and 161 (punishment for public servant) of the repealed IPC section by the PC Act.

The court sentenced each accused to rigorous imprisonment for one year along with a fine of Rs 10,000 under Section 120B RPC, rigorous imprisonment for one year and a fine of Rs 10,000 under Section 161 RPC, and rigorous imprisonment for one year and a fine of Rs 10,000 under the Prevention of Corruption Act.

The case was registered on the complaint of a contractor who had completed blacktopping work on the Doda-Ganeka road. While 75 per cent payment has been released, the accused officers demanded illegal gratification of Rs 45,000 for the release of the remaining amount, thereby harassing the complainant, the ACC spokesperson said.

A trap was accordingly laid in Doda city, during which Faisal was caught red-handed while demanding and accepting the bribe of Rs 45,000 in the presence of independent witnesses.

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GOVERNMENT OF JAMMU AND KASHMIR
DIRECTORATE OF STATE
MOTOR GARAGES DEPARTMENT
BEMINA BYPASS SRINAGAR /NEW PLOT JAMMU

Subject: Appointment of Driver Grade-II (UT Cadre) in the State Motor Garages Department.
Reference:- Letter No. JKSSB-Scry/4/2024-03 (E-7411217) dated 28-05-2025 of J&K Services Selection Board.

ORDER No. 547 -DSMG of 2025 DATED:- 09/ 09 / 2025

On the recommendations of the J&K Services Selection Board wide communication referred to above and approval for appointment in the State Motor Garages Department conveyed by the Administrative Department vide No. TRPT-SMGON/20/2021-02(E 77654) dated 07.07.2025, sanction is hereby accorded to the appointment of following candidates as Driver Grade-II (UT Cadre) in the State Motor Garages Department in the Pay Level-2 (19900-63200) with immediate effect:-

S.no	Code No.	Name	Parentage	Address	Category
1.	1314	Shahid Mehraj	Mehraj U Din Khan	Near Masjid Shareef Ramgarh Gulgam	OM
2.	1315	Rahul Rai	Tek Ram	Bilaspur Thial Majalta Udhampur	SC

The appointee shall report to this Directorate within a period of twenty one (21) days from the date of issuance of this order failing which he shall forego his right to appointment, and the same shall be deemed to have been cancelled ab-initio without any further notice. The appointee shall be allowed to join only on the production of the following certificates (in original) to be verified subsequently:-

- Academic/Qualification Certificates.
- Matriculation/Date of Birth Certificate.
- Health Certificate from the concerned Chief Medical Officer of the District.
- Domicile Certificate issued by the Competent Authority.
- Valid relevant Category Certificate, if any applicable.
- Valid HGV/PSV Driving License.

The appointment of the above candidate shall further be subject to the following conditions:-

- The appointee shall give an undertaking in the shape of an affidavit as per Annexure-A to this Order to the effect that if on verification, his Qualification / Date of Birth / Domicile / Driving License / Reserved Category Certificates from the concerned issuing authorities is found fake / forged and if it is found that he possess lower/higher qualification than the prescribed one at any stage, his appointment as Driver Grade-II in the State Motor Garages Department shall be deemed to have been cancelled ab-initio and the legal action as warranted under rules shall be initiated against him.
- That if the candidate has taken loan for self employment from DIC/Employment Department, to be ascertained from the District Industries Centre (DIC) and District Employment & Counseling Centre of the Domicile District, he shall relinquish the proprietorship of unit/enterprise and also stakes, if any, in such self-employment unit/enterprise before joining the Government service. He shall be required to repay the entire loan liability in suitable EMIs to be worked out by the DDO concerned from his salary. DDO concerned shall obtain an affidavit from the concerned appointee regarding both relinquishment of proprietorship and stakes, if any, in such a self-employment unit/enterprise and recovery to be made and also personally monitor its recovery.
- The salary of the appointee shall not be drawn and disbursed to him unless the satisfactory report in respect of genuineness of Qualification / Date of Birth / Domicile / Driving License / Reserved Category Certificates is received from the concerned Authorities/Agency.
- The appointee shall be on probation for a period of two years.
- The appointment of the candidate shall be governed by the "New Pension Scheme" as notified vide SRO-400 of 2009 dated 24.12.2009.
- The inter-se-seniority of the appointee in the State Motor Garages Department shall be determined as per the J&K Civil Services (Classification, Control and Appeal) Rules, 1956.
- The appointment of the above appointee shall be subject to outcome of writ petition(s), if any, pending before Competent Court of law.

No:- RCD-311/ 4119-25 /DSMG
Dated: 09/09/2025
DIPK-6379-25
DT: 18/09/2025

(Malik Tahir Gani)
Director,
State Motor Garages Department
J&K, Srinagar

India v Oman: Chance To Give Batters Game Time Before Super 4s

Press Trust of India

DUBAI: The Suryakumar Yadav-led India will ideally prefer to bat first and make full use of the 20 overs when they take on an embattled Oman in their final Asia Cup group league game that will be played in Abu Dhabi on Friday.

Having already qualified for the Super 4s and with one eye on the important rematch against arch-foes Pakistan on Sunday, the Oman game is a perfect opportunity for the team management to just get some wood on leather after two lopsided low-scoring chases in the first two games.

While Abhishek Sharma has got a couple of blazing starts, Shubman Gill might want to bat



a bit longer. Skipper Suryakumar had a good outing against Pakistan but he would like Tilak Varma to get some more batting time.

Ideally, the middle-order line-

up of Hardik Pandya, Sanju Samson, Shivam Dube and Axar Patel would all like to get some decent hit out there in the middle before the business week of the tournament commences, with four

games in a space of seven days if India make it to the final.

Such is the quality of the Indian bowling line-up that in case Oman bat first, there is every chance of the match finishing early as Jatinder Singh and Co. have very little chance of negotiating the likes of Kuldeep Yadav and Varun Chakravarty.

In Oman's two games against Pakistan and the UAE, their batting was evidently not at its best.

The two totals of 67 and 130, while chasing in a losing cause, don't exactly paint a rosy picture. Such has been their plight that across two games, not a single batter has crossed the individual score of 30.

Hammad Mirza scored 27 against Pakistan while Aryan

Bisht made a painstaking 24 off 32 balls against UAE.

India head coach Gautam Gambhir might not like to experiment too much with the line-up except for giving a bit of breather to his lethal weapon Jasprit Bumrah -- that too if he chooses to -- before the Super 4s.

That will also give the team a chance to check out Arshdeep Singh, who has been missing out due to the think tank's obsession with multi-skilled cricketers and batting depth till No. 8.

If Gambhir wants to be slightly more experimental, then he can also play Harshit Rana, giving one among Varun or Kuldeep a rest. This will also be the only game where Suryakumar can re-jig his batting order a bit.

YSS Budgam Organises Sports Events Under Seva Parv Calendar



Dabirah Hassan

BUDGAM: The Department of Youth Services and Sports Budgam, under directions of District Youth Services and Sports Officer Budgam, Ghulam Hassan Lone, on Thursday organised a series of sports competitions across the district as part of the ongoing Seva Parv calendar.

A wide range of events including Volleyball, Chess, Tug of War, Cricket, Athletics and other traditional games were conducted with participation of students from various zones of Budgam. The activities aimed to channel the energy of youth towards positive pursuits while promoting the spirit

of sportsmanship, teamwork and discipline.

Speaking on the occasion, DYSSO Budgam appreciated the efforts of Zonal Physical Education Officers, Activity Incharges and staff for ensuring mass participation and smooth conduct of events across all zones. He further highlighted that the Seva Parv programme, scheduled from September 17 to October 2, is blending sports with the message of community service, fitness, and unity.

The Department reiterated its commitment to provide a strong sporting platform for students, encouraging them to excel both in academics and extracurricular activities.

IHPL To Debut T20 Cricket League In Kashmir From Oct 23

Agencies

SRINAGAR: The Indian Heaven Premier League (IHPL) on Thursday announced the launch of its maiden T20 cricket season, scheduled to kick off on October 23 at Bakshi Stadium in Srinagar.

The tournament, as per the organisers will run till November 7 and feature eight teams, blending local talent with players from national and international circuits.

The announcement was made during a press conference at the Radisson Collection, Srinagar, where the league's format and strate-

gic vision were unveiled.

Addressing the media, Surinder Khanna, former Indian cricketer and league mentor, said the IHPL aims to nurture emerging cricket talent in J&K by offering young players mentorship from seasoned domestic and international cricketers.

Meanwhile in a statement issued by the organisers said the Kashmir is set to mark a major sporting milestone as the inaugural Indian Heaven Premier League (IHPL), a two-week T20 tournament featuring international stars, ex-Ranji players, and local talent, is set to kick off from next month. (KNO)



Afghan Batter Mohammad Nabi Hits 5 Sixes In Final Over v Sri Lanka



Press Trust of India

ABU DHABI: Sri Lanka pacer Nuwan Thushara (4/18) struck thrice in his lethal opening spell before Mohammed Nabi played a blinder in the death overs to lead Afghanistan's sensational recovery, firing them to 169 for eight in the Asia Cup here on Thursday.

It seemed Afghanistan would struggle to get past 120 but Nabi (60 off 22) hammered five sixes in the 20th over from left-arm spinner Dunith Wellalage to collect 32 runs off the six legit balls, and swing

the momentum in his team's favour.

It is unusual for a spinner to bowl the final over, but captain Charith Asalanka had already exhausted his pace bowling options.

Having not chased well in the recent past, Afghanistan opted to bat but lost three wickets inside the powerplay to lose the momentum generated in the first two overs that had yielded 26 runs.

The intent, which was missing in the last game, was there but Afghanistan batters did not know how to deal with the moving ball from Thushara.

District Roll Ball Championship 2025 From September 22

District Roll Ball Championship 2025 is scheduled to be held at Gindun Sports Complex Rajbagh on September 22 and 23. The championship will be conducted under the aegis of J&K Sports Council for all age categories of boys and girls.

There will be a selection of teams to go for the state championship and then trials for the national championship, which is set to be held in Jammu. Interested players can contact M. Ashraf Dijoo, Secretary/Coach Roll Ball Association of J&K, on 9419179740.

Roll ball is played between two teams and combines roller skates, basketball, handball and throwball. It is played on roller shoes, with each team consisting of 12 players, six on the field and six in reserve. (Observer News Service)

No Political Questions At Media Interactions: ACC To Journos

The Asian Cricket Council has issued fresh guidelines barring journalists from asking political questions at press conferences in an apparent bid to diffuse the volatile situation that has persisted since the India-Pakistan match last Sunday.

Before India's customary media interaction on Thursday, addressed by spinner Kuldeep Yadav, an ACC media official requested the Indian media to "refrain from asking any political questions".

The move is seen as damage control, with the ACC media wing already under scrutiny for its handling of the controversy. UAE skipper Muhammad Waseem, for instance, was repeatedly quizzed over Pakistan's delayed arrival for a match earlier this week.

With Indian journalists pressing tough questions at successive press conferences, the continental body has now opted to clamp down on political lines of inquiry. (PTI)

Ashwin To Be Part Of Indian Team For Hong Kong Sixes

Former spinner Ravichandran Ashwin will be a part of the Indian team for the Hong Kong Sixes tournament to be held here from November 7-9, the organisers announced on Thursday.

Ashwin retired from all forms of international cricket last year during India's tour of Australia and while he bid adieu to the Indian Premier League last month, the spin bowling legend said that he was available to ply his trade in various leagues across the world.

The organisers said in a release, "Widely regarded as one of the finest spin bowlers in modern cricket, Ashwin's inclusion adds immense depth, experience, and star power to Team India's campaign in this fast-paced, action-packed global tournament."

Ashwin said, "This format requires a different strategy and will prove to be high octane which I am looking forward to play alongside my ex- teammates. I am also thrilled to compete against some quality players in the opposition teams, it will be a good challenge for us." (PTI)

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