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## 1.3 Lakh MTs Fruit Transported From Valley



4,500 Vehicles Move Daily As Traffic Streamlined: Officials

Observer News Service

Srinagar: Over 1.3 lakh metric tonnes of fresh fruit have been

transported from the Kashmir Valley to markets across the country in the last 10 days, an official said on Monday.

At a press conference, Kashmir Divisional Commissioner Anshul Garg said that daily, around 1,500-2,000 trucks | [More on P10](#)

**Railways Deploys Wagons To Ferry Kashmir Apples**

Northern Railways has introduced 21 container-based wagons to transport apples from Kashmir, officials said on Monday, marking a new initiative to support the | [More on P10](#)

**6 AROUND 800-1000 TONNES** of fresh fruits are being dispatched daily through the train.

## GST Rate Cut Kicks In; Groceries, Cars, Electronics Get Cheaper

Press Trust Of India

New Delhi: New, lower GST rates came into effect from Monday, slashing prices on around 375 items ranging from toothpaste and shampoo to cars and televisions. The move is aimed at boosting consumption to support an economy facing global tariff headwinds.

The previous GST slabs of 5%, 12%, 18%, and 28% have now been merged into two main rates: 5% and 18%, reducing prices for nearly 99% of daily-use items. FMCG companies, automobile makers, electronics manufacturers, and pharma firms have already lowered prices on several products, including groceries, agri-equipment, clothing, medicines, and vehicles.

Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman visited the bustling Laxmi Nagar market in Delhi and spoke with a stationary shop owner. The Finance Ministry said in a post on X that the shopkeeper welcomed the rate cuts on stationary items, noting | [More on P10](#)

### WHAT GETS CHEAPER?

Daily Essentials  
12-18% → 5%

Agriculture & Farming  
2-18% → 5%

Health & Life Insurance  
18% → Nil

Medical Devices  
12-18% → 5%

Vehicles  
28% → 18%

Education & Stationery  
5-12% → Nil

Electronics & Appliances  
28% → 18%



### GST Reforms To Boost Savings For Every Household: PM

Press Trust Of India

New Delhi: Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Monday said the next generation GST reforms will boost savings and directly benefit every section of society, as he asserted that it is imperative to walk on the path of self-reliance to achieve the collective goal of Viksit Bharat by 2047.

In an open letter to Indians which he posted on X, Modi said that from September 22, next generation GST reforms have begun to make their presence felt, marking the start of a 'GST Bachat Utsav' or 'GST Savings Festival' across the country.

"This year, the festive season brings an added



reason to rejoice. These reforms will boost savings and directly benefit every section of society, be it farmers, women, youth, poor, middle class, traders or MSMEs. They will encourage greater growth and investments and accelerate the progress of every state and region," the prime minister said.

An important feature of the next | [More on P10](#)

## GOC Reviews Anti-Terror Ops In Jammu Hills

Observer News Service

Jammu:General Officer Commanding (GOC) of White Knight Corps, Lt Gen P K Mishra, on Monday reviewed ongoing anti-terror operations in the hilly areas of Udhampur, Doda, and Kishtwar districts following recent encounters with terrorists, officials said.

A massive search operation has been underway in the Seoj Dhar forest, connecting Dudu-Basantgarh in Udhampur with Bhaderwah in Doda, since Friday evening after a soldier was killed in a gunfight with terrorists. Meanwhile, another operation was launched in Keshwan forest of Kishtwar district following a brief encounter on Sunday afternoon, officials added.

Accompanied by GOC, Counter-Insurgency Force (Delta) Maj Gen A P S Bal, the corps commander flew by helicopter to Seoj Dhar on Monday morning to review the operations, officials said.

Although there has been no contact with terrorists after the initial encounters in Seoj Dhar and Keshwan, helicopters were seen patrolling | [More on P10](#)

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2

## The Jammu and Kashmir State Board Of School Education

New Campus Bemina Srinagar

### Notice for General Public

The applicant/ candidate whose photograph is published in this notice and claiming to have lost her qualification certificate/s issued under as per below mentioned details:-

Roll No: 16158234  
Year & Session Nov-Dec 2020  
Name : Rizwan Qayoom  
Mother's Name : Hameeda  
Date of Birth:- 07-03-2006  
Residence:- Larkipora Awantipora

Class 10th (DOB)  
Registration: 193300000270022  
Father's Name: Abdul Qayoom Wani



According the candidate concerned has approach to this office for issuance of Duplicate Qualification /Marks Certificate/s, so before the same is processed and provided to the candidate, under rules, anybody having any objection in this regard, shall bring into the notice of Assistant Secretary of Certificate as well as Assistant Secretary Examination Unit I & III KD within the period of 10 & 7 days respectively, from the date of publication of this notice.

(Besides the above referred "Qualification / Marks Certificate/s" bearing No: 20ARKAM 1213278 be treated as "CANCELLED")  
No: F(Cer is-I-DQC)/BD/  
Dated  
X

Assistant Secretary  
Certificates, KD.

### OFFICE OF EXECUTIVE MAGISTRATE 1ST CLASS ZAINGEER BOMAI

No: 240 /B&D/TZ/2025 Date: 22/09/25

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

This office has received a written application from Ateeqa Begum W/o Mohd Ashraf Najar R/o Sagipora for issuance of Birth & Death certificate in favour of Arbeena Ashraf who was Born on 11-03-2015 and as per document evidence produced by the applicant. In this regard, if anyone has any objection, he/ she may file the same before the undersigned within 07 days.  
After that, no objection whatsoever will be entertained by this office.

fko\_r Naib Tehsildar  
Executive Magistrate  
Bomai

### OFFICE OF EXECUTIVE MAGISTRATE 1ST CLASS ZAINGEER BOMAI

No: 235/B&D/TZ/2025 Date: 22/09/25

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

This office has received a written application from Shareefa Begum D/o Ab Aziz Sheikh R/o Seelo for issuance of Birth & Death certificate in favour of Shareefa Begum who was Born on 21/10/1969 and as per document evidence produced by the applicant. In this regard, if anyone has any objection, he/ she may file the same before the undersigned within 07 days.  
After that, no objection whatsoever will be entertained by this office.

fko Naib Tehsildar  
Executive Magistrate  
Bomai

### OFFICE OF EXECUTIVE MAGISTRATE 1ST CLASS ZAINGEER BOMAI

No: 236/B&D/TZ/2025 Date: 22/09/25

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

This office has received a written application from Mussadiq Mushtaq Lone S/o Mushtaq Ahmad Lone R/o Zaloor for issuance of Birth & Death certificate in favour of Adeeba Jan who was Born on 26/12/2019 and as per document evidence produced by the applicant. In this regard, if anyone has any objection, he/ she may file the same before the undersigned within 07 days.  
After that, no objection whatsoever will be entertained by this office.

fko Naib Tehsildar  
Executive Magistrate  
Bomai

### OFFICE OF EXECUTIVE MAGISTRATE 1ST CLASS ZAINGEER BOMAI

No: 238/B&D/TZ/2025 Date: 22/09/25

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

This office has received a written application from Mahmooda Akhter D/o Bashir Ahmad Khan R/o Wadoora for issuance of Birth & Death certificate in favour of Mahmooda Akhter who was Born on 15/10/1987 and as per document evidence produced by the applicant. In this regard, if anyone has any objection, he/ she may file the same before the undersigned within 07 days.  
After that, no objection whatsoever will be entertained by this office.

fko Naib Tehsildar  
Executive Magistrate  
Bomai

### OFFICE OF EXECUTIVE MAGISTRATE 1ST CLASS ZAINGEER BOMAI

No: 239/B&D/TZ/2025

Date: 22/09/25

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

#### Public Notice

This office has received a written application from Bashir Ahmad Lone S/o Abdul Ahad Lone R/o Tujar for issuance of Birth & Death certificate in favour of Sahiba Bashir who was Born on 16/08/2013 and as per document evidence produced by the applicant. In this regard, if anyone has any objection, he/she may file the same before the undersigned within 07 days.  
After that, no objection whatsoever will be entertained by this office.

fko\_r Naib Tehsildar  
Executive Magistrate  
Bomai

### OFFICE OF EXECUTIVE MAGISTRATE 1ST CLASS ZAINGEER BOMAI

No: 242/B&D/TZ/2025

Date: 22/09/25

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

#### Public Notice

This office has received a written application from Mubeena Akhter D/W/O Gh Hassan Bhat R/o Bomai for issuance of Birth & Death certificate in favour of Mubeena Akhter who was Born on 30/04/1995 and as per document evidence produced by the applicant. In this regard, if anyone has any objection, he/she may file the same before the undersigned within 07 days.  
After that, no objection whatsoever will be entertained by this office.

fko\_r Naib Tehsildar  
Executive Magistrate  
Bomai

## GOVERNMENT OF (U.T) JAMMU & KASHMIR Office Of The Executive Engineer Jal Shakti (PHE) Deptt. Ground Water Division Srinagar Baghi-Ali-Mardan, Nowshara Srinagar.

E-mail:- hakeemmushtaq.75316@jk.gov.in

TeL./FaxNo:-0194-2411285

#### Extension Notice 1st

Subject: 1. Installation of Bore wells at different Spots of Chuntwaliwar District Ganderbal.  
2. Installation of Bore wells at different Spots of Block Gund District Ganderbal..

Reference: This office e-NIT No. 42-JS-PHE/GWDS/Mech. of 2025-26, issued vide endorsement No: JS-PHE/GWDS/25-26/Camp./ 6630-40, dated: 11-09-2025. Bearing Tender ID No. 2025\_PHE\_288027\_1 & 2.

Due to "NO Response" for the above mentioned works advertised vide e-NIT No. and Tender ID No's under reference. Which was scheduled to be downloaded till 22-09-2025 Up-to 11:00 AM are extended as per the details given below: -

| S.No. | Item                         | Fresh Date                |
|-------|------------------------------|---------------------------|
| 1.    | Period of submission of bids | 06-10-2025 Up-to 11:00 AM |
| 2.    | Date of opening of tenders   | 07-10-2025 11.00 AM       |

#### NOTE:

All other terms and conditions shall remain same as laid down in the aforesaid e-NIT issued vide above referred endstt: nos.  
No: -JS-PHE/GWDS/25-26/Camp./ 7495-7505  
DIPK-6454/25  
Dated: 22-09-2025

Sd/-  
Executive Engineer  
Jal Shakti (PHE) Deptt.  
Ground Water Division Srinagar.

## NORTHERN RAILWAY

### E-Tender Notice

Tender Notice No:- 770-W/01/WA/JAT/2025-26-21-2025-26-DRM-JAT.22-2025-26-DRM-JAT & 23-2025-26-DRM-JAT (to be opened on 10.10.2025) acting for and on behalf of The President of India invites open tenders (E-Tenders) against below titled tenders and available on [www.ireps.gov.in](http://www.ireps.gov.in) with closing date 10.10.2025 up to 15:00 Hrs. Bidders will be able to submit their original/revised bids up to the closing date and time only. Manual offers are not allowed against these tenders, 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 payment modes available on the IREPS portal like net banking, debit card, credit card etc. Manual payments through Demand draft, Banker cheques, Deposit receipts, FDR etc. are not allowed.

| Tender Type               | Tendering Section | Bidding System        |
|---------------------------|-------------------|-----------------------|
| Open                      | Works             | Two Packet System     |
| Date of Uploading Tenders | Bid Starting Date | Bid Closing Date/Time |
| 19.09.2025                | 26.09.2025        | 10.10.2025            |

| S.N. | Tender No.         | Details of Tender                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         |
|------|--------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 1    | 21-2025-26-DRM-JAT | Upgradation of Type-IV, Type-III and Type-II Quarters at JAT for transit accommodation at JAT in the Jurisdiction of ADEN-JAT.<br>Advertised Value (Rs.) 1,97,06,182.28<br>Validity of Offer 60 Days<br>Period of Completion 06 Months                                                                                    |
| 2    | 22-2025-26-DRM-JAT | Supply, installation and commissioning of track based Electronic type rail gauge face lubricator 68 nos (68x12x5yrs=4080 month) in the section of ADEN/JAT under the jurisdiction of Sr.DEN-III/FZR for 5 years.<br>Advertised Value (Rs.) 11,34,13,216.80<br>Validity of Offer 90 Days<br>Period of Completion 60 Months |
| 3    | 23-2025-26-DRM-JAT | Supply, installation and commissioning of track based Electronic type rail gauge face lubricator 62 nos (62x12x5yrs=3720 month) in the section of ADEN/PTK under the jurisdiction of Sr.DEN-III/FZR 5 years.<br>Advertised Value (Rs.) 10,34,62,586.40<br>Validity of Offer 90 Days<br>Period of Completion 60 Months     |

NOTE: Contractors are advised to check the IREPS website for any corrigendum issued against this tender before submitting the bids. 2911/2025

SERVING CUSTOMERS WITH A SMILE

## PUBLIC NOTICE

My DOB has been wrongly written in my adhaar card as 05-02-2005 while my correct DOB is 15-02-2005. Now I have applied for the correction of the same if any body has any objection in this regard he/she may file them in the Concerned adhaar centre Jammu / Srinagar within seven days. After that no objection shall be entertained.  
Asima Manzoor mdl  
D/o Manzoor Ahmad Wani R/o Achagoza

## PUBLIC NOTICE

I Farooq Ahmad Ganai S/o. Ab Aziz Ganai, residing at Daharmunah Budgam, bearing PID No. 952084 in IRP 24th Battalion, wish to inform the general public that my name has been incorrectly recorded in my service records as Farooq Ahmad Ganie S/o. Abdul Aziz Ganie.  
The correct and official spelling of my name is Farooq Ahmad Ganai and my father's name is Ab Aziz Ganai.  
All concerned parties are requested to take note of this correction.  
bko

## NOTICE FOR GENERAL PUBLIC

This is information for the general public that i am applying for the registration of my Kani Shawl group for Handloom Kanishawl Unit under the name and style of SHAHZADA SHAWLS at Mulshullah Beerwah Budgam. In this regard if any body having any objection may contact Handloom Department Budgam within a period of seven days. No objection shall be entertained after that.  
POSHA AKHTER  
D/O GHULAM AHMAD SHEIKH  
R/o MULSHULA BEERWAH BUDGAM mcb  
CELL. 9596228699

## NOTICE FOR GENERAL PUBLIC THE JAMMU & KASHMIR STATE BOARD OF SCHOOL EDUCATION

CERTIFICATES-KD, NEW CAMPUS BEMINA SRINAGAR

### ATTENTION PLEASE

The candidate whose photograph is published in the notice is claimed to have lost his qualification certificate of with the following particulars..

1. Roll No:- 713404
2. Class:- 10th
3. Year & Session :- NOV-DEC-1994
4. Registration No:- 32794-AP-IX-91
5. Name : GH NABI PADDER
6. Fathers Name: GH AHMAD PADDER
7. Mothers Name: SARA BANO
8. Date of Birth. 11-03-1977.
9. Residence:- HEFF SHOPIAN

Now the candidate has applied for the DUPLICATE QUALIFICATION CERTIFICATE. before the same is processed and provided to the candidate, any person having any objection in this regard may please file the same before the secretary BOSE or undersigned with in 7 days from the date of issue of this notice.

Besides, the above losted QUALIFICATION CERTIFICATE bearing S. No. 486280 be traeted as CANCELLED.

Sd/=  
Assitant Secretary  
Certificates - KD  
mcb

## PUBLIC NOTICE

My name has been wrongly written in my adhaar card as Nageena Akhter while my correct name is Nighata Bano. Now I have applied for the correction of the same if any body has any objection in this regard he/she may file them in the Concerned adhaar centre Jammu / Srinagar within seven days. After that no objection shall be entertained.  
Nighata Bano fko  
D/o Gh Mohi Ud Din Ganai  
R/o Sheerpura Bangil Tehsil Pattan

## PUBLIC NOTICE

I have to Change my name from Old name (Mohammad Hussain) To New name (Mohd Hussain) in future I'll be known as (Mohd Hussain) if anybody has any objection kindly report to passport office Srinagar within 7 working days after that no objection will be accepted.  
Mohammad Hussain Karkit  
JNA7780878931

## Government of Jammu and Kashmir Office of the Executive Engineer PMGSY (JKRRDA) Division Pulwama.

e-mail id: xenpmgsy-pul@jk.gov.in

### NOTICE INVITING TENDERS

E-NIT No.:- 11/EE/PMGSY-Pulwama/e-tendering of 2025-26, Dated: - 20/09/2025

For and on behalf of Government of Union Territory of Jammu and Kashmir, e-tenders are invited on Percentage basis from approved and eligible Contractors registered with Union Territory of J&K, CPWD, Railways, MES and other State/Central Governments for each of the following works:

| S.No | Name of the work                                                                                                                             | Adv. Cost/ (in Lakhs) | Cost of Tender Document. (In Rupees) | Earnest Money (In Rupees) | Time of completion | M.H. of Contractor                       | Ac-Count of Class of |
|------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------|--------------------------------------|---------------------------|--------------------|------------------------------------------|----------------------|
| 1.   | Temporary Rectification / Restoration of road from Veshru-B to Shalidar, Package No:- JK1050, Under UT Capex 2025-26 (Flood relief Measures) | 11.08                 | 500                                  | 22160                     | 25 Days            | UT 2025-26 (Under Flood relief Measures) | C / D                |

Note:- Rate includes carriage (wherever applicable.) and are inclusive of GST.

Position of AAA : Accorded  
Position of T.S : Accorded  
Major Head of Account : UT Capex 2025-26 (Under Flood relief Measures)  
The important dates and time are as under:-

|    |                                         |                           |
|----|-----------------------------------------|---------------------------|
| 1. | Date of issue of tender notice          | 20/09/2025                |
| 2. | Bid submission start date               | 20/09/2025 from 04:30 AM  |
| 3. | Bid submission End date                 | 26/09/2025 up to 04:30 PM |
| 4. | Date & time of opening of Bids (Online) | 27/09/2025 at 10:30 AM    |

1. Cost of Bid Form (non-refundable) should be submitted only in form of e-challan/treasury challan.
2. Availability of Bid Document and mode of submission: The bid documents are available online and bids should be submitted online on website [www.pmgsytendersjk.gov.in](http://www.pmgsytendersjk.gov.in). The bidders are required to register in the website which is free of cost. For submission of bids, the bidder is required to have valid Digital Signature Certificate (DSC) from one of the authorized Certifying Authorities (CA). "Aspiring bidders who have not obtained the user ID and password for participating in e-tendering in PMGSY may obtain the same from the website: [www.pmgsytendersjk.gov.in](http://www.pmgsytendersjk.gov.in) Digital signature is mandatory to participate in the e-tendering. Bidders already possessing the valid digital signature issued from authorized CAs can use the same in this tender.
3. Bids must be uploaded along with Scanned copy of cost of Tender Document as mentioned in column 4 in shape of e-challan/treasury challan to MH 0059-PWD (Revenue) and scanned copy of Bid Security/Earnest Money favouring Executive Engineer PMGSY Division Pulwama. The bid security/earnest money in the form of BG/CDR/FDR shall be valid for a period not less than 120 days after the deadline date for bid submission.
4. The original documents, viz, the cost of tender document, Bid Security submitted by LI should be same as uploaded online (scanned copies) otherwise the allotment will not be issued. The tenders will be cancelled and the bidder will not be allowed to Participate in any further/future tendering process in PMGSY for a period of one year.
5. Only online submission of bids is permitted, therefore; bids must be submitted online on website [www.pmgsytendersjk.gov.in](http://www.pmgsytendersjk.gov.in).
6. The bids for the work shall remain valid for acceptance for a period not less than 120 days after the deadline date for bid submission.
10. The bids of such bidders shall be out rightly rejected whose record of performance is poor such as abandoning the works, not properly completing the contract, inordinate delays in completion, litigation history of Financial failure etc.
11. Any damage caused to the private/public property during execution of works shall be the liability of the contractor and no claim on account of any such restoration to be carried or disposal of mulba /excavated earth to the suitable dumping spot by the contractor shall not be entertained by the department.
12. Contractor has to quote the rates without GST and GST shall be added at the time of allotment.
13. The Employer shall not be held responsible for any delay due to system failure beyond its control. Even though the system will attempt to notify the bidders of any bid updates, the Employer shall not be responsible for any information not received by the bidder. It is the bidder's responsibility to visit the website for the latest information related to the tender.
14. No Engineer of Gazetted rank or other Gazetted officer employed in Engineering or Administrative duties in an Engineering Department of the State Government is allowed to work as a Contractor for a period of two years after his retirement from Government service, without permission of the Government. This contract is liable to be cancelled if either the contractor or any of his employee is found any time to be such a person who had not obtained the permission of the Government as aforesaid before submission of the tender or engagement in the Contractor's Service.
15. The Performance Security (including additional performance security for unbalanced bids) shall be provided to the employer not later than the date specified in the Letter of Acceptance in shape of FDR/CDR/BG. The employer, and denominated in Indian Rupees, failing which the earnest money of the bidder shall be forfeited without giving any notice. The Performance Security shall be valid until a date 28 days from the date of expiry of Defects Liability Period and the additional performance security for unbalanced bids shall be valid until a date 28 days from the date of issue of the certificate of completion.
16. The successful bidder will have to provide performance security @5% in the shape of CDR/FDR/BG at the time of contract award. The earnest money/bid security of 2% will be released to the successful bidder only after the submission of a performance security of 5% of the total cost, which will be released after successful completion of the DLP. If in any case bid of the bidder is unbalanced, the successful bidder LI shall have to deposit an additional performance security in the shape of CDR/ FDR/BG before award of contract for which as per circular issued by Finance Department vide No.:- FD-Code/441/2021-02-158 Dated:- 08/08/2025 scale shall apply thereto. The said additional performance security shall also be released after 60 days of successful completion of the DLP.

No:- EE/PMGSY/Pul/2025/2883-89  
DIPK-6457/25

Dated: 22/09/2025

-Sd/-

Chief Engineer PMGSY (JKRRDA)  
Division Pulwama



### TRAFFIC CONGESTION IN SRINAGAR CITY

## Div Com Directs Formation Of Committee To Regulate Traffic Movement

Observer News Service

In order to ensure hassle-free traffic movement in the city, Divisional Commissioner (Div Com) Kashmir, Anshul Garg on Monday directed the constitution of a committee headed by Deputy Commissioner Srinagar and asked concerned departments to conduct surveys to identify bottlenecks to address the issues of traffic congestion.

He made these remarks while chairing a meeting of the Multi-Disciplinary Committee for Srinagar.

Addressing officers, Div Com directed the constitution of the committee headed by Deputy Commissioner Srinagar with Commissioner SMC, SSP Traffic Srinagar, and Heads from stake-

holder departments as members of the committee.

He directed officers to conduct a scientific study to identify bottlenecks and explore integration of technology to address the issue of traffic congestion and to streamline traffic movement.

He instructed officers to come up with tangible suggestions and submit the same in a time bound manner.

The meeting was attended by Deputy Commissioner Srinagar, Akshay Labroo; Commissioner SMC, Fazlul Haseeb; VC LCMA, SSP Traffic Srinagar, SSP Traffic Rural, RTO Kashmir, Manager RTC, officers of tourism department, R&B, Housing & Urban Development Department, and Home department.

## Security Forces Destroy Suspicious Object Near Dal Lake



### Agencies

**SRINAGAR:** Security forces on Monday detected and destroyed a suspicious object near Nehru Park on banks of Dal Lake.

"The object was noticed along the lakefront, prompting an immediate response. Security personnel rushed to the spot, cordoned off the area and suspended vehicular movement to ensure the safety of locals and tourists," said an official.

"Given the sensitivity of the location, the object was destroyed through a controlled explosion as a precautionary measure. The situation is fully under control," he added.

The controlled blast neutralised the suspected object without causing any damage or casualties. Authorities later re-

sumed traffic movement after the site was declared safe, the official said.

Witnesses said soon after the object was spotted vehicles of the security forces surrounded the spot and disposed of the device.

Meanwhile, videos of the controlled explosion went viral on social media, showing the suspected object being destroyed in a loud blast. Officials said that teams are investigating to ascertain the exact nature of the object.

Moreover, later in the day, security forces secured the lakefront while photographs from the spot pointed out locals and security personnel gathering to check the site and commuters resuming their journey after traffic was restored near Nehru Park—(KNO)

## Garbage Piles Trigger Health Concerns In Barbar Shah



Observer News Service

**SRINAGAR:** Residents of Sathu Payeen (Jogi Lane) in Barbar Shah area, here have expressed serious concern over the growing accumulation of garbage, junk and construction debris in their locality.

They also accused the Srinagar Municipal Corporation (SMC) of negligence.

Members of the Mohalla Committee said that the unattended waste has created an unhygienic environment, blocked movement on roads and spread a foul smell, disrupting the daily lives of residents.

"We have been living with this garbage for weeks. The stench is unbearable and it has become difficult for children and elderly residents to even step out of their homes," said Mohammad Ashraf, a local resident.

Another resident, Mohamed Zahid, added, "The debris is not just an eyesore but a serious health hazard. We fear the outbreak of diseases if the waste is not removed soon."

The Committee further cautioned that the situation is worsening with each passing day, turning the area into a makeshift dumping ground. According to them, the debris not only poses a major health risk but also endangers children and elderly residents living nearby.

"Our repeated requests to the SMC have gone unheard. Immediate action is necessary to clear the garbage and restore hygiene in the locality," said a member of the Mohalla Committee, urging municipal authorities to arrange for immediate removal and proper disposal of the waste to prevent further hazards and restore cleanliness in the area.

## CS Reviews Progress On Additional Block At LD Hospital



Observer News Service

**SRINAGAR:** Chief Secretary, Atal Dullooon Monday visited Lal Ded Hospital, Srinagar to review the progress of the ongoing construction of the additional block being developed under the World Bank-funded Jhelum Tawi Flood Recovery Project (JTFRP).

On this occasion besides the Principal Secretary, PWD; Divisional Commissioner, Kashmir and Secretary, H&ME he was accompanied by DC, Srinagar; Commissioner, SMC; CEO, ERA; Chief Engineer, R&B (Central) and other concerned officers.

About the project, the Chief Secretary was apprised that with a sanctioned cost of Rs 171.42 Cr, it was initiated in 2019–20 by JKPC and later transferred to R&B, it is aimed at significantly upgrading the hospital's infrastructure through Composite Civil, Mechanical, Electrical, and Medical Equipment works, hospital furniture, and annual maintenance support.

During the visit, the Chief Secretary was informed that out of the total 283 piles, 277 have already been completed, while raft work stands 97% complete. An expenditure of Rs 29.07 Cr has been incurred so far.

It was further divulged that



**THE CS NOTED THAT THE HOSPITAL, BEING KASHMIR'S ONLY TERTIARY CARE GYNAECOLOGICAL FACILITY**

serving thousands of women and new-borns, must have its infrastructure strengthened to improve maternal and child healthcare."

against the approved balance project cost of Rs 142.35 Cr, an amount of Rs 118.60 Cr has been allotted through the Contract Committee, and balance pile work is currently in progress. The revised likely date of completion has been fixed as December 31, 2026.

Underscoring the significance of the project, the Chief Secretary observed that the Hospital is the only tertiary care gynecological hospital in the entire Kashmir Valley, catering to thousands of women and newborns every year. So he reiterated that strengthening its infrastructure is of paramount importance for improving maternal and child healthcare services in the region.

He further remarked that the new block, once completed, will greatly enhance patient care facilities and ease the existing load on the hospital. He directed the executing agencies to strictly adhere

to the revised timelines and maintain the highest quality standards to ensure the facility is developed as a model healthcare block.

Reaffirming the government's commitment, the Chief Secretary said that projects like this reflect our focus on expanding and modernizing healthcare infrastructure across the UT.

The additional block at Lal Ded Hospital will play a transformative role in bridging critical gaps in service delivery and meeting the healthcare needs of women and children in the Valley, he asserted.

Dulloo also made it clear that he is personally monitoring the progress of this vital project. Given its importance for the people of the UT, he called for regular monitoring of the pace of work to ensure timely completion and prevent any unnecessary delays, he asserted.

### SEWA PARVA:

## DIPR, Amar Singh College Hold Day Long Cultural Fest



Observer News Service

**SRINAGAR:** The Department of Information, as part of its ongoing Sewa Parva campaign, organised a day long cultural fest in collaboration with Amar Singh College, Srinagar here Monday.

Titled as Symphonies of Peace the event brought together eminent dignitaries, cultural personalities, faculty and students to celebrate the ideals of peace, harmony and cultural integration in line with the philosophy of Mahatma Gandhi and the spirit of Seva Parva.

The event provided a platform to young and budding artists to showcase their hidden talent to the thunderous applause of the audience.

DIPR has been regularly holding such cultural events and the aim of holding such events is to enhance cultural and creative spaces

available to the student community and youth by providing them a platform to hone their talent.

The festival featured a vibrant blend of cultural performances including music, theatre and traditional Kashmiri art forms which captivated the audience and showcased the rich cultural heritage of Jammu and Kashmir. Among the art forms, Kashmiri Rauf, Punjabi Tappe, Martial art form Gatka, documentaries on Nasha Mukht Jammu Kashmir, Qawalis and skits were performed much to the delight of the audience.

Noted broadcaster and former Director, AIR, Srinagar, Syed Humayun Qaisar in his keynote address advised the students to identify their hidden talent by utilising the creative spaces. He said creative endeavours help in the personality development of

an individual and induce positive thinking among them.

Prof. (Dr.) Aijaz Ahmad Hakak, Principal Amar Singh College Srinagar, Dr. Ahsanul Haq Chisht, Deputy Director Information PR Kashmir, Burhan Hussain, Cultural Officer Kashmir and Mush-taqee Ali Ahmad Khan, noted Actor and Filmmaker from J&K also spoke on the occasion.

The joint initiative of the Information Department and Amar Singh College in organising the event was appreciated by the participants and it underlined the significance of such cultural platforms in promoting peace, brotherhood and cultural vibrancy, spirit of sewa- service among others.

Notably, DIPR J&K is organising a multitude of events as part of the broader Sewa Parv campaign, being celebrated from 17th September till 2nd October 2025.

### Shardiya Navratri Puja Performed At Shankaracharya Temple

Agencies

**SRINAGAR:** In a historic and spiritually uplifting moment, the sacred Shardiya Navratri Puja was performed for the first time in recorded history at the revered Shankaracharya Temple in Kashmir.

This landmark event was led by Swami Govind Anand Saraswati Maharaj, the esteemed Maharaj of the Sri Hanumad Janmahoomi Treta Kshetra Trust.

Adding to the significance of the occasion, the Chief Secretary of Jammu & Kashmir also graced the event with his presence, reflecting the state administration's commitment to preserving and promoting the rich spiritual and cultural heritage of the region.

The Navratri Puja, a nine-day celebration dedicated to the divine feminine, was conducted with full Vedic rituals and chants, overlooking the majestic Dal Lake

from one of the most ancient and sacred sites in India. The presence of devotees, spiritual leaders, and government officials marked a new chapter in the temple's religious history.

Swami Govind Anand Saraswati Maharaj said: "This is not just a religious event, but a cultural renaissance for Kashmir. May the blessings of Maa Durga bring peace, harmony, and spiritual awakening to the Valley."—(KNO)

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

### AIRPORTS

SHIEK UL ALAM AIRPORT: 01942303311



### RAILWAYS

- SRINAGAR: 0194-2103259
- ANANTNAG: 01932-228243
- BARAMULLA: 0194-102029
- BIJBERA: 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**  
29 Rabi-ul-Awwal  
1447

### PRAYERS

|        |        |
|--------|--------|
| FAJR   | 4:56   |
| ZUHR   | 12: 24 |
| ASR    | 4:45   |
| Magrib | 6:32   |
| ISHA   | 7:52   |

### This Day In History

- 951- Otto I the Great becomes king of Italy
- 1122- Concordat of Worms agreed between Pope Calixtus II and Holy Roman Emperor Henry V
- 1387- One of the most extravagant medieval English feasts ever recorded held for Richard II and John of Gaunt in London. Included 14 salted oxen, 120 sheep, 1200 pigeons and 11,000 eggs [1]
- 1408 - Battle of Othée; victory of John the Fearless, duke of Burgundy over Liège.
- 1459 - Battle of Blore Heath in Staffordshire, 1st major battle of the English Wars of the Roses
- 1513 King Henry III & Emperor Maximilian conquer Doornik
- 1739 - Russia & Turkey sign Peace of Belgrade
- 1803- Battle of Assaye: British-Indian forces beat Maratha Army
- 1821- Fall of Tripolitza, Greek forces massacre 30,000 Turks during Greek War of Independence
- 1862- Otto von Bismarck appointed Prime Minister and Foreign Minister of Prussia by King Wilhelm I
- 1868- Grito de Lares proclaims Puerto Rico's independence (crushed by Spain)
- 1887- Tongariro National Park formed in New Zealand after proposal by local chief Ngati Tawharetoa - fourth national park in the world [1]
- 1892- British Open Men's Golf, Muirfield: Harold Hilton wins by 3 shots from amateur John Ball, Sandy Herd & Hugh Kirkaldy
- 1895- French labor union CGT (Confederation Generale du Travail) forms
- 1904- British Colonel Francis Younghusband and his expedition with accompanying military force leave Lhasa, Tibet
- 1908- University of Alberta opens
- 1913 - Serbian troops march into Albania
- 1932 - Abdulaziz Ibn Saud merges the Kingdom of Nejd and Hejaz into the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia
- 1941 - General de Gaulle forms government in exile in London
- 1941 - German air raid on Soviet naval base at Kronstadt (battleship Marat sinks)
- 1941 - The first gas murder experiments are conducted at Auschwitz. concentration camp
- 1942 - Soviet counter offensive at Stalingrad
- 1944 - Proclamation No. 30 was issued, declaring the existence of a state of war between the Philippines and the United States and the United Kingdom
- 1949 - US President Harry Truman announces evidence of USSR's 1st nuclear device detonation
- 1950 - Nobel peace prize awarded to Ralph Bunche for mediation in Israel - 1st African American winner
- 1970 - Abdul Razak bin Hussain becomes premier of Malaysia
- 1973 - Largest known prime, 2 ^ 132,049-1, is discovered
- 1976 - South Africa decides to allow multi-racial teams to represent them
- 1976 - Soyuz 22 returns to Earth
- 1977 - 3rd test of Space Shuttle Enterprise
- 1999 - NASA announces that it has lost contact with the Mars Climate Orbiter.
- 2002 - The first public version of the web browser Mozilla Firefox ("Phoenix 0.1") is released
- 2003 Crime drama "NCIS" starring Mark Harmon, Michael Weatherley, Pauley Perrette and David McCallum premieres on CBS in the US
- 2017 - Women are allowed in King Fahd International Stadium in Riyadh for the first time during Saudi Arabia's 87th anniversary celebrations
- 2018- Mud volcano, the Otman-Bozdog, erupts 300m (980ft) high, near Baku, Azerbaijan
- 2019- 178 year old British travel company Thomas Cook goes into liquidation, stranding 600,000 travellers worldwide, prompting largest postwar repatriation effort by UK government
- 2019- Climate activist Greta Thunberg scolds world leaders "How Dare You" for not addressing climate change at the UN Climate Action Summit in New York
- 2020- President Donald Trump refuses to commit to a peaceful transfer of power after the US November election at a White House press conference
- 2021- Biden administration and EPA introduce first regulation against greenhouse gases, reduction of hydrofluorocarbons by 85% in 15 years
- 2022- British PM Liz Truss and Chancellor Kwasi Kwarteng release "the mini-budget that broke Britain" containing largest tax cuts. Leads to an economic crisis and the downfall of both.
- 2022- Russia holds sham referendums in four partly occupied Ukrainian regions with some Ukrainian citizens voters forced to vote at gunpoint

## 'Airstrike' at TTP Camp in Pakistan Kills 24

Press Trust Of India

Peshawar, Sept 22 At least 24 people, including women and children, were killed and several others injured on Monday when explosive materials stored at a compound owned by the Pakistani Taliban exploded in northwest Pakistan, police said.

The residents, however, claimed that airstrikes hit the compound in Tirah Valley's Matur Dara area in Khyber district of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa province, bordering Afghanistan.

No official statement has been issued by the government regarding the tragedy.

Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf party's provincial branch claimed that the "jet bombing" in the Tirah Valley destroyed five houses. It said that 20 bodies have been recovered from the rubble.

The local administration denied the claims about aerial strikes by the Pakistani fighter jets on the compound, saying the explosives used in bomb making exploded, causing the death of 24 people, including 14 militants.

At least 10 civilians, including women and children, were killed, along with 14 militants in the explosion, Station House Officer, Tirah police Station, Zafar Khan said.

The compound had been home to a large number of local militant leaders and operatives, including dozens of Af-

ghan fighters. It was regarded as a hub for the production of improvised explosive devices (IEDs) and sniper training.

The locals have announced the closure of Bara Bazaar, demanding accountability and protection.

Protesters accused government authorities of failing to ensure the safety of citizens and called upon elected representatives to play an active role in addressing the community's grievances.

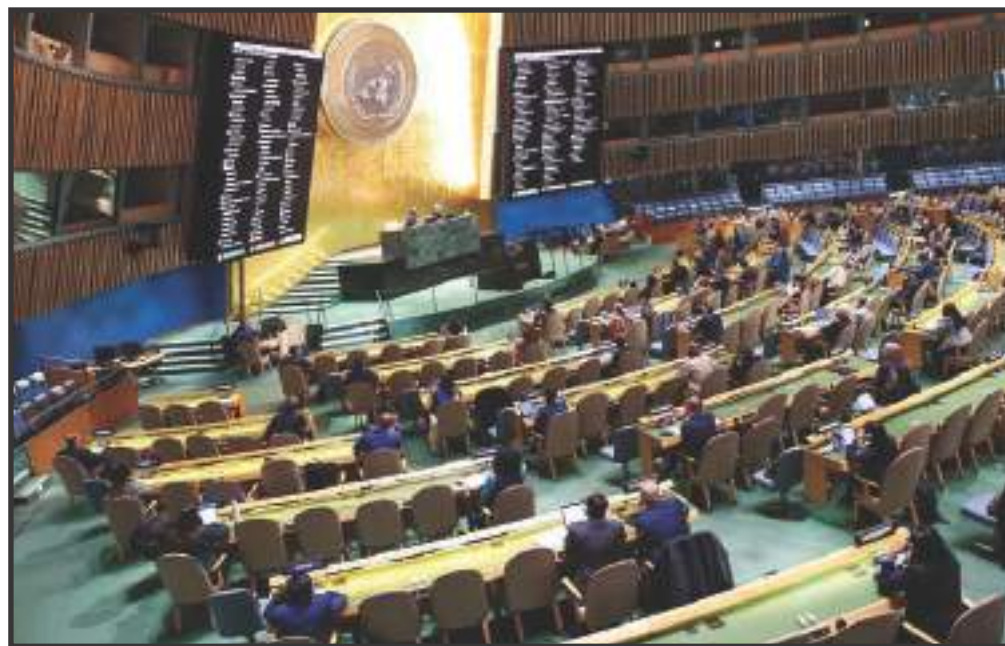
Mohammad Iqbal Khan Afridi, Member of the National Assembly from Khyber, expressed grief in a video message, saying women and children were among those killed in the "shelling by jets."

He urged residents to protest the killings, adding that "the killing of civilians has become routine."

"Due to the bombing by jet aircraft, 21 innocent citizens, including innocent children and helpless women, were killed," Provincial Assembly lawmaker Abdul Ghani Afridi said in a post on social media.

"The blood of the innocent people will not go to waste, and we will raise this voice on every forum. We will not rest until justice is achieved," he said.

Meanwhile, the Human Rights Commission of Pakistan (HRCP) expressed concern over civilian casualties in alleged "aerial bombings" in the Tirah Valley and called for an immediate inquiry.



## As Conflicts Rage, World Leaders Gather at UNGA 80

Associated Press

United Nations— World leaders begin convening Monday at one of the most volatile moments in the United Nations' 80-year history, and the challenges they face are as dire as ever if not more so: unyielding wars in Gaza and Ukraine, escalating changes in the US approach to the world, hungry people everywhere and technologies that are advancing faster than the understanding of how to manage them.

The United Nations itself, which emerged from World War II's rubble on the premise that nations would work together to tackle political, social and financial issues, is in crisis itself.

As Secretary-General Antonio Guterres said last week: "International cooperation is straining under pressures unseen in our lifetimes."

Yet the annual high-level gathering at the UN General Assembly will bring presidents, prime ministers and monarchs from about 150 of the 193 UN member nations to UN headquarters.

The secretary-general says it is an opportunity that can't be missed — even in the most challenging of moments. "We are gathering in turbulent — even uncharted — waters," Guterres said. He pointed to, among other spectres, "our planet overheating, new technologies racing ahead without guardrails, inequalities widening by the hour."

They gather for a better world, but can they build it? Guterres said he will use the more than 150 one-on-one meetings he has with leaders and ministers to urge that they speak to each other, bridge divides, reduce risks and find solutions — to conflicts, to keep the planet from increased warming, to put guardrails on fast-expanding artificial intelligence, and to find funding for lagging UN goals for 2030 including ending poverty in all countries and ensuring quality education for every child.

He said leaders must make progress, not merely engage in "posturing and promises".

But UN watchers say that in a deeply polarised world, with no prospects of ceasefires in Gaza, Ukraine and

Sudan, whether the high-level meeting makes any progress remains a big question mark.

Richard Gowan, UN director for the International Crisis Group, said he is confident three topics will dominate high-level week — US President Donald Trump's first appearance in his second term, the horrific situation in Gaza, and what's next for the United Nations as it grapples with major funding and staff cuts, mainly due to the cutoff in US payments to its regular and peacekeeping budgets.

Gowan said he expects the nearly two-year war in Gaza to be the central issue, as Israel launches a major offensive in Gaza City forcing thousands to flee and following a report by independent experts commissioned by the UN Human Rights Council that accused Israel of committing genocide in Gaza. Israel rejected the allegation, calling the report "distorted and false".

Riyad Mansour, the Palestinian ambassador to the United Nations, has stressed that "Palestine is going to be the huge elephant in this session of the General Assembly".

## Iran's Top General Vows 'Strategic Surprises' Against 'Bullying' Powers

Trans Asia News

Tehran: Iran's top military official has warned that the country's Armed Forces will unleash "strategic surprises" to deliver a timely and crushing response to any threat from bullying and oppressive powers.

Chief of Staff of the Iranian Armed Forces, Major General Abdolrahim Mousavi, made the remark in a message to commemorate the Sacred Defense Week, which marks an eight-year war of aggression imposed on Iran by then-Iraqi dictator Saddam Hussein in the 1980s.

"We assure the noble and heroic Iranian nation that the Armed Forces are prepared to give a timely, decisive, regret-inducing, and unfathomable response to any threats by global bullying [powers] and oppressors through relying on [own devised] strategic surprises," Mousavi said.

In the face of threats, Iran will not remain passive and will turn every threat into an opportunity to display its power in the regional and international scene, he added.

Pointing to Israel-US acts of aggression against Iran in June, he emphasized that the enemy failed to achieve its objectives during the 12-day war, thanks to the Islamic Republic's military and de-



Major General Abdolrahim Mousavi

fensive power and its regional capabilities, as well as the strong and proportional response of the Armed Forces.

The top Iranian general emphasized the importance of improving modern and advanced defense technologies and deterrence power, along with preparedness to counter hybrid war, especially the cognitive warfare of the enemy.

In mid-June, Israel unleashed war on Iran, assassinating high-ranking military commanders, scientists, and civilians. Iran responded decisively by launching waves of ballistic and hypersonic missiles at sensitive Israeli targets in Tel Aviv, Haifa, and other occupied cities.

Once the United States joined the Israeli aggression by striking Iran's nuclear facilities, the American air base of Al Udeid in Qatar was targeted by the Iranian Armed Forces.

The White House then proposed a ceasefire, which Israel accepted.

## Study Abroad Enquiries Drop 46% for US, 75% for Canada: IDP

Press Trust Of India

New Delhi : Enquiries from those aspiring to study in the United States have declined by over 46 per cent in the last one year while those for Canada have come down by around 75 per cent in the last two years, according to top officials at IDP Education.

Founded by the Australian government in 1969, IDP Education is a global leader in international education services that helps students achieve their goals of studying abroad.

The company provides free expert guidance on course and university selection, application submission, visa processing and pre-departure planning for popular destinations like Australia, Canada, New Zealand, Ire-

land, the UK and the US. It also conducts the English language proficiency test IELTS.

According to Piyush Kumar, Regional Director, South Asia, Canada and Latin America (LATAM), IDP Education, the geopolitical situation has impacted students' plans to go to the US and Canada.

"If we talk about the geopolitical situation, I think primarily it concerns the US and we have seen that in the last...6 to 12 months, the situation has obviously impacted the plans of students who are planning to go to the US. It started actually before President Trump (came in), so we saw that after June onwards, we did see the visa approval rates go down," Kumar told PTI.

"Typically, what happens is that during the election year, every time we see that visa approval rates go down for what-

ever reasons. But after President Trump has come, I think he is planning, or there is a lot of noise about some changes which are going to happen, which obviously is acting as a dampener," he added.

Citing official statistics, Kumar said there was a 46.4 per cent decline in enquiries for the US in May this year as compared to May 2024. The Canadian enquiries have also declined by around 70-75 per cent over the last two years.

"In Canada, there have been a lot of changes in the last two years. It started when the man had attempted to open the cockpit door during the flight. "He was arrested on landing and handed over to us. All nine persons, residents of Bengaluru, had come to Varanasi for pilgrimage. They are being interrogated, and further action will be taken based on findings," Singh added. Further legal proceedings are underway.

## EAM Jaishankar Meets US Secretary Rubio in New York

Press Trust Of India

New York, Sept 22 (PTI) External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar on Monday met US Secretary of State Marco Rubio for bilateral discussions, as the high-level 80th session of the UN General Assembly (UNGA) kicks in.

The meeting at Lotte New York Palace is the first face-to-face interaction between them following President Donald Trump's imposition of an additional 25 per cent tariff on India for Delhi's purchases of Russian oil, taking the total levies imposed on India to 50 per cent.

They had last met in July in Washington DC for the Quad Foreign Ministers' Meeting. Their meeting takes place on the same day India and the US will hold discussions to achieve an early conclusion of a trade agreement.

A delegation led by Union Commerce and Industries Minister Piyush Goyal will meet with the US side on Monday in the city. "The delegation plans to take forward the discussions with a view to

achieving early conclusion of a mutually beneficial Trade Agreement," the Ministry of Commerce and Industry had said in a statement.

The statement added that during the last visit of officials from the office of the US Trade Representative to India on September 16, positive dis-



cussions were held on various aspects of the trade deal, and it was decided to intensify efforts in this regard.

Jaishankar, who arrived in New York on Sunday for the high-level UNGA week, will hold a series of bilateral and multilateral meetings on the sidelines of the session and will deliver the national statement at the General Debate on September 27 from the iconic green UNGA podium.

## Shara First Syrian President to Visit US in 60 Yrs

Trans Asia News

DAMASCUS, Syria: Syrian President Ahmad Al-Sharaa arrived in New York on Sunday to take part in the UN General Assembly, the first president of Syria to do so in nearly six decades.

The last time a Syrian head of state attended the General Assembly was in 1967. That was before the 50-year rule of the Assad family dynasty, which came to an end in December when then-President Bashar Assad was ousted in a lightning insurgent offensive led by Al-Sharaa. Assad's fall also brought to an end nearly 14 years of civil war.

Since then, Al-Sharaa has sought to restore ties with Arab countries and the West, where officials were initially wary of his past ties with the Al-Qaeda militant group. The rebel group he formerly led, Hayat Tahrir Al-Sham, was previously designated by the United States as a terrorist group.

Since assuming power, Al-Sharaa has preached coexistence and sought to reassure Syria's minority communities, but the country's fragile recovery has been threatened by outbreaks of sectarian violence. Fighters affiliated with the new government were also accused of killing hundreds of civilians from the Druze and Alawite religious minorities.

Along with his appearance at the UN General Assembly, Al-Sharaa is likely to use his visit to push for further sanctions relief for Syria as it attempts to rebuild its war-battered economy and infrastructure.

US President Donald Trump met with Al-Sharaa in



**The last time a Syrian head of state attended the General Assembly was in 1967. That was before the 50-year rule of the Assad family dynasty, which came to an end in December when then-President Bashar Assad was ousted in a lightning insurgent offensive led by Al-Sharaa**

Saudi Arabia in May and announced that he would lift decades of sanctions imposed on Syria under the Assads' rule.

He followed through by ordering a large swathe of sanctions lifted or waived. However, the most stringent sanctions were imposed by Congress under the Caesar Syria Civilian Protection Act passed in 2019 and will require a congressional vote to permanently remove them.

Another topic that will loom large during Al-Sharaa's visit is his country's relations with US ally Israel. Since Assad's fall, Israel has been suspicious of Al-Sharaa's government and has seized a formerly UN-patrolled buffer zone in southern Syria and launched hundreds of airstrikes on Syrian military sites.

### NEWS MAKERS

## Experts Question Albania's AI-Generated Minister

Associated Press

Edi Rama: TIRANA, Albania: Last week, Albania announced that an AI-generated minister would take charge of a new public tenders portfolio.

"Diella" is touted as the world's first virtual minister, and Albanian Prime Minister Edi Rama promised the appointment would end rampant corruption in government contracts — a major obstacle to the Balkan nation's accession to the European Union.

But serious technical, political and ethical questions have been raised about the virtual lawmaker.



Truly incorruptible?

In announcing Diella's appointment, Rama claimed that public tenders would now be "100 percent free of corruption."

"Diella never sleeps, she doesn't need to be paid, she has no personal interests, she has no cousins, because cousins are a big issue in Albania," according

to the prime minister, whose country ranks 80th out of 180 in Transparency International's corruption index.

Albanian politicians are frequently implicated in corruption scandals linked to public funds.

The former mayor of the capital Tirana was detained while in office and remains in custody, suspected of corruption in connection with the awarding of government contracts.

The opposition leader and former prime minister Sali Berisha is also suspected of awarding public contracts to his associates.

## Mid-air Scare On Bengaluru-Varanasi Flight As Passenger Tries To Enter Cockpit

Press Trust Of India

Varanasi: A passenger on board a Varanasi-bound Air India Express flight from Bengaluru on September 22 approached the cockpit entry area mid-air while looking for the lavatory, the airline said in a statement on Monday.

The matter has been reported to the relevant authorities, and an investigation into the incident is on.

"We are aware of reports of an incident on one of our flights to Varanasi, where a passenger approached the cockpit entry area while looking for the lavatory. We reaffirm that robust safety and security protocols are in place and were not compro-

mised," Air India Express said in a statement.

In Varanasi, officials said CISF personnel detained a man and his eight companions as soon as their aircraft landed and handed them over to the local Phoolpur police.

SHO Praveen Kumar Singh said the man had attempted to open the cockpit door during the flight.

"He was arrested on landing and handed over to us. All nine persons, residents of Bengaluru, had come to Varanasi for pilgrimage. They are being interrogated, and further action will be taken based on findings," Singh added.

Further legal proceedings are underway.

## Indian National Jailed, Caned in Singapore for Molesting Woman

Press Trust Of India

Singapore, Sep 22 : A 46-year-old Indian national and Singapore permanent resident on Monday was sentenced to four years in jail and six strokes of the cane for molesting a woman in a nursing room at a shopping mall.

Ankit Sharma was convicted on one charge of aggravated outrage of modesty for molesting a 31-year-old technology specialist recruiter after dragging her into a nursing room at Changi City Point mall on March 1, 2023, Channel News Asia reported.

The victim had met Sharma for the first time that evening after a colleague shared his profile with her. The meeting began with professional discussions but soon turned uncomfortable as Sharma initiated sexual conversations and asked intrusive personal questions over drinks at a bar, Deputy Public Prosecutor Sheldon Lim told the court.

## J&K Police First In India to Adopt eSakshya: DGP

Says New Laws Bring Greater Transparency to Justice System

Observer News Service

**SRINAGAR:** The Jammu and Kashmir Police have become the first police force in the country to adopt the eSakshya application, a move aimed at increasing transparency and efficiency in the justice system, Director General of Police (DGP) Nalin Prabhat said on Monday.

Addressing the inaugural function of a three-day mega exhibition on new criminal laws organized by the Economic Offences Wing (EOW) Crime Branch Jammu under the directions of the Union Home Ministry, DGP Prabhat said the event aims to create public awareness, especially among youth, about the new criminal laws that have replaced colonial-era statutes.

"It's important to create awareness among people, especially the youth, about the new criminal laws that have replaced the colonial-era statutes. New laws have brought greater transparency to the justice system, with technology being a key enabler," he said.

The exhibition, which runs until September 24 from 10 am to 5 pm daily, features various stalls demonstrating provisions and benefits of the Bharatiya Nyay Sanhita (BNS), Bharatiya Nagrik Suraksha Sanhita (BNSS), and Bharatiya Sakshya Adhiniyam (BSA). Units including the District Police, Foren-



sic Science Laboratory (FSL), Police Control Room (PCR), Women Police Station, Cyber Police Stations, Prosecution, ANTE, CICE, Special Crime Wing, and the Health Department are participating.

DGP Prabhat commended the Crime Branch for organizing the exhibition and said similar events will be held in every district of J&K to ensure the public is familiar with the new legal framework.

"By engaging directly with the public, the police aim to bridge the gap between citizens and law enforcement," he added, noting that J&K Police have been implementing the new criminal laws with enthusiasm and commitment, ensuring investigations are carried out in a time-bound manner.

A large number of students, scholars, and citizens attended the first day of the exhibition to learn about the new laws. SSP Benam Tosh, the nodal officer, invited the public to participate and gain valuable knowledge about the updated criminal law framework.

## Pilgrims Flock To Vaishno Devi As Navratri Festival Kicks Off

KO Web Desk

**SRINAGAR:** With chants of 'Jai Mata Di' and devotional bhajans filling the air, hundreds of devotees on Monday thronged the Vaishno Devi shrine atop Trikuta Hills, marking the beginning of the nine-day Navratri festival.

The town of Katra in Reasi district was adorned with sparkling lights and colorful decorations, creating a festive ambience as pilgrims began their journey to seek the blessings of Mata Rani. Officials said nearly 10,000 devotees visited the shrine on the first day.

"The Shrine Board has made elaborate arrangements to ensure a comfortable yatra," said Sachin Kumar Vaishya, CEO of the Shri Mata Vaishno Devi Shrine Board. Volunteers have been deployed to guide pilgrims, manage the rush, and ensure smooth movement along the 13-km yatra route.

Drinking water points, medical stations, and crowd management measures have been put in place, while wireless communication sets have been

introduced for better coordination. A multi-tier security grid involving police, CRPF, paramilitary forces, and quick-response teams is active throughout the festival.

Devotees climbed the decorated serpentine path, chanting hymns and singing bhajans, offering prayers at the holy Bhawan. Many pilgrims, like Hunamant Singh from Uttarakhand and Simita from Pune, expressed that the darshan brought them a sense of calm and divine blessings.

The pilgrimage resumed on September 17 after being suspended for 22 days following a landslide on August 26, which killed 34 people and injured 20 others.

Meanwhile, the 43rd Chhatri Yatra departed from Shri Raghunathji temple in Jammu and reached Vaishno Devi via Nagrota and Katra, with prayers offered for peace, prosperity, and relief from natural calamities.

Navratri, observed from September 22 to October 1, is dedicated to the worship of Goddess Durga and sees one of the highest pilgrim footfalls at the Vaishno Devi shrine every year.

## Amazon Great Indian Festival begins Today

Observer News Service

**SRINAGAR:** As India implements the landmark GST reforms effective September 22, Amazon.in announced the launch of a dedicated storefront The Great Savings Celebration. #GSTBachatUtsav. The storefront will feature products with GST savings across categories such as home appliances, electronics, daily essentials, healthcare, fashion, and more just in time for the Amazon Great Indian Festival (AGIF) 2025, which begins on September 23, with Prime members enjoying 24 hours of early access starting midnight on September 22..

As part of the #GSTBachatUtsav, the storefront will feature badges on products that reflect applicable GST savings, making it easier for customers to identify and shop for these offers. During Prime Early Access, these badges will read "Prime Deal+ GST Savings" and during the main event "Deal with GST Savings". In addition to GST savings and Prime deals, customers will also find a wide selection of festive deals from sellers, affordability options such as No-Cost EMI via Amazon Pay Later, and benefits like up to 5% assured cashback for Prime members through Amazon Pay Rewards Gold (applicable T&Cscan be accessed on www.amazon.in).

As part of its commitment to supporting sellers and facilitating compliance with government reforms, Amazon has implemented mechanisms to help sellers transition smoothly to the new GST rates effective September 22, 2025. Sellers remain responsible for ensuring the correct GST rates and Product Tax Codes (PTCs) are applied

to their products, and Amazon is proactively supporting them with tools and guidance to review and maintain accuracy across their listings. Wherever possible, Amazon is automatically updating GST rates and PTCs on sellers' listings for select product categories. We have also equipped sellers with comprehensive resources, including masterclasses on understanding nuances of GST tax codes. While sellers on Amazon.in continue to have complete control on pricing of products, we are enabling them to conveniently pass on benefits of GST reductions to customers in applicable product categories.

This festive season, the Amazon Great Indian Festival is the perfect time for customers to maximize their savings with GST benefits, exciting offers, and an unmatched selection. Shoppers can explore over 1 lakh products and 30,000+ new launches from leading brands such as Samsung, Apple, Intel, Titan, Libas, and L'Oréal. Unmissable deals include the iPhone 15 at INR 43,749\*, Samsung Galaxy S24 Ultra 5G at INR 71,999\*, and up to 80% off across electronics, fashion, beauty, home, and everyday essentials.

Customers can also enjoy a 10% instant discount on SBI Credit and Debit Cards and EMI transactions, exclusive offers from other leading banks, and unlimited cashback with the Amazon Pay ICICI Bank Credit Card. Apart from this, the Navratri and Dussehra Store has everything you need to celebrate with style - from traditional décor to trendy electronics- featuring a minimum of 50% off on all festival essentials.

### J&K Autumn Assembly Session

# Cabinet To Propose Dates To LG

Agencies

**SRINAGAR:** The cabinet is set to meet on Tuesday to take a final decision on several proposals, including a recommendation to the Lieutenant Governor for convening the autumn session of the assembly.

Sources said that the cabinet, headed by Chief Minister Omar Abdullah, is expected to meet on Tuesday to propose a date to the Lieutenant Governor for convening the autumn session of the assembly.

"The session is expected to begin in the third or fourth week of October. It could start on any day between October 20 and 27. The cabinet would take Diwali celebrations into account before finalising its

recommendation," they said.

As per Jammu & Kashmir Reorganisation Act- 2019, there must not be a gap longer than six months between the last meeting of one session and the first meeting of the next session.

"The Lieutenant Governor shall, from time to time, summon the Legislative Assembly to meet at such time and place as he thinks fit, but six months shall not intervene between its last sitting in one session and the date appointed for its first sitting in the next session," reads J&K Reorganisation Act-2019.

Since the last sitting of the previous session was held on April 29, then-according to the rule that no more than six months should pass between

sessions-the next session should be held by October 28.

The issues of statehood and reservation are likely to dominate proceedings of the House.

In the last assembly session, three resolutions on statehood lapsed due to disruptions created by National Conference following rejection of the adjournment motion brought by their legislators on the Waqf (amendment) bill-2025.

The issue of reservation also came up repeatedly during discussions in the House with PC president Sajad Gani Lone cornering the government over the issue.

The issue of detention of MLA Doda Mehraj and his assault during the last budget session could also come up for discussion. (KNO)

## CM Orders Quick Flood Damage Assessment & Restoration



Observer News Service

**SRINAGAR:** Chief Minister Omar Abdullah on Monday instructed concerned departments to fast-track flood damage assessments and expedite restoration works following heavy rains across the region.

The recent downpour triggered flash floods in rivers and drains, along with landslides and traffic disruptions in several districts. On September 18, the Chief Minister had noted that the floods caused widespread damage to public infrastructure, including 330 bridges and 1,500 km of roads, and destroyed private properties such as homes and agricultural fields.

"Chief Minister chaired a follow-up meeting today on post-flood rehabilitation and relief. He directed departments to fast-track damage assessments, expedite restoration works, and ensure the timely distribution of relief," the J&K Chief Minister's Office said in a statement.

Omar also emphasized that while connectivity has largely been restored, efforts must continue to reopen the remaining closed roads at the earliest to ensure smooth movement and aid distribution.

Officials said that all departments have been instructed to co-ordinate closely and prioritize the rehabilitation of affected areas.

The CM also reviewed the safety audit of schools undertaken after the floods, calling for the certification process to be fast-tracked.

Responding to rumours and misinformation circulating on social media about "deliberate delay" in movement of fruit trucks on Srinagar-Jammu Highway (NH-44), the CM instructed the Divisional Commissioners and IGP (NH) to issue

- J&K'S FLOOD LOSSES
- 864 HOUSES DAMAGED; RELIEF DISBURSED.
- 1 DEATH, 3 COMPENSATED VIA RED CROSS.
- 90 KM ROADS, 87 BRIDGES DAMAGED; REPAIRS UNDERWAY.
- JHELMUM BREACH AT ZOONIPORA BEING FIXED.
- 12,500+ HA FARMLAND, 315 HA HORTICULTURE AFFECTED (~RS 59 LAKH).

verified information promptly so that people remain updated with facts.

The CM was informed that slow movement has been on account of poor road conditions in certain stretches of the National Highway and not deliberate.

During the meeting, Omar expressed concern over damage to the historic Mubarak Mandi Heritage Complex in Jammu.

Divisional Commissioner Jammu, Ramesh Kumar, informed that land subsidence along the Circular Road had damaged the backside of the complex, underscoring the need for urgent protective measures.

The CM directed officials to ensure robust preparedness, strengthen embankments and put in place effective response mechanisms to safeguard lives and property.

He also directed concerned Deputy Commissioners to submit report regarding admissibility of ex-gratia relief in favour of next of kin of families from J&K who lost their lives in Himachal Pradesh in the recent landslide.

Earlier, Divisional Commissioner Kashmir Anshul Garg presented a detailed report on the impact of the floods. He informed that losses in Kashmir division included 16 houses which were fully damaged, 57 severely damaged, and 791 partially damaged, with relief already disbursed in all cases.

Garg said one life was lost, for which compensation has been

provided, while three other deaths in related incidents in Anantnag were compensated through the Red Cross.

Giving details of infrastructure damage, it was informed that nearly 90 km of roads were affected across 279 road stretches, of which 52 have been restored while the rest are under repair, the spokesperson said.

He said 87 bridges and culverts were also damaged, with more than half already restored.

A breach in the Jhelum at Zoonipora, Shalina in Budgam, is currently being repaired, the spokesperson added.

The Divisional Commissioner Kashmir gave account of agricultural losses with more than 12,500 hectares of land affected and nearly 315 hectares in Horticulture impacted, primarily in Anantnag, Kulgam, and Pulwama, districts with estimated losses of about Rs 59 lakh.

While giving details of the situation in Jammu, the Divisional Commissioner Jammu said the floods claimed 150 lives, left 178 people injured, and 33 missing, with Kishtwar recording the highest casualties.

Housing losses were severe, with more than 4,200 homes fully damaged and over 8,600 partially damaged, the worst-hit districts being Udhampur and Jammu. Livestock losses stood at 1,455 and crops over 1,300 hectares were damaged, the Divisional Commissioner Jammu said.

### Discuss CSR Projects With Australian Delegation



Chief Minister Omar Abdullah on Monday met with an Indo-Australian delegation led by Sajid Saiyed, Chairperson and Founder of Bharat CSR Network and the Circular Economy Alliance Australia (CEAA), to discuss a range of Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) projects aimed at fostering sustainable development in Jammu and Kashmir.

"The delegation proposed a range of initiatives aimed at promoting community empowerment and environmental sustainability, including the establishment of Smart Villages, setting up Artificial Intelligence (AI) Labs, implementing Waste-to-Wealth programmes, undertaking water remediation projects, constructing community centres and providing

rehabilitation support for flood-affected communities," an official spokesman said after the meeting.

Welcoming the proposals, the chief minister appreciated the delegation's commitment to inclusive development and identified sports, skill enhancement and greenfield projects as priority sectors for collaboration.

### 2nd Convocation Ceremony Of University Of Ladakh

## Ladakh's Youth Must Align With India's Growth Story: LG Kavinder Gupta



Observer News Service

**KARGIL:** Emphasising the need to align Ladakh's youth with India's growth story, Lieutenant Governor Shri Kavinder Gupta said the Administration is committed to building a knowledge-driven society anchored in innovation, entrepreneurship, and social equity.

The Lt Governor was speaking while presiding over the 2nd Convocation Ceremony of the University of Ladakh as the Chief Guest.

Congratulating the graduating students and describing them as the torchbearers of a prosperous and progressive Ladakh, Shri Kavinder Gupta said that the youth of the Union Territory must dream big, remain committed to excellence, and contribute actively to building a stronger and more developed India.

Shri Kavinder Gupta underlined that education, skill development, and women's empowerment remain top priorities for the UT Administration. He said the implementation of the National Education Policy (NEP) 2020 in Ladakh is opening new opportunities for students to acquire advanced skills, embrace innovation, and

become job creators rather than job seekers.

Highlighting the government's initiatives, the Lt Governor said that investments are being made in modern academic infrastructure, digital learning tools, and industry linkages to enable Ladakh's youth to compete with the best in the world. He added that special focus is being given to ensuring equitable access to education, particularly for girl students, as a vital step towards social progress and empowerment.

The Lt Governor also stressed the importance of research, startups, and entrepreneurship in shaping Ladakh's future, assuring continued support to the University and young innovators. "We are determined to turn Ladakh into a hub of knowledge, innovation, and sustainability while preserving its unique cultural and ecological identity," he said.

The ceremony, witnessed the participation of faculty, students, and dignitaries, also reflected the Administration's broader vision of improving quality of life in Ladakh through investments in healthcare, connectivity, renewable energy, and skill-based livelihood generation.

Form No 3  
[See Regulation -15 (1) (a)/16(3)]

**DEBTS RECOVERY TRIBUNAL  
CHANDIGARH (DRT I)**  
**2nd Floor SCO 33-34-35  
Sector-17 A, Chandigarh**  
**Case No. OA/855/2025**

**Summons under Sub Section (4) of Section 19 of the Act,  
read with sub rule (2A) of rule 5 of the Debt Recovery  
Tribunal (Procedure)Rules,1993**

**Exh. No: 29958**  
**JAMMU AND KASHMIR BANK LIMITED  
VS  
MR FAYAZ AHMAD GANAIE**

To.  
(1) **Mr. Abdul Hamid Ganie @Abdul Hameed Ganie**  
**S/o: Mr Ghulam Nabi Ganie**  
**Resident of Dawlatpora Athoora**  
**Baramulla Jammu and Kashmir**  
2) **Mr. Mohammad Ashraf Ganie**  
**S/o: Ghulam Ahmad Ganie**  
**Resident of Yadipora Tehsil Pattan District**  
**Baramulla, Jammu and Kashmir**  
**SUMMONS**

Whereas , OA/855/2025 was listed before Hon'ble  
Presiding Officer/ Registrar on 11.08.2025  
Whereas this Hon'ble Tribunal is pleased to issue  
summons / notice on the said application under section  
19(4) of the Act, (OA) filed against you for recovery of  
debts of Rs 8639969.65/- (application along with copies of  
documents etc, annexed).  
In accordance with sub-section (4) of section 19 of the Act,  
you. the defendants are directed as under:-  
(i) to show cause within thirty days of the service of  
summons as to why relief prayed for should not be  
granted;  
(ii) to disclose particulars of properties or assets other  
than properties and assets specified by the applicant  
under serial number 3 A of the original application;  
(iii) you are restrained from dealing with or disposing of  
secured assets or such other assets and properties  
disclosed under serial number 3A of the original  
application, pending hearing and disposal of the  
application for attachment of properties;  
(iv) you shall not transfer by way of sale, lease or  
otherwise, except in the ordinary course of his business  
any of the assets over which security interest is created  
and/ or other assets and properties specified or disclosed  
under serial number 3A of the original application without  
the prior approval of the Tribunal;  
(v) you shall be liable to account for the sale proceeds  
realised by sale of secured assets or other assets and  
properties in the ordinary course of business and deposit  
such sale proceeds in the account maintained with the  
bank or financial institutions holding security interest  
over such assets.  
You are also directed to file the written statement with  
a copy thereof furnished to the applicant and to appear  
before Registrar on 29.10.2025 at 10:30 A.M. failing which  
the application shall be heard and decided in your  
absence  
Given under my hand and the seal of this Tribunal on this  
date : 13.08.2025  
**Signature of the Officer Authorised to issue  
summons**

Note: Strike out whichever is not applicable

KASHMIR OBSERVER®

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KO VIEW

Saving Dal lake

Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha’s words this week about Dal Lake becoming cleaner due to conservation efforts over the last five years offer a glimmer of hope. More than a third of the water body has reportedly been rejuvenated, with its open expanse increased to over 20 square kilometres for the first time, the LG said. The administration’s decision to join hands with citizens as part of Sewa Parv is welcome. Dal Lake, after all, is not just a tourist postcard, it is the very soul of Kashmir, and an ecological, cultural, and economic lifeline.

But despite some improvement in the lake’s condition, there is a long way to go before even a modicum of its pristine glory is restored. The lake is choked by sewage, plastic, and unchecked human activity, and as a result continues to gasp for survival. As the Jammu and Kashmir Pollution Control Committee (PCC) has noted in a report, untreated waste from some 910 houseboats still flows directly into its waters. This is not an aberration, it is the norm. Despite decades of cleanup projects, cosmetic dredging, and expensive lily-clearing operations, the fundamentals have not changed.

The problem is structural. Around 50,000 people continue to live within the lake’s catchment, including hundreds of families on floating hamlets and some 750 houseboats moored on its waters. Encroachments and unregulated urbanisation have eaten away at Dal’s green belt, while sewage from growing colonies and agricultural effluents steadily pour into the lake. Tourism, vital to Kashmir’s economy, has added its own share of pressure, with hotels, restaurants, and other infrastructure mushrooming along the 15.5-kilometre Boulevard.

It is not that governments, both state and central, have ignored Dal. Plans to rehabilitate residents date back to 1987. Conservation and resettlement strategies have been run in parallel for three decades. Yet, while conservation has limped along, rehabilitation has barely moved. Each government has preferred to announce a fresh plan, clean a patch of lilies, or commission another study. The result is the same: Dal survives, but only just.

This is where the current government must show greater resolve. The recent cleanliness drive should not remain a symbolic gesture or a seasonal exercise tied to events. What the lake needs is a sustained, transparent, and accountable effort to tackle the sources of pollution. Untreated sewage must be stopped. Rehabilitation of lake dwellers must be addressed humanely but firmly, without endless deferment. Strict land-use regulation, community participation, and scientific monitoring should form the backbone of the strategy.

Dal Lake has waited too long for a decisive change. If the current momentum can be turned into long-term action, the Lieutenant Governor’s personal efforts for the lake’s rejuvenation will not be just an optimistic headline but a lived reality. Saving Dal is not an option, it is an obligation.

CASH COURSE

Read This Before You Buy Anything

The Cost of Fast Ripening

Short-term profits are  
spoilng Kashmiri apples and  
their future markets.

Irshad Mushtaq

Kashmiri apples are famous for their flavour, color, and crunch. But many of them reach markets artificially ripened with chemicals banned in the United States and China. Calcium carbide, the culprit, accelerates ripening and promises quick profits. Early harvests rush to market, but the cost comes in spoiled fruit, lost reputation, and health risks.

Growers face economic pressures, and awareness of the dangers is low. Enforcement of existing regulations is weak. Early harvesting, driven by roadblocks and market timelines, forces artificial ripening. When apples arrive damaged, the blame often falls on transport, masking the deeper problem: fruit pulled from trees too soon. Naturally ripened apples last longer, taste better, and withstand the journey.

Globally, regions like Bulgaria and Italy thrive with careful post-harvest practices and patient timing. Kashmir could compete at that level. Its apples carry a unique identity, yet chemical shortcuts erode that edge. Each artificially ripened apple chips away at market trust, consumer health, and the industry’s long-term future.

The path forward is clear. Enforcement must tighten, awareness must grow, and best practices, from harvesting to storage, must guide every orchard. Investment in research for safe alternatives can strengthen quality and reputation.

Kashmiri apples deserve time, care, and respect. Choosing natural ripening isn’t just about flavour. It is about health, sustainability, and reclaiming a global place for one of the region’s most cherished treasures.

The author is a Srinagar-based reputed financial advisor.



Kashmir’s Golden Crop  
Faces a Climate Threat

From wedding platters to crimson fields, saffron shapes life and identity in Kashmir.  
Climate change now threatens the spice, and the people who depend on it

Dr. Waseem Ahmad

At a recent wedding in Pampore, a waiter ladled golden saffron gravy over rice and crimson meat. Guests picked up the food with practiced ease, their fingers stained the bright yellow of tradition and celebration.

For a few hours, saffron, the spice of prosperity, purity, and joy, ruled the table. Outside the marquee, however, in the very soil that produces this treasure, saffron is slipping through our fingers.

Kashmir has long been India’s saffron paradise, second only to Iran and Afghanistan on the world stage.

Pampore, known as the golden city of saffron, has nurtured the delicate crocus sativus flower for centuries.

Each autumn, fields should erupt in a sea of purple petals, and from each flower, three fragile red stigmas are plucked by hand. This ritual is painstaking and sacred.

For generations, the harvest has been a rhythm tied to land, climate, and human care.

But today, that rhythm is faltering. Saffron requires something Kashmir can no longer reliably offer: predictability.

The crocus needs a long, cold winter, at least 1,100 hours below freezing, and a dry spring, besides well-timed August rains.

But now, winters have grown warmer. Springs bring unexpected storms, and May hail has become a growing threat. Monsoons sometimes fail to arrive.

What was once a dependable cycle has become a gamble.

Mohammed Yousuf, a saffron farmer in Pampore, has witnessed this climate change firsthand. His cupboard holds the remnants of last year’s harvest: red threads more precious than gold by weight.

He once gathered eight kilos in a season. Now, one kilo feels like a triumph.

Yousuf separates the finest threads with a sieve, laying them on imitation leather sheets instead of the traditional white linens. It is a silent concession to labour, time, and wear.

The saffron grower’s story is echoed across the valley, where generations watch their traditions wilt under a sun that shines too hot, for too long.

This unfolding saffron crisis is deeply cultural,

The threat to saffron is also a warning about what happens when heritage meets climate instability. Will future generations scoop turmeric-tinted substitutes onto their wedding plates, unaware of what has been lost? Will Yousuf’s grandchildren inherit land too warm to grow the crop their ancestors tended for centuries?

emotional, and spiritual setback.

In Kashmiri weddings, saffron is an invocation of joy. Its colour seeps into every dish, its scent into every memory, and the yellow-tinted fingers left behind marks of belonging.

Losing saffron would mean losing a piece of collective identity, in Kashmir and beyond.

Around five percent of Kashmir’s workforce is engaged in saffron cultivation. For many families, it is the primary source of income in a region already burdened by limited employment opportunities.

Declining harvests drive prices higher while shrinking livelihoods, creating a bitter irony: saffron grows more symbolic in celebrations even as it disappears from the fields.

Attempts to safeguard the spice are underway. Irrigation projects, scientific interventions, and support from institutions like the Sher-e-Kashmir University of Agricultural Sciences & Technology show promise.

Production per hectare has begun to inch upward. But numbers alone fail to capture the lived reality. Farmers like Yousuf are cautious about

modern methods. For them, success is tied to centuries of experience and a belief that only Allah determines the outcome of a crop. Their hesitation is a worldview formed by generations of living in harmony with nature, a harmony now disrupted.

Climate-resilient approaches offer hope. Controlled-environment agriculture, such as greenhouses that mimic freezing temperatures, can stabilize yields. Research into hardier saffron strains must accelerate. Insurance schemes and incentives for sustainable practices can provide security, while access to markets that value quality over quantity can make saffron cultivation economically viable again.

Critical to any plan is dialogue with the farmers who have nurtured the land for generations. Science and policy matter, but so do the hands that pluck each crimson stigma with devotion.

The threat to saffron is also a warning about what happens when heritage meets climate instability. Will future generations scoop turmeric-tinted substitutes onto their wedding plates, unaware of what has been lost? Will Yousuf’s grandchildren inherit land too warm to grow the crop their ancestors tended for centuries?

In every failed bloom, in every field left barren, the story of Kashmir itself is written.

At that wedding in Pampore, guests eventually left with small plastic bags of leftover saffron rice and meat, packed carefully to be eaten later. The ritual felt deeply human but precarious, like a candle flickering just before the wind snuffs it out.

Saffron has always carried luck and blessing in this part of the world. Perhaps it is time for us to return the favour, by treating it as a legacy.

A legacy that, if allowed to vanish, would leave more than just our plates a little less golden.

Preserving saffron is protecting centuries of culture, family livelihoods, and the very identity of a people. It is a call to act before the fields of Pampore are remembered only in stories, and the canary-yellow fingertips of celebration fade into memory.

The author is an agricultural analyst writing on farming, climate, and culture. He can be reached at waseembhatpni@yahoo.com.

Letter to Editor

Disasters Compound Kashmir’s Economic Woes in 2025

The year 2025 has tested Jammu and Kashmir in ways few could have imagined. A region already dependent on tourism and horticulture now faces a string of shocks that have shaken livelihoods and threatened economic stability. From violent attacks to floods, each disaster has piled onto the last, leaving communities struggling to recover. But, amid the chaos, people continue to hold on to hope: after every night comes a dawn.

Tourism, the backbone of the valley’s economy, suffered first. The April attack in Pahalgam brought a sudden halt to the spring season. Hotels, guesthouses, shikaras, taxis, and small traders faced empty bookings and unpaid loans. Families who depended on daily earnings found themselves without work, and businesses that had expanded in anticipation of

the season now faced mounting debts. The collapse was both economic and deeply personal, a loss of dignity for thousands of breadwinners.

Before recovery could even begin, August brought devastating floods to Jammu and Kashmir. Many compared the scale to the infamous 2014 floods, but this disaster spread wider and hit harder. Villages were submerged, roads and bridges destroyed, and access to essential supplies cut off. Shops lost stock, farmers lost crops, and rebuilding homes became another financial burden. Schools, hospitals, and government offices were left waterlogged, setting back development by years.

September repeated the nightmare, this time engulfing Kashmir itself. Late-season crops, especially apples, suffered heavy losses. Unusually moist and cloudy weather caused

premature fruit drop, while flood-damaged roads delayed transport, reducing both freshness and market value. For families who depend on horticulture, the losses were devastating. Reduced income will ripple through towns, affecting traders, transporters, and everyday spending.

The interconnectedness of these sectors makes the situation more severe. When tourism collapses, service workers cannot repay loans. When floods hit, farmers lose both crops and infrastructure. And when horticulture fails, rural incomes drop, shrinking demand across the region.

The economic toll is human lives disrupted: the taxi driver with a loaned vehicle, the apple grower watching the harvest rot, and the shopkeeper surrounded by mud.

These crises highlight the urgent need for strong policy support. Crop

insurance schemes must deliver in times of need, highways must withstand climate shocks, and tourism requires long-term confidence-building measures. Economic diversification into manufacturing, IT, and small industries could provide sustainable livelihoods and reduce reliance on seasonal sectors.

Despite the losses, the people of Jammu and Kashmir continue to endure. Communities rebuild together, families support one another, and hope persists. Orchards will bloom again, tourists will return, and flood-damaged roads will reopen. After every fall, the valley rises once more.

Sincerely,

Navaid Runyal  
Ramban

# A Scientist's Fight Against Disasters in Kashmir

Dr. Kainat Aziz uses science, fieldwork, and satellites to turn natural warnings into actionable alerts.

Aashiq Hussain Andrabi

The Himalayas are warming almost twice as fast as the rest of the planet, and Kashmir is already feeling the heat.

Cloudbursts flood villages in minutes, landslides cut highways overnight, and glaciers are melting faster than scientists can measure.

At the centre of this unfolding story is Dr. Kainat Aziz, a Postdoctoral Fellow at the Centre for Sustainable Water Research, IIT Guwahati, who has turned these alarming signals into her life's work.

Raised in Sopore, Kainat knows these hazards as childhood memories: winter trips to Jammu halted by rockfalls, and supplies running thin when a single slide sealed the highway.

Now she uses satellites, sensors, and long days in the field to track the fragile balance of glaciers, rivers, and mountain slopes. Her research powers early warning systems and disaster plans that could mean the difference between an evacuation and a tragedy.

In this interview with Kashmir Observer, Kainat breaks down the science in plain words, explains why Kashmir's mountains are warming so fast, and shares what must change, now, to keep families safe.

**Kainat, growing up in Sopore, did you ever picture yourself trekking glaciers and decoding Himalayan hazards?**

Not at all. As a kid, I just knew the mountains made life tricky. Every winter my family would travel to Jammu like many Kashmiri families. We'd get stuck for hours on the highway whenever a landslide blocked the road. Supplies would run short.

I didn't call it a "hazard" back then, but I could feel how one landslide could ripple through entire communities.

Only later did I realise these events connect to climate, geology, and where people live. That curiosity slowly pulled me toward glaciers, landslides, and the science behind them.

**This summer everyone's talking about cloudbursts and heat waves. Why do they feel more intense now?**

They're not just "feeling" stronger, they really are. Climate change is the driver. Greenhouse gases trap heat, and mountains like ours warm almost twice as fast as the global average, a process we call elevation-dependent warming.

Warmer air can hold more moisture, so when it rains, it pours.

Add Kashmir's steep valleys and you've got a recipe for sudden, violent downpours, called cloudbursts.



**For people who think research is far from daily life, how does your work actually touch a Kashmiri's everyday world?**

Landslides and glaciers decide everything from the water in your tap to whether your road is open tomorrow. By studying snow-melt patterns and unstable slopes, we can improve early-warning systems, plan safer roads, and manage water supplies.

It's science, but it's also about keeping families safe and livelihoods secure.

**People often call the Himalayas "young and fragile." You've seen that up close. What makes them so delicate?**

The mountains are literally still growing. The Indian and Eurasian plates keep colliding, leaving steep, cracked slopes that crumble easily.

During my PhD fieldwork in Ramban, I saw tiny, repeated slides slowly eat away an entire hillside near Gool town. Add warmer temperatures and heavier rains, and the slopes get saturated and collapse faster.

You meet people living right under dan-

gerous slopes. What do they tell you?

Many don't even realise how risky their surroundings are. Some think our surveys mean government aid is coming. That misunderstanding is heartbreaking.

They've lost fields, homes, irrigation canals, yet they adapt silently, waiting for the next disaster.

Those stories remind me that science must include people's fears and coping methods, not just numbers on a map.

**Cloudbursts and glacial lake floods both strike suddenly. Are they connected? And are we ready for either?**

They're different but linked. A heavy cloudburst can dump so much rain that a glacial lake overflows or its ice dam fails.

In J&K, where glaciers are already melting, the risk is high. Some monitoring exists, like remote sensors and river gauges, but coverage is patchy and warnings don't always reach the villages that need them most.

**Whenever disaster hits, people blame**

**the government. Where do you see the biggest gaps?**

Policies and plans exist on paper, but implementation lags. Hazard maps and early-warning protocols often stay in files instead of shaping roads or construction. Funding is thin, coordination weak, and many communities simply don't know the risks.

Without awareness and trust, even good policies fail.

**Imagine you have five minutes with Kashmir's policymakers tomorrow. Your top three urgent fixes?**

First, enforce risk-informed planning: use hazard maps and early warnings in every road or housing project. Second, invest in community awareness: school lessons, training, local language campaigns, especially for women and the elderly. Third, expand real-time monitoring: more weather stations, glacial lake sensors, and quick, clear alerts with district-specific evacuation plans.

**You've carved a path in a field still dominated by men. What was that like?**

Tough, but rewarding. Some collaborators doubted I could handle long treks or harsh weather. At times it felt lonely. But every climb and dataset collected in freezing wind reminded me why I started.

My parents backed me completely, and mentors kept me going.

I believe, Kashmiri women need to seek mentors, and team up with other women. We need to support each other, not compete. Small women-led research groups can change the game.

**Looking 10-15 years ahead, what change do you hope your research brings?**

I want mountain communities, who contribute least to climate change but suffer the most, to have real protection.

My dream project is an all-women research team building disaster-risk frameworks that combine science, policy, and local wisdom so these communities are not left alone.

**Kashmir is seeing a boom in roads, construction, and tourism. How does that play into natural hazards?**

Big time. Road cutting weakens slopes, blocked drains trigger flash floods, and removing forest cover speeds erosion. Building near rivers narrows their flow and magnifies flood impact.

Development without careful planning is like pulling threads from a fragile fabric. It all unravels faster.

With satellites and fancy weather tech, how close are we to reliable early warnings?

The tools are improving fast: high-resolution satellite images, automated rain gauges, glacier-lake sensors. We can spot warning signs earlier than ever.

But technology is only half the job. We need faster data sharing, wider coverage, and a system that gets clear alerts to every village in real time. Only then can these tools truly save lives.

**After all these treks and surveys, what keeps you going?**

The mountains themselves. Standing on a glacier or watching a river carve through rock reminds you how alive and powerful nature is. It teaches patience, humility, and, above all, the need to listen, because the mountains are always speaking.

— The interviewer is a senior scribe from Pulwama.

## Waiting for Care

Nearly eight million people face stark choices as AIIMS Awantipora struggles to staff its wards.

Faizaan Bashir

I have spent months carrying my father from one hospital to another across Kashmir. Each trip felt like steering an obstacle course.

Srinagar's winter roads vanish under sudden snow, spring rains turn highways into rivers of mud, and in summer, traffic stretches for miles.

My father grew weaker with every journey. Breathing became a struggle, pain a constant companion.

At SKIMS, we hoped for answers. Instead, we found crowded corridors, doctors rushing from ward to ward, and a system stretched beyond endurance.

Then, in September 2025, a sliver of hope appeared.

Chief Minister Omar Abdullah, with Health Minister Sakina Itoo, visited AIIMS Awantipora. Outpatient services were promised this year, inpatient care by next.

South Kashmir, long underserved, felt the promise of advanced healthcare: doctors and specialists who could treat ailments beyond the reach of local clinics.

The faculty situation highlights the challenge ahead.

AIIMS Vijaypur in Jammu, which was conceived around the same time as Awantipora, is already functional and staffed with a robust team of doctors across all departments.

Awantipora, while rising rapidly, currently lists 94 faculty positions, all still unfilled since the hospital has yet to become operational.

Filling these positions would ensure that Awantipora functions at full capacity and meets the needs of families across the region.

Kashmir is home to nearly eight million people. Fewer doctors mean overcrowded OPDs, overworked specialists,



Until its faculty is in place, Awantipora risks becoming another overstretched facility, a hospital with the promise and infrastructure to help, but without the human resources to do so effectively.

and care that cannot wait.

In winter, Srinagar residents face snow-laden roads that isolate them from Awantipora. Crossing the state to reach other hospitals is impossible for families scraping together essentials, let alone affording private care in Delhi or Mumbai. Affluent Kashmiris travel, the poor wait.

I have watched my father slump in hospital chairs, his eyes reflecting the strain of travel and waiting. Doctors

move swiftly, their exhaustion mirrored in every gesture.

Until its faculty is in place, Awantipora risks becoming another overstretched facility, a hospital with the promise and infrastructure to help, but without the human resources to do so effectively.

Filling those 94 posts could transform the hospital from a promise into a sanctuary. It could save lives, prevent doctors' burnout, and give families relief after years of struggle.

AIIMS Awantipora's walls are rising, its labs and wards taking shape. What remains uncertain is whether its heart, including its doctors, specialists, and faculty, will arrive on time.

I watch my father and thousands like him waiting for care. Each delay, empty slot, and snowbound road reminds me that building a hospital is only the first step. The real challenge lies in giving it the people who can make it work.

Until then, hope hangs by a fragile thread above our lives.

—The author holds a Masters in History and can be reached at peerfaizanbashir@gmail.com

## The Price of Tradition

As weddings grow costlier, the gap between religious teachings and reality widens

Raqif Makhdoomi

I recently watched a groom's family meticulously arranging dry fruit containers, each more ornate than the last.

The trays gleamed, the prices soared, and I couldn't help but wonder: who really benefits from this?

Once the nuts are eaten, the boxes sit unused, discarded, a symbol of the growing pressure on families.

Weddings have become competitions in wealth and display, and the simple joy of marriage is disappearing.

It is not just about dry fruits or sweets.

The feasts have grown overwhelming, plates piled with dishes, many of them wasted while poor wait outside, hungry and turned away.

I remember thinking, why not serve them a simple dish or some rice and let them go home satisfied?

Our faith teaches compassion. The Prophet, peace be upon him, said, "Never yell at anyone who comes to you to ask for anything. Either help them or turn them away peacefully." He never endorsed turning away the needy with anger.

In Islam, the burden of wedding expenses has never been placed on the bride's family. The only feast required is the Walima, arranged by the groom.

There is no concept of the bride's family funding elaborate gatherings, or of the so-called special groom feast that can involve fifty to a hundred guests.

Historical records show the Prophet, peace be upon him, married more than once, but no mention exists of extravagant bride-side ceremonies. Innovations like these have made marriage an impossible financial burden for the poor, leaving many women unmarried long past their prime.

Hormones, puberty, and desire are natural. Our bodies create them. Islam acknowledges this and provides Nikkah as a lawful



In a time when adultery is increasingly common, restricting Nikkah to those who can afford lavish feasts is a tragedy that Kashmir cannot ignore

outlet. The problem arises when marriage becomes unaffordable.

The data tell a stark story: India's national average of unmarried women rose to 19.9 percent in 2021, up from 13.5 percent in 2011. Men fare worse, with 27.1 percent remaining unmarried.

In Kashmir, financial constraints, societal expectations, career priorities, and declining employment opportunities all delay marriages, pushing youth toward risky alternatives.

The solution is simple. We must return to the teachings of Islam. Nikkah was meant to be accessible, not a showcase of wealth. Marriage should protect youth, not deter them.

In a time when adultery is increasingly common, restricting Nikkah to those who can afford lavish feasts is a tragedy that Kashmir cannot ignore.

— The author is a law student and human rights activist.

# 'Mental Distress Following Heart Attack Can Increase Risk Of Another Cardiac Event'

Press Trust Of India

Persistent psychological distress following a heart attack event and lasting up to 12 months could increase the risk of another cardiac event by nearly 1.3 times, according to a study.

Recognising and treating psychological distress with strategies such as cognitive behavioural therapy, antidepressants and stress reduction techniques could help improve mental

health, emotional well-being and quality of life for survivors, researchers said.

The team from the American Heart Association said about 33-50 per cent of heart attack survivors are estimated to suffer psychological symptoms, including depression, anxiety or post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD), all of which can affect physical recovery and long-term health.

The researchers reviewed previously published research on myocardial infarction, acute coronary syndrome, depression, anxiety, stress

and PTSD, among others.

"After a mean of 4.7 years of follow-up, moderate psychological distress was associated with a 28 per cent increased risk of future (myocardial infarction) and high (or) very high distress was associated with a 60 per cent increased risk compared with low distress," the authors wrote in the review published in the journal Circulation.

Author and chair of the group writing the article, Glenn N Levine, said, "Psychological distress after a heart attack is quite common

but often goes unrecognised." "We often focus on the physical aspects of heart disease, yet psychological health is linked to physical health, so when a major cardiac event like a heart attack occurs, emotional recovery is just as important," Levine, a professor of medicine at Baylor College of Medicine, USA, said.

The researchers explained that damage to heart muscle due to a heart attack can trigger inflammation, causing hormonal shifts and chemical changes in the brain that may contribute towards symptoms of depression, anxiety or PTSD.

Acute psychological stress can narrow the heart's arteries (coronary vasoconstriction), reduce blood flow to the heart (ischaemia) and cause irregular heart rhythms (arrhythmia), even in people without previous heart issues, the team said.

They added that factors through which psychological distress can increase risk of a recurrence of cardiac attack include lesser physical activity, smoking and alcohol, poor diet and sleep, inadequate social support and a lower medication adherence.

## Study Finds El Nino linked with Making Daily Extreme Rainfall More Likely In India's Wetter Regions

Press Trust Of India

Climate driver 'El Nino', known to suppress monsoon, could however be contributing to a sharp increase in chances of extreme rainfall in a day in India's wetter regions, according to a new study.

El Nino is the warm phase of the larger 'El Nino-Southern Oscillation' (ENSO) cycle, during which warmer waters of the Pacific Ocean trigger unusual patterns of rising and sinking air, thereby suppressing seasonal rainfall across the Indian subcontinent on a large-scale.

ENSO is known to alternate between El Nino, its cool counterpart 'La Nina' and a neutral phase -- duration of one cycle can be between two and seven years.

Researchers from City College of New York and Columbia University in the US said that while light and moderate rain becomes less common during an El Nino, chances of "very heavy downpours" rise steeply in India's wetter regions -- by more than 50 per cent in some regions, potentially creating hazardous conditions.

The findings, published in the journal Science, suggest that processes which contribute to intensifying daily rainfall could be important in driving more frequent changes in rainfall patterns in the tropics under climate change.

As a result, India's typically drier regions might see fewer



rainy days and weaker showers, further compounding their dryness, researchers from City College of New York and Columbia University in the US added.

However, in the country's wetter areas -- which tend to see lesser rainfall during an El Nino -- data from 1901-2020 suggests that storms tend to be "markedly more intense", they added.

The results reveal the contrasting effects of El Nino on monsoons across India depending on the region -- yet influence of ENSO and physical processes driving the effects remain largely unexplored, the researchers said.

"Although El Niño events in the equatorial Pacific are known to suppress total summer rainfall throughout India, we show using observational data spanning 1901

to 2020 that, counterintuitively, they simultaneously intensify extreme daily rainfall," the authors wrote.

"For accumulations exceeding 250 millimetres (of rainfall), for example, statistically significant increases in likelihoods are 43 per cent for the whole domain and 59 per cent for the Central Monsoon Zone," they said.

They added, "Extreme rainfall during the Indian summer monsoon can be destructive and deadly to the world's third-largest economy and the most populous country."

The authors added that the impact of El Nino on weather extremes has remained steady over time, even as it appears to have weakened on the country's average rainfall in recent decades.

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Notice Inviting Tender

e-NIT No.: - ED-III /23 of 2025-26

Dated: - 22-09-2025

For and on behalf of the Lt. Governor of UT of Jammu and Kashmir, e-Tenders, (In Two Cover System) are hereby invited from reputed companies Registered with ROC of INDIA, Original Manufacturers or relevant class A registered electrical contractors/suppliers enlisted with CPWD/MES/Railways/DGS&D and Inspection Agency of JK PDD, for “Renovation and Modernization of Sub-Stations- 400 kVA at Islamia College, 400 kVA at Khanwari & 400 kVA at Syed Ali Akbar (Turnkey Basis)” as details below:

| Name of the work.                                                                                                                          | Estimated Cost (Lacs) | EMD                                  | Cost of Tender Document | Completion Period | Status of funds                                           |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------|--------------------------------------|-------------------------|-------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------|
| Renovation and Modernization of Sub-Stations- 400 kVA at Islamia College, 400 kVA at Khanwari & 400 kVA at Syed Ali Akbar (Turnkey Basis). | 7.80                  | 2% of estimated Cost<br>Rs. 15600.00 | Rs. 500/-               | 20 days           | Under Capex Budget 2025-26<br>Work Code - PDDSS2526100101 |

1. Bidders are advised to study the Bidding Document carefully. Submission of e-Bid against this SBD shall be deemed to have been done after careful study and examination of the procedures, terms and conditions of the Standard Bidding Document with full understanding of its implications by the bidder.

2. The tender document is available on website <http://jktenders.gov.in>. Interested bidders may view, download the e-Bid document, seek clarification and submit their e-Bid online up to the date and time mentioned in the table below:

|                                                                                                                                           | The standard Bidding Document can be downloaded over <a href="http://jktenders.gov.in">http://jktenders.gov.in</a> from |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| A Date & Time of downloading of Standard Bidding Document/Sale of Bid Document (Start)                                                    | 22-09-2025; 04:00 PM                                                                                                    |
| B Sale of Bid Document (End)                                                                                                              | 10-10-2025; 02:00 PM                                                                                                    |
| C Clarification start date                                                                                                                | 26-09-2025; 10:00 AM                                                                                                    |
| D Clarification End date                                                                                                                  | 07-10-2025; 02:00 PM                                                                                                    |
| E e-Bid submission (start) date and time (Submission of e-tender fee, and other supporting documents in PDF/XLS format)                   | 26-09-2025; 10:00 AM                                                                                                    |
| F e-Bid submission (End) date and time Submission of e-tender fee, and other supporting documents in PDF/XLS format)                      | 10-10-2025; 04:00 PM                                                                                                    |
| G Hard copy of tender document Submission end date (along-with Original Copy of e-tender fee, Instruments and other supporting documents) | Required for L1 only & to be submitted on or one day after opening of financial e-bid.                                  |
| H Online commercial and technical e-bid opening date and time                                                                             | 11-10-2025; 02:00 PM                                                                                                    |
| I Online financial e-bid opening date & time (only of the technically qualified bidders)                                                  | Will be communicated to the technically qualified bidders                                                               |
| J Venue of opening of technical & financial e-bids                                                                                        | Office of Executive Engineer ED-III, Sgr.                                                                               |
| K Cost of e-bid document: (Copy of treasury challan/receipt to be up-loaded with e-tender)                                                | Rs. 500.00/- (Rupees Five Hundred only)                                                                                 |

No.: - ED-III/TS/5896-905  
Date: - 22-09-2025

DIPK-NB-2014/25      dated: 22-09-2025

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H-1B Clarity Eases Worry, India Inc To Boost US Hiring



Press Trust Of India

NEW DELHI- Nasscom on Monday said the US clarification that the H-1B visa fee hike will not affect current visa holders and will apply as a one-time fee only to fresh petitions has helped address the immediate ambiguity surrounding eligibility and timelines.

It alleviates concerns about business continuity and uncertainty for H-1B holders who were outside the US.

Further, Indian and India-centric companies operating in the US have significantly reduced their dependencies on H-1B visas and are increasing local hiring, it said, adding that given this, "we anticipate only a marginal impact for the sector".

"Moreover, with the fee being applicable from 2026 onward, it gives companies time to further step up skilling programs in the US and enhance local hiring," the apex industry body said.

The industry is spending over USD 1 billion on local upskilling and hiring in the US, and the number of local hires has increased tremendously.

"The clarification makes clear that the measure will not affect current visa holders and will apply as a one-time fee

only to fresh petitions. This has helped address the immediate ambiguity surrounding eligibility & timelines," it said.

Over the years, Indian and India-centric companies operating in the US have significantly reduced their dependencies on H-1B visas and steadily increased their local hiring.

According to available data, the number of H-1B visas issued to leading Indian and India-centric companies has decreased from 14,792 in 2015, to 10,162 in 2024.

H-1B workers for the top 10 Indian and India-centric companies are less than 1 per cent of their entire employee base. "Given this trajectory, we anticipate only a marginal impact for the sector," it said.

H-1B is high-skilled worker mobility and a non-immigrant visa that bridges the critical skills gap in the US. Salaries are at par with local hires.

According to Nasscom, H-1B workers are a mere decimal point of the overall US workforce.

"Nasscom has consistently advocated for predictable and stable skilled talent mobility frameworks, which are critical for sustaining national competitiveness and have long fuelled US innovation and economic growth.

USD 100,000 Fee To Apply For New H-1B Petitions After Sep 21: USCIS

Press Trust Of India

NEW YORK/WASHINGTON- All new H-1B visa petitions submitted after September 21, including those for the FY2026 lottery, will require payment of the USD 100,000 fee, as announced by President Donald Trump in a recent proclamation, the US government has said.

The US Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS) in a 'H-1B FAQ' document, released on Sunday, said that the September 19 proclamation took an "important, initial, and incremental step" to reform the H-1B visa programme to curb abuses and protect American workers.

The proclamation "requires a \$100,000 payment to accompany any new H-1B visa petitions submitted after 12:01 am eastern daylight time on September 21, 2025," the FAQ document said.

This includes applications for the 2026 lottery and any other new H-1B filings beyond that date, it added.

USCIS had earlier said in a statement on Saturday that the fee would apply only to new, prospective petitions that had not yet been filed, but had not specified the exact date and time when the rule would take effect.

A White House official had told PTI that the \$100,000 fee



will "first apply in the next upcoming lottery cycle."

The USD 100,000 fee is a one-time fee on submission of a new H-1B petition.

USCIS further clarified that the fee does not apply to any petitions filed before the 12:01 am deadline on Sept 21, previously issued H-1B visas, renewal petitions, and H-1B holders re-entering the US.

The proclamation also authorises the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) and the Department of State (DOS) to coordinate implementation steps, the FAQ document said.

Further planned reforms under the proclamation include, a proposed rulemaking by the Department of Labour to revise and raise the prevailing wage levels in order to upskill the H-1B programme and ensure that it is used to hire "only the best of the best" temporary foreign workers.

The planned reforms also include a DHS rulemaking to prioritise high-skilled, high-paid workers in the H-1B lottery system.

Traders Welcome GST Rate Cut, Raise Concerns Over Refunds

Press Trust Of India

NEW DELHI- Traders across Delhi on Monday termed the new GST rates a festive relief for consumers, even as some associations flagged concerns over refunds and implementation.

The GST Council, comprising the Centre and states, decided to reduce tax rates on about 375 goods and services, from September 22 -- the first day of Navaratri.

GST rate on several essential goods and services has been brought down to 5 per cent or even zero. Life-saving drugs are now tax-free, while other medicines will attract just 5 per cent. For farmers, too, GST has been reduced to 5 per cent or nil. Educational materials that earlier carried 12 per cent GST have been exempted.

Amit Gupta, general secretary of the New Delhi Traders' Association (NDTA), said the move has brought relief to both traders and consumers.

"Items like dishwashers that were once a luxury for many middle-class consumers have now become affordable. We are extremely happy. We are also contacting the authorities and, once a date is set, we will start a workshop for our traders in association with the officials," he said.

Sanjiv Mehra, president of Khan Market Traders Association, said it was a positive step, but pointed to "a lot of implementation-based queries" that still need clarity. "Once our queries are addressed, we will definitely



OUR MLA PARVESH VERMA CAME BY TODAY TO EDUCATE TRADERS REGARDING THE NEW RULES. We have also circulated the details in the form of PDFs for their reference,"

educate our traders."

Similarly, Suresh Ratan, president of Bengali Market Traders' Association, said the members were "thrilled" with the changes and had already held awareness meetings.

"Our MLA Parvesh Verma came by today to educate traders regarding the new rules. We have also circulated the details in the form of PDFs for their reference," Ratan said.

The Federation of Sadar Bazar Trades Association, in a statement, termed the tax restructuring a step that would boost trade and increase the purchasing power of the common man. However, its president, Rakesh Kumar Yadav, flagged concerns about the refund mechanism.

"If you have paid 18 per cent GST earlier and the rate has now been reduced to 5 per cent, you will not receive a 13

per cent refund, but instead, the amount will be adjusted. This is a significant issue for our traders as it may affect our capital," he said, demanding a simpler and more transparent refund process.

During an interaction with traders at Totaram Market in Tri Nagar, Delhi Chief Minister Rekha Gupta said, "Diwali has arrived early for traders."

She also termed the tax reform a "gift" from Prime Minister Narendra Modi.

Gupta urged people to buy swadeshi goods to strengthen the country's economy.

Delhi Development Minister Kapil Mishra also visited Bhajanpura Market as part of his "Dhanyawad Yatra" along with local MLA Ajai Mahavar.

"We will spread the message of swadeshi to every home and make the nation self-reliant," he said.

Housing Sales In Top 9 Cities Fall 4% YoY In Q3: PropEquity

Observer News Service

NEW DELHI: Housing sales in India's top nine cities fell by 4% and consecutive declined for the 10th quarter, in Q3 (July-September) 2025, settling just above the 1 lakh-unit mark at 1,00,370 units, according to a report by NSE-listed real estate data analytics firm PropEquity. New launches, however, remained flat, coming in below the 1 lakh mark at 92,229 units declining by 10% on Q-o-Q basis.

The top 9 cities are Bengaluru, Chennai, Hyderabad, Mumbai, Navi Mumbai, Pune, Thane, Kolkata and Delhi-NCR. The Y-o-Y decline in sales across the top 9 cities during Q3 2025 was primarily led by the Maharashtra region - including Mumbai, Navi Mumbai, Thane, and Pune - which experienced a contraction ranging from 6% to 28%.

Bengaluru, Chennai and Kolkata, however, witnessed a rise of 21%, 16% and 25% respectively in Q3 2025. Delhi-NCR and Hyderabad, too, saw 4% YoY each rise in sales in Q3 2025.

On a Q-o-Q basis, sales in top 9 cities fell marginally by 1%



with only Delhi-NCR (24%) and Thane (11%) seeing a drop. The other 7 cities witnessed a rise.

Samir Jasuja, Founder and CEO, PropEquity said, "The reason why we feel that the housing market remains healthy even though the new launches are coming down consecutively is because the sales continue to be higher than the new launches. We anticipate that 2025 will mirror 2024 with approximately 4 lakh unit launches and approximately 4.5 lakh sales, which is marginally lower than the 2024 numbers."

On the new housing supply front, the report said that new launches in India's top 9 cities remained flat YoY, remaining below the 1 lakh unit mark, at 92,229 units in Q3 2025. Jasuja noted, "While the current quarter has seen subdued activity, we anticipate a rebound in the upcoming quarter due to the festive season, which is expected to drive stronger demand, leading to improved launch momentum and a higher absorption level."

There is a YoY rise in new launches in Chennai, Navi Mumbai, Pune, and Kolkata, and there is a decline in Bengaluru, Hyderabad, Mumbai, Thane, and Delhi-NCR.

However, new supply fell 10% Q-o-Q with a 31% decline in Delhi-NCR, followed by 15% in Pune and 29% in Chennai.

However Hyderabad, Kolkata and Navi Mumbai saw a rise of 14%, 24% and 6%.

(Disclaimer: The press release was sent by PropEquity. Kashmir Observer takes no editorial responsibility for the same).

J&K Bank Organizes Special 'Yuva Udyami Day' In Jammu



Observer News Service

JAMMU- Marking the auspicious beginning of Navratra, J&K Bank Monday organized "Yuva Udyami Day - Weekly Login Day" at its Zonal Office, Rail Head Complex, Jammu, in collaboration with the Department of Employment, Government of J&K. The event was chaired by the Bank's Chief General Manager, Sunit Kumar, and attended by senior Bank officials and dignitaries from the Department.

Speaking on the occasion, CGM Sunit Kumar highlighted the Bank's commitment to empowering youth through entrepreneurship. He said, "Just as Navratra symbolizes new energy and fresh beginnings, the sanctioning of loans to young entre-

preneurs today marks the start of many new journeys of growth and self-reliance." He further emphasized the Bank's close coordination with government departments to ensure smooth facilitation of credit support under the flagship self-employment programme of the Government.

Sunaina Saini (JKAS), Deputy Director Employment, DE&CC Jammu, who was the Guest of Honour, lauded the Bank's efforts under Mission Yuva and encouraged young entrepreneurs to avail the benefits of government-sponsored schemes to contribute to the socio-economic development of the region.

On the occasion, 80 sanction letters were handed over to aspiring entrepreneurs, reinforcing the Bank's proactive role in driving youth empowerment.

J&K Bank Sets Up Special Counter At SMVDSB On Navratra

Observer News Service

JAMMU- On the auspicious occasion of Navratra, J&K Bank reinforced its commitment to facilitating pilgrims by establishing a Special Counter at its Business Unit in Shri Mata Vaishno Devi Bhawan (SMVDSB). The counter will provide fresh cash and note exchange facilities to devotees visiting the revered shrine.

The counter was inaugurated jointly by CEO, Shri Mata Vaishno Devi Shrine Board (SMVDSB), Sachin Kumar Vaishya (IAS), and the Bank's Divisional Head (General Manager) Ashok Gupta, in the presence of SDM Bhawan Anshumali Sharma, Tehsildar Mukesh Thappa, DySP Munish Kumar, Zonal Head Udhampur, Lalit Prakash, senior Shrine Board officials, police, administration, Bank officers, and a large gathering of devotees from across the country.

Speaking on the occasion, CEO SMVDSB Vaishya lauded J&K Bank's initiative, remarking, "By setting up this Special Counter, the Bank has once again demonstrated its commitment to providing seamless and world-class banking facilities to the Shrine Board, its employees,



and lakhs of devotees who visit the holy shrine." He further appreciated the Bank's role in ensuring smooth financial services along the entire pilgrimage route.

Welcoming the dignitaries, GM Ashok Gupta expressed gratitude to the Shrine Board for its continued trust and support, assuring best-in-class services. "Operating at the Bhawan since the inception of SMVD Board, our branch is fully dedicated to serving the Shrine Board, its establishments, employees, and the devotees from across the country. With three branches and nine ATMs from Katra to Bhawan, we ensure pilgrims have easy access to banking services, in addition to facilities like fresh cash and note exchange on special occasions like Navratra," he said.

Online Betting: ED Attaches Dubai Assets, Bank Deposits Worth Rs 307 Cr

Press Trust Of India

NEW DELHI- Land, villas and flats in Dubai and bank deposits in India worth Rs 307 crore have been attached under the anti-money laundering law in an online betting and broadcasting case linked to a platform named Fairplay, the ED said on Monday.

The money laundering case stems from an FIR filed by the Cyber wing of the Mumbai Police. The complaint was registered on the basis of a communication sent by Viacom18 Media against Fairplay and others, alleging revenue loss of more than Rs 100 crore to the former company due to violation of the Information Technology (IT) and Copyright Act.

Subsequently, many other FIRs against various entities, including Fairplay and its associates, for "illegal" online betting were tagged together for investigation, the Enforcement Directorate (ED) said in a statement.

A provisional order was issued under the Prevention of Money Lau-

Borrowers Can't Redeem Property After SARFAESI Notice Publication: SC

Press Trust Of India



NEW DELHI- The Supreme Court on Monday held borrowers cannot redeem property after publication of auction notice as purchasers acquire indefeasible rights once sale certificate is issued by creditor banks and financial institutions under the SARFAESI Act.

A bench of Justices J B Pardiwala and R Mahadevan ruled the fact that the Securitisation and Reconstruction of Financial Assets and Enforcement of Security Interest Act (SARFAESI Act) was enacted in 2002 to protect banks and financial,

but certain ambiguities in its Section 13(8) and a few rules had prolonged litigations.

The top court also held that the 2016 amendment to Section 13(8) of the SARFAESI Act, which extinguishes a borrower's right of redemption once the secured creditor publishes an auction notice, will apply even to loans taken before the amendment came into force if the default occurred after September 1, 2016.

Writing 140-page judgement, Justice Pardiwala said, "We humbly urge the Ministry of Finance to take a serious look at these provisions and bring about necessary changes, before it is too late in the day."

The bench went on, "It has been almost twenty-three years since the SARFAESI Act has remained in force. It is indeed very sad to note that even after these many years procedural issues such as the one involved in the case at hand, have continued to plague the legislation."

Referring to amended provision, the bench said, it "extinguishes" the right of redemption of the borrower in the event he fails to repay his dues and redeem the asset before publication of the auction notice.

UK Moves To Attract Global Talent with Visa Fee Waiver: Report

Press Trust Of India

LONDON- The UK government is looking at bolstering a drive to attract global talent with a possible visa fee waiver to support the world's top science and tech talent relocation to the country, a media report said on Monday.

The Global Talent Taskforce, backed up by a 54-million-pound Global Talent Fund launched earlier this year, is revving up further to lure international experts, including Indians, even as the US announced a clampdown on its H-1B visas used by global techies, according to a 'Financial Times' report.

The taskforce, which reports directly to Prime Minister Keir Starmer and Chancellor Rachel Reeves, works across 10 Downing Street and the UK Treasury to explore ways to boost the UK's economic growth.

"We're kicking around the idea of cutting (visa) costs to zero," the newspaper quoted a government official as saying.

"We're talking about the sort of people who have attended the world's top five universities or have won prestigious prizes," the official said.

It comes as President Donald Trump's order imposing a \$100,000 one-off application fee on all new H-1B visa applications came into force on Sunday. The visa is used overwhelmingly by American tech majors, with Indians among the largest recipients.



The UK operates a Global Talent Visa system, which is often perceived as heavily bureaucratic and led to Starmer launching his taskforce back in June. It is chaired by the UK PM's business adviser, Varun Chandra, and Science Minister Lord Patrick Vallance.

"The launch of the Taskforce and 54-million-pound Global Talent Fund, which will attract world-class researchers and their teams to the UK, covering relocation and research costs over five years starting this year, sends a clear signal to exceptional talent and businesses that the UK seeks to continue its global leadership in growth-driving sectors," the UK's Department for Science, Innovation and Technology (DSIT) said in a statement.

Since its launch, the taskforce has been working to support researchers, entrepreneurs, investors, top-tier managerial and engineering talent and high-calibre creatives to relocate and work closely with the UK's international presence to network and build a pipeline of talent who want to come to Britain, DSIT said.

## LG Condoles Passing Of Former J&K DGP

Observer News Service

Srinagar: The Lieutenant Governor, Manoj Sinha, has condoled the passing away of Gulam Jeelani Pandit ji, former DGP of Jammu Kashmir. He will always be remembered for his devotion to duty and service to the nation. My thoughts and prayers are with his family and friends in this hour of grief. I pray for peace for the departed soul".

In a condolence message, the Lieutenant Governor said:

"Saddened to learn about the passing away of Gulam Jeelani Pandit ji, former DGP of Jammu Kashmir. He will always be remembered for his devotion to duty and service to the nation. My thoughts and prayers are with his family and friends in this hour of grief. I pray for peace for the departed soul".

## Gulmarg Gondola To Remain Closed Till Sept 29

Agencies

Gulmarg: The world-famous Gulmarg Gondola, one of the highest cable cars in Asia and a major attraction for tourists visiting Kashmir, will remain closed from today, September 22, to September 29, 2025, for its annual inspection and maintenance.

Officials said the routine exercise is conducted every year

by a team of technical experts to ensure the safety, reliability, and smooth functioning of the gondola operations. The week-long suspension is necessary to carry out checks and servicing of the machinery.

Authorities have urged tourists and locals to plan their visits accordingly, assuring that the gondola will resume operations immediately after the inspection is completed. (KNS)



Jammu and Kashmir Police destroyed a suspicious object found near the banks of Dal Lake in Srinagar. KO Photo By Abid Bhat

## 14 KU, 6 IUST Scientists In Stanford's Top Global Researchers List 2025

Observer News Service

Srinagar: Fourteen scientists from the University of Kashmir (KU) and six from the Islamic University of Science & Technology (IUST) have been featured in the prestigious Stanford University Rankings 2025, placing them among the world's top researchers for their impactful contributions to global academia.

The KU faculty recognized include Adil Gani (Food Technology), Manzoor Ahmad Mir (Bioresources), Idrees Ahmad Wani (Food Technology), Farooq Ahmad Masoodi (Food Technology), Mudasar Ahmad (Computer Science), Shakeel Ahmad Romshoo (Earth Sciences), Faheem Arjamend Sheikh (Nanotechnology), Shabir Ahmad Parah (Electronics), Ghulam Jeelani (Earth Sciences), Firdous Ahmad Shah (Mathematics), Arshid Bashir (Chemistry), Lateef Ahmad Malik

(Chemistry), Shariefuddin Pirzada (Mathematics), and Reyaz Hassan Mir (Pharmaceutical Sciences).

Among them, Dr. Adil Gani has earned global distinction in the career-long impact category, placing him in the top 1% of scientists worldwide. He is the only KU researcher to achieve this honour in 2025.

Vice-Chancellor KU, Prof. Nilofer Khan, congratulated the faculty, calling the achievement a source of immense pride for the academic community. She said it underscores the dedication, intellectual rigour, and global relevance of KU's research. Dean Academic Affairs, Prof. Shariefuddin Pirzada, highlighted the consistent quality of scholarship, while Dean Research, Prof. Mohammad Sultan Bhat, noted the achievement reflects KU's vibrant research culture. Registrar KU, Prof. Naseer Iqbal, described the recognition as both an honour and a responsibility, reaffirming KU's position as a centre

of academic excellence.

The Stanford University Rankings, prepared annually under Prof. John P.A. Ioannidis, evaluate over 1,80,000 researchers globally using standardized citation indicators including citations, h-index, co-authorship patterns, and composite scores.

Meanwhile, in the 2025 edition of the Top 2% Global Scientists list compiled by Stanford, Prof. Shakil A. Romshoo of IUST has been featured for the sixth consecutive year. An expert in hydrology, glaciology, and climate sciences, Prof. Romshoo has earned several national and international accolades and is an elected fellow of the Indian Academy of Sciences, the Indian Society of Remote Sensing, and the Indian Society of Geomatics.

This year's list also recognises other IUST faculty, including Prof. Shakeel Ahmad (Centre for Disaster Risk Reduction), Dr. Basharat Nabi Dar (Food

Technology), Dr. Manzoor Ahmad Rather (Chemistry), Dr. Muzaffar Ahmad Macha (Watson and Crick Centre for Molecular Medicine), and Dr. Shakeel Ahmad Khanday (Physics), marking the university's growing research footprint.

Prof. Romshoo said the recognition reflects IUST's sustained efforts to strengthen its research ecosystem, transitioning the university into a research-intensive institution engaged in high-impact work across critical areas of science and technology. He added that collaborations with leading institutions, including the IITs, have been instrumental in nurturing talent and expanding research horizons.

"The inclusion of IUST researchers in a globally recognised list is a testament to the university's growing research output, the quality of its work, and the increasing citation impact of its scholarly contributions," Prof. Romshoo remarked.

## Some HC Judges Unable To Deliver On Their tasks: SC

Press Trust Of India

New Delhi: The Supreme Court on Monday lamented some high court judges being unable to "deliver on their tasks" as it called for their "performance evaluation".

A bench of Justices Surya Kant and N Kotiswar Singh said though it did not want to act like a "school principal" for the high court judges but there ought to be a self-management system to ensure "files don't pile up on their desks".

"There are judges who work day and night and are giving outstanding disposal of cases. But at the same time, there are some judges who unfortunately are unable to deliver - whatever may be the reasons, good or bad, we don't know and maybe there are some circumstances," the bench said.

The bench added, "Suppose a judge is hearing a criminal appeal, then we don't expect

him to decide 50 cases in a day and deciding one criminal appeal in a day is itself a very big achievement. But in a bail matter, if a judge says I will decide only one bail matter in a day, that is something which requires introspection."

The top court, as a result, stressed on "performance evaluation" but underlined the question of parameters and guidelines guiding the process.

"Our intention is not to act as a school principal and there should be broad guidelines so that judges should know what is the task before them and on how much task they must deliver. There is a legitimate expectation of the public at large from the judiciary," the bench added.

The observations came on criminal appeals, where some life and death row convicts have knocked at the door alleging that the Jharkhand high court has not delivered verdicts on their criminal appeals

## All-Women CRPF Bike Rally From J&K To Ladakh To Begin On Sep 23

Press Trust Of India

New Delhi- A high-altitude bike expedition of women CRPF personnel from Srinagar in Jammu and Kashmir to the Pangong Tso Lake in Ladakh is expected to be flagged off on Tuesday, officials said on Monday.

Thirty-two women bikers will be part of the nine-day rally that will cover about 1,400 km and return to Srinagar on October 1.

Central Reserve Police Force (CRPF) director general G P Singh is expected to flag off the bikers from Lal Chowk in Srinagar on Tuesday, the officials said.

"The expedition serves as a symbol of women breaking barriers and conquering challenging terrains," a senior CRPF officer said.

The bikers are part of the women bike-borne 'Daredevils' that was raised in the paramilitary force sometime back.

### CONTD. FROM FRONT PAGE

### 1.3 Lakh MTs

laden with fresh fruit and other materials accumulate in the valley. These are dispatched via the Srinagar-Jammu National Highway and the Mughal Road on an alternate-day basis.

"In the last 10 days, 1.37 lakh metric tonnes of fruit have been dispatched through the National Highway, Mughal Road, and the parcel train," Garg said.

He explained that a standard operating procedure (SOP), formulated by the Chief Secretary in coordination with district administrations, BRO, traffic, and National Highway authorities, ensures smooth transportation of fresh fruits and essential supplies. Traffic police personnel monitor the SOP round-the-clock.

"If traffic on the National Highway moves from Srinagar to Jammu on a particular day, the upward movement occurs on the Mughal Road from Jammu to Srinagar. This pattern reverses the next day to ensure uninterrupted movement of essentials," Garg said.

Referring to the condition of the highway, which remained closed for vehicular traffic recently due to inclement weather and landslides, Garg said restoration work is progressing rapidly.

"Earlier, around 1,500-2,000 trucks used to ply daily. Now, 4,000 - 4,500 trucks are moving. Today, nearly 2,000 trucks from Qazigund moved towards Jammu and are expected to reach by evening," he added.

He further noted that on the Mughal Road, 1,800-1,900 trucks moved towards Jammu on Sunday, prioritizing the evacuation of fresh fruits.

The newly introduced parcel train service from the Valley to New Delhi is also operational, carrying 800-1,000 tonnes of fresh fruit daily. Farmers from north and south Kashmir can now conveniently load produce in Baramulla and Anantnag, respectively.

Addressing concerns about essential supplies, Garg assured that there is no shortage of petrol, diesel, LPG, food, or consumer items.

"Sufficient stocks of essentials are available. We have a full week's stock of fuel and food items, which will be replenished regularly. People are requested not to believe in rumours or resort to panic buying," he said.

### Railways Deploys

region's apple industry.

In the past week, over 6,400 tons of apples have been moved from Kashmir to Delhi using bogie covered wagons (BCN) and parcel coaches from the Anantnag Goods Shed Terminal. Each wagon accommodates 76 special containers, each weighing 40 kilograms.

In a related effort, the Jammu Railway division arranged crates, racks, and puff panels—insulated steel panels used for

temperature-controlled storage—for apple storage units in Lassipora, Pulwama district. Officials said these panels improve insulation and energy efficiency for cold storage.

The parcel train service, launched on September 11, transports apples efficiently to Delhi. Each parcel van carries roughly 23 tons of goods, and the journey from Budgam to Adarsh Nagar was completed in less than 21 hours, while another reached Jammu in under six hours.

On September 15, Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha flagged off an eight-parcel van coach train from Srinagar to Delhi, each van carrying 23 tons, further boosting apple transportation from the Valley.

Officials said the new arrangements aim to ensure timely and safe delivery of perishable goods, supporting farmers and stabilizing the supply chain from Kashmir to national markets.

"These eight parcel van trains reached Delhi significantly faster than road transport," officials said.

Expanding the parcel train service to transport other goods, over 500 tons of mustard oil and other food items have been transported from Bari Brahmana to Budgam so far, ensuring that essential supplies remain unaffected despite disruptions in road connectivity.

### GST Rate Cut

that students and parents would benefit.

"The shopkeeper shared that Nex-Gen GST rate cuts on many stationery items have reduced prices, benefitting students and parents," the Finance Minister's Office said in a X post.

Prime Minister Narendra Modi has termed the reform as 'GST Bachat Utsav' and said that, along with the Income Tax exemption hike to Rs 12 lakh announced in the Budget, the total household savings would be Rs 2.5 lakh crore.

"Your household expenses will reduce and it will be easier to fulfil aspirations such as building a home, purchasing a vehicle, purchasing appliances, eating out or planning a family vacation," the Prime Minister said in an open letter.

Prime Minister Narendra Modi called the reform "GST Bachat Utsav", and highlighted that, combined with the Budget announcement raising the income tax exemption to Rs 12 lakh, household savings would total Rs 2.5 lakh crore. In an open letter, he said the changes would reduce household expenses and make it easier for families to fulfill aspirations such as building a home, buying a vehicle, purchasing appliances, eating out, or planning vacations.

According to government estimates: Savings on groceries and daily essentials are around 13%.

Small car buyers could save approximately

Rs 70,000.

Purchases of stationery, clothing, footwear, and medicines may bring 7-12% savings.

Health and life insurance policies are now exempt from GST, giving up to 18% savings.

Tractors (up to 1800 cc) now attract 5% GST instead of 12-18%, saving Rs 40,000.

Bikes/scooters (up to 350 cc) buyers save Rs 8,000, TVs (above 32 inches) save Rs 3,500, and air conditioners save Rs 2,800 following the rate cut from 28% to 18%.

Home Minister Amit Shah said the Next-Gen GST reforms reflect the Prime Minister's commitment to serving the poor, youth, farmers, and women.

Home Minister Amit Shah said that the Next-Gen GST reforms are a testament to Prime Minister Narendra Modi's "steely resolve" to serve the poor, youth, farmers and women.

Meanwhile, opposition-ruled states slammed the Centre for taking all "undue credit" for the GST rate cut, saying it is the states who will have to suffer revenue loss.

West Bengal Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee on Monday accused the Centre of having passed the financial burden to states after lowering GST and taking "undue credit" for it.

"It was I who had asked for withdrawing the additional GST burden (on people), and the Centre should not take undue credit for it. The Centre won't have to spend a single paisa. Every state will have to find ways to tide over the revenue loss," Banerjee said.

Karnataka Chief Minister Siddaramaiah accused Modi of "deceiving" Indians.

"It was Modi who implemented GST, it was Modi who increased GST rates, and now it is Modi who is patting himself on the back. We were the ones who opposed when GST was increased to 18 per cent and 28 per cent. The very people who collected it all these years are now taking credit. See how cleverly they are deceiving Indians. You should not fall for this," Siddaramaiah added.

Telangana Chief Minister A Revanth Reddy on Monday demanded that the Central government compensate for the loss of revenues due to the recent GST rate rationalisation for five years.

Congress general secretary Jairam Ramesh said the "limited" reform comes eight years too late, and a "big question mark" remains on whether the benefits of tax reduction will be passed on to consumers.

The cut in Goods and Services Tax (GST) rate is expected to boost demand, especially this festive season, and promote growth. The rate cut comes at a time when there is uncertainty in the export market created by the imposition of a 50 per cent tariff by the US on Indian shipments.

### GST Reforms

generation GST reforms is that there will mainly be two slabs of 5 per cent and 18 per cent, he said.

"Daily essentials such as food, medicines, soap, toothpaste, insurance and many more items will now either be tax-free or fall in the lowest 5% tax slab. Goods that were earlier taxed at 12% have almost entirely shifted to 5%. It is greatly heartening to see various shopkeepers and traders putting up then and now boards which indicate taxes pre-reforms and post-reforms," Modi said in his letter to the people.

In the last few years, 25 crore people have risen above poverty and formed an aspirational neo-middle class, he said.

"Further, we have also strengthened the hands of our middle class with the massive income tax cuts, which ensure zero tax up to the annual income of Rs 12 lakh. If we combine the income tax cuts and the Next Generation GST reforms, they add up to savings of nearly Rs 2.5 lakh crore for the people," he said.

"Your household expenses will reduce and it will be easier to fulfil aspirations such as building a home, purchasing a vehicle, purchasing appliances, eating out or planning a family vacation," the prime minister said.

Noting that the nation's GST journey, which began in 2017, was a turning point in freeing citizens and businesses from the web of multiple taxes, Modi said the GST united the nation economically.

"One Nation, One Tax' brought uniformity and relief. The GST Council, with the active participation of both Centre and states, took many pro-people decisions. Now, these new reforms take us further, simplifying the system, reducing rates and putting more savings in the hands of the people," he said.

"Our small industries, shopkeepers, traders, entrepreneurs and MSMEs will also see greater Ease of Doing Business and Ease of Compliance. Lower taxes, lower prices and simpler rules will mean better sales, less compliance burden and growth of opportunities, especially in the MSME sector," he said.

Asserting that the collective goal of the people is Viksit Bharat by 2047, Modi said that in order to achieve it, walking on the path of self-reliance is imperative.

These reforms strengthen our local manufacturing base, paving the way towards Aatmanirbhar Bharat, he said.

"On a related note, this festive season, let us also resolve to support products that are Made in India. This means buying Swadeshi products that have the sweat and toil of an Indian involved in their making, irrespective of the brand or the company that makes them," he said.

"Every time you buy a product made by our own artisans, workers and industries, you are helping many families earn their living and creating job opportunities for our youth," Modi said.

He appealed to shopkeepers and traders to sell products that are Made in India.

"Let us proudly say - what we buy is Swadeshi. Let us proudly say - what we sell is Swadeshi," the prime minister said.

"I also urge state governments to encourage industry, manufacturing and improvement of investment climate," he said.

"I wish you and your families a joyous Navratri and a season full of happiness and savings through the 'GST Savings Festival'," Modi said.

Posting the letter on X, Modi said "This festive season, let's celebrate the 'GST Bachat Utsav'! Lower GST rates mean more savings for every household and greater ease for businesses."

Earlier, Modi highlighted the sweeping and upbeat coverage given in newspapers to the reduced GST rates to underscore the nationwide buzz it has created.

"From markets to households, GST Bachat Utsav brings a festive buzz, ensuring lower costs and brighter smiles in every home," Modi said on X, posting pictures of the front page of leading Hindi and English-language dailies.

Sharing a video of his interaction with traders during his visit to Arunachal Pradesh, he asserted that it is a strong reflection of why India is so optimistic about the "GST Bachat Utsav".

"Today, next-generation GST reforms have been implemented across the country, and the GST 'Bachat Utsav' has begun. During the season of festivals, the people have received a double bonanza," he said at a rally in Itanagar.

"The GST reforms will reduce kitchen budget, helping women," Modi said.

On Sunday, the prime minister addressed the nation on the eve of the new GST rates roll-out from the first day of Navratri, lauding it as the "GST Bachat Utsav" for shoppers as prices of a wide array of items have gone down.

### GOC Reviews

the dense forests while joint teams of the army, police, and CRPF carried out combing operations on the ground. Drones and sniffer dogs were also deployed to track and neutralise the militants.

In a related development, security forces launched a cordon and search operation in the Malhar area of Kathua district following reports of suspected movement of two terrorists. The operation is ongoing, but no trace of the suspects has been found so far, officials said.

# ASIA CUP: Sri Lanka & Pakistan Desperate To Bounce Back In Super 4s

Press Trust of India

**ABU DHABI:** Reeling from early setbacks in the Super 4s, both Sri Lanka and Pakistan will be desperate to register their first win in this critical stage of the Asia Cup when they lock horns here on Tuesday.

Defending champions Sri Lanka, who breezed through the group stage unbeaten, were jolted by a four-wicket loss to Bangladesh in their Super 4 opener. The defeat not only disrupted their rhythm but also snapped an impressive eight-match winning streak in the T20 Asia Cup.

On the other hand, off-field issues have dominated headlines around the Pakistan team, overshadowing their middling performances on the field. They are in disarray after suffering yet another humiliating defeat at the hands of arch-rivals India on Sunday, their second loss to the 'Men in Blue' in this tournament.

India and Bangladesh have two points each with Suryakumar Yadav's men leading the



standings owing to a superior net run rate. Sri Lanka and Pakistan occupy the third and fourth spots respectively.

With little time for recovery, Pakistan skipper Salman Agha and his side now face a must-win situation under mounting pressure.

The absence of former skipper Babar Azam and senior batter Mohammad Rizwan has only deepened the batting crisis, exposing a lineup short on tech-

nique and temperament.

Against India, top order batters Sahibzada Farhan, Fakhar Zaman and Saim Ayub offered a glimmer of hope, stitching together 90/1 to hand a promising start.

Ayub, in particular, showed signs of resurgence after three consecutive ducks. However, the innings fizzled out in the latter half, once again highlighting Pakistan's inability to sustain pressure.

The bowling unit, too, has struggled. Leg-spinner Abrar Ahmed, who found success against lower-ranked teams like Oman and the UAE, failed to find the right lengths against a dominant Indian batting line-up and was taken to the cleaners.

Sri Lanka, despite their strong run, have their own set of issues to iron out.

A fragile middle order remains a concern, though Dasun Shanaka's counterattacking knock at No. 5 against Bangladesh offered some respite. Pathum Nissanka, the standout performer with back-to-back fifties in the group stage, has hit a rough patch.

However, Kusal Mendis and Kamil Mishara appear to be in good touch and could provide much-needed stability.

In the bowling department, pacer Nuwan Thushara has impressed, currently standing as the fourth-highest wicket-taker in the tournament with six scalps.

Spin wizard Wanindu Hasaranga, along with Dushmantha Chameera, Charith Asalanka,

and Shanaka, have also contributed effectively across matches.

Promising all-rounder Dunith Wellalage has rejoined the squad after a brief absence following the death of his father last week, a return that could bolster both morale and depth.

**TEAMS (FROM):**

**Sri Lanka:** Charith Asalanka (c), Pathum Nissanka, Kusal Mendis (wk), Kusal Perera, Nuwanidu Fernando, Kamindu Mendis, Kamil Mishara, Dasun Shanaka, Wanindu Hasaranga, Dunith Wellalage, Chamika Karunaratne, Maheesh Theekshana, Dushmantha Chameera, Binura Fernando, Nuwan Thushara, Matheesha Pathirana.

**Pakistan:** Salman Ali Agha (c), Abrar Ahmed, Faheem Ashraf, Fakhar Zaman, Haris Rauf, Hasan Ali, Hasan Nawaz, Hussain Talat, Khushdil Shah, Mohammad Harris, Mohammad Nawaz, Mohammad Waseem Jnr, Sahibzada Farhan, Saim Ayub, Salman Mirza, Shaheen Afridi, Sufyan Moqim. Match starts at 8pm IST.

## Inter-Hostel Football Tourney For Men Concludes At NIT Srinagar

The much-anticipated Inter-Hostel Football Tournament (Men) at the National Institute of Technology (NIT) Srinagar concluded on Monday, showcasing intense competition, skill, and sportsmanship.

Organised by the Students Activity and Sports Centre, the tournament saw participation from all hostel teams, making it a major sporting event on campus. A total of 8 teams competed in this edition.

The final match was contested between the 3rd-year and 2nd-year teams, with the 2nd-year team clinching victory 1-0. The match-winning goal was scored by Yameen Gatto (2024BCHE015) in the second half, securing the championship for his team.

The tournament was formally inaugurated by Dean Students Welfare, Prof. Mohammad Abid Bazaz, who emphasized the importance of such events in promoting holistic development among students.

In his message, Director NIT Srinagar, Prof. Binod Kumar Kanaujia, lauded the enthusiasm of participants. Registrar, Prof. Atikur Rehman, also congratulated the teams. (Observer News Service)

## Ganguly Returns As Cricket Association Of Bengal President

Former India captain Sourav Ganguly on Monday returned as the president of Cricket Association of Bengal (CAB) after six years and picked out the boosting of Eden Gardens' capacity to one lakh and securing marquee fixtures during next year's T20 World Cup among his top priorities. Ganguly was elected unopposed at the CAB's 94th annual general meeting here on Monday, marking his comeback to the state association after six years. He earlier served as CAB president from 2015 to 2019.

He also pledged to oversee a smooth return of Test cricket to Eden Gardens when India hosts world champions South Africa on November 14.

The 53-year-old, who previously served as BCCI president from 2019 to 2022, replaced his elder brother Snehasish Ganguly, who had to step down following the completion of a six-year tenure cap. The former India left-hander's immediate responsibility would be to prepare for the India vs South Africa opening Test in November -- the first at Eden Gardens since the historic day-night pink-ball fixture against Bangladesh in 2019, which he had initiated during his stint as BCCI chief. (PTI)

## India Beat Pakistan 3-2 In Charged SAFF U17 C'ship Game

India maintained their stranglehold over arch-foes Pakistan across sports as the country's football team notched a 3-2 victory in a highly-charged SAFF U17 Championship match here on Monday in which losing team member Muhammad Abdullah's controversial celebration attracted attention.

In the game that was rendered inconsequential after both teams qualified for the semifinals, India took the lead in the 31st minute through Dallamun Gangte.

Pakistan drew level in the 43rd minute when a penalty was converted by Abdullah, after which, he ran to the corner, sat down, and, in a unique celebration with his teammates, seemed to mimic drinking tea. But that mocking celebration backfired on Pakistan as they had to eat the humble pie with India stamping their superiority in actual play. Abdullah's celebration, though, became a talking point after the match.

Gunleiba Wangkeirakpm restored India's lead in the 63rd minute, only for Hamza Yasir to equalise for Pakistan seven minutes later. Rahan Ahmed, then, stepped up to score the match-winning goal for India in the 73rd minute.(PTI)

## Bolt To Visit India For Exhibition Football Game On October 1

Sprint legend Usain Bolt will trade his running spikes for football boots as he is set to visit India for a unique exhibition match here on October 1.

Bolt, one of the greatest athletes of all time with eight Olympic gold medals to his credit, will light up the pitch in an exclusive football showcase alongside footballers, Bollywood personalities and other prominent figures.

Bolt will represent both Bengaluru FC and Mumbai City FC, playing one half each bringing fans from both camps together in PUMA's two-day celebration, starting September 30.

This exhibition match will be a ticketed event. "We believe sport has the power to inspire and unite communities. Football is one of the most popular sports among the youth of India, and bringing Usain Bolt to play here is our way of celebrating that momentum," PUMA India MD Karthik Balagopalan said. Beyond the track, Bolt has always carried a deep passion for football.

Growing up, he often played the sport and dreamt of showcasing his speed and skills on the pitch. After retiring from athletics, he actively pursued this love, training, playing trial matches, and even scoring goals along the way.(PTI)

## De Kock Returns From ODI Retirement, Bavuma Out Of Pak Series

South Africa wicketkeeper batter Quinton de Kock on Monday reversed his decision to retire from ODIs and was named in the national white-ball squads for the upcoming Pakistan tour but skipper Temba Bavuma was ruled out of the Test series due to a calf strain.

The Proteas will begin their defence of the ICC World Test Championship Mace with a two-match series from October 12-24 in Lahore and Rawalpindi.

De Kock, who last played white-ball cricket in 2024 T20 World Cup against South Africa in Barbados, has also been included in the squad for the one-off T20I in Namibia. The left-handed opener quit ODI cricket after the 2023 World Cup. The then coach Rob Walter did not include him in the T20 squad since he was not sure about his long-term plans. (PTI)

## Seva Parv Sports Calendar Moves Into Day 5 Across Budgam

Dabirah Hassan

**BUDGAM:** The Seva Parv Activity Calendar of the Department of Youth Services and Sports Budgam is gaining further momentum as the celebrations entered the fifth day across the district.

The ongoing program, being observed from September 17 to October 2, continues to witness enthusiastic participation of students and youth.

On Day 5, all zones of Budgam district organized a range of competitive sports and traditional games, including volley-



ball, kabaddi, cricket, and several indigenous activities. The events created a festive atmosphere as young boys and girls displayed their energy, discipline, and sporting spirit.

The entire initiative is being carried out under the leadership of District Youth Services and Sports Officer Budgam, Ghulam Hassan Lone, who emphasized that such activities not only promote health and fitness but also provide a platform to nurture talent and revive cultural heritage.

The Seva Parv series will continue in the coming days with pledge ceremonies, cultural events, and community-oriented drives, culminating on October 2, Gandhi Jayanti.

## Wheelchair Race For Specially Abled Students Held In Bijbehara

Observer News Service

**ANANTNAG:** The Zonal Physical Education Office Bijbehara, in collaboration with Zaiba Appa School Semthan Bijbehara, conducted a Wheelchair Race for specially abled students under the Celebrations Sewa Parv Programme on Monday. The aim of the race was to promote Physical fitness, youth empowerment, discipline and overall health of the specially abled students.

Apart from Wheelchair Race, Carrom and Chess activities were also conducted to promote the physical fitness and sportsmanship spirit. In



these events, both boys and girls of Zaiba Appa School participated. Around 27 students participated in these events.

Meanwhile, in the ongoing District level Inter Zonal Cricket Tournament, Zone Bijbehara & Anantnag qualified for grand finale on Monday at BMHSS Bijbehara.

The tournament is featuring U-14 age group boys representing various zones of the district.

In the first match of the day, Zone Bijbehara defeated Zone Qazigund by 2 runs. In the 2nd match, Zone Anantnag defeated Zone Achabal by 55 runs.

## CM Omar Unveils Hummel, Real Kashmir FC's 'Peace Jersey'

Observer News Service

**SRINAGAR:** Chief Minister Omar Abdullah on Sunday unveiled Hummel and Real Kashmir FC's Peace Jersey at the TRC Ground Srinagar.

Minister for Youth Services and Sports Satish Sharma, Advisor to the CM Nasir Aslam Wani, MLA Tanvir Sadiq, Commissioner Secretary Social Welfare Department Sarmad Hafeez, Secretary Sports Council Nuzhat Gul and representatives of RKFC and Hummel were present on the occasion.

Speaking to reporters, the CM said sports infrastructure was being developed across Jammu and Kashmir.

He also praised the RKFC for

promoting football in the valley.

He added that the government was assessing losses to fruit crops caused by the closure of the highway and assured compensation to farmers.

The Peace Jersey—a special edition kit—has been designed to spread a message beyond football. Inspired by Kashmir's spirit of unity and resilience, it reflects the power of sport to heal, inspire, and bring people together.

The jersey draws inspiration from Hari Parbat Fort in Srinagar, a historic landmark symbolizing unity with its shrine, temple, and gurdwara standing side by side. Its soothing sky-blue tone represents peace and harmony, while evoking the vastness of the sky as a space



of hope and freedom. Mountain graphics symbolize growth, and dove motifs represent harmony. The jersey is part of a larger mission to change the world through sport in partnership with Real

Kashmir FC. It will be available on hummel.net.in from September 21, 2025.

"Real Kashmir FC has always been a journey of the heart, not just football. Every step we take

is about giving our community something to believe in—something that unites us beyond the field," said Arshad Shawl, Promoter, Real Kashmir FC.

Established in 1923, the Danish sports brand Hummel has a long history in the international sportswear industry. Headquartered in Aarhus, Denmark, Hummel's mission is to change the world through sport, based on its unique Company Karma philosophy that balances profitability with social responsibility. The brand designs, produces, and markets high-quality sports and leisure wear for adults and children. Hummel is privately owned and part of the Thornico Group.

## Weekend Fitness Drive: Hussaini Sports Club Organises Road Race



Observer News Service

**SRINAGAR:** Hussaini Sports Club, in collaboration with Hussaini Welfare Organization, Hassan-Abad Rainawari, conducted the Run for Health Road Race from Saida Kadal Chowk to Bagh-E-Shugufa, Nigeen. The event was flagged off by Dr. Sarwar Hussain (Vice President, HWO) in the presence of PRO Inayat Hussain, Treasurer HSC Vilayat Hussain and other office bearers of HWO. Students from various educational institutions participated in the race.

At the conclusion of the event, medals and par-

ticipation certificates were distributed among winners and participants by the Vice President HWO along with Secretary and Treasurer HSC.

Ahsan Ali (General Secretary, Hussaini Sports Club) delivered the vote of thanks, appreciating the participants, parents, and guests. He emphasized that the aim behind organizing such events is to spread awareness about physical fitness and promote a healthy sports culture among the youth. He further assured that such activities will continue to be organized on weekends to engage young people in productive pursuits.

## 'The Great Nigeen Swim 2025' Concludes At Nigeen Lake

Observer News Service

**SRINAGAR:** The Swim N Survive Society – Kashmir, in collaboration with the Underwater Sports Association of J&K, hosted the Great Nigeen Swim, marking yet another milestone in promoting endurance sports in the Valley.

The event brought together 45 seasoned long-distance swimmers, including five women participants, who braved the waters of Nigeen Lake with remarkable grit and determination.

The challenge was flagged off by Shakeel Ahmad, President of the Swim N Survive Society – Kashmir, along with Yasir Makhdoomi, Secretary of the Society, and Riyaz Ahmad Wani, noted swim-

ming and cycling expert.

Swimmers charted a 3.6 km course from the Nigeen Water Sports Centre, completing four demanding laps towards the houseboat area. The entire event was meticulously tracked with Garmin devices, while volunteers Imran Sofi, Sheikh Rashid, and Er. Rayees Naqasbandi ensured smooth execution.

The participant list read like a roll call of Kashmir's most respected swimmers and adventure sportsmen, including Dr. Sheikh Tariq, RTD Er. Mushtaq Wani, Ajaz Khan (Paristaan Group), national fin swimmers Mohammad Faaliq Najar, Momin bin Tariq, Zaid Wani, Sadiq, and national medallists Mohsin Fayaz and Owais Rashid.



## Islamia College Organises 'Unity Run'



Observer News Service

**SRINAGAR:** Islamia College of Science and Commerce, in collaboration with Police Station Nowhatta, organised 'Unity Run' to commemorate 150th birth anniversary of Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel.

The event, commenced from the college sports field and proceeded via Hawal, Gojwara Chowk, Srinagar, witnessed enthusiastic participation from around 150 students and Police personnel, all united in promoting the spirit of harmony, unity, and fitness.

Leading the event, Principal of the College, Prof. (Dr) Tehmina Yousuf, was joined by NSS Program Officers, NCC Officers, Convenor Hostel/Convenor Sports and Physical Education Department. Their active participation added further inspiration to the cause.

The run aimed to foster a sense of national integration and physical well-being among the youth and the community, reflecting the shared commitment of educational institution and law enforcement agencies towards peace and unity in the area.

