

EXCEPTIONAL ACADEMY  
FOR IAS/JKAS/NT/12TH/NEET/JEE

EXCELLENCE IN ACTION

Hello, Kashmir

DON'T MAKE IAS/JKAS A 5 YEAR PLAN...

RATHER START EARLY AFTER CLASS 12TH

Join EXCEPTIONAL'S 03 Year Foundation Course

New Batch's commencing on

20 October 2025



Register Now

## RS 'Safe Seat' Row Escalates NC-Congress Rift



File Photo

Observer News Service

Srinagar: Tensions between the ruling alliance partners in Jammu and Kashmir have intensified, with the Congress accusing the National Conference (NC) of "repeated betrayal of

trust" and sidelining its MLAs in governance, following a row over the Rajya Sabha elections.

The J&K unit of the Congress submitted a scathing report to the party high command on Tuesday, alleging that the NC reneged on its commitment | [More on P6](#)



### Will Sajad Lone's NC Snub Give Edge To BJP?

KO Web Desk

Jammu and Kashmir People's Conference (JKPC) led by Sajad Gani Lone on Tuesday announced that his party will abstain from the forthcoming Rajya Sabha | [More on P6](#)

**BY BACKTRACKING ON THE PROMISE OF PROVIDING A SINGLE SAFE SEAT** in the forthcoming Rajya Sabha elections, the National Conference is tactically moving away from the INDIA alliance

### Drug Trade Case

## 2 Jailed For 10 Yrs, Rs 4.15 Lakh Fine Imposed

M Ahmad

Srinagar: Two weeks after holding them guilty in connection with a case involving trafficking of psychotropic substances, a court here on Wednesday sentenced two persons to 10 years of jail and imposed over Rs four lakh as fine on them. The court—Special Judge NDPS Cases Srinagar, Vinod Kumar, on September 29 found the duo—Mudasir Sultan Bhat alias Majid and Feroz Ahmad Khan alias Jaja, both residents of Bemina, guilty under Sections 8/22 read

with Section 29 of the NDPS Act. Mudasir has been also found guilty under IPC Sections of 468, 471(forgery), and 420 (cheating) for orchestrating and facilitating the transport of psychotropic substances under the guise of legitimate pharmaceutical trade.

Pronouncing the quantum of punishment, the court sentenced the duo to ten years rigorous imprisonment under Section 22 NDPS Act (commercial quantity) and imposed a fine of Rs 1,00,000 (minimum

Full Story on [kashmirobserver.net](#)

### Father-Son Drug Traffickers' ₹66L Properties Seized

Observer News Service

In a major crackdown against narcotics trade, Anantnag Police have attached immovable properties worth approximately 66 lakh belonging to a notorious father-son duo involved in drug trafficking in Bijbehara. According to a police spokesperson, the action follows the investigation into two separate | [More on P6](#)

### Apni Party To Contest Nagrota, Budgam By-polls



Observer News Service

Srinagar: Jammu and Kashmir Apni Party (JKAP) President Syed Mohammad Altaf Bukhari on Tuesday announced that the party will contest the upcoming Assembly bye-elections from both Nagrota and Budgam constituencies independently. | [More on P6](#)

## Wangchuk Threat to State Security: Leh DM

SC Adjourns Hearing On Plea Against Activist's Detention To October 15

Press Trust To India

New Delhi: Climate activist Sonam Wangchuk indulged in "activities prejudicial to the security of the state, maintenance of public order and essential services" which led to

his detention under the National Security Act, Leh District Magistrate has told the Supreme Court defending his order. In an affidavit filed before the top

Full Story on [kashmirobserver.net](#)

### SC Adjourns Hearing On Plea To Oct 15

The Supreme Court on Tuesday adjourned to October 15 the hearing on a plea filed by Sonam Wangchuk's wife Gitanjali J Angmo challenging the climate | [Full Story on kashmirobserver.net](#)

## Op Sindoor Showed We Will Avenge Every Drop Of Blood: LG

Observer News Service

Jammu: Asserting that Operation Sindoor was the result of the valour and sacrifice of the Indian armed forces, Jammu and Kashmir Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha said that the operation sent out a message to the world that India will avenge every drop of its citizens' blood.

He said India has shown to the world that it is among the most powerful countries after destroying enemy defence fortifications and airfields within minutes of launching Operation Sindoor.

"Operation Sindoor gave a message to the world that we will avenge every drop of an



Indian citizen's blood. No one can dare raise their eyes towards our country," the lieutenant governor said.

Sinha paid tribute to martyrs and felicitated

ex-servicemen to mark commemoration of Diamond Jubilee of India's victory over Pakistan in 1965 war. The event was organised by Western Command and 26

Infantry Division in Jammu.

Addressing a mega rally of Ex-servicemen, the Lieutenant Governor said that 1965 war victory and recent Operation Sindoor was the result of the valour and sacrifice of soldiers of Indian armed forces which is considered among the strongest across the globe.

The Lieutenant Governor recalled the sacrifice of 1965 war heroes and paid homage to all the martyrs who made the supreme sacrifice, defending the sovereignty and integrity of India.

He said the abode of soldiers, who are the first line of defence against terror country Pakistan is a sacred land.

"Unwavering devotion to ex-servicemen | [More on P6](#)

### Buy Swadeshi, Support Local Artisans: LG

Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha urged people to celebrate the festival of lights by embracing the spirit of 'Vocal for Local' and buying Swadeshi products made by local artisans, self-help groups, and small entrepreneurs.

"Let us boost our local economy, empower local entrepreneurs, increase employment and strengthen the overall economic position of Jammu and Kashmir," Sinha said.

Sinha inaugurated the J&K Police's

Diwali Mela 2025 at Gulshan Ground, Jammu, and paid glowing tributes to the bravehearts of the force who laid down their lives in the service of the nation. He added that this Diwali, the mission should be to promote | [More on P6](#)

## From Art 370 To Op Sindoor, We Have Hit The Roots Of Terror: HM

Zero-Tolerance Policy Against Terrorism Is Our Govt's Resolve

KO Web Desk

Srinagar: Union Home Minister Amit Shah on Tuesday asserted that India's security forces have struck at the very roots of terrorism, from the abolition of Article 370 to Operation Sindoor, ensuring that no place is safe for terrorists anymore.

Addressing the 41st Raising Day of the National Security Guard (NSG), Shah said the recent Operation Sindoor devastated terror headquarters, training centres, and launchpads in Pakistan and Pakistan-occupied Kashmir,



following the Pahalgam terror attack in April, which claimed 26 lives.

"In Operation Mahadev, our forces carried out precise action to eliminate the terrorists behind the Pahalgam attack. It has | [More on P6](#)

### 'Op Sindoor 2.0 Will Be Deadlier'

Asserting that Pakistan has no capacity to fight India but it may attempt Pahalgam-type attacks again, Western Army commander Lieutenant General Manoj Kumar Katiyar on Tuesday said the response — Operation Sindoor 2.0 — will be deadlier. He maintained that Pakistan continues its policy of "bleed India through a thousand cuts" and said the Army is fully prepared to | [More on P6](#)

## Pahalgam Attack Severely Affected J&K Economy: CM

Says GST Revision Alone Could Slash J&amp;K Revenue By Rs 1,000 Crore

Observer News Service

Srinagar: Chief Minister Omar Abdullah on Tuesday said the recent revision in GST rates is expected to reduce Jammu and Kashmir's tax revenue by up to Rs 1,000 crore in the current fiscal.

Addressing the national executive meeting of FICCI here, Omar highlighted that the economic impact of the Pahalgam terror attack, along with heavy rains during the summer of 2025, has severely affected the Union Territory's economy.

"The revision of GST rates alone will reduce our earnings



by Rs 900 to 1,000 crore. For a state like Jammu and Kashmir, which is already facing a deficit, this is a significant amount," he said.

The Chief Minister added that torrential | [More on P6](#)

## WHO Alerts On 'Substandard' Cough Syrups In India

KO Web Desk

Srinagar: The World Health Organization (WHO) has issued a global alert warning against three "substandard" cough syrups sold in India—Coldrif, Respifresh TR, and ReLife—after at least 25 children reportedly died following their consumption.

The alert comes amid reports of kidney failure in children, mostly under five, in Madhya Pradesh and Rajasthan. WHO has urged national regulatory authorities worldwide to immediately notify the agency if these products are detected in their countries and to strengthen | [More on P6](#)

### A New Chapter

## In Surgical Gastroenterology Care Srinagar's Health Landscape Welcomes a Visionary

Paras Health -Srinagar proudly introduces a trusted name in Surgical Gastroenterology

### Dr. Hamza Wani

Associate Director  
Surgical Gastroenterology, GI, HPB,  
Onco-Surgery, Minimal Access & Bariatric SurgeryMBBS, MS (General Surgery)  
DrNB (Surgical Gastroenterology)  
Travel Grant Awardee (Japan & South Korea)  
Ex Assistant Professor GMC Jammu & AIIMS  
BhopalAvailability:  
Monday - Saturday  
10:00 AM to 5:00 PM

13+ Years of Experience

PARAS  
HEALTH





To place an advertisement

CALL +91-194 2502327

Monday - Saturday (9am - 6pm)

No 5- Dal Lake Boulevard Srinagar, 190001, Kashmir

KASHMIR OBSERVER®

Srinagar | Wednesday | 15-10-2025

2

#### PUBLIC NOTICE

My name has been wrongly written in my school records as Kousar Farooq While my correct name is Qaisar Farooq . Now I have applied for the correction of the same if anybody has any objection in this regard he/she may file them in the office of the Headmaster Govt Middle School Sagipora / Panipora Zaingeer (Bomai) within seven days. After that no objection shall be entertained.

Kaisar Farooq

fko

Father's Name: Farooq Ahmad Najar

#### Office of Aijaz Ahmad Dar & Associates

Advocate J&K and Ladakh High Court Srinagar

In the Case of:

Yawar Zaib Tanki.

S/o Mohammad Yaqoob Tanki,

R/o.Banigam Shalimar Near Govt.Higher Secondary School , Srinagar

(Caveator /Applicant)

Versus

Public at large

(Non Caveator /Non Applicant)

In the matter of:

Caveat

Be it known to the public at large/interested persons that the caveator have reason (s) apprehension (s) to believe that the Non-Caveator may file suit/s, Appeal/s or any other like proceedings separately or jointly against the ORDER / ALLOTMENT OF TRC CRICKET GROUND, addressed to the Deputy Manager, TRC Cricket Ground Srinagar, issued under no.SC/ SOK/151/2032-34 Dated 09.09.2025 , by the Divisional Sports Officer Kashmir, Government Of Jammu & Kashmir , in favour of the Caveator, before this Hon'ble Court, by suppressing the material & real facts and by manipulating and distorting the facts and will try to seek some stay order/s in ex-parte, against the aforesaid Order/Allotment.

It is played before the Honble court that in the event of any petition or other case being filed by any manner of public at large /interested person, no interim order or any protective order be passed without granting the caveator an opportunity of hearing.

M/S Aijaz Ahmad Dar  
Advocate at Srinagar  
Dated 14-10-2025

mko

#### PUBLIC NOTICE

My name and date of birth have been wrongly entered in my Aadhaar Card as Arsheema Javid, DOB: 10-01-2009, whereas my correct name is Arshma Javid and my correct date of birth is 20-05-2011.

Now, I have applied for the correction of the same. If anybody has any objection in this regard, he/she may file the same in the concerned Aadhaar Centre, Jammu/Srinagar, within seven days from the date of publication of this notice. After that, no objection shall be entertained.

Arshima Javid

D/o Javid Ahmad Sheikh

R/o Hajipora, Shopian

FKO\_R

#### Office of the Naib Tehsildar Pattan

Sub.. issuance of registration order in respect of delayed birth..

#### PUBLIC NOTICE

The registrar birth EO MC pattan has submitted a case file pertaining to birth of Mohammad Hamaad Dar s/o Mudasir Ahmad Dar R/o Nowpora Kalan Tehsil sopore with verified date of birth 22/05/2021 occurred at SDH pattan in this connection if any body having objection for issuance of said certificate he may contact to this office within 04 days after that no objection shall be entertained.

SD

FKO

Naib Tehsildar Pattan

#### PUBLIC NOTICE

I have changed my name from (Old Name) Sakeena Zehra to (New Name) Sakeena Ahmad in furute I will be knoww as (New NAME) Sakeena Ahmad if anybody has any objection in this regard he/she may file them in the Passport office Srinagar within seven days. After that no objection shall be entertained.

INF

#### PUBLIC NOTICE

The name and DOB of my ward has been wrongly written in his adhaar card as Mohd Asif Wani , DOB 16-02-2004 while his correct name is Asif Ismail and Correct DOB is 14-03-2008. Now I have applied for the correction of the same if anybody has any objection in this regard he/she may file them in the concerned Adhaar Centre Jammu/Srinagar within seven days. After that no objection shall be entertained.

Mohammad Ismail Wani

F/o Asif Ismail

R/o Hydergund Shopian

fko

#### PUBLIC NOTICE

This is information for the general public that in Birth Certificate of my daughter the name is entered as FAJAR ZAINAB while her actual name is NOORAIN FATIMA. Now i want its correction, in this regard if anybody having any objection may contact DISTRICT HOSPITAL BUDGAM with in a period of seven days. No objection shall be entertained after that.

IMRAN ALI BHAT

F/o NOORAIN FATIMA

R/o TALAPORA KHANSAHIB BUDGAM

CELL. 9149568875

MCB

## Women Account For 70% Of Autoimmune Disease Patients: Experts

Press Trust Of India

Nearly 70 per cent of people living with autoimmune diseases are women, and it needs to be recognised as a major health issue in the country, according to experts.

The experts at the 40th Annual Conference of the Indian Rheumatology Association (IRACON 2025) said that doctors in India have observed that autoimmune diseases are far more common among women, especially between the ages of 20 and 50, when hormonal and lifestyle factors are most active.

During a special session dedicated to women's health and autoimmune disorders, leading rheumatologists discussed how hormonal changes, genetic predisposition and distinct biological mechanisms make women more vulnerable to such conditions.

The discussion highlighted that the female immune system, though stronger in fighting infections, can sometimes turn against the body itself, leading to autoimmune diseases.

A recent study by Stanford University has also shed light on this difference. The researchers found that women's bodies produce a special molecule called Xist RNA, which helps control one of the two X chromosomes that women carry.

However, this molecule can sometimes confuse the immune system, making it attack the body's own healthy cells instead of protecting them.

This could be one of the key reasons why autoimmune diseases are seen more often in women.

Experts at IRACON 2025 said this scientific discovery supports what doctors in India have observed for years: autoimmune diseases are far more common among women, especially between the ages of 20 and 50, when hormonal and lifestyle factors are most active.

Autoimmune disorders occur when the



body's defence system, which usually protects against infections, mistakenly attacks its own tissues. Common conditions include rheumatoid arthritis, lupus, thyroiditis, psoriasis, and Sjögren's syndrome. These diseases can affect joints, skin, blood vessels, and even internal organs such as the heart and lungs.

"In my outpatient clinic at AIIMS, almost seven out of every ten patients with autoimmune diseases are women. We see a clear pattern. Women often come late because they overlook persistent symptoms," said Dr Uma Kumar, Head of Rheumatology at AIIMS, New Delhi.

Genetic make-up, hormonal changes during reproductive age and after childbirth, combined with stress, obesity, and nutritional deficiencies, can make them more vulnerable to autoimmune diseases, she added.

"It's time we recognise autoimmune disorders as a major women's health issue in India," Kumar said.

Dr Bimlesh Dhar Pandey, Organising Secretary of IRACON 2025 and Director of Rheumatology at Fortis Hospital, said, "Every week, I meet women who have been living

with unexplained joint pain or swelling for years before getting diagnosed.

"Many are in their 30s or 40s, juggling family and work. By the time they reach us, the disease has already damaged their joints or organs. We must increase awareness and ensure early screening, especially among women."

In India, doctors say the issue is made worse because women often ignore early warning signs like tiredness, joint stiffness or swelling, dismissing them as minor problems or results of stress or ageing.

Many delay visiting doctors due to family responsibilities, lack of awareness, or social reasons, which allows the disease to progress silently until it becomes more severe. Adding to this, Dr Neeraj Jain, Vice Chairman of Rheumatology at Sir Ganga Ram Hospital, said, "We have also seen the same trend, a clear majority of autoimmune patients are women. The Stanford study gives a biological explanation, but social and environmental factors in India play a major role in increasing the incidence of autoimmune diseases. Pollution, infections, and poor lifestyle habits can all trigger or worsen autoimmune responses."

"In my practice, about 70% of autoimmune patients are women, and many have gone through years of wrong treatment before reaching a specialist. We must identify the early signs, especially in women, so they can be referred to rheumatologists sooner. Early diagnosis can prevent long-term disability," Dr Pulin Gupta, Professor and Rheumatologist at Dr Ram Manohar Lohia Hospital, noted.

Emphasising the need for focused policies, Conference Chairman Dr Rohini Handa, Senior Consultant at Indraprastha Apollo Hospitals, said, "Autoimmune diseases are as common as diabetes or heart disease, yet they get far less attention. When 70% of those affected are women, we can't treat it as a gender-neutral issue. There is a strong need for awareness campaigns, women-specific research, and better access to rheumatology services across India."

Experts agreed that, in addition to biological factors, lifestyle and environment play a key role in triggering autoimmune disorders in Indian women. Increasing pollution levels, sedentary routines, unhealthy diets, rising stress, and lack of adequate sleep are all contributing factors.

Some studies have shown that exposure to air pollutants and industrial chemicals can disturb hormonal and immune pathways, further increasing risk.

Doctors at IRACON 2025 also highlighted that timely diagnosis and treatment can make a huge difference. While autoimmune diseases cannot be completely cured, they can be effectively managed through medication, exercise, balanced nutrition, and stress control.

India currently faces a shortage of trained rheumatologists, with fewer than 1,000 specialists for a population of over a billion. Experts suggested that primary care physicians should be trained to recognise early symptoms and refer patients appropriately. Public health programs should also include autoimmune diseases under women's health initiatives, similar to how reproductive and cancer screenings are promoted.

Government of Jammu & Kashmir (UT)

Phone:-01933-295302

### OFFICE OF THE EXECUTIVE ENGINEER R&B DIVISION PULWAMA.

#### TENDER NOTICE

E-NIT No: 78/EEP/RNB/of 2025-26/5884-94

Dated: 13 /10 /2025

For and on behalf of the Lt. Governor, J&K UT term e-tenders (In Single Cover system) are invited on %age Basis from approved and eligible Contractors registered with J&K State Govt. CPWD, Railways and other State/Central Government for the following work :-

S. No	Name of Work	Adv. Cost (Rs. Lacs.)	Cost of T/D (Rs.)	Earnest Money (In %age.)	Time of Completion in working Days	Class of Contract	Major Head of Accounts	Administrative Accord Approval No:	Call No:
1	Construction of school link and Bonpora link takes off from Rahmoo Bachnard road incl. Panchayat ghar to PHC link and link roads at Diloo Rahmoo incld. CC drain at Kamraziopora.	15.12 lacs	800/-	2% of ADV cost	120 days	CEE,BEE	UT sector	23-SE/PS of 2023-24 Dt.10.08.2023 & TS. NO. 146-SE/PS of 2025-26 DT.10-10.2025	1st call
2	Construction of R wall and WBM G-II on Ladermud Kawani road incld . Interior links.	27.44 lacs	1100/-	2% of ADV cost	120 days	BEE,AAV	UT sector	25-SE/PS of 2023-24 Dt 10.08.2023 & TS. NO. 143-SE/PS of 2025-26 DT.10-10.2025	1st call
3	Improvement Upgradation of Interior allied links of sonsamil Arigam Ashmunder Murran Chewakhurd/Karimabad,Mong hama Gudoor and Inder roads.	65.84 lacs	1600/-	2% of ADV cost	450 days	AAV	UT sector	25-SE/PS of 2023-24 Dt.10.08.2023 & TS. NO. 141-SE/PS of 2025-26 DT.10-10.2025	1st call
4	Pulwama Tahab Lassipora road by way of R wall ,Culverts,drains etc incld construction of passanger shed at Melhoora Junction incld. IR Tumlahal,trichal, Naira.	48.01 lacs	1100/-	2% of ADV cost	450 days	BEE, AAV	UT sector	41-SE/PS of 2023-24 Dt.19.12.2023 & TS. NO. 142-SE/PS of 2025-26 DT.10-10.2025	1st call
5	Construction of Protection bund on Tahab Chakoor road at various spots incl. IR Chandgam ,Palpora ,Nownagri incl. construction of RCC covered Drain at Payer.	45.22 lacs	1100/-	2% of ADV cost	120 days	BEE,AAV	UT sector	25-SE/PS of 2023-24 Dt.10.08.2023 & TS. NO. 144-SE/PS of 2025-26 DT.10-10.2025	1st call
6.	Upgradation of Aglar Kanigam High school link incld Kanigam Drabgam Pati road.	31.70 lacs	1100/=	2% of ADV cost	450 days	BEE,AAV	UT sector	18-SE/PS of 2023-24 Dt.02.08.2023 & TS. NO. 145-SE/PS of 2025-26 DT.10-10.2025	1st call

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

1.	Date of Issue of Tender Notice	13 - 10-2025
2.	Bid downloading Start Date	13 - 10-2025 from 10:00 A.M
3.	Bid submission Start Date	13 - 10-2025 from 10:00 A.M
4.	Bid Submission End Date	28 - 10-2025 upto 0 4:00 P.M
5.	Date & time of opening of Bids (Online)	29 - 10 -2025 at 11.00 A.M in the Office of the Executive Engineer R&B Div.Pulwama
6.	Submission of Performance Security(PS)	Within three (03) days of receipt of LOA. (The First lowest successful bidder has to provide 5% of allotted cost as Performance Security in the shape of CDR/FDR/BG and EMD of 2% shall be released after receipt of 5% Performance security.

- Bids must be accompanied with cost of Tender document in the shape of Treasury Challan /Receipt as per Annexure -C (Debited to M.H.0059 PWD) and EMD in the shape of CDR/FDR/BG pledged to the Executive Engineer R&B Div. Pulwama (The Date of Treasury Challan and EMD should be between the date of start of bid and Bid Submission End date.
- The date and time of opening of Bids shall be notified on Web site [www.jktenders.gov.in](http://www.jktenders.gov.in) and conveyed to the bidders automatically through an e-mail message on their e-mail address. The bids of responsive bidders shall be opened online on

same Web Site in the office of Executive Engineer R&B Div. Pulwama

- The bids for the work shall remain valid for a period of 120 days from the date of opening of bids.

- EMD in the shape of CDR/FDR/BG in favour of the Executive Engineer R&B Div. Pulwama**

- The Contractors are advised to visit the site and to be aware of the conditions for launching at site of work before quoting the rates.

- The contractor shall also be responsible for any theft/ damage to any of the component at site and the cost of damage/ theft if any shall be deducted from the work done or CDR of the Contractor till completion of work and handing over.

- The 1st lowest bidder has to produce an amount equal to 5% of contract as Performance Security in the shape of CDR/FDR/BG in favour of Executive Engineer R&B Division Pulwama within three (03) days after the date of receipt of letter of acceptance and shall be released after successful completion of DLP. The Bank Guarantee should be valid for 45 days beyond DLP

Head Draftsman

DIPK-7164/25

Technical Officer

dated: 14-10-2025

Executive Engineer

R&B Division Pulwama





## GreenFrontJK Conducts Clean-Up Drive Along Jhelum Bank

Observer News Service

Srinagar: In a bid to protect Kashmir's fragile ecosystem and promote environmental consciousness, a group of young volunteers under the banner of GreenFrontJK on Sunday organized a Clean-Up Drive along the banks of river Jhelum in Srinagar.

The initiative, part of the group's ongoing Sunday environmental activities, saw enthusiastic participation from over 22 student volunteers who collected plastic waste, discarded bottles, and other debris littering the riverbank.

According to the organizers, the drive aimed to raise public awareness about the importance of keeping water bodies clean and to inspire citizens to take an active role in preserving Kashmir's natural environment.

"Through such initia-

tives, we want to send a message that protecting nature begins with small, consistent efforts," a spokesperson of GreenFrontJK said. "Our rivers are lifelines of the Valley, and it is our shared responsibility to keep them pollution-free."

The youth-led group, which operates purely on a volunteer basis, comprises students and young professionals who dedicate their Sundays to environmental conservation activities across the Valley. From plantation drives to waste management campaigns, GreenFrontJK has been at the forefront of grassroots efforts aimed at creating a cleaner and greener Kashmir.

The organization urged the public to join hands in maintaining cleanliness around water bodies and to adopt sustainable practices to safeguard the region's environment for future generations.



## Paintball Fever Grips Kashmir as 'New Splash' of Adventure

Kashmir's Youth Embrace New Wave of Recreation

Agencies

Srinagar: Wearing a safety vest and uniform while splattering colours across a mock battle-zone, paintball is fast winning hearts in Kashmir.

Once known mainly for cricket and football, the valley is now witnessing a fresh wave of recreational excitement as paintball — the global combat sport born in the U.S. makes its entry in Srinagar's Rajbagh.

It all began with young entrepreneur Tajamul, who transformed the top floor of a building in Rajbagh into Kashmir's first and only indoor paintball arena. The game offers a taste of action long missing from the region's leisure scene.

"I wanted to bring something new to Kashmir, something that takes people away from their daily scrolling or online gaming and lets them enjoy in a safe, exciting way," Tajamul said while holding paintballs in his hand and briefing players about the game.

He said paintball is not just about shooting colours but about teamwork, bonding, and unforgettable moments. "Players gear up in two teams, helmets and protective safety vests before charging into friendly battles that combine teamwork, adrenaline and thrill," he added.

It is worth mentioning that the sport, which originated in the 1980s in the United States, has become a global craze with arenas in cities like Delhi, Bengaluru and Mumbai. For Kashmir,

where recreational infrastructure has long remained limited, the entry of paintball marks a refreshing shift.

About the introduction of this sport, Tajamul said he has been trying to bring this game to the valley

since 2017. "We introduced paintball in Kashmir in 2017, and now, after so many years, we have started the arena in Rajbagh," he said.

"Families, kids, students, married couples and even office-goers are showing up to try their



**Families, kids, students, married couples and even office-goers are showing up to try their hand at the game, which has quickly turned into a popular activity,"**

hand at the game, which has quickly turned into a popular activity," he added, noting that many say it is not just about fun but also about building fitness, bonding with your family, and staying active.

Tajamul further said the venture was not easy. "Bringing the gear, setting up a safe arena and convincing people that it's an all-season adventure — all of that took time. But once people tried it, they loved it," he said with a smile.

Similarly, paintball's rise in the valley also signals a changing mindset, where recreation and innovation are slowly replacing uncertainty and reviving the love for new-age games—(KNO)

## Marghoob Banihali Remembered at Literary Event



Farooq Ashai

Srinagar: A galaxy of cultural and literary figures gathered at Tagore Hall, Srinagar, on Sunday to pay homage to the celebrated Kashmiri poet, thinker, and educationist, Prof. Marghoob Banihali, on the occasion of "Yaum-e-Marghoob."

The event was organised by the Marghoob Foundation under the patronage of Adabi Markaz Kamraz, J&K, and drew writers, poets, scholars, and cultural icons from across the Valley.

The programme began with a soulful recitation of Prof. Banihali's poetry by young artist Hanzala Hussain Saqib and his team, followed by the rendition of the Adabi Markaz Kamraz anthem, composed by the poet himself. Welcoming the guests, Dr. Mushtaq Marg-

hoob, Chairman of the Marghoob Foundation and son of the late poet, highlighted the Foundation's mission to preserve and promote Prof. Banihali's intellectual and spiritual legacy, especially among the younger generation. "Our aim is to help the youth stay rooted in Kashmiri language and culture while drawing inspiration from his poetry, which embodies both humanism and spiritual depth," he said.

The event was presided over by Prof. Mushtaq Ahmad Siddiqi, former Vice-Chancellor of the Islamic University of Science and Technology (IUST), who described Prof. Banihali as "a symbol of an intellectual movement, infusing Kashmiri poetry with faith, truth, and social awakening."

Read Full Story On [kashmirobsrver.net](http://kashmirobsrver.net)

## Teenager Injured in Axe Attack in Qamarwari

Observer News Service

Srinagar: Panic gripped the Qamarwari area of Srinagar on Tuesday after an 18-year-old boy was brutally attacked with an axe, leaving him seriously injured.

Eyewitnesses and officials said the incident took place when the teenager, identified as

Numaan, son of John Mohammad Khanday, was assaulted by an individual wielding a sharp-edged axe. The sudden attack left the youth lying in a pool of blood, triggering chaos in the locality.

Local residents immediately shifted the injured to SMHS Hospital in Srinagar, where doctors are monitoring his condition, which re-

mains unknown as of now.

Meanwhile, police have taken cognizance of the incident and launched an investigation to identify and apprehend the attacker.

Authorities have assured that strict action will be taken once the circumstances surrounding the assault are fully established.

## Sad Demise of Mr. Ali Mohammad Zarkoob



With deep sorrow and heartfelt grief, we announce the passing away of our beloved father, Mr. Ali Mohammad Zarkoob, who departed for his heavenly abode on 14th October 2025. Inna Lillahi Wa Inna Ilayhi Rajioon. The Congregational Fateh Khawani will be offered at the ancestral graveyard in Malkha, near Ganj Baksh Park on Friday, 17th October 2025, after Friday prayers at 3.00 pm In-Shaa Allah. Condolences and mourning will be held at the family residence, Alamdar Colony B Lal Bazar.

Ladies are kindly requested not to bring eatables or other items.

**Grief-Stricken**

Mr. Irshad Ahmad Zarkoob, Mr. Rouf Ali Zarkoob, Mr. Ishfaq Ali Zarkoob  
Contact: 7006794796/ 9622660668

### OBSESSIVE COMPULSIVE DISORDER

8 WEEK FREE GROUP THERAPY

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

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

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

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

You do not have to fight your battles alone.

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

Happy & Healthy minds Office, HPVT Building (First Floor), Dareskhadal Chowk, Srinagar

9070806160

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

### AIRPORTS

SHIEK UL ALAM AIRPORT: 01942303311

### RAILWAYS

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

### HIGHWAY STATUS

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

HIJRI CALENDAR 21 Rabi-ul-Sani 1447	PRAYERS	
	FAJR	5:10
	ZUHR	12:18
	ASR	4:23
	Magrib	6:06
	ISHA	7:25

## This Day In History

- 533 - Byzantine General Belisarius makes his formal entry into Carthage, having conquered it from the Vandals
- 1522 - Emperor Karel I names Hernán Cortés governor of Mexico
- 1552 - Khanate of Kazan is conquered by troops of Ivan Grozny.
- 1756 - Saxon army surrenders to Prussia
- 1815 -Napoleon Bonaparte arrives on island of St Helena to begin his exile
- 1842 - Karl Marx becomes editor-in-chief of Rheinische Zeitung
- 1888 - German philosopher Friedrich Nietzsche decides to write his autobiography "Ecce Homo" on his 44th birthday
- 1904 - The Russians are driven back by the Japanese in the Battle of Shaho; both sides suffer high casualties: Japanese (16,000) and Russians
- 1914 - Battle of Warsaw, begins (ends Oct 21)
- 1924 - US President Calvin Coolidge declares Statue of Liberty a national monument
- 1932 - Tata Airlines (later to become Air India) makes its first flight.
- 1940 - Heavy German air raid on London, 400 killed
- 1941 - Hideki Tojo appointed Prime Minister of Imperial Japan
- 1946 St Louis Cards beat Boston Red Sox, 4 games to 3 in 43rd World Series

*From KO Archives*

## Matric Exams Postponed; Teachers Threaten To Sabotage Govt Move

Observer News Service

Srinagar- The Jammu and Kashmir Board of School Education BOSE, this evening announced its decision to postpone the examinations of 10th class soon after the day long negotiations failed to resolve the crisis raised by the teachers boycott of the examinations duty.

The Board authorities while announcing the decision to postpone the examinations said that the fresh date sheet would be sued next week.

Earlier representatives of the Teachers Forum and Lecturers Association held negotiations with the Government to resolve the crisis. The Government was represented by the Commissioner Secretary Education and the Director Education besides Minister of State of Education, Muhammad Sharief Tariq.

Sources said that teachers remained adamant as they demanded that Government should accept all their demands in black and white before they would call off their strike. The Government today showed willingness to resolve the crisis by assuring teachers that their genuine demands will be fulfilled at the earliest. But sources said, the teachers remained adamant saying that their past experience has been bitter. The promises made with them in the past had been hollow as Government backtracked from its decision, the teachers representative reportedly told the Government during the meeting.

The representatives of the Government told the teachers that the decision involving financial implications has to be taken by the Cabinet as nobody from the Government has authority to pass such orders. The Minister of Education, Muhammad Sharief Tariq, earlier in the day appealed the teachers to defer their strike upto October 26 so that the teacher's demands would be decided in the cabinet.

The Government later passed an order asking the Chairman of the State Board of School Education to conduct the examination immediately. The Chairman of the BOSE, Prof Ali Muhammad Charu told Observer News Service that the examinations would commence from October 20 as they have to recruit employees from other departments.

The Chairman said that the Board needs 4405 employees to conduct the exams. The staffers to be taken from the department of Revenue, Agriculture, Engineering, said the Chairman. As the conduct of the examinations is a technical job the recruits have to be imparted the necessary training, he said. The new staff will be given training in the district head-quarters on October 17, 18 and 19 and the examination would start from October 20, Chairman hoped.

Meanwhile a statement issued by the Joint Co-ordination Committee of Teachers Forum has advised the state government to shun the rigid attitude and issue orders for the implementation of demands put forth by teachers forum so that precious time of the students is not wasted. The statement said that the government is pursuing a policy of delaying tactics and is trying to nullify some demands of the Forum. But this time teachers community will not compromise on any of its demand, the statement added.

Statement condemned the rigid attitude of government and made it clear that Teachers Forum will boycott the house examinations of 8th and 11th class as well. If the Government goes ahead with the examination process all the schools in the valley will be locked, adds the statement justified the boycott of teachers and appealed the people and students misunderstand the strike issue.

Statement appealed all trade unions to support the Teachers demands. (Kashmir Observer, October 15, 1998)



KASHMIR OBSERVER®

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

KO VIEW

Whispers of a Garden

When Mahjoor sang his call for renewal, Kashmir was not the basket case it is today. If the poet was animated by fervour for the future, he was also inspired by what he saw around himself – nature, largely unsullied and unspoilt. His words of hope and challenge must have sprung as much from his confidence in his compatriots as from the bounteous mother’s blessings the Valley boasted of. But now, and for a long time, there has been betrayal on both counts. Anyone visiting Kashmir untutored today would find it hard to believe that it had once moved the poet to sing walo ha baaghwano nau baharuk shaan paida kar. Where is the baagh, and where is the baghbaan? Even saints and rishis born and bred here have found inspiration from nature’s bequests and scaled great heights in their spiritual journeys, leaving behind timeless lessons for humanity on how to forge its relationship with the world. In a way, this intellectual debt has been acknowledged time and again in poetry and prose, with some going to the extent of attributing the noblest verses sung here to the portraiture of nature. Ancient sites excavated during the twentieth century are also an indication of the strong affinity people of Kashmir had with their land. This is also reflected in literature, whatever the language in vogue in different periods of the region’s history.

Hafeez Jalandhari compared portraying Kashmir to drawing streams of milk from the rocks of Mount Bistun. The warp and woof of Ghani Kashmir’s poetry is nothing but the beauty of Kashmir. Even poets like Thomas Moore and Mirza Ghalib, who have never visited Kashmir but read of it in books or heard of it from others, have produced masterpieces in glowing tributes to this land. Thomas Moore introduced Kashmir to the world thus: Who has not heard of the Vale of Cashmere/With its roses the brightest that earth ever gave?. Mirza Ghalib put it thus: Mir’s poetry is beyond description; it is no less than the garden of Kashmir. Pandit Narayan Chakbast said, ‘Every speck of my Kashmir is exceedingly hospitable; even the wayside stones offered me water to drink.’ European travellers who visited Kashmir have praised this land in most beautiful prose.

Love for nature and its preservation was deeply ingrained in the local psyche. Long before the Vedic period, people here were ‘nature worshippers’. They saw gods and goddesses in different manifestations of nature and held them in high esteem. For them, preserving nature was the greatest religious duty. And this is said to have been so for thousands of years.

Assuming that Kashmir today has even average awareness of how highly such elements figure in its lore, both recorded and transmitted by word of mouth, is there even a tinge of a sense of loss at what has been wrought? What would the verdict be today if some outsider arrived for inspiration for his creativity? Would anyone find a resonance, or even a fleeting resemblance, with what had been described so graphically barely a hundred years ago? Given their aspirations in life and how they translate into the physical world, would present-day Kashmiris be remembered as lovers of nature? No one should be surprised if the undeniably talented artists and writers of today sing no odes.

CASH COURSE

Read This Before You Buy Anything

Profit Plans

From local shares to global markets, Kashmiri investors have opportunities to grow their money strategically.

Irshad Mushtaq

Investing can feel like a distant world, filled with complex terms and confusing charts. Understanding how to grow your money can transform financial security into a real possibility.

Shares offer a way to own a piece of a company you believe in. Dividends and growth over time reward patience and insight. ETFs, or exchange-traded funds, simplify diversification. With a single investment, you can spread risk across sectors and even across borders. Global ETFs open doors to international markets, letting Kashmiri investors tap into growth outside the local economy.

Gold and silver remain enduring stores of value. Investing in them through ETFs avoids the complications of physical storage while protecting against economic uncertainty. For those drawn to real estate, REITs provide a stake in property markets without managing buildings or tenants.

More advanced options like futures and options allow investors to plan around future asset prices, while expiry-day strategies can optimize returns with calculated risk. Commodities trading, company fixed deposits, and mutual funds offer additional layers of portfolio diversification, balancing potential growth with stability. Systematic investment and withdrawal plans help manage regular contributions or income, harnessing the power of compounding and providing steady support over time.

Kashmiri investors have a wide array of tools at their disposal. Each option carries its own balance of risk and reward. By understanding these choices and planning thoughtfully, building wealth becomes a deliberate and achievable journey, helping individuals secure their futures while contributing to the region’s growing economic potential.

The author is a Srinagar-based reputed financial advisor.

Kashmir’s Art of Healing

The world measures recovery in rebuilt walls. Kashmir reminds us it should be measured in healed hearts.



Musaib Bilal

When the Pahalgam attack took place earlier this year, I was full of life. I had been attending youth conferences, leading discussions, and speaking on education, women’s hygiene, and emotional well-being.

That evening, my friend and I were on a live session about tourism in Kashmir, talking about how travellers saw our valley as a “piece of the moon.” Midway through the conversation, the news broke. There had been an attack. We went silent. Within minutes, we ended the session.

What I felt first was anger. Then panic. What would this mean for our future, for the sense of peace we were finally learning to build?

I remember thinking: why does every spark of hope in Kashmir have to fight so hard to stay lit?

For generations, people here have been conditioned to survive. We have lived through upheavals, curfews, communication blackouts, and natural disasters. Survival became our default mode. But survival leaves scars that seep into how we think, feel, and raise our children.

Drug addiction, depression, and suicides are no longer rare incidents. They’ve become symptoms of an emotional epidemic that nobody wants to name.

After the attack, I met a local official and asked him what we were doing about the mental health crisis. He had no answer. Our priorities always lie in security, infrastructure, and relief. Mental health still feels like a distant privilege. But when we neglect it, everything else falls apart.

This year’s World Mental Health Day theme, “Access to Services – Mental Health in Catastrophes and Emergencies,” feels like it was written for us.

Soon after the April attack, we faced another blow. Continuous rains triggered flood-like conditions across parts of Kashmir, reviving memories of 2014 when homes, schools, and entire neighbourhoods were swallowed by water. I saw the same fear again: children crying, elders staring helplessly at rising waters, families trapped with no supplies. Relief camps were set up quickly, but no one talked about emotional care. Shelter and food took priority. Healing minds was never part of the plan.

When crises hit, conversations rarely go beyond ration, water, and safety. But disasters fracture the sense of safety people hold inside. What happens to the boy who wakes up screaming after seeing his house collapse? Or the mother who can’t sleep because silence

Governments and policymakers have to think beyond rebuilding roads and homes. They must fund therapy, create mental health units in disaster response teams, train community leaders to offer psychological care, and make counseling free and accessible after emergencies. The mind, too, deserves recovery.

reminds her of the flood’s roar? Or the young man whose only dream of stability is washed away overnight?

Those wounds don’t vanish when the water recedes. They stay in our bones.

Kashmir’s mental health infrastructure is painfully limited. For millions of people, we have only a handful of psychiatrists and psychologists, most based in Srinagar. Rural areas barely have access to basic counseling. Even in peaceful times, the waiting lists are long. During crises, help disappears altogether. Families facing trauma are left with silence as their only counsellor. And silence, I’ve learned, can be brutal.

When trauma is untreated, it multiplies. Parents who have lived through conflict, violence, or floods carry invisible wounds into their parenting. Fear, hyper-alertness, and emotional numbness spill into family life. Children grow up believing the world is dangerous, that it’s safer to suppress feelings than express them.

Trauma becomes hereditary. It travels from one generation to the next, shaping how we love, trust, and dream. This is how an entire society begins to live half-alive: physically present, emotionally absent.

To heal, we must change how we respond to crisis. Relief camps should include counsellors as naturally as they include doctors. Schools reopening after disasters should offer group sessions where children can talk about their fears through storytelling, art, or play. Simple acts, like listening, acknowledging, and validating pain, can do more for recovery than we realize. Mental health is part of the crisis response itself.

Healthy coping is learning how to live with the memories without letting them con-

sume us. For that, we need communities that talk about pain instead of hiding it. We need teachers trained in psychological first aid, social workers equipped to spot trauma, and parents who reassure children that fear is normal after chaos. These are human solutions.

The drug crisis in Kashmir is a grim example of what happens when emotional wounds go untreated. The number of substance abuse cases has surged dramatically in recent years. The government’s own data shows over 70,000 people currently battling addiction. Many started using drugs as a way to “forget” anxiety, fear, or grief.

In the absence of therapy, they turned to substances for escape. What could have been treated with counseling turned into a public health disaster.

But hope lives in small actions. A few NGOs in the valley now run community counseling programs where trained volunteers offer psychological first aid. Parents’ groups have begun sharing resources on coping mechanisms and emotional literacy. These may seem like modest efforts, but they are shifting the culture from silence to conversation.

The world has been no stranger to catastrophe. Floods in Pakistan and Bangladesh, earthquakes in Turkey and Syria, wars in Gaza and Ukraine carry the same psychological toll. A Kashmiri mother watching her house disappear in floodwater shares the same pain as a Gazan child trembling at the sound of sirens. Trauma has no geography. Healing shouldn’t either.

That is why mental health first aid must become as common as physical first aid in every relief effort, everywhere.

Governments and policymakers have to think beyond rebuilding roads and homes. They must fund therapy, create mental health units in disaster response teams, train community leaders to offer psychological care, and make counseling free and accessible after emergencies. The mind, too, deserves recovery.

As someone who has lived through both fear and hope, I’ve realized survival is not enough. A community can rebuild its homes, but remain broken inside. Healing begins when we tend to our minds with the same urgency as we do our wounds.

This World Mental Health Day, as Kashmir stands once again between chaos and calm, I hold on to one belief: we deserve to thrive, not merely survive.

The writer is a speaker, and mental health advocate pursuing a Bachelor’s degree at Amar Singh College. He can be reached at musaib-bilal.216061@gmail.com.

Letter to Editor

Kashmir’s Forgotten Tradition of Labour

In my childhood, life in Kashmir moved to the pulse of shared work. Families and neighbours helped one another in harvesting paddy, building homes, chopping wood, and running errands.

Work was a language of trust, care, and friendship. Villages and mohallas were knit together through these daily acts of cooperation.

A harvest could stretch into a celebration, a house could rise on laughter and collective effort. Everyone contributed, and shared.

Today, that picture has shifted. Most of the work we once did ourselves is now carried out by workers from Bihar, Uttar Pradesh, and other states who earn hundreds or thousands of rupees a day.

A single paddy field, which could have been harvested by neighbours in exchange for small favours or shared labour, now comes alive only when hired hands arrive. Families pay daily wages for jobs that could be done collectively at a fraction of the cost. The money leaves our homes, and our bonds slowly fade.

This shift has consequences beyond finance. Social cohesion, once built through joint effort,

is weakening. Children grow up seeing independence replaced by convenience, and a sense of shared responsibility disappearing.

Even the wealthy, those who once prided themselves on self-reliance, now hire labourers for harvesting their own paddy, stacking firewood, or fixing fences. When the rich outsource, others follow, believing that doing everything themselves is outdated. Poor families spend more while losing a sense of agency. Local workers, who could have earned a living, are left with fewer opportunities.

The erosion of local skill-building contribute, in subtle ways, to inequality. Those who can afford hired labour continue to do so, while those who cannot mimic the same habits, often out of social pressure. The result is a widening gap: the poor grow poorer, the rich appear more modern, and the community fragments.

Reviving the culture of shared work could reshape both economy and society. If four or five neighbours helped each other in rotation, the money would remain in the community. Families could save thousands of rupees per season, and that money could support students, small shopkeepers, and struggling households. Young people could find

work within their own villages, learning skills and pride that no hired labour can provide.

Beyond savings, shared work rebuilds relationships. Mutual effort fosters empathy, trust, and solidarity.

Our elders built Kashmir with their hands, shaping homes, fields, and relationships alike. Their legacy was social in spirit and synergy. They understood that peace and happiness grew from community effort, that respect and dignity were forged through contribution and cooperation.

Real development comes from within. It begins with us, our hands, our work, and our willingness to support one another.

If Kashmiris reclaim this habit of cooperation, we can restore both our economy and our social fabric. We can teach children that labour is honorable, that helping one another is strength, and that progress is measured in bonds, trust, and shared purpose. Real development begins at home.

Sincerely,

Shahid Showkat  
shahidshowkat226@gmail.com



# Reading Heart Lamp Through a Kashmiri Lens

On International Day of Rural Women, Heart Lamp by Banu Mushtaq sheds light on the hidden struggles of women in traditional societies. Though set in Karnataka, its themes of gender injustice and societal pressure resonate strongly in Kashmir, urging reflection and change.

Peerzada Mohsin Shafi

On October 15th each year, the International Day of Rural Women is celebrated globally, offering a meaningful opportunity to reflect on the unique challenges faced by women, particularly in rural communities.

This day serves as an ideal moment to deepen our understanding of their struggles and it feels especially fitting to explore these issues through the lens of Heart Lamp, Selected Stories by Banu Mushtaq.

After reading Heart Lamp, a powerful collection originally written in Kannada by Banu Mushtaq, a distinguished lady advocate and the recipient of the prestigious Best Booker Prize in 2025, I found myself profoundly moved by how the book resonates with the social realities of Kashmir.

Mushtaq's storytelling is not only masterful but also deeply relevant, offering an honest portrayal of the multifaceted hardships faced by women in society. The language, tone and perspective she employs transcend regional boundaries, making the narrative universally applicable.

Each chapter of Heart Lamp struck a personal chord, drawing stark parallels to the struggles women face here in Kashmir. The stories are more than literary works. They act as a mirror to our own societal issues, shedding light on the silent battles women fight every day.

On this International Day of Rural Women, it is the perfect time to immerse ourselves in Mushtaq's poignant storytelling. The book becomes not just a reflection of women's struggles but a powerful call for moral awakening. It urges us to confront the harsh realities of gender inequality and challenges us to rethink our attitudes and actions.

There is no better time than today to engage with this work and reflect on the urgent need for change in how we treat and empower women, particularly in rural and marginalized communities.

The very first chapter, "Stone Slabs for Shaista Mahal," sets a powerful tone. The story narrates the plight of a woman with many children, focusing on the eldest daughter who, despite her brilliance is denied further education and forced to care for her younger siblings.

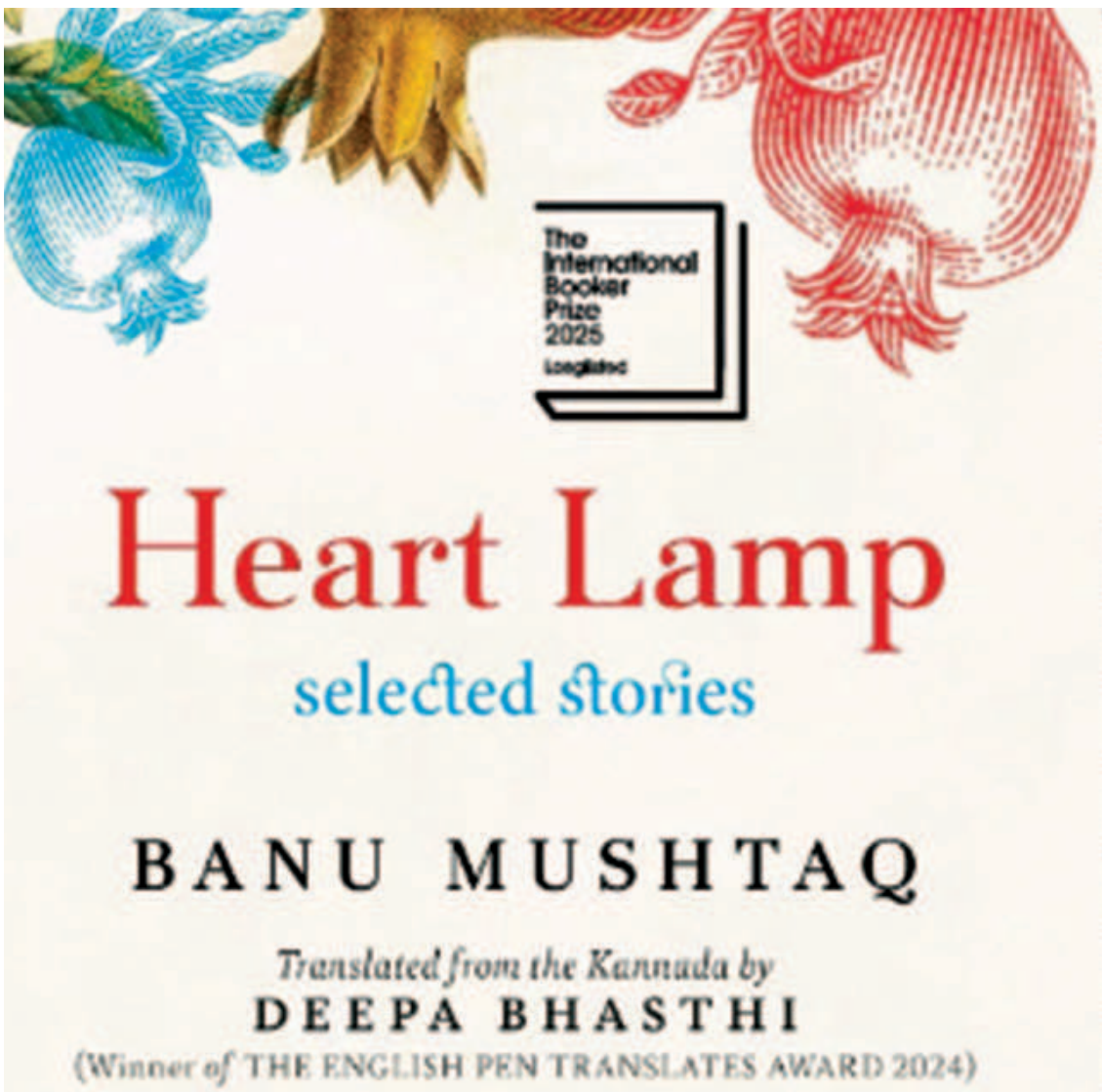
The author in this chapter recounts a visit of one lady to her husband's colleague's house, where the man had once showered praise on his wife, claiming he loved her enough to build a palace like the Taj Mahal for her. Yet, shockingly, after the wife's death in childbirth, he quickly remarried without waiting for few months and without regard for the children of the first marriage.

This stark contrast between words and actions reveals a toxic selfishness prevailing in society, where empty promises overshadow true compassion. It reflects the brutal reality that emotions and responsibilities are often neglected, turning humanity into something barbaric.

This reality resonates deeply with the situation in Kashmir, where broken promises and self-serving attitudes have become all too common, eroding the fabric of social trust and unity.

Kashmiri people often make grand commitments, offering words of encouragement and support, but when the time comes to follow through, those promises are quickly forgotten. This tendency is encapsulated in the saying, "Dammas seet chu Namaskaar," which translates to "Respect and love are given only as long as a person holds rank, position, or benefits."

In the chapter "Fire Rain", the author presents Mutawalli Sahab, a respected figure who leads the Mohalla and Jamia Mosque Committee, positions that give him authority and admiration in the community. He is seen as a leader who resolves local issues, guides people,



and often preaches about justice, fairness, and responsibility.

However, his image as a moral leader quickly unravels when it's revealed that he refuses to share his parental property with his sisters. This stark contradiction exposes a deeper hypocrisy within his character and highlights a broader societal issue.

Many Kashmiri leaders publicly advocate for justice and equality but fail to apply these principles in their personal lives. This is especially common among men in positions of power who claim moral authority over others, but fail to uphold those values within their own families.

Mutawalli Sahab's behaviour serves as a powerful critique of such leadership. It reveals the hollowness of individuals who preach fairness but act in self-interest when it comes to personal matters.

The chapter underscores the failure of many so-called leaders to create genuine change, as their actions often betray the values they claim to promote. It raises an important question: How can leaders speak of justice when they fail to practice it in their own homes?

Mutawalli Sahab's hypocrisy is not just a personal flaw, but a reflection of the larger societal problems, where entrenched patriarchal values and power structures continue to shape the behaviour of those in

woman's daughter dies due to neglect and poverty. In the wake of this heartbreaking loss, the community turns against Mutawalli Sahab, the man in charge of delivering justice, who has failed to uphold his duty.

This chapter exposes a grim truth about society and resonates with Kashmir as well, where women, especially those from impoverished backgrounds, suffer abandonment and their cries for justice are ignored or delayed.

The apathy of those in positions of power, like Mutawalli Sahab, not only neglects their responsibilities but leads to tragic outcomes for the most vulnerable. This narrative condemns the failure of those who are entrusted with safeguarding the welfare of others, especially women and children, whose suffering is compounded by societal indifference.

In contrast, the chapter "The Decision of the Heart" delves into the complexities of domestic life, focusing on a conflict within a family. Here, the wife resents her husband's equal affection for her mother, which creates tension and strife in their relationship.

The emotional turmoil reaches a point where the son, seeking peace and harmony in the household, arranges for his mother's remarriage, believing that this act will restore balance and calm to the family. The mother, despite her initial reserva-

tion, time had moved on, and the family dynamics had already been irreparably altered.

This story explores the emotional complexities of familial relationships, highlighting the delicate balance of love, sacrifice, and compromise needed to maintain harmony.

It resonates and reflects the emotional landscape of many Kashmiri families, where conflicts are often resolved through difficult choices and sacrifices, all in the hope of preserving peace.

However, despite these efforts, the damage caused by unresolved tensions often leaves lasting scars. In Kashmiri society, the pursuit of peace within the family can come at a high emotional cost, with the realization that, sometimes, the harm done cannot be undone.

Together, these chapters offer a stark contrast in the portrayal of human relationships. While "Black Cobras" highlights the tragic consequences of neglect and injustice, particularly the abandonment of women, "The Decision of the Heart" provides insight into the complexities of love, sacrifice, and family dynamics.

Both stories resonate deeply with the realities of Kashmiri society, where power structures and emotional bonds shape the lives of individuals in profound ways. Whether it is the failure of a community leader to protect the vulnerable or the emotional challenges within a

minimal medical care, a poor boy, Arif, surprisingly heals faster than Razia's own son, who received better care. This unsettles Razia, prompting her to reconsider her assumptions about privilege and divine justice. She extends kindness to Arif, inviting him into her home and sharing food.

This story critiques social class divisions and challenges condescension disguised as charity. It urges to respect the resilience and dignity of the underprivileged and embrace empathy and humility rather than pride in material wealth and same applies to our valley.

The chapter "Heart Lamp" focuses on Mehru, a woman struggling with postpartum depression and isolation despite being surrounded by family. She battles intense emotional pain and contemplates suicide, but the love of her young daughters gives her hope and a reason to continue.

This story sheds light on how women's mental health, especially postpartum depression is often ignored or stigmatized and it resonates with the valley. It exposes the societal expectation for women to silently endure suffering and conform to traditional roles, worsening their pain. This chapter calls for greater awareness, emotional support and the creation of safe spaces where women's mental health struggles are openly acknowledged and compassionately addressed.

Mental health, especially among women, is often overlooked or misunderstood, yet it is a crucial part of overall well-being.

The same theme is powerfully explored in another chapter titled "Soft Whispers," which delves into the quiet, often invisible suffering that women endure. These soft whispers symbolize the subtle, restrained ways women express their pain and hold on to hope in a society that discourages open emotion. In many cases, women carry heavy emotional burdens in silence, often in the name of preserving family honour.

This silence, however, comes at the cost of deep isolation and inner turmoil. The story is a gentle yet urgent plea for society to truly listen to tune in to the silent voices that often go unheard.

It calls for the creation of spaces where women can speak without fear, be met with understanding and receive the emotional support they deserve.

Above all, it reminds us that real compassion means recognizing the hidden struggles many women live with daily and responding with empathy, not indifference.

These struggles are deeply rooted and far too common in the valley. Many women silently carry emotional burdens, shaped by societal expectations, cultural pressure and a lack of supportive environments. It is time we confront this reality with sincerity and sensitivity.

We must learn to listen without judgment, to offer comfort without hesitation and to create spaces where women feel safe to express their pain and seek help.

Let us be the shoulders they can lean on and the voices that advocate for their healing. True progress will come only when mental health is treated with the same importance as physical health, and when every woman feels seen, heard and supported.

In "High-heeled Shoe," a young woman grapples with societal pressure to conform to rigid notions of femininity and appearance. The high-heeled shoe becomes a symbol of the sacrifices women make to meet oppressive beauty standards at the cost of their comfort and freedom.

This chapter reveals the emotional and psychological toll of these expectations on women, particularly in patriarchal settings. It urges society to question and dismantle harmful gender norms, advocating for acceptance of diversity in self-expression and greater empathy from families and communities.

"Taste of Heaven" tells of a young widow whose husband dies soon

after marriage. Despite her youth, she is not remarried and is passed between brothers, each unwilling to take responsibility. Her kind nature wins the affection of the children in the household, who comfort her



Heart Lamp is a beacon illuminating the path toward a more just and humane society. For Kashmir, these narratives are both a mirror and a guide reflecting our struggles and inspiring change.

with a cold drink they call "a drink from heaven." She finds solace in this, reminiscing about her late husband. This story resonates and reflects the plight of many widowed women in Kashmir, whose lives are often ruined by societal neglect and refusal to remarry or support them. It calls for change and compassion toward these women.

Finally, the deeply moving chapter "Be a Woman Once Oh Lord" is a powerful plea to the Almighty. It depicts the cruel reality women face, including a wife forced by her husband to demand money from her in-laws and bear child after child, highlighting the societal expectation for women's endless sacrifices.

When she finally gives birth to a boy, her joy is not for the child's gender but for the hope that another girl a "prisoner of life" in our society has not been born. This chapter encapsulates the profound suffering and injustice faced by women and calls for equal rights and empathy. It reflects the harsh realities in our societies, urging society to recognize women's pain and work toward true equality.

Together, these chapters from Heart Lamp provide a comprehensive reflection on social issues, gender injustice, leadership hypocrisy, mental health neglect, cultural expectations, education, identity, death and compassion. Each story resonates deeply with Kashmiri society, revealing truths we must confront and lessons we must learn.

The book teaches us to value empathy, justice, and dignity above tradition and appearance, to listen to the silenced voices and uplift the marginalized, to challenge toxic norms and embrace diversity, and above all, to foster a community rooted in love, respect, and equality.

Heart Lamp is a beacon illuminating the path toward a more just and humane society. For Kashmir, these narratives are both a mirror and a guide reflecting our struggles and inspiring change.

— Peerzada Mohsin Shafi hails from Anantnag. He is a researcher and infrastructure columnist who also writes on societal issues, critically highlighting systemic flaws.



# India Is A Great Country With Good Friend Of Mine At Top: Trump

Press Trust Of India

Egypt:US President Donald Trump on Monday praised India and Prime Minister Narendra Modi without naming him, saying "India is a great country with a good friend of mine at the top".

Trump, addressing a summit of world leaders at this Egyptian city after a ceasefire reached in Gaza ending the Israel-Hamas war, said from the podium that he thinks "India and Pakistan will live very nicely together".

"India is a great country with a very good friend of mine at the top and he's just done a fantastic job. I think Pakistan and India are going to live very nicely together," Trump said while looking at Pakistan Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif who was standing behind him, as he responded with a chuckle.



Earlier praising Sharif and his "favourite field marshal" Pakistan army chief Gen Asim Munir, Trump also invited the Pakistan prime minister to address the gathering.

Sharif said peace has been achieved in the Middle East after "untiring and relentless efforts" of President Trump.

"Pakistan had nominated

President Trump for the Nobel Peace Prize for his outstanding (and) extraordinary contributions to first stop the war between India and Pakistan and then achieve a ceasefire along with his very wonderful team," he said.

Sharif said he would like to nominate Trump again for the Nobel Peace Prize for "saving

millions of lives not only in South Asia but also in the Middle East".

After missing out on the Nobel Peace Prize, Trump has claimed to have resolved eight wars, including the one between India and Pakistan, saying, he did not do this for the Nobel.

Trump has been claiming to resolve seven conflicts till now, including the one between India and Pakistan. However, he has now increased that figure to eight after adding the Israel-Gaza conflict.

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

# Detained AAP MLA Moves HC For Permission To Cast Vote In RS Polls

Press Trust Of India

Jammu: Jammu and Kashmir AAP president and MLA Mehraj Malik, who was detained under Public Safety Act (PSA) last month, has moved the High Court of J&K and Ladakh seeking permission to participate in the upcoming assembly session and to cast his vote in Rajya Sabha elections.

The J&K Assembly session is scheduled to start on October 23 and the biennial elections to fill the four Rajya Sabha seats of the Union Territory, lying vacant since 2021, would be held on October 24.

Admitting the application of Malik, Justice Sanjay Dhar directed the government to file its reply. He was hearing the main habeas corpus petition filed by the politician who was detained on September 8 for allegedly disturbing public order and was subsequently lodged in Kathua jail.

Senior advocate Rahul Pant, along with advocates S S Ahmed, Muzaffar Iqbal Khan, Appu Singh Slathia, Tariq Mughal, M Zulkarnain Chowdhary and Joginder Singh Thakur, submitted that they have filed an application seeking permission for the detenu to participate in the upcoming assembly session and to cast his vote for the Rajya Sabha election. Furthermore, they emphatically put forth that the replies in the main petition have not been filed till date.

On September 24, Malik filed a habeas corpus petition, challenging his detention and claiming Rs 5 crore compensation.

Justice Chatterji Koul had issued notices to the principal secretary, Home Department of J-K government, Doda district magistrate, the senior superintendent of police and the superintendent of Kathua district jail to file their response by October

14, the next date of hearing.

"It was humbly and vociferously submitted that the applications are of emergent nature, therefore should be considered expeditiously so that the detenu can participate in the upcoming assembly session of J&K and can cast his vote for the Rajya Sabha election," a spokesperson of the AAP said.

Senior advocate Anil Sethi and Senior Additional Advocate General Monika Kohli appeared for the government of J&K and sought time to file reply in the application as well as the main petition.

After considering the pleas of both the parties, Justice Sanjay Dhar granted time to the J&K government to file the reply in the application by or before October 18 and to file reply in the main petition by or before November 7 with further direction to keep record available on November 7 for consideration of the matter, the spokesperson said.

## CONTD. FROM FRONT PAGE

### RS 'Safe Seat'

to provide the party a 'safe seat' in the upcoming Rajya Sabha polls. Sources said the report detailed grievances over what Congress called NC's violation of coalition dharma and marginalization of Congress leaders over the past year.

"The party leadership in Jammu and Kashmir is anguished over the backtracking of commitment by the National Conference leadership with senior leader Sonia Gandhi over Rajya Sabha polls," sources said, adding that mounting pressure exists on the Pradesh Congress Committee (PCC) leadership to consider pulling out of the government.

Congress J&K chief Tariq Hamid Karra described the NC's refusal to grant a safe seat as a "blatant betrayal" and claimed the move was a tactical step away from the INDIA alliance. Speaking on Sunday at a party meeting, he accused the NC leadership of having "questionable motives" since the formation of the alliance government.

"By backtracking on the promise of providing a single safe seat in the forthcoming Rajya Sabha elections, the National Conference is tactically moving away from the INDIA alliance," Karra said. He emphasised that Congress initially joined hands with the NC for the "higher purpose" of restoring dignity and countering divisive forces in Jammu and Kashmir.

Karra also accused the NC of disregarding alliance principles by not forming a coordination committee to ensure smooth governance and sidelining Congress in decision-making, particularly on matters like statehood restoration. He further criticised Chief Minister Omar Abdullah for statements perceived as favouring the BJP and undermining Congress's role.

The NC had announced three candidates for the Rajya Sabha and offered the fourth to Congress, which declined to contest the "riskier" seat. Omar Abdullah reportedly denied that any commitment was made to Congress regarding a safe seat, despite claims that NC president Farooq Abdullah had assured one to senior Congress leader Sonia Gandhi.

The NC had announced three candidates for the Rajya Sabha and offered the fourth to Congress, which declined to contest the "riskier" seat. Omar Abdullah reportedly denied that any commitment was made to Congress regarding a safe seat, despite claims that NC president Farooq Abdullah had assured one to senior Congress leader Sonia Gandhi.

The political fallout has drawn attention from other parties as well. Peoples Conference (PC) chairman Sajad Gani Lone announced he would not vote for NC candidates in the Rajya Sabha polls, accusing Omar Abdullah of aligning with the BJP and betraying Congress. Lone claimed that Congress is the only party genuinely opposing BJP in the region and argued that NC's actions indirectly benefit the ruling party at the Centre.

The current assembly strength makes the Congress's six MLAs crucial. If Congress withdraws support, the NC-led government's effective strength would drop to 48 in the 90-member assembly, slightly above the majority mark of 45, leaving the coalition vulnerable amid the ongoing RS seat dispute.

With the Rajya Sabha elections scheduled for October 24, all eyes are on the Congress high command to decide its strategy and future course of action in Jammu and Kashmir.

### Will Sajad Lone's

elections, a move seen as giving a crucial edge to BJP candidate Sat Sharma in the polls.

Lone's decision came amid an earnest appeal by Chief Minister Omar Abdullah, who urged all non-BJP parties to unite and support the National Conference's fourth candidate, Imran Nabi Dar, to prevent a BJP victory.

Lone has rejected Omar's call.

"I would rather die than vote for the National Conference. Stop dictating to us who we should vote for and who we should not. You cannot label us. You are not a prince," the JKPC leader, who was a minister in the BJP-PDP government, told reporters here.

The polls are scheduled for October 24 and the NC is expected to easily secure three of the four Rajya Sabha seats based on the current strength of the legislative assembly.

However, the contest for the final seat is razor-thin. The assembly has a strength of 88 MLAs out of which the NC-led ruling coalition has 55.

BJP candidate Sat Sharma needs only three non-BJP MLAs to either abstain or cross-vote to ensure a victory for the saffron party. The BJP has only announced three candidates for the four seats.

Omar, meanwhile, termed the upcoming polls as a litmus test for political parties in the region.

"I appeal to political parties not to stay away from the elections and prove that they are against the BJP because there are only two

parties contesting the polls — the BJP and the National Conference," he said in Baramulla.

Responding to Lone's announcement of abstention, Omar said, "Everyone knows who will benefit from such a move... What are his compulsions only he would know? But we will need everyone's support to ensure that the National Conference wins all the seats and the BJP wins none."

Lone questioned the NC's commitment to fighting the BJP saying "today you are in the dock. You have to prove to the people of J-K that you did not deny a Rajya Sabha seat to the Congress on BJP's orders. Prove to the people of J-K that you are not sitting in the BJP lap."

Dismissing Omar's assertion that abstention amounted to tacit support for the BJP, the JKPC chief added, "Your sense of entitlement is synonymous with lunacy."

The chief minister, meanwhile, countered Lone's allegations, defending the party's decision to field a fourth candidate.

"Had that been the case, we would not have fielded a candidate and compromised... If Sajad is against the BJP, then he should vote for our candidate. By staying away, it is benefitting the BJP," Omar asserted, highlighting that his party had felt the Congress was best suited to win the fourth seat before they opted not to field a candidate.

The elections for the four seats of Rajya Sabha in J&K have been divided into three notifications. Chowdhury Mohammed Ramzan of the NC will have a direct contest with Ali Mohammed Mir of the BJP in one of the seats.

For the second seat, NC's Sajjad Kitchloo will fight against Rakesh Mahajan of the BJP.

The third seat will have Imran Nabi Dar of the NC contesting against BJP's Sat Sharma.

There are two independent candidates also in the fray and all the nomination papers will be scrutinized on October 16.

### Op Sindoor Showed

is the fundamental foundation of my policies. Personally, for me the land of veterans is no less than a pilgrimage site. Our veterans have made immense contribution in economic growth, social transformation and the resurgence of a glorious India," the Lieutenant Governor said.

He recalled the valour of 26 Infantry Division during Operation Sindoor and army's selfless work in saving people's lives during recent natural calamities.

The Lieutenant Governor called upon ex-servicemen to contribute to society by applying their leadership skill and discipline in ongoing community service, and civic action programmes.

"Our ex-servicemen are role models for the youth. They must guide the young generation on the righteous path and teach them the values of patriotism, discipline, and selfless service," he further said.

The Lieutenant Governor urged all sections of society to honor the sacrifices and dedication of security forces' brave hearts. It is our collective responsibility to ensure that our veterans and the families of our martyrs live a dignified life, he said.

Lt Gen. Manoj Kumar Katiyar, General Officer Commanding-in-Chief, Western Command; Lt Gen. Rajan Sharawat, GOC, 9 Corps; Maj Gen. Mukesh Bhanwala, GOC, 26 Infantry Division; Shri Ramesh Kumar, Divisional Commissioner Jammu; Lt Gen RK Sharma (Retd.), President, J&K Ex-Services League; Brig. Gurmeet Singh Shan (Retd.), Director, Sainik Welfare, J&K; senior officials of Security forces, Police and Civil Administration; war veterans, ex-servicemen and veer naris were present.

### Buy Swadeshi, Support

self-reliance and national pride by supporting indigenous crafts and small businesses.

"All families should buy handicrafts, handloom, and other traditional products as gifts for Diwali. This will instil patriotism among people and support small businesses," the Lieutenant Governor said.

Organised by the Jammu and Kashmir Police in collaboration with the Police Wives Welfare Association (PWVA), the Diwali Mela features a wide range of attractions including food and shopping stalls, career counselling and educational counters, public awareness programmes, a live magic show, police band display, laser show, and fireworks.

The event was attended by DGP Nalin Prabhat, ADGP Headquarters M.K. Sinha, ADGP Armed Anand Jain, IGP Jammu Bhim Sen Tuti, Divisional Commissioner Jammu Ramesh

Kumar, besides serving and retired police officials, members of the Police Wives Welfare Association, and a large number of citizens.

The festive event blends celebration with community spirit, aiming to promote local entrepreneurship while honouring the contributions of the Jammu and Kashmir Police to peace and public service in the Union Territory.

### Pahalgam Attack

rains from July to September have caused major losses to the agriculture and horticulture sectors, delivering a substantial blow to the economy.

Speaking about the Pahalgam attack, Omar said it was not only a setback for tourism but also affected the perception of Jammu and Kashmir as a home for people and visitors alike. "Pahalgam was a setback to how we perceive Jammu and Kashmir as a home," he noted.

Despite the setbacks, Omar expressed optimism about the future. "The situation in Jammu and Kashmir, when it is good, is very, very good, and when it is bad, it is terrible. We came very close to the lowest point earlier this year, but the direction now, I would like to believe, is positive," he said.

He added that restoring Jammu and Kashmir to its pre-Pahalgam economic and social position would take time and sustained effort, but he remained hopeful about gradual recovery.

### From Art 370 To

further strengthened the confidence of citizens in our security forces," Shah said.

Highlighting the government's zero-tolerance policy under Prime Minister Narendra Modi, he said the campaign against terrorism has included surgical strikes, air strikes, and now Operation Sindoor. "No matter where terrorists hide, our forces have proven that no place is safe for them. Our soldiers are resolutely determined to go to the depths of the Earth to punish every act of terror," Shah added.

Since 2019, the government has strengthened counter-terror measures, including amendments to the UAPA and NIA Act, strict enforcement of the Prevention of Money Laundering Act, banning terror groups such as the Popular Front of India (PFI), and upgrading the Multi-Agency Centre for intelligence sharing.

Shah also praised the NSG for its bravery and preparedness, noting that the force had conducted reconnaissance of 770 important locations nationwide, including religious sites, inland waterways, and Parliament, with 3D modelling of key structures underway for strategic planning.

The Home Minister laid the foundation stone of a special operation training centre for the NSG in Manesar, to be constructed at a cost of Rs 141 crore over eight acres. The centre will also train personnel from anti-terrorist squads across the country.

Shah announced the setting up of a sixth NSG hub in Ayodhya, Uttar Pradesh, joining existing hubs in Mumbai, Chennai, Kolkata, Hyderabad, and Gandhinagar. He lauded the NSG for protecting the nation in critical operations since 1984 and said every citizen can feel the country is safe in the hands of its Black Cat commandos.

### 'Op Sindoor 2.0

deal with it.

"The action we will take this time will be deadlier than in the past. It will be more powerful. Yes, you are very right — it (Operation Sindoor 2.0) has to be deadlier. There is no doubt about it," Lieutenant General Katiyar told reporters.

He was replying to a question on whether Operation Sindoor 2.0 will be deadlier than the first one.

Asked whether there will be Pahalgam-type attacks in the future by Pakistan, he said that until there is a change in Pakistan's thinking, it will continue to carry out such mischiefs.

"It does not have the capacity to fight a war with us. They do not want to fight a war. It commits mischiefs as per its policy of 'bleed India through a thousand cuts'," he said.

The Western Army commander said that India had inflicted heavy damage on Pakistan in Operation Sindoor. "We destroyed its posts and air bases, but it may again attempt something like the Pahalgam attack. We have to remain prepared. We are fully prepared. I am confident the action this time will be deadlier than in the past," he said.

The Army commander complimented the armed forces for their role in Operation Sindoor, saying it gave a befitting reply to Pakistan after the Pahalgam terror attack.

"Pakistan again attempted a nefarious strike through a terrorist attack in Pahalgam, but the Indian Army responded strongly. In Operation Sindoor, we received full support from the public, veterans, state and civil administration, and everyone else," he said.

Addressing an ex-servicemen rally to commemorate 60 years of the 1965 India-Pakistan War, he said that terrorists killed innocent people in the Pahalgam attack. "The Indian Army gave a befitting reply to Pakistan. Operation Sindoor was successful as we received full support from the administration, ex-servicemen, and the local people."

The Army commander maintained that the forces are ready to thwart future attacks by the neighbouring nation.

He said that Pakistan does not have the courage to face India directly and will not desist from its designs. "We believe Pakistan's attitude will not change. It will try again to attack us. It lacks the courage to face us directly, so it will attempt another terrorist attack like the one in Pahalgam. It is important that we remain vigilant. The Indian Army is ready to thwart any nefarious move by Pakistan," he said.

Recalling the 1965 Indo-Pak war, he said the reason for Pakistan's defeat was that it underestimated the patriotism of the people of Jammu and Kashmir.

"We won the trust of the people of the nation after defeating Pakistan in the 1965 war, and that trust is intact today. Pakistan's aim was to capture Jammu and Kashmir. About 10,000 Razakars trained by the Pakistani Army infiltrated, but they made a mistake in measuring the patriotism of the people of Jammu and Kashmir," he said.

Taking a dig at Pakistan, he said, "With the help of the public, the Indian Army chased them away."

Marking the Diamond Jubilee of the 1965 Indo-Pak War, the Indian Army's Tiger Division organised a series of events in Jammu to honour the valour and sacrifice of its soldiers.

The ceremony began at Balidan Stambh with the hoisting of a 50-foot-high national flag, followed by a wreath-laying by Lt Gen Katiyar in tribute to fallen heroes.

He also interacted with schoolchildren, NCC cadets, Scouts and Guides, urging them to uphold the values of patriotism and discipline.

A mega ex-servicemen rally at Satwari Ground, attended by more than 3,000 veterans, 'Veer Naris' and 'Veer Matas', was graced by Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha.

The rally, themed "Shaurya, Samarpan aur Samadhan", paid homage to 1965 war heroes and reaffirmed the Army's commitment to the welfare and honour of its veterans. (PTI)

### Father-Son Drug

FIRs filed under the Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances (NDPS) Act. Mohd Saleem Dar, alias Sahib Matto, son of Abdul Rasheed Dar, was booked under FIR No. 167/2025 for his involvement in illicit drug trafficking. His father, Abdul Rasheed Dar, had earlier been booked under FIR No. 113/2025 for similar offences.

Investigations revealed that the duo had accumulated wealth through the proceeds of narcotics trade, acquiring a double-storey residential house and a single-storey commercial shopping complex in Village Tulkhan.

"Following legal procedures and based on concrete evidence, both properties have been formally seized and attached under Sections 68-E and 68-F of the NDPS Act," the police statement said.

The district police said this action marks a significant milestone in their ongoing campaign against drug trafficking. "We reiterate our zero-tolerance policy towards drug-related crimes and remain committed to eradicating this menace from society," the statement added.

This operation is part of the broader efforts by Anantnag Police to dismantle narcotics networks and hold accountable those who profit from illegal drug trade. (inputs from KNC)

### WHO Alerts On

surveillance, especially in informal or un-regulated markets.

Investigations revealed that the syrups, manufactured by Sresan Pharmaceutical, Rednex Pharmaceuticals, and Shape Pharma, contained Diethylene Glycol (DEG), a toxic substance that can cause acute kidney injury and death. The Central Drugs Standard Control Organization (CDSCO) confirmed the contamination, halted production at the implicated sites, and initiated a recall of affected

batches.

WHO has advised healthcare professionals to report any adverse effects or lack of expected effects and warned that consuming these contaminated syrups could lead to severe, potentially fatal illness.

"If you are in possession of any of these products, do not use them. Seek immediate medical attention if consumed," the alert stated, emphasizing urgent caution.

### SC To Hear Pleas

mandatory time period was nearing the end. On Tuesday, another similar plea was mentioned for urgent hearing along with Owasi's plea on October 28.

The bench said it would consider listing the fresh one as well.

In an interim order, the top court had on September 15 put on hold a few key provisions of the Waqf (Amendment) Act, 2025, including a clause that only those practising Islam for the last five years could create waqf, but refused to stay the entire law outlining the presumption of constitutionality in its favour.

It also held the Centre's order to delete the "waqf by user" provision in the newly-amended waqf law was prima facie not arbitrary and the argument that waqf lands would be grabbed by governments held "no water".

Waqf by user refers to a practice where a property is recognised as a religious or charitable endowment (waqf) based on its long-term, uninterrupted use for such purposes, even if there isn't a formal, written declaration of waqf by the owner.

Earlier on October 9, Pasha, appearing for Owaisi, had said that a miscellaneous application seeking extension of time for registration of waqf properties be heard.

He said that six months time was given in the amended law for registration of the waqf properties and "Five months went during the judgement, we now only have one month left."

The Centre had on June 6 launched the Unified Waqf Management, Empowerment, Efficiency and Development Act, 1995 (UMEDD) central portal to create a digital inventory after geo-tagging all waqf properties.

According to the mandate of the UMEDD portal, details of all registered Waqf properties across India are to be mandatorily uploaded within six months.

### Apni Party To

Speaking to reporters after a key meeting with provincial leaders at the party's Jammu office in Gandhi Nagar, Bukhari said that the candidates' names will be finalised and announced after the Political Affairs Committee (PAC) meeting in Srinagar.

"Our Jammu organisation has finalised the candidates. We will announce the names tomorrow. We are neither supporting anyone nor taking support from anyone," he said, emphasizing the party's independent stand.

Bukhari took a dig at the ruling National Conference (NC) government and the BJP-led Central Government, accusing them of failing to deliver on promises. He highlighted issues like lack of development, absence of social welfare schemes, rising unemployment, and non-release of jailed youth, adding that the prolonged closure of the Jammu-Srinagar National Highway had caused significant losses to fruit growers in Kashmir.

"The people have lost faith as NC and BJP have failed to fulfil their commitments. Statehood is crucial; otherwise, why are there 29 states in India?" Bukhari said, reiterating the party's demand for the restoration of statehood to Jammu and Kashmir.

He also highlighted the Apni Party's role after the abrogation of Article 370, claiming the party successfully protected jobs and land rights for locals by engaging directly with the Union Government—a step he said no other party took.

Bukhari urged voters to reject both NC and BJP in the upcoming bye-polls and extend their support to Apni Party candidates.

Muntazir Likely to Quit Apni Party  
Apni Party Chief Spokesperson, Muntazir Mohiuddin would likely resign from the party and contest the upcoming Budgam by-elections as an independent candidate.

Muntazir confirmed that he will contest the Budgam bypolls as an independent candidate.

"I may quit the Apni Party, but as of now, I am still part of it," he said.

Pertinently, during the 2024 Assembly elections, he had extended his support to Omar Abdullah on the Budgam constituency seat.



# Apple Demand Picks Up After Month-Long Slump

Growers Urge Govt to Compensate for Earlier Losses

## Agencies

**SRINAGAR:** After facing over a month of sluggish demand and falling prices, apple growers in Kashmir are finally witnessing some relief as rates have started to climb.

According to traders and farmers, the demand for Kashmiri apples has improved over the past week, pushing prices up by nearly 30 per cent.

Bashir Ahmad Basheer, president of the Kashmir Valley Fruit Growers Cum Dealers Union, said the turnaround has brought a glimmer of hope to the community after weeks of distress.

"The rates have started going up as demand has increased in various markets outside Kashmir. We expect prices to improve further in the coming days, which could help growers recover at least part of the losses they suffered earlier," he said.

Basheer added that the government's "indifference" towards the crisis faced by or-

chardists has deepened their financial woes.

"A majority of the growers have already suffered heavy losses this season due to low demand, poor rates, highway

///

**THE RATES HAVE STARTED GOING UP AS DEMAND HAS INCREASED IN VARIOUS MARKETS OUTSIDE KASHMIR. We expect prices to improve further in the coming days"**

///

closure, freight rise and other issues. Unfortunately, the gov-



FILE PIC

ernment has so far failed to provide any compensation or relief," he said.

Local farmers echoed similar concerns, expressing cautious optimism about the current rise in rates but warning that recovery may still take time.

Abdul Rashid, an apple grower from Shopian, said that the last month was "one of the worst" in

recent years.

"We were forced to sell apples at throwaway prices. The rates were so low that they didn't even cover transport and packaging costs. Now, with the demand improving, we are hopeful the next few weeks will be better," he said.

Another grower, Mohammad Yousuf from Sopore, said many

farmers had to delay sales in the hope of better prices. "Those who stored their apples are now in a better position as the market has started responding. If the demand continues to rise, it could bring some relief to us," he said.

Traders in the other fruit mandis also confirmed an uptick in market activity. They said demand from many Indian states has improved slightly due to festive season needs, leading to higher prices for A- and B-grade apples.

Experts believe the next few weeks will be crucial for the fruit market, as consistent demand could stabilise rates and help offset the losses growers incurred earlier in the season.

Meanwhile, farmers have reiterated their appeal to the government for compensation and support, saying the horticulture sector—one of the backbones of Kashmir's economy—needs urgent attention to prevent long-term distress—(KNO)

## Reservation Row

# Will Ruhullah Take to the Streets Again?

## Agencies

**SRINAGAR** MP and senior National Conference (NC) leader Aga Syed Ruhullah has indicated that he may join students in protests over the unresolved reservation issue in Jammu and Kashmir, raising questions about renewed agitations in the Valley.

In an interview, Ruhullah said the government had promised to resolve the issue within six months after setting up a committee, but no significant progress has been made. "The committee was supposed to submit its report within six months. Later, it was said that the report had been sent to the law department, but it has not been made public yet," he said.

Ruhullah said he has been in contact with students affected by the issue and assured them of his support if they decide to protest again. "At that time, I spoke to the students and told them that if they have to go on the streets again, I am ready for that too. It is an elected government—why will they not listen? Why should students have to protest repeatedly?" he asked.

He added that previous plans to discuss the matter at Tiger Hall were blocked, but he continues to engage with students. "I do not want students to suffer, but I remain with them. Internally, the issue is neither dead nor on the back foot for me," Ruhullah said.

Speaking on internal party discussions regarding the up-



coming Budgam elections, Ruhullah said he had made his position clear. "Before we talk about Budgam, you should act on what you had promised regarding reservation," he said, stressing that he had put forward one key condition: the cabinet must take up the reservation issue and the sub-committee report be made public. "If you can show your intention by doing these two or three things, then I will give my answer regarding Budgam," he added.

Addressing speculation about differences with the NC, Ruhullah clarified that his stance is issue-based rather than confrontational. "Reservation is one among several issues tied to the broader political rights of Jammu and Kashmir. Our commitment to people is based on our agenda and rights, including those linked to Article 370. If political effort is not visible, it appears as confrontation," he said.

Ruhullah reiterated that he continues to raise the issue in every available forum and remains consistent in his advocacy. "Wherever and in whichever way I can fight, I am fighting the same issue-based fight," he said. (KNS)

# LG Ladakh Calls for Expedited Smart PDS Card Distribution

## Observer News Service

**LEH:** The Lieutenant Governor of Ladakh, Kavinder Gupta on Tuesday emphasised the need for expediting the distribution of Smart Public Distribution System (PDS) cards across the Union Territory to ensure uninterrupted food security for all citizens, particularly those residing in remote and high-altitude regions.

Chairing a meeting at the LG Secretariat, the Lieutenant Governor highlighted that the Smart PDS cards—designed to replace traditional paper ration cards—offer a more durable and secure system with electronic authentication features. These cards, he said, will not only streamline the delivery of subsidised food grains and essential commodities but will also serve as an official identification tool to access multiple government welfare schemes under the One Nation, One Ration Card (ONORC) initiative.

The meeting was attended by Deputy Chairman, LAHDC Leh, Tsering Angchuk; Executive Councillor, LAHDC Kargil, Er Panchok Tashi; Secretary, FCS&CA, Rahul Sharma; Director, FCS&CA, Tahir Hussain; Head of the DFPD Informatics Division, NIC, Meenu Arora and team; and other officials from the Food, Civil Supplies & Consumer Affairs Department.

During the discussion, the Lt Governor asked the National Informatics Centre (NIC) to resolve technical and e-KYC-related issues—including Aadhaar seeding errors, legacy data problems, and internet connectivity challenges—on a priority basis. He directed NIC to conduct special handholding and training sessions for local officials to ensure smooth functioning and early completion of the e-KYC process.



## DG ITBP Calls on LG Ladakh

### Observer News Service

**LEH:** The Director General of the Indo-Tibetan Border Police (ITBP), Praveen Kumar, IPS, paid a courtesy call on the Hon'ble Lieutenant Governor of Ladakh, Shri Kavinder Gupta, at the Raj Niwas today.

During the meeting, the Director General ITBP briefed the Lt Governor on matters related to border management, security preparedness, and welfare initiatives for ITBP personnel deployed in the Union Territory of Ladakh. He further briefed the Lt Governor on ongoing infrastructure development projects, logistic support mechanisms, and measures being taken to enhance operational efficiency and living conditions of ITBP

personnel in high-altitude areas. The Lt Governor appreciated the ITBP's dedicated service in safeguarding the nation's borders and acknowledged its significant role in supporting the local administration during emergencies and disaster response operations.

Inspector General, North-West Frontier (NWF), ITBP, Shri Akun Sabharwal, (IPS), also accompanied the Director General during the meeting.



personnel in high-altitude areas.

The Lt Governor appreciated the ITBP's dedicated service in safeguarding the nation's borders and acknowledged its significant role in supporting the local administration during emergencies and disaster response operations.

Inspector General, North-West Frontier (NWF), ITBP, Shri Akun Sabharwal, (IPS), also accompanied the Director General during the meeting.

Highlighting the urgency, the Lt Governor said that delays in resolving these issues could adversely affect beneficiaries in remote regions, especially during the winter months when several areas remain cut off due to heavy snowfall. He emphasised that timely completion of Smart PDS card distribution is critical to ensure that no household is deprived of essential supplies during this period.

Earlier, officials from FCS&CA briefed the Lt Governor about the ongoing challenges in issuing Smart PDS cards, particularly in the addition and deletion of beneficiaries. They requested NIC's technical support and on-ground assistance to expedite the process.

Reiterating his government's commitment to ensuring food security and digital efficiency, the Lt Governor, Kavinder Gupta called upon all departments to work in close coordination and ensure that every eligible household in Ladakh receives its Smart PDS card at the earliest.

# Director Exceptional Academy & Chanakya Jammu Calls on LG

## Observer News Service

**SRINAGAR:** Owais Ali Bhat, Director of Chanakya IAS Academy, Jammu Centre and Exceptional Academy, Srinagar, as well as the founder of the Owais Ali Bhat Foundation, called on the Lieutenant Governor of Jammu and Kashmir. Mr. Bhat, an educationist, philanthropist, and social worker, met the Lieutenant Governor along with Azhar (Director, Exceptional Academy, Srinagar, and social worker) to discuss issues related to student welfare, reservation policies, skill development schemes, scholarships, and the alarming unemployment rate among the youth in Jammu and Kashmir.

Bhat also briefed the LG about the relief work carried out by the



Owais Ali Bhat Foundation during the recent floods in Jammu as well as in the Budgam district of Kashmir. He highlighted the hardships faced by the affected people and appreciated the efforts of the district administrations of both Budgam and Jammu

for their prompt response and assistance.

During the interaction, Bhat apprised the Lieutenant Governor, Manoj Sinha, of the rising unemployment rate in Jammu and Kashmir and its adverse impact on the region's youth. When

asked about the meeting, Mr. Bhat said that Manoj Sinha gave a patient hearing and assured that all the issues raised would be addressed soon. He also mentioned that the administration is working round the clock to resolve the concerns of the citizens of Jammu and Kashmir.

Mr. Bhat, who hails from a small village named Summer Bugh, B.K. Pora, raised an important issue regarding the administrative jurisdiction of his area. He informed the LG that B.K. Pora is situated at the tri-junction of three districts and administratively falls under the jurisdiction of District Budgam. While the area's revenue records are maintained under Budgam District, law and order matters come under the purview of District Srinagar. He explained

that this overlapping jurisdiction causes administrative inconvenience and requested a rationalisation of the area for better governance, efficient service delivery, and effective public grievance redressal. The Hon'ble LG assured him that the matter would be looked into and forwarded to the concerned authorities.

Azhar, who hails from Magam, expressed his gratitude to Manoj Sinha for his timely intervention in the recent matter involving the arrest of local youth. He requested leniency for the students involved, as FIRs could affect their academic and professional futures. The LG assured that the issue would be examined with compassion and appropriate action would be taken to safeguard the interests of the students.

## RS Polls: NC Candidates Meet Dr Farooq

National Conference (NC) candidates for Rajya Sabha on Tuesday met the party President, Dr Farooq Abdullah here at his Gupkar residence here to express gratitude and discuss the future strategies for the upcoming elections, slated to be held on October 24.

The four candidates, who submitted their nomination papers for Rajya Sabha elections yesterday and met the party president, include Choudhary Muhammad Ramzan, Shammi Oberoi, Sajjad Kichloo and Imran Nabi Dar.

Dar said that the candidates expressed their gratitude to the party president for their nomination and discussed the future strategies for the elections.

"We are hopeful of securing all the four seats in the Rajya Sabha elections. Three seats are expected in NC's kitty already and we are hopeful that we will secure the fourth seat as well," he added.

He added that they have already made an appeal to all the secular parties to cast their votes in NC's favour to give a message to BJP that they are not with them. About the future course of action, Dar said that the party will also meet the secular parties personally here to seek their support in the Rajya Sabha elections. "The meetings with the secular parties will begin soon," he added.

Pertinently, seven candidates including four from NC and three from Bharatiya Janata Party have filed their nomination papers for Rajya Sabha elections, which is set to be held on October 24. —(KNO)

## 3 Drug Peddlers Arrested In Awantipora, Budgam

Continuing its efforts to eradicate the menace of drugs from the society, Police on Tuesday said to have arrested three drug peddlers in Awantipora & Budgam and recovered contraband substances from their possession.

"In Awantipora, a police party headed by SHO Police Station Pampore at a checkpoint established at Tulbagh Pampore, intercepted two suspicious persons. They have been identified as Tabish Rafiq Bhat son of Mohammad Rafiq Bhat resident of Namblabal Pampore and Tariq Ahmad Sheikh son of Ghulam Nabi Sheikh resident of Tulbagh Pampore," a police spokesman said in a statement.

During the search, officers were able to recover 80 grams of Charas Powder like substance from their possession. They have been arrested and a case under FIR number 104/2025 under relevant sections of law has been registered at Police Station Pampore and investigation has been initiated.

In Budgam, Police Station Beerwah received credible information that Shabir Ahmad Sofi, son of Gulzar Ahmad Sofi, resident of Arwah, Beerwah, was involved in drug peddling and had stored a large quantity of narcotic substance at his residence for illegal sale among local youth, police said.

"Acting swiftly, a police party led by SHO PS Beerwah, along with the Executive Magistrate Beerwah, conducted a raid at the suspect's house. During the search, a narcotic-like substance (Ganja) weighing approximately 21.644 kilograms was recovered. The accused was arrested on the spot and a case FIR No. 146/2025 under Sections 8/20 of the NDPS Act has been registered at Police Station Beerwah, and further investigation is underway," it reads. (Observer News Service)

## JKTAB Forum Launched, Chaya Appointed Chairman

In a landmark development, Jammu and Kashmir's travel, tourism, hospitality and allied sectors have formally come together under a single platform—the Jammu and Kashmir Tourism and Allied Business Forum.

This initiative marks a new era of collaboration among leading associations, industry stakeholders, and seasoned professionals to collectively strengthen and promote tourism across the region, a statement issued to Kashmir Observer reads.

The forum announced its office bearers, managing committee members, and sub-committees. Mushtaq Chaya has been appointed as Chairman, supported by Mushtaq Burza as Vice chairman I and Gouhar Maqbool as Vice Chairman II. Wahid Malik will serve as Secretary General, with Manzoor Pakthoon as Joint Secretary.

The position of Treasurer has been assigned to Aqib Chaya, with Murad Kapra as Joint Treasurer. Publicity and media responsibilities will be handled by Javid Burza and Nasir Shah.

A notable feature of the forum's formation is the leadership of Tariq Gani, who has been appointed Convenor, and Sameer Baktoo, appointed as Co-Convenor. They will play a central role in coordinating the forum's activities, facilitating communication among member associations, and ensuring the smooth execution of strategic initiatives aimed at promoting tourism and allied sectors across Jammu and Kashmir. (Observer News Service)

## Festive Season:

# Railway Authorities Make Special Arrangements For Passenger Convenience

Special arrangements have been made at the main stations of the Jammu Division to ensure the convenience and safe travel of passengers during the upcoming festivals.

In view of the heavy rush during the festivals, additional measures have been taken to facilitate passenger movement and maintain order at the stations, a statement issued to Kashmir Observer reads.

These are as follows: First, continuous train announcements are being made at all important stations in the division, including Jammu, Pathankot Cantt, Pathankot City, Shri Mata Vaishno Devi Katra, Srinagar, etc., to ensure passengers receive accurate information about their trains. Help desks have been set up at various stations to assist passengers. The primary purpose of these help desks is to provide information, assistance, and prompt resolution to any travel-related issues. Temporary holding areas have been created at stations to manage crowds.

# Darbagh Shopian Residents Demand Bridge Over Nallah Tongri

## Agencies

**SHOPIAN:** The residents of Darbagh Watchi in Zainapora subdivision of South Kashmir's Shopian district have appealed to the administration for the construction of a concrete bridge over Nallah Tongri, a crucial link that was damaged during the 2014 floods and has remained unsafe ever since.

Locals said the old structure, which serves as the main connection between Darbagh and several

neighbouring villages, has deteriorated to a dangerous extent.

The bridge, they said, is tilted and unstable, making it unsafe for heavy vehicles and risky even for small ones.

"We have been living with this danger for years. Every time when it rains heavily, we fear that the bridge might collapse completely," Gulzar Ahmad, a local resident said. "People face huge difficulties during medical emergencies and while transporting daily essen-

tials. A single delay can cost lives."

Residents said they have repeatedly approached district authorities and public representatives, but their pleas have failed to yield results.

"The government has sanctioned projects worth lakhs elsewhere, yet our demand for a basic bridge remains unheard," said Nisar Ahmad, another villager.

The absence of a proper bridge, they said, has isolated the area and slowed down socio-economic

activities. "A new bridge will not just connect us to nearby villages but also ensure easier access to schools, health centres and markets," said one of the residents, adding that the issue is more than just an infrastructural need—it is about safety, dignity, and equitable development.

Locals said they have raised the demand in every possible forum—from grievance camps to election rallies—but only hollow promises were made. "We

are tired of assurances. What we need now is immediate action," they said, urging the Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha, local MLA Showkat Hussain Ganaie and the Deputy Commissioner Shopian to intervene personally.

Meanwhile, an official from the district administration confirmed that the bridge project has been sanctioned. "The proposal for the new bridge has been approved, and the work is expected to start soon," the official said—(KNO)



