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QR Codes Are Powering Kashmir's Shift To A Cashless Economy

From city markets to remote villages, QR codes are reshaping how Kashmir buys, sells, and saves

Peerzada Mohsin Shafi

Srinagar: On a cold morning in Srinagar's old city, the air smells of brewing tea. Bashir Ahmad stands behind his wooden stall, pouring steaming cups into paper glasses. Beside the teapot hangs a small QR code,

laminated and smudged from use. A young customer scans, a soft beep sounds, and the deal is done.

"I don't count cash anymore," Bashir says, tucking his phone into his side pocket. "I count pings."

That ping has now become



the new language of trade in the valley.

QR codes, once seen as city toys, have spread from Lal Chowk boutiques to vegetable carts in Sopore and tea stalls in Pulwama. Everyone scans, pays, and moves on.

The engine behind this change

is India's Unified Payments Interface (UPI), a system that lets people transfer money instantly by scanning a code.

In August 2025, UPI recorded over 20 billion transactions worth nearly 25 lakh crore, according to the National Payments Corporation of India.

Kashmir's contribution may be small in numbers, but large in transformation.

"Digital payments have gone from novelty to necessity," says Tanveer Hussain, a banker from Anantnag. "We now see QR codes in rural markets, on milk cans, and even on handcarts.

This is a social shift, not just a financial one."

Shopkeepers agree. In Srinagar's Lal Chowk, boutique owner Rukhsar Nabi says business feels lighter and cleaner. "No waiting for change, no worrying about fake notes," she says. "Even older | **More on P6**

Bihar Creates History: Record 65% Turnout In Phase 1



Press Trust Of India

Patna: In the "highest ever" voter turnout in Bihar, nearly 65 per cent of 3.75 crore electors exercised their franchise on Thursday across 121 constituencies in the first phase of the assembly elections, which marks the beginning of a closely watched high-stakes contest that is seen as a litmus test of the ruling NDA's popularity.

In a statement, the Election Commission said the first phase of the assembly elections concluded peacefully "in a festive mood with the highest-ever voter turnout of 64.66 per cent in the history of Bihar".

Chief Electoral Officer (CEO) Vinod Singh Gunjyal said women came out in large numbers

to cast their votes, with "a lot of enthusiasm".

The NDA, which has been in power in the state for 20 years, except for a few brief interruptions, is banking on its image of "sushasan" (good governance) in contrast to the alleged "jungle raj" of the RJD-Congress combine, while the opposition bloc relies on anti-incumbency and the unprecedented "jobs-for-every-home" promise of its CM candidate, Tejashwi Yadav, to outperform the ruling alliance.

The polls for the 243-member assembly are being closely watched not only for their local implications but also as an early indicator of the political mood ahead of 2029, and follow the highly controversial Special Intensive | **More on P6**

JKAS Officer Files ₹7 Cr Defamation Suit Against Reporter

KO Web Desk

Jammu- In a high-profile defamation row, Jammu and Kashmir Administrative Service (JKAS) officer Zakir Hussain Wani has filed a ₹7 crore civil suit against journalist Tousif Kraipak, alleging that the latter circulated defamatory content on social media and other public platforms.

Wani claims the posts were "baseless, malicious, and

intended to tarnish his professional image", causing him severe mental anguish and undermining his public reputation as a government officer.

The suit seeks ₹7 crore in damages, permanent removal of the alleged defamatory material, and an injunction restraining Kraipak from making further derogatory remarks.

Journalist Tousif Kraipak, represented by Advocate M. A. Dar, appeared before | **More on P6**



Children play among fallen Chinara leaves on an autumn day in Srinagar. KO Photo By Abid Bhat

SC Mandates Written Grounds of Arrest for All Offences

Press Trust Of India

New Delhi: In a landmark verdict, the Supreme Court on Thursday held that every arrested person must be furnished with the grounds of arrest in writing and in a language they understand irrespective of the nature of the offence or statute involved.

In the verdict that strengthens constitutional protection for personal liberty, the top court held that non supply of grounds of arrest in writing to the arrestee prior to or immediately after arrest would not vitiate such arrest if the same is "supplied in writing within a reasonable time and in any case two hours prior to the production of the arrestee before the magistrate for remand proceedings".

A bench comprising Chief



Justice B R Gavai and Justice Augustine George Masih delivered the judgment in the Mihir Rajesh Shah vs State of Maharashtra case that arose from the high-profile Mumbai BMW hit-and-run incident of July 2024.

Justice Masih, writing a 52-page judgment for the bench, ruled that the constitutional mandate under Article 22(1) of the Constitution, which guarantees that an arrested person must be informed "as soon as may be" | **More on P6**

DGP Chairs Security Review Meet

Calls For Advanced Surveillance, Inter-agency Coordination

Observer News Service

Srinagar: Jammu and Kashmir Director General of Police (DGP) Nalin Prabhat on Thursday chaired a high-level security review meeting at the Police Control Room in Srinagar, calling for enhanced surveillance, stronger inter-agency coordination, and proactive field engagement to bolster the city's security network.

According to a police spokesperson, the meeting was attended by senior officers from the Police, Central Reserve Police Force (CRPF), and Sashastra Seema Bal (SSB). Officers briefed the DGP on the prevailing security



situation and operational preparedness across different jurisdictions.

Emphasising the need to strengthen the security grid in Srinagar, the DGP directed officers to make greater use of advanced surveillance systems, maintain effective coordination among all security agencies, and intensify on-ground | **More on P6**

LG Pays Obeisance At Vaishno Devi Shrine

KO Web Desk

Jammu: Jammu and Kashmir Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha on Thursday paid obeisance at the Vaishno Devi shrine and prayed for the people of the region, officials said.

The cave shrine, situated at an altitude of 5200 ft in Reasi district, attracts millions of devotees every year.

The officials said Sinha paid obeisance at the shrine.

He prayed for the well-being of all and for peace and prosperity in Jammu and Kashmir, they added.

Ignoring Decree Orders

Court Summons Senior J&K Bureaucrat

KO Web Desk

Srinagar: A local court in Anantnag has summoned a senior Jammu and Kashmir bureaucrat for failing to execute its decrees and ordered attachment of his salary.

Principal District Judge Tahir Khurshid Raina directed the Commissioner Secretary of the Irrigation and Flood Control Department to personally appear before the court and explain why he should not be sent to civil prison for defying orders. The court also summoned the department's Chief Engineer (Kashmir), Superintendent Engineer (Hydraulic Circle), and Executive Engineer (Flood Control) to appear on November 17.

During a hearing of several execution petitions, Judge Raina remarked that "obtaining a decree is the easiest part of litigation, but its execution is the most difficult," stressing that the judiciary must ensure its orders are implemented in letter and spirit.

Taking serious note of the officials' five-year delay in implementing court decrees, the judge ordered attachment of their salaries and directed treasury officers to deposit the attached amounts with the court, excluding government-fixed subsistence allowances.

Emotional Manipulation & Financial Exploitation: Broken Hearts, Empty Wallets – Dating Scams Bleed Bengaluru

Jenifer Hussain

Bengaluru: What starts as a swipe for love is fast turning into a swipe for loss. Bengaluru's tech-savvy singles are falling prey to a new breed of cybercriminals who mix romance with ruthless deception, draining victims of lakhs, even crores, through fake trading apps, honey traps, and high-society dating hoaxes.

According to the city's Cybercrime Police, dating-related frauds generally fall into two categories: honey-trap extortion (sextortion) and fraudulent investment schemes. Scammers, often posing as prospective partners, build emotional connections over weeks



or months before coaxing victims into sharing sensitive information or transferring large sums of money.

"These fraudsters are exceptionally patient," said a senior

officer at the Cybercrime Police Station. "They engage victims in warm, genuine-sounding conversations, promise a future together, and gradually build trust before making financial

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A FEBRUARY 2025 REPORT REVEALED THAT NEARLY 39% OF ONLINE DATING interactions in India involve fake or fraudulent identities, and 77% of users encounter AI-generated or impersonated profiles.

demands."

In one recent case, a 32-year-old software engineer lost ₹79.3 lakh after investing in a fake trading app, following the recommendation of a woman he

met on a matrimonial website. Similarly, a 37-year-old businessman was duped of ₹5.5 lakh in a sextortion scam after connecting with a woman on a dating platform.

The Horamavu Case: A Costly 'High-Society' Trap

In another incident, a 63-year-old man from Horamavu fell prey to a scam after receiving a WhatsApp message from someone claiming to represent a "high-society dating agency". Lured by the promise of exclusive introductions, the victim transferred a total of ₹32 lakh over several weeks.

He was initially asked to pay a registration fee of ₹1,950, followed by repeated requests for "coordination" | **More on P6**

HC Upholds Licensing For Brick Dealers

Says Unregulated Imports Will Lead To Hoarding, Black Marketing

M Ahmad

Srinagar: Upholding the enforcement of licensing requirements for brick dealers, the High Court of J&K and Ladakh has observed that the unregulated import of bricks from outside the Union Territory could result in serious economic distortions such as hoarding, black marketing, and artificial shortages.

Dismissing a petition filed by some dealers, a bench of

Justice Wasim Sadiq Nargal observed that allowing unmonitored imports would undermine the local brick manufacturing industry and defeat the objectives of the regulatory framework meant to ensure transparency and fair trade.

Several dealers had petitioned the court, contending that the Jammu and Kashmir Brick Kiln (Regulation) Act, 2010 and the Jammu and Kashmir Brick Kiln (Regulation) Rules, 2017 apply only to | **More on P6**

Int’l Symposium at KU Focuses on Peace & Progress

Observer News Service

Srinagar, Nov 6: A two-day international symposium on “Peace, People and Possibilities”, organised by Vishwagram, concluded at the University of Kashmir on Thursday, highlighting the crucial role of youth innovation, entrepreneurship and academic collaboration in building a peace-

innovator Ashiq Bandy, who was invited as a special guest. Bandy stressed the importance of aligning innovation with cultural identity to create sustainable pathways of development in the region.

“When our youth learn to turn challenges into opportunities and innovate with integrity, that is when true peace takes root,” Bandy said, calling on universities



ful and self-reliant Jammu and Kashmir.

The concluding sessions centred on themes including Youth Development Initiatives in Jammu and Kashmir, Peace, Security, Nation Building and Civil Responsibilities, and Swadeshi and Atmanirbhar Bharat: Pathways to Sustainable Livelihood and Inclusive Growth. Scholars, students and professionals exchanged ideas on strengthening local capacity through quality education, creative enterprise and community engagement.

A key feature of the day was the address by noted Kashmiri entrepreneur and social

to foster “doers, dreamers and difference-makers.”

He urged young people to take full advantage of government and institutional initiatives aimed at skill-building and entrepreneurship under the administration of Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha.

Bandy also appreciated the spirit of togetherness displayed by participants from varied social and cultural backgrounds. “The camaraderie between Muslim and Pandit communities during this symposium reflects Kashmir’s age-old plural ethos. Such engagement must continue for the greater good,” he remarked.

Police Recover Revolver, Live Rounds

Observer News Service

Srinagar: Police on Thursday said that it arrested three persons and recovered a country-made pistol along with live ammunition from their possession during naka checking in the Khanyar area of the city.

A senior police official KNO that a vehicle was intercepted by a police party during routine checking at Khonkhan Dalgate.

He said two persons

were on board and during the search, one country-made pistol (desi katta) and nine live rounds were recovered from their possession.

He added that during sustained questioning, the duo revealed the identity of their aide, who was later detained.

Meanwhile, the official said a case FIR number, 51/2025 under relevant sections of law has been registered and further investigation has been set into motion.



Div Com Chairs Multi-Disciplinary Committee Meeting on Traffic Management

Reviews measures to Decongest City Roads & improve Traffic Flow

Observer News Service

SRINAGAR: Divisional Commissioner Kashmir, Anshul Garg, on Thursday chaired a comprehensive meeting of the Multi-Disciplinary Committee on Traffic Management to review and strengthen ongoing measures aimed at streamlining traffic movement and decongesting city roads.

The meeting was attended by the Deputy Commissioner Srinagar, Commissioner SMC, RTO Kashmir, Chief Engineer R&B, and officers from Traffic Police and SSCL.

During the meeting, the Divisional Commissioner took a detailed review of the improvements witnessed in downtown areas following the implementation of one-way traffic plans on several routes. It was informed that the initiative has yielded positive results by significantly reducing traffic congestion.

The committee also discussed the introduction of colour-coded passes for mini-buses to restrict

“
The meeting proposed declaring MA Road as a “No E-Rickshaw Zone” from Jahangir Chowk to Dalgate, while allowing their movement only through Residency Road.”

them from operating beyond their designated zones.

Further, the meeting proposed declaring MA Road as a “No E-Rickshaw Zone” from Jahangir Chowk to

Dalgate, while allowing their movement only through Residency Road. It was also decided to impose a cap on the number of E-Rickshaws operating on saturated routes to prevent further congestion.

The Divisional Commissioner reviewed the progress on the Smart Parking Management System, being developed at three key locations in the city, as well as the establishment of E-Rickshaw charging stations at Hazratbal, Zoonimar, and Batamaloo.

Discussions were also held on the development of surface parking facilities at JVC, Children’s Hospital, Karan Nagar, Sanath Nagar, Batamaloo, and Harwan.

Several other issues including HLC matters, SSCL projects, and concerns related to the Regional Transport Authority (RTA) were also deliberated upon. The Divisional Commissioner issued specific directions to concerned departments for timely action and resolution.

EPFO Holds Seminar on Pradhan Mantri Viksit Bharat Rozgar Yojna

Observer News Service

Srinagar: The Employees’ Provident Fund Organisation (EPFO), Regional Office Srinagar organized an awareness seminar on the Pradhan Mantri Viksit Bharat Rozgar Yojna (PMV-BRY) Scheme at the Industrial Estate Zakura, bringing together stakeholders from textile and handicraft units to promote formal employment and social security coverage.

The seminar aimed at familiarizing employers and workers with the objectives, benefits and implementation procedure of the scheme, which is designed to incentivize job creation and encourage businesses to expand their workforce under the formal sector.

Addressing the participants, Regional Provident Fund Commissioner-II, Vinay Kumar, said the scheme is expected to generate over 3.5 crore new jobs across the country in the next two years. “For the manufactur-

ing sector, the benefits under this scheme can be availed for up to four years, whereas other sectors are eligible for incentives for a period of two years,” he explained.

Officials from the EPFO delivered detailed presentations, highlighting how industries can effectively utilize the scheme to offer new employment opportunities, particularly to first-time wage earners, while ensuring social security coverage for the organized workforce.

PUBLIC NOTICE

I, Javed Akbar Awan, resident of Gingal, Tehsil Uri, District Baramulla, would like to inform the general public that my son's name has been wrongly recorded as Eshaan Javed in the school records of New Era Public School, Rajbagh, Srinagar, bearing Admission No. 4779, studying in Class 2nd 'C'.
The correct name of my son is Furqan Javed.
Now, I have applied for the correction of name in the said school records. If anybody has any objection in this regard, he/she may file the same in the office of the Principal, New Era Public School, Rajbagh, Srinagar, within seven (7) days from the date of publication of this notice. After that, no objection shall be entertained.
Care of: Javed Akbar Awan
Father of: Furqan Javed
Mobile No.: 9906395004

iko

اڙنيابت بومي

عنوان:- درخواست منجانب عرفان مجيد ولد عبد المجيد تيلي ساکن نوپوره تهر مراد

عطالگی OBC تحت 176 SRO بحق شير

اشتهار هر خاص و عام

معاملہ مندرجہ عنوان الصد میں ساکن نے ایک درخواست بغرض OBC سرٹیفکیٹ بذمہ

تیلی پیش کی ہے جو کہ زیر کاروائی ہے اس بارے میں پٹواری حلقہ سے رپورٹ طلب کی گئی ہے

جس سے عیاں ہے کہ ساکن واقعی تیلی ذات سے تعلق رکھتا ہے اور ساکن نوپوره تهر میں

رہائش پذیر ہے اور کسی بھی ترک سکونت نہیں کی ہے ساکن کا کنڈ بڈیل افراد پر مشتمل ہے

عبدل مجید تیلی ولد لنگہ تیلی درزی 50 سال 7000 آدمی

پروینہ بیگم زوجہ عبدل مجید گھریلا کام 48 سال

عرفان مجید پسر زیر تعلیم 24 سال

باسط مجید پسر -- 22 سال

ارشاد مجید دختر -- 20 سال

مومن مجید پسر -- 18 سال

فاضل مجید پسر -- 16

مسکان جان بیو -- 24

سائل مذکورہ OBC سرٹیفکیٹ حاصل کرنے کا خواہاں ہے اور کنڈ کی مہوار آدمی

7000 روپے تک ہے۔ سرٹیفکیٹ زیر بحث اجراء کرنے میں اگر کسی شخص کو کوئی عذریا

عترض ہو تو بعد مشتمل اخبارات سرائے دن کے اندر اندر آپے مخدیر عراض عدالت جڈا کو فوری اوقات

کے دوران پیش کریں۔ بعد گزرے میں عذریا قائل قبول نہیں ہوگا۔

نائب تحصیلدار

FKO

GOVERNMENT OF JAMMU AND KASHMIR OFFICE OF THE EXECUTIVE ENGINEER, IRRIGATION & FLOOD CONTROL DIVISION HANDWARA RAJWAR ROAD, HANDWARA – 193221

NOTICE INVITING e-TENDER
e-NITNo:14-IFCD/HND/2025-26 Dated: 04/11/2025.

For and on behalf of Hon'ble Lieutenant Governor of Jammu & Kashmir Union Territory, e-Tenders on percentage basis are invited from approved and eligible contractors registered with Jammu and Kashmir UT Government for the following work:

S. No.	Name of work	Advertised cost	Money	Earnest	Time of Completion	Class of Contract	Major Head	Cost of Tender	Tender ID No.
1.	Construction of protection bund near land of Siraj Din Khatana at Yamlar Block Rajwar. (Construction of protection bund on YamlerKhul near land of Siraj Din Khatana at Yamlar Block Rajwar).	2.489		5000	30 Days	DEE	CDF	200/-	

Position of AAA: Sanctioned vide District Development Commissioner Kupwara's Order No. 293-DDCK of 2025 Dated: 27/10/2025.

Position of T.S.: Issued.

Position of funds: Assured.

Authorization by: District Development Commissioner Kupwara's No. DDCK/CDF/6778-Dated: 27-10-2025.

The NIT consisting of Qualifying information, eligibility criteria specifications, bill of quantities (B.O.Q), set of terms and conditions of contract and other details can be seen/downloaded from websitewww.jktenders.gov.in from:

1.	Publishing Date	04-11-2025 1700 Hours
2.	Download Date Start	04-11-2025 1800 Hours
3.	Tender Submission date Start	04-11-2025 1800 Hours
4.	Tender Submission date Ends	13-11-2025 1500 Hours
5.	Date of Opening	14-11-2025 1200 Hours

Sd/
Executive Engineer,
I&FC Division Handwara.

No-IFCDH/Camp/3540-49
DIPK-7808/25
Dated: 06/11/2025

PUBLIC NOTICE

This is to inform the general public that my name has been wrongly mentioned in my Aadhaar Card bearing Aadhaar No. 2674 6830 0499 Now I want to change my name from Azzie (Old Name) to Fareeda Bano (New Name). In this regard, if anyone has any objection, he or she may approach the concerned authorities within a period of seven days. After that, no objection shall be entertained.

Name:Zayn Ali
S/o:Ghulam Qadir Sheikh
R/o:Hamam Pora Khomani Chowk Bemina
R/o:OmporaBudgam, Jammu & Kashmir – 191111

PUBLIC NOTICE


This is to inform the general public that my name has been wrongly mentioned in my Aadhaar Card bearing Aadhaar No. 3933 6457 6221 Now I want to change my name from Azzie (Old Name) to Fareeda Bano (New Name). In this regard, if anyone has any objection, he or she may approach the concerned authorities within a period of seven days. After that, no objection shall be entertained.

Name:Fareeda Bano
W/O:Ghulam Mohd Rather
R/o:Hamam Pora Khomani Chowk Bemina
Budgam, Jammu & Kashmir – 190018

PUBLIC NOTICE

This is to inform the general public that my name has been wrongly mentioned in my Aadhaar Card bearing Aadhaar No. 3801 8795 8826 Now I want to change my name from Hanan Noor (Old Name) to Bhat Hanan Noor (New Name). In this regard, if anyone has any objection, he or she may approach the concerned authorities within a period of seven days. After that, no objection shall be entertained.

Name:Bhat Hanan Noor
S/O:- Noor Mohammad Bhat
R/o:Astanpora Rawalpura Sanat Nagar Srinagar,
Jammu & Kashmir – 190005

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


AIRPORTS
SHIEK UL ALAM AIRPORT: 01942303311

RAILWAYS

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

HIGHWAY STATUS

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

 <div>HIJRI CALENDAR 15 Jumada al-Awwal 1447</div>	PRAYERS
	FAJR 5: 30
	ZUHR 12:14
	ASR 3: 55
	Magrib 5:36
	ISHA 7: 57

This Day In History

- 1733- France & Spain sign the Treaty of the Escorial (the first 'Pacte de Famille' between the Bourbon kings of France and Spain)
- 1742- Empress Elizabeth of Russia proclaims her nephew Peter of Holstein-Gottorp (later Peter III) her heir
- 1747- Orangist in Netherlands revolt under Daniel Raap
- 1786- The oldest musical organization in the United States is founded in Boston, Massachusetts as the Stoughton Musical Society
- 1794- French troops conquer Nijmegen
- 1811- Battle of Tippecanoe: General William Henry Harrison defeats the Native Americans of the Tecumesh Confederation
- 1814- 1st sitting of States-general in Hague
- 1848- General Zachary Taylor elected as 12th President of US
- 1861- Battle of Belmont, fought in Mississippi County, Missouri begins, first combat test for Brigadier General Ulysses S. Grant, Union victory (US Civil War)
- 1861- Battle of Port Royal, fought in Port Royal Sound, South Carolina ends, Union forces capture Fort Walker and Fort Beauregard (US Civil War)
- 1863- Battles of Rappahannock Station & Kelly's Ford, Virginia
- 1873- Alexander Mackenzie becomes the second Prime Minister of Canada, succeeding John A. Macdonald
- 1900- Battle of Leliefontaine, a battle during which the Royal Canadian Dragoons win three Victoria Crosses.
- 1901- A French fleet seizes the customs house on the Turkish-ruled island of Mytilene after Turks refuse to settle France's indemnity claims for losses suffered by French subjects in 1896
- 1908- Dutch capture Venezuelan navy
- 1909- Knights of St Peter Claver founded in Mobile, Alabama; Ladies Auxiliary formed in 1922
- 1910- The first air freight shipment (from Dayton, Ohio, to Columbus, Ohio) is undertaken by the Wright Brothers and department store owner Max Moorehouse.
- 1913- Great Lakes Storm the "White Hurricane" begins with 90 mph winds and 35 foot waves, (lasts till 10 Nov), will sink 19 ships and strand 19 more, killing over 250 people
- 1914- German Chinese concession of Kiaochow Bay and its center at Tsingtao are captured by Japanese forces
- 1914- Japanese attack German concession on Chinese peninsula of Shanghai
- 1914- The first issue of The New Republic magazine is published.
- 1916 - Amidst the Mexican Revolution and World War I, Woodrow Wilson is re-elected as President of the United States, defeating Republican candidate Charles E. Hughes
- 1916- Grand Duke Nikolai Nikolayevich warns Tsar of uprising
- 1918 - United Press erroneously reports WWI armistice had been signed
- 1931 - Chinese People's Republic proclaimed by Mao Zedong
- 1940 Tacoma Narrows (Galloping Gertie) Bridge collapses, Wash
- 1941 - British air attacks on Berlin, Mannheim & Ruhrgebiet Communication
- 1944 - Franklin D. Roosevelt is re-elected President of the United States for a record fourth term,
- 1951 - Constitution of Jordan passes
- 1954 - US spy plane shot down North of Japan
- 1956 - Suez Crisis ends with a ceasefire as the United Nations Emergency Force is established at instigation of Canadian diplomat Lester B. Pearson and UN Secretary-General Dag Hammarskjöld
- 1957 - Cold War: The Gaither Report calls for more American missiles and fallout shelters.
- 1967 - Surveyor 6 launched for soft landing on Moon
- 1984 - STS 51-A launch scrubbed because of high shear winds
- 2000 - Controversial US presidential election that was later resolved in the Bush v. Gore Supreme Court Case

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KO VIEW

Who Owns
the Kahwa?

Kashmir's new cafés love to serve kahwa in curated cups with almond flakes and bright lights in the background. The drink looks beautiful in photos. It tastes fine too. Still, something feels different. Kahwa once belonged to living rooms, late-night conversations, and long winters. Today it has turned into a trend.

Kashmiri culture is becoming an accessory. Things that once sat in homes and shrines now sit in Instagram corners. The copper samovar is a prop. The pheran is a fashion piece. Folk music plays through speakers in cafés where hardly anyone understands the lyrics. Even handmade carpets appear on walls only for colour and not for meaning.

This shift has created a new image economy. Local businesses know that culture sells. Tourism numbers crossed two million visitors in 2024, and cafés multiplied fast. Many of them market themselves as “heritage spaces.” They use names from poetry, borrow motifs, and design their interiors around nostalgia. The result looks charming, though it often feels shallow. The symbols remain, while the stories behind them fade.

The kahwa served at an airport lounge carries none of the memory of the homes it came from. It has no link to the saffron farmer who works through erratic seasons or to the grandmother who taught the ritual of slow brewing. When culture becomes a product, it loses texture. It entertains without teaching. It pleases without connecting.

There is also a sharp divide between those who create culture and those who display it. A craftsman who makes a hand-carved samovar in downtown Srinagar earns very little. Meanwhile, cafés using his work sell tea at prices he cannot afford. The cultural economy rewards visibility more than skill. The makers remain unseen while the curators thrive.

Kashmir does not need to freeze its traditions, but it needs to carry them with care. Culture survives when people understand it, share it, and pass it on. Kahwa is more than tea. It is a gesture of warmth, a reason to sit together, and a link to many generations before us. When it turns into a photo-op, that bond weakens.

Innovation has value. So does style. The challenge is to keep meaning at the centre. Kashmir can celebrate its heritage through new spaces, new tastes, and new ideas while still honouring the hands and memories behind them.

The cup of kahwa belongs to everyone who keeps its story alive. The cafés can decorate it. The artisans can create it. The families can continue to brew it. When all three remain connected, culture feels alive again.

CASH COURSE

Read This Before You Buy Anything

Kashmir's Smart New Landlords

REITs offer Kashmiris the security of real estate with the ease of a click.

Irshad Mushtaq

Kashmiris have always dreamt of land. It was seen as a shield against uncertainty, a mark of pride and permanence. But anyone who has tried to buy property here knows the ordeal: endless paperwork, disputes over title, and the constant anxiety of being cheated.

Today, a digital revolution is reshaping that story. Real Estate Investment Trusts, or REITs, are turning ordinary investors into part-owners of India's top office parks and shopping malls, all from the comfort of a Demat account.

A REIT works like a company that owns and manages rent-generating real estate. Investors buy units of this company on the stock exchange, much like shares. In return, they earn a share of the rental income and any rise in property value. By regulation, REITs must distribute at least 90% of their rental income to investors, offering steady returns without landlord headaches.

The appeal is obvious for Kashmiris. There's no mutation, no registration, no middlemen. Every transaction is transparent and governed by SEBI, making fraud nearly impossible. Even better, anyone can start small. A few thousand rupees is enough to invest in multi-core assets through REITs like Embassy Office Parks, Mindspace Business Parks, or Nexus Select Trust.

Land has always been a financial one: safe, liquid, and modern.

As the market grows, Kashmir's new investors can finally claim ownership in India's skyline through smart, secure participation in its real estate future.

The author is a Srinagar-based reputed financial advisor.

Letter to Editor

The Fading Melody of Kashmiri Autumn

Autumn in Kashmir feels like a painting that moves. The air turns cool, the light softens, and the chinar leaves glow like gold. The scent of burning wood mixes with the wind. It is a season that touches the heart and slows time.

Years ago, autumn evenings in Kashmir carried another kind of beauty. In my village, Ahlan Gadole, about forty kilometres from Anantnag, the end of the harvest marked the beginning of evening gatherings. When the fields turned bare and the sky blushed orange, groups of young girls would come together in open courtyards to sing. The songs spoke of love, waiting, faith, and the passing

of time. Their voices floated through the village, light and full of feeling.

Those evenings were moments of connection. The girls shared stories, laughter, and warmth. If one stopped coming, others would ask about her. Parents never worried. They knew these gatherings made their daughters stronger and closer. The songs carried lessons of care and companionship that life often forgets to teach.

The melodies were part of Kashmir's living tradition, passed from mothers to daughters. Each song held a piece of memory, of the land, the people, and the emotions that shaped village life. It was through these gatherings that the culture of song, story, and empathy survived.

Today, that tradition has almost disappeared. The open courtyards are gone, replaced by walls and narrow lanes. Families have moved indoors, and the phone has replaced the dafti. People meet less, speak less, and share less. The rhythm of community has faded into private lives.

Autumn still arrives with its familiar beauty, but the evenings feel different. The air is the same, but something is missing. The season that once sang now falls silent. What we have lost is a way of being together.

This change is a reflection of how life in Kashmir has shifted. We have built better houses, but we have smaller hearts. The new world has given us comfort but taken away

connection. The courtyards that once echoed with song now echo with silence.

Every autumn reminds me of that loss. The valley still burns in gold, the rivers still flow, and the leaves still fall, but the music of the people is gone.

Culture is memory, and when its sounds fade, we forget who we were.

As the chill deepens and the first snow nears, it feels as if autumn itself listens for a song that once belonged to us.

Sincerely,

Bashir Ahmad Dar
darbashir1234321@gmail.com



The question keeps returning to Kashmir's public debate with the persistence of a recurring fever: should doctors in government service be barred from private practice?

A recent demand by a lawmaker from Anantnag has brought it to the front pages again, stirring emotions and dividing opinion across hospital corridors and dinner tables alike.

It is an issue that touches the ethics of care, the economics of survival, and the state of our healthcare system itself.

At first glance, the idea of a ban appears simple and appealing. Supporters argue that government doctors should dedicate themselves entirely to public hospitals. After all, taxpayers pay their salaries. Patients, often poor and exhausted after long journeys to district hospitals, deserve a doctor's full attention. Instead, they often hear that the specialist they came to see is “away” or “unavailable,” which many take to mean “at a private clinic.” This fuels resentment and mistrust.

A ban, proponents say, would ensure presence, accountability, and focus. Doctors would finally be where they are most needed: inside public hospitals, serving the poor.

The argument has another layer. Banning private practice, many believe, could open the door for young doctors.

Kashmir's medical colleges produce hundreds of graduates every year, but many remain unemployed or underemployed. If senior specialists were compelled to commit fully to government hospitals, or if some left the service altogether, fresh talent could step in.

The system would renew itself, and patients would benefit from the enthusiasm of young, well-trained doctors.

But beneath this appealing simplicity lies a complex reality.

The government's health system runs on a weak balance. Salaries for government doctors, even specialists, are often modest compared to the years of study, the workload, and the emotional toll of the profession.

Private practice has long served as an informal compensation mechanism. It allows doctors to sustain their families, invest in

better education for their children, and retain some measure of financial dignity.

Removing that outlet without a corresponding improvement in pay or working conditions could have serious consequences.

The risk of a brain drain looms large.

Many senior doctors, already overburdened and underpaid, could move to private hospitals outside Jammu and Kashmir, or even outside India, where their expertise is rewarded. Losing them would cripple the very public institutions we hope to strengthen. A ban might ensure presence, but what use is presence without proficiency?

There is also the question of patient volume. Kashmir's government hospitals are already overwhelmed.

At Sher-i-Kashmir Institute of Medical Sciences (SKIMS) or the Government Medical College hospitals, outpatient departments witness thousands of patients each day. Private clinics, despite their cost, help absorb part of this overflow.

If private practice disappears overnight, the pressure on public hospitals will become unbearable. Crowds will swell, waiting times will grow, tempers will rise, and the quality of care may suffer. Doctors may be physically present, but stretched beyond endurance.

Then there is the matter of enforcement. A ban might drive private practice underground, creating an unregulated parallel system. “Moonlighting” is not difficult to hide in a region where monitoring is weak and demand for care is high.

Such a system would benefit neither doctors nor patients. It would only erode trust further.

The real challenge is not the existence of private practice, but the absence of a strong, well-resourced public health system that commands loyalty and pride. The solution lies in reform rather than restriction.

The first step must be investment. Our hospitals need reliable supply chains for medicines, updated diagnostic equipment, and adequate paramedical staff. A doctor who has the tools to treat patients effectively will find greater purpose in government service. Infrastructure, more than ideology, determines commitment.

Second, the government could introduce a regulated system of limited private practice. Doctors could be allowed to see patients after official hours, within designated hospital premises or authorized polyclinics. A portion of their fees could go into a hospital development fund. Their attendance during government hours should be strictly monitored, with transparent systems for leave, duty rosters, and patient feedback. Accountability can coexist with flexibility.

Third, the state must create incentives for doctors who choose to remain fully in public service. This could include higher pay, performance-linked promotions, housing benefits, or funded research opportunities. Making government service both prestigious and rewarding will retain talent better than coercion ever could.

Finally, the government cannot overlook the pool of unemployed doctors waiting for a chance. A sustained recruitment drive is long overdue. Bringing these doctors into the system on attractive, stable terms would ease workload pressures and improve service delivery.

The aim should be to build a health system where doctors find professional satisfaction and patients find reliable care.

The debate over banning private practice should not be reduced to slogans or moral outrage. It should become an opportunity to redesign healthcare delivery in a way that aligns the interests of doctors and patients rather than placing them in opposition.

The answer does not lie in punishment or prohibition. It lies in policy, planning, and empathy. When government hospitals become centers of excellence, private practice will lose its appeal on its own.

In the end, we must remember that doctors and patients stand on the same side of the hospital bed. One cannot heal while the other struggles.

The goal is to build a public system so strong that no one needs to look elsewhere.

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Kashmir's New Code of Change

A generation of young Kashmiris is building tech startups that solve the problems they live with every day, from traffic jams to fruit losses, and silently reshaping the region's future.

Sidrat-ul-Muntha

On an autumn morning in Srinagar, two young men stand beside a row of bright green electric bikes lined neatly near Lal Chowk. The bikes hum softly as they connect to charging docks. Commuters stop, curious. A college student unlocks one with a QR code and rides away through the narrow streets.

That small moment captures what is changing in Kashmir.

The bikes belong to Curv Ebikes, a startup founded in 2023 by Sheikh Yameen and Zubair Bhat. The idea was simple: make travel easier and cleaner in a city where traffic often crawls. They began with 50 bikes. Two years later, there are 150 bikes and 11 stations across Srinagar.

"We wanted people to feel that movement here could be efficient and sustainable," says Yameen, standing by the riverfront. "Each ride saves a few minutes and a bit of air."

Curv's 80,000 rides have already reduced emissions equal to what 7,500 trees would absorb. The bikes have also given part-time jobs to students and delivery riders. They're planning to expand to other hill towns that face similar transport problems.

This kind of story is becoming common. More and more young Kashmiris are turning their frustrations into ideas. They are designing apps, building networks, and finding solu-



tions to everyday problems that had once seemed too ordinary to solve.

For years, many graduates dreamed of only one thing: a secure government job. It promised stability in a place that rarely offered it. Now, a silent shift is underway. Students from engineering and business schools are beginning to see entrepreneurship as a path to empowerment.

That shift began with people like Sheikh Samiullah and Abid Rashid Lone, founders of Fast Beetle.

In 2019, they started delivering parcels across Srinagar on two scooters. Orders came slowly at first: a few boxes of dried apricots, some woollen shawls, and handmade soaps. The aim was to help local artisans and small businesses reach customers beyond the valley.

By 2021, the pandemic had hit, and suddenly everyone needed delivery services. Pharmacies, bakeries, and online stores began calling. Fast Beetle grew quickly. They built an app, hired riders, and now handle lakhs of parcels across Jammu and Kashmir.

In 2023, the duo appeared on Shark Tank India, becoming the first

startup from Kashmir to do so. They secured ₹90 lakh in funding and national recognition. "We didn't just go to represent our company," Samiullah says. "We went to represent every Kashmiri who wants to dream beyond limits."

The company now connects hundreds of home-run ventures, especially those led by women, to customers across India.

For many, it's their first exposure to e-commerce. And local startups like Fast Beetle have become a bridge between isolation and opportunity. In Shopian, known for its apple orchards, Ubair Shah faced a different challenge.

A third-generation grower, he saw farmers losing income every year due to poor storage and unfair

pricing. So he created Efruit Mandi, a digital platform that helps farmers store, grade, and sell their produce directly to buyers.

Shah uses his phone to show how it works: farmers upload pictures of their apples, buyers place bids, and logistics partners handle delivery.

The app even provides weather updates and data on market trends. "We lose less and earn better now," says one grower who joined the platform last year.

Shah believes innovation doesn't have to uproot tradition. "Our heritage is farming," he says. "Technology should protect it, not replace it."

Efruit Mandi has helped hundreds of farmers reduce waste and reach national markets. In a place where agriculture employs most of the population, this kind of change has ripple effects: families stay financially stable, and younger people begin to see farming as a field with a future.

Kashmir's startup wave may still be small, but it's gaining structure. The Greenovator Incubation Foundation at NIT Srinagar and new government policies are supporting early-stage ventures with mentorship and grants. More than 650 startups are now registered in Jammu and Kashmir, working in fields from healthcare and tourism to agri-tech.

These ventures are teaching young people that progress can start small. They are also changing how Kashmiris see risk. "Our parents wanted us to be safe," says Yameen of Curv. "We want to be useful."

Still, the challenges are real. Funding is limited. Many investors remain hesitant to back businesses from the region. But the persistence of these founders tells a different story, one of resilience shaped by necessity.

The thread that connects these

THE THREAD THAT CONNECTS THESE VENTURES IS PERSONAL EXPERIENCE.

None of these founders built a business from theory. They built it from life. They saw problems every day and decided to do something about them.

ventures is personal experience. None of these founders built a business from theory. They built it from life. They saw problems every day and decided to do something about them.

A traffic jam turned into an idea for sustainable mobility. A delayed delivery became a logistics solution. A rotting apple crate led to a digital mandi. Their stories reveal a kind of local wisdom, one that sees progress as an act of responsibility.

As evening falls over Srinagar, Yameen locks the last Curv bike at a dock near the Dal Lake. He looks at the reflection of lights in the water and smiles.

"People once told us innovation didn't belong here," he says. "Now they're riding it."

— The author is a Sustainable Business Professional, and can be reached at ulmuntahasidrat374@gmail.com.

THESE VENTURES ARE TEACHING YOUNG PEOPLE THAT PROGRESS CAN START SMALL.

They are also changing how Kashmiris see risk. "Our parents wanted us to be safe," says Yameen of Curv. "We want to be useful."

Kishtwar's Saffron Story

In the hills of Jammu, the farmers of Kishtwar keep alive one of the world's rarest crops. Their saffron, known for its deep colour and fragrance, tells a story of labour, heritage, and pride.

Sadaket Ali Malik

On a crisp October morning, the saffron fields of Kishtwar glow purple under the first light. The flowers bloom for only a few days, and farmers rush to pick them before the sun gets strong.

Each blossom holds three thin red threads, the stigmas, that make up the world's most expensive spice.

For people here, saffron is history, identity, and a way of life. Locals call it Kung, a name that carries warmth and pride.

Grown on a small plateau surrounded by the Pir Panjal and Himalayan ranges, Kishtwar's saffron has a reputation for purity and strength. Old farmers say it outshines even the saffron of Pampore in Kashmir.

The story of Kung runs deep through the region. Some believe travellers brought the bulbs here centuries ago during the Mughal era. Others say saffron was born in this soil.

In villages like Matta, Hidyāl, and Tund, every family has a connection to it. The skill of planting, plucking, and drying passes from one generation to the next, along with the faith that this delicate flower will bloom again each year.

The work begins in September when farmers plant the bulbs in neat rows. A month later, the fields burst into colour. The harvest is short and intense. Men, women, and children bend over the flowers, collecting them carefully.

Later, indoors, the women separate the red threads from the petals, a job that takes patience and precision. It takes nearly a thousand flowers to produce just ten grams of dried saffron.

Only a few of Kishtwar's 156 villages grow saffron, including Nageni, Begana, and Pochhal. Together, they cultivate around 120 hectares.

Every patch of land is precious, every harvest uncertain. "We wait the whole year for these two weeks," says Abdul Rashid, a farmer from Hidyāl. "If the weather turns bad, all our effort is gone."

A single kilogram of pure Kishtwar saffron can sell for more than ₹2.5 lakh. Still, profits vary.

The crop needs constant care, and



DESPITE THE HARDSHIPS, SAFFRON CONTINUES TO GROW HERE, YEAR AFTER YEAR, FLOWER AFTER FLOWER. FOR FARMERS, IT REPRESENTS ENDURANCE. "OUR FATHERS DID THIS. WE DO THIS. IT KEEPS US CONNECTED TO THE LAND," SAYS RASHID.

middlemen often take the larger share. Many young people now prefer government jobs or city life, leaving behind fields their grandparents once tended with pride.

But saffron remains at the heart of Kishtwar's culture.

During weddings, milk mixed with saffron and almonds is served to guests. On winter mornings, families add a few threads to tea for warmth. In temples, it marks foreheads. And

in shrines, it scents the air.

The spice is a symbol of purity and prosperity, linking daily life with devotion.

Scientists say Kishtwar saffron has higher crocin content, the pigment that gives it its deep red hue, than most other varieties. The government has tried to give it a Geographical Indication (GI) tag, like Pampore saffron, to protect its identity and help farmers reach bigger markets.

Still, challenges remain. Climate change is altering rainfall patterns. Traditional methods struggle to keep pace with modern demands. Officials and researchers suggest drip irrigation, better drying facilities, and farmer cooperatives to improve yields and ensure fair prices. Some pilot projects are showing promise, but the transformation is slow.

Despite the hardships, saffron continues to grow here, year after year, flower after flower. For farmers, it represents endurance. "Our fathers did this. We do this. It keeps us connected to the land," says Rashid.

As the harvest ends, the violet petals fade, leaving behind the scent of saffron in the cold mountain air. It drifts through the narrow streets of Matta and Tund, through kitchens and mosques, through stories that families have told for centuries.

The fragrance stays, reminding Kishtwar of its golden threads: fragile, fragrant, and full of life.

— The author can be reached at sadaketjammu@gmail.com

Nine Years Down the Line

Through reflection and resilience, a young Kashmiri woman writes about reclaiming her peace in a land that has taught generations to endure and evolve.

Aisha Hasnain

Nine years ago, on November 6, 2016, I was out shopping with my parents. Those days Kashmir had a calendar for days without a curfew. I was in grade 11 and I was carrying with myself some savings of Rs 1,100. I spent it all on a hardcover book, *The Universe in a Nutshell* by Stephen Hawking. It made me the happiest. Back then I used to be a science and math student, unaware of the fact that I will not be able to make it beyond grade 12.

My mental health issues, which led to physical weaknesses, started in the summer of 2015. I had made it out of a huge panic attack in April 2016. The next was going to be on this fateful day of November 6. It was triggered by a tense fight between my parents in the car. I kept begging them to stop but they could not oblige. The only way my brain felt it could cope was by asking me to consider jumping out of the window of the running car.

That night was one of the heaviest as I kept crying in my bed. I cried a lot in the morning prayers as well the next day. Today on November 6, 2025, as I prayed in the morning, I asked myself the important question, "What has changed?"

My my! The negative energies that used to surround me have only become stronger than ever.

When I was crying in my morning prayers back in 2016, on Nov 7, I was full of pain and hardly any energy to go on. When I was praying this morning, the pain in my mass was heavier but the feelings in my chest were different. So much around me has gotten worse but I have become an extraordinary person. Recently I realised that one of the stages of winning at life is when you have recognised your strengths and weaknesses well, whether the sharpness of mind or bad driving skills, without feeling very proud of one or guilty of the other. Both the attributes can be imposters.

These days my room is undergoing renovation. At home, I am the one who makes choices for things. From the paint on the walls to the tin sheets on our roof, most of the stuff is of my choosing. In my family, I am the one with the most curious eye for



EVERYTHING IS VERY MUCH OF DEBRIS AND SCATTERED. I cannot complain though, perhaps because no loss ever stays without being replaced by something as nice or better.

art but if you happen to see my room, all you shall see is someone who does not care much about herself.

"Why such a glaring contrast, Aisha?" I had to ask myself. Could this be an embodiment of the hypocritical care I show for everyone else while back-burnering my own existence? Why has my room been an unfinished work for over a decade? It is a relief to be able to understand that I am not responsible for the harmful things I was subconsciously made to integrate into my being. But as simple is the fact that I am the one responsible for my healing.

So, the primary question, "What has changed?" While physically I am healing at a sloth pace, I have found some inner peace which is as precious as anything. Amidst great friction, I have developed a voice for myself that is hard for anyone to challenge. My soul is lighter because there no longer are too many doubts or a directionless chase for the remaining unanswered questions. I have developed the courage to be very protective of myself and I cannot be thankful enough for how that has become second nature to me. The patience I have cultivated within to not lose heart or my mind even after losing my precious years leaves me in awe, as it should. The grace or ferocity in my 'no' to things I don't want on my platter is liberating. There are not many misplaced expectations. I am trying to reduce the noise around me. I am expressing better and unlearning repression.

These are a few pretty wise things I have instilled into my cognition over time. For sure the storm within is relenting but it has left a good deal of damage behind. I think I am seeing a shore but the roadmap to healing is something which is not very clear to me right now. Everything is very much of debris and scattered. I cannot complain though, perhaps because no loss ever stays without being replaced by something as nice or better.

— The author writes under the pen name Aisha Hasnain and can be reached at aishahasnain02@gmail.com.

PIL In SC Seeking Judicial Intervention To Address Rising Air Pollution Levels

Press Trust Of India

Srinagar: A PIL has been filed in the Supreme Court by a wellness expert seeking urgent judicial intervention to tackle a "persistent and systemic failure" in addressing the country's rising air pollution levels which has reached proportions of a "public health emergency".

The plea was filed on October 24 by Luke Christopher Coutinho, holistic health coach and wellness expert, and made the Centre, Central Pollution Control Board (CPCB), Commission for Air Quality Management (CAQM), several Union ministries, NITI Aayog, and the governments of Delhi, Punjab, Haryana, Uttar Pradesh, Bihar, and Maharashtra as parties.

The plea said the current air pollution crisis has reached proportions of a "public health emergency", violating citizens' fundamental right to life and health under Article 21 of the Constitution.

The plea sought declaration of air pollution as a national public health emergency and formulation of a time-bound national action plan.

"The National Clean Air Programme (NCAP), launched in 2019 with the target of reducing particulate matter by 20-30 percent by 2024 (subsequently extended to 40 percent by 2026), has not met its modest objectives. As of July 2025, official data reveals that only 25 of the 130 designated cities have achieved a 40 per cent reduction in PM levels from the 2017 baseline,



while 25 other cities have in fact seen an increase," it said.

Similar violations are cited in the plea for Kolkata and Lucknow, among others.

The plea sought a direction to make NCAP targets binding with "statutory force, including clear time-lines, measurable indicators, and enforceable penalties for non-compliance".

In Delhi alone, 2.2 million schoolchildren have already suffered irreversible lung damage, as confirmed by government and medical studies, the plea alleged.

The plea also submits that air quality monitoring systems are inadequate.

It also sought setting up a National Task Force on Air Quality and Public Health chaired by an independent environmental health expert.

It sought immediate curbs on crop residue burning, including farmer incentives and sustainable alternatives besides phasing out high-emitting vehicles and promoting e-mobility and public transport.

The plea sought strict enforcement of industrial emission norms with real-time monitoring and public disclosure.

Experts Warn of Rising Youth Heart Risks, Advocate 'Blue Zone' Living

Press Trust Of India

New Delhi: A new health crisis is silently gripping India's youth, with leading medical experts warning that sedentary lifestyles are rapidly escalating instances of hypertension among teenagers and triggering heart attacks in individuals as young as 25.

With 50 per cent of heart attacks now striking people below the age of 50, and 60 per cent of Delhi schoolchildren obese, the alarming figures have prompted experts to declare that an urgent return to 'Blue Zone' principles is the way to reverse this urban health crisis and save the next generation.

'Blue Zones' refer to five regions around the world — Okinawa, Japan; Sardinia, Italy; Nicoya, Costa Rica; Icaria, Greece; and Loma Linda, California — where people live much longer, healthier lives, often up to 100 years, with remarkable vitality, primarily due to their unique lifestyles based on natural movement, strong community bonds, purpose, and plant-rich diets.

Dr Sanjeev Gera, Senior Director and Head of Department of Interventional Cardiology at Fortis, Noida, speaking at the HEAL OneHealth Connect Series held last week, sounded an alarm on the severity of this 'epidemic'.

"The crisis is immediate; we are seeing heart attacks as young as 25, with 50 per cent of our cases below the age of 50. Our

sedentary lifestyle is the cause. The alarming 60 per cent obesity rate among Delhi teens is a ticking time bomb, fuelled by silent hypertension — leading to massive organ damage before they hit 40. We must drastically shift focus to preventative check-ups starting at 25 and adopt the simple Blue Zone principle: keep moving," he said.

Professor K G Suresh, Director, India Habitat Centre, and Chairperson of the HEAL OneHealth Connect Series, said, "The role of communication and community involvement is key in achieving the goal of Healthy India. The best health schemes fail without communication. Health must become a 'Jan Bhagidari' (people's movement). Just as we have Swachh rankings for cleanliness, we must institute 'Swasthya Rankings' to rank localities on community health. Competition drives change and makes health a collective neighbourhood priority."

Dr G S Grewal, former president, Delhi Medical Association (DMA), argued that the Blue Zone is a utopian ideal, out of reach for urban populations exposed to the vices of development.

"We must create a realistic 'Pink Zone' that embraces minor lifestyle changes, early detection, and vaccinations. It's about being practical, not perfect, and living well despite urban chaos. Success hinges on reviving the old, effective model of Information, Education and Counselling (IEC) to drive behaviour change," Dr Grewal said.

Dr Nimesh G Desai, a senior psychiatrist and psychotherapist, discussed the definition of health, emphasising mental resilience and asserting that the old definition of health, the absence of disease, is inadequate.

"Health is about resilience. We must address loneliness, which is a major risk factor. As French philosopher Albert Camus suggested, 'If you feel lonely when you are alone, you are in bad company.' We must add 'life to years', not just years to life, because while pain is universal, suffering is optional," Dr Desai said.

Echoing the call for mindfulness, Dr Rekha Sharma, former chief dietitian, AIIMS, Delhi, provided actionable advice on diet.

"Our ancestors practised mindful eating naturally. The biggest secret is that your satiety centre needs a full 20 minutes to signal fullness to the brain. If you eat quickly, you invariably overeat. We must slow down, smell our food, and return to our own traditional diet of whole grains, millets, and fresh garden greens," she said.

The discussion on 'Blue Zones Secrets: Healthy Heart, Mind and Soul for Vibrant Longevity', organised at the India Habitat Centre, concluded with a consensus that the path to vibrant longevity lies not in abandoning modernity, but in integrating ancient wisdom, such as mindfulness, purposeful living, and community, with modern medical screening to prevent disease onset.

ED Raids In J&K Narco-Terror Case Premises Of Ex-Minister Babu Singh Searched

KO Web Desk

Srinagar: The Enforcement Directorate on Thursday conducted simultaneous searches in Jammu and Kashmir, including at the premises of former minister Babu Singh, as part of a drugs-linked money laundering investigation, official sources said.

Six premises in Srinagar and two in Jammu are being covered under the provisions of the Prevention of Money Laundering Act (PMLA).

The case pertains to a narcotics-linked money laundering case, first detected by the UT Police in March 2022, where a man named Mohd Shareef Shah was apprehended while attempting to deliver Rs 6.9 lakh hawala money from Kashmir to Jammu to one Jatinder Singh @ Babu Singh alias Jatinder Singh, the sources said.

They said this money was intended to "fund" separatist and secessionist groups in Jammu to carry out subversive activities.

The agencies found an alleged nexus involving Saif Din, Farooq Ahmed Naikoo, Mubashir Mushtaq Fafoo where Pakistan based operatives were running a narco-terror module to fund subversive activities.

Naikoo orchestrated a narco-terror funding network where heroin smuggled from Pakistan was sold in India during 2021-22 and the cash from these sales (over Rs 2 crore) was deposited in local bank accounts in Srinagar during 2021-22, they said.

These funds are alleged

to have been transferred to bank accounts of Indian citizens working in Dubai who worked as 'mules' (illegal carriers of money) to obscure the origin of funds, they said.

These "proceeds of crime" were withdrawn and accumulated in Dubai and further routed to Hizbul Mujahideen terrorists operating from Pakistan, the ED sources said.

The Special Investigation Agency (SIA) had filed a chargesheet against 12 accused, including the former minister, in the hawala money case, and further investigation is underway into a cross-border narcotics syndicate involving him in terror funding, officials said.

Singh was arrested in April 2022 after one of his workers, Mohammad Shareef Shah, a resident of south Kashmir's Kokernag, was held with hawala money amounting to Rs 6.90 lakh in Jammu.

In 2024, SIA arrested two more persons, including a policeman, for allegedly being part of a cross-border narcotic syndicate involved in terror funding in Jammu.

The arrest of Selection grade constable Saif-ud-din of Jammu and former sarpanch Farooq Ahmad Jungal of Uri in north Kashmir's Baramulla district took the number of accused in the case to 17, they said. An SIA team had also raided the house of a policeman and a sarpanch in the Belicharana area of Jammu on January 2 in connection with the terror financing case involving Singh and Shah, and seized some electronic gadgets, the officials said.

CONTD. FROM FRONT PAGE

QR Codes Are Powering

women in pherans scan now. They ask for my code before they ask for the price."

For many, the change goes beyond convenience. Dr. Kaisar Wani, a Srinagar-based economist, says UPI has opened doors to financial inclusion. "In Kashmir's informal economy, small traders rarely had bank histories," he says. "Now, every scan builds a record. That record means credit, and credit means growth."

Women entrepreneurs are among the biggest gainers. In Pampore, saffron grower Rafiq Bano uses QR codes to sell directly to buyers in Delhi and Mumbai. "Earlier I waited days for payments," she says. "Now, I send a code and the money comes instantly. I don't depend on anyone."

Still, the shift has its rough edges. Weak internet in rural areas often interrupts payments. "There are days when half my customers walk away because the network drops," says grocery owner Shabir Ahmad in Kupwara. "It saves time when it works, and wastes it when it doesn't."

Cybersecurity is another worry. Fake QR codes and phishing scams are rising across the valley.

Dr. Sumaiya Hassan, a cybersecurity researcher, says users need more awareness. "Scammers print fake codes over real ones," she says. "People scan without checking and lose money. It's easy to fix with training, but that training must reach everyone."

Police have started awareness drives in schools and markets. "Digital trust grows only with digital safety," says a senior cyber cop. "We teach people to pause before they scan."

Despite the glitches, the change feels irreversible.

During Eid, ATMs that once drew long queues now stand almost empty. In Srinagar, bus conductors use QR sound boxes instead of collecting cash. "It's faster," says Hilal Dar, a bus conductor. "And cleaner too. Money never touches my hands."

Economists say this is how social change start, silently, through habit. "Kashmir is moving from cash to code faster than expected," says Dr. Wani. "Each ping is a sign of trust."

As night falls in city centre Lal Chowk, the stalls close one by one, and QR codes dangle in the cold air like small flags of a new order.

For traders and travelers alike, the shift is clear. The valley's economy now moves at the speed of a scan.

The next turnaround in Kashmir, it seems, will be cashless.

Bihar Creates

Revision (SIR) of the electoral roll by the EC, which came under attack from opposition parties for alleged "rigging" and "manipulation" of voter lists.

The second and the last phase will be held on November 11, and the counting will take place on November 14.

Stakes are high for both the ruling NDA and the opposition INDIA bloc, with several key leaders, including RJD's Yadav, Deputy CMs Samrat Choudhary and Vijay Kumar Sinha, besides a slew of ministers, being among the 1,314 candidates in fray in this phase.

Stray incidents of violence, including an alleged attack on Sinha's vehicle, were reported from some areas during the polling.

Prime Minister Narendra Modi, who addressed rallies in a couple of constituencies

going to polls in the second and final phase, felt that the noticeably high number of women turning up to vote was a good sign for the NDA.

"Mothers, daughters, and sisters have been the worst sufferers of 'jungle raj'. Today, they seem to have put up a fortress around polling booths to prevent the return of 'jungle raj'," Modi remarked.

The NDA hopes that Chief Minister Nitish Kumar's record, along with recent welfare measures such as 125 units of free power, Rs 10,000 cash transfers to over 1 crore women, and an increase in social security pensions, will help counter anti-incumbency.

However, the opposition dismissed the boasts of the BJP-led coalition and hoped that people would vote for a change.

RJD president Lalu Prasad, who hopes that his younger son and heir apparent Yadav will form the next government, came out with an evocative social media post, drawing the analogy of a "roti".

"If a roti is not flipped on a tawa (pan), it gets burnt. Twenty years is a long time. A Tejashwi government is essential to build a new Bihar," Prasad wrote on X.

There have also been allegations and counter-allegations from both sides on the polling day.

Deputy CM Sinha, who is seeking a fourth consecutive term from Lakhisarai, claimed that one of the cars in his convoy was attacked by RJD supporters trying to "intimidate" voters belonging to extremely backward classes.

On the other hand, the RJD alleged on X that voting had been "deliberately slowed down" in areas where the INDIA bloc was strongly placed, a charge promptly rejected by the EC.

A notable feature of this election has been the presence of Prashant Kishor's Jan Suraj Party, which the former political strategist believes could emerge as the proverbial dark horse.

Kishor has caught public imagination with his promise of making the state "among the top-ranking ones in the country", and to this end, he has not shied away from making a few bold statements, including his announcement that he intends to scrap the prohibition law, which has been bleeding the state dry.

Polling was held across 18 districts, with Muzaffarpur and Samastipur recording the highest turnouts, as per the latest available data.

Muzaffarpur recorded a turnout of 70.96 per cent, while the polling percentage in Samastipur stood at 70.63.

Madhepura recorded 67.21 per cent turnout, followed by Vaishali at 67.37 per cent, Saharsa at 66.84 per cent, Khagaria at 66.36 per cent, Lakhisarai at 65.05 per cent, Munger at 60.40 per cent, Siwan at 60.31 per cent, Nalanda at 58.91 per cent, and Patna at 57.93 per cent.

The low turnout in Patna was largely attributed to urban constituencies such as Bankipur, Digha, and Kumhrar, where electors are known to be less enthusiastic.

According to the Election Commission, the assembly elections of 1951-52 saw the lowest voter turnout in the state at 42.6 per cent, while the one in 2000 saw the highest turnout before this, at 62.57 per cent.

In the last assembly polls in 2020, held under the shadow of the COVID-19 pandemic, a voter turnout of 57.29 per cent was recorded. The 2015 elections recorded a turnout of 56.91 per cent, while the one before that, in 2010, the

polling percentage stood at 52.73.

Politics in Bihar is as much about numbers as it is about castes. Caste and community loyalties remain crucial, with Yadavs, Kushwahas, Kurmis, Brahmins, and Dalits shaping outcomes in key constituencies.

JKAS Officer

the court and received a copy of the plaint. The case has been listed before the Principal District and Sessions Judge, Jammu, with the next hearing scheduled for December 11, 2025. -KNT

SC Mandates Written

of the grounds of arrest, is not a procedural formality but a fundamental safeguard of personal liberty.

"This court is of the opinion that to achieve the intended objective of the constitutional mandate of Article 22(1) of the Constitution of India, the grounds of arrest must be informed to the arrested person in each and every case without exception and the mode of the communication of such grounds must be in writing in the language he understands," the verdict said.

"The constitutional mandate of informing the arrestee the grounds of arrest is mandatory in all offences under all statutes including offences under IPC 1860 (now BNS 2023)," it held.

"The grounds of arrest must be communicated in writing to the arrestee in the language he/she understands and in case(s) where, the arresting officer/person is unable to communicate the grounds of arrest in writing or soon after arrest, it be so done orally. The said grounds be communicated in writing within a reasonable time and in any case at least two hours prior to production of the arrestee for remand proceedings before the magistrate," it directed.

In case of non-compliance, the arrest and subsequent remand would be rendered illegal and the person will be at liberty to be set free, it said.

The top court directed its registry to send a copy of the judgment to all the registrars general of the high courts and the chief secretaries of all the states and Union territories.

The verdict dealt with two issues and the first one was "whether in each and every case, even arising out of an offence under IPC now Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita, 2023 would it be necessary to furnish grounds of arrest to an accused either before arrest or forthwith after arrest".

The second issue was whether, even in exceptional cases, where on account of certain exigencies it will not be possible to furnish the grounds of arrest either before arrest or immediately after, the arrest would be vitiated.

Referring to earlier verdicts, it said, "Mere communication of the grounds in a language not understood by the person arrested does not fulfil the constitutional mandate under Article 22 of the Constitution of India. The failure to supply such grounds in a language understood by the arrestee renders the constitutional safeguards illusory and infringes the personal liberty of the person as guaranteed under Article 21 and 22 of the Constitution."

The objective of the constitutional mandate is to place the person in a position to comprehend the basis of the allegations levelled against him and it can only be realised when

the grounds are furnished in a language understood by the person, it added.

The ruling stems from appeals filed by Mihir Rajesh Shah, the accused in the 2024 Mumbai BMW hit-and-run case, who challenged the legality of his arrest on the ground that he was not furnished written reasons for arrest as required by law.

Although the Bombay High Court had acknowledged a procedural lapse, it upheld the arrest citing the gravity of the offence.

DGP Chairs Security

engagement to ensure public safety. The DGP also instructed officers to establish dynamic and surprise nakas (checkpoints) at strategic and vulnerable locations to enhance area domination and deterrence. He called for seamless communication between adjoining districts to improve real-time information sharing and coordination during operations.

Highlighting the importance of preparedness, Prabhat asked district police chiefs to reinforce their quick reaction teams (QRTs) with better mobility, training, and equipment. He also stressed the need to modernise and upgrade the communication network to ensure uninterrupted and secure connectivity across all operational levels.

Concluding the meeting, the DGP reiterated the importance of professionalism, alertness, and people-friendly policing, while maintaining the highest standards of operational readiness across the Valley.

HC Upholds

brick kiln owners engaged in manufacturing within the J&K, and not to dealers dealing in finished bricks imported from other States.

"This court is of the view that the unregulated import of bricks from outside the Union Territory without proper licensing and monitoring would inevitably lead to hoarding, black marketing, and deliberate shortage, thereby disturbing the market equilibrium and causing loss to the local revenue and adverse repercussions on the State economy," the court observed. Such unchecked inflow, the court said, would not only undermine the local brick manufacturing sector but would also defeat the regulatory objectives of the Act by promoting clandestine trade.

"The enforcement of licensing requirements upon dealers thus serves an important economic and administrative purpose in maintaining market stability, ensuring fiscal discipline, and safeguarding legitimate local enterprises," the court noted.

The petitioners had called into question orders passed by the Deputy Commissioners of Kathua and Samba, directing seizure of vehicles transporting bricks from outside the Union Territory, confiscation of consignments, and initiation of prosecution under Section 21 of the Act, if any person or entity was found contravening the orders. They had alleged that the order passed by respective deputy commissioners was arbitrary, without jurisdiction, and violative of their fundamental right to trade and commerce under Article 19(1)(g) of the Constitution.

"This court further holds that licensing requirement under Rule 3, read with Section 2(e) of the Act, is a reasonable regulatory condition and does not violate Article 19(1)(g) of the

Kashmir Wetlands Come Alive With Migratory Birds

Thousands of birds from across Asia arrive in Kashmir’s water bodies as winter arrives

Observer News Service

SRINAGAR: With the arrival of winter, Kashmir’s wetlands are once again witnessing a breath-taking transformation, turning into vibrant sanctuaries for thousands of migratory birds escaping the freezing landscapes of Europe, Central Asia, and parts of East Asia.

Every year, as temperatures drop across the northern hemisphere, winged visitors take flight toward the valley’s water bodies, which serve as resting and feeding grounds through the colder months.

From Hokersar to Wular, Haigam, and Shalbugh, these wetlands have begun echoing with the calls of species that travel thousands of miles to find temporary refuge in Kashmir.

Officials from the Wildlife Department told KNO that the current migratory season began in late October and will



continue till March.

They said the valley’s lakes and marshes, still holding sufficient water after autumn rains, have become ideal habitats for these birds. This year’s early arrivals include the Black-headed Gull, Tufted Duck, Brahminy Duck, and Northern Pintail — species that signal the full re-

turn of the migratory cycle.

According to official records, more than a million birds visited Kashmir’s wetlands last year. Initial field assessments suggest similar numbers this season, with bird movements reported from all major conservation zones. “The diversity is promising this year, as both lo-

THEIR ARRIVAL, HOWEVER, ALSO BRINGS RENEWED CHALLENGES — particularly the risk of poaching and habitat degradation.”

cal conditions and water levels are favourable,” an official said.

“The visiting flocks, some travelling from as far as Siberia, the Philippines, and Japan, enrich the wetlands’ ecosystem by maintaining the food chain balance and aiding natural regeneration processes,” he said. “Their arrival, however, also brings renewed challenges — particularly the risk of poaching and habitat degradation.”

Wildlife authorities have increased ground surveillance to prevent hunting, a recurring threat to migratory species. Patrol teams have been stationed around vulnerable wetland belts, and awareness drives are being held in nearby villages to discourage illegal trapping.

“We are keeping strict watch through night patrols and co-ordination with local police units,” another official said.

Beyond their ecological importance, the migratory influx is also a draw for photographers, bird watchers, and environmental students. Many enthusiasts have begun visiting Hokersar and Shalbugh to document rare sightings and behaviour patterns.

The wetlands are expected to host new arrivals in the coming weeks. The final bird census, officials said, will be completed by the end of next week, giving a clearer picture of this year’s population trend.

GMC Handwara Students Seek Immediate Hostel Facilities

Students of Government Medical College (GMC) Handwara on Thursday held a sit-in protest, demanding immediate hostel accommodation and alleging that the authorities have failed to act despite repeated appeals over the past year.

The protesting students—mainly from the second-year batch—said they have been compelled to live in private rented rooms under “poor and unsuitable conditions”, with many sharing cramped spaces and struggling with inadequate water and electricity facilities.

“Living without a hostel in the first year might have been understandable, but we are now in our second year and still without proper accommodation,” one of the students said, holding a placard that read “A room for every dream.”

The students alleged that although an official order issued on May 21, 2025, had directed the arrangement of a building for hostel purposes, the facility was instead allocated to junior students, leaving the second-year batch without space. “This has affected students from economically weaker backgrounds the most. How can a student from a modest family afford ₹8,000–₹10,000 a month just for rent, apart from food and travel?” another student asked. (Observer News Service)

Springs in Bandipora Dry Up Due to Encroachment

Once known for its abundant natural water sources, north Kashmir’s Bandipora district is witnessing a steady decline in its springs and streams, with many of them now converted into garbage dumping sites or encroached upon by residents.

Bandipora, traditionally associated with Ilm (knowledge), Adab (literature), and Aab (water), is losing one of its defining elements as several freshwater bodies that once sustained communities have dried up or become polluted. Locals of Arin-Dardpora, Gundpora, Aragam, Kehnusa, Kaloosa, Gamroo, Nadihal, and Guroora decry that water channels have been reduced to waste disposal sites.

They said household garbage, plastic bottles, and other non-biodegradable waste are being dumped directly into these streams, choking their flow and contaminating water that once supplied nearby villages.

In Gundpora village, residents said a two-century-old stream has turned into a stagnant drain. “We used to drink from it years ago, but now people throw garbage and old items into it,” said Mohammad Shafi, a resident.—(KNO)

MP Er Rashid Shifted to Tihar Jail No. 1 After Alleged Attack

Member of Parliament Engineer Rashid, has reportedly been shifted to Jail Number 1 in Delhi’s Tihar Prison following an alleged attack inside the jail premises recently. The party confirmed that the MP from north Kashmir’s Baramulla constituency was relocated to another block after the alleged assault incident sparked serious security concerns.

According to KNT, the party spokesperson said that Rashid, who has been lodged in Tihar, was allegedly attacked by some inmates during a routine interaction period.

The party was “deeply disturbed” by the reports and demanded an independent inquiry into the alleged incident. “This is not just about one individual, it’s about custodial safety and the rights of prisoners under law.”

Rashid was elected as an independent MP from Baramulla in the 2024 parliamentary elections while being in custody. (Observer News Service)

Textiles Ministry Sanctions 100 More Modern Looms

Close on the heels of distribution of 100 Modified Modern Steel Looms amongst the carpet weavers, the Union Ministry of Textiles has sanctioned 51.00 lakh for procurement and distribution of 100 more looms under the ‘Wool Processing Scheme’ of the Central Wool Development Board.

Each loom costing ₹51,000 has been specially designed by the Indian Institute of Carpet Technology (IICT), Srinagar, which provides a suitable back-rest and comfort seating arrangement for the weavers.

Tax Awareness Event Held at Central University of Kashmir



Observer News Service

GANDERBAL: As part of its ongoing public outreach initiative, the Income Tax Department, Srinagar organised the second event in its “Tax Talks” series at the Central University of Kashmir’s Ganderbal campus. The session focused on “The Importance of Progressive Taxation” and saw active participation from students of commerce and finance streams.

Students engaged in a structured debate on the theme, highlighting various dimensions of taxation and its role in nation-building. The winners were later felicitated with prizes in recognition of their presentations and participation.

The programme was led by Shakeel Ahmad Ganie, Deputy Commissioner, Income Tax, Srinagar, along with Abhinav Jhorar, ITO. Rifat Qureshi, Deputy Commissioner, Sales Tax, Srinagar, also participated in the discussions. Faculty

members, university staff and officers from the department were present on the occasion.

Speakers underscored the role of income tax in socio-economic development and emphasised the need for voluntary tax compliance. They noted that increasing tax awareness among the youth is essential for strengthening fiscal responsibility and supporting India’s growing economy.

The speakers also highlighted the importance of tax education at the academic level to foster informed citizenship and to encourage future professionals to understand the broader implications of taxation on development.

Registrar of the University, Nisar Ahmad, thanked the Income Tax Department for collaborating with the institution and expressed hope that such engagements would continue to encourage informed dialogue among students.

Red Potato Loses Sheen in Shopian

Observer News Service

SRINAGAR: The famous Hirpora Red Potato—locally known as ‘Katt-e-Maaz Aalu’ because of its unique mutton-like flavour—is now being cultivated by only a handful of households in Hirpora Shopian, even as farmers this year earned good returns from other potato varieties.

Locals from Hirpora and its adjoining areas said that despite being a crop with a legacy value and high market demand, the red Hirpora potato is today limited to barely 2-4 households out of nearly 800 families in the village.

“This potato once represented Hirpora’s identity. Traders from different parts of the Valley used to travel to Hirpora only for this red potato. But today it is nearly extinct,” said Mohammad Yousuf, a grower from Hirpora.

Farmers said that this year other potato varieties—especially the improved white varieties—gave good production and good returns due to favourable weather. However, on the red variety, they said the population has been shrinking mainly due to diseases, low yields and the increasing shift towards

apple cultivation.

Locals also alleged that the agriculture department this year supplied them with potato seed at Rs 3,500 per quintal with the promise that later the department would procure the produce at the same rate.

“We were assured ‘whatever rate we sell to you at the beginning, same rate we will buy back’. But later they

paid us only Rs 2,500 per quintal. This is cheating,” said another farmer, Abdul Rehman.

Farmers said this caused distress among many households who had trusted the department’s commitment.

“We demand a proper inquiry into this. If there was a subsidy or any scheme component, we should have been told clearly. But changing the rate after its cultivation is totally unjust,” they said.

An official told KNO that there was no cheating involved and that farmers were paid Rs 2,500 per quintal + Rs 1,000 subsidy under HADP, making it equivalent to Rs 3,500 per quintal.

“Farmers got Rs 2,500 cash rate and Rs 1,000 subsidy component under HADP (Holistic Agriculture Development Programme). So the total comes to Rs 3,500 per quintal,” the official clarified.



Bla Police Roll Out J&K’s First Emergency Response App

Agencies

SRINAGAR: Baramulla Police on Thursday launched Jammu and Kashmir’s first-of-its-kind digital safety application to ensure quick emergency response and strengthen citizen security.

The “Baramulla Safety App” allows residents to send SOS alerts that reach police within five seconds, enabling real-time monitoring and immediate action by duty officers.

Deputy Commissioner (DC) Baramulla, Minga Sherpa, while addressing a joint press conference with SSP Baramulla Gurinderpal Singh, said the initiative bridges the communication gap between citizens and authorities.

“In critical situations, calls to officials often go unanswered. This app ensures that the moment an SOS button is pressed, within five seconds a dashboard opens with user details, and the concerned officer is bound to respond,” he said.

DC Sherpa urged residents to register in large numbers, stating that the success of the initiative depends on community participation. Over 6,000 people have registered so far, including employees of PM Packaging, minority and migrant communities and outside-state laborers.

The “Baramulla Safety Application” provides real-time

monitoring, SOS alerts and a connected command network supervised by SHOs, DOs, and the PCR Baramulla. The app includes 15 categories of enrollees, covering vulnerable and at-risk groups.

According to the official dashboard, the current category-wise enrolments are as follows: 596 KP Migrants, 80 KP Non-Migrants, 313 KP PM Package Employees, 96 Non-Kashmiri Students, 414 Non-Kashmiri Government and Semi-Government Employees, 533 Non-Kashmiri Employees in Private Sector (Primary), 225 Non-Kashmiri Employees in Private Sector (Secondary), 387 Non-Kashmiri Employees in Private Sector (Tertiary), 15 Non-KP Minority Migrants, 561 Non-KP Minority Non-Migrant Sikhs, 259 Non-KP Minority Non-Migrant Brahmins, 01 Non-KP Minority Non-Migrant Christians, 130 Protected Persons, 216 Terror Victim Persons and 1,617 Transit Category.

SSP Gurinderpal Singh, while speaking to reporters said the app dynamically adapts to evolving threat perceptions. “Security challenges change constantly and this platform will expand its scope accordingly. Journalists, political workers or any vulnerable person can enroll and seek support when needed,” he said.—(KNO)

Government of Jammu & Kashmir

OFFICE OF THE EXECUTIVE ENGINEER (R&B) DIVISION AWANTIPORA.

NOTICE INVITING E-TENDER

NIT No: 112/EEA/R&B of 2025-26/ 6271-81 **Dated: 04-11-2025**

For and on behalf of the Lt. Governor, UT J&K, e-tenders (In single cover system) are invited on Percentage basis from approved and eligible Contractors registered with J&K Govt., CPWD, Railways sand other State/Central Governments for the following works:-

S. No	Name of Work	Adv. Cost (Rs. In Lacs)	Cost of T/ Doc. (In Rupees)	Earnest money (In Rupees)	Time of completion	M.H of Account	Class of Contractor	Project Authority
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
1.	Upgradation of IR Seer Colony, exchange colony, Gojri Mohallah, Mirbagh, Androosa, Zabdaji colony at Khrew, Batapora and Krenchoo-Konibal.	36.96	1100/-	2% of Adv cost	40 days	UT Road sector of capex budget 2023-24	Aay, Bee	PW(R&B)

Position Of AAA: Accorded vide No: 27-SE/PS of 2023-24 dt 12.08.2023).

Position of funds: Committed.

The Bidding documents Consisting of qualifying information, eligibility criteria, specifications, Drawings, bill of quantities (B.O.Q),Set of terms and conditions of contract and other details can be viewed/downloaded from the departmental website www.jktenders.gov.in as per schedule of dates given below-

	Date of Issue of Tender Notice	04-11-2025
1	Period of downloading of bidding documents	04-11-2025
2	Bid submission Start Date	05-11-2025
3	Bid Submission End Date	17-11-2025 4:00 PM
4	Date & time of opening of Bids (Online)	18-11-2025 12:00 PM

1. Every participating contractor to mandatorily disclose the bank account number which is linked with their GSTIN at the time of bid submission. No payments shall be released by the Government Department/Agency to any other bank account except the one linked with the GST registered number of the successful bidder. (As per circular No. 01(ADM) FD of 2025 Dated 08-07-2025 of J&K Finance Department)

(The participating contractor may disclose his Bank Account as per the format, devised as Annexure- A of the NIT and submit/upload the same accordingly at the time of submission of the bid).

2. Bids must be accompanied with cost of Tender document in shape of Treasury Challan (Dated between bid submission start date and bid submission end date) with NIT No., Serial No. and name of work to be deposited in M.H. 0059 in favour of Executive Engineer R&B Division Awantipora(tender inviting authority)

3. All the bidders must upload Earnest money /Bid security equal to 2% of advertised cost in the shape of CDR/FDR/BG pledged to Executive Engineer R&B Division Awantipora (tender receiving authority)(The Date of earnest money/Bid security should be between the Bid Submission start date and Bid submission End date, otherwise bids shall be rejected).

4. The Successful bidder will have to provide performance security@5% of contract value in the form of CDR/FDR/BG pledged to Executive Engineer R&B Division Awantipora (tender receiving authority)as per rule-171 (I) of GFR 2017. The earnest money/ Bid security @2% shall be released to the successful bidder only on receipt of Performance Security@5% of Contract value which shall be released after successful completion of DLP / maintenance period.

5. The date and time of opening of Bids shall be notified on Web Site 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 Division Awantipora(tender receiving authority).

6. The earnest money/ Bid security in favour of unsuccessful bidder shall be released only after submission of original Treasury Challan.

7. The bids for the work shall remain valid for a period of 120 day s from the date of opening of Technical bids

37. The tender / bid is liable rejection if it does not fulfill the requirements as laid down in NIT.

38. All other terms conditions are as per PWD Form 25 (Double agreement Form)

Sd/-
Draftsman

No: 112/EEA/R&B / 2025-26/ 6271-81
Dated: 04 -11-2025

Sd/-
Tech. Officer

DIPK-7792-25
DT: 06/11/2025

Sd/-
Executive Engineer

R&B Division Awantipora.

Government of Jammu & Kashmir

OFFICE OF THE EXECUTIVE ENGINEER, TRANS. LINE MAINTT. DIVISION-VII, JKPTCL BEMINA, SRINAGAR-190010

Ph. No. 0194-3516481 e-mail: tlmd-vii.sgr@jk.gov.in

NOTICE INVITING TENDER

e-NIT No: TLMD-7/ 08 of 2025-26 Dated: 04: 11: 2025

For and on behalf of the Managing Director Jammu & Kashmir Power Transmission Corporation Ltd. (JKPTCL) Kashmir, Superintending Engineer O&M Circle-II, JKPTCL PDD Bemina Srinagar invites online e-bids valid for 180 days, from eligible and financially sound registered Civil/Electrical Contractors of Class "AAY/Firms/Joint ventures having sufficient experience of the relevant work viz. Construction of Pile Foundations, as per Terms, Conditions, Technical Specifications and Schedules thereto mentioned in the Standard Bidding Document, for the job detailed below.

The cost of tender document shall be deposited in the Account of Executive Engineer Transmission Line Maintenance Division-7, Srinagar bearing CD A/ C No. 0367010200000182. Scanned copy of original EMD in the form of CDR/FDR/BG pledged to the Superintending Engineer O&M Circle-II, JKPTCL Srinagar shall be uploaded along with other credentials. However, the hard copy of EMD instrument shall have to be deposited along with hard copy of Bid.

S. No	Description of Work	Qty	Estimated Cost (INR Lacs)	Earnest Money (INR Lacs)	Cost of Tender Documents (Nonrefundable) INR	Completion period
1.	Construction of pile type / open raft type tower foundations and Supply, Erection of Tower Material and Supply, Laying & Stringing of 0.4ACSR Conductor with Hardware Fittings at various locations of 220 kV D/C Alusteng-Mirbazar Transmission Line	As per BOQ	411.51	8.23	5500.00	6 months

The Bidding Documents consisting of Pre-Qualifying Requirements / eligibility criteria, specifications, Bill of Quantities (BOQ), set of Terms and Conditions of the contract and other related details can be seen/downloaded from the J&K State Government's website http: // www.jktenders.gov.in, as per Scheduled of dates given below:-

(i)	Date of Issue of Tender Notice	04-11-2025
(ii)	Online Start date of downloading of Tender Documents	05-11-2025 (10:00Hrs.)
(iii)	Online Start date & time of e-Bid submission	05-11-2025 (14:00 Hrs.)
(iv)	Online Last date & time of e-Bid submission	25-11-2025 (14:00 Hrs.)
(v)	Online Techno-Commercial Bids Opening Date & time	26-11-2025 (14:00Hrs.)
(vi)	Date and time of opening of Price e-Bid (Only of the technically qualified Bidders)	The date & time of opening of price e-bids shall be notified separately
(vii)	Status of TS & AA	Accorded
(viii)	Status of Funds	Available (Capex)

1. The Techno-Commercial Bids of all participating Bidders shall be opened online in the office of Superintending Engineer O&M Circle-II, JKPTCL Bemina Srinagar. The date & time of opening of Price Bids shall be notified on J&K Government's website http://www.jktenders.gov.in and conveyed to the Bidders automatically through e-mail message on their e-mail address.

2. Before participating in the online Bids, the intending Bidders shall get acquainted with the sites of work and local conditions thereof.

3. Clarifications, if any, can also be sought from the office of the undersigned on e-mail: tlmd-vii.sgr@jk.gov.in.

4. The Department reserves the right to reject any or all the Bids at any stage without assigning any reason thereof.

No: TLMD-7/TS/ 2364-68
Dated: 04: 11 : 2025

DIPK-NB-2379-25
DT: 06/11/2025

Sd-
Executive Engineer

TLMD-VII Srinagar

4th T20I: Bowlers Give India 2-1 Series Lead Against Australia In Gold Coast

Press Trust of India

CARRARA (GOLD COAST): India defended a modest total with a stifling bowling performance for a 48-run win over Australia in the fourth T20 International to grab an unassailable 2-1 lead in the five-match series here on Thursday.

The architects of India's win were Axar Patel and Shivam Dube who shared two wickets each to put Australia on the backfoot in the run chase.

Washington Sundar struck thrice towards the end as India comfortably defended 168 with Australia folding up for 119 in 18.2 overs after being 91/3 at one stage.

The final T20 will be played in Brisbane on November 8. The opening match of the series was washed out in Canberra.

Openers Matthew Short (30 off 24) and Mitchell Marsh (25 off 19) got Australia



lia off the blocks smoothly in the run chase but a flurry of wickets in the middle overs pushed the hosts to a point of no return.

After Axar trapped Short in the powerplay, Dube removed Marsh and Tim David (14 off 9) in successive overs to make a telling impact on the game. The wicket of Marsh came off his second ball before he surprised David with a short ball in the following over.

Arshdeep Singh too picked a wicket in the middle overs and the game seemed done and dusted when Glenn Maxwell saw his exposed stumps disturbed off the last ball of Varun Chakaravathy's fourth over.

The stellar performance came after a middling batting effort. India never got the momentum they needed after a wicket-less powerplay to end with an un-

derwhelming 167 for eight. Abhishek Sharma (28 off 21) and Shubman Gill (46 off 39) put on 56 for the opening wicket before India lost their way.

Promoted to number three to counter Adam Zampa, Shivam Dube (22 off 18) could not make a big impact while skipper Suryakumar Yadav (20 off 10) departed after hitting a couple of sixes.

Pacer Nathan Ellis (3/21 in 4 overs) was the pick of the Australian bowlers, using his variations effectively.

Zampa leaked 45 runs in his four overs but more importantly, he got three wickets including the dangerous Abhishek.

Axar Patel (21 not out off 11) got the much needed boundaries towards the end to push the total past 160.

India lost four wickets for 42 runs in the last five overs but a stellar bowling performance carried them over the line.

10th District Badminton Championship Baramulla 2025-26 Concludes



Observer News Service

BARAMULLA: The 10th District Badminton Championship Baramulla 2025-26, organised by the District Badminton Association Baramulla under the aegis of the Badminton Association of J&K in collaboration with the J&K Sports Council, concluded on Thursday at the General Bipin Rawat Indoor Sports Stadium, Janbazpora, Baramulla.

Over 125 participants from across the district showcased their skill, talent and sportsmanship spirit during the championship. The closing ceremony was graced by Haji Peerzada Abdul Qayoom,

former Chief Sports Officer, J&K Sports Council, as the Chief Guest, while officials of the J&K Sports Council and other dignitaries including Haji Abdul Majid Dar, Satinder Jit Singh, Sheikh Mushtaq (Former Manager, J&K Sports Council) and Tanvir Ahmed Mir (Vice President, DBA Baramulla) attended as Guests of Honour.

"Parents expressed their delight and gratitude to the organisers for providing such platforms to young players. The Chief Guest encouraged participants with inspiring words, appreciating their dedication and performance," the department said.

UT Level U-19 Boys Athletic Meet Commences In Jammu

The Inter District UT Level Athletic Meet for Under-19 Boys commenced on Thursday at the Synthetic Turf, University Ground, here. The event is being organised by the Department of Youth Services and Sports, J&K.

The first day of the competition witnessed enthusiastic participation from approximately 140 athletes representing all fifteen districts of the J&K. The event is being held under the patronage of Director General Youth Services and Sports, Anuradha Gupta.

The primary objective of the meet is to identify and select the finest athletic talent from across J&K for upcoming higher-level competitions.

Sukhdev Raj Sharma, DYSSO Jammu, appreciated the winners for their outstanding performances and encouraged them to maintain rigorous practice for the National level competitions. (Observer News Service)

UT Level Cricket Tournament U-19 Boys To Begin In Anantnag

The Department of Youth Services and Sports Anantnag is all set to organise the UT Level Inter-District Cricket Tournament for Under-19 Boys, featuring participation from across J&K. A total of 320 budding cricketers representing 20 district teams are expected to showcase their talent.

To ensure the smooth conduct of the tournament, adequate arrangements for accommodation have been made at Qazigund, providing comfortable lodging and necessary facilities for the visiting players and officials. The matches will be held across five premier venues in Bijbehara, including turf wickets, creating a competitive and professional atmosphere for the young cricketers. The tournament will be played on a League-cum-Knockout basis, ensuring that every participating team gets ample opportunity to perform. Over 40 league matches are scheduled, in addition to the knockout rounds, promising an exciting and action-packed series of fixtures spread over several days. (Observer News Service)

UT Level Cricket Tourney For Boys U-14 Enters Day 4 In Budgam



Observer News Service

BUDGAM: The Department of Youth Services and Sports Budgam-hosted Inter District UT Level Cricket Tournament for Boys Under-14 entered its fourth day on Thursday. The event is being organised under the overall direction and supervision of District Youth Services and Sports Officer, Ghulam Hassan Lone.

Thursday's matches were held across four key venues of the district — Sports Stadium Budgam, Eidgah Ground Sheikhpora, Sports Stadium Charar-i-Sharief, and Degree College Ground Charar-i-Sharief.

The tournament witnessed thrilling encounters as young cricketers from various districts of Jammu and Kashmir showcased their skills, discipline, and team spirit. Each venue buzzed with energy as the budding athletes competed with determination and sportsmanship.

DYSSO Budgam Ghulam Hassan Lone appreciated the efforts of the organising staff and participating teams, highlighting that such events not only strengthen inter-district sports relations but also help identify and nurture promising cricket talent at the grassroots level.

UT Level Athletic Meet 2025-26 Kick Starts At Kashmir University

Observer News Service

SRINAGAR: The Department of Youth Services and Sports, J&K, is organising the Inter-District UT Level Athletic Meet 2025-26 at the University of Kashmir.

The event brought together athletes from across J&K to showcase their individual talent, spirit, and sportsmanship in various

The meet was inaugurated by Dr. Basharat, Assistant Physical Director of the University of Kashmir, alongside Nodal Officer Shabir Ahmad Mir and Overall Incharge Barkat Ali Mir, with the support of convenors and technical officials.

The athletic meet is hosted by the District Youth Services and Sports Office,



track and field categories, including running, jumping, and throwing events.

Around 150 young athletes in the Under-19 (Girls) category participated in the grand opening of the event.

Srinagar, under the ongoing national campaign "Nasha Mukht Bharat Abhiyan."

The event began with a collective pledge to eradicate substance abuse and promote a drug-free society across the country.

Ahmedabad To Host 2026 T20 WC Final, 5 Venues Shortlisted



Press Trust of India

The BCCI has shortlisted Ahmedabad, Delhi, Kolkata, Chennai and Mumbai as the venues for next year's T20 World Cup with the final to be played in Ahmedabad.

The 2023 ODI World Cup final, between India and Australia, was also conducted in Ahmedabad, home to the world's largest cricket stadium with a capacity of over one lakh.

That edition of the marquee competition was held across 10 venues in total. It is learnt that the ICC will announce the full schedule of the February-March tournament next week.

The event will be co-hosted by Sri Lanka which will act as a neutral venue for Pakistan as per an agreed arrangement with India.

Three venues in Sri Lanka will host the games, including Colombo.

If Pakistan reach the final, the summit clash will be played in Sri Lanka.

Irrespective of the host nation, India and Pakistan will play all their games at a neutral venue till 2027, as per the agreement reached by the ICC, BCCI and the PCB. (PTI)

Jammu and kashmir Bank
Officer's Association Election 2025
Voting on 8th November 2025
10 AM to 4 PM



Mr. Mehrajuddin Shah



Mr. Altaf Ah. Ringshaw

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LEGACY

YOUR VOTE, YOUR WELFARE-
TOGETHER WE RISE

PANEL 2



ZUBAIR RASOOL MIR
President



ISHTIYAQ AHMED
Sr. Vice President



SAQIB SHOWKAT
Vice President



JOHN MOHAMMAD SOFI
General Secretary



MUNEER AHMAD GANAI
Assistant General Secretary



IMTIYAZ AHMAD PUNJABI
Organising Secretary



MANZOOR AHMAD MASOODI
Secretary 1



SHAISTA AMIN
Secretary 2



MOHAMAD IQBAL BAZAZ
Treasurer



SHARIQ MOHD SHAH
Assistant Treasurer

Work-Life Balance

Fairness

Progress

Abbas Ads: 7006444730

OFFICE OF THE CONVENOR ELECTION COMMITTEE
THE JAMMU & KASHMIR BANK OFFICERS' ASSOCIATION KASHMIR
(AFFILIATED TO AIBOA)
RAJBAGH EXTENSION ABOVE JK BANK TRC SRINAGAR J&K
Ref No: JKBOA(K)- Election 2025-03
Dated: 06.11.2025

AIBEA
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AUKBOF
JKBOA

VENUE NOTIFICATION.

All members of The Jammu and Kashmir Bank Officer's Association Kashmir JKBOA (K) are hereby informed that Election 2025 for the officer bearers of the Association scheduled on 08th November 2025 shall be held at the following polling stations. The member of JKBOA (K) can exercise their right to vote at any of the following designated polling stations. All members are requested to mandatorily carry their Employee (Bank) Identity Card with them for identification.

Polling station	Venue address	Time of Polling
ANANTNAG	Wazir Bagh Park Anantnag	10.00 AM to 3.00 PM
AWANTIPORA	Near J&K Bank Awantipora	
BARAMULLA	Dak Bunglow Baramulla, Adjacent to District Police Lines Baramulla	
BANDIPORA	RSETI Bandipora Tawheed Bagh	
BUDGAM	Town Hall near New Bus Stand Budgam	
GANDERBAL	RSETI Ganderbal - Top Floor J&K Bank Ganderbal	
KULGAM	RSETI Kulgam Town Plaza Kulgam	
KUPWARA	Town Hall Kupwara Near Masjid Murshideen Kupwara	
SOPORE	RSETI Baramulla Bye Pass Road Amargarh Sopore	
SHOPIAN	Lead District office , 2nd Floor Main Branch Shopian	
PULWAMA	Hotel Akbar Near Old Bus Stand Pulwama	10.00 AM to 4.00 PM
SRINAGAR	S. P College MA Road Srinagar	

MAKE YOUR VOICES HEARD
EXERCISE YOUR RIGHT TO VOTE
08th November 2025

Sd/-
Imtiyaz Ahmad Beigh
(Convenor Election Committee)

Abbas Ads: 7006444730