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Budgam, Nagrota Set For By-polls Today

27 Candidates In Fray Across Two Constituencies



Syed Mohammad Burhan

Srinagar: All arrangements have been put in place for the much-anticipated by-elections in the Budgam and Nagrota Assembly constituencies, scheduled to be held tomorrow, November 11. The counting of votes will take place on November 14, officials said.

A total of 27 candidates — 17 in Budgam and 10 in Nagrota — are contesting in what are being seen as politically

significant by-polls likely to shape the balance of power in both the central and Jammu regions of the Union Territory.

The by-elections were necessitated after Chief Minister Omar Abdullah vacated the Budgam seat, choosing to retain Ganderbal following his dual victory in the 2024 Assembly polls, and following the passing of senior BJP leader Devender Singh Rana, who represented Nagrota.

Intense Contest | [More on P6](#)

8 Dead, Dozens Injured In Delhi Red Fort Blast



Press Trust Of India

New Delhi: A high-intensity explosion ripped through a slow-moving car at a traffic signal near the Red Fort metro station on Monday evening, killing at least eight people

and gutting several vehicles, officials said.

Twenty-four people were injured in the blast that took place on a busy evening when the area was milling with people. The injured were taken to the LNJP | [More on P6](#)

India On High Alert; Security Tightened Across States

KO Web Desk

Srinagar: A nationwide high alert was sounded on Monday evening after a deadly explosion near the Red Fort metro station in New Delhi killed at least eight people and left 24 others injured, prompting states across India to tighten security and increase vigil at vital installations, metro stations, and public places.

A high-intensity blast ripped through a parked car near Gate No. 1 of

the Red Fort metro station around 6:30 pm, gutting several vehicles and sending shockwaves across the national capital. Ten fire tenders rushed to the spot, and the fire was brought under control by 7:30 pm. Police cordoned off the area as NSG and NIA teams, along with forensic experts, began collecting samples from the site.

Authorities described the blast as "massive," with eyewitnesses recounting | [More on P6](#)

also directed the chiefs of the National Security Guard (NSG), National Investigation Agency (NIA) and forensic sciences to send expert teams to the blast site to assist the probe and collect evidence. The home minister spoke to the | [More on P6](#)

PM, Shah Review Situation

Union Home Minister Amit Shah spoke to the Delhi police chief and the director of the Intelligence Bureau to take stock of the situation following a blast near the Red Fort that has so far claimed eight lives, sources said. Shah

'WHITE COLLAR' TERROR BUST

2 Kashmiri Doctors Held In Faridabad

KO Web Desk

Srinagar: In a major counter-terror operation, Jammu and Kashmir and Haryana Police have recovered around 360 kilograms of suspected ammonium nitrate, arms, and electronic equipment from a rented house in Faridabad, following the arrest of two Kashmiri doctors allegedly linked to a terror module associated with Jaish-e-Mohammad (JeM) and Ansar Ghazwat-ul-Hind (AGuH).

The seizure came after the interrogation of Dr Adil Ahmad Rather, arrested earlier by J&K Police from Saharanpur, Uttar Pradesh, for allegedly pasting JeM posters in Srinagar on October 27. Based on his disclosures, police identified and arrested Dr Muzammil Shakeel, a faculty member at Al-Falah University, who hails from Kashmir.

Addressing a press conference, Faridabad Police Commissioner Satender Kumar Gupta said that teams from Haryana and J&K Police jointly conducted the operation. "During follow-up raids, 360 kg of | [More on P6](#)

Nov 11 Paid Holiday For Polls

The Jammu and Kashmir government has announced that November 11, 2025 (Tuesday) will be observed as a paid holiday in connection with the bye-elections to Assembly Constituencies 27-Budgam and 77-Nagrota. The decision has been taken under Section 135B of the Representation of Peoples Act, 1951, as per Government Order No. 1355-JK(GAD) of 2025, issued by the | [More on P6](#)

Traffic Plan In Place For Budgam

In view of the upcoming bye-elections for the 27-Budgam Assembly Constituency, the Traffic Police Rural Kashmir has issued a comprehensive traffic advisory to facilitate | [More on P6](#)

India Will Lead Deep-Tech Ventures Of The World: LG Says Cutting-Edge Technologies Like AI to Drive Future Development

Observer News Service

Srinagar: Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha on Saturday said that India is emerging as a global leader in technological innovation and will soon lead the world in deep-tech ventures, powered by advances in artificial intelligence (AI), automation, and other cutting-edge technologies.

Addressing the annual convocation of the Indian Institute of Technology (IIT) Bhubaneswar in Bhubaneswar, Odisha, the



Lieutenant Governor urged young engineers and scientists to focus on transforming scientific principles into real-world solutions that can drive industries

JKP Seeks Bail Cancellation Of 33 UAPA Accused

Firdos Ali

Srinagar: In a major legal push to curb the misuse of judicial relief by individuals facing terror-related charges, Jammu and Kashmir Police have moved to cancel bail for at least 33 accused booked under the Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act (UAPA) across Sopore, Anantnag, and Shopian districts. Officials said the accused were found violating bail conditions and allegedly re-engaging in activities detrimental to public order and security.

In Sopore, police identified 11 individuals booked under UAPA who had been granted bail by the court but were later found flouting bail conditions. After verification of their post-bail conduct, police said the violations were "established beyond doubt", prompting the initiation of formal applications for bail cancellation before the competent court.

A senior police officer said the move was aimed at ensuring that "judicial concessions are not exploited by | [More on P6](#)

Valley-Wide Raids As Police Target Terror Links

Observer News Service

In a series of coordinated operations across multiple districts, Jammu and Kashmir Police have launched a valley-wide crackdown on terror networks and anti-national elements, conducting simultaneous cordon and search operations (CASOs) in Anantnag, Pulwama, Awantipora, Shopian, and Baramulla. The intensified drive, | [More on P6](#)

From Downtown To Delhi, Faiyaz Dilbar's Life Was A Story In Verse

From newsroom desks to theatre stages, Faiyaz Dilbar turned words into windows on Kashmir.

Fiza Masoodi

Srinagar: When the light faded over Srinagar on Sunday evening, a familiar voice fell silent.

Faiyaz Dilbar, poet and playwright, died at Sheerin Bagh hospital after weeks of illness. He had been unwell with a lung condition, and a heart attack brought his life to a close. He was sixty-eight.

By morning, the road to Harwan filled with mourners carrying him to his final rest, beneath chinars



burnished by autumn and memory.

In Srinagar, a city shaped by poetry and print, Faiyaz Dilbar's name was spoken with respect.

He came from Maharaj Gunj, one

of the city's oldest neighbourhoods, where Urdu newspapers were once printed by hand and verse was part of daily life.

He began young, with the Srinagar Times, his pen guided by both curiosity and conviction.

In the early 1980s, he and fellow journalist Imdad Saqi founded the Kashmir News Bureau, KNB, from a modest room in Madina Chowk. It became a hub for restless young reporters and visiting national correspondents who wanted to understand the valley's pulse.

Veteran journalist Yusuf Jameel still remembers walking into that smoky newsroom. "He was my distant neighbour from Raze Kadal," Jameel said. "We | [More on P6](#)

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2

The proportion of institutes having 24-hour eye emergency, functional eye OT, eye bank (with tissue processing facility), refractive eye surgery, and low-vision services was significantly higher in the private sector in comparison to the public sector and NGO sector, the study said.

The gap between the proportion of eye institutes in the public, NGO and private sectors is more in the case of refractive eye surgeries and low-vision services, whereas the gap is minimal in the case of eye banking services, the study said.

This clearly indicates that financially lucrative services like refractive surgeries are being prioritised by the private sector, whereas charitable services like eye banking are predominantly in the public sector, the doctors stated.

The proportion of institutes having sub-specialties of cataract, glaucoma, squint, uvea and vitreo-retina, keratoplasty, oculoplasty, and neuro-ophthalmology was also significantly higher in the private sector in comparison to the NGO sector and public sector.

The corresponding figure for other countries ranges from a mean of 3.7 per million population in low-income countries (LICs) to a mean of 76.2 in high-income countries (HICs).

Among the HICs, it ranged from 14 in the United Arab Emirates to 56.8 in the United States to 183 in Greece.

The number of ophthalmologists in the current survey was 20,944, which falls short of the 25,000 required to eliminate the burden of avoidable blindness in the country by 2030, the study said.

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Soz Inspects Achan Site, Seeks Action on Waste Crisis

Observer News Service

Srinagar ~ Former Union Minister Prof. Saifuddin Soz on Saturday visited the Achan Waste Management facility at Eidgah, Srinagar, along with members of civil society and social activists to assess the city’s solid waste handling operations being undertaken by the Srinagar Municipal Corporation (SMC) in collaboration with Ecostan Infra Pvt. Ltd., Noida.

During the visit, Prof. Soz reviewed the site and described the large heaps of waste and strong stench in the area as “deeply concerning.” He was briefed by Najeeb Shah, Executive Engineer (Solid Waste Management), and Arif Ahmad Magray, Project Head (Waste Management), on measures being taken to improve the situation.

Prof. Soz urged SMC to strengthen door-to-door public awareness campaigns about waste segregation and the environmental impact of non-biodegradable waste. He

also appealed to residents to use separate bins for solid and liquid waste to aid better disposal.

Drawing on his experience as former Environment Minister, Prof. Soz cited Vienna’s waste incineration model as a successful example of scientific waste management and questioned why similar systems had not yet been adopted in Jammu and Kashmir.

Speaking to reporters, he called for community participation in addressing the waste issue through local initiatives and sustained public education drives.

Later, Prof. Soz visited the Hokersar wetland to review migratory bird activity. Chief Wildlife Warden Mir Altaf briefed him on ongoing projects including dredging and cleaning operations across major water bodies such as Wular Lake, Shalabugh, Mirgund, and Anantnag, and on efforts to facilitate the migration of birds from regions including Siberia, Russia, China, and Europe.

Workshop on Solar Energy Technologies Begins at NIT

Observer News Service

Srinagar: A week-long workshop and exhibition titled “Solar Energy Technologies (SETA-2025)” began at the National Institute of Technology (NIT) Srinagar on Monday, focusing on research, innovation, and practical applications of solar energy technologies.

The event is being organized under the patronage of Prof. Binod Kumar Kanaujia, Director, NIT Srinagar, with Prof. Roohie Naaz Mir, Dean (Research & Consultancy), and Prof. Atikur Rehman, Registrar, serving as co-patrons.

Dr. Yashwant Mehta, Associate Professor, Mechanical and Materials Engineering Department, is the Secretary of the event, while Dr. Asadur Rahman, Assistant Professor, Electrical Engineering Department, is the Convener, and Dr. Pankaj Kumar, Assistant Professor from the same department, is the Coordinator. The inaugural ceremony was presided over by Prof. Roohie Naaz Mir (In-charge Director, NIT Srinagar), while Er. Bashir Ahmad, Managing Director of JK Green Technologies and former MD of JKPCL and Secretary (Technical), JKPDD, was the Guest of Honour on the occasion.

In her inaugural address, Prof. Roohie Naaz Mir emphasized the importance of integrating modern solar technologies with real-time monitoring systems.

“Such workshops are the need of the hour to bridge the gap between academia and industry. The focus should be on operation and maintenance, data-driven strategies, and regular inspections to enhance system efficiency,” she said.

Prof. Roohie further highlighted the role of Artificial Intelligence (AI), Machine Learning (ML), and the Internet of Things (IoT) in improving the performance and sustainability of solar power systems.

Ex-Cop Gets 3-Year Jail for DOB Forgery

Observer News Service

Srinagar: A court here has sentenced a former police officer to three years’ imprisonment for forging his date of birth to extend service, officials said on Monday.

The Court of City Judge, Srinagar also imposed a fine of Rs 5,000 on former Sub-Inspector Jagdesh Singh, a resident of Atina, Budgam.

In case of default in payment of fine, the convict shall undergo an additional six months of imprisonment. All sentences shall run concurrently, the officials added.

According to PTI, the

Economic Offences Wing of Crime Branch Kashmir said the case stemmed from a communication received from the Police Headquarters (PHQ) J-K, indicating that the accused had altered his year of birth from 1957 to 1959 in official records to unlawfully extend his service tenure by two years.

Investigation revealed that Singh had fraudulently modified his date of birth to November 10, 1959 in his service documents, including his character roll and matriculation certificate, to gain undue service benefits, the officials said.

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Three-Day Graphic Narratives Workshop Kicks Off at KU

Observer News Service

Srinagar: The Department of English at the University of Kashmir on Monday inaugurated a three-day workshop on ‘Graphic Narratives’ at the university’s Main Campus, bringing together artists, scholars, and students to explore the intersection of visual art and literary expression.

The workshop is aimed at examining the growing significance of graphic storytelling as a hybrid artistic and academic medium, encouraging participants to engage with visual forms of narrative construction and interpretation.

Delivering the presidential address at the inaugural session, Vice-Chancellor Prof. Nilofer Khan said such initiatives help broaden the creative and intellectual horizons of students.

“Engaging with visual and literary art forms not only nurtures imagination but also enables students to think critically and empathetically about the world around them,” Prof. Khan said. She added

“Engaging with visual and literary art forms not only nurtures imagination but also enables students to think critically and empathetically about the world around them,”

that the University remains committed to promoting interdisciplinary learning and innovative academic experiences.

Dean Academic Affairs, Prof. Shariefuddin Pirzada, underscored the need to integrate contemporary literary and visual mediums into the curriculum to remain aligned with global academic trends.

In her keynote address, graphic novelist, illustrator, and animator Ikroop Sandhu discussed how

graphic novels enhance visual literacy and allow readers to navigate narratives through both imagery and emotion. Renowned visual artist and graphic literature author Sarnath Banerjee also spoke at the session, noting that the workshop offers a platform for critical engagement with the evolving form of graphic narratives and how they shape cultural and intellectual discourses today.

Earlier, Head of the Department of English, Prof. Iffat Maqbool, in her welcome address, said the initiative is aimed at inspiring young researchers and students to experiment with diverse storytelling forms and cultural representations.

The workshop will feature expert-led theoretical and practical sessions, interactive exercises, demonstrations, and discussions focused on the evolution, techniques, and narrative potential of graphic storytelling.

Research scholars and students from both Main and Satellite Campuses are participating in the event. The proceedings of the inaugural session were conducted by Prof. Mufti Mudasir of the Department of English.

JKEDI Holds Entrepreneurship Orientation Prog for KU Students

Observer News Service

Srinagar: The Jammu and Kashmir Entrepreneurship Development Institute (JKEDI) organised a two-day Entrepreneurship Orientation Program (EOP) for students and faculty members of the Department of Food Science and Technology, University of Kashmir, with an aim to promote entrepreneurship as a viable and promising career path.

The program was conducted by the Centre for Entrepreneurship Education and Research (CEER), a core vertical of JKEDI, under the overall supervision of the Director of the Institute.

The initiative focused on famil-

iarizing participants with the fundamentals of entrepreneurship, project report formulation, and the provisions of the J&K Startup Policy 2024-27. Officials said the programme was part of JKEDI’s ongoing efforts to strengthen the startup ecosystem in the Union Territory and encourage youth to take up entrepreneurial ventures.


During the interaction, students were briefed by JKEDI faculty and domain experts on the evolving entrepreneurial landscape in Jammu and Kashmir. The sessions covered key aspects including business plan modeling, Detailed Project Report (DPR) preparation, capacity building, business simulations, financial and market linkages, and mentorship avenues

available for aspiring entrepreneurs.

Participants were also given an overview of various JKEDI verticals and support functions, gaining insight into how the institute facilitates innovation, enterprise growth, and incubation support.

Officials said such engagement programs are crucial to exposing students to real-world entrepreneurial frameworks and motivating them to contribute to the region’s growing startup culture.

The EOP concluded with an interactive session, reaffirming JKEDI’s continued commitment to nurturing young talent and fostering a culture of innovation-driven economic development in Jammu and Kashmir.

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HIGHWAY STATUS



- Sgr-Jammu highway - (Open)
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<div><div>HIJRI CALENDAR</div></div>	PRAYERS
19 Jumada al-Awwal 1447	<div>FAJR5: 35</div> <div>ZUHR12: 14</div> <div>ASR3: 52</div> <div>Magrib5: 32</div> <div>ISHA6: 54</div>

This Day In History

- 1945 - Nobel Peace Prize awarded to Cordell Hull (establishing UN)
- 1953 - David Ben-Gurion, resigns as Prime Minister of Israel
- 1963 - Train crash in Japan, kills 164
- 1970 - Scientists perform 1st artificial synthesis of a live cell
- 1974 - A salmon is discovered in the River Thames, England, for the first time since 1833.
- 1979 - US President Carter announces a halts to Iranian oil imports & freezes Iranian assets
- 1981 - 2nd shuttle mission-1st time spacecraft launched twice (Columbia 2)
- 1981 - Great Britain performs nuclear test
- 1984 - Space shuttle astronauts snared a satellite 1st space salvage
- 1985 - STS 61-B vehicle moves to launch pad
- 1989 - Brazil holds its 1st free presidential election in 29 years
- 1990 - Crown Prince Akihito is formally installed as Emperor Akihito of Japan, becoming the 125th Japanese monarch.
- 1990 - Tim Berners-Lee publishes a formal proposal for the World Wide Web
- 1991 Atlanta Brave Tom Glavine wins NL Cy Young Award
- 1991 - Dili Massacre, Indonesian forces open fire on a crowd of protesters in Dili, East Timor, killing at least 250
- 1995 - STS 74 (Atlantis 15), launches into orbit
- 2001 - Taliban forces abandon Afghanistan's capital Kabul, ahead of advancing Afghan Northern Alliance troops
- 2001 - In New York City, American Airlines Flight 587, an Airbus A300 on its way to the Dominican Republic, crashes minutes after takeoff from John F. Kennedy International Airport, killing all 260 on board and five on the ground.
- 2003 - With 501 km/h (311 mph) Shanghai Transrapid sets up a new world record for commercial railway systems.

From KO Archives

US Election Drama Drags On; Trailing Gore Wants Hand Count, Loses Faith In Machines

AGENCIES

WASHINGTON: Republican George W. Bush’s lead over Democrat Vice-President Al-Gore has been pegged at 327 votes after a final unofficial recount in Florida, prompting the Bush camp to ask Gore to concede defeat but the outcome of the US Presidential election will not be known till next week as several thousand postal ballots are expected from abroad.

Vice President Al-Gore, who the recounts showed was trailing by 327-votes to Republican George W Bush has demanded more vote recounts in crucial Florida state particularly hand counts in four of the 67 counties. Saying machines make mistakes.

Meanwhile, news reports said a court in Palm Beach had ordered a freeze on the recount process in the county pending a hearing next week on alleged irregularities that could hurt Gore.

Three days after the voting, the election to the White House was mired in uncertainty facing legal challenges and the world yet to know as to who is the next incumbent. The unofficial count by the Associated Press county-by-county slightly boosted Bush’s tally after earlier counts had showed the margin as 225 votes.

The recount shoved Bush won Florida, Bush’s communication director Karen Hughes claimed in a statement in Austin, Texas, asking Gore to concede.

The Gore camp hit back saying contrary to claims by the rival side this election is not over.

Again we want the true and accurate will of the people to prevail and that means the legal system to run its course. If at the end of that process, George Bush is the victor, we will respect that result, Gore campaign chairman William Daley said in a statement.

(Kashmir Observer, November 11, 2000)

KASHMIR OBSERVER®

Printed & Published by Sajjad Haider on behalf of
Kashmir Observer LLP
Printed at: K.T Press Pvt. Ltd 120-Electronic Complex,
Industrial Estate, Rangreth-Budgam
Published from: 5-Boulevard Srinagar J&K
Editor-in-Chief : Sajjad Haider
Managing Editor: Bilal Handoo
News Editor: Farzana Nisar
Online Editor: Syed Hamid
Head Layout & Design: Muntazir Yaseen,
Digital Media Head: Amir Ali Shah
Distribution & Advertising: Firdous Ahmad
RNI Registration No: 69503/98
Postal Registration No-L/159/KO/SK/2014-16
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KO VIEW

Cold Truths
of Kashmir

Winter in Kashmir feels more brutal than beautiful. The long cold months test people's health, homes, and savings. This season means more coughs, more hospital visits, and sadly, more deaths. Local doctors report a clear rise in breathing problems every winter. The cold has always been part of life here. People have relied on kangris, pherans, and bukharis for generations. These old ways still help, but they also bring new risks.

Burning charcoal, coal, or wood inside closed rooms fills the air with smoke. That smoke makes asthma, chest infections, and heart problems worse. Every winter, hospitals see more patients struggling to breathe.

Life today has made winters harder. More people live in concrete homes that stay cold and trap moisture. Rising lifestyle diseases like diabetes, hypertension, and obesity make many more people vulnerable to cold-related illness.

Some families move to the warmer plains during the season. But not all can afford winter escapism. They stay in the valley, facing freezing temperatures and smoky air.

There are still ways to make homes safer. Ventilation matters most. A small window opening or vent can clear smoke and carbon fumes. People can switch to cleaner heating options like LPG, electric heaters, or oil radiators when possible. Kangris and bukharis should be used carefully, kept away from the body while sleeping and not left burning in closed rooms.

Winter health camps, flu vaccines, and home visits for the elderly can prevent emergencies as well. Hospitals need reliable power and oxygen supplies. Simple home fixes can also help: seal windows, layer clothing, cover pipes, and use carpets or old blankets to keep floors warm.

The government should focus on long-term solutions. Subsidies for safe heating devices, better power supply, and public awareness drives can save lives.

Kashmir's winter will always be cold. But death and disease do not have to come with it. With a bit of care and planning, warmth and safety can reach every home.

CASH COURSE

Read This Before You Buy Anything

The Broker Game

Villagers, widows, and elderly sellers face the highest losses in broker-driven fraud.

Irshad Mushtaq

Buying or selling land has become risky in the valley. Unlike Delhi or Mumbai, where payments go directly to sellers, most transactions here happen in cash, through third-party cheques, or unbanked transfers. This makes deals unclear and leaves both buyers and sellers open to fraud.

Brokers and land mafias control the market. They hold payments in pieces or sometimes never release them. They sell the same plot to multiple buyers, exploiting gaps in old and inaccurate land records. Villagers, widows, and elderly sellers often lose their life savings. Genuine buyers spend years in court trying to claim land they have paid for.

Legal loopholes make the problem worse. Some broker gangs file civil suits to trap buyers and sellers, forcing them to pay commissions. Revenue documents are sometimes forged or tampered with. Police action is limited. Without clear records, mafias operate freely, and ordinary people face near-constant risk.

Fixing the system will take clear rules and strict enforcement. All payments should go through bank-issued cheques in the seller's name.

Buyers should avoid unregistered brokers and deal directly with owners or trusted real estate firms. The government must ensure fast land mutation after sale and take action against any one tampering with records.

The author is a Srinagar-based reputed financial advisor.



Kashmir's Wings of Renewal

Each winter, flocks of migratory birds return to Kashmir's lakes, carrying a message of adaptability. Their survival depends on the valley's ability to protect its vulnerable wetlands.

Mohammad Hanief

Every winter, as cold seeps into the valley, the skies fill with wings. Bar-headed geese, pintails, teals, herons, and gulls arrive from the frozen stretches of Siberia, Central Asia, and northern Europe.

These avian guests turn the wetlands into living paintings of movement and sound, marking a presence older than memory, a sign of nature's strength and of the delicate balance that the valley must maintain.

This year, the spectacle has been more vibrant than usual.

Early counts suggest a rise in the number of visiting birds. Wular Lake, one of Asia's largest freshwater lakes, shows a remarkable rebound, and smaller wetlands like Hokersar, Hygam, Shallabugh, and Dal Lake are also seeing renewed life.

These wetlands sustain local communities, irrigate fields, and nurture the valley's ecological web. The surge in bird numbers signals hope, proof that even small steps in conservation can yield results.

But the recovery is risky. Decades of neglect, pollution, and encroachment have left many wetlands struggling. Siltation has shallowed lakes, invasive plants choke waterways, and urban waste continues to flow into waters that once reflected the snow peaks. Conversion of marshes into farmland has robbed countless species of shelter. These scars run deep.

The increase in birds this season carries a dual message. It reflects the improvement in Kashmir habitats, but it also hints at trouble elsewhere.

Drying wetlands, urban sprawl, and changing climates along the Central Asian Flyway have forced birds to seek refuge wherever water and food remain. The valley's success is therefore a reminder and a warning: nature survives here, but may vanish elsewhere.

Kashmir holds a crucial place on the Central Asian Flyway, a migratory route spanning thousands of kilometers from the Arctic to the Indian Ocean. Its lakes and marshes serve as resting grounds for birds on perilous journeys. Their arrival signals ecological balance, water health, and global interconnectedness.

The returning flocks at Wular, Hokersar, and Dal Lake are emissaries of a shared planet. Their wings carry pride and responsibility. Pride, because Kashmir retains the grace to host this natural spectacle. Responsibility, because that grace is fragile, and time is short.

Each returning flock carries a message: life persists here. Each absence warns that something has been lost.

Focused restoration work has begun to bear fruit. Desilting, encroachment removal, and careful water management have revived stretches of wetland. Community participation has grown. Fishermen and boatmen, once sidelined, are now partners in conservation.

When locals see lakes as shared assets, the work of recovery gains permanence.

But governance remains a challenge. Conservation in Kashmir often depends on short-term projects. Each new administration brings different priorities, while wetland restoration demands long-term consistency. Jurisdictional overlaps between local bodies, forest authorities, and development agencies complicate matters.

Effective protection requires integrated management, where environmental, social, and economic interests converge.

But climate change threatens these gains. Rising temperatures, erratic rainfall, and shifting snowfall disrupt migration patterns and water levels. Wetlands may dry prematurely or flood beyond capacity.

Birds, attuned to environmental cues for

breeding and feeding, face increasing stress. Recent fluctuations in arrival times reflect this uncertainty, and the ecological clockwork of the valley feels the strain.

The flocks have also sparked growing interest from birdwatchers and eco-tourists. Managed wisely, this interest can generate sustainable livelihoods. Guided lake tours and birding trails can benefit local communities if strictly regulated.

Wetlands must not become playgrounds for mass tourism. Conservation tourism thrives on respect, for the birds, the people, and the ecosystems.

Beyond birds, Kashmir wetlands sustain agriculture, fisheries, and groundwater. Neglecting them undermines the valley's resilience. Protection demands scientific management, enforcement against encroachment, investment in sewage treatment, and a cultural shift toward valuing water bodies as life sources.

For centuries, poets and mystics celebrated Kashmiri rivers, lakes, and birds as symbols of purity and peace. Allowing these waters to decay or these birds to disappear erases part of the valley's identity.

Environmental preservation is both a moral and cultural responsibility.

The returning flocks at Wular, Hokersar, and Dal Lake are emissaries of a shared planet. Their wings carry pride and responsibility. Pride, because Kashmir retains the grace to host this natural spectacle. Responsibility, because that grace is fragile, and time is short.

Policymakers, conservationists, and citizens must build on this season's success with enduring commitment.

The valley could reclaim its place among South Asia's richest wetlands, a sanctuary for birds and ecological balance. Failure would leave silence where song once lived.

As dawn rises over Wular, the cries of geese and gulls fill the air. Nature offers Kashmir a second chance. Whether the valley listens and acts will determine if future generations inherit skies alive with wings, or only stories of what once was.

The author is a Srinagar-based senior analyst. He can be reached at m.hanief@gmail.com.

Letter to Editor

Bring Back Missing Kashmiri Novels

In Srinagar's old city, there was once a bookstore where a reader could find Akhtar Mohiuddin's bold storytelling to Ali Mohammad Lone's heartfelt tales.

Today those authors and their books are gone. The shelves that once carried the soul of Kashmiri writing now stand empty. The novels that told our story have faded from view.

Kashmiri literature grew from the language of the people. It began with the wisdom of Lal Ded, flowed through Habba Khatoon's verses, and reached the modern world through writers like Mohiuddin, Amin Kamil, and Ghulam Nabi Gauhar. Their novels spoke of change, struggle, and

everyday life in the valley.

Reading Dod Dag or Mujrim felt like walking through our villages and cities, hearing familiar voices, seeing our history unfold. These books carried the emotions and ideas that shaped Kashmir.

Today, most of them are missing. They are out of print and hard to trace. Some survive only in private homes or in old, worn-out pages. Libraries have few copies. Bookstores prefer selling English or Urdu titles. Online, there is almost no record of them. For young readers, Kashmiri novels have almost disappeared.

This literary loss touches our identity. When a language loses its

stories, it loses its memory. Every missing novel means a missing part of who we are. These stories gave us ways to see ourselves, to understand our joys and wounds. Without them, our culture becomes smaller, our sense of self weaker.

Universities, cultural departments, and publishers can work together to digitize these novels and make them available again. Translating and sharing them online would bring them to new readers. Schools and colleges can introduce them in reading programs. Readers, too, can help by asking for them, by talking about them, and by valuing Kashmiri writing as a living part of our world.

Every recovered book is a story saved. Imagine a student in Pulwama or Kupwara finding Gatti Munz Gaash online and discovering a reflection of their own life. That moment can keep a language alive.

The novels of Mohiuddin, Kamil, Gauhar, and Lone still speak to us. They only need to be heard again. It is time to bring them back, before the last page is lost.

Sincerely,

Saba Andrabi
hereissabaandrabi@gmail.com

Remembering Faiyaz Dilbar The Man Who Saw Kashmir in Every Frame

The defiant downtowner watched the world shift from the editor's desk of Srinagar Times to the television studios of Delhi, where he made a name for himself as a sharp video journalist and a tender poet.

Sibt Muhammad Hassan

In the late 1980s, Kashmir newsrooms were small islands of debate and discovery.

The Soviet Union was collapsing, the world was changing its axis, and in Srinagar, a new generation of writers and editors was learning to steer that shifting landscape through stories.

Among them was a young editor named Faiyaz Dilbar, who spent his days at Srinagar Times shaping the Sunday Adab Nama page under the watchful eye of Sofi Ghulam Mohammad.

Those were different times. The newsroom carried the earthy smell of newsprint and the clatter of typewriters. Writers gathered around Faiyaz's desk, waiting for his silent nod of approval.

The newsman from the Qazi clan of Maharaj Gunj was patient with manuscripts, never in a rush to reject or accept. He would read each word as if it carried a secret. His edits were gentle but firm, always meant to lift a piece rather than trim it down.

Faiyaz had a rare gift for understanding how the global and the local intertwined.

Back then, Indian media was opening up, satellite television was making its first appearances, and Kashmir's own socio-political landscape was beginning to tremble.

In that environment, Dilbar tried to preserve a space for thought and culture.

His pieces often reflected on how stories could bridge divides, and how art could still hold mean-

ing when politics threatened to drown it.

In the early 1990s, as his homeland entered a turbulent phase, Faiyaz left for Delhi. It was not an escape but a continuation of his search.

He joined the Observer video magazine, a trailblazing initiative that aimed to bring serious journalism to television. There, he worked under Vinod Dua, one of India's most respected broadcasters, and found his call in the hum of cameras and the pulse of breaking stories.

Delhi was a different kind of classroom. Faiyaz adapted quickly, learning the new grammar of visual storytelling. He worked alongside colleagues like Ajaz Rashid, Abdul Rafia Fazili, Sundeep Saini, and Ajay Joshi, forming a fraternity of restless journalists driven by truth and camaraderie.

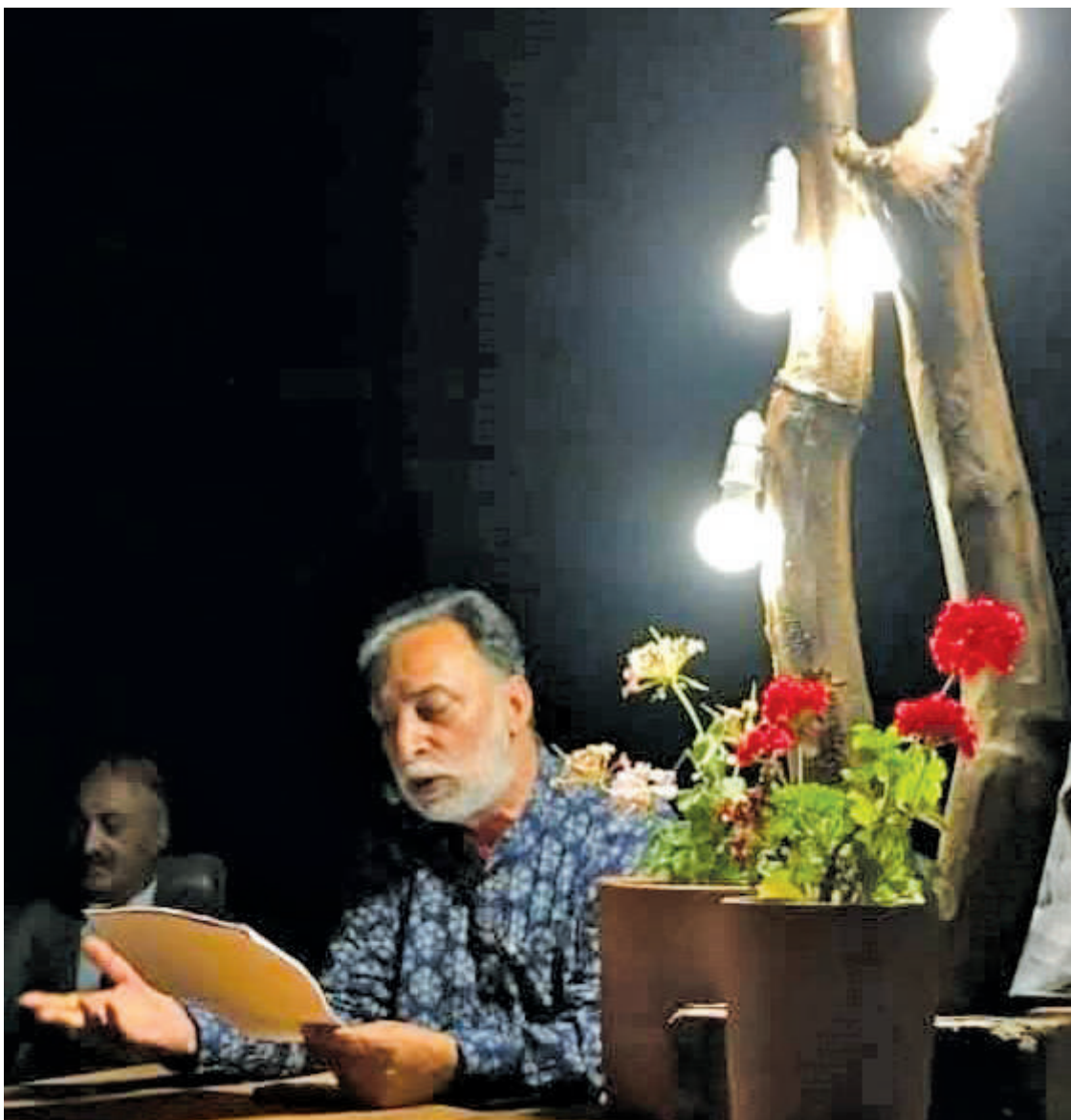
The studio lights, the late-night edits, and the rush of deadlines suited him. But even in that demanding world, he carried the same warmth that had once filled the corridors of Srinagar Times.

His Delhi home became a refuge for Kashmiris who had arrived in the city during difficult years. Friends recall evenings when his door was always open, tea was always brewing, and laughter filled the small living room.

Dilbar had an unassuming way of making people feel at ease, a storyteller who listened more than he spoke.

In a city of strangers, his home was a small Kashmiri embassy of affection.

Through it all, Faiyaz kept writing.



Poetry was his compass, rather than a side note in his life. His anthology of Kashmiri lyrics, illustrated by his wife, revealed a man deeply rooted in both tenderness and realism.

His verses carried the scent of rain-soaked orchards, the sound of fading laughter, and the weight of memory. They were filled with longing, but never despair.

His writing spoke of belonging, of people who left and returned, and of time that both healed and wounded.

Faiyaz's humour was famous among friends. His laughter, often described as contagious, could turn a tense discussion into an evening of stories.

The beloved bard had the rare ability to see absurdity in the world's seriousness and find light in moments of heaviness.

In his later years, he devoted himself to building the Kashmir Art and Artists Foundation (KAAF) at his home in Harwan, the valley's first printmaking studio. The initia-

tive brought leading printmakers from across India and opened new doors for young Kashmiri artists to learn and create within their own homeland.

Faiyaz's hospitality was an extension of his creative spirit. Even when illness slowed him down, he kept welcoming people with the same warmth. His friends from journalism, theatre, and literature often visited him at residence, where he shared memories of the Observer days and his dreams for Kashmir's



FAIYAZ DILBAR BELONGED TO AN ERA WHEN ART WAS AN ACT OF FAITH AND FRIENDSHIP A WAY OF SURVIVAL. He bridged the gap between print and screen, between Kashmir and the world, between nostalgia and progress. His life was a conversation that never truly ended.

art scene. He would serve tea, talk about poetry, and end every conversation with his familiar smile.

When the news of his passing spread, it felt like a page had turned in Kashmir's cultural story. The man who once helped others find their voice had fallen silent.

But in that silence, his words still echo in his poems, in the stories he edited, and in the memories of those who sat beside him in smoke-filled newsrooms or Delhi cafés.

Faiyaz Dilbar belonged to an era when art was an act of faith and friendship a way of survival. He bridged the gap between print and screen, between Kashmir and the world, and between nostalgia and progress.

His life was a conversation that never truly ended.

— The author is a journalist, friend, and admirer of an unforgettable artist.

WHEN THE NEWS OF HIS PASSING SPREAD, IT FELT LIKE A PAGE HAD TURNED IN KASHMIR'S CULTURAL STORY. The man who once helped others find their voice had fallen silent. But in that silence, his words still echo in his poems, in the stories he edited, and in the memories of those who sat beside him in smoke-filled newsrooms or Delhi cafés.

The Struggle for Work and Worth in Kashmir

Degrees hang on walls, dreams turn to smoke, and still the young of Kashmir rise each morning, carrying both hope and heartbreak in equal measure.

Falak Fayaz

At twenty, life should open like a window. You study hard, finish college, and hope the world will make space for you.

But in Kashmir, twenty feels more like standing in a long corridor where every door stays closed. The sound of possibility is missing.

What fills the air instead is the shuffle of shoes outside employment offices, the low buzz of phones with new job alerts, and the same question playing in everyone's mind: Where do we go from here?

When there is no work for the hands, the heart begins to sink.

Jammu and Kashmir's unemployment rate stands at 17.1 percent, nearly double the national average, according to the Centre for Monitoring Indian Economy. The numbers tell one story, the faces tell another.

There is an engineer driving a cab, a postgraduate selling apples, and a teacher waiting for a call that never comes.

These are not people without ambition. They studied, prepared, and waited. The system simply stopped meeting them halfway.

A graduate from Sopore said it best: "We were told to build our wings, but no one gave us the sky."

Education once felt like a sacred promise in Kashmir. Parents sold land, took loans, and believed that degrees would bring respect and stability.



Today, those degrees hang on cracked walls, reminders of hope that didn't reach its destination.

Socrates once said the hunger of the mind is harder to satisfy than the hunger of the body. That hunger burns across the valley.

Students work late into the night, but when morning comes, there are no jobs to greet them. From Srinagar to Pulwama, the story is the same: "We are qualified for nothing that exists, and nothing exists for what we are qualified for."

This is not simple joblessness. It feels like a theft of purpose.

When purpose fades, many look for escape.

Drug addiction in Kashmir has grown into one of its darkest crises. Reports estimate nearly seventy-five thousand active users, most between seventeen and thirty-three.

In IMHANS Srinagar, the main rehabilitation hospital, corridors smell of disinfectant and despair.

A single puff behind a college gate, and a pill passed around

at a party are small beginnings that often end with a parent praying beside a hospital bed.

A rehabilitation worker once said, "Our youth are not addicted to drugs. They are addicted to forgetting."

Forgetting feels easier than facing another day of waiting.

Crime statistics reflect the same hopelessness. Street fights, petty thefts, and knife attacks involve boys who should still be in college. They are called "frustrated youth."

Frustration is not a crime. It is what happens when effort

meets a wall.

Elders like to say, "An empty mind is the devil's workshop." The young ask, "Who emptied it?"

Kashmir's culture once grew from patience, work, and creativity. There were looms, orchards, and songs. Today, social media fills that space.

Screens promise luxury without labour. Influencers perform success while those watching scroll through another day of uncertainty.

The old crafts fade as fast as new reels appear.

Mental health adds another

heavy layer. The World Health Organization reports that Kashmir faces one of India's highest rates of depression and post-traumatic stress. Therapy remains a distant concept for many. People have learned to carry pain as a routine part of life. Uncertainty has become a shared inheritance passed down through decades of conflict and loss.

Living with uncertainty here takes strength. Continuing to dream inside it takes courage.

Still, hope shows up in small ways.

A boy opens a café with his friends. A girl writes about healing. A craftsman teaches his art to keep it alive.

Each act, however small, becomes a stand against despair.

A teacher once asked, "If the hands that should build our future are losing themselves in smoke, who failed whom: the youth, or the system that gave them no sky to fly?"

That question still lingers. What kind of future will these young people shape? Will they build companies or break under the weight of waiting? Will they write poems or police reports?

Kashmir's beauty has always been told through snow, mountains, and lakes. But its real beauty now lies in its people, the ones who wake up every morning, keep faith, and try once more to find their place in the world.

— The author can be reached at falakfayaz.bhat69@gmail.com

KASHMIR'S BEAUTY HAS ALWAYS BEEN TOLD THROUGH SNOW, MOUNTAINS, AND LAKES. BUT ITS REAL BEAUTY NOW LIES IN ITS PEOPLE, THE ONES WHO WAKE UP EVERY MORNING, KEEP FAITH, AND TRY ONCE MORE TO FIND THEIR PLACE IN THE WORLD.

Urdu Scholar and Icon Dr Arfa Sayeda Passes Away

KO Web Desk

Srinagar: Dr Arfa Sayeda Zehra, a distinguished educationist, scholar, public intellectual, and one of the finest custodians of Urdu in the subcontinent, passed away in Lahore on Monday. She was 88. In a statement, her family said, "With aching hearts, we share that our beloved Dr Arfa Sayeda Zehra—Lahore's proud daughter, our dearest aunt/sister, and a beacon of intellect,

grace and love—has returned to her Creator." Her funeral will be held on Tuesday, November 11, at Jamia Masjid Askari, Gulberg, followed by burial at her family graveyard in Cavalry Ground.

Condolences began pouring in, with many saying her departure marks the 'end of an era defined by wisdom, dignity, and grace'. Celebrities, academics, and admirers remembered her for her intellect and mentorship, calling her an enduring symbol of

scholarship and moral courage.

A scholar of Urdu language and literature, Dr Zehra specialised in intellectual history and South Asian social thought. Her work explored the intersections of history, gender, and power, often challenging patriarchal and social hierarchies. A familiar voice in televised debates and literary forums, she combined academic depth with clarity of expression — making complex ideas accessible to public audiences.

Educated at Lahore College for Women University and Government College University, with advanced studies at the University of Hawaii at Manoa, Dr Zehra's academic career was marked by her relentless pursuit of truth and her commitment to education as a force for social transformation.

Throughout her life, Dr Zehra remained an unflinching and fearless voice on issues of gender equality, education, religious tolerance, and social justice.

Plea Seeking Death Penalty For Yasin Malik
NIA Requests Delhi HC To Hold In-Camera Hearing

Press Trust Of India

New Delhi: The National Investigation Agency (NIA) on Monday asked the Delhi High Court for in-camera proceedings while hearing the agency's appeal seeking death penalty for Kashmiri separatist leader Yasin Malik in the 2017 terror funding case.

A bench of Justices Vivek Chaudhary and Manoj Jain said

the plea would be considered after NIA's counsel, Special Public Prosecutor Akshai Malik, requested to conduct the proceedings in-camera and provide a private virtual link. Yasin Malik, who appeared through video conferencing from Tihar jail, said he was subjected to psychological torture because of the protracted delay of around three years in deciding the appeal.

The bench has posted the

matter to January 28 for hearing the arguments.

In September, Yasin Malik, in an 85-page affidavit submitted before the high court, claimed that he spent nearly three decades as a key figure in a state-sanctioned "backchannel" mechanism, working with a succession of prime ministers, intelligence chiefs and even business tycoons to foster peace in Jammu and Kashmir.

CONTD. FROM FRONT PAGE

Budgam, Nagrota

in Budgam
In Budgam, a high-voltage campaign concluded on Sunday with major political parties making their final appeals to voters. The National Conference (NC) has fielded Aga Mehmood, while the Peoples Democratic Party (PDP) is represented by Aga Syed Muntazir. The BJP has nominated Aga Syed Mohsin, with AAP's Deebea Khan, AIP's Nazir Ahmad Khan, and independents Muntazir Mohiuddin and Muhammad Maqbool Bhat also in the fray.
Once an NC bastion, Budgam has become a multi-cornered battlefield, with local independents and smaller parties seeking to tap into voter discontent over unfulfilled promises.
Historically a National Conference bastion, Budgam was represented for three consecutive terms by Aga Ruhullah before Omar Abdullah's victory in 2024. This time, however, internal rifts within the NC and the presence of multiple strong candidates have made the bypoll a major test of the party's standing in central Kashmir.

The campaign in Budgam witnessed heavy political activity till the final hour. Chief Minister Omar Abdullah, joined by Advisor Nasir Aslam Wani, led roadshows for NC candidate Mohammad Mahmood, urging voters to "support progress and stability."

PDP chief Mehbooba Mufti canvassed for her party's nominee Aga Syed Muntazir, while the BJP pushed a spirited campaign for Aga Syed Mohsin, with senior leaders, including Leader of Opposition Sunil Sharma, addressing several rallies.

According to election officials, 1,26,025 voters will cast their ballots across 173 polling stations, all equipped with Assured Minimum Facilities (AMFs), including drinking water, electricity, ramps for specially-abled voters, and toilets.

Returning Officer Afrooza Bano said polling parties have been dispatched and adequate security arrangements have been made to ensure peaceful voting.

Three-Way Battle in Nagrota
The segment is witnessing a three-cornered contest among the BJP, National Conference (NC) and the Jammu and Kashmir National Panthers Party (JKNPP).

The bypoll was necessitated following the demise of former MLA Devender Singh Rana on October 31 last year.

His 30-year-old daughter, Devyani Rana, riding on public sympathy and goodwill, is contesting on a BJP ticket.

She faces NC's 37-year-old nominee Shamim Begum, a postgraduate in Urdu and a sitting District Development Council (DDC) member, and JKNPP president Harsh Dev Singh, a senior advocate and former education minister.

"All necessary arrangements have been put in place for smooth polling. Adequate security measures have also been ensured," a senior official said.

He added that polling staff, static and mobile surveillance teams, and magistrates have been deployed across booths.

A total of 97,893 voters are eligible to cast their vote at 154 polling stations.

Campaigning concluded on Sunday evening. Leaders from multiple parties camped in the constituency over the past month.

Chief Minister Omar Abdullah, Union Minister Jitendra Singh, Deputy Chief Minister Surinder Choudhary, and several senior NC and BJP leaders addressed rallies in support of their respective candidates. BJP president Sat Sharma also canvassed for Devyani Rana.

Devyani Rana, an economics graduate from the University of California who manages her family's media and automobile businesses, has promised a "professional and inclusive approach to development".

Begum, banking on her grassroots connect and NC cadre support, has projected herself as a candidate of continuity and service delivery at the local level.

Harsh Dev Singh, who represented Ramnagar for three consecutive terms in 1996, 2002 and 2008, is contesting from Nagrota for the first time.

Anil Sharma, a former sarpanch and BJP rebel, is contesting as an Independent after failing to secure the party mandate. Another lawyer, Joginder Singh, is in the fray as the AAP candidate. Five more Independents are also contesting.

Nagrota has alternated between the BJP and NC over five elections since 1996. Ajatshatru Singh (NC) won in 1996, followed by BJP's Jugal Kishore Sharma in 2002 and 2008. Devender Singh Rana won the seat for NC in 2014 and retained it in 2024 as a BJP candidate after switching parties in 2021.

The Congress has not fielded a candidate and did not formally join the NC campaign despite being coalition partners at the union territory level.

Candidates made final appeals urging voters to turn up in large numbers on polling day.

Tight Security and Restrictions

To maintain law and order, prohibitory orders under Section 163 of the Bharatiya Nagarik Suraksha Sanhita (BNSS) and Section 189 of the Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita (BNS) remain in effect from 6 p.m. on November 9 to 6 p.m. on November 11, marking the mandatory election silence period.

Authorities have assured that all polling stations, security measures, and logistics are in place, urging voters to turn out in large numbers.

Tomorrow's by-polls in Budgam and Nagrota are being closely watched as a litmus test for major political parties, setting the tone for Jammu and Kashmir's evolving political landscape.

Nov 11 Paid Holiday

General Administration Department on October

16, 2025.

According to the order, the poll day will be treated as a paid holiday for all persons employed in any business, trade, industrial undertaking, or other establishments who are entitled to vote in these constituencies. No deduction or abatement of wages shall be made on account of the holiday.

The order further states that any employer who contravenes the provision shall be liable to a fine extending up to five hundred rupees. However, the rule will not apply to any elector whose absence may cause danger or substantial loss to the employment in which they are engaged.

The government has clarified that this paid holiday will also be recognized under Section 25 of the Negotiable Instruments Act, 1881, ensuring that all government and private offices falling under the notified constituencies observe the closure on the poll day.

Traffic Plan

the smooth movement of polling staff, election materials, and general vehicular traffic in and around Budgam town.

According to the advisory issued by the office of the Senior Superintendent of Police, Traffic Rural Kashmir, specific route plans have been drawn up for November 10 and 11 to streamline logistics and avoid congestion during the crucial election period.

Under Route-01, on November 10, vehicles moving from Beerwah, Nasrulla Pora, Soibugh, Bemina, Khumani Chowk, and Mirgund towards Budgam will follow the route:

Nasrullapora – Soibugh – Bemina – Khumani Chowk – Mirgund – Railway Approach Road Srinagar – New Bus Stand Budgam between 07:00 hours and 00:00 hours.

Similarly, under Route-02, on November 11, vehicular movement from Main Chowk Budgam towards DC Office, Mirgund, Beerwah, and Bemina will follow the route:

Main Chowk Budgam – Railway Station Budgam – Reshipora – Beerwah – Sebdan – Bemina between 07:00 hours and 00:00 hours.

Officials said these arrangements have been put in place to ensure a hassle-free distribution and collection of polling materials and to facilitate the smooth movement of polling personnel.

Senior Superintendent of Police, Traffic Rural Kashmir, Ravinder Pal Singh, urged the public and commuters to extend full cooperation to the authorities and strictly adhere to the advisory for the successful and peaceful conduct of the bye-elections.

"Traffic police personnel will be deployed at key intersections to guide movement and ensure minimal disruption. The public is advised to plan their travel accordingly," the advisory read.

8 Dead, Dozens

hospital, a few kilometres away.

Delhi Police Commissioner Satish Golcha said the car, in which the blast took place, had some occupants.

According to a senior police officer, "The blast occurred in a moving Hyundai i20 car in which three people were sitting. We have not found any pellet or puncture in the body of the injured, which is unusual in a bomb blast. We are investigating all angles."

Police sources said the car was registered in the name of one Nadeem Khan and bore a Haryana number plate.

A high alert has been sounded in Delhi, and security has been beefed up at city border points, with vehicle checking intensified.

Panic gripped the area as fire billowed from burning cars following the explosion.

Videos shared by the Chandni Chowk Traders' Association revealed the magnitude of the blast. A mangled body could be seen lying on a vehicle, while another clip showed a body on the road. Eyewitnesses said body parts could be seen scattered near the blast site.

Ten fire tenders were rushed to the spot as police cordoned off the area, the Delhi Fire Services said. The blaze caused by the blast was brought under control by 7.29 pm, officials said.

Golcha told reporters that Union Home Minister Amit Shah is being regularly briefed about the incident.

"There was a blast around 6.52 pm in a slow-moving vehicle at a traffic signal near the Red Fort metro station. There were passengers inside the vehicle. Other vehicles got affected. All agencies – Delhi Police, Forensic Science Laboratory, National Investigation Agency (NIA), National Security Guard (NSG) – have arrived and they are taking stock of the situation," he said.

Shah spoke to the Delhi police chief and the director of the Intelligence Bureau to take stock of the situation. He directed the chiefs of the NSG, NIA and forensic sciences to send expert teams to the blast site to assist the probe and collect evidence.

India On High Alert

scenes of chaos and panic. Body parts were seen scattered across the road, and the windows of near-by shops and metro facilities were shattered.

Alerts Issued Across States

In the wake of the Delhi blast, several states – including Uttar Pradesh, Haryana, Punjab, Maharashtra, Gujarat, Bihar, West Bengal, and Odisha – issued high alerts and tightened security measures at critical locations.

In Uttar Pradesh, Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath ordered a state-wide alert, directing police to intensify patrols and maintain high vigilance at metro stations, temples, malls, and crowded areas. Quick Response Teams (QRTs), bomb squads, and ATS units were deployed, with special checks underway

in Ayodhya, Varanasi, and Lucknow.

In Haryana, Director General of Police O. P. Singh confirmed that police have been deployed at interstate borders, parking lots, and transport hubs. "Special vigilance is being maintained in NCR districts. Citizens are urged to report any suspicious objects or persons," he said.

In Punjab, a red alert was sounded across all districts, with police patrolling sensitive locations and conducting extensive vehicle checks. "We are maintaining strict surveillance in all districts," said a police spokesperson.

Maharashtra Police also stepped up security at Mumbai's Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj Terminus, Dadar, and Kalyan stations, with dog squads and bomb detection teams deployed. Railway police have urged passengers not to touch unidentified objects.

In Kolkata, Commissioner Manoj Verma said police have been instructed to remain on high alert, especially near metro stations and crowded zones. Security was intensified around Eden Gardens, where India is scheduled to play South Africa in a Test match later this week.

Odisha Police heightened security around the Jagannath Temple in Puri, major religious sites, and the Integrated Test Range in Balasore. Similar directives were issued in Bihar, where polling for the second phase of Assembly elections is due on November 11.

Gujarat Police too ordered all units to remain vigilant and increase patrolling at railway stations, airports, and major city hubs.

India Will Lead

and improve people's lives.

"Our prime objective is improving the lives of people and driving economic growth through cutting-edge innovation," Sinha said.

He called on the graduating students to embrace courage, creativity, and curiosity in their professional journeys. "Where there is fearlessness, there is invention. Where there is courage, there is new scientific discovery," he remarked.

Highlighting India's growing technology ecosystem, the LG said the country has "succeeded in creating a dynamic environment for innovation" and is poised to take the lead in the next wave of deep-tech development.

"AI and automation are still in relatively early stages, but we are entering a new phase of acceleration that will drive future growth and development," he said, adding that this transformation will open vast opportunities for the youth.

He pointed out that sectors such as renewable energy, green technology, defence, aerospace, biotechnology, automation, robotics, and healthcare will see rapid growth and require millions of skilled professionals in the coming years.

"Scientists and engineers across the world are competing to discover new frontiers of technology. You must create your own space in this exploration and make a positive impact," he said.

Sinha also noted that nearly 89% of India's start-ups are engaged in technological innovation, and through the Seven Pillars of the National AI Mission, the country will bring transformative changes in agriculture, healthcare, climate, and governance. Lauding Bhilai's legacy in industrial development, the Lieutenant Governor said IIT Bhilai must carry that legacy forward and act as a driving force for India's technical education and innovation ecosystem.

PM, Shah Review

Delhi Police commissioner, the director of the Intelligence Bureau and the Union home secretary to take stock of the situation following the blast, sources said.

The three top officers briefed him about the incident, they said.

Experts of the NSG and investigators of the NIA have rushed to the blast site, sources said. The NSG team comprised explosive experts, while the NIA team consisted of investigators experienced in terror cases.

A team of forensic experts has also rushed to the spot, sources said.

A high-intensity explosion ripped through a car near the Red Fort metro station on Monday evening, gutting several vehicles and killing at least eight people, officials said.

Twenty-four people were injured in the blast that took place on a busy evening when the area was milling with people. The injured were taken to the LNJP hospital, a few kilometres away.

Hours after the incident, Shah, accompanied by senior police officers and doctors, met the injured at the hospital. He visited several wards of the hospital and interacted with the injured.

Prime Minister Narendra Modi said he has reviewed with Home Minister Amit Shah and other officials about the situation following the explosion near the Red Fort metro station on Monday.

"Condolences to those who have lost their loved ones in the blast in Delhi earlier this evening. May the injured recover at the earliest," PM Modi said on X.

"Those affected are being assisted by authorities. Reviewed the situation with Home Minister Amit Shah Ji and other officials," he added.

Earlier, government sources said PM Modi had taken stock of the situation and spoken with Shah, and taken an update.

2 Kashmiri Doctors

inflammable material – possibly ammonium nitrate – was recovered. I want to make it clear that it is not RDX. The operation is still underway," Gupta said.

The explosives were found stored in 14 bags in a

single room along with a rifle, three magazines, 83 live rounds, a pistol, 20 electronic timers, batteries, 24 remote devices, walkie-talkies, and wiring. The rifle, Gupta clarified, is an assault weapon resembling an AK-series gun. "The chemicals and devices could have been used to prepare IEDs," he added.

A local cleric has also been detained for questioning, while forensic experts are examining the seized materials. Cases under the Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act (UAPA) and the Arms Act have been registered. "Further searches and arrests are likely as the investigation expands to track handlers and funding sources," Gupta said.

Terror Module Spread Across States

In Srinagar, the J&K Police described the bust as a "major counter-terror success", revealing an interstate and transnational network of radicalised professionals and students allegedly in contact with foreign handlers in Pakistan and other countries.

According to the police statement, the investigation began after Jaish-e-Mohammad posters surfaced in Nowgam, Srinagar, on October 19, threatening security forces.

Officials said the probe has so far led to the arrest of eight accused – Arif Nisar Dar, Yasir-ul-Ashraf, Maqsood Ahmad Dar, Molvi Irfan Ahmad (Imam from Shopian), Zameer Ahmad Ahanger, Dr. Muzammil Ahmad Ganaie, Dr. Adeel, and Dr. Shaheen Shahid, a Lucknow-based doctor whose vehicle was allegedly used to transport arms and explosives.

The investigation uncovered a "white-collar terror ecosystem" involving radicalised professionals who allegedly raised funds under the guise of social and charitable causes, channelled money through encrypted communication platforms, and coordinated logistics for terror outfits.

Searches were also conducted in Srinagar, Anantnag, Ganderbal, Shopian, Faridabad, and Saharanpur, leading to the recovery of a large cache of arms, ammunition, and 2,900 kilograms of IED-making material, including chemicals, circuits, batteries, and metal sheets.

A senior J&K Police officer said, "The investigation has revealed how radicalised professionals and academics were being used to build logistical and financial networks for banned terror organisations."

Financial probes into fund flows are underway, with central agencies assisting in tracing the larger network.

"This investigation is a testimony to the diligent efforts and determination of the police teams involved. J&K Police remain steadfast in stamping out terrorism," the official statement added.

Authorities said further arrests are expected as investigators track digital and financial trails across multiple states.

JKP Seeks Bail

those involved in anti-national activities." The official added that bail is "a legal relief, not a licence to resume unlawful behaviour", stressing that such individuals will face immediate re-arrest upon cancellation of bail.

Similarly, in Anantnag, police have filed nine applications for bail cancellation against accused persons facing trial under UAPA who were found breaching court-imposed conditions. Officials said several of these individuals had re-established contact with terror networks and were involved in activities "prejudicial to public peace and national security".

The violations, police said, came to light through regular case reviews and surveillance of individuals released on bail. "The step reflects our resolve to ensure that legal reliefs do not become loopholes aiding those intent on destabilising peace," a police spokesperson said, adding that the move underscores J&K Police's zero-tolerance policy towards any attempt to revive terror ecosystems.

In Shopian, police filed 13 applications for bail cancellation in similar UAPA cases, after several accused were found violating bail terms and re-engaging in subversive activities. The violations were "meticulously documented" through continuous monitoring, the statement said.

Police officials emphasised that the legal action is part of a broader strategy to dismantle terror support networks and reinforce accountability among those facing terrorism charges. The campaign, they said, ensures that those released on bail are not allowed to exploit judicial leniency to fuel unlawful or extremist activities.

"Maintaining peace and rule of law remains the top priority," police said in a statement, adding that operations would continue to identify and act against anyone misusing judicial provisions to undermine security or sovereignty in Jammu and Kashmir.

Valley-Wide Raids

carried out in close coordination with security forces, aims to dismantle terror support structures, trace individuals involved in subversive activities, and strengthen the security grid across the Kashmir Valley.

In Anantnag, police teams conducted raids at Lal Chowk and near District Jail Kheribal, targeting suspected JKNOP-linked operatives and individuals accused under UAPA. Several premises were searched, identities verified, and movements of suspected persons closely monitored, officials said.

In Pulwama, police carried out third consecutive day of operations, raiding multiple suspected locations associated with JKNOP and other terror associates. The searches focused on dismantling sleeper cells and preventing regrouping of networks involved in aiding terrorism.

Similar operations were conducted in Awantipora, where police raided locations linked to recent encounters and killed terrorists, including

the residences of their associates. The searches were part of sustained efforts to identify active and inactive terror operatives and remove their support base.

In Shopian, police continued searches and raids for the third straight day across various areas to disrupt the terror ecosystem, while in Baramulla, a massive preventive crackdown was carried out to choke financial and logistical channels aiding militants.

According to officials, 16 properties linked with Pakistan-based Kashmiri natives were searched, while 23 Over Ground Worker (OGW) locations were raided. At least 31 individuals were bound down under preventive laws for aiding or supporting anti-national activities.

Police also inspected SIM card vendors for compliance with verification norms, checked over 175 vehicles at strategic points, and conducted 32 CASOs simultaneously across the district.

"These sustained operations reflect the police's proactive and multi-layered strategy to neutralize terror ecosystems, reinforce public safety, and preserve hard-earned peace across the Valley," a police spokesperson said.

The Jammu and Kashmir Police reaffirmed their unwavering resolve to continue such preventive and intelligence-based operations in coordination with other security agencies, warning that any network or individual attempting to disrupt peace will face strict action under law.

From Downtown To Delhi

met at KNB and quickly became friends. Later, when I worked with Vinod Dua on a major Kashmir feature, I asked Faiyaz to fill in for me for a few days. That small assignment changed his life."

Dua, struck by Dilbar's sharp mind and humour, invited him to Delhi. There, amid the hum of television studios and editing rooms, the Srinagar scribe found a new beat.

In Delhi, Dilbar worked with Frontline and Observer Video Magazine, among others. The city opened its doors to him, but he carried the valley inside: its idioms, silences, and layered grief. His poems bore that imprint.

His 2004 collection Haarnis Taapas Andar, introduced by Jnanpith awardee Rahman Rahi, reflected a Kashmiri soul tempered by the discipline of Urdu form. Friends recall how he would recite verses over endless cups of tea, his laughter punctuating even his most serious observations.

When violence surged in the 1990s, Dilbar and his wife, artist and printmaker Nasreen Mohsin, offered their Delhi home as refuge to friends displaced by the turmoil. Jameel remembers that generosity vividly.

"After the 1995 parcel bomb that killed Mushtaq Ali and left me badly injured, it was Faiyaz and Nasreen who stood by me," he said. "They helped us find a place to live. He was more than a colleague. He was family."

Those who knew him remember his humour as much as his intellect. Mohammad Saleem of the Press Club of Kashmir spoke of how Dilbar would appear unannounced at his office, share a few jokes, and vanish again with his trademark haste. "He could turn a tense newsroom into a place of laughter," Saleem said.

After two decades in Delhi, Dilbar returned home. At Harwan, overlooking Dal Lake, he and Nasreen built a house they named Koh-i-Daman. The streets around it were given Kashmiri names: Goudnuik Kocha, Doyum Kocha, Tryum Kocha. It was his way of reclaiming belonging.

From that house, the couple launched the Kashmir Art and Artists Foundation (KAAF), the valley's first printmaking studio.

The initiative drew celebrated printmakers from across India, offering workshops for young artists who had long lacked such opportunities. "We wanted Kashmiris to have a space where creativity could grow without leaving home," Nasreen had said at its opening.

Through KAAF, Dilbar's vision expanded beyond words. He saw art as a form of healing, a dialogue between ink, paper, and imagination.

Even as his health declined, he remained involved, helping curate workshops and mentoring writers. His last public appearance was at the studio, his voice faint but spirited, speaking about art as "a bridge between pain and beauty."

Colleagues describe him as a man of many languages and many lives: poet, filmmaker, novelist, journalist, presenter. His Urdu carried the grace of Delhi's old poets, while his Kashmiri verses smelled of deep belonging.

Tarique A. Bhat, who worked with him at Srinagar Times, called him "a gentle force of brilliance." He remembered the long nights they spent debating politics, faith, and philosophy. "His feature Pakaan Dour-e-Falak will always echo in my mind," Bhat said. "He was more than a friend. He was an elder brother."

To his peers, Faiyaz Dilbar represented a generation that saw journalism and poetry as twin acts of truth-telling.

His pen carried empathy, even when writing about conflict. His work reminded readers that Kashmir's heart beats in its words, softly and stubbornly.

On the morning of his funeral, as Harwan shimmered under a pale sun, mourners recited a few lines in farewell to the fallen poet: Zindagi chhu ek sheher, magar har mohallus andar gham chu basaan. Life is a city where every street holds sorrow.

Along with his wife and son, Dilbar leaves behind verses that carry the warmth of home, a laughter that eased the weight of truth, and a generation of writers who drew strength from his voice.

IUST Marks 20 Years; CM Opens Radio Station, New Facilities

Observer News Service

AWANTIPORA: The Islamic University of Science and Technology (IUST) on Sunday celebrated its 20th Foundation Day, with Chief Minister Omar Abdullah inaugurating a community radio station, a new girls' hostel, and a technology expo showcasing student innovations at the Awantipora campus.

Addressing the gathering, Omar praised IUST's "remarkable growth in a short span" and said the university had emerged as a centre for innovation, technology, and contemporary learning. He assured full government support for its future initiatives and said the new radio station would help "take the university's voice to the wider community."

Advisor Nasir Aslam Wani and Minister Javid Ahmad Dar, who attended as guests of honour, lauded IUST's efforts in entrepreneurship, sustainable development, and youth skill-build-



ing. Wani cited programmes such as "Design Your Own Degree" as examples of academic flexibility, while Dar urged the university to use innovation to address grassroots social and economic challenges.

Vice-Chancellor Prof. Shakil

Ahmad Romshoo outlined IUST's Institutional Development Plan, highlighting its alignment with the National Education Policy 2020 and focus on digital governance, skilling, and research-linked learning. He also announced the university's

participation in the National Student Satellite Mission, under which a "Kashmir Satellite" is expected to be launched by the end of next year.

The event also featured the re-lease of the university's annual report and felicitation of five IUST

CM OMAR PRAISED IUST'S "REMARKABLE GROWTH IN A SHORT SPAN" and said the university had emerged as a centre for innovation, technology, and contemporary learning.

students who won national gold medals in sports. A series of MoUs with industry partners were exchanged to strengthen academia-industry collaboration.

The ceremony began with a welcome address by Prof. Ayaz Hassan Moon, Dean Academic Affairs, and concluded with a vote of thanks by Registrar Prof. Abdul Wahid Makhdoomi, who reaffirmed IUST's commitment to innovation and inclusive education.

LG Sinha, CM Omar Mourn Victims of Explosion Near Red Fort

Observer News Service

SRINAGAR: Lieutenant Governor J&K Manoj Sinha on Monday expressed deep sorrow over the explosion near Red Fort that resulted in multiple fatalities. Describing himself as "extremely pained" by the loss of lives, the LG conveyed his condolences to the bereaved families. "My deepest sympathies are with the families who lost their loved ones. I pray for the speedy recovery of those injured," he said.

Jammu and Kashmir Chief Minister Omar Abdullah also expressed "deep shock". In a statement shared on X by the Chief Minister's Office, he extended condolences to the bereaved families and prayed for the swift recovery of the injured.

Earlier, Prime Minister Modi said he was "deeply pained" by the loss of lives in the explosion and assured that those affected were being assisted by au-



thorities. "Condolences to those who have lost their loved ones in the blast in Delhi earlier this evening. May the injured recover at the earliest. Those affected are being assisted by authorities. Reviewed the situation with Home Minister Amit Shah and other officials," the Prime Minister said in a post on X.

Defence Minister Rajnath Singh termed the incident "extremely painful and disturbing," expressing solidarity with the bereaved families. "The blast in Delhi is deeply distressing. My heartfelt sympathies are with those who lost their loved ones. I pray for the early recovery of all those injured," he said, adding that the tragedy demanded collective strength and support.

'Fine Superstructure Without Foundation'

HC Upholds Discharge Of 8 In Graft Case

M Ahmad

SRINAGAR: FIR should make out a prima facie case of conspiracy against accused persons as one cannot have the construction of fine superstructure without a foundation, the High Court of J&K and Ladakh said on Monday, while upholding a 2022 trial court verdict that discharged eight accused — five engineers and three contractors — in a case registered by the erstwhile Vigilance Organization Kashmir (now ACB-Kashmir) in 2012.

The case had been registered on the basis of a verification conducted regarding 19 work components having been allotted and executed in the years 2007-08 and 2008-09 i.e. after the period of more than five years.

"No explanation in regard to the belated registration of the FIR has been spelt out in the charge sheet filed before the trial court under Section 173 Cr.P.C., more so, when the same was of significant importance, in view of the nature of the works in question as also vulnerability of

the same to natural wear and tear over a period of time," a bench of Justice Javed Iqbal Wani said.

"Be that as it may, perusal of the record available on the file, inasmuch as, copy of the charge sheet in particular tends to show that prosecution (petitioner) has enumerated 19 work components, claimed to have been inspected on multiple time by the Engineering Wing of the Vigilance Organization lastly in the year as per report dated 13.02.2018 and in respect of said work components figuring at Serial Nos. 9, 10, 12, 14, 15, 16, 17 and 18, no loss to the public exchequer has been found caused to the public exchequer, despite the fact that said works have had been executed in Kacha in and around agriculture land in the year 2007-08 and 2008-09 and inspected between the years 2010-11 and 2018," the court said.

Besides, the court said, record also reveals that out of the 19 work components, four have been reported in the reports as "non verifiable" for obvious reasons as

the works indisputably have had been executed on Kacha soil without any concrete and had remained exposed to ordinary wear and tear over a period of time.

The court said that the law was settled that there must have been an agreement between the persons, who are alleged to have conspired and that agreement should be either for doing an illegal act or for doing by illegal means.

"The only relevant factor is that all means adopted and illegal acts done must be and purported to be in furtherance of the object of conspiracy," the court said, adding, "Leveling of an allegation of conspiracy without mentioning as to how, where and which of the conspirators hatched conspiracy and for what purpose or circumstances warranting inference of existence of conspiracy is not enough to constitute an offence of conspiracy, but an FIR should make out a prima facie case of conspiracy against accused persons as one cannot have the construction of fine superstructure without a foundation."

"A closer examination of the impugned order reveals that trial court has been not only alive to the aforesaid facts and circumstances of the case, but also to the position and principles of law laid down from time to time by the Apex Court in the matter of framing of charge and discharge and seemingly has passed a well reasoned order without committing any fault, illegality or impropriety," the court said while upholding 2 July 2022 order passed by the Court of Special Judge (ACB Baramulla, Banidpora, and Kupwara). Those discharged include Ishfaq Ahmad Zargar, the then Xen R&B Division Baramulla, Muneer Ahmad Sherwani, the then AEE, R&B Division Baramulla, Khursheed Ahmad Hakeem, the then JE, R&B, Division Baramulla, Mohammad Ashraf Dar, the then JE, R&B, Division Baramulla, Zahoor Hussain Bukhari, the then H.D., R&B Division Baramulla, Farooq Ahmad Bhat, then Contractor (Deceased), Reyaz Ashraf Banday (then Contractor) and Javid Abdullah Bhat (then Contractor).

J&K Police Crack Down on US-Based 'Fai Network'



KO Web Desk

SRINAGAR: Jammu and Kashmir Police on Monday launched coordinated operations across Budgam and Baramulla districts targeting alleged separatist and terror-linked networks, including those associated with US-based Kashmiri activist Ghulam Nabi Fai, officials said.

In Budgam, police conducted large-scale searches at multiple locations linked to Fai, a native of Wadwan Budgam currently residing in the United States. Officials said the action was part of efforts to dismantle separatist infrastructure and curb networks supporting banned organisations. Several premises were raided, and multiple individuals were detained for questioning.

According to the police, Dr Fai is a key accused in FIR No. 46/2020 registered at Police Station Budgam under Sections 10, 13, and 39 of the Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act (ULA(P)) and Section 66 of the IT Act. On April 30,

2025, the Court of Special Judge NIA, Budgam, declared him a proclaimed offender in connection with the case. Police have also initiated proceedings for the attachment of his immovable property under relevant legal provisions.

According to police, Dr Fai heads the Washington-based Kashmiri American Council (KAC), an organisation allegedly backed by Pakistan's Inter-Services Intelligence (ISI), known for propagating anti-India narratives on Kashmir. In a recent interview with a Turkey-based media outlet, Dr Fai reportedly made statements endorsing the banned outfit JKLF, which was declared unlawful through Government Notification S.O. 1403(E) issued on March 22, 2019.

Meanwhile, in Baramulla, police continued a massive preventive crackdown as part of a sustained campaign to choke the ecosystem aiding terrorism. Searches were conducted at 16 properties linked to Pakistan-based Kashmiri nationals and 23 locations of Over Ground

Workers (OGWs). At least 16 OGWs were bound down, along with 10 other individuals involved in unlawful activities.

Officials said that six properties belonging to UAPA-accused individuals on bail were searched, and five more OGWs were restrained under preventive measures. Additionally, 11 SIM card vendors were inspected for compliance with verification norms, while 175 vehicles were checked at nakas and 32 cordon-and-search operations (CASOs) were carried out across the district.

Police described the campaign as a "layered preventive strategy" to neutralise support structures aiding terror operations. "Each phase is aimed at strengthening public confidence, choking illegal networks, and ensuring peace and stability in the region," a police spokesperson said.

The police reaffirmed their commitment to take uncompromising action against individuals or groups attempting to destabilise Jammu and Kashmir.

Authorities Target Drug Proceeds, Arrest Peddlers in Separate Operations

Observer News Service

SRINAGAR: Intensifying its crackdown on narcotics trafficking, the Anti-Narcotics Task Force (ANTF) Kashmir on Sunday attached property worth over ₹44 lakh belonging to a notorious drug peddler in Budgam. In separate operations in Anantnag and Pulwama, police arrested five drug peddlers and recovered a significant quantity of contraband substances. Meanwhile, Ganderbal Police organised a drug awareness programme to sensitise youth about the harmful effects of substance abuse.

According to officials, ANTF Kashmir, along with Revenue Department authorities, a Lambardar and a Chowkidar, attached a double-storey under-construction residential house at Churumujru Beerwah in Budgam. The property belongs to Rouf Ahmad Bhat, son of Abdul Majeed Bhat, presently lodged in Central Jail Srinagar. The action was taken under Section 68-F of the NDPS Act, 1985.

The property was identified as an illegally acquired asset during financial investigations in case FIR No. 02/2024 under Sections 8/15 of the NDPS Act. Police said the investigation established that the house was raised using proceeds generated from the illicit trafficking of narcotic drugs and psychotropic substances.

"This action reflects



ANTF's commitment to disrupt the drug trade and target not only offenders but also the assets amassed from illegal activities," officials said.

In South Kashmir, police arrested five drug peddlers in separate anti-drug operations. In Anantnag, a naka checking team from Police Post Sherbagh intercepted two suspects at Beig Bagh, Sarnal, and recovered 641 grams of charas-like substance from their possession. They were identified as Abdul Wahid Khan of Chenni Chowk and Amir Yousaf Khan of Maliknag.

In another operation in Krangsoo, police detained two individuals who attempted to escape during patrolling. Upon search, 7.6 kilograms of charas powder was seized. The arrested men were identified as Kaiser Shakeel Wani and Firdous Ahmad Poya, both residents of Pehroo.

Meanwhile, in Pulwama, police from PS Litter arrested Sharik Ahmad Dar of Litter and recovered 266.5 grams of charas powder from him during naka checking at Pirtaki.

All accused have been shifted to respective police stations and cases have been registered for further investigation.

Police has urged people to extend cooperation in the campaign against drugs, assuring that the identity of informants will be kept confidential.

In a parallel awareness initiative, Ganderbal Police under the Civic Action Programme conducted a "Drug Awareness Programme" at Government Degree College, Kangan. The programme was chaired by SDPO Kangan Rajeev Raina and attended by faculty members, students and local youth.

Speakers highlighted the devastating consequences of drug abuse and stressed the role of families, educational institutions and law enforcement agencies in combating the menace. Mementos and certificates of appreciation were awarded to participants.

Police reiterated that its fight against drugs would continue through community engagement, preventive measures and strict enforcement.

Sgr Records Coldest Night of Season

A mid dry weather conditions, the winter chill has gripped Kashmir with most of the places recording the sub-zero temperature last night. As per the details available, Srinagar recorded the first sub-zero temperature night of the season at minus 0.1 degree on Sunday.

The temperatures below freezing point were also recorded at Pahalgam, Qazigund, Kupwara and Gulmarg. In Pahalgam, the mercury settled at minus 3.2 degree Celsius while Gulmarg recorded a low of minus 0.2 degree.

Qazigund recorded a low of minus 0.9 degree and Kupwara's night temperature settled at minus 1.2 degree Celsius.

According to KNO, the weather is expected to remain dry for the next few days. The weatherman has predicted that the night temperature may plummet further in coming days. (Observer News Service)

Omar-Led Govt 'Directionless': Mehbooba

Peoples Democratic Party (PDP) president Mehbooba Mufti on Monday launched a blistering attack on Chief Minister Omar Abdullah, accusing him of deceiving the public, failing to fulfil pre-poll promises, and running what she termed as a "directionless government".

Addressing a press conference here, Mehbooba, as per KNO said the National Conference (NC) and its leadership have "nothing to tell the people" after one year of governance.

"Today, they (NC) have nothing to say to the public on the by-poll. Omar Abdullah, who had said he would remove smart meters when he came to power, is now advocating for them. He's asking people to install solar panels, saying later he will see about free electricity units," she said. "The cylinders they promised are nowhere to be found, and unemployment and inflation are higher than ever."

The former Chief Minister said that despite the National Conference and Congress alliance securing a strong majority in the last assembly elections, the government had failed to deliver on even a single major promise.

"It's been more than a year since the government was formed. People came out in large numbers, even in areas where there were boycotts, because they were fed up with rising electricity fees, unemployment, inflation, and bulldozer actions against the poor. They wanted a government that would stand by them. But after a year, people are again asking: what has this government done?" she said.

Mufti accused Omar of deflecting public questions by repeatedly bringing up the PDP-BJP alliance. "Instead of answering people about his own performance, Omar Sahib has only one thing to say — PDP, BJP, PDP, BJP — as if that will solve the people's problems. This shows his frustration and lack of substance," she remarked (Observer News Service)

Health Experts Urge Timely Immunisation to Protect Children

Health experts have termed timely immunisation as a vital public health tool to protect infants and children from deadly, preventable diseases.

Immunisation, also called vaccination, is a process in which a person is made immune or resistant to an infectious disease by administering vaccines that stimulate the body's own immune system to fight future infections.

Once a vaccine enters the body, it triggers the production of antibodies. These antibodies remain in the body and help recognise and destroy the disease-causing organism if it attacks later.

Dr Murtaza, a general physician at the Directorate of Health Services (DHSK), speaking to KNO said that due to immunisation, diseases like smallpox were completely eradicated globally, while others such as polio, measles, diphtheria and tetanus have drastically reduced.

"Vaccines save millions of lives every year. A child who receives routine vaccines at the correct schedule gets protection against several fatal illnesses that can otherwise lead to disability or death," he said.

He added that immunisation not only protects the vaccinated individual but also the community by reducing the spread of infections. This is known as herd immunity — meaning when the majority of people are immunised, the remaining unvaccinated population, such as newborns or those with weak immunity, also gets indirect protection.

Another doctor, Dr Javid Ahmad Mir, said that routine immunisation given under the national programmes covers diseases like polio, Hepatitis-B, tuberculosis (BCG), rotavirus, pneumococcal infection, measles-rubella, DPT (diphtheria, pertussis, tetanus) and others. (Observer News Service)

Police Foil Daily Wagers Protest In Jammu

Police on Monday foiled a protest march by hundreds of daily wage employees of the Jal Shakti Department, who had taken out a rally to gherao the Civil Secretariat here, demanding the regularisation of their services and the release of pending wages.

The protest, which began near Indira Chowk, saw a large gathering of workers from various departments, including the Jal Shakti Department, Power Development Department (PDD), and other civil sector units. The protesters marched towards the Civil Secretariat but were stopped by police near the main bridge, leading to a brief standoff.

Witnesses said the workers, shouting slogans in support of their demands, blocked parts of the road, causing traffic disruptions in the area. Police had to place barricades to prevent them from proceeding further. Officials said the protesters were allowed to demonstrate peacefully but were stopped from entering the high-security Civil Secretariat area.

As the protest continued, the traffic movement around Indira Chowk and nearby routes was affected. (Observer News Service)

J&K Eye Historic Ranji Trophy Win, Spinners Hold Key For Delhi

Press Trust of India

NEW DELHI: J&K are in sight of a historic victory over Delhi in Ranji Trophy as they require 124 runs on the final day which promises to produce an engaging day of cricket, considering a crumbling Feroz Shah Kotla track where finger spinners are ruling the roost.

At stumps on the third day, J&K were 55 for two in pursuit of 179 with an entire final day's play left in the group D encounter.

One delivery from debutant left-arm spinner Mannan Bhardwaj had Shubham Khajuria bowled through the gate with a ball that kept low.

But it was Hrithik Shokeen who got one to pitch on the middle stump and turn away sharply as left hander Vivrant Sharma lunged forward only to find the off-stump bail clipped.

This was after Delhi, riding on Ayush Badoni's (72 off 73 balls) flamboyance and Ayush Doseja's (62 off 88 balls) grit, scored half centuries to take Delhi's second innings score to 277 in 69.1 overs.

Sanat Sangwan (34) and Arpit Rana (43) added 86 runs for the opening stand, but Badoni's knock came at a time where deliveries from left-arm spinner



Vanshaj Sharma (6 for 68) and off-spinner Sahil Lothra (3/73) turned viciously and many kept low.

The last five wickets fell for just 10 runs but it was Badoni's batting on a difficult track which was a delight to watch.

Till Badoni was at the crease, he made Vanshaj look pedestrian by repeatedly using his cease to smother the turn.

It was an innings that would have made opposition coach and Delhi legend Ajay Sharma, who

was a master player of spin, proud.

BRIEF SCORES:

Delhi: 211 & 277 (Ayush Badoni 72, Ayush Doseja 62, Vanshaj Sharma 6/63)
J&K 310 and 55/2.

J&K Team Asked To Stay In Hotel After Blast In Delhi: Report

As per a report in The New Indian Express, J&K senior men's cricket team has been asked to stay in their hotel after a deadly blast near Red Fort in New Delhi left many dead and injured.

Per the report, the team has been advised to not to venture out of their hotel and to stay put.

J&K head coach Ajay Sharma told the publication that as soon as they came to know about the incident they advised all support staff and team members to not leave the hotel.

"We have also asked those who had already ventured out to come back to the hotel as it is near the site where explosions were reported," Sharma told The New Indian Express.

Security Beefed Up Around Arun Jaitley Stadium After Explosion

Security arrangements would be beefed up in and around the capital's Arun Jaitley Stadium for the final day of the Ranji Trophy Group D match between Delhi and Jammu and Kashmir following a high-intensity blast near the Red Fort, which is just kilometres away from the stadium here.

"Security to be beefed up near Feroz Shah Kotla Stadium (renamed Arun Jaitley Stadium) on the final day of the Ranji Trophy match between Delhi and Janmu & Kashmir," Delhi & District Cricket Association (DDCA) secretary Ashok Sharma told PTI on Monday.

"I would be getting in touch with Delhi Police authorities and request them to deploy additional security outside the stadium premises," he added.

A high-intensity explosion ripped through a car parked near the Red Fort metro station on Monday evening, gutting several vehicles and killing at least eight people. Twenty-four people were reported injured in the blast that took place on a busy evening when the area was milling with people. (PTI)

Director Information Felicitates Gagan Jamwal For Winning Gold

Director Information and Public Relations Nitish Rajora on Monday felicitated Gagan Jamwal, an employee of DIPR, for clinching gold medal at J&K UT Roller Skates and 2nd J&K Master Games-2025 Championships recently held at MA Stadium, Jammu.

Joint Director Information (Hq'r) Dr. Zahoor Ahmad Raina was also present on the occasion. The Director termed Gagan and his team's victory as phenomenal and applauded them for clinching the Gold medal. He appreciated the talent of Gagan and expressed optimism about his success in upcoming Roller Hockey Championship. (Observer News Service)

Sports Minister Lays Foundation For Upgradation Of Radpora Playfield

Observer News Service

SRINAGAR: In a major push towards strengthening sports infrastructure in the heart of Srinagar, Minister for Youth Services & Sports Satish Sharma on Monday laid the foundation stone for upgradation of playfield at Radpora and other adjoining playfields by way of seating tiers at an estimated project cost of ₹100.00 lakh.

The foundation stone was laid by the minister in presence of MLA Khanyar Ali Mohammad Sagar, MLA Hazratbal Salman Ali Sagar, senior officers from the Department of Youth Services

and Sports and local representatives.

On the occasion, Satish Sharma said the government is committed towards nurturing sports culture across Jammu and Kashmir.

He highlighted that the upgradation works, like construction of seating tiers, levelling, and allied amenities, will provide better sporting avenues for local youth.

Local residents, Sports persons and youth from Radpora and adjoining areas hailed the efforts of the Minister and the government for the much-needed developmental initiative.



J&K Wins Gold At 69th NSG Taekwondo C'ship In Jammu



Observer News Service

JAMMU: Shivansh Rajput of J&K secured gold in the -45 kg category on Day 2 of the 69th National School Games 2025 Under-19 Boys Taekwondo Championship on Monday.

The event is being organised by the Department of Youth Services and Sports under the aegis of the School Games Federation of India (SGFI) at Indoor Sports Complex, Bhagwati Nagar, Jammu.

On his road to the finals, Shivansh outperformed his opponent from Tamil Nadu in the quarterfinals before defeating Soham Joe of Goa in a thrilling semifinal bout.

Earlier, on the opening evening, J&K's Nasir ul Islam clinched the Bronze medal in the -59 kg category. In the -75 kg category,

West Bengal beat Telangana, Uttarakhand defeated Karnataka, Maharashtra triumphed over CBSE, and Gujarat overwhelmed Uttar Pradesh. Assam edged past KVS, Goa got the better of Chandigarh, Madhya Pradesh beat Kerala, and Himachal Pradesh outclassed Chhattisgarh. J&K dominated Andhra Pradesh, Bihar subdued NVS, Delhi overpowered Tamil Nadu, Punjab beat Puducherry, and Rajasthan ousted Jharkhand. In the second round, West Bengal defeated Vidya Bharathi, Maharashtra trounced Uttarakhand, and Gujarat beat Assam.

Joint Director Youth Services and Sports Jammu, Vinakshi Koul visited the venue and watched the bouts before inspecting the arrangements.

No Rank Turner Requested For South Africa Test: Ganguly

The Indian team management has not asked for a rank turner for the opening Test of the two-match series against South Africa beginning at the Eden Gardens on Friday, Cricket Association of Bengal president Sourav Ganguly said on Monday.

India head coach Gautam Gambhir, who arrived late on Sunday along with members of the team that played the white-ball series in Australia, inspected the Eden pitch on Monday morning along with batting coach Sitanshu Kotak. Ganguly, too, had a look at the wicket later in the evening after which the entire square was covered to protect it from dew or any unlikely showers. "Well, they haven't asked for it yet. So, I won't be able to answer the question. It looks a very good one," Ganguly said when asked if the Indian team management had requested for a turning wicket.

The Eden Gardens has hosted two Ranji Trophy matches so far this season, and the tracks have played on the slower side, offering little assistance to pacers. (PTI)

Full-Strength South Africa Assembles In Kolkata Before 1st Test



Press Trust of India

KOLKATA: South Africa captain Temba Bavuma, who was part of the 'A' team's unofficial Test series in Bengaluru, was the last to join the senior squad on Monday morning as the visitors assembled in full strength ahead of the opening Test against India beginning at the Eden Gardens on Friday.

The first batch of the South African contingent, including head coach

Shukri Conrad, pace duo of Kagiso Rabada and Marco Jansen, along with the players who featured in the white-ball series in Pakistan, had arrived on Sunday morning.

"Bavuma, along with another player and a few officials, arrived this morning from Bengaluru. Most of the squad including the head coach had already checked in on Sunday," the South Africa teams local manager told PTI.

"So, South Africa now

have their full contingent in. There's no activity scheduled at the Eden today... Most likely, both teams will have their first training session on Tuesday."

Bavuma, who had suffered a calf strain and missed the start of South Africa's World Test Championship title defence during the two-match Test series in Pakistan, returned to action for the 'A' side in their second unofficial Test against India A in Bengaluru.

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 2025-04
Dated: 10.11.2025



JKBOA (K) ELECTION 2025 RESULT NOTIFICATION.

Pursuant to the conclusion of the JKBOA (K) Election 2025, following contestants have been elected as office bearers of The Jammu & Kashmir Bank officers' Association Kashmir JKBOA(K) for a period of three years.

ELECTED MEMBERS	ELECTED FOR THE POST OF
MR. ZUBAIR RASOOL MIR, Code No.: 32564 Present Posting: Naidkhai Bandipora	PRESIDENT
MR. ISHTIYAQ AHMAD, Code No.: 11291 Present Posting: Cluster 3 Srinagar	SENIOR VICE PRESIDENT
MR. SAQIB SHOWKAT, Code No.: 33653 Present Posting: Achabal Anantnag	VICE PRESIDENT
MR. JOHN MOHAMMAD SOFI, Code No.: 10814 Present Posting: Nallamar Road Srinagar	GENERAL SECRETARY
MR. MUNEER AHMAD GANAI, Code No.: 9357 Present Posting: Khowja bagh Baramulla	ASSISTANT GENERAL SECRETARY
MR. IMTIYAZ AHMAD PUNJABI, Code No.: 12445 Present Posting: Ajas Bandipora	ORGANISING SECRETARY
MR. MANZOOR AHMAD MASOODI, Code No.: 10476 Present Posting: Murran Adda Pulwama	SECRETARY 1
MS. SHAISTA AMIN, Code No.: 12057 Present Posting: CPC RLOS Srinagar	SECRETARY 2
MR. MOHAMMAD IQBAL BAZAZ, Code No.: 32215 Present Posting: Rawalpura Khansahib Budgam	TREASURER
MR. SHARIQ MOHD SHAH, Code No.: 13284 Present Posting: Halmatpora Kupwara	ASSISTANT TREASURER

OUR BEST WISHES TO THE ELECTED MEMBERS

Sd/-
Imtiyaz Ahmad Beigh
(Convenor Election Committee)