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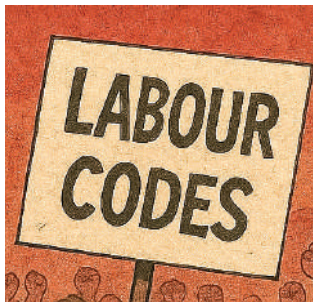
## India Rolls Out Four New Labour Codes

Press Trust Of India

New Delhi: In a landmark overhaul of labour laws, the government on Friday notified all four Labour Codes, ushering in major reforms, including universal social security coverage for gig workers, mandatory appointment letters for all employees, and statutory minimum wages and timely payment across sectors.

The four Labour Codes -- the Code of Wages (2019), Industrial Relations Code (2020), Code on Social Security (2020) and Occupational Safety, Health and Working Conditions Code (2020) -- effective Friday, replace 29 fragmented laws with a unified, modern framework.

The reforms include expanded rights and safety for women, including night-shift work, free annual health check-ups for workers aged over 40



- The Code of Wages, 2019
- The Industrial Relations Code, 2020
- The Code on Social Security, 2020
- Occupational Safety, Health and Working Conditions Code, 2020

years, pan-India ESIC coverage including hazardous process units, and a single registration, licence and [More on P6](#)

## No Family Will Be Deprived Of Their Rights & Needs: LG

Launches Housing Project For Shelling-Hit Families In Rajouri

Observer News Service

Srinagar: Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha on Friday laid the foundation stone for construction of new houses for families affected by recent natural calamities and unprovoked Pakistani shelling during Operation Sindoor in Poonch and Rajouri.

A total of 133 houses in Poonch and 388 houses in Rajouri that were completely damaged will be built free of cost with the support of the High range Rural Development Society (HRDS India).

Reaffirming the Government of India's commitment to full rehabilitation, the Lieutenant Governor said the initiative reflects the resolve to improve the lives of border residents.

"Earlier, ex gratia relief and employment to Next of Kins



of the deceased were provided and compensation paid to the families affected by flash floods and Pakistani shelling in both the districts. Under SRE and central schemes, relief of more than Rs 10 crore was already provided to other house owners in Poonch. It is being ensured that not a single family is deprived of their rights and fundamental needs," the Lieutenant

- » 521 fully damaged houses to be rebuilt free of cost
- » Project cost of Rs 51 crore entirely funded by HRDS India
- » Part of 1500 smart house plan across Jammu and Kashmir
- » Five year maintenance by HRDS India; solar panels in second phase

- » Earlier relief included jobs and compensation for NoKs and damaged houses
- » 1125 bunkers built in Poonch; 2923 in Rajouri; more proposed
- » 19 NoKs in Rajouri and 9 in Poonch given government jobs

Governor said.

He noted that 13 NoKs in Poonch were provided government jobs and 14 families received ex gratia. In Poonch, 160 kachcha and 425 pucca house owners were given compensation to rebuild their homes. In Rajouri, one NoK of a civilian killed during Operation Sindoor was provided a government job, while 465

damaged houses received relief. Compensation was also extended to homes damaged by natural calamities.

Expressing gratitude, the Lieutenant Governor said, "I thank the district administration, police, army, CAPFs, emergency responders, civil society members and volunteers for saving many lives during natural calamities and unprovoked [More on P6](#)

## Two Newly Elected MLAs Take Oath

Observer News Service

Srinagar: Two newly elected members of the Jammu and Kashmir Legislative Assembly were administered the oath of office by Speaker Abdul Rahim Rather on Friday in Jammu.

Aga Syed Muntazir Mehdi, elected from Budgam, and Devyani Rana, who won from Nagrota, took their oaths in the presence of senior leaders and family members. While Devyani Rana took her oath in Dogri, Mehdi chose Urdu.

The ceremony was attended by Rajya Sabha MP Sat Paul Sharma, Leader of Opposition Sunil Kumar Sharma, MLAs Sham Lal Sharma, Vikram Randhawa, Waheed ur Rehman Para and others.

Under Section 24 of the Jammu and Kashmir Reorganisation Act, 2019, every MLA must make and subscribe an oath before the Lieutenant Governor or an authorised official, in the format provided in the Fourth Schedule. Following the abrogation of Article 370, all legislators in the region now take their oath under the Constitution of India.

With the [More on P6](#)

## What New Labour Codes Change?

KO Web Desk

India on Friday put into effect all four Labour Codes, marking the biggest overhaul of labour regulations since Independence. The changes introduce universal social security, mandatory appointment letters, statutory minimum wages across all sectors and modernised safety standards for workplaces. [More on P6](#)



## Most Progressive Reforms Since Independence: PM

Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Friday said the four labour codes notified by the government were the most comprehensive and progressive labour-oriented reforms since Independence that would empower workers. "It also significantly [More on P6](#)

## Red Fort Blast

## After Hospitals, Searches Widen To Fertiliser Shops & Car Dealers

Observer News Service

Srinagar: Authorities in Kashmir on Friday expanded a large-scale inspection drive, extending checks from hospitals to chemical and fertiliser shops and car dealerships across multiple districts as part of heightened security measures, officials said.

Police teams in Ganderbal carried out surprise inspections at several hospitals in coordination with hospital administrations. The checks focused on verifying locker use, ensuring security protocols, and preventing any misuse of hospital premises. Staff were briefed to report suspicious activity and ensure lockers and workspaces are used strictly for official purposes.

In Kupwara, police inspected lockers at Government Medical College Handwara, reminding

employees to maintain proper records and adhere to safety guidelines. The inspections followed recent security concerns after the Delhi blast and the recovery of arms and ammunition from what officials described as a white collar terror module. Earlier this month, an AK rifle was found in a doctor's locker at GMC Anantnag, prompting intensified checks across districts.

In Srinagar, the sweep widened further on Friday, with coordinated inspections across chemical and fertiliser shops, car dealerships and hospital facilities. Last week, police uncovered a white collar terror module involving doctors from Kashmir, Faridabad and Uttar Pradesh who allegedly stored explosives. The network was linked to the blast near Delhi's Red Fort and triggered [More on P6](#)

## No One Should Dare Tamper With India's Borders' Every Infiltrator Will Be Identified & Deported: Shah

Agencies

Gujarat: Union Home Minister Amit Shah on Friday said the Indian security forces delivered a decisive response during Operation Sindoor, compelling Pakistan to announce a unilateral ceasefire earlier this year. Speaking at the Diamond Jubilee celebrations of the Border Security Force in Bhuj, he said the operation sent a clear message that any attempt to challenge India's borders will face firm retaliation.

Addressing personnel, Shah said BSF jawans have always acted as the first responders



on the country's front lines. "The brave BSF personnel have discharged their responsibility with extraordinary valour and many have made the supreme sacrifice of their lives," he said, according to

news agency KNO.

Recalling the April 22 attack in Pahalgam, the Home Minister said Pakistan sponsored terrorists targeted tourists in a "cowardly" act. "The attack was avenged through Operation Sindoor. We gave only a limited response, yet Pakistan treated the strike on terrorists as an attack on itself. The moment the Pakistani Army came into action, BSF jawans gave them a befitting and resounding reply," he said.

Shah said the joint response by the BSF, Army and Air Force forced Pakistan to announce a [More on P6](#)

## No Major Weather Activity Till Dec 9: MeT

Pir Ki Gali Sees Light Snow; Valley Remains In Sub Zero Grip

Observer News Observer

Srinagar: The Meteorological Department on Friday said there is no forecast of any major wet spell in Jammu and Kashmir for the next several days, even as the higher reaches of Shopian received a brief spell of snowfall.

Independent weather forecaster Faizan Arif Keng said that light snowfall was recorded in the upper

reaches of Shopian earlier in the day. "Pir Ki Gali received light snowfall today. The spell lasted for only one to two hours," he said.

Director MeT, Dr Mukhtar Ahmad, said radar and satellite observations indicate dry weather across Jammu and Kashmir until at least December 2. He said generally cloudy conditions may prevail, with a brief spell of very light snowfall likely over isolated higher reaches during the night of December 2 and the morning of December 3.

"Overall, nothing significant is expected till December 09," Dr Ahmad said. Meanwhile, [More on P6](#)

## Drug Traffickers Inflict A Deadly Blow On Youth: HC

Dismisses Bail Plea Of Accused Under Incarceration For 4 Years

M Ahmad

Srinagar: The High Court of J&K and Ladakh on Friday dismissed bail plea of a drug trafficker, observing that such offenders deal a "deadly blow" to the youth and pose a grave threat to society.

Dismissing a plea by 27-year-old Shah Nawaz Ahmad Dar, a bench of Justice Wasim Sadiq Nargal noted that drug trafficking not only devastates individual lives but also undermines public health, weakens family structures, fuels secondary crimes, and endangers entire communities.



"Drug traffickers inflict a deadly blow on the youth and are a hazard to society. Their activities not only destroy individual lives but also undermine public health, erode family structures, fuel secondary crimes, and threaten communities," the court said, underlining that granting bail in such cases without strict

compliance with the statutory conditions creates a real and tangible risk of the accused returning to the same network and re-offending.

"The social cost of permitting such offenders to re-enter the community, even temporarily, is immeasurable," the court said, underlining that the legislative intent behind the NDPS Act is precisely to shield the public from the grave dangers posed by drug traffickers and to prevent the recurrence of offences that carry devastating consequences for present and future generations.

The court [More on P6](#)

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2

# Study: A Decade of Evidence Shows Why Public Trust in Media Is Crumbling

## The Conversation

That trust in media is declining throughout the world is almost an unquestioned truth today. But researchers have found it hard to clearly demonstrate how we went from an era of high trust in 20th-century media to one of low trust in the digital age. The ways people engage with media and where they go for trusted information are changing. From 2011 to 2024, my colleagues and I at the Glasgow University Media Group have charted these trends through a series of focus group studies. Our findings, summarised in my book The Construction of Public Opinion in a Digital Age, suggest that many people feel journalism today represents the interests of the powerful and does not speak for them. For audiences of 20th-century broadcasting and press, trust largely rested on what we might call a leap of faith. With only a small number of news outlets – and where organisations like the BBC were given exclusive access to politicians and experts – there were few alternatives for audiences to turn to for information. Most people didn't have access to other sources or direct experience of what was reported in the news – though when they did, they trusted news reports less. Traditional media outlets now rely on digital platforms to deliver their content, where it competes with an expanded range of alternative information sources. Mainstream news continues to be led by the perspectives of government, business and economic experts. But digital platforms also allow the voices of social media influencers, independent journalists, activists and everyday users to be heard. This gives audiences easy access to perspectives which directly and regularly challenge the narratives presented in news. In this environment, journalists working for mainstream news outlets are



expected to prove they best represent the interests of their audiences – it is no longer taken as gospel by readers, listeners and viewers. Focus group participants told me and my colleagues over many hours of discussions that they see mainstream journalism as being bound up with a political system that is failing. For example, journalists may positively report percentage points of economic growth and demand sensible spending plans, but many people simply don't believe things will get better. In our most recent study, which analysed media content and audience reception in relation to the cost of living crisis (and will be published as a book in 2026), we found that journalists, in line with politicians, reported the crisis as a short-term shock, temporarily raising food and energy prices. But our participants understood the crisis as one of long-term decline in their communities and standard of living. In other words, there is a disconnect between the priorities and beliefs of journalists and their audiences. This disconnect was evident across all demographic groups studied – yet not all are affected to the same degree. Our findings point to a correlation between those most disaffected with the political system – particularly those really struggling – and the likelihood of investing trust in alter-

native "news" sources.

Where do you get your news? With more choices than ever for where to get information, people now move between different platforms and devices depending on their needs and circumstances. During the pandemic, millions tuned in to the BBC for the latest health guidance. At other times, people follow algorithm-driven social media feeds for entertainment and news. Our research indicates, however, that most people have a dominant mode of engagement they rely on to deliver trusted information. These fell largely into three categories in terms of preferences:

- 1. Mainstream sources**  
Older and highly-educated participants tended to rely on mainstream news. They invested trust in official forms of evidence and authoritative voices such as politicians and experts.
- 2. Non-mainstream sources**  
Lower-income participants were more likely to engage with sources which were seen as free of the mainstream "agenda". Trust was often invested in partisan podcasters, independent outlets and bloggers – as well as social media posts more generally – who shared their scepticism of public institutions and establishment figures.
- 3. Mix of sources**  
Younger participants were more likely to filter news through aggregation apps like Google News, friend endorsements, or simply be led by platform algorithms. They decided who to trust by comparing multiple sources, often giving more credibility to social media influencers who were more relatable and seen to better represent their interests. It is important to note that these are generalised categories – it is not the case that all those on low incomes go to social media for their news, nor that young people don't access mainstream outlets. New information sources are emerging in the context of algorithm-driven platforms which push provocative content to users, as well as political groups which amplify and distort people's frustrations. The danger is that as greater numbers move away from traditional news towards information sources without any formal verification processes or proper scrutiny of political parties, uncertainty about who or what to trust may only deepen. Interestingly, there was one source across our studies which held a unique position of being widely trusted across a broad range of groups. That was the website MoneySavingExpert and its founder, Martin Lewis. As a financial journalist who then set up his consumer website, Lewis brings his expertise to often personalised, everyday financial concerns. At a time when mainstream journalists are seen to parrot political rhetoric, Lewis positions himself on the side of the public – most notably during the cost of living crisis, making an emotional appeal to politicians to "help people" live on TV. If journalists want to re-engage with communities lost to online alternatives, the remedy may lie in lessons that can be learned from figures such as Lewis, and his innovative model of trust which seems to work so well for the digital generation.

## PUBLIC NOTICE

I intend to change the name on the electricity bill bearing Consumer ID No. 0211010004338 from Gh. Mohd Mir to Ghulam Mohi Uddin Malik. If anybody has any objection in this regard, he/she may file the same in the PDD Office, Division Pulwama, within seven days from the publication of this notice. After that, no objection shall be entertained.

Name: Ghulam Mohi Uddin Malik  
S/o: Ghulam Mohammad Malik  
R/o: Ratnipora

x

## PUBLIC NOTICE

I, Adil Radu, R/o Hawal, Srinagar, hereby solemnly affirm that my ward's name has been incorrectly recorded in the school records as Anabia Adil, whereas the correct name is Anabia Adil Radu needs to be corrected. The Date of Birth of my ward is 03-11-2012.

If anybody has any objection to the above correction, they may contact the Principal, Radiant Public School, Mallahbagh within 7 days from the publication of this notice. After that, no objections will be entertained.

Mob:6006775828

Media line advert

## The Jammu and Kashmir State Board Of School Education New Campus Bemina Srinagar Notice for General Public

The applicant/ candidate whose photograph is published in this notice and claiming to have lost her qualification certificate/s issued under as per below mentioned details:-  
**Roll No: 6138213**

**Class 10th**  
**Year & Session Annual-Regular-2015**  
**Registration: N14381500006**  
**Name : Syed Sahil Lateef**  
**Father's Name: mOHAMMAD Lateef Sha**  
**Mother's Name : Haseena**  
**Date of Birth:- 03-03-2001**  
**Residenc:- Ladho Pampore**



According to the candidate concerned has approach to this office for issuance of Duplicate Qualification /Marks Certificate/s, so before the same is processed and provided to the candidate, under rules, anybody having any objection in this regard, shall bring into the notice of Assistant Secretary of Certificate as well as Assistant Secretary Examination Unit I & III KD within the period of 10 & 7 days respectively, from the date of publication of this notice. (Besides the above referred "Qualification / Marks Certificate/s" bearing No: 15AARKAM-202136 be treated as "CANCELLED")  
No: F(Cer is-I-DQC)B/KD/  
Dated  
**FKO**

Assistant Secretary  
Certificates, KD.

## PUBLIC NOTICE

I have lost the number plate of my vehicle bearing regd no JK01AU 5346. Now I have applied for the duplicate of the same if anybody has any objection in this regard he/she may file them in the office of the RTO Srinagar within seven days. After that no objection shall be entertained

Mohammad Zaid  
Botshah Mohallah Lal Bazar Srinagar

FKO

## PUBLIC NOTICE

I have applied for the issuance of Discharge certificate of class 3rd. I was reading in class 3rd in years 1989 at Govt Boys Middle School Makhama Kunzer. If anybody has any objection in this regard he/she may file them in the office of the Govt Boys Middle School Makhama Kunzer within seven days. After that no objection shall be entertained.  
Shabir Ahmad Pandith  
S/o Ghulam Nabi Pandith  
R/o Mughama Kunzer

bmgr\_r

## OFFICE OF THE EXECUTIVE OFFICER, MUNICIPAL COMMITTEE, KUNZER.

### PUBLIC NOTICE

~\*\*\*\*\*~

### Public Notice for Empanelment / Engagement of Architect on Record (AOR), Engineer on Record (EOR), and Structural Engineer on Record (SEoR)

In pursuance of the provisions contained under Section 2.19 of the Building Bye-Laws, 2021, Municipal Council Kunzer hereby invites applications for empanelment and engagement of professionals to act as Architect on Record (AOR), Engineer on Record (EOR), and Structural Engineer on Record (SEoR) for preparation, authentication, and submission of site plans and building permission drawings within the jurisdiction of MC Kunzer.

- 1. Eligibility**
    - Architect on Record (AOR): Must hold a valid registration with the Council of Architecture (CoA) and possess experience in architectural design and statutory compliance.
    - Engineer on Record (EOR): Must be a licensed/registered civil engineer recognized by the competent authority, with expertise in site plan preparation and building bye-laws.
    - Structural Engineer on Record (SEoR): Must be a qualified structural engineer with valid registration and demonstrable experience in structural design, safety certification, and compliance with seismic and building standards.
  - 2. Scope of Work**
    - Preparation of site plans, building drawings, and structural designs in conformity with the Building Bye-Laws, zoning regulations, and MC Kunzer requirements.
    - Authentication of drawings with signature and seal as AOR/EOR/SEoR.
    - Representation before MC Kunzer in matters related to building permissions and statutory compliance.
    - Ensuring adherence to safety, sustainability, and audit requirements.
  - 3. Submission of Applications**
    - Interested professionals may submit their applications along with copies of registration certificates, qualification documents, and experience details to the office of the Executive Officer, MC Kunzer within 07 days of publication of this notice in person or through Jansugam Portal.
    - Applications must be submitted in sealed envelopes marked "Application for Empanelment as AOR / EOR / SEoR".
  - 4. General Conditions**
    - Empanelment does not confer exclusive rights; MC Kunzer reserves the authority to engage any empanelled professional as per project requirements.
    - Engagement shall be project-specific and subject to compliance with statutory provisions.
    - MC Kunzer reserves the right to reject any application without assigning reasons.
- The interview for the same will be held at the Office of Town Planning Organization Srinagar.

No:MC/KZ/2025/1621-24  
DIPK-NB-2535/25 Dated:- 21-11-2025

SD/-  
Executive Officer,  
Municipal Committee,  
KUNZER

## PUBLIC NOTICE

I have changed my name from (old name) Salik Riyaz Wani to (new name) Salik Riyaz. In future I will be known as (new name) Salik Riyaz.

If anybody having any objection he/she may contact Passport Office Srinagar, within & 7 days. After 7 days no objection will be accepted.

Media line advert

## PUBLIC NOTICE

I have changed my name from (old name) Syed Shah Zaman Mushtaq to (new name) Syed Shah Zaman. In future I will be known as (new name) Syed Shah Zaman.

If anybody having any objection he/she may contact Passport Office Srinagar, within & 7 days. After 7 days no objection will be accepted.

Media line advert

## NOTICE

I, Waheeda Faiz, W/o Adil Radu, hereby declare that I have corrected my name as per official records. My previous name was Waheeda Faiz Qazi, and my new correct name is Waheeda Faiz. In future, I shall be known by the name Waheeda Faiz for all purposes. If anybody having any objection he/she may contact Passport Office Srinagar, within & 7 days. After 7 days no objection will be accepted.

Media line advert

## PUBLIC NOTICE

I, Firdous Ahmad Mir, F/o Madiha Firdous, do hereby certify that I am applying for correction of mother's name in the school records of my daughter, who is studying in Firdous Educational Institute, Zakura Crossing Srinagar. Incorrect Mother's name: unjum Correct Mothers name: Anjum. If anybody having any objection to the said correction, he/she may contact the office of the Principal Firdous Educational Institute, Zakura Crossing, Srinagar within 7 days of this notice. After that no objection will be entertained.

Firdous Ahmad Mir  
F/o Madiha Firdous  
R/o Hadoora Alastang Ganderbal.

Media line advert

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

I have passed/appeared in Secondary School Examination (Class- 10th) under Roll No.: 162268 Session: Oct / Nov Year 1986 through the Jammu and Kashmir Board of School Education. Due to the error committed by the concerned School against my name as mushtaq Ahmed Mir instead of Mushtaq Ahmad Mir Now, I have applied for correction/rectification of error in the Jammu and Kashmir Board of School Education. New Campus Bernina. Srinagar, if any person has any objection in this regard, may file the same in the office of the Assistant Secretary, Certificates-KD within seven days from the date of Publication of this notice, after the expiry of said period no objection will be entertained.



**Name: Mushtaq Ahmad Mir**  
**Father's name: Assad Ullah Mir**  
**Mother's Name: Zaina**  
**DOB: 01-04-1968**  
**Residence: Babahara**  
**Mobile no: 7006861409**

fko

## PUBLIC NOTICE

This is information for the general public that i have lost my passport during travelling from Patwaw to Budgam. Now i want to apply for its duplicate. In this regard. If any body having any objection he/she may contact Regional Passport Office, Srinagar within 7 days. After 7 days no objection will be accepted.  
**SALEEMA BANO**  
**W/O GHULAM HYDER MIR**  
**R/O PATWAW BUDGAM.**

fko

## PUBLIC NOTICE

This is information for the general public that in School records the D-O-B of my son KAMRAN FAYAZ is entered as 12-04-2012 while his actual D-O-B is 15-02-2012. Now i want its correction, in this regard if anybody having any objection may contact PRINCIPAL ISLAMIC EDUCATION INSTITUTE NASRULLAH PORA BUDGAM with in a period of seven days. No objection shall be entertained after that.  
**FAYAZ AHMAD GANIE**  
**F/o KAMRAN FAYAZ**  
**R/o NASRULLAH PORA BUDGAM**  
**CELL. 9622748100**

mcb

## PUBLIC NOTICE

This is information for the general public that in Birth Certificate of my son MOHAMMAD MURTAZA the fathers name is entered as AB RAHID GANIE while actual name is ABDUL RASHID GANIE. Now i want its correction, in this regard if anybody having any objection may contact BLOCK DEVELOPMENT OFFICER BUDGAM with in a period of seven days. No objection shall be entertained after that.  
**ABDUL RASHID GANIE**  
**F/o MOHAMMAD MURTAZA**  
**R/o ICHIGAM BUDGAM**  
**CELL. 7006291252**

mcb

## PUBLIC NOTICE

the particulars of my ward have been wrongly written in his adhaar card as Tawqeer S/o Bashir Ahmad Malik, DOB 21-07-2014 while his correct particular are Tawqeer Ahmad Malik S/o Bashir Ahmad Malik, DOB 25-09-2014. Now I have applied for the duplicate of the same if anybody has any objection in this regard he/she may file them in the concerned Adhaar Centre Jammu/Srinagar within seven days. After that no objection shall be entertained.  
Sameena Begum  
M/o Tawqeer Ahmad Malik  
R/o Sadhunara Hasti Khan Tehsil Hajin

fko\_r



## Srinagar Police Intensifies Citywide Security Checks

Observer News Service

Srinagar: In a renewed push to strengthen public safety and tighten vigilance across the city, Srinagar Police on Friday conducted extensive inspections at chemical and fertilizer shops as well as at medical institutions, covering a wide network of police station jurisdictions and healthcare facilities.

As part of the citywide security drill, inspection teams fanned out across areas falling under Police Stations Nowhatta, Lal Bazar, Shaheed Ganj, Chanapora, Rajbagh, Ram Munshi Bagh, Harwan, Nishat, MR Ganj, Safakadal, Zadibal, Hazratbal, Nigeen, Saddar and several others. The checks focused on ensuring that chemicals, fertilizers, and other sensitive materials are neither misused nor stored in violation of existing norms.

Police officials verified stock and sales records, scrutinised identity checks for bulk purchasers, and inspected storage conditions for materials with potential security implications. Dealers were also asked to ensure valid licensing and strict ad-

herence to regulatory guidelines. Shop owners were briefed on enhanced security requirements and encouraged to immediately report suspicious transactions.

Simultaneously, Srinagar Police, in coordination with medical officers from the Health Department, carried out inspections of lockers and storage racks used by doctors and staff in district hospitals, private health centres, medical colleges, PHCs and other healthcare institutions. The drive aims to prevent any unauthorized or illegal storage within hospital premises and to reinforce internal security protocols.

All lockers were thoroughly examined, and staff were reminded to maintain transparency in record-keeping and to restrict locker usage strictly to official, permissible purposes.

Authorities said both inspection drives will continue as part of routine vigilance measures to safeguard public spaces and critical institutions. Srinagar Police reiterated its commitment to ensuring the safety of citizens and maintaining the security of the nation.

## SBI Officers' Association Unveils Newly Renovated Office



Observer News Service

Srinagar: The State Bank of India Officers' Association on Friday inaugurated its newly renovated office in Srinagar, marking a fresh chapter in the Association's efforts to enhance working spaces and strengthen organisational engagement.

The inauguration was jointly carried out by Circle General Secretary Priyvrat and Regional Manager RBO-I, Mir Mohammad Akbar. The ceremony was held in the presence of Circle President Rajiv Sirhindi, DGM Vigilance Md Ayazuddin, President Jammu Module Shah Zaman, and Deputy General Secretary Jammu Module Rajesh Mehta. Office bearers of various modules also attended and graced the occasion.

The event drew participation from officers across RBO-I, RBO-IV, RASMECC,

and SARB Srinagar, reflecting strong inter-departmental camaraderie within the Association. Following the inauguration, the Circle leadership addressed officers from the participating units.

Welcoming the gathering, Deputy General Secretary (Jammu Module) Rajesh Mehta expressed gratitude to the Circle leadership for their presence and to the bank management for facilitating the renovation project.

Speaking on the occasion, Circle General Secretary Priyvrat briefed members on the latest developments in the banking sector and highlighted the initiatives undertaken both at the Circle and Module levels to strengthen organisational welfare and professional support systems.

DGM Vigilance Md Ayazuddin also addressed the audience, sharing insights relevant to the functioning and responsibilities of officers.



Man checks a traditional Kashmiri kangri before buying from the market. KO Photo Abid Bhat

## Hogaad, Hokh Suen Face Fading Demand in Modern Kashmiri Kitchens

Observer News Service

Srinagar: As winter wraps Kashmir in its chill, Srinagar's markets are witnessing a quiet shift. Once a must-have in every Kashmiri kitchen, Hogaad (dried fish), Hokh Suen (dried vegetables) and other traditional delicacies are seeing dwindling demand.

Vendors who once struggled to meet crowds now find their stalls nearly empty.

"Earlier, people would stock up weeks before the first snowfall. Now, many youngsters don't even know how to cook these traditional items," says Abdul Majeed, a vendor at Srinagar's Mahraj Bazaar, while speaking to KNO. He adds that the decline reflects broader changes in Kashmiri eating habits.

“The younger generation prefers fresh vegetables or ready-to-cook items. The culture of preserved winter foods is slowly fading. It's not just food; it's a way of life disappearing slowly.”

"The younger generation prefers fresh vegetables or ready-to-cook items. The culture of preserved winter foods is slowly fading," said another vendor nearby.

Traditionally, these foods were prepared to last through harsh winters when fresh produce was scarce. Families would soak, sun-dry and preserve vegetables to create meals that were both nutritious and long-lasting. Today, with supermarkets and year-round availability of fresh produce, that necessity has all but disappeared.

Vendors hope the trend reverses but admit the change is generational. "It's not just food; it's a way of life disappearing slowly," says Majeed, glancing at his unsold piles of Hogaad and Hokh Suen.

With Srinagar settling into winter, these age-old delicacies, once a symbol of resilience and tradition, may soon become rare glimpses of Kashmiri heritage rather than staples on every plate.

## Man Assaulted at Noorbagh, Hospitalized

Observer News Service

Srinagar: A 32-year-old man from Noorbagh area of Srinagar was hospitalized on Friday after sustaining multiple injuries in an alleged assault by some individuals, officials said.

An official told KNO that the man was allegedly assaulted by some persons at Guzarbal Noorbagh area this afternoon, leaving him critically wounded.

He said the injured was immediately shifted to the hospital for treatment, where his condition was stated to be critical.

The injured was later identified as Showkat Ahmad Khan (32), son of Abdul Rashid Khan, a resident of Noorbagh, Srinagar.

Meanwhile, police have taken cognizance of the incident.

## Gold Defraud Case Police Held 2 Associates of Accused Woman

Observer News Service

Srinagar: Srinagar Police said it has arrested a woman accused in multiple cheating and stolen-gold cases along with her two associates, cracking a racket that had been operating across several districts of the Kashmir Valley.

Police Station Lal Bazar conducted the operation following sustained intelligence inputs that led to the tracking of the prime accused, identified as Asmat Jan alias Taboo, who was wanted in several cheating and fraud cases in Lal Bazar, Safakadal, Chadoora, Sopore and Khrew in Awantipora. According to officials, she had been evading law enforcement for an extended period by frequently shifting locations in West Bengal, Punjab, Maharashtra and Jammu.


Five teams of PS Lal Bazar, working under the supervision of the SDPO and the Zonal SP, traced the accused to Hotel White House in Jalandhar, Punjab, where she was taken into custody. Police said the arrest followed weeks of coordinated efforts.

The Gold Association of Kashmir Valley had earlier raised concern over her repeated involvement in cheating gold shopkeepers. In this regard, FIR No. 42/2025 has been registered at PS Lal Bazar under Sections 303(2) and 318(4) of the Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita.

During further investigation, police said credible evidence surfaced pointing to the involvement of two associates who were facilitating the disposal of stolen gold. Both have been arrested.

They have been identified as Shameem Ahmad Sheikh, son of Sonallah Sheikh of Iqbal Colony, Indra Nagar, a goldsmith at Bohri Kadal accused of knowingly purchasing stolen gold at undervalued rates and helping in its concealment and circulation, and Basir Ahmad Dar, son of Abdul Aziz Dar of Nawakadal, who police said was involved in transporting and clandestinely disposing of stolen gold.


All three accused are in custody, and police said further arrests and recoveries are expected as the investigation progresses.

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


**AIRPORTS**  
SHIEK UL ALAM AIRPORT: 01942303311 ✈

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

**HIGHWAY STATUS**



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

 <div>HIJRI CALENDAR</div> -- 1447	PRAYERS	
	FAJR	5: 41
	ZUHR	12:14
	ASR	3: 50
	Magrib	5:30
	ISHA	6: 50

## This Day In History

- 498 - St Symmachus begins his reign as Pope replacing Anastasius II
- 845 - First King of all Brittany, Nominos defeats Frankish King Charles the Bald at the Battle of Ballon, near Redon
- 1220 - Frederick II crowned Holy Roman Emperor in Rome by Pope Honorius III
- 1346 - Street fights in Utrecht, Hollandsgezinde Gunterlingen statements
- 1497 - Portuguese navigator Vasco da Gama rounds Cape of Good Hope on way to first voyage from Europe to reach India
- 1683 - Purcell's "Welcome to All the Pleasures" premieres in London
- 1699 - Treaty of Preobrasjensku Denmark, Russia, Saksen and Poland divide Sweden
- 1707 - Prince Johan Willem Friso sworn in as viceroy of Friesland
- 1714 - King Karel XII leaves Turkish captivity to return to Sweden
- 1794 - Strasbourg Alsace-Lorraine, prohibits circumcision and wearing of beards
- 1809 - Peregrine Williamson of Baltimore patents a steel pen
- 1830 - Charles Grey, 2nd Earl Grey, becomes Prime Minister of the United Kingdom Charles Grey
- 1864 - American Civil War Battle at Griswoldville, Georgia, ends after 650 casualties
- 1864 - Union General O Howard orders plunderers be shot to death
- 1872 - Franz Grillparzer's "Die Judin von Toledo" premieres in Prague
- 1884 - T Thomas Fortune starts NY Freeman (NY Age) newspaper
- 1886 Victoria Street Cable Tram route begins in Melbourne, Australia
- 1899 - Battle at Willow Grange, Natal (British vs Boer army)
- 1900 - Paul Kruger, exiled President of the Boer Republic of South Africa, is given a popular welcome when he lands at Marseilles, France
- 1905 - British, Italian, Russian, French and Austro-Hungarian fleet attacks Lesbos
- 1906 - Peter Stolypin, Prime Minister of Russia, introduces agrarian reforms allowing peasants to withdraw from the communes and take their share of land for private ownership
- 1908 - 1st US-Japanese baseball game Reach All-Americans defeat Waseda U, 5-0
- 1914 - Indian troops take Basra in Mesopotamia.
- 1924 - Britain orders Egyptians out of Sudan.
- 1930 - Elijah Muhammad forms Nation of Islam in Detroit..
- 1960 - French National Meeting decide to build own nuclear weapons.
- 1967 - UN Sec council passes resolut 242-Israel must give back occupied land
- 1969 - Isolation of single gene announced by scientists at Harvard University.
- 1974 - UN General Assembly recognizes Palestine right to sovereignty
- 1989 - US 63rd manned space mission STS 33 (Discovery 9) launches into orbit.
- 1990 - Margaret Thatcher announces her resignation as British Prime Minister.
- 2002 - In Nigeria, more than 100 people are killed at an attack aimed at the contestants of the Miss World contest.
- 2003 - In Tbilisi, Georgia, opponents of President Eduard Shevardnadze seize the parliament building and demand the president's resignation.
- 2004 - The Orange Revolution begins in Ukraine, resulting from the presidential elections.
- 2005 - Angela Merkel becomes the first female Chancellor of Germany.
- 2008 - YouTube hosts the largest ever live broadcast, YouTube Live.
- 2012- 6 attacks across Pakistan kill 37 people and injure 92
- 2013- Norwegian, Magnus Carlsen defeats Viswanathan Anand to win the 2013 World Chess Championship
- 2014- Lionel Messi of FC Barcelona sets a new goal scoring record in La Liga of 253 goals
- 2015- In Argentine elections Mauricio Macri (PRO) wins a narrow election victory over his left-wing opponent



### ذیر احمد نجار انتقال کر گئے

یہ خبر انتہائی دکھ کے ساتھ دی جاتی ہے کہ ذیر احمد نجار ولد محمد سلطان نجار (گورنمنٹ ٹیچر)

ساکن نکیہ ناگام چاؤدرہ بڈگام میں 20 نومبر 2025ء بروز جمعرات کو مختصر عالت کے بعد اس دارفانی سے رحلت کر گئے۔ اِنَّا لِلّٰہِ وَاِنَّا اِلَیْہِ رَاجِعُوْنَ مرحوم خوش اخلاق، شریف النفس،

نیک سیرت، بااخلاق، غریب پرور اور صوم و صلوة کے پابند تھے۔ اللہ سبحان و تعالیٰ مرحوم کو جنت الفردوس میں اعلیٰ مقام عطا کرے۔ آمین

اس سلسلے میں مرحوم کی اجتماعی فاتحہ خوانی 23 نومبر 2025ء بروز اتوار اُن کے آبائی

مقبرہ نکیہ ناگام چاؤدرہ بڈگام میں انجام دی جائے گی۔

سوگواراں

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NORTHERN RAILWAY		
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The Senior Divisional Commercial Manager/FS, Northern Railway, Firozpur for and on behalf of President of India invites E-Auction from eligible and registered bidders for the following works over Firozpur Division.		
Catalogue No.	Auction Start	Name of work
EAfZR-SLR25-127	05/12/2025 at 11:00 Hrs.	Allotment of contract for leasing of parcel space in Train No./SLR compartment: 14626/F1, 14622/F1, 14633/F1, 14632/R1, 14616/F1, 19614/F1, 14633/F2, 14542/F1, 12422/F1 & 14630/R1.
For other details and registration, please visit Railway website <a href="http://www.ireps.gov.in">www.ireps.gov.in</a> .		3634/2025
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KO VIEW

Stop Trashing  
Kashmir

In Old Srinagar, a small square was meant to be a fresh start for the neighbourhood. New tiles brightened the ground. Benches invited families to sit and relax. Shaded corners gave people a break from the noise. Children played without worry. It finally felt like the city was returning something good to its people.

The scene is different now. The gates remain locked. Tiles lie cracked. Benches are scratched by people who never stopped to sit. Bike wheels have crushed the edges. Litter lies in corners. A place built with hope has become a reminder of our carelessness.

This story repeats across the valley. Roads repaired with effort turn rough again in no time. Freshly painted walls get scribbled on. Recreational zones meant for community end up as dumping grounds.

According to the Srinagar Municipal Corporation, many new public spaces suffer damage within months of being built. The government repairs, the damage returns, and the cycle continues.

People often say, “It is the government’s job.” The responsibility ends there. The mess remains. And the sense of belonging remains weak.

Public spaces bring people together. They help strangers feel like neighbours. When these spaces stay dirty and damaged, the distance grows. The city begins to feel unfriendly instead of welcoming.

Taking care of a public space only needs manners. Walk on the paths instead of flowerbeds. Use dustbins. Respect the effort that went into making the place better. Remind others when they forget. These everyday actions create pride. And pride builds community.

The locked square in Old Srinagar sends a stark message: money can create beauty, but people must protect it.

So, the next time a public space opens, let it stay open. Paradise is not just a view. It is home. And home should be treated with love.

A Copenhagen-style  
Future for Lal Chowk

Srinagar can join global city centres that grew stronger by choosing clean mobility over more traffic and fumes.

Hidayat Bukhari

Cities everywhere are rethinking how people move through their busiest streets.

From Istanbul’s Sultanahmet to the walkable promenades of Copenhagen, the idea stays the same: a city works best when its heart breathes, instead of choking on traffic.

As Srinagar plans its own mobility shift, especially around Lal Chowk and nearby markets, the global push for clean energy, shared transport, and people-friendly spaces feels more important than ever.

Srinagar’s historic centre sees tens of thousands of people every day. Students rush to classes, office workers squeeze through tight schedules, families visit hospitals, shopkeepers lift their shutters, and tourists arrive to feel the pulse of the city.

On a typical weekday, around 35,000 to 40,000 vehicles enter the wider Lal Chowk area through MA Road, Residency Road, Dalgate, Jehangir Chowk and nearby routes.

What stands out is how people choose to travel.

More than 60% of these vehicles are private cars and two-wheelers. But they carry less than 20% of the total commuters.

Most people are moving in the least space-efficient way, taking up the most road space while transporting the fewest passengers.

This is where small, clean-energy vehicles like e-rickshaws can shift the balance.

An e-rickshaw uses only about 3 to 5 kWh of electricity for a full charge. That is roughly equal to just half a litre of petrol. One charge usually covers 70 to 90 kilometres, which means it can make many short trips in a day without releasing any tailpipe pollution.

On the other hand, a regular petrol car emits 120 to 150 grams of CO for every kilometre it travels.

So, if an e-rickshaw takes over even 40 kilometres of short trips that would otherwise be done by a private car, the city prevents around 5 to 6 kilograms of carbon emissions in a single day from just one vehicle.

Add a few hundred of these e-rickshaws to the city centre, and the environmental benefits start to show very fast.

There is also the question of how efficiently a road space



“In the long run, this is not a fight between one type of vehicle and another. It is about deciding what kind of city Srinagar wants to become: a city with cleaner air, safer streets, more shoppers, and stronger local business. E-rickshaws, with their small size and high usefulness, fit naturally into this future. They support a mobility culture where streets feel cleaner, travel becomes fair and accessible, and the city centre becomes a place to enjoy.

is used.

On Srinagar’s busiest roads, a private car takes up about 8 to 10 square meters of space and usually carries just one person. An e-rickshaw takes less than half that space, but it keeps moving 8 to 12 passengers every hour through short, quick trips.

Over a full day, one e-rickshaw can serve 120 to 160 passengers. A private car used only for commuting might move just two or three people in total.

This difference in efficiency is hard to ignore in a city where every square foot of road is precious. The economic benefits are also clear.

When a commercial centre is easy to walk around, convenient to reach, and free from big vehicles, more people visit the shops.

In Chandni Chowk in Delhi and Church Street in Bengaluru, studies found retail visits rose by 18-25% after the areas became safer and less crowded.

Internationally, Copenhagen found that when it created calm mobility corridors, it brought four times more daily pedestrians over the decades, boosting local businesses in the process.

A similar model could work

in Srinagar.

In the Lal Chowk area, where businesses depend heavily on walk-in customers, students, and daily repeat shoppers, shifting toward cleaner, smaller vehicles encourages more walking, easier street crossings, and longer stays.

All of it adds up to a busier, more successful marketplace.

Energy use tells an even stronger story. One litre of petrol holds around 8.9 kWh of energy, but a normal petrol car turns only 20 to 25% of that into actual movement. The rest is lost as heat.

An e-rickshaw, on the other hand, uses electricity far more efficiently. More than 80% of the energy goes straight into moving passengers.

So when hundreds of short trips in the city centre shift from fuel to electric power, the energy savings add up fast.

In busy areas like Lal Chowk, where thousands of quick rides happen every day, this efficiency helps the city become quieter, cleaner, and less dependent on fuel.

But the impact is not just environmental or economic. It is social.

Around Lal Chowk, MA Road, and Residency Road, more than 60,000 students live their daily rou-

tines alongside office workers, shoppers, and people visiting clinics.

For many of them, e-rickshaws offer what they need most: an affordable, reliable, and accessible ride.

They act as the city’s most flexible last-mile option, quickly connecting people from bus stops and shared taxi stands to the inner commercial lanes where bigger vehicles struggle to move.

Cities that improved their mobility systems, including Singapore, Seoul, Madrid, and even parts of Delhi, did it by strengthening these last-mile electric services.

If Srinagar wants Lal Chowk to feel cleaner, calmer, and more in line with global city centres, the answer may not be to push out small electric vehicles. Instead, we need to control how many private cars enter the core.

Many cities do this by building parking hubs at the edge of busy districts.

In Singapore, for example, large parking facilities sit outside the main shopping zones. Srinagar could follow a similar approach around Batamaloo to hold most of the cars coming into the centre.

From there, e-rickshaws, using very little energy and producing zero emissions, can take people into the pedestrian-friendly heart of the city.

In the long run, this is not a fight between one type of vehicle and another. It is about deciding what kind of city Srinagar wants to become: a city with cleaner air, safer streets, more shoppers, and stronger local business.

E-rickshaws, with their small size and high usefulness, fit naturally into this future.

They support a mobility culture where streets feel cleaner, travel becomes fair and accessible, and the city centre becomes a place to enjoy.

As Srinagar grows and modernises, it can learn from cities around the world that redesigned their cores with clean mobility, thriving markets, and better energy use.

In that future, the humble e-rickshaw is not a problem to remove. It is an opportunity to embrace.

The author is an AI researcher and columnist. He can be mailed at hidsfan@gmail.com.

Warren Buffett never bought land in Kashmir. But many smart investors here unknowingly follow his approach.

They study plots for years. They ignore brokers who push pressing deals. They stay calm through political tension and changing tourist seasons. They focus on what a property can earn and treat land like a business.

This slow and steady mindset has silently built wealth in one of India’s most uncertain real estate markets.

But not everyone listens to patience.

In 2018, Nazir Dar borrowed against his father’s orchard to buy three new flats near the airport. Brokers promised the high-way expansion would double their prices within months. Nazir hoped to sell quickly, clear the loan, and keep the profit.

Then everything got delayed. Worried about his growing interest payments, he sold two flats at a loss. The third is still unsold, worth less than what he paid.

Something similar happened in Anantnag.

Gulzar Ahmad, a retired teacher, trusted a broker named Mir who visited him often with glossy brochures and big claims. Gulzar sold a family plot for what he thought was a good price and bought two smaller parcels Mir said were undervalued.

Both new plots had legal disputes. The money disappeared into court cases. Gulzar now rents the home his grandfather once owned.

In Sopore, shopkeeper Gaffar Khan and his cousin Ali from Kupwara gathered money from relatives to flip properties. They bought agricultural land near proposed highways and commercial shops near busy markets.

At first they earned well. Then the market cooled in 2021. With too much borrowed land and no buyers, lenders took over and

The Kashmir Property Gamble  
The best investors in the valley walk their land, check their papers and wait for the right moment.

Irshad Mushtaq



the partners stopped talking to each other.

These men were not clueless. They understood local prices, water access, even how to check documents. What they lacked was discipline.

Buffett says temperament is more important than intelligence. But emotional control is everything in Kashmir.

Here, political changes can freeze markets overnight. A heavy winter can damage orchards and wipe out rental income.

The gap between investing and gambling shows up in the details. A real investor calculates rent returns, counts tourist flow, checks drainage systems and waits years for gains. A speculator hears a rumour about a golf course, buys nearby land and hopes someone will pay more soon.

Brokers like Mir make money from movement instead of growth. They earn commissions only when people buy and sell. They create urgency to push deals forward. Their clients carry the risk.

Smart financial planning in Kashmir begins with facing the valley’s realities. Sudden situational twists and seasonal tourism affect property income.

A smart plan keeps enough savings to handle a year with no rent coming in. It stays away from too many loans because banks here act fast if you fall behind. And

it asks for guidance from chartered accountants who understand local rules, than from middlemen who disappear when things go wrong.

People who succeed in property here share a few habits. They visit the land in

person, talk to neighbours about flood history, and confirm approvals directly from municipal offices. They keep a portion of their money liquid. They hold agricultural land for the long term because orchard income helps them wait.

“Kashmir’s real estate journey, from land reforms in the 1950s to the post-2019 freeze, shows one clear rule. Wealth comes to those who can stay patient during uncertainty.

Most importantly, they stay silent about their investments to avoid panic and pressure.

Kashmir’s real estate journey, from land reforms in the 1950s to the post-2019 freeze, shows one clear rule. Wealth comes to those who can stay patient during uncertainty.

Brokers will always promise quick returns. Neighbours will brag about overnight profit. The market will rise and fall.

But the calm investor, who has checked every detail and secured the ownership papers, will walk his land, watch his trees grow and stay focused on the future instead of the noise.

The author is a Srinagar-based reputed financial advisor.



# Kashmiri Aayas Aren't Maids

The valley imported Finland's idea of a classroom assistant, then cut the pay, skipped the training and added a mop. Fix the job description, and 1.2 million children move forward.

Mushtaq Hurra

Jammu and Kashmir's education department followed the best in the business.

The United States, the United Kingdom, Finland, Canada and Japan all place a second adult in pre-primary rooms to steady small bodies long enough for minds to learn.

We liked the idea, so in 2018 we advertised for "Aayas," promised 5,000 rupees a month and forgot to write what the job actually is.

The omission turned a global best practice into a maid post and wasted the cheapest chance we have to lift early learning across the valley.

The government order that created the position runs to four lines. It says "engage Aaya on need basis."

It never spells out the need, never lists tasks, and never sets working hours.

Head teachers filled the blank the way institutions always do: they handed the new hire a bucket.

Overnight the classroom assistant became the school maid, and the concept that helps Finland top world charts was reduced to scrubbing toilets and peeling onions for the midday meal.

Aayas are not make-believe characters. They are real women already on the payroll: 6,400 across the val-

ley, one for every 25 Balvatika, kindergarten, pupils.

Most never finished high school, but they spend seven hours a day with four- and five-year-olds whose brains are forming faster than at any later stage.

Research from the National Council of Educational Research and Training shows rural first-grade classes with a trusted ancillary worker record 17 percent lower absenteeism.

We have the ratio right. We simply refuse to treat the worker as educator.

The salary tells the story. Five thousand rupees is less than the price of a single school blazer sold in Srinagar's boutiques. It arrives quarterly, often three months late.

Three quarters of Aayas hold a second job after the last bell. 40 percent report chronic back pain from mopping floors. Burnout is routine, turnover is rising, and still the department wonders why the teaching-learning process stays stuck.

We could blame headmasters for overloading the position, but they were never given guidance.

One principal sends the Aaya to maintain voter rolls during village elections. Another makes her mid-day-meal incharge. Neither violates



the original order, because the order is silent. And silence is expensive.

Finland spends 4 percent of its education budget on auxiliary staff training. We spend zero and then complain that our reading scores trail the global median.

Signs of repair are visible, but they are tentative.

This summer the State Council of Educational Research and Training teamed up with a local nonprofit to run three-day workshops in all ten districts. Two thousand Aayas have

**AAYAS ARE READY.**  
Visit any primary school at eight in the morning and you will find them kneeling to tie shoelaces, humming lullabies when the bus is late, and collecting broken bangles to turn into counting tokens.

already practised breathing games and learned to flag early signs of dyslexia.

Attendance is voluntary, enthusiasm is high, and the first cohort of schools reports a 9 percent jump in daily attendance from kindergarten sections.

The program costs less than the price of two smart classrooms that usually stay locked for want of a key.

What comes next is neither mysterious nor costly.

Double the honorarium to 10,000 rupees and pay on time through the same direct-benefit portal already used for pensions. Issue a one-page

role chart signed by the director of school education: Aayas will assist in classroom management, maintain play corners, accompany sick children to the nearest health center and will not cook lunch.

Finally, guarantee twelve hours of refresher training every year, the same way we refresh math teachers on new textbooks.

The package would add 1.2 percent of the existing central education outlay for the region, and could place a trained second adult in every Balvatika room by next spring.

Kashmir public schools enroll 1.2 million children. One in four is a Balvatika pupil, the age group whose test scores predict later retention, employment and even civic participation.

Give each of those rooms a confident, trained Aaya and we add the equivalent of a full academic year to a child's life before grade three.

Keep the mop and we lose the moment, probably for another generation.

The women are ready. Visit any primary school at eight in the morning and you will find them kneeling to tie shoelaces, humming lullabies when the bus is late, and collecting broken bangles to turn into counting tokens.

They already do the work. They simply need the wage, the title and the training that acknowledge the work matters.

We imported the position from the best systems on earth. Now we must import the respect.

Otherwise we are not saving money. We are stealing futures.

— The writer teaches in a government school in Bandipora and writes on education and culture.

## What Happened to Our Meals?

Fast food now rules young appetites in Kashmir. Reviving local food traditions offers a path to lasting well-being.

Subzar Ahmad Reshi

I grew up seeing food as a form of love. My grandmother cooked with ingredients that always had a story behind them.

Fresh produce came from nearby farms, grains were ground at home, and fruits and vegetables were dried for winter. Noon chai paired with homemade bread. A simple bowl of millet or maize kept people going through long days.

No one counted calories or talked about nutrition. Health came from the food on our plates.

Today, I feel worried when I look around. Home-cooked food has lost its place in many Kashmiri lives. Lines outside fast food stalls grow longer every month. Even toddlers know the flavour of packaged chips better than the taste of a simple recipe cooked at home.

The change did not arrive overnight. It slipped into our everyday life until we started accepting it as normal.

I teach students who survive on fried snacks, sugary drinks, and restaurant meals from early morning until late evening. Many leave home without breakfast. They rush from school to tutoring centers and grab whatever is sold outside. Their parents try to cook for them, though their efforts often lose to catchy ads and shiny wrappers designed to make junk irresistible.

Health reports from hospitals tell a harsh story.

Obesity, hypertension, and diabetes show up earlier in life now. Doctors speak about teenagers with high cholesterol. Many young adults take daily medicines for issues that once appeared only in old age.

International studies by the FAO and USDA keep reminding us that natural foods protect the heart, brain, bones, immunity, and mood.

More than ninety percent of lifestyle diseases in families stem from how we eat.

There is another side to this picture. Some households struggle to afford proper nutrition. Work keeps parents away from kitchens for long hours. Fresh vegetables and whole grains often cost more than processed options.

Food choices shrink when the goal is only to stay full enough to get



through the day.

I meet children who have access to calories but not nourishment. Two different food crises exist in the same society: overeating without health and under-eating without strength.

Good food costs money, though poor food drains far more through hospitals and pharmacies later in life.

I hear people say they will manage with whatever is available and focus on work first. How long can a person truly work when the body feels tired

and inflamed from chemicals and excess oil?

There is also the land that feeds us. Farmers today rely on pesticides and synthetic fertilizers to grow more and earn faster. These substances end up in rivers, lakes, and soil.

A vegetable may look perfect from outside while carrying chemicals that silently damage health.

Kashmiri fields once produced clean food. That memory deserves a return as we face a future shaped by

climate stress and rising disease.

Organic farming is possible here. Traditional crops like millets and pulses suit our soil and climate. Apple orchards and walnut trees can thrive without harmful chemicals if farmers receive proper support.

When the earth heals, we heal along with it. Real food begins far before it reaches the kitchen.

The cultural memory of food in Kashmir holds strength. We once believed that feeding someone was equal to blessing them. A cup of kehwa prepared at home tasted like welcome. A plate of haakh served love.

These dishes still exist, though fewer young people know how to prepare them. Food traditions fade when families stop passing them down.

I want children to learn where food comes from and how it supports memory, stamina, and immunity. A simple lesson about whole grains or vegetables can shape habits for years. Public spaces can encourage healthier options too.

Educational institutions with access to clean, homemade food would improve life more than any billboard promoting exam success.

Everyone has a role. Doctors can talk about prevention. Parents can bring their children back to the dining table. Restaurants can celebrate local ingredients instead of only copying global menus. Policymakers can promote chemical-free farming and regulate harmful additives. Social groups can organize food literacy drives that

**PURE FOOD STRENGTHENS LIFE. IT SHAPES HOW WE THINK, WORK, LOVE, AND AGE.** It gives every child a fair chance to grow into who they want to be. If we reclaim what we eat, we reclaim our future too.

reach rural and urban families alike.

We do not need a revolution in taste. The answers already exist in our kitchens, farms, stories, and memories.

Millet rotis, fresh greens, seasonal fruits and pulses cooked slowly with a little oil and a lot of patience build strong bones, clear minds, and long lives.

Every time I choose a simple home-cooked meal over a packaged snack, I feel like I am honouring my elders who lived healthy lives without supplements or fad diets.

The change begins with one decision during one meal on any ordinary day.

Add more real ingredients. Share a meal with family. Buy from a farmer who cares for the soil. Trust traditional recipes that worked for centuries.

Pure food strengthens life. It shapes how we think, work, love, and age. It gives every child a fair chance to grow into who they want to be.

If we reclaim what we eat, we reclaim our future too.

— The author teaches Botany in the Department of Higher Education, J&K.

**EVERY TIME I CHOOSE A SIMPLE HOME-COOKED MEAL OVER A PACKAGED SNACK, I feel like I am honouring my elders who lived healthy lives without supplements or fad diets.**



# IAF Tejas Jet Crashes at Dubai Air Show, Pilot Killed

KO Web Desk

Srinagar: A Tejas fighter jet of the Indian Air Force crashed during an aerial display at the Dubai Air Show on Friday, killing the lone pilot, Wing Commander Namansh Syal. The accident, which occurred around 2.10 pm local time, is the second involving the indigenous Light Combat Aircraft in less than two years.

Video footage showed the aircraft losing height during a low-altitude manoeuvre before nosediving and exploding into a ball of fire inside the airfield grounds. Thick black smoke rose over Al Maktoum International Airport as stunned spectators watched the crash unfold.

Wing Commander Syal, in his mid-30s and a native of Himachal Pradesh, died on the spot. The IAF said it "deeply regrets the loss of life" and has ordered a court of inquiry to



determine the cause.

Hindustan Aeronautics Limited, manufacturer of the LCA Tejas, said it was "deeply saddened" by the loss of the "courageous IAF pilot." Defence Minister Rajnath Singh and Chief of Defence Staff General Anil Chauhan also expressed grief and extended condolences to the pilot's family. The Congress party too mourned the

death, with Rahul Gandhi saying the nation stands with the bereaved family.

The crash took place during an eight-minute demonstration flight on the final day of the biennial air show, which features flying and static displays from global aerospace giants. The air show resumed its demonstrations about ninety minutes after the accident.

Eyewitnesses told local media the jet appeared to turn sharply before going down, and some believed the pilot was attempting to avoid residential areas and spectators.

The previous Tejas crash occurred in March 2024 during a return flight from the Bharat Shakti military exercise in Jaisalmer. The pilot had ejected safely in that incident.

The Tejas is India's first indigenous multi-role light combat aircraft, designed for air-to-air combat, ground attack and maritime missions. The jet, declared airworthy in 2011, has gone through decades of development. Two IAF squadrons, 45 and 18 Squadrons, currently operate the Tejas.

The aircraft has faced scrutiny over past technical issues but remains central to India's long-term fighter fleet plans. In 2021, the government signed a Rs 48,000 crore deal with HAL for 83 upgraded Tejas Mk-1A jets. In 2023, the defence ministry cleared an additional proposal for 97 more aircraft.

As emergency teams worked at the crash site in Dubai, the local administration said it responded rapidly to the incident. Police and firefighters sprayed foam across the area, while Indian diplomatic officials reached the spot.

## J&K Bank Inks MoU With MDB Group For A Luxury Housing Project

Observer News Service

Srinagar: Reinforcing its commitment to providing convenient financial solutions for aspirational homeowners, J&K Bank Friday signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with MDB Group for financing 'The Lutyens' - an ultra-luxury high-rise apartment project located along the Delhi-Manali Highway in Mohali.

Zonal Head (Kathua) Suresh Choudhary signed the MoU along with the Representative from MDB Group CA Nikhil Garg in the presence of General Manager & Divisional Head (Jammu) Ashok Gupta at the Bank's Divisional Office in Jammu.

Speaking on the occasion, Divisional Head (Jammu) Ashok Gupta said, "Through partnerships like this, J&K Bank continues to strengthen its role as a trusted financial partner in the housing sector. This collaboration will enable us to extend seamless and tailored housing finance



solutions to customers aspiring for premium living spaces."

He further added that the MoU reinforces the Bank's efforts to strengthen its builder relationships in fast-growing real estate hubs while contributing to residential infrastructure development.

Pertinently, the agreement will facilitate exclusive home loan offerings for customers interested in MDB Group's 'The Lutyens' project, enabling prospective buyers to avail customized financing and personalized services from J&K Bank.

## CONTD. FROM FRONT PAGE

### India Rolls Out

return system.

According to Labour Minister Mansukh Mandaviya, the labour Codes will formalise employment, strengthen worker protections, and make the labour ecosystem simpler, safer and globally aligned.

Additional systemic reforms include a national floor wage, gender-neutral work policies, the Inspector-cum-Facilitator model for supportive compliance, faster dispute resolution through two-member tribunals, and a National Occupational Safety, Health (OSH) Board to harmonise safety standards.

The government will now initiate consultations to frame detailed rules and schemes.

During the transition, provisions of existing labour laws will remain applicable wherever required.

The social-security coverage had expanded from 19 per cent in 2015 to over 64 per cent in 2025. The enforcement of the Labour Codes marks the next transformative step -- broadening worker protections, easing business operations and promoting a pro-worker labour ecosystem.

According to a labour ministry statement, the Codes lay the foundation for Aatmanirbhar Bharat.

India's labour laws were framed in the pre-Independence and early post-Independence era (1930s-1950s), at a time when the economy and world of work were fundamentally different.

Labour Minister Mandaviya said on X, "Modi Government's Guarantee: Dignity for Every Worker! From today, the new labour codes have been made effective in the country."

The minister said the codes will guarantee minimum wages for all workers, appointment letters for the youth, equal pay and respect for women, social security for 40 crore workers, gratuity for fixed-term employees after one year of employment, free annual health check-ups for workers above 40 years of age, double wages for overtime, 100 per cent health security for workers in hazardous sectors and social justice for workers as per international standards.

"These reforms are not just ordinary changes, but a major step taken by Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi for the welfare of the workforce. These new labour reforms are an important step towards a self-reliant India and will give new momentum to the goal of a developed India by 2047," he said on X.

Under the Code on Social Security, 2020, all workers, including gig & platform workers, will be covered by social security. All workers will get PF, ESIC, insurance, and other social security benefits.

Under the Code on Wages, 2019, all workers will receive a statutory minimum wage payment. Minimum wages and timely payment will ensure financial security.

The ESIC coverage and benefits are extended Pan-India -- voluntary for establishments with fewer than 10 employees, and mandatory for establishments with even one employee engaged in hazardous processes.

Now, Fixed-Term Employees (FTE) will receive all benefits equal to those of permanent workers, including leave, medical, and social security.

The Codes have defined 'Gig work', 'Platform work', and 'Aggregators' for the first time.

Aadhaar-linked Universal Account Number will make welfare benefits easy to access, fully portable, and available across states, regardless of migration.

Plantation workers will be brought under the OSHWC Code and the Social Security Code. Digital and audiovisual workers, including journalists in electronic media, dubbing artists, and stunt performers, will now be entitled to full benefits.

### What New Labour

The four Codes -- Code of Wages (2019), Industrial Relations Code (2020), Code on Social Security (2020) and the Occupational Safety, Health and Working Conditions Code (2020) -- replace 29 separate laws with a unified legal framework. The government said the updated structure creates a future-ready labour ecosystem that protects workers while easing compliance for industry.

The reforms significantly expand rights for workers across sectors, particularly gig workers, platform workers, migrants, contract

labour and MSME employees.

Key before-and-after shifts include:

- Appointment letters: Mandatory for all workers, ensuring transparent and documented employment.

- Universal social security: PF, ESIC, insurance and other benefits extended to all workers, including gig and platform workers.

- Minimum wages: Statutory minimum wage applicable across all sectors; timely payment is mandatory.

- Health checks: Free annual medical check-ups for workers aged above 40.

- Women's workforce participation: Women can work night shifts and in all job categories with consent and safety measures.

- ESIC expansion: Pan-India coverage; mandatory even for one worker in hazardous units.

- Compliance simplification: Single registration, single licence and single return for all establishments.

Sector-wise reforms

Fixed-term employees will now receive benefits equal to permanent workers, including gratuity after one year and parity in wages and social-security entitlements.

Gig and platform workers gain legal recognition for the first time, with aggregators required to contribute to their social-security funds.

Contract workers will receive annual health check-ups, social-security coverage and improved working conditions.

Women workers benefit from equal pay, prohibition of discrimination, expanded work opportunities and mandatory representation in grievance committees.

Youth and MSME workers gain appointment letters, minimum wages and basic workplace facilities.

Plantation, beedi and cigar workers are now covered under modern safety norms, minimum wage protections and regulated working hours.

Audio-visual and digital media workers, including journalists, technicians and performers, will receive appointment letters, timely wages and overtime protection.

Mining and hazardous-industry workers are guaranteed stricter safety standards, free annual health check-ups and regulated working hours.

IT, ITES and export-sector workers will have timely salary release, equal pay guarantees, dispute-resolution mechanisms and night-shift provisions for women with safeguards.

System-wide changes

The Codes introduce a national floor wage, gender-neutral protections, a simplified compliance system, two-member tribunals for faster dispute resolution, and a National Occupational Safety and Health Board to harmonise standards across industries.

Aadhaar-linked Universal Account Numbers will make benefits portable, allowing workers to access entitlements across states.

According to the Labour Ministry, social-security coverage has already grown from 19 per cent in 2015 to more than 64 per cent in 2025. The implementation of the Labour Codes is seen as the next step toward expanding protections to all categories of workers while creating a flexible, growth-oriented labour market.

### Most Progressive

simplifies compliance and promotes 'Ease of Doing Business'," he said in a post on X.

The four labour codes -- the Code of Wages (2019), Industrial Relations Code (2020), Code on Social Security (2020) and Occupational Safety, Health and Working Conditions Code (2020) -- effective Friday, replace 29 fragmented laws with a unified, modern framework.

"These codes will serve as a strong foundation for universal social security, minimum and timely payment of wages, safe workplaces and remunerative opportunities for our people, especially Nari Shakti and Yuva Shakti," Modi said.

The prime minister said the four labour codes will build a future-ready ecosystem that protects the rights of workers and strengthens India's economic growth.

"These reforms will boost job creation, drive productivity and accelerate our journey towards a Viksit Bharat," Modi added.

Union Home Minister Amit Shah extended his greetings to all workers of the country over the implementation of the four Labour Codes on Friday, terming them the "biggest reforms"

in the history of labour laws.

In a post on X, he said these codes, which guarantee minimum wages to workers, social security, equal opportunities for women workers, and legal recognition for gig and unorganised workers, will improve the standard of living for workers.

Shah remarked that the codes, crafted under the leadership of Prime Minister Narendra Modi, represent "the biggest reform in the history of labour laws."

At the same time, by accelerating the creation of a developed and self-reliant India, the codes would become a role model for labour laws around the world, the home minister added.

In a landmark overhaul of labour laws, the government on Friday notified all four labour codes, ushering in major reforms, including universal social security coverage for gig workers, mandatory appointment letters for all employees, and statutory minimum wages and timely payment across sectors.

The reforms include expanded rights and safety for women, including night-shift work, free annual health check-ups for workers aged over 40 years, pan-India ESIC coverage including hazardous process units, and a single registration, licence and return system. (PTI)

### No Family Will

Pakistani shelling and for extending support to affected families." He also praised HRDS India for its "noble initiative."

Highlighting the immediate need for secure housing, the Lieutenant Governor said, "A total of 1500 houses will be built in the first phase across the Union Territory and will be handed over to the beneficiaries within six months of the beginning of the foundation work. These new three bedroom prefabricated Smart Houses are designed to help families quickly get their lives back on track."

The houses will include cowsheds and will be maintained for five years by HRDS India. Solar panels will be installed in the second phase. The construction in Poonch and Rajouri will cost around Rs 51 crore, entirely borne by HRDS India.

Directing district administrations to ensure transparency, Sinha said, "There is no cap on the number of houses to be built. This project is specifically designed for those who are economically weak. Their welfare is the greatest service."

He further said development under the leadership of the Prime Minister has reached unprecedented speed and scale. "The people of Poonch and Rajouri faced neglect for decades and suffered from terrorism perpetrated by the neighbouring country. Today, a new ray of development has replaced that dark phase and false promises. For the first time since independence, the people of these two districts are reaping the benefits of the development they were entitled to. I assure that this process will continue unabated."

Sharing the recent measures to strengthen border infrastructure, the Lieutenant Governor said 1125 bunkers have been completed in Poonch and a proposal to build 5693 more has been submitted. In Rajouri, 2923 bunkers have been constructed in the past five years.

He added that 19 NoKs of terror affected families in Rajouri and 9 in Poonch were provided government jobs. He directed the district and police administration to identify any remaining eligible families and forward their cases to the General Administration Department.

Chief Secretary Atal Dulloo, DGP Nalin Prabhat, Divisional Commissioner Jammu Ramesh Kumar, IGP Jammu Bhim Sen Tuti, DIG Rajouri Poonch Range Tejinder Singh, Deputy Commissioners of Rajouri and Poonch, HRDS India CEO Krishnakumar S Devan, BJP leader Ravinder Raina, senior officials and community members attended the ceremony.

### Two Newly

induction of these two members, the strength of the Jammu and Kashmir Legislative Assembly has risen to 90.

In the current House, the National Conference holds 41 seats, the BJP 29, Congress 16 and the PDP four. The Peoples Conference, CPI(M) and Aam Aadmi Party have one MLA each, while seven members are independents. The Lieutenant Governor also has the power to nominate five members, including two women, two migrant representatives and one

representing refugees from Pakistan occupied Jammu and Kashmir.

### Every Infiltrator

ceasefire within days. "A clear message has gone out to the entire world that no one should dare tamper with India's borders or challenge our security forces. Otherwise they will have to face the consequences," he added.

He said Operation Sindoor destroyed nine key locations used by Jaish-e-Mohammed, Hizbul Mujahideen and Lashkar-e-Taiba, including headquarters, training centres and launch pads. "The objective was the elimination of terrorism and the safety of citizens and border areas," he said.

Praising the dedication of the force, Shah said the nation places immense trust in the BSF. "The country sleeps peacefully because of their unbreakable resolve to protect us," he said. He noted that 2,013 BSF soldiers have laid down their lives in the line of duty.

Shah said the BSF, raised in December 1965, has excelled across land, water and air borders. He said the force's ability to operate in the harshest terrains and conditions is commendable. Today the BSF has 193 battalions and more than 2.76 lakh personnel protecting the 2,279 km border with Pakistan and the 4,096 km border with Bangladesh.

The Home Minister said the coming year will be focused on the complete modernisation of the BSF, while the year after will be devoted to the welfare of personnel and their families. He said the Ministry of Home Affairs is committed to transforming the BSF into the world's most capable border force within five years.

Shah also highlighted the BSF's recent successes against narcotics infiltration. He said the force has seized more than 18,000 kilograms of drugs in 2025, calling it a historic achievement.

He said infiltration not only threatens national security but also the democratic system. He announced that the government is moving ahead with a new e border security concept that is now past trial stage. He said the BSF has played a key role in developing it and that the entire land border will be covered under the system within five years.

Targeting political parties that have opposed the Special Intensive Revision of voter lists, Shah said some groups were trying to weaken efforts to remove infiltrators. "We will identify and deport every single infiltrator from this country, one by one. Only Indian citizens will decide who becomes a chief minister or prime minister. No infiltrator has the right to influence our democratic decisions," he said.

Shah said the government has strengthened border fencing in recent years and most trials related to fencing systems have been completed.

### 20% Peak Hour

and middle class will be cruel and catastrophic," he wrote. Para added that any policy that overlooks human suffering has no place in a responsible administration.

Apni Party president Syed Altaf Bukhari also rejected the proposal, calling it a grave injustice. In his post on X, he said the population is already facing economic pressure due to losses in tourism and horticulture, along with a slowdown in other business sectors. He said increasing power charges during mornings and evenings, when families rely on heating the most, cannot be justified. "With harsh winter days approaching, I urge the authorities to show some mercy to people who are already burdened and suffering," he said.

Peoples Conference state secretary Sheikh Muhammad Imran accused the National Conference led government of betraying the promises made during the election campaign. He said the tariff hike was being proposed at a time when people need electricity the most. "What does he think will happen, families sitting in the cold and dark during peak hours while winter is at its harshest? This is a complete betrayal of the promises he sold," Imran said. He added that people were promised two hundred free units and accused the Chief Minister of now arguing for higher rates.

Besides these reactions, the move has triggered criticism from ordinary consumers as well, who say higher power bills during the coldest months of the year will add to their financial strain.

The government has not yet issued a final

decision on the proposal. The surcharge plan is likely to undergo further review before any implementation.

### No Major Weather

most parts of the Kashmir Valley continued to reel under sub-zero night temperatures. Srinagar recorded a minimum of minus 0.5 degrees Celsius, while Pahalgam dropped to minus 2.5 degrees.

Qazigund recorded minus 1.4 degrees, and Kupwara settled at minus 1.2 degrees Celsius. Kokernag and Gulmarg were the only stations that remained above freezing, recording minimum temperatures of 1.2 degrees and 1.0 degrees Celsius respectively.

### Drug Traffickers

further observed that while the factor of prolonged incarceration is undoubtedly a relevant consideration in the adjudication of a bail application, such consideration cannot, in itself, furnish an adequate or independent ground for the grant of bail in cases governed by the rigors of Section 37 of the NDPS Act.

"The statutory restrictions imposed under Section 37 are mandatory in nature, and the Court is bound to record its satisfaction regarding the twin requirements--first, that there exist reasonable grounds for believing that the accused is not guilty of the alleged offence, and second, that he is not likely to commit any offence while on bail," the court said while rejecting Dar's contention that he has been in custody since 2021.

"This Court is equally mindful of the petitioner's plea that petitioner has been in custody for more than four years, having already undergone more than one-third of the minimum sentence prescribed, therefore, in light of such prolonged incarceration the continuance of the detention of accused would impinge Article 21," the court said, adding, "However, the record reveals that as many as ten prosecution witnesses out of thirteen have already been examined, and the trial is now at an advanced stage. The right under Article 21 operates subject to the 'procedure established by law', and Section 37 of the NDPS Act constitutes such valid and stringent statutory procedure."

Where the Legislature, in its wisdom, has mandated the recording of specific satisfaction before granting bail in cases involving commercial quantity, the Court cannot dilute or bypass these conditions on general notions of delay or liberty, the Bench said.

"Consequently, the continued custody of the petitioner (Dar), in the absence of satisfaction of the twin conditions, cannot be characterized violative of Article 21 of Constitution of India," the court said and rejected Dar's plea for grant of bail.

### After Hospitals,

region-wide checks.

A police official told KNO that Friday's operations covered the jurisdictions of Nowhatta, Lal Bazar, Shaheed Ganj, Chanapora, Rajbagh, RM Bagh, Harwan, Nishat, MR Ganj, Safakadal, Zadibal, Hazratbal, Nigeen, Saddar and Khanyar.

At chemical and fertiliser outlets, teams checked stock registers, sales records, identity verification for bulk buyers, secure storage of sensitive materials and license validity. Shop owners were advised to maintain transparency and promptly report suspicious transactions.

Car dealerships were inspected for proper documentation, verification of purchaser identities, compliance with security protocols and updated inventory records. Dealers were told to alert authorities in case of any unusual activity.

Police teams also inspected lockers used by doctors and staff in district hospitals, private hospitals, medical colleges and PHCs across Srinagar to ensure there was no unauthorised storage of hazardous or prohibited items.

In Anantnag, teams checked vehicle dealerships for documentation, stock verification and compliance with the Motor Vehicles Act. Dealers were directed to maintain accurate records and share sale and purchase details with authorities.

Officials said similar operations were underway in other parts of the valley as part of efforts to strengthen public safety and prevent anti national activities. Police said the inspection drives will continue in the coming days and urged citizens, shopkeepers, dealers and medical staff to cooperate.



# Enhanced ILS to Keep Sgr Airport Flights Running Without Cancellations

Observer News Service

**SRINAGAR:** Director, Srinagar International Airport, Javid Anjum, on Friday said the flight cancellations due to weather are 'unlikely this winter' as the airport has been equipped with an upgraded Instrument Landing System (ILS) Category-II.

Speaking to KNO, the Director said the upgraded system ensures safer and more reliable landings even under low-visibility conditions.

Anjum said that Srinagar usually records around 1,000 metres of visibility during winters, which allows for comfortable landings. "Earlier, the threshold was 1,200 meters, but now the system is much improved. This year, we expect no flight cancellations," he said, adding that the upgraded ILS now allows landings with visibility as low as 400 metres.

The Director said the ILS up-



grade was already functional last year and that no cancellations occurred due to weather conditions, marking a major improvement in airport reliability during foggy and snowy months.

Highlighting enhanced passenger facilities, he said, "We have im-

proved the heating system, added more seating and also introduced free Wi-Fi for passengers. The airport has also seen the addition of 22 new retail shops and nine food & beverage outlets, with three more expected to open soon."

On flight operations, Anjum

said the number of daily flights has dropped mainly due to lower passenger turnout, not operational constraints. "We had around 54 flights per day before the Pahalgam episode, but now we are operating about 30. Passenger traffic has declined from around

**EARLIER, THE THRESHOLD WAS 1,200 METERS, but now the system is much improved. This year, we expect no flight cancellations,"**

19,500 daily to 8,000-10,000, though we expect a rise with the onset of winter tourism," he said.

Regarding international operations, the Director said the airport has "ample infrastructure" to handle international flights and that a formal request has already been made to the ministry. "We are ready, and it now depends on the airlines to come forward," he added.

'It's Beautiful, Real & Original'

## Foreign Visitor Praises 'Know Your Artisan' showcase

Observer News Service

**SRINAGAR:** A foreign tourist on Friday expressed deep admiration for Kashmir's timeless craft traditions during the ongoing "Know Your Artisan" exhibition at Sher-e-Kashmir Park, Srinagar, calling it a beautiful synthesis of heritage, creativity and authenticity.

The exhibition, organised by the Department of Handicrafts and Handloom, Kashmir, offers visitors an opportunity to meet master artisans, witness live demonstrations and experience centuries-old craftsmanship that defines the valley's cultural identity.

Speaking to KNO, the visitor said she found the exhibition "beautiful, excellent, and amazing."

"This is a synthesis of your country. With all these artisans, you can see what real production and originality of Kashmir mean,"



Abid Bhat/KNO

she said.

She added that such initiatives highlight the importance of supporting local artisans over imported goods. "It is sad when I see imported items replacing original handmade crafts. Anyone coming here can see the difference, the people, their skills and their creations. It's beautiful," she said, while touring stalls

displaying papier-mache, walnut wood carving and hand embroidery.

Meanwhile, the 'Know Your Artisan' showcase continues to attract both locals and visitors, serving as a bridge between Kashmir's traditional craftsmen and the world, reaffirming the valley's place as a cradle of artistic excellence.

## 'Fight Where It Matters': Ruhullah Rebukes CM, NC Leaders

Observer News Service

**SRINAGAR:** Member of Parliament Aga Syed Ruhullah Mehdi on Friday issued a sharp rebuttal to criticism from some National Conference (NC) leaders, urging them to "direct their political energy where it is actually needed" rather than targeting him.

Speaking to reporters after visiting Hari Parigam in Awantipora to condole the family of Crime Branch photographer Javid Ahmad—killed in the recent Nowgam blast—Ruhullah said senior NC figures should have displayed the same courage against the central government that they are now showing towards him.

He said that the Chief Minister must "set ego aside" and prioritise the mandate given by the people. "Omar Abdullah should avoid personal attacks and fight for what he received votes for," he said.



The MP spent time with the bereaved family, assuring them that he would raise the issue at all relevant forums and push for justice for every affected household.

Ruhullah renewed his call for a thorough and independent investigation into the Nowgam blast, questioning the manner in which the ammunition material was transported and stored. "Why was such sensitive material handled in an unprofessional way? Why was it kept inside a police station? And how were civilians, including the tailor and the Naib Tehsildar, present there? Every angle must be examined so

that the truth comes out," he said.

He urged the administration to extend compensation to all victims, including civilians and officials who were injured or killed. "Whoever has suffered in this blast deserves compensation. The government must ensure justice reaches every affected family," he added.

He emphasised that the fight against terrorism has been a collective struggle. "People from every community—Muslims and non-Muslims—have sacrificed. Javid Ahmad's death is also part of that fight."

Reiterating his long-held position, Ruhullah said the restoration of democratic rights and empowerment of states remains crucial. "People in J&K felt empowered when they had special status. After its revocation, they feel disempowered. States must be strengthened through democratic rights," he said.

## Zainapora DM Bans Loudspeakers for Moving Vendors

Observer News Service

**SRINAGAR:** Sub-Divisional Magistrate (SDM) Zainapora, Bilal Ahmad has issued a stringent public order banning the use of mikes and megaphones on moving vehicles across the sub-division.

The move comes in response to a rising number of complaints about noise pollution caused by vendors using loudspeakers while selling fruits and other consumables.

Officials informed KNO that the administration had been flooded with complaints from residents during public outreach programmes, including the recent Block Diwas held on November 19,

where locals highlighted the "unbearable disturbance" caused by frequent loud announcements by mobile vendors.

Invoking Section 152 of the Bharatiya Nagarik Suraksha Sanhita (BNSS), 2023, the SDM directed that no vendor shall henceforth use loudspeakers or megaphones while moving through streets, lanes, or market areas within Sub-Division Zainapora.

The order states that the practice has been causing "noise and other pollutions... rendering public spaces congested and susceptible to accidents", and is "injurious to the health and physical comfort of the community".

The notice further warns that

any violation will attract strict penal action under the law.

The decision has drawn strong support from residents, many of whom say the problem has been growing unchecked for years.

Speaking to KNO, Mohammad Yousuf, a resident of Zainapora, said the constant loudspeaker announcements had become "a daily nuisance".

"Since early morning till late evening, these vendor vehicles keep roaming with loudspeakers on full volume. It disturbs people, especially students, patients, and elderly persons. This order was much needed," he said.

Another local, Shakeela Bano, said the elderly and sick were

the worst affected. "My mother is bedridden, and every time these vendors pass by with loudspeakers, she gets startled. Such noise has no justification. We are thankful the administration finally listened."

Parents also expressed relief, saying the move will help students prepare for exams without any disturbance.

Rameez Ahmad, a college student, said that during exam season, the noise becomes unbearable. "I hope this order is implemented strictly, and other areas also follow the same," he said.

Several residents from neighbouring villages have called for similar orders across Kashmir.

"The issue is not limited to Zainapora. Almost every town and village faces this problem," said Imran Mir, a shopkeeper from Shopian. "Authorities across Kashmir should impose a uniform ban on these unnecessary loudspeakers. Public comfort must be prioritised."

Officials said the move aims not just to curb noise pollution but also to reduce road congestion and accident risks caused by randomly parked vendor vehicles.

An official told KNO that enforcement teams have already been instructed to monitor the movement of such vehicles and take action wherever violations are noticed.

## UTLBC's Special Drives Bring Forgotten Savings Back to Citizens

Observer News Service

**SRINAGAR:** In a bid to simplify the process of reclaiming long-pending financial assets, the Jammu & Kashmir Union Territory Level Bankers' Committee (UTLBC) organised Special Facilitation Camps in Reasi, Rajouri and Anantnag under the nationwide initiative "Aapki Poonji, Aapka Adhikar - Your Money, Your Right." The programme is part of a three-month campaign launched by the Union Ministry of Finance's Department of Financial Services (DFS) in coordination with RBI and other financial regulators.

The camps assisted citizens in tracing unclaimed bank deposits, dormant insurance proceeds, inactive mutual fund units, unclaimed dividends, shares and other assets held with various institutions.

At the district-level camp



in Reasi, ADC Rakesh Kumar, accompanied by RBI Deputy General Manager Vibha Gupta and senior officials from banks and insurance companies, underscored the role of coordinated financial outreach. Gupta highlighted RBI's "3A Strategy - Awareness, Accessibility and Action," urging banks to proactively identify dormant accounts. She said Reasi has 36,642 unclaimed accounts worth Rs 9.95 crore, and encouraged banks to return funds to rightful claimants in a time-bound manner. Participants were trained

in using the RBI's UDGM Portal, and 20 beneficiaries received cheques totalling Rs 35 lakh.

In Rajouri, the camp hosted at J&K Bank's Zonal Office brought together officials from RBI, NABARD, commercial banks and insurance firms. Zonal Head Rajeev Kumar Digra stressed the importance of last-mile financial literacy. The district has 81,955 unclaimed accounts amounting to Rs 17.45 crore, officials said. During the camp, 17 beneficiaries were handed over cheques worth Rs 8.10 lakh.

## LG Ladakh Calls on Union Health Minister JP Nadra

Observer News Service

**NEW DELHI:** Lieutenant Governor of Ladakh, Kavinder Gupta on Friday met J.P. Nadra, Union Minister of Health & Family Welfare and Minister of Chemicals & Fertilizers, in New Delhi and discussed key issues related to healthcare development, medical education, and public welfare in the Union Territory of Ladakh.

Kavinder Gupta expressed gratitude for the continuous support extended by the Union Government and apprised the Union Health Minister of the progress on major projects, including the establishment of Ladakh's first Medical College and the proposed Nursing College in Leh. He informed that substantial steps—such as release of central funds, land allotment, and submission of proposals for construction and creation of posts—have already been completed. He requested the Ministry to expedite the remaining administrative approvals so that the Medical College and Nursing College can be operationalised at the earliest.

The Lt Governor also highlighted the need to fast-track the upgradation of District Hospital Kargil from 100 to 200 beds, noting that construction of additional infrastructure is under progress but the creation of essential posts requires early approval from the Ministry.



Kavinder Gupta further requested the establishment of a CGHS wellness centre in Leh, pointing out that thousands of central government employees and pensioners posted in Ladakh currently lack access to this facility. He also urged the Ministry to bring the entire ST population of Ladakh under full PMJAY coverage and revise the premium to reflect higher healthcare delivery costs in the region.

The Lt Governor proposed setting up a specialised AYUSH Hospital and requested consideration for establishing an AIIMS campus in Leh to significantly improve tertiary care and medical research in the trans-Himalayan region. He reaffirmed Ladakh's commitment to building a strong and inclusive healthcare ecosystem with continued support from the Government of India.

## Mehbooba Mufti, Family Should Be Probed for Terror Links: BJP

The BJP's Jammu and Kashmir unit on Friday called for a probe into the "possible terror links" of Peoples Democratic Party president Mehbooba Mufti and her family.

BJP spokesperson Altaf Thakur criticised Mehbooba and her daughter Iltija Mufti for repeatedly defending the Kashmir Times daily, which was raided by the Jammu and Kashmir Police's State Investigation Agency a day ago.

According to PTI, Thakur questioned the motive behind the Mufti family's stance and their constant objections to anti-terror actions of agencies.

"The pattern is too obvious to ignore: whenever law enforcement agencies have taken action against the newspaper over controversial activities in the past, the Mufti family became its most vocal defender," Thakur said, adding that it is strange and raises serious doubts.

"Why do Mehbooba and Iltija immediately jump in to support Kashmir Times? What is their interest? Is there some old association or influence that keeps bringing them into the picture every time?" the BJP spokesperson asked.

Calling for a probe, Thakur said agencies must thoroughly examine all angles, including any questionable affiliations if they exist, rather than allowing political noise to derail actions aimed at dismantling support systems that once glorified separatism and terrorism. (Observer News Service)

## Surprise Ticket Drive at Jammu Station Catches 60 Without Tickets

Northern Railway's Jammu Division conducted a surprise ticket-checking operation at Jammu Railway Station early Friday, during which 60 ticketless travellers were detected and fined a total of 26,325, officials said.

The four-hour "fortress check" was carried out from 4 am to 8 am with a team of 15 ticket-checking personnel led by Senior Divisional Commercial Manager Uchit Singhal, alongside Railway Protection Force (RPF) and Government Railway Police (GRP) staff. Security personnel were stationed at all entry and exit points to verify ticket validity and check for any unauthorized or suspicious items, the railway division said in a statement.

Officials noted that Jammu station handles a heavy rush of passengers during early morning hours, making it a key location for such checks.

Singhal said similar surprise drives will continue across the division to discourage ticketless travel and enhance security at stations. According to the railway division, over 40.06 lakh in penalties has been collected so far this financial year from around 6,600 passengers without valid tickets. (Observer News Service)

## G N Itoo Named Director of IUST's Good Governance Centre

Islamic University of Science and Technology (IUST) Awantipora Friday designated G N Itoo as Director of Centre for Good Governance and Policy Analysis.

Deputy Registrar (Establishment) in an order further said the Dr Itoo shall also look after the Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) engagement with the corporate sector for various initiatives of the University.

"In the interest of the administration, Dr Ghulam Nabi Itoo, Professor of Practice, School of Business Studies, is designated to function as Director, Centre for Good Governance and Policy Analysis, in addition to his own duties," reads the order.

It also said, "He shall further be associated with the B.Voc. Programme in Hospitality and Tourism Management." (Observer News Service)

## Vaishno Devi Landslide Case Court Grants 3-week Extension For Filing Report

A Katra court on Friday granted an additional three weeks to Reasi senior superintendent of police and a station house officer to file an action taken report (ATR) over a complaint seeking registration of case against Shri Mata Vaishno Devi Shrine Board (SMVDSB) officials for alleged criminal negligence that resulted in the deaths of 34 people in a landslide en route to the cave shrine in August. The landslide, triggered by a cloudburst, struck the pilgrim route at Adhkuwari in the Trikuta hills of Reasi district on August 26, killing pilgrims and injuring 20 others. J&K Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha constituted a three-member committee on August 29 to probe the causes behind the landslide. Sub-Judge Katra Sidhant Vaid, on October 16, directed the SSP Reasi and Bhawan SHO to submit the ATR in response to a complaint filed by Rohit Bali of Jammu. Bali has sought registration of an FIR under Sections 105 (capable homicide) and 106 (causing death by negligence) of the Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita (BNS), 2023, against the Board's CEO, alleging that negligence by SMVDSB officials led to the deaths. Pursuant to the court's earlier order, the Bhawan SHO appeared in person and submitted a written request seeking a four-week extension, informing the court that an entry regarding the incident had been made in the Roznamcha of Police Post Adhkuwari. (Observer News Service)

## Industrial Estate Sopore Gets New President After 25 Years

Industrial Estate Sopore in north Kashmir on Friday saw a major leadership shift after unit holders elected Junaid Mehraj Janwari as the new president, ending more than 25 years of continuous control by the previous head.

As per KNO, majority of the Estate Unit holders gathered at the oath ceremony and endorsed Janwari's election. They said the estate needs a more active leadership structure that can address issues faced by industries in Sopore. Meanwhile, former president Javid Bhat questioned the legality of the process. He said the move was unconstitutional and added that he had already announced his resignation a day earlier.

However, he asked unit holders to extend support to the newly elected president for the sake of the estate. Unit holders said they expect the former president to work with the new leadership for the stability of the estate. The newly elected President, Junaid, while speaking to reporters said he will work for transparent functioning and quicker decision making in the estate.

He said the association is entirely out of politics and will focus only on industrial issues, Janwari, however, asked all unit holders for full support. (Observer News Service)



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