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Kashmir Braces For Fresh Snowfall

Observer News Service

Srinagar: Kashmir is gearing up for a fresh spell of rain and snowfall around the New Year, with the Meteorological Department forecasting light to moderate snowfall across large parts of the Valley and higher reaches of the Union Territory.

According to the India Meteorological Department, light to moderate snowfall is likely at many places across Jammu and Kashmir from Tuesday, with higher reaches expected to receive fresh snow till January 1. Weather conditions are likely to remain generally cloudy on December 30, with the possibility of light rain or snowfall at several places towards the evening.

"From December 31 to January 1, light rain or snow is likely at most places, while a few higher reaches of north and central Kashmir may receive moderate snowfall," the department said,

adding that snowfall activity is expected to be more pronounced along the Zojila-Drass axis and over the Siachen area. Light to moderate snowfall is also likely in parts of Kargil and Zaskar regions, as well as higher reaches of Leh district. Snow accumulation of up to 10 inches is possible at Zojila during this period.

Officials said snowfall has already begun in the higher reaches, including Razdan Top and Zojila, and was continuing at the time of filing this report.

Meanwhile, tourists in good numbers have reached winter destinations across Kashmir to celebrate the New Year, even as authorities issued advisories warning of possible disruptions. The MeT cautioned about a high risk of temporary disruption of surface transport over the Zojila pass due to heavy snowfall on December 31. Authorities also said flight cancellations are likely during the [| More on P6](#)

Hangul Population Shows Steady Growth

» LG Chairs 6th Wildlife Board Meeting In J&K » Calls For Prioritizing Biodiversity Management & Wildlife Conservation

Observer News Service

Srinagar: The population of the Kashmir stag, popularly known as Hangul, has recorded a significant increase at the Hangul Breeding Centre in Tral, reflecting the success of sustained conservation efforts by the Department of Wildlife Protection, officials said on Monday.

According to officials, the population of the endangered species has risen to 323 as per the 2025 census, marking steady growth from 127 in 2008. The positive trend was highlighted during the sixth meeting of the Wildlife Board for the Union Territory of Jammu and Kashmir, chaired by Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha at Lok Bhavan.

During the meeting, the Wildlife Board accorded



wildlife clearance to several development projects and recommended a number of proposals to the National Board for Wildlife for final approval. These included projects related to 4G saturation, the Jal Jeevan Mission, re-alignment of transmission lines, setting up of border security posts, development of horticulture nurseries and installation of avalanche warning systems.

The Board was apprised of various conservation and

habitat improvement measures undertaken by the department, including steps to address human wild animal conflict, establishment of rescue centres and restoration works of wetlands. Efforts towards the operationalisation of the Hangul Breeding Centre at Tral were also presented, with the Board noting the encouraging rise in the Hangul population with satisfaction.

Addressing the meeting, the Lieutenant Governor

called for prioritising sustainable management of biodiversity and conservation of wildlife habitats, stressing that development initiatives must move forward in harmony with environmental protection. He emphasised the need for promotional activities, particularly among school children, for major projects such as Jambu Zoo, Hokersar and Charana Wetlands. He also directed that public transport facilities be [| More on P6](#)

PDD Likely To Revise Curtailment Schedule

Feeders With Over 40% Losses May Face Up to 6 Hours Power Cuts

Agencies

Srinagar: The Power Development Department (PDD) is likely to announce a new power curtailment schedule for consumers in the Kashmir division, which will include extra hours of load shedding in the high AT&C losses.

Sources said that Kashmir Power Development Corporation Limited (KPDCL) is devising a new power curtailment plan that is likely to be rolled out in coming days.

It also said that the power feeders having losses of more than 40 percent may face restrictions of 4-6 hours.

"As of now, the areas with more than 40 percent Aggregate Technical & Commercial (AT&C) losses are facing a power curtailment of nearly 4 hours. However, in the revised schedule, these feeders may face power shedding of 5-6 hours," sources said.

It also said that in case of those feeders having losses 20-40 percent, the consumers may face power curtailment of 3 hours. [| More on P6](#)

Tourism In Kashmir Back On Track: Dir Tourism

After witnessing fluctuations throughout the year, Jammu and Kashmir's tourism sector has regained its pace, with strong bookings reported in November and December. Director Tourism Kashmir Syed Qamar Sajad said the department is optimistic about a vibrant 2026, as the Valley's tourism graph continues to show steady recovery. "Tourism in Kashmir is back on track," he said. [| More on P6](#)

HC Modifies Uri Woman's Sentence In 1979 Case

Cites 46-Year Procedural 'Ordeal'

M Ahmad

Srinagar: The High Court of J&K and Ladakh on Monday modified the sentence of a 70-year-old woman convicted in a 1979 culpable homicide case, citing the "ordeal of prolonged proceedings for over 46 years", her advanced age, and deteriorating health.

A bench of Justice Sanjay Parihar, while disposing of a criminal appeal filed by the woman Shameema Begum,

observed that the case exemplifies systemic delays in the criminal justice system.

The incident occurred on July 10, 1979, while the trial concluded after more than 30 years in 2009, and the appeal remained pending for another 16 years.

"This case bears testimony to the systemic delay in the disposal of criminal cases. The appellant (woman) was convicted in relation to an incident dated 10.07.1979. [| More on P6](#)



LG Interacts With IAS Officer Trainees

Observer News Service

Srinagar: Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha on Monday interacted with the IAS Officer Trainees of the 2025 Batch, who are on their 5-day visit to Jammu as a part of the Winter Study Tour (Bharat Darshan Programme).

The Officer Trainees are currently undergoing Phase-1 training at the Lal Bahadur Shastri National Academy of Administration (LBSNAA), Mussoorie.

During the interaction, the Lieutenant Governor shared his insights on governance and public service. He also highlighted the transformational journey of Jammu Kashmir across the sectors.

The Group of IAS Officer Trainees comprised of Muskan Srivastava, Haryana Cadre; Meghna Chakravorty and Mudita Bansal, West Bengal Cadre; Deepak Godara, AGMUT Cadre; Saichaitanya Jadhav, Rahul Raghavan [| More on P6](#)



Gulmarg sees a surge of tourists as fresh snow carpets the ski resort. KO Photo By Abid Bhat

CBK Records Highest-Ever Case Disposal In 2025

Observer News Service

Srinagar: The Crime Branch Kashmir has recorded its highest-ever case disposal in 2025, marking a significant improvement in institutional efficiency and internal monitoring, according to official data.

Year-end figures show notable gains across core functions, including crime investigation, departmental vigilance, complaint redressal and scrutiny, reflecting a sustained push to reduce pendency and tighten procedural accountability.

Overall Crime Disposal In 2025, the Crime Branch handled 1,108 crime cases, comprising an opening balance of 932 cases and 164 fresh registrations. By December 20, [| More on P6](#)

Iran Cracked The Saffron Code, Kashmir Didn't: Iranian Experts Weigh In

Syed Mohammad Burhan

Srinagar: A high-level scientific delegation from Iran's Ministry of Agriculture has sparked a serious rethink about the future of Kashmir's saffron sector, bluntly contrasting Iran's globally dominant saffron model with the stagnation seen in Pampore, Kashmir's historic saffron heartland. The five-day collaborative mission, hosted by the Sher-e-Kashmir University of Agricultural Sciences and Technology of Kashmir (SKUAST-K) in partnership with the International Crops Research Institute for the Semi-Arid Tropics (ICRISAT),



brought together two of the world's most important saffron-growing regions—but with vastly different outcomes.

Led by Elham Fattahifar, Director General for Greenhouses and Medicinal Plants, the Iranian delegation

included Parisa Pourali, a noted saffron scientist, and Ramin Esmi, a senior saffron specialist with extensive field experience. Through field visits, technical sessions and interactions with farmers and researchers, the delegation examined why Iran today controls more than 90 percent of global saffron production, while Kashmir's output continues to decline despite its famed reputation for quality.

"Iran's success in saffron is not accidental," Elham Fattahifar said during discussions in Pampore. "It is the result of decades of experience, strong economic [| More on P6](#)

New Year Celebrations: Security Tightened In J&K

Observer News Service

Srinagar: Security forces in Jammu and Kashmir have intensified checking and surveillance across high-influx areas, including venues hosting New Year celebrations, as part of heightened security measures to ensure a peaceful festive season.

Additional checkpoints have been established at key entry points, with enhanced patrolling, area domination exercises and surprise verifications carried out across major road networks to prevent any untoward incident.

Amid the intensified security grid, officials said multiple suspicious recoveries were reported from forward and border districts. In Poonch

district's Mendhar sector, the Special Operations Group of the Jammu and Kashmir Police, acting on specific intelligence inputs, recovered an unidentified drone abandoned in an open field at Gohled village. The site was immediately secured and an investigation was launched to trace the drone's origin and possible operator.

In a separate operation, security forces recovered a magazine of an AK assault rifle along with seven live rounds from an open field in Sudhmahadev area of Chenani in Udhampur district during search operations.

Meanwhile, in the Akhnoor sector of Jammu district, an aircraft-shaped [| More on P6](#)



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No 5- Dal Lake Boulevard Srinagar, 190001, Kashmir

PUBLIC NOTICE

The name of my ward has been wrongly written in his adhaar card as Seham Shabir while his/her correct name is Fajar Shabir . Now I have applied for the correction of the same if anybody has any objection in this regard he/she may file them in the concerned Adhaar Centre Jammu/Srinagar within Seven days. After that no objection shall be entertained..

Shabir Ahmad Bhat
F/o Fajar Shabir
R/o Trenz Tehsil & Distt Shopain
fko

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.: 710438, 707331, 6125278 Session: Bi-Annul /Annual Regular / Annual Regular Year 2013/2013/2014 through the Jammu and Kashmir Board of School Education. Due to the error committed by the concerned School against Father's Name Nazeer Ahmad Mir Instead of Nazir Ahmad Mir Now, I have applied for correction/rectification of error in the Jammu and Kashmir Board of School Education. New Campus Bemina. 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: Sameer Ahmad Mir
Father's name: Nazir Ahmad Mir
Mother's Name: Hasena Akhter
DOB: 05-01-1997
Residence: Urichersoo
Mobile no: 9622793437
fko_r

PUBLIC NOTICE

It is hereby notified for the information of the general public that the name recorded on the electricity bill bearing Bill ID No. 0213040003950 is Gh Ahmad Lone S/o Ab Raheem Lone, which is incorrect. The same is proposed to be changed to Ab Quyoom Lone S/o Gh Ahmad Lone, R/o Ussen Khoie. If anybody has any objection in this regard, he/she may file the same in the office of the AEE, Pattan within seven (07) days from the date of publication of this notice. After that, no objection shall be entertained.

Ab Quyoom Lone S/o Gh Ahmad Lone
R/o Ussen Khoie
FKO

PUBLIC NOTICE

It is informed to the General public that my daughter's name and Parantage in her Aadhar Card bearing Aadhar No :-2728 9040 6192 has been wrongly mentioned as Ashiya Mehraj D/O. Mehraj U Din Khan. Instead of Khan Aishah D/O. Mehraj U Din Khan . Now I am applying for its Correction as per School record . if anybody having any objection in this regard he/she may contact the same in the office of the General Manager Ranbir Govt Press Jammu within a period of seven days from the publication of this notice. No objection will be entertained after expiry of stipulated period.
Mehraj Ud Din Khan
F/O. Khan Aishah
R/O :- Udidpora .Tehsil :- Langate Distt : Kupwar
. Pin Code:- 193302 J&kashmir
FKO



From Office of the Advocate
Ishfaq Rasool and Associates

In the case of
Mohd Ahsan Yattoo S/o: Abdul Samad Yattoo
R/o: Tantraypora Palhallan Tehsil Pattan District Baramulla

Vs
Public at large
Caveator
Non Caveators

In the Petition in terms of Section 148-A

The caveators have reason to believe that Non-Caveator may file any Application, Petition, Ap- peal, Suit or any other type of proceeding before the Hon'ble Court and on the ground of distorted facts/misrepresentation and cooked story and may seed in obtaining some relief/order at their back/in exparte against the caveators and in such eventuality the caveators will be put in irrepa- rable loss and inconvenience. It would be proper that caveators be given an opportunity of being heard by the Hon'ble court before passing any order.
fko
Sd/advocate

PUBLIC NOTICE

The name of my son has been wrongly written in his adhaar card as Aatif Rashid Zargar while his correct name is Aatif Rashid Zargar S/o Ab Rashid Zargar . Now I have applied for the correction of the same if anybody has any objection in this regard he/she may file them in the concerned Adhaar Centre Jammu/Srinagar within Seven days. After that no objection shall be entertained..
Ab Rashid Zargar
F/o Aatif Rashid Zargar
R/o Pattan Tehsil Pattan District Baramulla
fko

PUBLIC NOTICE

The name of my son has been wrongly written in his adhaar card as Umair Gull while his correct name is Dar Umair Gull . Now I have applied for the correction of the same if anybody has any objection in this regard he/she may file them in the concerned Adhaar Centre Jammu/Srinagar within Seven days. After that no objection shall be entertained..
Gulzar Ahmad Dar
F/o Dar Umair Gull
R/o Puthar Reshi pora Tehsil Kreeeri District Baramulla
fko

Government of Jammu & Kashmir
OFFICE OF THE EXECUTIVE ENGINEER (R&B) DIVISION PATTAN.

NOTICE INVITING E-TENDER

NIT No: 69/R&B of 2025-26/ 3757-62 Dated: 27.12.2025

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

S. No	Name of Work	Adv. Cost (Rs. In Lacs)	Cost of T/Doc. (In Rupees)	Earnest money (In Rupees)	Time of comple- tion	M.H of Account	Class of Contractor
1	Providing temporary arrange- ments for the celebrations of 26th January 2026 at pattan.	4.10 lacs	200/-	8200/-	04 days	Over All Contingence	DEE

Position Of AAA: Accorded Position of T.S: Accorded

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

1	Date of Issue of Tender Notice	27.12.2025
2	Period of downloading of bidding documents	29.12.2025
3	Bid submission Start Date	29.12.2025
4	Bid Submission End Date	07.01.2026 4:00 PM
5	Date & time of opening of Bids (Online)	08.01.2026 11:00 AM Office of The Executive Engineer RnB Division Pattan

- Bids must be accompanied with cost of Tender document in shape of Treasury Challan (Dated between bid submission start date and bid submission end date) with NIT No., Serial No. and name of work to be deposited in M.H. 0059 in favour of Executive Engineer R&B Division Pattan (tender inviting authority) Falling under the Competence of under sign.
- All the bidders must upload Earnest money /Bid security equal to 2% of advertised cost in the shape of CDR/FDR/BG pledged to Executive Engineer R&B Division Pattan (tender receiving authority) (The Date of earnest money/Bid security should be between the Bid Submission start date and Bid submission End date, as per PWD norms).
- The Successful bidder will have to provide performance security @ 5% of contract value in the form of CDR/FDR/BG pledged to Executive Engineer R&B Division Pattan (tender receiving authority). The earnest money/ Bid security @2% shall be released to the successful bidder only on receipt of Performance Security @ 5% of Contract value which shall be released after successful completion of DLP /maintenance period for different nature of works i.e. for M&R works six months (6 months) Bituminous works Three Years (03 Years) and Building works Eighteen Months (18 months) etc as per Physical nature of work.
- The date and time of opening of Bids shall be notified on Web Site www.jktenders.gov.in and conveyed to the bidders automatically through an e-mail message on their e-mail address. The bids of Responsive bidders shall be opened online on same Web Site in the Office of Executive Engineer R&B Division Pattan (tender receiving authority).
- The earnest money/ Bid security in favor of unsuccessful bidder shall be released only after submission of original Treasury Challan.
- The bids for the work shall remain valid for a period of 120 days s from the date of opening of Technical bids
- The earnest money shall be forfeited, if-
i. Any bidder/ tenderer withdraw his bid/ tender during the period of bid validity or make any modifications in the terms and conditions of the bid.
ii. Failure of Successful bidder to furnish the required performance security within the specified time limit.
iii. Failure of Successful bidder to execute the agreement within 28 days after fixation of contract.
- Instruction to bidders regarding e-tendering process.
i. Bidders are advised to download bid submission manual from the "Downloads" option as well as from "Bidders Manual Kit" option on website www.jktenders.gov.in to familiarize themselves with the bid submission process.
ii. To participate in bidding process, bidders have to get " Digital Signature Certificate(DSC)" as per information Technology Act-2000. Bidders can get digital certificate from any approved Vendor.
iii. The bidders have to submit their bids online in electronic format with digital Signature. No bid will be accepted in physical form.
iv. Bids will be opened online as per time schedule mentioned in Para-1.
v. Bidders must ensure to upload scanned copy of all necessary documents with the bid.

Computer operator/ Camp/ Draftsman/ Head Draftsman/ Technical Officer /
No: R&B / Divn./3757-62 DIPP-9441/25 Dated:29.12.2025
Executive Engineer
R&B Division Pattan

PUBLIC NOTICE

My name has been wrongly written in my adhaar card as Zameer Majeed Dar while my correct name is Zameer Ahmad Dar. Now I have applied for the correction of the same if anybody has any objection in this regard he/she may file them in the concerned Adhaar Centre Jammu/Srinagar within Seven days. After that no objection shall be entertained..

Zameer Ahmad Dar
S/o Abdul Majeed Dar
R/o Ogmuna Tehsil Kawarhama DISTT Baramulla
fko

OFFICE OF EXECUTIVE MAGISTRATE
1ST CLASS ZAINGEER BOMAI

No: 166/B&D/72/2025 Date: 20/06/25

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

This office has received a written application from Mohammad Dilawar Mir S/o Mohammad Abdullah Mir R/o Brath , Tehsil Zaingeer for issuance of Birth & Death certificate in favour of Daughter Aabish Jaan who was Born on 05-04-2013 and as per document evidence produced by the applicant. In this regard, if anyone has any objection, he/she may file the same before the undersigned within 07 days. After that, no objection whatsoever will be entertained by this office.
Tehsildar
Executive Magistrate
Bomai
fko

NOTICE

I have changed my name from (old name) Mohd Sultan Dobi to (new name) Mohammad Sultan Dhobi. In future I will be known as Mohammad Sultan Dhobi.
If anybody is having any objection he/she may contact Passport Office Srinagar, within & 7 days. After 7 days no objection will be accepted.

PUBLIC NOTICE

This is to inform the general public that I, Mohamad Amin Sofi, S/o Ghulam Nabi Sofi, R/o Saderbal, Palhallan, intend to change the name of my firm from SOFI PESTICIDES to SOFI AGRO CENTRE. If any person has any objection to this change, the same may be submitted in writing within seven (07) days from the date of publication of this notice. After that, no objection shall be entertained.
Sd/-
Mohamad Amin Sofi
S/o Ghulam Nabi Sofi
R/o Saderbal, Palhallan
fko

PUBLIC NOTICE

My name has been wrongly written in my Demat Account as Bashir Ahmed Badar while my correct name is Bashir Ahmad Bader . Now I have applied for the correction of the same if anybody has any objection in this regard he/she may file them in concerned office within seven days. After that no objection shall be entertained.
Bashir Ahmad Bader
S/O Gh Hassan Bader
R/O Bijbehara
DP ID: In302349
Account Number 10424405
am

OFFICE OF THE ASSISTANT REGIONAL TRANSPORT OFFICER BUDGAM

Subject:- Necessary Correction/change in address in data to the License No.JK-0420190003030 issued in favour of TANVEER HUSSAIN Parentage MANZOOR AHMAD WANI

Whereas an application has been received by one TANVEER HUSSAIN Parentage MANZOOR AHMAD WANI where- in he claimed that the Name has been wrongly recorded in the records of Driving Licenses as KHAWAJA TANVEER HUSSAIN Parentage KHAWAJA MANZOOR AHMAD Which needs to be changed as TANVEER HUSSAIN Parentage MANZOOR AHMAD WANI

Now therefore it is notified for the information of the general public that objections if any in this regard shall reach in written in the office of the Assistant Regional Transport office Budgam within a period of 7 days from the date of publication of this notice in the daily newspaper. After expiry of stipulated time no objection will be entertained.

Assistant Regional Transport officer
Budgam Kashmir
mcb

PUBLIC NOTICE

The name of my ward has been wrongly written in his adhaar card as Sadiya Hassan while her correct name is Sadiya Hassan. Now I have applied for the correction of the same if anybody has any objection in this regard he/she may file them in the concerned Adhaar Centre Jammu/Srinagar within Seven days. After that no objection shall be entertained..

Gulam Hassan Lone
F/o Sadiya Hassan
R/o Kawarhama Distt Baramulla
fko

PUBLIC NOTICE

This is information for the general public that in Adhar card bearing No 261606045493 the name is entered as TARIQ IQBAL SHAH while my actual name is MOHAMMAD TARIQ IQBAL. Now I want its correction, in this regard if anybody having any objection may contact Concern department with in a period of seven days. No objection shall be entertained after that.

MOHAMMAD TARIQ IQBAL
S/O MOHAMMAD SHAFI SHAH
mcb

ازنیات یومی زینگیئر

عنوان:- درخواست منجانب اشفاق احمد بیگ ولد محمد رمضان بیگ ساکن زاورہ برادر اجرائی لیگل ہیر بحق خود

اشتہار ہرخاص و عام
معاملمندرچ عنوان الصددر میں ساکن نے ایک درخواست بغرض لیگل ہیر سرٹیفکیٹ پیش کی ہے جو کہ ریکارڈ ہے اس بارے میں پٹواری حلقے سے رپورٹ طلب کی گئی ہے جس سے عیاں ہے کہ ساکن کا والد مورخہ کوٹہ ہوا ہے اور متوفی کے وارثان جائز بڈیل ہے
محمد رمضان بیگ ولد غلام رسول بیگ مزدوری 50 شہر متوفی
اشفاق احمد بیگ پرمحمد رمضان تجارت 29 سال پر متوفی
مڈرا احمد بیگ پرمحمد رمضان بیگ 39 سال --
فرحت پرمحمد رمضان 41 سال --
سنور دخترمحمد رمضان بیگ گھریلو کام 30 سال دخترموتی
نیولفر رمضان دخترو۔ 24 سال --
اس کے علاوہ اوکوئی افراد کی نہیں ہے سرٹیفکیٹ زیر بحث اجراء کرنے میں اگر کسی شخص کو کوئی عزیایا عزیاش ہو تو وہ بعد مشورہ اخبار سات دان کے اندر اندر اپنے عزیاش عدالت حد کو دفتر ای واقات کے دوران پیش کریں۔ بعد گزرے میعاد کوئی قابل قبول نہیں ہوگا۔
تائب تحصیلدار
FKO

PUBLIC NOTICE

I have Changed my Name Hajara Banoo W/O Mohd Maqsood Beigh to Hajra Banoo W/O Mohammad Maqsood Beigh. If anybody is having any objection He/She may contact Passport Office Srinagar Within 7 (Seven) days after 7 days no objection will be accepted
Name: Hajra Banoo W/O: Mohammad Maqsood Beigh
R/O: Hiller Shahabad Tehsil: Dooru District: Anantnag fzko

PUBLIC NOTICE

My Name & DOB in my Aadhar Card has been wrongly entered as MUNEERA BANO & DOB is 09-05-1977 while my correct Name & DOB as per School record is MONIRA AKHTAR & DOB is 01-01-1969. Now I want the same to be corrected if anybody has any objection in this regard He/ She may file his /her objection in the Office of the General Manager Ranbir Government Press Jammu, within a period of seven (7) days from the date of publication of this notice. After that no objection shall be entertained.
Monira Akhtar W/O Gh Mohi Ud Din Shaikh
R/O Hardu Toru Anantnag
JNA7780878931

PUBLIC NOTICE

My Name in my Aadhar Card has been wrongly entered as AZMAT GULZAR while my correct Name is AZMAT JAN. Now I want the same to be corrected if anybody has any objection in this regard He/ She may file his /her objection in the Office of the General Manager Ranbir Government Press Jammu, within a period of seven (7) days from the date of publication of this notice. After that no objection shall be entertained.
Azmat Jan D/O Gulzar Ahmad Lone
R/O Gassipora Laram Ganjipora Anantnag
JNA7780878931

PUBLIC NOTICE

I Dr Mirza Irfan Sayeed Beg want to change my Son's name in his Aadhar card bearing no 2290 0337 3801 from Mirza Tahzeeq Irfan beg (old name) to Muhammad Beig (new name) .If anybody has any objection in this regard he/she may file them in the concerned centre within seven days. After that no objection shall be entertained.
jvd

PUBLIC NOTICE

I Bisma Manzoor Meather want to change my name in my adhaar card bearing no 5018 7535 4327 from Hasiaa khatun (old name) to Bisma Manzoor Meather (new name) . If anybody has any objection in this regard he/she may file them in the concerned centre within seven days. After that no objection shall be entertained.
jvd

PUBLIC NOTICE

I have changed my wards name from syeda Zahra to syeda zehra. In future she will be known as syeda zehra .If anybody is having any objection he / she may contact passport office srinagar within 7 days. After 7 days no objection will be accepted
Address:-H No 56/3 Hassan Abad Rainawari Srinagar
Pin :- 190003 Jammu and Kashmir India inf

PUBLIC NOTICE

I have changed my name from Mufazal Hussain Syeed to Mufazal Hussain Syed .In future I will be known as Mufazal Hussain Syed.If anybody is having any objection he /she may contact passport office srinagar within 7 days. After 7 days no objection will be accepted.
Address:-H No 56/3 Hassan Abad Rainawari Srinagar
Pin :-190003 Jammu and Kashmir India inf

ازنیات یومی زینگیئر
عنوان:- درخواست منجانب قاضی اقبال جاوید ولد مرحوم قاضی غلام سائک بھدری پورہ شکر گڑہ برادر اجرائی لیگل ہیر بحق خود
اشتہار ہرخاص و عام
معاملمندرچ عنوان الصددر میں ساکن نے ایک درخواست بغرض لیگل ہیر سرٹیفکیٹ پیش کی ہے جو کہ ریکارڈ ہے اس بارے میں پٹواری حلقے سے رپورٹ طلب کی گئی ہے جس سے عیاں ہے کہ ساکن کا والد مورخہ 05-12-2025 کو فوت ہوا ہے اور متوفی کے وارثان جائز بڈیل ہے
طاہرہ بیگم بیگم غلام محمد گھریلو کام 52 سال بیو متوفی
قاضی اقبال جاوید زیر تعلیم 18 سال ہیر۔
عظمت جاوید قاضی -- 15 سال دخترموتی
اس کے علاوہ متوفی کا والد اور والدہ اپنے دوسرے پسر کے ساتھ رہائش پذیر ہے سرٹیفکیٹ زیر بحث اجراء کرنے میں اگر کسی شخص کو کوئی عزیایا عزیاش ہو تو وہ بعد مشورہ اخبار سات دان کے اندر اندر اپنے عزیاش عدالت حد کو دفتر ای واقات کے دوران پیش کریں۔ بعد گزرے میعاد کوئی قابل قبول نہیں ہوگا۔
تائب تحصیلدار
FKO

ازنیات یومی زینگیئر
عنوان:- درخواست منجانب اشفاق احمد بیگ ولد محمد رمضان بیگ ساکن زاورہ برادر اجرائی لیگل ہیر بحق خود
اشتہار ہرخاص و عام
معاملمندرچ عنوان الصددر میں ساکن نے ایک درخواست بغرض لیگل ہیر سرٹیفکیٹ پیش کی ہے جو کہ ریکارڈ ہے اس بارے میں پٹواری حلقے سے رپورٹ طلب کی گئی ہے جس سے عیاں ہے کہ ساکن کی والدہ مورخہ کوٹہ ہوا ہے اور متوفی کے وارثان جائز بڈیل ہے
محمد رمضان بیگ ولد غلام رسول بیگ مزدوری 50 شہر متوفی
اشفاق احمد بیگ پرمحمد رمضان تجارت 29 سال پر متوفی
مڈرا احمد بیگ پرمحمد رمضان بیگ 39 سال --
فرحت پرمحمد رمضان 41 سال --
سنور دخترمحمد رمضان بیگ گھریلو کام 30 سال دخترموتی
نیولفر رمضان دخترو۔ 24 سال --
اس کے علاوہ اوکوئی افراد کی نہیں ہے سرٹیفکیٹ زیر بحث اجراء کرنے میں اگر کسی شخص کو کوئی عزیایا عزیاش ہو تو وہ بعد مشورہ اخبار سات دان کے اندر اندر اپنے عزیاش عدالت حد کو دفتر ای واقات کے دوران پیش کریں۔ بعد گزرے میعاد کوئی قابل قبول نہیں ہوگا۔
تائب تحصیلدار
FKO

City to Get First State-of-the-Art School for Specially-Abled Students

Observer News Service

Srinagar: In a landmark step towards inclusive education, Srinagar is set to get its first state-of-the-art school exclusively designed for students with special needs by 2027. The ambitious project, being implemented by the Jammu and Kashmir Social Welfare Department, will cater primarily to children with visual and hearing impairments and is expected to serve students from across the Kashmir Valley.

Deputy Commissioner Srinagar, Akshay Labroo, on Monday said that several key social welfare projects are currently underway in the district, with the 'Abhinandan State-of-the-Art School' being among the most significant initiatives.

"The State-of-the-Art School is a vital project for specially-abled students, particularly those who are visually impaired and those with hearing disabilities," Labroo said during an inspection of the ongoing works. He added that all concerned departments are working in close coordination to ensure the timely and high-quality completion of the project.

The Deputy Commissioner informed that the construction of the school is scheduled to be completed by 2027,

though efforts are being made to finish the project ahead of the stipulated timeline. "We are ensuring quality work without any delay. This institution is not only meant for students from Srinagar but will cater to the entire Kashmir Valley," he said.

Labroo conducted an on-site inspection of the infrastructure upgradation works for the construction of the new educational complex, which is being developed at an estimated cost of Rs 9.90 crore. The project is being executed on a modern, state-of-the-art pattern and will be the first institution of its kind in the Kashmir Division dedicated exclusively to children with visual and hearing special abilities.

While reviewing the progress, the Deputy Commissioner stressed the importance of seamless co-ordination among all line departments to ensure the project's timely completion. He directed the executing agency to accelerate the pace of work while maintaining strict adherence to prescribed quality standards.

He also instructed officials to ensure the timely procurement and installation of lifts and to complete internal electrification works well in advance, so that there is no delay in the overall execution of the project.

Fire Guts Three-Storey House in Lal Bazar

Observer News Service

Srinagar: A three-storey residential house was completely gutted in a fire incident reported on Monday morning at Umar Colony, Lal Bazar in Srinagar. No loss of life or injuries were reported.

Officials said the State Fire Control Room, Bataloo received a call, following which fire tenders from Hazratbal and Nowshehra fire stations were rushed to the spot. Due to the congested locality and lack of an

immediate water source, additional reinforcements were pressed into service.

According to KNT, fire crews found the structure fully engulfed and launched firefighting operations. After sustained efforts, the fire was contained to the affected house, preventing its spread to nearby structures.

The operation was led by Divisional Fire Officer Headquarters Muzaffar Ali Bhat under the supervision of Deputy Director Fire and Emergency Services Dr Mir Agib Hussain. The cause of the fire

Tanvir Felicitates National Award winners

Observer News Service

Srinagar: Department of Handicrafts and Handloom, Kashmir felicitated four of its renowned artisans who were recently conferred with the National Awards and Certificates of Excellence by the President of India at New Delhi.

MLA Zadibal, Tanvir Sadiq, presented Certificates of Excellence and mementos to the awardees including Manzoor Ahmad Khan for carpet weaving, Khawaja Nazir Ali for Sozni embroidery, Mir Arshad Hussain for papier mache and Mashkoora Begum, for Sozni embroidery, in a glittering ceremony, in IICT/ CDI premises at Baghe-Ali Mardan Khan, here.

Director, Handicrafts and Handlooms, Kashmir, Mussarat Islam; Director IICT, Zubair Ahmad; Joint Director, Handicrafts, Deeba Khalid and other senior officers of the Department, besides UT Awardees 2024 were also present on the occasion. In his address, Tanvir

Sadiq congratulated the winners for bringing laurels to the famed Handicrafts sector of Kashmir. He also praised the Department for organizing such functions, which act as an elixir and motivate many others to make unique handmade products for the ever-expanding niche markets for Kashmir Handicrafts, both within and outside the country.

In response to the demand for creating a Crafts Hall of Fame, Tanvir Sadiq assured the department of his full support as the same shall bring the highly skilled craftsmen of Kashmir into public domain.

Earlier, Director Handicrafts & Handloom presented a detailed overview of the activities of Handicrafts and Handloom Department, with focus on its brand promotion campaign under 'Soulful Kashmir' as well as development of a new software for GI QR labelling to secure the future of authentic handmade products from Kashmir.

Dewatering Operations Reviewed at Darish Kadal

Observer News Service

SRINAGAR: In view of the forecasted wet spell and to ensure the city's preparedness against waterlogging, the Commissioner, Srinagar Municipal Corporation (SMC), Faz Lul Haseeb, on Monday conducted a comprehensive inspection of the SCADA (Supervisory Control and Data Acquisition) Control Room at the Drainage Circle Office, Darish Kadal.

During the inspection, the Commissioner assessed

the functioning and operational efficiency of the SCADA-based dewatering system, which provides real-time monitoring and centralized control of dewatering equipment installed at 80 dewatering stations across Srinagar city and its adjoining areas. The system is operated through the Main Control Centre (MCC) at Darish Kadal, with a Backup Control Centre (BCC) at JKERA Complex, Rambagh, ensuring operational continuity and redundancy.



With Hostels Full, KU Female Students Turn to Private Accommodation

Observer News Service

Srinagar: Female students of the University of Kashmir have renewed their demand for the construction of an additional girls' hostel at the main campus, citing the acute accommodation shortage that has forced hundreds of students to live in private rented rooms under difficult conditions.

At present, the University of Kashmir operates several girls' hostels at its main campus, including Habba Khatoon, Rabia Basri, Quratul-Ain-Hyder, Bibi-Aamina and Lal Ded hostels. Despite these facilities, students allege that the combined capacity caters to only a limited portion of enrolled female students, leaving a large number without on-campus accommodation.

Students residing outside the campus said they are compelled to rent private rooms at an average cost of around Rs 6,000 per month, apart from bearing additional expenses. Many raised concerns over safety and lack of a secure environment. Parents echoed similar apprehen-

“
Students residing outside the campus said they are compelled to rent private rooms at an average cost of around Rs 6,000 per month, apart from bearing additional expenses.

sions, stating that they remain anxious about their daughters' wellbeing and have to stay in constant contact due to security fears.

According to KNT, students also

said that living in rented accommodation significantly affects their academic routine. They claimed that managing daily chores, particularly cooking, consumes over three hours each day, leaving them with limited time to focus on studies.

Senior faculty members pointed out that over the past decade, the proportion of female students at the university has increased substantially. According to them, girls currently constitute nearly 80 percent of enrolment in science and social science streams, placing additional pressure on existing hostel infrastructure.

Data shows that more than 800 female students are presently staying in rented accommodations across areas including Habak, Sadribal, Zakura, Malhabagh, Saïda Kadal, Hazratbal and Nigeen.

Students and parents have appealed to the Chancellor and Vice Chancellor of the university to take immediate steps to resolve the issue. Efforts were made to contact the Vice Chancellor, however, no response was received till filing of this report.

Government of Jammu & Kashmir OFFICE OF THE EXECUTIVE ENGINEER PWD(R&B) DIVISION ANANTNAG NIT NO 127 OF R&B/Anantnag/2025-26 /E-TENDERING/ 10601-10 DATED 27-12-2025

For and on behalf of the Lt. Governor, Union Territory of J&K Stage Tenders in electronic mode (In Single Cover) are invited on %age basis from approved and eligible Contractors registered with J&K Govt. CPWD, Railways and other State/Central Governments for each of the following works:-

S.No.	Name of Work	Ceiling Amount (Rs. In Lacs)	Cost of T/Doc. (In Rs.)	Earnest Money Deposit (In Rs.)	Time of completion	Major Head	Class of Contractor
1.	Upgradation of Residential Quarter, Principal District and Session Judge, Anantnag.	1.30 Lacs	200/-	2600/-	27-12-2025	District Budget Grants 2025-26	Capex/All Classes (Civil) (NFB and MSME's Only)

Project Authority: District Development Commissioner Anantnag.
Position of AAA: Accorded vide Order No. 92-DDCA of 2025, Dated 26.06.2025.

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

S.No.	Particulars	Dated
1	Date of Issue of Tender Notice	27-12-2025
2	Period of Downloading of bidder documents	From 27-12-2025 To 02-01-2026 (04:00 PM)
3	Bid submission Start Date	From 27-12-2025 To 04:00 PM (04:00 PM)
4	Bid Submission End Date	From 02-01-2026 To 04:00 PM (04:00 PM)
5	Date and time of opening of bid (online)	03-01-2026 (11:00 AM)

1. Bids must be accompanied with cost of tender document in shape of Treasury Challan / Receipt (Under MH- 0059 PWD) in favour of Executive Engineer R&B Division Anantnag (Tender Inviting Authority) [NIT NO & Item No/Name of Work to be mentioned on the Treasury Challan / Receipt] (The Date of Treasury Challan should be between the date of Start of Bid and Bid Submission End Date) and EMD as tabulated above in the shape of CDR/FDR/BG pledged to Executive Engineer PWD(R&B) Division Anantnag (Tender receiving Authority). (The Date of EMD {CDR/FDR/BG} should be between the date of Start of Bid and Bid Submission End Date) and validity of EMD at the time of opening of bids shall be a period of 45 Days beyond bid validity of 120 days.)

2. All the Bidders have to submit Earnest Money/Bid Security (EMD) (@ 2%) in the shape of CDR/FDR/BG. Non submission of Earnest Money/Bid Security shall render the bidder as Non-responsive.

3. The 1st lowest responsive (Successful) Bidder has to produce an amount equal to 5% of contract as Performance Security in the shape of CDR/FDR/BG in favour of Executive Engineer R&B Division Anantnag (Tender receiving authority) within 03 Days before fixation of Contract and shall be released after successful completion of Defect Liability Period (DLP) of the work. Failure to produce Performance Security shall render the LI as non-responsive and case for debarring of the Contractor for a period of 01 Year be forwarded to Higher Authorities.

4. The Earnest Money Deposit (EMD) in the shape of CDR/FDR/BG of the successful Bidder shall be released after receiving Performance security in the shape of CDR/FDR/BG and same shall be released after successful completion of Defect Liability Period (DLP) of the work.

5. The rates quoted in the BoQ are exclusive of GST. GST @18 Percent shall be added to the contract value by the allotting authority at the time of issuance of allotment.

6. The date and time of opening of Bids shall be notified on Web Site www.jktenders.gov.in and conveyed to the bidders automatically through an e-mail message on their e-mail address. The bids of Responsive bidders shall be opened online on same Web Site in the Office of Executive Engineer R&B Division Anantnag

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

8. Instruction to bidders regarding e-tendering process.

a. Bidders are advised to download bid submission manual from the "Downloads" option as well as from "Bidders Manual Kit" on website www.jktenders.gov.in to acquaint bid submission process.

b. To participate in bidding process, bidders have to get 'Digital Signature Certificate (DSC)' as per Information Technology Act-2000. Bidders can get digital certificate from any approved vendors.

c. The bidders have to submit their bids online in electronic format with digital Signature. No Financial bid will be accepted in physical form.

d. Bids will be opened online as per time schedule mentioned in Para-1.

e. Bidders must ensure to upload scanned copy of all necessary documents with bid.

f. Bidders must ensure to upload scanned copy of all necessary documents including tender document fee in terms of soft copies with technical bid.

Note: - Scan all the documents on 100 dpi with black and white option.

9. The department will not be responsible for delay in online submission due to any reasons.

10. Scanned copy of cost of tender document in the shape of Treasury Challan / Receipt in favour of Executive Engineer PWD(R&B) Division Anantnag (The Date of Treasury Challan should be between the date of Start of Bid and Bid Submission End Date) and EMD in the shape of CDR/FDR/BG pledged to Executive Engineer PWD(R&B) Division Anantnag must be uploaded with the documents of the bid. The Original Treasury Challan (Cost of Tender Document), EMD and other relevant bid documents shall be obtained from the lowest bidder before the fixation of the Contract.

11. Bidders are advised not to make any change in BOQ (Bill of Quantities) contents. In no case they should attempt to create similar BOQ manually.

12. Price escalation and taxes: The %age quoted by the bidder entirely in Indian Rupees, shall be deemed to include price escalation and all taxes upto completion of the work. Deduction on account of taxes shall be made from the bills of the contractor on gross amount of the bill as per the rates prevailing at the time of recovery.

13. Bidders are advised to use "My Documents" area in their user on R&B e-Tendering portal to store such documents as are required.

14. All other terms and conditions are as same as laid in PWD Form 25.

(Er Syed Ishfaq Ahmad)
Executive Engineer,
R&B Division Anantnag

DIPK-9428/25
dated: 29-12-2025

- 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
SHIEKH UL ALAM AIRPORT: 01942303311 ✈

RAILWAYS

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

HIGHWAY STATUS

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

HIJRI CALENDAR

09 Rajab
1447

PRAYERS	
FAJR	6: 46
ZUHR	12:17
ASR	3: 46
Magrib	5:27
ISHA	6: 50

This Day In History

- 1786 - Grand Duke of Tuscany Leopold II promulgates a penal reform, making his the 1st state to abolish the death penalty. November 30 commemorated as Cities for Life Day.
- 1803 - Spain cedes her claims to Louisiana Territory to France
- 1864 - Battle of Franklin, Tennessee: Confederate attack fails, 7,700 casualties
- 1864 - Battle of Honey Hill, South Carolina (Broad River) 96 dead, 665 wounded
- 1876 - Archaeologist Heinrich Schliemann finds the gold Mask of Agamemnon at Mycenae (modern Greece) "the Mona Lisa of prehistory"
- 1908 - The US Secretary of State and Japan's ambassador to the US exchange notes in what becomes known as the Root-Takahira Agreement: they affirm support for an independent China with an 'open door' policy and for the status quo in the Pacific
- 1909 - British House of Lords rejects David Lloyd George's 'People's Budget', which tried to shift tax burden to the wealthy. Leads to the Parliament Act; intent to stop unelected house overruling will of the elected house.
- 1916 - Costa Rica becomes a signatory to the Buenos Aires copyright treaty.
- 1922 - 1st speed test of 1st genuine Japanese aircraft carrier Hoshu.
- 1922 - Hitler speaks to 50,000 national-socialists in Munich.
- 1944 - Biggest & last British battleship HMS Vanguard launched.
- 1950 - US President Harry Truman threatens China with atom bomb.
- 1961 - USSR vetoes Kuwaits application for UN membership.
- 1962 - U Thant of Burma becomes the 3rd Secretary-General of the United Nations.
- 1964 - USSR launches Zond 2 towards Mars; no data returned.
- 1967 - People's Democratic Republic of Yemen declares independence from the UK.
- 1967 - The Pakistan Peoples Party is founded by Zulfiqar Ali Bhutto who becomes its first Chairman later as the Head of state and Head of government after the 1971 Civil War.
- 1971 - The government of the Republic of Ireland states that it will take the allegations of brutality against the security forces in Northern Ireland to the European Court of Human Rights.
- 1974 - Most complete early human skeleton (Lucy, Australopithecus) discovered by Donald Johanson, Maurice Taieb, Yves Coppens and Tim White in the Middle Awash of Ethiopia's Afar Depression.
- 1981 - Cold War: In Geneva, representatives from the United States and the Soviet Union begin to negotiate intermediate range nuclear weapon reductions in Europe (the meetings ended inconclusively on December 17).
- 1982 - STS-6 vehicle moves to launch pad.
- 1982 - "Gandhi" directed by Richard Attenborough and starring Ben Kingsley and John Gielgud premieres in New Delhi (Best Picture 1983)
- 1987 - Afghanistan Constitution adopted.
- 1988 - UN General Assembly (151-2) censures US for refusing PLO's Arafat visa.
- 1990 - US President George H. W. Bush offers to send Secretary of State James Baker to Baghdad to meet with Saddam Hussein.
- 1993 - President Clinton signs Brady Gun Control Bill.
- 1999 - In Seattle, Washington, United States, protests against the WTO meeting by anti-globalization protesters catch police unprepared and force the cancellation of opening ceremonies.
- 2006 - Madrid Barajas International Airport is bombed.
- 2016 - A ceasefire organised by Russia, Iran and Turkey between Syria's government and opposition groups takes effect
- 2016 - Last day Indians are able to deposit in banks 500 and 1,000 rupee notes which were scrapped only 50 days earlier in an anti-corruption measure
- 2021 - Rare winter wildfire destroys nearly 1000 homes at the base of the Rocky Mountains, Colorado, in suburban neighborhoods between Boulder and Denver

KASHMIR OBSERVER™

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KO VIEW

Kashmir's Dropout Crisis

More children in Kashmir are leaving school before they finish. This is no longer a concern based on stories or impressions. Government data now makes it clear.

At the primary level, the dropout rate in Jammu and Kashmir stood below four percent in 2022-23. In just one year, it climbed to nearly nine percent. At the upper primary level, the rate rose from about two and a half percent to over four percent.

The biggest rise shows up at the secondary stage. In 2023-24, the dropout rate crossed nine percent, far higher than it was earlier in the decade. This stage matters deeply because it often decides whether a young person can move toward stable work or remain stuck in uncertainty.

These numbers show how many children step away from learning before education can shape their future. They also stand out because they rise even as overall enrolment appears strong on paper.

Last year, Kashmir reported close to 26 lakh students enrolled from pre-primary to class twelve. The system looks large, but it is losing students from within.

School closures explain part of this problem. In recent years, authorities closed or merged more than 4,400 government schools across Jammu and Kashmir due to low enrolment. Most of these schools were located in villages and remote areas.

The data highlights another concern. More than a hundred government schools continue to operate with zero students. Many others function with very few children and too few teachers. In several places, one teacher handles many classes at the same time. Learning slows, interest drops, and attendance declines.

Daily life adds to the strain. In many areas, children walk long distances or depend on costly transport. Winters disrupt travel for weeks. Several schools still lack clean toilets, drinking water, and proper classrooms. Parents weigh these conditions against daily pressures and begin to question whether school is worth the effort.

Money often pushes families toward painful choices. When income falls, education moves lower on the list. Boys enter work early. Girls leave school to manage homes or marry young. These decisions come from pressure.

The cost of rising dropouts will shape Kashmir's future. Children who leave school rarely return. Without education, they face fewer jobs and lower wages. A region already facing unemployment cannot afford this loss.

This moment calls for action. Kashmir needs schools closer to homes, enough teachers in classrooms, and conditions that bring children back each day.

If dropout numbers keep rising, the damage will spread far beyond school walls.

CASH COURSE

Road This Before You Buy Anything

When Money Hurts

Facing financial truth is uncomfortable, but it is the first step toward empowerment.

Irshad Mushtaq

Behind the valley's fascinating facade, many families live with constant worry about medical bills, school fees or the next disruption that could cut income overnight.

Most people work hard, but feel trapped. A small group owns assets, while others believe their salary is their fate. Financial literacy gently challenges that belief. It tells people their story is not finished. With basic knowledge, they can plan, save and make choices that protect them.

Understanding money builds self-respect. When people track their spending, shame fades. They see clearly which expenses help their lives and which drain them. The question shifts from blaming fate to asking, "What can I change today?"

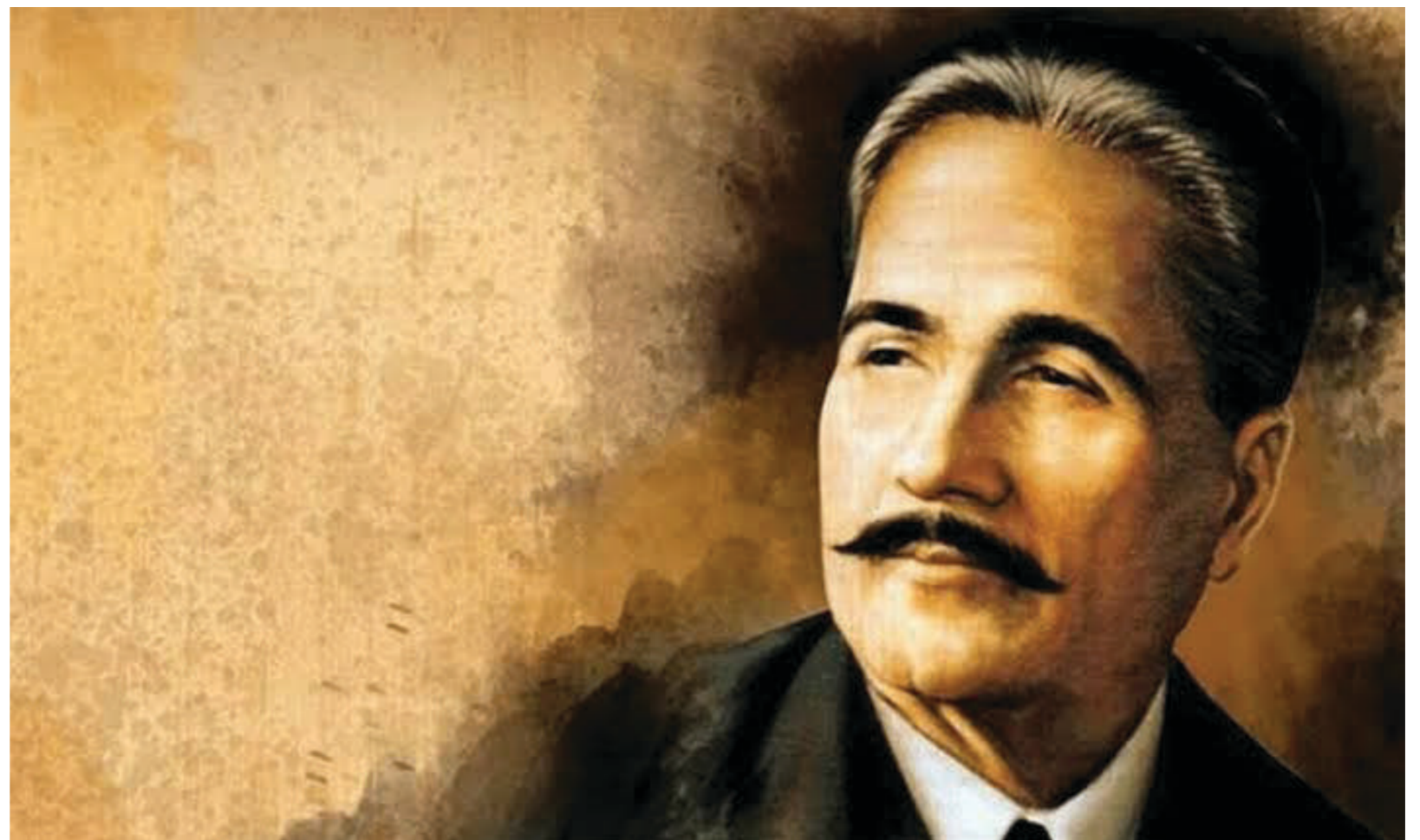
Starting young makes a big difference. A student who saves a little, avoids easy loans and spends with care may not feel richer right away. But over time, fear eases. That habit creates distance from constant anxiety.

Time can be a friend or an enemy. Savings grow slowly but steadily. Debt grows faster and heavier. Knowing this simple truth changes behaviour more than any complex advice.

Many are not careless, they are tired. As incomes rise, spending rises too. Comfort turns into EMIs. The real shift comes with honesty: "I am not poor. I am paying for things I do not truly need."

When families choose clarity over confusion, saving over show, they begin to build something rare: trust in their own future.

The author is a Srinagar-based reputed financial advisor.



Poet & Policy

As NEP 2020 reshapes classrooms, Iqbal's ideas on learning, purpose and character offer lessons Kashmir should not ignore.

Muntashir Kifayat Hussain

Education in Kashmir is changing. New policies bring new terms, structures, and expectations. Teachers sit through training sessions, and schools revise formats.

But amid this constant adjustment, a deeper question remains unanswered: what is education meant to do for a young Kashmiri mind?

In the rush to modernise, our education system has begun to overlook the thinkers who once shaped our moral and intellectual compass. Their ideas are treated as history lessons, rather than living guides.

Allama Iqbal is one of them. The Poet of East is often remembered as a versatile versifier to be quoted instead of a thinker to be engaged with.

But his ideas speak directly to the very questions our classrooms are struggling to answer today.

Most of us grew up hearing his verses from parents and grandparents. His poetry lived in our homes, prayers and public life.

Today, he rarely appears in serious discussions on education.

We are not short on modern ideas. What we lack is the habit of connecting them to our own intellectual tradition.

The National Education Policy 2020 talks about holistic learning, critical thinking, creativity, skill development and moral grounding.

These ideas are presented as new. They are not. Iqbal spoke about them long before policy documents existed.

If teacher training programs in Kashmir created space to discuss thinkers like Iqbal, education would gain depth and direction.

Winter training sessions often focus on methods and paperwork. They should also ask a larger question: what kind of human being should education produce?

Iqbal's answer was clear. Education must build self-awareness and confidence. It must create learners who think independently and act with purpose. In one famous verse, he says: You are a falcon, flight is your task / There are many skies still ahead.

Beyond an image, the falcon represents ambition and self-belief.

Iqbal wanted students who aim high and refuse to settle early. NEP 2020 also speaks of flexibility, choice and lifelong learning.

“

NEP 2020 offers Kashmir a chance to rethink its classrooms. It can remain a technical reform or become a meaningful change. Connecting it with thinkers like Iqbal can give education a sense of purpose.

Both ideas push students to grow instead of staying boxed into narrow paths.

Iqbal warned against comfort that weakens the mind.

In Bal-e-Jibril, he criticizes those who choose safety over effort. He praises the open desert because it strengthens character.

The message is simple: growth demands struggle, learning requires effort, and education cannot be reduced to marks alone.

This thinking fits well with experiential learning, which NEP 2020 promotes. Students learn best when they question, explore and test ideas rather than repeat lines from textbooks.

Iqbal also rejected surface-level learning. He urged learners to look deeper and move beyond ap-

pearances. He wrote: Do not stop at the world of colour and scent / There are other gardens, other nests.

He was warning against rote learning. Education should train the mind to search for meaning. NEP 2020 echoes this by stressing understanding over memorization.

Nature, for Iqbal, was a teacher. He believed beauty and truth appear only to those who truly observe.

The rhymester reminds us that even a single drop holds vast meaning if one learns how to see. This idea supports learning through observation, curiosity and engagement with the real world.

Iqbal also understood the modern age. He openly admired the West's strength in science and knowledge. He did not blame culture or freedom for its power. He credited education and research.

This matches NEP 2020's focus on scientific thinking, innovation and global awareness.

But Iqbal never separated knowledge from values. The bard believed learning must serve society. Education, in his view, should produce people who stand with the poor and care for the suffering. He imagined individuals who shine for the good of others.

NEP 2020 also speaks of responsible citizenship. It wants students who contribute to society. Here again, the link with Iqbal is clear.

The poet placed deep respect on the teacher-student relationship. A learner must honour teachers but protect originality. Blind imitation, especially of borrowed models, leads to empty minds. Education must grow from within the learner's own context.

This warning matters today.

As we adopt new policies, we must adapt them to local realities. Copying ideas without understanding weakens education instead of strengthening it.

NEP 2020 offers Kashmir a chance to rethink its classrooms. It can remain a technical reform or become a meaningful change. Connecting it with thinkers like Iqbal can give education a sense of purpose.

Iqbal is not a poet of the past. He belongs wherever young minds are taught to question, learn, and act with clarity. Modern education does not begin by erasing who we are.

The author teaches at Boys High School Narabal and works as an academic monitor.

Letter to Editor

Kashmir's Beacon Culture Is Out of Control

A beacon was designed to clear the road for an ambulance racing against death or for a fire engine cutting through chaos. It was never meant to announce rank, office, or influence.

But on the roads of Jammu and Kashmir, the flashing light has drifted far from its purpose. It now too often signals authority than emergency. Look closely and you will see it everywhere.

Beacons atop vehicles carrying officials, local officers, elected representatives, and people who draw confidence from proximity to power. These lights blink through traffic as if the road itself were a private passage.

The message to the public is blunt: some lives run on a faster lane.

The law, however, is clear and unsentimental. Under the Central Motor

Vehicles Rules, beacon lights lost their VIP tag in 2017. The category of "high dignitaries" was removed. Rank, title, and office no longer matter.

A beacon is legal only for vehicles engaged in notified emergency or disaster duties. Nothing more, nothing less.

That means no routine movement for Tehsildars, MLAs, judges, or civil servants qualifies. Seniority does not switch on a flashing light. Even emergency vehicles are allowed beacons only when there is a real emergency. A siren and a beacon are tools instead of ornaments.

Courts have said this repeatedly. The Supreme Court has called out beacon misuse as a symptom of a VIP culture that mocks democratic values. Public roads, the judiciary has reminded, belong to everyone. They are not corridors of privilege.

And yet enforcement falters.

When officials break the rule, the rule itself looks lawless. Ordinary citizens see this and learn fast. Some install illegal lights and sirens on private cars. Others bully their way through traffic, copying the language of power. Real emergency vehicles then lose the respect and space they urgently need.

For the citizen forced to pull aside for an unauthorized beacon, the feeling goes beyond inconvenience. It feels like being told, once again, that equality stops at the roadside.

Jammu and Kashmir cannot afford this. Governance here already lives under close public and constitutional watch. Selective obedience only deepens mistrust. Traffic authorities have acted at times, ordering removal of illegal beacons and penalizing offenders regardless of status. But scattered action cannot cure a habit so deeply rooted.

The law has teeth. Fines, prosecution, seizure of vehicles, even charges of impersonation are available. What is missing is not power but resolve. Consistent, visible, and impartial enforcement would speak louder than any flashing light.

This is a question of equality before law. Every unauthorized beacon weakens institutions and fuels public cynicism. Ending this misuse is not anti-official. It is pro-democracy.

A beacon should announce urgency over VIP culture. On the road, only emergency deserves priority. Everything else must wait.

Sincerely,

Aamir Basharat Qureshi
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A Railway Line Marks Kashmir's Apple Heartland

As survey pillars rise across apple orchards in south Kashmir, farmers fear the loss of land, trees, and income. This is what the railway project looks like from the ground.

Dr. Raja Muzaffar Bhat

I stood in an apple orchard in Kunsoo, Shopian, watching yellow-painted masonry pillars rise from the soil.

They looked out of place, sharp and final, as if someone had drawn lines through a living landscape.

Each pillar marked the proposed path of a new railway line.

For the families around me, each pillar also marked a question about tomorrow.

Kunsoo lies about 20 kilometres from Kakapora in Pulwama. A wide road already links the two places. Buses, trucks, and private vehicles move through it every day.

Despite this, the government plans a 27-kilometre railway line between Awantipora and Shopian.

The Railways Ministry approved a Final Location Survey for this line, along with four other railway projects in Kashmir. The announcement came in Parliament in December 2023.

The proposal reads like progress, but the land and people tell a different story.

I visited several villages along the proposed route with members of the Jammu and Kashmir Climate Action Group.

We walked through Babbar, Kee-gam, Check Niltrisal, Check Nazninpura, and Kunsoo. Everywhere, people spoke about the same worries.

Landholdings here remain small. Apple orchards cover most of the farmland. Families depend on two or three kanals of land for income, food, education, and dignity.

Over the years, nearly 80 percent of agricultural land in this belt has shifted to apple farming. This shift helped families survive uncertain times. The orchards now stand fully grown, productive, and deeply tied to local life.

Residents estimate that around



seven lakh trees will fall if the railway line takes shape. Many of these stand directly along the alignment.

Apple trees dominate the landscape, joined by mulberry, walnut, chinar, and willow trees.

Several of these fall under legal protection.

People here see survey markers and pillars, but they hear little about safeguards or clear procedures.

Water flows through this land in narrow irrigation channels called khuls. These channels carry glacier-fed water to orchards across villages.

Farmers fear that raised tracks

and embankments will disturb this system.

A small blockage here affects entire fields downstream.

In Kunsoo, plans include a large railway station. The village stands to lose 40 to 50 kanals of land. This figure feels heavy in a place where most families own only a fraction of that.

I met Nazir Ahmad Dar, an apple grower with two kanals of land. His orchard supports his household and his five daughters. He spoke about compensation and uncertainty.

Land nearby rarely comes up for sale. Money fades fast. Fruit trees keep giving year after year. His wor-

ry reflected a deeper fear shared across villages.

Another farmer, Farooq Ahmad Dar, called the project destructive. He spoke about legal options and collective action. His voice carried anger shaped by years of hard work in orchards that now face erasure.

What troubled people most involved silence.

Senior political leaders and departments responsible for agriculture and horticulture remain absent from the conversation. Only one local DDC member, Raja Waheed, raised concerns through a formal letter to the district administration. He told me local revenue officials appeared unsure about project details.

The law requires consultation. Social impact assessments form a core part of land acquisition rules. Village meetings through Halqa Majlis serve as platforms for consent and discussion. Villagers say these steps never took place.

Umar Wani, a farmer from Babbar, summed it up during our conversation. He asked who decided this plan without speaking to those

whose land and lives stand involved.

Supporters of the railway line talk about development and connectivity. But Kakapora already has a functioning railway station. Roads connect Pulwama and Shopian efficiently. Traffic management and road widening offer clear solutions without disturbing orchards.

Apple orchards here play roles beyond income. They support birds, insects, bees, and butterflies.

During spring, blossoms feed pollinators that sustain wider agriculture. Apple trees store carbon in trunks, branches, and roots for decades. They improve air quality by trapping dust and pollutants from passing vehicles.

These orchards serve as living shields in a region facing climate pressure.

Removing them brings wider consequences.

Carbon storage disappears. Pollinators lose feeding grounds. Soil erosion rises. Mining activity increases to supply material for railway filling. Water systems weaken. Each impact feeds into the next,

altering the balance that sustains this region.

As I looked again at the yellow pillars cutting through orchards, I felt the distance between decision-makers and this land.

Plans drawn on maps fail to capture the value of trees that carry livelihoods, memory, and climate protection.

Progress deserves care and listening. Infrastructure shapes futures. In Pulwama and Shopian, that fu-



THESE ORCHARDS FEED FAMILIES, SUPPORT BIODIVERSITY, AND HOLD THE SOIL TOGETHER. They deserve thoughtful consideration equal to any railway line. The voices rising from these villages ask for dialogue, respect, and reason.

ture grows on apple trees.

Any plan for growth must begin by speaking with the people who live here and protect this land every day.

These orchards feed families, support biodiversity, and hold the soil together. They deserve thoughtful consideration equal to any railway line.

The voices rising from these villages ask for dialogue, respect, and reason.

— Dr. Raja Muzaffar Bhat is an Acumen Fellow and Chairman Jammu & Kashmir RTI Movement. He can be reached at bhatrajamuzaffar@gmail.com.

PROGRESS DESERVES CARE AND LISTENING. INFRASTRUCTURE SHAPES FUTURES. In Pulwama and Shopian, that future grows on apple trees. Any plan for growth must begin by speaking with the people who live here and protect this land every day.

A Mother's Mission to Empower Women

In a South Kashmir village, one woman turned loss into action, building a life of learning, work, and hope for herself and her community.

Gowher Bhat

Zehra Rehman learned early that life does not wait for you to heal.

At 35, she faced a reality most would find unbearable: three young daughters to raise alone, two elderly parents relying on her entirely, and no one to step in.

Life after her divorce felt uncertain, with grief as her constant companion.

"I cried," she says, voice steady, "but crying does not feed children. Crying does not pay school fees."

At the edge of Verinag, South Kashmir, where the mountains rise silently, untouched by human struggle, Zehra reshaped her life with resolve.

The young mother refused to wait for help, neither from God nor from anyone else.

"Some people said, 'Wait, Allah will help,'" she recalls. "I told myself, Allah helps those who move."

She turned first to education, the foundation she had built for herself.

Holding an M.A. in Urdu and a B.Ed., Zehra began teaching from her home. Village girls started attending classes in the afternoons. Some paid what they could, others nothing.

"Education should not stop because of money," she says.

Teaching brought more than

income. It gave her purpose.

"When I taught, I felt useful again," she continues. "I felt alive."

Alongside teaching, Zehra returned to embroidery, a skill her mother had passed down.

"My mother taught me everything," she says. "I learned slowly, carefully, watching her hands."

What had once been a tradition became a lifeline. She started with small orders, which gradually grew into larger commissions.

Her embroidery, precise and unmistakably Kashmiri, began attracting attention from suppliers beyond the village.

Deadlines arrived, income steadied, and opportunities multiplied.

Zehra eventually trained young women in embroidery, teaching them patiently, the same way she had learned from her mother.

Today, several women work from home, earning their own money and gaining independence.

Gulshan Sultan, a neighbour, observes, "Zehra didn't sit and wait for someone to rescue her. She stood up, and taught our girls. Now they don't stretch their hands. They earn."

Her impact extends to education and ambition.

Villagers recall a time when girls stayed indoors after



Illustration by Mehdi Saeedi

school, their energy confined by expectation.

"Earlier, girls stayed inside after school," says Arifa Farooq, a villager. "Now they come carrying notebooks or embroidery frames. Zehra showed them that sitting idle is not fate."

Life at home reflects the

changes Zehra has brought about.

Her parents, slowed by age but clear in voice, watch her carefully. Her mother says softly, "She learned embroidery from me. I never imagined it would one day feed the whole family."

Her father adds, "She became both a son and a daughter for us. Allah gave us strength through her."

Zehra listens, uncomfortable with praise. In the next room, her daughters study. The eldest has finished Class 12 and is preparing for medical entrance exams.

ZEHRA'S VISION STRETCHES BEYOND HER HOUSEHOLD.

She plans a small coaching institute, bringing together local teachers, offering honest education at modest fees, and creating opportunities for students who cannot afford private coaching elsewhere.

"I want my daughters to stand on their own feet," she says. "I don't want them to beg for mercy. If I don't guide them, who will?"

The village observed her closely when she first began living independently. A divorced woman with no male support unsettled many.

"A woman alone makes people uncomfortable," Arifa says. "But success silences many mouths."

Zehra never responded to gossip.

"I did not answer people," she says. "My work answered."

Her vision stretches beyond her household. She plans a small coaching institute, bringing together local teachers, offering

honest education at modest fees, and creating opportunities for students who cannot afford private coaching elsewhere.

"Good education should not be expensive," she says. "We cannot wait for everything to come from outside. We must build here."

Grief remains, usually arriving late at night when the house is still. It no longer dictates her life.

"I pulled myself up," she concludes with a smile. "I patted my own back. I wiped my tears. I told myself, there is a long road ahead."

— The author is a Pulwama-based educator and writer.

JKPSC Submits Annual Report To LG



KO Web Desk

Srinagar: Jammu & Kashmir Public Service Commission (JKPSC) today submitted its 66th Annual Report for the year 2024-25 to the Lieutenant Governor, Manoj Sinha, at Lok Bhavan Jammu.

The delegation of the Members of the Commission – Dr Rajiv Singh, Tariq Ahmad Zargar, Shri Yashpal Kotwal and Asaf Mehmood Sagar, was led by Chairman JKPSC, Arun Kumar Choudhary. The report was submitted in terms of Article 323(2) of the Constitution of India.

The report outlines a year of significant administrative reforms and presents a comprehensive review of the functioning of the Commission.

The Lieutenant Governor commended the Jammu & Kashmir Public Service Commission for upholding the highest standards of integrity and ensuring a fair, merit-based, speedy and transparent selection process.

Arun Kumar Choudhary, Chairman JKPSC briefed the Lieutenant Governor on technological interventions including the upcoming SMS notification initiative designed to provide aspirants with updates at various stages of the selection process.

The report provides details of the selections made, Departmental Promotion Committee meetings held, promotions effected and the recruitment rules of the departments approved, among other important matters.

Security Incidents, Weather Disruptions Hit Vaishno Devi Yatra in 2025

Press Trust Of India

Jammu: The pilgrim footfall at the Mata Vaishno Devi shrine atop Trikuta hills in Reasi district of Jammu and Kashmir fell below the 70-lakh mark in 2025, marking a significant decline as a series of security-related incidents and prolonged weather disruptions affected the annual pilgrimage, officials said.

According to officials, a total of 68.85 lakh pilgrims had paid obeisance at the shrine till December 28 this year, with around 70,000 more expected to visit in the remaining days of 2025, given the heavy influx of pilgrims in view of the New Year.

Compared to last year when annual footfall had crossed the 94.84-lakh mark, the over 27.4 per cent drop underscores the cumulative effect of security concerns and natural disruptions on religious tourism in the region, they said.

The year saw multiple setbacks, with the Pahalgam terror attack in April that left 26 persons dead and prompted heightened security measures across the region.

This was followed by a major counter-terror operation, Operation Sindoor, next month when the Indian armed forces hit terror infrastructure in Pakistan, leading to tensions on the border.

Adding to the challenges, a landslide triggered by incessant rain along the yatra track near Katra on August 26 resulted in the death of 35 pilgrims and

caused damage to a critical stretch, forcing authorities to halt the pilgrimage for three weeks in August-September.

Officials said the prolonged closure during what is traditionally considered a high-footfall period had a direct impact on the overall pilgrim footfall for the year.

"Safety of pilgrims remains the top priority. Decisions to suspend the yatra were taken based on real-time assessments of weather and track conditions," a shrine board official said.

Despite the challenges, he said the Shri Mata Vaishno Devi Shrine Board continued infrastructure upgrades, including track maintenance, disaster preparedness measures and enhanced surveillance.

The yatra was resumed after restoration work and safety audits, with additional deployment of security forces and continuous monitoring of weather advisories, he added.

According to official data, the highest footfall was recorded in April when 9,81,228 pilgrims visited the shrine, while the lowest, 1,85,165 devotees paid obeisance at the shrine in September when the Jammu region witnessed record rainfall and flood-like conditions.

March recorded the second highest pilgrim turnout of 9,40,143 followed by June (9,26,263), July (6,77,652), January (5,69,164), August (5,33,756), November (4,23,553), May (4,13,365), October (3,84,952) and February (3,78,865). As many

as 4,71,396 pilgrims visited the shrine in December till now.

From 13.95 lakh in 1986 when the shrine board took over the affairs of the shrine, there has been a steady increase in pilgrim footfall with each passing year, touching the all time high of 1.04 crore in 2012, after 1.01 crore devotees visited the site in 2011.

The pilgrim arrivals at the shrine touched 31.15 lakh in 1991 and reached 74.17 lakh in 2007.

However, the number dropped to 67.92 lakh in 2008 which was attributed to the two-month long Amarnath land row agitation, but again went up to 82 lakh in 2009 and 87.2 lakh next year (2010).

The pilgrim arrivals dropped from 93.24 lakh in 2013 to 78.03 lakh in 2014 and further to 77.76 lakh in 2015 and 77.23 lakh in 2016.

It increased to 81.78 lakhs in 2017 and 85.87 lakhs in 2018 but again dropped to 79.40 lakhs in 2019 -- the year in which the Centre revoked the special status to Jammu and Kashmir under Article 370 of the Constitution, and bifurcated the erstwhile state into two Union territories.

Only 17 lakh pilgrims, the lowest in over three decades, visited the shrine in 2020 when the shrine, for the first time in its history, remained closed for five months amid the COVID-19 pandemic and reopened for the pilgrims on August 16, 2020, the data showed.

The number of pilgrims increased to 55.77 lakh next year.

Jammu, Dec 29 (PTI) The pilgrim footfall at the Mata Vaishno Devi shrine atop Trikuta hills in Reasi district of Jammu and Kashmir fell below the 70-lakh mark in 2025, marking a significant decline as a series of security-related incidents and prolonged weather disruptions affected the annual pilgrimage, officials said.

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CONTD. FROM FRONT PAGE

Kashmir Braces

December 31 to January 1 period, depending on prevailing weather conditions.

The weather is expected to remain cold and cloudy during the peak snowfall phase. Improvement is likely from the afternoon of January 1, with no major weather activity expected thereafter till January 12, the IMD said.

Temperature data showed below-normal night temperatures at several places in the Valley. Srinagar recorded a minimum of minus 2.6 degrees Celsius, while Pahalgam and Gulmarg registered minus 5.2 degrees Celsius and minus 5.9 degrees Celsius respectively. Day temperatures, however, remained above normal at most places.

Meanwhile, an independent weather forecaster, Faizan Arif of Kashmir Weather, said a fresh western disturbance is likely to affect Jammu and Kashmir from December 30, with snowfall activity expected to peak between the afternoon of December 30 and the morning of December 31. He added that mostly cloudy conditions with light to moderate rain or snow are likely on December 31 and January 1, followed by a return to dry weather from January 2 to January 5.

Authorities have advised commuters, tourists and transport operators to stay updated with official weather advisories and plan travel carefully, particularly along high-altitude passes connecting Kashmir with Ladakh. The administration has asked concerned departments to remain alert and ensure preparedness for any weather-related disruptions.

Tourism In Kashmir

"Our bookings for November and December have improved, and though not in large numbers yet, the industry is moving back to normal."

The Director said the department has drawn up an extensive promotion calendar, including roadshows across major Indian cities and international tourism exhibitions in Germany and Malaysia, aimed at attracting visitors from Europe and East Asia.

"We want to expose the hidden treasures of the Valley to the world. Our focus is on dreaming bigger and achieving higher targets so that the tourism industry here continues to flourish," he said.

Highlighting the contribution of local communities, Sajad said the tourism industry in Kashmir has been "groomed for decades" and that efforts are now being intensified to ensure stakeholders benefit from their long-standing work.

"Our industry has been nurtured for centuries. It's time the people who built this legacy reap the harvest of their efforts," he said.

The Director added that the upgradation of destinations and infrastructure remains a top priority. The department has initiated a plan to renovate government-owned assets that remained unattended for years.

"We are repairing and refurbishing our tourist facilities and changing furniture, upgrading exteriors and improving amenities. Once refurbished, these will be outsourced to youth to create dignified employment avenues," Sajad said. He stressed that 2026 will focus on three key areas: infrastructure development, employment generation and destination grooming.

"We are committed to making our service sector more efficient and raising satisfaction levels among tourists. I anticipate that the coming year will be a very good one for Kashmir's tourism industry," he said. (KNO)

Hangul Population

provided to these destinations to promote eco tourism.

The meeting also discussed damage to agricultural crops caused by wild boar, blue bull and monkeys. The Board explored the

possibility of compensating farmers for losses caused by wild animals.

The meeting was attended by Minister for Jal Shakti, Forest, Ecology and Environment and Tribal Affairs Javed Ahmed Rana, MLAs Devinder Kumar Manyal and Mian Mehar Ali, Chief Secretary Atal Dulloo, Principal Secretary to the Lieutenant Governor Mandeep K. Bhandari, senior forest and wildlife officials, security representatives, eminent conservationists, ecologists, environmentalists, representatives of the Army, NGOs dealing with wildlife and other board members.

On the occasion, documentaries showcasing restoration works at Hokersar and Gharana Wetland Conservation Reserves and the operationalisation of the Hangul Breeding Centre were screened. The department also released several publications, including the Wildlife Calendar 2026, a coffee table book titled A Journey Through Protected Wilderness, The Bounty of Pir Panjal: A Journey Through Its Flora and Fauna, and a report on the first time discovery of a hedgehog in the Union Territory.

PDD Likely To

"Earlier, there was a restriction of only two hours. However, there is an extra one hour curtailment in the pipeline."

Sources further informed that there will be no power curtailment to those areas wherein feeders are having less than 20 percent AT&C losses.

About the power distribution, sources said that the DISCOM on an average was delivering 1700 Megawatts of Power. "During the peak hours, we are meeting a demand of 1900-1950 MWs of power in the Kashmir region."

Pertinently, Chief Minister Omar Abdullah last week had said that nearly 48 percent households in Srinagar enjoy uninterrupted electricity supply following a successful Revamped Distribution Sector Scheme (RDSS) trial with zero power cuts.

The Chief Minister, in a post on X had congratulated KPDCI on making another 83 areas in Srinagar 24-hour power zones following a successful RDSS trial with zero power cuts.

"With this, 108 areas in Srinagar now enjoy round-the-clock, uninterrupted electricity supply, benefiting 1.25 lakh households, nearly 48% of the city. Similar upgrades are underway in other districts to ensure 24x7 power supply," he said. (KNO)

HC Modifies Uri

after a trial spanning over thirty years, she was convicted under Section 304-II RPC and sentenced to rigorous imprisonment for five years with a fine of Rs 2,000, and also under Section 324 RPC to one year's imprisonment with a default stipulation of six months, vide judgment dated 16.07.2009," the Bench said, adding, "Thereafter, more than sixteen years have elapsed in finally hearing and deciding the present appeal."

Though upholding her conviction under Section 304-II of the Ranbir Penal Code, the Court reduced the substantive sentence of five years' rigorous imprisonment to the period already undergone by her, while enhancing the fine to Rs 5,000, with a default sentence of three months' simple imprisonment.

The Court took note that the offence was not "premeditated" and arose in the heat of the moment during a domestic quarrel.

It also considered that the appellant, a woman from a modest background residing in a remote area of Uri, was now suffering from age-related infirmities, including impaired eyesight.

"Considering that the offence was committed in a heat of passion without premeditation, that the appellant (woman) has suffered incarceration and the ordeal of prolonged proceedings for over 46 years, and that she is now about seventy years old with age-related infirmities, this Court is of the considered view that no useful purpose would be served by maintaining the substantive sentence," the court said, adding, "As no minimum sentence is prescribed under Section 304-II RPC, the ends of justice would be served by treating the sentence as already undergone and payment of a fine of Rs 5,000/-, in default thereof, to undergo simple imprisonment for three months."

The woman was initially arrested on July 21, 1979, and released on bail on October 25, 1979. Following her conviction on July 16, 2009, she was again taken into custody but was subsequently enlarged on bail by the High Court on July 28, 2009.

LG Interacts

and Aman Tiwari, Tamil Nadu Cadre; Venkatesh Banna, Andhra Pradesh Cadre, was led by Umesh Kumar Meena (Rajasthan Cadre), with Vidhi (AGMUT Cadre) as the Associate Group Leader. Dr Rakesh Minhas, Deputy Commissioner Jammu was also present during the interaction.

The programme includes visits to the Shri Mata Vaishno Devi Shrine, Salal Hydroelectric Power Project, Bari Brahmana SIDCO Industrial Area, India -Pakistan border and a city tour of Jammu.

The visit is intended to provide the Officer Trainees with first-hand exposure to the administrative, developmental, and cultural landscape of the region, thereby contributing to their professional training and sensitisation to governance in diverse administrative environments.

New Year Celebrations

balloon bearing markings of Pakistan International Airlines in English and Urdu was seized from an agricultural field in the border village of Gurah Manhasa in the Pragwal area. Officials said the balloon was likely blown across the border by wind.

The recoveries, officials said, underline the heightened alert along the Line of Control and International Border, with stepped-up deployments and anti-sabotage checks in both urban centres and hinterland areas.

Authorities have appealed to the public to remain vigilant and immediately report any suspicious objects or activities to the nearest police station to enable swift action.

Iran Cracked The

planning, sustained demand and institutional support. Saffron in Iran is treated as a strategic crop, not just a traditional one."

Iran cultivates saffron on over 120,000 hectares, compared to roughly 3,000 hectares in Kashmir. According to the Iranian experts, this difference in scale has influenced every aspect of the value chain—from cultivation and harvesting to research, marketing and exports. But scale alone, they stressed, does not explain Kashmir's decline.

Climate change emerged as a shared and serious concern. "Climate change has affected saffron-growing regions globally, including Iran," Fattahifor noted. "But the impact is clearly visible in Kashmir as well, particularly in and around Srinagar, which is the core saffron-producing area here." Reduced snowfall, erratic rainfall and rising temperatures have disrupted flowering cycles and reduced yields, making traditional practices increasingly unsustainable.

Yet, Ramin Esmi argued that technical shortcomings have compounded these climatic pressures. "One major difference we observed is in harvesting practices," he said. "In Iran,

harvesting is uniform, well-timed and organised. Here, harvesting is often irregular and staggered. This directly reduces yield per hectare and affects the production of healthy saffron corms."

Esmi explained that improper harvesting not only lowers immediate output but also undermines future productivity. "When corms are not managed scientifically, farmers lose potential income year after year. This is a technical issue, and technical problems require technical solutions."

Soil management was another area where Iranian experts found Kashmir lagging. Many saffron fields in Pamore, they observed, suffer from shallow tillage, rocky soil and poor nutrient balance. "Land correction is fundamental," Esmi said. "Removing large stones, allowing deep ploughing and improving soil nutrition can significantly increase productivity over time. Without healthy soil, even the best saffron variety cannot perform."

Quality—a sensitive subject for Kashmiri farmers proud of their saffron's aroma and colour—was addressed carefully but firmly. While acknowledging Kashmir's potential, Fattahifor cautioned against unscientific comparisons. "Quality is not decided by perception or reputation," she said. "It is defined by international standards that apply equally to all saffron-producing countries."

According to her, saffron from both Iran and Kashmir is produced in multiple grades. "You can find premium, medium and lower-grade saffron in Iran, just as you can here. Scientific analysis—based on measurable compounds like crocin and safranal—determines quality. It is not correct to claim that saffron from one region is universally superior to another."

The issue of adulteration and counterfeit saffron also featured prominently, particularly given India's large consumer base. "Saffron is a high-value product, and wherever there is value, there is risk of fraud," Esmi said. "This is not just an Indian or Iranian problem—it is global."

Both Esmi and Fattahifor emphasised traceability as the most effective solution. From farm-level identification to market-level certification, every step must be documented and verifiable. The delegation praised the India International Kashmir Saffron Trading Centre, describing it as a "positive and necessary intervention."

"At the trading centre, we saw properly labelled and tested saffron, ready even for export," Fattahifor said. "This kind of system builds trust—with consumers, traders and international buyers." She added that honest traders and ethical marketing practices are just as important as laboratory testing in safeguarding saffron's reputation.

The visit was anchored around a structured programme titled "Saffron Cultivation, Production, Best Practices and Capacity Building in Traceability and Authenticity Analysis." Facilitated by SKUAST-K and ICRIASAT, the initiative aims to establish long-term joint research projects, academic exchanges and policy-level cooperation between India and Iran.

Key focus areas include Geographical Indication (GI) tagging, e-auction platforms, and advanced authenticity analysis to enhance Kashmir saffron's value in global markets. Climate resilience also formed a major pillar of discussions, with experts exploring crop modelling and scientific interventions to adapt saffron cultivation to changing environmental conditions.

Technology, particularly mechanisation and artificial intelligence, was repeatedly highlighted as a game changer. In Iran's major saffron regions of Razavi Khorasan and South Khorasan, farms of all sizes use modern tools to optimise irrigation, planting density and harvesting schedules. "Technology allows us to make precise decisions," Esmi said. "From

water use to harvest timing, data-driven farming has transformed saffron cultivation in Iran."

During their stay, the Iranian delegation toured SKUAST-K's advanced facilities, including the Centre for Artificial Intelligence and Machine Learning, the Saffron Research Station in Pamore, and the Kashmir Saffron Trading Centre. They expressed optimism about Kashmir's institutional infrastructure but stressed that its impact depends on effective field-level implementation.

"The Saffron Research Centre here is a major strength," Fattahifor said. "But research must not remain confined to papers and presentations. Researchers should work directly with farmers as a technical arm, guiding them season by season."

Summing up the visit, Esmi offered a stark but hopeful assessment. "Iran cracked the saffron code by investing in science, organisation and integrity across the value chain. Kashmir has the heritage and potential, but it needs systems to match that legacy."

As Pamore's saffron fields await revival, the Iranian experts' message was clear: tradition alone will not save Kashmir's saffron. Only a decisive shift towards scientific farming, technological adoption and transparent markets can help the region reclaim its place on the global saffron map.

CBK Records

the agency had disposed of 223 cases, the highest annual disposal since its inception. Of these, 167 cases were charge-sheeted, 30 marked not applicable, 25 transferred and one cancelled or quashed. As of December 20, 885 cases remained under investigation.

The performance marks an improvement over 2024, when 191 cases were disposed of out of a total workload of 1,123 cases, indicating a faster pace of investigations this year.

Departmental Vigilance

The departmental vigilance wing handled 143 cases in 2025, including 32 carried forward and 111 newly registered. Of these, 113 cases were disposed of or reverted, while 30 remain pending. Officials said vigilance efforts were intensified to reinforce internal accountability.

JK Samadham Platform

Under the JK Samadham grievance redressal initiative, the Crime Branch handled 114 cases during the year, including 106 fresh cases and eight from the previous year. A total of 103 cases were disposed of, leaving 11 pending.

Headquarters Scrutiny

The scrutiny section examined 268 cases, including one carried forward and 267 new cases. Of these, 263 were disposed of. This included 136 cases charge-sheeted, 22 marked not applicable, 19 transferred, one cancelled and 85 reverted. Only five cases remain under scrutiny.

Public Complaints

Data shows that 3,120 public complaints were handled during 2025, including 312 from the previous year. Of these, 3,070 complaints were disposed of, while 50 remain pending, with 15 from Jammu division and 35 from Kashmir division. Officials said an upgraded monitoring mechanism helped speed up complaint resolution.

Verification Cases

The verification wing processed 2,821 cases during the year, disposing of 1,009, while 1,812 remain under process. These include financial verifications, background checks and internal reviews that often precede formal registration of cases.

Officials attributed the record performance to focused monitoring, systematic clearance of long-pending cases and timely filing of charge sheets. They said the drive to reduce backlog and enhance transparency will continue in 2026, with particular emphasis on clearing verification pendency and strengthening internal vigilance mechanisms. (KNO)

'WINTER TOURISM'

Gulmarg's New Year Buzz Spurs Youth-Centric Skiing Programme

Observer News Service

SRINAGAR: With Gulmarg recording nearly 100 per cent occupancy for the New Year week celebrations, officials from the Jammu and Kashmir Tourism Department on Monday announced a 14-day integrated skiing programme for young enthusiasts.

They said the programme will cover key destinations including Pahalgam, Sonamarg, Doodhpathri and Gulmarg, providing training on varied slopes and winter sports facilities.

Speaking to KNO, Director Tourism Kashmir, Syed Qamar Sajad, said winter tourism has seen a remarkable revival this season. "Gulmarg continues to be the winter games capital of the country. Occupancy is almost 100 per cent, just like previous years," he said.

Sajad said the destination's growing popularity stems from upgraded facilities, including Asia's largest drag lift, installed by the J&K Cable Car Corporation, enhancing the skiing ex-



perience for professionals and beginners alike.

"The new drag lift has become a special attraction for children and young learners. Those with intermediate or professional skills can practice at Kondori and Afarwat slopes, which offer

some of the best terrains in India," he added.

The department, as part of its winter initiatives, is organising an integrated skiing training course with the Winter Games Association of J&K. It will be conducted across Pahalgam,

Sonamarg, Doodhpathri and Gulmarg.

"This 14-day programme will train children at a nominal fee of rupees 5,000, covering boarding and lodging. Each trainee will experience different slopes, baby slopes in Sonamarg and Pa-

halgam and professional ones in Gulmarg and Afarwat, and help them understand varied topographies," he said.

The initiative, the Director said, aims to expand youth engagement in winter sports while building a skilled pool for future competitions. "We foresee a day when many youth from Kashmir will participate in national and international skiing competitions. This training is our foundation for that," he said.

Sajad further mentioned that alongside adventure sports, the department is upgrading its physical assets across the Valley and outsourcing refurbished sites to youth for generating employment opportunities.

"Our focus this year remains threefold, with infrastructure, employment and destination grooming. With these efforts, we are confident of a stronger, more sustainable tourism season ahead," the Director said, adding that the government's preparations for the upcoming year are "in full swing".

Abid Bhat/KNO

Child Labour Persists at Tourist Hotspots

Observer News Service

SRINAGAR: Despite clear legal prohibitions and repeated government assurances, incidents of child labour continue to surface at several popular, especially tourist destinations across Kashmir. This has triggered serious concern among educators and social activists who are demanding stronger enforcement and sustained awareness drives.

From pony rides to assisting tourists at scenic locations, minors, many of them below the age of 14, are increasingly being seen working at tourist hubs and even factories, where mostly non-local children can be seen working.

Activists warn that this trend not only violates child labour laws but also poses a grave threat to the educational future and overall well-being of these children.

A teacher from the Pahalgam area of Anantnag district expressed deep concern over the growing involvement of school-going children in tourism-related activities.

"When children see their peers earning money by taking tourists on horse rides or assisting them at tourist spots, they too get tempted to follow the same path, which directly affects school attendance," the teacher said, speaking to KNO.

"When other students see a child roaming with horses and ferrying tourists instead of attending classes, it creates a wrong precedent. Slowly, it leads to absenteeism and eventually dropouts. The government must take this issue very seriously," he added.

The teacher squarely blamed parents for allowing their underage children to engage in such activities during school hours. "Children below 14 years should be in classrooms, not at tourist spots. Parents permitting this are unknowingly harming not only their own children but also influencing others negatively, which impacts the overall attendance and academic environment in schools," he added.

The issue recently gained wider attention after a video went viral on social media, purportedly showing a minor taking tourists to the famous Betaab Valley. In the video, the child is seen calling his 'boss'—believed to be his father—at the end of the trip to ask how much money he should collect from the tourists, to which the response comes as Rs 1,500. The video sparked outrage among netizens and renewed debate on the persistence of child labour in Kashmir's tourism sector.

The teacher stressed that awareness campaigns at tourist destinations are crucial. "First, people must be

made aware that employing or engaging children in such work is illegal and harmful. If awareness fails, then strict action must follow against those who violate the law," he said.

Echoing similar concerns, Waqar Fayaz, Chairman of Noorkash Foundation J&K, a well-known NGO working on social issues in the Valley, said that while the government has taken steps to curb child labour through various departments and agencies, the efforts need to be intensified.

"The government is working to stop child labour, but strict vigilance is the need of the hour, especially at tourist spots, hotels, restaurants and factories where such practices often go unnoticed," Fayaz said. He added that tourism-related child labour is particularly worrying because it becomes more visible during peak seasons, yet enforcement often remains lax.

Meanwhile, an official from the Labour Department, Jammu and Kashmir, told KNO that the department is aware of such incidents and is actively monitoring the situation. "These issues are being tracked, and we will further intensify vigilance to ensure that child labour is completely eradicated from society," the official said, adding that action would be taken wherever violations are found.

MHA Approves Forensic Institute In J&K

Observer News Service

SAMBA: The Union Ministry of Home Affairs has approved a proposal of the All India Institute of Medical Sciences (AIIMS), Jammu, for a state-of-the-art Forensic Institute.

The proposal had been sent to establish an institute to consolidate evidence collection, increase conviction rates and help in better investigation and diagnosis in the health sector, officials said.

"A forensic institute is coming up in J&K. AIIMS has submitted a proposal (for setting up the institute in J&K) to the Ministry of Home Affairs. They have approved it," Executive Director & CEO, AIIMS Jammu, Prof Shakti Kumar Gupta told PTI.

Gupta said the CBI has also been involved in it. "There are only a few foren-



sic institutes in the country. This institute will come up in the Samba district of Jammu and Kashmir," he said.

He added that in the future, AIIMS will work with the institute, helping in early investigation and diagnosis for medical health.

Jammu and Kashmir, which has been battling terrorism for the past 35 years, has two forensic science laboratories at Jammu and Srinagar, with its headquarters at Jammu. It was created in the year 1964 under

the Home Department.

The geographical location of Jammu and Kashmir, with its proximity to the International Border and three state borders, makes it sensitive to terror, narco-terror and gun-related crimes, officials said.

"The possibility of involvement of criminals from different states and different nations is always anticipated. This poses a major challenge to the police and defence forces, and the same has been

well known," Professor and Head, Forensic Medicine and Toxicology, AIIMS, Dr Dinesh Rao said.

He said it is essential that the Union Territory is prepared to address this by establishing a state-of-the-art forensic institute wherein all the services discussed above are made available under one roof.

"This will be a one-point facility for the investigation agencies. This will help secure the evidence, examine the evidence, and at the same time, analyse it through different scientific laboratories available under one roof," he said.

Dr Rao said that with the support of the government, AIIMS can establish a state-of-the-art forensic institute in the region to cater to the needs of the police and defence forces in their efforts to fight the menace in the region.

Ahead of New Year, Thousands Throng Mata Vaishno Devi Shrine



Observer News Service

JAMMU: Ahead of the New Year, thousands of pilgrims thronged the holy shrine of Mata Vaishno Devi atop the Trikuta hills in Jammu's Reasi district.

According to KNO, groups of families and friends, wrapped in warm clothing to brace against chilly winds, trekked from the base camp in Katra despite mixed weather conditions featuring intermittent sunshine, clouds, and icy breezes. The devotees' enthusiasm remained undeterred by the cold.

Reports indicated that daily arrivals at Katra surged to between 20,000 and 26,000 pilgrims, underscoring the traditional New Year rush. Authorities expected further increase, with an additional 70,000 visitors projected by the end of 2025.

To manage the influx, Indian Railways operated special reserved trains (Nos. 04081/04082) between New Delhi and Shri Mata Vaishno Devi Katra from December 27, 2025, to January 1, 2026, providing

comfortable and safe travel options for devotees.

The Shri Mata Vaishno Devi Shrine Board, in coordination with police and administration, deployed comprehensive security arrangements to ensure pilgrim safety.

These included a multi-tier security grid, over 550 CCTV cameras for round-the-clock surveillance along the yatra track and key areas, RFID-based crowd management and access control, document verification, and a joint control room manned by shrine board officials, Jammu and Kashmir Police, and central armed paramilitary forces for immediate response to alerts.

Helicopter services from Katra to the helipad near the shrine continued operations despite fluctuating weather, while battery-operated cars facilitated movement on key routes.

Officials stressed that pilgrim safety was the top priority, urging devotees to utilise all available facilities for a smooth and fulfilling yatra as preparations for New Year celebrations intensified.

Prolonged Recruitment Lapse Leaves Dental Surgeons Without Jobs

More than 7,000 trained dental surgeons in Jammu and Kashmir continue to remain unemployed as no regular recruitment has been carried out in the government sector for the past 17 years, raising serious concerns over career stagnation and underutilisation of skilled medical professionals.

According to details highlighted by dental professionals, despite the growing population and increasing oral health needs across the region, recruitment of dental surgeons has remained virtually frozen, leaving thousands of qualified graduates without government employment opportunities. Aspirants said the prolonged delay has pushed many young professionals into uncertainty, forcing some to migrate outside the region or abandon the profession altogether.

The issue has also been mentioned in political discourse. The National Conference, in its manifesto for the 2024 elections, had promised time-bound recruitment of dental surgeons, acknowledging that the matter has remained pending for over a decade. The commitment raised hopes among unemployed dental graduates, who say tangible action is now urgently required.

Dental surgeons said the absence of regular recruitment has adversely impacted public healthcare delivery, particularly in rural and peripheral areas where dental services remain limited or non-existent. They said timely appointments would not only address unemployment but also strengthen oral healthcare infrastructure in government hospitals and primary health centres.

According to KNT, the unemployed professionals have urged the government to initiate immediate recruitment drives, frame a clear policy for absorption of dental surgeons and fulfil assurances made regarding time-bound appointments. They said continued delay would further aggravate unemployment and deprive the public of essential dental healthcare services. (Observer News Service)

Recruitment Delays Leave JKPC Lecturer Aspirants Uneasy

Aspirants for the 10+2 Lecturer posts under the Jammu and Kashmir School Education Department have urged the authorities to expedite the interview process, citing prolonged delays that have left hundreds of candidates in uncertainty and adversely impacted the education sector.

The aspirants said that the Jammu and Kashmir Public Service Commission had conducted the written examination for 590 lecturer posts across 28 subjects and subsequently released the result lists. However, they alleged that the recruitment process has remained stalled thereafter, causing distress among candidates who have been awaiting final selection for years despite meeting all eligibility criteria.

According to the aspirants, the continued delay has resulted in significant mental stress and disrupted long term career planning. They further stated that the shortage of lecturers at the higher secondary level is directly affecting academic standards in government schools, particularly in science, arts and commerce streams, where subject specific faculty is crucial.

The aspirants expressed hope that the entire recruitment exercise would be completed before the reopening of schools after winter vacations, stressing that timely appointments are essential to ensure uninterrupted teaching and academic stability for students.

They also appealed to the Lieutenant Governor's administration to address operational constraints within JKPC by appointing additional members. Aspirants pointed out that three posts of members in the commission are presently vacant, which has limited the commission's capacity to conduct interviews. They said that filling these vacancies would allow the formation of multiple interview panels and significantly speed up the selection process. (Observer News Service)

KU Bags Rs 8.5 Cr Research Grants under ANRF Scheme

The University of Kashmir (KU) has achieved a major milestone in strengthening its research and innovation ecosystem by securing research grants worth ₹8.5 crore under the Advanced Research Grant (ARG) Scheme of the Anusandhan National Research Foundation (ANRF), Department of Science and Technology, Government of India.

The grants have been awarded in the broad domains of Biological, Medical, and Earth Sciences, and are expected to significantly enhance cutting-edge research at the University in critical areas such as climate change and permafrost studies, cancer biology, ecosystem restoration, development of cold-resistant high-yield maize, microbiology, and genomics.

In response to the recent national call for proposals under the ARG scheme, research proposals submitted by Prof. Ghulam Jeelani, Prof. Anzar Khuroo, Prof. Nazir Ahmad Dar, Prof. Rabia Hamid, Prof. Fouzia Rashid, Dr. Irfan Rashid, Dr. Rifat, and Dr. Gulzar Ahmad were selected for funding after a rigorous evaluation process. The cumulative sanctioned amount of these prestigious projects stands at 8.5 crore. (Observer News Service)

GOVERNMENT OF JAMMU AND KASHMIR

OFFICE OF THE BLOCK MEDICAL OFFICER NAGAM

SHORT TERM RETENDERING NOTICE FOR CAR PARKING IN SUB DISTRICT HOSPITAL NAGAM FOR THE YEAR 2025-26

For and on behalf of the Government of Union Territory of Jammu and Kashmir, sealed tenders are once again invited from registered firms for Car Parking Services at SDH Nagam, District Budgam for the year 2025-26, due to poor response in the earlier notification. The tender document along with terms and conditions can be obtained from the office of undersigned against non-refundable cash payment of Rs 200 w.e.f 30.12.2025 to 05.01.2026 written application on letter head. The tender must be submitted properly sealed in double water proof envelope duly super scribed as "Tender for Car parking at SDH Nagam" addressed to Block Medical Officer Sub District Hospital Nagam and should reach to the office of undersigned by or before 05.01.2026. The tender will be opened on the next day by the tender opening committee in the office chamber of undersigned. The intending tenderer shall have to deposit an amount of Rs 5000/- in the shape of CDR from the JK bank Ltd. Pledged to the undersigned having validity not less than 12 months.

The Bid shall start for car parking with an amount of Rs. 75000/=

NO: BMO/N/1676-1680
DATED: 29/12/2025

DIPK-9450-25
DT: 29/12/2025

Block Medical Office
Nagam

Government of Jammu & Kashmir

OFFICE OF THE EXECUTIVE ENGINEER

MACHINERY DIVISION KASHMIR MECHANICAL & HOSPITAL ENGINEERING DEPARTMENT, KASHMIR

| Fax No: 0194-2497093 | email: xenmds-jk@jk.gov.in |

Corrigendum 01 For Date Extension.

Name of work: - Providing & fixing of Blankets and other items for Snow Clearance Control Room Budgam of Machinery Sub Division 1st Srinagar.

Reference: This office e-NIT No: - MDSK/TS/2025-26/74 Date:18.12.2025 (Tender ID: 2025_PWDJK_298503_1)

Due to poor response, the critical dates of the above referred e-NIT are hereby extended as under: -

S.No.	Description	Previous dates	New Dates
01.	Last date of downloading/ submission of bids	26.12-2025 (18:55 hrs)	02-01-2026 upto 06:55PM
02.	Date of opening of bids online	27.12-2025 (14:00 hrs)	03-01-2026 at 02:00 PM

All other terms, conditions and specifications as stipulated in the e-NIT shall remain unchanged.

No: MDSK/TS-4958-61

Date: 27.12-2025.

DIPK-9457-25

DT: 29/12/2025

Sd/
Executive Engineer
Machinery Division,
Kashmir.

Year 2025 in Review

Women's WC Glory Saves Indian Cricket as Men Stumble in Tests

G Unnikrishnan

BENGALURU: The women came of age with a long-awaited World Cup trophy but Indian men's cricket was in turmoil as its white-ball peaks ended up dwarfed by the abysmal low of a home Test series whitewash, making 2025 a year of 'glorious uncertainties' for the country's favourite sport.

The men's side triumphed in the Champions Trophy (ODI) and the Asia Cup (T20), while the women brought home a maiden 50-over World Cup.

But a 0-2 hammering at the hands of South Africa in Tests laid bare India's shortcomings in the red-ball format under feisty head coach Gautam Gambhir, who was his usual combative self in both triumph and debacle.

Why is it important to dwell on a lone glitch when the rest of the year largely produced glitter?

A glance back to the 2024-25 Border-Gavaskar Trophy is essential to find an answer.

The 1-3 series defeat saw the Test careers of Virat Kohli and Rohit Sharma coming to an end, and India had already lost R Ashwin to retirement midway through the tour Down Under late last year.

Rohit and Kohli's ODI future remained a talking point through the year even though the two made it clear that they are here to stay by showing up in domestic matches as mandated by the BCCI.

Another Test stalwart Cheteshwar Pujara too formally retired from international cricket, leaving a gaping hole in the middle order that is now struggling to find a sheet anchor.

India scaffolded their journey in the new World Test Championship (WTC) cycle (2025-27) on new captain Shubman Gill and a clutch of rising stars and the results so far have been mixed at best.



The beginning was bright.

A rather young India side drew the five-match away series against England 2-2 with Gill leading from front. He made 75.40 runs at an average of 75.40 with four hundreds, the second highest run-tally for a captain after Don Bradman's 810 in the 1936-37 Ashes.

Riding on the initial wave, India expectedly towelled the West Indies (2-0) at home and it seemed they had embraced a new era without much fuss.

But then fortunes can swing wildly in the longest format.

SA debacle

A wily South African off-spinner, Simon Harmer, mercilessly cut the chord of India's chandelier of optimism. Better prepared, and more settled Temba Bavuma's Proteas ended a 25-year wait to pull off a Test series against India.

And it did not feel like an isolated act either. Last year, the Indians had caved in similarly against New Zealand spinners at home.

The twin failure exposed an obvious chink in the armour against spin.

It was a painful deviation from the past when some of the greatest spinners in the

history of cricket had to return with bruised egos and stats from these shores.

But, now, even a set of above average spinners could outfox the Indian batters, as even a meagre target like 124 ended up being unachievable for Indians.

India are already down to sixth in the WTC points table and with tough tours to Sri Lanka and New Zealand lined up in 2026, a final spot in the cycle now appears a vastly distant stop.

If India do not do a big-picture thinking on players and combinations now, the next 12 months too could be heart-breaking in the traditional format.

Kings of white ball formats

But the other side of the revolving door that opens to the glitzy world of white ball cricket remained quite glossy.

India went through the ICC Champions Trophy in Dubai and then later in the Asia Cup at the same venue undefeated, underlining their dominance in ODIs and T20Is at least in this part of the world.

Those triumphs also gave Gambhir some bargaining space after a poor run in Test cricket.

If the performances of 2025 can be taken as a yardstick

then fans will have a lot to look forward to in 2026 as well, as men's and women's teams are bracing for T20 World Cups.

Winds of change

In one way, the year belonged to women cricketers. The Under-19 side defended its T20 crown in February to set the tone for the rest of the year.

Despite the obvious talent, the women's senior side has always struggled against Australia, New Zealand and England in global tournaments.

But in this edition of the 50-over World Cup, the Harmanpreet Kaur-led India took down Aussies and Kiwis and eventually overcame South Africa in the final to land their maiden ICC title.

The landmark victory has already brought in a fee hike in domestic matches by BCCI and fresh endorsements to players -- clear portents to an even brighter future for women's cricket that once struggled for money and attention.

Off the field too, it was a year of change.

Former Delhi cricketer Mihun Manhas replaced Roger Binny as the BCCI president along with some new names.

Several other state asso-

ciations too witnessed regime change as a few former cricketers like Sourav Ganguly and Venkatesh Prasad returned to administrative roles.

No handshakes with Pak

The turbulent diplomatic ties with Pakistan simply nosedived after the Pahalgam terror attack and a brief military operation after that. The resonance of the upheaval was felt on the cricket field too.

Indian cricketers, on the directions of the BCCI, refused to shake hands with their cross-border opponents during the Asia Cup. They also did not accept the winners' trophy as it was to be presented by a Pakistani, Mohsin Naqvi.

As a result, Naqvi, who heads the Asian Cricket Council, and the Pakistan Cricket Board besides being the internal affairs minister of his country, has locked up the silverware at the ACC office in Dubai. He has also made it clear that he would only hand it to the Indians in a media-covered ceremony.

Tears of sorrow

Royal Challengers Bengaluru ended their 18-year wait for an IPL trophy in 2025, but that epic triumph soon became a tragedy as 11 fans were killed and 56 others were injured in a stampede near the M Chinnaswamy Stadium during the franchise's celebrations.

Chinnaswamy has not hosted a game of significance after that.

The RCB team management has been left to take the bulk of the blame for the tragedy after urging fans to come out in hordes despite not having the requisite security clearances to carry out the celebrations.

The whole episode brought to light the need for better crowd management and the lack of facilities for spectators at Indian venues. (PTI)

J&K Fall Short as Vidarbha Cruise Home in Record Chase

Press Trust of India

RAJKOT- Vidarbha aced a 312-run chase against J&K with five wickets to spare with opener Aman Mokhade (139 off 125 balls) and middle-order batter Ravikumar Samarth (114 off 108) striking centuries.

J&K, after their 341 against Assam, made 311 for 9 with top-order batter Yawer Hassan contributing 79. But for seasoned Vidarbha it was hardly a challenge as they reached 315 for 5 with nine deliveries to spare.

Brief Scores:

Uttar Pradesh 369 for 7 in 50 overs (Abhishek Goswami 51, Dhruv Jurel 160 not out, Rinku Singh 63; Raj Limbani 4/74) beat Baroda 315 all out in 50 overs (Shashwat Rawat 60, Krunal Pandya 82; Zeeshan Ansari 3/53, Sameer Rizvi 2/43) by 54 runs.

Hyderabad 310 for 8 in 50 overs (Rahul Singh 79, Abhirath Reddy 54, Nitesh Reddy 53; Abdul Ajiz Kuraishi 3/71) lost to Assam 314 for 6 in 49.3 overs (Saurav Dhingia 91, Sibankar Roy 112, Denish Das 54; Chama Milind 3/68) by 4 wickets.

Jammu and Kashmir 311 for 9 in 50 overs (Qamran Iqbal 54, Yawer Hassan 79; Yash Thakur 3/73, Yash Kadam 2/10) lost to Vidarbha 315 for 5 in 48.3 overs (Aman Mokhade 139, Ravikumar Samarth 114; Yudhvir Singh 3/69) by 5 wickets.

Chandigarh 319 in 48.2 overs (Manan Vohra 112, Sanyam Saini 67; Mohammed Shami 3/69, Mukesh Kumar 5/59, Shahbaz Ahmed 2/51) lost to Bengal 320 for 4 in 47.4 overs (Abhishek Porel 106, Anustup Majumdar 63, Shahbaz Ahmed 76 not out) by six wickets.

UP Secures Win Against Baroda

Young wicketkeeper-batter Dhruv Jurel underlined his 50-over credentials ahead of the selection of the Indian team for the three-match ODI series against New Zealand next month by smacking a brilliant unbeaten century while big-hitter Rinku Singh gave another commanding performance as

Uttar Pradesh secured a facile 54-run win against Baroda in a Vijay Hazare Trophy game to lead Group B, here on Monday.

Jurel struck a blazing 160 not out off 101 deliveries as UP scored a mammoth 369 for 7 and then dismissed the rivals for 315 on the last ball to earn four points and take their tally to 12 after three rounds of the tournament.

Jurel, who came in following the departure of opener and previous game's centurion Aryan Juyal (26), struck 15 boundaries and eight maximums, shared a 131-run partnership for the fourth wicket with Rinku (63 off 67 balls), who was uncharacteristically slow by his standards.

Jurel then joined forces with late-order batter Prashant Veer (35) to stitch a 122-run stand for the sixth wicket as UP zoomed to a massive total in no time after being reduced to 92 for 3 in the 19th over.

Both, the T20 World Cup-bound Rinku and Prashant played the ideal foil for Jurel as he milked Baroda's bowling, especially right-arm pacer Rasikh Dar, who went for 102 runs in his 10 overs as the rivals ran out of ideas to contain the rampaging batters.

Young pacer Raj Limbani (4/74) brought some level of sanity with his four-wicket haul but it was not enough against a side packed with big hitters.

Baroda openers Shashwat Rawat (60) and Shivalik Sharma (30) did start the chase in earnest but losing Jitesh Sharma and Priyanshu Moliya in quick succession impeded their progress, with Sameer Rizvi (2/43) and spinner Sameer Rizvi (3/53) causing a lot of damage.

Still, skipper Krunal Pandya (82 off 77 balls) held out some hope till the time he was at the crease. But his departure in the 43rd over virtually stalled Baroda's victory bid.

Following their third successive win in the seven-round group contest, UP secured the pole position. Jammu & Kashmir, Vidarbha, Baroda and Bengal are on eight points each in that order behind UP.

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