

Terror, Floods & Blasts

2025: From Pahalgam To Floods, J&K Endures A Year of Crisis

Press Trust Of India

Srinagar: Jammu and Kashmir's quest for restoration of statehood suffered twin blows during the year in the form of the Pahalgam terror attack and the Delhi car blast.

The elected government led by Chief Minister Omar Abdullah made all the right noises in the first six months in office for the restoration of statehood, but the deadly strike by terrorists on tourists on Baisaran meadows of Pahalgam on April 22 put a halt to any immediate talk of Jammu and Kashmir's returning as a state.

The terrorists shot dead 26 men -- 25 tourists and a local ponywalla.

Survivors alleged that the assailants chose their targets after confirming that they were not Muslims -- a revelation that sent communal shockwaves to the rest of the country.

The attack was denounced widely across the valley.

For the first time in 35 years, spontaneous protests were held



across the length and breadth of the valley in condemnation.

The protesters unequivocally declared: "Not in my name."

On May 7, the Indian forces launched cross-border strikes to avenge the massacre on the meadow. Its fallout was seen in the subsequent days, when border residents of the Union Territory were hit by shelling from Pakistan.

Poonch, Rajouri, Kupwara and Baramulla, all on the border, bore the most of the brunt of the enemy fire, which took 20 lives, destroyed over 2,000

structures, including three dozen schools.

On July 28, the government said, the perpetrators of the April 22 carnage were eliminated in Operation Mahadev in the Dachigam forest area in Harwan.

While it was still finding its bearings from the carnage, the backlash, and the bombing, Jammu and Kashmir was hit by a natural calamity.

On August 14, a cloudburst in Kishtwar of Jammu killed over 50 people.

Flash floods | More on P6

Weather Fatalities In J&K Hit 15 Year High In 2025 199 deaths recorded; Jammu Division Worst Hit

Observer News Service

Srinagar: Weather-related fatalities in Jammu and Kashmir witnessed a sharp rise in 2025, making it one of the deadliest years in the Union Territory over the last decade, according to official disaster management data.

Data comparing extreme weather events (EWE) and deaths from 2010 to August 2025 shows that while the number of weather events has remained broadly consistent over the years, fatalities surged significantly in 2025, mainly



due to floods, cloudbursts and landslides.

Nearly one out of every four people who lost their lives to

extreme weather events in Jammu and Kashmir over the last 15 years died in 2025 alone. Official data shows that

between 2010 and August 2025, the Union Territory recorded 856 weather-related deaths, of which 199 occurred this year.

This means 2025, though only one year in the 15 years, accounts for almost a quarter of all fatalities caused by floods, cloudbursts, landslides, avalanches and other extreme weather events, underscoring a sharp rise in the severity and impact of such disasters.

Between 2010 and 2024, annual deaths due to extreme weather events ranged between 25 and | More on P6

Violence At 25-Year Low

Observer News Service

Jammu and Kashmir recorded one of its least violent years in more than two decades in 2025, with 46 terrorists killed in 35 violent incidents even as security forces carried out major counter-terror operations, including

cross-border strikes, officials said.

Data showed that overall violence in the Union Territory remained near a 25-year low despite high-impact incidents that shaped the security narrative during the year.

Among the key operations, security forces eliminated the perpetrators of the | More on P6

Jai Hind Remains Symbol Of National Valour: LG

Jammu Symbolises Divided Society Cannot Build Lasting Future



Observer News Service

Jammu: Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha on Tuesday said that the slogan "Jai Hind" continues to be a powerful

symbol of national valour and unity, inspiring generations of Indians to uphold the values of patriotism and collective strength.

The | More on P6

Rain, Snow Likely Across J&K Till Early Jan

Observer News Service

Srinagar: A weak Western Disturbance affected Jammu and Kashmir on Tuesday, bringing light rain and snowfall to parts of north Kashmir, officials said.

The upper reaches, including Gulmarg, Sadhna Top and the Tulail Valley, received light to moderate snowfall, while most other areas remained generally cloudy. An official said that plains across the Valley witnessed intermittent rain.

The India Meteorological Department has forecast generally cloudy weather across the region from December 30 to January 10, with intermittent rain or snowfall expected at several places.

According to the forecast, light to moderate rain or snow is likely over most areas during the night of December 31 and January 1. Higher and extreme upper reaches of north and central Kashmir may receive moderate to heavy snowfall during this period.

From January | More on P6

Unveils J&K Bank Calendar

Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha on Tuesday unveiled J&K Bank's Wall and Table Calendars for the year 2026, at Lok Bhavan. The Wall Calendar for 2026 is themed "Rivers of J&K and Ladakh", while the Table Calendar showcases the region's "Historic Places", reflecting the diversity of human heritage and natural wonders of | More on P6

Custodial Torture Case: Court Grants Bail To 8 Accused

KO Web Desk

Srinagar: The Principal District & Sessions Judge, Kupwara in Jammu and Kashmir on Tuesday granted bail to eight accused in the infamous custodial torture case being investigated by the Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) under orders of the Supreme Court.

The accused, identified as Deputy SP Aijaz Ahmad, Sub-Inspector Riyaz Ahmad Mir, Special Police Officer Jahangeer Ahmad Beigh, Head Constables Mohammad Younis Khan and Tanveer Ahmad Malla, Selection Grade Constables Shakir Hussain Khoja and Altaf Hussain Bhat, and Constable Shah Nawaz Ahmad, are lodged in the central jail after they | More on P6

Road Deaths Drop Nearly 30% in Kashmir

202 Road Deaths Reported; Over Three Lakh Challans: SSP

KO Web Desk

Srinagar: Road accident fatalities in the Kashmir Valley have declined by nearly 30 percent this year, with 202 deaths reported so far compared to 279 fatalities recorded last year, according to official data.

Senior Superintendent of Police, Traffic Rural Kashmir, Ravinder Paul Singh, shared the figures and attributed the decline to intensified enforcement, improved inter departmental coordination, and increased public awareness.

"Our deployment is primarily



focused on traffic management. Any violator found committing a traffic offence is booked strictly under the provisions of law," Singh said.

He said the same mission would continue in the coming year with sustained focus and commitment. Singh noted that public | More on P6

Vande Mataram

Singing Competition 2026

Celebrate 77th Republic Day

Category INDIVIDUAL

12-18 years of age
less than 12 years age

THE COMPETITION IS OPEN FROM 1st TO 20th JANUARY 2026

Cash awards

1 st Prize	2 nd Prize	3 rd Prize
₹ 10000	₹ 7500	₹ 5000

ELIGIBILITY

- The Individual should be a Domicile of J&K.
- A Video file (preferably HD) while singing the Vande Mataram song

Please upload your entries by Scanning this QR

DEPARTMENT OF INFORMATION & PUBLIC RELATIONS, J&K

@informationprjk | Information & PR, J&K | @diprjk | @dipr_jk

DIPK NO 9487/25 DATED: 30/12/2025

Celebrate 77th Republic Day

Online Essay Writing Competition

on the theme

My Constitution My Pride

Eligibility Conditions :

200 words essay | No plagiarism | Should be handwritten

for age group not more than 18 years

Cash awards

1 st Prize	2 nd Prize	3 rd Prize
₹ 10000	₹ 7500	₹ 5000

Start Date: 1st January, 2025
Last Date: 20th January, 2025

Submit entries by scanning the QR Code

DEPARTMENT OF INFORMATION & PUBLIC RELATIONS, J&K

@informationprjk | Information & PR, J&K | @diprjk | @dipr_jk

DIPK NO 9486/25 DATED: 30/12/2025



To place an advertisement
CALL +91-194 2502327
 Monday - Saturday (9am - 6pm)
 No 5- Dal Lake Boulevard Srinagar, 190001, Kashmir

IAF, IIT Madras Partner To Develop Indigenous Airborne Communication System

Press Trust Of India

The IAF's Software Development Institute (SDI) has signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with IIT-Madras for the joint design and development of an indigenous digital communication system for airborne applications. This collaboration marks a significant step towards realising the vision of Atmanirbhar Bharat, fostering self-reliance in defence technology and enhancing India's strategic capabilities, an official release said on Monday. The MoU was signed by Air Vice Marshal R Guruhari, Commandant, SDI; Prof V Kamakoti, Director of IIT Madras and Dr M J Shankar Raman, CEO, Pravartak Technologies Foundation. Through this partnership, the Indian Air Force (IAF) aims to develop advanced algorithms for networking and encryption in collaboration with IIT Madras, the re-

lease said. These systems are critical for secure, reliable, and high-performance data exchange in dynamic airborne environments, essential for modern military operations and networked warfare. By developing this technology indigenously, the collaboration seeks to reduce reliance on imported systems, promote technological sovereignty, and bolster the operational efficiency of India's defence forces, it added. Air Vice Marshal R Guruhari said, "This partnership with IIT Madras is a visionary step towards achieving complete self-reliance in critical defence communication technologies. By combining academic excellence with operational expertise, we are paving the way for innovative, indigenous solutions that will significantly enhance the capabilities of our airborne forces and contribute to a stronger, Atmanirbhar Bharat."



Prof V Kamakoti, said, "This collaboration with the Indian Air Force's Software Development Institute exemplifies the synergy between academia and defence institutions. IIT Madras is proud to contribute

our nation with cutting-edge, homegrown technologies that strengthen national security, he said. The joint effort will leverage the IAF's domain expertise at SDI and IIT Madras' world-class research facilities. Key focus areas include advanced encryption protocols, secure data transmission, resilience against threats, scalability for airborne networks, and integration with existing defence systems, officials said, the project is expected to yield deployable prototypes, supporting the IAF's mission through technological advancement. This partnership is part of IIT Madras' broader engagement in defence R&D, including collaborations in aerospace, AI, and materials science, they said, adding that it reinforces the Government of India's emphasis on indigenisation in defence procurement, contributing to the growth of India's defence industrial base.

PUBLIC NOTICE

I have applied for the issuance of DOB certificate. If anybody has any objection in this regard he/she may file them in the office of the Block Development Officer Hardu Aboora within seven days. After that no objection shall be entertained.
 Shabir Ahmad Ganaie (DOB 11-09-1990)
 S/o Abdul Ahad Ganaie
 R/o Hardaboora fko

PUBLIC NOTICE

My DOB has been wrongly written in my Adhaar Card while my correct DOB as per school records is 06-12-1996. 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 office within seven days. After that no objection shall be entertained.
 Maqsoob Ahmad Bhat
 S/o Abdul Rahim Bhat
 R/o Hazarpora Kowarhama fko

PUBLIC NOTICE

It is hereby informed to the general public that I have changed my name from Hanifa Begum to Haneefa Banoo. Henceforth, I shall be known as Haneefa Banoo for all purposes. If anybody has any objection in this regard, he/she may contact the Passport Office, Srinagar within seven (07) days from the date of publication of this notice. After the expiry of the said period, no objection shall be entertained.
 Haneefa Banoo x
 R/o Akipora, Khee Jogipora Kulgam

ASF ENTERPRISES

Sale and Services of Computers 2nd. Floor Munir Manzil Regal Chowk Srinagar (J&K), Ph.0194-24 77949, 9419001176, 9419776235
 Sale and Sendee of Laptops. Desktops. Printers, Photocopiers. Faxes, ,CTV Cameras, Security System and Refilling of all Types of Cartridges, Toners Registered Government order Suppliers.

PUBLIC NOTICE

It is hereby notified to the general public that the electricity connection bearing Consumer ID No. 0206020013014 and Installation No. 534, presently registered in the name of Ali Mohd Thakur, is proposed to be transferred in favour of Arshid Ahmad Thokur S/o Mohd Shafi Thokur R/o Gopalpora, Chadoora, Budgam. If anybody has any objection in this regard, he/she may submit the same to the concerned authorities within seven (07) days from the date of publication of this notice. After the stipulated period, no objection shall be entertained.
 mjd

PUBLIC NOTICE

It is hereby informed to the general public that my name has been wrongly written in my Date of Birth Certificate as Ayat Aijaz D/o Aijaz Ahmad Ganie R/o Palhallan, Pattan, whereas my correct particulars are Ayat Aijaz D/o Aijaz Ahmad Ganie R/o Palhallan, Hajam Mohalla. I have applied for correction of the same. If anybody has any objection in this regard, he/she may file the objection in the office of the Executive Officer, Municipal Committee Pattan within seven (7) days from the date of publication of this notice. After that, no objection shall be entertained.
 Ayat Aijaz
 D/o Aijaz Ahmad Ganie fko
 R/o Palhallan, Hajam Mohalla

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

NOTICE INVITING E-TENDER (CIVIL WORKS)

NIT No: 116/R&B of 2025-26

Dated:-30-12-2025

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 completion	M.H of Account	Class of Contractor	Project Authority	Tender call
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	10	11
1	Construction of SDM office Tangmarg Baramulla.	65.58	1600/-	131160/-	120 days	4059-Capex	AAV	District Dev. Commissioner Baramulla	1 st

Position of AAA: **Accorded**
 Position of T.S: **Accorded**
 Position of funds: **Assured**

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	30-12-2025
2	Period of downloading of bidding documents	31-12-2025
3	Bid submission Start Date	31-12-2025
4	Bid Submission End Date	21-01-2026 4:00 PM
5	Date & time of opening of Bids (Online)	22-01-2026 11:00 AM

3. 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 Tangmarg (tender inviting authority)**.

4. 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 Tangmarg (tender receiving authority)** (The Date of earnest money/Bid security should be between the Bid Submission start date and Bid submission End date, otherwise bids shall be rejected).

5. 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 Tangmarg (tender receiving authority)** as per rule-171 (I) of GFR 2017. The earnest money/ Bid security **@ 2%** shall be released to the successful bidder only on receipt of Performance Security **@ 5%** of Contract value which shall be released after successful completion of DLP /maintenance period.

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 Tangmarg (tender receiving authority).

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

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

9. The earnest money shall be forfeited, if:-

- 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.
- Failure of Successful bidder to furnish the required performance security within the specified time limit.
- Failure of Successful bidder to execute the agreement within 28 days after fixation of contract.
- Failure of successfully bidder to submit the performance security within the time period (as per JKPWD Engineering Manual 2020) i.e 21 Days from the issuance of letter of acceptance, after that the work will be put to fresh tenders without any notice to the contractor and the EMD will be forfeited.

DIPK-9489/25
 dated: 30-12-2025
 No: R&B / Divn./ Tang/6825-50
 Dated: 30-12-2025

Sd/-
 Executive Engineer
 R&B Division Tangmarg.

PUBLIC NOTICE

I have changed my name from (old name) YOUNIS ZAHOR SOFI to (New name) YOUNIS ZAHOOR . In future i will be known as (new Name) YOUNIS ZAHOOR. If any body having any objection he/she may contact Passport Office, Srinagar within 7 days. After 7 days no objection will be accepted.
 YOUNIS ZAHOR
 S/o ZAHOR AHMAD SOFI
 R/o OMPORA BUDGAM.
 Cell. 9622890524 mcb

PUBLIC NOTICE

The name of my ward has been wrongly written in his/his adhaar card as ZUNAIRA Jaan while her correct name is ZUNAIRA Aijaz . 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.
 Aijaz Ahmad Yatoo
 F/o Zunaira Aijaz fko
 R/o Dilshad pora (Donadara) Tehsil Pattan

PUBLIC NOTICE

This is information for the general public that in Schol records of my the Daughter FATIMA NISAR The Date of Birth is entered as 02/08/2010 while her actual Date of birth is 03/05/2013. Now I want its correction, in this regard if anybody having any objection may contact PRINCIPAL OXFORD SCHOOL OF EDUCATION BUDGAM with in a period of seven days. No objection shall be entertained after that.
 NISAR AHMAD BHAT
 F/o FATIMA NISAR
 R/o BOPAT BEERWAH BUDGAM. mcb

PUBLIC NOTICE

The name of my ward has been wrongly written in his/his adhaar card as Uzair while his correct name is Uzair Ahmad Wani . 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.
 Hilal Ahmad Wani
 F/o Uzair Ahmad Wani fko
 R/o Wailu Kralpora Tehsil Kunzer

PUBLIC NOTICE

I want to apply for a Pesticide License under the name North Agro care, Situated at Budran Stop Adina Budgam 193401. If anybody has any objection in this regard, they may submit it to the Plant Protection Officer, Lal Mandi, Srinagar, within 7 days from the publication of this notice. After that, no objection shall be entertained.
 YAWER NABI
 S/O: GHULAM NABI DAR
 R/O: PETH MAKHAMA BEERWAH BUDGAM jvd

PUBLIC NOTICE

My name has been wrongly written in my adhaar card as Mahraj Ahmad Hajam while my correct name is Mehraj U Din Hajam. 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.
 Mehraj U Din Hajam S/o Mohd Ramzan Hajam
 R/o Hardoo Nagisharan Shopian fko

PUBLIC NOTICE

I have changed my name from (old name) Shazir Rahman to (New Name) Shazia Rahman in future I will be known as (New Name) Shazia Rahman. If anybody has any objection in this regard he/she may file them in the passport office srinagar within 7 days. After that no objection shall be entertained.
 inf

PUBLIC NOTICE

I want to apply for a Fertilizer License under the name North Agro care, Situated at Budran Stop Adina Budgam 193401. If anybody has any objection in this regard, they may submit it to the CHEIF AGRICULTURE OFFICE BUDGAM within 7 days from the publication of this notice. After that, no objection shall be entertained.
 YAWER NABI
 S/O: GHULAM NABI DAR
 R/O: PETH MAKHAMA BEERWAH BUDGAM jvd

PUBLIC NOTICE

I have changed my name from (old name) Shazir Rahman to (New Name) Shazia Rahman in future I will be known as (New Name) Shazia Rahman. If anybody has any objection in this regard he/she may file them in the passport office srinagar within 7 days. After that no objection shall be entertained.
 inf

Sgr Court Hands Two-Year Jail Term in Rs 16 Lakh Cheque Bounce Case

Observer News Service

Srinagar: A Srinagar court has convicted a local man in multiple cheque dishonour cases involving a total amount of 16 lakh and sentenced him to two years of simple imprisonment along with a fine of 32 lakh, which is double the cheque amount.

The verdict was delivered by the Court of the Special Mobile Magistrate (PT&E), Srinagar, which found Abdul Hameed Danga guilty of the offence under Section 138 of the Negotiable Instruments Act, 1881. The court held that the prosecution had successfully established the essential ingredients of cheque dishonour beyond reasonable doubt.

According to case details, the conviction pertains to five separate cheque bounce cases filed by the complainant, Gulshan Rasool. The court observed that despite legal notice and sufficient opportunity, the accused failed to honour the financial liability arising out of the cheques

issued to the complainant.

While awarding the sentence, the court noted that cheque dishonour cases undermine financial discipline and public confidence in commercial transactions. Emphasising the deterrent aspect of the law, the magistrate sentenced the accused to two years of simple imprisonment and imposed a fine of 32 lakh, payable to the complainant as compensation in accordance with legal provisions.

According to KNT, the complainant was represented by a team of advocates including Arshad Andrabi, Rayees Maqbool, Zahid Ameen Khan and Adil Farooq Warsi, who argued that repeated dishonour of cheques caused financial hardship and mental distress to the complainant.

The court directed that the sentence and fine shall run in accordance with law, reaffirming that economic offences of this nature would be dealt with firmly to protect the interests of victims and uphold the sanctity of negotiable instruments.



Civic Upgradation of Lal Chowk Discussed During On-Ground Inspection

Observer News Service

Srinagar: Deputy Commissioner (DC) Srinagar, Akshay Labroo, on Tuesday undertook an extensive tour of Lal Chowk and its adjoining areas to take stock of the developmental requirements and assess ongoing civic and infrastructure-related issues in the city's commercial hub.

The DC was accompanied by Additional Deputy Commissioner Mir Imtiaz Ul Aziz; Joint Commissioner, Srinagar Municipal Corporation (SMC), Nuzhat Khurshid; Chief Planning Officer Fayaz Ahmad Dar; Superintending Engineer, Roads and Buildings (R&B); Assistant Commissioner Revenue; Assistant Regional Transport Officer (ARTO); Executive Engineers from City Drainage, UEED, KPDC and Jal Shakti departments; Tehsildar South, besides other senior officers.

The visit began with a detailed interaction with the Traders Association of Central Lal Chowk, during which members of the business com-



The traders highlighted issues related to infrastructure upgradation, traffic regulation, drainage, sanitation and overall beautification of Lal Chowk. They also raised the demand for improvement and upliftment of the surrounding area of the old Lower Court"

munity apprised the administration of various developmental and civic challenges affecting the area. The traders highlighted issues related to infrastructure upgradation, traffic regulation, drainage, sanitation and

overall beautification of Lal Chowk. They also raised the demand for improvement and upliftment of the surrounding area of the old Lower Court.

Giving a patient hearing to the concerns raised, the Deputy Commissioner assured the traders that all genuine issues would be taken up with the concerned departments for early redressal. He emphasized that the district administration remains committed to strengthening civic amenities in Lal Chowk while ensuring that developmental works are executed in a planned manner with minimal inconvenience to the public and the trading community.

The DC directed the concerned officers to maintain close inter-departmental coordination to ensure timely implementation of projects and a holistic development of Lal Chowk and its adjoining areas. He underscored the importance of sustained engagement with stakeholders to preserve Lal Chowk's commercial vitality while improving its urban infrastructure and public services.

Lal Bazar Residents Demand Fire Service Station

Observer News Service

Srinagar: Residents of Srinagar's Lal Bazar area have once again highlighted the urgent need for a dedicated Fire & Emergency Services station in their neighbourhood.

Locals told KNO that despite decades of demand, the establishment of such a facility remains pending, even as the area's population has grown and multi-storey buildings have increased.

Lal Bazar, one of Srinagar's most congested neighbourhoods with narrow lanes, remains dependent on distant fire stations, causing delays during emergencies.

"Whenever a fire breaks out here, the tenders take time to reach due to distance and road congestion," said Nisar

Ahmad Malik, a resident.

He added that if there had been a local fire station, several incidents in recent years could have been contained before causing major damage.

Another resident said the absence of a fire station has made the locality particularly vulnerable during winters. "We use electric blankets and heaters during this season, and any short circuit can turn dangerous. The government must act before another tragedy occurs," he said.

MLA Zadibal, Tanvir Sadiq, told KNO that the matter is under active consideration. "Land is not available yet. There is a piece under the Housing Department, and I am in touch with them. Very soon, there will be a station," he assured.

Dept. of Env. Sciences, KU Celebrates Silver Jubilee

Observer News Service

Srinagar: The Department of Environmental Sciences, University of Kashmir (KU) on Tuesday celebrated its Silver Jubilee - 25 Years of Excellence with a day-long academic and alumni engagement programme themed "Engaging with Peers and Alumni" at the Science Block Auditorium, Main campus.

The event marked a significant milestone in the Department's journey of academic growth, research excellence, and contributions to environmental science at regional, national, and inter-

national levels.

Organised as a blend of inaugural session, alumni connect, and commemorative celebrations, the Silver Jubilee event brought together faculty members, former Heads of the Department, alumni, research scholars, and students.

In her presidential address, Vice Chancellor, KU Prof. Nilofar Khan, recalled that the Department of Environmental Sciences began its journey 25 years ago under the patronage of the Centre of Research for Development (CORD) and has since grown into a full-fledged and independent department.

MLA Tanvir Inaugurates 2 MGD Advanced Carbon Filtration Plant

Observer News Service

Srinagar: In a major boost to drinking water infrastructure in downtown Srinagar, MLA Zadibal on Tuesday inaugurated the first and only 2 Million Gallons per Day (MGD) Advanced Activated Carbon Filter at Pokhrilal, Badamwari, marking a significant step towards ensuring safe, clean and reliable water supply for the area.

The state-of-the-art filtration system has been designed to meet the growing local demand for potable water while effectively addressing long-standing issues related to odour and colour in drinking water. Officials said the facility will benefit large parts of downtown Srinagar, improving both the quality and consistency of water supply.

Speaking on the occasion, the MLA said access to clean, tested and



transparent drinking water is a basic right of every citizen and reaffirmed the government's commitment to strengthening essential public utilities. He described the commissioning of the advanced carbon filter as a milestone for Zadibal constituency, noting that modern technology is being leveraged to address public con-

cerns in a sustainable manner.

"This project reflects our resolve to provide residents with water that meets quality standards and restores public confidence in the supply system," he said, adding that similar interventions would be explored in other areas facing water quality challenges.

'Dog Menace to Be Tackled as Per Supreme Court Directions'

Observer news Service

Srinagar: Commissioner Srinagar Municipal Corporation Faz Lul Haseeb on Tuesday said that all necessary arrangements have been completed to effectively deal with snowfall and related challenges in Srinagar.

The Commissioner said extensive pre-snowfall preparations have been undertaken by the civic body to ensure uninterrupted civic services during the winter season. He said special focus has been laid on preventing waterlogging in low-lying and vulnerable areas, adding that dewatering stations across the city have been kept active and fully operational to address any emergent situation promptly.

According to KNT,

Haseeb said the Srinagar Municipal Corporation has also reviewed winter preparedness of essential infrastructure, including drainage systems and response teams, to minimize inconvenience to locals during snowfall and rain-

Srinagar Municipal Corporation has also reviewed winter preparedness of essential infrastructure, including drainage systems and response teams, to minimize inconvenience to locals during snowfall and rain-related events.

related events.

Highlighting the issue of street lighting, the Commissioner said Srinagar has a high requirement for functional street lights, particularly during the winter months when daylight hours are limited. He assured that all defunct street

lights across the city will be restored in a phased manner and appealed to the public to report non-functional lights and other civic grievances directly to the SMC for timely redressal.

On the issue of stray dog menace, the Commis-

sioner said the matter is being addressed strictly in accordance with the directions and guidelines issued by the Supreme Court of India. He said nodal officers have been nominated to oversee the issue at various levels and ensure coordinated action.

UNION TERRITORY OF JAMMU AND KASHMIR

Office of the Executive Engineer Jal Shakti (PHE) Mechanical Division Srinagar

e-mail ID: xen-phemds@jk.gov.ina

CANCELLATION CORRIGENDUM

Subject: Fabrication of trust over the main control panel of old VT station and construction of boundary wall for development of the area for park near office building at WSS Doodganga.

Reference i. This Office e-NIT No. PHE/Mech/e-NIT-57 of 02/2025.
ii. Corrigendum (I) to this office e-NIT No: JSMDs/e-NIT-57 of 02/2025 vide No. JSMDs/CC/3522-25 Dated 24/02/2025

The subject cited e-NIT is hereby cancelled due to technical reasons and budgetary constraints.

Sd/-
Executive Engineer
Jal Shakti PHE Mechanical Division
Srinagar.

DIPK-9460/25
dated: 30-12-2025

NO:- JSMDs/CC/4006-08
Dated: 27/12/2025

- 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 - (Open)
- Srinagar- Leh- (Closed)

PRAYERS	
FAJR	6: 07
ZUHR	12:33
ASR	3: 52
Magrib	5:34
ISHA	6: 59

This Day In History

- 535 - Byzantine General Belisarius completes the conquest of Sicily, defeating Ostrogothic garrison of Syracuse, and ending his consulship for the year
- 1600 - British East India Company chartered
- 1669 - France & Brandenburg sign secret treaty
- 1670 - France & England sign Boyne-treaty
- 1744 - English astronomer James Bradley announces discovery of Earth's nutation motion (wobble)
- 1756 - Russia joins the Alliance of Versailles
- 1758 - British expeditionary army occupies Goree (Dakar) Senegal
- 1775 - Battle of Quebec in American Revolutionary War; Americans defeated trying to take British stronghold
- 1783 - Import of African slaves banned by all of the Northern US states
- 1805 - End of French Republican calendar; France returns to Gregorianism
- 1861 - 22,990mm of rain falls in Cherrapunji Assam in India in 1861, a world record
- 1862 - Battle of Stone's River (Battle of Murfreesboro), Tennessee in American Civil War
- 1901 - In the first election under their new constitution, Cuba elects a Congress and their first president, Tomas Estrada Palma
- 1924 - Italian Fascist Mussolini orders the suppression of opposition newspapers
- 1942 - Battle of the Barents Sea between British Navy and German Kriegsmarine off North Cape, Norway
- 1944 - Japanese army evacuates harbor city Akyab
- 1944 - World War II: Hungary declares war on Germany.
- 1946 - US President Harry Truman officially proclaims end of WW II
- 1951 - 1st battery to convert radioactive energy to electricity announced
- 1952 - Danny Nardico stops former world middleweight champion Jake LaMotta in 7 rounds in a light heavyweight non-title bout in Coral Gables, Florida; LaMotta is knocked down for the only time in his career, his corner stopping fight after the round
- 1955 - The General Motors Corporation becomes the first U.S. corporation to make over \$1 billion USD in a year.
- 1961 - Failed coup by Syrian group in Lebanon
- 1961 - Marshall Plan expires after distributing more than \$12 billion
- 1964 - Donald Campbell (UK) sets world water speed record (276.33 mph)
- 1964 - Indonesia proclaims expelled from the UN
- 1974 - Popular Electronics displays Altair 8800 computer
- 1977 - Amir Sheikh Jabir al-Ahmad al-Jabir Al Sabah becomes leader of Kuwait
- 1977 - Cambodia drops diplomatic relations with Vietnam
- 1978 - Iran shah names Chapour Bakhtiar premier
- 1978 - Taiwan's final day of diplomatic relations with US
- 1980 - After being struck by an orange thrown from the crowd West Indian fast bowler Sylvester Clarke knocks out a spectator with a brick during 4th Test against Pakistan in Multan
- 1983 - Brunei gains complete independence from Britain
- 1983 - Nigeria's National Assembly dissolves after military coup
- 1983 - President Shagari of Nigeria is overthrown in a military coup and Major General Muhammadu Buhari is installed as Head of State
- 1986 - Russian TU-144 flies for 1st time faster than sound
- 1990 - Iraq begins a military draft of 17 year olds
- 1997 - Intel cuts price of Pentium II-233 MHz from \$401 to \$268
- 1997 - Microsoft buys Hotmail email service for \$400 million and re-launches it as MSN Hotmail
- 1998 - Exchange rates between the euro and legacy currencies in the Eurozone become fixed.
- 1999 - Boris Yeltsin resigns as President of Russia, leaving Prime Minister Vladimir Putin as acting President
- 1999 - Control of Panama Canal reverts to Panama
- 2014 - Beji Caid Essebsi is sworn in as Tunisia's 1st ever freely elected President

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KO VIEW

When Art Sleeps

The recent demise of Abdul Ahad Farhad feels like a door closing on a shared past. He came from a time when creativity was not timed or measured. Art shaped daily life, friendships, and ways of thinking.

When someone like him is gone, we lose a way of living with ideas.

Kashmir once drew its energy from artists and artisans. Painters, poets, writers, craftsmen, and musicians kept public life alive. They argued, laughed, disagreed, and learned from one another. Art lived in workshops, book-filled rooms, and long talks over tea.

This gave Srinagar the feel of a thinking city. Conversation mattered just as much as creativity.

That feeling now feels distant.

Many artists today live in isolation. Some rarely step out. Some have moved away. Others stay and continue their work, but without places to meet, share, or grow together.

Art has not disappeared, but it feels asleep. This speaks to something deeper about the state of society.

The change came slowly. Shared spaces faded one by one. India Coffee House was one of those places that once held the city together. It was simple, even plain, but full of life. Writers, students, journalists, painters, and musicians sat at the same tables. Books met ideas and lively debate. Young people learned how to listen, and speak in public. That space helped ideas move easily from one person to another.

Today, such places are hard to find. Apart from a small fiction guild made up of a few storytellers, there is little that feels open and collective. There are few corners where literature reflects social life or where artists can test ideas in front of others. The silence that remains shows what is missing.

This should worry us all. A community needs imagination just as much as it needs infrastructure. Artists help people understand change, pressure, loss, and hope. They raise questions that others cannot answer.

When these voices grow faint, public life becomes narrower and less honest.

Kashmir has always created art during hard times. Poetry, craft, music, and storytelling helped people hold on to meaning and means. Letting that tradition fade would mean settling for a smaller future.

The answer is not longing for the past. It is rebuilding what is needed now.

Kashmir needs cultural spaces again, places where artists can meet, talk, and create together, and where ideas can return to the center of everyday life.

CASH COURSE

Read This Before You Buy Anything

Modern Metal Investing

What Kashmiri investors should know before buying precious metals.

Irshad Mushtaq

Gold and silver have always mattered in Kashmir. They are part of weddings, savings, and small businesses. Now they are also part of online trading apps and market talk. Prices rise and fall quickly, and many investors feel confused.

Should you buy physical metal, try ETFs, or trade on MCX? The answer depends on what you want from your money.

Let us begin with ETFs. An Exchange-Traded Fund follows the price of gold or silver and trades like a share on the stock market. When you buy an ETF, you are not buying coins or bars. You are buying price exposure. There is no need for lockers, guards, or worry about purity. You can buy or sell through your demat account during market hours. Costs stay lower because there are no making charges or storage expenses. For many investors, this ease makes ETFs attractive.

MCX trading is a different game. On the Multi Commodity Exchange, gold and silver are traded as contracts. This suits people who track markets daily and want to benefit from short-term price moves. Prices are clear and update all the time. You can trade with a smaller amount of money, which can increase profits but also increase losses. This option works best for experienced traders who understand risk.

Physical gold and silver still feel reassuring. You can see them and touch them. But they come with problems. Safe storage costs money. Selling often means accepting lower prices because of wide buying and selling gaps.

For Kashmiri investors, the choice should be practical. ETFs work well for steady, long-term investing. MCX suits active traders. Physical metal is better for personal use than frequent buying and selling.

The market has changed. Smart investing now depends less on tradition and more on clear thinking. Know your goal, understand the risk, and choose the path that fits you best.

The author is a Srinagar-based reputed financial advisor.



What 2025 Brought

In the outgoing year, Jammu and Kashmir moved forward in small, uneven steps, shaped by development, fear, memory, and the daily will to keep going.

Dr. Rizwan Rumi

As winter closed in on Jammu and Kashmir at the end of 2025, the year refused to settle into a clean ending.

It did not offer a neat story of recovery or decline. Instead, it left behind a layered record of ambition and anxiety.

Life here continued as it often does, carrying the weight of history while making space for ordinary days.

Time in this land rarely moves in straight lines. It circles back to memory, revisits old wounds, stops for prayer, and then pushes forward again.

The mountains mirror this reality well. So do the people who live among them.

The year opened with the sound of machines cutting through rock and snow. Infrastructure once again stood as the clearest sign of state intent.

The Udhampur-Srinagar-Baramulla Rail Link edged closer to full operation, with tunnels and bridges nearing completion. All-weather rail access to the valley remained a promise delayed by terrain and turmoil for decades. In 2025, that promise felt closer than ever.

Road projects under Bharatmala and PMGSY continued to link remote villages in the Chenab Valley, the Pir Panjal range, and north Kashmir.

This work showed up in practical ways for families in these areas.

Ambulances reached faster. Travel to district hospitals took fewer hours. Farmers sent apples and vegetables to markets with less loss. Children missed fewer school days. Electricity supply improved in parts of the region, stretching evenings beyond candlelight.

Expanded 4G coverage allowed students to attend online classes, traders to use digital payments, and families separated by work or deployment to stay in touch.

Progress, though visible, remained uneven. Paper announcements often ran ahead of execution. Delays tested patience. Complaints moved from village offices to social media feeds. Development arrived, but not always where or how people expected it.

The economy found some lift through tourism.

After years marked by shutdowns and uncertainty, domestic visitors returned in large numbers during spring and summer. Gulmarg, Pahalgam, Sonamarg, and Srinagar's old city saw packed hotels and busy streets. Dal and Nigeen lakes filled with guests once more, houseboats alive with conversation deep into the night.

Festivals, adventure events, film shoots, and national conferences signaled official confidence in the valley's stability.

Taxi drivers, hotel staff, shikara owners, pony handlers, photographers, artisans, and roadside vendors felt money return to their hands. The handicraft sector revived demand for carpets, papier-mâché, pashmina, and walnut woodwork.

Then came April.

A violent attack on tourists in south Kashmir cut through the sense of recovery. Cancellations followed within hours. Travel advisories returned. Fear entered conversations that had begun to soften. The incident reminded residents of a hard truth they already know.

Peace here is not a milestone reached once and for all. It requires constant care.

Security operations increased in districts such as Rajouri, Poonch, Kupwara, and Anantnag. Officials spoke of operational success, but civilian life absorbed the strain.

Temporary restrictions limited movement, shops closed earlier, and parents waited longer for

vival. Walnut producers faced storage and export limits.

Youth remained at the center of policy talk. Sports leagues, start-up schemes, vocational training, and entrepreneurship programs aimed to offer direction.

Some young people found paths forward. Others stayed caught between ambition and worry. Jobs remained the question heard in homes, online spaces, and public meetings.

Cultural life offered moments of shared breath. Football matches, cricket tournaments, and marathons filled public spaces with cheers instead of caution. Poetry readings, mushairas, and book launches kept the region's thinking alive.

Artists continued to write about loss without letting go of beauty. Archaeological discoveries, including ancient Buddhist sites, reminded people that this land has long been a meeting place of faiths and ideas.

As 2025 ends, Jammu and Kashmir stands nei-

“As 2025 ends, Jammu and Kashmir stands neither healed nor broken. It stands alert, weathered, and watchful. Questions remain about political voice, dignity, lasting peace, and work that offers stability. Some bridges, of steel and of trust, remain unfinished. Still, movement continues. Trains inch through long tunnels. Tourists return with care. Farmers tend orchards, trusting seasons they can no longer predict. People keep choosing to stay, build, and believe that the next year might hold more light than loss.”

children to return home.

Nature added its own tests.

Cloudbursts and flash floods struck parts of Jammu and Kashmir midyear, killing people, damaging homes, sweeping away livestock, and cutting off roads. Rivers rose with force that felt both sudden and ancient.

Climate concerns moved from reports into daily talk. Farmers spoke of shifting seasons. Orchard owners worried about snowfall patterns and chilling hours.

Springs ran thinner, water tables dropped, and the land itself seemed uncertain.

Administratively, the year stayed in transition. Governance focused on welfare delivery through housing, healthcare outreach, skills programs, and agricultural support.

Horticulture remained the backbone of the valley, though growers faced unstable prices and transport challenges. Apple farmers struggled with market swings. Saffron growers balanced tradition with sur-

ther healed nor broken. It stands alert, weathered, and watchful. Questions remain about political voice, dignity, lasting peace, and work that offers stability. Some bridges, of steel and of trust, remain unfinished.

Still, movement continues. Trains inch through long tunnels. Tourists return with care. Farmers tend orchards, trusting seasons they can no longer predict.

People keep choosing to stay, build, and believe that the next year might hold more light than loss.

This is how Jammu and Kashmir lives, in the daily decision to move forward, carrying hope and hurt together into another winter.

The author is a Srinagar-based academic and commentator. He can be reached at rizwanroomi2012@gmail.com

Letter to Editor

What Kashmir Gets Wrong About Coaching

From Srinagar's crowded lanes to district towns, signboards promise selection, ranks, and a clear future.

Parents sign up their children early, worried about limited colleges, few jobs, and rising competition.

Students follow, believing that one institute might decide everything that comes next.

This belief deserves a closer look.

Are coaching centers truly shaping careers in Kashmir, or have we given them more power than they deserve?

Most institutes advertise success with confidence. Toppers smile from posters. Percentages shine in newspaper ads. What stays unseen are the many students who do not make it, despite long hours and high fees.

Education works best when learning grows slowly through understanding. When it turns into endless drills and test

scores, students stop asking questions and start fearing failure.

For certain exams, coaching does serve a purpose. Competitive tests like the IIT-JEE demand preparation far beyond the regular school syllabus.

The gap between school teaching and national exams is real. In such cases, professional guidance can help students learn exam patterns, manage time, and practice advanced problems.

For students fully focused on these goals, a good coaching institute can offer structure and clarity.

The real concern begins when coaching becomes automatic.

Many Kashmiri students enroll because friends do or because parents feel there is no other route. Few stop to ask a basic question: Can I handle board exams and entrance tests together?

Many teenagers overestimate their capacity under pressure from home

and society. The result is exhaustion, loss of interest in learning, and falling grades in school.

Instead of gaining confidence, students feel stuck in a cycle of tests and comparison.

Coaching centers do offer benefits. Experienced teachers, planned schedules, and regular mock tests help students track progress. Exposure to competition can sharpen focus. Exam-oriented strategies often save time, something schools struggle to provide.

But this system also has flaws.

Fees can be overwhelming for Kashmiri families already facing economic strain. Rapid expansion has lowered teaching quality in many centers. Large batches often mean little personal attention. Choosing an institute based on advertisements alone can be costly. Scholarship tests, trial classes, and honest conversations with en-

rolled students provide better insight than glossy brochures.

There are other paths too.

Students who are disciplined, conceptually strong, and comfortable studying alone can succeed through self-study or correspondence courses.

These options cost less and allow learning at a personal pace without constant pressure.

Coaching centers are tools rather than guarantees. They can guide, but they cannot replace effort, clarity, and honest self-assessment.

The idea that success can be bought from an institute does more harm than good.

The journey belongs to the student. No classroom can walk it for them.

Sincerely,

Subzar Ahmad Reshi
subzar@gmail.com

Kashmir's Silence in Sacred Terms

Religious metaphors justify political exhaustion, turning survival into a narrative of wisdom.

Hamid Rather

History is rehearsed more than it is remembered in Kashmir. It becomes a place to justify actions and hide uncertainty. Political stops gain sacred meaning, retreats win respect, and changes are treated as destiny.

It is in this landscape that Waheed Para likened Mirwaiz Umar Farooq's decision to remove the "Hurriyat chief" title from his social media profile to the Treaty of Hidaybiyah.

Beyond a flawed analogy, this moment reveals a deeper ailment in the political imagination of Jammu and Kashmir.

The Treaty of Hidaybiyah was a decisive moment. It was a negotiated truce between two adversaries, concluded by the Prophet Muhammad (ﷺ) as a leader with moral authority, political legitimacy, and a mobilized community.

The truce had witnesses, written terms, mutual recognition, and calculated risk. It came from ethical clarity rather than compulsion.

To invoke it to explain the removal of a digital title is historical dilution.

This dilution has become a habit in Kashmir's political discourse.

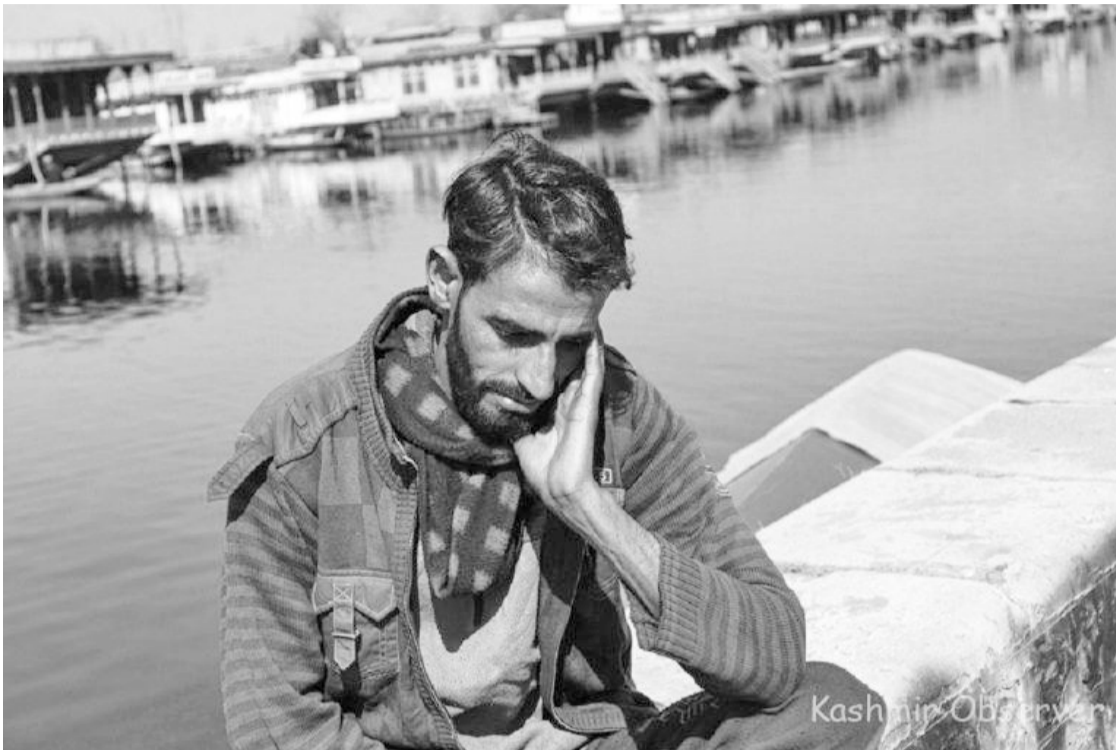
Religious metaphors explain exhaustion. Sacred history becomes a language of consolation for a society repeatedly asked to adapt and endure.

What grows from political pressure is called wisdom. What comes from coercion is praised as patience. Survival is mistaken for strategy.

The political system in Jammu and Kashmir thrives on this confusion.

It survives by exhausting.

Leadership no longer shapes the future. Political actors move within narrow corridors of speech. Silence earns reward, ambiguity feels safe, and clarity carries cost.



“**HUDAYBIYAH WAS STRENGTH DISGUISED AS CONCESSION.** Today's politics in Jammu and Kashmir is concession disguised as strength. To confuse the two is beyond an error in analogy. It is a refusal to confront reality

In such a backdrop, personal choices grow into grand narratives because the system produces no grand politics.

Mirwaiz Umar Farooq's decision must be understood within this confined terrain.

Years of detention, restrictions, and enforced silence leave any action conditional. Red lines remain invisible but firm.

To suggest that this resembles Hidaybiyah misunderstands both.

Hidaybiyah created space, while Kashmir's current order administers space. One arose from mutual recognition, the other emerges from unilateral control.

The danger in Waheed Para's comparison majorly lies in political convenience.

By invoking Hidaybiyah, a deeply

asymmetrical reality becomes strategic foresight. Structural domination softens into ethical patience. Absence of agency becomes moral choice.

This is how the political system sustains itself. It thrives on narratives that cloak retreat as virtue.

The political class has mastered this language. It abandoned both the courage to resist and the honesty to

surrender. It traffics in metaphor.

Real questions about representation, consent, autonomy, and esteem wait while symbolic gestures are overinterpreted.

Titles become debates while institutions remain hollow. Statements are dissected while structures remain untouched.

Religion once inspired moral resistance. Now it anesthetizes political despair. Sacred history hardly challenge power. It rather rationalizes accommodation.

That's why invoking Hidaybiyah is deliberate here.

Critique easily turns into sacrilege, disagreement becomes impiety, and debate narrows under the flood of reverence. Stagnation cloaks itself in sanctity.

Rather than confronting the erosion of democratic life, including the reduction of politics to administration, leadership to obedience, and public discourse to mere performance, we are invited to admire restraint without ever asking who demanded it.

This does not deny Mirwaiz Umar Farooq his autonomy. He may chart a path he believes necessary or inevitable. But autonomy requires honesty.

Choices must be owned in their real context, rather than elevated through borrowed grandeur. Societies mature by distinguishing strategy from survival.

The tragedy is that Kashmir's political discourse has become impoverished. It borrows from scripture to justify inertia, and from faith to mask fear.

In doing so, it diminishes all three.

Hidaybiyah was strength disguised as concession. Today's politics in Jammu and Kashmir is concession disguised as strength.

To confuse the two is beyond an

“**IF KASHMIR HOPES TO RECOVER ITS POLITICAL VOICE, IT MUST RECOVER INTELLECTUAL HONESTY.** Sacred history deserves respect, rather than recycling. Personal choices must face debate over sanctification. And the political system must be called what it is using truth instead of metaphor.

error in analogy. It is a refusal to confront reality.

If Kashmir hopes to recover its political voice, it must recover intellectual honesty.

Sacred history deserves respect, rather than recycling. Personal choices must face debate over sanctification.

And the political system must be called what it is using truth instead of metaphor.

—The author is a practicing lawyer at J&K High Court.

Goodbye, 2025

In this farewell letter, the turbulence of 2025 meets the hope and direction of 2026.



Khair Ull Nissa Shah

Dear 2025,

You were not gentle. You did not try to be. You tore away illusions, in boardrooms and bedrooms, in politics and personal lives.

You arrived with disruption and an unflinching eye for truth.

Comfort had no place here. You revealed relationships built on convenience rather than trust. You tested institutions that claimed strength but operated on habit. You showed the limits of power.

I say this without bitterness. And without illusion.

Globally, you were a year of friction. Trade wars became tools, rather than background noise. Supply chains were redesigned out of fear. Ambition stayed loud, while caution grew. Leaders spoke of diversification while holding on to concentration. Strength became a slogan, while the systems that create it remained vulnerable.

Politics moved dangerously close to the edge. Conflicts multiplied, diplomacy weakened, and the language of force grew sharper. Discussions of a third world war moved from abstract speculation to serious policy debate, a warning no leader should ignore.

These shifts were felt early in the valley. Borders hardened,

“**2026 IS NOT A YEAR FOR REVENGE OR REPAIR.** It is a year for direction, disciplined capital, ethical growth, partnerships built on alignment, investing in people, planet, and process without pretending politics does not exist.

supply chains fractured, rhetoric accelerated, and responsibility lagged.

Volatility remained lived experience here.

Climate change stopped asking politely. Floods, fires, heatwaves, and food shortages were stark signs that the planet holds us accountable. We failed parts of that audit.

Technology raced ahead. AI

dominance became a global contest, faster and louder than our capacity to reflect. Ethics were spoken, guardrails neglected.

The gap between intelligence and wisdom widened, and the cost is real.

But 2025 was not only about collapse. Women moved closer to leadership, young people demanded better systems, and Gen Z questioned inherited loyalty. Courage appeared in these shifts.

As an entrepreneur, your lessons were sharp: failure is essentially about structure.

Weak systems break, strong ones adapt. Partnerships matter more than valuation, while impact scores over optics.

You reminded me that strategy without execution is theater, capital without character is dangerous, and misaligned partnerships eventually fracture.

Painful lessons, yes, but necessary.

So thank you, 2025. Thank you for honesty, for reminding me that I am the only constant I fully control.

Standing tall often means standing alone, and I did.

Now, 2026, let's be clear.

This is not a year for revenge or repair. It is a year for direction, disciplined capital, ethical growth, partnerships built on alignment, investing in people, planet, and process without pretending politics does not exist.

It is a return to fundamentals: talent nurtured, entrepreneurship solving real problems, and leadership grounded in accountability.

From a Kashmiri, an Indian, and a global business leader who has seen volatility up close, this is the promise: we build anyway, we lead anyway, and we stay human anyway.

Welcome, 2026. This is not a wish list. It is a contract. Let's get to work.

—The author is a global business leader and serves as Executive Director at Alson Motors and Emaarat Chalets.

When New Year Arrived On Bull

From the tales of firewood dealers to digital messages, one man recalls the old ways in Kashmir as the world speeds ahead.

Syed Nissar H. Gilani

On the 3rd of September 2026, I will enter my eightieth year.

But as 2025 comes to a close, I watch the world prepare for yet another New Year with celebrations and digital fanfare that would have seemed magical to my childhood self.

Today, friends exchange messages filled with elegant quotes and polished wishes, sentiments I never heard as a boy.

Back then, the New Year arrived in whispers, stories, and small rituals. My mother would ask Khaliq Matta, our seasoned firewood dealer, with the utmost seriousness, "Khaliq Joo, in what form is the New Year arriving?"

Khaliq Joo would lean forward, voice grave, and reply, "This year, the New Year has arrived on a Bull."

"Tuba, Tuba!" my mother would cry, "May Allah save us! Bulls are naughty, especially the Bainul Dand."

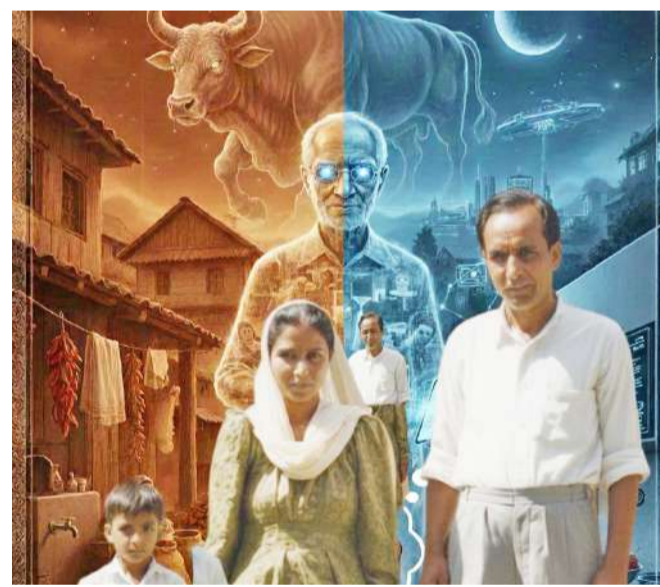
He would explain how the year's temperament shifted depending on the animal: Rabbit, Cat, Dog, Monkey, Snake, or Pigeon.

I would wait months for these predictions to unfold, unaware that I was witnessing the tail end of an ancient world of folklore.

Our lives then were shaped by the seasons and the slow heat of the hearth. I remember my mother and grandmother insisting that I eat a roasted potato or an egg early in the morning. They would bury it deep in the embers of a Kangri until it turned a perfect, smoky brown.

Today, the same items go into a microwave, ready in moments, but the soul of the taste is gone.

Our mothers washed clothes by hand, only rarely sending heavy garments to the Doub, the washerman. Families dried vegetables to survive harsh winters, living on "Hoku Suin."



The author and parents, 1953.

I remember chewing Gogji ara, the dried turnip, imagining it was soft mutton. Now, any vegetable is available year-round on supermarket shelves.

Oranges, once a rare sight, are now common. Firewood Choolas have been replaced by modular kitchens, and the rhythmic grinding of the Gratta is gone, replaced by the whir of a mixer-grinder.

Clothing, once laboriously woven and repaired, is now

tion to the work that shaped our days.

My mother used to tell me, "A time will come when people will talk on phones and see each other's faces."

At the time, it sounded like a fairytale. Today, it is ordinary, but it still feels like magic.

It makes me wonder: what comes next?

Perhaps sky scooters, Moon excursions, or journeys through space.

“**MY GENERATION HAS SEEN BOTH MYTHS AND REALITIES.** We have known the slow warmth of the Kangri and pheran, the whispered predictions of Khaliq Joo, and the playful magic of food and folklore.

bought freely from stores.

We have traded hands-on effort for speed, and with convenience comes a loss of connec-

I imagine meeting aliens and making them feel at home in our guesthouses, showing them Kani-woven shawls or

entertaining them with Rasool Mir's poetry: "Aa masta sharab Ashiq tchu bangey, kungi hawatey paan."

But human nature, I fear, remains unchanged.

Someone will surely try to sell a fake Kanihama shawl as the real thing. If an alien falls ill, they might be sent to a modern hospital where a robot doctor, much like dubious chemists of our neighborhoods, misdiagnoses them.

To soothe them, we might offer bottled water under the grand name "Shiffaey Kamil," claiming it comes from the Chashme Shahi spring while secretly using polluted water from Dal Lake.

The bill will be so large that only angels could pay it.

The changes I have witnessed are staggering. We can predict floods and storms with technology far better than Khaliq Matta ever could.

Life is easier in many ways, but our mindset has not always kept pace. Expensive cars give the impression of lavish living, while newspaper pages are filled with debt defaults. Young people struggle with addictions and divorces, issues almost unheard of in my childhood.

Despite the abundance of modern life, many of us still long for the simple joy of a fresh morning masalla.

My generation has seen both myths and realities. We have known the slow warmth of the Kangri and pheran, the whispered predictions of Khaliq Joo, and the playful magic of food and folklore.

We have also stepped into the world of robots, instant communication, and year-round produce.

As the Bull of the old world fades and the Robot of the new rises, I hope the New Year brings honesty, warmth, and delight to our lives.

—The author is a former civil servant. He can be reached at nisargilani57748@gmail.com.

Ex KCCI Chief Among 3 Proclaimed By NIA Court

Warns Property Attachment If Accused Skip January 31 Deadline

KO Web Desk

Srinagar: An NIA-designated court in Srinagar has issued a proclamation notice against former Kashmir Chamber of Commerce and Industries president Mubeen Shah and two others in a 2020 case registered under the Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act, directing them to appear before it on or before January 31, 2026.

The Special Judge designated under the NIA Act invoked Section 82 of the Code of Criminal Procedure against Shah, Azizul Hassan Ashai and Rifat Wani after observing that the accused have remained absconding despite the issuance of arrest warrants. The court has cautioned that failure to comply will invite proceedings under Section 83 CrPc, including attachment of property.

Officials said the case was registered by Counter Intelligence Kashmir in 2020 following "credible intelligence inputs revealing a well-orchestrated conspiracy by

unscrupulous anti-social and anti-national elements operating at the behest of secessionist forces within and outside the Valley."

"Investigation has exposed that these elements were masquerading as news portals, journalists and freelancers, while in reality weaponising social media platforms such as Facebook, X and WhatsApp," an official said.

The FIR has been registered under Sections 153-A and 505 of the Indian Penal Code, which deal with promoting enmity between groups and statements conducing public mischief, along with Section 13 of the UAPA.

According to officials, the deliberate objective of the alleged digital misinformation campaign was "to incite street violence, disrupt normal life, damage public property and disturb public order," while advancing a secessionist agenda.

"The accused were found to be actively propagating content prejudicial to the sovereignty

and integrity of India, spreading false and fabricated narratives with the clear intent of instigating disaffection against the Union of India," the official said.

Officials said warrants of arrest were issued against the accused, following which they went underground and began evading the process of law. Taking serious note of their continued non-appearance, the court issued the proclamation directing them to appear before it by January 31, 2026.

"Failure to comply will invite stringent proceedings under Section 83 CrPc, including attachment of property," the official said.

Despite being declared absconders, officials claimed the accused remain active on social media platforms and continue to circulate provocative material. "They persist in peddling false, fabricated and provocative content with the intention of inciting large-scale violence and destabilising public order in Jammu and Kashmir," the official added.

CUSTODIAL TORTURE CASE

Court Grants Bail To 8 Accused

KO Web Desk

Srinagar: The Principal District & Sessions Judge, Kupwara in Jammu and Kashmir on Tuesday granted bail to eight accused in the infamous custodial torture case being investigated by the Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) under orders of the Supreme Court.

The accused, identified as Deputy SP Aijaz Ahmad, Sub-Inspector Riyaz Ahmad Mir, Special Police Officer Jahangeer Ahmad Beigh, Head Constables Mohammad Younis Khan and Tanveer Ahmad Malla, Selection Grade Constables Shakir Hussain Khoja and Altaf Hussain Bhat, and Constable Shah Nawaz Ahmad, are lodged in the central jail after they were arrested by the CBI in August.

The accused have been ordered to furnish personal bonds and surety bonds of Rs 1,00,000 each. The court has prohibited the accused from leaving the territorial jurisdiction of the court without prior permission. If any one of them holds a passport, he should deposit the same in the court, the order said.

"The accused must not intimidate, influence or tamper



with prosecution evidence, nor threaten any prosecution witness, and must remain present at every hearing before the trial court unless exempted by the court. Any breach of the bail conditions would be viewed seriously and could lead to cancellation of bail," the court order said.

The Supreme Court, in an indictment of state abuse and institutional failure, had ordered CBI to take over the investigation into the illegal detention and brutal custodial torture of a serving police constable, Khurshheed Ahmad Chohan, at the Joint Interrogation Centre (JIC), Kupwara, J&K.

As crucial, in recognition of the brutality of the violations inflicted, reparation was also

ordered. The court also awarded Rs 50,00,000 as compensation to the appellant, holding it to be a necessary constitutional remedy in light of the established violation of Article 21.

The Supreme Court not only quashed a retaliatory FIR filed against the victim under Section 309 IPC for "attempt to suicide" but directed the immediate arrest of the officers involved and ordered the Union Territory of J&K to pay Rs 50 lakh as constitutional compensation, recoverable from the guilty officers following departmental proceedings.

The CBI has also been tasked with investigating systemic failures and institutional impunity at the JIC.

"The unprecedented gravity

of this case involving brutal and inhuman custodial torture, characterised by the complete mutilation of the appellant's genitalia, represents one of the most barbaric instances of police atrocity which the state is trying to defend and cover up with all-pervasive power. The medical evidence conclusively establishes that such injuries are impossible to be self-inflicted. The respondent's theory of suicide attempt crumbles under scrutiny when examined against the timeline and the medical evidence," the apex court said.

Delivering the judgment, a bench of Justices Vikram Nath and Sandeep Mehta described the case as one involving "unprecedented gravity", with complete mutilation of genitalia, pepper powder and electric shocks on private parts, and injuries consistent with custodial torture techniques such as falanga, the presence of multiple vegetative particles in the rectum, and anal insertion.

The court found the state's claim of attempted suicide "medically impossible", rejecting it as a fabricated counter-narrative aimed at shielding perpetrators. (Agencies)

CONTD. FROM FRONT PAGE

2025: From Pahalgam

caused heavy damage to standing crops in many areas of Jammu as well as the Kashmir valley.

Jammu suffered the most as the Tawi River came into spate for the first time in more than a decade.

The flash floods also washed away a significant stretch of the Jammu-Srinagar National Highway, snapping road connectivity between Kashmir and the rest of the country for weeks.

The unearthing of the white collar terror module -- highly educated men radicalising youths to join the terrorist ranks -- came as a shocker with several doctors arrested in the first week of November during sweeping raids conducted by J-K Police with its counterparts in Haryana and Uttar Pradesh.

Massive quantities of explosives were seized from a Kashmiri doctor's rented room in Faridabad in the National Capital Region, while weapons and other incriminating material were recovered from a medical college hostel in Anantnag district.

As the noose tightened around the culprits, one of the suspects -- Dr Umar Nabi -- was killed in a car blast near Red Fort Metro Station in Delhi on November 10.

According to investigators, the blast occurred while Nabi was trying to relocate the explosives in his possession. Ten people were killed, and scores were injured in the blast.

The 2,900 kilograms of explosive material seized from Faridabad was transported to Nowgam here as case property to be examined.

However, on November 14, the explosive was set off and ripped through the police station where it was kept, killing nine people.

Struck by violence and nature's wrath, the Union Territory found itself grappling with a fund crunch. Tourism was the worst-hit.

The valley teemed with visitors for a good part of the first four months of the year, but the party came to an end with the April 22 attack. The Indo-Pakistan tension after Operation Sindoor also kept the tourists away from the valley.

The closure of nearly 50 popular tourist spots on security grounds after the Pahalgam attack, ordered by the lieutenant governor, ended all hopes of tourism revival this year.

While most of the tourist spots have since been reopened, the tourism sector has at best been limping back to its normal with sparse footfall.

The other mainstay of the Kashmir economy, horticulture, was dealt a blow due to the closure of the flood-hit Jammu-Srinagar National Highway at the peak of apple harvesting season. However, timely intervention by the Union Ministry of Railways ensured that the losses were kept to a minimum and the Kashmiri apples reached the terminal markets by train till the highway was restored.

The introduction of Vande Bharat -- the direct rail link between Kashmir and the rest of the country -- salvaged somewhat an otherwise bleak year for the Union Territory.

The train reduced the travel time and cost for people travelling to Kashmir.

The train has already been used to bring in food grain for the civilians and heavy-duty equipment for the armed forces.

Weather Fatalities

72. The highest toll during this period was recorded in 2014, when 72 people died, followed by 2012 with 68 deaths and 2023 with 53 deaths.

In contrast, 2025 recorded 149 deaths till the end of August, with updated data shared with the Ministry of Home Affairs placing the toll at 199 by late December, the highest for any comparable period in the last 15 years.

The number of extreme weather events reported in 2025 till August stood at 224, comparable to previous years such as 2023 (234), 2021 (220) and 2014 (245).

However, the sharp increase in fatalities indicates a rise in the intensity and impact of such events.

Cause-wise data shows that flash floods and

cloudbursts accounted for the highest number of deaths during the period under review, with 250 fatalities recorded between 2010 and August 2025.

Heavy snow and avalanches followed closely, with 241 deaths, while landslides claimed 162 lives.

Heavy rainfall alone resulted in 125 deaths, while thunderstorms and lightning caused 47 fatalities.

Windstorms accounted for 24 deaths, cold wave incidents led to seven deaths, while no deaths were reported due to heatwaves during this period.

District-wise data reveals that Kishtwar and Ramban recorded the highest cumulative fatalities between 2010 and August 2025, with 115 and 106 deaths, respectively.

Reasi reported 74 deaths, while Kupwara recorded 63 fatalities. Other districts with notable death tolls include Anantnag (47), Bandipora (43), Jammu (36), Rajouri (33) and Leh (33).

Samba recorded the lowest number of deaths at four during the period.

Officials said the Jammu division accounted for a disproportionate number of deaths in 2025, particularly during the monsoon months, due to repeated cloudbursts, flash floods and landslides.

Over the 15 years from 2010 to August 2025, Jammu and Kashmir recorded a total of 3,473 extreme weather events, resulting in 856 deaths. (KNO)

Violence At 25-Year Low

April 22 terror attack in Pahalgam in an encounter on July 28. Those killed were identified as Suleiman Shah aliah Hashim Musa, Hamza Afghani and Zibran. The Pahalgam attack, which claimed the lives of 25 tourists and a local guide, was described by officials as the deadliest strike on civilians in Jammu and Kashmir since the 2008 Mumbai attacks.

The most significant military action of the year came on May 7 with the launch of Operation Sindoor, carried out in response to the Pahalgam massacre. Under the operation, Indian forces conducted missile strikes on nine terror camps located in Pakistan and Pakistan-occupied Jammu and Kashmir.

Officials said more than 100 terrorists, including several high-value commanders, were killed in the strikes. Seven camps were destroyed by the Indian Army, while two were targeted by the Indian Air Force. The operation was planned at the Military Operations Branch of the Army and monitored from the Directorate General of Military Operations' control room, with the Chief of Defence Staff and the chiefs of the three services present.

According to officials, the strikes were time-bound and calibrated to reinforce deterrence while avoiding escalation. Pakistan retaliated with heavy shelling along the Line of Control between May 7 and May 10, particularly affecting Poonch district, where at least 21 civilians were killed. During the same period, Pakistan also attempted drone attacks on four consecutive nights, all of which were intercepted and neutralised by Indian air defence units.

Along the Line of Control, Indian forces destroyed more than a dozen terror launch pads using ground-based weapons, disrupting infiltration routes and logistical networks. On May 10, an understanding was reached to halt firing after the Director General of Military Operations of the Indian Army was approached by his Pakistani counterpart.

The Border Security Force reported that eight terrorists were killed while attempting to infiltrate across the Line of Control in four separate foiled bids. Infiltration attempts along the LoC in the Kashmir Frontier declined during the year, with only four attempts reported. Of the 13 terrorists involved in these attempts, eight were neutralised and five were pushed back.

The government said it further strengthened intelligence gathering, inter-agency coordination and border management during the year. Minister of State for Home Affairs Nityanand Rai told the Lok Sabha during the

Winter Session that measures such as upgraded Multi-Agency Centres, AI-enabled analysis, improved capabilities of central armed police forces and state police, advanced surveillance systems and forensic modernisation projects had contributed to reduced terror threats and improved operational preparedness.

Security force casualties were also reported during the year. A soldier was killed in a gunfight with terrorists in the Basantgarh area of Udhampur in April, while two Army personnel lost their lives in an improvised explosive device blast near the Line of Control in the Akhnoor sector in February. Additional casualties occurred during cross-border firing in May and encounters in Baramulla district in August, as well as operations in Kulgam, Kishtwar, Rajouri and Kupwara.

A major setback came on November 14 when a powerful explosion inside Nowgam Police Station on the outskirts of Srinagar killed nine people and injured at least 32 others. Jammu and Kashmir Director General of Police Nalin Prabhat said the blast was accidental. The government announced ex-gratia relief of Rs 10 lakh for the families of the deceased and Rs 1 lakh for those injured, while government appointment letters were later handed over to the victims' families.

The year also saw recognition for counter-terror investigations carried out by the Jammu and Kashmir Police. Union Home Minister Amit Shah hailed the force for its investigation into the November 10 Red Fort blast in Delhi, describing it as a "masterclass" during the Anti-Terrorism Conference held on December 26. He cited the probes into both the Pahalgam attack and the Delhi blast as examples that intelligence agencies across the world would study.

Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha also praised the Jammu and Kashmir Police for dismantling a pan-India white-collar terror module, saying the investigations had thwarted multiple terror incidents and marked a significant success in the fight against terrorism.

Officials said counter-terror operations and border management would continue to remain the focus, with security agencies determined to sustain the downward trend in violence while preventing infiltration and dismantling militant networks. (inputs from KNO)

Rain, Snow Likely

2 onwards, the weather is expected to remain partly to generally cloudy, with isolated light rain or snowfall at some places. Partly cloudy conditions are likely from January 3 to 5 and again from January 7 to 8, while January 6 may witness light snowfall over isolated higher reaches. The weather is expected to remain partly to generally cloudy from January 9 to 10 and partly cloudy from January 11 to 13.

Minimum temperatures recorded on Tuesday reflected widespread cold conditions. Srinagar recorded a low of 1.0 degrees Celsius, Pahalgam minus 1.2 degrees Celsius, Gulmarg minus 1.6 degrees Celsius, Kupwara 2.0 degrees Celsius and Awantipora 1.0 degree Celsius.

In the Jammu region, Jammu recorded a minimum of 8.6 degrees Celsius, Katra 9.8 degrees Celsius, Baderwah 3.8 degrees Celsius and Kishtwar minus 1.5 degrees Celsius.

Ladakh continued to experience severe cold wave conditions, with Leh recording a minimum of minus 8.4 degrees Celsius, Kargil minus 7.9 degrees Celsius and Nubra Valley minus 4.2 degrees Celsius.

Officials advised travellers and residents, particularly those heading towards high altitude areas, to remain cautious due to icy road conditions and reduced visibility in fog prone regions. The public has also been urged to stay updated with weather advisories as the region prepares for New Year celebrations amid cold and wet conditions.

Jai Hind Remains

Lieutenant Governor made these remarks after hoisting the Tricolour and inaugurating the Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose Flag Point at JDA Park in Ram Vihar, Jammu, to mark the 82nd anniversary of the hoisting of the national flag on Indian soil by Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose

in the Andaman and Nicobar Islands in 1943.

"Jai Hind, the slogan given by Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose, once united the Azad Hind Fauj and continues to inspire 140 crore Indians today," the Lieutenant Governor said, while paying tributes to the freedom fighter.

Sinha said Netaji's patriotism was unparalleled and his extraordinary valour offered the nation a vital lesson in unity. "He believed that a divided society can never build a lasting future. Unity is the foundation on which a strong and prosperous nation is built," he said.

Highlighting Netaji's vision, the Lieutenant Governor said his advocacy for Swaraj, empowerment of youth and women, and emphasis on industrialisation and small-scale industries played a significant role in laying the foundations of a self-reliant India.

The Lieutenant Governor said Jammu symbolises India's national unity and an unbroken cultural stream, noting that the people of the region have, through generations, upheld the spirit of complete integration of Jammu and Kashmir with the country.

"Our unity is our strength and is crucial for success. We must remain united and preserve our shared heritage and values," he said.

Sinha also expressed gratitude to Prime Minister Narendra Modi for ensuring that Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose's legacy receives its rightful place in the nation's history.

He appreciated the Jammu Municipal Corporation, Jammu Development Authority, Housing and Urban Development Department and the district administration for their collaborative efforts to honour Netaji's legacy, and called for regular commemorative events to be held every year on December 30.

On the occasion, the Lieutenant Governor visited a photo gallery depicting the life and contributions of Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose, while a documentary showcasing his leadership and role in India's freedom struggle was also screened. Several public representatives, senior civil and police officials, prominent citizens and members of the public were present at the ceremony.

Unveils J&K

UT of Jammu & Kashmir and UT of Ladakh. The Lieutenant Governor appreciated the J&K Bank for selecting unique themes which will raise awareness about preserving ancient monuments, archaeological sites and traditions for future generations. He said society must come together to safeguard these priceless treasures. The Lieutenant Governor also emphasised on protecting earth's vital ecosystems. He said rivers in J&K UT are source of fresh water and they are also ensuring food security and supporting biodiversity conservation. The Lieutenant Governor called for community efforts to protect rivers and water bodies to build resilience against climate impacts in the future.

Amitava Chatterjee, Managing Director and CEO, Jammu & Kashmir Bank Limited briefed that the 2026 edition of J&K Bank's calendars honour the rivers that sustain life across the regions and the historic sites that define their shared legacy.

The calendar also features important public welfare initiatives such as Mission YUVA and PM Surya Ghar Muft Bijli Yojana, alongside J&K Bank's key products including Housing Loan, Car Loan, Personal Consumption Loan and Online Account Opening, reinforcing the Bank's role as a development partner and facilitator of people's aspirations.

Santosh D.Vaidya, Principal Secretary, Finance Department; Dr. Mandeep K. Bhandari, Principal Secretary to the Lieutenant Governor; Sudhir Gupta, Executive Director, Sunit Kumar and Intiyaz Ahmad, Chief General Managers J&K Bank attended the unveiling ceremony.

Road Deaths

cooperation had played a significant role in reducing accidents, stating that people in the Valley are largely educated and responsive to traffic regulations.

"With just two days left in the year, we hope citizens will continue to follow traffic rules and

regulations in the future as well," he said.

The SSP said efforts would be further intensified to bring down the death toll from road accidents. "Our vision and mission are clear. We want to minimise accidents and save precious lives," he added.

Singh said the Traffic Police would strengthen outreach and awareness programmes in schools, colleges, sumo stands, and other public spaces to further sensitise people about road safety.

Providing enforcement details, he said more than three lakh challans were issued during the year, generating revenue exceeding Rs 11.24 crore. Several vehicles were also seized during special enforcement drives.

"We followed multiple parameters with one clear aim, to save lives," he said.

The SSP also lauded the role of multiple stakeholders, including the Traffic Police, district administration, district police, municipal bodies, Beacon authorities, and the Roads and Buildings Department, for their coordinated efforts.

"We introduced changes at the policy level and implemented new measures. The results are now visible in the data," he said.

Custodial Torture

were arrested by the CBI in August. The accused have been ordered to furnish personal bonds and surety bonds of Rs 1,00,000 each. The court has prohibited the accused from leaving the territorial jurisdiction of the court without prior permission. If any one of them holds a passport, he should deposit the same in the court, the order said.

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"The unprecedented gravity of this case involving brutal and inhuman custodial torture, characterised by the complete mutilation of the appellant's genitalia, represents one of the most barbaric instances of police atrocity which the state is trying to defend and cover up with all-pervasive power. The medical evidence conclusively establishes that such injuries are impossible to be self-inflicted. The respondent's theory of suicide attempt crumbles under scrutiny when examined against the timeline and the medical evidence," the apex court said.

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The court found the state's claim of attempted suicide "medically impossible", rejecting it as a fabricated counter-narrative aimed at shielding perpetrators. (Agencies)

Doctor's Prescription Mandatory for 'Red Line' Antibiotics

Observer News Service

SRINAGAR: Amid growing global concern over antimicrobial resistance (AMR), the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare, Government of India, has reiterated that medicines bearing a Red Line mark on their packaging must never be consumed without a valid doctor's prescription.

The advisory comes as part of the Ministry's nationwide Red Line Campaign, aimed at curbing the rampant misuse of antibiotics and promoting responsible drug use.

The Red Line Campaign urges citizens to identify medicines marked with a red vertical line—typically antibiotics and certain scheduled drugs—and to strictly avoid self-medication. These medicines fall under Schedule H and H1 of the Drugs and Cosmetics Rules, 1945, which legally mandate their sale only against a prescription issued by a Registered Medical Practitioner.

"Medicines with a red line should never be taken without medical advice. Misuse of antibiotics directly fuels antibiotic resistance, making infections harder and sometimes impossible to treat," the Ministry stated in an official communication.

Health experts in Kashmir have echoed the Ministry's concerns, warning that AMR has emerged as one of the most seri-

ous public health threats of the 21st century.

Speaking to KNO, Dr Irfan Gul, Associate Professor at Government Medical College (GMC) Srinagar, said antibiotic resistance is no longer a distant threat but a harsh reality being faced daily in hospitals.

"We are increasingly encountering infections that do not respond to commonly used antibiotics. Drugs that once worked as first-line treatment are now failing, forcing doctors to use stronger and more expensive medicines. This is a dangerous trend," Dr Gul said.

He explained that antimicrobial resistance develops when bacteria and other microbes adapt and survive despite exposure to medicines meant to kill them.

"When antibiotics are taken unnecessarily—especially for viral infections—or when patients stop treatment midway, microbes learn to resist. This not only prolongs illness but also increases the risk of severe complications and spread of resistant infections in the community," he added.

Dr Showkat Mir from the Directorate of Health Services Kashmir (DHSK) stressed that misuse of antibiotics has reached alarming levels in the region.

"Self-medication, over-the-



SELF-MEDICATION, OVER-THE-COUNTER SALE OF ANTIBIOTICS WITHOUT PRESCRIPTIONS, and irrational prescribing practices are major contributors to AMR in Kashmir. Many people still believe antibiotics are a cure-all, which is simply not true."

counter sale of antibiotics without prescriptions, and irrational prescribing practices are major contributors to AMR in Kashmir. Many people still believe anti-

otics are a cure-all, which is simply not true," he said.

Dr Mir warned that if corrective measures are not taken urgently, even routine infections could once again become life-threatening.

"We are gradually moving toward a post-antibiotic era. If resistance continues unchecked, common surgeries, cancer chemotherapy, and organ transplants will become extremely risky," he cautioned.

To strengthen monitoring and response, the Government of India has established the National AMR Surveillance Network (NARS-Net), which conducts surveillance of nine priority pathogens using standardised protocols. Annual surveillance reports from 2017 to 2023 are publicly available through the National Centre for Disease Control (NCDC).

The Ministry is also implementing the National Programme on AMR Containment, which includes: Awareness campaigns during World Antibiotic Awareness Week (WAAW), Information, Education and Communication (IEC) materials on judicious antibiotic use and infection prevention and IEC content developed in 12 regional languages and shared with

States and Union Territories

In addition, national guidelines such as the National Treatment Guidelines for Antimicrobial Use and Infection Prevention and Control (IPC) Guidelines have been issued to reduce healthcare-associated infections and irrational antibiotic prescriptions.

Doctors in Kashmir point out that antibiotic resistance has already compromised the treatment of common infections like pneumonia, urinary tract infections, tuberculosis, and bloodstream infections. Citing global studies, they note that AMR was associated with nearly 5 million deaths worldwide in 2019, a figure projected to rise sharply if urgent action is not taken.

"AMR is a silent pandemic," Dr Irfan Gul said. "The public must understand that antibiotics are a precious resource. Taking them without a prescription endangers not just the individual but society at large. These drugs must be preserved for future generations."

Health experts have called for stricter enforcement against the over-the-counter sale of antibiotics, stronger infection control practices, improved surveillance, and sustained public education campaigns across Jammu and Kashmir to prevent an impending health crisis.

Authorities Launch Clean-up of Jhelum Stretch in Sopore

Days after highlighting the state of a dried Jhelum stretch in Sopore being turned into a dumping ground, the Municipal Council on Tuesday launched a major sanitation drive to clear the heaps of waste choking the riverbed.

Officials informed KNO that the teams from the sanitation wing, equipped with loaders and vehicles, began removing piles of plastic crates, fish residue and mixed garbage from the site in Ward 15—an area that had sparked public fury over unchecked dumping.

The drive has brought visible relief to nearby traders and residents who had complained of unbearable stench and shrinking business.

Local shopkeepers and traders hailed the swift response from the authorities, crediting media coverage for prompt action. "We are thankful that the issue was highlighted. The council has finally acted, and cleaning is underway. This shows how public grievances, when reported, can make a real difference," said Mohammad Shafi, a trader whose shop faces the cleaned river stretch.

Residents, while appreciating the Municipal Council's efforts, urged the administration to install fencing along the bridge to deter offenders who reportedly dump waste during late evening hours.

Meanwhile, officials of Municipal Council Sopore said the sanitation drive will continue for the next few days and that violators identified through local inputs and field inspections would face penalties. (Observer News Service)

Pension Delay Leaves Kashmir's Elderly Waiting

A delay in the release of the monthly old-age pension has left thousands of elderly beneficiaries across Kashmir anxious, with many saying they rely solely on this small amount to meet their daily needs.

For 72-year-old Fatima Begum from Srinagar, the monthly pension of Rs1,000 is her only means of buying medicines and essentials. "I keep waiting every month for this money. When it doesn't come on time, I have to borrow from neighbours," she said with trembling hands and moist eyes.

Several other elderly citizens echoed similar distress, saying the pension is their only financial support amid rising prices and health challenges.

When contacted, an official from the Social Welfare Department Kashmir told KNO that the delay was due to the year-end financial load and the large volume of transactions being processed.

"There is a lot of fund flow at the year-end and this is a big amount running into crores. Payments have already been made to some beneficiaries and the remaining ones will be cleared within the next two to three days," the official said. (Observer News Service)

Gulmarg Ready for Peak Winter Influx as New Year Carnival Begins

Gulmarg gears up for a busy winter as the Valley prepares to welcome a surge of tourists during the festive season.

The Tourism Department is all set to host a grand seven-day New Year carnival that promises snow adventures, cultural shows and musical nights, aimed at showcasing the hospitality and spirit of peace.

Director Tourism, Kashmir, Syed Qamar Sajad said the carnival would include several attractions such as snow cricket, snow skiing and musical evenings designed to offer visitors a seamless experience during their winter holiday.

"We are hosting a week-long carnival to ensure that tourists enjoy the celebrations and take along the message of peace from the Valley across the country," he said.

He extended warm greetings to visitors on behalf of the Department and expressed gratitude for their growing presence in the region. "We welcome tourists with open hearts. All arrangements have been put in place to make their stay comfortable and memorable. Let them experience the warmth and love themselves—we are humbled by the response and hope peace continues to prevail," he added.

Acknowledging that the tourism sector had faced a brief setback earlier, the Director said the industry had successfully recovered, with tourists returning to the Valley in significant numbers.

"Tourists are back, and they are enjoying the facilities and services happily," he said. "Wherever there are gaps, we are upgrading services continuously, and with every rise in footfall, we remain committed to improving infrastructure for a more seamless visitor experience." Speaking about the upgraded Gulmarg Gondola, one of the world's highest cable cars, Sajad said its carrying capacity had been enhanced. (Observer News Service)

CS Reviews Prospects for Eco-Tourism Promotion

Chief Secretary, Atal Dulloo on Tuesday chaired two separate high-level meetings to review the initiatives undertaken for promotion of eco-tourism by the Forest Department and the commercial cultivation of Medicinal and Aromatic Plants (MAP) across J&K.

The meeting on eco-tourism was attended by the Commissioner Secretary, Forests; Principal Chief Conservator of Forests (PCCF); Chief Wildlife Warden; Managing Director, Forest Development Corporation; Director, Remote Sensing and other senior officers of the Forest Department.

During the deliberations, the Chief Secretary emphasised the need for a more comprehensive and well-planned approach to eco-tourism development. He advised the department to identify destinations that can offer multiple eco-tourism options, enabling visitors to choose activities based on their interests and the duration of their stay.

The role of the Forest Development Corporation in strengthening eco-tourism infrastructure and services was discussed in detail. The PCCF, Suresh Kumar Gupta, highlighted successful ecotourism models adopted in other states, including the Ranjit Sagar Lake initiative in Punjab and similar models in Kerala and Tamil Nadu, which were examined for possible replication in J&K. (Observer News Service)

VPN Ban in Various Districts in Public Interest: Div Com Kashmir

Observer News Service

SRINAGAR: Divisional Commissioner (Div Com) Kashmir, Anshul Garg, on Tuesday said the ban on Virtual Private Networks (VPNs) in several districts of Kashmir has been ordered in the overall interest of society following security reviews carried out by the respective Deputy Commissioners.

Speaking to reporters in Srinagar, the Div Com, as per KNO, said that every DC conducts independent security assessments based on local inputs.

"You must have seen that DCs in Kupwara, Kulgam, Shopian and other districts have issued prohibitory orders. Such measures are taken whenever required to prevent misuse by anti-social elements," he said. "Many people get caught up in the misuse of such networks. These decisions are taken in the overall interest of society to safeguard the public."

Preparedness for snowfall and winter advisory



The Divisional Commissioner said the administration is on full alert following the Meteorological Department's advisory of snowfall in the Valley. "Our Integrated Command and Control Centre works 24x7. Helpline numbers have been widely circulated, and all calls from the public are being responded to immediately," he said.

Garg said that all Deputy Commissioners have established district-level control rooms, also manned round the clock. "All executing agencies, including the Mechanical Engineering Department, PWD, Beacon, PMGSY, National Highways, SMC and other urban local bodies have activated and pre-positioned their machinery to ensure prompt snow clearance," he said.

Chadoora Attack Case Solved after CCTV Analysis

Observer News Service

BUDGAM: Police in Chadoora have arrested a man for allegedly attacking two minor girls by spraying a chemical substance into their eyes while they were returning from tuition classes, officials said on Tuesday.

According to police, Police Station Chadoora received a written complaint from the parents of two minor girls alleging that an unknown person intercepted their daughters and sprayed a substance into their eyes, causing distress and injury. Acting on the complaint, FIR No. 209/2025 was registered under Sections 62 and 137 of the Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita, and an investigation was immediately taken up.

During the course of investigation, police analysed CCTV footage from the area along with other technical evidence. Officials said this led to the identification of the suspect, following which questioning and searches were conducted.

Police identified the accused as Raja Furqan, son of Fayaz Ahmad Khan, an



inhabitant of Gowherpora, Chadoora. Investigation revealed that he had allegedly sprayed snow spray into the eyes of the minor girls. The clothes and shoes worn by the accused at the time of the incident were recovered from his possession.

According to KNT, officials said the accused was identified by the victims and has been formally arrested in the case. Further investigation also brought to light that the accused had allegedly attempted similar acts in the past but was let off by locals after being admonished, without any formal complaint being lodged at that time.

Police said the investigation is continuing to ascertain whether the accused was involved in any other similar incidents, while assuring strict legal action in accordance with law.

Data-driven readiness

The Div Com said buffer stocks and essential supplies have been arranged across the Valley. "Distribution transformers and transfer oil stocks have been kept in excess capacity to prevent power disruptions," he said.

He added that the Food and Civil Supplies Department completed its dumping by November 30 in all border and remote areas, while 893 snow-bound stations have been stocked with LPG for the next four months.

The Health Department, he said, has also ensured that all medical institutions in hard-to-reach areas are equipped with heating arrangements and adequate medicines. "Vulnerable patients and pregnant women have been mapped and advised to shift to safer zones," he said.

"With the tourist footfall increasing and weather turning favourable, all departments are maintaining round-the-clock preparedness to ensure public convenience," Garg added.

11 Fire Incidents Reported Across Kashmir in 24 Hours

Observer News Service

SRINAGAR: At least eleven fire incidents were reported from different parts of the Kashmir Division during the past 24 hours, resulting in damage to residential, commercial and agricultural properties, officials from the Fire and Emergency Services said. Fire tenders and personnel responded promptly to all distress calls and succeeded in containing the blazes, thereby preventing further spread and averting larger losses.

In Srinagar's Umar Colony area of Lal Bazar, a three-storey residential house was damaged after a fire broke out. In north Kashmir's Sopore town of Baramulla district, a single-storey school structure at Dewan Bagh caught fire, causing damage to the building.

In central Kashmir's Ganderbal district, a haystack used as cow fodder was gutted by fire at Chewa village in Safapora. Meanwhile, in Letpora area of Awantipora in Pulwama district, a shed constructed with GCI sheets was damaged in another incident.

In 2025, Blaze Count Dips by 5.7% in North Kashmir

Observer News Service

SRINAGAR: Marking a modest 5.7% decline, North Kashmir tallied 1,142 fire calls in 2025 compared to 1,212 in 2024 that destroyed property worth crores, with Baramulla still topping at 533 cases amid winter surges.

Data obtained by KNO states Baramulla district remained the hotspot with 533 cases—down from 548 last year, while Kupwara saw 380 incidents versus 407 previously, with Bandipora logged the lowest at 228 compared to 357 in 2024.

The 2025 tally reflects a 5.7% reduction overall, with false alarms staying minimal at 11 across districts (5 in Baramulla, 3 each in Kupwara and Bandipora).

Kupwara, as per the official data, reported the steepest drop but highest human toll: 30 forest fires, 47 injuries and 4 lives lost, contrasting 2024's broader damage from dry spells and short circuits. Bandipora achieved near-zero fatalities with just 5 forest fires and 2 injuries, while

Baramulla peaked at 158 calls in November-December alone.

Prolonged dry weather, short circuits and gas leaks fueled both years' spikes, with 2025's November-December surge hitting around 190 calls regional, which echoed 2024 patterns but met with swifter responses.

Meanwhile, Deputy Director F&ES, Mir Arif told KNO that the dry spell has significantly contributed to fire incidents alongside common

causes like electricity short circuits and gas leaks. "Our 42 stations and 444 personnel across North Kashmir, including 175 in Baramulla, 182 in Kupwara and 87 in Bandipora, managed 1,142 calls in 2025 without any firemen injuries, down from 1,212 last year—yet vigilance remains key."

He urged installing smoke detectors, fire extinguishers, and evacuation plans while avoiding overloaded outlets and unattended flames.

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JKCA Elections Set for Jan 16 After Eight-Year Gap

Observer News Service

SRINAGAR: After nearly eight years, the Jammu & Kashmir Cricket Association (JKCA) is set to hold elections for its office bearers and Apex Council on January 16, at GGM Science College, Jammu.

Affiliated members while addressing a news conference here welcomed the move, calling it a long-awaited step toward normalization and the revival of cricket administration in the Union Territory.

"After eight years, JKCA is finally heading towards elections as per the Supreme Court's directions. We appreciate the personal efforts of BCCI President Mithun Manhas, whose intervention helped pave the way for this democratic process," members said, adding that prolonged litigation had left the Association in administrative limbo.

Earlier attempts to mediate club disputes through the J&K High Court and later by BCCI-appointed Justice L. Narsimha Reddy, helped verify records and finalize the list of representatives eligible to partici-

rate in the polls.

"Petitions filed by some clubs previously suspected by the 2015 working committee in connection with earlier financial irregularities were disposed of by the Supreme Court, which upheld the suspension of their voting rights."

Another JKCA member said, "For years, cricket in J&K suffered from disputes and mismanagement. The interim administrators dismantled the old structure, but the system introduced under BCCI's guidance brought professionalism and transparency."

He added that the selection process for both men and women players has become more merit-based, leading to visible improvements in performance and player development.



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According to KNT, mem-



bers credited BCCI President Mithun Manhas, a former Delhi captain, for stabilizing JKCA affairs and restoring credibility.

Calling the upcoming polls a "historic and corrective step," members urged all stakeholders to support the process and focus on improving cricket infrastructure and nurturing local talent in J&K.

"The Supreme Court's intervention and the upcoming elections will finally end the cycle of litigation that has crippled JKCA for years. It's time to bring back the glory of cricket in Jammu & Kashmir," members added.

Notably, the elections, delayed due to internal disputes and prolonged litigation, will be conducted under the supervision of Mr. A.K. Jyoti, former Chief Election Commissioner of India, appointed by the Supreme Court to ensure the process adheres strictly to the court-approved JKCA Constitution.

The Apex Court, in the case titled 'Youth Cricket Club & Others vs JKCA & Others', directed that the elections be completed within 12 weeks.

2025: A Year That Redefined World Sport

KO Web Desk

SRINAGAR: The year 2025 stood out as a landmark chapter in global sports, defined by moments that transcended scorelines and statistics. Across continents and disciplines, athletes and teams delivered performances that reshaped expectations, revived legacies, and set new benchmarks of excellence. From packed stadiums to global television audiences, sport once again proved its power to unite, inspire, and astonish.

Fans witnessed historic title runs, dramatic last-minute comebacks, and record-breaking feats in football, cricket, basketball, motorsport, tennis, and beyond. Established champions defended their crowns under immense pressure, while a new generation of stars announced their arrival on the biggest stages. Tactical innovation, physical endurance, and mental resilience became the defining traits of success in a year where margins were razor-thin and stakes unprecedented.

Beyond victories and trophies, 2025 also marked a period of transformation. Leagues expanded, formats evolved, and landmark decisions shaped the future direction of several major sports. Women's competitions continued their rapid rise in prominence, youth talent flourished, and global audiences reached new highs, underscoring sport's growing cultural and commercial impact.

This curated list revisits the most significant sporting moments of 2025, detailing the events, venues, champions, and defining performances that made the year unforgettable. Together, these stories capture a season of ambition, drama, and achievement—one that will be remembered as a testament to the enduring spirit of competition at the highest level.



India defeated South Africa by 52 runs in the final to claim their maiden Women's Cricket World Cup title at DY Patil Stadium in Navi Mumbai.



Rising above the noise, Kohli and Rohit played pivotal roles in India's triumphant Champions Trophy 2025 campaign, silencing critics and reaffirming their enduring value. (BCCI PHOTO)



In the final against Punjab Kings, Kohli scored 43 runs off 35 balls as Bengaluru posted 190/9, eventually winning the match by six runs. The victory marked the franchise's first IPL title, ending an 18-year wait. (PHOTO: X)



South Africa's World Test Championship win at Lord's against the mighty Australia. Proteas clinched their first major ICC title in decades with a memorable victory over Australia. (PHOTO: ICC/X)



Neeraj Chopra breaking the 90m barrier in javelin, throwing 90.23m at the Doha Diamond League and setting a new Indian record. (AP IMAGE)



Lando Norris wins his maiden Formula 1 World Championship, becoming a defining figure in F1's 2025 season. (PHOTO: X)



Chelsea win the expanded FIFA Club World Cup, beating PSG to become the first club to win all major UEFA trophies, a landmark moment for club football. (REUTERS IMAGE)



Crystal Palace's FA Cup final shock victory over Manchester City to win their first major English trophy in the modern era. (PHOTO: X)



In MMA's biggest year of shifts, Islam Makhachev etched his name in history by capturing belts in both lightweight and welterweight divisions. (PHOTO: X)

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