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DIPK-10155/25 Dated: 17.01.2026

Department of Information & Public Relations, J&K

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Digital Arrest' Cyber Scam

Elderly Srinagar Couple Loses ₹48 Lakh

KO Web Desk

Srinagar: An elderly couple from Srinagar has fallen victim to a cyber fraud, losing 48 lakh after being trapped in a 'digital arrest' scam.

In a statement, the Crime Branch J&K said that the couple was approached by the fraudsters through WhatsApp video call informing them that the callers belong to CBI and are investigating the couple for their alleged involvement in a big financial fraud.



The fraudsters also projected themselves as officials from the Telecom | **More on P6**

Copper's Global Boom Sparks Kashmir's Ancient & Modern Trading

While investors keep an eye on gold and silver, copper is drawing attention for its rising role in clean energy, electric vehicles and data infrastructure.

Irshad Mushtaq

Srinagar: When Bashir Masoodi invested 2 lakh in copper late in 2025, he focused on the numbers flashing on the Multi Commodity Exchange screen. Copper futures for the January 2026 series traded near 1,300 per kilogram, a sharp contrast to the 160 per kilogram level seen in 2004.

That long climb reflected a return of more than 700 per cent over two decades and convinced him that copper had entered a new phase.



By early 2026, the value of Masoodi's copper exposure had grown to about 3.4 lakh, giving him a profit of

1,40,000 in a matter of months.

He followed the market through MCX futures, the primary route available to Indian investors since copper does not have an exchange traded fund option in the country.

"Gold and silver always dominate the talk," Masoodi said while holding a copper glass passed down from his grandmother. "But when I looked at the price history and saw how copper moved with industry and power projects, the story felt different and | **More on P6**

Wet Spell Likely From Jan 19: MeT

Observer News Service

Srinagar: Minimum temperatures across Jammu and Kashmir and Ladakh remained largely unchanged on Saturday compared to the previous day, even as the Meteorological Department forecast a prolonged wet spell with the possibility of heavy rain and snowfall in several areas later this month.

Srinagar recorded a minimum temperature of minus 3.2 degrees Celsius, the same as on Friday. Qazigund and Pahalgam also witnessed identical overnight lows of minus 3.4 degrees Celsius and minus 2.6 degrees Celsius, respectively, showing no variation from the previous day.

Gulmarg registered a minimum of minus 4.2 degrees Celsius, unchanged from Friday. Shopian and Pulwama remained | **More on P6**

LG: Sports Must Be Kept Away From Politics

Pushes Grassroots Sports Infrastructure, Fair Selection Systems

Calls For Future-Ready Sports Ecosystem In J&K

Observer News Service

Srinagar: Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha on Saturday called for keeping sports strictly away from politics, asserting that a peaceful and transparent environment is essential to nurture sporting talent and build India as a true sporting powerhouse.

The Lieutenant Governor was speaking at the inauguration of the two-day National Level Sports Conference - SRIJAN, organised by the Department



of Youth Services and Sports at Jammu. The conference aims to identify actionable strategies to

strengthen sports systems in Jammu and Kashmir, prepare a roadmap for the effective implementation of the National Sports Policy 2025 and J&K Sports Policy 2022, and outline measures for shaping a resilient and future-ready generation.

In his address, the Lieutenant Governor emphasised the need to integrate sports with education and essential life skills, describing sports as a powerful tool for the holistic development of

youth.

"Sports is a powerful force that shapes individuals, brings communities together, and plays a vital role in nation-building. For youth, sports act as a real-life school that teaches discipline, values and leadership through lived experience," he said.

Highlighting the broader social impact of sports, the Lieutenant Governor said it serves as a strong medium for empowerment, social awareness and overall societal | **More on P6**

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Scholarships This Week

Kashmir Observer in association with Buddy4Study.com presents scholarships available for the meritorious students of Jammu and Kashmir

Scholarship Name 1: Dr. A. P. J. Abdul Kalam Young Research Fellowship 2025-26

Description: Dr. A. P. J. Abdul Kalam Young Research Fellowship 2025-26 is being provided by Technology, Education, Research and Rehabilitation for the Environment (TERRE) Policy Center. It supports students having secured undergraduate, postgraduate, or PhD degrees in environmental research, and recognises young Indian researchers having made significant contributions to environmental protection.

Eligibility: Application is open to citizens of India, who are between 18 to 25 years old as of 31st December 2025. Applicants must be pursuing or must have completed an undergraduate or master's degree in any field (M.Sc./M.E./M.A.) or a PhD degree in a related field.

Prizes & Rewards: A fellowship of up to 25,000 and a certificate.

Last Date to Apply: 31-01-2026
 Application mode: Online applications only

Short Url: www.b4s.in/observer/APJF2

QR Code: <https://d1e9eg0t05513.cloudfront.net/static/images/scho-media/2025-261768281342.png>

Scholarship Name 2: JMI Dr. A.P.J. Abdul Kalam Scholarship 2024-25

Description: The JMI Dr. A.P.J. Abdul Kalam Scholarship 2024-25 is being offered by the Jamia Millia Islamia, New Delhi. It supports students from economically weaker sections pursuing full-time regular undergraduate or postgraduate courses.



Eligibility: Application is open to citizens of India, who are the bona fide students of Jamia Millia Islamia enrolled in a full-time undergraduate or postgraduate courses and have secured a minimum attendance of 75%. Applicants must show good conduct, satisfactory academic performance. They must have passed their previous examinations. They must belong to an economically weaker section with a family income not exceeding 2,00,000 per annum.

Prizes & Rewards: Fee reimbursement of 10,000 per annum.

Last Date to Apply: 25-01-2026
 Application mode: Offline to: Office of the Dean, Students' Welfare, JMI (Dr. M. A. Ansari Auditorium)

Short Url: www.b4s.in/observer/JMIA1

QR Code: <https://d1e9eg0t05513.cloudfront.net/static/images/scho-media/2024-251768281332.png>

Scholarship Name 3: GSK Global Capability Centre Scholarship Program 2025-26

Description: The GSK Global Capability Centre Scholarship Program 2025-26, introduced by the GlaxoSmithKline Global Capability Centre (GSK GCC) offers financial support to first-year MBBS students pursuing their studies in government medical colleges across India. The initiative aims to ease educational expenses, enabling deserving students to pursue their medical studies without facing financial burden.

Eligibility: Students must be enrolled in the first year of an MBBS program in a government medical college. Applicants must have scored at least 65% marks in Class 12 Board examinations.

The annual family income of the applicants must be below INR 6,00,000 from all sources combined.

The scholarship is open to Indian nationals only. Children of the employees of GlaxoSmithKline Global Capability Centre (GSK GCC) and Buddy4Study are ineligible.

Prizes & Rewards: Selected students will receive a scholarship of up to INR 1,00,000 per year for 4.5 years.

Last Date to Apply: 20-01-2026
 Application mode: Online applications only

Short Url: www.b4s.in/observer/GSKGCC1

QR Code: <https://d1e9eg0t05513.cloudfront.net/static/images/scho-media/2025-261768281351.png>

PUBLIC NOTICE

I have changed my name from (old name) ATEEB BASHIR (new name) ATEEB BASHIR LONE. In future I will be known as (new name) ATEEB BASHIR LONE. If anybody is having any objection, he/she may contact Passport Office, Srinagar within 7 days from the date of publication of this notice. After that no objection shall be entertained.

FKO

OFFICE OF THE NAIB TEHSILDAR PATTAN

Public Notice..

Sub.. issuance of registration order in respect of delayed birth..

The registrar birth BDO Sherabad Khore has submitted a case file pertaining to birth of Ghulam Hassan Tantray s/o Abdul Razak Tantray R/o Shirpora with verified date of birth 01/07/1951 occurred at home in this connection if any body having objection for issuance of said certificate he may contact to this office within 04 days after that no objection shall be entertained.

Sd
Naib Tehsildar Pattan
FKO

PUBLIC NOTICE

My name has been wrongly written in my driving licence bearing DL No: JK 05 20010001054 as Mohammad Salim while my correct name is Mohd Saleem Khan. 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 RTO within seven days. After that no objection shall be entertained.

Mohd Saleem Khan
S/o Ab Rashid
fko

PUBLIC NOTICE

I, Bilal Ahmad Bhat, S/O Abdul Salam Bhat hereby inform the general public that my shop, earlier registered as Mobile Accessories, located at Main Chowk, Ompora, Budgam, has been renamed Chirag Mobile Gallery.

Therefore, the electricity bill with consumer ID 0206010072376 may kindly be issued in the new name. If anyone has any objection, they may inform the concerned department within seven days from the date of this announcement.

Bilal Ahmad Bhat
S/O Abdul Salam Bhat
R/O Ompora Budgam
x

OFFICE OF THE NAIB TEHSILDAR BUDGAM

NOTICE FOR ISSUANCE OF OBC UNDER TELI CASTE

It is hereby notified for the information of the general public that the following applicant and his family members, resident "Zooribagh" of Tehsil Budgam District Budgam, have applied for issuance of OBC, J&K, Under Teli Caste certificate in terms of Government of Jammu and Kashmir rules.

Whereas, Shri/Smt. ZAHID AHMAD TELI S/O BASHIR AHMED TELI R/O Zooribagh Tehsil Budgam District Budgam has applied before this office for issuance of OBC, J&K certificate. Any person having objection(s) with regard to the issuance of the said OBC certificate may submit the same in writing to the office of the undersigned within 07 (seven) days from the date of publication of this notice. After expiry of the stipulated time, no objection shall be entertained and the certificate will be issued in due course.

Details of Applicant and Family Members:

| S. NO | Name of family member | Relationship with Applicant | Occupation | Annual Income |
|---------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------------|------------|---------------|
| 1. | Bashir Ahmed Teli | Father | LABOURER | 1,20,000/= |
| 2. | Raja | Mother | H/WIFE | |
| 3. | Irfan Ah. Teli | Brother | LABOURER | 180,000/= |
| 4. | Zahid Ah. Teli | Self | SALESMAN | 180,000/= |
| Total Annual Income | | | | Rs 480,000/= |

The total annual income of the applicant's family is Rs 480,000/= (Rupees Four lac Eighty Thousand only). In this regard, objections are invited from general public regarding the issuance of requisite certificate in favour of the applicant. If any person has any objection, he/she can submit his/her objections in this office within seven days during office hours. No objection shall be entertained after the stipulated time period.

Naib Tehsildar
Budgam
mcb

PUBLIC NOTICE

My DOB has been wrongly written in my Passport bearing no: X9971535 as 10-04-1975 While my correct DOB as per adhaar card is 15-10-1985. 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 Passport Office Srinagar within Seven days. After that no objection shall be entertained.

Mohd Saleem Khan
S/o Ab Rashid Khan R/o Taperwaripora
fko

NOTICE FOR GENERAL PUBLIC THE JAMMU & KASHMIR STATE BOARD OF SCHOOL EDUCATION

CERTIFICATES-KD, NEW CAMPUS BEMINA SRINAGAR ATTENTION PLEASE

I have passed /appeared in SSE/HSE-I/HSE-II (Class 10th.) under Roll No. 117007010 Session Annual Regular Year 2025. Through the Jammu & Kashmir Board of School Education. The error has been committed by the records against my Mothers name as SHAMEEMA instead of SHAMIMA BANO.

Now I have applied for correction / rectification of error in the Jammu & Kashmir board of School Education, New campus Bemina, Srinagar. If any person has any objection in this regard may file the same in the office of the Deputy Secretary, Certificates-KD within seven days from the date of publication of this notice, after the expiry of said period, no objection will be entertained.

This is published for the information of the general public. The Correct particulars be recorded as under:
 Name: FARHANA ZAINAB,
 Fathers Name: MANZOOR AHMAD BHAT,
 Mothers Name, SHAMIMA BANO
 Date of Birth: 05-05-2010,
 Residence:- PARISABAD BUDGAM .
 mcb

NOTICE FOR GENERAL PUBLIC THE JAMMU & KASHMIR STATE BOARD OF SCHOOL EDUCATION

CERTIFICATES-KD, NEW CAMPUS BEMINA SRINAGAR ATTENTION PLEASE

I have passed /appeared in SSE/HSE-I/HSE-II (Class 10th.) under Roll No. 117041006 Session Annual Regular Year 2024. Through the Jammu & Kashmir Board of School Education. The error has been committed by the records against my Fathers name as MOHAMMAD ISHAQ MIR instead of MOHD ISHAQ MIR.

Now I have applied for correction / rectification of error in the Jammu & Kashmir board of School Education, New campus Bemina, Srinagar. If any person has any objection in this regard may file the same in the office of the Deputy Secretary, Certificates-KD within seven days from the date of publication of this notice, after the expiry of said period, no objection will be entertained.

This is published for the information of the general public. The Correct particulars be recorded as under:
 Name: SHUGUFTA BATOOL .
 Fathers Name: MOHD ISHAQ MIR,
 Mothers Name, FATIMA BANO
 Date of Birth: 05-08-2009,
 Residence:- CHANDPORA BUDGAM
 MOBILE: 9906919215.
 mcb

NOTICE FOR GENERAL PUBLIC THE JAMMU & KASHMIR STATE BOARD OF SCHOOL EDUCATION

CERTIFICATES-KD, NEW CAMPUS BEMINA SRINAGAR ATTENTION PLEASE

I have passed /appeared in SSE/HSE-I/HSE-II (Class 10th.) under Roll No. 117007021 Session Annual Regular Year 2025. Through the Jammu & Kashmir Board of School Education. The error has been committed by the records against my Fathers / Mothers name as SYED ALTAF HUSSAIN / HANEESA AKHTER instead of SYED AULTAF HUSSAIN / HANIFA BANO.

Now I have applied for correction / rectification of error in the Jammu & Kashmir board of School Education, New campus Bemina, Srinagar. If any person has any objection in this regard may file the same in the office of the Deputy Secretary, Certificates-KD within seven days from the date of publication of this notice, after the expiry of said period, no objection will be entertained.

This is published for the information of the general public. The Correct particulars be recorded as under:
 Name: SYED HEENA ZEHRA ,
 Fathers Name: SYED AULTAF HUSSAIN,
 Mothers Name, HANIFA BANO
 Date of Birth: 01-07-2010,
 Residence:- GAREIND BUDGAM
 MOBILE: 9906919215.
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ازنیابت بومی

عنوان :- درخواست منجانب محمد سلطان چوپان ولد عبدلرزاق چوپان ساکن رشید آباد برادر عطا علی OBC For Central تحت 176 SRO نکت اولادان عاشق حسین وحمید سلطان

اشتہار ہرخاص وعام

معاہدہ مندرچہ عنوان الصد میں ساکن/ ساکنہ ایک درخواست بخش OBC سرٹیفکیٹ بزمہ چوپان چیش کی ہے جو کزیر کاروائی ہے اس بارے میں پٹواری حلقہ سے رپورٹ طلب کی گئی ہے جس سے عیاں ہے کہ ساکن واقعی چوپان ذات سے تعلق رکھتا ہے اور ساکن رشید آباد میں رہائش پذیر ہے اور کبھی بھی ترک سکونت نہیں کی ہے ساکن کا تہذیبی ذیلی افراد پر مشتمل ہے

| محمد سلطان چوپان ولد عبدلرزاق چوپان | مزدوری | 62 سال |
|-------------------------------------|--------------|--------|
| حمید بیگم زوجہ محمد سلطان چوپان | گھریلوی کام | 61 سال |
| عابد حسین چوپان پسر | سرکاری ملازم | 27 سال |
| عاشق حسین چوپان پسر | زیر تعلیم | 24 سال |
| نازہ بیگم زوجہ قیصر احمد | گھریلوی کام | 34 سال |
| حمید سلطان خنجر | -- | 22 سال |
| قیصر احمد پسر | -- | -- |

سائل مذکورہ OBC سرٹیفکیٹ حاصل کرنے کا خواہ ہے اور تہذیبی مہوار آمدنی 58771 روپیہ تک ہے۔ سرٹیفکیٹ زیر بحث اجراء کرنے میں اگر کسی شخص کو کوئی عذر یا اعتراض ہو تو وہ بدستور ایشیا رسات دن کے اندر اندر اپنے مندر یا مندر سے عدالت حذاکوٹری اوقات کے دوران پیش کریں۔ بعد گزرے سے مہاکوٹی مندر یا مندر سے قابل قبول نہیں ہوگا۔

FKO
نایب تحصیلدار

ازنیابت بومی

عنوان :- درخواست منجانب محمد سلطان چوپان ولد عبدلرزاق چوپان ساکن رشید آباد برادر عطا علی OBC For Central تحت 176 SRO نکت اولادان عاشق حسین وحمید سلطان

اشتہار ہرخاص وعام

معاہدہ مندرچہ عنوان الصد میں ساکن/ ساکنہ ایک درخواست بخش OBC سرٹیفکیٹ بزمہ چوپان چیش کی ہے جو کزیر کاروائی ہے اس بارے میں پٹواری حلقہ سے رپورٹ طلب کی گئی ہے جس سے عیاں ہے کہ ساکن واقعی چوپان ذات سے تعلق رکھتا ہے اور ساکن رشید آباد میں رہائش پذیر ہے اور کبھی بھی ترک سکونت نہیں کی ہے ساکن کا تہذیبی ذیلی افراد پر مشتمل ہے

| محمد سلطان چوپان ولد عبدلرزاق چوپان | مزدوری | 62 سال |
|-------------------------------------|--------------|--------|
| حمید بیگم زوجہ محمد سلطان چوپان | گھریلوی کام | 61 سال |
| عابد حسین چوپان پسر | سرکاری ملازم | 27 سال |
| عاشق حسین چوپان پسر | زیر تعلیم | 24 سال |
| نازہ بیگم زوجہ قیصر احمد | گھریلوی کام | 34 سال |
| حمید سلطان خنجر | -- | 22 سال |
| قیصر احمد پسر | -- | -- |

سائل مذکورہ OBC For central سرٹیفکیٹ حاصل کرنے کا خواہ ہے اور تہذیبی مہوار آمدنی 58771 روپیہ تک ہے۔ سرٹیفکیٹ زیر بحث اجراء کرنے میں اگر کسی شخص کو کوئی عذر یا اعتراض ہو تو وہ بدستور ایشیا رسات دن کے اندر اندر اپنے مندر یا مندر سے عدالت حذاکوٹری اوقات کے دوران پیش کریں۔ بعد گزرے سے مہاکوٹی مندر یا مندر سے قابل قبول نہیں ہوگا۔

FKO
نایب تحصیلدار

Khyber Cement Goes Live with SAP S/4HANA

Observer News Service

Srinagar: Khyber Cement on Saturday announced the successful go-live of Project Nishat, a major enterprise-wide digital transformation initiative that transitions the company's core operations to SAP S/4HANA, marking a significant leap in operational excellence and technological modernization.

The implementation represents a comprehensive overhaul of Khyber Cement's business processes, enabling real-time visibility, seamless integration across functions, and a unified data environment. The shift to SAP S/4HANA positions the

Umar Trambo, Director Corporate & Strategy at Khyber Cement, said the successful transition demonstrates that organizations from Jammu and Kashmir can lead world-class digital programs.

"By upgrading to a platform trusted by the world's leading enterprises through our partnership with SAP Labs and Grant Thornton, we are setting a new standard for Jammu and Kashmir. This transformation proves that regional leaders can successfully execute global-scale digital initiatives and emerge as future-ready organizations," he said.

Manzoor Ahmad Mir, Head of Commercials, Le-



Hazratbal buzzes with devotees as traditional snacks are prepared on the eve of Shab-e-Meraj. KO Photo Abid Bhat

Kashmir Observes Shab-e-Meraj, Devotees Throng Hazratbal

Observer News Service

Srinagar: Kashmir observed Shab-e-Meraj with religious fervour, as the historic Hazratbal Shrine witnessed one of the largest congregations on Friday night.

According to KNO, hundreds of devotees thronged Hazratbal Shrine, which houses the holy relic of Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) last night.

The holy night was marked by uninterrupted prayers and heartfelt supplications that filled the shrine's courtyard with spiritual energy.

"This night and day fill my heart with peace. Being here with my family, offering prayers, I feel as if the Prophet's blessings surround us," Sana Bano, 62, from Nishat told KNO.

Ghulam Rasool, 65, from Pulwama, said, "Every year, this day reminds us of unity, devotion and the mercy of the Prophet (PBUH). The prayers and recitations strengthen our faith like nothing else."

Officials and volunteers ensured smooth crowd management, water stations, medical assistance and proper lighting, allowing devotees to focus entirely on their spiritual experience.

Across the Valley, households and other shrines also hosted prayers, recitations and night-long gatherings, echoing the devotion of Hazratbal far beyond its gates.

KU Organizes Medical Camps for Devotees

Observer News Service

Srinagar: The Department of Students Welfare (DSW) University of Kashmir (KU) in collaboration with the varsity's Health Centre, organised a Special Social Service Camp and Medical Camp on the eve of the revered occasion of Mehraj-ul-Alam.

The initiative was aimed at extending community service and healthcare support to devotees who had gathered in large numbers to visit the Hazratbal Shrine.

The twin camps were set up at the Sir Syed Gate of the University campus, where refreshments were served to devotees arriving from various corners of the Valley, while free medical check-ups and basic healthcare services were also provided at the medical camp.

To ensure the smooth and orderly conduct of the camps the Proctorial Wing of the university made elaborate arrangements while managing the flow of devotees and maintaining discipline and coordination at the venue.

Vice-Chancellor, KU Prof Nilofer Khan, who was present on the occasion, personally served refreshments to the devotees, reflecting the institution's spirit of compassion and inclusivity.

The Vice-Chancellor remarked that the University has always stood committed to serving society beyond its academic mandate, particularly on occasions of deep religious and social significance.

Highlighting the broader role of university in community engagement, Prof Nilofer Khan stated that such initiatives reaffirm the university's responsibility towards society. Registrar, KU Prof Naseer Iqbal, appreciated the collective efforts of all stakeholders involved in organising the camps and said that the initiative exemplified the university's commitment to social responsibility.

Dean, Students Welfare, KU Prof Pervez Ahmed, stated that the Department of Students Welfare KU remains actively engaged in promoting student-led and institutional social service activities. He said that organising such camps on significant religious occasions strengthens the bond between the university and the community and instils the values of service and compassion among students and staff alike.

The devotees visiting the Hazratbal Shrine expressed their appreciation for the arrangements made by the University of Kashmir, acknowledging the timely refreshments, medical assistance and overall management at the twin camps.



company in line with global enterprise standards and strengthens its readiness for scale and long-term growth.

Project Nishat was executed in close collaboration with Grant Thornton, with technical support from SAP Labs. The partnership brought together global consulting expertise and best-in-class enterprise technology to deliver a high-performance system tailored to Khyber Cement's complex operational requirements.

Highlighting the regional importance of the milestone,

gal and Regulatory Affairs, described Project Nishat as a decisive step toward achieving global operational benchmarks.

"Project Nishat is a direct result of our commitment to global operational standards. By implementing SAP S/4HANA, we have replaced fragmented processes with a cohesive, data-driven system that empowers our teams and provides a scalable platform for consistent excellence," Mir said.

| NORTHERN RAILWAY TENDER NOTICE | |
|--|---|
| The Dy. Chief Engineer / Construction, N.Rty., Jalandhar City, for and on behalf of the President of India invites e-tender under Two Packet System for the under noted work:- | |
| 1. Name of work and location | Request for proposal (RFP) for appointment of Authority Engineer for providing project management services (PSS) for Redevelopment of Beas Junction and Jalandhar City Railway Stations of Firozpur Division, Northern Railway |
| 2. Completion period of the work | 24 (Twenty four) Months |
| 3. Approx. Cost of work | Rs. 6,54,04,806.14 |
| 4. Earnest Money amount (to be deposited Online) | Rs. 4,77,000/- |
| 5. Validity of offer | 120 days |
| 6. Date & Time for submission of E-tender and opening of tender | Bidders will be able to submit their original/revised bids up to closing date i.e. up to 15:00 hrs dated 18.02.2026 on IREPS website www.ireps.gov.in . Manual submission of bid offer is not allowed against this tender, and any such manual offer received shall be ignored. |
| 7. Detailed Tender Notice & Tender Document | The tender document is available on www.ireps.gov.in Above tenders document will be available for submission of offer on IREPS web site i.e. www.ireps.gov.in from 04.02.2026 to 18.02.2026 upto 15:00 hrs. All other terms and conditions in respect of above tender are given in tender document. |
| Tender Notice No. 1-W/2025-26/4/Dy.CE/CJUC Dated: 17.01.2026 186/2026 | |
| SERVING CUSTOMERS WITH A SMILE | |

BEREAVEMENT

With deep sorrow this is to inform about the demise of our dear mother, wife of Late Syed Mohammad Yaseen, resident of Sanat Nagar on the morning of Saturday, 17th January, 2026. May the Almighty rest her soul in peace. All are requested to pray for the departed soul.

Bereaved
Syed Tariq Yaseen
Syed Fouz ul Tariq
Gul Hanief Khan
Qazi Qamar Iqbal Qari

pd

| NORTHERN RAILWAY E-TENDER NOTICE | | |
|---|------------------------|---|
| Tender No: 219-2025-26-ADEN-I-ASR | Date: 15.01.2026 | |
| Sr.DEN-III/FZR acting for and on behalf of The President of India invites open tenders (E-Tenders) against below titled tenders and available on www.ireps.gov.in with closing date- 09.02.2026 up to 15:00 Hrs. Bidders will be able to submit their original/revised bids up to closing date and time only. Manual offers are not allowed against this tenders, and any such manual offer received shall be ignored. Contractors are allowed to make payments against this tender towards tender document cost and earnest money only through only payment modes available on www.ireps.gov.in portal like net banking, debit card, credit card etc. Manual payments through Demand draft Banker Cheque, Deposit receipts, FDR etc. are not allowed. For more information logon to www.ireps.gov.in | | |
| Tender Type | Tendering Section | |
| Open | Works | |
| Date of Uploading Tenders | Bid Starting Date | |
| 15.01.2026 | 26.01.2026 | |
| | Bid Closing Date/Time | |
| | 09.02.2026/15:00 Hrs | |
| Details of Tender | | |
| SN | Tender Number | Details of Tender |
| 1 | 219-2025-26-ADEN-I-ASR | Drainage improvement work to prevent ingress of ground water in LHS at C-64 on VKA-DBNK Section Under ADEN-I-ASR. |
| | Advertised Value (Rs.) | Earnest Money |
| | 52,60,976.01 | 1,05,200.00 |
| | Validity of Offer | Period of Completion |
| | 60 Days | 06 Months |
| Similar nature of work: "Repair using epoxy/ epoxy based chemicals." | | |
| Note: 1. Before bidding, bidders to check for any corrigendum issued against tender. | | |
| 183/26 | | |
| SERVING CUSTOMERS WITH A SMILE | | |



RASM-E-CHAHARUM

With profound grief and sorrow, we inform you of the sad demise of Mohammad Ismail Wani S/o Late Jalal-u-Din Wani R/o Kursu Padshahi Bagh, Srinagar who passed away on Friday 16th January 2026. May Almighty Allah grant Jannat-ul-Firdous to the departed soul.

Fateha Khawani will be held on Monday 19th January 2026 at 10:00 A.M. at Ancient Graveyard Padshahi Bagh, Srinagar.

Bereaved Family

- 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- (Open)

| PRAYERS | |
|---------|-------|
| FAJR | 6: 08 |
| ZUHR | 12:38 |
| ASR | 4: 08 |
| Magrib | 5:51 |
| ISHA | 7: 15 |

This Day In History

- 1884 - General Charles Gordon departs London for Khartoum
- 1896 - British troops occupy Kumasi, West Africa
- 1913 - Turkish-Greek sea battle near Troy
- 1919 - The Paris peace conference (aka the Versailles peace conference) opens to draw up the treaties formally ending the Great War (WWI)
- 1941 - World War II: A counter-offensive is launched by the British against the Italians in East Africa
- 1943 - Soviets announce they have broken the long siege of Leningrad by Nazi Germany
- 1943 - US rations bread & metal - banning presliced bread reduce bakery demand for metal parts
- 1943 - The first Warsaw Ghetto Uprising
- 1945 - Soviet troops capture Krakow, Poland.
- 1945 - Soviet Armed Forces enter Krakow and push Germans out only to eventually occupy entire country.
- 1947 - Small river steamer sank on Yangtze River, kills 400
- 1959 Ruth Jessen wins LPGA Tampa Golf Open
- 1960 - US & Japan sign joint defense treaty
- 1960 - Capital Airlines Flight 20 crashes in Virginia, killing all 50 people on-board
- 1968 - USSR performs nuclear test at Eastern Kazakh/Semipalinsk USSR
- 1969 - Expanded 4 party Vietnam peace talks began in Paris
- 1969 - United Airlines Flight 266 crashes into Santa Monica Bay, killing all 38 people on-board
- 1974 - Israel & Egypt sign weapons accord
- 1977 - Imran Khan takes 12 wickets in match for Pakistan win at the SCG
- 1977 - Scientists identify a previously unknown bacterium as the cause of the mysterious Legionnaires' disease.
- 1977 - Australia's worst rail disaster occurs in Sydney, killing 83 people
- 1978 - Geoff Boycott captains England for the 1st time, v Pakistan at Karachi
- 1978 - Thiokol conducts 2nd test firing of space shuttle's SRB
- 1981 - Iran accepts US offer of \$7.9 billion in frozen assets
- 1983 - IOC restores Jim Thorpe's Olympic medals 70 years after they were taken from him for being paid \$25 in semipro baseball
- 1988 - Airliner crashes in SW China, killing all 108 on board
- 1989 - Astronomers discover pulsar in remnants of Supernova 1987A (LMC)
- 1989 - IBM announces earnings up 10.4% in 1988
- 1990 - South Africa says it is reconsidering ban on African National Congress
- 1991 - Iraq launches SCUD missiles against Israel
- 1991 - US acknowledges CIA and US Army paid Manuel Noriega \$320,000 over his career
- 1991 - Eastern Air Lines goes out of business after 62 years, citing financial problems.
- 1993 - Martin Luther King Jr. holiday observed in all 50 states of the USA for 1st time

From KO Archives

Child Back After 12 Years

Observer News Service

BARAMULLA - A child who had crossed over to the other side of the line of control (LoC) at the age of five has returned to his home at Keran in the border district of Kupwara after turning 17. Identified as Babu Bhat s/o Taj Din Bhat, he crossed the LoC Thursday to the pleasant surprise of his grieving family.

(Kashmir Observer, 18 January, 2001)

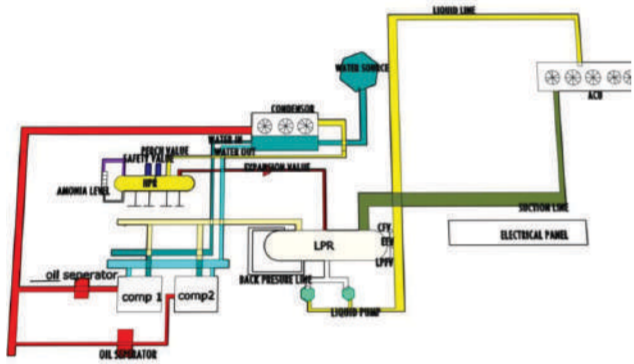
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KO VIEW

Kashmir's Apple Lifeline

Modern refrigeration in Kashmir transforms millions of apples from seasonal surplus to year-round supply, showing how innovation and planning keep tradition alive.



Er Ishfaq Khaliq

When spring rolls into Kashmir, cherries are the first to greet the markets, followed by pears and a host of other fruits that mark the valley's rich horticultural calendar.

Apples, however, wait for autumn, and when they arrive, they flood the markets in Delhi, Mumbai, Bangalore, Ahmedabad, and elsewhere.

The rush of the harvest season often pushes prices down at first, and only when supply tapers off do they climb again.

This economic pulse makes cold storage essential, allowing growers to store their produce and release it gradually for better returns.

Behind this miracle lies a technology that is as old as it is powerful: ammonia refrigeration.

Ammonia is no newcomer. It has long been a trusted refrigerant in industrial systems, and in Kashmir's apple industry, it has become indispensable.

Its properties, including thermodynamic efficiency, high latent heat of vaporization, zero ozone depletion and global warming potential, low cost, and widespread availability, make it the backbone of the valley's cold storage sector.

Today, almost 90 percent of cold stores here rely on ammonia, whether through pump feed or gravity feed systems, delivering reliable performance that keeps apples crisp for months after harvest.

Kashmir produces over 20 lakh metric tons of apples annually, making it one of India's largest apple-growing regions. Controlled Atmosphere (CA) storage is central to preserving this bounty.

By stabilizing prices, reducing spoilage, and extending market access, these cold stores transform perishable fruit into a source of consistent income for growers.

With over a hundred storage units scattered across Pulwama, Shopian, Srinagar, and other districts, the valley relies on refrigeration systems that are large, precise, and fast.

Apples must be cooled quickly after harvest to prevent early ripening and decay, and ammonia offers the energy efficiency and scale required to meet this challenge.

Despite its widespread use, misconceptions about refrigeration persist, particularly when designing systems for Kashmir.

Some assume that because the valley is cold, systems can be simpler, but temperatures during peak harvest season can rise, and systems must be designed just as carefully as anywhere else.

Air-cooled condensers, common elsewhere, often fail in Kashmir's hot and humid conditions, making water-cooled condensers a more reliable choice.

The scale of the industry also matters. Cold stores here handle massive quantities of fruit, and system design must reflect that, moving beyond the small-scale setups of other regions.

Finally, modernization is no longer optional. SCADA and PLC-based systems are increasingly necessary to manage complex storage environments, replacing outdated methods with precise, controllable technology that ensures apples reach the market at peak quality.

Kashmir's apple story is larger than the fruit itself. It is the meeting of technology and landscape, tradition and innovation, planning and execution, turning a short-lived harvest into a reliable national supply.

Ammonia refrigeration is the reliable engine that allows Kashmiri apple growers to compete, thrive, and sustain a tradition that spans generations.

Every crate of fruit that reaches a market far from the orchards carries the imprint of this system, proving that even in the coldest of regions, technology can bring warmth to the livelihoods of thousands.

The author is a senior engineer with the Al-Noor Group of Companies and a member of the Indian Society of Heating, Ventilation, and Air Conditioning Engineers (ISHRAE).

A New Push on the Chenab

As bids open for Dulhasti Stage II, Kishtwar stands at the center of a major energy project with wide economic and social stakes.

Peerzada Mohsin Shafi

The Chenab River has long stood as a source of ambition in Jammu and Kashmir. Its fast waters cut through deep gorges, offering energy, opportunity and the promise of development.

Several hydropower projects already draw strength from this river. Kiru, Kwar, Rattle and Pakal Dul form a growing chain of turbines and tunnels.

With the opening of financial bids for Dulhasti Stage II on January 13, 2026, the Chenab enters another chapter, one that blends engineering confidence with rising public expectation in Kishtwar.

Dulhasti Stage II builds on an existing success. The first stage of the project, commissioned by NHPC in 2007, produces 390 megawatts through a run of the river design with pondage.

That plant has delivered power for almost two decades, offering proof that the site works and the river can support complex infrastructure.

Stage II adds 260 megawatts through two units of 130 megawatts each.

The original detailed project report for Stage I had already mapped this expansion. Engineers chose a plan that draws more power from the same river stretch without erecting a fresh large dam. The result limits surface disturbance while increasing output, a practical approach in steep Himalayan terrain.

The project sits in Kishtwar district, with the dam near Dul village, about 450 meters downstream of the Amni Nallah confluence. The underground powerhouse will rise on the left bank near Benzwar village.

Dulhasti Stage II also fits into a larger design for the Chenab basin. Water released from the 1,000 megawatt Pakal Dul project on the Marusudar River will flow into the Dulhasti reservoir after passing through Pakal Dul's powerhouse. That discharge, measured at 277 cubic meters per second, will produce electricity more than once.

This cascading use of water reflects careful planning and strengthens renewable capacity without additional river diversion.

After years of delay, the project reached a decisive stage when NHPC floated the civil works tender under Lot 1, valued at 1,018.44 crore, with a construction timeline of 1,340 days. The



Dulhasti Stage II reflects how ambition meets geography in the mountains. Local communities see prospects for work and development. Policymakers and engineers see a test of planning and execution under demanding conditions. As the project moves toward construction, its success will depend on respect for the river's force and the terrain's limits. Built with care and accountability, Dulhasti Stage II can power the future while honoring the land that makes such power possible.

tender was issued on May 30, 2025, and financial bids were opened on January 13, 2026, drawing participation from four firms.

Max Infra Limited quoted 882 crore and emerged as the lowest bidder. Patel Infra followed at 990 crore, while MEIL quoted 1,065 crore. Rithwik Projects failed to qualify at the financial stage.

Infrastructure efforts in the region often stall even after bids open, as seen in projects like Vailoo, Singhpora and the Sudhmahadev Dranga tunnels.

This step suggests real movement, with the Letter of Award expected in the coming months.

Environmental clearance already stands in place under the EIA Notification of 2006, supported by scoping and impact studies.

The project will use 60.3 hectares of land. Private holdings account for 8.27 hectares and affect 62 families. State land covers 40.93 hectares, while

11.1 hectares come from the existing Stage I facilities.

Forest land stays untouched. The clearance outlines steps to manage effects on land, water, communities and local ecology.

Risk management shapes much of the planning.

Kishtwar and nearby districts face cloud bursts, flash floods and landslides. Engineers carried out dam break studies using hydrodynamic models for extreme flood scenarios, both with the reservoir at full level and under natural river conditions.

The analysis mapped downstream impact over 33.42 kilometers up to the Rattle dam site. Villages such as Merut, Bander Koot, Nilsar, Satarbagli, Gohle, Koriye, Puitnag, Bachi, Chattar and Bhandera on the right bank, along with Dul, Benzwar, Bindraban, Jarwari and Kandni on the left bank, appear in partial impact zones.

In steep valleys, flood waves can peak within an hour. The Disaster Management Plan, budgeted at 1.75 crore, focuses on early warning systems, preventive steps and training at the community level.

Economic gains form another pillar of the project's appeal.

Construction will employ local youth, skilled workers, transport operators and small businesses tied to supply and services.

Once operational, the plant will feed 260 megawatts of clean power into the grid, improving supply and supporting industry while lowering dependence on fossil fuels.

The cascading link with Pakal Dul shows how the same water can deliver higher returns through thoughtful design.

Jammu and Kashmir stands to gain stronger power availability, better infrastructure and broader employment opportunities.

At the national level, the project supports renewable energy targets and showcases a model of Himalayan hydropower that values efficiency and planning. Success here could guide future projects in similar terrain.

But challenges still demand attention.

The Himalayan landscape brings steep slopes, seismic activity and heavy sediment loads. Changing climate patterns add stress through intense rainfall events. Land acquisition, though limited in scale, touches real families whose relocation must proceed with openness and fairness. Strong oversight, strict adherence to technical standards and constant preparedness will shape outcomes on the ground.

Dulhasti Stage II reflects how ambition meets geography in the mountains. Local communities see prospects for work and development. Policymakers and engineers see a test of planning and execution under demanding conditions.

As the project moves toward construction, its success will depend on respect for the river's force and the terrain's limits.

Built with care and accountability, Dulhasti Stage II can power the future while honouring the land that makes such power possible.

The author is an infrastructure columnist from Anantnag, and can be reached at mssf21@gmail.com.

I learned about religious authority through everyday moments.

At tea stalls, on buses, and in offices after lunch, people spoke of clerics with care, caution, and compassion. Names were whispered almost like a prayer.

"He is very close to God, very pious," someone would say. "No molvi XYZ is better than ABC." "Do you know the great aga or molvi PQR?" they would ask.

I watched faces, listened to the way people spoke, noticed the pauses, and realized that the preacher held something special and shaped how people understood their faith in Kashmir.

Respect often depends more on who speaks than on what is said. Knowledge stays in the hands of a few families or networks. Access to scripture, rituals, and guidance passes through them, making devotion feel personal and deeply rooted in everyday life.

When a small group controls meaning, devotion grows stronger, and faith becomes something people experience through others. Personal understanding steps aside as listening, trusting, and following take center stage.

Families like the Safavis and the Ansaris hold both spiritual and social influence. They oversee mosques, madrasas, and courts, shaping ideas about what is allowed, what is seen as sinful, and what fits social and political expectations.

Questioning them often feels like questioning faith itself.

Surnames carry weight, and influence reaches far beyond religion into society and politics.

A candidate with a respected family name attracts loyalty that others struggle to build.

Sunni groups follow a similar pattern in different ways.

Clerical families and preacher networks guide public discourse through mosques and seminaries. Figures such as Anwar Shah Shopiani inspire loyalty that goes well beyond theology.

Sermons shape social behaviour, influence political views, and ease communal anxieties. Guidance slowly turns into prescription, and prescription settles into accepted truth.

Devotion turns into idealization



Faith in Everyday Life

Tradition, loyalty, and emotion guide belief more than access to texts or personal understanding in the valley.

Aabroo Hussain

when authority rises beyond question. Loyalty outweighs reasoning, and the preacher begins to appear morally flawless.

People protect this authority through love, respect, and the fear of being pushed to the margins of the community.

Reverence feels inherited and instinctive, rather than something each

person actively chooses.

If admiration reflected contributions to knowledge alone, innovators like Nikola Tesla might be honoured in homes every morning for bringing electricity into daily life.

Instead, devotion often centers on figures whose authority flows from family, tradition, and long-standing social respect.

Today's world offers access to religious texts, tafsirs, fiqh manuals, historical debates, and critical perspectives online. Knowledge stands open to everyone.

Even so, the pulpit continues to draw attention and loyalty. Emotional allegiance explains much of this pull.

Many people prefer mediated faith over personal exploration. Belonging and reassurance matter more than interpretation, and guidance feels safer than inquiry.

Religious authority continues because devotion passes from one generation to the next like a cherished heirloom. Families and communities carry reverence across decades, shaping faith in ways that information alone cannot.

Faith often aligns with submission to personalities rather than engagement with ideas. Loyalty quiets questions, emotional attachment strengthens tradition, and the pulpit remains central even in an age of open knowledge.

These patterns reach beyond religion into how communities trust, believe, and make decisions.

Conversations, habits, and inherited reverence create structures that outlast changes in technology or access to information. Faith becomes a shared map that guides behaviour, shapes political attitudes, and defines belonging.

People learn devotion as continuity, and that continuity grows as important as belief itself.

Every conversation, reverent tone, and silent acknowledgment of authority shows that devotion carries history, emotion, and social inheritance.

Understanding this pattern explains why faith continues to move through familiar channels, why the pulpit retains its influence, and why curiosity and critical engagement often give way to belonging, loyalty, and inherited reverence.

The author hails from Srinagar and can be reached at aabroo@startupkashmir.org. Views expressed are personal and do not necessarily reflect the editorial position of KO.

The Kashmiri Boy Who Reads the World Differently

A young student's journey through classrooms and community reveals how support and care shape possibility.

Mohammad Hanief

Morning comes early in Pandach, and Shahid Farooq knows it by the sounds before he sees the light.

He hears footsteps in the house, his mother calling from the kitchen, and the village waking up around him.

At eleven, Shahid already understands his world through what he remembers and pays attention to, living his days with patience and care he has learned from experience rather than being told.

Shahid was born on May 7, 2011, in this village in Ganderbal district. He is in Class 5 at Government High School Pandach, where he learns by listening, remembering, and putting in steady effort.

A government medical assessment shows that Shahid has a seventy-five percent visual disability, classified as low vision. His condition comes from encephalomalacia with gliosis in both occipital regions of the brain, along with damage to the optic nerves, which affects how his eyes process sight.

Doctors say the condition is progressive, which means Shahid's experience of the world will continue to change as he grows.

The boy's daily life reflects this reality in small but clear ways.

Reading a page takes time and close focus. Writing on the blackboard is hard to see without help. He recognizes familiar faces more by their voices than by how they look. Moving through new spaces calls for careful steps and attention.

Even so, Shahid goes to school every day, holding on to education as a door to possibility instead of a barrier set by his circumstances.



Inside the classroom, Shahid listens with full concentration, absorbing lessons through sound and

repetition while classmates follow chalk and print.

Teachers describe him as engaged, curious, and committed to keeping pace, even when the classroom offers limited tools designed for students with visual challenges.

His experience mirrors that of many children in mainstream schools, where inclusion often rests more on intention than on practical design.

Life beyond school centers around family and faith, which give Shahid structure and assurance.

Five times each day, he walks to the mosque with his father and younger brother, following paths shaped by routine and familiarity.

His father stays close, attentive to each step, while his brother moves beside him with the ease of shared understanding.

Prayer offers Shahid a sense of grounding and belonging, a place where his presence feels complete and whole.

From the doorway of their home, Shahid's mother watches these moments with layered emotion. Pride rises as her son moves through the world with determination. Hope stays constant as she imagines a future shaped by medical progress and supportive care.

Her days revolve around that belief, strengthened by faith and the certainty that her child's life holds

meaning and promise.

The family's finances add another dimension to their journey.

Medical evaluations, follow up visits, visual therapy, assistive tools, and specialized educational support demand resources that stretch the household budget.

Each decision requires planning and adjustment, as care remains essential rather than optional.

Families like Shahid's often balance these demands silently, guided by responsibility and love.

Beyond the household, social attitudes continue to influence how children with disabilities experience community life. Understanding grows slowly, and inclusion takes time.

Shahid's constant presence in school, prayer, and daily routines gently challenges old assumptions, offering a living example of capability shaped through support rather than limitation.

India's legal framework recognizes this principle.

The Rights of Persons with Disabilities Act of 2016 places low vision within benchmark disabilities, opening access to educational support, healthcare benefits, and social welfare measures. Shahid's certification confirms his eligibility, while practical access depends on awareness, coordination, and local systems prepared to respond.

Medical professionals emphasize that early and ongoing rehabilitation strengthens independence and learning outcomes for children with visual impairments.

Therapy, adaptive technology, and learning environments designed with care allow children like Shahid to thrive and grow with confidence. Support at the right time shapes futures in lasting ways.

Shahid Farooq's story highlights the importance of turning recognition into action and policy into practice.

His life raises a shared responsibility, asking whether society chooses to meet children like him with meaningful support and sustained commitment.

Each day, Shahid moves forward with purpose. He learns through listening and memory, finds grounding in his prayers, and draws strength and guidance from his family.



SHAHID FAROOQ'S STORY HIGHLIGHTS THE IMPORTANCE OF TURNING RECOGNITION INTO ACTION AND POLICY INTO PRACTICE. His life raises a shared responsibility, asking whether society chooses to meet children like him with meaningful support and sustained commitment.

His hopes are simple, shaped by the dreams of childhood: to learn, grow, and become independent.

As his life moves between faith and education, Shahid walks with care and confidence, supported by his family, and ready for a future defined by opportunity and inclusion rather than the limits of his sight.

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

AS HIS LIFE MOVES BETWEEN FAITH AND EDUCATION, SHAHID WALKS WITH CARE AND CONFIDENCE, supported by his

family, and ready for a future defined by opportunity and inclusion rather than the limits of his sight.

The Cost of Waste at Wular

From the shore, a fisherman reveals how waste is changing fish, birds, and the valley itself.

A.R. Matahanji

I found Gul Kak sitting beside his boat on the muddy edge of Wular Lake. His nets lay open in front of him. He looked down at his catch with a tired face that carried both anger and grief.

His family has fished these waters for generations. The lake fed them and shaped their lives.

Today, that same lake is struggling under plastic and silt, slowly turning hostile to those who depend on it.

"Look at this, Beta," he said, lifting part of the net.

A small fish lay trapped inside a tangle of plastic bags, torn sheets, and bottle caps. It gasped and twisted, fighting for life inside waste that did not belong there.

"Plastic is everywhere now," Gul Kak said. "It sinks, floats, blocks boat engines, and kills the weeds where fish lay eggs. Many days I spend more time cleaning my nets than fishing."

From a distance, Wular Lake still looks calm. Mountains and clouds reflect on its surface. That picture fades the moment you step closer.

Near the shore, thick patches of plastic drift with the water. Waste spreads far into the lake, forming floating sheets that move with the current.

Waterbirds land on these patches, mistaking them for solid ground. They peck at bright pieces and swallow plastic that fills their stomachs without feeding them.

The lake has become a trap for fish and birds alike, shaped by human neglect.

"They say the lake is dying," I said. "It is not just dying," Gul Kak replied. "It is shrinking."

Each year, the water grows shallower. Silt builds up and plastic holds it in place. The lake recedes, replaced by land made of waste rather than soil.



We walked along the shoreline. The ground was covered with discarded items that showed everyday habits.

Old sandals, broken toys, crates, festival boxes, thin bags, and sweet wrappers lay scattered, faded by the sun but still intact.

All of it had come from homes, shops, and streets far away, carried here by streams and drains.

Beyond a fishing ground, Wular Lake holds floodwaters, supports wildlife, and helps regulate Kashmir's climate.

But as it weakens, the damage spreads far and wide. Water levels fall, floods become stronger, and the bal-

ance of the valley shifts.

Gul Kak spat into the water. "Everything comes here," he said. "Our drains lead straight to the lake. This is where all the waste ends up."

I touched the water with my hand. A thin oily layer floated on the surface. Below it, plastic lay pressed into the mud, forming a layer that will last for decades.

At home, I had started counting the plastic my family used each day. Standing here, that effort felt small, but necessary.

"We have to stop waste before it reaches the lake," I said. "Cleaning Wu-

lur alone will not work. Change has to begin in villages, shops, and homes."

"People will not change," Gul Kak said. "They care about ease. They will understand only when the fish are gone."

"They will understand soon," I replied. "Through dirty water and hunger. If people see how much waste they create, they may begin to think differently."

As the sun set, the lake turned golden. And for a moment, it looked peaceful again. Beneath that surface, plastic crowded the water and fish struggled to survive.

walked away as plastic brushed against the mud behind me. The ending of this story is already visible. Understanding it fully means looking at where this waste begins and why it lasts so long. The damage to Wular Lake is clear in fishing nets, birds feeding on plastic, and the debris spread across the water. Seeing it leaves no room for denial. Every bag, wrapper, and careless act only add to a giant slowly being suffocated.

—The author is a resident of a Wular fringe village in Bandipora. He can be reached at saltfarooq@yahoo.com.

I WALKED AWAY AS PLASTIC BRUSHED AGAINST THE MUD BEHIND ME. The ending of this story is already visible. Understanding it fully means looking at where this waste begins and why it lasts so

Iran Unrest Fades & Trump Shifts Tone



Agencies

Dubai: As Iran's street unrest appeared to subside and daily life in Tehran returned closer to normal, President Donald Trump on Friday struck a notably softer tone, publicly thanking Iranian authorities for what he said was a decision to halt mass executions and suggesting the United States may be stepping back from earlier hints of military action.

"We've been told that the killing in Iran is stopping, and there's no plan for executions... I've been told that on good authority... And I greatly respect the fact that they cancelled." Trump told reporters at the White House.

Trump echoed the claim on his social media platform, posting that more than 800 people had been set to be executed but now would not be. "Thank you!" he wrote.

His remarks followed several days in which he repeatedly suggested the U.S. might respond militarily if Iran's government used severe measures to crush protests that had turned violent. The shift in tone added to the impression that the threat of imminent American intervention was easing.

Trump had previously written in support of protesters, "Help is on the way." Asked Friday whether that message still applied, he answered, "Well, we're going to see."

Pressed on whether Arab or Israeli officials had urged him to back away from striking Iran, Trump insisted the decision was his alone. "Nobody convinced me," he said. "I convinced myself."

On the ground in Iran, there were no signs of protests for days in Tehran, where shopping and street life resumed. A week-old internet blackout, however, continued. Authorities also reported no unrest elsewhere in the country.

Still, Iran's leadership signalled it was prepared for any eventuality. In a major Friday prayer sermon broadcast on

state radio, Ayatollah Ahmad Khatami prompted chants from worshippers, including, "Armed hypocrites should be put to death!"

Khatami, a member of Iran's Assembly of Experts and Guardian Council, portrayed the protesters as 'bullets' of Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu and 'Trump's soldiers', warning both leaders to expect 'hard revenge from Iran.'

"Americans and Zionists should not expect peace," he said.

Widespread Damage From Protests

Khatami also offered the first broad accounting of damage from the protests, saying 350 mosques, 126 prayer halls and 20 other religious sites had been vandalised or set on fire. He said 80 homes belonging to Friday prayer leaders were damaged, along with 400 hospitals, 106 ambulances, 71 fire vehicles, and another 50 emergency vehicles.

Meanwhile, Iran's exiled Crown Prince Reza Pahlavi urged Washington to follow through on its earlier signals of support, calling Trump "a man of his word." Pahlavi, whose father was toppled in the 1979 Islamic Revolution, said he still believed the U.S. president's promise of assistance.

But a growing sense that both the demonstrations and the prospect of U.S. retaliation were receding was underscored by diplomatic concerns. One diplomat told The Associated Press that senior officials from Egypt, Oman, Saudi Arabia and Qatar warned Trump that American military intervention could destabilise the region and shake the global economy.

Crisis Over or Just a Pause? Whether the moment of crisis has passed or whether this is merely a pause remains unclear.

U.S. media reports suggested a carrier strike group led by the USS Abraham Lincoln had been told to redeploy from the South China Sea, widening Trump's options.

Red Fort Blast

ED Flags Al Falah University Over Hiring Accused Doctors

Press Trust Of India

New Delhi: Faridabad-based Al Falah University had appointed three doctors -- two arrested by the National Investigation Agency and the third an alleged suicide bomber of the November 2025 Red Fort area blast -- apart from other specialists without police verification or scrutiny, the Enforcement Directorate has found.

The agency, as part of its money laundering probe against the promoter of the university, is understood to have furnished statements of various senior executives and faculty of the varsity in this context in a chargesheet filed before a Delhi court on Friday.

Arrested 61-year-old Al Falah Group chairman Jawad Ahmad Siddiqui and the Al Falah Charitable Trust that controls all the educational institutions of the varsity are the two accused named in the complaint filed under various sections of the Prevention of Money Laundering Act (PMLA).

The about 260-page chargesheet seeks prosecution of Siddiqui and his Trust for alleged generation of illicit funds from fees paid by students, while allegedly misrepresenting the accreditation and recognition of his institutions.

In a statement issued on Friday, the Enforcement Directorate (ED) said it has provisionally attached the university land and building, worth about Rs 140 crore and located in the Dhauj area of Faridabad.

The court is yet to take cognisance of the ED chargesheet.

Quoting the ED chargesheet, officials told PTI that doctors at the medical college were employed "on paper" and were listed under a "22 days punch" or "two days per week" clause to be represented as regular faculty "just to obtain" requisite approvals from the National Medical Commission (NMC) so that the healthcare facility runs uninterrupted.

According to officials, the ED has recorded the statement of the Registrar of the University, who "acknowledged" the visit of probe agencies to the campus and the arrests of "Dr Muzammil and Dr Shaheen, associated with the University hospital."

He said in his statement that the doctors of the medical college, established in



2019, were hired "without" any police verification.

The Vice-Chancellor and Principal of the University told the ED that the doctors reported to be involved in terror-related activities -- Dr Muzammil Ganaie, a junior resident in general medicine department since October 2021; Dr Shaheen Saeed, an associate professor in pharmacology since October 2021, and Dr Umar Nabi, the alleged suicide bomber and an assistant professor in general medicine since May 2024 -- were appointed during her tenure.

She informed the agency that these appointments were, however, "recommended" by the varsity's HR head and "approved" by Siddiqui, following which she issued formal appointment letters.

The V-C is also understood to have told the ED that "no police verification or scrutiny" was conducted while appointment of these doctors.

The explosives-laden car blast near Delhi's Red Fort area on November 10 last year killed 15 people and injured several others. Nabi was stated to have been driving the car and was killed in the blast, while Ganaie and Saeed were arrested by the NIA. They, along with some others, are currently in judicial custody.

A document appended in the chargesheet also lists the name of Nabi as a regular doctor at the medical facility.

Siddiqui, in his statement before the agency, is stated to have denied having "any connection" with a terrorist or banned organisation.

The ED records statements of various persons in a money laundering investigation under Section 50 of the PMLA and such statements are admissible before court.

Officials said the agency has recorded statements of senior executives and faculty of Al Falah University. It is alleged that

the specialists, who were in the pay roll of the medical college, were listed in documents as "on paper doctors", "22 days punch" and "two days per week", but in reality, they neither attended college on a regular basis nor took classes or attended to patients at its hospital.

The "on paper" doctors are employed only for the purpose of obtaining NMC clearance and other regulatory inspections, the ED is understood to have claimed in the chargesheet.

The "on paper staff" of the medical college were in clear knowledge of their status and their terms of employment were "under control" of Siddiqui. He has allegedly provided "fake" work experience certificate to some of them, as per ED findings.

The agency also claimed that financial terms of certain consultants, appointed as associate professors and senior faculty members in the paediatrics and neonatology departments, linked remuneration and appraisal to occupancy levels in critical care units "irrespective" of clinical necessity.

The agency found that Siddiqui continued to "defraud" NMC even during its last inspection of the medical college in June 2025, following which it was granted permission to increase MBBS seats from 150 to 200.

These "on paper" doctors were paid "significantly" lower salaries compared to other doctors of the same designation within the same department, the ED is understood to have found.

It is evident, the ED is stated to have concluded, that several doctors were hired on a temporary basis to meet requirements during regulatory inspections and even those working in the Al Falah medical college had multiple fraudulent employment terms.

PM Flags Off First Vande Bharat Sleeper Train

Press Trust Of India

Malda: Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Saturday flagged off India's first Vande Bharat sleeper train between Howrah and Guwahati, and launched several rail and road infrastructure projects worth Rs 3,250 crore in West Bengal.

At a public function in Malda in north Bengal, the Prime Minister virtually flagged off four Amrit Bharat Express trains connecting New Jalpaiguri with Nagercoil and Tiruchirappalli, and Alipurduar with SMVT Bengaluru and Mumbai (Panvel).

Modi launched the country's most advanced and the first set of Vande Bharat sleeper trains between Howrah and Guwahati (Kamakhya) from Malda Town railway station.

He also virtually flagged off the return Guwahati-Howrah Vande Bharat sleeper train from here.

The fully air-conditioned sleeper train is expected to cut travel time on the Howrah-Guwahati route by around 2.5 hours. Currently, it takes nearly 18 hours from Howrah to Guwahati by train.

Speaking at the function, Modi said the projects, especially the new trains, will empower the youth of the region.

"There was a time when we used to watch the developed foreign nations and dreamt of such modern trains in our country. Today that dream has come true. The new Vande Bharat sleeper train has connected the holy land of Maa Kali to that of Maa Kamakhya," he said.

India has both modernised its transport facilities and made the country self-reliant, Modi said.

The prime minister asserted that the country is currently "making more railway coaches in India than in Europe or the US".

"In a big step towards a modern India, the Vande Bharat sleeper train has started its journey from today. This new train will ease long-distance travel for the country's people, making it smooth and memorable," Modi said.

The PM, who interacted with some passengers at Malda Town station, said that they expressed happiness about the new Vande Bharat train.

"Now I am seeing that foreigners are making videos of metros and other trains in India to tell the world how train travel in India is being revolutionised," he said.

Asserting that the modern Vande Bharat sleeper trains will operate across the country in

the near future, Modi said that the Indian Railways was going through a process of rejuvenation, with electrification of rail lines and modernisation of stations.

"More than 150 Vande Bharat trains are at present running across the country. Along with these, a network of modern and fast trains is being created," he said.

Pointing out that West Bengal got four more Amrit Bharat Express trains on Saturday, he said that the state, especially north Bengal, will get better connected with western and southern India.

"Those who come to Bengal and eastern India from other parts of the country, those who come to visit Gangasagar, Dakshineswar and Kalighat and those who go to Tamil Nadu and Maharashtra will find these Amrit Bharat trains make their travel easier," he said.

Asserting that the Indian Railways is becoming self-reliant along with modernisation, Modi said that India-made locomotives, coaches and metro trains are becoming the country's identity.

"Today we are making more locomotives than America or Europe," the PM said.

He said that India exports coaches for passenger and metro trains to several countries across the world, benefitting the country's economy.

"Connecting the country is our primary objective and reducing distances is our mission," he said.

Modi said Bengal has got new rail projects for its development, which will ease travel for the people of the state and help trade and commerce.

He said train maintenance facilities will provide job opportunities for the youth of Bengal.

Speaking at the occasion, Railway Minister Ashwini Vaishnaw said India would soon be exporting Vande Bharat trains.

"Keeping in mind the food tastes of the region, passengers of the Vande Bharat trains departing from Kolkata would be served Bengali cuisine and those from Guwahati would be offered Assamese food," he announced.

At the function, Modi laid the foundation stone for four major railway projects in the state, including a new rail line between Balurghat and Hili, next-generation freight maintenance facilities at New Jalpaiguri, upgradation of the Siliguri Loco Shed, and modernisation of Vande Bharat train maintenance facilities in Jalpaiguri district.

CONTD. FROM FRONT PAGE

Elderly Srinagar

Regulatory Authority of India (TRAI). The callers falsely accused them of being involved in a financial fraud case that was allegedly being investigated by the CBI. The scammers sent them fake orders from the CBI and TRAI. They threatened to freeze their bank accounts and seize their property.

The fraudsters forced the couple to continuously stay under video surveillance for a few days, even while using the washroom. They were forbidden from leaving their house without permission. Living under immense psychological pressure, the couple ended up transferring Rs 48 lakh.

Cyber Crime Investigation Centre for Excellence, Crime Branch, J&K is repeatedly advising people that there is nothing like Digital arrest and any person facing such a situation should immediately recognize them as fraudsters and, instead of falling prey to their ill designs, they should immediately report it on helpline number 1930 or on www.cybercrime.gov.in. It has been observed that the fraudsters usually target senior citizens whose children do not reside with them owing to outside jobs or businesses. People are again advised to remain careful to stay safe and don't fall prey to these fraudsters, reads the statement.

Copper's Global

much bigger." On the MCX, copper trades as a futures contract with a standard lot size of 2,500 kilograms. At a price of 1,300 per kilogram, a single contract carries a total value of around 32.5 lakh.

Traders do not pay the full amount upfront. Instead, they post a margin of roughly 10 to 15 percent, which means an investor needs about 3 lakh to 6 lakh to hold one contract. Exchanges allow margins to be split between cash and approved shares, usually in a fifty-fifty ratio.

Daily mark-to-market adjustments sit at the heart of copper trading. Gains and losses are settled at the end of each session, tying traders closely to every price move.

Investors who want to stay invested beyond a contract's expiry roll over their positions by selling the expiring contract and buying a later-month series.

Copper's sustained rise has pushed these once-technical terms into everyday conversation among traders and small investors.

Its price now signals changes that extend well beyond commodity screens.

"Copper sits at the center of the modern economy," said Shiv Kumar, a Mumbai-based commodities strategist. "Electric vehicles use much more copper than petrol cars. Renewable energy projects depend on copper wiring. Data centers rely on it for power distribution and cooling. Demand flows from every direction."

India's copper prices respond closely to global trends, currency movement, and supply pressure.

A weaker rupee often adds upward force, while rising global demand tightens availability. Industry data shows India consumes close to 1.9 million tonnes of copper each year and imports a large share because domestic production falls short.

Forecasts from leading research firms point to copper demand rising sharply through the next decade as countries expand power grids, build electric transport systems, and scale digital infrastructure.

Analysts expect these sectors to account for a growing share of copper use, placing further pressure on supply.

That worldwide demand reaches Kashmir, where copper holds meaning far deeper than price charts.

In old neighbourhoods near Zaina Kadal and Saraf Kadal, craftsmen continue shaping copper into samovars, engraved plates, serving trays, and water vessels. The craft dates back several centuries and reflects Persian influence and royal patronage.

"My family has worked with copper for generations," said Ghulam Rasool, a 68-year-old trader whose shop displays rows of polished utensils. "People trusted copper because it lasted long and worked well in cooking and heating. Every wedding and gathering needed it."

These objects once filled Kashmiri homes and kitchens. Stainless steel and aluminum later replaced many of them because of lower prices and easier upkeep.

Even so, copper never vanished. Heirlooms stayed on shelves and in storage trunks, waiting for renewed attention.

That attention has now returned from an

unexpected direction.

Rising copper prices have pushed families to reassess the value of old utensils. Collectors and traders now seek authentic hand-made pieces, especially those with detailed engraving and clear origins.

Masoodi noticed that shift while tracking global markets. His decision to invest followed his sense that copper linked inherited value with modern demand.

"When the same metal connects my grandmother's kitchen to electric cars and power grids, it changes how you see it," he said.

But for Kashmiri artisans, renewed metal interest has not eased long-standing challenges.

Factory-made copper goods enter markets at lower prices, tightening competition for hand workers. Trade groups have begun pushing certification and labeling systems to help buyers identify genuine craft work.

"Machines shape copper fast," said Manzoor Ahmad Baba, a coppersmith in Srinagar. "Hand work takes time and skill. People who understand the difference still come looking for it."

Beyond these regional realities, copper is becoming more central to global technology systems.

Electric vehicle charging stations, transformers, battery systems, and data centers consume large quantities of the metal.

Analysts warn that future supply may struggle to match demand unless mining investment increases sharply.

"The next decade belongs to metals tied to electrification and digital growth," said Egeest Balla, a market analyst tracking infrastructure demand. "Copper stays at the heart of that change because alternatives cannot match its efficiency at scale."

Policy planners in India also watch closely. Heavy reliance on imported copper exposes the economy to global price swings. Discussions around strategic reserves, recycling, and domestic capacity expansion remain active as infrastructure spending rises.

Back in Srinagar, Masoodi checks copper prices each morning before work. His trading app sits beside shelves holding old copper vessels polished by time and use. He weighs both with equal care.

"I entered this market because the numbers made sense," he said. "I stayed because copper

tells a longer story about where the world is going and where we come from."

That story unfolds daily across trading screens, workshops, and homes, as copper futures continue to trade near record levels on the MCX.

Clearly, a metal shaped by Kashmiri hands centuries ago now powers the global economy, linking traditional craft to modern wealth.

Wet Spell Likely

among the coldest plains at minus 5.6 degrees Celsius and minus 5.3 degrees Celsius, respectively, while Anantnag recorded minus 4.7 degrees Celsius.

In north Kashmir, Kupwara recorded minus 2.2 degrees Celsius, Baramulla minus 1.6 degrees Celsius, and Bandipora minus 3.1 degrees Celsius, all matching the previous day's readings. Srinagar Airport also recorded minus 3.2 degrees Celsius, while Budgam and Awantipora stood at minus 3.8 degrees Celsius, with no day to day fluctuation.

The Jammu region also witnessed stable night temperatures. Jammu city recorded a minimum of 4.6 degrees Celsius, Banihal 0.6 degrees Celsius, Bhandarwah 1.5 degrees Celsius, and Rajouri minus 0.5 degrees Celsius. Katra and Kishtwar experienced relatively warmer nights at 7.4 degrees Celsius and 7.5 degrees Celsius, respectively.

Ladakh continued to reel under intense cold conditions. Drass remained the coldest place, recording a minimum of minus 9.9 degrees Celsius. Leh and Hanle recorded minus 7 degrees Celsius and minus 8 degrees Celsius, respectively, while Kargil registered minus 5.1 degrees Celsius, all unchanged from Friday.

Meanwhile, the Meteorological Department has forecast partly to generally cloudy weather on January 18, with light snowfall expected at isolated higher reaches. From January 19 to 20, light to moderate rain or snowfall is likely at scattered to fairly widespread places.

A more intense wet spell is expected between January 22 and 25, with the possibility of heavy rain or snowfall over parts of the Chenab Valley, Pir Panjal range, and south Kashmir districts, particularly on January 23 and 24.

The MET office has issued an advisory warning of possible landslides at vulnerable locations and urged travellers to plan their

journeys carefully. Farmers have also been advised to suspend farm operations during the peak wet spell.

LG: Sports Must

progress. He stressed that sporting talent can only flourish in a peaceful environment and warned against political interference in sports.

"We must move forward and create a system where there is no room for doubt in the selection process. Politics should not interfere in sports, and talented youth should not be deprived of the opportunities they deserve," he said.

The Lieutenant Governor reiterated the administration's commitment to extending full support to sports persons and to developing state-of-the-art sports infrastructure at the grassroots level. He also underlined the need to give special focus to increasing the participation of women and youth in sports and to address the barriers that limit their involvement.

Calling upon policymakers and industry leaders to create new avenues of opportunity through sports, he said investing in sports was an investment in disciplined citizens and a confident future.

"To truly build a sports culture, sports must be brought into the heart of daily community life and closely connected with education and life skills," he added.

The Lieutenant Governor commended the Department of Youth Services and Sports, Jammu and Kashmir, for its initiative aimed at advancing the national sports agenda through the sharing of best practices in governance, participation, athlete development and performance excellence. He urged sports councils, federations, administrators and officials to chalk out strategic development plans focused on improving performance at international competitions.

The inaugural ceremony was attended by Chief Secretary Atal Dulloo; Commissioner Secretary, Youth Services and Sports, Yasha Mudgal; Padma Shri awardee and Olympian Dr Karnam Malleswari, Vice Chancellor of Delhi Sports University; Divisional Commissioner Jammu Ramesh Kumar; Director General Youth Services and Sports Anuradha Gupta; senior officials, representatives of the Sports Authority of India, eminent sports personalities, experts and youth in large numbers.

Tourist Arrivals Rise as Conditions Improve After Pahalgam Terror Attack: CS Dulloo

Observer News Service

JAMMU- Chief Secretary Atal Dulloo said that the tourism sector in Jammu and Kashmir, which suffered a major setback following the Pahalgam terror attack and subsequent adverse weather conditions, is gradually showing signs of recovery, with tourist arrivals picking up as conditions improve.

Dulloo said that a major project has been conceptualised to promote sustainable tourism in emerging destinations with the objective of reducing pressure on traditional hotspots across J&K, and its implementation is being carefully planned.

"If we look at tourism, the impact after the Pahalgam terror attack and subsequently the rise in incidents of heavy rains and floods caused significant losses in 2025. However, we are now gradually seeing a recovery. As weather conditions improve, tourist arrivals have started increasing again," Dulloo said in a video interview here.

He said that while revival is underway, the government is reassessing its tourism strategy

to prepare for rising visitor numbers and sustainable growth. "As tourism grows, we must also focus on how prepared we are to manage the increasing footfall. This calls for a reassessment of our tourism strategy and capacity," he added.

The chief secretary stressed the need to develop new tourist destinations to reduce pressure on traditional hotspots that often exceed their carrying capacity during peak seasons. "By developing new destinations, tourist footfall will be distributed more evenly. This will generate employment for local communities, lead to infrastructure development, attract investment and help mitigate seasonal tourism peaks," he said.

The tourism sector in Kashmir was severely impacted after last year's April 22 Pahalgam terror attack, in which 26 civilians, including 25 tourists, were killed by terrorists.

Following the terror attack, around 50 tourist spots and resorts were closed for security reasons. Several destinations have recently been reopened, and more will be thrown open to



WE NEED A COMPREHENSIVE STRATEGY TO CONVERT THE MASSIVE INFLUX OF PILGRIMS into multi-day tourists by encouraging them to explore experiences beyond traditional pilgrimage circuits,"

tourists after the completion of security audits.

He said a major project has been conceptualised in this direction and its implementation is being carefully planned, including transportation and other infrastructure arrangements. "Our focus will remain on developing new tourist destinations to ensure sustainable growth of the tourism sector," Dulloo said.

Referring to the SPREAD initiative, the chief secretary said it seeks to decongest overburdened tourist spots by developing eco-sensitive, year-round alternatives while balancing economy, ecology and equity. He said that with support from the Department of Economic Affairs and implementation through the Economic Reconstruction Agency, the SPREAD project will focus on infrastructure development, waste management, ecological conservation and livelihood generation. "Community engagement and private sector participation are central to this initiative, which envisions holistic development across both Jammu and Kashmir regions in line with global best

practices," he added.

Dulloo also underlined the need for a targeted strategy to convert the rising pilgrim footfall in Jammu into longer tourist stays. "A focused approach is required to promote the region's wider leisure, heritage, adventure and spiritual attractions beyond the main pilgrimage routes," he said.

He stressed proactive use of digital platforms and social media, including collaboration with influencers, to expand outreach and attract national and international tourists. "We need a comprehensive strategy to convert the massive influx of pilgrims into multi-day tourists by encouraging them to explore experiences beyond traditional pilgrimage circuits," Dulloo said.

Highlighting J&K's potential as a year-round tourism destination, he said that the introduction of adventure activities such as rafting, paragliding, bungee jumping, and water sports would transform the region into a tourism hub while creating significant employment opportunities for local youth.

IRAN TENSIONS

Kashmiri Students Reach Home, Question Media Coverage



Observer News Service

SRINAGAR: Relief mixed with anger marked the return of over three dozen Kashmiri students from Iran on Saturday, as families expressed gratitude for their safe arrival, while students spoke of the heavy financial burden they bore and frustration over what they described as exaggerated media portrayals of their situation.

Several returning students said that there was no immediate danger in the areas where they were studying. "We returned on our own. There is no harsh situation as shown on television. The coverage only spreads panic and exaggeration," one of the students said.

The students said they were compelled to book tickets at short notice, incurring substantial expenses, as no evacuation had been announced. Many said their decision to return was driven by family anxiety fuelled by media reports rather than any direct threat on the ground.

National Convenor of the Jammu

and Kashmir Students Association, Nasir Khuehami, said that all students travelled at their own expense and that a significant number of pilgrims also returned on the same flights.

"The students have reached India safely and have since returned to their native places. Many more students are expected to arrive from today onwards, as they have booked commercial flights," Khuehami said.

He added that the Indian Embassy in Tehran remains in direct contact with the students and will inform them through official channels if evacuation becomes necessary. "At present, all students who remain in Iran are safe, secure, and stable, and the situation on the ground is gradually stabilising," he said.

Khuehami further said that the Association is in constant coordination with the Ministry of External Affairs and the Indian Embassy, which are closely engaging with Iranian authorities to monitor developments.

Family members, he said, expressed relief and appreciation to officials of the Ministry of External Affairs and the Indian Embassy upon the students' arrival. "Families conveyed their trust in the Government of India and thanked the authorities for the timely support extended during a period of uncertainty," he said.

The Association welcomed the safe return of the students, saying it has brought much-needed relief to anxious families across Jammu and Kashmir, while noting that many more students studying in different parts of Iran are expected to return in the coming days through commercial flights. (KNO)



EMOTIONAL SCENES at the Hazratbal Shrine as devotees pray during the display of the Holy Relic on Shab-e-Meraj. KO PHOTO, ABID BHAT

4 Injured in Wild Boar Attack at Tral

Observer News Service

SRINAGAR: Panic gripped the busy market area at Tral in South Kashmir's Pulwama district on Saturday after a wild boar, entered public space and attacked civilians, leaving four people injured.

According to the details available with KNO the incident occurred in the market area of Tral town, where people were going about their normal business when the animal suddenly appeared and began charging at passers-by.

The unexpected assault caused chaos as men, women

and children tried to escape from its path.

At least four persons sustained injuries in the attack and were immediately evacuated by locals and health responders to the Sub-District Hospital (SDH) Tral for urgent medical attention.

The injuries ranged from lacerations and bruises to deeper wounds caused by the boar's tusks.

Medical staff at SDH said that the injured have been treated at the hospital and are in a stable condition.

Soon after the news spread, Rafiq Ahmad Naik, the Peo-

ple's Democratic Party (PDP) MLA representing the Tral Assembly constituency, rushed to the SDH Tral to meet with the injured victims and their families. "Such attacks reflect larger problems related to human-animal conflict, especially in areas close to forests or where wild animals increasingly stray into human settlements," Naik said.

He asked the administration, wildlife and forest departments to take immediate steps to prevent similar incidents in the future. "The victims should be compensated," he added.

Kulgam's Veshow Nallah Runs Dry

Observer News Service

SRINAGAR: A prolonged dry spell in Kashmir has pushed several major water bodies to critically low levels, with the Veshow Nallah—a key tributary of the River Jhelum—completely drying up in south Kashmir's Kulgam district.

Locals said that not a single drop of water is visible in the nallah, which serves as a vital source of drinking water and irrigation for several villages.

The unprecedented situation has resulted in acute water scarcity in areas heavily dependent on the nallah for daily needs.

Officials attributed the alarming situation to scant rainfall, reduced snowfall this winter, and freezing of pipelines, which have together depleted surface and groundwater sources across the district.

Ghulam Rasool, an elderly resident of Pranh village, said the



complete drying up of Veshow Nallah has never been witnessed before. "We have faced droughts and cold waves in the past, but this is something entirely new," he said.

He said the entire agricultural cycle of the area depends on the nallah.

"Veshow Nallah is the lifeline of several villages in Kulgam. Today, even drinking water has become a concern. Its drying up is a serious warning sign," he added.

Executive Engineer, Jal Shakti (Division Kulgam), Er Ishaq Hamid

Wani, told KNO that nearly five drinking water schemes have been affected due to the drying up of the Veshow Nallah, with freezing of pipelines further aggravating the situation.

He said the department is closely monitoring the situation and has initiated measures to mitigate the impact of the ongoing dry spell.

"Water tankers are being deployed to supply drinking water to the worst-affected villages," he said, adding that efforts are underway to stabilize the water supply until weather conditions improve.

Kashmir Doctor Appeals for Help to Bring Ailing Wife Home From Mecca

After his wife suffered a stroke during their pilgrimage, a Srinagar-based dentist has urged Indian and local authorities to arrange an emergency medical airlift so she can continue treatment near her family.

Mohammad Hanief

SRINAGAR: A Srinagar-based dental doctor, Dr. Rouf Jeelani, has appealed to the government for urgent help to bring his critically ill wife back to Kashmir from Mecca, Saudi Arabia, where she remains hospitalized after suffering a stroke during a pilgrimage.

Dr. Jeelani had traveled to Saudi Arabia with his wife to perform Umrah when she suddenly fell ill in Mecca. She was rushed to a hospital there and continues to receive treatment in a critical condition. Doctors treating her have told the family that recovery could take a long time, stretching over several months and possibly longer.

With his wife admitted far from home, Dr. Jeelani has sought support from Jammu and Kashmir Lieutenant Gov-

ernor Manoj Sinha and Chief Minister Omar Abdullah. He has asked them to take up the matter with the Union Ministry of External Affairs so arrangements can be made for a medical evacuation and airlift to Srinagar, where she could continue treatment closer to



her family and medical network.

In his appeal, Dr. Jeelani described the situation as overwhelming for his family. He

spoke of the strain of managing a medical emergency in a foreign country while coping with uncertainty over his wife's condition.

"I appeal to the authorities and to anyone who can help me bring my wife back to Srinagar for proper medical care," he said. "This is the most difficult time of my life."

Relatives, friends, and members of the local community have echoed his request, urging authorities to act quickly on humanitarian grounds. They have stressed that prompt arrangements for her transfer could play an important role in her treatment and recovery.

The family has said it remains hopeful that officials will respond to the appeal and move swiftly to help bring Dr. Jeelani's wife home for continued care.

6 Drug Peddlers Arrested Across Kashmir

SRINAGAR: Continuing its sustained drive against drug trafficking, Police have arrested 06 drug peddlers in Anantnag and Budgam in separate actions and recovered contraband substances from their possession.

According to a statement issued to Kashmir Observer, a police party of Police Station Anantnag at a checkpoint established at Bangidar Bridge near the Filtration Plant intercepted a suspicious person. During search, charas powder-like substance weighing about 384 grams and charas-like sticks wrapped in corn husk weighing about 54 grams was recovered from his possession. The total quantity recovered is 438 grams. He has been identified as Faizan Ahmad Bhat @ Gafoor, son of Nazir Ahmad, resident of Bangidar.

Moreover, on receiving specific information, a police party of Police Station Ultrasoo at a checkpoint established at Chattergul intercepted & apprehended two individuals. They have been identified as Mehboob Gojjer son of Mum Shakoore Gojjer and Rafiq Ahmad Gojjer son of Bashir Ahmad Gojjer, both residents of Chontihal, Ultrasoo. During the search, Charas-like substance weighing approximately 1.150 kilograms was recovered from their possession. The contraband was seized on the spot as per legal procedure.

In Budgam, a police team from Police Station Magam, led by SHO Police Station Magam, during routine patrolling at Batpora Crossing intercepted and apprehended a suspicious individual carrying a nylon bag. Upon search, approximately 2 kg and 100 grams of charas-like substance in powder form was recovered. The accused was identified as Rouf Ahmed Hajam, son of Mohd Ramzan Hajam, resident of Batpora, Kanihama.

Meanwhile, a police team of Police Post Hardpanzoo, established a checkpoint at Bonizainigam village intercepted and apprehended 02 suspicious persons. They have been identified as Irfan Ahmad Mir, son of Mohd Yousuf Mir, and Owais Ahmad Bhat, son of Gh Mohd Bhat, both residents of village Hardulatina. Upon search, 2 kg and 185 grams of charas-like substance in powder form were recovered from their possession.

Accordingly, cases under relevant sections of law have been registered at respective police stations. Further investigation in all the cases is in progress.

J&K Police reiterate their zero-tolerance policy against drug trafficking and reaffirm their commitment to protecting youth and society from the menace of drugs through sustained enforcement and preventive measures. (Observer News Service)

Demise of Thakur Singh Condoled

JAMMU: Director Information, Nitish Rajora has expressed deep grief and sorrow on the tragic demise of Thakur Singh, former officer of the department, who also served as Director Public Relations, Lok Bhawan and Cultural Officer, Jammu.

In his message, the Director said that Thakur Singh had served the department in various capacities and his contribution has been widely recognised in the department.

He expressed deep grief on his tragic demise and also extended his sympathies with the bereaved family.

Meanwhile, the employees of Directorate of Information and Public Relations (DIPR), have also expressed deep grief and sorrow on the sad demise of Thakur Singh.

The Employees extended their deepest sympathies to the bereaved family and also prayed for eternal peace of the departed soul. (Observer News Service)

LG Sinha Releases J&K Shri Kashi Vidwat Parishad Diary



JAMMU: Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha released J&K Shri Kashi Vidwat Parishad's Dairy and Panchang Calendar 2026, at Lok Bhavan.

The Lieutenant Governor extended his felicitations to Padma Shri Prof. Vishwa Murti Shastri, President, J&K Shri Kashi Vidwat Parishad Jammu, editorial team, and all the members of the parishad for their dedicated efforts in promoting and preserving cultural heritage.

The 2026 Calendar is designed as a comprehensive spiritual and cultural guide featuring information about auspicious occasions, festivals and religious rituals. (Observer News Service)

BJP leader Ravinder Raina Calls on LG



JAMMU: Ravinder Raina, senior BJP Leader and former MLA called on Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha on Saturday.

He discussed various public important issues and development of several religious sites including Baba Naar Singh Ji Dev Sthan (Lamberi) Nowshera, Mangla Mata Shrine & Mangla Devi (Fort & Temple) under religious and border tourism and Peer Badesar near LoC in Rajouri. (Observer News Service)

Bangladesh Ask ICC to Move T20 WC Matches to Sri Lanka

Press Trust of India

DHAKA: The Bangladesh Cricket Board (BCB) on Saturday asked the ICC to swap its national team with Ireland in Group C during the upcoming T20 World Cup in order to play in Sri Lanka instead of India.

Bangladesh are currently placed in Group C along with the West Indies, Italy, England and Nepal and are scheduled to play their matches in Kolkata and Mumbai.

Ireland are in Group B alongside Sri Lanka, Australia, Oman and Zimbabwe and their matches are scheduled in Colombo and Pallekele.

The two-member ICC team, consisting of Gaurav Saxena, General Manager, Events and Corporate Communications, and Andrew Ephgrave, General Manager, Integrity Unit, was in Dhaka to convince BCB about



the security arrangements in India and to follow the original schedule.

"The Bangladesh Cricket Board (BCB) today held a meeting with representatives of the International Cricket Council (ICC) to discuss matters relating to Bangladesh's participation in the

ICC Men's T20 World Cup 2026," said the BCB in a release after the meeting with ICC delegates.

Ephgrave attended the meeting in person but Saxena joined virtually after he failed to secure a Bangladesh visa in time.

"During the discussions, the BCB reiterated its formal request

to the ICC to relocate Bangladesh's matches to Sri Lanka. The Board also shared the Bangladesh Government's views and concerns on safety and security of the team, Bangladeshi fans, media and other stakeholders," the BCB added.

From the BCB's side, President Mohammad Aminul Islam, Vice Presidents Md Shakawath Hossain and Faruque Ahmed, Director and Chairman of Cricket Operations Committee Nazmul Abedeen and Chief Executive Officer Nizam Uddin Chowdhury attended the meeting.

However, it is learnt that the ICC is reluctant to accept Bangladesh's demand, considering the logical constraints and the enormous changes to the itinerary to be made deep into the tournament.

Bangladesh has been asking the global governing body to relocate its World Cup matches,

scheduled to be held in Kolkata and Mumbai, on the pretext of a perceived security threat to its players.

The BCB raised this demand after national team pacer Mustafizur Rahman was abruptly delisted from his IPL contract with the Kolkata Knight Riders following a BCCI directive.

The BCB indicated that more dialogue will follow soon to find an amicable solution to the impasse.

"The discussions were conducted in a constructive, cordial and professional manner, with all parties engaging openly on the relevant issues.

"Among other points, the possibility of moving Bangladesh to a different group as a means of facilitating the matter with minimum logistical adjustments was discussed. The BCB and the ICC have agreed to continue engaging in constructive dialogue on this matter," it noted.

Hyderabad Toofans Crush Bengal Tigers 6-0 in HIL



Press Trust of India

BHUBANESWAR: Hyderabad Toofans registered a dominating 6-0 win over Shraichi Bengal Tigers to kick off the Bhubaneswar leg of the men's Hockey India League (HIL) on a resounding note here on Saturday.

Zachary Wallace (2nd, 17th, 30th minutes) and Tim Brand (12th, 39th, 46th) scored a hat-trick each for Hyderabad Toofans.

Hyderabad Toofans opened the scoring in the second minute of the first quarter itself as Talwinder Singh did well to hold and protect the ball inside the circle and passed it on to Wallace who finished the chance with ease.

In the seventh minute, Sukhjeet Singh won a penalty corner for Shraichi Bengal Tigers but Tom Grambusch's drag-flick went inches away from the goal.

The very next minute, the Tigers won another penalty corner and this time, Grambusch's attempt was saved by Hyderabad Toofans goalkeeper Jean-Paul Danneberg.

In the 12th minute, Hyderabad Toofans won their first penalty corner of the evening and although Amandeep Lakra's drag-flick was saved initially by the Tigers, Brand was quick to react on the rebound and slotted the ball into the net to extend the lead.

Hyderabad Toofans continued their scoring streak in the second quarter as Wallace was given too much time and space in the 16th minute. He dribbled down the middle into the circle and unleashed a low-driven shot, to sneak the ball past the goalkeeper and into the bottom-right corner of the goal.

In the 19th minute, Abhishek created a good opportunity for Shraichi Bengal Tigers as he took a strong shot on goal but it was stopped by Hyderabad Toofans' goalkeeper Bikramjit Singh.

Moments later, the Tigers came close again as Ketan Kushwaha played a strong pass into the circle from the left flank but Abhishek's deflection towards goal went narrowly wide off-target.

With 20 seconds left in the first half, Hyderabad Toofans found another goal, this time Wallace dribbled from the right flank and struck the ball towards goal, and it took a deflection and went over the Tigers' goalkeeper.

The third quarter started off with a tight contest between the two sides. However, it didn't take long for Hyderabad Toofans to score their fifth goal.

In the 39th minute, Arshdeep Singh showed incredible 3D skills along the baseline as he beat multiple defenders and played it in the centre of the circle for Brand, who slotted the ball into the goalpost with ease.

No Handshake at Toss in India vs Bangladesh

Press Trust of India

BULAWAYO: The strained bilateral relations between India and Bangladesh filtered onto the cricket field as captains of the two teams abstained from making customary handshake ahead of their U-19 World Cup Group A match here on Saturday, though BCB later called it "unintentional and momentary lapse" by its team's skipper.

After a delayed start owing to rain, India skipper Ayush Mhatre and Bangladesh vice-captain Zawad Abrar stood at the toss but there was no exchange of cordiality between them before or after the spin of the coin.

Bangladesh Cricket Board (BCB) said in a state-



ment later in the day that "the absence of a handshake with the opposition captain was completely unintentional and resulted from a momentary lapse in concentration."

"There was no intent whatsoever to show discourtesy or disregard towards the opposition," the BCB said in the statement issued in Dhaka.

The BCB said it has taken note of an inadvertent and unwarranted action that occurred at the toss.

"Due to illness, regular captain Azizul Hakim was unable to attend the toss, and vice-captain Zawad Abrar represented the team on the occasion.

"The BCB wishes to clarify that the absence of a handshake with the opposition captain was completely unintentional and resulted from a momentary lapse in concentration.

There was no intent whatsoever to show discourtesy or disregard towards the opposition.

Man United Stuns Man City 2-0 in Carrick Debut

AP

MANCHESTER: Michael Carrick got off to a flying start as Manchester United head coach with a 2-0 win against Manchester City in the Premier League on Saturday.

Taking charge of his first game since his appointment this week, Carrick immediately lifted the gloom over Old Trafford with a victory that will likely live long in the memory of United fans.

The former United midfielder has only signed a deal until the end of the season and has 17 games to convince the club's hierarchy to give him the job on a permanent basis after Ruben Amorim was fired last week. And he could not



have made a better first impression with a dominant performance against all-conquering City manager Pep Guardiola in the 198th Manchester derby.

Second half goals from Bryan Mbeumo and Patrick Dorgu sealed the win that had United fans singing in full voice and drowning out their fierce cross-city rivals.

And the victory could have

been even more emphatic, with United twice hitting the frame of the goal, forcing a string of saves from City goalkeeper Gianluigi Donnarumma and having three goals ruled out for offside.

Not only did the win give United local bragging rights and boost the team's chances of Champions League qualification, but it also delivered another blow to City's title chal-

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