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- Chairs Review Meeting On J&K Development Projects
- Says J&K Must Harness Full Hydropower Potential
- J&K Covered Under Capital Investment Scheme For First Time'

Observer News Service

Jammu: Union Home Minister and Minister of Cooperation Amit Shah on Saturday reviewed the progress of development projects in Jammu and Kashmir and underscored the need to utilise the full potential of hydropower projects in the Union Territory.

Chairing a high-level review meeting at Lok Bhawan here, Shah said that under the leadership of Prime Minister Narendra Modi, the Centre

remains firmly committed to the vision of building a developed and prosperous Jammu and Kashmir.

The meeting, which continued for nearly two hours, was attended by Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha, Chief Minister Omar Abdullah, Union Home Secretary Govind Mohan, Chief Secretary Atal Dulloo, Director General of Police Nalin Prabhat, and senior officials from the Central government and the Jammu and Kashmir administration.

"Due to the continuous and dedicated efforts of the Modi government to accelerate development, development projects in Jammu and Kashmir have made unprecedented progress. The Union Territory needs to develop the full potential of its hydropower projects," Shah said during the meeting.

During the review, the Home Minister undertook a comprehensive assessment of key sectors | [More on P6](#)

'Enthusiasm Of Tourists Has Not Diminished'

Amid a setback to the tourism industry due to last year's Pahalgam terror attack, Union Home Minister Amit Shah said on Saturday that the enthusiasm of tourists from across the country to visit Jammu and Kashmir has not diminished. Shah was addressing a review meeting in Jammu to assess the progress of development projects in the Union Territory. | [More on P6](#)

Q DUE TO THE CONTINUOUS AND DEDICATED efforts of the Modi government to accelerate development, development projects in Jammu and Kashmir have made unprecedented progress."

Assembly Sees Heated Exchange Over 'Special Status'

Observer News Service

Jammu: The Legislative Assembly on Saturday witnessed heated exchanges over the issue of special status of the erstwhile state, with legislators of the ruling National Conference and the Bharatiya Janata Party trading sharp arguments during the Budget discussion.

NC MLA Javid Hussain Baig said that Article 370, Article 35-A, the Constitution of Jammu and Kashmir and the J&K flag together constitute what is referred to as the | [More on P6](#)

No Proposal To Relax Land Use Norms: Govt

Observer News Service

Srinagar: The Jammu and Kashmir government on Saturday said it is not considering any proposal to relax the norms related to change of land use (CLU) in the Union Territory.

The information was shared

CM Rules Out Creation of New Admin Units

Chief Minister Omar Abdullah on Saturday said that the government has no intention of creating new administrative units at present and is focused on operationalising | [More on P6](#)

India, US Reach Framework For First Phase Of Trade Agreement

Tariff Cuts Agreed; Interim Pact Likely By Mid-March

KO Web Desk

Srinagar: India and the US on Saturday announced that they have reached a framework for the first phase of the bilateral trade agreement under which both sides will reduce import duties on a number of goods to boost two-way trade.

The framework reaffirms the two countries' commitment to the broader US-India Bilateral Trade Agreement (BTA) negotiations, launched by President Donald Trump and Prime Minister Narendra Modi on February 13, 2025, according to a joint statement.

While the US will reduce tariffs on Indian goods to 18 per cent from the present 50



per cent, India will eliminate or cut down import duties on all US industrial goods and a wide range of American food and agricultural products, including dried distillers' grains, red sorghum for animal feed, tree nuts, fresh and processed fruit, soybean oil, wine and spirits.

The first phase of the pact is expected to be signed by mid-March. Implementation of the pact will lead to concessions and the elimination of duties on American goods by India.

The US, through a separate executive order, has eliminated the | [More on P6](#)

US Wines, Dry Fruits To Get Cheaper

Observer News Service

New Delhi: American goods ranging from wines and spirits to dry fruits will enter India at zero or reduced import duties under the

first phase of the India-US trade agreement framework announced on Saturday, a move expected to make these products cheaper for Indian consumers.

India and the | [More on P6](#)

'₹80/kg Minimum Import Price'

India Grants Quota-Based Duty Concession On US Apples

Press Trust Of India

India has granted a quota-based duty concession to the US on apples under the interim trade pact, while fully protecting domestic apple growers, Commerce and Industry Minister Piyush Goyal said on Saturday.

India has imposed a minimum import price (MIP) of Rs 80 per kg and an import duty of 25 per cent on apples from the US under the proposed India-US trade pact, which is expected to be signed by mid-March.

This effectively means apples priced below Rs 100 per kg cannot be imported into the country from the US.

At present, imported apples attract a 50 per | [More on P6](#)

Over 98% School Access Achieved In J&K: Govt

Observer News Service

Srinagar: The Jammu and Kashmir government on Saturday said over 98 per cent access to schooling has been achieved across all levels in the Union Territory, marking a major transformation in the education sector in line with the National Education Policy (NEP) 2020.

In a written reply in the Legislative Assembly, the government said the focus has been on equity, inclusion and quality, leading to improved enrolment, reduced drop-out rates and strengthened infrastructure.

The government said literacy in Jammu and Kashmir has increased from 11.03 per cent in 1961 to 68.74 per cent in 2011, while school enrolment continues to show an upward trend. As per official data, the Union Territory has 24,137 schools, including 18,724 government schools and 5,413 run by other managements.

Total student enrolment from pre-primary to Class XII stood at over 26.17 lakh during the academic year 2024-25, the reply said.

Highlighting gender inclusion, the government said the Gross | [More on P6](#)

No New Wine Shops Planned For 2026-27

KO Web Desk

Srinagar- The Jammu and Kashmir government on Saturday said there is no proposal to open new wine shops in the Union Territory during the financial year 2026-27.

In a written reply to a question by MLA Arjun Singh Raju, the Finance Department informed the House that no new JKEL-2 liquor licences are planned for the upcoming fiscal.

The government also placed | [More on P6](#)



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Tehsildar Booked For Taking SUV Bribe In Land Scam

KO Web Desk

Srinagar: The Anti-Corruption Bureau on Saturday registered a corruption case against a Tehsildar over the alleged demand and acceptance of illegal gratification in connection with land demarcation and restoration.

An FIR bearing number 03/2026 has been registered at Police Station ACB Srinagar under Section 7 of the Prevention of Corruption Act, 1988, against Maeen Azhar Kakroo, the then Tehsildar South Srinagar.



According to an official statement, the case originated from a verification conducted by the ACB following a complaint alleging illegal encroachment and demand for

bribe for restoration and demarcation of land during 2021.

The verification revealed that land measuring 4 kanals, 9 marlas and 165 square feet, including Survey No. 998/54, is recorded in the name of several individuals, including the complainant.

It allegedly emerged during verification that the accused public servant demanded illegal gratification for facilitating the restoration of 14 marlas of land situated at Gulbahar Colony, Hyderpora, Sector-14 in Srinagar. | [More on P6](#)



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Government of Jammu & Kashmir

**OFFICE OF THE EXECUTIVE OFFICER
MUNICIPAL COMMITTEE KHANSAHIB**

PUBLIC NOTICE
(Sanitation & Solid Waste User Charges)

In pursuance of the provisions of the Solid Waste Management Rules, 2016, and in accordance with the directions issued by the Directorate of Urban Local Bodies, Kashmir, the general public is hereby informed that the following provisions are being implemented within the jurisdiction of Municipal Committee Khansahib for effective sanitation and waste management:

1. User charges for sanitation and solid waste management services shall be levied on all households and on commercial, institutional and industrial establishments as per the rates and norms notified by the Municipal Committee from time to time. These charges are meant to cover services such as door-to-door waste collection, transportation and proper disposal of garbage.
2. Spot fines/penalties shall be imposed on individuals or establishments found littering in public places, failing to segregate waste at source, or otherwise violating the provisions of the Solid Waste Management Rules, 2016.

All residents, shopkeepers, institutions and other establishments are advised to cooperate with the Municipal Committee and strictly comply with the above directions. Non-compliance shall attract penal action as per the rules, without further notice.

The cooperation of the public is solicited in the interest of cleanliness, public health and improved civic services.

No:-MC/KSB/SBM/2026/90-94
Dated:-06/02/2026

Sd/-
Executive Officer
Municipal Committee
Khansahib

DIPK-NB-3196/25
dated: 07-02-2026

**OFFICE OF EXECUTIVE MAGISTRATE
1ST CLASS ZAINGEER BOMAI**

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

Public Notice

This office has received a written application from Gh Mohd Shaikh S/o Mohd Ramzan Shaikh R/o Tujar Sharief Tehsil Zaingeer for issuance of Birth & Death certificate in favour of ward Sheikh Abdul Hadi born on 15-07-2014 and as per document evidence produced by the applicant. In this regard, if anyone has any objection, he/she may file the same before the undersigned within 07 days. After that, no objection whatsoever will be entertained by this office.

fko Tehsildar
Executive Magistrate
Bomai

**OFFICE OF EXECUTIVE MAGISTRATE
1ST CLASS ZAINGEER BOMAI**

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

Public Notice

This office has received a written application from QAISER HAMID MEER S/o ABDUL HAMID MEER R/o LATISHAT Tehsil Zaingeer for issuance of Birth & Death certificate in favour of ward MOIN QAISER MEER born on 15-08-2023 and as per document evidence produced by the applicant. In this regard, if anyone has any objection, he/she may file the same before the undersigned within 07 days. After that, no objection whatsoever will be entertained by this office.

fko Tehsildar
Executive Magistrate
Bomai

**OFFICE OF THE ASSISTANT REGIONAL
TRANSPORT OFFICER BUDGAM**

Subject:- Necessary Correction/change in address in data to the License No. JK-0420160031602

Issued in favour of SARFARAZ AHMAD WANI Parentage ABDUL RASHID WANI Whereas an application has been received by one SARFARAZ AHMAD WANI Parentage ABDUL RASHID WANI wherein he claimed that the Fathers Name has been wrongly recorded in the records of Driving Licenses as AB. RASHID WANI Which needs to be changed as ABDUL RASHID WANI.

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

Assistant Regional Transport officer
Budgam Kashmir

**Government of Jammu and Kashmir
(Department of Revenue)
OFFICE OF THE EXECUTIVE
MAGISTRATE 1ST CLASS BUDGAM**

PUBLIC NOTICE

It is hereby notified for the information of the general public that an application for permission of Late Birth Entry has been received in this office from the applicant namely Shaheena Akhter D/o Ghulam Ahmad Rather R/o Kurhama Budgam for the purpose of issuance or a authority. As Per the Disability certificate issued by CMO Budgam vide no JK022891828003599 dated: 19-01-20126 and affidavit duly attested by special mobile magistrate budgam the DOB/ Age of applicant reflects as 15-07-1982

Any person having any objection in this regard may contact or file the same in the office of the Executive Magistrate 1st Class, Budgam, within seven (07) days from the date of publication of this notice. After the expiry of the said period, no objection shall be entertained, and the case shall be processed further for issuance of the birth certificate accordingly.

fko EXECUTIVE
MAGISTRATE 1ST CLASS BUDGAM

**OFFICE OF THE ASSISTANT REGIONAL
TRANSPORT OFFICER BUDGAM**

Subject:- Necessary Correction/change in address in data to the License No. JK-0420160031602

issued in favour of MOHD AYOUB MIR Parentage ALI MOHD MIR Whereas an application has been received by one MOHD AYOUB MIR Parentage ALI MOHD MIR wherein he claimed that the Fathers Name has been wrongly recorded in the records of Driving Licenses as ALI MOHAMMAD MIR Which needs to be changed as ALI MOHD MIR.

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

Assistant Regional Transport officer
Budgam Kashmir

**GOVERNMENT OF JAMMU & KASHMIR
OFFICE OF THE TEHSILDAR KALANTRA / KREER**

Subject: Application of MOHD SHAREEF DEADER S/O SARDER MOHD for the issuance of R/O. BANDI BALA (SCHEDULE TRIBE Gujjar and Bakerwal) in favour of SHAGUFTA BANQ, SHAHID HUSSAIN , IRAM JAN , MOHD IMRAN

PUBLIC NOTICE

Regarding the subject cited above, the applicant has submitted the file in the office of the undersigned for the issuance of ST. In this connection a report of patwari halqa concerned has been sought which reveals that the applicant is currently residing in village BANDI BALLA and belongs to the ST caste and GOJER DEADER community, having annual income is 107000 the details of the family of the applicant are as follows

- 1..MOHD SHAREEF self 51 years Labour
- 2... RAFIQA BEGUM wife 48 years H/W
- 3...SHAGUFTA BANO daughter 25 years H/W
- 4...SHAHID HUSSAIN Son 15 years student
- 5..IRAM JAN daughter 16 years //
- 6...MOHD IMRAN Son 12 years //

.The applicant has applied for issuance of ST (SCHEDULE TRIBE Gujjar & Bakerwal) certificate in favour of Self
if anyone have any objection to the issuance of delay order of said certificate certificate shall present his/her claim this office within 07 days, after that no objection shall be entertained

NAIB TEHSILDAR KREERI

**OFFICE OF EXECUTIVE MAGISTRATE
1ST CLASS ZAINGEER BOMAI**

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

Public Notice

This office has received a written application from Abdul Gani Chopan S/o Mohd Rajab Chopan R/o Wadoora Tehsil Zaingeer for issuance of Birth & Death certificate in favour of ward Aamir Gani born on 08-03-2000, Asmat Gani Born On 07-07-2001M Gulshana Bano born on 17-11-1993 and as per document evidence produced by the applicant. In this regard, if anyone has any objection, he/she may file the same before the undersigned within 07 days. After that, no objection whatsoever will be entertained by this office.

fko Tehsildar
Executive Magistrate
Bomai

**OFFICE OF EXECUTIVE MAGISTRATE
1ST CLASS ZAINGEER BOMAI**

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

Public Notice

This office has received a written application from Ab Ahad Zargar S/O GH Hassan Zargar R/o Goripora Tehsil Zaingeer for issuance of Birth & Death certificate in favour of Ab Ahad Zargar born on 08-03-1980 and as per document evidence produced by the applicant. In this regard, if anyone has any objection, he/she may file the same before the undersigned within 07 days. After that, no objection whatsoever will be entertained by this office.

fko Tehsildar
Executive Magistrate
Bomai

PUBLIC NOTICE

This is information for the general public that we 1. GH MOHI UDDIN SHAH S/O REHMAN SHAH 2. AB HAMID SHAH S/O GH MOHI UDDIN SHAH Prop. of GMS Construction, holder of BEE class contractor issued by Superintendent Engineer PWD, BEE to (A) change class. Also add firm name as GMS CONSTRUCTION, If any body having any objection regarding the same they may submit their objection written to the Chief Engineer Civil investigation wing JKPCD, Bemina Srinagar within a period of 7 days from the date of this notice. No objection will be entertained after that.

1. GH MOHI UDDIN SHAH S/O REHMAN SHAH
2. AB HAMID SHAH S/O GH MOHI UDDIN SHAH R/O BATAGUND TRAL PULWAMA. mcb

**OFFICE OF EXECUTIVE MAGISTRATE
1ST CLASS ZAINGEER BOMAI**

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

Public Notice

This office has received a written application from AMIR BASHIR RESHI S/o BASHIR AHMAD RESHI R/o MARBAL, Tehsil Zaingeer for issuance of Birth & Death certificate in favour of AMIR BASHIR RESHI born on 07-11-2004 and as per document evidence produced by the applicant. In this regard, if anyone has any objection, he/she may file the same before the undersigned within 07 days. After that, no objection whatsoever will be entertained by this office.

fko Tehsildar
Executive Magistrate
Bomai

**OFFICE OF EXECUTIVE MAGISTRATE
1ST CLASS ZAINGEER BOMAI**

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

Public Notice

This office has received a written application REYAZ AHMAD MIR S/o GHULAM RASOOL MIR R/o EDIPORA, Tehsil Zaingeer for issuance of Birth & Death certificate in favour of SADAF JAAN born on 07-06-2015 and as per document evidence produced by the applicant. In this regard, if anyone has any objection, he/she may file the same before the undersigned within 07 days. After that, no objection whatsoever will be entertained by this office.

fko Tehsildar
Executive Magistrate
Bomai

**OFFICE OF EXECUTIVE MAGISTRATE
1ST CLASS ZAINGEER BOMAI**

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

Public Notice

This office has received a written application from WASEEM AHMAD SHEIKH S/o KHAZIR MOHD SHEIKH R/o TUJAR, Tehsil Zaingeer for issuance of Birth & Death certificate in favour of WASEEM AHMAD SHEIKH born on 01-03-1992 and as per document evidence produced by the applicant. In this regard, if anyone has any objection, he/she may file the same before the undersigned within 07 days. After that, no objection whatsoever will be entertained by this office.

fko Tehsildar
Executive Magistrate
Bomai

**OFFICE OF EXECUTIVE MAGISTRATE
1ST CLASS ZAINGEER BOMAI**

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

Public Notice

This office has received a written application from ABDUL RASHID MIR S/o BAHAR AHMAD MIR R/o GUND BRATH, Tehsil Zaingeer for issuance of Birth & Death certificate in favour of ward IQRA RASHID born on 25-07-2009 and as per document evidence produced by the applicant. In this regard, if anyone has any objection, he/she may file the same before the undersigned within 07 days. After that, no objection whatsoever will be entertained by this office.

fko Tehsildar
Executive Magistrate
Bomai

**OFFICE OF EXECUTIVE MAGISTRATE
1ST CLASS ZAINGEER BOMAI**

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

Public Notice

This office has received a written application from MOHAMMAD ASHRAF TEELI S/o MOHAMMAD TEELI R/o NOWPORA TUJAR, Tehsil Zaingeer for issuance of Birth & Death certificate in favour of ABID ASHRAF TEELI born on 15-09-2009 and as per document evidence produced by the applicant. In this regard, if anyone has any objection, he/she may file the same before the undersigned within 07 days. After that, no objection whatsoever will be entertained by this office.

fko Tehsildar
Executive Magistrate
Bomai

**OFFICE OF EXECUTIVE MAGISTRATE
1ST CLASS ZAINGEER BOMAI**

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

Public Notice

This office has received a written application from GULZAR AHMAD BHAT S/o MOHD RAMZAN BHAT R/o DARPORA, Tehsil Zaingeer for issuance of Birth & Death certificate in favour of GULZAR AHMAD BHAT born on 15-09-1977 and as per document evidence produced by the applicant. In this regard, if anyone has any objection, he/she may file the same before the undersigned within 07 days. After that, no objection whatsoever will be entertained by this office.

fko Tehsildar
Executive Magistrate
Bomai

PUBLIC NOTICE

I, SABREENA KAUNSER D/O MOHAMMAD AKBAR GANIE R/O WARIHAMA, hereby inform the general public that my Name/ Parentage/Date of Birth has been wrongly mentioned in my Aadhar Card as, Sabreana Akber D/O Mohd Akbar Gani DOB: 14-07-2006, instead of the correct particulars SABREENA KAUNSER D/O MOHAMMAD AKBAR GANIE DOB:- 02-04-2007.

Now, I am applying for the necessary correction. Any person having any objection to the said correction may kindly contact the office of the Block Development Officer, Beerwah, within 07 days from the date of publication of this notice. After that, no objection shall be entertained, and the correction process will proceed accordingly.

RKO

Subject: Grant of registration of the proposed Travel unit under the name & Style of M/s. LAVEEZA TRAVELS " situated at Kunzer Utlipora ward no 7 Baramulla

Public notice

Whereas I Arif Ahmad Para S/o Ghulam Mohammad Para R/o Kachmuqam Baramulla intends to apply in the Department of tourism for registration of my proposed travel unit under the name and style " M/s. LAVEEZA TRAVELS" situated at Kunzer Utlipora ward no 7 Baramulla Tourist Trade Act1978/82/2011-12.

Whereas, I will submit state subject/Domicile certificate, Qualification Certificate, Pan card, Experience certificate (minimum 05 years), Character certificate (Police department), Bank statement (minimum balance 1000), site plan, Affidavit, Rent Deed duly attested sub-registrar, printing Material (Letter Head/Visiting), Photograph of the unit (indoor and Outdoor) and Two Passport size photograph to the department of tourism as prescribed checklist prior to registration of my unit as an Excursion Agency/Adventure tour operation.

Now as per J&K Registration of Tourist Trade Act 1978/82/2011-12, before my case is processed for registration by the competent Authority the matter is hereby notified for information of general public/financial institutions/Ban/ Organisation, etc for objection, if any and the same should reach to the deputy director tourism Registration (e-mail ID:- ddtreg123@ gmail.com) within a period of 7 days from the publication of this notice in leading local newspaper/newspaper of the valley. No objection beyond a period of 7 days shall be entertained

fko

Office of the Naib Tehsildar Pattan.

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

Public Notice

The registrar birth BDO Sherabad Khore has submitted a case file pertaining to birth of Safiya Jan D/o Ghulam Mohammad Khanday R/o Hanjiwera Bala with verified date of birth 20/08/2016 occurred at SDH pattan 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.

fko Sd
Naib Tehsildar Pattan

Office of the Naib Tehsildar Pattan.

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

Public Notice

The registrar birth EO MC pattan has submitted a case file pertaining to birth of Sheiza Shabir D/o Shabir Ahmad Malik R/o Singhpora with verified date of birth 30/10/2024 occurred at SDH pattan 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.

fko Sd
Naib Tehsildar Pattan

Office of the Naib Tehsildar Pattan.

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

Public Notice

The registrar birth EO MC pattan has submitted a case file pertaining to birth of Sheiza Shabir D/o Shabir Ahmad Malik R/o Singhpora with verified date of birth 30/10/2024 occurred at SDH pattan 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.

fko Sd
Naib Tehsildar Pattan

**OFFICE OF EXECUTIVE MAGISTRATE
1ST CLASS ZAINGEER BOMAI**

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

Public Notice

This office has received a written application from GH MOHD LONE S/o GH AHMAD LONE R/o ZALOORA, Tehsil Zaingeer for issuance of Birth & Death certificate in favour of ward Namely (SURAYA JAN) born on 04-05-2007 and as per document evidence produced by the applicant. In this regard, if anyone has any objection, he/she may file the same before the undersigned within 07 days. After that, no objection whatsoever will be entertained by this office.

fko Tehsildar
Executive Magistrate
Bomai

**OFFICE OF EXECUTIVE MAGISTRATE
1ST CLASS ZAINGEER BOMAI**

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

Public Notice

This office has received a written application from MOHAMMAD SHAFI BHAT S/o ABDULL KHALIQ BHAT R/o GORIPORA DARPORA Tehsil Zaingeer for issuance of Birth & Death certificate in favour of (MOHD SHAFI BHAT) born on 13-10-1975 and as per document evidence produced by the applicant. In this regard, if anyone has any objection, he/she may file the same before the undersigned within 07 days. After that, no objection whatsoever will be entertained by this office.

fko Tehsildar
Executive Magistrate
Bomai

SMC Employees Protest over Unpaid Wages

Observer News Service

Srinagar: Hundreds of employees of Srinagar Municipal Corporation (SMC), including permanent staff and daily wagers, on Saturday staged a protest at the Corporation's headquarters in Karan Nagar, demanding release of their pending salaries and a concrete policy for regularisation.

Led by SMC Employees Association President Nazir Ahmad Ahanger and Workers Union President Mohammad Ramzan Sheikh, the employees gathered inside the main premises, shouting slogans against what they called "deliberate neglect" by the authorities.

The protesters, as reported by KNO claimed that they have not been paid their wages for the last three months, leaving thousands of families struggling to make ends meet.

"We are the backbone of civic services in Srinagar, from sanitation to street cleaning, yet our own homes are in darkness. Our children are being sent back from schools because we cannot pay fees," said one of the protest-

"We have given our youth to this department without any job security. We deserve to be treated with dignity,"

ing employees.

Another employee said they have approached the administration several times, but their pleas have gone unheard.

"Every time we are assured that dues will be released soon, but nothing ever happens. We are left to manage loans and debts just to feed our families," he said.

Daily wagers, many of whom have worked with the Corporation for years, demanded a time-bound policy for their regularisation.

"We have given our youth to this department without any job security. We deserve to be treated with dignity," one of them said.



Fire Reduces Fisheries Dept Structure to Ashes

Observer News Service

Srinagar: A fire incident on Saturday afternoon reduced structures belonging to the Department of Fisheries to ashes at Nehru Park in Gagribal area of Srinagar, officials said.

An official told KNO that the fire was reported at Ghat No. 18, Gagribal, around 2:26 PM.

Soon, the Fire and Emergency Services (F&ES) Department

rushed to the spot, he said, adding that additional reinforcements were also pressed to assist in the operation.

"The firefighters found three tin sheds, belonging to the Central Processing Office (CPO) of the Fisheries Department, engulfed in flames," the official said.

He said that firefighting operations were promptly initiated, and after sustained efforts, the blaze was brought under control, pre-

venting it from spreading to nearby installations and park areas.

Old furniture, one old motorcycle, lockers containing service records and a 25 kV generator were damaged, he informed.

No loss of life or injuries was reported. "However, the structures were completely gutted before the flames could be contained," the official said, adding that the cause of the fire is being investigated.

Admin Finalizes Mahashivratri Preparations at Shankaracharya Temple

Observer News Service

Srinagar: Deputy Commissioner (DC) Srinagar, Akshay Labroo, on Saturday visited the historic Shankaracharya Temple to review and finalize arrangements for the upcoming festival of Mahashivratri (Herath), scheduled to be celebrated on February 14 and 15, 2026.

The DC was accompanied by SSP Traffic Police Srinagar, Aijaz Ahmad Bhat, along with senior officers from various departments to ensure that all necessary arrangements are put in place for the smooth conduct of the festival, which holds immense religious and cultural significance, particularly for the Kashmiri Pandit community.

Among those present during the inspection were Addi-

tional Deputy Commissioner Srinagar, Mir Imtiyaz Ul Aziz; Joint Commissioner Srinagar Municipal Corporation (SMC), Nuzhat Khurshid; Chief Planning Officer, Fayaz Ahmad Dar; Chief Medical Officer, Dr Tahir Sajad; Executive Engineers of PHE, R&B and KPDCL; Tehsildar South; Tehsildar Khanyar; Chief Sanitation Officer; Additional Secretary Dharmarth Trust, Avinash Fotedar; and Vidhu Sharma, besides other concerned officials.

During the on-site review, the DC directed all line departments to ensure that essential facilities are established well in advance for the devotees expected to visit the temple. He stressed the need for coordinated efforts to provide a smooth, safe and enriching pilgrimage experience.

SKUAST-K Holds Food Processing Conclave

Observer News Service

SRINAGAR: Sher-e-Kashmir University of Agricultural Sciences and Technology of Kashmir held a one day food processing conclave at Shalimar to deliberate on growth opportunities, policy support, and industry modernisation in the sector.

The conclave titled, 'Jammu and Kashmir Produce and Processing Conclave' was organised by SKUAST-K's Division of Food Science & Technology in collaboration with Knowledge Chamber of Commerce and Industry (KCCI) and

the Ministry of Food Processing Industries (MoFPI), Government of India.

The program brought together policymakers, industry leaders, financial institutions, and food processing stakeholders to deliberate on the issues and way forward for the processing industry in J&K.

Vice Chancellor, SKUAST-K, Prof Nazir Ahmad Ganai, who was the chief guest on the occasion, emphasised the critical role of research, innovation, and academia-industry collaboration in unlocking the horticulture and food processing potential of the region.

OFFICE OF THE EXECUTIVE ENGINEER SEWERAGE & DRAINAGE DIVISION No. IIND SRINAGAR.

Phone/ Fax No. 0194-2950058
GIST OF TENDER NOTICE No:- 36 /E-Tendering OF 2025-26

For and on behalf of the Commissioner Srinagar Municipal Corporation, e-tenders are invited on **Percentage basis** from the Registered PWD Civil Contractors whose registration cards are valid in terms of standing rules, for the below mentioned works strictly as per the terms and conditions given hereunder:-

Sl. No.	Name of work	Estt. Cost of work incl. Deptt. materials (Amount in lacs)	Earnest Money	Class of Contractor	Time of completion.	Cost of Tender Document in the shape of Treasury Challan (Rs.)	Head of Account
1.	Construction of pipe drain including manholes at Khumani Chowk to H/o Mohammad Hussain Kargil via Radiant School Srinagar	Rs.31.00	Rs.62000/-	AAY/BEE	25 Days	Rs.1000/-	NGT City Grants 2025-26

In terms of Government order Circular No.01 (Adm) FD of 2025 Dated:- 08.07.2025 that "Every participating supplier/contractor to mandatory disclose the bank account number which is linked with their GSTIN at the time of bid submission. No payment shall be released by the Government Department /Agency to any other bank account except the one linked with the GST registered number of the successful bidder"

The NIT Consisting of qualifying information, eligibility criteria, specifications, Bill of quantities (B.O.Q), Set of terms and conditions of contract and other details can be seen/downloaded from the departmental website www.jktenders.gov.in as per the schedule of dates given hereunder:-

01.	Date of issue of Tender Notice	07.02.2026
02.	Period of down loading of bidding documents	07.02.2026 from 04.00 P.M to 20.02.2026 up to 4.00 PM
03.	Bid Submission Start Date	07.02.2026 from 04.30 AM
04.	Bid Submission end Date	20.02.2026 up to 4.00 PM
05.	Date & time of opening of Bids on line	21.02.2026 at 11.30 PM in the office of Executive Engineer, Sewerage & Drainage Division No. II, SMC, Daresh Kadal Srinagar or any subsequent date convenient date to the tender Opening Authority
06.	List of soft copies to be uploaded	Scanned copy of Treasury challan (cost of tender document) with Sl. No. of NIT/ Name of the work (without overwriting). Scanned copy of CDR/ FDR/BG (Earnest Money) (without Over writing). Scanned copy of GST Registration with latest clearance and PAN Card. Scanned copy of JKPWDOMS Registration card with latest renewal on JKPWDOMS PORTAL, Cell No./ e-mail ID and correspondence address. NIT (Terms and conditions) duly signed by the bidder. BOQ.

TERMS AND CONDITIONS

- In case the bids are found unbalanced / abnormally low bid price, the Successful bidder has to produce/ deposit additional performance security in shape of FDR/CDR/BG pledged to Executive Engineer Sewerage & Drainage Division 2nd, SMC Srinagar within three days after opening the bids, as per the circular instructions of the Finance Department Circular No. FD-Code/44/2021-02-158 Dated:- 08.08.2025. The additional performance security shall be released after the successful completion of work till Defective Liability (DLP) period is over and the defective liability period for each work shall be reflected in the allotment order when issued.
- Where the bid price is below 10% but not below 20% of the Advertised cost put to bid, the additional performance guarantee / security percentage shall be incremented by 0.1% for every percentage of Bid Price Below 10% of advertised cost put to bid starting at 11% with the additional bid performance guarantee being 0.1% and this Additional Performance Guarantee percentage shall be applied on the bid Price.
- Where the Bid Price is 20% or more below the advertised cost put to bid the Additional Performance Grantee percentage shall be increment ed by 0.2% for every percentage of Bid Price Below 20% of project cost put to bid in addition to 0.1% of the bid price and this additional performance guarantee percentage shall be applied on the bid price.
- Additional Performance Security shall be treated as part of Performance Security.
- In addition to above the successful bidder has to produce/ deposit Performance security i.e. 05% (Five Percent) of the value of contract in shape of FDR/CDR pledged to Executive Engineer Sewerage & Drainage Division 2nd SMC Srinagar within three days after opening the bids. The performance security shall be released after the Defective Liability (DLP) period of the work.
- In case of its bids the department shall identify the tied bidder and shall select the L1 based on the draw lots, in presence of tied bidders, if they chose to be present.
- The Successful Bidder has to produce Hard Copies within three days after opening of Bids.
- Bidders are advised to read the NIT carefully before participating in the Bidding process.
- Treasury Challan (Tender Document Fee) should be a fresh i.e. between the date of issue of tender notice & bid submission end date.
- The Contract shall be awarded only after obtaining Administrative Approval from Competent Authority and release of funds on BEAMS portal by the Finance Department.
- The payment of work on account of work done shall be made under rules subject to availability of funds under the prescribed head of account.
- The tender receiving authority reserves the right to accept or reject or cancel any bid / tender / NIT or all tenders without assigning any reason thereof.

Camp Clerk HD HA TO

Executive Engineer,
S&D Division IInd, Sgr.

NO.S&D-II/5077
Dated:- 07.02.2026

DIPK-10687/25
dated: 07-02-2026

PUBLIC NOTICE

I Gulam Hassan Akhooon have lost my RC bearing vehicle no Jk01AT3353. Now I am applying for the Duplicate of the same. If anybody has any objection may contact the concerned authorities within a period of seven days. After that no objection shall be entertained.
Owner's name:- Gulam Hassan Akhooon
Address:- ChAk sadarbal
Registration no. Jk01AT 3353
Contact no:- 8899045214

PUBLIC NOTICE

My name has been wrongly written in my adhaar card as Ashiq Hussain Mir while my correct name as per school records is Ashaq Hussain Mir. Now I have applied for the correction of the same. If anybody has any objection in this regard he/she may file them in the concerned office within seven days. After that no objection shall be entertained.

Ashaq Hussain Mir
S/o Gh Hussain Mir
R/o Balhama
Tehsil Pantha Chowk

fko

PUBLIC NOTICE

I, Tariq Ahmad Alayee, S/o Sona Ullah Alayee, R/o Adina, Tehsil Magam, District Budgam (J&K), hereby declare that I intend to change the name of my son from Ahmed Arsh to Ahmed Arsh Ellahi in the school records.

If any person has any objection in this regard, the same may be submitted to the concerned authority at Dubai Grand International School, HMT, Srinagar, within the prescribed period.

Sd/-
Tariq Ahmad Alayee
(Father of Ahmed Arsh)
bmg

All praises to Allah, the Most Merciful and the Most Generous.

Ramzan Appeal 2026~
Ration Kits for Needy Families

Feeding a fasting family is among the most beloved deeds in the sight of Allah.

Assalamu Alaikum wa Rahmatullahi wa Barakatuhu.

As the blessed month of Ramazan 2026 approaches, Idara Falahi Aam Waqf humbly appeals for the distribution of Ramazaan Ration Kits for poor and deserving families.

Distributing Approximately **300 Ration Kits**
Approximate cost of one kit ₹2,400/-
Each kit provides essential food items for entire family.

Contribute Generously:
J&K BANK ACCOUNT
NO: 1112040102856261
J&K BANK Branch Alamgari Bazar
IFSC: JAKA0ALMGRI

Idara Falahi Aam Waqf
Alamgari Bazaar, Srinagar

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Trees Before Tracks

A halted railway plan saved orchards, livelihoods and showed how listening can rebuild trust in Kashmir.



Dr. Raja Muzaffar Bhat



Ashwini Vaishnav, an IIT Kanpur graduate and former IAS officer with experience in government and the corporate world, took a call that balanced development with people's lives. By shelving these projects, he helped protect thousands of trees and the livelihoods of apple farmers in Anantnag, Pulwama and Shopian. More than that, the decision sent a message that listening still matters.

BJP Rajya Sabha MP Ghulam Ali Khatana took the issue directly to railway minister Ashwini Vaishnav. That combined effort made a difference. On February 3, 2026, the railway minister announced that the Bijbehara to Pahalgam and Awantipora to Shopian rail proposals stood suspended. He said the decision followed objections from farmers, elected representatives and the Jammu and Kashmir government.

These surveys had continued for nearly two years, covering over 40 kilometres in one case and 27.6 kilometres in the other, and had caused anger in villages where tracks would cut through apple orchards.

Chief minister Omar Abdullah welcomed the decision and asked for more coaches and better frequency on the Katra to Srinagar Vande Bharat trains.

Relief spread quickly through Anantnag, Pulwama and Shopian. Apple growers spoke about finally breathing easier after months of worry.

This moment mattered beyond orchards and income. It showed that public voices can still influence decisions, even in places where people often feel ignored.

My own bond with railways carries emotion.

I travelled by train from Srinagar to Maharashtra and Gujarat for the first time in my life, and that journey felt unreal. Railways connect India and Kashmir in powerful ways. People here never opposed the Katra to Srinagar line, which stands as an engineering marvel. The opposition arose only when new lines threatened forests and orchards for short stretches that offered little benefit at great cost.

Ashwini Vaishnav, an IIT Kanpur graduate and former IAS officer with experience in government and the corporate world, took a call that balanced development with people's lives.

By shelving these projects, he helped protect thousands of trees and the livelihoods of apple farmers in Anantnag, Pulwama and Shopian.

More than that, the decision sent a message that listening still matters.

And in a place where trust runs low, that choice opened space for better understanding between New Delhi and Kashmir.

The author is an environmental activist and policy commentator. He is the founder and chairman of the Jammu and Kashmir Climate Action Group and a member of the J&K State Audit Advisory Board.

KO VIEW

The Graduate Gap

Kashmir's educated youth live with the country's highest unemployment, a burden no degree can fix alone.

Mehak Safder

Life feels clear and full of promise for many young people in Kashmir while they remain inside colleges and universities, where days follow a pattern that makes sense.

Classes and campuses drive routines, exams offer direction, and encouragement from teachers slowly builds confidence.

At home, families speak with pride, neighbours talk about potential, and effort feels noticed and rewarded.

During these years, a student lives inside an academic bubble that offers purpose, belonging, and the comfort of believing that hard work will naturally lead somewhere secure.

That feeling changes once college ends.

Degrees come home, celebrations fade, and the outside world feels uncertain. Job openings appear rarely, interviews remain out of reach, and competition feels overwhelming.

This shift feels sharper in a region that has the highest level of joblessness in the country.

A young graduate who once felt valued now meets long waiting periods and empty inboxes. Confidence begins to shake, even though ability and effort remain strong.

The responsibility for this gap does not sit with young people alone. Education celebrates success inside classrooms, where praise comes easily, while real opportunities remain limited once students step outside.

Society now faces a simple truth and a shared task to accept it and build paths that truly match the years of study and effort students have already given.

Ordinary moments at home reveal how deeply this struggle touches families.

Young people study late into the night for exams linked with stability. Others refresh job portals many times a day, hoping to see fresh listings. Some return from interviews and choose gentle words at home, aiming to protect parents from worry.

These talks are filled with pressure and the constant question of what comes next.

Waiting for jobs affects an entire generation. Many young people start to measure their value by selection lists or salaries. Success feels like relief and pride, while rejection brings doubt and disappointment.

This thinking hides a simple truth: talent is still there, and hard work keeps building, even if success takes time.

Hard work shows itself everywhere in the valley. Students travel long distances for coaching classes and return home late. Power cuts turn study hours into tests of patience as books remain open under dim lights. Degree holders take small jobs or help behind shop counters, guided by care for their families and a strong sense of responsibility.

Some move to other towns and cities, live alone, and accept whatever work appears so parents and siblings can live with comfort and pride.

These choices show real strength and dedication, even when few people notice.

But long periods of waiting slowly wear down confidence. Months turn into years, and hope starts to fade.

Some young people pull away from others, while sadness grows heavier for some. A few turn to harmful habits or the wrong company, thinking it will make the pressure easier to bear.

Experience shows that short-term escape only makes things harder, affecting health, worrying families, and closing doors that once seemed open.

Kashmir's young generation deserves a wider understanding of success. The valley holds sharp minds, creative thinkers, and workers ready to learn and adapt. Many already build skills online, start small ventures, or prepare again after disappointment while supporting their households.

Rising after setbacks builds character, and this strength appears daily in small efforts.

Society has a big role in deciding what happens next. Success is not only found in government offices or big buildings. Any honest work that helps a family and builds self-respect matters.

Families should give their children strength through patience. Constant comparisons can hurt confidence, while trust and encouragement bring it back.

A few kind words at the right time can make a lasting difference. Young people need understanding and support. They carry the hopes of the valley and the promise of its future.

Paths in teaching, public service, business, art, and leadership stay open when they keep believing in themselves, even through hard times. Job delays mark a stage of life rather than a final judgment. Progress may move slowly and still move forward. Effort invested today determines opportunity tomorrow.

Persistence opens doors, while shortcuts place futures at risk. As this generation steps out of academic comfort and into a demanding world, clarity and action matter.

The struggle shows a shortage of opportunity rather than a lack of ambition. Families, institutions, and leaders carry the responsibility to build systems that honour effort with real chances.

The young people facing struggle today hold the promise of tomorrow. Kashmir's true strength lies in determination, in caring for family, and in the courage to keep dreaming.

When that spirit stays alive, the valley's future is full of promise and hope.

The author can be reached at mehaksafder313@gmail.com

I can still picture what I saw on December 26, 2025, while walking through Babhar, Keegam, Check Niltrisal, Check Nazneenpora and Kunsoo, villages spread between Pulwama and Shopian.

I was there with fellow activists from the Jammu and Kashmir Climate Action Group, and the feeling in those orchards unsettled me.

Apple farmers stood beside their trees, watching survey teams place masonry pillars marked in yellow, fully aware of what those markings could mean.

The railway line under survey would cover just 27 kilometres, running from Kakapora in Pulwama to Kunsoo in Shopian.

That short stretch cut straight through the heart of these villages.

Nearly ninety percent of families depend on apple farming, and the proposed line threatened their income, land and the local environment at the same time.

People felt cornered and unsure how to speak, even though the danger was unfolding right in front of them.

When we sat with farmers and listened, the frustration came pouring out. Many believed raising their voice would change nothing.

But once we started sharing their concerns publicly, backed by clear facts and numbers, the mood began to shift.

Social media posts caught attention, journalists reached out, and silence slowly gave way to public debate.

Soon, people started calling it a Chipkoo-like movement, because villagers stood up to protect trees that sustained their lives.

This struggle had already surfaced earlier.

In November 2024, survey work began in Bijbehara in Anantnag district for the proposed Bijbehara to Pahalgam line. I visited those areas too and saw similar anger and fear. MLA Bashir Veeri raised the issue repeatedly for over a year, and MLA Altaf Kaloo wrote to the chief minister in January 2026.

During the winter session of parliament in 2024, Srinagar MP Aga Syed Ruhullah spoke strongly in the Lok Sabha and demanded a social impact assessment, which the Right to Fair Compensation Act of 2013 makes mandatory.

In December 2024, I visited Dhirhama village with a team from Kashmir Observer. Villagers protested openly against the railway surveys, and a short video report from that visit spread widely online and reached millions.

Attention dipped for some time, then returned sharply when the same survey work appeared in Pulwama and Shopian. DDC member Raja Waheed called me several times, and together we focused on spreading awareness and explaining the law.

People wanted clarity, and I explained how the proposed alignment broke environmental rules, since it also involved mulberry, willow, chinara and walnut trees protected under the Jammu and Kashmir Specified Trees Act of 1969.

I spoke about the Fair Compensation Act of 2013, which applies in Jammu and Kashmir and stresses consent of local people during land acquisition. Farmers like Ummer Wani and Mohammad Aslam spoke openly about these legal protections, and those videos travelled far online.

After that December visit, I followed the case for new developments. More journalists visited these villages, political leaders began speaking publicly, and farmers who once stayed silent stepped forward.

PDP leader Mehbooba Mufti raised the matter, as did MLAs Waheed Parra, Ghulam Mohiudeen Mir and Shabir Kullay. DDC member Raja Waheed stayed active, and several BJP leaders joined in.

People wanted clarity, and I explained how the proposed alignment

Budget Beyond Spending

The February 6 budget expands welfare, jobs and infrastructure across Jammu and Kashmir, while keeping the region deeply tied to Central funding and rising fixed costs.

Irshad Mushtaq

Marriage assistance for poor AAY girls rises from 50,000 to 75,000. The Ladli Beti scheme continues to support nearly 1.92 lakh girls, linking financial help with education and social protection.

Jobs and youth programs form another major focus.

During 2025, the government provided 7,650 government jobs and plans to fill another 23,800 posts in the coming period. Mission YUVA shows strong momentum, drawing more than 70,000 applications and financing about 16,500 new enterprises through loans close to 800 crore.

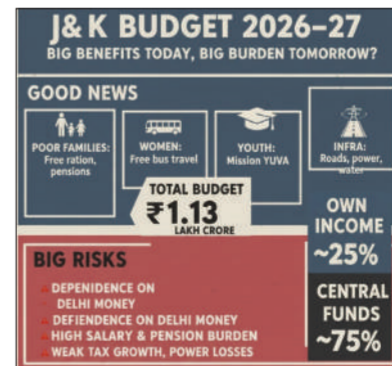
The aim here lies in mixing public sector hiring with support for small businesses and self employment.

Farmers and rural communities also gain targeted support. The budget highlights better seeds, expanded irrigation, solar pumps and wider use of e-NAM for online crop sales.

High density orchards, controlled atmosphere storage, weather based crop insurance and seven large milk plants aim to raise farm incomes. New dairy cooperatives and chilling units strengthen links between villages and markets.

Infrastructure spending remains the most visible promise.

The Udhampur-Srinagar-Baramulla rail line brings full rail connectivity to Kashmir. Expressways, highways, ring roads and tunnels continue to transform travel, while



2,400 villages move closer to all-weather road access and around 3,500 kilometres of roads get black topped.

In the power sector, projects such as Pakal Dul, Kiru, Ratle, Kwar and Sawalkote add more than 3,000 megawatts. Smart meters already show impact, cutting losses by nine percent and raising revenue by sixteen percent.

Around 2.22 lakh AAY households receive two kilowatt solar rooftops, offering free electricity for nearly twenty years.

Water supply and city services see steady expansion. Over 15.6 lakh rural homes now have tap water connections, covering about eighty one percent of households. Urban projects include sewage treatment plants, solid waste systems, cleaning of Dal and Wular lakes, and Smart City upgrades covering roads, parking and housing.

Digital governance runs silently be-

neath these changes.

J&K now offers 1,547 services online, ranking first among Union Territories and fourth nationwide. Systems such as Aadhaar linked direct benefit transfers, SPARSH payments, e-Office 2.0 down to block level, WhatsApp-based services and CSC Digi Dost centres reduce paperwork and speed up access when implementation stays clean and consistent.

The concerns appear once you look closer.

J&K still earns only about twenty five percent of what it plans to spend, which means real financial independence remains limited.

The fiscal deficit rises to 3.69 percent of GDP. Salaries, pensions and interest payments take up nearly sixty percent of expenditure, leaving limited room to adjust spending priorities.

Revenue measures remain modest, centred on a 2 per litre cut in diesel rebate and tighter GST and excise enforcement.

Power sector losses continue to drain resources, while diesel price changes can raise transport and goods costs, affecting household budgets.

For many Kashmiris, the budget brings visible relief through better services, direct cash support, free travel for women and new job opportunities.

The same document also points to a future shaped by borrowing, high fixed costs and steady reliance on Central funds.

Stronger tax collection, cleaner power sector finances and tighter control over wasteful spending can turn this moment into lasting strength.

The choices taken after this budget will decide whether today's comfort grows into long term stability or places heavier demands on the years ahead.

The author is a Srinagar-based reputed financial educator.

Standing Through Life

Born with a disability and battered by back-to-back losses, Raja Begam raises her grandchildren and tends her orchard with consistent care, showing a life built on endurance and work.

Gowher Bhat

Raja Begam's left leg never worked the way the other did.

In her hometown of Wahibugh, people still remember the girl who always lagged behind, her foot dragging slowly over the earth.

Pain was part of life from the very beginning, and she bore it as her fate.

She learned to move carefully, rest when she needed, and keep going without ever asking why.

"I don't remember a time when my leg did not hurt," she says, sitting in her courtyard, fingers brushing the earth beneath her. "So pain grew with me. I stopped asking why."

Children ran past her, climbed trees, disappeared into games. She stayed behind.

Her world moved differently. Perseverance came before hope.

She helped her parents with small tasks: sorting vegetables, feeding the goats, and carrying what she could.

But when pain came, she stopped. When it eased, she worked again.

"I learned early," she says, rubbing her knee, "that stopping forever was not an option."

At twenty-five, her marriage was arranged. Families hesitated because of her leg. The reason was never spoken, but it was understood.

"A man was brought to our home," she says. He came as a ghar-jamai. Villagers whispered, some with sympathy, others with judgment.

Raja Begam listened without saying anything. She understood that dignity does not need defending.

She worked in the kitchen garden, bending carefully between rows of vegetables, and tended the apple orchards. She learned when to prune, when to wait, and when to let the tree take its own course.

"She never acted helpless," a neighbour remembers. "Even when her leg hurt, she kept working."

Together, Raja Begam and her husband built a modest house on land her parents gave them. They planted apple trees whose roots sank deep into the soil, holding the land



steady. "At least we were building something that would stay," she says.

Grief arrived next. Her husband got seriously injured in a tractor accident while moving boulders. He never came back.

"I was waiting for him," she says. "Then people came running instead." Her lips tighten. She wipes her hand across her face. "After that, this house learned silence."

Widowed with two daughters and a leg that never healed, Raja Begam became mother, father, worker, and protector. She did not falter.

"My mother never cried in front of us," her surviving daughter says. "But at night, we heard her moving through the house, as if carrying something very heavy."

Years passed. One daughter married, and for a short while, the house felt lighter. Her daughter had a son, and Raja Begam held him in her arms.

"When I held my grandson," she says, a faint smile forming, "something softened inside me."

A year later, her daughter gave birth again. She was happy, thinking the family was complete. The second child survived, but the mother did not.

"She gave birth to her second child," Raja Begam says, voice breaking, "and then she left us." She presses her hand to her chest. "When they brought her body back to this house, it felt like the walls could not hold the pain."

Her surviving daughter speaks slowly, her voice trembling.

"Our mother was handicapped from birth," she says. "Then our father died. And then my sister died after giving birth. This house has seen grief again and again. Sometimes it feels like grief lives here."

She looks at her mother. "My mother supported us on one leg," she says. "She buried



VILLAGERS CALL HER THE IRON LADY. "SHE HAS ENDURED MORE THAN MOST OF US," a local elder says. "Yet she never complains. That is real strength." Raja Begam does not call herself strong. "I am only surviving," she says, standing with her familiar limp. "Sometimes, that is enough."

our father. Then she buried my sister. I don't know how she is still standing."

Raja Begam listens.

"I buried my husband," she says finally. "Then I buried my daughter." She wipes her tears. "A mother is not made for this. Allah gives no choice."

Today, Raja Begam raises her grandchildren. She walks to the orchard when her leg allows, moving among the trees she planted and tended for years.

"The trees don't ask questions," she says. "They just grow."

Villagers call her the Iron Lady. "She has endured more than most of us," a local elder says. "Yet she never complains. That is real strength."

Raja Begam does not call herself strong. "I am only surviving," she says, standing with her familiar limp. "Sometimes, that is enough."

She wipes her hand across her face and walks inside, into a house that has held loss again and again and continues to stand.

— The author is a coach and columnist from Pulwama.

Virtual Walls

A counselor shares how smartphones are altering young lives and family bonds in Kashmir, and why mindful use can restore balance and connection.



Shazia Qadir

I meet young adults every day who seem glued to their phones. I notice them checking screens during meals, scrolling late at night, and holding devices while sitting with family. Their attention drifts away even when people sit close, and I can sense the tension between digital connection and real-life presence.

Phones give convenience, access to learning, social interaction, and work support, but I see how overuse affects sleep, moods, focus, and emotional health, slowly changing the way families relate to each other.

I observe patterns in homes I visit. Young adults who grow up in families that share time, encourage each other, and show support usually handle technology with care. They can take breaks from screens without stress, manage emotions better, and stay present around family.

Spending time together, setting boundaries on device use, and encouraging openness helps them build habits that protect their wellbeing and strengthen family bonds.

In households where tension or conflicts are frequent, or emotional support is limited,

phones often become a way to escape.

I meet young adults who turn to social media, games, or videos to cope with stress, loneliness, or silent disagreements at home. The reliance grows unnoticed.

Talking reduces, laughter fades, and small misunderstandings slowly create emotional distance. Parents and grandparents often sit in the same room as younger family members who seem elsewhere, because devices become the first response to boredom or discomfort.

The effects on older family members are clear. Many tell me they feel unseen, unheard, or less important despite sharing the same space with younger relatives. This sense of being ignored can cause sadness, frustration, and isolation.

I watch how the absence of shared attention affects everyone's emotional wellbeing, and it often creates patterns that are hard to break.

I also see the impact on young adults themselves. Long hours on phones can bring restlessness, anxiety, mood swings, and trouble sleeping. Some struggle with studies or work because focus drifts toward notifications. Many come to me feeling frustrated or drained, and understanding how screens affect them is the

first step to change.

I guide families in ways that work. Creating phone-free times during meals or family activities allows real engagement. Hobbies, outdoor time, and shared projects redirect energy toward meaningful activity. Parents and caregivers lead by showing thoughtful phone use without giving strict rules or lectures.

This approach helps young adults notice the benefits of putting devices aside, without feeling forced.

Phones themselves are not the problem. They can educate, connect, and inspire. They become harmful only when they replace attention, care, and support at home.

I have seen homes regain warmth and closeness when families focus on being present with one another.

Young adults begin to feel trust, care, and connection when people matter more than devices.

Balance is possible, and when phones serve life rather than replace it, families grow stronger and everyone's wellbeing improves.

— The author works as a counselor in Kashmir.

Stitching Work & Worth

From crewel embroidery to self-belief, six young women show how craft, care, and community can open new paths in Kashmir.

Mehrina Masoodi

I grew up hearing the names of those twin villages in the mountains of Kupwara spoken softly, as if people were afraid to say them out loud.

That feeling followed me as I grew older, staying somewhere in the back of my mind.

It only began to make sense when I spent time there and understood why the place sits so heavily in Kashmir's collective memory.

Kunan-Poshpora is full of beauty, with open fields, orchards, and homes built by long-held traditions, but a painful event from the past still shadows life, touching women most deeply.

Even after public attention faded, the emotional and social scars remained, and women continued to live with its impact through years of isolation and judgement.

Growing up, many girls in Kunan and Poshpora, and in nearby Awoora, learned early that the past determined how others looked at them.

School often felt out of reach, stepping outside the home drew unwanted attention, and public spaces felt closed to women.

Over time, their dreams grew smaller, shaped by the narrow space they were allowed to move in.

I met young women who spoke about those years with harrowing sense and honesty, talking about homes where pain stayed unspoken and support felt scarce.

But within that silence, something else also lived. Skills passed from mother to daughter, hands learned patterns and stitches, and crewel embroidery, a centuries-old Kashmiri craft, survived in living rooms and courtyards, even when many other doors remained closed.

Six young women from Kunan, Poshpora, and Awoora decided to bring that skill into the open.

Watching them work felt simple and bold at the same time, like they were doing something natural while also stepping into something new.

They began to treat embroidery as more than decoration, turning it into curtains, tote bags, cushion covers, and bed sheets that bring tradition into everyday modern homes.

Their journey came together through Project Jazba, an initiative of the TYCIA Foundation.

The project focuses on women in post-conflict and marginalised communities, offering training that brings together craft, emotional care, and business learning.

I watched the atmosphere in the room change as skills grew stronger, voices became clearer, and conversations shifted from hesitation to planning, with women gaining an understanding of markets, pricing, and the confidence to speak about their work.

A few years earlier, these kinds of discussions felt far away from village life, so watching them



take place now felt deeply personal to me.

Thread and fabric became ways to express feeling and find healing, with every stitch showing patience and pride, and every finished piece standing as proof that creativity could also open doors to income and independence.

Daily life here still comes with challenges, as social attitudes change slowly, economic limits control choices, and memories from the past continue to influence the present, but the women I met choose action over retreat.

Through their work, they invite others to imagine new roles for women in the village, roles rooted in participation, visibility, and shared confidence.

This shift reaches beyond embroidery. Education programs, vocational training, and community support have begun to change how women see themselves, and I now hear fewer stories driven only by loss and more guided by intention.

The women speak as planners and makers, as people creating their own paths.

In this setting, crewel embroidery means more than keeping a tradition alive.

It brings income, opens space for artistic expression, and supports emotional healing through shared work and goals.

When neighbours see these products travel beyond the village, a belief grows that what is made here holds value far beyond these hills.

As I leave Kunan-Poshpora after each visit, I carry images of women bent over fabric, laughing, discussing designs, and planning the next order.

What they create reaches beyond textile art.

They stitch together heritage and future, care and courage, memory and possibility.

The author works with TYCIA Foundation, a non-profit organisation dedicated to empowering rural communities in Kupwara under Project Jazba. She can be reached at masoodimehrina@gmail.com.

Army Chief in Poonch, Reviews Operational Preparedness



KO Web Desk

Srinagar: Army Chief Upendra Dwivedi on Saturday visited forward areas of Jammu and Kashmir's Poonch sector and reviewed the operational preparedness of troops deployed along the Line of Control and in hinterland areas.

During the visit, the Chief of Army Staff assessed deployment posture, surveillance measures

and overall security arrangements, officials said. He was briefed by senior officers on ground conditions and the readiness of formations operating in the sector amid ongoing counter-terror operations.

"The COAS visited forward areas of Poonch sector to review operational preparedness. He assessed deployment posture, surveillance measures and security arrangements, and reviewed

the overall readiness of formations deployed in the sector," the Army's Additional Directorate General of Public Information said in a post on X.

Gen Dwivedi also interacted with troops stationed in the challenging terrain and lauded their professionalism, preparedness and dedication. He commended the soldiers for maintaining high standards of operational readiness under

difficult conditions.

Officials said the Army Chief visited the twin border districts of Poonch and Rajouri, where he took stock of the security situation both along the LoC and in the hinterland. He met field commanders of the Army as well as officers from other security agencies to review coordination and operational effectiveness.

Later in the day, Gen Dwivedi

chaired a security review meeting at the Counter Insurgency Force Romeo headquarters in Rajouri to assess the overall security scenario in the two districts.

On Friday, the Army Chief had attended a high-level security review chaired by Union Home Minister Amit Shah and also visited the headquarters of the White Knight Corps in Jammu to assess operational preparedness in the region, officials said.

CONTD. FROM FRONT PAGE

Ensure 100%

including road infrastructure, power, industry, tourism, and digital connectivity covering 4G and optical fibre networks. He stressed that special focus should be laid on achieving 100 per cent saturation of Central government welfare schemes and ensuring that the benefits of all development projects reach the intended beneficiaries.

Shah said the enthusiasm of tourists from across the country to visit Jammu and Kashmir has not diminished. He called for aggressive marketing of the Union Territory's tourist destinations in other states to tap the full tourism potential and said the Government of India would provide all possible assistance for developing new tourist destinations.

The Home Minister also emphasised the importance of developing sports infrastructure and establishing sports academies to connect youth with development. He said efforts would be made to mobilise investment of around 200 crore by engaging various sports bodies.

In the agriculture and allied sectors, Shah said steps should be taken to promote the dairy sector in Jammu and Kashmir through the National Dairy Development Board.

Marking a significant fiscal development, Shah noted that Jammu and Kashmir has been brought under the ambit of the Special Assistance to States for Capital Investment scheme for the first time in the financial year 2025-26. This will enable the Union Territory to access 50-year interest-free loans for capital expenditure projects. He underlined that strengthened fiscal discipline would assist in stabilising the Union Territory's fiscal deficit over time.

Shah said India is steadily progressing towards the goal of Viksit Bharat by 2047, marking 100 years of Independence, and reiterated that the Government of India will continue to extend wholehearted support to Jammu and Kashmir in pursuit of this goal. An official spokesperson said the Home Minister's visit reflects the Centre's firm resolve to make the development, peace, and security of Jammu and Kashmir a foremost national priority.

Earlier, Shah arrived in Jammu late on Thursday evening and began his two-day visit by touring forward outposts of the Border Security Force at Gurnam and Bobiyian along the International Border in Kathua district on Friday. After returning from Kathua, he chaired a security review meeting that was attended, among others, by Army Chief General Upendra Dwivedi, with a focus on freeing Jammu and Kashmir from terrorism.

During his visit, the Home Minister also met the families of police personnel who were killed while fighting terrorism and handed over job appointment letters to them. A BJP delegation called on Shah on Friday as well.

In a post in Hindi on X, Shah said he held meetings in Jammu with BJP state office-bearers as well as MLAs and MPs from Jammu and Kashmir. He said the BJP would continue working to ensure the ground-level reach of the Prime Minister's development initiatives while strengthening the organisation to realise the vision of a developed and secure Jammu and Kashmir.

'Enthusiasm Of Tourists

"The enthusiasm of tourists from across the country to visit Jammu and Kashmir has not diminished. There is a need for aggressive marketing of Jammu and Kashmir's tourist destinations in other states to explore the tourism potential available here," he said.

Shah said the Bharatiya Janata Party-led Centre will provide all possible assistance in the plan to develop new tourist destinations in Jammu and Kashmir.

Pakistani terrorists affiliated with the Lashkar-e-Taiba (LeT) targeted tourists at the famous south Kashmir hill resort of Pahalgam on April 22 last year, killing 26 people and dealing a severe setback to the tourism industry in Jammu and Kashmir.

India, US Reach

25 per cent tariffs on India for purchasing Russian oil from February 7, as New Delhi has committed to stopping directly or indirectly importing oil from Moscow.

Trump's order has said that the US officials will monitor whether India resumes directly or indirectly importing Russian oil.

If it finds that India has resumed directly or indirectly importing the oil, the US officials shall recommend "whether and to what extent I should take additional action as to India, including whether I should reimpose the additional ad valorem rate of duty of 25 per cent on imports of articles of India," the order said.

The reciprocal tariff of 25 per cent will be reduced to 18 per cent after the US issues an executive order in this regard, which is expected soon.

The statement also said that India has expressed its intention to purchase USD 500 billion of US energy products, aircraft and aircraft parts, precious metals, technology products and coking coal over the next five years.

"The US and India are pleased to announce that they have reached a framework for an Interim Agreement regarding reciprocal and mutually beneficial trade," it said.

On the development, Prime Minister Narendra Modi said the interim trade pact will strengthen 'Make in India' by opening up new opportunities for farmers and entrepreneurs, and create jobs for women and youngsters.

Commerce and Industry Minister Piyush Goyal

said the interim pact will open a USD 30 trillion market for Indian exporters, especially MSMEs, farmers and fishermen, as the US duties on Indian goods will come down to 18 per cent from 50 per cent earlier.

When asked about the oil issue, Goyal said that the external affairs ministry will respond to the matter.

In August last year, the US imposed 25 per cent reciprocal tariffs and an additional 25 per cent levy on India for its purchase of Russian oil, hitting Indian exporters hard as America is their largest export destination.

The reduction in tariffs will help boost exports of India's labour-intensive sectors such as textiles and apparel, leather and footwear, plastic and rubber, organic chemicals, home decor, artisanal products and certain machinery.

Additionally, tariffs will go down to zero on a wide range of goods, including generic pharmaceuticals, gems and diamonds, and aircraft parts, thereby further enhancing India's export competitiveness and Make in India.

India will also get exemptions under section 232 on aircraft parts, tariff rate quota on auto parts and negotiated outcomes on generic pharmaceuticals, leading to tangible export gains in these sectors.

"At the same time, the agreement reflects India's commitment to safeguarding farmers' interests and sustaining rural livelihoods by completely protecting sensitive agricultural and dairy products, including maize, wheat, rice, soya, poultry, milk, cheese, ethanol (fuel), tobacco, certain vegetables, meat, etc," Goyal said.

Under the pact, India will eliminate import duties on certain US goods on the day the agreement comes into force, while duties on other items may be phased out over time. In some sectors, tariffs will be reduced, while in others, quota-based concessions will be provided.

Hailing the agreement, US Trade Representative Ambassador Jamieson Greer said President Donald Trump's dealmaking is unlocking one of the largest economies in the world for American workers and producers.

The joint statement also said that the two countries will "promptly" implement this framework and work towards finalising the interim agreement with a view to concluding a mutually beneficial Bilateral Trade Agreement (BTA).

In February last year, the two nations entered into negotiations for the first phase of the BTA. This framework will now be converted into a legal pact, which is expected to be signed by mid-March, following which India will start cutting down duties on specified American goods.

After the successful conclusion of the interim pact, tariffs will go down to zero on a wide range of Indian goods, including generic pharmaceuticals, gems and diamonds, and certain aircraft and aircraft parts.

"Similarly, consistent with the US national security requirements, India will receive a preferential tariff rate quota for automotive parts subject to the tariff imposed to eliminate threats to national security," the statement said.

It added that New Delhi has agreed to address long-standing barriers to the trade in US medical devices, eliminate restrictive import licensing procedures that delay market access for, or impose quantitative restrictions on American Information and Communication Technology goods.

"Recognising the importance of working together to resolve long-standing concerns, India also agrees to address long-standing non-tariff barriers to the trade in US food and agricultural products," the statement said.

India and the US will also significantly increase trade in technology products, including Graphics Processing Units and other goods used in data centres, and expand joint technology cooperation.

To enhance ease of compliance with applicable technical regulations, the two countries plan to discuss their respective standards and conformity assessment procedures for mutually agreed sectors.

During 2021-25, the US was India's largest trading partner in goods. The US accounts for about 18 per cent of India's total exports, 6.22 per cent in imports, and 10.73 per cent in bilateral trade. In 2024-25, the bilateral trade touched USD 186 billion (USD 86.5 billion exports and USD 45.3 billion imports).

With America, India had a trade surplus -- or the difference between imports and exports -- of USD 41 billion in 2024-25. It was USD 35.32 billion in 2023-24 and USD 27.7 billion in 2022-23.

Goyal added that India's exports worth about USD 44 billion to the US will enter the American market at zero reciprocal tariffs under the agreement.

While Indian goods worth about USD 30 billion will continue to attract an 18 per cent tariff (which includes goods from the labour-intensive sectors), there will be no change in duties on goods worth USD 12 billion (including steel, copper and certain auto parts).

Commenting on the deal, the Congress claimed that the Indo-US trade pact is "not a deal but a surrender" of the country's self-esteem and interests, and that it is a betrayal of India and its people.

Congress's media and publicity department head Pawan Khara said India will soon become a dumping ground for American products that will hurt the interests of the farmers and small and medium industries here. (PTI)

India Grants Quota-

cent import duty with an MIP of Rs 50 per kg, effectively barring imports of apples priced below Rs 75 per kg.

"Our apple farmers are fully protected, and there is no need to worry," Goyal told reporters here.

India imports about six lakh tonnes of apples every year, including from the US. About 25.7 per cent of the fruits are coming from Iran, 22.5 per cent from Türkiye and around 8 per cent from Afghanistan. The EU accounts for 11.3 per cent of the shipments.

He also said that several Indian goods, including agricultural products, will attract zero reciprocal tariffs in the US under the interim trade pact.

Certain Indian fruits, vegetables, tea, and coffee will also have zero reciprocal tariff in the US, he said, adding India has not given any duty concessions on any dairy product, sugar, or millets to America.

Goyal added that the agreement will not hurt the interests of farmers, MSMEs, handicrafts, and handlooms "in any way".

He further said India has granted duty concessions to the US in sectors like alcoholic beverages, cosmetics, and medical devices.

India has also agreed to lower duty on European apples to 20 per cent under a trade pact between India and the 27-nation bloc, but the imports would be capped at 50,000 tonnes per year and subject to a minimum import price of Rs 80 per kg, thereby fully protecting domestic farmers.

The commodity is a politically-sensitive subject for major apple-growing regions such as Himachal Pradesh and the Union Territory of Jammu and Kashmir.

As per the India-EU free trade agreement, the 50,000-tonne cap will be increased to one lakh tonnes over 10 years.

The two sides last month announced the conclusion of the negotiations. It is expected to be signed and implemented this year itself.

New Delhi has also opened up extra-long staple cotton imports under a quota.

"We need this cotton for our exports because we don't produce it much here. It has been coming since the Congress' (government) time," Goyal said.

India's textile industry, the country's second-largest employment provider, requires stable access to high-quality cotton. In view of the persistent demand-supply gap, the government had extended the import duty exemption on cotton until December 31, 2025.

India is the world's second-largest producer of the fibre.

The Cotton Association of India (CAI) has increased the country's cotton crop production estimate for October-September 2025-26 by 7.50 lakh bales to 317 lakh bales, following reports of higher production in Maharashtra, Telangana and Karnataka.

Total cotton supply till the end of the 2025-26 season, up to September 30, 2026, is estimated at 427.59 lakh bales, as against the last year's total supply of 392.59 lakh bales.

CAI has maintained its estimate of cotton imports into India during the 2025-26 season at 50 lakh bales, while exports decreased by 3 lakh bales from 18 lakh bales.

The total cotton consumption during 2025-26 is estimated at 305 lakh bales, as against 314 lakh bales in the last crop year.

US Wines, Dry Fruits

United States said they have reached a framework for the initial phase of a bilateral trade pact aimed at boosting two-way trade through tariff reductions and easing non-tariff barriers. The framework will be converted into a legal agreement, which is expected to be signed by mid-March, with duty concessions taking effect from the date of implementation.

According to a joint statement, India will eliminate or reduce tariffs on all US industrial goods and a wide range of American food and agricultural products. These include dried distillers' grains, red sorghum for animal feed, tree nuts, fresh and processed fruits, soybean oil, and wines and spirits. Other products such as walnuts, almonds, pistachios, and some lentils will also enjoy duty concessions.

India will additionally grant tariff relief on select high-end cars and motorcycles imported from the US. The two countries have also agreed to address non-tariff barriers affecting bilateral trade.

"India agrees to address long-standing barriers to trade in US medical devices and to eliminate restrictive import licensing procedures that delay market access for, or impose quantitative restrictions on, US Information and Communication Technology goods," the statement said. India requires these ICT products for data centres and other industrial uses. New Delhi has also committed to addressing non-tariff barriers impacting US food and agricultural exports.

Commerce and Industry Minister Piyush Goyal said India has opened its market for American goods in a "very calibrated" manner. He said minimum import prices have been fixed for certain products, including apples, to safeguard the interests of farmers and MSMEs.

Under the framework, India will remove import duties on some US goods from the day the agreement comes into force, while duties on others will be phased out. In certain sectors, tariffs will be reduced, while in others, quota-based concessions will apply.

Duty benefits will also be extended on select American medicines used for neurological, cardiac, and diabetes treatment, as well as on cosmetics, medical devices, X-ray valves, diagnostic

reagents, pacemakers, imaging equipment, hearing aids, and artificial joints. The agreement will also allow the import of American aircraft, semiconductor chips, and high-quality machinery into India.

In return, a wide range of Indian exports to the US will attract zero reciprocal tariffs. These include spices, tea, coffee, copra, coconut oil, areca nut, cashew, Brazil nut, chestnut, avocado, banana, guava, mango, kiwi, papaya, pineapple, shitake mushroom, vegetable planting material and saplings, roots and tubers such as taro, barley, canary seeds, bakery products, cocoa and cocoa items, sesame seeds, poppy seeds, and fruit jams and pastes.

Spices, tea, coffee, copra, vegetable wax, areca nut, chestnuts, cashews, and several fruits and vegetables exported from India will also attract nil reciprocal tariffs in the American market, officials said.

The agreement is expected to significantly expand bilateral trade while balancing market access with protections for sensitive domestic sectors.

Over 98% School

Enrolment Ratio (GER) of girls has surpassed overall averages across levels. During 2024-25, GER of girls stood at 114.5 at the primary level, 80.0 at upper primary and 67.5 at the secondary level, reflecting the impact of initiatives such as Beti Bachao Beti Padhao.

Dropout rates have declined significantly, with primary dropout at 1.5 per cent, upper primary at 3.2 per cent and secondary at 12.9 per cent, it said.

The government said access to schooling has improved to over 98 per cent at all levels, while the Gross Access Ratio also remains above 98 per cent. Transition rates have improved, with 94.8 per cent of students moving from primary to upper primary, 90.7 per cent from elementary to secondary and 72.9 per cent from secondary to higher secondary.

Availability of basic infrastructure has increased, with girls' toilets available in 90.84 per cent schools, boys' toilets in 88.49 per cent, libraries in 75.10 per cent, electricity in 91.44 per cent, computers in 39 per cent and internet connectivity in 49 per cent schools, though digital infrastructure remains a focus area, the government said.

It said flagship schemes such as Samagra Shiksha Abhiyan, PM POSHAN, PM-SHRI and ULLAS have played a key role in strengthening the education system. About 1.85 lakh children are currently enrolled in government pre-primary classes, while vocational education has been introduced in 1,350 schools, benefiting around 1.54 lakh students.

To improve monitoring and learning outcomes, the government said the Vidya Samiksha Kendra has been established with AI-based chatbots and digital studios. As many as 3,008 ICT and computer-assisted learning labs have been set up, while another 2,036 ICT labs and 4,272 smart classrooms are under establishment.

On infrastructure development, the reply said 1,766 school works were completed during 2024-25, while 946 works have been completed in 2025-26 up to November. Kindergarten education has been expanded with the support of 13,804 AAYAs.

The government further said 396 schools have been approved for upgradation under the PM-SHRI scheme, and 746 school complexes have been created to optimise resources in line with NEP 2020.

To further expand access to education, the government said it is launching JK e-Pathshala, a free television channel to broadcast curriculum-based lessons in local languages, particularly benefiting students in remote and far-flung areas.

No New Wine

district-wise revenue figures from existing wine shops for the past two financial years, which showed a steady increase.

According to the data, Jammu district generated 48,350.15 lakh in 2023-24 and 50,913.93 lakh in 2024-25. Udhampur recorded revenues of 11,322 lakh and 12,061.50 lakh, while Reasi reported 3,371 lakh and 3,450.50 lakh during the same period.

Kathua earned 10,653 lakh in 2023-24 and 11,272 lakh in 2024-25, while Samba recorded 9,138.06 lakh and 9,740.15 lakh, Doda generated 2,353.61 lakh and 2,448.17 lakh, and Kishtwar 1,681.90 lakh and 1,887.59 lakh.

Ramban reported revenues of 2,299.95 lakh in 2023-24 and 2,476.70 lakh in 2024-25, Rajouri 4,806.19 lakh and 5,336.96 lakh, and Poonch 1,497.78 lakh and 1,768.92 lakh.

In the Kashmir division, Srinagar generated 5,489.67 lakh in 2023-24, which rose to 6,557.66 lakh in 2024-25. Ganderbal recorded 223.45 lakh and 319.69 lakh, Baramulla 872.23 lakh and 1,139.84 lakh, Kupwara 415.66 lakh and 442.96 lakh, and Anantnag 1,403.50 lakh and 1,999.50 lakh.

Responding to concerns over alleged benami liquor licences, the government said it has received no such complaints. It added that all liquor licences are issued strictly to J&K domiciles in accordance with the Excise Act, 1958, and the excise policies notified from time to time.

Assembly Sees

special status of Jammu and Kashmir. Leader of Opposition Sunil Kumar Sharma interrupted the speech, asserting that the term

"special status" does not exist in the Constitution of India. "If the word special status exists in the Constitution of India, I am ready to face any punishment you hand over to me. What is special status?" he said.

Intervening in the debate, Minister for Consumer Affairs and Public Distribution Satish Sharma remarked that those who do not know their history cannot create history. Minister for Horticulture Javid Dar told the Leader of Opposition that he had no right to disrupt proceedings of the House.

As members of the treasury benches prevented the Leader of Opposition from speaking, BJP legislators stood up and raised slogans of "Bharat Mata Ki Jai." NC members also rose, chanting "Special Status Ayega."

After order was restored, Baig resumed his speech and claimed that the erosion of Article 370 had led to alienation and violence in Jammu and Kashmir.

Similar scenes unfolded later when Independent MLA from Rajouri, Muzaffar Khan, argued that every state should have internal autonomy and its own constitution. "We should also have our own flag," he said, triggering protests from BJP members who demanded that the remarks be expunged from the records.

The Deputy Chief Minister rebuked the protesting BJP legislators, saying they should not show hatred towards the J&K flag and reminded them that two flags were being hoisted when they were in power.

NC MLA from Eidgah Mubarak Gul, who was presiding over the House, said that the remarks could be expunged if they had hurt sentiments. His observation was objected to by NC legislators, following which he clarified that he had not ordered the remarks to be expunged from the records.

No Proposal To

present to grant any relaxation in CLU norms. He also clarified that there is no proposal under consideration to exempt rural areas from the existing CLU provisions.

Further, the minister said that the government is not contemplating any move to reduce the prescribed fees or ease the formalities associated with change of land use.

During the discussion, MLAs Vikram Randhawa, Rajiv Jasrotia and R S Pathania raised supplementary questions seeking clarity on various aspects of the CLU policy. The government, however, maintained that the existing framework would continue unchanged.

CM Rules Out Creation

those already sanctioned. Omar was replying to supplementary questions by members in the Assembly seeking new administrative units in Jammu and Kashmir.

"This issue should end here. The government, as of now, has no intention to open new administrative units," he told the House.

The chief minister said the units already created have not been properly operationalised. "It is our responsibility to operationalise them, to make them function properly and to put systems in place wherever gaps need to be filled," he said. He further said MLAs have complained that units set up in their constituencies have not been operationalised. "The units that were opened have not been operationalised. Our first responsibility is to make them functional," he said.

"After making them functional, we will take necessary steps wherever new administrative units need to be established," he added.

Replying to a question by MLA Dr Rameshwar Singh in the Assembly, the chief minister said the matter is being taken seriously, and new administrative units will not be created arbitrarily.

He said nine new sub-divisions, 50 tehsils and 99 niabats were sanctioned on October 21, 2014, under which Lohai and Duggan were also created as tehsils.

The chief minister said the order was later kept in abeyance in 2018, except for tehsils created at Vilgam and Qalamabad in the Kupwara district, Singhpora and Narway in the Baramulla district, Bhella in the Doda district and Ramsu in the Ramban district, which remained in force.

Tehsildar Booked

The ACB further alleged that the accused accepted a second-hand Mahindra Rexton 4x4 vehicle bearing registration number MH03CP-5000 as illegal gratification. Payments for the vehicle were reportedly made by the complainant through banking transactions from his Paytm account linked with J&K Bank, Batamaloo.

The statement said that after the restoration, the land was sold by the complainant in January 2022 to a private purchaser and is presently under her possession.

By allegedly demanding and accepting illegal gratification other than legal remuneration in connection with an official act, the accused is stated to have abused his official position, the ACB said.

Immediately after the registration of the FIR, the bureau conducted searches at the residential premises of the accused after obtaining search warrants from the court. The searches were carried out simultaneously at two locations, one at Kamil Bagh, Azad Road in Baramulla and the other at Rose Avenue Colony, Gazalla Abad, HMT in Srinagar.

"Incriminating material including revenue records and financial and bank documents were recovered and seized during the searches," the statement said, adding that further investigation in the case is underway.

Kashmir Fruit Growers Welcome J&K Budget 2026-27

Observer News Service

Srinagar: The Kashmir Valley Fruit Growers Cum Dealers Union (KVFGCDU), the apex body representing fruit growers and traders across the Valley, has welcomed several horticulture-focused measures announced in the Jammu and Kashmir Budget Estimates for the year 2026-27, presented by Chief Minister Omar Abdullah.

In a statement sent to KNO it said that the Union lauds the introduction and strengthening of a Crop Insurance Scheme exclusively for apple orchards and the proposed expansion of Controlled Atmosphere (CA) storage facilities. "These are crucial steps toward stabilising Kashmir's horticulture economy," it added.

"These initiatives will provide long-term protection to fruit growers against unpredictable weather conditions and market volatility. Apple forms the backbone of J&K's horticulture sector, and crop insurance is a much-needed safety net," the statement said.

The Union stressed the urgent need to extend crop insurance coverage to other fruit crops, including cherry, plum, peach, pear, and babagosa, which are equally vulnerable to climatic disasters. They expressed deep disappointment over the absence of a special compensation package for massive crop losses suffered due to untimely rains, hailstorms, snowfall, and floods in recent years—particularly the devastating deluge of 2025.

"Fruit growers across the Valley have suf-

fered losses estimated at nearly 2,000 crore. Many orchardists are on the verge of financial collapse, yet the Budget has not allocated any relief or compensation for these weather-related damages," the statement said.

KVFGCDU highlighted several long-standing demands that remain unaddressed, including: Reintroduction of the Market Intervention Scheme (MIS) to stabilize fruit prices, Establishment of a separate Horticulture Estate on the pattern of industrial estates, Subsidy on packaging material such as trays and a ban on silicate-based cardboard boxes, Declaring tree spray oil as an agricultural product, Subsidies on fertilizers, pesticides, and promotion of organic farming, Setting up testing laboratories across J&K,



Enhanced funding for horticulture tools like borewells and weeders, Relief for poor orchardists under Kisan Credit Card (KCC) loans and interest waivers and Development of major fruit mandis including Parimpora, Sopore, Shopian, Pulwama, and Anantnag.

The Union reaffirmed its confidence in the present leadership and expressed hope that the remaining demands would be addressed in the larger interest of sustaining Kashmir's horticulture economy.

"The horticulture sector is the lifeline of Jammu and Kashmir. Timely intervention and farmer-centric policies are essential to safeguard thousands of livelihoods dependent on it," the Union added further.

Kashmiri Farmers Learn Modern Agribusiness Skills to Boost Incomes

KVK Srinagar completes Phase-I training under HADP, teaching Krishi Udyamis digital tools, marketing, and practical farming methods.



KO Web Desk

Srinagar: Farmers in the valley are finding new ways to increase their incomes using modern farming techniques.

To boost this ecosystem, the Krishi Vigyan Kendra (KVK) in Srinagar this week wrapped up a two-day training program for Krishi Udyamis from Kisan Knowledge Groups across the district.

The sessions, held at the Directorate of Agriculture in Lal Mandi, focused on practical skills and tools that can help make farming businesses more successful.

The training introduced participants to modern business approaches, cost-effective farming inputs, marketing techniques, and digital tools. Farmers also learned how to use Common Service Centers to brand and sell their products more effectively.

The event was inaugurated and chaired by Director of Agriculture Production Kashmir, Sar-taj Ahmad Shah. Chief Agriculture Officer Srinagar, Ajaz Ahmad Dar,

joined him along with his team of officers. Scientists and resource persons from KVK guided the sessions, supported by extension staff from across Srinagar.

Technical workshops were led by Dr. I.A. Mir, Dr. Haseeb, Dr. Showket, and Dr. Owais. They shared knowledge about agrivalue chains and modern farming methods. Farmers got hands-on experience through practical demonstrations and discussed challenges from their fields during interactive sessions with the experts.

The training emphasized the economic opportunities in agribusiness and the support available through government schemes. Participants showed enthusiasm and interest in applying the new skills to their farms.

The program ended with a felicitation ceremony, where Joint Director Agriculture (Extension) M.G. Singh congratulated the trainees. Farmers praised the program and said the training gave them confidence to expand and improve their agricultural ventures.

Free Eye, Health Camp Held at Talab Tillo



Observer News Service

JAMMU: Continuing its outreach to make healthcare accessible to the underprivileged, social activist and Chairman of Samvedna Society, Keshav Chopra, organised the 102nd Free Eye Screening and General Health Check-up Camp at Shree Guru Kabear Colony, Talab Tillo.

The camp was held in collaboration with K.D. Multispeciality Hospital, Jammu, headed by Dr J.P. Singh. A team of specialist doctors conducted advanced eye examinations, including refraction tests, Non-Contact Tonometry (NCT), and detailed vision assessments.

In addition to eye care, the camp provided

general health services such as blood sugar testing, blood pressure monitoring, and medical consultations for various ailments. Free medicines were distributed among the beneficiaries. More than 109 patients from the locality and adjoining areas availed themselves of the services.

Speaking on the occasion, Keshav Chopra reaffirmed the society's commitment to bridging gaps in healthcare accessibility. He said the milestone of organising 102 camps reflected the dedication of volunteers and the trust reposed by the public. He stressed that regular screenings are essential for building a healthier society and assured that similar initiatives would continue across the region.

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e-NIT No: ED-II/21 of 2025-26

Notice Inviting e-Tender

Dated: 06-02-2026

For and on behalf of the Managing Director, Kashmir Power Distribution Corporation Limited (KPDC), e-bids are invited from reputed Contractors having Valid A-Class Electrical Contractor License or equivalent license issued by Chief Electrical Inspector of J&K/PDD/Relevant issuing authority/ registered Firms/Bidders enlisted with CPWD/MES/Railways for the following work

1	Name of the Work	Providing, Installation and commissioning of dedicated 400 KVA Tap Changing Transformer (OFF CIRCUIT TAP CHANGING) at Kashmir Government Polytechnic, Srinagar .
2.	Position of Funds	Available with the intending Department - Skill Development, J& K
3.	Estimated Cost	Rs 18.76 Lacs
4.	Authorization of Work	Accorded by Director Skill Development, J& K
5	Technical Section	Accorded by the Competent Authority (Cost Engineer Committee V)

The tender document is available on website <http://jktenders.gov.in>. Interested bidders may view or download the e-Bid document, seek clarification and submit their e-Bid online up to date as per the details mentioned in the table below :

A	Date & Time of Downloading of Standard Bidding Document	The Standard Bidding Document can be downloaded over http://jktenders.gov.in from 09-02-2026; 10:00 AM
B	Clarifications Start Date	09/02/26, 11:00 AM
C	Clarifications End Date	10/02/26, 04:30 PM
D	e-Bid Submission (Start) Date & Time (Submission of e-tender fee, EMD and other supporting documents in PDF/XLS format)	10/02/26, 4.45 PM
E	e-Bid Submission (End) Date & Time (Submission of e-tender fee, EMD and other supporting documents in PDF/XLS format)	02/03/26, 02:30 PM
F	Online e-Bid Opening Date & Time	04/03/26, 02.30 PM
G	Venue of Opening of Technical & Financial e-Bids	Office of the Executive Engineer, KPDC, ED-2 nd , Rajbagh, Srinagar
H	Cost of e-Bid Document (e-challan/TR)	Rs. 1000/- (Rupees One Thousand Only) (Non-Refundable)
I	Amount of EMD/Performance Security Deposit	EMD for Rs 37600/- (Rupees Thirty Seven Thousand Six Hundred Only) to be furnished and uploaded by all bidders for tender participation and Performance Security Deposit for an amount equal to 5% of the value of contract (to be furnished by L1 only)

1. The bidders need to submit the proof/Cost of e-Bid document as stated in the above table through e-Challan/Treasury Receipt pledged to Executive Engineer, KPDC, ED-2nd, Rajbagh, Srinagar to be Credited to M.H-0801-Power payable at Srinagar. The scanned copy of the e-Challan/Treasury Receipt must be enclosed along with the e-Bids. **No Demand Draft shall be accepted. Further, No Bidder shall be exempted from depositing Cost of e-Bid document even if agency/bidder is MSME.**

2. All the e-Bids must be accompanied by the scanned copy of EMD in the form of CDR/FDR/Bank Guarantee for tender participation by all bidders, pledged to the Executive Engineer, KPDC, ED-2nd, Rajbagh, Srinagar. No interest would be payable on EMD/Performance Security deposited with the Department. **No Bidder shall be exempted from depositing of Earnest Money even if agency/bidder is MSME**

The e-Bids of the bidders not submitting the certified copies of above mentioned documents at S.No. (1) and (2) in scanned form shall liable to be rejected.

3. Hard Copy of original instrument of EMD needs to be submitted only by the lowest tenderer instantly after opening of e-NIT and must be pledged to the Executive Engineer, KPDC, ED-2nd, Rajbagh, Srinagar. The same must be submitted to this office within 03 days positively for award of contract.

4. The e-Bids will be electronically opened in the presence of bidder's representatives, who choose to attend at the identified venue on indicated date and time mentioned in the above table or any subsequent day to the convenience of the Tender Opening Committee. An authority letter of bidder's representative will be required to be produced.

5. The Department reserves the right to cancel any or all the e-Bids/ the e-Bid process without assigning any reason thereof. The decision of department will be final and binding.

6. In the event of date specified for e-Bids opening being declared a holiday/closed day for department's office then the due date for opening of e-Bids shall be the following working day at the appointed time and place.

7. All the required documents excluding Price Schedule/BOQ should be uploaded by the e-Bidder electronically in the PDF format, whereas Price Schedule/BOQ should be uploaded electronically in the same BOQ sheet provided with the SBD. Also, Signed and Stamped Copy of SBD is required to be uploaded.

8. To participate in e-bidding process, bidders have to get 'Digital Signature Certificate' - (DSC) Class-III (b) as per Information Technology Act-2000, to participate in online bidding.

9. Hard Copy of requisite documents shall be required to be submitted only by the Lowest Tenderer with original Performance Security and e-Challan/Treasury Receipt instantly after opening of e-NIT pledged to Executive Engineer, KPDC, ED-2nd, Rajbagh, Srinagar.

10. The Name of the Work/Job along with e-NIT reference should be superscripted in Bold letters on the envelope and the Name/Firm of the Lowest Bidder should be clearly written on the cover.

It may be noted that the hard copy should be an exact replica of the uploaded offer documents by the Lowest Tenderer.

Documents uploaded on the website shall be treated as final.

11. Other details can be seen in the bidding documents.

DIPK-NB-3223/25
dated: 07-02-2026

SD
Executive Engineer
KPDC, ED-2nd, Rajbagh

No : ED-II/ 1338-42 /TS Dated 06-02-2026

OFFICE OF THE MUNICIPAL COMMITTEE QAZIGUND

Government of Jammu & Kashmir

PUBLIC NOTICE User Charges for Solid Waste Management Services

As per Solid Waste Management Rules, 2016 & 2026 and SBM-U guidelines, the Municipal Committee Qazigund hereby notifies User Charges for door-to-door collection, transportation of municipal solid waste.

ULB-wise User Charges (Monthly)

Category	User Charge (₹)
Residential Households	₹ 50
Commercial Establishments	₹ 100
Institutional Establishments	₹ 100
Industrial Units	₹ 500

Further the Rates may vary depending upon the Type and Size of Establishment. Non-payment of user charges shall attract penal action as per notified.

Sanitation Service Tariff & Penalties

The Municipal Committee Qazigund hereby notifies sanitation service tariffs and penalties for non-compliance with Solid Waste Management Rules 2016 & 2026.

Sanitation Tariff		Penalties	
Category	Tariff (₹)	Nature of Violation	Penalty (₹)
Residential	₹ 100	Non-segregation of waste at source	₹ 500
Commercial	₹ 200	Littering / open dumping	₹ 500
Institutional	₹ 500	Repeated non-compliance	₹ 5000
Industrial	₹ 1000		

Zero Waste Events Compliance

All event organizers are hereby informed that Zero Waste Event protocols shall be strictly followed for all public and private events within municipal limits. Use of disposable plastic items is prohibited and segregation at source is mandatory.

Non-compliance shall attract penalties as notified by the ULB.

Safai Mitra Safety & Fecal Sludge Management

In compliance with national advisories under Swachh Bharat Mission-Urban:

- Manual hazardous sewer/septic tank entry without safety gear is strictly prohibited.
- Dumping of untreated fecal sludge in drains or open areas is a punishable offence.
- Citizens may report violations on Helpline 14420.

Desludging Charges & Penalties

Particular	Amount (₹)
Desludging user charge (per trip)	₹ 4000/-
Penalty for illegal dumping	₹ 5000/-

Construction & Demolition Waste Management

The Municipal Committee Qazigund hereby notifies charges and arrangements for Collection, Transportation and Disposal of Construction & Demolition (C&D) Waste. C&D Waste Charges & Facilities

Particular	Details
User charge (₹ per MT / trip)	₹ 2000/-
Designated Collection Points	SWM Site MC Qazigund, Wanpora Chaimulla, Dardekoot, Qazigund.
Helpline number	01931-295720.

Illegal dumping of C&D waste shall invite strict penal action.

Bulk Waste Generators – On-site Processing

All Bulk Waste Generators who are producing the Daily Waste of 100 Kgs. or more are directed to ensure on-site processing of wet waste as per SWM Rules, 2016 & 2026. Failure to comply shall attract penalties as notified by the Municipal Committee Qazigund.

No.: MC/QZD/SBM/2026/299-302.

Dated: 06/02/2026.

Sd/-
Executive Officer
Municipal Committee

Qazigund



Government of Jammu & Kashmir
Office of the Municipal Committee Qazigund



Subject: - Regulatory measures for prevention of Open Defecation Free and Self-Declaration as ODF++.

NOTIFICATION

Whereas, as per the guidelines of Swachh Bharat Mission, it is mandatory on part of every Municipal Council/ Committee to get their Town declared and certified as Open Defecation Free (ODF++).

Whereas, a number of awareness programmes have been conducted by the concerned staff of Municipal Committee Qazigund to educate the inhabitants of their respective town about the health hazards of Open Defecation in order to eradicate such practices and to keep the surroundings environment clean and safe.

Whereas, Open Defecation not only pollutes the environment but also has the potential to infect serious health hazards to the general public, besides rendering all the resources and efforts put in by the Municipal Committee Qazigund unproductive /ineffective.

Whereas as per the protocol of SBM the practice of Open Defecation is prohibited and it has become inevitable to establish a mechanism of imposing certain fines upon the defaulters / open defecators in order to bring a sense of accountability among the inhabitants. Besides, as per the latest survey conducted, Municipal Committee Qazigund is already ODF+, and self-declares the Town as ODF++.

Now therefore, it is hereby notified for information of all that practice of Open Defecation is completely prohibited within the Jurisdiction of MC Qazigund and if any person found defecating in open shall be imposed fine of Rs. 200/- and persons found urinating in open shall be imposed a fine of Rs. 100/- the habitual' chronic defaulter shall be booked under relevant provision of Law.

No.: MC/QZD/SBM/2026/295-98.
DIPK-NB-3193/25 Dated: 07/02/2026.

Sd/-
Executive Officer
Municipal Committee Qazigund

RANJI TROPHY

Auqib Nabi takes seven wkts for J&K but MP strike back



Press Trust of India

Indore, Feb 7: Jammu & Kashmir pacer Auqib Nabi made a blazing impact by scalding former champions Madhya Pradesh with a seven-wicket haul as his team took a first-innings lead on day two of their Ranji Trophy quarterfinal here on Saturday.

The 29-year-old quick from remote Kreeeri in Jammu & Kashmir returned superb figures of 7 for 40 as he single-handedly decimated Madhya Pradesh for 152, helping J&K take a 42-run first-innings lead against the former Ranji champions.

However, despite the lanky pacer's heroics, J&K still find themselves in a spot of bother, having slumped to 84 for 5 in their second innings -- an overall lead of just 126 in a low-scoring game heading into day three of the engrossing contest.

There was no doubt about the standout performer of the day as Nabi, still riding high after securing a multi-crore deal with Delhi Capitals for the upcoming Indian Premier League season, ran riot through the top and middle order, beginning his onslaught by dismissing Harsh Gawli (10) and Himanshu Mantri (0) in the 14th over.

Those two blows in the space of three deliveries left MP reeling at 2 for 34, which soon became

3 for 39 when left-arm pacer Sunil Kumar (3/47) shattered the stumps of Shubham Sharma, who managed just one run off 19 balls.

Auqib then removed MP skipper Rajat Patidar (10) and Venkatesh Iyer (22) to tighten the screws further.

He capped off his spell by dismissing Aryan Pandey and Ramveer Gurjar for ducks off successive deliveries in the 48th over, leaving Madhya Pradesh in complete disarray.

However, J&K's start to the second innings was equally disappointing, as MP pace stalwart Kuldeep Sen (2/25), who had claimed a five-wicket haul in the first innings, struck back with a vengeance.

India all-rounder Venkatesh Iyer also made amends after going wicketless in the first innings, returning figures of 2 for 10 to reduce the opponents to 84 for 5 in 26 overs.

Madhya Pradesh, despite the disappointment of conceding the first-innings lead, are back in contention and will be eyeing an outright win if their batters perform better in the second essay.

Brief scores: Jammu & Kashmir 194 and 4 for 5 in 26 overs (Kuldeep Sen 2/25, Venkatesh Iyer 2/10). Madhya Pradesh 152 all out in 53.4 overs (Yash Dubey 58; Auqib Nabi 7/40, Sunil Kumar 3/47).

T20 WORLD CUP

Suryakumar, Bowlers Power India to 29-Run Win Over USA

Press Trust of India

Mumbai - Indian bowlers produced a disciplined effort after a middling batting display to subdue the United States of America by 29 runs, starting their ICC T20 World Cup campaign on a winning note here on Saturday.

Pacers Mohammad Siraj (2/29) Arshdeep Singh (2/18) and left-arm spinner Axar Patel (2/24) were the pick of the bowlers, after India laboured to 161 for 9.

In reply, the USA were restricted to 132/8.

Milind Kumar (34), Shubham Ranjane (37) and Suraj Krishnamurthi (37) fought well but were no match to the big-match experience of Indian bowlers.

Earlier, Skipper Suryakumar Yadav fought back with a counter-attacking half-century (84, 49 balls) to cover up the failure of his colleagues in the top and middle order.



India were left shellshocked at 77 for 6 in the 13th over as USA's 37-year-old South African-born pacer Shadley van Schalkwyk (4/25) tore through the batting, striking thrice in a brutal sixth over to remove Ishan Kishan (20), Tilak Varma (25) and Shivam Dube (0).

Brief scores: India 161/9 in 20 overs (Suryakumar Yadav 84 not out; Shadley van Schalkwyk 4/25, Ali Khan 1/13, Harmeet Singh 2/26) beat USA: 132/8 in 20 overs (Milind Kumar 34, Suraj Krishnamurthi 37; Mohammad Siraj 2/18, Arshdeep Singh 2/18, Axar Patel 2/24) by 29 runs.

Pakistan beat Netherlands by 3 wickets in T20 World Cup opener

Press Trust of India

Colombo, Feb 7: Pakistan defeated Netherlands by three wickets in T20 World Cup opener here on Saturday.

Sent in to bat, Netherlands lost the way in the later part of their innings after a strong start as Pakistan bowled them out for 147 in 19.5 overs.

In reply, opener Sahibzada Farhan made 47 off 31 balls, while Faheem Ashraf played an unbeaten 11-ball 29-run cameo to help Pakistan chase down the

target with three balls to spare. Paul van Meekeren (2/20) and Aryan Dutt (2/33) were the most successful bowlers for Netherlands.

Brief Scores: Netherlands: 147 all out in 19.5 overs (Scott Edwards 37, Bas de Leede 30; Salman Mirza 3/24, Saim Ayub 2/7, Mohammad Nawaz 2/38, Abrar Ahmed 2/23).

Pakistan: 148 for 7 in 19.3 overs (Sahibzada Farhan 47, Faheem Ashraf 29 not out, Paul van Meekeren 2/20, Aryan Dutt 2/33).

Pakistan didn't win, we lost the game: Meekeren

Colombo, Feb 7: The Netherlands right-arm pacer Paul van Meekeren said the team lost their T20 World Cup clash against Pakistan here on Saturday due to poor execution in the final overs, rather than their rivals winning the contest.

Chasing 148 for victory, Pakistan were 90 for 2 at the halfway stage but lost wickets in a heap as they were 114 for 7 in 16.1 overs, needing 34 more runs.

It looked all but over for Pakistan at that stage, but walking in at No. 8, Faheem Ashraf -- who was dropped on 7 -- had other plans, smashing an unbeaten 29 off just 11 balls.

Needing 29 runs from the last two overs, Ashraf hit three sixes and one four off Logan van Beek and finished off the match with a four in the final over as Pakistan reached 148 for 7 in 19.3 overs.

Max O'Dowd dropped Faheem Ashraf on seven off the second ball of the 19th over.

"I mean, I want to be very clear. Pakistan didn't win the game today. We lost the game against ourselves," van Meekeren said at the post-match press conference.

"...we just probably didn't execute the way we wanted to. Yeah, you know, these World Cup moments, it's small margins, sometimes one ball. But yeah, it's just a very disappoint-

ed feeling at the moment." He said Netherlands were a few runs short of what would have been a winning total but was proud of the overall effort.

"I'm very proud of the guys. I think we probably didn't get the runs on the board that we wanted, but to fight back after a strong start from Pakistan with the bat that shows how the culture that we've created in the team and they never give up.

"We weren't a better team today, especially in the bowling department. And we should have deserved to win the game. And there were moments. There was moments in the back. You got yourself to about 123 for 4 after 15 overs."

Van Meekeren, however, gave credit to Pakistan for holding their nerve and sealing the contest in their favour.

"I think the one thing I have to give Pakistan credit for is taking the game deep. I mean, we should have probably done it with the bat. Maybe taking the innings a little bit deeper," he said.

"Because you can see what you can do if you've got a batsman who's in the last two overs and be able to take a bit more risk. But I think the conditions were very nice for us to ball to. And I mean, there was a lot of pressure on Pakistan in those last few overs."

Man United Wins Again to Make it Four in a Row

Associated Press

Manchester, Feb 7: It's four Premier League wins in a row for Manchester United under Michael Carrick and a season that was unraveling just weeks ago now looks full of promise.

A 2-0 victory against Tottenham on Saturday extended Carrick's 100% start as head coach and will further strengthen his case to be given the job on a long-term basis.

It was the first time in two years that United has won four straight league games and boosted its hopes of a return to



the lucrative Champions League. Bryan Mbeumo and Bruno Fernandes scored in each half at Old Trafford in a game that saw Spurs reduced to 10 men after

captain Cristian Romero was sent off in the 29th minute.

Carrick has transformed United's fortunes since he was parachuted in to replace the fired Ruben Amorim last month. Initially given a contract until the end of the season, his impressive impact will likely put him in serious contention to keep the job as the club's hierarchy consider its long-term plans.

United is fourth and after moving up to 44 points, the 20-time English champion has already exceeded last season's total of 42 points for the entire campaign.

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