


Dated: 14-02-2026
DIPK-10967/25



Beware of KYC fraud!


Unknown Link = Unknown Risk

Think Before You Click


*Never share OTP, PIN, passwords, or confidential information

Online Reporting Portal: www.cybercrime.gov.in

Don't enter KYC details through unknown links.



Helpline No. **1930**



Department of Information & Public Relations, J&K

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

Child Anaemia Soars In Kashmir, Reversing A Decade Of Health Gains

New survey data show rising iron deficiency in children despite wider hospital births and expanded health services, pointing to diet gaps, winter food limits and weak last-mile nutrition delivery.

Ruqaya Akhter

Srinagar: A routine haemoglobin test has begun to tell a harsher story in clinics and anganwadi centres in Jammu and Kashmir.

Children who arrive with vaccination cards and hospital birth records still show low iron levels, and the latest national survey places the region among the worst affected in the country.

The numbers mark a sharp turn after a decade that had

promised improvement.

Data from the National Family Health Survey show anaemia among children aged six to 59 months in India falling from 69.5 per cent in 2005-06 to 58.4 per cent in 2015-16, then climbing again to 67.1 per cent in 2019-21.

The rise reflects a broader shift toward moderate anaemia rather than severe forms, which suggests diets that fill stomachs without meeting micronutrient needs.

Jammu and Kashmir follows



this national reversal with greater intensity.

Anaemia among young children dropped from 58.6 per cent in the earlier survey to 54 per cent a decade later, placing the region below the national average and aligning with improvements in antenatal care, immunisation and access to basic health services.

The latest round shows a surge to 72.7 per cent, pushing the Union Territory above the national level and into the same bracket as nutritionally

stressed states.

The survey also reveals a layered nutrition picture.

About 26.9 per cent of children are stunted and 19 per cent are wasted, while nearly one in ten is overweight, pointing to diets high in calories and low in micronutrients.

Public health specialists describe this pattern as a shift from food scarcity to poor food quality, where cereals dominate meals and iron-rich foods appear less often.

Regional | [More on P6](#)

Security Crackdown Deepens In Doda-Kishtwar Belt

- Posters Of Wanted JeM Terrorist Surface
- Nearly A Dozen Encounters Reported In Jammu Region Over Past Month



Press Trust Of India

Jammu: Police in Doda district have pasted posters at several strategic locations seeking information about a Pakistani commander of the banned outfit Jaish-e-Mohammad, an official said on Saturday.

Senior Superintendent of Police, Doda Sandeep Mehta said the Pakistani terrorist, identified as Saifullah, is believed holed up in Chatroo belt of adjoining Kishtwar district with intelligence inputs suggesting that he is desperately looking for an opportunity to escape and may even try to evade detection by disguising himself, including wearing women's clothing or a burqa.

"We have circulated his

poster — both with and without a beard — for the information of the general public. It is the poster of the same individual (Saifullah) who is the main JeM commander who is alive and attempting to flee Chatroo belt," he said, requesting people to immediately share information with police on spotting this person anywhere at any time.

The SSP said there are reports suggesting that he may attempt to escape from Chatroo disguised in women's clothing or wearing a burqa. "If anyone notices a suspicious person, they should immediately inform the police or security forces." He said the police and other security agencies are fully alert to the situation and are involved in search operations | [More on P6](#)

Pulwama Attack Anniversary

World Saw How India Punished Terrorists: PM

Says Op Sindoor Evidence Of India's Response To Terror Attacks

Leaders Across Parties Honour Fallen CRPF Personnel

KO Web Desk

Srinagar: The nation on Friday paid rich tributes to the 40 CRPF personnel killed in the 2019 Pulwama terror attack, with Prime Minister Narendra Modi asserting that the world witnessed how India responded to the strike.

In a post on X, Modi remembered the "brave heroes" who laid down their lives, saying their devotion and service remain etched in the country's collective consciousness and continue to inspire every Indian.

Addressing a public meeting in poll bound Assam, the prime minister said that after the terror attack, the entire world saw how India punished the terrorists. Referring to the retaliatory action that followed, he cited the Balakot airstrike carried out days after the attack. He also mentioned Operation Sindoor, undertaken after last year's terror attack in Pahalgam, as evidence of India's firm



response to terrorism.

Modi took a swipe at the Congress, alleging that the party did nothing to strengthen national security and was instead mired in corruption during defence procurements.

Union Home Minister Amit Shah, speaking at a rally in poll bound Puducherry, praised Modi's decisive leadership and resolute action against terrorism, hailing both the Balakot airstrike and

Operation Sindoor.

Vice President C P Radhakrishnan paid homage to the slain personnel, saying their sacrifice will forever remain in the nation's memory.

Congress president Mallikarjun Kharge said the soldiers' indomitable courage and unflinching devotion to the nation would always be remembered. Senior Congress leader Rahul Gandhi also paid tribute, stating that the nation | [More on P6](#)

Duty-Bound To Wipe Out Terrorism: CRPF Chief

"The CRPF is duty-bound to wipe out all forms of terrorism from the country," Gyanendra Pratap Singh said on Friday after paying tributes to the 40 personnel killed in the 2019 Pulwama terror attack.

The Director General of the Central Reserve Police Force visited the memorial site at Lethpora in south Kashmir on the seventh anniversary of the attack. Senior officers | [More on P6](#)

Terrorism Is Humanity's Greatest Enemy: HM

Union Home Minister Amit Shah on Saturday paid homage to the CRPF personnel killed in the 2019 Pulwama terror attack, asserting that terrorism is the greatest enemy of humanity and India is firmly determined to eradicate it completely.

In a message posted on X, Shah said the country would



Valiant Sacrifice Will Forever Inspire: LG

Jammu and Kashmir Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha on Saturday paid tributes to the CRPF personnel who lost their lives in the 2019 Pulwama terror attack. In a post on X, Sinha said, "Humble tributes to the valiant martyrs who made the supreme sacrifice | [More on P6](#)



MHA Flags Fake 8th Pay Commission App Scam

Observer News Service

New Delhi: The Ministry of Home Affairs has issued a public alert warning government employees against a fraudulent WhatsApp campaign offering a fake salary calculator for the proposed 8th Pay Commission.

The advisory, released through the Indian Cyber Crime Coordination Centre, said fraudsters are circulating messages claiming that employees can check their revised salary by downloading an APK file.

Officials cautioned that once the malicious file is installed, cyber criminals gain access to the user's mobile phone and may siphon money from linked bank accounts or compromise sensitive personal and financial data.

The alert clarified that the government never sends APK files through WhatsApp and advised users not to download applications from unverified sources. Installing unknown APK files can lead to data theft and financial loss, it said.

Authorities have urged government employees to verify information related to salary, pension or pay commission updates only through official government portals.

The advisory also emphasised the need for vigilance and warned citizens against clicking on suspicious links shared through messaging platforms. | [More on P6](#)

Multi-Crore IHPL Scam: Court Denies Anticipatory Bail Of Accused

Besides Duping The Likes Of Chris Gayle & Jesse Ryder, Rs 1,600 Each Taken From J&K's Budding Cricketers

M Ahmad

Srinagar: A court here on Saturday dismissed two anticipatory bail petitions filed by two among several accused persons in connection with an alleged multi-crore fraud linked to the Indian Heaven Premier League (IHPL).

The Court of Additional Sessions Judge, Srinagar Farooq Ahmad Bhat, rejected the pleas filed by Surender Khanna, projected as "League



Commissioner," and Nirmal Sidhu, who, according to police, was among the several accused persons who fled from the hotel without informing the management or the players and without clearing the pending hotel

bills and match fees of the players and sports staff.

Police had registered FIR No. 56/2026 at Police Station Rajbagh under Sections 316(2) (cheating) and 318(4) (criminal breach of trust) of the Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita against the organisers of IHPL in November last year. The league, organised under the banner of Mohali-based Yuva Society, featured former international cricketers including Chris Gayle, Jesse Ryder and | [More on P6](#)

₹72 Lakh Cheque Bounce Case: Convict Flees Court

Observer News Service

Srinagar: In a high profile cheque dishonour case arising out of a land deal, a local court has convicted a Budgam resident and sentenced him to one year of simple imprisonment along with a fine of 1.44 crore. The accused, however, absconded soon after the judgment was pronounced.

Chief Judicial Magistrate Tabasum convicted Shafiq Ahmad Sheikh of Najan Beerwah in Budgam district under Section 138 of the Negotiable Instruments Act for issuing a cheque of 72 lakh that was dishonoured due to

insufficient funds.

According to the complaint filed by Mohammad Yaseen Mir of Lawaypora, Srinagar, the accused had taken 72 lakh in 2018, promising to arrange five kanals of land at Dodpathri in Budgam. When the complainant later discovered that the land was not available for sale, the accused issued a cheque dated February 15, 2021, drawn on J and K Bank's Air Cargo Branch, Srinagar, to settle the liability.

The cheque was returned unpaid due to insufficient funds. Despite a legal notice served to the accused, the payment was not made, prompting the complainant to | [More on P6](#)

India US Trade Deal Will Hurt J&K Growers: CM

Observer News Service

Srinagar: Chief Minister Omar Abdullah on Saturday said the India-US trade deal will adversely affect the Union Territory.

The chief minister said that while he does not know how the deal would benefit the rest of the country, for Jammu and Kashmir "as of now, we can only see losses".

"The items that will be allowed to enter here duty-free are all what Jammu and Kashmir produces — almonds, walnuts, apples, fresh fruit, dry fruit. You (government) are saying there will be no impact, that fruits



from Jammu and Kashmir will not be sold for less than Rs 70 a kilo. But what does it mean (when you say) they will sell their good fruit and we will sell our bad ones?" he told reporters after inaugurating the annual agritech festival 'GONGUL' at Sher-e-Kashmir | [More on P6](#)

Paras Health Introduces Comprehensive Breast Cancer Care

Observer News Service

Srinagar: In a landmark development for cancer care in the Valley, Paras Health Srinagar has launched Kashmir's first Comprehensive Breast Cancer Care Program in the private sector, bringing advanced surgical treatment—including fluorescence-guided breast surgery—rehabilitation, and psychological support together under one roof. The program, introduced in Srinagar, aims to ensure that women diagnosed with breast cancer receive complete, coordinated, and evidence-based care within Kashmir itself, significantly reducing the

2023, 930 in 2024, and 938 by 2025. This consistent upward trend reflects a growing disease burden in the region and underscores the urgent need for structured, specialized, and locally accessible breast cancer services. Until now, many patients have had to seek advanced care outside the Valley, often facing delays, financial strain, and emotional stress during an already challenging period.

Commenting on this, Dr. Shabnam Bashir, Director of the Program at Paras Health Srinagar, said, "Breast cancer care should not begin and end in the operating theatre. It requires



need to travel outside the region for specialized treatment.

Breast cancer remains the most prevalent malignancy among women in Jammu & Kashmir, with cases steadily rising over the past five years. Official figures show that 908 cases were recorded in 2021, increasing to 916 in 2022, 923 in

precision in surgery, structured rehabilitation, and long-term follow-up. Our focus is to provide complete, evidence-based treatment within Kashmir so that women can recover with confidence and dignity, without having to leave their support systems behind."

Five-Year-Old Dies After Fall

Observer News Service

Srinagar: Tragedy struck the Bemina locality on Saturday after a young child lost his life following a fall inside his home, officials said.

The five year old boy sustained grievous injuries after falling from an elevated portion of the residential structure. He was immediately evacuated to SMHS

Hospital in Srinagar for emergency medical attention, but doctors declared him dead on arrival.

Officials identified the deceased as Daniyal Sheikh, son of Parveez Ahmad Sheikh of Bemina.

According to KNT, Police have registered a case and initiated an investigation to determine the exact circumstances surrounding the incident.



Visitors walk through a festooned entrance during the inauguration of GON'GUL-2026, the 11th AgriTech Mela, at SKUAST. KO Photo Abid Bhat

Srinagar Infrastructure Projects to Ease Traffic Congestion: DC Sgr

Observer News Service

Srinagar: Stating that the Government of India is funding multiple infrastructure projects in Srinagar to improve traffic flow, connectivity and urban facilities, Deputy Commissioner Srinagar Akshay Labroo on Saturday said that work on several key projects, including vehicular underpasses, a foot overbridge, and the city ring road, will begin very soon.

The DC as per KNO said the vehicular underpasses near Momina-bad and Nowgam Railway Station have received approval from the Government of India and the final designs have been finalized.

He said the Government of India has approved the designs and the final plans are ready. "A foot overbridge is also planned at Children's Hospital, Bemina. Surveys and field inspections have started. Work will begin very soon," said.

The DC also said these projects

will help decongest city traffic and improve connectivity.

He also highlighted the National Clean Air Programme (NCAP), implemented by the Srinagar Municipal Corporation, as a key contributor to urban development. "NCAP funds are supporting major projects across the city. At Sonarcoal, we have proposed an alternate route behind SMHS Hospital to strengthen health infrastructure, including the superspecialty hospital and government medical college."

"Work has started using Government of India funds in convergence with NCAP," he said.

The DC Labroo also urged senior citizens above 70 to avail the Pradhan Mantri Vaya Vandana Yojana (PMVVY). "Eligible citizens will receive a card like the Ayushman Bharat Golden Card, providing medical coverage of up to Rs 5 lakh. You can go to any BMO office in Srinagar or call the numbers available on our website and social

media. The district administration will ensure you receive the benefits," he added.

He further highlighted the Sanat Nagar project, recently completed and opened for vehicular movement, which was also funded by the Government of India.

The Deputy Commissioner said work on the Srinagar Ring Road Phase-1 and Phase-2 is underway. "Phase-1 will connect districts surrounding Srinagar and South Kashmir. Phase-2 is also being implemented. These projects, funded by the Government of India and the National Highways Authority of India (NHAI), will gradually decongest city traffic and upgrade infrastructure," he said.

The DC added that the combined implementation of all these projects, including underpasses, the foot overbridge, alternate health route, Sanat Nagar and the ring road, will significantly improve traffic management and connectivity in Srinagar.

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

AIRPORTS
SHIEK UL ALAM AIRPORT: 01942303311 ✈️

RAILWAYS

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

HIGHWAY STATUS

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

HIJRI CALENDAR
26- Shaban
1447

PRAYERS

FAJR 5: 52
ZUHR 12:45
ASR 4: 35
Magrib 6:17
ISHA 7: 39

DEMISE

With profound grief and sorrow, we inform the sad demise of our beloved father, **Haji Abdul Rehman Parray, son of Ghulam Mohi-ud-Din Parray, resident of Umer Colony, Khosa Bagh, Kani Pora, Srinagar**, who passed away on **Saturday, 14th February 2026**, after a brief illness. **Mourning shall be observed for three days only, from 14th to 16th February 2026. There will be no Rasm-e-Chaharum.**

BEREAVED:
Muhammad Shafi Parray, Altaf Ahmad Parray, Hafiz-ur-Rehman, Najam-ul-Rehman
Contact Numbers: 7051572022 9541398483

SAD DEMISE

Indeed, we belong to Allah, and to Him we shall return. With deep sorrow, it is hereby informed that Fatima, wife of Late Ghulam Mohammad Geer, resident of Chinkral Mohalla, Habba Kadal, Srinagar, passed away after a brief illness on 14 February 2026. The congregational Fatah Khawani will be held on February 16, 2026 (Monday) at 10:30 AM. We humbly request all relatives, friends, and well-wishers to pray for the forgiveness of the departed soul and for patience and strength for the bereaved family. Mourning (Ta'ziyat) will be observed for three (3) days only. Note: Ladies are kindly requested not to bring any kind of eatables, in accordance with Islamic teachings. Contact: 9541193022 17006543637

PUBLIC NOTICE

It is hereby notified for the information of the general public that I have applied for change of name in the electricity (power) bill. Existing name on record: Abdul Ahad Bhat Proposed name: Mohammad Ashraf Bhat S/o: Abdul Ahad Bhat R/o: Tapper Waripora, Pattan, Baramulla Consumer ID: 0213040007663 If any person has any objection to the above change, he/she may submit the same in writing to the concerned Electricity Department within seven (07) days from the date of publication of this notice. After the expiry of the said period, no objection shall be entertained. Mohammad Ashraf Bhat 979775207 fko

PUBLIC NOTICE

Notice is hereby given that the name of SHOKIT ALI s/o MOHD BASHIR, having ON Jammu Kashmir Bank Branch Gursahi Bank account no. 015604010006252, has been changed from: Old name: Showket Ali To New name: Shokit Ali Aadhaar/Pan: I have updated my Aadhaar Card to the correct name as well as PAN The public is advised to transact with us/me at the correct name only. The bank is requested to update my name their records. Date: 13-02-2026 Place: Poonch inf

OFFICE OF THE SUPERINTENDING ENGINEER PWD (R&B) CIRCLE SRINAGAR NORTH
LALMANDI SGR. e-mail sesrinagarnorth@gmail.com

Subject:- 264th High Level Committee meeting of PWD(R&B) Circle Srinagar North to be held on 16-02-2026 at 3:00 PM in office chamber of the Divisional Commissioner, Kmr.

The owners/stake holders of below mentioned structures are requested through this notice to attend the 264th HLC meeting for negotiations/ deliberations on the above mentioned date and venue.

S. No.	NAME OF OWNER (Title is subjected to Verification from revenue deptt.)	STRUCTURE NO. AS PER ENGINEERING MARK
RESIDENTS OF MALLA BAGH		
1	Farooq Ahmad Shah	R-22
2	Abdul Ahad Akhooon	R-25
3	Abdul Majeed Sofi	R-26
4	Mohammad Yousuf Bhat	R-27
5	Farooq Ahmad And Gh. Rasool	R-28
6	Ghulam Jeelani	R-29
7	Ghulam Jeelani	R-29A
8	Arshid Ahmed Bhat	R-30ABC
9	Gh. Ahmad Najar	R-31ABC
10	Gh. Ahmad Sofi	R-32
11	Abdul Salam Sofi S/o Ab Jabar Sofi, Sajad Rasheed & Haroon Rashid Ss/o Lt. Mohd. Sidiq Sofi	R-33, R-34 & R-35
14		R-35 A
15	Gh. Mohi-ud-din Sofi, Mushtaq Ahmad Sofi & Nazir Ahmed Sofi	R-36
16	Ali Mohammad Sofi	R-37
17	Ab. Rashid Sofi & Mehraj-ud-din Sofi.	R-38 & R-39
18	Mohammad shafi dar	R-40
19	Peer Noor Din Shah	R-41
20	Gh. Mohammad Sofi	R-42
21	Shamima Akther	R-43
22	Gh. Rasool Mir	R-44
23	Abdul Ahad Rather	R-45
24	Ab. Salam Sofi, Mohammad Sabir	R-46
25	Gh. Mohammad Sheikh & Gh. Mohi-ud-din-Sheikh	R-47
26	Mohammad Aslam Sheikh, Mohd. Ashraf Sheikh Ss/o Lt. Gh. Qadir Sheikh	R-48
27	Abdul Aziz Sofi	R-51
28	Gulzar Ahmad Mir	R-52
29	Hilal Ahmad Malik	R-53
30	Farooq Ahmad Mir.	R-54
31	Dilawar Ahmad Sofi & Tariq Ahmad Sofi	R-55
32	Dilawar Ahmad Sofi & Tariq Ahmad Sofi Ss/o Abdul Aziz Sofi	R-56
Residents of Qamarwari		
1	Mohd Amin Shah	QC-1
2	Mst Aamina Lassoo and Others	QC-2
IGI Road		
1	Legal Heirs of Late Abdul Rahim Bhat	14-,14A & 14-B
Residents of Habba Kadal		
1	Shamboo Nath & Others Through Attorney Holder Gh Qadir Dar under occupation of Hilal Ahmad Dar and Feroz Ahmad dar	S-4
Residents of Mir Masjid Khanyar		
1	Gh Nabi & Others	B-1
Residents of Chinkral Mohalla Habba Kadal		
1	Fayaz Ahmad Hakeem & Others	S-80

Yours Faithfully, Sd/-(Er. Shabir Ahmad) (Member Secretary HLC) Superintending Engineer, PWD (R&B) Circle Srinagar North

DIPK-10954/25
DATED: 14-02-2026

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

Dal Lake in the Tap

Pumps at Dal Lake draw sewage-laced inflow into treatment plants that serve lakhs of residents while court records, expert findings, and field visits reveal a system under strain and largely unexamined.



Raja Muzaffar Bhat

I reached the Nishat pump station on a recent clear winter morning and watched dark drains flow into Dal Lake beside the intake that feeds one of Srinagar's largest drinking water plants.

The lift station pulled this water through heavy pipes toward the filtration facility above the road, and that single line connects to taps across large parts of the city.

The Smart Cities programme entered Srinagar in 2017 with promises of modern utilities and sustainable supply systems. The city installed digital command centres and upgraded roads, while the core water network continued to depend on a lake that receives most of the city's untreated waste.

The contrast appears in public view along Boulevard Road where multiple drains from Brein, Nishat, and Ishber discharge directly into the lake within meters of the pumping site.

Engineers describe the Nishat plant as capable of treating around nineteen million gallons each day for nearly five lakh residents. The inflow at this location includes sewage, faecal discharge, household wastewater, and agricultural runoff.

The plant also receives a smaller share from Dachigam stream, though the lake remains the main source. Field observation at the intake point shows visible contamination before treatment begins.

A second major facility at Pokhribal near Lalbazar supplies more than one lakh people in Saidakadal, Kalaiandar, Makhdoom Sahib, Rainawari, and nearby areas.

The plant releases about four million gallons daily into the downtown network. Residents report discoloured water, sediment in storage containers, and un-



“Srinagar promotes its smart status through control rooms and sensor networks while the most basic service travels through pipes that start at a polluted shoreline.”

pleasant odour during peak supply hours.

Court records add a documented layer to these field observations.

In 2019, the Jammu and Kashmir High Court appointed a Committee of Experts to examine Dal Lake water quality and the functioning of sewage treatment plants around it.

The committee reported in 2020 that these plants operate beyond designed load, receive weak maintenance, and release effluent below Central Pollution Control Board standards.

The findings also stated that roughly seventy per-

cent of Srinagar's sewage reaches Dal Lake.

Three sewage treatment plants at Brein, Habak, and Hazratbal with capacities of 4.5, 3.5, and 7.5 MLD show partial operation during inspections.

The committee recorded absence of mandatory effluent testing before discharge, despite clear statutory provisions.

During site visits, I observed tankers transporting sludge from these facilities and unloading it along the Shalimar foreshore, a practice widely known among local residents.

The same pattern appears at another major drinking

water source.

Doodh Ganga stream feeds the Kralpora treatment plant that supplies more than six lakh people in uptown Srinagar. Upstream municipal discharge pollutes the stream, and the National Green Tribunal imposed environmental compensation on Municipal Council Chadoora and Srinagar Municipal Corporation after confirming contamination. Payments crossed forty crore rupees following earlier penalties.

The government approved one hundred forty crore rupees for new sewage treatment plants along the stream two years ago, but construction has not begun. Meanwhile, the existing treatment plant continues to process polluted inflow for domestic use.

The city's water system therefore rests on two principal sources that receive untreated waste at scale, while treatment facilities operate under heavy load. Testing protocols show lapses, and expansion projects remain on paper.

Households, hospitals, schools, and offices draw from the same distribution network each day.

I followed the route from drain outlets to the lake, from intake pumps to filtration chambers, and from overhead tanks to neighbourhood taps.

The flow chart of this system shows a continuous path that begins at sewage discharge points and ends in drinking water storage inside homes.

Public discussion around smart infrastructure rarely addresses the origin of the water inside the pipeline. The monitoring data of treatment efficiency, real-time testing records, and contamination levels remain outside public access.

Srinagar promotes its smart status through control rooms and sensor networks while the most basic service travels through pipes that start at a polluted shoreline.

I left the Nishat pump station with the same image that greeted me on arrival, dark drains entering the lake beside the intake pipe that feeds thousands of homes.

And that single point explains the entire system more clearly than any official document.

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.

Kashmir Needs Cancer Funds

Treatment costs are pushing families into debt, land sales, and lost schooling. Local funds can protect lives and futures.



Irshad Mushtaq

Many Kashmiri families keep three generations under one roof.

A grandfather receives a cancer diagnosis. His son steps away from work to take him for treatment while grandchildren watch the changes at home.

A young parent receives the same diagnosis. Elderly parents wonder who will care for the children.

One case touches the whole family on emotional levels, financial levels, and practical levels right away.

Working-class families deepen the narrative with their own struggles and hopes.

Drivers, shopkeepers, and labourers lose a full day's pay for every hospital visit. Travel from Kupwara, Baramulla, Anantnag, or Poonch to Srinagar or Jammu starts early, fills the entire day, and ends late with everyone tired.

Cancer treatment brings hospital bills plus all the income lost when someone must attend the patient.

Consider a taxi driver whose wife battles breast cancer. He often spends ten to fifteen days each month on hospital trips and tests. Relatives help a little. His earnings drop sharply while expenses climb.

Cancer arrives as a shock that silently rearranges a child's education. Parents shift them to cheaper schools, or stop tuition altogether. Older children, especially girls, begin caring for younger siblings or the patient, trading classrooms for kitchens and hospital corridors.

Homework fades, attendance breaks, and exam forms remain unfilled as money is diverted to medicine.

The strain is immediate, measured in unpaid fees and missed lessons, but its shadow stretches forward.

A child pulled away from school today often grows into an adult with narrower choices and lower earnings tomorrow.

Pressure changes how families talk to each other. Patients hide their pain to spare others worry, others hide money problems to spare the patient guilt. Arguments start over small matters such as who went to the hospital or who paid what. Big talks about recovery chances and decisions happen less often.

Open talk lets families plan treatment limits, borrowing limits, and ways to protect children and elders.

In one home, a son and father borrow money separately for the same treatment without telling each other. After the patient passes, they discover the double loans and feel the heavy load.

Many people notice small symptoms and choose to wait.

They wonder where the money will come from if tests show cancer. They decide to wait until after the apple harvest, winter, exams, or marriage.

Early check-ups catch the disease when treatment stays cheaper and easier. The concern about money leads people to delay. The disease advances and treatment costs more.

Early action keeps treatment options open and expenses lower.

Kashmiri families often sell land, orchards, and ancestral property to cover treatment costs. These pieces give yearly income, inheritance for children, and trust from elders.

Selling a small orchard pays for a few chemo cycles. Families use their future security to meet today's needs.

Even when treatment succeeds, the land disappears and the next generation starts with less.

Amid all this, crestfallen caregivers become the hidden patients in Kashmiri homes.

The mother who cares for her sick husband lifts, washes, changes dressings, and holds the emotional load. She skips her own checks for sugar or blood pressure.

The daughter who cares for a parent



“Imagine every mohalla and village in Kashmir creating its own cancer support fund. People contribute what they can each month. The fund pays for travel to Srinagar or Jammu, covers a few chemo cycles, helps with medicines, and even supports caregivers with basic health checks.”

stops meeting friends and loses sleep. People rarely view her as a patient.

With tumour cases climbing, caregivers in the valley are often ignored by the system, but their strength is what holds the patient's wellbeing together.

The pressures of looking at others' lives intensify today's emotional load.

People see perfect lives on social media and feel extra strain about their own struggles. Some families keep the illness hidden to avoid judgment as weak or unlucky. They skip big gifts at weddings or events because of costs and feel the eyes on them.

Social comparison can worsen the pain, but early support offers families a crucial lifeline.

Some families turn to quick-money options when pressure builds. A young person starts risky online ventures or other schemes to earn fast for treatment. Money meant for medicines goes into apps and vanishes. The failure brings more shame and arguments.

The patient feels responsible for the new problem. Pressure pushes some toward shortcuts that take away the money and calm mind needed for careful treatment. Careful planning keeps the focus on real needs and

improves chances.

When a patient passes after a long fight, the family faces a triple impact.

An empty chair and missing voice stay in the home. Loans remain to be paid, land is gone, and savings are blank.

Some visitors stop coming after the funeral days. The family works through years of rebuilding emotionally, financially, and socially.

This is where community support can come to their rescue.

Real help arrives through real presence for Kashmiri families. Cancer touches every part of life: health, money, relationships, children's futures, and connection to land.

Early awareness and check-ups catch the disease when treatment is cheaper and easier. Honest family planning sets limits on spending, borrowing, and protecting loved ones.

Strong social support from friends, relatives, and neighbours arrives consistently. They contribute money, time, presence, and respect, directing every rupee to real needs: treatment, nutrition, transport, and mental health, while avoiding quick-money traps.

This is exactly where community funds make the difference.

Imagine every mohalla and village in Kashmir creating its own cancer support fund. People contribute what they can each month.

The fund pays for travel to Srinagar or Jammu, covers a few chemo cycles, helps with medicines, and even supports caregivers with basic health checks.

Families no longer sell their orchards or borrow in secret. Children stay in school. Caregivers receive attention before they break down. Early check-ups become possible because the money question loses its sting.

When someone passes, the fund helps clear part of the debt and keeps the family standing.

People stand with each other through these community funds.

The author is a Srinagar-based reputed financial educator.

A Kashmiri Leader in Health Reform

A daughter of a pioneering Kashmiri educator turns patient care expertise into system-wide impact in Singapore and beyond.



SHE ENGAGES REGULATORS, TRADE MINISTRIES, PATIENT GROUPS, CLINICIANS, and industry leaders, turning complex policy challenges into concrete outcomes that improve access and patient care. Colleagues often say Beenish is a person who knows how to turn complex challenges into practical solutions.



Arshid Mehraj

Dr. Beenish Aslam sits at the head of a conference table in Singapore, surrounded by regulators, administrators, and industry leaders.

Charts display chronic disease pilots, market access timelines, and regulatory frameworks across more than ten Asia-Pacific countries.

She points to a table showing projected outcomes for cardiovascular patients and asks a question that redirects the discussion toward alignment with local industrial policy.

Every suggestion she makes connects directly to improving care, access, and sustainability across diverse health systems.

Her path to this table begins far from Singapore, in Srinagar, where she grew up as the diligent daughter

of Professor M. Aslam, a former vice-chancellor of IGNOU.

Her father set a standard for learning at a time when education wasn't a massive enterprising endeavour in her homeland. Beenish grew up carrying that legacy.

Her family valued knowledge, hard work, and service, and those principles continue to guide the way she approaches healthcare and policy.

Beenish trained as a physiotherapist at Jamia Hamdard University in New Delhi, earning bachelor's and master's degrees. She joined the Hamdard Institute of Medical Sciences & Research as an assistant professor, delivering clinical care and leading research projects that resulted in seven peer-reviewed publications.

Those early experiences revealed

how regulatory decisions, funding structures, and access policies shaped whether patients received timely care. She learned that healthcare is an interconnected ecosystem where clinical insight, evidence, and policy must operate together.

She earned a PhD in Disability Studies at IGNOU and completed an MBA in Strategy and Digital Leadership at ESSEC Business School. These qualifications positioned her to move beyond the clinic and transform healthcare policy at a regional scale.

Today, she leads government affairs, policy, and ESG at the Asia Pacific Medical Technology Association, driving initiatives across Japan, South Korea, India, China, and several ASEAN nations.

Her work touches regulatory re-

form, industrial policy, market access, public health strategy, and environmental compliance, all aligned with regional and global health priorities.

Her initiatives span multiple therapeutic areas.

She led APAC's first value assessment framework for next-generation sequencing in oncology, convening policymakers in Hong Kong to develop guidelines and reimbursement strategies.

Beenish guided cardiovascular care policies in Australia and Thailand, addressing funding barriers and implementation challenges. She even co-developed WHO SEARO's diagnostic module for antimicrobial resistance stewardship.

In Singapore, she coordinated chronic disease care pilots covering cardiovascular disease, diabetes,

chronic kidney disease, and respiratory health, later sharing lessons with Chinese city-level out-of-hospital care models.

Beenish also frames industrial policy and localization.

She influenced reforms in Indonesia, Vietnam, India, and China, securing recognition for member R&D investments that enhanced procurement eligibility and market access.

She led environmental and chemical regulation strategies in Singapore, Thailand, and Vietnam, safeguarding operations while maintaining compliance.

Regulatory harmonization efforts across Thailand, Malaysia, Singapore, Hong Kong, and Korea reduced review timelines by six to twelve months, strengthening health technology assessment and digital health strategies.

Her advisory work spans multinational executives and global trade dynamics.

She translates international trade tools, industrial policy changes, and geopolitical developments into actionable strategies across Asia-Pacific.

Beenish represents APACMed at ASEAN, APEC, WHO, and IM-DRF, while liaising with AdvaMed, MedTech Europe, and GMTA.

She works with regulators, trade ministries, patient groups, clinicians, and industry leaders, turning policy challenges into concrete actions that expand access and enhance patient care.

Colleagues note her ability to tackle difficult problems and deliver practical solutions.

Her father, Professor M. Aslam, reflects on her journey with pride. "She follows the values we lived by in Srinagar," he says. "She changes systems, improves lives, and sets a standard that others will look up to for years."

— The author is a Srinagar-based scribe.

The Girl from the Chilli Yard

In a village in Pulwama, a twenty-three-year-old steps into her father's shoes, balances books with business, and becomes the heart of her community.

Gowher Bhat

One evening Soliha sat beside her mother and spoke the words that still echo in their small house in Fraspura. "Ammi, I will make sure everything turns out fine. I will look after Abba, the business, and our home. Please rest easy."

Her mother, who had watched her only child move between textbooks and family duties without missing a beat, answered softly. "My child, you show such heart, but promise me you will look after yourself as well."

Soliha took her mother's hand, eyes bright. "I promise, Ammi. I will. I must keep going, especially now when so much depends on it."

She is twenty-three, the only child in her home, and the one who now shoulders the daily needs of their lives. Her father runs a small workshop that cleans, mixes, and packs red chillies, rice, and wheat. These goods have fed the family and many others in Pulwama for years.

But when a disc problem in his back left him unable to stand for long, Soliha simply moved into the space he left behind.

"When Abba fell ill," she recalls, "I asked myself who else would keep the work alive and our home running. I am his only child. I chose to stand by him."

Her father's eyes grow wet when he talks about her. "Soliha became someone far stronger than I ever pictured. She handles everything so naturally and gives me fresh energy. She holds us all up."

Her mother tends the house and watches her daughter with a mix of pride and gentle worry. "I see her move from morning till late, dealing with the shop, speaking with buyers, studying at night. My heart feels full and heavy at once. She bears more than her years, but she still smiles with pride."

A usual day starts early for Soliha. She finishes her online lectures or



works through her IGNOU materials for the master's in sociology, then walks to the family workshop. She checks the grinding and mixing, talks with suppliers, discusses orders with buyers, and makes sure every packet meets the usual standard.

The hours stretch, but she keeps her pace consistent and kind. "Child, sit for a moment and rest," her mother often says. Soliha smiles and answers, "Ammi, I will rest soon. Abba counts on me. This is our world. I need to keep it moving."

Regular buyers in Pulwama notice the difference. "Even after her fa-

ther's illness, Soliha made sure nothing stopped," one longtime customer says. "She remembers exactly how I like my spices and which rice suits my family. She treats every person who walks in like they belong here."

Another buyer adds with a warm laugh. "She greets me as if I am family. I step inside and she already knows what I want. That comes from care and respect."

People in Fraspura speak of her the same way. An older neighbour puts it simply. "Soliha studies, runs the shop, helps at home, and still finds time to lend a hand to anyone who needs it. In

our village she has become someone we all look to."

Some evenings leave her tired. "I sometimes feel worn out and ready to slow down," she admits. "Then I see my father trying to stand a little longer, my mother smiling at me, and our home still running well. That sight pushes me forward. We all meet hard days, but we find the way to keep going."

Late at night, she sits with her sociology books, finishes assignments, or plans the next day's work at the shop. "I want to do well in my studies because learning opens my eyes wider," she says. "At the same time my family

comes first. Both matter deeply to me."

Her professors see the same balance. "Soliha thinks clearly, feels for others, and stays focused," one of them notes. "She brings her lessons into real life. Watching her succeed in both worlds inspires everyone."

Her friends feel it too. "Soliha always finds room to help, no matter how full her own plate is," a classmate says. "We all admire how she moves through life."

Soliha aims to finish her degree with strong results and grow the family business further. "I want to build on what my father started, make things



THIS PULWAMA GIRL SHOWS HOW ONE YOUNG WOMAN CAN HOLD A FAMILY TOGETHER AND STILL REACH FOR HER OWN DREAMS. "Life brings its tests," she says in a clear voice, "but we can face them directly. Accept your role, put in the effort, and find joy in your tasks. That is how you grow. That is how you encourage those around you."

better, and use what I learn to help our community," she says, eyes bright.

This Pulwama girl shows how one young woman can hold a family together and still reach for her own dreams.

"Life brings its tests," she says in a clear voice, "but we can face them directly. Accept your role, put in the effort, and find joy in your tasks. That is how you grow. That is how you encourage those around you."

— The author is a Pulwama-based educator.

Party Cannot Challenge Consent Order: HC



KO Correspondent

Srinagar: The High Court of J&K and Ladakh has held that a party cannot challenge an order passed with its own consent, reiterating that the same was binding and creates an estoppel in law.

A Bench of Justice Wasim Sadiq Nargal dismissed a writ petition filed by one Sikander Sharma against an order of the Additional Commissioner, Jammu, which had remanded a land partition dispute to the Tehsildar for fresh proceedings under the applicable Partition Rules.

The court observed that the revisional authority's order had been passed with the consent of counsel representing all parties, emphasizing that once an order is made on the basis of such consent, the parties are legally estopped from challenging it, except on grounds of fraud, coercion, misrepresentation, or patent lack of jurisdiction.

Referring to a verdict by the Apex Court, the Bench said that a judgment by consent is intended to stop litigation between the parties just as much as a judgment resulting from a decision of the Court at the end of a long drawn-out fight.

Referring to a judgment by the court's coordinate bench, the Bench said that it was not necessary for consent terms to be reduced into writing so long as the record reflects that the order was passed on the basis of consent.

It also referred to another Supreme Court judgment which held that a consent decree creates an estoppel by judgment and cannot be modified except in cases of patent mistake or fraud.

Observing that the impugned order merely directed the revenue authority to proceed in accordance with the Partition Rules after hearing all parties, the Court ruled that no prejudice had been caused to the petitioner.

LG Sinha, CM Omar Extend Mahashivratri Greetings

Observer News Service

Jammu: Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha and Chief Minister Omar Abdullah on Friday extended their greetings to the people of Jammu and Kashmir on the auspicious occasion of Mahashivratri, which will be celebrated on February 15.

In his message, the Lieutenant Governor conveyed his heartfelt greetings and best wishes to all, praying for the health, happiness and prosperity of every citizen.

Describing the sacred festival, celebrated as 'Herath' by the Kashmiri Pandit community, as a symbol of spiritual tradition and communal harmony, Sinha said Mahashivratri holds profound significance in people's lives. He said the festival provides an opportunity to reflect on the timeless virtues exemplified by Lord Shiva and underscores the value of



universal service and responsibility towards humanity. "May Lord Shiva continue to shower his divine blessings upon us. May this festival strengthen the bonds of brotherhood for years to come. Har Har Mahadev," he said.

Chief Minister Omar Abdullah, in his message, said Mahashivratri symbolises devotion, faith and spiritual awakening, inspiring people to follow the path of righteousness, harmony and

compassion. "On the blessed occasion of Mahashivratri, I convey my heartfelt greetings and best wishes to all. May this sacred occasion bring peace, happiness and prosperity to every household," the Chief Minister said.

He also prayed for strengthening the bonds of brotherhood, unity and communal harmony in Jammu and Kashmir and wished that the festival may usher in progress and well-being for all.

Weeklong Mobile Security Bootcamp concludes at NIT Srinagar

Observer News Service

Srinagar, Feb 14: A weeklong bootcamp on "Mobile Security" concluded at the National Institute of Technology Srinagar on Saturday, bringing together students, researchers, and experts to deliberate on emerging threats in the mobile ecosystem.

The programme was organised by the Department of Computer Science and Engineering, NIT Srinagar, in collaboration with

Indian Institute of Technology Jammu.

It was sponsored under the Information Security Education and Awareness (ISEA) Phase III initiative of the Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology (MeitY), Government of India.

Dr. Mohammad Ahsan Chishty served as the Convener of the bootcamp, with Dr. Shaïma Qureshi and Dr. Sparsh Sharma as Coordinators. The valedictory session was

presided over by Incharge Director and Dean Research & Consultancy, Prof. Roohie Naaz Mir, while Registrar Prof. Atikur Rehman attended as Guest of Honour.

In her keynote address, Prof. Roohie Naaz said the weeklong programme was structured to combine strong theoretical foundations with intensive hands-on training, enabling participants to effectively respond to rapidly evolving mobile

security threats. About growing risks of cyber fraud, data breaches, and malicious applications, she said institutions must proactively build technical capacity to safeguard digital ecosystems and spread awareness.

"This camp focused on critical areas such as secure application development, threat modelling, encryption standards, and countermeasures against phishing, malware,

and supply-chain attacks," Prof. Roohie said.

She also thanked MeitY for supporting the initiative under ISEA Phase III and acknowledged the collaboration of IIT Jammu, faculty members and participants.

Registrar Prof. Atikur Rehman, who was the Guest of Honour, underscored the growing significance of cybersecurity in an increasingly digitised society.

CONTD. FROM FRONT PAGE

Child Anaemia Soars

comparisons highlight the scale of the change.

Kerala, Goa and Sikkim continue to report lower prevalence, while Bihar, Uttar Pradesh, Madhya Pradesh and Rajasthan remain above 65 per cent.

Jammu and Kashmir now sits closer to these high-burden states than to its earlier peer group.

Among Union Territories, Delhi reports 69.2 per cent and Puducherry 64 per cent, while Lakshadweep stands far lower at 43.1 per cent.

Ladakh records an exceptionally high 93.9 per cent, underscoring the added strain of altitude, isolation and limited food diversity.

Doctors in government hospitals link the surge to maternal health and feeding practices. Anaemia in women remains widespread nationally at 57 per cent, which increases the risk for low-birth-weight babies and depleted iron stores in infancy.

"We see mothers with low haemoglobin and children starting life with the same deficit," said a paediatrician at a district hospital in the valley who asked not to be named because he was not authorised to speak publicly. He noted that complementary feeding often begins late and relies heavily on rice or wheat preparations.

Seasonal access to food plays a visible role. Winter months limit availability of fresh vegetables and animal protein, especially in remote and snowbound blocks. Stored staples sustain calories while reducing dietary diversity.

Surveys in other parts of India show that fewer than one in three children aged six to 23 months receive iron-rich foods regularly, a pattern that mirrors field reports from Kashmir.

Programme delivery shows uneven reach. National initiatives such as POSHAN Abhiyaan and Anaemia Mukht Bharat aim to expand iron supplementation, deworming and nutrition counselling, though implementation varies widely by region.

Studies using NFHS-5 data link higher anaemia rates to gaps in supplementation, maternal nutrition and poverty-related diet limits.

In remote areas of Jammu and Kashmir, anganwadi centres often operate with limited staff and infrastructure, and supply interruptions affect regular distribution of iron syrup and fortified foods, according to field workers and local health officials.

The pandemic years deepened these vulnerabilities. Disruptions to anganwadi services and school feeding programmes reduced access to supplementary nutrition, while income losses narrowed household food choices.

National analyses show anaemia rising during the same period across rural and urban groups, with increases of seven to nine percentage points in many districts.

Nutrition researchers point to a life-cycle pattern that begins before birth.

Adolescent girls in India show anaemia prevalence near 60 to 66 per cent in several studies, feeding into maternal anaemia and then childhood deficiency.

"Child anaemia reflects maternal anaemia, diet diversity and programme quality," said a nutrition scientist involved in national survey analysis. "Health services alone cannot correct it."

Some states have shown that strong supplement coverage and community monitoring can reduce the burden.

Recent programme scorecards place states with higher iron-folic acid coverage at the top of anaemia control rankings, suggesting that consistent last-mile delivery and counselling

influence outcomes.

The rise in Jammu and Kashmir shows how medical gains can outpace nutrition gains. Hospital births and immunisation have expanded, while diets, maternal health and local programme delivery have lagged.

Anaemia in early childhood affects brain development, immunity and school readiness, with effects that extend into adult productivity.

The latest survey places the region at a point where recovery depends on reliable delivery, diversified local food systems and sustained maternal nutrition.

— The author is a research scholar at the Department of Economics, UOK.

World Saw How

remains indebted to the martyred soldiers for their supreme sacrifice.

In Jammu and Kashmir, Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha said the soldiers' unwavering commitment, unparalleled bravery and selfless service will continue to inspire every citizen.

Chief ministers across party lines also honoured the martyrs. West Bengal Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee saluted the CRPF jawans who were victims of the attack. Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath described their sacrifice as a proclamation of India's invincible resolve against terrorism. Arunachal Pradesh Chief Minister Pema Khandu said February 14 should also be remembered as a day symbolising the highest form of love, love for the nation.

Punjab Chief Minister Bhagwant Mann and Haryana Chief Minister Nayab Singh Saini also paid homage, terming the soldiers' sacrifice an enduring symbol of unity and national security.

In Jammu and Kashmir, senior leaders and workers of the Bharatiya Janata Party visited Lethpora in Pulwama district and laid floral tributes at the site of the attack. The party criticised certain regional political outfits for not participating in the homage ceremony.

The Pulwama attack occurred on February 14, 2019, when a suicide bomber rammed an explosives laden vehicle into a convoy of the Central Reserve Police Force on the Srinagar Jammu national highway, killing 40 personnel. Days later, India launched an airstrike in Balakot in Pakistan in response to the attack, marking one of the most significant cross border military actions in recent years.

Duty-Bound To Wipe

of the Army and the Jammu and Kashmir Police joined the ceremony and laid floral tributes to the fallen personnel.

"We lost our 40 brave jawans on this day. We are here near the spot to pay homage to the martyrs," Singh told reporters.

Highlighting welfare measures for the bereaved families, he said the CRPF family and the CRPF Pariwar Kalyan Sanastha have been extending sustained support. According to Singh, 19 families have been provided housing, while land has been allotted to several others in coordination with respective state governments.

He said the force is bearing the full cost of education for the children of the martyrs and will continue to do so. "All children will receive compassionate appointments as they reach adulthood. Families have been granted approximately Rs 2.25 to Rs 3 crore in relief from the government," he added.

To address concerns of the families, a Veer Pariwar App has been launched, while the CRPF Welfare Directorate remains in regular contact with them to ensure their needs are met.

Singh also noted that the force lost eight personnel in various operations last year and said the CRPF remains committed to supporting their families as well.

The Pulwama attack occurred on February

14, 2019, when a suicide bomber affiliated with Jaish-e-Mohammad rammed an explosives-laden vehicle into a CRPF convoy on the Srinagar-Jammu national highway, killing 40 personnel.

Terrorism Is Humanity's

indebted to the courage, dedication and sacrifices of security forces and agencies that confront terrorism.

"Terrorism is the greatest enemy of humanity, and India is firmly determined to eradicate it completely," he said.

The Pulwama attack took place on February 14, 2019, when a suicide bomber affiliated with Jaish-e-Mohammad rammed an explosives laden vehicle into a bus carrying personnel of the Central Reserve Police Force in south Kashmir's Pulwama district, killing 40 jawans.

Days after the attack, the Indian Air Force carried out airstrikes on terror training camps in Balakot in Pakistan in what was described as a retaliatory action against the perpetrators.

Valiant Sacrifice

in the line of duty during the dastardly terrorist attack in Pulwama in 2019. Their unwavering commitment, unparalleled bravery and selfless service to the motherland will forever inspire every citizen."

The attack occurred on February 14, 2019, when a suicide bomber rammed an explosives laden vehicle into a bus carrying personnel of the Central Reserve Police Force in Pulwama district, killing 40 jawans.

Days later, India carried out a retaliatory airstrike on terror training camps in Balakot, an operation that came to be known as the Balakot airstrike.

Security Crackdown

continuously to tackle any terror activity. "A search operation has been ongoing for the past four days in the Thathri area of Doda. Whenever we receive information about suspicious individuals, search operations are immediately launched from our side," he said.

The officer also appealed to the public to ensure that the police are informed before renting out any house or shop in their area, emphasising that prior verification is essential for maintaining security and preventing misuse of rented premises.

The pasting of posters comes amid heightened security operations in the high-altitude areas across the Jammu region following recent encounters and intelligence inputs about the presence of terrorists in the region. The posters were seen at key checkpoints and public places, including Nagri, Dessa, Ganpat Bridge at the Doda entry point, and Thathri, the officials said, adding that more such notices are being displayed in other vulnerable areas to maximise public outreach.

The posters, carrying photographs and brief details of the suspects, urge the public to share any credible information with the police while assuring complete confidentiality and protection of informants, the officials said.

They noted that the poster campaign is part of intensified efforts to dismantle terror networks operating in the Chenab Valley, including Doda and neighbouring Kishtwar districts, which have witnessed a series of encounters in recent years after militants attempted to revive activities in parts of the Jammu region that had largely been cleared of terrorism.

Meanwhile, security forces busted a terrorist hideout in Chilli forest in the Gandoh area of Doda on Saturday morning, leading to the recovery of eatables and blankets, the officials said.

They said the recovery suggests recent

movement in the area, prompting forces to intensify combing operations in the surrounding forests.

A massive search operation has been underway in the higher reaches of Doda, Kishtwar, Kathua, Udhampur, Rajouri and Poonch districts over the past month, resulting in nearly a dozen encounters — mostly in Kishtwar, Udhampur and Kathua — and leading to the killing of four Pakistani terrorists of JeM and an army soldier. While two terrorists were killed in an encounter in the Ramnagar forest area of Udhampur and another in the Chatroo area of Kishtwar on February 4, one terrorist was gunned down at Parhetar in Kathua on January 23. An army paratrooper also lost his life in a gunfight in Chatroo on January 18.

Officials informed that search operations, particularly in Thathri and Gandoh areas of Doda, have been intensified after locals reported suspicious movement of persons believed to be terrorists who may have escaped recent cordon-and-search operations in Kishtwar and moved towards adjoining forest belts.

Multi-Crore IHPL

Thisara Perera. According to the prosecution, the organisers allegedly duped players, support staff, hotel management and spectators by collecting substantial sums of money and abandoning the event shortly after it commenced.

Matches were held at Bakshi Stadium Srinagar, which had been rented from the J&K Sports Council. The event was widely publicised through large hoardings and advertisements featuring prominent cricketers to attract spectators.

In its report submitted before the court, police said that the accused persons accommodated players and officials at Radisson Collection Hotel but fled during the midnight of November 1-2, 2025, without informing the hotel management or the players and without clearing pending hotel bills or match fees of players and sports staff. After the alleged commission of the offence, the accused are stated to have absconded and concealed themselves at unknown locations.

The prosecution further submitted that ticket amounts were collected from spectators for scheduled matches that were never played. During investigation, it also came to light that the accused conducted trials of young budding cricketers across Srinagar, Kishtwar and Jammu, charging Rs 1,600 per player as trial fees. Bank statements obtained during the probe reportedly reflected transactions exceeding Rs 4 crore in the society's account during the relevant period. Also, ticket money was collected from spectators for scheduled matches that were not played.

In their pleas, Khanna, a resident of South West New Delhi, claimed that he was merely invited as the face of the league and had no role in financial transactions, adding that he joined the investigation upon being served notice. Sidhu, a resident of Chandigarh, contended that he was not named in the FIR and that no specific role had been attributed to him.

Opposing the bail applications, the prosecution argued that the allegations disclose a pre-planned economic offence involving significant public money and multiple victims. The investigating agency maintained that custodial interrogation was necessary to trace the money trail and unearth the larger conspiracy.

While dismissing the petitions, the court observed that economic offences stand on a different footing due to their wider societal impact. It held that the material collected during investigation prima facie disclosed serious offences. The court noted that one co-accused

J&K Issues 2 Lakh Birth, 60,000 Death Certificates Annually

Agencies

Srinagar: The Government of Jammu and Kashmir has claimed that it has initiated online registration of births and deaths across the Union Territory through the Civil Registration System portal of the Office of the Registrar General of India, officials said.

Authorities stated that the move is aimed at streamlining documentation and ensuring transparency in the issuance of vital records. The online platform enables citizens to apply for and obtain certificates digitally, reducing procedural delays and improving accessibility.

According to official figures, nearly two lakh birth certificates and around 60,000 death certificates are issued annually through the CRS portal in Jammu and Kashmir. The

system also facilitates delayed registrations of births and deaths, allowing applicants to regularise records that were not registered within the stipulated timeframe.

Officials said the digitisation of civil registration services is part of broader governance reforms intended to strengthen public service delivery and maintain accurate demographic data. The online mechanism is expected to minimise manual intervention, curb discrepancies and create a centralised database for better administrative monitoring.

The government maintained that the initiative has significantly improved efficiency in certificate issuance and has provided relief to applicants who earlier had to visit offices for documentation and follow-up procedures. (KNT)

had already been arrested and charge-sheeted, while others were allegedly evading arrest.

Finding no exceptional grounds to grant protection from arrest, the court directed both petitioners to surrender before the investigating agency or the competent court for custodial interrogation in accordance with law.

The investigation is ongoing, and police have indicated that supplementary charge sheets may be filed following further arrests and examination of financial records.

India US Trade

University of Agricultural Sciences and Technology here.

Omar said the fruit growers in Jammu and Kashmir have made huge investments to improve the quality of their produce.

"New varieties and high qualities have come up, we have been able to take the fruit to the markets at the right time through the CA stores. Now, if you are saying that good things will come from outside and less valued items should be sold from here, that is a huge joke with our growers. We want our best and high value products to be sold. So, I can only see losses because of this deal and no benefit," he added.

The chief minister said attempts are being made, with the help of the UT's agriculture universities, to take technology-driven organic solutions to farmers to give a fillip to the rural economy and agriculture.

"People are visiting this festival in lakhs to benefit from this. That is what we want. If have to compete with countries like the US -- which seems to be the case after the trade deal because their agriculture produce will enter our country -- we will have to improve our productivity and quality, for which this festival plays an important role," he said.

Meanwhile, Omar expressed hope that the new government in Bangladesh will improve relations with India, and said having stable neighbours benefits our country.

"The more stable our neighbouring countries are, the more it benefits us. No one wants to have wars and fights, or to have unstable neighbours -- be it Bangladesh, Sri Lanka, Nepal or any other country," Omar said.

Omar said India wants democracy in Bangladesh and wants it to remain stable and prosper.

"We hope that after their government formation, both the countries will improve their relations, which had otherwise witnessed some bitterness," he added. (with PTI inputs)

₹72 Lakh Cheque

approach the court. During the trial, Sheikh admitted his signature on the cheque but claimed that it was a blank signed document that had been misused by the complainant. The court rejected the defence, observing that the accused had neither lodged any complaint alleging misuse nor issued stop payment instructions to the bank.

Relying on statutory presumptions under the Negotiable Instruments Act, the court held that the complainant had successfully established the issuance and dishonour of the cheque, thereby proving the offence.

Immediately after the conviction and sentencing, the accused fled from the courtroom. The court directed the Station House Officer of the concerned police station to arrest him and lodge him in Central Jail, Srinagar.

In addition to the prison term, the court ordered recovery of the fine amount through a levy warrant and authorised the District Collector, Budgam, to attach the movable and immovable properties of the convict.

Advocate Marouf Khan represented the complainant in the case.

GON'GUL-2026 At SKUAST-Kashmir

Tech-Driven Farming Key To Boosting Rural Economy: CM

Observer News Service

SRINAGAR: To compete at the global level, Jammu and Kashmir must enhance both the quality and quantity of its agricultural produce, Chief Minister Omar Abdullah said on Saturday while inaugurating GON'GUL-2026, the 11th AgriTech Mela at the Shalimar Campus of the Sher-e-Kashmir University of Agricultural Sciences and Technology of Kashmir.

The three day event, themed "NextGen Agriculture: My Produce-My Price," has brought together progressive farmers, agripreneurs, start-ups, researchers and youth innovators from across the Valley to showcase innovative technologies and sustainable farming practices.

Ministers Sakina Itoo and Javid Ahmad Dar were present at the inaugural session, along with Vice Chancellor Prof. Nazir Ahmad Ganai, Registrar Prof. Azmat Alam Khan and other faculty



members and scientists. After inaugurating the mela, the Chief Minister inspected more than 100 stalls set up by agri-entrepreneurs and established and budding start-ups

displaying advanced irrigation systems, farm machinery, organic products and value-added produce. He interacted with stall owners and enquired about their enterprises and technologi-

cal interventions.

Addressing the gathering, Omar Abdullah highlighted the contributions of progressive farmers, scientists and researchers in transforming the agrarian

landscape of Jammu and Kashmir. He said sustained efforts in research and innovation are driving modernisation and economic growth in the sector.

He stressed that technology-driven and organic farming solutions are essential for strengthening the rural economy. Emphasising value addition, branding and improved market linkages, he said farmers must be enabled to secure better returns for their produce.

The Chief Minister also lauded the role of the university in empowering farmers through research, field outreach and innovation, and said platforms like GON'GUL allow growers to interact with experts, explore new tools and access emerging market opportunities.

The AgriTech Mela will continue over the next three days with participation from farmers, agri-business firms, students and researchers from across the region.

Vital Chadoora Bridge Closure Enters Third Month

SRINAGAR: The vital Chadoora Bridge in Budgam, which connects Srinagar to Charar-i-Sharif and Yousmarg, has remained closed to traffic since November 28, 2025, due to structural damage caused by floods. The prolonged closure has caused severe and ongoing inconvenience for residents, who are now forced to take alternative routes.

Speaking with KNO, locals said that since the bridge was shut, they have been grappling with traffic jams and muddy roads. "Sometimes, people who are unaware of the alternative route attempt to cross the flowing river and end up stranded in the water for hours, especially during these cold winter days," a resident said.

Nazir Ahmad, a resident, recounted a recent incident: "An auto tried to cross the river in the evening, as the occupants did not know about the alternative route via the college side. They remained stuck in the river for hours. We are thankful to the Chadoora police, who helped rescue them and saved their lives."

"The administration has opened an alternative route from the New Bus Adda side, but it remains plagued by traffic jams as the road is narrow. People continue to face hardship. Students reach institutions late, and patients, particularly pregnant women and the elderly, cannot reach hospitals on time," he added.

Another local, Yaqoob Ahmad, said that despite assurances from the administration since the very beginning about installing a Bailey bridge as an alternative route, more than two months have passed and people are still waiting. "On January 27, Deputy Chief Minister Surinder Choudhary said that the department had assured him the Bailey bridge would be completed soon, yet 17 days later, the work remains unfinished," he said.

Residents have urged the government to install the Bailey bridge at the earliest to prevent further suffering. They have also appealed to the LG administration to look into the condition of the main bridge so that restoration work can begin as soon as possible. (Observer News Service)

Mirwaiz Extends Greetings on Herath

Observer News Service

SRINAGAR: Mirwaiz Umar Farooq, has extended warm greetings to the Kashmiri Pandit community on the occasion of Herath. He said that such occasions remind us of the shared values of peaceful coexistence, mu-

tual respect, and brotherhood that have long been an integral part of Kashmir's religious and cultural ethos.

Meanwhile, Mirwaiz expressed sorrow over the demise of Khawaja Ghulam Ahmad Mir of Kangan, father-in-law of Fayaz Ah-

mad Kaloo, Editor-in-Chief of Greater Kashmir and Kashmir Uzma. Paying tribute to the deceased, Mirwaiz conveyed his heartfelt condolences to Mr Kaloo and other bereaved family members and prayed for Maghfirah, and Jannat-ul-Firdous for the deceased.

With 28% Transition Gap, J&K Battles to Retain Kids in Schools

Observer News Service

SRINAGAR: With nearly 28 percent of students in Jammu and Kashmir failing to transition from secondary to higher secondary level, the retention rate post 8th standard poses a real challenge for the School Education Department in ensuring the consistency of the learners.

According to the official figures available, the transition rates have improved significantly with 94.8 percent transition from primary to upper primary and 90.7 percent from elementary to secondary levels.

The documents further reveal that the J&K was facing a transition rate of 72.9 percent from secondary to higher secondary and Gross Access Ratio remains above 98 percent across stages.

Besides, the figures further reveal that literacy has improved significantly from 11.03 percent in 1961 to 68.74 percent in 2011.

"Gender inclusion has



strengthened, with the Gross Enrolment Ratio (GER) of girls exceeding overall averages at 114.5 at primary, 80.0 at upper primary, and 67.5 at secondary levels in 2024-25, reflecting the success of initiatives like Beti Bachao Beti Padhao," it reads.

The official figures further state that the dropout rates have declined sharply to 1.5 percent at primary, 3.2 percent at upper primary, and 12.9 percent at secondary levels.

Meanwhile, teachers in the schools told KNO that there could be various reasons for the transition rate of students from secondary to senior secondary in Jammu and Kashmir.

One of the teachers said,

"There can be various reasons for the dropout rate among the students of elementary and secondary levels. Mostly, the students come from financially unstable families and quit studies midway."

"Nowadays, many students are either seen quitting studies midway either to earn for their families or are setting-up their own businesses. Some students don't want to be regular in class but continue their studies simultaneously while working," said another teacher.

"There are a number of Out of School Children (OoSC) in JK. The students from nomad tribes also give less preference to the studies," the teacher said.

DM Kathua Extends Border Restrictions to 5 Km Zone

Observer News Service

JAMMU: Amid heightened security concerns along the International Border (IB), the District Magistrate Kathua has issued fresh orders limiting non-essential movement in a 5-kilometre strip adjacent to the border.

According to the details available with KNO, District Magistrate Rajesh Sharma invoked Section 163 of the Bharatiya Nagarik Suraksha Sanhita (BNSS) to enforce these preventive measures, aimed at averting risks to public safety, countering potential cross-border shell-

ing, and blocking any anti-national elements.

Pertinently, the order highlights the fragile security environment in the border region, where sporadic firing from across the border remains a credible threat.

To prioritize the protection of local residents and maintain peace, unnecessary travel has been curtailed in the specified zone under the Border Security Force (BSF)'s jurisdiction, stretching from Border Outpost (BOP) Paharpur to BOP Karol Krishna.

Additionally, the movement of heavy vehicles—such as trucks, tippers, and

multi-axle carriers—has been banned on the old Samba-Kathua road from 9 pm to 6 am to further reduce vulnerabilities during nighttime hours.

These curbs took effect immediately on February 14, 2026, and will continue for the next 60 days, or until withdrawn sooner. Violations could lead to legal consequences under Section 223 of the Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita. Speaking to reporters, DM Sharma clarified that this is a renewal and update of previous restrictions, which had lapsed on the same day.

Div Com Kashmir Reviews SANJY-2026 Arrangements

Observer News Service

SRINAGAR: To ensure a smooth and spiritually fulfilling pilgrimage of Yatis during SANJY-2026, Divisional Commissioner Kashmir, Anshul Garg on Saturday chaired a comprehensive review meeting to review arrangements at base camps along the route to the Holy Cave.

On the occasion, The Div Com issued a slew of instructions for advance preparations for forthcoming annual Shri Amarnathji Yatra.

The Divisional Commissioner emphasized optimal utilization of already released funds to augment facilities for pilgrims. He instructed departments to submit detailed action plans for SANJY-2026, float tenders in advance, complete works within stipulated timelines and prepare realistic and practical cost estimates.

Highlighting the role of the Tourism Department as the nodal agency for the SANJY, he directed it to ensure accountability among stakeholder departments.

To facilitate registration of pilgrims, the Divisional Commissioner instructed concerned authorities to increase staff deployment



at RFID registration counters. He further directed the Animal Husbandry and Labour Departments to work in coordination for RFID tagging of service providers and ponies.

BEACON was instructed to install crash barriers along the Pahalgam-Chandanwari stretch and the Baltal route, and to construct shelter sheds for security forces along the axes.

During the meeting, he also reviewed operationalization of control rooms including ICCC and circulation of mitigation plans among agencies.

Also, he instructed for capacity augmentation of camps and installation of headcount cameras at designated parking areas.

To ensure seamless movement of SRTC buses during SANJY-2026, Police authorities were directed to facilitate smooth circu-

lation of buses after de-boarding of yatis.

The Divisional Commissioner also reviewed the progress of works undertaken by R&B, PHE and KP-DCL and emphasized adherence to timelines. He also reviewed arrangements for supply of essential items, including ration and firewood, to the yatra camps.

During the meeting, special focus was laid on sanitation along the camps and routes, stationing of fire tenders at strategic locations, installation of signages and display screens, and expansion of telecom coverage in shadow areas by communication agencies.

The meeting underscored the administration's commitment to advance planning, inter-departmental coordination and augmentation of services to ensure a safe, efficient and well-managed pilgrimage during SANJY-2026.

Shopian to Host Dubjan Winter Carnival on Monday

Observer News Service

SRINAGAR: Shopian is all set to host the second edition of the much-anticipated Winter Carnival at Dubjan Meadow on Monday.

According to the details available, the event is being organized by the Tourism Department in collaboration with the Shopian administration.

It aims to boost winter tourism in the region by highlighting the natural beauty and rich cultural heritage of South Kashmir. Surrounded by snow-covered landscapes, Dubjan is expected to transform into a vibrant hub of celebration, adventure, and tradition for the day-long carnival.

An Official of the Tourism Department told KNO that the carnival will offer

a wide range of attractions including snow activities, fun-filled snow games, colourful cultural performances, traditional Kashmiri music, local cuisine stalls, departmental exhibitions, and various recreational events.

"The objective is not only to attract tourists during the winter season but also to create livelihood opportunities for local artists, artisans and vendors," he said. "Dubjan has immense tourism potential, especially in winter, and such initiatives help put it on the tourism map," the official added.

Locals are eagerly awaiting the festival, calling it a much-needed push for the area's economy.

"We are very happy that the government is focusing on Dubjan. During win-

ters, business usually slows down, but such carnivals bring visitors and help us earn," said Ghulam Hassan, a tea stall owner from a nearby village.

Another resident, Farooq Ahmad, who runs a small handicraft shop, said the carnival provides a rare platform for locals to showcase their products. "Tourists love our handmade items and local food. Events like this help preserve our culture while supporting our families," he added.

Young residents are equally excited about the snow sports and cultural programs. "We usually travel far to enjoy winter festivals. Having one here in Shopian is special and will attract people from other districts too," said college student Aijaz Ahmad.

4 Drug Peddlers Arrested

SRINAGAR: As part of its ongoing drive against drug trafficking, J&K Police have arrested 04 drug peddlers in separate incidents in Baramulla, Sopore, Anantnag & Budgam and recovered significant quantities of contraband substances.

According to a statement issued to Kashmir Observer, in Baramulla, J&K Police received input that one individual named Riyaz Ahmad Khan, son of Late Ghulam Nabi Khan, resident of Janbazpora, was attempting to sell charas in the area. Accordingly, a police party was immediately deployed to the spot and an Executive Magistrate 1st Class was informed. The suspect was apprehended and during his personal search, a green polythene bag containing 58 grams of charas was recovered.

Littering Chokes Water Bodies in Zainapora Shopian

SRINAGAR: Continuous littering along water bodies has choked many streams and drains in the Zainapora area of south Kashmir's Shopian district, with residents and environmentalists expressing serious concern.

As per KNO, people from different villages of the subdivision said that indiscriminate dumping of waste into and along water bodies has become a common practice, resulting in blockages and pollution.

Residents say unchecked dumping has turned many scenic spots into garbage sites, contaminating water sources used for irrigation and daily needs.

"People throw plastic bags and garbage directly into streams. During rains, it spreads everywhere, blocking drains and polluting fields," said a local shopkeeper. "Government action is necessary, but public awareness is equally important."

Environmental activists in Shopian have long raised concerns over the growing plastic menace, warning that polythene waste not only harms soil fertility but also poses serious threats to livestock and aquatic life.

Amid reports of plastic waste, diapers, animal dung, and household refuse increasingly being dumped along roadsides and into streams, the local administration in Zainapora has launched a renewed cleanliness drive, urging residents to take responsibility for protecting the environment. (Observer News Service)

After Gulmarg, Sonamarg Poised as Next Winter Tourism Hub: Director Tourism

SRINAGAR: The Tourism Department has identified Sonamarg as the next major winter tourism hub after Gulmarg, with plans to expand skiing infrastructure and host competitive winter sports events in the coming years.

Director Tourism Kashmir, Syed Qamar Sajad, as per KNO said the department is supporting initiatives to showcase Sonamarg's potential for winter sports, noting that the area's natural slopes and terrain are well-suited for skiing.

Around 180 students from Jammu and Kashmir and as many as 20 other states are taking part in the ongoing programme, which the director described as an encouraging response reflecting growing interest in winter sports.

Referring to Gulmarg as the country's winter capital, Sajad said nearby destinations, particularly Sonamarg, have the capacity to host competitive winter events in a phased and structured manner.

He said winter tourism in the Valley has seen improvement this season, with a steady inflow of visitors, and added that the department would intensify efforts within its mandate to promote Sonamarg as a winter destination.

As part of these efforts, the department has launched a 14-day integrated skiing course, exposing trainees to different slopes, including sessions in Gulmarg, to improve skill levels.

Sajad said a drag lift installed at Sonamarg by the cable car corporation will be operationalised on priority, while local youth will be encouraged to participate in winter sports. (Observer News Service)



Govt. Of Jammu & Kashmir

OFFICE OF THE CHIEF EDUCATION OFFICER BARAMULLA

Office: Kantlibagh Road, Mini Secretariat, Baramulla,
Phone No.:- 01952-234869, Fax: 01952-234869, email: ceobla2010@gmail.com

Subject:- Conduct of Type-Test on computer keyboard for eligible Multitasking Staff (Class-IV employees) possessing qualification Matriculation or above in School Education Department of District Baramulla.

Reference:- DSEK/NTS/138/2026/488 Dated 10-02-2026.

NOTIFICATION

In terms of SRO-308 dated 16-10-2008 read with Circular No. 32 GAD of 2011 dated 28-09-2011, the 25% of the vacancies of Junior Assistants available under promotion quota are to be filled up by promotion of Class-IV (MTS) officials having Matriculation qualification and the typing speed of 25 words per minute. Accordingly, all the eligible Multitasking Staff possessing qualification viz Matriculation or above of this District, who are intending to appear in the Type Test shall submit their bio-data as per the appended prescribed proforma /format through concerned office/institution within a period of 10 days from the issuance of this notification.

Besides, the officials who are already working as l/c Junior Assistants shall also submit the application forms within the stipulated time.

No:- CEO/Bla/NTS/Type-Test/2026/3057-3289
Dated:- 14-02-2026

DIPK-10952-25
DT: 14/02/2026

Chief Education Officer
Baramulla

Battle of Nerves

Can India's Calm Middle Order Tame Pak's Spin Threat?

Press Trust of India

COLOMBO: Amid the still-smouldering embers of an impasse that mixed cricket with politics like never before, India will need middle-order stability and a fit-again Abhishek Sharma firing to maintain domination over Pakistan when the two bitter rivals clash in the T20 World Cup's marquee fixture here on Sunday. A temporary 'peace season' has dawned after Pakistan made a U-turn from its boycott stand and agreed to take the field against India at the Premadasa stadium here.

It came after weeks of intense parleys that involved the International Cricket Council, Bangladesh and Sri Lanka. Practically, the whole of South Asia was turning the wheel to make this match happen, should the weather gods allow, because of its power to attract millions -- fans and bank balance alike.

So, a train of events set off by the BCCI-instructed release of Bangladesh pacer Mustafizur Rahman from the roster of Kolkata Knight Riders, that so trans-

formed into a cross-border crisis has come to halt, for now.

On their part, cricketers from both the teams have also tried to temper down the accompanying swirl of hype, terming this match as just another game in the calendar. It's hard to fathom the precise nature of their thoughts in that regard, but certainly both sides do not want the result to go against them because of the frenzy of negativism it can kick up.

For that, they will have to push the thoughts of a fan backlash behind and focus on the more controllable factors.

Abhishek bats at nets

For India, the worries start with Abhishek as he was forced to skip the match against Namibia with a stomach bug that needed hospitalisation.

But on the bright side, the left-hander batted for a considerable time at nets on Saturday evening, signalling his recovery from the illness.

"If you guys want, we will play Abhishek," skipper Suryakumar Yadav was in a mood to joke



with the media contingent when the obvious query came in.

So, it's almost certain that the Punjab man will walk in for Sanju Samson to open with an on-song Ishan Kishan. The nature of the track here also might prompt the management to bring in left-arm wrist spinner

Kuldeep Yadav.

But the inclusion of Kuldeep will have to come at the expense of a batter and the unfortunate one missing out could be Rinku Singh. Bringing in Kuldeep is also a massively tantalising option because of his hold over Babar Azam and he also had fine

figures of 4 for 30 in the Asia Cup final at Dubai -- his last outing against the cross-border rivals.

Middle-order stutter

In the run-up to the World Cup, the India batting line-up resembled a bulldozer rolling down a slope, crushing every-

thing in its route. But the two matches in the marquee event so far have revealed a mild concern -- a propensity to lose wickets in a cluster.

India slid to 77 for six against the USA at Mumbai, while the home side lost five for four against Namibia in the death overs, but its impact was masked by a 200-plus total and a large 93-run victory at New Delhi. On both those occasions, India were propped up by skipper Suryakumar Yadav, Ishan Kishan and Hardik Pandya.

But a collective effort is needed to win a long tournament like this, rather than repeatedly relying on individual brilliance. With four points in the kitty, the management would not be overly concerned about it, but they certainly would not want another show of profligacy because Pakistan have the capacity to exploit it.

The Pak threat

Keeping up with the hybrid model chalked out last year, Pakistan have been stationed in Colombo, and it has given

them a better understanding of the pitch and conditions here. The pitch at the RPICS has been a speed-sucker and the 2009 champions have five capable spinners in their ranks -- Usman Tariq, Saim Ayub, Abrar Ahmed, Shadab Khan and Mohammad Nawaz.

Tariq's side-arm stop and pause action has already become the talk of the town and battle with the versatile Indian batters would be an intriguing sub-plot of the showdown.

"When you get an out of syllabus question, you try to solve it," the Indian skipper replied to a question from a Pakistani journalist.

Pakistan's batters led by the irrepressible Sahibzada Farhan, who seemed to have gotten a grip over Jasprit Bumrah during last year's Asia Cup, Ayub, and all-rounder Faheem Ashraf can pack a punch on their day.

Without any disrespect to the Netherlands and the USA, they are yet to be tested by a quality bowling unit and India possesses one.

Tariq is Different from Other Spinners: Harbhajan

Press Trust of India

COLOMBO, FEB 14 (PTI) Former India cricketer Harbhajan Singh was relieved to see Abhishek Sharma regaining his fitness, stating that the swashbuckling opener's presence will help India neutralise Pakistan's unorthodox spinner Usman Tariq in their T20 World Cup match here on Sunday.

Off-spinner Tariq's outing against Indian batters at the Premadasa will be keenly watched because of the pause ahead of delivery and slinging action.

"See, he's someone that I have seen him bowl in the final, he was the man-



of-the-match. He is different from the other spinners and has a lot of variations," Harbhajan told PTI.

"People are talking about him for his stand and deliver action. It's not easy. You know, anybody can stand and bowl, but you've got to have different variations, which he's got and he's hard to hit in bigger grounds and slower pitches.

"So, all I want to say is that be a little bit mindful when you're playing against someone whom you

have never faced before. India can tackle him and not give him any big wicket. It's good to see Abhishek coming back, who plays spin really well and dominates (spin), throughout his innings," he added.

But what exactly is that Abhishek, who has recovered from a stomach bug that forced him to skip the match against Namibia in New Delhi, brings on to the table against spinners?

"Abhishek is a quality player. He is a player who

is determined to win the match on his own. I have played a lot of cricket. I know that he is a proper batsman who has all the shots.

"A lot of batsmen do not have all the shots. He (Abhishek) is not like that. He hits the first ball. And as long as he is on the crease, he keeps hitting. So, he is a proper batsman," he noted.

Harbhajan also exhorted the teams to put behind the unsavoury build-up to Sunday's match and concentrate on the game.

"Of course, there were a lot of hurdles before this game, whether this game will happen or not. But all that is done. Now, the focus should be on cricket, which is the main part. Of course, I'm hoping that India will play well in this game.

SA Takes Big Leap Towards Super 8s Making Short Work of NZ

Press Trust of India

AHMEDABAD: Aiden Markram smashed a blazing half-century as South Africa steamrolled New Zealand by seven wickets to all but qualify for the Super 8s of the men's T20 World Cup, here Saturday.

Leading from the front in a highly-anticipated Group D clash, Markram's commanding 86-run knock deflated the Kiwi attack and ensured South Africa completed the chase without fuss.

New Zealand rode on a counter-attacking 74-run stand between Mark Chapman (48) and Daryl Mitchell (32) to post 175 for seven after being asked to bat.

The Proteas were in a real



hurry as they chased down the 176-run target in 171 overs for their third consecutive victory that has taken them to the top of Group D.

The contest lived up to its billing as one of the most interesting games at group stage as close to 55,000 fans filled the stadium to wit-

ness the action despite it being a non-India fixture.

With six points from three games, South Africa will be favourites to move to the next stage. They play UAE next while New Zealand take on Canada in Chennai on Tuesday. Barring an upset, the Black

Caps will be through too. Mathematically, UAE (2 points) stay in the hunt for Super 8s but it will be a near impossible task to make that happen.

The Proteas were playing their third match at the venue and knew the conditions better and nothing worked for the Black Caps.

Markram set the tone early as he peppered the boundary with eight fours and four sixes at a strike rate touching 200.

Quinton de Kock (20 off 14) fell to Lockie Ferguson after helping the Proteas to a brisk start, and Ryan Rickelton (21 off 11), whose cameo kept the momentum intact, also lost his wicket after a start.

MIRAE ASSET Sharekhan

Achieve financial freedom

Set up Systematic Investment Plans in Exchange Traded Funds (Shariah Based ETF)



Contact: M I Securities - 9906518342 / 9906684475

1, 10 Samad Complex, Ma Link Road, Srinagar, Srinagar, Jammu & Kashmir, Srinagar - 190001

Registered Office: Sharekhan Limited, The Ruby, 19th Floor, 29 Srinagar Bapat Marg, Dadar (West), Mumbai 400 028, Maharashtra, India. Tel: 022-47502000, Fax No: 022-24327243. Correspondence Address: 10th Floor, Cignepal Bldg, No. 9 Rubeja Mindapose, Anuli Knowledge Park Bld, MSEB Staff Colony, TTC Industrial Area, Anuli, New Mumbai, Maharashtra 400708, India. Tel: 022-41169000/41150000. Fax no: 61169999. SEBI Regn. No.: BSE / NSE - CASH / FPO / CD / MCX - Commodity / IN2000171337. DP: NSDL, CDSL - IN-09-365-2018. CIN: U99999MH1999PLC087498. Sharekhan Ltd. (AMF) Registered Mutual Fund Distributor Mutual Fund: APN 20669 (date of initial registration: 03/07/2004, and valid till 02/07/2026). RFDH Registered Corporate Agent (Composite) License No. CA0950, valid till June 13, 2027. PMS: RFP000005786. Research Analyst: BH000006183. MCX Member Id - 26125. For any complaints email at: info@sharekhan.com. Compliance Officer: Mr. Joby John Meledan, email id: compliance@sharekhan.com. Tel: 022-42263303. Please refer the Risk Disclosure Document issued by SEBI and go through the Rights and Obligations and Do's and Don'ts issued by Stock Exchanges and Depositories before trading on the Stock Exchanges. For commodities derivatives, please note that Commodities Derivatives are highly leveraged instruments. PMS is not covered in Commodity Derivative Segment by Sharekhan Limited. Before investing in the asset class consider your investment objectives, level of experience and risk appetite carefully. Mutual Fund investment are subject to market risk. Read all the scheme related documents carefully before investing. Brokerage will not exceed SEBI prescribed limit. Mutual Funds are not Exchange traded products and all disputes with respect to the distribution activity would not have access to Exchange investor redressal forum or Arbitration Mechanism. The figures shown above are as of 30th November 2024. Such representations are not indicative of future results. For more details visit www.sharekhan.com. (AP Regn. Nos.: BSE -0107480196720; NSE -206970951)