

5 Kashmir Lakes In 'Very High GLOF Risk', Threat To 2,700+ Structures: Study

The research maps exposure across Ganderbal, Shopian, Kulgam; govt says no immediate threat

KO Web Desk

Srinagar: A recent study by the University of Kashmir has identified at least five glacial lakes in the Kashmir Himalaya as having "very high susceptibility" to glacial lake outburst floods (GLOFs), raising concerns over potential risks to

downstream habitations and infrastructure.

The findings, published in the Journal of Glaciology, were shared by Chief Minister Omar Abdullah in the Legislative Assembly on Tuesday while replying to a question from National Conference MLA Tanvir Sadiq.

According to the study, which assessed 155 glacial lakes using hydro-geomorphic indicators such as lake expansion rate, dam stability and surrounding conditions, the lakes identified in the "very high susceptibility" category include Bramsar, Chirsar, Nundkol, Gangabal



and Bhagsar.

The Chief Minister said a preliminary geospatial analysis was carried out to map downstream exposure, identifying vulnerable habitations and critical infrastructure in districts such as Ganderbal, Shopian and Kulgam. The study estimates that in

the event of a GLOF, around 2,704 buildings, nearly 15 major bridges, road stretches and at least one hydropower project could be impacted.

However, Omar clarified that the classification does not indicate an immediate threat. "It reflects a higher likelihood of outburst | [More on P6](#)

Time To Build Bridges, Not Battlefields: LG

Warns Against Echo Chambers, Says Truth Has Multiple Perspectives

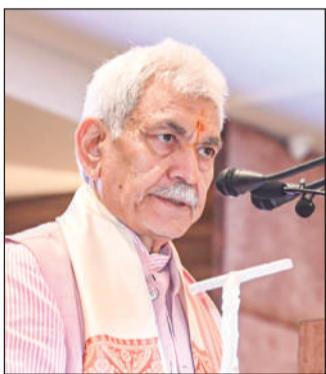
Observer News Service

Jammu: Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha on Tuesday said that the teachings of Lord Mahavira remain deeply relevant in a world marked by conflict and division, calling for compassion, peace and a renewed commitment to non-violence.

The Lieutenant Governor was speaking at the Mahavir Janma Kalyanak celebrations organised by S.S Jain Sabha in Jammu to mark Mahavir Jayanti. He extended his greetings to the people on the occasion and highlighted the enduring significance of Mahavira's philosophy.

In his address, Sinha underscored the principles of Ahimsa and Anekantavada, stressing the need for right faith, knowledge and conduct in contemporary society.

"Under the leadership of Hon'ble Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi, India stands resolute today. He has laid the foundation for a powerful nation



which is inspiring the world with its message that true peace is not weakness but unwavering courage. This is a time to build bridges, not battlefields," he said.

The Lieutenant Governor said that amid global strife, humanity must draw lessons from Mahavira's teachings, which foster enduring peace and unbreakable brotherhood. He emphasised that true progress stems from responsibility and accountability towards one's actions. "To envision | [More on P6](#)

Champion Compassion Over Conflict: LG To Youth

Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha on Tuesday called upon the youth to "champion compassion over conflict" and draw strength from cultural and spiritual traditions to shape a better future. He was speaking at the inaugural ceremony of the Jammu Kashmir Cultural Festival organised by Shri Kailakh Jyotish and Vedic Sansthan | [More on P6](#)

Search Op Launched Out In Ganderbal

KO Web Desk

Srinagar: Security forces launched a cordon and search operation in Ganderbal district of Jammu and Kashmir on Tuesday, officials said here.

The security forces cordoned off the Arahama area in the district for carrying out searches as part of an anti-terror operation.

Firing shots were reportedly heard near the cordoned area.

An official said that the security forces launched a cordon and search operation in the Arham village today evening.

He said the operation was launched following a tip off about the presence of terrorists in the area.

"During searches few gunshots were | [More on P6](#)



10, with intermittent rain and snowfall expected across Jammu and Kashmir.

"Between March 31 and April 2, brief spells of light rain or snow may occur at isolated places. From April 3 to 4, generally cloudy conditions with light

J&K Assembly: Security, Jobs & Housing Relief Dominate Proceedings

CM Flags NC HQ Security Withdrawal; Says 25,000 Jobs Targeted This Year | 'CDF Norms Expanded; MLAs Can Allocate ₹50 Lakh for Housing Aid'

Observer News Service

Jammu: Security concerns, recruitment plans and housing relief measures dominated proceedings in the Jammu and Kashmir Legislative Assembly on Tuesday, with members across party lines raising issues impacting governance and public welfare.

Chief Minister Omar Abdullah strongly criticised the withdrawal of security from the National Conference (NC) headquarters 'Nawai Subuh' in Srinagar, terming the move "incomprehensible", especially in light of the recent assassination attempt on party president Farooq Abdullah.

The issue sparked a heated half-hour discussion in the House, with Speaker Abdul Rahim Rather stressing that members' concerns over security, including withdrawal



of escort vehicles, required urgent attention.

"The message from this House is loud and clear: if you do not want to provide security, then declare Jammu and Kashmir a risk-free state. A pick-and-choose approach has no merit," the Speaker said. Speaking to reporters

outside the Assembly, the Chief Minister said the security at the party headquarters had been "completely withdrawn" despite frequent visits by Farooq Abdullah.

"It has barely been weeks since the attack on him. What is the compulsion behind removing security altogether?"

₹18,382 Cr Liabilities Cleared In FY26: CM

Chief Minister Omar Abdullah on Tuesday said the government has cleared financial liabilities worth over 18,382 crore during the financial year 2025-26, including dues to contractors and retired employees. Replying to a question by

BJP MLA Sham Lal Sharma in the Legislative Assembly, the Chief Minister said liabilities in the form of bills presented at treasuries are being cleared regularly through a structured mechanism. He said payments made so far include 7,800.58 crore towards | [More on P6](#)

WEST ASIA WAR

India Managed Situation Effectively: PM Modi

Press Trust Of India

Gujarat: Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Tuesday said while the world is grappling with war, unrest, and rising fuel prices, India has managed the situation effectively due to strong foreign policy and the unity of its people.

He accused the Congress of trying to create panic so that people queue up at fuel stations and gas agencies, likening the party to "political vultures" waiting to exploit the situation (arising out of the West Asia war) and reap political dividends.

"At a time when the world



is grappling with war, unrest and rising fuel prices, India has managed the situation effectively due to strong foreign policy and the unity of its people," Modi said while addressing a gathering at Nani village in Vav Tharad district

of Gujarat.

He said certain political parties, mainly Congress, are trying to take advantage of the situation by spreading panic and fear, instead of supporting national unity.

"Today, the Congress party is busy inciting the people. Like political vultures, it (Congress) is waiting for the situation to escalate so that it can exploit and reap political dividends," Modi added.

The Prime Minister noted that though fuel prices have risen by as much as 10 per cent globally due to the West Asia conflict, the Central government is ensuring that the burden of this | [More on P6](#)

Court Convicts 5 In 28-Yr-Old Fake Appointment Case

Says Corruption Is "Cancer" That Destroys Fabric Of Trust Between Citizen And State

M Ahmad

Srinagar: Special Judge Anti-Corruption Court Pulwama on Tuesday convicted five accused persons in a nearly 28-year-old fake appointment case, sentencing them to five years of imprisonment.

"Corruption is not a victimless crime. It is a "cancer" that destroys the fabric of trust between the citizen and the State," said the court, presided over by Dr Noor Mohammad Mir, while convicting the accused in a case registered in 1998 by the Vigilance Organization Kashmir (now ACB), which involved the illegal appointment of a woman as a teacher

at Government High School Goripora, Pulwama, using forged documents and fabricated service records. The case was initially registered against six persons - Assad-Ullah Lone, then Headmaster, Government High School Goripora; Ghulam Mohammad Sheikh, then Junior Assistant; Bashir Ahmad Shah, then Orderly; Syed Showkeen Andrabi, then Orderly; Mohammad Ashraf Khan and Hamida Akhter (beneficiary). However Assad-Ullah Lone passed away on 30 April 2025 and proceedings against him were abated by the court on 29 November last year. "In the Education Department | [More on P6](#)

Snow, Rain Lash Kashmir; Key Roads Shut, Temps Dip

Observer News Service

Srinagar: Fresh snowfall in higher reaches and widespread rainfall across the plains disrupted normal life and road connectivity in Kashmir on Tuesday, while bringing down temperatures across the Valley.

Snowfall was reported from Tulail Valley, Razdan Pass and Sadhna Top in Kupwara district, even as several areas recorded moderate to heavy rainfall over the past 24 hours.

According to official data, Baramulla recorded the highest rainfall at 73 mm, followed by Poonch with 68.5 mm. Qazigund received 48.6 mm, Kulgam 42.2 mm, Kupwara 40.8 mm and Srinagar 31.6 mm, while Jammu city recorded 12 mm.

The Meteorological Centre Srinagar said the wet spell is likely to continue till April



10, with intermittent rain and snowfall expected across Jammu and Kashmir.

"Between March 31 and April 2, brief spells of light rain or snow may occur at isolated places. From April 3 to 4, generally cloudy conditions with light

to moderate rain or snowfall at many places are expected, accompanied by thunder and gusty winds," an official said.

Partly cloudy weather is likely between April 5 and 7, followed by fresh spells of light to moderate rain and snowfall in higher

reaches from April 8 to 10.

Authorities also warned of thunderstorms and gusty winds reaching 30-40 kmph at isolated places, particularly during late afternoon hours on March 31, April 3 and 4.

Meanwhile, road connectivity was hit at several places due to landslides and snowfall.

The Jammu-Srinagar National Highway (NH-44) remained blocked for several hours due to landslides and shooting stones between Ramban and Banihal. Although traffic was later partially restored, commuters have been advised to avoid night travel.

Passenger Light Motor Vehicles are being allowed from both sides in a regulated manner, subject to weather and road conditions.

The Srinagar-Sonamarg-Gumri (SSG) Road remains closed towards | [More on P6](#)

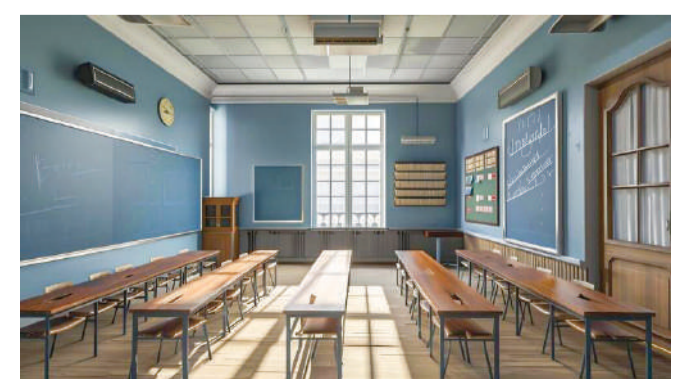
Enrolment Crisis In J&K Colleges: 2 Without Students, Many Below 30

Five colleges have under 20 students; 24 operate below 100 enrolment

Agencies

Srinagar: In a setback to the government's push to take higher education to the grassroots, several Government Degree Colleges (GDCs) in Jammu and Kashmir are witnessing dismal student enrolment, with at least two institutions recording zero admissions.

According to official information placed in the Legislative Assembly, Government Degree College Baghi Dilawar Khan and Government Degree College Chattisinghpora currently have no active student enrolment. The government said the earlier intake in these colleges was insufficient to sustain a viable academic environment, and



they have failed to attract fresh admissions.

Both colleges have now been placed under the administrative control of other institutions, with GDC Chattisinghpora attached to Government Degree

College Anantnag and GDC Baghi Dilawar Khan to SP College Srinagar for oversight.

The data further reveals a broader trend of declining enrolment across colleges in the Union Territory. | [More on P6](#)

Drainage Works Trigger Panic in Hawal Chowk

Observer News Service

Srinagar: Residents of Hawal Chowk in downtown Srinagar on Tuesday said they are facing a difficult situation after the installation of a new drainage system in the area.

They said continuous water leakage has damaged several houses and left one structure on the verge of collapse.

"The Mehaboob Abad Hawal area, part of the densely populated Hawal locality, has witnessed seepage from newly laid drainage pipes, leading to cracks in residential buildings and water accumulation inside homes," residents told KNO.

They said they were told the new drainage system would solve waterlogging, but instead it has created a bigger problem.

"Water is seeping into our houses day and night,"

said Zeeshan, a local resident. He said that one of the affected structures has developed visible cracks and is "close to collapse," posing a serious risk to the lives of occupants.

Locals further alleged that poor planning and faulty execution of the drainage project are to blame for the crisis, claiming that pipelines were either improperly laid or damaged during installation.

Notably, the issue comes amid broader concerns over drainage infrastructure in the city, where residents in several areas have repeatedly flagged waterlogging and seepage problems, especially after rainfall.

Residents also said despite repeated appeals, no concrete action has been taken so far. "We have informed the authorities multiple times, but no one has come to assess the damage," another local said.

EOW, CB Files Chargesheet in Rs 55 Lakh Property Scam

Observer News Service

Srinagar: The Economic Offences Wing (EOW) of Crime Branch J&K on Tuesday said it has filed a chargesheet against a Srinagar resident accused of duping a buyer of Rs 55.11 lakh in a property deal.

Officials said the accused allegedly sold the same mortgaged house to multiple individuals after receiving payment, leading to a detailed probe and action under Section 420 IPC.

In a statement issued to Kashmir Observer, a spokesperson said the Economic Offences Wing, Srinagar of Crime Branch J&K has filed a chargesheet in case FIR No. 10/2026 under Section 420

IPC against Mehraj-Ud-Din Dar S/o Abdul Ahad Dar, a resident of Alamdar Colony Rawalpora, A/P Tengpora Batamalo Srinagar, before the Hon'ble Court of City Judge Srinagar.

He said, the case originated from a written complaint alleging that the accused is a habitual offender who employed a calculated modus operandi to defraud innocent individuals.

"It was reported that after receiving payments, the accused deliberately failed to honour commitments and, in an attempt to evade legal action and recovery proceedings, transferred or registered acquired properties in the name of his wife."



Fire Engulfs 4 Houses in Habba Kadal, 2 Firemen Injured

Observer News Service

Srinagar: A fire incident in the Habba Kadal area of Srinagar on Tuesday afternoon damaged four residential houses and left two fire personnel injured, officials said here.

As per details available with KNO, the blaze was reported at around 2:05 PM, following which fire tenders from multiple stations were rushed to the spot.

"On arrival, firefighters found two structures initially engulfed in flames and launched simultaneous

operations to contain the fire," officials said.

"However, the situation worsened due to a gas cylinder explosion, coupled with public interference and lack of cooperation, leading to the fire spreading to adjoining structures and partially damaging them, taking the total number of affected houses to four," they added.

Officials said that during the firefighting operation, two personnel sustained injuries. They were identified as Mushtaq Ahmad, posted at F&S Headquarters Batamalo and

fireman Fahmeed Ahmad, who was injured after a fall while performing his duties.

"Both were shifted to a nearby hospital, where their condition is stable," they said.

Officials added that no loss of life has been reported in the incident and an investigation has been initiated to ascertain the cause of the fire.

Meanwhile, the department has urged the public to cooperate with emergency responders during such situations to ensure swift and effective firefighting operations.

Tulip Garden Records Nearly 1.78 Lakh Visitors in First 15 Days

Observer News Service

Srinagar: The Tulip Garden in Srinagar has recorded a footfall of 1,77,869 visitors in the first 15 days, with officials saying the final count is likely to be higher as online ticketing data has not been included.

Assistant Floriculture Officer In-charge Tulip Garden Srinagar,

Imran Ahmad, told KNO that the current figures are based on available of-line ticket records.

"The footfall in the first 15 days is 1,77,869. This does not include online ticketing data, which will be compiled after the garden closes," he said.

Ahmad said the visitors include locals, domestic tourists and foreign tourists among them, though their separate count was not available this time.

Officials said the garden is witnessing a steady rise in visitors and expect a further surge in the coming days as the bloom reaches its peak.

Situated at the foothills of the Zabarwan range overlooking Dal Lake, Asia's largest Tulip Garden, this year features around 70-75 varieties of tulips and remains a major highlight of Jammu and Kashmir's spring tourism season.

TRAFFIC POLICE : 941993745, 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
- BIJBERA: 01932-228243
- PAMPOR: 01933-294132
- PATTAN: 01954-293507
- QAZIGUND: 01951-296153

HIGHWAY STATUS

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

PRAYERS

FAJR 4: 55
ZUHR 12:36
ASR 5: 05
Magrib 6:54
ISHA 8: 16

HIJRI CALENDAR
12- Shawwal
1447

NORTHERN RAILWAY FIRST CORRIGENDUM

For Tender No.: 765-TRD-JAT-2025-26 due on 20.04.2026

Senior Divisional Electrical Engineer (TR), Northern Railway, Jammu Tawi has invited the above tender. The Tender Notice was published in leading newspapers on 29.03.2026 to be opened on 20.04.2026. The following changes have been made in the above tender and may be read as below:

- Change In Mandatory document is done. Previous Mandatory documents have been deleted. New Mandatory documents have been uploaded. Annexure-1 (First Sheet) in the mandatory documents were changed.
- Earnest Money is updated as per latest ACS 11 of GCC Apr-2022
- Old Tender Form (First Sheet) - As per Annexure-1, Part-1 of Indian Railway Standard GCC for Works of April-2022 has been deleted and New is added in Mandatory Document.
- Change In Tender document is done. Previous Tender document 765 TRD-JAT 2025-26 is deleted and New Tender document 765 TRD-JAT 2025-26 is added.
- New ACS (Advance Correction Slip) 11 for GCC APR 2022 is added.

All the changes are made due to introduction of ACS (Advance Correction Slip) 11 for GCC APR 2022, Dtd. 13.03.2026.

Other terms and conditions will remain unchanged. No.: 765-TRD-JAT-2025-26
Dated: 30-03-2026 1070/2026

SERVING CUSTOMERS WITH A SMILE

CONDOLENCE

The officers/officials of the Directorate of Handicrafts & Handloom, Kashmir, express their deepest grief and sorrow on the untimely demise of the cousin brother of Director Handicrafts & Handloom Kashmir Mr. Mussarat Islam.

In this moment of profound grief, all the employees of the Department stand in solidarity with the bereaved family and pray for strength and courage to bear this irreparable loss. May the departed soul rest in eternal peace, and may the Almighty grant solace to the family members.

Heartfelt condolences are extended to the Director Handicrafts & Handloom Kashmir and his family.

إِنَّا لِلّٰهِ وَإِنَّا إِلَيْهِ رَاجِعُونَ

With profound grief and sorrow we inform the sad demise of Shabir Ahmad Wani who left for heavenly abode on SUNDAY 29th March 2026. His Fateh Khawani will be held on Wednesday April 01, 2026 at 10: 30 AM at his ancestral graveyard solina payeen Banpora Opposite Shalimaar Bakery, Srinagar

Bereaved Family
Suhail Shabir wani (Son)

Government of Jammu and Kashmir
OFFICE OF THE CHILD DEVELOPMENT PROJECT OFFICER POSHAN PROJECT TREHGAM KUPWARA

Subject: Merit cum Tentative Selection List of Sahayika (Anganwadi Helper) of Anganwadi Centre Mirpora Trehgam Poshan Project Trehgam. (PUBLIC NOTICE)

Whereas, Pursuant to the Human Resource Policy for recruitment of Sanginis (Anganwadi Workers/AWVs) and Sahayikas (Anganwadi Helpers/AWHs) issued vide Government Order No. 222-JK(SWD) of 2022 dated 30-11-2022 and Government Order No. 103-JK(SWD) of 2023 dated 28-04-2023, the vacancies of Sahayikas (Anganwadi Helpers/AWHs) have arisen due to various reasons, i.e., attaining the age of sixty, resignation, death, etc.

Whereas, this office submitted the vacancy position to the District Programme Officer, Kupwara vide No. CDPO/POSHAN/TRH/25/634 Dated: 10-12-2025, who further submitted it to the Mission Director, Poshan Jammu and Kashmir for accord of approval for recruitment of Sahayikas (Anganwadi Helpers) at vacant positions.

Whereas, the Mission Director, Poshan J&K, accorded approval for the recruitment of Sahayikas (Anganwadi Helpers) vide letter No. MD/POSHAN/47213-23 Dated: 24-12-2025 which was further communicated by the District Programme Officer, ICDS Kupwara to this office vide letter No. DPO/POSHAN/25/6043-55 Dated: 29-12-2025.

Whereas, this office advertised (01) vacant post of Sahayika (Anganwadi Helper) against Anganwadi Centre Mirpora Trehgam (PH Trehgam-B Ward NO 04, vide this office advertisement notification No. 03-CDPO-TREHGAM of 2026 Dated: 09-03-2026, issued under endorsement No. CDPO/TRH/Adv/2025-26/943-58 Dated: 09-03-2026, published in daily newspapers Kashmir Observer, Mission Kashmir, Aayena Kashmir, Kashmir Arman on 10-03-2026 respectively, and also uploaded on departmental/district websites for wide publicity.

Whereas, in response to the said advertisement notice, the following number of applications were received within the prescribed/Stipulated time; the details are as under

S. No	Name of Anganwadi Center	Ward No	No of Applications Received
01.	Mirpora Trehgam	04	01

Whereas, the requisite screening has been conducted as envisaged in Government Order No. 222-JK(SWD) of 2022 dated 30-11-2022 and Government Order No. 103-JK(SWD) of 2023 dated 28-04-2023, and a merit panel has been prepared.

Whereas, the merit list along with the tentative selection list was prepared as per the criteria laid down in the said Govt. Orders and placed before the committee. After thorough deliberations and analysis, the Selection Committee approved the merit list cum tentative selection list for wide publication in local newspapers, display at the offices of all committee members, respective Panchayats Ghars, and on the department's website, as well as the NIC website at the Deputy Commissioner's office, inviting objections (if any).

Therefore, the merit-cum-tentative selection list attached at Annexure-A and Annexure-B of this notification is hereby published today on 31-03-2026 for inviting appeals/objections (if any). The appeal/objection (if any) against the said merit-cum-tentative selection list shall be filed in the office of the Child Development Project Officer, Poshan Project (ICDS) Trehgam, Main Road, Near Post Office Trehgam, against proper receipt, within Seven (7) days from the date of publication of the merit cum tentative selection list during working hours (up to 4:00 PM). No appeal/objection shall be entertained after the lapse of the last date.

Annexure-A

Merit List of candidates who have applied for the post of Sahayika (Anganwadi Helper) for Anganwadi centre Mirpora Trehgam (PH Trehgam-B Ward NO 04)

S. No	Index No	Name of Candidate	Parentage/ Spouse Name	Residence/ Panchayat Halqa	Location of AWC	Ward No	D.O.B	Qual ification	Marks obtained in 10 th Out of	Total Merit	Remarks
1	01	Nazia Ali	D/o Ali Mohammad Mir	Trehgam-B	Mirpora Trehgam	04	01-04-2004	10 th	228/500	45.6	

Annexure-B

Tentative Selection list for the post of Sahayika (Anganwadi Helper) for Anganwadi centre Mirpora Trehgam (PH Trehgam-B Ward No. 04)

S. No	Index No	Name of Candidate	Parentage/ Spouse Name	Residence/ Panchayat Halqa	Location of AWC	Ward No	D.O.B	Qual ification	Marks obtained in 10 th Out of	Total Merit	Remarks
1	01	Nazia Ali	D/o Ali Mohammad Mir	Trehgam-B	Mirpora Trehgam	04	01-04-2004	10 th	228/500	45.6	

DIPK-12269/25 dated: 31-03-2026

No: CDPO/TRH/ADV/2025-26/1008-1022

Sd/= **Child Dev. Project Officer Poshan Project TREHGAM**
Dated:- 31-03-2026

DPHQ Udhampur

No: - CB/Hue & Cry Notice/2026/19425-35 Dated: -30.03.2026

HUE & CRY NOTICE

As requested by SHO PS Chenani that an alleged accused namely Mohd Sadiq S/o Fateh Ali R/o village Ganshad Tehsil Chenani District Udhampur is involved in case FIR No. 39/2026 U/S 3(1) SC& ST(Prevention of Atrocities) Act and 351(3)/352/356(2) BNS of PS Chenani and is absconding after commission of crime. Despite strenuous efforts, whereabouts of the said alleged accused are not ascertained so far. The Photograph with descriptive roll of absconding accused person is as under:

Photo	Description
	Name: Mohd Sadiq Age: 48 yrs. Complexion: Wheatish Height: 5.7 feet Body built: Normal

It is therefore requested that a sharp lookout may please be maintained and if traced out or any clue leading to the whereabouts of said absconding accused is received an information may kindly be shared on the below mentioned Telephone Nos./Fax/e-mail address for further course of action.

Email: sspoudh@jkpolice.gov.in
Fax: 01992-270027
Phone: 01992-2270210
PCR Udhampur: 01992-276915
SHO P/S Chenani: 9419134268

DIPK-12263/25 dated: 31-03-2026

SSP Udhampur.

KASHMIR OBSERVER®

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KO VIEW

Local Courage

Last month, a young woman opened a bakery in Srinagar. She hired three neighbours, bought walnuts from Tangmarg orchards, posted her first sale online. Within days, the comments arrived: another showpiece.

This culture of putting others in a poor light has spread across the valley in everyday life.

Students in Anantnag restored a crumbling reading room built by their grandfathers, filling it with donated books and a secondhand computer. Villagers in Kupwara revived a spring festival, clearing debris so elders could attend.

Each effort met the same wall: bound to fail.

Doubt runs deep in the mountains, nourished by decades of broken promises. But doubt has hardened into something more damaging, a reflex that strikes before any seed takes root.

We have grown skilled at spotting flaws while remaining blind to possibility, quick to say "what can these people do," while never asking what we might do ourselves.

Kashmir holds a legacy of makers. The shawl weavers of Kanihama created textiles that warmed emperors. The papier-mâché artisans of Nowhatta passed techniques through generations, their workshops filling winter evenings with color. The boat-builders of Dal Lake constructed doongas that lasted half a century, repairing them each spring when ice thawed.

These people did not wait for perfect conditions. They worked with what their homeland offered, improved it grain by grain, built reputations that outlasted rulers.

That same impulse survives. A carpenter in Baramulla sells walnut furniture through Instagram, employing four apprentices who once faced empty afternoons. A women's collective in Pampore processes saffron for export, negotiating directly with Dubai buyers. A teacher in Shopian runs weekend classes in traditional Kashmiri script, attracting students who had never seen their grandmother's handwriting.

These are small fires, easily stamped out by indifference or the mockery we use to mask our own fear of trying. They need customers who choose creativity over convenience, neighbours who defend experiments rather than predicting collapse, a culture that values the attempt as much as the outcome.

Criticism demands no investment. Anyone can stand at the edge of effort and say, "it will not work," without touching the work.

Building requires skin in the game, the willingness to look foolish, stamina to continue after stumbles.

Kashmir has hosted enough spectators sitting on shopfronts, commenting as others pass. The valley now needs hands on the passion projects to revive the lost pride.

CASH COURSE

Read This Before You Buy Anything

Paper Wealth

Assets may look strong, but steady income is what truly sustains Kashmiri households today.

Irshad Mushtaq

Many Kashmiri families live in big homes, own good land, and carry gold passed down for decades. These are signs of comfort. Still, many households feel uneasy because money coming in each month has become uncertain.

Business is slower, jobs are harder to find, and incomes from orchards and small trades no longer stretch the way they once did. Wealth looks strong on paper, although day-to-day life feels tighter.

A house does not pay school fees. A plot of land cannot cover groceries unless you sell it. Families learn this quickly when savings start slipping away. Some have also lost money to scams or emotional lending that never came back.

Regular income brings peace that old assets cannot always offer. A fund of 1 crore placed in balanced mutual funds or monthly income plans can earn 8-12 percent a year.

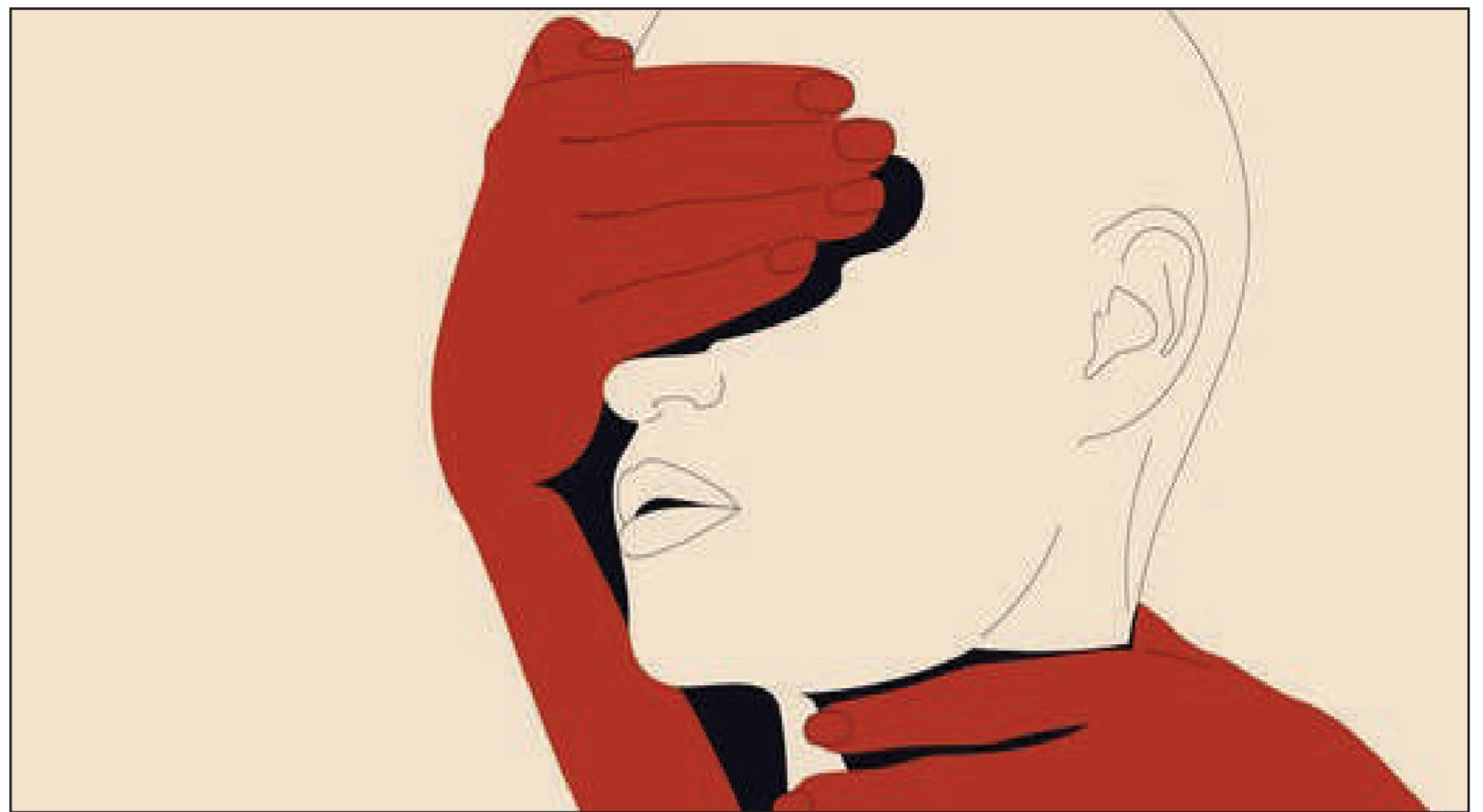
This gives families the confidence to plan ahead without touching land or gold.

Balanced and hybrid funds work for many households because they mix stable bonds with growth-oriented stocks. Monthly Income Plans send payouts that feel like a salary and are handled by trained professionals, so families do not need to track markets every day.

Every investment should remain in your own name with proper documents. A registered financial advisor offers safer guidance than informal promises.

Kashmir is changing, and steady earnings matter more than ever. Turning old wealth into dependable monthly income helps families protect dignity, comfort, and their future.

The author is a Srinagar-based reputed financial educator.



From Pain to Punchline

Mental health struggles are often reduced to jokes, leaving people unseen and unheard.



Dr. Fiaz Maqbool Fazili

“
In many homes, mental illness is explained through faith or personal weakness. Depression is called weak faith. Panic attacks are called exaggeration. Schizophrenia is confused with possession. And trauma is dismissed as unnecessary thinking.”

Language in Kashmir carries everything we've lived through: loss, laughter, love, fear, and endurance.

But hidden in our everyday speech is one word we toss around without thinking, even though it can wound deeply.

That word is "pagal."

It echoes in markets when a shopkeeper scolds an apprentice. It appears in classrooms when children repeat what they hear at home. It surfaces at kitchen tables when a parent talks about a child who has become withdrawn.

Every time it is used, it turns someone's struggle into an insult.

"Pagal" does not describe an illness. It judges. It reaches a man carrying years of trauma, and a student struggling under pressure.

The word flattens every form of emotional pain into one dismissive category.

It tells a person their struggle is unreal, unimportant, and undeserving of care.

Modern medicine gives names to these conditions, and each, including depression, anxiety, bipolar disorder, schizophrenia, and PTSD, has clear symptoms and treatments. The brain reacts to stress and imbalance the way any organ does.

So, when someone fighting depression cannot get out of bed, families often label them "pagal."

This difference in understanding reveals how deeply stigma has settled into our social life.

Kashmir has lived through experiences that would shake anyone. Families have carried loss, uncertainty, unemployment, fear and loneliness for years.

Many try to survive by staying composed. Men hear they must stay strong. Women are told they must stay patient. Children grow up thinking they must hide their feelings.

These habits turn vulnerability into something shameful.

In many homes, mental illness is explained through faith

or personal weakness. Depression is called weak faith. Panic attacks are called exaggeration. Schizophrenia is confused with possession. And trauma is dismissed as unnecessary thinking.

These explanations spread because people rarely speak about the brain, trauma responses or chemical imbalance. For many families, using the word "pagal" feels easier than facing confusion or fear.

This stigma forces people into silence. The fear of that word alone keeps many from going to a doctor even when life feels unbearable. Some avoid sharing anything with their parents or siblings because they worry about gossip or how it might affect marriage prospects. Others start believing they are indeed broken or worthless.

I have met patients who suffered for years before walking into a clinic. They were not afraid of illness. They were afraid of judgment.

Mental health services in Kashmir work under heavy demand. Professionals try their best, but myths about medicines remain.

Many believe tablets will make them dull or dependent. Families hope symptoms will fade on their own. Early signs like sleeplessness, withdrawal, panic or sudden behaviour changes often pass without attention.

People try to carry on because acknowledging distress feels risky.

Studies over the years have shown high levels of anxiety, depression and trauma in the valley. Long-term stress and limited opportunities add to the load. People carry these burdens while running households, raising children, or trying to earn a living.

A society with so much pain should naturally understand mental health. Instead, the fear of labels keeps support out of reach. The language we use keeps stigma alive.

When we remove "pagal" from our conversations, we make room for compassion.

A person who says they feel lost or overwhelmed needs comfort rather than humiliation. Words can open a path toward help or shut it down completely.

When a friend says they are struggling, kindness becomes medicine. When a child withdraws, attention can guide them back. And when a neighbour behaves strangely, empathy can prevent a crisis.

Homes, schools and workplaces can all make a difference. A family that listens becomes a safe space. A classroom where students learn about emotions builds resilience. A workplace that encourages counselling makes healing possible.

Hospitals can expand services, but progress depends on how people treat one another outside those walls.

Kashmir has carried enough suffering. "Pagal" adds more damage than many realise. It pushes people away from treatment and away from each other.

Changing one word may not solve everything, but it can change how someone feels about themselves. It can make them feel human again.

Simple sentences can change a life: "You matter." "You're going through something hard." "I'm here for you."

These are small acts of care, but they can hold someone steady during a difficult moment.

The valley is full of stories shaped by struggle and hope. Let the next chapter be shaped by compassion.

Retiring "pagal" is a step toward a Kashmir where every person feels safe to ask for help and safe to be understood.

The author is a medical doctor, counsellor and columnist. He can be reached at drfiazfazili@gmail.com.

Letter to Editor

The Changing Heart of Kashmiri Families

Kashmiri parents often speak of a loneliness that arrives long before old age.

It settles slowly inside homes that once echoed with small footsteps and laughter. Many mothers and fathers say they feel unseen in families they spent their lives holding together. Their stories make us face a hard truth: something important in our relationships is fading.

The roots of this shift often lie in early childhood. A baby enters the world with a wide-open heart, eager for every bit of warmth and care. Those first three years pass in soft moments that shape the parent-child bond. Soon after, life changes.

Children are placed in crèches and pre-schools, and the long routine

begins. By five, they spend most of the day in classrooms. Parents wait for them to return home with stories, only to watch evenings turn into another round of tutoring.

The rest of the night slips into the pull of phones that fill the silence without offering real company.

This pattern continues for years. Schools, coaching centres and screens start to feel more present in a child's life than the people at home. A young person grows up knowing how to perform well, how to follow routines, how to stay busy, although they often feel unsure when it comes to emotional closeness.

The bond with parents, once natural, becomes thin from lack of time and shared experiences.

Many parents see the result when their children become adults. Some grown children keep a polite distance. Others seem unsure how to care, or how to express affection.

It is easy to label this as indifference. But it is often the outcome of childhoods that offered structure but little space for connection. The child was never uncaring. The bond simply never had the room it needed to grow.

Families are not to blame alone. Daily life pushes parents toward constant work, pressure, and speed. Childhood becomes something to manage rather than something to enjoy. Only later, when parents look back and children look forward, does the ache of distance become clear.

There is still a way to mend this.

The early years matter. A child who grows up hearing stories, sharing meals, and feeling seen carries that memory for life. These simple moments shape how they love, how they respond, and how they return home in times of need.

Stronger families begin with presence. Parents deserve more than duty. They deserve affection that grows from years of closeness. Children deserve a home where they feel truly held.

Small changes in daily life can rebuild a connection that lasts.

Sincerely,

Dr. Bilal Ahmad
gnbilal25@gmail.com

Starting Again

With her daughter by her side, a teacher rebuilds a life rooted in safety and truth.



Gowher Bhat

It was a blistering summer day in Pulwama. The sky was open and clear, and schoolchildren were filing into classrooms under tall walnut trees. Hania stood at the blackboard, white chalk in hand. Her voice was soft but steady, her smile practiced. She looked like someone in control.

But inside, she was quietly rebuilding a life undone by love.

For three years, she had lived with a man who never hit her, never screamed at her in public, never left a mark anyone else could see.

Yet every day, he chipped away at her, word by word, silence by silence.

"He would send long messages when we were dating," she said. "Did you eat? I love you. No one can love you like I do." I thought that was love. I was 24. It felt real.

They married within a year. From the outside, it looked right. A thoughtful husband, a quiet teacher, a peaceful home. But after the wedding, she noticed the small controls. "He didn't like my friends. Said they were too modern," she said. "Then he asked me to quit teaching. Said it was to protect me. And I thought, that must be love, right?" It wasn't.

What followed wasn't loud. It was slow. He criticized how she cooked, how she spoke, how quickly she picked up the phone. He didn't yell. He withdrew. He gave her the cold shoulder for days. Then he'd come back crying.

"He'd kiss my forehead and say



sorry. I forgave him. Every time," she said. "I kept thinking, maybe I was being difficult. Maybe if I tried harder."

But she began forgetting who she was. She couldn't trust her own memory.

"He'd say something cruel and then swear he never said it. I thought I was going crazy. I started writing things down, just to stay sane."

This was gaslighting. She didn't know the term back then. All she knew was that she had stopped dreaming, stopped speaking, stopped being herself.

Kashmir is a place where silence



KASHMIR IS A PLACE WHERE SILENCE IS MISTAKEN FOR STRENGTH, WHERE DAUGHTERS ARE TOLD TO ADJUST. Hania heard it from

everyone. "My mother told me to be patient. My in-laws said I was imagining things. Friends told me not to talk about my marriage," she said. "So I stopped."

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tient. My in-laws said I was imagining things. Friends told me not to talk about my marriage," she said. "So I stopped."

On Instagram, she smiled in pictures. At family functions, she laughed. But inside, she was drowning.

Then one January night, she curled up on the cold bathroom floor while her toddler slept in the next room. "I looked in the mirror," she said, "and I didn't see a person. Just a shadow."

She didn't cry loudly. She didn't wake anyone. But in that moment, she made a decision.

"I couldn't let my daughter grow up thinking this was what marriage

looked like."

She left soon after, with the help of her cousin and therapist. She packed her bags and walked out just with her daughter.

"I had nothing," she said. "But I had my will."

She found a small flat with two rooms, leaking tap, and weak heating. But it was hers. It was safe. She started teaching again. She cooked for herself. Watched old Bollywood films with her daughter. Wrote in a journal. And above all, laughed again.

"I remembered what joy felt like," she said.

In Kashmir, where emotional abuse is rarely named and often buried under talk of honour and family, Hania's story is rare. Many women stay. Cultural silence, economic dependence, fear of gossip keeps them from leaving.

And because abuse doesn't always look like bruises, people don't see it.

Hania broke the silence. She didn't just leave. She spoke.

"I don't want sympathy," she said. "I want people to understand. Real love doesn't confuse you. It calms you."

She tells women to trust their gut. To speak. To leave if they need to. She doesn't pretend it's easy.

"You're not weak for staying," she said. "But if you choose to leave, that takes a different kind of strength."

Now, she walks the same streets she once crossed with her head down. Her daughter holds her hand. Her chalk-stained fingers carry stories, not shame. Her classroom is full of life again.

She teaches maths and language. But she also teaches something else. That it's okay to say no. That silence isn't strength.

And maybe that's the legacy. She didn't just survive. She showed what survival looks like, in a society that often expects women to suffer silently.

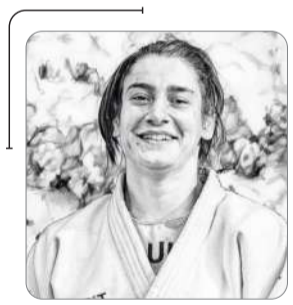
—The author is a Pulwama-based writer and educator.

Lessons in Falling

A Kashmiri sportsperson shares how Judo teaches grace, discipline, and the courage to rise again.



JUDO GAVE ME MORE THAN MEDALS. It gave me discipline. It gave me a space untouched by the chaos beyond the door. We learned not to defeat but to guide. We learned to listen: to breath, to stillness, to each other.



Kabra Altaf

There are places the world forgets. Corners where dust gathers on ambition, and the soft sounds of effort go unheard. For me, that place has always been the mat.

I first stepped onto it as a girl with hope and excitement, dreaming of being called a sportsperson, something my parents taught me to be: someone who is strong, unafraid, who fights for what is right. I didn't know what a Judoka was then. I just knew this was my calling.

The mat was not grand. It did not glow. It was just around 14 or 12 blue mats in Srinagar, softened by years of falling feet and honest struggle. But to me, it was the beginning of something sacred.

Judo arrived in my life without noise, without announcements. It came like the slow filling of a cup: steady, patient, certain.

I was 11, or 12 I guess, traveling alone for almost an hour to reach the stadium. No one in my family had ever done this. My parents later bought me a small button phone, which I wasn't allowed to use during training. I'd keep it off, always. Even now, no matter how old I get, I silence my phone before stepping onto the mat. The respect for that space remains unchanged.

I remember waiting sometimes for my Abu to pick me up after practice,

and on some days, the sudden shock of a curfew. Once, I called from a traffic police booth near the Chinar tree and said, "I'm waiting here." That memory is stitched into the fabric of my journey.

Back then, sports wasn't even considered an option for most girls, let alone Judo. I entered it as a kid excited to create a world of her own. There were days I stood on empty mats, stadiums echoing only with the sound of my own feet. And yes, the tense situation in Kashmir shaped the soundtrack of our childhood—but Judo gave me something different.

It gave me silence. The kind that doesn't demand but welcomes.

People in Kashmir still call it karate. They mean well, but I don't correct them anymore. It's not their fault. But I know. I have always known.

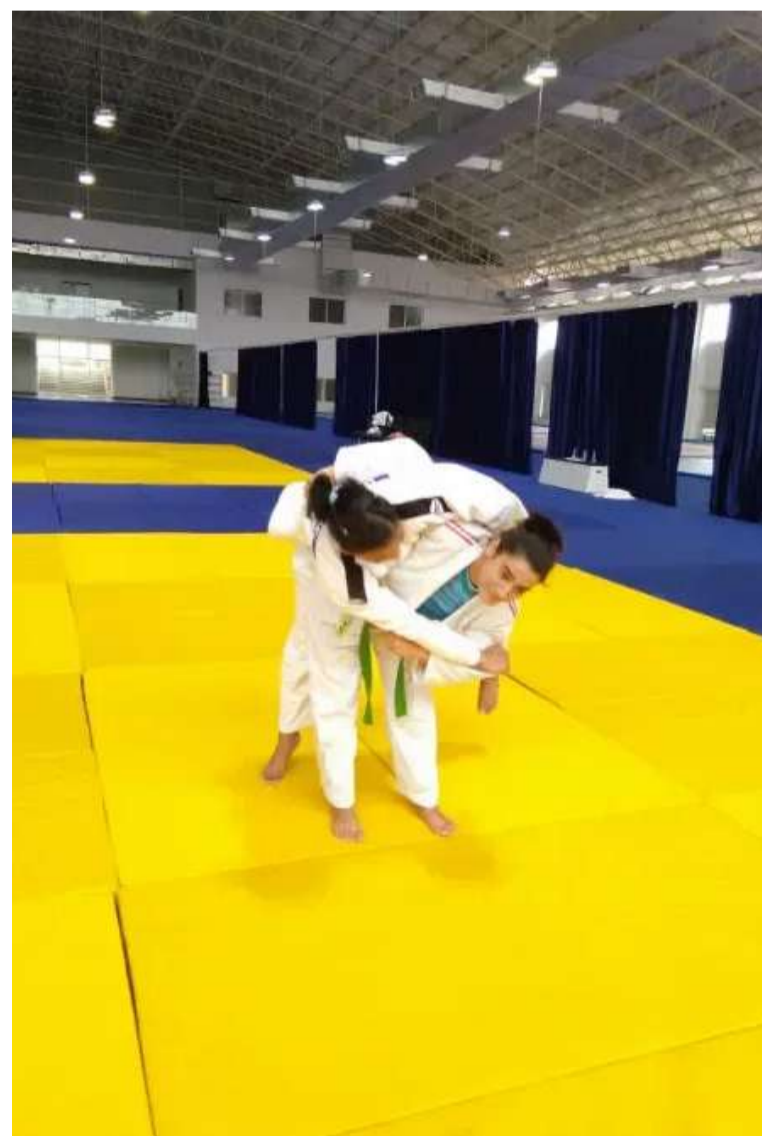
Judo is not a fight. It is not fists clashing. It is a soft rebellion. The art of yielding, of rising with grace by surrendering to the moment. Judo teaches you to fall with honesty and rise with dignity.

Some of us girls in the valley carried that truth quietly in our bodies. We took long bus rides from distant villages, tied our belts with clumsy fingers, and walked into training halls pretending we weren't afraid. The streets, the headlines, the sideways glances—we had seen them all. But the mat never questioned us. It only asked that we show up.

And yes, there were critics. There were taunts, misunderstandings, even injuries and blocked roads. But I am a Judoka. If I don't rise after every fall, what legacy would I leave behind? I must get up. Every time.

In those dim halls, no one told us we were too soft, too small, or too late. We bowed to the mat, to our partners, to the air. We bowed to life.

Judo gave me more than medals. It gave me discipline. It gave me a space untouched by the chaos be-



yond the door. We learned not to defeat but to guide. We learned to listen: to breath, to stillness, to each other.

But that stillness is harder to find now.

The mat has changed. Or perhaps, those who walk on it have. New stu-

dents arrive with heads bent, not in bowing, but in scrolling. Their fingers move fast, their eyes flicker with borrowed lights. Sometimes they only hear me when their seniors ask, "Why are you lost?" Sometimes they forget to tighten their belts. Sometimes they forget why they came.

I see them rush through bows, toss their Gi like laundry, walk on the mat without thinking. The reverence is slipping. The rhythm feels broken. I don't feel anger, just loss.

The phone is not just a toy in Kashmir. It's an escape, from the long silences, from the heaviness of news, from waiting too long to be heard. I understand. I am of this place too.

But I know what the screen takes. Just two minutes of its glow and their grip softens, their minds drift, their bodies forget the language of falling. The beauty of Judo waits silently. And sometimes, it's left waiting too long.

Yet, I still carry a dream.

Every Judoka dreams of Kodokan—the birthplace of Judo in Tokyo. I've never been there. I may never go. But in the theatre of my mind, I've walked its halls a hundred times. I've bowed on its mats. I've felt the presence of legends brushing past.

I don't wish for trophies. I don't need pictures. I just want to bow.

To press my bare feet into the mat that remembers every fall, every rise. To let my breath settle into the same silence that shaped generations.

Even if I never stand there, I carry Kodokan inside me. I bring it to the dusty halls of Srinagar. I pass it to every girl—and now boy—who comes with trembling fingers, searching for something they can't yet name.

I can't stop the world from spinning. I can't make the screens disappear. But I can still show them how to bow. I can teach them what it means to fall and rise again. I can remind them that some things, like respect, like rhythm, must still be done slowly.

Judo taught me how to step forward gently.

And in Kashmir, where so much has been taken, that is still worth holding on to.

—The author is a prominent sportsperson from Kashmir.

PM Surya Ghar Yojana

Subsidy Worth Rs 3.80 Cr Disbursed To 4,288 Beneficiaries: CM

Press Trust Of India

Jammu: Chief Minister Omar Abdullah on Tuesday said Rs 3.80 crore has been disbursed as UT subsidy in favour of 4,288 consumers of Kashmir and Jammu Power Distribution Companies under the PM Surya Ghar - Muft Bijli Yojana.

Replying to a question raised by BJP legislator Shakti Raj Parihar in the legislative assembly regarding the scheme, Abdullah, who also holds the power portfolio, said Rs 1.80 crore has been disbursed in favour of the first 2,053 consumers of KPDC, in line with the central financial assistance (CFA).

Similarly, Rs 2 crore has been disbursed in favour of 2,235 beneficiaries of JPDCL under the scheme, he said.

He informed the House that under the scheme, the subsidy component is primarily borne by the central government through the Ministry of New and Renewable Energy, with an additional subsidy component provided by the Union



Territory.

The CFA is provided to

residential consumers installing rooftop solar systems at Rs 33,000 per kW for the first two kW of installed capacity and Rs 19,800 per kW for the next one kW, taking the total maximum subsidy to Rs 85,800 for systems up to three kW, the chief minister said.

In addition, he said, the UT provides a subsidy of Rs 3,000 per kW, Rs 6,000 for two kW and up to Rs 9,000 for three kW (capped at 3 kW), taking the total subsidy up to Rs 94,800 for a three kW system, he added.

The chief minister said delays, wherever applicable, in the release of the UT's share are primarily due to the verification of beneficiary installations, scrutiny of supporting documents, and integration of subsidy disbursement through the national portal.

He said the J&K administration is taking necessary steps to streamline the process and assured that the pending UT subsidy share will be released to eligible beneficiaries upon completion of verification formalities.

NIT Srinagar Secures Patent for AI-Based Smart Hamaam System

Observer News Service

Srinagar: In a significant technological breakthrough, the National Institute of Technology Srinagar has secured a patent for an artificial intelligence (AI) and Internet of Things (IoT)-based system designed to modernise the traditional Hamaam.

The patented invention, titled "An Automated Temperature Control System for Underfloor Heating," has been developed by Dr. Saniya Zahoor, Dr. Shabir A. Sofi and Syed Farmaan Ali from the Department of Information Technology and Engineering.

Widely used across Kashmir during harsh winters, traditional Hamaams require continuous manual monitoring and often result in inefficient fuel use. The newly developed system addresses these limitations by integrating smart technologies with conventional heating methods.

According to the inventors, the system uses IoT-enabled sensors and AI algorithms to regulate underfloor heating in real time. It features an automated hopper mechanism that controls the supply of fuel into a combustion chamber beneath the floor while continuously monitoring parameters such as temperature,



humidity and wind speed.

An AI-driven module dynamically determines fuel requirements, activating the feed mechanism as needed to optimise energy use and minimise wastage. The system also includes a controlled ignition unit and a motorised ash-removal mechanism, ensuring cleaner and more efficient operation.

Officials said the innovation significantly reduces human intervention while enhancing efficiency, safety and user comfort. It also allows precise control of temperature and humidity based on user preferences and ambient conditions. Director Binod Kumar Kanaujia said the patent reflects the institute's commitment to innovation rooted in local needs.

"Integrating artificial intelligence with traditional systems like the Hamaam demonstrates how technology can preserve cultural practices while enhancing efficiency, safety and sustainability," he said.

In-charge Director and Dean Research and Consultancy, Prof. Roohie Naaz Mir, said such initiatives promote development of indigenous technologies tailored to local requirements, strengthening the institute's role in socially relevant research.

Registrar Prof. Atikur Rehman said the innovation marks a step towards smart, energy-efficient solutions for cold regions, adding that such advancements contribute to sustainable development and technological progress.

CONTD. FROM FRONT PAGE

5 Kashmir Lakes

only under specific triggering conditions," he said, adding that the assessment provides a baseline for prioritising detailed future studies.

The research also highlighted gaps in precise risk estimation, noting that accurate assessment of GLOFs requires reliable data on lake volumes, which can only be obtained through field-based bathymetric surveys. Such data is currently unavailable for most Himalayan lakes.

To address this, the Department of Geoinformatics at the University of Kashmir has procured a high-precision RTK-enabled robotic echo-sounding boat with support from the Ministry of Earth Sciences.

Bathymetric surveys of at-risk glacial lakes in the western Himalaya are planned for 2026 to improve hydrodynamic modelling and downstream risk evaluation, the Chief Minister said.

Outlining mitigation measures, Omar said the government is prioritising continuous monitoring of vulnerable lakes through remote sensing and field assessments. He added that early-warning systems, eco-zonation plans and integration of GLOF risk scenarios into district-level disaster preparedness frameworks form part of the strategy.

Researchers are also working on developing tailored early-warning systems for mountainous regions, combining satellite monitoring, field observations, hydro-meteorological sensors and near real-time communication systems for timely hazard detection and dissemination.

Time To Build

a better future, we must bridge divides among people, fostering trust through understanding diverse cultures, ideas and experiences," he said.

Highlighting the importance of introspection and personal transformation, Sinha said that Mahavira's teachings of discipline, faith and awareness can elevate society. He added that values such as non-violence, restraint, austerity, non-possession and truth are essential for meaningful nation-building.

"By internalising these principles, we can contribute meaningfully to nation-building. Our impact depends on the character we cultivate," he said.

The Lieutenant Governor also called upon the youth to embrace non-violence not just as an ethical principle but as a way of life, including in their relationship with nature.

"True Ahimsa transcends ethics, becoming the sharpest environmental strategy," he said, urging a shift in attitudes towards nature, which he said has long been exploited as a mere utility.

Referring to the concept of Anekantavada, Sinha said that Mahavira taught humility by affirming the multifaceted nature of truth.

"No single viewpoint can capture truth fully. Today, amid echo chambers, people often mistake opinions for absolute truth, eroding balance. On Mahavira Jayanti, embracing intellectual humility and questioning one's own opinion is the highest form of wisdom," he said.

Describing Mahavira's legacy as a guide for navigating modern complexities, the Lieutenant Governor said that his teachings on Ahimsa, restraint and austerity continue to inspire generations.

On the occasion, Sinha also felicitated achievers from diverse fields.

Among those present were Shri Suneel Jain, President, S.S. Jain Sabha; Shri Devki Nandan Jain, Vice President; Shri Pavinder Vijay Jain, General Secretary, along with other members of the Sabha, prominent citizens and people from different walks of life.

Shri Justice Rajesh Oswal, Members of Legislative Assembly Shri Yudhvir Sethi and Shri Arvind Gupta, ADGP Armed Shri Anand Jain, Divisional Commissioner Jammu Shri Ramesh Kumar, IGP Jammu Shri Bhim Sen Tuti and other senior officers were also in attendance.

Champion Compassion

Trust in Jammu.

Emphasising the role of heritage, the Lieutenant Governor said the culture and spiritual wealth of Jammu and Kashmir would play a vital role in building a brighter future.

"Jammu's soil brims with rich traditions. Dogri songs weaving life's values, crafts embedding experiences and art infused with devotion are our vibrant legacies breathing new life," he said.

The Lieutenant Governor said the festival aims to preserve the region's rich heritage, reaffirm commitment to folk arts and traditions, and strengthen cultural identity.

"I am confident traditional performances will enliven the atmosphere with colour and melody, while cultural displays will carry our priceless legacy forward. Farmer awareness programmes will also honour those who nourish this Union Territory's soul," he added.

Highlighting India's evolving global role, Sinha said the country must empower its knowledge economy and promote innovation alongside cultural and philosophical values.

"In this defining moment, as global strife fractures societies and humanity searches for peace, India stands tall to illuminate a new path for the world. We are heirs to a civilisation that spread knowledge, culture and spirituality across continents," he said.

Calling on young people to reconnect with their roots, he urged them to combine tradition with innovation to drive societal transformation.

"The world awaits fresh ideas. Our youth inherit a tradition of transformative thought. They must return to their roots, cultivate innovation and use cultural heritage as a powerful tool for change," he said.

"In this interconnected era, strengthen the bonds of brotherhood and champion compassion over conflict," he told the youth.

The Lieutenant Governor said art and culture hold profound insight and purpose, making them essential to nation-building. For India, he added, art, spirituality and ethics act as bridges linking generations.

He also praised the leadership of Prime Minister Narendra Modi, saying the country has witnessed remarkable transformation over the past decade and must collectively accelerate this progress.

"On global platforms, India has regained its confidence and stature. Our engineers, scientists and innovators are shaping global discourse, marking a renaissance that revives India's glorious legacy," he said.

The festival featured cultural exhibitions, traditional folk performances, a Kisan Mela and a free medical camp. Distinguished individuals were also felicitated for their contributions in various fields.

Among those present were Acharya Mahamandaleswar Swami Avdhesanand Giri Ji Maharaj, MLAs Sham Lal Sharma and Devyani Rana, Mahant Rohit Shastri, Mukul Kanitkar and several senior officials and prominent citizens.

J&K Assembly:

Zero Hour, Lone questioned why the House was allowing discussion on security withdrawal while debates on the Public Safety Act and police verification were restricted. The Speaker clarified that members were not barred from raising issues but certain procedures were limited as per rules.

The remarks triggered a strong backlash from the treasury benches, with Deputy Chief Minister Surinder Choudhary asking Lone to vacate his official residence, prompting a sharp retort. NC MLA Javid Hasan Baig termed the issue a collective concern and accused Lone of downplaying its seriousness. Later, Choudhary accused Lone of politicising a sensitive matter, while Lone alleged that the NC had "weaponised" security mechanisms in the past by denying protection to political opponents.

Govt Targets 25,000 Jobs: CM
Amid the discussion, the Chief Minister reiterated the government's commitment to a transparent and legally sound recruitment process, announcing that 25,000 vacancies are

targeted to be filled this year.

Responding to a supplementary by PDP MLA Waheed-ur-Rehman Para, Abdullah cautioned against rushing recruitment.

"We all want the process to be transparent and time-bound. However, time-bound should not mean rushing matters and ending up in court," he said.

He noted that past recruitment processes had often been stalled due to legal challenges, resulting in delays and candidates becoming overage.

According to official data, over 28,000 vacancies — mostly non-gazetted — exist across departments, with more than 7,000 posts already referred to recruitment agencies in 2025.

The Health and Medical Education Department accounts for over 10,000 vacancies, followed by significant gaps in the School Education Department and other key sectors such as finance, power, public works, rural development and forest ecology.

CDF Norms Expanded for Housing Relief
The House was also informed about revised provisions under the Constituency Development Fund (CDF), allowing MLAs to allocate up to 50 lakh for housing assistance to families affected by calamities during the financial year 2026-27.

—Replying to a Calling Attention Motion moved by NC MLA Shamim Firdous, the Chief Minister said the assistance per family would be capped at 1 lakh and extended to all affected households, without restriction to specific categories.

He clarified that "calamity" includes incidents such as fires and other events causing significant damage.

Citing Srinagar district, Abdullah said 24 cases related to fire victims had been received, involving an estimated cost of 12.80 lakh. Of these, five have been cleared, while 19 are under examination with the Deputy Commissioner.

The day's proceedings saw a mix of sharp exchanges and broad agreement, particularly on the need for fair security arrangements and timely governance measures, as the Assembly took up issues spanning safety, employment and relief support.

₹18,382 Cr Liabilities

contractor bills, 5,821.43 crore under General Provident Fund (GPF), 2,864.14 crore as gratuity, 1,123.22 crore for commutation and 773.47 crore towards leave salary.

Abdullah informed the House that most bills under these categories have been cleared up to March 27, 2026, while GPF claims have been settled up to December 31, 2025.

Addressing concerns over pending liabilities, he said dues are being systematically cleared and payments to contractors and retired employees are processed at regular intervals depending on fund availability.

Clarifying the allocation mechanism, the Chief Minister said funds are provided under specific "Heads of Expenditure" rather than on a divisional basis, and payments in treasuries are recorded accordingly.

During the discussion, legislator RS Pathania also raised a supplementary question.

64 Private Bills

Kashmir Land Grants Rules, 2022, which were notified by the administration led by the Lieutenant Governor.

Under the 2022 rules, leases—except for certain categories such as subsisting or expired residential leases—are not to be renewed and are instead required to be put to auction afresh. This includes leases granted under earlier frameworks such as the Jammu and Kashmir Land Grants Rules, 1960 and the Notified Area (All Development Authorities in the tourism sector) Land Grant Rules, 2007.

The proposed legislation seeks to revisit these provisions and provide relief to existing leaseholders who have been affected by the new policy framework.

Meanwhile, most of the other private member bills listed for the day are expected to either face opposition from the government or

be withdrawn by the members in charge, in line with past trends.

The day's proceedings are likely to see a busy legislative agenda, with multiple proposals lined up for introduction even as political focus remains on the government's response to the lease renewal issue.

India Managed

impact does not fall upon people.

"The Congress desires to create an atmosphere of panic in the country, hoping that the people will be forced to queue up at petrol pumps and gas agencies," he added.

Modi asserted that India will emerge as a world leader in the renewable energy sector.

He said the circumstances in West Asia have affected every country, but India managed the situation well.

Continuing his attack on the Opposition, Modi said they want to spread anarchy.

"India is capable of facing any crisis. However, Congress is trying to instigate people to queue up at fuel pumps and spread disorder," he added.

Court Convicts

the impact of such fraud is even more devastating. When "backdoor" entrants like Accused No. 06 (Akhtar) occupy posts meant for the meritorious, they do not just steal a salary, they steal the future of the children they are supposed to teach and the aspirations of the qualified youth who were denied that opportunity," the court said.

That the primary goal of sentencing in corruption cases, the court said, is "deterrence".

"The 'reformatory theory' while valuable in many contexts, must yield to the 'deterrent theory' when the crime involves a calculated, long term assault on the integrity of the public exchequer," the court said, adding, "A sentence must be severe although not harsh that it 'dreadfully psychoses' potential offenders from attempting similar acts of malfeasance."

The court observed that accused did not forge one document but an entire service history spanning seven years, including transfer orders and relieving orders. "Public servants (A2(Ghulam Mohammad Sheikh), A3(Bashir Amad Shah), A4 (Syed Showkeen Andrabi) utilized their intimate knowledge of departmental procedures to 'hack' the system from within," the court said.

The court said that a specific sum of Rs. 29,952 was siphoned from the government treasury, which, while seemingly small in absolute terms, represented a significant portion of the education budget for a rural school in 1997.

"The demand and acceptance of Rs. 60,000/- as a bribe demonstrates a clear 'profit motive' that removes any possibility of the act being a mere mistake of judgment," the court said and sentenced

Ghulam Mohammad Sheikh, Bashir Ahmad Shah and Syed Showkeen Andrabi to five years simple imprisonment and a fine of Rs.50,000 (Rupees Fifty Thousand only) for offence under section 5 (2) r/w 5 (1) (d) of J&K PC Act Svt 2006. "In default of payment of fine, they shall undergo simple imprisonment for a further one (01) year."

For offence under section 468 RPC r/w 471 RPC and 120-B RPC, they have been sentenced to simple imprisonment for five years and a fine of Rs.30,000 (Rupees Thirty Thousand only). "In default of fine, further simple imprisonment for three (03) months."

For offence under Section 420 RPC, they have been sentenced to simple imprisonment for three years and a fine of Rs.20,000 (Rupees Twenty Thousand only). "In default of fine, further simple imprisonment for three (03) months."

Similarly the convicts namely Mohammad Ashraf Khan and Hamida Akhter have been sentenced to simple imprisonment for five years and a fine of Rs.50,000 (Rupees Fifty Thousand only) for offence under section 120-B RPC r/w 5 (2) of J&K PC Act Svt 2006, 468 RPC r/w 471 RPC. "In default of payment of fine, they shall undergo simple imprisonment for a

further one (01) year."

For offence under section 420 RPC, they have been sentenced to simple imprisonment for three years and a fine of Rs.20,000 (Rupees Twenty Thousand only). "In default of fine, further simple imprisonment for three (03) months."

The court said that all the substantive sentences of imprisonment shall run concurrently. "The effective term of imprisonment shall thus be five years for each accused".

Search Op Launched

heard, while the area been sealed to prevent terrorists from escaping," he added.

Reinforcements have been rushed to the spot.

Enrolment Crisis

At least 13 colleges have fewer than 30 students each, while five colleges are operating with enrolment below 20 students. In 14 colleges, student strength is under 50, and as many as 24 colleges have fewer than 100 students enrolled.

Several institutions reported extremely low numbers. Government College of Education, MA Road Srinagar had just 14 students enrolled in 2025, while JKIMS recorded 11. Government Degree College Chatroo Kishtwar had 16 students, GDC Langate 10, GDC Dangiachi Baramulla 18 and GDC Tulail Bandipora 28.

Similarly, GDC Verinag had 29 students, Government Degree College Marwah Kishtwar and GDC Mandi Poonch had 27 each, GDC Dharmari Reasi recorded 22 students, while GDC Dudu Basantgarh Udhampur and GDC Kralpora Kupwara had 26 each. GDC Vilgam Kupwara reported 27 students.

The government informed the House that a total of 143 degree colleges, including Government College of Engineering and Technology institutions, are currently functional with active enrolment across Jammu and Kashmir.

It acknowledged a general decline in admissions in recent years, attributing it to multiple factors affecting student preferences and admission patterns. However, it said steps have been taken to improve enrolment, including the introduction of a centralized admission portal and rationalisation of subject offerings to better align with demand.

The implementation of the fourth year under the Four-Year Undergraduate Programme (FYUP) has also contributed to increased student interest, the government said, adding that enrolment showed signs of improvement in the 2025-26 academic session. Colleges in Anantnag district, in particular, recorded an increase of around 11.8 percent in admissions. (inputs from KNO)

Snow, Rain Lash

Kargil due to fresh snowfall, while the Mughal Road connecting Shopian and Poonch has also been shut due to snow accumulation.

The Bandipora-Gurez road via Razdan Pass has been closed following fresh snowfall, suspending traffic on the nearly 85-km stretch.

The Sinthan-Anantnag-Kishtwar road also remains closed due to unsafe conditions.

Authorities have advised commuters to travel during daytime, maintain lane discipline and check weather and traffic updates before undertaking journeys, warning of possible landslides and shooting stones at vulnerable locations.

Farmers have been advised to carry out agricultural activities between March 31 and April 2 when weather conditions are expected to remain relatively stable.

In Baramulla district, a joint operation by the Army and police rescued 34 students and staff trapped in a government school in Watergam after flash floods inundated the premises.

Officials said 30 students and four teachers were evacuated safely after water levels in a nearby stream rose suddenly, adding that the timely operation averted a major tragedy.

Relief Assistance Regulations Clarified for Fire, Natural Calamity Victims

Observer News Service

SRINAGAR: The Jammu & Kashmir government on Tuesday said that financial assistance provided to families affected by fire incidents and natural calamities is regulated under the State Disaster Response Fund (SDRF) and National Disaster Response Fund (NDRF) norms, and any enhancement in relief amounts is decided by the Government of India.

Replying to a starred Assembly Question No. 675 tabled by MLA Payare Lal Sharma regarding the adequacy of Rs 1.35 lakh relief, the government, as reported by KNO said the assistance is governed by revised norms issued by the Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA) under Disaster Management guidelines.

As per the existing norms, the government said assistance for fully damaged houses stands at Rs 1.20 lakh per pucca house in plain areas and Rs 1.30 lakh per kutcha house in hilly areas.

The reply stated that any revision or enhancement in SDRF/NDRF assistance is subject to periodic review by the Government of India, and therefore, no fixed timeline for increasing the relief amount can be indicated at this stage.

Govt Admits Rising Drug Abuse in J&K, Says Multi-Pronged Strategy Underway

Observer News Service

SRINAGAR: The Government of Jammu & Kashmir on Tuesday acknowledged the growing menace of drug abuse in the Union Territory, stating that the issue—particularly among youth—has emerged as a serious social and public health concern requiring sustained and coordinated intervention.

Replying to a question raised by MLA Sham Lal Sharma in the Assembly, Health and Medical Education Minister Sakina Itoo as per KNO said that J&K, like several other regions in the country, is facing the challenge of increasing use of narcotic drugs and psychotropic substances.

"It is a fact that the Union Territory of Jammu & Kashmir is confronted with the menace of narcotic drugs and psychotropic substances. This challenge has particularly affected a section of the youth, thereby posing serious social and public health concerns," the Minister informed the House.

The Minister said that a joint survey conducted in 2022 by the Health Department and Social Welfare Department across 10 districts of Kashmir division revealed that around 70,000 individuals are involved in substance use.



"Out of these, nearly 50,000 are heroin users, and a significant number consume drugs through the intravenous route, which raises additional health risks," she said.

Sakina Itoo said the government is fully aware of the gravity of the situation and has adopted a comprehensive strategy to combat drug abuse. This includes: awareness campaigns to educate youth and communities about the harmful effects of drugs, preventive interventions at grassroots levels, strengthening enforcement mechanisms to curb supply and expansion of treatment and rehabilitation services. "The

government is addressing the issue through a multi-pronged approach, combining prevention, treatment, and enforcement," she added.

The Minister informed that a wide network of de-addiction and rehabilitation centres has been established across the UT, including in District Hospitals, Government Medical Colleges, and police-run facilities.

"Youth identified as drug dependent are being provided treatment, counselling, and rehabilitation services through these centres," she said.

According to official figures, around 69,000 patients have so

far been treated or rehabilitated across various addiction treatment facilities in J&K.

"These numbers are being regularly documented, and services are being further scaled up under the National Action Plan for Drug Demand Reduction (NAPDDR) and other schemes," she added.

Providing details of infrastructure, the Minister said: De-Addiction Centres (DDACs): Three functional in Kashmir division (Kulgam, Pulwama, Bandipora) and One functional in Jammu division (Rajouri); Outreach and Drop-In Centres (ODICs): Functional in Kupwara, Srinagar, and Jammu and Community-Based Peer-Led Interventions (CPLI): Operational in Srinagar and Jammu.

"All these institutions are functioning under the supervision of the respective Deputy Commissioners," she said.

The Minister emphasized that while the government acknowledges the seriousness of drug abuse among youth, institutional mechanisms for prevention, treatment, and rehabilitation are already in place and are being strengthened continuously.

"The government remains committed to tackling this issue in a systematic and sustained manner," she said.

No New Health Sub-Centre Proposed at Chountwaliwar: Govt

SRINAGAR: The Jammu and Kashmir government on Tuesday said that no fresh proposal is currently under consideration for establishing a new health sub-centre at Chountwaliwar in Ganderbal district.

Replying to an unstarred question by Mian Mehar Ali in the Assembly, the Minister In-charge of Health and Medical Education Department, as reported by KNO said that one sub-centre at Chountwaliwar has already been sanctioned for the area.

The government, however, clarified that at present there is no proposal for setting up an additional sub-centre at the location. It said a policy decision has been taken to consolidate and strengthen existing healthcare facilities across Jammu and Kashmir, which number over 4,000, by improving services, manpower, equipment and use of technology. The minister said the government is focusing on digital initiatives such as tele-medicine, tele-radiology and mobile medical units to ensure better healthcare delivery.

He added that any decision regarding the creation of new health facilities will be taken after the withdrawal of austerity measures imposed by the Finance Department, and based on gap analysis. (Observer News Service)

SWF, Baramulla Bids Farewell to Haseena Bano



SRINAGAR: The Department of Social Welfare, Baramulla hosted a dignified retirement ceremony to honour Haseena Bano (Sr.Astt.) upon her superannuation after over three decades of unwavering dedicated service. The event recognised and celebrated her exceptional service and outstanding contributions to the department and was attended by the worthy DSWO Baramulla, TSWO Tangmarg, department officials, colleagues, and family members. TSWO Tangmarg lauded her invaluable contributions to the department and her efforts for the welfare of the underprivileged and destitutes. The department wishes her a retirement brimming with peace, joy, and fulfillment. (Observer News Service)

War of Words between Sajad Lone, Deputy CM over Security Withdrawal

Observer News Service

SRINAGAR: A war of words broke out between Peoples Conference MLA Sajad Gani Lone and National Conference leaders in the Legislative Assembly on Tuesday over the withdrawal of security to NC's party headquarters.

During Zero Hour, as per KNO, Lone questioned the discussion on the withdrawal of security to NC's party headquarters, saying legislators are not allowed to debate the Public Safety Act or police verification, yet are permitted to discuss security withdrawal.

"When we talk about PSA or police verification, you say this House doesn't have powers. Then this House also doesn't have powers to discuss security. Why are you allowing them to talk so much?" Lone asked.

The Speaker, however, clarified that he had not stopped anyone from raising issues but had only prevented legislators from using certain parliamentary devices due to rules. Lone further alleged that thousands of people were killed in Kashmir due to denial of security by the National Conference-led government.

"I am entitled to the highest level of security. I don't have house guards,"



he said, adding that NC should write to the Home Ministry over the issue instead of projecting themselves as martyrs.

Irked by Lone's remarks, Deputy Chief Minister Surinder Choudhary asked Lone to vacate his official residential bungalow.

"You come here and lecture us. You should vacate the residential house," Choudhary retorted.

Lone hit back, saying Choudhary was a blot on the chair of the Deputy Chief Minister.

Responding sharply, NC MLA Ja-

vid Hasan Baig said the issue was not about any single party but a collective concern for all legislators. He termed Lone's remarks as personal and accused him of downplaying the seriousness of the matter. Baig added that if such incidents could happen to one party, they could happen to anyone, and questioned whether Lone would take responsibility in case of any untoward incident.

Speaking to reporters outside the House, Deputy Chief Minister said that despite being a victim of militancy, Lone appeared to have taken the issue lightly.

He accused Lone of politicising a sensitive matter and undermining the gravity of security concerns.

Choudhary referred to the killing of Lone's father, stating that it was itself a consequence of security lapses, and said such sacrifices should not be trivialised.

Meanwhile, Lone accused the National Conference of having "weaponised" security mechanisms after 1996 by placing political opponents on overground worker lists and denying them police clearances and protection. He alleged that those not aligned with the party were left exposed to violence.

994 Posts Allocated for Rehbar-e-Khel Regularisation

Observer News Service

SRINAGAR: The Jammu and Kashmir government on Tuesday said that 994 vacant posts of Physical Education Teachers (PETs) have been kept reserved for the regularisation of Rehbar-e-Khel (ReK) candidates under the existing policy.

Replying to an unstarred question by MLA Aga Syed Muntazir Mehdi, the government, as reported by KNO, said that as per the policy issued under Government Order No. 141-Edu (YSS) of 2017, a total of

2,395 Rehbar-e-Khel candidates are to be regularised in a phased manner after completion of seven years of satisfactory and continuous service.

The government informed that these 994 vacant PET posts, along with other available posts, are required to accommodate the regularisation process of ReK candidates.

It added that the modalities for implementation of the regularisation process are currently under consideration.

Regarding recruitment,

the government clarified that there is no proposal under consideration to de-freeze these posts or refer them to the Jammu and Kashmir Services Selection Board (JKSSB) for fresh recruitment, as the posts have been reserved in line with the Rehbar-e-Khel policy.

The reply further stated that the registration of unemployed youth on the employment portal is voluntary, and as of January 2026, around 3.50 lakh unemployed youth have registered.

Among them, 440 candidates with B.P.Ed and 473 with M.P.Ed qualifications are registered with the Employment Department.

The government added that 20 Physical Education Lecturers have been appointed against sanctioned posts, while 2,395 physical education graduates have been engaged under the Rehbar-e-Khel policy to provide job opportunities.

PUBLIC NOTICE
The mothers name of my daughter Dua Zainab has been wrongly mentioned in her DOB issued by Registrar Births and Deaths Srinagar Municipal Corporation Srinagar has been wrongly mentioned as Shajista Aisif while the correct and actual mothers name is Shabana Aisif. Now the necessary correction is to be made. In this regard if any body is having any objection may convey to Registrar Births and Deaths SMC Srinagar within a period of seven days, after that no objection shall be entertained.
Asif Hussain Dar F/o: Dua Zainab R/o: SK Bagh Bagati Kanipora

PUBLIC NOTICE
I want to correct the parentage details of my ward, which have been incorrectly mentioned in his passport as Jan Mohd Hussain, S/o Jan Mohd Hussain & Shabena Bano. The correct parentage is Irtiza Hussain, S/o Jan Mohammad Hussain & Shabena Bano. I am applying for the necessary correction in the official records. If anyone has any objection regarding this correction, they may contact the concerned authorities within seven (7) days from the date of publication of this notice. After the expiry of the said period, no objection shall be entertained.

PUBLIC NOTICE
I want to correct my name and my father's name, which have been incorrectly mentioned in my passport as Jan Mohd Hussain, son of Mohd Maqbool. The correct name is Jan Mohammad Hussain, son of Mohammad Maqbool. I am applying for the necessary correction in the official records. If anyone has any objection regarding this correction, they may contact the concerned authorities within seven (7) days from the date of publication of this notice. After the expiry of the said period, no objections shall be entertained.

FINAL NOTICE

Name:- M/S Shan Constructions
Firm owner: Farooq Ahmad Paul
S/O: Ab. Rehman Paul
R/O: Summerbugh Lasjan Budgam
Regd card No: CE/RBK/PS/25731 dated: 04.02.2017
GST No: 01ABVFS19851ZM
NO: 12362-70 Date: 29-03-2026

Subject:- Beautification of Sopore Town and allied works.

Reference:- This office NIT No: 162 of 2025-26 issued under No: 10628-37 dated: 14.02.2026 and SE's letter No: 12506-07 dated: 16.3.2026 and this office letter No: 12134-35 dated: 23.3.2026 and letter No: 12295-98 dated: 27.03.2026.

Refer to above mentioned letter no's, wherein you were directed to produce 5% performance security for an amount of Rs. 636425/- and 4% Addl. performance security for an amount of Rs.509140/- as per NIT condition within 03 days, but till date you have not produced the same. In this connection you are once again directed to produce the same within 03 days failing which the work shall be put to fresh tenders at your risk and cost and Earnest money deposited by you shall be participation.

DIPK-12284-25
DT: 31/03/2026

Executive Engineer,
R&B Division Sopore

GOVERNMENT OF JAMMU AND KASHMIR
OFFICE OF THE EXECUTIVE OFFICER MUNICIPAL COMMITTEE URI

Subject: Auction of Adda/Entry Fee collection contract for the year 2026-27.

AUCTION NOTICE.
Auction ID No: 32593.

For and on behalf of the Lt. Governor of J&K UT, term e-tenders (in single cover system) are invited from the interested persons/parties/firms for Auction of Adda/Entry Fee of Municipal Committee Uri, for the year 2026-27 w.e.f. 16/04/2026 to 31/03/2027. The Minimum reserved bid is fixed as Rs. 2119912/- (Rupees Twenty One Lacs Nineteen Thousand Nine Hundred & Twelve Only). The Tax Schedule of the vehicles is as under and the successful highest bidder is bound to recover Adda/Entry Fee collection contract as per the same schedule

S. No.	Name of Vehicle	Tax/Rate Schedule
01	Buses	20/- PER TRIP
02	Trucks Loaded	50/- PER TRIP
03	Trucks Un loaded	30/- PER TRIP
04	Trolley Vehicles loaded/ Oil Tanker Loaded	150/- PER TRIP
05	Trolley Vehicles/ Oil Tanker Un loaded	100/- PER DAY
06	JCB	50/- PER TRIP
07	Tractor Loaded	20/- PER TRIP
08	Tractor Un Loaded	20/- PER DAY
09	Tipper Loaded	30/- PER TRIP
10	Tipper Un Loaded	20/- PER TRIP
11	Load Carrier loaded Four wheeler	20/- PER TRIP
12	Load Carrier unloaded Four wheeler	20/- PER DAY
13	Sumo, Xylo, Bolero, Taveera, Innova, Scorpio, Winger etc.	20/- PER DAY
14	Magic Van/Auto/Rickshaws	20/- PER DAY
15	Loaded Auto Load carrier three Wheeler	20/- PER TRIP
16	Unloaded Auto Load carrier three Wheeler	20/- PER DAY
17	Mini Buses/Matador Vehicles	30/- PER DAY
18	All other Passenger Vehicles	20/- PER DAY
19	All other load carrier vehicles	20/- PER TRIP

The bidding documents consisting of qualifying information, eligibility criteria, bill of quantities (BOQ) set of terms and conditions of contract and other details can be seen/downloaded from the departmental website www.gem.gov.in, as per the schedule of dates given below:

1	Pre-Qualification submission Start Date & Time (Documents)	01.04.2026 from 10:00 hrs
2	Pre-Qualification Submission End Date & Time (Documents)	From 06.04.2026 upto 23:00 hrs
3	Pre-Qualification assessment Start Date & Time	07.04.2026 from 11:00 hrs
4	Pre-Qualification assessment End Date & Time	08.04.2026 upto 15:00 hrs
5	EMD Payment Start Date & Time	09.04.2026 from 10:00 hrs
5	EMD Payment End Date & Time	11.04.2026 upto 15:30 hrs
5	Auction Start Date & Time	13.04.2026 from 11:00 hrs
5	Auction End Date & Time	14.04.2026 upto 16:00 hrs
6	Submission of CDR.	The bidders shall be bound to accompany the bid offers with call deposit receipt (CDR) of Rs. 44200/- (Rupees Twenty Two Thousand Only) drawn from any Nationalized Bank, pledged to the Account Officer, Municipal Committee Uri, without which offers shall be liable for rejection.
7	Mode of Payment	10% token money at the time of Opening of the Bid and 65% of bid amount at the time of taking over the possession of Adda/Entry Posts and rest 25% of bid amount within three months for which irrevocable bank guarantee from a nationalized/scheduled bank shall be deposited by highest bidder/Allottee.

- Bids must be accompanied with the cost of tender document in shape of Bank Challan/Receipt (Credited to A/c No. 1251040100001454 maintained at Jammu & Kashmir Bank Ltd. Branch Lagama Municipal Committee Uri amounting to Rs. 2000/- (Rupees Two Thousand Only)) and Bid securing declaration as per format Annexure - 1, below on stamp paper duly attested by Notary in favour of Executive Officer, Municipal Committee Uri, failing which tender will be rejected.
- The date and time of opening of bids shall be notified on website www.gem.gov.in The bids of the responsive bidders shall be opened online on the same website in the office of the Executive Officer, Municipal Committee Uri.
- BID SECURITY.**
- The successful bidder has to produce an amount equal to 5% of allotted cost as performance security in shape of CDR/FDR within three days after opening of tenders and same shall be released after expiry of the contract.
- The earnest money deposit of 2% of successful bidder shall be released after receipt of 5% performance security
- Any bid not accompanied by the Call Deposit Receipt (CDR) and BID security declaration shall be summarily rejected by the Authority as non-responsive. The contract of collection of Adda/Entry Fee shall be for the year 2026-27 w.e.f.16/04/2026 to 31/03/2027 and no claim for extension on any pretext will be entertained beyond the allotted period.
- That, the successful bidder has to execute an agreement duly registered in the Hon'ble court of law with the Executive Officer, Municipal Committee Uri before issuance of allotment and taking over the possession of the collection of posts and no permission shall be granted for recovery fees until agreement/ allotment is made in favour of successful bidder/contractor.
- The successful Bidder shall be bound to effect recovery of Adda/Entry Fee as per approved schedule, which is available with this office as mention above. In case of any violation to the approved schedule, legal action against the contractor/ Allottee will be initiated.
- That, the successful bidder shall have to bear/provide/arrange Manpower, Stationary, furniture, Sanitation, Toll posts etc without claiming any compensation thereof, from the office of the undersigned.
- The Highest Bid offered shall be exclusive of all applicable taxes (Income Tax etc) as such the successful bidder shall be bound to bear all kinds of taxes which shall be payable by the bidder in addition to bid amount.
- After expiry of the contract i.e. on 31/03/2027, the successful bidder shall hand over the possession of the Entry posts to the Municipal Committee Uri in its original position without any damage.
- That, the successful contractor shall have to collect Adda/Entry Fee on the following toll Posts only:
01. Lagama Near Chinar 02. Near Sumo Stand Uri as per the approved schedule of this institution and the realization of the Adda/entry fee shall be in a public friendly manner without causing any inconvenience to visitors, and also to display the rate schedule on every post which shall be visible.
- The contractor shall be responsible to maintain Adda/Entry fee collection posts with special care to sanitation/hygiene of the environment and surroundings.
- Incase the successful bidder fails to deposit the token amount (10%) or first installment (65%) of the bid amount, the CDR/10% bid amount as the case, shall be forfeited and the bidder shall be black listed for future participation /e-auctions, and in case the allottee fails to deposit the 2nd installment of the bid amount, the committee shall take over the possession of the collection posts and go for fresh auction within seven days from the date of allotment. No such bidder shall be allowed to participate in the process, who has been defaulter from Municipal Committee Uri or any of the other Municipal Institution.
- That, the Authority reserves the right to accept or reject any or all the bids without assigning any reason thereof.
- In case of any dispute arising between the parties with respect to any of the conditions as laid down herein above or any ambiguity will be referred to arbitrator and the decision of the arbitrator, Director Urban Local Bodies shall be final and binding upon the parties.
- Scanned copy of cost of tender document in shape of Bank Receipt/Challan in favour of Executive Officer, Municipal Committee Uri and bid securing declaration must be uploaded with the bid.
- The Bidder must have to upload (soft copies) of the following documents (Photostat/Original should be clearly seen in all respect with Ink Signed and Seal):-
a) Valid original Bank Challan/Receipt
b) Call Deposit Receipt (CDR)
c) BID Securing declaration on stamp paper duly attested by Notary.
d) Valid GSTIN / PAN Card No/ Aadhar Card.
e) The Bidder should upload the Tender Document form attached below (Not Mandatory).
f) Bidder must ensure to upload scanned copies of all necessary documents including BID Securing Declaration and tender documents fee in terms of soft copies with technical bid. No document(s) which has/have not been uploaded shall not be entertained in the form of hard copy. However, in case of any clarification the bidders shall have to produce original documents in support of soft copies if need arises.
g) The Highest Bidder will have to submit hard copies of all documents uploaded on e-tendering portal before issuance of Allotment.

No: MC/U/2025-26/1357-62
Dated: 31-03-2026

DIPK-NB-3729-25
DT: 31/03/2026

Executive Officer
Municipal Committee Uri

West Asia **WAR**

Trump Confronts Narrowing Options Amid Rising Frustration

Trans Asia News

CAIRO — U.S. President Donald Trump expressed growing frustration with America's allies on Tuesday, accusing them of failing to support Washington's military campaign against Iran, as the conflict drives global oil prices higher and strains the U.S. economy.

In a sharply worded social media post, Trump urged allies to "go get your own oil," criticizing countries such as France, United Kingdom, Spain, and Italy for refusing to deepen their involvement in a war that has now entered a critical phase with no clear end in sight.

The remarks came as U.S. gasoline prices climbed above \$4 per gallon for the first time since 2022, reflecting the global shock triggered by Iran's closure of the Strait of Hormuz—a strategic chokepoint through which roughly one-fifth of the world's oil passes under normal conditions.

Intensifying Conflict and Strategic Miscalculations

The war, which began on February 28 with direct U.S. strikes on Iranian targets, has escalated significantly over the past month. Initial expectations in Washington that limited strikes and targeted assassinations would yield a quick strategic advantage have proven overly optimistic.

Instead, Iran has mounted a coordinated response, launching precision missile attacks on U.S. and Israeli bases across the region and targeting energy infrastructure. The conflict, involving both the United States and Israel, has already claimed more than 3,000 lives and disrupted global energy markets.

Recent U.S. strikes on a city housing a major Iranian nuclear facility underscored the war's intensity, with dramatic explosions signaling a further escalation.

Allies Withhold Support

Despite Washington's expectations, key European allies have resisted deeper involvement. France permitted limited use



of its Stres air base but only under strict conditions that it would not support combat operations. Spain has closed its airspace to U.S. military flights linked to the conflict, while Italy reportedly denied access to the Sigonella base for certain operations, though it maintains broader cooperation with Washington. These refusals have exposed fractures within Western alli-

ances and added to the administration's frustration.

Oil Shock and Economic Fallout

The closure of the Strait of Hormuz has sent shockwaves through global markets. Brent crude prices have surged to around \$107 per barrel—up more than 45% since the war began.

In the United States, the economic consequences are becoming increasingly visible. Rising fuel costs are pushing up transportation and logistics expenses, contributing to broader inflationary pressures.

Diesel prices have jumped to an average of \$5.45 per gallon, sharply increasing costs for freight, agriculture, and supply chains. Analysts warn that consumers will feel the impact not only at the pump but also in grocery bills and delivery costs.

"Americans are spending hundreds of millions of dollars more on gasoline every day," said Patrick De Haan of GasBuddy, noting the psychological and economic strain on households.

A recent AP-NORC poll found that 45% of Americans are highly concerned about their ability to afford fuel in the coming months, highlighting the political risks for the administration in an election year.

Iran's Strategic Shift

On the battlefield, Iran has demonstrated resilience and adaptability. Following the assassination of several senior commanders, a new generation of leadership has emerged, reshaping the country's military strategy.

Tehran's decision to close the Strait of Hormuz has proven particularly consequential, amplifying its leverage on the global stage. Domestically, the Iranian government has consolidated support, projecting unity and stability despite sustained attacks.

Internationally, Iran has paired military resistance with diplomatic signaling, presenting its approach as both strategic and rational.

A War Without Clear Victory

As the conflict drags on, the prospect of a decisive victory for either side appears increasingly remote. Analysts suggest that the United States and Israel have not only failed to secure a clear strategic win but have also lost the

ability to convincingly claim one. The psychological momentum, once expected to favor Washington, has instead shifted toward Tehran.

Meanwhile, the United Nations Human Rights Council has condemned recent U.S.-Israeli strikes, adding diplomatic pressure to an already complex situation.

Trump's Core Dilemma

For President Trump, the challenge now is no longer how to win the war—but how to end it.

Having initiated a conflict that has escalated beyond initial expectations, the administration faces a narrowing set of options. Prolonging the war risks further economic damage and political backlash at home, while a rapid withdrawal could be perceived as a strategic defeat.

The central question confronting the White House is how to engineer an exit that avoids the appearance of failure—at a time when both the military and economic costs of the conflict continue to mount.

Trump's Flip-flops on Iran War Leave Americans Confused

Press Trust of India

WASHINGTON: From seeking help from NATO allies in the Iran war to declaring he does not need them, and from threatening to destroy Tehran's energy infrastructure to postponing such strikes almost overnight – US President Donald Trump's flip-flops since the start of the "military operations" a month ago have baffled Americans.

Trump's regular commentary on the war has drawn criticism for being "impulsive" – to put it mildly – to a derisive "Trump Always Chickens Out (TACO)" by social media users.

In an interaction with reporters earlier this month, Trump appeared to seek help from European nations and others dependent on oil and gas from the Middle East in securing the Hormuz Strait, a narrow Iran-controlled waterway used to transport one-fifth of the global crude supplies.

"If we need their mine boats or if we need anything, any piece of apparatus that they may have because of a

situation that they have, they should be jumping to help us. We want them to come and help us with the Strait," Trump said.

But in the same breath, he added, "My attitude is, we don't need anybody. We're the strongest nation in the world. We have the strongest military by far in the world. We don't need them."

The US President's appeal for help in securing the Strait of Hormuz has received a cold response from European nations, China, and South Korea, among others.

"All of those countries that can't get jet fuel because of the Strait of Hormuz, like the United Kingdom, which refused to get involved in the decapitation of Iran, I have a suggestion for you: Number 1, buy from the US, we have plenty, and Number 2, build up some delayed courage, go to the Strait, and just TAKE IT," Trump wrote in a Truth Social post on Tuesday.

Last week, the US President threatened to "obliterate" Iran's power plants if Tehran does not fully reopen

the Strait of Hormuz within 48 hours.

The next day, Trump put the strikes on hold – first for five days and then for another 10 days, citing negotiations with a leader in Iran, who appeared to be in control of the situation there.

"Instead of a cold and calculating explanation of his reasons for going in, Trump has sounded much more impulsive and emotional. The problem, then, is any backtracking or scaling back undermines his own ego and posturing," Edward Lengel, a former chief historian for the White House Historical Association, was quoted by American media outlet 'Roll Call'.

Engel said Trump was the "most involved wartime president since Abraham Lincoln," but described the trait as a flaw as it leads to a lack of consistent plan being decided by commanders.

"Most presidents since have actively tried to avoid that and be seen as behind the scenes, leaving the tactical and strategic decisions up to the generals," added Lengel, a military historian by training.

Gas Prices Eclipse USD 4 Per Gallon in US

AP

NEW YORK: US gas prices jumped past an average of USD 4 a gallon for the first time since 2022 on Tuesday, as the Iran war pushes fuel prices to soar worldwide.

According to the motor club AAA, the national average for a gallon of regular gasoline is now USD 4.02 – over a dollar more expensive than before the war began. The last time US drivers were collectively paying this much at the pump was nearly four years ago, following Russia's invasion of Ukraine.

The price is a national average, meaning drivers in some states have been paying well over USD 4 a gallon for a while now. Prices vary from state to state due to factors ranging from nearby supply to differing tax rates.

Since the US and Israel launched the joint war against Iran on Feb. 28, the cost of crude oil – the main ingredient in gasoline – has spiked and swung rapidly. That's because the conflict has caused deep supply chain disruptions and cuts from major oil producers across the Middle East. Both Brent

crude, the international standard, and benchmark US crude are now going for more than USD 100 per barrel – up from roughly USD 70 before the war.

Motorists around the world are also coping with higher gas prices. In Paris, for example, gas is at 2.34 euros per litre (USD 2.68), which is about USD 10.27 a gallon.

Expensive gas could drag on the economy and drive up other prices

Higher gas prices are impacting consumers and businesses as many households continue to face wider cost-of-living strains. And as drivers pay more to cover necessities like gas or even utility bills impacted by soaring fuel costs, many may be forced to cut their budgets in other places.

"Americans (are) spending hundreds of millions of dollars more on gasoline every day," said Patrick De Haan, the head of petroleum analysis at fuel-tracking service GasBuddy. That, he said, has a negative impact on the "psyche of the US consumer," which carries consequences for the economy overall.

Before launching the war, President

Donald Trump bragged about keeping gas prices low. Consumer prices and the cost of living have already become flashpoints in this midterm election year, with Democrats hammering Trump and Republicans as the GOP tries to hold majorities on Capitol Hill. A recent AP-NORC poll found that 45 per cent of US adults are "extremely" or "very" concerned about being able to afford gas in the next few months, up from 30 per cent shortly after Trump won the 2024 presidential election with promises to lower costs.

Beyond visits to the pump, analysts point to groceries, which have to be restocked frequently and could also see price hikes as businesses' transportation and packaging costs pile up. Hauling other cargo and packages has also been impacted. The United Postal Service, for example, is seeking a temporary 8 per cent added charge on some of its popular products, including Priority Mail.

US diesel prices – the fuel used for many freight and delivery trucks – are now going for an average of USD 5.45 a gallon, up from about USD 3.76 a gallon before the war began, per AAA.

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