

CBC 22201/13/0005/2627



**Committed to Nari Shakti Vandan**

#NariShaktiVandan

**33% reservation for women in the Lok Sabha and State Legislative Assemblies, ensuring participation in nation-building**



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## LG Sacks 2 Govt Employees Over 'Terror' Links

Fresh Action Takes Total Dismissals To 90



Observer News Service

Srinagar: Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha on Wednesday terminated the services of two Jammu and Kashmir government employees for their alleged links with terror outfits, including Lashkar-e-Taiba and Hizbul Mujahideen, official sources said.

The dismissals were carried out under Article 311(2)(c) of the Constitution as part of the administration's "zero-tolerance to terror" policy, aimed at rooting out militant elements from government institutions. Sinha had recently observed that he will not rest until "the last thread of the terror cancer is torn from the body of government machinery". He had also vowed that security agencies

would "completely, decisively and permanently end the scourge of terrorism".

One of those dismissed, Farhat Ali Khanday, a Class-IV employee in the education department in Ramban district, was allegedly working for Hizbul Mujahideen and using his government position as a cover to revive militant activities and build networks in the region, they said.

According to sources, Khanday first came under the radar of security agencies in 2011 during investigations into a hawala network involved in distributing funds to families of militants. He was arrested the same year but later secured bail and allegedly continued his activities. Investigations revealed that he remained | [More on P6](#)

## Court Declares Srinagar Man Dead 28 Yrs After Disappearance

KO Web Desk

Srinagar: A court in Jammu and Kashmir has declared a man dead nearly 28 years after he was taken into custody by the Army and subsequently went missing in Srinagar.

Sub-Judge Massarat Jabeen issued a decree of declaration in favour of Abdul Rashid Wani, a resident of Madina Colony, Bemina, Srinagar, on a civil suit filed by his wife and two sons. The court also directed the Registrar Births and Deaths, Srinagar Municipal Corporation, to issue a death certificate in their favour.

"His whereabouts remain unknown despite judicial inquiry and police investigation. He has not been heard of for more than seven years by

those who would have naturally heard of him. Thus, the legal presumption of death squarely applies," the court observed.

The court held that the cumulative effect of the evidence established that Wani was taken into custody by 2/8 Gorkha Rifles of the Army on July 7, 1997, after which he disappeared.

According to the family, Wani was picked up by the Army at Rawalpura, Srinagar, along with another person, Farooq Ahmad Bhat. While Bhat was later released, Wani never returned and his whereabouts remained unknown since then.

The court noted that an inquiry conducted by the Sessions Judge, Srinagar, on the directions

## Ceasefire Teeters As Iran Says 'Hands On Trigger'

Iran Insists on All-Fronts Peace as Lebanon Strikes Shake Truce

Trans Asia News

Tehran: A fragile ceasefire between Iran, the United States and Israel appeared to be unravelling within hours of its announcement on Wednesday, as Iran warned of a possible return to full-scale war following Israeli strikes in Lebanon that Tehran described as clear violations of the truce.

A senior Iranian security official said the world was witnessing Israel destabilise what was already a tenuous agreement. "The entire world is currently witnessing the



Israeli strikes hit several areas in Beirut without warning on Wednesday.

regime destabilise the already tenuous truce," the official was quoted by Press TV as

saying. He accused Israel of breaching the ceasefire while escalating attacks in

Lebanon and raising the political cost of the agreement for Washington.

The official called on mediating countries to intervene immediately, warning that if the ceasefire collapses, Israel would bear sole responsibility. "The time has come to put this aggressor regime in its place," he said, adding that Iran "will punish the aggressor."

Strikes in Lebanon Raise Alarm

The warning followed a wave of Israeli airstrikes across Lebanon, including in Beirut, just | [More on P6](#)

## Last-Minute Pivot: Trump Steps Back, Iran Declares Victory

KO Web Desk

In a dramatic late-night reversal, US President Donald Trump stepped back from the threat of launching devastating strikes on Iran, opting instead for a two-week

ceasefire just hours before his own deadline for escalation expired. The abrupt pivot marks a critical turning point in a 40-day conflict that had pushed the region—and global energy markets—to the edge. Until Tuesday evening, Trump had warned of imminent | [More on P6](#)

## Universities Must Lead Fight Against Drug Menace: LG

Observer News Service

Srinagar: Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha on Wednesday called upon universities and educational institutions across Jammu and Kashmir to take a proactive role in combating drug abuse, asserting that campuses must emerge as key sites of social responsibility and reform.

Chairing the second meeting of the University Council of the Cluster University of Srinagar at Lok Bhavan, Jammu, Sinha stressed that institutions of higher learning must go beyond academics and actively contribute to addressing pressing societal challenges.

"Universities and educational institutions must discharge their responsibility



towards the society and lead the fight against drug menace," he said, urging authorities to intensify awareness campaigns under the Nasha Mukta Bharat Abhiyaan.

The meeting approved several key proposals aimed at strengthening academic and administrative frameworks.

Among them was the in-principle nod for the establishment of the Abdul Ahad

Azad Chair, a move seen as an effort to promote regional literary and intellectual traditions. The Council also cleared the adoption of a postgraduate curriculum framework under the National Education Policy 2020 in line with guidelines issued by the University Grants Commission.

Sinha directed the university administration to implement | [More on P6](#)

## LG Prorogues J&K Assembly

Jammu and Kashmir Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha has prorogued the Union Territory's Legislative Assembly, formally bringing the ongoing House session to an end, officials said on Wednesday. According to a bulletin issued by the Assembly Secretariat, the order dated April 7, 2026, was issued in exercise of powers conferred

under Section 18(2)(a) of the Jammu and Kashmir Reorganisation Act, 2019. "The Lieutenant Governor has prorogued the Legislative Assembly with immediate effect," the bulletin said. The move effectively closes the current round of legislative proceedings, setting the stage for the next session to be summoned in due course.

## Snow, Rain Trigger Landslide, Flash Flood Alert In Kashmir

Temperatures Dip Sharply; Weather Set to Improve After April 10

Observer News Service

Srinagar: Fresh snowfall in the upper reaches and widespread rainfall across the plains on Wednesday brought back a chill across Kashmir, with temperatures dropping significantly and authorities issuing alerts for possible landslides and flash floods in vulnerable areas.

According to the Meteorological Department, higher reaches including Gulmarg, Kupwara, Bandipora, Gurez, Tulail and Razdan Top recorded fresh snowfall, while popular tourist destinations like Sonamarg also received snow. In the plains, including Srinagar and other parts of

NH-44 Shut After Landslides, Commuters Asked to Stay Away

north and south Kashmir, intermittent rainfall was recorded through the day.

The wet spell led to a sharp fall in day temperatures across the Valley. Srinagar recorded a maximum of 11.8°C, nearly 7°C below normal, while the minimum temperature settled at 8.8°C. Other stations including Qazigund, Pahalgam, Kupwara and Gulmarg also reported significant departures in maximum temperatures.

Rainfall activity remained widespread, with Gulmarg receiving 8.2 mm and Kupwara 5.8 mm in the last 24 hours. Jammu division also witnessed below-normal temperatures, with Jammu | [More on P6](#)

## DIG Urges Public to Avoid Jammu-Srinagar Highway

Deputy Inspector General (Traffic) Haseeb Mughal on Wednesday advised commuters to avoid travel on the Jammu-Srinagar National Highway after continuous rainfall triggered multiple landslides, rendering the road unsafe. He said major landslides have been reported from Nashri, Karol, Khandar (Kunfar) Nallah, Banihal and Shalgari, while traffic has been halted from both sides as a precaution. Vehicles have been stopped at Qazigund for those | [More on P6](#)

## Over 100 JKP Personnel Get Out-of-Turn Promotions For CT Ops

Agencies

Jammu: In a first in the history of the Jammu and Kashmir Police, over a hundred personnel have been awarded out-of-turn promotions along with cash rewards, while several Special Police Officers (SPOs) have been regularised for their role in counter-terrorism operations in the Jammu zone.

A senior police official said the recognition follows intensified anti-terror operations carried out between 2021 and 2023, when the Jammu region witnessed a renewed surge in militant activity.

"Between 2021 and 2023, the Jammu region saw a resurgence of terrorist activities, with outfits like Lashkar-e-Taiba and Jaish-e-Mohammed | [More on P6](#)

## J&K Bank Renews Tie-up With Bajaj Life Insurance Company



Observer News Service

Srinagar: Reaffirming its commitment to enhanced customer convenience, J&K Bank has renewed its Corporate

Agency Agreement with Bajaj Life Insurance Company for a further period of three years.

The agreement was formally renewed after signing the pact here at the Bank's

Corporate Headquarters in the presence of senior officials from both organisations. General Manager (Retail, Agriculture & MSME - RAM) Rakesh Magotra | [More on P6](#)

## CAG Flags ₹104 Cr Revenue Doubt, ₹59 Cr Irregularities In J&K

'GST Scrutiny Delayed By 5 Years; PSU Compliance Abysmally Low'

Observer News Service

Srinagar: The Comptroller and Auditor General (CAG) has flagged deep-rooted systemic failures in financial oversight in Jammu and Kashmir, highlighting significant revenue leakages, weak enforcement under the Goods and Services Tax (GST) regime, and serious irregularities in the functioning of Public Sector Undertakings (PSUs).

The compliance audit of revenue receipts and PSUs points to a doubtful recovery of 104.51 crore, wrongful disbursement of 59.21 crore, and blocking of 85.75 crore in funds, raising serious concerns over transparency and fiscal

accountability in the Union Territory.

According to the audit, there was a delay of over five years in issuing the Standard Operating Procedure (SOP) for scrutiny of GST returns for the financial years 2017-18 and 2018-19, resulting in minimal scrutiny. The Special Investigation Unit (SIU), meant to support scrutiny and enforcement, was constituted only in 2022-23.

The report noted that intelligence inputs meant to be shared with jurisdictional authorities between 2017-18 and 2020-21 were not forwarded, increasing the risk of undetected revenue losses. It also flagged minimal scrutiny of returns such | [More on P6](#)

## Autonomous Bodies Lag Behind In Accounts

The Comptroller and Auditor General (CAG) has flagged significant delays in the submission of accounts by autonomous bodies in Jammu and Kashmir, raising concerns over transparency and financial oversight. According to the audit, eight autonomous bodies failed to submit a total of 40 annual accounts, with delays ranging from three to 14 years. The Compensatory Afforestation Management and Planning Authority (CAMPA) recorded the highest pendency, with 14 accounts pending from 2009-10 to 2022-23. Similarly, Sher-e-Kashmir University of Agricultural Sciences and Technology (SKUAST), Srinagar and Jammu have | [More on P6](#)



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

**Subject:- Grant Of Registration of the Proposed Travel unit under the name & Rohi Afza Tour and Travels situated at Magam**

**PUBLIC NOTICE**

Whereas I, Rukhsana Salam D/o Abdul Salam Bhat R/o Ratsun Beerwah intend to apply in the Department of Tourism for registration of my proposed travel unit under the name & style of M/S Rohi Afza Tour and Travels situated at Magam 193401 KASHMIR under tourist trade act 1978/82/2011-12.

Whereas I will submit state subject / Domicile certificate, Qualification Certificate, pan card \ Experience Certificate (Minimum 5years), Police character certificate, Bank statement (minimum balance 10000), site plan, Affidavit, Rent deed duly attested by sub Registrar, printing material (Letter head / Visiting card ) Photograph of the unit (indoor and outdoor) and Two passport size photographs to the department of Tourism as per prescribed checklist I Prior to Registration of my unit as an Excursion Agency.

/ Adventure Tour Operator Now as per J&K Registration of Tourist Trade Act 1978/82/2011/12) before my case is processed for my registration by the Competent Authority, the matter is hereby notified for information of general public/ Financial institutions/Bank/ Organisation, etc for objection, if any and the same should reach to the Deputy Director Tourism Registration(email id: dtdreg123@gmail.com) within a period of 7days from the publication of this notice in a leading newspaper/newspapers of the valley. No objection beyond a period of 7 days shall be entertained.

bmj

**PUBLIC NOTICE**

The name of my ward has been wrongly written in his/he adhaar card as 729231001156 AS Mavish Jaan D/o Gh Mohd Sheikh while her correct name is Mehvish Jan D/o Ghulam Mohammad Mochi . Now I have applied for the correction of the same if anybody has any objection in this regard he/she may file them in the concerned Adhaar Centre Jammu/Srinagar within Seven days. After that no objection shall be entertained.. Ghulam Mohammad Mochi F/o Mehvish Jan R/o Lalpora Kunzer fko

**PUBLIC NOTICE**

My Residence in my Discharge Certificate issued by Govt Boys Secondary School Batapora (Kanihama) has been wrongly written as Agrikalani while my correct residence is Kralweth which needs to be corrected. If anybody has any objection in this regard he/she may file them in the concerned office within seven days. After that no objection shall be entertained. Tahira Bano D/O Nazir Ahmad Ganie R/o Krawleth Tehsil. Kunzer District Baramulla fko

**PUBLIC NOTICE**

It is for the general information of the public that in my 10th Class Secondary School Certificate Examination mark sheet issued by JKBOSE (Session 2024), under Roll No. 101032124 and Registration No. 2201000002150035, my father's name has been inadvertently and incorrectly recorded as IRATAJA KHAN instead of his actual and correct name IRATAJA KHAN. Now I am applying for correction of the same in the official records. If anybody has any objection regarding this correction, they may file the same before the concerned JKBOSE office within 07 days from the date of publication of this notice. After that, no objection shall be entertained. Name: Abdul Rauf S/O: Irtaza Khan R/o: 794, Khas Mansurpur, Mansoorpur, Muzaffarnagar, Uttar Pradesh - 251203

**PUBLIC NOTICE**

My name has been wrongly written in my adhaar card bearing no: 6649 0980 9408 as Muzaffar Zaman Teli While my correct name is Muzaffar Uzaman Teli . Now I have applied for the correction of the same if anybody has any objection in this regard he/she may file them in the concerned Adhaar Centre Jammu/Srinagar within Seven days. After that no objection shall be entertained.. Muzaffar Uzaman Teli S/o Gh Mohd Teli R/o Yal Tehsil. Pattan fko

**PUBLIC NOTICE**

601322207109 as Taosa Ahmad Gojri while my correct name is Tawoos Ahmad GOJRI . Now I have applied for the correction of the same if anybody has any objection in this regard he/she may file them in the concerned Adhaar Centre Jammu/Srinagar within Seven days. After that no objection shall be entertained.. Tawoos Ahmad GOJRI S/o Mohammad Maqbool Gojri R/o Hardu Aboara fko

**PUBLIC NOTICE**

I want to change the name on electricity bill from Abdul Rashid Ganaie S/O Late Ghulam Mohammad R/o Tapper Waripora to Zahoar Ahmad Ganaie S/O Abdul Rashid Ganaie R/o Tapper Waripora . If anybody has any objection in this regard he/she may file them in the concerned office within seven days from the date of publication of this notice. After that no objection shall be entertained. Zahoar Ahmad Ganaie S/O Abdul Rashid Ganaie R/o Tapper Waripora fko

**ASF ENTERPRISES**

Sale and Services of Computers 2nd. Floor Munir Manzil Regal Chowk Srinagar [J&K] , Ph.0194-24 77949 , 9419001176, 9419776235

Sale and Sendee of Laptops. Desktops. Printers, Photocopiers. Faxes, ,CCTV Cameras, Security System and Refilling of all Types of Cartridges, Toners Registered Government order Suppliers.



**PUBLIC NOTICE**

The name of my ward has been wrongly written in his/he adhaar card as Zayaan Mohiuddin while his correct name is Ziyen - Mohi-Din Lone. Now I have applied for the correction of the same if anybody has any objection in this regard he/she may file them in the concerned Adhaar Centre Jammu/Srinagar within Seven days. After that no objection shall be entertained.. Ghulam Mohi Din Lone F/o Ziyen - Mohi-Din Lone R/o Darakasi Tehsil Tangmarg fko

**PUBLIC NOTICE**

The name of my ward has been wrongly written in his/he adhaar card as Aeram Aslam while his/her correct name is Iram Aslam. Now I have applied for the correction of the same if anybody has any objection in this regard he/she may file them in the concerned Adhaar Centre Jammu/Srinagar within Seven days. After that no objection shall be entertained.. Mohammad Aslam Gorsi F/o Iram Aslam R/o Sangerwani Tehsil. Rajpora District Pulwama fko

**PUBLIC NOTICE**

This is to inform that I, Gulam Mohammad Dar S/o Habib Ullah Dar R/o Lethpora Pulwama have applied for upgrade of my contractor Card to Class A . If any person have any objection in this regard, they may submit their objections(if any) in writing to the office of Chief Engineer, CID wing JKSPDC Kashmir, Bemina, Srinagar or Secretary Technical PWD (R&B), Civil Secretariat Jammu within 7 (seven) days from the date of publication of this notice. No objection shall be entertained thereafter. ab

**PUBLIC NOTICE**

This is to inform that I, Shakil Ahmad S/o Saraj ud Din R/o Drass Hulyal Kargil have applied for enlistment as Class D civil Contractor. If any person has any objection in this regard, they may submit their objections(if any) in writing to the office of Chief Engineer, CID wing JKSPDC Bemina Kashmir or Secretary Technical PWD (R&B), Civil Secretariat Jammu within 7 (seven) days from the date of publication of this notice. No objection shall be entertained thereafter ab

**PUBLIC NOTICE**

This is to inform that I, Nusrat Firdous (Mainline Building Solutions) W/O Firdous Ahmad Dar R/o khushipore HMT Srinagar have applied for enlistment as Class D civil Contractor. If any person has any objection in this regard, they may submit their objections(if any) in writing to the office of Chief Engineer, CID wing JKSPDC Bemina Kashmir or Secretary Technical PWD (R&B), Civil Secretariat Jammu within 7 (seven) days from the date of publication of this notice. No objection shall be entertained thereafter ab

**PUBLIC NOTICE**

This is to inform that I, Kifayat hussain wani S/O Ali Mohammad Wani R/o Parisabad pora Budgam have applied for enlistment as Class D civil Contractor. If any person has any objection in this regard, they may submit their objections(if any) in writing to the office of Chief Engineer, CID wing JKSPDC Bemina Kashmir or Secretary Technical PWD (R&B), Civil Secretariat Jammu within 7 (seven) days from the date of publication of this notice. No objection shall be entertained thereafter ab

**PUBLIC NOTICE**

I have applied for the issuance of DOB certificate as my DOB has not been registered in the concerned Registrar of Birth & Deaths so far. If anybody has any objection in this regard he/she may file them in the concerned office within seven days. After that no objection shall be entertained. Hassina Bano DOB 20-11-1977 R/o Ab Gani Mir R/o Lalad Sopore A/P Delina Baramulla jvd

**J-17011/658/2025-IC-Part(2)**  
**Ministry of Youth Affairs & Sports**  
**(Department of Youth Affairs)**  
**GPOA-3, Netaji Nagar, New Delhi-110023**  
 Website: <https://yas.gov.in>

**WALK-IN-INTERVIEW**

Walk-in-Interview for recruitment of Consultants on contract basis to be held on 13<sup>th</sup> April, 2026 at Ministry of Youth Affairs & Sports, GPOA-3, Netaji Nagar, New Delhi-110023.

**NB:** For vacancies, other details and corrigendum, if any, please visit frequently our website <https://yas.gov.in>. No separate notice in this regard shall be published in Newspaper.

Sd/-  
 Under Secretary to the Govt of India  
 CBC 4707/11/0001/2627

**PUBLIC NOTICE**

It is hereby notified for the information of the general public that the name "Faizan Hameed" S/o Abdul Hamid Sofi mentioned in the Driving Licence records is incorrect. The correct name is Faizan Hamid S/o Abdul Hamid Sofi. The Driving Licence No. is JK01 20220000736. The concerned person is applying for correction of the name in the official records. If anyone has any objection to the above correction, they may contact the RTO Office Srinagar within 07 days from the date of publication of this notice. After that, no objection shall be entertained. media line adst

**PUBLIC NOTICE**

This is to inform the general public that S.S. Shaws, Proprietor Sakeena Shafi W/o John Mohd Akhnoon , R/o: Wanihama Payeen, Hazratbal, Srinagar -190006, has applied for registration in the Department of Handicrafts, Srinagar under the office of the Assistant Director Handicrafts, Srinagar. Any person having any objection regarding the registration of the said unit may file their objection in writing before the Office of the Assistant Director Handicrafts, Srinagar, within 07 days from the date of publication of this notice. After the expiry of the stipulated period, no objection shall be entertained, and the case will be processed accordingly. Contact No.: 7006328181 media line adst

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

Subject:- Necessary Correction/change in address in data to the License No. JK-0420130020894 issued in favour of MUDASIR ALI Parentage ZAFFAR ALI Whereas an application has been received by one MUDASIR ALI Parentage ZAFFAR ALI wherein he claimed that the Name has been wrongly recorded in the records of Driving Licenses as MUDASIR ALI MALAH Parentage ZAFFAR ALI MALAH Which needs to be changed as MUDASIR ALI Parentage ZAFFAR ALI. Now therefore it is notified for the information of the general public that objections if any in this regard shall reach in written in the office of the Assistant Regional Transport officer Budgam within a period of 7 days from the date of publication of this notice in the daily newspaper. After expiry of stipulated time no objection will be entertained. Assistant Regional Transport officer Budgam Kashmir

mcb

**PUBLIC NOTICE**

I have changed my name from (old name) JAMEELA AKHTAR to (New name) MAHAJABEENA AKHTER . In future i will be known as (new Name) MAHAJABEENA AKHTER. If any body having any objection he/she may contact Passport Office, Srinagar within 7 days. After 7 days no objection will be accepted. MAHAJABEENA AKHTER W/O: PEER ZADA MANZOOR AHMAD MASOODI mcb R/o: BAGANDER NAMBLAL PAMPORE.

**PUBLIC NOTICE**

This is information for the general public that in School records the name is entered as TAJAMUL REYAZ S/O REYAZ AHMAD DAR while his actual name is TAJAMUL RYIAZ DAR S/O RYIAZ AHMAD DAR. Now I want its correction, in this regard if anybody having any objection may contact Principal Little Angles School Budgam with in a period of seven days. No objection shall be entertained after that. RYIAZ AHMAD DAR F/O TAJAMUL RYIAZ DAR mcb R/O ICHIGAM BUDGAM CELL. 7006562602

**PUBLIC NOTICE**

I have changed my name from (old name) Mohseen Makroo to (New name) Mohsin Makroo . In future i will be known as (new Name) Mohsin Makroo. If any body having any objection he/she may contact Passport Office, Srinagar within 7 days. After 7 days no objection will be accepted. Mohsin Makroo S/o: Manzoor Mohammad Makroo mcb R/o: Larkipora Padgampora Awantipora Pulwama 192122. Cell No: 9419005322

**PUBLIC NOTICE**

I have applied for the issuance of DOB certificate in favour of my son namely Muneer Hussain Dar who was born on 25-06-1997 at home . If anybody has any objection in this regard he/she may file them in the concerned office within seven days. After that no objection shall be entertained. Mahbooba Begum W/O Ghulam Ali Dar R/O Uchilipora fko

**OFFICE OF THE NAIB TEHSILDAR PATTAN**

Sub.. issuance of registration order in respect of delayed birth. PUBLIC NOTICE.. The registrar birth BDO Singapora has submit a case file pertaining to birth of Sakeena Akther D/o Mohammad Kazim Dar R/o Hanjiwera with verified date of birth 19/02/2002 occurred at home in this connection if any body having objection for issuance of said certificate he may contact to this office within 04 days after that no objection shall be entertained. Sd FKO Naib Tehsildar Pattan

**OFFICE OF THE NAIB TEHSILDAR PATTAN**

Sub.. issuance of registration order in respect of delayed birth.. PUBLIC NOTICE The registrar birth BDO Singapora has submitted a case file pertaining to birth of Sania Zehra D/o Showkat Hussain Reshi R/o Hanjiwera payeen Tehsil Pattan with verified date of birth 14/02/2008 occurred at home in this connection if any body having objection for issuance of said certificate he may contact to this office within 04 days after that no objection shall be entertained. Sd FKO Naib Tehsildar Pattan

**OFFICE OF THE EXECUTIVE ENGINEER SUB TRANSMISSION DIVISION BIJBEHARA**

www.jkppdd.gov.in Tel No :- 09132-233002 Fax No:- 09132-234397 e-mail: xen-stdbijbehara@jk.gov.in,

**NOTICE INVITING TENDER e-NIT NO./ STB/03 of 2026-27; Dated: 03/04/2026**

For and on behalf of the Lt Governor, Jammu and Kashmir State, e-Tenders are hereby invited from eligible "D" Class Civil Contractors registered with J&K Govt. CPWD, Railways and other State/Central Government Organisations. In case bid submitted joint venture firm, any of partner should possess "D" class Civil license for " Construction of Power transformer foundation at AIS Pahalgam for 4 MVA Power transformer." as per terms, conditions, technical specifications and schedules forming part of this tender document. Intending bidders are requested to submit their offer along with terms, conditions, technical specifications and annexure forming part of this tender document. The details are as under:

#	Name of Work	Adv. Cost. (IN Rs.)	Cost of e-Bid/ tender document (Rs)	EMD (Rs)
1.	Construction of Power transformer foundation at AIS Pahalgam for 4 MVA Power transformer	291710.00	200	5834
2.	Publishing Date & Time	03.04.2026 (1700 Hrs)		
3.	Document Download / Sale Start Date & Time	03.04.2026 (1700 Hrs)		
4.	Seek Clarification Start Date & Time	03.04.2026 (1700 Hrs)		
5.	Bid Submission Start Date & Time	03.04.2026 (1700 Hrs)		
6.	Seek Clarification End Date & Time	20.04.2026 (1700 Hrs)		
7.	Bid Submission End Date & Time	21.04.2026 (1500 Hrs)		
8.	Bid opening date & Time	22.04.2026 (1500 Hrs)		
9.	Venue of opening Bids	STD Bijbehara		
10.	Availability of Funds	Demanded under SANJY 2026		

**Please Read Standard Bidding Document Carefully**

- The tender document is available at website <http://jktenders.gov.in>. Interested bidders may view, download the e-Bid document, seek clarification if required and submit their e-Bid online up to the date and time mentioned in the table below.
- There is no need of furnishing of hard copies of bids after submission of e-tenders. The same should be obtained only from the bidder who is declared as LI after opening of financial bid as per the instructions of Finance Department issued vide O.M No. A/24(2017)-651; Dated: 07-06-2018
- All the e-Bids must be accompanied by the scanned copy of cost of tender document. The cost of tender document should be paid through e- challan/ treasury challan /receipt only.
- All the e-Bids must be accompanied by the scanned copy of EMD in the form of CDR/FDR/TD, pledged to the Executive Engineer Sub transmission Division Bijbehara. No Interest would be payable on Earnest Money deposited with the Department. However the bidder who is declared LI after opening of financial bid has to submit the original EMD to the office of the Executive Engineer Sub transmission Division Bijbehara through speed post, Courier or by hand.
- The e-Bids will be electronically opened in the presence of bidder's representatives, who choose to attend at the venue, date and time mentioned in the above table or any subsequent day to the convenience of the Tender Opening Committee. An authority letter of bidder's/OEM representative will be required to be produced.
- The Department reserves the right to cancel any or all the e-Bids/ the e-Bid process without assigning any reason thereof. The decision of department will be final and binding.
- In the event of date specified for e-Bids opening being declared a holiday for department's office then the due date for opening of e-Bids shall be the following working day at the appointed time and place.
- All the required documents excluding Price Schedule/BOQ should be uploaded by the e- Bidder electronically in the PDF format, whereas Price Schedule/BOQ should be uploaded electronically in the same BOQ sheet provided with the SBD.
- To participate in e-bidding process, bidders have to get 'Digital Signature Certificate (DSC)' class III(b) as per Information Technology Act-2000, to participate in online bidding.
- The tender document is available on website. Interested bidders may view, download the e-Bid document, seek clarification and submit their e-Bid online up to the date and time mentioned in the table above. The Quoted rates shall be Firm, inclusive of all taxes and duties, WCT, freight, transportation up to working sites. The rates shall include costs, if any attracted towards mandatory inspections / testing by the designated agencies and the department will not be required to pay / reimburse anything over and above the price quoted. All the bids must be supported by the Instrument of EMD of the exact amount as mentioned in the above table and shall have been issued post tender publication date. Moreover, any deviation in the EMD amount is liable for rejection.
- The bidder at his own responsibility and risk should visit and examine the site of work and its surroundings before the submission of bid.
- Before the deadline for submission of bids, the employer reserves the right to modify the bidding document by issuing Addendum/Corrigendum.
- All requisite documents like EMD, eChallan, NIT, SBD, Experience Certificate, Turnover Certificate, ITR, GSTR, PAN Card etc. as sought in the eNIT must be compulsorily uploaded with the bid.
- In case the bid of the lowest bidder is unbalanced, the bidder has to submit additional performance security deposit in the shape of CDR/FDR as per the breakup given below:

S.No	Percentage of unbalanced bid viz Quoted percentage of NIT	Additional performance security
01	Upto and including 10% below	Nil
02	>10% up to and including 25% below	05% of the bid cost
03	>25%	10% of the bid cost.

15. The work is to be completed within 45 days from the date of issue of LOA.  
 NO:STB/Ts/e-tender/16-19  
 DPK-NB-100/26 Dated: 08/04/2026  
 Sd/-  
 Executive Engineer  
 Sub Transmission Division Bijbehara

## Traffic Diversion on Ali-Jan Road for Sewerage Work: SSP Bhat

Observer News Service

Srinagar: The Traffic Police on Wednesday announced a temporary traffic diversion on Ali-Jan Road Srinagar's Soura to facilitate ongoing sewerage system work, officials said here.

SSP Traffic Ajaz Ahmad Bhat told KNO that one lane from Ali-Jan Road to Aali Masjid will remain closed until the completion of the project, expected to take at least five days.

"The UED department is currently digging the road from Ali-Jan road to Aali Masjid to lay a new sewerage pipe. During this period, two-way traffic will not

be possible on that section," SSP Bhat said.

He also advised commuters that starting tomorrow, vehicles traveling from Karan Nagar to Ali-Jan road will be diverted via Soura. "They will have to take a right from Aali Masjid towards Hawal," he added, stressing that there will be no restrictions for traffic coming from Soura.

"Vehicles moving from Ali-Jan road will also need to take a right turn towards Hawal."

SSP Bhat appealed to motorists to follow the diversion routes and exercise caution while traveling through the area to ensure smooth traffic movement and safety.

## SKUAST-K Launches NextGen e-Plant Clinic

Observer News Service

Srinagar: Sher-e-Kashmir University of Agricultural Sciences and Technology of Kashmir (SKUAST-K) on Wednesday signalled a paradigm shift in regional agriculture with the inauguration of a high-tech ecosystem dedicated to digital advisory and farmer-centric innovation.

In a ceremony at the varsity's Directorate of Extension, Shalimar, Vice-Chancellor, Prof Nazir Ahmad Ganai accompanied by University Officers, Heads of Divisions and Scientists launched a suite of next-generation facilities. These include the e-Plant Health Clinic, Farmer School Centre, Agri-Clinic and Agri-Business Centre and the newly established Conference Hall of the Directorate of SAMETI Kashmir.

The launch was also attended by progressive farmers and orchardists who hailed the move as a 'game-changer' for the region.

Prof Ganai described the e-

Plant Clinic as a critical bridge between laboratory breakthroughs and field-level reality. "We are moving from reactive to proactive agriculture," Prof Ganai said. "This platform leverages digital tools for the instant diagnosis of pests and diseases, ensuring that our farmers aren't just guessing, they are acting on scientific certainty," he added.

Director Extension, Prof Raihana Habib Kanth emphasized that these facilities are 'engines of capacity building.' She highlighted how the integration of the Agri-Business Incubation Centre will transform the local landscape by fostering a culture of innovation and startups among the educated youth.

Director Planning, Prof Haroon Naik said that SKUAST-K has solidified its position as a 'brand institution,' setting a national benchmark for how universities can drive regional prosperity. "The development reflects a perfect synergy between academia and funding agencies," Prof Naik added.

## Admin Reviews Water Supply Initiatives

Observer News Service

Srinagar: Deputy Commissioner (DC) Srinagar, Akshay Labroo on Wednesday chaired a comprehensive meeting here at DC Office to conduct a detailed project-wise review of major water supply projects being implemented under Atal Mission for Rejuvenation and Urban Transformation (AMRUT) 2.0 aimed at strengthening and augmenting the water supply and quality of water across the district.

The Meeting was attended by Chief Planning Officer, Fayaz Ahmad Dar, Superintending Engineer, Er. Ambreen Anjum, Executive Engineer Water Works Division, Aijaz Rafiq, Water Supply Master Plan Division, Muzamil Ahmad, Executive Engineer, I&FC, Executive Engineer, UEED, Executive Engineer, Ground Water, Executive Engineer PHE Mechanical Division and other concerned Officers.

At the outset, the Deputy Commissioner was given a detailed overview through a detailed presentation highlighting the progress of different projects under the scheme

aimed to augment and boost the water supply in the district.

The DC was informed that 19 projects have been approved for Srinagar City under AMRUT 2.0, with work progressing in full swing and several major water supply projects nearing completion to boost and augment water supply in Srinagar District.

On the occasion, the DC conducted an in-depth review of each project, focusing on critical parameters including infrastructure quality, operational efficiency and citizen-centric outcomes. He emphasized the importance of quality execution and strict adherence to timelines to ensure that residents benefit at the earliest.

Highlighting the significance of AMRUT 2.0, the DC stated that the scheme prioritizes water security for urban areas through sustainable and modern solutions. He observed that the completion of key water supply projects will strengthen existing networks, enhance groundwater availability and supplement traditional water sources to meet the growing demand of Srinagar's expanding population.

## DC, Principal GMC Interact with Students & Faculty

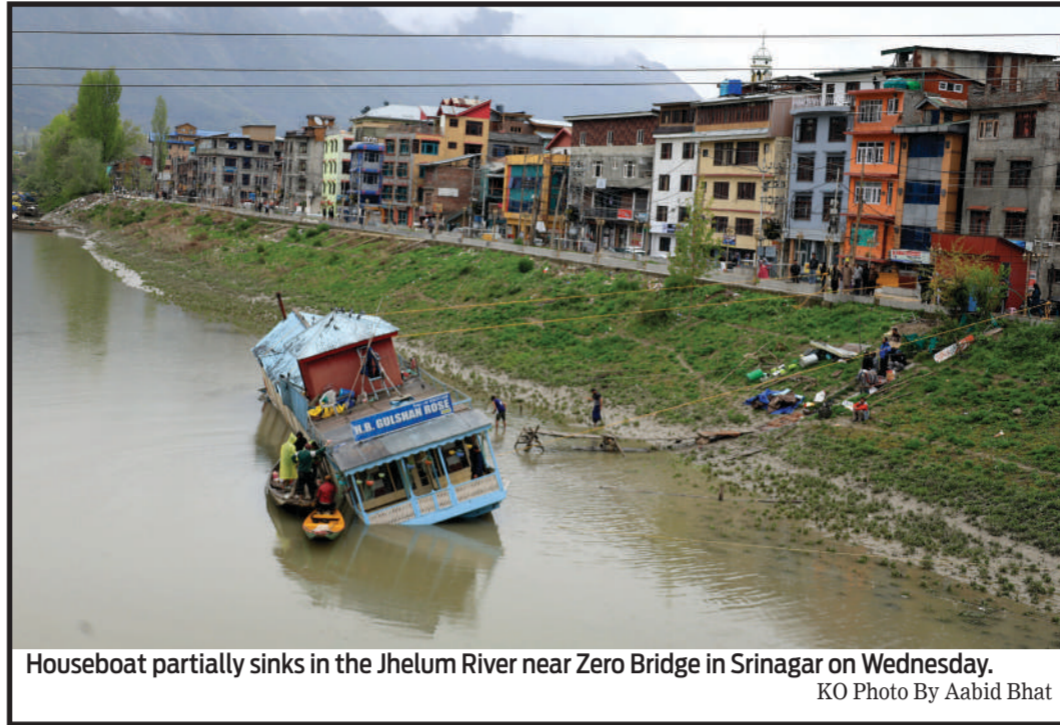
Observer News Service

Srinagar: Deputy Commissioner (DC) Srinagar, Akshay Labroo and Principal Government Medical College (GMC) Srinagar, Prof Iffat Hassan Shah on Wednesday held an interactive session with faculty and students of GMC Srinagar and the Nursing College to assess their requirements with respect to infrastructural upgradation, improvement in civic services and augmentation of existing facilities.

Administrator GMC Srinagar, Mohammad Ashraf Hakak, Additional Deputy Commissioner Srinagar, Aadil Fareed, Joint Commissioner SMC, Nuzhat Khurshid, Executive Engineer, R&B, Abdul Qayoom,

Medical Superintendent SMHS Hospital, Dr Andleeb, District Youth Services & Sports Officer, Ghulam Hassan and other senior officers of the District Administration and GMC Srinagar were present on the occasion.

During the interaction, faculty and students highlighted requirements relating to development and upgradation of sports and recreational facilities, enhancement of library, reading room and smart classroom facilities, improvement of sanitation, civic facilities and hostel infrastructure, measures to address stray dog menace within and around the campus and macadamization, landscaping and green space development across the College premises.



Houseboat partially sinks in the Jhelum River near Zero Bridge in Srinagar on Wednesday.  
KO Photo By Aabid Bhat

## Education Minister Briefs Parliamentary Committee on Sectoral Reforms

Observer News Service

Srinagar: Minister for Education, Social Welfare, Health and Medical Education, Sakeena Itoo interacted with the members of Department-related Parliamentary Standing Committee on Education, Women, Children, Youth and Sports (EWCY&S) who are on two day visit of Jammu and Kashmir.

During the interaction, the Minister presented a comprehensive overview of the initiatives undertaken by the Government to enhance the quality, accessibility and inclusivity of education sector across Jammu and Kashmir. She emphasized that the Government is focused on creating a robust academic ecosystem aligned with national educational priorities and global standards.

Sakeena Itoo highlighted key reforms aimed at improving academic infrastructure, promoting research and innovation,

**The Minister presented a comprehensive overview of the initiatives undertaken by the Government to enhance the quality, accessibility and inclusivity of education sector across Jammu and Kashmir**

strengthening faculty development programmes and expanding digital learning facilities in schools, colleges and universities. She informed the Committee that sustained efforts are being made to modernize schools, college campuses, introduce industry-oriented courses and ensure skill-based education to improve employability among students.

The Minister also under-

scored the importance of equitable access to education, stating that special attention is being given to students from remote and under-served areas through scholarship schemes, upgraded facilities and enhanced connectivity initiatives.

The Members of the Committee appreciated the progress achieved in the higher education sector and held detailed deliberations on challenges, opportunities, and future strategies for academic growth. The discussion focused on improving research output, fostering innovation-driven learning, and strengthening institutional governance mechanisms.

Sakeena Itoo reiterated that the Omar Abdullah led Government remains committed to nurturing academic excellence, encouraging innovation and creating a learner-centric environment that empowers youth and contributes to socio-economic development of Jammu and Kashmir.

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- BIJBERA: 01932-228243
- PAMPORE: 01933-294132
- PATTAN: 01954-293507
- QAZIGUND: 01951-296153

**HIGHWAY STATUS**

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

**PRAYERS**

**HIJRI CALENDAR**  
20- Shawwal  
1447

FAJR	4: 42
ZUHR	12:32
ASR	5: 07
Magrib	7:00
ISHA	8: 24

- 1691 - French troops occupy Mons
- 1772 - Philosopher and mathematician Jean-Baptiste Le Rond d'Alembert becomes permanent secretary of the French Academy of Sciences
- 1864 - Battle of Pleasant Hill LA, 2870 casualties
- 1869 - Hudson Bay Company cedes its territory to Canada
- 1917 - Battle of Arras begins
- 1928 - Turkey passes separation of church & state
- 1942 - Battle of Bataan; US-Filipino forces overwhelmed by Japanese at Bataan
- 1945 - Battleship Admiral Scheer sunk by RAF bombing in Kiel
- 1945 - Liberty ship at Bari Italy carrying aerial bombs explodes, kills 360
- 1947 - Atomic Energy Commission confirmed
- 1947 - Tornadoes striking West Texas & Oklahoma kill 169, injuring 1,300
- 1948 - Massacre at Deir Yassin.

**NORTHERN RAILWAY**

**E- Tender Notice**

The Deputy Chief Engineer/ Bridge Line/Jammu Tawi for and on behalf of the President of India invites Open-tender under for the under noted works:-

S. No	Tender No.	Name of work	Approx Cost (Rs)	Earnest Money (Rs)
1	OT-12-JAT-25-26	Assembling, linking by HSFG bolting, Providing H-Beam sleeper and Launching of steel girder on abutment of Bridge No. 100 (1X76.20m) by using calender-hamilton span as a launching nose to facilitate the end launching over Shah canal at Km22/758.9 in between Patal- Hazipur in MEX-Talwara Section i/c with Nangaldam-Talwara new BG Line and taking over siding Mukerian-Talwara in jurisdiction of Bridge Line JAT	46755505.37	935100.00

Date of opening	Bidding start date on IREPS	Cost of tender form Rs.	Completion period of work
29.04.2026	15.04.2026	0	08 Months

Date & Time for submission of Tender and opening of tender: Up to 11:00 hrs on dates shown against each and opening of tender thereafter at 11:00 hrs on same date.

Website Particulars where complete details of Tender can be seen & downloaded: The detailed e-tender notice is available on Northern Railway web site i.e. [www.nr.indianrailways.gov.in](http://www.nr.indianrailways.gov.in) and tender document is available on [www.ireps.gov.in](http://www.ireps.gov.in).

No. 5-DYCEBLJAT-2025/26. Dated: 07.04.2026

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**NOTICE**

I want to transfer the Electric Connection bearing Consumer No. 0213040012781, Installation No. which is registered in the name of Gh Mohmad Bhat (Gul Bhat) S/o: Mohmad Jaffer Bhat R/o: Yakmanpora (Wani Mohalla Pattan) in the Electric Department. In this regard, if anybody having any objection He/She may convey to Assistant Executive Engineer Electric Sub Division Pattan within a period of 7 days from the date of publication of this notice. After that no objection shall be entertained.

**Mushtaq Ahmad Bhat**  
S/o: Gulzar Ahmad Bhat  
R/o: Diver Yakmanpora Pattan Baramulla

29<sup>th</sup> year OF PUBLICATION

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### KO VIEW

## Strait Calm

Washington's two-week ceasefire with Tehran opens a brief window after six weeks of conflict that shook oil supply and sea trade.

Escalation grew from targeted strikes on military sites and quickly spread into the Gulf, where tankers, ports, and patrol ships entered a tense standoff.

Brent crude crossed \$120 per barrel during peak tension, as traders priced in risks to a route that ships nearly one-fifth of global oil.

The Strait of Hormuz became the pressure point for the world economy. Shipping activity fell by about 70 to 90 percent at the height of the crisis, with some days seeing near-zero movement as insurers withdrew cover and crews waited for safe passage.

Close to 10 million barrels per day faced disruption, tightening supply across Asia and Europe. Freight and insurance costs jumped four to six times, pushing up delivery costs for energy and goods.

Economic losses built up fast, as higher oil prices added tens of billions of dollars to import bills within weeks. Energy-driven inflation risks grew in many countries, with transport and food costs moving upward.

India felt this pressure directly, as more than 80 percent of its crude oil moves through this route. Rising fuel prices placed stress on households, industry, and public finances, showing how deeply global trade links depend on this narrow waterway.

Ceasefire signals have started to ease market stress. Oil prices moved down toward the mid-\$90 range, and tanker traffic has begun to return in small numbers under close watch. Shipping companies remain careful, though early movement suggests a slow return of activity. Financial markets reacted with gains, showing relief as tensions halted.

India's approach during this period showed unwavering judgment. New Delhi stayed engaged with major powers while focusing on energy supply and stability. This balanced stance helped secure flows and strengthened India's position as a dependable voice during a tense global moment.

The conflict showed how quickly regional tension can influence the global economy. Actions in the Gulf affected prices, trade routes, and investor confidence within days. The ceasefire also signals that prolonged escalation holds heavy economic costs for all sides, including pressure on growth and prices worldwide.

This two-week truce gives time for reassessment. Stable movement through Hormuz supports trade, lowers price pressure, and brings a sense of order back to markets.

Calm in these waters now holds global value, as careful decisions in this narrow passage influence economic conditions far beyond the region.

### CASH COURSE

Read This Before You Buy Anything

## Regulatory Vacuum

Without RERA, Kashmir's property market leaves buyers exposed and builders unchecked.

Irshad Mushtaq

In most Indian states, the Real Estate Regulatory Authority (RERA) protects homebuyers from fraud, delays, and shady deals. There's no such safety net in Kashmir.

RERA, created in 2016, makes builders register their projects, follow timelines, and face penalties if they fail. It also offers buyers a formal channel to resolve disputes. In states where it's enforced, trust in real estate has grown. But in Jammu and Kashmir, the system hasn't taken root.

For ordinary Kashmiris, this means navigating a web of unclear rules and unpredictable outcomes. If you want to buy land, you'll need a registered sale deed. If you want to prove ownership, that requires a mutation, a bureaucratic update in revenue records.

And if you want to build, you need municipal permission. Each step is loaded with delays and paperwork.

Local revenue and municipal offices often lack staff, transparency, and public trust. Citizens frequently turn to courts, believing them more reliable than government departments. In contrast, institutions like SEBI and RBI are widely trusted, because they follow clear rules and protect people's interests.

The absence of RERA in Kashmir leaves the real estate sector exposed. Buyers are unsure, builders are unaccountable, and investment suffers. A functioning RERA could change that, by making property deals safer and encouraging market growth.

The author is a Srinagar-based reputed financial educator.

# Together, Let Us Empower Our Nari Shakti

As festivals of renewal sweep across India, a historic opportunity emerges to empower women through meaningful political representation.



Narendra Modi

In the coming days, India will be immersed in a festive season, with celebrations taking place across the length and breadth of the nation.

The people of Assam will mark Rongali Bihu while Odisha will celebrate Maha Bishuba Pana Sankranti. In West Bengal, Poila Boishakh will usher in the Bengali New Year and in Kerala, Vishu will be observed with immense enthusiasm. In Tamil Nadu, Puthandu will be celebrated while in Punjab and other parts of Northern India, it will be Baisakhi, which will usher in a spirit of hope as well as positivity.

I convey my best wishes to all those across India and the world who are marking these festivals. May these auspicious occasions bring happiness and prosperity to everyone's lives.

Furthermore, on the 11th of April, we will commence the 200th birth anniversary celebrations of Mahatma Phule and on the 14th, India will pay homage to Dr. Babasaheb Ambedkar on Ambedkar Jayanti.

In addition to these special occasions, when the spirit of renewal fills our hearts and minds, our nation stands at the threshold of another historic occasion. It is an opportunity to deepen the foundations of our democracy and to reaffirm our collective commitment to equality and inclusion.

On the 16th of April, Parliament will be convened to discuss and pass an important bill that advances women's reservation. To describe this merely as a legislative exercise would be an understatement. It is a reflection of the aspirations of crores of women across India. It is an affirmation of a principle that has long guided our civilisational ethos, that society progresses when women progress.

Women constitute nearly half of India's population. Their contributions to our nation are vast and invaluable. Today, India is witnessing remarkable achievements by women across every field. From science and technology to entrepreneurship, from sports to the armed forces and from music to the arts, women are at the forefront of India's progress.

Over the years, sustained efforts have been made to create an enabling environment for women's empowerment. Greater access to education, improved healthcare, enhanced financial inclusion and better access to basic amenities have strengthened the foundations of women's participation in

“  
As we approach this historic Parliament sitting, I appeal to all Members of Parliament, across party lines, to come together in support of this important step for the women of India. Let us seize this opportunity with a sense of responsibility and purpose. Let us act in a manner that reflects the highest traditions of our democracy.

economic and social life.

Yet, their representation in the world of politics and legislative bodies has not always been commensurate with their role in society. This is particularly unfortunate because when women participate in administration and decision-making, they bring with them experiences and insights that enrich public discourse and improve the quality of governance.

It is imperative that the 2029 Lok Sabha elections and the Assembly elections to the various states in the coming times are conducted with women's reservation in place. Over the decades, there have been repeated efforts to provide women with their rightful place in democratic institutions by the previous governments. Committees were made, bill drafts were introduced but they never saw the light of day. But the broad consensus has remained that women's representation in legislative bodies has to increase.

In September 2023, Parliament passed the Nari Shakti Vandan Adhiniyam with the same spirit of consensus. I consider it to be among the most special occasions of my life.

This opportunity to ensure women's reservation also resonates deeply with the spirit of our Constitution. The makers of our Constitution, envisioned a society where equality is both enshrined and realised in practice. Strengthening women's participation in legislative institutions is an important step towards fulfilling that vision. It reflects our commitment to building a society where every citizen has an equal stake in shaping the nation's destiny.

This is a moment that cannot be deferred any longer. Every delay in advancing women's representation is, in effect, a delay in strengthening the quality and inclusiveness of our democracy.

For decades, the need for greater participation of women in legislative institutions has been acknowledged, discussed and reaffirmed. To postpone action now would mean extending an imbalance that we already recognise and have the capacity to correct.

At a time when India is moving forward with confidence and purpose, it is essential that our institutions reflect the aspirations of all citizens, especially those who form half our population. Timely action will not only honour long-standing commitments but also ensure that the momentum of progress is sustained.

This is truly a historic opportunity to make our democracy more representative, responsive and future-ready.

This moment calls for collective action. It is not about any one government, party or individual. It is about the nation as a whole recognising the importance of this step and coming together to realise it. It is what we owe to our Nari Shakti.

That is why the passage of a bill for women's reservation should reflect the broadest possible consensus and be guided by the larger national interest.

Such opportunities call upon us to act not for ourselves, but for future generations. They remind us that the true strength of a democracy lies in its ability to evolve and to become more inclusive over time.

As we approach this historic Parliament sitting, I appeal to all Members of Parliament, across party lines, to come together in support of this important step for the women of India. Let us seize this opportunity with a sense of responsibility and purpose. Let us act in a manner that reflects the highest traditions of our democracy.

India has always shown that when it comes to matters of national importance, it can rise above differences and act with unity. This is one such moment.

Let us move forward together and strengthen Constitutional values and empower our Nari Shakti for national progress.

Narendra Modi is Prime Minister of India.

### Letter to Editor

## Offices in Kashmir Need More Than Attendance

One afternoon in Srinagar, I left my office early to send a book by speed post. I drove fast, eager to reach the post office before it closed. Inside, I found a scene that left me unsettled.

The office did not look like a place of service. A few young men lounged around a table, laughing loudly with the postal worker behind the counter. He, a bespectacled youngster with messy hair, sat cross-legged in his chair, glued to his phone. When I asked about the speed post procedure, he barely looked up. My words received half-hearted nods, as his eyes were fixed on the glowing screen. To get his attention, I had to raise my voice. His friends went on chatting, their laugh-

ter echoing in the room.

That day reminded me of how much we have lost in our public institutions. There was a time when a government office carried an air of seriousness. Clerks focused on their desks, files moved from one table to another, and there was an understanding that people came seeking help. Today, many of these spaces feel like drawing rooms or street corners.

Government employees are not private shopkeepers. Their salaries come from taxpayers. They are entrusted with a simple duty: to serve. For citizens, especially in Kashmir where government offices are often the only lifeline, indifference is more than inconvenience. A distracted clerk can mean a delayed

scholarship, a missed deadline, or a wasted trip for someone who traveled hours from a village.

Technology has begun to ease some of this burden. Online forms, e-payments, and digital portals have reduced the need for endless visits to offices. They save time and spare citizens humiliation. Yet machines cannot replace every task. For many services, people still depend on the attention and empathy of the person behind the counter.

The new generation entering public service needs training and guidance. Professionalism must be taught and reinforced. Without it, government offices risk becoming hangouts where responsibility is secondary.

I did not confront the postal worker that day. Scolding him in front of his friends would not have changed much. Instead, I write this in hope that he, and others like him, reflect on the privilege of public service. Friendships can be nurtured in cafes and parks. The post office is for the citizen who walks in with trust.

Professionalism is the foundation of faith between people and their institutions. Losing it weakens that bond, and once lost, it is hard to rebuild.

Sincerely,

Malik Javid  
malikjavid86@gmail.com

# Doodh Mouj in a Changing Kashmir

Personal memories from Kashmir show how wedding rituals, shared plates, and open doors once wove families and neighbours into something unbreakable.



Mohammad Ilyas Bhat

Kashmir still remembers those wedding days that gave life its real meaning, when people came closer through small acts of care and shared moments, and traditions felt natural and heartfelt, full of love, warmth, and togetherness.

As the groom prepared to leave with the wedding procession, a special moment unfolded when a woman known as the Doodh Mouj stepped forward. She had nursed him as a child, and she stood before him with the same love and respect as his own mother.

The Doodh Mouj accompanied the bride in the procession too, providing companionship in the new environment ahead, while a Nabud Nout pitcher came with them both, holding sugary icicles for the occasion.

This Nabud Nout served as a powerful metaphor for family ties, illustrating the roles of brides and grooms clearly as they nurtured ties with in-laws and extended families through it.

The pitcher pointed toward patience and kindness in relationships, showing how sweetness softened differences the same way sugar did. The Nabud Nout lasted long after the event, adding continuity to daily life.

The custom reflected a society built on shared bonds, where motherhood extended beyond blood relations in that era, and love moved freely among homes and families with humanity forming the founda-

tion for all relationships back then.

Those moments showed a clear truth about care, and care spread among people naturally in the community, where neighbours functioned as extensions of family in daily life.

Children spent time in one another's homes freely, growing up familiar with fluid household boundaries, while mothers prepared meals for every child who entered the courtyard in a practice that felt as natural as breathing.

The warmth persisted through the late seventies and early eighties, resembling the glow of a setting sun in the valley.

Teenage years brought another memory into focus, when death in the locality touched the whole community deeply and grief spread gently among everyone.

Community members took responsibility to inform relatives promptly, walking miles and travelling to nearby villages to deliver the news through personal visits each time, because relationships called for such presence in difficult moments.

Neighbours knew the location of every relative nearby, relying on living connections built over years, and duty guided their actions as they understood the need to show up in times of sorrow.

These days, information moves at the speed of light, and a phone call or message delivers news instantly, with concern showing up in different forms now.

People deliver updates quickly, standing beside those in need at the same time, though childhood moments come to mind with special clarity when neighbourhood children sat together at meals in those days.

They ate from the same plate during gatherings, and sharing food created a sense of belonging, conveying an unspoken assurance that what belonged to one person belonged to all.

Those small acts held meanings greater than realized at the time, and the meanings live on in mem-



**NEW PRACTICES TOOK THE PLACE OF THE DOODH MOUJ CUSTOM OVER TIME, AS FEEDING BOTTLES AND FORMULA MILK ENTERED THE ROLE OF SHARED CARE, and people choose separate meals to maintain health now. Convenience arrived in daily routines smoothly, and connection found new expressions in the modern world, while homes underwent changes during the transition too.**

ory even now.

New practices took the place of the Doodh Mouj custom over time, as feeding bottles and formula milk entered the role of shared care, and people choose separate meals to maintain health now.

Convenience arrived in daily

routines smoothly, and connection found new expressions in the modern world, while homes underwent changes during the transition too.

Large families occupied small spaces back then, and everyone felt comfortable in the arrangement, with a single room becoming a

space for sleep at night, a place for study in the evening, and a gathering spot for laughter during the day.

Beds became shared among family members, space stayed compact in the houses, and hearts remained expansive in all interactions.

Guests arrived at any moment in the old days, staying with full ease during visits, and room always appeared for them in the home. Meals extended to accommodate everyone, bedding adjusted easily for additional people, and hearts opened wider with genuine joy each time, because hospitality brought happiness to hosts.

Houses stand larger and more comfortable now, with design focusing on privacy for residents, and the spaces feel calmer at times.

Guests come on special occasions only these days, and hospitality takes a formal approach now, though the effortless warmth remains visible in memories.

The mohallah once represented more than houses clustered to-

gether, forming a living community for all residents where everyone knew one another well. Joys spread among people, and sorrows received support from all, but colonies organize life in structured ways now, with efficiency marking the layout of the areas.

People build closeness through different means in the colonies, while doors opened for neighbours in the old mohallahs, and lives run parallel in modern settings.

A person lives years next to a neighbour easily, with knowledge of the neighbour's name or story growing over time.

Technology brings brilliant connections to people worldwide, and people reach continents with ease through the tools, though video calls stand in for personal visits often, and messages stand in for face-to-face conversations regularly. Occupations fill the days constantly, engagement remains endless in the daily schedule, and privacy gives its rewards while companionship finds new expressions.

Comfort delivers its benefits, warmth finds new forms, and modernity provides many advances, but shared humanity stays central in daily life.

The question arises with a sense of reflection, because progress stands as the goal everyone pursues actively, and the pursuit of convenience and individuality leads people forward.

Bonds that once enriched life receive attention still, and life grows richer when those bonds remain strong, bringing satisfaction and fullness to existence in ways that make existence profoundly human.

Kashmir taught us this truth through its mohallahs and sweet pitchers, and we hold every modern comfort in our hands today while remembering the old ways in our hearts.

The real measure of progress lies in keeping both elements.

— The author works in agricultural seed production and is currently writing his first short story collection in Kashmir.

## Farewell to a Relentless Public Servant

From the legislative councils of Uttar Pradesh to the cabinet rooms of Delhi, Mohsina Kidwai built a career on personal austerity and independent judgment through six decades of public life.



Syed Sammar Mehdi

Mohsina Kidwai spent her final hours at Metro Hospital in Noida, where medical staff had monitored her condition through the night. She died early Wednesday morning at age ninety-four, closing a political career that began when she won a legislative seat at twenty-eight and continued through six decades of Indian history.

The veteran Congress leader had served as minister under two prime ministers, represented four different legislative chambers, and maintained until her final years the sharp judgment that colleagues prized above all else.

Her family announced burial plans for the evening at Nizamuddin, the historic Delhi cemetery where generations of public figures rest. Tributes arrived immediately from every corner of the Congress Party.

Mallikarjun Kharge, the party president, described her death as a profound loss to the nation. Rahul Gandhi noted that her entire life stood as an exemplar of public service. Priyanka Gandhi Vadra recalled her travels through every district of Uttar Pradesh, building relationships with workers during her tenure as state party chief.

Kidwai entered politics in 1960,

winning a seat in the Uttar Pradesh Legislative Council while still in her twenties. She came from Barabanki, part of an aristocratic Muslim family with deep roots in the Awadh region. Her connection to Rafi Ahmad Kidwai, the freedom fighter and union minister, opened few doors. She built her career through patient work at the grassroots.

By 1974, she had entered the state assembly. Four years later, she won a parliamentary by-election from Azamgarh, a victory that arrived at a critical moment for the Congress Party following its post-Emergency defeat.

That 1978 campaign marked the beginning of her close association with Indira Gandhi.

The former prime minister had returned to power and recognized in Kidwai a rare combination of administrative competence and personal discretion. Gandhi appointed her to the council of ministers in the early 1980s, assigning portfolios that ranged from labour to health to rural development.

When Rajiv Gandhi succeeded his mother, he retained Kidwai in the cabinet, moving her through transport, urban development, railways, and civil aviation. She handled each assignment with the same methodical attention she had brought to her early work in Uttar Pradesh villages.

Her political survival demanded more than electoral skill.

During December 1978, Kidwai faced her most severe test when two men hijacked an Indian Airlines flight departing Lucknow. The hijackers claimed affiliation with the Youth Congress and demanded her intervention to secure Indira Gandhi's release from prison.

Kidwai disavowed any link to the men and rejected legal advice to seek anticipatory bail. She argued that such a petition would admit guilt. The crisis



ended peacefully, though it illustrated the turbulence of Indian politics during that era.

Colleagues remembered her personal austerity as vividly as her political achievements.

Despite serving as Union minister for housing and other senior portfolios, Kidwai lived in government accommodation, her only real estate holding remaining the ancestral joint property in Barabanki. This Spartan existence extended to her public demeanour.

She travelled constantly through Uttar Pradesh as state party president, visiting every district to strengthen the organizational network. Farmers in Lucknow recalled her protests against low sugarcane prices during the same period as the hijacking crisis,

demonstrating her ability to manage multiple pressures simultaneously.

Her relationship with Indira Gandhi blended professional respect with personal affection.

Kidwai observed the former prime minister breaking biscuits into pieces for a driver during a long journey, and witnessed a Sikh woman apply a blood tilak to Gandhi's forehead at a Haridwar Gurudwara. These moments revealed a leader who inspired intense devotion through small kindnesses.

Kidwai recorded these memories in her 2022 memoir, "My Life in Indian Politics," which appeared alongside her support for Shashi Tharoor's presidential bid against Mallikarjun Kharge.

That intervention demonstrated her

**THROUGHOUT HER CAREER, KIDWAI REPRESENTED A PARTICULAR TRADITION WITHIN THE CONGRESS PARTY: THE BRIDGE BETWEEN GRASSROOTS ACTIVISM AND MINISTERIAL RESPONSIBILITY. She spoke candidly to leadership while maintaining party discipline, offering advice on matters ranging from the Shah Bano case to coalition partnerships. Her presence in the Congress Working Committee and Central Election Committee provided continuity through decades of political transformation.**

continued willingness to assert independent judgment even in her ninetieth year.

Throughout her career, Kidwai represented a particular tradition within the Congress Party: the bridge between grassroots activism and ministerial responsibility. She spoke candidly to leadership while maintaining party discipline, offering advice on matters ranging from the Shah Bano case to coalition partnerships. Her presence in the Congress Working Committee and Central Election Committee provided continuity through decades of political transformation.

She entered the Rajya Sabha in 2004 and continued attending sessions into her eighties, representing Chhattisgarh with the same diligence she had brought to her first legislative council seat in 1960.

Kidwai's death removes from Indian public life one of the last direct links to the post-Independence political establishment.

She belonged to a generation that entered politics through state legislative councils rather than television studios, and built influence through persistent constituency work rather than social media presence.

Her three daughters survive her, along with a political legacy defined by probity, discretion, and an unwavering commitment to the party she served for sixty-six years.

The burial at Nizamuddin on Wednesday evening marked the final chapter of a life spent entirely in the service of the republic.

— The author is a Poonch-born journalist.

# Five LeT Operatives Remanded In Police Custody For 10 Days

## Press Trust Of India

Srinagar: A local court on Wednesday sent five operatives – two Pakistani nationals and their three local supporters – affiliated with proscribed Lashkar-e-Taiba (LeT) terror outfit to 10 days police custody here, an official said.

The five were arrested following the uncovering of a "deep-rooted" interstate LeT module headed by Pakistani terrorist Abdullah, alias Abu Hureira, who had been on the run for 16 years and successfully established bases outside the Union Territory.

Hureira, along with another Pakistani terrorist Usman alias Khubaib and three

Srinagar residents identified as Mohammad Naqeb Bhat, Adil Rashid Bhat, and Ghulam Mohammad Mir alias Mama, was arrested on Tuesday.

The five were produced in a local court in Srinagar which remanded them in police custody for 10 days, the official said.

They said a number of suspected persons were picked up for questioning as the probe is underway to identify additional associates, financiers, facilitators, safe houses and inter-state linkages.

The busting of the LeT network in a major operation comes six months after the dismantling of a "white-collar" terror cell centred at Faridabad's Al Falah University that was linked to the

Red Fort blast on November 10, 2025.

The operation, which began on March 31 and was monitored by Director General of Police Nalin Prabhat who camped in Srinagar, has unveiled the funding and financial pattern of the LeT, officials said.

The terrorists used forged documents and identities to create a network not just in Jammu and Kashmir, but in several other states, they added.

Over the last few days, Srinagar police along with police forces of other states and central agencies carried out searches at 19 locations across Jammu and Kashmir, Rajasthan and Haryana.

The raids led to the recovery



of a large cache of weapons, including four AK assault rifles, pistols, hand grenades and electronic gadgets.

The two Pakistani terrorists are categorised as 'A+' grade militants and the officials said they infiltrated India approximately 16 years ago and

remained active across various districts of the Kashmir Valley, commanding around 40 foreign terrorists over the years, most of whom have since been neutralised, the officials said.

Forged documents with addresses from other states were recovered from Abdullah and Usman, indicating the use of false identities to facilitate movement outside the valley, they said.

Probe findings also suggest that one foreign terrorist managed to travel outside the country on a valid passport made from forged documents.

The elaborate network began to unravel on March 31 when the first of the three Srinagar residents, Naqeb Bhat, was

arrested from Pandach area along with a pistol and other incriminating material.

During his questioning, he said that he was part of the LeT and procured the arms and ammunition from another associate, Adil Rashid of Zakoora. He also provided support to foreign terrorists, the officials said. From Bhat, police were led to Mir and Rashid Bhat, both active associates in Srinagar.

The officials said the probe indicates that a foreign terrorist managed to travel outside the country on the basis of forged documents and identity with the help of the Lashkar-e-Taiba network in other states.

During the investigation, following disclosures from those

arrested, various hideouts were also busted in forested areas in and around Srinagar.

In the earlier 'Al Falah operation' in November 2025, Srinagar police unravelled a network comprising highly educated professionals, mostly doctors, who had been radicalised to carry out terrorist activities.

One of the accused was the Al Falah University's Dr Umerun Nabi, who was driving the explosives-laden car that detonated outside the Red Fort on November 10, 2025, killing more than a dozen people.

He had earlier made unsuccessful attempts to join terror groups in 2016 and 2018, the officials said.

## CONTD. FROM FRONT PAGE

### LG Sacks 2 Govt

in contact with militant networks and acted as a facilitator. A chargesheet was filed against him in a special court in 2022, they said.

"We didn't know that Farhat was working for Hizbul Mujahideen until April 2011. His name came out during the interrogation of a Hizbul Mujahideen terrorist, who was nabbed by Jammu and Kashmir Police for distributing terror money to seven terrorist families. Police picked up Farhat and put him behind bars, but in October 2011, he managed to get bail and continued his terror activities," official sources revealed.

The second employee, Mohammad Shafi Dar from Bandipora, was working in the rural development department and had been appointed on compassionate grounds, officials said.

He was allegedly acting as a terror associate of Lashkar-e-Taiba, providing logistical and operational support, including arranging safe houses, facilitating movement of militants, and sharing sensitive information about security forces, they added.

Dar was apprehended in April 2025 during a joint naka check. Arms and ammunition, including an AK-56 rifle and a grenade, were recovered from his possession, sources said.

Further investigation suggested that he had become an active operational associate and was allegedly involved in planning attacks on security forces.

Officials said the action is part of a broader crackdown, under which more than 90 government employees with alleged terror links have been dismissed so far in Jammu and Kashmir.

Sinha has reiterated the administration's commitment to eliminating terrorism and ensuring that no element inimical to the state operates within the government system, they added.

### Ceasefire Teeters

hours after the ceasefire took effect. Reports indicated that at least 100 strikes were launched in under 10 minutes, with at least 88 people killed in the capital alone and hundreds feared dead nationwide.

Iranian officials described the assault as a direct violation of the ceasefire framework, which had explicitly called for an immediate and comprehensive halt to hostilities on all fronts—including Lebanon and other arenas involving Iran-aligned groups.

Iran's Demand: Lasting Peace Across All Fronts

Tehran has emphasised that any agreement must go beyond a temporary pause. Central to its position is a demand for a lasting and comprehensive cessation of war across all fronts, including conflicts involving what it calls the "Axis of Resistance", particularly in Lebanon.

Officials reiterated that anything short of this would be unacceptable and could trigger renewed conflict.

Iran Signals Readiness to Escalate

Foreign Minister Abbas Araghchi warned that Tehran is reconsidering its participation in the ceasefire. According to Iranian reports, officials are actively weighing withdrawal if Israeli strikes continue.

Araghchi also raised the issue in a call with Pakistan's army chief Field Marshal Asim Munir, highlighting concerns to one of the key mediators behind the agreement.

Meanwhile, top IRGC commander Brigadier General Seyed Majid Mousavi issued a stark warning:

"Our hands are on the trigger, and the moment the slightest error is committed by the enemy, it will be responded to with full power."

He added that if battlefield gains are not translated into political outcomes, Iran will continue fighting "until all the demands of the Iranian nation are met".

Straits of Hormuz at Risk

Iran also warned that stability in the Strait of Hormuz could quickly deteriorate. The waterway had only recently been reopened under Iranian supervision as part of the ceasefire arrangement.

Officials cautioned that the current "period of ease" could end abruptly if violations persist, raising the risk of global economic disruption.

A Ceasefire on the Brink

The latest escalation comes just hours after Iran declared a "historic victory" in the 40-day war and announced that the United States had accepted its core demands.

But the renewed violence in Lebanon has cast serious doubt on whether the ceasefire can hold. Iran now frames the situation as a decisive moment: either the agreement evolves into a lasting peace across all fronts or the region returns to war.

For now, both sides remain on edge, with Tehran warning that any further violations could bring the fragile truce to a swift and violent end.

In a dramatic late-night reversal Wednesday, US President Donald Trump stepped back from the threat of launching devastating strikes on Iran, opting instead for a two-week ceasefire just hours before his own deadline for escalation expired. The abrupt pivot marks a critical turning point in a 40-day conflict that had pushed the region—and global energy markets—to the edge.

### Last-Minute Pivot:

attacks on Iranian infrastructure, including bridges and power plants—targets that critics argued could have caused significant civilian harm amounting to war crimes. However, less than two hours before the deadline, the US president announced he would hold off—conditional on Iran agreeing to a temporary ceasefire and reopening the strategically vital Strait of Hormuz.

The narrow waterway, through which roughly one-fifth of global oil supply passes during peacetime, had become a central flashpoint in the conflict.

Trump stated that Iran had presented a "workable" 10-point peace proposal and that "almost all points of past contention" had been resolved, pending final negotiations during the two-week pause.

Iran Declares "Historic Victory"

In stark contrast to Washington's cautious tone, Tehran declared outright victory.

In a statement issued by Iran's Supreme National Security Council, the country claimed it had delivered a "historic and crushing defeat" to both the United States and Israel, asserting that Washington had been forced to accept Iran's core demands.

Iranian officials framed the ceasefire not as a compromise, but as a submission by their adversaries. The statement emphasised that the US now saw "no way forward but to submit to the will of the great nation of Iran."

Iran's Foreign Minister, Abbas Araghchi, confirmed that Tehran would allow passage through the Strait of Hormuz during the ceasefire—but under Iranian military coordination, reinforcing its claim of strategic control over the waterway.

The scope of ten point demands signals not just an end to the conflict, but a broader attempt by Tehran to redefine geopolitical and economic dynamics in the region.

War Origins and Escalation

The war began on February 28 with joint US-Israeli strikes that Iran says included the assassination of its Supreme Leader, Sayyed Ali Khamenei, along with senior military commanders. Washington and Tel Aviv had justified their actions by citing Iran's nuclear programme and regional influence.

Over the following weeks, both sides exchanged escalating threats, with Trump repeatedly setting—and then extending—deadlines for Iranian capitulation.

Mediation and Diplomatic Pressure

The latest breakthrough came after intense diplomatic engagement, particularly involving Pakistan. Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif publicly urged Trump to extend his deadline, while Pakistan's army chief, Asim Munir, reportedly played a key role in backchannel discussions.

Trump acknowledged that his decision was influenced by these conversations, signalling a shift from coercive pressure to negotiated compromise.

Israel's Uneasy Acceptance

Israel has reportedly agreed to the ceasefire terms, but not without internal dissent. Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu is said to be deeply dissatisfied, with sources indicating that Israel had hoped to extract greater concessions from Iran.

Netanyahu, long sceptical of ceasefire arrangements, had previously pushed for a more aggressive strategy and was believed to have influenced earlier escalations.

Fragile Peace, Lingering Tensions

Despite the ceasefire, Iran has made it clear that the war is not truly over. In a warning-laden statement, Tehran emphasised that its "hands remain upon the trigger" and that any misstep by the US or Israel would be met with force.

Meanwhile, Iran continues to retain its stockpile of highly enriched uranium—one of the original triggers for the conflict—leaving a major issue unresolved.

A Shift in Global Power Dynamics

Analysts suggest the outcome could have lasting implications for US foreign policy. Trita Parsi of the Washington-based Quincy Institute noted that the conflict may have weakened the credibility of US military threats in future negotiations with Iran.

Essentially, war with Iran was tried and failed.

### Cabinet Clears

Constitution in 2023, but it would have

come into effect after the completion of the delimitation exercise on the basis of the 2027 Census. Therefore, it was expected to come into force only in 2034 if the present law remains as it is.

According to the broad contours available, the number of Lok Sabha seats would be increased from the present 543 to 816, with 273 seats reserved for women. The reservation will also be done on a "vertical basis" with seats allocated for SCs and STs.

The redrawing of the constituencies will be done on the basis of the 2011 census rather than the proposed 2027 census.

A similar exercise will be carried out for state assemblies, where seats will be reserved on a pro-rata basis.

While a Constitution amendment bill will tweak the Nari Shakti Vandan Adhiniyam, another ordinary bill will amend the Delimitation Act.

Once approved by Parliament, the proposed laws will come into force on March 31, 2029 and will help reserve seats in the next Lok Sabha elections and assembly elections in Odisha, Arunachal Pradesh, Sikkim and Andhra Pradesh.

Addressing an election rally in Kerala on April 4, Prime Minister Narendra Modi had said that the NDA government has given 33 per cent reservation to women in the Lok Sabha and Legislative Assemblies through a law in 2023. Modi had urged all parties that this is an issue related to women's empowerment, and so they should, with an open mind and without any political calculations, fully support it and become partners in winning the trust of the country's mothers and sisters.

In September 2023, President Droupadi Murmu gave her assent to the Nari Shakti Vandan Bill.

The law is officially known as the Constitution (106th Amendment) Act.

### Universities Must

targeted reforms to enhance academic excellence and improve student welfare mechanisms. He also emphasized the urgent need for full-scale adoption of e-office systems to modernize governance, reduce procedural delays, and ensure greater efficiency in university functioning.

In a broader administrative push, the Lieutenant Governor called for uniformity in recruitment rules for non-teaching staff across all universities in the Union Territory. He said such standardization would ensure transparency and streamline hiring processes, addressing long-standing concerns over inconsistencies.

Highlighting youth engagement as a critical pillar of national development, Sinha asked the university to increase participation in initiatives such as the "Viksit Bharat Yuva Connect" programme and other national integration efforts.

During the meeting, Vice Chancellor Prof. Mohammad Mobin presented a detailed progress report of the university, outlining academic developments and institutional initiatives. The Registrar placed various agenda items before the Council for consideration and ratification.

The meeting was attended by senior academic and administrative officials, including Vice Chancellors of universities in Jammu and Kashmir, senior bureaucrats, and former heads of central universities.

The Council's decisions signal a dual focus on academic reform and social responsibility, positioning universities not only as centers of learning but also as active stakeholders in addressing broader societal challenges, particularly the growing concern of drug abuse among youth.

### Snow, Rain Trigger

recording a maximum of 24.0°C, around 6°C below normal, along with rainfall in the preceding 24 hours.

The Meteorological Centre Srinagar said erratic weather conditions are likely to persist across Jammu and Kashmir till April 10, with generally cloudy skies and intermittent light to moderate rain in the plains and snowfall in higher reaches.

"Intermittent light to moderate rain and snow would continue in the higher reaches, accompanied by thunder, hail and gusty winds at a few places," the MeT department said, adding that some areas may witness moderate to heavy rainfall till Thursday morning.

The department has issued an advisory warning that intense showers over short periods could trigger flash floods, landslides and shooting stones in vulnerable areas, besides causing waterlogging in low-lying regions.

A brief spell of light rain or thundershower is also likely at scattered places on Thursday and Friday, while the weather is expected to remain generally dry from April 11 to April 16. However, occasional light rain in the afternoon or evening

hours at a few places cannot be ruled out.

Farmers have been advised to resume operations as conditions improve, while a gradual rise in day temperatures by 4 to 6 degrees Celsius is expected in the coming days.

The sudden return of wintry conditions in April has once again disrupted normal life in parts of the Valley, even as residents brace for more fluctuations in weather over the next few days.

### DIG Urges Public

coming from Srinagar and at Udhampur for those heading towards the Valley.

Restoration work is underway at several locations, with the National Highways Authority of India working round the clock. However, continuous bad weather is hampering immediate clearance.

Mughal urged commuters not to take risks and advised travellers to verify road conditions with traffic authorities before starting their journey, adding that the highway will be restored once weather conditions improve.

### CAG Flags ₹104 Cr

as GSTR-3B and GSTR-9, leading to mismatches in turnover, tax paid and input tax credit going unnoticed.

The audit further highlighted inaction against non-filers, failure to cancel registrations of defaulters, and non-levy of penalties and interest. Discrepancies between MIS reports and data submitted by State Taxes Officers (STOs) were also observed, pointing to gaps in monitoring and enforcement.

Administrative delays were cited as a key reason behind weak oversight, including late issuance of SOPs and delayed constitution of the internal audit wing. The audit also noted that crucial records, such as GSTN red-flag reports and year-wise scrutiny details, were not produced despite repeated requests.

The CAG has recommended strengthening scrutiny through risk-based analysis and fixing year-wise targets to address discrepancies and improve compliance.

As of March 31, 2022, a total of 42 PSUs were under audit in Jammu and Kashmir, including 39 government companies, two statutory corporations and one government-controlled entity. Six PSUs were found inactive, involving investments of 57.57 crore and outstanding loans of 0.83 crore.

Compliance levels among PSUs were found to be extremely low. Only three out of 34 government companies submitted their accounts for 2021–22 within the stipulated timeline, while accounts of key entities such as Jammu and Kashmir Road Transport Corporation and Jammu and Kashmir Financial Corporation remained pending.

The audit also flagged irregularities in the interest subvention scheme approved in October 2020, noting that 85.75 crore remained unutilised for nearly a year. Ineligible benefits amounting to 59.21 crore were extended to over 39,000 accounts, including those not covered under the scheme.

Further, 104.51 crore became doubtful due to irregular credit sanctioning by J&K Bank Limited, while failure to operationalise J&K Asset Reconstruction Limited led to wasteful expenditure of 82.18 lakh. Improper parking of surplus funds resulted in a loss of 2.65 crore to J&K IT Infrastructure Development Private Limited.

The audit also pointed to violations of the Income Tax Act, 1961, by certain PSUs. The Jammu and Kashmir State Power Development Corporation Limited failed to deposit advance tax on time during multiple financial years, leading to an avoidable interest burden of 6.88 crore. Similarly, Jammu and Kashmir Projects Construction Corporation Limited incurred an additional interest liability of 0.32 crore due to delayed tax payments. (inputs from agencies)

### Autonomous Bodies

three pending accounts each for the period 2020–21 to 2022–23.

The Jammu and Kashmir Employees Provident Fund Organisation (EPFO) has not submitted four accounts from 2015–16 to 2018–19.

Other bodies with pending accounts include the Jammu and Kashmir Housing Board (four accounts), Khadi and Village Industries Board (three), Building and Other Construction Workers Welfare Board (four), and the State Legal Services Authority (five).

The CAG warned that such delays keep public funds outside legislative scrutiny and weaken accountability, urging timely submission of accounts to ensure better governance.

### J&K Bank Renews

represented the Bank along with DGM (Cross Selling) Shabir Ahmad Bulla and other members of the Cross Selling team. Executive Vice

President & Business Head Zeeshan Andleeb attended signing ceremony on behalf of Bajaj Life Insurance Company besides National Account Head Mukhtar Ahmad and other officials.

Speaking on the occasion, General Manager (RAM) Rakesh Magotra said, "The renewal of our partnership reflects the strength of a relationship built on shared values of customer-centricity and trust. As we move ahead in our growth journey, we remain focused on expanding our bouquet of financial solutions, ensuring that our customers have seamless access to protection products alongside banking services."

He further added, "Strengthening our cross-selling ecosystem is one of the key priorities for the Bank."

This renewed engagement will help us scale up insurance outreach, particularly across Jammu & Kashmir and other emerging markets, while contributing to the broader agenda of financial inclusion and social security."

The partnership between the Bank and Bajaj Life Insurance Company has witnessed steady growth since its inception, driven by robust distribution capabilities and a focused approach towards meeting evolving customer needs.

The renewal of the agreement is expected to further enhance customer engagement and deepen the reach of life insurance solutions, thereby enabling greater financial protection for individuals and families across the Bank's operational geographies.

### Over 100 JKP

attempting to re-establish their presence in the mountainous belts," the official said.

To counter this shift, Director General of Police Nalin Prabhat initiated structural and operational changes on the ground. This included the establishment of Temporary Operational Bases (TOBs) along high ridges and mid-altitude contours to improve surveillance and response time in difficult terrain.

Special Operations Groups (SOG) were also strengthened through advanced training in guerrilla, jungle and mountain warfare. "The SOG units were revitalised with fresh personnel, modern weapons and specialised equipment to meet emerging challenges," the official said.

In addition, niche units such as Snow Leopards and Markhor have been recently created within the SOG framework to enhance operational precision in extreme terrains.

The police have also revised their reward policy to incentivise intelligence gathering and operational success. "To intensify efforts in tracking and neutralising Pakistani terrorists, the reward amounts in specific cases have been increased substantially," the official added.

Officials said that in recent months, coordinated operations by the Jammu and Kashmir Police and other security forces have yielded significant gains, particularly in difficult mountainous areas of the Jammu division.

The latest recognitions are being seen as both a morale booster and a strategic signal, reinforcing the administration's focus on aggressive counter-terror measures in the region.

Notably, 1,620 personnel of the Jammu and Kashmir Police have laid down their lives in the fight against terrorism over the years, underscoring the force's long-standing role in maintaining security in the Union Territory. (KNO)

### Court Declares

of the Jammu and Kashmir High Court had revealed that Wani was taken into custody and subsequently murdered.

"The inquiry report reads that during the investigation of case FIR No. 180/2002 under Section 364 RPC registered at Police Station Parimpora, Srinagar, it came to fore that Abdul Rashid Wani was taken into custody by the army along with one more person namely Farooq Ahmad Bhat. It further reveals that actually, the accused (Major V.P. Yadav) had murdered Abdul Rashid Wani in his custody and had disposed of his corpse," the court said.

The court also observed that despite investigations, Wani could not be traced and the police, in its final report, concluded that he had been killed in custody.

"The findings of the above referred report and statement of the witnesses produced in support of plaintiffs clearly indicate that despite investigation, the missing person could not be traced," the court said, adding that the issue stood proved in favour of the plaintiffs.

Concluding that Wani had not been heard of for more than seven years and that his whereabouts remained unknown despite judicial and police inquiries, the court ruled that the legal presumption of death applied in the case.

The family had been pursuing the case for years seeking official recognition of his death and registration with the Srinagar Municipal Corporation.

# Kehwa, Crackers, & Cheers: Kashmir Celebrates Gulf Ceasefire

KO Web Desk

**SRINAGAR:** Celebrations broke out across several parts of Kashmir following the announcement of a ceasefire between Iran and the United States, with many people hailing the development as a "victory" for the Islamic Republic.

Hundreds of residents, particularly in Shia-majority areas, poured onto the streets late into the evening, marking the truce with slogans, flag-waving, and public gatherings. Festivities were reported from Srinagar localities including Saidakadal, Shalimar, Zadibal, Bemina, and Lawaypora, as well as from districts such as Budgam, Baramulla, Ganderbal, Pulwama, and Bandipora.

Carrying Iranian flags, people celebrated what they described as Iran's resilience against the combined might of the United States and Israel. Firecrackers were burst in several areas, while many distributed traditional Kashmiri kehwa among passersby.

"This ceasefire is a victory for Iran. They brought the US and Israel to their knees. Today, we are celebrating this victory," said a participant in Budgam.

The celebrations come weeks



after widespread protests were held across the Valley following the outbreak of hostilities on February 28, when joint US-Israeli strikes on Iran triggered public anger. In Srinagar's Lal Chowk, thousands had gathered to demonstrate against the attacks, with members of the Shia community particularly vocal over the reported killing of Iran's Supreme Leader.

In the intervening weeks, solidarity with Iran also took the

form of large-scale fundraising drives. Residents across Kashmir contributed money and valuables to support those affected by the conflict, reflecting what many see as deep cultural and religious ties between the Valley and Iran. Kashmir is often referred to as "Iran-e-Sagheer" or Little Iran, underscoring these historical connections.

Reacting to the ceasefire, Kashmir's chief cleric Mirwaiz Umar Farooq described the de-

velopment as a positive step.

"The two-week ceasefire announcement between Iran and the United States is a welcome step toward peace. It underscores that restraint and dialogue must take precedence over confrontation for conflict resolution," he said, while also commending the "resilience and courage" of the Iranian people.

However, political reactions in the region reflected a mix of endorsement and scepticism.

Jammu and Kashmir Chief Minister Omar Abdullah questioned the outcome of the nearly 40-day conflict, asking what the United States had ultimately achieved.

"The Strait of Hormuz was open and freely available before the war began. What exactly did this 39-day war achieve for the US?" he said in a post on X, referring to the strategic waterway whose closure had heightened global concerns during the conflict.

Former chief minister and PDP president Mehbooba Mufti welcomed the ceasefire more emphatically, framing it as a moment of triumph for Iran.

"It is a day to rejoice. Thank God, He gave Iran such courage that it stood strong in front of the United States. Not just America, it forced Israel to kneel down. Both the United States and Israel were forced to seek a negotiation," she said, also acknowledging Pakistan's role in easing tensions.

On the ground, the sentiment echoed similar views. "It is a victory for us. The truce has come at Iran's own terms," said a resident of north Kashmir. Another, from Budgam, described the moment as "like an Eid," adding that weeks of anxiety had given way to relief.

## NGT Team Inspects Mining Sites in Pulwama, Budgam

**SRINAGAR:** A team constituted by the National Green Tribunal (NGT) has inspected earth mining sites in the Zadoora area of Pulwama and Kultreh in Chadoora, Budgam, following allegations of environmental degradation and soil damage in the Kashmir Valley.

The inspection was carried out after environmentalists approached the NGT and the Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change, alleging large-scale extraction of soil and sand and damage to the fragile karewa landscape.

Officials said the team visited the sites to assess the extent of environmental impact caused by mining activities, which have been flagged for degrading soil quality and altering natural landforms.

Environmentalists, including Dr. Raja Muzaffar Bhat, had raised concerns that a company based outside Jammu and Kashmir was involved in excessive extraction of natural resources, leading to visible damage to the landscape.

He alleged that such activities have disfigured parts of the Valley and called for strict regulatory action and restoration of affected areas through proper landscaping.

The NGT team was accompanied by Deputy Commissioners of Pulwama and Budgam, who coordinated with the visiting officials during the inspection process.

According to KNT, Environmental experts expressed hope that the findings of the inspection would lead to accountability and corrective measures, including possible restrictions on mining activities in ecologically sensitive karewa zones.

They said there is a need for restoration of damaged sites and enforcement of environmental safeguards to prevent further degradation.

Further action is expected based on the report of the inspection team. (Observer News Service)

## Man Killed After Load Carrier Plunges into Nallah Ningli

**BARAMULLA:** A man was killed after a load carrier auto plunged into Nallah Ningli in the Veer Panzipora area of Sopore, police said.

The vehicle fell into the nallah under circumstances that are being investigated, resulting in critical injuries to the driver. He was immediately shifted to Sub District Hospital Sopore, where doctors declared him dead on arrival.

According to KNT, the deceased has been identified as Tariq Ahmad Bhat, son of Ghulam Qadir Bhat and a resident of Sheer Colony.

Police said they have taken cognizance of the incident and initiated further investigation to ascertain the cause of the accident. (Observer News Service)

## Two Pharmacies Penalized in Kulgam

**SRINAGAR:** A joint inspection drive was conducted in the District Hospital area of Kulgam by the district administration, police, and the Drug Control Department to check irregularities in the sale of scheduled drugs.

The drive was carried out in pursuance of NCDOR directives, with officials focusing on ensuring compliance with licensing conditions and preventing unauthorized sale of pharmaceutical preparations.

During the inspection, two medical shops were disallowed from operating after violations were found in license conditions. Officials said one shop was functioning without the presence of a qualified person, while another failed to maintain proper records. In addition, two other medical shops were issued warnings and directed to make their CCTV cameras functional in line with regulatory requirements.

According to KNT, the operation forms part of ongoing efforts by the Drug Control Department to bring transparency and accountability in the sale and purchase of medicines. (Observer News Service)

## NITI Aayog Calls for Boosting Horticulture Sector

Observer News Service

**NEW DELHI:** Government think tank NITI Aayog on Wednesday pitched for 'Operation Golden Greens' - a project for the horticultural sector's transformation in Jammu and Kashmir and increase exports of apple, walnut, almond and saffron.

The report, titled 'Roadmap for Horticulture Development in the UT of Jammu and Kashmir', further said that J&K's horticultural products pose significant global trade potential.

"However, India's presence in global markets for these commodities remains limited, with increasing import dependence and stagnant or declining exports," it said.

Outlining the roadmap to enhance production of horticultural products in J&K, the Aayog said that there will be five sub-missions, dedicated to dry fruits, fresh

fruits, vegetables, floriculture and minor crops, with each sub-mission built on twelve identified common components but with differentiated priorities, allocations and activities aligned to its respective value chain and regional potential.

"It will be implemented in three phases, with Phase 1 extending from 2026-30, Phase 2 from 2030-35 and Phase 3 from 2035-47," the report said.

According to the report, short-term (2026-28) and medium-term (2028-30) measures will fall within Phase 1, while long-term actions (2031 onwards) are implemented through Phases 2 and 3.

The report noted that initiatives such as the Indian International Kashmir Saffron Park and dedicated branding campaigns can help secure premium positioning in global markets for saffron.

## CM Omar Calls for Expert Engagement for Tourism Push

Observer News Service

**JAMMU:** With over 600 heritage sites identified across Jammu and Kashmir, Chief Minister Omar Abdullah on Wednesday called for structured engagement with national and international agencies to unlock their tourism potential.

Abdullah was addressing a meeting on heritage promotion and cultural tourism to review measures for conservation and adaptive reuse of heritage assets aimed at boosting tourism in the Union territory.

The meeting was informed that over 600 heritage sites have been identified across Jammu and Kashmir, including both protected and unlisted monuments, reflecting the vast scale of opportunity



in the sector, an official spokesman said.

Advocating a holistic and forward-looking approach, the chief minister emphasised the need to blend conservation with commercialisation and community engagement.

"Jammu and Kashmir's vast heritage wealth must be leveraged as a dynamic engine for tourism and economic growth, while ensuring preservation of its cultural legacy," he

said, stressing the need to strengthen institutional mechanisms and develop heritage-based tourism circuits to posit Jammu and Kashmir as a premier cultural tourism destination.

He underscored the importance of learning from national and international agencies that have successfully undertaken conservation and adaptive reuse of heritage properties.

Abdullah called for structured consultations

with such stakeholders to draw upon technical expertise and professional inputs for transforming heritage sites into viable tourism assets.

The meeting also discussed in detail the proposed constitution of the Jammu and Kashmir Heritage Conservation and Preservation Authority, with emphasis on strengthening its institutional capacity and ensuring effective implementation of conservation policies, the spokesman said.

He said a detailed presentation by concerned officials highlighting the immense heritage potential of Jammu and Kashmir, encompassing both tangible and intangible assets such as monuments, forts, shrines and performing arts traditions.

## PSAJK Kupwara Reaffirms Faith in Altaf Qureshi



Observer News Service

**KUPWARA:** In the elections held for the post of District President of the Private Schools Association Jammu & Kashmir (PSAJK) Kupwara, Altaf Anjum Qureshi was once again unanimously elected as District President. The election process witnessed great enthusiasm, with members associated with private educational institutions from across the district, zonal presidents, and executive body members participating actively.

The important electoral meeting was held at My New School Dragmulla, where Zonal heads, executive members and private school promoters/representatives from different areas of the district were present. The election process was supervised by Election Convener Farooq Ashai, who ensured that the voice vote and overall procedure were conducted in a transparent and organized manner.

On this occasion, President of PSAJK, Dr. Baba Nazrul Islam, attended as the chief guest. Besides him, Chairman of Welkin

School Sopore, Inayat Hajni, along with Shakir Ashraf, Dr. Abrar Mir DP Baramulla and Mubeen Ahmad secretary PSAJK Baramulla and prominent educationists, were observers in the election process.

Speaking to the media, Dr. Baba Nazrul Islam stated that the association is conducting democratic and transparent elections across all districts to ensure that the private education sector is provided with strong and effective leadership. He added that serious efforts are being made to improve the quality of private education in Jammu & Kashmir, address the issues faced by schools, and further strengthen the educational environment.

Newly elected District President Altaf Anjum Qureshi expressed gratitude to all members and assured that he would strongly highlight the issues faced by private schools in Kupwara at every platform. He said that the association will continue its struggle for the rights of private educational institutions, improvement in the standard of education, and protection of school interests.

## Govt Mulls Inclusion of AI in School Curriculum

Observer News Service

**SRINAGAR:** The government is mulling to include Artificial Intelligence (AI) in school curriculum across Jammu and Kashmir.

According to the official notes available with KNO, authorities have said that the School Education Department has said that the introduction of AI as a subject or discipline is under active consideration in the department in alignment with NEP 2020.

Furthermore, the department has said that coding and vocational education subjects have already been introduced at different levels of schooling in a phased manner depending upon the levels of institution and availability of infrastructure, trained manpower and other requisite facilities.

It also said that the components relating to General Studies, Digital Literacy, Computer Education and vocational skill-based learning have been introduced at different levels depending on infrastructure and trained manpower.

The official notes further reveal that Computer Science, Information Practices and IT have already been introduced as separate subjects at the higher secondary level, covering Classes XI and XII.

It also reveals that vocational education with 15 trades is being implemented in high and higher secondary schools in line with the National Education Policy 2020.

**GOVERNMENT OF JAMMU AND KASHMIR**  
**OFFICE OF THE CHILD DEVELOPMENT PROJECT OFFICER ICDS PROJECT BATWARA**

**Subject: Publication of tentative merit list of advertisement notice No: 72 OF 2025 dated: 30.12.2025 of Poshan Project Batwara**

03 vacant posts of Anganwadi workers (Sangnis) has been advertised in Poshan Project Batwara vide Notice No: 72 of 2025 dated: 30.12.2025 and same was published in three local dailies viz 'Srinagar times, Iqbal e Kashmir and Gadyal to invite application from the eligible female candidates of respective wards. In wake of the above advertisement Notice against 03 vacant posts, 18 applications have been received for 03 posts from desirous candidates residing in respective wards. The tentative merit list of 18 candidates has been formulated on the basis of 12th class marks and other supporting documents which has been approved by the District level selection committee for inviting objections.

Hence the tentative merit list is hereby published in local dailies to invite objections within 07 days and no objection shall be entertained after the stipulated time line

**Ward wise tentative merit list of female candidates for the post of AWW/Sangnis in response to Advertisement Notice No. 72 of 2025 dated : 30-12-2025 (Phase 5th)**

S.No	Ward	No. of vacancies	Name of AWC	Name of candidate with parentage	Residence	Date of Birth	Qualification	Max Marks	Marks Obtained	%	Additional points
1	Ward 67 Daniham	1	Danihama B	Bisma Jan D/o Abdul Gani Rather	Mulfaq Zurabzama	21.08.2004	Graduate	500	420	84%	
2				Muskan Shafi D/o Mohammad Shafi Mir	Wanihama Payeem	17.02.2002	Graduate	500	393	79%	
3				Khushboo Rashid D/o Abdul Rashid Dar	Gasoo Hazratbal	02.07.1999	Graduate	500	385	77%	
4				Nusrat Ismail W/o Ashiq Hussain Mir	Gasoo Hazratbal	06.04.1992	Graduate	750	577	76.9%	
5				Naswheen Shafi D/o Mohammad Shafi Dar	Kral Mohalla Chhatrahama	10.09.2005	12th	500	365	73%	
6				Muskaan Shameem D/o Shameem Danihama Hazratbal	Danihama Hazratbal	05.04.2002	12th	500	337	67.4%	
7				Muskaan Nazir D/o Nazir Ahmad Thokar	Danihama Hazratbal	12.02.2004	12th	500	311	62.2%	
8				Nasreena D/o Ghulam Nabi Sheikh	Mulfaq Bon Mohalla	06.07.2000	Graduate	500	308	61.6%	
9				Nadiya Gul D/o Ghulam Mohammad Wani	Danihama Thoker Mohalla	27.11.2002	Graduate	500	264	52.8%	
10				Nusrat D/o Mohammad Sidq Magrey	Danihama	14.10.1995	Graduate	500	227	45.4%	

S.No	Ward	No. of vacancies	Name of AWC	Name of candidate with parentage	Residence	Date of Birth	Qualification	Max Marks	Marks Obtained	%
1	Ward 3 Brein	1	Mangzam G	Iqra Hilal D/o Hilal Ahmad Ganai	Ganai Mohalla Mangam Brein	26.05.2006	12th	500	485	97%
2			Sheikh Mohalla A	Shahida Mustaq D/o Mustaq Ahmad Bhat	Pahloo Brein	03.04.2004	12th	500	452	90.4%
3				Nighat Shafi D/o Mohammad Shafi Bhat	Pahloo Brein	20.10.2000	Graduate	500	417	83.4%
4				Shaista Shafi Mohd Shafi Bhat	Pahloo Brein	07.07.1998	Graduate	500	404	80.8%
5				Nida Mehraj D/o Mehraj ud Din Hafiz	Danpora Brein	11.07.2004	12th	500	343	68.6%
6				Mehraj D/o Mehraj ud Din Dar	Brein Nishat	28.06.2002	Graduate	500	301	60.2%
7				Asmat Akhter D/o Abdul Ahad Bhat	Wani Mohalla Brein	22.07.1997	12th	500	282	56.4%
8				Tabiya Hameed D/o Abdul Hameed Bhat	Pahloo Brein	21.01.2003	Graduate	500	281	56.2%

CDPO Batwara Member Secretary      D D Employment Sgr. Member      DSWO Srinagar Member

General Manager DIC Member      DPO Srinagar Chairperson

**DIPK-226-26**  
**DT: 08/04/2026**

# Bloodbath In Beirut, As Israeli Raids Kill Over 100

Israel says Iran truce doesn't apply there

**AP**  
**BEIRUT:** Israeli strikes hit several commercial and residential areas in central Beirut without warning on Wednesday, hours after a ceasefire was announced in the US-Israeli war with Iran. Lebanon said at least 112 people were killed and hundreds were wounded in what was one of the deadliest days in the latest Israel-Hezbollah war. US President Donald Trump told PBS News Hour that Lebanon was not included in the deal because of Hezbollah. When asked about Israel's latest strikes, he said, "That's a separate skirmish." Israel had said the agreement does not extend to its war with Hezbollah, although mediator Pakistan said it does. The fleeting sense of relief among Lebanese after the ceasefire announcement turned into panic with what Israel's military called its largest coordinated strike in the current war, con-

ducting 100 raids within 10 minutes in Beirut, southern Lebanon and the eastern Bekaa Valley. Black smoke towered over several parts of the seaside capital, where a huge number of people displaced by war have taken shelter. Explosions interrupted the honking of traffic on what had been a bustling, blue-sky afternoon. Ambulances raced toward open flames. Apartment buildings were struck. AP journalists saw charred bodies in vehicles and on the ground at one of Beirut's busiest intersections in the central Corniche al Mazraa neighbourhood, a mixed commercial and residential area. Using forklifts, rescue workers removed smouldering debris and sifted through ruins for survivors. In response to the attacks on Lebanon, Iran later Wednesday said it will once again halt the movement of oil tankers in the Strait of Hormuz, the country's state-run media reported.



**A deadly midday barrage**

Central Beirut has been targeted before, but not by so many strikes at once and in the middle of the day. Israel has rarely struck central Beirut since the outbreak of the latest Israel-Hezbollah war on March 2 but has regularly struck southern and eastern Lebanon and Beirut's

southern suburbs. Lebanon's Minister of Social Affairs, Haneed Sayed, condemned Israel's wide range of strikes, calling it a "very dangerous turning point." "These hits are now at the heart of Beirut ... Half of the sheltered (internally displaced people) are in Beirut in this

area," she said, adding that she had just driven by areas hit. Lebanese President Joseph Aoun called the Israeli attacks "barbaric". Lebanon's health ministry said that along with the 112 killed, at least 837 were wounded, warning that this is not the final count. Residents and local officials said that the buildings hit were civilian sites. "Look at these crimes," said Mohammed Balouza, a member of Beirut's municipal council, at the scene of a strike in Corniche al Mazraa. An apartment building behind a popular shop selling nuts and dried fruit had been hit. "This is a residential area. There is nothing (military) here."

**An Israeli warning and a defiant Hezbollah**

As the smoke rose Wednesday, Israeli Defence Minister Israel Katz warned Hezbollah leader Naim Kassem that "his turn will come". In 2024, Israel

killed Hezbollah's charismatic leader, Sayyed Hassan Nasrallah, with an airstrike. Katz called Wednesday's strikes the largest blow against Hezbollah since the attack that caused paggers used by hundreds of its members to explode almost simultaneously in September 2024. Before the new strikes, a Hezbollah official told the AP that the group was giving a chance for mediators to secure a ceasefire in Lebanon, but "we have not announced our adherence to the ceasefire since the Israelis are not adhering to it." The Hezbollah official said the group will not accept a return to the pre-March 2 status quo, when Israel carried out nearly-daily strikes in Lebanon despite a ceasefire being nominally in place since the last full-blown Israel-Hezbollah war ended in November 2024. "We will not accept for the Israelis to continue behaving as they did before this war with re-

gards to attacks," he said. Hezbollah had fired missiles across the border days after the United States and Israel attacked Iran on Feb. 28, sparking a regional war. Israel responded with widespread bombardment of Lebanon and a ground invasion. Since the war started and before Wednesday's attacks, Israeli airstrikes killed more than 1,530 people in Lebanon, including more than 100 women and 130 children. The Israeli military has said it has killed hundreds of Hezbollah fighters. More than 1 million people have been displaced in Lebanon. Early Wednesday, after the Iran ceasefire was announced and before Israel struck, many displaced people sleeping in tents on the streets of Beirut and the coastal city of Sidon had begun packing their belongings in preparation to return home. Families at a sprawling displacement camp on Beirut's waterfront later expressed confusion and despair.

## Navjot Sidhu Not in Any Political Outfit, Says Wife

**Press Trust of India**  
**CHANDIGARH:** Former Punjab MLA Navjot Kaur Sidhu, who joined political outfit Bharatiya Rashtrawadi Party (BRP), claimed on Wednesday that her husband Navjot Singh Sidhu was not part of any political outfit. Spelling out a roadmap in Punjab, the former Congress leader told reporters here that the BRP will contest the 2027 assembly polls in the state. She advocated opium cultivation if her party forms the government after the next assembly elections. Kaur, who was expelled from the Congress about two months ago, announced joining the BRP on Monday night to "lead Punjab to achieve its lost glory of being a golden state". She said her husband, former Punjab Congress chief Navjot Singh Sidhu, was away from politics.



Replying to a question about the party she joined, she said her husband Sidhu has no role in it. Asked whether her husband was still in the Congress, she said he was not in any party. "He was not called after 2022 (Punjab assembly polls). Had he been part of it, he could have been called for any meeting," she said. Asked whether Sidhu will have any role in the coming 2027 elections, she said she does not know about it. "He is working four days a week and is earning Rs 15 lakh every day," she said.

## India, Bangladesh Vow to Normalise Ties

**Press Trust of India**  
**NEW DELHI:** India and Bangladesh on Wednesday vowed to normalise their partnership following more than 18 months of unprecedented strain in relations, with External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar and his Bangladesh counterpart Khalilur Rahman agreeing to take steps to bolster ties in areas of trade, energy and people-to-people exchanges. In his meeting with Jaishankar, Rahman reiterated Bangladesh's request to extradite former prime minister Sheikh Hasina and her ex-home minister Asaduzzaman Khan Kamal as they have been convicted by the 'International Crimes Tribunal', according to a readout issued by Dhaka. At the same time, it was agreed that the issue relat-



ing to Hasina should not impact the overall trajectory of the India-Bangladesh relations, people familiar with the matter said. Shortly after landing in New Delhi on Tuesday, Rahman held wide-ranging talks with National Security Advisor Ajit Doval. It is the first high-level visit to India by a senior member of the new Bangladesh Nationalist Party government led by Prime Minister Tarique Rahman that came to power in February following the parliamentary elections. "Rahman stated that the recently elected BNP government under the leadership of Prime Minister Tarique Rahman would pursue its foreign policy in accordance with the principle of 'Bangladesh First' and on the basis of mutual trust and respect and reciprocal benefit," the Bangladeshi readout said. It said the foreign minister thanked the Indian government for apprehending the suspected killers of student

leader Shaheed Osman Hadi. "Both sides agreed that the arrested individuals will be returned to Bangladesh in accordance with the procedures laid out in the extradition treaty between the two countries," it said. A readout from the Ministry of External Affairs (MEA) was silent on the issues of Hasina and Hadi. Hasina and Kamal have been living in India after they fled Bangladesh following the collapse of the Awami League government in August 2024 in the face of a massive student-led agitation. Hadi was shot by gunmen in Dhaka last December and was subsequently taken for treatment to Singapore, where he died. The attack on Hadi had triggered huge protests in Bangladesh, with many elements trying to link India to his killing.

## India Withdraws Bid to Host COP33 Summit in 2028

**Press Trust of India**  
**NEW DELHI, APR 8 (PTI)** India has withdrawn its offer to host the United Nations annual climate Conference Of the Parties (COP33) in 2028, sources said on Wednesday. During his address at COP28 in Dubai in 2023, Prime Minister Narendra Modi had proposed India as the host country for COP33. Sources informed that the decision has been officially communicated to the concerned that India is withdrawing its bid to host COP33. There was no response from the Environment Ministry on the development. A questionnaire sent to the COP headquarters in Bonn also did not elicit a response. The right to host the annual climate COP negotiations rotates between the UN's five regional groups. This year, COP31 will be co-hosted by Türkiye and Australia -- both members of the Western Europe and Others Group -- and next year's event will be held in the capital city of Ethiopia, a representative of the African Group. In July 2025, the Environment Ministry in India had set up a dedicated COP33 Cell to address the professional and logistical requirements for the 2028 summit.

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