

## Jammu To Srinagar Vande Bharat From April 30

Semi-high-speed Train Equipped With Anti-freezing Tech



KO Web Desk

Srinagar: In a major boost to rail connectivity in Jammu and Kashmir, a specially designed Vande Bharat Express will begin operations between Jammu and Srinagar from April 30, with the existing service extended up to Jammu Tawi, officials said on Friday.

The semi-high-speed train, which has been operating between Shri Mata Vaishno Devi Katra and Srinagar for over nine months, will now run from Jammu Tawi, providing a direct rail link between the twin capitals of the Union Territory.

The inaugural run of the extended service will be flagged off as a special train from Jammu at 10:30 am on April 30, according to a notification issued by Northern Railway.

The Vande Bharat service on this route is part of the Udhampur-Srinagar-Baramulla Rail Link (USBRL), a key infrastructure project aimed at ensuring all-weather connectivity to the Kashmir Valley. The rail link was inaugurated last year, marking a significant milestone in integrating the region with the national railway network.

Officials said the train has been specially | More on P6

**OUR OBJECTIVE IS NOT ONLY TO PROVIDE FASTER** travel but also to ensure reliable all-weather connectivity. This train will strengthen the link between pilgrims visiting Vaishno Devi and the Kashmir Valley, while also giving a boost to tourism."

'LOVE AFFAIR NOT SEXUAL ASSAULT'

## HC Acquits Kulgam Man In Rape Case

KO Correspondent

Srinagar The High Court of J&K and Ladakh on Friday set aside conviction of a man from Kulgam in a rape case, holding that the prosecution failed to prove that the prosecutrix was a minor at the time of the incident.

A bench of Justice Sanjay Dhar, while allowing the appeal filed by Yawar A Bhagat, set aside the trial court's judgment and sentence order passed in March last year, awarding eight years' imprisonment under Section 376 RPC in case registered in 2018.

The trial court had acquitted the accused of kidnapping charges but convicted him for rape on the ground that the prosecutrix was below 18 years of age, making her consent immaterial. However, the High Court found that the prosecution had failed to conclusively | More on P6

## J&K Tops With GI Tags Across Crafts; Artisan Base Crosses 4.52 Lakh

KO Web Desk

Srinagar: Jammu and Kashmir has recorded over 4.52 lakh registered artisans and weavers, even as the Union Territory emerges as the only one in the country to secure Geographical Indication (GI) tags across its full range of traditional crafts, officials said.

The figures were shared during a high-level review meeting chaired by Chief Secretary Atal Dulloo to assess progress and outline the future roadmap for strengthening the handicrafts and handloom sector.

Commissioner Secretary, Industries and Commerce, Vikramjit Singh said



around 17,000 artisans and weavers were added to the registry in the past year, taking the total to over 4.52 lakh across the Union Territory. He added that about 12,600 individuals have been trained through departmental training centres.

Presenting an overview of the sector, Singh said the department is focusing on expanding

training and capacity-building initiatives in collaboration with the National Institute of Fashion Technology, including its Budgam centre, to integrate modern techniques with traditional craftsmanship. Short-term courses and diploma programmes ranging from 15 days to one year are being offered to artisans and weavers.

Reviewing the progress, the Chief Secretary stressed the need to further scale up such programmes to enhance skill levels and improve the market competitiveness of local crafts. He also noted that several project proposals have been submitted to the Government of India for | More on P6

## Collective Force Has Risen Against Drugs: LG Sinha

Says Drug Traffickers Will Face Harshest Consequences

Observer News Service

Jammu: Manoj Sinha on Friday said a "collective force" has risen across Jammu and Kashmir against drug abuse, as he launched the 'Drug-Free J&K Campaign' in Reasi and called for a sustained, society-wide movement to eliminate narcotics.

Addressing the gathering, the Lieutenant Governor said that in just 12 days of the on-going Nasha Mukh Jammu &



Kashmir Abhiyaan, communities, enforcement agencies and institutions have shown

**FOR OVER A DECADE, J&K HAS CARRIED** a heavy silence around drug abuse, and the current campaign seeks to break that silence through collective action."

a unified resolve to tackle the menace. He stressed that the campaign must evolve into a "historic movement" rooted in homes, schools, | More on P6

## 14 Held, Contraband Seized In Multi-District Raids

More Peddlers' Homes Razed In Jammu

A coordinated anti-narcotics crackdown across Kashmir led to the arrest of 14 alleged drug peddlers on Friday, as police intensified enforcement under the ongoing 100-day Nasha Mukh Jammu & Kashmir Abhiyaan. Officials said the arrests and recoveries were made during naka checking and targeted raids in multiple districts, | More on P6

## LG Pushes AI Integration In J&K Higher Education

Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha on Friday chaired a high-level meeting of the Jammu Kashmir Higher Education Council at Lok Bhavan, outlining a reform-driven roadmap to

transform the Union Territory's higher education sector. The Council deliberated on a range of measures aimed at holistic development, with key focus on the | More on P6

## Sopore Protest Fallout 6 Detained Under PSA For Vandalism, Unrest

Observer News Service

Srinagar: Six persons have been detained under the stringent Public Safety Act (PSA) in Sopore area of north Kashmir for their alleged involvement in recent student protest violence and acts of vandalism, police said on Friday.

A police spokesman said the six were booked under the PSA for disrupting public order during a protest that had erupted in Sopore earlier this month. The protest was triggered at Government Girls Higher Secondary School after a

## J&K Begins Work On Rules For Pvt Varrsities

Agencies

Srinagar: The Jammu and Kashmir Government has begun drafting rules for the implementation of The Jammu and Kashmir Private Universities Act, 2026.

Sources said that the Government has initiated the exercise of framing rules under the law.

Minister for Education Sakina Masood Ittoo said she has directed that the Rules be framed at the

earliest.

"Our government is keen that more and more private universities should be established in Jammu & Kashmir, given that we have a limited number of public universities here," she said

The Jammu and Kashmir Private Universities Bill, 2026 was passed by the J&K Assembly during the recently concluded budget session. Both the treasury benches and the opposition hailed the legislation | More on P6

## Iran FM Begins Tri-Nation Tour

Islamabad, Muscat & Moscow on Itinerary; US Talks Likely

Sajjad Hussain

Islamabad, Apr 24: Iranian Foreign Minister Abbas Araghchi on Friday said that he was travelling to Pakistan, Oman and Russia to "closely coordinate" with them on bilateral matters and consult on regional developments, reviving hopes for the second round of Iran-US peace talks to end the war in West Asia.

"Embarking on a timely tour of Islamabad, Muscat, and Moscow", Araghchi wrote on X ahead of his departure from Tehran.

"Purpose of my visits is to closely coordinate with our partners on bilateral matters and consult on regional developments. Our neighbours are our priority," he said.

Araghchi will lead a small delegation to Pakistan, Oman, and Russia on Friday to "hold bilateral consultations and discuss current developments in the region, as well as the latest situation" in the US-Iran war, the state-run IRNA news agency earlier reported.

A senior official of the Shehbaz Sharif government said that Araghchi is expected to arrive in Islamabad on Friday night with a small delegation. "Following key discussions with the Pakistani mediation team, a second round of peace talks between the US and Iran is expected to be held in Islamabad," he told PTI.

He said that a US logistics and security team is already present in Islamabad to facilitate the negotiation process.

The official | More on P6

## Kupwara Custodial Torture Case Court Frames Charges Against 7, DySP Discharged

Agencies

Srinagar: A court in Kupwara has ordered framing of charges against seven accused in a custodial torture case investigated by the Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI), while discharging a senior police officer due to lack of sufficient evidence.

The order was passed by the Principal District and Sessions Judge, Kupwara, on Friday.

According to the court record (page 1 of the order), the case relates to allegations that a police constable was subjected to illegal detention, wrongful confinement, and physical assault at the Joint Interrogation Centre

(JIC) Kupwara in February 2023.

The court observed that the material on record, including the victim's statement and medical evidence, prima facie indicates custodial violence. The order notes that injuries found on multiple parts of the body were consistent with physical assault rather than self-inflicted harm.

CCTV footage and forensic evidence were also examined during the investigation. While the footage did not cover the entire period, the court said it does not conclusively negate the prosecution's case at this stage.

The court framed charges under | More on P6

## Govt's Reply Delays Draw HC Ire, Law Secretary Asked To Appear

M Ahmad

Srinagar: The High Court of J&K and Ladakh on Friday strongly deprecated the government's repeated failure to file replies in court cases and directed the personal appearance of the Law Secretary

to explain lapses and outline corrective measures. A bench of Justice Wasim Sadiq Nargal urged the government to devise a time-bound system ensuring prompt transmission of records to counsel, timely drafting and filing of replies, monitoring of pending cases, and fixation of responsibility on erring officers.

"Such a mechanism

would not only facilitate effective representation of the Government before the Courts, but also obviate the necessity of passing coercive orders and safeguard public interest," the court observed.

The observations were made by the court while hearing a case pending since June 14, 2023. The court noted that despite multiple opportunities including a final opportunity granted on October 31, 2025, the respondents failed to file their reply, leading to closure of their right on November 28, last year.

When the matter was taken up on April 22, neither the case | More on P6

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# New TB Vaccines Safe But May Not Protect Against All Forms Of Infection: Study

Press Trust Of India

**T**he two new tuberculosis vaccines could be safe for use in adults and children in India but may not provide protection against all forms of the infectious bacterial disease, according to phase-3 trial results published in The British Medical Journal. Phase-3, a randomised clinical trial, is a final-stage study that compares a new treatment against a current

a non-infectious version of the pathogen. The researchers said while the BCG vaccine is effective against severe forms of TB in young children, it does not offer protection for adolescents and adults. Over 12,700 household contacts -- aged six and above -- of TB patients from 18 sites across six states and Union territories, including Delhi, Maharashtra and Tamil Nadu, between July 2019 and December 2020 were analysed. The participants were randomly assigned



**The trials also found that while neither vaccine offered general protection against TB or prevented latent TB infection, both demonstrated an ability to prevent the progression to active TB in those who developed latent TB.**

to receive a dose of either VPM1002, Immuvac, or a placebo (4,239 in each group) and were followed up for 38 months. A second dose was administered to 11,829 participants one month later. A total of 12,295 participants (96.7 per cent of those enrolled) completed 38 months of follow-up. Both vaccines were found to be safe and induced an immune response. "Both vaccines were safe but did not show any efficacy against all forms of microbiologically confirmed TB or pulmonary TB," the authors wrote. The trials also found that while neither vaccine offered general protection against TB or prevented latent TB infection, both demonstrated an ability to prevent the progression to active TB in those who developed latent TB. However, VPM1002 showed an effectiveness (50.4 per cent) against extrapulmonary TB across all age groups, including those aged 36-60 years -- the result suggests a potentially significant public health benefit, as extrapulmonary TB which affects organs beyond the lungs is often associated with a higher risk of mortality than pulmonary TB, the researchers said. Among children, the VPM1002 provided protection against all TB, pulmonary and extrapulmonary, in the six to under-14 age group, while Immuvac provided protection against extrapulmonary TB only in the six to under-10 age group. However, neither vaccine protected children and adults who were underweight, suggesting that nutritional support may be needed along with vaccination, especially for younger children, the authors said.

procedure to determine safety and efficacy. Researchers, including those from the Indian Council of Medical Research (ICMR) in Delhi, conducted the PreVenTB trial to assess the safety and efficacy of the two new vaccines -- VPM1002 and Immuvac -- in lowering incidence of tuberculosis (TB). In India, the Bacillus Calmette-Guérin (BCG) vaccine is administered to infants at birth to prevent TB. VPM1002 is a recombinant BCG vaccine developed by Serum Life Science Europe GmbH, a Germany-based pharmaceutical company. A recombinant vaccine makes use of genetic engineering to produce antigens from a pathogen to trigger an immune response. Immuvac is developed by the ICMR and Ahmedabad-based Cadila Pharmaceuticals and is an inactivated vaccine made using

## PUBLIC NOTICE

I, MOHD SHAFI S/O MOHAMMAD MAQBOOL GANIE R/O ASHAM BANDIPORA SAFA PORA KASHMIR am applying for contractor Card-Dee class in the office of the JKPCD chief office Bemina Srinagar anybody having any objection may please contact above mentioned department within a period of seven days after that No objection will be entertained

ab

## PUBLIC NOTICE

I state that my son's Aadhaar Card bearing number 742527131102 contains an error in his name. Due to a mistake, his surname was not included. His correct and full name is Burhan Ashraf Rather, whereas it is currently mentioned as Burhan Ashraf. I therefore request you to kindly make the necessary correction and update his name accordingly.

Correct Detail:  
Name: Burhan Ashraf Rather JMA  
S/o: Mohammad Ashraf Rather  
Address: Ishber Nishat, Srinagar

## SHRI LAL BHADUR SHASTRI NATIONAL SANSKRIT UNIVERSITY

(Central University)

B-4, Qutab Institutional Area, New Delhi-110016

The University invites online applications for regular recruitment to various categories of non-teaching positions. For details, please visit the University website <https://www.slbrsv.ac.in>.

The last date for receipt of online application is 21.05.2026.

REGISTRAR  
Cbe 21371/11/0001/2627

## PUBLIC NOTICE

I, Shafiqat Ara D/o Ghulam Ahmad Khan, R/o Baharestan Kawarhama, Tehsil Kawarhama, District Baramulla, hereby inform the general public that the name of my ward has been wrongly recorded in Aadhaar Card bearing No. 6084 1109 504 as AISHA. The correct name of my ward is AISHA SHAFQAT as per Domicile Certificate records. Hence, this notice is issued for correction of name. Any person having any objection may file the same within 7 days from the date of publication of this notice. Failing which, the name shall be treated as AISHA SHAFQAT for all official purposes.

Sd/-  
Shafiqat Ara  
R/o Baharestan Kawarhama, Baramulla

fko

## PUBLIC NOTICE

My daughter's Name has been Wrongly Mentioned in my schools records as Shahlla Amein instead of SHAHLLA AMIN. Now I want to make necessary corrections in schools records at Scholars School Natipora. In this regard if anybody having any objections may file same in the School within the period of seven days after that no objections shall be entertained.

Mdl

## Office of the Naib Tehsildar Pattan..

Sub.. Application of Bilal Bin Ashraf s/o Mohammad Ashraf Najar R/o Pattan for issuance of OBC certificate in favour of self.

Public Notice...

IT is inform to general public that applicants OBC certificate is under process in this office in this matter report was sought from Patwari concerned which reveals that Applicant is residing in village Pattan with his father and applicant belongs to Najar caste. The monthly income of applicant is Rs 6000 . The applicant's consists of Five members. In this connection if anybody 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.. Application of Faizan Shabir s/o Shabir Ahmad Hajam R/o Hanjiwera for issuance of OBC certificate in favour of self.

Public Notice..

IT is inform to general public that applicants OBC certificate is under process in this office in this matter report was sought from Patwari concerned which reveals that applicant is residing in village Hanjiwera and applicant belongs to Hajam caste. The monthly income of applicant's family is Rs 6000 . The applicant family consists of five members. In this connection if anybody 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

## PUBLIC NOTICE

I, Haroon Rashid S/o Abdul Rashid Mir, R/o Tapper Waripora, hereby inform the general public that I have applied for issuance of D-Class Contractor Card

Any person having any claim or objection regarding the said card may contact the concerned office within 7 days from the date of publication of this notice.

If no claim is received within the stipulated period, the same shall be treated as null and void

Sd/-  
Haroon Rashid  
R/o Tapper Waripora  
Contact: 7006808741

## PUBLIC NOTICE

I, Arif Rasheed Dar S/o Abdul Rasheed Dar, R/o Kunzer, Tehsil Kunzer, District Baramulla, hereby inform the general public that the name of my ward has been wrongly recorded in Aadhaar Card bearing No. 8654 4133 3645 as IFFAEM UL ISLAM BIN ARIF.

The correct name of my ward is IFFAEM ARIF DAR as per official Birth Certificate records. Hence, this notice is issued for correction of name. If any person has any objection, the same may be conveyed within 7 days from the date of publication of this notice. Failing which, the name shall be treated as IFFAEM ARIF DAR for all official purposes.

Sd/-  
Arif Rasheed Dar  
R/o Kunzer, Baramulla

## PUBLIC NOTICE

I, Mohd Lateef Mir S/o Habib Ullah Mir, R/o Khai Pora Bala, Tehsil Tangmarg, District Baramulla, hereby inform the general public that the name of my ward has been wrongly recorded in Aadhaar Card bearing No. 4432 8169 6105 as ILHAM LATIF.

The correct name of my ward is ILHAM LATEEF as per School Certificate records. Hence, this notice is issued for correction of name. Any person having any objection may file the same within 7 days from the date of publication of this notice. Failing which, the name shall be treated as ILHAM LATEEF for all official purposes.

Sd/-  
Mohd Lateef Mir  
R/o Khai Pora Bala, Tangmarg, Baramull

## PUBLIC NOTICE

My name has been wrongly written in my service book and Regularization order as Gh Mohammad Sofi S/o Mohamad Sabir Sofi while my correct name as per DOB certificate is Gh Mohammad Sofi S/o Mohd Saber Sofi R/o Baba Khaippora tehsil Kunzer Dist. Baramulla . Now I have applied for the correction of the same if anybody has any objection in this regard he/she may file them in the concerned office within seven days. After that no objection shall be entertained.

Gh Mohammad Sofi  
S/o Mohd Saber Sofi  
R/o Baba Khaippora tehsil Kunzer Dist. Baramulla

FKO

## PUBLIC NOTICE

I have lost my Driving licence bearing no: 1669/R/23/2/2001 issued by RTO Rajouri wh while travelling from Kunzer to Hardu Aboora . Now I have applied for the duplicate of the same if anybody has any objection in this regard he/she may file them in the concerned office within seven days. After that no objection shall be entertained.

Manzoor Ahmad Gojri  
S/o Abdul Raheem Gojri  
R/o Hardu ABOORA Kawarhama

fko

## PUBLIC NOTICE

I, Hilal Ahmad Bhat, S/o Habibullah Bhat, R/o Hardu Bani, Tehsil Kunzer, District Baramulla, J&K, hereby inform that my Date of Birth is 17-04-1986, born at Hardu Bani, Tehsil Kunzer. The same has not been registered earlier.

Now, I intend to register my Date of Birth with the concerned authorities for issuance of a Birth Certificate. If anybody has any objection, they may file the same before the concerned authority within 7 days from the date of publication of this notice.

Sd/-  
Hilal Ahmad Bhat

fko

## PUBLIC NOTICE

I, Nazir Ahmad Palla, R/o Dangerpora, Tehsil Pattan, District Baramulla, J&K, hereby inform the general public that my daughter's name has been wrongly recorded as "Roonak Nazir" in the school records of M.M.K.S Public High School Nehalpora, Pattan. Her correct and actual name is "Ronak Nazir". Both names refer to one and the same person. The error is purely clerical in nature. Concerned authorities may kindly take note and make necessary corrections in official records.

Sd/-  
Nazir Ahmad Palla  
(Father of Ronak Nazir)

fko

## Office of the Naib Tehsildar Pattan

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

## PUBLIC NOTICE

The registrar birth EO MC pattan has submitted a case file pertaining to birth of Imaad Ibnni Imtiyaz s/o Imtiyaz Ahmad Ganie R/o Sheerpora bangil with verified date of birth 03/03/2023 occurred at SDH pattan in this connection if any body having objection for issuance of said certificate he may contact to this office within 04 days after that no objection shall be entertained.

Sd  
Naib Tehsildar Pattan

fko

## PUBLIC NOTICE

This is information for the general public that I MOHD RAMEEZ RAJA Son of BHAT HAMID ULLAH Prop. of BARKAT ROAD CONSTRUCTION CO., am holder of BEE class contractor issued by Superintendent Engineer R & B SB/BEE/1251 of 2018-19, BEE to (A) change class.. If any body having any objection regarding the same they may submit their objection written to the Chief Engineer Civil investigation wing JKPCD, Bemina Srinagar within a period of 7 days from the date of this notice. No objection will be entertained after that.

MOHD RAMEEZ RAJA  
S/O BHAT HAMID ULLAH  
R/O KHADERMOH PAMPORE .

mcb

## PUBLIC NOTICE

This is information for the general public that in my passport bearing No N6930175 the Spouse name is entered as SHANI BHAT while her actual name is SHANI RASHID. Now i want its correction, in this regard if anybody having any objection may contact Regional Passport Officer Srinagar with in a period of seven days. No objection shall be entertained after that.

SHOWKAT AHMAD BHAT  
S/O NOOR MOHAMMAD BHAT  
R/O SIR SYED ABAD WANBAL RAWALPORA SRINAGAR  
PIN 190005

mcb

## PUBLIC NOTICE

This is information for the general public that in Birth Certificate of my son the name is entered as RAHIL ABASS while his actual name is RAHIL ABASS DAR. Now i want its correction, in this regard if anybody having any objection may contact EXECUTIVE OFFICER MUNICIPAL COUNCIL BUDGAM with in a period of seven days. No objection shall be entertained after that.

SHAHEEN HUSSAIN DAR  
F/O RAHIL ABASS DAR  
R/O ICHIGAM BUDGAM  
CELL. 9596167724

mcb

## POLICE TRANSPORT WORKSHOP SRINAGAR.

### QUOTATION

Fresh Sealed quotations addressed to Sr. Superintendent of Police, Police Transport Workshop Srinagar, marked with "quotation for used Engine oil for the year 2025-2026" are invited from such dealers who are dealing with purchase of used Engine Oil which is being drained out from Auto Mobile vehicles at periodic engine oil changes. The firms located within Srinagar Municipal Council Limits and dealing in such trade can apply.

### The terms and conditions are detailed below:-

- The successful quotationer has to keep empty barrel of 210 liters capacity at the workshop service station Police Transport Workshop premises, Police Control Room Complex Srinagar as container for used Engine Oil.
- Rates should be quoted per 210 litres of used Engine Oil without cost of container.
- Used Engine Oil in barrel is to be lifted from workshop premises within two days after supplier is informed by this office about the availability of used Engine Oil.
- The successful dealer will be allowed to lift the used Engine Oil barrel/barrels from the workshop premises only after deposition of approved cost with the Accounts Section under proper Govt. Receipt.
- No payment will be accepted in the shape of bank draft or cheque and the payment is to be made in cash.
- The quotations with mutilation or cuttings will not be accepted.
- The last date for reception of quotations is 02/05/2026 up to 1600 hrs.
- The quotations will be opened in the office chamber of undersigned on 04-05-2026 at 1100 hrs in presence of each tendered person or their authorized representatives who may like to be present. If it falls any holiday, the next working day will be the date for opening of these quotations.
- Undersigned shall reserve the right to accept or reject any quotation without assigning any reasons thereof.

NO. PTWS/Acctts/2026-1995-2000  
DIPK-734/26  
DATED: 24-04-2026

(JAVID AHMAD SOFIA LINK DDO)  
For Sr. Superintendent of Police,  
PTWS-Srinagar.

## GOVERNMENT OF JAMMU AND KASHMIR TOWN CENSUS OFFICER QAZIGUND

Subject:- Self-Enumeration for Census 2027, Municipal Committee Qazigund

### PUBLIC NOTICE

The Municipal Committee Qazigund hereby informs all residents within its jurisdiction that the first phase of Census 2027, comprising House Listing and Housing Census, will be conducted across the Union Territory of Jammu & Kashmir from 01 June 2026 to 30 June 2026.

To ensure convenience, transparency, and wider participation, the Government has launched the Self-Enumeration Portal, enabling citizens to submit their household details online from the comfort of their homes.

### Self-Enumeration Period:- 17 May 2026 to 31 May 2026

All inhabitants residing within the limits of Municipal Committee Qazigund are earnestly requested to avail this facility and complete their self-enumeration within the prescribed dates.

Official Portal  
<https://se.census.gov.in>

### Steps for Self-Enumeration

- Visit the official Self-Enumeration Portal.
- Using your mobile number, register.
- Carefully fill in household and individual details.
- Verify all information before final submission.
- Submit the form and save the reference number for future use.

### Important Appeal

Citizens are respectfully urged to furnish correct, complete, and truthful information. Accurate Census records are vital for effective planning, equitable resource distribution, and sustainable development of our community.

This initiative reflects the Government's commitment to ease, transparency, and citizen empowerment in the Census process.

### For Assistance

In case of any difficulty, please contact the Census Cell of this office at:

7006072619 7889911625 9858334443

### Final Reminder

All residents of Municipal Committee Qazigund are requested to extend full cooperation and complete the process within the stipulated time. Your participation ensures that the Census 2027 truly reflects the voice and identity of our people.

NO:-MC/Qzd/2026/census-2027/975-80  
DIPK-NB-242/26  
Dated: 24/04/2026

Chage Census officer  
Municipal Committee Qazigund

## Lift Collapse Injures Six Tourists in a Hotel

Observer News Service

Srinagar: Six tourists from Bengaluru were injured after a lift reportedly collapsed at a hotel in the Hyderpora area of Srinagar on Friday, and were later shifted to Bone and Joint Hospital Barzulla for treatment, officials said.

The incident occurred at Hotel Arison Luxury in Hyderpora, where the group was staying. The injured were brought to the hospital with varying degrees of leg and lower body injuries. All patients were reported to be stable, according to information received.

The injured have been identified as Vinkatesh, 65, son of Muni Thimmaiah; D. Mangula, 54, wife of

R.L. Murthy; Kushalla, 18, daughter of Jayaram; Pan-kaja, 16; Venkatalakshamma, 60, wife of Chinnya; and Sowbhagya, 60, wife of Vinkatesh. All are residents of Bengaluru and were temporarily staying at the hotel at the time of the incident.

According to KNT, the circumstances leading to the lift collapse were not immediately clear, and no official statement has been issued by the hotel management so far. The incident has raised concerns about safety standards in hospitality establishments, particularly those catering to tourists.

Further details are awaited as authorities are expected to ascertain the cause of the malfunction and determine whether any negligence was involved.

## Search Continues for Youth who Jumped into Jhelum

Observer News Service

Srinagar: Rescue teams on Friday continued an extensive search operation in river Jhelum to trace an 18-year-old youth who had jumped into the water from Budshah Bridge in Srinagar's Lal Chowk area late Wednesday night, officials said.

They said that in another incident, another man was rescued after a fresh jump attempt at the same spot within 24 hours.

Officials told KNO that the search for missing youth was continued for the third straight day in Jhelum.

They said teams of State Disaster Response Force (SDRF) carried out searches throughout the day at multiple locations along the river stretch, but the youth could not be traced.

An SDRF official said the operation was suspended in the evening due to low visibility and will resume on Saturday morning with

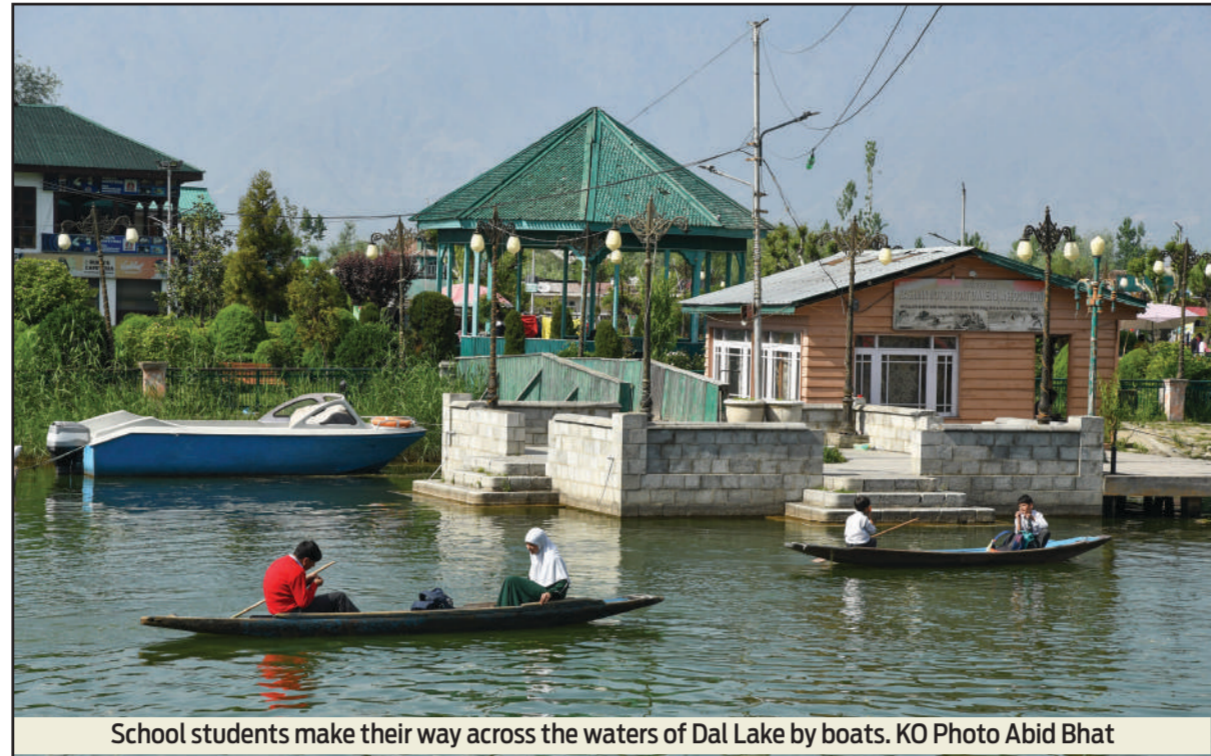
the first light of day.

The missing person was later identified as Mohd Qurash Sadaqi (18), son of Nawab Sadaqi, a resident of Uttar Pradesh, presently staying at Chattabal, Srinagar.

The incident had occurred late Wednesday when the youth allegedly climbed the railing of Budshah Bridge and jumped into the river, prompting an immediate rescue response. CCTV footage of the incident later surfaced on social media.

Meanwhile, in another incident on Thursday, a major tragedy was averted after SDRF personnel rescued a 27-year-old man who had jumped into the Jhelum from the same bridge.

Officials said the rescue teams were already deployed at Budshah Bridge for the ongoing search operation when they noticed the man jumping into the river and swiftly pulled him out alive. He was later handed over to the police for further legal formalities.



School students make their way across the waters of Dal Lake by boats. KO Photo Abid Bhat

## Water Supply to Remain Disrupted in Many Srinagar Areas

Observer News Service

Srinagar: Many parts of Srinagar city are set to face a 36-hour disruption in potable water supply from April 25 to April 26, following urgent repair works on the Sindh Power Canal (Phase II) by CMD Ganderbal, the Water Works Division Srinagar said in a public notice.

The notice issued by office of the Executive Engineer Water Works Division Srinagar, reads the shutdown will affect raw water supply to the Alusteng and Rangil treatment plants, impacting several major residential and adjoining areas across the city.

The authorities have also advised residents to store adequate water in advance and assured that control room facilities will remain operational round the clock for assistance.

"The general public is hereby informed that, due to urgent repair works of the Sindh Power Canal (Phase IInd) scheduled to be carried out by CMD Ganderbal on 25th & 26th April 2026, the raw water supply to the Water Treatment Plants Alusteng and Rangil are likely to be affected," it reads.

"Consequently, the potable water supply in major parts of Srinagar City and adjoining areas may experience disruption for approximately 36 hours,

commencing from 6:00 A.M on Saturday (25.04.2026) to 6:00 P.M on Sunday (26.04.2026). The inconvenience caused is deeply regretted," it reads.

The order reads, the affected areas include: Zakoora, Gulab Bagh, Alusteng, Khalmulla, Habak, Naseem Bagh, Busserbugh, Malla Bagh, Pandach, Buchpora, Soura, Anchar, Bohluchpora, Zoonimar, Nowshera, Bagh I Ali Mardan Khan, Zadibal, Hawal, Alamgari

Mahrajgunj, Zaina Kadal, Saidpora, Firdous Abad, Parts of Batmaloo, Qamarwari and adjacent areas.

"General Public is hereby notified through the medium of this notice to store sufficient supply of water to meet the demands. For any complaints/grievances regarding scarcity / shortage of water supply, general public are requested to contact the PHE Provincial Control Room which remains func-

**"The general public is hereby informed that, due to urgent repair works of the Sindh Power Canal (Phase IInd) scheduled to be carried out by CMD Ganderbal on 25th & 26th April 2026, the raw water supply to the Water Treatment Plants Alusteng and Rangil are likely to be affected"**

Bazar, Rajouri Kadal, Nallahmar, Nawakadal, Bohori Kadal, Nowhatta, Lal Bazar, Hazratbal, Sadribal, Nigeen, Saida Kadal, Parts of Rainawari, Khanyar, Nowpora, Nawab Bazar, Ganpatyar, Habba Kadal, Baghwanpora, Basant Bagh, Chota Bazar, Karan Nagar, Chattabal, Kawdara, Eidgah,

tional round the clock for the service of the general public."

It further reads, the Contact Numbers of Provincial Control Room Water Works Div. Sgr. are as under: 0194-2477207, 0194-2452047 (Landline Numbers) and 9419413914, 9419413915 (WhatsApp Numbers)

## Police Deploy Narcotic Dog Squad to Crack Down on Drug Trafficking

Observer News Service

Srinagar: Police in Srinagar have deployed the narcotic dog squad across multiple city locations to crack down on drug trafficking, a police official said on Friday.

During this special drive under the Nasha Mukh Bharat Abhiyan, trained

sniffer dogs have been positioned at key checkpoints to detect concealed narcotics, identify and arrest drug peddlers, he said.

The official said deploying highly trained canines enhances on-the-spot detection capabilities and strengthens ground-level enforcement.

He said the proactive ini-

tiative is a vital component of the Srinagar police's strategy to dismantle narcotics supply networks and establish a strong deterrent against drug-related activities.

According to PTI, the police also continued awareness campaigns to educate the public and reinforce the collective resolve towards a drug-free society.

## Srinagar CAT Summons Official in Salary Case Non-Compliance

Observer News Service

Srinagar: The Central Administrative Tribunal (CAT) Srinagar has expressed concern over continued non-compliance of its earlier judgment in a salary-related case and directed the personal appearance of a senior official to ensure implementation.

The direction came in a contempt petition filed by Ghulam Mustafa Mantoo against the General Ad-

ministration Department, where the applicant alleged that the judgment passed in his favor had not been implemented despite being upheld by the High Court.

The tribunal noted that despite assurances from the government side to file compliance within a stipulated time, the response submitted was repetitive and did not address the core issue of implementing the order.

It observed that com-

pliance of a court judgment is essential, stating that without execution, a judgment would remain "a simple piece of paper."

During the hearing, counsel for the applicant submitted that the delay in compliance was causing hardship, including non-release of salary. The applicant had also provided an undertaking that any payment would remain subject to the outcome of related proceedings.

## Police Lead Anti-Drug Rally in Nishat

Observer News Service

Srinagar: An anti-drug awareness rally was organized in the Brein-Nishat area of Srinagar on Friday, with participation from local youth, fitness groups, and police officials.

The rally was conducted by Muscle Factory Gym Nishat in collaboration with Nishat Police Station under the supervision of

SHO Parvaiz Ahmad. The march commenced from Syed Rehman Sahib in Brein and proceeded towards Brein Bazar.

According to KNT, Participants raised awareness about the harmful effects of drug abuse and emphasized the need for collective responsibility in addressing the issue. The rally saw active involvement of local residents and young participants, reflect-

ing growing community engagement on the issue.

Police officials highlighted the importance of preventive outreach alongside enforcement measures, stating that public participation is key to building a drug-free society.

The initiative forms part of ongoing efforts in the area to promote awareness and discourage substance abuse through community-based programs.

### Government of Jammu & Kashmir (UT) OFFICE OF THE ZONAL EDUCATION OFFICER, SHANGUS NOTIFICATION

**Subject: Final Selection List of the candidate for the post of Seasonal Educational Volunteer for the year 2025-26 advertised vide this office notification no: ZEO/S/SmS/Seasonal/4723-26/2026, dated: 21/01/2026.**

Whereas, Zonal Education Officer Shangus advertised 01 post of Seasonal Educational Volunteer in the already approved Seasonal Centre for the Year 2026 vide this office notification no.: ZEO/S/SmS/Seasonal/4723-26/2026, dated: 21/01/2026 and only one application form was received by this office till cut-off date (31.01.2026) against 01 approved Post accrued due to Resignation of existing SEV.

Whereas, the existing Zonal Level Selection Committee framed vide No: ZEO/S/SmS/781-84/2025 dated: 11/11/2025, thoroughly scrutinized/ verified the entire process strictly as per the guidelines and prepared the Tentative selection list.

As Such, the Tentative Selection has been prepared in accordance with the Orders of Chief Education Officer Anantnag vide No: CEO/A/SmS/17552-53/25, dated: 05.03.2025 and norms/guidelines of Directorate of SAMAGRA SHIKSHA, J&K vide Order No: 1684 of 2021, dated: 07.12.2021 including the selection criteria of 2006, dated: 23.05.2006.

Whereas, the Tentative Selection prepared, notified as per "Annexure to the notification" vide no: NO:ZEO/S/SmS/Seasonal/4893/2026, Dated: 12.03.2026 and accordingly published for the information of general public and all concerned. Whereas' this office has not received any kind of objections/ claims after publishing Tentative Selection List till date.

**Now, The Final Selection is prepared in accordance with the guidelines/norms of Directorate of SAMAGRA SHIKSHA, J&K. No claim(s) hereof shall be entertained/considered from the date of publication of this notification.**

#### Annexure:

S.No	Name of the Approved Seasonal Centre	Name of the Applicant	Father's Name	Permanent Address	D.O.B
1	WARDBAL THIMRAN	ASIF ALI BHAT	ALI MUHAMMAD BHAT	THIMRAN	20.10.2006

The selection is subject to the fulfilment of the following conditions that:

- The Final Selection List shall be subject to the production of all documents in original by the selected candidates at the time of joining the post for verification.
- There is nothing adverse against the selectees from VOK/Crime/Police or any other agency.
- The Enrolment will be verified as per PEN No/ U-Dise and other intact guidelines for establishment of the Seasonal Centre, which could lead to non-establishment/closure of the Centre.
- Engagement Orders will not be issued till on spot Physical verification of Location of the approved Seasonal Centre.
- The monthly Attendance as per devised format issued by concerned/ Nearest HOIs will be entertained only after duly countersigned by Head of the Physical Verification Committee.
- Overlapping of anyone of the Approved Seasonal Centre shall be liable to on-spot Closure.
- The details of migratory children shall be recorded by HOIs concerned. Accordingly, On spot Physical verification of concerned Schools will be made where from Children migrate to Seasonal Centres. Strict action will be taken against the delinquent HOIs.

NO:ZEO/S/SmS/Seasonal/5094-96/2026  
Dated: 22.04.2026

S/d,  
Zonal Education Officer  
Shangus

DIPK-742/26  
DATED: 24-04-2026

- TRAFFIC POLICE : 941993745, 01998-266686
- PCR: 0194-2452092, 2455883
- PDD: 0194-2450213
- FIRE AND EMERGENCY SERVICES : 2479488, 2452222, 2452155
- CAPD: 18001807011
- SMC HEALTH OFFICER: 9469409081
- Ambulance: Kashmir EMS Service: +91 94841 00200

**AIRPORTS**  
SHIEK UL ALAM AIRPORT: 01942303311

**RAILWAYS**

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

**HIGHWAY STATUS**

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

**HIJRI CALENDAR**  
07 Zil-Qadah  
1447

PRAYERS	
FAJR	4: 18
ZUHR	12:29
ASR	5: 14
Magrib	7:13
ISHA	8: 40

### This Day In History

- 1185 - Sea battle at Dan-no-ura: Minamoto Yoritomo beats Taira family
- 1507 - German cartographer Martin Waldseemüller first to use the name America on his world map "Universalis Cosmographia"
- 1607 - Battle at Gibraltar: Dutch fleet beats Spanish/ Portuguese fleet
- 1626 - Battle at the Dessau bridge: Albrecht von Wallenstein beats Ernst von Mansfeld
- 1678 - French troops conquer Ypres
- 1684 - Patent granted for thimble
- 1684 - Patent granted for thimble
- 1707 - Battle of Almansa; Franco-Spanish forces defeat British and Portuguese
- 1861 - Battle of Lavaca, Texas (US Civil War)
- Jones & Harry Greenbacks musical premieres in London
- 1846 - Thornton Affair: Open conflict begins over the disputed border of Texas, triggering the Mexican-American War.
- 1859 - Ground broken for Suez Canal
- 1861 - Battle of Lavaca, Texas (US Civil War)
- 1898 - Spanish-American War: The United States declares state of war on Spain effective from 21st April.
- 1905 - Whites win right to vote in South Africa
- 1914 - US President Woodrow Wilson is persuaded by Argentina, Brazil, and Chile to accept mediation in the conflict with Mexico
- 1926 - Persian Cossack officer Reza Khan crowns himself Shah Palawi
- 1927 - Spain routes 20,000 soldiers to Morocco (uprising Rifkabylen)
- 1941 - Operation Merkur: Hitler orders conquest of Kreta
- 1945 - Allied air raid on Surabaya, Java
- 1945 - British troops reach Grebbe line Neth
- 1945 Red army completely surrounds Berlin
- 1945 - Last Boeing B-17 attack against Nazi Germany
- 1957 - 1st experimental sodium nuclear reactor operated
- 1957 - Ibrahim Hashim forms Jordanian government
- 1959 - Then-bishop Karol Wojtyła's celebrates newly completed Nowa Huta, Poland's first ever Mass at midnight of Christmas morning

### A Message of Condolence from Sheikh Anis Musa, Orphans In Need

Inna lillahi wa inna ilayhi raji'un.

It is with deep shock and profound sadness that we extend our heartfelt condolences to all at Darul Muhsinat and to the family of our beloved sister, who has returned to her Lord while in service of orphaned children.

Our sister devoted herself to caring for some of the most vulnerable in our society. As a cook in the children's home, she did far more than prepare meals. She nurtured, comforted, and brought dignity to children who have already endured hardship. Her service was sincere, consistent, and filled with quiet mercy.

The Messenger of Allah said: "I and the one who cares for an orphan will be together in Paradise like this," and he held his two fingers together. (Sahih al-Bukhari)

Her daily work reflected this noble . She honoured the orphan not through words alone, but through her actions, every single day.

Allah says in the Qur'an: **"So as for the orphan, do not oppress him."** (93:9)

She lived this command with sincerity and compassion.

On behalf of Orphans In Need, I extend my deepest sympathies to her family, her colleagues, and every child whose life she touched. Her passing is a great loss, but her legacy is one of service, mercy, and care that will continue to live on.

She returned to her Lord while serving others, in a state of care and compassion. We ask Allah to accept this as a noble end, to envelop her in His mercy, and to grant her the highest ranks in Jannatul Firdaus. May her grave be filled with light, her deeds weigh heavy on her scale, and may she be reunited with the righteous in the hereafter.

May Allah grant patience and strength to her family and loved ones during this difficult time.

Sheikh Anis Musa  
Founder & Chair  
Orphans In Need

# Kashmir's Brain Gain

After decades of student migration, Jammu and Kashmir moves to build its own higher-education economy.



Dr. Aijaz Ahmad Bhat

Every autumn, thousands of families in Jammu and Kashmir perform the same painful ritual.

Suitcases fill with woollens, medicines, dried vegetables, prayer beads, and homemade food packed with care. Parents walk their children to buses, trains, and airports, then return to homes that suddenly feel empty.

Education has demanded separation for far too long in Kashmir. Opportunity lived elsewhere, and families paid the emotional price.

The passage of the Private Universities Bill in the Jammu and Kashmir Assembly changes that story in a profound way.

This legislation opens the door to campuses, jobs, investment, and research. More importantly, it restores something many Kashmiri families have missed for decades: the chance to build a future without sending their children away.

Chief Minister Omar Abdullah understood the depth of this crisis. Kashmir's young people deserved more than speeches about potential. They needed institutions that treated their ambitions seriously. MLA Qaysar Lone pushed that vision into law with political clarity and persistence. Their effort addressed a truth every family in the valley already knew.

A student from Lolab, Kupwara, Kulgam, or Bandipora deserves access to strong universities close to home. Education should strengthen a society rather than scatter it.

Families in Kashmir have spent years speaking softly about the experiences their children faced in distant cities. Students found themselves isolated in hostels where their customs invited suspicion. Ramzan became especially painful for many.

Young men and women searched for Sehri meals before dawn and struggled to arrange Iftari after sunset. Some encountered hostility from administrators or ridicule from classmates who viewed them through the lens of politics rather than humanity.

Academic success becomes difficult when a student spends each day proving he belongs.

Universities inside Jammu and Kashmir offer something larger than convenience. They give students an environment that understands their language, faith, food, and lived experience. A young person studies better in a place where identity feels accepted rather than questioned.

Mothers throughout Kashmir know the measure of distance better than any government report ever could. Many sleep lightly, started by late-night phone calls and news alerts from cities hundreds of miles away. Fathers borrow heavily to pay hostel fees, rent, transport costs, and private tuition outside the valley. Families sacrifice land, savings, and security so their children can earn degrees elsewhere.



“Behind every statistic stands a deeply human story. A daughter studies close enough to commute from home each morning. A father educates both children without falling into debt. Grandparents watch grandchildren grow up nearby instead of through phone screens. Students practice their faith openly in campuses that understand their traditions instinctively.”

This bill directly addresses that burden.

Kashmir has exported talent for decades. Apples, saffron, and handicrafts brought income to the region. Brilliant young minds often left permanently. Thousands of students travelled to Delhi, Bengaluru, Pune, Chandigarh, and Lucknow because higher education options remained limited at home.

Careers grew in those cities, professional networks formed there, and lives settled there.

Kashmir lost generation after generation of educated youth to places that never truly understood the valley.

The Private Universities Bill creates the possibility of reversing that flow. Kashmir can now build an economy that attracts talent instead of losing it.

The promise of 30,000 jobs explains why this legislation matters so deeply. Those jobs represent teachers, researchers, accountants, lab technicians, librarians, admissions officers, wardens, drivers, security staff, electricians, cooks, and

software professionals. Each position changes a household.

Picture a young MBA graduate from Sogam in Lolab. A few years ago, he likely would have searched for work in another state, sharing cramped apartments and visiting home only during holidays. Private universities create another path entirely.

That same graduate can now teach, manage, or work in administration within his own district. He earns a salary near family, supports aging parents directly, and builds a life inside the community that raised him.

Multiply that story by thousands. Economic change spreads quickly when institutions anchor themselves locally. Money once spent on rent and transport outside Kashmir now circulates inside neighbourhood markets.

Shopkeepers near campuses gain steady business. Tea stalls fill with students between classes. Bakers, stationery stores, taxi drivers, internet providers, and landlords all ben-

efit from a growing academic ecosystem.

Construction alone will transform many communities. Campuses require roads, housing, libraries, laboratories, cafeterias, and hostels. Carpenters, masons, plumbers, painters, and labourers gain reliable contracts that support entire families.

Farmers also stand to benefit in practical ways. Universities need vegetables, rice, dairy products, poultry, and meat for thousands of students and staff. Local procurement gives farmers dependable buyers and predictable income. Education becomes directly tied to rural prosperity.

The bill also creates an opportunity few people discussed seriously until now: Kashmir as an international education destination.

That possibility sounds ambitious only because the valley spent decades trapped inside narratives of conflict. Kashmir already possesses the raw ingredients of a strong academic center. Students interested in climate science can study environmental change firsthand through shrinking lakes, altered snowfall patterns, and shifting agriculture. Scholars of peace studies, religion, political history, and Himalayan ecology already recognize the region's intellectual value.

Imagine students from Delhi spending semesters in Srinagar studying coexistence and federal politics. Imagine young people from Dubai, Bangladesh, Nepal, or London enrolling in affordable, high-quality universities surrounded by mountains and chinar trees. Those students would rent apartments, eat in local restaurants, shop in neighbourhood stores, and introduce Kashmir to the world through lived experience rather than headlines.

Such transformation changes perception in powerful ways. Kashmir begins to stand for knowledge, research, and innovation. Young Kashmiris living abroad speak about home with renewed pride because their homeland becomes associated with learning rather than instability.

Behind every statistic stands a deeply human story. A daughter studies close enough to commute from home each morning. A father educates both children without falling into debt. Grandparents watch grandchildren grow up nearby instead of through phone screens. Students practice their faith openly in campuses that understand their traditions instinctively.

Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha gave the bill its final approval, completing a process that always concerned ordinary families more than political credit.

Each delayed year pushed another batch of students toward distant cities. And each delayed year deepened separation between young Kashmiris and the place they still called home.

This legislation concerns universities on paper. Its deeper purpose reaches far beyond classrooms and campuses.

Kashmiri children finally have a chance to pursue ambition without abandoning belonging.

That alone makes this moment historic.

*The author is an assistant professor and socio-political commentator based in Jammu and Kashmir who writes on education, youth policy, and public life in the region.*



Irshad Mushtaq

# Kashmir's Costly Divorce Wars

False matrimonial cases, hidden incomes and endless litigation are draining families, damaging children and pushing Kashmir into a social and financial crisis few leaders want to confront.

Marriage once stood as one of Kashmir's strongest social institutions.

Families built entire lives around it. Parents saved for years, relatives gathered with pride, and communities treated marriage as the beginning of stability and trust.

Today, many families speak about marriage with fear, calculation and suspicion. That shift needs serious attention.

A growing trend in Kashmir has turned marital breakdown into an economic disaster for many households. The issue demands honesty because silence has deepened the damage.

Genuine domestic abuse exists and deserves strict punishment under the law. Women facing violence need protection, legal support and swift justice.

At the same time, false or exaggerated matrimonial cases have become a harsh reality that courts themselves have acknowledged for years.

The Supreme Court of India addressed this concern directly in Sushil Kumar Sharma vs. Union of India in 2005, describing misuse of Section 498A as "legal terrorism."

The court recognized that a law created for protection had, in some cases, become a weapon for harassment.

Another landmark judgment, Arnesha Kumar vs. State of Bihar in 2014, directed police to avoid automatic arrests in matrimonial disputes and instead conduct proper investigations first.

The Supreme Court again intervened in Rajesh Sharma vs. State of UP in 2017, calling for verification mechanisms before arrests.

Those rulings came for a reason. NCRB figures show that only a small percentage of 498A cases end in conviction. Most collapse before reaching that stage.

Courts have seen the pattern. Police officers know the design. Families living through these cases know it painfully well.

Kashmir now faces its own version of this

crisis.

Srinagar family courts have reported a sharp rise in matrimonial disputes in recent years. Behind those statistics sit families drained by legal fees, emotional breakdown and public humiliation.

The sequence often follows a familiar path.

A marriage takes place after months of preparation and enormous spending. Families spend anywhere between 10 lakh and 30 lakh on ceremonies, gifts, gold and furniture. Parents see those expenses as an investment in their children's future.

Then the marriage collapses within weeks or even days.

The bride returns to her parents' home. Complaints remain vague. A disagreement with a mother-in-law becomes a police matter. A tense talk becomes a criminal allegation.

Soon afterward, legal notices arrive. Cases under Section 498A, domestic violence laws and maintenance provisions land together.

The husband, parents and siblings all become accused persons.

An elderly father suddenly stands inside a police station answering criminal allegations. A retired mother spends nights worrying about arrest. Brothers and sisters lose marriage prospects because the family name now sits inside court files.

Meanwhile, an important detail often disappears inside the legal process: income.

Many women involved in these disputes hold stable government jobs or professional positions. Salaries continue every month while maintenance claims proceed in court.

Families allege that earnings frequently remain hidden, minimized or poorly examined during proceedings. Courts, already burdened with



huge caseloads, sometimes issue interim maintenance orders without full financial scrutiny.

That creates public anger because the imbalance feels glaring.

A husband earning 30,000 a month may face maintenance demands from a spouse earning double his salary. Legal fees pile higher every year, cases continue for years, and settlements emerge as the fastest escape route.

Those settlements come at devastating prices: families sell land, mothers sell gold, retirement savings disappear, and loans grow.

One broken marriage can wipe out wealth built over generations.

The numbers tell a brutal story. Wedding ex-

penses, legal costs, maintenance payments and settlements together can push losses into crores for a single household.

When hundreds of such disputes emerge annually, Kashmir loses hundreds of crores that could have gone into businesses, education, homes or investments.

This crisis extends far beyond money.

Children suffer the deepest wounds. A child trapped inside a bitter custody battle grows up surrounded by hostility, fear and manipulation. Many fathers speak about seeing their children only through court permissions and payment disputes. Children hear one parent demonize the other for years. Emotional confusion becomes

their normal life.

Kashmir already struggles with rising drug abuse and severe mental stress among young people. Broken families add another layer to that burden.

Children who grow up amid constant conflict often struggle in school, lose emotional stability and withdraw from healthy relationships. Society pays the cost later.

Religious values also speak clearly on this issue.

Islamic teachings condemn false testimony, financial exploitation and unjust consumption of another person's wealth. Divorce remains permissible in Islam, though deeply discouraged except when necessary. Faith demands fairness from both men and women. A legal claim built on falsehood violates both law and morality.

Solutions exist if lawmakers and communities choose seriousness over statements.

Courts should require mandatory financial disclosure from both spouses before maintenance decisions. Maintenance calculations should reflect actual earnings and living standards of both parties. False claims proven in court should trigger financial penalties and repayment of legal costs. Mediation should become compulsory before criminal proceedings move forward in non-violent matrimonial disputes. Cases involving elderly parents deserve stronger safeguards against unnecessary prosecution.

Faster courts would also reduce suffering. A matrimonial case dragging for seven years destroys lives regardless of the final judgment. Resolution within a fixed timeline would help everyone involved, especially children.

Mosque committees, community elders and social organizations also have responsibilities here. Public support should follow verified facts rather than emotional pressure or family influence. Young couples need financial literacy, conflict-resolution skills and realistic expectations before marriage begins.

Kashmir cannot afford a system that turns family disputes into financial warfare.

Justice must protect genuine victims without punishing the innocent.

Strong families, fair courts and emotionally secure children remain the foundation of a stable society.

*The author is a Srinagar-based reputed financial educator.*

# Kashmir Needs a Kerala Moment

Kerala built social progress through schools, healthcare and local governance. Jammu and Kashmir now faces the same test of political imagination.



Muhammad Sahir Raza

Kerala reached a landmark moment last November when the state government declared the eradication of extreme poverty through multidimensional poverty indicators.

Months later, the 2026-27 Budget announced free undergraduate education in government institutions.

Those community-welfare decisions described a century-long political project that treated education, healthcare and public participation as the foundation of economic progress.

Jammu and Kashmir needs to read that story closely.

Public debate in Kashmir often circles around highways, tourism numbers and investment summits. Those issues matter, though durable prosperity begins elsewhere.

Kerala understood this early. Schools, hospitals, literacy campaigns and local governance built a society capable of demanding accountability and creating economic mobility. Human development became the engine of growth rather than its byproduct.

That distinction matters deeply for Jammu and Kashmir at this stage of its development journey.

Kerala's transformation began long before independence. Travancore and Cochin invested heavily in public education and healthcare during the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Christian missionaries expanded access to modern education among socially excluded communities. Literacy improved steadily, especially among women and poorer households.

An educated public emerged before India became independent, and that social base later supported ambitious reforms.

Many Indian states entered in-

dependence with weak literacy and severe social inequality. Kerala entered with a population already engaged with schools, public institutions and political debate. That early investment produced long-term returns that remain visible today.

Post-independence reforms accelerated the process. Land reforms during the 1950s and 1960s weakened exploitative tenancy structures and distributed ownership more broadly. Families gained stability, rural inequality narrowed and agricultural workers secured greater bargaining power.

The Kerala Education Bill of 1957 strengthened state oversight of private institutions and expanded educational access. Public systems became stronger, more standardized and more inclusive.

Economic mobility followed social investment.

Kashmir's own history provides parallels. The region possesses strong intellectual traditions, high social awareness and a population that values education deeply. Families often spend enormous portions of their income on schooling because they see education as the clearest path toward mobility and security.

That social instinct provides fertile ground for a development strategy centered on human capability.

Kerala also demonstrates that progress rarely follows a perfect line.

Industrial growth slowed during the 1970s and 1980s, while unemployment rose sharply. Migration to Gulf countries then transformed the state economy. Millions of Malayalis found work in West Asia, and remittances soon became a central pillar of household income. Living standards improved substantially, though dependence on external labour markets created economic vulnerability. The COVID-19 pandemic exposed that weakness with brutal clarity.

Returning workers, disrupted remittance flows and global instability placed severe pressure on families and public finances.

Kerala's experience therefore gives both inspiration and caution. Social investment strengthens society, though economic diversification remains essential.

Jammu and Kashmir now stands at a similar spectrum.



**KASHMIR'S OWN HISTORY PROVIDES PARALLELS. THE REGION POSSESSES STRONG INTELLECTUAL TRADITIONS, HIGH SOCIAL AWARENESS AND A POPULATION THAT VALUES EDUCATION DEEPLY.** Families often spend enormous portions of their income on schooling because they see education as the clearest path toward mobility and security. That social instinct provides fertile ground for a development strategy centered on human capability.

Tourism alone cannot sustain long-term prosperity. Seasonal income patterns create instability for thousands of households. Government employment also cannot absorb a young and educated population searching for meaningful work.

Kashmir needs a broader development vision that combines social investment with modern eco-

nomics expansion.

Education should stand at the center of that strategy.

Public colleges and universities need stronger funding, better research infrastructure and deeper industry collaboration. Rural schools need teacher training, digital access and modern learning tools. Healthcare systems need similar attention, especially in un-

derprivileged districts where specialist services remain limited.

Strong public institutions create confidence among citizens and reduce economic inequality over time.

Kerala's decentralized governance model also deserves serious attention.

The People's Planning Campaign launched during the 1990s transferred substantial development spending to local governments. Panchayats gained greater authority over planning and implementation. Citizens became more involved in public decision-making, and local priorities received greater attention.

Kashmir's governance system often operates through centralized decision-making that leaves local communities distant from planning processes. Stronger municipal bodies and panchayats could improve accountability and ensure development highlights actual community needs rather than administrative assumptions.

Digital infrastructure presents another major lesson.

Kerala treated internet access as a public necessity and expanded connectivity through the Kerala Fiber Optic Network initiative. Digi-

tal access opened pathways for online education, entrepreneurship and remote employment.

Kashmir possesses enormous potential in technology services, digital commerce and artificial intelligence-based industries because of its young and educated population. Reliable internet infrastructure could help thousands of young people build businesses without leaving the valley.

Public investment alone, however, cannot generate broad-based prosperity.

Kerala's experience shows the importance of balancing welfare policies with economic dynamism. Private investment creates jobs, innovation and market expansion when regulatory systems remain transparent and stable.

Kashmir already possesses sectors capable of attracting serious investment. Horticulture, food processing, tourism, handicrafts, renewable energy and digital services offer significant opportunities. Government policy should focus on creating predictable rules, modern infrastructure and skill development that encourages entrepreneurs to build locally.

Kerala's greatest achievement lies in its long-term political vision.

Success emerged through decades of consistent investment in people rather than short bursts of headline-driven development. Literacy campaigns, healthcare expansion, land reforms and local governance strengthened the next stage of progress.

Jammu and Kashmir now faces the same choice.

Development can remain tied to temporary economic cycles and seasonal industries, or it can rest on educated citizens, strong institutions and broad public participation.

Kerala proved that sustained social investment can transform a society over generations. Kashmir's future depends on whether its leaders choose that same path with patience, seriousness and ambition.

—The author studies at Amar Singh College, Srinagar, and writes on public policy, development and education. He can be reached at muhammadsahirraza@gmail.com.

# Kashmir Beyond the Brochure

Famous lakes and ski slopes draw the crowds, though Kashmir's deepest beauty lives in remote valleys where nature, memory and village life still move together.



**NORTHERN KASHMIR STILL SHELTERS THIS VAST STRETCH OF UNTOUCHED LAND,** where forests meet open pastures under enormous skies. Mobile signals weaken, commercial activity remains limited, and silence gains meaning there because nature still commands the landscape.



Mehak Manzoor

The first thing Kashmir teaches a visitor is this: the famous picture rarely tells the full story.

Travel brochures present the same frame every season. A shikara glides through Dal Lake. Snow gathers on Gulmarg's slopes. Tourists crowd the cafés of Pahalgam with phones raised toward the mountains.

These places deserve their fame, and each one still holds enormous beauty. Still, Kashmir reveals its true character far away from packed parking lots and crowded markets.

A different Kashmir waits beyond the postcard.

Roads winding through Budgam lead toward Yusmarg, where pine forests open into vast green meadows touched by mountain light. Horses graze near streams that move with startling clarity. Families sit beneath tall fir trees while children wander through open fields without noise or rush. Air feels cooler there, cleaner too, and conversation slows naturally.

Doodhpathri gives another version of the valley's soul. Water rushes through polished stones while roll-

ing grasslands spread toward distant peaks. Shepherds guide flocks through the hills as wooden homes stand beside narrow paths lined with wildflowers. Visitors find space to walk without interruption and time to notice details often missed in crowded destinations.

Bangus Valley leaves the deepest impression of all.

Northern Kashmir still shelters this vast stretch of untouched land, where forests meet open pastures under enormous skies. Mobile signals weaken, commercial activity remains limited, and silence gains meaning there because nature still commands the landscape.

Travellers arriving in Bangus discover something rare in modern tourism: a place that exists for itself rather than for spectacle.

That experience changes the way people understand Kashmir.

Tourism in the valley has long revolved around a few heavily promoted locations. Huge seasonal crowds place enormous pressure on roads, lakes, forests and waste systems. Popular destinations struggle through traffic congestion, plastic pollution and unchecked construction every year.

Hidden destinations provide a different path forward, one that benefits both travellers and local communities.

These spots create opportunities for eco-tourism rooted in care rather than extraction. Trekking routes encourage low-impact travel. Camping introduces visitors to remote landscapes without heavy construction. Village homestays generate income for families while preserving local architecture and food traditions. Small handicraft sellers gain customers directly instead



of relying on distant middlemen.

Economic benefits reach places that tourism once ignored.

Villages tucked into forests or mountain valleys now welcome travellers eager for authentic experiences rather than curated entertainment. Guests eat home-cooked Kashmiri meals prepared with local ingredients. Elders share stories about seasonal migrations, farming traditions and old customs tied closely to the land. Women sell woven crafts and embroidered garments produced within their communities. Young people discover employment opportunities close to home instead of seeking work far away.

Culture gains strength through this exchange.

Commercial tourism often reduces places into visual consumption. Hidden Kashmir gives something richer and more human.

Travellers participate in daily life

rather than merely observing scenery through a car window. Morning prayers echo through villages. Smoke rises from kitchen hearths during cold evenings. Shepherd dogs bark through alpine pastures while streams move beside narrow footpaths carved over generations.

These experiences stay with people far longer than photographs.

A stronger tourism model also emerges through this approach. Sustainable travel depends on balance between access and preservation. Kashmir's lesser-known destinations still possess that balance, though careful planning matters enormously now.

Visitor numbers continue to rise each season as social media exposes new landscapes to wider audiences. That attention brings opportunity along with serious responsibility.

Local authorities, travel operators and visitors all hold a role here.

Cleanliness requires constant attention in ecologically sensitive areas. Plastic waste damages forests and streams rapidly in mountain environments. Construction policies need clear limits that protect natural scenery instead of replacing it with concrete expansion. Cultural respect matters equally. Villages welcoming tourists deserve consideration for local customs, traditions and religious practices.

Responsible travel begins with humility.

Visitors entering hidden Kashmir step into living communities rather than untouched backdrops created for entertainment. Respect for local life preserves the very experiences travellers seek in the first place.

Tourism succeeds when communities gain economic security while landscapes retain their natural character.

Kashmir stands at an important moment in its tourism story.

Famous destinations will always attract visitors, and rightly so. Still, the valley's future depends on broader thinking that values sustainability, cultural connection and environmental care alongside economic growth.

Hidden Kashmir already provides that possibility through its forests, meadows and villages where life still follows the land instead of commercial demand.

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# No Court Can Force Minor to Carry Pregnancy Against Her Will: SC

Press Trust Of India

New Delhi: Observing that no court can force a woman, especially a minor, to carry a pregnancy against her will, the Supreme Court on Friday allowed a 15-year old girl to medically terminate her over seven-month pregnancy.

A bench of Justices BV Nagarathna and Ujjal Bhuyan said the choice of the pregnant

woman is relevant rather than that of the child to be born and stressed that continuation of such a pregnancy could have long lasting repercussions on the minor's mental health, educational prospects, social standing and overall development.

The top court remarked that the reproductive autonomy of a woman must be accorded the highest importance and if a

woman, carrying an unwanted pregnancy, is compelled to continue it then her constitutional rights would be breached.

"The right to make decisions concerning one's body particularly in matters of reproduction is an integral facet of personal liberty and privacy under Article 21 of the Constitution. The right cannot be rendered ineffective by imposing unreasonable restrictions

especially in cases involving minors and unwanted pregnancies such as in the instant case.

"No court ought to compel any woman and more so a minor child to carry a pregnancy to full term against her express will. Such compulsion would not only disregard her decision autonomy but also inflict grave mental emotional and physical trauma in case she is compelled

to give birth," the bench said.

In the circumstances denying relief would compel the minor to endure irreversible consequences and such an approach would be contrary to the constitutional and settled principles recognising reproductive choice is a fundamental right.

The apex court said the choice of the pregnant woman is relevant rather than that of the child to be born.

"It is easy to say that if the pregnant woman is not interested in raising the child she may give away the child in adoption and, therefore, she must give birth to the child.

"That cannot be a consideration particularly in cases where the child to be born is unwanted. In such a situation, directing the pregnant woman to give birth to the child against her wishes and,

therefore, continue her pregnancy would negate the welfare of the pregnant woman and make it subordinate to the child yet to be born," the bench said.

It said the constitutional courts must weigh the circumstances in which a case in relation to the welfare of the pregnant woman has to be considered rather than the child to be born.

## CONTD. FROM FRONT PAGE

### Jammu To Srinagar

designed to operate in the region's challenging terrain and extreme winter conditions, making it the first Vande Bharat variant equipped with advanced "winterisation" technology.

They said the train will run with a 20-coach Vande Bharat rake and cover a distance of around 266.66 kilometres during the inaugural run. The train will also halt at Bijbehara, which will remain operational for the cross-run of the service.

To ensure smooth functioning in sub-zero temperatures, the train is fitted with self-regulating heating cables to prevent freezing of water pipelines, along with 1800W silicon heating pads installed in water tanks. Heating arrangements have also been made in bio-toilets and auxiliary tanks to maintain uninterrupted sanitation during harsh weather.

Passenger comfort has been enhanced with extended warm air ducts to restrooms, heaters in toilets and improved thermal insulation across coaches. A water-draining mechanism has also been incorporated to prevent freezing when the train is stationed.

In a first for Indian Railways, the train is equipped with an embedded heating element in the driver's windshield to prevent fogging during snowfall, ensuring clear visibility. Additionally, heaters have been installed in the air dryer system to maintain braking efficiency in low temperatures.

The train will retain its semi-high-speed capability, with an operational design speed of up to 160 km per hour, while offering modern on-board amenities such as fully air-conditioned coaches, automatic plug doors, LED lighting, CCTV surveillance and regenerative braking systems.

The service is expected to operate with limited halts at key stations including Shri Mata Vaishno Devi Katra, Banihal and Qazigund before terminating at Srinagar, although the final timetable is yet to be formally notified.

Senior Divisional Commercial Manager Uchit Singhal said the extension fulfils a long-pending demand of passengers and residents of the region.

"Our objective is not only to provide faster travel but also to ensure reliable all-weather connectivity. This train will strengthen the link between pilgrims visiting Vaishno Devi and the Kashmir Valley, while also giving a boost to tourism," he said.

Officials said the extended Vande Bharat service is expected to significantly reduce travel time, improve passenger convenience and enhance economic and tourism prospects across Jammu and Kashmir.

### Collective Force

mohallas and villages, driven by open and honest dialogue.

"Mothers and sisters are the moral bedrock of our society and with their support, this cancer will be cured," he said, underlining the role of women in leading social change. He noted that 1,947 women committees have already been constituted across districts in the Jammu division since April 11 to strengthen community-level engagement.

Detailing the enforcement outcomes, Sinha said that between April 11 and 22 in the Jammu division, authorities registered a large number of cases and arrested several drug smugglers. Narcotics worth nearly 3 crore were seized, while assets valued at around 1 crore were attached as part of efforts to dismantle the financial backbone of the drug trade.

He said properties of drug peddlers have been demolished, 187 driving licences and four vehicle registrations cancelled, and financial investigations initiated against 48 drug peddlers. In addition, authorities conducted inspections of chemist shops, leading to the cancellation of 15 drug licences for violations of the Drugs and Cosmetics Act.

The Lieutenant Governor added that drug users identified during the campaign have been referred to de-addiction and rehabilitation centres, with counselling support extended as part of a parallel public health approach.

On the enforcement front, Sinha said over two dozen drug traffickers have been identified for targeted action, while thousands of suspected peddlers remain under surveillance. Security checks have been intensified around schools, colleges and other vulnerable areas to prevent drug circulation among youth.

Issuing a stern warning, he said those involved in drug trafficking would face the "harshest consequences under the law." He also highlighted the nexus between narcotics and terrorism, stating that drug traffickers and terrorists often operate hand in hand and must be treated as "allies in crime."

"Our response should be decisive, thorough and unyielding. Every route exploited by smugglers must be monitored, every financial chain dismantled, and every asset stripped away until these networks are destroyed," he said.

Reflecting on the broader context, Sinha observed that for over a decade, Jammu and Kashmir has carried a "heavy silence" around drug abuse, and the current campaign seeks to break that silence through collective action.

He also called upon NGOs, social organisations, educators and spiritual leaders to join the initiative in large numbers, describing them as "frontline guardians" capable of mobilising communities and restoring social resilience.

Reaffirming the administration's

commitment, the Lieutenant Governor said the campaign would continue with a combination of strict enforcement, financial scrutiny, institutional accountability and active public participation to eradicate the drug menace from its roots.

### 14 Held, Contraband

including Ganderbal, Anantnag, Budgam, Kupwara, Baramulla and Sopore, pointing to a Valley-wide push to disrupt both street-level supply and larger trafficking networks.

In Ganderbal, police intercepted a vehicle and recovered 100 bottles of Codeine Phosphate, a commonly misused opioid-based cough syrup. In Anantnag, a series of operations resulted in the seizure of charas, heroin-like substances and poppy straw from several accused, indicating the continued presence of mixed narcotics in circulation.

A significant recovery was reported in Budgam, where over 2.7 kilograms of charas powder was seized from a residential premises, suggesting possible storage or distribution activity. In Kupwara, a vehicle-borne suspect was apprehended with a substantial quantity of a heroin-like substance.

Baramulla also saw multiple detentions, with four individuals found in possession of drug paraphernalia during checking. Their medical examination confirmed opioid consumption, officials said. In Sopore, police recovered psychotropic substances, including Spasmaproxyvon capsules and Alprazolam tablets, from an accused.

All the arrested individuals have been booked under relevant provisions of the Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances Act, and further investigations are underway to trace backward and forward linkages in the supply chain.

In a parallel move aimed at targeting the financial backbone of the trade, police in Budgam attached a vehicle worth around 4 lakh belonging to an alleged drug peddler under provisions of the NDPS Act.

Authorities also widened scrutiny of legal pharmaceutical channels. Inspections of medical stores were carried out in Sopore and Kupwara to ensure compliance with the Drugs and Cosmetics Act, with officials warning chemists against the illegal sale of prescription drugs.

Alongside enforcement, police stepped up community outreach. Awareness programmes, rallies and youth engagement initiatives were held in districts such as Shopian, Awantipora, Kupwara and Baramulla to highlight the risks of substance abuse and promote a drug-free lifestyle.

Anti-narcotics measures were further strengthened with the deployment of sniffer dog squads and the setting up of checkpoints at key locations, particularly in Ganderbal and Srinagar, to enhance detection and deter trafficking.

Reaffirming its commitment, police said the campaign would continue with sustained enforcement, financial targeting of offenders, and community participation to curb the drug menace in the region.

Moreover, the district administration on Friday intensified its anti-narcotics crackdown by demolishing residential properties belonging to two alleged drug peddlers on the outskirts of Jammu, officials said.

Backed by a heavy police presence, bulldozers moved into Indira Nagar Colony in Miran Sahib, where the houses linked to the accused were razed as part of the ongoing drive.

Officials said the action was taken under provisions of the Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances Act, in line with the administration's broader push to dismantle the infrastructure supporting the drug trade.

The demolition was carried out under the supervision of Sub-Divisional Magistrate R S Pura Anuradha Thakur and Sub-Divisional Police Officer Gurmeet Singh.

The latest operation comes a day after three houses of alleged drug peddlers were demolished in the Rajiv Nagar locality, indicating a sustained escalation in enforcement measures.

Earlier, on April 18, authorities had brought down two more properties linked to NDPS-accused individuals in the Belcharana area.

Officials said the continued action forms part of a wider campaign aimed at curbing narcotics trafficking and signalling zero tolerance against those involved in the drug network.

### LG Pushes AI

implementation of the 'Design Your Degree' (DYD) programme, integration of Information Technology and Artificial Intelligence into academic curricula, and strategies to promote entrepreneurship and knowledge-based skills aligned with the vision of Viksit Bharat.

Chairing the meeting, Sinha directed for effective on-ground execution of DYD, skill development initiatives and AI-led programmes across higher educational institutions. He also stressed the need for seamless synergy between central and Union Territory institutions to ensure comprehensive sectoral transformation.

"We must establish benchmarks aligned with both national and international standards, ensuring that Jammu Kashmir's education sector stands as a model of excellence in the country," the Lieutenant Governor said.

Vice Chairman JKHEC, Dinesh Singh, emphasised that higher education must focus on realising human potential, linking academic

outcomes with societal service and enhanced student productivity.

The Council also discussed the creation of a structured mechanism to strengthen collaboration among institutions through joint degree programmes and a common technology-based platform for sharing academic practices and innovations. Measures to increase the Gross Enrolment Ratio (GER), along with special initiatives such as 'The Riverine College' and an AI competition, were also reviewed.

Budget utilisation for 2025-26 and allocations for 2026-27 came under discussion, alongside the broader implementation framework of the National Education Policy 2020.

Vice Chancellors and Council members shared their inputs on advancing the DYD programme and strengthening higher education outcomes in the Union Territory.

Among those present were Prof Sheikh Ajaz Bashir, Director Colleges J&K; Dr Seema Naz, Nodal Principal Government College of Education; Dr Ravinder Kumar Tickoo, Principal GCW Parade Jammu, along with senior officials and vice chancellors from various universities and institutions.

### Iran FM Begins

said that once the Iranian delegation arrives here and works out the framework of talks with the US technical team, then the high-powered US delegation would likely arrive here on Saturday night.

"But this is subject to some kind of understanding being reached with Iran," he said.

The development comes hours after Deputy PM Ishaq Dar and Araghchi spoke over the phone and "exchanged views on regional developments, the ceasefire, and ongoing diplomatic efforts being pursued by Islamabad in the context of US-Iran engagement".

Dar, who is also the Foreign Minister, underscored the importance of sustained dialogue and engagement to address outstanding issues to advance regional peace and stability at the earliest, the Foreign Office said in a statement.

Araghchi appreciated Pakistan's consistent and constructive facilitation role in this regard, and both leaders agreed to remain in close contact, it added.

Iranian media reported that Araghchi also spoke with Army chief Field Marshal Asim Munir on Friday. However, there was no confirmation from the Pakistani side.

The first round of US-Iran talks held on April 11 and 12 failed to produce a breakthrough, prompting a flurry of diplomatic efforts by host Pakistan to cool tensions and revive hopes for another round of dialogue.

On Friday, Secretary of War Pete Hegseth repeated US President Donald Trump's threat to destroy any Iranian fast boats that attempt to put mines in the water or disrupt passage through the Strait of Hormuz.

Separately, the US Central Command said that for the first time in decades, three aircraft carriers are operating in the Middle East at the same time.

"Accompanied by their carrier air wings, the USS Abraham Lincoln, USS Gerald R. Ford and USS George H.W. Bush include over 200 aircraft and 15,000 Sailors and Marines," it said in a post on X.

It also said that the US forces have directed 34 vessels to turn around or return to port since the start of the blockade against Iran.

On Tuesday, Trump extended the two-week ceasefire with Iran indefinitely to give Tehran more time to prepare a unified proposal to end the war, just hours before the truce was set to expire.

Interior Minister Mohsin Naqvi held an "important meeting" with US Charge d'Affaires Natalie Baker on Thursday during which they exchanged detailed views on the latest regional situation and discussed diplomatic efforts related to the proposed second round of peace talks, the interior ministry said in a statement.

The meeting, the second between the two this week, took place amid uncertainty over the US-Iran talks, with Islamabad under tight security for the proposed engagement.

In a social media post, Trump on Thursday said that the US has total control over the Strait of Hormuz, and no ship can enter or leave without its approval. "It is 'Sealed up Tight,' until such time as Iran is able to make a DEAL," he said.

Trump also claimed that Iran is having a "very hard time" figuring out who their leader is. "They just don't know! The infighting is between the 'Hardliners', who have been losing BADLY on the battlefield, and the 'Moderates', who are not very moderate at all (but gaining respect!)," is CRAZY!" he said in a separate post.

Responding to Trump's comments, both Iranian President Masoud Pezeshkian and Parliament Speaker Ghalibaf issued identical posts, saying there are no "hardliners" or "moderates" in Iran.

"We are all Iranians and revolutionaries. With ironclad unity of nation and state and obedience to the Supreme Leader, we will make the aggressor regret. One God, one nation, one leader, one path; victory for Iran, dearer than life," they said in separate posts on X, which were re-posted by Araghchi.

Earlier, Trump shared a post by a conservative commentator, calling for the assassination of Iranian officials who oppose diplomacy with the US.

Iranian Foreign Ministry spokesman Esmaeil Baqaei lashed out at Trump for sharing the

post, saying the US, which once presented itself as a cradle of democracy, freedom, and human values, "now appears to become a promoter of terrorism, murder, and mass violence."

There is still no official word on the start of the talks between Iran and the US, even as strict monitoring of roads leading to Islamabad indicates that preparations for the proposed talks are underway.

The administrations of the twin cities of Islamabad and Rawalpindi had closed all major roads and markets in VVIP movement areas on Sunday. More than 10,000 security personnel have been deployed to maintain law and order.

Streets, link roads, markets and banks around the old airport remained closed during the last five consecutive days, confining residents of Shah Faisal Colony, Khalid Colony, Gulzar-e-Quaid, Fazal Town, and other areas, to their homes.

The Metro Bus Service between Rawalpindi and Islamabad and electric buses on seven routes have been suspended, while goods transport has remained halted since April 19, causing inconvenience to the public. The Red Zone remained closed, with employees of offices in the area working from home.

The war began when the US and Israel jointly attacked Iran on February 28, killing Iranian Supreme Leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei and several top commanders. The retaliation by the Islamic Republic extended the war to the entire Gulf region.

### 6 Detained Under

female student alleged sexual assault by a senior lecturer, who was subsequently booked and suspended pending inquiry.

The detained individuals have been identified as Umar Akbar Hajam of Seelu, Salman Ahmed Shala of Shalpora Sopore, Altaf Ahmed Sheikh of Panzipora Tarzoo, Mubashir Ahmed Gilkar of Naseerabad, Muzammil Mushtaq Changa of Arampora, and Majid Firdous Dar of Chankipora.

"All the individuals have been detained under PSA after obtaining proper detention warrants from the competent authority (District Magistrate) and have been lodged in District Jail Bhadarwah," the spokesman said.

Police said the accused were actively involved in instigating unrest, indulging in vandalism and attempting to disturb peace during the protest. Their actions posed a serious threat to public order and safety, the spokesman added.

Reiterating a zero-tolerance approach, police said strict action would continue against those involved in unlawful activities that threaten peace and stability in the area.

"More individuals involved in the said incidents are being identified and are under process for similar legal action, including detention under PSA," the spokesman said.

The case marks a significant escalation in action following the protests, with authorities invoking preventive detention laws to curb further unrest.

### J&K Begins Work

as a landmark move in the higher education sector of J&K.

Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha has also given his assent to the bill.

The law provides a framework for establishing private universities and regulating their functioning, management, and academic standards.

Under the law, the Government must constitute an Expert Committee headed by the Administrative Secretary of Higher Education to examine applications submitted by sponsoring bodies seeking to establish private universities.

The law further stipulates that a sponsoring body can set up a private university only if it has been registered for at least three years, has education as its primary objective, possesses sound finances, maintains clean credentials, and holds lawful possession of adequate land and facilities. (KNO)

### J&K Tops With

approval to strengthen the sector across districts.

Director Handicrafts and Handloom, Kashmir, Mussarat Islam highlighted key infrastructure initiatives, including the development of a craft village at Sonpah in Budgam and the establishment of common facility centres (CFCs) in Srinagar for wool processing, yarn dyeing and dehairing. Upgradation of the Indian Institute of Carpet Technology (IICT) Srinagar and related laboratories is also underway, alongside efforts to curb counterfeit products and improve quality standards.

Director Handicrafts and Handloom, Jammu, Mohammad Nazir Sheikh said several proposals are under consideration by the Ministry of Textiles, including raw material depots for Pashmina and wheat straw clusters, a bamboo cluster at Samba, a calico printing cluster in Jammu, and the development of an Urban Haat at Samba. He added that multiple CFCs in Kathua and Samba have already been completed.

On financial inclusion, officials said more than 2,400 cases have been sanctioned under the Credit Card Scheme for Artisans and Weavers, providing access to credit up to 2 lakh with interest subvention. Under the Karkhandar Scheme, 46 karkhanas have been established with government assistance

amounting to 185.79 lakh.

On the GI front, 970 new authorised users were registered during 2025-26, taking the total to nearly 4,700 across various crafts, while over 80,545 products have been QR-labelled to enable traceability and authenticity.

Taking a comprehensive review, Dulloo directed the immediate operationalisation of non-functional training centres across districts and called for alignment of programmes with the National Skills Qualification Framework (NSQF) to ensure wider recognition of certifications.

He also stressed the need to enhance artisan registrations on the Udyam portal and link them with the RBI's Unified Lending Interface (ULI) to improve access to affordable credit. The Chief Secretary further advised exploring a dedicated term loan product for the sector, on the lines of agriculture financing, to support capital infusion and business expansion.

Reviewing GI implementation, he called for optimal use of the QR-based management system and its full integration with the Government of India's MeghRaj cloud platform to strengthen tracking and traceability of GI-certified products.

Officials said the combined push on skill development, infrastructure, financial inclusion and GI-backed branding is aimed at revitalising Jammu and Kashmir's traditional crafts economy and expanding its reach in national and global markets. (inputs from PTI)

### HC Acquits

establish her age.

The Court observed that the school certificate relied upon by the trial court had "no probative value" as the basis of the recorded date of birth was not proven. It further noted that neither the father nor other witnesses could provide reliable evidence regarding the prosecutrix's exact age.

Examining the statements of the prosecutrix, the Court found that she had voluntarily accompanied the accused and admitted to having a consensual physical relationship with him. The Court termed the case as a "love affair between two young persons" rather than an instance of "statutory rape".

The Court also referred to recent Supreme Court observations cautioning against the misuse of stringent laws in cases involving consensual relationships between young individuals, emphasizing the need for courts to carefully assess the context.

Holding that the conviction was unsustainable, the Court allowed the appeal and directed that the appellant be released from custody forthwith, if not required in any other case.

### Court Frames Charges

multiple provisions of the Indian Penal Code, including Sections 120-B (criminal conspiracy), 323, 325, 330, 331, and 343, relating to hurt, grievous hurt, and wrongful confinement.

However, DySP Aijaz Ahmad Naik was discharged from the case. The court held that there was no material indicating his direct participation, facilitation, or knowledge of the alleged acts beyond his supervisory role.

The remaining accused, including police personnel and others named in the chargesheet, have been directed to face trial. The court noted that at the stage of framing charges, the threshold is whether the material raises a "grave suspicion," which it found satisfied against the other accused.

The case will now proceed to trial, with the accused required to appear before the court for further proceedings. [KNT]

### Govt's Reply

record was produced nor was there proper representation on behalf of the respondents. The court termed this conduct as reflecting "scant respect" for its orders.

The bench further observed a recurring pattern across cases where authorities, despite repeated opportunities, failed to file replies within stipulated timeframes. "Such a practice not only contributes to the mounting backlog of cases, but also seriously impedes the efficient administration of justice," it said.

The court also took note that government counsel had been issuing reminders to departments, but relevant records and instructions were not being provided in time, hampering effective representation.

"In case, that be the position, then the Secretary Law shall fix the responsibility on such officers, who are remiss in drafting of parawise comments/reply well in time, as a result of which, adverse orders are passed against the Government and interest of Government are hampered in such like cases," the court directed.

Emphasizing that compliance with court directions is a constitutional obligation, the bench said any delay or indifference undermines the rule of law and erodes public confidence in the justice system.

Observing that no effective mechanism has been established despite repeated directions, the court directed the J&K Secretary Law to appear in person on April 27 to apprise it of steps taken to ensure proper defence of government cases.

The court clarified that the order was aimed at ensuring timely filing of replies, avoiding coercive measures, and safeguarding public interest.

## Workers Welfare Key to Nation's Growth: Union Minister Mandaviya Inaugurates ESIC Hospital in Budgam



Observer News Service

**SRINAGAR:** Asserting that workers' welfare is key to the nation's growth, Union Minister Mansukh Mandaviya on Friday said that the country's development depends largely on the contribution of its workforce.

Addressing the inaugural function of a 30-bedded ESIC hospital at Ompora, the Minister, according to KNO said, "The government is committed to strengthening the welfare of labourers."

Mandaviya said that the hospital, set up under the Employees State Insurance Corporation scheme, will provide affordable and quality treatment to insured workers.

He said the number of people covered under ESIC has increased significantly over the years, growing from around 7 crore benefi-

ciaries in 2014 to nearly 14 crore at present.

Highlighting the importance of accessible healthcare, Mandaviya said labourers often face financial challenges in getting proper treatment, which affects their families as well.

He said that several schemes have been introduced to provide medical support ranging from Re 1 to Rs 1 crore.

The Minister also announced that a nursing college will be established at the hospital in the coming time, along with training facilities to strengthen healthcare services in the area.

Referring to sports development, he said the government is working to provide better opportunities for youth and is committed to India's preparations for hosting the 2036 Olympics.

## Newborn Baby Dies of Alleged Medical Negligence

Observer News Service

**SRINAGAR:** A newborn baby has died at District Hospital (DH) Ganderbal due to alleged medical negligence, with the family demanding a thorough and transparent probe into the circumstances leading to the tragedy.

According to the family from Gutlibagh, the expectant mother had been admitted to the hospital two days before the incident after her pregnancy had exceeded the due date. The family alleged that doctors had initially planned a surgical procedure for April 20, but continued to assure them that both mother and baby were stable.

"We repeatedly requested the doctors to refer her to SKIMS Soura if the case was complicated, but they kept insisting everything

was normal," a family member told KNO. "Even minutes before the surgery, we were told the baby was fine. Suddenly, they took her in for the operation, and after the procedure, the baby was declared dead."

"This was a moment we had long awaited, but it turned into a nightmare," the grieving relatives said, alleging that timely referral or better medical care could have saved the newborn.

The family has called for strict action against those responsible and urged higher authorities to intervene to ensure accountability.

Medical Superintendent of District Hospital Ganderbal, Dr Farhat Shafiq termed the incident "unfortunate". He said an internal audit committee has been constituted as per standard protocol to ascertain the facts.

## Man Rescued After Jumping into Jhelum

Observer News Service

**SRINAGAR:** A man was rescued after he jumped into the Jhelum river near the Deputy Commissioner's office in Srinagar on Friday, officials said.

The individual has been identified as Adil Badyari, (30) a resident of Karfali Mohalla Habba Kadal area of Srinagar. He was pulled out of the river by river police personnel who were already present in the

area conducting a search operation related to an earlier drowning incident reported on February 22, 2026.

As per KNT, officials said the team responded immediately after noticing the incident and managed to rescue him in time. A police party from Shaheed Gunj Police Station subsequently shifted to SMHS Hospital for medical evaluation, where his condition was reported to be stable.

## South Kashmir Farmers Seek Desilting of Canals

Observer News Service

**SRINAGAR:** As the agricultural season approaches, residents and farmers across several parts of south Kashmir have raised concerns over the deteriorating condition of irrigation canals and streams, urging authorities to carry out immediate desilting and restoration work to prevent disruption to farming activities.

Residents from areas including Pulwama, Tral, Kakapora, Pampore, Awantipora, Litter, Rajpora, Bijbehara, Srigufwara, Mattan, Pahalgam, Dooru, Koker-nag, Dialgam, Qazigund, Khudwani, Kund, DH Pora, Yaripora, and Zainapora alleged that many canals have turned into dumping sites and have been encroached upon through illegal constructions.

"These canals were once lifelines for our fields, but today they resemble gar-



bage dumps. In several places, their original paths have been blocked or narrowed due to unchecked construction," a farmer from Tral told KNO.

"If timely desilting is not carried out, we fear severe water shortages during the peak sowing period." They said irrigation canals are crucial for sustaining the region's agriculture-dependent economy, particularly for paddy cultivation and horticulture. Locals expressed frustration over what they described as a recurring pattern of delayed action by the concerned departments.

## Cloudy Weather, Light Rain Likely Across Kashmir

Observer News Service

**SRINAGAR:** The India Meteorological Department on Friday forecast partly to generally cloudy weather with spells of light rain and thundershowers across Kashmir over the next few days, while warning of heatwave conditions in parts of the Jammu region.

According to the Meteorological Centre Srinagar, scattered to many places are likely to receive light rain or thunder showers with gusty winds during the afternoon and evening hours on April 25. The weather is expected to remain largely dry on April 26 and 27, with brief spells of light rain at isolated places.

The MeT office, as reported by KNO, said generally cloudy conditions with light rain and gusty winds are likely at scattered locations on April 28, followed by brief spells of rain at a few places between April 29 and May 2, mainly during late afternoon hours.

Temperature data released by the department showed that most parts of Kashmir recorded above-normal day temperatures. Srinagar recorded a maximum of 28.1°C, 6.1 degrees above normal, and a minimum of 13.0°C. Qazigund registered a high of 27.2°C, while Pahalgam settled at 25.0°C and Kupwara at 25.4°C.



Gulmarg recorded a maximum temperature of 18.6°C, while Koker-nag saw 26.6°C. Night temperatures also remained above normal, with Gulmarg recording a minimum of 8.0°C and Pahalgam 6.8°C.

In the Jammu region, Jammu city recorded a maximum of 39.3°C, nearly five degrees above normal, while the minimum settled at 22.8°C. Katra recorded 36.0°C, Banihal 29.0°C, and Batote 29.2°C.

The MeT department said hot and

dry weather is likely to persist in Jammu, Kathua, Samba, Reasi and Udhampur districts over the next four days, with heatwave conditions expected at isolated places on April 24.

The department has advised farmers to suspend farm operations on April 24 and 25 due to the possibility of gusty winds and thundershowers.

It also urged people to avoid heat exposure during peak hours and to stay hydrated by consuming adequate fluids.

## Prof. Ashraf Ganie Wins National Honour for PCOS Research

Observer News Service

**SRINAGAR:** In a major recognition of cutting-edge medical research from Jammu and Kashmir, Prof. M. Ashraf Ganie, Director of Sher-i-Kashmir Institute of Medical Sciences, has been conferred with the prestigious "Recognition of Academic Excellence (RAE)" award by the National Academy of Medical Sciences.

The Achanta Lakshminipathi RAE Award for 2026 was presented to Prof. Ganie for his outstanding contributions in the fields of maternal and child health, women's health, and community nutrition—particularly his pioneering work on Polycystic Ovary Syndrome (PCOS) and its broader metabolic implications.

The award ceremony took place during the 66th Foundation Day of NAMS in New



Delhi on April 21, where Prof. Ganie delivered the National Recognition & Foundation Day Oration titled "PCOS as a Central Driver of NCDs Epidemic in India." His address highlighted the growing burden of non-communicable diseases (NCDs) linked to PCOS and aligned closely with national public health priorities, including women-centric initiatives such as Swasth Nari, Sashakt Parivar Abhiyaan.

The oration was attended by eminent medical leaders, including Dr. K. K. Talwar, Dr. N. K. Ganguly, and Dr. Sanjeev Sinha. The award—compris-

ing a citation plaque and gold medal—was presented by Dr. P. K. Mishra.

A landmark aspect of Prof. Ganie's work has been his role as National Chief Coordinator of the ICMR PCOS Task Force Study, conducted under the Indian Council of Medical Research. This nationwide study, spanning 18 centers, generated India's first large-scale composite dataset on PCOS.

Published in JAMA Network Open, the findings reveal a strong association between PCOS and increased risks of diabetes, metabolic syndrome, and cardiovascular diseases. Crucially, the research underscores intergenerational health risks, showing that PCOS in mothers may predispose their children to early onset of conditions such as Type 2 diabetes, coronary artery disease, hypertension, and non-alcoholic steatohepatitis.

## Rare Himalayan Musk Deer Rescued in Gurez

Observer News Service

**SRINAGAR:** A rare male musk deer was rescued by the Wildlife Department from a village near the Line of Control (LoC) in the Gurez Valley of north Kashmir's Bandipora district, officials said on Friday.

The animal, locally known as "Roose Kat", was spotted in Wanpora village, prompting locals to alert the department, they said.

A wildlife team rushed to the area and launched a rescue operation, successfully capturing the deer alive without causing any harm, officials said.

Wildlife official Tanveer Ahmad told KNO that the species is rarely sighted along the LoC belt in Gurez, making the rescue significant.

The animal was shifted to the Ajas range for initial care and later referred to the Dachigam Wildlife Rehabilitation Centre for treatment and observation, he said.

The Kashmir musk deer (*Moschus cupreus*) is an endangered and elusive mammal found in the high-altitude Himalayas. Despite its name, it is not a true deer but belongs to a separate family, Moschidae.

Males are known for their elongated, tusk-like canines and a musk gland, which has made the species a target for poaching. Officials said severe winters often push the animal to lower altitudes, leading to occasional sightings in human habitations.

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مجلسِ ترجمہ

بمناست

بیسوی سالگرد ارتحال

خطیب و تلمیذ مولانا مصطفیٰ حسین نصار

۲۱ مارچ ۱۹۳۵ء - ۲۷ اپریل ۲۰۰۶ء

زمان: 26 اپریل 2026ء بروز اتوار

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