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Wet Spell Ahead In J&K From May 3

Observer News Service

Srinagar: The India Meteorological Department has forecast generally cloudy conditions with spells of rain and thundershowers across Jammu and Kashmir between May 3 and 5, accompanied by gusty winds, and advised farmers to suspend agricultural operations during this period.

According to the MeT Centre Srinagar, weather conditions will largely remain dry on May 1 and 2, although brief showers at isolated places cannot be ruled out.

"Generally cloudy weather with one or two spells of light to moderate rain or thundershower at many places is expected from May 3 to 5, accompanied by thunder and gusty winds of 40-50 kmph at a few locations," the department said.

It added that from May 6 to 9, the weather is expected to turn generally dry again, with a possibility of isolated brief showers.

The India Meteorological Department has issued an advisory urging farmers to suspend farm operations during May 3-5 in view of the expected rainfall and strong winds, which could disrupt ongoing agricultural activity. Temperatures Below Normal in Valley

Meanwhile, day temperatures across the Kashmir Valley remained below normal on Wednesday.

Srinagar recorded a maximum temperature of 20.0°C, which is 3.1 degrees below normal, while the minimum settled at 9.9°C, slightly above normal by 0.4 degrees.

Qazigund registered a maximum of 20.2°C, 2.2 degrees below normal, and a minimum of 7.2°C. Pahalgam saw a high of 15.2°C, five degrees below normal, while the minimum was 7.4°C, 2.8 degrees above normal.

Kupwara recorded a maximum of 19.5°C, 4.2 degrees | More on P6

Jammu To Srinagar Now In 4 Hours: Vande Bharat Flagged Off

Creating New History, Says Minister Vaishnav; Promises Rail Link To Uri

Regular Services From May 2, Two Pairs To Run Six Days A Week

20-Coach All-Weather Train Equipped For Sub-zero Operations, Heavy Snowfall

Observer News Service

Srinagar: Jammu and Kashmir on Thursday witnessed a landmark moment in its transport history as the first direct high-speed Vande Bharat Express between Jammu Tawi and Srinagar was formally flagged off, ushering in seamless rail connectivity between the Jammu region and the Kashmir Valley.

The inaugural run from Jammu Tawi Railway Station was jointly flagged off by Railway Minister Ashwini Vaishnav, Union Minister of State Jitendra



Vande Bharat Express arrives at Srinagar after its maiden run from Jammu. KO Photo By Abid Bhat

Singh, and Chief Minister Omar Abdullah, alongside senior officials and public representatives.

The launch follows the completion of the Rs 43,780-crore Udhampur-Srinagar-Baramulla Rail Link, a decades-long project that connects the Kashmir

Valley with the national rail network. Work on the project began in the late 1990s, while train services within the Valley started in October 2008.

Describing the moment as "creating new history," Ashwini Vaishnav said the direct rail link would ensure

uninterrupted connectivity and significantly transform mobility in the region.

"This train service is a major landmark for the people of Jammu and Kashmir and has already become a lifeline with 100 per cent occupancy," he said.

20-Coach Train, Built for

Harsh Winters

Responding to rising demand, the Railways has introduced a 20-coach Vande Bharat Express on the route, replacing the earlier eight-coach configuration. The move increases passenger capacity from around 500 to nearly 1,400.

The train is equipped with advanced winterisation features such as heated windshields and specialised temperature control systems, allowing it to operate in sub-zero temperatures.

"We can run this train in minus 10 degrees Celsius. Even during heavy snowfall, services continued," the minister said.

Travel Time Cut, All-Weather Connectivity Ensured

Covering a distance of approximately 267 kilometres in about four to five hours, the service is expected to significantly reduce travel time between Jammu and Srinagar.

The all-weather capability of the train provides a reliable alternative to road travel, especially during winter disruptions. | More on P6

CM Seeks Inland Port, Flags Trade Potential



Chief Minister Omar Abdullah on Thursday called for the establishment of an inland dry port in Jammu and Kashmir, arguing that the new direct

21 Personnel, Including CORAS, To Secure Trains

A part from the multi-layered security setup along the 327-kilometre Jammu-Katra-Srinagar-Baramulla railway line, 21 security personnel, including RPF commandos, will guard the Jammu-Srinagar Vande Bharat Express service launched by Railway Minister Ashwini Vaishnav on | More on P6

5 Officials Get 3-Year Jail In 1990 Misappropriation Case

M Ahmad

Srinagar: A court in Anantnag has sentenced five officials of the Food and Supplies Department to three years of simple imprisonment in a nearly three-decade-old misappropriation case.

The Special Judge, Anti-Corruption Court Anantnag, Ms. Masarat Roohi, had on April 20 convicted Abdul Khaliq Shah, Ghulam Nabi Mir, Mohammad Shafi Rather, Ghulam Hassan Hajam, and Muzaffar Ahmad Bichoo—each of whom had served as store keepers at various Food Supplies Sale Centres in Pahalgam, Laripora, Dawatoo, Aru, Ashmuqam, and Katsoo.

They were found guilty under Section 5(2) of the J&K Prevention of Corruption Act,

2006, read with Section 409 of the Ranbir Penal Code, in connection with the misappropriation of food grains and empty bags during the period from April 1989 to September 11, 1989, in the Pahalgam Circle.

Accordingly, the court sentenced the convicts to two years of simple imprisonment and imposed a fine of Rs 1 lakh each under Section 5(2) of the J&K Prevention of Corruption Act. In default of payment of the fine, each convict shall undergo an additional six months of simple imprisonment.

For the offence under Section 409 RPC, the court sentenced them to three years of simple imprisonment along with a fine of Rs 2 lakh each. In case of default in payment, each convict shall undergo | More on P6

Drug Traffickers Will Be Treated Like Terrorists: LG Sinha

'350 FIRs, 440 Arrests In 20 Days; 80 Days Remain In Anti-drug Drive'

Observer News Service

Srinagar: Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha on Wednesday launched the Drug-Free Jammu and Kashmir campaign in Doda, calling for a united public movement against narcotics and warning of stringent action against those involved in drug trafficking.

Addressing a gathering, the Lieutenant Governor described drug abuse as a "form of silent terrorism" that threatens the social fabric and future of the region.

"I firmly believe that drug abuse is a form of silent terrorism, not merely a matter of law and order. The smuggling of



narcotics represents terrorism in disguise. It is a hidden threat that devastates our youth, weakens families, and undermines the very foundations of society," he said.

He asserted that the administration has decided to treat drug traffickers on par with terrorists under the law.

"We have decided that drug traffickers in Jammu and Kashmir will be treated the same way terrorists are. They are enemies of society, enemies of humanity and enemies of our youth. We are committed to wiping out this threat," he said.

The Lieutenant Governor said that every drug smuggler, local peddler and member of a drug syndicate would be identified and put behind bars.

"I give you my word: we will not rest until the networks spreading this poison are completely | More on P6

Haj Pilgrims To Pay ₹10K More As Airfare Rises

Govt Says It Averted Bigger Burden

Observer News Service

New Delhi: The airfare for Haj 2026 has been increased by 10,000 per pilgrim, with the Haj Committee of India attributing the hike to a sharp rise in global Aviation Turbine Fuel (ATF) prices triggered by the ongoing crisis in the Middle East.

The increase, approved by the Ministry of Minority Affairs, has sparked criticism from opposition leaders, who termed the move unfair and poorly timed.

According to a circular issued by the Haj Committee of India, pilgrims will have to pay an additional USD 100 (approximately 10,000) irrespective of their embarkation point.

The committee said airlines had sought a much steeper increase of over USD 400 per pilgrim due to the surge in ATF prices, necessitating a revision.

"In view of extraordinary circumstances arising out of the ongoing crisis in the Middle East, a one-time revision in airfare has been approved after due consultation with stakeholders," the circular stated.

All registered pilgrims have been asked to deposit the additional amount by May 15.

Govt Says Hike Was Minimized

Union Minority Affairs Minister Kiren Rijiju defended the decision, saying the government intervened to shield pilgrims from | More on P6

J&K Records Highest-Ever Investment At Rs 5,824 Cr In FY26

Agencies

Srinagar: Jammu and Kashmir has recorded its highest-ever annual investment of Rs 5,824.42 crore in the financial year 2025-26, marking a major milestone in the Union Territory's industrial growth and ongoing economic transformation.

According to official data, the investment is over 13 times the average annual inflow recorded between 2014 and 2021, reflecting a sustained surge in industrial activity across the UT.

The data shows that the upward trend has remained consistent over recent years, with



investments rising from Rs 2,153 crore in FY 2022-23 to Rs 3,389 crore in FY 2023-24 and Rs 4,145 crore in FY 2024-25, culminating

in the current record. For the first time, multiple anchor investments exceeding Rs 500 crore are | More on P6

J&K HC Warns Against 'Scandalous' Allegations On Judges

M Ahmad

Srinagar: The High Court of J&K and Ladakh has issued "clear and unequivocal caution" to all litigants and advocates, directing them to desist from making unfounded and scandalous allegations against judicial officers.

A bench of Justice Wasim Sadiq Nargal also warned that any repetition of such conduct without any basis or material shall invite appropriate action in accordance with law.

"While this Court is

constitutionally vested with supervisory jurisdiction over the district judiciary, it bears a corresponding obligation to protect its judicial officers from scandalous, reckless, and wholly unsubstantiated allegations," the court said, underlining that the exercise of such supervisory control cannot be reduced to a "conduit for ventilating grievances founded on conjecture or motivated insinuation."

"Any indulgence of baseless imputations would not only strike at the very root of judicial independence but also corrode | More on P6

Shah Arrives In Ladakh For Buddha Relics Exposition

Press Trust Of India

Leh: Union Home Minister Amit Shah arrived in Ladakh on Thursday to attend the first-ever international exposition of holy relics of Lord Buddha in India, officials said.

Shah was received by Ladakh Lieutenant Governor V K Saxena and accorded a ceremonial welcome at the Kushok Bakula Rimpochee Airport here. Senior officials of the police and civil administration were also present.

During his two-day visit, Shah will pay respect to the sacred relics of Lord Buddha on the Buddha Purnima, which falls on Friday.

He will also lay foundation



stone for a 10 TLPD (thousand litres per day) capacity dairy plant in Kargil and attend other dairy-related programmes.

In an X post on Wednesday, Shah said it was a moment of profound good fortune for him.

"It is a | More on P6



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Dreams Reflect Interplay Between Personal Traits, External Events: Study

Press Trust Of India

The contents of a dream may not be random or chaotic, but could instead reflect a complex interplay between personal traits, such as one's tendency to mind-wander, interest in dreams and sleep quality and external events, including large-scale societal experiences like the COVID-19 pandemic, according to a new study.

Researchers at Italy's IMT School of Advanced Studies Lucca analysed over 3,700 reports of dream and waking experiences collected from 287 participants aged 18-70. Over two weeks, the participants recorded daily experiences, while the researchers gathered information about sleep patterns, cognitive abilities, personality traits and psychological characteristics. The researchers analysed the words the participants used to describe both

their daily lives and their dreams. Rather than simply replaying waking experiences, dreams appear to reinterpret them, they said. Elements from daily routines, such as work environments, healthcare settings, or education, do not reappear as they are -- they are instead reorganised into vivid, immersive scenarios, often blending different contexts and shifting perspectives into unfamiliar landscapes, the team said.

PUBLIC NOTICE

This is for the information of the general public that my ward Simran Jan was born on 08-08-2012 at home in Village Hardubani, Tehsil Kunzer, District Baramulla. However, the date of birth has not been recorded in the concerned official records. Now, I intend to obtain the Date of Birth Certificate from the competent authority. If anybody has any objection in this regard, he/she may file the same before the concerned authority within 7 days from the date of publication of this notice.
 Hilal Ahmad Shah
 S/o Mohammad Shafi Shah
 F/o Simran Jan
 R/o Hardubani, Tehsil Kunzer
 District Baramulla fko

PUBLIC NOTICE

This is to inform that I, RAQIBA AKTHER R/o Shajar Colony Mandial Nowshera have applied for upgrade of my Class "D" contractor registration issued vide No. SE/(R&B)/Gbl/Bandi/DEE/1231/Civil/2020-2021 to Class "C". If any person has any objection in this regard, they may submit their objections (if any) in writing to the office of Chief Engineer, CID wing JKPC Kashmir, Bemina, Srinagar or Secretary Technical PWD (R&B), Civil Secretariat Srinagar within 7 (seven) days from the date of publication of this notice. No objection shall be entertained thereafter.
 Contact No.9541257325 ab

PUBLIC NOTICE

This is to inform that I, Asma Yaqoob Khan R/o Khayam Colony Srinagar have applied for upgrade of my Class "C" contractor registration issued vide No. SE/(R&B)/Gbl/Bandi/CEE/1017/Civil/2020-2021 to Class "B". If any person has any objection in this regard, they may submit their objections (if any) in writing to the office of Chief Engineer, CID wing JKPC Kashmir, Bemina, Srinagar or Secretary Technical PWD (R&B), Civil Secretariat Srinagar within 7 (seven) days from the date of publication of this notice. No objection shall be entertained thereafter.
 ab

PUBLIC NOTICE

This is to inform that I, Salman Ahmad Shiekh R/o Kaloosa Bandipora have applied for upgrade of my Class "C" contractor registration issued vide No. SE/(R&B)/Gbl/Bandi/CEE/1069/Civil/2020-2021 to Class "B". If any person has any objection in this regard, they may submit their objections (if any) in writing to the office of Chief Engineer, CID wing JKPC Kashmir, Bemina, Srinagar or Secretary Technical PWD (R&B), Civil Secretariat Srinagar within 7 (seven) days from the date of publication of this notice. No objection shall be entertained thereafter.
 Contact No.7889631607 ab

PUBLIC NOTICE

This is to inform that I, Mussarat Jabeen w/o Naseem Javaid R/O Exchange Road Jammu want to upgrade my class B contractor card registered vide No. 02/BEE/PWD/2016-17 DT 30-07-2016 to Class A from the office of Chief Engineer C&D wing JKPC; Kashmir, if anybody has any objection he/she may contact Chief Engineer C&D wing JKPC Kashmir or Secretary Technical PWD (R&B), Civil Secretariat within seven days from the date of publication of this notice. No objection shall be entertained thereafter.
 ab

PUBLIC NOTICE

This is to inform the general public that my name has been wrongly mentioned in my Aadhaar Card bearing Aadhaar No. 8609 2942 8472 Now I want to change my name from ITRUT SAKEENA (Old Name) to ITRAT SAKEENA (New Name). In this regard, if anyone has any objection, he or she may approach the concerned authorities within a period of seven days. After that, no objection shall be entertained.
 Name:- ITRAT SAKEENA inf
 D/O :- NISAR HUSSAIN DAR
 R/O: MAHWARA BUDGAM, Jammu And Kashmir- 191111

PUBLIC NOTICE

This is to inform the general public that my name has been wrongly mentioned in my Aadhaar Card bearing Aadhaar No. 8817 3449 2540 Now I want to change my name from HAJA BEGUM (Old Name) to HAJIRA BEGUM (New Name). In this regard, if anyone has any objection, he or she may approach the concerned authorities within a period of seven days. After that, no objection shall be entertained.
 Name:- HAJIRA BEGUM ab
 W/O:-GHULAM NABI MALLA
 R/O:- GOGOO, BUDGAM, Jammu And Kashmir- 191111

Subject: Grant of registration of the proposed paying Guest/homes stay unit under the name & Style of M/s. NEXES INN HOME STAY situated at Laam Brein Srinagar

PUBLIC NOTICE

Whereas I Sarameena w/o Shabeer Ahmad Dandru R/o Brein Nishat Srinagar Near J&K Bank Intends to apply in the office of the prescribed authority of Director of tourism for registration of my proposed paying Guest house/ Home stay under the name and style "M/s. NEXES INN HOME STAY" situated at Laam Brein Srinagar under Tourist Trade Act 1978/82/2011-12. Whereas, I will submit landownership certificate from concerned Tehsilard with attested photographs of the unit through Dy Commissioner concerned rent/lease deed/partnership deed/issued by concerned sub-registrar, judicial magistrate (if applicable) NOC from the owner to the effect that the property can be used as home stay), Character certificate of the applicant from the concerned police station, undertaking from the owner as self declaration public notice inviting objections, if any in the print media, list of family members Name, age and photograph self attested by owner, photographs of the unit as mentioned in the applicant (such of exterior and interior of the unit and bathrooms), inspection report by the committee (The recommendation of the inspection committee shall decide whether to issue a registration to the unit or not keeping in view the type of accommodation and amenity, adhar card. Now before my case is processed for registration by the prescribed authority, the matter is hereby notified for information of general public/organizations for objections if any and the same shall be reached to the office of prescribed Authority within a period of 7 days from the publication of this notice in leading local newspaper of the valley, objection received beyond the period of 7 days from the date of publication shall not be entertained and the case shall be proceeded under rules as per merit fko

Kind Attention Rail Passengers

IMPORTANT NOTICE

It is notified for the information of all concerned that Train no. 26401/26402 Shri Mata Vaishno Devi Katra- Srinagar- Shri Mata Vaishno Devi Katra Vande Bharat Express and Train no. 26404/26403 Srinagar- Shri Mata Vaishno Devi Katra- Srinagar Vande Bharat Express will be extended up to Jammu Tawi w.e.f. 02.05.2026 as per details given below:-

26401/26402 Jammu Tawi - Srinagar - Jammu Tawi Vande Bharat Express Train Daily (Except Tuesday)				
TRAIN NO. 26401		STATIONS	TRAIN NO. 26402	
ARR.	DEP.		ARR.	DEP.
---	06:20	Jammu Tawi	18:50	---
07:37	07:39	Martyr Captain Tushar Mahajan	17:25	17:27
08:05	08:10	Shri Mata Vaishno Devi Katra	16:55	17:00
08:28	08:30	Reasi	16:34	16:36
09:56	09:58	Banihal	14:58	15:00
11:10	---	Srinagar	---	14:00

Days of Run : 26401 Ex. Jammu Tawi and 26402 Ex. Srinagar from 02.05.2026
 Accommodation : Executive Car & AC Chair Car

26404/26403 Srinagar - Jammu Tawi - Srinagar Vande Bharat Express Train Daily (Except Wednesday)				
TRAIN NO. 26404		STATIONS	TRAIN NO. 26403	
ARR.	DEP.		ARR.	DEP.
---	08:00	Srinagar	18:05	---
09:00	09:02	Banihal	16:40	16:42
11:05	11:10	Shri Mata Vaishno Devi Katra	14:50	14:55
11:35	11:37	Martyr Captain Tushar Mahajan	14:16	14:18
12:45	---	Jammu Tawi	---	13:20

Days of Run : 26404 Ex. Srinagar and 26403 Ex. Jammu Tawi from 02.05.2026
 Accommodation : Executive Car & AC Chair Car

Note: - In repercussion to above, timings of the following trains will be revised as per details mentioned below:-

Train No. 12549 Durg Jn. - Martyr Captain Tushar Mahajan Superfast Express: Effective From: 02.06.2026
 Train No. 20847 Durg Jn. - Martyr Captain Tushar Mahajan Superfast Express: Effective From: 03.06.2026

Station	Existing Timings		Revised Timings	
	Arrival	Departure	Arrival	Departure
Jammu Tawi	17:43	17:50	17:43	17:50
Bajalta	---	---	18:10	18:35
Sangar	18:22	18:44	19:05	19:20
Martyr Captain Tushar Mahajan	19:40	---	20:05	---

For any kind of information, passengers are requested to contact RailMadad Helpline No. 139 or visit Indian Railways website <https://enquiry.indianrail.gov.in> or NTES App.

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PUBLIC NOTICE

This is for the information of the general public that the name of my ward has been wrongly recorded as Abid Ahmad Kumar and father's name as Dilawar Ahmad Kumar in Aadhaar Card bearing No. 5463 5296 8039. However, the correct name is Abid Ahmad Kumar S/o Dilawar Ahmad Kumar as per domicile records. Henceforth, the correct name of my ward shall be Aabid Ahmad Kumar S/o Dilawar Ahmad Kumar for all official purposes. If anybody has any objection in this regard, he/she may file the same before the competent authority within 7 days from the date of publication of this notice.
 Saleema Begum
 W/o Dilawar Ahmad Kumar
 Mother of Abid Ahmad Kumar
 R/o Kralweth, Tehsil Kunzer
 District Baramulla fko

ازنیات یومی

عنوان:- درخواست منجانب محمد شرف شاہ ولد محمد یاسین شاہ ساکن سلیو زینگیہہ ہزارہ اترائی EWS سرٹیفکیٹ بحق اولاد ان فرقان، فوزیہ اتریش

معاملہ مندرجہ عنوان الصدمیں ساکن نے ایک درخواست نمٹنے EWS سرٹیفکیٹ پیش کی ہے جو کہ زبردستی ہے اس بارے میں پڑواری حلقہ سے رپورٹ طلب کی گئی ہے جس سے عیام ہے کہ ساکن دھڑا میں رہائش پذیر ہے سال کا کنٹینر 5 افراد پر مشتمل ہے اور کنٹینر کی سالانہ آمدنی زرعی غیر زرعی سے مبلغ 8000 روپیہ تک ہے ساکن کے پاس 15 ایکڑ سے کم رقبہ ہے ساکن کا مکان رہائشی 200 SQ Ground سے کم ہے رقبہ میں قبضہ شدہ موجود ہے ساکن کا رہائشی فلیٹ 1000 sq فٹ سے کم ہے ساکن کا مکان رہائشی اتریزون میں ہے اور وہیں واقع نہیں رہائش سالانہ آمدنی 8 لاکھ سے کم ہے ساکن، RBA، ST، OBC، زر سے نہیں آتا ہے۔
 سرٹیفکیٹ زیر بحث ابراہم نے میں اگر کسی شخص کو کوئی مزرا یا عراض ہتھوڑو بعد شہر اچرا سارماتن کے اندر اندر اپنے مندرجہ عراض واداء حذا کو ہتھی اوقات کے دوران پیش کریں۔ بعد گزرے بیجا کو بی مندرجہ عراض قابل قبول نہیں ہوگا۔
 نائب تحصیلدار FKO

ازنیات یومی زینگیہہ

عنوان:- درخواست منجانب محمد شرف شاہ ولد محمد یاسین شاہ ساکن سلیو زینگیہہ ہزارہ اترائی Property Certificate

معاملہ مندرجہ عنوان الصدمیں ساکن نے ایک درخواست نمٹنے پر اپنی سرٹیفکیٹ پیش کی ہے جو کہ زبردستی ہے اس بارے میں فیڈل حلقہ سے رپورٹ طلب کی گئی ہے جس سے عیام ہے کہ موضع عیوی پورہ میں تراست نمبر 2549/614 زیر قبضہ 1 کنال موجود ہے جس کی ملکیت فی کنال 965000 ہے۔ اب ساکن محمد شرف شاہ ولد محمد یاسین شاہ نے اپنے حق میں Property Certificate حاصل کرنے کا خواہاں ہے۔
 سرٹیفکیٹ زیر بحث ابراہم نے میں اگر کسی شخص کو کوئی مزرا یا عراض ہتھوڑو بعد شہر اچرا سارماتن کے اندر اندر اپنے مندرجہ عراض واداء حذا کو ہتھی اوقات کے دوران پیش کریں۔ بعد گزرے بیجا کو بی مندرجہ عراض قابل قبول نہیں ہوگا۔
 نائب تحصیلدار FKO

OFFICE OF THE ASSISTANT REGIONAL TRANSPORT OFFICER BUDGAM
 Subject:- Necessary Correction/change in address in data to the License No. JK-0520240004359 issued in favour of UMER YOUSUF BABA Parentage MOHAMMAD YOUSUF BABA Whereas an application has been received by one UMER YOUSUF BABA Parentage MOHAMMAD YOUSUF BABA wherein he claimed that the Name has been wrongly recorded in the records of Driving Licenses as UMER YOUSUF Which needs to be changed as UMER YOUSUF BABA.
 Now therefore it is notified for the information of the general public that objections if any in this regard shall reach in written in the office of the Assistant Regional Transport officer Budgam within a period of 7 days from the date of publication of this notice in the daily newspaper. After expiry of stipulated time no objection will be entertained.
 Assistant Regional Transport officer
 Budgam Kashmir
 mcb

PUBLIC NOTICE
 This is information for the general public that in Adhar card bearing No 731508302325 the name is entered as Mehbooba Ramzan while my actual name is Mahbooba. Now I want its correction, in this regard if anybody having any objection may contact Concern department with in a period of seven days. No objection shall be entertained after that.
 Mahbooba
 W/O Mohammad Ramzan Sofi mcb

PUBLIC NOTICE
 This is to inform the general public that my name has been wrongly mentioned in my Aadhaar Card bearing Aadhaar No. 8817 3449 2540 Now I want to change my name from HAJA BEGUM (Old Name) to HAJIRA BEGUM (New Name). In this regard, if anyone has any objection, he or she may approach the concerned authorities within a period of seven days. After that, no objection shall be entertained.
 Name:- HAJIRA BEGUM inf
 W/O:-GHULAM NABI MALLA
 R/O:- GOGOO, BUDGAM, Jammu And Kashmir- 191111

PUBLIC NOTICE
 It is hereby notified for the information of the general public that the name "Suhaib Mushtaq Dar" mentioned in the Driving Licence records is incorrect.
 The correct name is: "Suhaib Mushtaq"
 Driving license No.: JK01 20260001771
 I am applying for correction in the official records. If anyone has any objection to the same, they may contact RTO office Srinagar, within 7 days of publication of this notice. After that, no objection will be entertained.
 media time adst

PUBLIC NOTICE
 This is to inform the general public that my name has been wrongly mentioned in my Aadhaar Card bearing Aadhaar No. 8609 2942 8472 Now I want to change my name from ITRUT SAKEENA (Old Name) to ITRAT SAKEENA (New Name). In this regard, if anyone has any objection, he or she may approach the concerned authorities within a period of seven days. After that, no objection shall be entertained.
 Name: ITRAT SAKEENA inf
 D/O :- NISAR HUSSAIN DAR
 R/O: MAHWARA BUDGAM, Jammu And Kashmir- 191111

PUBLIC NOTICE
 This is to certify that my daughter's name has been wrongly recorded as Zuhra Batool and her Date of Birth as 25.10.2017, in her Aadhaar Card.
 I want to correct the name of my daughter from Zuhra Batool to Zehra Batool. Further, I also wish to correct her Date of Birth: 25.10.2017, as 20.05.2017
 Henceforth, my daughter shall be known as Zehra Batool, with Date of Birth 20.05.2017, for all official and legal purposes.
 Any person having any objection to the above-mentioned change of name and correction of Date of Birth may submit their objection in writing to the concerned authority within 7 (seven) days from the date of publication of this notice. If no objection is received within the stipulated period, the change shall be deemed final.
 Name: Showkat Ahmad Dar,
 S/O Abdul Gani Dar
 Address: Rathusna, Tehsil: Tral, District: Pulwama: Post Office- Saimoh; Pin Code: 192123
 Contact No. +91-7006083010 inf

Government of Jammu & Kashmir
Health & Medical Education Department
 Civil Secretariat, J&K.

Subject:- Compassionate appointment of Smt. Anju Parihar W/o Late Anil Kumar, (Ex- Driver) R/o Village Kandote, Thathri District Doda J&K, in Government Medical College, Doda under Jammu & Kashmir Rehabilitation Assistance Scheme-2022.
 Reference:- i. Minutes of the meeting of Evaluation Designated Committee held on 03.07.2025 in Civil Secretariat, Jammu/Srinagar;
 ii. Form No. 150205 dated 10.04.2026 received from Criminal Investigation Department, J&K.
 iii. General Administration Department O.M No. GAD-RAS/1/2026 (7718766) dated 11.02.2026.

Government Order No.374 -JK(HME) of 2026.
Dated:- 24-04.2026

In exercise of the powers conferred under Clause-3 of Jammu and Kashmir Rehabilitation Assistance Scheme, 2022 notified vide S.O. 429 dated 6th September, 2022 read with S.O. 397 dated 16th of August, 2024, sanction is hereby accorded to the temporary appointment of Smt. Anju Parihar W/o Late Anil Kumar, (Ex- Driver) R/o Village Kandote, Thathri District Doda J&K, in Government Medical College, Doda, as MTS in the Pay Level SL-1 (14800-47100).
 The appointee shall report to the Principal, Government Medical College, Doda, within a period of 21 days from the date of issuance of this Government Order, failing which she shall forfeit her right to appointment and the same shall be deemed to have been cancelled ab-initio without any further notice.
 The appointee shall be allowed to join only on the production of the following certificates (in original) to be verified subsequently:-
 a) Academic Qualification Certificates.
 b) Date of Birth Certificate.
 c) Health Certificate from the concerned Chief Medical Officer of the District.
 d) Domicile Certificate.
 e) All other relevant documents as are required under the J&K Rehabilitation Assistance Scheme-2022.
 The appointment of the appointee shall further be subject to the following conditions:-
 i. The applicant shall give an undertaking in writing as per format prescribed in the Scheme that she shall maintain properly the other family members who were dependent on the deceased and in case, it is proved subsequently, at any time that the family members are being neglected or are not being maintained properly by her, appointee shall be terminated forthwith.
 ii. Any claim for transfer of appointment to any other family member shall invariably be rejected.
 iii. The appointee shall be adjusted against appropriate category to which she belongs. In case the appointee fails to produce any valid category certificate, she shall be adjusted against General category.
 iv. That she shall give an undertaking in the shape of an Affidavit to the effect that if on verification, her Qualification/Date of Birth/Category Certificates, if any, from the concerned issuing authority are found to be fake/forged, the claim of the appointee for appointment as Class- IV/Multitasking Staff (MTS) shall be deemed to have been cancelled ab-initio and legal action as warranted under rules shall be initiated against her.
 v. That she shall give an undertaking in the shape of an Affidavit duly attested by the Judicial Magistrate First Class, to the effect that the applicant is unemployed as on date and none of the family members other than the applicant has taken benefit of compassionate appointment under J&K Rehabilitation Assistance Scheme-2022. In case, it turns out that the applicant is already appointed or the benefit of compassionate appointment under the Scheme has already been extended to the family of the deceased, then the instant appointment shall be deemed to have been withdrawn ab-initio without any further notice.
 vi. That if the candidate has taken loan for self-employment from District Industries Centre (DIC) / Employment Department, to be ascertained from the DIC and District Employment & Counselling Centre of the domicile District, she shall relinquish the proprietorship of unit/enterprise and also stakes, if any, in such self-employment unit/enterprise before joining the Government service. She shall be required to repay the entire loan liability in suitable EMIs to be worked out by the DDO concerned from her salary. The DDO concerned shall obtain an affidavit from the concerned appointee regarding both relinquishment of proprietorship and stakes, if any, in such self-employment unit/enterprise and recovery to be made and also personally monitor its recovery.
 vii. The salary of the appointee shall not be drawn and disbursed to her unless a satisfactory report in respect of genuineness of Qualification/Date of Birth/Category Certificate, if any, is received from the concerned authorities.
 viii. The appointee shall be on probation for a period of two years.
 ix. The appointment of the candidate shall be governed by the "New Pension Scheme" as notified vide SRO-400 of 2009 dated 24.12.2011. The appointment of the appointee shall be subject to outcome of writ petition(s), if any, pending before competent Court of Law.
By order of the Government of Jammu & Kashmir.
 Sd/-
 (M. Raju) IAS,
 Commissioner/Secretary to the Government,
 Health & Medical Education Department

No: HD-NG-J/200/2023-02 (CC. No. 7232502)
 DIPK-910/26
 Dated:- 30.04.2026



Smoking Driving Surge in Lung Cancer Cases across Kashmir: Director SKIMS

Observer News Service

Srinagar: Sher-i-Kashmir Institute of Medical Sciences (SKIMS) Director Prof. M. Ashraf Ganie on Thursday said that the Kashmir Valley—particularly Srinagar—is witnessing one of the highest burdens of lung cancer cases in the country, with smoking emerging as the leading cause.

Speaking during an informal media interaction held alongside the inauguration of upgraded medical infrastructure at SKIMS, Prof. Ganie, according to KNO described the trend as “deeply concerning,” stressing that tobacco consumption remains the most significant contributor to the rising incidence of lung cancer in the region.

He noted that lifestyle-related factors, especially smoking, are driving the surge and require urgent attention at both the policy and community levels.

“While we are strengthening treatment facilities, prevention must now take centre stage,” he said, underlining the need for widespread awareness campaigns to discourage tobacco use and promote healthier lifestyles. “Smoking kills,” he warned.

He emphasized that early detection is critical in improving survival rates, as most lung cancer cases are currently diagnosed at advanced stages.

To tackle the growing cancer burden, SKIMS has intensified efforts to upgrade its oncology services. The institute is enhancing diagnostic and treatment capabilities to ensure that patients can access advanced care within Jammu and Kashmir, reducing dependence on outside referrals.

A key upcoming initiative includes the establishment of a dedicated screening and prevention facility aimed at large-scale early detection of cancers. This centre will focus

on identifying high-risk individuals—particularly smokers—and initiating timely interventions. It will also play a crucial role in educating the public about risk factors such as tobacco use and the importance of regular screenings.

Prof. Ganie said that bridging the gap between diagnosis and prevention is essential to reversing current trends. “Systematic screening and preventive strategies can significantly reduce the long-term burden of cancer,” he added.

He said that Sher-i-Kashmir Institute of Medical Sciences is set to strengthen its clinical and research capabilities with the addition of advanced equipment across multiple departments, including nephrology, paediatrics, critical care, maternity services, and surgical oncology.

He added that SKIMS will also present key scientific findings at an upcoming

Research Dissemination Meet, where experts are expected to highlight data-driven insights on the rising cancer burden in the Valley. The research is aimed at dispelling myths and addressing public concerns surrounding the increasing incidence of cancer, with a focus on evidence-based understanding and early detection strategies.

The Director inaugurated a series of advanced medical facilities across multiple departments at SKIMS, marking a major step toward strengthening patient care.

The upgraded infrastructure—worth over Rs 24 crore—includes high-end equipment for critical care, oncology, surgery, and diagnostics, aimed at improving precision, efficiency, and overall patient outcomes.

He said the upgraded infrastructure aims to enhance patient care, improve diagnostic precision, and support complex treatments at the tertiary care institute.

- TRAFFIC POLICE : 9419993745, 01998-266686
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- CAPD: 18001807011
- SMC HEALTH OFFICER: 9469409081
- Ambulance: Kashmir EMS Service: +91 94841 00200

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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)

PRAYERS

FAJR	4: 12
ZUHR	12:28
ASR	5: 18
Magrib	7:17
ISHA	8: 45

HIJRI CALENDAR
13 Zil-Qadah
1447

Four Houses Damaged in Bemina Blaze

Observer News Service

Srinagar: At least two firefighters were injured and four houses were damaged after a fire broke out in the Bemina area of Srinagar on Thursday, officials said.

An official told KNO that four houses were damaged near Usmania Colony in Bemina.

He said the fire started in one house and quickly spread to adjoining structures, engulfing four houses before it was brought under control by the Fire and Emergency Department.

He added that two firemen, Mohammad Arif and Tanvir Ahmed, were injured during the operation.

The cause of the fire is under investigation and cognizance has been taken.

Srinagar Traffic Plan Issued for Nasha Mukht Rally on May 3

Observer News Service

Srinagar: The Senior Superintendent of Police (SSP) Traffic Srinagar City Ajaz Ahmad Bhat on Thursday shared a detailed traffic advisory for the Nasha Mukht Rally scheduled to be held on May 3.

Sharing details while addressing the media in Srinagar, SSP Bhat, as per KNO, said, “The 100-Day Nasha Mukht J&K Abhiyaan event is expected to witness large participation and elaborate arrangements have been put in place.”

He said the rally will be flagged off by Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha from the Synthetic Turf Football Ground (opposite Radio Kashmir) and will culminate at Lal Chowk.

Bhat said vehicles from South Kashmir will be parked at Rajbagh, while those from North Kashmir and Downtown areas will be accommodated at Jehangir Chowk.

He added that additional parking facilities have been designated at Gindun

Park, Cluster University, Indoor Stadium, and SP College (rear side).

Roadside parking, especially along the Bund stretch, has been strictly prohibited, he said.

SSP Bhat said vehicles from South Kashmir will move via Rajbagh and de-board at Gindun Park, while vehicles from North Kashmir and Downtown will proceed via Jehangir Chowk, LD Hospital, and Jawahar Nagar.

He said participants will then reach the venue through designated footbridges.

He added that movement of heavy vehicles will remain restricted between LD Hospital and Abdullah Bridge during the event.

He said special arrangements have also been made for the NEET examination scheduled on the same day, with around 4,000 candidates appearing at centres along MA Road.

He said admit cards will be treated as valid passes to ensure smooth movement of students.

Counter-Terror Drill Held at Srinagar Airport

Observer News Service

Srinagar: A multi-agency counter-terrorist exercise was conducted at Srinagar international airport on Thursday to test emergency response and coordination among security forces, officials said.

As per the details available with KNO, the CISF-led drill, in coordination with CRPF, police, AAI, BCAS and other stakeholders, simulated real-time scenarios to assess preparedness, communication and evacuation procedures under the airport’s counter-terror contingency plan.

It said the exercise evaluated response protocols through the coordinated deployment of specialized units, real-time scenario simulation and comprehensive testing of actions as per the Counter-Terrorist Contingency Plan, including communication channels, evacuation drills, and inter-agency coordination mechanisms.

GOVERNMENT OF JAMMU AND KASHMIR HEALTH & MEDICAL EDUCATION DEPARTMENT

Civil Secretariat, Jammu/Srinagar.

Dr. Bushra Jabeen Medical Officer
Under orders of transfer to SDH Beerwah
No. HD-Gaz0Gen/82/2026-02 (7723535)

Dated: 23.04. 2026

Subject: Non Compliance of Government Order-Show Cause Notice thereof.

Whereas, vide Government Order No. 274-JK(HME) of 2026 dated 07.04.2026 among others you were transferred and posted at SDH Beerwah and; Whereas, you have failed to report for the duties at the new place of posting till date and; Whereas, this indicates an irresponsible and lackadaisical approach on your part, towards entrusted legal duties/ responsibilities and an outright brazen non-compliance of Government Orders and Directions and; Whereas, the post of Medical Officer is a UT cadre post, and therefore, a doctor is liable to be posted anywhere across the Union Territory of Jammu & Kashmir in the interest of patient care and healthcare services; Whereas, further, the decision to post Dr. Bushra Jabeen Medical Officer at SDH Beerwah, has been taken in view of the pressing public demand for healthcare services in the area and with the objective of strengthening medical facilities at the said hospital, in the larger interest of patient welfare and equitable healthcare delivery across the UT; Whereas, such unwarranted conduct in discharging assigned duties, particularly remaining absent without authorization, has adversely affected the healthcare delivery and hampered patient care services at the health institution. Whereas; this behaviour is wholly unbecoming of a Government employee, reflecting a disregard towards official responsibilities negatively impacting the functioning of the hospital/health facility and as such, the matter has, therefore, been viewed very seriously by the Competent Authority; Now therefore, in view of the above, you are directed to report at your new place of posting i.e. SDH Beerwah forthwith and without fail, failing which disciplinary action as warranted under rules shall be initiated against you without any further notice, as the patient care cannot be left unattended in the Hospital/Health Facility.

DIPK-913/26
dated: 30-04-2026

(Abdul Raqib Bhat) JKAS
Under Secretary to the Government

GOVERNMENT OF JAMMU AND KASHMIR HEALTH & MEDICAL EDUCATION DEPARTMENT

Civil Secretariat, Jammu/Srinagar.

Dr. Prtima Sambyal (PG Radiology)
Medical Officer
Under orders of transfer to SDH Akhnor
No. HD-Gaz0Gen/82/2026-02 (7723535) Dated: 23.04. 2026

Subject: Non Compliance of Government Order-Show Cause Notice thereof.

Whereas, vide Government Order No. 275-JK(HME) of 2026 dated 07.04.2026 among others you were transferred and posted at SDH Akhnor and; Whereas, you have failed to report for the duties at the new place of posting till date and; Whereas, this indicates an irresponsible and lackadaisical approach on your part, towards entrusted legal duties/ responsibilities and an outright brazen non-compliance of Government Orders and Directions and; Whereas, the post of Medical Officer is a UT cadre post, and therefore, a doctor is liable to be posted anywhere across the Union Territory of Jammu & Kashmir in the interest of patient care and healthcare services; Whereas, further, the decision to post Dr. Prtima Sambyal (PG Radiology) Medical Officer at SDH Akhnor, has been taken in view of the pressing public demand for healthcare services in the area and with the objective of strengthening medical facilities at the said hospital, in the larger interest of patient welfare and equitable healthcare delivery across the UT; Whereas, such unwarranted conduct in discharging assigned duties, particularly remaining absent without authorization has adversely affected the healthcare delivery and hampered patient care services at the health institution. Whereas; this behaviour is wholly unbecoming of a Government employee, reflecting a disregard towards official responsibilities negatively impacting the functioning of the hospital/health facility and as such, the matter has, therefore, been viewed very seriously by the Competent Authority; Now therefore, in view of the above, you are directed to report at your new place of posting i.e. SDH Akhnor forthwith and without fail, failing which disciplinary action as warranted under rules shall be initiated against you without any further notice, as the patient care cannot be left unattended in the Hospital/Health Facility.

DIPK-904/26
dated: 30-04-2026

(Abdul Raqib Bhat) JKAS
Under Secretary to the Government

PUBLIC NOTICE
This is for the information of the general public that the name of my father has been wrongly recorded as Gh Ahmad Reshi in my Aadhaar Card bearing No. 4614 7015 0017. However, the correct name of my father is Gh Ahmed Reshi as per my school records. Henceforth, the correct name of my father shall be Gh Ahmed Reshi for all official purposes. If anybody has any objection in this regard, he/she may file the same before the competent authority within 7 days from the date of publication of this notice.
Gulzar Ahmed Reshi
S/O Gh Ahmed Reshi
R/O Pariswami, Tehsil Kwarhama
fko

PUBLIC NOTICE
I have lost my 10th pass discharge certificate issued by Govt Boys Secondary School Sanoora Kallipora. 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 above mentioned office within seven days. After that no objection shall be entertained.
Ali Mohammad Wani
S/O Ghulam Mohammad Wani
R/O Hardu Wamina District Beerwah
bmg

PUBLIC NOTICE
have applied for the issuance of 8th pass certificate from the office of the Headmaster Govt Girls Middle School Palpora Srinagar. If anybody has any objection in this regard he/she may file them in the above mentioned office within seven days. After that no objection shall be entertained.
Mudasir Rashid
(DOB : 01-03-2001)
S/O Ab Rashid Mathanji
R/o Ashtangoo Ghat
bmg

PUBLIC NOTICE
This is for the information of the general public that my name has been wrongly recorded as Ashya Bano in my Aadhaar Card bearing No. 7850-7285-2868. However, my correct name is Aasifa Aziz. Henceforth, I shall be known as Aasifa Aziz for all official purposes. If anybody has any objection in this regard, he/she may file the same before the competent authority within 7 days from the date of publication of this notice.
Aasifa Aziz
D/o Ab Aziz Najar fko
R/o Botingoo, Tehsil Danganpora District Baramulla

The Jammu & Kashmir Bank Ltd.
IAPM Department, Zonal Office Srinagar,
M. A. Road, (Opposite Women's College), Srinagar-190001, Kashmir.
0194-2452658, Ext.:132;iapmd.kmr@jkbmail.com

POSSESSION NOTICE

Notice under Section 13 (4) of the SARFAESI ACT, 2002 read with Rule 8 (1) of the Security (Enforcement) Interest Rules, 2002

Whereas the Authorized Officer of the Jammu & Kashmir Bank Limited under the Securitization and Reconstruction of Financial Assets and Enforcement of Security Interest (SARFAESI) Act, 2002 and in exercise of powers under Section 13(2) of the said Act read with Rule 3 of the Security Interest (Enforcement) Rules 2002, issued Demand Notice dated 09.10.2024 thereby calling upon the Borrowers namely 1) Mr. Mukhtar Ahmad Dar S/O Ghulam Rasool Dar R/O Humhama, Budgam, Prop. Of M/s F.M. Enterprises (borrower/Mortgagor) and his guarantors namely 2) Mushtaq Ahmad Khan, 3) Bashir Ahmad Dar and 4) Mushtaq Ahmad Dar to repay an amount of Rs. 5,81, 55,125.22 (Rupees Five Crore Eighty One Lac Fifty Five Thousand One Hundred Twenty Five and Paise Twenty Two only) being the balance outstanding as on 08.10.2024 in the account of the borrower, within 60 days from the date of the said notice together with the future interest and other charges thereon.

The said borrowers having failed to repay the said amount, notice is hereby given to the said borrowers in particular and the public in general that the undersigned being authorized officer of the J&K Bank Ltd. has taken possession of the mortgage property described herein below, in exercise of the powers conferred on me under Section 13(4) of the said Act read with Rule 8 of the said Rules, on 30th April, 2026.

The borrowers in particular and the public in general are hereby cautioned against dealing with the said property in any manner whatsoever and any dealings with the said property will be subject to the charge of the J&K Bank Limited for the amount in aggregating to Rs.6,91,03,020/- (Rupees six crores ninety one lacs three thousand and twenty only) together with future interest thereon from 01.04.2026 and other charges incurred or to be incurred.

The borrower's attention is invited to the provisions of Sub-section (8) of Section 13 of the Act, in respect of the time available, to redeem the secured assets.

Description of the Immovable Property

Land measuring 2 Kanals falling under Khasra No.21 min, Khata No.192 and Khawat No.38, situated at Mouza Humhama, Tehsil and District Budgam, standing in the name of Mr. Mukhtar Ahmad Dar S/O Ghulam Rasool Dar R/O Humhama, Budgam.

Authorized Officer

KASHMIR OBSERVER™

Printed & Published by Sajjad Haider on behalf of Kashmir Observer LLP
Printed at: K.T Press Pvt. Ltd 120-Electronic Complex, Industrial Estate, Rangreth-Budgam
Published from: 5-Boulevard Srinagar J&K
Editor-in-Chief: Sajjad Haider
Managing Editor: Bilal Handoo
News Editor: Farzana Nisar
Online Editor: Syed Hamid
Head Layout & Design: Muntazir Yaseen,
Digital Media Head: Amir Ali Shah
Distribution & Advertising: Firdous Ahmad
RNI Registration No: 69503/98
Postal Registration No-L/159/KO/SK/2014-16
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May Day in Kashmir

Beneath Kashmir's May Day symbolism stands a workforce still waiting for security, healthcare and fair enforcement of labour laws.



KO VIEW

Kashmir's Wellness Wave

Kashmir stands at the edge of an economic transition that few policymakers fully understand.

Apple orchards and tourism still dominate public discourse, though a different economy has started taking root in the valley's forests, fields and mountain slopes.

Medicinal plants, organic farming, herbal products and wellness tourism now attract scientists, entrepreneurs and investors who see Kashmir as a future center for natural health industries.

Global demand fuels that interest. Consumers increasingly spend money on plant-based supplements, herbal therapies, organic foods and preventive health products.

India's nutraceutical market has expanded rapidly during the past decade, and Kashmir's biodiversity has entered that commercial conversation with growing force.

Researchers working in the Kashmir Himalayas documented more than 100 medicinal plant species used in traditional healing systems. Many grow in high-altitude ecosystems that support rare herbs with commercial value in pharmaceutical and wellness industries.

Saffron fields in Pampore, lavender cultivation in Jammu divisions and herbal tea ventures in the valley now feed a market that links Himalayan agriculture to urban wellness culture.

That economic shift creates real possibilities for Kashmir's struggling rural economy.

Mountain regions rarely sustain heavy industry at scale, while medicinal and aromatic crops generate high value from smaller land holdings. Young entrepreneurs have already started building businesses around organic produce, essential oils, medicinal herbs and wellness retreats aimed at domestic travellers seeking experiences tied to health and nature.

Scientists and tourism researchers in Kashmir have also promoted "herbal wellness tourism" as a long-term growth sector. The idea connects local medicinal knowledge with travel experiences centered on traditional therapies, organic food and ecological landscapes.

That model could diversify Kashmir economy beyond seasonal tourism and government employment. Commercial enthusiasm, however, has moved faster than scientific oversight.

Herbal products increasingly enter markets with sweeping health claims and inconsistent testing standards. Social media advertising often presents medicinal plants as miracle solutions for chronic illnesses despite limited clinical evidence. Consumers rarely receive clear information about sourcing methods, dosage safety or product quality.

Environmental pressure has also intensified in several Himalayan regions where medicinal plants face excessive harvesting. Scientific studies conducted in Kashmir have already documented ecological stress affecting important species used in traditional medicine. Rising commercial demand could intensify that pressure as collectors and middlemen push deeper into mountain ecosystems searching for high-value herbs.

Traditional knowledge also deserves stronger protection. Generations of local communities preserved medicinal practices through lived experience and oral transmission. Large companies now see commercial opportunity in that knowledge, while rural communities receive limited economic participation in the final profits.

Kashmir needs a wellness economy built on scientific credibility rather than marketing slogans. Strong regulation, clinical research, biodiversity protection and transparent certification systems would give this emerging sector long-term strength. Investment in local processing industries would also allow Kashmir to produce finished wellness products instead of exporting raw biological material for outside companies to monetize.

Kashmir's medicinal wealth needs careful stewardship. A rush for quick profits would drain the very ecosystems and traditions that make this region valuable in the first place.



Shabir Ahmad Ganaie

At first light in Shopian, a young father steps out of his home before his children wake up. Morning spares him the hardest question they ask each evening: "Did you find work today?"

Near the town's clock tower, he joins dozens of men waiting for a contractor to arrive. Some men secure a day's work, others return home empty-handed by noon.

That scene repeats itself every day in Kashmir. Labour remains visible in every market, orchard, roadside project and construction site. Protection for workers remains painfully absent.

May Day comes every year with speeches, banners and official statements praising workers as the backbone of society. But Kashmiri labourers deserve more than ceremonial praise. Their lives reveal how deeply the region depends on informal work and how little security supports the people who keep the economy running.

Global labour movements emerged through demands for fair hours, humane conditions and economic justice. The Haymarket protests in Chicago became a defining symbol of that struggle.

More than a century later, large sections of Kashmiri workforce still wait for the most basic guarantees: timely wages, medical protection, workplace safety and stable employment.

Karl Marx described a system where workers create wealth while remaining trapped in hardship themselves. His words still reverberate powerfully in Kashmir.

Economic growth fills headlines each year through rising tourism, expanding infrastructure and record apple production. Workers who sustain those sectors continue living with uncertainty that shadows every season.

India's informal sector employs more than 80 percent of the workforce. Jammu and Kashmir presents an even sharper version of that reality. More than 36 lakh unorganised workers stand registered on the e-Shram portal. Registration alone changes little when workers still lack insurance, pension access, compensation mechanisms and legal support.

Government figures show that only around 2.7 lakh construction workers hold registration with the welfare board. Thousands remain outside the system entirely. More than one lakh casual and daily-rated workers still work without long-term security despite years of service.

Districts such as Shopian, Pulwama and Anant-

nag depend heavily on seasonal labour. Men gather at public squares each morning hoping contractors select them for orchard work, masonry, road construction or loading jobs. A missed day means unpaid rent, delayed school fees or empty kitchens. Minimum wage laws exist on paper, though weak enforcement leaves workers vulnerable to underpayment and delayed wages.

Kashmir's apple industry tells the clearest story of economic imbalance.

The sector contributes nearly 75 percent of India's apple production and generates enormous revenue each year. Orchard labourers climb trees, spray pesticides and transport heavy loads through difficult terrain. Protective masks and gloves rarely appear in those orchards. Chemical exposure damages workers slowly through respiratory illness, skin disease and long-term health complications. Prosperity enters the market chain, but risk remains with the labourer. Construction work presents another harsh reality.

declines, tourism employment shrinks, and families survive through borrowing money, delaying expenses and accumulating debt that follows them through the rest of the year.

Seasonal unemployment remains one of Kashmir's most serious economic realities, though policy discussions rarely treat it with the seriousness it demands.

Existing welfare schemes could ease some of this suffering.

The Building and Other Construction Workers Welfare Scheme and Ayushman Bharat contain important protections. Workers often struggle to access those benefits because of bureaucratic delays, poor awareness campaigns and incomplete registration systems.

A welfare programme achieves little when the intended beneficiary cannot reach it.

Kashmir needs a labour policy rooted in enforcement rather than symbolism. Authorities must ensure strict implementation of minimum wages and

“Kashmir needs a labour policy rooted in enforcement rather than symbolism. Authorities must ensure strict implementation of minimum wages and mandatory safety standards at every worksite. Informal workers need universal registration linked directly to health insurance, accident compensation and pension access. Agricultural workers require training and protective equipment for handling pesticides safely. Seasonal support programmes should assist families during winter unemployment when income disappears for months.”

Kashmir's roads, bridges, hotels and homes rise through the labour of men working high above the ground without harnesses or helmets. A single accident can erase a family's only income source within seconds. Compensation often comes late or never at all. Contractors move on to the next project while families struggle with hospital bills and debt.

Sanitation workers face equally dangerous conditions. Every morning, they clean drains, collect waste and maintain public hygiene under conditions that expose them to infections and toxic material.

Hospitals such as the Sher-i-Kashmir Institute of Medical Sciences and SMHS Hospital regularly treat workers suffering from occupational illnesses linked to unsafe working environments.

Public health depends heavily on their labour, but public policy continues treating them as invisible.

Child labour also survives beneath the surface of Kashmir economy.

Children work in orchards, workshops and small manufacturing units because families need additional income to survive. Many children attempt to balance school with work before eventually leaving education altogether. Poverty then passes from one generation to another with brutal efficiency.

Winter deepens every one of these problems. Construction slows sharply, agricultural activity

mandatory safety standards at every worksite.

Informal workers need universal registration linked directly to health insurance, accident compensation and pension access. Agricultural workers require training and protective equipment for handling pesticides safely. Seasonal support programmes should assist families during winter unemployment when income disappears for months.

Economic development gains meaning only when workers share its benefits. Roads, orchards, schools, hotels and markets stand on the labour of people who still live one unpaid wage away from crisis.

May Day should push Kashmir toward an honest question: What type of economy depends entirely on workers while leaving them exposed to injury, debt and uncertainty?

The answer matters because Kashmir's future rests in the hands of labourers who continue building the region every single day.

A society that protects those hands protects its own future.

The author is a researcher of South Asian history whose work focuses on socio-political change, minority experiences and marginalized communities in Kashmir. He can be reached at shabeerhistory18@gmail.com.

CASH COURSE

Read This Before You Buy Anything

Risky Bets

As young Kashmiris enter futures and options trading, experts warn that quick profits often hide devastating losses.

Irshad Mushtaq

More young Kashmiris are looking at futures and options as a way to grow wealth beyond land or gold.

These contracts sound like quick ladders to fortune, but they are also full of traps for the unprepared.

At the heart of it all is the derivative, a contract whose value depends on an underlying asset like a stock, an index, or even a commodity.

Unlike buying shares directly, you put down only a margin, a fraction of the value, and your fortunes rise or fall with daily price changes.

In futures, this means your account is adjusted each day. A sudden drop in value can drain your margin fast.

Options trading appears more flexible. A "call" gives you the right to buy later, and a "put" gives you the right to sell.

The cost, called a premium, looks small at first. If the market moves your way, the gain can be big. If it doesn't, you lose the premium outright.

The reality is sobering. Studies show that 93 percent of investors in options lose money. The seven percent who win are not lucky.

They are disciplined, educated, and strategic. They study trends, manage risks, and keep learning.

For Kashmir, where financial literacy is still uneven, rushing into derivatives without preparation is a recipe for loss.

Futures and options can be powerful tools, but only if investors treat them with respect, patience, and knowledge.

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

Letter to Editor

Kashmir Must Build New Economic Engines

For decades, the breathtaking beauty of Jammu & Kashmir has been the heartbeat of our economy.

Tourists from across the world have filled our valleys, stayed in our hotels, and driven our livelihoods. Tourism has become the primary source of income for thousands of families.

But today, we must ask ourselves: Are we depending too much on one fragile pillar?

Every time political instability or tension arises, tourism collapses first. Empty

hotels, idle taxis, and shuttered shops have seen it happen too often. Young people who invested heavily in building guesthouses or buying vehicles are left stranded with debt and broken dreams.

We cannot continue living at the mercy of circumstances beyond our control.

This is a sincere call to the youth of Jammu & Kashmir: We must diversify. Our land is rich in agriculture, horticulture, beekeeping, handicrafts, and untapped technology sectors.

The world is evolving fast. We need skills that can survive global changes,

skills that make us strong in every season.

Another pressing concern is education. Why must our best students leave to study elsewhere?

If we can build luxury hotels for visitors, why can't we build world-class institutions for our children?

The ability to create vibrant learning spaces lies within us.

Our youth are already excelling in fields like I.T., medicine, research, and business across the globe.

Now is the time for them to come home, to mentor, to invest, to uplift. We must show

that growth, innovation, and resilience can flourish in our homeland too.

Tourism is a blessing, but it cannot be our only identity.

True progress lies in spreading our roots deeper, in creating opportunities that no political storm can wipe away.

The valley of Kashmir has always stood tall. It is time our dreams do too.

Sincerely,

Zain Ul Abidin Raina
rainazainul222@gmail.com

Happiness Beyond Grand Houses

A visit to a small home in Srinagar exposed the emptiness of status-driven living and the human search for lasting happiness.



Mohammad Ilyas Bhat

After spending a few months outside Kashmir, I returned to Srinagar and decided to visit an old friend who had built an impressive life in one of the city's wealthy colonies.

His house had once become a small symbol of success among people who knew him. Large gates stood outside the property, expensive cars filled the driveway, and guests often spoke about his achievements with admiration.

I knocked on the door expecting his signature smile, though a stranger opened the gate instead and looked at me with curiosity.

I asked for Abdul Rehman, and the man calmly explained that the house had been sold after major financial losses forced the family to move elsewhere.

That answer unsettled me because I had seen my friend rise consistently through years of hard work, business success, and social recognition. People often pointed to his life as proof that financial success could secure comfort, respect, and happiness.

Later that evening, I finally found him living in his ancestral two-room home on the outskirts of Srinagar. Several members of his family shared the cramped space, old belongings filled the corners, and the atmosphere carried the heaviness that follows public downfall and private grief.

We sat together on a thin carpet beside a wood stove while he spoke softly about the losses that had overturned his life within months.

Business failures had swallowed his savings, debts had piled up quickly, and the grand house had disappeared almost overnight.

While listening to him, I kept thinking about how quickly human certainty collapses when life changes direction. Modern society trains people to believe that money, property, influence, and social status create protection against hardship and insecurity. Many spend decades chasing material success with complete faith that wealth will eventually produce peace of mind and emotional fulfillment.

Kashmir has increasingly absorbed this culture during recent years as social standing becomes closely tied to visible prosperity. Srinagar's growing colonies display enormous homes, imported interiors, lavish weddings, and lifestyles carefully designed to communicate financial success.

Many families pursue prosperity with sincerity because parents naturally want comfort and opportunity for their children. Honest wealth has value, and Islam itself encourages lawful earnings and responsible living. Trouble begins when possessions become the centre of human identity and when society starts measuring personal worth through money alone.

Life repeatedly exposes the weakness of that thinking because health can deteriorate suddenly, businesses can collapse within weeks, and influence can disappear with astonishing speed.

One story from India continues haunting many people because it reveals the limits of wealth with painful clarity.

A famous biscuit tycoon landed in prison over a relatively small tax issue despite possessing enormous wealth and influence. Reports later revealed that he died without receiving a simple tablet that could have eased his suffering during his final hours.

That story strips away many illusions surrounding power and material success because it shows how vulnerable every human being remains regardless of status or fortune.

Kashmiris understand instability better than most communities because generations here have lived through conflict, uncertainty, economic disruption, and sudden political upheaval. Families who



ONE STORY FROM INDIA CONTINUES HAUNTING MANY PEOPLE BECAUSE IT REVEALS THE LIMITS OF WEALTH WITH PAINFUL CLARITY. A famous biscuit tycoon landed in prison over a relatively small tax issue despite possessing enormous wealth and influence. Reports later revealed that he died without receiving a simple tablet that could have eased his suffering during his final hours.

once enjoyed financial comfort have slipped into hardship within months, while others rose unexpectedly through changing markets and opportunities.

Despite witnessing these realities repeatedly, material obsession continues growing rapidly within society.

Young people increasingly mea-

sure achievement through luxury phones, expensive clothes, lavish weddings, social media visibility, and lifestyles designed to impress others.

Many outwardly successful people now live with constant anxiety and emotional exhaustion because comparison has entered almost every part of modern life. Families

spend less time together while chasing higher incomes, friendships weaken under financial competition, and communities lose the emotional closeness that once defined Kashmiri society.

People build larger houses while warmth slowly disappears from family life.

Several years ago, I read a well-known account written by a nurse who documented the final reflections of dying people.

Very few wished for greater wealth during their final days, while many longed for companionship, forgiveness, affection, and the comforting presence of loved ones beside them.

That truth reveals something deeply human which modern culture often pushes aside in the race for material advancement. Human beings crave emotional connection and spiritual peace far more deeply than endless accumulation.

Religious traditions have described this reality in different ways throughout history.

Hindu philosophy speaks about Anand, Buddhism speaks about Nirvana, and Islam connects true

success with closeness to Allah and accountability in the hereafter.

People continue defining happiness according to personal understanding, though material comfort alone rarely creates lasting peace. Desire expands endlessly, comparison deepens frustration, and the pursuit of status gradually becomes an exhausting race without satisfaction.

My friend's downfall changed the way I think about success because financial collapse stripped away almost every external symbol that once defined his public image. Wealth disappeared, social attention faded, and many relationships built around status slowly vanished.

Family remained beside him through hardship, old friends continued visiting him, and faith gave him the strength to survive humiliation with patience and grace.

Those things held far greater value than the grand house he once owned in Srinagar.

Societies lose their moral balance when wealth becomes the primary measure of success because kindness begins losing importance, honesty receives less respect, and sacrifice attracts little admiration. Endless material pursuit creates endless dissatisfaction because human desire grows faster than fulfillment.

Gratitude creates a stronger foundation for happiness because contentment strengthens relationships, faith brings stability during uncertainty, and compassion builds communities capable of surviving hardship together.

That evening in my friend's small ancestral home changed something inside me because it exposed how quickly life can overturn human certainty.

Character and faith survive those moments, while the people who remain beside you during hardship become the true measure of a meaningful life.

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

A Father Waiting in the Rain

Junaid's brief meeting with his children reveals the emotional devastation caused by fractured families and forced distance.



Syed Majid Gilani

It was the stillness of the night, a time when the world lay in deep sleep, but Junaid's heart remained awake. Suddenly, he woke up, tears streaming down his face. He had seen a dream, a dream so painful that it broke the fragile peace of his heart.

In that dream, he saw his three kids, his life, his happiness, his reason for breathing. They came running to him, arms wide open, calling out, "Papa! Papa!" He held them tightly, kissed their little faces, and felt their tiny hands holding his.

But before he could say a word, a dark shadow appeared and dragged them away. He cried out, begged them not to go. Their innocent eyes filled with tears, their mouths opened to call him again...but no voice came out.

Junaid woke up, his face wet with tears. The pain of their absence felt like a sharp wound to his heart. This wasn't an ordinary separation, it was cruel and planned. His wife, Falak, had created a wall between him and his children.

Sleep left him. He sat on the bed, holding their pictures close, remembering every word they had spoken,

every hug, every laugh. In that silent moment of grief, he made a decision. He had to see them. Even if only from a distance.

In the morning, without telling anyone, Junaid left his home. His heart was set on one thing, he would go and wait outside their school.

The rain was falling softly when he reached the school. He stood alone as vans arrived and children got down. He didn't know which van would bring his kids, but he refused to take shelter. He stood there, drenched in rain, unwilling to miss even a second.

Some teachers came and asked him to come inside, but he didn't move. His eyes stayed fixed on the school gate.

Then, the Director of the school, a kind and understanding man who knew him, saw him standing there. He walked over, carrying an umbrella, and softly said, "After you meet the kids, come to my office for tea." Junaid nodded quietly, too lost in his emotions to properly hear the words.

And then it happened. A van stopped. His heart skipped a beat. There they were, his three kids. The very reason for his existence, standing in front of him.

But as soon as their eyes met, something inside him shattered. The children quickly looked away, pretending not to see him. The pain in Junaid's heart was unbearable. He rushed to them, called their names, and pulled them close in his arms. He kissed their faces, but they stood still, cold and silent.

But their eyes, their innocent eyes, told him everything. Those eyes spoke of the pain they carried, of hearts wounded by lies. Their mouths remained closed, but their eyes narrated every tale of their forced separation and suffering. Their love for their Papa



was clear in the way they looked at him, but their voices were gagged by the influence of Falak.

The eldest child's eyes silently pleaded for understanding. The middle one's eyes showed both love and fear, fear of the punishment that might come if they showed their love. The youngest one looked up at him, as if asking for permission to cry, to call him "Papa" again. But invisible chains held their voices down.

The meeting lasted only two minutes. Then, without a word, they turned and walked towards their classrooms, never looking back.

Junaid stood in the rain, motion-

less, a father who had sacrificed everything for his children. Now, he was left standing alone, heartbroken, feeling betrayed by the very hands that once embraced him with love. His children hadn't betrayed him, it was their mother's calculated scheme that had torn them apart. This was no coincidence. It was a cruel, deliberate act by Falak, a plan to erase a father's love from his children's hearts.

The rain kept falling, and so did Junaid's tears. After some time, the Director came back, gently placed a hand on his shoulder, and led him inside. Junaid's eyes were still moist, his heart heavy. The Director offered him

tea. He took the cup, but couldn't even taste it. He sat there in silence, carrying the weight of a thousand emotions inside him.

That day, Junaid made a promise to himself. No matter how many lies Falak spread, no matter how much she poisoned their innocent minds, no matter how long the silence lasted, he would live on only for his children. Like before, he would continue to perform every duty, fulfill every responsibility, and keep loving them, quietly, faithfully, and without caring for the hatred their mother had planted in their tender hearts. He would wait for the day they would return, when their

BUT AS SOON AS THEIR EYES MET, SOMETHING INSIDE HIM SHATTERED. The children quickly looked away, pretending not to see him. The pain in Junaid's heart was unbearable. He rushed to them, called their names, and pulled them close in his arms. He kissed their faces, but they stood still, cold and silent.

hearts would find their way back to him. And until that day, every beat of his heart would call their names, every breath would carry a prayer, and every tear would hold a silent hope.

In orchestrating such deceitful games, perhaps Falak had forgotten the most important principle of nature, that what one sows, one will inevitably reap.

And above all, there is an ultimate overseer, Allah, who watches over all, ensuring that justice will always prevail in the end.

— The author writes about human emotions, family bonds, personal struggles, moral values, and deep, heartfelt experiences drawn from real life.

J&K Police Files FIR Over Geelani Video On SM

KO Web Desk

Srinagar: The cyber wing of Jammu and Kashmir Police on Thursday registered an FIR against unidentified persons for uploading a video of late separatist leader Syed Ali Shah Geelani on social media, alleging that it glorifies separatist content.

Officials said the case has been registered under Section 152 of the Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita (BNS), and an investigation has been initiated to identify those responsible for circulating the video.

The development comes a day after Peoples Democratic Party leader Iltija Mufti shared an old video of Geelani on X, commenting on his views regarding the importance of Urdu.

"May not concur with Geelani Sahab's ideology, but this old video of him stressing the importance of Urdu very well makes sense... Worth a watch," she wrote while posting the clip.

On Interim Bail, Er Rashid Visits Ailing Father In Hospital

KO Web Desk

Srinagar: Jailed Lok Sabha member Sheikh Abdul Rashid, popularly known as Engineer Rashid, arrived in Srinagar on Thursday after the Delhi High Court granted him a week's interim bail to visit his ailing father.

Officials said Rashid landed at Srinagar airport in the afternoon and proceeded directly to SMHS Hospital to meet his father, who is undergoing treatment.

The interim relief was granted on Tuesday by a Delhi High Court bench comprising Justices Prathiba

M Singh and Madhu Jain. The court permitted Rashid to either remain at home with his family or visit the hospital during the one-week period.

The court directed that at least two police personnel in plain clothes would accompany Rashid at all times. It also made it clear that he would not bear the cost of their travel.

Further, the bench restricted access during his visit, stating that no "undue visitors" would be allowed and only immediate family members could meet him.

The order came while hearing Rashid's appeal

against a trial court decision dated April 24 that had denied him interim bail.

Sheikh Abdul Rashid is currently lodged in Tihar Jail in New Delhi since 2019, following his arrest by the National Investigation Agency in connection with a 2017 terror-funding case.

He is accused of funding separatist and militant groups in Jammu and Kashmir. A special NIA court had framed charges against him and others in March 2022 under various sections of the IPC, including criminal conspiracy, waging war against the government and sedition,

along with provisions of the Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act (UAPA).

Rashid represents Baramulla in the Lok Sabha and had won the 2024 parliamentary elections, defeating prominent leaders including Chief Minister Omar Abdullah and Sajad Lone.

His interim bail is limited to humanitarian grounds, and he is expected to surrender before the authorities after the stipulated period ends.

Officials said security arrangements remain in place during his stay in the Valley in compliance with court directions.

Buddha Purnima

LG, CM Call For Peace & Unity

Observer News Service

Srinagar: Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha and Chief Minister Omar Abdullah on Thursday extended greetings to the people on the eve of Buddha Purnima, urging them to uphold the values of compassion, unity and peaceful coexistence.

In his message, the Lieutenant Governor said the timeless wisdom of Gautama Buddha, rooted in compassion, non-violence and equality, continues to illuminate humanity's journey towards spiritual fulfilment and lasting peace.

"On this auspicious occasion, I extend my greetings and good wishes to all. In a world of great change, we are reminded not only of the challenges before us but also of the immense strength that lies in our unity," he said.

He expressed hope that the festival would inspire people to walk the path of enlightenment shown by Buddha and strengthen

collective resolve for the welfare of humankind.

Meanwhile, the Chief Minister, in his message, said that the teachings of Gautama Buddha continue to guide humanity towards peace, compassion and non-violence.

He said Buddha's message of love, tolerance and service to mankind remains deeply relevant, particularly at a time when the world is in need of harmony and mutual understanding.

Highlighting the importance of communal harmony, the Chief Minister said the occasion offers an opportunity to reaffirm commitment to peaceful coexistence, brotherhood and respect for diversity. He prayed for peace, prosperity and well-being of the people of Jammu and Kashmir and the country.

Both leaders underscored the enduring relevance of Buddha's teachings in fostering harmony and strengthening the social fabric.

CONTD. FROM FRONT PAGE

Wet Spell

below normal, and a minimum of 11.3°C. Kokernag reported a high of 20.6°C, while Gulmarg recorded a maximum of 10.8°C.

Jammu city recorded a maximum temperature of 35.5°C, close to normal, and a minimum of 22.1°C. Banihal and Batote recorded maximum temperatures of 21.0°C and 19.1°C respectively, both below normal, while Katra registered a high of 30.3°C.

Light rainfall was recorded at multiple locations during the day, with Pahalgam receiving 8.2 mm of rain, followed by Gulmarg at 2.4 mm, while Kupwara and Qazigund recorded 0.8 mm each.

The department said conditions would remain under observation, with further updates to be issued as required.

Jammu To Srinagar

'Boost to Trade and Freight Movement' Beyond passenger travel, Ashwini Vaishnav highlighted the train's growing role in cargo movement.

"I have been told that cement prices have dropped by around Rs 50 per bag. Around 20,000 tonnes of apples and other fruits have been transported to other parts of the country," he said.

The service is also facilitating the transport of vehicles and other goods, strengthening supply chains in the region.

The Railway Minister announced that the next phase of expansion will target remote and border districts.

"Detailed Project Reports have been prepared to connect Poonch and Rajouri, and to extend the railway line to Uri. We will try to begin work soon," he said.

"Economic Push, Easier Travel" Union Minister Jitendra Singh said the direct rail link between Jammu and Srinagar would accelerate economic growth and ease travel for tourists and pilgrims.

"We express our gratitude to the Prime Minister for making this long-awaited connectivity a reality," he said.

Prime Minister Narendra Modi had earlier inaugurated the Katra-Srinagar service in June 2025, which has now been extended to Jammu Tawi.

Following the ceremony, the Railway Minister inspected the Chenab Bridge and reviewed facilities at the Shri Mata Vaishno Devi Katra railway station.

Timings and Operations

Regular operations will commence from May 2, with two pairs of trains running six days a week.

Train No. 26401/26402 will operate except Tuesdays, departing Jammu at 06:20 AM and reaching Srinagar at 11:10 AM, with a return at 02:00 PM reaching Jammu at 06:50 PM.

Train No. 26403/26404 will operate except Wednesdays, departing Srinagar at 08:00 AM and reaching Jammu at 12:40 PM. The return service will depart Jammu at 01:20 PM.

21 Personnel, Including

Thursday, an official said. Vaishnav on Thursday flagged off the 20-coach train, which is expected to cut travel time between Jammu and Srinagar to five hours, here in the presence of Chief Minister Omar Abdullah and Union Minister Dr Jitendra Singh.

Talking to reporters, Pankaj Gangwar, principal chief security commissioner, Indian Railway Protection Force Service, said, "Today is the start of this service from Jammu. Its regular service will begin from May 2."

He said a comprehensive security grid has been put in place to protect the railway line as well as the Vande Bharat train.

"For initial security, we have deployed a 'one plus twenty' guard system. An inspector will lead the team, which also includes eight Railway Protection Force (RPF) commandos who will ensure security along the route," Gangwar said, adding that they are fully equipped with advanced weapons.

The official said the railways will also operate a pilot vehicle ahead of the train for security purposes. "It will move in advance in the morning and address any shortcomings along the route," he said.

Furthermore, guard posts have been established at every 2 kilometres, manned by quick reaction teams consisting of Government Railway Police and civil police personnel.

"On receiving any information, they will immediately secure the affected area," he said.

On tunnel security, he explained that a tunnel control system is put in place, which is jointly

managed by the engineering teams and the Government Railway Police.

"Sensors have been installed to detect any unusual activity -- whether fire or intrusion -- and they immediately trigger alarms. Both ends of the tunnels are guarded," he added.

Escape tunnels have been provided so that, in case of any emergency, stranded passengers can be evacuated safely.

"You will see that there is complete and robust security throughout the route. Moreover, the affection and support of the people of Kashmir itself serve as a strong assurance for the safety of this service," Gangwar said.

RPF commandos, popularly known as CORAS (commandos for railway safety), were deployed last year for security of Vande Bharat trains operating on the Katra-Srinagar rail link between the Kashmir Valley and Katra, the base camp of the Mata Vaishno Devi shrine.

The 327-kilometre railway line, constructed at a cost of around Rs 43,780 crore, includes 36 tunnels spanning 119 kilometres and consists of 943 bridges, the official said.

The project provides all-weather seamless rail connectivity between the Kashmir Valley and the rest of the country, aiming to transform regional mobility and boost socio-economic integration.

Prime Minister Narendra Modi, on June 6 last year, flagged off the first Vande Bharat train service between Katra and Srinagar, marking the first rail link between the Kashmir Valley and the Jammu region. (PTI)

CM Seeks Inland

rail connectivity between Jammu and Srinagar must be backed by local customs infrastructure to fully unlock its trade potential.

Speaking at the flagging-off ceremony of the Vande Bharat Express at Jammu Tawi Railway Station, Omar said the absence of a local customs clearance facility continues to hamper exporters from the Union Territory.

"There is an urgent need for a dry port here so that we do not require customs clearance in other cities for our goods. The clearance should take place within J&K itself. It will benefit our trade and business," he said.

Rail Link Opens New Trade Possibilities

The Chief Minister said the direct rail service between Jammu and Srinagar is already reshaping how goods move in and out of the region, offering a faster and more efficient alternative to road transport.

Highlighting early trends, he pointed to the movement of construction material and vehicles into the Valley, alongside outbound shipments of horticultural produce.

"I was surprised to see cars being transported to Srinagar and fruits from Kashmir being sent outside by rail. This will give a major boost to business," Omar said.

He noted that improved logistics would reduce costs, stabilise supply chains and open new market access for local producers.

Push for Localised Export Ecosystem

Omar stressed that without an inland port, exporters from Jammu and Kashmir remain dependent on facilities in other states for customs clearance, adding to time and cost burdens.

He urged Union ministers and Members of Parliament present at the event to take up the matter with the Centre, while also assuring that the demand would be formally raised by the state government.

"This is not directly under the Railways, but given the goodwill and coordination, I request support to make this happen," he said.

Connectivity Meets Economic Integration

The Chief Minister described the rail link as a long-awaited development that goes beyond passenger convenience, positioning it as a catalyst for economic integration.

"For years, we waited to travel by train from Jammu to Srinagar. Now that has become a reality," he said, adding that the service would ease movement for traders, tourists, students and patients alike.

He also pointed to the growing popularity of the service, noting that high demand had already led to an expansion in train capacity.

From Mobility to Market Access

Omar underscored that infrastructure gains must translate into economic outcomes, and that the rail link presents an opportunity to reconfigure Jammu and Kashmir's trade architecture.

With faster connectivity now in place, he said, the focus should shift to enabling seamless export processes within the Union Territory itself.

"The rail link has opened the door. Now we must ensure that our traders and producers can fully benefit from it," he added.

The Chief Minister's remarks place the spotlight on the next phase of development, where

physical connectivity is complemented by institutional support to drive sustained economic growth.

J&K Cabinet

In the health sector, the Cabinet approved the re-designation of Medical Superintendents, Deputy Medical Superintendents and Assistant Medical Superintendents in Government Medical Colleges as Professors, Associate Professors and Assistant Professors, respectively.

The move is expected to align administrative roles with academic structures within medical institutions.

Final Approval Pending

Sources said all approved proposals will now be forwarded to the Lieutenant Governor for final approval before implementation.

The decisions reflect a mix of financial relief measures, administrative restructuring and infrastructure development initiatives undertaken by the government.

5 Officials Get 3-Year

further simple imprisonment for a period of one year.

However, the court directed that both the substantive sentences shall run concurrently.

According to the prosecution, the case was initiated following a complaint filed on November 2, 1989, by the Deputy Director, Food and Supplies Department Srinagar, alleging embezzlement amounting to Rs 3,64,235.84 by the accused.

After investigation, a chargesheet was filed on September 9, 2003, and the matter proceeded to trial, culminating in the conviction and sentencing of the officials.

Drug Traffickers

dismantled," he added.

Highlighting the progress of the ongoing campaign, Manoj Sinha said that around 350 FIRs have been registered and 440 drug traffickers arrested in the last 20 days alone.

He noted that while the campaign has made a strong start, the road ahead remains challenging, with 80 days still remaining in the 100-day drive.

"Every moment must be used with purpose, and every citizen must take part in this Jan-Andolan. Together, we can make Jammu and Kashmir a shining example for the nation, a society free from the burden of drug addiction," he said.

Stressing the importance of public participation, the Lieutenant Governor said the fight against drug abuse cannot rely solely on government machinery and requires active involvement from society.

"In the remaining 80 days, a whole-of-government effort must confront and dismantle the web of drug addiction. This requires a change in mindset. Sometimes people say this is not my problem. This attitude must change. Drug smugglers thrive on public indifference and silence," he said.

He urged citizens to remain vigilant and proactive, stating that a drug-free society depends on responsible choices and collective action.

Calling upon schools, colleges, social organisations and the media to play a proactive role, the Lieutenant Governor said that awareness and community vigilance are key to preventing the spread of addiction.

"When communities stay alert, they can resist infiltration. When society is vigilant, addiction cannot spread," he added.

Haj Pilgrims

a much higher financial burden.

"For countless families, Haj is a once-in-a-lifetime dream. Amid a sharp global rise in ATF prices, airlines sought a hike of USD 300-400 per pilgrim. Through negotiations, we ensured the increase was restricted to just USD 100," he said in a post on X.

The ministry reiterated that the decision was taken transparently and in good faith to ensure that Haj 2026 operations are not disrupted.

"After extensive consultation, we capped the increase at USD 100, saving each pilgrim USD 200-300 compared to the original demand," it said.

Officials added that private tour operators had already increased fares significantly and, in some cases, imposed additional hikes of around USD 150.

Opposition Slams Move

The decision has drawn sharp reactions from opposition leaders.

AIMIM chief Asaduddin Owaisi urged the Centre to revoke the circular mandating the surcharge, while Congress MP Imran Pratapgarhi

termed the move "utter injustice."

"When the full fare was already fixed in advance, why was this increase imposed at the last moment? At the very least, such collections should not be made from pilgrims heading for a sacred journey," Pratapgarhi said.

Govt Stresses 'Global Factors'

Responding to the criticism, the ministry said the rise in ATF prices was a result of geopolitical tensions in the Middle East, describing it as a global emergency beyond any government's control.

"This is not exploitation. This is the government absorbing pressure and protecting pilgrims from a far larger burden," it said.

The ministry maintained that the process was lawful and transparent, and that the primary objective was to ensure smooth conduct of Haj 2026 for over one lakh registered pilgrims.

While the hike has added to the financial burden on pilgrims, the government has underlined that it was a calibrated decision aimed at balancing affordability with operational continuity.

"We remain committed to making Haj accessible and affordable for every Indian Muslim," the ministry said.

With the deadline for payment approaching, the controversy is likely to continue even as preparations for Haj 2026 move forward.

Shah Arrives

moment of profound good fortune for me to be attending on the occasion of Buddha Purnima, the first ever international exposition of the holy relics of Lord Buddha, commencing on the 1st of May," he said.

"In this exposition, devotees from different parts of the world will offer veneration to the relics of Lord Buddha," he added.

The sacred Piprahwa relics of Buddha were brought to Leh in a special Indian Air Force aircraft on Wednesday by Drukpa Thuksey Rinpoche and Khenpo Thinlas Chosal of Matho Monastery.

The sacred relics were accorded a ceremonial reception on arrival, with people pouring out of their homes and gathering along the roads to pay respect.

The exposition to be held in the first two weeks of May marks the beginning of a rare and significant spiritual occasion in the Union Territory of Ladakh.

Piprahwa relics refer to the ancient remains and associated objects linked to Gautama Buddha, discovered at Piprahwa, an archaeological site in the present-day Uttar Pradesh, near the Nepal border.

The relics have gained renewed global significance in recent years, especially after a collection of associated gems and offerings was repatriated to India in July 2025 from a British family and a private collection, ending over a century of colonial possession.

The relics have been exhibited internationally in several countries; this is the first time they have been brought out from their original place of preservation for exposition within India.

The Piprahwa relics have previously been exhibited in countries such as Thailand, Mongolia, Vietnam, Russia, Singapore, Bhutan, Sri Lanka and Myanmar, attracting global attention and devotion, according to an official statement.

In Ladakh, the relics will be open for public veneration at Jivetsal from May 2 to 10. They will subsequently be taken to Zanskar on May 11 and 12, followed by exposition at the Dharma Centre in Leh from May 13 to 14, before being returned to Delhi on May 15, it read.

J&K HC Warns

institutional integrity and erode public confidence in the administration of justice," the court said while hearing a transfer petition filed by Assadullah Bhat and others, in which allegations were levelled against the Presiding Officer of the Sub-Judge Court and the Principal District Judge.

"This Court is of the considered view that any indulgence shown in such matters would embolden litigants to adopt similar tactics, thereby eroding public confidence in the justice delivery system," the court said, adding, "It is, therefore, imperative that such conduct be dealt with strictly and in accordance with law, so as to preserve the majesty of law and the credibility of the institution."

Judicial officers, the court said, cannot be expected to discharge their duties with the requisite independence, impartiality, and fearlessness if they are compelled to function under the constant spectre of unfounded aspersions upon their character and conduct.

"To permit such allegations to gain publicity, in the absence of cogent and credible material, would have a chilling effect on the judicial

Ladakh's 5 New Districts Trigger Political Backlash

Kargil leaders allege bid to divide region

Observer News Service

KARGIL- A decision by Ladakh's administration to carve out five new districts has sparked a sharp political backlash, with leaders in Kargil accusing the government of attempting to fracture a rare political unity between the region's Buddhist and Muslim communities.

On 27 April, Ladakh Lieutenant Governor Vinai Kumar Saxena formally announced the creation of five new districts—Nubra, Sham and Changthang in Leh, and Zaskar and Drass in Kargil—raising the Union Territory's total number of districts from two to seven. The administration described the move as fulfilling "long-pending aspirations" of local populations.

However, the announcement has exposed deepening fault lines within Ladakh's political landscape.

Leaders of the Kargil Democratic Alliance (KDA), which has

been working alongside the Leh Apex Body (LAB) to press for constitutional safeguards, criticised the restructuring as "arbitrary" and "divisive".

Sajjad Kargili, a senior KDA leader, said the move appeared "less an administrative reform and more a calculated attempt" to weaken a unified movement that has brought together Ladakh's historically divided regions.

"The decision risks fragmenting the collective voice of both Buddhists and Muslims," Kargili said in a statement. "While we welcome long-standing demands such as district status for Drass and Zaskar, the broader approach ignores regional sensitivities, demographic realities and principles of equitable representation."

Dispute over representation According to the 2011 Census, Ladakh has a population of around 274,000, with Muslims making up approximately 46.4% and Buddhists 39.65%. Critics

argue that the new administrative map—five districts in Buddhist-majority Leh and two in Muslim-majority Kargil—creates an imbalance that could dilute political representation.

KDA leaders say the government has not made public the criteria used for the reorganisation. Asgar Ali Karbalai, who heads the alliance, argued that Kargil's geography and population warranted additional districts.

"There is no clarity on the basis of this decision," Karbalai said. "Kargil should have received more districts proportional to its size and population."

The reorganisation has also reignited longstanding demands from sub-regions such as Sankoo-Barsoo, Suru, Shakar-Chiktan and Shergole, whose residents have repeatedly sought district status but were excluded from the latest changes.

Fragile unity under strain The controversy is particularly sensitive given the unusual

political convergence between Leh and Kargil in recent years. Despite historic religious and political differences—Leh being predominantly Buddhist and Kargil largely Muslim—both regions have jointly campaigned for greater autonomy following Ladakh's separation from Jammu and Kashmir in 2019.

The KDA and LAB have been engaged in talks with India's Ministry of Home Affairs, demanding statehood, inclusion under the Sixth Schedule of the Constitution, job protections and enhanced parliamentary representation.

Observers say the new district boundaries could complicate that unified front.

Chering Dorjay Lakruk, chairman of the Leh Apex Body, acknowledged Kargil's concerns and urged dialogue with the central government.

"We recognise that there are genuine issues being raised," Lakruk said, adding that Kargil

leaders should formally present their objections to the Ministry of Home Affairs.

Wider implications While the administration maintains that smaller districts will improve governance and service delivery in Ladakh's remote and sparsely populated terrain, critics warn that administrative restructuring in a sensitive region must account for social and political balance.

For now, what was intended as a governance reform risks becoming a flashpoint—testing both Ladakh's fragile inter-regional unity and its ongoing negotiations with New Delhi over autonomy and constitutional protections.

As Kargil leaders continue to mobilise opposition, the debate underscores a broader question: whether administrative changes in Ladakh can be separated from the region's complex identity, demography and political aspirations.

NR Officials, Traders Map Fruit Transport Strategy

Observer News Service

SRINAGAR: Senior officials of Northern Railway on Thursday held threadbare discussions with fruit growers and traders to strengthen the transportation of horticultural produce from Kashmir to markets across the country and modernize rail-based cargo logistics in the Valley.

According to the details available with KNO the high-level delegation of the railway officials travelled in an arranged inspection coach from Srinagar to Baramulla via Budgam, covering key stations including Pattan and Sopore. The visit was aimed at assessing infrastructure gaps and identifying ways to ensure seamless movement of fruits and vegetables.

The meeting was attended by Principal Chief Commercial Manager Parveen Pandey, ACM Jammu-Srinagar Jaswant Singh, and other senior officials. The fruit growers' delegation was led by Bashir Ahmad Basheer, Presi-

dent of the New Kashmir Fruit Association (NKFA), along with key representatives of the trade.

A major focus of the interaction was the introduction of temperature-controlled (AC/refrigerated) cargo trains to transport highly perishable produce such as apples, cherries, pears, plums, and walnuts.

Stakeholders stressed that such facilities are essential to maintain quality and reduce post-harvest losses, particularly during peak export seasons.

The proposal also includes improving inbound logistics to ensure timely supply of essential commodities like onions, potatoes, mangoes, and melons into the Valley.

To streamline bulk handling, Sopore Railway Station and Baramulla Railway Station have been identified for development of yard-based loading facilities. Additionally, phased development of cargo infrastructure has been proposed at Anantnag, Awantipora, and Pampore.

OFFICE OF THE JOINT ELECTRICITY REGULATORY COMMISSION
FOR UT OF JAMMU & KASHMIR AND UT OF LADAKH
Regd. Office: Railway Road, Ambedkar (Panama) Chowk, Jammu 180016
Phone No. : 0191-2959191, 0191-2470160 | Email: secretary-jercjkl@gov.in | Website: http://jercjkl.nic.in/

NOTICE FOR VACANCY CIRCULAR
No: JERC/Estt/F-67/2023/204 Dated:30-04-2026

Notice for inviting applications for the post of Independent Member(s) to the Consumer Grievances Redressal Forum(s) (CGRF) one each for Jammu Power Distribution Corporation Limited (JPDC), Kashmir Power Distribution Corporation Limited (KPDC) and Ladakh Power Development Department (LPDD).

The Joint Electricity Regulatory Commission for Union Territories of J&K and Ladakh (JERC-JKL) invites application from suitable person(s) for the appointment of Independent Member(s) in the Consumers Grievances Redressal Forum(s), one each for the Consumers of the JPDC, KPDC and LPDD to discharge various functions related to Redressal of Consumer's Grievances against Distribution Licensees as per the provisions of the Joint Electricity Regulatory Commission for UT of Jammu & Kashmir and UT of Ladakh (Consumer Grievances Redressal Forum, Electricity Ombudsman and Consumer Advocacy) Regulations, 2023.

The eligibility criteria, Qualification and Experience for the post of Independent Member is as under:

Minimum Educational Qualification	Working Experience
Bachelor's degree preferably in Engineering (Electrical / Mechanical/ Electronics/ Computer) / Law/ Public Administration / Journalism / Economics / Political Science or equivalent.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 5 years of experience in power sector related matters. A retired civil servant of Additional Secretary level of UT of J&K / Deputy Secretary level in Govt. of India (i.e. of Level 12) (OR) A retired Electrical Engineer not below the rank of Superintending Engineer having experience in distribution of electricity.

The Independent Member(s) shall be engaged on the following terms and conditions:

- The monthly remuneration shall be Rs. 30,000/-.
- The engagement shall be purely on contractual basis and shall not confer any right to claim regular appointment or continuation of contractual engagement in the Distribution Licensee or the Commission.
- The Independent Member shall be appointed initially for one year, extendable annually up to four additional years or till attaining the age of 65 years, whichever is earlier, however, each extension shall be accorded for one year, subject to annual performance review by the Commission.
- The Independent Member shall be entitled to avail 12 days Casual Leave in a calendar year.
- The Independent Member shall be entitled to TA/DA, as admissible to a Level-12 Officer of the UT of J&K, for official tours approved by the Chairman, CGRF.
- All other terms and conditions shall be as determined by the Commission from time to time.
- The Scope of Work and detailed terms and conditions are contained in Annexure-I, which shall form an integral part of this engagement.

Eligible and willing candidates may submit their applications in the prescribed Proforma attached at Annexure-II along with the supporting documents through registered post at the following address:

Secretary, Joint Electricity Regulatory Commission for UTs of J&K and Ladakh, Railway Road, Ambedkar Chowk Jammu (J&K) 180016

Application form along with Terms of Reference (ToR) and General Terms and Conditions for engagement of Independent Member are available on the website of the commission i.e. https://jercjkl.nic.in/

The last date for receipt of applications, in the prescribed format is 20th June, 2026 (upto 5 P.M.). Applications received after due date/time or without supporting documents will not be considered. No TA/DA shall be admissible for attending interview/ joining the assignment or on its completion.

Annexure-I

Term Of Reference (ToR) for engagement of Independent Member(s) to the Consumer Grievances Redressal Forum(s) (CGRF) one each for Jammu Power Distribution Corporation Limited (JPDC), Kashmir Power Distribution Corporation Limited (KPDC) and Ladakh Power Development Department (LPDD)

1. The name, location, e-mail address, telephone of Independent Member shall be widely published by the Distribution Licensee through newspapers from time to time, at least once in each quarter and shall be displayed on the website of the Distribution Licensees as well as at all the offices of the Distribution Licensee including the office of the Commission. Such particulars shall also be intimated to the consumers through electricity bills by printing necessary message at appropriate place on the energy bills. The Distribution Licensee shall also give wide publicity to these particulars through electronic media. And, there should be no reservations to Independent Member on account of it.

2. The Licensee shall meet all the costs and expenses of the CGRFs including the cost of establishment and staff required to assist the Forum in the discharge of its functions under these Regulations. The Licensee shall appoint a Nodal officer to act as the facilitating link between the Forum & the Licensee and also for fulfilling day to day requirements of CGRF.

3. No person shall be appointed and/or be entitled to continue as a Member if he/she:

- has been adjudged as insolvent; or
- has been convicted of an offence involving moral turpitude; or
- has become physically or mentally incapable of acting as such member; or
- has without reasonable cause refused or failed to discharge his functions for a period of at least three months; or
- ceases to fulfil any of the conditions of his appointment as member; or
- has acquired such financial or other interest that can prejudicially affect his functioning as a member; or
- has conducted himself in a manner or has so abused his position as to render his continuance in office prejudicial to the public interest or to the objects and purposes of the Act.
- has been guilty of proved misbehaviour.
- has negligence towards his duties is established.

Provided further that the Independent Member appointed by the Commission shall be removed from his office only after the prior approval of the Commission as per the procedure laid in regulation Joint Electricity Regulatory Commission for UT of Jammu & Kashmir and UT of Ladakh (Consumer Grievances Redressal Forum, Electricity Ombudsman and Consumer Advocacy) Regulations, 2023.

4. Independent Member shall abide by all the regulations & Laws in force formulated by the JERC for J&K and Ladakh.

ANNEXURE-II
APPLICATION FOR THE POST OF INDEPENDENT MEMBER TO THE CONSUMER GRIEVANCES REDRESSAL FORUM (CGRF) FOR JPDC, KPDC and LPDD.

Applying for Distribution Licensee: JPDC KPDC LPDD
(Please select only one option)

BIO-DATA

1. Name: _____
2. Father/Husband Name: _____
3. Date of Birth(DD/MM/YYYY): _____
4. Gender: _____
5. Address: _____

Present Address _____ Permanent Address _____
State/UT _____ State/UT _____
Pin Code _____ Pin Code _____
Telephone/Mobile No. _____ Telephone/Mobile No. _____
Email ID _____ Email ID _____

6 (a) Academic/Professional Qualifications: (Starting from the highest qualification attained)

Degree	University	Institution	Field / Specialization	Year of Passing

(b) Experience:-
Details of employment, in chronological order. Please enclose a separate sheet, duly Authenticated by your signature, if the space below is insufficient

Office/Institute/ Organization	Post held	From	To	Nature of duties in brief

(c) Additional Information: -
Additional information, if any, which you would like to mention in support of your suitability for the post. Enclose a separate sheet if the space is insufficient.

DECLARATION
I certify that the above details furnished by me are true and correct. I am willing to work in _____ (KPDC/JPDC/LPDD) from its office located at _____ (Kashmir/Jammu/Ladakh) respectively.

Place: _____ Date: _____
DIPK-925-26 DT: 30/04/2026 Signature of the applicant

GOVERNMENT OF JAMMU & KASHMIR
TOURISM DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY, SONAMARG

E-Bid Document (Auction ID: 33660)
Outsourcing of Restaurant at TRC, Sonamarg "as is where is basis" for a period of 03 Years, through GeM Portal.
No: CEO/SDA/2026/324-32 Dated: 30/04/2026.

For and on behalf of the Lieutenant Governor of J&K Union Territory, e-bids are invited online through GeM Portal for Outsourcing of Restaurant at TRC, Sonamarg "as is where is basis" for a period of 03 Years. The details are as under:-

S.No	Particulars	Date/Time	Remarks
1	PQ (Pre-Qualification) Submission Start Date	30/04/2026 at 02.00 PM	-NIL-
2	PQ (Pre-Qualification) Submission End Date	08/05/2026 at 1.00 PM	-NIL-
3	PQ (Pre-Qualification) Assessment End Date &	09/05/2026 at 1.30 PM	-NIL-
4	EMD Start Date	09/05/2026 at 2.00 PM	-NIL-
5	EMD End Date	11/05/2026 at 11.00 AM	-NIL-
6	EMD (Bid Security) Amount in shape of CDR/FDR/DD	Rs. 30000/- (Rupees Thirty Thousand only)	To be pledged in favour of Accounts Officer, Sonamarg Development Authority
7	Bid Submission/Auction Start Date	11/05/2026 at 11.30 AM	-NIL-
8	Bid Submission/Auction End Date & Time	12/05/2026 at 2.00 PM	-NIL-
9	Reserve bid amount	Rs. 2.50 Lacs (Rupees Two Lacs Fifty Thousand Only)	-NIL-

PRE-QUALIFICATION (PQ) CRITERIA (TO BE UPLOADED ON GeM PORTAL)

- The bidder should be a domicile of J&K and shall upload a valid domicile certificate.
- The bidder shall have to upload a Character Certificate from the concerned Police Station or alternatively copy of a valid Passport.
- The bidder shall have to upload self-attested PAN Card, Aadhar Card.
- The bidder shall upload Average Annual Financial Turnover Statement of last three years ending of previous financial year & should be at least 50% of basic bid amount.
- The bidder shall have to upload Income Tax return of last three financial years.
- The bidder shall have to upload undertaking that if found successful after the culmination of auction process as per following:
I. That I shall abide by the all terms & conditions of the contract.
II. That I will deposit the offered bid amount within a period 03 days after culmination of auction, failing which result in automatic cancellation without notice along with forfeiture of CDR.
- That I will handover the asset in good condition as received from the department on the day of expiring of auction contract.
- That I will not approach the Courts for extension of contract period.
- The bidder has to upload FSSAI & GST registration certificate/return.

Terms and Conditions:

- The interested parties should compulsorily visit & inspect the asset before participating in the e-bidding process and the physical position of the site/asset shall stand on "as is where is" basis. As such, no claim of any deficiency, addition, alteration, rectification in the asset would be entertained during/after bidding process.
- The bidder participating in the e-bid process must apply in his name or the firm name duly registered in his name.
- Eligible persons shall be allowed to participate in the e-bidding process only after uploading of relevant documents mentioned in the Eligibility Criteria and EMD (after qualifying Pre-Qualification) in the shape of CDR, amounting to Rs. 30,000/- (Rupees Thirty Thousand Only) pledged in favour of Accounts Officer, Sonamarg Development Authority.
- There will be an escalation of 15% compounding on the offered bid amount of previous years for each successive year and thereafter to be deposited before two months from the start of every year. The bid offers should be above the minimum reserve bid.
- The minimum reserve bid has been fixed at Rs. 2.50 Lacs (Rupees Two Lac Fifty Thousand only). However, the bidder has to pay GST @ 18% of the offered bid and also for the successive years on compounding amounts including 15% escalation every year. All other applicable taxes shall be paid by the bidder on its own under an intimation to this office.
- Previous defaulters shall not be allowed to participate in the bidding process.
- The period of outsourcing shall be on license basis for a period of 03-years which will commence from the date of issuance of the formal allotment letter.
- The successful bidder shall have to deposit 100% of the offered bid for the 1st year within a period of three days postively.
- The successful bidder has to install amusement and other recreational activities in the park (pollution free) and has to take prior permission before start of the operation. Without the explicit permission of CEO Sonamarg Development Authority, the successful bidder shall not install any other activity within the premises of the parks.
- The contract shall be awarded for one year in the first instance and renewal of the same shall be subject to depositing of rentals for the each successive year in advance including 15% escalation on compounding amount before the expiry of the 1st year contract.
- In case the successful bidder fails to fulfill the term of contract, or leaves the contract half way or the contract is cancelled due to any disqualifications/non-payment of advance rent, the CDR shall be forfeited.
- The safety, security and upkeep and watch & ward of the asset shall be sole responsibility of outsourcee during the period of contract. The successful bidder shall ensure all safety measures like firefighting equipments, first aid kit etc. Sonamarg Development Authority shall not be responsible for any loss of life and property within the asset during the period of the contract.
- The out-sourcing committee/SDA reserves the right to reject any or all the e-bids without assigning any reason thereof.
- The successful bidder shall have to charge rates for various allotted services as per approval of the SDA from time to time.
- The electric/water consumption charges shall be payable by the outsourcee & CDR shall be released after obtaining NOC from PHE & PDD.
- The bidder should not be employed in any Govt. Deptt. or a Public Sector undertaking.
- The successful bidder shall have to execute an agreement with CEO, Sonamarg Development Authority regarding adherence to the terms and conditions as may be prescribed by the Department during the course of the contract period. The bidder shall have to bear all the costs and expenses for executing this agreement/license deed.
- The successful bidder shall have to handover the property to the CEO, Sonamarg Development Authority after completion of contract period with the list of inventory, received by him at the time of allotment/taking over.
- The licensee shall not make any alterations or additions to the space/unit allotted, without seeking written permission from the CEO, Sonamarg Development Authority.
- The successful bidder shall arrange on his own all necessary stationary, staff or any other requirements for providing efficient services to the clients.
- The licensee shall provide necessary uniform & name plates to the staff working in the premises & shall be responsible for any unfair act of the staff member for which, he shall be liable for criminal/civil action under rules/law if any required.
- The Watch and ward of the property, maintenance of lawns and other subsidiaries and landscape, if any, shall be the sole responsibility of the licensee.
- The licensee shall not, in any case, sub-let the premises to any other party.
- The successful bidder shall have to provide services to the best satisfaction of tourists/locals. The bidder shall have to ensure that there isn't any complaint of misbehavior with the visitors/locals or by any of the staff member employed by the bidder in this regard. In case any complaint is received, action as warranted under rules shall be initiated against the bidder and penalty shall be imposed upon the defaulters.
- In case of any negligence in running the service or complaint pertaining to bad performance, the contract shall be terminated without any notice by the department.
- The allotted premises shall be inspected periodically by the departmentally authorized officers and in case the services of the licensee are not found satisfactory, the contract shall be liable for cancellation without any notice.
- Any damage caused to the Government property at the site will invite penalty amounting to double the cost of damage or replacement of the same whatever the cause may be, as per assessment to be made by the CEO, Sonamarg Development Authority.
- The Department shall reserve the right for using the space for any purpose or function or event as it may deem fit and no fee shall be charged by the licensee in this regard.
- The Department shall reserve the right for installation and outsourcing of any other activity within the premises of the park.
- The successful bidder will have to abide by all the orders/communications issued by Department from time to time during the period of contract as may necessitated in light of public unrest and law & order, security and in case of any other Administrative requirements.
- The successful bidder shall ensure arrangement of furniture, electricity back up and availability of standard crockery/cutlery in the unit, on his own.
- During the contract period the maintenance of the asset/area, watch and ward as well as upkeep and daily cleaning/sweeping shall be the sole responsibility of the licensee.
- The successful bidder/Licensee shall strictly adhere to all rules and regulations regarding commercial establishment, sanitation in vogue with focus on preservation of environment etc. within the territorial area and shall clear all applicable taxes like GST/IT etc. within the stipulated time. Any default on this account will be the sole responsibility of the successful bidder.
- Any dispute arising out of or in connection with the contract, including any question regarding its existence, validity or termination, shall be referred Arbitration of Administrative Secretary Incharge Tourism Department, Government of J&K, whose decision shall be final & binding upon the parties. The proceedings of the Arbitration shall be conducted under the provisions of the J&K, Arbitration & Conciliation Act, 1997 & rules and its amendment if any, framed there under.
- Any natural or Anthropogenic/manmade calamity occurs. The highest bidder/ licensee shall not seek extension of lease or relaxation, nor such claims shall be entertained by Sonamarg Development Authority.
- If the bidder intends to withdraw the agreed contract, he shall have to notify the Chief Executive Officer, Sonamarg Development Authority before three months without claim for refund of existing contract year.
- If any minor repairs of the assets such as electrification, sanitary maintenance etc are to be done and these will be carried out by the licensee at his own cost, however, after seeking permission from the competent authority as per the direction of the inspecting authority from time to time which will help in maintenance of the asset.
- Any bid submitted in contravention of the prescribed terms and conditions, guidelines, or procedures governing the e-auction process shall be treated as non-responsive and liable for outright rejection without any reason. Further, any bidder found to have violated the established e-auction rules, engaged in unfair practices, or submitted bids inconsistent with the notified business rules shall be liable to be debarred/blacklisted from participating in the present as well as future bidding processes of the Authority for a period as deemed appropriate by the competent authority.
- No extensions shall be granted. The asset shall be outsourced afresh at the end of the license term.
- The successful bidder has to run the asset as per the norms and conditions as prescribed within Tourist Trade Act in vogue.
- The Authority shall not be responsible for any monetary loss due to any climate untowardness or due to any other reason.

DIPK-NB-324-26 DT: 30/04/2026
Sd/-
Chief Executive Officer
Sonamarg Development Authority

Oil Jitters Rise as Iran's Khamenei Defies Trump's Bluster

Agencies

TEHRAN — Iran's Supreme Leader Mojtaba Khamenei struck a defiant tone on Thursday in the face of U.S. President Donald Trump's bluster, declaring that Tehran would defend its nuclear and missile capabilities as "national assets" and impose new rules over the strategic Strait of Hormuz.

In a message marking National Persian Gulf Day, Khamenei signalled Iran would not yield to U.S. demands following weeks of conflict and a fragile ceasefire.

"Ninety million proud and honourable Iranians inside and outside the country regard all of Iran's identity-based, spiritual, human, scientific, industrial and technological capacities — from nanotechnology and biotechnology to nuclear and missile capabilities — as national assets and will protect them just as they protect the country's waters, land and airspace," he said.

New Hormuz framework

Khamenei said Iran would enforce a new system to govern the vital oil transit route, portraying it as beneficial for the region.

"The Islamic Republic, in grateful action for the divine blessing of managing the Strait of Hormuz, will secure the Persian Gulf region and end the hostile misuse of this waterway," he said.

"The new legal framework and management system for the Strait of Hormuz will advance comfort and development for all the region's nations, and its economic benefits will bring joy to the nation."

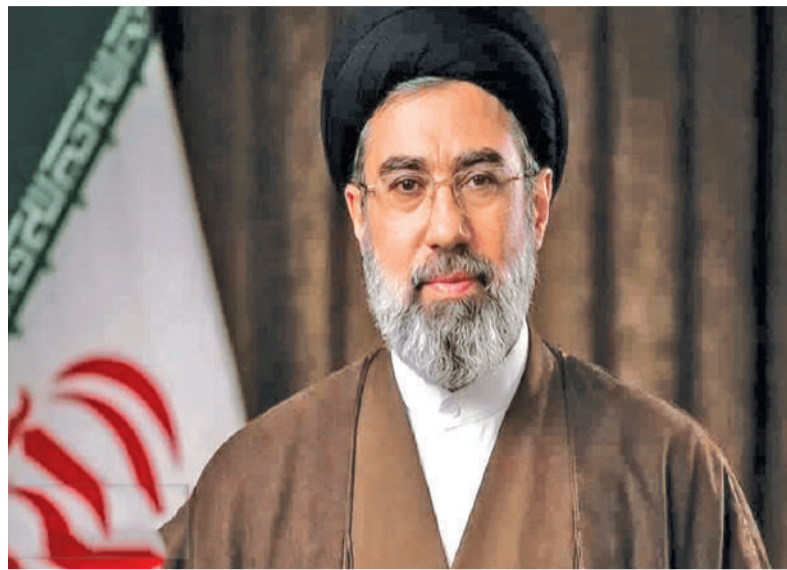
The Strait of Hormuz, through which roughly a fifth of global oil passes, has become the focal point of the standoff, with oil prices surging amid fears of disruption.

Sharp rhetoric against Washington

Khamenei delivered a pointed rebuke of U.S. involvement in the Persian Gulf, repeating long-standing revolutionary rhetoric.

"Foreigners who come from thousands of kilometres away to act with greed and malice there have no place in it — except at the bottom of its waters," he said.

Referring to the United States as the



"Great Satan," he added that American forces were the main source of instability in the region.

"America's hollow bases can barely guarantee their own safety, let alone that of their dependents or pro-American allies in the area."

He also said: "By divine will, the future of the Persian Gulf will be bright—a future free of America, devoted to progress, peace, and prosperity for its nations."

War backdrop and escalation

Mojtaba Khamenei framed the current confrontation as part of a broader historical struggle against foreign powers.

"This strategic asset has long provoked the greed of many evildoers over the centuries. The record of repeated invasions by European and American foreigners... reflects only a fraction of the malicious schemes of global oppressors against the peoples of the Persian Gulf."

He added that recent conflict had reinforced Iran's position.

"Today, two months after the largest military mobilisation and invasion attempt by the world's bullies... a new chapter is being written for the Persian Gulf and the Strait of Hormuz."

"The nations of the Persian Gulf region... have witnessed with their own eyes over the past sixty days the beautiful manifestations of solidarity, vigilance, and endeavour... in rejecting foreign domination."

Nuclear standoff and diplomacy

The comments come as Washington maintains a naval blockade on Iranian oil exports and presses for broader concessions, including limits on Iran's nuclear programme. Tehran has insisted its programme is peaceful.

Indirect talks continue, with Pakistan facilitating contacts.

"If the two parties can engage in real-time conversations, that could ease the sticking points," Pakistani Foreign Ministry spokesperson Tahir Andrabi said.

"New chapter" narrative

Ayatollah Khamenei cast Iran's stance as part of a transformative moment for the region.

"Today, 90 million Iranian people... consider all their identity, spiritual, human, scientific, industrial, and basic and modern technological capacities—from nano and bio to nuclear and missile—as their national asset... They will guard them just as they do their maritime, land, and aerial borders."

"The bright future of the Persian Gulf region will be a future without America and in the service of the progress, comfort, and prosperity of its nations."

With tensions high, energy markets volatile and diplomacy uncertain, the standoff over the Strait of Hormuz remains a critical flashpoint in the region.

Israeli Attacks Kill 14 People In Southern Lebanon Despite Ceasefire

Agencies

Israeli attacks on southern Lebanon have killed at least 14 people, according to the country's National News Agency (NNA), despite a temporary United States-mediated "ceasefire".

In the municipality of Jebchit, three people were killed and seven wounded in an attack that destroyed a residential building. A separate attack killed four members of one family, including a child. In the municipality of Toul, four people were killed and six wounded.

Later on Thursday, another Israeli attack hit a home in Toul, killing one person and injuring two others. In the municipality of Harouf, two people were killed, and the attack also destroyed a house.

Israeli forces have intensified their attacks in southern Lebanon over recent days, with artillery shelling reported in the towns



of Zawtar al-Sharqiyah, Yohmor al-Shaqif, and Bayt al-Sayyad.

In the past 24 hours, Israeli air attacks have killed more than 20 people, including members of two families, two Lebanese army soldiers, and three paramedics. More than 70 others, including children, were injured in the attacks.

The Israeli army has also issued more forced displacement threats for 15 southern Lebanese towns and villages, including Jebchit, Toul, al-Samanieh, Sahel al-Hnieh, Qlailah, Wadi

Jilo, al-Kanisa, Kafar Jouz, Majdal Zoun, and Seddiqine.

The attacks come amid a temporary US-mediated "ceasefire" deal agreed between Israel and Lebanon that took effect on April 17. Lebanese President Joseph Aoun denounced the "continuing Israeli violations" in southern Lebanon on Thursday, saying they were occurring "despite the ceasefire, as do demolitions of homes and places of worship, while the number of killed and wounded rises day after day".

"Pressure must be ex-

erted on Israel to ensure it respects international laws and conventions and ceases targeting civilians, paramedics, civil defence, and humanitarian health and relief organisations," the Lebanese president added.

Meanwhile, Parliament Speaker Nabih Berri called for "the swift formation of an international fact-finding committee on the crimes of the Israeli occupation".

Reporting from Beirut, Al Jazeera's Malcolm Webb said "Lebanon's President Aoun has asked the US for a date for negotiations to restart but has also said that Israel must fully implement the ceasefire."

"The Lebanese government, Israel and the US have sought to distance the talks from the US talks with Iran. But with the fighting continuing to escalate, it seems the only thing that would slow it down is further pressure from Trump on Israel to stop," he said.

Trump Asks German Leader Merz to Fix His 'Broken Country'

AP

WASHINGTON: United President Donald Trump on Thursday took another dig at German Chancellor Friedrich Merz, asking the European leader to fix his broken country and spend less time concerning himself with the Iran war.

The president is continuing to pillory German Chancellor Friedrich Merz, who's been increasingly critical of the US-Israel war against Iran.

Trump, in a social media post, said Merz "should spend more time on ending the war with Russia/Ukraine" and "fixing his broken Country, especially Immigration and Energy" and less time concerning himself with the Iran war.

The latest criticism by Trump of Merz came the day after the US president announced he was

reviewing the US military presence in Germany, a NATO ally that hosts several American military installations.

Germany faces new threat President Trump has again threatened that the United States could reduce its military presence in Germany, a key NATO ally and the European Union's largest economy. Europeans have heard this before.

Trump's social media post on Wednesday followed comments by Chancellor Friedrich Merz that the US was being "humiliated" by Tehran as it slow-walks its diplomacy over the US-Israel war against Iran.

Trump has mused for years about reducing America's military presence in Germany and has recently repeatedly railed against NATO for its refusal to assist the US in its two-month-old war.

Man Gets Life Term for Killing Wife's 'Rapist' in UP

Press Trust of India

MUZAFFARNAGAR: A local court here has sentenced a man to life imprisonment for shooting dead a person who allegedly raped his wife, officials said on Thursday.

Additional District and Sessions Judge Manjula Bhalotia convicted the accused, Akash, under Section 302 of the IPC and also imposed a fine of Rs 60,000. According to government counsel Kuldeep Kumar Pundhir, the incident took place on November 3, 2022, in Chachpur village under the Khatauli police station area.

The victim, Suraj Kumar, had been arrested a few months earlier in connection with a rape case involving Akash's wife but was later released on bail, he said.

Pundhir said Akash shot Suraj Kumar dead due to old enmity stemming from the incident.

A complaint in the matter was lodged by the deceased's brother, Satendra, following which a case was registered and investigated, leading to the conviction, he added.

MI Securities

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