

## The Brushstrokes of Shared Humanity in Kashmir

A Muslim man tending a temple and old friends reuniting in tears have recently drawn attention to the enduring emotional ties many Kashmiri Muslims and Pandits still preserve.



Mudabir Jehan

Srinagar: The temple stood under the spring light in South Kashmir's Shopian district, its walls weathered by time and long winters. Inside the compound, 47-year-old Ghulam Qadir Sheikh dipped a paintbrush carefully into a small container and began tracing the "Om" symbol by hand.

Each stroke moved slowly, almost ceremonially, as if repetition itself had become devotion.

Many Kashmiri Pandit families who once prayed at the Kapalmochan temple left the valley decades ago. The courtyard gradually emptied, footsteps faded, and rituals became infrequent. The structure, however, never slipped

to ruin.

Qadir continued arriving there year after year.

He swept the floors, lit diyas and cleaned the premises with a consistency that drew admiration far beyond Shopian.

A recent video showing him painting the temple by hand spread widely online, stirring emotion among Kashmiris who saw in it something larger

than maintenance work.

Qadir described his reason in simple terms. He said he did it for humanity.

That image cut through the louder narratives that usually dominate public discussion about Kashmir. Television debates and social media battles often reduce Kashmiri Muslims and Kashmiri Pandits into rigid | [More on P6](#)

## PM Calls For Peaceful Resolution Of Conflicts

Receives Norway's Highest Civilian Honour | Says Pahalgam Terror Attack Delayed Norway Visit



Press Trust Of India

Oslo: Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Monday called for a resolution of the West Asia crisis and the Ukraine conflict through dialogue and diplomacy, asserting that military action alone cannot achieve lasting peace.

Modi made the remarks after holding wide-ranging talks with Norwegian Prime Minister Jonas Gahr Store that focused on boosting the overall trajectory of bilateral relations.

"India and Norway, both, believe in a rules-based order, dialogue, and diplomacy. We agree that no issue can be resolved through military conflict alone," Modi said in his televised statement to the media.

"Be it Ukraine or West Asia, we will continue to support every effort for the early end of the conflict and for peace," he

said. Modi met Store hours after he landed in Oslo from Sweden as part of his four-nation European tour.

In his remarks, the prime minister also underlined the need for reform of the global institutions.

"We also agree on this point that reforming global institutions is essential for addressing the growing global challenges."

"And eradicating terrorism in every form from its roots is our shared commitment," he noted.

Modi also complimented Norway for its support to India following last year's Pahalgam terror attack that killed 26 people, mostly tourists.

"I was supposed to visit Norway last year, but had to postpone that trip due to the terrorist attack in Pahalgam. During that difficult time, Norway stood | [More on P6](#)

## Terror Recruitment Almost Negligible In J&K, Omar Doing Great Work: LG

Observer News Service

Srinagar: Asserting that recruitment into terror ranks has become "almost negligible," Jammu and Kashmir Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha on Monday said terrorism in the Union Territory has been pushed to the margins.

In an interview with a national television channel, LG Sinha said security agencies were maintaining strict surveillance over digital platforms to counter terrorism and related activities.

"Our security agencies are working with complete seriousness. Whether it is Telegram, WhatsApp or any other platform, agencies are monitoring every aspect and the situation will remain under control," he said.

The LG said terror networks and narcotics smuggling operated through the same channels and alleged that drugs were being pushed



into Jammu and Kashmir from across the Line of Control through sectors including Gurez, Tangdhar and Uri, besides drone routes.

"Drugs are directly linked to terror funding and terrorism," he said, adding that the administration had intensified its anti-drug campaign after repeated complaints about rising addiction among youth.

LG Sinha said people from different sections of society, including religious leaders, students, women and youth

percent of the police force was engaged in anti-drug operations and claimed that public cooperation had increased significantly, with residents voluntarily sharing information about alleged drug peddlers.

"Some people have problems with our fight against drugs, but I want to assure that no innocent person has been touched. Those found guilty will be punished," he said.

He also said rehabilitation and treatment facilities were being strengthened through government hospitals and rehabilitation centres run by the health department.

Referring to the April 22, 2025 Pahalgam terror attack, LG Sinha said people across Jammu and Kashmir had come out on the streets to condemn terrorism and support peace.

"People of Kashmir now believe that their future lies with India and people are against terrorism," he said.

The LG said nearly 90

## Conviction Rate In J&K UAPA Cases Less Than 1%: SC

Grants Bail To Handwara Man In Narco-Terror Case

KO Web Desk

Srinagar: The Supreme Court on Monday flagged low conviction rates under the Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act (UAPA) for the five years from 2019-23 hovers between 2 per cent and 6 per cent.

"In other words, there is a 94 per cent to 98 per cent possibility of acquittal in such cases in the country. When it comes to the Union territory of Jammu and Kashmir, the percentage of conviction is abysmal, to say the least.

"For the aforesaid period, the annual rate of conviction is always less than 1 per cent. It means | [More on P6](#)

Records Bureau (NCRB) and said that the country-wide percentage of convictions under the Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act (UAPA) for the five years from 2019-23 hovers between 2 per cent and 6 per cent.

The tourist destinations of Gulmarg and Pahalgam also witnessed warmer-than-usual conditions. Gulmarg recorded a maximum temperature of 23.6 degrees Celsius, 7.3 degrees above normal, while Pahalgam settled at 26.4 degrees Celsius, 4.5 degrees above normal.

In north Kashmir, Kupwara recorded 29.5 degrees Celsius, which was 3.7 degrees above normal. | [More on P6](#)

## Srinagar Sizzles At 31.5°C

MeT Forecasts Relief From May 19

Observer News Service

Srinagar: Jammu and Kashmir continued to witness hot and dry weather on Monday, with temperatures remaining several degrees above normal across many parts of the Union Territory, even as the Meteorological Department forecast rain, thunderstorms and gusty winds from May 19 onwards.

According to data shared by the MeT Department, Srinagar recorded a maximum temperature of 31.5 degrees Celsius, which was 6.1 degrees above normal for this time of the year.

Qazigund registered 33 degrees Celsius, 8.6 degrees above normal, while Kokernag recorded 30.8 degrees Celsius, nearly seven degrees above the seasonal average.

The tourist destinations of Gulmarg and Pahalgam also witnessed warmer-than-usual conditions. Gulmarg recorded a maximum temperature of 23.6 degrees Celsius, 7.3 degrees above normal, while Pahalgam settled at 26.4 degrees Celsius, 4.5 degrees above normal.

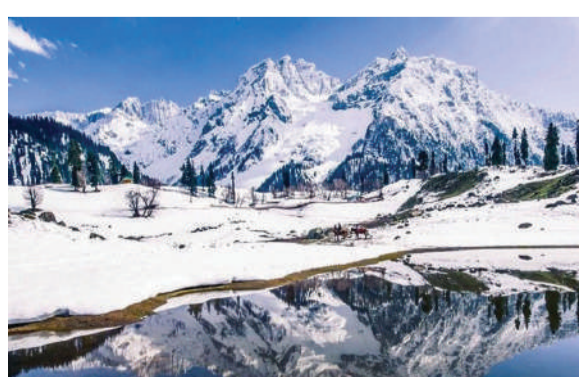
In north Kashmir, Kupwara recorded 29.5 degrees Celsius, which was 3.7 degrees above normal. | [More on P6](#)

## Kashmir's Thajwas Glacier Lost 86% Area Since Neoglaciation: Study

Agencies

Srinagar: The Thajwas Glacier in the Kashmir Himalaya has lost nearly 86 per cent of its area and close to 88 per cent of its volume since the Neoglaciation period, according to a new scientific study published in the journal Geoscience Frontiers, highlighting the long-term impact of rising global temperatures on Himalayan glaciers.

The study, published in the journal Geoscience Frontiers, reconstructed the paleo-glacial history of the Thajwas Glacier using



cosmogenic Beryllium-10 (10Be) exposure dating and geomorphological mapping, providing one of the few detailed glacial


chronologies from the Kashmir Himalaya.

Researchers identified four major glacial advances over the past nearly 21,000


years, corresponding to the global Last Glacial Maximum (gLGM), the Younger Dryas period, the Early Holocene and the Neoglaciation phase.

According to the study, the glacier witnessed major advances around 20,770 years ago, 11,460 years ago, 9,120 years ago and nearly 4,190 years ago.

The researchers said the glacier has undergone a drastic reduction in both area and volume since the gLGM period. "The Thajwas Glacier lost around 64 per cent of its area and 73 per cent of its | [More on P6](#)



# OUR CENSUS OUR DEVELOPMENT




(First Phase of Census 2027)

Common queries on Self-Enumeration (SE) and their Answers (Part-1)


### WHAT IS SELF-ENUMERATION?

Self-Enumeration is an online process in which you fill and submit your household details on the SE portal ([se.census.gov.in](http://se.census.gov.in)) yourself, without waiting for an enumerator



- ❖ **Is Self-Enumeration mandatory?**  
No, it is an additional facility. If you do not do it, an enumerator will collect data during field visit
- ❖ **Can I do Self-Enumeration in any language?**  
This facility is available in Hindi, English and 14 Indian languages
- ❖ **Is internet required for Self-Enumeration?**  
Yes, internet is required to access the portal
- ❖ **Is my information safe?**  
Yes, all data is secure, encrypted and stored on government servers
- ❖ **What is SE ID and its use?**  
After submission of information, you will receive a unique 11 digit SE ID (Also via SMS/email) which must be shown to the enumerator during her/his visit to your house
- ❖ **What if SE ID is forgotten?**  
It can be retrieved using the registered mobile number on the portal
- ❖ **Will an enumerator visit after Self-Enumeration?**  
Yes, the enumerator will visit your home and confirm your details using the SE ID
- ❖ **Do I need to upload any documents?**  
No documents are required to be uploaded
- ❖ **Is help available on the portal?**  
Portal has user guide, flowcharts, tutorial videos, FAQs and tooltips

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**2**

**NOTICE**

I BILAL AHMAD DRABO S/O MUSHTAQ AHMAD DRABOO R/O DRABUPORA DALIGAM HINNHAL DOLEGAM DODA am applying for contractor Card-Dee class in the office of the JKPDC chief office Bemina Srinagar anybody having any objection may please contact above mentioned department within a period of seven days after that No objection will be entertained

**PUBLIC NOTICE**

I hereby inform the general public that my name has been wrongly recorded as Fayaz Ahmad S/o Mohd Kazim Mir in my service records. My correct name is Fayaz Ahmad Mir S/o Mohammad Kazim Mir, as reflected in my official school documents and other records. Henceforth, I shall be known and identified by the corrected name Fayaz Ahmad Mir S/o Mohammad Kazim Mir for all official purposes. If anybody has any objection in this regard, they may submit the same to the concerned authorities within 7 days from the date of publication of this notice. After that, no objection shall be entertained.

**PUBLIC NOTICE**

I, SHEERAZ AHMAD SHAH S/O GH. MOHIUDIN SHAH R/o Kahrot, Tehsil & District Kulgam, J&K, hereby notify for general public that the name of my son is mentioned as AATIF SHEERAZ in all his documents, whereas in my service records his name is recorded as AATIF SHEERAZ SHAH. That both the names AATIF SHEERAZ and AATIF SHEERAZ SHAH refer to one and the same person. Henceforth, the correct name of my son shall be treated as AATIF SHEERAZ for all purposes. If anybody has any objection in this regard, he/she may contact the undersigned within 7 days from the publication of this notice, failing which no objection shall be entertained later on.

**Office Of The Naib Tehsildar Kreeri**

Sub: Application of Aqib Mushtaq Mir S/o Mushtaq Ahmad Mir R/o Satosa Kreeri for issuance of Income Dependent certificate.

**NOTICE**

Regarding the subject cited above, in this context, a detailed report sought from the concerned patwari halqa which reveals that the family consists of 05 members and the annual income of the applicant family from all sources is Rs 478296/year moreover family structure of the applicant is as under

S. NO	NAME OF DEPENDENT	RELATION WITH DECEASED	AGE	OCCUPATION
1	Mushtaq Ah Mir	Father	63	Disabled
M	Saleema Begum	Mother	60	h/w
3	Aqib Mushtaq	Self	32	Govt EMP.
4	Jamid Mushtaq	Brother	29	Student
5	Owais Mushtaq	Brother	26	-

It is further submitted that Aqib Mushtaq Mir S/O Mushtaq Ahmad Mir is a govt employee by profession and is also earning member of the said family, the applicant needs income dependent certificate in favour of Father Mushtaq Ahmad For Medical Assistance.

The applicant has applied for issuance of income dependent certificate. As such the instant matter is published through newspaper. If any one is having any kind of objection may approach this office within 7 days (Seven Days) of the publication of this notice after passing of stipulated time of 7 days (Seven Days), no objections will be entertained.

Naib Tehsildar

**OFFICE OF EXECUTIVE MAGISTRATE 1ST CLASS ZAINGEER BOMAI**

Subject: Issuance of registration order in respect of delayed Birth & Death  
Public Notice

This office has received a written application from Ishrat Ghulam D/o Ghulam Ahmad Ganie R/o Bohripora, Tehsil Zaingeer for issuance of Birth & Death certificate in favour of Ishrat Banoo Born on 13-08-1999 and as per document evidence produced by the applicant.

In this regard, if anyone has any objection, he/she may file the same before the undersigned within 07 days. After that, no objection whatsoever will be entertained by this office.

Tehsildar  
Executive Magistrate  
Bomai

fko

**PUBLIC NOTICE**

I, Nissar Hussain Wani S/o Abdul Rehman Wani, R/o Wani Mohalla, Nanil, hereby inform that I have lost the front number plate of my scooter bearing registration number JK03J 5691 (TVS Jupiter). I am applying for a duplicate/new number plate. If anyone has any objection regarding the above-mentioned vehicle number plate, they may contact the concerned authorities within 7 days from the date of publication of this notice.

AMR

**Office of the Naib-Tehsildar Pattan Executive Magistrate 1st Class**

Subject: Issuance of Registration orders in respect of delayed Birth

**Public Notice**

The registrar Births and deaths (Block Development Officer Lolpora) has submitted a case file pertaining to Birth of Haroon Rashid s/o Ab Rashid Sheikh R/o Mamoosa Tehsil Pattan District Baramulla with verified date of event (birth) as 02-03-1997 occurred at Home

In this connection, if anybody having any objection to the issuance of said registration may contact this office within seven (07) days, after which no objections shall be entertained.

Executive Magistrate 1st Class  
Naib Tehsildar Pattan

fko\_r

**PUBLIC NOTICE**

I, Mohammad Rafeeq Dar S/O Abdul Hamid Dar R/O Tarzoo, Sopore, Baramulla, hereby inform the general public that the name and DOB of my ward have been wrongly entered in Aadhaar Card No. 2372 0766 0908 as Taufeeq Ahmad Dar and DOB 23/05/2014 instead of the correct name Taufeeq Rafeeq and DOB 06/04/2015 as per School Certificate record. Now, I intend to correct/change the name and DOB in Aadhaar records accordingly. If anybody has any objection regarding this correction/change, he/she may file the same before the concerned authority within seven days from the date of publication of this notice. Thereafter, no objection shall be entertained.

fko

**PUBLIC NOTICE**

I, Farooq Ahmad Ganaie S/O Ghulam Mohammad Ganaie, R/O Lalpora, Kunzer, Baramulla, J&K, hereby inform the general public that my Passport bearing No. R6097258 issued at Srinagar on 20-11-2017 has been lost/misplaced on 13-05-2026 at/about Lalpora to Kunzer.

If anybody has any objection or finds the above said passport, he/she may contact the concerned Police Station or Passport Authorities within seven days from the date of publication of this notice. Thereafter, no objection shall be entertained.

fko

**PUBLIC NOTICE**

I inform the general public that at the time of admission of my ward in Tyndale Biscoe and Mallinson School, Tangmarg, the name of my ward was wrongly entered as "Seher Shabir S/o Shabir Ahmad Khanday". However, the correct name is Sehar Shabeer S/o Shabeer Ahmad Khanday. Now, I have applied for correction of the said names in the school records. If anybody has any objection regarding this correction, he/she may file the same before the concerned authority within 7 days from the date of publication of this notice.

Shabeer Ahmad Khanday  
F/o Shabeer Ahmad Khanday

fko

**PUBLIC NOTICE**

I, RAYEES RIYAZ S/O RIYAZ AHMAD BEIGH R/o Malik Bagh Kralpora, Baghi Mehtab, Srinagar, Proprietor of "Watan E Kashmir Tour & Travels" bearing Registration No. JKTA00053701, hereby inform the general public that the office address/location of my travel agency has been changed from "Kralpora near Doodh Ganga Water Plant" to "Malik Bagh Kralpora, Baghi Mehtab, Srinagar" for all official purposes.

If anybody has any objection in this regard, he/she may contact the concerned office within 7 days from the publication of this notice, failing which no objection shall be entertained later on.

fkps

**Office of the Naib Tehsildar Pattan**

Sub... issuance of registration order in respect of delayed birth..  
**PUBLIC NOTICE**

The registrar birth BDO Sherabad Khore has submitted a case file pertaining to birth of Momin Nabi D.o.B 15/10/2008 and Mosin Nabi D.o.B 01/07/2014 ss/o Ghulam Nabi Ahanger R/o Hanjiwera Bala Tehsil Pattan. In this connection if any body having objection for issuance of said certificate he may contact to this office within 04 days after that no objection shall be entertained.

Sd

FKO-R

Naib Tehsildar Pattan

**Office of the Naib Tehsildar Pattan**

Sub... issuance of registration order in respect of delayed Death..  
**Public Notice..**

The registrar BDO Singapora has submitted a case file pertaining to death of Ali Mohammad Dar s/o Ghulam Mohammad Dar R/o Hanjiwera payeen Tehsil Pattan with verified date of death 01/11/2025. In this connection if any body having objection for issuance of said certificate he may contact to this office within 04 days after that no objection shall be entertained.

Sd

FKO

Naib Tehsildar Pattan

**Office of the Naib Tehsildar Pattan**

Sub... issuance of registration order in respect of delayed birth..  
**PUBLIC NOTICE**

The registrar birth BDO pattan has submitted a case file pertaining to birth of Daniyal Manzoor Dar s/o Manzoor Ahmad Dar R/o Khambiyar Tehsil Pattan with verified date of birth 16/08/2018 occurred at home in this connection if any body having objection for issuance of said certificate he may contact to this office within 04 days after that no objection shall be entertained.

Sd

FKO

Naib Tehsildar Pattan

**PUBLIC NOTICE**

It is hereby notified for the information of the general public that the mother's name of my ward, namely Aashima Mohsin, daughter of Mohsin Hassan Shah, has been incorrectly recorded in her school records as Qunser Nazir, whereas the correct name is Qunser Nazeer, wife of Mohsin Hassan Shah.

I have applied for the necessary correction of the said name in the records of Presentation Convent Higher Secondary School, Rajbagh.

If anyone has any objection in this regard, he/she may file the same in the office of the said school within a period of seven (7) days from the date of publication of this notice. After that, no objection shall be entertained.

Qunser Nazeer  
Mother of Aashima Mohsin  
Wife of Mohsin Hassan Shah

RIKO

**PUBLIC NOTICE**

I, Fayaz Ahmad Malik S/O Ali Mohammad Malik R/O Mulagam, Kunzer, Baramulla, hereby inform the general public that the name of my ward has been wrongly entered in Aadhaar Card No. 2688 4823 4730 as Farhan Ahmad Malik instead of the correct name Furqan Ahmad Malik as per Birth Certificate record.

Now, I intend to correct/change the name in Aadhaar records from Farhan Ahmad Malik to Furqan Ahmad Malik. If anybody has any objection regarding this correction/change, he/she may file the same before the concerned authority within stipulated time.

fko

**Office of the Executive Engineer, Electric Division- Ist, Srinagar.**

Tel No. 0194-2452079 Fax No.0194-2452079

e-TENDER ABBREVIATED NOTICE  
e-NIT No. 009/EDI, dt:16.05.2026

For and on behalf of the Managing Director, Kashmir Power Distribution Corporation Limited (KP-DCL), the Tender Floating Authority, as specified in clause 1 of BDS, invites e-bids from reputed Contractors having Valid A-Class Electrical Contractor License or equivalent license issued by Chief Electrical Inspector of J&KPDD/Relevant issuing authority/ registered Firms/Bidders enlisted with CPWD/MES/Railways/GEM, for the works as specified in clause 2 of BDS (Bid Data Sheet).

S.No	Particulars	Estimated Cost (In Lacs)
1	Rate Contract for carrying out Restoration, Maintenance and HT-LT Network improvement Works for the year 2026-27 under the jurisdiction of Subdivision Khunmoh and Nishat (Stage Contract)	40.00

The complete tender document is available at website <http://jktenders.gov.in>. Interested bidder/tenderers may view, download the e-Bid document, seek clarification and submit their e-Bid online up to the date and time mentioned in the table below. Bidding Documents contain Qualifying Criteria for Bidders, Specifications, Bill of Quantities, Terms and Conditions of Contract and other details.

A	Date & Time of downloading of Standard Bidding Document/Sale of Bid Document (Start)	The standard Bidding Document can be downloaded over <a href="http://jktenders.gov.in">http://jktenders.gov.in</a> from 16-05-2026; 16:00 Hours
B	Clarification start date	16-05-2026; 16:00 Hours
C	Clarification End date	22-05-2026; 16:00 Hours
D	e-Bid submission (start) date and time (Submission of e-tender fee, and other supporting documents in PDF/XLS format)	16-05-2026; 16:00 Hours
E	e-Bid submission (End) date and time Submission of e-tender fee, and other supporting documents in PDF/XLS format)	08-06-2026; 16:00 Hours
F	Hard copy of tender document Submission end date (along-with Original Copy of e-tender fee, Instruments and other supporting documents)	Required for L1 only & to be submitted on or one day after opening of financial e-bid.
G	Online commercial and technical e-bid opening date and time	09-06-2026; 02:00 PM
H	Online financial e-bid opening date & time (only of the technically qualified bidders)	Will be communicated to the technically qualified bidders
I	Venue of opening of technical & financial e-bids	Office of Executive Engineer ED-I, Sgr.
J	Cost of e-bid document. (Copy of treasury challan/receipt to be up-loaded with e-tender)	Rs. 1000/- (Rupees one thousand only).
H	EMD	Rs 20000/- (Rs Twenty Thousand Only)

Sd/-  
Executive Engineer Electric  
Division 1st, Srinagar

DIPK-NB-516/26  
DATED: 18-05-2026

**از عدالت جوڈیشل مجسٹریٹ فسٹ کلاس (منصف) گاندربل**

پاجلاس محمد مہتاب

SYED ALTAF HUSSAIN نام ALI MOHD KAWA

Complaint M/S 138 OF NZACA

دارت شعی عام مختلف: ALI MOHAMMAD KAWA S/O MOHAMMAD QASIM KAWA  
R/O HAMDANIYA COLONY BEMINA SGR

حکم بنام ابکاران پولیس یوٹی جملوں و کشمیر

معاملہ مندرجہ عنوان الصدور میں ملزم کی گرفتاری نظر بق معمول نامکن ہے اسطور ملزم کے خلاف کرائی 512 ص ف عمل لائی جا چکی ہے لہذا ابکاران پولیس یوٹی جملوں و کشمیر کو بذریعہ وارنت حکم دیا جاتا ہے کہ جب تک اور جہاں کی ملزم حدود یوٹی جملوں و کشمیر دستیاب ہوا اسے گرفتار کر کے عدالت نمازیں بحراست ضابطہ پیش کریں۔ وارنت نمٹا دستیاب ملزم زیر کار ہے۔ تحریر 07-02-2026

دارت حد امرزہ اجراء ہوئی

حکم سنایا گیا تحریر الصدور

بردستخرا تم و ہر عدالت کے جاری کی جائی ہے۔

no: 35-39/press/jmic/ghl/26

dated: 10-02-2026

جوڈیشل مجسٹریٹ فسٹ کلاس گاندربل

DIPK-1401/26 dated: 18-05-2026

**از عدالت جوڈیشل مجسٹریٹ فسٹ کلاس گاندربل**

پاجلاس محمد مہتاب

علی محمد بابا ولد قصود دادا کاند و شعیسن گاندربل نام منیر احمد ولد علی محمد ڈارسا کاند جوگی انگریز عمارت سربنگر حال تھیک کالونی نئی پورہ سربنگر (ڈگری وار)

(ملزم نام)

بجرائیم: درخواست اجراء

دارت شعی عام مختلف: منیر احمد ولد علی محمد ڈارسا کاند جوگی انگریز عمارت سربنگر حال تھیک کالونی نئی پورہ سربنگر

حکم بنام ابکاران پولیس یوٹی جملوں و کشمیر

معاملہ مندرجہ عنوان الصدور میں ملزم کی گرفتاری نظر بق معمول نامکن ہے اسطور ملزم کے خلاف کرائی 512 ص ف عمل لائی جا چکی ہے لہذا ابکاران پولیس یوٹی جملوں و کشمیر کو بذریعہ وارنت حکم دیا جاتا ہے کہ جب تک اور جہاں کی ملزم حدود یوٹی جملوں و کشمیر دستیاب ہوا اسے گرفتار کر کے عدالت نمازیں بحراست ضابطہ پیش کریں۔ وارنت نمٹا دستیاب ملزم زیر کار ہے۔ تحریر 06-03-2026

دارت حد امرزہ اجراء ہوئی

حکم سنایا گیا تحریر الصدور

بردستخرا تم و ہر عدالت کے جاری کی جائی ہے۔

no: 87-91 /press/jmic/ghl/26

dated: 16-03-2026

جوڈیشل مجسٹریٹ فسٹ کلاس گاندربل

DIPK-1407/26 dated: 18-05-2026

## LG Conducts Inspection of SASB Yatri Niwas



Observer News Service

Srinagar: Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha on Monday conducted an on-site inspection of the Shri Amarnathji Shrine Board's Yatri Niwas at Pantha Chowk in Srinagar and reviewed the ongoing construction works and arrangements for pilgrims ahead of the annual Amarnath Yatra.

During the visit, the Lieutenant Governor interacted with officials and directed them to expedite the pace of work to ensure completion of all pending projects well before the commencement of the pilgrimage.

He also reviewed the facilities being put in place for devotees, including arrangements for a sound and light show dedicated to Baba Barfani.

Officials briefed the Lieutenant Governor on the status of the ongoing works and preparedness measures at the Yatri Niwas.

The visit was attended by Dr. Mandeep K. Bhandari, CEO of the Shri Amarnathji Shrine Board (SASB); Mukesh Garg, SASB member; Rajiv Pandey; Dr. GV Sundeeep Chakravarthy; Deputy Commissioner Srinagar Akshay Labroo and other senior officers.

## KU Extends Deadline for B.Tech, M.Tech Admission Applications

Observer News Service

Srinagar: The Directorate of Admissions & Competitive Examinations (DACE), University of Kashmir (KU), has extended the last date for submission of on-line application forms for admission to B.Tech and M.Tech programmes advertised vide Admission Notification Nos. 07 and 08 of 2026 dated 21-04-2026.

The decision has been taken in response to repeated requests from aspirants who

could not submit their application forms earlier due to various reasons. The last date for submission and updating of eligibility details has now been extended upto May 21, 2026 (Thursday).

The Directorate has further informed that candidates who have already applied but have not updated their eligibility can also do the needful by the extended deadline. No further extension or updation of any kind shall be allowed after the said date.

## Buyers flock to Eidgah Market to Purchase Sacrificial Animals

Observer News Service

Srinagar: Activity at Srinagar's famous Eidgah sheep market has started rising as buyers flock to purchase sacrificial animals ahead of Eid-ul-Adha, which will be observed on May 27.

From early morning, buyers from different parts of the city thronged the market, inspecting sheep and negotiating prices.

Livestock sellers from Budgam, Bandipora, Ganderbal and south Kashmir districts have started bringing livestock to Srinagar, hoping for strong sales in

the coming days.

"We have just entered the main season. The rush will increase with each passing day till Eid," Nazir Ahmad, a livestock dealer from Budgam, told KNO.

Many families said they preferred shopping early to avoid last-minute crowds and expected price hikes. Children accompanying parents added to the festive mood at the market.

"Zil Hajj has just begun, and the market is already seeing good footfall. We expect the real rush in the coming days," said Bashir Ahmad, another sheep seller from Pulwama.

## Former PDC Engineer Charge Sheeted for Forgery, Destruction of Evidence

Observer News Service

Srinagar: The Economic Offences Wing (EOW) of Crime Branch J&K has filed a charge sheet against a former In-charge Superintendent Engineer of the J&K State Power Development Corporation for allegedly forging official records to alter his date of birth and secure undue service benefits.

In a statement issued to Kashmir Observer, a spokesperson said the EOW filed a charge sheet before the Court of Chief Judicial Magistrate Srinagar in FIR No. 09/2015 under Sections 420, 467, 468, 471 and 201 RPC against the then I/C Superintendent Engineer of the J&K State Pow-

er Development Corporation, who is now retired.

He said a probe was initiated by the then Police Station Crime Branch Kashmir after receiving a written complaint alleging manipulation of the officer's date of birth in official service records.

"Investigation revealed that the accused fraudulently manipulated his date of birth in official service records from 28-10-1955 to 28-10-1958 in order to secure undue service benefits. The manipulation was confirmed through FSL Srinagar and J&K BOSE verification reports. The accused also destroyed his original service book to conceal evidence, leading to invocation of Section 201 RPC," the spokesperson said.

## Authorities Warn Traders over Unsafe Food Storage Practices

Observer News Service

Srinagar: The Food Safety Department Srinagar on Monday conducted an extensive inspection drive across several city areas, including Karanagar, Kanikadal, Pathi Kadal, Gojwara and Hawal, to ensure strict compliance with the provisions of the Food Safety and Standards Act and allied regulations.

The inspection was carried out by a team of the department under the supervision of Assistant Commissioner Food Safety Srinagar, Yameen-ul-Nabi.

During the drive, officials inspected various food business establishments and bakery units to assess hygiene standards, storage practices and overall compliance with food safety norms.

According to officials, three bakery units were found violating the provisions of Schedule-4 of the Food Safety and Standards Act related to hygiene and sanitary requirements. The department said prosecution proceedings under the relevant provisions of the Food Safety and Standards Rules and Regulations would be initiated against the violators and the cases would be presented before the competent court of law.

The inspection team also observed that several retail shopkeepers and small wholesalers were exposing food items directly to sunlight and were failing to follow the prescribed storage conditions mentioned on product labels. Officials



warned that such practices could adversely affect the quality and safety of food products.

The department issued a strict advisory directing all Food Business Operators (FBOs) not to expose food items to excessive sunlight and to ensure that food products are stored in cool, dry places or strictly in accordance with the storage instructions specified on product labels.

Officials further instructed all FBOs to maintain proper hygienic conditions and adhere to Good Storage Practices as mandated under the Food Safety and Standards Act and Regulations.

The department warned that any violation or non-compliance in future inspections would invite strict legal action against the defaulters under the relevant provisions of the law.

## DC Reviews Progress in Establishment of New Fire Stations

Observer News Service

Srinagar: Deputy Commissioner (DC) Srinagar, Akshay Labroo chaired a meeting in his Office Chamber to review the progress on establishment of new fire stations in the District and upgradation of fire safety infrastructure across the City.

The meeting also took stock of identification and transfer of land for proposed new fire stations at various strategic locations to ensure improved response time and wider coverage of fire and emergency services in Srinagar.

The meeting was attended by Additional Deputy Commissioner, Mir Imtiyaz Ul Aziz, Additional Deputy Commissioner, Aadil Fareed, IAS Probationer, Alfred Thomas, Assistant Commissioner Revenue, Umar Gulzar, Deputy Director Fire & Emergency Services, Auqib Ahmad and other concerned.

During the meeting, detailed discussions were held on strengthening



the overall emergency response system, augmenting existing fire and rescue infrastructure and addressing gaps in service coverage, particularly in congested localities in Shahr-e-Khaas

and densely populated areas of the City.

On the occasion, the DC emphasized the need for expediting the identification and transfer of suitable land for new fire stations so that critical infrastructure projects are taken up immediately. He directed the concerned departments to work in close coordination to place intend for the land and ensure timely completion of preparatory formalities.

He further stressed that strengthening fire and emergency services is a key priority for safeguarding lives and property, especially in view of increasing urbanization and infrastructure growth in the City. He called for a time-bound and result-oriented approach in implementing all ongoing and proposed works related to fire safety upgradation for enhancing operational readiness for ensuring quick and effective response during emergencies to safeguard human lives and properties.

### GOVERNMENT OF JAMMU AND KASHMIR SCHOOL EDUCATION DEPARTMENT (HUMAN RESOURCE MANAGEMENT SECNON) CIVIL SECRETARIAT, JAMMU/SRINAGAR

Subject: Tentative seniority list of PG Masters/ PG Teachers in the discipline of Commerce as on 01.04.2026.

NOTICE

WHEREAS, the final seniority list of PG Masters/ PG Teachers in the discipline of Commerce was issued vide Government Order No: 297-JK(EDU) of 2023 dated 5.09.2023;

AND WHEREAS, after issuance of the final seniority list, the Department received various objections/representations from cadre members/Directorates for correction/inclusion/up-dation of service particulars in the seniority list;

AND WHEREAS, the objections received by the Department have been examined/scrutinized and necessary corrections/additions/deletions etc., wherever required, have been made in the seniority list;

AND WHEREAS, the Designated Committees have recommended 195 incumbents, (Annexure-D + Annexure-E) in light of Government Order No. 188-JK(Edu) of 2024, dated 15.03.2024, who have obtained their PG degrees through distance/private mode during service. The recommendations made in their favour, after examination in the Department, have been accepted by the Competent Authority. These incumbents, some of whom already figured in the tentative seniority list on conditional basis, have now been incorporated in the Tentative seniority list at appropriate places, except for 46 incumbents whose complete service particulars have not been provided by the concerned Directorates;

AND WHEREAS, recommendations of the committee constituted vide Government Order No. 188-JK(Edu) of 2024, dated 15.03.2024 in respect of one (01) incumbent has NOT been accepted by the Competent Authority due to the reasons mentioned against him in "Annexure-F";

AND WHEREAS, some of the incumbents, who have obtained their PG degrees during service and whose cases have not yet been recommended by the Designated Committees constituted vide Government Order No. 188-JK(Edu) of 2024 dated 15.03.2024, have also been incorporated in the seniority list, with the condition that their inclusion in seniority is subject to the condition that proper permission has been/is granted by the Competent Authority for acquiring the PG degree during service. Their names shall be deemed to have been deleted from the seniority list, ab-initio, in case the recommendations are not received in the time frame decided in the ibid Government order;

AND WHEREAS, this has necessitated issuance of an updated seniority list of members of the service.

Now, therefore, tentative seniority list in respect of PG Masters/ PG Teachers in the discipline of Commerce, forming "Annexure-A" to this notice, is hereby circulated for inviting objections, if any, from the concerned members of the service, who either is/are not included in the list or is/are aggrieved with the position assigned to them in the tentative seniority list along with authenticated documentary proof of their service particulars/bio-data, within a period of 15 days from the date of issuance of the list. The objections must be filed/forwarded through concerned Directorates, so as to reach the Administrative Department within stipulated time. Further, no objections in this regard shall be entertained after expiry of the stipulated time period. Moreover, 114 incumbents have been included in the tentative seniority list at appropriate places as detailed in "Annexure-B" and 37 incumbents have been deleted from the Tentative seniority list as detailed in "Annexure-C" for the reasons as shown against each.

Furthermore, 46 incumbents who have been recommended by the Designated Committee constituted vide Government Order No. 188 JK(Edu) of 2024 Dated 15.03.2024, conveyed by the Director School Education Jammu, as detailed in "Annexure-D" shall be included in the seniority list at appropriate place, as and when full authenticated service particulars of the incumbents are received from the concerned Directorate.

The tentative seniority list is also available on the official website of School Education (<https://schooleducation.jk.gov.in>).

Sd/- (Ram Niwas Sharma),  
IAS Commissioner/Secretary to the Government,  
School Education Department.

No. Edu-HRM/215/2022-01 (2060003)  
DIPK-1390/26  
Dated: 18.05.2026.

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

AIRPORTS  
SHIEK UL ALAM AIRPORT: 01942303311

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

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

 <b>HIJRI</b> <b>CALENDAR</b> 2 Zil-Hajj 1447	PRAYERS	
	FAJR	3: 50
	ZUHR	12:27
	ASR	5: 22
	Magrib	7:31
	ISHA	9: 06

### This Day In History

- 1585 - Spain confiscates English ships
- 1635 - France's First Minister, Cardinal Richelieu declares war on Spain (Franco-Spanish War 1635-59)
- 1643 - Battle at Rocroi/Allersheim: French army destroys Spanish army
- 1643 Massachusetts Bay, Plymouth, Connecticut and New Harbor form the United Colonies of New England
- 1649 - England is declared a Commonwealth by an act of the Rump Parliament making England a republic for the next 11 years
- 1652 - Spanish troops occupy Grevelingen
- 1662 U - niformity Act of England goes into effect
- 1749 - George II grants charter to Ohio Company to settle Ohio Valley
- 1792 - Russian army enters Poland
- 1793 - Netherlands captures French island of St Maarten (held until 1795)
- 1796 - Game protection law restricts encroachment on Indian hunting grounds
- 1863 - Siege of Vicksburg, investment of city complete
- 1864 - Battle of Port Walthall Junction, Virginia (Bermuda Hundred)
- 1864 - Last engagement in series of battles known as Spotsylvania
- 1864 - Skirmish at Cassville, Georgia
- 1885 - German Chancellor Otto von Bismarck takes possession of Cameroon and Togoland
- 1900 - World's longest railroad tunnel (Simplon) linking Italy and Switzerland opens
- 1910 - Passage of Earth through tail of Halley's Comet causes near-panic
- 1919 - Kelud volcano on Java, erupts killing 5,160
- 1919 - Mustafa Kemal Atatürk lands at Samsun on the Black Sea coast, beginning the Turkish War of Independence
- 1926 -- French air force bombs Damascus Syria
- 1929 - Chinese warlord Feng Yuxiang declares war on Chiang Kai-shek's nationalist government
- 1939 - Churchill signs British-Russian anti-Nazi pact
- 1940 - Amsterdam time becomes MET (Middle European Time)

**PUBLIC NOTICE**

In school/Board records my name has been recorded as "Mehraj Din Matta S/O: Abdul Rehman Matta" instead of " Mehraj ud Din Bhat S/o:Abdul Rehman Bhat". Now I have applied for one and the same person certificate which is under process in the office of Tehsildar North, Srinagar. If any body has any objection in this regard, he / she may submit the same in the office of Tehsildar North, Srinagar within a period of seven days from the date of publication of this notice. After the expiry of the stipulated period, no objection shall be entertained.

Mehraj ud Din Bhat  
S/O: Abdul Rehman Bhat.

jvd

**From Office of the  
Adv Ishfaq Rasool and Ass.**

**In the case of**  
1. Nazir Ahmad Waza  
Son of Ali Mohammad Waza

2. Abdul Salam Shah  
S/o Abdul Sattar Shah  
Both Residents of village Palhallan Pattan  
Tehsil Pattan And District Baramulla.

**Caveators**

**Versus**  
**Public At Large**

**In the Petition in terms of Section 148-A**

The caveators have reason to believe that Non-Caveator may file any Application, Petition, Ap- peal, Suit or any other type of proceeding before the Hon'ble Court and on the ground of distorted facts/misrepresentation and cooked story and may seek in obtaining some relief/order at their back/in exparte against the caveators and in such eventuality the caveators will be put in irrepa- rable loss and inconvenience. It would be proper that caveators be given an opportunity of being heard by the Hon'ble court before passing any order.

Sd/advocate  
fko

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  
Legal Counsel: Tasaduq Khwaja  
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# Diplomacy or Descent

The world keeps paying the price when governments treat diplomacy as a last resort instead of a first principle.



Dr Sohail Nasti



Recent developments involving the United States and Iran reveal another important truth. Even bitter adversaries eventually return to negotiation when confrontation grows too costly. Renewed indirect talks reportedly facilitated through Pakistan and later supported by China reopened communication channels between Washington and Tehran after periods of heightened tension.

KO VIEW

## Kashmir's Remote Moment

Now that work from home is returning to public discussion and policy thinking, Kashmir has before it an opening that can change the direction of its struggling job market.

What began during the COVID years as a temporary adjustment has gradually grown into a practical and accepted model for industries across the world. Prime Minister Narendra Modi has also spoken about flexible work systems, digital growth and technology-led employment. Kashmir should treat this moment seriously.

The region continues to face one of the highest levels of unemployment among educated youth in India. Every year, thousands of young men and women complete degrees with hopes of building stable careers, only to discover that local opportunities remain limited and highly competitive. Many eventually prepare themselves for a life outside Kashmir. Families invest in relocation plans long before their children complete education because migration has slowly become tied to survival and professional growth.

Remote work can alter that trend in a meaningful way. The pandemic years demonstrated that physical distance no longer limits professional contribution. Companies today recruit coders, designers, writers, analysts, consultants and developers from different cities and countries without demanding relocation. A skilled young person sitting in Srinagar, Kupwara or Anantnag can work for firms based in Bengaluru, Dubai, Europe or North America with the help of stable internet access, proper training and professional guidance.

This changing work culture also opens a larger role for the Kashmiri diaspora and professionals working across different sectors around the world. Kashmiris serving in global technology firms, universities, corporate houses, hospitals, media organisations and startups possess experience that can directly help local youth prepare for this transition. Their guidance can become more valuable than occasional speeches or symbolic engagements. A software engineer can mentor students on coding skills and digital hiring platforms. A business executive can explain how remote teams function in international companies. Medical professionals can guide healthcare graduates on telemedicine and digital consultation systems. Entrepreneurs and investors can train aspiring founders in freelancing, online commerce and startup building.

Such participation does not demand major commitments. A few hours every month spent through online mentorship sessions, workshops or digital networking groups can help hundreds of young people understand emerging industries and employment trends. Local colleges, universities and training institutes can coordinate with these professionals to build structured mentorship platforms focused on remote employment and digital enterprise.

This model also helps Kashmir retain its human capital. Young professionals can remain connected to their families, communities and local economy while working for national or international companies. Earnings generated outside the region can strengthen businesses and households within Kashmir itself. That creates economic movement without forcing an entire generation to disconnect from home in search of stability.

Kashmir already possesses the foundation needed for such a transition. The region has educated youth, rising digital awareness and a generation eager to participate in global industries. What now requires attention is serious collaboration between policymakers, academic institutions, industry experts and the diaspora.

Work from home should no longer be viewed as a passing trend linked only to the pandemic period. It has become part of the future of employment.

Kashmir has an opportunity to use this shift as a long-term answer to unemployment, migration and the growing disconnect between talent and opportunity.

History keeps delivering the same lesson with brutal clarity: wars begin with declarations of strength and end with exhausted governments searching for dialogue.

Statesmen who dismiss diplomacy at the outset eventually return to it after cities collapse, economies bleed, and millions lose their homes.

The tragedy lies in the timing. Diplomacy enters after destruction has already rewritten entire societies.

That design defines much of modern geopolitics.

Military action now comes with speed and certainty, while diplomatic engagement struggles for political attention. Governments celebrate decisive action and frame negotiation as delay. Public discourse rewards confrontation, social media amplifies outrage within minutes, and strategic patience receives little political value in such an atmosphere.

This shift has produced a dangerous global climate. Multiple crises now intersect at once: military conflicts, refugee emergencies, economic instability, ideological polarization, and widening mistrust between major powers.

Every crisis deepens the next, and each unresolved dispute feeds another flashpoint. Diplomacy should stand at the center of efforts to prevent such escalation. Instead, many governments treat it as emergency cleanup after catastrophe strikes.

The Iraq War remains one of the clearest examples of this failure.

The invasion dismantled state institutions with remarkable speed, though the political framework necessary to stabilize the country never emerged with equal seriousness. Sectarian violence surged through the vacuum, extremist organizations gained ground, and regional instability expanded far beyond Iraq's borders and altered global security for decades.

Strategic planners invested immense resources into military operations while political reconciliation received far less attention. The consequences still haunt the Middle East.

Afghanistan followed a similar trajectory.

Initial military objectives appeared defined and achievable. Long-term political reconciliation never gained sustained momentum during the early years of intervention. Diplomatic engagement eventually entered the picture after trust had collapsed among multiple actors. Negotiations conducted under those conditions faced enormous obstacles.

The final outcome raised an uncomfortable question for every major power involved: what might have changed if

diplomacy had received equal priority from the beginning?

Syria pushed this diplomatic breakthrough to an even darker level.

A domestic uprising evolved into an international battleground involving regional powers, global powers, militias, proxy networks, and extremist groups. Competing geopolitical agendas prevented unified diplomatic action. Human suffering expanded while international actors pursued fragmented strategies. Millions fled their homes, while entire cities turned into ruins.

Syria demonstrated how diplomatic disunity can transform a national crisis into a global humanitarian disaster.

Palestine presents another painful example of prolonged diplomatic stagnation.

Decades of intermittent negotiations, recurring violence, and collapsing trust have trapped generations inside an endless cycle of insecurity and grief. Diplomatic initiatives emerged repeatedly, though sustained commitment rarely followed with enough political force. Every failed effort deepened public cynicism and hardened divisions.

The crisis now stands as one of the clearest signs of what happens when diplomacy proceeds without consistency, accountability, or long-term vision.

Libya tells a similar story.

The removal of a regime occurred without a coherent political roadmap capable of holding the country together afterward. Rival factions, foreign interventions, and weak institutions pushed the country toward fragmentation. Political stability became increasingly difficult to restore because diplomacy entered a fractured landscape where competing actors sought influence through force.

South Asia also reveals the immense importance of careful diplomatic engagement.

Bangladesh has faced major humani-

tarian and economic pressures linked to the Rohingya refugee crisis and regional instability. Managing such pressures demanded sustained diplomatic balancing with neighbouring countries and international organizations.

Humanitarian crises of this scale demand continuous negotiation, coordination, and regional cooperation. Military logic alone cannot resolve displacement, poverty, and social strain involving millions of vulnerable people.

Meanwhile, unresolved tensions continue simmering throughout Asia and Africa. India and Pakistan remain locked in recurring friction between two nuclear powers. China's strategic rivalries with neighbouring countries continue redefining regional security calculations. Nepal and Sri Lanka face political sensitivities tied closely to regional influence and economic pressure. North Korea's nuclear isolation continues generating global anxiety. Sudan's humanitarian collapse exposes the devastating cost of prolonged political breakdown.

Each case points toward the same reality: unmanaged disputes eventually destabilize entire regions.

Recent developments involving the United States and Iran reveal another important truth. Even bitter adversaries eventually return to negotiation when confrontation grows too costly. Renewed indirect talks reportedly facilitated through Pakistan and later supported by China reopened communication channels between Washington and Tehran after periods of heightened tension.

These efforts remain politically delicate, though they highlight the continuing value of diplomacy even during deep mistrust.

Pakistan's intermediary role illustrates how regional actors now influence major geopolitical disputes with increas-

ing significance. China's involvement signals the growing multipolar character of international diplomacy. Western powers no longer hold exclusive authority over mediation and strategic dialogue. Emerging powers now play a larger part in managing crises and reducing escalation.

Such developments deserve careful attention because they expose a central truth about diplomacy. Dialogue between rivals demonstrates strategic maturity. Backchannel negotiations, discreet mediation, and multilateral engagement often prevent catastrophic escalation long before the public sees evidence of success.

The weakening of diplomacy also damages international institutions.

The United Nations depends upon constructive engagement among member states. Unilateral action weakens collective frameworks designed to preserve global stability. Mistrust then deepens further, making future cooperation increasingly difficult.

Modern technology complicates this challenge. Digital platforms reward instant reactions and public posturing. Governments face intense pressure to respond immediately during crises. Economic interdependence adds another layer of risk because conflict within one region now triggers inflation, supply disruptions, migration pressures, and political unrest elsewhere.

Diplomacy must therefore become faster, broader, and more adaptive while preserving its core principles: restraint, compromise, dialogue, and strategic patience.

Governments should understand diplomacy as strategic wisdom rather than hesitation. Military power and economic leverage retain importance, though neither can replace sustained political engagement.

Wars eventually end through negotiation anyway. Serious diplomacy simply begins that process earlier and saves countless lives before destruction reaches irreversible levels.

A deeper moral question also stands before the international community.

Imagine the transformation possible if even a fraction of global military spending moved toward education, healthcare, scientific advancement, sustainable infrastructure, poverty reduction, and climate adaptation.

Such investment would alter societies at their foundation. People raised with opportunity, inclusion, and economic security rarely gravitate toward extremism or violent hostility.

Diplomacy therefore serves a larger purpose than conflict prevention alone. It creates conditions where cooperation becomes politically valuable and human progress becomes widely shared. Future generations deserve a world built through dialogue rather than destruction.

Humanity has already witnessed the cost of abandoning diplomacy. Governments now face a defining choice between sustained engagement and permanent instability.

The author is a diplomacy analyst based in the United Kingdom, with a focus on international security and strategic affairs.



Lt Gen. R. S. Reen (Retd.)

## Why Kashmir Is Falling Behind

India's cities race ahead with jobs, investment and ambition while Kashmir sinks deeper into a model that drains talent, land and hope.

Ten days on the road changed the way I look at Jammu and Kashmir.

I travelled through Mumbai, several state capitals, major metros and Navi Mumbai's industrial belt. Every stop revealed a country moving with astonishing speed.

Tower cranes filled the skyline, metro lines cut through dense neighbourhoods, technology parks hummed late into the night, and construction crews worked with purpose and precision.

India looked like a nation convinced that the future belongs to those who build it first.

Mumbai captured this transformation most clearly. New skyscrapers rise 80 or 100 floors into the sky. The Bandra Kurla Complex has turned into a global business district where Indian conglomerates and multinational companies compete for space. Roads connect efficiently, capital flows freely, and ambition sits in clear view.

That energy stayed with me when I returned home to Jammu and Kashmir. The contrast hit hard.

Our towns continue to spread outward through unplanned colonies lined with large independent homes. Many of these houses stand beautifully designed and lovingly built. Families pour decades of savings into them. Parents dream of leaving something substantial behind for their children.

Then reality arrives.

Their children leave for Bengaluru, Hyderabad, Pune, Gurugram or Mumbai because jobs, industries and opportunity live there. Elderly parents remain alone in oversized homes that demand constant maintenance and endless expense. A structure meant to symbolize prosperity turns into evidence of an economy that stopped evolving years ago.

This trend reaches far beyond individual families. Jammu and Kashmir built housing growth without building economic en-

gines beside it. We never developed large medical hubs, technology corridors or modern tourism ecosystems capable of employing educated young people at scale. Every year, another generation departs in search of work that should exist here.

People often describe this migration as sacrifice or adaptation, but I see a region consuming its savings while exporting its talent.

The imbalance between Jammu and Kashmir also reveals deeper failures. Families from the valley increasingly maintain winter homes in Jammu because of the warmer climate. Very few families from Jammu seek summer homes in Kashmir. That one-way movement exposes the absence of a shared economic culture between the two regions.

A seasonal living model could have strengthened both economies. Families could have circulated money between regions, supported local businesses and built stronger social connections through regular movement. Political division and religious polarization interrupted that possibility long ago. Economic logic lost ground to emotional politics.

Land tells the story even more brutally.

Villages in Kashmir have expanded dramatically in population and housing density during recent decades. Agricultural land steadily disappears under concrete. Paddy fields shrink into residential plots. Forest areas and traditional grazing lands face growing pressure through organized encroachment and unchecked expansion.

These houses generate little economic value after construction finishes. Families exhaust lifetime savings to build them, then spend decades maintaining them. Marriage expenses and religious pilgrimages follow. Financial exhaustion arrives by middle age, leaving little capital for entrepreneurship, investment or innovation.

That economic cycle weakens an entire society.

Government employment once acted as the backbone of Jammu and Kashmir's economy. During difficult years,

public sector jobs brought security and predictability. That structure also narrowed ambition and discouraged private enterprise. Young people learned to chase limited government vacancies because few alternatives existed.

Today, the consequences appear everywhere. Dental graduates teach in schools. Agriculture graduates supervise unrelated departments. Law graduates serve in police positions unrelated to their training. Talented young people accept whatever secure employment appears available because the market around them remains painfully small.

Universities continue producing degrees without building pathways into meaningful work. Families who can afford it increasingly send their children abroad, especially to the United States, because foreign education often leads directly to employment opportunities. Kashmir spends enormous energy educating young people for export.

This crisis now extends into the environment itself.

Concrete expansion keeps eating into farmland and forests. Natural buffers shrink, dry summers grow harsher, and hailstorms strike more frequently. Ecological pressure rises each year because planning disappeared from urban growth. Every acre consumed recklessly today creates deeper vulnerability tomorrow.

Solutions exist, though they demand honesty and political maturity.

Political stability forms the foundation of everything else. Tourism, which remains one of Jammu and Kashmir's strongest economic sectors, suffers every time tensions rise. Competing political camps spent decades treating the region as ideological territory rather than a shared responsibility. That approach weakened investor confidence and stalled long-term planning.

Economic policy also needs sharper focus. Jammu and Kashmir possesses valuable raw materials, strategic geography and immense tourism potential. Local industries should grow around these strengths instead of exporting resources

outward with minimal local gain. Cement plants, downstream manufacturing, healthcare infrastructure and technology parks can create employment ecosystems capable of retaining skilled youth.

Three sectors stand out immediately. A medical city built around healthcare and wellness could attract patients and investment. A serious technology corridor backed by reliable electricity, digital infrastructure and targeted training programs could connect local talent with national and global markets. A modern tourism ecosystem focused on adventure travel, wellness and high-end experiences could generate year-round employment far beyond traditional hotel work.

Education reform also demands attention. Private universities should face clear expectations tied to employability and industry partnerships. Degrees alone hold little value when graduates face years of uncertainty afterward.

Urban planning must change fundamentally as well. Vertical development in designated zones makes far greater sense than endless horizontal sprawl that destroys farmland and forests. Every serious city in the world learned this lesson through necessity. Jammu and Kashmir faces that same moment now.

The deepest concern, though, involves the next generation.

We continue constructing expensive homes while weakening the economic foundation needed to sustain them. We continue producing educated youth while sending them elsewhere to build their lives. We continue debating political identities while economic realities grow harsher each year.

India moves forward at extraordinary speed. New industries rise constantly, new cities emerge, and new ambitions take root. Jammu and Kashmir still possesses the talent, beauty and strategic importance needed to participate fully in that growth story.

Success now depends on hard choices, disciplined planning and collective seriousness.

The next fifteen years will determine whether Jammu and Kashmir builds a self-sustaining future or sinks deeper into dependence, migration and stagnation.

That decision has already arrived.

The author is a graduate of REC/NIT Srinagar and a former Director General of the Directorate General of Quality Assurance under the Ministry of Defence. He is currently an advisor to Bharat Electronics Limited and writes on issues related to Jammu and Kashmir.

# A Chef's Life in the City of Lights

A chef's journey from Kupwara's mountain villages to Srinagar's kitchen floors reveals the unseen movement of lives built between home and city.



Majid Jahen

Airport Road in Hyderpora gathers motion long before evening settles. Buses edge forward in tight intervals while taxis press toward the airport stretch. Shopfronts brighten one by one, pulling reflections of headlights and people into glass and steel.

Cafe The Lounge by Just Baked stands within this current, its frontage catching the passing city and the widening arc of Srinagar's cafe economy.

Imtiyaz Wani steps inside before service begins. His entry shows long association with rooms where timing decides everything. The road behind him leads to Lolab Valley in Kupwara, a place of orchards, forest edges, and villages stitched together by winding distances. Ten years earlier, he left that terrain in search of income that soil and seasons could not secure.

His first work inside Srinagar kitchens began at a dishwashing station. The monthly wage stood at ₹3,500. Steel trays rose in stacks beside boiling water. Plates returned in endless cycles of use and cleaning. Senior staff guided him through timing, order, and the discipline needed inside crowded kitchens where every surface demanded attention.

Progress came through repetition and observation. Knife handling improved through daily use. Movement around counters gained speed through service hours that stretched without interruption. Each shift deepened familiarity with ingredients, heat, and coordination.

Years inside Srinagar's hospitality spaces drew him forward, step by step, toward the center of the kitchen.

Cafe The Lounge marks his present position as head chef. He leads kitchen operations, directs staff, and manages preparation during high demand hours. Orders arrive in waves that require timing, coordination, and constant movement between stations. Each dish passes through multiple hands before reaching the customer seated along glass walls that open toward Airport Road.



A white chef's coat marks the beginning of his working hours. The act of fastening buttons and adjusting sleeves sets a boundary between outside life and the enclosed world of the kitchen. The apron ties close with familiar precision. Years of repetition have turned this gesture into entry rather than preparation.

Heat defines the space within. Flames rise above skillets during peak service. Oil responds with sharp sound under pressure. Espresso machines release bursts of steam as cups fill and return to counters. Staff move between stations with steady attention to timing, where every delay shifts the flow of service.

Wani's hands reveal a decade spent inside such conditions. Skin

bears marks of repeated contact with steel and heat. Knife work remains exact as he prepares ingredients and oversees cooking stations. Each movement reflects familiarity built through long exposure to commercial kitchens where attention rarely drifts.

Srinagar's cafe sector has expanded along Airport Road and surrounding commercial zones. Restaurants and cafes now form a visible part of the city's evening life. Employment draws workers from Kupwara, Baniptora, and Pulwama, where rural households send young men toward kitchens and service counters in search of steady income.

Lolab Valley remains fixed within Wani's memory. Orchards, river paths, and stone-lined

homes define the place where his early years unfolded. The road between Kupwara and Srinagar takes only hours, though work in the city stretches that distance through long service hours and rare return visits.

Afternoon light softens inside the kitchen. Wani stands near a window facing Airport Road. Vehicles move in steady flow outside while activity inside slows between service cycles. Glass holds reflections of street motion and interior lighting in the same frame, binding two worlds through reflection rather than separation.

Evening service returns force to the kitchen. Orders arrive in rapid succession as tables fill inside the cafe. Staff coordinate movement

between stations with constant attention to timing. Heat rises again from stoves and pans while espresso machines fill the air with steam and sound. Each dish moves forward only through precise coordination.

Service ends late at night. The chef's coat returns to its hanger after hours of sustained movement between counters and stoves. Staff leave one by one as exhaustion settles into posture and breath. The kitchen space empties, leaving behind surfaces still warm from continuous work.

A rented room in Sanat Nagar forms the next space of his day. The room holds only essential belongings. A bed, a few items, and walls shaped by use rather than comfort

define its interior. Life in the city compresses into this enclosure between long shifts.

A phone becomes his link to Lolab Valley. A child's photograph appears on screen during short intervals between calls. Family voices reach him through unstable connections and brief exchanges. Distance between Kupwara and Srinagar becomes measured through time between conversations rather than kilometers on a map.

His life moves between these two worlds without interruption. Kitchens in Hyderpora demand precision, coordination, and continuous attention under service pressure. Lolab Valley remains tied to land, memory, and the presence of family that shaped his early years. Work in Srinagar sustains the household in Kupwara, binding city labor to village survival.

This movement reflects a wider condition within Kashmir's internal economy. Rural workers enter urban hospitality in growing numbers as cafes and restaurants expand along Srinagar's main corridors. Kitchens depend on this labor, built through long hours and shared experience inside confined working spaces.

Wani stands within this flow as both skilled worker and distant son. Years inside kitchens have built mastery and responsibility. Distance from home has grown through repeated cycles of service, rest, and return. Each day binds those two spaces together through effort that never fully settles in one place.

Night settles over Hyderpora as lights spill from cafes onto wet roads. Traffic slows along Airport Road while city life extends into late hours. In Lolab Valley, the mountains hold their own stillness, shaped by fields, wind, and memory. Between these two geographies, Wani's life continues through work that ties kitchen heat to a valley home held at distance, measured not by separation alone, but by everything required to bridge it each day.

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# Iran's Geography Powers Trade Shift Beyond Seas

Trans Asia News

Tehran: Freight train traffic between China and Iran has accelerated sharply since the start of a US naval blockade in the Persian Gulf, underscoring Tehran's widening shift toward overland trade corridors as neighbouring countries move to facilitate Iranian commerce despite Western pressure.

Cargo trains travelling from Xi'an in central China to Tehran have increased from roughly one train per week before the conflict to one every three to four days since the blockade began on April 13, according to a Bloomberg report. The route through Kazakhstan and Turkmenistan has emerged as a critical artery in Tehran's effort to offset maritime disruptions and maintain trade flows.

The increase in rail traffic comes as Iraq issued a direct order to customs authorities across the country requiring the activation of transit and transshipment operations for Iranian goods through Iraqi territory, expanding Tehran's access to alternative trade routes.

Under directives from Iraqi Prime Minister Mohammed Shia al-Sudani's government, customs offices across northern, central, western and southern Iraq, as well as air cargo facilities and Baghdad International Airport, have been instructed to facilitate the transit and re-loading of Iranian goods.

The move effectively integrates Iraq's land and air transport infrastructure into Iran's transit network at a time when Tehran faces mounting pressure from a maritime blockade intended to isolate its economy.

The US-led naval restrictions, imposed during the wider regional conflict involving Iran, Israel and allied Gulf states, were designed to inflict economic pressure by constraining Iranian shipping and energy exports. However, rather than cutting Iran off, the measures appear to have accelerated Tehran's transition toward land-based supply



chains and regional transport networks.

Iran's strategic geographic position between Asia, the Middle East and Eurasia has enabled it to redirect cargo toward overland corridors connecting China, Central Asia, Afghanistan, Turkey and Russia.

According to data from the Islamic Republic of Iran Railways, more than 40 freight trains from China have entered Iran since the beginning of this year. That compares with just seven trains operating on the route during the previous seven years combined, signalling a dramatic acceleration in rail-based trade.

The China-Iran rail corridor runs through Kazakhstan and Turkmenistan, keeping cargo traffic far from maritime routes vulnerable to naval restrictions. Analysts say direct interference with such land networks could risk broader geopolitical consequences involving Beijing.

The rail expansion forms part of a longer-term strategy pursued by Tehran to reduce exposure to sanctions and external pressure by building logistical partnerships with regional and

international allies.

In October, Iran began exporting diesel by rail to Afghanistan through the 225-km Khaf-Herat rail line connecting Iran's north-eastern Khorasan Razavi province to Herat.

Earlier, China launched a direct freight rail service to Hairatan in northern Afghanistan, while Uzbekistan and Afghanistan later announced plans to extend rail connectivity to Herat, approximately 130 km from the Iranian border.

Iran has also committed billions of dollars to develop a North-South transportation corridor linking the country with Russia, part of broader efforts to diversify commercial routes.

Kambiz Etemadi, head of the container committee of Iran's national shipping association, said Iran could shift as much as 40% of its conventional maritime trade toward overland transport systems.

On Friday, Iran launched the operational phase of the Sarakhs Economic Zone in Khorasan Razavi province near the Turkmenistan border in another effort to strengthen trade connectivity with China and Central

Asia.

The free zone possesses annual cargo handling capacity of 10 million tonnes but currently processes only around 2.8 million tonnes.

Rasoul Rais Jafari, chief executive of the Sarakhs Free Zone Organization, said previous traffic constraints stemmed partly from a lack of return cargo to China. He said exports of zinc and copper concentrates are expected to create return loads that could make rail transportation economically more competitive than maritime shipping.

According to Iranian officials, Sarakhs possesses infrastructure supporting both broad-gauge and standard-gauge railway systems and can process up to 1,000 waggons daily in cooperation with a Chinese logistics company.

The project follows three decades of development and aligns with broader Iran-China cooperation under the two countries' 25-year strategic partnership agreement.

Sarakhs also forms part of the 925-km Kazakhstan-Turkmenistan-Iran railway

network inaugurated in 2014 by the leaders of the three countries, with annual freight capacity estimated at between three and five million tonnes.

Turkey is also being considered as a potential alternative trade gateway. Turkish infrastructure already functions as a major logistics platform for imports, manufacturing and transit operations, and Iranian officials have suggested portions of trade traditionally routed through the United Arab Emirates could be redirected there.

Beyond China and Turkey, Tehran has sought to deepen commercial integration with the Eurasian Economic Union (EAEU) through a preferential trade framework under which tariffs on approximately 88% of Iranian commodity groups have been eliminated.

Iranian officials describe the arrangement as giving Tehran an advantage not available to other regional players such as Turkey and China.

Iran currently maintains a trade volume of roughly \$25 billion with the UAE, including \$15 billion in imports and \$10 billion in exports. Officials say a large proportion of imported goods are re-exported products originating elsewhere, creating opportunities to diversify sourcing channels.

Iranian economic studies suggest trade with EAEU member states could increase from approximately \$5 billion currently to \$15 billion over the next two to three years.

Iranian officials say the expansion of transport and trade corridors demonstrates that efforts to economically isolate the country may instead be strengthening its role as a strategic transit bridge linking East and West.

Analysts say whether these alternative routes can permanently replace maritime commerce remains uncertain, but recent developments suggest Tehran's regional connectivity strategy has gained renewed urgency under geopolitical pressure.

# J&K Traffic Police Gets 350 Modern Vehicles, 685 Body Cameras



Observer News Service

Srinagar: The Jammu and Kashmir Traffic Police has been equipped with over 350 modern vehicles and more than 1,000 enforcement assets, including body-worn cameras, interceptor vehicles and highway patrol units, to strengthen traffic monitoring and road safety enforcement across the Union Territory, officials said.

According to officials, the equipment has been procured through road safety funds as part of efforts to modernise traffic regulation systems and improve enforcement capabilities.

"As many as over 350 vehicles and over 1000 enforcement assets have been procured out of road safety funds to improve enforcement capabilities and ensure effective implementation of road safety measures across J&K," officials said.

The newly procured fleet includes 213 Pulsar motorcycles, 69 Royal Enfield motorcycles, 19 mobile interceptor vehicles, 16 highway patrol Innova vehicles, seven Hydra cranes, 23 cranes and three Tata Winger vehicles for field enforcement and highway management.

To improve transparency and accountability during enforcement operations, authorities have also introduced 685 body-worn cameras for traffic personnel.

Besides the vehicles and

cameras, the department has procured a range of safety and enforcement equipment, including 1,625 traffic night safety belts, 560 iron barricades, 687 LED traffic batons, 687 traffic safety jackets, 437 moveable barricades, 231 fixed barricades, 562 traffic cones with iron chains, 64 breath alcohol analysers and 100 first responder kits.

Officials said the enforcement system has now completely shifted to a 100 per cent e-challan mechanism aimed at ensuring transparent and technology-driven action against violators.

Data shared by the department revealed that the Motor Vehicles Department issued 52,543 e-challans during 2025 compared to 40,197 in 2024.

During the current year, authorities also seized 1,528 vehicles, suspended 1,641 driving licences, blacklisted 10,439 vehicles, cancelled 1,192 registration certificates and withdrew 300 route permits for violations.

Officials said the strengthened enforcement measures, combined with awareness campaigns and improved road safety infrastructure, have contributed to a steady decline in road accidents in Jammu and Kashmir over the last three years.

The number of road accidents dropped from 6,120 in 2023 to 5,726 in 2024 and further to 5,287 in 2025, they added.

## CONTD. FROM FRONT PAGE

### The Brushstrokes

political identities locked inside the memory of conflict and migration. But life inside the valley frequently moves through more personal terrain.

Stories of affection, longing and good old bonds continue to surface in neighbourhoods and family gatherings.

A video circulated recently showing two elderly women meeting after years apart. One woman, a Kashmiri Muslim, wrapped her arms tightly around her Kashmiri Pandit friend. Tears filled their eyes as they held each other and spoke about earlier days in the valley.

The scene resonated deeply because many Kashmiris recognized something intimately familiar within it.

Families still recall former neighbours with tenderness. Mothers continue speaking to old friends who migrated years ago. Children hear stories about people who once lived next door, attended weddings together or shared meals during harsh winters.

Distance altered geography, though emotional ties often remained intact.

One Srinagar resident described how his mother still calls a Pandit family that lived in their locality before migration changed the neighborhood.

"There was never any dramatic reason behind it," he said. "They were people we had known for years. That feeling remained."

Those bonds survive most visibly in ordinary human moments untouched by political events.

Two women in Srinagar described a friendship that began in 2008, years after migration had already transformed Kashmir's social landscape. One of them still remembers the first meeting clearly.

"I saw her standing in the corridor of my office," she recalled. "She looked uncomfortable waiting there alone, so I asked her to sit inside."

That brief gesture grew naturally into a lasting friendship between a Kashmiri Muslim woman and a Kashmiri Pandit woman. Religion never entered the equation in any defining way, while politics rarely surfaced between them. Shared trust deepened gradually through visits, family gatherings and difficult moments.

"When my father was sick, she helped me immensely," one of them said. "She guided me through hospitals and doctors. That period brought us even closer."

Today, their children know each other closely enough to move between homes with ease. Both women speak about their bond with the sense of extended family rather than the caution of symbolic reconciliation.

"We never thought of it as anything extraordinary," one of them said. "It simply remained part of life."

Their words reflect a reality often overshadowed by louder public narratives. Many Kashmiris reject the idea that personal relationships must remain permanently trapped inside larger political disputes. They speak instead about individual conduct, shared memories and years of familiarity that existed long

before ideological lines hardened.

"We never sat and discussed politics," the women said. "Friendships do not begin by searching through histories of conflict connected to another person."

That sentiment echoes through many corners of Kashmir where people continue distinguishing human relationships from collective blame. Politics still casts a long shadow over the valley, while pain and displacement remain deeply embedded in public memory.

Those truths coexist alongside another reality that rarely receives equal attention: many Kashmiris still refuse to see each other solely through religious identity.

Recent remarks by comedian Samay Raina drew attention for similar reasons.

Speaking about difficult years in Kashmir, he recalled how Muslims around his family helped them during periods of uncertainty. His recollection centered on personal kindness rather than communal hostility. Many listeners recognized the sentiment immediately because similar stories exist inside countless Kashmiri households.

But social media frequently amplifies anger, spectacle and division. Television studios reward sharper binaries and louder claims. Human relationships rarely fit neatly into those frameworks.

Old neighbours still ask about each other's children. Families continue exchanging greetings during festivals and bereavements. Elderly women still cry while remembering shared songs and vanished neighbourhoods.

Kashmir's public history carries wounds that remain raw and unresolved. Beneath that history, another emotional landscape continues breathing through habit, memory and affection.

Perhaps that explains why Ghulam Qadir Sheikh still walks into the Kapalmochan temple with a paintbrush in his hand, tending carefully to a place many people assume belongs only to someone else's faith.

### PM Calls For

firmly with India against terrorism, demonstrating true friendship," he said.

"Today, as I visit Norway, I express my heartfelt gratitude for that solidarity," he said.

Modi also hailed Norway's decision to join the India-led Indo-Pacific Oceans Initiative.

"As two major maritime nations, we will work together to strengthen cooperation in the marine economy, maritime security, and capacity building," he said.

Highlighting the growing India-Europe partnership, PM Modi referred to the India-European Free Trade Association pact and said it would strengthen economic cooperation between India and Norway. He said the agreement was expected to bring investments worth USD 100 billion and create one million jobs in India over the next 15 years.

The Prime Minister also underlined the importance of the India-Norway Green Strategic Partnership, saying it would benefit the global community. He said Norway was joining the Indo-Pacific initiative and both countries would work together to strengthen maritime

security, marine economies and capacity building.

The Norwegian Prime Minister said both countries believed in cooperation and dialogue to address global challenges. He announced that India and Norway were signing a memorandum of understanding to expand collaboration in high-quality health services, digital health, artificial intelligence, research and health technology.

He also cautioned against the "weaponisation" of diplomacy, trade and technology and said discussions were held on key global issues, including the wars in Ukraine and the Middle East.

Modi was conferred with Norway's highest civilian honour, the Grand Cross of the Royal Norwegian Order of Merit, for his contribution in advancing the India-Norway relationship and his leadership.

This is Prime Minister Modi's 32nd international honour.

King Harald V of Norway conferred upon PM Modi the Grand Cross of the Royal Norwegian Order of Merit. It is awarded for exceptional service in advancing Norway's interests and international relations.

A day earlier, Modi was awarded Sweden's prestigious 'Royal Order of the Polar Star, Degree Commander Grand Cross', in recognition of his exceptional contributions to bilateral ties and his visionary leadership. The award is Sweden's highest honour conferred on foreign Heads of Government.

PM Modi arrived here earlier in the day on a two-day visit from Sweden. This is Modi's maiden visit to Norway, and marks the first visit by an Indian prime minister to the country in 43 years.

### Terror Recruitment

claimed that infiltration attempts and terrorist activities were being dealt with firmly by security forces.

"None of their top commanders have survived. Infiltration attempts will also face the same fate," he said, while praising the Army and the CRPF for carrying out "precise operations" under the Pahalgam attack.

"Our neighbouring country carried out the Pahalgam attack, but we punished them," he added.

On the political process in Jammu and Kashmir, LG Sinha said the Centre had fulfilled its commitments made after the abrogation of Article 370 by conducting delimitation and peaceful elections.

"After Article 370's abrogation, delimitation and peaceful elections were completed without violence or repolls. Statehood will also be restored as assured by the Prime Minister and the Home Minister," he said.

Asked about Chief Minister Omar Abdullah, LG Sinha said he was "doing great work." (KNO)

### J&K hikes DA

will receive arrears in cash. The revised DA will be reflected in salaries and pensions from May 2026 onwards. The orders also stated that any fraction arising during calculation of DA will be rounded off to the

next higher rupee.

### Srinagar Sizzles

Meanwhile, Jammu city continued to reel under intense heat, recording a maximum temperature of 41.1 degrees Celsius, three degrees above normal. Katra registered 38.4 degrees Celsius.

Banihal, Batote and Baderwah recorded maximum temperatures of 33.2 degrees Celsius, 31.7 degrees Celsius and 32 degrees Celsius respectively.

The Meteorological Department said weather conditions are likely to change from May 19 to 21, with partly cloudy skies and spells of light rain, thundershowers, gusty winds and hailstorms expected at scattered to many places, mainly during afternoon and evening hours.

It said generally dry weather is expected between May 22 and 25 during the forenoon, although brief showers may occur at isolated places later in the day.

Dry weather conditions are likely to return from May 26 to 28, the department added.

The MeT office has also issued an advisory warning of thunderstorms, lightning and gusty winds with speeds reaching 40 to 50 kilometres per hour at a few places across Kashmir and Jammu divisions between May 19 and 21.

Authorities have advised people to suspend boating and shikara rides during afternoon and late afternoon hours due to the possibility of strong winds over water bodies.

The department also urged residents, particularly in the plains of Jammu division, to take precautions against the prevailing hot and dry weather conditions.

### Conviction Rate

that at the end of the trial, there is a 99 per cent possibility of acquittal in such cases. With such statistics staring at our face, the question is, should we continue the detention of the appellant or defer the consideration to a later stage, simply because the charges are serious?" the bench said.

The top court also said that, on due consideration, it believed that Andrabi has made out a case for the grant of bail during the pendency of the trial, as there is no recovery of cash or contraband from the person of the appellant or from the premises used by the appellant, either as his residence or place of work.

"All statements implicating the appellant have been made before the police, including the confessions allegedly made by the appellant himself, which, prima facie, are self-incriminating and hit by Section 25 of the Evidence Act, 1872.

"The appellant has no prior antecedents of being connected with the narcotic trade or in terrorist activities. At least, no such material has been placed on record.

"On the contrary, it is stated that the appellant is an ardent advocate of the constitutional, federal and democratic set-up of India. He is a supporter of the Jammu and Kashmir People's Conference, a registered mainstream political party," the bench noted.

Andrabi had challenged an order passed by the High Court of Jammu and Kashmir and

Ladakh, which dismissed his bail plea, saying the scrutiny of cellphone records indicated that he had been in touch with terror operatives across the border.

Narrating the sequence of events leading to the apprehension of the accused, the NIA had said that on June 11, 2020, police intercepted a car belonging to Abdul Momin Peer at Kairo Bridge, Handwara. During a search, Rs 20.01 lakh in cash and 2 kg of heroin were seized, and Peer was arrested.

Later, on his disclosure, the police arrested Andrabi and Islam-Ul-Haq Peer.

Investigation revealed that the accused were allegedly involved in cross-border smuggling and supply of heroin in Jammu and Kashmir and other parts of the country after procuring the same from their associates in Pakistan, the chargesheet said.

Andrabi and Abdul Momin Peer had visited Pakistan several times during 2016-17 to meet the operatives of terrorist organisations, including Lashkar-e-Taiba and Hizbul Mujahideen, it said, adding that the amount generated from the sale of heroin was used by the accused to further the terrorist activities of Lashkar-e-Taiba.

### Kashmir's Thajwas

volume from the Last Glacial Maximum to the Neoglaciation stage," the study noted.

It added that glacier retreat accelerated further in more recent times, with the glacier losing around 85.74 per cent of its area and 87.67 per cent of its volume from the Neoglaciation period to the present day.

The scientists said the findings indicate a strong connection between global temperature rise and glacier melt in the Himalaya.

The study also examined changes in the glacier's Equilibrium Line Altitude (ELA), the point on a glacier where accumulation and melting remain balanced. Researchers found that the ELA fluctuated significantly, from around 3,365 metres above sea level during the global Last Glacial Maximum to nearly 4,238 metres at present.

The lower ELA during the gLGM suggested colder climatic conditions and positive glacier mass balance, while rising temperatures over thousands of years led to sustained glacier retreat and ice loss, the researchers said.

They noted that quantitative records of past glaciations remain limited across the Himalaya, especially in Kashmir, making the study important for understanding long-term climatic changes in the region.

The researchers said reconstructing the glacial history of Kashmir's Himalayan region could help bridge major gaps in understanding regional climate evolution and glacier response to changing temperatures.

Scientists have repeatedly warned that rapid glacier retreat in the Himalaya could have serious implications for water availability, river systems and ecological stability across South Asia, where millions depend on glacier-fed rivers for drinking water, agriculture and hydropower.

The Himalaya, often referred to as the "Third Pole", contains one of the world's largest reserves of ice outside the polar regions and remains highly vulnerable to climate change. (KNO)

# J&K Facing Growing Blood Pressure Crisis, NFHS-5 Figures Show

Observer News Service

**SRINAGAR:** Hypertension is emerging as a major public health concern in Jammu and Kashmir, with official figures revealing that only 36 per cent of women and 31 per cent of men in the Union Territory have normal blood pressure levels, according to the National Family Health Survey-5.

The data from the National Family Health Survey-5 (NFHS-5), accessed by KNO, reveals that this growing health challenge is linked to changing lifestyles, stress, poor dietary habits and lack of physical activity.

The survey further reveals that nearly 57 per cent of the population falls in the pre-hypertensive category, a condition considered an early warning sign before the onset of hypertension.

Health experts say people in this stage are highly vulnerable to developing full-fledged high blood pressure if preventive measures are not adopted in time.

According to the data, around 11 per cent of women and 10 per cent of men aged between 15 and 49 years are already living with hypertension in Jammu and Kashmir.

The figures also highlight a steady rise in hypertension with increasing age. Among adolescents aged 15 to 19 years, only about three per cent are hyper-



tensive. However, the prevalence gradually increases across age groups, reaching four per cent among people aged 20-24 years, seven per cent in the 25-29 age group, 8.5 per cent among those aged 30-34 years, 14 per cent in the 35-39 age bracket, and nearly 20 per cent among people aged 40-45 years. The rate further climbs to 24 per cent among individuals aged 45-49 years.

At the same time, the percentage of people with normal blood pressure declines sharply with age. While nearly 60 per cent of teenagers in the 15-19 age group have normal blood pressure, the figure drops to just 17 per cent among people aged 45-49 years.

The survey also points towards a rise in pre-hypertension with age. Around 40 per cent of adolescents fall in the pre-hypertensive category, while the percentage increases to nearly 62 per cent in older adults aged 45-49 years.

Urban areas in Jammu and Kashmir reported slightly higher

cases of hypertension compared to rural regions. Among women, nearly 10.3 per cent in urban areas were found to be hypertensive compared to 9.7 per cent in rural areas. A similar trend was observed among men as well.

The data further categorises hypertension severity levels. Among women, around seven per cent suffer from Stage-1 hypertension, one per cent from Stage-2 hypertension and less than one per cent from Stage-3 hypertension. A small proportion of women were also found to be taking medication despite recording normal blood pressure levels during screening.

Among men, eight per cent were found to have Stage-1 hypertension, one per cent Stage-2 hypertension and 0.2 per cent Stage-3 hypertension. Some men were also on anti-hypertensive medication despite having controlled blood pressure readings.

Medical experts describe hypertension as a "silent killer" because it often develops without noticeable symptoms but significantly increases the risk of heart disease, stroke, kidney failure and other life-threatening complications.

Doctors attribute the growing burden of hypertension to unhealthy eating habits, excessive salt intake, obesity, lack of exercise, smoking, alcohol consumption, mental stress and sedentary lifestyles.

## 'Hypertension Rising Alarmingly Among Youngsters'

Observer News Service

**SRINAGAR:** Hypertension, commonly known as high blood pressure, is rapidly emerging as one of the biggest public health concerns in Kashmir, with doctors warning that the condition is silently affecting a significant portion of the population, including young adults and even school-going children.

Medical experts described hypertension as a "silent killer" because it often develops without noticeable symptoms, while gradually damaging vital organs and increasing the risk of heart attacks, brain strokes, kidney failure and other life-threatening complications.

Speaking to KNO, Dr Mohammad Salim Khan, Head of the Department of Community Medicine at Government Medical College (GMC) Srinagar, said hypertension has become the most prevalent non-communicable disease and is affecting nearly every third or fourth person.

"Hypertension is the most prevalent non-communicable disease affecting every third

to fourth person. However, being without any symptoms, it affects the end organs and can cause heart attacks, brain strokes and other complications unless diagnosed early and treated properly," he said.

Dr Khan said the growing burden of hypertension is closely linked to drastic lifestyle and dietary changes witnessed in recent years.

"The lifestyle changes, including high consumption of salt, oils and fats, fast foods, sugars, along with sedentary lifestyle, minimal physical activity, stress and addiction to tobacco, alcohol and narcotics, are major risk factors pushing people towards hypertension at an early age," he said.

He warned that hypertension and pre-hypertension are no longer confined to older people, stating that adolescents and even young children are increasingly being diagnosed with the condition.

Doctors expressed concern that a majority of patients remain unaware that they are suffering from high blood pressure until serious complications develop.

## 2 Drug Peddlers Arrested in Handwara

**SRINAGAR:** Continuing its zero-tolerance drive against the drug menace, J&K Police in Handwara arrests 02 drug peddlers in separate operations and recovered contraband substances from their possession.

As per the statement issued to Kashmir Observer, in the first operation at Manzgam Crossing Vilgam, a naka was established on the general road where a person moving under suspicious circumstances was intercepted. He has been identified as Altaf Ahmad Mir son of Abdul Samad Mir resident of Matipora Tarathpora. During personal search, a charas-like contraband substance was recovered from his possession. In another operation at Utingroo Qalamabad, a suspect was apprehended during naka checking. He has been identified as Naseer Ahmad Ahanger son of Khazir Mohd Ahanger, resident of Audoora Qalamabad. During search, a Charas like substance was recovered from his possession.

All the accused have been arrested and accordingly, cases under relevant sections of law have been registered at respective Police Stations, and further investigation is underway to unearth the broader network involved. J&K Police reiterates its firm commitment to eradicate the drug menace and urges the general public to cooperate by sharing any information related to drug peddling or illegal activities. (Observer News Service)

## Unidentified Body Recovered in Jammu's Satwari

**JAMMU:** An unidentified body was recovered near the Airport Station Gate in the Satwari area of Jammu, prompting police to launch an investigation into the circumstances surrounding the death, officials said.

Officials said locals spotted the body lying near the gate area and informed the police, following which a team rushed to the spot and took possession of the body. The deceased could not be immediately identified, and police shifted the body to a hospital for medico-legal formalities and identification procedures. Authorities said inquest proceedings were initiated to ascertain the identity of the deceased as well as the cause of death.

According to KNT, Police officials said nearby areas were being examined and efforts were underway to gather details that could help establish the identity of the person. Further details were awaited as police continued the probe. (Observer News Service)

## Fire Damages Cowshed in Tral's Poshaone Area

**SRINAGAR:** A fire broke out in a cowshed belonging to Bashir Ahmed in the Poshaone area of Tral on Monday, triggering panic among residents before Fire and Emergency Services personnel brought the blaze under control, officials and locals said.

Officials said teams from the Fire and Emergency Department Awantipora rushed to the spot immediately after receiving information about the incident and launched firefighting operations to prevent the flames from spreading to nearby structures.

The fire damaged the cowshed, though no loss of life or injuries were reported in the incident, according to initial reports. Local residents also joined the rescue and firefighting efforts and assisted emergency personnel during the operation. (Observer News Service)

## Woman Killed, After Car Plunges Into Gorge

**UDHAMPUR:** A woman died while two other persons sustained critical injuries after a speeding car plunged into a deep gorge along the Udhampur Highway on Monday, officials said.

The accident involved a car bearing registration number JK02AR-5777, which reportedly lost control before skidding off the road and falling into a deep gorge. Officials said the vehicle rolled and glided down the slope several times before finally crashing at the bottom, leaving the car completely mangled. Three persons were travelling in the vehicle at the time of the accident. One woman died on the spot, while the two injured occupants were rescued in critical condition and shifted to a nearby hospital for treatment. (Observer News Service)

# House Committee Appointments Spark Speaker-LoP Face-Off

Observer News Service

**JAMMU:** The battle between Speaker of the Legislative Assembly Abdul Rahim Rather and Leader of Opposition Sunil Kumar Sharma intensified on Monday, with the latter questioning the former and asking whether the yardstick of seniority applied only to the BJP and not to the ruling alliance, whose first-time MLAs, he said, have been appointed as heads of non-financial committees.

In a statement issued to the media, as per KNO, Sharma termed the Speaker's claims on the issue of appointing chairpersons of House committees as smacking of an attempt to shield wrongdoing rather than to respond to the reservations of the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) over it.

He said the Speaker's discretion to appoint heads of six non-financial House committees cannot be driven by party interests, but must be guided by fairness and well-established



conventions.

Responding to the Speaker's claims, Sharma said that an attempt has been made to portray him as if he was oblivious to the process of constituting three financial committees.

He said that he had clearly mentioned in his handout issued to the media on Friday that the opposition has been ignored while appointing heads of six non-financial committees.

He said the Speaker's claim that the post of chairman of the Public Accounts Committee (PAC) has been given to the Bharatiya Janata Party is not a favour to the party, but a well-established convention across the country. "The post of PAC chairman has always been held by the oppo-

sition, whether it is in Parliament, states, or Union Territories with legislatures," he said.

He said the Speaker's assertion that senior BJP members were adjusted in financial committees and couldn't be appointed as heads of other committees was questionable, asking why the same yardstick was not applied to the ruling alliance whose first-time MLAs have been appointed as heads of House committees.

"There are several second-time MLAs of BJP who are not part of financial committees, but the Speaker has chosen first-timers from the ruling alliance as heads of non-financial committees," he said.

Sharma said the Speaker has exclusive powers to nominate chairpersons and members of non-financial committees, but discretion cannot be guided by party interests and should be exercised on the basis of well-established conventions and the principle of proportionate representation.

## SDH Sopore X-Ray Breakdown Forces Patients to Return

Observer News Service

**SOPORE:** Patients at Sub District Hospital (SDH) Sopore on Monday faced immense inconvenience after the lone functional X-Ray machine developed repeated technical snags, forcing many, including emergency cases, to return without undergoing diagnostic tests.

Several attendants and patients told KNO that they had been waiting for hours in long queues when the machine stopped functioning multiple times during the day.

According to the patients, hospital authorities later informed them that the machine could not be restored immediately and advised them to collect refunds and get the X-Ray tests conducted at private diagnostic centres.

Many patients expressed concern over the situation, saying the breakdown caused serious inconvenience, especially to el-

derly patients and those requiring urgent medical attention.

"We waited for hours but were eventually told to go outside for private tests. Some patients were in pain and needed immediate X-Rays," an attendant said.

Officials said the hospital was already functioning with only one operational X-Ray machine, as the digital X-Ray unit had been out of service for the last several days after developing a technical fault.

Block Medical Officer (BMO) Sopore, Dr Zulfiqar acknowledged the issue, saying the machine had developed a snag during functioning.

He said a technician has been called to rectify the fault, and the machine is expected to be restored either by evening or by Tuesday morning.

The incident has once again brought attention to the healthcare infrastructure at SDH Sopore, one of the major referral hospitals in north Kashmir.

## Gulmarg Operating at Peak Capacity: GDA CEO

Observer News Service

**GULMARG:** Gulmarg is currently operating at its peak destination capacity, reflecting the return of tourist confidence in Kashmir after recent setbacks, Chief Executive Officer (CEO) of the Gulmarg Development Authority (GDA), Tariq Husain Naik, said on Monday.

Speaking to KNO, Naik said the famous tourist destination is once again witnessing strong footfall from across the country, while authorities are also expecting a major increase in foreign tourist arrivals in the coming months.

"Currently, Gulmarg is carrying the best of its destination capacity, and hopefully it will increase further.



Domestic tourism is increasing steadily, while we are hopeful of a foreign tourism boom ahead," Naik said.

He said the revival of tourism in Kashmir reflects the coordinated efforts of the administration, tourism department, security agencies and local stakeholders who have worked to restore confidence among visitors after the Pahalgam attack. "We

should move forward and not remain stuck in the past. Gulmarg has always remained an all-weather tourist destination, and we are thankful to tourists for putting their trust in us," he added.

Calling tourism the backbone of the region's economy, the GDA CEO said tourists from different parts of the country are arriving in large numbers and enjoy-

ing the peaceful atmosphere and pleasant weather in Gulmarg. "People are visiting and experiencing the cool and calm atmosphere here. We are trying our best to ensure tourists feel safe, secure and at home. Confidence among tourists is returning day by day," he added.

On infrastructure development, the CEO said authorities are working to improve tourism facilities while ensuring ecological concerns remain protected. "Infrastructure development will be carried out in such a manner that it attracts tourists while preserving the natural beauty of Gulmarg. The government is committed to tourist facilitation without compromising ecology," he said.

## IN THE COURT OF CHIEF JUDICIAL MAGISTRATE HANDWARA

Case No.	CNR Number	Date of Institution	Date of Order
711/2022	JKKW060009182022	12.09.2022	22.04.2026

In the case of:

Mohd Yaseen Shah S/o Gh. Mohi Ud Din Shah  
Resident of Villagam Tehsil Villagam District Kupwara

(Complainant)  
Through. Adv. Nazir Ahmad Wani

V/S

Ajay Kumar Raina S/o Vaid Parkash Raina  
Resident of Bandi Braminah Tehsil Uri District Bla.

.....(Accused)  
Through. Nemo

In the matter of:

Complaint under Section 138 of N.I. Act.

Coram: Manzoor Hussain

(ORDER)

22.04.2026

- Complainant along with Ld. Counsel is present. Accused is continuously absent. It is evident from the record that due to continuous absence of accused nothing substantial is being done in the matter and in view of the report submitted by the concerned police executing agency it appears that accused has deliberately and intentionally absconded from the process of law with an intention to escape from legal liability.
- On careful examination of the record this court is prima facie satisfied and has a sufficient reason to say that there is no other option for effecting and procuring the arrest/attendance of the accused except to declare him as proclaimed offender in view of section 82 of Cr.P.C. Hence, the accused is declared as proclaimed offender and in order to ensure the proclamation proceedings initiated against the accused in view of section 82 Cr. P.C to be put into execution, it is hereby ordered as under:
  - The proclamation to be issued separately shall be publically read by beat of drum in street/lane/Mohallah where the accused resides permanently/temporarily or does any business, profession or occupation.
  - One copy of the proclamation shall be affixed in front of the residential house or place of business of the accused/proclaimed offender.
  - One copy of the proclamation shall also be affixed in front of the main entrance gate of this court.
  - Apart from aforesaid mode of publication, proclamation shall be published in at least two daily widely circulated newspapers.
  - Expenses to be incurred for making the publication of the proclamation shall be borne by the complainant.
  - The proclamation at (a) shall be made with the aid and assistance of SHO police station concerned who shall be required to submit detailed report to this court that the directions as regard to proclamations contained herein above have been complied with.
  - The complainant shall be required to produce the copy of the newspapers in which the proclamation shall be published just for perusal and satisfaction of this court.
- Through the medium of proclamation the accused shall be made aware that he will appear before this court on 22.05.2026.
- Simultaneously the property (movable/immovable) owns and possesses by the accused is also directed to be attached through Tehsildar concerned by way of seizure and detention till further orders at the end of this court.
- A copy of this order along with separate warrant of attachment be sent to Tehsildar concerned and Officer I/C of concerned Police Station for information and compliance.
- Ordered accordingly.
- Put up on 22.05.2026.

Announced  
22.04.2026

DIPK-1381-26  
DT: 18/05/2026

Sd/-  
Chief Judicial Magistrate  
Handwara

UT of Jammu & Kashmir

OFFICE OF THE EXECUTIVE ENGINEER, TRANS. LINE MAINTT.  
DIVISION-VII, JKPTCL BEMINA, SRINAGAR-190010

Ph. No. 0194-3516481 e-mail: tlmd-vii.sgr@jkk.gov.in

EXTENSION NOTICE-I

The last date for submission of bids in respect of tender e-NIT No. TLMD-7/03 of 2026-27 dated: 24-04-2026 for "System Strengthening / Improvement scheme of 220kV Zainakote- Alustang-Mirbazar Transmission Line (Section-II) in Gulgam, Zawoora and Zabarwan areas" is hereby extended with revised critical dates as under.

1.	Existing e-bids submission end date and time	16-05-2026 (14:00 Hrs.)
2.	Extended e-bids submission end date and time	25-05-2026 (14:00 Hrs.)
3.	Online techno commercial e-bid opening date and time	26-05-2026 (12:00 Hrs.)

All other terms and conditions of e-NIT will remain unchanged.

No. TLMD-7/TS/505-09  
Dated: 16 : 05: 2026

DIPK-NB-519-26  
DT: 18/05/2026

Sd-  
Executive Engineer  
TLMD-VII, Bemina Srinagar

# Iran Rejects Trump Ultimatum, Sends Revised Terms

**Agencies**

**TEHRAN** – Iran has submitted a revised proposal to the United States through Pakistan as indirect negotiations continue over ending the ongoing regional conflict, according to Iranian and Pakistani sources, signalling renewed diplomatic efforts despite persistent disagreements between Tehran and Washington.

A source close to Iran's negotiating team told Tasnim news agency on Monday that Tehran had prepared a new 14-point proposal which Pakistan would deliver to Washington. The revised document follows an earlier Iranian proposal that was rejected by U.S. President Donald Trump, who reportedly described it as "totally unacceptable".

According to the Iranian source, the latest proposal centres on defining the framework of negotiations and introducing confidence-building measures expected from the American side.

"In line with the recent prac-

...tice of exchanging messages, Iran has once again submitted its text in 14 points through the Pakistani mediator after making amendments," the report said.

Iran and the United States have been using Pakistan as an intermediary following the outbreak of the war involving Iran, the United States and Israel. Diplomatic contacts intensified after a Pakistan-brokered temporary ceasefire took effect on April 8, forty days into the war.

Subsequent negotiations were held in Pakistan's capital, Islamabad, but the talks failed to produce a breakthrough amid disputes over conditions and demands presented by both sides.

A Pakistani source was quoted by Reuters on Monday as saying that Islamabad had forwarded a revised Iranian proposal to Washington, though the source declined to provide specific details about the contents.

The source said negotiations remained fluid and warned that time was becoming in-



creasingly limited.

"We don't have much time," the Pakistani source said, adding that both sides continued to alter negotiating positions and "keep changing their goalposts".

Iranian Foreign Ministry spokesperson Esmaeil Baqaei confirmed that exchanges through Pakistan were ongoing despite Washington's rejection of earlier Iranian proposals.

Baghaei told reporters that Iran had recently received "a set of corrective points and considerations" from the Pakistani intermediary on behalf of the U.S. side.

"As announced yesterday, our points of view were presented to the American side in return. Therefore, the process continues through Pakistan", he said.

Tehran has repeatedly stated that current discussions are limited to ending hostilities

and reducing regional tensions, arguing that other contentious issues, including Iran's nuclear programme, could only be discussed at a later stage.

Iranian officials have also linked any future progress in diplomacy to the lifting of US restrictions imposed on Iranian maritime activity.

Since negotiations stalled, Tehran has demanded the removal of what it describes as an illegal blockade targeting Iranian vessels and ports before broader diplomatic engagement can resume.

Iran has also maintained that it has no intention of reopening the Strait of Hormuz while maritime restrictions remain in place, a position with potentially significant implications for global energy markets given the waterway's role as a major route for oil exports.

Iranian President Masoud Pezeshkian on Monday reiterated Tehran's position that the country would resist external pressure and would not compromise national dignity under coercion.

"We will not bow. I will never bow before any power," Pezeshkian said, according to Iranian media.

He said adversaries had failed to weaken Iran militarily and were now seeking to create divisions within the country.

"We will not sacrifice the country's dignity for the sake of comfort-seeking and worldly desires, but we must manage the country with prudence and wisdom," he added.

Pezeshkian also accused Iran's adversaries of targeting senior Iranian figures and civilians during the conflict, while criticising what he described as international silence regarding those actions.

The latest diplomatic exchanges indicate both sides continue to seek a negotiated path despite deep mistrust and unresolved disagreements over the conditions required for a broader settlement.

## Gold Flat at Rs 1.62 Lakh; Silver Gains on Import Curbs

**Press Trust Of India**

**NEW DELHI**- Gold prices remained flat at Rs 1.62 lakh per 10 grams in the national capital on Monday, while silver rates edged higher to Rs 2.76 lakh per kilogram amid fresh restrictions on imports of the white metal and weakness in the rupee.

According to the All India Sarafa Association, the white metal appreciated by Rs 1,000 to Rs 2,76,000 per kg (inclusive of all taxes) from Friday's closing level of Rs 2,75,000 per kg.

Gold of 99.9 per cent purity was unchanged at Rs 1,62,800 per 10 grams in the bullion market, according to the association.

Analysts said domestic bullion prices remained relatively resilient despite weakness in global markets.



Gold prices in the domestic market traded flat on Monday, following a sharp sell-off in the previous session, tracking weakness in the international bullion market, Saumil Gandhi, Senior Analyst – Commodities at HDFC Securities, said.

However, losses in local prices remained limited as the Indian rupee weakened further to a record low of about 96.37 against the US dollar. The weaker rupee continued to cushion the

decline in domestic gold prices, he added.

Market participants also reacted to the central government's decision to impose immediate restrictions on silver imports in nearly all forms, a move aimed at easing pressure on the rupee and curbing non-essential imports.

"The move is expected to lower silver imports and tighten domestic availability, which could lead to higher premiums in the local market," Gandhi added.

## Non-Veg Iftar on Ganga Banks: Court Grants Bail to Six More

**Press Trust Of India**

**PRAYAGRAJ**- The Allahabad High Court on Monday granted bail to the remaining six persons accused of consuming non-vegetarian food during an iftar party on a boat in the Ganga in Varanasi and throwing the leftovers into the river.

Justice Rajiv Lochan Shukla, while giving relief to the accused, noted that in the same offence, eight accused have already been granted bail.

Therefore, present applicants are also entitled to bail on the same terms, the court said.

On May 15, Justice Shukla granted bail to five accused observing that the applicants are apologetic for their actions and even their families also regret the pain that had been caused to the society at large.

On the same day, Justice Jitendra Kumar Sinha had granted bail to three other accused in the case.

On Monday, Justice Shukla said that the investigation, "in the opinion of the Court, would not be thwarted and the said investigation can continue without further detention of the applicants in prison".

In the case, 14 people were accused of hurting religious sentiments of the Hindu community after they organised a Roza iftar party on the Ganga during which non-vegetarian food was consumed and the leftovers were allegedly thrown into the river.

The applicants, in jail since March 17, 2026, have expressed their regrets and have also undertaken never to repeat any such act in future.

The FIR was lodged on March 16 based on a complaint filed by Rajat Jaiswal, the president of the Varanasi chapter of the BJP Yuva Morcha, claiming that the incident hurt the sentiments of the Hindus.

## FIFA Signs Another World Cup Sponsor Deal with Gambling Industry

**Agencies**

**GENEVA**- FIFA added another gambling industry sponsor to the 2026 World Cup on Monday, signing Greece-based betting brand Betano to a regional deal covering Europe and South America.

Betano was the World Cup's first-ever betting sponsor four years ago when parent company Kaizen Gaming signed a Europe-only deal for the 2022 edition in Qatar.

The value was not given for the new deal covering the 104-game tournament being played across the United States, Canada and Mexico from June 11.

"Since we first partnered with Betano four years ago, we have seen a genuine commitment to sporting integrity, bringing fans closer to our game and finding new, engaging

ways to entertain them," FIFA chief business officer Romy Gai said in a statement.

FIFA deepened its ties to betting and gambling with two other deals this year for a World Cup that is expected to earn more than \$11 billion revenue for the soccer body.

Predictions market newcomer ADI Predictstreet signed as a top-tier World Cup partner last month in a deal reportedly worth \$150 million. The Abu Dhabi-backed company had been founded the previous week in March and one day later got a gambling license in the British overseas territory Gibraltar, Norwegian magazine Josimar reported.

In January, FIFA announced a deal with data provider Stats Perform that will let some online betting operators livestream World Cup games. The agreement also gave exclusive betting rights to thousands of games worldwide organized by national soccer bodies and streamed live by FIFA.

FIFA has completed the commercial deals while its code of ethics formally prohibits players, officials and agents from taking part in "either directly or indirectly, betting, gambling, lotteries or similar events or transactions related to football matches or competitions."

Betano also partnered with European soccer body UEFA to sponsor the men's 2024 European Championship. The betting brand also sponsors the Europa League and pays to be on the jersey of English club Aston Villa which plays in the competition's final on Wednesday. (AP)

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