

₹384-Crore Qurbani Trade Amid Buyer Slump



Observer News Service

Srinagar: Nearly 1.92 lakh sheep entered Kashmir in the run-up to Eid-al-Azha this year, fueling a livestock trade estimated at around ₹384 crore. Yet, despite the massive inflow and bustling animal markets across the Valley, traders say sales remained slower than expected, leaving many dealers with unsold stock even after the festival. According to the Kashmir Mutton Dealers Association (KMDA), around 1,200 trucks carrying sheep entered the Valley over a span of 15 days ahead of Eid-al-Azha.

1,200 Trucks, Nearly 2 Lakh Sheep

Association General Secretary Mehraj-ud-Din said each truck

carried more than 160 sheep on average, taking the total number of animals brought into Kashmir to nearly 1.92 lakh.

"About 1,200 trucks carrying sheep entered the Valley during the last 15 days till May 27. Every truck was carrying over 160 sheep," he said.

Most of the livestock was imported from outside Jammu and Kashmir to meet the seasonal demand associated with Qurbani. Additional supplies also arrived from Rajouri, Jammu and other regions, further adding to the availability of sacrificial animals in the Valley.

A ₹384-Crore Eid Economy

With the average price of a sheep hovering around ₹20,000, the Eid-al-Azha livestock market generated | [More on P6](#)

ABOUT 1,200 TRUCKS CARRYING SHEEP entered the Valley during the last 15 days till May 27. Every truck was carrying over 160 sheep."

Erase Colonial Mindset, Take Truth To Global Readers: LG To Writers

Inaugurates 3rd Edition Of Kashmir Literature Festival In Srinagar

Asks Authors To Counter Historical Distortions & Strengthen India's Narrative

Observer News Service

Srinagar: Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha on Friday inaugurated the third edition of the Kashmir Literature Festival in Srinagar and called upon writers to play an active role in shaping positive discourse, correcting historical distortions, and presenting India's civilizational heritage to global audiences.

Addressing writers, scholars, artists and literature enthusiasts, Sinha said the responsibility of writers extends beyond storytelling, as their work has the power to inspire society and influence



the course of civilizations.

Urging authors to use fiction, non-fiction and other creative forms to foster constructive

dialogue, the Lieutenant Governor said a writer's craft lives not only in words but also in its impact on people's lives

and collective consciousness.

"We must erase every trace of the colonial mindset and ensure that people abroad do not distort our history and present to serve their own narratives. It is the responsibility of writers to correct such errors and take the truth to global readers," he said.

The Lieutenant Governor asserted that India was historically a centre of economic, educational, cultural and philosophical advancement and stressed the need to communicate that legacy more effectively to the world.

Full story on [kashmirobserver.net](#)

Amarnath Yatra to Begin From July 3

Agencies

Srinagar: With preparations gathering pace for the annual Shri Amarnath Ji Yatra, the Jammu and Kashmir administration has intensified efforts to ensure the smooth, safe and successful conduct of the 57-day pilgrimage scheduled to commence on July 3, 2026.

Authorities on Saturday said that registrations from across the country have shown an encouraging trend, indicating a substantial turnout of devotees for one of India's most revered spiritual journeys.

To assess the readiness of various departments and agencies involved in the Yatra, Divisional Commissioner (Div Com) Kashmir, Anshul Garg, chaired a high-level review meeting in Pahalgam, the traditional base camp for the pilgrimage. Senior civil and police officers, representatives of security agencies, district | [More on P6](#)

8th Central Pay Commission Team To Visit J&K

Govt Dept Asked To Present Demands

Agencies

Srinagar: The Jammu and Kashmir Government has informed that the 8th Central Pay Commission will visit the Union Territory from May 31 to June 5 to interact with various stakeholders, including government employees, unions and associations.

According to an official communication | [More on P6](#)

J&K Hajj Pilgrims Protest Fresh Baggage Curbs

Observer News Service

Srinagar: With the first batch of Hajj pilgrims from Jammu and Kashmir scheduled to return home from Saudi Arabia on June 2, concerns over new baggage restrictions have sparked resentment among pilgrims, many of whom fear delays and possible damage to their belongings after being informed that a major portion of their luggage will be transported separately by road from Ahmedabad to

Srinagar.

Videos circulating from Mina, where pilgrims are currently staying ahead of their return journey, show several Hajjis questioning the decision and demanding restoration of the traditional 40-kilogram baggage allowance.

The pilgrims said they had purchased gifts, religious items and personal belongings for their families and were worried about the safety and timely delivery of luggage that would | [More on P6](#)

Fresh Hailstorm Hits Shopian, Kupwara

Orchardists Fear Crop Damage

Observer News Service

Srinagar: Fresh hailstorms lashed parts of Shopian and Kupwara districts on Saturday, raising concerns among farmers and orchardists amid a prolonged spell of erratic weather across Kashmir.

Reports said several areas in the two districts witnessed hail accompanied by sudden changes in weather conditions, with clear skies quickly giving



way to stormy weather. The fresh weather disturbance caused | [More on P6](#)

540 Agniveers Inducted Into Army at JAKLI Centre

Observer News Service

Srinagar: A fresh batch of 540 Agniveers was inducted into the Indian Army on Saturday after successfully completing months of rigorous military training at the Jammu and Kashmir Light Infantry (JAKLI) Regimental Centre.

The induction took place during an impressive Attestation and Passing Out Parade held against the backdrop of the Kashmir Valley, marking the transformation of young recruits into trained soldiers ready to serve the nation.

According to a defence spokesperson, the 540 Agniveers of the seventh batch successfully passed out from the JAKLI Regimental Centre in a ceremony that showcased military precision, discipline and patriotism.

The parade was reviewed by General Officer Commanding (GOC), White Knight Corps, Lieutenant General P K Mishra, who commended the Agniveers for their immaculate turnout, synchronized drill movements and exemplary standards of military bearing.

Senior Army officers, civil



A newly inducted Agniveer is embraced by his parents after the Passing Out Parade at an Army training centre on the outskirts of Srinagar. KO Photo by Abid Bhat

dignitaries and family members of the recruits attended the event, adding significance to the occasion.

The Agniveers underwent months of intensive physical training, tactical instruction and character-building exercises before reaching the milestone. The attestation ceremony

symbolised their commitment to the values of duty, courage and selfless service. Addressing the newly attested soldiers, Lt Gen Mishra urged them to uphold the finest traditions and values of the

Full story on [kashmirobserver.net](#)

Demographic Shifts Key Border Challenge: HM

Asks DMs To Monitor And Report Shifts Regularly

Observer News Service

Ahmedabad: Union Home Minister Amit Shah on Friday described demographic changes in India's border districts as the most significant challenge facing the country and directed district administrations to closely monitor and regularly report such developments.

Chairing a security review meeting in Bhubaneswar, along the India-Pakistan border, Shah also asked district administrations in border areas to formulate standard operating procedures (SOPs) for identifying infiltrators and tracking threats related to drones and narcotics.

According to an official statement, Shah stressed that District Magistrates must maintain strict vigilance over demographic changes in border districts and ensure regular reporting to the authorities.

The Home Minister's remarks come days after he announced the formation of a



high-level committee to assess demographic changes across the country arising from illegal immigration and other non-natural causes and recommend measures to address the issue.

The review meeting was attended by Gujarat Chief Minister Bhupendra Patel, Deputy Chief Minister Harsh Sanghani, senior government officials, and District Magistrates and Superintendents of Police from Kutch, Vav-Tharad and Patan districts.

Full story on [kashmirobserver.net](#)

Army Chief: Ready For Op Sindoor 2.0 If Needed

Press Trust Of India

Pune: The armed forces are fully prepared for 'Operation Sindoor 2.0' if the need arises, Chief of Army Staff General Upendra Dwivedi said on Saturday, asserting that all three services are enhancing synergy for modern multi-domain warfare that extends beyond land, air and sea.

Speaking at a press conference on the sidelines of the passing-out parade of the 150th course of the National Defence Academy (NDA) here, General Dwivedi noted that while a temporary cessation of hostilities currently exists, all three services are preparing intensely for the next phase should it take place.

India launched Operation Sindoor, a military exercise to destroy terror infrastructure in Pakistan in May 2025, in response to the Pahalgam terror attack, which claimed 26 lives in April.

"As far as Operation Sindoor is concerned, firstly, it is still continuing. There is a temporary cessation of hostilities. So the Indian Army and all the three services are preparing well for Operation Sindoor 2.0 if it takes place," he said.

He noted that future warfare will not be limited to land, maritime and air alone, but would be increasingly influenced by emerging domains such as space, cyber and cognitive warfare.

Modern battlefields | [More on P6](#)

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Severity Of Genetic Mutation May Override Female Protective Effect Against Autism: Study

Press Trust Of India

An increased severity of a genetic mutation responsible for autism could override mechanisms that protect females from the neurodevelopmental disorder, a study has found. Autism spectrum disorder affects males more frequently than females, with women thought to possess biological protective mechanisms that reduce vulnerability to the condition, which is characterised by repetitive behaviours and impaired social communication skills. However, direct experimental evidence supporting this trend has remained limited, researchers from Korea Advanced Institute of Science and Technology (KAIST), Yonsei University and the Institute for Basic Science said. "Our findings suggest that females may possess protective biological mechanisms against CHD8-related dysfunction, but severe mutations can overwhelm those protective effects," said author Eunee Lee, professor at Yonsei University, said. "This provides important insight into why autism severity and sex differences can vary depending on genetic background and mutation strength," Lee said.



The gene 'CHD8' is considered among the most important risk factors for autism and other neurodevelopmental conditions. It helps regulate the activity of genes involved in brain development by remodelling chromatin structure, a complex macromolecule containing DNA, RNA, and proteins. The researchers developed what they described as the world's first viable homozygous mouse model carrying the same CHD8 mutation inherited from

both parents. The model enabled researchers to directly compare mild and severe CHD8 mutations across brain development, neural activity, behaviour, and gene expression. Mice carrying only one mutated CHD8 copy showed behavioural abnormalities primarily in males, consistent with previous findings and the trend of a higher prevalence of autism in human

males. In contrast, mice carrying severe mutations in both CHD8 copies displayed pronounced autism-related abnormalities in both sexes. The homozygous mutant mice also exhibited an enlarged brain volume, altered cerebral blood flow, disrupted brain rhythms, among other changes -- pathways strongly associated with autism and other neurodevelopmental disorders, the researchers said. They found that male-female differences became progressively weaker as mutation severity increased, suggesting that the biological mechanisms underlying sex differences in autism may not be fixed, but instead depend on the intensity of genetic disruption.



Our findings suggest that females may possess protective biological mechanisms against CHD8-related dysfunction, but severe mutations can overwhelm those protective effects

Half of Newborns in India Breastfed Within 1st Hour of Birth: NFHS-6

Press Trust Of India

The percentage of children under three years of age who were breastfed within an hour of birth increased by nearly 10 percentage points, rising from 41.8 per cent in 2019-2021 (NFHS-5) to 50.1 per cent in 2023-24, according to the National Family Health Survey-6 released on Friday.

The new data reveals that 95.6 per cent of children under six months of age were breastfed during the survey period. The Union Health Ministry stated that NFHS-6 indicates encouraging progress in child nutrition outcomes, showing a positive trajectory toward achieving Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). However, exclusive

breastfeeding for the first six months declined from 63.7 per cent in NFHS-5 to 55.8 per cent in NFHS-6, as reported in the data. Moreover, the prevalence of stunting (low height for age) among children under five years has significantly decreased from 35.5 per cent to 29.3 per cent, reflecting improvements in long-term nutritional outcomes.

Office of the Assistant Director, Archives, Archaeology and Museums, Old Secretariat Old Assembly Complex Srinagar

AUCTION NOTICE

It is hereby informed to the general public that the Department of Archaeology is inviting bids for the sale of walnuts at Kothiar Anantnag Monument. Therefore, interested bidders are requested to remain present at Monument of Kothiyar Anantnag on Saturday, 20 June 2026 at 11:00 AM. The bidders shall have to deposit 10,000/- (Rupees Ten Thousand only) as security money in favour of the Assistant Director, Archives, Archaeology and Museums, Old Secretariat, Old Assembly Complex, Srinagar, by Wednesday, 10 June 2026 up to 4:00 PM. Only those bidders shall be entitled to participate in the bidding process who have deposited the security amount by the above-mentioned date. The security deposit shall be refunded after the bidding process. The successful bidder shall have to deposit the full amount within 24 hours of the auction.

Published by
 In-charge Assistant Director
 Archives, Archaeology and Museums
 Srinagar, Kashmir
 DIPK-1665/26
 dated: 30-05-2026

Office of the Assistant Director, Archives, Archaeology and Museums, Old Secretariat Old Assembly Complex Srinagar

AUCTION NOTICE

It is hereby informed to the general public that the Department of Archaeology is inviting bids for the sale of walnuts at Parrihaspora Pattan Monument. Therefore, interested bidders are requested to remain present at Parrihaspora Pattan Monument on Saturday, 13 June 2026 at 11:00 AM. The bidders shall have to deposit 10,000/- (Rupees Ten Thousand only) as security money in favour of the Assistant Director, Archives, Archaeology and Museums, Old Secretariat, Old Assembly Complex, Srinagar, by Wednesday, 10 June 2026 up to 4:00 PM. Only those bidders shall be entitled to participate in the bidding process who have deposited the security amount by the above-mentioned date. The security deposit shall be refunded after the bidding process. The successful bidder shall have to deposit the full amount within 24 hours of the auction.

Published by
 In-charge Assistant Director
 Archives, Archaeology and Museums
 Srinagar, Kashmir
 DIPK-1666/26
 dated: 30-05-2026

GOVERNMENT OF JAMMU AND KASHMIR JAMMU AND KASHMIR SERVICES SELECTION BOARD Muthi Akhnoor Road, Jammu/ Zam Zam Complex Rambagh, Srinagar (www.jkssb.nic.in)

Subject: Provisional Selection List for 03 posts of Telephone Operator in Estates Department, advertised vide Notification No. 04 of 2022 dated 27.07.2022, under Item No. 130.

NOTIFICATION

Whereas, the Jammu and Kashmir Services Selection Board, vide Indent No. Est/79/2021-04-(86979) /900 dated 11.04.2022, received (03) Posts of Telephone Operator in Estates Department, which were advertised vide Notification No. 04 of 2022 dated 27.07.2022, as per the following category-wise break up:

S. No	Name of the Posts	Cadre of the posts	Item No.	OM	SC	ST	OSC	ALC/ TB	RBA	PSP	EWS	TOTAL
01	Telephone Operator	UT	130	02	01	0	0	0	0	0	0	03

whereas, the requisite qualification for selection against these posts, as per the Indent was prescribed as under:

Name of the Post	Requisite Qualification
Telephone Operator	Matric with ITI/diploma in electronics and communication trade

whereas, the JKSSB, accordingly conducted (OMR) based written examinations for these (03) posts on 02.03.2025 and accordingly the result was declared on 14.05.2025.

whereas, after the publication of Results/Score-sheets, the candidates, falling under the consideration zone, were called for Document Verification conducted on 04.06.2025, followed by supplementary DV w.e.f 24.06.2025 to 25.06.2025.

whereas, subsequently, vide Office Order No. 221-SSB of 2025 dated 14.07.2025, among other committees, a selection committee has also been constituted for preparing the Selection List for these 03 posts of Estates Department, advertised vide Notification No. 04 of 2022 dated 27.07.2022.

whereas, the said Selection Committee, upon careful scrutiny of the Indents/advertisements, prepared the Provisional Selection List for the (03) Three posts in accordance with the Merit/ Eligibility and preference of the candidates as per the extant rules and same was placed in the board in its 350th meeting, held on 21.05.2026, which after due deliberations and consideration of the matter, approved its notification.

Now, therefore, the Provisional Selection List of the candidates for 03 posts of Telephone Operator, Estates Department, advertised vide Notification No. 04 of 2022 dated 27.07.2022, item No. 130, is hereby notified as per "Annexure-A" to this Notification. It is further notified that:

- This Provisional Selection List shall be subject to outcome of the OAs/Writ Petition(s), if any, pending in the competent court of law.
- This shall also be subject to the outcome of any pending inquiry, involving candidate(s), figuring in this Provisional Selection List.
- This is a Provisional List and shall be subject to the change(s) as per the objections as may be received against it and mere figuring in it shall not confer any right to selection, which shall be finalized after examination of the objections based on merit. **The authenticity, genuineness, applicability and validity of the certificates submitted by the candidates shall be verified by the Indenting Department.**
- In case any candidate(s) is aggrieved with this Provisional Selection List, or intends to furnish any document/clarification regarding his/her candidature, he/she may represent through the e-mail address estateselection2026@gmail.com within (10) ten days from the date of this Notification, beyond which no representations whatsoever shall be entertained. The representations in this regard shall necessarily include complete details of the candidate including Name, Address, Roll Number and Contact Number.

By Order.

DIPK-1673/26
 dated: 30-05-2026

No. JKSSB-Scry/22/2025-06 (E-7731805)

(Khurshid Ahmad Ganai) JKSSB Secretary
J&K Services Selection Board
 Dated: 26.05.2026

Public Notice

I have applied for the issuance of DOB certificate, as per Age Certificate issued by Dental Surgeon I am 59 year old. If anybody has any objection in this regard he/she may file them in the concerned office within seven days. After that no objection shall be entertained.
 Hajra W/O Mohd Ramzan Dar
 R/o Palhallan fko

Public Notice

This is for information of general public that the (Electric bill) power connection is registered on my husband's name AB AHAD MALIK S/O AB SAMAD MILAK R/O KHASIPORA Now this Connection bearing Consumer ID NO 021204000280 wants to be registered on my name KHATIJA BEGUM W/O late AB AHAD MALIK R/O KHASIPORA .If anybody have any objection in this regard He/She may file his/her objection in the concerned PDD office within seven days from the date of publication of this notice after that no objection will be entertained Name.KHATIJA BEGUM.
 W/O ..late AHAD MALIK
 R/O ..KHASIPORA KREERI fko

From Office of the Advocate Adv Ishfaq Rasool

In the case of: - Caveat Application captioned below:

- Mohamamd Abdullah Palla Son of Abdul Gaffar Pala
 - Shahnawaz Pala
 - Suhail Ahmad Pala
 - Shaista
- All sons and Daughter of Mohammad Abdullah Palla
 All Residents of Seru Dangarpora Pattan
 Tehsil Pattan District Baramulla
 (Caveators/ Applicants) .

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- plev, 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.
 fko Sd/advocate

Public Notice

This is to inform that I, Jugal Kishore Sharma S/O Sh. Rishi Paul R/O W.No.4, near post office main bazar Reasi, have applied for upgradation of my class A contractor card issued vide No. UD/1980-81/A/4 Dated 10/10/1980 to Class A Partnership Firm. If any person has any objection in this regard, they may submit their objections (if any) in writing to the office of Chief Engineer CID wing JKSPDC Bemina Kashmir or Secretary Technical PWD (R&B) Civil Secretariat, Srinagar within 7 (seven) days from the date of publication of this notice. No objection shall be entertained thereafter.
 Ab

Public Notice

This is information for the general public that in Adhar card bearing No 396652382186 the name is entered as Bashur Ahmed Ganai while her actual name is Bashir Ahmad Ganai. Now i want its correction, in this regard if anybody having any objection may contact Concern department with in a period of seven days. No objection shall be entertained after that.
 BASHIR AHMAD GANAI
 S/O MOHAMMAD SHABAN GANAI
 R/O NARKARA SABDAN BUDGAM mcb

Office of the Naib Tehsildar Pattan

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

Public Notice..

The registrar birth EO MC pattan has submitted a case file pertaining to birth of Qazi Azhan s/o Qazi Mushtaq R/o Bagi Islam Kranki Shivan Colony Sopore tehsil Sopore district baramulla with verified date of birth 07/07/2021 occurred at SDH pattan in this connection if any body having objection for issuance of said certificate he may contact to this office within 04 days after that no objection shall be entertained..
 Sd
 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 EO MC pattan has submitted a case file pertaining to birth of Aamina D/o Aejaaz Ahmad Wani R/o Hamray tehsil pattan with verified date of birth 19/06/2021 occurred at SDH pattan in this connection if any body having objection for issuance of said certificate he may contact to this office within 04 days after that no objection shall be entertained.
 ..
 Sd
 fko Naib Tehsildar Pattan



As twilight descends over Dal Lake, women residents of its interior localities travel by boat, a routine journey woven into everyday life. KO Photo Abid Bhat.

Boulevard Road Four-Laning on Cards, Sagar Assures Push

Observer News Service

Srinagar: National Conference General Secretary and MLA Khanyar Ali Mohammad Sagar on Saturday assured people that he would pursue resumption of work on the proposed four-laning of Boulevard Road and extension of Gousia Hospital, while also raising demands related to sports infrastructure and tourism development with the government.

The assurances are important for locals in parts of Khanyar constituency, where several civic, healthcare, and infrastructure demands remain pending. Locals are seeking progress on projects related to connectivity, public facilities, and tourism.

Sagar said the issue of stalled work on the proposed four-laning of Boulevard Road would be taken up with the concerned authorities, describing the project as important for improving connectivity and easing traffic pressure

in adjoining areas.

He also assured people that the demand for extension of Gousia Hospital would be strongly pursued with the government to improve healthcare infrastructure and services in the constituency.

The MLA further promised to raise the demand for playground facilities for Nishat and Brane areas, saying sports infrastructure and recreational spaces required focused attention.

Sagar additionally spoke of bringing what he described as an important developmental shift toward tourism in Khanyar constituency, indicating that tourism-related initiatives would also form part of his engagement with the government.

According to KNT, the assurances were made during Sagar's visit to Brane and Baba Demb areas of Khanyar constituency, where residents apprised him of local concerns and highlighted pending developmental requirements.

Srinagar Sees Hassle-Free Traffic Movement Despite Eid-al-Azha Rush

Observer News Service

Srinagar: Eid-ul-Adha celebrations in Srinagar passed off with smooth traffic movement across the city and its outskirts, as commuters and residents praised the efforts of the Traffic Police department for ensuring hassle-free vehicular movement despite heavy festive rush.

From constables and Special Police Officers (SPOs) to senior officials, including Deputy Superintendents of Police (DySPs), traffic personnel remained stationed on roads throughout the day to regulate movement and assist commuters.

Police also conducted enforcement drives at multiple locations across Srinagar, including the busy boulevard and several other key routes in downtown and uptown areas, during which several motorcycles were seized for violations,

while many challans were issued against traffic offenders.

The department remained on the ground throughout Eid to ensure the smooth movement of vehicles and pedestrians across the city. Special focus was laid on regulating traffic at busy junctions and major Eid congregation points, while enforcement drives against violators were also intensified.

Speaking to KNO, DySP Traffic Srinagar Mehboob-ul-Haq said traffic management remained largely successful, especially around the Eidgah area, where coordinated planning helped avoid congestion.

"With the help of Waqf Board Srinagar, we arranged parking facilities inside Eidgah premises, which helped keep the roads free and traffic movement smooth. People cooperated well and parked their vehicles in designated spaces, making movement fast and hassle-free," he said.

The DySP said the department kept special focus on two-wheelers during the Eid days, adding that a significant number of challans were issued while several vehicles were also seized during checking drives.

"With Eid rush on roads, our teams remained active throughout the day. Like every year, most of our Eid was spent on roads ensuring smooth movement for the public," he said.

Locals and commuters appreciated the role of the Traffic Police, saying visible deployment of officials on roads helped prevent traffic jams and ensured smooth movement even during peak hours.

"We witnessed traffic police personnel standing on roads since morning, despite Eid celebrations. Their presence made movement very easy for us and deserves appreciation," said Adil Ahmad, a commuter from downtown Srinagar.

- 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
 BIJBHERA: 01932-228243
 PAMPORA: 01933-294132
 PATTAN: 01954-293507
 QAZIGUND: 01951-296153

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

HIJRI CALENDAR
14 Zil-Hajj
1447

PRAYERS
 FAJR 3: 39
 ZUHR 12:28
 ASR 5: 26
 Magrib 7:39
 ISHA 9: 18

This Day In History

- 1223 - Mongol invasion of the Cumans: Battle of the Kalka River - Mongol armies of Genghis Khan led by Subutai defeat Kievan Rus and Cumans.
- 1659 - Netherlands, England and France sign Treaty of The Hague
- 1923- China & USSR exchange diplomats
- 1924- China recognizes the USSR
- 1931 - 7.1 magnitude Earthquake destroys Quetta in modern-day Pakistan: 40,000 dead.
- 1935- 7.7 magnitude earthquake hits Quetta in Balochistan, British (Pakistan) killing approx 50,000
- 1940- Premier Winston Churchill flies to Paris to meet with Marshal
- August Pétain who announces he is willing to make a separate peace with Germany
- 1944- Allied breakthrough in Italy
- 1951- Netherlands & South Africa sign cultural accord
- 1953 - Lebanese president Camille Shamun disbands government
- 1955 - Great Britain proclaims emergency crisis due to rail strike
- 1957 - Great Britain performs nuclear test at Christmas Island (atmospheric)
- 1970 - 7.75 Ancash earthquake off coast of Peru kills 66-70,000 and sets off world's deadliest avalanche
- 1974 - Israel and Syria sign an agreement concerning Golan Heights
- 1974 - USSR performs nuclear test at Eastern Kazakh/Semipalatinsk USSR
- 2008 - Usain Bolt breaks the world record in the 100m sprint, with a wind-legal (+1.7m/s) 9.72 seconds
- 2012 - Egypt formally ends its 31 year state of emergency
- 2018 - Danish government bans garments that cover the face, including the niqab and burqa
- 2018 - Uganda's parliament imposes tax on social media to stop gossip

Sanitation Workers Protest, Seek Regularization

Observer News Service

Srinagar: Sanitation workers on Saturday staged a protest outside the office of Director Urban Local Bodies (ULB) in Bemina, Srinagar, demanding regularization of their services and implementation of SRO-64.

The protest highlighted long-pending concerns of sanitation workers, who said unresolved employment and service-related issues had pushed them to seek immediate intervention from the authorities.

Scores of workers assembled outside the ULB office carrying placards and banners, pressing for fulfillment of their pending demands.

Mushtaq Ahmad, President of Sanitation Workers Association said regularization remained one of their principal demands and urged the administration to take concrete measures to address the issue.

Implementation of SRO-64 also figured prominently during the protest, with workers alleging that delays had prolonged uncertainty

regarding their service conditions and entitlements.

Several workers had brought their children to the protest site, where they were seen carrying banners seeking justice and early redressal of the workers' demands. The protesters urged the government and concerned authorities to engage with them and resolve the issues at the earliest.

According to KNT, the demonstration remained peaceful as workers continued to voice their demands outside the Director ULB office in Bemina.

MOLVI'S BEREAVED

With profound grief and sorrow, it is informed, wife of Molvi Waiz Assadullah Shah, resident of Pine Avenue, Sector-A, Lane-2, Rawalpura, near Masjid Amir Kabeer, passed away on Saturday, 30th May 2026.

Inna Lillahi Wa Inna Ilaihi Raji'un Fateh Khwani will be held on Tuesday, 2nd June 2026, at 9:30 AM at Molvi Maqbara, Mallakhah. There after, a Taziati Majlis will be held at their residence.

May Almighty Allah (SWT) forgive her short comings, envelop her in His infinite mercy, and grant her the highest place in Jannat-ul-Firdous. Ameen.

Bereaved Family Contact: 70060 18700

Government of Jammu & Kashmir,
Office of the Executive Engineer,
Mechanical & Hospital Division SKIMS/ JVC,
HQ: SKIMS Soura
 Tel: 0194-2402617 Ext: 2159 email: - mech-hospitalaskims@jk.gov.in

Short term notice inviting E-tenders
 e-NIT NO. MHD/SKIMS/JVC/ 05 OF 2025-26 dated: 25 /05/2026

For and on behalf of the Honorable Lieutenant Governor, J&K UT e-tenders are invited in two cover system (Technical and financial) on item rate basis from eligible contractors registered with J&K Govt. CPWD, Railway/State/Central Government organization for the below mentioned work:

Name of Work	Ceiling Cost (Rs. in Lacs)	Cost of T/Doc (In rupees)	Completion time/Period of contract	Budget Head	AA Accorded Vide No:	TS Accorded Vide:	Earnest Money (in Rs in Lacs)	Position of funds)	Tender opening authority
Providing and Fitting of Medical Gas Pipeline System to the OT Block of SKIMS MCH Bemina	3.009	500	20days	M&R	SKIMS- MC 02 of 2026, Dt: 03.04 .2026.	SEMHK/TS -14/06 Dt:25.05.202 6	6000.00	Available with the intending Department	Executive Engineer Mechanical & Hospital Engineering Department SKIMS JVC Soura.

❖ The bidding document consisting of qualifying information, eligibility criteria, specifications, Bill of quantities (B.O.Q), Set of terms and conditions of contract and other details can be seen/downloaded from the Govt. website www.jktenders.gov.in as per schedule of dates given below: -

01	Publish date	26.05.2026 (9.00 hrs)
02	Period of downloading of bidding document	26.05.2026 (9.10 hrs)
03	Bid submission start date	26.05.2026 (9.15 hrs)
04	Bid submission end date	05 .06.2026 (11.00 hrs)
05	Date and time of opening of bids (online)	05 .06.2026 (16.00 hrs)

No. MHD/SKIMS/JVC/912/1218-22
 DIPK-NB-612/26
 dated: 30-05-2026

Sd/-
 Executive Engineer,
 Mechanical and Hospital
 Division SKIMS/

The Flame and the Faultline

The record LPG shock has exposed a long-ignored reality: Kashmir's dependence on imported gas makes distant geopolitical conflicts an immediate economic threat.



Malik Daniyal



The central question is no longer whether Kashmir needs a different energy policy. It is whether policymakers will act before the next winter exposes the same weakness again.

On the morning of May 1, 2026, a notice went up at gas agencies across the valley. The price of a 19-kg commercial LPG cylinder had been revised overnight by 993.

This was the single largest single-day revision in India's recorded LPG pricing history.

The cylinder that hotels, dhabas, and bakeries depend on now costs 3,071.50, up from 1,691.50 on January 1: an 82 per cent increase in four months.

The reasons for this extraordinary surge lie far from Srinagar, in the waters of the Strait of Hormuz.

The US-Israel military campaign against Iran, which intensified in early 2026, disrupted global energy markets and supply chains. The Strait of Hormuz, a vital route for nearly 20 per cent of the world's traded oil, suddenly became a high-risk zone.

Shipping costs rose sharply as war-risk insurance premiums soared, while many insurers stopped providing coverage for vessels operating in the Gulf.

The vulnerability was no secret.

India imports around 60 per cent of its LPG requirements, most of it traditionally routed through the Strait of Hormuz from Gulf producers. Official estimates suggest domestic reserves can meet barely two weeks of national demand. Heavy import dependence, a geographically concentrated supply chain, and limited strategic storage had long made the sector exposed.

The Gulf crisis did not create this weakness. It merely exposed a risk that had been ignored for years.

Facing mounting supply pressures, New Delhi issued a Natural Gas Control Order under the Essential Commodities Act, placing households at the top of the allocation ladder, followed by hospitals and schools, and cutting off commercial supplies to restaurants and hotels deemed non-essential. The refineries were directed simultaneously to maximise domestic LPG output.

The logic of that priority order is defensible at the national level. Its consequences, however, are borne unevenly across regions, and nowhere more so than in Kashmir.

The timing was devastating for the valley's hospitality sector, which was attempting a small recovery from the economic fallout of the April 2025 Pahalgam terror attack.

By March, hotels and restaurants across Kashmir were operating on just eight to ten days of commercial LPG stock as fresh supplies remained suspended, according to gas agency dealers and media reports.

Kitchen fires went cold at precisely the moment the tourism industry needed them burning.

The Jammu and Kashmir Pradesh Congress Committee's March 20 statement highlighted a concern that national LPG-allocation priorities did not fully account for J&K's unusually high dependence on commercial LPG for tourism, pilgrimage, and hospitality activity.



cern that national LPG-allocation priorities did not fully account for J&K's unusually high dependence on commercial LPG for tourism, pilgrimage, and hospitality activity.

That argument had a structural basis in the region's service-heavy economy and limited alternatives to cylinder-based fuel.

Kashmir's energy challenge is different because the same cylinder that cooks meals also keeps homes warm through winter.

During Chillai Kalan, when temperatures can fall below minus 7 to 10 degrees Celsius, a family can finish a 14.2-kg cylinder in four or five days.

That is why a sharp rise in prices hits much harder in the valley than elsewhere.

The May 1 increase marked the fourth revision in two months. Since January, the cumulative rise has reached about 1,380 per cylinder.

For small hotels, restaurants and dhabas, that is not a routine increase. It can wipe out already thin margins.

Then came higher petrol and diesel prices in mid-May, pushing up transport costs at a time when tourism was still struggling after the Pahalgam attack.

Several pressures landed at once on an economy with little room to absorb them.

India has begun diversifying LPG supplies through new import agreements with the United States. That is a welcome step. But Kashmir's problem is also about distribution.

Fuel still travels through mountain tunnels and high-altitude roads that remain vulnerable to disruption.

The solutions are neither complicated nor out of reach.

Kashmir needs priority LPG allocation, a protected regional reserve, targeted support for hospitality businesses, faster expansion of piped natural gas, and a dedicated task force to oversee supplies and allocations.

October is only months away. A region that depends on LPG for both warmth and cooking, sits at the end of one of India's most difficult supply routes, lacks a strategic reserve, and is still recovering from a major security shock faces risks that cannot be treated as routine.

The central question is no longer whether Kashmir needs a different energy policy. It is whether policymakers will act before the next winter exposes the same weakness again.

Every delay raises the economic, social and political cost. The valley is already paying enough.

The author is an economics graduate from University of Delhi and regularly writes on valley's economy and policy issues. He can be reached at mdaniyal.054@gmail.com.

The Madness of Modernity

A growing backlash against capitalism's excesses suggests that the age of unquestioned globalism may be nearing its limits.



Wajahat Qazi

Project Modernity has failed. Tracing the wellsprings of the same to Western 'Enlightenment values', where reason, its handmaiden rationality, and individualism were harbingers of 'progress' and a new social order, the obverse seems to have happened.

Wars of choice in Iraq, Afghanistan, and now Iran, after the so-called post-Cold War peace dividend, the excesses of globalism, global inequality, poverty, uneven economic development, and so on, social disorder, dysfunction, and anomie in Western societies, unhinged capital flows that promote consumerism as the ultimate 'value', among other things, all point to this.

While the irony is that the Global South is moving in this direction, lock, stock, and barrel, many across the West seem to be reclaiming their agency and autonomy. The overall trend, however, appears to have been toward conformism, a decidedly contra-Western 'Enlightenment' notion.

In the schemata of conformism, capitalism, its accoutrements, and proclivity, consumption and consumerism as the highest values, deviation from these normative ideals of capitalism engendered a divorce from Western democracy.

In other words, the social order was being shaped by capitalism and its ideals.

This percolated into political orders and systems in and across the West, with only a wee resistance offered by Scandinavian social democracies, despite all their other flaws.

With the link between democracy, democratic individualism, individual agency, and autonomy that inhered in these being broken, capitalism, which morphed into globalism, became the dominant ideology of a post-Cold War world.

All its perversions, including the fraying of the social contract, were justified, almost thoughtlessly and cavalierly, as the apogee of 'rationality' and 'reason'.

The Pied Piper of capitalist modernity led peoples to the 'abyss, where each peered and jumped into it'. Anything



that resisted, reflexively or consciously, and anyone who refused to be 'blue-pill'd' by this Matrix, was not only seen as deviant but also labelled 'irrational' and 'insane'.

As for the former, the Islamic Republic of Iran was deemed and labelled the paradigmatic instance of the same, and within both the West and the non-West, those who questioned this were subjected to the same labelling and were also occluded, marginalised, and invisibilised.

Both broadly and in terms of aggregates, specifics, and the individual level of analysis, all this meshes with the work of the great scholar, analyst, and critic of power, Michel Foucault.

Foucauldian analysis and critique were perhaps at their most eloquent in his lucid thesis, 'Madness and Civilization'. In this remarkable work, Foucault postulated that 'madness was not biological, it was, in fact, a social construct'.

The French philosopher periodized Western societies' approach to 'madness' in terms of a pre-modern, Enlightenment, and post-Enlightenment one.

In the pre-modern schema, the 'mad' were integrated into society. In the Enlightenment and post-Enlightenment periods, the 'mad' were viewed as 'deviants' and 'cast-aways'. The instruments and techniques of control for their 'deviance' were the 'lunatic asylum' and the power to define

exercised by the psychiatrist.

Over time, these techniques seem to have been appropriated by states and powers that be across the world.

In a post-Cold War world, where capitalism became the dominant ideology, and where states gradually became auxiliaries to it, conformity to capitalist ideals became the new 'order', and any resistance to it was seen as 'deviance'.

In Plato's 'Ship of Fools', the crew and the passengers became something other than fully human beings with agency and autonomy, the actual promise of the West's 'Enlightenment'.

All this gels into dramatic and literary form in one of Shakespeare's plays, 'Hamlet'.

'Hamlet' is a play within a play, where the main protagonist is a self-aware hero. He tries to skirt around the conventions of a revenge tragedy by casting himself as a clown. Hamlet's madness gives him the ultimate power to expose the imposters who seek to project a perfect image in society.

To stretch the argument further, the ideas of power and the potential for that power to corrupt are what tie together the various themes that 'Hamlet' addresses. This includes love, wisdom, and wealth, in the main.

In a nutshell, then, the themes and ideas that Foucault addresses, and that Shakespeare in 'Hamlet' brings forth

and illustrates, are all interwoven and interrelated, the potential and reality of power to corrupt, with the same holding for money and wealth, the perversions of individual autonomy and choice, among other things.

All this has a searing resonance in today's world, where Polanyi's 'double movement' reaction to capitalism is emerging alongside the hegemony of capitalism. The 'Unconscious Civilization' is gradually, and hopefully, awakening from its deep slumber.

Within this paradigm, questioning these ideals, often labelled as 'deviance' and 'madness', jostles with attempts by people, mostly in the West, to reclaim authenticity, morally, economically, socially, and politically.

Again, from a schematic perspective, was, or is, Donald Trump the Hamlet pretending insanity and madness to speak the truth?

If he was, was he too ultimately swallowed by the enabling and totalizing forces of capitalism, to be domesticated and made 'rational'?

If these totalizing forces of capitalism and capitalist modernity are so ubiquitous and powerful, is there a way out, an exit? Is the exit even necessary?

The answer to the latter is a resounding yes, but with a qualifier.

We humans, and the world at large, need 'progress' and 'development', but in an idiom that elevates the human and the humanity that inheres in each of us, not just the rate of return and profitability. Our humanness needs to be, and must be, reclaimed.

Can this be done? I can only answer this from my own vantage point and perspective, and this applies to me.

My quest, a circuitous one, leads me back to faith and God, the anchor that can provide both stability and psychic closure, thereby imparting meaning to life.

I do not know, and cannot know, about others, but I have loved, only to choose to forfeit that in youthful silliness.

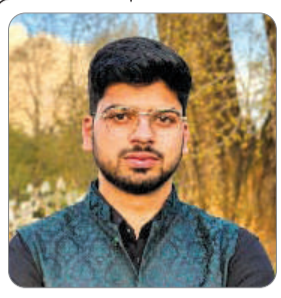
I have not achieved much by way of worldly and material accomplishments, but I would like to think I have enough to remain content.

For me, ultimate meaning and closure can be attained by returning to God. The rest is just 'false consciousness'.

The author holds a Distinction in International Relations from the University of Aberdeen and combines scholarship with real-world engagement. He has worked in academia and media, including as Associate Editor at Kashmir Observer.

Kashmir's Post-Eid Problem

Eid-ul-Azha's spiritual meaning stands in sharp contrast to the unmanaged remains left behind in many neighbourhoods.



Mohammad Muslim Bhat

Morning after Eid-ul-Azha in many parts of Kashmir opens to a difficult sight.

Streets house traces of sacrifice in raw, exposed form. Blood trails run along pavements. Hoofs and horns lie near drainage edges. Organs sit under open sun.

Meat scraps cling to roadside corners where crowds walked hours earlier in prayer and celebration. The scent often reaches before the eye takes in detail.

What begins as devotion ends, in many spaces, as unmanaged public waste spread through shared lanes and open grounds.

The contrast is stark.

Eid-ul-Azha centers on an act of worship rooted in the story of Prophet Ibrahim (AS), whose surrender to divine command stands as a defining moment in Islamic tradition. Sacrifice during this day holds meaning as ibadah, where intention, selection of the animal, and distribution of meat form a continuous religious act.

Scholars describe the ritual as devotion that extends through action, where the animal becomes part of worship itself.

That spiritual significance defines the day, but the aftermath on

streets pulls attention in another direction entirely.

Stray dogs move through leftover meat along drains and open patches. Crows gather around exposed waste. Children step through hurried paths while holding their noses. Residents pass through narrow lanes where remnants of sacrifice sit uncollected under heat and dust.

Public space becomes a site where sacred practice and civic neglect sit side by side, visible within hours of each other.

Attention often turns toward municipal bodies during this time. Waste collection systems face sudden pressure, limited preparation, and uneven coordination.

But responsibility does not end there.

Many households dispose of remains in ways that place waste directly into open areas, vacant plots, or roadside edges. Such actions place strain on shared environments already under pressure during festival days.

Religious teaching places strong thrust on cleanliness, dignity, and respect for surroundings. The ritual of sacrifice holds moral continuity beyond slaughter, extending into how remains receive care and removal.

Health consequences follow quickly, as organic waste left under heat decomposes rapidly, producing conditions that spread infection.

Open drains carry contaminated runoff into shared water channels. Children playing outdoors face exposure to unsafe surroundings. Elderly residents experience higher risk from polluted air and surface contact.

Stray animals feeding on waste move between dumping points and residential spaces, carrying contamination further into



EID-UL-AZHA CONCLUDES MEANINGFULLY WHEN SACRIFICE EXTENDS BEYOND RITUAL COMPLETION INTO DISCIPLINED HANDLING OF ITS AFTERMATH.
Worship finds completion when devotion and responsibility meet in the same space, leaving both faith and public life in balance.

the community. A single lapse in disposal creates a

chain of impact that reaches households, streets, and water systems.

Public perception also enters the picture, since mixed neighbourhoods place communities in close proximity during Eid days. Visitors and residents alike observe how public spaces function during and after sacrifice.

Tourism-linked areas have similar exposure, where impressions form through visible conditions on streets. Civic image becomes tied to cleanliness practices during religious observance, shaping how shared life appears to those outside immediate communities.

Solutions remain available and practical. Deep burial stands as one of the most effective methods for handling sacrificial remains. Proper pits allow organic material to return to soil without exposure, reducing odour, contamination, and

animal access.

Municipal systems in several regions have introduced dedicated Eid waste services, including scheduled pickups, designated disposal bags, and temporary collection points placed in neighbourhoods.

Community awareness campaigns through mosques and institutions have also guided households toward structured disposal practices.

Where these systems receive cooperation, public spaces remain significantly cleaner during Eid periods.

Eid-ul-Azha holds a philosophy built on submission. The story of Ibrahim (AS) frames sacrifice as complete trust and willingness before divine command. That spirit extends beyond the moment of slaughter into conduct that follows.

Worship finds fuller meaning when it holds continuity, where devotion includes how remains are treated and how shared environments are respected.

Cleanliness becomes part of that expression, linking belief with responsibility in visible form.

Kashmir's dense living spaces make this connection more immediate.

Narrow streets, shared courtyards, and interconnected drainage systems amplify the impact of disposal choices. Public hygiene becomes a collective outcome rather than an individual act.

The strength of ritual devotion gains clearer expression when it passes through to the final stage of care, where streets remain clean and communities move through spaces without harm or distress.

— The author is a student columnist and can be reached at mdmuslimbhat@gmail.com.

Inside IUST's Policy Experiment

How a university initiative seeks to connect academic research with administrative systems in Jammu and Kashmir.



Dr. Ashraf Zainabi

Universities in Jammu and Kashmir remained largely confined to instruction, examinations, and degree completion for many decades.

Academic inquiry remained distant from administrative decision-making and public policy design.

Elsewhere, university systems gradually expanded their role, entering domains linked to planning, social welfare, institutional reform, and development strategy.

The establishment of the Centre for Good Governance and Policy Analysis at Islamic University of Science and Technology marks a shift toward closer engagement between research and governance practice in Jammu and Kashmir.

Governance studies worldwide have evolved into an interdisciplinary field drawing on public administration, economics, political science, environmental planning, technology, sociology, and development policy.

Institutions such as the Blavatnik School of Government at Oxford University, the Ash Center for Democratic Governance and Innovation at Harvard University, and the Lee Kuan Yew School of Public Policy at the National University of Singapore demonstrate how policymaking gains strength through structured research systems, data-driven planning, institutional learning, and public participation frameworks.

Jammu and Kashmir today experiences a complex set of governance pressures linked to demographic transition, employment demand, ecological stress, urban expansion, administrative coordination challenges,



public trust concerns, and uneven development outcomes.

Institutional responses often move in fragmented directions, shaped more by immediate requirements than by sustained empirical inquiry.

Evidence-based governance systems gain importance within such a context, supporting clearer assessment of outcomes and more informed administrative decisions.

The Centre for Good Governance at IUST can function as a bridge between academic inquiry, administrative institutions, and public priorities. Its long-term relevance depends on consistent production of reliable data, structured policy analysis, and practical governance solutions grounded in field realities.

Five strategic directions can guide the Centre during its early development phase.

The first priority involves creation of a Jammu and Kashmir Governance Observatory.

Governance discussions frequently proceed without systematic district or tehsil-level datasets. A structured observatory can compile annual assessments covering service delivery

performance, administrative efficiency, grievance patterns, development disparities, and sectoral outcomes.

Such a system would strengthen policy evaluation practices and support administrative transparency through continuous documentation of governance indicators.

The second priority concerns a household employment security and government representation survey.

Public employment has historically served as a key source of economic stability and social mobility in Jammu and Kashmir. Policy discourse around employment often relies on partial information, leaving gaps in understanding household-level job distribution.

A structured survey can map how many households include permanent government employees and how many remain outside stable public employment systems. Analytical focus at the nuclear-family level would allow clearer assessment of livelihood security patterns, particularly within extended family structures where economic responsibilities vary.

Findings from such research can inform employment policy design, welfare

targeting, educational planning, and regional development strategies.

The third priority centers on environmental governance and Himalayan sustainability.

Ecological systems such as the River Jhelum, Wular Lake, Dal Lake, and Hokersar Wetland face increasing pressure linked to urban expansion, pollution, encroachment, and climate variability. Environmental outcomes depend on coordination between planning systems, regulatory frameworks, and scientific monitoring.

Research-driven policy design can support wetland restoration, climate adaptation planning, disaster preparedness systems, waste management reform, and sustainable urban development strategies suited to fragile mountain ecosystems.

The fourth priority focuses on youth aspirations, employment pathways, and skill mapping.

Jammu and Kashmir hosts a large educated youth population engaged with examinations, recruitment cycles, entrepreneurship planning, and migration decisions. Daily household discussions often center on exam preparation, waiting periods for re-

cruitment lists, and decisions linked to relocation for work opportunities. Educational expansion has proceeded rapidly, while employment pathways have developed at a slower pace.

Systematic research into youth expectations, labour market transitions, and skill requirements can guide education planning, vocational training frameworks, and innovation policy.

The fifth priority involves creation of a governance innovation and digital public systems laboratory.

Administrative systems increasingly operate through digital platforms covering certificates, applications, grievances, and service delivery mechanisms. Experiences with these systems vary widely due to differences in connectivity, digital literacy, and institutional coordination.

A dedicated laboratory can evaluate digital governance platforms, public grievance systems, artificial intelligence tools for administration, transparency systems, and low-cost technological solutions adapted to regional conditions.

Research in this area can support more efficient service delivery and improved citizen interaction with government systems.

These five priorities engage central dimensions of governance in Jammu and Kashmir. Combined, they provide a structured research agenda aligned with public policy needs and development planning requirements.

The Centre for Good Governance at IUST holds potential as a platform that advances research-informed governance practice in the region.

Universities in societies undergoing rapid socio-economic and environmental transition increasingly participate in generating policy knowledge and institutional innovation.

A sustained commitment to interdisciplinary research, administrative collaboration, and data-based inquiry can position the Centre as a meaningful contributor to governance reform and development planning in Jammu and Kashmir.

— The author is a Chadoora-based educator and researcher. He can be reached at bhatashraf@gmail.com.

THE CENTRE FOR GOOD GOVERNANCE AT IUST CAN FUNCTION AS A BRIDGE BETWEEN ACADEMIC INQUIRY, administrative institutions, and public priorities. Its long-term relevance depends on consistent production of reliable data, structured policy analysis, and practical governance solutions grounded in field realities.

'FIR Filed Before Offence' HC Flags Lapse In 2019 Arms Smuggling Case

KO Web Desk

Srinagar: The Jammu and Kashmir High Court has raised serious concerns over what it described as a glaring procedural lapse in a 2019 arms smuggling case, observing that the First Information Report (FIR) appeared to have been registered before the alleged offence was detected.

The observations came during the hearing of a bail plea filed by truck driver Sabeel Ahmad Baba, who was arrested in September 2019 in connection with the recovery of arms and ammunition from a vehicle at Lakhanpur in Kathua district.

Justice Rahul Bharti, while examining the case records, noted a discrepancy in the timeline presented by the prosecution. According to the court, the FIR at Lakhanpur Police Station was registered at 8:30 am on September 12, 2019, whereas the alleged seizure of weapons from Baba's truck took place at 9:45 am, about 75 minutes later.

The court observed that it could not ignore the apparent inconsistency between the registration of the FIR and the timing of the alleged commission and detection of the offence.

According to police records, authorities recovered four AK-56 rifles, two AK-47 rifles, six magazines and 180 rounds of ammunition from the truck. Police also arrested four other accused in the case, including Jahangir Ahmad Parry and Ubaid-ul-Islam, who were travelling in the vehicle.

Investigators alleged that

Ashique Ahmad Nengroo, a Pakistan-based operative of the militant outfit Jaish-e-Mohammed, sent the weapons, NDTV reported.

During the proceedings, the High Court also took note of another irregularity concerning the case records. The court observed that the original FIR had not been placed on record along with the final police report.

Instead, the bench noted, a copy of the FIR was obtained from the prosecution and annexed to the case file for the court's reference.

"From the record, it is forthcoming that the original FIR No. 0061/2019 of Police Station, Lakhanpur (Kathua) was submitted before the Chief Judicial Magistrate, Kathua, which was sent by the court of 3rd Additional Sessions Judge (designating Judge under NIA Act), Jammu in terms of an order dated 10.03.2020, but no original FIR No. 0061/2019 dated 12.09.2019 came to be received from the court of Chief Judicial Magistrate, Kathua," the court observed.

The bench further noted that only a copy of the FIR procured from the prosecution was available before it.

Taking serious note of the discrepancies, the High Court has directed the investigating officer to appear in person at the next hearing and explain the circumstances surrounding the registration of the FIR and the absence of the original document from the court record.

The matter is scheduled for further hearing on a later date.

CUET-UG: NTA Announces Re-test For Over 3,700 Students

Press Trust Of India

New Delhi: More than 3,700 CUET (UG) 2026 candidates who left their examination centres after a technical glitch delayed the start of Shift 1 of the test on Saturday will be given a one-time opportunity to reappear for the entrance exam for undergraduate admissions, the National Testing Agency said.

Following the disruption, examination timings were revised at the affected centres and "most candidates (about 95 per cent) were able to complete their exam once it resumed", the National Testing Agency (NTA) said.

"Most candidates were able to complete their exam once it resumed. We understand that 3,765 candidates who were present and had completed biometric registration chose to leave before the exam could restart," the NTA said on X.

"For these candidates, NTA will hold a rescheduled examination as a one-time measure," it added.

The new date and details will be announced separately, the agency said.

It also said that the technical service provider, TCS iON, "has been asked to conduct a root-cause analysis and submit its report immediately" after the glitch delayed the commencement of the examination at some centres.

"Earlier today, some centres faced a technical glitch that delayed the start of Shift 1. We know this was stressful, and we're sorry for the anxiety it caused. The technical service provider, TCS iON, has been asked to conduct a root-cause analysis and submit its report immediately," the agency said.

"We know that today's unfortunate technical disruption caused distress for some CUET (UG) 2026 candidates. Candidates who did their biometric registration and were present at their examination centres today (i.e., 30.05.2026 in Shift-1), but couldn't complete their examination due to this technical glitch, will get another opportunity for examination," the NTA said on X.

Earlier, the agency had said that the technical issue had been resolved and the examination was being conducted with full compensatory time so that no candidate was disadvantaged.

"TCS has reported that a technical glitch at their end delayed the commencement of CUET UG 2026 at some centres on Saturday. The issue has since been resolved, and the exam is being conducted with full compensatory time so that no candidate is disadvantaged," the NTA said on X.

"Afternoon session timing (revised): Reporting/entry from 2:30 pm; examination begins at 4:00 pm instead of 3:00 pm," the NTA said.

Morning session candidates are being given the full duration of the paper and are allowed to exit only after completion of the test, it said.

"NTA sincerely regrets the inconvenience caused to the students and parents," the agency said.

The NTA also provided a helpline number - +91-11-40759000 - and email support - cuet-ug@nta.ac.in - for any assistance.

In a statement, K Krithivasan, CEO and Managing Director at TCS, said that "a brief technical issue" caused a delay of around two hours in the morning shift of the CUET-UG examination.

"The issue was promptly identified and resolved by our technical teams and the examination has since resumed without any impact to the sanctity of the exam. We regret the inconvenience," the company said in a statement.

It added that its teams are "actively monitoring all systems" and remain committed to working closely with NTA "to ensure seamless conduct of the computer based tests."

Several students and parents reported the delay on X and alleged lack of communication at the examination centres.

"CUET 2026 students forced to wait 3-4 hours due to technical glitches. No proper communication, no arrangements, students and parents suffering in extreme heat. This is unacceptable for a national-level exam," an X user posted.

"CUET scheduled to conclude at 10:30 am today has not yet commenced at the centre Webinfotron Technologies adjacent to Ganga International School, Khasra No. 265, Delhi 110081. Parents are waiting since morning for their children with no official update," another user said.

"CUET exam delayed. The centre for most kids was many miles away from the main city. Kids and parents left at 6 am to reach the centre on time. At 11 am, parents are told that the exam has not even started. Meanwhile, kids are just sitting inside waiting," said another.

The Common University Entrance Test-Undergraduate, or CUET-UG, is a standardised, national-level entrance exam conducted by the NTA for admissions into undergraduate degree programmes across central, state, and select private universities.

One Day of Extreme Heat Causes 3,400 Excess Deaths Across India: Study

Press Trust Of India

New Delhi: A single day of extreme heat causes about 3,400 excess deaths across India, while a five-day heatwave causes nearly 30,000, a study has estimated.

Researchers Piyush Narang and Ashok Gadgil from the India Energy and Climate Center at the University of California Berkeley, US, said that even though global studies highlight a surging heat-related mortality, granular spatial-temporal data on how heatwaves affect mortality in India's districts remain inaccessible to common researchers.

The team adapted findings from a multi-city analysis of heat-related mortality across 10 cities in India to estimate excess deaths across all districts in the country.

"Excess deaths" is a public health metric that refers to the difference between total deaths over a specific period and deaths that could be expected to occur based on historical data.

The study, published in the journal *Frontiers in Environmental Health*, integrated district-level mortality rates from the Civil Registration System and population projections for 2024 to obtain district-level excess death estimates under one-day and five-day heatwave scenarios.

"We estimate that a single day of extreme heat causes approximately 3,400 excess deaths nationally; a five-day heatwave causes nearly 30,000," the authors wrote.

Heatwave to severe heatwave conditions were prevailing in north, central and east

India, with temperatures consistently exceeding 45 degrees Celsius in Madhya Pradesh, Rajasthan, parts of Uttar Pradesh and Haryana over past few days.

Mapping heat-induced mortality risk to individual districts revealed that the state of Uttar Pradesh alone accounts for about 8,100 excess deaths during a five-day heatwave, while excess deaths in districts, including Ahmedabad, Jaipur and Surat, each exceed 250 in a single event.

A 2.3-fold disproportion between mortality burden and economic capacity was found in the five highest death-burden states of Uttar Pradesh, Bihar, Madhya Pradesh, Rajasthan, and Gujarat, which together accounted for 66 per cent of the country's excess deaths while contributing only 29 per cent of India's GDP.

The result has direct and urgent implications for how India designs and funds its heat resilience architecture, the researchers said.

"The 2.3x GDP disproportion documented here provides a quantitative basis for arguing that federal adaptation investment, including funding under the National Disaster Management Authority and the National Action Plan on Climate Change, should be weighted toward high-burden, low-GDP states rather than allocated in proportion to population or administrative capacity," they wrote.

The top 100 districts, comprising nearly one-third of India's population, accounted for 44 per cent of excess deaths projected for a five-day heatwave event, the researchers found.

CONTD. FROM FRONT PAGE

₹384-Crore Qurbani

business worth an estimated ₹384 crore.

The annual festival traditionally triggers one of Kashmir's largest seasonal economic activities, involving livestock traders, transporters, commission agents, fodder suppliers and market operators.

Major livestock markets, particularly the Eidgah mandi in Srinagar, witnessed a steady rush of buyers in the days leading up to Eid. Similar scenes were witnessed in district-level animal markets as families visited mandis to purchase animals for sacrifice.

Sales Fall Short of Expectations

However, despite the scale of trade and visible activity in the markets, dealers said business did not translate into the kind of sales seen in previous years.

"The stock this year sold far less than the previous year," Mehraj-ud-Din said, adding that a significant number of dealers were left with unsold animals despite the festive demand.

Traders attributed the slowdown to a combination of factors, including higher livestock prices, changing spending patterns and subdued purchasing power among consumers.

Many buyers, they said, appeared more cautious in their spending this year, even as the tradition of Qurbani continued to draw participation across the Valley.

A Market Full, Buyers Few?

The contrast between the massive inflow of livestock and relatively slower sales has become one of the defining features of this year's Eid market.

While the Valley witnessed one of its largest seasonal arrivals of sacrificial animals, traders say demand failed to keep pace with supply, resulting in lower-than-expected sales and leftover stock for several dealers.

For many traders, the season highlighted both the scale of Kashmir's Eid economy and the growing challenges facing traditional markets amid changing economic realities.

Eid-al-Azha remains one of Kashmir's most significant religious festivals and continues to drive large-scale livestock movement and trade every year. However, this year's experience suggests that a thriving market presence does not always guarantee brisk business. (With inputs from KNO)

Amarnath Yatra to

administrations, and officials from multiple line departments responsible for the annual pilgrimage attended the meeting.

Speaking to reporters after the meeting, Garg expressed satisfaction over the pace of preparations and said that the administration is working on a comprehensive plan to provide a hassle-free and secure pilgrimage experience to devotees.

"Registrations for the Yatra were received, and the response has been very encouraging. We expect a significant number of pilgrims this year. Today's review meeting was aimed at assessing preparedness, identifying any gaps and ensuring that all departments work in close coordination to provide the best possible facilities to yatis," he said.

The meeting focused on a wide range of arrangements required for the smooth conduct of the pilgrimage, including accommodation facilities, healthcare services, sanitation measures, traffic regulation, drinking water supply, electricity, communication networks and

disaster response preparedness along both the traditional Pahalgam route and the shorter Baltal route.

The Div Com said that all stakeholders, including hoteliers, ponywalas, and others, who also attended the meeting, provided positive feedback on the successful conduct of the Yatra, as they have experience and have been part of the pilgrimage in past years as well.

He reviewed the progress of infrastructure development and maintenance works being carried out ahead of the pilgrimage season, and special attention was paid to ensuring that all facilities are completed and made operational well before the arrival of the first batch of pilgrims.

During the meeting, Deputy Commissioner (DC) Anantnag, Dr Bilal Mohi-Ud-Din Bhat, presented a detailed briefing on the arrangements being undertaken by the district administration. He outlined the status of ongoing works, preparedness of lodging facilities, sanitation management plans, healthcare infrastructure and the coordination mechanism established among departments to ensure uninterrupted services during the Yatra period.

Div Com Garg said the successful conduct of the pilgrimage depends on seamless inter-departmental coordination and timely execution of assigned responsibilities. He directed all concerned agencies to expedite pending works and maintain strict adherence to deadlines.

"Our objective is to ensure that every pilgrim undertakes the sacred journey in a safe, comfortable and well-managed environment. All departments must remain proactive, responsive and fully prepared before the commencement of the Yatra," he said.

Healthcare preparedness emerged as one of the key focus areas during the review. Authorities discussed deployment of medical teams at strategic locations, establishment of emergency healthcare units, availability of ambulances and oxygen support systems, and stocking of essential medicines to tackle medical emergencies, particularly considering the high-altitude terrain and challenging weather conditions.

Security arrangements also figured prominently in the discussions, with officials reviewing plans to maintain a robust security grid throughout the pilgrimage period. Measures relating to crowd management, surveillance, emergency response and smooth movement of pilgrims along the Yatra routes were thoroughly assessed.

Traffic management strategies aimed at ensuring hassle-free movement of pilgrims and minimising disruptions on major roads were also reviewed.

Officials discussed plans for regulating vehicular movement, improving parking facilities and strengthening communication systems for real-time coordination during the pilgrimage.

The annual Shri Amarnath Ji Yatra, which attracts lakhs of devotees from across India and abroad, holds immense religious significance.

Officials present at the meeting assured the Divisional Commissioner that all arrangements are being implemented on a priority basis and that preparations are progressing according to schedule to facilitate the successful and peaceful conduct of the Annual Amarnath Yatra 2026.(KNO)

Fresh Hailstorm Hits

anxiety among residents, particularly those

dependent on horticulture and agriculture, as hailstorms during this period can potentially damage fruit crops and orchards.

Locals said the hailstorm struck without warning, adding to worries already triggered by repeated spells of rain, gusty winds and unstable weather witnessed across the Valley in recent weeks.

While there was no immediate assessment of losses, growers in the affected areas expressed concern over possible damage to crops and fruit-bearing trees.

Shopian and Kupwara are among Kashmir's key horticulture districts, and weather fluctuations during the growing season are closely monitored by farmers due to their impact on production and yields.

The latest hailstorm is part of a continuing pattern of unpredictable weather that has affected several parts of Kashmir this season, disrupting normal conditions and keeping farming communities on edge.

Officials had not issued any immediate estimate of damage till the filing of this report.

J&K Hajj Pilgrims

not accompany them on their flights.

"We have been preparing for months and bought gifts and essentials for our families back home. Now, suddenly, we are being told that most of our luggage will come separately by road. We are worried our belongings may get damaged or delayed," one pilgrim said.

Another pilgrim said that for years, Hajj travellers were allowed to carry 40 kilograms of baggage and questioned the need for the change.

"Every year there seems to be a new rule. Elderly pilgrims especially find it difficult to understand these changes. We request the authorities to either restore the earlier allowance or ensure our luggage reaches safely and on time," he said.

Responding to the concerns, Jammu and Kashmir Hajj Committee Chief Executive Officer Dr Shujaat Ahmad Qureshi said the restrictions were necessitated by operational limitations caused by the ongoing runway maintenance work at Srinagar Airport.

"As per Hajj guidelines, pilgrims are entitled to 40 kilograms of check-in baggage and seven kilograms of hand baggage. However, due to the runway maintenance work and the NOTAM in force at Srinagar Airport, certain operational restrictions have become unavoidable," he said.

Dr Qureshi said Akasa Air, which is operating Hajj flights from Srinagar, Ahmedabad, Cochin and Bangalore embarkation points, has reduced baggage carriage to 35 kilograms plus seven kilograms of hand baggage due to technical and operational requirements.

He said Srinagar faces additional constraints because aircraft operating to the airport cannot land with a heavier load during the runway repair period.

"Because of these limitations, around 30 kilograms of baggage belonging to each pilgrim will be transported separately by road from Ahmedabad to Srinagar," he said.

According to the Hajj Committee, pilgrims returning to Srinagar will be permitted to carry five kilograms of check-in baggage and seven kilograms of hand baggage on their flights, while the remaining luggage will arrive separately.

Dr Qureshi said efforts were being made to ensure that the baggage reaches Srinagar

within three to four days after the pilgrims' arrival.

He advised pilgrims carrying valuable, essential or perishable items to keep them in the baggage accompanying them on the flight.

Meanwhile, Cabinet Minister Sakeena Itoo said the government would examine the concerns raised by pilgrims.

Speaking after an Awami Darbar in Pulwama, she said the administration was aware of the issue and understood the sensitivities involved.

"Whatever concerns have been brought to our notice regarding Hajj pilgrims will be carefully looked into. We understand the sentiments attached to the pilgrimage, and every issue will be examined in detail," she said.

The issue has generated concern among families awaiting the return of pilgrims, with many hoping that authorities will either reconsider the restrictions or ensure the smooth and timely delivery of baggage to Kashmir.

8th Central Pay

issued by the Finance Department (Codes Division), the Commission has scheduled an interaction and presentation session with the J&K Government on June 1, 2026, from 11:00 AM to 1:00 PM at Meeting Hall CR-3, SKICC, near Centaur Hotel, Srinagar.

The meeting will be led by the Chief Secretary and attended by senior officers from various departments. Those invited include Additional Chief Secretaries of Jal Shakti, Power Development, Tourism, Agriculture, Finance, Public Works (R&B) and the Chief Minister's Secretariat.

Principal Secretaries of the Home Department, Lieutenant Governor's Secretariat and Election Department, along with the Commissioner Secretary, General Administration Department, Commissioner Secretary, Law, Justice and Parliamentary Affairs Department, and all Heads of Departments of the Finance Department, have also been directed to participate.

The visit is aimed at gathering inputs and representations from stakeholders regarding pay structures, service conditions and other issues to be considered by the 8th Central Pay Commission during its review process. (KNC)

Army Chief: Ready

have become highly transparent, General Dwivedi said, adding that military planners must remain cautious about deployments and force protection measures.

"What we have seen over a period of time is 24/7. The battlefield is so transparent that every movement is known to the other side. Therefore, we have to be very cautious in terms of our deployment, in terms of our employment, and the protection which is required to protect our troops as well as the civilians in the border areas," he said.

Referring to information warfare lessons from Operation Sindoor, General Dwivedi said public trust and national cohesion would remain decisive factors in future conflicts.

"Victory is always in the mind. It's not on the ground. Therefore, information warfare is only successful if the whole of the nation gets together and trusts the people who are giving the information," he said.

"If that happens, I can assure you that the nation which trusts each other and all these stakeholders will always win the war," the

Army Chief added.

He said that Operation Sindoor demonstrated India's resolve and the armed forces' ability to deliver a calibrated, precise, and purposeful response.

"This operation underlined the importance of integrated planning, real-time intelligence, precision targeting, strong air defence, secure communications, and synergy across domains," the Army chief said.

He said the Indian Army is fully conscious of modernisation transformation.

"We are transforming ourselves into a future-ready force under the 'Decade of Transformation', wherein the role of the younger generation would be pivotal," he added.

He noted the raising of industry drone battalions, Divyastra batteries, Shaktiman regiments, Bhairav battalions, and other technology-enabled structures from within our resources is part of this transformation.

The general said the next major step is networking and data-centricity, where data becomes a strategic resource, and decision-making becomes faster, smarter, and more resilient.

Talking about the use of drones and other indigenous weapons, General Dwivedi said since he has taken over, he has been talking about "Eagle on the Arm".

"This means every soldier should have an 'eagle' in their hand... Every soldier should have the capability to fly a drone. You have seen that in our academies and other places, training for this is ongoing, simulators are there," he said.

He further said that the long-awaited military theaterisation process is on the "right track", with deliberations within the Chiefs of Staff Committee completed and a report submitted to Defence Minister Rajnath Singh for review.

All major concerns and interests of the three services have been accommodated in the proposed structure, he said.

General Dwivedi said service chiefs would continue to be responsible for "raise, train and sustain", while the theatre commanders would be tasked with operational orchestration of forces.

"We are hopeful that the next setup which is coming under the new CDS should be able to take the journey forward and in the next two to three years, we should be able to see it happening on the ground," he said.

Earlier in the day, General Dwivedi reviewed the passing-out parade of the 150th course at NDA, Khadakwasla, where he said that Operation Sindoor had set a benchmark for when national will was expressed with precision and resolve, defining India's response to provocation.

"From contested grey zones to high-velocity hybrid warfare, today's security environment demands that those who serve must think sharply as they act," he said.

"Operation Sindoor demonstrated that and set the benchmark when national will was expressed with precision and resolve, defining how Bharat responds to provocation. That standard now belongs to you to uphold," the Army Chief said.

Calling the occasion "a poignant and a particularly personal moment", General Dwivedi recalled passing out from the same quarterdeck over 42 years ago.

"Today, as I stand before you at the far end of a life in uniform, preparing to doff mine as you prepare to don yours, I can tell you with certainty: what you begin here endures forever," he said.

Rainfall Brings Relief from Heat across Jammu Region



Observer News Service

SRINAGAR: Fresh rainfall across parts of Jammu region on Saturday brought relief from the prevailing heatwave in Samba, Kathua and Reasi districts, while heavy showers triggered inundation at the Shri Mata Vaishno Devi base camp, disrupting normal movement in the area. The rainfall comes amid prolonged sweltering conditions in Jammu districts, where rising temperatures and heatwave conditions had caused discomfort and concern, with weather conditions expected to intensify

again from June 1.

Heavy rainfall led to significant waterlogging at the base camp of Shri Mata Vaishno Devi, where large portions of the area were reported inundated following the showers.

At the same time, fresh rain in Samba and adjoining districts brought down temperatures and created comparatively pleasant weather conditions after days of intense heat.

The showers were welcomed by farmers, particularly in border areas, who said the rainfall had improved soil moisture and strengthened prospects for sowing seasonal

crops and preparing paddy nurseries.

Locals said the rainfall had generated optimism among the farming community, which had been awaiting favorable weather conditions for agricultural activities.

Kathua and Reasi districts also witnessed rainfall, providing respite to inhabitants grappling with high temperatures during the recent heat spell.

According to KNT, the change in weather brought temporary relief across the region even as concerns remain over the expected rise in temperatures from the beginning of June.



'Spend a Day in Jammu' Campaign Launched Ahead of Amarnath Yatra

Observer News Service

JAMMU: Several Jammu-based organizations have launched a "Spend a Day in Jammu" campaign ahead of the annual Amarnath Yatra, seeking to promote the city as a religious and tourist destination and encourage pilgrims to spend more time exploring the region.

The initiative comes amid concerns over comparatively lower religious and tourist footfall in Jammu, with many pilgrims and visitors preferring to proceed directly to the Shri Mata Vaishno Devi shrine instead of staying in Jammu city and nearby areas.

As part of the campaign, organizers have released a special poster highlighting Jammu's major religious, historical and tourist attractions in an effort to showcase the region's cultural and spiritual heritage. Members associated

with the campaign said the initiative aims to draw attention to Jammu's tourism potential and encourage travelers to experience local destinations, heritage sites and hospitality.

One member associated with the campaign said that if the "Spend a Day in Jammu" initiative materializes and gains wider public response, it could significantly boost Jammu's economy and benefit local businesses dependent on pilgrim and tourist activity.

The campaign has also urged the Tourism Department to provide free sightseeing bus services for devotees during the Amarnath Yatra to facilitate travel to important destinations across Jammu.

According to KNT, organizers believe the initiative could help strengthen Jammu's tourism profile and increase economic activity during the pilgrimage season.

J&K Govt to Move Supreme Court on TET Issue, Review Plea Next Week

Observer News Service

SRINAGAR: The Jammu and Kashmir government on Saturday said it will move the Supreme Court with a review petition on the Teacher Eligibility Test (TET) issue, reiterating its commitment to protecting the interests of teachers affected by the matter.

Education Minister Sakina Itoo said the review petition has already been prepared and is scheduled to be filed before the apex court next week.

In a statement posted on X, Itoo said the government has been actively pursuing the issue and has consistently taken steps to address concerns raised by teachers.

"On the TET issue concerning JK teachers, the Government has always acted responsibly and proactively. We have consistently taken up this matter and, more importantly, followed it up with concrete action," she said.

The minister said the government had earlier taken measures to safeguard the interests of teachers and has now formally sanctioned the filing of a review petition before the Supreme Court.

According to her, the Department of Law, Justice

and Parliamentary Affairs, through a communication issued on May 26, 2026, directed its standing counsel to initiate the required legal proceedings.

"The review petition has been prepared and will be filed before the Hon'ble Supreme Court in the coming week. We remain fully committed to safeguarding the interests of our teachers," Itoo said.

The development comes months after the School Education Department (SED) placed its order relating to the conduct of the Teacher Eligibility Test in abeyance.

In an order issued in the last week of February, the department stated that the government decision designating the Jammu and Kashmir Board of School Education (JKBOSE) and the State School Standards Authority (SSSA) as the nodal agency for conducting TET would remain suspended until further orders.

The earlier order had designated JKBOSE and SSSA as the nodal agency for conducting the Teacher Eligibility Test across the Union Territory in compliance with directions issued by the Supreme Court.

The department had directed JKBOSE to immedi-

ately operationalise the TET examination framework in line with an action plan formulated during a meeting held in October 2025. The board was also tasked with preparing and notifying a detailed examination schedule and coordinating with agencies including the National Informatics Centre (NIC), School Education Department, Higher Education Department and Home Department to ensure logistical, technical and security arrangements for the examination process.

The TET issue gained significance after the School Education Department, while citing legal advice received from the Department of Law, Justice and Parliamentary Affairs, indicated that teachers who failed to qualify the Teacher Eligibility Test within the prescribed timeframe could face compulsory retirement and would be entitled only to the terminal benefits admissible under rules.

The government's decision to seek a review of the Supreme Court verdict is being seen as an effort to secure relief for affected teachers and address concerns arising from the implementation of TET-related requirements in Jammu and Kashmir.

Excise Department Intensifies Drive against Illicit Poppy Cultivation



Observer News Service

SRINAGAR: In a major crackdown on illegal crop cultivation, a multi-departmental team on Saturday carried out a comprehensive destruction drive against illicit poppy cultivation in Chowari village of Tehsil Keller, District Shopian.

The operation was conducted under a well-coordinated and collaborative effort involving the Excise Department Shopian, Jammu & Kashmir Police, Revenue Department, Agriculture Department, and the Forensic Science Laboratory (FSL).

During the drive, a significant area under illegal poppy cultivation was identified and destroyed on the spot. The action forms part of the ongoing efforts of the district administration and law enforcement agencies to eradicate the menace of illicit narcotic crop cultivation and curb drug-related activities in the region.

Following the success-

ful destruction of the illegal crops, a First Information Report (FIR) has been registered against the accused under relevant provisions of law.

A thorough legal investigation has been initiated to identify all individuals involved and ensure strict action against violators.

The district administration and law enforcement agencies have reiterated their commitment to maintaining a zero-tolerance policy towards narcotic cultivation and trafficking. They emphasized that similar drives will continue across the district with full force to dismantle the infrastructure supporting illicit poppy cultivation and safeguard the community from the harmful effects of narcotic substances.

The public has also been urged to cooperate with authorities and report any information regarding illegal cultivation or drug-related activities to help strengthen the collective fight against the drug menace.

Altaf Bukhari Urges Govt to Intervene Over Hajj Pilgrims' Luggage Concerns

Observer News Service

SRINAGAR: Jammu and Kashmir Apni Party president Syed Muhammad Altaf Bukhari on Saturday expressed concern over the reported difficulties being faced by Hajj pilgrims from Jammu and Kashmir regarding baggage restrictions during their return journey from Saudi Arabia.

Bukhari said pilgrims, who are preparing to return home after completing the sacred pilgrimage, were allegedly being subjected to unnecessary hardship due to what he described as an insensitive and non-cooperative approach by the concerned Hajj authorities and airline officials.

The remarks come amid reports from pilgrims that baggage regulations communicated to them before departure to Saudi Arabia were now being altered for the return journey, triggering anxiety and uncertainty among travelers.

In a statement, Bukhari said pilgrims had stated that before leaving for Saudi Arabia they were instructed to reduce their luggage by 15 kilograms.

"Now they are being informed that on the Ahmedabad-Srinagar sector they will be allowed only 5 kg of check-in baggage and 7 kg of hand baggage, while the remaining luggage—up to 30 kg—will be transported separately by road," he said.

Bukhari said the abrupt decision had caused grave concern among the pilgrims, many of whom feared that sacred items, gifts, and perishable

goods purchased during their stay in Saudi Arabia could be damaged, lost, or spoiled during transit.

He said such uncertainty had added needless stress and anguish to the journey of pilgrims who had already completed an important religious obligation.

"The Jammu and Kashmir Government must intervene immediately and take up the matter with the Hajj Committee of India and the concerned airline authorities," Bukhari said.

He maintained that pilgrims who had completed a sacred journey deserved dignity, respect, and proper facilitation.

"They should not be subjected to such avoidable inconvenience and mental anguish," he said, as per KNT.

Ladakh Administration Opens Selection Process for Environmental Authority Chief

Observer News Service

LEH: The Administration of Union Territory of Ladakh has invited Expressions of Interest (Eoi) from eligible candidates for appointment as Chairman of the Union Territory Environment Impact Assessment Authority (UTEIAA), constituted under the provisions of the Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) Notification, 2006.

The move is aimed at filling a key regulatory position responsible for overseeing environmental appraisal and decision-making related to environmental clearances for projects within the Union Territory.

The administration said the Chairman shall be a professional or expert fulfilling eligibility criteria laid down under Appendix VI of the EIA Notification dated September 19, 2006.

As per the notified criteria, eligible candidates must possess specified professional qualifications and experience, while experts are required to have at least 15 years of relevant field experience or 10 years of experience with an advanced degree in the concerned field.

The Chairman will preside



over meetings of the authority and guide appraisal and decision-making processes relating to grant of Environmental Clearance for projects falling within the jurisdiction of the Union Territory of Ladakh, in accordance with the EIA Notification, 2006 and guidelines issued by the Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change.

Interested candidates have been asked to submit their Expression of Interest along with a brief résumé or curriculum vitae detailing educational qualifications, relevant experience, and contact information.

Applications must reach the Office of the Wildlife Warden at Leh, functioning as the Member Secretary and Secretariat of UTEIAA, on or before June 15, 2026.

According to KNT, the administration said applications may also be submitted through email.

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JKB/ADV/IAPMSEC/2026-27

Dated: 11-05-2026

Registered A.D.

- M/s Srinagar Golden Transport Service (Borrower Firm)
Unit at Parimpora Srinagar
Contact No: 9906827799
- Mr. Abdul Rashid Tichoo (Borrower/Proprietor/Mortgagor)
S/O Mohammad Sultan Tichoo
R/O Gogji Bagh, Srinagar-190008
Contact No: 9906827799

DEMAND NOTICE UNDER SECTION 13(2) OF THE SECURITISATION AND RECONSTRUCTION OF FINANCIAL ASSETS AND ENFORCEMENT OF SECURITY INTEREST ACT-2002.

Dear Sir(s)/Madam(s),

This Demand Notice under Section 13 (2) of the Securitization and Reconstruction of Financial Assets and Enforcement of Security Interest Act, 2002 (hereinafter referred to as "The Act") is issued by me, on 11th day of May 2026 as Authorized Officer of Jammu and Kashmir Bank Ltd duly empowered in accordance with the provisions of SARFAESI Act, 2002 for the reasons stated hereinafter:

Whereas, Business unit, Air Cargo of Jammu and Kashmir Bank (hereinafter called Bank) sanctioned credit facilities, details whereof is:

Account Number	Type of Facility	Title of account	Sanction No.	Date
025202100000679	CCMRT	M/S Srinagar Golden Transport Service	JKB/AIRCAR/ADV/18	15.12.2018

The said credit facilities are sanctioned against the following securities:

Primary Security:

- Assignment of Book debts/Receivables.

Collateral Security:

- Equitable mortgage of land measuring 18 Kanals, falling under khasra No 727/163-min (01 Kanal & 06 Marlas), under Khasra No.162-min (01 Kanal & 11 Marlas) of Khata No.365 & Khewat No.32, under Khasra No.154-min (01 Kanal) of Khata No.268 and Khewat No.20, under Khasra No.164-min (05 Kanal & 12 Marlas) of Khata No.207 and Khewat No.15, under Khasra No.165-min (04 Kanal & 12 Marlas) of Khata No.196 & Khewat No.12 and under Khasra No.163-min (03 Kanal & 19 Marlas) of Khata No.54 and Khewat No.05, situated at Mouza Gasoo, Tehsil North & District Srinagar in the name of Mr Abdul Rashid Tichoo. Whereas the above Credit Facilities were availed by you, as borrowers/partners after creation of security interest in the above referred properties (secured Assets) in favour of the Bank.

Whereas, you/ borrower has failed to maintain the credit facilities as per terms and conditions of the above referred sanction letter/s and other terms and conditions laid down in the documents executed by borrower in favour of the Bank, consequently borrower loan accounts as detailed below have been classified by the Bank as Non-Performing Asset on 02-05-2026 in accordance with the directives and guidelines of the Reserve Bank of India. The details of loan account are as under:

Type of Facility	Limit in Lacs	Date of NPA	Amount of NPA	Un-applied Interest as on 30.04.2026	BOS as on 03.05.2026
Cash Credit	60.00 lacs	02.05.2026	58,83,546.00	1,95,176.50	60,78,722.50
Total	60.00 lacs		58,83,546.00	1,95,176.50	60,78,722.50

In addition to amount outstanding as on 03.05.2026, Bank, as secured creditor, reserves the right to claim amount which may become due on account of crystallization of BG's and/or devolvement of LC's (if any)

Total outstanding as on 03.05.2026 is Rs 60,78,722.50 (Rupees Sixty Lakh Seventy Eight Thousand Seven Hundred Twenty Two & Paise Fifty Only) as stated herein above, together with interest at contractual rate thereon w. e. f. 01.05.2026 along with other charges and costs to be incurred by the Bank from time to time.

Whereas the above said amount is due and payable from you as borrower in the books of accounts of the Bank.

Now since borrower has failed and neglected to make payment of dues in respect of the said Loan duly secured by the securities mentioned hereinabove, and classification of borrowers account as a Non-Performing Asset, I above named as Authorized Officer in exercise of the powers vested in me under the provisions of SARFAESI Act, 2002 and rules made there under hereby give borrower notice under sub-section (2) of section 13 of Securities and Reconstruction of Financial Assets and Enforcement of Security Interest Act, 2002, and call upon borrower to pay in full and discharge borrower liabilities aggregating to Rs 60,78,722.50 (Rupees Sixty Lakh Seventy Eight Thousand Seven Hundred Twenty Two & Paise Fifty Only) as stated herein above, together with interest at contractual rate thereon w. e. f. 01.05.2026 along with other charges and costs to be incurred by the Bank from time to time and thereby discharge in full all borrowers liabilities to the Bank within a period of 60 days from the date of this Notice failing which the Bank shall at borrowers costs and risk exercise its powers under the Act. We further give borrower notice that in case of failure to pay the above mentioned outstanding amount with interest and costs till the date of payment within the stipulated period of 60 days, we shall be free to exercise all or any of the rights under sub-section (4) of section 13 of the said Act and;

- In the event of borrower's failure to pay amount as demanded, Bank is authorized under the Act to take possession, control and or management of the above mentioned secured asset together with the right to transfer by way of lease, assignment or sale, without the intervention of the court.
- All expenses incurred in the process shall be debited to borrower account and will be recovered from borrower. Moreover in the event of sale of the secured asset borrower liability is not discharged in full, Bank shall have right to recover the remaining balance from borrower.
- This demand notice is without prejudice to and shall not be construed as waiver of any other rights or remedies which Bank may have including the right to make further demands in respect of sums owing to Bank.
- Section 13(13) of the Act restrains borrower/mortgagor after the date of this notice from transferring by way of sale, lease or otherwise any of secured assets referred to in this notice, without prior written consent of the Bank and breach of the said provision is an offence punishable under Section 29 of the Act.
- This demand notice is recall of the loan amount and demand by the secured creditor of the outstanding amount without prejudice to the rights of the Bank to proceed as against the borrower/ company/ Directors/ mortgagors/ guarantors for initiating recovery proceedings under any other legal remedies.
- Borrower is also informed that it can redeem the secured asset within the time frame prescribed by section 13(8) of the Act.

Authorized Officer

Iran Says Hormuz Under Full Control, Warns Against US Interference

Agencies

TEHRAN : Iran's highest operational military command on Saturday said the strategic Strait of Hormuz remains under the full control of the country's armed forces and warned that any attempt by foreign military vessels to interfere in its management would trigger a response.

In a statement, the Khatam al-Anbiya Central Headquarters said the management of the vital waterway was being exercised "with full authority" by Iran's armed forces.

"All ships, commercial vessels, and oil tankers are exclusively required to transit through designated routes and obtain permission from the Islamic Revolution Guards Corps (IRGC) Navy," the statement said.

The command stressed that all vessels using the Strait of Hormuz must comply with established regulations, warning

that violations would "seriously jeopardize the security of their passage".

It also issued a stern warning to foreign naval forces operating in the region.

"Any action by military vessels aimed at interfering in the management of the Strait of Hormuz or creating disruption in navigation will be targeted by the Armed Forces of the Islamic Republic of Iran," it said.

The statement comes amid heightened tensions in the Gulf following the recent conflict involving Iran, Israel and the United States.

Iran has imposed tighter controls over the Strait of Hormuz, through which roughly one-fifth of the world's oil and gas supplies pass, restricting access to vessels belonging to the United States and its allies that participated in or supported what Tehran describes as the US-Israeli war against the Islamic Republic.

According to Iranian officials,



stricter measures were introduced after US President Donald Trump announced a blockade of Iranian vessels and ports, a move Tehran says violated the

terms of a ceasefire earlier declared by Washington.

The IRGC Navy has also pledged to enforce what it described as a "historic" directive

issued by Leader of the Islamic Revolution Ayatollah Seyyed Mojtaba Khamenei regarding the Persian Gulf and the Strait of Hormuz.

Meanwhile, a regional analyst said recent developments suggest Tehran is entering negotiations with Washington from a position of growing confidence.

Sultan Barakat, professor of public policy at Hamad Bin Khalifa University in Doha, told Al Jazeera that time appeared to be working in Iran's favour rather than that of the United States.

Speaking about ongoing discussions between Tehran and Washington, Barakat said financial issues remained part of the negotiations, particularly Iranian assets frozen abroad.

"But the real money that Iran, I think, is after is the money that is now being held in China. This is more than USD 40 billion in return for oil that Iran has already exported to China," he said.

Barakat argued that Iran no longer viewed immediate access to those funds as essential for its survival.

"They don't need the cash in hand at the moment in order to show that they are capable of surviving the American attack. That has already been done," he said.

According to Barakat, the balance of negotiations has shifted in Tehran's favour as Washington has gradually softened some of its earlier demands.

"At the beginning, Trump was very clear. It's a red line. They need to do this, one, two, three, four. There will be zero enrichment, zero this, zero that; they have to come to accept our terms," he said.

"But what we've seen over the last few weeks, he is walking back one step at a time," Barakat added.

The remarks come amid continuing diplomatic efforts to resolve tensions between Iran and the United States following weeks of military confrontation and uncertainty over the future of regional security arrangements.

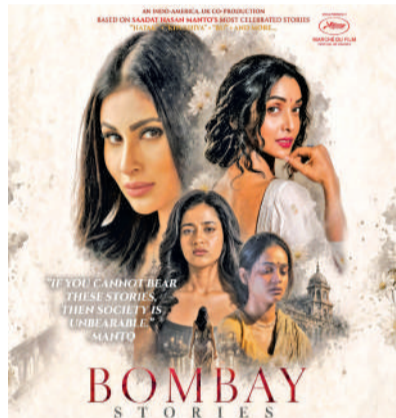
J&K Filmmaker Tariq Khan's 'Bombay Story' Premieres at Cannes

KO Web Desk

SRINAGAR – Acclaimed Mumbai-based Kashmiri filmmaker and producer Tariq Khan has brought laurels to Jammu & Kashmir with the world premiere of his latest feature film *Bombay Story* at the prestigious Cannes Film Festival.

The film, featuring actor Mouni Roy in a lead role, received an overwhelming response from international audiences and was screened to a packed theatre during the festival, marking another milestone in Khan's cinematic journey, a statement received by Kashmir Observer said.

Inspired by the literary works of renowned Urdu writer Saadat Hasan Manto, *Bombay Story* explores themes of human emotions, social realities and the vibrant spirit of Mumbai through a compelling narrative. The film boasts an ensemble cast comprising Mouni Roy, Anupria Goenka, Rahat Shah, Kasmii, Shoaib Nikash Shah and several others, whose performances were widely appreciated during the screening.



to bring Manto's timeless storytelling to a global audience through the medium of cinema. J&K Filmmaker Tariq Khan's *Bombay Story* Premieres at Cannes

"Manto's stories are timeless because they speak the truth of human existence without filters. *Bombay Story* is our humble attempt to carry forward that legacy and present it to the world through cinema," he said.

The Cannes premiere is being viewed as a significant achievement for Khan,

who hails from Jammu and Kashmir and has consistently showcased Indian and regional stories on international platforms.

Known for his distinctive storytelling style and socially relevant narratives, Khan has established himself as a prominent voice in contemporary Indian cinema. His earlier films, including *Identity Card*, *Lihaaf – The Quilt* and *Side A Side B*, have won accolades and awards at several international film festivals.

Industry observers said the successful screening of *Bombay Story* at Cannes is expected to boost the film's prospects for international distribution and wider theatrical releases across global markets.

The achievement has also been hailed as a proud moment for Jammu and Kashmir, with Khan once again placing the region on the global cinematic map through his work.

Tariq Khan Productions, the Mumbai-based production house behind the film, is known for producing meaningful and artistically rich cinema that resonates with audiences across cultures and geographical boundaries.

Half of Newborns in India Breastfed Within 1st Hour of Birth: NFHS-6

Press Trust Of India

NEW DELHI– The percentage of children under three years of age who were breastfed within an hour of birth increased by nearly 10 percentage points, rising from 41.8 per cent in 2019-2021 (NFHS-5) to 50.1 per cent in 2023-24, according to the National Family Health Survey-6 released on Friday.

The new data reveals that 95.6 per cent of children under six months of age were breastfed during the survey period.

The Union Health Ministry stated that NFHS-6 indicates encouraging progress in child nutrition outcomes, showing a positive trajectory toward achieving Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

However, exclusive breastfeeding for the first six months declined from 63.7 per cent in NFHS-5 to 55.8 per cent in NFHS-6, as reported in the data.

Moreover, the prevalence of stunting (low height for age) among children under five years has signifi-

cantly decreased from 35.5 per cent to 29.3 per cent, reflecting improvements in long-term nutritional outcomes.

The significant reduction in stunting prevalence provides strong evidence of progress in long-term nutritional transition and child health outcomes in India, according to the Health Ministry.

Severe wasting (being too thin for one's height) also declined sharply from 7.7 per cent to 5.2 per cent, while the prevalence of underweight children under five experienced a slight decrease from 32.1 per cent to 31.8 per cent.

Additionally, improvements were observed in infant and young child feeding practices.

The percentage of children aged 6-8 months receiving solid or semi-solid food along with breast milk increased from 45.9 per cent to 59.5 per cent.

These gains are attributed to collaborative efforts across various ministries through flagship initiatives such as POSHAN Abhiyaan,

Saksham Anganwadi, and POSHAN 2.0, alongside strengthened service delivery under the Integrated Child Development Services (ICDS).

Complementary interventions under the National Health Mission (NHM), including maternal and child health services, Nutrition Rehabilitation Centres (NRCs), Mother's Absolute Affection (MAA), Infant and Young Child Feeding, Iron and folic acid supplementation and growth monitoring, have further contributed to improved outcomes, the ministry noted.

The NFHS-6 was conducted during 2023-24 by the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare, with the International Institute for Population Sciences (IIPS) in Mumbai serving as the nodal agency.

Covering nearly 6.79 lakh households across 715 districts, the survey provides vital evidence on population, health, nutrition and family welfare indicators and supports evidence-based planning and programme implementation up to the district level.

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