

J&K Leads UTs In Census 2027 Self-Enumeration Ranks 8th Across India With 6.67 Lakh Online Entries



KO Web Desk

Srinagar: Jammu and Kashmir has emerged as the top-performing Union Territory and ranked eighth among all states and Union Territories in the self-enumeration phase of Census 2027, with more than 6.67 lakh households voluntarily submitting their details through the official online portal before the commencement of field operations.

Chief Principal Census Officer and Director Census Operations for Jammu and Kashmir and Ladakh, Amit Sharma, said on Monday that 6,67,517 households in Jammu and Kashmir and 7,009 households in Ladakh completed self-enumeration ahead of the House Listing Operations (HLO), which formally began across the country on Monday.

"J&K has emerged as the leading Union Territory and eighth among states in the country in self-enumeration under Census 2027. More than 6.67 lakh households voluntarily submitted their details through the official Self-Enumeration portal," Sharma told reporters.

He described the response as highly encouraging and said residents across Jammu and Kashmir actively participated in the exercise. According to him, Pulwama, Jammu and Kulgam districts recorded particularly strong participation during the self-enumeration phase.

Sharma also appreciated the response from residents of Leh and Kargil districts in Ladakh and thanked district administrations, census officials, field functionaries, media organisations and the public for contributing to the | [More on P6](#)

Drug-Addicted Youth Are Victims, Not Criminals: LG Sinha

» Says Every Rupee Spent On Drugs Fuels Terror » '923 FIRs Registered & Over 1,000 Peddlers Arrested'

Observer News Service

Srinagar: Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha on Monday gave an emotional and people-centric push to the ongoing Nasha Mukta Jammu Kashmir Abhiyaan, describing himself as "a member of your family" while assuring full support of the administration in the fight against drug addiction and narcotics abuse across the Union Territory.

Leading the Drug-Free J&K Padyatra in south Kashmir's Kulgam district, Sinha said the anti-drug campaign launched 51 days ago had evolved into a mass movement that has united people across Jammu



and Kashmir in a shared mission to free their villages and towns from the menace of drugs.

"I stand before you not only as your Lieutenant Governor but as a member of your family who shares your pain, your



I STAND BEFORE YOU NOT ONLY AS YOUR LG BUT AS A MEMBER OF YOUR FAMILY who shares your pain, your struggles, and your dream of a safe, empowered and drug-free J&K"

struggles, and your dream of a safe, empowered and drug-free Jammu Kashmir," Sinha

Full story on [kashmirobserver.net](#)

Milk Prices In J&K Raised By Rs 5 Per Litre

Agencies

Jammu: Milk prices across Jammu and Kashmir have been increased by Rs 5 per litre following a decision announced by the Jammu Kashmir Dairy Farmers Association (JKDFA), with the body citing mounting operational costs and inflationary pressures behind the hike.

The increase, announced on World Milk Day by JKDFA president Sandeep Singh Chib, is expected to impact consumers across both urban and rural areas of the Union Territory where milk remains a daily household necessity.

Chib said the decision to impose a flat Rs 5 increase per litre was taken after considering rising expenditure faced by dairy farmers and suppliers.

He cited escalating freight and transportation charges involved in bringing new breeds of cows and buffaloes from Punjab, along with broader inflationary trends affecting the dairy sector.

According to | [More on P6](#)

Justice Sanjeev Kumar Appointed Acting Chief Justice

KO Correspondent

Srinagar: The Union Ministry of Law and Justice on Monday notified the appointment of Justice Sanjeev Kumar as the Acting Chief Justice of the High Court of J&K and Ladakh.

According to a notification issued by the Department of Justice under Article 223 of the Constitution of India, the President appointed Justice Sanjeev Kumar to perform the

duties of the office of the Chief Justice consequent upon the appointment of Chief Justice Arun Palli as a Judge of the Supreme Court.

Born on April 8, 1966, in village Prehta Nagrota of Basohli Tehsil in Kathua, Justice Kumar received his early education at the local Government Middle School and later completed his matriculation from Government | [More on P6](#)

2013 Kulgam Murder Case

Conviction Overturned, HC Finds Gaps In Prosecution Case

M Ahmad

Srinagar: The High Court of J&K and Ladakh has set aside the conviction and life sentences of two persons in a 2013 Kulgam murder case, holding that the prosecution evidence was riddled with serious infirmities, material omissions, and inconsistencies that created substantial doubt about the truthfulness

and reliability of the police's case.

A Division Bench of Justice Sanjay Dhar and Justice Sanjay Parihar acquitted Ali Mohammad Dar and Muzamilla, who had been convicted by a trial court for the murder of Abdul Rashid Dar of Modergam, Kulgam. The deceased's body was recovered hanging from a tree in an orchard | [More on P6](#)

Commercial LPG Prices Hiked By Rs 42

Prices of commercial LPG - the one used in hotels and restaurants - as well as 5-kg market-priced LPG cylinders were on Monday hiked in line with global benchmarks, but rates of cooking gas used in household kitchens were kept unchanged. The price of commercial LPG was hiked by Rs 42 to | [More on P6](#)

Preparations Gather Pace For 57-Day Amarnath Yatra

Drone surveillance, enhanced highway security among key focus areas

Observer News Service

Jammu: Top civil and police officials on Monday reviewed security and logistical arrangements for the forthcoming annual Amarnath Yatra, with authorities stepping up preparations to ensure the smooth and safe conduct of the 57-day pilgrimage beginning July 3.

The pilgrimage to the holy cave shrine is scheduled to commence simultaneously from the traditional 48-kilometre Nunwan-Pahalgam route in Anantnag district and the shorter 14-kilometre Baltal route in Ganderbal district. The yatra will conclude on August 28 on the occasion of Raksha Bandhan.

Divisional Commissioner Jammu, Ramesh Kumar, and Inspector General of Police (IGP) Jammu, Bhim Sen Tuti, conducted separate inspections and review meetings to assess preparedness at key locations associated with the pilgrimage.

At Bhagwati Nagar in Jammu, the main base camp for pilgrims, the Divisional Commissioner inspected registration counters, RFID centres, accommodation facilities, sanitation arrangements, healthcare infrastructure | [More on P6](#)

Srinagar Airport To Shut Twice A Week From July

Runway Repair & Resurfacing Works Likely To Affect Around 2 Lakh Passengers



Observer News Service

Srinagar: Flight operations at Srinagar International Airport will remain suspended every Monday and Tuesday from July

through September as authorities undertake major runway repair and resurfacing works, officials said on Monday.

The revised closure schedule, which comes | [More on P6](#)

'Runway Curbs Force Haj Baggage Restriction'

The Union Ministry of Minority Affairs (MoMA) on Monday issued a clarification regarding the baggage restrictions imposed on Haj pilgrims returning to Srinagar, stating that the measures were necessitated by runway maintenance and operational limitations at | [More on P6](#)

RTI Exposes Oversight Gaps In ₹1.25 Cr Kashmir Beautification Project

The disclosure has placed renewed focus on accountability in publicly funded infrastructure schemes.

Syed Sammar Mehdi

Srinagar: Kashmir's heavily publicized beautification projects have come under fresh scrutiny after an RTI disclosure Monday revealed that ₹22.01 lakh was spent on a government-funded scheme without a completion certificate, audit report or third-party inspection. In Pattan, documents obtained by Advocate Hamid Rather from the Municipal Committee show that the expenditure was incurred on tiled pathways, concrete pathways and drains under the ₹1.25-crore Pattan Beautification



Project. The RTI response states that the project remains "ongoing" despite the spending already incurred. Records also show that an additional ₹36 lakh has been earmarked for the scheme in the 2026-27 budget, prompting fresh questions about oversight and accountability in

public works.

Those findings have triggered political criticism and renewed questions about how development projects are monitored after public funds are released.

Standing outside the municipal office, Rather described the disclosures as evidence of weak

financial oversight. He said completion certificates, audits and independent inspections serve as safeguards that help ensure public money is spent according to approved standards and technical specifications.

"Public funds require proper verification at every stage," he said. "People deserve to know whether the work has been completed according to the sanctioned plan and whether quality standards have been maintained." The RTI response indicates that the beautification project remains officially classified | [More on P6](#)

FUEL & LPG SUPPLIES IN J&K ARE NORMAL

- ✓
Adequate stock of Petrol, Diesel & LPG.
- ✓
Supplies are being replenished regularly.
- ✗
Avoid panic buying.

For Assistance / Information Contact:
Divisional level Control Rooms-FCS&CA

| | |
|--|--|
| <p>Jammu Division Deputy Director (Supplies) - 94192 03030 Assistant Director - 99062 41592</p> | <p>Kashmir Division Deputy Director (Supplies) - 96227 28755 Assistant Director - 99066 06336</p> |
|--|--|

Department of Information & Public Relations, J&K

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Dated: 01.06.2026

DIPK-1737/26



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Caffeine In Evening May Affect Quality Of Night-Time Sleep: Study

Press Trust Of India

A study has found that consuming caffeine in the evening may not always lead to less sleep or difficulty falling asleep, but can often affect the quality of sleep during the night. Researchers, including those from Poland's Wroclaw Medical University, said electroencephalography (EEG), by which brain's electrical activity is recorded, makes it possible to observe sleep duration or moments of awakening, as well as the biological quality of sleep itself. "EEG allows us to see not only whether a person is sleeping, but also how the

brain is sleeping," Donata Kurpas from the department of nursing, Wroclaw Medical University and author of the study published in the journal Nutrients, said. "Classical sleep assessment assesses sleep duration and its stages, whereas quantitative EEG analysis reveals more subtle changes, such as reduced slow-wave activity, which is an important marker of sleep depth and its restorative character," Kurpas said. Slow waves are a key component of deep sleep -- the phase responsible for bodily regeneration, restoration of energy resources, and proper brain function. "Caffeine may shorten sleep

or make it more difficult to fall asleep; however, even when sleep duration appears normal, it may reduce slow-wave activity and shift the EEG pattern toward a more "wakeful" brain," Kurpas said. Thirty two studies that looked at caffeine exposure and sleep-related EEG outcomes were analysed. The authors wrote, "Caffeine reliably alters the neurophysiological architecture of human sleep in a direction consistent with reduced sleep depth and weakened homeostatic recovery." "Emerging evidence further suggests that caffeine increases EEG complexity and shifts sleep dynamics toward a more excitation-dominant state," they said.

JAMMU & KASHMIR BOARD OF TECHNICAL EDUCATION

OFFICE JAMMU: IN THE PREMISES OF GOVT. POLYTECHNIC, BIKRAM CHOWK, JAMMU-180004
OFFICE SRINAGAR: BLOCK-C, OLD SECRETARIAT, SRINAGAR-190001

Website: www.jkbote.ac.in. Email: secretary-jkbote@jk.gov.in

Subject: Extension of date for filling of Admission forms for the academic year 2026-27.

NOTICE

In continuation to the extension notice issued by this office under endorsement no: BOTE/ADM/2026/1209-1213 dated 28-04-2026. In this connection, it is notified for the information of all the concerned Principals of Govt./Pvt Polytechnics of UT of JK/Ladakh and in the interest of General public, that the last date for filling of online admission forms for the academic year 2026 for various Engg/Non Engg courses offered by all the Polytechnics of UT of JK/Ladakh is hereby extended upto 12-06-2026, rest term and conditions laid down in the notification issued under no 14-BOTE of 2026 Dated 30-03-2026 by this office will remain same.

Secretary/Controller J&K,
BOTE Jammu/Srinagar

No: BOTE/ADM/2026/1544-60
DIPK-1727/26
Dated: 01-06-2026



EXPRESSION OF INTEREST (EOI)

Engagement of Content Development Experts Yuge Yugeen Bharat Museum (YYBM), New Delhi

The Ministry of Culture, Government of India, invites Expressions of Interest (EOI) from eligible professionals for engagement as Content Development Experts for the Yuge Yugeen Bharat Museum (YYBM), New Delhi, a flagship national initiative.

POSITIONS

- Content Director (01)
- Associate Content Director (02)
- Content Researchers (07)
- Young Museum Professionals (05)

Detailed EOI, eligibility criteria, application format, and other terms & conditions are available on the Ministry of Culture website www.culture.gov.in.

HOW TO APPLY

Interested candidates may submit their applications in the prescribed format along with supporting documents to:

Email: yybm-culture@gov.in
Last Date for Submission: 19 June 2026 (Friday), 3:00 PM

The Ministry of Culture reserves the right to accept or reject any application without assigning any reason.

CBC 09101/11/0013/2627

PUBLIC NOTICE

I have changed my name from (old name) ABDUL MAJID BHAT to (New name) ABDUL MAJEED BHAT. In future I will be known as (new Name) ABDUL MAJEED BHAT. If any body having any objection he/she may contact Passport Office, Srinagar within 7 days. After 7 days no objection will be accepted. ABDUL MAJEED BHAT PASSPORT NO. N5408267, mcb

OFFICE OF THE ASSISTANT REGIONAL TRANSPORT OFFICER BUDGAM

Subject:- Necessary Correction/change in address in data to the License No. JK-042008002995 issued in favour of ZAHOO AHMAD KHAN Parentage GHULAM AHMAD KHAN

Whereas an application has been received by one ZAHOO AHMAD KHAN Parentage GHULAM AHMAD KHAN wherein he claimed that the fathers Name has been wrongly recorded in the records of Driving Licenses as GH AHMAD KHAN which needs to be changed as GHULAM AHMAD KHAN also the Date of birth in license is entered as 02-02-1985 which needs to change as 02-05-1989.

Now therefore it is notified for the information of the general public that objections if any in this regard shall reach in written in the office of the Assistant Regional Transport office Budgam within a period of 7 days from the date of publication of this notice in the daily newspaper. After expiry of stipulated time no objection will be entertained.

Assistant Regional Transport officer
Budgam Kashmir
mcb

PUBLIC NOTICE

The electricity connection with consumer ID:0204040014815 registered in the name of Late Gulla Khan to be transferred in favour of Ashiq Hussain Khan, S/o: Late Mohammed Jafer, R/o. Gasiyar Hawal. If anybody has any objection, he/she may contact concerned department within 7 Days after that no objection shall be entertained.

Media Line Advt

Government of Jammu & Kashmir

Department Of Rural Development And Panchayati Raj Office Of The Block Development Officer Kanjiullar

Subject: Invitation for Expression of Interest (EOI) for Solid Waste Management in Block Kanjiullar District Shopian.

On behalf of the Government of Jammu and Kashmir, Expressions of Interest (EOI) from the eligible and interested agencies are hereby invited for the execution of a Solid Waste Management Plan in District Shopian Block Kanjiullar.

1. BACKGROUND:

The Solid Waste Management program aims to implement effective and scientific waste management practices in Block Kanjiullar in line with the Swachh Bharat Mission (Grameen). The program will cover the CD Block Kanjiullar comprising of 06 Gram Panchayats mentioned below:

| S No. | Name of Panchayat | Approximate No of Households | Other Establishments |
|-------|-------------------|------------------------------|----------------------|
| 1 | HP Batgund | 450 | 25 |
| 2 | Kanjiullar | 650 | 28 |
| 3 | Nowgam | 520 | 25 |
| 4 | Pudsoo | 650 | 22 |
| 5 | Shamsipora | 380 | 15 |
| 6 | Vehil | 550 | 45 |

2. SCOPE OF WORK:

The contracting agency will be responsible for the following processes:

❖ Solid Waste Collection

- Sanitation and door-to-door collection of both biodegradable and non-biodegradable waste from all households and other waste generators

covering all households, Schools, Offices, shops, factories, industrial establishments, etc. at least thrice a week. b) A Panchayat-wise schedule of waste collection shall further be notified in consultation with the concerned Block Development Officer and Gram Panchayat.

c) The intending agency shall collect all types of waste- door-to-door waste, waste from already installed dustbins, and legacy waste so that the objective of ODF plus is obtained and sustained.

d) Ensuring segregation of waste preferably at the household level and mandatorily at the already constructed segregation shed sites.

e) Effective and scientific management and disposal of collected waste in an environment friendly manner. A weekly review/report shall be submitted by halqa panchayat to ascertain the effectiveness of weekly disposal. Revenue realization

a) Conducting a fresh survey, in consultation with the field functionalities of the Rural Development Department, to update the household data and include commercial factories, business units, institutions, shops, etc. Collection of monthly Fees/ Charges from the households preferably in digital mode in consultation with the officials of this department.

b) Revenue generation through sustainable waste management practices, such as selling segregated dry waste to authorized dealers.

c) User charges collected shall be deposited in Halqa Panchayat Fund of concerned Gram Panchayat on a monthly basis out of which 10 to 40% (to be decided later) of the Fee/user charges so collected shall form a revenue part and the remaining shall be utilized for incurring the expenditure on account of sanitation workdone.

Maintenance a) Maintenance and upkeep of departmental garbage collection vehicles, and other amenities used for waste collection and ensuring their dedicated use only for solid waste management purposes.

b) The Vehicles used for waste collection shall be departmental and the agency has to use these Vehicles etc. by engaging its own staff and ensuring the vehicle's maintenance in all respects.

c) The intending agency shall be responsible for the smooth handing over of all assets (Vehicles/machinery/ Civil Structures and possession of the sites in good condition to the concerned department after completing the allotment of one year (without any damage)

Manpower & Machinery a) The contracting agency has to engage sweepers/ waste collectors, Drivers, and Management staff with a unique uniform having a unique logo, the design and details of which shall be conveyed to the contracting agency later.

b) The contracting agency has to operate and maintain all the e-carts, garbage collection vans, and machinery at its own level and has to bear the electricity, POL, and maintenance /repair charges of the machinery. The contracting agency will be required to obtain necessary permissions/approvals from the BDO concerned for repair, and maintenance of the existing machinery, if required, at any time. Dispute Resolution and Penal provision

a) In case of any dispute, the Block Development Officer concerned shall be the first appellate authority, the 2nd appellate authority shall be the Assistant Commissioner Panchayat Shopian and the third appellate & final authority shall be the District Level Sanitation Committee for implementation of SBM-G.

b) The contracting agency shall have to report to the Block Development Officer concerned in case of any violation by any Household/establishment for imposing a fine. Further, the agency may be required to paste color-coded notices across the panchayat

c) In matters pertaining to any disputes, or repercussions arising, the District level Sanitation committee shall hold exclusive jurisdiction and serve as the ultimate deciding body. "Repercussions" in this context refer to any adverse consequences, claims, disputes, legal actions, or related incidents that may arise. IEC endeavors and inciting behavioral change

a) The contracting agency shall chalk out a plan for a sustained IEC campaign for inciting behavioural change among the people through various means. The means could be composing appealing and effective sanitation jingles played through overhead speakers of waste collection vehicles on a regular basis, organizing special sanitation drives by involving local youth clubs, students, and Self Help Groups, organizing monthly felicitation ceremonies for best cooperative and complying Panchayats in consultation with the BDO concerned and the District administration, etc... Monthly IEC plans, 10 days in advance, to be submitted to the concerned BDO for review and approval.

b) The contracting agency shall influence the general public through its best possible sanitation services and shall motivate and convince them to segregate the waste at the source besides reducing the use of Single Use Plastics.

3. ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA:

The contracting agency must meet the following criteria:

a) The agency can be a sole proprietor, registered contractor, registered partnership firm, limited liability partnership, public limited company, private limited company, society or NGO, etc.

b) The agency must have an average annual turnover of more than Rs. 100000 (Rupees TEN Lakh) for the last three years.

c) Previous experience in managing public utilities as a PPP/outsourcing and knowledge of waste management, including running decentralized solid waste management processes, will be advantageous.

d) Additional experience in community mobilization and IEC activities will be preferred.

e) The agency must deposit a Cash Deposit Receipt (CDR) of Rs. 30,000 (thirty thousand rupees) pledged to the Block Development Officer Kanjiullar

4. CONTRACTING PROCESS:

a) Interested agencies must submit their EOI in sealed envelopes addressed to the Block Development Officer Kanjiullar, within 15 days after publication of this EOI.

b) The envelopes will be opened on the next day at 3 PM in presence of the bidders or their authorized representatives.

c) The EOI will be followed by Technical Evaluation and Financial Evaluation.

5. GENERAL INSTRUCTIONS:

a) The selected agency will be awarded a one-year contract, which may be extendable based on its performance and the necessity of the Department.

b) The agency shall adhere to all the terms and conditions specified in the EOI document.

c) The authority reserves the right to accept or reject any EOI without assigning any reason thereof, in the interest of the government, department, and public funds.

6. SUBMISSION OF EOI AND CONTACT INFORMATION:

a) Interested agencies must submit their sealed envelopes containing the EOI to the following address:

Block Development Office Kanjiullar

Email: bdokanjiullar@gmail.com

b) For any inquiries or clarifications regarding the EOI, interested agencies may contact Block Development Officer Kanjiullar, at the above-mentioned address

7. NOTIFICATION OF RESULTS:

The results of the EOI evaluation will be communicated to the eligible agencies through official communication channels.

8. LEGAL AND ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS:

a) The selected agency must comply with all applicable laws, regulations, and ethical standards during the execution of the Solid Waste Management project in Kanjiullar.

b) The contracting agency has to adhere to a) the Environment protection act 1986, the Water (Prevention and Control of Pollution) Act 1974 and the bylaws drafted and passed by the Gram Panchayats in letter and spirit. c) Sub-contracting shall not be allowed and shall be considered illegal.

d) The contracting agency has to submit an affidavit duly attested by a Judicial Magistrate affirming therein the commitment to bear all costs related to damage, theft, or loss incurred to the vehicles/machinery of the department during the execution of the SWM project.

e) In matters pertaining to any disputes, or repercussions arising, the District level Sanitation committee shall hold exclusive jurisdiction and serve as the ultimate deciding body. "Repercussions" in this context refer to any adverse consequences, claims, disputes, legal actions, or related incidents that may arise. The process of technical Evaluation will be done by a designated committee based on the score for the solutions & procedures provided by the agencies to transform the entire solid waste management into an efficient, effective, and sustainable one in the Block.

No. BDO/Kullar/26-27/130-36.
DIPK-1697/26 Dated: 01-06-2026

BLOCK DEVELOPMENT OFFICER KANJULLAR.

Office of the Naib Tehsildar Pattan

Sub... Application on behalf of Waheed Ahmad Ahanger s/o Ghulam Rasool Ahanger R/o Hanjiwera Tehsil Pattan for issuance of OBC certificate.

PUBLIC NOTICE..

IT is inform to general public that applicants OBC certificate is under process in this office in this matter report was sought from Patwari concerned which reveals that Applicant is residing in village Hanjiwera and applicant belongs to Ahanger caste. The monthly income of applicant's family is Rs 6000 . The applicant's family consists of seven members. In this connection if any body having objection for issuance of said certificate to this office within 04 days after that no objection shall be entertained.

Sd
Naib Tehsildar Pattan
fko

Office of the Naib Tehsildar Pattan

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

PUBLIC NOTICE..

The registrar birth EO MC pattan has submitted a case file pertaining to birth of Azra Irshad D/o Irshad Ahmad waza R/o Parpora Mamoosa Tehsil Pattan district baramura with verified date of birth 04/04/2024 occurred at SDH pattan in this connection if any body having objection for issuance of said certificate he may contact to this office within 04 days after that no objection shall be entertained.

Sd
Naib Tehsildar Pattan
fko

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 Aabiro Amin D/o Mohammad Amin Waza R/o Haratreh Tehsil Singapora district baramura with verified date of birth 14/04/2022 occurred at SDH pattan in this connection if any body having objection for issuance of said certificate he may contact to this office within 04 days after that no objection shall be entertained.

Sd
Naib Tehsildar Pattan
fko

PUBLIC NOTICE

I have changed my name from (Old Name) HASNAIN HYDER to (New Name) HASNAIN HYDER DAR, in future I will be known as HASNAIN HYDER DAR.

If anybody having any objection He/She may contact passport Office, Srinagar within 7 days. After 7 days no objection will be accepted.

fko

PUBLIC NOTICE

It is for the information of the general public that my name has been wrongly recorded in my Aadhaar Card bearing No. 6671 5856 0201 as "Shaheena Akhter" instead of my correct name "Shayena Bano."

I have applied for correction of my name from "Shaheena Akhter" to "Shayena Bano." If anybody has any objection in this regard, he/she may file the same before the concerned Aadhaar authority within seven days from the date of publication of this notice. After that, no objection shall be entertained.

Shayena Bano
D/o Ab Gani Mir
R/o Arigam Chirath, Tehsil Rajpora, District Pulwama. fko

PUBLIC NOTICE

I have changed my name Aabid Hussain S/o Mohd Yaqoob Nagri To Aabid Hussain Nagri S/o Mohammad Yaqoob Nagri. In future I will be known as Aabid Hussain Nagri S/o Mohammad Yaqoob Nagri. If anybody is having any objection he/she may contact Passport Office, Srinagar within 7 (Seven) days. After 7 days no objection will be accepted.

fko

PUBLIC NOTICE

It is for the information of the general public that my name and date of birth have been wrongly recorded in my Aadhaar Card bearing No. 8065 6107 2338 as "Zi" and "13/04/1951" instead of my correct name "Zee Begum" and correct date of birth "02/08/1955".

I have applied before the concerned Aadhaar authority for correction of my name from "Zi" to "Zee Begum" and my date of birth from "13/04/1951" to "02/08/1955". If anybody has any objection in this regard, he/she may file the same before the concerned Aadhaar authority within seven (07) days from the date of publication of this notice. Thereafter, no objection shall be entertained.

Zee Begum
W/o Gul Mohammad Thoker
R/o Dragad, District Shopian fko

PUBLIC NOTICE

I have changed my name from (old name) Tauseef Ahmad to (new name) Tauseef Ahmad Makhdoomi. In future I will be known as (new name) Tauseef Ahmad Makhdoomi . If anybody is having any objection he/she may contact passport office srinagar, within & 7 days. After 7 days no objection will be accepted.

Media line advt

اطلاع عام
ہر خاص و عام کو بذریعہ اشتہار مطلع کیا جاتا ہے کہ
بھیسرا سنے کاروبار نام INFLATE
TOUR AND TRAVEL
بھتاق MUJAPATHRI LANILAB
KHANSAHIB BUDGAM کی
رہنمائی کی ضرورت ہے۔ اگر کسی کو کوئی
اعراض ہو تو وہ سات دنوں کے اندر اپنا اعتراض
مخبرہ سب سے کہہ کر پیش کیا جائے۔ ریگٹر کے دفتر
میں پیش کریں۔ میعاد گزرنے کے بعد کوئی بھی
اعراض قابل قبول نہیں ہوگا۔
اشفاق احمد کے دلہن محمد کمال و سہا اور امتیاز
حسین و دلہن عبدالکریم کاس
ساکان پچھواری غاٹا صاحب بڈگام۔
mcb

Boy Drowns To Death In Nigeen Lake

Observer News Service

Srinagar: A boy drowned to death while bathing in Nigeen Lake near Nigeen Club area of Srinagar on Monday afternoon, officials said.

An official told KNO that a rescue team comprising SDRF Nigeen and others launched a rescue operation soon after receiving information about

the incident.

He said the boy was retrieved from the water and shifted to SDH Hazratbal (Habbak), where doctors declared him brought dead.

The deceased was later identified as Nazil Shakeel Bhat, son of Shakeel Ahmad Bhat, a resident of Nowhatta area of Srinagar.

Meanwhile, cognizance of the incident has been taken up.

Three Chargesheeted in Srinagar Land Fraud Case

Observer News Service

Srinagar: The Economic Offences Wing (EOW) Kashmir of the Crime Branch J&K has filed a chargesheet before the Court of Chief Judicial Magistrate Srinagar in connection with a land fraud case involving the alleged sale of the same parcel of land to multiple buyers through separate registered sale deeds.

In a statement issued to Kashmir Observer, a spokesperson said the chargesheet in FIR No. 03/2024 under Sections 420, 468, 167 and 120-B RPC was filed against three accused persons for their alleged involvement in the fraud.

He said the case pertains to the fraudulent sale of a parcel of land located at Khushipora, HMT Srinagar, to multiple purchasers through separate sale deeds.

"Investigation revealed that accused Mehrajuddin Khanday, son of Gh-

ulam Ahmad Khanday, and Shabir Ahmad Khanday, son of Ghulam Ahmad Khanday, both residents of Khushipora Abanshah, Srinagar, in connivance with the then Patwari (now deceased), had allegedly executed multiple sale deeds for the same piece of land," the spokesperson said.

He said the accused used fabricated and manipulated revenue records to deceive purchasers and secure unlawful gains.

Upon completion of the investigation, the chargesheet was presented before the court for judicial determination, officials said.

"The Crime Branch advised the general public to remain vigilant against economic fraudsters and report such incidents directly to SSP EOW Srinagar, Abdul Waheed Shah. Victims of economic fraud can also submit complaints through the official channels of the Crime Branch," the spokesperson added.

SMC Commissioner Inspects NCAP Works Along NH-44



Observer News Service

Srinagar: Commissioner, Srinagar Municipal Corporation, Faz Lul Haseeb, conducted an extensive inspection of various sites along the NH-44 Western Highway Corridor to review the progress of works being executed under the National Clean Air Programme (NCAP) aimed at mitigating air pollution and improving the Air Quality Index (AQI) across one of the busiest traffic corridors in the city.

The visit was undertaken to assess the implementation and maintenance of ongoing and completed NCAP interventions designed to curb dust pollution, enhance environmental sustainability, and bring air quality levels within the prescribed standards.

During the inspection, the Commissioner took a comprehensive review of the works executed under NCAP and evaluated the effectiveness of dust suppression and pollution mitigation measures being undertaken along the highway corridor. He emphasized the importance of timely completion of all ongoing works and directed

the concerned agencies to ensure sustained maintenance of completed projects for achieving long-term environmental benefits.

Stressing the need for coordinated action, the Commissioner instructed all stakeholder departments to work in close collaboration to reduce vehicular dust emissions, improve roadside aesthetics, and strengthen efforts towards achieving the objectives of the National Clean Air Programme. He further directed the concerned officers to expedite all pending works and ensure strict adherence to prescribed air quality standards.

The Commissioner also held detailed discussions with the officers regarding future strategies for strengthening air quality management initiatives along NH-44. He underscored the significance of increasing urban green cover and directed the concerned departments to explore the possibilities of large-scale plantation drives and landscape enhancement measures along the corridor, keeping in view the holistic and sustainable development of the city.



SRINAGAR INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT

WELCOMES HAJJ PILGRIMS

FIRST BATCH OF HAJJ PILGRIMS TO ARRIVE IN SRINAGAR TODAY

RETURN PHASE
02 JUNE - 16 JUNE 2026

4,641 PILGRIMS FROM J&K PERFORMED HAJJ THIS YEAR

2,583 MALES **2,058** FEMALES

3,952 PILGRIMS, INCLUDING 21 WOMEN WITHOUT MEHRAM, WILL RETURN THROUGH SRINAGAR EMBARKATION POINT

3,631 FROM J&K **321** FROM LADAKH

1 FROM PUNJAB WILL ARRIVE VIA SRINAGAR EMBARKATION POINT

144 PILGRIMS ON FIRST RETURN FLIGHT
74 MALES **70** FEMALES

FIRST FLIGHT
02 JUNE 2026 TO SRINAGAR

PILGRIMS FROM J&K ARRIVING THROUGH OTHER EMBARKATION POINTS

| | |
|--------------|--------------|
| DELHI | 1,010 |
| MUMBAI | 49 |
| BANGALORE | 2 |
| TOTAL | 1,061 |

FACILITIES ARRANGED AT SRINAGAR AIRPORT

TRANSPORT ARRANGEMENTS MEDICAL FACILITIES ASSISTANCE COUNTERS ZAMZAM WATER DISTRIBUTION

BAGGAGE RESTRICTIONS
DUE TO RUNWAY MAINTENANCE WORKS AND TEMPORARY RUNWAY LENGTH RESTRICTIONS UNDER EXISTING NOTAM



HAJJ-2026
A JOURNEY OF FAITH

First Batch Of Hajj Pilgrims To Arrive In Srinagar Today

Observer News Service

Srinagar: The return phase of Hajj-2026 pilgrims from Jammu & Kashmir will commence today with the first flight carrying 144 pilgrims scheduled to land at Srinagar International Airport.

J&K Haj Committee Chief Executive Officer Dr Shujaat Ahmad Qureshi, speaking to KNO, said the Hajj return operations for pilgrims from Jammu & Kashmir and Ladakh will continue till June 16.

He said 4,641 pilgrims from Jammu & Kashmir performed Hajj this year, including 2,583 males and 2,058 females.

"A total of 3,952 pilgrims, including 21 women without Mehram, will return through the Srinagar Embarkation Point during the scheduled arrival operations," he said.

Dr Qureshi said that among the pilgrims arriving through Srinagar, 3,631 belong to Jammu & Kashmir, while 321

"A total of 3,952 pilgrims, including 21 women without Mehram, will return through the Srinagar Embarkation Point during the scheduled arrival operations," he said.

pilgrims from Ladakh and one pilgrim from Punjab will also arrive via the Srinagar Embarkation Point.

The first return flight scheduled for tomorrow will carry 144 pilgrims, including 74 male and 70 female Hajis, he informed.

The CEO said 1,061 pilgrims from Jammu & Kashmir are also scheduled to arrive through other embarkation points across the country, including 1,010 pilgrims through Delhi, 49 through Mumbai and two through Bangalore.

All necessary arrangements have been put in place at Srinagar Airport for the reception and facilitation of the returning pilgrims.

"Transport arrangements, medical facilities, assistance counters and distribution of Zamzam water have already been arranged for the pilgrims arriving at Srinagar Airport," Dr Qureshi said.

The return flights are commencing amid ongoing concerns regarding baggage restrictions imposed due to operational limitations at Srinagar Airport caused by runway maintenance works and temporary runway length restrictions under the existing NOTAM.

DC Stresses Swift, Timely Delivery of Revenue Services

Observer News Service

Srinagar: Deputy Commissioner (DC) Srinagar, Akshay Labroo, on Monday chaired a review meeting of senior Revenue Officers at the Conference Hall of the DC Office Complex to assess tehsil-wise progress on key revenue matters and delivery of revenue related services.

The meeting was attended by Additional Deputy Commissioner Srinagar, Mir Imtiyaz Ul Aziz, Additional Deputy Commissioner, Aadil Fared, SDM West Irfan Bahadur, SDM East Zubair Ahmad, Assistant Commissioner Revenue Umar Gulzar all Tehsildars and other concerned.

At the outset, the DC reviewed the status of various revenue-related initiatives and commended the dedicated efforts of Officers and field functionaries

in accelerating the digitisation process and ensuring the timely completion of assigned targets and emphasized the need to sustain the momentum and ensure the timely completion of the remaining tasks and reforms within the prescribed timelines.

During the meeting, the DC was informed that Srinagar district comprises 137 villages, each having its own Jamabandi record, all of which shall be uploaded on the designated portal. He was further informed that to ensure accuracy and transparency, the digitised records were taken to the villages and read out in public. Registers shall also be maintained in each village to record grievances raised by residents, thereby ensuring community participation in the verification process.

While reviewing the implementation of the online portal, (jzkameensu-

dar.jk.gov.in), the DC stressed the need for the timely redressal of grievances registered on the portal and directed Officers to clear any pendency at the earliest. He also emphasized the uploading of complete Jamabandi records in PDF format.

During the meeting, the DC also reviewed the status of the PM SVAMITVA Scheme and sub-parcelization of mother maps. He directed the concerned officers to ensure completion of targets under these initiatives in a time-bound manner.

The DC further urged the officers to continue working with dedication and professionalism to strengthen public confidence in the Revenue Administration and ensure efficient, transparent and citizen-centric service delivery within the PSGA timelines across the District.

GOVERNMENT OF JAMMU AND KASHMIR

**OFFICE OF THE EXECUTIVE ENGINEER,
MECHANICAL IRRIGATION DIVISION SRINAGAR,
NEAR J&K BANK(ZALDAGAR)**

Telefax No. 0194-2952696 e.mail Id: to-exenmidsrinagar@jk.gov.in

**Sub: - Extension in bidding time for e-NIT No. 09 OF 2026-27, Dated:05-05-2026 for below mentioned work: -
Supply, Installation, Testing and Commissioning of 40 HP, 980 RPM VT Motor and Supply,
Installation, Testing and Commissioning of 01 Tone Chain Pulley block at LS Zazna-A.**

Ref: - JK Government official e-Procurement portal Tender ID No.: - 2026_IFC_309391_1

EXTENSION NOTICE 2

Due to **Poor response** to above mentioned e-NIT for the subject works, the critical dates are extended as under: -

| | |
|---|------------------------|
| Bid submission/ Document download / sale end Date | 08/06/2026 at 1400 hrs |
| Date and time of Bid opening | 09/06/2026 at 1230 hrs |

Rest of the terms and conditions shall remain un-altered as laid down in the original e-NIT.

Sd/-
**Executive Engineer,
Mechanical Irrigation Division
Srinagar**

**No. MIDS/Ts/996-1001
Dated: -01-06 -2026**

DIPK-1732/26 dated: 01-06-2026

TRAFFIC POLICE : 941993745, 01998-266686
PCR: 0194-2452092,2455883
PDD: 0194-2450213
FIRE AND EMERGENCY SERVICES : 2479488,245222,2452155
CAPD: 18001807011
SMC HEALTH OFFICER: 9469409081
Ambulance: Kashmir EMS Service: +919484100200

AIRPORTS
SHIEK UL ALAM AIRPORT: 01942303311

RAILWAYS

- SRINAGAR: 0194-2103259
- ANANTNAG: 01932-228243
- BARAMULLA: 0194-102029
- BIJBERA: 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
16 Zil-Hajj
1447

PRAYERS

| | |
|--------|-------|
| FAJR | 3: 38 |
| ZUHR | 12:29 |
| ASR | 5: 27 |
| Magrib | 7:40 |
| ISHA | 9: 20 |

This Day In History

- 1763 - Pontiac's Rebellion: At what is now Mackinaw City, Michigan, Chippewas capture Fort Michilimackinac by diverting the garrison's attention with a game of lacrosse, then chasing a ball into the fort.
- 1774 - Intolerable Acts: Amendment to original Quartering Act enacted, allowed governor in colonial America to house British soldiers in uninhabited houses, outhouses, barns, or other buildings if suitable quarters not provided.
- 1858- Donati Comet 1st seen named after its discoverer
- 1875- Alexander Graham Bell makes first sound transmission
- 1896-Guglielmo Marconi applies to patent the radio, accepted 2 July 1897
- 1910- Pygmies discovered in Dutch New Guinea
- 1949- Transjordan renamed Jordan
- 1955- The USSR and Yugoslavia sign the Belgrade declaration and thus normalize relations between both countries, discontinued since 1948.
- 1964- Lal Bahadur Shastri elected premier of India.
- 1966- US Surveyor 1 lands in Oceanus Procellarum; 1st lunar soft landing
- 1969- Australian aircraft carrier HMAS Melbourne slices US destroyer USS Frank E Evans in half, killing 74 (South Vietnam)
- 1976- East Timor People's Assembly accepts annexation by Indonesia
- 1979- John Paul II becomes 1st pope to visit a Communist country (Poland)
- 1979- NASA launches space vehicle S-198
- 1986 Regular TV coverage of US Senate sessions begins
- 1989- 10,000 Chinese soldiers are blocked by 100,000 citizens protecting students demonstrating for democracy in Tiananmen Square, Beijing
- 1996- 9th Children's Miracle Network Telethon.
- 1998- The CIH computer virus is discovered in Taiwan.
- 1999- The Bhutan Broadcasting Service brings television transmissions to the Kingdom for the first time
- 2003- Europe launches its first voyage to another planet, Mars. The European Space Agency's Mars Express probe launches from the Baikonur space centre in Kazakhstan.

From KO Archives

Charge-Sheet File In Kanna Case Disappears

Accused Gets Nine More Days In Judicial Custody

Observer NEWS SERVICE

SSRINAGAR: Known informer, "Rajiv" Kanna, allegedly involved in the killing of a government employee of Safa Kadal, has been remanded to judicial custody for nine more days by the chief judicial magistrate (CJM) in a case which was turned bizarre by the disappearance of the charge-sheet file.

Firdous Ahmad Bhat of Dab, Ganderbal, alias Rajiv Kanna, was produced before the magistrate today, where chief prosecuting officer, Basheer Ahmad, raised objections to the bail application filed by Bhat, saying that he was involved in as serious a case as murder.

Bhat's lawyer argued that since the police had failed to produce the case diary and the charge-sheet against the accused in the court, his client should be set free.

At this point, the prosecution told the magistrate that the charge-sheet file of the case had disappeared, and the matter was under the court's investigation.

It said that the case-diary and the charge-sheet would be produced before the Chief Judicial Magistrate after the court's orders.

After ascertaining that the relatives of the accused were being al-towed to meet him in jail, the Chief Judicial Magistrate remanded Bhat to nine more days in judicial custody, asking counsel to present their arguments on his bail application on the next hearing.

(Kashmir Observer, 02s June, 2007)

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Gone Without a Trace

Families search through fear and uncertainty while reported cases of missing minors expose cracks in policing, schools, homes, and the digital world.



Malik Zahoor Mehdi



“International research shows that educational institutions frequently serve as the first line of protection for vulnerable children. Teachers notice behavioral changes, signs of distress, sudden withdrawal, and indications of abuse. Studies examining child protection systems found that schools often function as a major reporting channel for violence and exploitation involving children.

Children facing distress should know exactly where to turn.

Law enforcement agencies also face a critical test. Missing children cases deserve immediate attention from the moment a complaint reaches a police station.

Speed determines outcomes, while delayed action creates opportunities for traffickers, predators, and criminal groups.

Dedicated investigation units, stronger cyber-monitoring teams, advanced digital tracking systems, and close coordination between districts can improve recovery efforts substantially.

Several states have expanded anti-human trafficking units and specialized response teams after witnessing increases in missing children cases.

Authorities in Telangana recently highlighted child abduction figures averaging six cases daily, while Karnataka reported a sharp rise in missing girl children cases.

These developments show how rapidly the problem can grow when institutions fail to stay ahead of emerging threats.

Families need active engagement with their children's friendships, emotional health, online activity, and daily routines. Open communication creates protection that surveillance alone cannot provide.

Religious leaders, teachers, community organizations, social activists, and local media also influence public awareness. Public campaigns about cyber safety, trafficking risks, mental health, and child protection can reach families long before a crisis develops.

Responsible journalism can strengthen awareness through careful reporting rather than sensational headlines.

Kashmir has spent decades confronting difficult challenges. This issue now demands collective attention with the same seriousness.

Missing children cases involve public safety, social stability, and the future of an entire generation.

A society reveals its character through the way it protects its children. Kashmir's families need assurance that institutions stand ready, communities remain alert, and authorities treat every missing child as a race against time.

Action taken today can spare countless families the pain of endless searching tomorrow.

The author is a Kashmir-based social activist, and can be reached at malikzahoormehdi@gmail.com.

KO VIEW

Beyond One Trophy

Royal Challengers Bengaluru's IPL triumph has sparked celebrations across the country. Kashmir had one more reason to celebrate. Rasikh Salam was part of the winning campaign, adding another chapter to a journey built through hard work, patience and belief.

His success has also reopened an old discussion closer to home. Many cricket followers in Jammu and Kashmir have asked why a player of his calibre could not find a place in the playing XI during the recent Ranji Trophy that ended a six-decade wait for a title.

The debate is not about revisiting team selection. Selection decisions belong to coaches and management. The larger point is about how talent is seen, valued and encouraged.

Rasikh's story speaks to a bigger reality. Young athletes from Kashmir are increasingly finding their path beyond the valley. They are entering national competitions, professional leagues and larger sporting ecosystems. Many have understood early in their careers that growth often comes through opportunities available outside their immediate surroundings. Their achievements show determination, ambition and a strong desire to compete at the highest level.

Aquib Nabi rightly earned praise for his outstanding performances and contributions. His rise is another example of the sporting talent present in the region. The discussion around Rasikh and Aquib is not about choosing one over the other. It is about recognising that Kashmir has produced a generation of players capable of succeeding on bigger stages.

Celebrations after a major victory are important. Young people draw inspiration from such moments. Lasting progress, however, comes through a system that identifies talent early, develops it consistently and gives it exposure. Sports infrastructure, coaching networks, scouting programmes and competitive opportunities can play a major role in shaping future careers.

Government officials often speak about expanding career choices for young people beyond the traditional pursuit of government jobs. Sport can become one of those alternatives. That goal becomes achievable when gifted players receive attention at the right time and are connected to pathways that help them advance.

Kashmir has never lacked raw talent. Cricket grounds, local tournaments and school competitions continue to reveal promising players every year. Many of them, however, remain unseen outside a limited circle. Their potential rarely reaches the platforms where careers are built.

Rasikh Salam's success is a moment of pride for Kashmir. It is also a reminder that many talented youngsters are still waiting on village grounds, in school tournaments and district competitions.

The real test lies in how many of them get a fair chance before their talent goes unnoticed.

A disturbing pattern has begun to haunt Jammu and Kashmir.

Reports of missing minor children, especially girls between the ages of 14 and 18, appear with troubling frequency. Parents wake up to empty rooms, unanswered phone calls, and long hours of panic.

Police stations receive complaints, posters circulate on social media, and entire neighbourhoods join searches.

Many children return home, but several families continue waiting.

This crisis reaches far beyond private grief. A missing child creates a wound that spreads through an entire community.

Parents spend sleepless nights moving between police offices, relatives' homes, hospitals, and crowded streets. Fear cripples daily life, trust weakens, and questions grow.

National data shows why this issue demands serious attention.

According to the National Crime Records Bureau, 83,350 children went missing in India during 2022. Girls accounted for more than 62,000 of those cases, nearly three-fourths of the total. Authorities recorded a 7.5 percent increase compared with the previous year.

Recovery figures remain substantial, though thousands of children continued to remain untraced.

Recent figures point toward an even larger challenge.

Analysis of NCRB 2023 data indicates that more than 91,000 children went missing during the year, with girls making up about 75 percent of cases.

Teenagers between 16 and 18 emerged as the most vulnerable group. Tens of thousands remained untraced at the end of the reporting period.

Jammu and Kashmir may not produce numbers comparable to major metropolitan regions, though the emotional damage remains identical.

A mother searching for her daughter in Srinagar experiences the same fear as a parent searching in Delhi, Hyderabad, or Bengaluru.

Figures reveal scale, but families reveal human cost.

Several forces drive this crisis.

Social media occupies a central place in the lives of young people. Smartphones place unlimited access in the hands of teenagers who often lack guidance about manipulation, deception, and online grooming. Criminal networks understand this reality well.

Fake identities, emotional manipulation, financial promises, blackmail schemes, and secret relationships often begin with a simple message.

Cybercrime data points toward a growing digital threat. NCRB figures recorded a sharp increase in cybercrime cases in recent years, including crimes linked to sexual exploitation and online fraud. Young users spend hours online while parents often remain unaware of their digital interactions.

Human trafficking also remains a serious concern.

Child-rights groups and anti-trafficking organizations have repeatedly linked missing children cases to trafficking networks, forced labour, sexual exploitation, and organized criminal activity.

NCRB data recorded thousands of trafficking victims in recent years, while activists continue to argue that detection figures capture only a fraction of the actual picture.

Another factor receives far less pub-

lic discussion.

Mental health struggles among teenagers continue to grow. Academic pressure, family conflict, isolation, substance abuse, unemployment, and emotional distress create intense pressure during adolescence.

Many young people spend their hardest moments without meaningful support. A child facing emotional turmoil often seeks answers in risky places.

Schools hold a crucial position in this concern and conversation.

International research shows that educational institutions frequently serve as the first line of protection for vulnerable children. Teachers notice behavioural changes, signs of distress, sudden withdrawal, and indications of abuse.

Studies examining child protection systems found that schools often function as a major reporting channel for violence and exploitation involving children.

That reality places a significant responsibility on educational institutions in Kashmir.

Schools and colleges need permanent counseling systems rather than occasional awareness seminars. Students need access to trained counselors, mental health support, digital safety education, and confidential reporting mechanisms.



Obeida Ashraf

Kashmir's Daily Diet Dilemma

A beloved morning ritual built for another era now collides with rising diabetes, hypertension, and sedentary living in modern Kashmir.



A Kashmiri morning begins with a ritual that feels timeless.

Before schools fill with students and markets open for business, people gather around a breakfast that has anchored life in the valley for generations: hot girda from the tandoor and a steaming cup of pink noon chai.

This breakfast represents far more than food. It speaks of memory, climate, family, and belonging. It connects today's Kashmir with centuries of shared experience. And that cultural significance is real and valuable.

A different question, however, demands attention: Is Kashmir's most common breakfast healthy?

This discussion goes beyond nostalgia or personal preference. Food is chemistry, endocrinology, ecology, economics, and public health. A meal that once suited a particular way of life can produce very different consequences when lifestyles change.

Traditional Kashmiri breakfasts emerged during an era of harsh winters, intense physical labour, and limited food availability. People spent long days working in orchards, fields, forests, rivers, and mountains. Walking formed a large part of daily life. Calorie-dense foods served a practical purpose. Salt helped maintain hydration and body function in demanding conditions. People burned through what they consumed.

Modern Kashmir presents a very different picture.

Urban life involves longer hours sitting at desks, greater dependence on vehicles, growing stress levels, and less physical activity. Meanwhile, diabetes, hypertension, obesity, fatty liver disease, heart disease, and metabolic disorders have become increasingly common concerns. Despite these changes, breakfast habits remain largely untouched.

Noon chai deserves closer examination. The tea often undergoes prolonged boiling and repeated reheating. Extended brewing extracts higher concentrations of tannins and other compounds that can irritate the stomach in some people. The larger concern, however, comes from sodium.

Salt plays an essential role in human health. Excessive sodium consumption, however, has a well-established connection with high blood pressure and cardiovascular disease. Kashmir already faces significant challenges related to hypertension, particularly among middle-aged adults.

Many people carefully limit salt during lunch and dinner while consuming several cups of noon chai throughout the morning. Those cups can silently contribute a substantial amount of sodium to the daily diet.

The drink's pink colour and comforting warmth create another interesting contradiction.

Noon chai feels soothing and wholesome. Combined with bakery products, however, it often produces a breakfast heavy in refined carbohydrates and sodium while providing limited fiber, protein, and micronutrient diversity.

Girda presents a similar challenge.

The issue has little to do with the traditional tandoor itself. Clay ovens have served communities successfully for thousands of years. The concern centers on the flour increasingly used to make the bread.

Many varieties rely heavily on refined maida. During

refinement, manufacturers remove much of the bran and fiber naturally present in whole grains. The result produces a softer texture and greater commercial appeal. It also allows glucose to enter the bloodstream more rapidly.

Breakfasts dominated by refined carbohydrates can trigger sharp rises in blood sugar followed by declines in energy. Hunger returns sooner. Over time, repeated exposure to these dietary patterns can contribute to insulin resistance and metabolic disease.

Many Kashmiris still view girda as a symbol of simple, traditional nourishment. Emotionally, that perception makes sense. Nutritionally, refined flour behaves very differently from the whole-grain flours that formed the foundation of many older food systems.

Another dimension receives far less attention. Many tandoors continue to rely on firewood burned in

environments with limited ventilation. Customers experience a pleasant smoky aroma associated with authenticity and tradition. Bakers experience something very different. Scientific research from around the world has linked prolonged exposure to biomass smoke with respiratory illness and chronic health problems. Daily exposure places bakery workers at particular risk.

None of this argues for abandoning Kashmir's culinary heritage.

Societies thrive when they adapt traditions to new realities. Japan preserved its rice-based culture while embracing modern nutritional science. Mediterranean countries maintained bread as a dietary staple while improving overall dietary balance. Nordic nations continued their fish traditions while updating public health practices.

Kashmir can do the same.

A healthier breakfast does not demand cultural surrender. Girda made with whole wheat, barley, millet, or mixed-grain flour would remain unmistakably Kashmiri. Gradual reductions in sodium could help people adjust their taste preferences without sacrificing the identity of noon chai. Walnuts, eggs, pulses, yogurt, and seasonal produce could complement traditional breads and improve nutritional balance. Modern smokeless tandoors could protect bakers while preserving cherished flavors.

Schools also have a role to play. Students should learn what Kashmiri food means culturally and how it functions biologically inside the body. Understanding both dimensions creates a stronger foundation for informed choices.

A deeper misconception, however, sits at the heart of this debate.

Many societies treat traditional food as automatically healthy, but history tells a more complicated story.

Human diets emerged through climate, scarcity, labour demands, and survival needs. Some practices held remarkable wisdom, others persisted because alternatives remained unavailable.

Tradition deserves respect, but scientific scrutiny deserves a place at the table as well.

The irony of modern wellness culture stands out clearly. People spend large sums on supplements, detox products, and imported health foods while paying little attention to the meal they consume every morning. Long-term health develops through daily habits repeated over decades.

One cup of noon chai will not damage an artery. One girda will not cause diabetes.

The challenge lies in repetition without balance.

The central question is not whether breakfast should remain traditional or become modern. The real question is whether a treasured tradition can evolve alongside changing lifestyles.

The author is a teacher by profession. She can be reached at obeidaashraf1983@gmail.com.

Budgam Is Not Kashmir's Punching Bag

Every crime cannot become a license to mock an entire district.



Haziqah Showkat

A terrible crime in Budgam lately triggered a wave of anger and grief online. Social media quickly filled with outrage, condolences, and heated debate.

Then came something else: memes, sarcastic reels, mocking comments, and casual jokes.

A whole district suddenly became the target.

That cycle has become painfully predictable in Kashmir.

The rape and murder of a young girl in Galwanpora recently shocked the valley, filling homes with grief, fear and anger. As demands for justice grew louder, the din and debate soon veered in a different direction.

Social media feeds filled with comments turning Budgam into a joke. Thousands joined the pile-on. One crime became an excuse to paint an entire district with a broad brush.

A rotten apple spoils the barrel, people say. Social media has flipped that proverb on its head. One criminal now becomes the face of an entire society.

That is a dangerous habit. Crime has never carried a district identity. It emerges wherever human beings live, work and interact.

Crime data from Jammu and Kashmir itself destroys the popular online narrative.

According to Crime Branch figures compiled in recent years, Anantnag reported more registered crime cases than Budgam. Even Kupwara and Srinagar reported more.

Several districts recorded figures either higher than or close to Budgam.

In 2021, Anantnag registered 519 cases, Kupwara 402, Srinagar 375 and Budgam 372.

Budgam did not top the list. It was not even close.

The larger NCRB trend tells a similar story. Jammu and Kashmir recorded a decline in overall crime between 2021 and 2023, with total cases falling from 31,675 to 29,595.

The data also shows crimes spread across districts and categories rather than being concentrated in one place.

But sadly, facts rarely stop stereotypes.

A crime in Budgam now attracts reactions that go far beyond condemnation of the accused.

Entire villages get mocked, and local identities become punchlines.

People sitting hundreds of kilometres away suddenly become experts on the "Budgam mentality."

That mentality exists only in the imagination of social media.

Budgam has contributed enormously to Kashmir's intellectual, spiritual and cultural life. The district houses the sanctum of Sheikh-ul-Alam, Nund Rishi, whose message influenced Kashmir's moral imagination for centuries. Its villages have produced scholars, poets, teachers, civil servants, artists and entrepreneurs. Thousands travel daily from Budgam to Srinagar to power offices, universities, hospitals and businesses that keep the valley moving.

None of that finds space in the meme economy.

Social media rewards exaggeration. Nuance gets buried, a joke



BUDGAM FACES SOCIAL CHALLENGES, AS DO DISTRICTS ACROSS KASHMIR. Drug

abuse, violence and crime cut through geographical boundaries, reminding us that human societies generate both remarkable achievements and troubling failures.

receives more engagement than a fact, and a stereotype usually travels faster than a statistic. Kashmir has seen this before.

Many people still remember the ugly social media narrative that followed the 2014 floods. Rajbagh became the subject of endless ridicule

after bizarre rumours and urban legends began circulating online.

People laughed, posts went viral, and entire neighbourhood became objects of mockery.

The humour looked harmless on the surface, but the damage underneath stayed hidden.

Every society has these fault lines.

America has its own versions. People routinely mock Alabama, Mississippi or West Virginia as symbols of backwardness. Residents of those states often complain that national debates reduce millions of people into caricatures.

One stereotype becomes stronger than reality, while one label starts replacing actual human beings.

Kashmir is walking into the same trap.

Humour has a place in public life, and satire has long enriched public debate. Trouble begins when a joke turns into character assassination.

That line is disappearing.

A criminal belongs in court, a rapist deserves public outrage, and a murderer deserves condemnation. Turning an entire district into the accused serves neither justice nor common sense.

But the internet often forgets this distinction.

Social media culture thrives on collective blame. One person commits a crime, thousands become suspects in public imagination, and entire populations end up defending themselves against accusations they had nothing to do with.

That approach creates bitterness, social divisions and prejudice in guise of comedy.

Many of the same people who oppose profiling based on religion, caste or region suddenly become comfortable profiling an entire district when a hashtag starts trending. That contradiction needs attention.

Budgam faces social challenges, as do districts across Kashmir. Drug abuse, violence and crime cut through geographical boundaries, reminding us that human societies generate both remarkable achievements and troubling failures.

Neither one incident can erase an entire history, nor one criminal can define an entire people.

People can keep chasing cheap laughs and viral stereotypes, or they can recognise a simple truth: crime belongs to the criminal, not the community.

A joke loses its charm the moment it begins poisoning the reputation of an entire district.

— With a background in Law and EdTech, the author engages with the deeper structures that shape society.

Galwanpora's Unanswered Question

Warnings to daughters have filled generations. Real change begins when responsibility becomes part of how sons are raised.



Nighat Ara

The rape and murder of a 12-year-old girl in Galwanpora while she was on her way to seminary has shaken Kashmir.

A child stepped out of her home and never returned, leaving behind a family carrying a grief that words cannot ease. Her books remain where she left them, her clothes still hold traces of her presence, and a life filled with possibility was cut short by an act of unimaginable brutality.

Public outrage has followed, as it should, with people demanding justice and expressing both sorrow and anger over the tragedy.

Those reactions are necessary, but this case also forces society to confront a deeper and more uncomfortable question: why does people spend so much time teaching girls how to survive violence while spending far less time teaching boys how to reject it?

A little girl should grow up learning confidence, curiosity and independence. Childhood should bring freedom, discovery and joy. Fear should never become part of a girl's education. Survival strategies should never become a lesson she learns before she



learns her dreams.

For decades, discussions around women's safety have centered on women's behaviour. Girls hear endless instructions about where to go, when to return, what to wear and whom to trust. Entire generations have grown up under a system that places the burden of protection on potential victims.

The persistence of violence against women exposes the failure of that approach.

Women never stood at the center of this problem. The source lies elsewhere.

It lies in attitudes that excuse aggression, normalize entitlement and avoid difficult conversations about male behaviour. It lies in a culture that

often examines a girl's actions before examining a man's choices.

When a child suffers sexual violence, the first question should concern the mindset that made such cruelty possible.

Society gains little by adding new restrictions on girls, but it definitely gains much more by examining how boys learn about power, respect and human relationships.

That conversation must begin early.

Boys need guidance about consent, empathy and accountability long before harmful attitudes take root. They need clear messages that strength comes through self-control, character and respect. Healthy masculinity grows through responsibility, com-

passion and integrity.

Human relationships flourish when women are viewed as equal individuals with their own rights, ambitions and freedoms.

The larger social environment influences how young people understand gender, authority and responsibility. A serious response to violence demands engagement from all social spaces.

Silence serves nobody.

Many communities speak openly with daughters about danger. Similar honesty is needed when speaking with sons about conduct.

Young boys absorb lessons from what adults say, ignore and tolerate. Cultural attitudes pass from one generation to the next through everyday

interactions. Positive values can travel through those same channels.

Violence does not emerge from nowhere. Human behaviour develops through social influences, experiences and beliefs. Harmful ideas gain ground when communities avoid confronting them. Better education, stronger accountability and healthier social norms create conditions where violence becomes far less likely.

Galwanpora therefore represents a moral test. Justice for one child remains essential, though justice alone cannot answer the larger challenge.

Punishment addresses an individual crime, but prevention addresses the conditions that allow such crimes to occur.

Kashmir now faces a choice. One path continues the familiar cycle of warning girls to stay careful. The other path focuses on raising boys who understand respect, responsibility and self-restraint.

The first path has dominated public thinking for generations. The second path offers a chance to build a safer society.

A community that prepares girls for violence instead of preventing boys from becoming violent abandons its most basic obligation.

The memory of the child lost in Galwanpora demands a different response.

Her death should push society toward the question that truly counts: when will we begin teaching boys with the same intensity that we teach girls?

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WHY DOES PEOPLE SPEND SO MUCH TIME teaching girls how to survive violence while spending far less time teaching boys how to reject it?

SC: Temporary Staff Can't Be Kept In Precarious Employment Conditions

Press Trust Of India

New Delhi: Taking strong note of acute dissimilarity in perks and retirement benefits of temporary and regular employees, the Supreme Court on Monday said that the State as an employer cannot retain a workforce which does the same work as

permanent staff but is denied corresponding benefits.

A bench of Justices Sanjay Karol and AG Masih set aside an order of the Patna High Court that denied pensionary benefits to temporary employees who have served for decades in the Department of Post.

The top court said any

classification resulting in denial of any benefits to a class of employees who are otherwise similarly situated in terms of duties and responsibilities would fall foul of constitutional ethos.

The bench said this court has taken a consistent judicial approach that long-serving employees, whether casual or

temporary, particularly those who have been conferred recognised status, cannot be denied corresponding benefits including social security and pensionary benefits.

"The emphasis must be on ensuring that the State does not retain such employees in a precarious condition while

extracting services identical to those performed by regular employees," it said.

The bench directed the Centre to compute and release within three months the pensionary and consequential retirement benefits payable to a group of former employees or legal representatives of the employees

who had rendered long years of service under the Department of Posts as casual labourers (Night Guards).

It said, in case of default, interest at the rate of six per cent per annum from the date of accrual till disbursement shall be payable to such persons.

The bench noted that

notwithstanding the conferment of temporary status and the extension of benefits akin to Group 'D' employees, the former employees or legal heirs of such employees were never formally regularised in service mainly due to administrative inaction on the part of the Department of Posts.

CONTD. FROM FRONT PAGE

J&K Leads UTs

successful completion of the initial phase. With the House Listing Operations now underway, Sharma appealed to residents of Jammu and Kashmir and Ladakh to cooperate fully with enumerators and supervisors who will be visiting households over the next month.

He said the exercise is a crucial component of Census 2027 and is aimed at gathering information on housing conditions, household amenities and living arrangements that will help governments formulate development policies and welfare programmes.

Highlighting preparations made for the nationwide exercise, Sharma said house listing block demarcation and geo-tagging activities have been virtually completed across both Union Territories.

"More than 23,600 house listing blocks have been demarcated in Jammu and Kashmir and 567 in Ladakh," he said.

The Census official said extensive training programmes had been conducted for master trainers, field trainers, enumerators and supervisors to ensure smooth, uniform and professional conduct of operations, including in far-flung and difficult terrain.

According to Sharma, over 27,000 census kits have already been dispatched across Jammu and Kashmir, while nearly 800 kits have been distributed in Ladakh to facilitate field-level work.

He urged citizens to provide accurate and complete information during the census exercise, saying the data collected would play a vital role in planning public services and welfare initiatives.

Sharma also assured residents that all information collected during Census 2027 would remain confidential under the provisions of the Census Act, 1948.

"All information collected is legally protected and will be used solely for statistical purposes. Individual data cannot be shared with any agency or institution," he said.

The officer added that special arrangements have been put in place to ensure complete coverage of remote, border, tribal, migratory and nomadic populations so that no household or individual is left out of the census process.

Speaking on the occasion, Press Information Bureau Director, Jammu, Neha Jalali said Census 2027 would be India's first fully digital census, featuring mobile-based data collection and caste enumeration backed by robust technological infrastructure.

She said the House Listing and Housing Census phase would collect information relating to buildings, households, housing conditions, family composition and living arrangements, providing an important foundation for evidence-based policymaking and development planning.

Jalali stressed the importance of public awareness and media participation in ensuring the successful conduct of the census and urged media organisations to continue disseminating authentic information about Census 2027.

Milk Prices In

the Association, transport-related costs, feed expenses and overall price escalation had made continuation of earlier rates increasingly difficult.

Chib also pointed to recent revisions in branded milk prices, noting that Amul had increased milk prices by Rs 2.

He said milk prices in Jammu and Kashmir vary depending on locality and supply patterns.

In Kashmir, the prevailing milk rate was around Rs 54 per litre prior to the latest revision, although prices differ across areas.

According to the Association, milk in rural areas is commonly sold at around Rs 50 per litre, while rates in urban and city areas generally range between Rs 55 and Rs 60 per litre.

The latest revision comes against a backdrop of wider inflationary pressure, with consumers already facing rising prices of fuel, food items, pharmaceuticals and other essential commodities. (KNT)

Commercial LPG

Rs 3,113.50 per 19-kg cylinder from Rs 3,071.50 in Delhi, industry sources said.

The latest increase follows a sharp Rs 993 hike implemented on May 1, taking commercial LPG prices to their highest-ever levels.

Prices of 5-kg free-trade LPG (FTL) cylinders were also increased by Rs 11 to Rs 821.50 per cylinder.

Household consumers were spared any increase, with the price of the 14.2-kg domestic LPG cylinder remaining unchanged at Rs 913 since early March, when rates were increased by Rs 60 per bottle.

The revisions are part of the monthly price review undertaken by state-owned oil marketing companies.

Prices vary from state to state depending on the incidence of local taxes, such as VAT.

While commercial LPG prices have climbed to record highs, household cooking gas rates have remained unchanged despite a sharp rise in import costs, underscoring the government's efforts to shield consumers from global energy volatility, government sources said.

The cost of supplying a 14.2-kg domestic LPG cylinder has risen by about two-fifths in recent months, driven largely by a surge in international benchmark prices. Yet retail prices for households have remained frozen.

For beneficiaries of the government's flagship Ujjwala scheme, the gap is even wider. A domestic LPG cylinder that costs roughly Rs 1,200 to supply is available to Ujjwala consumers at an

effective price of Rs 613 after the Rs 300-per-cylinder direct benefit transfer subsidy, according to government estimates.

The increase in supply costs has been fuelled by a sharp rise in the Saudi Contract Price (CP) for propane, the benchmark used for India's LPG imports. Saudi CP jumped 38 per cent in April after disruptions around the Strait of Hormuz tightened Gulf supplies, according to industry data.

Despite the rise in global prices, India's household LPG rates remain among the lowest in the region, according to government sources. Both subsidised and non-subsidised domestic cylinders are priced below comparable cooking gas cylinders in neighbouring countries, although cylinder sizes vary across markets.

The protection comes at a cost. State-owned fuel retailers incurred an under-recovery of Rs 41,338 crore on domestic LPG sales in 2024-25. Following the spike in international prices, the under-recovery for 2025-26 is estimated at around Rs 60,000 crore, according to oil ministry projections.

To offset part of the burden, the government has approved a compensation of Rs 30,000 crore to state-owned oil marketing companies in the current fiscal year.

The support framework is tied to the Pradhan Mantri Ujjwala Yojana, under which more than 100 million households have received LPG connections since 2016, alongside a capped subsidy of Rs 300 per cylinder.

Commercial LPG, by contrast, is priced on a market-linked basis and revised every month in line with international benchmarks. Domestic LPG rates are administered and insulated from immediate global price swings - a policy that has helped protect household budgets even as energy costs have surged. -(PTI)

Conviction Overturned

on December 21, 2013.

According to the prosecution, Police Station Kulgam received information on December 21, 2013, about the suspicious death of Abdul Rashid Dar of Modergam. Police found his body hanging from a tree in an orchard, with private parts squeezed and signs of a fractured neck. Following inquest proceedings, investigators concluded that he had been murdered and his body was later hung to make the death appear as a suicide, leading to the registration of an FIR under Section 302 RPC.

During investigation, police alleged that the deceased's wife, Muzamilla, and co-accused Ali Mohammad Dar were involved in an illicit relationship and had conspired to kill him. The prosecution claimed that Ali Mohammad Dar disclosed that the deceased was administered Anxit-0.5 tablets to render him unconscious, after which he was suffocated and later hanged from a tree using a lady's trouser and dupatta to stage the incident as a suicide. Subsequently, the police filed charge sheet culminating in their conviction and life imprisonment in July last year.

Setting aside the conviction, the High Court observed that although the deceased had met a homicidal death, the prosecution was duty-bound to prove not only that a murder had occurred but also that the accused were responsible for it through reliable and legally admissible evidence.

"The mere fact that a homicide has occurred does not automatically justify the conviction of the accused unless there exists reliable evidence connecting them with the commission of the offence," the Bench said.

It found that the prosecution case was built primarily around disclosure statements allegedly made by the accused while in police custody. It held that once the inadmissible confessional portions of those statements were excluded, the remaining evidence failed to form a complete chain of circumstances pointing exclusively towards the guilt of the accused.

The Court noted several shortcomings in the investigation, including the absence of independent evidence linking the accused to the crime. It observed that the recoveries of a scarf, glass and medicine strips were made from ordinary locations within the house and were not supported by forensic evidence such as fingerprint examination.

The Court also found that the medical evidence contradicted the prosecution's theory that the deceased had been drugged before being killed. The viscera examination did not detect any sedative substance, while the doctor who conducted the post-mortem ruled out death by smothering and opined that death resulted from dislocation of cervical vertebrae due to hanging.

Significantly, the Court held that there was no evidence placing Ali Mohammad Dar at the deceased's house on the night of the incident. The deceased's children, who were present in the house, did not state that they had seen him there, nor was any "last seen" evidence produced by the prosecution.

The Court further held that allegations of an extra-marital relationship and call detail records could at best create suspicion but were insufficient to sustain a conviction. It reiterated the settled legal principle that suspicion, however strong, cannot substitute proof beyond reasonable doubt.

The Bench observed that the trial court had been unduly influenced by the disclosure statements without properly appreciating the settled legal principles governing their admissibility and evidentiary value. The Bench said the trial court overlooked material contradictions, inconsistencies and gaps in the prosecution case, rendering its findings legally unsustainable.

Reaffirming that the burden of proving guilt

always rests upon the prosecution and that any reasonable doubt must benefit the accused, the Court concluded that the evidence on record suffered from serious infirmities and failed to establish the charges beyond reasonable doubt.

Accordingly, the Court set aside the conviction and sentence, acquitted both duo of all charges and directed their release from custody unless required in any other case.

Justice Sanjeev Kumar

Higher Secondary School, Basohli. He secured the 10th position in the Jammu and Kashmir State Board of School Education matriculation examination in 1981.

He graduated with a Bachelor of Science degree from Government Degree College, Kathua, in 1985 and completed his LL.B. degree from the University of Jammu in 1988, both in first division. He was enrolled as an Advocate with the Jammu and Kashmir Bar Council in February 1989.

Justice Kumar served as Government Advocate for the Srinagar wing of the High Court during 1992-93 and again during 1994-95. He was subsequently appointed Government Advocate for the Jammu wing in 1995 and continued in that role until 1998. During his legal practice, he represented several government departments and public sector undertakings and served on the panel of the Advocate General. He also acted as standing counsel for the Jammu and Kashmir Services Selection Board for nearly six years between 2006 and 2012.

Justice Kumar had more than 200 reported judgments to his credit as an advocate and appeared in several high-profile matters, including the Toshakhana case, the Assembly dissolution matter, and reservation in promotion cases.

He was sworn in as a Permanent Judge of the High Court on June 6, 2017. Earlier, he had also been appointed Acting Chief Justice of the High Court of J&K and Ladakh through a notification dated April 9, 2025.

Preparations Gather

and security measures. Kumar said the visit was aimed at reviewing on-ground preparedness and ensuring that all arrangements are completed well before the commencement of the pilgrimage.

"All necessary arrangements are being put in place at Bhagwati Nagar. Registration facilities, RFID services, health infrastructure and sanitation arrangements were thoroughly inspected," he said.

He said discussions were held with concerned departments to ensure timely completion of works and seamless management of pilgrim facilities.

Officials said Kumar had earlier fixed June 10 as the deadline for completion of various infrastructure and service-related works at the base camp, including whitewashing, establishment of bus ticket booking counters, langars, cloakrooms, accommodation units, washrooms and lighting arrangements.

Directions have also been issued for ensuring adequate drinking water supply, sanitation facilities and langar services. Authorities have additionally been asked to establish a convenience store, provide prepaid SIM card facilities and install German hangars for pilgrims.

The Fire and Emergency Services Department has been directed to conduct a comprehensive fire safety audit, while the Public Works Department has been tasked with blacktopping roads within and around the camp area. The Power Development Department has been instructed to ensure uninterrupted electricity supply, adequate illumination and backup power arrangements.

Meanwhile, IGP Jammu Bhim Sen Tuti reviewed security arrangements and deployment plans for security forces across key transit points and lodgement centres.

The IGP stressed the importance of proper lighting at all lodgement centres and directed officers to strictly enforce yatra cut-off timings and security protocols.

Tuti also inspected security and facilitation arrangements in Kathua and Samba districts, directing officers to maintain heightened vigilance and strengthen surveillance mechanisms along the pilgrimage route.

At Lakanpur, the gateway to Jammu and Kashmir, he inspected the base camp, reception centres and lodgement facilities, reviewing CCTV coverage, access control systems, frisking procedures, traffic management plans and other pilgrim-related amenities.

A security review meeting was later held at the District Police Lines in Kathua, where Senior Superintendent of Police Mohita Sharma briefed officers on convoy management, deployment of Quick Response Teams (QRTs), surveillance measures and emergency response plans.

The IGP emphasised strict adherence to security procedures and directed personnel to maintain a professional and pilgrim-friendly approach throughout the yatra period.

DIG Jammu-Samba-Kathua Range Shridhar Patil instructed officers to regularly inspect langars and lodgement centres and maintain close surveillance on suspicious activities and individuals.

In Samba district, SSP Anuj Kumar briefed the IGP on preparedness measures and ongoing coordination among agencies involved in the pilgrimage.

During the review, Tuti stressed close coordination among the Jammu and Kashmir Police, Central Armed Police Forces (CAPFs), intelligence agencies and Punjab Police to ensure a secure

and hassle-free pilgrimage.

Officials were directed to intensify drone surveillance, deploy dog squads for anti-sabotage checks at sensitive locations, langars and lodgement centres, and strengthen real-time monitoring systems.

Security forces have also been asked to enhance surveillance along the Jammu-Pathankot National Highway and in border areas through round-the-clock domination, naka checking and area patrolling to ensure the safe movement of pilgrims during the yatra.

Authorities said preparations are progressing as scheduled and all departments have been directed to complete pending works well before the arrival of the first batch of pilgrims next month.

Srinagar Airport To

into effect from July 1, is expected to impact air travel across Kashmir during the peak summer and tourist season, with nearly two lakh passengers likely to be affected over the three-month period.

Srinagar Airport Director Javed Anjum said passenger flight operations would remain suspended twice a week to facilitate the runway maintenance programme.

"Due to runway repair works, passenger flight operations will remain suspended every Monday and Tuesday during July, August and September," Anjum said.

The latest schedule replaces an earlier proposal under which the airport was expected to remain closed on Saturdays and Sundays from August 1 to October 15. Authorities have now revised the plan and opted for a Monday-Tuesday shutdown instead.

The decision is part of an ongoing runway rehabilitation project aimed at improving operational safety and infrastructure at the airport.

The maintenance works have already had an impact on airport operations in recent weeks. Authorities earlier reported logistical challenges, including issues related to the transportation of baggage belonging to returning Haj pilgrims.

In addition, a Notice to Airmen (NOTAM) issued by the Indian Air Force had restricted operational hours at Srinagar Airport until July 31. Under the current arrangement, scheduled flight operations are permitted only between 8:00 am and 5:00 pm to allow repair work to continue during non-operational hours.

Despite these restrictions, flight services have largely remained stable, with airlines adjusting schedules in accordance with the Directorate General of Civil Aviation (DGCA)-approved summer timetable.

Srinagar Airport currently handles around 35 to 40 flight arrivals daily, making it one of the busiest airports in the region, particularly during the tourism season.

Officials said airlines have already been informed about the revised closure schedule and are expected to modify flight operations accordingly during the maintenance period.

The temporary shutdown is expected to affect thousands of passengers travelling to and from Kashmir each week, with airport authorities advising travellers to check flight schedules with their respective airlines before planning journeys.

The runway resurfacing and repair works are part of a broader effort to upgrade airport infrastructure and ensure smoother operations in the long term, officials said.

'Runway Curbs Force

Srinagar Airport.

In a post on X, the Ministry said that a NOTAM issued for Srinagar Airport, coupled with ongoing runway maintenance work, had resulted in temporary runway length restrictions. This, it said, compelled authorities to impose payload limitations on aircraft operations in the interest of flight safety.

The Ministry stated that to avoid disruption to Haj flight schedules and minimise inconvenience to pilgrims, return Haj flights operated by Akasa Airlines for the Srinagar embarkation point have been routed via Ahmedabad.

Under the arrangement, pilgrims will be permitted to carry up to 35 kilograms of check-in baggage up to Ahmedabad. However, on the Ahmedabad-Srinagar sector, only 5 kilograms of check-in baggage per pilgrim will be allowed onboard, while the remaining 30 kilograms will be transported separately by road to Srinagar. The cabin baggage allowance will remain unchanged.

"These arrangements have been necessitated solely by airport operational constraints and aviation safety requirements," the Ministry said, adding that the Ministry of Minority Affairs, Haj Committee of India, and J&K Haj Committee are coordinating with all stakeholders to ensure the safe and smooth return of pilgrims.

The clarification comes days after several Haj pilgrims from Jammu and Kashmir expressed concern over the reduced baggage allowance and the separate transportation of luggage from Ahmedabad to Srinagar.

Earlier, J&K Haj Committee Chief Executive Officer Dr. Shujaat Ahmad Qureshi had told KNO that the restrictions were linked to the runway maintenance work at Srinagar Airport and the NOTAM issued for the period from April to October.

He said that while pilgrims are normally entitled to 40 kilograms of check-in baggage and 7 kilograms of hand baggage, operational constraints this year forced airlines to reduce load capacity on Srinagar-bound flights.

Dr. Qureshi also assured that the remaining luggage of pilgrims would be transported safely to Kashmir within a few days, while Zamzam water had already reached Srinagar for distribution at the airport. The Union Ministry of Minority Affairs (MoMA) on Monday issued a clarification regarding the baggage restrictions imposed on Haj pilgrims returning to Srinagar, stating that the measures were necessitated by runway maintenance and operational limitations at Srinagar Airport.

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RTI Exposes Oversight

as "ongoing." That status has drawn additional attention because another ₹36 lakh has reportedly been earmarked for the project in the 2026-27 budget.

The prospect of fresh spending has intensified demands for scrutiny. Opposition figures argue that authorities should first establish the status and quality of work already completed before allocating additional funds.

The controversy comes at a time when development projects occupy a central place in local politics. Roads, drainage systems, public spaces and urban improvements frequently feature in speeches, public meetings and government outreach campaigns. Elected representatives often point to such projects as visible evidence of governance and investment.

Rather directed much of his criticism toward the constituency's MLA, accusing him of presenting the beautification project as a flagship achievement through publicity campaigns while key procedural requirements remain pending.

He said official records raise questions about financial discipline and administrative supervision. Publicity, he argued, gains meaning when supported by documentation that confirms work quality and compliance with established procedures.

Municipal records disclosed through the RTI have become the focal point of that argument. Completion certificates generally establish that a project or phase of work meets approved specifications. Audits examine financial transactions and expenditure patterns. Independent technical inspections provide an external assessment of construction quality and execution.

Their absence does not by itself determine whether work was properly executed. Their absence does, however, leave unanswered questions about verification and accountability, particularly when public funds have already been utilized.

The disclosures have also sparked a broader debate about transparency in local development spending. Residents and opposition leaders say public access to project records can strengthen confidence in government-funded works and reduce suspicion surrounding expenditure decisions.

Rather has called for a comprehensive technical inspection, an independent third-party evaluation and a full financial audit before authorities release additional payments linked to the project. He also urged officials to place project records in the public domain.

The RTI disclosures have shifted the focus in Pattan from newly built pathways and drains to the records meant to verify them. With another 36 lakh proposed for the project, demands for audits, inspections and greater transparency are likely to grow.

What began as a beautification initiative now faces a larger test: whether public spending can withstand public scrutiny.

Gurez, Bangus, Keran See Rising Footfall as Tourists Seek Relief from Heat

Observer News Service

SRINAGAR: As soaring temperatures continue to grip the plains, tourists are increasingly heading to the cooler border regions of Jammu and Kashmir, bringing fresh activity to some of the remote frontier destinations.

According to KNO, tourist arrivals have picked up in Gurez and Tulail valleys in north Kashmir's Bandipora district, as well as Keran and Bangus in Kupwara and Uri in Baramulla district, with visitors seeking relief from the heat and an opportunity to experience the region's natural beauty.

Known for their lush meadows, rivers, mountains and relatively cooler climate, these destinations have witnessed a steady increase in footfall over the past few weeks, providing a boost to local businesses and tourism-related activities.

"We have seen a good number of tourists visiting Gurez in recent weeks. Hotels, guest houses and homestays are receiving more inquiries and bookings," said 38-year-old Ishfaq Ahmad, a resident of Gurez.

He said residents have been



actively helping visitors and promoting the valley's tourism potential. "Gurez has immense potential as a tourist destination. Better infrastructure and connectivity will help attract even more visitors," Ahmad said.

In Kupwara district, tourists have also been flocking to Keran and the sprawling Bangus Valley, drawn by the cool weather and scenic landscapes. "The arrival of tourists is en-

THE ARRIVAL OF TOURISTS IS ENCOURAGING FOR PEOPLE here as many families depend directly or indirectly on tourism for their livelihood."

couraging for people here as many families depend directly or indirectly on tourism for their livelihood," said 52-year-old Ghulam Mohammad, a resident of Keran.

He urged the government to focus on improving road connectivity and tourism infrastructure in remote areas.

Visitors described the border destinations as among the most picturesque places in Kashmir. Adnan Ahmad, 29, a tourist

from Srinagar visiting Gurez, said the valley offered everything needed to become a major tourism destination.

"The weather is pleasant, the scenery is stunning, and the environment is peaceful. With better facilities, more people would choose to visit Gurez," he said.

Shazia Khan, 34, a tourist from Delhi who recently visited Bangus Valley, said the region offered a welcome escape from the intense heat prevailing in many parts of the country.

"The cool climate, green meadows and hospitality of residents made the experience memorable. These places deserve greater attention from tourists," she said.

Officials said tourist movement has been increasing steadily across Gurez, Tulail, Keran, Bangus and Uri as visitors continue to seek cooler destinations during the ongoing heatwave.

For residents of these frontier villages, the growing tourist footfall is bringing renewed optimism and helping strengthen local economies during the summer season.

Forest Guard Held in Rs 15,000 Bribery Case

SRINAGAR: The Anti-Corruption Bureau (ACB) on Monday arrested a Forest Guard posted in Forest Division Marwah, Kishtwar, for allegedly demanding and accepting a bribe of Rs 15,000 from a complainant for expediting the release of security deposits related to allotted works, officials said.

In a statement issued to Kashmir Observer, a spokesperson said that a written complaint was received by the ACB alleging that the accused had demanded a bribe of Rs 20,000 from the complainant for expediting the release of security deposits related to allotted works. After negotiations, the accused allegedly agreed to accept Rs 15,000 as illegal gratification.

He said that, unwilling to pay the bribe, the complainant approached the Anti-Corruption Bureau seeking legal action against the accused official.

"Upon receipt of the complaint, ACB conducted a discreet verification, which established the prima facie demand for bribe by the accused public servant. Consequently, FIR No. 07/2026 under Section 7 of the Prevention of Corruption Act, 1988, was registered at Police Station ACB Central, Jammu, and investigation was initiated," the spokesperson said.

He said that during investigation, a trap team was constituted by the ACB, which laid a successful trap and caught the accused public servant, namely Vaseem Ahmad Hap S/o Manzoor Ahmad R/o Hidayal, Kishtwar, presently posted as Forest Guard and looking after accounts work in the office of Divisional Forest Officer, Forest Division Marwah, red-handed while demanding and accepting Rs 15,000 from the complainant.

"The accused was immediately arrested on the spot, and the bribe amount was recovered from his possession in the presence of independent witnesses associated with the trap team. Subsequently, searches were conducted at the residential premises of the accused government employee in the presence of an Executive Magistrate and independent witnesses. Further investigation in the case is underway," the spokesperson added. (Observer News Service)

Fare Meters Compulsory for All Auto-Rickshaws in Baramulla

SRINAGAR: To put an end to overcharging, the Transport Department has made fare meters compulsory for all auto-rickshaws across Baramulla district. Operators failing to comply with the order risk legal action under the Motor Vehicles Act, officials said.

Assistant Regional Transport Officer (ARTO), Baramulla, Mudasir Wani, in an order accessed by KNO, directed all categories of auto-rickshaws, including conventional three-wheelers, e-autos and e-rickshaws to install duly calibrated fare meters and charge passengers strictly according to meter readings with immediate effect.

According to the order, no auto-rickshaw without a functional fare meter shall be permitted to operate. Authorities have also directed operators to prominently display the approved fare chart inside their vehicles for the convenience of passengers.

The ARTO warned that any violation of the directions will invite action under the provisions of the Motor Vehicles Act. "No deviation from the prescribed fare structure shall be tolerated under any circumstances," he said.

As per the revised rates, conventional auto-rickshaws will charge Rs 46 for the first two kilometres and Rs 20 for every subsequent kilometre, while waiting charges have been fixed at Rs 25 per hour. E-rickshaw fares have been fixed at Rs 15 per kilometre, while e-autos will charge Rs 25 for the first kilometre and Rs 20 for each additional kilometre.

Officials said the move is aimed at ensuring transparency in fare collection, preventing overcharging and protecting the interests of commuters. The department has asked all operators to ensure immediate compliance, warning that enforcement drives will be carried out to check violations. (Observer News Service)

Water ATM Project in Sopore Falls into Disrepair Within Year

SOPORE: Less than a year after being launched with much fanfare, the Water ATM project in Sopore, once projected as a landmark public utility initiative, has fallen into disrepair, triggering criticism from residents who have questioned the maintenance and sustainability of civic projects undertaken by the Municipal Council (MC) Sopore.

The Water ATMs, meant to provide clean drinking water to shoppers, commuters and visitors, currently lie damaged and non-functional.

Residents told KNO that the project, which received considerable attention at the time of its launch, has now become another example of public infrastructure being neglected after inauguration.

"It didn't last even a year. The facility was projected as a major achievement, but today it lies abandoned. These installations are located at busy places, including near the Municipal Council gate and educational institutions, yet nobody seems concerned about their condition," said local activist Arshad Badroo.

Another resident, Fahim, said recurring problems with public projects raise questions about planning and long-term maintenance. "Projects are launched with publicity and promises. Then comes repair work, maintenance costs and repeated spending. If proper upkeep is not ensured, the public is ultimately left without the service that was promised," he said.

Locals said public assets should not be allowed to deteriorate like this, and urged the administration to ensure regular upkeep.

Chief Executive Officer (CEO) of Municipal Committee (MC) Sopore, Wali Mohammad, acknowledged that the Water ATM has remained defunct for more than a month. He said the facility was damaged by miscreants who allegedly stole some of its components.

"The Water ATM became non-functional after miscreants damaged the unit and took away some of its items. An FIR has been registered in this regard, and the facility will be restored soon," he said. (Observer News Service)

Justice Sanjeev Kumar Appointed Acting CJ of J&K High Court

SRINAGAR: The President of India on Monday appointed Justice Sanjeev Kumar, Judge of the High Court of Jammu & Kashmir and Ladakh, to perform the duties of the office of the Chief Justice of the High Court of Jammu & Kashmir and Ladakh.

The Ministry of Law & Justice notified the appointment of Justice Sanjeev Kumar as acting of the High Court.

"In exercise of the powers conferred by Article 223 of the Constitution of India, the President is pleased to appoint Shri Justice Sanjeev Kumar, Judge of the High Court of Jammu & Kashmir and Ladakh, to perform the duties of the office of the Chief Justice of the High Court of Jammu & Kashmir and Ladakh consequent upon the appointment of Shri Justice Arun Palli, Chief Justice of the High Court of Jammu & Kashmir and Ladakh, as a Judge of the Supreme Court of India," reads the notification, a copy of which is in possession Kashmir Observer. (Observer News Service)

Repeated Hailstorms, Erratic Weather Have Crushed Harvest Hopes, Say Orchardists

Observer News Service

SRINAGAR: Kashmir's horticulture sector, the backbone of the Valley's rural economy, is reeling under the impact of repeated hailstorms, gusty winds, and erratic weather conditions that have caused extensive damage to fruit orchards across several districts.

Growers and traders have expressed deep concern over mounting losses, warning that the livelihoods of lakhs of families dependent on horticulture are at stake.

The latest spell of severe weather struck on the evening of May 30, when intense hailstorms accompanied by strong winds battered large parts of South Kashmir, particularly Pulwama, Shopian and Kulgam districts. Several horticulture belts in central and north Kashmir also witnessed widespread destruction, leaving orchardists worried about the fate of this year's fruit crop.

Growers, speaking to KNO, said weather conditions have become increasingly unpredictable, with clear afternoons often giving way to violent storms during the evening hours. Orchard owners said that



hailstones and powerful winds have damaged fruit-bearing trees at a crucial stage of crop development, resulting in significant losses.

The damage follows a series of similar weather events witnessed over the past two months. Earlier, severe hailstorms affected horticulture-rich areas of Rafiaband, including Wategram, Lasser, Dangiwa, Dandoosa, Hadipora and adjoining villages. Extensive damage was also reported from Sopore, Bandipora, Ganderbal and several orchard belts of Baramulla district, including Sangrama, Wagura, Kreeeri, Pattan, Kandi and Tangmarg.

The repeated weather-related disasters have sparked panic among orchardists, many of whom depend entirely on fruit cultivation for their livelihood. Growers say that

continuous losses have not only reduced their expected income but have also pushed many families deeper into debt.

The Kashmir Valley Fruit Growers-cum-Dealers Union, Srinagar, an elected umbrella body representing fruit growers' associations across the Valley, has expressed serious concern over the situation and urged the government to intervene immediately.

The Union said that despite repeated representations, no comprehensive compensation package has been announced for the losses suffered by fruit growers due to hailstorms and strong winds. It also lamented the absence of a functional crop insurance mechanism and a Market Intervention Scheme (MIS), both of which could provide much-needed financial security to farmers during natural calamities.

CS Reviews Progress in Solarisation of Govt Buildings

Observer News Service

SRINAGAR: Chief Secretary, Atal Dulloo, chaired a review meeting of the Science & Technology Department to assess the initiatives undertaken for promotion of clean energy and the progress achieved in solarisation of government buildings across Jammu and Kashmir.

The meeting was attended by Commissioner Secretary, Science & Technology; Chief Executive Officer, JAKEDA; Director, Jammu and Kashmir Science, Technology and Innovation Council (JKSTIC); and other senior officers of the department.

During the meeting, the Chief Secretary undertook a comprehensive review of the solarisation programme being implemented across government establishments and emphasized the need for close coordination among the Science & Technology Department, Power Development Department (PDD) and district administrations to ensure smooth and timely installation of smart meters. He observed that effective metering is essential for realizing the full benefits of solar energy generation and optimizing energy savings.



Dulloo further directed the department to extend necessary assistance to government departments in finalizing Power Purchase Agreements (PPAs), enabling efficient utilization and management of the energy generated through solar installations.

He remarked that large-scale solarisation, coupled with the development of small and medium hydro-power projects, has the potential to transform the energy landscape of Jammu and Kashmir, given the immense renewable energy potential available across the Union Territory.

Highlighting the need for inclusive and sustainable energy solutions, the Chief Secretary called for exploring alternative cooking energy options for people residing in remote and far-flung areas who continue to depend on conventional fuel sources. He also

stressed the importance of expediting efforts towards formulation and implementation of the Renewable Energy (RE) Policy and promotion of Compressed Biogas (CBG) initiatives in Jammu and Kashmir.

Reviewing the functioning of the Jammu and Kashmir Science, Technology and Innovation Council (JKSTIC), the Chief Secretary urged the council to devise a focused and actionable strategy in collaboration with institutions such as the Islamic University of Science and Technology (IUST) for promoting food processing, skill development and other innovation-driven entrepreneurial ventures. He emphasized that stronger linkages between academic institutions and government agencies can play a significant role in fostering innovation-led economic growth and employment generation in the region.

Monika Dhama Assumes Top Income Tax Post in J&K, Ladakh

Observer News Service

SRINAGAR: Senior Indian Revenue Service (IRS) officer Monika Dhama on Monday assumed charge as the Principal Commissioner of Income Tax in Srinagar, becoming the highest-ranking Income Tax Department official overseeing the Union Territories of Jammu and Kashmir and Ladakh.

An officer of the 2001 batch of the IRS, Dhama has held several key assignments during her career, including policy-making responsibilities in the Department of Economic Affairs, corporate and salary assessment roles within the Income Tax Department, and a distinguished stint as lead trainer of newly inducted civil servants at the Lal Bahadur Shastri National Academy of Administration (LBSNAA), Mussoorie.

According to PTI, Dhama has been strategically posted to Srinagar by the Government of India to work closely with taxpayers, tax professionals, trade bodies and industry stakeholders to further strengthen a transparent, fair and taxpayer-friendly tax administration



in the region. She was formally welcomed by officers and staff of the department upon assuming office and, during her first interaction, highlighted the significant transformation underway in the Income Tax Department.

Dhama underscored the increasing use of technology in tax administration, including faceless processes, digital enforcement mechanisms and measures aimed at enhancing ease of compliance for taxpayers.

She reiterated that voluntary compliance remains the cornerstone of the country's tax system and called upon officials to foster greater trust and cooperation between taxpayers and the department.

"Voluntary compliance remains the cornerstone of the tax system," she said, while encouraging officers to strengthen a culture of mutual trust and partnership with taxpayers.

Dr Darakshan Andrabi Questions NC Governance

Observer News Service

SRINAGAR: BJP leader and Jammu and Kashmir Wakf Board Chairperson Darakshan Andrabi on Monday launched a sharp attack on the National Conference-led government, alleging that it has failed on multiple fronts and weakened politically at the grassroots level.

Her remarks come amid mounting political exchanges over governance and ahead of the June 3 meeting convened by the ruling National Conference, which has attracted growing political attention following opposition claims of internal unease.

Talking to reporters, Andrabi said the National Conference government has "failed to a great extent" and claimed that people increasingly believed the government has weakened on the ground and was not effectively working for public welfare. "People believe the NC government has weakened on ground and does not work for the people on ground," she said.

At the same time, Andrabi refrained from making definitive comments on the significance of the June 3 meeting and said it would be



premature to draw conclusions about the meeting.

"It will be premature to talk about the June 3 meeting," she said.

The BJP leader contrasted the present political discourse with what she described as the development trajectory under Prime Minister Narendra Modi-led government.

Praising the BJP and Prime Minister Modi, Andrabi claimed that development activities had accelerated significantly, particularly after 2019.

As per KNT, she termed the period before 2019 a "dark era" and asserted that development work had gained momentum following subsequent political changes.

Andrabi further argued that BJP could not be criticized on development issues, claiming that the party had focused extensively on ground-level progress and infrastructure expansion.

4 Drug Peddlers Arrested: Police

Observer News Service

SRINAGAR: In a continued effort to curb the menace of drug trafficking and substance abuse, Police achieved a significant success by apprehending 04 drug peddlers in Baramulla and Handwara and recovering contraband substances from their possession.

According to a statement issued to Kashmir Observer, a police party during naka checking operation conducted at Babreshi Crossing intercepted a Scooty bearing registration number JK15C-1139. During search, 17 grams of Charas like substance was recovered from his possession. The accused identified as Shahid Ahmad Lone son of Nazir Ahmad Lone resident of Bathipora Naidkhai, Sumbal. Similarly, a police party of Police Station Baramulla intercepted two suspicious individuals at Jani Chowk, Khawajabagh. Upon search, 487.5 grams of opium pods were recovered from their possession. The accused have been identified as Amandeep Singh, son of Amarjeet Singh resident of Khawajabagh, Baramulla, and Muzain Tanveer son of Tanveer Ahmad Hajam, resident of Khawajabagh, Baramulla.

In Handwara, police apprehended a drug peddler during naka operation at Waskoora Crossing area falling within the jurisdiction of Police Station Handwara. During the subsequent personal search, officers recovered Spasmo-Proxyvon Plus contraband substance from his possession, exposing his involvement in illegal narcotics trafficking. The accused has been identified as Aijaz Ahmad Bhat son of Mohd Ramzan Bhat resident of Kralgund Handwara.

All the accused were arrested and shifted to respective police stations where they remain in custody. Accordingly, cases under relevant sections of law have been registered at respective police stations and investigation has been set into motion to unearth further links in the narcotics network.

Iran Warns Israelis to Evacuate if Beirut Is Attacked

Agencies

TEHRAN - Iran's Khatam al-Anbiya Central Headquarters on Monday warned residents of northern Israeli settlements to evacuate if Israel follows through on threats to strike Beirut's southern suburbs, escalating tensions despite a ceasefire that Tehran says extends across all regional fronts.

In a statement, the headquarters said Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu had threatened to bomb Beirut's Dahiyeh district and other parts of the Lebanese capital and warned that residents of northern occupied territories could be at risk if such attacks were carried out.

"Given the regime's repeated violations of the ceasefire, if this threat is implemented, we warn residents

of the northern parts and military settlements in the occupied territories to leave the area if they do not want to be harmed," the statement said.

Netanyahu said on Monday that he and Defence Minister Israel Katz had instructed the military to strike targets in Dahiyeh and Beirut in response to what he described as Hezbollah's "repeated violations" of an existing truce.

Iranian Foreign Minister Abbas Araghchi said any Israeli action in Lebanon would constitute a breach of a broader ceasefire arrangement involving Iran and the United States.

"For immediate attention: The ceasefire between Iran and the U.S. is unequivocally a ceasefire on all fronts, including in Lebanon," Araghchi said in a post on X.



Separately, Iranian media reported that Tehran had suspended all indirect negotiations and message exchanges with Washington in protest against ongoing Israeli military operations in Lebanon and Gaza.

According to the reports, Iranian officials said no dialogue would resume until Israeli military campaigns in Gaza and Lebanon cease and Israeli forces withdraw completely from occupied areas in Lebanon.

The reports also said Iran and allied resistance groups were preparing measures that could include efforts to enforce a blockade of the Strait of Hormuz and activate other strategic fronts, including the Bab al-Mandab Strait, though there was no immediate independent confirmation of those claims.

Ladakh Talks: Wangchuk Flags Omission in Meeting Minutes

Press Trust of India

LEH: Climate activist Sonam Wangchuk on Monday alleged that crucial points relating to the primacy of elected representatives over the bureaucracy were omitted from the draft minutes of a recent meeting between the Ladakh alliance group and the Centre.

He said such developments risked undermining the atmosphere of trust that had emerged during the talks and appealed to the government to ensure that the official minutes accurately reflect the agreements reached during the meeting.

Ladakh Chief Secretary Ashish Kundra, however, said the draft record was only intended to facilitate discussion. He said if anything had been left out, the groups could raise it with him and it would be conveyed to the government.

The Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA) convened a meeting of the sub-committee for political dialogue with representatives of agitating Ladakh groups on May 22.

The Leh Apex Body and the Kargil Democratic Alliance (KDA) have been jointly engaged in dialogue with the Centre since 2021 over their key demands, including state-



hood for Ladakh and its inclusion under the Sixth Schedule of the Constitution.

Speaking to reporters here, Wangchuk claimed that the discussions during the meeting centred on demands for greater democratic empowerment of Ladakh, including the establishment of a legislative assembly with legislative, executive and financial powers.

"Our perspective is that the entire Ladakh region should have a legislative assembly with powers relating to legislation, administration and financial decision-making," he said.

There was also an understanding that the bureaucracy, including the chief secretary, would function under the authority of elected representatives, he added.

The activist further said,

"The draft minutes of that meeting were shown to us by the government with the suggestion that we review them and indicate if anything needed to be added or deleted."

He claimed that while the draft minutes prepared by the government contained references to legislative and executive powers, they failed to record one of the key outcomes of the meeting — the primacy of elected representatives over the administrative machinery.

He said representatives of the Ladakh groups pointed out the omission and sought revisions, following which the draft was taken back. However, when a revised version was later presented for signatures, the disputed provision was still absent, he alleged.

According to Wangchuk, requests for a copy of the revised draft before signing were not immediately accommodated and participants were not allowed to photograph the document.

"It created an impression that the minutes might not accurately reflect what had transpired during the meeting," he said, adding that such developments risked undermining the atmosphere of trust that had emerged during the talks.

Wangchuk said that several participants invited by the government, including BJP leader and Kargil Hill Council Chairman Thupstan Chhewang, had made statements after the meeting indicating that elected representatives would exercise effective control over governance and the bureaucracy.

Those remarks reflected the understanding reached during the discussions, he said.

To preserve what they believe to be an accurate account of the proceedings, representatives of the Leh Apex Body and the Kargil Democratic Alliance prepared an independent "record of meeting" based on complete recordings of the discussions, the activist said.

"We hope the minutes are is-

sued exactly as the discussions took place and that the process moves forward in a constructive spirit," he said.

Wangchuk said the Ladakh groups would be compelled to register their protest and explore all democratic and legal options available to them if the final record does not accurately reflect the outcome of the talks.

At a separate press conference, Ladakh Chief Secretary Ashish Kundra termed the meeting a breakthrough moment and said the Centre has asked the Ladakh representatives to prepare and submit a document outlining their proposed framework along the lines of the discussions held.

He also sought to dispel confusion over reports relating to the meeting, saying that official minutes had not yet been issued and that a draft record shared among stakeholders was only intended to facilitate discussion.

Describing himself as a link between the people of Ladakh and the Centre, Kundra said, "If there is anything left out, I am here for them to raise it with me. People should come forward and speak openly. We will certainly convey their views to the Government of India."

Five New Judges Appointed to Supreme Court

Press Trust of India

NEW DELHI: Five new judges appointed to the Supreme Court are scheduled to be sworn in on Tuesday.

Chief Justice of India Surya Kant will administer the oath of office to five new judges at the apex court premises.

With the swearing in, the strength of judges will go up to 37, one short of the upgraded sanctioned strength of 38.

The Centre on Monday cleared the appointment of senior advocate Venkita Subramani Mohana; Justice Shree Chandrashekar, Chief Justice of Bombay High Court; Justice Sheel Nagu, Chief Justice of Punjab and Haryana High Court; Justice Sanjeev Sachdeva, Chief Justice of Madhya Pradesh High Court; and Justice Arun Palli, Chief Justice of Jammu and Kashmir and Ladakh High Court as top court judges.

The government last month promulgated an ordinance amending a law to increase the sanctioned strength of the apex court to 38 from 34, including the Chief Justice of India.

While there were already two vacancies, after the sanctioned strength was increased, altogeth-

er six posts became vacant in the apex court.

With five appointments on Monday, the Supreme Court has now one vacancy.

Two Supreme Court judges -- Justice Pankaj Mithal and Justice J K Maheshwari -- are set to retire on June 16 and June 28 respectively.

The five new names were recommended by the Supreme Court Collegium on May 27 and the appointments came through in four days.

Senior advocate Venkita Subramani Mohana, who will also be sworn in on Tuesday has become only the second woman in the country to be directly elevated to the apex court from the Bar after Justice Indu Malhotra in 2018.

Mohana will be one of the two serving women judges in the Supreme Court alongside Justice B V Nagarathna, who has been a judge in the top court since August 31, 2021.

Justice Nagarathna will also become the Chief Justice of India for more than a month in 2027.

Mohana, 59, graduated from the Coimbatore Law College in 1988 and has been practising since then. The Supreme Court designated her as a senior advocate in 2015.

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