

Iran Strikes US Bases, Warns Ceasefire at Risk

The Strait of Hormuz: A U.S.-Iran Flash Point

The narrow waterway is a crucial choke point in the global oil trade and has a large military presence.



Agencies

Tehran/Dubai - Iran and the United States exchanged fresh military strikes on Sunday, sharply escalating tensions despite an existing ceasefire, with Tehran launching drone and missile attacks on American military installations in Bahrain and Kuwait while warning that continued US attacks could bring a "complete halt" to negotiations aimed at ending months

of conflict.

The latest exchange followed a dispute over navigation through the Strait of Hormuz after a US-led multinational maritime body announced plans to expand an alternative shipping corridor near Oman without direct Iranian oversight, creating a new flashpoint with Tehran.

The Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps (IRGC) said the move violated understandings reached | [More on P6](#)

Pilgrim Safety And Comfort Our Top Priority: LG Sinha

Reviews Final Amarnath Yatra Preparations at Baltal

Directs Officials To Strengthen Security, Expand Registration Facilities

Observer News Service

Srinagar: Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha on Saturday reviewed the final preparations for the annual Amarnath Yatra at Baltal in Ganderbal district, directing all stakeholder departments to ensure comprehensive security arrangements and seamless facilities for pilgrims ahead of the pilgrimage beginning July 3.

Chairing a high-level meeting with senior civil, police



and security officials, the Lieutenant Governor assessed the status of infrastructure, security measures and pilgrim facilities to ensure all arrangements are in place

before the commencement of the Yatra.

He instructed all departments to make certain that devotees of Lord Shiva are welcomed into an environment that is safe, comfortable and well-organised.

"My priority is that every pilgrim can enjoy the spiritual journey and leave with a truly enriching and fulfilling experience. The sacred Yatra is a moment of faith and shared joy. I want the arrangements to reflect that | [More on P6](#)

Mock Rescue Drills Held At 18 Key Stretches

Agencies

Jammu and Kashmir Police on Sunday conducted comprehensive high-altitude operational

drills at 18 strategic locations -- many of them snow-bound -- along the twin routes to the cave shrine of Amarnath, to assess preparedness of its mountain | [More on P6](#)

Buzz Grows Over Modi Cabinet Reshuffle

KO Web Desk

Srinagar: Speculation over an imminent reshuffle of the Narendra Modi government's Council of Ministers gathered pace on Sunday, with sources indicating that the exercise could take place before the Monsoon Session of Parliament, alongside the announcement of the Bharatiya Janata | [More on P6](#)

PM Thanks Citizens For Backing Gold, Fuel Curbs

Highlights indigenous defence achievements, AI education in Mann Ki Baat

Observer News Service

New Delhi: Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Sunday thanked citizens for responding to his appeal to conserve resources during the West



Asia crisis, saying people actively supported

Unveils New Website, Logo, Mascot & Pilgrimage Anthem

Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha on Saturday unveiled the campaign's official website, pilgrimage anthem, logo and mascot aimed at promoting environmental sustainability during the annual pilgrimage. The Lieutenant Governor also launched the Directorate of Rural Sanitation's 'Shubham-Shivam' campaign at the Baltal base camp, describing it as a major step towards ensuring a sustainable, clean and zero-landfill Amarnath Yatra. Addressing the launch ceremony, Sinha said the initiative | [More on P6](#)

CEC Arrives In Kashmir On 3-Day Visit

Observer News Service

Srinagar: Chief Election Commissioner (CEC) Gyanesh Kumar arrived in Srinagar on Sunday on a three-day official visit to Jammu and Kashmir, during which he will interact with voters, electoral stakeholders and grassroots election functionaries besides reviewing electoral initiatives across the Valley.

The Chief Election Commissioner was received at the Sheikh-ul-Alam International Airport by Chief Electoral Officer (CEO) J&K Sanjeev Verma, Deputy Commissioner Budgam Athar Aamir Khan and other senior officers of the administration and the Election Department.

Speaking to reporters at the airport, Kumar said the visit is aimed at strengthening engagement with voters and grassroots-level election officials, particularly Booth Level Officers (BLOs), who play a crucial role in | [More on P6](#)

NC Rejects PDP's Backdoor Appointment Charge

Challenges Opposition To Identify A Single Illegal Appointment

Observer News Service

Srinagar: The Jammu and Kashmir government on Sunday strongly rejected the People's Democratic Party's allegations of backdoor appointments through outsourcing,

asserting that all engagements have been made transparently and in accordance with an outsourcing policy framed during the PDP-BJP government.

Addressing a joint press conference, Advisor to the Chief Minister Nasir Aslam Wani, Health Minister Sakina Itoo and Agriculture Minister Javid Ahmad Dar dismissed the allegations as baseless and challenged the PDP | [More on P6](#)

MANOJ SINHA
LIEUTENANT GOVERNOR
JAMMU & KASHMIR

MESSAGE

National Statistics Day is observed across the country on 29th June to honour the contribution of Professor Prasanta Chandra Mahalanobis, whose pioneering work in statistics and economic planning transformed the use of statistical data in public policy.

The theme for National Statistics Day 2026, "Unlocking the Potential of Administrative Data" is especially important from perspective of governance. It reflects the growing recognition that data generated through routine administrative processes can serve as a powerful catalyst for informed governance. Seamless integration of administrative datasets will help us build a modern and cohesive statistical ecosystem for targeted public interventions and sustainable development.

Statistical thinking must be cultivated across all levels of public administration and civil society to drive impactful developmental strategies through informed decision-making and efficient utilization of public resources. This transformation is pivotal for ensuring effective localized governance and realizing our shared vision of Viksit Bharat @2047.

I convey my best wishes to all stakeholders, especially the Directorate of Economics & Statistics, J&K, and the Planning, Development & Monitoring Department, for working towards data excellence and building an integrated, future-ready robust statistical ecosystem for Jammu & Kashmir.

29th June, 2026
Srinagar

Manoj Sinha
(Manoj Sinha)

Omar Abdullah
Chief Minister,
Jammu & Kashmir

MESSAGE

National Statistics Day, observed annually on 29th June, marks a significant occasion to celebrate the invaluable role of statistics in shaping public policy and guiding the development planning. The day commemorates the birth anniversary of the late Professor P.C Mahalanobis, a visionary and universally recognised statistician whose pioneering contributions to the fields of statistics and economic planning continue to guide country's development journey. This special day aims to promote awareness, particularly among the younger generation, regarding the vital role of statistics in policy formulation and sustainable development.

The Ministry of Statistics & Programme Implementation (MoSPI), Government of India, has rightly identified the theme for this year's celebrations as "Unlocking the Potential of Administrative Data". Administrative data offers immense promise for strengthening the Statistical System through integration and generation of timely, granular, reliable and cost-effective statistics vital for evidence-based decision-making.

In Jammu and Kashmir, the Directorate of Economics & Statistics (DES), J&K, is commemorating the 20th National Statistics Day 2026 through a series of seminars, discussions, and awareness programmes. The initiatives aim to bring stakeholders together to highlight the pivotal role of the official statistical system in formulating strategic policies and anchoring economic development. Focused deliberations on the theme will pave the way for building a modern, integrated, and future-ready statistical ecosystem capable of driving evidence-based governance and sustainable regional development.

I extend my best wishes to all stakeholders, notably the Directorate of Economics & Statistics, J&K and the Planning, Development & Monitoring Department for their dedicated efforts in supporting and strengthening the evidence-based governance and advancing inclusive growth across the Union Territory.

29th June, 2026
Srinagar

Omar Abdullah
(Omar Abdullah)

Atal Dulloo, IAS
Chief Secretary,
Jammu & Kashmir

MESSAGE

I am happy to know that 20th National Statistics Day is being celebrated on 29th June 2026 across the Union Territory to commemorate the birth anniversary of renowned statistician, the late Professor Prasanta Chandra Mahalanobis, whose monumental contributions to the fields of statistics and economic planning laid the foundation for modern economic planning and statistical science in our country. The day seeks to create greater awareness about the importance of statistics in national development and stands as a powerful reminder of our commitment to informed evidence-based decision-making.

2. The theme "Unlocking the Potential of Administrative Data" chosen for National Statistics Day 2026 by the Ministry of Statistics & Programme Implementation (MoSPI), Government of India, presents a timely paradigm shift. Every robust administrative decision relies on underlying data; when administrative datasets are correctly harnessed, analyzed, and interpreted, they become highly potent tools for policymakers to design precise interventions.

3. Transitioning toward optimized administrative data system ensures that governance is agile, cost-effective, and deeply responsive to ground realities. It bridges information gaps and provides alternative pathways for achieving our socio-economic developmental goals.

4. On this important occasion, I extend my warmest wishes to all statisticians, researchers, academicians, and in particular the Directorate of Economics & Statistics (DES), J&K and the Planning, Development & Monitoring Department. Their dedicated work and unwavering commitment to advancing statistical practices and strengthening our official statistical system remain vital to advancing the developmental aspirations of the Union Territory.

29th June, 2026
Srinagar

Atal Dulloo
(Atal Dulloo, IAS)

R Alice Vaz, IAS
Commissioner/ Secretary to
Government
Planning Development &
Monitoring Dept.
UT of Jammu & Kashmir

MESSAGE

National Statistics Day, observed on 29th June, honours the birth anniversary of the late Professor Prasanta Chandra Mahalanobis, the doyen of Indian statistics and economic planning, whose seminal contributions laid the foundation of modern statistical planning in India. The occasion serves to promote awareness about the indispensable role of statistics in data-driven decision-making and sustainable development.

The theme for 20th National Statistics Day 2026, "Unlocking the Potential of Administrative Data," underscores the core value embedded within administrative datasets for delivering reliable, timely, and cost-effective indicators for evidence-based policymaking. Our collective efforts in strengthening, standardisation, interoperability, and sharing of administrative datasets shall strengthen the statistical ecosystem and further foster socio-economic progress.

The Union Territory level celebration of National Statistics Day 2026, spearheaded by the Directorate of Economics & Statistics, J&K, seeks to promote statistical literacy, highlight the importance of official statistics in development, and encourage the adoption of data-driven decision-making, particularly among the youth. As the nodal agency for the integrated development of the statistical system in the Union Territory, the Directorate of Economics & Statistics, J&K, plays a central role in ensuring data excellence, modernizing official statistics, and nurturing an ecosystem geared towards evidence-based planning and governance.

I extend my compliments and best wishes to the Directorate of Economics & Statistics, J&K and the wider statistical community, for their sustained efforts and valuable contributions towards advancing the official statistical system to support robust, evidence-based governance and sustainable growth.

29th June, 2026
Srinagar

R Alice Vaz
(R Alice Vaz, IAS)

Riyaz Ahmad Romshoo
Director General,
Economics & Statistics,
Govt. of Jammu & Kashmir

MESSAGE

The Directorate of Economics & Statistics, Jammu & Kashmir, observing National Statistics Day every year on 29th June to commemorate the birth anniversary of Professor Prasanta Chandra Mahalanobis, the architect of modern statistics and economic planning in India, whose pioneering contributions transformed statistics into a powerful instrument of evidence-based policy-making, and continue to inspire generations of statisticians and policymakers to uphold the highest standards of official statistics and statistical excellence, and reinforce the indispensable role of statistics in public policy and development planning.

The observance of National Statistics Day by the Directorate seeks to promote awareness and deepen public understanding of the pivotal role of statistics in policymaking and socio-economic development. It provides a valuable platform to engage students, researchers, academicians and other stakeholders in deliberations on emerging statistical issues, encourage the wider application of statistical approaches to developmental challenges, and inspire younger generations to embrace statistical thinking and recognize statistics as an indispensable tool for nation-building.

The Ministry of Statistics & Programme Implementation (MoSPI), Government of India, identifies a theme of national significance each year for National Statistics Day to encourage focused deliberations and advancement in the field of official statistics. The theme for the 20th National Statistics Day 2026, "Unlocking the Potential of Administrative Data," highlights the growing catalytic role of administrative datasets in strengthening the official statistical system, supporting evidence-based decision making and fostering a modern, integrated and technology-enabled statistical ecosystem for efficient governance and sustainable development.

As the nodal agency for the integrated development of the official statistical system in the Union Territory, the Directorate of Economics & Statistics, Jammu & Kashmir, remains steadfast in its commitment to strengthening and modernizing the official statistical system while promoting statistical literacy across the Union Territory. In keeping with the theme of the 20th National Statistics Day, the Directorate is expanding the use of administrative data, leveraging digital technologies and adopting modern statistical practices to enrich official statistics. Through continuous innovation and capacity building, the Directorate strives to enhance the quality, credibility and accessibility of official statistics.

On this significant occasion, I extend my greetings and best wishes to all statisticians, researchers, and data professionals, with special appreciation to the members of the Jammu & Kashmir, Economics & Statistics Service for their unwavering dedication and valuable contributions towards strengthening the official statistical system of the Union Territory. I am confident that our commitment and collective efforts will further enhance the quality and credibility of official statistics, and contribute meaningfully to the evidence based inclusive, sustainable and resilient development of Jammu & Kashmir.

29th June, 2026
Srinagar

Riyaz Ahmad Romshoo
(Riyaz Ahmad Romshoo)



To place an advertisement
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Transfer Policy-2026

The draft Transfer Policy-2026 in respect of School Education Department is placed in the public domain for information and for inviting comments, suggestions and objections, if any, from stakeholders and members of the general public within a period of 15 days.

1. Policy Framework and Objectives:

The School Education Department is committed to promote the delivery of quality education through the efficient functioning of educational institutions and the optimum utilization of available human resources. Recognizing that a balanced and need-based distribution of personnel is essential for maintaining academic standards, addressing institutional requirements and strengthening service delivery, the Government of UT of Jammu & Kashmir, hereby notifies a comprehensive Transfer Policy for the School Education Department to provide a transparent, fair and accountable framework for regulating transfers and postings within the School Education Department. The policy aims to promote consistency and objectivity in personnel administration, ensure equitable distribution of staff across educational institutions, particularly in remote and underserved areas, facilitate optimal utilization of available manpower and enhance administrative efficiency and accountability, while safeguarding uninterrupted academic functioning and placing the educational interests of students at the forefront of all transfer-related decisions.

2. Scope, Applicability, Tenure and Guiding Principles:

2.1. This Policy shall govern transfers and postings of Teachers, Masters, Lecturers, Headmasters, Principals, Zonal Education Officers & equivalent, Chief Education Officers & equivalent serving under the School Education Department, UT of Jammu and Kashmir.

2.2. The Directorates shall maintain a comprehensive and updated electronic database relating to the posting history, tenure, service particulars and transfer records of employees to facilitate transparent and effective implementation of the Policy.

2.3. Transfers and postings shall ordinarily be processed through the designated Online Transfer Portal. For this purpose, the School Education Department shall

notify the annual transfer schedule at the conclusion of each academic session and the process shall, as far as practicable, be completed prior to the commencement of the ensuing academic session. However, on administrative exigencies, offline transfers can also be effected with the approval of the Competent Authority.

2.4. For the purpose of regulating tenure and ensuring balanced deployment of personnel, educational institutions shall be classified into designated zones viz. **Zone-I, II, III, IV and V (identified difficult and inaccessible areas within the Union Territory)** as specified in Annexure B and the employees shall ordinarily be rotated across these designated Zones, to the extent practicable.

2.5. An employee posted in **Zone-I, Zone-II or Zone-III** shall ordinarily serve a tenure of **three (03)** years in a particular institution whereas, an employee posted in **Zone-IV or Zone-V** shall ordinarily serve a tenure of **two (02) years and one (01) year** respectively in a particular institution. The prescribed tenure shall not apply to an employee who voluntarily opts to continue serving in Zone-III, Zone-IV or Zone-V beyond the stipulated period.

2.6. In respect of postings in Zones-IV and V, any period spent away from the place of posting on account of deputation, deployment, attachment or leave shall not be reckoned towards the prescribed tenure for the purpose of transfer.

2.7. Notwithstanding anything contained elsewhere in this Policy, an employee serving in a Zone-V area shall, upon completion of the prescribed tenure, be deemed to have fulfilled his/her prescribed service obligation in the said zone and shall become due for immediate rotation to a posting outside Zone-V. No employee shall ordinarily be retained in a Zone-V posting beyond the prescribed tenure except under exceptional circumstances and for reasons to be recorded in writing. Further, in order to ensure timely implementation of rotational transfers, the date on which the employee is required to be relieved from the Zone-V posting shall be explicitly specified in the corresponding order of posting/transfer issued in respect of such zones.

2.8. Completion of the prescribed tenure in Zone-V shall confer upon the employee a preferential claim for consideration against suitable vacancies in Zones-I or II, subject to the administrative requirements.

2.9. Officers holding administrative positions, including Chief Education Officers (CEOs), Principals, Headmasters, Zonal Education Officers (ZEOs) and equivalent posts, shall ordinarily have a tenure of **two (02)** years at a particular station, which may be extended up to a maximum period of three years, subject to the administrative requirements.

2.10. Employees promoted to higher posts shall ordinarily be considered for placement in Zones-III, IV or V, either at the time of promotion or subsequently, unless exempted by the Administrative Department for reasons to be recorded in writing.

2.11. The new appointees shall be posted in Zones- III, IV and V as far as practicable.

3. Staff Rationalization and Institutional Requirements:

3.1 In the event of a shortage of subject-specific teaching staff within a School Complex, the concerned Director, School Education shall make appropriate arrangements in accordance with the instructions contained in Government Order No. 2173-JK(Edu) of 2022 dated 01.12.2022.

3.2 Any extraordinary arrangement involving deployment, redistribution or adjustment of staff to address acute shortages or institutional exigencies shall be undertaken only by the Administrative Department after due consultation with the concerned Directorate(s).

3.3 Staff rationalization shall be guided by the principles of equity, optimum utilization of human resources, maintenance of prescribed pupil-teacher ratios, subject-specific requirements, enrolment strength, geographical accessibility, overall academic interests of the institution and any other relevant educational parameters as may be determined by the Administrative Department from time to time.

3.4 Surplus staff identified through a rationalization exercise may be redeployed to institutions experiencing shortages, notwithstanding the period of stay of such employee at the present place of posting.

3.5 No rationalization measure shall ordinarily result in the complete depletion of teaching staff in any institution or adversely affect the delivery of academic instruction in core subjects.

3.6 The Directorate concerned shall maintain a periodically updated database of staff position, vacancies, surplus establishments and subject-wise requirements to facilitate evidence-based rationalization and manpower planning.

3.7 Orders issued pursuant to a rationalization exercise should ordinarily reflect the institutional considerations or administrative factors that have necessitated such deployment, adjustment, or redeployment.

3.8 The outcomes of rationalization measures may be reviewed from time to time with a view to assessing their efficacy and addressing any emerging staffing imbalances.

3.9 Nothing contained herein shall preclude the competent authority from revisiting, reviewing, or suitably modifying any rationalization decision where circumstances so warrant in the interest of administrative efficiency, institutional requirements or educational outcomes.

4. Categories of Transfers:

Transfers under this Policy shall be classified into the following categories:

4.1 General Transfers:

General transfers shall ordinarily be undertaken as part of the annual transfer exercise and shall be regulated through the Transfer Assessment Matrix as prescribed at Para 19 of this Policy. Such transfers shall be based on completion of the prescribed tenure, merit points secured by the employee, availability of vacancies and other relevant considerations prescribed under this Policy.

4.2 Mutual Transfers:

Employees belonging to the same cadre and holding comparable posts may be permitted to exchange their places of posting through mutual consent, subject to fulfilment of the prescribed eligibility conditions and approval of the competent

authority. Mutual transfers shall not ordinarily result in disturbance of sanctioned staff strength or adversely affect institutional functioning.

4.3 Administrative Transfers:

The competent authority may effect transfers at any time in the interest of administration and academic efficiency. Such transfers may be necessitated by staff imbalances, rationalization of manpower, disproportionate teacher-student ratios, subject-specific requirements, institutional performance concerns, establishment of new institutions, closure or merger of institutions or any other administrative exigency requiring immediate intervention.

4.4 Compassionate and Priority Transfers:

Transfers under this category may be considered on priority in deserving cases involving severe medical conditions of the employee or dependent family members, benchmark disabilities, widowhood, safety or security concerns or other exceptional humanitarian circumstances. Such cases shall be supported by appropriate documentary evidence and shall be subject to verification and approval by the Competent Authority.

4.5 Special Rotation Transfers:

Employees serving in notified difficult, remote or inaccessible areas, including Zone-V areas, may be considered for rotational transfer upon completion of the prescribed tenure in accordance with the provisions of this Policy and subject to availability of suitable vacancies.

5. Cadre and Category-specific Provisions:

5.1. The employees appointed against RBA/ALC categories shall serve in the notified RBA/ALC areas in accordance with the provisions of the Jammu and Kashmir Reservation Act, 2004, and rules framed thereunder.

5.2. The employees appointed under SRO-202 shall become eligible for consideration of transfer only upon completion of five years of service against the post to which they were originally appointed.

5.3. Employees borne on Union Territory, Divisional or District Cadres shall ordinarily remain transferable within their respective cadres. Inter-cadre transfers shall not be permissible except in such cases and under such conditions as may be specifically provided under Para 18(vi), (vii), (viii), (ix) and (x) of this Policy.

6. Special Provisions and Relaxations:

6.1 Subject to administrative feasibility and availability of vacancies, special consideration may be accorded in the following circumstances:

6.1.1 Where both spouses are serving under Government employment, efforts shall be made to post them at the same station or within reasonable proximity to each other, to the extent feasible, subject to the availability of post(s).

6.1.2 The employee(s) due to attain the age of superannuation within six months may, shall preferably be posted nearby his/her residence as far as practicable.

6.1.3 The employees aged 58 years and above shall ordinarily not be posted to Zone-IV or Zone-V, except where necessitated by compelling administrative considerations.

6.1.4 Due consideration shall be accorded to single parents, widows, divorcees, female employees and employees having children with benchmark disabilities, subject to institutional requirements and availability of vacancies.

6.1.5 The employees with benchmark disabilities shall be considered for posting at a convenient station, subject to administrative feasibility and availability of suitable vacancies.

6.1.6 Notwithstanding anything contained elsewhere in this Policy, the Administrative Department may consider inter-cadre or mid-term transfers on compassionate grounds arising from exceptional medical or security-related circumstances pertaining to the employee, spouse or dependent children, on the recommendations of the Designated Committee constituted for the purpose. Such transfers shall ordinarily be approved for a period not exceeding **two (02) years** and shall be subject to the production of the following documents:

S. No.	Grounds	Eligibility Criteria	Supporting Documents
1.	Medical	(a) Life-threatening or chronic debilitating illness; or (b) Disability of not less than 40% affecting the employee, spouse or dependent child	Medical Certificate issued by the Standing Medical Board
2.	Security	Cases involving verified security concerns requiring relocation	Recommendations of the Special Director General, CID Wing

6.1.7 In cases involving life-threatening or chronic medical conditions, fresh medical certification shall not ordinarily be required for continuation beyond the approved period, unless specifically directed by the competent authority. However, continuation of transfer benefits on security grounds beyond the prescribed period shall require fresh recommendations from the competent authority concerned.

6.1.8 The Designated Committee shall ordinarily meet at least twice during an academic session to examine and recommend eligible cases under this provision. However, the lien, seniority and promotional prospects of such employees shall be retained in their parent District or Divisional Cadre.

6.1.9 Mutual inter-cadre transfers shall be considered by the Administrative Department, subject to the condition that the employees concerned possess comparable academic qualifications and belong to equivalent categories of service. Employees transferred on a mutual basis shall be required to serve at the allotted place of posting for a minimum period of three years.

Provided that:

(a) The employees who are due for consideration for promotion shall not be eligible for mutual inter-cadre transfer.

(b) The employees appointed under the RBA/ALC category shall be eligible for mutual inter-cadre transfer only after completion of the mandatory tenure prescribed for service in the notified RBA/ALC areas under the Jammu & Kashmir Reservation Act, 2004.

The lien, seniority and promotional prospects of such employees shall continue to remain protected in their parent District or Divisional Cadre.

6.1.10 Inter-cadre transfer on account of marriage may be considered by the Administrative Department on the recommendations of the Designated Committee, subject to the employee having rendered a minimum of five years' service in her parent District or Divisional Cadre. Such transfers shall be considered with due regard to availability of vacancies, institutional requirements and relative seniority.

Applications under this provision shall be supported by the following documents:

S. No.	Ground	Documents Required
1.	Marriage	Domicile Certificates of both spouses and Valid Marriage Certificate

Employees transferred under this provision shall continue to retain their lien, seniority and promotional prospects in their parent District or Divisional Cadre.

6.1.11 Inter-cadre transfers permitted under this Policy shall not confer any claim for permanent absorption in the borrowing cadre.

7. Annual Transfer Schedule:

7.1 To ensure stability in institutional functioning and minimize disruption to academic activities, transfers and postings shall ordinarily be effected only upon the conclusion of the academic session. The annual transfer process shall, as far as possible, be completed before the commencement of the ensuing academic session.

Provided that, notwithstanding the foregoing, transfers and postings may be undertaken during the academic session in exceptional cases where warranted by administrative necessity. In particular:

7.1.1 Teaching staff may be transferred from one institution to another during the academic session in the interest of academic and administrative efficiency, including but not limited to subject-specific staff requirements, performance of the teacher, school results, student enrolment patterns, staff imbalances, institutional performance, rationalization of manpower or any other compelling administrative exigency to be recorded by the competent authority.

7.1.2 Employees promoted to higher posts, reinstated upon revocation of suspension, or resuming duties after completion of training, deputation or authorized leave may be adjusted against available vacancies during the non-transfer period, subject to institutional requirements.

7.2 Any transfer effected during the academic session shall, as far as practicable, be accompanied by suitable arrangements to address the resultant vacancy and maintain academic continuity in the institution concerned.

7.3 The Competent Authority may, where considered necessary in the interest of students and institutional functioning, defer, modify, or withhold a proposed transfer if its implementation is likely to adversely affect academic outcomes, public examinations, or the overall functioning of the institution.

7.4 With a view to ensuring predictability, transparency and orderly management of the transfer process, the annual transfer cycle shall ordinarily be undertaken in accordance with the following indicative schedule:

S. No.	Stage	Timeline
1.	Publication of anticipated vacancies, staffing position and transfer-related notifications	April
2.	Submission of applications and exercise of posting preferences by eligible employees through the prescribed mode	May
3.	Publication of provisional eligibility and merit lists, along with the opportunity for submission of representations, wherever admissible	June
4.	Examination and disposal of representations and publication of final merit lists	June
5.	Issuance of transfer and posting orders and completion of consequential adjustments	June-July

Provided that the Administrative Department may, for reasons to be recorded in writing, suitably revise the aforesaid timelines in view of academic requirements, administrative considerations, judicial directions or other circumstances warranting such modification.

8. Transfer Assessment Matrix (TAM):

The annual transfer exercise shall ordinarily be undertaken through an online, point-based assessment mechanism to ensure a fair, transparent, and objective determination of transfer priorities. The merit score of an employee shall be computed on the basis of the criteria and weightages prescribed in the Transfer Assessment Matrix set out below:

S. No.	Criterion	Points
1.	Service rendered in Zone-V (Inaccessible Areas)	4 points for each completed year of service (Maximum 24 points)
2.	Service rendered in Zone-IV Areas	2 points for each completed year of service (Maximum 10 points)
3.	Age of 55 years or above	8 points
4.	Female (Widow/Divorcee/Single Parent) employee	8 points
5.	Person with Benchmark Disability (PwBD)	Up to 15 points, depending upon the percentage and nature of disability as certified by the competent medical authority.
6.	Spouse serving in Government and posted in the same district	5 points
7.	Recipient of National Teacher Award/State Teacher Award or equivalent Government-recognized award	5 points
8.	Demonstrated exceptional academic performance/results during the preceding three academic years, as certified by the competent authority	5 points
9.	Serious illness of self, spouse, child, or dependent parent requiring continued medical supervision, duly certified by a Government Medical Board	10 points
10.	Employee due to retire within two years	5 points
11.	Orphan employee or employee having sole caregiving responsibility for a dependent family member, supported by documentary evidence	5 points
Total		100 points

9. Other Administrative Provisions:

9.1 Where an employee is identified as surplus to the sanctioned requirement of a school or institution, such employee may be transferred in the interest of staff rationalization and institutional requirements, irrespective of the period of stay at the existing place of posting.

9.2 An employee placed under orders of transfer shall ordinarily not be granted leave until the transfer order has been complied with, except in circumstances beyond the employee's control and for reasons duly recorded by the competent authority.

9.3 While effecting transfers and postings, due regard shall be given to the staffing requirements of Model Schools and other institutions that have consistently demonstrated high academic performance, so as to preserve institutional effectiveness and educational outcomes.

9.4 Officers serving on administrative assignments, including Chief Education Officers (CEOs), Deputy Chief Education Officers, District Education Planning Officers (DEPOs), Zonal Education Officers (ZEOs), Zonal Education Planning Officers (ZEPOs) and equivalent posts, shall ordinarily be posted on transfer to corresponding academic positions.

9.5 Transfer and posting orders issued under this Policy shall be complied with promptly. Any proposal for modification of such orders shall require the approval of the next higher Competent Authority. Cancellation, reversal or modification of transfer orders after issuance shall be resorted to only in exceptional circumstances and for reasons to be recorded in writing.

9.6 The provisions of this Policy shall not apply to Rehbar-e-Taleem (ReT) and Regularized Rehbar-e-Taleem (RReT) employees whose appointments are school-specific in nature, unless otherwise provided by the Government through separate orders.

9.7 The Administrative Department shall be the final authority for interpretation, clarification and relaxation of any provision of this Policy, where deemed necessary in the interest of public service and educational administration.

10. Delegation of Powers:

The authority to order transfers shall be exercised in accordance with the provisions of the Transfer Policy and the delegation of powers notified by the General Administration Department from time to time, including Government Order No. 861-GAD of 2010 dated 28.07.2010 and Government Order No. 810-JK(GAD) of 2020 dated 01.09.2020, as amended from time to time.

The competent authorities for effecting transfers shall be as under:

S. No.	Category of Employees	Competent Authority
1.	District Cadre Non-Gazetted Employees (within the district)	The District-Level Officer of the Department shall process and submit the proposal to the Head of the Department for approval.
2.	Divisional Cadre Non-Gazetted Employees (within the division)	Head of the Department at the Divisional Level.
3.	State Cadre Non-Gazetted Employees	Head of the Department at the State Level. Where no State-Level Head of Department exists, the Administrative Department shall exercise the powers.
4.	First Gazetted Level Officers	The Head of the Department shall submit proposals to the Administrative Department for consideration and approval.
5.	Inter-Divisional Transfers of First Gazetted Level Officers	Administrative Department, on proposals submitted by the Head of the Department.
6.	Gazetted Officers above the First Gazetted Level and up to the rank of Joint Director/Deputy Director or equivalent.	Minister-in-Charge. The Minister-in-Charge may delegate such powers to the Minister of State and/or the Administrative Secretary, as permissible under the rules.

11. Grievance Redressal Mechanism:

11.1 To ensure transparency, accountability, and timely resolution of issues arising from the implementation of this Policy, a three-tier grievance redressal mechanism shall be established at the institutional, district, and Union Territory levels. The grievance redressal structure shall comprise:

(a) **Institution Level:** Head of the Institution.

(b) **District Level:** Chief Education Officer concerned.

(c) **Union Territory Level:** Transfer Review Committee constituted by the Government/Administrative Department.

11.2 An employee aggrieved by any decision or action taken under this Policy may submit a representation before the appropriate forum. Grievances shall ordinarily be examined at the lowest competent level in the first instance and may be escalated to the next level only where the matter remains unresolved.

11.3 All representations shall be disposed of expeditiously and, as far as practicable, within **fifteen (15) days** from the date of their receipt. Decisions shall be communicated to the concerned employee through the prescribed mode.

11.4 The decision of the Union Territory Level Transfer Review Committee shall ordinarily be final, subject to any statutory remedy available under the applicable rules.

Criteria of the areas falling under Zone-I, II, III, IV and V:

S. No.	Zone	Criteria																																	
1.	I	Institutions/schools located within the municipal limits of the District Headquarters.																																	
2.	II	Institutions/schools situated outside the municipal limits and up to 20 kilometres from the District Headquarters.																																	
3.	III	Institutions/schools located beyond 20 kilometres and up to 40 kilometres from the District Headquarters.																																	
4.	IV	Institutions/schools situated beyond 40 kilometres from the District Headquarters and requiring change of residence. This zone shall also include institutions/schools not connected by a motorable road where the one-way walking distance from the nearest motorable road is 7 kilometres or more.																																	
5.	V	Inaccessible areas of the Union Territory of Jammu and Kashmir detailed as under:																																	
<table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th>S. No.</th> <th>District</th> <th>Inaccessible Area(s)</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>1.</td> <td>Kishtwar</td> <td>Marwah, Dachhan, Warwan, Paddar</td> </tr> <tr> <td>2.</td> <td>Reasi</td> <td>Mahore, Chassana</td> </tr> <tr> <td>3.</td> <td>Rajouri</td> <td>Khwass</td> </tr> <tr> <td>4.</td> <td>Kathua</td> <td>Malhar, Bani</td> </tr> <tr> <td>5.</td> <td>Doda</td> <td>Bhaleesa</td> </tr> <tr> <td>6.</td> <td>Ramban</td> <td>Gool, Khari</td> </tr> <tr> <td>7.</td> <td>Kupwara</td> <td>Karnah Sector, Keran, Kralpora, Kupwara, Machil, Trehgam</td> </tr> <tr> <td>8.</td> <td>Bandipora</td> <td>Gurez</td> </tr> <tr> <td>9.</td> <td>Anantnag</td> <td>Aishmuqam</td> </tr> <tr> <td>10.</td> <td>Baramulla</td> <td>Uri</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>			S. No.	District	Inaccessible Area(s)	1.	Kishtwar	Marwah, Dachhan, Warwan, Paddar	2.	Reasi	Mahore, Chassana	3.	Rajouri	Khwass	4.	Kathua	Malhar, Bani	5.	Doda	Bhaleesa	6.	Ramban	Gool, Khari	7.	Kupwara	Karnah Sector, Keran, Kralpora, Kupwara, Machil, Trehgam	8.	Bandipora	Gurez	9.	Anantnag	Aishmuqam	10.	Baramulla	Uri
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Garbage, Stray Dogs Turn Kashmir University Market into Public Nuisance

Observer News Service

Srinagar: The market outside Kashmir University in the Hazratbal area on the outskirts of Srinagar has become a source of growing concern for commuters, students and shopkeepers due to the accumulation of garbage, stagnant water and the increasing presence of stray dogs.

Shoppers and traders told the news agency Kashmir News Trust that heaps of garbage have remained unattended for days, while stagnant water around the dumping site has created an unhygienic atmosphere and foul smell, making it difficult for people to move around the busy market.

They said packs of stray dogs roam the area throughout the day, posing a risk to pedestrians, particularly students, elderly persons and women. Many complained that walking through the market has become increasingly difficult as the dogs often move in groups around the garbage dumps.

According to locals, the neglected condition of the market has given one of the city's busiest educational hubs a shabby appearance. They alleged that despite repeated appeals to the concerned authorities, no effective measures have been



Heaps of garbage have remained unattended for days, while stagnant water around the dumping site has created an unhygienic atmosphere and foul smell, making it difficult for people to move around the busy market

taken to clear the accumulated waste or address the menace of stray dogs.

Shopkeepers said the unhygienic surroundings are affecting business and creating inconvenience for customers, while the persistent foul smell has become a daily ordeal.

As per KNT, the locals alleged that the Srinagar Municipal Corporation (SMC) has failed to take adequate steps to mitigate the problems despite being aware of the situation. They urged the civic body to immediately remove the garbage, drain the stagnant water and launch a sustained drive to control the stray dog population in the area.



LG interacts with volunteers of Save Youth Save Future Foundation

Observer News Service

Srinagar: Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha interacted with the volunteers of the Save Youth Save Future Foundation at Lok Bhavan, Srinagar.

The Lieutenant Governor commended the efforts of the members of the foundation for their dedicated community outreach and social initiatives and inspiring greater participation of youth in the fight against substance abuse.

Calling upon the youth to become ambassadors of a drug-free Jammu Kashmir, the Lieutenant Governor urged them to continue spreading awareness in their localities and work with determination to build a prosperous and healthy society.

He also reiterated his commitment to dismantle the entire drug ecosystem while ensuring that affected youth receive every possible opportunity for treatment, rehabilitation and reintegration into the mainstream.

During the interaction, the members of the Save Youth Save Future Foundation expressed their gratitude to the Lieutenant Governor for spearheading the Nasha Mukta Jammu Kashmir Abhiyan.

They also lauded the stringent action taken by the Civil Administration and J&K Police against drug peddlers and those involved in the narcotics trade.

On the occasion, the Lieutenant Governor also launched "Mulaqaat", an initiative of the Save Youth Save

Future Foundation aimed at bringing together people from different communities to interact, share their memories, experiences, traditions and cultural heritage. The initiative seeks to strengthen social bonds, promote communal harmony and foster mutual understanding among diverse sections of society.

Shri Wajahat Farooq Bhat, Chairman, Save Youth Save Future Foundation; Ms. Anika Nazir, Women's Wing Head; Shri Mudasar Ahmed Dar, South Kashmir Zonal President and team members of the Save Youth Save Future Foundation were present.

The Lieutenant Governor commended the efforts of the members of the foundation for their dedicated community outreach and social initiatives and inspiring greater participation of youth in the fight against substance abuse.

PUBLIC NOTICE

I Mohammad Usman Mir S/o Mohammad Mannoor Mir R/o Katiyubagh Kunzer hereby inform the general public that my character certificate issued by Govt. Boys Higher Secondary Kunzer bearing Roll No 321018068 has been lost somewhere. Now I have applying for the duplicate of the same if anybody has any objection in this regard he/she may file them in the concerned office within seven days. After that no objection shall be entertained.

Mohammad Usman Mir
Mobile Number: 778098965

fko

شمیم احمد گنگو کا انتقال پر ملال



یہ خبر انتہائی دکھ کے ساتھ دی جاتی ہے کہ ہمارے نعت جگر شمیم احمد گنگو ولد حاجی محمد یوسف گنگو صاحب نے انڈیا کے شہر بنگلور میں 28 جون 2026 کو اس جہاں فانی سے رحلت کر گئے۔ مرحوم بنگلور کے رہنے والے تھے۔ ان کا انتقال 28 جون 2026 کو صبح 9:30 بجے اپنے آبائی مقبرہ واقع ملکہ شاہ میں انجام دیا گیا ہے۔

سوگواران: سرتاج احمد گنگو (برادر) شوکت احمد وانی، تاج الدین شاہ (برادر بھتیج)

Worker Found Unconscious in Room, Declared Dead at SMHS Hospital

Observer News Service

Srinagar: A labourer was declared brought dead after his colleagues rushed him to SMHS Hospital, Srinagar, on Sunday after finding him unconscious inside his room in the Rangreth area.

The deceased has been identified as Shahmeem Ahmad Gangoo, 35, a resident of Khan-yar Srinagar.

According to hospital sources, fellow labourers working at FIL Industries Pvt. Ltd. brought him to the hospital in an unconscious condition, where doctors declared him brought dead on arrival.

His colleagues told the police that they found Shahmeem unconscious inside his room before immediately shifting him to the hospital.

As per KNT, Police have initiated proceedings to ascertain the cause of death. Officials said the body has been taken up for medico-legal formalities, and further investigation is underway.

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

AIRPORTS
SHIEK UL ALAM AIRPORT: 01942303311

RAILWAYS

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

HIGHWAY STATUS

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

HIJRI CALENDAR 13 Muharram 1448	PRAYERS	
	FAJR	3: 37
ZUHR	12:33	
ASR	5: 34	
Magrib	7: 50	
ISHA	9: 31	

This Day In History

- 1916- Boeing aircraft flies for 1st time
- 1929- 1st high-speed jet wind tunnel completed Langley Field Ca
- 1932- USSR & China sign non-aggression treaty
- 1943- US forces landed at Nassau Bay, near Salamaua, New Guinea
- 1943- Germany begins withdrawing U-boats from North Atlantic in anticipation of the Allied invasion of Europe
- 1949- US troops withdraw from Korea after WW II
- 1961- Launch of Transit 4a, with 1st nuclear power supply (SNAP-3)
- 1966- In the Vietnam War, US planes bombed Hanoi & Haiphong for 1st time
- 1966-US bombs fuel storage facilities near North Vietnamese cities
- 1967- Israel removes barricades, re-unifying Jerusalem
- 1972- USSR launches Prognoz 2 into earth orbit (549/200,000 km)

From KO Archives

BJP, Bar Call 2-Day Jammu Bandh Against Autonomy

Rajinder Singh

JAMMU: Effigies of the union home minister, L K Advani, and the chief minister, Dr Farooq Abdullah, were burnt when thousands of people, mostly gujjars, staged a demonstration to protest at the border town of Poonch today against the adoption of the autonomy resolution by the state assembly on Monday. They burnt the erased slogans like, "We want peace, development and employment, not autonomy".

Reports reaching here said the demonstrators marched through various streets in the border town and submitted a memorandum to the deputy commissioner demanding rejection of the autonomy report.

Meanwhile, work in courts was disrupted for the second day today following boycott called by the Jammu Bar Association in protest against the adoption of the autonomy resolution by the state legislature. The boycott will continue tomorrow. While the BJP has called for a bandh on Friday, the Panun Kashmir follows suit on Saturday. The decision for Jammu bandh on Friday was taken at an emergency meeting of the state BJP leaders here today.

According to reports, the autonomy resolution has evoked widespread resentment among the people of the region who described it as a political drama' under a 'secret agreement between the National Conference (NC) and Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP).

Prominent leaders of gujjars and other scheduled cast communities described the autonomy report as a 'dangerous move to deprive them of the rights and privileges provided under article 338, 339, 340, 341 and 342 of the Indian constitution which the report has recommended to be abolished'. The leaders included Gujjar United Front president, Anwar Chaudhry, Ch. Muhammad Siraj, Shah Muhammad, and Ch Culzar Ahmad.

Barring the BJP, reports said, all the political parties and other organisations have demanded the dismissal of the Farooq Abdullah government and holding of fresh elections 'as the ruling party has lost its representative character.

Though the BJP's state unit has demanded that the Centre should reject the autonomy resolution in parliament when it comes up for its discussion, they are reported to be incensed at what they described as the criminal silence' of the party high command over the chief minister's 'anti-national' move.

The non-BJP parties alleged there was a secret pact between the BJP and NC as both the parties would exploit the issue during the ensuing snap polls in the state which are considered to be round the corner. The BJP will exploit it in Jammu region to woo the Hindu majority while the NC will make it the main, election plank in the valley, they alleged.

Observers are of the opinion Farooq Abdullah may very soon recommend dissolution of the state assembly and a snap poll as he is believed to be under tremendous pressure in the wake of the on-going moves of the Centre to start a dialogue with the All Parties Hurriyat Conference (APHC). Various political groups in the Jammu province have projected to demand for separate statehood for Jammu and supported the Ladakhis call for union territory status for the region

(Kashmir Observer, June 29, 2000)



The methods used to consume news have changed over time from newspapers, to television, to the Internet on our computers to carrying the news around with us 24/7 on smartphones in our pockets.

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The Kinship Debate

Islam may not compel care for in-laws, but compassion demands a deeper conversation.



Bilal Ahmad Khanday

“
When clerics or elders declare that someone is “not bound” to care, they may be technically correct in a narrow sense. But they risk encouraging apathy in a society that already struggles with disconnection.

Not long ago, I sat in a modest living room in Ganderbal, shoulder to shoulder with elders, relatives, and a local cleric.

We had gathered for what seemed like a straightforward mediation between a married couple.

Their conflict wasn't unique. It was based on misunderstandings, hurt feelings, perhaps a bit of mistrust.

But what caught me off guard was how quickly the discussion veered into deeper territory: the question of whether a daughter-in-law is obliged to care for her husband's parents.

“She's not bound to,” the cleric said flatly. “Not by religion, not by ethics. Her husband can't ask it of her either.”

Heads nodded around the room. No one argued. No one even flinched. It was as if someone had read a verdict from a sealed book.

But I sat uneasily. Something about the confidence of the statement, and the silence that followed, troubled me.

I've spent most of my life in a culture where family ties are sacred. I've also studied enough religion to know that what's written in our texts is often more nuanced than how it's preached. That day, I couldn't stay silent.

I asked the cleric, respectfully, to consider whether such an interpretation reflected the full picture. We cannot reduce a religion like Islam, a faith that speaks so widely about compassion, kinship, and care, to one-liners devoid of social context.

The Quran, after all, is not just a book of rules. It speaks to the heart of human relationships. It emphasizes duties toward others, Huqooq-ul-Ibaad, even more than duties to God.

And the Prophet Muhammad, peace be upon him, often reminded us about the importance of maintaining family ties, what we call Silah Rehmi. In what world do those ties exclude in-laws?

I wasn't arguing that daugh-



ters-in-law should be treated like unpaid caretakers. Far from it, I was saying that family, especially in Kashmir where generations often live under one roof, runs on mutual respect and shared responsibility.

To say a daughter-in-law has no duty toward her husband's parents, not even on ethical grounds, risks hollowing out the very idea of family.

Later that evening, I thought about my own sisters. If one of them didn't support her in-laws when they aged or fell ill, would her husband be expected to care for our aging parents? If everyone shrugged off these responsibilities as someone else's problem, what would be left of our social fabric?

The truth is, this isn't just about religion. It's about logic. It's about decency. We live in a time where families are changing, and not always for the better.

With migration, stress, and rising individualism, the old social

bonds are fraying. We should be working to strengthen them, not cut them off because of a poorly interpreted ruling.

Even if we accept that there may not be a direct scriptural command obligating a daughter-in-law to serve her in-laws, there's a deeper message within our tradition that can't be ignored: kindness begets kindness. Care begets care. Love, when given sincerely, often returns in unexpected ways.

I made these points calmly that day, not to win an argument, but to reframe the question. And to my surprise, people listened.

Some nodded thoughtfully. The atmosphere shifted. We stopped seeing the couple's dispute as a tug-of-war over rights and started seeing it as a mirror reflecting bigger issues in our community.

It's easy to take a literal verse or a religious opinion and use it to end a conversation. It's harder, but more necessary, to ask what our traditions are trying to build. Are

they building love, stability, understanding? Or are they drawing rigid lines around people and calling it divine will?

I don't claim to have all the answers. But I do believe we owe it to ourselves and to our communities to think deeper before we speak in absolutes.

When clerics or elders declare that someone is “not bound” to care, they may be technically correct in a narrow sense. But they risk encouraging apathy in a society that already struggles with disconnection.

So much of our religion is not just about what we are told to do, but who we choose to be. And maybe, just maybe, we should choose to be a little more responsible toward one another. Not because we have to, but because it's right.

—
The author is from Shalabugh, Ganderbal, and can be reached at khandaybilal12@gmail.com.

The Missing Mutation

An overlooked provision in Jammu and Kashmir's agrarian reforms continues to undermine the rights of those the law sought to empower.



Mohammad Amin Mir

In the long story of land reforms in India, Jammu and Kashmir once stood out.

In 1976, the erstwhile state introduced the Agrarian Reforms Act, a bold law that promised to break the back of feudal landlordism.

The idea was simple: give the land to the people who actually work on it.

Many thought this was one of the most powerful land reforms in India, even more far-reaching than the ones in places like West Bengal or Kerala.

But nearly 50 years later, the reform is still hanging halfway.

Families who should have become rightful landowners long ago are now finding themselves caught between what's written in law and what's missing in official records.

The problem lies in a gap between two sections of the law. Section 4 says that land cultivated by tenants will belong to them. Section 8 says this transfer should be properly recorded in government papers. While Section 4 was acted upon quickly, Section 8 was often skipped.

Many farmers gained control of their land, but their names were never officially entered as owners in revenue records.

This missing step might sound like a small clerical issue. It's not. Without Section 8, farmers can't sell their land, pass it on to their children, or use it to get government support. The land is theirs in daily life, but on paper, it belongs to no one.

Take Abdul Rasheed from Qazigund in South Kashmir. His family has been working on five kanals of land for three generations. When he went to the tehsil office to get the land formally recorded in his name, he was told his father's record was incomplete. “We've lived on this land for decades,” he said, “but on paper, it still doesn't belong to us.”

In Sopore, Ghulam Mohi-ud-Din, a retired schoolteacher, wanted to sell a part of his family's orchard. Buyers backed off after seeing the missing Section 8 mutation. “I have land, but no proof,” he said with frustration.

The issue has only gotten worse in recent years. As Jammu and Kashmir pushes to digitise land records, people like Abdul Rasheed and Ghulam Mohi-ud-Din are being left out. In the new online systems, their lands are marked as “incomplete” or “pending verification.” This excludes them from basic services like agricultural loans, crop insurance, and government compensation.

When the government acquires land for roads or other projects, families without a proper Section 8 entry are often denied compensation. They've worked the land all their lives, but in the eyes of the law, they are invisible. Some states handled this better. In West



“
Some farmers died before their ownership could be completed on paper. Their children are now stuck in a waiting room of the law, unable to inherit the land that was meant to be theirs.

Bengal, the Operation Barga program carefully recorded both possession and ownership. Punjab and Himachal Pradesh made sure to update ownership records through regular checks.

Jammu and Kashmir, however, rushed the first part and ignored the second.

How did this happen? Partly because the early days of the reform were politically driv-

en. Officials quickly recorded Section 4 to meet targets, but Section 8 required more paperwork and care.

Over time, no one followed up. Courts have often recognised farmers' possession but have hesitated to declare them as legal owners without Section 8. Local revenue officers rarely correct these old mistakes unless someone files a complaint.

Some farmers died before their ownership could be completed on paper. Their children are now stuck in a waiting room of the law, unable to inherit the land that was meant to be theirs.

Fixing this is possible. It would require district officials to check old records carefully. Ground-level revenue officers should be empowered to correct the entries without forcing families into long legal battles. The government's digital platforms could easily build a system to finish the Section 4 to Section 8 process.

Without these steps, the legacy of one of India's most ambitious land reforms will remain incomplete. A law passed to give dignity to farmers will continue to leave them in the shadows.

Jammu and Kashmir can still correct this. But it must act quickly, before more farmers pass away, leaving their land floating, unclaimed, between statute and soil.

—
The author is a land policy researcher and columnist based in South Kashmir. He writes on revenue administration, rural reform, and governance.

Kashmir's Mind Scientist

The childhood curiosity of a Kashmiri boy now powers pioneering brain imaging research in the United States.



Dr. Waseem Ahmad

In a sleepy Kashmir village, a young stargazer looked up at the night sky, chasing questions larger than his world: Why does the mind forget? Where does illness hide in the brain? What lies beneath thought itself?

That Pulwama boy, Mudasar Maqbool, is now a scientist at the U.S. National Institutes of Health (NIH), where he crafts radiotracers: tiny chemical tools that light up the brain's hidden processes.

His work helps researchers study Alzheimer's, Parkinson's, depression and other diseases that remain among the greatest medical mysteries of our time.

In the sterile calm of NIH's Molecular Imaging Branch in Bethesda, Maryland, Dr. Mudasar's path has been anything but linear. But his trajectory is reshaping how scientists explore the human mind.

Growing up in the 1990s in Kashmir, a region long marred by political disturbances, Dr. Mudasar was no stranger to uncertainty. Electricity was unreliable. Internet was scarce. Classrooms were sometimes interrupted by clashes outside.

But what he lacked in resources, he made up for in resolve. "Books

were my refuge," he said. "There was so much I didn't understand, but I knew that science could answer the big questions."

After high school, he left for New Delhi, earning a Ph.D. in chemistry at Jamia Millia Islamia. His doctoral work focused on proteins like beta-amyloid and tau, which cluster in the brains of Alzheimer's and Parkinson's patients. He used computational chemistry to design molecules that could disrupt these rogue proteins. It was an effort he carried forward in collaborations at India's Central Drug Research Institute and IIT Gandhinagar.

His early work earned him a prestigious research fellowship from India's Council of Scientific and Industrial Research. Still, his scientific ambition pointed him outward.

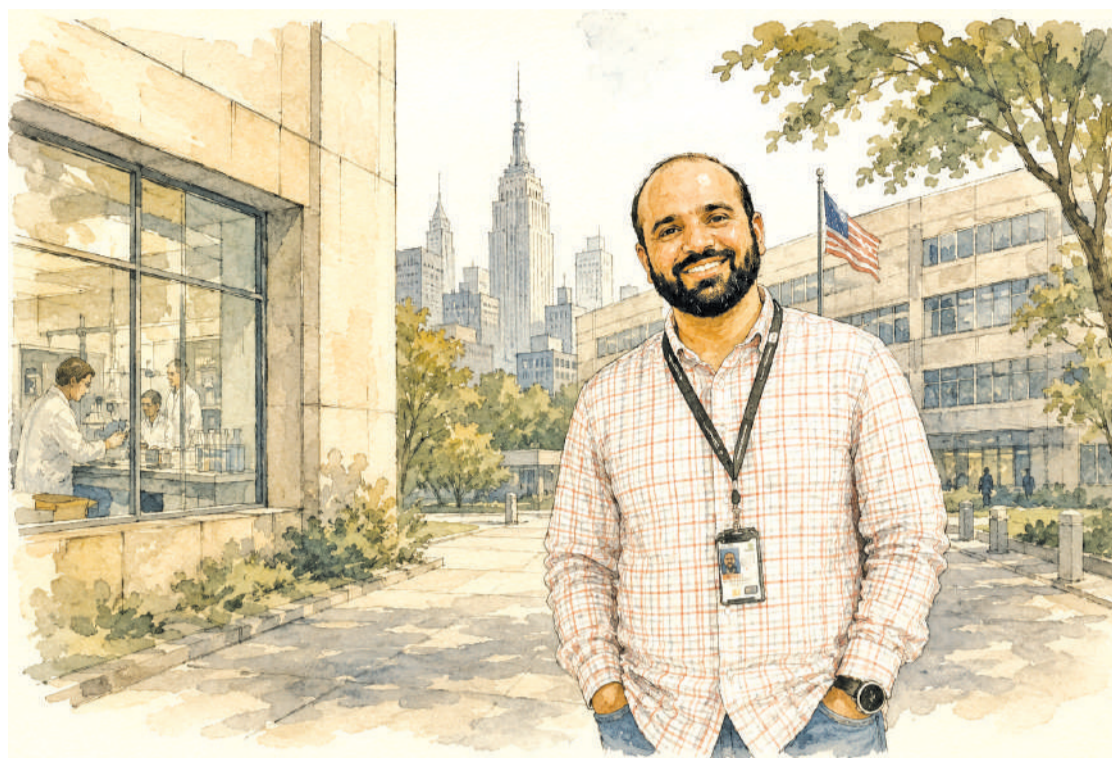
In 2018, a Finnish government fellowship took Dr. Mudasar to the University of Turku, where he studied sugar-like molecules designed to neutralize toxic proteins.

The shift from South Asia's sun to Scandinavia's snow was stark. But it was in Turku's crisp laboratories that his research began to attract international attention.

By 2020, he was in Norway as a postdoctoral fellow at the University of Oslo. There, alongside Professor Patrick Riss, he honed a method for synthesizing radiotracers using fluorine-18, a radioactive isotope used in positron emission tomography (PET).

Their work led to new imaging agents that are now being used in medical centers across Europe and North America.

"These radiotracers act like guided missiles," Dr. Mudasar explained. "They find specific targets in the brain, attach to them, and emit signals we can see on a scan. It's one of the most precise ways to study



"KASHMIR HAS INCREDIBLE TALENT," HE SAID. "But opportunities are limited. I want to help change that, so that young scientists don't have to leave home just to pursue their curiosity."

disease without surgery."

His research also contributed to the development of inhibitors aimed at cancer-linked proteins, part of a growing effort to adapt imaging agents into therapeutic tools.

In February 2023, the NIH called. Dr. Mudasar joined the Molecular

Imaging Branch as a visiting fellow. There, he focuses on creating new radiotracers to explore the brain's cannabinoid receptors, immune-related enzymes, and other molecular pathways linked to inflammation and psychiatric illness.

The work is painstaking. Each tracer takes months, sometimes

years, to develop and test. Even a slight miscalculation in chemical structure can render a compound ineffective or unsafe. But the potential payoff is enormous: earlier diagnoses, tailored treatments and clearer understanding of disease progression.

"Every tracer is a map," Dr.

Mudasir said. "It shows us where suffering begins, so we can find ways to stop it."

His latest compounds are helping to chart the brain's involvement in disorders ranging from neurodegeneration to chronic depression. In a field where breakthroughs can take decades, his steady contributions are making the invisible, visible.

Despite his global footprint, Dr. Mudasar remains closely connected to Kashmir. He regularly mentors young students from the region and dreams of one day establishing a research center back home.

"Kashmir has incredible talent," he said. "But opportunities are limited. I want to help change that, so that young scientists don't have to leave home just to pursue their curiosity."

He is aware that his story stands in contrast to how Kashmir is often portrayed. "People hear about conflict, not creativity," he said. "But there's so much more to us than that."

His colleagues describe him as soft-spoken, intensely focused, and driven more by questions than by accolades. He has published widely in international journals, and his imaging compounds have contributed to ongoing clinical studies on neurological disease.

But in his mind, the journey is still beginning.

"There is so much we don't know about the brain," Dr. Mudasar concluded. "If I can contribute even a small piece to that puzzle, to help people live better lives, that's enough."

— The author is an Agricultural Analyst writing on farming, climate and culture. He can be reached at waseembhatspn@yahoo.com.

The White-Bearded Teacher

His limp slowed his walk, but never his readiness to care for a child.



Muntashir Kifayat Hussain

I was recently on an academic visit to a small government primary school nestled in the hills of Budgam, my home district in Kashmir. It was meant to be a routine inspection, a check on foundational literacy and numeracy. I came in with a notebook, some questions, and, admittedly, a few assumptions. I left with something far deeper.

The first thing I noticed was an elderly teacher with a white beard, sitting comfortably on the floor with a group of tiny children. One leg stretched out, he looked like just another mystic figure in a meditative place.

I started asking the children questions about letters, numbers, shapes. To my surprise, they answered everything quickly and correctly.

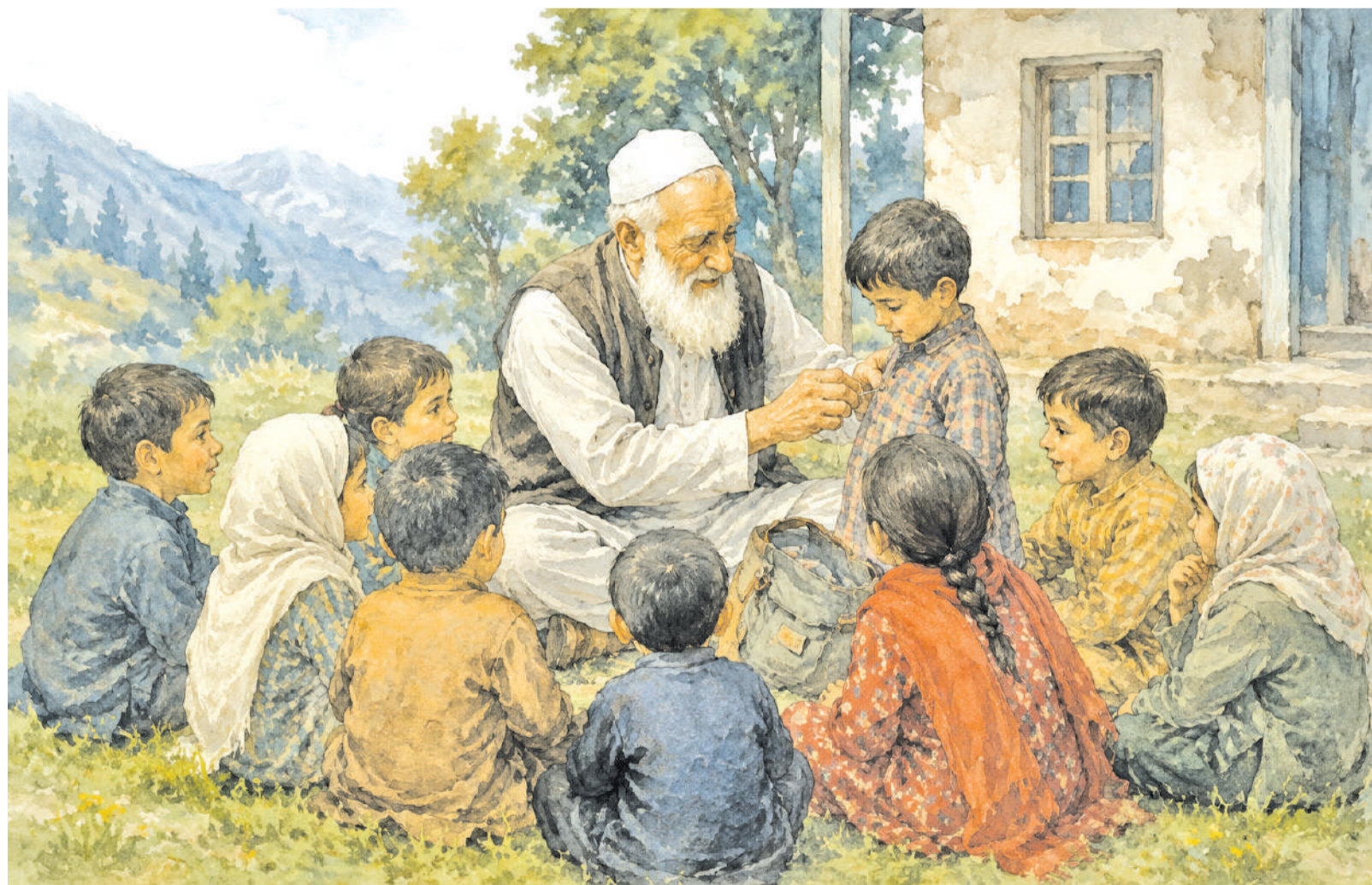
Delighted, I looked at the teacher, half-expecting a modest smile. Instead, he burst out joyfully, "It is we who taught them!" That small "we" said everything.

As we talked, a small child ran up to him shouting something in broken Urdu. "Shar... shar... shirt ka button gir gaya!" The button of my shirt fell off. The words were rushed, childlike, adorable.

Without missing a beat, the teacher reached into a small bag slung over his shoulder, pulled out a needle and thread, and calmly stitched the button back on. No scolding. No fuss. Just quiet care.

I started noticing that bag more. We strolled through the school lawn: lush green, with a hill rising nearby. The teacher limped slightly. He told me he had gout, but brushed it off.

A boy, no more than four, had fallen on the grass and his face was dusty and streaked with tears. Again, the



teacher hurried over. He didn't just wipe the child's face. He picked him up, carried him to the washroom, took out soap from that same handy bag, and gave him a bath. Clean clothes, gentle hands, no drama.

I realised then that I wasn't here just to monitor, I was here to learn.

The school had about 15 children in its pre-primary classes: nursery, LKG, UKG. When the lunch bell rang—than, than—they ran outside in a flurry and sat in a half-moon formation on the soft grass.

The teacher rolled up his sleeves and started feeding them, one by one, with his hands. "Me first, me first!" they giggled and shouted, falling over each other in excitement. He smiled, feeding them patiently, lovingly. It was like watching poetry in motion.

I wondered how, in this tiny building with peeling paint and no fancy resources, the children looked so loved and happy. And then I saw why.

Just as we were settling for our own lunch, we heard a loud cry. The teacher rushed out, bag still on his arm, and I followed. A child had scraped his elbow on the fence. The teacher unzipped the bag and pulled out antiseptic, gently applying it as the child sobbed into his shoulder.

That bag, it wasn't just a bag. It was a toolkit of compassion.

Inside the school building, the walls were painted in bright colours with drawings and lessons on morals and discipline. Curious, I asked him how it was all funded. He looked at me as if the answer was obvious. "From my salary," he said. "I earn Rs 70,000. I

can spare Rs 10,000."

Later, in a corner of the lawn, I noticed a small tin shed, just six by eight feet. Inside were carefully arranged Kashmiri cultural artefacts: woven baskets, miniature samovars, old musical instruments. "I collected these from nearby villages," the teacher said. "Children should know where they come from."

Even the corridor walls had portraits of great personalities, each one with a short biography in simple words. He believed in teaching values, not just syllabi.

I didn't want to leave. But the final bell rang—than, than, than—and the children began to leave, one by one. Each one hugged him before stepping out of the gate. He kissed their foreheads, whispering something to each

of them. Not one wanted to let go.

The bag was still there, hanging from his arm. Ready for the next bruise, the next broken button, the next tear.

As I left the school, the words of Khalil Gibran came to mind: Your children are not your children... they are the sons and daughters of Life's longing for itself.

I had walked into that school thinking I was the educator. But it was that white-bearded teacher with a limp, a gentle smile, and a small handy bag, who truly taught me what it means to teach.

— The author is a Budgam based teacher. He can be reached out at muntashirkifayat@gmail.com.

The teacher rolled up his sleeves and started feeding them, one by one, with his hands. "Me first, me first!" they giggled and shouted, falling over each other in excitement. He smiled, feeding them patiently, lovingly. It was like watching poetry in motion.

VAR Heartbreak Ends Iran's World Cup Dream

Fazal Ansari

Srinagar: Iran's bid to reach the FIFA World Cup knockout stage for the first time ended in agonising fashion on Saturday after a controversial VAR decision and dramatic results elsewhere combined to eliminate Team Melli despite an unbeaten group-stage campaign.

Iran finished third in Group G with three points from three draws against New Zealand, Belgium and Egypt but narrowly missed out on one of the

eight places reserved for the best third-placed teams in the expanded 48-team tournament.

The decisive blow came in two acts.

First, defender Shoja Khalilzadeh thought he had scored a dramatic stoppage-time winner against Egypt in Seattle that would have secured automatic qualification. Wild celebrations erupted among Iranian players and supporters before the referee, following a lengthy Video Assistant Referee (VAR) review, ruled the goal out for offside.

The decision proved pivotal Moments later, midfielder Saied Ezatollahi struck the crossbar as Iran settled for a 1-1 draw, leaving its fate dependent on results in other groups.

Those results ultimately went against the Iranians.

Iran briefly appeared destined for the Round of 32 when Algeria took a 3-2 lead over Austria deep into stoppage time. However, Austria equalised with virtually the final kick of the match to secure a dramatic 3-3 draw, a result that sent both

European sides through while pushing Iran down to ninth among the third-placed teams — one place outside the qualification zone.

Croatia's 2-1 victory over Ghana and DR Congo's 3-1 win against Uzbekistan further reshuffled the rankings, sealing Iran's elimination.

The outcome capped one of the cruelest exits of the tournament, with Iran remaining unbeaten yet failing to record the victory needed to advance.

The campaign unfolded

against an extraordinary political backdrop.

Playing while Tehran remained engaged in negotiations with Washington following months of conflict, the Iranian squad operated from a base in Mexico after being granted permission to relocate from Arizona. Several members of the delegation were denied US visas, forcing the team to commute into the United States for matches before returning immediately afterwards during the early stages of the tournament.

Ireland Beat India by 1-run to Claim T20I Series

Press Trust Of India

Belfast: Ireland defeated India by a slender 1-run margin in the second T20I to register a historic 2-0 victory in the two-match series here on Sunday.

It was Ireland's first-ever series win over India in any format. They had beaten the reigning T20 world champions by 34 runs in the first match a couple of days back. Ireland laboured to a 154 for eight in 20 overs, but India could only reach 153 for

nine in 20 overs despite Prince Yadav striking a last-ball six.

Vice-captain Tilak Varma top-scored for the tourists with a 55 off 46 balls. Jai Moondra and Matt Holland took three wickets each for Ireland.

Brief scores: Ireland 154 for 8 in 20 overs (Harry Tector 53, Ben Calitz 37; Arshdeep Singh 2/35, Harshit Rana 1/17, Prince Yadav 3/22, Shivam Dube 2/25) beat India: 153/9 in 20 overs (Tilak Varma 55, Jai Moondra 3/32, Matt Holland 3/26).

CONTD. FROM FRONT PAGE

Iran Strikes US

under a Pakistan-mediated memorandum of understanding recently signed between Tehran and Washington, under which Iran says responsibility for regulating maritime traffic through the strategic waterway rests with the Islamic Republic.

"Henceforth, vessels found to be in violation will be dealt with more firmly than before," the IRGC said in a statement.

The Guard warned that "any future aggression by the enemy, regardless of the pretext and even if, as last night and tonight, it targets objectives deemed to be of minor importance, will be met with a crushing response".

It further said, "The enemy should understand that violating the ceasefire constitutes a breach of Clause One of the Islamabad understanding and will result in the complete suspension of all related processes."

The warning came shortly after the US Central Command (CENTCOM) announced fresh strikes on Iranian military targets.

According to CENTCOM, US forces struck Iranian military surveillance infrastructure, communication systems, air defence sites, drone storage facilities and naval minelaying capabilities after Iran allegedly attacked the Panamanian-flagged oil tanker Kiku in the Gulf.

The tanker, carrying crude oil for Qatar's state-owned energy company, had departed a Qatari oil field earlier in the week and was bound for a port in the United Arab Emirates on the Gulf of Oman. According to US officials, it was using an internationally coordinated alternative shipping corridor established near Oman's coastline rather than the Iran-approved route through the Strait of Hormuz.

US President Donald Trump accused Tehran of repeatedly violating the ceasefire.

"We struck Iranian missile and drone storage locations and coastal radar sites for violating the Ceasefire Agreement, AGAIN!" Trump wrote on Truth Social.

He warned that Washington could soon reach a point where it could no longer remain restrained.

"If that happens, the Islamic Republic of Iran will no longer exist!" he wrote.

Iran rejected the accusation, insisting it was responding to repeated US ceasefire violations.

The IRGC said its Navy and Aerospace Force jointly carried out ballistic missile and drone strikes between 2:00 a.m. and 3:00 a.m. local time against what it described as eight key American military installations, including Ali Al Salem Air Base in Kuwait and the headquarters of the US Fifth Fleet at Salman Port in Bahrain.

The Guard claimed the targeted facilities had been destroyed, although those claims could not be independently verified.

Kuwait said its air defence systems intercepted two incoming ballistic missiles and several drones targeting the country. Officials reported no casualties or material damage.

In Bahrain, the Interior Ministry said an Iranian strike damaged a residential building near Bahrain International Airport. Images released by authorities showed the upper floor of an eight-storey apartment building extensively damaged, although officials said there were no fatalities.

Bahrain hosts the headquarters of the US Navy's Fifth Fleet, which has repeatedly come under attack during the conflict.

The IRGC said Sunday's operation was launched in retaliation for US strikes earlier in the day on five Iranian coastal military outposts.

"The aggressor enemy, whose very nature is characterised by breaking commitments and violating agreements, attacked five coastal outposts of the Islamic Republic in the early hours of today under the pretext of responding to the IRGC Navy's confronting a trespassing vessel in the Strait of Hormuz," the statement said.

Shortly after CENTCOM announced its operation, Iran's state broadcaster IRIB, citing an informed military source, reported explosions in Sirik County in the southern province of Hormozgan.

According to the report, several projectiles struck a telecommunications tower near the village of Tahrouyi. Residents also reported multiple explosions on Qeshm Island, although officials did not immediately identify the precise targets.

The renewed exchange followed an incident on Friday in which the IRGC Navy fired warning shots at a commercial vessel attempting to transit the Strait of Hormuz through what Tehran described as an unauthorised shipping corridor.

CENTCOM subsequently announced strikes against Iranian military facilities, saying they were carried out in response to the targeting of the commercial oil tanker.

The Strait of Hormuz remains one of the world's most important energy chokepoints, carrying roughly one-fifth of globally traded oil.

Iran maintains that enforcement of maritime traffic through the strait falls under its authority in accordance with the recently concluded Islamabad understanding brokered by Pakistan.

The latest escalation has renewed concerns over the durability of the ceasefire announced by President Trump on April 7, with both Tehran and Washington accusing each other of repeated violations.

While the United States says its latest military action was a defensive response to attacks on commercial shipping, Iran insists it is responding to continued American and Israeli aggression and has warned that any further violations of the ceasefire could derail negotiations aimed at bringing the conflict to a permanent end.

Pilgrim Safety

spirit, ensuring that Teerth Yatris are well cared for," Sinha said.

The Lieutenant Governor reviewed preparations related to sanitation, evacuation plans, weather forecasting, holding areas for pilgrims, parking facilities, langars, transportation, healthcare services, drinking water and power supply, buffer stock of essential commodities, road maintenance, flood mitigation measures, disaster management preparedness, animal husbandry services, registration counters and other critical infrastructure.

Emphasising the need for foolproof security, Sinha directed the Jammu and Kashmir Police and other security agencies to maintain the highest level of vigilance and ensure close coordination for the safety of pilgrims throughout the Yatra.

He also stressed the importance of efficient pilgrim management and instructed the concerned departments to increase the number of on-the-spot registration counters to facilitate quicker registration and minimise waiting time for devotees.

Deputy Commissioner Ganderbal Jatin Kishore presented a comprehensive overview of the preparations made by various line departments for the annual pilgrimage.

Senior Superintendent of Police Ganderbal Sudhanshu Dhama briefed the meeting on the security plan, including deployment of personnel, area domination, surveillance measures, access control, traffic management and emergency response mechanisms.

The meeting was attended by Shri Amarnath Ji Shrine Board Member K.N. Rai; Director General of Police Nalin Prabhat; Special Director General of Police (Coordination) S.J.M. Gillani; Principal Secretary to the Lieutenant Governor and Chief Executive Officer of the Shri Amarnath Ji Shrine Board, Dr Mandeep K. Bhandari; Divisional Commissioner Kashmir Anshul Garg; Managing Director JKPDCL and Nodal Officer for the Baltal Axis Rahul Yadav; Inspector General of Police Kashmir V.K. Bardi; Inspector General of Police Traffic M. Suleman Choudhary; Deputy Inspector General, Central Kashmir Range, Rajiv Omprakash Pande; Director Information Shreya Singhal; Director General Rural Sanitation Anoo Malhotra, besides senior officers of the civil administration, police and security forces.

The annual Shri Amarnath Ji Yatra will commence on July 3 under a multi-layered security cover and conclude on August 28, with pilgrims undertaking the pilgrimage through the traditional Pahalgam route in Anantnag district and the shorter Baltal route in Ganderbal district.

Unveils New Website,

reflects the administration's commitment to preserving the fragile Himalayan ecology while ensuring a spiritually enriching experience for devotees.

"The true backbone of this initiative is our incredible sanitation team. I am grateful to the Karmyogi volunteers, whose relentless dedication will keep the base camp and both the tracks clean in the days ahead. They are the real heroes turning our zero-waste vision into reality, preserving the environment and the profound spiritual dignity of the Shri Amarnath Ji pilgrimage," he said.

The Lieutenant Governor said all the innovative initiatives introduced by the Directorate of Rural Sanitation are rooted in devotion and discipline and called upon every stakeholder to implement them conscientiously.

"The vision of Shubham-Shivam sends a clear message to every pilgrim, every langar and every service provider that preservation of ecology and natural resources is a sacred duty," he said.

Sinha highlighted several eco-friendly initiatives introduced for this year's Yatra, including the 'Trayambakam' mobile application, through which pilgrims can upload photographs of waste or litter to enable immediate action by sanitation teams.

He also praised the 'Swaha' Utensil Bank, under which reusable steel plates and cups will be provided to pilgrims against a refundable security deposit to reduce the use of disposable utensils.

Describing the 'Amarnath Seva Cafe' as another innovative initiative, the Lieutenant Governor said pilgrims would be able to exchange collected plastic waste for tea and snacks, encouraging public participation in keeping the pilgrimage routes clean.

"Exchanging collected plastic for tea and snacks is not merely a transaction. It sends the message that true devotion to Baba Barfani is

reflected in active participation in keeping the pilgrimage clean," he said.

The Lieutenant Governor also announced a regulatory framework for the Yatra that includes mandatory four-way waste segregation, a complete ban on single-use plastic and prescribed sanitation standards for all langars and camps to strengthen environmental protection.

Referring to the newly unveiled campaign identity, Sinha said the official logo featuring Lord Shiva surrounded by 34 tridents symbolises the collective responsibility to protect the holy land and its environment.

He said the pilgrimage anthem, 'Swachhta Dharma Hamara', would inspire pilgrims to embrace cleanliness as an integral part of the spiritual journey.

"I extend my best wishes to the thousands of workers who will operate on these difficult routes in the coming days. Let us resolve that Baba Amarnath's sacred pilgrimage will be an unparalleled experience for pilgrims from across the country and abroad," he said.

Mock Rescue

rescue teams (MRTs), an official said.

To bolster safety measures for the pilgrimage, 45 specialised MRTs, comprising personnel from the Jammu and Kashmir Police, National Disaster Response Force (NDRF), State Disaster Response Force (SDRF) and Central Reserve Police Force (CRPF), have been deployed along the 48-km Pahalgam route in Anantnag district and the 14-km Baltal route in Ganderbal district, the official said.

The annual 57-day yatra to cave shrine, situated at an altitude of 3,880 metres in south Kashmir Himalayas, is scheduled to commence on the twin routes on July 3.

Simultaneous mock rescue drills were conducted at all the strategic locations, many of them still snow-bound, to assess preparedness of the MRTs for ensuring security of pilgrims, and timely response in cases of emergency, Ram Singh — who is overseeing the 18 rescue teams along the yatra routes — told PTI.

He said the exercise involved MRTs deployed at Chandanwari, Pissu Top, Zojibal, Nagakoti, Wavbal, MG Top, Poshpathri, Kelnar, Dardkote, Sangam Top, Holy Cave, Lower Holy Cave, Y-Junction, Brarimarg, Railpathri, Domail, Panjtarni and Sheshnag.

The mock drill was aimed at keeping all rescue teams in a high state of operational readiness and evaluating their response to potential contingencies including natural disasters, medical emergencies, landslides, flash floods and other unforeseen incidents that may arise during the pilgrimage, the officer said.

He said the exercise also tested coordination among MRTs, communication systems, rescue equipment, evacuation procedures and overall emergency response mechanisms to ensure safety and well-being of devotees.

Singh said the drill was conducted successfully, with all participating teams responding satisfactorily, reaffirming their preparedness for smooth and safe conduct of the yatra.

Earlier, a spokesman said the exercises reinforced Jammu and Kashmir Police's commitment to ensuring a safe yatra for pilgrims.

Police have urged devotees to use the 'Pehchaan' app to verify the antecedents of service providers during their pilgrimage to the south Kashmir Himalayas.

"It will ensure that the pilgrims only interact with verified and registered service providers. It will also help in preventing fraud, impersonation and overcharging," the spokesman said.

CEC Arrives

the electoral process.

"I will be interacting with the voters across the beautiful valleys of Jammu and Kashmir, particularly with the grassroots-level Booth Level Officers of Budgam district, who serve as the cornerstone of the Election Commission," he said.

As part of his itinerary, the CEC will hold an interaction with voters, BLOs and other electoral stakeholders in Budgam district on Monday morning. He is also scheduled to review electoral initiatives being implemented at the grassroots level and assess field-level preparedness.

The visit is part of the Election Commission of India's continuing efforts to strengthen its engagement with voters and election stakeholders, enhance the efficiency of the electoral machinery and promote greater democratic participation and electoral awareness across the country.

Buzz Grows

Party's new organisational team under president Nitin Nabin.

According to sources, the BJP leadership has largely finalised the new party team, with younger leaders expected to be assigned key organisational responsibilities. The cabinet reshuffle is likely to be coordinated with the announcement of the new office-bearers.

The sources said consultations have already begun, with Nabin holding discussions with a few Union ministers of state last week. Some ministers are expected to be moved to organisational roles in the BJP, while party office-bearers could find a place in the Union Council of Ministers.

Portfolio changes are also believed to be under consideration. The future of Union Education Minister Dharmendra Pradhan is reportedly uncertain following controversies surrounding the NEET paper leak and alleged irregularities in the CBSE digital evaluation system.

Sources indicated that the reshuffle could take place in July, ahead of the Monsoon Session of Parliament, though the exact timing will depend on Prime Minister Narendra Modi's busy schedule.

The Prime Minister is currently on a three-day visit to Seychelles and is expected to undertake visits to Indonesia, Australia and New Zealand between July 6 and 11. Japanese Prime Minister Sanae Takaichi is also scheduled to visit New Delhi from July 1 to 3.

According to sources, the BJP leadership believes some key ministries require fresh faces, while political considerations such as regional representation, caste balance and organisational priorities are also expected to shape the exercise.

Union Ministers Pankaj Chaudhary and Harsh Malhotra have already been appointed presidents of the BJP's Uttar Pradesh and Delhi units, respectively. With the party generally adhering to its "one person, one post" principle, both are expected to relinquish their ministerial positions.

Union Minister George Kurian has already resigned after not being renominated to the Rajya Sabha. Ravneet Singh Bittu, whose Rajya Sabha term also ended recently, continues in the ministry but is reportedly being asked to focus on the upcoming Punjab Assembly elections.

With Assembly elections due next year in Uttar Pradesh, Uttarakhand and Punjab, the BJP is expected to strengthen regional representation from these states in the Union ministry.

Following the BJP's sweeping victory in the recent West Bengal Assembly elections, some MPs from the state are also believed to be under consideration for ministerial berths.

Sources further indicated that leaders from the breakaway factions of the Trinamool Congress and Shiv Sena (UBT), who have aligned with the NDA, could also be accommodated in the ministry, subject to legal developments relating to disqualification petitions pending before the Lok Sabha Speaker.

One or two Rajya Sabha MPs who recently left the Aam Aadmi Party to join the BJP are also said to be under consideration.

The reshuffle speculation intensified after Prime Minister Modi met President Droupadi Murmu at Rashtrapati Bhavan on June 23 and Union Home Minister Amit Shah called on the President two days later. While the meetings were officially described as routine courtesy calls, political circles believe the cabinet reshuffle may have figured in the discussions.

The terms of Union Ministers Hardeep Singh Puri and B.L. Verma in the Rajya Sabha are due to end in November, and the BJP leadership is yet to decide on their renomination.

Meanwhile, the tenures of Karnataka Governor Thawar Chand Gehlot, Madhya Pradesh Governor Mangubhai Patel and Uttarakhand Governor Lt Gen Gurmit Singh are set to conclude in the coming months, giving rise to speculation that some ministers leaving the Union Cabinet could be accommodated as governors.

However, sources acknowledged that Prime Minister Modi is known for keeping major political decisions closely guarded until the last moment, and a clear picture will emerge only after an official announcement.

PM Thanks Citizens

measures such as temporarily avoiding gold purchases, limiting foreign travel and adopting fuel-saving practices.

Addressing the nation in his monthly radio programme Mann Ki Baat, Modi said the public had not only accepted his appeal but had also actively cooperated in helping the country navigate a challenging period.

"I am grateful to every citizen of the country; not only have they supported my appeal, they are also actively cooperating in every way," the Prime Minister said.

Modi had earlier appealed to people to avoid buying gold for some time, defer foreign holidays and opt for measures such as carpooling in view of the uncertainty arising from the conflict in West Asia.

The Prime Minister also highlighted India's growing self-reliance in defence and aviation, citing the successful maiden flight of the first made-in-India C-295 military transport aircraft and the successful test of the indigenously developed Long-Range Land-Attack Cruise Missile (LRLACM).

He said 40 C-295 aircraft are being manufactured in India, strengthening the country's aerospace ecosystem, boosting the MSME sector and generating employment opportunities.

Referring to the recent induction of INS Dunagiri, INS Shanshak and INS Agrya into the Indian Navy, Modi said the warships reflected India's growing indigenous defence manufacturing capabilities.

"From the seas to the skies, our India is becoming increasingly secure and self-reliant," he said.

The Prime Minister also renewed his appeal to farmers to embrace chemical-free farming, protect agricultural land and maximise the use of natural fertilisers.

Highlighting efforts to integrate traditional knowledge with modern technology, Modi said the Central Sanskrit University in Delhi was launching a B.Tech programme in Artificial Intelligence and Data Science.

He also spoke about Indian culture gaining global recognition, citing the example of a group of Spanish-speaking people in the Dominican Republic studying Vedic literature and learning Vedic chants.

The Prime Minister praised grassroots conservation efforts across the country, including initiatives to protect the Hargila bird in Assam, preserve Meghalaya's living root bridges and recycle plastic waste into eco-bricks in Madhya Pradesh.

Referring to football development in Nagaland, Modi lauded the 'Nagaland Baby League' for encouraging children to take up sports at an early age.

With Ganesh Chaturthi approaching later this year, the Prime Minister urged people to purchase Ganesh idols made from clay by local artisans and potters.

"I urge all of you to ensure that the idol of Ganpati Bappa installed in your home, society or neighbourhood is made from the soil of our own country and crafted by the hands of our own potters and local artisans," he said, while encouraging idol makers to prioritise eco-friendly clay idols.

Modi said supporting local artisans and environmentally sustainable practices would strengthen both India's economy and its cultural traditions.

NC Rejects PDP's

to identify even a single illegal appointment made by the present National Conference-led government.

"Our recruitment process is completely transparent. We have undertaken recruitment in a phased manner through designated recruiting agencies, and filling 40,000 vacancies is our commitment," Wani said.

He maintained that the outsourcing policy currently being questioned was introduced between 2015 and 2018 when the PDP was in power in alliance with the BJP.

"Since assuming office, we have only followed the existing system. No new outsourcing policy has been introduced by this government," he said.

Wani said that before the outsourcing policy came into force, departments had the authority to make seasonal appointments whenever required. That practice, he said, was discontinued by the PDP government, which adopted outsourcing as the mechanism for engaging manpower.

He also claimed that the recruitments now being questioned had taken place before the 2024 Assembly elections and before the present government assumed office.

Rejecting the opposition's allegations, Wani said outsourcing should not be equated with regular government recruitment.

"There is a clear difference between outsourcing and recruitment. Outsourcing is a temporary, need-based administrative arrangement and cannot be termed a regular appointment," he said.

Throwing an open challenge to the PDP, Wani said the government possesses complete department-wise records and asked the opposition to identify even one instance of a backdoor appointment made by the present administration.

He also launched a counterattack, alleging that backdoor appointments had taken place during the PDP regime in institutions such as the Jammu and Kashmir Bank and the Khadi and Village Industries sector.

Referring to the political developments of 2019, Wani further alleged that the PDP's decisions had resulted in Jammu and Kashmir losing its special constitutional status, statehood and being bifurcated into two Union Territories.

Health Minister Sakina Itoo also defended the government's position, saying outsourcing was merely a temporary administrative arrangement to meet immediate requirements and should not be confused with permanent government recruitment.

"I want to educate the PDP that outsourcing is only an administrative arrangement and not regular government recruitment," she said.

Itoo reiterated that the government remained committed to its promise of providing one lakh jobs. She said the Health Department had already referred 624 paramedical posts for recruitment, while around 400 selected candidates were currently undergoing CID verification.

Agriculture Minister Javid Ahmad Dar said departments were continuously referring vacancies to designated recruiting agencies to ensure transparent and merit-based recruitment.

The government's response came a day after the PDP stepped up its attack on the National Conference government, alleging that jobs were being filled through outsourcing without transparency in the engagement process.

Pak Intruder Caught along LoC in Poonch

Observer News Service

POONCH: A 31-year-old Pakistani intruder was apprehended by Indian Army troops along the Line of Control (LoC) in Jammu and Kashmir's Poonch on Sunday, the third such incident in the district this month, officials said.

Rayees Khan, a resident of Pakistan-occupied Kashmir, was taken into custody from Balakote sector shortly after he crossed the LoC into this side, the officials said.

They said no incriminating material was recovered from the captured intruder, who is being questioned to determine the motive behind his cross-border movement and whether he had any intended contacts or objectives on the Indian side.

As per PTI, the latest apprehension marks the third

such incident this month.

On Friday, another PoK intruder Mohammad Sajad (26) was arrested from Gulpur area of Krishna Ghati sector in Poonch.

On June 9, Javid Ali, 14, was detained and handed over to Pakistan a week later.

Meanwhile, a suspected Pakistani drone briefly entered the Indian side along the International Border in Samba district, prompting a search operation by Indian forces.

The drone was noticed hovering near village Nundpur early Sunday, the officials said, adding the Border Security Force (BSF), Army and police later carried out a thorough search operation on the ground to ensure that there is no air-dropping of weapons or narcotics from across the border.

However, nothing incriminating was found during the searches, they said.



Agriculture Department Bandipora Organizes Farmers' Awareness Programme

Observer News Service

SRINAGAR: As part of the ongoing Khet Bachao Abhiyan, the Department of Agriculture, Bandipora organized a farmers' awareness programme at Sumbal to promote sustainable agricultural practices and enhance awareness among the farming community.

The programme witnessed enthusiastic participation from a large number of farmers, officers, and field functionaries.

Joint Director Engineering, Department of Agriculture, who was the chief guest on the occasion, emphasized the importance of conserving agricultural resources through efficient water management, maintenance of soil health, adoption of scientific farming practices, and the judicious use of farm inputs. He urged farmers to embrace modern technologies to improve productivity while ensuring environmental sustainability.

During the programme, ex-

perts from the Agriculture Department interacted with farmers and provided technical guidance on scientific crop management, resource conservation, and various government schemes aimed at enhancing farm productivity and increasing farmers' income. The experts also addressed farmers' field-related queries during an interactive session.

Speaking on the occasion, the officers reiterated the Department's commitment to strengthening farmer outreach through regular awareness programmes and capacity-building initiatives under the Khet Bachao Abhiyan. They encouraged farmers to adopt climate-resilient and sustainable agricultural practices for long-term agricultural growth.

The programme concluded with a renewed commitment by the Department to continue promoting scientific and sustainable farming practices across the district through sustained awareness and extension activities.

PARAS Health Srinagar Takes Multi-Specialty Healthcare to Sonmarg



Observer News Service

SRINAGAR: Reinforcing its commitment to making quality healthcare accessible to people living in remote regions, PARAS Health Srinagar, in collaboration with The Villa Himaliya, Kullan, successfully organised a Mega Multi-Specialty Health Camp at Sonmarg on June 27.

Held from 10:00 AM to 3:00 PM, the camp received an encouraging response from the local community, with nearly 100 patients availing free consultations and preventive health services.

The outreach initiative brought together specialists from four key medical disciplines, enabling residents of the picturesque but geographically challenging region to access expert medical care closer to home. In addition to specialist consultations, beneficiaries received free blood pressure monitoring, Random Blood Sugar (RBS) testing, and personalised health counselling, promoting early diagnosis

and preventive healthcare.

The camp formed part of PARAS Health Srinagar's continued efforts to bridge healthcare gaps by delivering advanced medical services directly to underserved communities across Jammu and Kashmir. By extending specialist healthcare beyond hospital walls, the institution aims to improve health outcomes while reducing the need for patients in remote areas to undertake long and often difficult journeys for medical care.

Hospital officials said the initiative reflects the hospital's vision of bringing quality, affordable, and accessible healthcare to every doorstep, ensuring that geography is never a barrier to timely medical attention.

They added that PARAS Health Srinagar will continue organising similar community outreach programmes across the region as part of its broader mission to strengthen preventive healthcare and enhance access to specialist medical services in far-flung areas.

Bus Carrying CISF Personnel Overturns in J&K's Reasi; 9 Injured



Observer News Service

SRINAGAR: Eight Central Industrial Security Force (CISF) personnel and a civilian driver were injured after a bus carrying them overturned near Mata Vaishno Devi shrine in Reasi district of Jammu and Kashmir on Sunday, officials said.

The accident occurred along the

Tarakote route to the shrine, and the condition of three injured CISF personnel – head constables Sammy Kumar and M M Dubey and constable P K Traya – was stated to be serious, they said.

The seriously injured personnel were admitted in Narayana hospital for specialized treatment, the officials said.

The rest of the injured, who

included a sub-inspector and the civilian driver, Virender Singh, were admitted to the Community Health Centre in Katra, where their condition was reported to be stable, they said.

As per PTI, the officials said the CISF personnel, deployed in the shrine area, were heading back to their camp after completing their duty.

DC Budgam Kick-starts Pulse Polio Immunization Campaign in District

Observer News Service

SRINAGAR: Deputy Commissioner (DC) Budgam, Athar Aamir Khan kick-started the Pulse Polio Immunization Programme in the district.

The campaign was formally kick-started at District Hospital Budgam, where the DC administered polio drops to children in the 0-5 years age group.

Chief Medical Officer Budgam, Dr. Gulzar Ahmad Dar, Deputy Chief Medical Officer, Dr. Shahid Qadri, Medical Superintendent, District Hospital Budgam, Dr. Aijaz Ahmad Kant, District Health Officer (DHO), District Immunization Officer (DIO), Block Medical Officers (BMOs), DPMU officials and other senior officers were present on the occasion.

Speaking on the occasion, the DC said that all children in the 0-5 years age group across the district will be covered under the Pulse Polio Immunization Programme.

He informed that 628 Pulse Polio booths have been established across Budgam district to ensure that no eligible child is left out.

The DC further stated that 8 transit



vaccination points and 3 Mela Bazar booths have also been established to vaccinate children at transit locations and other public places, ensuring comprehensive coverage of the programme. He said that following the booth-based vaccination drive, house-to-house vaccination will be conducted on 29th 2026, during which health teams will visit every household to cover children who may have missed vaccination at the booths.

The district aims to cover 1,22,477 children below the age of five years under the campaign.

The DC appealed to parents to co-

operate with health workers and ensure that every eligible child receives the life-saving polio drops in their nearest booths established across the District.

Meanwhile, Chief Medical Officer Budgam, Dr. Gulzar Ahmad Dar, informed that health workers, ASHA workers, ICDS workers and volunteers have been deployed at Pulse Polio booths across the district. He added that dedicated transit teams have also been constituted to vaccinate children at designated transit points, ensuring that no child is missed during the campaign.

Division-level launch of Pulse Polio Immunisation Programme 2026 Held

Observer News Service

SRINAGAR: The Division-Level Launch Programme of National Immunisation Day (NID) 2026 under the Pulse Polio Immunisation Programme was held at Government Hospital Sarwal Jammu.

The Pulse Polio Campaign 2026 across Jammu Division is being conducted on a large scale, with 5,402 vaccination booths established across the Division. A total of 22,304 health workers and volunteers have been deployed to implement the programme. To cover children on the move, 148 transit vaccination points and 130 mobile teams have been set up. Through these arrangements, the campaign aims to administer Oral Polio Vaccine to approximately 8.24 lakh children under the five years of age across the Division, ensuring that no child is missed and the region's polio-free status is sustained.

Member of Parliament Sat Sharma (CA), Chief Guest, inaugurated the programme by administering polio drops to children. MLA Jammu West Arvind Gupta attended as Guest of Honour.

Addressing the gathering, the dignitaries highlighted the importance of immunisation in protecting children from vaccine-preventable diseases and noted the achievements of the Pulse Polio Programme in India.

They appealed to parents and caregivers to participate actively in the campaign and ensure that every child below five years of age receives polio drops during the National Immunisation Day and the subsequent house-to-house activity.

Minister Satish Lays Foundation Stone for Development works in Maira Mandrian



Observer News Service

SRINAGAR: Minister for Food, Civil Supplies & Consumer Affairs, Information Technology, Youth Services & Sports, Science & Technology and ARI & Trainings, Satish Sharma laid the foundation stone for a series of developmental works in Block Maira Mandrian, Akhnoor, reaffirming the Government's commitment towards strengthening the public infrastructure and ensuring efficient service delivery at the grassroots level.

Among the major projects inaugurated was the upgradation and construction of the Godhan-Tuppa road under NABARD RIDF-XXXI (2025-26), a project aimed at improving the road connectivity, facilitating easier movement of people and goods besides enhancing access to essential services for residents of the area.

Following the foundation stone laying ceremony, the Minister presided over a public meeting at Godhan, where he interacted extensively with the local residents, public representatives and officers from various departments.

Senior district and sectoral officers attended the meeting to ensure on-the-spot redress of public grievances and to expedite solutions to issues raised by the people.

Addressing the gathering, Satish Sharma said that the government is committed to create robust public infrastructure that directly improves the quality of life of citizens. He emphasized that roads, public utilities, education, healthcare, sports facilities and digital infrastructure are the building blocks of inclusive and sustainable development.

The Minister said that governance must remain people-centric and responsive, adding that direct engagement with the citizens enables the administration to understand local priorities and deliver solutions in a time-bound manner. He reiterated that the government is focused on taking governance to the doorsteps of the people by strengthening grassroots institutions and ensuring greater public participation in the development process.

"Development is meaningful only when it reaches every village and every household. Our objective is not merely to create assets but to improve the everyday lives of people through better infrastructure, efficient public services and accountable governance," the Minister said.

He stressed that continuous interaction between the administration and the public is essential for transparent governance and effective implementation of welfare programmes. He directed the concerned officers to remain accessible to the people, promptly address genuine grievances and ensure that developmental works are completed within stipulated timelines while maintaining quality standards.

Satish Sharma said that it is firm resolve of the present dispensation to accelerate the developmental initiatives across Jammu and Kashmir with special emphasis on rural connectivity, public amenities, youth development, technology-driven governance and improved service delivery. He said that every department must work in close coordination to fulfil the aspirations of the people and ensure that the benefits of development reach every corner of the region.

Dalai Lama Arrives in Ladakh for Two-Month Summer Stay

LEH: Tibetan spiritual leader His Holiness the 14th Dalai Lama arrived in Ladakh on Sunday for his annual extended summer stay, marking the beginning of a two-month visit to the Union Territory.

The visit follows his recent medical treatment in Delhi. During his stay, the Dalai Lama is scheduled to participate in religious teachings, public interactions and special programmes across the region.

According to officials associated with the visit, the Leh administration, in coordination with the Ladakh Buddhist Association (LBA) and the Ladakh Gonpa Association (LGA), has made elaborate arrangements to facilitate the spiritual leader's stay and the events planned during the coming weeks.

The Dalai Lama is expected to remain in Ladakh through July and part of August. While the number of public teachings and audiences is likely to be limited this year in view of his recent knee surgery and the need for adequate rest, he is expected to visit Matho village, where he will confer the Yarchos Chenmo teachings.

His 91st birthday, falling on July 6, is also scheduled to be celebrated in Ladakh with religious and cultural programmes. Organisers said detailed schedules of teachings and public events would be announced separately.

As per KNT, the arrival of the Dalai Lama was welcomed by devotees and members of the Buddhist community, who expressed joy over his annual visit to the Himalayan region. (Observer News Service)

Four-Year-Old Critically Injured in Pahalgam Road Accident

ANANTNAG: A four-year-old boy was critically injured after he was allegedly hit by a vehicle in the Aroo area of Pahalgam in south Kashmir's Anantnag district.

The injured child has been identified as Mohammad Yasin Chala, son of Ghulam Ahmad Chala, a resident of Lane Dachan, Pahalgam.

Officials said the boy was initially taken to Government Medical College (GMC), Anantnag, where he received preliminary treatment before being referred to SMHS Hospital, Srinagar, in view of his critical condition.

Hospital sources said the child was admitted to SMHS Hospital and is undergoing treatment.

As per KNT, further details regarding the accident are awaited. (Observer News Service)

Three-Year-Old Critically Injured in Hit-and-Run Accident

SRINAGAR: A three-year-old boy sustained critical injuries after he was allegedly hit by an unidentified vehicle in the Laggam area of Awantipora in south Kashmir's Pulwama district on Sunday.

The injured child has been identified as Arham Dar, son of Shabir Ud Din Dar, a resident of Noorpora, Awantipora.

According to hospital sources, the child was initially taken to the Primary Health Centre (PHC), Awantipora, where he received preliminary treatment before being referred to SKIMS Soura in view of the seriousness of his injuries.

The boy's attendant told doctors that the child was struck by an unidentified vehicle while crossing the road at Laggam, resulting in multiple head injuries.

As per KNT, Hospital sources said the condition of the child remains critical and he is undergoing treatment at SKIMS.

Further details are awaited. (Observer News Service)

Kashmir: Human Skull Recovered Along Jhelum Bank

SRINAGAR: A human skull was recovered from the bank of the Jhelum River in the Takiyabal area of Sopore on Sunday, officials said. An official said that locals noticed the skull lying on the riverbank and immediately alerted the police. Acting on the information, a team from the Forensic Science Laboratory (FSL), along with the Sopore Police, rushed to the spot and recovered the skull.

The officer said the remains have been taken into custody and sent for medico-legal examination to ascertain the identity of the deceased and other relevant details.

As per KNO, Police have registered a case and initiated further investigation. (Observer News Service)

Crime Branch Registers Case in Alleged J&K Grameen Bank Loan Fraud

JAMMU: The Economic Offences Wing (EOW) of the Crime Branch, Jammu, has registered a criminal case in connection with alleged financial irregularities and fraudulent loan transactions in two branches of the Jammu and Kashmir Grameen Bank.

The case was registered under Sections 420 and 120-B of the Indian Penal Code following complaints forwarded through Crime Headquarters by the Director of the Anti-Corruption Bureau. The complaints were filed by the Chief of Audits, Inspection and Vigilance of J&K Grameen Bank and pertain to alleged fraud at the bank's Kaluchak and Surankote branches.

According to the Crime Branch, an internal enquiry at the Kaluchak branch revealed that 58 loan accounts under 15 Joint Liability Groups (JLGs), besides two Cash Credit Limit accounts, were allegedly opened and operated without the knowledge or consent of the account holders, resulting in a suspected fraud of nearly Rs 42 lakh.

Investigators said around Rs 12 lakh was allegedly transferred to bank accounts reportedly maintained in the name of the deceased Senior Manager, Bhagwan Singh Saini, while the remaining loan amounts were allegedly withdrawn through ATM transactions.

The enquiry also found that a daily wager engaged at the branch had allegedly admitted to using Rs 2 lakh from one Joint Liability Group loan account for personal purposes. Recovery has reportedly been effected in two accounts.

In a separate complaint relating to the Surankote branch, allegations have been made against Branch Head Rohit Kumar and others over unauthorized transactions and debits amounting to Rs 7.37 lakh. The complaint also alleges fraudulent sanction and withdrawal of loans worth around Rs 19 lakh through five fake loan accounts allegedly opened without the knowledge or consent of the borrowers. According to the enquiry, these accounts were subsequently shown as settled or closed to reconcile the branch's cash position.

The Crime Branch said a preliminary verification established a prima facie commission of cognizable offences, following which a formal case was registered against Rohit Kumar and other suspected persons for a detailed investigation. (Observer News Service)

Iran Claims Sole Control Over Hormuz Reopening

Agencies

BAGHDAD – Iranian Foreign Minister Abbas Araqchi on Sunday asserted that Tehran alone would oversee the reopening of the Strait of Hormuz under the Iran-US Memorandum of Understanding (MoU), warning that any attempt by foreign powers to impose alternative security arrangements would complicate the situation, delay the reopening of the strategic waterway and fuel fresh regional tensions.

Addressing a joint press conference with Iraqi Foreign Minister Fuad Hussein in Baghdad, Araqchi said the arrangements envisaged under the Tehran-Washington MoU were already being implemented by the Islamic Republic and should not be interfered with by outside powers.

"According to the MoU, the

strait will return to its pre-war capacity within 30 days under the management that Iran will adopt and after the removal of obstacles by the Islamic Republic," Araqchi said.

"These arrangements are being implemented, and the responsibility for them lies with the Islamic Republic. Any interference in this matter and any attempt to adopt new or separate arrangements compared to what is underway by Iran will only lead to more complicated situations and delays in the reopening of the Strait of Hormuz and will fuel tensions," he said.

Referring to the renewed tensions in the Strait of Hormuz over the past two nights, the Iranian foreign minister urged all parties to refrain from interfering in Tehran's management of the strategic waterway.

"I call on all parties not to



interfere in the management of the Strait of Hormuz," he said.

Araqchi also appealed for adherence to the recently signed peace agreement between Tehran and Washington.

"They should not allow this memorandum of understanding (MoU) to deviate from its course," he said.

The Iranian minister further

proposed a new regional security framework for the Strait of Hormuz involving only countries from the region.

"A new framework for the security of the Strait of Hormuz that includes all countries in the region should be established, without the presence or interference of any country from outside the region," he said.

The Strait of Hormuz, through which nearly one-fifth of global oil supplies pass, has remained under Iranian control following the US-Israeli military campaign against Iran that began on February 28. Iran has restricted commercial transit through the strategic waterway since the early days of the conflict, insisting that vessels use designated shipping lanes approved by Iranian authorities and provide prior notification before passage.

Under the Pakistan-brokered Memorandum of Understanding signed by Iran and the United States on July 17, both sides agreed to permanently end hostilities across multiple fronts, including Lebanon, lift the naval blockade on Iran within 30 days and restore commercial shipping through the Strait of Hormuz.

The latest remarks come amid renewed friction between

Tehran and Washington after both sides exchanged retaliatory strikes beginning on Thursday. The United States accused Iran of attacking a commercial vessel in the Strait of Hormuz, an allegation rejected by Tehran, which has maintained that navigation through the waterway remains subject to Iranian regulations.

Commenting on the broader regional situation, Araqchi expressed regret that Israeli military operations in Lebanon were continuing despite the MoU.

"Under the MoU, the United States should stop the Zionist regime's strikes," he said.

The Iranian foreign minister also thanked Iraq for supporting Iran during what he described as the illegal US-Israeli war of aggression.

He expressed "gratitude to the Iraqi government and nation for their solidarity with Iranians

as victims of the illegal US-Israeli war of aggression".

Araqchi's remarks also follow conflicting reports over communication mechanisms between Tehran and Washington. On Friday, Iranian state media reported that the two countries had established a direct communication channel to prevent incidents in the Strait of Hormuz from escalating into military confrontation following talks in Switzerland. However, the Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps (IRGC) later rejected the report, describing it as an "out-right lie".

The developments come as diplomatic efforts continue to implement the terms of the Iran-US agreement while ensuring the resumption of commercial traffic through one of the world's most strategically important maritime chokepoints.

Ladakh Cracks Down on Illegal Off-roading

Press Trust Of India

LEH – In a first-of-its-kind enforcement drive, the Ladakh administration has cracked down on illegal off-roading in ecologically sensitive areas, imposing a Rs two lakh penalty on four tourists for violating the Wildlife (Protection) Act, officials said.

The action, aimed at curbing environmental damage in Pangong lake and other protected wildlife habitats, comes as Lieutenant Governor V K Saxena urged visitors to practise responsible and environmentally conscious tourism while exploring the Union Territory.

On June 26, the Wildlife Department of Ladakh imposed a penalty of Rs 50,000 each on four vehicles found violating the provisions of the Wildlife (Protection) Act, the officials said.

They said the offending vehicle owners belonged to Himachal Pradesh, Chandigarh, Punjab and Uttar Pradesh. They were fined for driving their cars illegally into the Pangong lake and other protected wildlife zones in Changthang and Nubra in the last few days.

The action reaffirms the administration's commitment to protecting Lada-



kh's fragile ecosystem and endangered wildlife, the officials said.

They said that while the cases of such illegal off-roading and stunts have been on the rise in recent times in Ladakh, it is for the first time that such strict penalty has been imposed on the miscreants.

In the instant cases, all four vehicles were impounded by the officials after a thorough investigation and the vehicles were released only after the penalty was paid, the officials said.

They said the action follows a series of violations detected by wildlife officials during routine patrolling and through social media surveillance and reported to the LG Secretariat. The violations were reported at four separate locations under the Leh Wildlife Division—Merak and Lukung along the ecologically sensitive shores of Pangong lake, Nurboo La in Hanle, and Sumur in Nubra Valley.

Trump to Israel: Let Syria Handle Hezbollah

Agencies

BEIRUT – As the White House has soured on Israel's war with Hezbollah in Lebanon, US President Donald Trump has shocked many in the region by pushing an alternative: Let Syria fight the Iran-backed militant group instead.

He has suggested that the battle-hardened and Islamist-led insurgents who overthrew Syria's autocratic President Bashar Assad a year and a half ago and formed a new government would do a better job of rooting out Hezbollah than the Israeli army.

Syrian President Ahmad al-Sharaa has said he has no interest in doing so and has asserted that Trump's comments were misconstrued. But Trump has doubled down on the idea.

Although it remains unclear how serious the White House is about the proposal, the prospect of a Syrian invasion has raised alarms in Lebanon – and also in Israel, which regards al-Sharaa's Islamist-led government with suspicion and has seized control of a strip of southern Syria since he took power.

Syria has also become the site of rising tensions between Israel and Türkiye – a



main backer of al-Sharaa's government – with each seeking to limit the other's influence in the neighbouring country. Top Israeli security officials convened a meeting on the subject on Wednesday, according to an official who spoke on the condition of anonymity because they were not authorised to speak to the media.

Trump says Syria would do a better job against Hezbollah

On the sidelines of the G7 summit earlier this month, Trump complained that Israel's war with Hezbollah is dragging on too long and "too many people are being killed". More than 4,000 people have been killed by Israeli strikes in Lebanon since Hezbollah joined the wider Iran war with a March 2 attack on Israel, including hundreds of women and children.

'Wanted to Kill 15,000': Mumbai Muharram Poison Plot Foiled

Trans Asia News

MUMBAI – A major tragedy was averted during a Muharram procession in south Mumbai after alert women volunteers noticed a man distributing capsules in a suspicious manner, leading to his arrest and the seizure of nearly 15,000 capsules allegedly filled with zinc phosphide, a highly toxic substance commonly used as rat poison, police said on Saturday.

The accused, identified as 39-year-old Faiyaz Premji, a resident of Pune, was apprehended in the Byculla area on Friday while handing out capsules to participants in the Ashura procession, claiming they were painkillers or immunity boosters.

The matter came to light after a participant who had consumed one of the capsules complained of vomiting and severe stomach pain. He was rushed to a nearby hospital and is now out of danger, police said.

According to Deputy Commissioner of Police (DCP) Jayant Meena, officers acted swiftly after receiving information about the man's suspicious activities and seized 14,900 capsules from his possession before they could be dis-

tributed further.

Preliminary investigation revealed that each capsule allegedly contained around one gram of zinc phosphide, a poisonous chemical widely used as a rodenticide.

"He had ordered around 30,000 empty capsules online and procured nearly 50 kilograms of zinc phosphide. He filled the capsules himself and was carrying around 14,900 capsules when he was intercepted," Meena told reporters.

Police said the accused had no authorisation to distribute medicines or health supplements.

The alleged plot was foiled largely due to the vigilance of three women volunteers overseeing arrangements during the Muharram procession.

One of the volunteers said suspicion arose because the accused was distributing the capsules in a manner completely at odds with the tradition of offering tabarruk, which is shared respectfully among mourners.

"Tabarruk is always distributed with respect by handing it over to people. He was throwing the capsules into the crowd, which was unusual and immediately made us suspicious," she said.

MI Securities

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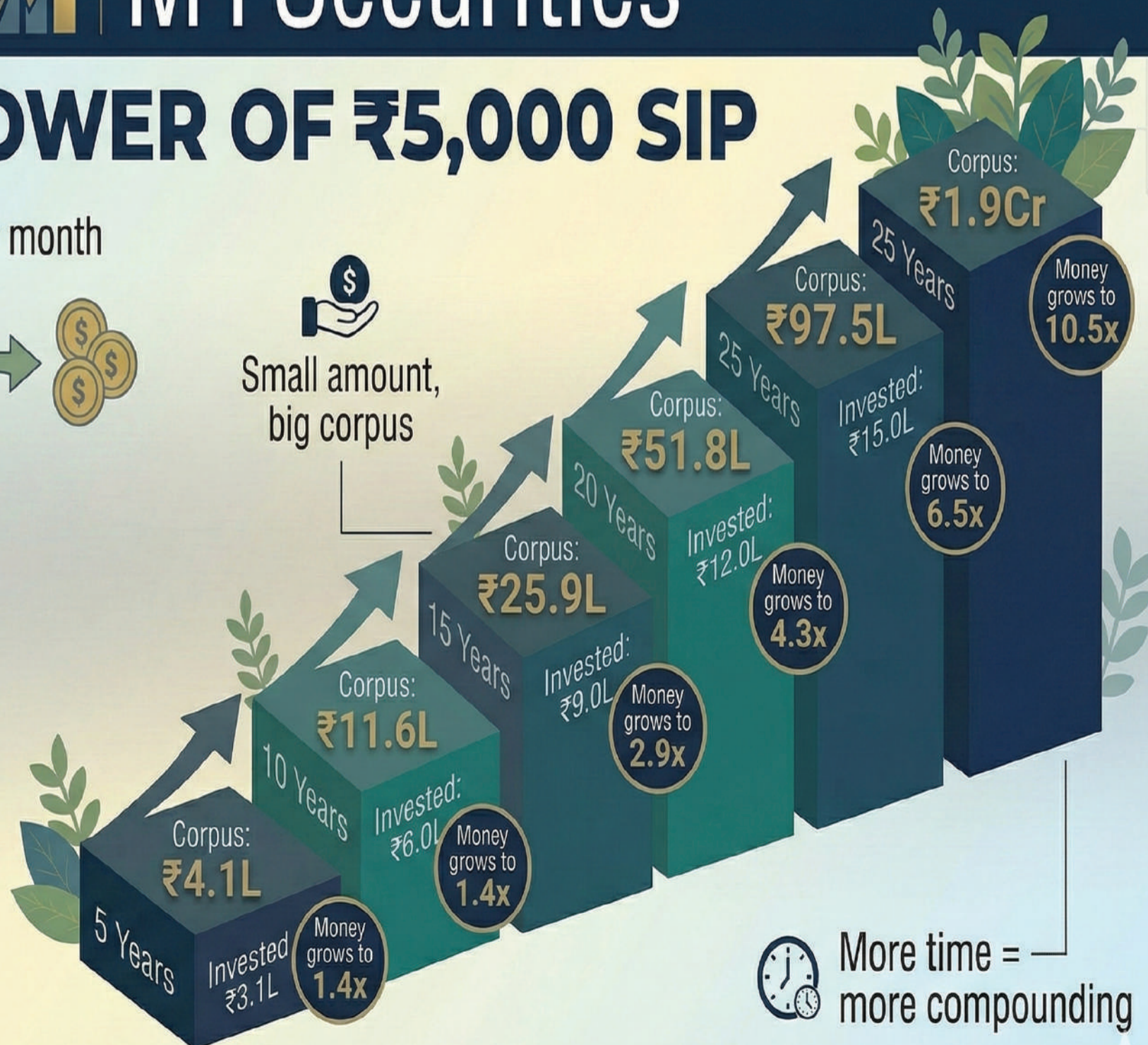
Step 1: You invest ₹5,000 every month



Small amount, big corpus

Step 2: You reinvest your total investment growth

Duration (Years)	Total Invested Amount
5	3.0L
10	6.0L
15	9.0L
20	12.0L
25	15.0L
30	18.0L



More time = more compounding

Mutual fund investments are subject to market risks. Read all scheme related documents carefully before investing.