

KULGAM TERROR ATTACK

Non-Local Labourer Killed, Another Injured

Security Forces Launch Manhunt; LG Directs Intensified Operations



Observer News Service

Srinagar: A non-local labourer was killed and another injured after suspected terrorists opened fire at a brick kiln in south Kashmir's Kulgam district on Friday evening, officials said. The attack took place at a brick kiln in the Kelam area,

where the assailants targeted non-local labourers working at the site.

Officials said two labourers sustained bullet injuries in the firing. One of them succumbed to his injuries before he could be shifted to a hospital, while the other was referred to the Government | [More on P10](#)

India Seeks Global Scrutiny Of PoK Crackdown

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, Jul 31: India on Friday called upon the international community to scrutinise Islamabad's "ruthless" use of force against peaceful protesters in Pakistan-Occupied-Jammu and Kashmir (PoJK) and hold it accountable for the "atrocities".

Around 40 people were reportedly killed in the crackdown by the security forces in PoJK since July 27 amid local-body elections in the region.

External Affairs Ministry spokesperson Randhir Jaiswal said the Pakistani establishment continued to "unleash ruthless force" against



peaceful civilians in PoJK.

The PoJK has been witnessing massive protests since last month over inflated living costs, alleged administrative apathy and political discrimination and atrocities against minorities. The Joint Awami Action

Committee (JAAC) has been leading the protests.

"This crackdown has resulted in the tragic death of over 40 civilians and serious injuries to many," Jaiswal said at a regular media briefing.

"Its absolute disdain for the innocent people of PoJK was laid bare when the defence minister branded the protesting civilians as enemies."

"Adding to this, the Special Assistant to the prime minister on political affairs, openly admitted that the very 'mujahideen' that Pakistani establishment trained, armed and sent to bleed India have now turned their guns inward, weaponising | [More on P10](#)

Mirwaiz Voices Concern Over PoK Situation

Kashmir's chief cleric Mirwaiz Umar Farooq on Friday expressed concern over the situation in Pakistan-occupied Jammu and Kashmir (PoJK), and called for engagement and respect for rights.

Addressing the Friday congregation at the Jamia Masjid here, Farooq expressed deep concern over the continuing unrest and tragic loss of lives across the Line of Control (LoC), particularly | [More on P10](#)

Flash Floods Hit Kashmir Parts

Wet Weather To Continue Till Aug 7

Observer News Service

Srinagar: Heavy overnight rainfall triggered flash floods in parts of north Kashmir on Friday, inundating roads and a government school in Bandipora district, while the Meteorological Department forecast intermittent rain and thunderstorms across Jammu and Kashmir till August 7. Officials said flash floods struck Saderkoot Bala in Bandipora after intense rainfall, sending muddy | [More on P10](#)

NH-44 Shut For Repairs; Yatra Suspended

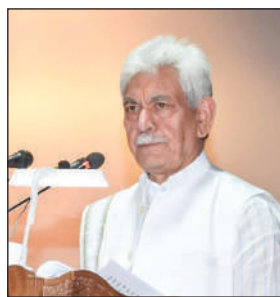
The Jammu-Srinagar National Highway remained closed for vehicular traffic on Friday to facilitate widening and debris clearance works, | [More on P10](#)

J&K's Transformation Built On Trust, Dignity: LG Sinha

Says forces must be ready for asymmetric warfare

Observer News Service

Srinagar: Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha on Friday said the transformation witnessed in Jammu and Kashmir over the past six years was the result of sustained efforts to rebuild public trust, restore dignity and ensure governance reached every citizen, while asserting that strong action had dismantled the terror ecosystem in the Union Territory.



Addressing officers attending the Higher Command Course-55 at the Army War

College, Mhow, during an interaction at the Raj Bhavan, Sinha said effective governance must reach every household, particularly those in remote villages and among the most marginalized sections of society.

"The transformation in Jammu and Kashmir over the past six years is the result of a sustained commitment to rebuilding trust, enabling citizens to lead lives of their own choosing | [More on P10](#)

'Modern Challenges Demand Multidisciplinary Thinking'

Observer News Service

Srinagar: Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha on Thursday inaugurated a series of new academic initiatives at Cluster University Jammu, including the "Design Your Degree"

programme, integrated science courses, a semiconductor skilling programme, and a Department of Vedic Studies, saying the future belongs to young people | [More on P10](#)

programme, integrated science courses, a semiconductor skilling programme, and a Department of Vedic Studies, saying the future belongs to young people | [More on P10](#)

KPDCL Tops India in Power Losses For 3rd Straight Year

One-Third of Kashmir's Power Never Reaches Consumers

Agencies

Srinagar: The power distribution company of Kashmir has recorded the highest electricity losses in India for the third consecutive year, with more than one-third of all power it handles vanishing before reaching consumers.

The official figures revealed that in the Financial Year (FY) 2025, Jammu and Kashmir was reeling under 33.54 percent of Aggregate Technical and Commercial (AT&C) losses against the national average of 15.04 percent.

The local Discom, Kashmir Power Development Corporation Limited (KPDCL),

had recorded a AT&C loss of 59.59 percent in FY23 against a target of 54 percent.

The figures further said that the AT&C had improved to 51.98 percent in FY24 against a target of 44 percent. However, the house was informed that the losses further declined to 33.54 percent in FY25 against the target of 44 percent.

In the FY26, KPDCL has set a target to fix the AT&C losses 34 percent.

Earlier this year, the Power Development Department (PDD) has directed the JPDCL and KPDCL to initiate strict actions including deducting up to 50 percent of salary against the officials of divisions and feeders where Aggregate Technical and Commercial (AT&C) losses exceed 40 percent.

Besides, the | [More on P10](#)

Shri Manoj Sinha
Hon'ble Lt. Governor, J&K

Jb. Omar Abdullah
Hon'ble Chief Minister, J&K

Celebrating 80th Independence Day

Participate in 3 Exciting Online Competitions and Win Cash Prizes & Certificates

NATIONAL ANTHEM SINGING COMPETITION – 2026

Category

INDIVIDUAL

GROUP

Between 13-18 years of age

Above 18 years

Cash awards

1 st Prize	2 nd Prize	3 rd Prize
₹10,000	₹7,500	₹5,000

Start Date: **1st August, 2026**

Last Date: **10th August, 2026**

Submit your entry: <https://gqr.sh/WW6t>

ONLINE ESSAY WRITING COMPETITION

Theme: Viksit Bharat @2047 & Youth Against Drugs: Building a Stronger Jammu & Kashmir

Cash awards

1 st Prize	2 nd Prize	3 rd Prize
₹10,000	₹7,500	₹5,000

Start Date: **1st August, 2026**

Last Date: **10th August, 2026**

Submit your entry: <https://surl.li/jeuwaw>

ONLINE PAINTING COMPETITION

Theme: Draw Your Favourite Freedom Fighter Honour their legacy through your art

Cash awards

1 st Prize	2 nd Prize	3 rd Prize
₹10,000	₹7,500	₹5,000

Start Date: **1st August, 2026**

Last Date: **10th August, 2026**

Submit your entry: <https://gqr.sh/ckFV>

Department of Information & Public Relations, J&K

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ISLAMIC UNIVERSITY OF SCIENCE & TECHNOLOGY, KASHMIR

INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE

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HARNESSING NATURE, INNOVATION AND GLOBAL COLLABORATION FOR CLIMATE-RESILIENT HIMALAYAS

CHIEF GUEST

SHRI MANOJ SINHA
Hon'ble, Lieutenant Governor, J&K

GUEST OF HONOUR

JUSTICE SANJEEV KUMAR
Hon'ble Chief Justice of J&K and Ladakh High Court

PATRON

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Professor of Practice, IUST

CO-CONVENERS

Dr. Tariq Abdullah, Geomatics, IUST

Dr. Jasia Bashir, Geomatics, IUST

Dr. Irfan Maqbool, CDRR, IUST

DATE & TIME:

AUGUST 03-06, 2026, 10:00 AM

VENUE:

NUND RESHI AUDITORIUM, IUST



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2

'5 Cups Of Caffeinated Coffee Safe, Linked With Lower Risk Of Heart Conditions'

Press Trust Of India

Consuming up to 400 milligrams of caffeine, or up to five cups of caffeinated coffee, per day is safe for most adults and could be linked to a lower risk of cardiovascular conditions, a new review has found.

The findings, published as a scientific statement in the journal Circulation, also show that higher levels of caffeine, however, such as those in energy drinks may increase risk of high blood pressure or irregular heart rhythm, researchers said.

Energy drink shots may contain 40-69 milligrams of caffeine per fluid ounce, 3-4 times more caffeine than regular caffeinated coffee, they said.

Caffeine consumed in coffee is metabolised by the liver and said to reach peak concentration for most people within an hour. However, how quickly individuals process caffeine depends on their genetics, metabolism, age and past caffeine use.

The researchers, including those from University of California, San Francisco, US, said consuming caffeinated coffee without added sugars, flavors or



cream was linked to a lower risk of type 2 diabetes, heart disease, stroke, heart failure and some irregular heart rhythms. They added that more research is needed to better understand caffeine's impact on the body, how different sources of caffeine impact heart health and how its impact may vary among different people.

"Caffeine consumed in coffee is a key part of daily life for millions of people, and in our review of the most recent research, for most adults, intake of up to 400 milligrams of caffeine (per) day, the equivalent of up to five cups of caffeinated coffee per day without added sugars or fillers, is safe and does not increase cardiovascular

risk," said Gregory M. Marcus, chair of the scientific statement volunteer writing group and a professor of medicine at the University of California, San Francisco school of medicine. "However, high doses of caffeine, such as those found in energy drinks including energy shots, may have harmful effects on the heart and should be avoided," Marcus said.

Randomised trials, which are the most rigorous and reliable type of study design, show that caffeine consumption in coffee is associated with a lower risk of atrial fibrillation but also a higher risk of premature ventricular contractions — both are irregular heart rhythms originating in either the upper (atria) or lower chambers (ventricles) of the heart, the researchers found.

Adding sugar, flavoured syrups, milk and/or cream to coffee likely reduces its potential health benefits, and more research is needed to understand the impact of these additives, they said. The team added that while coffee is the main source of caffeine for most adults, tea, chocolate, soda and energy drinks, as well as over-the-counter and prescription medications, also contribute to overall caffeine intake.

PUBLIC NOTICE

My Father's name has been wrongly written in my 10th Marks Card as Aadil Majid Maqdoomi while the correct name is Aadil Majid Maqdoomi. Now I have applied for the correction of the same if anybody has any objection in this regard he/she may file them in the office of the JK Board Of School Education Sub Office Baramulla within seven days. After that no objection shall be entertained.



Kabirah Ahmad
D/o Aadil Majid Maqdoomi
R/o Tujair
Regd no: 2408010000430160
Roll No 108017110
DOB: 14-01-2010

fko-R

THE JAMMU & KASHMIR BOARD OF SCHOOL EDUCATION SUB OFFICE KUPWARA

PUBLIC NOTICE

I have passed /appeared in secondary school Examination (SSE) class 10 th under Rollno .127062077.Session:- Annual Regular year 2025 . through the Jammu and Kashmir Board of School Education . the error has been committed by the Candidate against my parentage as AIJAZ UL REHMAN while as actual my Father's name is AEJAZ UL RAHMAN



Now I have applied for correction in the Jammu and Kashmir Board of School Education New Campus Bemina Srinagar if anybody having any objection in this regard may file the same before office of the Deputy Secretary, Certificates - (KD) Kashmir Division -undersigned within 07 days from the date of Publication of this notice.after the expiry of said period no objection will be entertained. This is published for the information of the general public.The correct particulars be recorded as under:-
Name:- AASHIA AIJAZ SHAH
S/O:- AEJAZ UL RAHMAN.
M/N.HANEEFA BEIGAM D.O.B:- 03.04.2009
R/O:- TOULWARI . Tehsil .LANGATE .Distt KUPWARA
Mobile No:- 7889541367

FKO

PUBLIC NOTICE

I, Refauth Ara, D/o Abdul Gani Mir, R/o Babagund Nowlari, Tehsil Pattan, District Baramulla, have applied for correction of my name in my Aadhaar Card (No. 2541-8156-6129).

My name has been incorrectly recorded as Rafiat Ara, whereas my correct name is Refauth Ara.

If anyone has any objection to this correction, they may file it with the concerned authorities within seven days from the date of publication of this notice.

Refauth Ara
D/o Abdul Gani Mir
R/o Babagund Nowlari, Pattan, Baramulla
Contact: 9797340367

FKO

PUBLIC NOTICE

I have lost my 10th DOB , 10th markscard , bearing Roll No 107019053 2023

. Now I have applied for the duplicate of the same if anybody has any objection in this regard he/she may file them in the office of the J&K Board Of School Education Srinagar within seven days. After that no objection shall be entertained.

Abrar Hussain
S/O Ghulam Ahmad Wani
R/O Kalantra Bala

FKO

PUBLIC NOTICE

I, Fahmeeda Begum, W/o Fayaz Ahmad Shah, R/o Chandraseer, Tehsil Pattan, District Baramulla, state that my son Kaisar Fayaz has passed his 7TH class from Public School Wanigam Payeen, Pattan.

In his school records, his name and father's name have been incorrectly recorded as Syed Kasir Fayaz, S/o Syed Fayaz Ahmad Bukhari, whereas his correct name and parentage are Kaisar Fayaz, S/o Fayaz Ahmad Shah.

I have applied for the necessary correction in the school records. If anyone has any objection, they may file it with the concerned authorities within seven days from the publication of this notice.

Fahmeeda Begum
W/o Fayaz Ahmad Shah
R/o Chandraseer, Pattan, Baramulla

FKO

PUBLIC NOTICE

My father's name has been wrongly written in my Electricity Bill bearing consumer Consumer id.0213040067847 as Gh.mohd Dar while my correct Father's Name is Ali Mohammad Dar. Now I have applied for the correction of the same if anybody has any objection in this regard he/she may file them in the concerned PDD Office within seven days. After that no objection shall be entertained.

Mehraj Ud Din Dar
S/O .Ali Mohammad Dar
R/O Baghat Mohalla Palhallan

FKO

Office of the Naib Tehsildar Pattan

Sub.. Application on behalf of Farooq Ahmad Mian s/o Abdul Rahman Mian R/o pattan for issuance of legal heir certificate..

PUBLIC NOTICE

IT is inform to general public that applicants father's legal heir certificate is under process in this office in this matter report was sought from Patwari concerned which reveals that applicants father namely Abdul Rahman Mian s/o Abdul Fatah Mian R/o Pattan died on 12/08/2020 and left following legal heirs..

Name	Age	Relationship with the Deceased	Marital Status
FAROOQ AHMAD MIAN	61	SON	MARRIED
KHURSHED AHMAD MIAN	53	SON	MARRIED
MOHAMMAD ALTAJ MIAN	59	SON	MARRIED
INASEER AHMAD MIAN	54	SON	MARRIED

In this connection if any body having objection for issuance of said certificate he/she may contact to this office within 04 days after that no objection shall be entertained.

fko Sd Naib Tehsildar Pattan

Office of the Naib Tehsildar Pathallan

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

PUBLIC NOTICE

The registrar birth BDO pattan has submitted a case file pertaining to birth of Faizana Feroz D/o Feroz Ahmad Hajam R/o Andergam Tehsil Kunzer District Baramulla. The date of birth as per school record is 17/06/2007 . In this connection if any body having objection for issuance of said certificate he/she may contact to this office within 04 days after that no objection shall be entertained.

Sd Naib Tehsildar Pathallan fko

Government of Jammu & Kashmir Department of Information & PR Office of the District Information Officer Kulgam

Ph/Fax: 01931-260032

email: dioinf-kulgam@jk.gov.in

DASTI QUOTATION

Sealed short term quotations are invited from interested cultural organizations/forums for performance of one Kashmiri Folk Programme at DPL Kulgam on the eve of Independence Day Celebrations 2026.

Terms and Conditions:

- The quotations shall reach the office of the undersigned by or before 10th of August 2026 upto 04 pm.
 - The selected parties have to give the demo of their cultural programme before the final performance on 15 August at DPL Kulgam.
 - The price quoted shall be inclusive of GST and less than government approved rates.
- The bid shall be opened in the next working day on completion of stipulated time on 10th August 2026. More information can be obtained from the office of District Information Officer, Kulgam during office hours upto 10th of August.

District Information Officer,
Kulgam

No: DIC/INF/Kul-113-114 /2026

DIPK-3964/26

Dated: 31-07-2026

Government of Jammu & Kashmir OFFICE OF THE EXECUTIVE ENGINEER (R&B) DIVISION AWANTIPORA.

NOTICE INVITING E-TENDER (MACADAM WORKS)

NIT No: 68/EEA/R&B of 2026-27/4006-4016

Dated: 31-07-2026

For and on behalf of the Lt. Governor, UT J&K, e-tenders (In single cover system) are invited on Percentage basis from approved and eligible Contractors registered with J&K Govt., CPWD, Railways and other State/Central Governments for the following works:-

S. No.	Name of Work	Adv. Cost (Rs. In Lacs)	Cost of T/Doc. (In Rupees)	Earnest money (In Rupees.)	Time of completion	M.H of Account	Class of Contractor	AAA & Dated
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
1	Macadamization of interior roads at Renzipora and Badriwan, Wakterpora.	38.85	1100/-	2% of Adv cost	12 days	C&T of Capex Budget 2026-27	AAY, BEE	125-SE/PS/ of 2026 Dated: 24.07.2026.

Position of AAA:- Accorded
Position of T.S:- Accorded
Position of funds:- Committed

The Bidding documents Consisting of qualifying information, eligibility criteria, specifications, Drawings, bill of quantities (B.O.Q), Set of terms and conditions of contract and other details can be viewed/downloaded from the departmental website www.jktenders.gov.in as per schedule of dates given below:-

1	Date of Issue of Tender Notice	31-07-2026
2	Period of downloading of bidding documents	31-07-2026
3	Bid submission Start Date	01-08-2026
4	Bid Submission End Date	07-08-2026 4:00 PM
5	Date & time of opening of Bids (Online)	08-08-2026 12:00 PM

1. Every participating contractor to mandatorily disclose the bank account number which is linked with their GSTIN at the time of bid submission. No payments shall be released by the Government Department/Agency to any other bank account except the one linked with the GST registered number of the successful bidder. (As per circular No. 01(ADM) FD of 2025 Dated 08-07-2025 of J&K Finance Department)
(The participating contractor may disclose his Bank Account as per the format, devised as Annexure- A of the NIT and submit/upload the same accordingly at the time of submission of the bid).

2. Bids must be accompanied with cost of Tender document/Tender Fee to be deposited in Cash in Centralized Designated Pooling JK Bank Account Bearing No: 0470010200000099, IFSC: JAKAOLALANG)
(In case the participating bidder wishes to deposit the requisite amount physically at any branch of the Bank other than using UPI or any other mobile application, the said bidder has to upload the Transaction Receipt as per devised format forming Annexure-Z to this NIT, duly signed by the concerned Branch Manager with proper seal.)

3. All the bidders must deposit Earnest money /Bid security equal to 2% of advertised cost in Cash in Centralized Designated Pooling JK Bank Account Bearing No: 0470010200000099, IFSC: JAKAOLALANG)
(In case the participating bidder wishes to deposit the requisite amount physically at any branch of the Bank other than using UPI or any other mobile application, the said bidder has to upload the Transaction Receipt as per devised format forming Annexure-Z to this NIT, duly signed by the concerned Branch Manager with proper seal.)

4. The Successful bidder will have to provide performance security @ 5% of contract value to be deposited in Cash in Centralized Designated Pooling JK Bank Account Bearing No: 0470010200000099, IFSC: JAKAOLALANG), which shall be released after successful completion of DLP /maintenance period.

(In case the participating bidder wishes to deposit the requisite amount physically at any branch of the Bank other than using UPI or any other mobile application, the said bidder has to upload the Transaction Receipt as per devised format forming Annexure-Z to this NIT, duly signed by the concerned Branch Manager with proper seal.)

5. The date and time of opening of Bids shall be notified on Web Site www.jktenders.gov.in and conveyed to the bidders automatically through an e-mail message on their e-mail address. The bids of Responsive bidders shall be opened online on same Web Site in the Office of Executive Engineer R&B Division Awantipora (tender receiving authority).

The bids for the work shall remain valid for a period of 120 days from the date of opening of Technical bids

Sd/-
Draftsman
DIPK-3938/26

Sd/-
Tech. Officer
dated: 31-07-2026

Sd/-
Executive Engineer
R&B Division Awantipora.

PUBLIC NOTICE

I have lost my 11th markscard, bearing 11th marks-card, 12th marks card 11Th Roll No 207013100 . Now I have applied for the duplicate of the same if anybody has any objection in this regard he/she may file them in the office of the J&K Board Of School Education Srinagar within seven days. After that no objection shall be entertained.

Abrar Hussain
S/O Ghulam Ahmad Wani
R/O Kalantra Bala



FKO

PUBLIC NOTICE

I have lost my 12th marks card bearing Roll No 307009125 2025 . Now I have applied for the duplicate of the same if anybody has any objection in this regard he/she may file them in the office of the J&K Board Of School Education Srinagar within seven days. After that no objection shall be entertained.

Abrar Hussain
S/O Ghulam Ahmad Wani
R/O Kalantra Bala



FKO

Office Of The Naib Tehsildar Kreeri

Sub: Application of Suzain Mushta D/o Peerzada Mushtaq Ahmad R/o Kreeri Tehsil. Kreeri for the issuance of EWS (Economically Weaker Section) in favour of Self

NOTICE

Regarding the subject cited above ,the applicant has submitted the file in the office of the undersigned for the issuance eof EWS in favour of his Self nbamely Suzain Mushtaq . in this connection a report of patwari halqa concerned has been sought which reveals tha tthe applicant is currently residing in village Kreeri . the family details are given below

S. NO	NAME OF DEPENDENT	RELATION WITH DECEASED	AGE	OCCUPATION
1	Peerzada Mushtaq Ahmad	Father	46	Labour
2	Shaheena Begum	Mother	45	h/w
3	Peerzada Aynul Haq	Brother	21	Student
4	Suzain Mushtaq	Applicant	19	--

According to report of Patwari Concerned the applicant's family has not more than 5 acres of land and does not have grater than 1000 sqft of residential house. The applicant has not any residential house or residential plot in municipal area. The applicants residential plot is not more than 200 sq ft and the applicant's family income is not more than 8 alcks per year. Moreover the applicant does not belong to any backward area. therefore through this notice

Therefore, through this Public Notice Objections are being sought from general public, if any person has any objection, he/she can submit their objections in the office of the undersigned within 07 days(Sevcn days J positively from the date the notice has been published No objection shall be entertained alter the stipulated time period.

fko Naib Tehsildar

Office of the Naib Tehsildar Pattan

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

PUBLIC NOTICE...

The registrar birth EO MC pattan has submitted a case file pertaining to birth of Fatima Nazir D/o Nazir Ahmad Rathel R/o Kripalpura Bala Tehsil Singapora District Baramulla. The date of birth as per Medical certificate is 15/08/2024 . In this connection if any body having objection for issuance of said certificate he/she may contact to this office within 04 days after that no objection shall be entertained.

Sd Naib Tehsildar Pattan fko

Office of the Naib Tehsildar Pattan

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

Public Notice

The registrar birth EO MC pattan has submitted a case file pertaining to birth of Aamina Jan D/o Ghulam Ahmad Chopan R/o Sonium Tehsil Kunzer District Baramulla. The date of birth as per school record is 17/01/2023 . In this connection if any body having objection for issuance of said certificate he/she may contact to this office within 04 days after that no objection shall be entertained.

Sd Naib Tehsildar Pattan fko



J&K Govt Approves Rs 6.59 Cr for Imambara Zadibal Conservation



Observer News Service

SRINAGAR- The Jammu and Kashmir government has approved Rs 6.59 crore for the conservation and upgradation of the historic Imambara Zadibal in Srinagar.

The announcement was made through Chief Minister Omar Abdullah's official X handle.

The project aims to preserve the heritage character of the centuries-old religious site while improving essen-

tial facilities for devotees and visitors, officials said. The conservation component will focus on safeguarding the historic architecture of the Imambara, while the upgradation works will seek to improve amenities for visitors, particularly during religious gatherings. The Imambara Zadibal holds significant cultural and spiritual importance in the Kashmir Valley and attracts large numbers of people during important religious occasions.

VC JKLCMA Reviews Progress of Lake Conservation Initiatives

Observer News Service

SRINAGAR: The Vice Chairman (VC), Jammu & Kashmir Lake Conservation and Management Authority (JKLCMA), Khurshid Ahmad Shah, convened a review meeting, to take stock of various ongoing activities and works being undertaken by the Authority for the conservation, protection and management of water bodies in Jammu & Kashmir.

All the officers of JK LCMA participated in the meeting.

During the meeting, a detailed review of the progress of various ongoing works and field activities was undertaken. The Vice Chairman emphasized the need for time-bound execution, effective monitoring and regular field inspections to ensure that the objectives of lake and waterbody conservation are achieved in a coordinated and sustainable manner.

The meeting also reviewed measures being undertaken for the protection of water bodies from encroachments, illegal constructions, dumping of solid waste, and discharge of untreated sewage. The concerned officers were directed to maintain close coordination with the field agencies and take prompt action wherever violations affecting the water bodies are noticed.

The progress of demarcation and clearance of encroachments, cleaning and maintenance of water channels, outlets and other associated works was also reviewed. The officers were directed to intensify field-level monitoring and ensure that cleared areas are pro-

tected from re-encroachment.

Issues relating to the 19 inlet channels coming from hinterlands came up for discussion. The Vice Chairman stressed the importance of ensuring proper functioning and maintenance of the regulatory gates installed on these inlet channels. It was desired that J&K PCC, in light of the directions of the Hon'ble High Court, shall be approached for banning the use of pesticides/chemicals by farmers along the hinterlands and ultimately flowing into these inlet channels thereby deteriorating the water quality of the lake.

The functioning and maintenance of aerators, fountains and other lake conservation infrastructure were also reviewed. Directions were issued for early rectification of deficiencies and ensuring that such infrastructure remains operational and is properly maintained.

The Vice Chairman further stressed upon the officers to ensure regular submission of progress reports, proper documentation of works and close supervision of projects at the field level. The concerned officers were directed to adhere strictly to the timelines and submit updated status reports on the progress of works.

The Vice Chairman reiterated that conservation of the water bodies is a collective responsibility and called for sustained efforts, inter-departmental coordination and strict enforcement of applicable provisions to safeguard the fragile aquatic ecosystems of Jammu & Kashmir for future generations.

Ensure Quality, Timely Delivery of Water Projects: Minister Rana to Officials

Observer News Service

SRINAGAR: Minister for Jal Shakti, Forest, Ecology & Environment and Tribal Affairs, Javed Ahmed Rana on Friday chaired a review meeting to assess the progress of various Jal Shakti sector works in Zadibal constituency. He directed the concerned officers to ensure their timely completion and effective implementation.

The meeting, held at the Civil Secretariat Srinagar, was attended by MLA Zadibal, Tanvir Sadiq; Chief Engineer, Jal Shakti, Kashmir along with other senior officers.

During the meeting, the Minister reviewed the progress of ongoing drinking water supply and allied infrastructure works in the constituency. He also took stock of the issues and demands projected by the MLA.

Rana directed the concerned officers to accord top priority to the issues raised by the MLA and ensure their resolution in a time-bound manner.

The Minister stressed that projects nearing completion should be expedited so that they are commissioned and made operational



without delay, enabling the people to avail the intended benefits at the earliest. He further directed the officers to resolve all bottle necks affecting the progress of ongoing works to ensure that no development project suffers avoidable delays.

The Minister underscored the importance of close coordination among all stakeholder departments for effective implementation of developmental projects. He also directed the officers to make judicious use of available resources, ensure optimum utilisation of funds under various schemes and maintain the highest standards of quality in execution of works.

Reiterating the government's commitment to ensure uninterrupted and equitable drinking water supply across the constituency, the Minister directed the officers to expedite the pending water supply schemes, bridge distribution gaps in underserved areas and maintain regular water quality testing to safeguard public health.

"The present administration is firmly committed to strengthening drinking water infrastructure across Jammu and Kashmir. Officers must ensure timely completion of all ongoing schemes, as every delay directly affects the public welfare," Rana asserted.

RBI Holds MSME Townhall in Srinagar

Observer News Service

SRINAGAR: The Reserve Bank of India (RBI), Jammu, on Friday organised an MSME Townhall Meeting for entrepreneurs from the Khonmoh Industrial Area in Srinagar, bringing together around 100 business owners, government officials and banking representatives to promote financial inclusion, improve access to credit and strengthen support for small businesses.

In a statement issued to Kashmir Observer, a spokesperson said the Reserve Bank of India, Jammu organized a MSME Townhall Meeting on July 31, 2026, for MSME Entrepreneurs of Khonmoh Industrial Area, Srinagar at Srinagar.

He said the event was graced by Ms. Rachna Sharma, Secretary, Department of Rural Development and Panchayati Raj (RDD), UT of J&K, as the Chief Guest, in the presence of Shri Chandrashekhar Azad, Regional Director, Reserve Bank of India, Jammu. The event had an enthusiastic participation of around 100



MSME entrepreneurs.

The spokesperson said the event was also attended, among others, by Deputy General Manager, RBI, Jammu; General Manager, UTLCB J&K Convenor Bank; Deputy General Manager, State Bank of India; Chairman, Jammu & Kashmir Grameen Bank; Deputy General Manager, Jammu & Kashmir Bank; Functional Manager, Directorate of Industries & Commerce, UT of J&K; Assistant Director, MSME-Development & Facilitation Office; officials from JK-TPO, JKEDI, SIDBI, Lead Bank, RSETI and other banks; and representatives from Association of Industries, Khonmoh Industrial Area, Srinagar.

He said in his inaugural address, Regional Director, while welcoming the

participants, stated that the objective behind conduct of Town Hall meetings in MSME clusters is to create awareness of banking facilities amongst the entrepreneurs in these clusters, link the unbanked entrepreneurs to the formal banking system and create a platform for a two-way communication amongst the stakeholders.

"He highlighted the significance of Udyam Registration, CGTMSE & TReDS for MSMEs and outlined the recent initiatives of RBI for MSMEs viz. enhancement of collateral free lending limit for micro and small enterprises from ₹ 10 lakh to ₹ 20 lakh and simplification of onboarding process for MSMEs on TReDS platforms by dispensing with the requirement of due diligence."

Two-Wheelers Turn Srinagar's Cycle Tracks Into Traffic Lanes

Agencies

SRINAGAR: Dedicated cycle tracks developed across Srinagar under the Smart City initiative are increasingly being misused by two-wheelers, defeating their very purpose and raising serious concerns over the safety of cyclists and pedestrians. Despite clear lane markings and exclusive cycling corridors along stretches of the Foreshore Road and other major roads in the city, motorcycles and scooters are routinely seen using the tracks to bypass traffic congestion. As per KNT, the latest instance, captured on camera, shows two-wheelers travelling on a designated cycle lane, a practice that local commuters said has become a daily occurrence.

40 Trainee Civil Judges Visit FSL for Exposure to Forensic Science

Observer News Service

SRINAGAR: A batch of 40 trainee Civil Judges, accompanied by the Secretary, District Legal Services Authority (DLSA), Srinagar on Friday visited the Forensic Science Laboratory (FSL), Srinagar as part of an exposure programme aimed at enhancing their understanding of the role of forensic science in the criminal justice system.

The programme commenced with an introductory presentation by Sheikh Suhail Ahmad, Scientific Officer, Fingerprints Division, who briefed the participants on the mandate, organizational structure, scientific capabilities, and pivotal role of FSL Srinagar in assisting investigating agencies and the judiciary through scientific examination of evidence.

The participants were subsequently taken on a guided tour of the laboratory, coordinated by Dr. Rais Ahmad, Scientific Officer, Narcotics & Chemical Division, and Sheikh Suhail



Ahmad, Scientific Officer, Fingerprints Division.

During the visit, the trainee judges interacted with experts across various forensic disciplines and were briefed by the respective Scientific Officers on the functioning of their divisions, modern analytical techniques, sophisticated instrumentation, quality assurance practices, and the scientific procedures followed in the examination of forensic exhibits.

Later, Dr. Qazi Danish Mushtaq, Deputy Director JKFSL Srinagar interacted with the visiting judicial officers regarding functioning of the District Mobile Forensic Units (DMFUs). He highlighted the crucial role of the mobile forensic units in

providing on-the-spot scientific assistance at crime scenes, ensuring proper collection, preservation, and documentation of physical evidence, and facilitating timely forensic support to investigating agencies across the Union Territory.

The exposure programme offered the trainee judicial officers valuable insights into the practical application of forensic science in criminal investigations and judicial proceedings. The participants actively interacted with the forensic experts, discussing the evidentiary value of scientific findings and the significance of forensic reports in ensuring fair and effective administration of justice.

Speaking on the occa-

sion, the Deputy Director, J&K FSL Srinagar, stated that "The criminal justice system increasingly relies on scientific evidence. Such exposure visits strengthen the understanding of judicial officers regarding forensic processes and promote closer coordination between the judiciary and forensic experts for the effective delivery of justice."

Sheikh Suhail Ahmad emphasized that "The objective of the programme is to familiarize judicial officers with the capabilities of modern forensic science and to provide them with firsthand exposure to the scientific procedures adopted in the laboratory."

The visiting officers appreciated the state-of-the-art facilities and professional expertise available at FSL Srinagar and described the interaction as highly informative and beneficial. The programme concluded with a reaffirmation of the importance of continued collaboration between the judiciary and forensic institutions in strengthening the criminal justice system.

GOVERNMENT OF JAMMU & KASHMIR OFFICE OF THE EXECUTIVE ENGINEER (R&B) DIVISION PULWAMA

NOTICE INVITING E-TENDER

NIT No: fresh:90/EEP/RNB of 2026-2027/4458-68 Dated: 31/07/2026

For and on behalf of the Lt. Governor Union Territory of J&K., e-tenders are being invited on an item rate basis/percentage age basis (as applicable) from approved and eligible Contractors registered with the J&K Government, CPWD, Railways, and other State/Central Governments for the following works:

S. No	Name of Work	Major Head of Account	Est. Cost (Rs. in Lacs)	EMD in shape of CDR/ FDR/BG	Class of Contractor	Time of Completion (In days)	Cost of T/Doc. (Rs.)	AAA No / Dt
02	Macadamisation of IR Nehama and Lelhar Kakapora.	MH: C&T 2026-27	39.09	2% of Adv cost	BEE/ AAY	20 Days	1100/	46/SE/PS of 2026-27 Dated: 30 .05.2026
05	Macadamisation of IR Tahab and Chandgam.	MH: C&T 2026-27	29.45	2% of Adv cost	BEE/ AAY	20 days	1100/	70/SE/PS of 2026-27 Dated: 03 .06.2026
12	Macadamisation of Interior links of Gujjar basti Lassipora Lassipora Bonpora link and Harpora Armulla.	MH: C&T 2026-27	39.47	2% of Adv cost	BEE/ AAY	20 days	1100/	78/SE/PS of 2026-27 Dated: 03 .06.2026

Position of funds :- Committed

Project Authority= PW(R&B) Department Kashmir

The bidding documents, which would include qualifying information, eligibility criteria, specifications/drawings, a bill of quantities (B.O.Q), a set of contract terms and conditions, and other details, can be viewed/downloaded from the departmental website www.jktenders.gov.in on the dates listed below: -

1	Date of Issue of Tender Notice	31/07/2026
2	Period of downloading of bidding documents	31/07/2026 from 04.00 PM.
3	Bid submission Start Date	31/07/2026 from 04.00 PM.
4	Bid Submission End Date	05 /08/2026 upto 4.00 PM.
5	Date & time of opening of Bids (Online)	06 /08/2026 at 11:00 AM in the office of Executive Engineer R&B Division Pulwama

In light of Circular issued by Finance department Vide No:FD-code/290/2026 Dated 22.05.2026 and circular issued by worthy Chief Engineer PW(R&B)Department South Kashmir Vide order No:CE/R&B/SK/WS/2095-2111 Dated: 05.06.2026 ,the following conditions are mentioned below:-

- Bids must be accompanied with cost of Tender document/Tender Fee to be deposited in Cash in Centralized Designated Pooling JK Bank Account Bearing No: 047001020000099, IFSC: JAKAOLALANG).
- All the bidders must deposit Earnest money /Bid security equal to 2% of advertised cost in Cash in Centralized Designated Pooling JK Bank Account Bearing No: 047001020000099, IFSC: JAKAOLALANG).
- The Successful bidder will have to provide performance security @ 5% of contract value to be deposited in Cash in Pulwama MC Holding Account Executive Engineer R&B Pulwama Bearing Account no. 0054010200003470 ,IFSC: JAKAOGOLDEN), which shall be released after successful completion of DLP /maintenance period..

The date and time of opening of Bids shall be notified on Web site www.jktenders.gov.in and conveyed to the bidders automatically through an e-mail message on their e-mail address. The bids of responsive bidders shall be opened online on same Web Site in the office of Executive Engineer R&B Div. Pulwama

The bids for the work shall remain valid for a period of 120 days from the date of opening of bids.

All other terms and conditions shall be available in website www.jktenders.gov.in

Head Draftsman

Technical Officer

DIPK-3972-26

DT: 31/07/2026

Executive Engineer,

R&B Division Pulwama

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

AIRPORTS

SHIEK UL ALAM AIRPORT: 01942303311



RAILWAYS

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



HIGHWAY STATUS

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



PRAYERS

FAJR	4 : 04
ZUHR	12 : 37
ASR	5 : 32
Magrib	7 : 35
ISHA	9 : 09

OBITUARY

Inna Lillahi Wa Inna Ilayhi Raji'un

With profound grief, we announce the passing of

Hajira Begum

beloved wife of
Late Prof. (Dr.) Shamshudin Ahmad.

The congregational prayers will be held on
Sunday, 2nd August 2026, at 11:00 AM
at **Majeed Bagh Graveyard,**
opposite Ibrahim Masjid, Lane No. 6, Parimpora.

Family members, relatives, friends, and
well-wishers are kindly requested to attend and
offer prayers for the departed soul.

CONTACT:

Bilal Ahmad Jan: 9596500111
Tariq Ahmad Jan: 9797515151

At least 34 die as 60,000 cross into Spain’s Ceuta

Trans Asia News

Ceuta: At least 34 migrants have died trying to reach Ceuta as about 60,000 have crossed into the Spanish enclave from Morocco in the past 24 hours.

Ceuta’s President Juan Jesús Vivas said on Friday that some 60,000 have crossed into the Spanish enclave in the past 24 hours. The number is equivalent to 70% of the autonomous city’s 84,000 population.

“The situation that Ceuta is going through is absolutely unsustainable,” he said.

Clashes have erupted between security forces and migrants on the Moroccan side of the border since Thursday. Arrests were also reported.

On Friday, Spanish Prime Minister Pedro Sánchez condemned the breach of the border as “a violation of Spain’s territorial integrity.”

He blamed human smugglers for the crisis, saying they “deceive so many young people, and ultimately lead many of them to their deaths — whether in the ocean or, as in this case, at Spain’s border in the autonomous city of Ceuta.”

Live footage of the border showed Moroccan forces using tear gas to disperse hundreds of migrants gathered on a hill overlooking Ceuta, while others continued to swim to the Spanish territory.

At the same time, many migrants walked back from Ceuta toward Morocco to return home.

Rachid Sbihi, head of the association that represents Spain’s Guardia Civil in Ceuta, called the situation a “serious humanitarian crisis,” noting that thousands of migrants, including unaccompanied children, were left sleeping in parks and on sidewalks, while others roamed the streets aimlessly.

“People are still entering. The reinforcements, including Spanish military troops, that have arrived are only helping the injured and other humanitarian efforts,” he said. “It’s chaotic.”

According to Sbihi, among those who died, many drowned. Some were also killed in a stampede to cross the breakwater fence at Tarajal beach, an urban beach near a border checkpoint with Morocco.

Ahmed Karim, a 33-year old Moroccan, said he had entered Ceuta because of the lack



of jobs in his country.

“Many people want to go to Europe, America, but they don’t have the opportunity,” he said.

Authorities in both Ceuta and Madrid attributed the mass influx of migrants to a recent

decision by Spain’s Supreme Court that ruled migrants arriving by sea could not be summarily deported, unlike those who cross by land or climb the border fence.

Sánchez noted that migrant smugglers misinterpreted the ruling.

“It appears that this interpretation of the Supreme Court’s ruling spread like wildfire over the past few hours through the networks of human trafficking organizations, triggering the kind of mass surge we witnessed yesterday,” Sánchez said.

Some Moroccan activists expressed doubt that the ruling was behind the latest developments, arguing most migrants would have been unaware of such legal decisions.

Migrants from Morocco also attempted to cross into Melilla, another Spanish autonomous city on the North African coast.

Clashes also erupted between migrants and police in the Moroccan town of Bni Nsar which borders the Spanish territory. Local media and rights groups reported injuries among security forces and the arrest of dozens of people trying to cross.

Many Moroccans consider Ceuta and Melilla to be occupied territory.

Ceuta has been governed by Spain since 1580 and its mixed population of Christians and Muslims, Spanish and Moroccan residents and day workers, lives in relative harmony.

US Deported Over 4,800 Indians Since 2025: MEA

Press Trust Of India

New Delhi, Jul 31 : A total of 4,840 Indian nationals have been deported by the US since 2025, including 1,273 between January and July this year, the Ministry of External Affairs (MEA) said on Friday.

“The total number of Indians deported from the US to India in 2026, from January 1 till date, is 1,273. In 2025, a total of 3,567 Indian nationals were deported from the US,” MEA spokesperson Randhir Jaiswal said.

His remarks came in response to a question at his regu-

lar media briefing.

Jaiswal said India is working with several governments on issues relating to deportation.

“As and when such issues are referred to us, we conduct due diligence on our side to confirm the nationality of the person being referred for deportation,” he said. “Once we are fully satisfied that the person concerned is of Indian nationality, only then we facilitate their return to India,” he said.

The Trump administration has been targeting illegal migrants in the US as part of a major crackdown.

Passport Fees Up 67% After 14 Years: Govt

Press Trust Of India

New Delhi, Jul 31 : Passport fees are revised from time to time after comprehensive review of the cost of providing passport and related services, operational requirements, and service delivery improvements, and the recent hike in fees by 67 per cent, has come after 14 years, the Lok Sabha was informed Friday.

The “increase in the cost of various inputs and service delivery” over the 14 years since the last revision in 2012 “made it necessary to revise the passport fees”, Minister of State for External Affairs Kirti Vardhan Singh said in a written response to a query.

The government recently revised the passport fee structure through an amendment to the Passports Rules, 1980, increasing application fee for an ordinary fresh passport containing 36 pages from Rs 1,500 to Rs 2,500. The new rules came into force with effect from July 1, 2026.

The Ministry of External Affairs (MEA) was asked whether the government has undertaken any cost study, regulatory impact assessment or affordability assessment before revising passport and related service fees under the Passports (Amendment) Rules, 2026.

“Passport fees are revised from time to time after a comprehensive review of the cost of providing passport and related services, operational requirements, and service delivery improvements,” Singh said.

Earlier, passport fees have been revised in 1971, 1980, 1993, 2002 and 2012, and now in 2026, the MoS said.

A number of initiatives have been taken for improvement of passport services including implementation of upgraded Passport Seva Programme (PSP) Version 2.0 and e-Passport, which has enhanced the quality, security and efficiency of passport services, while increasing the cost of service delivery, the Centre said.

The Arbaeen Pilgrimage Amid Regional Developments



By Z.Agharezaei
WANA News

WANA (Jul 31) – The Arbaeen pilgrimage, which draws millions of Muslim pilgrims every year from around the world—particularly from Iran—to the holy cities of Iraq, especially Karbala, has taken on a distinctly different character this year.

Traditionally recognized as the world’s largest peaceful religious gathering, rooted in values of peace, solidarity, and hospitality, this year’s event is taking place under the direct influence of recent regional developments and a unique atmosphere.

Along the walking route from Najaf to Karbala, shifts in symbols and signs are clearly visible. Alongside traditional pilgrimage rituals, the prominent waving of red flags—symbolizing a call for justice and resolve—can be seen, as well as portraits of Iran’s late leader alongside images of Iran’s new leader, Seyed

Mojtaba Khamenei.

The display of these images in hospitality stations (Mokebs) and held by Iranian and Iraqi pilgrims reflects a new form of political-religious solidarity emerging among certain groups along the route.

Furthermore, the auditory environment of the journey has undergone noticeable changes. Epic chants and eulogies—previously used in Iran during heightened tensions and conflicts involving the US and Israel—are frequently heard this year from sound stations and Iraqi Mokebs, shaping the overall mood of the event.

One of the most notable aspects of Arbaeen this year was the pilgrims’ response to border security developments. Following news reports of a US military strike in the Shalamcheh border area and casualties reported in the incident, a decrease in pilgrim turnout was anticipated.

However, field observations

“One of the most notable aspects of Arbaeen this year was the pilgrims’ response to border security developments. Following news reports of a US military strike in the Shalamcheh border area and casualties reported in the incident, a decrease in pilgrim turnout was anticipated.

indicate that the event did not deter participation. In fact, many individuals who had initially decided not to attend this year due to personal or professional commitments reversed their decision following the incident and headed toward the journey.

From their perspective, joining the walk served as a direct response to intimidating actions and an affirmation to maintain the continuity of this tradition under any circumstances.

Iranian people walk as they commemorate Arbaeen in Tehran, Iran, September 17, 2022. Majid Asgaripour/WANA (West Asia News Agency)

Ultimately, Arbaeen this year demonstrated that it is not merely a static, traditional ritual, but a dynamic platform that swiftly reflects political and regional realities. Despite shifts in certain symbols and tones, its foundational elements—massive public participation, free civic services provided by Iraqi hosts, and cross-border solidarity—remain fully intact.

Arbaeen marks the forty-day threshold following Ashura, commemorating the life and historical stance of Imam Hossein, the third Shiite Imam—a 7th-century leader who stood against injustice and tyranny.

His stand was centered on freedom, dignity, and justice—universal values that transcend the boundaries of any single religion. That is why today, Arbaeen attracts not only Shiite Muslims, but also Sunnis, Christians, and followers of various faiths who resonate with its message of standing against oppression.

Iran Turns A Dormant Volcano Into A Clean Energy Asset

Trans Aisa News

Tehran: After years of geological research and deep drilling into the dormant Sabalan volcano, Iran on Thursday inaugurated its first geothermal power plant, bringing a long-anticipated renewable energy project into operation.

The 5-megawatt facility, lo-

that the reservoir beneath the site could ultimately support electricity generation of as much as 250 megawatts.

A clay layer roughly 500 meters thick acts as a natural seal, trapping heat beneath the surface and creating stable geothermal conditions. Engineers reached the reservoir by drilling several wells to depths approach-



cated in Meshginshahr and built at a cost of 10 million, was officially connected to the national electricity grid during a ceremony attended by Iran’s Energy Minister Abbas Aliabadi.

More than adding a modest amount of generating capacity, the project signals Iran’s entry into geothermal power production and reflects a broader effort to diversify the nation’s energy portfolio while reducing reliance on fossil fuels.

It also marks the beginning of a new phase in Iran’s efforts to develop its geothermal resources, part of a broader push to expand renewable energy.

The power plant sits about 25 kilometers south of Meshginshahr in an area known as Darreh-ye Moeil, where the dormant Sabalan volcano conceals a vast underground heat source.

Geological studies indicate

ing 3,000 meters.

Speaking at the inauguration, Aliabadi described the project as an important milestone in the country’s effort to expand renewable energy production and lessen dependence on conventional fuels.

He said the initiative was intended not only to generate electricity but also to develop the technical expertise needed to exploit geothermal resources elsewhere in Iran.

Developing the project presented considerable engineering challenges. Drilling through Sabalan’s volcanic formations proved even more demanding than conventional oil and gas drilling.

Extremely hard rock and underground temperatures exceeding 240 degrees Celsius rapidly wore down drill bits and degraded drilling fluids.

SpaceX Rocket Set to Crash into Moon

MARCIA DUNN

Cape Canaveral (US), Jul 31 (AP) A drifting SpaceX rocket is on a collision course with the moon after launching a pair of lunar landers more than a year ago.

The rocket’s upper stage will unintentionally slam into the moon on Wednesday, carving out a crater and sending up a plume of dust and rubble that scientists — and skygazers — are eager to observe.

Space tracking expert Bill Gray predicts an impact of 5,400 mph (8,700 kph) — seven times the speed of sound — near Einstein Crater on the moon’s sunlit western limb. With the action unfolding in the wee hours, the eastern portions of the US and Canada, and much of South America should have the best views.

While scientists are not too concerned about this particular piece of space junk, it highlights the growing threat as more and more items cram into orbit.

“Things are getting crowded up there,” said Gray, who plans



to view the aftermath from New Brunswick, Canada.

It was never SpaceX’s intent to hit the moon. But space experts said the crash could have been avoided if the upper stage had been nudged into orbit around the sun.

It will be the second dead rocket known to crash into the moon accidentally. A Chinese rocket segment dug out a pair of craters on the lunar far side in 2022.

Lucky for astronomers, the up-



coming smashup will occur on the moon’s near side, packing the equivalent energy of three tons of TNT.

The impact flash, lasting less than a second, will probably be too dim to see, according to experts. But the stream of ejected material could stretch for several miles (kilometres) into space and remain visible to telescopes for tens of minutes.

“The gravity on the moon is low and there is no wind to blow

the dust away,” said Los Alamos National Laboratory’s Benjamin Fernando, who’s encouraging observations by professionals and amateurs alike.

“Part of the reason for our interest in this event is to figure out how much of a hazard debris impacts pose to future astronauts,” he added in an email.

Fernando anticipates an impact crater nearly 90 feet across and 16 feet deep (27 metres across and 5 metres deep), too small to see from Earth but visible to spacecraft.

NASA’s Lunar Reconnaissance Orbiter and South Korea’s Danuri lunar orbiter will gather before-and-after shots of the crash scene. Danuri will stray within a mile or two (a few kilometres) of the SpaceX rocket just two minutes before impact, according to Fernando and his team.

The abandoned rocket segment — measuring some 40 feet (12 metres) and weighing around 10,000 pounds (4,500 kilograms) — hoisted two private lunar landers on January 15, 2025.

A Wedding Like No Other: Twins Marry Twins

Press Trust Of India

Kottayam (Kerala), Jul 31 : Some weddings are remembered for the flowers, some for the music. A wedding in Kerala’s Changanassery will be remembered for something far rarer - almost every key role was shared by twins.

As the wedding ceremony began at the Changanassery Metropolitan Church on Thursday, Akhil K Thomas held the hand of Magi Mary Thomas, while his twin brother, Nikhil K Thomas, stood beside him with Magi’s twin sister, Maria Mary Thomas.

The unusual celebration became even more special when twin priests led the ceremony and twin altar boys assisted them.

For the two families, it was more than a wedding. It was the fulfilment of a dream they had cherished for years.

The grooms, Akhil and Nikhil, are the twin sons of Kunjumon

Thomas and Jomol of Vettuparambil, Changanassery.

The brides, Magi and Maria, are the twin daughters of Tomichan and Marykutty of Kumbuluvilil, Kulathoor, in Pathanamthitta district.

Adding another remarkable layer to the occasion were twin priests, Fr Anto Pezhumkattil and Fr Ajo

Pezhumkattil of the Kanjirappally Diocese, who officiated the marriage. Assisting them at the altar were twin brothers Jeron James and John James from Pala.

The idea of having twins in every important role was not accidental.

The twin sisters themselves searched for twin priests and eventually found them through a Church in Kothanallor here, which is well known for gatherings of twins.

“It had been our dream since childhood to have a wedding sur-

rounded by twins,” the sisters said.

“Our parents and family also wished for it. Jesus Christ made it happen. When we invited the priests, they immediately agreed to come.”

The priests, too, described the ceremony as one they would always remember.

“Officiating at the wedding of twins is very special,” they said.

“It is an experience that gives us memories for a lifetime. Such occasions remind us of goodness and togetherness,” they told a news channel.

Reflecting on their own lives as twins, they added, “They were born together and they are beginning a new life together. We, too, entered the priesthood together. These are beautiful memories.”

Beyond the rare photographs and the many pairs standing side by side, the wedding carried a simple message about family and shared journeys.

Highway Closure Strands Apple Trucks, Growers Fear Heavy Losses

Observer News Service

SRINAGAR: Hundreds of fruit-laden trucks remained stranded along the Jammu-Srinagar National Highway on Friday after traffic was suspended for restoration and slope stabilization works, raising fears of heavy losses for Kashmir's apple growers and transporters during the peak harvesting season.

The 250-km highway, the only all-weather road linking Kashmir with the rest of the country, was closed to facilitate restoration and safety works on vulnerable stretches, leaving hundreds of trucks carrying fresh apples and other perishable produce stranded on both sides of the road.

Drivers said prolonged delays could severely affect the quality of the fruit and reduce its market value. "We are carrying fruit-laden trucks, and the shelf life of the produce is very limited. If the highway remains closed for long, the fruit will start deteriorating, leading to heavy financial losses for growers as well as transporters," said Mohammad Ashraf, a truck driver. He said uncertainty over the reopening of the highway had compounded their concerns. "We have been waiting for hours without any clear information on when traffic will resume.

Every passing hour reduces the quality of the fruit, and we fear the consignment may not fetch a good price in the market," he said. Another driver questioned the timing of the restoration works.



"We understand the need for highway maintenance, but why is it always undertaken during the peak apple season? Thousands of fruit-laden trucks use this road at this time of the year. The work could have been planned before or after the harvest," he said, urging authorities to allow the movement of fruit trucks as soon as the highway is declared safe. The drivers appealed to the administration and the National Highways Authority of India (NHAI) to expedite the restoration work to minimize losses.

President of the Fruit Growers Association Kashmir, Bashir Ahmad Bashir, said fruit-laden trucks had already been facing delays over the past few weeks, affecting the timely transportation of produce to wholesale markets outside Jammu and Kashmir.

"Several trucks carrying perishable fruits are being held up for long hours, while some have to wait for days before crossing into Jammu. Such delays damage fruit quality and result in financial losses for growers," he said.

Bashir said the government's suggestion to use the Mughal Road as an alternative route was not viable for heavily loaded fruit trucks. He said the association had urged the government to ensure uninterrupted movement of fruit-laden vehicles during the harvesting season.

"We cannot afford a repeat of last year's situation when transportation disruptions caused huge losses to apple growers. We hope the authorities will take prompt steps to safeguard the interests of the horticulture sector," he said.

Iltija Seeks Relief for Apple Growers

Press Trust of India

SRINAGAR: PDP leader Iltija Mufti on Friday alleged that apple growers in Kashmir are facing significant losses due to the closure of the Srinagar-Jammu national highway for maintenance.

Iltija urged Union Minister of Road Transport and Highways Nitin Gadkari to expedite the highway work.

"Unfortunately, much like last year, Kashmiri apple growers are suffering immense catastrophic losses again because the Qazigund highway is closed yet again for 'maintenance'. Why is it that road repairs happen only during harvest season? Horticulture provides a dignified livelihood to lakhs of Kashmiris. Request @nitin_gadkari to ensure road work is expedited," she said in a post on X.

The PDP leader interacted with fruit transporters at Qazigund along the national highway and urged the administration to reopen the highway as soon as possible.

The 250-km national highway, which is the only all-weather road linking Kashmir with the rest of the country, was closed for vehicular traffic on Friday to facilitate widening of the carriageway and removal of overhanging debris at

vulnerable locations between Udhampur and Banihal.

"Why are trucks carrying Kashmiri apples being stopped at Qazigund? Apple growers are already facing immense challenges. Such disruptions only add to their hardship and deserve an immediate explanation and resolution," Iltija stated.

Speaking to PTI Videos, the PDP leader claimed that apple produce has been rotting for two days at Lower Munda in Qazigund because trucks were not allowed to travel on the highway.

"The police stopped us here; they didn't allow us to proceed. And they are giving us this excuse that road maintenance is going on here. Why is it that in the entire year, road maintenance begins at the exact time when it's peak season for apple growers trying to send their fruit to market? It's very strange," she said.

Iltija expressed concern that there might be a conspiracy against Kashmiri apple growers.

"You want private players, like Adani in Himachal Pradesh where their apples come from, to lower the prices of our fruit so it sells at the lowest possible rates. This is a big conspiracy because horticulture is the backbone of our entire economy," she added.

IFAW Extends Relief to Fire-Hit Family in Pattan



SRINAGAR — A delegation of Idara Falah-i-Aam Waqf (IFAW) on Friday visited a family whose house was destroyed in a devastating fire at Duslipora in Pattan, extending immediate financial assistance and other relief to help them cope with the tragedy.

Led by its chairman Er Abrar Hussain, the delegation met the family of Ali Mohammad Dar to express solidarity and assess their immediate and long-term rehabilitation needs, the organisation said in a statement.

According to the statement, the fire, which broke out in the early hours of July 29, completely gutted the family's house, reducing all household belongings to ashes. Among the losses were gold jewellery, clothing and wedding items that had been collected for the marriage of Dar's two daughters, scheduled for next month. To provide immediate relief, the organisation handed over financial assistance and blankets to the family to help meet their urgent needs.

Speaking during the visit, the IFAW chairman described the incident as a heartbreaking tragedy.

"To lose a home is a profound tragedy, but losing the hard-earned wedding savings for two daughters just a month before their marriage is unbearable. IFAW stands firmly with Ali Mohammad Dar's family. We have provided immediate relief and are committed to helping them rebuild their lives and ensure the daughters are wed with dignity," he said.

The delegation also held discussions with village elders to assess the family's long-term rehabilitation requirements and explore ways of providing continued institutional support, the statement added. (Observer News Service)

Mehbooba Defamed Kashmir's Political Class: Sajad Lone

Press Trust of India

SRINAGAR: People's Conference president Handwara Sajad Lone on Friday accused PDP chief Mehbooba Mufti of "defaming" the entire political class of Kashmir.

Lone's remarks came a day after Mehbooba's daughter and PDP leader Iltija Mufti accused People's Conference leadership of threatening and intimidating her party leaders to break them away from the PDP.

"By branding every political figure an agency operative, Mehbooba was defaming the entire political class of Kashmir. She is abusing our political system.

"She is abusing our political leaders. Is everybody on sale here?" Lone told reporters here.

The MLA from Handwara in north Kashmir's Kupwara district asked Mehbooba to look within before pointing fingers at others.

Targeting the PDP, the People's Conference president said PDP founder Mufti Mohammad Sayeed is known as the "biggest party-breaker" here.



"He (Sayeed) broke NC into two parts as the head of the Congress in J-K in 1983. I won't remain silent now. I am not a punching bag.

"She and her father were the chief ministers of the BJP (coalition) and she is blaming me. Her father was the (Union) home minister and agencies were reporting to him. He was their boss. You are the daughter of the boss of the agencies. How dare you talk like this?" he added.

He asked the PDP chief to offer an unconditional apology for her recent remarks justifying pellet and bullet firing on Kashmiris.

"No matter how much drama you do, you will have to unconditionally apologise," Lone said, adding that his party would run daily social media

campaigns until the apology was made.

He dismissed the PDP's focus on his party as a deliberate attempt to divert attention.

Asserting that the PDP was itself created by agencies from existing political stock, Lone said Mehbooba assumes the same of every other party.

"They were handed a 'khichdi', which is called a coalition of individuals. If any individual runs away from them, they drop to zero in that constituency," he said.

"Just imagine for five seconds, the agencies are doing this at Sajad Lone's behest, the one you go to Delhi and call a separatist's son. You are the home minister's daughter. Meaning, is a separatist's son scaring the home minister's daughter?" he added.

Lone questioned Mehbooba's appearance at the Cockroach Janta Party (CJP) protest in Delhi "while hundreds of young Kashmiris were killed or detained under the Public Safety Act during her own tenure as chief minister".

"With what face did you go there? This 'pellet queen' must answer," Lone said.

J&K Notifies Uniform Building Permission Fee across Urban Areas

Observer News Service

SRINAGAR: In a major move to streamline the building permission process across Jammu and Kashmir, the Housing and Urban Development Department (HUDD) has notified a Uniform Building Permission Fee Schedule under the provisions of the Jammu and Kashmir Unified Building Bye-Laws, 2021, bringing a standardized fee structure for all urban local bodies and development authorities across the Union Territory.

The new schedule, notified through Government Order No. 157-JK(HUD) of 2026, has come into immediate effect and will apply uniformly to all Municipal Corporations, Municipal Councils, Municipal Committees and Development Authorities in Jammu and Kashmir.

The initiative replaces the varying fee structures that were previously followed by different urban local bodies and development authorities, with the government stating that the reform is aimed at ensuring greater uniformity, transparency, predictability and ease of doing business while creating a more citizen-friendly regulatory framework for urban development.



As per the notified schedule, the building permission fee has been fixed at ₹80 per square metre for residential buildings, including housing colonies. Mixed-use buildings will attract a fee of ₹150 per square metre, while commercial, public or semi-public, industrial and other special category buildings will be charged ₹270 per square metre. Religious buildings have been exempted from the building permission fee.

In addition to the prescribed fee, the government has also notified uniform ancillary charges. A Malba Security deposit of ₹3,000 will be applicable for residential buildings, while ₹10,000 will be charged for all other building categories. A compounding fee, where applicable, has been fixed at 40 per cent of the prescribed building permission fee, payable in addition to the normal permission charges.

Officials said the stan-

dardized fee structure will be applicable across all urban local bodies and development authorities in the Union Territory, ensuring that applicants are charged uniformly irrespective of the authority processing their building plans.

The department has also decided to integrate the revised fee schedule into the Online Building Permission System (OBPS)/Auto-DCR, enabling automated and uniform processing of building permission applications across Jammu and Kashmir.

According to the government, the reform is expected to simplify the approval process, remove disparities in fee structures among different agencies functioning under the Housing and Urban Development Department, and strengthen a transparent, efficient and business-friendly regulatory environment for planned urban development in the Union Territory.

LG Manoj Sinha to Inaugurate International Climate Resilience Conference at IUST

SRINAGAR: The Islamic University of Science and Technology (IUST) will host a four-day international conference on 'Nature-based Solutions for Enhanced Climate Resilience and Livelihoods in the Himalayas' from August 3 to 6.

The conference will be inaugurated on August 3 by the Honourable Lieutenant Governor of Jammu and Kashmir, Shri Manoj Sinha, as Chief Guest. The Honourable Chief Justice of the High Court of Jammu and Kashmir and Ladakh, Justice Sanjeev Kumar, will grace the inaugural session as Guest of Honour.

The international event will bring together policymakers, scientists, academicians, development practitioners, financial institutions, and businesses and civil-society representatives to examine how nature-based solutions can strengthen climate resilience, support livelihoods and contribute to sustainable economic growth in Jammu and Kashmir and wider Himalayan region.

The programme focuses on climate-resilient Jhelum River Basin and Himalayas, wetland restoration, climate-smart forestry, sustainable agriculture and horticulture, urban resilience, human well-being, digital technology-enabled green enterprises, and climate finance. (Observer News Service)

Five from Ladakh Injured in Ganderbal Road Accident

GANDERBAL: Five persons from the Ladakh region, including two brothers and a 10-year-old boy, were injured after a Xylo vehicle crashed into an electric pole at Hain Kangan in central Kashmir's Ganderbal district on Friday.

Officials said the vehicle (JK10/5974) lost control and rammmed into an electric pole, leaving all its occupants injured.

The injured were identified as driver Asghar Ali, son of Mohammad Hussain Ali, a resident of Kargil; Hussain Asqari, son of Ghulam Hussain, resident of Loh; brothers Junaid Iqbal and Liaquat Ali, sons of Ghulam Abbas, residents of Loh; and 10-year-old Mohammad Danish, son of Abdul Bari, also a resident of Loh.

All the injured were initially admitted to Sub-District Hospital Kangan. However, due to the severity of their injuries, they were referred to SKIMS Soura for specialized treatment.

Ladakh Pashmina Growers Connect Directly with Buyers at Srinagar Meet

Observer News Service

SRINAGAR: The Cooperatives Department, Union Territory of Ladakh, in collaboration with the All Changthang Pashmina Growers Cooperative Society Ltd. and J&K Bank, organized a Buyer-Seller Meet today at the DIPR Auditorium, Srinagar. The programme aimed to establish direct interaction between Ladakh Pashmina herders and leading buyers, exporters, traders and business organizations, ensuring better price realization for the actual Pashmina herders, eliminating unnecessary intermediaries, and strengthening sustainable market linkages through the cooperative movement.

The programme was graced by Shri Nitish Rajora, IAS, Deputy Commissioner, Changthang, as the Chief Guest. He highlighted the unique geographical land-



scape of Changthang, which is home to nearly 1.84 lakh Changra goats.

Among those present were Mr. Thinles, Secretary, All Changthang Pashmina Growers Cooperative Society Ltd.; representatives of J&K Bank, the Cooperatives Department, the District Administration, Changthang; besides members of cooperative societies, artisans, weavers, and media representatives.

The event witnessed the participation of more than 100 buyers, exporters, traders, entrepreneurs, and representatives of leading business organizations from

Jammu & Kashmir and other parts of the country. The meet provided a valuable platform for direct business interaction between Pashmina growers and prospective buyers, enabling discussions on quality, pricing, long-term procurement, and market requirements.

Prominent participants included Mr. A.P. Vicky Shaw, Chairman, PHD Chamber of Commerce & Industry (PHDCCI), Kashmir; Mr. Iqram Ali Shafiee, Chairman, Confederation of Indian Industry (CII), J&K; Mr. Javed Ahmad Tenga, President, Kashmir Chamber of Commerce & In-

dustry (KCCI); Mr. Mubashir Ahmad, President, Kashmir Pashmina Welfare Trust; Mr. Mohd. Rafiq Sofi, President, Tahafuz Society; and Mr. Muzaaffar, Zonal Head, Srinagar, J&K Bank, who interacted with the cooperative members and explored avenues for long-term collaboration.

Addressing the gathering, Shri Nitish Rajora, IAS, highlighted the global recognition of Ladakh Pashmina for its exceptional quality and emphasized that cooperative societies play a vital role in empowering nomadic herders by improving market access, ensuring fair remuneration, and preserving the authenticity of Ladakh Pashmina. He reiterated the commitment of the UT Administration towards strengthening the cooperative movement and creating sustainable livelihood opportunities for Pashmina-growing communities.

GOVERNMENT OF JAMMU AND KASHMIR

OFFICE OF THE ASSISTANT COMMISSIONER/
DESIGNATED OFFICER, FOOD SAFETY
FOOD & DRUGS ADMINISTRATION, ANANTNAG

Subject: Prohibition on sale of "Cow Ghee" marketed under the Brand Name Milk Bite (Batch No. 137).

ORDER

Whereas, the Food Safety Officer, Lamoo, procured a sample of "Cow Ghee" sold in the market under the brand name Milk Bite (Batch No. 137), manufactured by M/S: Mahadev Industries F-227-B, Udhog Vihar RIICO, SRI Ganganagar, Rajasthan-335001. Whereas, the Food Analyst, National Food Laboratory, Ghaziabad, vide Report No. JK-390/Jul/26/398, dated 17-07-2026, has declared the sample as "UNSAFE" on the following grounds:

- The sample shows presence of beta-sitosterol.
- The Reichert-Meissl Value, Polenske Value and Saponification Value are below the minimum prescribed limits. The B.R. Reading at 40°C and Iodine Value are above the maximum prescribed limits.
- In the fatty acid profile, the values of C4:0, C6:0, C8:0, C10:0, C12:0, C14:0, C18:0 and C16:1 are below the minimum prescribed limits, whereas the values of C18:1, C18:2, and C18:3 are above the maximum prescribed limits.

Whereas, consumption of the above said ghee is liable to be prohibited under Regulation 2.3.7 of the Food Safety and Standards (Prohibition and Restriction on Sales) Regulations, 2011 as it may pose a threat to the health of consumers.

Whereas, manufacture and sale of unsafe food, as defined under Section 3(l)(zz)(iv)(vi) of the Food Safety and Standards Act, 2006, is prohibited.

Now, therefore, in exercise of the powers conferred under Section 36(3)(b) of the Food Safety and Standards Act, 2006, and in the interest of public health, I, Sheikh Zameer Ahmad, Designated Officer, Food Safety, Anantnag, hereby prohibit the sale of the aforesaid food product within the territorial jurisdiction of District Anantnag with immediate effect and until further orders.

No: DO/ANG/2026/ 2012-2015

Dated: 29/07/2026

DIPK-3948-26

DT: 31/07/2026

Designated Officer
(Assistant Commissioner)

Food Safety, Anantnag

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KO VIEW

Beyond Bitter Battles

Kashmir's public discourse has begun to show a welcome change, and one of its strongest signals is coming from an unexpected place.

Mosque pulpits, which often guide social conduct as much as religious life, have started sending a simple message.

Clerics and preachers are asking worshippers to stay away from on-line feuds, sectarian insults, and exchanges that deepen divisions instead of strengthening society.

That message comes after months of bitter arguments on social media, where followers of different schools of thought turned disagreement into public spectacle.

Religious differences became material for insults, mockery, and endless exchanges that reached far beyond genuine debate.

Every fresh argument widened mistrust and pulled attention away from the values that faith itself seeks to promote.

Such advice from religious leaders needs attention because it places responsibility above emotion.

Public disagreements rarely end with one argument. They multiply, draw more participants, and soon become battles where winning takes priority over wisdom.

Kashmir has witnessed enough of those cycles to understand how quickly they poison public life.

Politics, however, continues to move in the opposite direction.

Supporters of rival political camps spend countless hours attacking one another online, while many political figures encourage the same atmosphere through words and conduct.

Personal attacks replace meaningful discussion, and public platforms become arenas for insults rather than ideas. Civility fades, public trust weakens, and genuine debate gives way to endless point scoring.

Kashmir faces far bigger questions than social media rivalries. Climate shocks continue to test communities. Unemployment weighs heavily on young people. Drug abuse and other social problems demand thoughtful leadership and sustained public attention.

Time spent amplifying personal feuds pushes these concerns further into the background.

Healthy disagreement will always remain part of a democracy, and competing political visions enrich public life when they focus on ideas and solutions.

Personal attacks achieve the opposite. They reduce politics to performance and leave citizens watching an endless contest that produces little beyond noise.

Religious leaders have shown that public influence can calm tensions instead of inflaming them. Their recent appeals demonstrate that leadership is measured by the ability to encourage restraint and responsible conduct.

That example deserves imitation well beyond the walls of a mosque.

Political leaders now have an opportunity to follow the same path. Public life gains strength when discussion centers on jobs, education, public services, the environment, and the everyday concerns of ordinary families.

Kashmir has waited long enough for politics that speaks to those priorities instead of feeding personal rivalries.



Syed Nissar H Gilani

Protecting women in India starts with teaching them to strike first and ensuring the state finishes the fight without delay.

The Baramulla case and a Kashmiri athlete's response in Agra prove that physical readiness and speed in policing and courts form the only reliable path to lasting safety.

A young woman and her male friend walked through Jalsheeri Drangbal in Baramulla when attackers seized them. The men beat the pair, sexually assaulted the woman, and filmed the entire crime to circulate the footage as a public humiliation.

Senior Superintendent of Police Gurinderpal Singh placed the investigation on a war footing. The survivor knew only the first names of her attackers, but investigators combined technical evidence with human intelligence to identify and arrest Shakir Ahmed Lone and Mohammed Ashraf within days.

That police speed stands as a model.

Trials must now match it so that arrests convert into convictions before evidence fades or witnesses face pressure.

The same principle of personal readiness appeared years earlier when the J&K Thang-Ta Association sent its state team to Agra for a national tournament.

Dozens of young men and women competed under the General Secretary's supervision and returned with dozens of medals plus the runners-up trophy.

After the event, hosts from the Sports Ministry and Milton International School arranged a visit to the Taj Mahal. As the group left the premises, local youths began teasing and harassing one female player.

She warned them to stop. When they grew more aggressive, she applied her training with precise force.

Two attackers fell to the ground. A third required three stitches on his forehead and treatment at a first-aid center.

On-duty officers came quickly and praised the Kashmiri athlete for her decisive defense.

The episode demonstrates that martial skill converts potential victims into capable responders.

Parents across every demographic must therefore encourage daughters to learn self-preservation techniques.

The Long Walk to Safety

A Baramulla assault and a Taj Mahal counterstrike show why martial training plus rapid trials must replace delayed justice as the core defense against sexual violence in India.



Police often act quickly, but judicial timelines collapse under procedural weight. Fast-Track Special Courts already exist. Their capacity must expand until trials finish within months rather than years.

tion techniques.

Early training builds bodily awareness and confidence so hesitation vanishes when danger appears. Schools and universities should embed mandatory self-defense modules inside physical education.

Disciplines such as Thang-Ta, Taekwondo, Judo, Karate, and specialized unarmed combat deliver three practical gains: tactical awareness that identifies threats before they close in, offensive and defensive moves that break grips and counter assaults, and mental composure that sustains clear action under stress.

Once these skills become standard academic practice, individual readiness multiplies into collective strength.

National Crime Records Bureau figures reveal the scale that demands this dual approach.

India records 80 to 90 reported rape cases every day, more than 31,000 each year. The true number sits higher because stigma and intimidation keep many incidents hidden.

Police charge-sheeting rates for crimes against women range between 70 and 77 percent, showing investigators routinely identify and formally charge suspects.

Courtrooms, however, create the bottleneck.

Conviction rates for rape hover between 20 and 28 percent. Pendency exceeds 85 to 90 percent, leaving hundreds of thousands of cases

stalled for years.

Delays in forensic reports, defense adjournments, and witness intimidation stretch survivors' suffering while perpetrators remain free.

High-profile gang-rape cases across the country illustrate the same failure.

Police often act quickly, but judicial timelines collapse under procedural weight. Fast-Track Special Courts already exist. Their capacity must expand until trials finish within months rather than years.

Only time-bound proceedings convert the police's early momentum into final accountability.

Two pillars therefore sustain safety for women. The first is the trained individual who meets force with force, and the second is the state that arrests, charges, and convicts without delay.

Mandating martial arts education in every academic institution supplies the first pillar. Pairing that education with the Baramulla model of rapid policing and expanded fast-track trials supplies the second.

Together they replace temporary public anger with permanent deterrence and give women the concrete means to move through public and private spaces with freedom and security.

The author is a former civil servant from the administrative services. He can be reached at nisargilani57748@gmail.com.

The Exodus Economy

The valley pays twice for a workforce it can neither educate at home nor employ once it returns.



Malik Daniyal

Thousands of students leave Jammu and Kashmir for college every year, and thousands more never come back to work.

Treat that as a footnote and you miss the real story of the union territory's economy.

This is a two-stage departure, first of students, then of workers, and it explains more about Kashmir's stalled growth than any single budget line or investment summit ever could.

Start with the money.

Remittances usually flow into a region, financing consumption and investment the way Gulf earnings have long supported households in Kerala and construction booms in Punjab.

Kashmir runs the opposite script.

Long before any money comes home, households send it out, covering tuition, hostel fees and living costs at institutions in Delhi, Bengaluru, Pune, Chandigarh and, increasingly, Central Asia and Eastern Europe.

Seats sit empty at universities inside the valley while students leave for courses those same institutions cannot offer, hobbled by administrative delays, exam backlogs and curricula that haven't kept up with the fields students want to study.

With only 142 government degree colleges and roughly 200 private ones serving the whole region, the capacity simply isn't there.

Ambition and household savings both head for the exit.

This is a capital outflow with no matching credit. The economic value that a growing student population normally generates - jobs, rent, and small businesses built around campus life - lands in Delhi or Pune rather than Srinagar or Jammu.

Kashmir finances an education sector it does not own.

Then comes the second, harsher departure.

Once students graduate, the local job market fails to absorb them. The Periodic Labour Force Survey has placed Jammu and Kashmir among the country's worst performers on youth unemployment for years running. Urban joblessness among young people sits near 32 percent, more than double the figure in industrialized states, and the union territory's own Economic Survey puts unemployment among educated youth at close to 46 percent.

More than three lakh people remain registered as jobless on the government's employment portal, over a lakh of them holding graduate or postgraduate degrees.

The region produces roughly 25,000 graduates annually, but official estimates show only 13 percent of the actual workforce holds a degree at all.

Most degree holders sit unemployed, underemployed or working jobs that never needed a diploma in the first place.

This combination, skilled graduates and a labour market unable to use them, describes jobless growth precisely.

The private sector is too thin to absorb technical and professional talent. Government employment, long the default absorber, has hit its own fiscal ceiling. Self-employment mainly clusters around low-value agriculture and retail.

Educated young people leave again, first for Indian metros, then increasingly for the Gulf. But unlike Kerala or Punjab, Kashmir has built no strong remittance channel to show for it.

Data on money sent home by the diaspora remains thin



and poorly tracked, a disparity that itself signals how little attention this problem has received.

Basic growth economics explains why this double exodus damages the valley's prospects more than a simple headcount would suggest.

Students who migrate for specialized fields, like medicine, engineering, management, and technology, tend to settle where they land, because their skills travel easily and demand for them exists everywhere.

Low-skill labour migrants send money home and keep ties to the local economy, but highly trained ones rarely do.

Kashmir thus loses a human capital base it built and subsidized through its own public education system.

That loss compounds through the tax base and the local business ecosystem.

The region loses not only workers but the founders who might have built its small and medium enterprises, the professionals who might have anchored a private sector, the taxpayers who might have widened its fiscal base beyond its current heavy reliance on central transfers.

Local revenue generation depends on the type of skilled, formal-sector activity that keeps leaving.

A young population should be an advantage. Several East Asian economies rode exactly this demographic profile to decades of fast growth. Kashmir is exporting that advantage instead, left with an aging, less economically active population at home alongside a self-employed informal sector with little room to grow more productive.

None of this argues against mobility itself. People moving toward opportunity is rational, and no government should try to stop it outright.

The failure sits elsewhere: in a local economy that has built neither enough college seats, nor enough private jobs, nor any real mechanism to capture the wealth its own graduates generate elsewhere.

Three fixes follow directly from that diagnosis.

Expand and modernize higher education capacity, particularly in technical and professional fields where local demand goes unmet, while fixing the exam backlogs and outdated curricula pushing students out.

Build private sector jobs rather than expanding an already-stretched public payroll, by easing industrial land leasing, activating registered-but-idle industrial units, and drawing manufacturing, IT services and agro-processing investment vehicles that can employ local graduates where they live.

And track the diaspora properly, the way Kerala does its Gulf workforce, through diaspora bonds and structured investment vehicles that turn remittances into local capital rather than lost data points.

Closing this gap, not restricting movement, is the only route back to growth Kashmir can actually take.

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

Kashmir Apples Fall to Fake Pesticides

Himachal controls the same apple diseases with quality inputs and science while Kashmir's growers keep losing whole seasons to counterfeit sprays.



Ghulam Ahmad Mir

Official tests in Kashmir last year uncovered 57 non-standard pesticide samples out of 1,654 checked. Jammu recorded just one failure in 384 samples. That difference alone should stop every decision-maker cold.

Farmers in the valley poured their savings into those products. The sprays failed, pests and diseases moved in, and orchards that should have delivered top-grade fruit produced stained and downgraded crops instead.

Agriculture and horticulture keep Jammu and Kashmir's economy alive. Thousands of families live off apple orchards and related crops. But counterfeit and substandard pesticides have become a growing threat in the market.

Growers spend hard-earned money each season on these chemicals, and expect the products to protect the trees. But when the bottles turn out fake or weak, the labour of an entire season disappears.

Financial losses hit hard, followed by emotional strain.

The same major apple diseases that still cause heavy damage in Kashmir have been brought under control in Himachal Pradesh.

Proper scientific management and quality inputs made the difference there. Kashmir faces identical pathogens under weaker conditions.

This contrast calls for a full and open investigation. Any lapses in regulation, monitoring or the supply chain must be found and fixed at once.

A 2020 scab outbreak showed the cost of failure.

Fake fungicides sold during the lockdown left more than 80 percent of the crop damaged. First-rate apples fell to B and C grades. Prices dropped, and growers who had planned strong returns faced debt.



CURRENT DATA ALREADY SHOW HIGHER FAILURE RATES IN KASHMIR under the same rules that apply in Jammu. That points to uneven enforcement. Proceedings under the Insecticides Act have started against some dealers after fruit-drop complaints. Even then, the volume of bad product keeps circulating.

Field studies in the valley earlier put the share of spurious or substandard agrochemicals above one-third. Some fungicides failed at rates over 60 percent.

National estimates place counterfeit pesticides at 25 to 30 percent of the market. A FICCI study found that a 25 percent share of non-genuine products cuts yields by 4 percent and wipes out 10.6 million tonnes of food in one year.

Kashmir's numbers run higher than the national average.

Recent seasons added more evidence. Growers in Shopian and nearby areas sprayed common products, and then watched fruit drop within days.

Enforcement teams seized suspect batches, but the same chemicals still reach the market.

Input costs have risen 30 to 40 percent. Some orchardists now spend 60,000 to 1 lakh per acre on sprays that deliver little protection.

The valley's apple sector produces 70 to 75

percent of India's total output, around 20 to 21 lakh metric tonnes in recent years. It generates revenue in the thousands of crores and supports roughly 3.5 million people.

When quality falls, buyers pay less. And when yields fall, families take loans.

The government must tighten quality control. Regular inspections of dealers and distributors, laboratory testing of samples in accredited facilities, and firm legal action against makers and sellers of counterfeit products form the base.

Current data already show higher failure rates in Kashmir under the same rules that apply in Jammu. That points to uneven enforcement. Proceedings under the Insecticides Act have started against some dealers after fruit-drop complaints. Even then, the volume of bad product keeps circulating.

Farmers need practical tools. Education programmes should show them how to spot genuine pesticides through holograms, batch numbers and manufacturer marks. Clear channels must let them report suspicious products without fear.

Knowledge reduces the power of informal traders who profit from confusion, but knowledge alone cannot clear a market already full of fakes.

One direct solution works better.

The government should buy certified pesticides from approved manufacturers and supply them through Agriculture and Horticulture Department outlets.

This step cuts the flow of fake products at the source. Quality becomes verifiable before the bottle leaves the official channel. Farmers regain the certainty that their money will protect the crop.

Direct distribution removes the layers of unregulated middlemen who now dominate the valley market. Studies of that market have long described it as poorly controlled, with authorized dealers mixed among unlicensed traders and widespread substandard stock.

Kashmir's horticulture reputation rests on consistent quality. Counterfeit pesticides put that reputation at risk.

The prosperity of the sector lies on the trust and security of its farmers. Protecting them from these products is a moral obligation.

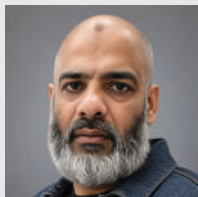
Strong laboratory enforcement, farmer education and government-controlled distribution of certified inputs must start now.

Only then will the orchards regain the reliability that scientific management has already delivered in Himachal.

— The author is a retired manager, Kashmir Government Arts Emporium. He comes from Dadasara Tral, and can be reached at mirghulamahmad45gmail.com.

The Wall of Photographs

Thirty-four years after losing his sons, one Kashmiri father continues a daily ritual of remembrance while the search for truth remains unfinished.



Tajamul Farooqi

Tajudin taught me how to ride a bicycle on a lane behind our grandfather's house, and Imtiyaz used to stand at the gate laughing at how many times I fell before I finally stayed upright.

I was younger than both of them, small enough that they seemed like grown men to me, though Tajudin was still finishing his engineering degree and Imtiyaz had not yet finished school.

Those two facts, so ordinary, are the only ones I want to begin with, because everything that came after tried to turn my cousins into something other than boys who were simply becoming men.

Summer of 1992 sits in my memory the way certain smells do, sudden and complete. I was not in the house on the afternoon it happened, and for that I have spent thirty-four years feeling something between relief and shame.

What I know comes from my uncle, aunts, and the cousins who were there. I have never fully left that room since.

Imtiyaz opened the front door and did not step back in time. Tajudin ran toward the sound and did not run back at all.

He lived, they tell me, for nearly thirty-five minutes afterward, while the people who loved him most begged anyone nearby for help that never came through the door.

My grandfather walked into that house



sometime before evening and saw what the day had made of it. He did not speak much after that. Within a short while, his heart simply stopped, as though it had already decided there was nothing left in the world worth the effort of continuing.

I think of him often, an old man undone by the gory sight of his grandsons.

My uncle is the one I think about most, though, because he is the one still here. He keeps two photographs on his wall, ordi-

nary school portraits, the type every family has tucked into some drawer.

His are framed and dusted and spoken to, softly, most mornings before the rest of the house wakes.

He still folds the shirts nobody wears, and still sets aside a little food on certain days out of a habit that has outlived its reason and become something closer to prayer.

I have watched him grow old beside two

boys who never got the chance to.

Kashmir remembers its dead loudly, when it remembers them at all. Every political camp has its own martyrs, its own anniversaries, its own careful choreography of grief turned into slogan.

My cousins belonged to none of that.

They held no office, carried no banner, spoke for no movement larger than their own small dreams of finishing school and building a life.

Perhaps that is precisely why so few people beyond our family ever learned their names.

There is a case number attached to what happened that day, FIR 94/162, filed at a Srinagar station under sections meant for murder and destruction, and it has not moved in thirty-four years.

Governments in Srinagar and in Delhi have turned over many times since then. Ministers have come and gone. Officers who might once have known something useful have retired or passed away themselves.

The file, as far as any of us can tell, has simply waited in the dark alongside my uncle, unopened and unanswered, the two of them aging in parallel.

I am not writing this to accuse anyone by name, because I do not know the names that belong in that file, and neither does my uncle after all these years of asking.

I am writing it because I want Tajudin and Imtiyaz to be more than a number filed away in a station drawer.

I want someone outside our family to say their names out loud and mean something by it.

My uncle is not young anymore. Some nights I wonder how many more mornings he has left to stand in front of that wall.

What I want for him, more than any verdict or apology, is simply the truth, spoken plainly, before the last person who remembers his sons as living boys is gone too.

That would not undo thirty-four years. It would only mean that somebody, finally, was listening.

— The author is an alumnus of JNU and University of Northern Virginia and is an entrepreneur. He can be reached at tajamul@gmail.com.



MY UNCLE IS NOT YOUNG ANYMORE. Some nights I wonder how many more mornings he has left to stand in front of that wall. What I want for him, more than any verdict or apology, is simply the truth, spoken plainly, before the last person who remembers his sons as living boys is gone too.

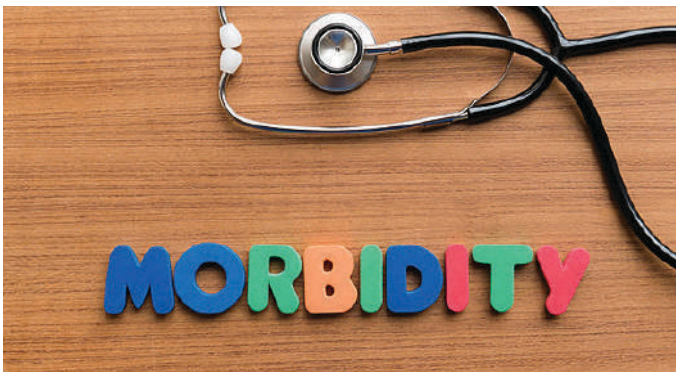
Morbidity Gap Widening Across Most Countries Since 1990: Study

Press Trust Of India

Healthy life expectancy fell short of total life expectancy by 10.7 years in 2023, up from 8.8 years in 1990, revealing that people world over are living longer, but spending more years in poor health, according to a study published in The Lancet Public Health journal.

Estimates also suggest that globally, people spent an average of 14.5 per cent of their lives in poor health in 2023, up from 13.6 per cent in 1990. Further, instead of occurring only in the final years of life, the widening morbidity gap -- the difference between total life expectancy and healthy life expectancy -- was observed across the adult lifespan, suggesting that people are spending more years living with disease and disability throughout adulthood, researchers, including those from the Institute for Health Metrics and Evaluation (IHME) at the US' University of Washington, said.

In India, the morbidity gap in 2023 was 10.6 years, up from



8.4 years in 1990 -- total life expectancy was 71.6 years in 2023 and 58.5 years in 1990, while healthy life expectancy was 61.0 years in 2023 and 50.1 years in 1990, the study shows.

"Our findings suggest that future gains in population health will come not only from helping people live longer, but from helping them live healthier," senior author Christopher Murray, director of the Institute for Health Metrics and Evaluation at the University of Washington's school of medicine. "Progress in healthy aging should be mea-

sured not only by lifespan, but by healthspan, with greater investment in prevention, long-term disease management, and chronic care to reduce years lived in poor health," Murray said.

The analysis is based on Global Burden of Disease (GBD) 2023 estimates, coordinated by the University of Washington. Also Read - Will finalise cabinet expansion this week: Karnataka CM Women consistently lived longer than men but also showed a larger morbidity gap compared to men, indicating that women spent more years living in poor health -- with

disease and disability -- across every region and level of development, the analysis revealed.

The pattern shows that longer life expectancy among women has not translated into the same gains in healthy years, the researchers said. In 2023, women globally experienced an average morbidity gap of 12.1 years, compared with 9.3 years for men. Morbidity gap for men in India increased from 7.5 years in 1990 to 9.1 years in 2023, while that for women increased from 9.4 years in 1990 to 12 years in 2023.

"Women are living longer than men almost everywhere in the world, but they are also spending more of those additional years in poor health," co-author Catherine Bisignano, senior scientific writer at IHME, said.

"Improving healthy aging will require greater focus on the conditions and risk factors that drive years lived with disability. Addressing these earlier through prevention and better long-term care could have meaningful social, health system, and economic impacts," Bisignano said.

PUBLIC NOTICE

It is hereby notified for the information of the general public that, due to an inadvertent error, my name and address have been recorded in my Service Book as Riyaz Ahmed, R/o Panzwalpora. However, as per my Aadhaar Card, my correct name and address are Reyaz Ahmad, R/o Pazwalpora, which are the accurate particulars.

The necessary correction is proposed to be made in my Service Book accordingly. If any person has any objection regarding this correction, he/she may submit the same in writing to the Commandant, JKAP/-14th Battalion, Manasbal within seven (7) days from the date of publication of this notice.

No objection received after the stipulated period shall be entertained.

Reyaz Ahmad

R/O: Pazwalpora

JMA

NORTHERN RAILWAY

E-Auction Notice

The Senior Divisional Commercial Manager, Northern Railway, Firozpur for and on behalf of President of India invites E-Auction from eligible and registered bidders for the following works over Firozpur Division:

S.N.	Catalogue No.	Nature of Contract
Date of Auction: 12.08.2026		
1	EAFFZ- MIS26-17	Allotment of contract for: a) Setting up and operation of Travel Help Desk at Amritsar Railway Station. b) Setting up and operation of Food Van at Ludhiana Railway Station/premises adjoining to wall of Jagraon Bridge in Colony No. 10. c) Setting up and operation of small food van near TTE Rest House at Ludhiana Railway Station. d) Setting up and operation of Single Brand Premium Store at Amritsar Railway Station.
2	EAFFZ- CTG26-7	a) Allotment of Catering Stall on contract at Phagwara Railway Station. b) Allotment of Catering Stall on contract at Makhu Railway Station.
Date of Auction: 13.08.2026		
3	EAFFZ- PnU26-8	a) Operation and maintenance Pay & Use Toilets blocks at Mukatsar Railway Station. b) Operation and maintenance Pay & Use Toilets blocks at Kotkapura Railway Station.
4	EAFFZ- ADVT26-18	Advertisement rights through Vinyl wrapping on exterior of coaches of Train No. 14680/79/82/81, 14622/21/26/25, 12408/07 & 20424/23.
5	EAFFZ- WVM26-3	Allotment of contract for setting up and operation of Water Vending Machines at Amritsar, Dhandari Kallan, Phagwara & Firozpur Cantt. Railway Station.

For other details and registration, please visit Railway website: www.ireps.gov.in

No. NR-FZROCOML(NFR)/18/2024 Date: 31.07.2026

2654/2026

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Govt. of Jammu and Kashmir (UT)

Department of Urban Local Bodies Kashmir Office of the Chief Executive Officer Municipal Council Bandipora

PUBLIC NOTICE

Subject: Implementation of Plastic Waste Management (Amendment) Rules, 2025-26

It is hereby informed for the information of the general public, traders, shopkeepers, manufacturers, retailers, and all other stakeholders within the jurisdiction of Municipal Council Bandipora that the Plastic Waste Management (Amendment) Rules, 2025 issued vide G.S.R. 73(E) dated 23rd January 2025 by the Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change, Government of India, have come into force.

These Rules form part of the Plastic Waste Management Rules, 2016, and aim to strengthen the management, segregation, collection, and recycling of plastic waste, as well as promote environmental responsibility and traceability in the use of plastic packaging.

Key Provisions for Compliance:

- Ban on Certain Single-Use Plastic (SUP) Items:**
The manufacture, import, stocking, distribution, sale and use of identified single-use plastic items shall continue to remain prohibited as per Government of India guidelines.
- Mandatory Labelling / Traceability (Effective from 1st July 2025):**
All Producers, Importers, and Brand Owners (PIBOs) dealing with plastic packaging must ensure that packaging materials carry the required information either through: Barcode / QR code, or Unique Identification Number, or Product Information Brochure, as per Rule 11(1A) of the Plastic Waste Management (Amendment) Rules, 2025.
- Extended Producer Responsibility (EPR):**
All Producers, Importers, and Brand Owners shall fulfil their EPR obligations by collecting back the equivalent quantity of plastic waste generated through their products and ensuring its environmentally sound management.
- Segregation and Collection at Source:**
Every household, commercial establishment, and institution shall segregate waste at source into wet, dry, and plastic fractions and hand over the same to the authorized collection agency of the Municipal Council.

- Penalties for Non-Compliance:**
Any person, organization, or establishment found violating the provisions of the Plastic Waste Management Rules, 2016 as amended up to 2025, shall be liable for penalties under Section 15 of the Environment (Protection) Act, 1986 and other applicable laws.

Public Cooperation Sought: All residents, shopkeepers, vendors, and institutions are requested to:

- Strictly avoid the use of banned single-use plastic items.
- Promote use of eco-friendly and biodegradable alternatives.
- Participate actively in segregation and clean waste disposal practices.
- Support the Municipal Council in making Bandipora a Plastic-Free and Environment-Friendly Town.

This notice is issued in the public interest for immediate awareness and compliance by all concerned.

For any clarification, please contact the Municipal Council Bandipora – Sanitation Wing / Solid Waste Management Cell.

No: MCB/SWM/2026/1691-94

DIPK-NB-1264/26 Date: 31/07/2026

(Chief Executive Officer)
Municipal Council Bandipora



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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CBI Conducts Searches At 10 Locations In Rs 105-Cr Bank 'Fraud' Case

Press Trust Of India

NEW DELHI- The Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) has conducted searches at 10 locations across Telangana and Andhra Pradesh in connection with an alleged bank fraud that caused a loss of Rs 105.44 crore to a public sector bank, officials said on Friday.

The agency said the case was registered by its Bank Securities and Fraud Branch (BSFB) in Bengaluru, based on a complaint from Punjab National Bank (PNB) in Chennai against "NCS Sugars Ltd, its Directors and unknown public servants" for alleged offences of criminal conspiracy, cheating, criminal breach of trust, misappropriation of property and forgery, the CBI spokesperson said in a statement.

According to the CBI, the accused "submitted forged documents to the lending bank by representing them as genuine."

Based on these documents, they allegedly availed credit facilities and later diverted and misappropriated the loan funds for purposes other than the intended business, the statement said.

The agency alleged that the borrowers failed to repay the dues, resulting in the loan accounts becoming irregular and



eventually defaulting, causing a wrongful loss of Rs 105.44 crore to the lending bank.

Searches were carried out at 10 locations in Hyderabad, Vizianagaram and Kakinada, covering "factory, registered office, residential properties linked to the directors of NCS Sugars Ltd," it said.

During the operation, the agency recovered and seized "incriminating documents and digital evidence, including records relevant to the investigation."

The seized material is being examined "to ascertain the full scope of the criminal conspiracy, trace the diversion and movement of funds, and determine the specific roles of all persons involved," the statement said.

India Monitoring US Bill Seeking 100% Tariffs on Russian Oil Purchasers



Press Trust Of India

NEW DELHI- Days after the US Senate cleared a new bill that would authorise President Donald Trump to impose tariffs of up to 100 per cent on India, China and other major buyers of Russian oil and gas, New Delhi on Friday said it was closely monitoring the situation.

The bill will now be taken up by the House of Representatives for deliberation.

"On energy security, our position has been clarified and very well articulated on several occasions. It is something which is predicated on our national priorities and on securing the energy needs of our 1.4 billion people through diversified sources, which includes the US," External affairs ministry spokesperson Randhir Jaiswal said.

He was responding to a question on the US Senate clearing the bill by 86-12 vote.

"We remain engaged with relevant stakeholders in the US at various levels on this particular matter," Jaiswal said.

The Lindsey O Graham Sanctioning Russia and Iran

Act of 2026 would impose primary and secondary sanctions against Russia and actors supporting its war in Ukraine.

The sanctions target Russian officials, oligarchs, their family members, foreign persons and Russian banks and financial institutions, as well as the Russian Shadow Fleet.

The legislation allows the president to impose targeted tariffs on imported goods from countries that buy the vast majority of Russian oil or gas and enable Russian sanctions evasion.

Section 113 of the bill specifically targets the five countries that purchase the largest volumes of Russian fuel or facilitate sanctions evasion through shadow fleets, threatening them with additional 100 per cent tariffs.

Apart from China and India, the other top purchasers of Russian oil are Slovakia, Hungary and Azerbaijan.

The bill calls for the US Trade Representative to reassess the top five purchasers every 180 days, to adjust tariff rates based on changes in purchasing behaviour.

Cabinet Clears PM-KISAN Extension Till FY31 With Rs 3.15 Lakh Cr Outlay

Press Trust Of India

NEW DELHI- The government on Friday extended the PM-KISAN scheme for the next five years till 2030-31 with a total outlay of over Rs 3.15 lakh crore, a decision aimed at providing financial support to farmers.

Under the Pradhan Mantri Kisan Samman Nidhi (PM-KISAN) scheme, launched in February 2019, eligible landholding farmer families get financial assistance of Rs 6,000 per year. The amount is transferred directly into their bank accounts in three equal instalments. Nearly 4.5 lakh crore have been disbursed so far under this scheme.

The Union Cabinet, chaired by Prime Minister Narendra Modi, approved continuation of the PM-KISAN scheme from 2026-27 to 2030-31, I&B Minister Ashwini Vaishnaw told reporters here.

A total financial outlay of Rs 3,15,614 crore has been approved for the Scheme during this period, he added.

"The approval reiterates the government's commitment that the prosperity of farmers forms the foundation of the nation's prosperity," the government said in a statement.

The extension of the scheme will enhance farmers' capacity to invest in agriculture, improve productivity, help reduce agricultural risks and strengthen the rural economy, it added.

Through this scheme, timely



and transparent income support is being provided to eligible farmer families through the Direct Benefit Transfer (DBT) system.

Talking about the successful implementation of this programme, the government said it has so far disbursed more than Rs 4.47 lakh crore directly into farmers' bank accounts through 23 instalments under the scheme.

Under the 23rd instalment, more than 9.49 crore farmers benefited, with over Rs 18,984 crore released.

"Women farmers have received more than Rs 1.06 lakh crore under PM-KISAN, and nearly one out of every four beneficiaries is a woman farmer," the statement said.

The government highlighted that the assistance provided under PM-KISAN has enabled farmers to make timely investments in seeds, fertilisers, irrigation,

agricultural machinery and other agricultural requirements.

"This has enhanced farmers' productive capacity, reduced their dependence on informal credit and strengthened the financial stability of rural households," it added.

Further, the government said that the impact of the PM-KISAN Scheme has been assessed by various independent institutions.

According to the evaluation conducted by the Development Monitoring and Evaluation Office (DMEO) of NITI Aayog, more than 92 per cent of beneficiaries reported that the amount was used for agricultural activities and agricultural investment.

Around 85 per cent of beneficiaries confirmed an improvement in agricultural income and a reduction in dependence on informal credit.

Cabinet Clears Rs 5,070 Cr Scheme To Promote Floating Solar Projects

Press Trust Of India

NEW DELHI- The government on Friday approved a dedicated scheme of Rs 5,070 crore to push development of floating solar projects along with storage set-ups in the country, aiming for a new capacity of around 5,000 MW.

Under the Pradhan Mantri Surya Sarovar Yojana (PM-SSY), approved by the Union Cabinet chaired by Prime Minister Narendra Modi, Central Financial Assistance (CFA) of Rs 1 crore per MW will be provided for eligible floating solar photovoltaic projects after successful commissioning, an official statement said.

In addition, CFA of Rs 50 lakh will be given for undertaking feasibility studies, including bathymetry and hydrography assessments, environmental studies, and other preparatory activities.

The PM-SSY aims to develop 5,000 megawatts of floating solar photovoltaic projects with co-located energy storage systems having a minimum capacity of two hours, i.e., 10,000 MWh, the statement said.

The projects will be sanctioned during FY 2026-27 to FY 2030-31, with disbursement of financial support continuing up to FY 2032-33.

All states and union territories



(UTs) will benefit through this scheme. The scheme would enhance the floating solar PV capacity in the country by 5,000 MW, which is presently around 700 MW only. These projects would provide an opportunity to gainfully utilise existing reservoirs & industrial ponds, and eliminate competition for scarce land resources.

The integration of an energy storage system will help strengthen grid reliability. The scheme would help reduce around 10 million tonnes of CO2 emissions annually. It would help generate approximately 16,000-17,000 full-time equivalent employment opportunities across the project value chain.

In a social media post, Minister for New and Renewable Energy (MNRE) Pralhad Joshi said that the Union Cabinet has approved the Pradhan Mantri Surya Sarovar

Yojana (PM-SSY), ushering in a new era of clean energy by harnessing the untapped potential of India's reservoirs and water bodies.

"With a target of 5,000 MW of Floating Solar PV capacity, 10,000 MWh of Energy Storage Systems and an expected investment of Rs 28,500 crore, the scheme will strengthen India's energy security, accelerate the clean energy transition and power the journey towards a self-reliant, sustainable #ViksitBharat," he said.

He said the scheme has the potential to unlock 102 GW of floating solar capacity.

The statement said that the scheme would also promote domestic manufacturing of floatation systems as well as the entire value chain of the projects, like PV cells, modules, energy storage systems, etc., and support the vision of Aatmanirbhar Bharat.

Bank Credit To Industry Records Robust Growth Of 19.2% In June: RBI Data

Press Trust Of India

MUMBAI- Bank credit to industry recorded a robust growth of 19.2 per cent in June compared to 6.3 per cent in the year-ago period as large companies as well as MSMEs displayed broad-based expansion, according to RBI data released on Friday.

On a year-on-year basis, non-food bank credit grew by 18.3 per cent as on the fortnight ended June 30, 2026, compared to 9.3 per cent during the corresponding fortnight of the previous year (June 27, 2025), the central bank said.

It has released data on sectoral deployment of bank credit for June 2026, collected from 41 select scheduled commercial banks which together account for about 95 per cent of the total non-food credit.

Advances to agriculture and allied activities registered a year-on-year growth of 16.8 per cent compared to 6.8 per cent in the corresponding fortnight of the previous year.

"Credit to industry recorded a robust y-o-y growth of 19.2 per cent (6.3 per cent in the corresponding fortnight of last year)," RBI said.

All sub-sectors -- 'Micro and Small', 'Medium' and 'Large industries' displayed a broad-based expansion.



Among major industries, credit to infrastructure, all engineering, food processing, textiles, construction, basic metal and metal products, petroleum, 'coal products and nuclear fuels' and 'chemical and chemical products' marked buoyant year-on-year (y-o-y) growth.

However, 'rubber, plastic and their products' and 'wood and wood products' segments witnessed marginally subdued growth.

According to the data, loans to the services sector registered a growth rate of 21.4 per cent y-o-y (8.8 per cent in the corresponding fortnight of the previous year), supported by accelerated growth in segments such as non-banking financial companies (NBFCs), commercial real estate, and trade.

Also, credit to the personal loans segment recorded a growth of 15.8 per cent, as compared with 11.7 per cent a year ago.

RBI Seeks Fake Currency Detection Machines At Border Branches

Press Trust Of India

MUMBAI- The Reserve Bank on Friday directed banks to ensure that their branches in the districts with international borders are equipped with note authentication/sorting machines, as it found that efforts of some of the lenders were not adequate for the detection of counterfeit currency.

The central bank, through a master direction issued in April, prescribed comprehensive instructions to the banks on detection, reporting, and monitoring of counterfeit notes.

The banks are mandated to train all their employees handling cash about the security features of genuine banknotes to enable them for detecting counterfeit notes.

Further, all banknotes received by the bank shall be examined for authenticity through machines, counterfeit notes should be impounded in all cases, and in no case the counterfeit note shall be returned to the tenderer or destroyed at the bank.

All detected Fake Indian Currency Notes (FICNs) has also to be reported, as per prescribed guidelines.

"However, an analysis by the Reserve Bank suggests that efforts of some of the banks in the matter were not adequate," the central bank said in a circular, which asked the

banks to review their processes so as to further strengthen their capacity and preparedness to identify, impound and report FICNs effectively.

The banks have also been advised to undertake certain specific measures.

In addition to the existing instructions, "the banks shall ensure that the branches in the districts with international borders are equipped with note authentication/sorting machines", the circular said.

As per the instructions issued in April, all bank branches/ identified back offices should be equipped with ultra-violet lamps/ note sorting/ authentication machines to facilitate the detection of counterfeit notes.

The RBI has also asked banks to adopt a focused and target-based approach for conducting awareness and/ or refresher programmes for cash handling staff on the security features of genuine banknotes and detection of FICNs.

"It shall be ensured that all the cash handling staff of the bank are imparted training positively by October 31, 2026," the circular said.

The lenders have also been asked that their Forged Note Vigilance (FNV) cells should analyse the FICN data of their bank to identify hotspots (if any), monitor trends and focus their outreach and capacity-building efforts accordingly.

Gold Rises Rs 300 In Delhi On Retail Buying; Silver Flat

Press Trust Of India

NEW DELHI- Gold prices rose by Rs 300 to Rs 1,48,300 per 10 grams in the national capital on Friday due to buying from retailers and jewellers, local traders said.

The yellow metal of 99.9 per cent purity had closed at Rs 1,48,000 per 10 grams in the preceding session.

Silver remained flat at Rs 2,24,700 per kilogram (inclusive of all taxes).

Traders said continuous purchases by retailers and jewellers supported domestic gold prices despite weak global prices, while silver traded in a narrow range.

In the international markets, spot gold slipped USD 48.28, or 1.18 per cent, to USD 4,055.56 per ounce and silver dropped nearly 2 per cent to USD 57.98 an ounce.

"Spot gold is easing back from Thursday's highs, slipping below USD 4,060 per ounce as the dollar claws back ground, while silver has cooled too, hovering near USD 58," said Kaynat Chainwala, AVP Commodity Research, Kotak Securities.

According to analysts, the rebound in the crude oil prices, also curbed investors' appetite for precious metals in the overseas markets.

Brent oil futures rose nearly 1 per cent to USD 89.69 per barrel, and West Texas Intermediate advanced to USD 84.16 a barrel in New York, reviving inflation concerns and limiting bullion's upside.

"Investors are awaiting the University of Michigan consumer sentiment and inflation expectation numbers, along with the second-quarter Employment Cost Index, for fresh cues on the US economic outlook.

India's Forex Reserves Climb To USD 682.35 Bn

Press Trust Of India

MUMBAI-India's forex reserves jumped USD 6.118 billion to USD 682.354 billion during the week ended July 24, the Reserve Bank said on Friday.

In the previous reporting week, the overall reserves had increased USD 1.08 billion to USD 676.237 billion.

The kitty had expanded to an all-time high of USD 728.494 billion during the week ended February 27 this year before the onset of the Middle East conflict which led to several weeks of a drop as the rupee came under pressure and the RBI had to intervene in the forex market through dollar sales.

Prime Minister Narendra Modi has also made multiple public appeals starting May 11 to countrymen to conserve forex by cutting down on foreign travel, limiting fuel use and refraining from gold buys for a year.

For the week ended July 24, foreign currency assets, a major component of the reserves, increased USD 4.873 billion to USD 555.929 billion, the central bank's data showed. Expressed in dollar terms, the foreign currency assets include effects of appreciation or depreciation of non-US units, such as the euro, pound, and yen, held in foreign exchange reserves.

The central bank and the government had launched a series of measures to attract more forex flows into the country last month, including the FCNR(B) measure. The country has so far received USD 32 billion under the schemes, as per reports.

Value of gold reserves increased USD 1.308 billion to USD 103.058 billion during the week, the RBI said.

Markets Rise For Third Day; Bajaj Finance Gains Over 8%

Press Trust Of India

MUMBAI- Stock market benchmark indices Sensex and Nifty rose for the third consecutive day on Friday to close at a more than three-week high, tracking a sharp rally in Bajaj Finance and foreign fund inflows.

The 30-share BSE Sensex climbed 166.49 points, or 0.21 per cent, to settle at over three-week high of 78,094.64 with 16 of its constituents closing higher and 14 with losses. During the day, it jumped 344.1 points, or 0.44 per cent, to 78,272.25.

The 50-share NSE Nifty gained 66.45 points, or 0.27 per cent, to end at a three-week high of 24,383.60.

From the Sensex pack, Bajaj Finance jumped 8.11 per cent after the firm on Thursday reported a 28 per cent year-on-year rise in consolidated profit after tax (PAT) to Rs 6,081 crore for the June quarter of FY27, driven by growth in core income and improvement in asset quality.

Bajaj Finserv, Mahindra & Mahindra, Adani Ports, Tata Steel, Reliance Industries, Bharat Electronics and Titan were also among the winners. Tata Consultancy Services, Eternal, Infosys, ITC and InterGlobe Aviation were among the major laggards.

Foreign Institutional Investors (FIIs) bought equities worth Rs 3,623.51 crore on Thursday, according to exchange data.

"Positive momentum continued, although some profit booking emerged at higher levels as caution persisted amid elevated yields and potential rate-hike concerns. The sustainability of the recovery will depend largely on the ongoing earnings season, which is currently outperforming forecasts, and on a reduction in global risks," Vinod Nair, Head of Research, Geojit Investments Limited, said.

The domestic IT index witnessed profit booking following its recent rally, he added.

Fiscal Deficit Touches 18.2% Of Full-Year Target In Q1: CGA Data

Press Trust Of India

NEW DELHI- The central government's fiscal deficit stood at 18.2 per cent of the full-year target at the end of June, according to data released by the Controller General of Accounts (CGA) on Friday.

The deficit was at 17.9 per cent of Budget Estimates (BE) of 2025-26 in the first three months of the previous financial year.

In absolute terms, the fiscal deficit, or gap between the government's expenditure and revenue, was Rs 3,07,833 crore in the April-June period of the 2026-27 fiscal year.

The Centre has set a fiscal deficit target of 4.3 per cent of the GDP or Rs 16.96 lakh crore in the current fiscal.

According to the CGA, the Centre's net tax revenue was Rs 6.36 lakh crore, or 22.2 per cent of the corresponding BE 2026-27 of total receipts, up to June 2026. In the corresponding period of the previous fiscal year, the net tax revenue was at 19 per cent of that year's BE.

The data on monthly accounts showed that the total expenditure during the first quarter was at Rs 13.57 lakh crore, or 25.4 per cent of BE. In the year-ago period, it was at 24.1 per cent of BE.

'EMBRACED FREEDOM'

SC Agrees to Dissolve Omar, Payal Abdullah's Marriage

Observer News Service

New Delhi: The Supreme Court on Friday agreed to dissolve the marriage of Jammu and Kashmir Chief Minister Omar Abdullah and his estranged wife, Payal Abdullah, after taking note of their joint request seeking divorce by mutual consent under Article 142 of the Constitution.

A bench of Justices P.S. Narasimha and Alok Aradhe said it would pass a formal order after recording the settlement reached between the parties.

Senior advocate Kapil Sibal, appearing for Omar Abdullah, informed the court that both sides had filed an application under Article 142 seeking dissolution of the marriage after settling all pending disputes.

"Both of them have embraced freedom. It's all settled. Article 142 has been filed. Your Lordships may grant divorce," Sibal submitted.

The bench said the application would form part



of its order and the matter would be disposed of accordingly.

When the court asked when the application had been filed, it was informed that it had been moved on July 22.

Sibal told the bench that all other pending proceedings between the parties would be withdrawn in terms of the settlement.

The apex court was hearing Omar Abdullah's appeal challenging a December 2023 Delhi High Court judgment that had refused to grant him a divorce on the grounds of cruelty.

The High Court had upheld a 2016 family court order dismissing his divorce petition, holding that he had failed to

establish allegations of cruelty or desertion against his wife.

In his petition before the family court, Omar Abdullah had claimed that the marriage had irretrievably broken down. He said the couple, who married on September 1, 1994, had not shared a conjugal relationship since 2007 and had been living separately since 2009. He had also alleged that he was subjected to unreasonable conduct by his wife, causing him mental pain and harassment.

In July 2024, the Supreme Court had issued notice to Payal Abdullah on Omar Abdullah's appeal against the High Court verdict.

Separately, in August 2023, the Delhi High Court had enhanced the interim maintenance payable by Omar Abdullah to his estranged wife to Rs 1.5 lakh per month. He was also directed to pay Rs 60,000 per month towards the education of each of their two sons. The order came on appeals filed by Payal Abdullah and the couple's sons against lower court

UN Rights Office Raises Concern Over Protest Crackdown in PoJK

Observer News Service

Geneva: The United Nations Human Rights Office has expressed concern over restrictions on peaceful assembly and the reported criminalisation of a civil society organisation in Pakistan-occupied Jammu and Kashmir (PoJK) amid escalating protests and allegations of a violent crackdown by Pakistani security forces.

In a statement, Jeremy Laurence, spokesperson for the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights, said the criminalisation of a civil society organisation and the imposition of strict restrictions on public gatherings in PoJK raise "serious concerns" about violations of the rights to freedom of expression, peaceful assembly and association.

The statement comes amid reports of intensified demonstrations across PoJK, with social media accounts linked to the Jammu Kashmir Joint Awami Action Committee (JAAC) alleging that Pakistani security forces used live

ammunition and excessive force against protesters.

According to reports cited by protest groups, between 40 and 75 people have been killed during the unrest. However, these casualty figures could not be independently verified.

Protesters have also alleged that authorities imposed curfew-like restrictions in several areas and disrupted internet and telecommunication services to curb the demonstrations.

The JAAC has appealed to the United Nations, international human rights organisations and democratic governments to intervene, alleging the use of live ammunition and excessive force against peaceful demonstrators by Pakistani security forces.

The UN Human Rights Office did not verify the reported casualty figures but called attention to the restrictions imposed on civil liberties, urging respect for internationally recognised rights to peaceful assembly, free expression and association.

Officials said heavy rainfall in the Baltal area on Thursday night triggered a minor flash flood at one location. No casualties or damage to property were reported.

"No pilgrim was allowed to proceed towards the holy cave shrine from the Baltal route owing to adverse weather conditions and repair work on the track," officials said, adding that restoration work was underway.

The pilgrimage had already been suspended from the Pahalgam route to facilitate essential repairs.

The annual pilgrimage commenced on July 3, and around 4.5 lakh devotees have so far offered prayers at the cave shrine housing the naturally formed ice lingam. The yatra is scheduled to conclude on August 28, coinciding with Raksha Bandhan.

J&K's Transformation

and restoring the dignity that had long been overshadowed by instability," he said.

Emphasising evolving security challenges, the Lieutenant Governor said the armed forces must remain prepared to deal with asymmetric warfare, where data analysis and algorithmic precision have become as crucial as conventional military operations.

"Our forces must be ready to tackle the challenges of asymmetric warfare. The strategic value of data analysis and algorithmic precision is as important as conventional kinetic operations today," he said.

Highlighting the government's counter-terrorism strategy, Sinha said a "whole-of-government approach" had been adopted to dismantle terror networks operating in Jammu and Kashmir.

He said strong action had been taken "with surgical firmness" against the terror ecosystem and those who sought to keep terrorism alive in the region.

"The systematic infiltration of terrorist sympathizers into government machinery over the past 30 years was decisively dismantled, delivering an unambiguous message of zero tolerance to terror. Public money will no longer sustain those quietly subverting the nation from within," he said.

Sinha also reiterated that governance could not be managed from a distance and stressed the need for administrators to remain connected with people on the ground.

"I have consistently emphasized that governance cannot be managed from a distance. Effective administration must reach out to every household in the most remote village and serve the most marginalized citizen with unwavering dedication and responsibility," he said.

Lieutenant General Ajay Chandpuria, Commandant of the Army War College, faculty members, and senior officers of the security forces were present during the interaction.

'Modern Challenges

capable of integrating knowledge across disciplines.

Addressing students, faculty and university officials, Sinha described the "Design Your Degree" programme as a transformative step towards student-centric and multidisciplinary education, enabling students to combine subjects according to their interests and career aspirations.

"The frontiers of knowledge are continuously expanding. Problems are multidimensional, and their solutions are possible only through multidisciplinary approaches. I believe that the 21st century will welcome those young people who are not specialists in just one subject but possess the ability to integrate knowledge from multiple fields and discover new solutions," he said.

"The future belongs to those who recognise possibilities, not boundaries. This initiative empowers students to shape their own academic journeys, combining subjects according to their interests, talents and aspirations," the Lieutenant Governor added.

He also inaugurated integrated programmes in Physics, Chemistry, Botany, Zoology, Mathematics and Geography, saying science thrives on interconnectedness and students must be equipped with a broader perspective to address complex global challenges such as climate change.

FDA Cracks Down on Unsafe Ghee, Mislabelled Meat

Over ₹15 lakh worth of stocks seized; sale of four ghee brands banned

KO Web Desk

Srinagar: The Food and Drugs Administration (FDA), Jammu and Kashmir, has launched enforcement action after four ghee brands were declared unsafe by the National Food Laboratory, Ghaziabad, seizing stocks worth over 15 lakh and prohibiting the sale of the affected batches.

The action follows laboratory reports that found samples of Dairy Mohan, Apna Dairy Milk, Sahi Taj and Milk Bite ghee unsafe for consumption.

Based on the findings, the Designated Officer, Food Safety, Anantnag, seized 1,250 litres of ghee belonging to the affected batch numbers, valued at around 4.88 lakh, and issued a prohibition order under the Food Safety and Standards Act, 2006. The sale and distribution of the affected batches have also been prohibited.

Food Safety teams in the Jammu division subsequently collected three additional samples of the same brands for

testing at NABL-accredited laboratories. Pending the laboratory reports, officials seized another 1,277 litres of ghee, valued at approximately 4.97 lakh.

In a separate enforcement drive, the Food Safety team in Srinagar inspected seven establishments dealing in meat and meat products.

During the inspection, officials seized 2,600 kg of frozen meat, valued at nearly 5.98 lakh, from an establishment at Bubghair, Kawadara, after finding discrepancies between the contents of the packages and the declarations on their labels.

The FDA said the frozen meat was also stored under unhygienic conditions, violating provisions of the Food Safety and Standards Act and related regulations. A complaint has been filed before the Additional Deputy Commissioner, Srinagar, who is the adjudicating officer under the Act, seeking action under Section 61 for furnishing false or misleading information and Section 56 for storing food under unhygienic conditions.

CONTD. FROM FRONT PAGE

Non-Local Labourer

Medical College (GMC), Anantnag, for specialised treatment.

Security forces rushed to the spot and cordoned off the area. A search operation was launched to trace the attackers.

The identity of the deceased and the injured labourer was not immediately known.

The incident comes less than ten days after terrorists shot dead a police officer in Anantnag town, highlighting continuing security concerns in south Kashmir.

Jammu and Kashmir Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha condemned the terror attack in Kulgam in which a labourer from Chhattisgarh was killed and another injured, and directed security forces to intensify operations to track down the attackers.

Sinha said he spoke to Director General of Police Nalin Prabhat and other senior security officials following the attack and instructed security forces to step up operations to eliminate those responsible.

"Police and security forces have cordoned off the area and launched an operation to track down the perpetrators," the Lieutenant Governor said.

He said the injured labourer, also from Chhattisgarh, had been shifted to a hospital for urgent medical treatment.

Expressing condolences to the family of the deceased, Sinha said the Jammu and Kashmir administration and the entire nation stood with the bereaved family.

He also prayed for the speedy recovery of the injured labourer.

Political parties also condemned the attack. PDP chief Mehbooba Mufti described the attack as "unimaginably cruel".

"Unequivocally condemn the killing of two labourers from Chhattisgarh in Kulgam today. They work themselves to the bone far away from home only to feed their families. Unimaginably cruel to target them in such senseless acts of violence," Mehbooba said on X.

Apni Party president Altaf Bukhari said the attack was tragic and inhuman.

"Shocked and grieved by the horrific attack that claimed the life of a non-local labourer and critically injured another in the Kilam area of Kulgam this evening. This is a deeply tragic and inhuman act of violence and terrorism. Such tragic incidents shake us all," Bukhari said on X.

He said those behind this heinous crime must be beasts to have attacked two innocent people who were here only to earn a livelihood for their families back home.

"I share in the grief of the families of the victims and pray that they find the strength to endure this unimaginable loss. I am sure the security agencies will soon nab the perpetrators so that they are brought to justice," Bukhari added.

The People's Conference said the party is deeply anguished by the tragic killing.

"The senseless targeting of innocent civilians is utterly reprehensible and stands in complete violation of the values of humanity, peace and compassion. We extend our heartfelt condolences to the bereaved family and stand with them in this hour of profound grief.

"We also pray for the swift and complete recovery of the injured worker," the party said.

NDPS Court Sends

(NDPS) Imran Hussain Wani sentenced Ubaid Amin Bhat, a resident of Kanelwan, after holding him guilty under Section 8 read with Section 22(c) of the NDPS Act, 1985 in FIR No. 81/2023. The court, however, acquitted him of charges under Sections 3/181 and 207 of the Motor Vehicles Act, 1988.

According to the prosecution, a police naka was laid at Hospital Crossing, Srigufwara, in 2023 when a motorcycle bearing registration number JK03H-8664, travelling from Srigufwara towards Keller, was signalled to stop. Instead of complying, the rider allegedly attempted to flee but was swiftly apprehended by the Station House Officer (SHO) and other police personnel.

During the search, police recovered an apple carton placed on the motorcycle containing 11 bottles of Codeine Phosphate-based cough

syrup—six bottles of ONEREX-C (100 ml) and five bottles of ODYCUF (100 ml). The accused, as per prosecution, failed to produce any licence, prescription or lawful authority for possessing or transporting the medicines.

The prosecution alleged that the accused had procured the Codeine-based cough syrup through illegal means and was transporting it for unlawful trade with the intention of earning illegal profits and facilitating drug abuse.

While recording the conviction, the court observed that the prosecution had proved the recovery through reliable oral, documentary and scientific evidence. It held that the seizure and sealing of the contraband were carried out strictly in accordance with law in the presence of an Executive Magistrate and that the chain of custody remained intact throughout the investigation.

The court also relied on the Forensic Science Laboratory (FSL) report, which confirmed that the seized samples contained Codeine Phosphate, a manufactured drug regulated under the NDPS Act. The testimonies of the prosecution witnesses were found to be consistent, trustworthy and corroborative, leaving no reasonable doubt regarding the guilt of the accused.

During the sentencing hearing, the prosecution sought the maximum punishment, arguing that offences involving commercial quantities of narcotic drugs pose a serious threat to society. The defence, however, pleaded for leniency, citing the convict's young age, absence of previous criminal antecedents, and family responsibilities.

After considering the submissions, the Special Court observed that although the offence involved a commercial quantity, the prosecution had not established any of the aggravating circumstances contemplated under Section 32B of the NDPS Act, such as the use of violence, involvement of minors or participation in organised criminal activity. The court also noted that the quantity recovered was only marginally above the prescribed commercial threshold and that the convict had no previous criminal record.

Taking these mitigating circumstances into account, the court awarded the statutory minimum sentence of 10 years' rigorous imprisonment along with a fine of Rs 1 lakh. It further directed that in default of payment of the fine, the convict shall undergo six months' simple imprisonment. The court also ordered that the period already spent in judicial custody during investigation and trial shall be set off against the sentence in accordance with law.

India Seeks Global

themselves against the state," he added. Jaiswal said the "so-called" elections stand as a "humiliating rejection" of the Pakistani establishment.

"Facing a violent regime, the people have requested international organisations for an independent investigation into the unlawful killings," he said.

"We urge that the international community should scrutinise Pakistan's actions and hold it accountable for its atrocities," he added.

Mirwaiz Voices

in Rawalakot.

"Today, as we gather in prayer, our thoughts and prayers are with our brothers and sisters on the other side of the LoC. We are deeply anguished by the continuing unrest and the tragic loss of precious lives during the past month and a half," he said.

The Mirwaiz said reports indicate that dozens of people have been killed, while some accounts place the cumulative toll even higher.

"The truth must be established through a prompt, impartial and transparent investigation. We mourn every life lost -- whether that of a civilian protester or a member of the police force -- and pray for the speedy recovery of all those injured," he added.

The recent events across the LoC, particularly in Rawalakot, remind that governments may administer territories and advance competing political positions, but it is the people of J-K who remain the true stakeholders of their homeland, he said.

"The governments administering the two

sides of the LoC each claim to act in the interests of the people of Jammu and Kashmir, yet the people themselves must remain at the centre of every decision affecting their future. We are one people, bound together by history, family, culture and our common state subject identity," he said.

The Mirwaiz appealed to the government of Pakistan and the local government across the LoC in J-K to engage sincerely with the representatives of the Joint Awami Action Committee (JAAC) and with all sections of the people.

"Durable peace and stability can only be achieved through dialogue, constitutional fairness and respect for the rights and dignity of every segment of society," he said.

Flash Floods Hit

water into the Government Primary School at Ganie Mohalla, Malpora. Classroom mats were damaged and classes were suspended for the day.

In neighbouring Baramulla district, flash floods affected the Brennara area of Sopore town. However, officials said there was no loss of life or damage to property. The situation was under close watch.

Most parts of the Valley received overnight rainfall, with Budgam, Baramulla and Bandipora recording significant precipitation.

According to the Meteorological Centre, Srinagar received 24.6 mm of rainfall during the past 24 hours, while Jammu recorded 27.1 mm. Gulmarg received 9.6 mm, Pahalgam 6.4 mm, Kathua 6.8 mm, Katra 7.8 mm, Kupwara 2.2 mm, while Qazigund recorded no rainfall.

Despite the rain, Srinagar recorded a maximum temperature of 31.4 degrees Celsius, 1.3 degrees above normal, while Jammu recorded a maximum of 33.9 degrees Celsius, 0.8 degree above normal.

The Met office has forecast scattered light rain and thundershowers at isolated places on August 1, with the possibility of isolated intense showers.

From August 2 to 4, many places across Jammu and Kashmir are likely to receive light to moderate rain and thundershowers, particularly during the afternoon, evening and early morning hours. A few districts in the Jammu division may witness heavy rainfall accompanied by brief intense showers or torrential downpours.

The department has also forecast scattered light to moderate rain and thundershowers at several places from August 5 to 7.

The weather office warned that heavy rain and intense showers over parts of the Jammu division on July 31, August 2 and August 3 could trigger flash floods, landslides, mudslides and shooting stones at vulnerable locations, advising people and authorities to remain vigilant.

NH-44 Shut For

while the annual Amarnath Yatra was suspended from the Baltal route due to bad weather and track repair work.

Officials said the 250-km highway, the only all-weather road linking Kashmir with the rest of the country, was closed after a batch of around 1,600 Amarnath pilgrims left the Jammu base camp for the holy cave shrine in the early hours.

According to a traffic advisory, the movement of all vehicles was suspended between Jakheni in Udhampur and the Navayug Tunnel in Banihal to allow the National Highways Authority of India (NHAI) to undertake widening of the carriageway and remove loose overhanging debris at vulnerable locations.

The works include widening the hillside carriageway at Ladha and Samroli and clearing unstable debris near Gangroo and Kishitwari Pather along the Udhampur-Banihal stretch. Authorities said no vehicle would be allowed to proceed beyond Nagrota towards Srinagar, Doda, Kishitwar, Ramban and Patnitop, or beyond Qazigund towards Ramban, Udhampur and Jammu during the closure. However, commuters travelling to Katra, Reasi and Udhampur were advised to carry valid photo identity cards to facilitate movement.

Meanwhile, the Amarnath Yatra was suspended from the Baltal route due to inclement weather and ongoing repair work on the track.

Cabinet Clears ₹29,000 Cr Khelo India Plan

Press Trust of India

NEW DELHI: Calling it the most "ambitious" sports development programme since Independence, the union cabinet on Friday approved an expanded Khelo India Scheme and enhanced the budget for Assistance to the National Sports Federations (ANSFs) with a combined outlay of Rs 36,441 crore covering the next five years.

The government has allocated Rs 29,054 crore for the next five years to the Khelo India Scheme that aims to build a pool of talented athletes at the grassroots level as India bids to become a global sporting hub by hosting the 2030 Commonwealth Games and bidding for the 2036 Olym-

pics.

The assistance to NSFs has been pegged at Rs 7387 crore over the next five years. The existing budgetary allocation for the Assistance to National Sports Federations (NSFs) for the year 2026-27 stood at Rs 425 crore.

"The approved outlay is nearly eight times that of the previous Khelo India Scheme, reflecting the Government's commitment to making sports a cornerstone of youth development, nation-building and India's emergence as a global sporting powerhouse," read a statement from the government.

To strengthen the school sports ecosystem, the Government has introduced two new initiatives -- Khelo India Feeder Schools (KIFS)



and Khelo India Utkrishta Vidyalayas (KIUV) -- which will "integrate sports with mainstream education and enable early identification and systematic nurturing of talented children."

The Assistance to National Sports Federations (ANSF) Scheme for the period 2026-31 will support Indian athletes and teams through funding for coaching, sports science, modern equipment, international exposure, coaching camps, engagement of foreign experts and participation in major international competitions.

"It will also support sports co-operation with countries of the Global South and promote India's indigenous sports internationally," the government stated.

"Special emphasis has been placed on expanding opportunities for women athletes, para-athletes, indigenous sports, and sports as a tool for peace, inclusion and community development."

"The scheme also provides support for organising the National Games and hosting major international sporting events in India," the statement read.

The scheme also envisages a unified digital sports platform on which athlete databases, infrastructure, competitions, coaching resources, talent assessments, funding and Fit India participation would be integrated.

The platform will enable data-driven planning, "transparent governance and personalised athlete development."

FIFA Executive Blasts Infantino Sell-Off Plan

AP

GENEVA: FIFA's chief operating officer said its staff were deceived by their president Gianni Infantino's World Cup sell-off plan, and suggested on Friday the project must not go ahead.

Zurich-based executive Kevin Lamour all but invited Infantino to fire him in a statement to The Associated Press that defended his colleagues amid intense fallout from the FIFA boss' plan to sell stakes in future World Cup profits to private equity funds.

Lamour wrote that staff were "deceived" by Infantino's lack of openness in planning the sale over recent months and "deserve better than contempt and intimidation."

"It is the project of one person," Lamour, a long-time colleague of Infantino at both FIFA and European soccer body UEFA, wrote. "Not only must this project not go ahead ... but the time has now come for football political leaders to ask themselves the right questions and make the right decisions."

Lamour's statement came hours after Infantino's senior adviser Carlos Cordeiro, a former Goldman Sachs banker who represented the soccer body on the White House Task Force for the World Cup, resigned and urged other senior FIFA staff to speak out.

"I cannot stand by while FIFA

considers selling a stake in the World Cup," Cordeiro wrote in a statement. The former U.S. Soccer Federation president said he was not included in talks about the plan backed by a New York investment fund created by Joshua Kushner.

"Let me be clear. I had no in-



volvement in this proposal, and I oppose it unequivocally," Cordeiro said. He called the \$20 billion commercial subsidiary "a bad deal for football."

Lamour did not resign the post he has held since 2024 but said he had a duty to his colleagues.

"And if that means I lose my job then so be it" the French official said. "I will understand and respect

that decision. At least I'll sleep well tonight."

Lamour came to soccer from politics two decades ago as an aide to then-UEFA president Michel Platini. He often had an international role in soccer politics liaising with FIFA member federations in

value of this asset and the consequences of giving part of it away," he said. "That is why this proposal should be rejected."

Infantino has proposed spinning off FIFA's commercial businesses -- including World Cups and Club World Cups for men and women -- into a \$20 billion subsidiary with 20% owned by private investors. The "anchor investor," described by FIFA, is Kushner, the younger brother of Trump's son-in-law Jared Kushner.

"FIFA already has access to extraordinary financial resources. The organization sits on billions of dollars in reserves and no debt," Cordeiro said. He noted FIFA's revenue of \$15 billion over the last four years tied to the men's World Cup just ended.

"Against that backdrop, selling a permanent stake in football's most valuable asset to raise \$4.2 billion makes little sense. It is mortgaging football's future without any compelling justification," he said.

Cordeiro said he shared five years of working for FIFA alongside Infantino with "dedicated, principled people who care deeply about the game."

"I hope they, too, will speak up," he wrote, "because decisions of this magnitude should be made in the interests of football, not those who stand to profit from it."

Chelsea Fined \$13M Over Agent Breaches



AP

LONDON: Chelsea was fined 10 million pounds (\$13.4 million) and given a suspended two-window transfer ban on Friday after appealing penalties for breaching English Football Association agent rules.

The club was initially given a suspended six-point deduction along with the fine but the points penalty has been replaced by the suspended

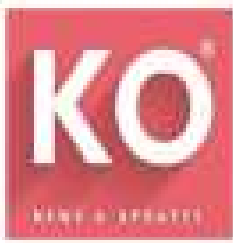
transfer ban.

The FA confirmed the sanctions on the west London club, which admitted to 74 breaches in total of FA regulations covering agents, working with intermediaries and third party investment in players.

The club owners self-reported the breaches to the soccer authorities in 2022, when they were in the process of buying Chelsea from Russian billionaire Roman Abramovich.

The six-point deduction, suspended until June 30, 2027, was imposed by the independent commission which initially heard the case. But the club appealed against that. An appeal board instead replaced the points penalty with the suspended two-window transfer ban.

Chelsea previously entered sanction settlements in regard to this matter with the Premier League and UEFA.



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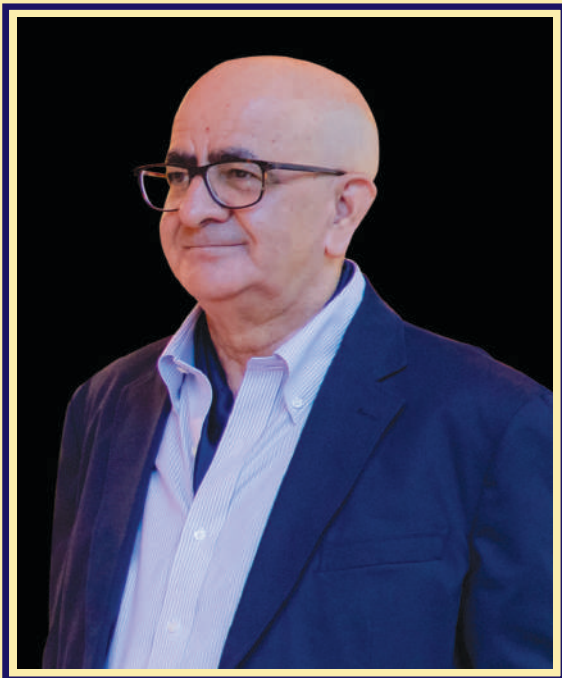
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THE OTHER SIDE

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UNRAVEL KASHMIR



Mohamed Ashraf Mir
(1st August 1949 - 17th July 2025)

Your spirit lives on in every heart you touched with kindness and compassion.
Your memory remains one of life's greatest blessings, a source of comfort and enduring love.
Your legacy of goodness is remembered with profound gratitude,
Just as your memory is cherished with love.



A. Rashid Mir

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Mujeeb Mir
(1st August 1970 - 1st February 2005)

For this Warrior of Light, the future became the present,
As every cherished dream was finally given a voice.
Whatever holds enduring significance shall remain;
Everything else shall quietly vanish into eternity.



A. Rashid Mir

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