29th year OF PUBLICATION

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7th Art 370 Abrogation Anniversary

Multi-Layered Security In Place Across J&K

Observer News Service

Srinagar:Security has been stepped up across Jammu and Kashmir ahead of the seventh anniversary of the abrogation of Article 370 on August 5, with authorities putting in place a multi-layered security grid amid planned political protests and heightened vigilance across the Union Territory.

Police, the Army, the Border Security Force (BSF) and the Central Armed Police Forces (CAPFs) have intensified surveillance, vehicle checking, frisking and area domination patrols from the International Border and the Line of Control to the Jammu-Srinagar National Highway and major towns, officials said.

Security has been reinforced at strategic locations, including highways, district headquarters, tourist camps, public places and other sensitive installations. Additional checkpoints have also been established along the Jammu-Srinagar National Highway (NH-44), where security personnel are conducting intensified vehicle searches while ensuring smooth movement of traffic.

Along the International Border and the Line of Control, the BSF and the Army have heightened operational alertness, while police and paramilitary forces have increased patrolling in both urban and rural areas. | More on P6

30% Gone: Kashmir's Glaciers Sound Climate Alarm

At a Himalayan climate conference in Awantipora, researchers laid out the numbers behind a crisis already revamping the region's water future.

Sameer Hussain

Srinagar- The glaciers feeding the Upper Indus Basin have shrunk by more than 30 percent over the past six decades, and the retreat is speeding up, scientists told a conference at the Islamic University of Science and Technology on Tuesday.

The figure came from the varsity's vice chancellor, Prof. Shakil Ahmad Romshoo, who addressed the second day of a four-day international conference on nature-based solutions for climate resilience in the Himalayas.

Standing before an audience of researchers and policymakers, he described a cryosphere in retreat and a hydrological system on the edge of transformation.

"We have lost over 30 percent of the glacier mass during the last six decades, but even more glacier mass is predicted to disappear by the end of the 21st century," Romshoo said.

His presentation traced how rising temperatures have altered snowfall patterns, glacier volume, and river flow throughout Kashmir and Jammu, and what those changes could mean for millions who depend on Himalayan meltwater for drinking supplies, irrigation, and hydropower.

The projections extended decades forward, sketching a future in which the region's water security depends increasingly on how quickly adaptation strategies take hold.

That theme carried into the conference's keynote address, | More on P6

India Rejects Local Body Polls In PoK

Press Trust Of India

New Delhi: India on Tuesday described the so-called local body elections in Pakistan-occupied Kashmir (PoK) a "complete farce," asserting that such "hollow" exercises cannot hide the ground reality in the region.

The Ministry of External Affairs (MEA) strongly criticised Pakistan's crackdown on protesters in PoK and said the international community should see through the "flimsy veneer" of Islamabad's "hypocritical lecturing" on human rights.

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

"This so-called local election in PoK is a complete farce. The real happening is that of public protests and wanton killings by Pakistani forces. Such hollow exercises cannot hide reality," MEA spokesperson | More on P6

J&K Achieves Full Literacy Under ULLAS Scheme: LG Sinha

Becomes the 10th State/UT to attain the milestone and the largest by population under the programme

Observer News Service

Srinagar: Jammu and Kashmir has been declared a fully literate Union Territory under the Government of India's ULLAS (Understanding Lifelong Learning for All in Society) scheme, becoming the 10th State/Union Territory in the country to achieve the milestone and the largest by population to do so.

Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha congratulated teachers, administrators and all stakeholders on the achievement, describing it as a significant milestone in the Union Territory's educational journey.

In a post on X, Lieutenant Governor said Jammu and Kashmir had joined the league of fully literate States and Union Territories under the Centre's ULLAS scheme.

"With 99.09% success, it stands tall as the largest population region to achieve this milestone. Congratulations to our teachers, administrators and every stakeholder who made this possible. Let us always remember that education is the truest force of empowerment and our collective responsibility is to keep advancing this mission," Sinha said.

According to official figures, 1,80,317 non-literate individuals were identified under the ULLAS programme, of whom 1,78,680 successfully qualified, | More on P6

J&K Saw 2,182 Child Kidnapping Cases In 5 Yrs

Agencies

Srinagar: Jammu and Kashmir recorded 2,182 cases of kidnapping and abduction of children during 2020–2024, involving 2,254 child victims, of whom 2,143 were recovered alive, according to data furnished by the Ministry of Home Affairs in the Lok Sabha on Tuesday.

As per the data, J&K registered 293 cases in 2020, 478 in 2021, 513 in 2022, 486 in 2023, and 412 in 2024. The number of child victims stood at 302, 493, 534, 502, and 423 respectively, while 286, 426, 542, 481, and 408 child victims were recovered alive during the corresponding years.

In Ladakh, 12 cases of kidnapping and abduction of children were registered during the five-year period. The UT reported no cases in 2020 and 2021, followed by five cases in 2022, four in 2023, and three in 2024. The number of child victims stood at five in 2022, five in 2023, and three in 2024, while three victims were recovered alive in each of the three years.

The data further shows that Jammu and Kashmir reported 32 child trafficking victims under human trafficking during 2020–2024—two each in 2020 and 2021, followed by ten each in 2022 and 2023 and eight in 2024. The same number of victims were shown as rescued in each corresponding year. Ladakh reported zero child trafficking victims and zero rescues throughout the five-year period.

The Ministry said that 'Police' and 'Public Order' are State subjects under the Seventh Schedule of | More on P6

Court Denies Mother's Custody Plea, Allows Weekly Meetings

KO Correspondent

Srinagar: A Budgam court has refused to hand over the custody of a minor boy to his mother, holding that the child was residing with his paternal grandparents and was not under any illegal confinement as claimed by her. The court, however, permitted the mother to meet her son every Saturday pending adjudication of the custody dispute before the competent Guardians and Wards Court.

The court of Chief Judicial Magistrate (CJM), Abdul Bari, passed the order in a petition filed under Section 100 of the Bharatiya Nagarik Suraksha Sanhita (BNSS) by mother, seeking issuance of search warrants for the recovery of her minor son from the custody of the grandparents.

The court noted that it had earlier directed the SHO of the concerned police station to recover the child and produce him before the court. However, when the matter was subsequently taken up, the parties themselves produced the child before the court. | More on P6

Kashmir Rail Link Hallmark of Railways' New Era: LG

LG Sinha on Tuesday described the completion of rail connectivity from Kashmir to Kanyakumari as one of the defining achievements of Indian Railways' transformation, saying it reflects a new era of infrastructure development, national integration and economic progress. Addressing 69 officer trainees of the Indian Railways | More on P6

HC Refuses To Quash Cheque Bounce Case

Says Defence Must Be Tested At Trial

KO Correspondent

Jammu: The High Court of J&K and Ladakh on Tuesday dismissed a petition seeking quashing of criminal proceedings in a cheque dishonour case, holding that disputed questions such as loss of a cheque, prior stop-payment instructions, and the absence of a legally enforceable debt are matters of defence that can only be adjudicated during trial.

A Bench of Justice Wasim Sadiq Nargal, while dismissing the petition filed by one S Gupta, upheld the order of the Sub Judge (Special Mobile Magistrate), Rajouri, issuing process in a complaint under Sections 138 and 142 of the Negotiable Instruments Act. The Court observed that the complaint disclosed a prima facie case and found | More on P6

SC Orders Measures To Curb Digital Arrest Scams

Press Trust Of India

New Delhi: Observing that mechanisms to tackle cyber crimes needed "wider adoption, faster implementation and continued follow-up", the Supreme Court on Tuesday asked the Reserve Bank of India to prepare and circulate a standard operating procedure (SOP) in four weeks to deal with bank accounts linked to cyber frauds, including mule accounts.

Issuing a slew of nationwide directions aimed at strengthening the response to cyber-enabled financial frauds, a bench of Chief Justice Surya Kant and Justices Joymalya Bagchi and V Mohana directed all states, Union Territories (UTs) and law enforcement agencies to ensure the expeditious adoption and operationalisation of the grievance redressal and money restoration modules developed for victims of such frauds.

The bench was hearing a suo motu matter, "In Re: Victims of Digital Arrest Related to Forged Documents".

After perusing the consolidated status reports and hearing Attorney General R Venkataramani on behalf of the government, the bench said, "While the progress reported at this stage is appreciable, the mechanisms already put in place require wider adoption, faster implementation, and continued follow-up."

The bench issued interim directions and said, "The Reserve Bank of India shall, within four weeks, prepare and circulate an SOP for dealing with mule accounts/ accounts linked to money laundering activity and cyber-enabled fraud. | More on P6

Photo : Abid Bhat

Kashmir Must Reclaim Its Place on India's Golf Map: CM

Observer News Service

Srinagar: Chief Minister Omar Abdullah on Tuesday unveiled an ambitious plan to revive Jammu and Kashmir as one of India's premier golf destinations, announcing that the government will work towards making the Professional Golf Tour of India (PGTI) event an annual fixture, establish a golf academy and strengthen sports infrastructure to promote high-value tourism.

Speaking after inaugurating the four-day J&K Open 2026 DP World Professional | More on P6

Cabinet Clears 40-Year PPP For Gulmarg Hotel

Observer News Service

Srinagar: The Jammu and Kashmir Cabinet on Tuesday approved a 40-year public-private partnership (PPP) model for the operation and maintenance of the long-pending Hotel Ashok project in Gulmarg, besides clearing the establishment of an IT/Innovation Park in collaboration with IIT Jammu and promoting 28 Jammu and Kashmir Administrative Service (JKAS) officers.

According to sources, the Cabinet approved outsourcing the operation and maintenance of Hotel Ashok through the PPP model for a concession period of 40 years, including a five-year construction phase, in a move aimed at reviving the long-stalled tourism project.

The Hotel Ashok project dates back to 1984, when the erstwhile Jammu and Kashmir government leased 64 kanals of land to the India Tourism Development | More on P6

Mold-Associated Illnesses May Be More Common Than Thought: Study

Associated press

A first-of-its-kind U.S. study suggests invasive mold infections may be an underappreciated — and potentially deadly — threat. The researchers detected about 450 cases in Atlanta-area hospitals over five years. About a third of the patients died in the hospital. The findings, published this week by the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, come from an attempt to better gauge how common these kinds of illnesses are. The government does not require doctors to report the illnesses. "It's kind of the first time we've had an estimate like this," said the CDC's Dr. Jeremy Gold, the study's senior author.

And it's important to understand it now, because the problem may grow in the future, he added.

Mold exposure is a recurring problem in the wake of hurricanes, floods and other natural disasters influenced by climate change, researchers have found.

"I agree that the frequency of fungal infections will likely increase with climate change," said Dr. Jeffrey Jenks, an infectious disease researcher at Duke University.

Meanwhile, there's a growing population of older people who are more susceptible to such illnesses, Gold said.

Invasive mold diseases are rare infections caused by certain species. Most people who get infected inhale mold spores, but they can also enter the body through cuts or wounds or from contaminated medical equipment.

The spores don't cause health problems for most people, but they can be life-threatening to some, including the elderly, cancer patients and others with weakened immune systems.

Previously, CDC researchers estimated more than 15,000 hospitalizations a year could be tied to invasive mold disease.

To better understand how common cases might be at a local level, the research team worked with four Atlanta-area hospitals and their affiliated outpatient clinics to look for potential cases from 2020 to 2024.

They initially identified nearly 1,000 potential cases, but winnowed the number down to about 450 by ruling out people who may have had signs of exposure but didn't qualify as having invasive mold disease.

The researchers found that hospitals can expect to see 3 to 5 cases per year for every 100 inpatient beds. The rates were higher at larger academic hospitals that tend to see more complicated illnesses.

Most patients had impaired immune systems or — in a number of cases — were weakened after falling sick from COVID-19.

Mold exposures can occur in hospitals or other healthcare facilities, but the study did not try to determine where each patient was first exposed, Gold said.

It's hard to generalize what was seen in the Atlanta area to other parts of the country where mold may be more or less of a problem, he said. But it should give hospital administrators at least a rough idea about whether the number of cases they see is what might be expected or whether it's an outbreak, Gold added.

NORTHERN RAILWAY

E-Tender Notice

Sr.DEE/G/FZR acting for and on behalf of The President of India invites E-Tenders (**www.ireps.gov.in**) against below titled Tenders. Bidders will be able to submit their original/revised bids up to closing date and time only.

Tender No. : 251-Elect-T-04-2026-27
Name of work : Electrical works in c/w execution of 9 Nos. Lifts at PGW (03 Nos.) FZR (03 Nos.), HSX (01 No.), KKP (02 Nos.) railway stations under Firozpur division; and Electrical works in c/w execution of 12 Nos. Escalators at PGW (04 Nos.), FZR (04 Nos.), PHR (04 Nos.), railway station under Firozpur division under Amrit Bharat Stations Scheme (ABSS)
App. Cost (in Rs.) : Rs. 1,58,83,576.34/-
Earnest Money (in Rs.) : Rs. 3,17,700/-
Completion Period : 06 Months
Opening of tender : 25.08.2026 after 15:00 hrs.
Website Particulars : www.ireps.gov.in

No.: 251-Elect/T.Notice No.04-Elect/2026-27 Dated: 03.08.2026 **2681/2026**

SERVING CUSTOMERS WITH A SMILE

PUBLIC NOTICE

PUBLIC NOTICE

I, Fayaz Ahmad, R/o District Baramulla, J&K, hereby inform the general public that the name of my ward has been wrongly recorded in his Aadhaar Card as "HUZAIB FAYAZ."

The correct particulars are:

- Ward's Name: HUZAIF FAYAZ
- Father's Name: FAYAZ AHMAD

I have applied to the concerned authority for correction of the Aadhaar records.

If any person has any objection to the above correction, he/she may submit the same before the concerned authority within 07 days from the date of publication of this notice. No objection shall be entertained thereafter.

Sd/-
Fayaz Ahmad
Applicant/Deponent
R/o District Baramulla, J&K 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 Munazim Ul Islam s/o Ab Hamid Ganie R/o Wagub Tehsil khoie Panzipora District Baramulla. The date of birth as per medical certificate is 001/06/2020 . In this connection if any body having objection for issuance of said certificate he may contact to this office within 04 days after that no objection shall be entertained.

Sd
Naib Tehsildar Pattan FKO

Office of the Naib Tehsildar Pattan..

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

Public Notice...

The registrar birth BDO pattan has submitted a case file pertaining to birth of Inayat Rashid Mir s/o Abdul Rashid Mir R/o Kalseri Nehalpora Tehsil Pattan District Baramulla. The date of birth as per school record is 17/10/2023 . In this connection if any body having objection for issuance of said certificate he may contact to this office within 04 days after that no objection shall be entertained.

Sd
Naib Tehsildar Pattan FKO

Office of the Naib Tehsildar Pattan..

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

Public Notice...

The registrar birth BDO Singapore has submitted a case file pertaining to birth of Mehmooda Akhter D.o.B 05/02/1997 and Sakeena Akhter D.o.B 05/03/1998 Daughters of Mohammad Jafar Dar R/o Triklbal Hanjiwera Tehsil Pattan District Baramulla.In this connection if any body having objection for issuance of said certificate he may contact to this office within 04 days after that no objection shall be entertained.

Sd
Naib Tehsildar Pattan FKO

PUBLIC NOTICE

I, Sajad Ahmad Lone, S/o Mohammad Jamil Lone, R/o Kawarhama, Tehsil Kawarhama, District Baramulla, J&K, hereby inform the general public that my original B.P.Ed. Degree Certificate and Marks Card issued by Sant Gadge Baba Amravati University were lost while travelling from Kawarhama to Dhobiwan on 03/08/2026.

Despite my best efforts, the documents could not be traced. A report regarding the loss has been lodged with the concerned Police Station, and I have applied to the University for issuance of duplicate Degree Certificate and Marks Card.

If any person has any objection or has found the said documents, he/she may inform the undersigned or the concerned authority within 07 days from the date of publication of this notice. No claim shall be entertained thereafter.

Sd/-
Sajad Ahmad Lone
S/o Mohammad Jamil Lone fko
R/o Kawarhama, Tehsil Kawarhama, District Baramulla, J&K

Office of the Naib Tehsildar Pattan..

Sub.. Application on behalf of Mushtaq Ahmad para s/o Mohammad Abdullah para 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 Abli para s/o Habib Para R/o pattan died on 11/04/2025 and left fallowing legal heirs.

Legal Heirs Details

Name	Age	Relationship with the Deceased	Marital Status
MUSHTAQ AHMAD PARA	58	SON	MARRIED
RIYAZ AHMAD PARRA	47	SON	MARRIED
AISHA BEGUM	53	DAUGHTER	MARRIED
RAJA BEGUM	75	DAUGHTER	MARRIED
BASHIR AHMAD PARA	55	SON	MARRIED

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

Sd
Naib Tehsildar Pattan FKO

Government of Jammu and Kashmir

OFFICE OF THE CHIEF EDUCATION OFFICER ANANTNAG

ceo.anantnag@jk.gov.in Fax/Tel:01932223525.

NOTIFICATION

All the Drawing and Disbursing Officers (DDOs) falling under the jurisdiction of this office are hereby informed to submit the cases if any pertaining to those CPWs/LFPWs whose names do not figure in Annexure "A" to this Notification and whose School Leaving (Discharge) Certificates could not be verified due to the destruction of records in the fire incident and flash floods of 2014.

Now, a final opportunity is being given to such cases and accordingly, the concerned DDOs are requested to furnish complete case records along with all supporting documents necessarily in light of the communication issued by the Directorate of School Education, Kashmir vide No. DSEK-NTS/415/2024/959-69 Dated 15.05.2025 (copy enclosed) for establishing the veracity of the claims of such CPWs/LFPWs, so as to enable this office to process their cases in accordance with the prescribed procedure/guidelines.

The requisite cases if any should reach this office by or before 08.08.2026, thereafter no case/claim shall be entertained after the stipulated date.

Sd/=
Chief Education Officer
Anantnag

No:-CEO/A/NT/12090-93/26
DIPK-4080/26
Dated:- 04/08/2026

PUBLIC NOTICE

The Mother's Name and Residence of my daughter in school records has been wrongly written as Mumtaza Begum R/o Hardaboora while his correct mother's name is Mumtaza Akhter R/o Hardu Aboora. 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 Al Noor Model School Dhobiwan within seven days.

Feroz Ahamd Bhat
F/o Areeba Feroz fko
R/o Hardu Aboora

PUBLIC NOTICE

I, Nasreena Akhtar, W/o Hilal Ahmad Lone, R/o Mamoosa, Tehsil Pattan, District Baramulla, J&K, hereby inform the general public that my name has been wrongly recorded in my Aadhaar Card (Aadhaar No. 9616 1975 4371) as "NUSREENA BANO."

My correct name, as per my School Records, is "NASREENA AKHTAR." I have applied to the concerned authority for correction of my name in the Aadhaar records.

If any person has any objection to the above correction, he/she may submit the same before the concerned authority within 07 days from the date of publication of this notice. No objection shall be entertained thereafter.

Sd/-
Nasreena Akhtar
W/o Hilal Ahmad Lone
R/o Mamoosa, Tehsil Pattan, District Baramulla, J&K fko

Government of Jammu and Kashmir

OFFICE OF THE ASSISTANT DIRECTOR (EXECUTIVE MAGISTRATE)

Food, Civil Supplies and Consumer Affairs Department Pulwama

PUBLIC NOTICE

Invitation of Sealed Bids for Sale of Seized Kerosene Stock (In Compliance with CNR No. JKPL030025772026 passed by Chief Judicial Magistrate Pulwama in case of FIR No: 13/2026 U.S 3/7 E.C Act)

Pursuant to the directions passed by Chief Judicial Magistrate Pulwama Under CNR No: JKPL030025772026 arising from FIR No: 13/2026 U.S 3/7 E.C Act of the Police Station Rajpora, Pulwama, sealed bids are invited for the sale of 4390 Liters of seized kerosene stock in 27 Barrels from all licensed kerosene dealers of District Pulwama and neighboring areas.

Terms and Conditions:

1. **Base Reserve Price:** **Rs 60.00 per Litre.**
2. **Issuing authority:** Assistant Director, FCS&CA, Pulwama.
3. **Mode of Bidding:** Sealed written bids, clearly mentioning the Offered rate per litre.
4. **Bidding period:** 15 Days from the date of publication of notice.
5. **Place of Submission:** Office of the Assistant Director, FCS&CA, Pulwama during office hours.
6. **Selection criteria:** Highest eligible bidder quoting above the base Price.
7. **Contingent Acceptance Clause:** In the event that no higher bid is Received within the stipulated 15- day bidding Period, the kerosene will be auctioned on base Reserve price.
8. **Deposit and payment conditions:** Upon finalization, the successful bidder shall deposit a security and provisional advance of **Rs 5268 (2%)** with the **Assistant Director FCS&CA Pulwama** .The Balance amount shall be calculated at the rate of highest bid amount multiplied by the total verified stock, after deducting the quantity (if any) already distributed. A bond shall be executed to ensure payment of the remaining amount immediately upon final quantification.

For further queries, interested Kerosene Licensce Holders may contact the undersigned during working hours at the Office of the Assistant Director, FCS&CA Pulwama.

No.FCSCA/Pul/Adm/26/
Dated-04-08-2026
DIPK-4081/26 dated: 04-08-2026

Assistant Director
Food, Civil Supplies & C.A Deptt.
Pulwama

PUBLIC NOTICE

I, Danish Bashir, S/o Bashir Ahmad Sheikh, R/o Poshhama, Tehsil & District Shopian, J&K (UT), do hereby inform the general public that my correct Date of Birth is 10-05-2008, as recorded in my school records.

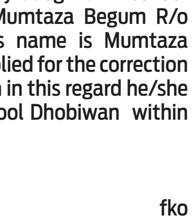
Due to certain domestic reasons, my Date of Birth could not be correctly recorded/updated in some other official documents. I hereby declare that the Date of Birth 10-05-2008 is true and correct and shall be treated as my correct Date of Birth for all official purposes.

If any person has any objection regarding this declaration, they may submit the same to the concerned authority within 7 days from the date of publication of this notice. Failing which, no objection shall be entertained thereafter.

Danish Bashir
S/o Bashir Ahmad
Sheikh
R/o Poshhama, Tehsil & District Shopian, J&K (UT)
bmg

PUBLIC NOTICE

I, Asif Sheeraz Shah, S/o Sub Sheeraz Ahmed Shah (Army No. JC-812719Y), permanent resident of Katroo, P/O Kalgai, District Kulgam, J&K (UT), presently posted at No. 1 Det NCSR, C/o 56 APO, hereby inform the general public that I have changed my name from "Asif Sheeraz Shah" to "Asif Sheeraz."



Both the names Asif Sheeraz Shah and Asif Sheeraz refer to one and the same person. Henceforth, I shall be known and identified as Asif Sheeraz for all official and personal purposes.

If any person has any objection to the above name change, he/she may submit the same before the concerned authority within 07 days from the date of publication of this notice. No objection shall be entertained thereafter.

Sd/-
Asif Sheeraz
(Formerly: Asif Sheeraz Shah)
R/o Katroo, P/O Kalgai, District Kulgam, J&K (UT) fko

PUBLIC NOTICE

I, Zahoor Ahmad Mahajan, S/o Mohd Yousf Mahajan, working in SKIMS hereby give notice that my name has been incorrectly recorded in my Service Record as:

Zahoor Ahmad Mahajan S/o Mohd Yousuf Mahajan

The correct name is: Zahoor Ahmad Mahajan S/o Mohd Yousf Mahajan.

I request that the above correction be made in all concerned official records. Any person having any objection to this correction may submit his or her in Administrative Office (Personal) of SKIMS within 7 (seven) days from the date of publication of this notice. If no objection is received within the stipulated period, the correction shall be deemed accepted and processed accordingly.

Zahoor Ahmad Mahajan
S/o Mohd Yousf Mahajan

Media line advt

PUBLIC NOTICE

it is informed to general public that I am applying for Name Parentage and Adress change of my Service Record Book 10 JKAP IR ACP Mattan as Shaneena Akhter D/o Mohd Maqbool Sheikh R/o Kaich Koot to Name Shaheena Akhtar W/o Mohd Sultan Bhat R/o Hariparigam if any body has any objection in this regard he/she may contact office of the concerned Department within seven days after seven days no objection will be entertained

Shaheena Akhtar
W/o Mohd Sultan Bhat
R/o Hariparigam Tehsil/police station Awantipora District Pulwama
x

PUBLIC NOTICE

I, Sajad Ahmad Paray, S/o Ghulam Mohd Paray, R/o Chowan, Keller, District Shopian, J&K (UT), do hereby notify the general public that the name and parentage of my son have been incorrectly recorded in the records of Rainbow International Educational Institute, Shopian and in his Aadhaar Card bearing No. 7049 8485 6210.

The incorrect particulars are:
Old Name & Parentage: Hiban Ahmad Parray S/o Sajad Ahmad Parray
The correct particulars are:
New Name & Parentage: Hibbaan Sajad S/o Sajad Ahmad Paray

I hereby declare that both the above names refer to one and the same person and request that the necessary corrections be made in all concerned records accordingly.

If any person has any objection to this change of name and parentage, the same may be conveyed to the concerned authority within 7 days from the date of publication of this notice. Thereafter, no objection shall be entertained.

Sajad Ahmad Paray
S/o Ghulam Mohd Paray
R/o Chowan, Keller, District Shopian, J&K (UT) bmg

PUBLIC NOTICE

I, Naseer Ahmad Sheikh, S/o Abdul Majid Sheikh, working in SKIMS hereby give notice that my name has been incorrectly recorded in my Service Record as:

Naseer Ahmad Shiekh S/o Abdul Majeed Sheikh

The correct name is: Naseer Ahmad Sheikh S/o Abdul Majid Sheikh

I request that the above correction be made in all concerned official records. Any person having any objection to this correction may submit his or her in Administrative Office (Personal) of SKIMS within 7 (seven) days from the date of publication of this notice. If no objection is received within the stipulated period, the correction shall be deemed accepted and processed accordingly.

Naseer Ahmad Sheikh
S/o Abdul Majid Sheikh

Media line advt

PUBLIC NOTICE

My daughter's name has been wrongly mentioned as AASHIA in her Adhaar card bearing Adhaar No 3876 7684 1052 While her correct name is AISHA as per Date of Birth certificate which needs to be corrected if anybody having any objection in this regard he /she may file his/her objection in the office of concerned Adhaar authority of India within seven days from the publication of this notice after that no objection will be entertained

Name...GHULAM NABI SHEIKH
F/O ...AISHA
R/O ...HAIL JAGIR
Tehsil...KREERI
DISTT ...BARAMULLA
fko

Public Notice

I have passed/appeared in Secondary School Examination (Class- 10th, 11th)under Roll No:. 121026099 /221009028 Session: Annn/ Reg/ NR / Oct -Nov Year 2025 / 2025 respectively through the Jammu and Kashmir Board of School Education. The error has been committed against my father's & mother's name as Ghulam Rasool Dar , M/N Rukhsana Rasool instead of GH Rasool Dar , M/N Rukhsana Bano

Now, I have applied for correction/rectification of error in the Jammu and Kashmir Board of School Education Sub Office Magam , if any person has any objection in this regard, may file the same in the office of the Assistant Secretary, Sub Office Magam within seven days from the date of Publication of this notice, after the expiry of said period no objection will be entertained.

Name: Saahiba Rasool
Father's name: GH Rasool Dar
Mother's Name: Rukhsana Bano
DOB: 11-09-2008
Residence: Pinjoora
Mobile no: 7006824526

bmg

PUBLIC NOTICE

The name of my ward has been wrongly written in his adhaar card as Taamil Imtiyaz C/o Imtiyaz Ahamd Tali while his correct name is Arham Imtiyaz C/o Imtiyaz Ahmad Teli. 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 Adhaar Centre Jammu/Srinagar within Seven days. After that no objection shall be entertained..

Imtiyaz Ahmad Teli F/o Arham Imtiyaz
R/o Hariutnu TehsiL Tangmarg fko

Khyber Cement Sets the Agenda for J&K's Built Future with Inaugural Conclave 2026

Observer News Service

Srinagar: Khyber Cement hosted the maiden Khyber Cement Architectural Conclave (KCAC) 2026 at Ramada Encore, Raj Bagh, bringing together some of Jammu and Kashmir's foremost architects, urban planners, conservationists, engineers and former policymakers for an evening of dialogue on the future of the region's built environment.

More than a corporate event, the Conclave was conceived as a knowledge platform to address the opportunities and challenges shaping construction in Jammu and Kashmir. The discussions moved beyond products and technology to focus on a set of simple questions: How can the region build infrastructure that is structurally safe, environmentally responsible and rooted in its unique architectural identity? Is vertical the way out for the city of Kashmir, which is expanding in all directions? How to address tradition, culture, climatic realities, seismic tensions while building for future?

A highlight of the evening was a panel discussion on "Sustainability and Responsible Construction", featuring architect and urban design academic Umar Farooq, architectural historian and conservation architect Dr Sameer Hamdani, and heritage conservationist M. Saleem Beg. Moderated by journalist Masood Hussain, the discussion examined issues ranging from structural resilience and climate-responsive design to urban planning, heritage conservation and the importance of preserving Jammu & Kashmir's architectural character amid rapid urbanisation.

Umar Tramboo, Director Corporate & Strategy, Khyber Cement, said the Conclave reflected the company's long-term commitment to the people and future of Jammu and Kashmir.

"Our vision is clear. We want to contribute not only to stronger buildings but also to a stronger future for Jammu and Kashmir. That means bringing together the people who shape our built environment, encouraging meaningful dialogue, and supporting ideas that balance safety, sustainability and identity. We see this Conclave as an investment in the future of our region," he said.

The Conclave also reinforced Khyber Cement's growing role as a thought leader in the region's construction sector. By creating a common platform for architects, engineers, planners, developers and policy-makers, the company aims to encourage better building practices, promote structural safety and inspire a more informed conversation about the changing urban landscape.

"The conclave is an attempt to create a space for all the stakeholders to talk on the most prized possession everybody is so keen to have," Hussain said while winding up the discussion. "The conclave will scale up for the next edition, and it must have participation from all stakeholders in Jammu & Kashmir's building architecture."

Wasim Ahmed Khan, Chief of Sales & Customer Relations, Khyber Cement, said the purpose of the initiative was to foster honest conversations around the challenges confronting the construction industry.

"Every day, architects, engineers and planners make difficult choices between speed and safety, between cost and quality, between short-term solutions and long-term sustainability. Through this Conclave, Khyber Cement wants to create a platform where those conversations can take place openly and constructively. This is not a one-time event; it is the beginning of an annual forum that will continue to evolve with the needs of the industry," he said.

KU's MMTTC Begins Refresher Course in Gender Studies

Observer News Service

Srinagar: The Malaviya Mission Teacher Training Centre (MMTTC), University of Kashmir (KU), commenced a two-week refresher course in Gender Studies at the Main Campus.

The course aims to strengthen the understanding of gender-related concepts and contemporary debates among teachers in higher education. It will cover themes related to gender, society, institutions, inclusion, representation and emerging issues in gender studies, with a focus on connecting academic perspectives with contemporary social realities.

Speaking at the inaugural session, Vice-Chancellor Prof. Nilofer Khan, said that gender studies has an important place in higher education as it encourages critical engagement with social structures and questions of equality and inclusion.

"Gender studies enables us to examine how social institutions, cultural practices and everyday experiences shape opportunities and identities. Higher education has a responsibility to encourage informed and critical discussion on these issues," she said.

Director, MMTTC KU, Prof. Nazir Ahmad Nazir, in his welcome address, provided the objectives of the refresher course and said that such programmes provide teachers an opportunity to engage with new scholarship, perspectives and approaches in their respective fields. He also highlighted the role of MMTTC in supporting continuous academic and professional development of faculty.

Dr. Humaira Showkat, Course Coordinator, briefed the participants about the course structure and academic schedule. She said the programme has been designed to facilitate discussion on key areas of gender studies through expert lectures, interactive sessions and academic engagement.

The two-week course is being attended by faculty members and participants from higher educational institutions across the country.

The proceedings of the inaugural session were conducted by Dr. Mohammad Ibrahim Wani, Coordinator, MMTTC KU, while the vote of thanks was proposed by Prof. Sumeer Gul, Deputy Director, MMTTC KU.

Security Mock Drill Conducted at Srinagar Railway Station

Agencies

Srinagar: A joint mock drill involving multiple security agencies was conducted at Srinagar Railway Station on Tuesday to assess preparedness and strengthen the response mechanism against potential security threats.

The exercise was carried out under the supervision of SDPO Railway Srinagar, Showket Ahmad, and witnessed the participation of personnel from the Government Railway Police (GRP), Railway Protection Force (RPF), Police Station Nowgam and the Central Reserve Police Force (CRPF).

During the drill, the deployed personnel were briefed on security preparedness, emergency response protocols and their respective duties and responsibilities in the event of any potential security threat.

As part of the exercise, personnel deployed at guard points, railway platforms and other vital installations carried out physical drills, while the Quick Response Team (QRT) also underwent operational briefing and field exercises to assess its readiness.

Officials said the mock drill formed part of routine security preparedness measures aimed at strengthening the overall security framework at Srinagar Railway Station.

The exercise concluded peacefully without any disruption to railway operations. [KNT]

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

HIGHWAY STATUS

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

HIJRI CALENDAR

21 Safar
1448

PRAYERS

FAJR	4:10
ZUHR	12:37
ASR	5:30
Magrib	7:32
ISHA	9:03

This Day In History

- 1772- 1st Partition of Poland between Austria, Prussia and Russia is made public
- 1781- Battle of Dogger Bank (Fourth Anglo-Dutch War): a British strategic victory, although both sides claimed to have won
- 1812- War of 1812: Tecumseh's Native American force of 25 ambush Thomas Van Horne's 200 US militiamen at Brownstown Creek, in Michigan Territory; US forces retreat haphazardly with 18 killed, 12 wounded, and 70 abandoning the battle
- 1861- President Lincoln signs the first US personal income tax into law (3% of incomes over $800)
- 1862- Battle of Baton Rouge, Louisiana, Union forces prevent Confederate attempts to capture the city
- 1864- Battle of Mobile Bay won by the Union Navy, led by Rear Admiral David Farragut with the cry "Damn the torpedoes, full speed ahead!"
- 1864 Spectrum of a comet observed for the first time by Giovanni Donati
- 1874- Japan launches its postal savings system, modeled after a similar system in England
- 1890- British and French accord to divide African colonization
- 1891 World's first traveler's cheques issued by American Express
- 1900- In Russia, anti-Jewish riots spread from Odessa into other parts of the country

Kashmir Power Distribution Corporation Ltd.
Office of the Executive Engineer, ED-2nd, Rajbagh, Srinagar
Near Silk Factory Rajbagh Srinagar
email: xened-2@jk.gov.in

e-NIT No: ED-II/11 of 2026-27 Dated :03.08.2026

Notice Inviting e-Tender

For and on behalf of the Managing Director, Kashmir Power Distribution Corporation Limited (KPDCL), e-bids are invited from reputed Contractors having Valid A-Class Electrical Contractor License or equivalent license issued by Chief Electrical Inspector of J&KPDD/Relevant issuing authority/ registered Firms/Bidders enlisted with CPWD/ MES/Railways for the following work

1	Name of the Work	Relocation by way of construction of Bed with cabling near Bismillah General store Gousia Pvt Colony Baghi Mehtab. (Capex 2026-27 PDDSS2627100285)
2.	Estimated Cost	Rs 2.87 Lacs
3.	Authorization of Work	Under Capex 2026-27

The tender document is available on website http://jktenders.gov.in. Interested bidders may view or download the e-Bid document, seek clarification and submit their e-Bid online up to date as per the details mentioned in the table below :

A	Date & Time of Downloading of Standard Bidding Document	The Standard Bidding Document can be downloaded over http://jktenders.gov.in from 06-08-2026; 10:00 AM
B	Clarifications Start Date	06/08/26, 11:00 AM
C	Clarifications End Date	06/08/26, 04:30 PM
D	e-Bid Submission (Start) Date & Time (Submission of e- tender fee, EMD and other supporting documents in PDF/XLS format)	06/08/26, 5.30 PM
E	e-Bid Submission (End) Date & Time (Submission of e- tender fee, EMD and other supporting documents in PDF/XLS format)	24/08/26, 02:30 PM
F	Online e-Bid Opening Date & Time	25/08/26, 02.30 PM
G	Venue of Opening of Technical & Financial e-Bids	Office of the Executive Engineer, KPDCL, ED-2nd, Rajbagh, Srinagar
H	Cost of e-Bid Document (e-challan/TR)	Rs.200/- (Rupees Two hundered Only) (Non-Refundable)
I	Amount of EMD/Performance Security Deposit	EMD for Rs5740/- (Rupees Five Thousand Seven Hundred and Forty Only) to be furnished and uploaded by all bidders for tender participation and Performance Security Deposit for an amount equal to 5% of the value of contract (to be furnished by L1 only)

1. 1. The bidders need to submit the proof/Cost of e-Bid document as stated in the above table through e-Challan/Treasury Receipt pledged to Executive Engineer, KPDCL, ED-2nd, Rajbagh, Srinagar to be Credited to M.H-0801-Power payable at Srinagar. The scanned copy of the e-Challan/Treasury Receipt must be enclosed along with the e-Bids. Further, No Bidder shall be exempted from depositing Cost of e-Bid document even if agency/bidder is MSME (Works Contract are excluded from the purview of Public Procurement Policy for MSEs Order,2012"

2. All the e-Bids must be accompanied by the scanned copy of EMD in the form of CDR/FDR/Bank Guarantee for tender participation by all bidders, pledged to the Executive Engineer, KPDCL,ED-2nd, Rajbagh, Srinagar. No Interest would be payable on EMD/Performance Security deposited with the Department. No Bidder shall be exempted from depositing of Earnest Money even if agency/bidder is MSME(Works Contract are excluded from the purview of Public Procurement Policy for MSEs Order,2012"

The e-Bids of the bidders not submitting the certified copies of above mentioned documents at S.No. (1) and (2) in scanned form shall liable to be rejected.

3. Hard Copy of original instrument of EMD needs to be submitted only by the lowest tenderer instantly after opening of e-NIT and must be pledged to the Executive Engineer, KPDCL, ED-2nd, Rajbagh, Srinagar. The same must be submitted to this office within 03 days positively for award of contract.
4. The e-Bids will be electronically opened in the presence of bidder's representatives, who choose to attend at the identified venue on indicated date and time mentioned in the above table or any subsequent day to the convenience of the Tender Opening Committee. An authority letter of bidder's representative will be required to be produced.
5. The Department reserves the right to cancel any or all the e-Bids/ the e-Bid process without assigning any reason thereof. The decision of department will be final and binding.
6. In the event of date specified for e-Bids opening being declared a holiday/closed day for department's office then the due date for opening of e-Bids shall be the following working day at the appointed time and place.
7. All the required documents excluding Price Schedule/BOQ should be uploaded by the e-Bidder electronically in the PDF format, whereas Price Schedule/BOQ should be uploaded electronically in the same BOQ sheet provided with the SBD. Also, Signed and Stamped Copy of SBD is required to be uploaded.
8. To participate in e-bidding process, bidders have to get 'Digital Signature Certificate' - (DSC) Class-III (b) as per Information Technology Act-2000, to participate in online bidding.
9. Hard Copy of requisite documents shall be required to be submitted only by the Lowest Tenderer with original Performance Security and e-Challan/Treasury Receipt instantly after opening of e-NIT pledged to Executive Engineer, KPDCL, ED-2nd, Rajbagh, Srinagar.
10. The Name of the Work/Job along with e-NIT reference should be superscripted in Bold letters on the envelope and the Name/Firm of the Lowest Bidder should be clearly written on the cover.

It may be noted that the hard copy should be an exact replica of the uploaded offer documents by the Lowest Tenderer.
Documents uploaded on the website shall be treated as final.

11. Other details can be seen in the bidding documents.

-SD-
Executive Engineer
KPDCL, ED-2nd, Rajbagh

No : ED-II/ 8706-11/TS
DIPK-NB-1298/26 Dated 04/8/2026

Government of Jammu and Kashmir
Public Works (R&B) Department
Civil Secretariat, Jammu/Srinagar

Subject: Acceptance of B.Tech Degree and inclusion of name in the seniority list of Junior Engineers (Civil) degree holders —Notice thereof.

NOTICE INVITING OBJECTIONS

WHEREAS, the Chief Engineer PMGSY Jammu vide his letter No. CEJ/PMGSY/2337-39 dated 07.05.2024 recommended the case of Mr. Maroof Ahmed Junior Engineer (Civil) diploma holder for acceptance of his Degree and inclusion of his name in the relevant seniority list of Degree Holders Junior Engineers(Civil) with the following details:-

Name with designation	Date of appointment	Date of enrollment	Mode of degree	Name of university	Date of passing degree
Maroof Ahmed Junior Engineer (Civil)	07.03.2024	26.11.2020	Regular	Visvesvaraya Technological University, Belagavi Karnatak, India	06.07.2023

AND WHEREAS, the case was examined in the department and the Degree/ marks certificates of above incumbent were forwarded to the Visvesvaraya Technological University, Belagavi, Karnataka and the University vide No. VTU/Exam/GD/2025-26/944 dated 09.10.2025 has verified the Degree/marks certificates as genuine:

AND WHEREAS, the above named Junior Engineer has also produced undertaking in the shape of Affidavit affirming therein that all the documents/information furnished by him are true and correct and nothing has been concealed therein.

NOW THEREFORE, before acceptance of the Degree acquired by the above named Junior Engineer and also inclusion of his name at appropriate place in the seniority list of Degree holders Junior Engineers (Civil), objections are invited from the members of the cadre who are likely to be affected. The objections, if any shall reach the Administrative Department through office of the Chief Engineer, PW (R&B) Department, Chenab Zone or by Post [Addressed to Financial Commissioner (ACS), PW (R&B) Department, Room No. 518, Civil Secretariat Srinagar-190001) or by e-mail to compwd@rediffmail.com or through CRU within a period of 21 days from the date of issuance/ publication of the notice. No claim whatsoever, shall be entertained after expiry of stipulated time period.

DIPK-4105/26
dated: 04-08-2026

(Hamid Hameed)
Under Secretary to the Government

No. PWD-HRM1/51/2024-05 [C.No.7496617]
Dated:-03.08.2026

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KO VIEW

Welcome Home, Champ

Owais Yaqoob came home to flowers, applause and smiling faces. The welcome felt genuine because people were hailing much more than a fighter returning after a big win.

They were celebrating a young Kashmiri who turned discipline into success and earned his place on one of the world's toughest sporting stages.

That homecoming stood out because Kashmir rarely celebrates its sporting heroes with such warmth.

Talented cricketers, footballers, skiers and martial artists have made the region proud for years, though many returned to little public excitement.

This time felt different.

Children lined up for photographs, supporters placed garlands around his neck and families came together simply to say, "Well done."

That scene alone made the victory even bigger.

The achievement speaks for itself. Competing at BRAVE CF 107 in Bulgaria, the Pulwama MMA fighter defeated previously unbeaten Bulgarian Delyan Georgiev by technical knockout.

Winning against a home favourite on foreign soil speaks of preparation, confidence and the ability to perform when the pressure reaches its highest point.

That confidence has grown inside one of the finest training environments in mixed martial arts.

Yaqoob trains with Team Khabib under former UFC champion Khabib Nurmagomedov and works alongside UFC lightweight champion Islam Makhachev.

Places inside camps like these are earned through relentless commitment, and Yaqoob has proved that he belongs there.

Young people in Kashmir have followed that journey through training clips and competition videos. They have watched him push through demanding sessions, sharpen his skills and improve with patience.

Those images leave a stronger impression than speeches because they show success exactly as it is built, one training session after another.

That is why this welcome matters.

Young people often search for someone who comes from the same streets, speaks the same language and understands the same struggles. Owais Yaqoob has become that person.

His success tells a teenager in Srinagar, Pulwama, Baramulla, Kupwara or Anantnag that international sport is not reserved for someone born somewhere else.

It tells parents that sport can become a serious pursuit when talent meets commitment.

Kashmir has always produced determined young people. Many simply needed someone who could turn possibility into proof. Yaqoob has done precisely that.

His success may inspire a child to step into a boxing gym, join a wrestling mat, lace up football boots or take up athletics. That single decision can change the direction of a life.

Communities grow stronger when they celebrate people who earn success through hard work. Applause builds confidence, and confidence inspires ambition. One champion often becomes the reason another child decides to dream a little bigger. Kashmir gave Owais Yaqoob the welcome of a champion. The greatest value of that celebration lies in what comes next.

Another young athlete may now believe that the road from Kashmir can also lead to the world stage, and that belief could become the region's finest victory.

A Smarter Jobs Strategy

Government could make lakhs of lives happier by spending half of what it would take to create reliable and dignified employment avenues through collaboration with MSMEs.

Faisal Kawoosa

I believe Kashmir needs more ground-level surveys to understand the root causes of the challenges it faces.

Such studies can identify problems, measure their scale, and generate evidence that helps policymakers and advocacy groups make informed decisions.

Employment remains one of Kashmir's biggest challenges, much like in many parts of the country. Rapid advances in technology, especially artificial intelligence, have made the job market more competitive.

The Jammu and Kashmir government has responded by encouraging young people to explore entrepreneurship and nano-entrepreneurship through its revamped startup policy and initiatives such as Mission Yuva.

Even with a supportive ecosystem, entrepreneurship appeals to only a section of society.

A 2025 SEBI survey found that fewer than 10 percent of Indian households invest in the securities market, with risk aversion emerging among the key reasons. Studies from different countries also show that 65 to 90 percent of people prefer financial stability over uncertainty. That naturally limits the pool of future entrepreneurs.

Entrepreneurship remains an important driver of economic growth because thriving startups strengthen the local economy and create employment.

A rough estimate suggests startups in Kashmir employ three to five people on average, although many early-stage ventures begin with only one or two founders. Even then, startups directly engage well over a thousand people in the valley.

A successful entrepreneur creates opportunities for many others.

The MSME sector remains the valley's largest employer. Reliable data is limited, but broad estimates suggest MSMEs employ around five lakh people in Kashmir alone.

According to the Ministry of MSME, Jammu and Kashmir has 8.19 lakh Udyam registrations. Assuming a broadly even distribution between the Jammu and Kashmir regions, the valley could account for more than four lakh registered MSMEs.

Those enterprises should generate at least 10 lakh jobs.

But the picture changes because nearly 99 percent of them are micro enterprises, many employing only the owner.

The Union Territory has only 3,220 small enterprises and 215 medium enterprises.

These figures reveal an important trend. The organised sector is expanding in Jammu and Kashmir, but much of that growth comes from micro businesses with limited capacity to generate large-scale employment.

MSMEs employ more people than the government, though government jobs continue to enjoy greater public confidence because they provide stability, predictable income, and clear career progression.

MSMEs in Jammu and Kashmir, especially in the valley, have spent years operating through economic and political uncertainty. That experience has shaped the quality of employment they provide. Many businesses function without structured HR policies, career pathways, performance reviews, or professional development opportunities.

Greater structure can change that. Reliable employment, fair workplace practices, and opportunities for growth would make MSME jobs far more attractive for young people.

The government's role in employment continues to evolve. Administrative reforms and technology have gradually reduced the scope for expanding the public workforce.

This shift also creates an opportunity.

Government can partner with MSMEs to help create reliable workplaces for lakhs of employees. Stronger private-sector jobs can gradually earn the same public confidence enjoyed by government employment.

A broader shift is also taking place in Kashmir, where young people increasingly seek meaningful work alongside a stable income. Earlier generations often viewed government jobs mainly through the lens of financial security and long-term stability.

Gen Z brings a different outlook.

Merit, honest earnings, and professional growth hold greater value for many young people today. That change creates a strong foundation for redefining what makes a good job in Kashmir.

So how can the government co-create these jobs and bring greater reliability and structure to employment in MSMEs, especially micro enterprises?

Labour laws, minimum wage provisions, provident fund benefits, and state life insurance schemes already exist. Their application, however, depends on eligibility criteria, while loopholes often delay or weaken implementation.

These practices remain common and leave many workers without meaningful protection.

The biggest challenge lies with resources. Most MSMEs operate with tight budgets, making additional compliance or employee benefits appear like an added expense rather than a long-term investment.

The government faces its own financial constraints. In the past, governments created jobs partly to expand economic opportunities, even when the work itself remained limited. Those decisions often highlighted welfare priorities.

That approach has become increasingly difficult to sustain now.

Financial pressures have encouraged greater reliance on ad hoc appointments, contractual staff, and daily wagers. Many people spent years in these roles, but recognition, security, and career growth remained out of reach.

MSMEs already generate employment, though many struggle to provide the stability people expect from a long-term career. The government, meanwhile, can strengthen these jobs through well-designed welfare measures at a much lower cost than creating new public-sector positions.

Personal observations suggest that more than 95 percent of MSME jobs pay less than Rs 10,000 a month. Salaries often remain unchanged for years, leaving little room to absorb inflation or build savings. Government support could change that picture.

Imagine an employee earning Rs 6,000 a month. A government contribution of Rs 3,000 each month into a mandatory savings fund would help that worker accumulate nearly Rs 1 lakh within three years.

Those savings could support a child's education, help build a home, or meet other major family expenses.

Over a 30-year career, the same worker would accumulate well over Rs 10 lakh, creating financial security that remains out of reach for many low-income households.

Financial support alone will not solve the problem. Structured HR policies should become part of the package.

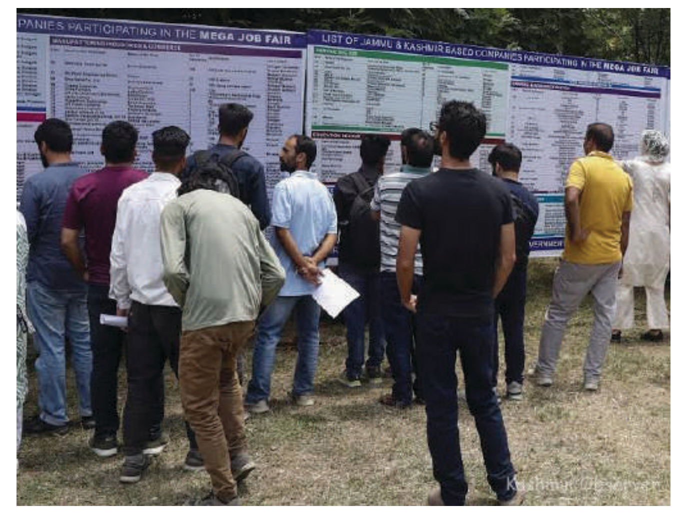
Clear guidelines for annual appraisals, salary revisions, and career progression would encourage professional growth and reduce stagnation.

An annual government contribution of Rs 35,000 to Rs 40,000 per employee could help build reliable and progressive employment through MSMEs.

That amount remains far lower than the cost of creating many temporary public-sector jobs, while producing stronger long-term outcomes for workers and businesses alike.

Implementation depends upon thoughtful regulation. Free-market principles encourage governments to stay outside day-to-day business operations, a view long associated with economists such as Adam Smith and Milton Friedman.

Governments, however, already support businesses through subsidies, interest subventions, and several incentive schemes.



And that support creates an opportunity.

Any MSME receiving direct financial assistance from the government could adopt basic HR standards as part of the programme. Those standards could include performance-linked growth, transparent workplace policies, and mandatory employee savings.

Such measures would strengthen workplace esteem while giving employees greater confidence in their future.

Creating large numbers of government jobs no longer appears financially practical, but building stronger partnerships with MSMEs presents a more sustainable path.

Reliable jobs, opportunities for growth, and rewards linked to performance would strengthen confidence in the private sector.

Kashmir already faces difficult questions surrounding the regularisation of daily wagers, reservation policies, and rising drug abuse among young people. Practical employment policies can address part of that challenge by creating stable opportunities that match present realities.

Suppose one lakh MSME workers receive support worth Rs 40,000 a year. The government's annual contribution would total Rs 400 crore, while Rs 360 crore would flow directly into long-term savings for employees.

That investment would strengthen the financial security of nearly five lakh family members who depend on those incomes.

The government can achieve far greater impact by strengthening employment where jobs already exist.

Focused support for MSMEs would help businesses grow, improve the quality of work, and give lakhs of families greater financial security, all at a fraction of the cost of expanding government payrolls.

—The author is the chief analyst and co-founder of Techarc, and a leading voice on India's technology industry. He advises businesses and policymakers on emerging trends, and serves on the jury of the GLOMO Awards at the Mobile World Congress in Barcelona.

Who Funds Kashmir?

A grant from Delhi still decides whether Srinagar's ledger closes, and that dependence is getting harder to disguise.

Sri Varshith Kumar Reddy E

Indian states now hold nearly a third of the country's general government debt. That single fact should colour how anyone reads a state budget this year, and Jammu and Kashmir's 2026-27 accounts belong squarely inside that larger story.

Its budget rests on a grant rather than a formula. That distinction determines whether its finances can survive a bad year, and on current evidence, they fail that test.

NITI Aayog's Fiscal Health Index 2026 splits India's states into four groups. Odisha tops the list with a score of 73.1. Goa and Jharkhand follow close behind, both pairing controlled deficits with own-tax revenues above 60 per cent of receipts. Punjab sits at the bottom with a score of just 12.4, joined in the "Aspirational" category by West Bengal, Kerala and Andhra Pradesh.

The distance between the top and bottom performers grew wider over the past year, and that widening gap sets the backdrop for everything that follows.

The Reserve Bank of India's review of state budgets sharpens the picture.

Aggregate state debt fell to 28.1 per cent of GDP by March 2024, down from a pandemic peak of 31 per cent, but the central bank now projects a climb back to 29.2 per cent by the close of this fiscal year.

Debt levels among individual states span from 17.8 per cent to 46.3 per cent of gross state domestic product, with Punjab projected to breach 45 per cent.

The FRBM (Fiscal Responsibility and Budget Management) review committee once proposed a 20 per cent ceiling on state debt. Most large states abandoned that benchmark long ago, and nobody in Delhi seems eager to revive it.

The 16th Finance Commission tabled its report in Parliament on February 1, 2026, covering the award period from 2026-27 through 2030-31. It held the states' vertical share at 41 per cent, unchanged from its predecessor, and capped state fiscal deficits at 3 per cent of gross state domestic product, enforceable under Article 293(3) of the Constitution. It directed states to end off-budget borrowing entirely, folding every outstanding liability onto their formal books.

None of that binds Jammu and Kashmir directly.

The Commission has no constitutional obligation to study Union Territories, and its 2025 fieldwork skipped J&K altogether.

The union territory's 1.85 per cent allocation flows through a separate channel, settled year by year rather than fixed by formula.

When the 14th Finance Commission raised the states' share to 42 per cent, the 15th Commission later trimmed it back to 41 per cent specifically to make room for J&K and Ladakh as Union Territories.

J&K's fiscal future now depends on an institution with no statutory reason to look closely at it.

Jammu and Kashmir's 2026-27 budget totals Rs 1,13,767 crore. A Union grant-in-aid of Rs 43,290.29 crore covers the largest share, booked by the Home Ministry under revenue accounts and kept outside Finance Commission devolution.

Own tax and non-tax revenues add roughly Rs 31,800 crore, about a quarter of total spending. Salaries, pensions and interest payments absorb over half the budget before a single new scheme gets funded.

The tax-to-GSDP ratio tells the harder story.

It is projected to fall from 7.5 per cent to 6.6 per cent, even as nominal GSDP grows near 9.5 per cent.

is outpacing the government's ability to tax it. And that disparity counts for more than the headline fiscal deficit of 3.69 per cent of GSDP.

It exposes the structural weakness sitting beneath what looks, on the surface, like a disciplined budget.

Kashmir produces far more hydropower than it consumes. Even so, its distribution utility, KPDCL, has topped India's power-loss rankings for three straight years. Aggregate technical and commercial losses stood at 15.40 per cent in 2024-25, an improvement from 16.33 per cent the year before, but still above the national average.

Some feeders still record losses between 15 and 40 per cent, forcing rationed power cuts even in a region that produces surplus electricity.

FY26 targets aim to bring that figure down to 34 per cent on the worst feeders alone, a sign of how far the recovery still has to go.

This drains the fiscal ledger as much as the power ledger. Any unit of electricity billed but never collected becomes a subsidy the government eventually absorbs, either through direct transfers or through utility bailouts that rarely show up as debt until they mature into one.

The 16th Finance Commission flagged this exact problem nationally, linking state fiscal stress to unresolved power-sector losses and recommending subsidy sunset clauses tied to utility reform.

J&K's power paradox, hydropower abundance paired with distribution scarcity, shows that national problem in its sharpest form.

Several structural problems repeat throughout India's state finances, and all of them show up in sharper form in Jammu and Kashmir.

Grants replace formulas: J&K's largest resource line sits inside the Home Ministry's demand, and annual bargaining replaces a rules-based share of national revenue.

Off-budget liabilities keep climbing nationally: outstanding guarantees to state public enterprises reached 3.9 per cent of GDP by March 2024, a shadow debt that rarely enters headline deficit figures, one the 16th Finance Commission explicitly asked states to eliminate.

Capital spending stays the residual: states with debt-service ratios above 15 per cent of revenue receipts spend under 2 per cent of GSDP on capital works, against a national average of 2.7 per cent, and J&K's own split, three-quarters routine spending against one-quarter development, mirrors that imbalance.

Cess and surcharge creep erodes the shared pool: the 16th Finance Commission recommended capping cesses and surcharges at 8-10 per cent of gross tax revenue, since these levies bypass the divisible pool and starve states, J&K included, of transfers they would otherwise receive.

Thirteen major states, including Madhya Pradesh, Andhra Pradesh, Rajasthan and Punjab, are projected to post fiscal deficits above 4 per cent of GSDP this year, the steepest slippage in a decade outside the pandemic year.

Post-2021 discipline now looks cyclical rather than lasting.

A genuine path forward needs five moves acting together. Formula-based devolution for Union Territories would let planners budget years ahead instead of waiting on annual settlements with the Home Ministry.

A binding debt ceiling with real enforcement would push states toward the debt-to-GDP target the Centre has set for itself, from 56.1 per cent toward 50 per cent by 2030-31, using the same Article 293(3) mechanism the 16th Finance Commission invoked.

Utility reform tied to disbursement would turn KPDCL's power losses from a recurring subsidy into a one-time fix instead of an annual drain, by linking central capital grants to measurable loss reduction.

Time-bound welfare would replace permanent transfers: J&K's 32 people-first initiatives, including LPG subsidies and fee waivers, ease hardship today, but they need sunset clauses tied to employment outcomes, echoing the Finance Commission's own subsidy-rationalisation logic.

Broadening the tax net through digitised compliance, updated property valuations and market-linked pricing for public services gives the most direct route toward lifting own-revenue shares.

Odisha's climb to the top of the Fiscal Health Index took several budget cycles rather than one reform. J&K's SASCI-funded infrastructure and its Holistic Agriculture Development Programme point in a similar direction, but direction alone does not close a gap this wide.

Budgets claim to be arithmetic, and few admit to being fiction, but J&K's 2026-27 accounts balance on paper because Delhi's grant fills the gap that Srinagar's own revenue leaves open.

Real fiscal health will show up the day J&K's budget can survive a bad year without a bailout, and its power grid can bill what it actually generates.

Until then, the numbers will keep improving in press releases while the story underneath stays exactly where it started: dependent, arranged case by case, and one grant cycle away from a different headline.

— The author is a pracademic working on government policy and public institutions. Ideas are personal.

Where Have Kashmir's Nightingales Gone?

Thirty years of rice grains outside my door once brought birds every day. They no longer come, and nobody has seriously asked what changed.

Mohammad Amin Mir

Let me tell you about something small that has been bothering me for years now.

Growing up in Kashmir, I loved nightingales. I would sit for hours watching them hop around, dart between branches, sing. That love stuck with me into adulthood.

So I started a small routine. Every morning I put out a shallow bowl of rice grains near my home. Within minutes the birds would show up in little groups. They would peck at the grains, fly up to a branch, come back down, sing a bit, then move on. It felt peaceful in a way nothing else quite matches.

I kept this going for almost thirty years. My whole family looked forward to it. Then, at some point, the bowl just stayed full.

I figured the birds had wandered off somewhere else. Simple enough explanation, so I let it go. But months turned into years, and they never came back.

So I started asking around. I called friends and colleagues living in different parts of the valley, thinking maybe this was just my street, my neighbourhood. Turns out it wasn't.

Person after person told me the same thing. The nightingales had disappeared from their areas too. Some hadn't heard one sing in years.

That's when I stopped thinking of this as a personal thing.

Birds tend to tell us things about our surroundings that we miss on our own. They are small, sensitive, quick to react when something changes around them. Chop down the wrong trees, spray the wrong chemicals, dry up the wrong stream, and they leave. Simple as that.

Kashmir has spent centuries being described as beautiful. Poets wrote about it, travellers came from far away just to see it. But beauty on its own doesn't mean much if the life underneath it keeps thinning out.

Look around and the reasons aren't hard to spot. Open fields have turned into concrete. The messy little hedges and shrubs where birds used to nest have been cleared away because they looked untidy rather than useful. Farming leans hard on chemicals now, and that wipes out the insects birds depend on to feed their young. Streams that used to run clean now carry plastic.

None of this is some big mystery. It's been building slowly, right in front of us.

Researchers can eventually explain the exact science behind it. But honestly, you don't need a lab to notice silence where birdsong used to be. People already know something is wrong. They just haven't been asked.

Universities here have the people and tools to run proper surveys, to figure out whether these birds actually vanished or just moved somewhere quieter.

As far as I know, that hasn't happened. Wildlife and forest departments exist for exactly this type of question, and so far they have stayed as silent as the trees.

Here is where it gets frustrating for me. Small things could help. Schools could get kids outside, teach them to notice birds instead of scrolling past nature on a screen. Communities could plant native trees, cut back on pesticide use, leave nesting spots undisturbed. None of this costs much.

Families can pitch in too. Plant a few native flowering shrubs, leave out water during the hot months, let a nesting spot alone instead of clearing it. Small habits, done widely, actually add up.

Losing these birds means losing more than a nice sound in the morning. It means something between people here and the land they live on is slipping away, bit by bit, without much notice.

Some mornings I still walk past that empty bowl and wonder if they will ever come back. My family wonders too, though nobody really says it out loud anymore.

Where have Kashmir's nightingales gone?

I keep asking myself that, but honestly, I am not the one who should have the final answer.

Scientists, conservationists, government departments, they owe us something here.

Because if birdsong disappears from our mornings today, it won't stop there. Forests and orchards come next.

> **HERE IS WHERE IT GETS FRUSTRATING FOR ME. SMALL THINGS COULD HELP.** Schools could get kids outside, teach them to notice birds instead of scrolling past nature on a screen. Communities could plant native trees, cut back on pesticide use, leave nesting spots undisturbed. None of this costs much.

— The author is a policy commentator and legal researcher based in Jammu & Kashmir. He can be reached at miramin354@gmail.com.

Who Stole Our Manners?

A society that prizes careers over conscience risks losing the values that once held it together.

Mushtaq Hurra

There was a time when the word adab held great impact and influence in our homes. It meant grace, restraint, and warmth woven together.

A child who bowed before an elder, and a student who lowered his gaze before a teacher were lessons in humility.

Today, I look around and see the scaffolding of that old world collapsing.

The moral castles our elders built with patience and prayer are giving way to noise. Gratitude is rare, modesty feels dated, and affection has turned into performance.

A teacher's words no longer echo in a student's heart. They float away like dust.

What caused this slow unraveling? Where did the thread snap?

Every thoughtful person asks the same questions, but few pause long enough to listen for the answers.

The change did not happen overnight. It crept in silently, in small ways, through the screens we gifted our children, the silence we maintained when they spoke without respect, and the way we began to measure success by income rather than integrity.

A few weeks ago, a video made the rounds: students hugging their teachers in public celebration. To some, it was a harmless act of affection. To others, it was a sign of something deeper: the fading of our sense of haya, of respectful distance.

Such gestures strike differently in Kashmir, where even fathers hesitate to embrace their teenage daughters in public.

I do not wish to shame those young students. Their intention might have been pure. But their act reflects something missing in their moral education.

If they had been taught the meaning of mahram and ghair mahram, of boundaries drawn by respect, they might have understood the weight of that moment.

The real failure lies with parents, teachers, and elders, who taught them how to build a career, but not how to build a conscience.

We have turned education into a ladder for livelihood instead of a lamp for the soul. Our forefathers sent their children to learn wisdom, humility, and truth. We send ours to secure salaries and titles. They dreamt of character. We dream of comfort.

Modern education has multiplied our schools and degrees, but divided our sense of self. We have engineers without empathy, doctors without patience, and teachers who chase applause more than understanding.

We have outshone our ancestors in knowledge, but fallen behind in virtue.

There was a time when a teacher's word could calm a restless child. When parents measured learning not by ranks but by behaviour.

In those days, fewer people could read, but everyone seemed to know the grammar of life.

Perhaps the problem is not in education itself, but in what we expect from it.

We see it as a shield against poverty, not as a cure for arrogance. We study science to master nature, not to understand our place within it.

The soul of education has become a casualty of its success.

We need to return to the idea of learning as character-building. Let science and scripture, reason and ethics, grow together like twin roots of the same tree. Let our classrooms become places where children learn to say thank you before they learn to say therefore.

We speak often about revival in Kashmir, but revival must begin with something simpler: a return to decency.

The elixir of old learning once promised to make us better human beings. It is time to rediscover that potion, before we forget how to bow our heads, or raise our hearts.

> **We speak often about revival in Kashmir,** but revival must begin with something simpler: a return to decency.

— The author is a teacher and columnist from Bandipora. He can be reached at mushtaqhurra143@gmail.com

Love Beyond Assumptions

Unchecked doubts can erode even the strongest bond, but trust and compassion help relationships endure.

Lily Swarn

Assumptions, Henry Winkler once said, are the termites of relationships.

Just because we have a mind that wanders, we don't need to start imagining all sorts of things about another person.

Our unchecked thoughts can easily ruin a perfectly beautiful moment.

It's never wise to give up on someone you can't go a day without thinking about.

There is always more to relationships than needs and small acts of self-appeasement. There is feeling, patience, and the work of understanding.

When the heart breaks into a merry salsa and the eyes sparkle with anticipation, it could be because of a cherished child, a trusted old friend, a heartthrob, or even a touch of divine intervention.

Humans often enter your life as if by witchcraft, appearing just when you need their presence the most. Mother Teresa said that intense love never measures. It only gives.

The flow of love in relationships is often irrational, for reason and logic rarely find space in a caring heart.

The day we understand that relationships are meant to be treasured, not possessed, we begin to breathe easier and build stronger bonds.

Fetters and shackles can never hold a relationship together. They only sour it, the way milk curdles when you forget to keep it in the fridge.

Promises are for the fickle. What really holds a relationship together is pure, selfless love. You don't need fancy words or sweet promises when the love is real.

The one who truly matters is the person who silently looks out for you, who won't let the light fade from your eyes, and who loves you so deeply that he doesn't even realize how this beautiful madness took over someone who once thought he was so sensible.

When two people with the same little quirks meet in the winding by-lanes of life, sparks are bound to fly. It's as if the heavens themselves celebrate the meeting of two loving souls, even if they're both a touch unhinged in their own spiritual ways.

But the cold winds of mistrust and control can easily crush the tender beginnings of love.

Still, look at the hardy flowers that grow in the cracks of rugged mountain paths. They bloom anyway, filling the air with their fragrance, no matter how small a corner life has given them.

Love is like that. It sings softly, the way the old song goes: "Tum mujhe bhool bhi jaao toh yeh haq hai tum ko, meri baat aur hai, maine toh mohabbat ki hai."

— The author is an acclaimed poet, novelist and essayist, and the author of A Drop of Cosmos. She can be reached at sukhish83@gmail.com.

> **When two people with the same little quirks meet in the winding by-lanes of life,** sparks are bound to fly. It's as if the heavens themselves celebrate the meeting of two loving souls, even if they're both a touch unhinged in their own spiritual ways.

Ahmedabad Patient Travels to Paras Srinagar for Complex Heart Procedure

Observer News Service

Srinagar: A patient from Ahmedabad, Gujarat, travelled to Kashmir to undergo a complex heart procedure at Paras Health Srinagar, underscoring the growing recognition of the Valley as a destination for advanced cardiac care.

The patient, diagnosed with complex multivessel coronary artery disease (CAD), underwent an advanced coronary intervention at the hospital under the supervision of Dr. Mohd Maqbool Sohil, Director of Interventional Cardiology, and was discharged in stable condition within 24 hours of the procedure.

According to the hospital, the case reflects the increasing number of patients from outside Jammu and Kashmir seeking specialised treatment at the facility.

"Managing complex multivessel coronary artery disease demands precision, experience and a patient-centric approach. Every case is unique, and our priority is to provide the safest and most effective treatment using advanced interventional techniques," Dr. Sohil said.

He said the patient's quick recovery and discharge within a day highlighted the effectiveness of minimally invasive cardiac interventions and the expertise of the medical team.

"It is encouraging to see patients travelling from different parts of the country to seek advanced cardiac care in Kashmir, reflecting the trust they have in our clinical expertise and infrastructure," he added.

The patient expressed gratitude to the medical team, praising the doctors for their expertise, compassion and support throughout the treatment.

"I just wanted to express my heartfelt gratitude for the exceptional care and support you've provided. Your dedication to your patients goes far beyond treatment, and your personal care and guidance have made a real difference," the patient said.

Associate Vice President and Facility Director of Paras Health Srinagar, Dr. Murtuza Habib, said the successful intervention reflected the hospital's continued investment in advanced technology and specialised healthcare services.

"The fact that patients are now travelling from distant states like Gujarat to seek treatment at our hospital is a testimony to the confidence people have in our doctors and healthcare services. We remain committed to strengthening super-speciality healthcare in the region while ensuring compassionate, accessible and quality medical care," he said.

Govt Adopts Multi-pronged Strategy to Curb Cross-border Infiltration: MHA

Agencies

Srinagar: The Union Government on Tuesday said it has adopted a multi-pronged strategy to curb cross-border infiltration along the country's international borders, including deployment of advanced surveillance technology, strengthening border infrastructure, enhanced patrolling and closer coordination among security agencies.

In a written reply to an unstarred question in the Lok Sabha, Minister of State for Home Affairs Nityanand Rai, said the government, through its border guarding forces (BGFs), has undertaken several measures to prevent illegal cross-border movement and improve border management.

The reply came in response to a question by Lok Sabha member Anil Yeshwant Desai, who sought to know whether it was the responsibility of the government to ensure that no person crossed the country's borders without proper authorisation, the role of paramilitary forces in the task, whether the presence of a large number of illegal people in the country reflected negligence in border management, and the action taken by the government.

Rai said the government has enhanced border surveillance by deploying advanced equipment such as CCTV cameras, drones and automatic number plate recognition systems to monitor border areas more effectively.

"The government has also strengthened border infrastructure by developing fencing, border outposts, roads and helipads to improve vigilance and mobility of security forces," he said, adding that regular patrolling has been intensified through area domination exercises, naka points and mobile teams to monitor illegal activities along the borders.

The minister said that intelligence agencies and other organisations are working in close coordination through established platforms to facilitate real-time information sharing.

The government has also focused on regulating cross-border movement by identifying and managing designated entry and exit points to ensure controlled movement of people and goods, Rai said.

He further said community engagement and awareness programmes are being conducted to educate border residents and discourage them from aiding illegal activities.

CONTD. FROM FRONT PAGE

Multi-Layered

Officials said Quick Response Teams (QRTs), bomb disposal squads and anti-sabotage teams have also been deployed at vulnerable locations as part of the enhanced security arrangements.

The heightened security comes as several political parties have announced separate demonstrations in Jammu to mark the anniversary of the Centre's August 5, 2019 decision to abrogate Article 370 and reorganise the erstwhile state into the Union Territories of Jammu and Kashmir and Ladakh.

The National Conference will hold a protest outside its party headquarters in Jammu, while the Congress will stage a demonstration at Shaheedi Chowk, demanding restoration of statehood along with constitutional safeguards for land, jobs and natural resources. The Peoples Democratic Party (PDP) has also announced a protest outside its Gandhi Nagar headquarters.

National Conference provincial president Rattan Lal Gupta described August 5 as one of the "darkest days" in the constitutional and democratic history of Jammu and Kashmir, alleging that the 2019 decisions were imposed without the consent of the people.

He said the Centre's continued delay in restoring statehood had weakened democratic institutions and deprived Jammu and Kashmir of the constitutional authority enjoyed by full-fledged states. Gupta urged the Union government to fulfil its commitment to restore statehood.

The Congress said its protest would focus on the restoration of statehood and constitutional safeguards for land, jobs and natural resources, while the PDP said its demonstration would seek the restoration of Article 370.

Officials said security forces remain on high alert across the Union Territory to ensure peaceful observance of the anniversary and maintain law and order.

30% Gone: Kashmir's

delivered remotely by Dr. Jagvir Singh, a scientist with the Ministry of Earth Sciences.

Singh laid out the ministry's mandate and its major scientific missions, then turned to a statistic that framed the day's proceedings: global temperatures have climbed from 2.2 to 2.35 degrees Celsius above preindustrial levels, according to recent estimates.

Two glacial hundredths of a degree may sound small, but scientists in the room understood it as confirmation that the pace of change keeps outstripping earlier forecasts.

The afternoon sessions moved from atmospheric data to ecological mechanics.

Researchers presented findings on carbon and nitrogen cycling in shifting environmental conditions, examining how these fundamental processes respond as temperatures climb and precipitation patterns change.

Another set of talks focused on wetlands, framing them as a first line of defense against flooding: natural systems that absorb and slow rising waters before they reach vulnerable communities downstream.

What united the presentations was a shared premise: technology alone cannot solve what centuries of ecological function once managed on its own.

Speakers argued that restoring and protecting wetlands, forests, and glacial watersheds gives regions like Kashmir a buffer against extremes that engineering solutions alone often fail to replicate.

An interactive question session closed the day, with attendees pressing scientists on implementation: how policy might translate models and projections into protections on the ground.

Outside the conference hall, the numbers Romshoo cited held impact beyond academic circles.

Kashmir rivers begin as ice, and when that ice disappears faster than expected, farmers, cities, and power grids downstream feel the consequences way before any policy catches up.

The conference continues through its remaining two days, with sessions expected to focus on translating the science presented this week into strategies communities can act on before the glaciers retreat further.

India Rejects

Randhir Jaiswal said at a regular media briefing.

"Since June this year, at least 90 civilians have lost their lives in the continuing crackdown," he said.

Jaiswal said the Pakistani establishment has "answered public discontent with bullets, black outs, intimidation and repression, and now seeks to manufacture legitimacy through a hollow electoral exercise".

"It must be held accountable, and the world should see through the flimsy veneer of Pakistan's hypocritical lecturing on human rights," he said.

Jaiswal was responding to a question on elections in PoK.

The Joint Awami Action Committee (JAAC) has been leading the protests amid local body elections in PoK.

Pakistani security forces used lethal force against the JAAC during its long march from Rawalakote to Muzaffarabad late last month and the crackdown reportedly resulted in the deaths of 40 civilians and left over 33 protesters injured.

The JAAC has officially appealed to United Nations Human Rights Council and international rights organisations for an immediate, independent investigation into what it described as "unlawful killings".

Jaiswal also called upon Pakistan to take strong action against cross-border terrorism.

"We call upon countries to take strong action against cross-border terrorism and those promoting it. We call upon Pakistan to take strong action against cross-border terrorism and dismantle the terrorist infrastructure operating from its soil," he said.

The MEA spokesperson also asserted that the Indus Waters Treaty (IWT) will remain in abeyance till Pakistan stops supporting cross-border terrorism.

"The treaty is in abeyance and will remain so until Pakistan irrevocably and credibly abjures its support for cross-border terrorism," he said.

India decided to put the IWT in abeyance as part of a series of punitive diplomatic and economic measures unveiled soon after the Pahalgam terror attack in April last year that killed 26 civilians.

Court Denies Mother's

After interacting with the child and allowing the mother sufficient time to meet him, the court observed that the child refused to accompany her. It further noted that the child was studying in Sopore and living with his grandparents, adding that the court found no material to indicate that the child's stay with the respondents (mainly grandparents) amounted to unlawful confinement or constituted an offence under the limited scope of Section 100 BNSS.

In its order, the court directed the respondents to ensure the mother's interaction with the child every Saturday. It also permitted the mother to meet her children every Saturday after school hours on the school premises. The principal of the concerned school has been asked to ensure compliance with the directions. The respondents were represented by Adv S. A. Manan, Adv. Mustahsun Mattu and Adv Junaid Gaffar Bhat.

The court clarified that the arrangement would remain in force only until either party approaches the competent Guardians and Wards Court, which has the authority to decide the issue of custody of the minor children.

J&K Achieves

translating into a success rate of 99.09 percent.

Under the Centre's guidelines, a State or Union Territory is considered fully literate once it achieves a literacy rate of 95 percent or above, recognising that universal literacy is not practically attainable because of factors such as advanced age and intellectual disabilities.

Officials said the milestone was achieved through targeted strategies and implementation plans adopted under the ULLAS programme, aimed at providing lifelong learning opportunities and improving adult literacy across the Union Territory.

Before Jammu and Kashmir, nine States and Union Territories had declared themselves fully literate under the scheme. These include Ladakh, Mizoram, Goa, Tripura, Himachal Pradesh, Chandigarh, Andaman and Nicobar Islands, Sikkim and Uttarakhand.

With its inclusion, Jammu and Kashmir becomes the largest State or Union Territory by population among those to have achieved full literacy under the national programme.

Kashmir Rail

Institute of Transport Management (IRITM), Lucknow, during their field visit to Jammu and Kashmir, Sinha said Indian Railways has evolved far beyond a passenger transport network to become a key pillar of the country's development.

"Electrification at record levels, the expansion of the Dedicated Freight Corridor, the realisation of the dream of connecting Kashmir to Kanyakumari, the launch of world-class Vande Bharat trains, and the modernisation of stations under the Amrit Bharat Station Scheme are hallmarks of Indian Railways' new era," he said.

The Lieutenant Governor said the railways now serve as a driving force for economic development, logistics efficiency and national unity, playing a central role in India's growth story.

He urged the officer trainees to view themselves not merely as administrators but as nation-builders whose decisions would shape the future of millions of people.

"You are the torchbearers of New India's pace, capability and resolve," he said, adding that the diverse academic and regional backgrounds of the trainees reflected the country's unity and strengthened its administrative framework.

Sinha stressed that improving the efficiency of freight and passenger transport directly contributes to reducing logistics costs, enhancing industrial competitiveness and strengthening India's position in the global economy.

"Every minute saved reduces logistics costs, strengthens industry competitiveness and enhances India's global standing," he said, while calling on officers to balance administrative discipline with public service, safety and financial prudence.

The Lieutenant Governor also outlined three guiding principles for the trainees: embracing innovation through digital technologies, artificial intelligence and data-driven systems; adopting a citizen-first approach that prioritises accessibility and sensitivity; and upholding integrity and transparency while managing public resources.

"India is moving forward with confidence towards becoming a developed nation by 2047. Your decisions, strategies and leadership will directly shape the future of millions of Indians," he said.

The interaction was attended by Rahul, Course Director and Professor (Traffic Planning and Costing), along with officials and faculty members of the Indian Railways Institute of Transport Management.

J&K Saw 2,182

the Constitution, and the responsibility for maintaining law and order and protecting the life and property of citizens, including children, rests with the respective State Governments and UT Administrations.

It said TrackChild and Khoya-Paya have been integrated with the unified Mission Vatsalya Portal and CCTNS to facilitate matching of FIRs of missing children with the TrackChild database. The Child Helpline 1098 is operational 24/7 and integrated with the Emergency Response Support System-112. The figures above are restricted to Jammu & Kashmir and Ladakh as reported in the uploaded MHA/Lok Sabha document. (KNO)

Cabinet Clears

Corporation Limited (ITDC) for the construction of the hotel. However, ITDC failed to complete the project and subsequently returned the land along with the unfinished structure to the Tourism Department.

The Cabinet also approved the establishment of an IT/Innovation Park in partnership with IIT Jammu to strengthen the Union Territory's technology and innovation ecosystem.

In another decision, the Cabinet gave its nod to the transfer of land for several public infrastructure projects. These include four kanals in Hiranagar, Kathua, for the construction of a cafeteria, four kanals and 11 marlas in Sonpah, Budgam, for setting up a Craft Village, and seven kanals and five marlas in Behibagh, Kulgam, for an Army Goodwill School.

Sources said the Cabinet also cleared the promotion of 28 JKAS officers, including nine officers to the Special Scale and 18 to the Selection Grade.

The approvals are aimed at boosting tourism infrastructure, promoting innovation and facilitating key public development projects across Jammu and Kashmir.

Kashmir Must

Golf Tour of India (PGTI) at the Royal Springs Golf Course, Omar said golf tourism forms an important pillar of the government's broader tourism strategy.

"Kashmir must reclaim its position as one of India's premier golf destinations," he said.

Annual Tournament, Golf Academy Planned

The Chief Minister said the tournament, which has attracted more than 100 professional golfers, including over 10 international participants, marks the beginning of a long-term effort to place Kashmir back on India's golfing calendar.

"Our endeavour is that this should become an annual tournament and not a one-off. We hope to increase both the prize money and participation and ensure it becomes a regular feature on the national golf calendar for at least the next five years," he said.

To encourage local talent, Omar announced plans to establish a golf academy where young players can receive professional training from an early age.

"These tournaments allow our amateur golfers to compete alongside professionals. Our endeavour is to establish a golf academy so children can be trained from a young age and eventually represent the country," he said.

Golf Tourism Strategy

Omar said the government's tourism strategy revolves around Kashmir's three major golf courses in Srinagar, Gulmarg and Pahalgam, along with the Sidra Golf Course in Jammu. Another golf course in the Jammu region is also being upgraded.

He said Kashmir's pleasant summer climate gives it a unique advantage over most parts of the country, where extreme heat limits golfing for several months each year.

"Even without actively promoting golf tourism, people are flying into Srinagar for long weekends, playing through the weekend and returning home. This tournament is an important milestone in putting Kashmir, particularly the Royal Springs Golf Course, back on India's golf map," he said.

'Golf Courses Are Tourism Assets'

Rejecting criticism over the maintenance costs of golf courses, the Chief Minister said such facilities should be viewed as long-term tourism assets rather than profit-making ventures.

"Golf courses may not directly generate profits, but in terms of tourism promotion they are unmatched," he said, adding that visiting golfers contribute to the local economy by staying in hotels and houseboats, hiring taxis, shopping for handicrafts and travelling with their families.

Push for Wider Sports Infrastructure

The Chief Minister also stressed the need to strengthen sports infrastructure across Jammu and Kashmir, particularly in cricket.

Referring to the recent selection of fast bowler Auqib Nabi for India's Test squad against Sri Lanka, Omar said the Union Territory's sporting talent has repeatedly proved itself at the national level.

He urged faster progress on the proposed international-standard cricket stadiums in Jammu and the Kashmir Valley, saying such facilities would enable the region to host IPL matches and international fixtures in the future.

Condemns Kulgam Killings

Responding to a question on the recent killing of two migrant labourers in Kulgam, Omar described the attack as "deeply tragic" and said no religion permits the killing of innocent people.

"It should never have happened. No religion permits the killing of innocent people. Those responsible for maintaining security are expected to ensure that such attacks do not take place," he said.

SC Orders

A copy of the final SOP shall be furnished to the Registrar General of all High Courts."

It also asked the states, Union Territories (UTs) and law enforcement agencies to ensure "expeditious adoption and operationalisation" of the grievance modules namely, "the Grievance Redressal Module, and the Money Restoration Module" under the Ministry of Home Affairs' SOP concerning the National Cyber Crime Reporting Portal (NCRP).

"They shall also take appropriate steps to ensure public awareness of these two modules," it said.

It asked the Registrar General of High Courts to apprise all courts and other adjudicating authorities of the grievance redressal mechanism to enable them to deal with freezing of bank accounts involved in cyber frauds.

"An aggrieved person may ordinarily be encouraged to avail of the said mechanism in the first instance. However, doing so shall not operate as a bar to the exercise of any constitutional, statutory or other legal remedies available in law," it said.

It asked the authorities to provide in their next status reports the "state-wise and bank-wise data" of grievances registered and disposed besides the summary of restoration orders issued and the amounts restored with the victims.

On the issue of State Cyber Crime Coordination Centres and registration of e-Zero FIRs, the bench noted that so far only 18 states have established such centres and asked the remaining states to "notify and operationalise" such centres within four weeks.

It also asked them to take steps to adopt the e-Zero FIR mechanism, in consultation with I4C (Indian Cyber Crime co-ordination Centre).

"The I4C shall ensure necessary follow-up and provide the requisite assistance to the States for implementation of these directions," it said.

It said, "The concerned authorities shall take appropriate steps to ensure the expeditious disposal of matters relating to the freezing of bank accounts arising out of cyber-enabled financial frauds."

The bench directed the Inter-Departmental Committee to issue necessary directions, advisories and instructions to all states, UTs, Ministries and government departments to undertake and promote awareness programmes relating to cybercrimes, including digital arrest scams.

It also asked them to publicise the Grievance Redressal Module and Money Restoration Module.

"The Inter-Departmental Committee shall consult with banks and intermediaries regarding technological measures that may be adopted to prevent digital arrest scams, assist in the recovery of defrauded amounts, facilitate investigation of digital arrest cases; and ensure cooperation and compliance with all applicable statutory obligations and legal requirements."

It asked State Legal Services Authorities to undertake public awareness initiatives on prevention of digital arrest scams, awareness, cyber security and assistance available for recovery of defrauded amounts.

"The Inter-Departmental Committee is directed to examine and discuss the proposal for a shared liability and victim compensation framework," it said.

At the outset, the bench referred to earlier directions and said that they were issued to secure a coordinated response from the concerned ministries in relation to digital arrest scams.

"Those directions concerned, inter alia, investigation by the CBI, mule accounts, misuse of SIM cards and SIM boxes, cooperation by intermediaries, grievance redressal and restoration of defrauded money, and institutional coordination," it said.

HC Refuses To

no jurisdictional error warranting interference under Section 528 of the Bharatiya Nagarik Suraksha Sanhita (BNSS).

Gupta had argued that the cheque in question belonged to a cheque book reported missing in 2022 and that payment had already been stopped through instructions issued to the bank. He contended that the cheque had been misused and that no legally enforceable liability existed. The respondent (complainant before trial court), however, maintained that the cheque had been issued towards repayment of financial assistance amounting to Rs 65.68 lakh and that its dishonour for "Payment Stopped by Drawer" attracted the provisions of the Negotiable Instruments Act.

Rejecting the plea for quashing, the Court held that once the execution of the cheque is not disputed, the statutory presumption under Section 139 of the Negotiable Instruments Act operates in favour of the holder. The Court observed that whether the cheque was lost, misused, or issued in discharge of a legally enforceable debt are factual issues requiring evidence and cannot be examined in proceedings invoking the Court's inherent jurisdiction.

The Court further noted that accepting Gupta's contentions at the threshold would amount to conducting a "mini trial," which is impermissible while exercising inherent powers under Section 528 BNSS. It also relied on an earlier decision involving the same petitioner, where similar pleas had been rejected with liberty to raise them before the trial court.

Accordingly, the Court dismissed the petition, vacated the interim protection granted to Gupta, and directed the trial court to proceed with the complaint expeditiously in accordance with law, while clarifying that all defences raised by Gupta remain open to be considered during the course of the trial.

Every Budget Commitment Must Deliver Results: CM

Observer News Service

SRINAGAR: Jammu and Kashmir Chief Minister Omar Abdullah on Tuesday said that every budget commitment must translate into tangible improvements in public services.

Abdullah said this at a meeting of the Council of Ministers chaired by him at the Civil Secretariat here.

In a post on his official X handle, Abdullah said several important decisions concerning development and public welfare were taken at the meeting.

The chief minister earlier reviewed the implementation of key budget announcements and directed all departments to expedite execution while ensuring strict adherence to stipulated timelines.

He emphasised that every budget commitment must translate into tangible improvements in public services, driven by efficiency, transparency and accountability, while fostering equitable development across J-K.

Abdullah also approved the appointment of 42 candidates in the Housing and Urban Development Department under the J-K Rehabilitation Assistance Scheme, 2022, reaffirming the government's commitment to providing compassionate support to eligible beneficiaries. (PTI)

ICLS Key To India's Economic Credibility: LG

Observer News Service

SRINAGAR: LG Manoj Sinha on Tuesday said the Indian Corporate Law Service (ICLS) plays a pivotal role in safeguarding corporate governance and strengthening India's economic credibility, asserting that transparency, accountability and investor confidence are essential for achieving the vision of Viksit Bharat@2047.

Addressing officer trainees of the Indian Corporate Law Service at the Raj Bhavan, Sinha said India's economic strength extends beyond production, investment and trade, and is rooted in robust institutions, the rule of law, and transparent governance.

"In an era of globalisation, where economies are deeply interconnected through capital, technology, innovation and trade, India has emerged as one of the fastest-growing economies. However, true economic strength is not measured merely by production, investment or trade, but by the robustness of institutions, respect for the rule of law, protection of investors' interests, and adherence to transparency and accountability," he said.

The Lieutenant Governor described the ICLS as a cornerstone of India's corporate governance framework, noting that officers of the service play a crucial role in implementing key legislations, including the Companies Act and the Insolvency and Bankruptcy Code.

"Their work ensures a balanced environment for industry, trade and investment, fostering trust and credibility in India's corporate sector. The identity of a developed economy also lies in institutional systems that encourage honest enterprises and effectively monitor irregularities," he said.

Sinha said investor confidence remains one of India's greatest strengths as the country continues to emerge as a preferred global investment destination.

"This trust is reinforced when companies operate transparently, maintain financial discipline and act swiftly against irregularities. The ICLS continuously strengthens this trust, making it an essential guardian of India's economic credibility," he said.

Calling rapid economic growth, responsible institutions, ethical business practices and a strong legal framework vital for inclusive development, the Lieutenant Governor said the ICLS would serve as a critical link between industry and governance in India's journey towards becoming a developed nation.

During the interaction, officer trainees from the 2023 and 2024 batches, accompanied by Registrar of Companies, Jammu and Kashmir, Haamid Bukhari, shared their experiences from their domestic study tour of the Union Territory and briefed the Lieutenant Governor on the functioning of the Registrar of Companies and the role of the ICLS in regulating and enforcing corporate laws.

The trainees also informed him about a recently filed winding-up petition under which the assets of a not-for-profit company were taken over by the Office of the Registrar of Companies-cum-Official Liquidator, Jammu and Kashmir. Officials said it was likely the first instance in which corporate laws had been invoked in a matter linked to national security.

J&K Has Around 120 Psychiatrists, 40 Clinical Psychologists: Centre

SRINAGAR: The Central Government has informed Parliament that Jammu and Kashmir has around 120 psychiatrists and 40 clinical psychologists across government and private institutions, while mental health and addiction treatment facilities are now functional in all districts of the Union Territory.

Responding to a question in the Rajya Sabha, the Union Ministry of Health and Family Welfare said approximately 71 psychiatrists and 10 clinical psychologists are posted in government institutions, while counselling services are being provided through Addiction Treatment Facilities, District Early Intervention Centres, Government Medical Colleges and Tele-MANAS services operated through the Institute of Mental Health and Neurosciences (IMHANS), Srinagar.

The Ministry said Psychiatry Departments with Addiction Treatment Facilities are functional in Government Medical Colleges at Jammu, Kathua, Udhampur, Rajouri, Doda, Anantnag, Baramulla, Handwara and Bemina. District Mental Health Units or Addiction Treatment Facilities are also operational in district hospitals across Reasi, Kulgam, Shopian, Pulwama, Budgam, Bandipora, Ganderbal, Kupwara, Ramban, Poonch, Samba and Kishtwar. IMHANS Srinagar continues to function as the Centre of Excellence for psychiatric care, training and manpower generation.

The Ministry further informed the House that the National Mental Health Survey-2, being conducted by NIMHANS, covers all States and Union Territories and includes studies on mental health related to disasters, climate change, children, women, elderly persons and other vulnerable groups.

The Centre said several measures have been initiated to strengthen mental healthcare in Jammu and Kashmir, including the introduction of MD Psychiatry at Government Medical College Jammu, integration of mental healthcare into the primary healthcare system, training of medical officers in community mental health, approval of psychiatrist posts under the National Mental Health Programme and expansion of digital mental health services through Tele-MANAS. [KNT]

Majalis, Processions Mark Arbaeen across Kashmir; Hundreds Join Karbala Pilgrimage

Syed Mohammad Burhan

SRINAGAR: Tens of thousands of mourners on Tuesday participated in Arbaeen (Chehlum) commemorations across Kashmir, attending majalis, taking out mourning processions and paying tribute to the martyrs of Karbala, whose sacrifice continues to inspire generations in the struggle against oppression and injustice.

Arbaeen, derived from the Arabic word for "forty," marks the completion of the 40-day mourning period following Ashura (10th Muharram), when Imam Hussain (AS), the grandson of Prophet Muhammad (PBUH), was martyred along with his companions in Karbala after refusing to pledge allegiance to the tyrannical ruler Yazid.

From the early hours of the morning, devotees converged at Imambargahs across the Valley, including in Srinagar, to participate in Arbaeen majalis. The largest gathering was reported from central Kashmir's Budgam township, where thousands of mourners commemorated the sacrifices of Imam Hussain (AS) and the noble family of the Holy Prophet (PBUH).

A massive mourning procession was taken out from Astaan Sharief in Budgam, passing through its traditional route before culminating at the Central Imam Bargah.

Similar processions were held in Bemina, Chattabal, Zadibal and Hassanabad in Srinagar, while mourners also took out processions in Shilwat in Baramulla district and Udina in Bandipora district.

The commemorations echoed with traditional Kashmiri nohas as mourners remembered the tragedy of Karbala. Food distribution stalls were also organised at several locations as part of the observances.

Addressing a large Arbaeen gathering at Sajjadabad, Chattabal, senior Shia cleric Maulana Masroor Abbas Ansari elaborated on the timeless message of Karbala, saying Imam Hussain (AS) taught humanity never to submit to oppression or tyranny.

"Imam Hussain (AS) taught humanity not to bow before oppression and tyranny, to remain steadfast on truth and honesty, and to preserve the true spirit of Islam," Ansari said.

The cleric stressed that social reform is a collective responsibility and urged people not to remain silent in the face of injustice.

"If a person witnesses injustice, oppression, evil or wrongdoing in society and chooses to remain silent, they also become responsible for its spread. Silence sometimes becomes synonymous with supporting oppression. Every individual must stand with truth and raise their voice against falsehood with wisdom, ethics and responsibility," he said.

Appealing particularly to the younger generation, Ansari urged them to make the teachings of Imam Hussain (AS) a guiding principle in their lives.

"The youth should implement the teachings of Imam Hussain (AS) in their practical lives, promote unity, brotherhood and religious values in society, and always stand for truth and justice," he said.

On the occasion, a large number of devotees visited Astana Babul Hawaij, where the rare manuscript of the Holy Quran believed to have been written by Imam Musa Kazim (AS) during his imprisonment is preserved.

In Bemina, a grand majlis preceded a large mourning procession. A Zuljinah procession was taken out from the Bemina crossing and culminated at the Auqaf grounds. President of Anjuman Sharie Shiayan, Agha Syed Hadi Moosavi, addressed mourners during the majlis held at Imambargah Agha Syed Yusuf.

At Zadibal, thousands of mourners from Srinagar and adjoining areas attended the majlis before a procession was taken out from Mohalla Syed Afzal to Imambargah Zadibal. Molvi Imran Reza Ansari addressed a gathering at the Imambargah.

A large gathering was also held at Zaildar Mohalla in Saida Kadal, from where a procession passed through different localities before culminating at Imambargah Hassanabad. Aga Syed Mujtaba addressed the mourners before the procession.

Arbaeen majalis and processions were also reported from several other parts of the Valley.

In a display of devotion, scores of mourners undertook a foot march from Nowgam in Sonawari to Imambargah Bemina as a tribute to the martyrs of Karbala.

At Budgam's Central Imam Bargah, President of Anjuman-e-Sharie-Shian, Aga Syed Hassan Mosavi Al Safavi, addressed the gathering and described the battle of Karbala as an eternal symbol of resistance.

"The unparalleled battle between truth and falsehood that took place on the land of Karbala in will live forever and continue to inspire humanity with the spirit of perseverance against injustice," he said.

Meanwhile, hundreds of Kashmiri Shia Muslims joined millions of pilgrims from around the world in Iraq to participate in the annual Arbaeen pilgrimage, one of the largest religious gatherings globally.

TRAI Reviews Mobile Service Quality in Kashmir

Press Trust of India

SRINAGAR: The Telecom Regulatory Authority of India has assessed the real-time quality of mobile network services provided by telecom service providers, officials said on Tuesday.

The TRAI released findings of Independent Drive Tests (IDT) conducted across Srinagar city, Gulmarg, Anantnag, Pahalgam, Srinagar to Pahalgam Highway, and Srinagar to Gulmarg Highway route under J&K LSA, during the month of June 2026, for information of general telecom consumers, officials said.

The officials said these IDTs have been designed to capture on-ground mobile network performance of all TSPs across diverse usage environments like cities, hotspots, public transport hubs, etc. In this type of drive testing, live data and voice sessions are established using SIM cards from all TSPs over 2G, 3G, 4G and 5G networks.

The officials said the findings of the IDT report have been shared with respective TSPs for taking further necessary action at their end.

Minister Expresses Ignorance over JKPSC's SC-Only Recruitment Notification for AP Posts

SRINAGAR: Jammu and Kashmir Education Minister Sakina Itoo on Tuesday said she was unaware of the Jammu and Kashmir Public Service Commission (JKPSC) notification inviting applications exclusively from Scheduled Caste (SC) candidates for Assistant Professor posts in Islamic Studies, Arabic, Persian and Kashmiri.

Responding to questions from reporters, the Minister admitted that she has not gone through the notification and said she would examine it before commenting in detail.

"I don't know. I will read the notification," Itoo said when asked about the recruitment advertisement.

She, however, remarked that the posts were meant for all and said she did not think they had been reserved exclusively for Scheduled Caste candidates.

The Minister's remarks came despite the JKPSC notification specifically inviting applications only from Scheduled Caste (SC) candidates for the advertised Assistant Professor posts in Islamic Studies, Arabic, Persian and Kashmiri.

The notification has triggered debate in academic circles and among aspirants, with several candidates questioning the reservation of teaching posts in subjects traditionally associated with specific linguistic and cultural studies. [KNT]

Govt-Pvt Partnership Vital for Future-Ready Education in J&K: Sakina

Observer News Service

SRINAGAR: Pitching for greater private sector participation in education, Jammu and Kashmir School Education Minister Sakina Ittoo on Tuesday said stronger public-private partnerships are essential to build a future-ready education ecosystem and improve learning outcomes in the Union Territory.

Addressing trainers and educators at an interaction organised by Cambridge International Education and Foundation World School in Srinagar, Ittoo said collaboration between the government, private institutions, teachers and parents was key to preparing students for an increasingly competitive world.

"The future belongs to those who possess the right knowledge, practical skills and the mindset to adapt to change," she said, adding that education must produce responsible, innovative and compassionate citizens rather than merely academic achievers.

Describing teachers as the "builders of the nation", the minister urged educators to nurture critical thinking, creativity and ethical leadership among students.

She also called on schools and colleges to play a proactive role in tackling drug abuse among youth by strengthening awareness campaigns, counselling services and healthy extracurricular engagement.

Highlighting the need for skill-based education, Ittoo said students should be encouraged to explore careers in sectors such as horticulture, agriculture, hospitality and tourism, where Jammu and Kashmir has significant economic potential.

BJP Says Art 370 Repeal Ensured Equal Rights

Press Trust of India

SRINAGAR: Jammu and Kashmir unit of the BJP on Tuesday said the abrogation of Article 370 by the Centre on August 5, 2019 was a "historic step" which laid a firm foundation for peace, transparent governance, investment and inclusive development in the Union Territory.

On the eve of the seventh anniversary of the abrogation of Article 370, the BJP said the development has also ensured constitutional equality, social justice and complete integration of J-K with the rest of India.

BJP spokespersons Purnima Sharma and Rajni Sethi credited Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Union Home Minister Amit Shah for demonstrating decisive leadership and political courage in taking the landmark decision on August 5, 2019.

Both leaders asserted that the decision strengthened the vision of "Ek Bharat, Shreshtha Bharat" and laid a firm foundation for peace, transparent governance, investment and inclusive development in J&K.

"Prime Minister Modi fulfilled the commitment of one nation, one Constitution and one flag, while Amit Shah played a pivotal role in translating this vision into constitutional reality," Sharma said.

She said the Constitution of India became fully applicable to J-K, giving its citizens the same fundamental rights and constitutional safeguards available across the country.

Sharma, a former deputy mayor of Jammu, said several progressive central laws relating to education, women's safety, child protection, social justice, disability rights, transparency and accountability were extended or adapted to J-K.

Millions Defy War Fears as Arba'een Pilgrimage Draws Record Crowds

Trans Asia News

KARBALA- Undeterred by war, economic hardship and simmering regional tensions, millions of Muslims on Tuesday converged on the Iraqi holy city of Karbala for Arba'een, the world's largest annual peaceful gathering, commemorating the 40th day after the martyrdom of Imam Hussain (AS), the beloved grandson of Prophet Muhammad (PBUH).

The sea of black-clad mourners, many carrying flags and chanting elegies, stretched for miles along the historic 80-kilometre route between Najaf and Karbala, retracing the path taken by pilgrims for generations in remembrance of Imam Hussain's stand against tyranny in the Battle of Karbala in 680 AD.

Imam Hussain (AS), along with 72 loyal companions, that inluded his close family members, was martyred while resisting the vastly superior forces of Umayyad ruler Yazid, a sacrifice that has come to symbolize resistance against oppression, injustice and despotism for millions across the world.

NEARLY 5 MILLION FOREIGN PILGRIMS ENTER IRAQ

Despite concerns over security following months of US-Israeli war against Iran, Iraqi authorities said more than 4.88 million foreign pilgrims had entered Iraq since the beginning of Muharram, with arrivals continuing until Arba'een. Millions more travelled from across Iraq, making the pilgrimage one of the largest human gatherings on the planet.

Iran accounted for the largest contingent of foreign pilgrims.

Iran's Traffic Police Chief, Brigadier General Ahmad Karami-Asad, said nearly three million Iranians had crossed into Iraq through various border crossings in the run-up to Arba'een, highlighting the extraordinary scale of participation.

Volunteer groups lined the highways to Karbala, distributing free meals, drinking water, medical aid, and accommodation to pilgrims walking under scorching summer temperatures.

WAR CASTS SHADOW OVER SACRED JOURNEY

This year's pilgrimage unfolded against the backdrop of continued tensions following the recent US-Iran conflict.

The visit of Iranian Foreign Minister Abbas Araqchi to Najaf and Karbala underscored the delicate political climate, with Iraq continuing to balance its close relations with both Tehran and Washington while trying to avoid being drawn deeper into regional confrontation.

Some pilgrims observed that while Iranian participation remained overwhelming, the number of visitors from Europe, Arab countries, and other parts of the Islamic world appeared lower than in previous years.

Several attributed the decline to ongoing regional instability and travel concerns.

The pilgrimage also comes as Iraq grapples with severe economic challenges following disruptions to oil exports and renewed debate over the future of Iran-backed armed groups operating inside the country.

TEHRAN'S SYMBOLIC MARCH CARRIES POLITICAL MESSAGE

In Iran, hundreds of thousands unable to reach Karbala joined the annual symbolic procession known as "Those Left Behind from Arba'een," marching nearly 20 kilometers through Tehran to the revered shrine of Shah Abdol-Azim Hasani in Rey.

The procession, while deeply religious, also carried a strong political message.

Participants pledged that Iran would avenge the assassination of Ayatollah Sayyed Ali Khamenei, whom they described as a martyr of the recent US-Israeli war, declaring that retaliation against those responsible remained an irreversible national demand.

Mourners chanted anti-US and anti-Israel slogans, while some demonstrators trampled on American and Israeli flags. Similar rallies were reported across several Iranian cities.

A MESSAGE BEYOND MOURNING

For millions of pilgrims, Arba'een is far more than a religious observance.

Observers describe the pilgrimage as a global reaffirmation of the ideals for which Imam Hussein (AS) sacrificed his life—justice, dignity, and resistance against tyranny.

Year after year, regardless of war, sanctions, political upheaval, or economic hardship, the roads leading to Karbala continue to fill with millions determined to keep alive what many call the timeless message of Karbala—that truth must prevail over oppression, no matter the cost.

After Bankipur Shock, PK Keeps Up Attack on Samrat

Press Trust of India

PATNA: Jan Suraaj Party founder Prashant Kishor on Tuesday continued to gun for Bihar Chief Minister Samrat Choudhary, claiming that people of the state saw in the latter "BJP's attempt to bring back jungle raj reminiscent of RJD's rule".

Talking to the media a day after he smashed the BJP bastion of Bankipur on his electoral debut, Kishor said he was "proud" that the party was being headed by Nitin Nabin, who previously represented the constituency, but disapproved of the notion that the assembly seat was a "citadel" of the ruling party.

"No party can claim a constituency to be its citadel (garh). In a democracy, all citadels are built by the people and they can bring it down when they wish. The BJP must have realised this by now", said the former poll strategist who has wrested a seat from the saffron party that it had never lost since 1995.

The Jan Suraaj Party founder was also asked about his strident stance with regard to Choudhary, who in April this year became the first ever BJP leader to have become the Chief Minister of Bihar.

"I still hold that Samrat Choudhary should go. And this is the sentiment of the common people of Bihar. This has been proven in the by-poll to Bankipur. I have nothing personal against Samrat Choudhary, but Bihar wants to have a chief minister with a decent education and without a criminal record," said Kishor.

He pointed out, "It is not that I started highlighting only recently Choudhary's criminal antecedents, his lack of educational qualifications and his equivocation on even things like his date of birth. I have been speaking on these issues since much before the assembly elections in November last year."

"The fact is, in him people see a reflection of the jungle raj under the RJD, the opposition party with which Choudhary was associated while it was in power. Ever since coming to power, his language has been that of a ruler presiding over a police state. Nitish Kumar (JDU president) had been a Chief Minister for 20 years. Nobody heard him bragging that the police would kill those wearing gamcha (scarves) of a particular colour," he said.

The allusion was to a controversial speech by Choudhary in which he had spoken of identifying those carrying "hara gamcha" (green scarves), a veiled reference to RJD workers, with the help of AI and bringing them to justice.

Joshi Blazes to Early Lead at J&K Open with Stunning 63

Observer News Service

SRINAGAR - Bengaluru's Khalin Joshi lit up the scenic Royal Springs Golf Course with a sizzling eight-under 63 to seize a two-shot lead after the opening round of the INR 1 crore J&K Open 2026 on Tuesday.

The former Asian Tour winner rolled in nine birdies against just one bogey, producing the day's best round with a clinical display that immediately established him as the man to beat.

Chasing him are Ajeetesh Sandhu of Chandigarh and Gurugram rookie Harman Sachdeva, who carded matching six-under 65s. Sachdeva's bogey-free round was one of the standout performances of the day.

Joshi's round was sparked by two spectacular chip-ins—

first at the par-three third and again on the 15th—along with a hot putter. "I putted really well and chipped in twice. It's been a long time since I holed a chip, so that was special," Joshi said.

The 33-year-old, who won the Andhra Open earlier this season, said playing in Srinagar was as much a pleasure as a competition.

"We all treat coming to Srinagar like a holiday, with the golf being a bonus. The course is stunning—I don't think any picture can do justice to this place," he said.

Sandhu, a former Asian Tour champion, recovered from an uneasy start with eight birdies in a six-under round, saying an early birdie on the tough fourth hole changed the momentum.

"It's great to be back. The scenery is beautiful, the people are welcoming, and walking around this course takes your mind off the usual stresses of competitive golf," he said.

Teenager Harman Sachdeva continued his impressive rookie season with the only blemish-free card of the day, strengthening his growing reputation on the DP World PGTI.

Five players—Gaurav Pratap Singh, Divyanshu Bajaj, Angad Cheema, Rashid Khan and Czech golfer Stepan Danek—shared fourth place on three-under 68.

Organisers shortened the par-four 11th into a par-three after heavy rain over the past two days left the original fairway waterlogged.

The ₹1 crore J&K Open, supported by J&K Tourism, continues at Royal Springs Golf Course on Wednesday.