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Flood-Hit Rajouri, Poonch

CM Omar To Approach PM Modi For Relief Package

Says J&K lacks the financial capacity to bear full restoration cost



Observer News Service

Srinagar: Chief Minister Omar Abdullah on Thursday said he will personally approach Prime Minister Narendra Modi with a proposal seeking a special Central relief package for the flood-affected districts of Rajouri and Poonch, saying Jammu and Kashmir does not have the financial capacity to bear the entire cost of restoration on its own.

Addressing reporters after chairing a high-level review meeting on relief and rehabilitation in Rajouri, Abdullah said the government would prepare a detailed proposal for Central assistance, similar to the nearly 1,400 crore package sanctioned after last year's floods. "While there are some things we can manage on our own,

the reality is that Jammu and Kashmir does not have the financial capacity to bear the entire cost of restoration. As soon as the proposal is ready, I will personally submit it to the Prime Minister," he said.

The Chief Minister said floods, flash floods and cloud-bursts are recognised as natural disasters and do not require any separate declaration before the Union Government can extend assistance.

Reviewing the aftermath of the July 19 flash floods in Rajouri that claimed four lives, Abdullah said the government's response had focused on three phases: rescue, recovery and rehabilitation.

"Our first priority was to minimise the loss of human lives. We regret the loss of four precious lives in | [More on P6](#)

Nature Strikes Again

Gusty Winds, Rain Ravage Orchards In Shopian Weeks Before Harvest

Observer News Service

Srinagar: Just when apple growers believed they had weathered the worst of this year's climate-related challenges, strong gusty winds accompanied by heavy rain-fall dealt another severe blow, ravaging orchards across parts of south Kashmir's Shopian district on Thursday.

The untimely weather struck several villages, including Mantribugh, Hermain, Kachdura and Kaprin in the Zainapora constituency, damaging apple orchards at a critical stage when the fruit was nearing maturity and growers were preparing for the harvest.

Hundreds of orchardists reported that large quantities of apples were blown off trees while fruit-laden branches snapped under the force of the winds, wiping out months



PIC: AI GENERATED

of labour and investment within a matter of hours.

"We had already survived hailstorms and earlier spells of gusty winds and believed the difficult days were behind us. But this fresh storm has shattered our hopes just weeks before harvesting," several growers said.

The losses are expected to

be substantial, particularly because the fruit had almost reached its final stage of development.

"We have been nurturing these orchards for months with the hope of a good harvest. We invested heavily in sprays, fertilisers, irrigation and labour. Within a few hours, strong winds knocked

down a large quantity of apples from our trees," said Ghulam Mohammad, an orchardist from Hermain.

Another grower from Kaprin said several branches bearing mature fruit had broken under the impact of the winds.

"Our entire family's livelihood depends on apple cultivation. The fruit was almost ready, and we were expecting a good season. This unexpected calamity has left us devastated. We request the government to provide compensation at the earliest," he said.

An orchardist from Kachdura said many growers had borrowed money to meet cultivation expenses and now feared they would struggle to recover.

"We have already spent lakhs on fertilisers, pesticides, labour and orchard maintenance. Much of that investment | [More on P6](#)

Rain Hits Kashmir Parts, Shepherd Killed By Lightning

MeT warns of more rain, flash floods & landslides till August 11

Agencies

Widespread rainfall lashed several parts of Kashmir on Thursday, bringing relief from the recent spell of warm weather but also triggering weather-related incidents, including the death of a shepherd who was struck by lightning in

Kupwara district.

Officials said Shahmeer Ahmad Khatana, son of Abdul Rasheed Khatana and a resident of Warsun in Kralpora, was killed after being struck by lightning in the Dutibegh area of the Keran sector during heavy rainfall on Thursday morning. Police have taken cognisance of the incident. | [More on P6](#)

Residential-To-Commercial Building Conversions 'Growing Menace': HC

» Bars Commercial Use of Srinagar Property Being Run as Hotel

» Says Civic Authorities Often Turn A Blind Eye; Orders ACB To Produce NOC Records

M Ahmad

Srinagar: Expressing concern over what it described as the growing "menace" of building violations and the alleged inaction of civic authorities, the High Court of J&K and Ladakh has restrained the commercial use of a property in Srinagar allegedly being operated as a hotel and directed the Anti-Corruption Bureau (ACB) to collect records relating to the No Objection Certificates (NOCs) issued for the property.

A bench of Justice Rahul Bharti observed that rampant building violations were leaving law-abiding residents "mere spectators" while municipal and other civic authorities often appeared to be "turning a blind eye, by



design or default," allowing illegal constructions to reach completion and forcing aggrieved neighbours into prolonged litigation.

"The matter of building violations is becoming a menace which leaves any genuinely placed resident citizen acting, within the bounds of law, a mere spectator to the least botheration of the Municipality/Municipal Corporation/other Civic

Authorities, who are often found to be turning a blind eye, by design or default, so as to let the building violation attain its complexion and completion, thereby leaving an aggrieved resident or neighbour to resort to frustration and litigation simultaneously, and this case is perhaps reflective of that scenario."

The observations came while hearing a petition filed by Syed Bilal Ahmad Qadri, a resident of Reyazat Tang, Khanyar, who alleged that a building opposite his residence had been converted from residential to commercial use as Hotel Shady Oaks in violation of the sanctioned building permission.

The petitioner submitted that despite | [More on P6](#)

J&K To Get 28 IFS Promotion Slots After 13-Yr Gap

Agencies

Srinagar: In a significant move ending a 13-year wait, the Centre has cleared 28 promotion quota vacancies for the induction of Jammu and Kashmir officers into the Indian Forest Service (IFS), paving the way for eligible officers from the Union Territory to join the prestigious All India Service.

According to an official communication issued by the Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change (MoEFCC) to the Jammu and Kashmir Chief Secretary, the Ministry has determined 28 vacancies under the promotion quota of the AGMUT cadre's J&K segment and directed the Union Territory administration to initiate the selection process.

As per the communication, 14 vacancies pertain to the Select List of 2013, two to 2017,

six to 2018, three to 2019, and one each to the Select Lists of 2020, 2021 and 2023.

The Ministry has asked the UT Government to submit a proposal to the Union Public Service Commission (UPSC) for convening Selection Committee Meetings to prepare the Select Lists for the identified years.

"The Government of Union Territory of Jammu and Kashmir is requested to take further necessary action in accordance with the provisions of the Indian Forest Service (Appointment by Promotion) Regulations, 1966 and furnish a proposal to the Union Public Service Commission for convening Selection Committee meetings for preparation of Select Lists for the aforesaid years," the communication states.

The induction of officers from Jammu and Kashmir into the IFS through the | [More on P6](#)

Kashmir Bets On Rivers And Forests To Fix Its Budget Problem

Officials, bankers and scientists met in Srinagar to argue that saving nature might be the cheapest way to save money.

Sameer Hussain

Srinagar: A government that rebuilds the same road after every flood is a government stuck in a loop it never asked for. That is the loop Jammu and Kashmir keeps running, and on Thursday, inside the Amar Singh Club, a room full of scientists, bankers and officials sat down to break it.

The gathering closed out a four day international conference on Nature Based Solutions for Climate Resilience and Livelihoods in the Himalayas, hosted by the Islamic University of Science and Technology.

The final session had a formal name, a High Level Policy Dialogue on Fiscal Diversification and Resilience,



but the idea behind it was easy to follow: restore the wetlands, forests and rivers that once soaked up floods and slowed

landslides, and the state will spend less repairing damage after every disaster.

The case made in the room

went further than disaster relief. Speakers argued that healthy natural systems can strengthen the industries the region relies on and open up new jobs for young people who have struggled to find work.

A scene setting presentation laid out what stands in the way right now: thin data, planning that ignores conditions specific to each place, and projects that never quite reach the stage where they can get built or funded.

Prof. Shakil Ahmad Romshoo, vice chancellor of the university, opened the dialogue by saying nature based approaches should sit at the center of any development plan meant to hold up against a changing climate.

Prof. V.K. Gaur, | [More on P6](#)

2020 Mosque Murder: Convict Awarded Life Term

M Ahmad

Srinagar: A court in Srinagar on Thursday sentenced a man convicted of murdering an elderly person inside a mosque here to life imprisonment, holding that although the offence was heinous, it did not fall within the "rarest of rare" category warranting the death penalty.

The Court of the Principal District and Sessions Judge Srinagar, Haq Nawaz Zargar, on Monday convicted Ghulam Mohi-ud-Din Dar in the 2020 murder case of Abdul Gani Dar, who was killed inside the Markazi Ahle Hadees Masjid at Gawkadail in Srinagar.

According to the

prosecution, the conviction was secured through a comprehensive chain of evidence presented during the trial. The evidence included CCTV footage of the incident, corroborative eyewitness testimony, scientific and forensic evidence, recoveries made during the investigation and other incriminating circumstances, which collectively established the guilt of the accused beyond reasonable doubt.

In its judgment, the court observed that the accused appeared to have committed the assault believing his unlawful conduct would go unnoticed, unaware that the mosque premises were under CCTV surveillance. | [More on P6](#)

LS Passes Bill Enabling Charges On UPI Payments

Observer News Service

New Delhi: The Lok Sabha on Thursday passed a Bill amending the Payment and Settlement Systems Act, 2007, paving the way for the Central Government to notify charges on Unified Payments Interface (UPI) and other electronic payment modes.

The amendment, passed by voice vote without discussion amid disruptions in the House, removes the existing legal provision that bars banks and payment system providers from levying charges, including Merchant Discount Rate (MDR), on specified electronic payment modes.

The proposed amendment is part of the | [More on P6](#)



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Air Pollution Linked To Risks In Male Fetal Development: Study

Press Trust Of India

Pollution has long been associated with respiratory and cardiovascular diseases but a possible link between exposure to polluted air during pregnancy and its influence on foetal development, especially in the formation of the male reproductive system, has become a matter of concern for doctors and researchers. Doctors have called for more research in the area but point to growing evidence which suggests that certain pollutants may interfere with hormones critical to foetal growth, raising questions about their possible role in congenital conditions such as hypospadias.

Hypospadias, one of the most common congenital abnormalities affecting boys, occurs when the urethral opening develops on the underside of the penis instead of at the tip during fetal development.

Experts say the condition is believed to result from a combination of genetic and environmental factors and more attention is being paid to endocrine-disrupting chemicals present in air pollution and other environmental sources.

Dr Shandip Kumar Sinha, Director of Pediatric Surgery and Pediatric Urology at Medanta - The Medicity, Gurugram, said that development of the external genitalia depends on a finely balanced hormonal environment during early pregnancy.

"Any factor capable of disturbing these hormonal pathways, including exposure to endocrine-disrupting chemicals, is being

actively studied for its possible role in congenital conditions like hypospadias," Sinha said.

He, however, cautioned that existing evidence does not establish pollution as a direct cause of the condition.

"Hypospadias is a multifactorial condition. Genetic predisposition, maternal health, hormonal influences and environmental exposures may all contribute. In most children, it is not possible to identify a single cause," Sinha said.

He said male reproductive organs begin forming during the first trimester of pregnancy, when hormones such as testosterone play a crucial role in normal genital development.

"Laboratory and epidemiological studies suggest that certain endocrine-disrupting chemicals can interfere with hormonal signalling during this critical developmental window. However, the current scientific evidence is not sufficient to conclude that air pollution alone causes hypospadias. More large-scale, long-term studies are needed to better understand this association," the doctor said.

Dr Prabudh Goel, Professor of Paediatric Surgery at AIIMS, Delhi, said hypospadias, in which the urinary opening develops on the underside of the penis instead of the tip, is among the most common congenital abnormalities in boys and its incidence appears to be rising globally.

"The condition results from a combination of genetic factors, inadequate androgen ac-

tivity during a critical 8-to-16-week period of foetal development, and increasingly, exposure to endocrine-disrupting chemicals (EDCs) present in plastics, pesticides, industrial pollutants and polluted air.

"These chemicals can cross the placenta, interfere with hormonal signalling and may even alter epigenetic mechanisms that regulate gene expression, potentially affecting not only fetal development but future generations," he said.

Prenatal exposure to EDCs has also been linked to undescended testes, impaired sperm quality and a higher risk of testicular cancer in males, while in females it has been associated with early puberty, menstrual disorders, polycystic ovarian syndrome and reduced fertility, Goel said.

"Although more research is needed to establish direct causation, reducing unnecessary exposure to harmful chemicals, avoiding heating food in plastic containers, limiting pesticide exposure and ensuring regular antenatal care are prudent preventive measures," he said.

Sinha said air pollution should be viewed as one of several environmental risks rather than the sole factor behind congenital abnormalities.

Expectant mothers should focus on good antenatal care, adequate nutrition and avoiding unnecessary exposure to pollutants, tobacco smoke and harmful chemicals wherever possible. While reducing air pollution remains a public health priority, pregnant women should not panic, as most

pregnancies result in healthy babies," he said.

Doctors said hypospadias affects an estimated one in every 150-200 male births globally and is usually detected during routine examination soon after birth.

Sinha said the condition can be corrected successfully through reconstructive surgery, ideally performed between nine months and two years of age.

He stressed that parents should seek early evaluation by a paediatric surgeon if hypospadias is suspected, as timely treatment offers excellent functional and cosmetic outcomes in most children while reducing potential psychological concerns later in life.

Dr Raman Kumar, Chairman of the Academy of Family Physicians of India, said environmental health must be viewed as an integral part of maternal and child healthcare. "Pregnancy is a particularly sensitive period, and reducing exposure to harmful environmental factors, wherever feasible, is a sensible preventive approach."

"While an individual has limited control over ambient air quality, simple measures such as avoiding outdoor activity during periods of severe pollution, ensuring good indoor ventilation, avoiding tobacco smoke and unnecessary chemical exposure, and adhering to regular antenatal check-ups can help support a healthy pregnancy," he said. At the same time, improving air quality requires sustained public health and policy interventions, he added.

PUBLIC NOTICE

I have applied for the issuance of 8th pass DOB certificate from Govt Girls High Secondary Magam . If anybody has any objection in this regard he/she may file them in the above mentioned office within seven days. After that no objection shall be entertained.
Syed Irfanah DOB15-03-1996 Roll No:161
D/o Syed Hassan Shah R/O Tongliheran BMG

PUBLIC NOTICE

I have applied for the issuance of DOB certificate in favour of my daughter Nargis Ramzan who was born on 05-03-2013. If anybody has any objection in this regard he/she may file them in the office of the BDO Wailoo within seven days. After that no objection shall be entertained.
Sara Begum
M/o Nargis Ramzan
R/o Mehmoodpora Tehsil Kunzer fko

PUBLIC NOTICE

I, am applying for the Seed and Fertilizer Licence, if anybody have any objection in this regard he/she may contact the same at Chief Agriculture Officer Baramulla within 07 days from the publication of this notice. After that no objection shall be entertained.
Ahtisham Mehraj
S/o Mehraj ud din Mir
R/o Gundbal Andergam Tehsil pattan District Baramulla

PUBLIC NOTICE

I, am applying for the Pesticides Licence, if anybody have any objection in this regard he/she may contact the same at Plant Protection Officer Lal Mandi within 07 days from the publication of this notice. After that no objection shall be entertained.
Ahtisham Mehraj
S/o Mehraj ud din Mir
R/o Gundbal Andergam Tehsil pattan District Baramulla fko

PUBLIC NOTICE

I intend to rectify the spelling of the mother's name recorded in the school records of my son, Mohammad Hasnain Mir, studying in Class 2nd, Section: Green, Roll No. 6, Session 2026, at Green Valley Educational Institute.
The mother's name has inadvertently been recorded as "Samia-yaseen" instead of the correct spelling, "Samia-yasin."
If anyone has any objection in this regard, they may submit the same to the Principal of the institute within 7 days from the date of publication of this notice. Failing which, it shall be deemed that there is no objection from any person or authority.
Name of Parent: Imtiyaz Hussain Mir
Address: Khaiwan,
Narwara Eidgah, Srinagar – 190002, J&K 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 Mohammad Kaiser Mir s/o Javid Ahmad Mir R/o Ganjipora Buran Tehsil Pattan District Baramulla. The date of birth as per school record is 30/06/2012 . 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 Sariwarpora

Sub... Issuance of registration order in respect of delayed birth..
PUBLIC NOTICE

The registrar birth BDO Wailoo has submitted a case file pertaining to birth of Mohammad Kaiser Mir s/o Javid Ahmad Mir R/o Serue Guo Dangerpora Tehsil Pattan District Baramulla. The date of birth as per school record is 10/01/2012 . 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 Sariwarpora fko

PUBLIC NOTICE

The name & Parentage of my ward has been wrongly written in his adhaar card bearing no 3288 2950 7853 as Taamil Imtiyaz C/o Imtiyaz Ahmad Teli instead of correct name and parentage Arham Imtiyaz C/o Imtiyaz Ahmad Tali . 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 Tali
F/o Arham Imtiyaz
R/o R/o Hari Utnu Tehsil Tangmarg fko

PUBLIC NOTICE

The name of my ward has been wrongly written in his/he adhaar card bearing no 890045571292 as Huzaib Fayaz instead of his correct name Huzaif Fayaz . 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..
Fayz Ahamd Choipan
F/o Huzaif Fayaz
R/o Tarahama Tehsil Kwarhama fko

PUBLIC NOTICE

I, Madiha Gulzar, D/o Gulzar Ahmad Reshi, R/o Takiya Batpora, Tehsil Kunzer, Block Kunzer, do hereby inform the general public that my Date of Birth has been incorrectly recorded in my Aadhaar Card as 01/01/2011 instead of my correct Date of Birth, 01/10/2011.
I am applying before the competent authority for correction of the above error in my Aadhaar records. If any person has any objection to this correction, they may submit the same before the concerned authority within the stipulated period. Otherwise, the correction shall be treated as genuine and valid.

PUBLIC NOTICE

I have applied for the issuance of Death certificate of my father Gh Mohd Waza S/o Ab Jabbar Waza who passed away IN 1999. If anybody has any objection in this regard he/she may file them in the Office of the BDO Pattan within seven days. After that no objection shall be entertained.
Fatima Begum W/o Gh Mohd Waza Fko

PUBLIC NOTICE

I, Mohammad Akbir Allaie, S/o Ghulam Hassan Allaie, R/o Sondipora, Budgam, Jammu & Kashmir, hereby notify the general public and all concerned that my name and father's name have been wrongly recorded in the bank records pertaining to my Bank Account No. 0078040100766610. The particulars are as under:Incorrect Name: Mohd Akbar AliaCorrect Name: Mohammad Akbir AllaieIncorrect Father's Name: Gh Hassan AlaiCorrect Father's Name: Ghulam Hassan Allaiei have requested the concerned bank authorities to correct/update my name and father's name in their records as per my Aadhaar Card and other valid identity documents.Any person having any objection regarding the aforesaid correction may submit the same before the concerned authority within 7 days from the date of publication of this notice, failing which no objection shall be entertained thereafter.

Sd/-Mohammad Akbir Allaie
S/o Ghulam Hassan Allaie
R/o Sondipora, Budgam,
J&KAccount No.: 0078040100766610 mcb

BEFORE THE HON'BLE COURT OF MUNISFF AT MAGAM.

In the case of:
Jamia Masjid Rawathpora Khag, Through its executive body, 1. Peer Bilal Ahmad Shah (Chairman) S/o Peer Hafizullah Shah. 2. Waseem Ahmad Thokar. (Treasurer) S/o Gh Nabi Thokar. 3. Adil Hassan Thokar. S/o Gh Hassan Thokar. 4. Peer Younis Rashid. S/o peer AB Rashid. All Residents of Rawathpora. Tehsil Khag District Budgam.

V/sCaveator
Public At Large. Non Caveators

In the matter of: Caveat under sec 14B-A cpc.
May it please your honour;
The caveator humbly submits as under:
1. That the caveators are the executive members of Jamia Masjid Rawathpora and intends to renovate the said masjid and the caveators apprehends that the non-caveators may file a suit or other proceedings against the said masjid/caveators and alongside they may file an application for grant of interim relief in exparte which if granted would put the caveators in utmost difficulty and hardship.
2. That the caveators through the instant motion enter their appearance and prays for an opportunity of being heard before passing any order in exparte, in the event any suit or other proceeding is instituted by non-caveators against the caveator.
3. That as a part of procedural requirement the copy of the caveat has been dispatched to the non caveators through registered post. In the premises, it is therefore humbly prayed that this caveat may be registered and the caveators may be provided an opportunity of being heard, before passing any order in exparte, in the event any suit or other proceedings is instituted against them by the non caveators.
06/08/2026
bmg Caveators through counsel
Adv Shaista Wani & Lone Ishfaq

PUBLIC NOTICE

It is here by notified that my name has been incorrectly mentioned in my Adhaar card as AMANAT ASHRAF KHAN bearing Account no 2173 4092 5830 while my correct name is MOHAMMAD AMANAT KHAN S/O MOHAMMAD ASHRAF KHAN which needs to be corrected if anybody having any objection in this regard he /she may file his /her objection in the office concerned adhaar authority of India within seven days from the publication of this notice after that no objection will be entertained
Name.....MOHAMMAD AMANAT KHAN
S/O ... MOHAMMAD ASHARAF KHAN
R/O ...DOLIPORA
Tehsil Kreeri
Dist....BARAMULLA fko

THE JAMMU AND KASHMIR BOARD OF SCHOOL EDUCATION NEW CAMPUS BEMINA SRINAGAR

I Have passed in secondary School Examination class 10th under Roll no 127073079 Annual regular 2025 through the Jammu and Kashmir Board Of school Education. The error has been committed by wrongly in the school admission records against my name Ayan Sultan Gojree instead Ayan Sultan Sheer Gojree. Now, I have applied for the correction/rectification of error in the Jammu and Kashmir Board of School Education New campus Bemina Srinagar. If any person have any objection in this regard, may file the same in the office of the Deputy Secretary Certificates-KD within seven days from the date of publication of this notice, after the expiry of said period no objection will be entertained.



This is published for the information of general public.
Name: Ayan Sultan Sheer Gojree
Father's name: MohammadSultan Sheer Gojree
Mother's name: Atiq Begum
Date of birth: 28/08/2009
Residence: Handwara fko

GOVERNMENT OF JAMMU & KASHMIR OFFICE OF THE TEHSILDAR KREERI (Executive Magistrate 1st Class)

Subject: Issuance of Registration Orders in respect of delayed Birth/ Death certificate.

PUBLIC NOTICE

The Registrar Births and Deaths (Block Development Officer Wagoora)/ chokedar hassubmitted case file pertaining to Birth of BASHIR AHMAD KHAN S/O WALI MOHAMMAD KHAN R/O... KREERI Tehsil KREERI Distt. Baramulla having verified the date of Birth as 11/01/1970 event has been shown to be occurred at this Home for issuance of delay order .In this connection if anyone have any objection to the issuance of delay order of Birth certificate shall present his/her claim this office within 07 days, after that no objection shall be entertained

fko Executive Magistrate 1st Class
KREERI

Union Territory of Jammu & Kashmir
JAL SHAKTI DEPARTMENT
Office of the Executive Engineer FBI Division Tangmarg
Email Address, exen-fbidtangmarg@jk.gov.in

e-TENDER NOTICE No. 10 of 2026-27 FBI Division Tangmarg
For and on behalf of the Lt. Governor of UT Jammu and Kashmir e-tenders on Percentage basis are invited from approved registered eligible contractors with J&K UT, Govt. for following works: -

S. No	Name of work	Advt. Cost of Work (In Lacs)	Earnest Money (Amount in Rupees)	Time of completion	Class of Contract	Cost of Tender document (Amount in Rupees)	M.H. of Account	Ref.to AAA No	Position Of Funds
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
1	Yal Khul-Construction of RCC lined channel from RD 0 to RD 600 m	93.09 Lacs	1,86,180	105 days	AAY	1600/-	4701-UT Capex	09-SE/Hyd./DB/ of 2026-27, Dat-	Assured
2	Ferozpora Nallah- Construction of Protection work by way of Gabion work including RCC bunds on L.S.DS Chanapora Bridge	50.69 Lacs	1,01,380	90 days	AAY	1000/-	4711-UT Capex		Assured
3	Construction of cement concrete lining wall near the land of Mohd maqbool mir and others at pan-dithpora bala, minor of khoi khul Tangmarg (Afresh)	2.50 Lacs	5000/-	25 Days	DEE	200/-	District Capex	121/DDC of 2026, Dat-ed:- 08-07-2026	Assured

Position of T.S No.-: Granted

1	Publishing date:	05-08-2026	05:00 PM
2	Download date start:	05-08-2026	06:00 PM
3	Bid Submission date start	06-08-2026	10:00 AM
4	Bid Submission date Ends:	20-08-2026	04:00 PM
5	Date of Opening	21-08-2026	11:00 AM

Finance Department Circular No.-: FD-Code/290/2026, Dated:- 22-05-2026.
Chief Engineer KMR, Jal Shakti (I&FC) Department Srinagar's No.-: CE/I&FC/DB/6518-47, Dated:- 16-06-2026.

Terms and Conditions: -
1. Scanned copy of crossed bank cheque wherein the requisite tender document fee (TDF) has been paid into the designated account of the Chief Engineer, Kashmir Irrigation & Flood Control department Srinagar, A/c No.-: 0367010200000608, IFS code: JAKA-OTANKEE, J&K Bank Ltd. Tankipora Branch shall be uploaded by the prospective bidder.
2. Scanned copy of crossed bank cheque wherein the requisite Earnest Money (EMD) has been paid into the designated account of the Chief Engineer, Kashmir Irrigation & Flood Control Department Srinagar, A/c No.-: 0367010200000608, IFS code: JAKAOTANKEE, J&K Bank Ltd. Tankipora Branch shall be uploaded by the prospective bidder.
3. The contractor has to arrange all key construction and any other material required for the execution and successfully completion of the works, as per orders of Engineer in charge, on his own. However, if any such material is available in the divisional stores, the same shall be supplied on stock issue rates prevailing at the time of the supply of such material including rapdite etc. if required at site.
4. Funding for the works listed at S. Nos. 1 and 2 shall be phased over a minimum period of two years.
5. No tender document will qualify if the tendered cost of the works, works out below 35% of advst. cost. The said tender will be rejected out rightly.
10. The NIT consisting of qualifying information, eligibility criteria, specification, Bill of Quantities (B.O.Q) set of terms and conditions of contract and other details can be seen/downloaded from the Department's website www.jktenders.gov.in..
11. All other terms and conditions shall be the same as laid down in the PWD Form No.-25 (double).
12. Taxes in vogue under new tax regime shall be deducted at sources at the time of payment i.e, IT/GST.
13. In case of any typographical error or confusion found in the advertised rate list the items quantities Rate/nomenclature etc. shall be deemed as per the proposed estimate and SSR of 2022.
14. If the work is not completed within the stipulated time, penalty @ 10% of allotted amount will be levied and deducted from contractor's claims.
15. In no case, the quantity of work executed shall exceed the allotted quantities, the contractor is himself / herself responsible for such extension and no payment in excess of allotted cost shall be paid by this division.
16. The date of start of the work shall be reckoned as communicated by concerned Asstt. Executive Engineer.

No-: FBID/CC/2932-49
DIPK-4206/26 Dated:- 06-08-2026

Executive Engineer,
FB I Division Tangmarg



CITY

KU Begins Capacity-Building Prog on Gender-Inclusive Leadership

Observer News Service

Srinagar: The Centre for Women's Studies and Research (CWSR), University of Kashmir (KU), in collaboration with the Department of Students' Welfare (DSW), commenced a two-day national capacity-building programme on the theme "Young Leaders on the Move: Towards Viksit Bharat 2027 – Gender-Inclusive Transformative Leadership" at the Main Campus.

The programme aims to provide participants with a comprehensive understanding of gender-related policies, institutional frame-

confidence and a sense of responsibility to contribute to the development of an inclusive society. Gender equality should remain an essential part of how we understand leadership and development," she said.

Dean Academic Affairs KU, Prof. Shariefuddin Pirzada, emphasised the importance of preparing students to engage with emerging national and global challenges through informed and inclusive perspectives.

Registrar KU, Prof. Naseer Iqbal, in his remarks, noted that gender-inclusive approaches can contribute to



works and leadership approaches at national and international levels. It also seeks to encourage young students and scholars to examine the role of gender-inclusive leadership in shaping equitable and sustainable social development.

Speaking at the inaugural session, Vice-Chancellor KU, Prof. Nilofer Khan, said that gender-inclusive leadership requires creating opportunities for young people to participate meaningfully in social, academic and institutional decision-making.

"Young people must be equipped with knowledge,

more responsive institutions and broader participation in development processes.

Delivering the keynote address, Professor Emeritus Dr. Pam Rajput, Founder Director of the Centre for Women's Studies and Development, Panjab University, Chandigarh, and former Member of the High-Level Committee on the Status of Women in India constituted by the GOI said that the vision of Viksit Bharat 2047 provides a broad development framework, but its realisation requires sustained attention to gender equality and women's participation.

CS Inaugurates IFAD Project Partners Learning Forum 2026 at SKICC

Observer News Service

Srinagar: The two day IFAD Project Partners' Learning Forum 2026, organised by the Mission Directorate, Jammu & Kashmir Competitiveness Improvement Project (JKCIP)/Holistic Agriculture Development Programme (HADP) under the Agriculture Production Department, commenced today at the Sher-i-Kashmir International Conference Centre (SKICC), Srinagar.

The Learning Forum, centred on the theme "Celebrating the International Year of Women Farmers: Empowering Women, Transforming Agriculture," was attended by the senior government officials, representatives of the International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD), Project Directors from IFAD-supported projects across India,

development professionals, Farmer Producer Organisations (FPOs), entrepreneurs and other stakeholders to deliberate on innovative approaches towards inclusive and sustainable agricultural development.

The inaugural session was presided over by Chief Secretary, Atal Dulloo, who formally inaugurated the Learning Forum and addressed the gathering.

In his keynote address, the Chief Secretary highlighted the transformative role of technology, innovation and institutional convergence in strengthening the agriculture sector. He emphasised the need for greater collaboration among the government institutions, development partners and farming communities to build resilient and market-oriented agricultural systems.

97% Smart City Projects Completed: Centre

'Jammu completes 125 of 127 projects, Srinagar 157 of 161'

Agencies

Srinagar: The Union government on Thursday informed the Lok Sabha that 282 Smart City projects were taken up in Jammu and Srinagar under the Smart Cities Mission. Of these, 125 out of 127 projects in Jammu and 157 out of 161 projects in Srinagar have been completed, reflecting an overall completion rate of over 97 per cent.

Replying to a question

raised by MPs Malvika Devi and Dhairyasheel Sambhariao Mane, Union Minister for Housing and Urban Affairs Manohar Lal said the Smart Cities Mission has achieved significant progress across the country, with 7,790 of 8,064 projects, worth 1.56 lakh crore, completed as on March 31, 2026. The Minister said all 100 Integrated Command and Control Centres (ICCCs) have also been established.



Officials of NBT & District Admin Felicitated for Successful Conduct of Chinar Book Festival

Observer News Service

Srinagar: The District Administration Srinagar organized a felicitation function to acknowledge and appreciate the efforts of Officers and Officials of National Book Trust, District Administration and Police involved in the successful conduct of the Chinar Book Festival.

Deputy Commissioner (DC) Srinagar, Akshay Labroo, was the Chief Guest of the occasion who felicitated the Director National Book Trust, Yuvraj Malik, Chief Convenor, Chinar Book Festival Amit Wanchoo, Coordinator, National Book Trust, Shoba Kapoor, Joint Commissioner SMC, Nuzhat Khurshid, Additional CEO SSSL, Suhail ul Islam, Dy SP Traffic Police, Mehboob ul Haq, Chief Education Officer, Ghulam Mohi-Ud-Din,

Executive Engineer Water Works, Aijaz Rafiq Shah, Executive Engineer, KPDC, Syed Abrar, Operations Head SKICC, Shahnawaz Ahmad, GM SRTC, Habib Ulla Reshi, SHO Nishat, Parvaiz Wani, Teacher BHSS Gulababagh, Nazrana for their dedicated efforts, effective coordination and commitment that contributed towards the smooth and successful organization of the mega literary event.

The felicitation event was attended by SSP Traffic Police, Aijaz

“
literary events
like the Chinar Book
Festival provide an
excellent platform
for students and
youth to engage with
books, authors and
diverse ideas, thereby
nurturing creativity,
knowledge and
intellectual growth

He said that the successful conduct of such a large-scale event was a result of collective efforts, meticulous planning, inter-departmental coordination and dedicated teamwork.

The DC stated that such events are essential to properly channelize the talent and energy of the younger generation, particularly students, and encourage them to develop a reading habit. He added that literary events like the Chinar Book Festival provide an excellent platform for students and youth to engage with books, authors and diverse ideas, thereby nurturing creativity, knowledge and intellectual growth.

The DC lauded the Officers for their professionalism, sense of responsibility and commitment towards creating a vibrant platform for readers, writers, publishers, students and literature enthusiasts. He emphasized that such events not only promote the culture of reading but also provide opportunities for intellectual exchange and engagement among diverse sections of society.

The felicitated Officers expressed gratitude to the District Administration for recognizing their efforts and reaffirmed their commitment to continue working with the same zeal and dedication towards successful implementation of Government initiatives

Ahmad, Additional Deputy Commissioner, Mir Imtiyaz Ul Aziz, Additional Deputy Commissioner, Aadil Fareed, SP East, Neha Jain, Chief Planning Officer, Fayaz Ahmad Dar, and other concerned.

Addressing the gathering, the Deputy Commissioner appreciated the role played by various Departments and teams in ensuring seamless arrangements during the festival.

Government of Jammu & Kashmir

OFFICE OF THE EXECUTIVE ENGINEER (R&B) DIVISION AWANTIPORA.

NOTICE INVITING E-TENDER (MACADAM WORKS)

NIT No: 83/EEA/R&B of 2026-27/4413-23

Dated: 06-08-2026

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

S.No.	Name of Work	Adv. Cost (Rs. in Lacs)	InCost (In Rupees)	1/Doc.Earnest money (In Rupees)	Time of completion	M.H of Account	Class of tractor	Con-AAA & Dated
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
1	Macadamization of 1.58.24	1600/-	2% of Adv cost	15 days	C&T of Budget 2026-	CapexAAY	95-SE/PS/	of 2026 Dated: 12.06.2026.

Position of AAA: -

Accorded

Position of T.S:-

Accorded

Position of funds:-

Committed

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

1	Date of Issue of Tender Notice	06-08-2026
2	Period of downloading of bidding documents	06-08-2026
3	Bid submission Start Date	07-08-2026
4	Bid Submission End Date	14-08-2026 4:00 PM
5	Date & time of opening of Bids (Online)	15-08-2026 12:00 PM

1.

Every participating contractor to mandatorily disclose the bank account number which is linked with their GSTIN at the time of bid submission. No payments shall be released by the Government Department/Agency to any other bank account except the one linked with the GST registered number of the successful bidder. (As per circular No. 01(ADM) FD of 2025 Dated 08-07-2025 of J&K Finance Department)

(The participating contractor may disclose his Bank Account as per the format, devised as Annexure- A of the NIT and submit/upload the same accordingly at the time of submission of the bid).

2.

Bids must be accompanied with cost of Tender document/Tender Fee to be deposited in Cash in Centralized Designated Pooling JK Bank Account Bearing No: 0470010200000099, IFSC: JAKAOLALANG)

(In case the participating bidder wishes to deposit the requisite amount physically at any branch of the Bank other than using UPI or any other mobile application, the said bidder has to upload the Transaction Receipt as per devised format forming Annexure-2 to this NIT, duly signed by the concerned Branch Manager with proper seal.)

3.

All the bidders must deposit Earnest money /Bid security equal to 2% of advertised cost in Cash in Centralized Designated Pooling JK Bank Account Bearing No: 0470010200000099, IFSC: JAKAOLALANG)

(In case the participating bidder wishes to deposit the requisite amount physically at any branch of the Bank other than using UPI or any other mobile application, the said bidder has to upload the Transaction Receipt as per devised format forming Annexure-2 to this NIT, duly signed by the concerned Branch Manager with proper seal.)

4.

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

(In case the participating bidder wishes to deposit the requisite amount physically at any branch of the Bank other than using UPI or any other mobile application, the said bidder has to upload the Transaction Receipt as per devised format forming Annexure-2 to this NIT, duly signed by the concerned Branch Manager with proper seal.)

5.

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

6.

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

Sd/-

Draftsman

DIPK-4227/26

Sd/-

Tech. Officer

dated: 06-08-2026

Sd/-

Executive Engineer

R&B Division Awantipora.

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

AIRPORTS

SHIEK UL ALAM AIRPORT: 01942303311

RAILWAYS

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

HIGHWAY STATUS

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

HIJRI
CALENDAR

23 Safar
1448

PRAYERS

FAJR	4: 12
ZUHR	12:37
ASR	5: 28
Magrib	7: 30
ISHA	9: 01

This Day In History

- 626 - Battle at Constantinople: Slavic/Persians/Avarenvloot defeated
- 936 - Otto I the Great becomes King of Germany
- 1420- Construction begins on the dome of Florence Cathedral, designed by Renaissance architect Filippo Brunelleschi
- 1479- Battle of Guinegate: Emperor Maximilian I vs King Louis XI
- 1575- Spanish troops conquer Oudewater, almost all inhabitants died
- 1606- Possible first performance of Shakespeare's tragedy Macbeth, performed in the Great Hall at Hampton Court Palace for King James I
- 1620- Battle at Ponts-the-Ce, Poitou: French king Louis XIII defeats his mother Marie de Medici
- 1714- The Battle of Gangut: the first important victory of the Russian Navy during the Great Northern War against Sweden
- 1782- Commander of the Continental Army, George Washington, creates two Honorary Badges of Distinction and a Badge of Military Merit (now the Purple Heart). First time military awards are presented to common soldiers.
- 1789- US Congress creates the Department of War and the United States Lighthouse Establishment
- 1802- Napoleon orders re-instatement of slavery on St Domingue (Haiti)
- 1819- Battle of Boyacá; Bolívar defeats Spanish in Colombia
- 1864- Battle of Moorefield, West Virginia
- 1882- Hatfields of south West Virginia and McCoys of east Kentucky feud, 100 wounded or die
- 1884- Germany annexes Angra Pequena / German South West-Africa (modern Namibia)
- 1885- Five German warships anchor off Zanzibar
- 1904- Train derails on bridge in Eden, Colorado, during a flash flood, kills 96
- 1908- The first train to travel the length of New Zealand's North Island 'main trunk line', leaves Wellington
- 1912- Progressive (Bull Moose) Party nominates Theodore Roosevelt for US President
- 1914 - Russia invades East Prussia
- 1925 - League of Nation advises against Turk/Iraqi division of Mosoelgebied
- 1927 - Peace Bridge between US and Canada dedicated
- 1933 - The Iraqi Government slaughters over 3,000 Assyrians in the village of Sumail. The day becomes known as Assyrian Martyrs Day.
- 1944 - US 3rd Army reaches suburbs of Brest, Brittany
- 1944 - IBM dedicates the first program-controlled calculator, the Automatic Sequence Controlled Calculator (known best as the Harvard Mark I)
- 1956 - British government sends 3 aircraft carriers to Egypt
- 1956 - Dynamite transport explodes in Colombia; about 1200 die
- 1956 - 51-year-old Satchel Paige (Miami Marlins) wins a game before the largest crowd in minor league history, 57,000 at Miami's Orange Bowl; International League: Marlins 6-2 v Columbus Jets
- 1959 - Explorer 6 transmits 1st TV photo of Earth from space
- 1961 - Cosmonaut Gherman Titov circles Earth for a full day in Vostok 2
- 1961 - Soviet premier Khrushchev predicts USSR economy will surpass US
- 1962 - USSR performs nuclear test at Eastern Kazakh/Semipalaitinsk USSR
- 1964 - Turkey begins air attack on Greek Cypriots
- 1965 - Lee Kuan Yew, Prime Minister of Singapore signs a separation agreement with Malaysia, after 2 years of political union
- 1976 - US Viking 2 goes into Martian orbit after 11-month flight from Earth
- 1976 - Scientists in Pasadena, California, announce Viking I found strongest indications to date of possible life on Mars
- 1981 - "The Washington Star" ceases all operations after 128 years of publication.
- 1985 - Takao Doi, Mamoru Mohri and Chiaki Mukai are chosen to be Japan's first astronauts.

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KO VIEW

A New
Climate Chapter

Kashmir has just wrapped up a climate summit that finally broke the ice on the part often missing from public discussion. People have heard enough about melting glaciers, shrinking wetlands and rising flood risks. This gathering chose a different path. It focused on answers, and that comes as welcome news for a Himalayan region living through a changing climate with growing uncertainty about its water, land and future. The most encouraging part of the four-day meeting at the Islamic University of Science and Technology was its belief that the land itself can help heal many of the problems people created over decades. Instead of searching for another engineering fix, the discussions turned toward forests that hold hillsides together, wetlands that soak up floodwater and rivers that flow better when floodplains remain open. Nature was treated as a partner instead of an obstacle. That idea sounds simple because it is simple. Kashmir spent years trying to force rivers into narrower channels, build over wetlands and clear slopes that once stood protected by trees. The valley has paid heavily for those choices through floods, landslides and rising public spending on repairs. Looking after natural systems gives the region a better chance to reduce damage before it begins. Science presented during the summit added fresh purpose to that message. Himalayan glaciers have already lost a large share of their ice, snowfall patterns continue to shift and the rivers that support farms, homes and power stations will follow a different direction in the years ahead. Those findings make one point hard to ignore: healthy ecosystems are no longer only about wildlife or scenic beauty. They have become part of the region's economic future. Another reason this summit stood apart was the people gathered in one room. Researchers, government departments, financial institutions and community voices looked at the same challenge through different lenses and arrived at a shared direction. That type of thinking gives climate action a stronger foundation because lasting change grows when knowledge, public planning and financial support move together. Kashmir has hosted many meetings where climate change dominated the agenda. This one left a different impression because it refused to stop at describing the crisis. It spent its energy asking what can still be done while there is still time to act. That change in thinking may prove to be its biggest achievement.

Kashmir's Family Secret

Some of the deepest wounds suffered by young Kashmiri women are inflicted inside their own homes, while relatives and neighbours choose silence over intervention.



Haziqah Showkat

A phone call interrupted my work last week. A colleague said a young girl wanted a lawyer because she had reached the point where a courtroom felt safer than the place where she grew up. That request exposed a truth Kashmir spends enormous energy hiding. Some of the gravest threats facing young women come from the people entrusted with their care, while relatives, neighbours and friends witness the damage and look the other way. She described years of beatings, humiliation and neglect. Medical treatment remained beyond reach because nobody considered her suffering worthy of attention. She finally spoke after questioning her father's late-night calls to another woman. Instead of confronting the father, the family turned on his daughter. Relatives chose to protect the perverted patriarch's reputation, stood by him, and forced the young woman out of her own home. Days later, another shocking case reached and rattled me. A father had allegedly tried to set his daughter on fire after she confronted him about an extramarital relationship. The person entrusted with her care became the source of mortal danger. Anyone tempted to dismiss these cases as isolated tragedies misses the larger truth. They expose a culture that shields power inside families even when that power turns violent. Kashmir celebrates its hospitality, cultural heritage and moral traditions with genuine pride. Those traditions enrich many lives. They also create convenient cover for conversations nobody wants to begin. Public virtue often shares space with private cruelty. People speak endlessly about preserving family prestige while avoiding a far more important question: What happens after the front door closes? Many girls grow up under constant surveillance instead of trust. Parents monitor friendships, challenge opinions, control movement and dictate personal choices. Affection becomes conditional, while approval depends on obedience. Independent thinking attracts labels such as arrogant, disrespectful and disobedient. Respect slowly loses its meaning and becomes another name for submission. Violence grows stronger because obedience earns approval. Bruises eventually fade, but emotional abuse leaves wounds that medical scans never detect. Girls hear repeated messages that they hold less value than others. Families compare them with siblings, describe them as burdens, blame them for domestic conflict, insult them before relatives and leave them feeling guilty simply for existing. Years of that treatment feed anxiety, depression, panic attacks, insomnia, eating disorders and suicidal thoughts. Many women seeking psychological care first survived long campaigns of emotional abuse during childhood. Psychological care receives little serious attention inside many families. Girls asking for professional help often hear instructions to pray harder,



endure silently and accept their circumstances. Emotional pain becomes something girls are expected to accept instead of heal from. Families respond with blame instead of compassion, protecting appearances while young women suffer alone. Mothers occupy the most painful place in this story. Deep love for a daughter often exists alongside fear built through decades of conditioning. Many women spent years surviving controlling marriages and learned that compliance protected the household better than confrontation. That message passes from one generation to the next. A wife learns to save a marriage before standing up for her child. A daughter's emotional well-being gives way to family prestige, while girls grow up watching the women they trust most stand helpless beside their pain. Financial dependence leaves many women with few choices. Divorce often brings blame. Gossip targets women who speak against abusive husbands, while isolation follows those who challenge male authority at home. One question keeps many trapped: "What will people say?" Fear of public opinion has destroyed more lives than open cruelty. Smiling family photographs and polite greetings often conceal untreated anxiety, hidden bruises and children searching for affection that never came. Neighbours recognise the signs, relatives hear arguments through shared walls, and friends notice withdrawal and fear. Abuse survives because people dismiss it as a private concern instead of recognising a collective failure. Girls continue hearing phrases that reduce them to temporary visitors inside their own childhood homes. "You belong to another house." "We raise you for someone else's family." "Avoid shame." "You are only a girl." Those words influence decisions about education,

health care, ambition and freedom. Families celebrate successful daughters once they succeed, even though support was often missing when they needed it most. The law protects victims of domestic abuse and punishes cruelty, intimidation, violence and neglect. Seeking legal help affirms fundamental rights, although no judgment restores a stolen childhood, erases humiliation or heals psychological trauma. Courts punish offenders, but families determine whether those courtrooms become necessary. Change begins with fathers who choose care over control, mothers who stand by their daughters, sons who learn respect at home, and relatives who refuse to excuse abuse. Society spent generations praising girls for putting up with pain and calling it strength. But real strength begins when a young woman knows her worth and her family values her freedom as much as her future. A daughter is neither property, family prestige, an investment nor anyone's reputation. She is a human being. The words spoken to her become her inner voice, and the love she never received becomes the love she spends years looking for. The respect denied at home influences the relationships she accepts later in life. Many parents in Kashmir are raising their daughters with love, fairness and respect. They prove that change begins at home, and that makes it harder to excuse the families that choose abuse instead. Court files tell only the stories where someone finally speaks up. Many more girls still wake up afraid in the place that should make them feel safest. Kashmir will change when cruelty inside the home stops being treated as a family secret and becomes a concern for all of us.

The author is a practicing advocate engaged with the corporate ecosystem. She can be reached at haziqahshowkat@gmail.com.

Faith Before Faction

Many of Kashmir's older darasgahs taught faith with humility and intellectual curiosity. Recovering that tradition can help restore unity in a divided Muslim community.



Bilal Ahmad Khanday

“If our preachers return to the humility of lifelong learning, teach Islam's basic principles with clarity and place unity above division, they can begin to repair the damage caused by rigid and exclusive claims.

I was born into a Muslim family in Kashmir and grew up studying in the local darasgahs that were common across the valley in the 1980s and 1990s. These modest schools taught us the Quran, along with hadith, fiqh and tafsir. My predecessors and contemporaries still remember how seriously these local seminaries prepared ordinary people to understand their faith. Years later, after completing degrees in science and education, I earned a master's degree in religious studies. That journey helped me see what our tradition once valued and what we are slowly leaving behind. Many preachers today present their own understanding of Islam as the only correct one. That approach ignores one of the faith's greatest lessons: a believer remains a student throughout life. Nobody knows everything. Claiming exclusive truth has hurt the spirit of Islam and damaged the public image of Muslims well beyond Kashmir. Faith does not ask us to abandon reason. Islam has always encouraged believers to think, question and reflect. Our religious seminaries should also teach science, critical thinking and rational inquiry alongside religious subjects. That balance can help reduce the growing divisions within the Muslim community. The starting point is simple. Our sermons should return to the foundations of Islam: Ta-



wheed, the oneness of God, Risalat, the prophethood of Muhammad [PBUH], and Aakhirah, belief in the life hereafter. These are the beliefs that unite every Muslim. Once those foundations are clear, preachers can guide people on family life, social relation-

ships, public conduct, business ethics and justice. The Quran and the Sunnah already provide guidance on equality, compassion, fairness and brotherhood. Sermons built on these values bring people together instead of pushing them apart. Islam is meant to unite people. It connects

hearts as much as minds. Preachers who understand this will strengthen relationships within families, neighbourhoods and society. They will stop passing harsh judgments and start building trust. Their words should strengthen harmony, mutual respect, compassion and a shared sense of purpose. Sermons should also speak to the realities of the community they serve. Islam has always valued an understanding of local circumstances. Ignoring them only leads to confusion and division. I remain hopeful that our preachers will rethink their approach. The task before them is to strengthen society instead of winning arguments. The darasgahs of my childhood aimed to spread knowledge rather than create rival camps. That spirit still points us in the right direction. If our preachers return to the humility of lifelong learning, teach Islam's basic principles with clarity and place unity above division, they can begin to repair the damage caused by rigid and exclusive claims. Kashmir, and the wider Muslim community, will benefit from that change. The way forward has always been clear: reason and revelation working together, guided by the shared values at the heart of Islam.

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

The Mystery of Soma

Three thousand years after the Rigveda praised a golden drink as the doorway to immortality, no scholar can say with certainty what filled the cup.



Muskan Shafi Malik

Priests press pale, leafless stalks between heavy stones as altar fires rise into the smoke. The golden liquid they collect, filter through wool, and mix with milk or honey becomes the most celebrated substance in the entire Rigveda.

Three millennia later, historians still cannot agree on what that liquid actually contained, and the not-knowing has become a discipline of its own, drawing botanists, archaeologists, linguists, and neuroscientists into one of the longest-running investigations in religious history.

The puzzle of Soma is not only which plant produced it. It is why an entire civilization organized its cosmology around a substance whose physical identity disappeared from memory almost as fast as the hymns praising it were composed.

Soma was never a minor detail of Vedic religion. It was plant, deity, and central offering at once, so important that the Ninth Mandala of the Rigveda, more than one hundred hymns known as the Soma Pavamana, is devoted entirely to its purification and praise.

The hymns describe the drink in specific, almost technical terms: leafless stalks called amsu, crushed between pressing stones called gravan, filtered through a woolen cloth

known as pavitra, then poured into fire as an offering to Indra and Agni.

This was not vague poetic imagery. It reads like a recipe, which is precisely why its disappearance feels so strange.

The Rigveda credits Soma with four distinct powers, and the claims are large.

It gave gods and warriors physical strength on a mythic scale, most famously fuelling Indra before his battle against the dragon Vritra. It sharpened perception of Rta, the cosmic order underlying Vedic thought. It inspired the poetic vision behind the hymns themselves.

And it granted, however briefly, a taste of immortality, producing the declaration still quoted by scholars today: drinkers of Soma believed they had become deathless.

Priests consumed it fresh, pressing and drinking it during the ritual itself, with little evidence of fermentation or storage. It was a direct physical experience rather than a symbolic act, which makes the disappearance of its plant source even more significant.

For more than a century, scholars have proposed many candidates for that source, but none has solved the mystery.

Ephedra, a mountain shrub rich in ephedrine, fits the geography of early Vedic texts and connects directly to Haoma, the parallel sacred drink of Zoroastrian tradition. Its stimulant effects, however, fall short of explaining the visionary, immortality-granting experience the hymns describe.

The fly agaric mushroom, championed by R. Gordon Wasson in his 1968 study, could plausibly produce religious ecstasy, but mushrooms do not match the repeated references to pressed stalks, and they were scarce in the regions early Vedic communities occupied.

Cannabis has obvious appeal given



CERTAINTY, AT THIS POINT, LOOKS UNLIKELY TO ARRIVE THROUGH A LABORATORY. What survives, finally, is not a plant but a question, and that question has proven more durable than any botanical specimen could have been.

its long presence in Indian spiritual life, but its traditional preparation relies on flowers and leaves rather than the stalk-pressing process the Rigveda insists upon.

Syrian rue, proposed by David Flattery and Martin Schwartz for its psychoactive alkaloids and bright colour, runs into a different problem: its toxicity makes sustained ritual consumption hard to defend.

The likelier explanation, favoured by many scholars now, is that Soma

was never a single fixed species.

Vedic communities migrated, environments changed, and the original plant became unavailable, so substitutes, various species of Ephedra and Sarcostemma among them, moved into ritual use in its place.

What began as a specific botanical sacrament gradually became a symbol, carried forward into Upanishadic philosophy as an image of divine illumination rather than a

literal ingredient.

That transformation, from plant to metaphor, may be the most historically significant fact in the entire Soma record, because it shows a religious tradition adapting to material loss without abandoning the meaning built on top of it.

The linguistic evidence deepens the case for genuine antiquity rather than invention.

Soma and Haoma share a root, sau, meaning “to press,” and both

traditions describe a light-coloured mountain plant processed the same way, for the same ritual purpose.

Scholars including Michael Witzel and Asko Parpola treat this overlap as proof that the ritual predates the arrival of Vedic peoples in South Asia altogether, placing its origins somewhere in the shared Indo-Iranian world of Central Asia.

Modern science has tried to close the distance between poetry and proof.

Archaeologist Harry Falk and others have examined vessels from Bronze Age Bactria-Margiana sites using chromatography, mass spectrometry, and environmental DNA testing, hunting for chemical traces of ephedrine or cannabinoids.

Plant residue degrades quickly, ritual vessels served multiple functions over their lifespans, and contamination is nearly impossible to rule out.

Certainty, at this point, looks unlikely to arrive through a laboratory.

What survives, finally, is not a plant but a question, and that question has proven more durable than any botanical specimen could have been.

Soma sits at the intersection of religion, ecology, medicine, and philosophy, a record of how early societies fused chemistry and cosmology into a single ritual vision.

The identity of the original plant may never be settled, but the fact that generations kept the memory alive anyway, building theology on top of an ingredient they could no longer name, says something sharper about human belief than any chromatography result ever could.

— The author holds a Master's degree in History from Aligarh Muslim University. She can be reached at muskanshafimalik@gmail.com.

A Letter to a Western Mystic

He owned an old SAAB, mended his sunglasses with glue, and carried himself like a prince. Years later, his student finally understood why.



Wajahat Qazi

Salaam!

This, my dearest mentor, is the greeting you would make whenever we met. Peace is what salaam means. It was this peace that drew me to you, dearest ATP.

The peaceful radiance that emanated from your visage, the dignified demeanour, and the graceful gait with which you walked all meshed together in an elegance that gave you presence.

I still remember that you mispronounced my name when I introduced myself. You called me Wahajat. But within a day or two, you got my name right.

Only the love of my life, Daniella, pronounced my name as it should be. Everyone else in Australia got it wrong.

The terms of endearment used by you and Daniella were almost the same. She called me Wiju, and you referred to me as Wui.

Dearest ATP, ah, those days in Australia. I was a broken man on a quest, seeking something. Anchorless and unmoored, I could have gone anywhere.

Maybe wanton hedonism would have wrapped me in its tentacles. The titillations of illusory pleasure, which may have given me some relief, would have gripped me in a vise-like grip. Or the ethereal and elusive balm of consumerism would have become both my quest and me.

But you, dear ATP, put my self on a pedestal. You told me that the West, to which you belonged, was not about hedonism, the mere quest for pleasure, which is actually a surrogate for what the great sociologist Émile Durkheim would have called “anomie.”

You taught me that when the larger and nobler quests of life become occluded by this, the human quest either dissipates into suicide or unhinged hedonism.

When I say this, dearest ATP, I speak inferentially.

My dearest mentor, when you walked, you glided. When you smiled, your face became nobler. When you spoke, it was like a Welsh poet pouring forth poetry. Your demeanour oozed contentment and peace.

When I first drove with you in your battered old SAAB motorcar, I suppressed my laughter. When I saw you wearing sunglasses held together by glue, I suppressed my laughter yet again. How could this eminent Westerner be so poor, I thought?

But little did I realise then that poverty was the way of life you had chosen. You were the man who had made real choices, dearest ATP. You refused to allow yourself, your authenticity, and your dignity to be swamped by the miasma of false choices and false quests. Noble Australian!

I now realize how difficult this path is. Even the choices I have are only half-choices. You had it all, dearest ATP, as the vulgar would say, yet you chose nourishment of the soul and a fuller efflorescence of the self.

This, I now realise, is a very difficult path to choose.

Dear mentor, when you talked of contentment as the existential locus of a human being, I would suppress giggles. I thought that because you were “poor,” that was why you said



such things. Because you did not have money, or a BMW, or the latest designer clothes, I believed your constant reference to contentment was the ultimate rationalization.

But, my dearest, you had made a choice. You could, if you chose, have overshadowed that “rich” man of Australia, the late Kerry Packer. You could, if you so desired, have become the real power behind many thrones.

In short, dearest ATP, you could have become anyone you chose to be. But you chose to be you, my dearest.

What a choice, but how difficult!

Your son, who had taken after you in terms of looks, grace, equipoise, and elan, dearest ATP, would be embarrassed at school.

You would drive an old SAAB. Your sunglasses, you would mend with glue or wire, and your clothes, while always defined by dignity, would at times be torn.

In my endless arguments with you, and through the litany of questions I would ask, you never lost patience. While I was enrolled at a university,

its utilitarian grid never sated me. It was you who employed the Socratic method, teaching me and imparting instruction to me.

But, dearest, it never felt like that. Talking to you was like a seamless, poetic conversation, a dialogue with a poet-philosopher.

Dear ATP, you had a vision for Australia, a great and noble one. I am sorry I could not understand it then, but I do now.

Elements of that vision were, I daresay, with both humility and trepidation, flawed. But the overall vision was permeated with nobility.

You, not through mere words or mere rhetoric, but through actual practice, demonstrated to me that the West was not, to repeat, merely about hedonism. Pared to its essence, it was about dignity, genuine and real selfhood, and the “rights of man (and woman),” understood in the most expansive rather than the vulgar sense.

Ah, those quarrels I had with you. The equanimity with which you dealt with them and engaged with me like a poet-philosopher, yet a man of the

world at the same time, leaves me squirming in embarrassment whenever I recall them.

Dearest mentor, allow me the use of what many would think of as an oxymoron. You were the “Western faqeer,” a “poor” mystic who chose the spiritual quest over vulgar materiality and performed marvels.

You, the “Western faqeer,” had made this choice in a context that forced other choices upon people, making them believe “shit” about themselves: delusions of grandeur, illusions of momentary happiness, money as the ultimate quest, and so on.

You, dearest ATP, sought to make “princes” out of ordinary mortals. Except in my case, you were successful.

Your “princes” rule, and the world is their ken.

Dearest ATP, all this is a walk down memory lane, a reminiscence. I am sorry I failed you, then and now. Then, because I failed to understand you in your entirety. Now, because I did not become the “prince” you wanted me to become.

I am a man of humble capacities and capabilities. A station in life that corresponds to these is

what I am and what I have.

But, dearest, I may never have become a “prince,” yet I have become a contented man. Contentment, peace, and joy are the only riches I seek, much like you.

If that is your influence on me, then I embrace it with gratitude.

I was a shattered man when I arrived in Australia in the roaring nineties. A disconnect of mind, body, and soul defined me. My heart did not speak to my mind.

You, dearest ATP, connected them seamlessly. And Daniella, my abiding love, imbued them with layers of love and sensitivity. Only a woman of worth, depth, and gravitas could have done that.

While both of you are far, far away physically, you and Daniella have a permanent presence in the niches of my heart.

Now, dearest ATP, regarding the heart. In your profound, somewhat cryptic way, yet in a moment of great clarity, you once told me, “A good heart is better than a good mind.”

I also recollect when you said, “Power lies within, not without.” Coming from you, a veritable genius with a brilliant, dazzling mind, this meant a great deal. This is my quest too, and it is the gravamen of my faith as well.

Qalb, as the heart is called in Arabic, is the seat of everything. Ritual, goodness, faith, and the other great imperatives of my faith, essential as they are, are meant to elevate the spirit by working upon the heart.

This is what it is, my dearest ATP. But I say this not as one whose mind is defined by dazzling brilliance like yours, but as a very ordinary mortal with prosaic and pedestrian capacities.

I, to repeat, may not have become a prince, dearest ATP, but I realise that the heart is everything. This is your singular achievement and success.

Thank you for this.

But, my dear ATP, this is not why I wrote this letter. The real purpose of writing it is to offer an apology.

I did not understand you entirely when I was in Australia. I was rude, abrasive, and argumentative with you. How embarrassing it is when I think of it. I may also not have turned out to be what you thought I would become. But that is the least of my concerns.

I am squirming as I write this. But, given the great man you are, you will understand.

You know, dearest, there are two things that are my prized material possessions. One is the old family heirloom you gave me when I left Australia: your father's old, rusted, empty tin tobacco box. The other is a few locks of Daniella's hair that I clipped.

These are my most valued possessions. But they are cold comfort, I guess, given my attitude towards you in Oz, and even at times later.

If you can, my dearest mentor, please forgive me. It is late where I am. Tears are welling in my eyes.

I will close this letter by writing that, for you, sans ideological and political connotations, the Tao may have been the quest. For me, now, it is the path. Both, my dearest, are universals.

Salaam, my dearest. I am sure that wherever you are, your pure soul and self will be radiating with joy.

Alhamdulillah. Praise be to God.

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

Joshi One Round Away From J&K Open Glory, Stretches Lead To 6 Shots

Observer News Service

Srinagar- Khalin Joshi tightened his grip on the J&K Open 2026, carding another flawless six-under 65 on Thursday to open up a commanding six-shot lead heading into the final round at the scenic Royal Springs Golf Course.

The 33-year-old Bengaluru golfer, who has barely put a foot wrong all week, moved to 19-under 194 after three rounds of 63, 66 and 65, putting himself firmly on course for the INR 1 crore title.

Former Asian Tour winner Rashid Khan of Delhi produced the round of the day with a scintillating seven-under 64, climbing to second place at 13-under 200, but still faces a mountain to climb on the final day.

Joshi's march towards the title has been built on remarkable consistency. Thursday marked his second straight bogey-free round, extending his streak without a dropped shot to 37 holes. His lone blemish this week remains the bogey on the 17th during the opening round.

Despite admitting he wasn't at his best early in the day, Joshi once again found a way to score.

"I didn't strike the ball as well on the front nine, but making birdies after missing fairways kept the momentum



going. The back nine was much better and I'm feeling confident heading into the final round," he said.

The Bengaluru golfer insists he won't change his strategy despite holding a sizeable advantage.

"Finding fairways is the key here. If I keep doing what I've done over the first three days, the scores will take care of themselves," he added.

Joshi also spoke about the unique charm of Royal Springs, recalling how a bear sprinting across the third fairway during the Pro-Am has become his favourite tournament memory—and perhaps his lucky omen. He has also sampled the course's fruit trees, enjoying mulberries, apples and what he believes

were cherries or apricots.

While Joshi looks firmly in control, the battle behind him has intensified.

Ajeetesh Sandhu surged into third place at 11-under 202 after a superb 65, while Shubham Jaglan and Angad Cheema shared fourth at nine-under 204.

DP World PGTI Order of Merit leader Saptak Talwar, fresh from his stint on the HotelPlanner Tour, and Kshitij Naveed Kaul were tied sixth at eight-under 205.

The day also produced the tournament's first moment of magic when Brijesh Kumar aced the par-three 11th—the hole temporarily converted from a par-four after heavy rain caused waterlogging before the event.

J&K Assembly's Privileges Panel Reviews Notice Against Para

Press Trust Of India

Srinagar: The Jammu and Kashmir Assembly's Committee on Privileges on Thursday reviewed three motions, including one against PDP MLA Waheed Para.

The committee convened a meeting at the Assembly complex to review cases related to alleged breach of privilege involving two Jammu and Kashmir Administrative Service (JKAS) officers, and a breach of privilege notice against Para, the Pulwama MLA, an official spokesman said.

He said the meeting was chaired by Chairman of the Committee Justice Hasnain Masoodi (ret'd).

The Pulwama MLA was also present, the spokesman said.

A breach of privilege notice was issued to Para in November 2024 based on a complaint by National Conference MLA Nazir Ahmad Gurezi.

Gurezi accused the opposition MLA of making derogatory remarks and levelling false allegations during his speech on the Motion of Thanks to the Lieutenant Governor's address on November 8, 2024.

Para responded to the initial notice issued by the speaker, denying any wrongdoing. He described the notice as an attempt to suppress dissent.

The issue was then referred

to the Committee of Privileges after the speaker found Para's explanation insufficient.

During the meeting on Friday, the Committee held detailed deliberations on the breach of privilege notice filed by Chadoora MLA Ali Mohammad Dar and Kangan MLA Mian Mehar Ali against Chadoora SDM and Jammu and Kashmir Board of School Education (JKBOSE) secretary, who was the then Ganderbal assistant commissioner development (ACD) respectively.

Both these officers were present in person.

Speaking during the meeting, the chairman emphasised the need for strict adherence to established legislative conventions and administrative protocols while dealing with the elected representatives.

Masoodi said that maintaining the dignity and privileges of the legislators is essential for strengthening the democratic institutions and ensuring harmonious coordination between the legislature and the executive.

The chairman stressed that all government officers should remain fully conversant with the provisions governing the legislative privileges and conduct themselves in accordance with the prescribed rules and procedures while interacting with the MLAs.

SC Asks Petitioners Seeking NTA Reforms To File Their Replies To Centre's Affidavit

Press Trust Of India

New Delhi: The Supreme Court on Thursday asked petitioners, including a doctors' association, to file their replies to the Centre's affidavit, which said that the migration of the NEET (UG) examination from the pen-and-paper mode to a computer-based mode on the pattern of JEE (Mains and Advanced), is under active consideration.

A bench of Justices PS Narasimha and Alok Aradhe said that the court will take up the matter on August 19 and the petitioners can file their replies to the counter-affidavit filed by the Centre.

Advocate Tanvi Dubey, appearing for the Federation of All India Medical Association (FAIMA), informed the bench that in case there is any plan for transition to a computer-based model, then the same should be done at the earliest since the students' preparation right now was driven by the pen-and-paper mode.

The bench said that it would consider everything and asked the parties to file their replies and suggestions.

Senior advocate Pijush Kanti Roy and advocate Satyam Singh Rajput appeared for RJD MP Sudhakar

Singh, who has sought reforms in the National Testing Agency (NTA).

In its affidavit, the Centre said in respect of NEET (UG), the migration from the pen-and-paper mode to a computer-based mode, whether in a single-stage or a two-stage examination on the pattern of the Joint Entrance Examination (Mains and Advanced), is presently under active consideration by all stakeholders.

"The Union of India respectfully submits that the final approach will be adopted after considering, and with the benefit of, the recommendations of the High-Powered Task Force under the chairmanship of Nandan Nilekani...The composition of the task force, with domain expertise drawn from technology, space, intelligence, academia and public administration, ensures a rigorous and holistic examination of the technological, security, equity, infrastructure and pedagogic dimensions of the transition," it had said.

The government further said it has undertaken a comprehensive overhaul of the conduct of the National Eligibility-cum-Entrance Test (NEET) to eliminate paper leaks and systemic failures.

CONTD. FROM FRONT PAGE

CM Omar To

this district. Had the district administration and police not acted promptly overnight, the death toll could have been much higher," he said.

Abdullah said the administration has now entered the rehabilitation and reconstruction phase, with priority being given to restoring damaged infrastructure and essential public services. While electricity supply has largely been restored, he said drinking water remains a major concern as several Jal Shakti Department water supply schemes were damaged in the floods.

He said suggestions by local legislators, including deploying water tankers and installing hand pumps in affected areas, would be implemented.

The Chief Minister assured compensation for damaged houses and said families whose homes and agricultural land were washed away would be provided five marlas of government land for rehabilitation. He also announced free ration for six months to one year for affected farming families.

Acknowledging that compensation under the State Disaster Response Fund (SDRF) has not been revised for nearly seven to eight years, Abdullah said the government has decided to enhance the relief amount to better reflect current reconstruction costs.

As part of long-term mitigation measures, he directed the Flood Control Department to construct a protection bund at Bela Colony to prevent floodwaters from entering residential areas during future floods.

He also announced that a new Mini Secretariat would be constructed in Rajouri after the existing Deputy Commissioner's office was declared structurally unsafe following the floods. The project is expected to cost around 50 to 60 crore and be completed within the next two to three years.

On vehicles damaged in the floods, Abdullah said he has directed police to expedite the registration of FIRs to enable genuine owners to claim insurance without unnecessary delays.

Earlier in the day, the Chief Minister visited flood-affected areas in Rajouri, inspected damaged infrastructure, met bereaved families and directed officials to expedite restoration works and strengthen protective measures in vulnerable locations.

During the review meeting, Abdullah also observed that cloudbursts and flash floods have become increasingly frequent in Jammu and Kashmir in recent years. While the Meteorological Department issues rainfall forecasts and advisories, he said predicting the exact location of cloudbursts remains a challenge, limiting preparedness in vulnerable areas.

Gusty Winds, Rain

now appears to have gone in vain. Without financial support, it will be extremely difficult for many growers to recover," he said.

The latest damage comes after a season marked by repeated weather-related disruptions, including hailstorms, unseasonal rainfall and high-speed winds, raising fresh concerns among growers over the increasing unpredictability of weather and its impact on Kashmir's horticulture sector.

Orchardists urged the government to immediately assess the losses, provide adequate compensation and strengthen crop insurance mechanisms to protect growers from recurring climate-related disasters.

MLA Zainapora Showkat Hussain Ganaie expressed concern over the losses and assured growers of all possible assistance.

"I am deeply saddened by this natural calamity and stand with the affected growers in this hour of grief. I have directed the Horticulture Department to immediately conduct a comprehensive assessment of the damage. Every possible step will be taken to ensure that the affected orchardists receive appropriate

compensation and assistance," he said.

Describing horticulture as the backbone of the local economy, Ganaie urged officials to complete the damage assessment on a war footing so that relief measures could be initiated without delay.

Former Zainapora MLA Aijaz Ahmad Mir also expressed solidarity with the affected farming community, saying the untimely weather had dealt a heavy blow to orchardists whose livelihoods depend entirely on apple cultivation.

He urged the administration to carry out an immediate assessment of the losses and ensure adequate compensation and relief for the affected growers. (inputs from KNO)

Rain Hits Kashmir

Heavy rain was recorded in several parts of the Valley through the day. In Shopian district, a hailstorm accompanied by strong gusty winds caused damage to apple orchards in several villages. Officials are yet to issue an assessment of the losses.

The Meteorological Centre, Srinagar, has forecast light to moderate rain and thunder-showers at many places across Jammu and Kashmir on August 7 and 8, with brief intense showers expected at isolated locations.

Between August 9 and 11, the Union Territory is likely to witness light to moderate rainfall at most places, while a few districts may receive heavy rainfall accompanied by brief intense showers.

The MeT office has warned that torrential rain and intense showers during the period could trigger flash floods, landslides and shooting stones at vulnerable locations. It has advised residents, particularly those living in vulnerable areas, to remain cautious and avoid unnecessary movement during periods of intense rainfall.

Amarnath Yatra Resumes

since the Yatra began has reached 4,71,588, officials said.

The pilgrimage remained suspended on Wednesday as a precautionary measure amid heightened security across the Union Territory ahead of the August 5 anniversary of the abrogation of Article 370. However, pilgrims already stationed at the Baltal base camp were allowed to proceed to the Holy Cave Shrine as per the scheduled movement.

The 57-day Amarnath Yatra, which commenced on July 3, is scheduled to conclude on August 28.

According to official data, more than 22.09 lakh devotees have undertaken the pilgrimage over the past five years. The Yatra recorded 3,65,721 pilgrims in 2022, 4,45,338 in 2023, a record 5,12,150 in 2024, 4,14,311 in 2025, while 4,71,588 devotees have performed darshan so far this year. The cumulative figure from 2022 to August 6, 2026 stands at 22,09,108 pilgrims.

J&K To Get 28

promotion quota had remained stalled for the past 13 years due to the absence of a recognised State Forest Service.

Following an examination of the issue, the Ministry concluded that the Jammu and Kashmir Forest (Gazetted) Service (Territorial) meets the prescribed criteria relating to recruitment, training and service conditions required for promotion to the Indian Forest Service.

Recruitment to the Indian Forest Service is carried out through two channels: direct recruitment by the UPSC and promotion of eligible State Forest Service officers. While about 66 per cent of IFS posts are filled through the Civil Services Examination, the remaining 33 per cent are reserved for promotion from the State Forest Service. (KNO)

Residential-To-Commercial

earlier directions of the High Court and repeated representations to the Srinagar Municipal Corporation (SMC), the building had been commissioned without obtaining the necessary regularisation or approvals.

Finding that a prima facie case had been made out, the court directed the Commissioner, Srinagar Municipal Corporation, to ensure that the building is not used as a hotel or guest house pending further orders. It cautioned that any violation of the direction would amount to a breach of the court's order and sought a compliance report by the next hearing on August 19.

The court also directed the Director, Anti-Corruption Bureau, J&K, to obtain and produce before it the records relating to NOCs issued by the Tourism, Fire and Emergency Services, Power Development, Jal Shakti and Water Works departments concerning the building's proposed commercial use.

Mehbooba, Iltija

asked to appear before the police to join the investigation, officials said.

Peoples Democratic Party (PDP) said that police came to the Mufti residence in Khimber and questioned Iltija.

"Questioning an injured person while she is under treatment raises serious concerns and is deeply insensitive. Authorities must respect her medical condition and ensure that due process is followed with dignity and humanity," the party said on X.

The police have claimed that Iltija physically assaulted a police officer while he was discharging his duties.

"She is further alleged to have grabbed the officer and bitten his forearm, causing a bleeding bite injury," they said.

The police said the scuffle took place when Peoples Democratic Party president Mehbooba Mufti led a sit-in outside the party office demanding restoration of special status to Jammu and Kashmir on the night of August 4, the eve of seventh anniversary of reading down of Article 370.

"During the course of the protest, a section of the demonstrators allegedly attempted to violate the imposed restrictions by blocking Residency Road and proceeding towards Lal Chowk," the police said.

The protesters continued to proceed despite appeals for peace by the police, they claimed.

Iltija was hospitalised at a private hospital here after, as she claimed, manhandling by the police.

The PDP leader, who showed her injuries on arms to the media, was discharged late Wednesday after treatment.

"As part of the ongoing investigation, Iltija Mufti has been summoned to appear before Police Station Kothibagh tomorrow to join the investigation in accordance with law," the police said.

Blatant Misuse of Power: PDP The People's Democratic Party (PDP) termed the registration of a case against its president Mehbooba Mufti and her daughter Iltija Mufti as a blatant misuse of power and authority.

In a statement, the party criticised the FIR filed by the Srinagar Police against Mehbooba and Iltija for their participation in a march on Tuesday evening to protest the abrogation of Article 370, calling it "a blatant misuse of power and authority."

According to the party, the City Police (East) restricted her and the PDP workers from proceeding further.

During the protest, Iltija walked alone towards the main road holding a placard against the abrogation of Article 370 but was intercepted by police personnel, the party claimed.

"During the intervention, she was allegedly manhandled by a woman IPS officer of SP rank, along with other police personnel and her own PSO. The officer allegedly instructed the male PSO to use force against her, following which she was dragged by male police personnel," the party statement said.

The statement alleged that the woman officer assaulted the PDP leader and used "excessive force while preventing her peaceful protest."

"We have eyewitnesses to the incident and intend to place the matter before a court of law," the statement added.

The PDP condemned the actions of the police officers involved, calling them "illegal, disproportionate, and wholly uncalled for."

"We strongly condemn the conduct of the police personnel involved and demand appropriate action against those responsible for allegedly manhandling a political leader during a peaceful protest," the statement said.

LS Passes Bill

Taxation and Other Laws (Amendment) Bill, 2026, which also contains changes to the Income Tax Act, 2025, and the Finance Act, 2026.

Under the amended provision, Section 10A of the Payment and Settlement Systems Act will be revised to empower the Central Government to notify one or more electronic modes of payment on which charges may be applicable. The existing provision links the exemption from charges to payment modes prescribed under Section 269SU of the Income Tax Act, 1961.

Currently, banks and payment service providers are prohibited from imposing any direct or indirect charge on electronic payment modes covered under Section 269SU, which requires businesses with an annual turnover exceeding 50 crore to provide specified digital payment options, including BHIM-UPI and RuPay debit cards.

The amendment does not automatically impose charges on UPI transactions but gives the government the legal authority to notify such charges in the future.

The move could pave the way for the introduction of Merchant Discount Rate (MDR) on certain digital payment transactions, a long-standing demand of banks and payment service providers, who argue that maintaining digital payment infrastructure involves significant costs.

Real-time payment systems such as RTGS and NEFT already attract service charges in certain cases, while UPI transactions have remained free for users and merchants.

Speaking on the issue on Wednesday, Reserve Bank of India Governor Sanjay Malhotra said it was "premature" to conclude that MDR would be introduced on digital payments.

He, however, noted that the cost of maintaining payment infrastructure has to be borne either by taxpayers through government funding or by users and merchants through charges such as MDR.

"The choices before us are simple: either the general public has to pay for it through taxes, or we have to levy the merchant discount rate (MDR), following the 'user pays' model," Malhotra said.

He added that the government's focus remains on strengthening the country's digital payments infrastructure and that the impact of the amendment would become clear as policy decisions evolve.

Industry stakeholders have long advocated for the reintroduction of MDR, particularly for high-value merchant transactions, while the government has so far maintained a zero-MDR regime for UPI to encourage digital payments.

The Bill now awaits approval in the Rajya Sabha before becoming law.

2020 Mosque Murder

It observed that the case demonstrated how technology, aided by the rule of law, ensures that even crimes committed away from public gaze are ultimately brought to justice, observing that "crime, however clandestine, seldom remains concealed for long."

The court pronounced the sentence in the case arising out of FIR No. 03/2020 registered under Section 302 of the IPC and Section 207 of the Motor Vehicles Act.

During the sentencing hearing, the prosecution sought capital punishment, arguing that the murder was committed with extreme

brutality and satisfied the "rarest of rare" test. The defence, however, pleaded for leniency, contending that the incident was not pre-meditated, involved a single blow and that the 60-year-old convict had no previous criminal record.

While determining the sentence, the court observed that punishment must strike a balance between the gravity of the offence and the circumstances of the offender. It identified the victim's advanced age, the fatal blow to the head and the commission of the crime inside a mosque as aggravating factors, observing that violence at a place of worship undermines communal harmony and public confidence in such institutions.

The court, however, also took into account mitigating circumstances, including the convict's age and the absence of any material to suggest that he was beyond the possibility of reform. It held that despite the gravity of the offence, the case did not meet the stringent legal threshold for awarding the death penalty.

Besides awarding life imprisonment, the court also imposed Rs 50000 fine on the convict.

While directing payment of compensation, the court noted that the deceased's children—particularly a daughter with special needs—had been permanently deprived of their father's care and support due to the murder. Referring to the Jammu and Kashmir Victim Compensation Scheme, the court said financial assistance was necessary to mitigate the hardship faced by the bereaved family. It accordingly directed the Jammu and Kashmir Legal Services Authority to pay Rs 7 lakh as compensation to the deceased's legal heirs within three months, while informing the convict of his statutory right to challenge the conviction and sentence before the High Court within the prescribed period.

Kashmir Bets On

an emeritus scientist at the CSIR Fourth Paradigm Institute, spoke next and pushed planners to study natural systems closely instead of working around them.

Government officials made an honest point about where the real problem sits.

Babila Rakwal, commissioner and secretary of the Science and Technology Department, and a deputy secretary from the Disaster Management Department, told the room that many of the right policies already exist on paper.

What is missing, she said, is the work of folding those policies into how projects actually get planned and built on the ground.

That disconnect came up again and again. Participants pointed to data that does not highlight local conditions, departments that plan in isolation from each other, and coordination between institutions that remains weak.

The conference had flagged these same problems days earlier during its opening sessions, so nobody in the room seemed surprised to hear them again.

Money had a seat at the table too. Zuhair Vaid, regional head at ICICI Bank, and Rakesh Magotra, J&K Bank's chief compliance officer, joined the discussion alongside academics and civil society groups.

Their presence made one thing clear: protecting a river basin and financing one are starting to look like the same job.

By the end of the session, the discussion had turned toward next steps for the Jhelum River Basin and the wider Himalayas, including a shared platform to connect scientists, government agencies, local communities and private companies. Prof. Javed Hussain Mir, the conference convener, closed the proceedings alongside co-conveners Tariq Abdullah, Irfan Maqbool and Jasia Bashir.

Officials left Srinagar with a policy on paper and a harder question still open: a restored hillside costs less than a rebuild one, but only if the work reaches the hillside before the next flood does.

CM Omar Inaugurates, Lays Foundation of Housing & Urban Development Projects in Jammu

Observer News Service

JAMMU: Chief Minister Omar Abdullah on Thursday inaugurated and laid the foundation stone for a series of key development projects worth over ₹60 crore in the Housing & Urban Development sector across Jammu city and adjoining areas, saying his Government is committed to creating sustainable, inclusive and people-centric urban infrastructure across Jammu and Kashmir.

The projects include the laying of foundation stones for works worth over ₹28 crore and the inauguration of completed projects valued at around ₹32 crore, reflecting the Government's sustained focus on strengthening urban infrastructure, promoting sustainable mobility, conserving heritage and enhancing civic amenities.

The Chief Minister laid the foundation stone for the Depot for 100 Electric Buses under the PM e-Bus Sewa Scheme at Bhagwati Nagar. The project, being executed by Jammu Smart City Limited under the Centrally Sponsored Scheme (CSS)/



CAPEX at a cost of ₹23.04 crore, will provide the necessary infrastructure for the operation and maintenance of an electric bus fleet, paving the way for cleaner, greener and more efficient public transport in Jammu.

The Chief Minister also laid the e-foundation stone for the Rejuvenation and Restoration of the Flowing Nallah at Tan Talab Kundarorian, Katra, to be executed by the Public Works Department

under CAPEX at a cost of ₹5.14 crore. The project aims to improve the ecological health of the water channel while enhancing sanitation, aesthetics and the overall urban environment in the pilgrimage town.

Among the projects inaugurated, the Chief Minister dedicated Tawi Wonderland (Waste-to-Wonder Park) at Bhagwati Nagar to the public. Developed under the Smart City Mission at a cost of

₹11 crore, the project transforms discarded materials into artistic installations and recreational spaces. The project also includes its operation, maintenance and management for a period of ten years under the PPP mode (VGF basis), promoting environmental sustainability while creating a unique tourist attraction.

The Chief Minister also inaugurated the Heritage Trail and Site Beautification Project under the Smart City Mission, developed at a cost of ₹15.74 crore. The initiative seeks to preserve and showcase Jammu's rich cultural heritage while improving public spaces, pedestrian accessibility and the city's tourism appeal.

He further inaugurated the Modernisation of Food Street at Bahu Fort, completed under the Smart City Mission at a cost of ₹1.65 crore, aimed at enhancing visitor amenities and promoting Jammu's culinary and tourism experience.

The Chief Minister also inaugurated the Shopping-cum-Municipal Complex at Akhnoor, constructed under CAPEX at a cost of

₹3.61 crore by the Public Works Department. The facility will strengthen civic infrastructure and provide improved commercial and public service amenities for the residents of Akhnoor.

Addressing the gathering, Chief Minister Omar Abdullah said that the newly inaugurated Waste-to-Wonder Park on the banks of the River Tawi has the potential to emerge as a major tourist attraction for Jammu. Referring to the replicas of iconic global and national landmarks installed in the park, he said the initiative reflects the Government's efforts to place Jammu prominently on the tourism map through innovative urban development projects.

The Chief Minister said that before visiting the park, he had not realised the scale and quality of the project, describing it as a remarkable addition not only for the residents of Jammu but also for visitors coming to the city. He congratulated the officers and officials of the Jammu Smart City Limited and the Housing & Urban Development Department for successfully executing the project.

J&K's Power Deficit Plummets from 19.1% to 0.1% in 12 Years: GoI

SRINAGAR: The Ministry of Power (MoP) Thursday said that in over 12 years, Jammu and Kashmir's massive power deficit of 19.1 percent has reduced to 0.1 percent.

According to KNO, the ministry informed the Lok Sabha that J&K was facing a staggering 19.1 percent power deficit in 2014-15. However, by the fiscal 2025-26, the deficiency plummeted to 0.1 percent.

It also said that in the year 2014-15, the region was facing 3,095 MU unserved energy and the deficit plummeted to 0.1 percent with just 19 MU short by 2025-26.

The house was further informed that for the first quarter of FY 2026-27 from April-June 2026, the energy deficit remains at a minimal 0.6 percent in Jammu and Kashmir —confirming that growing demand is now almost completely matched by grid supply—(KNO)

Doodhpathri Cloudburst Wreaks Havoc in Raiyar

BUDGAM: Flash floods triggered by a possible cloudburst in the upper reaches of Doodhpathri wreaked havoc in Raiyar village of central Kashmir's Budgam district on Thursday, damaging residential houses partially, several shops, a school boundary wall and standing crops, locals said.

Locals said that a cloudburst likely hit in the upper Doodhpathri area, followed by intense rainfall, led to a sudden surge in water discharge through local streams, resulting in flash floods that inundated parts of Raiyar village.

The floods entered several residential houses and shops, causing damage to household belongings and business establishments. A school boundary wall was also damaged, while standing crops in nearby agricultural fields suffered losses.

Residents said the flash floods struck without warning, forcing families and shopkeepers to rush to safety as water entered their homes and business establishments. They said household items, goods and crops suffered damage in the incident. However, there were no immediate reports of any loss of life or injuries.

Locals urged the district administration to conduct an immediate assessment of the losses suffered by affected families and traders—(KNO)

NC MP Ramzan Raises Bangus, Gurez, Railway Connectivity in Rajya Sabha

SRINAGAR: National Conference (NC) Member Parliament Chowdhary Mohammad Ramzan on Thursday raised several issues concerning Jammu and Kashmir in the Rajya Sabha, seeking greater investment in tourism, railway connectivity and power generation capacity in the Union Territory.

Participating in the proceedings, Ramzan, urged the Union Finance Minister to make provisions in the upcoming budget for a comprehensive development plan for the Bangus and Gurez areas, asserting that tourism remains one of the key avenues for economic development in Jammu and Kashmir.

"Tourism is the only avenue we have through which the region can achieve development," he said, seeking a dedicated provision for the comprehensive development of Bangus and Gurez in the next budget.

MP Ramzan also raised the issue of railway connectivity to Kupwara, saying the district has not yet been connected with the railway network. He urged the Centre to consider extending railway connectivity to the district.

Highlighting Jammu and Kashmir's power potential, the MP said that only around 2,000 MW of the available potential has so far been tapped, while the region has the capacity to generate around 20,000 MW.

He said the lack of adequate funds was preventing the development of the remaining power projects and urged the Centre to invest in the untapped power potential of Jammu and Kashmir.

Ramzan further sought the return of power projects currently with NHPC to the Union Territory, stating that the Centre had already recovered the investment made in these projects several times over.

"I would request the Honourable Minister that the power projects that are already with you, for which you have recovered the money you invested several times over through NHPC, should be returned to the state," he said.

He also called for investment in the remaining power projects, saying their development would benefit both Jammu and Kashmir and the country.

The NC MP also urged the Centre to address the issue of power cuts being faced by the people of Jammu and Kashmir and sought measures to resolve the problem—(KNO)

Centre Lists Damage on 5 J&K NH Stretches

Contractor Blacklisted Over 2022 Project Failure

Observer News Service

SRINAGAR: The Centre on Thursday listed landslide and cloudburst-related damage on five National Highway stretches in Jammu and Kashmir in recent years, while separately informing the Lok Sabha that a contractor was blacklisted and penalised over a National Highway project failure reported in the Union Territory in 2022.

The details were shared by Union Minister for Road Transport and Highways Nitin Gadkari in a written reply to a starred question raised by Lok Sabha member Captain Viriato Fernandes on damage to roads and flyovers.

According to the reply, one National Highway project in Jammu and Kashmir reported a major structural failure in 2022. The Engineering, Procurement and Construction (EPC) contractor was blacklisted and a penalty equivalent to one per cent of the project cost was imposed.

Separately, the Ministry detailed damage caused by landslides and cloudbursts on five National Highway stretches in Jammu and Kashmir.

On the Udhampur-Ramban section of NH-44, cloudbursts and heavy rainfall in 2025 triggered landslides at Bali Nallah and Tharad, besides muck and slush accumulation at Karol



and Kowbagh. In 2026, a massive landslide at Dewal near Samroli blocked both carriageways and damaged a retaining wall. The Ministry said restoration and clearance work has since been completed.

The Ramban-Banihal section of NH-44 witnessed heavy slush and debris at Seri, muck accumulation in Tunnel T-2 and a landslide at Kela Mor following a cloudburst in 2025. Another landslide in 2026 again blocked both carriageways before the road was restored.

A landslide also occurred at Marog on the Marog-Digdol section of NH-44 in 2025 following a cloudburst, while multiple landslides were reported along the NH-244 Chenani-Sudhmahadev road between Km 1+650 and Km 14+200 due to rainfall, flash floods and cloudbursts. The affected stretches were later cleared and traffic restored.

The reply further referred to a landslide inci-

dent in 2023 on the NH-1 Sonamarg Tunnel Project, following which an audit was conducted and slope-protection measures were installed.

The Ministry said National Highways are constructed in accordance with Indian Roads Congress standards and monitored through Authority's Engineers, executing agencies and independent quality auditors.

It said extreme rainfall and landslides frequently affect highway infrastructure in the Himalayan region, and that debris clearance and restoration are undertaken immediately, while long-term mitigation measures such as slope stabilisation, improved drainage, landslide monitoring and early warning systems are being implemented.

The Centre also informed Parliament that it has signed memoranda of understanding with the Defence Geo-informatics Research Establishment (DGRE), Geological Survey of India (GSI) and the National Institute of Rock Mechanics (NIRM) for geo-hazard mitigation, geological investigations and tunnel safety. It added that IIT Roorkee has been tasked with developing guidelines for assessing hillslope instability through instrumentation and real-time monitoring. (KNO)

PD&SJ Gbl Holds Preparatory Meet on “Mediation for Nation Drive 3.0” Campaign



Observer News Service

GANDERBAL:In furtherance of the nationwide initiative "Mediation for Nation drive 3.0", Principal District & Sessions Judge (Coordinator District Mediation Center), Ganderbal, chaired two consecutive meetings today, with Judicial Officers and Members of the Bar Association, to make them aware regarding the implementation of Mediation for Nation Drive 3.0 initiative, pursuant to the directions from the Jammu & Kashmir Legal Services Authority regarding the launch of the campaign under the guidance of the Mediation and Conciliation Project Committee (MCPC), Hon'ble Supreme Court of India.

As part of the preparatory cum awareness process two separate meetings were convened under the chairmanship of Abdul Nasir, Principal District & Sessions (PD&SJ) Judge, Ganderbal.

The first meeting was chaired by the PD&SJ and was attended by Secretary

DLSA Ganderbal Sheikh Babar Hussain and members of Bar Association, Trained mediators and Legal Aid Defense Counsels of the District.

The second meeting was convened with all the Judicial Officers of District Ganderbal, including Fozia Faul, Additional District & Sessions Judge, Ganderbal; Nusrat Ali Hakak, Chief Judicial Magistrate, Ganderbal; Sheikh Babar Hussain, Secretary, District Legal Services Authority, Ganderbal; Mahoor, Munisif, Ganderbal.

While addressing the participants in both meetings, the PD&SJ, highlighted the significance of the "Mediation for Nation drive 3.0" and called upon Judicial Officers, members of the Bar, Legal Aid Defense Counsels, and Panel Mediators to extend their wholehearted cooperation for its successful implementation by involving themselves actively for this noble initiative. He emphasized that mediation is an effective, speedy, confidential, and amicable mode of dispute

resolution that not only preserves relationships but also reduces the burden of litigation and ensures timely justice, as well as maintains harmony between the parties.

The participants were also apprised of the Standard Operating Procedure (SOP) for the nationwide campaign. It was informed that during the period from 1st August to 30th September, 2026, emphasis shall be laid on identifying pending cases having an element of settlement, conducting pre-mediation screening, issuing notices to parties, referring fit cases to mediation centers, undertaking awareness and outreach activities, and publishing the list of identified cases on the notice boards of the Courts, Bar Associations and official websites. The nationwide mediation drive has commenced from 1st August, 2026, with regular transmission of progress reports to the Mediation and Conciliation Project Committee (MCPC), Hon'ble Supreme Court of India.

Comm Secy IT Takes Possession of Erstwhile ACB Building

Observer News Service

JAMMU: Commissioner Secretary, Information Technology department, Saurabh Bhagat on Thursday formally took possession of 23 rooms in the erstwhile ACB Building behind the Civil Secretariat, Jammu, allotted to the Information Technology Department.

DIG, Anti-Corruption Bureau, Vikas Gupta; Special Secretary IT, Showkat



Mehmood; Additional Secretary IT, Devender Singh Bhau; Deputy Secretary IT, Head SeMT, I/C IT Cell,

technical officers, and other departmental officials were also present on the occasion. Commissioner Secretary

IT stated that the newly allotted facility is envisioned to function as a dedicated IT Hub for the Department. He said the expanded infrastructure will support the Department's growing technical workforce, foster seamless coordination among various functional verticals, and provide the necessary space and resources to meet the evolving technological and digital governance requirements of the Government.



GOVERNMENT OF JAMMU AND KASHMIR
DEPARTMENT OF SHEEP HUSBANDRY KASHMIR
OFFICE OF THE OFFICER INCHARGE SHEEP BREEDING FARM KEWA OAZIGUND
Email: oi.sbfkewa@jk.gov.in



QUOTATION NOTICE

Sealed quotations are invited from interested persons/parties for harvesting, drying, binding, stacking, collecting, loading etc. including labour charges (Skilled/unskilled) and fuel charges for Brush cutter/Harvester of Perennial Fodder crop (Jungle Hay) for the year 2026-27 at Doodnag Kewa. The quotations should reach the office of undersigned by or before 12.08.2026 up to 2:00 pm and the rates should be quoted per quintal of dry produce from harvesting, drying, binding, stacking, Collecting, loading, dumping, etc. including labour charges (Skilled/unskilled) and fuel charges for Brush cutter/Harvester. The quotations shall be opened on next working day by the committee constituted for the purpose. Incomplete quotations and those received after the due date and time shall not be entertained.

Terms and conditions.

- The rates quoted per quintal of dry produce from harvesting, drying, binding, stacking, collecting, loading etc. including labour charges (Skilled/unskilled) and fuel charges for Brush cutter/Harvester, must be inclusive of all taxes.
- Quotations shall be addressed to Officer Incharge Sheep Breeding Farm Kewa.
- The committee reserves the right to accept/reject any quotation without assigning any reason thereof.
- The contractor has to complete all the work within the given time frame and as per the terms and conditions set by the department.
- In case the successful tenderer fails to execute the job within the stipulated period, the department shall be at liberty to cancel the contract and to execute the job through other source. The extra cost thus involved shall be recovered from the defaulting contractor including a penalty as deemed appropriate by the undersigned.
- Payment to the successful contractor shall be released only after completion of contract as per terms/conditions and time frame set by the department.
- The department reserves the right to withdraw the quotation notice at any time without assigning the reason.
- The taxes (GST)/duties/levies and other charges in connection with the service provided shall be borne by the Successful Persons/Parties/Contractors to whom the contract shall be allotted.

No: SBFK/Agri/2026-21/439-44
Dated: - 06/08/2026
DIPK-4218-26
DT: 06/08/2026

-sd-
Officer Incharge
Sheep Breeding Farm
Kewa



OFFICE OF THE PRINCIPAL
GOVERNMENT DEGREE COLLEGE VERINAG
Email: vernag-gdc@jk.gov.in | Phone: 9419560578
College Website: www.gdcverinag.edu.in



Ref.No. GDC/VRG/26/Auction/ 346
Dated: - 03-08-2026

NOTICE REGARDING INVITATION OF PARTICIPANTS FOR AUCTION OF WALNUTS AT GOVT. DEGREE COLLEGE VERINAG ON 12-08-2026:

The principal Govt Degree College Verinag (J&K) invites the interested persons that the auction process of walnuts is going to be conducted on 12-08-2026 at 11:00 A.M. In this connection the interested persons are requested to visit the College on the said date. The application form, criteria, terms and conditions are available on our college website (www.gdcverinag.edu.in).
The interested persons are also hereby informed that the application form fee for participating in the auction process is Rs.100.

DIPK-4212-26
DT: 06/08/2026

Principal
Govt. Degree College
Verinag

Trump Blasts Hegseth As Weapon Shortages Stall Iran War Plans

Agencies

LONDON– US President Donald Trump reportedly confronted Defense Secretary Pete Hegseth during a tense Cabinet meeting at Camp David last week, accusing him of misleading the White House about the state of America's dwindling missile stockpiles as Washington weighs the prospect of renewed large-scale military action against Iran.

According to The Washington Post, citing two people familiar with the exchange, Trump challenged Hegseth over severe shortages of long-range precision missiles and interceptor systems, telling him bluntly: "I thought the problem had been fixed."

The reported confrontation comes amid growing concerns inside Washington that America's prolonged military engagement in the region is rapidly draining some of its most critical weapons inventories.

US Missile Stocks 'Dangerously Low'

The concerns were reinforced by a CNN report claiming the US military has already exhausted nearly 80 percent of its THAAD (Terminal High Altitude Area Defense) interceptors and

roughly half of its Patriot missile interceptors, leaving supplies "dangerously low."

The shortages are particularly alarming because THAAD batteries have become the primary shield protecting US bases across West Asia from Iranian ballistic missile attacks.

Officials reportedly fear the depleted stockpile could significantly limit America's ability to launch another major offensive against Iran while simultaneously defending its own forces in the region.

Hegseth Blames Deputy

According to the Post, Hegseth sought to deflect responsibility during the Camp David exchange, pointing instead to Deputy Defense Secretary Stephen Feinberg, suggesting the Pentagon leadership had failed to accurately communicate the true extent of the shortages.

The reported blame game underscored growing tensions inside the administration as military planners struggle with shrinking resources and an increasingly complicated battlefield.

White House Calls Story '100% Fake News'

The White House swiftly re-



jected the report.

Press Secretary Karoline Leavitt dismissed the account in the strongest terms, telling the newspaper: "100% fake news. Literally never happened. And President Trump has the utmost confidence in Secretary Hegseth."

Despite the denial, multiple media outlets reported signs of deep frustration within the administration over the direction of the conflict.

'The President Is Exasperated'

NBC News reported that Trump has privately lashed out at senior advisers over the lack of progress in ending the con-

frontation with Iran.

One Trump ally familiar with the president's thinking told the network:

"The president is exasperated."

The source added: "I don't think he believed it was going to be this difficult to get the Iranians to agree to a deal. There was not a real strategy for how long or what they should do to get to the endpoint."

Another blunt assessment followed: "He did not intend this to be a long, drawn-out war."

Administration Divided Over

Endgame

According to an unnamed US official quoted by NBC, the administration itself remains deeply divided over what it actually wants to achieve.

Officials reportedly disagree over whether the priority should be:

- Preventing Iran from acquiring nuclear weapons;
- Keeping the Strait of Hormuz open;
- Destroying Iran's missile arsenal; or
- Weakening Tehran's drone capabilities.

Without a clear political objective, military planners are reportedly preparing for further operations without knowing what constitutes victory.

'Tactical Victories... Strategic Defeat'

One US official offered perhaps the starkest assessment yet of America's position.

"We have had a series of tactical victories," the official said. But he warned: "We are facing a strategic defeat without clear policy guidance or a decision about where this is going."

The official added that the military has continued preparing for another major offensive

despite the absence of clear direction from civilian leadership.

Trump Keeps Switching Between Threats and Talks

Publicly, Trump has repeatedly threatened devastating military strikes against Iran before later suggesting diplomacy remains possible.

Earlier this week, he claimed Washington and Tehran were engaged in discussions that could eventually reopen the Strait of Hormuz, a critical global oil shipping route disrupted during the conflict. Asked Wednesday about those negotiations, Trump told a Fox affiliate: "I hear they're doing very well."

Iran Denies Talks

Tehran, however, rejected Trump's account.

Iranian officials said no direct negotiations with the United States had taken place in recent days, though they confirmed discussions with Oman aimed at reaching an arrangement over navigation through the Strait of Hormuz.

Officials familiar with those efforts described the proposed understanding as a temporary measure that could eventually pave the way for renewed negotiations

over Iran's nuclear programme.

Iran's Retaliation Raising Alarm

Growing concern is mounting in Washington over Iran's increasingly effective retaliatory campaign.

According to The Intercept, citing a US official, Iran has significantly improved its ability to strike American military installations across West Asia through coordinated attacks combining drones and advanced ballistic missiles. The report said Iranian retaliation has targeted at least nine US military bases in recent weeks, with several suffering "significant damage".

The sustained attacks have taken a heavy toll on the US arsenal. Recent reports indicate the Pentagon has depleted nearly 80% of its THAAD interceptors and about half of its Patriot missile interceptors, while stocks of long-range precision weapons have also fallen sharply. With THAAD interceptors costing up to \$12 million apiece and requiring months to replace, dwindling inventories are increasingly seen as a constraint on Washington's military options should the conflict with Iran escalate further.

Netanyahu Dials PM Modi, Discusses West Asia Situation

Press Trust of India

NEW DELHI: Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Thursday received a telephone call from his Israeli counterpart Benjamin Netanyahu during which they exchanged views on the recent developments in West Asia.

The two leaders also reviewed sustained progress in India-Israel Special Strategic Partnership and reaffirmed their commitment to further strengthening the bilateral cooperation across various sectors for the mutual benefit of the two countries, a statement issued by the Prime Minister's Office (PMO) said.

Later, in a post on X, Modi said, "Received a phone call from Prime Minister Benjamin Netan-



yahu. We reviewed progress on various aspects of the India-Israel Special Strategic Partnership, which continues to grow from strength to strength."

"We also exchanged views on the current situation in West Asia," he added.

According to the PMO statement, PM Modi and Netanyahu exchanged views on

the recent developments in West Asia and the two leaders agreed to remain in touch.

The conflict in West Asia is continuing for over five months now without any permanent solution.

Iran on Thursday said it is in the final stage of drafting an agreement on the Strait of Hormuz waterway with Oman, even as two Israeli soldiers were killed in Lebanon.

The Strait is crucial to global shipping and energy supplies. Before the war, which began with US and Israeli strikes on Iran in February, around one-fifth of the world's oil and natural gas would pass through the waterway at the mouth of the Persian Gulf.

Media Clampdown Shadows PoK Unrest

Trans Asia News

LONDON- Pakistan has come under criticism from rights groups and media organisations after introducing fresh restrictions on foreign journalists, requiring them to register with the government and obtain prior permission before reporting outside Islamabad, Lahore and Karachi, a move that comes amid protests and political unrest in Pakistan-occupied Kashmir (PoK).

Under the Foreign Media Facilitation Guidelines 2026, issued by Pakistan's Information Ministry, all journalists working for international media organisations, including freelancers, must register with the ministry's external media wing. Media organisations will also be required to obtain Non-Objection Certificates (NOCs) before reporting from areas outside

the country's three major cities.

The move has sparked concerns that it will further shrink press freedom in Pakistan, particularly as many major security, human rights and environmental stories originate in remote regions, including PoK.

The Human Rights Commission of Pakistan (HRCP) said the new guidelines would "institutionalise bureaucratic control over news gathering" rather than facilitate journalism.

"This is the latest in a growing pattern of restrictions on media freedom in Pakistan," the HRCP said, warning that "the space for journalism continues to shrink."

Pakistan ranks 153rd out of 180 countries in the latest Reporters Without Borders Press Freedom Index.

Foreign journalists already re-

quire government clearance to report outside Pakistan's major cities, but rights groups say the process often takes weeks, making timely coverage of developing events nearly impossible.

The latest restrictions also extend to Pakistani journalists working for foreign media organisations, who will now require prior government approval before covering stories outside the designated urban centres.

The new rules come against the backdrop of continuing protests and the recent Legislative Assembly elections in Pakistan-administered Kashmir, where international media and rights groups have reported increasing restrictions on press access.

The Joint Awami Action Committee (JAAC), which has been spearheading protests in the region, has

demanding electoral reforms and called for a boycott of the polls.

The Committee to Protect Journalists (CPJ) said it was monitoring what it described as "deteriorating press freedom conditions in Pakistan-administered Kashmir amid ongoing protests" and urged authorities to restore access to information and allow independent reporting.

Pakistan's Information Ministry also criticised international broadcaster Al Jazeera over its coverage of the elections, accusing it of engaging in "yellow journalism" and "selective reporting" that, it alleged, served the agenda of "external actors." The broadcaster has not publicly responded to the accusation.

Meanwhile, Pakistan has linked the unrest in PoK to alleged Indian interference.

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