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Institutionalise Regular Interfaith Dialogues: LG

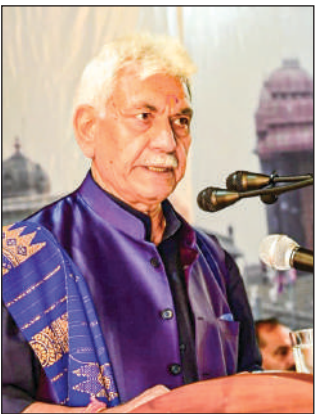
Six-Point Roadmap, Youth Peace Ambassadors At Core Of LG's Mulaqat Message

Observer News Service

Srinagar: Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha on Sunday called for institutionalising regular interfaith dialogues in schools, colleges and community centres, stressing that mutual trust and respect are essential to preserving India's diverse cultural heritage.

Addressing the Mulaqat programme in Pulwama, organised by the Save Youth, Save Future Foundation, Sinha said dialogue was not merely an exchange of words but a means of building bridges between people, nurturing trust and creating a path towards peace and prosperity. Quoting the Rig Veda, "S a n g a c h c h a d h w a m Samvadadhwam, Sam Vo Manamsi Janatam", the Lieutenant Governor said India's civilisational ethos emphasised walking together, conversing together and making space for one another.

"Mutual trust and respect to all faiths and beliefs was an integral part of our way of life. The civilisation of our beloved Bharat gave us a profoundly beautiful message 6,000 years ago to walk together, converse together and make space for one



another in our hearts," he said. Sinha said India's diversity was its strength and an invaluable heritage that could be safeguarded through mutual trust and respect.

He noted that India had, over centuries, welcomed different faiths, cultures and traditions, creating a shared heritage reflected in concepts such as Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam and the ethos of Kashmiriyat.

The Lieutenant Governor said Kashmiriyat teaches that a person's true identity lies in conduct and humanity rather than labels of faith or community.

Appreciating the Save Youth, Save Future | [More on P6](#)

Respect for All Religions Is India's Gift To The World'

Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha on Sunday emphasised India's tradition of respecting all faiths, saying that equal respect for all religions has been one of the country's enduring contributions to the world. Addressing a gathering at the Shri Ramakrishna Mahasammelan Ashram in Anantnag, Sinha said India's strength lies in its unity in diversity and in the ability of people of different faiths and traditions to move forward together. "The message of Sarva Dharma Samabhava (equal respect for all) | [More on P6](#)

Will Resign As MP In Coming Months: Ruhullah Proposes Omar's Resignation to Avert His Own Exit

KO Web Desk

Srinagar: Srinagar Lok Sabha member Aga Syed Ruhullah Mehdi on Monday said he has made up his mind to resign from Parliament in the coming months, but indicated that he could reconsider the decision if National Conference president Dr Farooq Abdullah accepts a set of political proposals, including Chief Minister Omar Abdullah's resignation and return to Parliament.

Ruhullah said he wanted a few months to take his campaign on the constitutional and political status of Jammu and Kashmir to a "certain level"



before stepping down.

"I need a few months. I am not even talking about a year. I want to bring this fight to a certain level, and then resign," he said.

Ruhullah said his resignation decision was not conditional, but he was willing to

rethink it if Dr Farooq Abdullah wanted the matter resolved and the proposed steps were implemented.

His first proposal is for Omar Abdullah to resign as Chief Minister, while Ruhullah himself resigns as MP, paving the way for Omar to contest a Lok Sabha election and lead the political campaign for restoration of Jammu and Kashmir's constitutional protections from Parliament.

"The current CM should resign from the post. I resign from the Member of Parliament," Ruhullah said.

He said he did not want to return to Parliament himself and believed | [More on P6](#)



Khoja Digar, a centuries-old Kashmiri tradition, brings thousands together in congregational prayer at the historic Naqshband Sahib Shrine in Khwaja Bazar, Srinagar. KO Photo By Abid Bhat

J&K's Higher-Secondary Enrolment Ratio Falls To 44.8%

Agencies

Srinagar: The Gross Enrolment Ratio in higher-secondary education in Jammu and Kashmir has fallen to 44.8%, marking a sharp decline in enrolment as students progress from primary to Classes XI and XII, according to NITI Aayog's latest assessment of the school education system.

The data presents a pronounced drop across successive stages of schooling. J&K's primary-level GER stands at 113.7%, but falls to 77.3% at the upper-primary level, 66.1% at the secondary level and further to 44.8% at the



higher-secondary level.

The figures indicate that while enrolment at the primary stage is relatively high,

participation declines considerably as students move towards higher classes.

The 44.8% | [More on P6](#)

SC Orders J&K to Pay for Land Takeover After 73 Yrs

Press Trust Of India

New Delhi: The Supreme Court on Monday asked the Jammu and Kashmir administration to pay compensation and rentals to one of the descendants of farmers whose land was forcibly taken more than 73 years ago for setting up a police station at Kangan in Ganderbal without any acquisition proceedings.

Land measuring seven kanals and 18 marlas at Kangan was forcibly taken over for constructing a police station

way back in 1953 without acquiring it and without paying the compensation.

A bench comprising Chief Justice Surya Kant and Justices Joymalya Bagchi and V



Mohana took note of the plea of one Abdul Rashid Wani who approached the top court through lawyer Mahfooz Ahsan Nazki to challenge the Jammu and Kashmir and Ladakh High Court's 2022 decision.

The high court had dismissed a writ petition seeking possession of land taken over for a | [More on P6](#)

Terror Network Busted on I-Day Eve, 200 Arrested: HM 'Grenades, pistols & CCTV cameras recovered in multi-state crackdown'

Agencies

New Delhi: Union Home Minister Amit Shah on Monday said that ahead of Independence Day Prime Minister Narendra Modi led Govt destroyed an ISI-backed terror network ahead of Independence Day, with security forces successfully thwarting the Shahzad Bhatti terror network's plans to carry out subversive attacks across the country.

In a post on X, the Union Home Minister said, "Modi govt destroyed the ISI-backed terror group Shahzad Bhatti Network ahead of Independence Day and thwarted its plans for subversive attacks by arresting more than 200 operatives."



"Indian security forces ripped apart the network by launching coordinated operations across different locations in 14 states upholding a brilliant example of India's zero-tolerance towards terrorism," Shah said.

The Union Home Minister said, "Improvised explosive devices (IEDs), | [More on P6](#)

Vande Mataram Inclusion May Take Time To Adjust: CM

KO Web Desk

Srinagar: Chief Minister Omar Abdullah on Monday said people may take some time to get accustomed to singing the national song Vande Mataram at official functions, as it has been included in such events only this year.

Omar was responding to the controversy surrounding the singing of Vande Mataram at the Congress' Independence Day function and allegations of disrespect by some party leaders.

"There is no controversy here. All three verses of Vande Mataram were sung. It will take us a little time to get used to it. This is the first time that this has been included. We are also adjusting a little bit," Omar told reporters in Srinagar.



He said the song was included for the first time during the Independence Day parade he attended this year.

"This was my eighth Independence Day parade, but it was for the first time Vande Mataram was included in it," he said.

Omar explained that the sequence of the programme also required some adjustment, as the national | [More on P6](#)

Nearly Half Of LS MPs Face Criminal Cases

KO Web Desk

Srinagar: Nearly half of the sitting Lok Sabha members have criminal cases against them, while 75 Rajya Sabha MPs are also facing criminal cases, according to a report submitted to the Supreme Court on Monday.

The affidavit filed by senior advocate Vijay Hansaria, appointed amicus curiae in a PIL seeking speedy disposal of criminal cases against MPs and MLAs, said 251 of the 543 Lok Sabha members have declared criminal cases against them. Of

these, 170 involve serious offences punishable with imprisonment of five years or more.

In the Rajya Sabha, 75 of 233 members have criminal cases, including 40 cases classified as serious, according to the affidavit, which cited data from the Association for Democratic Reforms.

The affidavit also said that 14 of the 28 state chief ministers have declared criminal cases against them, including serious offences.

Telangana Chief Minister Anumula Revanth Reddy has declared the | [More on P6](#)

Illegal Mining: 9,417 Seizures, Only 285 FIRs Registered

KO Web Desk

Srinagar: Jammu and Kashmir authorities carried out 9,417 seizures and registered 285 FIRs against illegal mining during the financial year 2025-26, recovering Rs 20,009 crore in penalties, according to official data.

Kathua recorded the highest number of seizures at 1,019, with one FIR registered, while Kupwara reported 972 seizures and 48 FIRs. Baramulla recorded 845 seizures and 41 FIRs, while Samba reported 800 seizures with no FIR registered.

Budgam recorded the



highest number of FIRs in the Union Territory, with 62 cases registered against illegal mining offenders from 671 seizures. Kupwara followed

with 48 FIRs, Baramulla 41, Ganderbal 30 and Srinagar 29.

Kathua also topped penalty recovery, with Rs 3,308 crore collected. | [More on P6](#)

Reviews Public, Tourism, Trade Issues

Chief Minister Omar Abdullah on Sunday met several delegations and individuals at Raabita here and discussed a range of issues concerning public welfare, tourism, sports, labour, trade and industry in Jammu and Kashmir. Omar met MLA Beerwah Dr Shafi Ahmad Wani, who apprised him of various matters concerning his constituency. A delegation from Beerwah also accompanied the legislator during the meeting. The Chief Minister also met emerging professional MMA fighter from Pulwama, Owais Yaqoob, and congratulated | [More on P6](#)



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2

After ‘Ozempic Face’, Experts Warn Of ‘Ozempic Hair’ As Hair Loss Concerns Grow

Press Trust Of India

After the widely discussed phenomenon of "Ozempic Face", dermatologists are now warning of another emerging side effect associated with the growing use, and in many cases misuse, "of GLP-1 weight loss medications such as Ozempic, Wegovy and Mounjaro. Popularly referred to as "Ozempic Hair", the condition involves excessive hair shedding following rapid weight loss. While these medications have become increasingly popular for managing obesity and diabetes, skin and hair specialists warn that their overuse, unsupervised consumption and over-the-counter use without medical advice are leading to a growing number of people experiencing temporary to significant hair loss. According to Dr Gaurav Garg, Senior Dermatologist, Hair Transplant Surgeon, Dermato-Surgeon and Medical Director of Dermalife Skin and Hair Clinic, Delhi, the trend has become increasingly common in dermatology clinics over the past year. "We are seeing a significant rise in patients complaining of excessive hair shedding after taking GLP-1 weight loss medications. Around 40 per cent of the weight loss drug users visiting our clinics are experiencing mild to significant hair loss, with many noticing hair

falling out in large clumps while washing or combing." In most cases, the medication itself is not directly damaging the hair. The problem is rapid weight loss, nutritional deficiencies and the metabolic shock experienced by the body, he said. "Unfortunately, we are also seeing people using these medications without proper medical supervision or obtaining them over the counter after being influenced by social media trends. Ozempic isn't the enemy of your hair; malnutrition and metabolic shock are. By ensuring gradual weight loss and proper nutritional support under expert guidance, many of these problems can be prevented," Dr Garg said. Medical experts explain that "Ozempic Hair" is not a medically recognised disease but the popular name given to telogen effluvium, a temporary form of stress-induced hair loss. Dr Neetu Bhari, additional professor in the Department of Dermatology at AIIMS, Delhi said that rapid weight loss acts as a physical stressor, pushing a large number of hair follicles prematurely into the resting phase, causing noticeable shedding typically three to four months later. "Reduced appetite during treatment can also lead to deficiencies of protein, iron, zinc and biotin,



nutrients that are essential for healthy hair growth," Dr Bhari said. Recent scientific evidence suggests that the problem may be more common than initially believed. A 2025 study published in PubMed Central (PMC), titled Prevalence and Predictors of Hair Shedding Among GLP-1 Receptor Agonist Users, found that nearly seven out of ten GLP-1 users reported some degree of hair shedding in real-world settings. Earlier international estimates had placed the figure between 25 per cent and 33 per cent, indicating that the condition may be significantly under-recognised outside clinical trials. Dr Bhari said patients often report

finding excessive hair on pillows, bathroom floors and hairbrushes, while many notice thinning over the scalp and widening of the hair part. "Although the condition is generally temporary and reversible, the sudden loss of hair can cause considerable emotional distress and anxiety, particularly among women and young adults," she said. Dr Bhari stressed that drugs should never be taken without medical supervision. Highlighting the growing concern over self-medication, Dr Garg said, "One of the biggest concerns today is that these weight loss injections are increasingly being viewed as quick-fix cosmetic solutions rather than prescription medicines meant for specific

medical conditions. Many people begin taking them after watching social media content or on the advice of friends, without understanding the nutritional consequences." Hair shedding in most cases is temporary, but prevention is always better than treatment. "These medications should never be used casually or without expert supervision. Anyone undergoing medical weight loss should also receive dietary counselling, adequate protein intake and regular monitoring to minimise the risk of hair loss and other nutritional complications." Echoing similar concerns, Dr Ramajeet Singh, Director, Department of Dermatology, Medanta Hospital said, "The emerging trend of 'Ozempic Hair' highlights the risks associated not only with rapid weight loss but also with the indiscriminate use of these medications without proper medical evaluation. We are increasingly seeing individuals obtaining weight loss drugs without specialist consultation or using them beyond recommended doses in pursuit of faster results." Hair shedding in such cases usually represents telogen effluvium triggered by rapid metabolic changes and nutritional deficiencies rather than permanent damage to the hair follicles.

PUBLIC NOTICE

It is hereby notified for information of the general public that the name of my child has been mistakenly entered as "USMAN LIAQAT BHAT" in the Aadhaar Card/record, whereas his correct and actual name is "HADI LIAQAT BHAT".The child is HADI LIAQAT BHAT, S/o LIAQAT FAROOQ BHAT, R/o Gudsathoo, Budgam, Jammu & Kashmir.The Aadhaar Card bearing No. 9140 2663 3633 contains the incorrect name "USMAN LIAQAT BHAT", which may kindly be read and treated as "HADI LIAQAT BHAT". The concerned authorities and the general public are hereby requested to take note of the above correction and treat HADI LIAQAT BHAT as the correct name of the child for all official and legal purposes.

Sd/-Parent/GuardianName: LIAQAT FAROOQ BHAT
R/o Gudsathoo, Budgam

mcb

PUBLIC NOTICE

Correction of Name in Bank Account is hereby notified for information of the general public that Bismah Hamid, D/o Ab Hamid Lone, R/o Hooru, Budgam, is maintaining Account No. 0078040100771980 with J&K Bank, Budgam Branch.Her name has inadvertently been recorded in the bank account as "Bisma Hamid Lone", whereas her correct and actual name as per her Aadhaar Card is "Bismah Hamid."The concerned bank authorities are requested to make the necessary correction in the bank records accordingly.Any person having any objection regarding the above-mentioned correction may submit the same to the concerned branch/bank authorities within the stipulated period. No objection shall be entertained thereafter. Bismah Hamid
D/o Ab Hamid Lone
R/o Hooru, Budgam

mcb

OFFICE OF THE REGIONAL TRANSPORT OFFICER KASHMIR

Subject:- Necessary Correction/change in address in data to the License No.JK-0120220003792 issued in favour of SAQIB ASHRAF Parentage MOHMMAD ASHRAF BHAT Whereas an application has been recieved by one SAQIB ASHRAF Parentage MOHMMAD ASHRAF BHAT wherein he claimed that the Name has been wrongly recorded in the records of Driving Licenses as SAQIB ASHRAF BHAT Parentage MOHD ASHRAF BHAT Which needs to be changed as SAQIB ASHRAF Parentage MOHMMAD ASHRAF BHAT.

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

Regional Transport officer
Kashmir, Srinagar

mcb

PUBLIC NOTICE

I have changed my name from (old name) SYED SARAFRAZ HUSSAIN SAFVI S/O SYED HYDER SAFVI to (New name) SYED SARFARAZ HUSSAIN SAFVI S/O SYED HAIDER SAFVI. In future i will be known as (new Name) Aga Syed Mustafa. If any body having any objection he/she may contact Passport Office, Srinagar within 7 days. After 7 days no objection will be accepted.

fko

OFFICE OF THE ASSISTANT REGIONAL TRANSPORT OFFICER BUDGAM

Subject:- Necessary Correction/change in address in data to the License No.JK-0420120018206 issued in favour of FAROOQ AHMAD GANAIE Parentage GHULAM AHMAD GANAIE Whereas an application has been recieved by one FAROOQ AHMAD GANAIE Parentage GHULAM AHMAD GANAIE wherein he claimed that the Name has been wrongly recorded in the records of Driving Licenses as FAROOQ AHMAD GANIE Parentage GH AHMAD GANIE Which needs to be changed as FAROOQ AHMAD GANAIE Parentage GHULAM AHMAD GANAIE. Now therefore it is notified for the information of the general public that objections if any in this regard shal reach in written in the office of the Assistant Regional Transport office Budgam within a period of 7 days from the date of publication of this notice in the daily newspaper.After expiry of stipulated time no objection will be entertained.

Assistant Regional Transport officer
Budgam Kashmir

mcb

PUBLIC NOTICE

This is information for the general public that i have changed my wards name from old name 1. ANNAS BIN FEROZ 2. MOHAMMAD ABDULLAH BIN FAROOZ To new name 1. ANAS BIN FAROOZ KUMAR 2. MOHAMMAD ABDULLAH BIN FAROOZ KUMAR. In this regard if anybody having any objection may contact Principal Delhi Public School Budgam with in a period of seven days. No objection shall be entertained after that. FAROOZ AHMAD KUMAR
F/o ANAS BIN FAOOZ KUMAR
2. MOHAMMAD ABDULLAH BIN FAROOZ KUMAR.
CELL. 9419020308

fko

PUBLIC NOTICE

The Mother's Name And DOB of my ward, Salma Riyaz, has been wrongly written in his school records as Farida Beigum , DOB 15-07-2011 while his correct name is Fareeda Bano , Correct DOB 14-06-2014. Now I have applied for the correction of the same if anybody has any objection in this regard he/she may file them in the office of the Al-Noor Model School Dhoibwan within seven days. After that no objection shall be entertained. Fareeda Bano
M/o Salma Riyaz
R/o Barzulla Karhuma

brmg

Office of the Naib Tehsildar Tilgam Executive Magistrate 1st Class

Subject: - Issuance of Registration orders in respect of delayed Birth/Death.

Public Notice

The registrar Births and Deaths BDO Khaipora has submitted case file pertaining to birth of Tanzeela Jan D/ Ghulam Ahmad Shah R/O Chandarseer Distt Baramulla having verified the date of birth as 04-03-2010 and the event has been shown to be occurred atHome . In this connection if anybody having any objection to the issuance of delay order of birth certificate shall submit his/hr claim to this office within seven (7) days after that no objection shall be entertained fko

Naib Tehsildar

OFFICE OF THE EXECUTIVE ENGINEER GENERATION DIVISION USHP-II, KANGAN EXTENSION NOTICE-II

Due to Poor response of the following e-Nit for the below mentioned works, published by this office is hereby extended up to 22nd Aug 2026.

S.No	e-NIT No & Date	Title	Bid Submission End Date	Opening Bid Date
1.	e- NIT No. USHP-II/GD/06 of 2026-27 & Dated: 11/ 07 /2026	Overhauling of Sumbal Junction Gate by way of replacement of seals, rollers, modification of guides and associated equipments.	22-08-2026	24-08-2026

DIPK-NB-1423/26
dated: 17-08-2026

Sd/-

Executive Engineer
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USHP-II, Kangan

No: USHP-II/GD/Tech/467-73

Dated: 15/08/2026

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E- Bid Document (Auction ID:)

Out-sourcing of "Operation Management" of Tourist Cafeteria at Naristan, Tral, J&K for a period of 03+02-years on License Basis through GeM Portal.

No: Estates / 278 / DTK / 373

dated:- 14/ 08 /2026

For and on behalf of the Lt. Governor of J&K Union Territory, e - bids are invited online through GeM Portal for Outsourcing the "Operation Management" of Cafeteria at Naristan,Tral, J&K for a period 03+02-years on License Basis through GeM Portal. The details are as under:

S.No	Particulars	Date/Amount	Remarks
1.	PQ (Pre-Qualification) Submission Start Date	18.08.2026 10:00 AM	Nil
2.	PQ (Pre-Qualification) Submission End Date	25.08.2026 04:00 PM	Nil
3.	PQ (Pre-Qualification) Assessment End Date & Time	28.08.2026 04:00 PM	Nil
4.	EMD Start Date	31.08.2026 10:00 AM	Nil
5.	EMD End Date	01.09.2026 4:00 PM	Nil
6.	EMD (Bid Security) Amount in shape of CDR/FDR/DD	Rs. 13,000 /- (Rupees Thirteen Thousand Only)	To be pledged in favour of Accounts Officer, Directorate of Tourism, Kashmir.
7.	Bid Submission/Auction Start Date	03.09.2026 10:00 AM	Nil
8.	Bid Submission/Auction End Date & Time	04.09.2026 4:00 PM	Nil
9.	Reserve Bid Amount	Rs.1,30,000/- (Rupees One Lakh and Thirty Thousand Only)	Nil
10.	Bidding Time Extension	Not Applicable	Not Applicable

The e-auction shall be finalized by the Outsourcing Committee under the Chairmanship of Director Tourism, Kashmir. Reliable/ resourceful and experienced agencies/persons, who fulfill the ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA (PRE QUALIFICATION) detailed as under shall only be eligible to participate in the e – bidding process. For Details/Information , Please Contact 9086244001 (Mr. Latif Khan , Sr Asst. Estates).

PRE –QUALIFICATION (PQ) CRITERIA (TO BE UPLOADED ON GEM PORTAL)

- The bidder should be a domicile of J&K shall upload a valid domicile certificate or state subject.
- The bidder shall have to upload a Character Certificate from the concerned Additional Dy. Commissioner (ADC) / Police Station or alternatively copy of a valid PASSPORT.
- The bidder shall have to upload self-attested PAN Card & Aadhar Card.

DIPK-4641/26
dated: 17-08-2026

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PUBLIC NOTICE

I, M. Abdullah Shiekh, S/o Gh. Mohmad Shiekh, R/o Nehalpora, Tehsil Pattan, Post Office Pattan, District Baramulla, J&K (UT), do hereby notify the general public that my name has inadvertently been recorded as "Mohammad Abdullah Shiekh" in my Aadhaar Card, which is incorrect. My correct name is "M. Abdullah Shiekh". I have applied for correction of my name in the Aadhaar records and request that the same be published in the Government Gazette for official record and further necessary action. Any person having any objection in this regard may approach the concerned authority within the prescribed period. M. Abdullah Shiekh
S/o Gh. Mohmad Shiekh
R/o Nehalpora, Tehsil Pattan,
Post Office Pattan, District Baramulla, J&K (UT)

fko

PUBLIC NOTICE

I have changed my name from Umer Gulzar Teli To new name Umer Gulzar in future I will be known as Umar Gulzar....If anybody is having any objection her or she may contact passport office srinagar within 07 days after 07 days no objection will be accepted. My name has been wrongly written as FATIMA BEGUM in my Adhaar card bearing Adhaar No..5547 3596 7314 while my correct name is KHATI BEGUM W/O GH HASSAN DAR which needs to be corrected if anybody having any objection in this regard he / she may file his /her objection in the office of concerned Adhaar Authority of India within seven days from the publication of this notice after that no objection will be entertained Name...KHATI BEGUM
W/O ...GH HASSAN DAR
R/O. KHISIPORA KREERI

fko

PUBLIC NOTICE

I, Qamar Ud Din Shah S/o Gh Nabi Shah, R/o Managam, hereby notify that my name is wrongly recorded in Aadhaar as Syed Qamar Ud Din, whereas my correct name is Qamar Ud Din Shah. My date of birth is also wrongly recorded as 04/03/1960, whereas the correct DOB is 27/03/1956 as per my Service Record Book. I have applied for correction of my name and date of birth in Aadhaar and for issuance of the necessary Gazette notification. Any person having objection may approach the concerned authority within the prescribed period. Qamar Ud Din Shah
S/o Gh Nabi Shah R/o MANAGAM

FKO-R

PUBLIC NOTICE

it is hereby notified for the general public that my name has been wrongly recorded as Zanaib Hussan D/o Gulam Hassan Lone instead of Zainab Hassan D/o Ghulam Hassan Lone in my aadhaar card bearing number 6876 8449 1720 i have applied for the correction/rectification of my name to Zainab Hassan. any person having any objection regarding this correction may file it in writing before the concerned Aadhaar centre/authority within seven days from the date of publication of this notice.

Zainab Hassan D/o Ghulam Hassan Lone
R/o Zaloor a Zaingeer Baramulla baramulla

fko

ACB Chargesheets 10 over Illegal Construction in Batamaloo

Observer News Service

Srinagar: The Jammu and Kashmir Anti-Corruption Bureau (ACB) on Monday said it has filed a chargesheet against 10 persons, including seven Srinagar Municipal Corporation (SMC) officers, for allegedly facilitating illegal and unauthorised construction in Ward No. 28 of Batamaloo, near Tiny Hearts School.

In a statement issued to Kashmir Observer, an ACB spokesperson said the chargesheet in FIR No. 06/2023 registered at Police Station ACB Srinagar was filed before the Court of Special Judge Anti-Corruption Srinagar against 10 accused, including seven SMC officers and three private individuals.

The case involves allegations of abuse of official position, criminal conspiracy and extending undue benefit to private beneficiaries under relevant provisions of the J&K Prevention of Cor-

ruption Act, RPC, RD Act and the Evacuees (Administration of Property) Act.

The spokesperson said the case was registered following allegations that officials of Ward No. 28, Batamaloo, had allegedly abused their official position and conspired with beneficiary Reyaz Ahmad Dar, son of Abdul Rahim Dar, resident of Tengpora, Batamaloo, to facilitate illegal and unauthorised construction near Tiny Hearts School.

He said the investigation conducted by Police Station ACB Srinagar, based on oral and documentary evidence, substantiated the allegations against the accused officers and private beneficiaries.

The spokesperson said that after obtaining the requisite sanction for prosecution of the public servants from the government, the chargesheet was produced before the Court of Special Judge Anti-Corruption Srinagar for judicial determination.



KO Photo: Abid Bhat

Generations Unite at Naqshband Sahib as Kashmir Observes ‘Khoja Digar’

Agencies

Srinagar: An ocean of devotion swept through Srinagar’s Old City on Monday evening as thousands of devotees rushed towards the historic Naqshband Sahib shrine to participate in the centuries-old tradition of ‘Khoja Digar’.

From elderly devotees carrying memories of the tradition for decades to young faithful joining the congregation with their families, the gathering brought together generations of Kashmiris at Khawaja Bazar, Srinagar.

“I have been attending the prayer for decades. Earlier, I used to come with my elders, and now I come with children and grandchildren,” Mohammad Salam Dar, 70, from Habba Kadal, told KNO.

For other devotees, the annual gathering is not only a religious observance but also a way of keeping alive a tradition passed down through

generations.

“It is important for us to be here and be part of this tradition. We have heard about it from our elders, and now we want the younger generation to experience it too,” said Mukhtar Ahmad, a devotee in his 30s.

The traditional prayer, observed on the third day of Rabi-ul-Awwal, is associated with Hazrat Khwaja Naqshband Sahib (RA) and the Naqshbandi spiritual order.

The shrine and adjoining streets remained packed as devotees offered Asr prayers and recited Awraad-e-Asriya, with special prayers also offered for peace, prosperity and the well-being of Jammu and Kashmir.

The congregation extended onto the Nowhatta-Khanyar road stretch, as devotees from different parts of the Valley joined the annual observance.

Authorities and shrine management had made arrangements for

security and the convenience of devotees, while the huge gathering also affected traffic movement in several downtown areas.

Long queues of vehicles were reported in Rainawari, Khanyar, Nowpora, Bohri Kadal, Hawal and adjoining areas following the closure of the Khawaja Bazar road for the congregation.

Meanwhile, Mirwaiz Umar Farooq, who traditionally leads the Khoja Digar prayers, said he had been placed under house arrest and prevented from attending the gathering.

“Ahead of the centuries-old tradition of Khoje Digar at the shrine of Naqshband Sahib, Mirwaiz Umar Farooq has been placed under house arrest, barring him from delivering the traditional sermon and offering prayers at the historic shrine,” the Mirwaiz Manzil said in a post on X.



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- QAZIGUND: 01951-296153



HIGHWAY STATUS



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



HIJRI
CALENDAR
4 Rabi-ul-Awwal
1448

PRAYERS

FAJR	4: 22
ZUHR	12:35
ASR	5: 21
Magrib	7: 20
ISHA	8: 47

This Day In History

- 293 BC - The oldest known Roman temple to Venus is founded, starting the institution of Vinalia Rustica (grape harvest festival)
- 440- St Sixtus III ends his reign as Catholic Pope
- 1201- The city of Riga is founded
- 1217 - First historical record of Scottish scholar Michael Scot, signs and dates his translation of al-Bitruji's "On the Sphere" in Toledo, Spain
- 1418- Competition announced to design the dome of Florence Cathedral, main competitors Lorenzo Ghiberti and Filippo Brunelleschi (supported by Cosimo de' Medici)
- 1564 - Spanish King Philip II joins Council of Trente
- 1587 - Saul Wahl is elected King of Poland, according to legend.
- 1605 - Spanish army under of general Spinola conquers Lingen

Kashmir Gears Up for First International Film Festival of J&K

Observer News Service

Srinagar: Divisional Commissioner Kashmir Anshul Garg chaired a meeting to review preparations for the 1st International Film Festival of J&K (IFFJK), scheduled to be held from September 7 to 10 and organised by the Department of Information and Public Relations jammu and kashmir.

The meeting deliberated on the objectives of the festival, the proposed programme of events, and coordination among various government departments and stakeholders to ensure its successful conduct.



Director Information and Public Relations Shreya Singhal, at the outset, made a detailed presentation outlining the vision and objectives of the festival, including promotion of cinematic excellence, cultural exchange, creative collaboration, emerging filmmaking talent and international industry engagement.

She apprised the meeting of the planned activities, including the opening and closing ceremonies, curated film screenings, masterclasses, panel discussions, jury and filmmaker interactions, film tourism initiatives, networking and business meetings, and dedicated engagement with students and young filmmakers.

While reviewing the arrangements, Divisional Commissioner Kashmir directed all the concerned departments to designate nodal officers for effective inter-departmental coordination and seamless execution of the film festival-related activities.

He also directed the Director Information and Public Relations to prepare a comprehensive work chart for the event manager and participating departments, clearly defining roles, responsibilities and timelines.

Emphasising the promotion of Kashmir's tourism potential, particularly emerging destinations, Anshul

Garg directed the Tourism Department to undertake focused branding of new tourist locations to attract filmmakers and international visitors. He also called for appropriate branding of shikaras and boats being utilised during the festival.

The Divisional Commissioner further stressed the need to integrate cultural programmes with the festival and showcase Kashmir's rich handloom and handicraft products at identified venues.

He advised the preparation of food menu suited to national and international guests and directed that bilin-

gual service providers be designated through the outsourced agencies to facilitate effective communication.

Anshul Garg also called for organising heritage tours to locations identified by JKTDC and the Handicrafts & Handloom Department. He reviewed plans for customised tour packages, sightseeing programmes and transportation arrangements for visiting guests.

The Divisional Commissioner issued a series of directions to officers from the Airport Authority, District Administrations of Srinagar and Baramulla, Srinagar Municipal Corporation, Floriculture, KPDC, Transport, Health, LCMA, AACL, Handicrafts & Handloom, Hospitality & Protocol, Education and Police departments regarding their roles and responsibilities.

The meeting was attended by the Deputy Commissioners of Srinagar and Baramulla, Commissioner SMC, Director Information and Public Relations J&K, Director Floriculture, Director Airport, Managing Director KPDC, Vice Chairman LCMA, Joint Director Information Headquarters, Joint Director Information Kashmir, besides senior officers of the Information Department and other concerned departments.

NORTHERN RAILWAY E-AUCTION NOTICE		
The Senior Divisional Commercial Manager, Northern Railway, Firozpur for and on behalf of President of India invites E-Auction from eligible and registered bidders for the following works over Firozpur Division:		
S. No.	Catalogue No.	Name of contract
Date of Auction: 27.08.2026		
1	EAFZR-CTG26-8	Allotment of Catering Stall on contract at Khemkaran, Fazilka, Sahnewal, Jagraon, Verka, Moga, Firozpur City, Tam Taran, Chheherta/2 Railway Stations.
2	EAFZR-ADVT26-18	Allotment of Commercial Advertisement rights through Factory Fitted LED TV screens in all coaches of Train no. 22488/22487 Vande Bharat Express.
Date of Auction: 28.08.2026		
3	EAFZR-ADVT26-20	Advertisement rights through Vinyl wrapping on exterior of coaches of Train No. 14680/79/82/81, 14622/21/26/25, 12408/07 & 20424/23.
4	EAFZR-PnU26-9	Operation and maintenance of Pay & Use Toilet blocks at Mukatsar & Kotkapura Railway Stations.
Date of Auction: 01.09.2026		
5	EAFZR-CTG26-9	Allotment of Catering Stall on contract at Phagwara Railway Station.
6	EAFZR-MIS26-15	a) Setting up and operation of Food Van in Railway premises adjoining to wall of Jagraon Bridge in Colony No. 10 and near TTE Rest house at Railway Station Ludhiana. b) Setting up and operation of Travel Help Desk at Amritsar Railway Station. c) Allotment of contract for setting up and operation of Water Vending Machines at Amritsar, Dhandari Kallan, Phagwara & Firozpur Cantt, Railway station.
Date of Auction: 02.09.2026		
7	EAFZR-MPS26-5	Allotment of multi-purpose stall (MPS) No. 3 in Waiting Hall at Phagwara Railway Station.
For other details and registration, please visit Railway website www.ireps.gov.in No.: NR-FZR0COML(NFR)/18/2024 Date: 14.08.2026 2836/2026 SERVING CUSTOMERS WITH A SMILE		

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IAPM Department,Zonal Office Srinagar,
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POSSESSION NOTICE
Notice under Section 13 (4) of the SARFAESI ACT, 2002 read with Rule 8 (1) of the Security (Enforcement) Interest Rules, 2002
Whereas the Authorized Officer of the Jammu & Kashmir Bank Limited under the Securitization and Reconstruction of Financial Assets and Enforcement of Security Interest (SARFAESI) Act, 2002 and in exercise of powers under Section 13(2) of the said Act read with Rule 3 of the Security Interest (Enforcement) Rules 2002, issued Demand Notice dated 24.04.2026 thereby calling upon the Borrowers namely 1) Mr. Khaleel Mohammad Nowsheri S/O Abdul Samad Nowsheri R/O SWheikh Mohalla, Soura, Sgr., proprietor of Al-Hubbi Traders (Borrower/Mortgagor) 2) Mr. Farooq Ahmad Ganai S/O Abdul Samad Ganai R/O Sheikh Mohalla, Soura, Sgr. (Guarantor/Mortgagor) and 3) Bashir Ahmad Taploo S/O Mohammad Ramzan Taploo R/O Taploo Mohalla, Anchar, Sgr. to repay an amount of Rs.21,48,122.26 (Rupees Twenty one lacs Forty Eight Thousand One Hundred Twenty Two and Paise Twenty Six only) being the balance outstanding as on 31.03.2026 in the accounts of the borrower, within 60 days from the date of the said notice together with the future interest and other charges thereon (liability of the guarantors being restricted to the balance outstanding in the particular loan accounts to which they have stood as guarantors).
The said borrowers having failed to repay the said amount, notice is hereby given to the said borrowers in particular and the public in general that the undersigned being authorized officer of the J&K Bank Ltd. has taken possession of the mortgage property described herein below, in exercise of the powers conferred on me under Section 13(4) of the said Act read with Rule 8 of the said Rules, on 14.08.2026.
The borrowers in particular and the public in general are hereby cautioned against dealing with the said property in any manner whatsoever and any dealings with the said property will be subject to the charge of the J&K Bank Limited for the amount in aggregating to Rs.21,30,437.26 (Rupees Twenty One Lacs Thirty Thousand Four Hundred Thirty Seven and Paise Twenty six only) together with future interest thereon from 01.08.2026 and other charges incurred or to be incurred.
The borrower's attention is invited to the provisions of Sub-section (8) of Section 13 of the Act, in respect of the time available, to redeem the secured assets.

Description of the Immovable Property
Residential House along with land measuring 2 Kanals 7 ½ Marlas falling under Khasra No.172 min, 173 min, 174 min, 175 min and 247 min (MUSHA) under Khata Nos. 2835 & 2884 and Khewat No.1237 situated at Mouza Zoonimar, Tehsil Eidgah District Srinagar standing in the joint names of Khalil Mohammad and Farooq Ahmad both residents of Sheikh Mohalla, Soura, Sgr.

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KO VIEW

A City Without Commons

Somewhere down the line, Srinagar began losing the things that made it a city rather than a collection of buildings. Its open grounds became construction sites, its wetlands became real estate, its flood basins became plots, and its green patches became tempting pieces of urban property. The historic city now keeps building bridges while losing the spaces that once gave its people room to breathe. A recent appeal by a civil society group to protect Srinagar's green and open spaces should therefore be read as more than another dispute over a piece of land. It is a warning about the type of city Srinagar is becoming. Every vacant patch now seems to invite a question: Why is this land still empty? That question exposes a dangerous idea in urban development, where an open space counts as wasted space until someone finds a commercial or residential use for it. A playground becomes a building site, a green patch becomes parking, a wetland becomes developable land, and a public ground becomes an asset waiting for monetisation. Srinagar has already paid a heavy price for this logic. Its wetlands and flood basins once absorbed water, cooled neighbourhoods and supported an urban ecology that had evolved over centuries. Encroachment and unchecked construction have reduced that capacity. Every monsoon now reminds the city of what it surrendered. The loss also reaches deeper than flooding. A city without commons becomes a city where every useful space belongs to someone. Children lose places to play, older people lose places to sit beneath trees, neighbourhoods lose their breathing room, pedestrians lose shade, and communities lose the physical spaces where strangers once became neighbours. Cities elsewhere have begun moving in the opposite direction. Seoul restored the Cheonggyecheon stream after removing a major roadway. New York protects public parks as essential urban infrastructure. Singapore treats greenery as part of its city planning rather than decoration. Barcelona has experimented with superblocks that return streets to people. These examples differ greatly, but they share one principle: public space creates public value. Srinagar can adopt the same principle without copying another city. The government can map every remaining wetland, playground, park, flood basin and major open ground and place them under a clear public-space protection framework. Local communities can become custodians rather than spectators. Schools, resident groups and municipal bodies can maintain neighbourhood greens. Development permissions can account for lost shade, drainage and public space, rather than merely built-up area. The city also needs a cultural shift. Srinagar must stop treating every unbuilt parcel as an opportunity for construction. A bridge connects two places, but a common space connects people to their city. Srinagar has spent years building the first kind of connection. Its future may depend on preserving the second.

Who Profits From Kashmir?

The valley leads global output in apples, cricket bat willow and hand-woven shawls, but the money keeps landing somewhere else.



Irshad Mushtaq

A number by itself tells you little. Say that Kashmir grew 21.10 lakh tonnes of apples this season and the figure sounds impressive until you place it beside Himachal Pradesh, which grew only 6.47 lakh tonnes on land barely two-thirds the size of Kashmir's 172,000-odd hectares. Put the two side by side and a sharper picture forms: Kashmir supplies roughly 70 percent of India's apples, Himachal supplies about 20 percent, according to figures compiled by the USDA's Foreign Agricultural Service and India's Commodity Board. That dominance should mean leverage, but instead it means exposure. When national demand softens even slightly, the region carrying the heaviest share of the market absorbs the heaviest share of the loss. This year, a carton that sold for 1,490 to 1,605 fetched only 860 to 1,145, a collapse felt hardest by growers who have the most riding on the crop. Walnuts tell a rougher version of the same story, but pointed in the other direction. China grows about 55 percent of the world's walnuts, some 45 times India's total output, most of it grown far more cheaply than Kashmir can manage. Chinese walnuts sell here at 350 to 400 a kilogram against Kashmiri walnuts priced at 700 to 800. Kashmir's own share of its own domestic market fell from 85 percent to 30 percent in just four years, per Commodity Board data. Volume was never the problem, price competitiveness was. Saffron shows what changes when policy actually intervenes. Iran produces 15 to 20 times more saffron than Kashmir does, but Kashmiri saffron sells for 2 lakh to 3.5 lakh per kilogram against Iran's 1 lakh to 1.5 lakh, nearly double the price for a fraction of the harvest. That difference opened after the Government of India granted Kashmiri saffron a geographical indication tag in 2020 and backed it with a 411 crore National Saffron Mission covering 3,715 hectares. Certification and branding turned a modest crop into a premium one. It is proof, concrete and measurable, that intervention works when it targets the right product. Pashmina makes the point clear. China and Mongolia together supply 80 to 90 percent of the world's cashmere wool. Kashmir's own Pashmina fiber output runs only 40 to 50 tonnes a year, under one percent of global supply. Small as that share is, hand-craftsmanship and certification have made it valuable: shawl exports climbed to 588.23 crore in 2025-26 from 305.52 crore the year before, now accounting for more than 70 percent of the valley's total handicraft exports, per the Directorate of Handicrafts. The GI tag registered for Kashmir Pashmina in 2005 has expanded from 175 certified labels in 2014 to over 30,000 today. Carpets, by contrast, once the valley's leading craft export at 821.50 crore in 2016-17, fell to 123.31 crore this year. Certification and marketing have helped artisans grow their exports, while late or limited support pushed the craft into decline. The comparison points



“The pieces are on the table, but what separates saffron and Pashmina from walnuts, carpets and cricket bats is not effort or raw material, both of which Kashmir has in abundance. It is the presence or absence of certification, storage, processing and branding built to match what growers already produce.

clearly to the next area for investment. Cricket bats, meanwhile, present the sharpest imbalance of all. Kashmir produces about 3 million bats a year, supplying somewhere between 70 and 77 percent of world volume by most industry estimates. But on sheer output, no region on earth competes. On price, however, the comparison is embarrassing: a Kashmir willow bat sells for 250 to 3,000, while an English willow bat commands 1.5 lakh to 2 lakh, a gap of 50 to 100 times for a broadly similar product. Growing the most does not translate into earning the most. Seasoning technology, grading standards and branding decide the final price far more than volume does, the same lesson saffron and Pashmina already taught.

The 2025 GI tag for Kashmir willow, paired with a Forest Department plan to plant 2.2 lakh new willow trees, gives an industry that already employs tens of thousands and exports to more than 40 countries a genuine opening to close that gap. Beyond agriculture, the wider economy shows both promise and strain. Land in prime pockets such as Hyderpora now sells for 1.5 crore to 3.5 crore per kanal, prices that rival parts of Mumbai and Delhi, even as the valley's average land value stays far lower. Unemployment stood at 6.7 percent in 2024-25 against a national figure of 3.5 percent, a disparity explained partly by an economy still tied to seasonal farming and tourism. Tourism itself collapsed after the Pahalgam attack, with arrivals falling from 98.19 lakh in 2024 to 11.16 lakh in 2025, even as Himachal Pradesh's tourist numbers continued climbing over the same period. Banking data adds one more piece: Kashmir's credit-deposit ratio sat at 57.82 percent as of March 2026, meaning banks lent 1,24,927.09 crore against deposits of 2,16,072.43 crore, well below the national average near 79 percent, according to the RBI and SLBC figures. A large share of the valley's own savings sits idle, even as local orchards and workshops struggle for capital. But public support has played a role. Under the MIDH scheme, the Centre funds Kashmir's horticulture on a 90:10 basis, well above the standard 60:40 share for most states, highlighting the region's difficult terrain. The Modified High-Density Plantation Scheme, offering a 50 percent subsidy for improved apple varieties, lifted production by 35 to 45 percent in a single season. NITI Aayog has mapped out cold-chain expansion for the apple belt, with 50,000 metric tonnes of new storage capacity already announced. The pieces are on the table, but what separates saffron and Pashmina from walnuts, carpets and cricket bats is not effort or raw material, both of which Kashmir has in abundance. It is the presence or absence of certification, storage, processing and branding built to match what growers already produce. The valley is not short on skill or output. It is short on the machinery that turns volume into value, and the record so far shows exactly what closes that gap.

The author is a Srinagar-based financial educator.

The Alpine Water Crisis

Climate change is accelerating ecological change in the high Himalayas, but monitoring and management of the valley's major lakes remain fragmented.



Mazum Bakshi

Gangbal, Vishansar, Krishansar, Gadsar, Tarsar, Marsar, Kounsarnag, Sheshnag, Tarsar, Nundkol, Alpather. The names read like a poem, but these lakes themselves are working harder than their beauty suggests. Perched above the tree line among Kashmir's snow-clad peaks, they collect meltwater and rain, then send it downhill into streams that feed the Jhelum, recharge groundwater, fill wetlands and keep farms and fisheries running through the dry months. Water security in the valley starts here, in basins most residents will never see. Scientists treat these lakes as something closer to instruments than scenery. Sediment layers on their beds hold a record of centuries of climate shifts, and their present condition works as an early signal of what is coming. And that signal is getting harder to ignore. The Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change and the International

Centre for Integrated Mountain Development have both found that the Himalayas are warming faster than the global average, a trend that threatens glaciers, snow-fed rivers and the ecosystems built around them. Kashmir's alpine lakes lie at the center of that transformation, absorbing changes that took millennia to accumulate in the space of a few decades. Members of the Jammu and Kashmir Mountaineering and Adventure Club have watched this unfold firsthand on their expeditions into the high country. Glaciers are retreating, snow cover is thinning, and rainfall and snowmelt no longer follow the timing that alpine plants and animals evolved around. Alpine ecosystems function at the edge of survivable conditions already, so they recover slowly from disturbance. Damage inflicted in a single bad season can take decades to heal, if it heals at all. None of this stays confined to the mountains, because when an alpine lake degrades, the effects travel downstream into rivers, wetlands and groundwater, then into the fields and fisheries that depend on them. The ecological health of the whole valley traces back to these high-altitude catchments. Treating them as a remote concern misreads the plumbing of the



region entirely. Other mountain nations have already worked this out. Switzerland has its alpine lakes continuously and enforces strict environmental rules around them. Canada protects Lake Louise and Moraine Lake inside Banff and Jasper National Parks through habitat safeguards and sustained ecological research. Yosemite and Rocky Mountain National Parks manage their high-altitude lakes

through decades of watershed science and adaptive planning. None of these programs are exotic or experimental. They rely on the same basic formula: measure conditions over time, act on what the data shows, and treat conservation as ongoing work rather than a one-time fix. The global policy architecture already points the same direction. The United Nations Decade on Ecosystem Restoration names moun-

tain landscapes a priority because they supply freshwater to close to half of humanity. The International Union for Conservation of Nature recommends integrated landscape management and community participation as the backbone of mountain conservation. India has committed to the Convention on Biological Diversity, the Ramsar Convention and the Sustainable Development Goals on clean water, climate action and life on land, commitments that run directly through places like Gangbal and Tarsar. Kashmir's alpine lakes are not a side note to those obligations. They are where those obligations get tested. Right now, most of these lakes have no dedicated management plan. Monitoring of water quality, biodiversity and climate indicators happens sporadically at best. Without consistent data, officials can only react once damage becomes visible, and visible damage in an alpine system often means the damage is already advanced. That is a poor strategy for ecosystems that take decades to recover from a single disturbance. The fix is not complicated, even if it takes coordination. The Jammu and Kashmir government should launch a dedicated Alpine

Lakes Conservation Mission, pulling together the Department of Forest, Ecology and Environment, the Wildlife Protection Department, the Department of Tourism, universities, research institutions and the communities who live closest to these watersheds. The mission should draft a management plan for major alpine lake in the region, backed by long-term monitoring that tracks climate, hydrology, biodiversity and water quality together rather than in isolation. Civilizations have always been judged by how they treated their water. Kashmir's alpine lakes are not decorative backdrops for tourism photographs, and they will not forgive years of neglect simply because they look pristine today. They are functioning ecosystems on loan to the present generation, and the bill for mismanaging them will land on the next one. Conservation, not admiration, is the only tribute that actually protects them. The author is a businessman by profession but a nature lover and environmentalist by heart. He can be reached at mazumbakshi@gmail.com.

History Between Evidence and Interpretation

Irfan Habib is right that history rests on evidence, but the real work begins when historians confront what those traces can and cannot show.



Muskan Shafi Malik

I scrolled through the news and found the recent interview of historian Irfan Habib. He stated that history ought to be interpreted on the basis of evidence and actual events rather than individual biases or political pressures.

"History must be based solely on evidence," he said.

I used to pass regularly by his home in Badr Bagh, Aligarh, without knowing I walked past the residence of one of India's most influential historians. Only after I began studying history more seriously did I encounter his writings and engage critically with his arguments.

His statement today matches what I have come to accept: without evidence, history collapses into myth, pure memory passed as fact.

But what do we mean by evidence, and does evidence by itself deliver historical truth?

An inscription, a royal chronicle, archaeological remains, a court document, a photograph, or an oral testimony counts as evidence. But none of these automatically supplies the full reality of the past.

Evidence forms the foundation of history, but it never speaks for itself.

Historians must select it, authenticate it, place it in context, and interpret it. The pursuit of historical truth therefore demands both evidence and a clear-eyed awareness of the limits and biases built into the sources that carry the past forward. Leopold von Ranke, a foundational

figure of modern professional historiography, insisted that historians reconstruct the past from reliable primary sources and try to understand that past on its own terms.

Primary sources, however, are never automatically objective.

A king's inscription reveals something about the king while saying almost nothing about what ordinary peasants thought of him. A court chronicle may detail the emperor's actions in careful sequence while remaining silent on the experiences of women, peasants, labourers, or marginalised communities.

Sometimes the chronicle itself records only what the writer was ordered to record.

In *What Is History?*, E.H. Carr dismantled the simple divide between objective facts and historical interpretation.

Historical facts do not sit waiting to be discovered, as historians actively select and interpret them.

Picture an archive holding one thousand documents from a single period. No historian can fold all one thousand into one article. Selection follows the question the historian asks. A scholar of economic history turns to land revenue records. A scholar of religion concentrates on religious texts. A historian of women searches marriage records, personal letters, and autobiographical writings.

The evidence stays the same, but the historical question changes.

This relationship between evidence and interpretation gives historical inquiry its intellectual depth. It does not license free invention, as facts still constrain the work.

R.G. Collingwood gave it another dimension: historians reconstruct the thoughts and intentions behind actions, rather than merely collecting dead facts.

Evidence may show that a ruler went to war. The document establishes the event. Understanding why the war began demands interpretation.



FOR CENTURIES, RULERS, ADMINISTRATORS, RELIGIOUS INSTITUTIONS, AND COLONIAL GOVERNMENTS GENERATED VAST QUANTITIES OF WRITTEN MATERIAL TO SECURE THEIR AUTHORITY. Ordinary people left far fewer written records. Absence of evidence therefore cannot be treated as evidence of absence. A group may have held immense historical significance while leaving almost no written trace.

Historians must therefore put questions to their sources rather than treat those sources as self-explanatory.

Michel Foucault's analysis of power and knowledge sharpens the critique further.

The historical archive is never neutral. Who possessed the power to write? Who received education? Whose documents survived and whose voices vanished? Who decided what deserved recording? For centuries, rulers,

administrators, religious institutions, and colonial governments generated vast quantities of written material to secure their authority. Ordinary people left far fewer written records.

Absence of evidence therefore

cannot be treated as evidence of absence.

A group may have held immense historical significance while leaving almost no written trace.

Hayden White observed that historians arrange facts into narratives. The same set of events can be told in different ways depending on emphasis, omission, chronology, language, and causation.

Taken to an extreme, this insight threatens to erase the distinction between historical scholarship and fiction.

That risk must be guarded against, since narrative should serve the evidence rather than stand in for it.

This raises a more fundamental question: can the sources themselves be trusted?

Historians draw on written records such as chronicles and letters, material evidence such as coins and architecture, oral traditions and interviews, and visual sources such as paintings and maps.

Each form carries limits: a royal inscription may inflate victories, a colonial report embeds imperial assumptions, and a personal diary records genuine feeling from a single vantage.

Oral memory preserves experiences often excluded from official writing but shifts with time. Archaeology discloses material life while remaining silent on internal beliefs.

A historian therefore cannot stop at the question: "What does this source say?"

The necessary questions run deeper: Who produced it, why, for whom, under what conditions, and what does it leave out?

This critical stance explains why Habib's insistence on evidence retains its force.

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

A Gallery of Grief and Grace in Kashmir

Young Kashmiri women are finding new forms of expression in a 15-year-old tradition of remembrance.



Iliyas Rizvi

The day of recollection in Kashmir brought women and girls together through poetry, art and discussion.

Schoolgirls recited *Nouhas* and *Marsiyas*. University students spoke about grief, history and social justice. Artists worked with wool, calligraphy, nails and red thread, while a young filmmaker screened a documentary on Kashmir.

The setting was the 14th edition of *Mashq-e-Arba'een: Dar'ke Azadari*, a nine-day community-driven exhibition and programme that has grown over a decade and a half into one of Kashmir's distinctive spaces for commemorating *Ashura* and *Arba'een* through art and literature.

This year, two young professionals, Ifsha Zehra and Nadiya Zehra, curated the exhibition and co-hosted "Safar-e-Mashq: The Decade and a Half Journey of the Exhibition," guiding a programme in which women took prominent roles as curators, artists, speakers, writers and participants.

The focus extended beyond the branded visual language of *Karbala*. The organisers sought to bring forward the experience of *Hazrat Zainab*, the granddaughter of the Prophet Muhammad, PBUH, and sister of Imam Hussain, alongside the women and children who witnessed the aftermath of the battle.

The programme sought to introduce these women more fully into *Azadari* spaces and encourage discussion about personalities and experiences that younger generations encounter less often.

That approach gave the exhibition a

wider purpose.

Young participants used the gallery to speak, write, perform and question. In an age dominated by social media and artificial intelligence, the organisers created in-person sessions where school and college girls could meet artists, academics and specialists directly.

The response reflected a scarcity of such creative forums for young women in Kashmir.

The artists gave that idea a physical form. Rutba Showkat, a Fine Arts student at the University of Kashmir's School of Music and Fine Arts, presented "Sogg-e-Sakino," combining woven craft with contemporary artistic techniques.

She described the experience as deeply emotional and enlightening, saying her work on *Karbala* gave her the sensation of witnessing its scenes herself.

Adhma Zehra's series, "Salam," focused on *Hazrat Zainab* and her journey toward *Kufa* and *Shaaam*. Her mixed-media work used nails and red woolen threads against a black background, creating an image of suffering and endurance associated with the women and children of *Karbala*.

Farhana Hassan and Syeda Uzma also used their artistic work to translate personal responses to the tragedy into visual form.

The exhibition then moved from images to voices.

During an oratory session conducted by Syeda Rizvi, school and university students performed *Nouhas*, *Marsiyas* and other poetic forms. Sadaf Nazir, a Class 10 student at Eve's Garden School in Srinagar, drew particular attention with her performance, leaving the gallery audience absorbed in her recitation.

Syeda Rizvi described *Azadari* spaces as rare places where women can gather for discussions that move beyond caste, gender and socioeconomic distinctions. Such spaces, she said, allow participants to connect spiritually while finding a sense of calm and belonging through shared reflection.

Film provided another route into the story.



Marziya Aga, an English Literature student at the Islamic University of Science and Technology, screened "Khameni in Kashmir." She described the centuries-old transmission of *Karbala* through art, poetry, literature and oratory as a continuing tradition and viewed *Mashq* as a space where aspiring Kashmiri filmmakers can explore that inheritance through their own work.

The academic writing workshop, "The *Karbala* Paradigm: A Critical Writing Workshop," led by academic and author *Khair-u-Nisa* Aga, pushed participants further.

The sessions treated writing as a process of questioning, reading, critical thought and knowledge building. Participants examined the *Karbala* Paradigm as a framework for understanding reality, knowledge and

ethical responsibility.

Aga said such spaces give young women room to question and connect their voices with social justice, leadership and change while developing confidence through knowledge.

Another session, "Emotions and *Azadari*," led by clinical psychologist Saeeda Nida Zahra, examined grief through the human experience rather than through dates and historical events alone.

Drawing on examples of suffering throughout history, she explored *Karbala* as a story in which emotion, memory and human expression remain deeply connected.

Hazrat Zainab's journey to *Kufa* and *Shaaam*, she explained, carries themes of suffering alongside patience, resistance to injustice and fidelity to truth. *Mashq-e-Arba'een* has spent 15

years developing this language of commemoration. Its evolution suggests a changing role for *Azadari* in Kashmir, where remembrance can become a setting for artistic experimentation, intellectual inquiry and female participation.

The gallery therefore became a place where a generation of Kashmiri women could interpret *Karbala* through paint, thread, poetry, film, scholarship and speech, extending an old tradition into forms that speak directly to their own lives and to the questions they are learning to ask.

— The author is a Srinagar-based crafts and heritage consultant and founder of EdRAAK, a decade-long initiative dedicated to reviving arts, crafts, and cultural heritage in Kashmir.

BJP Mounts Major Protest Against NC In Jammu

Press Trust Of India

Jammu: Hundreds of BJP workers, led by Jammu and Kashmir party president Sat Sharma, took to the streets here on Monday to protest against the National Conference-led government, accusing it of failing to fulfil its election promises and address

unemployment and development issues.

Carrying placards and party flags, the BJP activists gathered at Dogra Chowk, Maheshpura, and Panjtirthi before marching separately toward the Civil Secretariat via Shalimar Road under the leadership of Sharma, Member of Parliament Jugal

Kishore Sharma, and Leader of Opposition in the J-K Assembly Sunil Sharma, raising slogans against the NC-Congress alliance.

Several senior party leaders demanded the resignation of Chief Minister Omar Abdullah, alleging large-scale corruption and complete failure of governance.

Protesters also set ablaze effigies of the NC-Congress government, while police and paramilitary personnel were deployed in large numbers along the march routes and the Civil Secretariat. Women workers of the BJP Mahila Morcha also participated in the demonstration. "Thousands of BJP workers,

MPs, legislators and common people are on the roads to express their anger against the NC-led government. The elections were held after a long gap, and the National Conference came to power after making several promises before the elections. But now, when it is time to actually work, they keep raising the issue

of statehood to mislead the public," the J-K BJP president said.

He claimed that since the government has failed to meet the public's expectations, it's using the statehood issue merely to distract people.

"They know that people will question them. They have already seen the results in Nagrota

and Budgam (by polls), and they know what their situation is going to be. National Conference is a completely failed political party. Unfortunately, our misfortune is that their alliance is with a political party (Congress) which has no respect for the national anthem or the national song," he said.

CONTD. FROM FRONT PAGE

Institutionalise Regular

Foundation for its efforts, particularly its young volunteers working against drug abuse and promoting brotherhood, Sinha called for expanding such initiatives across a wider scale.

He said the true meaning of peace begins with understanding one another and described Mulaqat as an opportunity to listen, understand and respect people from different backgrounds.

"Through programmes such as Mulaqat, we must create a culture in which people belonging to all faiths, all systems of worship and all sections of society sit together, discuss issues, examine the truth and assess reality. Wherever a wall has been erected between people, everyone must work together to bring it down," he said.

Sinha also outlined a six-point roadmap aimed at strengthening social harmony and empowering young people.

As part of the roadmap, he called for regular interfaith dialogues to be institutionalised in schools, colleges and community centres to foster greater understanding among youth. He also proposed the development of Youth Peace Ambassadors and urged young people to take the lead in cultural exchange, community service and environmental protection.

The Lieutenant Governor stressed the importance of preserving historical and cultural sites as shared heritage through joint participation by citizens and the administration.

He also called for greater digital literacy among youth and efforts to counter misinformation, saying these were necessary to safeguard public trust.

"It is the collective responsibility of the public and the administration to ensure that youth receive an education that teaches them to ask questions, access to technology that guides them towards progress, and the character that inspires patriotism and nation-building," Sinha said.

He further emphasised social justice and equal opportunities, calling upon stakeholders to ensure impartial systems for the delivery of education, employment, healthcare and justice to all citizens.

As the sixth component of his roadmap, Sinha called for the constitution of Village Peace Committees representing all sections of society to strengthen compassion, humanity and development at the grassroots level.

The Lieutenant Governor said governments could make laws and administrations could establish systems, but lasting harmony could ultimately be built only through collective participation by the people.

He also called upon administrative officers to ensure the safety of citizens, equal opportunities in development and proper implementation of welfare schemes.

Earlier, Sinha flagged off a Tiranga Yatra from the Sports Stadium in Pulwama and commended the people of the district for their participation in the Har Ghar Tiranga campaign and other national integration programmes.

DIG South Kashmir Range Javid Iqbal Matoo, Deputy Commissioner Pulwama Dr Basharat Qayoom, SSP Pulwama Tanushree, Chairman Save Youth Save Future Foundation Wajahat Farooq Bhat, Women's Wing President Anika Nazir, Zonal President South Kashmir Mudasir Dar, members of the foundation, senior officials, civil society representatives, prominent citizens and a large number of youth attended the programme.

Respect for All

religions) has been India's gift to the world," Sinha said.

The Lieutenant Governor was visiting the Ashram on the occasion of Samadhi Pratishtha Divas, Nag Panchami Mahotsav and the Purnahuti of the Yajna. He also laid the foundation stone for initiatives dedicated to heritage and cultural preservation.

Paying homage to Swami Ashokanand Ji Maharaj, Sinha recalled his vision in 1937 to develop the Ashram as a vibrant spiritual centre. He said the institution had preserved the wisdom of sages while carrying forward a tradition of service, discipline, sadhana and dedication.

Sinha said India's saints, despite following different languages, traditions and methods of spiritual practice, conveyed a common message of bringing people closer to one another.

"Our saints, in different languages, different traditions, and through different methods of sadhana, gave humanity the same fundamental message: work to bring human beings closer to human beings," he said.

The Lieutenant Governor also urged people, particularly youth, to embrace selfless service, courage, compassion, discipline and social responsibility.

He said spirituality in Indian culture was closely linked with responsibility towards society and the natural world, urging young people to protect rivers, forests, animals and other living beings.

Referring to the Bhagavad Gita, Sinha said that when action becomes service and service becomes dedication, even ordinary work becomes sadhana.

He also urged youth to draw inspiration from Swami Vivekananda's message of self-confidence, fearlessness and selfless service, saying that true strength lies within every individual.

"We are the makers of our own destiny," Sinha said, adding that while past karmas may influence the present, what people become

tomorrow would largely be determined by their present actions.

The Lieutenant Governor said people must fulfil their responsibilities towards society and complete their duties towards their families and the nation.

He also highlighted the importance of sustainable development and harmony with nature in the face of global climate challenges.

The new initiatives at the Ashram include construction of a Yatri Niwas, renovation works, a dining complex and expansion of the Yajnashala. Sinha expressed confidence that these projects would translate faith into action and strengthen the Ashram's role in preserving heritage and culture.

Padma Shri Brij Lal Bhat, Chairman, Administrative Committee, Shri Ramakrishna Mahasammelan Ashram, Vivekananda Kendra, Nagdandi; Principal Secretary Culture Brij Mohan Sharma; Divisional Commissioner Kashmir Anshul Garg; DIG South Kashmir Javid Iqbal Mattoo; SSP Anantnag Amod Ashok Nagpure; Deputy Commissioner Anantnag Dr Bilal Mohiuddin Bhat; Shivanand Rohit Raina, members of the Ashram and Vivekananda Kendra, senior officials, prominent citizens and devotees attended the programme.

New Airfare

social activist S Laxminarayanan seeking a robust and independent regulator to ensure transparency and passenger protection in the civil aviation sector. The plea also seeks regulatory guidelines to address what it describes as unpredictable fluctuations in airfares and ancillary charges imposed by private airlines.

Senior advocate Ravindra Srivastava, appearing for the petitioner, submitted that the existing rules would continue to operate until the new framework comes into force. He questioned the effectiveness of the present regulatory mechanism and alleged that airlines were charging exorbitant fares.

The bench examined the draft rules submitted by the Centre and observed that while a mechanism had been proposed, questions remained over the regulator.

The court granted the Centre three weeks to finalise the rules and posted the matter for further hearing on September 7.

The Supreme Court had earlier directed the Centre to place the rules framed under the Bharatiya Vayuyan Adhiniyam, 2024, before it. On May 15, while hearing the matter, the court had called for rationalisation of airfares and asked the Centre to provide relief to passengers.

The petitioner has alleged that passengers face arbitrary fare hikes, dynamic pricing, high ancillary charges and reduced services, particularly during festivals and weather disruptions.

The plea also challenges the reduction of free check-in baggage allowance for economy-class passengers from 25 kg to 15 kg, alleging that airlines have effectively converted part of the earlier ticketed service into an additional revenue stream.

It further contends that there is currently no effective authority empowered to review or cap airfares and ancillary charges, leaving passengers vulnerable to opaque pricing practices. The petitioner has sought stronger safeguards covering airfare algorithms, cancellation policies, service continuity, baggage allowances and passenger grievance redressal.

The plea argues that unpredictable fare increases and the absence of adequate regulatory safeguards disproportionately affect poor and last-minute travellers and warrant urgent intervention by the court.

Terror Network

grenades bearing Pakistan Ordnance Factory markings, pistols, live cartridges, and CCTV cameras used for espionage were recovered from the ISI-funded group and the network was involved in several terrorist activities."

Meanwhile, in a statement, the MHA said the terror syndicate was busted in a "major multi-state crackdown. "Two hundred and fifty-three (253) people were detained across 14 states. More than 80 FIRs stand registered and over 200 arrests have been recorded against the Shahzad Bhatti Network as part of the zero-tolerance policy towards cross-border terrorism."

It said, "The operation was carried out in coordination with state police forces and followed intelligence inputs on activities linked to the network. In Uttar Pradesh 62 people, in Haryana 52, in Delhi 51, in Punjab 44, in Rajasthan 15, in Maharashtra 8, in Uttarakhand 5, in Karnataka, Gujarat and Bihar, 3 each, and Telangana, Himachal Pradesh, Jammu and Kashmir and Kerala 2 each, were detained."

"Fresh FIRs were registered in Delhi and Karnataka during the operation. The cases have been registered under provisions of the Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act, Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita, Arms Act, Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances Act and Explosive Substances Act," the statement said.

According to the statement, Shahzad Bhatti Network is based in Pakistan and has been linked to grenade, improvised explosive device and petrol bomb attacks as well as targeted killings in India.

"The network also allegedly paid local operatives to conduct reconnaissance of police, defence and religious sites and install closed-circuit television cameras for surveillance," it said, adding, "Security agencies recovered improvised explosive devices, pistols, live cartridges and closed-circuit television cameras

during investigations, while some grenades recovered from the accused bore Pakistan Ordnance Factory markings."

The statement said the August 12 operation was conducted using a real-time intelligence-sharing mechanism involving central agencies and state police forces. "Investigations into the network and its associates are continuing."(KNO)

Vande Mataram

song was played before the flag was unfurled and the National Anthem was subsequently played.

"It took me some time to understand that first I will stand up, Vande Mataram will play, then I will unfurl the flag, then the National Anthem will play. Perhaps Congress also took time to adjust; it happens," he said.

A complaint was recently filed with the Delhi Police seeking registration of an FIR against Congress leaders Sonia Gandhi and Rahul Gandhi over alleged obstruction during the singing of Vande Mataram at the party's Independence Day function at its headquarters in Delhi.

The Congress has maintained that there was no attempt to stop the singing of the full version and said that the party's 1937 decision was to sing the initial stanzas of the song at its sessions.

Asked about PDP president Mehbooba Mufti's recent post on X referring to herself as a "dimaagi naxal" over her support for restoration of Article 370, Omar declined to comment.

"Why are you asking me to explain or speak about what she tweets? It is her Twitter account, her daughter runs it, let her tweet what she likes," he said.

On student protests in Jharkhand, Omar said authorities should engage with protesters if their demands were legitimate.

"If the students' demands are legitimate and correct, then somewhere they should sit down and talk. If they are not, then say it straight that their talk has no weight," he said, noting that one round of talks had already taken place.

The Chief Minister also reiterated his view that education and health are state subjects under the devolution of powers.

He criticised the centralisation of functions that traditionally fall within the states' domain, saying several Central governments had contributed to the weakening of states.

"This fault is not just of the BJP; various Central governments have played a role in weakening the states," Omar said.

Referring to the NEET examination, he argued that greater centralisation can also lead to accountability being shifted to the Centre.

"What belongs to the state should be left to the state; what belongs to the Centre, the Centre should handle," he said.

Reviews Public,

him on his achievements in mixed martial arts.

Omar felicitated Yaqoob with a cash award of 1 lakh in recognition of his performances on the international stage. Yaqoob recently secured a first-round TKO victory over Bulgaria's Delian Georgiev.

A delegation of the Travel Agents Association of Kashmir (TAAK), led by its Secretary General Sajad Ahmad Kralyari, also called on the Chief Minister and discussed issues concerning the tourism sector.

The Chief Minister further met a delegation of the Kashmir Labour Union's Federation, led by its President Mohammad Ashraf Ganai. The delegation apprised him of its concerns and suggestions regarding the Draft Code on Social Security (Jammu and Kashmir) Rules, 2026.

Senior Vice President of the Bari Brahmana Industrial Association Tarun Singla also met Omar and discussed various issues related to trade and industry in Jammu and Kashmir.

The Chief Minister gave a patient hearing to the delegations and individuals and assured them that their genuine concerns would be examined and addressed on priority.

Deputy Chief Minister Surinder Kumar Choudhary and Advisor to the Chief Minister Nasir Aslam Wani were also present on the occasion.

J&K's Higher-Secondary

figure, however, represents the Gross Enrolment Ratio and should not be interpreted as meaning that 55.2% of children have dropped out. GER compares total enrolment at a particular level with the population in the official age group for that level and can include students outside the prescribed age group.

The sharp decline nevertheless points to a significant challenge in retaining and transitioning students through the higher stages of school education.

The issue becomes more significant in view of J&K's secondary dropout rate, which NITI Aayog places at 12.9%, above the national figure of 11.5%.

The pattern raises questions over what happens to students between the primary and higher-secondary stages and whether factors such as access, household circumstances, school availability, distance, affordability and the transition from secondary to higher-secondary education are contributing to the decline.

The data also highlights the need to examine the availability and accessibility of higher-secondary education, particularly for students living in remote and geographically difficult areas

of Jammu and Kashmir.

While the primary GER of 113.7% indicates that J&K has achieved broad participation at the entry level of school education, the fall to 44.8% at the higher-secondary stage shows that maintaining participation through Classes XI and XII remains a substantially greater challenge. (KNT)

Will Resign As

Omar could have a greater impact there given his political position and the strength of the National Conference.

Ruhullah said the campaign should go beyond restoration of statehood and include the restoration of Jammu and Kashmir's constitutional guarantees, protections and dignity.

Under his second proposal, Ruhullah said Omar could nominate another NC MLA or minister to head the government while he moved to Parliament to focus on the political campaign. The government, he said, could then concentrate on governance and implementation of the National Conference manifesto.

His third proposal was for the National Conference to turn the issue into a broader political movement and stand behind Omar Abdullah's parliamentary campaign.

Ruhullah said he was willing to take responsibility for organising such a movement within the party. He also called for those he accused of moving the party away from its political movement and ideological agenda to be removed from party affairs.

"If these two-three suggestions work, I am ready to rethink my resignation the next day," he said.

Ruhullah said that in the absence of movement on his proposals, he would proceed with his decision to resign.

He maintained that his decision was not the result of pressure from any individual.

"There is no one to force me. I will do what I have to do on the basis of morals and conviction," he said.

The Srinagar MP also spoke about his differences with sections of the National Conference, saying developments within the party had created an atmosphere in which his continuation had become increasingly difficult.

He alleged that questions about why he had not resigned had come from different party functionaries, including MLAs, an MP, the additional general secretary and, at times, the Chief Minister.

Ruhullah also alleged that he had been kept away from the party's working committee, functioning and decision-making.

He said that if the party believed he had violated its ideology, agenda, manifesto or discipline, it should follow a formal process instead of publicly asking him to resign.

"I wish they had the dignity to issue a show-cause notice," he said, adding that he would respond to any such notice and allow the party to take a decision thereafter.

Ruhullah acknowledged that resigning would mean losing the parliamentary platform through which he has been pursuing the issue of Jammu and Kashmir's constitutional status.

"Whatever I could do in Parliament, I did it. I did the opinion generation, I spoke about 370," he said.

He also acknowledged that leaving Parliament would affect his ability to lobby political parties and undertake outreach on the issue.

"I won't have the Parliament. The lobbying that I can do through the Parliament, the outreach that I can do, I won't have that. That is obvious," he said.

"That will be a loss," he added, while maintaining that he was prepared to take the decision on the basis of his convictions. (KNS)

SC Orders J&K

police station in Ganderbal district in 1953, holding that the claim suffered from gross and unexplained delay of 68 years.

On Monday, the top court considered the fervent pleas of Wani that though there was a delay, he should not suffer on account of state action which was illegal.

The apex court said it cannot direct fresh land acquisition proceedings as on date due to the delay of nearly seven decades.

The bench, however, said that it will direct the land acquisition officer to commence the land acquisition proceedings from the date Wani approached the high court in 2021.

Coming to the rescue of Wani, the bench directed the land acquisition officer to calculate and award the rentals to Wani from 1953 when the land was forcibly taken over for setting up of the police station.

The amount on account of land acquisition and the rentals will be finally decided by the high court, the bench said.

On June 28, 2022, a division bench of the high court had declined to exercise its extraordinary jurisdiction in the matter, saying that the petitioner could not be permitted to revive what had effectively become a "dead cause of action" after such a prolonged period.

Wani had claimed that his predecessors were owners of 7 kanals and 18 marlas of land bearing survey no. 525 at Mouza Kangan in Ganderbal district.

According to the petition, the land was taken over for a police station in 1953 without formal acquisition or payment of compensation.

He sought either restoration of possession or initiation of acquisition proceedings and

payment of compensation or rental compensation for the use and occupation of the land since 1953.

The high court noted that the alleged takeover had occurred about 68 years before the filing of the petition and that the petitioner, around 42 years old, had not explained why the matter was brought before the court after such an inordinate delay.

The petitioner had argued that his father was illiterate and therefore could not approach the court earlier.

The high court, however, did not accept the explanation, noting that the petitioner himself had attained maturity more than two decades earlier but had still failed to seek legal redress.

The high court had also noted that the petitioner claimed to have approached the authorities during the preceding 20 years but was unable to produce any supporting documents, citing the destruction of government records during the 2014 floods.

The UT administration had opposed the petition as highly belated, stating that the police department had remained in peaceful possession of the land since 1953 and that, after such a long period, it was difficult to produce records relating to the property.

"Every cause of action should come to an end within a time bound period and should not be allowed to remain alive infinitely," the high court had said.

Illegal Mining:

Jammu recovered Rs 2.248 crore, Pulwama Rs 2.008 crore, Baramulla Rs 1.618 crore and Kupwara Rs 1.499 crore.

Anantnag recorded 530 seizures and recovered Rs 1.01 crore in penalties, while Kulgam reported 391 seizures and Rs 94.9 lakh in penalty recovery.

In the Jammu division, Jammu district registered 679 seizures and 15 FIRs, while Reasi recorded 356 seizures. Rajouri and Udhampur reported 317 and 277 seizures respectively, Daily Excelsior reported.

Ramban recorded 39 seizures, the lowest among the districts, followed by Kishtwar with 58. Neither district registered an FIR.

The seizure and FIR figures were discussed during a recent meeting of the Committee on Environment chaired by M Y Tarigami.

The committee sought details from the Mining Department regarding the enforcement action taken against illegal mining.

Tarigami directed the department to furnish comprehensive details of the first and second penalties imposed on violators before the seizure of vehicles, machinery or minerals.

Nearly Half

highest number of cases at 89, followed by West Bengal Chief Minister Suvenud Adhikari with 29 and Karnataka Chief Minister D K Shivakumar with 19.

The report said there are 4,192 criminal cases pending against current and former MPs and MLAs.

Hansaria said that despite monitoring by the Supreme Court and high courts to ensure speedy disposal, the number of pending criminal cases against lawmakers has remained almost unchanged since 2018.

According to data compiled from various high courts, 1,243 criminal cases were decided in 2025, while 1,050 new cases were registered during the same year.

The affidavit also highlighted significant state-wise variations among MPs.

Kerala had the highest proportion, with 19 of its 20 MPs facing criminal charges, including 11 facing serious cases. In Telangana, 14 of 17 MPs faced criminal charges, while Odisha reported 16 of 21 and Jharkhand 10 of 14 MPs facing such cases.

Tamil Nadu had 26 of its 39 MPs facing criminal cases.

Around half of the MPs from Uttar Pradesh, Maharashtra, West Bengal, Bihar, Karnataka and Andhra Pradesh were also reported to have criminal cases.

The affidavit said Haryana and Chhattisgarh had one MP each facing criminal charges, while Punjab had two of 13, Assam three of 14, Delhi three of seven, Rajasthan four of 25, Gujarat five of 25 and Madhya Pradesh nine of 29 MPs facing criminal cases.

Hansaria urged the Supreme Court to ensure closer monitoring of criminal cases involving lawmakers and proposed that designated Special Courts for MPs and MLAs exclusively conduct their trials.

He suggested that regular court work should be assigned to such special courts only after trials involving lawmakers are concluded.

He also sought monthly monitoring by high courts and requested that cases be concluded expeditiously, preferably within one year of the framing of charges.

The amicus further urged high courts to closely monitor cases pending for more than three years and pass effective orders to ensure their early disposal.

Hansaria is assisting the Supreme Court in a PIL filed by BJP leader Ashwini Upadhyay seeking speedy disposal of criminal cases against lawmakers.

In November 2023, the Supreme Court had directed high courts to establish special benches to monitor criminal cases against MPs and MLAs and ensure their speedy disposal. It had also directed special courts not to adjourn such proceedings except for rare and compelling reasons.

LG Manoj Sinha Flags off the Holy Shri Budha Amarnath Ji Yatra

Observer News Service

JAMMU: Marking the commencement of the annual spiritual journey, the Lieutenant Governor, Shri Manoj Sinha on Monday flagged off the first batch of devotees for the holy Shri Budha Amarnath Ji Yatra from the Bhagwati Nagar Yatri Niwas, while extending warm wishes to all pilgrims for a safe and spiritually fulfilling pilgrimage.

The Lieutenant Governor expressed deep appreciation to the Baba Amarnath and Budha Amarnath Yatri Nyas along with VHP and Bajrang Dal, local authorities, langar organisations and civil society groups for their meticulous co-ordination and comprehensive arrangements ensuring the smooth conduct of the pilgrimage and the Budha Amarnath Ji Mela.

"The sacred journey to Baba Budha Amarnath's abode is a deeply enlightening experience. I firmly believe this pilgrimage brings profound transformation and reveals life's deepest truths to every devotee," the Lieutenant Governor said.

A large gathering of eminent spiritual leaders, religious heads, public representatives, senior civil and police administrators, security officials, promi-



Chhari-Pujan Marks Final Phase of Annual Amarnath Yatra

Press Trust of India

SRINAGAR:The 'Chhari-Pujan' of Lord Siva's holy mace was performed at the Amareshwar temple in Mahadev Gir Dashnami Akhara here on the occasion of Nag Panchami on Monday, officials said.

Amid chants of Vedic hymns, Mahant Deependra Giri, the mace's custodian, led a group of sadhus in performing the puja, they said.

Chhari Pujan signifies the final phase of the annual Amarnath Yatra. Following its worship in Srinagar, the holy mace is taken along the pilgrimage route to the Amarnath cave shrine

for final prayers on Shravan Purnima.

"Embarking on the main course of pilgrimage on August 22, the holy mace will be taken to the shrine of Swami Amarnath Ji to perform 'Pujan' and have 'Darshan' on the auspicious occasion of 'Shravan Purnima' on August 28," Mahant Deependra Giri said.

There will be night halts at Pahalgam on August 22 and 23, at Chandanwari on August 24, at Sheshnag on August 25 and at Panchtarani on August 26 and 27, respectively.

More than 4.80 lakh pilgrims have performed the Amarnath Yatra since the pilgrimage began on July 3. It will conclude on August 28.

ent citizens, and enthusiastic devotees attended the flag-off ceremony.

'J&K, Ladakh Record Negative Power Variation'



Agencies

SRINAGAR: Jammu and Kashmir and Ladakh have witnessed a negative variation of over 11 percent in power requirement during the solar hours and minus 7.2 percent during peak hours in the previous month.

According to the official documents showing the anticipated power supply position v/s actual power supply position (Provisional) of Northern Region during the month of July-2025 states that in Jammu and Kashmir and Ladakh it has anticipated power availability of 2520 MU's and requirement of 1775 MU's respectively.

The official figures accessed by KNO further reveal that the actual power availability was 1562 MU's whereas the requirement was 1570 MU's. It also states that there was a variation of minus 11 percent in power

requirement and during the peak hours the union territories recorded a variation of minus 7.2 percent in power requirement respectively.

It also states that during the peak, NRPC has anticipated that there will be a peak power availability of 4130 Megawatts (MW's) and power requirement of 2964 MWs.

The documents said that there was variation of minus 7.2 percent in power requirement during the peak hours as the actual power supply availability and requirement respectively was 2750 MWs.

"Negative or significant variation (≥5%) in Actual Power Supply Position (Provisional) vis-à-vis anticipated figures is observed for the month of July-2026 in terms of Energy Requirement for Haryana, HP, UTs of J&K and Ladakh, Rajasthan, and Uttarakhand and in terms of Peak Demand similar variation is noted for Chandigarh, Haryana, HP, UTs of J&K and Ladakh, Punjab and Rajasthan," NRPC said.

The Committee urged such states and UTs to submit reason for such variations so that the same can be deliberated in the meeting.

Journalists in Press Colony Raise Concern over Stray Dog Menace



SRINAGAR: Getting to work turned into a run for safety for journalists at Srinagar's Press Colony on Monday, after a pack of stray dogs chased senior journalist and Kashmir Monitor newspaper founder Zafar Meraj outside his office.

Meraj fell while trying to escape and sustained injuries, but was not bitten.

The episode has also left other journalists concerned.

Umar Ganie, a photojournalist with Kashmir Monitor, told KNO that he was forced to avoid the main entrance and enter his office through the back door as the dogs continued to remain around the premises.

"The dogs have created a scary situation here. I had to enter the office through the back door today," Ganie said.

Later, SMC workers reached the spot and removed two dead puppies lying in front of a newspaper office, while their mother remained there. "The mother dog in front of the newspaper office is aggressive and cannot be relocated," an SMC worker who arrived with a dog-catching van said.

The incident has once again highlighted the stray-dog menace in Press Colony, where journalists and other employees have repeatedly raised concerns over the presence of stray dogs.

Last week, a correspondent of JKNS and Daily Gadyal was bitten by stray dogs near the R2 quarters in Press Colony.

KNO had earlier reported that the SMC's Animal Birth Control (ABC) programme had been affected due to outsourcing issues, with officials saying the sterilisation drive would resume once the process is completed—(KNO)



GOVERNMENT OF UNION TERRITORY OF JAMMU & KASHMIR

OFFICE OF THE CHIEF AGRICULTURE OFFICER, ANANTNAG

Subject: Re-advertisement Notice for Engagement of Krishi Udyamis (KU)/ Agricultural Entrepreneur in District Anantnag under Holistic Agriculture Development Program.

NOTIFICATION NO. 34 ESTT OF CAO A 2026

DATED: 14-08-2026

Applications on prescribed format are invited from eligible candidates for engagement as Krishi Udyamis (KUs) on contractual basis for a period of two years (extendable) subject to terms and conditions laid down in contract agreement.

A. KEY DETAILS:

S No.	Details	Description
1.	Position	Krishi Udyami (KU) (Agricultural Entrepreneur)
2.	Number of positions	23 (List enclosed at Annexure-I)
3.	Engagement Duration	Initially for period of 2 years, with the possibility of annual extensions subject to satisfactory performance of the PLE.
4.	Qualification	Diploma* in Agriculture & Allied Fields or Graduation in Science (BSc), Graduation** in Agriculture and Allied Fields. (BSc/BVSc) Additional preference will be given to candidates possessing post-graduation (science/agri & allied) & computer*** diplomas/certifications. * Diploma courses: Diploma in Agriculture, Horticulture, Veterinary Sciences, Forestry, Fisheries, Sericulture, Agri. Engineering, BHT, BAT from government recognised institution ** Agri Allied courses: BSc in Agriculture, Horticulture, Forestry, Fisheries, Sericulture; B. Tech in Agriculture Engineering, BVSc & AH from a Government recognised institution *** Diploma/Certification course in computers of 3 or more months duration from a government recognised institution Please see selection criteria Annexure II for full details
5.	Job profile	Operate Kissan Khidmat Ghars (KKGs) under the Holistic Agriculture Development Programme in Jammu & Kashmir as per details mentioned at (Annexure III)
6.	Remunerations	The engagement is based on a self-earning/entrepreneur basis. Full details of KKG operations can be viewed at Annexure IV
7.	Last date for receipt of complete applications	05-9-2026 (upto 4:00 PM)

GENERAL TERMS & CONDITIONS:

I. Detailed information including application form can be obtained from office of District Development Commissioner Anantnag or download from official websites of Agriculture Production Department (<https://jkapd.nic.in>) and <https://haddp.jk.gov.in>) or official website of District Development Commissioner Anantnag (anantnag.nic.in) in announcements/recruitments window.

II. Candidate must have the requisite qualification for the post applied.

III. Age should be between 21 and 45 years as on the last date of submission.

IV. Self-attested photocopies of the following documents must be attached with the application form:

- Date of Birth Certificate (Matriculation certificate).
- Marks Certificate of all qualifying examinations.
- Domicile Certificate.
- Character Certificate issued by competent authority
- Panchayat ward certificate from concerned BDO

V. Complete application forms should be submitted in the office of the undersigned.

VI. Any postal delay shall not be the responsibility of the advertising authority

VII. Incomplete applications will be summarily rejected without further notice

VIII. Original documents shall have to be presented during the verification process.

C. OTHER TERMS AND CONDITIONS FOR KRISHI UDYAMIS (KUS):

i The KU must make available space comprising of two rooms, totalling 750-800 square feet. The nature of space available with KU may be rented or owned but no financial assistance would be provided by department for the spaces.

ii The selected KU shall enter in to an agreement with the APD and shall have to deposit a refundable security amount of Rs 10,000 (Rupees ten thousand only) in the form of Fixed Deposit Receipt from any scheduled commercial bank.

iii Nature of Engagement: The selected KU will work on a franchise-franchisee basis, the operation of Kisan Khidmat Ghars (KKGs) at the panchayat level will be carried out by KUs under the support and framework provided by the Agriculture Production Department with the aim of fostering entrepreneurship, local empowerment, and the effective delivery of agricultural services in the Union Territory of Jammu & Kashmir.

iv No Right to Regular Appointment: KUs are not entitled to claim any regular appointment.

v Asset Ownership and Maintenance: Assets provided by the department for KKGs shall remain the exclusive property of the department. KUs will function as custodians of the infrastructure and facilities, being responsible for their maintenance.

vi Management under Supervision: KKGs shall be managed by KU under the supervision of a Designated APD Officer from the respective locality, ensuring alignment with departmental goals and guidelines.

vii Training and Fee Entitlement: KUs shall be provided with requisite training to enhance their skills. They will be entitled to a payment of fees out of contingency for participating in such training sessions and programs.

viii Input License Provision: The Directorate of Agriculture shall provide/ facilitate Entrepreneurs with the requisite input license, ensuring compliance with regulatory standards.

ix Nodal Agency for Establishment and Administration: The Mission Director HADP shall act as the nodal agency responsible for the establishment and administration of KKGs, overseeing their effective functioning.

x Technological Support: Development Departments and Krishi Vigyan Kendras (KVKs) shall provide regular technology support to KUs, ensuring they stay abreast of the latest advancements in agricultural technology. SKUAST cyber extension hub shall be integrated with the KKG software ecosystem for continuous and sustainable technology backup.

xi Facilitation of Linkages: The Agriculture Production Department/

xii Extension of Functions: Village/panchayat level workers of Agriculture and allied departments shall extend their functions through KKGs, enhancing the reach and impact of agricultural services.

xiii Service Charges and Compliance: KUs shall charge nominal service charges and adhere to all requisite norms for extending services. A rate card for service charges shall be issued by the Mission Director HADP from time to time. Weekly reporting to Panchayat, Block, and Line departments is mandatory.

xiv Succession Plan on Disengagement: In the event of a KU leaving the assignment or being disengaged, the functioning of KKG will directly come under the control of the designated APD Officer for the said KKG, till the process of engaging new KU is completed.

xv Agreement Termination Conditions:

a) The Agreement may be terminated by both parties (KU & APD) with a 3-month prior notice. KUs, however, must provide an undertaking to stay in the agreement for a minimum of two years. In the case of exit before two years by the KU, the security amount of INR 10,000 (Rupees Ten thousand) will be forfeited. This is in addition to the 3-month prior notice.

b) For all purposes, the Designated APD Officer will be the overall custodian of the entire KKG setup, including monitoring of services rendered and assets.

xvi Flexibility in Terms & Conditions: All the conditions mentioned in the advertisement notice shall constitute the terms and conditions of the agreement. However, APD reserves the right to change or add any other condition at the time of signing of the agreement.

ANNEXURE-I

List of Panchayats under Phase-I &Phase II for engagement of KU/AEs under Establishment of KKG of HADP

Phase I and II			
S.no	Name of KKG	Block	Phase
1	KKG Bidhard	Larnoo	Phase II
2	KKG Gopalpora B	Achabal	Phase II
3	KKG Fatehpura A	Shahbad	Phase II
4	KKG TB Shah	Anantnag	Phase II
5	KKG Khandipahari	Anantnag	Phase II
6	KKG Tanjloo	Hillershabad	Phase II
7	KKG Adlash Magam	Dachnipora	Phase II
8	KKG Mahind	Dachnipora	Phase II
9	KKG Khirnam Dargah	Dachnipora	Phase II
10	KKG Manigam	Khovripora	Phase II
11	KKG Hangalpawa	Khovripora	Phase II
12	KKG Aino Brai	Pahalgam	Phase II
13	KKG Arwani A	Bijbehara	Phase II
14	KKG Thajiwara	Bijbehara	Phase II
15	KKG Katoo	Bijbehara	Phase II
16	KKG Semthan	Bijbehara	Phase II
17	KKG Nipora	Vessu	Phase II
18	KKG Shamsipora	Anantnag	Phase II
19	KKG YK Pora	Qazigund	Phase II
20	KKG Badura Sahiabad	Achabal	Phase I
21	KKG Chee	Anantnag	Phase I
22	KKG Changoo	Qazigund	Phase I
23	KKG Katriteng-A	Bijbehara	Phase I

No. CAO/A/2026-27/HADP-KKG/ Chief Agriculture Officer Anantnag
Dated Anantnag
(Member Secretary Selection Committee KUs)

DIPK-4630-26
DT: 17/08/2026

'23,000 Govt Vacancies Fast-Tracked This Year in J&K'

Agencies

SRINAGAR: With youth employment emerging as a key focus, Jammu and Kashmir has fast-tracked 23,000 government vacancies this year and set a target of establishing 1.35 lakh enterprise units under

Mission Yuva to support over five lakh youth.

During his Independence Day speech at Baramulla, Cabinet Minister Javed Ahmad Dar, as per KNO said the 23,000 vacancies have been forwarded to the concerned recruitment agencies.

He exuded hope that the recruitment process would be completed soon, while stressing that the process

of filling government vacancies would continue.

The Minister said the government is pursuing employment opportunities through both government recruitment and the private sector, while entrepreneurship and skill development remained key components of its youth-focused initiatives.

"Under Mission Yuva, the government has planned 1.35 lakh enterprise units aimed at creating opportunities for more than five lakh youth across Jammu and Kashmir. More than one lakh applications had been received under the initiative so far, while over 29,000 units had received fund- ing through banks, he said, adding that over 33,000 youth have also received skill training under Mission Yuva," he said, adding "Youth are vital to Jammu and Kashmir's future. We need to provide them with opportunities in employment, entrepreneurship and skill development."—(KNO)

Bear Attacks Keep Khonmoh on Edge

Agencies

SRINAGAR: Khonmoh outskirts of Srinagar city, remained on edge on Monday after a 30-year-old man was injured in a bear attack, was attacked by the bear and later shifted to SMHS Hospital, Srinagar. His condition is stated to be stable.

The latest attack took place at Sarhandi Colony, where Muzaffar Ahmad Bhat, son of Ghulam Hassan Bhat, was attacked by the bear and later shifted to SMHS Hospital, Srinagar. His condition is stated to be stable.

An official from the Wildlife Division, Khonmoh, told KNO that a cage has been installed, and teams

are continuing searches to trace the animal.

"The bear had come in search of food and shelter. There are several corn fields in the area and human habitation is nearby. We have been searching for it since yesterday and have also installed a cage," the official said.

The latest attack follows an attack on a man on Monday morning and another on a 57-year-old woman on Sunday, making it the third bear attack reported in Khonmoh within 24 hours.

The Wildlife Department has intensified searches in the area as efforts continue to capture the bear—(KNO)

FIR Registered in Kargil Over Alleged Derogatory Remarks Against Religious Leader

KARGIL: Senior Superintendent of Police (SSP) Kargil Nitin Yadav on Monday said Police have registered an FIR following complaints over alleged derogatory remarks against revered religious leader Ayatollah Khomeini, stating that the investigation is underway.

Addressing a press conference, SSP Kargil, according to KNO said police received two complaints from different parts of Kargil, including Sankoo, Panikhar, Chiktan, Shargole and Kargil town.

He said the first complaint was received from IKMT, following which police initiated a preliminary inquiry under Section 173(3) of the Bharatiya Nagarik Suraksha Sanhita (BNSS) to ascertain whether prima facie facts were made out.

"During the inquiry, it was found that prima facie facts were made out regarding the remarks. Accordingly, police immediately registered an FIR," Yadav said.

The SSP said the FIR was registered at Kargil Police Station under Section 299 of the BNSS, bearing FIR No. 78, and that further investigation has been initiated.

Fisheries Dept Seizes 4,000 Gill Nets, 150 This Year: Chief Project Officer

Agencies

SRINAGAR: Chief Project Officer (CPO) of the Fisheries Department Dr Nahida Akhter on Monday said that gill nets are illegal in Kashmir and strict action will be taken against those involved in their use.

Akhter, while talking to KNO said the use of gill nets poses a threat to fish production as the nets trap juvenile and smaller fish, affecting the sustainability of fisheries as well as the livelihood of professional fishermen.

"Gill nets are illegal. They trap small and juvenile fish, which automatically affects fish production and directly impacts the employment of fishermen," she said.

Explaining the difference between permitted and illegal fishing practices, Akhter said professional fishermen generally use cast nets, which allow them to target marketable fish, while gill nets with smaller mesh sizes can indiscriminately trap smaller fish.

"We are trying to stop illegal fishing. Our staff works in the field day and night. Whenever we receive information about illegal fishing, our teams immediately move to the spot and take action," she said.

The department has seized around 4,000 gill nets since the end of March, Akhter said, adding that about 150 such nets had been seized so far this year.

She said the number of illegal nets being used appeared to be declining as awareness among people increased.

The department also undertakes annual stocking of fish seed to support the fishing community and improve catches, she said.

Akhter said the Fisheries Department issues different categories of licences, including rod licences for recreational or sport fishing and professional fishing licences for registered fishermen who depend on fishing for their livelihood.

She said line fishing involving multiple hooks is

also prohibited and violators can be fined.

On enforcement in Dal Lake, Akhter acknowledged that the department faces staff shortages despite the need for round-the-clock monitoring.

"Dal Lake is a very large area. We need at least 20 to 25 employees to cater to it, but there is a shortage of staff," she said.

According to her, the available personnel work in rotations and remain alert to complaints of illegal fishing. Teams equipped with motorboats are deployed to reach reported locations as quickly as possible.

Akhter also said the department had issued more than 1,870 licences up to March last year and had already issued over 500 licences so far this year as part of its routine licensing process.

The department is also targeting a 10 per cent increase in revenue from registered fishermen compared with last year, she said, adding that the number of licence holders was also increasing—(KNO).

'This Is Big': Trump Hails Makkah Pact Between Saudi, Turkey & Pakistan

Trans Asia News

LONDON – President Donald Trump on Sunday welcomed a new defence agreement between Saudi Arabia, Türkiye and Pakistan, calling it a “big, bold and important first step” toward allowing the three countries to defend themselves in a more meaningful way.

The endorsement gives an unusually high-profile American stamp of approval to an agreement that could reshape security cooperation among three strategically important Muslim-majority countries at a moment of heightened instability across the Middle East.

The Makkah Joint Defence Agreement, signed on Aug. 7 in the holy city of Makkah by Saudi Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman, Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan and Pakistani Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif, establishes a framework for collective defence. Under

its central provision, an armed attack against any one of the three countries would be treated as an attack against all three.

Trump, in a post on Truth Social, said he was “very happy” that Saudi Arabia, Türkiye and Pakistan had “finally” signed the agreement, arguing that it demonstrated how countries in the Middle East were coming together to strengthen their ability to defend themselves.

“THIS IS A BIG, BOLD, AND IMPORTANT FIRST STEP – WOW,” Trump wrote.

Sharif quickly welcomed Trump’s remarks, describing them as “kind words of support” and saying Pakistan would continue working with Saudi Arabia and Türkiye to strengthen the defence of their countries and the wider region.

A NATO-like commitment, but not NATO

The pact has drawn comparisons with NATO’s collective-



defence principle because of its provision that aggression against one member would be considered aggression against all.

Turkish Foreign Minister Hakan Fidan, however, has stressed that the agreement is not directed against Iran or any other particular country.

The agreement goes beyond a political declaration. Türkiye has said the three countries intend to establish high-level political and military coordination mech-

anisms involving foreign and defence officials and military commanders. It also envisages regular joint military exercises covering land, sea, air and cyber domains, as well as cooperation in areas such as unmanned systems, electronic warfare and artificial intelligence.

The three countries also plan to expand defence-industry cooperation, including joint development and production, technology transfers and greater

coordination in military procurement. A permanent secretariat is expected to be established in Saudi Arabia. The framework has also been described as open to additional members, with Egypt mentioned as a possible future participant.

At the same time, Turkish officials have indicated that the pact is not intended to replace existing international alliances or security arrangements.

Why Now?

The timing of the agreement is significant.

It comes at a moment of profound strategic uncertainty in the Middle East, with the Israel-US war against Iran reverberating across the Gulf and raising fresh concerns over energy security and maritime routes.

Saudi Arabia, Türkiye and Pakistan face different versions of a common strategic challenge: how to strengthen their ability to respond to regional threats

while reducing dependence on any single external power.

The pact, therefore, reflects not only closer military cooperation but also a broader attempt by regional powers to develop new mechanisms for collective security.

Saudi Arabia brings enormous financial resources and a growing defence-industrial base. Türkiye has developed substantial indigenous military capabilities, particularly in drones, electronic warfare and other advanced systems. Pakistan contributes decades of military experience, a long-established defence relationship with Saudi Arabia and its status as a nuclear-armed state.

The three countries have also been steadily deepening bilateral defence ties. Pakistan has historically provided military personnel, training and security assistance to Saudi Arabia, while Türkiye has emerged as an increasingly important de-

fence partner and supplier to Riyadh. Pakistan and Türkiye, meanwhile, have expanded cooperation in defence production, research and development.

Iran Looms Over the Pact

Some observers, however, view the agreement through a different lens.

They argue that Iran’s forceful retaliation against Gulf states hosting American military bases, including Saudi Arabia, exposed a strategic vulnerability: rather than serving purely as a deterrent, the presence of US military facilities could make Gulf monarchies potential targets in any confrontation between Washington and Tehran.

In this view, the risk of being drawn into the crossfire – and of becoming vulnerable because of a conflict not directly of their making – may have added urgency to the search for alternative regional security arrangements.

SC: Victims Have Right to Speedy Trial

Press Trust of India

NEW DELHI: Observing that right to speedy trial is also a “valuable right” of a victim, the Supreme Court on Monday set aside an order of the Allahabad High Court which had kept in abeyance the trial in a murder case.

In its order passed in August last year, the high court had also directed the special judge to expedite the proceedings in a case lodged under the provision of the Uttar Pradesh Gangsters and Anti-Social Activities (Prevention) Act, 1986 to satisfy the intent of the mandatory provisions contained in Section 12.

Section 12 of the Gangsters Act pertains to trial by special courts to have precedence.

While dealing with an appeal challenging the apex

court noted that purpose behind Section 12 of the law was not to freeze other proceedings against the accused till proceedings under the Gangsters Act were concluded.

“The purpose was only to indicate that in the event of clash of dates, the proceedings under the Gangsters Act were to get priority,” a bench of Justices K V Viswanathan and Arun Palli said.

It said there was one more significant aspect of the matter, and Article 21 of the Constitution guarantees right to speedy trial.

“This court has held that right to speedy trial is not only the prerogative of the accused but is also a valuable right of the victim and any inordinate delay in the conclusion of the trial, could have a deleterious effect on the society in general,” the bench noted.

BJP Inducts Ram Madhav, Smriti Irani to National Team

6 Minority Leaders Also Figure in New List

KO Web Desk

NEW DELHI- The BJP on Monday announced its new national team under party president Nitin Nabin, bringing back key faces such as Ram Madhav and former Union minister Smriti Irani while giving representation to women, minority communities and leaders from across the country.

Ram Madhav, Lok Sabha MP D Purandeshwari, former Uttarakhand chief minister Tirath Singh Rawat, former Rajasthan chief minister Vasundhara Raje Scindia, Bajajant Jay Panda and Rekha Verma were named national vice presidents. Union Minister Piyush Goyal was appointed national treasurer.

Smriti Irani and former Tripura chief minister Biplab Kumar Deb were among eight national general secretaries, while B L Santhosh continued as national general secretary (organisation). Vinod Tawde and Sunil Bansal were



retained as national general secretaries.

The new team also includes several minority leaders. Former Aligarh Muslim University vice-chancellor Prof Tariq Mansoor was appointed national vice president, while Kunwar Basit Ali was named president of the BJP’s Minority Morcha. Former Punjab finance minister Manpreet Singh Badal was also made a national

3-Star Hotel Rate Cap Proposed for Hospital Rooms

Press Trust of India

NEW DELHI: A private hospital room in a metropolitan city should not cost more than the average tariff of a three-star hotel room in the vicinity, a parliamentary committee has recommended as part of a series of measures to make healthcare more affordable and curb out-of-pocket expenditure.

The 176th Report of the Parliamentary Standing Committee on Health and Family Welfare, titled “Affordability and Accessibility of Healthcare Facilities in Public and Private Sector” said room charges in private hospitals, particularly in metropolitan cities, need to be rationalised on an “emergent basis”.

The report was presented in the Rajya Sabha and tabled in Lok Sabha on August 7.

The panel recommended making the three-star hotel tariff benchmark mandatory

for all private hospitals in large metropolitan cities. Resident doctor, nursing, disposable consumable, meal and laundry costs may be added to the basic room tariff, it said.

It also recommended that the government mandate all tertiary care hospitals to provide patients with a comprehensive and legally binding upfront cost estimate before starting any complex or prolonged medical intervention.

Hospitals should also deploy dedicated financial navigators to help patients and their families understand treatment costs, available philanthropic assistance and health assurance limits, it said.

The committee noted that households continue to face significant financial stress while accessing private healthcare, with average out-of-pocket expenditure per hospitalisation episode pegged at Rs 34,064.

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