

Pregnant Schoolgirl Dies in Kishtwar; Teacher Held

Accused Teacher Booked Under Rape, POCSO Provisions

Locals Protest; Demand Judicial Probe Into Death



KO Web Desk

Srinagar: A 14-year-old schoolgirl died while being shifted for medical treatment in Kishtwar district after she was reportedly found pregnant, with police arresting a government school teacher in connection with the case.

According to reports, the minor from the Chatroo area was being taken towards Doda for termination of pregnancy when her condition deteriorated during the journey. She died before reaching the hospital, according to sources.

Police have registered FIR No. 34/2026 at Police Station Chatroo under relevant provisions of the Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita and the Protection of Children from Sexual Offences (POCSO) Act.

The accused teacher has been identified in the official suspension order as Khalid Hussain Sheikh, Teacher Grade-II at Middle School Bumalpora, Zone Inderwal. The order states that he was in police custody when the suspension was issued.

The Chief Education Officer, Kishtwar, has placed Sheikh under suspension pending an inquiry. The suspension order was issued under Rule 31 of the Jammu and Kashmir Civil Services (Classification, Control and Appeal) Rules, 1956.

According to the case details cited in the suspension order, Sheikh is facing charges under Sections 61(2), 65(1), 90, 91 and 92 of the BNS, along with Sections 4, 6, 8, 10 and 17 of the POCSO Act.

Reports citing local sources have alleged that | [More on P10](#)

Make J&K Hub Of Agri Innovation, Youth Entrepreneurship: LG

Urges youth to develop homegrown solutions for local farm challenges

Observer News Service

Jammu: Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha on Friday called agriculture and allied sectors the next major frontier for innovation and entrepreneurship, urging Jammu and Kashmir's youth to develop solutions tailored to the region's own farming, climate and market challenges.

Sinha was speaking after inaugurating a series of infrastructure facilities at Sher-e-Kashmir University of Agricultural Sciences and Technology (SKUAST)-Jammu and launching the Startup Outreach Programme under JKICP.

The newly inaugurated facilities include the Unnati Girls Hostel, Centre for AI and ML in Agriculture, Centre for Mushroom Research and Innovation, Advanced Sericulture Laboratory and Centre for Digital Media and Publication.

Describing the facilities as more than physical infrastructure, Sinha said they



represented a commitment to innovators, entrepreneurs, researchers and farming families of Jammu and Kashmir.

"Different countries have innovated for their own problems, and now it is time for Jammu Kashmir to innovate for its own questions and challenges," he said.

The LG cited examples of technology-driven agricultural innovations from countries including the Netherlands,

Israel, New Zealand and Brazil, saying these demonstrated the growing scope for innovation in agriculture and allied sectors.

He, however, cautioned young entrepreneurs against simply replicating foreign models and called upon them to understand local fields, farmers, climate and problems before developing solutions.

"Today, there are startups worldwide continuously

exploring new possibilities in agriculture and allied sectors. The biggest message from these startups and new innovations is that agriculture and allied sectors themselves are the next big frontier for innovation," Sinha said.

He encouraged young and progressive farmers to explore opportunities beyond traditional farming, including cold chains, grading and packaging units, regional branding and digital marketplaces to connect Jammu and Kashmir's produce with markets in Delhi, Dubai and beyond.

Sinha also emphasised the changing employment aspirations among India's youth, saying young people were increasingly seeking to create jobs rather than merely wait for employment opportunities.

He said this shift was central to the vision of a self-reliant Jammu and Kashmir.

"I often say that the truest meaning of a Self-Reliant Jammu Kashmir | [More on P10](#)

J&K Announces School Staff Transfer Drive

Applications open from August 23 to September 8

KO Web Desk

Srinagar: The Jammu and Kashmir School Education Department has announced the Annual Transfer Drive for 2026, inviting online applications from eligible teachers, masters, lecturers, principals, headmasters, Zonal Education Officers and equivalent employees from August 23 to September 8.

The department issued the notification on August 21 after the government notified the Transfer Policy, 2026 on August 20, aimed at ensuring equitable distribution of human resources, institutional efficiency, transparency in decision-making and continuity of academic activities.

The online transfer portal will remain operational for 15 days, and applications will be accepted exclusively through the designated portal. The department said manual applications, individual representations or offline requests will ordinarily not be entertained during the transfer drive.

Under the notification, employees serving in Zone-I and Zone-II who have completed three years or more at their present place of posting will be required to participate in the transfer exercise.

Employees serving in Zone-III, Zone-IV and Zone-V who have completed the prescribed tenure of three years, two years and one year respectively may submit applications if they wish. Those who have completed the | [More on P10](#)

Traffic Advisory Issued For NH-44, Other Roads

KO Web Desk

Srinagar: The Jammu and Kashmir Traffic Police has issued an advisory for August 22, warning commuters of possible disruptions on the Jammu-Srinagar National Highway (NH-44) and other major roads due to forecast rainfall, ongoing road widening work, landslide-prone stretches and regulated movement of heavy vehicles.

The advisory said very slow traffic movement was observed on NH-44 between August 20 and 21 due to a single-lane stretch and uneven road surface at Dawal in Udhampur, besides another single-lane stretch between Marog and Nachilani in Ramban district. Vehicle breakdowns at Digo and Ramban also affected traffic movement.

In view of the rainfall forecast by the India Meteorological Department, the Traffic | [More on P10](#)

India's Stability, A Bright Spot In An Uncertain World: PM

New Delhi, Aug 21: Prime Minister Narendra Modi asserted on Friday that reforms in all spheres are his government's commitment and that India continues to take several steps to ensure continued growth momentum.

Addressing the Economic Times World Leaders Forum, Modi also said India has political stability and continuity in its policies, and the world sees the country as a bright spot of growth and hope.

"India continues to take several steps to ensure continued growth momentum. India is pushing ahead with reforms across sectors and reforms are our commitment," he said.

The prime minister said the world has many concerns regarding growth as resources are getting weaponised, but India is being seen as a bright spot of growth.

He said the NDA government has a clear roadmap for reforms, with a strong focus on governance.

"Our government is rewarding higher production with incentives," he said.

Modi alleged that it was the policy



of the previous regimes to keep people in scarcity, so that they beg before the government for even basic needs.

He said the licence raj of the previous governments used to add to the burden of unemployment, whereas his government's production-linked incentive model is creating opportunities.

"We are not just changing regulations, we are changing the entire policy of regulations. Our government believes that there should be no regulation for doing something that has not been explicitly | [More on P10](#)

Leave Religious Issues To Clerics: CM To Politicians

Stresses need to balance housing needs with environmental protection

Agencies

Srinagar: Chief Minister Omar Abdullah on Friday urged politicians to refrain from commenting on religious matters, saying such issues should be left to religious leaders while elected representatives focus on issues concerning the people.

Omar was responding to recent remarks by Leader of Opposition in the J&K Assembly and BJP leader Sunil Sharma and cautioned politicians against playing with public sentiments.

"People should not play with people's emotions," Omar said.

Referring to Congress leader Rahul Gandhi's protest seeking registration of an FIR over the alleged use of pellet guns during protests in New Delhi, Omar defended his role as Leader of Opposition, saying questioning



the government was precisely what an opposition leader was expected to do.

"He is the Leader of the Opposition. He is not the leader of the religion. Leave religious issues to the religious leaders. Keep your issues to the politicians. I would like him to continue doing that, because this is the job of the Opposition," he said.

Omar said an Opposition leader should not | [More on P10](#)

SC Cuts Judicial Practice Requirement to 1 Year

KO Web Desk

Srinagar: The Supreme Court on Friday modified its May 2025 verdict mandating three years of legal practice for law graduates seeking to appear in entry-level judicial service examinations, reducing the required prior practice to one year.

A bench headed by Chief Justice Surya Kant and comprising Justices AG Masih and K Vinod Chandran passed the order by a 2:1 majority while dismissing a batch of review petitions challenging the earlier judgment.

The court said candidates appearing in judicial service examinations notified between May 25, 2025 and March 31, 2027 would be eligible regardless of their prior legal experience.

However, selected candidates under this arrangement will be appointed as trainee judicial officers for one year and will have to undergo training at a judicial academy, followed by a further one-year structured clerkship, the court said.

For examinations notified after April 1, 2027, the new arrangement will apply.

The Supreme Court said the sudden restoration of the three-year practice requirement without a | [More on P10](#)





5

5 DAYS LEFT



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2

DEPARTMENT OF URBAN LOCAL BODIES KASHMIR
**OFFICE OF THE EXECUTIVE OFFICER
MUNICIPAL COMMITTEE CHARAR-I-SHARIEF**

Web:www.ulb.gov.in, email: eomc-chararisharief@jk.gov.in

Subject: Auction / Outsourcing of Adda Entry Fee / Terminal Tax Collection Posts of Municipal Committee Charar-i-Sharief through GeM Portal for a period of one (01) year 365 Days.
Reference: DULBK Letter No: DULBK/G/7937530/2026/25068 Dated: 25.07.2026

AUCTION NOTICE

For and on behalf of the Lt. Governor of Jammu & Kashmir Union territory Online bids are invited through the GeM Portal from interested and eligible individuals / firms for outsourcing of Adda Entry Fee / Terminal Tax collection posts of Municipal Committee Charar-i-Sharief for the contract period as notified on the GeM portal. The successful bidder shall collect entry fee strictly as per the approved schedule of rates issued by the Municipal Committee.

BIDDING SCHEDULE

S.No	Particulars	Date / Amount	Remarks
1	PQ (Pre-Qualification) Submission Start Date	22.08.2026 10:00 am	NIL
2	PQ (Pre-Qualification) Submission End Date	28.08.2026 04:00 Pm	NIL
3	PQ (Pre-Qualification) Assessment End Date & Time	29.08.2026 04:00 Pm	NIL
4	EMD Start Date & Time	31.08.2026 10:00 am	NIL
5	EMD End Date & Time	05.09.2026 04:00 Pm	NIL
6	EMD (Bid Security) Amount in shape of CDR	Rs.24760/- (Rupees Twenty Four Thousand Seven Hundred & Sixty Only)	To be Pledged in favour of Pay & Accounts Officer, MC Chararisharief
7	Bid Submission / Auction Start Date	06.09.2026 10:00 am	NIL
8	Bid Submission / Auction End Date	07.09.2026 04:00 Pm	NIL
9	Reserve Bid Amount	12,37,990/- (Rupees Twelve Lacs thirty Seven Thousand Nine Hundred & ninety Only)	NIL

MODE OF PAYMENT

- The highest bidder shall deposit 10% of the HI amount as token money immediately after declaration of the highest bidder. 65% of the HI amount shall be deposited at the time of taking possession of the Adda / Entry Fee collection posts. The remaining 25% of the HI amount shall be deposited within three months from the date of possession. The successful bidder shall submit an Irrevocable Bank Guarantee from any Nationalized Bank within seven days from the date of allotment for the balance installment.
 - In case the successful bidder fails to deposit 10% of the HI amount as Token money, the CDR shall be forfeited and the bidder shall be liable for blacklisting.
 - In case the allottee fails to deposit the the (65%) of the HI amount, the Municipal Committee shall take over the possession of the collection posts and proceed for fresh auction besides recovery of the defaulted amount as per rules.
 - In case the allottee fails to deposit the (25%) of the HI amount within (03) months from the date of possession, the Municipal Committee shall take over the possession of the collection posts and proceed for fresh auction besides recovery of the defaulted amount as per rules.
- PRE-QUALIFICATION (PQ) CRITERIA (TO BE UPLOADED ON GeM PORTAL)**
- Bidder shall upload Character Certificate issued by Additional Deputy Commissioner (ADC) / Police Station or alternatively copy of a valid Passport.
 - Self-attested copies of PAN Card and Aadhaar Card must be uploaded.
 - The Bidder shall have to upload self-attested GST registration Certificate on the name & title of Bid.
 - Sworn affidavit that the bidder is not black listed/barred by any other department.
 - Affidavit for Bid Security.
 - Copy of payment of Cost of Tender document Fee in shape of Bank Challan / Receipt/ UPI/mPay (Credited to A/c No. 0049010200000971)
 - Scanned copies of all required documents must be uploaded on the GeM portal before submission of bids.
 - Bids shall open and close as per the schedule notified on the GeM portal.
 - All required information must be filled and submitted online on the GeM portal.

APPROVED RATE SCHEDULE

S.No.	Type of Vehicles	Rates
1	Govt. Vehicles / Security Forces Vehicles	Exempted
2	Truck, Tipper, Dumper	Rs.30/=per trip
3	Tractor with Trolley	Rs.20/=per trip
4	Load Carrier 407/608 / Jeep/D-I 207 etc	Rs.20/=per trip
5	Load Carrier Auto	Rs.10/=per trip
6	Sumo/Tavera	Rs.20/=per day
7	Bus/Mini Bus/Matador/Swraj Mazda/407/608 etc	Rs.20/=per day
8	Full Booking Bus/Mini Bus/Matador/Tourist Bus	Rs.100/=per day
9	Sumo/Tevra/Tourist Cab	Rs.50/=per day
10	School Bus	Rs. 20/= per trip
11	Govt. Passenger Carrier	Rs.20/=per day

TERMS AND CONDITIONS

- Bids must be accompanied with the cost of tender document in shape of Bank Challan / Receipt/ UPI/mPay (Credited to A/c No. 0049010200000971) maintained with Jammu & Kashmir Bank Ltd. Branch: Chararisharief in favour of Executive Officer, Municipal Committee Chararisharief amounting to Rs.1000/- (One Thousand only) (Non-Refundable) and Bid securing declaration as per format Annexure – I, below on stamp paper duly attested by Notary in favour of Executive Officer, Municipal Committee Chararisharief, failing which tender will be rejected.
- The bidder participating in the e-auction process must apply in his/her own name or in the name of the firm duly registered in his/her name.
- The successful contractor shall have to collect Entry Fee on the following toll Posts only.
01. Chungli Post 1st at Nowhar Chararisharief, 02. Chungli Post 2nd at Wazbagh Chararisharief, as per the approved schedule of this institution and the realization of the entry fee / terminal tax shall be in a public friendly manner without causing any inconvenience to visitors, and also the display of schedule of rates shall be visible at each Post in the Town.
- Interested bidders should inspect the tool posts before participating in the bidding process. The asset shall be allotted on 'as is where basis is'.
- In case the successful bidder fails to deposit the required amount within the stipulated time, the security deposit shall be forfeited and the authority may conduct fresh auction.
- The successful bidder shall be responsible for operation and management of entry fee collection posts.
- All expenses including manpower, stationery, furniture, sanitation, electricity, water charges and operational costs shall be borne by the contractor.
- The contractor shall maintain infrastructure of collection posts and display the approved rate schedule prominently.
- The receipt books used at entry fee posts shall be authenticated by the Executive Officer or authorized officer.
- The contractor shall collect entry fee strictly according to the approved schedule issued by the Municipal Committee.
- Vehicles falling under exemption categories including Government vehicles and security forces vehicles shall not be charged entry fee.
- The contractor shall maintain sanitation and hygiene of entry posts and surrounding areas.
- The contractor shall provide necessary uniform and identification to staff working at collection posts.
- The contractor shall be responsible for conduct of staff and any act of misconduct.
- The contractor shall not sublet the contract or transfers it to any other person or agency.
- No alterations shall be made to the allotted premises without written permission of the Municipal Committee.
- All applicable taxes including GST, duties, levies or any other statutory charges imposed by the Government from time to time shall be borne and paid by the contractor. The Municipal Committee Charar-i-Sharief shall not be liable for payment of any such taxes.
- The contractor shall comply with all labour laws and statutory regulations.
- The contractor shall ensure courteous behavior with visitors and public.
- The collection posts may be inspected periodically by authorized officers/officials of the Municipal Committee.
- In case the services of the contractor are found unsatisfactory, the contract may be cancelled without prior notice.
- No claim for compensation, concession or extension shall be entertained on account of strikes, curfew, natural calamities or Government restrictions.
- The contractor shall hand over the property after completion of the contract without damage.
- The contractor shall not carry out any unlawful activities within or around the collection posts.
- In case of dispute between the parties, the matter shall be referred to the competent authority of the Municipal Committee whose decision shall be final.
- The Municipal Committee reserves the right to accept or reject any or all bids without assigning any reason.

No: MC/Ch/2026-27/1370-73

DIPK-NB-1464/26

Dated:21/08/2026

Sd/-
Executive Officer
Municipal Committee Chararisharief

PUBLIC NOTICE

I, Tanveer Ahmad Khan, Son of Sahib Ahmad Khan, Resident of Utikoo, Tehsil Kawarhama, District Baramulla, Jammu & Kashmir, hereby declare that my name has been incorrectly recorded as "Tanveer Ahmad Shah" in HDfC Life Insurance Policy No. 26716132. My correct and actual name is Tanveer Ahmad Khan. The names "Tanveer Ahmad Shah" and "Tanveer Ahmad Khan" refer to one and the same person, namely myself. The incorrect surname "Shah" has been recorded due to an inadvertent clerical/typographical error. Henceforth, for all legal, official, financial, and insurance-related purposes, my correct name shall be read and treated as Tanveer Ahmad Khan. If any person has any objection regarding this correction/change, the same may be conveyed to the undersigned within 7 days from the date of publication of this notice. Thereafter, no objection shall be entertained and the necessary correction shall be carried out in the records of the concerned authorities.

Tanveer Ahmad Khan
S/o Sahib Ahmad Khan
R/o Utikoo, Tehsil Kawarhama
District Baramulla, J&K

fko

PUBLIC NOTICE

It Is Hereby Notified For The Information Of The General Public That The Electricity Connection Bearing Consumer Id: 02040200006717, Presently Registered In The Name Of My Father Mohammad Shafi Beigh, R/O Hazratbal, Srinagar With Mobile No. 7006564624 Is Proposed To Be Transferred In Favour Of Saif Shafi Beigh, S/O Mohammad Shafi Beigh, R/O Hazratbal, Srinagar. With Mobile No.7006438537

If Any Person Has Any Objection Regarding The Proposed Transfer Of The Said Electricity Connection, They May Submit The Same In Writing To The Concerned Authority Within Seven Days From The Date Of Publication Of This Notice.

If No Objection Is Received Within The Stipulated Period, The Electricity Connection Shall Be Transferred In Favour Of Saif Shafi Beigh Without Any Further Notice.

For Any Clarification, Please Contact:
Mob: 7006438537

inf

PUBLIC NOTICE



TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN

I am a member of Jammu & Kashmir, Secretariat (Gazetted) Service-I presently posted as Private Secretary in the Department of Disaster Management, Relief, Rehabilitation & Reconstruction, J&K. My Name/Father's Name/Surname had been incorrectly recorded in School/College/University records as Gh Mohd Wagay S/o Mohd Sideeq Wagay. Now the same has been corrected in School/College/University records and also require to be carried out in my service records by the General Administration Department for which I need to apply before the competent authority. If any person has any objection in this regard, he/she may file the same in the office of Commissioner/Secretary to Government, General Administration Department, Civil Secretariat, Srinagar within seven days from the date of publication of this notice. After the expiry of the said period, no objection shall be entertained.

This is published for the information of the general public.

The correct particulars be recorded as under:

Name: GHULAM MOHAMMAD GAVGOJRI

Father's Name: MOHAMMAD SIDIQ GAVGOJRI

Mother's Name: SUNDARI BANO

Date of Birth: 11-03-1975

Residence: Tral-i-Payeen, Tral (Pulwama)

Mobile No. 9149592674

inf

PUBLIC NOTICE

I, JAVIDA NAZIR W/o NAZIR AHMAD BHAT, R/o GUNDARI PORA, TEHSIL KUNZER, DISTRICT BARAMULLA, do hereby solemnly affirm and declare on oath that my ward, namely AISHA NAZIR, was born on 16-11-2018 at SDH Tangmarg.

That the name of my ward has been wrongly recorded in her Aadhaar Card as "AISHE", which is incorrect. Her actual and correct name is "AISHA NAZIR", as recorded in her Birth Certificate and School Records. I, therefore, intend to get the name of my ward corrected in her Aadhaar Card from "AISHE" to "AISHA NAZIR" from the concerned authority. The correct name AISHA NAZIR shall be used for all official and practical purposes in future.

Any person having any objection regarding the aforesaid correction may approach the concerned authority within the prescribed period.

JAVIDA NAZIR

W/o Nazir Ahmad Bhat

R/o Gundari Pora, Tehsil Kunzer, District Baramulla

fko

PUBLIC NOTICE

I, RAYEESA BEGUM W/o AAQIB RASHID CHICHI, R/o BANDI BALA, TEHSIL KREERI, DISTRICT BARAMULLA, J&K UT, do hereby solemnly affirm and declare on oath that my name has been wrongly recorded in my Aadhaar Card bearing No. 2356 0666 7666 as "RUWEESA BANO" instead of my correct name "RAYEESA BEGUM." My correct name is RAYEESA BEGUM, as recorded in my Domicile Certificate. I have approached the concerned authority for correction of my name in the Aadhaar Card from "RUWEESA BANO" to "RAYEESA BEGUM."

Any person having any objection regarding the aforesaid correction may approach the concerned authority within the prescribed period. I shall be personally responsible for any discrepancy or false information furnished in this regard.

RAYEESA BEGUM

W/o Aaqib Rashid Chichi

R/o Bandi Bala, Tehsil Kreeri, District Baramulla, J&K UT

fko

PUBLIC NOTICE

My father's name has been wrongly spelled in my Employment Order, Service Book as Ali Mohammad Bhat while the correct spelling is Ali Mohammad Bhat . 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 Principal Govt HSS /Goshugh Chief Education Officer Baramulla within seven days. After that no objection shall be entertained.

Muzamil Ali S/o Ali Mohammad Bhat

R/O Ussan Khoie Pattan

zk

PUBLIC NOTICE

My name has been wrongly spelled in my Employment Order, Service Book as Sona ulla Ahangar while my correct name is Sona Ullah Ahangar . 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 Principal Govt HSS Goshugh Chief Education Officer Baramulla within seven days. After that no objection shall be entertained.

Sona ulla Ahangar

S/o Ab Subhan Ahangar

R/o Palhallan Pattan

zk

PUBLIC NOTICE

This is information for the general public that in Adhar card of my daughter AALIYA TARIQ bearing No 742395925400 the name and Date of birth is entered as Name Aliyaa Jan D-O-B 14-10-2015 while her actual name is Aaliya Tariq, D-O-B is 10-10-2015. Now I want its correction, in this regard if anybody having any objection may contact Concern department with in a period of seven days. No objection shall be entertained after that.

TARIQ AHMAD BEIGH

F/O AALIYA TARIQ

R/o NASRULLAH PORA BUDGAM

mcb

PUBLIC NOTICE

I, Ghulam Mohi Din Bhat, S/o Ghulam Hassan Bhat, R/o Sundipora, Tehsil & District Budgam, Jammu & Kashmir, solemnly declare and notify the public as follows: In my Aadhaar Card Bearing Number 798082723911, certain personal details were recorded incorrectly: Applicant's Name: Recorded incorrectly as "Gh Mohudin Bhat" instead of the correct name "Ghulam Mohi Din Bhat". Father's Name: Recorded incorrectly as "Gulam Hassan Bhat" instead of the correct name "Ghulam Hassan Bhat". I have want to rectify these clerical errors in my Aadhaar Card and all official records. "Gh Mohudin Bhat" and "Ghulam Mohi Din Bhat" refer to one and the same person. If any person, organization, or authority has any objection to the correction of these names in official records, they should submit their objection in writing along with supporting evidence to the relevant authority within 7 days from the date of publication of this notice. Applicant: Ghulam Mohi Din BhatAddress: Sundipora, Tehsil & District Budgam, J&K

mcb

PUBLIC NOTICE

It is hereby notified for the information of the general public that the name and address recorded in my account maintained with Jammu & Kashmir Bank, Budgam Branch, have been entered incorrectly. The correct particulars are as follows: Account No: 0078041200000357 Bank & Branch: Jammu & Kashmir Bank, Budgam Branch Incorrect Name: Ghulam Ahmad Thoker Correct Name: Firdous Ahmad Lone Incorrect Address: Thakarpura Jagir, BudgamCorrect Address: Hooru, BudgamI hereby request the concerned authorities of Jammu & Kashmir Bank to kindly update/correct my name and address in the bank records as mentioned above. This notification is issued for the information of all concerned and for future reference.

Place: Budgam Date: 21-08-2026

Firdous Ahmad LoneHooru, Budgam

mcb

PUBLIC NOTICE

I, Sania Yousuf D/o Mohd Yousuf Najar, R/o Sindoo Shirmal, Shopian, do hereby inform the general public that my name has been wrongly recorded as "Afroza Jan" in my Aadhaar Card bearing No. 6436 0842 8392, whereas my correct and actual name, as per my Domicile Certificate, is "Sania Yousuf."

I have approached the concerned authority for correction of my name in the Aadhaar records from Afroza Jan to Sania Yousuf. Any person having any objection to the said correction may raise the same before the concerned authority within the prescribed period.

Sania Yousuf D/o Mohd Yousuf Najar

R/o Sindoo Shirmal, Shopian

fko

اطلاع عام

ہر خاص و عام کو مذہب و اشتہار مطلع کیا جاتا ہے کہ گھنٹھا پٹی پیدائشی سرٹیفکیٹ کا تعلق مطلوب ہے۔ جبکہ یہی تاریخ پیدائش 24-10-2003 ہے۔ جبکہ نے آج تک کسی بھی ادارے کوئی بھی سرٹیفکیٹ نہیں کیا ہے اور نہ ہی کہیں پر اندراج کیا ہے۔ لہذا سرٹیفکیٹ ڈالنے پر اگر کسی کو کوئی اعتراض ہو تو وہ سات دنوں کے اندر اپنا اعتراض خط میں سات دن کے اندر اندر پیش کریں۔ میعاد گزرنے کے بعد کوئی بھی اعتراض قابل قبول نہیں ہوگا۔ ساتھ ساتھ دفتر میں اب ڈراما کن بھی تھیں یہ ضرور دیکھنا ہوگا۔

PUBLIC NOTICE

I, Umer Mushtaq Muttoo, parent of Mehreen Umer, student of 9th Class at Iqra Educational Institute, Bemina, Srinagar, hereby notify that the mother's name of my ward has been inadvertently recorded incorrectly in the school records.

The details submitted at the time of admission are as under:

Name: Mehreen Umer

Father's Name: Umer Mushtaq Muttoo

Mother's Name (Incorrect): Urooja

The correct details are as under:

Name: Mehreen Umer

Father's Name: Umer Mushtaq Muttoo

Mother's Name (Correct): Urooja Muttoo

It is, therefore, requested that the necessary correction may kindly be carried out in the school records.

Any person having any objection to the proposed correction may communicate the same to the Chief Education Officer (CEO), Srinagar, and/or the Principal, Iqra Educational Institute, Bemina, Srinagar, within seven (07) days from the date of publication of this notice.

Sd/-

Umer Mushtaq Muttoo

Parent of Mehreen Umer

fko

PUBLIC NOTICE

I, ABDUL RASHID MOUCHI, Father of SHAFKAT RASHID, R/o Debugh, Tehsil Kunzer, District Baramulla, do hereby solemnly affirm and declare as under:

That I am a permanent resident of Jammu & Kashmir (UT), India.

That my ward SHAFKAT RASHID, born on 18/05/2018 at PHC Kunzer, has not availed/received his Birth Certificate till date.

That I have not received the said Birth Certificate from the concerned authority till date.

That the Birth Certificate of my ward is required to be digitized/ updated with QR Code in the official records for school purposes.

That the information furnished above is true and correct to the best of my knowledge and belief, and I shall be personally responsible if any information is found false.

That I also acknowledge that the Birth Certificate/DOB entry issued on the basis of the above declaration shall be liable to cancellation if the information furnished herein is found false at any time.

ABDUL RASHID MOUCHI

Father of SHAFKAT RASHID

R/o Debugh, Tehsil Kunzer, District Baramulla

FKO

PUBLIC NOTICE

The mother's name in Matric Marks Card of my daughter bearing roll no: 132004205 has been written as Sakeena instead of Sheikh Sakeena . Now I have applied for the correction of the same . If anybody has any objection in this regard he/she may file the same in the concerned office within a period of seven days from the date of publication of this notice. After that no objection shall be entertained.

Raja Sameer Hussain S/o Gh Nabli Sheikh

R/o New Pulwama

rko

PUBLIC NOTICE

I have changed my name from Tasasqu Hussain Dob 01-04-1986 to Tasaduq Hussain Waza Dob 10-02-1990.

In future, I will be known as Tasasqu Hussain Waza. Dob 10-02-1990 If any person has any objection, he/she may contact the Passport office Srinagar within 7 days. After 7 days, no objection will be accepted.

x

PUBLIC NOTICE

I, Hilal Ahmad Khan S/o Abdul Raziq Khan, R/o Krishama, Tehsil Kunzer, District Baramulla, J&K UT, do hereby solemnly affirm and declare that I am the father of my ward, namely Zaid Bin Hilal.

That the name of my ward has been wrongly recorded in his Aadhaar Card bearing No. 2185 3911 0925 as "Sahir Ahmad Khan" instead of his correct name "Zaid Bin Hilal". The correct name of my ward is Zaid Bin Hilal, as recorded in his Birth Certificate.

The name "Sahir Ahmad Khan" mentioned in the Aadhaar Card is incorrect and does not represent the correct name of my ward. I, therefore, request the concerned authority to kindly correct/update the name in the Aadhaar Card from "Sahir Ahmad Khan" to "Zaid Bin Hilal" as per his Birth Certificate.

I shall be responsible for any discrepancy or false information furnished by me in this regard.

Hilal Ahmad Khan

S/o Abdul Raziq Khan

R/o Krishama, Tehsil Kunzer, District Baramulla, J&K UT

fko

PUBLIC NOTICE

I, Abdul Majeed Hajam S/o Abdul Khaliq Hajam, R/o Devbugh, Tehsil Kunzer, District Baramulla, J&K UT, do hereby solemnly affirm and declare that I am the father of my ward, namely Toiba Majeed.

That my ward Toiba Majeed was born on 15/10/2013 at our residential house situated at Devbugh. The birth of my ward was not registered at the time of her birth, and no Birth Certificate has been obtained or issued by the Police Station, Municipal Committee, Block Office, or any other concerned authority so far.

I now intend to get the birth of my ward Toiba Majeed registered and obtain her Birth Certificate from Block Kunzer.

The information furnished above is true and correct to the best of my knowledge and belief, and nothing material has been concealed. I shall be responsible for any discrepancy or false information found in this regard.

Abdul Majeed Hajam

S/o Abdul Khaliq Hajam

R/o Devbugh, Tehsil Kunzer, District Baramulla, J&K UT

fko

**از غیابت گوئیگام با اجلاس مذہب ارحملوں نائب تحصیل اور گوئیگام
اشہار ہمارا داگاہی ہر خاص و عام نہایت اجرائی ڈیپنٹ سرٹیفکیٹ**

محاملہ مندرجہ عنوان الصدر کے نسبت دفتر ہذا میں ایک شے مسلک سیاست تیکہ دن چار منبر عبد الغنی چوہان ساکن موضع اوگنہ تحصیل کوڈا ہاہر ضلع بارہمولہ کے طرف سے پیش ہوئی ہے جس میں محمد بابک ڈیپو پست افسر سکرٹری کے اجراء کردہ دستخط سرٹیفکیٹ کے مطابق ساکنہ کا والد

عبد الغنی چوہان ولد غلام محمد چوہان مورخہ 2026-05-23 کو فوت ہو چکا ہے متوفی

جس کو کشمیر گرامین بینک برانچ اوگنہ میں کام کرتا تھا۔ متوفی کا کنبہ مندر ذیل افراد پر مشتمل

ہے

تاکیدہ جان 21 سال دختر

رفت جان 28 سال --

سائینی 23 سال -

زینہ بیگم 51 سال زوجہ

عرفان غنی چوہان 30 سال پسر

غلام محمد چوہان 66 سال والد

ذو بی بیگم 64 سال والدہ

اس کے علاوہ اوکوئی افراد کنبہ ہیں۔ سرٹیفکیٹ زیر بحث اجراء کرنے میں اگر کسی شخص کو کوئی عزیاء اعتراض ہو تو وہ بعد مشورہ اخبار سات دن کے اندر اندر اپنے مذہب اعتراض عدالت

حذا کو دفتر می اوقات کے دوران پیش کریں۔ بعد گزرے میعا کوئی مذہب اعتراض قابل قبول نہیں

ہوگا۔

نائب تحصیلدار

FKO

Advisor Nasir Aslam Wani Listens to Public Grievances at Nawa-e-Subh

Observer News Service

SRINAGAR: On the directions of Jammu and Kashmir National Conference President Dr. Farooq Abdullah, Advisor to the Chief Minister Nasir Aslam Wani remained available to the public at the party headquarters, Nawa-e-Subh Complex, Srinagar, where he listened to the grievances and demands of people from various parts of the city and elsewhere.

People and delegations, including senior party leaders, Members of the Legislative Assembly, party office-bearers, workers, representatives of traders' associations, temporary teachers and other groups, apprised him of their personal and area-specific concerns. The issues raised included public infrastructure, essential services, welfare schemes, employment, roads, electricity, healthcare, drinking water, pending development works and concerns of weaker sections of society.

Provincial President Advocate Showkat Ahmad Mir, State spokesperson Imran Nabi Dar, Provincial Secretary Syed Tauqeer Ahmad, Minority Cell Convener Jagdish Singh Azad and Provincial Youth President Mushtaq Mir, besides other party office-bearers, were also present on the occasion.

Wani gave a patient hearing to the delegations and assured them that their genuine concerns would be taken up with the concerned departments for early resolution. In several cases, he also contacted the concerned authorities on the spot and facilitated necessary action.

Reiterating the government and party's commitment to accessible and responsive governance, Nisar said, "Our doors are always open to the people. Every genuine concern and legitimate demand brought to our notice will be taken up promptly. Public service and development remain our foremost priorities."

Strengthening NC Essential to Protect Interests of J&K People: Shamima Firdous

Observer News Service

SRINAGAR: A meeting of the Jammu and Kashmir National Conference Women's Wing was held today at the party headquarters, Nawa-e-Subha, under the chairmanship of Women's Wing President and MLA Habba Kadal Advocate Shamima Firdous. Provincial President Er. SABIYA QADRI and all district presidents of the Kashmir Province participated in the meeting.

The meeting reviewed organisational affairs, ongoing activities of the Women's Wing and issues confronting people, particularly challenges faced by women across the districts. The participants shared their views, highlighted public grievances and difficulties in their respective areas and apprised the leadership of the status of ongoing developmental works.

Addressing the meeting, Firdous said strengthening the National Conference was the need of the hour and

called upon party workers to maintain sustained contact with the people, understand their concerns, raise their grievances at the appropriate forums and work sincerely towards their resolution.

She said the people are the ultimate source of public authority and that the strength of any political organisation lies in its connect with the people. She urged the Women's Wing to remain active at the grassroots and stand with people, particularly women, during times of difficulty and distress.

She said the Women's Wing has consistently worked in accordance with the directions of the party leadership and the principles of the party's Naya Kashmir programme. She maintained that women have always been an integral force in the growth and consolidation of the National Conference and that the Women's Wing remains one of the organisation's strongest pillars.

Nishat Residents Thank LCMA for Prompt Response to Drainage Complaint

Agencies

SRINAGAR: Residents of Syed Rehmaina Stop in Nishat area of Srinagar City on Friday thanked the Lakes Conservation and Management Authority (LCMA) officials for promptly responding to their complaint regarding an overflowing drainage near

Residents speaking with KNO, said the drainage overflow had caused waterlogging in the area, creating inconvenience for pedestrians, commuters and local residents.

"We approached the LCMA after the drainage started overflowing and causing waterlogging. The response from the authority was prompt and we appreciate their intervention," Nazir

Ahmed, a local from the area said.

Another resident, Abdul Majeed Dar, said the issue had been causing inconvenience to people in the area and urged the authorities to ensure a permanent solution.

"We are thankful to the LCMA and to Executive Engineer of Nishat second division for taking cognisance of our complaint and responding promptly. We hope the necessary work will be carried out soon so that the problem does not recur," he said.

Pertainly, locals appreciated the authority's response and said timely intervention would help prevent further waterlogging and inconvenience in the area.

SKUAST-K's Celebrates World Entrepreneurs' Day with Startups

Observer News Service

SRINAGAR: SKUAST-K Innovation, Incubation & Entrepreneurship Centre (SKIE) celebrated World Entrepreneurs' Day, bringing together resident startups, mentors and industry partners under the banner "Stakeholders of Change" for a day-long programme reflecting on Kashmir's growing entrepreneurship ecosystem. The session was chaired by Director Education, SKUAST-K Prof Altaf Mohd Bhat, with Chief Executive Officer of SKIE delivering the keynote address to an audience of founders, innovators and prospective entrepreneurs.

In his address, Naveed Hamid traced SKIE's journey from an idea to an institution that now stands behind more than 125 registered startups across agri-tech, biotechnology, artificial intelligence, deep-tech,

food processing and rural enterprise, backed by funding partners including DST New Delhi, i-TBI, BIRAC, MEITY, NABARD and IFAD. He pointed to the centre's recent recognition as Start Startup Ecosystem Award and "Incubator of the Year", when that recognition came with a fifty-lakh seed fund, we didn't see it as a trophy. We saw it as fifty lakh reasons to go back to work faster.

"This centre does not build startups. You do. We only build the room you build them in," Naveed Hamid told the audience, urging founders in the audience not to see Kashmir's biotech and agri-tech challenges as reasons to look elsewhere, but as the very market they were uniquely positioned to serve. He added that SKIE's mentors and doors "don't close when the pitch deck stops being the hard part and the business starts being the hard part."



CM Omar Abdullah inspects colourful floral displays during the inauguration of the Waste to Wonder-Flower Garden and Floriculture Mela at Polo View, Srinagar.

SMC Suspends Junior Building Inspector after ACB Arrest in Bribery Case

Observer News Service

SRINAGAR: The Srinagar Municipal Corporation (SMC) on Friday placed a Junior Building Inspector under suspension, hours after she was arrested by the Anti-Corruption Bureau (ACB) in connection with a bribery case.

Gazala Akhter, posted at Ward No. 28 of the SMC, was taken into custody on August 20, 2026, following the registration of FIR No. 11/2026 under Section 7 of the Prevention of Corruption Act, 1988 (as amended in 2018). The provision deals with offences relating to public servants obtaining illegal gratification.

In a formal order issued by the



Office of the Commissioner, SMC, the corporation invoked Rule 31 of the J&K Civil Services (Classification, Control & Appeal) Rules, 1956, which mandates automatic suspension of a government employee from the date of arrest in a corruption case.

Gazala Akhter, Junior Building Inspector, Ward No. 28, SMC shall be deemed to have been placed under

suspension with effect from the date of her arrest i.e., 20.08.2026," the order stated.

The suspension was prompted by a communication from the Senior Superintendent of Police, ACB, Srinagar, who had sought action against the accused official.

During the suspension period, Akhter has been attached to the office of the Joint Commissioner (Sanitation), SMC. She will be entitled to a subsistence allowance of 50 per cent of her salary — comprising half pay and half dearness allowance — as per Article 108-A of the Jammu and Kashmir Civil Service Regulations, 1956.

Further investigation into the matter is underway, officials said.

SCW Kashmir Searches Safakadal House in Police Appointment Forgery Case

Observer News Service

SRINAGAR: The Special Crime Wing (SCW) Kashmir of Crime Branch J&K on Friday conducted a search at a residential house in Safakadal, Srinagar, as part of an investigation into alleged forgery of date-of-birth and educational qualification documents for a J&K Police appointment.

In a statement issued to Kashmir Observer, a spokesperson said that the Special Crime Wing Kashmir of Crime Branch J&K conducted a house search at Safakadal in connection with the investigation of Case FIR No. 10/2026, registered under Sections 420, 468 and 471 RPC. The search was carried out in compliance with a search warrant issued by the Court of Special Mobile Magistrate (PT&E), Srinagar.

He said the case pertains to allegations of appointment in the J&K Police Department through the submission of forged documents relating to date of birth and educational qualifications. As part of the ongoing investigation, the Special Crime Wing conducted a search at



the residential premises of SG Ct. Manzoor Ahmad Najar at Safakadal, Srinagar.

The spokesperson said the search was conducted in accordance with due process of law. Further details will be shared as the investigation progresses.

The general public has been advised to remain vigilant against fraudsters and report any such incidents directly to SSP SCW Kashmir (Crime Branch J&K). Those who have been victims of fraud may also send their complaints to the official email: sspscw-kmr@jkpolice.gov.in.

Committee on Petitions Reviews Grievances of Khimber Residents



Observer News Service

SRINAGAR: The Committee on Petitions of J&K Legislative Assembly met under the Chairmanship of Pirzada Farooq Ahmad Shah to examine the long-pending grievance of residents of Khimber Hazratbal regarding illegal occupation of their traditional grazing land.

The meeting was attended by Members of the Committee including Javaid Riyaz (Bedar), Dr. Sajjad Shafi, Javaid Iqbal Choudhary and Shagun Parihar.

Deputy Commissioner Srinagar, Akshay Labroo; SDM East Srinagar, other concerned officers, besides officers of the Assembly Secretariat were also present in the meeting.

During the meeting, the Chairman observed that Government land belongs

to the people and must not be allowed to fall into the hands of a few. He assured that the Committee will not allow such injustices to continue and will take every possible step to restore the rights of the common man, safeguard public property for future generations.

The Chairman directed that strict action be taken against all those found involved in the illegal encroachment of Government land. He instructed the District Administration to identify and take to task the land mafia and other elements involved, and to retrieve the illegally occupied land immediately.

The Deputy Commissioner, Srinagar, during the meeting, briefed the Committee in detail about the illegal occupation of their traditional grazing land in Khimber Hazratbal.



GOVERNMENT OF UNION TERRITORY OF JAMMU AND KASHMIR

DIRECTORATE OF SOCIAL WELFARE KASHMIR BLOCK A, OLD SECRETARIAT, SRINAGAR - 190001

EXTENSION NOTIFICATION

In view of the low response and insufficient receipt of proposals against the earlier notification issued vide No. DSWK/Sch/GIA/2026/211-223 dated 25.04.2026, the timeline for submission of proposals of State Grant-in-aid is hereby extended up to 10th September, 2026 to facilitate wider participation of eligible organisations (NGOs).

Proposals are hereby invited in the prescribed format from registered Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs) registered under the Societies Registration Act, 1860 and enrolled on the NITI Aayog Darpan Portal, engaged in the socio-economic welfare of the weaker/vulnerable sections of society in the Kashmir Division, for Grant-in-Aid during the financial year 2026-27.

The application forms, duly completed in all respects and accompanied by the documents specified in the checklist shall be submitted strictly in accordance with the provisions of Government Order No. 207-JK (SWD) of 2022 dated 21.11.2022.

The terms and conditions shall remain the same as specified in the earlier notification issued by this office vide No. DSWK/Sch/GIA/2026/211-223 dated 25.04.2026. The proposals must reach the office of the concerned District Social Welfare Officer within the extended timeline mentioned below.

S.No	Submission of proposals	Date extended upto
1	Date of submission of proposals by the Registered/NGOs/Institutions to the DSWOs Concerned	10/09/2026
2	Date of Submission of Proposals to the Director Social Welfare Kashmir alongwith requisite documents included inspection report by the concerned DSWOs	15/09/2026

NO:-DSWK/Sch/GIA/2026/(7292430)/ 1819-31

Dated:- 21-08-2026

DIPK-4841-26

DT: 21/08/2026

Sd/-

Mohammad Akbar Wani, (IAS)

Director,

Social Welfare Department Kashmir

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

AIRPORTS

SHIEK UL ALAM AIRPORT: 01942303311



RAILWAYS

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

HIGHWAY STATUS

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



PRAYERS

FAJR	4 : 27
ZUHR	12 : 35
ASR	5 : 17
Magrib	7 : 16
ISHA	8 : 41

This Day In History

- 1942 - Brazil declares war on Germany, Japan & Italy
- 1943 - Soviet troops free Karkov
- 1944 - Adolf Hitler orders Paris to be destroyed
- 1953 - Shah of Iran returns to Tehran
- 1956 - US President Eisenhower and VP Richard Nixon renominated by Republican convention in San Francisco.
- 1958 - Great Britain performs atmospheric nuclear test at Christmas Island.
- 1962 - Failed assassination attempt on French president Charles de Gaulle
- 1962 - USSR performs nuclear test at Novaya Zemlya USSR
- 1963 - NASA civilian test pilot Joe Walker in the X-15 rocket plane achieves a world record altitude of 354,200 feet (107,960 m, 67 miles)
- 1964 - Guinea, Liberia & Ivory Coast form joint market
- 1968 - The Society of Labour Lawyers (SLL) publishes an 'interim report' about alleged discrimination in Northern Ireland; the report is heavily criticised by unionists.
- 1971 - Approximately 130 non-Unionist councillors announce their withdrawal from participation on district councils across Northern Ireland in protest against Internment (allowing suspected terrorists to be indefinitely detained without trial)
- 1972 - Rhodesia is expelled by the International Olympic Committee for its racist policies.
- 1982 - Israeli General Ariel Sharon urges Palestinians to discuss peaceful coexistence
- 1984 - The United Democratic Front, an internal coalition of anti-apartheid groups in South Africa, organizes a highly successful boycotts of the Colored and Indian elections to parliament.
- 1985 - Airtours Boeing-737 crashes at Manchester airport, 55 killed
- 1986 - Gas from Volcano Chamberoen kills 1,734 (Cameroon)

RSS Deliberates on Demographic Imbalance, Fertility & Youth

Press Trust Of India

Visakhapatnam, Aug 21 : The three-day all India coordination meeting of RSS here deliberated on demographic imbalances, falling fertility rate and India's youth population, a senior Sangh leader said on Friday.

Addressing a press conference here, RSS leader C R Mukunda said the conclave discussed changing demographics in India.

"Demographic change is happening. As we all know, all over the globe, this is a very challenging thing. There are many countries which are going through an aging population challenge," he said.

However, he noted that India is currently endowed with the world's largest youth population while its entire population is also the largest in the world.

Though India is blessed with these two strengths, Mukunda noted that demographic scientists flagged that aging crisis will hit the country in the next three to four decades.

Further, he underscored that fertility rate is diminishing with demographic imbalances, leading to societal disturbances in some regions.

"Certain classes or certain communities are seeing a massive increase in their population while other communities and

classes are seeing a decrease—this imbalance was taken up seriously here and it was discussed," he said.

Further, Mukunda noted that the meeting deliberated on what the Sangh-inspired organisations



are thinking and planning to face these challenges.

In a press release, the RSS said the meeting held serious discussions on demographic change and imbalance.

"In the context of the challenges arising from ageing populations and declining fertility rates in many countries of the world, the situation in Bharat was considered. Changes taking place in the population ratios of different regions and communities and their social impact were discussed, along with measures to maintain balance and harmony in society," it added.

Delhi Police Files FIR Over Pellet Injuries at July Protest

Press Trust Of India

New Delhi, Aug 21 : Congress leader Rahul Gandhi on Friday staged a dramatic six-hour dharna at the Parliament Street police station here demanding an FIR over pellet injuries to a youth during the July 20 protest and ended it only after police registered the complaint.

Gandhi raised the pitch on the issue after 19-year-old Sahil Lochab claimed that the police was refusing to register an FIR on his complaint despite him suffering pellet wounds including damage to his eye.

Soon after the police registered the FIR late in the evening, Gandhi said this is the first step towards justice and ended his dharna.

The BJP hit back at Gandhi and accused him of playing "politics of anarchy" only to remain relevant in the media and termed this as Congress' attempt to divert attention from the "wrong stand" taken on Vande Mataram.

Gandhi accompanied Lochab and his mother to the Mandir Marg police station in the morning, which refused to register the FIR. He then took them to Deputy Commissioner of Police (New Delhi area) Sachin Sharma, where he warned that if no FIR is registered he would sit on dharna for days together.

With the police claiming that the matter is being investigated and no FIR can be booked, Gandhi along with Sahil and his mother then sat on dharna in the police station premises with several Congress leaders joining him.

The Parliament Street police station turned into a protest venue.

Top Congress leaders like Priyanka Gandhi Vadra,

You can imagine who was stopping the registration of an FIR, as these cops wanted to do so but they were not allowed

Kumari Selja, Adhir Ranjan Chivdhwry, Jairam Ramesh, Salman Khurshid, Mukul Wasnik, Randeep Surjewala, among others, converged on the police station along with hundreds of party workers. They raised slogans against the government and slammed Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Home Minister Amit Shah over the alleged police "brutality" against students.

Gandhi earlier claimed that he was told by police officers that an FIR could not be registered as "there are orders from the top".

While ending his dharna, he said the final FIR was registered only after an okay from Home Secretary and Amit Shah.

"You can imagine who was stopping the registration of an FIR, as these cops wanted to do so but they were not allowed."

Targeting the home minister, Gandhi asked why is Shah so afraid of justice.

"This is the first step towards justice and a case has been registered," Gandhi said.

US Kashmir Comment Leaves Pakistan Fuming, India Mocking

KO Web Desk

New Delhi – India on Friday took pot shot at Pakistan for summoning the top US diplomat in Islamabad over comments by US Ambassador to New Delhi Sergio Gor affirming that Jammu and Kashmir is an integral part of India.

"I see no reason to comment on Pakistan's frustration," said External Affairs Ministry spokesperson Randhir Jaiswal.

Gor, during his visit to Jammu and Kashmir, said on Wednesday that the Union territory is an important part of India.

Hours after his remarks, Pakistan's Foreign Office summoned the US Charge d'Affaires in Islamabad and lodged a "strong demarche" over the comments made by Gor, who is also the Trump administration's Special Envoy to South and Central Asia.

"Pakistan strongly condemned and categorically rejected the characterisation of Jammu and Kashmir as a 'part of India'," the Pakistan Foreign Office said in a statement.

Jaiswal also asserted that the Union territories of Jammu and Kashmir and Ladakh are, and will always remain an integral



and inalienable part of India.

He also responded to a question on India's tit-for-tat action in removing some unauthorised structures outside the Pakistan high commission in the national capital.

India's action came after Pakistan removed parking poles outside the Indian mission in Islamabad this week.

"Certain structures there (outside Indian high commission in Islamabad) were removed, despite our request. Once it happened, we took what could be described as a proportional action— we removed some temporary structures located in the lane out-

side the Pakistani High Commission here (in Delhi)," Jaiswal said.

Pakistani authorities had removed security barricades and parking poles outside the Indian High Commission in Islamabad.

The action by Pakistani authorities and subsequent demolition of the unauthorised structures by Indian agencies came amid a deep freeze in the relations between the two countries.

The ties between the two sides hit rock bottom following India's Operation Sindoor targeting terrorist infrastructures in Pakistan and Pakistan-Occupied territories.

Gulf States Hosting US Bases 'Fully Supported' Iran Attack: Envoy

Press Trust Of India

New Delhi, Aug 21 (PTI) Gulf countries hosting American bases not only "provided logistical help but fully supported" the US in carrying out military attack on Iran, a top official of the judiciary in Iran alleged on Friday and claimed that if they had not played such a role, Tehran could have "won the battle much earlier".

At a seminar hosted at Iran Culture House, head of the Centre for Attorneys of the Judiciary of Iran Hasan Abdolliapour, who is leading a nine-member Iranian delegation to India, without naming any Gulf country, also indicated that Iran could pursue the cases of "violations" by its neighbouring countries by taking the cases to "international courts".

The theme of the event was 'US Attack on Iran Under International Law: Aggression or Self-defence?' and it was attended by members of the delegation, and many foreign policy experts and Persian scholars.

Abdolliapour, also a member of the International Bar Association (IBA), in response to a query from an audience, said, Gulf countries hosting US bases not only "provided logistical help, but fully supported" the US in carrying out the military attack on Iran.

He spoke in Persian, and his remarks were interpreted in English and Urdu at the seminar.

"From a legal standpoint, I can say that Iran will raise this issue, both internally and at international fora," Abdolliapour said.

He said the the way Iran consider US and Israel guilty, the Gulf countries hosting US bases,

who supported them, will also be "treated similarly", adding, Tehran feels, had they not supported the US, "we could have won the battle much earlier".

During the seminar Abdolliapour in a detailed talk outlined the Iran conflict as seen from the prism of UN Charter, and international humanitarian laws asked how could US-Israeli military operation against Iran be justified through these laws.

Other delegates reiterated Iran's accusation that "civilians and civilian infrastructure", including a school in Minab, a small city in southern Iran, being bombed in the military operation in which several children have been killed as per in-

Iran's stand on its neighbouring countries in the Gulf, said, "We had many good relations with our neighbours, and although this attack and and this aggression happened, but I think our nation can forgive other nations, if things are going to be ordinary again, and we will continue peaceful relations with our neighbours."

On whether Iran is planning to take the matter to the international court, he said, "We will do our best. We are using some professional attorneys and lawyers and we will refer to universal jurisdiction in other countries to follow these cases according to international law and even we will follow that in the Interna-

We had many good relations with our neighbours, and although this attack and and this aggression happened, but I think our nation can forgive other nations, if things are going to be ordinary again, and we will continue peaceful relations with our neighbours

ternational reports.

At the seminar, a panel carried photos of some of the children from Minab, with the caption – "No war on children", and guests were also handed photos of some of these children affected by the ongoing conflict that began with US-Israeli combine carrying out air strikes on Iran on February 28.

Tehran in retaliation attacked neighbouring Gulf countries hosting US bases.

Efforts to build lasting peace in West Asia in these nearly six months have not met much success.

Later, interacting with PTI, Abdolliapour, when asked about

tional Court of Justice and International Criminal Court."

Israel and the US have justified the attack on Iran saying – "No war on children", and programme was an "existential threat" to them.

"This is the kind of illusion that we are a threat. We are not threat to any other country. And we are completely.. we have peaceful relation with all of neighbours and in all of the countries. And in all over the history, we didn't attack any other country. And nowadays, we are resisting against our enemies and we are following the sustainable relation with all of the countries," Abdolliapour said.

Sohrabuddin Case: Plea in SC Challenges 22 Acquittals

Press Trust Of India

New Delhi, Aug 21 : A plea has been filed in the Supreme Court challenging the Bombay High Court order acquitting 22 accused including 21 policemen in the alleged 2005 fake encounter case involving Gujarat gangster Sohrabuddin Shaikh, his wife and aide Tulsiram Prajapati.

The petition has been filed by Nayabuddin Shaikh, younger brother of deceased Sohrabuddin Shaikh, challenging the May 7 order of the high court which, while

The remaining one accused was the owner of a farmhouse in Gujarat, where Shaikh and his wife Kausar Bi were allegedly illegally detained before they were killed.

The high court in its verdict noted that the prosecution failed to establish that Sohrabuddin Shaikh and Kausar Bi were abducted by the Gujarat and Rajasthan police and also failed to establish motive for staging a fake encounter.

The high court had said there was no ground to draw an inference that the trial was not being conducted properly because 92 prosecution



acquitting the accused, said that the prosecution had failed to establish the case.

On May 7, the high court observed it finds no ground to interfere with the trial court judgment acquitting the accused and added that the prosecution case is based on circumstantial evidence and there are several broken links in the chain of circumstances.

It had dismissed the appeals filed by Rubabuddin and Nayabuddin, challenging the December 2018 judgment of a special CBI court in Mumbai acquitting all the accused in the case.

Among the 22 accused acquitted, 21 were junior-level officers from Gujarat and Rajasthan police, who were part of the teams that allegedly abducted the three and later killed them in staged encounters.

witnesses turned hostile.

The special trial court, while acquitting the accused, had observed that the prosecution failed to establish a cogent case to suggest there had been any conspiracy to kill Shaikh and the others, and the present accused persons had any role in it. In April 2019, Shaikh's brothers filed an appeal in the high court.

The prosecuting agency, Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI), told the high court last year that it had accepted the acquittal judgment and was not going to appeal against it.

Shaikh was killed in November 2005 in an alleged fake gun-battle near Ahmedabad by the Gujarat Police. His wife, Kausar Bi, was also killed a few days later, according to the probing agency.

US to Accept New Form I-485 for Green Card from Sep 18

Press Trust Of India

Washington, Aug 21 : A new application form for green card will come into effect next month and any submissions made using the older versions will be rejected after September 18, the United States Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS) has said.

The new Form I-485 to Register Permanent Residence or Adjust Status replaces the January 20, 2025 edition and aligns with the new public charge rules that come into effect from September 18, said the USCIS, operating under the Department of Homeland Security.

The USCIS will reject the January 20, 2025 edition of Form I-485 if it is postmarked or electronically submitted on or after September 18.

The agency is providing a preview version of the new edition of Form I-485 and its instructions be-

cause there is no grace period for accepting the revised edition.

It has made it clear to applicants not to file the revised edition of Form I-485 before September 18.

The old version of Form I-485 will be accepted only if it is postmarked or electronically submitted



ted before September 18.

Earlier, the Trump administration expanded the definition of "public charge" to deny immigration applications of those availing benefits such as Medicaid, food stamps or any subsistence aid from the government. The new "public charge" rules come into effect on September 18.

NEWS MAKERS

Bribe Rate Card Goes Viral After Gram Sabha Discussion

Latur, Aug 22 (PTI) A video of a gram sabha or village assembly where the sarpanch and others purportedly spoke about a "rate card" of bribes required to be paid to officials for securing government aid has gone viral in Maharashtra's Latur district.

Authorities have sought an explanation from the sarpanch, asking him to submit evidence.

The video was purportedly recorded at Atola village in Chakur tehsil on August 17.

When people questioned him why the gram panchayat asked for money when they sought benefits of various government schemes, the sarpanch purportedly claimed that Panchayat Samiti members and of-

ficials demanded bribes.

A bribe of Rs 20,000 was required for the approval of a well under the employment guarantee scheme, he said.

Similarly, Rs 7,000 was allegedly being charged for approval of a cattle shed, while fixed amounts were also allegedly demanded for housing and other government schemes.

While a bribe of Rs 20,000 was demanded at the Panchayat Samiti level for a well, Rs 5,000 could be adjusted against house tax and water tax dues, leaving beneficiaries to allegedly pay

I have sought a written explanation from the sarpanch and asked him to submit evidence within three days or explain whom they paid money and when

Rs 15,000 to Panchayat Samiti employees.

In the video, the sarpanch was also heard

saying, on microphone, that these proceedings of the gram sabha should be recorded and made public so that "the whole world comes to know".

"I have sought a written explanation from the sarpanch and asked him to submit evidence within three days or explain whom they paid money and when," said Santaji Mane, Block Development Officer of Chakur Panchayat Samiti.

"If the allegations are found to be true, action will be taken against those responsible. I have also appealed to citizens not to pay money for any work at the Panchayat Samiti. If anyone demands money, they should directly complain to me or the Anti-Corruption Bureau (ACB)," Mane told PTI.

Parents Die in Desperate Bid to Stop Son's Suicide

Chhatrapati Sambhajnagar, Aug 21 (PTI) In an unfortunate turn of events, three members of a family died in Maharashtra's Chhatrapati Sambhajnagar on Friday afternoon after a domestic dispute over a mobile phone ended in a sequence of fatal falls from a hilltop, police said.

The tragedy unfolded in the Tisgaon area under the jurisdiction of Waluj MIDC in the afternoon, an official said.

The deceased have been identified as Murlidhar Chandgude (48), his wife Sangita, and their 19-year-old son Kunal, residents of the city's Zalta Phata area.

According to officials, the tragic chain of events began around 10 am when Kunal trekked up the hill as he was upset following an argument with

his parents over his demand for a new mobile phone.

Anxious about his safety, Murlidhar and Sangita followed him to the hilltop to reason with him and persuade him to return home.

As the situation unfolded, local villagers, police personnel, and fire brigade officials gathered at the spot to assist in the rescue operation. Fire service personnel tried to spread a safety net at the base of the hill, but Kunal kept shifting his position along the cliff edge, foiling their attempts.

The standoff took a turn around 1 pm when Murlidhar stepped closer to console his son, but Kunal leapt from the steep hill, and the former made a desperate grab to save him, causing both to lose their control and fall from the hilltop.

Sword Attacker Wounds Many at Sweeden School

Berlin, Aug 21 (AP) An attacker wielding a sword has wounded several people at a school in Sweden, local officials say. The suspected perpetrator is in custody.

The city government said the attack took place at the Brinnell School in the city of Fagersta, northwest of the capital, Stockholm.

Police spokesperson Pelle Vamstad, quoted by the TT news agency, said an alarm was received early afternoon Friday and police rushed to the scene.

Prime Minister Ulf Kristersson, in a post on the X social media platform, lamented a "serious incident" in Fagersta "right after the summer break."

GMC Employees to Decide Future Course After Minister Assures SRRs by September

Hundreds of elective surgeries, OPD services affected

Agencies

SRINAGAR: The indefinite strike by non-gazetted employees of five new Government Medical Colleges (GMCs) entered in J&K its fifth day on Friday, with routine healthcare services, including OPD work and hundreds of elective surgeries, being affected.

The employees, as per KNO, are agitating against the prolonged delay in framing and notifying Service Recruitment Rules (SRRs).

The protesting employees of GMCs Anantnag, Baramulla, Doda, Kathua and Rajouri have been demanding early finalisation of the recruitment rules, which they say are essential for regulating their recruitment, promotions, seniority

and other service-related matters.

Notably, the five Government Medical Colleges were established in 2019, but employees working in non-gazetted categories have continued to await a formal service framework governing their career progression and other conditions of service.

More than 3,300 employees, including nursing, paramedical, clerical and multitasking staff, are understood to be affected by the issue. The employees have repeatedly approached the authorities, seeking an early resolution, but maintain that the matter has remained pending for years.

The agitation initially began at three new GMCs earlier this week before spreading to GMC Anant-

nag and Baramulla, bringing employees of all five institutions under the umbrella of the indefinite protest.

The employees have maintained that the strike will continue until the Service Recruitment Rules are finalised and notified.

They said the absence of notified service rules has created uncertainty regarding promotions and other career benefits, particularly for employees who have completed several years of service.

A key grievance of the employees is the lack of regular promotional avenues and the non-constitution of Departmental Promotion Committees (DPCs). They contend that in the absence

of notified rules and DPCs, many eligible employees have been unable to move to higher posts despite fulfilling the required service period.

The employees have also raised concerns related to seniority, pay fixation and other service benefits associated with career progression.

Meanwhile, Health and Medical Education Minister Sakeena Itoo on Friday acknowledged the employees' demand as genuine and said that the recruitment rules should have been framed by now.

She assured that the Service Recruitment Rules for non-gazetted employees of the five new GMCs would be framed by the end of September.

The minister's assurance has

opened a possible window for resolving the ongoing standoff. The employees, however, are expected to deliberate on the government's assurance before deciding whether to suspend, continue or modify their agitation.

Speaking to KNO, AIRNF J&K UT Committee State President Vishav Sharma said that a meeting of the employees would be held on Friday evening to discuss the assurance given by the Health Minister and decide the future course of action.

"We are holding a meeting this evening and will discuss the assurance given by the Health Minister. The future course of action will be decided after the meeting," Sharma said.

Citing Convention, BJP Stakes Claim for Deputy Speaker's Chair

Agencies

SRINAGAR: Ahead of the upcoming autumn session of the Legislative Assembly, Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) State President Sat Pal Sharma on Friday said the post of Deputy Speaker should be allotted to the party, citing the convention of the position being given to the largest opposition party.

Talking KNO, Sharma said that when the BJP was in power, the post of Deputy Speaker was given to the NC.

"As per convention, the post of Deputy Speaker is allotted to the opposition," he said.

Sharma added that the Chief Minister should have given the post of Deputy Speaker to the BJP at the time of the election of the

Speaker. "He should look into the matter to uphold the tradition and convention," he remarked.

During the PDP-BJP government, Nazir Gurezi of the National Conference served as Deputy Speaker, while Sartaj Madni of the PDP held the post during the NC-Congress rule.

The key statutory post of Deputy Speaker has remained vacant for nearly two years, with the ruling National Conference showing no inclination to fill the position.

As per the Rules of Procedure and Conduct of Business in the House, the election of the Deputy Speaker is conducted under the supervision of the Speaker, who fixes the date for the election.

After Temporary Closure, Doodhpathri Reopens for Tourists



Agencies

SRINAGAR: Authorities on Friday reopened Doodhpathri, one of the major tourist spots in Central Kashmir's Budgam district, for visitors. The destination temporarily closed due to inclement weather conditions and the risk of flash floods and landslides last month.

Local traders, pony operators, cab drivers, food stall owners and other stakeholders while talking to KNO welcomed the decision, saying the reopening will help them resume their livelihoods after the temporary closure.

"We are happy that Doodhpathri has reopened. Tourism is our main source of livelihood, and the return of visitors will provide much-needed relief to local families," locals said.

The authorities had earlier ordered the temporary closure of Doodhpathri in view of continuous rainfall and the possibility of flash floods and landslides, particularly along the approach roads.

With weather conditions improving, the destination has now been opened for tourists, bringing relief to the local tourism community and businesses dependent on visitor footfall.

Teenager Drowns in Kangan's Nallah Sindh

Agencies

KANGAN: An 18-year-old youth drowned in Nallah Sindh near Kangan in central Kashmir's Ganderbal district while taking a bath on Friday, officials said.

An official said that the youth drowned in Nallah Sindh near Dumping Park in the Kijpara area of Kangan. He said that soon after

the incident, police, along with local residents and the SDRF, rushed to the spot and launched a search operation to trace the missing youth. The deceased was later identified as Danish (18), a resident of Rangpora Soura, Srinagar.

Meanwhile, an investigation has been initiated, while the rescue operation is underway—(KNO)

Drug Peddler Arrested in Shopian

Observer News Service

SRINAGAR: Continuing its sustained efforts to eradicate the menace of drug abuse from society, J&K Police arrested a drug peddler in Shopian and recovered contraband substances from his possession.

According to a statement issued to Kashmir Observer, a police party from Police Station Shopian during routine naka checking at Deegam crossing, intercepted & apprehended a suspicious person. During his

personal search, approximately 870 Grams Charas like substance was recovered from his possession. He has been identified as Mohd Younis Pampori son of Gh Hassan Pampori resident of Hergam Shopian. Accordingly, a case vide FIR No. 167/2026 under the relevant provisions of the NDPS Act has been registered at Police Station Shopian and investigation has been taken up to establish forward and backward linkages and dismantle the larger drug network involved.

NC-Cong Biggest Enemies of Local Self-Government: BJP

MLA Pathania

Agencies

SRINAGAR: Terming National Conference (NC) and Congress as the "biggest enemies of local self-government" in Jammu and Kashmir, Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) MLA from Udhampur East, Ranbir Singh Pathania, on Friday accused the CM Omar led government of deliberately delaying Panchayat and Urban Local Body polls in the Union Territory.

Talking to KNO, Pathania said Jammu and Kashmir needs stronger local self-government.

Slamming the Congress and National Conference over the delay in local body elections, he said the two parties should explain their position. "Today, Ladakh has announced its local body elections. What has stopped Jammu and Kashmir? What is the obstacle?" he asked.

"The biggest enemies of local self-government in Jammu and Kashmir are the National Conference and Congress. They want people to suffer for a small drain, lane, pipe or road and come to them," Pathania alleged.

He said the delay in Panchayat and ULB polls will be a major issue for the BJP in the upcoming session.

Launching a broader attack, Pathania said, "This is a government which has no commitment, no direction, no development philosophy. We will expose it and oppose it."

He accused Chief Minister Omar Abdullah of being invisible on the ground. "We accept and acknowledge that Omar Abdullah is the elected Chief Minister of Jammu and Kashmir. But on the ground, he is not visible. His government is fragmented," he said.

SDH Qaimoh Faces Power Outage, Poor Sanitation

Agencies

QAIMOH: Water accumulation, poor sanitation and a recent power outage have raised questions over basic infrastructure and maintenance at the newly inaugurated 50-bed Sub-District Hospital (SDH) at Qaimoh, a facility that took nearly two decades to materialise.

As per KNO, pertinently, Minister for Health and Medical Education Sakeena Itoo inaugurated the new hospital here in South Kashmir on August 9, 2026 and dedicated it to the public.

The SDH Qaimoh project was sanctioned during 2008-09 under the Prime Minister's Development Programme (PMDP). Constructed by the R&B Division Kulgam at an estimated cost of Rs 19.33 crore, the facility has 50 inpatient beds besides OPDs, IPDs and diagnostic laboratories.

However, days after its reopening, concerns have emerged over water accumulation, sanitation and electricity supply at the facility.

According to officials, water accumulated on the hospital floor after plastic got stuck in the drainage system, blocking the outlet. The water was drained out the following morning.

An official said the in-

cident was linked to the clogged drainage pipeline. The R&B Department has also raised construction-related concerns with the contractor and issued three notices, directing him to rectify deficiencies, including improper tile fixture.

Regarding the water accumulation, a health official, wishing not to be named, said the tap had remained open for several hours, leading to the incident. He, however, denied allegations of poor sanitation at the hospital.

Meanwhile, sanitation at the hospital premises has also come under scrutiny, with visuals showing plastic packets and other waste scattered around parts of the facility.

A local resident said, "What is the fun of misusing money when things are not fixed? We waited for 20 years and could have waited a little longer. Why was there such a hurry? There is poor sanitation, and a power outage was also witnessed a few days ago. All this is happening just days after the reopening of the hospital."

A few days ago, the hospital also faced a power outage, triggering concern among patients and attendants. Officials said there is no dedicated hotline at the facility for reporting electricity-related issues.

Sheema Farooqi to Oversee Media & Communication of J&K Muslim Personal Law Board

Observer News Service

SRINAGAR: The Jammu and Kashmir Muslim Personal Law Board has announced the association of Sheema Farooqi to oversee its media and communication management.

In her new role, Farooqi will focus on strengthening the Board's communication architecture, refining institutional messaging

and enhancing its engagement with the media.

She will also work towards ensuring greater clarity, consistency and wider reach of the Board's communication across public platforms.

The announcement was made by the Advisor to the Grand Mufti of Jammu and Kashmir and Chief Spokesperson of the Muslim Personal Law Board, J&K.

Kangan Residents Suffer as Waste Collection Vehicles Disappear

Agencies

GANDERBAL: Absence of garbage collection vehicles in Kangan area in Ganderbal district for the past month has caused considerable inconvenience to residents, business owners and hotel operators, with waste accumulating along roadsides and at unauthorised dumping spots.

Residents while talking to KNO, said that they continue to pay monthly waste collection fees, but irregular garbage collection has resulted in the accumulation of waste at Prang, Kijpora, Chinnar, Cherwan, Margund, Wussan, Lari, Najwan, and other areas of Kangan subdivision.

They said the situation is not only affecting cleanliness but is also creating environmental hazards and public health concerns, besides causing inconvenience to tourists and visitors.

"Authorities should ensure that collection vehicles visit the area regularly," said Manzoor Ahmad, a resident of Prang.

"Foul odour emanating from garbage dumps has made our lives miserable. These

dumps are attracting stray animals who become violent after spotting the humans. We request the concerned authorities to restore regular waste collection at the earliest," said M Iqbal of Kijpora.

"Chinnar is also facing problems due to the accumulation of waste. The authorities need to act. The garbage is piling up in public places. Clean surroundings are especially important for the people and visitors," said Abdul Ahad.

Hotel owners in the area also expressed concern, saying the accumulation of garbage could have a negative impact on tourism and local businesses.

Meanwhile, around seven waste segregation sheds have reportedly been constructed in Kangan Block, but residents said most of them are currently non-functional.

They said the initiative could help improve waste management if the sheds are properly operated and waste is segregated and processed regularly. Parwaiz Ahmad told KNO that no suitable land has so far been identified for the dumping and proper management of the waste.

US Ambassador Visits Thiksey Monastery in Ladakh

LEH: US Ambassador to India Sergio Gor on Friday visited the historic Buddhist monastery, Thiksey, in Ladakh and explored its temples and interacted with monks.

"He visited the monastery mainly for a spiritual experience. He spent around half an hour visiting the temples and learning about Ladakh's culture and traditions. He seemed very happy with his visit," a monk told reporters outside the monastery. The 15th-century Thiksey Monastery, located around 19 km east of Leh, is one of Ladakh's most prominent Buddhist monasteries.

Perched on a hill overlooking the Indus Valley, the 12-storey complex belongs to the Gelugpa (Yellow Hat) sect and is known for its resemblance to the Potala Palace in Lhasa. The monastery houses a towering 15-metre statue of Maitreya Buddha, also known as the future Buddha, which spans two storeys.

The US Embassy in India said Gor wrapped up his three-day visit to Jammu and Kashmir and Ladakh, describing the visit as an opportunity to highlight the growing India-US partnership through dialogue and cultural engagement.

"Ambassador Sergio Gor wrapped up a visit to Srinagar and Leh this week, highlighting the growing US-India partnership through meaningful dialogue and cultural engagement," the embassy said in a post on X.

On Wednesday, Gor met Chief Minister Omar Abdullah in Srinagar and discussed ways to strengthen bilateral ties. He later travelled to Leh on Thursday to experience Ladakh's culture and traditions. He also visited the Sangam Confluence at Nimmu, a popular tourist destination.

The visit is significant as Ladakh shares sensitive borders with China and Pakistan. The region has remained strategically important since the 2020 Galwan Valley clashes, which led to a major military deployment along the Line of Actual Control (LAC) and heightened security preparedness in the high-altitude region. Gor was on his maiden official visit to Jammu and Kashmir and Ladakh since assuming charge as US ambassador to India in January.

During a joint media briefing with Omar Abdullah in Srinagar, Gor described Jammu and Kashmir as an important part of India and "an incredibly beautiful place," and indicated that the US would review its travel advisories for the region. (Press Trust of India)

HELPING HANDS CARE FOUNDATION SECOND DEATH ANNIVERSARY

The Helping Hands Care Foundation J&K paid heartfelt tributes to its Founder, Late Ali Mohammad Bhat, on his second death anniversary at Wadi Mohalla, Harwan.

Members, volunteers, residents and well-wishers gathered to remember the departed soul and offer prayers. Religious scholars and Zakireen delivered discourses and recited Marsiya and verses in remembrance of Imam Hussain (A.S.), seeking Isal-e-Sawab for Late Ali Mohammad Bhat.

The Foundation remembered its Founder as a compassionate and selfless humanitarian who dedicated himself to helping the poor, needy and underprivileged without discrimination. His commitment to social welfare, the Foundation said, continues to inspire its members and volunteers.

"Two years have passed since his departure, but his presence continues to live in our hearts. His service, values and memories will always remain an inspiration for us," the Foundation said, reiterating its commitment to carrying forward his mission and legacy.

The Foundation expressed gratitude to the residents, religious scholars, Zakireen and all those who attended the remembrance programme, and prayed for Maghfirat and the highest place in Jannatul-Firdous for the departed soul.

Inna Lillahi Wa Inna Ilayhi Raji'un.

Issued by:

NGO Helping Hands Care Foundation J&K
Srinagar, Jammu & Kashmir

GOVERNMENT OF JAMMU & KASHMIR

OFFICE OF THE CHILD DEVELOPMENT PROJECT OFFICER POSHAN PROJECT SUMBAL

Phone/Fax: +91-1954-230722

Email ID: Cdpoc-icdssumbal@jk.gov.in

Subject: Engagement of candidates for the Posts of Sangnis (AWW).

This office has advertised Two posts of Sangnis (AWW) vide advertisement Notice No 01 of 2026 Dated 20-06-2026 under endorsement No: CDPO/SBL/ADV/2026-27/373-87 Dated: 20-06-2026 and same was published through department of information vide DIP No. #DIPK-2392/26 in Newspapers Kashmir Despatch and Uqab on 21-06-2026 and vide publicity was also given through PRLs and same was also uploaded on website of DC Bandipora and applications were received accordingly. After proper scrutiny of application forms by the District Level selection committee the final merit of candidates for each ward was made accordingly as per H.R policy for Sangnis (AWW) & Sahikayas (AWH) constituted by Government vide order No: 222-JK(SWD) of 2022 Dated: 30-11-2022 which is now being published for inviting of objections if any within 10 days from the date of publication, after expiry of cutoff date, no objection shall be entertained. The merit list of all candidates is mentioned at Annexure "A" and provisional/Tentative selection list as per Annexure "B" is shown below for each ward from were applications for engagement of Sangnis (AWW) were received.

ANNEXURE "A"

S. No	Name of Candidate	Parentage /Husbands Name	DOB	Name of location for which she has applied	Marks obtained as per 12th Class Marks Sheet	Percentage of Marks
01	Bisma Maqbool	D/o Mohammad Maqbool Mir	01-01-1999	Wangipora Bala W.No. 1	413/500	82.60%
02	Nadia Rashid	D/o Abdul Rashid Dar	15-03-2001	Wangipora Bala W.No. 1	384/500	76.80%
03	Rifat Farooq	D/o Farooq Ahmad Mir	06-03-2002	Wangipora Bala W.No. 1	362/500	72.40%
04	Tahmeena Qadir	D/o Ghulam Qadir Mir	29-03-2004	Wangipora Bala W.No. 1	347/500	69.40%
05	Safeena Ali	W/o Suhail Ahmad Bhat, D/o Ali Mohammad Mir	09-03-1998	Wangipora Bala W.No. 1	405/600	67.50%
06	Ishrat Bashir	W/o Tariq Ahmad Dar, D/o Bashir Ahmad Dar	02-01-1999	Wangipora Bala W.No. 1	317/500	63.40%
07	Roshan Ara	W/o Bilal Ahmad Dar, D/o Gh Mohd Lone	01-03-1993	Wangipora Bala W.No. 1	435/750	58.00%
08	Uzma Hameed	D/o Abdul Hameed Rather	10-01-2005	Wangipora Bala W.No. 1	283/500	56.60%
09	Nusrat Ali	W/o Firdous Ahmad Mir, D/o Ali Mohamad Mir	21-01-1991	Wangipora Bala W.No. 1	388/750	51.73%
10	Farhana Hassan	D/o Gh Hassan Beigh	15-02-2001	Wangipora Bala W.No. 1	252/500	50.40%
11	Shazia Fayaz	W/o Farooq Ahmad Mir, D/o Fayaz Ahmad Rather	18-05-1992	Wangipora Bala W.No. 1	353/750	47.07%
12	Gulshana Akhter	W/o Irshad Ahmad Beigh, D/o Gulam Hassan Khan	25-10-1989	Wangipora Bala W.No. 1	340/750	45.33%
13	Nusrat Bashir	W/o Jan Mohamad, D/o Bashir Ahmad Bhat	16-03-1992	Wangipora Bala W.No. 1	226/500	45.20%
01	Zahida Hameed	D/o Abdul Hameed Khan	25-04-2002	Sofipora Asham W.No. 1	404/500	80.80%
02	Bisma Hassan	D/o Gh Hassan Khan	21-04-2002	Sofipora Asham W.No. 1	371/500	74.20%
03	Sumaiya Rasheed	D/o Abdul Rasheed Khan	24-10-2005	Sofipora Asham W.No. 1	349/500	69.80%
04	Aabiroo Ahad	D/o Ab Ahad Khan	22-07-2006	Sofipora Asham W.No. 1	313/500	62.60%
05	Nusrat Nazeer	D/o Nazeer Ahmad Khan	13-04-2001	Sofipora Asham W.No. 1	265/500	53.00%
06	Shameema Bano	W/o Imran Khan, D/o Ab Ahad Bahar	05-03-1991	Sofipora Asham W.No. 1	379/750	50.53%
07	Rubeena Bano	W/o Ali Mohammad Khan, D/o Gh Mohd Sheikh	15-02-1992	Sofipora Asham W.No. 1	227/500	45.40%

Annexure "B"

S. No	Name of Candidate	Parentage/Husband's Name	DOB	Location for which selected provisionally	Marks obtained as per 12th Class Marks Sheet	Percentage of Marks	Remarks
01	Bisma Maqbool	D/o Mohammad Maqbool Mir	01-01-1999	Wangipora Bala W.No. 1	413/500	82.60%	
02	Zahida Hameed	D/o Abdul Hameed Khan	25-04-2002	Sofipora Asham W.No. 1	404/500	80.80%	

No: CDPO/SBL/Rec/2026-27/739-47
Dated: 21-08-2026

DIPK-4833-26
DT: 21/08/2026

Child Development Project Officer,
Poshan Project Sumbal Bandipora.
(Member Secretary DLSC)

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Legal Counsel: Tasaduq Khwaja
Switchboard: (0194) 2502327 | +91 8899256463
Editorial: (0194) 2502327
Email: editor@kashmirobserver.net

Kashmir Is Digging Its Own Grave

In this open letter to Dr. Krishna S. Vatsa, a member of the National Disaster Management Authority, the author and activist documents a decade of illegal mining that has left Kashmir’s rivers and plateaus at risk of landslides.



Dr Raja Muzaffar Bhat



Holding Officials Accountable

The suspension of a Srinagar Municipal Corporation junior building inspector following her arrest in an alleged bribery case is a welcome administrative response.

The Jammu and Kashmir Anti-Corruption Bureau says Gazala Akhter, posted in Ward 28, was caught while allegedly demanding and accepting 10,000 from a complainant over construction work. The complainant had already obtained the required building permission, according to the ACB.

The case touches a nerve because building permissions, files and inspections form the daily interface between government and ordinary citizens.

A person who approaches an office for a legitimate service should be able to expect a decision based on rules rather than the size of an envelope.

When an official allegedly blocks work and then seeks money to let it proceed, public service becomes a private transaction.

The suspension, therefore, sends a positive signal.

Administrative action tells the public that an institution has recognised the seriousness of an allegation and has responded within its own rules. The charge will still have to be proved in court, but the institutional response can begin much earlier.

The timing is significant, as days before the SMC arrest, the CBI arrested a Jammu and Kashmir Police sub-inspector at Police Station Janipur in Jammu in an alleged 10,000 bribery case. The agency said the officer had initially demanded 20,000 from a complainant in return for not registering an FIR over a marital dispute and later agreed to accept 10,000.

The wider record shows why sustained vigilance matters.

An RTI-based account published in April said the J&K ACB had arrested 267 public servants between January 2020 and March 2026, including 20 gazetted and 247 non-gazetted officers. The Bureau had conducted 208 trap cases and recovered more than 1.22 crore in alleged bribe money.

The ACB registered 78 corruption FIRs in 2025, according to its year-end account. Its 2026 record has continued to show arrests involving police personnel, revenue officials, engineers and other public servants.

The numbers also expose the harder part of the problem.

The same RTI data showed only 27 convictions out of 214 cases that reached a judicial conclusion over six years.

Enforcement can create fear of consequences, but lasting public confidence comes when investigations reach sound conclusions and courts deliver timely judgments.

Government employees, notably, hold the office where policy meets the citizen. Their conduct can make a public institution appear fair or corrupt, accessible or transactional.

A file delayed for money, a certificate withheld for payment or a permission turned into a bargaining exercise damages more than one applicant.

It teaches people that access to government belongs to those willing and able to pay.

That is why arrests and suspensions should become part of a larger culture of accountability. Officials should know that public office comes with scrutiny, and citizens should see that complaints can produce action.

Clean administration begins when the state makes clear that a government desk is a place for public service, rather than private profit

I have spent years watching trucks loaded with sand and clay pull onto highways across Jammu & Kashmir, and I have spent those same years filing the cases meant to stop them.

Today, I am writing this letter because local institutions have shown that they cannot, or will not, act.

This account draws largely on documents from my own litigation and the findings of a government committee.

Riverbed mining in Kashmir began generations ago with people using shovels and baskets, at a scale the land could handle. I watched that change roughly a decade ago, when hydraulic excavators like JCBs and LNTs replaced hand tools, and I watched it accelerate again once government infrastructure projects created demand contractors were eager to meet.

Rivers such as the Rambiar, Sukhnag, Doodh Ganga, Romshi and Shali Ganga became mining sites, often without environmental clearance and sometimes even inside protected trout fish beats.

Mining continued during the monsoon, when riverbeds are most vulnerable and the risk of floods is highest. I raised these violations with the National Green Tribunal after the Flood Control Department, Mining Department and police in J&K failed to act.

I took the fight to court, and both the NGT and the Supreme Court issued rulings in my cases.

The halt achieved in parts of Budgam district proves regulation works when someone enforces it.

On August 22, 2025, the Supreme Court ruled in my case, Raja Muzaffar Bhat vs Government of J&K, NKC Projects Pvt Ltd and others, ordering the J&K Pollution Control Committee to act against a company that damaged the Shaliganga stream.

Regulators imposed an environmental compensation of Rs 3.10 crore on NKC Projects in February 2026. That fine remains unpaid, and I understand the figure has since doubled through accumulated penalties.

A court order without a collection mechanism is a suggestion, rather than a sanction, and I have watched that lesson repeat itself for years.

Beyond the rivers lies a second crisis, one built into geology older than any legal system.

Kashmir’s karewas, plateau-like deposits of alluvial soil formed when the Pir Panjal range dammed a lake covering 5,000 square kilometers during the Pleistocene epoch, took millions of years to become the fertile terraces that grow saffron, almonds and apples.

Kashmir saffron earned a Geographical Indication tag in 2020 specifically because of the soil these plateaus provide.

But between 1995 and 2005, builders flattened large sections of karewa in Pulwama, Budgam and Baramulla to source clay for the Qazigund-Baramulla railway. Between 2020 and 2025, the Srinagar Ring Road project consumed hundreds of acres more, and I watched both projects proceed with no meaningful environmental scrutiny.

A joint committee convened under NGT case OA No. 93 of 2026, staffed by officials from the Ministry of Environment, the Central Pollution Control Board, the state pollution control committee and district magistrates from Pulwama and Budgam, inspected the villages of Zadoora and Gowharpora Kultreh in April.

Their report puts a number on the damage: 13.05 lakh metric tonnes of sand, clay and bajri removed from Budgam sites alone, split between 415,000 tonnes at Kuzwera and 890,000 tonnes at Gowharpora, with the Zadoora quantity recorded separately as 2.996 lakh cubic metres.

In Brinjan village, roughly 4,000 kanals, about 500 acres, of high-value farm-

land and horticultural land have been degraded or flattened outright, land that could otherwise sustain high-density orchards of apple, walnut and cherry for generations of local families.

Officials told the committee that disposal permits issued over the preceding five years fell under an exemption from prior environmental clearance.

I want to underline the committee’s own response: exemption from one requirement never cancelled the rest. Investigators found no evidence that project proponents gave the pollution control committee the fourteen days’ notice the rules demand, and standard procedures covering topsoil preservation, replanting, benching and drainage went largely ignored.

Between April 2021 and March 2026, authorities in Budgam alone made 113 seizures of vehicles and machinery, collected about Rs 25.25 lakh in compounding charges, and filed fourteen FIRs against repeat offenders.

Numbers this specific do not describe negligence to me. They describe a system that knows exactly what is happening and lets it continue.

I see the consequence as geological instability with a body count waiting to happen.

Hyathpora Nagam, Watirihail Muqam and Brinjan in Budgam, along with Zangam, Kanisathoo colony and Singhpora Pattan near Baramulla, Bijbehara in Anantnag, and Newa in Pulwama, now stand as landslide hotspots, their slopes stripped

of the vegetation that once anchored them.

Silt washes into irrigation channels and stream networks during heavy rain, accelerating downstream flooding.

I have asked repeatedly for drone and CCTV surveillance of these sites through multiple written appeals to the government. Police have not stopped the machinery, and administration departments covering revenue, mining, agriculture and horticulture have not enforced statutes already on their books.

I am asking you, Dr Vatsa, to send an expert team to Srinagar and to constitute a joint flood-risk assessment involving the Central Water Commission, the state disaster management authority, scientists from the G B Pant National Institute of Himalayan Environment, and hydrological experts, backed by drone and GIS monitoring of high-risk zones.

All of it is overdue.

Kashmir’s rivers and karewas took millennia to build the ground my community lives and farms on. Trucks are removing that ground faster than any institution has agreed to notice.

The author is an environmental activist and policy analyst based in Kashmir. He chairs the J&K Climate Action Group and founded the Jammu & Kashmir RTI Movement. He can be reached at bhatrajamuzaffar@gmail.com.

Can We Be a Community Again?

Kashmir has changed, but its older social bonds have not vanished entirely. The challenge is to reclaim them without turning back the clock.



Wajahat Qazi

In my younger days, the Mohalla of a given urban agglomeration in Srinagar city and its environs was the microcosm of Kashmir.

This was a region or even space where innocence, in relative terms, mutual bonds, affection, amity and brotherhood was normative. These normative themes cut across social boundaries, classes and even sects.

A given Kashmiri was not a Shia, a Sunni, a waatul, a shaykh, or a wealthy person. He or she was from either Zaene Kadal, Aeil Kadal, Bohir Kadal, Maisum, Safa Kadal, Sheshgaer Mohalla, Fateh Kadal and so on.

This was the operating socio-cultural dynamic of the famed City of Seven Bridges, as I recall it.

Yes, sniping at each other and the locality that one lived in was usual, but it was good-hearted in the nature of small banter.

All this was jealously guarded and prized. The khoja, wealthy merchant, of

a given locality was its patron, feeder of orphans and caregiver to the needy, the indigent and widows.

The sweeper or street cleaner swept streets and cleaned these not merely out of a sense of duty but an obligation and responsibility that stemmed from within. The corner store owner, Kaak, as most were fondly called, were stingy shopkeepers, but kept an eye on a Mohalla’s children and youth.

Waywardness meant a sneaky puff of a cigarette by a young man or stealing a furtive, shy glance at a girl or a woman.

A Kashmiri wedding, then a spartan and minimalist affair, was an event to be savoured and celebrated by all. The nosh, bride, was not merely the daughter of a given family, but the daughter of the entire Mohalla.

So was the zaamtur, groom, the honoured and respected son-in-law.

Time was kept and organized by the Mohalla elders, either in the cold chill of winter or sultry early summer mornings of Kashmir, walk to the Mosques or Khanqa Mualla, or Dast Geer Sahib’s, or Makhdhoom Sahib’s for the morning prayer.

Women would time themselves to these walks and the tip-tap sounds of the elders’ walking sticks. Out of sheer respect, our womenfolk, when they would wake to the tip-tap sounds of elders’ walking steps, would cover their

heads with their dupattas.

It was beside the point that the Mohalla elder’s gaze had not fallen on a woman in contention. All this was neither vigilantism nor a check on people’s legitimate freedoms, nor moral policing, but an inbuilt, inherent mechanism of a duty of care and responsibility people believed they owed each other.

In modern parlance and in the jargon of economics, this constituted Kashmir’s social capital.

The question is, does our special and beloved Kashmir still have social capital? Or has it frayed?

It appears that both vertical and horizontal bonds of solidarity in Kashmir have gone with the wind. While it is easy to fault capitalism for this, like elsewhere, that would be reductive.

Capitalism in Kashmir is a warped variant of the same, where the unsavoury aspects of culture and the conditions that have obtained here for multiple decades have distorted it.

This is not to defend or promote vulgar market fundamentalism or untrammelled capitalism, where supply and demand become the arbiter of ethics, love, bonding and so on. But this is to suggest that merely blaming capitalism for the dissipation of our social capital is not enough.

It would appear that the problem lies in the titillations of modernity and

modernization, the insalubrious bits of these and their uncritical acceptance.

I, as a modern Kashmiri Muslim, am not against modernization. We all need motor cars, nice houses, good and pleasant public spaces, the ability to travel and savour the legitimate joys and pleasures of life.

But if the price of modernization is a modernity where choice is seen as co-eval with hedonism, deviance and licentiousness, and an (im)moral framework where everything is relative and everything goes, this is unacceptable to me.

As a Muslim, I see choice in moral and ethical terms and efforts to strive for perfection in these domains. Of course, being flawed humans, we can only try and strive, but that is what real choice is. Anything else is illusion and delusion.

Again, this is not to impugn material welfare and delegitimize it. No. But progress and development and modernization have to be defined by sobriety and proportion.

Normatively speaking, these have to be in harmony and consonance with nature, culture and faith. Any disproportion can or will skew us, as a society and as individuals.

But how is modernization, balanced, harmonious and sustainable, to be attained?

By mimicry that is only laughed at by those copied and sought to be mim-

icked? By osmosis, that is, by letting go of our authentic selves and then being taken over, mind, body and spirit, by trends and themes that are not ours? By rejectionism, resisting any influence, good, moral and ethical or even practical?

The answer is: none of the above.

To be authentic and really ourselves, we may have to dig deep into the reservoirs of our selves, collective, social and individual, and curate the best from these. In this schema, faith, salubrious aspects of tradition and morality have to assume primacy.

It is then, after a firm moral, ethical grounding informed by faith and tradition, that we can look to the world for matters where a genuine, mutually rewarding synthesis can be arrived at.

In other words, if this phrase is not an oxymoron, we have to be ‘practical romanticism’. Is this possible?

I shall close with an anecdotal vignette, a prayer and a wish.

An elderly friend narrated a story to me. In the late sixties, when he was a child, a government official had to visit Jammu for a few days. He returned to his village as a celebrity, the first to have ventured to Jammu, about 200 miles from Srinagar.

Men, womenfolk and children of the village greeted him. The man’s elderly neighbour exclaimed in horror: ‘Look, how pale and thin he has gone

in just a few days!’ She then asked: ‘Son, have you eaten batta, rice, the staple of Kashmiris?’

The young man replied: ‘Yes, I did at a hotel.’

The woman then asked: ‘What is a hotel?’ The man replied: ‘A hotel is a business establishment where batta is sold.’

The elderly woman recoiled in shock and horror. She said, ‘Oh my God, what has the world come to? Now even rice is sold!’

This touching vignette is true and reflects Kashmir of yore. Obviously, it cannot be restored in this pristine and romantic form, as much as desirable as it is.

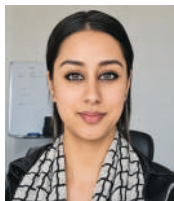
But much can be reclaimed and the way forward charted in a way, form and idiom where we, our authentic self and our soul are primary, and the rest, as important as it is, is a mere corollary.

Ameen to this!

The author holds a Distinction in International Relations from the University of Aberdeen and combines scholarship with real-world engagement. He has worked in academia and media, including as Associate Editor at Kashmir Observer. He can be reached at wajahatqazi1234@gmail.com.

The Prophet's Way Through Kashmir

As Kashmir lights its shrines for the Prophet's birth anniversary this week, an old way of living still runs through the valley, carried in acts of learning, generosity, restraint and care for others.



Haziqah Showkat

Before the first light reaches the chinars around Hazratbal, the shrine has already begun to gather its people.

Green banners hang above the shopfronts. Copper vessels catch the early light, while strings of small bulbs wrap around the lamp-posts, waiting for evening. Men set kettles of kehwa over low charcoal flames as pilgrims walk towards the shrine gate through the blue-grey morning.

The scene belongs to the present, though its meaning reaches far back.

Rabi-ul-Awwal is approaching its twelfth night, the date Kashmiris mark as the birth anniversary of Prophet Muhammad, peace be upon him. Friday prayers on August 28 will bring large congregations to mosques and shrines throughout the valley.

Watch the people for a while and another story begins to emerge.

An old man presses a plate of tehri into the hands of a stranger without being asked twice. A shopkeeper lets a regular customer pay later. A teenage girl recites verses she taught herself during power cuts, holding her phone close enough to read by its small pool of light.

These gestures have the modesty of ordinary life. They carry no display of faith. Still, they belong to an older inheritance, a way of thinking about what one person owes another.

Seven hundred years ago, a preacher named Shah-e-Hamdan entered this valley between mountains. Kashmir already knew Buddhist monks, Hindu ascetics and successive waves of conquest. A stranger with a religious message could hardly have seemed extraordinary.

Amir Kabir brought something more lasting.

His teaching placed human worth beyond family and birth. He treated knowledge as something open to anyone willing to seek it. He taught a direct relationship between the



Kashmir Observer

believer and God, without a priest standing between the Creator and a farmer bent over a rice field.

People listened, masses converted, and the valley gradually began to take on a new religious life.

The story of Kashmir thereafter became tied, in ways both intimate and immense, to a man born six centuries before Shah-e-Hamdan entered the valley, in a desert most Kashmiris would spend their lives without seeing.

The distance between those two places can seem enormous on a map. Daily life has made it small.

That becomes visible during Rabi-ul-Awwal.

A woman selling embroidered shawls near Hazratbal speaks about her grandmother, who owned a Quran she could not read. She reads it aloud to her own daughter every night.

The story contains a whole family history in a few sentences. One generation held a sacred book beyond its literacy. Another learned to read it. The next hears its verses before sleep.

Women now fill shrine courtyards alongside men. Many run shops in Lal Chowk, others teach in village schools. Their presence has a historical impact of its own, since the Prophet gave women recognition and standing at a time when much of the surrounding world denied them both.

Kashmir absorbed that principle slowly, unevenly, through family life, education, religious practice and changing social expectations.

The valley has always had its own way of receiving ideas. Sufi saints carried Islamic teachings from village to village, where they met an older culture already steeped in devotion, poetry and spiritual inquiry.

Something distinctive grew from that encounter.

Kashmiriyat developed through this blending of traditions, expressed through saints, poets and household customs as much as through formal institutions. Lal Ded spoke of inner discipline and the search for truth. Nund Rishi, born into a Muslim family in a land still moving towards Islam, spoke in a language of self-control, compassion and honest conduct.

Their verses remain framed inside Kashmiri homes.

A line of poetry on a wall can seem like a small domestic object. It also connects a mountain household to a spiritual history that reaches back fourteen centuries, to the life of the Prophet and the moral world he left behind.

That inheritance has held particular impact in a place accustomed to disruption.

Generations have grown up with curfews, school closures and internet blackouts. A family could lose access to a hospital appointment, a job application or a child studying abroad. Students learned under candlelight and phone light, finding another hour for a textbook when circumstances closed the usual doors.

The lesson behind such persistence runs deeper than schooling: knowledge belonged to the seeker, faith belonged to the believer, and character belonged to the person who practised it.

Those ideas have survived kings, colonial rule and modern bureaucracies. Institutions have changed around them. The intimate relationship between a person, God and community has continued through the changes.

Look again at Hazratbal and the great abstractions become smaller.

A teacher stays with a struggling student. A neighbour extends credit to a family. A young person chooses restraint when anger feels readily available.

Someone prepares food for a stranger and places the plate in his hands as though the gesture requires no explanation.

Such acts rarely enter the historical record. They hardly make headlines either.

Still, they may tell us more about a society's moral inheritance than a procession or a speech ever could.

By Friday evening, the lamps around the Dargah will begin to dim. The tea kettles will cool. The crowds will thin. The roads will return to their usual traffic, and the valley will fold the celebration back into ordinary life.

That is where the memory of the Prophet has always found its most durable home.

It lives in prayer, and in the green banners, the gatherings and the recited verses. It also lives in the habits that remain when the banners come down: a student being taught, a neighbour being trusted, a stranger being fed, and a daughter reading aloud to her mother or child.

Fourteen centuries after a birth in the Arabian desert, that life still reaches Kashmir in these small human gestures.

The lights around Hazratbal will eventually go dark, but the way they illuminate people will remain.

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



A LINE OF POETRY ON A WALL CAN SEEM like a small domestic object. It also connects a mountain household to a spiritual history that reaches back fourteen centuries, to the life of the Prophet and the moral world he left behind.

One Girl's Long Road Out of the Dark

A village in Kupwara had no electricity, no textbooks to spare, and almost no precedent for a daughter with a doctorate. Gulshan Ara Wani became the second woman in the district to earn one anyway.



Khan Sikendr Bashir

The walk to school in Badkoot began before the sun cleared the hills.

Some mornings a horse-drawn tanga rattled along the dirt track and a young Gulshan Ara climbed aboard for part of the distance.

Most mornings gave no such relief, and she covered the five to ten kilometers on foot, over terrain that punished shortcuts.

At home, kerosene chimneys threw a dim, unsteady light across the evening hours she spent with her books, because the village electricity supply switched on for only a couple of hours, two or three times a week.

Notebooks and pens counted as expenses a family had to plan around, rather than items to be picked up without thought.

Gulshan was born in the early 1960s, the first of five children raised by Khawaja Habibullah Wani, and given a name that means adorning of the garden.

Nothing about Badkoot in that decade suggested a doctorate lay ahead.

Rural Kashmir treated girls' education as an option at best, and a household's resources typically ran out way before a daughter's schooling became a priority.

Gulshan finished middle school at Islamia School in Handwara and completed her secondary education at Girls Higher Secondary School in 1978. From there she enrolled at Islamic College for Women in Sopore for her Bachelor's degree, then moved on to the University of Kashmir, where she earned a



Master's in Education in 1982.

A teaching post in the Department of Education followed soon after, and her career as an educator began in earnest.

Marriage came next, to her paternal cousin in Bashir Ahmad Wani, who went on to serve as Deputy Director in the Horticulture Department before retiring.

His death, recent and keenly felt, closed a partnership that had carried both of them through decades of shared work at home and

in their professions.

Kashmiri custom placed the weight of household management on Gulshan's shoulders the moment she married, on top of a full-time teaching post and, before long, the raising of three children.

She managed all three without letting any one obligation crowd out the others. Her eldest son, Wasif, became a doctor. Her daughter, Maria, followed the same path into medicine. Her younger son, Saqib, went on

to complete a Master's degree at the London School of Economics.

Raising children who reach that level of achievement takes a mother willing to plan years ahead while managing the demands of the present day.

Her own academic ambitions stalled during those years, and the break stretched past two decades.

Family obligations and a demanding job left little room for research or further study, and

the delay could easily have become permanent. It did not.

Once her children reached adulthood and the heaviest domestic demands eased, Gulshan returned to the university she had left behind as a graduate student. She completed an M.Phil and then a Ph.D. in Education at the University of Kashmir, finishing her doctorate in 2006.

The University of Kashmir later appointed her Associate Professor, a post she held until her retirement. Along the way she authored three books, including Psychology of Learning and Development, Early Childhood Care and Education, and Basics in Education, and published research papers in her field.

Gulshan's path becomes clearer when set against the Kashmir she grew up in, a place where female education faced open discouragement well into the late twentieth century.

A rural girl walking ten kilometers a day to a school lit by kerosene had almost no template for what came afterward: a doctorate, a university faculty post, three children who reached the top of their own fields.

She became only the second woman in the whole of Kupwara district to hold a Ph.D., a fact that says as much about the barriers she crossed as it does about her own drive.

Educators leave two types of legacy. One lives in the books they write and the students they teach directly. The other lives in the girls who watch a woman from their own district walk that same road and decide the destination is reachable.

Gulshan left both.

The dim kerosene light of Badkoot gave way, over five decades, to a university lecture hall, and the distance between those two places measures how far a region can travel when a single determined student refuses to let circumstance write the ending.

The author is an educationist from Handwara, North Kashmir. School principal Ikkgul contributed reporting.

Indian Researchers Develop GenAI Platform To Trace Likely Cancer Root

Press Trust Of India

What causes cancer? Researchers at Delhi's Indraprastha Institute of Information Technology may have moved a step towards answering that all important question through an AI platform that helps decode DNA damage and what may have led to the malignancy.

'MutAIverse' is the first of its kind generative AI platform anywhere in the world, the researchers said. It was tested on 27 people suffering from head and neck cancer in Guwahati, Assam, and went to the root to trace the exposure that possibly contributed to the disease - chewing smokeless tobacco.

Though AI adds a layer of information in understanding cancer development, it does not in its current form conclusively prove that DNA damage due to the exposure caused the cancer, cautioned experts. The researchers include those from Guwahati's National Institute of Pharmaceutical Education and Research (NIPER) and Council of Scientific and Industrial Research (CSIR)-Institute of Genomics and Integrative Biology (IGIB).

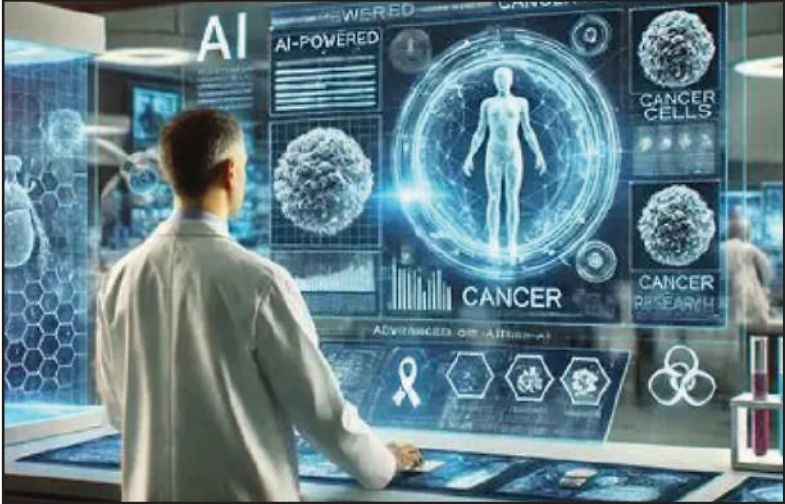
Their research focuses attention on the causative factors rather than just the diagnosis and can be a useful screening tool, the study authors said.

"Nobody talks about what caused the cancer. What were you exposed to? Were you exposed to pollution? Were you exposed to contaminated water? Or were you exposed to cigarettes? Nobody tells you," lead author Gaurav Ahuja, associate professor at the department of computational biology, IIT, told PTI.

The environment we live in continuously exposes us to multiple chemicals, which can induce mutations in the DNA, he explained.

"In my point of view, the study is a step forward when people are talking not about the fact that one got cancer, but in a way that they can identify what they were exposed to, so that family members can be protected, if the exposure is prevalent in the locality they live in," Ahuja said.

The genAI platform also helped expand existing reference libraries of DNA adducts - toxic chemicals that can attach to and cause changes to one's DNA, potentially causing cancer



-- from fewer than 400 to over three lakh. The AI system is described in a paper published in the Journal of Cheminformatics.

"The platform is the first-of-its-kind in the world where generative AI has helped open up the largest library of potential reference DNA adducts (for cancer)," Ahuja said.

MutAIverse, a contraction of 'mutational universe', features a machine-learning-based backtracking tool called AdductLinker.

Upon finding a damaged DNA in a cancer patient's tumour, Adduct-Linker works backward like a "detective tracing footprints", allowing us to pinpoint the exact environmental chemical - genotoxin or carcinogen - that originally caused the cancer, Ahuja explained.

The team experimentally validated MutAIverse using biopsy samples of head and neck cancer patients with a history of consuming smokeless tobacco.

The samples were collected in collaboration with the Dr. Bhubaneswar Borooh Cancer Institute in Guwahati. DNA adductomics - a comprehensive study of DNA adducts - was performed at NIPER.

Generative AI, a type of artificial intelligence trained on massive amounts of data, can create original content, including images, audios and videos, and respond to a user's request in the natural language (a prompt).

For MutAIverse, a prompt is

the mass spectrometry data from the patient's tumour biopsy and output is characteristics of the patient's exposure. Mass spectrometry is a diagnostic method that breaks down cell samples into molecular profiles, which carry information about DNA mutations.

"The DNA is made up of four nucleotide bases or building blocks - the letters A, T, G and C. Now, a chemical entering your body can perform mutations, which means changing the letters of the DNA and composition of A, T, G and C. So, A is no more A, it will be something else," Ahuja explained.

"MutAIverse basically allows you a platform, where you can isolate the patient's DNA samples, read the A-T-G-C and even if there is a 0.1 per cent abnormality, it back traces and identifies the exposure the patient had," he said.

Output of the generative AI is a comprehensive breakdown of the patient's exposure, pointing out the exact environmental chemical or toxin the patient was exposed to - along with a confidence score - and showing the specific structure of the damaged DNA. The output also contains a list of intermediate chemicals formed in the body due to a breakdown of the toxin.

"Application to in-house generated DNA adductomics data from tissue biopsies of smokeless tobacco-induced head and neck cancer patients revealed (a) selective enrichment of both novel and known DNA adducts," the authors wrote.

MutAIverse also uses simulations to predict how toxic chemicals break down inside human cells and physically mutate the DNA.

"If a particular chemical, for example, a tobacco product, or occupational exposure is identified, the patient can try to avoid further exposure, and people with similar risks can also be warned," said Saravanan Matheshwaran, associate professor at the Indian Institute of Kanpur's (IIT-K) department of biological sciences and bioengineering, told PTI.

There's a lot of work that remains to be done.

Discussing the findings, Matheshwaran said, "Finding a DNA adduct only tells us that a chemical has interacted with DNA. It does not prove that this particular damage caused a mutation or eventually caused cancer. Some types of DNA damage may be repaired by the cell, while others may remain and contribute to (a) genomic instability."

"The AdductLinker approach is particularly useful because it attempts to connect a DNA adduct with the chemical exposure that may have produced it," he said.

However, detecting an adduct does not by itself prove that it caused the cancer.

"More experimental, clinical and epidemiological evidence would be needed to establish such a connection," Matheshwaran said.

In India, head and neck cancers are driven overwhelmingly by smokeless tobacco and betel nut chewing, particularly in the north east where the study collected samples from, added Kedar Natarajan, a computational biologist and professor of biology at Ashoka University in Sonapat.

"Knowledge of causative cancer exposure is critical towards understanding cancer severity, mutational landscape, cancer management and potentially (the) treatment regime," he said.

He added that while the genAI platform makes for an impressive computational tool for basic research, in its current form, it is not a clinical diagnostic tool for hospital or community deployment.

The platform also does not prove that the particular exposure or DNA damage caused a mutation, eventually leading to cancer, the experts said.

Marine Heatwaves A Growing Threat To Physical, Mental Health Of Humans: Researchers

Press Trust Of India

Marine heatwaves, which are prolonged periods of unusually high sea surface temperatures, are posing a growing threat to humans' physical and mental health, researchers said.

Extreme ocean temperatures can contribute to more intense weather systems, increasing the risks of injury, death and displacement from storms and flooding.

Writing in a comment for the journal Nature Sustainability, the researchers from Australia's Adelaide University and the University of Hong Kong outlined how marine heatwaves can trigger a cascade of effects - worsening extreme weather events, reducing seafood supplies and increasing mental health challenges for coastal communities - eventually affecting human health.

As the planet continues to warm, marine heatwaves have become more frequent, longer lasting and more intense.

The extreme weather events have already been linked to mass mortality events affecting marine life, widespread coral bleaching, harmful algal blooms and major disruptions to fisheries and aquaculture.

The researchers said the environmental changes can have profound consequences for people, which receive much less attention.

Lead author Laura Falkenberg, from Adelaide University's school of physics, chemistry and earth sciences, said, "Marine heatwaves are no longer just recognised as an environmental issue; they are increasingly also perceived as a human health issue."

"Our paper highlights that these events can influence people's health in many different ways, both directly and indirectly. They can intensify storms and atmospheric heatwaves, affect the availability and safety of seafood, disrupt livelihoods and contribute to anxiety, grief and other mental health impacts in communities that depend on healthy oceans," Falkenberg said.

Harmful algal blooms, which are expected to become more common due

to marine heatwaves, can contaminate seafood and pose serious health risks, the paper added.

In the long term, declining fish stocks and reduced seafood production threaten food security for billions of people worldwide, the researchers said.

The paper also highlighted the psychological impacts of witnessing the loss of marine ecosystems and the stress experienced by people whose livelihoods and cultural identity are closely connected to the ocean.

The authors argued that governments and public health agencies should begin treating marine heatwaves in much the same way they prepare for land-based heatwaves.

This means incorporating marine heatwave forecasts into public health planning, considering health impacts in



marine and coastal management decisions, and improving collaboration between ocean scientists, health authorities and resource managers, they said.

Falkenberg said if action is taken before the crises occur, it would help communities become more resilient as marine heatwaves continue to intensify.

"When marine ecosystems suffer, the impacts ripple through communities. We are seeing increasing evidence that these changes can contribute to eco-anxiety, grief and other mental health challenges, particularly for people who feel deeply connected to the marine environment," the lead author said.

"Recognising these health impacts is the first step towards better protecting communities," she said.

Brain's white matter may help soften cognitive impacts of gray matter loss: Study

Press Trust Of India

New Delhi : Gray and white matter might both work together to support cognitive health among older adults in India and health of the brain's white matter wiring may help soften the cognitive effects of gray matter loss, a study has revealed. Science

"Gray matter and superficial white matter are physically close and may play different roles: gray matter processes information, while superficial white matter helps nearby brain regions communicate," first author Yingxu Liu, a postdoctoral scholar at the University of Southern California's school of medicine, said.

"Our findings suggest that cognitive health depends not only on how much gray matter is preserved, but also on the condition of the wiring that connects it," Liu said.

The study, published in Alzheimer's and Dementia: The Journal of the Alzheimer's Association, analysed brain scans and cognitive assessments from 459 community-dwelling adults aged 60 and older across India. Data for the analysis came from the Harmonised Diagnostic Assessment of Dementia for the Longitudinal Aging Study in India, or 'LASI-DAD'. Alzheimer's Disease

The study is among the first to examine the brain's superficial white matter in a community-based population from a low- and middle-income country, they added.

An advanced form of diffusion MRI (magnetic resonance imaging) was used to assess neurite density - the small projections that allow nerve cells to send and receive signals - and the amount of freely moving water around them.

Participants also completed tests of language, memory, executive function and visuospatial ability.

A lower neurite density or more free water can indicate a tissue disruption associated with processes such as loss of myelin, inflammation, or swelling, the researchers said.

A healthier superficial white matter was most consistently associated with stronger language skills, with clearest links appearing in frontotemporal areas involved in recognising words, speaking fluently, and holding language information in mind. Neuroscience

Further, decrease in gray matter remained the strongest overall predictors of cognition. Neuroscience

However, the relationship between gray matter and cognitive performance was found to depend in part on superficial white matter - when this local wiring showed poorer integrity, gray matter loss was seen more strongly tied to worse language performance and cognitive impairment.

When superficial white matter was healthier, the associations were found to be weaker.

GOVERNMENT OF (U.T) JAMMU & KASHMIR

Office Of The Executive Engineer Jal Shakti (PHE) Deptt.

Ground Water Division Srinagar

Baghi-Ali-Mardan, Nowshara Srinagar.

E- mail:- hakeemmushtaq.75316@jk.gov.in Tel./ Fax No:- 0194-2411285

NOTICE INVITING e-TENDERS

GIST of Detailed e- NIT No - 54/JS-PHE/GWDS/Mech. of 2026-27.

For and on behalf of Government of UT - J&K, e-tenders from reputed and resourceful Firms/Companies/drilling agencies/Joint Ventures etc for "registered experienced Contractors of Production Tube wells" as per details given below The bidding process shall be completed online on www.jktenders.gov.in in two covers viz. Cover 1st consisting of Pre Qualification Criteria, General Terms and Conditions and Technical Specifications and Cover 2nd shall consist of Financial Bid in the prescribed BOQ.

(Table - I)

S.No	Name of work	Est. Cost Rs. in Lacs	Earnest money	Cost of Tender Document	Time of completion	Class of Contract	Technical Sanction	Major Head / Programme	Tender Call
1.	Augmentation of drinking water facilities to Gujar Basti Check Sangri Khomoh by way of bore well including pipe network pump station and other related works.	Rs.24.81 Lacs	Rs.74,500/-	Rs.1,000/-	45 Days	Registered for Construction of Production Tube Wells	Awaited	District Capex Budget (2026-27)	1st

Position of Funds:- Available:

Executive Engineer Jal Shakti (PHE) Mechanical Rural Division, Srinagar's letter No. PHE/MRD/1347-52, Dated: 25-07-2026.

Accord of Administrative Approval issued by the by the District Development Commissioner Srinagar Vide Order No: 176-DDCS of 2026, issued under endorsement No. DDCS/Dev./District Capex/2026-27/4609-10, Dated: 15-07-2026.

The Bidding Documents and other details can be downloaded from the website:

<https://www.jktenders.gov.in>

From 21.08.2026 (10:00 AM) to 24.08.2026 (01:00 PM)

The Bidding documents consisting of qualifying information, eligibility criteria, specifications, Drawings (if any), Bill of quantities (B.O.Q), Set of terms, conditions of contract and other details can be seen / downloaded from the website:

<https://www.jktenders.gov.in>

As per Critical Dates/Information scheduled given below

Table-II

1.	Publishing Date	21-08-2026 (10:00 AM)
2.	Period of Downloading of Bids	21-08-2026 (01:00 PM) upto 11-09-2026 (11:00 AM)
3.	Period of Submission of bids	21-08-2026 (01:00 PM) upto 11-09-2026 (11:00 AM)
4.	Date of opening of Tender.	12-09-2026 (11:00 AM)
5.	Tender Receiving Authority: Executive Engineer, Jal Shakti (PHE) Ground Water Srinagar Kashmir-190011	
6.	Cost of Tender Document : To be deposited online (if available) or Non-Refundable should be in form of DD /TR/ deposited to Account Head 0215 or in favour of Executive Engineer (Jal Shakti) PHE Ground Water Division Srinagar (The firm shall specify the name of work for which apply)	
	Note: In case the firm/agency/contractor submits/uploaded scanned copy of tender document fee in the shape of DD /TR/ the hard copies shall have to be submitted in the divisional office before opening of cover 2nd. (Financial Cover) of e-NIT (if needed)	
7.	Bid Validity Period: 180 Days	
8.	The bids can be downloaded or uploaded on www.jktenders.gov.in	

No instrument—such as an Earnest Money Deposit (EMD), Treasury Receipt, or Challan-generated prior to the publication of the tender document will be accepted. Any bid submitted contrary to this requirement is liable for summary rejection. In the event the tender is retendered due to government exigencies or otherwise, an instrument shall be considered valid only if generated after the date of the initial tender publication.

The cost of Tender Document under Account Head 0215 to be pledged in favour of the Executive Engineer Ground Water Division Srinagar (as specified in the table (I) (Page 1st). Bid security will have to be in any one of the forms as specified in the bidding documents and shall be valid for 180 Days after opening of bid. Bids will be opened in the Office of the Executive Engineer Jal Shakti (PHE) Ground Water Division Srinagar (H.Q. Baghi-Ali-Mardan, Nowshara Srinagar) on 12-09-2026 (11:00 AM) If the office happens to be closed on the date of opening of the bids as specified, the bids will be opened on the next working day at the same time and venue.

No: -JS-PHE/GWDS/26-27/Camp/7781-93.

DIPK-4853/26

dated: 21-08-2026

Executive Engineer

Jal Shakti (PHE) Deptt.

Ground Water Division Srinagar.

PUBLIC NOTICE

I, SHAHMALI W/o MOHAMMAD HUSSAIN PEER, R/o KHAMINDER PORA, TEHSIL KUNZER, DISTRICT BARAMULLA, J&K UT, do hereby solemnly affirm that my name has been wrongly recorded in my Aadhaar Card bearing No. 3439 8560 2986 as "SHAH BEGUM" instead of my correct name "SHAHMALI." My correct name is SHAHMALI, as recorded in my Domicile Certificate.

I have applied to the concerned authority for correction of my name in the Aadhaar Card from "SHAH BEGUM" to "SHAHMALI." Any person having any objection in this regard may approach the concerned authority within the prescribed period.

SHAHMALI

W/o Mohammad Hussain Peer

R/o Khaminder Pora, Tehsil Kunzer, District Baramulla, J&K UT

fko

KIND ATTENTION RAIL PASSENGERS!

IMPORTANT INFORMATION

Extension of train no. 19223/19224 Sabarmati BG- Jammu Tawi- Sabarmati BG Sabarmati Express up to Shri Mata Vaishno Devi Katra

For the convenience of rail passengers Railways have decided to extend the service of train no. 19223/19224 Sabarmati BG- Jammu Tawi- Sabarmati BG Sabarmati Express up to Shri Mata Vaishno Devi Katra with additional stoppages. The details of new stoppages, timings and effective dates are given below:-

19223/19224 Sabarmati BG - Shri Mata Vaishno Devi Katra - Sabarmati BG Sabarmati Express

Train No. 19223	ARR.	DEP.	STATIONS	ARR.	DEP.	Train No. 19224
----	10:25	----	Sabarmati BG	14:05	----	----
14:44	14:46	----	Samba	08:11	08:13	----
15:08	15:10	----	Bari Brahman	----	----	----
15:30	15:35	----	Jammu Tawi	07:35	07:40	----
17:58	18:00	----	Martyr Captain Tushar Mahajan	05:18	05:20	----
18:55	----	----	Shri Mata Vaishno Devi Katra	----	04:50	----

Date of run :- 19223 Ex. Sabarmati BG everyday from 18.10.2026 and 19224 Ex. Shri Mata Vaishno Devi Katra everyday from 20.10.2026.

For detailed information regarding stoppages & timings, please call RailMadad Helpline No. 139 or visit enquiry website: www.enquiry.indianrail.gov.in

RailMadad Helpline No. 139

Visit RailMadad website:- www.railmadad.indianrailways.gov.in

Download RailMadad app.

29/09/26

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Gold, Silver Hit 3-Month Highs On Weak US Dollar

Press Trust Of India

NEW DELHI- Gold and silver prices surged to more than three-month high levels in the national capital on Friday, extending their gains for a second straight session as a weak US dollar and firm global trends drove investors towards precious metals.

The yellow metal of 99.9 per cent purity appreciated by Rs 1,200 to Rs 1,63,500 per 10 grams (inclusive of all taxes), up from the previous close of Rs 1,62,300 per 10 grams, according to local traders.

The precious metal was last quoted around these levels on May 19, when it had stood at Rs 1,63,600 per 10 grams.

Silver also mirrored the bullish trend, jumping Rs 5,000 to Rs 2,50,000 per kilogram (inclusive of all taxes), its highest level in 15 weeks. The white metal had settled at Rs 2,45,000 per kg on Thursday and gained Rs 15,000 over the last two sessions.

It was last seen near these levels on May 4, when the price was quoted at Rs 2,49,500 per kilogram.

"Gold extended its rally on Friday's session and is heading for its third consecutive weekly gain, while silver also remained strong, supported by a weaker US dollar and falling longer-term Treasury bond yields," Gaurav Garg, Head of Research at Lemonn Markets Desk, said.

In the international markets, spot gold extended its rally on Friday, gaining USD 81.58, or 2 per cent, to USD 4,600.91



per ounce, and silver jumped nearly 3 per cent to USD 69.87 per ounce.

"Spot gold surged to around USD 4,600 an ounce, its highest level since May 18, 2026, and remained on track for a third consecutive weekly gain," Saumil Gandhi, Senior Analyst - Commodities at HDFC Securities, said.

Strong investment demand and heightened volatility across currency and bond markets continued to support the precious metal, he added.

Praveen Singh, Head of Commodities at Mirae Asset ShareKhan, said gold has gained more than 4 per cent this week after the US Treasury Department expanded its bond-buying programme to double its long-term debt buybacks aimed at containing borrowing costs.

The move triggered a sharp fall in the US dollar and bond yields, providing fresh momentum to bullion. Although US yields have since stabilised as investors questioned the durability of the Treasury's measures, gold has managed to retain most of its gains.

Bullion also drew support from a slight retreat in oil prices in the overseas markets, Singh said.

No Ethanol Link To Sugar Price Spike; Millers Jacking Up Rates: Govt

Press Trust Of India

NEW DELHI- The government on Friday rejected claims that diversion of sugar for ethanol production was driving a sharp rise in the price of the sweetener and instead blamed the industry for jacking up prices despite the country having sufficient stock to meet domestic demand.

The Centre has asked States to take action against hoarding and black marketing of the sweetener and also start preparing for early start of the crushing season by mills, by around October 15. It is also considering reducing the stock that dealers can hold.

Briefing the media on sugar availability and prices, Food Secretary Sanjeev Chopra said the government has taken precautionary measures by allowing imports of 10 lakh tonnes of sugar by October 31 and imposing stock-holding limits on dealers as well as bulk consumers such as soft-drink and ice-cream makers.

He asserted that there are ample sugar stocks in the country despite a fall in production to 306 lakh tonnes for the 2025-26 marketing year (October-September), down from earlier estimates of 343 lakh tonnes, mainly because of pest disease in sugarcane



crops and waterlogging caused by excess rains. Annual domestic demand is around 280-285 lakh tonnes.

Following the government's recent measures, the secretary said retail prices are expected to fall in the coming days. The all-India average retail price has shot up to Rs 56 per kg from Rs 48 per kg on July 20.

Chopra pointed out that ex-mill sugar prices have shot up to Rs 62 per kg from Rs 47-48 per kg in just about 7-10 days, and said this kind of hike is "unjustified".

On Friday, the secretary called representatives of the industry bodies ISMA and the National Federation of Cooperative Sugar Factories (NFSCF) and told them that this sudden, sharp hike in ex-mill prices is "not acceptable".

"We have always been assisting the sugar sector, and we expect that they will not take advantage of these situations to the detriment of the consumers of the country," Chopra said.

BRICS Adopts Jaipur Declaration To Boost Tourism

Press Trust of India

JAIPUR- The BRICS Tourism Ministers' meeting, under India's chairship, concluded in Jaipur on Friday with the adoption of the BRICS Tourism Ministers' Communique 2026, also known as the Jaipur Declaration, aimed at strengthening tourism cooperation among member countries.

The meeting, chaired by Union Culture and Tourism Minister Gajendra Singh Shekhawat, marked the culmination of the BRICS Tourism Track under India's 2026 chairship, which was conducted under the theme "Building for Resilience, Innovation, Cooperation and Sustainability."

Tourism ministers and heads of delegation from nine BRICS member states participated in the meeting.

Ministerial participation included Brazil's Tourism Minister Gustavo Costa Feliciando, Iran's Minister of Cultural Heritage, Tourism and Handicrafts Reza Salehi Amiri, South Africa's Tourism Minister Patricia De Lille and UAE's Minister of Economy and Tourism Abdulla Bin Touq Al Marri.

Heads of delegation from China, Ethiopia, Indonesia and Russia also attended the meeting.

The Indian delegation included Tourism Secretary Bhuvnesh Kumar and Joint Secretary Harikishore S, among other officials.

The Jaipur Declaration builds on the work undertaken by the BRICS Tourism Working Group during India's chairship and focuses on four key priorities: artificial intelligence and tourism, sustainability and responsible



tourism, tourism skilling and capacity building, and tourism exchanges and seamless travel facilitation.

The communique, adopted by consensus, recognises the potential of responsible, safe and human-centred artificial intelligence and digital technologies to transform tourism.

It calls for cooperation among BRICS countries in areas such as tourism planning, destination management, visitor services, multilingual communication and travel facilitation.

The declaration also emphasises sustainable and community-centred tourism, protection of natural and cultural heritage, tourism investment and infrastructure development, and promotion of diverse tourism products.

It further calls for continuous skilling and upskilling of tourism professionals, stronger industry-academia partnerships, exchange of tourism data and statistics, sharing of best practices and enhanced people-to-people connectivity among BRICS countries.

Addressing the meeting,

Shekhawat said tourism would play an important role in India's journey towards "Viksit Bharat" by 2047 and has the ability to take economic growth beyond major centres to towns, villages and remote regions.

He said tourism creates livelihood opportunities for hotels and homestays, taxi operators, tourist guides, artisans, weavers, farmers and entrepreneurs, besides supporting millions of families directly or indirectly dependent on the sector.

The minister highlighted India's efforts to develop a tourism ecosystem that is economically prosperous, environmentally responsible, technologically enabled and culturally authentic.

On the sidelines of the meeting, India held bilateral discussions with delegations from Brazil, Iran, South Africa and the United Arab Emirates to discuss and advance tourism cooperation.

A press conference was also held on the outcomes of the BRICS Tourism Track under India's chairship, including the adoption of the Jaipur Declaration.

Major US Markets Struggle To Find A Positive Ending For Week

Associated Press

HONG KONG- US markets pointed higher early on Friday, but for the first time in a month, major indexes are all at risk of closing the week in negative territory.

The futures for the S&P 500 rose 0.3 per cent, the Dow Jones Industrial Average gained 0.4 per cent and Nasdaq futures climbed 0.6 per cent.

For the week, the Dow and the S&P are down 1.81 per cent and 1.85 per cent, respectively, before the opening bell, and the Nasdaq is down 2.48 per cent. It would be the second consecutive week of losses for the Dow.

Treasury Secretary Scott Bessent this week attempted to put a lid on longer-term borrowing costs, which have weighed on markets, but the results have been muted.

The Treasury announced Wednesday that it will at least double the size of its planned purchases of longer-term government debt, and Bessent signalled Thursday that the repurchase



program could be larger.

The announcement temporarily brought down government bond yields, which have been elevated by concerns about high inflation partly caused by the war in Iran and rising US government debt.

But economists believe the effect on bond yields is temporary. The yield on the US 10-year Treasury was around 4.70 per cent, up from nearly 4.64 per cent on Thursday and back near its level before the Treasury Department's announcement.

The 30-year Treasury yield was about 5.25 per cent, up from 5.18 per cent on Thursday.

In early trading, SpaceX shares are up less than 1 per cent after nearly 319 million shares held by

investors and employees became eligible to trade Thursday.

Bitcoin is on a tear this week and was up more than 5 per cent early. Bitcoin has gained 22 per cent for the week and was trading for USD 76,935 each on Friday.

In Asia, bond yields also rose. Japan's 10-year government bond yield, which had been trading near 30-year highs, rose to about 2.88 per cent from around 2.83 per cent on Thursday.

In Europe, Britain's FTSE 100 climbed 0.1 per cent to 10,752.29. France's CAC 40 was nearly unchanged at 8,454.20. Germany's DAX rose 0.1 per cent to 26,015.14.

Oil prices are essentially flat as the US stepped up its economic threats toward Iran due to limited progress in talks between Washington and Tehran to open the Strait of Hormuz.

Brent crude, the international standard, fell 0.1 per cent to USD 93.67 a barrel. It was trading at roughly USD 72 per barrel before the start of the war. Benchmark US crude was down 0.1 per cent to USD 86.77 a barrel.



J&K Weavers Asked to Enrol Kin In CDI Craft Management Course

Observer News Service

SRINAGAR- Jammu and Kashmir's Department of Handicrafts and Handloom on Friday urged artisans and weavers to enrol their kin in craft management programme at the Craft Development Institute (CDI) here.

The Department of Handicrafts & Handloom, Kashmir, has urged the artisans and weavers to encourage their wards to apply for admission in two-year MBA course in the Craft Management & Entrepreneurship Programme at Craft Development Institute (CDI), Srinagar, affiliated with the University of Kashmir, an official spokesman said.

He said the specialised postgraduate programme aims to create a new generation of professionally trained craft entrepreneurs capable of taking Kashmir's famous handicrafts and handloom traditions to the national and international markets.

The course integrates craft, design, technology, management and entrepreneurship, providing students with a comprehensive understanding of the craft economy and its emerging opportunities, the spokesperson said.

The department said the

programme would provide a strong edifice for craft entrepreneurship and enterprise development in Jammu & Kashmir.

"We particularly urge the children and wards of artisans and weavers to avail this programme. Our traditional crafts possess enormous economic and export potential and a professionally trained young generation can play a decisive role in converting this heritage into sustainable enterprises, creating employment opportunities and globally competitive brands," he said. He said the government would reimburse the tuition fee of the two-year PG course as per the prescribed eligibility criteria.

"Interested artisans and weavers shall have to produce an Income Certificate issued by the competent authority concerned to establish eligibility for reimbursement of the tuition fee," he stated.

The spokesman further stated that the Department is working towards creating a 'startup launch pad' for students successfully completing the programme, enabling them to convert their professional knowledge into viable craft enterprises and employment opportunities, the spokesman said.

India-Designed Phones Likely In 10-14 Months: Vaishnaw

Press Trust Of India

NEW DELHI- Indigenously designed mobile phones with Indian companies owning their IP rights are expected to hit the market in 10-14 months under the Rs 62,500-crore Mobile Phone Manufacturing Scheme (MPMS), Union Electronics and IT Minister Ashwini Vaishnaw said on Friday.

The minister said the government will be rigid on screening Indian brands and will not allow "copycats" to get any benefit under the scheme.

Announcing the notification of the MPMS, Vaishnaw said companies applying for the scheme will have to prove that they own intellectual property (IP) rights of the design used in manufacturing the phones.



"In this target segment of developing Indian brands, we are very particular that the design has to be your own design. It cannot just be a copycat. They have to come up with the design and prove that the IP is their own. We see three players who have the potential of coming up in a time frame of, let us say, about 10-14 months from now," Vaishnaw said.

The minister said the government will not show any flexibility while evaluating the design of these phones.

"We have asked three players to come up with design options. The challenge we have given them is that the design has to match the best in your segment. It cannot be a design which cannot compete with the best in your segment," Vaishnaw said. Designing a product like a mobile phone with its own patented technology will need huge technical expertise. At present, no mobile phone is entirely designed in India.

Korean major Samsung has a research and development team of more than 3,000 people in India, contributing in development of some features used in its Galaxy smartphones. Among domestic brands, Lava International and Ai+ claim that they design their smartphones locally.

The MPMS has been divided in two parts -- incentivising mobile phone manufacturing, which is target segment 1 (TS1), and supporting Indian mobile phone brands as target segment 2 (TS2).

India's Forex Kitty Swells USD 9.9 Bn To USD 716.9 Bn

Press Trust Of India

MUMBAI- India's forex reserves jumped USD 9.905 billion to USD 716.907 billion during the week ended August 14, the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) said on Friday.

In the previous reporting week ended August 7, the overall kitty had jumped USD 14.136 billion to USD 707.002 billion.

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

For the week ended August 14, foreign currency assets, a major component of the reserves, increased USD 7.225 billion to USD 581.851 billion, the central bank's data showed.

Expressed in dollar terms, foreign currency assets include the effects of appreciation or depreciation of non-US units, such as the euro, pound, and yen, held in foreign exchange reserves.

The RBI and the government had launched a series of measures to attract more forex flows into the country last month, including the FCN (B) measure. The country has so far received USD 56.85 billion under the concessional swap measures till August 13.

Value of gold reserves increased USD 2.679 billion to USD 111.47 billion during the week, the central bank said.

The special drawing rights (SDRs) were down USD 5 million to USD 18.74 billion, the apex bank said.

India's reserve position with the IMF was up USD 5 million to USD 4.899 billion at the end of the reporting week, according to the apex bank's data.

SKUAST-K Celebrates World Entrepreneurs' Day With Startups

Observer News Service

SRINAGAR- SKUAST-K Innovation, Incubation & Entrepreneurship Centre (SKIIE) celebrated World Entrepreneurs' Day, bringing together resident startups, mentors and industry partners under the banner "Stakeholders of Change" for a day-long programme reflecting on Kashmir's growing entrepreneurship ecosystem.

The session was chaired by Director Education, SKUAST-K Prof Altaf Mohd Bhat, with Chief Executive Officer of SKIIE delivering the keynote address to an audience of founders, innovators and prospective entrepreneurs.

The Director Education, commended SKIIE's role in embedding entrepreneurship into the university's academic culture and encouraged audience to see startups as a viable career path alongside conventional employment.

He further deliberated on Entrepreneurs' Day and quoted let's stop treating entrepreneurship as an event we celebrate once a year, and start treating it as the daily infrastructure of this university, this valley, this Union Territory.

In his address, Naveed Hamid traced SKIIE's journey from an idea to an institution that now stands behind more than 125 registered startups across agri-tech, biotechnology, artificial intelligence, deep-tech, food processing and rural enterprise, backed by funding partners including DST New Delhi, i-TBI, BIRAC, M-ITY, NABARD and IFAD. He pointed to the centre's recent recognition as Start Startup Ecosystem Award and "Incubator of the Year". "This centre does not build startups. You do. We only build the room you build them in," Naveed Hamid told the audience, urging founders in the audience not to see Kashmir's biotech and agri-tech challenges as reasons to look elsewhere, but as the very market they were uniquely positioned to serve.

India Gets 29 FDI Proposals Worth ₹4,895 Crore After China Rule Eased

Press Trust Of India

NEW DELHI- As many as 29 FDI proposals totalling about Rs 4,895.65 crore (over USD 500 million) have been reported so far following the government's decision in May to permit overseas companies with up to 10 per cent Chinese shareholding to invest in India under the automatic route, an official statement said on Friday.

Before May, these companies, even with a minor stake held by an individual or firm from a country sharing land border with India, were required to seek government approval to invest in any sector in India.

Following the demand from the stakeholders, the government amended the norms. As per the amendments, foreign companies having a Chinese/Hong Kong shareholding of up to 10 per cent are eligible to invest in India in sectors where FDI is permitted under the automatic route, subject to sectoral conditions.

However, these relaxed FDI rules do not apply to entities registered in China or Hong Kong or other countries sharing land borders with India.

Countries that share land border with India are China, Pakistan, Bangladesh, Nepal, Bhutan, Myanmar, and Afghanistan.

The finance ministry notified the changes to this effect under FEMA on May 1, 2026.

"A total of 29 FDI investments have been reported under the revised framework up to 20 August, 2026, involving proposed FDI of Rs 4,895.65 crore," the commerce and industry ministry said.

Stock Markets End Flat As Elevated Crude Oil Prices Cap Gains

Press Trust Of India

MUMBAI- Market benchmark indices Sensex and Nifty ended flat on Friday, a day after registering a rebound, as elevated crude oil prices induced by geopolitical uncertainties and a sharp fall in the US markets made investors cautious.

In a largely range-bound trade, the 30-share BSE Sensex ended almost unchanged from the previous close at 77,540.83, up 3.11 points. During the day, it hit a high of 77,725.67 and a low of 77,445.86, gyrating 279.81 points.

The 50-share NSE Nifty also ended flat, up 20.15 points, or 0.08 per cent, at 24,252.

A rebound in US Treasury yields and persistently elevated crude oil prices discouraged investors from taking aggressive directional positions, an expert said.

"Indian equity benchmarks ended a choppy Friday session largely unchanged, as investors defended Thursday's recovery but showed little conviction to push the market decisively higher.

"Investor sentiment remained cautious heading into the weekend as a rebound in US Treasury yields and persistently elevated crude oil prices discouraged investors from taking aggressive directional positions," Harishelvan Radhakrishnan, Founder & CEO of HST Wealth, a Research Analyst firm, said.

The continuing standoff between the United States and Iran has kept geopolitical risk firmly embedded in energy markets, leaving oil prices at levels that remain uncomfortable for a major importing economy such as India, Radhakrishnan added.

J&K Teacher Among 48 National Teachers Awardees 2026

Awards to be conferred by President Droupadi Murmu on September 5

Observer News Service

New Delhi: Jammu and Kashmir teacher Mohammad Ayaz Raina has been selected among 48 teachers for the National Teachers Awards 2026, announced by the Department of School Education and Literacy on Friday.

The awards recognise teachers for their contribution to school education and literacy and will be conferred by President Droupadi Murmu on September 5, observed as Teachers' Day.

The 48 awardees have been selected from 27 states, seven Union Territories and six organisations of the central government.

Among the awardees are teachers from institutions



including the Kendriya Vidyalaya Sangathan, Navodaya Vidyalaya Samiti, Sainik Schools, Adarsha Tribal Schools and PM SHRI Schools.

Of the 48 selected teachers, 26 are men and 22 are women.

Raina is among the awardees from Jammu and Kashmir. The list also includes teachers from states and Union Territories

including Andaman and Nicobar Islands, Andhra Pradesh, Arunachal Pradesh, Assam, Delhi, Goa, Gujarat, Haryana, Himachal Pradesh, Ladakh, Madhya Pradesh, Maharashtra, Manipur, Mizoram, Nagaland, Odisha, Punjab, Rajasthan and Sikkim.

Other awardees include J Prakash Rao from the Andaman

and Nicobar Islands, Rajesh Kouluri from Andhra Pradesh, Yaku Tame from Arunachal Pradesh, Rajesh Bordoloi from Assam, Suman Goel from Delhi and Zafar Alam from an Eklavya Model Residential School under the Ministry of Tribal Affairs.

The ministry said the National Teachers Awards are aimed at celebrating the contribution of some of the finest teachers in the country and recognising those whose commitment and work have helped improve the quality of school education and enrich the lives of their students.

The 48 teachers were selected through a three-stage selection process conducted at the district, state and national levels by the Department of School Education and Literacy.

J&K Temperatures Likely to Stay 3-4°C Above Normal Till August-End

Observer News Service

Srinagar: Temperatures across Jammu and Kashmir are likely to remain around 3 to 4 degrees Celsius above normal until the end of August, with no significant fall in minimum temperatures expected during the period, the Meteorological Department said.

The Met forecast a slight rise in daytime temperatures over the coming days, while minimum temperatures may fluctuate marginally but are unlikely to witness any substantial decline before the end of August.

"Day temperatures are likely to rise slightly in the coming days," an official said.

The official said minimum temperatures could fall marginally but added that no significant drop was expected until the end of August.

A more noticeable change in the weather pattern is



expected from September, with both maximum and minimum temperatures likely to begin declining from the first or second week of the month across Jammu and Kashmir.

"From the first week of September or second week of September onwards, a fall in temperatures, both maximum and minimum, can be seen across Jammu and Kashmir," the official said.

The immediate weather outlook remains largely stable,

with no indication of a prolonged spell of rain, according to the Met.

However, isolated brief showers may occur, particularly during the early morning and late afternoon or evening hours.

Parts of south Kashmir and the Jammu division may experience brief but intense showers over the coming days, while the broader seasonal decline in temperatures is expected only from September.

CONTD. FROM FRONT PAGE

Pregnant Schoolgirl

the minor was sexually abused over a period of time and that her pregnancy came to light after she complained of abdominal pain. The allegations are under investigation and have not been established by a court.

According to reports, the girl was subsequently taken to a medical facility after her pregnancy was detected and was later referred for further treatment. Her condition reportedly deteriorated during the process, following which she died while being shifted.

The incident has triggered protests in Chatroo and adjoining areas, with locals demanding a thorough investigation and strict action against those found responsible.

Police are investigating the circumstances surrounding the minor's pregnancy and death, as well as the role of those accused.

The allegations against the accused are subject to investigation and judicial determination.

Make J&K Hub

is a region where every young citizen becomes an employer in some form, according to their ability and talent," he said.

Addressing students, Sinha said a degree should not be considered the final destination but a foundation for pursuing ideas and building enterprises.

He said SKUAST-Jammu had so far selected more than 150 students for idea incubation and supported 56 promising startups. He urged the university to expand these numbers and emerge as a bridge between laboratories and markets, scientists and farmers, and technology and ground-level needs.

"The real success of SKUAST-Jammu will not be measured only by how many students graduate from here, but by how many new ideas were born here, how many solutions to problems were developed here, how many enterprises were established here, and how many farming families' lives were positively changed by those enterprises," he said.

The LG also stressed the need for greater participation of women in entrepreneurship, saying no entrepreneurship revolution could be complete without their equal and active participation.

"I do not just want to see women present in enterprises; I want to see enterprises led by women," he said, calling for greater support to women-led Self-Help Groups and Farmer Producer Organisations in accessing finance, technology and markets.

On the Startup Outreach Programme, Sinha said its focus on reaching farmers and youth in villages was important as many of them may have had no prior exposure to incubation, mentoring or venture capital.

He said solutions to farmers' problems were often best developed by people who had experienced those problems themselves.

The LG asked students to regularly consider four questions: what problem they could solve, what enterprise they could build, what value they could add to agriculture and how many families could benefit from their ideas.

"If these four questions keep troubling your mind continuously, then no one can stop you from finding the purpose of your career," he said.

Sinha expressed confidence that Jammu and Kashmir would increasingly be recognised for innovation, agricultural entrepreneurship, science, technology and youth leadership.

"Do not make your dreams small. Do not let your circumstances become the limits of your future. Draw strength from your roots, direction from knowledge, speed from technology, and create new paths with your resolve," he told students.

The LG also felicitated eight startups, FPOs and cooperative and rural enterprises for their contribution to agriculture, allied sectors, value addition and rural enterprise development.

Four publications, including the Policy Document for Promoting Medicinal and Aromatic Plants in J&K, Chronicle of Innovation & Startups under RKVY-RAFTAAR, SKUAST-Jammu, Value on the Vine: Economic and Market Dynamics of Vegetables and Student's Rural Exploration Programme (SREP), were also released.

Additional Chief Secretary, Finance Department, Shailendra Kumar; SKUAST-Jammu Vice Chancellor Prof B N Tripathi; Director Extension Dr Amrish Vaid; Registrar Dr Anil Kumar; faculty members, senior officials, students, scientists, entrepreneurs,

representatives of startups, FPOs and cooperatives were present.

Unite To Defeat

community and the Shri Amriteshwar Shiv Mandir Vikas Samiti for their collective efforts towards establishing and developing the sacred site.

Highlighting the role of community participation, the LG said social solidarity was essential not only for strengthening the security environment but also for addressing issues such as substance abuse and corruption and promoting economic development.

"India is going through a great spiritual revival. This cultural wave is felt across Jammu Kashmir, bringing people closer together and strengthening our community bonds," he said.

Sinha urged people to remain vigilant against the activities of anti-national elements, report suspicious activities and isolate terror sympathisers.

"Security forces alone cannot defeat terrorism. Eradicating this threat demands a whole-of-society approach," he said.

He called for a united effort involving the police, security agencies, local administration and residents to dismantle the illicit financial and logistical networks supporting narco-terrorism.

The Lieutenant Governor said coordinated efforts by the Army, security forces, J&K Police, local administration and residents had significantly degraded terrorism and transformed the security landscape of Jammu and Kashmir.

"It was once grimly predicted that the Tricolour would find no willing hands to carry it in Jammu Kashmir. Today, it is held high with pride on countless resolute shoulders," he said.

Sinha also assured the gathering that the administration would make sincere efforts to address public grievances and local infrastructure requirements raised by the people.

MLA Kalakote-Sunderbani Thakur Randhir Singh, President of Shri Amriteshwar Shiv Mandir Vikas Samiti and Chelda Biradari Satyapal Sharma, President of Vishva Hindu Parishad, J&K, Rajesh Gupta, IGP Jammu Bhim Sen Tuti, Divisional Commissioner Jammu Ramesh Kumar, DIG Rajouri-Poonch Range Sandeep Wazir, DIG Udhampur-Reasi Range Shiv Kumar Sharma, Deputy Commissioner Rajouri Abhishek Sharma, General Secretary of Shri Amriteshwar Shiv Mandir Vikas Samiti Dr Bharat Bhushan, senior officials and prominent citizens were present.

J&K Announces

prescribed tenure in Zone-IV or Zone-V may also seek transfers within the same zone.

Employees willing to serve in Zone-IV or Zone-V may apply irrespective of their existing tenure, subject to availability of vacancies, institutional requirements and other applicable conditions.

Academic functionaries, including principals, lecturers, headmasters, masters and teachers serving in SCERT, DIETs, J&K Board of School Education, Samagra Shiksha or administrative offices of the department, who have completed the prescribed tenure will also have to participate compulsorily.

The notification also states that lecturers, masters, General Line Teachers and other academic personnel identified as surplus under the approved staff rationalisation framework will participate in the transfer exercise. Principals, headmasters and Zonal Education Officers who have completed the prescribed tenure will also be covered compulsorily.

Special categories Employees seeking transfer on medical grounds, disability-related considerations or other recognised special categories may apply irrespective of the prescribed tenure, subject to submission of the required documentary evidence.

Single parents, including widows, widowers and divorcees, may seek transfer within the same zone, excluding Zone-I, subject to valid supporting documents. Employees seeking transfer on security grounds must submit recommendations or assessments from the competent security authority.

Female lecturers and headmasters working in Zones-IV and V in districts other than their domicile district may also apply irrespective of their tenure, subject to submission of a domicile certificate, availability of vacancies and departmental requirements.

Employees retiring within one year may participate in the transfer drive on an optional

basis, subject to administrative feasibility, vacancies and institutional requirements.

The department said employees claiming preference or additional points under any category must furnish valid documentary evidence. Claims that are unsupported or based on deficient or unverifiable documents will not be considered.

Point-based merit system

The merit and preference lists will be prepared according to the criteria and point-based matrix prescribed under the Transfer Policy, 2026. Where more than one employee is eligible for the same vacancy, preference will be determined on the basis of prescribed merit criteria, points and the applicable tie-breaking mechanism.

The department clarified that completion of the prescribed tenure does not give an employee an automatic right either to remain at the existing place of posting or to secure a transfer to a station of choice.

Transfers and postings will be made according to institutional requirements, staffing needs, administrative considerations, availability of vacancies and the provisions of the Transfer Policy.

Provisional merit and eligibility lists will be placed in the public domain through the designated portal. Employees aggrieved by entries in the lists may submit objections within 15 days along with supporting documents.

The department has also reserved the right to transfer, post or adjust an employee at a place other than the preference exercised by them in the larger academic and administrative interest. Mere submission of an application or inclusion in a provisional or final merit list will not confer a right to transfer to a particular station, institution, zone or post.

Employees have been advised to carefully verify their service particulars, present place of posting, cadre, zone, tenure and preferential claims before final submission. Each eligible employee can submit only one application, while incorrect, misleading or fabricated information or documents may lead to rejection and action under applicable service rules.

The department said transfer orders issued under the Annual Transfer Drive will be binding and must be complied with within the prescribed period. For technical assistance or clarification regarding the online application process, employees may contact their respective directorates.

India's Stability

prohibited under law," he said.

The prime minister said his government is bringing next-generation reforms at the policy level and implementing reforms at the governance level and for ease of living.

"We are moving from the 'prohibited-unless-permitted' approach to the 'permitted-unless-prohibited' model," he said.

Modi said India has moved away from the PLP (Production Linked Punishment) model of the previous governments to PLIs (Production Linked Incentives) now.

He said even small reforms in the Indian Railways, the Delhi Metro and the Namu Rapid Rail show that the country is changing with times.

The prime minister said earlier, no one could make India's map without permission even though foreign satellites could map India, but his government has changed this system.

He also said the government has decided that border infrastructure is India's strength and not weakness. "We have changed the picture of our border infrastructure," he said.

Modi said the world's cheapest data is available in India and the country is making the cheapest and best mobile phones.

Traffic Advisory

Police advised commuters to undertake journeys only after confirming the status of the road from the Traffic Control Units.

Passengers and light motor vehicle operators have been advised to prefer daytime travel on NH-44 and avoid night journeys between Ramban and Banihal due to the possibility of shooting stones, landslides and ongoing construction work.

Traffic is being regulated at Dawal in Udhampur, where a 30-40 metre stretch of the highway has been reduced to a single lane.

Meanwhile, due to widening work being undertaken by the National Highways Authority of India along the Digo-Khooni Nalla axis, the movement of Kashmir-bound heavy motor

vehicles and gas tankers will remain restricted between 7 am and 7 pm.

Tankers carrying inflammable material will not be permitted through the tunnel during this period. However, their movement beyond Chenani will be allowed between 4 pm and 7 pm, according to the advisory.

Goods carriers transporting perishable items and livestock have been advised to load their vehicles according to the schedule issued by Traffic Police Headquarters, keeping in view the possibility of shooting stones, landslides and ongoing construction work between Ramban and Banihal.

Heavy motor vehicle operators have also been asked to avoid overloading, ensure sufficient fuel and check the fitness of their vehicles before undertaking journeys on NH-44.

Commuters have been advised against unnecessary halts between Ramban and Banihal, particularly near landslide- and shooting-stone-prone areas.

Subject to fair weather and good road conditions, light motor vehicles, passenger vehicles, private cars and roadworthy commercial vehicles will be allowed to ply in both directions between Jammu and Srinagar.

The Traffic Police has asked commuters to maintain lane discipline and avoid wrong-lane overtaking. Traffic Control Units at Jammu and Ramban will coordinate regarding road conditions.

Security Forces vehicles will also be allowed to move in both directions on NH-44, subject to fair weather, good road conditions and confirmation from the concerned authorities.

On the Kishtwar-Sinthan-Anantnag road (NH-244), light motor vehicles, passenger vehicles and private cars will be allowed to ply from both sides, subject to fair weather, good road conditions and clearance from the road maintenance agency.

Vehicles will be allowed from P.P. Pora towards Anantnag and from Daksum towards Kishtwar between 8 am and 4 pm. No vehicle will be permitted to proceed after the prescribed cut-off timings.

On the Srinagar-Sonamarg-Gumri road, light motor vehicles will be allowed in both directions between Srinagar and Sonamarg, subject to fair weather, good road conditions and clearance from the road maintenance agencies.

Heavy motor vehicles will be allowed from Sonamarg towards Kargil and from Minamarg towards Srinagar only after a green signal from the road maintenance agencies and up to 1 pm.

HMVs travelling from Minamarg towards Srinagar will be allowed between noon and 5 pm, with no vehicle permitted to proceed after 5 pm.

Motorists have been advised to carry anti-skid chains to maintain better grip on slippery roads.

Security Forces convoys have also been advised to plan their movement in a manner that does not inconvenience civilian traffic.

On the Mughal Road, light motor vehicles followed by heavy motor vehicles up to 10 tyres will be allowed to ply in both directions between Poonch and Shopian, subject to fair weather, good road conditions and clearance from the road maintenance agency.

Vehicles will be allowed from Poonch towards Shopian and Herpora towards Poonch between 7 am and 7 pm.

The Traffic Police has urged commuters to confirm road conditions before starting their journey and follow instructions issued by the respective Traffic Control Units.

Leave Religious

be criticised for questioning the government. "If the Opposition leader does not oppose, then what is the use of it?" he said.

He also questioned the contrasting reactions to opposition leaders raising questions against governments.

"I have not heard you ask the Opposition leader of Jammu and Kashmir why you ask questions again and again in vain. When he does it, you enjoy it. When Rahul Gandhi does it, you say, why is he doing it?" Omar said.

On shrinking green spaces in Kashmir, the Chief Minister said the government could not prevent people from constructing houses but stressed the need to minimise the land used for construction.

"We cannot tell people not to build houses. But we tell people to use as little land as possible," he said.

Omar said land lost to construction could not be restored and called for a balance between

development and environmental protection.

"Once the land is gone, we cannot bring it back. We can generate more electricity, we can make water, we can do many things. But once the land is gone, we cannot bring it back. So we need balanced development," he said.

He said people should be allowed to construct homes while making every effort to preserve green spaces.

Speaking about the newly inaugurated 'Waste to Wonder-Flower Garden', Omar said the initiative was intended not only to provide an attraction for visitors but also to create awareness about recycling and reuse.

He urged people to reduce their dependence on single-use plastic bags and carry reusable bags from home when shopping.

"Is it a compulsion that every time we go to the shop, we take a new plastic bag from the shopkeeper?" he said, urging people to reuse bags instead of throwing them into drains.

Omar said the garden was intended to convey this message and expressed hope that people would visit and enjoy it.

He also said the concept could have tourism potential and directed the Floriculture Department to explore whether a similar waste-themed garden could be recreated elsewhere.

"I believe that this will also be a great attraction for tourism," he said.

Asked whether such attractions could help boost tourism in Kashmir, Omar referred to the development of the Chrysanthemum Garden, saying it had expanded considerably since its initial phase.

"This year will be its second season. I hope that we will use the lessons learned from last year and will do the best in this garden," he said.

Recalling the garden's early days, Omar said it had initially been small but had expanded gradually with the addition of new features.

"I remember that it was a very small garden in the first year. It took so many years to reach here. Every year something or the other was added to it," he said, adding that water channels and new levels had subsequently been introduced.

Asked about the situation in Kishtwar following the death of a schoolgirl, Omar described it as a "very sad situation" and said he hoped the administration and law-and-order authorities would complete their investigation at the earliest.

"I know that this is a very sad situation. We hope that the administration, especially the law-and-order authorities, will take action as soon as possible," he said.

"They should complete their investigation as soon as possible," the Chief Minister added. (KNO)

SC Cuts Judicial

transitional arrangement had caused hardship to young lawyers and fresh law graduates, warranting limited intervention.

The bench, however, said it found no reason to interfere with the fundamental reasoning behind its earlier judgment that candidates entering the judiciary should have exposure to the legal profession.

Chief Justice Surya Kant, while pronouncing the majority verdict, said the requirement of prior experience must have a reasonable nexus with the objective of judicial service and should not result in undue hardship to young advocates.

The court clarified that its earlier judgement did not require reconsideration on the question of whether prior legal experience should be required for entry into the judicial service.

On May 20, 2025, the top court had barred fresh law graduates from appearing in entry-level judicial service examinations and prescribed a minimum three-year legal practice requirement for candidates seeking direct recruitment as Civil Judges (Junior Division).

The latest order came on a batch of review petitions and writ petitions challenging that decision.

On July 28, the Supreme Court had reserved its decision on the petitions.

Earlier, on March 13, the court had asked all high courts to extend the last date for submission of applications for Civil Judge (Junior Division) posts to April 30.

The court had also sought the views of high courts, National Law Universities and other law schools on the three-year practice requirement for entry-level judicial service examinations. (PTI)

England Thrashes Pakistan by Innings & 103 Runs

LEEDS (ENGLAND): England wrapped up an innings win over Pakistan inside three days in the first test on Friday, delivering a strong start to the post-Bazball era under returning captain Joe Root.

Dismissed for 409 around 40 minutes into day three, England took a 238-run advantage into the second innings and skittled Pakistan for 135 in 37.3 overs before tea.

England won by an innings and 103 runs for a 1-0 lead in the three-match series. The second test starts on Thursday at Lord's.

"Brilliant performance," Root said. "You look at the prep we had leading in, coming straight from the Hundred, the fact we're in a slight transition stage. I thought the way that we dealt with all of that, the clarity and the way the guys approached this week has been outstanding."

England's battery of four seamers pestered consistently

at a fuller length that's required at Headingley and Pakistan couldn't endure it.

Jofra Archer removed the openers with the new ball, Ollie Robinson got three more wickets, Josh Tongue was introduced after lunch and took three wickets averaging 143 kph (89 mph), and Gus Atkinson bowled superbly for the late reward of Pakistan top scorer Mohammad Rizwan.

Robinson and Tongue each took eight wickets in the match. They took five each in the first innings and literally split the match ball in half. Robinson was named the player of the match for his 8-80 compared to Tongue's 8-89.

This was Robinson's first test since June when he took 7-77 against New Zealand. He'd been working on his fitness, he said, and his partner had their first baby last week. "I'm going to try and get as much sleep as I can before the next test," he said.

England is in a new era fol-



lowing the retirement of captain Ben Stokes and the firing of Brendon McCullum as test coach after the 2-1 series loss to New Zealand in June.

'England outplayed us'

Pakistan arrived with a semblance of confidence after drawing the series in the West Indies this month and playing a warmup match last week. But

Pakistan looked rusty and the bowling and fielding was less than ordinary. The question, after finishing England's first innings in the morning, was whether the visitor could force

play into a fourth day.

England, 366-8 overnight, added 43 runs for its first 400-plus total in 10 tests. Archer pulled the only six of the match. Khurram Shahzad took both wickets and showed the pitch was still offering plenty for the bowlers.

Pakistan started 0-1 for the second time in the match. Imam-ul-Haq bent backwards to an Archer bouncer and the ball brushed a glove. Azan Awaiz, who fell to the first ball of the series, then nicked to Root at leg slip and Archer had dismissed both openers.

The pressure was on veterans Shan Masood and Abdullah Shafique to endure, but Robinson broke their partnership in the 14th over. Robinson busted through Shafique's determined defense with a nick to second slip.

Pakistan went to lunch at 59-3 with Masood set at the ground where he spent two seasons playing for Yorkshire.

But straight after the interval Tongue was given the ball and

Root's field placement paid off. Dan Lawrence had just been sent to backward square when Saud Shakeel whipped Tongue straight to him.

Masood then tried pushing at Tongue and edged to England's new first slip, Ben Duckett. Tongue had two wickets in two balls as he did in the first innings and couldn't nail the hat trick.

But Tongue soon had 3-7 in 11 balls when he pinned stand-in skipper Salman Agha on 8 and was hastening Pakistan's demise at 76-6.

Rizwan, Pakistan's last recognized batter at No. 7, top-scored with 41 but, for someone playing his 46th test, surprisingly failed to shepherd the tail.

Rizwan was the ninth man out. Five minutes later the game was over.

"England have outplayed us, they've been outstanding in every department," Agha told the BBC. "We need to flush this game out and turn it around at Lord's."

Arsenal Sign Konsa to Bolster Defence

LONDON: Arsenal bolstered its already-strong defense by signing England international Ezri Konsa from Aston Villa on Friday, hours before starting its bid to retain the Premier League title.

Konsa, who played for England at the World Cup at both center back and right back, moves to the defending champion in a deal worth 55 million pounds (\$75 million) and on a four-year deal, The Athletic reported.

Arsenal wanted to strengthen its defensive options because of a long-term injury to center back William Saliba and concerns over the fitness of right back Jurrien Timber.

Mikel Arteta's team has the best defense in the Premier League, conceding 27 goals in 38 games in its title-winning campaign last season.

Arsenal begins the new league on Friday against



Coventry.

The 28-year-old Konsa has been at Villa since 2019.

Arsenal's squad-strengthening continues

With center midfielder Bruno Guimaraes and winger Christos Tzolis also joining this offseason, Arsenal has strength in depth in almost every position for its Premier League title defense and bid to win the Champions League after reaching the final last season.

Guimaraes, Tzolis and

Konsa are like-for-like replacements for Christian Norgaard, Leandro Trossard and Jakub Kiwior, who have all left the Gunners.

Wan-Bissaka joins Villa as right back option

Aaron Wan-Bissaka, who played for Congo at the World Cup, has joined Villa from West Ham on a season-long loan with a conditional obligation to buy.

Wan-Bissaka was previously at Crystal Palace and Manchester United.

Indian Bravehearts Lose To Netherlands In Tough Match

Press Trust of India

AMSTELVEEN: Indian defence led by veteran goalkeeper Savita put up a valiant performance yet again, but the Paris Olympics gold medallists and three-time defending world champions, the Netherlands, won 2-0 in the first match of the second round of the FIH World Cup here on Friday.

The Indian goalkeepers and defenders, who had saved 12 penalty corners in the previous match against England, prevented the world No. 1 team from playing freely at the packed Wagner Stadium, and the co-hosts could not score a single field goal.

For the Dutch team, which had scored 15 goals in three matches in the first round, Yibbi Jansen scored in the second minute and Frederique Malta in the 38th minute, both from penalty corners.

The Netherlands also earned a penalty corner in the final seconds, which was blocked by Savita, along with a couple of attacks in the last quarter.

India now face Australia on Sunday and must win this match to keep their semifinal hopes alive.

The Netherlands did not lose a single match at the Paris Olympics



or the last World Cup. Furthermore, they lost only two matches in the last season of the FIH Pro League.

Dutch supporters came to the Wagner Stadium wearing orange jerseys, the same colour as India's jersey today, while the co-hosts played in blue.

The Netherlands defeated Japan 9-0, Australia 4-2, and Chile 2-0 in the first round, while the Indian team also remained unbeaten to reach the second round. India held China to a 2-2 draw and England to a 0-0 draw, while defeating South Africa 6-1.

The Netherlands, as expected, made a very aggressive start, earn-

ing a penalty corner in the second minute, from which the dangerous drag-flicker Janssen, who has scored the most goals in the tournament, slotted home her seventh goal.

After conceding the first goal early, the Indian defense performed well and contained the Dutch strikers. In the fifth minute, the Dutch were awarded a penalty corner after being obstructed in the circle, and Bichoo skilfully blocked Jansen's powerful shot with her left foot.

Bichoo, who had saved a goal in the final 30 seconds of the last pool match against England, maintained her form and made another bril-

liant save a minute later.

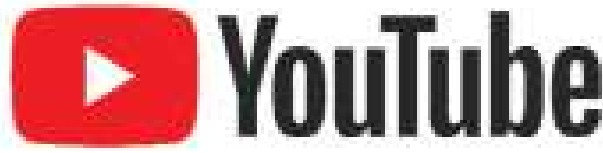
In the eighth minute, an Indian player entered the Dutch half for the first time after a foul, giving the Netherlands a free hit. In the 12th minute, the Netherlands' Pien Sanders missed the target.

In the following minute, Salima Tete carried the ball forward on a counterattack, but her shot from the circle went wide. Jansen's counterattack in the same minute ended with her shot going wide and hitting the post.

In the second quarter, Savita's experience in goal came to the fore as the Dutch team failed to score despite numerous attacks. India earned a penalty corner in the 19th minute through Lalremsiami, which resulted in a second consecutive penalty corner after the ball hit the first rusher.

However, Deepika's shot hit the first rusher's stick and went wide. India secured a long corner but lost possession.

Navneet intercepted an aerial pass in the 22nd minute, but her shot missed the target. In the 28th minute, the Dutch attacked from the left and passed the ball into the centre of the circle. They attempted a shot in front of goal but were unable to beat Savita.



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