

Massive Search in Budgam Forests

1 Terrorist Killed, Tourist Movement Restricted

Observer News Service

Srinagar: One terrorist was killed, and an AK rifle along with other warlike stores was recovered during a joint operation by the Indian Army, Jammu and Kashmir Police and CRPF in the Ashdar Gali area of Budgam district, officials said on Friday.

The operation, launched on the basis of specific intelligence inputs, has been underway since Thursday, with security forces conducting a massive combing operation deep inside the dense forests of the Yousmarg and Pir Panjal belt.

Officials said the forces



had received inputs regarding the movement of a suspected group of terrorists from Pakherpora in Pulwama district towards Yousmarg meadow in Budgam. Following the

inputs, a joint search operation was launched by the Army, J&K Police and CRPF in the general area of Ashdar Gali.

In a post on X, the Army said vigilant troops

observed suspicious activity, and, upon being challenged, the terrorists opened fire, prompting a fierce exchange of gunfire.

During the exchange, one terrorist was neutralised and an AK rifle along with other warlike stores was recovered, the Army said.

The search operation, however, remains underway as security forces continue combing the forested area for possible presence of other terrorists.

Officials said the operation is being conducted in difficult and densely forested terrain, with forces carrying out searches across the area to track down | **More on P6**

Search Ops In Samba Border

Police on Friday carried out a joint search-cum-area domination exercise in the border areas

in Jammu and Kashmir's Samba district to strengthen security and enhance vigilance, officials said.

The exercise began in Regal village and extended to Chillerian, Nadala, and Ploora. | **More on P6**

'No Written Assurance, No End To Strike'

J&K Medical Interns Hold Firm On Stipend Demand As Talks Fail



Observer News Service

Srinagar: The deadlock over the stipend of MBBS and BDS interns in Jammu and Kashmir continued on Friday after a meeting between representatives of the protesting interns and Health and Medical Education Minister Sakina Itoo failed to yield an agreement, with the interns deciding to continue their indefinite strike.

The interns had sought a clear and written commitment from the Government on enhancement of their monthly stipend. However, according to Dr Zamin Javiad, an intern from GMC Anantnag who was part of the delegation, the Minister

did not provide the written assurance sought by the interns.

Speaking after the meeting, Dr Javiad said the Minister told the delegation that the issue would be resolved within a month and assured them that the Government was working towards a possible solution.

The interns, however, insisted that the assurance be provided in writing.

"We wanted a written assurance, but the Minister declined," Dr Javiad said, adding that the Minister maintained that discussions remained open and that the interns could approach her at any time.

The meeting consequently | **More on P6**



Don't Politicise Interns' Stipend Demand: Itoo

Health and Medical Education Minister Sakeena Itoo on Friday termed the demand of MBBS and BDS interns for enhancement of their | **More on P6**

J&K Attains 'Fully Literate' Status Under ULLASw

Observer News Service

Srinagar: Jammu and Kashmir has achieved the status of a 'Fully Literate Union Territory' under the ULLAS-Nav Bharat Saaksharta Karyakram (NBSK), with a reported literacy rate of 98.43 percent, Education Minister Sakina Itoo announced on Friday.

Taking to microblogging platform X, Itoo said Jammu and Kashmir had achieved the "noble distinction" of becoming a Fully Literate Union Territory.

"With deep honor, I declare that Jammu & Kashmir has achieved the noble distinction of becoming a Fully Literate Union Territory, recording an outstanding literacy rate of 98.43% under the ULLAS-NBSK," she said.

The minister said the achievement marked a significant milestone in the UT's education sector and called upon people to celebrate | **More on P6**



CM Calls On HM Shah, Discusses Statehood, Reservations

Chief Minister Omar Abdullah on Friday met Union Home Minister Amit Shah in New Delhi and discussed several key

issues concerning the Union Territory, including restoration of Statehood, rationalisation of reservations and finalisation of the Transaction

of Business Rules.

The meeting also covered other matters related to public welfare and development, the | **More on P6**

Sangarmal's Big-Ticket Auction Revives Stalled Project, Sparks Row

45-Kanal Commercial Complex Fetches More Than Twice Its Estimated ₹200 Cr Valuation

Syed Mohammad Burhan

Srinagar: A long-delayed commercial project in Srinagar has attracted a staggering Rs 421.75 crore bid, turning the largely underused Sangarmal City Centre property into one of the city's most valuable recent real estate deals.

The 45-kanal property was auctioned on a full-lease basis, with bidding beginning on August 25 and continuing into the early hours of the following day. The final offer was more



than twice the estimated valuation of around Rs 200 crore.

A consortium led by Parmesh

Construction Company Ltd, along with Pahalagam Green Hotels, a | **More on P6**

Ladakh's Barren Land Issue Resolved

Thousands to Get Proprietary Rights

Press Trust Of India

Leh: Ladakh Lieutenant Governor Vinai Kumar Saxena on Friday approved the regularisation rules of 'nautor lands', paving the way for the grant of proprietary rights over eligible barren land and resolving a long-pending issue concerning thousands of landholders in the Union territory.

Nautor land refers to barren or wasteland owned by the government and historically allotted to individuals for cultivation or other productive

purposes. More than 60,000 acres of land in Ladakh is presently recorded in revenue records as nautor holdings.

The new rules in Ladakh Autonomous Hill Development Councils (Nautor Regularisation) Rules, 2026, provide a comprehensive framework for granting proprietary rights over up to 10 acres of eligible nautor land to occupants across all seven districts of Ladakh, an official spokesperson said.

Nautor land beyond the 10-acre limit may | **More on P6**

J&K HC Quashes PSA Detention Of Baramulla Man

KO Web Desk

Srinagar: The Jammu and Kashmir and Ladakh High Court has quashed the preventive detention of a Baramulla man under the Public Safety Act (PSA), observing that the detention order was founded on stale grounds and that the detaining authority failed to explain why ordinary criminal law was insufficient to deal with the allegations against him.

A bench of Justice Moksha Khajuria allowed a habeas corpus petition filed by Mumtaza Akhter, sister of 49-year-old Tariq Ahmad War

of Wailoo, Kralpora, Baramulla, and directed the authorities to release him forthwith.

The judgment was pronounced on September 3.

War had challenged detention order No. 19/DMB/PSA of 2024, dated April 12, 2024, issued by the District Magistrate, Baramulla, under which he was placed under preventive detention.

According to the petition, War had been detained on vague, irrelevant and non-existing grounds. His sister also alleged that he had not been furnished all the material relied upon by the detaining authority while passing the detention order. | **More on P6**

IGP Reviews Security Ahead Of Kashmir Int'l Film Festival



Observer News Service

Srinagar: Inspector General of Police, Kashmir Zone, Sujit Kumar, on Friday chaired a security review meeting ahead of the International Film Festival of Jammu and Kashmir, scheduled to be held here from September 7 to 10.

The meeting focused on strengthening security arrangements and ensuring comprehensive preparedness for

the smooth and secure conduct of the festival, a police spokesperson said.

The IGP reviewed the overall security preparedness, deployment plans and arrangements being put in place for the event. Detailed discussions were held on venue security, deployment of personnel, access control, surveillance, crowd management, traffic regulation, emergency response mechanisms and | **More on P6**

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2

PUBLIC NOTICE

I, Gulam Mohd Wani, R/o Nasrullahpora, Budgam, J&K, Aadhaar No. 7604 4303 9198, do hereby inform the general public that my name and father's name have been incorrectly recorded in official records. The details are as under:
My Name: Incorrectly written as Gh Mohd Wani, Correct name is Gulam Mohd Wani
Father's Name: Incorrectly written as Abdul Samad Wani, Correct name is Mr Samad Wani
It is requested that my name and my father's name be corrected and recorded as Gulam Mohd Wani and Mr Samad Wani respectively in all official records and documents.
Applicant:
Gulam Mohd Wani
S/o Mr Samad Wani
R/o Nasrullahpora, Budgam, J&K
Aadhaar No.: 7604 4303 9198

mcb

PUBLIC NOTICE

The electricity connection with consumer ID: 0204040016757 registered in the name of Akhter Hussain Dar to be transferred in favour of Amjad Hussain Dar, S/o Mohd Akhter Dar R/o New Colony, Zadibal
If anybody has any objection, he/she may contact concerned department within 7 Days after that no objection shall be entertained.

Media Line Ads

PUBLIC NOTICE

I have changed my name from Old name Mymoona To New Name (Mymoona Akhter) in Future I'll be known as MYMOONA AKHTER if anyone has any objection kindly report to passport office Srinagar within 7 working days after that no objection will be accepted.
Mymoona Akhter R/O Trichal pulwama

JNA7780878931

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PUBLIC NOTICE

I, Mehraj Ud Din Alaqband, F/o Qubra Mehraj, R/o Hamza Colony B, Awanta Bawan, hereby inform the general public that the name of my daughter was earlier recorded as: "Qubra Mehraj D/o Mehraj Ud Din Alaqband" The correct name is: "Qubra Mehraj D/o Mehraj Ud Din Alaqband" The said name has already been corrected/updated in her Aadhaar Card and Birth (DOB) Certificate as "Qubra Mehraj D/o Mehraj Ud Din Alaqband."

If anybody has any objection regarding the above-mentioned correction, they may contact the concerned authority within a period of seven (07) days from the date of publication of this notice. After the expiry of the said period, no objection shall be entertained.

Mehraj Ud Din Alaqband
F/o: Qubra Mehraj
R/o: Hamza Colony B, Awanta Bawan

Media line

PUBLIC NOTICE

It is for the information of general public that Sh. Barkat Hussain S/O Feroz Din R/O Behramgalla Tehsil Surankote District Poonch, is going to apply for registration of his home located at Behramgalla as Homestay in Jammu and Kashmir Tourism Department. If anyone has any objection to this, file your objections in the concerned Tourism Department office, within seven days from the date of publication of this notice.

Media Line Ads

PUBLIC NOTICE

I, Mehraj Ud Din Alaqband, F/o Ehtisham Mehraj, R/o Hamza Colony B, Awanta Bawan, hereby inform the general public that the name of my son was earlier recorded as: "Ehtisham Mehraj S/o Mehraj Ud Din Alaqband" The correct name is: "Ehtisham Mehraj S/o Mehraj Ud Din Alaqband" The said name has already been corrected/updated in his Aadhaar Card and Birth (DOB) Certificate as "Ehtisham Mehraj S/o Mehraj Ud Din Alaqband."

If anybody has any objection regarding the above-mentioned correction, they may contact the concerned authority within a period of seven (07) days from the date of publication of this notice. After the expiry of the said period, no objection shall be entertained.

Mehraj Ud Din Alaqband
F/o: Ehtisham Mehraj
R/o: Hamza Colony B, Awanta Bawan

Media line

PUBLIC NOTICE

It is notified for the information of the General Public that my Ward's Name in Aadhar Card has been wrongly entered as Arham Naseer while my Ward's correct Name as per School record is Yasir Naseer Rather. Now I want the same to be corrected if anybody has any objection in this regard He/ She may file his /her objection in the Office of the General Manager Ranbir Government Press Jammu, within a period of seven (7) days from the date of publication of this notice. After that no objection shall be entertained.

Naseer Ahmad Rather
F/O Yasir Naseer Rather
R/O Sirhama Bijbehara Anantnag

JNA7780878931

PUBLIC NOTICE

I, Tawseef Ahmad Dar, S/o Mohamad Akbar Dar, R/o Sholipora, Budgam, Jammu & Kashmir, father and lawful guardian of my minor ward, do hereby inform the general public that my ward's name has been mistakenly recorded as "Naman Tawseef" instead of the correct name "Numaan Tawseef" in his Aadhaar Card (Aadhaar No. 5546 0272 8341). I am submitting an application to the concerned authorities to correct/rectify his name in the Aadhaar record from "Naman Tawseef" to "Numaan Tawseef". If any person, institution, or organization has any objection to the said name correction, they may submit their objection in writing to the concerned authority within seven (7) days from the date of publication of this notice. If no objection is received within the specified period, it will be presumed that nobody has any objection to the correction of the name.

Tawseef Ahmad Dar (Father / Lawful Guardian)
R/o Sholipora, Budgam, Jammu & Kashmir

mcb

PUBLIC NOTICE

I, Waheeda Bano, W/o Mohammad Altaf Mir, R/o Hakermulla, Tehsil and District Budgam, Jammu & Kashmir, do hereby give public notice that in my Aadhaar Card bearing No. 291070062888, my name has been incorrectly recorded as Shazia Mir. My actual and correct name is Waheeda Bano. I am submitting this notice for necessary correction in my Aadhaar Card records and other official documents. If anyone has any objection to this name correction, they may raise their objection in writing to the concerned Aadhaar/UIDAI authority within 7 days from the publication of this notice.

Waheeda Bano (Deponent)
R/o Hakermulla,
Tehsil & District Budgam, J&K

fko

PUBLIC NOTICE

I, Ab Rashid Wani, resident of Ompora, Budgam, Jammu & Kashmir (Aadhaar No. 8483 7480 8633), have corrected my name in my official records and Aadhaar Card.
Incorrect Name: Abdul Rashid Wani
Correct Name: Ab Rashid Wani
It is hereby notified that for all future purposes and official records, I shall be known and addressed by my correct name, Ab Rashid Wani.

If anyone has any objection to this name correction, they may file their objection in writing to the Manager/Editor, Ranbir Government Press, Sempora, Pantachowk, Srinagar, 191101 J&K, within 7 days from the publication of this notice.

Ab Rashid Wani
S/o Abdul Khaliq Wani
R/o Ompora, Budgam, J&K
Aadhaar No.: 8483 7480 8633

mcb

اطلاع عام
برقاس و عام کو بریدہ اشتہار مطلع کی جاتا ہے کہ مجھے اپنے بچے کی ایک تصدیق دہندہ نمبر 0206010002005 جو کہ میرے والد کے نام پر مبنی گھر درخان پر ہے اسے نام پر سید اب اسکو میرے نام یعنی فاروق احمد پر ہے اسے نام پر کروانا مطلوب ہے اس بارے میں اگر کسی شخص کو کوئی اعتراض ہو تو وہ سات دن کے اندر اندر اپنا تحریر شدہ اعتراض قابل قبول ہوگا۔
فاروق احمد پر سے ولد محمد رمضان پر سے
ساکن بندھن پورہ کام۔
فون: 7889316799
MBC- 7889316799

PUBLIC NOTICE

I am applying for the registration of date of birth certificate of my ward as I have not applied yet so anybody having any objection in this regard he/she may contact to Municipal committee Kupwara/Concerned Authorities within the period of seven days from the publication of this notice after that no objection shall be entertained.
Applicant Name:- Mohammad Anzar Shah Peerzada
F/o:- Peerzada Uzair Ibni Anzar
DOB:-16-08-2009
R/o:-Dudwan Kupwara

QNS

PUBLIC NOTICE

I, Jasir Yousuf Bhat S/o Mohammad Yousuf Bhat R/o Rangpora near Green Valley School, Ellahi Bagh, Srinagar lost my wallet containing important cards while travelling from Rangpora to Soura on 02/09/2026. I lost my aadhar card, driving license (JK0120130085194), SKIMS Hospital ID(240305257/PG-2315/T), and some banking cards. Now I wish to apply for duplicates of the same. Anyone having any objection regarding the same, may contact authorities at Police Station Soura within 7 days of this notice.

mdl

PUBLIC NOTICE

It is for the information of the general public that I, Mohi Din Dar, S/o Wali Dar, residing at Nasrullahpora, Budgam, J&K, 191111, have corrected my name and corrected my father's name in my official documents.
My name has been corrected from Ghulam Mohiuddin Dar to Mohi Din Dar, and my father's name has been corrected from Wali Mohammad Dar to Wali Dar.
It is requested that all concerned authorities update their records accordingly.
Mohi Din Dar
R/o Nasrullahpora, Budgam, J&K – 191111
Aadhaar No.: 289138413995
Mobile No.: 9906972696

mcb

NOTICE FOR GENERAL PUBLIC THE JAMMU & KASHMIR BOARD OF SCHOOL EDUCATION

SUB OFFICE GANDERBAL

ATTENTION PLEASE

I have passed /appeared in SSE/HSE-I/HSE-II (Class 10th,) under Roll No. 124023006 Session Annual Regular Year 2023. Through the Jammu & Kashmir Board of School Education. The error has been committed by the School Authorities against My Name & My Mothers name as AAYAT & Mothers name NUSRAT BEGUM instead of AAYAT MEHMOOD AND Mothers name NUSRAT BANO.
Now i have applied for correction in the Jammu & Kashmir board of School Education, Sub Office Ganderbal. If any person has any objection in this regard may file the same in the office of the Assistant Secretary, Sub Board Office Ganderbal within seven days from the date of publication of this notice, after the expiry of said period, no objection will be entertained.
This is published for the information of the general public. The Correct particulars be recorded as under:
Name: AAYAT MEHMOOD,
Fathers Name: MEHMOOD AHMAD RATHER,
Mothers Name, NUSRAT BANO
Date of Birth: 10-06-2008,
Residence:- WAKURA GANDERBAL J & K U.T
Mobile: 9906866900



mcb

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Traditional Shobha Yatra Marks Janmashtami Celebrations

Agencies

Srinagar: Srinagar on Friday came alive with faith, colours and festive fervour as Kashmiri Pandits celebrated Janmashtami, marking the birth of Lord Krishna, with prayers, devotional singing, a traditional Shobha Yatra and cultural festivities across the city.

The celebrations began with devotees offering prayers at temples, observing fasts and participating in bhajan-kirtans and other religious rituals. Temples

from the historic Ganpatyar Temple in Tankipora, Habba Kadal, and passed through several localities, including Kralkhud, Barbarshah and Regal Chowk, before reaching Lal Chowk, the commercial heart of the city.

The streets echoed with devotional chants, bhajans and the beats of drums as devotees moved through the city carrying idols and religious flags.

At Lal Chowk, the celebrations took on a colourful cultural character, with



KO Photo : Abid Bhat

were decorated with flowers, lights and colourful displays, while devotees gathered to mark the occasion with traditional fervour.

According to details, the main attraction of the celebrations was the traditional Shobha Yatra taken out by the Kashmiri Pandit community through the streets of Srinagar.

The procession started

Altaf Bukhari Reviews Party Organisation in Chanapora

Observer News Service

Srinagar: Apni Party president Altaf Bukhari on Friday chaired a meeting with party leaders and workers from various wards of the Chanapora constituency to review public grievances and organisational matters.

The meeting, held at the party headquarters at Sheikh Bagh here, was attended by representatives from Natipora, Budshah Nagar, Baghe-Mehtab, Chanapora and Mehjoor Nagar wards.

During the meeting, participants apprised Bukhari of issues confronting residents in their respective areas and discussed measures to highlight and address the griev-

ances of the people.

The meeting also focused on strengthening the party's organisational structure and activities at the grassroots level.

Participants expressed concern over what they termed the government's failure to address several pressing public issues. They also alleged that the government had failed to fulfil promises made to the people during the 2024 elections.

Bukhari was briefed on the concerns raised by party workers, while organisational matters pertaining to the constituency were also discussed.

Apni Party chief spokesperson and state secretary Muntazir Mohiuddin was present at the meeting.



File Pic

Indigo Flight Hits Pole While Parking at Srinagar Airport, No Injuries

Press Trust Of India

Srinagar- An Indigo flight from Navi Mumbai to Srinagar hit a pole while being parked at Srinagar airport on Friday. While the aircraft suffered damage, there were no injuries to the passengers or crew members.

Flight 6E 225 (VT-NOG) was being positioned at Bay No. 6 at 9.02 am when it came into contact with the Visual Docking Guidance System (VDGS) pole during the parking process, the Airport Authority of India (AAI) said in a statement.

"All passengers and crew members are safe, and no injuries have been reported," it said, adding that the passengers and crew safely deboarded using manual aircraft stairs.

The AAI said the details and circumstances leading to the incident will be examined by the appropriate authorities according to the prescribed procedures.

"The exact cause will be ascertained following the completion of the inquiry, and no conclusion regarding the cause is being drawn at this

Stray Dogs at Srinagar Airport Raise Passenger Safety Concerns

Agencies

Srinagar: The presence of stray dogs at Srinagar International Airport has raised concerns among passengers, with reports of canines roaming around the airport premises and allegedly causing anxiety among travelers.

Passengers have reportedly encountered stray dogs while moving through areas of the airport complex, with some claiming they have had to hurriedly move away from the animals to avoid possible attacks.

The issue has prompted concerns over the airport's arrangements for controlling stray animals within and around passenger movement areas.

The presence of dogs in an air-

port environment can pose risks beyond inconvenience, particularly if animals enter areas with heavy passenger movement or access points connected to operational zones.

Passengers have urged the airport authorities and other concerned agencies to address the issue promptly and ensure that stray animals are removed safely from areas accessible to travelers.

The concerns also raise questions about the effectiveness of existing measures for managing stray animals around one of the Valley's busiest transport facilities.

To get the response from the airport authorities regarding the reported presence of stray dogs and measures being taken to address the issue didn't materialize. [KNT]

stage," the statement read.

Airport operations remained nor-

mal, with flight arrivals and departures continuing as per schedule, it added.

Srinagar's Built-Up Area Jumps 75.6% In Two Decades

Agencies

Srinagar: Srinagar's built-up area increased by 75.58 per cent between 2000 and 2020, while vegetation and water bodies declined substantially during the same period, according to a satellite-based study published in Discover Cities.

The study found that the city's built-up area increased from 34.53 square kilometres in 2000 to 60.63 square kilometres in 2020.

During the same period, vegetation declined by 40.2 per cent, water

bodies by 25.41 per cent and dense forest cover by 62.74 per cent.

The researchers analysed land-use and land-cover changes using satellite remote-sensing data and examined their relationship with land-surface temperature.

The study identified urban expansion, population growth, migration and increasing construction activity among the factors associated with the changing land-use pattern.

It also pointed to development activity, including construction of hotels and amusement facilities, en-

croachment along the Jhelum and wetlands, unplanned urbanisation and industrial activity, as factors contributing to changes in the city's land-use pattern.

The findings show that the areas around Lal Chowk, Natipora, Hyderpora, Rajbagh, Nowgam, Dargah, Chhatabal, Batamaloo and Bemina witnessed significant urbanisation during the study period.

The researchers said the findings could assist urban planners and policymakers in understanding the environmental consequences of Srinagar's expansion. [KNT]

- 
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- QAZIGUND: 01951-296153

HIGHWAY STATUS


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

 HIJRI CALENDAR 22 Rabi-ul-Awwal 1448	PRAYERS	
	FAJR	4: 40
	ZUHR	12:32
	ASR	5: 04
	Magrib	7: 00
	ISHA	8: 22

This Day In History

- 1198- Philips of Zwabia, Prince of Hohenstaufen, crowned King of Germany and King of the Romans
- 1519- Second Battle of Tehuacingo, Mexico: Hernán Cortés vs Tlascalala Aztecs
- 1550- William Cecil appoints himself English minister of foreign affairs
- 1590- Alexander Farnese's army forces Henry IV of France to raise the siege of Paris
- 1596- Dutch fleet commander Cornelis de Houtman taken hostage in Java, is later ransomed
- 1622- Bishop Richelieu appointed Cardinal under French King Louis XIII
- 1646- First public library in the Americas established when Bishop Palafox y Mendoza donates his personal library of 5,000 volumes to Tridentine colleges in Puebla, Mexico [1]
- 1666- Great Fire of London ends, leaving 13,200 houses destroyed and 8 dead
- 1698- Russian Tsar Peter the Great imposes a tax on beards
- 1717- Britain's King George I issues Proclamation "For Suppressing Pirates in the West Indies", granting pirates who surrender a pardon (re-issued 1718)
- 1774- The 1st Continental Congress, a meeting of delegates from 12 of the 13 British colonies that later became the United States, convenes at Carpenters' Hall in Philadelphia
- 1795 - USA and Algiers sign peace treaty
- 1800 - Malta surrenders to British after they blockade French troops
- 1814 -Battle of Masurische Meren: Germans chase Russians out of East Prussia
- 1864 - British, French & Dutch fleets attacked Japan in Shimonoseki Straits
- 1914 - Great Britain, France, Belgium and Russia sign pact of London
- 1914 - US President Woodrow Wilson orders US Navy to make its wireless stations accessible for any transatlantic communications - even to German diplomats sending coded messages; leads to interception of the Zimmermann telegram, helping bring the US into the war
- 1915 - Anti-war conference in Zimmerwald, Switzerland
- 1915 - Tsar Nicholas II, distressed by increasing Russian losses, assumes personal command of his nation's military forces; clearly a symbolic act and devastating for his leadership
- 1937 - Spanish Civil War: Llanes falls
- 1939 - FDR declares US neutrality at start of WW II in Europe
- 1939 - New Zealand Prime Minister, Michael Joseph Savage declares New Zealand's support for Britain in the war with Germany; Savage famously told the nation 'where she goes, we go. Where she stands, we stand'
- 1942 - Battle at Alam Halfa ends
- 1942 - British & US bomb Le Havre & Bremen
- 1944 - Allies liberate Brussels

Demise

We are deeply saddened to share the news of the passing away of our beloved **Master Gul Mohammad Raina** S/o: Late Ghulam Mohammad Raina R/o: Degree College Road, Tulbagh Pampore on Thursday, 03/06/2026(20thRabi al-Awwal 1448 AH) (Indeed, to Allah we belong and to Him we shall return).



His Congregational Fateh Khawani will be held on Sunday, 06th September 2026 (23th Rabi al-Awwal 1448 AH) at 6.30 am, at his family graveyard located nearGovt Girls Higher Secondary School Pampore. May Allah grant him the highest place in Jannahand give strength to the bereaved family to bear this irreparable loss.

NOTE: Ladies are requested not to bring any fruits or any kind of eatable items along with them

Bereaved Family:

Mr. Raina Ahrif Gul (Son)
Mr. Bashir Ahmad Raina (Brother)
Mr. Pervaiz Ahmad Lone and Dr Arshaq Asfer (Sons-in-law)



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KO VIEW

Protect Guryul Now

Guryul Ravine has earned national recognition for a geological record that can survive only if the site itself is protected.

Located near Khonmoh in Srinagar, the site records a geological crisis from about 252 million years ago, when roughly 95 percent of marine species and more than 70 percent of land species disappeared.

The Geological Survey of India recognised Guryul as a National Geoheritage Site in October 2025, giving the administration a clear reason to put protection measures in place.

The delay has now become the central concern.

Guryul still awaits a formal protection notification, while questions have emerged about industrial activity near the site.

The Environmental Policy Group has asked the administration to examine whether activity around the Khonmoh Industrial Estate could affect Guryul’s geological and fossil records. It has also sought scientific demarcation of the site and details of a March 12 joint inspection by the GSI and district administration.

The scientific case for protection is unusually strong.

Guryul contains an important record of the Permian-Triassic boundary, helping scientists study the largest known mass extinction in Earth’s history. Research at the site has produced evidence about changes in climate, geology and life during that period.

Geological formations hold this evidence in their original setting, so excavation or construction can reduce the scientific value of a site that cannot be recreated elsewhere.

The government therefore has to connect its national designation with practical safeguards.

A formal boundary, clear rules for nearby activity and regular scientific monitoring would give the designation real force. Public disclosure of the March inspection findings would also help establish what risks exist and what steps the administration plans to take.

There is an economic argument for conservation as well.

The Environmental Policy Group has sought 10 crore for conservation, interpretation, access, research facilities and visitor management.

That investment could give Guryul a defined role in scientific education and carefully managed tourism, adding a new public asset to Kashmir’s tourism economy.

Before Chickenpox Strikes

As late summer arrives, Waav Pait begins appearing in Kashmiri households, bringing fever, blisters and days of discomfort.



Dr. Humaira Gilani

By late summer, I can tell the season has turned without looking at a calendar.

Children start filing into clinics with the same itchy rash spreading across their arms and faces, and I know Waav Pait has returned to Kashmiri households.

The first spots look like nothing much, easy to dismiss as a mosquito bite or a heat rash, until the fever climbs and the skin fills with small, fluid-filled blisters that no child can leave alone.

Most families in the valley already know the drill.

A grandmother names it correctly the moment she sees it. Calamine lotion appears from some cupboard where it has sat since the last outbreak. Nails get trimmed short, soft food replaces the usual meal, fluids are pushed all day.

This household knowledge has passed down through generations, and I respect it. But what troubles me is the belief sitting underneath it: that chickenpox is simply something children have to endure on their way to adulthood.

That belief no longer holds.

The illness comes from the Varicella-zoster virus, spread through the droplets of a cough or sneeze, or through direct contact with fluid from an open blister.

It can sit unnoticed in a child’s body for ten to twenty-one days before announcing itself with a low fever, tiredness, headache and loss of appetite.

Within a day or two the rash follows: red spots, then itchy vesicles, then blisters that break and crust over.

Understanding what causes the illness also saves families from one recurring mistake.

Because the disease is viral, antibiotics do nothing against it. Antibiotics fight bacteria, while a virus like VZV works by hijacking living cells, which is a different problem entirely.

The distinction stops being academic the moment a child scratches through the skin and lets bacteria in.

What began as ordinary chickenpox can turn into a secondary skin infection that is far harder to treat, and that is often when a family finally understands how much was left to chance.

Age changes the calculation further. Children fill most of my appointment slots, but adults who missed the disease in childhood and were never vaccinated remain vulnerable, and the illness tends to hit them harder, with risks including viral pneumonia and encephalitis.

The virus is also patient. Once the rash fades, VZV does not leave the body. It withdraws into nerve tissue and can resurface decades later as shingles, particularly in older adults.

A single childhood infection can leave a dormant threat behind, waiting for the immune system to weaken.

None of this makes good home care irrelevant. Preventing scratching still matters for the skin’s sake, since damaged skin scars and invites infection.

Short nails help, while Calamine still eases itching, and paracetamol still brings a fever down under



Kashmir has built an entire vocabulary around childhood illness, and Waav Pait sits comfortably inside it. The wisdom in that tradition, the hydration, the soft food, the trimmed nails, the days kept at home, still holds true. What no longer needs to survive is the assumption that infection itself is part of growing up here.

medical guidance.

One old habit needs to go, though: aspirin should never be given to a child with a viral illness, because of its link to Reye’s syndrome, a serious and sometimes fatal complication.

It is the one entry in the traditional medicine cabinet that has no place there anymore.

Food becomes part of the treatment too, especially once blisters form inside the mouth.

Khichdi, mashed potato, yogurt, clear soup and cooked apple go down easily on sore tissue. Water, coconut water and fresh juice keep a child hydrated. Salty, spicy, acidic and crunchy food only worsens the pain, and is best kept off the plate until the mouth heals.

Isolation protects the household beyond the sick child. A person carrying the virus can pass it on from roughly two days before the rash shows until every blister has scabbed over, which means school, playgrounds and family gatherings all become risks, particularly for a pregnant relative or a newborn nearby.

All of this describes how to manage chickenpox once it has already taken hold.

As a dermatologist, what puzzles me is why the conversation in Kashmir still begins after the rash appears, when prevention has been available for years.

The varicella vaccine, given in two doses, provides strong protection against the disease, cuts the risk of hospitalisation and severe complications, and shields the people around a vaccinated child who cannot be vaccinated themselves.

Kashmir has built an entire vocabulary around childhood illness, and Waav Pait sits comfortably inside it. The wisdom in that tradition, the hydration, the soft food, the trimmed nails, the days kept at home, still holds true.

What no longer needs to survive is the assumption that infection itself is part of growing up here.

Late summer will keep bringing chickenpox back to Kashmiri homes. What changes now is whether parents wait for the spots or act before they show up.

A vaccination appointment can prevent days of fever, spare a child the itching, and protect someone more vulnerable standing nearby.

That is the better seasonal habit worth building here: preparation before the rash, instead of resignation once it appears.

The author is a Srinagar-based consultant dermatologist & cosmetologist. She can be reached at gillanihumaira@gmail.com.

Kashmir’s Dirty Divide

A culture that prizes ritual cleanliness must also confront what it leaves behind in Kashmir’s rivers, streets and forests.



Haris Mashooq Zia

By early morning, the floors of a Kashmiri home have usually been swept clean. The idea is taught early: “An-nazafatu minal-iman”, cleanliness is half of faith.

Parents repeat it to their children, schools put it on walls, and families follow it in their daily routines.

But step past that same doorstep and the picture changes completely.

The Jhelum carries a visible skin of plastic. Mountain springs that once ran clear now mix with sewage. Bicycles installed under Srinagar’s Smart City program sit stripped of parts or abandoned in ditches. Advertising boards, put up without permission, block the view of the Zabarwan range. Public walls wear stains of garbage like a second coat of paint.

The contrast between the clean home and the dirty street highlights a simple idea: cleanliness ends at the doorstep.

Local practice has narrowed purity down to taharat, the ritual cleanliness mandatory for prayer. Clothes, body, and the small square of carpet beneath the knees must be spotless before worship.

Once a wrapper or a bottle crosses the doorway into the lane outside, it stops being anyone’s spiritual business.

The riverbank, the forest floor and the public square become places where responsibility seems to stop. A faith that asks us to keep the body clean for prayer should also remind us to keep the land clean.

This split runs as deep in theology as it does in civic life.

The same religious tradition that governs how a person washes before prayer also forbids fouling running water, and treats tree planting as an act of ongoing charity. Sadqah Jariyah, that continues to bless the giver long after the sapling is in the ground.

A choked spring or a stripped hillside sits against texts that Kashmiris recite without hesitation.

Political history has made this divide even deeper.

Decades of discord and administrations imposed from a distance have worn away any sense that public property belongs to the people who use it.

A bin, a bicycle, a footpath register less as

Picture an Imam devoting one Friday a month to the ethics of waste, naming the dumping of plastic into Dal Lake or the Jhelum plainly as Zulm, a wrong done to others. That single shift in language could move more households than a decade of municipal notices.

shared possessions and more as objects installed by an authority that can be blamed when things go wrong.

When a Smart City bicycle is smashed, it reads less as random destruction than as a small, almost automatic statement that the object was never really the owner’s to protect.

Because the government alone is treated as guardian of anything public, individual behaviours slide free of consequence.

“The municipality will clean it” becomes a

private excuse repeated by thousands of households at once, and no municipal department, however well staffed, can keep pace with garbage thrown from moving cars and household waste tipped into centuries-old canals after dark.

Leadership that could close this split has largely stayed silent.

The Friday khutbah remains the single most attended, most trusted platform in the valley, able to move public behaviour faster than any government campaign.

Week after week, sermons circle common sectarian ground or abstract points of ritual law, while drying wetlands and thickening air lie untouched as subjects.

A society watching its lakes shrink and its air thicken cannot keep treating ecological collapse as something outside the pulpit’s concern.

Picture an Imam devoting one Friday a month to the ethics of waste, naming the dumping of plastic into Dal Lake or the Jhelum plainly as Zulm, a wrong done to others.

That single shift in language could move more households than a decade of municipal notices.

None of this gets solved by sermons alone, or by government alone. Waste segregation and sewage treatment in Kashmir remain basic even as towns have grown well beyond their old boundaries.

Door-to-door collection has to reach any lane, rather than only the ones near tourist routes, so a stream stops looking like the near-

est available bin.

Fines for polluting water bodies or defacing public walls need to fall on a hotelier along Dal Lake with the same weight they fall on a passerby, or the law itself becomes another source of cynicism.

Religious scholars from different schools of thought could draft a shared environmental charter and turn mosque committees into organizers of plantation drives, so sacred ground becomes a site of restoration rather than only ritual.

Schools could swap dry units on the environment for actual cleanup work in the neighbourhoods where their students live, and mohalla committees could take direct charge of the lanes outside their own doors.

The mountains and the rivers that fill Kashmiri poetry are living systems under pressure from the same population that depends on them.

Faith practiced only indoors leaves the outdoors to fend for itself.

Restoring a dying lake, protecting a public bicycle, and planting a tree for people not yet born are what belief looks like once it steps past the doorstep.

The author is a Srinagar-based student and environmental writer. He can be reached at harismashooqharis@gmail.com.

The Poison in Kashmir's Honey Harvest

From Batote to Baramulla, beekeepers are losing colonies, income and hope as pesticides, pests and climate shocks take their toll.



Anuj Kumar Verma

Rahul Rathore remembers when his hives hummed with 350 colonies, stacked in neat rows outside Batote, each box producing honey he could sell with confidence and pride.

Seven years later, only about 100 colonies remain. The rest died somewhere between here and Rajasthan, poisoned by pesticide-laced fields, battered by strange temperature swings, and picked apart by a beetle that science still cannot control. "We started strong," Rathore said, describing the winter migrations that once sustained his operation.

Now those same journeys, undertaken so bees can find forage during Kashmir's frozen months, have become the biggest threat to his livelihood.

Farmers spraying chemicals may never see the bees feeding nearby. Season after season, the exposure weakens Rathore's colonies. He wants a minimum support price for honey, calling it the lifeline that could keep beekeepers like him from ruin.

His story is playing out across Kashmir, in Ramban, Udhampur and Kishtwar, where thousands of small beekeepers depend on honey as supplementary income.

Heavy pesticide, fertilizer and herbicide use in orchards has thinned bee populations, while unpredictable weather, hailstorms one month and blistering heat the next, keeps disrupting the flowering cycles bees depend on for nectar.

Small hive beetle infestations, a destructive parasite scientists have yet to fully treat, are killing eggs and adult bees on top of everything else.

A 2022-2023 study found fifteen pesticides in honey samples pulled from migratory apiaries in

Kashmir, with organophosphates showing up prominently near intensive apple orchards.

Pollen samples tested positive for dozens of additional chemicals, mostly fungicides and herbicides, echoing what researchers have documented globally about the toxic burden bees now carry in their bodies.

Hari Prasad manages roughly 1,400 colonies across Sud Mahadev, Kishtwar, Bhaderwah and Punjab, moving them seasonally in pursuit of better forage. Transport costs, he said, consume most of what he earns.

He is pushing state officials to introduce a subsidy for migratory beekeepers, and he wants agro-chemical-free buffer zones established around flowering crops and vegetable belts to give pollinators room to survive.

Wholesale honey prices have collapsed in recent months, a decline Prasad connects partly to the ongoing war disrupting exports to Gulf countries. He also blames adulteration, alleging that large brands are cutting corners to undercut small producers.

A closer look tells a more precise story: rather than surfactant chemicals, several companies appear to be using sophisticated imported sugar syrups, engineered specifically to slip past standard purity tests. The effect on local producers is the same either way. Genuine honey struggles to compete on price against a product built to imitate it.

The stakes extend well beyond the beekeepers themselves. Bees pollinate the apple, cherry, almond and vegetable crops that define Kashmir's agricultural economy, and researchers value that pollination service at roughly ₹12,656 crore annually, with managed pollination boosting apple yields by about 19 percent.

Apiculture officials estimate that 30 to 40 percent of migratory colonies die during the winter shift south, and some beekeepers describe production drops as steep as 90 percent in bad seasons.

In response, a handful of officials and growers have begun testing "warm womb" wintering methods, an attempt to keep hives in Kashmir through the cold months instead of risking the journey.

The valley counts more than 2,100 registered beekeepers and



Annual production of around 60 metric tonnes once fetched ₹800-1,600 per kilogram depending on quality, before pesticide exposure, beetle infestations and unstable weather began eating into both colony strength and price.

produces over 1,200 metric tonnes of honey annually, but bad years can wipe out 70 to 90 percent of that output, translating into losses running into crore rupees.

Ramban, Udhampur and Kishtwar, where beekeeping supplements thousands of rural incomes, have seen output fall by 50 to 80 percent, leaving small operators barely breaking even once migration and input costs are paid.

The apple economy, worth an estimated ₹8,000 to ₹10,000 crore a year, has absorbed

pollination-related losses estimated at ₹300 to ₹400 crore in particularly harsh seasons.

Government figures show registered colonies climbing from 1.23 lakh in 2019 to 2.27 lakh in 2024-25, with honey production rising 77 percent to 3,895 metric tonnes, numbers officials point to with pride even as beekeepers on the ground describe how quickly one bad season can erase those gains.

Amid the losses, one product has found room to grow.

Sulai honey, drawn from

wild *Plectranthus rugosus* blossoms around Banihal, earned a Geographical Indication tag in 2023. Prices have climbed from ₹800-1,200 per kilogram to nearly ₹2,000 following the recognition, nearly double what many plainland honeys command.

Acacia honey from the valley and multiflora varieties from Udhampur and Poonch have followed a similar, if smaller, path upward.

Akhtar Wani, who leads a farmer producer company in Baramulla

and has helped establish two others in Kupwara, described members maintaining thousands of bee boxes between them, all facing the same pesticide exposure during winter migrations to Jammu, Gujarat, Rajasthan and Madhya Pradesh.

He wants chemical-free flowering zones designated by the government and broader awareness of federal food-processing schemes that could help beekeepers build small honey-processing units of their own.

Wholesale prices in Baramulla can fall as low as ₹200 per kilogram even as retail prices hold between ₹600 and ₹1,500, a gap Wani said justifies a minimum support price.

Orchard surveys across Kashmir show farmers applying seven to twelve pesticide sprays a season, some during bloom itself, a practice many growers now admit has thinned pollinator populations and degraded their habitats.

Researchers are calling for tighter regulation of high-risk chemicals, protected buffer zones around bee forage, and a shift toward integrated pest management that reduces spray frequency without sacrificing crop yields.

Mushtaq Ahmad, who runs a farmer collective in Banihal with about 160 members and 1,700 colonies, watched output fall from an initial peak to hives numbering closer to 1,000.

Annual production of around 60 metric tonnes once fetched ₹800-1,600 per kilogram depending on quality, before pesticide exposure, beetle infestations and unstable weather began eating into both colony strength and price.

What remains constant, across every district and every beekeeper interviewed, is the demand for a floor beneath their prices and a barrier between their bees and the chemicals killing them.

Kashmir's mountains still produce some of the finest honey in the country, amber and herbal and rare.

Whether the bees survive long enough to keep making it depends on decisions still waiting to be made in Srinagar and New Delhi.

— The author is an environmental advocate and policy writer, and can be reached at verma.anujjk@gmail.com.

The Myth Kashmir Was Told Twice

A new book argues that the story of Kashmiri "backwardness" was manufactured before 1989 and recycled after 2019, using the same statistics to justify opposite political conclusions.



Malik Daniyal

Sehar Iqbal's *A Strategic Myth: "Underdevelopment" in Jammu and Kashmir* opens with a number most readers will not expect.

By the 1970s, the erstwhile princely state had climbed out of special category status into the general category, its human development indicators improving enough to place it among India's better-performing regions.

That fact lies uneasily beside the story most Indians have absorbed for decades: that Kashmir's constitutional distinctiveness produced stagnation, and that real progress began only when Article 370 was struck down in 2019.

Sehar's book does not so much dispute this story as dismantle its factual foundation.

The princely state Kashmir joined India as in 1947 was genuinely poor. A feudal agrarian system had left per capita income, literacy and life expectancy well below most of the subcontinent.

Sehar accepts this starting point. Her argument is about what comes next: the leap from that fact to the claim that special status caused

everything that followed. Land redistribution, pushed through aggressively in the decades after accession, transformed the lives and livelihoods of rural families far beyond what aggregate GDP figures could capture.

To document this, she does something unusual for a work of development economics: she sits with villagers who remember the redistribution firsthand, and lets their testimony stand beside the official data.

Many of these witnesses are old now, and the pandemic thinned their numbers further.

The book arrives at almost the last moment when such memories can still be gathered directly, rather than pieced together from documents.

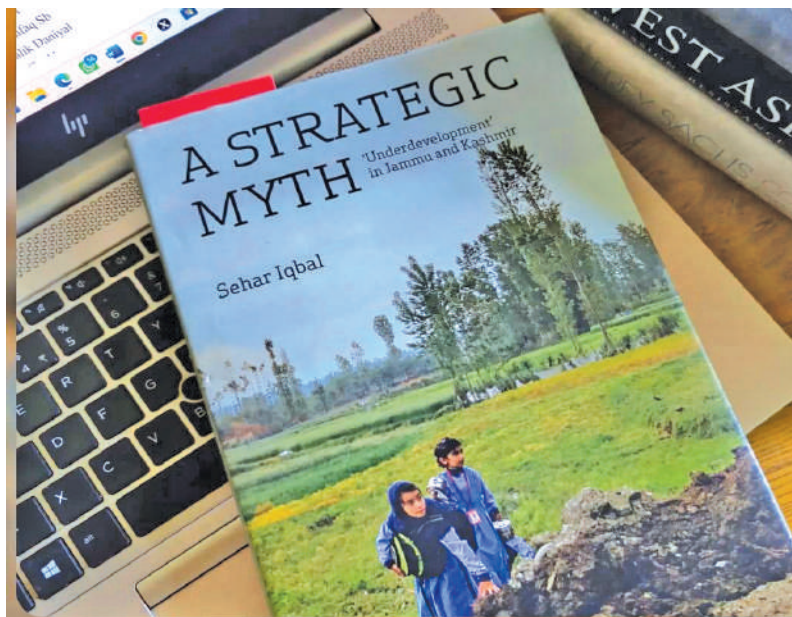
Eight chapters build the case through different indicators rather than one striking statistic. Income, healthcare, education, debt and housing challenge the popular picture of a region left behind.

Gender receives sustained attention rather than a token subsection.

Drawing on National Family Health Survey data, Sehar isolates seven gender-related measures and finds the region ahead of the national average on four, including maternal mortality and reported domestic violence, while matching the national figure on women's participation in household decisions.

None of this fits comfortably into either the nostalgic account of pre-1989 Kashmir or the triumphant account of post-2019 Kashmir. It sits, inconveniently, in between.

The book's sharpest chapter comes last, titled "Insult and Injury: Development in and as a Union Territory."



Here Sehar turns from the historical record to the political present, examining what the central government has claimed since abrogation.

Her argument is precise: the underdevelopment narrative has done double duty. First it justified stripping the region of constitutional protections. Then it was redeployed to claim credit for gains that, by her own figures, had already been substantially achieved decades earlier.

Holding two governments separated by seventy years to the identical evidentiary standard is an unusual move for a policy monograph, and it is the moment the book stops being merely descriptive and becomes an argument with teeth.

Placing Kashmir beside Kerala and Himachal Pradesh sharpens the point

further.

Both states began the postcolonial period with comparably modest human development baselines, and both pursued redistributive land policy along different tracks.

Seen against this wider picture, Kashmir's mid-century gains look like part of a broader postcolonial pattern in which land reform brought measurable improvements in people's lives.

This comparative framing does something important: it keeps the book from becoming a defensive, exceptionalist case for one region, and instead folds Kashmir into a national conversation about how land reform actually worked.

But despite a telling treatise, limitations remain.

Sehar leans heavily on official and secondary statistics, and state-generated data in a heavily administered region has its own vulnerabilities, driven by who has the capacity and incentive to measure what.

A closer examination of those limits, rather than treating the numbers as unquestionably sound, would have strengthened her case.

The comparative framing against Kerala and Himachal Pradesh, while illuminating, occasionally glosses over disparities within Jammu, Kashmir and Ladakh that a slim volume cannot fully hold.

Readers hoping for a fuller discussion of the capability approach associated with Amartya Sen and Martha Nussbaum, which Sehar invokes but does not develop at length, will find it compressed beside the book's denser empirical chapters.

These are questions of scope, not of discipline. What Sehar has built is a compact, seven-year corrective to a story that has proven durable precisely because it has never been forced to answer to its own numbers.

She refuses both the romance of the pre-1989 period and the uncritical acceptance of what came after abrogation.

Literacy rates, land titles, and maternal mortality figures are unglamorous instruments, but they are the only ones that do not bend to whichever government happens to be telling the story that year.

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

What Sehar has built is a compact, seven-year corrective to a story that has proven durable precisely because it has never been forced to answer to its own numbers

J&K Govt Orders Probe Against Former LCMA Assistant Engineer Srinagar Development Authority VC Appointed Inquiry Officer; Report Sought Within 30 Days

Observer News Service

Srinagar: The Jammu and Kashmir Government has ordered a departmental inquiry into charges against Amir Farooq Kuttay, Assistant Engineer, who was formerly posted with the Lake Conservation and Management Authority (LCMA). According to Government Order No. 185-JK(HUD) of 2026, issued by the Housing and Urban Development Department on September

3, Shabir Hussain Bhat, JKAS, Vice Chairman of the Srinagar Development Authority, has been appointed as the Inquiry Officer to inquire into the charges levelled against Kuttay. The order has been issued under Rule 33 of the Jammu and Kashmir Civil Services (Classification, Control and Appeal) Rules, 1956. Muneer Ahmad Khan, JKAS, Secretary of the Lake Conservation and Management Authority, has been appointed as the Presenting Officer and

will assist the Inquiry Officer in the proceedings. The Government has directed the Inquiry Officer to submit his report and findings within 30 days from the date of issuance of the order. The inquiry has been ordered to examine the charges against Kuttay in accordance with the applicable service rules. The order was issued by Mandeep Kaur, IAS, Commissioner/Secretary to the Government, Housing and Urban Development Department.

223 Selected Sportspersons Await Joining, Seek Govt Intervention

Agencies

Srinagar:The fate of 223 outstanding sportspersons selected for government service under the sports quota remains uncertain, with the selected athletes yet to join their duties amid an issue involving an individual candidate from Jammu. The sportspersons, who were selected for government appointments under the applicable sports-quota provisions, say they are being made to suffer for a matter that does not concern their selection and have urged the Jammu and Kashmir Government to resolve the issue without further delay. The controversy is linked to the case of Surya Pratap Singh of Jammu, an Asian Games medalist who, according to the

sportspersons, was excluded from the selection process on what they described as “duping charges.” Singh subsequently staged a protest in Jammu seeking government employment, following which Sports Minister Satish Sharma assured him of a job. The development has reportedly created uncertainty around the appointment process involving the 223 selected sportspersons, leaving them unable to join their assigned government duties. The affected sportspersons have questioned why candidates who have already been selected for government service should be prevented from joining because of an issue involving an individual candidate. “What is our fault?” is the

question being raised by the selected athletes, who say they completed the required process and earned their selection through sporting achievements but are now being left in uncertainty. They argue that if the Government has found them eligible and selected them for appointment, there should be no reason to keep their joining on hold indefinitely. The sportspersons have appealed to the Lieutenant Governor’s administration and the concerned departments to resolve the matter administratively and ensure that the appointment process of the 223 selected candidates is not held hostage to an individual case. For athletes who have represented Jammu and Kashmir and

the country and achieved recognition through years of training and competition, the prolonged uncertainty over employment has added to their concerns. The sportspersons maintain that the Government can address any dispute concerning an individual candidate separately without affecting the appointments of those who have already been selected. They have called for immediate intervention by the administration so that the selected athletes can finally join their duties instead of remaining caught in an unresolved administrative situation. Repeated attempts to contact Sports Minister Satish Sharma for his response to the issue were unsuccessful as, as usual, the minister did not pick up the phone. (KNT)

CONTD. FROM FRONT PAGE

Massive Search

any remaining threat. Inputs about the presence of foreign terrorists in the Pir Panjal forest belt had prompted the security forces to intensify the search operation, officials said. Meanwhile, Inspector General of Police, Kashmir Zone, Sujit Kumar, reached near the operation site in Budgam to take stock of the ongoing operation and review the security situation. Security forces have maintained heightened alert in and around the operation area, while searches are being conducted to ensure that no other terrorist is hiding in the forests. As a precautionary measure, Yousmarg has been shut for tourists amid the ongoing operation. Movement in the tourist destination has been restricted while security forces continue their searches in the surrounding forest areas. The identity of the slain terrorist has not yet been ascertained. The encounter comes after a lull of several months in such operations in the Valley. Security forces have continued their searches in forested areas to prevent any movement or presence of terrorists in the region. The operation was ongoing when this report was filed.

Don’t Politicise

stipend as genuine but urged against giving the issue a political colour. Speaking to reporters in Bijbehara, Itoo said she was herself a doctor and understood the difficulties faced by medical interns during their training. “I have been a doctor myself, and I understand the difficulties interns face. They are playing an important role in hospitals, and their concerns are genuine,” she said.

The Minister said the matter was already under consideration and the concerned file was presently with the Finance Department. She assured that the Government would make every possible effort to address the issue and take steps for the welfare of interns at the earliest. However, Itoo expressed displeasure over attempts to politicise the ongoing protest, saying that the genuine concerns of interns should not become a platform for political point-scoring. “The issue of interns is very genuine, but it should not be politicised,” she said. She also questioned those attempting to raise the issue politically, asking them to recall what steps they had taken for the welfare of interns when they were in government. The remarks come amid an ongoing protest by MBBS and BDS interns across Jammu and Kashmir over their demand for enhancement of the monthly stipend. Itoo reiterated that the Government was seized of the matter and that efforts were underway to resolve the issue through the appropriate administrative process. During her visit to Bijbehara, the Minister also appreciated Padma Shri awardee Javed Tak for his social work and contribution towards education and the welfare of children. She assured him of every possible support from the Social Welfare and School Education departments for the functioning and development of the Zaiba Aapa Institute of Inclusive Education at Bijbehara.

Search Ops In Samba

Security personnel carried out thorough checks and maintained a presence along identified routes and vulnerable areas. During the exercise, a special joint team comprising police and BSF was established at a strategic location. This was supervised by the additional superintendent of police, Samba, along with the deputy superintendent of police from the Special Operations Group and an inspector from the BSF. Officers stationed at checkpoints conducted detailed inspections of vehicles and their occupants, raising alert throughout the operation. As part of the exercise, police personnel also interacted with locals and sensitised them about the importance of community participation in maintaining security and preventing any untoward incident. They provided residents with contact numbers for the police, including the Police Control Room Samba and SOG Samba, encouraging them to report any suspicious individuals, movements, vehicles, or unusual activities in their areas. Senior Superintendent of police (SSP) Samba, Anuj Kumar, stated that the joint exercise aimed to bolster security preparedness, enhance coordination among agencies, increase police visibility, and foster a sense of safety within the local community. He assured the public that every credible input received from citizens would be assessed

promptly and acted upon appropriately. (PTI)

J&K Attains ‘Fully

the accomplishment with pride. “From the mountains of Kashmir to the plains of Jammu, our teachers, officers, volunteers, and learners carried the torch of education into every community. Their dedication has transformed lives and strengthened the foundation of a brighter future,” Itoo said. She credited teachers, volunteers, officers and learners for the achievement, saying it belonged to everyone who contributed to the literacy campaign. “This achievement belongs to every teacher who taught, every volunteer who served, every officer who guided, and above all, every learner who chose to learn,” she said. However, Itoo said the achievement should not be viewed as the end of the education journey, but rather as the beginning of a new phase. “It is the beginning of a new chapter. A chapter where education will continue to guide Jammu & Kashmir towards peace, progress, dignity, equality, and prosperity,” she said.

J&K Medical Interns

ended without an agreement that could persuade the interns to withdraw their agitation. The interns have been demanding that their monthly stipend be increased from the existing 12,300 to 30,000. They began their indefinite strike on August 31, arguing that the stipend has remained unchanged for years despite inflation, long working hours, emergency duties and the responsibilities assigned to them in government hospitals. The Government has previously acknowledged the demand. Health Minister Sakina Itoo had described the demand as justified and said the proposal was under consideration in the Finance Department. She had also urged the interns to call off the strike, citing its impact on patient care. The interns, however, maintain that assurances that the matter is “under process” are no longer sufficient, particularly as the issue has remained pending despite earlier recommendations and repeated representations. Dr Javiad said the interns would not end their agitation merely on the basis of another verbal assurance. “We will continue our strike till the resolution of our issue,” he said. The continuation of the strike is expected to keep putting additional pressure on clinical services at medical institutions where interns have withdrawn from routine duties. Reports from GMC Srinagar have already indicated an increased workload for postgraduate doctors following the interns’ absence from wards, emergency departments and other clinical areas. The interns maintain that they are not seeking an indefinite confrontation with the Government, but a formal decision that provides certainty regarding the revised stipend. For now, however, the meeting has failed to break the impasse, with the interns making it clear that they will continue their strike until their demand is formally resolved.

CM Calls On

Office of the Chief Minister said. In a post on X, the Chief Minister’s Office said the discussions focused on “restoration of Statehood, finalisation of the Transaction of Business Rules, rationalisation of reservations” and other important issues concerning Jammu and Kashmir. Omar also briefed the Union Home Minister about the first International Film Festival of Jammu and Kashmir (IFFJK), scheduled to begin in Srinagar next week. During the meeting, the Chief Minister also thanked Shah for the timely assistance being extended to Jammu and Kashmir in the wake of flood-related damage reported from several areas. Restoration of Statehood has remained a key demand of the Jammu and Kashmir Government, with the issue being repeatedly raised with the Centre. The meeting comes amid the J&K Government’s continued efforts to pursue restoration of Statehood and address other pending issues concerning the Union Territory. The discussions also came ahead of the International Film Festival of Jammu and Kashmir, which is scheduled to be held in Srinagar from September 7 to 10. -ONS

J&K HC Quashes

The High Court, after examining the matter, found that the grounds relied upon for the detention were stale and could not sustain the preventive detention order. The court also noted that the detaining authority had failed to demonstrate why recourse to ordinary criminal law was inadequate or insufficient to deal with the allegations against War. The court accordingly quashed the detention order and directed the authorities to release War forthwith, unless he was required in connection with any other case. The judgment underscores that preventive detention, being an exceptional measure, must satisfy the statutory and constitutional safeguards governing such detention and cannot be sustained merely on the basis of stale or insufficient grounds.

IGP Reviews Security

inter-agency coordination. Kumar stressed the need for adequate and strategically planned deployment at all identified venues, keeping in view the expected movement and gathering of visitors, participants, dignitaries and other stakeholders. He also directed officers to ensure thorough route clearance and appropriate deployment of Road Opening Parties (ROPs) along designated routes to facilitate secure and uninterrupted movement during the festival. The officers were further directed to put in place effective crowd management measures, regulate entry and exit points and ensure smooth movement of people around the venues. The IGP also emphasised the need for appropriate traffic management plans to ensure smooth vehicular movement and minimise

inconvenience to the public.

He directed that adequate personnel be deployed at vulnerable and congested points and stressed close coordination among all concerned agencies to ensure effective management of security and traffic arrangements throughout the festival. The International Film Festival of Jammu and Kashmir is scheduled to take place from September 7 to 10, with the security agencies gearing up to ensure the event is conducted smoothly and securely. Ladakh’s Barren be allotted on a leasehold basis in accordance with the rules. “The rules introduce a one-time regularisation mechanism for nautor land occupied before October 27, 2020, the date on which the JK tenancy act, 1980 was repealed. Any possession of such land after the cut-off date will not be eligible for regularisation”, he said. The new framework also vests the authority to allot nautor land with the LAHDCs in all seven districts. “Under Section 42 of the Ladakh autonomous hill development councils act, 1997, land within the district stands transferred to the Council, while clause (i) of Section 23 vests executive powers in the Council in relation to the allotment, use and occupation of land vested in it,” the rules state. Saxena said the rules seek to strike a balance between protecting the legitimate interests of genuine nautor landholders and safeguarding public and Council land from encroachment and unauthorised claims. “The nautor issue has a deep historical connection with the lives and livelihoods of the people of Ladakh. For generations, our people have worked hard to bring barren and waste land under cultivation in one of the most challenging agricultural environments in the country,” the lieutenant governor said. “These rules provide a transparent and uniform mechanism to address this long-pending issue and give legal certainty to genuine holders. It will also enable such land to be utilised as a financial asset, including for availing bank loans,” he added. The spokesperson said the absence of a clear and uniform legal framework had restricted effective utilisation of nautor land, particularly for holders who did not possess proprietary rights and were consequently unable to use the land as a financial asset, including for obtaining loans. At the same time, the new framework is aimed at preventing disputes and unauthorised claims over government and council land, he added. Under the rules, genuinely eligible nautor holders can be granted proprietary rights up to 10 acres, with the amount payable for proprietary rights fixed at the market rate notified by the administration for the concerned revenue village, he added. For nautor holdings beyond 10 acres, proprietary rights may be allotted on a leasehold basis, with the premium fixed at 80 per cent of the notified market rate.

For ‘Gair Mustaqil’ holdings, field verification by revenue authorities will be mandatory to establish the identity of the occupant, area under occupation, nature and extent of cultivation, date of possession, and whether the occupation existed before the prescribed cut-off date, he added. Gair Mustaqil land refers to a holding where the occupant or cultivator does not have the same permanent proprietary status as a Mustaqil (permanent) holder. In the case of Mustaqil landholdings, the respective LAHDC will determine whether field verification is required based on ground realities. The rules stipulate that abandoned land or land found to have been encroached upon will not qualify for allotment and will be liable to eviction, the spokesperson said. Nautor land mutated before the October 27, 2020 cut-off date, where a change in land use has taken place, may also be considered for regularisation, subject to formal approval of the change in land use by the competent authority. Land regularised under the rules can be mortgaged with scheduled banks, financial institutions and government-backed lending agencies for development of the land. In municipal areas, planning areas and areas covered by master plans, zonal plans or development authorities, the use of land will have to strictly conform to applicable planning regulations. The rules also provide for periodic review and audit of allotments and regularisations. Any violation, misrepresentation, concealment of facts, non-utilisation, unauthorised transfer or breach of conditions may lead to cancellation or resumption of the land. The rules will now be placed in the public domain for a two-week consultation period before their final notification, the spokesperson stated.

Sangarmal's Big-Ticket

J&K-based company and Bhutani Infra Ltd, emerged as the successful bidder. The complex was planned with shops, Craft Bazaar spaces, kiosks, food courts, offices, parking facilities and other amenities. However, the project failed to attract the expected commercial activity and remained largely underutilised. The massive auction has now revived interest in the property and raised expectations of its redevelopment. The deal has also sparked a political row. PDP leader Iltija Mufti criticised the auction, alleging that prime land in Kashmir was being handed over to outsiders. In a post on X, Mufti said the Sangarmal property had been handed over to Parmesh Construction, which she described as a “non-local firm”. She also questioned the role of a local company in the consortium, alleging that its participation was being used to conceal the actual arrangement. The controversy comes amid renewed government efforts to put underused prime properties in Srinagar to productive commercial use.



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Chief Secy Assesses Framework of 'Draft J&K EV Policy 2026'

Observer News Service

SRINAGAR: Chief Secretary, Atal Dulloo on Friday called for a reliability-first and fiscally prudent approach to electric mobility in Jammu and Kashmir, with EV adoption to be scaled up with establishing adequate service readiness, winter performance and dependable charging infrastructure.

The Chief Secretary was chairing a meeting to review the comprehensive framework of the Draft Jammu and Kashmir Electric Vehicle (EV) Policy 2026, formulated by the Transport Department with support from the Centre for Innovation and Transformation in Governance (CITaG).

The meeting was attended by ACS, Power Development Department; ACS, Finance; Commissioner Secretary, FCS&CA; Commissioner Secretary, Housing & Urban Development Department; Commissioner Secretary, Law; Secretary, Transport; Commissioner, JMC/SMC, besides other concerned officers and subject experts from CITaG.

While speaking the Chief Secretary directed that implementation of the proposed policy should follow a strictly sequenced approach, beginning with service preparedness before expansion of charging corri-



dors and wider market adoption.

He stressed that EV deployment in J&K must be in consonance with the Union Territory's distinct terrain, climatic conditions and sub-zero operating environments, particularly on difficult routes, so that infrastructure and vehicle performance are validated under actual field conditions before scaling up.

On the fiscal framework, the Chief Secretary directs for ensuring that government support remains targeted towards strategic gaps and capacity building of the concerned. He emphasised greater reliance on centrally sponsored interventions, including PM E-DRIIVE, as the principal fiscal an-

chor for the transition.

The Chief Secretary further directed the Law Department to undertake the requisite legal vetting of the draft policy before its finalisation.

Regarding electrification of the government fleet, Dulloo directed that replacement of government vehicles should be undertaken in a phased and need-based manner, strictly keeping in view the terrain, climatic conditions and operational requirements of different areas of J&K.

On this occasion the Secretary, Transport, Avny Lavasa highlighted that the proposed policy has been structured around eight stra-

tegic pillars, with measurable targets for vehicle adoption, charging infrastructure, workforce development, fiscal support, power-system integration and environmental outcomes.

She added that tangible policy targets had been envisaged within the next 6 years of the policy adoption constituting an EV share of 40 per cent in new personal four-wheeler registrations, 35 per cent in two-wheelers, 30 per cent in buses and 25 per cent in taxis and shared mobility.

To support this transition, the proposed roadmap envisages expansion of the public charging network from the present baseline

of around 180 stations to 450 sites by the third year and 900 sites by the sixth year. This would include 140 priority fast-charging hubs, each targeted to maintain at least 98 per cent monthly uptime.

A dedicated Winter Validation Protocol has been proposed to assess battery thermal behaviour, low-temperature charging acceptance and the impact of cabin heating on vehicle performance.

The proposed policy also favours incentivising the early adopters. It envisages giving eligible buyers the option of either interest subvention of up to 3 per cent per annum or a rolling top-up support, with both benefits not being admissible simultaneously.

An annual scrappage exchange bonus has too been recommended for a maximum period of three years. The benefit would be available only through authorised scrappage channels and subject to verification through a centralised digital database.

The policy also proposes managed integration of EV charging demand with the power system through Time-of-Day tariffs and solar-hour charging, with a target of 40 per cent renewable-energy integration in charging operations within the targeted period of time.

LG Extends Greetings on Teachers' Day

SRINAGAR: The Lieutenant Governor, Manoj Sinha, extended his heartiest greetings to the teachers on the occasion of Teachers' Day, which is being celebrated on September 05.

In a message, the Lieutenant Governor said, "Heartiest greetings and best wishes to the teachers on the occasion of Teachers' Day. I offer my humble tributes to the great educationist, philosopher, and former President of India, Dr. Sarvepalli Radhakrishnan Ji, on his Janm-Jayanti. His exemplary life and visionary work continue to be a guiding light for generations to come.

Teachers' Day provides an auspicious occasion to express our profound gratitude for the continuous commitment of educators to human advancement.

Teachers are true nation-builders and changemakers. By sparking curiosity and breaking down barriers, they shape young minds and help students grow into creative and compassionate leaders.

I urge teachers to celebrate every student's unique quality and make their classrooms engaging and interactive spaces. On this day, let us strengthen our resolve to provide quality education for all and work together to build a Developed India by 2047. (Observer News Service)

Soldier Dies after Falling from Forward Post in Rajouri

RAJOURI: An Army soldier died after falling from a forward post along the Line of Control in the Nowshera sector of Rajouri district on Friday, official sources said.

Sources revealed that Lance Naik Rituk Choudhary, 26, fell from the post towards a downhill ridge.

He was evacuated to the MI Room at Rumuldihara, where he was declared dead on arrival, they said.

The body will be handed over his legal heirs after completing legal formalities.

Choudhary was a resident of Uklada village of Gujarat's Tapi district—(KNO)

PDP Expels Kaiser Ahmad Ganie Over 'Anti-Party Activities'

GANDERBAL: The Jammu and Kashmir Peoples Democratic Party (PDP) has expelled Kaiser Ahmad Ganie, a senior party leader and Zone President Ganderbal, from its basic membership with immediate effect over alleged involvement in anti-party activities and acts of indiscipline.

The expulsion was ordered by PDP District President Ganderbal Zahoor Ahmad Rather following a recommendation from the party's constituency in-charge.

As per the order, a copy of which was accessed by Kashmir Observer, Ganie shall cease to be a member of the PDP with immediate effect.

The move comes amid a series of resignations by PDP members in the Kangan constituency over the past few days, with several party workers quitting the party. (Observer News Service)

PDP's Dr Mehboob Beg Questions Omar Government's Performance

SRINAGAR: PDP senior leader Dr Mehboob Beg on Friday slammed the Omar Abdullah-led government, questioning its poll promise delivery and asserting that the administration cannot evade public accountability.

In a post on X, the PDP leader said the opposition and the people have every right to raise questions, and the government is duty-bound to respond.

"Is a five-year mandate an excuse for no visible progress in the first two years?" He asked, taking a dig at the National Conference administration.

In a post, Dr Mehboob Beg wondered whether the promised 200 units of free electricity and free LPG cylinders would be delivered only on the last day of the government's tenure.

"The people have much more intelligence than you credit them for," he remarked, accusing the ruling dispensation of ducking accountability.

Notably, Earlier this week, the PDP party president Mehbooba Mufti had also hit out at the NC over "selective" protest restrictions, alleging that while her party was barred from peaceful demonstrations, the NC and the BJP were allowed to take to the streets freely.

"Who authorises these selective restrictions?" she had asked on X, calling out the double standard. (Observer News Service)

Wular Lake Shrinks From 90.57 To 65.33 Sq Km In Four Decades: Study

BANDIPORA: Wular Lake's surface area declined from 90.57 square kilometres in 1985 to 65.33 square kilometres in 2024, according to a new remote-sensing study that documents a sustained reduction in the lake's extent over nearly four decades.

The study analysed satellite imagery from 1985, 2000, 2015 and 2024 using Normalized Difference Water Index and Support Vector Machine classification techniques.

The lake's surface area declined to 76.62 square kilometres by 2000 and further to 69.77 square kilometres in 2015 before reaching 65.33 square kilometres in 2024.

The study also estimated a reduction in average water storage from 176 million cubic metres in 1985 to 65 million cubic metres in 2024.

The researchers associated the long-term changes with climate variability, reduced precipitation and human interventions, while also examining the role of urbanisation and water extraction.

Satellite-altimetry observations between 2016 and 2025 showed seasonal fluctuations in water levels, adding to concerns over long-term hydrological instability.

The researchers said the changes could affect the ecological stability of the lake and communities dependent on its resources.

They called for integrated water-resource management and continued monitoring of the lake through remote-sensing techniques. [KNT]

Glacial Lake in Kishtwar's Warwan Basin Expands 308%, Study Flags Flood Risk

Agencies

KISHTWAR: A glacial lake in the remote Warwan basin of Kishtwar district has expanded by about 308 per cent between 1999 and 2024, with a new scientific study warning that an avalanche-triggered glacial lake outburst flood could generate a cascading sequence of flooding and debris flows downstream.

The study, currently available as a 2026 pre-print, examined mass movements, glacier changes and glacial lakes in the Warwan sub-basin.

Researchers found that Lake-B expanded from approximately 0.075 square kilometres in 1999 to 0.306 square kilometres in 2024.

The study also identified previous avalanche and GLOF events in the basin. An avalanche in September 2020 struck a proglacial lake and triggered a GLOF, resulting



in the complete drainage of stored water and sediment and the formation of a downstream debris flow.

For Lake-B, modelling of a worst-case large-magnitude scenario involving a rock-ice avalanche estimated a peak liquid discharge of about 2,214 cubic metres per second immediately downstream of the lake.

The modelling indicated that up to 97.5 per cent of the lake's water could potentially be drained in that scenario.

The researchers identified settlements including Youdu and Qaderna, along with roads, bridges and res-

idential structures, within potential inundation zones.

They also warned that the availability of loose sediment from previous mass movements could increase the possibility of debris-flow cascades, potentially affecting downstream infrastructure and hydropower facilities.

The researchers stressed the need for preparedness, mitigation planning and early-warning systems closer to the source of a potential GLOF.

The findings represent a modelled risk assessment and do not indicate that an outburst flood is imminent. [KNT]

Five Kashmir Glacial Lakes Classified 'Very High' For GLOF Susceptibility, Study Finds

Agencies

SRINAGAR: Five glacial lakes in the Kashmir Himalaya have been classified as having very high susceptibility to glacial lake outburst floods, with modelling indicating that a potential outburst could affect 2,704 downstream buildings, 15 major bridges, roads and a hydropower project, according to a study published in the Journal of Glaciology.

The study assessed 155 glacial lakes using multiple indicators linked to GLOF susceptibility.

Bramsar, Nundkol, Bhagsar, Chirsar and Gangabal were placed in the very-high-susceptibil-

ity category.

Thirty-five additional lakes were classified as having high susceptibility, while 77 fell into the moderate category. The researchers identified differences in the factors contributing to the susceptibility of individual lakes.

Bramsar emerged with the highest susceptibility index, followed by Nundkol, Bhagsar, Chirsar and Gangabal.

The assessment estimated that potential outburst events from Bramsar and Chirsar could affect 406 buildings and five bridges. Events involving Nundkol and Gangabal could affect 1,184 buildings, four

bridges and a hydropower project, while Bhagsar could expose 1,114 buildings and six bridges along with the Mughal Road.

Taken together, the five lakes were found to have potential downstream exposure involving 2,704 buildings and 15 major bridges.

The researchers stressed that the exposure figures are indicative because the assessment used buffer-based modelling rather than a full physically based simulation of an actual flood.

They recommended continued satellite and field monitoring, hydrodynamic modelling and community-based early-warning systems. [KNT]

Lumpy Skin Disease Spreads to Nine Kashmir Epicentres

Observer News Service

SRINAGAR: Minister for Agriculture Production, Rural Development and Panchayati Raj, Cooperative and Election Department, Javid Ahmad Dar chaired a meeting to review the prevailing situation of Lumpy Skin Disease (LSD) and the measures being undertaken for its effective containment across Jammu and Kashmir.

During the meeting, the Minister was briefed on the district-wise status of the disease, vaccination coverage, availability of medicines and vaccines, sample collection and testing besides other containment measures being implemented by the Animal Husbandry Department. It was informed that nine active epicentres have been reported in Kashmir, with 59 cattle affected, including 55 active cases while no deaths have been reported so far.

Ganderbal is the most affected district, accounting for 52 cases across seven epicentres, followed by Bandipora with three cases



FILE PIC

and Srinagar with the remaining cases.

Taking detailed district-wise feedback, Javid Dar directed the concerned officers to strictly adhere to the prescribed treatment protocols and expedite the vaccination drive to prevent further transmission of the disease. He stressed the need for intensified surveillance and timely intervention, particularly in areas reporting higher incidence of LSD.

The Minister called for strengthened field-level coordination, adequate deployment of veterinary experts and field staff and regular visits to affected areas. He also directed the department to intensify awareness campaigns, including door-to-door outreach, to educate farmers

about preventive measures, early reporting and appropriate care of affected livestock.

Javid Dar directed the officers to ensure adequate availability of essential medicines and vaccines in all affected areas besides maintaining close monitoring of the situation for timely and effective response.

The Minister emphasised that concerted efforts by all stakeholders, coupled with scientific treatment, timely vaccination and greater farmer awareness, are essential to contain the disease and safeguard livestock.

HoDs of Animal Husbandry Kashmir, Chief Animal Husbandry Officers and other concerned officers attended the meeting.

Public Service Commission Headless for Nearly 3 Weeks

Agencies

SRINAGAR: The Jammu and Kashmir Public Service Commission (JKPSC) has remained headless for nearly three weeks, rendering the constitutional body virtually non-functional.

The Commission, mandated to conduct recruitment for gazetted posts, has been without a chairperson since August 15, 2026, when Arun Kumar Choudhary, a former IPS officer, completed his term as Chairman.

"The Commission's functioning has been severely hampered due to the absence of a chairperson as it cannot take key deci-

sions on the recruitment process," an official said on condition of anonymity.

He explained that legally the Commission comprises a chairperson and other members. "So, it is clear that in absence of a Chairperson, the Commission cannot discharge its key functions," he said.

Officials pointed out that the Government has powers to appoint an Acting Chairperson to ensure normal functioning. Article 316(1A) of the Constitution of India states: "If the office of the Chairman of the Commission becomes vacant or if any such Chairman is by reason of absence or for

any other reason unable to perform the duties of his office, those duties shall, until some person appointed under clause (1) to the vacant office has entered on the duties thereof or, as the case may be, until the Chairperson has resumed his duties, be performed by such one of the other members of the Commission as the President, in the case of the Union Commission or a Joint Commission, and the Governor of the State in the case of a State Commission, may appoint for the purpose."

At present, the Commission is left with only two Members—Dr. Rajiv Singh and Asaf Mehmood Sagar—(KNO)

Ahead of Talks, Proposed Kargil-Leh Padyatra Postponed

Agencies

SRINAGAR: Ladakhi groups have postponed their proposed padyatra from Kargil to Leh in view of the upcoming talks with the Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA). Addressing a press conference in Leh, climate activist Sonam Wangchuk, as per KNO, said the leadership has collectively decided to defer the march.

"The talks have been scheduled just one day before the padyatra was supposed to begin on September 10. Keeping this development in mind, we have collectively

decided to postpone the padyatra for the time being," he said.

Wangchuk added that the future course of action would depend largely on the outcome of the September 9 meeting. "If the talks go very well, perhaps we may not need to hold many major programmes," he added.

Former minister and Leh Apex Body Co-Chairman Chering Dorje said the body had scaled down its activities over the past two months in view of the Dalai Lama's stay in Leh, but would now intensify programmes following his return to Dharamshala.—(KNO)

Four SKUAST-K Students Bag Research Fellowships in Japan

Observer News Service

SRINAGAR: Four students from Sher-e-Kashmir University of Agricultural Sciences and Technology of Kashmir have been selected for competitive research fellowships in Japan, advancing the institution's international academic engagements. The selections take place amid expanding educational ties between India and Japan, which include a mutual framework aiming to host 10,000 Indian students and research-

ers over the next five years.

The selected scholars include doctoral student Tabish Jaan and master's student Misbah Fayaz, both pursuing biotechnology under the supervision of Dr. Sajad Majeed Zargar, Head of the Division of Plant Biotechnology. From the discipline of plant pathology, doctoral scholar Sayima Nargis, working under the guidance of Dr. Tariq Rasool, along with master's graduate Nulevino Iralu, who completed her degree under the supervision of Dr.

Aflaq Hameed, have also secured placements.

Tabish Jaan, Misbah Fayaz, and Sayima Nargis have been awarded the JST-LOTUS Fellowship for two years, one year, and three years respectively, while Nulevino Iralu earned a four-year Japanese Government MEXT Scholarship. During their tenures across Japanese research institutes, the scholars will focus on molecular biology and biotechnology applications aimed at mitigating bi-

otic and abiotic stresses in crops and addressing critical nutritional challenges.

During their tenures at research institutes across Japan, the scholars will focus on molecular biology and biotechnology applications aimed at mitigating biotic and abiotic stresses in crops and improving nutritional security. The programs will grant them direct access to Japanese laboratory infrastructure, research methodologies, and collaborative developmental projects.



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