

A Salary Dispute Puts Criminal Law To The Test In Kashmir

Eight workers in Srinagar wanted back pay, so they accused their boss under India's toughest criminal statutes, and a High Court judge just called their bluff.



Syed Sammar Mehdi

Srinagar: Eight employees walked into Safakadal police station on August 27 this year, and did something almost nobody does over a missing paycheck. They filed a criminal complaint. The document named their

employer under Sections 318(4), 351(2), 74, and 61(2) of the Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita, India's new penal code, provisions built for grave crimes, deployed here over

unpaid wages. Nineteen days later, a judge froze the whole thing.

Justice Sanjay Parihar of the High Court of Jammu & Kashmir and Ladakh handed down his order

on September 16, staying the First Information Report against the petitioner and setting October 14 as the date both sides return to argue the case properly. The strategy

behind the complaint reveals something stranger than the case itself.

The petitioner's lawyers, Ishfaq Ahmad Ahanger and Shahid Farooq, told the court that | [More on P6](#)

LEGAL ANALYSTS DESCRIBE THE CASE AS A symptom of something larger spreading through Indian courts, where frustrated employees increasingly weaponize criminal statutes built for violence and fraud to settle what amounts to a contract fight over a paycheck.

'Operation Sohan'

2 JeM Terrorists Killed In Udhampur Encounter

Suspected OGW detained; M4 carbine, AK rifle, Glock pistol and grenades recovered

KO Web Desk

Srinagar: Two Pakistani terrorists affiliated with the proscribed Jaish-e-Mohammad (JeM) were killed and a suspected over-ground worker was detained during a joint counter-terrorism operation in the dense forests of Udhampur district on Thursday, officials said.

The operation, code-named 'Operation Sohan', was launched by the Army, Jammu and Kashmir Police and the Central Reserve Police Force (CRPF) in the Brattal Sohan and Khubban areas of Majalta, near the Kathua border, amid heavy rainfall, difficult terrain and poor visibility.

The Army and police confirmed the killing of the two



terrorists, identified by the J&K Police as Saddam and Mustafa, both Pakistani nationals.

"In a joint intelligence-based operation during the intervening night of September 16-17, confirmed inputs indicated the presence of terrorists in the general area of Brattal, Udhampur. Despite hostile | [More on P6](#)

PM Has Helped Build New, Powerful J&K: LG Sinha

Celebrates PM Modi's birthday with children in Srinagar

Launches month-long Seva Sankalp Abhiyan

Observer News Service

Srinagar: Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha on Thursday said Prime Minister Narendra Modi had "helped build a new, powerful Jammu Kashmir", while highlighting development and welfare initiatives undertaken across the country.

Sinha made the remarks while celebrating the Prime Minister's birthday with children at the 'Palaash' and 'Pareesha'



children's homes in Srinagar. He distributed school bags, sports kits and sweets among the children and reviewed the residential | [More on P6](#)

Science-Policy Link Key To Climate Resilience: LG

Observer News Service

Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha on Thursday called for stronger integration

between scientific research and policymaking to address the challenges of climate change, biodiversity loss and pollution. Addressing | [More on P6](#)

Season's First Snowfall Blankets Gulmarg, Gurez

Observer News Service

Srinagar: The season's first snowfall covered the higher reaches of Kashmir on Thursday, with Gulmarg, Gurez, Zojila and Sonamarg receiving fresh snow as widespread rain lashed the plains, bringing down temperatures across Jammu and Kashmir.

The upper reaches of Gulmarg, including the Apharwat Peak and Gondola Phase 2 area, received snowfall during the night, officials said. The snow covered the higher slopes in a thin white layer.

Fresh snowfall was also reported from Tulail Valley and Kabul Gali in the Gurez sector of north Kashmir's Bandipora district. Kabul Gali, situated at an altitude of around 4,167 metres, received light to moderate snowfall.

The high-altitude pass connects Tulail Valley in Gurez with the Mushkoh Valley towards the Drass sector.

Snowfall was also reported from the higher reaches of Zojila Pass and Zero Point near Sonamarg in central Kashmir's Ganderbal district.

Meanwhile, | [More on P6](#)

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2

61% Of Indian Children Face Extra Month Of Heat Stress: Study

Press Trust Of India

In India, 61 per cent of children, or 145 million, are exposed to at least one additional month of heat stress due to climate change every year, new global research has estimated. Findings published in the journal Science Advances show that climate change has doubled the number of children aged up to nine exposed to at least five total months of dangerous heat stress per year — from 59 million to 118 million (50 per cent of children). An international team of researchers, led by those at Vrije Universiteit Brussel in Belgium, said the study is the first-ever analysis quantifying how heat exposure directly linked to climate change affects different age groups globally, both now and in the near future. Excess heat disrupts the human body's normal functioning, aggravates underlying diseases, and can lead to serious complications such as heatstroke, dehydration and organ failure. The study focuses on humid heat,

which is more dangerous than dry heat because it impedes the body's ability to sweat to cool back down, leading to dangerous levels of heat stress. Globally, up to 560 million children aged 0-9 — 43 per cent of all children in this age group — are living through at least one additional month of heat stress per year due to human-induced climate change, the analysis found. The exposure outpaces that for any other age group and is nearly triple the 190 million people (30 per cent) aged 60-69 experiencing the additional health threat, the researchers said. They added climate change is increasing humid heat the most in tropical regions and poorer countries, where populations are younger, and more children are therefore affected. South Asia, Southeast Asia, and West Africa are the regions with the highest number of children exposed to dangerous heat stress today, the team said. "Climate change is already causing hundreds of millions of children to suffer from dangerous heat worldwide, posing severe risks to their health.

Children in developing countries face (a) disproportionate exposure to climate extremes now and into the future, despite contributing the least to historical greenhouse gas emissions," lead author Rosa Pietroiusti, a PhD researcher at Vrije Universiteit Brussel, said. "At the same time, poverty, inadequate housing, limited access to cooling, and overstretched health care systems leave many children with few ways to protect themselves from the heat," Pietroiusti said. The number of children affected by an additional month of dangerous heat is expected to increase to 620 million (49 per cent of all children) and 650 million (59 per cent) children under projected climate change scenarios of 1.5 degrees Celsius and 2 degrees Celsius of global warming, respectively. In India, 166 million children (74 per cent) are projected to experience at least one additional month of heat stress per year under a global warming of 1.5 degrees Celsius. The figure could be 169 million children (96 per cent) under a global warming of 2 degrees Celsius.

OFFICE OF THE CHILD DEVELOPMENT PROJECT OFFICER POSHAN PROJECT SUMBAL

Phone/Fax: +91-1954-230722, Email ID: Cdpocdssumbal@jk.gov.in

Subject: Final Selection List of candidates for the Posts of Sangnis (AWW).

This office has advertised Two posts of Sangnis (AWW) vide advertisement Notice No 01 of 2026 Dated 20-06-2026 under endorsement No: CDPO/SBL/ADV/2026-27/373-87 Dated: 20-06-2026 and same was published through department of information vide DIP No. #DIPK-2392/26 in Newspapers Kashmir Despatch and Uqaab on 21-06-2026 and vide publicity was also given through PRIs and same was also uploaded on website of DC Bandipora and applications were received accordingly. After proper scrutiny of application forms by the District Level selection committee the final merit of candidates for each ward was made accordingly as per H.R policy for Sangnis (AWW) & Sahikayas (AWH) constituted by Government vide order No: 222-JK(SWD) of 2022 Dated: 30-11-2022 and the same was published vide DIP No. #DIPK-4833/26 in Newspapers Kashmir Observer & Srinagar-e-Jung on 22-08-2026 for inviting of objections if any within 10 days from the date of publication and was also uploaded on District Website. No Objection was received by this Office within the stipulated time. The final Selection list of all candidates is mentioned at Annexure "A" who are meritorious and selected against each AWC for which they have applied.

Annexure "A"

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

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

No:- CDPO/SBL/ADV/2026-27/918
DIPK-5827/26
Dated:-17-09-2026

GOVERNMENT OF JAMMU AND KASHMIR OFFICE OF THE CHILD DEVELOPMENT PROJECT OFFICER B.K. PORa

Advertisement Notice: No-05 of 2026
Dated: 15-09-2026

Subject: Re- Advertisement for Recruitment of Sahayikas (Anganwadi Helpers) in Anganwadi Centers of POSHAN Project B.K.Pora

- Reference:
- Government order No 222-JK (SWD) of 2022 Dated: 30.11.2022
 - Government Order No.103-JK (SWD) of 2023 dated: 28.04.2023
 - MD/Poshan/22200-22208 Dated: 18-06-2026
 - PO/ICDS/Misc/130-140 Dated: 19-06-2026
 - CDPO/Poshan/BKP/Adv/2026/898-90 dated: 29-06-2026.
 - CDPO/Poshan/BKP/2026/Adv/967-80 dated: - 22-07-2026.

Approval has been accorded vide Government Order No. 103-JK (SWD) of 2023 dated 28.04.2023 for filling up various vacant posts of Sahayikas (Anganwadi Helpers) in the Anganwadi Centres of Poshan Project B.K. Pora, as per the details given below. However, in response to the earlier advertisement, the response received from eligible candidates was found to be poor/inadequate, resulting in some vacancies remaining unfilled. Accordingly, the competent authority has decided to re-advertise the vacant posts of Sahayikas (Anganwadi Helpers) in the concerned Anganwadi Centres of Poshan Project B.K. Pora. The details of the vacant posts proposed to be filled through this re-advertisement are given below.

Sr. No.	Name of Project	Name of Post	No. of Post
01	Poshan Project B.K.Pora	Sahayikas (Anganwadi Helpers)	03
Total			03

- The rest of the eligibility conditions and terms and conditions remain the same as mentioned in references.
- Date of commencement for submission of application 18-09-2026
 - Last date for submission of applications is 29-09-2026
 - Annexure B- Name of the Post, Location/Ward, Qualification and Criteria for selection

ANNEXURE 'B'

Detail of Vacant Posts (AWW/AWH) along with name and location of AWC.

S.NO	NAME OF PANCHAYAT/ MUNICIPALITY WARD	NAME OF ANGANWADI CENTRE	WARD NO.	NAME OF POST	No of Post
1	2	3	4	5	6
01	Chattergam "B"	Astanpora	Punch Ward No (01)	Anganwadi Helpers	1
02	MC Electoral Ward No (12)	Khan Colony Chanapora	MC Electoral Ward No (12)	Anganwadi Helpers	1
03.	Kralpora "A"	Gund Checkpora "A"	Panch Ward No (03)	Anganwadi Helpers	1

Child Development Project Officer B.K.Pora

CDPO/Posan/BKP/Adv/026/ 1164-74
DIPK-5839/26
Dated: 17-09-2026

Office of the Naib Tehsildar Pattan

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

The registrar birth BDO pattan has submitted a case file pertaining to birth of Mir Saifullah S/o Mohd Ashraf Mir R/o Drveshbagh Nehalpora Tehsil Pattan District Baramulla with verified date of birth 01/03/2023 . In this connection if any body having objection for issuance of said certificate he may contact to this office within 04 days after that no objection shall be entertained.

Sd
fko Naib Tehsildar Pattan

Office of the Naib Tehsildar Pattan

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

The registrar birth BDO pattan has submitted a case file pertaining to birth of Hurrain D/o Mohd Ashraf Mir R/o Nehalpora Tehsil Pattan District Baramulla with verified date of birth 01/03/2020 and Nurrain D/O Mohd Ashraf Mir with verified date of birth 01/03/2017. In this connection if any body having objection for issuance of said certificate he may contact to this office within 04 days after that no objection shall be entertained.

Sd
fko Naib Tehsildar Pattan

Office of the Naib Tehsildar Pattan

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

The registrar birth BDO Singhpora has submitted a case file pertaining to birth of Aiman Jan D/o Lateef Ahmad Wagy R/o Trikalbal Tehsil Pattan District Baramulla with verified date of birth 05/03/2016 . In this connection if any body having objection for issuance of said certificate he may contact to this office within 04 days after that no objection shall be entertained.

Sd
fko Naib Tehsildar Pattan

The Jammu and Kashmir Board of School Education Bemina Srinagar.

The candidate whose photograph is above reports that she has lost her Qualification Certificate/s having following description:-

Roll No 607219
Class 10th
Year & Session ANNUAL-2012
Registration No N11420640055
Name SAIMA JAN
Fathers Name GH MOHAMMAD MIR
Mothers Name SHAHEENA BANOO
Date Of Birth 18/01/1998
Residence AVIL KULGAM



Now the candidate had applied for issuance of DUPLICATE QUALIFICATION CERTIFICATE/S.Before the case shall be processed under rules, if somebody has /have any kind of objection in this regard he / she shall approach the office of undersigned within seven (07) days from the date of publishing of this notice. No claim shall be entertained.

(Besides, the "QUALIFICATION CERTIFICATE/S" bearing S.NO: 12ARKAM-7016206 Be treated as "CANCELLED"

Sd/- Asstt. Secretary, Certificates K.D.
No. F(Certs-I-DQC/B)KD/22
Dated: _____

Office Of The Naib Tehsildar Kreeri

Sub: Application of Shahid Ahmad Reshi S/o Mohd Assadullah Reshi R/o Dandmooh Tehsil Kreeri seeking their in the Legal heir certificate.

NOTICE

Regarding the subject cited above, in this context. As per the death certificate and report submitted by the patwari concerned Hajra Begum W/o Mohd Assadullah Reshi has passed away on 01-06-2026 . The report of the patwari further depicts that the deceased has following Legal Heirs.

S. NO	NAME OF DEPENDENT	RELATION WITH DECEASED	AGE	OCCUPATION
1	Shahid Ahmad	Son	31	Driver

The applicant has applied for issuance of Legal certificate . As such the instant matter is published through news paper, if any one is having any kind of objection may approach this office within 7 days (Seven Days of the publication of this notice after passing of stipulated time of 7 days (Seven Days), no objections will be entertained.
fko Naib Tehsildar

PUBLIC NOTICE

I, Abdul Rehman Ganie S/o Abdul Gani Ganie, R/o Malpora Sangram, Tehsil Kunzer, District Baramulla, hereby declare that the date of birth of my ward Arbeen Rahman S/o Abdul Rahman Ganie, Mother's Name Shaheena Bano, has been wrongly recorded in the Aadhaar records as 20-10-2010. The correct date of birth of my ward, as per the School Certificate, is 05-10-2013. I have applied for correction/ updation of the date of birth in the Aadhaar record accordingly. Any person having any objection to the above correction may file the same before the concerned authority within 7 days from the date of publication of this notice, failing which no objection shall be entertained thereafter.

Abdul Rehman Ganie zK
S/o Abdul Gani Ganie
R/o Malpora Sangram, Tehsil Kunzer, District Baramulla

PUBLIC NOTICE

My name has been wrongly written in my driving licence bearing dI no: JK 0120030070836 as Aijaz Ahmad Dar while my correct name is Ajaz Ahmad Dar. Now I have applied for the correctio of the same if anybody has any objection in this regard he/she may file them in the concerned RTO within seven days. After that no objection shall be entertained.
Ajaz Ahamd Dar INF
R/O Habak Naseembagh Srinagar

PUBLIC NOTICE

I have changed my wards name from KHADEEJA KHALID KHUROO to KHADEEJA KHALID. In future, she will be known as KHADEEJA KHALID. If anybody is having any objection he/she may contact Passport Office, Srinagar within & 7 days. After 7 days no objection will be accepted.
rdko

PUBLIC NOTICE

It is hereby notified for information of all concerned that the electricity connection bearing Consumer ID No. 0215010001458, under Sub-Division Sumbal Sonawari, presently stands in the name of Mohammad Subhan Ganaie. The undersigned intends to have the said electricity connection transferred in the name of Mughli, W/o Late Mohammad Subhan Ganaie, R/o Sarai Dangerpora. Any person having any objection to the proposed transfer may submit the same before the concerned authority within 7 days from the date of publication of this notice. After the expiry of the stipulated period, no objection shall be entertained.
Mughli x
W/o Late Mohammad Subhan Ganaie
R/o Sarai Dangerpora

PUBLIC NOTICE

I, Abdul Rasheed Shah, F/o Shakir Rasheed Shah, R/o Batamaran Wanpora, Tehsil Keller, District Shopian, hereby inform that the Date of Birth of my child has been incorrectly recorded in the Aadhaar records as 01/02/2003. The correct Date of Birth of my child is 15/05/2007, as per the DOB Certificate issued by BDO Keller. I have applied for correction/ updation of the Aadhaar records accordingly. Any person having any objection in this regard may file the same before the concerned department within 7 days from the date of publication of this notice. Thereafter, no objection shall be entertained.
Abdul Rasheed Shah fko
F/o Shakir Rasheed Shah
R/o Batamaran Wanpora, Tehsil Keller, District Shopian

NOTICE

It is information to the general public that my name in Adhaar card bearing No:-**4759-6194-2690 has inadvertently recorded as Mohammad Asrar Sheikh which is incorrect.** while my correct and actual Name is **Muhammad Asrar Sheikh**. 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 Concerned Authority, within a period of seven (7) days from the date of publication of this notice, after that no objection shall be entertained.

**Muhammad Asrar Sheikh
S/o Mohammad Ashraf Sheikh
R/o Tantraypora Palhallan.**

PUBLIC NOTICE

It is informed to the General public that my name in my Aadher Card bearing Aadhar No :- 2666 1956 8999 has been wrongly mentioned as Jantee Begum instead of Zoona Begum W/O. Mohammad Jamal Bhat .Now I am applying for its Correction as per Domicil Certificate recard .if anybody having any objection in this regard he/she may contact the same in the office of the General Manager Ranbir Govt Press Jammu within a period of seven days from the publication of this notice. No objection will be entertained after expiry of stipulated period.
Zoona Begum fko
W/O. Mohammad Jamal Bhat
R/O :- Guloora .Tehsil :- Langate Distt :Kupwara .
Post Office:- Langate Pin Code:- 193302 J&kashmir



PUBLIC NOTICE

I, Muneerah Begum, W/o Nazir Ahmad Mir, R/o Warpora Hatmulla, Tehsil & District Kupwara, mother and natural guardian of my minor son Hashim Nazir Mir, hereby state that his name and date of birth have inadvertently been recorded incorrectly in his Aadhaar Card as "Hasham Nazir" and 17/04/2017. His correct name and date of birth are "Hashim Nazir Mir" and 14/11/2015, respectively. I have applied for correction of the same in his Aadhaar Card and other relevant records. Any person having any objection in this regard may file the same before the concerned authority within 7 days from the date of publication of this notice, failing which no objection shall be entertained thereafter.
qns

PUBLIC NOTICE

I, Fatima Begum W/o Mohd Yousuf Najar, R/o Gagal, Tehsil Lalpora, District Kupwara, holding Aadhaar Card No. 2857-9722-8532, hereby declare that my name and spouse name have been incorrectly recorded in my Aadhaar as "Fatia Begum W/o Mohammad Yousf Angtee". My correct name and spouse name are "Fatima Begum W/o Mohd Yousuf Najar". I have applied for updation/correction of the same in my Aadhaar on the basis of my valid Domicile Certificate. Any person having any objection regarding the aforesaid correction may file the same before the concerned authority within 7 days from the date of publication of this notice, failing which no objection shall be entertained thereafter.
Deponent qns
Fatima Begum
W/o Mohd Yousuf Najar
R/o Gagal, Tehsil Lalpora, District Kupwara

Office of the Naib Tehsildar Pattan

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

The registrar birth BDO pattan has submitted a case file pertaining to birth of Ayman Hameed D/o Abdul Hameed Khan R/o Malpora Buran Tehsil Pattan District Baramulla with verified date of birth 27/01/2016 . In this connection if any body having objection for issuance of said certificate he may contact to this office within 04 days after that no objection shall be entertained.

Sd
fko Naib Tehsildar Pattan

Workshop on Interlinking of Budget with SDGs Held

Observer News Service

Srinagar: A workshop on “SDG Budget Tagging & Outcome-Oriented Financing Framework” was held at the Civil Secretariat, Srinagar, J&K, with the objective of strengthening the linkage between public expenditure, budgetary allocations and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

The workshop was presided over by the Financial Commissioner (Additional Chief Secretary), Finance Department, and attended by senior officers including DG Budget, DG Codes,

getary framework, enabling better assessment of whether public expenditure is addressing identified development gaps and delivering intended outcomes.

The participants deliberated on mapping of existing UT Schemes, Centrally Sponsored Schemes and Central Sector Schemes with relevant SDG Goals and Targets to promote convergence, avoid duplication and identify financing gaps. The exercise is aimed at strengthening the linkage between resources, expenditure and development outcomes.

Emphasis was also laid



DG Resources, DG Audit & Trainings (A&T), Director SDG, Director DED-II, Directors Planning and Directors Finance of various Administrative Departments, besides resource persons from United Nations Development Programme (UNDP).

The workshop focused on the need to move from SDG monitoring to SDG financing by linking identified development gaps with appropriate schemes, budgetary allocations and measurable outcomes. It was emphasised that SDG Budget Tagging would not involve creation of a separate SDG budget, but would instead bring an SDG perspective to the existing bud-

on outcome-oriented planning, with departments to prepare SDG-wise Action Plans covering identified gaps, targets, interventions, beneficiaries, responsibilities, resources, indicators and timelines. These Action Plans are proposed to be aligned with the Annual Budget formulation process, so that SDG priorities become an integral part of the regular planning and budgeting cycle.

The workshop also deliberated on integration of the existing SDG Dashboard with IFMIS for improved tracking of expenditure against SDG priorities, without creating any parallel financial system.



PARAS Health Srinagar, IAP Sign MoU to Strengthen Rehabilitation Care

Observer News Service

Srinagar: In a significant step towards strengthening physiotherapy, rehabilitation and multidisciplinary patient care in Jammu and Kashmir, PARAS Health Srinagar has signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with the Indian Association of Physiotherapists (IAP).

The collaboration aims to promote professional cooperation, knowledge exchange and greater awareness around the evolving role of physiotherapy in modern healthcare, while creating opportunities for advancing rehabilitation practices and patient-centred care.

Speaking on the occasion, Dr Murtuza Habib, Facility Director, PARAS Health Srinagar, highlighted the expanding scope of physiotherapy and the important role physiotherapists play in the recovery and long-term wellbeing of patients.

He said physiotherapy today extends far beyond conventional rehabilitation, with physiotherapists playing an increasingly important role across specialties including orthopaedics, neurosurgery, critical care, sports injuries and post-operative recovery.

Dr Habib also underlined the importance of a multidisciplinary approach, where physiotherapists work closely with surgeons, physicians, nurses and other healthcare professionals to support patients through different stages of treatment and recovery.

The MoU marks another step towards building stronger professional linkages and creating a platform for collaboration between a leading healthcare institution and the professional body representing physiotherapists.

Dr Masarat Shafi, PT, IAP CEC North Zone and Council Member, State Allied Health Council, J&K, described the occasion as a significant and historic moment for the organisation.

He said the IAP was particularly encouraged by PARAS Health Srinagar's growing focus on specialised and advanced healthcare, noting the work being undertaken across departments including Orthopaedics, Neurosurgery and Critical Care.

Dr Shafi said the collaboration would provide an important platform for strengthening the role of physiotherapy within comprehensive healthcare and for promoting professional development, knowledge sharing and better rehabilitation practices.

The collaboration comes at a time when rehabilitation is increasingly recognised as an integral component of healthcare rather than merely a post-treatment service. From restoring mobility after orthopaedic procedures to supporting neurological recovery and helping critically ill patients regain strength and function, physiotherapy has become an essential component of the continuum of care.

The MoU between PARAS Health Srinagar and IAP is expected to further encourage professional engagement and contribute towards strengthening the rehabilitation ecosystem in the region. “Healthcare is meaningful when it is accessible, affordable and available closer to the communities we serve. Our focus at PARAS Health is to bring quality, specialised care to the doorsteps of people across Jammu and Kashmir at affordable rates. Collaborations such as this with the Indian Association of Physiotherapists further strengthen our commitment to ensuring that rehabilitation and recovery are an integral part of comprehensive, patient-centred healthcare.” Seema Vig, Senior Vice President & Regional Director, PARAS Health, said.

NSD Begins Three-Month Theatre Course in Srinagar

Observer News Service

Srinagar, September 17: The National School of Drama (NSD) has commenced a three-month Short-Term Theatre Course at its Srinagar Centre, providing aspiring theatre practitioners with an opportunity to gain theoretical knowledge and practical skills in various aspects of theatre.

The formal inauguration of the course was held at the NSD Srinagar Centre on Thursday in the presence of the Registrar and Dean (Academics) of the National School of Drama, along with



the Centre In-charge.

The dignitaries formally inaugurated the programme and extended their best wishes to the participants, expressing hope that the course would offer them a meaningful and enriching learning experience.

The three-month pro-

gramme combines classroom-based learning with practical training, covering different dimensions of theatre practice. It is aimed at nurturing artistic talent and providing young learners and theatre enthusiasts with structured exposure to the performing arts.

Eight Labourers Injured as Tata Mobile Collides With Electric Pole

Agencies

Srinagar: Eight labourers were injured after the Tata Mobile they were travelling in collided with an electric pole at Pirbagh area on the outskirts of Srinagar, with three of the injured reported to be in critical condition.

Reports said the vehicle's driver lost control before colliding with the electric pole. The injured were subsequently brought to SMHS Hospital Srinagar for treatment.

The injured have been identified as Zahoor Ahmad, 27, son of Nazir Ahmed, a resident of Kupwara, who was driving the vehicle and is reported to be in critical condition; Nair Ahmad Kumar, 19, son of Wali Mohammad, resident of Kupwara, whose

condition is stated to be stable; and Ajaz Ahmad Sheikh, 26, son of Buland Sheikh, resident of Lolab, Kupwara, who is also reported to be stable.

The other injured have been identified as Ishfaq Ahmad Bhat, 16, son of Mohammad Yousuf, resident of Beerwah, Budgam, whose condition is reported to be critical; Tanveer Ahmad Khan, 19, son of Ghulam Hussain Rubani, resident of Kupwara, also reported to be critical; Shahmeem Ahmad Khan, 25, son of Dilawar Ahmad, resident of Kupwara, whose condition is stated to be stable; Mohammad Qasim Sheikh, 27, son of Noor Din Sheikh, resident of Lolab, Kupwara; and Kaiser Ahmed Teli, 19, son of Ghulam Mohammad, resident of Kupwara, whose condition is reported to be stable.(KNT)

PUBLIC NOTICE

I, Sabreena Rashid D/o Ab. Rashid Rather R/o Saderbal-B Hazratbal, Srinagar, do hereby inform the general public that I want to correct my name in my Aadhaar card bearing No. 8869 2002 5445, FROM SABREEN RASHID TO SABREENA RASHID as per my domicile certificate. Now I am applying for its correction. Objections if any, must reach concerned authorities within a week at the most.

Abass Advi.

NORTHERN RAILWAY					
E-Tender Notice					
Sr.DEN-III/FZR acting for and on behalf of The President of India invites open tenders (E-Tenders) against below titled tenders and available on www.ireps.gov.in with closing date 09.10.2026 up to 15:00 Hrs. Bidders will be able to submit their original/revised bids up to closing date and time only. Manual offers are not allowed against these tenders, and any such manual offer received shall be ignored. Contractors are allowed to make payments against this tender towards tender document cost and Earnest Money only through the payment modes available on www.ireps.gov.in portal, like Net Banking, Debit Card, Credit Card etc. Manual payments through Demand Draft Banker's Cheque, Deposit Receipt, FDR etc. are not allowed. For more information log on to www.ireps.gov.in					
Tender Type	Tendering Section	Bidding System	Date of Uploading Tenders	Bid Starting Date	Bid Closing Date/Time
Open	Works	Single Packet System	17.09.2026	25.09.2026	09.10.2026 15:00 Hrs.
S.N.	Tender No.	Details of Tender			
1	148-2026-27 ADEN-I-ASR	Provision of 60 bedded male barrack complex at Amritsar under ADEN-I/ASR.			
		Advertised Value (Rs.)	Earnest money (Rs.)	Validity of Offer	Period of Completion
		33516328.56	670300.00	60 Days	12 Months
Similar nature of work:- "Construction of building/quarters."					
2	149-2026-27 ADEN-I-ASR	Construction of precast central drain between yard lines at Amritsar station in the section of SSE/WML/ASR under ADEN-I/ASR.			
		Advertised Value (Rs.)	Earnest money (Rs.)	Validity of Offer	Period of Completion
		449492068.95	989900.00	60 Days	09 Months
Similar nature of work:- "Any civil work other than track work".					
Note1. Before bidding, bidders to check for any corrigendum issued against tender.					
Tender Notice No:- 148 & 149-2026-27-ADEN-I-ASR Date: 17.09.2026					
3229/2026					
Serving Customers With A Smile					

OFFICE OF THE EXECUTIVE ENGINEER, TLMD II PAMPORE,KASHMIR, J&K Power Transmission Corporation Ltd. NOTICE INVITING e-Bids E-NITNo.TLMD-II/05 of 2026-27Dt: 16.09.2026

For and on behalf of Hon'ble Lieutenant Governor of U.T of Jammu & Kashmir, the Executive Engineer TLMD-II, Pampore hereby invites online e-Tenders valid for 180 days from reputed, competent and financially sound "A" class Electrical contractors/Companies/Firms/Joint Ventures having sufficient experience of the relevant work registered with Electrical Inspectorate of State/UT/ Central Inspectorial organization fulfilling eligibility and qualification requirements as per terms, conditions & technical specifications thereof mentioned in standard bidding document for the work detailed below:-

S No.	Name of work	Estimated Cost (Rs. In Lacs)	Cost of Tender Document (Non-Refundable)	Earnest Money	Time of completion
01.	Providing of separate outgoing panel for (2x10)MVA Budshah Nagar Receiving Station	Rs 34.94	2% of estimated cost	Rs.1100.00 (Rs. One Thousand One Hundred only)in theshapeof non-refundableDemand Draft drawn in favor of Executive Engineer TLMD-II Pampore.	90 Days

Submission of e-Bid shall be deemed to have been done after careful study and examination of the procedures, terms & conditions with full understanding of its implications. The tender is available at website <http://jktenders.gov.in>. Interested bidders may view, download thee-Bid, and submit their e-Bid online up to the date and time mentioned in the table below:

A	Date & Time of downloading of Standard Bidding Document	The Standard Bidding Document can be downloaded over http://jktenders.gov.in from 16.09.2026 , /1800 Hour
B	Clarifications start date	16.09.2026 ,1800 Hour
C	Clarifications end date	19.09.2026 ,1200 Hours
D	e-Bid submission (start) date & time (Submission of e-tender fee, EMD in pdf)	19.09.2026 ,1400 Hours
E	e-Bid submission (end) date & Time	29.09.2026 ,1400 Hours
F	Online Commercial and Technical e-Bid opening date & Time	30.09.2026, 1400 Hours or any other subsequent day convenient to tender opening authority.
G	Online financial e-Bid opening date& time (Only of the technically qualified bidders)	Will be communicated to the Technically Qualified Bidders
H	Venueofopeningofe-Bids	The Office of Executive Engineer TLMD II Pampore Kashmir J&K.

DIPK-NB-1668/26 dated: 17-09-2026

Sd/= ExecutiveEngineer, TLMDII Pampore,

NO. TLMD-II/1903-05;

Dated:..16.09.2026.

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

AIRPORTS

SHIEK UL ALAM AIRPORT: 01942303311

RAILWAYS

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

HIGHWAY STATUS

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

HIJRI CALENDAR 05 Rabi-ul-Sani 1448	PRAYERS	
	FAJR	4: 52
	ZUHR	12:36
	ASR	4: 51
	Magrib	6: 40
	ISHA	8: 00

This Day In History

- 96 - Nerva is proclaimed Roman Emperor after Domitian is assassinated.
- 324 - Chrysopolis Emperor Constantine beats Emperor Licinius
- 1454 - In the Battle of Chojnice, the Polish army is defeated by the Teutonic army during the Thirteen Years' War.
- 1502 - Christopher Columbus lands at Costa Rica on his 4th & last voyage
- 1739 - Turkey & Austria sign peace treaty-Austria cedes Belgrade to Turks
- 1759 - Battle of Quebec ends, French surrender to British who capture Quebec City.
- 1864 - Battle of Martinsburg, Virginia
- 1914 - Battle of Aisne ends with Germans beating French during WW I
- 1914 - South African troops land in German South West Africa
- 1918 - Battle of Megiddo (Palestine) starts
- 1922- Hungary is admitted to the League of Nations
- 1927- Columbia Broadcasting System goes on air with 18 stations and WOR as the New York City affiliate
- 1934- USSR is admitted to the League of Nations
- 1940- Italian troops conquer Sidi Barrani
- 1942- Canadian Broadcasting Corporation authorized for radio service
- 1943- German occupiers liquidate the ghetto of Lida, Belarus, transporting the last remaining Jews to their murder at the Nazi extermination camp Sobibor
- 1944- WWII: British submarine Tradewind torpedoes Junyo Maru: 5,600 killed, including 1,377 allied POWs and 4,200 Javanese slave laborers
- 1944- WWII: Eindhoven, Netherlands, is freed by American and British troops (Liberation Day)
- 1944- WWII: US 266th division defeats German troops at Brest Bretagne in Brittany, France, after a seven-week siege; 37,000 prisoners taken, ports rendered useless
- 1947- Central Intelligence Agency officially comes into existence after being established by President Truman in July
- 1947- US Air Force is created as a separate military service with the passing of the National Security Act
- 1947 US Department of Defense first day of operation
- 1948- Communist Madiun Uprising in Dutch Indies (Muso/Sjarifudin)
- 1961- Transair Sweden DC-6 passenger aircraft, chartered by the United Nations for transit to cease-fire negotiations during the Congo Crisis, crashes near Ndola, Northern Rhodesia (present-day Zambia), killing 16, including UN Secretary-General Dag Hammarskjöld, the second Secretary-General of the United Nations, and 15 others; official inquiries never determine the cause
- 1961- USSR performs a nuclear test at Novaya Zemlya, USSR
- 1962- Rwanda, Burundi, Jamaica, and Trinidad are admitted to the United Nations as the 105th through 108th member countries
- 1962- USSR performs a nuclear test at Novaya Zemlya, USSR

PUBLIC NOTICE

I, MUSHTAQ AHMAD BHAT F/O MOHAMMAD DAYYIM BHAT, R/o Zoorigund, Budgam, presently associated with FOUNDATION WORLD SCHOOL, Mamath, Budgam, intend to change my wards name from "DAREES MOHAMMAD BHAT" to "MOHAMMAD DAYYIM BHAT" for all official, educational, academic and other records.

Any person having any objection to the proposed change of name may submit the same in writing to the concerned authority / FOUNDATION WORLD SCHOOL, Mamath, Budgam, within 15 days from the date of publication of this notice.

If no objection is received within the stipulated period, the proposed change of name shall be treated as having no objection from the general public.

Name: DAREES MOHAMMAD BHAT
Proposed Name: MOHAMMAD DAYYIM BHAT
S/o: MUSHTAQ AHMAD BHAT
R/o: ZOORIGUND, BUDGAM
Institution: FOUNDATION WORLD SCHOOL, MAMATH, BUDGAM
Date: 17/09/2026
Place: Budgam mcb

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Beyond Land-to-the-Tiller

Since the land reforms of 1950, Kashmir has gained ownership without building enough productive systems around it. Its craft traditions reveal what a stronger value-based economy could look like.



Irshad Mushtaq

Kashmir needs a more honest account of how its economy was built.

Land reform changed who owned the soil, but handicrafts transformed how Kashmir earned its name in the world.

Confusing these two histories has left us with an incomplete idea of prosperity.

The Big Landed Estates Abolition Act of 1950 was one of Kashmir's great social reforms. It abolished large estates, removed intermediaries and transferred land rights toward actual cultivators.

The ceiling was set at 182 kanals, or 22.75 acres.

Historical estimates put the number of large proprietors affected at about 9,000. Nearly 4.5 lakh acres were identified above the ceiling, with around 2.3 lakh acres transferred to tillers.

That was a profound change in rural life.

A cultivator gained ownership of the soil worked by his family, an old feudal relationship weakened, and rural households gained an asset that could pass to the next generation.

Land reform, however, was never a complete economic strategy.

Similar reforms took place in Bihar, Uttar Pradesh, West Bengal, Kerala, Karnataka, Tamil Nadu, Maharashtra, Rajasthan, Telangana, Himachal Pradesh, Assam, Odisha and other parts of India.

By 2005, India had declared around 73.67 lakh acres surplus under land-ceiling programmes, taken possession of 64.97 lakh acres and distributed 54.03 lakh acres to about 57.46 lakh beneficiaries.

Kashmir's particular achievement was the depth of its assault on feudal ownership, but the wider reform belonged to a national transformation.

The valley's distinctive economic story came through another door: the artisan's hand.

Long before modern hotels, government salaries and construction became major sources of income, Kashmir sent shawls, carpets, silk, walnut woodwork, copperware, papier-mâché and embroidery into distant markets.

Pashmina travelled as a finished product, wool became carpets, wood became carved furniture, while copper became decorative ware.

Skill converted raw material into something with a much higher value.

That was Kashmir's original manufacturing economy. It operated through homes, workshops and small businesses, and supported spinners, weavers, dyers, embroiderers, woodcarvers, copper arti-

sans, traders, transporters and exporters.

Families without agricultural land could earn through skill.

That reality is important today because land ownership alone cannot create prosperity. A farmer can own an orchard and still earn too little when storage, grading, packaging, transport, branding and retail remain outside his control. A small holding can become fragmented through inheritance. Production can remain low when irrigation, machinery, credit and processing facilities are weak.

The same principle applies to handicrafts.

A pashmina shawl can sell for a high price in Delhi, Dubai, London or elsewhere while the artisan receives payment tied to a piece or a day's labour. A carpet can command several lakh rupees in a premium showroom while the person who spent months making it owns little of the final sale.

The artisan creates value, but someone else often controls the customer.

Government figures show that the sector still has considerable economic value. Handloom and handicraft exports rose from 563.13 crore in 2021-22 to 1,162.29 crore in 2023-24, an increase of more than 106 percent in two years.

Government material placed before the J&K legislature records exports of 733.59 crore in 2024-25 and 492.16 crore during the first three quarters of 2025-26.

The same material puts the total exports from 2021-22 onward at 4,607.54 crore up to the first three quarters of the current reporting period.

More than 4.50 lakh artisans work in the handloom and handicraft sector, including producers of pashmina, carpets, embroidery and other traditional crafts.

Those figures point toward an economic opportunity that Kashmir has never fully captured.

Artisans need direct access to customers, transparent pricing, affordable credit, insurance and pension protection. They need stronger GI enforcement, digital marketing, better packaging and QR-based authentication for genuine Kashmir products.

Cooperatives, brands and export companies can give artisans ownership in the businesses built around their skills.

A craftsperson should be able to earn from the product, the brand and the market, rather than only from labour.

The same principle applies to land.

Kashmir has apples, walnuts, saffron and vegetables, but farmers often receive only a portion of the final value. Cold storage, processing, grading, packaging, branding and export can turn farm produce into a larger business. Farmer-producer organisations can help small growers pool production and gain bargaining power.

The current economic structure shows why this shift is necessary.

J&K's services sector contributes around 61.06 percent of gross state value added, while the primary sector contributes around 18.24 percent and the secondary sector around 20.70 percent.

Both agriculture and land ownership

remain important, but neither can sustain a modern economy by itself.

Punjab and Haryana combined land ownership with irrigation, electricity, improved seeds, fertiliser, procurement, storage, mechanisation, credit and markets. Kerala linked land reform with education, health and social development. Karnataka combined land reform with industry, services and technology. West Bengal strengthened cultivator rights through tenancy reform and Operation Barga.

Kashmir transferred land without building enough productive systems around it.

That difference can be seen in the way productive assets are sometimes sold. Families may sell ancestral land to pay medical bills, education costs, debts, house construction or wedding expenses. A productive asset can become short-term spending money, leaving the household with fewer future sources of income.

A car can provide comfort while generating monthly expenses. A house can provide shelter without producing income. Land, orchards, workshops, shops and businesses can generate income over decades.

Medical costs and debt can make land sales unavoidable. When a sale happens, the proceeds need to be treated as capital, with part of the money directed into a replacement source of income.

GST figures provide another useful, if limited, window into Kashmir's economic structure.

Publicly reported 2024-25 figures put Jammu division's GST collection at around 5,672 crore, compared with around 2,452 crore for Kashmir division.

Jammu district alone was reported at approximately 4,367 crore, while Srinagar was around 1,497 crore.

J&K's total GST collection rose from 8,064.14 crore in 2023-24 to 8,585.93 crore in 2024-25 according to the CAG. Subsequent information placed before the J&K Assembly gave figures of 8,680.20 crore for 2024-25, 8,128.44 crore for 2023-24 and 7,272.15 crore for 2022-23.

Different reporting cut-off dates, accounting treatment and GST heads can account for such differences.

GST also has geographical biases.

Jammu is a major gateway for goods entering J&K. Wholesale trade, warehousing, transport and distribution have a strong presence there. Dealers can bill goods through Jammu before they reach customers in Kashmir. Automobile dealers, construction-material suppliers, consumer-goods distributors and industrial traders generate substantial formal taxable turnover.

Kashmir has a larger presence of small producers, handicrafts, horticulture, home-based work and tourism activity. Parts of that economy operate outside the formal tax structure.

GST therefore cannot map the full economic contribution of Kashmir. It only measures taxable transactions recorded through the system.

Formalisation can increase tax visibility and local business capacity, provided small artisans and producers are not

burdened with rules designed for much larger firms.

The larger lesson becomes clearer when Kashmir is compared with Israel.

J&K's land reform and Israel's establishment belong to the 1948-50 period. Kashmir gave cultivators greater rights over land. Israel began building its state amid war, rationing, insecurity and water shortages.

Today, according to the comparison supplied here, Israel's output per person is roughly 30 times J&K's published per-capita income, putting the latter at roughly 50 lakh per person on that comparison.

The difference lies less in the possession of natural assets than in what gets built around them.

Israel developed capital mobilisation, irrigation, industry, research, technical education, entrepreneurship and export businesses. Its largest sources of income now come from high-value knowledge, technology, research and exports rather than agriculture alone.

Kashmir has water, fertile land, horticulture, handicrafts, tourism and a large pool of young people. Those assets become wealth only when skill, capital, technology, ownership and access to markets connect them.

J&K's own budget position makes the point sharper.

The 2025-26 Budget Speech says own tax and non-tax revenues cover only about 30 percent of revenue receipts and roughly 25 percent of budget needs, while salaries and pensions consume nearly 60 percent of revenue expenditure.

A durable economy therefore needs private enterprise, productive farms, export businesses, local brands and skilled employment alongside government employment.

Clearly, Kashmir's economic inheritance is larger than land. It includes the artisan bent over a carpet, the farmer tending an orchard, the trader taking a product to market and the young person trying to build a business with skills rather than inherited property.

Land reform gave the cultivator ownership, but handicrafts gave Kashmir a global commercial identity. Agriculture supplied food and orchard wealth, while tourism created service income.

The next stage demands something harder: ownership of value.

If Kashmir protects its soil while allowing its skills to fade, one half of its economic inheritance will disappear. If it preserves handicrafts as heritage while leaving artisans at the bottom of the value chain, the other half will weaken.

The real test is whether a child in Kashmir can inherit a productive asset and a productive skill, then turn both into an income without selling the first to survive the present.

That is the economic inheritance worth protecting.

The author is a Srinagar-based financial educator, and can be reached at drm757@gmail.com.

KO VIEW

The Chestnut Case Study

Kashmir's unemployment debate focuses heavily on the jobs governments and established employers can provide.

That leaves out a large part of the economy already creating income through seasonal demand, small investments and practical skills.

The roasted chestnut business, a popular autumn street delicacy in the valley, makes that clear.

Chestnuts now sell for about 120 per 100 grams, up from roughly 100 from last year.

Demand is established, equipment costs little and the business has a defined seasonal window.

Migrant workers have recognised the opportunity and entered the business. Their participation is legitimate and points to a broader feature of the local labour market: some forms of accessible seasonal work may still attract limited interest among local workers because of their lower social status.

Masalzot provides a useful local example.

Boiled beans, bread and chutney once occupied the lower end of Kashmir's occupational hierarchy. Economic disruption after 2019 and the pandemic changed that perception.

Younger Kashmiris entered the business, and masalzot vendors became a visible part of Srinagar's street-food economy before expanding into other areas. Economic circumstances altered an old social judgment. The same shift can take place in seasonal commerce.

Kashmir already has a commercial instinct built around timing. Grocers and roadside sellers adjust their goods to demand. Fruit and vegetable vendors understand how season, location and customer preference can turn modest merchandise into household income.

Chestnuts, walnuts and other seasonal products can support similar small enterprises when young workers treat them as legitimate livelihoods.

Migrant workers have also taken up other roadside food sales, barbering and other jobs once dominated by locals. Their presence points to a simple economic reality: demand exists, but social attitudes can still keep local workers away from certain occupations.

Government employment remains important, as does private-sector expansion, but neither can absorb a workforce indefinitely.

A functioning labour market also needs people who identify demand, accept small beginnings and build income through enterprise.

A roadside stall can become a livelihood when someone understands the product, season, location and customer.

Policy can support this shift by making small enterprises easier to start and sustain. Employment programmes that focus only on formal posts miss an opportunity to encourage self-created work.

Kashmir needs a broader definition of employment, one that values enterprise alongside salaried positions.

The charcoal stove, sack of chestnuts and roadside stall may look insignificant beside large employment schemes, but their economic lesson is direct: income can begin with a small investment and a willingness to work.

Kashmir's young workers need opportunity and social acceptance for such choices, while policymakers must make self-created livelihoods as legitimate as salaried jobs.



Dr. Rizwan Rumi

Srinagar's Rent Problem

A new tenancy law gives Jammu and Kashmir a framework for rental disputes, but students and workers still enter the urban housing market without knowing what a fair rent looks like.

A student from Kupwara, Kulgam, Bandipora, Baramulla or Anantnag can win admission to a college in Srinagar and still face a second, less celebrated hurdle before classes begin: finding a room he or she can afford.

The family has already calculated tuition, books, transport and food.

Then comes rent.

A room may have to be shared with several students, located far from campus or paid for at a price that pushes the household budget beyond its limit.

The college admission remains intact on paper, but the cost of reaching it has changed.

Jammu and Kashmir has a new legal framework for this relationship.

The Jammu and Kashmir Tenancy Act, 2025 came into force on February 15, 2026. It calls for written tenancy agreements and establishes Rent Authorities, Rent Courts and Rent Tribunals.

When landlords and tenants dispute a rent revision, the Rent Authority can determine the revised rent and other charges.

Those provisions give tenants a formal route when a dispute has already begun, but they leave a more basic question largely untouched: what should the initial rent be?

Section 8 says rent is the amount agreed upon by landlord and tenant in the tenancy agreement.

That arrangement gives both sides a legal document, but it gives a student little

information before signing one.

A landlord can name a price and call it the market rate, but the student may have no locality-wise data to test that claim.

A room's price can depend on its size, location, heating, electricity, water, internet, furniture, parking and condition. Demand can also push prices upward.

Without reliable information, the person needing a room immediately often enters the bargain with the least knowledge.

Jammu and Kashmir has already accepted the broader principle that affordable rental housing belongs in public policy.

Under the Affordable Rental Housing Complexes initiative, 336 government-funded houses and flats at Sunjwan in Jammu were converted into rental housing.

The J&K Economic Survey 2024-25 records those units among the Union Territory's housing initiatives.

When the Sunjwan complex opened, reported monthly rent stood at Rs 2,200, with the homes intended for economically weaker and low-income urban migrants, workers and other eligible groups.

The scheme included industrial workers, service providers, people employed in educational and health institutions, hospitality workers and students.

That example points toward a policy that could work without turning private housing into a government-controlled market.

Jammu and Kashmir could establish indicative rental bands for different localities. The calculation could use accommodation size and type, location, accessibility, number of rooms, furnishings, heating, electricity, water, internet, parking, building condition, proximity to educational institutions and workplaces, and rents for comparable properties.

Such figures need not become fixed ceilings. They could give tenants a credible reference point.

A landlord with better facilities could charge above the published range. A student would at least know what comparable accommodation usually costs before committing money.

The same information could sit on a J&K Rental Housing Portal linked to the Rent Authority.

A registered property could list its location, size, type, facilities, monthly rent, security deposit and tenancy period.

Students could compare rooms before leaving their villages, landlords could reach tenants without depending entirely on informal brokers, and government departments could begin building a reliable picture of rental demand.

The Tenancy Act already limits residential security deposits to two months' rent. It also calls for rent receipts and allows electronic payment records to prove payment.

Those protections are useful once a tenancy exists. A receipt, however, does little

for a family trying to decide whether it can afford the room in the first place.

Universities have a role here too.

The University of Kashmir, colleges, professional institutions and other educational centres generate substantial demand for housing. Institutions could survey students living in private accommodation and publish broad information on local housing costs.

Verified property lists, student housing cells, grievance systems, private-hostel partnerships, low-cost hostels and subsidised accommodation could give students alternatives.

The same principle applies to workers.

Nurses, interns, teachers, contractual employees, domestic workers, security guards, technicians, sales employees and hospitality workers move toward urban centres because employment takes them there.

The 2011 Census recorded 1,22,587 interstate migrant workers in Jammu and Kashmir. Rent comes out of the same monthly income that pays for food, health care, transport and family expenses.

A worker can therefore face a strange arithmetic: employment becomes available in the city, but the cost of living there consumes a large share of the wages attached to that job.

The government already has institutional machinery through district-level Rent Authorities, Rent Courts and Rent Tribunals. District Collectors or District Magistrates appoint Rent Authority officers at least at the

rank of Deputy Collector. The law also envisages a digital tenancy platform and unique identification for registered agreements.

That machinery can become useful public infrastructure rather than a filing system.

A simple online and offline complaint process, available in local languages, could let tenants submit agreements, lodge complaints and seek clarification without mastering legal procedure.

A fair rental system also has to recognise landlords' economics.

Property owners spend on construction, repairs, maintenance, utilities and taxes. Rental income can support households. A workable policy needs information for landlords as much as tenants.

The central issue is therefore neither landlord control nor unrestricted pricing. It is knowledge.

A landlord can know what similar properties command. A tenant can know whether a quoted figure lies within a reasonable local range. Universities can see whether housing costs are pushing students away from education. Policymakers can see where pressure is building.

Jammu and Kashmir has written the first part of that system into law. The next part needs to answer the question that confronts a student standing outside a rented room in Srinagar, calculating expenses on a phone: what will it cost to live here, and how do I know that price is fair?

Education should not become costlier simply because a student leaves home, and employment should not lose its value because rent consumes half a worker's income.

A city should remain a place where people can study and work without entering the housing market blind.

The author is a Srinagar-based academic and commentator. He can be reached at rizwanroomi2012@gmail.com.

The Forgotten Food Pits of Kashmir

While refrigerators and shorter winters erase a centuries-old vegetable pit tradition throughout the rest of Kashmir, the isolated villages of Gurez still trust holes dug in the earth to keep food alive until spring.



Umer Ahmad

The first light hits the fields, and Fazi Begum walks toward her farm holding a wicker basket.

Mountains rise on every side of Gurez Valley, sealing the 2,400-meter-high region off from the rest of Kashmir for months at a stretch.

The basket holds seed potatoes, pulled minutes earlier from an underground pit her family dug last autumn.

Villagers here call these pits khew, and they have used them for generations to keep vegetables from freezing during winters that can bury homes under eight feet of snow.

Begum, 60, learned the method as a child, watching her parents stack onions at the bottom of a trench, potatoes above them, and leafy greens closest to the surface.

"There is no space for errors," she said, describing how a single

misplaced layer can spoil an entire winter's food.

More than 32 villages sit scattered through Gurez, and residents estimate that almost all households maintain at least one pit.

Mohammad Rastum Lone, 70, said families store as much as 10 quintals, roughly a ton, of vegetables before the snow closes in.

Choosing where to dig takes real judgment, he said.

A pit placed too far from the house becomes unreachable once drifts pile up around it, while one placed too close risks damage from meltwater running off the roof.

The engineering follows rules refined over centuries.

Diggers avoid going deeper than five feet, since deeper pits invite water seepage that can ruin produce before anyone notices.

Width settles around five or six feet. Once loaded, the trench gets covered with woolen fabric for ventilation, then sealed with a wooden slab.

"We must ensure the produce remains preserved in optimal state throughout the freeze," Lone said, adding that families check their pits periodically all winter long.

Electricity reaches Gurez reliably now, but cold storage devices remain almost absent from local life.

Saleem Mapnoo, 32, runs a shop in the valley and said no household here owns a refrigerator. Three shopkeepers keep one apiece,

strictly for cooling drinks sold to summer tourists.

Gurez is home to the Shina ethnic community, and Mapnoo said most families now leave for Bandipora or Srinagar before winter sets in, something earlier generations rarely did.

Isolation used to run far deeper, as Lone remembered childhood winters that dropped ten to twelve feet of snow on the valley and cut Gurez off from Kashmir until July or August.

"We used to celebrate seeing the first vehicle bringing ration, including fresh vegetables and rice, enter the area," he said.

Roads today stay closed for three to four months rather than nearly a year, and the government now airlifts residents during emergencies.

Even so, families continue preparing for winter the way their ancestors did.

Spring resets the cycle. Snow melts in late April, daytime temperatures climb, and villagers till their fields and plant vegetables meant for the following winter.

Whatever survives in the trenches by then becomes seed.

Digging her field with a hoe, Begum smiled and explained the logic simply: with the onset of summer, whatever vegetables remain in the pits turn into the seed for the next planting.

Science backs what generations of trial and error taught Gurez's

farmers.

Praveen Kumar, a scientist at Sher-e-Kashmir University of Agricultural Sciences and Technology, has measured conditions inside the pits during the coldest months and found them running more than twelve degrees Celsius warmer than the air outside.

That stable underground temperature keeps vegetables from freezing solid, he said, describing the method as both inexpensive and dependable for regional food security.

Residents of Ladakh use a similar but larger version, Kumar added. They store vegetables in underground cellars with shelves, burying cabbage and cauliflower stems in the soil to keep them fresh for months.

Far from the cold desert of Ladakh, Gurez still holds on to a practice much of Kashmir has left behind.

Sedow village in Shopian district, more than 180 kilometers away, abandoned its pits decades ago.

Raja Begum, 72, said her family dismantled its khew during the 1990s after soldiers told residents to stop using them.

Overnight search operations during the insurgency turned the trenches into targets, she said, forcing families to dig up and rearrange their stored vegetables repeatedly through winter, until the burden

outweighed the benefit.

Javaid Ul Aziz, a historian at the University of Kashmir, said the decline traces to overlapping causes rather than one clear breaking point.

Improved transport, refrigeration, and evolving farming practices had already begun making pit storage feel outdated, he said, and the added strain of military searches accelerated its disappearance.

Environmentalist Sheikh Ghulam Rasool said the trenches once existed even in Srinagar, where they have now vanished entirely.

He connects that loss to a warming climate. "We have seen a spike in temperature in summers, even the winters remain mostly warm here," he said, describing visible effects of climate change throughout the valley.

Recent research supports his observation.

Parts of Jammu and Kashmir's high mountains are warming faster than lower elevations, with some high-altitude sites gaining nearly one degree Celsius of warmth over two decades. Srinagar recorded 35.9 degrees Celsius on July 18 this year, an extreme summer reading for the city.

Kumar argues Kashmir should look backward to move forward.

Frequent closures of the national highway connecting the valley to the rest of India routinely trigger shortages of essential goods during

winter, he said, and pit storage provides a proven answer sitting largely forgotten.

He wants civil society groups and NGOs to press the government formally to revive the practice and to teach younger Kashmiris techniques their grandparents once knew without effort.

Jammu and Kashmir's State Energy Efficiency Plan already targets cutting energy use equivalent to between 0.37 and 0.69 million tonnes of oil by 2031, part of India's national climate commitments.

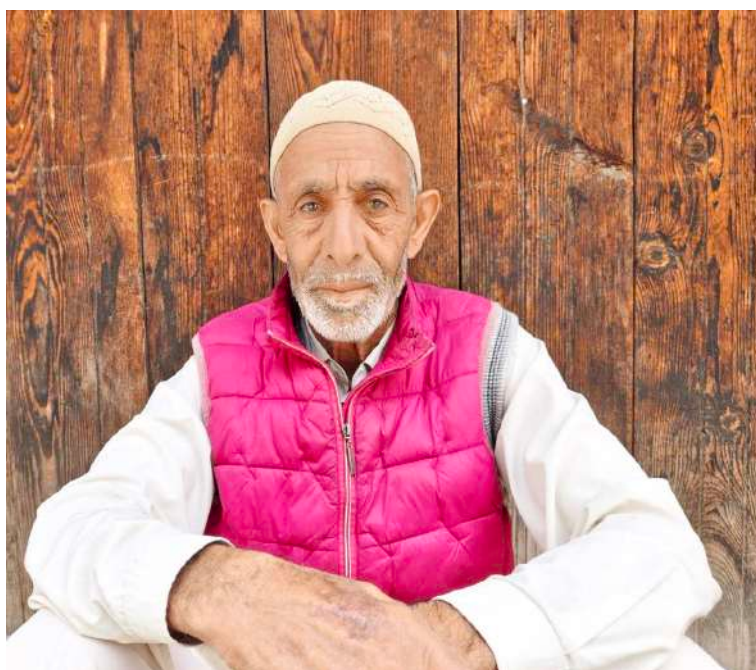
Kumar sees pit storage as one practical route toward that goal, moving households away from electricity-dependent refrigeration and toward a solution the land itself already provides.

Back in Gurez, no policy memo drives Begum's work.

Winter is coming the way it always has, and her family digs, layers, and covers a pit the way her parents did.

What the earth returns in spring becomes what she plants again: a small, self-renewing answer to a problem the rest of Kashmir has largely stopped trying to solve underground.

—The author previously worked with ETV Bharat's national desk and is now a freelance multimedia journalist based in Pune. He can be reached at umer1558@gmail.com.



HC Directs Staff to Seek Prior Permission for Exams, Further Studies

Ex-post facto permission applications will not be entertained; violations to invite disciplinary action

KO Web Desk

Srinagar: The High Court of Jammu and Kashmir and Ladakh has directed all its officers and officials to strictly obtain prior permission from the competent authority before appearing in competitive examinations or pursuing further studies.

The direction was issued by the Office of the Registrar Judicial at Jammu pursuant to instructions received from the Registrar General.

The High Court reiterated that officials intending to appear in any competitive examination or pursue further studies must obtain permission before submitting their examination or admission forms to the concerned authorities.

The court referred to Circular No. 03 of 2023/RG/NG-382(I), dated July 25, 2023, which had prescribed the procedure after it was observed that some officers and officials were seeking permission only after submitting examination or admission forms.



The circular had directed employees to obtain prior permission from the competent authority and warned that any deviation from the prescribed procedure would be viewed seriously.

In its latest order, the High Court said that, in terms of the Registrar General's directions, no application seeking permission or ex-post facto sanction would be entertained in future

if it was found to be contrary to the guidelines laid down in the 2023 circular.

The court further warned that any violation of the instructions would be viewed seriously and could invite strict disciplinary action under the applicable rules.

The order was issued following a communication from the office of the Registrar General dated September 10, 2026.

SC Asks CBSE to Consider 3-Language Policy for Class 6 From Next Year

Press Trust Of India

New Delhi: The Supreme Court on Thursday asked the CBSE to consider implementing its policy mandating the study of three languages, including two native Indian languages, for Class 6 students from the next academic session starting 2027.

The Central Board of Secondary Education (CBSE), represented by Additional Solicitor General Aishwarya Bhati, told the bench comprising Chief Justice Surya Kant and justices Joydalya Bagchi and V Mohana that it would consider the suggestion.

Justice Bagchi, at the outset, said that just to comfort the children, the CBSE should consider deferring the implementation of the three-language policy from the next academic year.

If the students, who are in Class 6 at present, want to study three languages from this year, they can also be allowed, Justice Bagchi added.

The law officer said that the CBSE would consider the suggestion and come back with a



fresh note on the issue.

The bench said its suggestions were without prejudice to the rights and contentions of the parties and the real issues may be decided later.

Earlier, the Centre and the CBSE told the bench that they were working on its suggestions on implementing the policy mandating the study of three languages, including two native Indian languages, for Class 6 students.

On May 27, the top court agreed to examine a plea challenging the policy and issued notices to the Centre, the CBSE and the NCERT seeking their responses.

According to a circular issued by the CBSE, the study of three languages, including at least two native Indian languages, has been made compulsory for Class 9 students beginning July 1.

"Every student in Class 9 would study three languages. Out of the three languages, at least two would be Bhartiya Bhashas. Examples of Bhartiya Bhashas: Hindi, Sanskrit, Tamil, Telugu, Kannada, Malayalam, Marathi, Bengali, Punjabi, Gujarati, Odia, Assamese, etc. Examples of non-native languages: English, French, German, Arabic, Spanish, etc.," the CBSE had said in its statement.

Two Indian languages have been made mandatory for Class 6, with some relaxations for Classes 7, 8 and 9 students, who were studying two non-native languages.

The move is part of the CBSE's

alignment of its scheme of studies with the National Education Policy-2020 and the National Curriculum Framework for School Education-2023.

According to the circular issued on May 15, students opting for a foreign language may do so only as the third language after studying two native Indian languages, or as an additional fourth language.

"With effect from July 1, 2026, for Class 9, the study of three languages (R1, R2, R3) shall be compulsory, with at least two languages being native Indian languages," the circular said.

The board said till the dedicated R3 textbooks are available, Class 9 students shall use Class 6 R3 textbooks (2026-27 edition) of the chosen language. The CBSE said that to keep the focus on learning and reduce any undue pressure on students, no board examination should be conducted for R3 at the Class 10 level.

It also asked schools to update their R3 language offerings for Classes 6 to 9 on the OASIS portal by June 30.

New Passport Rule: Under-15 Validity Cut to 5 Years Or Till 18

Passports valid for five years or till age 18, whichever is earlier

KO Web Desk

Srinagar: The Ministry of Home Affairs has amended the passport rules governing the validity of passports issued to children below 15 years of age.

Under the amended Rule 12(1A) of the Passports Rules, 1980, an ordinary 36-page passport issued to a child below 15 will remain valid for five years from the date of issue or until the child turns 18, whichever is earlier.

The change has been notified through the Passports (Amendment) Rules, 2026, published in the Gazette of



India on September 17.

The amendment also revises Rule 8 relating to passport application fees, with the applicable charges specified in Schedule IV.

The amended rules have come into force from the date of their publication in the Official Gazette.

The changes follow a revision in passport service charges

announced by the Ministry of External Affairs, which came into effect from July 1.

Under the revised fee structure, the fee for a normal 36-page passport for adults has increased from 1,500 to 2,500, while the fee for a 60-page passport has risen from 2,000 to 3,500.

For minors, the fee for a normal 36-page fresh or reissue

passport has increased from 1,000 to 1,750, while the Tatkaal fee has risen from 3,000 to 4,250.

The revised fee structure also provides a 10 per cent discount on fresh passport applications for children below eight years and senior citizens above 60 years. The discount does not apply to passport reissue applications.

CONTD. FROM FRONT PAGE

A Salary Dispute

their client had become the target of a legal shortcut.

They said workers increasingly turn to criminal complaints when civil courts and labour tribunals take years to resolve disputes.

A criminal complaint can bring the police into the case quickly, they argued, putting pressure on employers to settle and pay.

Parihar found the theory compelling enough to act, and ordered notice sent to the eight respondents, gave both sides four weeks to respond, granted one week for service, and extended the petitioner two additional weeks to submit certified copies of the FIR and a bail order dated August 29, sparing him that requirement for now.

But none of it answers the only question anyone actually cares about: did the employer pay his staff or did he stiff them?

The eight workers remain empty-handed, while the petitioner stays legally exposed, his prosecution deferred rather than erased.

Legal analysts describe the case as a symptom of something larger spreading through Indian courts, where frustrated employees increasingly weaponize criminal statutes built for violence and fraud to settle what amounts to a contract fight over a paycheck.

Judges now find themselves playing referee in disputes that blur the line between crime and commerce, deciding case by case which one they are actually looking at.

October 14 will bring an answer, or at least a verdict on the legal gambit itself.

Until then, a courtroom in Kashmir sits with a question that could redefine how labour disputes get fought across India: when workers can't get paid through the front door, how far can they push through the back one built for criminals?

2 JeM Terrorists

weather, difficult terrain and poor visibility, troops of White Knight Corps, Police and CRPF launched a targeted counter-terrorism operation, resulting in the neutralisation of two terrorists," the White Knight Corps said in a post on X.

The Army said the operation remained underway, with search and surveillance operations continuing in the area to track any remaining threat.

J&K Police said an AK-series assault rifle with four magazines, an M4 carbine with three magazines, a Glock pistol with two magazines and four grenades were recovered from the encounter site.

Officials said security forces had been tracking the movement of a suspected group of terrorists in the forest area after their presence was noticed last week.

Following fresh intelligence inputs, the forces cordoned off the suspected area around 9 pm on Wednesday, leading to initial contact with the terrorists. A few rounds of firing and explosions were heard after the operation began.

The area remained largely quiet during the night before the encounter resumed on Thursday morning, when the terrorists allegedly opened fire while attempting to break the security cordon. Reinforcements were subsequently rushed to the area.

Officials said the bodies of the two slain terrorists were retrieved from thick vegetation in the difficult hilly terrain.

A local man, suspected of being an over-ground worker associated with the JeM, was also detained and is being questioned in connection with the operation.

Northern Army Commander Lieutenant General Pratik Sharma commended the White Knight Corps for what the Army described as a swift and coordinated operation.

"The successful intelligence-based operation, conducted in seamless synergy with Police and CRPF, once again underscores the strength of joint inter-agency coordination in the counter-terrorism grid. Northern Command remains steadfast in its resolve to ensure a terror-free Jammu and Kashmir," the Udhampur-based command said in a post on X.

The operation was conducted in the difficult mountainous belt of Kathua, Udhampur and Doda, an area that has previously been used by armed groups to establish hideouts and move through dense forest terrain.

Security forces have maintained a heightened presence in the upper reaches and have been conducting intelligence-based searches to track suspected terrorist movement.

This was the second major encounter in Udhampur district this year. In February, two Pakistani terrorists, including a self-styled commander identified as Rubani alias Abu Mavia, were killed in the Ramnagar forests.

The latest operation comes amid continued searches in remote forest areas of the Jammu region based on intelligence inputs regarding possible terrorist movement.

According to officials, four terrorists and five security personnel were killed in separate encounters in Doda in 2025, while four terrorists and one security personnel were killed in adjoining Kishtwar district this year.

In Udhampur, two terrorists, one security personnel and one civilian were killed in 2024, while 2025 recorded the deaths of one terrorist and three security personnel. In 2026 so far, one terrorist had been killed in the district before Thursday's operation, officials said.

The search and surveillance operation in the Brattal-Sohan and Khubbana forests was continuing when the last reports came in.

PM Has Helped

facilities being provided for their well-being. The Lieutenant Governor later visited the Children's Hospital at Bemina, where he interacted with young patients and wished them a speedy recovery.

The programmes marked the beginning of the month-long 'Seva Sankalp Abhiyan', which will continue till October 17. The campaign is aimed at promoting community service and will include a series of activities across Jammu and Kashmir.

Sinha said the 'Seva Setu Abhiyan' would be conducted at the block and ward levels, with three to four-day camps to facilitate registration of deprived beneficiaries for various government welfare schemes.

"I earnestly appeal that every citizen of Jammu Kashmir participates wholeheartedly in this campaign," he said.

Highlighting the Prime Minister's tenure and the government's development initiatives, Sinha said, "Hon'ble Prime Minister has worked day and night for 140 crore countrymen and has helped build a new, powerful Jammu Kashmir."

He cited India's first-quarter GDP growth rate for 2026-27 at 7.8 per cent and said 25

crore people had moved above the poverty line, while 80 crore people were receiving free ration under the Garib Kalyan Ann Yojana.

Sinha also highlighted the expansion of the national highway network from 91,000 km to 1.46 lakh km and the increase in the number of airports from 74 to 165.

"Kashmir is now directly connected with the rail network. Discrimination has been eliminated and the UT is witnessing historic transformation," he said.

He also referred to the government's welfare initiatives, including the construction of 11 crore toilets, provision of more than 10 crore gas connections and four crore houses under the PM Awas Yojana, with another three crore houses under construction.

The Lieutenant Governor said Jammu and Kashmir, under the Prime Minister's guidance, would emerge as an "unparalleled example of prosperity and happiness" and urged citizens to contribute to the month-long service campaign.

The Seva Sankalp Abhiyan will feature 12 programmes, including school competitions on 'Mere Sapno ka Bharat', recognition of Anganwadi and ASHA workers, tree plantation drives, youth activities and registration camps under the Seva Setu Abhiyan.

Science-Policy

the valedictory session of the three-day national seminar on "Environment, Climate and Sustainability: Science, Policy and Pathways" at the University of Kashmir. Sinha said climate change, biodiversity loss and pollution were interconnected dimensions of the "triple planetary crisis" and required a holistic approach.

The seminar brought together ecologists, hydrologists, soil experts, policymakers and researchers from across the country to deliberate on environmental challenges and pathways towards sustainability.

Sinha said government departments dealing with water, forests and climate often worked separately despite the close links between these areas.

"Although government machinery has separate departments. One department formulates water policy, another forest policy, and yet another climate policy. But, I strongly believe such national seminars remind us that there is a deep connection among all these, and acknowledging it is the first step toward solving these problems," he said.

Emphasising the role of technology, the Lieutenant Governor described geospatial intelligence, including GIS, remote sensing and unmanned aerial vehicles, as a critical link between science and governance.

He called for a shift from reactive to anticipatory governance, saying real-time information should be used to support decisions on development, conservation and disaster management.

"We must create systems that do not merely record what has already happened to a glacier, forest, or river valley, but can also tell us with full confidence what is going to happen next," Sinha said.

He said scientists and environmental experts should move beyond documenting environmental changes and contribute to the development of early warning systems.

"The time when we waited five years for a report on a subject is gone. Now we must make

real-time decisions," he said.

Sinha also stressed the need to bridge the gap between scientific knowledge and policy implementation. While data, climate models and technological tools are increasingly available, he said institutional mechanisms to translate scientific findings into district development plans, water management and disaster preparedness remained inadequate.

"If we can bridge the distance between what science knows and what policy delivers in line with that knowledge, then even the biggest challenges related to climate change can be addressed," he said.

The Lieutenant Governor said artificial intelligence had further expanded the availability of tools and models for understanding environmental change, but called for stronger institutional arrangements to ensure that scientific findings reached policymakers in time.

He also urged researchers and policymakers to adopt a broader approach to development, where economic progress is accompanied by environmental responsibility and conservation.

"Development must mean establishing a relationship with the Earth in which use is accompanied by responsibility, progress by conservation, and rights by duties," he said.

Sinha called upon young researchers and scientists to work across disciplinary boundaries and urged policymakers to engage more closely with scientific institutions.

Looking ahead to India's 2047 development vision, he emphasised the need for climate-resilient and inclusive growth, supported by science-policy integration, technological innovation and environmental sensitivity.

He expressed hope that the discussions initiated at the seminar would continue beyond the conference and inform research, governance and policymaking at universities, laboratories and district levels.

University of Kashmir Vice Chancellor Prof Nilofer Khan, former Vice Chancellor Prof Talat Ahmad, former Director of the National Centre for Polar and Ocean Research Dr Rasik Ravindra, Dean Academic Affairs Prof Shariefuddin Pirzada, experts, policymakers, researchers, faculty members and students attended the valedictory session.

Omar Asks PM

Jammu and Kashmir, the Chief Minister said, "If nothing else, give us the statehood of Jammu and Kashmir. What else do we need?"

On the restoration of statehood, he said Jammu and Kashmir had been told that the process would follow three steps—delimitation, elections and restoration of statehood.

"We were told that statehood would be restored to Jammu and Kashmir after the elections, but nothing was put in writing. Assurances were given verbally, even in Parliament and the Supreme Court," he said.

CM Abdullah said Jammu and Kashmir accepted the delimitation process and subsequently participated in elections in which a significant number of people voted, but statehood had still not been restored.

"That is why I advised my friends and colleagues in Ladakh, and since they are currently in talks with the Central government, they should not rely on verbal assurances but get it in writing," he said.

Omar also commented on the issue of UPI merchant discount rate (MDR) charges, saying the proposed charges would not directly be

imposed on customers.

"It won't apply to you or me; the businesses facilitating the transactions will have to bear it. Furthermore, the issued order explicitly states that this cost cannot be passed on to the customer," he said.

The CM added that person-to-person UPI transfers would not attract any tax, while transactions below Rs 2,000, which constitute a major share of business transactions, would not carry merchant charges. "For amounts exceeding Rs 2,000, there is a set limit," he said, adding that if larger factories and merchants were required to bear such charges, "I don't think anyone should have an objection." (KNO)

Season's First

widespread rain lashed the Valley, with several areas of south Kashmir receiving heavy showers.

Srinagar recorded 8.2 mm of rainfall in the 24 hours ending 8:30 am on Thursday, while Qazigund, Pahalgam, Kokernag and Gulmarg recorded 13.4 mm, 13 mm, 14.4 mm and 13.2 mm, respectively.

Kupwara received 4 mm of rainfall, while Banihal and Batote recorded 17.1 mm and 22.4 mm. Bhabarwah received 11.7 mm during the period.

In the Jammu division, heavy rainfall was recorded at several places. Jammu received 112.9 mm of rainfall, Udhampur 117.8 mm and Katra 45.2 mm.

The rainfall and snowfall resulted in a noticeable fall in temperatures across the region.

Srinagar recorded a maximum temperature of 23.2 degrees Celsius, 4.6 degrees below normal, while the minimum temperature settled at 13.4 degrees Celsius.

Pahalgam recorded a maximum of 14 degrees Celsius, 9.9 degrees below normal, while the minimum temperature was 9.4 degrees Celsius.

Gulmarg recorded the lowest maximum temperature among the listed Valley stations at 11.2 degrees Celsius, 7.4 degrees below normal. Its minimum temperature was 5.8 degrees Celsius, 2.9 degrees below normal.

Qazigund recorded a maximum temperature of 20 degrees Celsius, 6.5 degrees below normal, while Kupwara recorded 21.9 degrees Celsius as the maximum temperature.

In Jammu, the maximum temperature settled at 31.4 degrees Celsius, 1.3 degrees below normal, while the minimum was 19.3 degrees Celsius.

The Meteorological Centre Srinagar has forecast generally dry weather from September 18 to 25, although brief spells of rain may occur at isolated places.

Partly to generally cloudy weather is expected on September 26 and 27, with brief spells of rain likely at a few places. Generally dry weather has been forecast from September 28 to 30.

The weather office has advised farmers to resume harvesting of apples and paddy, besides other agricultural activities, from September 18 as weather conditions are expected to improve.

For Thursday, the MeT Centre has forecast thunderstorms, lightning and gusty winds at a few places, along with light snowfall at isolated higher reaches of north and central Kashmir.

Officials have advised travellers heading towards higher reaches to exercise caution amid the changing weather conditions.

Former Dargah Imam Moves HC against His Removal

M Ahmad

SRINAGAR: The High Court of J&K and Ladakh has issued notice to authorities on a petition filed by Professor Dr. Kamal-ud-Din Farooqui, who has challenged his removal from the duties of Imam-o-Khateeb at Aasar-i-Shareef Dargah Hazratbal here.

A bench of Justice Mohd Yousuf Wani also directed the authorities to consider a representation submitted by Farooqui against his removal.

In his petition, Farooqui has challenged the 8 April 2024 order issued by the Executive Magistrate (Tehsildar), J&K Waqf Board, whereby he was relieved from his duties as Imam-o-Khateeb pending an



enquiry or until further orders.

Farooqui has contended that the action followed an April 5, 2024 incident involving a non-Muslim individual who, according to the petition, approached

him through the Naib Imam with a desire to embrace Islam. Farooqui has maintained that the individual was questioned regarding any force, threat, coercion, compulsion or inducement before the Kalima Shahadah was administered and had publicly stated that he was acting voluntarily.

The petition alleges that the Waqf authorities subsequently described the incident as a "forcible conversion" and constituted an enquiry committee without first issuing a show-cause notice or providing the petitioner an opportunity of hearing.

Farooqui has further submitted that he cooperated with the enquiry and furnished a detailed statement on May 5, 2024, seeking verification of CCTV footage and statements of persons present at the shrine. However, he submits, the enquiry report or any final decision was not communicated to him.

Farooqui has sought quashing of the 8 April 2024 order, restoration to the duties of Imam-o-Khateeb, disclosure of the complete enquiry report and consequential reliefs. The notice, seeking reply, has been issued against the government through the principal secretary, the home department, and the Jammu and Kashmir Waqf Board Through its Chief Executive Officer, Dr. Darakhshan Andrabi; the chairperson, the Jammu and Kashmir Waqf Board; the executive magistrate (Tehsildar), the Jammu and Kashmir Waqf Board; the senior superintendent of Police, Srinagar; the station house officer, police station Nigeen, Srinagar; and the administrator/in-charge, Aasar-i-Shareef Hazratbal, Srinagar. The matter has been listed for October 14.

ment before the Kalima Shahadah was administered and had publicly stated that he was acting voluntarily.

DIG North Kashmir Calls for People-Friendly Policing

SRINAGAR: Calling for greater public participation in policing, DIG North Kashmir Range Vinod Kumar on Thursday called for people-friendly policing and community vigilance to maintain peace, prevent crime and tackle drug trafficking.

Addressing a gathering during Thana Diwas at Police District Sopore, DIG Kumar, as per KNO, said Thana Diwas provides an important platform for direct interaction between Police and the public and helps strengthen mutual trust and cooperation.

He called for accessible, responsive and people-friendly policing, saying police stations should function not merely as enforcement units but also as institutions of public service.

The DIG highlighted the role of community cooperation in maintaining peace and preventing crime. He urged citizens to remain vigilant and share timely information about drug trafficking, crime, suspicious activities and other issues affecting society.

Kumar called for the collective responsibility of parents, teachers, religious leaders, civil society and police in protecting young people from drugs and other negative influences—(KNO)

Speaker Chairs All Party Cum BAC Meeting

SRINAGAR: Speaker, Jammu and Kashmir Legislative Assembly (JKLA), Abdul Rahim Rather, today chaired a meeting of the All Party cum Business Advisory Committee (BAC) ahead of the Autumn Session of the Legislative Assembly, scheduled to commence on September 21, 2026, with a focus on ensuring smooth, orderly and people-oriented functioning of the House.

The meeting was attended by Leader of Opposition Sunil Kumar Sharma, Ali Mohammad Sagar, Mubarak Gul, Mohammad Yousuf Tarigami, Nizamuddin Bhat, Sajad Gani Lone, Mir Mohammad Fayaz and Choudhary Mohammad Akram.

The Speaker sought their valuable suggestions for making the forthcoming Assembly Session more fruitful, meaningful and responsive to public concerns. He emphasised the need to provide adequate opportunities to the elected representatives to raise issues pertaining to their respective constituencies and bring matters of public importance to the floor of the House.

The Speaker called for coordinated efforts by all stakeholders to ensure the smooth and effective conduct of the Assembly proceedings. He underlined that the legislative institution carries a significant responsibility towards the people of Jammu and Kashmir.

"Every eye is on the proceedings of the Assembly and the people are watching how their elected representatives articulate their grievances and raise issues of public importance in the House. This places a great responsibility on every member. It is, therefore, imperative that all members conduct themselves with due regard to the dignity, discipline and decorum of the House," maintaining the Speaker.

He stressed that parliamentary debate should remain focused on public welfare, constructive deliberations and the effective articulation of issues confronting the people, while maintaining the established conventions and dignity of the legislature. (Observer News Service)

Drivers Deserve Greater Respect, Welfare Support: DIG Traffic

SRINAGAR: Drivers deserve greater respect and welfare support for their contribution to society and the economy, DIG Traffic Kashmir Haseeb-ur-Rehman said here on Thursday.

Speaking to reporters in Srinagar on the occasion of a walkathon organised as part of Drivers' Dignity Day, Haseeb-ur-Rehman, as per KNO, said drivers are an essential part of society and the economy and that greater efforts are needed to ensure their dignity and welfare.

"Throughout the year, efforts will be made to ensure that drivers receive the respect they deserve. Society has an important role to play in this, and the Traffic Police will also fulfil its role," he said.

The DIG called for greater attention to the welfare of departmental and private drivers, particularly after retirement, and urged the corporate sector to support drivers and their families through corporate social responsibility (CSR) initiatives.

He also proposed financial assistance for the children of drivers pursuing Class 12 and college education. "These are the issues we have raised here. I hope these points will reach the concerned quarters and that action will be taken on them," he said.—(KNO)

Para Moves Resolution Seeking Reconciliation, Amnesty

Press Trust Of India

SRINAGAR: Senior PDP leader and MLA Waheed Ur Rehman Para has proposed a resolution in the upcoming Autumn session of the Jammu and Kashmir Assembly, urging the Centre to initiate a "meaningful and sustained" political process in the Union territory and consider a one-time, comprehensive amnesty for those affected by years of turmoil.

The resolution submitted by Para to the Assembly secretary on September 5 calls for a humanitarian and time-bound review of cases involving "misguided" youth, who were caught in circumstances beyond their control, or continue to face



cases and restrictions long after the events in question.

"The House calls upon the government of India to begin a meaningful and sustained political process in Jammu & Kashmir and to take a historic step towards healing by offering a one-time, comprehensive amnesty to those affected by years of turmoil," the one-page resolution said.

"No young person should be condemned to a lifetime

of suspicion because of an allegation, past case or circumstances of conflict. The House, therefore, calls for a time-bound review of eligible cases, including restrictions affecting passports, security clearances, education and employment, with due process and safeguards for serious offences.

"The House believes that peace cannot be built by keeping an entire generation trapped in its past. Our youth must be given the chance to study, work, travel, support their families and rebuild their lives with dignity. This is not a plea for forgetting. It is a call for justice with compassion, accountability with humanity and peace with dignity," the resolution said.

₹2.61 Cr PDS Loss Lands JKAS Officer In ACB Net

Separate DA Case Filed; Searches Conducted at Her Home, Office

KO Web Desk

SRINAGAR: The Anti-Corruption Bureau (ACB) has registered two separate cases against Jammu and Kashmir Administrative Service (JKAS) officer Sheeba Inayat, alleging disproportionate assets and irregularities in the distribution of government foodgrains under the Public Distribution System (PDS), officials said on Thursday.

According to the ACB, the first case relates to alleged accumulation of assets disproportionate to Inayat's known sources of income while she was serving as Block Development Officer in Singhpora/Pattan.

The agency alleged that the assets included substantial bank balances, fixed deposits, LIC policies and jewellery, besides immovable properties including a five-storey commercial shopping complex in Baramulla and land plots in Baramulla, Gulmarg, Kreeri and Chowadi in Jammu.

The ACB alleged that the expenditure incurred and the value of assets acquired were disproportionate to her income from known sources, indicating alleged enrichment through corrupt practices and misuse of official position.

FIR No. 03/2026 has been registered at Police Station ACB Baramulla under Section 5(1)(e) read with Section 5(2) of the J&K Prevention of Corruption Act.

During the investigation, searches were conducted at Inayat's residential and office premises after warrants were obtained from the Anti-Corruption Court, Baramulla. The agency said incriminating material was seized and the investigation is underway.

The second case relates to alleged irregularities in the distribution of government foodgrains during Inayat's tenure as Assistant Director, Consumer Affairs and Public Distribution (CAPD).

The ACB said that between June 2013 and June 2015, Inayat allegedly abused

her official position and acted in criminal conspiracy with Mohammad Shafi Rather alias Kandaman, then a salesman in the CAPD Department, Baramulla, along with other public servants and private persons.

According to the agency, verification into the allegations established unauthorised diversion and re-appropriation of foodgrains from the Above Poverty Line (APL) category to Below Poverty Line (BPL) and Antyodaya Anna Yojana (AAY) categories, involving a financial implication of ₹26.32 lakh.

The verification also found an unexplained shortage of 16,763.77 quintals of foodgrains, valued at around ₹1.67 crore at the applicable APL issue rate, the ACB said.

It further alleged discrepancies between consolidated district statements and circle-wise distribution records, involving more than 6,120 quintals of foodgrains and a financial implication of around ₹61.20 lakh.

The agency also found a probable short remittance of government revenue amounting to ₹6.74 lakh, besides an abnormal increase in ration cards and households during the 2014 floods followed by a sharp decline, which it said prima facie indicated manipulation of beneficiary records and unauthorised distribution.

The ACB has alleged that the irregularities resulted in a wrongful loss of more than ₹2.61 crore to the government exchequer and corresponding wrongful gain to Inayat, Rather and other public servants.

FIR No. 04/2026 has been registered at Police Station ACB Baramulla under relevant provisions of the J&K Prevention of Corruption Act, 2006, along with Sections 409 and 120-B of the RPC.

Searches were subsequently conducted at the residential and office premises of Inayat and Rather, during which the ACB said incriminating material was seized.

The agency said investigations in both cases are in progress.

Amazon Now Crosses \$1 Billion in Annualised Sales in India

Observer News Service

NEW DELHI: Amazon's ultra-fast delivery service, Amazon Now, has crossed \$1 billion in annualised gross sales in India, recording a sharp rise in customer demand as the company accelerates its expansion ahead of the festive season.

Amazon said orders on the platform have doubled every quarter since its launch, making Amazon Now the fastest-growing e-commerce business unit in the history of Amazon India.

The company has expanded the service to four times as many cities in less than 10 weeks, taking its delivery-in-minutes offering to more than 60 cities and towns. The network includes locations



beyond major metros such as Padubidri, Tirupati, Guntur, Gurdaspur, Jalandhar, Vellore, Dharwad, Warangal and Berhampur.

Orders are fulfilled through a network of more than 750 micro-fulfilment and urban fulfilment centres, enabling customers to receive a wide range of products

within minutes. Samir Kumar, Country Manager, Amazon India, said the company was encouraged by the customer response and remained on track to expand Amazon Now to 100 cities by Diwali.

In June, Amazon had announced plans to scale its delivery-in-minutes network to more than 300 cities across India. The company said its specialised fulfilment infrastructure is being expanded to provide customers with tens of thousands of products within minutes or a few hours. Amazon Now offers groceries, including fruits, vegetables and frozen food, along with personal care, fashion and beauty products, small appliances, home and kitchen products and other daily essentials.

From Kashmir to Amaravati, CQAI Takes Quantum Vision to National Stage

Observer News Service

AMARAVATI: Chinar Quantum AI (CQAI), a Kashmir-based deep-tech organisation working in quantum technologies and advanced computation, has been invited to participate in the VIT-AP Industry Conclave 2026 at VIT-AP University, Amaravati, on September 18 and 19.

Representing CQAI at the conclave will be its CEO and Chief Scientist, Dr Rukhsan Ul Haq. The participation is expected to provide an opportunity for CQAI to engage with academia, industry and research institutions and explore avenues for collaboration in emerging technologies.



The invitation marks a further link between Kashmir and Amaravati's developing technology ecosystems. CQAI said its engagement with Amaravati reflects its broader objective of building institutional partnerships and connecting scientific research with technological applications and enterprise.

The organisation's work is centred on the conver-

gence of quantum computing, advanced computation, data, research and emerging technologies. It seeks to develop capabilities that can translate scientific knowledge into practical applications and contribute to the development of India's technology ecosystem.

For CQAI, the engagement also highlights Kashmir's potential as a source of deep-tech innovation and scientific capability. The organisation said its roots in Kashmir remain central to its identity even as it expands its engagement with technology and research ecosystems across the country.

The Kashmir-Amaravati engagement is aligned with

the broader objectives of India's National Quantum Mission, with an emphasis on strengthening indigenous capabilities, research, innovation and workforce development in quantum technologies.

While Kashmir and Amaravati represent distinct geographical and institutional environments, CQAI views their growing connection as an opportunity to build a wider network around India's emerging quantum ambitions.

As CQAI participates in the VIT-AP Industry Conclave, the organisation aims to explore meaningful institutional relationships, exchange expertise and contribute to discussions on the future of quantum technology.



UNIVERSITY OF KASHMIR

OFFICE OF THE EXECUTIVE ENGINEER, CONSTRUCTION DIVISION

NOTICE INVITING E-TENDER

For and on behalf of the University of Kashmir, e-tenders (In double cover system) are invited on **Percentage (%age)** Basis from approved and eligible Electrical Contractors registered with J&K Govt., CPWD, Railways and other State/U.T/ Central Governments for the following works:-

S.No	Name of Work	Est. Cost (Rs. In Lacs)	Cost of T/Doc in shape of E-Challan (in Rs.)	Earnest Money (in Rs.)	Time and Date for Submission of E-Tender.	Date & Time of Opening of Bid	Class of Contractor
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
1.	Construction of Skill Development Centre at University of Kashmir (Electrical works)	31.11 Lacs	Rs.1100/-	Rs. 62,220/-	19/09/2026 to 12/10/2026 (4:30 PM)	13/10/2026 (2:30 PM)	"AAY"

The bid forms and other details can be obtained from the web site www.kashmiruniversity.net / www.jktenders.gov.in.

NIT No: F(E.Tend)(Elect. Skill Dev. UOK)(UCD)/KU/18/26
DATED: 16/09/2026

DIPK-NB-1667-26
DT: 17/09/2026

Executive Engineer

GOVERNMENT OF JAMMU AND KASHMIR

OFFICE OF THE CHILD DEVELOPMENT PROJECT OFFICER B.K. PORA

ADVERTISEMENT NOTICE: NO- 04 - OF 2026 DATED: 15-09-2026

Subject: Re- Advertisement for Recruitment of Sahayikas (Anganwadi Helpers) in Anganwadi Centers of POSHAN Project B.K.Pora

Reference: 1. Government order No 222-JK (SWD) of 2022 Dated: 30.11.2022
2. Government Order No.103-JK (SWD) of 2023 dated: 28.04.2023
3. MD/Poshan/47147-56 Dated: - 24-12-2025
4. PO/ICDS/Advt/AWW-H/01 Dated: - 29-12-2025
5. CDPQ/Poshan/BKP/2025/Adv/1086-97 dated:- 31-12-2025.
6. CDPQ/Poshan/BKP/2025/Adv/199-210 dated:- 27-01-2026.

Approval has been accorded vide Government Order No. 103-JK (SWD) of 2023 dated 28.04.2023 for filling up various vacant posts of Sahayikas (Anganwadi Helpers) in the Anganwadi Centres of Poshan Project B.K. Pora, as per the details given below. However, in response to the earlier advertisement, the response received from eligible candidates was found to be poor/inadequate, resulting in some vacancies remaining unfilled. Accordingly, the competent authority has decided to re-advertise the vacant posts of Sahayikas (Anganwadi Helpers) in the concerned Anganwadi Centres of Poshan Project B.K. Pora.

The details of the vacant posts proposed to be filled through this re-advertisement are given below.

Sr. No.	Name of Project	Name of Post	No. of Post
01	Poshan Project B.K.Pora	Sahayikas (Anganwadi Helpers)	04
Total		04	

The rest of the eligibility conditions and terms and conditions remain the same as mentioned in references.

a) Date of commencement for submission of application 18-09-2026
b) Last date for submission of applications is 29-09-2026
c) Annexure B- Name of the Post, Location/Ward, Qualification and Criteria for selection

ANNEXURE 'B'

Details of Vacant Posts (AWW/AWH) along with name and location of AWC

S.NO	NAME OF PANCHAYAT/ MUNICIPALITY WARD	NAME OF ANGANWADI CENTRE	WARD NO.	NAME OF POST	No of Post
1	2	3	4	5	6
01.	Mouchuwa	Mouchuwa "A"	Punch Ward No (08) Wani Mohalla	Anganwadi Helpers	1
02.	Lasjan	Lasjan "F"	Panch Ward No (05)	Anganwadi Helpers	1
03.	M.C Ward No (12)	Chanapora "A"	M.C Ward No (12)	Anganwadi Helpers	1
04.	MC Ward No (16)	Wavoosa "A"	MC Ward No (16)	Anganwadi Helpers	1

CDPO/Posan/BKP/Adv/026/1175-85
Dated: 15-09-2026

DIPK-5838-26
DT: 17/09/2026

Child Development Project Officer
B. K. Pora

Rail, Ports & Viksit Bharat: Srinagar Media Explores Chennai

Observer News Service

CHENNAI- A 13-member media delegation from Srinagar, currently on a five-day media exposure tour of Chennai organised by the Press Information Bureau (PIB), Srinagar, completed the fourth day of its engagements on Thursday with visits to key national institutions and infrastructure projects.

The tour is aimed at providing journalists from Kashmir first-hand exposure to India's technological advancements, industrial capabilities, infrastructure development and initiatives towards building a Viksit Bharat 2047.

Delegation visits Integral Coach Factory

The day's engagements began with a visit to the Integral Coach Factory (ICF), Chennai, one of the country's premier railway coach manufacturing units.

The delegation was taken

through the production facilities and assembly lines for Linke Hofmann Busch (LHB) coaches and briefed on modern fabrication techniques, manufacturing processes and safety standards.

During an interaction with senior engineers and technical officials, the journalists were briefed on the evolution of India's indigenous railway manufacturing capabilities, including the development of Vande Bharat trainsets.

Anupam Chauhan, Chief Workshop Engineer, LHB Division, explained the engineering and manufacturing processes involved in Vande Bharat trains. He also briefed the delegation about concepts and trials relating to experimental Vande Bharat freight trainsets aimed at facilitating high-speed cargo transportation.

The delegation was also informed about engineering adaptations incorporated into Vande Bharat trainsets for operations in



Jammu and Kashmir's high-altitude and sub-zero conditions.

These include heating lines, anti-freeze water systems and enhanced climate-control systems designed to ensure reliable operation in extreme weather

conditions.

Visit to Chennai Port

The journalists subsequently visited Chennai Port, where senior port officials briefed them about the functioning of the

strategic maritime hub and its role in facilitating domestic and international trade.

The delegation was apprised of the port's daily logistics operations, multi-cargo handling capabilities, automated container

management systems and ongoing modernisation and digitisation initiatives.

The visiting journalists also toured the berths, container yard, signalling station and the Premium Cruise Passenger Terminal, gaining first-hand insight into the scale and functioning of one of India's major ports.

MoS I&B highlights media's role

Later in the evening, the delegation attended a special event at Doordarshan Kendra, Chennai, commemorating Prime Minister Narendra Modi's 25 years of public service.

Minister of State for Information and Broadcasting Dr L Murugan was the chief guest at the event.

Welcoming the Srinagar delegation to Tamil Nadu, Murugan emphasised the role of the media in connecting regional narratives with the country's broader development story.

He urged the visiting journalists to highlight the transformation taking place across the country in areas such as infrastructure, economic empowerment and development, and communicate these experiences to audiences in Jammu and Kashmir.

Murugan described the visit of the Srinagar media team as an example of the spirit of Ek Bharat Shreshtha Bharat (EBSB), noting that Jammu and Kashmir and Tamil Nadu have been paired under the initiative.

The five-day exposure tour will conclude on Friday with further interactive sessions, following which the delegation will depart for Srinagar.

The tour has provided the journalists an opportunity to visit major institutions, interact with officials and stakeholders, and document development initiatives and the implementation of public welfare programmes at the grassroots level.

Kanimozhi Holds Closed-door Meeting with Mamata in Kolkata

Press Trust of India

KOLKATA: Senior DMK leader Kanimozhi met former West Bengal chief minister Mamata Banerjee in Kolkata on Thursday.

The Lok Sabha MP met Banerjee at her residence in Kalighat in south Kolkata, a TMC leader said.

"Kanimozhi held a closed-door meeting with Mamata Banerjee at her residence. Several issues were discussed," he said, without divulging the details. The meeting comes days after Kanimozhi held discussions with Shiv Sena (UBT) chief Uddhav Thackeray in Mumbai and NCP (SP) chief Sharad Pawar in Delhi.

The outreach has drawn attention amid strains between the DMK and Congress and differences among several regional constituents of the opposition INDIA bloc.

The TMC and Congress are constituents of the INDIA bloc at the national level, but their relationship in West Bengal has remained contentious.

The two parties have recently sparred over the October 6 bypoll.

The state Congress claimed that the

TMC approached its central leadership with an offer to leave the Nandigram seat to the party, a claim rejected by the Mamata Banerjee-led bloc.

The DMK-Congress relationship has also come under strain following the assembly elections in Tamil Nadu.

The Congress is now part of the ruling alliance led by actor-turned-politician C Joseph Vijay's TVK, while the DMK is in the opposition.

The TMC is also navigating a period of political churn as the BJP came to power in West Bengal, ending its 15-year rule. The party is facing dissent within the state assembly as well as among its parliamentary ranks, presenting additional challenges for Banerjee.

The DMK had skipped an INDIA bloc meeting in June, while the party has since adopted a more confrontational stance towards the Congress.

Against this backdrop, Kanimozhi's meetings have prompted speculation about efforts to strengthen coordination among parties outside the Congress-led framework, although there was no official indication that the discussions were aimed at forming a new political grouping.

Teacher Recalls Modi's Sharp Memory, Courage

Press Trust of India

AHMEDABAD: As Prime Minister Narendra Modi celebrated his 76th birthday on Thursday, his former teacher remembered his sharp memory and spoke about how he had once brought home a baby crocodile, only to release it back on his mother's advice.

H C Patel was Modi's science teacher in class 11-12 at Bhagwat Acharya Narayan Acharya School at Vadnagar.

Later, when he once met Modi who had become Gujarat's Chief Minister, seeking a favour regarding the transfer of a relative, Modi refused politely, Patel recalled.

Speaking to the media, Patel talked about the period between June 1965 and May 1967 when he taught the future prime minister.

Modi had once acted in a school play, playing the role of Jogidas Khuman, a famous 19th century rebel, to raise funds for the compound wall, and received 10-minute applause from the audience, Patel recalled.

Retelling a famous story from Modi's childhood, Patel said he once brought home a baby crocodile from

the Sharmishtha lake.

"His mother Heeraba asked him, 'What have you done? What would its mother do? You have brought the baby here, but what will happen to its mother?' She told him to take it back. So, the next day, he released the baby crocodile in Sharmishtha lake," Patel said.

In 2012, there was a temple consecration ceremony in Patel's native village, and Modi, then chief minister, accepted the invitation to attend it.

"He has a very sharp memory.... I had taught him but had not realized he would become so famous. But even back then, he was extraordinary. I pray to God to grant him good health so that he may serve the country and the world in the spirit of Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam (the world is one family)," Patel said.

"We had no idea back then that this person would rise so high and achieve so much. Before he became chief minister, I met his younger brother, Pankaj-bhai, and asked about the possibility; he had said no. But by God's grace, he became the chief minister," he said.

Robot Gives 26-year-old a Shot at Merchant Navy

Press Trust of India

NEW DELHI: A 26-year-old man's dream of joining the Merchant Navy had to be put on hold after a routine check-up detected a large congenital hole in his heart, forcing him to undergo surgery at a Delhi hospital.

According to a statement, doctors at Fortis Escorts Hospital in Okhla, where the procedure was performed, said an echocardiogram revealed a large atrial septal defect (ASD) in the man's heart, a congenital opening between the two upper chambers.

Although he had undergone mandatory medical screening before joining the service, the defect had not been detected on an ECG. The condition was subsequently found to be allowing excess blood flow to the lungs and putting additional strain on the right side of his heart, following which he was declared medically unfit for service.

The condition was allowing excess blood to flow to the lungs and putting additional strain on the right side of his heart. He was subsequently declared medically unfit for service, putting his plans to work at sea on hold,

the statement read.

The cardiac team at the hospital repaired the defect using the Da Vinci Xi robotic surgical system, accessing the heart through small ports and a limited incision instead of splitting the breastbone as in conventional open-heart surgery.

"The patient was aspiring to join the Merchant Navy but was unable to pursue the opportunity because of his ASD. Since the defect was large and not suitable for device closure, we chose a robotic-assisted surgical approach," said Dr Ritwick Raj Bhuyan, Senior Director, Cardio Thoracic Vascular Surgery, Fortis Escorts Hospital.

The defect was closed using a specialised patch, with doctors saying the surgery was completed without complications and the patient was taken off the ventilator on the same day.

Hospital authorities said the patient recovered smoothly and was discharged in stable condition with normal heart function.

They said the size and anatomy of the defect made it unsuitable for closure through a catheter-based device, which can be used for some ASDs.

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