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Foreign Fat Found In Ghee, J&K FDA Bans 4 Batches



Observer News Service

Srinagar: The Jammu and Kashmir Food and Drugs Administration has banned the sale, storage, distribution and display of four identified batches of ghee after laboratory tests found them failing prescribed food safety standards, with three brands classified as unsafe and one as sub-standard.

The prohibitory order, issued by Commissioner Food Safety J&K Khalid Jahangir, covers the affected batches of Cow Ghee Milk Bite, Pehalwan, Swift and Sangath and applies across the Union Territory with immediate effect.

The action follows the lifting of

samples by Food Safety Officers from Anantnag, Jammu, Kathua, Samba and Pulwama, which were subsequently analysed at the National Food Laboratory, Ghaziabad, and the Food Testing Laboratory, Srinagar.

Foreign fat, vegetable fat detected

According to the FDA order, a copy of which lies with Kashmir Observer, laboratory findings in the affected samples included the presence of beta-sitosterol, vegetable fat and foreign fat, along with a positive Baudouin test and deviations in several prescribed parameters used to assess the quality and composition of ghee. | More on P6

Holiday Row Triggers Uproar, Walkout In J&K Assembly

» NC demand to restore Sheikh Abdullah holiday sparks BJP protests

» PDP backs restoration of July 13 Martyrs' Day holiday

Observer News Service

Srinagar: The Jammu and Kashmir Legislative Assembly witnessed disruptions on Tuesday after National Conference (NC) demanded restoration of the holiday on the birth anniversary of NC founder Sheikh Mohammad Abdullah, while also calling for cancellation of the holiday marking the birth anniversary of Maharaja Hari Singh if the demand was not accepted.

As soon as proceedings began, NC legislator, Abdul Majid



Larmi said the government should restore the holiday on

Sheikh Abdullah's birth anniversary or cancel the holiday

relating to Maharaja Hari Singh.

"The holiday which should have been observed on the birth or death anniversaries of Sher-e-Kashmir Sheikh Muhammad Abdullah has been cancelled by them. The holiday should be restored; otherwise, they should cancel the holiday relating to Maharaja Hari Singh," Larmi said, as per KNO.

His remarks triggered protests from BJP legislators, who raised slogans in support of Maharaja | More on P6

Govt Moves Resolution Seeking TET Exemption

Education Minister Sakina Itoo on Tuesday tabled a resolution in the Jammu and Kashmir Legislative Assembly urging the Union Government to | More on P6

Cooperative Societies Amendment Bill, 2026 Passed

The Jammu and Kashmir Legislative Assembly today passed the Jammu and Kashmir Cooperative Societies (Amendment) Bill, 2026 (L.A. Bill No. 9 of 2026) after detailed | More on P6

MLAs Raise Issue of Highway Stoppages

DP MLA Waheed-ur-Rehman Parra and NC MLA Abdul Majeed Larmi on Tuesday raised the issue of repeated stoppage of vehicles on | More on P6

HC Sets Timelines For Bail, Trials

Frames Draft Criminal Practice Rules

KO Correspondent

Srinagar: The High Court of J&K and Ladakh on Tuesday adopted and framed the Draft Rules of Criminal Practice, introducing detailed procedures for investigation, trial, recording of evidence, judgments and disposal of bail applications in subordinate courts.

The rules have been framed in compliance with the Supreme Court's February 5, 2026 verdict in the suo motu writ petition concerning inadequacies and deficiencies in criminal trials. The directions have been issued for the guidance and compliance of all courts subordinate to the High Court.

Under the new rules, every medico-legal certificate, post-mortem report and inquest report will have to contain a printed frontal and rear view of the human body, with injuries indicated on the sketch.

In cases involving death in police action or police custody, photographs and videography of the post-mortem examination have been mandated. Such material is to be properly seized, preserved and supported by the required electronic evidence certificate for use during trial.

The rules also require investigating officers to prepare a hand-drawn site plan along with the scene mahazar or spot panchnama. The plan must indicate the place of occurrence, location of bodies, seized material and | More on P6

J&K Stands At Threshold Of A New Future: LG

Says Abrogation Of Art 370 Fulfilled Sardar Patel's 'Unfinished Dream'

Observer News Service

Srinagar: Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha on Tuesday said Jammu Kashmir now stands at the threshold of a "new future", asserting that the region's youth, development potential and cultural heritage would play a key role in shaping its future.

Sinha made the remarks while launching the book 'Sardar Patel and Kashmir: The Untold History'. He paid tribute to Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel's leadership and described him as the "architect



of modern India", crediting his vision and organisational ability with the integration of 562 princely states.

The Lieutenant Governor said Patel's | More on P6

AI Must Remain Servant Of Humanity, Not Its Master: LG

Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha on Tuesday said artificial intelligence must remain a servant of humanity and not become its master, stressing that | More on P6

J&K Bank To Issue Recruitment Notification For J&K Posts Soon

Bank Holds 88th AGM; Net Profit Rises 13.5% to ₹2,363 Crore

Observer News Service

Srinagar: Jammu and Kashmir Bank will soon issue a recruitment notification for officer and associate posts in Jammu and Kashmir and Ladakh, MD & CEO Amitava Chatterjee said on Tuesday.

Chatterjee made the announcement while responding to shareholders' queries during the bank's 88th Annual General Meeting (AGM) held at SKICC in Srinagar.

The AGM was chaired by the bank's Part-time



Non-Executive Chairman S. Krishnan and attended by Chatterjee and members

of the Board of Directors, including Financial Commissioner (Additional

Secretary) Shaileendra Kumar, representing the majority shareholder and promoter, the J&K Government, and Commissioner and Secretary, Finance Department, Ladakh UT, Tsewang Tharchin.

The meeting, themed 'Trust, Tradition and Transformation', was attended by shareholders, Executive Director Sudhir Gupta, senior bank officials, auditors, the Scrutinizer and members of the media fraternity. Addressing | More on P6



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Government of Jammu and Kashmir

Office of the Commissioner, Food & Drugs Administration, J&K

FDA Complex, Near Saint Luke's Church, Durgjan, Dalgate, Srinagar - 190001

Subject: Prohibition of sale, storage, distribution and display of specified brands/batches of Ghee in the Union Territory of Jammu & Kashmir.

PROHIBITORY ORDER

Whereas, the Food Safety and Standards Act, 2006 has been enacted to ensure the availability of safe and wholesome food for human consumption and to regulate the manufacture, storage, distribution, sale and import of food; and

Whereas, Section 30(2)(a) of the Food Safety and Standards Act, 2006 empowers the Commissioner of Food Safety, in the interest of public health, to prohibit the manufacture, storage, distribution or sale of any article of food throughout the Union Territory or any area or part thereof for such period as may be specified in the order; and

Whereas, samples of various brands/batches of Ghee were lifted by the Food Safety Officers from Anantnag, Jammu, Kathua, Samba and Pulwama and were subjected to analysis by the Notified Food Analysts of the National Food Laboratory, Ghaziabad and Food Testing Laboratory, Srinagar; and

Whereas, the analytical reports received in respect of the said samples have revealed that the food articles in question have failed to conform to the prescribed standards and requirements under the Food Safety and Standards Act, 2006 and the regulations made thereunder and have accordingly been reported as Unsafe/ Sub-standard/Misbranded, as applicable; and

Whereas, the analytical findings in respect of the said samples have, inter alia, revealed the presence of beta-sitosterol/vegetable fat/foreign fat, positive Baudouin test and deviations in prescribed parameters of Ghee, including Reichert-Meissl value, Polenske value, saponification value, B.R. reading, iodine value and fatty-acid profile; and

Whereas, under the Food Safety and Standards (Food Products Standards and Food Additives) Thirteenth Amendment Regulations, 2017, Clause 2.1.8 Standard for Milk Fat Products, "Ghee shall be a product derived exclusively from milk or milk products through processes that result in the almost complete removal of water and non-fat milk solids." and

Whereas, Regulation 2.1.1(3) of the Food Safety and Standards (Prohibition and Restrictions on Sales) Regulations, 2011 provides that Ghee containing any added matter not exclusively derived from milk fat shall not be sold; and

Whereas, Regulation 2.1.1(10) of the Food Safety and Standards (Prohibition and Restrictions on Sales) Regulations, 2011 provides that milk or a milk

Page 1 of 3

product containing a substance not found in milk, except as provided in the said regulations, shall not be sold; and

Whereas, the aforesaid analytical findings establish that the concerned food articles do not conform to the prescribed standards and restrictions governing Ghee and, therefore, their continued sale, storage, distribution or display is not considered permissible in the interest of food safety and public health; and

Now, therefore, I, Khalid Jahangir, Commissioner, Food Safety, J&K, in exercise of the powers conferred under Section 30(2)(a) read with Section 18(1)(f) , of the Food Safety and Standards Act, 2006, hereby prohibit the sale, storage, distribution and display of the following identified affected batches of Ghee Brand throughout the Union Territory of Jammu & Kashmir, with immediate effect:

S.No.	Food Article/ Brand	Manufacturer/ Packer	Place of Sampling	Batch No./ Date/Best Before/Net Content	Test Report No. & Date	Analytical Opinion
1.	Desi Ghee "Cow Ghee Milk Bite"	M/s Mahadev Industries, Rajasthan	Jammu	143/ July-2026 / April-2027 / 500 ml	JK-578/SEP/26/68 1, 02-09-2026	Sub-standard
2.	Desi Ghee "Pehalwan"	M/s Comfy Agro Pvt. Ltd, Malout Road Gidderbaha, Dist Sri Muktsar Sahab- 152101	Anantnag	PW-005 / May-2026 / Best Before 9 Months/ 500 ml	JK-433/AUG/26/4 93,10-08-2026	Unsafe
3.	Desi Ghee "Swift"	M/s Suneja Food Products SICOP Industrial Estate Hisar (Haryana)	Anantnag	M-92 / April-2026 / April-2027 / 450 ml	JK-474/AUG/26/4 94, 10-08-2026	Unsafe
4.	Desi Ghee " Sangath"	M/s Akshar Dairy Product Survey No. 250, Near Railway Crossing, Santhal Circle, Santhal Ahmedabad Gujrat-382210	Anantnag	AD-05/01-05-2026/01-02-2027/200 ml	JK-551/AUG/26/5 77, 25-08-2026	Unsafe/ Sub-standard

Accordingly, it is further ordered that:

- All Food Business Operators, manufacturers, distributors, wholesalers, retailers and other persons dealing in the aforesaid food articles shall forthwith discontinue their sale, storage, distribution and display within the Union Territory of Jammu & Kashmir.
- The concerned Food Business Operators shall segregate the affected batches and keep the same under safe custody and shall not dispose of, sell, transfer or otherwise deal with such stock except with the approval/directions of the competent Food Safety Authority. Page 2 of 3
- All concerned FBOs shall furnish the complete stock position of the affected batches, including the quantity received, quantity sold/ distributed and quantity presently available in stock, to the concerned Designated Officer within 48 hours of issuance of this Order.
- The concerned Designated Officers/Food Safety Officers shall ensure immediate implementation of this Order and shall conduct necessary verification/inspection of the concerned premises and supply chain.
- Any person found violating this Order shall be liable for action under the relevant provisions of the Food Safety and Standards Act, 2006 and the rules/regulations made there under, in addition to any other action permissible under law.
- The concerned Enforcement Officers shall maintain strict surveillance over the movement, storage, sale and distribution of the aforesaid food articles and shall take immediate action wherever the prohibited batches are found. This Order is issued as an abundant precautionary measure in the public interest and shall not preclude the concerned Food Business Operators from availing the statutory right of re-analysis through any FSSAI Notified Referral Laboratory, in accordance with the provisions of the Food Safety and Standards Act, 2006 and the rules made there under.

Sd/-

(Khalid Jahangir), JKAS

Commissioner Food & Drugs Administration, J&K

No.: FADA-Tech/16/2025-05
DIPK-6022/26
Dated:22.09.2026

PUBLIC NOTICE

I have applied for the issuance of DOB certificate In favour of my son Mohammad Hazim War who was born on 22-01-2018. If anybody has any objection in this regard he/she may file them in the office of the BDO Tuijer Sharief within seven days. After that no objection shall be entertained.
Mohammad Arif War
F/o Mohammad Hazim War
R/o Zaloora

fko

PUBLIC NOTICE

I have applied for the issuance of DOB certificate In favour of my son Tawkeer Ahamd War who was born on 20-07-2015. If anybody has any objection in this regard he/she may file them in the office of the BDO Tuijer Sharief within seven days. After that no objection shall be entertained.
Mohammad Arif War
F/o Tawkeer Ahamd War
R/o Zaloora

fko

PUBLIC NOTICE

I have lost my passport bearing Number F2800088 during travelling Budgam to Sringar in a Commercial Vehicle on 20-09-2026. If anybody found please return below mentioned address. In other way i want its duplicate if anybody having any objection in this regard may submit regional passport<?> Office Srinagar within a period of seven days. No objection shall be entertained after that.
KOUSAR ALI KHANDAY
S/O MOHAMMAD SAFADAR KHANDAY
R/O PALAR BUDGAM.
CELL: 7006792349

mcb

PUBLIC NOTICE

This is inform to the general public that my name has been wrongly mentioned in my aadhar as RUQAYA AKTHER While as my actual name is REQUIA AKHTER C/O ALI MOHAMMAD MIR R/O MUGALPORA KUPWARA District KUPWARA 193222. Now I want to apply for the correction of the same if anybody is having any objection he/she may contact concerned authority within the period of seven days after that no objection will be entertained.

REQUIA AKHTER
C/O :-ALI MOHAMMAD MIR
R/O :- MUGALPORA , KUPWARA

qns

PUBLIC NOTICE

I, Bashir Ahmad Mir S/o [Father's Name], R/o Wanigam Bala, Tehsil Pattan, Post Office Kreeri, District Baramulla, J&K, hereby inform the general public that the name of my daughter has inadvertently been recorded in her Aadhaar Card bearing No. 2557-1950-2219 as "Arzoo Bashir", which is incorrect. Her correct and actual name is "Aarizo Bashir". I have applied for correction of the said name and request the concerned authorities to publish the necessary notice in the Government Gazette for further processing.
Bashir Ahmad Mir
Father of Aarizo Bashir
R/o Wanigam Bala, Tehsil Pattan,
Post Office Kreeri, District Baramulla, J&K

fko

PUBLIC NOTICE

I, Shahnawaz Ahmad Tallee S/o Ab Majid Tallee, R/o Maharaj Pora (Kungam Dara), Pattan, District Baramulla, J&K, hereby inform the general public that my name has inadvertently been recorded in my Aadhaar Card bearing No. 8370-1552-7732 as "Shahnwaz Ahmad Tali", which is incorrect. My correct and actual name is "Shahnawaz Ahmad Tallee." I seek publication of the necessary Gazette Notification regarding the correction of my name in the Government Ranbir Press, Jammu, for further processing.
Shahnawaz Ahmad Tallee
S/o Ab Majid Tallee
R/o Maharaj Pora (Kungam Dara), Pattan,
District Baramulla, J&K

fko

PUBLIC NOTICE

It is hereby notified that on the night of 21th September ,2026 my vehicle Scorpio NZ4 under registration no: JK01AT-1777 met with an unfortunate incident at Ali Jan road, Eidgh Srinagar resulting front number plate of the vehicle being lost/ misplaced. Despite making efforts to trace the same, it could not be found. The concerned authority is, therefore, requested to kindly take the loss on record and issue/permit the issuance of a duplicate number plate as per the prescribed rules and procedure.Any person has objection in this regard may file the same before the concerned authority within a week. No objection shall be entertained after the expiry of already notified time period.

Owner's Name:- Ms. Nazira Jan.
R/o : Bypass, Nowgam, Srinagar

sku

PUBLIC NOTICE

My Residence and Adhaar No has been wrongly mentioned in Domicile certificate of my daughter, Humairaa Jaan as Residence: Flatishat while the correct address is Latishat and Adhaar No has been wrongly written as 203315790373 while her correct adhaar no is 622367220050. Now I have applied for the correction of the same if anybody has any objection in this regard he/she may file them in the concerned office within seven days. After that no objection shall be entertained.
Manzoor Ahamd Hajam
F/o Humairaa Jaan
R/o Latishat

fko

PUBLIC NOTICE

My name has been wrongly written in my In my Degree Transcript (Marks Card) And In Kashmir University Registration Details as Basharat Gani S/O Shah Saida Begum R/o Malpora while my correct name is Basharat Gani Baba S/o Abdul Gani Baba R/o Malpora . Now I have applied for the correction of the same if anybody has any objection in this regard he/she may file them in the concerned office within seven days. After that no objection shall be entertained.
Basharat Gani Baba
S/o Abdul Gani Baba
R/o Malpora panditan

FKO

NOTICE

It is information to the general public that my name in my Aadhaar Card bearing No:-4802-6405-1859 has been wrongly entered as Jameela Akhter which is incorrect. while my correct and actual Name is Jameela Hassan. 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.

Jameela Hassan
D/o Gh. Hassan Bhat
R/o Bochu Tehsil Pattan
District Baramulla

PUBLIC NOTICE

I, Muhammad Saleem Dar S/o Ghulam Mohi-ud-Din Dar, R/o Bun Makhama, Magam, District Budgam, hereby inform the general public that the name and date of birth of my ward, Imad-ul-Islam Dar, have inadvertently been wrongly recorded in his Aadhaar Card as "Immad-ul-Islam" and "02/03/2011", respectively. The correct particulars of my ward are as under:
Correct Name: Imad-ul-Islam Dar
Father's Name: Muhammad Saleem Dar
Correct Date of Birth: 09/09/2013
I have accordingly applied for correction of the aforesaid particulars in the Aadhaar records. Any person having any objection regarding the proposed correction may submit the same before the concerned authority or approach the undersigned within 07 (seven) days from the date of publication of this notice. After expiry of the said period, no objection shall be entertained and the undersigned shall proceed with the correction of the aforesaid particulars in accordance with law.
Muhammad Saleem Dar
S/o Ghulam Mohi-ud-Din Dar
R/o Bun Makhama, Magam, District Budgam
Mob.: 6006993885

bmg

PUBLIC NOTICE

I, Imran Khan, Sole Proprietor of New Unique Art and Craft, R/o Hassana Abad, Rainawari, Srinagar – 190003, hereby inform the general public that the original documents relating to my Importer Exporter Code (IEC) and Handicrafts unit Card have been lost/misplaced.
IEC Code No.: 5514000559
Handicrafts unit Card No.: ADS/Regn/SHL/306/17/U
The above-mentioned documents shall be treated as lost and invalid and should not be used for any purpose. If anyone finds the said documents, kindly contact the undersigned.
Imran Khan
Sole Proprietor
New Unique Art and Craft
R/o Hassana Abad, Rainawari, Srinagar – 190003
Contact No.: 9622267890

fko

Office of the Naib Tehsildar Tilgam

Executive Magistrate 1st Class

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

Public Notice

The registrar Births and Deaths BDO Pattan has submitted case file pertaining to birth of Safoora Farooq D/o Farooq Ahamd Bhat R/o Wanigam Bla Distt Baramulla having verified the date of birth as 01-03-2014 and the event has been shown to be occurred atHome .

In this connection if anybody having any objection to the issuance of delay order of birth certificate shall submit his/hr claim to this office within seven (7) days after that no objection shall be entertained

PUBLIC NOTICE

It is hereby informed to the general public that I intend to change/correct my name in my Aadhaar Card from Jahangir Ahmad Khan to Jahangeer Ahmad Khan, as per my Date of Birth Certificate.

If any person has any objection regard he/she may contact the concerned department within seven (07) days from the date of publication of this notice. Thereafter, no objection shall be entertained.

Jahangeer Ahmad Khan
S/o Ali Mohammad Khan

Media line advt

PUBLIC NOTICE

I have changed my name from (old name) Ulfat Jan

to (new name) Ulfat . In future i will be known as

(new name)

Ulfat.

If anybody is having any objection he/she may contact passport office srinagar, within & 7 days.

After 7 days no objection will be accepted.

Media line advt

PUBLIC NOTICE

My name has been wrongly written in my jk bank passbok as Shazia Bano D/O M Rafiq Mir R/O Brath Kalan While my correct name is Shazia Akhter D/o Mohd Rafiq Mir R/O Breath Kalan . Now I have applied for the correction of the same if anybody has any objection in this regard he/she may file them in the Concerned JK Bank within seven days.After that no objection shall be entertained.
Shazia Akhter D/o Mohd Rafiq Mir
R/O Breath Kalan

FKO

NOTICE

It is information to the general public that my name in my Aadhaar Card bearing No:-8295-9818-7579 has been wrongly entered as Zamrooda Begum which is incorrect. while my correct and actual Name is Zamroda Bano. 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.

Zamroda Bano
W/o Shabir Ahmad Parrah
R/o Pattan Tehsil Pattan
District Baramulla

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KO VIEW

Kashmir's Water Failure

Jammu and Kashmir has spent about 7,000 crore under the Jal Jeevan Mission, but a House committee has found that 63 per cent of 3,253 water-supply schemes are non-functional.

That figure turns a public infrastructure programme into a question of public accountability.

A project cannot be judged by the money spent, pipes purchased or works recorded as complete. Its success rests on whether households receive reliable, safe drinking water.

The Jal Jeevan Mission was built around a straightforward promise: rural households would receive functional tap connections with adequate quantities of prescribed-quality water on a regular basis. The Union government set 2024 as the original target. J&K's figures show how sharply implementation can diverge from policy goals.

The committee found problems beyond unfinished construction. It cited poor maintenance, defective civil works, inaccurate records and questionable pipeline installation. Some schemes listed as functional were only partly operational. Field inspections also found discrepancies between official records and the actual supply reaching households.

Such findings weaken confidence in administrative claims and raise a basic question about how project completion is being verified. The dispute over pipes creates another crisis.

The committee questioned the shift from galvanised iron pipes to HDPE pipes in 2023. About 600 crore was spent on HDPE procurement, while the committee linked the change to delays and found abandoned pipes at several sites.

Decisions involving hundreds of crores of public money need clear technical justification, transparent procurement and visible results. When those links become difficult to establish, scrutiny becomes essential.

The larger failure lies in treating infrastructure as an endpoint. Water schemes need functioning sources, usable networks, maintenance and reliable monitoring after construction. A government can record a connection on paper while a household continues to depend on an unreliable supply. Such a system rewards administrative completion rather than public service.

J&K has announced a reform plan under Jal Jeevan Mission 2.0, including timelines for unfinished schemes, source sustainability, maintenance and improved service delivery. The test will come through measurable results, rather than another set of targets.

The government should publish the status of all 3,253 schemes, along with expenditure, physical completion, water quality, supply hours and the number of households actually receiving water. Independent verification should examine disputed claims and identify responsibility for defective work, poor maintenance and inaccurate records.

Public money creates a public obligation. 7,000 crore should leave behind functioning water systems rather than thousands of projects that exist mainly in government files.

Kashmir's water programme now needs fewer completion claims and far greater proof that the taps it funded actually work.

Hidayat Bukhari

There is an understandable appeal to the idea of a five-day school week in Kashmir.

At a time when children carry heavier academic expectations, move routinely between school and private tuition, and grow up in households increasingly anxious about marks, admissions and careers, giving them two uninterrupted days away from school can sound less like indulgence than common sense.

The argument becomes even more persuasive when one looks abroad: children in many prosperous societies attend school from Monday to Friday, but those countries are hardly accused of taking education lightly.

It is therefore tempting to frame the debate as a choice between an old six-day routine and a more humane, modern understanding of childhood.

The difficulty is that Kashmir does not enter this debate with an ordinary school calendar or a common educational memory.

Here, the year available to a child has always been narrower than the calendar on the wall suggests.

Winter consumes a substantial part of it, and weather can take more, while summer closures, once hardly central to the valley's educational planning, are becoming increasingly common. Public holidays remain fixed and the possibility of an unforeseen interruption has never entirely disappeared.

None of these realities provides an argument for keeping children in school merely for the sake of attendance. They do, however, make one question unavoidable before another regular day is removed from the timetable: how much uninterrupted instruction does a Kashmiri child actually receive in a year, and what happens to that total when Saturday disappears?

That is a more useful place to begin than with the number five or six, because neither number has any educational virtue of its own.

OECD countries, for example, average about 186 instructional days a year at the primary level and 184 at lower secondary, while providing roughly 804 and 922 hours of compulsory annual instruction respectively.

The figures vary widely between systems, which is precisely the point: successful countries do not become successful because their children are home on Saturday. They rather decide what children should learn, how many hours are necessary to make that possible, how vacations should be distributed, how teachers should use classroom time, and only then does the shape of the week emerge.

To take the weekend from such a system while ignoring the structure supporting it is merely comparison by appearance.

Kashmir has another reason to resist such shortcuts, and it lies less in statistics than in memory.

For a generation that went to school through the 1990s, the 2000s and the years of repeated political turmoil that followed, education was often defined as much by interruption as by instruction.

There were mornings when the school existed, the teacher was appointed, the books were ready and the uniform had been laid out the night before, but circumstances outside the school gate determined whether any of that mattered.

Shutdown calls, curfews, protests, restrictions and periods of unrest repeatedly

fractured academic routines. Floods later did their damage, and the pandemic eventually produced an interruption on a scale no politics had managed.

The causes of those disruptions were different, and any serious account of Kashmir would be dishonest if it collapsed them into a single political explanation.

What united them from the perspective of a student was much simpler: a lesson that was not taught did not reappear merely because the school eventually reopened.

Teachers hurried through syllabi, examinations were modified, families that could afford it leaned more heavily on tuition, and children frequently moved into the next academic year with portions of the previous one only partially absorbed.

What was lost was not just attendance but continuity. A child needs one lesson and to lead naturally into the next, while a teacher needs to spot when someone is falling behind before the problem becomes harder to fix.

This history should not be misused. Children today should not be made to sit through six academically oppressive days because earlier generations endured interrupted schooling. Suffering is not an educational benchmark, and nostalgia is not a policy.

But societies are supposed to learn from what they have lived through, and one lesson Kashmir ought to have learnt better than most is that instructional continuity is difficult to rebuild after it has been lost.

We spent years worrying that events beyond the control of children were stealing their school days. That experience should at least make us careful before treating instructional time as something that can be reduced without first showing what will replace it.

The irony is that the contemporary Kashmiri child often attends a school considerably richer than the one remembered by his or her parents.

Many schools now provide regular games periods, physical education, sports days, cultural programmes, excursions, debates, science activities, arts and other co-curricular experiences that were either less developed or far harder to sustain consistently during earlier decades of instability.

The school day, at its best, is no longer simply a procession from one textbook to the next, and this change matters because it weakens the assumption that recreation necessarily begins only when the school gate closes.

If children are not receiving the games periods already written into their timetables, the problem is not that school is open on Saturday. It is that the timetable is being violated.

If physical education is regularly sacrificed to finish mathematics or science, enforce physical education rather than declaring another holiday. If homework consumes the evening, regulate homework. If child leaves school only to spend another three or four hours in a coaching centre, we should ask why families believe they must purchase a second education after the first one finishes. If examinations have colonised so much of childhood that students experience every month as preparation for the next test, the reform required is an examination reform instead of a calendar reform.

This matters especially because "burnout", although a useful description of a real problem, is too easily converted into a universal diagnosis.

How Many School Days Can Kashmir Lose?

Before Kashmir cuts another school day, it needs to ask how much teaching time children are actually getting.

One child may be exhausted by excessive homework, another by an hour-long commute, another by private coaching, another by parental expectations, and another by a school culture in which every activity eventually ends in a ranking.

But another may simply need time to play without an adult converting play into achievement.

These children have something in common: they are under pressure, but it does not follow that the pressure originates from the same place.

Giving all of them Saturday off may help some of them. For others, it may simply relocate the problem.

A child who leaves school on Friday believing that the weekend has arrived and reports to a tuition centre on Saturday morning has not been given back childhood. The classroom has merely changed address.

Nor does a free Saturday mean the same thing in every home.

For an affluent family it might mean sport, books, music lessons, travel or time with parents. For another family it may mean an extra coaching class.

For a household in which both parents work, it may mean several hours without supervision, and for a child whose home offers little space, few books and no organised recreation, school may remain the most stimulating environment available, a place with friends, a playground, a library, adult attention and the possibility of doing something purposeful.

There is a danger, particularly in public debate conducted by relatively privileged adults, of imagining that every child returns from school to the same version of home and that every additional holiday therefore produces the same benefit.

None of this makes the five-day week a bad idea. In fact, the international evidence shows quite clearly that excellent education can be delivered within five days.

The real weakness lies in deciding on the five days before designing the year around them.

A serious review would begin with facts that should already be available to the education system: the actual number of instructional days delivered in Kashmir during each of the past several years, not merely the number notified at the beginning of the session; the hours lost to winter, summer heat, weather and exceptional closures; the difference between instructional time in urban and remote schools; the amount of Saturday currently devoted to genuine academic teaching rather than assemblies or activities; and, finally, the precise number of instructional hours that would remain if every Saturday became a holiday.

Only then can the next questions be answered sensibly. Would school days become slightly longer? Would vacations need adjustment? Would parts of the curriculum be rationalised? Could some unnecessary academic load be removed altogether? Or are we simply willing to teach less?

There is also a possibility that sits strangely between the two sides of this debate and deserves more imagination than it has received: Saturday need not be abolished merely because it should not resemble Monday.

A lighter school day could contain far less conventional instruction and far more of what education routinely claims to value but often pushes to the margins, sport, reading, theatre, art, music, science clubs, coding, environmental work, counselling, practical skills, career exposure and community activity.

Children could come to school without carrying the psychological weight of another examination day. A school system would preserve continuity while simultaneously making room for childhood.

That alternative raises the most interesting question of all. Perhaps children are not asking for less school, maybe they are asking for less of what we have allowed school to become.

If so, the easiest reform may also be the least ambitious.

Closing the gate for another day requires a notification. Making the five or six days inside that gate intellectually stimulating, physically active, emotionally healthy and less obsessed with marks requires reform of teaching, homework, assessment, sports, counselling and the tuition culture surrounding formal education.

One produces an immediate headline, but the other produces, eventually, a better school.

Kashmir should certainly study Finland, Britain, Australia or any other education system from which something useful can be learnt, but it should study them with greater curiosity than the question of whether their children attend school on Saturday.

The meaningful comparison is what happens between the first day of their academic year and the last: how many hours children learn, how those hours are used, how much time remains for play, and what happens when a student begins to fall behind.

For Kashmir, that conversation carries an additional weight. An earlier generation knows what it is to have schools, teachers and books available but to live through circumstances that repeatedly made access to them uncertain.

Today's children are fortunate to inherit greater continuity, richer extra-curricular experiences and a school environment in which sport, outings and recreation can be part of ordinary life rather than occasional exceptions.

They need something more from us as well: a childhood with less anxiety, less pointless academic load and more room to breathe.

But there is an important distinction between making education gentler and making education thinner.

Before deciding whether Kashmir's children need one fewer day of school, we should establish whether what they actually need is one fewer day of pressure.

If those two things turn out to be the same, the case for a five-day week will have been made on evidence rather than imitation. If they do not, then shortening the week may leave the deeper problem untouched.

Kashmir has already learnt, at considerable cost, how difficult it is to recover education after the calendar has taken it away. That history should not imprison the next generation in school, but it should make us careful custodians of their time.

The goal, after all, should not be to make children spend more days in school or fewer days in school. It should be to ensure that the days we ask from their childhood are worth giving.

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The Gig Shift

Apps and remote platforms are opening new income streams, but the work rarely provides the stability young people need to plan ahead.

Muhammad Arbaaz Niazi

Kashmir now stands firmly inside India's gig economy story.

Young people sign up for app-based driving, food delivery, online tutoring, freelance design, data tagging, content writing, and home services with the hope that quick income and flexible hours will bring stability. Platforms present these jobs as modern and open to anyone willing to log in.

This shift first gathered pace in cities such as Bengaluru, Delhi, and Mumbai, where strong digital networks and dense markets keep demand high.

The valley operates under very different conditions. Private sector opportunities remain limited, industry lacks depth, and competition for government posts stays intense. Platform work therefore feels like an economic necessity for many young people rather than a passing trend.

Kashmir's gig economy grows out of limited options and structural constraints, and that reality defines its character.

Young men attach their cars to ride-hailing apps and spend long hours chasing rides. Graduates deliver meals and groceries on routes set by platforms. Postgraduates teach online classes or compete for remote freelance projects posted by

clients they never meet. Instagram pages serve as digital storefronts where algorithms decide visibility and reach.

Many join to support their families and meet rising costs, while few treat this work as a long-term career built on steady growth.

Flexibility drives the appeal, as workers choose when to log in and which tasks to accept. That freedom matters in a region where private jobs remain scarce and government posts draw fierce competition.

At the same time, risk shifts toward the worker.

Companies avoid long-term commitments. Income rises and falls without warning. Paid leave rarely exists, and health insurance often offers little real protection. The language of partnership sounds empowering, though legal safeguards remain thin.

Earnings depend on season and demand. A driver may earn well during tourist months and struggle when rides decline. A freelancer may complete a project and then wait weeks for another. An algorithm update can reduce visibility overnight. A low rating can limit future assignments. Appeals move through automated systems that offer little human engagement.

This uncertainty spills into personal life.

Young people delay marriage plans, and families postpone building homes as unstable income drives major life decisions.

Medical expenses demand careful calculation against unpredictable earnings, while workers remain constantly available since declining tasks can affect future opportunities.

Flexibility, in this setting, starts to resemble ongoing pressure to stay online at all times.

Local conditions deepen the strain on gig workers in the valley. Internet service has improved over time, though disruptions still interrupt online work and delay tasks. Payment systems often create delays that complicate household budgeting.

Platforms invest minimally in local offices or grievance systems, and major decisions flow from distant dashboards that rarely reflect everyday realities in Kashmir.

Public discussion often raises rising numbers and economic contribution, while job quality receives far less scrutiny. Work means more than income alone, since it also provides predictability and the ability to plan ahead.

Gig work generates earnings in bursts and offers limited assurance over time, leaving long-term stability uncertain for many workers.

The idea of being one's own boss weakens when incentives change without explanation and fuel prices rise while payouts stay flat.

Platforms recruit more workers to maintain supply, and oversupply reduces bargaining power. Options to switch platforms or demand better

terms remain narrow in a constrained job market.

Skill development raises another serious concern in this model. Many educated young people take on low-skill, high-effort tasks that offer limited upward movement and no clear path forward.

Platforms focus training on immediate efficiency and task completion, while long-term professional growth receives little attention. Experience gained through apps often stays confined to the platform and rarely translates into stable employment later.

Women also enter this space under specific pressures. Home-based digital work appears convenient and socially acceptable. Pay often remains modest, and work hours extend late into the night.

Informal arrangements increase vulnerability, while written contracts remain rare.

Supporters argue that the gig economy continues to evolve and that regulation will mature over time. They point out that platforms expand access for students, women, and those excluded from traditional hiring. Digital work can also function during periods when physical workplaces face disruption. These arguments deserve attention.

Access, however, differs from advancement. Entry without enforceable protections places risk on individuals. Clear pay floors, transparent deactivation rules, functional health and accident

coverage, and accessible grievance systems form the foundation of fair work in a digital age.

Policymakers must decide whether gig work complements formal employment or slowly replaces it as the dominant model.

Kashmir needs jobs that provide stability, skill development, and social protection. Long-term prosperity depends on more than constant activity.

Gig work in its current structure does not consistently provide these elements. Reform can narrow the gap through minimum earning guarantees, empowered local grievance bodies, and formal recognition of gig workers as workers with rights.

An economy built on insecurity normalizes instability and lowers expectations. Activity may rise, while mobility and long-term planning weaken.

Kashmir faces a clear choice as digital work expands. Design and accountability will define the outcome. Fair rules can align flexibility with protection.

The app economy will grow. Regulation will decide whether it builds stable opportunity or sustains constant uncertainty.

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Between a Child and a Stray Dog

Kashmir needs practical solutions that reduce attacks, prevent cruelty and give residents confidence on their own streets.



Dr. Shahid Amin

A few days ago, my elder brother Dr. Farooq Ahmad Mir called me. He lives in Russia now, holding a respected position there, though his heart remains rooted in his birthplace Pahalgam.

Our conversations usually drift toward the beauty of our homeland, the culture we grew up inside, and the opportunities we wish for Kashmiri youth.

But this time, the tone shifted, and we talked about dogs.

A dog had recently attacked a pedestrian in Kashmir. Locals, gripped by fear and anger, killed the animal on the spot. The episode splintered public opinion.

Some mourned the creature and condemned the violence, others asked a harder question: what should ordinary people do when a dog turns violent and human life hangs in the balance?

The collision between compassion and survival had arrived on our streets, and nobody seemed prepared.

Dogs and humans have walked together for millennia. We bred them for protection, herding, hunting, and companionship. They looked to us for food, shelter, and affection.

That bond has enriched both species, and research across societies confirms its emotional depth. Street dogs, though, sit outside this compact.

Their numbers have swelled in many regions, and the relationship has tipped toward conflict. Public safety, health, animal welfare, and simple daily peace all feel the strain.

Kashmir is living this tension in real time. Newspapers and social media fill with reports of children bitten on their way to school, elderly citizens chased during morning

walks, and pedestrians altering their routes to avoid certain streets. Stray dog populations have grown so large in several localities that fear has become a fixture of daily life.

The situation grows more volatile when activists lodge complaints against locals who react during attacks. Protecting animals holds real moral weight, and cruelty toward them should always draw condemnation.

But those who file complaints against frightened residents might stop and imagine their own child cornered by an aggressive pack, their own parent unable to flee. Would they expect bystanders to stand still?

Fear triggers instinct, and when society punishes people who step in to save a child or shield a vulnerable person, hesitation sets in. People begin calculating the legal risk of helping. They weigh social backlash against a scream for help. That hesitation corrodes the social fabric itself.

The answer lies in balanced, mature, long-term planning rather than emotional reactions alone.

Dr. Farooq shared a useful comparison during our call. Russian cities rarely show stray dogs wandering roads. Municipal systems manage the population through shelters, vaccination drives, sterilization programs, and strict enforcement. Russians love dogs deeply, but they grasp the importance of discipline, responsibility, and public safety. Other nations have struck similar balances.

The World Health Organization puts the global stray dog population above 200 million. The Netherlands became one of the first countries to eliminate the problem entirely, using the CNVR model — Collect, Neuter, Vaccinate, and Return — a nationwide, government-funded sterilization and vaccination program that animal welfare groups rank among the most effective humane approaches. Sweden, Norway, and Turkey have advanced comparable efforts.

India faces a different scale. Studies place the stray dog population in the millions, and the toll shows in dog bites, rabies cases, public safety failures, and abandoned animals. Kashmir shares



Dr. Farooq shared a useful comparison during our call. Russian cities rarely show stray dogs wandering roads. Municipal systems manage the population through shelters, vaccination drives, sterilization programs, and strict enforcement. Russians love dogs deeply, but they grasp the importance of discipline, responsibility, and public safety. Other nations have struck similar balances.

these burdens.

Poor waste management draws dogs to populated areas. Sparse sterilization programs let populations multiply, inadequate shelters leave animals on streets, and local administrations work with thin resources and patchy implementation.

Public emotion has split into two camps. One side speaks about animal rights, the other speaks about human safety. Both arguments hold water.

Dogs feel hunger, pain, fear, and attachment. Many strays turn aggressive because of harsh environments, starvation, disease, abuse, or

neglect rather than innate malice. That truth stands.

But it also fails to erase the trauma of a child mauled on a school path, a family terrified inside their own lane, and a tourist fleeing a pack near Dal Lake.

Society cannot dismiss the suffering of victims. The path forward demands a middle ground.

Animal welfare activists possess real influence here. Rather than filing complaints against terrified residents, they could redirect that energy toward pressing governments and policymakers into building lasting systems.

Meaningful sterilization programs, proper shelters, municipal coordination, and veterinary partnerships would ease both animal suffering and human fear. Governments must recognize that this crisis touches public confidence, urban safety, tourism revenue, and social harmony.

Kashmir, celebrated worldwide for its beauty and warmth, risks becoming a place where parents keep children inside and visitors watch their step.

The Supreme Court of India has now entered the fray.

The Court ruled that citizens hold

a fundamental right under Article 21 to live and move freely without fear of stray animal attacks. It criticized years of official inaction, blaming poor sterilization and control measures for serious human suffering, including attacks on children and tourists.

To force accountability, the Court directed High Courts nationwide to monitor implementation actively and warned officials that negligence could bring disciplinary action, contempt proceedings, and compensation liability.

The same Bench noted that where stray dog populations reach alarming levels and repeated attacks endanger public safety, authorities may adopt legally permissible measures after proper veterinary assessment and in strict compliance with the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals Act, 1960 and the Animal Birth Control Rules, 2023.

Euthanasia remains an option in exceptional cases involving rabid, incurably ill, or demonstrably dangerous dogs, with the primary goal of protecting human life.

Authorities must move past temporary fixes and emotional statements. Serious planning, adequate funding, and coordination among veterinarians, NGOs, municipalities, and local communities form the backbone of any real solution.

Policies should shield animals from cruelty while giving citizens confidence on their own streets. Schools can teach responsibility, while media houses can replace sensationalism with balanced discussion.

The moment calls for wisdom, balance, and collective responsibility.

Dr. Farooq ended the call on a thoughtful note: civilized societies solve problems through systems, planning, empathy, and cooperation rather than anger alone.

Kashmir, and any region wrestling with this crisis, would do well to listen.

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Beyond the Mop

Kashmir has put an adult in the classroom. Now it needs to give that adult a meaningful role.



Mushtaq Hurra

Jammu and Kashmir's education department followed the best in the business.

The United States, the United Kingdom, Finland, Canada and Japan all place a second adult in pre-primary rooms to steady small bodies long enough for minds to learn.

We liked the idea, so in 2018 we advertised for "Aayas," promised 5,000 rupees a month and forgot to write what the job actually is.

The omission turned a global best practice into a maid post and wasted the cheapest chance we have to lift early learning across the valley.

The government order that created the position runs to four lines. It says "engage Aaya on need basis."

It never spells out the need, never lists tasks, and never sets working hours.

Head teachers filled the blank the way institutions always do: they handed the new hire a bucket.

Overnight the classroom assistant became the school maid, and the concept that helps Finland top world charts was reduced to scrubbing toilets and peeling

onions for the midday meal.

Aayas are not make-believe characters. They are real women already on the payroll: 6,400 across the valley, one for every 25 Balvatika, kindergarten, pupils.

Most never finished high school, but they spend seven hours a day with four- and five-year-olds whose brains are forming faster than at any later stage.

Research from the National Council of Educational Research and Training shows rural first-grade classes with a trusted ancillary worker record 17 percent lower absenteeism.

We have the ratio right. We simply refuse to treat the worker as educator.

The salary tells the story. Five thousand rupees is less than the price of a single school blazer sold in Srinagar's boutiques. It arrives quarterly, often three months late.

Three quarters of Aayas hold a second job after the last bell. 40 percent report chronic back pain from mopping floors. Burnout is routine, turnover is rising, and still the department wonders why the teaching-learning process stays stuck.

We could blame headmasters for overloading the position, but they were never given guidance.

One principal sends the Aaya to maintain voter rolls during village elections. Another makes her mid-day-meal incharge. Neither violates the original order, because the order is silent. And silence is expensive.

Finland spends 4 percent of its education budget on auxiliary staff training. We spend zero and then complain that our reading scores trail the global median.

Signs of repair are visible, but

they are tentative.

This summer the State Council of Educational Research and Training teamed up with a local nonprofit to run three-day workshops in all ten districts. Two thousand Aayas have already practised breathing games and learned to flag early signs of



We imported the position from the best systems on earth. Now we must import the respect.

dyslexia.

Attendance is voluntary, enthusiasm is high, and the first cohort of schools reports a 9 percent jump in daily attendance from kindergarten sections.

The program costs less than the price of two smart classrooms that usually stay locked for want of a key.

What comes next is neither mysterious nor costly.

Double the honorarium to 10,000 rupees and pay on time through the same direct-benefit portal already used for pensions. Issue a one-page role chart signed by the director of school

education: Aayas will assist in classroom management, maintain play corners, accompany sick children to the nearest health center and will not cook lunch.

Finally, guarantee twelve hours of refresher training every year, the same way we refresh math teachers on new textbooks.

The package would add 1.2 percent of the existing central education outlay for the region, and could place a trained second adult in every Balvatika room by next spring.

Kashmir public schools enroll 1.2 million children. One in four is a Balvatika pupil, the age group whose test scores predict later retention, employment and even civic participation.

Give each of those rooms a confident, trained Aaya and we add the equivalent of a full academic year to a child's life before grade three.

Keep the mop and we lose the moment, probably for another generation.

The women are ready. Visit any primary school at eight in the morning and you will find them kneeling to tie shoelaces, humming lullabies when the bus is late, and collecting broken bangles to turn into counting tokens.

They already do the work. They simply need the wage, the title and the training that acknowledge the work matters.

We imported the position from the best systems on earth. Now we must import the respect.

Otherwise we are not saving money. We are stealing futures.

— The author is a teacher and columnist from Bandipora. He can be reached at mushtaqhurra143@gmail.com.

Keep the Diary Alive

A well-kept diary helps teachers remember the children behind the classroom numbers and respond to their changing needs.



Muntashir Kifayat Hussain

I stood in a dusty classroom, flipping through a teacher's diary that felt more like a checklist than a tool.

As an academic monitor in remote Jammu and Kashmir, I had seen this before. Diaries once meant to reflect a teacher's heart and hustle now reduced to bureaucratic formality. It hit me hard: we were letting something vital slip away.

When I began teaching, I carried a worn notebook. It wasn't just lesson plans. It was a record of my students' lives. Their strengths, struggles, and even their parents' numbers lived in those pages. One evening, a parent stopped me on the road: "How's my daughter doing?" I opened my diary, found her name, and read notes on her shy but steady progress. He smiled, kissed my forehead. In that moment, I felt trusted, respected, fulfilled.

That diary wasn't paper. It was connection. But now, I see diaries forgotten, blank, neglected. Teachers are exhausted. Some teach ten classes a day. "When do I have time to write?" one asked me. And I get it. Society blames us for everything: students dropping out, indiscipline, even drug abuse. Expectations crush us. Yet we're still asked to perform miracles.

But I believe in the teacher's diary. I think of Kahlil Gibran's words: Dig with

faith, and you will find treasure. The diary is that buried treasure, full of clues to each child's growth.

In some schools, I've seen the diary used as it should be. Teachers with no smartboards or gadgets still outshine private schools. Their diaries are detailed: lesson plans aligned with NEP 2020, notes on kids with special needs, test scores, parent feedback. These teachers are present, alert, committed. Others, sadly, just go through the motions.

We are paid to teach, care, and stay accountable. The diary sharpens us. It's not punishment, it's purpose.

Mine is my compass. It holds my timetable, responsibilities, student profiles, parent contacts. I mark kids who need extra attention, log their scores, note behavior shifts. If I have a large class, I track ten students closely. I can call parents from home, share updates, build trust. This isn't admin work. It's outreach.

My lesson plans follow NEP 2020's spirit: activity-based learning, critical thinking, multiple intelligences. I write what worked, what didn't, how kids responded. Sometimes I paste in student drawings or photos of model work. At home, I flip through pages, smiling. This is my reward.

But too many colleagues see the diary as a burden. If we let that attitude grow, we lose more than a tool. We lose our link to students, our edge, our relevance.

Yesterday, a teacher handed me her diary. Except for a signature, it was blank. My heart sank. I wanted to say, "This is your story, your students' story!" But I just smiled, closed the book, and walked away wondering: how long before this lifeline disappears?

— The author is a Budgam based teacher. He can be reached out at muntashirkifayat@gmail.com.

PIL On Newa Waste Site

HC Issues Warrants Against DC Pulwama, 2 Other Officials

M Ahmad

Srinagar: The High Court of J&K and Ladakh has issued bail-able warrants of Rs 10,000 each against the Deputy Commissioner Pulwama, and two other officials for “failing” to comply with its directions in a PIL concern- ing the proposed Faecal Sludge Treatment Plant (FSTP) and al- leged illegal dumping of waste at Newa village in Pulwama.

A Division Bench of Chief Justice Dr Justice Pushpendra Singh Bhati and Justice Rajnesh Oswal passed the directions af- ter noting that its August 4 order had not been complied with.

The PIL, filed by Sheikh Ghulam Rasool, seeks directions to halt the construction, installation, es- tablishment and operation of the FSTP and the alleged waste dump- ing site at Newa, contending that the activities violate environmen- tal norms and applicable laws.

The petitioner has also sought removal of the allegedly illegally dumped material from Newa and its shifting to a nearby autho- rised recycling facility. Besides, directions have been sought for compensation to the inhabitants of Newa village for the alleged environmental nuisance and damage caused by the dumping.

In its August 4 order, the court had granted a last and fi- nal opportunity to the Deputy Commissioner, Pulwama; Chief Executive Officer, Municipal Council, Pulwama; and Member Secretary, J&K Pollution Control Board, Raj Bagh, Srinagar, to file separate affidavits within four weeks. The officials had also been directed to appear person- ally in case of non-compliance.

CONTD. FROM FRONT PAGE

Foreign Fat Found

These included Reichert-Meissl value, Polenske value, saponification value, B.R. read- ing, iodine value and fatty-acid profile.

The findings led authorities to conclude that the affected products did not conform to the standards and restrictions applicable to ghee under food safety regulations.

Under the prescribed standards, ghee must be derived exclusively from milk or milk prod- ucts, with processes resulting in the almost complete removal of water and non-fat milk solids.

Four brands under scanner

The FDA order identifies the following af- fected batches:

Cow Ghee Milk Bite — manufactured by M/s Mahadev Industries, Rajasthan. The sampled batch, bearing batch number 143, with a July 2026 manufacturing date and April 2027 best-before date, was declared sub-standard.

Pehalwan — manufactured by M/s Comfy Agro Pvt. Ltd., Gidderbaha, Punjab. Batch PVV-005, manufactured in May 2026, was declared unsafe.

Swift — manufactured by M/s Suneja Food Products, SICOP Industrial Estate, Hisar, Haryana. Batch M-92, manufactured in April 2026, was declared unsafe.

Sangath — manufactured by M/s Akshar Dairy Product, Ahmedabad, Gujarat. Batch AD-05, manufactured on May 1, 2026, was classi- fied unsafe/sub-standard.

The FDA has specifically prohibited the iden- tified batches—not necessarily every product manufactured under the respective brand names.

Dealers ordered to pull affected stock

The order directs manufacturers, distribu- tors, wholesalers, retailers and other food busi- ness operators dealing in the affected products to immediately stop their sale, storage, distri- bution and display across J&K.

Businesses holding the affected stock have also been ordered to segregate it and keep it under safe custody.

They cannot sell, transfer, dispose of or otherwise deal with the stock unless per- mitted or directed by the competent Food Safety Authority.

48-hour deadline for stock details

The FDA has given concerned food busi- ness operators 48 hours to furnish complete details of the affected stock to the concerned Designated Officer.

The information is required to include the quantity received, the quantity already sold or distributed and the quantity currently avail- able in stock.

Designated Officers and Food Safety Officers have been directed to carry out inspections and verify compliance across the concerned prem- ises and supply chain.

Violators face action

The administration has warned that anyone found violating the prohibitory order will face action under the relevant provisions of the Food Safety and Standards Act, 2006, and as- sociated rules and regulations.

Enforcement officers have also been in- structed to maintain surveillance over the movement, storage, sale and distribution of the affected products and take immediate action wherever prohibited batches are detected.

Companies retain right to seek re-analysis

The FDA order, however, makes clear that the action is a precautionary measure in the public interest and does not take away the statutory right of the concerned food business operators to seek re-analysis through an FSSAI-notified referral laboratory in accordance with law.

The order has been issued under Section 30(2)(a), read with Section 18(1)(f), of the Food Safety and Standards Act, 2006, which empow- ers the Commissioner of Food Safety to prohib- it the manufacture, storage, distribution or sale of food where such action is considered neces- sary in the interest of public health.

The immediate concern for consumers and retailers is therefore the identification and removal of the specific affected batches from the J&K market while the regulatory process, including any statutory re-analysis available to the concerned food businesses, remains open.

Holiday Row Triggers

Hari Singh, including “Maharaja Hari Singh Amar Rahe.”

NC legislators Nazir Gurezi and Shamima Firdous countered by highlighting the contri- butions of Sheikh Abdullah.

Speaker Warns Members Over Disruptions

Speaker Abdul Rahim Rather intervened and asked the protesting members to return to their seats.

“Please, take your seats. I will listen to you. I want to tell you something: I do not have to re- store or cancel holidays. That is not within my powers,” Rather said.

NC MLA from Eidgah, Mubarak Gul, said it was the NC’s stand that the holiday on Sheikh Abdullah’s birth anniversary should be restored.

PDP MLA Waheed-ur-Rehman Parra sup- ported the demand and also pressed for resto- ration of the July 13 Martyrs’ Day holiday.

“The issue raised by Larmi Sahab is legiti- mate. Emotions of people are attached to this issue, and they want Sheikh Sahib’s holiday to be restored. Everyone in the House wants its restoration,” Parra said.

Amid the commotion, BJP MLA Surjit Singh Slathia demanded that the government re- spond to an issue raised by BJP members in the

House on Monday.

Rather warned the BJP legislators against disrupting proceedings.

“The House has to function as per procedure. You cannot behave like this,” he said.

The Speaker said MLAs could raise issues in accordance with the Rules of Procedure and Conduct of Business in the Assembly.

“It is not like you can talk about anything and seek answers from the government. The gov- ernment must get notice,” he said.

BJP legislators later staged a walkout from the House.

PDP MLA Seeks Restoration of July 13 Holiday Separately, PDP MLA from Budgam Aga Syed Muntazir Mehdi demanded restoration of July 13 as an official holiday. He displayed a handwritten placard reading, “Restore 13 July Martyrs Day Holiday.”

Mehdi called for recognition of the historical significance of July 13 and the sacrifices associ- ated with the day, and urged the government to restore its observance as Martyrs’ Day.

July 13 was observed as a public holiday in the erstwhile state of Jammu and Kashmir in memory of people killed outside Srinagar Central Jail on July 13, 1931. The holiday was re- moved from the official calendar after the 2019 reorganisation of Jammu and Kashmir.

The demand had also been raised by PDP MLA Waheed-ur-Rehman Parra during the Assembly’s 2025 session. The official J&K holi- day calendar for 2026 does not include July 13.

Mehraj Malik, Speaker Clash Over Supplementary Question

The Assembly also witnessed a separate confrontation between MLA Mehraj Malik and Speaker Rather over the right to raise a supple- mentary question during a debate on amnesty granted on electricity bills.

When Malik rose to ask a supplementary question, the Speaker stopped him and di- rected him to return to his seat. Malik object- ed, saying, “Assembly is not anybody’s jageer (property).”

Rather warned Malik to behave properly or face action.

The Speaker later told the House that a com- mittee had decided that supplementary ques- tions could be raised only by members who had submitted the original question.

Referring to the exchange, Rather said Malik had not behaved properly and that he had ex- ercised restraint.

“I won’t allow this type of nonsense in fu- ture,” the Speaker said.

Omar Praises Yudhvir Sethi

Meanwhile, Chief Minister Omar Abdullah praised BJP MLA Yudhvir Sethi for remaining inside the House and participating in proceed- ings after his party colleagues walked out dur- ing the holiday dispute.

Sethi subsequently raised a question in the House, prompting Abdullah to comment on his decision to remain in the proceedings.

The Assembly disruptions came a day after members had raised issues including electric- ity tariffs, regularisation of daily wagers and National Health Mission employees.

YP Bourney Sworn

Justice Bourney were also present.

Among the other dignitaries were Mir Syed Latif, Judicial Member and HOD of the Central Administrative Tribunal, Srinagar Bench; Shaleen Kabra, Additional Chief Secretary; M K Sinha, ADGP CID; Achal Sethi, Commissioner Secretary, Law, Justice and Parliamentary Affairs; Divisional Commissioner Kashmir; IGP Kashmir; IGP Security; senior advocates; representatives of the Kashmir Advocates’ Association and J&K High Court Bar Association, Jammu; law officers; judicial officers and offi- cers of the High Court Registry.

The Ministry of Law and Justice, Government of India, issued the notification appointing Yash Paul Bourney as a Judge of the High Court of Jammu and Kashmir and Ladakh on September 19, 2026.

Born on August 25, 1967, Justice Bourney hails from Dadwara village in Bhaddu, Billawar, Kathua district.

During his judicial career, he served as Principal District and Sessions Judge at Leh, Baramulla, Udhampur and Jammu. He also served as Special Judge, Anti-Corruption, Srinagar and Special Judge, Anti-Corruption, Jammu.

Justice Bourney served as Member Secretary of the J&K Legal Services Authority, Registrar Vigilance of the High Court of J&K and Ladakh, and Director of the J&K Judicial Academy.

After serving as Principal District and Sessions Judge, Jammu, he was appointed on deputation as Member of the J&K Special Tribunal, Jammu.

He was serving in that capacity immedi- ately before his elevation as a Judge of the High Court of Jammu and Kashmir and Ladakh.

Govt Moves Resolution

exempt all teachers appointed before October 31, 2019, from appearing in the Teacher Eligibility Test (TET).

Moving the resolution in the House, Itoo urged the Centre to make the necessary statu- tory amendment to Section 23 of the Right of Children to Free and Compulsory Education Act, 2009, to provide the exemption.

The resolution also calls for necessary legal and regulatory measures through the National Council for Teacher Education (NCTE) and issu- ance of the requisite notification to give effect to the proposed exemption.

It seeks to cover all teachers appointed

before October 31, 2019, from the requirement of appearing in the TET.

The resolution will come up for discussion in the Assembly on September 24.

Cooperative Societies

discussion and deliberations by the mem- bers of the House.

The Bill was moved by Minister for Cooperative Department Javid Ahmad Dar, seeking amendment of the Jammu and Kashmir Cooperative Societies Act, 1989, re- peal of the Jammu and Kashmir Self-Reliant Cooperative Act, 1999, and provision of a tran- sitional framework for self-reliant cooperatives under the principal Act.

The Bill was discussed at length in the House, with several legislators putting forth their views, suggestions and observations on various provisions of the proposed legislation.

The members who participated in the dis- cussion included Nizam-ud-din Bhat, Pawan Gupta, Balwant Singh Mankotia, Arjun Singh Raju and Rajiv Jasrotia.

Responding to the issues and suggestions raised during the discussion, the Minister ap- prised the House of the objectives and ration- ale behind the proposed amendments and reiterated the Government’s commitment to strengthening the cooperative sector through a robust, transparent and effective legislative framework.

“The Bill marks an important step towards streamlining the cooperative legislative frame- work in Jammu and Kashmir and strengthen- ing cooperative institutions for more effective functioning and delivery of services to their members,” he informed.

The Minister said that the proposed legis- lative framework is aimed at bringing greater co- herence to the cooperative sector and ensuring a smooth transition for self-reliant cooperative societies within the ambit of the Jammu and Kashmir Cooperative Societies Act, 1989.

Following the discussion and consideration of the suggestions raised by the members, the Jammu and Kashmir Cooperative Societies (Amendment) Bill, 2026, was passed by the Legislative Assembly through a voice vote.

MLAs Raise Issue

highways in south Kashmir in the Jammu and Kashmir Legislative Assembly.

Speaking in the Assembly, Parra said security was important but could not become a blanket justification for repeatedly stopping ordinary citizens travelling on their own roads.

“It has become a sense of discrimination, be it tourists, yatra or convoy, people are subject- ed to a sense of huge humiliation as they are stopped time and again,” Parra said.

He said locals should be treated as partners in maintaining security and not as suspects or obstacles.

“If Kashmiris after 70 years can’t walk with people across the country on the highway, it is a question mark,” he said.

Parra said restrictions could not be justified indefinitely on the basis of a single security incident and urged the government to take up the issue with the Government of India, secu- rity establishments and the Unified Command.

NC MLA Abdul Majeed Larmi called for an Assembly resolution on repeated highway restrictions.

“I know it is not in our control and it falls in the domain of Home Department, but a recom- mendation should be sent as to why it is being done,” Larmi said.

He said the Pulwama incident could not justify continued stoppages in south Kashmir, claiming that such restrictions had persisted since then and that even ambulances had faced difficulties.

Larmi urged the House to pass a resolution on the issue and send a recommendation to the concerned authorities.

Parra said there was a need for a clear frame- work that protects security while safeguarding the dignity and right of citizens to travel.

“Security and civil rights must go hand in hand. No suspicion should mean no harass- ment,” he said.

HC Sets Timelines

weapons, blood stains, bullet shells, sources of light and surrounding structures. A scaled site plan is also to be prepared by an authorised draftsman, wherever available.

The accused will be supplied statements of witnesses and a list of documents, material ob- jects and exhibits relied upon by the investigat- ing officer. The rules also provide that the list should specify material not relied upon by the investigating officer. Victims entitled to partici- pate in proceedings will also be provided copies of the supplied material.

On framing of charges, the formal charge is to be prepared personally by the Presiding Officer within 60 days from the date fixed for the first hearing on charge.

The rules provide for recording of evidence in typed or audio-visual format, wherever pos- sible. Depositions are to be recorded in the language of the witness and translated into English where required. The evidence is to be read over by the Presiding Officer, with signed copies made available free of cost to the ac- cused or their advocate, the witness and the prosecutor on the date of recording.

Audio-visual recording and live transcrip- tion of the entire evidence has also been pro- vided for, wherever technologically feasible. Persons entitled to copies of evidence will also be entitled to true copies of the audio-visual

recordings and transcripts.

The rules prescribe systematic numbering of prosecution, defence and court witnesses, as well as exhibits and material objects. They fur- ther require objections raised by the prosecu- tion or defence during evidence to be recorded and decided in accordance with law.

On judgments, the rules require a prescribed format containing a preface, tabular statement and an appendix listing witnesses, exhibits and material objects. Every judgment must specify the points for determination, the decision on those points and the reasons for the decision.

Significantly, the rules prescribe timelines for bail proceedings. Bail applications in non- bailable cases should ordinarily be disposed of within three to seven days from the first hear- ing, with reasons to be recorded if this period is not adhered to. The rules also prescribe broader timelines of two weeks to two months for dis- posal of bail and anticipatory bail applications.

The rules further provide that matters con- cerning personal liberty should be prioritised and indefinite adjournments should not be granted. Undertrials who have remained in custody for more than five years are to be ac- corded priority for bail or release on personal bond, while those who have spent more time in custody than the maximum punishment prescribed for the alleged offence should be released on personal bond.

The rules also recognise the victim’s right to be heard at every stage of proceedings, includ- ing bail. In addition, State Governments have been directed to appoint advocates, other than Public Prosecutors, to advise investigating of- ficers during investigation.

On sentencing, courts have been directed to record reasons in writing where probation, wherever applicable, is not considered as an alternative to imprisonment.

J&K Stands At

vision of “Ek Bharat, Shreshtha Bharat” con- tinued to inspire the country’s pursuit of unity and development. He also recalled Patel’s po- sition on Jammu Kashmir and his declaration that “we will not give even an inch of Jammu Kashmir’s territory to anyone.”

“Through his indomitable willpower, clear vision, selfless diligence, and skilful orga- nizational strength, he ensured that the dream of an undivided India became a reality. I also believe that had Sardar Patel been given the responsibility for Jammu Kashmir, perhaps the problems that the people here endured for more than six decades would not have arisen,” Sinha said.

He described the book as an effort to re- evaluate history with “honesty and impartial- ity”, saying historical narratives had, for long, been influenced by ideological biases that overlooked the contributions of leaders such as Patel.

Sinha urged the new generation of writers to treat history as a “mirror of truth” rather than a tool for glorification, and to draw lessons from past decisions while shaping the future.

Referring to the constitutional changes of August 2019, Sinha described the abrogation of Articles 370 and 35A as the fulfilment of what he termed Patel’s “unfinished dream”.

“In August 2019, under the leadership of Prime Minister Narendra Modi, the nation wit- nessed a historic constitutional change. New possibilities of education, employment, entre- preneurship and development opened up for the youth,” he said.

He added that the decision demonstrated that “when national interest becomes the su- preme priority, no obstacle remains perma- nent”, drawing a parallel with Patel’s role in nation-building.

“I believe that by consigning the era of Article 370 to history, Jammu Kashmir now stands at the threshold of a new future,” Sinha said.

The Lieutenant Governor outlined four pri- orities for Jammu Kashmir’s future: peace through zero tolerance towards terrorism, rapid development through infrastructure and connectivity, youth empowerment by linking them with India’s digital economy and startup ecosystem, and revival of cultural heritage to strengthen tourism and human values.

He envisioned Srinagar, Jammu and other cities of the Union Territory emerging as centres of education, trade and innovation.

Sinha also said the region’s youth were its “most valuable asset” and their en- ergy must continue to be transformed into nation-building.

He described the book as a “lighthouse” il- luminating Patel’s vision of a united and confident India, and called upon citizens to uphold the ideals of unity, integrity and patriotism.

The Lieutenant Governor also expressed gratitude to Bhagwan Shri Swaminarayan Ji and commended the Maninagar Shree Swaminarayan Gadi Sansthan for its contribu- tions to spiritual upliftment, education and hu- manitarian service. He congratulated Dr Rizwan Kadri for editing and publishing the book.

Acharya Shree Jitendriyapriyadasji Swamiji Maharaj, National Commission for Scheduled Castes Chairperson Kishor Makwana, Dr Rizwan Kadri, Swami Bhagwat Priya Das Ji, Principal Secretary Culture Brij Mohan Sharma, senior officials, literary personalities and office- bearers of the Maninagar Shree Swaminarayan Gadi Sansthan attended the launch.

AI Must Remain Servant

decisions affecting human dignity, liveli- hood, health and freedom must always re- main the responsibility of accountable human

beings.

Sinha made the remarks while inaugurat- ing a series of new facilities at the University of Jammu, including a modern sports complex, shooting range, high-mast lights for the cricket stadium and the Tawi Guest House complex, developed at a cost of nearly 10 crore.

Addressing students and faculty, the LG said the rapid transformation driven by artificial intelligence had raised important questions about the purpose of education and the role of technology.

He described AI as a “quadruple-use” tech- nology that could independently produce both beneficial and harmful outcomes, and stressed the need for human oversight in decisions with significant consequences.

“Technology must remain humanity’s serv- ant, never its master,” Sinha said, adding that machines could calculate and predict but could not feel, bear responsibility or carry the moral weight of decisions.

He said every decision affecting a person’s freedom, livelihood, health, education or dig- nity should have an accountable human being behind it.

The LG outlined five key challenges for high- er education, including keeping curricula rel- evant to rapid technological changes, moving away from rote learning, encouraging applica- tion and reasoning, promoting original think- ing and ensuring technology does not widen the rural-urban education divide.

He said technology would not replace teach- ers but would change their role, with teachers increasingly serving as mentors and guides who foster curiosity and character.

Sinha urged students to embrace lifelong learning, develop creativity and empathy, build interdisciplinary knowledge, contribute to na- tional development, balance academics with sports and remain rooted in traditions and values.

He said the generation growing up with AI as a companion had a responsibility to shape a fu- ture in which technological progress remained aligned with human welfare.

The newly inaugurated facilities, he said, would strengthen the University of Jammu’s role as a centre of excellence and provide im- proved opportunities for athletes, scholars and visitors.

Vice Chancellor Prof Umesh Rai, Divisional Commissioner Jammu Ramesh Kumar, IGP Jammu Tejinder Singh, DIG JSK Range Shridhar Patil, Deputy Commissioner Jammu Dr Rakesh Minhas, senior university officials, faculty members and students attended the event.

J&K Bank To Issue

shareholders, Krishnan said the bank’s leg- acy, present performance and future respon- sibilities were closely linked to its role in the economic and social transformation of the region.

He highlighted the bank’s role in enabling entrepreneurship and said its participation in Mission YUVA was significant in creat- ing opportunities for a new generation of entrepreneurs.

On digital transformation, the Chairman said technology should serve the objective of mak- ing banking simpler, safer and more accessible, while customer experience remained central to the bank’s digital expansion.

He also appreciated the leadership of Chatterjee and his management team and commended employees for their dedication and professionalism.

Speaking at the AGM, Chatterjee said the bank had recorded its fourth consecutive year of record profitability, with net profit reaching an all-time high of 2,363 crore, registering year-on-year growth of 13.5%.

He said the bank’s growth momentum had continued into the current financial year and that its total business crossed the 3 lakh crore mark by June 2026.

Chatterjee said the bank’s progress had been broad-based, with profitability, asset qual- ity, efficiency and capital strength advancing together. He said the bank would continue to focus on the quality and sustainability of earn- ings as it expands.

On digital banking, he said investments in digital platforms, data analytics, cybersecurity and process automation had improved cus- tomer experience and operational efficiency. Digital transactions grew by up to 94% during FY 2025-26, he said.

Chatterjee said the bank’s aspiration was to become the ‘Bank of Choice’, with continued investments in people and technology, stron- ger cybersecurity, improved customer experi- ence and a culture of innovation.

During the meeting, DGM and Company Secretary Mohammad Shafi Mir read out the Auditor’s Report, comments of the Comptroller and Auditor General (C&AG) and the Secretarial Audit Report and briefed shareholders on the business items listed for consideration.

He also said the results of e-voting, along with the Scrutinizer’s Report, would be made avail- able on the websites of the bank, its Registrar and Transfer Agent (RTA) and stock exchanges within two working days of the AGM.

The meeting concluded with a question- and-answer session in which shareholders raised various queries.

Responding to a question on recruitment, Chatterjee said the bank would soon issue a notification for recruitment of officers and as- sociates in J&K and Ladakh.

The shareholders also appreciated the bank’s performance during the financial year 2025-26.

J&K Can Lead the Way in Making Millets a People's Movement: LG

Observer News Service

SRINAGAR: Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha on Tuesday said Jammu Kashmir can lead the way in making millets a people's movement, highlighting their nutritional, ecological and economic benefits at the concluding session of the National Seminar on "Millets for One Health" at Lok Bhavan, Srinagar.

The two-day programme, organised in collaboration with Kheti Virasat Mission, brought together farmers, scientists, chefs, doctors, students and policymakers to discuss the revival and promotion of millet-based food systems.

Sinha said millets such as jowar, bajra, ragi, kodo, kangni and kutki had nourished communities for centuries and their revival could help address malnutrition, lifestyle-related



diseases and the economic challenges faced by marginal farmers.

"Millets are climate-smart, nutrition-rich and farmer-friendly. I believe Jammu Kashmir can lead the way in making millets a people's movement, strengthen farmers, empower women and youth entrepreneurs and ensure healthier lives for all," he said.

Highlighting increasing soil

degradation, water stress and biodiversity loss, Sinha said millets required less water, could thrive on rain-fed land and generally required fewer chemical inputs. He also highlighted their fibre, iron, calcium and protein content and low glycaemic index.

He called for a complete millet ecosystem covering seed diversity, crop diversification, farmer training, pro-

cessing, value addition, chef training and millet-based cuisine campaigns.

"All stakeholders should focus on seeds and crop diversification so that we can revive the diversity of our rich agricultural heritage. Now, we must move beyond seminars to the field and the market," he said.

Sinha said initiatives such as "grain to plate" programmes and women-led home-based

millet cuisine campaigns should be expanded to turn millets into a mass movement.

He also underlined the role of millets in building climate-resilient agriculture amid changing weather patterns and stressed that farmer prosperity and environmental conservation could go hand in hand.

Chief Justice of the High Court of Jammu Kashmir and Ladakh Justice Pushpendra Singh Bhati, Chief Minister Omar Abdullah, DGP Nalin Prabhat, Padma Shri Dr Khadar Veli, Kheti Virasat Mission Executive Director Umendra Dutt, ministers, legislators, judges, academics, social activists, civil society members and senior officials attended the event.

A millet-based dinner was also served after the programme, showcasing a range of traditional millet-based dishes.

Fresh Snowfall Covers Gulmarg's Upper Reaches

Observer News Service

SRINAGAR: The upper reaches of Gulmarg, including Affarwat and surrounding peaks, received fresh snowfall on Tuesday as weather conditions changed in the Kashmir Valley's higher reaches.

An official said that fresh snowfall covered the upper slopes of the popular ski resort.

According to the India Meteorological Department's daily weather bulletin, Gulmarg recorded a maximum temperature of 21.2°C and a minimum of 7.5°C during the past 24 hours.

The maximum temperature at Gulmarg was 2.7°C above normal, while the minimum was 0.4°C below normal.

Srinagar recorded a maximum temperature of 30.3°C, which was 2.9°C



above normal, while the minimum temperature stood at 11.5°C, 0.5°C below normal.

Pahalgam recorded a maximum of 24°C and a minimum of 7°C, while Kupwara recorded 30.2°C and 9°C, respectively.

Qazigund recorded a maximum of 29°C and a minimum of 9.2°C, while Kokernag recorded 27.4°C and 11.2°C, respectively.

Jammu recorded the highest maximum temperature among the stations listed, at 33.9°C, while its minimum temperature was 24.1°C.

The IMD bulletin also recorded 3.4 mm rainfall at Gulmarg between 8:30 am and 5:30 pm. No rainfall was recorded at Srinagar, Pahalgam, Qazigund, Kupwara, Kokernag or Jammu during the period.

JJM Panel Flags ₹7,000-Cr Spend, 63% Schemes Non-Operational

Observer News Service

SRINAGAR: A Jammu and Kashmir Legislative Assembly House Committee has recommended a high-level inquiry into alleged irregularities in the implementation of the Jal Jeevan Mission (JJM), after finding that 63 per cent of 3,253 water supply and retrofitting schemes examined by it were non-operational despite expenditure of around ₹7,000 crore.

The committee, headed by Justice (Retd) Hasnain Masoodi, flagged deficiencies in the planning, execution, monitoring and maintenance of JJM schemes and recommended fixing responsibility on officials, engineers, contractors and suppliers wherever lapses are established.

The report, tabled in the Legislative Assembly, also raised concerns over contract management and the execution of projects in

difficult terrain.

The panel said contracts in several cases were awarded to contractors from outside Jammu and Kashmir without adequately assessing their ability to mobilise manpower, material and machinery in districts such as Poonch, Rajouri, Reasi and Udhampur.

It further observed that some contractors allegedly did not visit project sites after securing the works, with execution reportedly being carried out through their agents or subordinate staff of the Jal Shakti Department.

The committee said the arrangement raised concerns regarding supervision, quality control and accountability.

Pipes worth ₹600 crore flagged

The committee also questioned the replacement of galvanized iron (GI) pipes with high-den-

sity polyethylene (HDPE) pipes in Jammu Division, observing that the decision was taken without proper revision of detailed project reports and had significant financial implications.

According to the report, HDPE pipes worth around ₹600 crore were procured. Field inspections, however, found pipes lying scattered or abandoned at several locations, including Poonch, Udhampur, Reasi and Budgam.

The panel recommended stronger inventory management and independent laboratory testing of pipes to ensure compliance with prescribed technical standards.

Schemes executed without confirming water sources

The committee flagged instances where substantial civil works were undertaken without adequately confirming the availability and sustainability of water sources.

Power Tariff Hike to Add Rs 251 Cr to J&K Consumers' Bills: Govt

Observer News Service

SRINAGAR: Consumers in Jammu and Kashmir will have to bear an additional Rs 251 crore due to the recent power tariff hike, the government informed the Legislative Assembly on Tuesday.

In a written reply to a question by MLA Sajad Gani Lone, the Power Development Department said the 6.83% tariff hike notified by the Joint Electricity Regulatory Commission (JERC) is expected to generate Rs 251 crore in additional revenue for DISCOMs during 2026-27.

The government said the tariff revision was long overdue and was required to bridge the gap between the cost of electricity supply and revenue realised, besides meeting the Annual Revenue Requirement (ARR) of the DISCOMs.

The government said it would still have to bear more than Rs 4,500 crore as subsidy to meet the



power purchase cost of the DISCOMs.

The department also revealed that power tariff dues amounting to Rs 4,385.30 crore are outstanding against Jammu and Kashmir and Central Government departments.

On revenue collection, the government informed that domestic consumers in Kashmir Valley generated Rs 1,455.90 crore in 2025-26, compared to Rs 1,238.07 crore in 2024-25.

During 2026-27 up to August, the revenue stood at Rs 547.79 crore, includ-

ing Rs 383.08 crore from metered consumers and Rs 164.71 crore from flat-rate consumers.

The government further said the scheme providing 200 units of free electricity to eligible AAY households is being implemented through a RESCO-based rooftop solar scheme under the PM Surya Ghar: Muft Bijli Yojana.

The tendering process is under evaluation, and eligible households will start receiving the benefit after commissioning of the rooftop solar systems.

Over 4,200 Books Pulled From J&K Colleges, Libraries

Kashmir accounts for 94% of withdrawals; 21.81 lakh books and publications examined so far

Agencies

SRINAGAR: The Higher Education Department has withdrawn 4,249 "objectionable" books from circulation in colleges and libraries across Jammu and Kashmir, the government informed the Legislative Assembly on Tuesday.

In a reply to a question by MLA Khurshed Ahmad Sheikh, the government said 3,996 books were withdrawn from Kashmir division and 253 from Jammu division.

The House was informed that 21,81,582 books and publications

have been examined so far, including 9,32,941 in Jammu and 12,48,641 in Kashmir.

The government also said 518 copies of 19 titles formally banned under S.O. 203 have been removed.

"The process of scrutiny of objectionable books, material to be withdrawn is under process in the Department as the same is laborious exercise and may take more time," the government said.

The government said the action was initiated on the grounds that higher education institutions are centres of higher

learning, research and academic excellence and are expected to foster an environment that upholds constitutional values, academic freedom, critical thinking, scientific temper, responsible citizenship and respect for the sovereignty, unity and integrity of India.

The House was further informed that the Higher Education Department had adopted clear and objective criteria for identifying objectionable material for scrutiny of books available in colleges in accordance with prescribed directions. (KNO)

Can't Make Every Tourist Destination Gulmarg: CM Omar

SRINAGAR: Chief Minister Omar Abdullah on Tuesday said every tourist destination in Jammu and Kashmir cannot be developed on the lines of Gulmarg or equipped with gondolas, stressing that each destination has its own attraction.

Replying to MLA Saif-ud-Din Bhat in the Legislative Assembly, Omar said the proposed gondola project at Doodhpathri is under consideration and will be taken up subject to approvals, completion of formalities and availability of funds.

He said snow skiing was introduced at Doodhpathri in 2023, while a drag lift became operational in 2026.

Around 25 kanals of state land at Kralpathri has also been identified for a Tourist Transit Hub and 400-car parking facility. A Rs 75-crore DPR has been submitted to the Union Ministry of Tourism under Swadesh Darshan Scheme 2.0.

Replying to MLA Yuthvir Sethi, Omar said the government is focusing on diversifying tourism in Jammu Division and developing emerging destinations. He said the approved tourism development budget for Jammu Division increased from Rs 56.50 crore in 2023-24 to Rs 62.85 crore in 2025-26. The government is also developing five pilgrimage circuits, with 29 works currently under progress, he said. (Observer News Service)

Daily-Wage Workers to Gherao Assembly on Sept 28

SRINAGAR: Casual and daily-wage workers on Tuesday announced that they would gherao the Jammu and Kashmir Legislative Assembly on September 28 to press for their long-pending demands, including regularisation, wage enhancement and pension benefits. Daily wagers staged a protest at Polo View Park under the banner of the Jammu and Kashmir Casual/Daily Wagers Forum (JKCDF). The protest was led by forum president Sajad Ahmed Parray.

The proposed Assembly gherao comes amid the ongoing Assembly session, where the government informed the House that 1,00,501 casual and other daily-rated workers have been registered through Aadhaar-based biometric identification and skill profiling. The government has also said that a committee constituted in March 2025 is examining the legal, financial and humanitarian aspects of regularisation of such workers.

Addressing the protesters, Parray questioned the delay in addressing their demands and sought equal treatment in wages and pension benefits. "If your committee's report can come, then why can't our committee's report come? If you are entitled to old pensions, then why are we not entitled to old pensions?" Parray said.

"If your salary can increase from Rs 1.5 lakh to Rs 3 lakh, then why is there no increase in the salary of a casual daily wager who is suffering in this time of inflation?" he asked.

Parray also questioned the silence of MLAs, civil society and various organisations over the workers' issues and appealed to them to join the September 28 programme.

"What great crime are you punishing us for? What crime have we committed?" he asked, adding that the workers had served the government and people during floods and COVID-19. (ONS)

Shopian Court Awards Life Imprisonment in 2019 Murder Case

SHOPIAN: The Principal District and Sessions Court Shopian on Tuesday awarded life imprisonment and imposed a fine of 1 lakh in a 2019 murder case.

Principal District and Sessions Judge Shopian Mehmood Ahmad Chowdhary pronounced the judgment in Case FIR No. 19/2019, registered under Sections 341, 147, 148, 307, 302, 109, 506 and 34 of the Ranbir Penal Code (RPC).

The court convicted Bilal Ahmad Seh, son of Abdul Ahad Seh of Urpora Nagbal, in connection with the case and awarded him life imprisonment along with the fine.

The prosecution was conducted by Public Prosecutor Farooq Ahmad Shagoo.

The case dates back to April 2019, when Rural Development Department employee Adfar Rashid Parra alias Kamal was stabbed to death at Urpora in Shopian following an altercation.

With the pronouncement of the judgment, the trial in the case has concluded. [KNT]

NORTHERN RAILWAY

E-TENDER NOTICE

Closing Date/Time: 13/10/2026 15:00

Sr. DSTE/JAT acting for and on behalf of The President of India invites E-Tenders on against Tender Notice No. 433, TELE_JAT_13_26-27 Closing Date/Time 13/10/2026 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 this tender, 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 online payment modes available on IREPS portal like Net banking, debit card, credit card etc. Manual payments through Demand draft, Banker cheque, Deposit receipts, FDR etc. are not allowed.

Contract Type	Works		
Name of Work	Provision of CCTV at Non-Interlocked LC Gates over Jammu Division		
Tender closing Date Time	13/10/2026 15:00	Date Time of Uploading Tender	21/09/2026 18:59
Advertised Value (Rs.)	35773490.97	Bidding Start Date as per IREPS	29/09/2026
Earnest Money (Rs.)	715500.00	Period of Completion	4 Months

Tender Notice No: 433, TELE_JAT_13_26-27 Date: 22/09/2026

SERVING CUSTOMERS WITH A SMILE 3290/26

Walnut Advertisers Marks Nine Years of Creative Work in Kashmir

Observer News Service

SRINAGAR: Walnut Advertisers, one of Kashmir's leading advertising and branding agencies, has completed nine successful years in the advertising, branding, and printing industry — a milestone that reflects nearly a decade of creative work, client trust, and consistent quality.

The management expressed heartfelt gratitude to its corporate clients, local businesses, institutions, individual customers, associates, and well-wishers whose continued confidence has been the driving force behind the company's growth.

"This anniversary is not only a celebration of our journey but also a recognition of the trust reposed in us by our clients and business partners. Every project we have

undertaken has been a testament to our commitment to quality, creativity, and customer satisfaction," the management said.

Over the past nine years, Walnut Advertisers has grown from a focused advertising outfit into a full-spectrum creative and printing solutions provider. Its services today span advertising campaigns, brand identity development, digital and offset printing, signage, promotional campaigns, wedding stationery, and customised business solutions — all delivered with a sharp eye for detail and a deep understanding of local market needs.

The company proudly serves clients across Jammu & Kashmir, and Ladakh, offering end-to-end creative and printing services tailored to diverse industries and individual requirements.



OFFICE OF THE PRINCIPAL GOVERNMENT DEGREE COLLEGE FRISAL HOMESHALIBUGH, KULGAM (J&K) 192232

Govt. Email: principal.gdcfrisal@jk.gov.in | Website: www.gdcfrisal.edu.in | Office Email: gdcfrisal@gmail.com | Cell No: 9419268663

No: GPCF/Books/26/660

Date: 22/09/2026

EXTENSION NOTICE

Subject: Extension of Timeline for Empanelment of Book Suppliers for the Financial Year 2026-27

In continuation to this office Notification No. GDCF/Books/26/604, Dated:05/09/2026, regarding the Empanelment of Book Suppliers for Government Degree College Frisal, Kulgam, for the financial year 2026-27, it is hereby notified for the information of all concerned that:

Due to the inadequate/poor response received from prospective suppliers, the last date for submission of applications has been extended by a further period of 05 (five) days from the date of publication of this notice.

Accordingly, all interested and eligible book suppliers are once again invited to submit their applications along with the requisite documents, which shall include:

- Sealed cover indicating the maximum discount offered.
- A Call Deposit Receipt (CDR) of ₹10,000/- (Rupees Ten Thousand only – Refundable) pledged in favour of Principal, Government Degree College Frisal, Kulgam.
- All other documents as prescribed in the original notification.

All other terms and conditions stipulated in the aforementioned notification shall remain unchanged. For any further clarification, interested parties may contact the college office during working hours.

Sd/-

Convener Library Committee

DIK-6002-26

DT: 22/09/2026

Sd/-

Principal

DEMISE

It is with profound grief sorrow that we announce the sad demise of our beloved mother namely **Aisha Rahim W/o Haji Abdul Rahim Shera R/o Zadi Masjid Safakadal** Presently at Syed Abad, Sheikhpora on 22.09.2026. The mourning will be for three days. **Congregational Fateh khwani** will be held at **10:30 AM on 24.09.2024** at the ancestral graveyard at Danamazar opposite Masjid Sharif Charari Nambal Safa Kadal.

Mourners:
All Siblings, nears and dears

45 IIT Suicides in 5 Years; 28 From SC, ST, OBC Groups

Press Trust of India

NEW DELHI: Twenty-three Indian Institutes of Technology (IITs) reported 45 student suicides between 2020-21 and 2024-25, 28 of them involving students from Scheduled Caste (SC), Scheduled Tribe (ST) and Other Backward Classes (OBC) communities, according to official data.

The numbers were compiled after data was obtained from all the IITs for a provisionally-admitted Lok Sabha starred question dated December 8, 2025.

The 28 students accounted for more than 62 per cent of all suicides reported by the IITs during the period.

Twelve of those who died were from OBC, nine from SC and seven from ST communities. Sixteen were from the General category and one from the Economically Weaker Sections category.

The number of suicides rose sharply in 2023-24, when the IITs reported 16 deaths, up from six the previous year. Thirteen suicides were reported in 2024-25.



IIT-Hyderabad reported the highest number of suicides over the five years at seven. IIT-Kharagpur, IIT-Delhi and IIT-Kanpur reported six each, while IIT-Madras reported five and IIT (BHU)-Varanasi four.

In 2024-25, four of the 13 students who died by suicide were from OBC, three from ST and two from SC communities, while four were from the General category.

The compilation separately records eight unnatural deaths over the five

years. They are not included in the figure of 45 suicides.

However, the document does not provide the course-wise break-up of the students who died by suicide or details of the circumstances surrounding their deaths. The raw numbers, therefore, cannot be used to draw conclusions about the reasons for the deaths.

The compilation was prepared in connection with the Lok Sabha Provisionally Admitted Starred Diary No. 3682 dated December 8, 2025.

Ladakh Revises Guidelines for MBBS, BDS Central Pool Seats

Press Trust of India

LEH/JAMMU: The Ladakh administration on Tuesday issued revised guidelines for admission to MBBS and BDS seats under the Central pool, following the formation of seven new districts in the Union territory, officials said.

The guidelines were issued by the health and medical education department with the approval of Lieutenant Governor V K Saxena, an official spokesman said.

He said the UT administration has decided to amend the existing guidelines and introduce a single merit list for admission to Central pool MBBS/Bachelor of Dental Surgery (BDS) seats.

Under the existing system introduced in 2021, candidates are considered under different categories

and admitted through a roster system.

The categories include reserved and unreserved candidates, Leh and Kargil districts, and male and female candidates, besides other categories pre-

merit list shall be maintained irrespective of the domicile district, sex, or reserved or unreserved status of the candidates.

Admission to the allotted medical and dental colleges shall be made strictly on the



scribed under the existing guidelines.

With the issuance of the new guidelines, the existing system of separate categories and roster shall be discontinued, the spokesman said, adding that a single

basis of NEET merit/ranking and the choices exercised by the eligible candidates, he said.

For the academic year 2026-27, the spokesman said, the Centre has allotted seven MBBS and two BDS

seats to Ladakh under the Central pool.

The seven MBBS seats have been allotted to Lady Hardinge Medical College, New Delhi; LLRM Medical College, Meerut; Maulana Azad Medical College, Delhi; RSDKS Government Medical College, Ambikapur, Chhattisgarh; Dumka Medical College, Jharkhand; MLB Medical College, Jhansi (UP); and Chandulal Chandrakar Memorial Medical College, Durg, Chhattisgarh.

The two BDS seats have been allotted to KG Dental College, Lucknow; and Government Dental College, Indore.

A period of seven days shall be provided to all the eligible candidates having a valid NEET ranking to apply for the Central pool MBBS/BDS seats through the official Ladakh NIC portal, the spokesman said.

Trump Repeats UN Claim He Settled India-Pakistan War

Press Trust of India

UNITED NATIONS: US President Donald Trump on Tuesday repeated his claim that he settled the war between India and Pakistan last year, as he addressed world leaders at the UN General Assembly here.

"Since I took office, it has been my great honour to settle eight wars, and in so doing, become friendly with the leaders of many of those countries. It was a great honour to do it. Numerous of these wars have gone on for many years and even decades," Trump said in his address to the General Debate of the 81st session of the UNGA.

He said the reason he was able to "make these settlements" was the use of his "very special relationships", trade, use and threat of tariffs, and various other reasons depending on the country.

"Among them, terms of settlement, Cambodia and Thailand, Kosovo and Serbia, the Democratic Republic of the Congo and Rwanda, Pakistan and India, Armenia and Azerbaijan, and of course the war in Gaza, which, as I stated previously, includes the return of all hostages, both living and dead," Trump said.

He added that all these countries wrote him a "letter of thank you".

"The Prime Minister of Pakistan, terrific man, said that Donald Trump was responsible for saving 30 million lives and probably many more than that," the US President said.

Trump also listed the words of appreciation expressed by leaders of Azerbaijan, Armenia and Cambodia, saying they thanked him profusely for ending the conflicts in their respective countries.

Trump has consistently



following direct talks between the Directors General of Military Operations (DGMOs) of the two militaries. India has denied any third-party intervention.

In his address to the high-level UNGA session last year as well, Trump had declared that he had stopped the conflict between India and Pakistan, as he had lashed out at the world organisation for its failure to "even try to help" in ending the conflicts.

First Lady Melania Trump, US Secretary of State Marco Rubio, US Ambassador to the UN Mike Waltz, US Treasury Secretary Scott Bessent and United States Trade Representative Jamieson Greer were sitting in the UNGA listening to Trump's address.

Trump said his administration is "working very closely" with the leaders of Russia and Ukraine to end that conflict.

"We will get that one done. It's going to happen, I think, more quickly than people understand," he said.

Trump also said that last week he signed a powerful new law, passed by Congress, in honour of Senator Lindsey Graham that provided him with enormous new tariff authorities. "If necessary, I will use them," he added.

Trump lambasted Iran, asserting that it will never allow the country to have nuclear weapons. He said he will "have a big decision to make" regarding Iran.

"Will a deal be made with Iran that let's them rebuild and create a far greater country than it ever was before, maybe one of the greatest in the Middle East or even the world? Or do I annihilate the Islamic Republic, and do it quickly, never giving them a chance to kill and destroy people and countries again?"

ACB Books NIMS Officer in DA Case, Finds Rs 6.13 Cr Assets

Press Trust of India

HYDERABAD: The ACB on Tuesday said it registered a DA case against an Additional Medical Superintendent at Nizam's Institute of Medical Sciences (NIMS) here and found assets worth over Rs 6.13 crore during searches conducted at his residence and places belonging to his relatives and associates.

A case of Disproportionate Assets (DA) was registered against N Lakshmi Bhasker, as he allegedly acquired assets disproportionate to his known sources of income by indulging in "corrupt practices and dubious means" during his service, a release from Telangana's Anti-Corruption Bureau said.

As the offence is punishable under the Prevention of Corruption Act, 1988 (as amended in 2018), searches were conducted on Tuesday at his residence and seven other places belonging to his relatives, friends, "benamis"

and other associates, it said.

During the searches, documents relating to eight apartments, five open plots, bank balances of Rs 41 lakh, Rs 12 lakh deposits in post office, Rs 35 lakh investment in private financial institutions, Rs 29.55 lakh investments in mutual funds, gold ornaments weighing about 517.8 grams, three four-wheelers, four two-wheelers, besides electronic gadgets were found.

The total worth of assets was Rs 6.13 crore. The market value of movable and immovable property may be many times higher the document value, the ACB claimed.

Further, it is learnt that, he has invested Rs 1.3 crore to purchase a flat which was in dispute before the DRT besides another Rs 1.33 crore amount was lent by him to various persons as hand loans, the ACB said.

Further verification of additional assets is underway, it said adding the case is under investigation.

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