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Gandhi's Philosophy Relevant in Tech Era: LG Sinha

Urges youth to verify information and use AI and technology responsibly



Observer News Service

Srinagar: Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha on Thursday called for truth, non-violence, responsible use of technology and compassion, saying Mahatma Gandhi's philosophy remains

relevant in today's rapidly changing world.

Sinha was speaking at a Gandhi Jayanti celebration organised by the School Education Department in collaboration with the Department of Culture.

Extending | [More on P6](#)

Gandhi's Ideals Inspire Generations: CM

Chief Minister Omar Abdullah on Friday paid tribute to Mahatma Gandhi on his birth anniversary, saying his message of truth, non-violence, peace and harmony continues to inspire generations. Abdullah called upon people to follow Gandhi's ideals and work towards building a more compassionate and | [More on P6](#)

TRUTH IS THE HABIT OF LOOKING WITHIN ONESELF. Truth is the habit of verifying before believing any fact or information and truth is the habit of listening and understanding before responding immediately to anything."

Para Flags 38 Pending JKPSK Exams, Seeks Intervention

KO Web Desk

Srinagar: PDP leader Waheed Ur Rehman Para on Friday raised concerns over delays in government recruitment in Jammu and Kashmir, claiming that 38 examinations conducted by the Jammu and Kashmir Public Service Commission (JKPSC) remain pending.

In a post on X, Para said the JKPSK and Jammu and Kashmir Services Selection Board (JKSSB) had advertised 15,964 posts between 2023 and 2026 and received 21.12 lakh applications for them.

He claimed the two

recruitment agencies collected nearly 114 crore in application fees during the period.

"From 2023 to 2026, JKPSK & JKSSB advertised 15,964 posts, received a staggering 21.12 lakh applications and collected nearly 114 crore in application fees!" Para said.

He further claimed that 38 JKPSK examinations remain pending and questioned the functioning of the Public Service Commission in the absence of a chairman.

Para said the delays were causing uncertainty for thousands of aspirants awaiting recruitment | [More on P6](#)



DEVOTEES OFFER PRAYERS OUTSIDE Dastgeer Sahib shrine in Srinagar on Friday following the Urs of Sufi saint Sheikh Syed Abdull Qadir Jeelani. KO Photo By Abid Bhat

J&K Notifies CBG Policy To Turn Organic Waste Into Clean Fuel

Policy offers incentives for projects and targets 2,000 rural jobs by 2030.

Observer News Service

Srinagar: The Jammu and Kashmir Government has notified the Compressed Bio-Gas (CBG) Policy 2026 to promote clean energy, strengthen the circular economy and convert organic waste into clean automotive fuel and bio-fertilisers.

Chief Minister Omar Abdullah described the policy as a major step towards turning organic waste into wealth and promoting sustainable energy development in Jammu and Kashmir.

The policy, approved by the Council of Ministers chaired by Abdullah, seeks to encourage investment in CBG production by utilising waste streams including cattle dung, apple pomace, municipal solid waste, pine needles and crop residues.

It aims to address waste management, energy security,



rural employment and sustainable agriculture through decentralised waste-to-energy solutions.

Under the policy, CBG projects will receive capital expenditure support of 0.50 crore per tonne per day (TPD), subject to a maximum assistance of 10 crore per project.

Government land will be made available at a nominal lease rate of 1 per square

metre, while eligible projects will receive 100 per cent exemption from stamp duty.

The policy also provides for 60-day deemed approvals for non-statutory permissions through the Single Window Portal. Eligible clearances will be deemed granted if they are not disposed of within the stipulated period.

Investors will also be eligible for | [More on P6](#)

JERC Clears Immediate Power Cuts For Theft

Agencies

Srinagar: The Joint Electricity Regulatory Commission (JERC) has authorised officers of local DISCOM's of Jammu and Kashmir and Ladakh to immediately disconnect connection upon detection of power theft.

JERC said that the Commission has considered the request of Jammu Power Distribution Corporation Limited (JPDDL) for authorisation of sub-division in-charge officers to disconnect supply upon detection of theft of electricity.

JERC said that in order to specify the officers competent to exercise this power within its jurisdiction, the Commission in exercise of the powers conferred by the first proviso to Section 135 (1A) of the Electricity Act, 2003, the officers of Jammu Power Distribution Corporation Limited (JPDDL), Kashmir Power Distribution Corporation Limited (KPDDL) and Ladakh Power Development



Department (LPDD) are authorised to take appropriate action upon detection of theft of electricity within the meaning of Section 135(1), subject to the Act and the applicable Electricity Supply Code.

"Officers for the time being duly posted as In-charge of the respective Electric Distribution Sub-divisions, within their territorial jurisdiction; and officers holding a valid authorisation under Section 135(2) of the Act from the competent Government authority, within the territorial | [More on P6](#)

CJP Warns Of Jantar Mantar 2.0 Over CEC Ouster

Press Trust Of India

Mumbai: Thousands of people attended the Cockroach Janta Party's (CJP) protest at Shivaji Park here on Friday seeking the resignation of Chief Election Commissioner Gyanesh Kumar, as party leader Abhijeet Dipke warned of "Jantar Mantar 2.0" if he did not step down.

Dipke also targeted the BJP, Prime Minister Narendra Modi, Union Home Minister Amit Shah and Maharashtra Chief Minister Devendra Fadnis while addressing the protesters.

"Gyanesh Kumar must resign and face criminal proceedings," demanded CJP leader Ajinkya Shinde. He also demanded freezing of voter lists of 2025 and abolition of the 2023 law laying down the procedure for the appointment of Election Commissioners. | [More on P6](#)

Vande Bharat Hits 100 Kmph On Katra-Banihal Rail Section

KO Web Desk

Srinagar: A Vande Bharat Express has crossed the world's highest railway bridge over the Chenab River and India's first cable-stayed railway bridge at Anji at a speed of 100 kmph, following an increase in the maximum permissible speed on the 111-km Shri Mata Vaishno Devi Katra-Banihal rail section.

The speed enhancement was successfully tested on Thursday on the Katra-Banihal section under the Jammu division of Northern Railway, marking a significant operational milestone for the Udhampur-Srinagar-Baramulla Railway Link (USBRL) project.

Senior Divisional Commercial Manager Uchit Singhal said the maximum permissible speed on the

section has been increased from 75 kmph to 100 kmph.

The Vande Bharat Express, Train No. 26401/26404, crossed both the Chenab Railway Bridge and Anji Khad Railway Bridge at the enhanced speed, officials said.

The Railway Ministry approved the speed enhancement after all prescribed safety conditions were complied with by the Railways in August.

Earlier, trains were permitted to operate at a maximum speed of 85 kmph between Katra and Sangaldan and 75 kmph between Sangaldan and Banihal.

The increase in the permissible speed is expected to reduce travel time between Katra and Banihal and make train journeys faster and more comfortable.

The 111-km section forms a crucial part | [More on P6](#)

J&K Marks First Mineral Auction With Two Limestone Blocks

KO Web Desk

Srinagar: Jammu and Kashmir has marked a significant milestone in mineral development with the successful auction of two limestone blocks in south Kashmir's Anantnag district under the Central Government's mineral auction framework.

The auction was conducted through the Ministry of Mines, Government of India, after the Jammu and Kashmir administration entrusted the competitive bidding exercise to the ministry to ensure systematic and transparent management of the Union Territory's mineral resources.

The Ministry of Mines said the successful completion of the auction marked the first mineral auction in Jammu and Kashmir and would help unlock the region's geological



potential through a transparent and competitive mechanism.

"The successful completion of the auction reflects the use of a transparent and competitive mineral auction process for the systematic development of mineral resources," the ministry said.

The two auctioned assets, the Koot-Kapran and Wantrag limestone blocks, are located in Anantnag district and together have estimated limestone resources of more than 15.6 million tonnes.

The Koot-Kapran limestone block, located | [More on P6](#)

NC MLA, Spokesperson Booked For 'Assaulting' PSO

Agencies

Srinagar: Ruling National Conference MLA Altaf Kaloo and spokesperson Umesh Bhat have been booked by the Jammu and Kashmir Police after a PSO of the legislator alleged that he was assaulted while performing his official duties, officials said on Friday.

Police booked Kaloo, an MLA from south Kashmir's Pahalgam, and NC spokesperson Umesh Bhat (Talashi) following the complaint by the MLA's personal security officer (PSO) alleging that he was beaten up by the two accused while performing his official duties, the officials said.

They said an FIR has been registered under Sections 121 and 351 of the Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita (BNS) at the Saddar Anantnag | [More on P6](#)



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After Diabetes Diagnosis, Women Face Mental Health Risks, Men Heart Risks: Study

Press Trust Of India

Women could be more likely to develop mental health conditions, while men might tend to develop cardiovascular and renal complications following a diagnosis of diabetes, a study has found. Researchers, including those from Queen Mary University in the UK, said that women and men experience cardiovascular disease, renal disease and mental health conditions differently, but research has not yet described the disease trajectories according to sex and age in people with type 2 diabetes. The study, published in the journal PLOS Medicine, looked at anonymised health records from 28,720 men and women in the UK who developed type 2 diabetes

between 2010 and 2020. In the years following a diagnosis, 39 per cent of the participants experienced at least one significant health event, with the event's trajectory and timing differing by gender. The researchers found that women were more likely to develop mental health conditions post-diagnosis (8.1 per cent compared to 5.3 per cent) and to experience trajectories culminating in death, while men showed higher proportions of cardiovascular disease (8.4 per cent compared to 5.3 per cent), end-stage renal disease, and hypertension. The team noted that on average, women used more health services and long-term prescriptions than men, which may contribute to the increased diagnoses.



The study also found similarities between the genders — a combination of diabetes and a mental health condition among both women and men was linked with a premature death, compared to other trajectories. Across all age groups and genders, hypertension was found to be the most frequent event following

type 2 diabetes. "Women exhibited greater vulnerability to mental health conditions post-T2D (type 2 diabetes), while men showed higher proportion of cardiovascular and renal complications, and had earlier onset of most events compared to women," the authors wrote.

"Both genders experienced earlier mortality when T2D was combined with a mental health condition," they said. The findings highlight the need for healthcare interventions differentiated by characteristics like gender and age, the researchers said. The team added younger women with diabetes were showing mental health complications earlier and more often than expected, suggesting that a routine psychological screening should be incorporated into standard diabetes care. For men, as cardiovascular and kidney risks tended to emerge earlier, monitoring and stronger strategies to support men's engagement with treatment over time is needed, they said.

Public Notice

I, Shabir Ahmad Ganie, F/o Junaid Ahmad Ganie, R/o Pochanag, Tehsil Pattan, P.O. Keeri, District Baramulla, J&K UT, do hereby declare that my son's name has inadvertently been recorded as "Junid Ahmad Ganie" in his Aadhaar Card bearing No. 7428-3245-3340, which is incorrect. His correct and actual name is "Junaid Ahmad Ganie." I intend to get the said correction published in the Government Gazette. Any person having any objection may approach the concerned authority within 7 days from the date of publication of this notice. Thereafter, no objection shall be entertained. fko

OFFICE OF THE NAIB TEHSILDAR KHANYAR

Subject: Issuance of legal heir certificate in favour of legal heirs of deceased Nazir Ahmad Ashraf S/o Mohammad Asgar Ashraf R/o Gulshan Bagh Upper Bota Kadal Srinagar

NOTICE

The above titled application for issuance legal heir certificate is under process. In this regard a report has been obtained from the concerned patwari which reveals that Nazir Ahmad Ashraf S/o Mohammad Asgar Ashraf R/o Gulshan Bagh Upper Bota Kadal Srinagar expired on 23/03/2023 as per death certificate. The deceased parents have already expired. The deceased has left behind the following legal heirs at the time of his death:

S. No	Name of legal heirs	Age/Approx.	Relation with deceased	Occupation/ Marital status
1	Mehra	68 yrs	Wife	Widow
2	Gulshan Bano	47 yrs	Daughter	married
3	Haseena	38 yrs	Daughter	married
4	Mohammad Rafiq Ashraf	39 yr	son	married
5	Hadeesa	36 yrs	Daughter	married
6	Shahzada	33 yrs	Daughter	married
7	Tawheeda	31 yrs	Daughter	Un married

The applicants seek issuance of legal heirs certificate. If anyone is having any objection in this regard, he/she may intimate the office of undersigned either personally on through an authorised agent within seven days from the date of publication of his notice after expiry of said period no claim shall be entertained.

Naib Tehsildar Khanyar
Srinagar

info

Public Notice

it is hereby notified for the general public that my name has been wrongly recorded as Rahi Ramzan instead of Raheel Ramzan in my aadhaar card bearing number 4718 2003 4111. I have applied for the correction/rectification of my name to Raheel Ramzan. any person having any objection regarding this correction may file it in writing before the concerned Aadhaar centre/authority within seven days from the date of publication of this notice.

Raheel Ramzan S/o Mohammad Ramzan Lone
R/o Tujar Pahle Har baramulla j&k 193201

fko

اڈوٹیز نائب تحصیلدار مارگام

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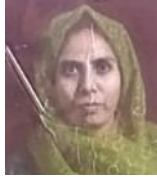
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New Campus Bemina Srinagar

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Class 10th (Matric)
Year & Session Bi - Annual- 2008
Registration No 05NKF705347
Name SHUBEENA ASSAD
Fathers Name ASSAD ULLAH YATOO
Mothers Name MISRA BANO
Date Of Birth 25-03-1991
Residence GORIPORA



Now the candidate had applied for issuance of
DUPLICATE QUALIFICATION CERTIFICATE/S. Before the case
shall be processed under rules, if somebody has /have any kind
of objection in this regard he / she shall approach the office of
undersigned within seven (07) days from the date of publishing
of this notice. No claim shall be entertained.
(Besides, the "QUALIFICATION CERTIFICATE/S" bearing S.NO:
4509028 is be treated as "CANCELLED"

Sd/= Asstt. Secretary,
Certificates K.D.

No. F(Certs-I-DQC/B)KD/20
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Secure Your Device Secure Your Dreams

Small steps in device security make a big difference in your safety!

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Device security means protecting your phone, laptop or tablet from unauthorised access, malware and cyber threats, so your personal data, privacy and information stay safe and secure.

Why It's Important for Girls?

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Helps you avoid stalking, bullying and misuse of your device.
- Safeguards Financial Security**
Protects your bank details, UPI, and digital payments.
- Stops Malware & Scams**
Blocks harmful apps, phishing and fake links.
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KU Marks Gandhi Jayanti with Floral Tribute, Art & Cleanliness Drive

Observer News Service

Srinagar: The University of Kashmir (KU) celebrated Gandhi Jayanti, paying tribute to Mahatma Gandhi and commemorating his enduring legacy of truth, non-violence, peace and cleanliness.

Organised by the varsity's Department of Students' Welfare (DSW), in collaboration with the Shri Pran Kishore Kaul Institute of Music and Fine Arts (IMFA), the event aimed to promote Gandhian values and sensitise students towards social responsibility, community service and environmental cleanliness.

Speaking on the occa-

sive and responsible society," she said.

Registrar, KU, Prof. Naseer Iqbal, noted the significance of preserving and promoting Gandhi's legacy, noting that his ideals of peace, harmony and collective responsibility continue to inspire generations.

Controller of Examinations, KU, Prof. Majid Zaman Baba highlighted the importance of Gandhian ideals in everyday life and stressed on the need to promote discipline, integrity and social responsibility among students.

Dean Students Welfare KU, Prof. Seema Singh, emphasised the importance of engaging students in activities that



sion, Vice-Chancellor, KU, Prof. Nilofer Khan, highlighted the continued relevance of Gandhi's philosophy and emphasised the role of educational institutions in nurturing values of peace and compassion among young people.

"Gandhian values of truth, non-violence and social service remain deeply relevant today. Educational institutions have an important role in inspiring young people to imbibe these ideals and contribute towards building a peaceful, inclu-

promote Gandhian values and encourage active participation in community welfare.

Students of IMFA bought Gandhi's ideals to life through creative expressions in painting and poster art. An open-air exhibition showcased their artistic interpretations, complemented by a cleanliness drive that translated Gandhian ideals of simplicity, service and cleanliness into action. The event was moderated by Cultural Officer DSW KU, Dr. Shahid Ali Khan.

Mirwaiz Urges Self-Accountability, Compassion & Social Responsibility

Observer News Service

Srinagar: Mirwaiz Umar Farooq, in his Friday address at the historic Jama Masjid Srinagar, spoke about the reality of death, accountability in the Hereafter and the need for people to reflect on how they live their lives and fulfil their responsibilities towards others.

Mirwaiz said that remembrance of death should not lead to fear or despair, but should encourage humility, self-correction and a greater sense of responsibility. He urged people to examine their conduct, make amends where they had wronged others, fulfil the rights of family members and fellow human beings, and avoid hatred, jealousy, bitterness and unnecessary disputes.

Expressing concern over growing material-

ism and weakening social bonds, he said that people often become so consumed by worldly pursuits that relationships, compassion and concern for others are pushed aside. He stressed that wealth, status and position are temporary, while a person's character, conduct and treatment of others have lasting significance.

Mirwaiz particularly called upon people to resolve family disputes, strengthen ties with parents and relatives, help the poor and vulnerable, and seek forgiveness from those whose rights may have been violated.

He said that society can become healthier and more compassionate when individuals develop the habit of self-accountability and understand that every action carries responsibility and consequence.



Friday Following of Urs-Mubarak Observed at Dastgeer Sahib Shrine

‘Sacred relic displayed, devotees throng shrine, offer prayers’

Agencies

Srinagar: The Friday following the Urs-Mubarak of Hazrat Sheikh Syed Abdul Qadir Jeelani (RA), popularly known as Dastgeer Sahib, was observed at the Dastgeer Sahib shrine in Khanyar here, on Friday, with the sacred relic of the revered saint displayed for devotees.

A large number of devotees from Srinagar and other parts of Kashmir

visited the shrine and offered prayers, recited the Holy Quran and participated in special prayers and supplications.

The display of the sacred relic drew devotees who gathered at the shrine to have a glimpse of it and seek blessings. "We come here with faith and devotion. Seeing the sacred relic is a special and emotional moment for us," said Zubair Ahmad, a devotee from Budgam.

Bilal Ahmad, a resident of Be-

mina, Srinagar, said the occasion holds special religious significance for devotees. "We visit the shrine to offer prayers and seek blessings. The gathering gives us an opportunity to remember Dastgeer Sahib (RA) and pray for peace and well-being," he said.

Notably, the shrine and adjoining areas witnessed a spiritual atmosphere throughout the day as devotees continued to arrive for prayers and religious observances—(KNO)

Wildlife Week 2026 Begins at SKUAST-K with Focus on Biodiversity, Wildlife Protection

Observer News Service

Srinagar: The J&K Wildlife Protection Department on Friday inaugurated the UT-level Wildlife Week 2026 celebrations at Sher-e-Kashmir University of Agricultural Sciences and Technology of Kashmir (SKUAST-K), Shalimar, with experts stressing habitat conservation, scientific research and greater community participation in protecting the region's biodiversity.

The week-long programme aims to raise awareness about wildlife conservation, biodiversity protection and preservation of Jammu and Kashmir's natural heritage.

PCCF (Wildlife) and Chief Wildlife Warden, J&K, Dr Suneesh Buxy, emphasised the importance of connected habitats and wildlife corridors for maintaining healthy ecosystems and ensuring the long-term survival of wildlife. He called for collective efforts to reduce human-wildlife conflict through awareness, scientific management and community participation.

Buxy also urged students to be-



come ambassadors of environmental conservation and adopt sustainable practices under the Mission LIFE initiative.

SKUAST-K Vice-Chancellor Prof Nazir Ahmad Ganai highlighted the role of universities in generating scientific knowledge, undertaking field-based research and developing human resources for conservation. He called for closer collaboration between academic institutions and the Wildlife Protection Department.

During the event, several publications were released, including the

coffee table book Dachigam, SOPs for Management and Mitigation of Human-Wildlife Conflict, the Asian Waterbird Census, Checklist of Mammals of J&K, Recovery of Kashmir Musk Deer and Dynamics of Man-Animal Conflict.

The programme also featured a wildlife documentary and jingle, cultural presentations and exhibition stalls. Students, faculty, government officials, researchers, environmentalists, NGOs and wildlife enthusiasts participated in the inaugural function.

Is this conversation helpful so far?

PUBLIC NOTICE

I, JAVID AHMAD WANI, F/o FATIMA JAVID, R/o GANGIPORA CHINAR BAGH PAHROO BUDGAM KASHMIR, do hereby inform the General Public and all concerned that the mother's name of my ward/son have inadvertently been recorded incorrectly in his/her school records. The mother has been recorded as "HALEEMA" instead of the correct mother name "HALEEMA BEGUM" My ward is presently studying in Class 6th at Dr. AGM CITY SCHOOL NOWGAM, SRINAGAR. Accordingly, the concerned School Authorities/Chief Education Office and all other concerned authorities are requested to make the necessary correction in the school records and reflect the Mother Name as "HALEEMA BEGUM".

Any person having any objection to the said correction may raise the same before the concerned authority within the prescribed period, failing which no objection shall be entertained.

JAVID AHMAD WANI,
F/o FATIMA JAVID,
M/o HALEEMA BEGUM
R/o GANGIPORA CHINAR BAGH PAHROO BUDGAM KASHMIR

fko

PUBLIC NOTICE

I, SAIMA ASHRAF D/o MOHAMAD ASHRAF SHEIKH, R/o 45 HAMAMBAL Srinagar, J&K UT 190002, do hereby inform the general public that my name has inadvertently been recorded as "SAIMA AAIIRA" in my Aadhaar Card bearing No. 5209-4509-7834, which is incorrect.

My actual and correct name is "SAIMA ASHRAF" I have applied for correction/update of my name and publication of the requisite notification in the Government Gazette through Govt. Ranbir Press Sempora Pampore.

Any person having any objection in this regard may file the same before the concerned authority within seven days from the date of publication of this notice. After that, no objection shall be entertained.

SAIMA ASHRAF
D/o MOHAMAD ASHRAF SHEIKH,
R/o 45 HAMAMBAL SRINAGAR, J&K UT 190002

dko

PUBLIC NOTICE

I, Bilqis Yaqoob W/o Mohammad Yaqoob Dar, R/o Near Girls High School Maisuma Dubji Tehsil South, District Srinagar, J&K UT, do hereby inform the general public that my name has inadvertently been recorded as "Bilkees" in my Aadhaar Card bearing No. 3584-7962-2321, which is incorrect.

My actual and correct name is "Bilqis Yaqoob" I have applied for correction/update of my name and publication of the requisite notification in the Government Gazette through Govt. Ranbir Press Sempora Pampore.

Any person having any objection in this regard may file the same before the concerned authority within seven days from the date of publication of this notice. After that, no objection shall be entertained.

Bilqis Yaqoob W/o Mohammad Yaqoob Dar,
R/o Near Girls High School Maisuma Dubji Tehsil South, District Srinagar, J&K UT

fko

PUBLIC NOTICE

I, JAVID AHMAD WANI, F/o KHALID JAVID, R/o GANGIPORA CHINAR BAGH PAHROO BUDGAM KASHMIR, do hereby inform the General Public and all concerned that the mother's name of my ward/son have inadvertently been recorded incorrectly in his/her school records. The mother has been recorded as "HALEEMA BANO" instead of the correct mother name "HALEEMA BEGUM" My ward is presently studying in Class 8th at Dr. AGM CITY SCHOOL NOWGAM, SRINAGAR.

Accordingly, the concerned School Authorities/Chief Education Office and all other concerned authorities are requested to make the necessary correction in the school records and reflect the Mother Name as "HALEEMA BEGUM".

Any person having any objection to the said correction may raise the same before the concerned authority within the prescribed period, failing which no objection shall be entertained.

JAVID AHMAD WANI, F/o KHALID JAVID,
M/o HALEEMA BEGUM
R/o GANGIPORA CHINAR BAGH PAHROO BUDGAM KASHMIR

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- BIJBERA: 01932-228243
- PAMPORE: 01933-294132
- PATTAN: 01954-293507
- QAZIGUND: 01951-296153



HIGHWAY STATUS

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





HIJRI
CALENDAR
20 Rabi-ul-Sani
1448

PRAYERS

FAJR	5: 06
ZUHR	12:21
ASR	4: 34
Magrib	6: 20
ISHA	7: 40

This Day In History

- 52 BC- Vercingetorix, leader of the Gauls, surrenders to the Romans under Julius Caesar, ending the siege and battle of Alesia
- 42 BC - First Battle of Philippi: Triumvirs Mark Antony and Octavian fight an indecisive battle with Caesar's assassins Brutus and Cassius.
- 382- Roman Emperor Theodosius makes a treaty with the Visigoths, granting them lands between the Lower Danube and the Balkans in return for military service
- 1143- Cardinal Guido elected Pope Celestinus II
- 1247- William II of Holland elected Roman Catholic anti-king of Germany
- 1264 - Comet said to predict death of Pope Urban IV is last seen
- 1272 -Beauvais cathedral in France is completed (choir and transept), designed to be the largest French Gothic cathedral ever built
- 1283- Dafydd ap Gruffydd, Prince of Gwynedd, Wales, becomes the first person executed by being hanged, drawn and quartered
- 1569- Battle of Montcontour: Duke of Anjou beats Huguenots
- 1574- The Siege of Leiden is lifted by the Watergeuzen and the forces of Admiral Boisot
- 1605- Chinese uprising on Philippines, Tondo/Quiaapo massacre
- 1657 -French troops occupy Mardyke
- 1683- The Qing Dynasty naval commander Shi Lang reaches Taiwan (under the Kingdom of Tungning) to receive the formal surrender of Zheng Keshuang and Liu Guoxuan after the Battle of Penghu.
- 1691- English & Dutch army occupies Limerick Ireland
- 1735- France and Holy Roman Emperor Charles VI sign peace accord
- 1739- The Treaty of Nissa is signed by the Ottoman Empire and Russia at the end of the Russian-Turkish War, 1736-1739.
- 1778- Captain James Cook anchors at Alaska
- 1789- Washington proclaims 1st national Thanksgiving Day on Nov 26
- 1793- A warrant is issued for the arrest of French mathematician and philosopher Marquis de Condorcet forcing him into hiding
- 1835 - Battle of Gonzales fought between Texan settlers and Mexican forces. First engagement of the Texas revolution
- 1851 - The pasilalinic-sympathetic compass(a contraption built to test the pseudo-scientific hypothesis that snails create a permanent telepathic link when they mate) is demonstrated but proves to be a fake.
- 1864 - Battle of Saltville, VA
- 1912 - Gopal Krishna Gokhale, at invitation of Gandhi, arrives in South Africa on a 26-day tour; he also visits Tolstoy Farm
- 1920 - The Chinese sign an agreement with the Russo-Asiatic Bank, largely French and Russian controlled, which will oversee the Chinese Eastern Railway, but give local supervision to China
- 1923 - British occupying army leaves Constantinople
- 1924 - League of Nations approves protocols of Geneva
- 1935 - Mussolini's Italian army attacks Abyssinia (Ethiopia)
- 1940 - 17 German aircraft shot down over England
- 1941 - Germans launch attack on Moscow
- 1944 - Nazis crush Warsaw Uprising killing 250,000 people
- 1944 - US B-17's drops pamphlets on Walcheren
- 1949 - USSR recognizes People's Republic of China
- 1956 - 1st atomic power clock exhibited-NYC
- 1958 - Guinea (French Guinea) gains independence from France (National Day).
- 1963 - West German Chancellor Konrad Adenauer condemns western grain shipments to USSR
- 1968 - Mexico City police fire on protesting students, 300-500 killed
- 1968 - Republic Guinea forms (day of republic)
- 1972 - Aeroflot Il-18 crashes near Black Sea resort of Sochi, kills 105
- 1977 - Pakistani general Zia ul-Haq bans all opposition
- 1978 - Syrian & Palestinians shoot in East Beirut, 1,300 killed
- 1981 - Ali Chamenei elected president of Iran
- 1982 - Bomb attack in Tehran, kills 60, injures 700
- 1990 - WW2 Allied nations cede any remaining rights as occupiers of Germany
- 1990 - Chinese plane explodes, about 100 die

Where Will the Water Go?

The city’s lakes, marshes and floodplains were part of a wider drainage system. Protecting what remains could be as important as strengthening built infrastructure.



Sheikh Aneaus



Wular is described as a biodiversity hotspot, a wetland and a bird habitat, and all three descriptions hold. It also belongs to the valley’s larger floodplain system, where siltation and changes in land cover have weakened its ability to do what a healthy wetland should.

Ask anyone in Srinagar about September 2014 and the answer comes with coordinates: the rooftop, the dead phone, the lane that became part of some other city.

Those memories return whenever the Jhelum rises, and a simpler question follows them far less often: When the river has taken all it can hold, where is the rest of the water supposed to go?

The usual answers involve rainfall, river levels, embankments and drainage, and the geography gives a wider one.

Mountains ring the valley, and snow and glacier melt tumble down through numerous tributaries onto a flat floor, where the Jhelum makes its slow way toward Wular Lake. A river that drops from steep catchments onto a gentle plain loses speed, so a large volume coming down in a short time piles up.

The Jhelum was never meant to work alone. Floodplains, marshes, lakes, wetlands and smaller rivers took in water when it rose, stored it and slowed it before it moved downstream, which made the river the main drainage channel and the wetlands its buffer.

We have gradually lost that buffer, and the loss has no single author.

Settlements grew, land use changed and a larger population needed room, so ground that was once open, seasonally wet or occasionally flooded has been built over.

Land that looks fallow can still be working for the river. A marsh bears no traffic and holds up no building, and its greatest service may be staying open and reachable on the day the water comes.

The 2014 figures show just how much the river was up against.

A 2017 satellite-based analysis found that more than 135,000 cusecs of water passed Sangam on September 6, 2014, the highest flow ever recorded there. The study estimated that the Jhelum could carry about 35,000 cusecs through Srinagar, with some additional capacity in the supplementary channel.

The Central Water Commission puts the safe capacity between Sangam and Srinagar near 31,700 cusecs and calls the 2014 flood roughly three times that, adding that low-lying areas along the river traditionally worked as natural flood-detention zones.

The difference between those figures was water that had to go somewhere, and it went into the city.

Dredging the Jhelum helps, and so do stronger embankments, an improved Flood Spill Channel, better drainage, flood forecasting and early alerts. Even together they leave the river’s capacity finite, so once an exceptional volume comes down, flood management becomes a question of storage as much as transport.

That makes the wetlands a concern for tenants and shopkeepers in Srinagar’s lanes as much as for environmentalists.

Wular is described as a biodiversity hotspot, a wetland and a bird habitat, and all three descriptions hold. It also belongs to the valley’s larger floodplain system, where siltation and changes in land cover have weakened its ability to do what a healthy wetland should.

A wetland can stay on the map while losing its function, since depth, land cover and links to other waterways decide whether it can still hold a flood.

Srinagar’s own wetlands depend on one another in the same way.

Brari Nambal has long been tied into the city’s web of lakes and waterways, and studies have traced its hydrological relationships with Dal Lake, Khushalsar and Anchar, including how changes in those links altered sedimentation and flow.



Planners elsewhere speak of “sponge cities,” which use wetlands, open spaces, permeable surfaces and restored waterways to absorb and briefly hold water instead of hurrying all of it away. China’s Sponge City programme is the best-known example, and Kashmir can borrow the principle without copying the programme: flood management can be built into the way a city grows, letting water slow down, spread out and settle where it does less harm.

The whole system needs restoring.

Waterways should keep flowing wherever possible, natural drainage paths merit protection, and wetlands with flood storage value should stop being treated as spare land. Existing flood basins should keep serving the purpose they were meant for, and urban planning can finally listen to what the hydrology has always been saying.

Planners elsewhere speak of “sponge cities,” which use wetlands, open spaces, permeable surfaces and restored waterways to absorb and briefly hold water instead of hurrying all of it away. China’s Sponge City programme is the best-known example, and Kashmir can borrow the principle without copying the programme: flood management can be built into the way a city grows, letting water slow down, spread out and settle where it does less harm.

The valley already holds much of this idea. Its lakes, marshes, wetlands, floodplains and waterways formed a distributed system of storage and drainage even before “nature-based solutions” became a phrase.

Modern engineering can strengthen that system instead of treating natural storage and built infrastructure as rivals.

Some wetlands cannot return to their original state, and development cannot simply stop, since Srinagar is a living city where people need homes, roads and infrastructure.

A drainage channel can still be improved, a wetland can sometimes be recovered and a floodplain conserved, though natural storage that is permanently lost makes recovery far harder.

The choice lies between development that works with the valley’s hydrology and development that eats away at it.

The Jhelum will keep following the slope of the land, the glaciers will keep sending water down and the weather will stay erratic, so no one can prevent a severe flood.

What people can decide is how much room is left for the water when it comes.

The lesson of 2014 belongs in how the valley thinks about its future, and the wetlands belong there as flood infrastructure as much as scenery.

The river will behave like a river, and the open question is whether the valley can still behave like a floodplain.

The author is a Ph.D. in Geoinformatics.

When Basics Become Bills

Families already pay taxes on the goods they buy and the services they use. The state can return part of that revenue through universal basic services.



Danish Mehraj

India builds trillion dollar economies, launches space probes and mints billionaires, and its officials still ask whether the state can afford to guarantee water, electricity, healthcare and schooling.

Jammu and Kashmir sharpens the question, because the region holds the rivers and still struggles to keep its own homes warm.

Providing these four necessities free of cost is an investment the state can finance, and it returns to citizens money they have already paid.

Winter makes the case plainly, as Chillai Kalan, the forty days of harshest cold in Kashmir, turns electricity into a question of survival. It runs the heaters, keeps pipes from freezing and lets children study after the early sunset.

A household that loses power in those weeks loses far more than convenience.

The cruelty lies in the arithmetic.

Central agencies such as the NHPC harness the Jhelum and the Chenab and produce thousands of megawatts that light cities on the plains. The families living along those banks endure routine power cuts, while the region buys electricity back at market prices to cover its winter deficit.

Jammu and Kashmir receives only 12 percent of the

free power from projects built on its own rivers. Raising that share to 25 or 30 percent would cover free domestic electricity for all its households, and it would correct an imbalance in which the people nearest the water see the least of its value.

Officials who resist such proposals usually ask why taxpayers should bear the burden of freebies.

The question assumes that only the small group paying income tax funds the state. The Goods and Services Tax reaches a daily wage labourer in Anantnag buying a packet of biscuits, a farmer in Kathua buying a liter of cooking oil and a student buying a pen.

Economic data consistently shows that the poorest households give up a larger share of their income to indirect taxes than the ultra rich do.

Free water, power, medicine and schooling therefore return revenue to the people who produced it, and calling that a handout misreads who owes whom.

Medicine shows the cost of misreading it. Specialist care in the mountains can mean a long and dangerous journey, and one medical emergency is the largest single force dragging middle income families into poverty.

The Ayushman Bharat SEHAT scheme has brought the idea of universal coverage to the region, but a card still stands between a patient and a bed. Fully funded public hospitals would remove the card, the premium and the mortgage on the family home.

Where care is sold, the right to life depends on a bank balance.

Schools divide families the same way. Children of the well off are groomed in modern private academies, while the children of Srinagar’s artisans, Jammu’s farmers and the labourers of the plains sit in underfunded public classrooms.

A system that sorts children by what their parents can



Jammu and Kashmir receives only 12 percent of the free power from projects built on its own rivers. Raising that share to 25 or 30 percent would cover free domestic electricity for all its households, and it would correct an imbalance in which the people nearest the water see the least of its value.

pay turns education from an equalizer into a device for passing class from one generation to the next.

Free schooling from kindergarten to university would let talent and effort decide a child’s path in place of the lottery of birth.

The savings from such a program would spread into the local economy.

A family freed from fear of a catastrophic hospital bill, school fees and runaway utility charges gains disposable income, and working families spend it nearby. They buy better food, repair their homes, buy from neighbourhood merchants and take small entrepreneurial risks.

The extremely wealthy often park their money in off-shore accounts or speculative assets, so the same rupee does less for the street it came from. Spending by working families raises the velocity of money, which drives demand, creates jobs and builds growth from the roots upward.

India also holds a demographic dividend in its young population, which can power innovation or harden into unemployment and unrest. In a region with Jammu and Kashmir’s history, young people who are educated, healthy and free of the cost of basic survival become productive workers, and economic security counters alienation.

Preventive care costs less than crisis care, so the state recovers part of its spending in reduced crime and lower future health bills.

The financing is within reach.

Lifeline quotas could guarantee 300 units of electricity and 30 kiloliters of water per household, enough for cooking, heating, lighting and sanitation. Consumption beyond that baseline, such as multiple air conditioners or a private swimming pool, would be metered and taxed progressively, so the heavy users balance the budget for those who use the least.

Smart meters and direct benefit systems could shrink the transmission and distribution losses that come from theft and bureaucratic corruption, and the savings could go to schools and hospitals.

At the national level, modest wealth taxes on the extremely rich, an end to loopholes in company taxation and cuts to bloated administrative spending could fund the rest.

India produces billionaires faster than most countries, while tax on large profits and inherited wealth stays light.

A government keeps its books in the well being of its people as much as in the surplus of its treasury.

The labourer in Anantnag pays tax on the biscuits he buys and pays again for the heat that sees him through the forty frosty days, which makes the state his debtor long before it becomes his provider.

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Kashmir's New Matrimonial Equation

As dual-income households become a preferred ideal, women devoted to home and family are finding fewer matrimonial prospects.



Haziqah Shaheen

The old city of Srinagar hums with afternoon activity. Narrow alleys near Khanyar fill with vendors selling boiled beans and fried snacks. Within a wood-paneled office above a fabric shop, Ghulam Hassan sorts through worn dairies.

These notebooks contain 15 years of marriage proposals. His fingers trace columns marked with names, ages, and professions.

Today, he stops longer at entries listing government salaries or corporate positions. The pages marked "homemaker" gather dust on the shelf.

"Families now open discussions with salary questions," Hassan explains, stirring tea in a chipped ceramic cup. The spiced drink sends steam into the cold air. "Character and education matter greatly, but the paycheck seals the arrangement every time."

Sara Bano completed her master's degree in Islamic studies three years ago. She stands twenty-eight years old. Each morning, she tutors neighbourhood children in religious texts at her family home in Sopore.

She prepares lessons on the Quran while wearing the traditional pheran against the spring chill. Her students range from ages six to twelve. They gather in her family's living room, sitting cross-legged on woolen carpets. Sara explains Arabic verses with patience, and translates complex theological concepts into Kashmiri.

Her parents seek a groom who values faith and family devotion. They have approached three matchmakers this year alone. Each closed her file after the initial consultation.

"One told my father directly: return after securing employment," she recounts, sitting in her family orchard behind her house. "My education holds weight only when paired with a monthly wage."

She adjusts her headscarf, and her hands show ink stains from morning lessons. "I chose this path to serve the community. Now society punishes that choice."

Her situation mirrors a broader transformation throughout the valley. Matchmakers increasingly filter candidates by income brackets. Professional women receive priority placement. Those dedicated to domestic management largely face dismissal.

The criteria shifted gradually over the past decade.

Older ledgers in Hassan's one-room office show different priorities. Some years ago, families asked about ancestry first. They inquired about domestic skills, and sought religious compatibility. Economic questions ranked lower on the list.

Kashmir's economic reality drives this shift. Labour surveys indicate twenty-five percent of young men remain outside formal employment. The cost of living continues rising. Wedding expenses now average three lakh rupees. Housing prices in Srinagar have doubled since twenty nineteen. Education costs for future children burden young couples.

Families view working wives as economic assets, and seek dual-income households out of necessity.

Amina Shah practices law at the Srinagar High Court. She earns average seventy thousand rupees monthly, handling divorce cases and property disputes. Her engagement last month brought celebration followed by household tension.

Her future husband works as an engineer. His brother married a woman who manages their joint household. The sister-in-law holds a bachelor's degree in literature. She volunteers at local schools, and cares for elderly relatives in the afternoons.

The elders urged this sister-in-law to seek employment before Amina's wedding. They feared she would feel diminished standing



BACK AT HIS OFFICE, HASSAN RECEIVES A CALL. A MOTHER DESCRIBES HER DAUGHTER: PIOUS, EDUCATED, SKILLED AT COOKING.

She mentions expertise in embroidery, and describes gentle manners.

Salary details stay absent from the conversation. Hassan reviews his files, notes her name in a new diary, and moves it to a secondary list while the primary ledger waits. The homemaker pages remain untouched on the shelf.

beside a professional lawyer, worrying about status differences within the family.

The sister-in-law now spends evenings searching job portals. She applies for positions she lacks interest in. Her previous satisfaction with household management has diminished. She now feels anxiety about her worth.

Dr. Farhana Qayoom studies gender dynamics at a Delhi-based university. She interviewed fifty families last year regarding matrimonial preferences in Kashmir. Her research reveals stark changes in spousal expectations.

"The matchmaking ecosystem now operates like a job market," she observes, sitting in a popular city cafe. Books line the walls behind her. "Economic utility outweighs traditional compatibility markers. Families treat marriage as a financial merger rather than a spiritual

partnership."

She notes complications arising from this approach. "Women report increased stress," Dr Farhana continues over a sip of coffee. "They feel pressure to maintain careers while managing households, and receive little credit for domestic labour. The society values their bank balance above their character."

Previous generations emphasized lineage, ethical conduct, and family skills. Brides brought knowledge of cuisine, embroidery, and household management. They prepared feast for dozens of guests and preserved cultural traditions. Grooms handled financial support alone.

These roles provided clear, respected boundaries. Each partner contributed distinct value. But contemporary demands erase these distinctions.

Families now expect dual-income households as standard.

Religious scholars express concern about this shift.

Imam Mohsin Kirmani leads Friday prayers at a Srinagar mosque. He counsels couples preparing for marriage.

"Islam teaches that marriage completes half the faith," he explains, sitting in his study near the mosque. "This completion comes through mercy, compassion, and shared spiritual goals. When we prioritize paychecks over piety, we corrupt the foundation."

Another candidate, who requested anonymity, describes similar frustration.

She lives in Baramulla, working as a private teacher. A matchmaker visited her home three times. Her family served him with warmth and multiple ₹500 notes. They showed him her certificates, and explained her dedication to education. On the final visit, he abandoned his search.

"He stated I should generate income before expecting proposals," she recalls, serving tea in her drawing room. The walls display her students' artwork. "He treated my preference for home life as a deficiency. He saw my care for children as idle time."

She holds a bachelor's degree in education, and speaks three languages. Her contributions lack enough monetary value. The matchmaker dismissed her marriage profile entirely.

The trend places Kashmiri women under conflicting pressures.

Education and employment become mandatory, and marriage depends upon both. Personal calling receives little accommodation.

"Women who embrace careers face judgment for neglecting home duties," says Shazia Rasool, a working young mother in Pulwama. "Women who choose domestic life find doors closed to them. Society celebrates professional women, but simultaneously, it stigmatizes those who choose traditional roles."

This creates punishing standards: women are expected to earn high salaries while also maintaining perfect households, raising children, and caring for elders.

At the same time, men face renewed pressure as providers, expected to match their wives' incomes while maintaining status.

Back at his office, Hassan receives a call. A mother describes her daughter: pious, educated, skilled at cooking. She mentions expertise in embroidery, and describes gentle manners. Salary details stay absent from the conversation.

Hassan reviews his files, notes her name in a new diary, and moves it to a secondary list while the primary ledger waits.

The homemaker pages remain untouched on the shelf.

Outside, the call to prayer echoes through Srinagar as the matchmaker closes his books, leaving a city silently weighing worth in rupees against what truly matters.

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

The Dards at the Edge

An ancient Himalayan culture is struggling to preserve its language, rituals and stories.



Dr. Arshad H. Bhat

Far from the noise of cities and the rush of modern life, an ancient world is still breathing in Kashmir.

In the high valleys of Gurez and Ladakh, the Dard tribes are holding on to their stories, rituals, and fading tongue.

They speak in a language older than any map, and sing to rivers that no longer know which flag they flow under.

But the silence is closing in, slow and certain, like snow falling on an empty path.

It is this silence that Suheel Rasool Mir breaks in Cultural Encyclopedia of the Dard Tribe: Journey Through Gurez and Ladakh.

Page by page, village by village, he unearths a civilization long buried under snow, state apathy, and academic neglect. His work doesn't simply catalogue a community. It revives a vanishing world.

The Dards, who once inhabited a vast belt stretching across Dardistan, from Gilgit to Gurez, have lived through a slow erasure.

Their stories aren't taught, their songs aren't archived, and their wisdom doesn't trend.

And yet, they hold within them the original pulse of the mountains: resilient, adaptive, deeply rooted.

Mir's book begins not with drama, but with devotion. He steps into their



kitchens, listens to their prayers, learns their games, eats their food, and sits through their grief.

What emerges is a tender, textured documentation of the Dard world, from millet fields to marriage customs, from burial rites to barter economies.

It's not some academic study or longing for the past. It's a cry for attention, and proof of what's slipping away.

In Gurez, young people are abandoning their dialects. In Drass, weddings that once spanned days are now

rushed through WhatsApp calls and cash payments. Sacred groves are being cleared for roads. Tourism, once a promise, now flickers between military presence and fleeting selfies.

The Dards are being archived before they've even been understood.

And yet, the stories live on. A woman weaving wool remembers the festival songs of her mother. An elder in Batalik still recites ancient chants for the harvest moon.

Mir captures the sharp details, like the way butter is churned during snowstorms, the pattern of tattoos on

women's wrists, the logic behind clan alliances, and the grief when a traditional flute falls silent for good.

Each chapter reads like a dispatch from a civilization the rest of the world forgot.

The power of the book lies in what it doesn't sensationalize. There are no heroic exaggerations here. Only the subtle urgency of preservation. The Dards are only waiting to be heard.

Mir does not write with the distance of a scholar. His tone is warm, clear, and grounded. He allows the Dards to speak for themselves, through songs,

sayings, and small, unremarkable acts that carry generations of wisdom.

There's a dignity in his gaze, a refusal to treat these lives as museum exhibits or relics of some romantic past.

The book arrives at a critical time. Climate change is reshaping the Himalayan ecology. Modernity through roads, telecom towers, and displaced priorities is sweeping away fragile systems of knowledge.

The Dards, who once lived in sync with stars and snow, are being dragged into a race they never signed



The Dards, who once lived in sync with stars and snow, are being dragged into a race they never signed up for.

up for.

And yet, their cosmology, rooted in earth cycles, spiritual reciprocity, and community care, might hold answers we're only beginning to seek.

For Kashmir, this work is more than a cultural document. It's a reckoning. It forces us to ask: how many worlds within our own borders have we neglected, overwritten, or lost? How many tongues will vanish before we call them mother tongues? How many traditions will be filed away as folklore before we recognise them as blueprints for survival?

Cultural Encyclopedia of the Dard Tribe doesn't offer closure. It offers an opening to listen, return, and remember.

Beyond the checkpoints and the curated landscapes of tourism, the real Kashmir still sings in forgotten valleys, in Dard voices carried by wind.

And if we don't bend down to hear them now, we may never hear them again.

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Centre Marks 28 Strategic Ladakh Sites on Official Map

List includes Gogra, Hot Spring and other key border locations along the LAC.

Press Trust Of India

New Delhi: The Centre has formally identified 28 strategic places and geographical features in Ladakh, including key border friction points along the LAC like Gogra and Hot Spring, on the official Indian map on Friday.

The step, taken by the Government in consultation with the Ladakh Union Territory administration, aims to streamline official cartography, facilitate precise identification, and foster better public awareness regarding the sensitive border region.

"Government of India, in consultation with the Union Territory of Ladakh, has identified a total of twenty-eight (28) places/features, located in the UT of Ladakh, by standard place and feature names on the official map of Survey of India (Sol)," a government statement said.

It said formally identifying them on the Survey of India map of the UT of Ladakh aims to facilitate accurate recognition and greater public awareness.

Gogra and Hot Spring are among the major strategic locations and were friction points during the 2020 standoff between Indian and Chinese forces, which is crucial to Indian Patrolling.

The eastern Ladakh border standoff between the Indian and Chinese militaries erupted on May 5, 2020, following a violent clash in the Pangong Lake areas. Both sides started the disengagement process in 2022.

The list also includes Alisha Giri, a high-altitude peak; Brangsa; Chapchinal Pass; Kanishka Peak; Karun Pir mountain; Kuxsel; Martand Giri; Parpik glacier; Skamri Glacier; Shachmirik Pass; Shkorga Valley; Zorawar Peak; Dehra Compass; and Drak Karpo.

Jolmori, Kumarayana Point, Panglung, Rinchen Zangpo, Sakyasi Giri, Guru Rinpoche, Shamal Lungpa (a patrol and staging route in the 1950s), Yangpa River, Marpa Lotsava Ri, Milarepa Kangri, Shiva Ri, and Maheshwara Ri have also been identified on the official map.

ECI Orders Special Drive to Enrol Voters Left Out of Rolls

KO Web Desk

Srinagar: The Election Commission of India (ECI) has directed states and Union Territories where the nationwide Special Intensive Revision (SIR) of electoral rolls has been completed to launch a special drive to identify and enrol eligible voters who may have been left out of the rolls.

In a communication to the Chief Electoral Officers (CEOs), the Commission said the drive would focus on left-out electors as well as first-time and young voters.

The direction follows the Commission's September 29 communication and a meeting with all CEOs held on October 1.

The ECI said that during the enumeration phase of the SIR exercise, Booth Level Officers (BLOs) prepared lists of voters classified as Absent, Shifted, Dead and Duplicate (ASDD), along with the probable reasons for their non-inclusion.

These lists were displayed on the notice boards of Panchayat Bhawans and Urban Local Body offices, shared with Booth Level Agents (BLAs) of political parties and uploaded on the websites of the respective Chief Electoral Officers.

Following the publication of the draft electoral roll, claims and objections



were considered by Electoral Registration Officers (EROs), after which the final electoral roll was published.

The Commission said the final roll reflects deletions made during the enumeration phase as well as additions and deletions following publication of the draft roll.

Emphasising that voter enrolment is a continuous process, the ECI said individuals who have not yet been enrolled or whose names have been deleted from the electoral roll can apply for enrolment at any time.

"The objective of the special drive is to identify and facilitate such electors," the Commission said.

As part of the drive, BLOs have been directed to compare the current electoral roll with the pre-SIR roll and prepare a list of electors whose names appeared in the earlier roll but are missing from the current one.

They will subsequently conduct house-to-house visits to ascertain the current status of the identified electors and facilitate their enrolment through Form 6 wherever they are found eligible.

The Commission has asked BLOs to cover at least 20 to 25 electors every week, with the exercise expected to be completed in around one month.

BLOs will record the present status of each identified elector

and indicate cases where Form 6 has been filled out.

During the house-to-house visits, BLOs will also facilitate the enrolment of eligible first-time and young voters and others who may have been left out of the electoral roll.

The lists prepared by BLOs will be shared with BLAs of recognised political parties. BLOs will also submit the lists, completed Form 6 applications and field verification reports to the concerned EROs.

The EROs will examine the cases and take appropriate action under the Representation of the People Act, 1950 and the Registration of Electors Rules, 1960.

At the conclusion of the

exercise, EROs will share booth-wise lists with representatives of political parties, providing another opportunity to identify eligible electors who may have been left out.

The ECI has also directed authorities to organise Booth Level Camps to facilitate submission of enrolment applications.

Special camps may be organised for people living in night shelters and labour colonies, as well as homeless and other marginalised groups.

The CEOs, District Election Officers (DEOs) and EROs have been asked to undertake awareness and mobilisation activities through educational institutions, local outreach programmes, SVEEP activities, regular press briefings and other platforms.

The Commission said the objective was to ensure that every eligible citizen is made aware of the opportunity to enrol in the electoral roll.

It has also directed that progress of the special drive be closely monitored and reviewed regularly at the levels of the CEO, DEO and ERO.

The CEOs have been instructed to issue necessary directions to the concerned DEOs, EROs and BLOs for effective implementation of the exercise and to ensure that the drive reaches all eligible citizens.

CONTD. FROM FRONT PAGE

Gandhi's Philosophy

greetings to the people of Jammu and Kashmir on Gandhi's birth anniversary, the LG congratulated children who participated in cultural programmes and the toppers of the district-level symposium on truth and non-violence.

He also commended the Kashmiri rendition of Gandhi's bhajan by Gulzar Ahmed, a Hindi performance by students of the Institute of Music and Fine Arts and a skit presented by students of Girls Higher Secondary School, Kothibagh.

Reflecting on Gandhi's life and philosophy, Sinha said the freedom fighter gave India "a new way of thinking" centred on standing against injustice and living with dignity.

He said Gandhi's legacy of truth and non-violence continues to inspire humanity, particularly in an era marked by rapid technological change.

"I believe that revered Bapu has left behind many priceless legacies for us. He gave us a new method, new principles, a new approach to life and a new system that remains alive in the hands of every generation," Sinha said.

The LG cautioned against misinformation and urged young people to develop the habit of verifying facts before believing or sharing information.

He said Gandhi's search for truth should be understood not merely as a moral principle but also as a discipline involving self-reflection, verification and dialogue.

"Truth is the habit of looking within oneself. Truth is the habit of verifying before believing any fact or information and truth is the habit of listening and understanding before responding immediately to anything," he said.

Sinha stressed that "Satyameva Jayate" must remain a guiding principle for democracy.

He also spoke about the growing influence of technology, saying technological advancement should not come at the cost of human judgment and conscience.

"I want all children and youth to remember that technology is only an instrument and the decision must remain ours. For however powerful the instrument may be, its direction is ultimately determined by the hand that wields it," he said.

Calling for responsible use of modern technologies, he urged young people to ensure that technological tools are used for progress while remaining grounded in human values.

The LG also highlighted India's diversity, saying differences in language, customs, attire and modes of worship should not weaken national unity.

He said India's strength lies in its ability to accommodate diversity through justice, respect and compassion.

"Walking together with diversity is India's strength. I believe this philosophy is needed today more than ever," he said.

Sinha also linked Gandhi's emphasis on self-reliance with the development agenda for India, saying small enterprises, artisans, farmers and local businesses have

an important role in strengthening rural economies.

He said Gandhi's ideas of self-reliance and trusteeship remain relevant to the vision of a developed India and referred to the promotion of local products and enterprises under the Atmanirbhar Bharat initiative.

The LG further stressed the importance of character-building among children, saying national development should not be measured only through infrastructure and economic growth.

"Bapu firmly believed that a nation's character is its most permanent infrastructure," he said.

He urged citizens to reflect on their individual contribution to society and asked whether they were promoting truth or rumours, engaging in dialogue or merely reacting, and contributing to unity or division.

Sinha said such introspection would constitute a meaningful tribute to Gandhi's life and philosophy.

He also called upon the youth to use technology with discipline and responsibility and work towards building an India that is modern and compassionate, prosperous and just, and powerful while remaining sensitive to the needs of its people.

Looking towards 2047, he said India's progress should be assessed not only through infrastructure but also by how effectively opportunities reach deprived and disadvantaged sections of society.

Minister for Health and Medical Education, School and Higher Education and Social Welfare Sakeena Masood Itoo, Chief Secretary Atal Dulloo, Padma Bhushan Rajeev Sethi, Padma Shri Dr S.P. Varma, President Gandhi Global Family, J&K, Ram Niwas Sharma and senior officials attended the celebration.

Heads of educational institutions, teachers, students and prominent citizens were also present.

Gandhi's Ideals

inclusive society. PDP chief Mehbooba Mufti also paid tribute to Gandhi, saying remembering the freedom fighter means finding the courage to stand up for the India he gave his life for.

"On Gandhi Ji's Jayanti, seeing our young people, despite all odds, gather at Shivaji Park and Jantar Mantar to defend the India we believe in fills my heart with hope," Mehbooba said in a post on X.

The former Jammu and Kashmir chief minister said Gandhi had given his life for an idea of India where every citizen could live with dignity and freedom.

"Today, that India is being tested. For me, remembering Gandhi Ji means finding the courage to stand up for the India he gave his life for," she said.

Both leaders paid tribute to Gandhi on his birth anniversary and highlighted the continued relevance of his ideals of peace, truth, harmony and dignity. (PTI)

Rain, Snow

and a minimum of 9.2°C, while Pahalgam recorded 24.3°C and 6.8°C, respectively. Kupwara recorded 30°C and 7.4°C, while Kokernag recorded 27.8°C and

11.2°C.

Gulmarg recorded a maximum temperature of 21.4°C and a minimum of 7.5°C.

In the Jammu division, Jammu city recorded a maximum of 33°C and a minimum of 21.1°C. Banihal recorded 28°C and 10.2°C, Batote 27°C and 14.5°C, Katra 31°C and 19.4°C, while Bhaderwah recorded 26.7°C and 9.6°C.

No rainfall was recorded at any of the observation stations during the period.

The MeT Department advised farmers to continue harvesting apples and paddy and complete other agricultural operations before the expected wet spell.

J&K Notifies CBG

100 per cent SGST reimbursement for the first five years of operation, a manpower subsidy of 3,000 per month for each local unskilled worker for two years and interest subvention of up to 2 crore on bank term loans.

The government will facilitate feedstock aggregation and market linkages for bio-manure, with the policy targeting distribution of bio-manure to 10,000 farmers.

The initiative envisages the creation of around 2,000 direct rural jobs by 2030, besides generating livelihood opportunities across the CBG value chain.

The policy will remain valid until 2032 and is aimed at creating an ecosystem for green investment while strengthening rural economies.

Omar Abdullah also congratulated Minister for Science and Technology Satish Sharma and the Department of Science and Technology for notifying the policy, describing it as an important initiative towards sustainable energy development and a cleaner, more resource-efficient Jammu and Kashmir.

JERC Clears

jurisdiction covered by that authorisation," the order reads.

It also said that the authorisation of officers for the time being duly posted as In-charge of the respective Electric Distribution Sub-divisions, within their territorial jurisdiction, is independent of the existence of an authorisation under Section 135(2).

"Officers of the respective licensee or supplier of a rank higher than the rank so authorised may also exercise the power of disconnection within their jurisdiction in terms of the first proviso to Section 135(1A)," it reads.

The Commission also said that the orders confer authorisation for disconnection under Section 135(1A) only. "Powers of entry, inspection, search and seizure under Section 135(2) shall be exercised only by officers separately authorised under that subsection, subject to the safeguards in Sections 135(3) and 135(4) and the applicable Supply Code."

It also said that where required, the concerned utility shall take up the matter of such separate authorisation with the competent Government authority.

"Each utility shall publish and maintain an updated list of the authorised officers at its offices and on its website, indicating their

names, designations, ranks, territorial jurisdiction and the statutory provision under which they are authorised. Photo identity cards shall accurately indicate the scope of authorization. Inspection authority under Section 135(2) shall be indicated only where the requisite Government authorisation exists," it reads.

The Commission further said that the requirements of regulation of the JERC Electricity Supply Code, 2023 shall be complied with in respect of officers authorised under Section 135(2).

"All action shall conform to the JERC for the UT of Jammu & Kashmir and the UT of Ladakh (Electricity Supply Code) Regulations, 2023, as amended, including the applicable requirements for inspection, evidence, assessment and consumer safeguards," the Commission said.

"Each utility shall maintain records of disconnections, police complaints and restoration of supply for production before the Commission when required," reads the order.

The Commission said that the order shall take effect from the date of its issue.(KNO)

Para Flags 38

examinations and results.

He urged Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha and Chief Minister Omar Abdullah to intervene and address the issue of pending recruitment examinations.

The PDP leader's remarks come amid continued concerns among government job aspirants over delays in the recruitment process and completion of examinations in Jammu and Kashmir.

NC MLA, Spokesperson

police station.

According to the complaint, the PSO was allegedly beaten up by the MLA and the spokesperson following an altercation, the officials said.

The PSO alleged he sustained injuries in the assault, following which he lodged a complaint. (Agencies)

J&K Marks First

across Koot and Kapran villages in Dooru tehsil, covers an area of 22.43 hectares and has estimated limestone reserves of 4.75 million tonnes.

Exploration in the Koot-Kapran tract has reached the G-4 stage, providing baseline geological information for further detailed exploration and development.

The Wantrag limestone block covers 5.36 hectares and has estimated limestone resources of 10.853 million tonnes. Prospecting in the area has reached the G-3 stage, with 159 metres of drilling carried out as part of the geological assessment.

The Ministry of Mines said the auction of the two limestone blocks is expected to attract investment and generate economic activity in the Union Territory.

"As mining and associated activities develop, they are expected to generate a large number of direct and indirect employment opportunities and create avenues for local businesses, entrepreneurs, service

providers and allied industries," the ministry said.

The development is also expected to strengthen allied industrial value chains and increase local participation in activities linked to mineral exploration, extraction, transportation and processing.

The ministry said development of the mineral sector would contribute to greater value creation from Jammu and Kashmir's mineral resources and provide new opportunities for local businesses and entrepreneurs.

The auction marks a new phase in the organised development of Jammu and Kashmir's mineral resources, with the administration seeking to bring resource utilisation under a structured and competitive framework.

The Ministry of Mines said it would continue working with the Jammu and Kashmir Government to ensure the transparent, sustainable and responsible development of the region's mineral reserves.

Vande Bharat Hits

of the USBRL project, which aims to provide seamless rail connectivity between the Kashmir Valley and the rest of the country.

The route passes through the rugged terrain of the Pir Panjal and lower Himalayan ranges, involving deep valleys, steep slopes, major rivers and complex geological formations.

The construction involved advanced engineering techniques, including long tunnels and high-level bridges. The section has 33 tunnels and includes the Chenab Railway Bridge near Reasi, described as the world's highest railway bridge, and the Anji Khad Railway Bridge, India's first cable-stayed railway bridge.

Prime Minister Narendra Modi flagged off the Katra-Srinagar Vande Bharat Express from Shri Mata Vaishno Devi Katra on June 6, 2025.

CJP Warns Of

After "deletion of voters", the BJP won states which it had not won even when the Narendra Modi wave was at its peak, Dipke alleged.

"If Gyanesh Kumar does not resign, the Gen Z of the entire nation will go to Delhi. There will be Jantar Mantar 2.0," Dipke said as he gave a call for "Chalo Delhi".

"The government is so incompetent that we have to protest again in two months (after the Jantar Mantar protest over the NEET paper leak)," the CJP founder said.

Referring to the proposal for simultaneous elections, he claimed that the real objective of the ruling Bharatiya Janata Party was "One Nation, One Election, One Party".

The CJP chose Maharashtra to start its protest against CEC Kumar because the alleged irregularities started from the state, Dipke said.

He claimed that 13 crore voters have been deleted in two years. In 2024, there were 97 crore registered voters and the gap between the victory between the NDA and INDIA grouping was just 2 per cent in 2024 Lok Sabha polls, he said.

Kumar was appointed 15 days before the polls to increase the gap, Dipke alleged.

Also in 2024, the BJP "stole" the

Maharashtra assembly elections as 40 lakh voters were added to the electoral rolls, he claimed.

In Delhi, 40,000 voters were deleted in AAP leader Arvind Kejriwal's assembly constituency and he lost by 4,000 votes, Dipke said.

In Tamil Nadu, nearly one lakh voters got deleted from former chief minister M K Stalin's constituency and he lost by 10,000 votes while Mamata Banerjee lost similarly in West Bengal after voters in her constituency were deleted, the CJP leader alleged.

BJP supporters argue that the opposition won in Telangana, Karnataka and Jharkhand (and hence the elections are fair), but "when the match is fixed, not all balls are no-balls and not all catches are dropped," Dipke said.

He also accused the BJP of trying to finish off regional parties, starting with the Shiv Sena and NCP in Maharashtra, and dubbed the Eknath Shinde-led Shiv Sena a "shell company".

Police had denied permission for the the CJP's protest at Shivaji Park in central Mumbai. However, youths turned up in large numbers. Dipke had dared Maharashtra Chief Minister Devendra Fadnavis to put him and other protestors behind bars.

Veteran actors Naseeruddin Shah and Shabana Azmi, filmmakers Vishal Bhardwaj and Hansal Mehta, singer-music director Vishal Dadlani, and Tushar Gandhi, great-grandson of Mahatma Gandhi, were present at the protest.

Despite opposition by a section of residents of Shivaji Park and heavy security deployment extending up to Dadar station, protesters filled the locality with slogans, Gandhian quotes, and signs calling for Kumar's immediate resignation.

Waving tricolours and displaying posters with messages such as "Gyanu, Tujha Democracy Var Bharosa Nay Kay?", "Gyanesh BRO, JUST RESIGN" and "Gaddaar Gyaanu Must Go", activists from groups such as Student Federation of India (SFI) and youngsters thronged the area.

Demonstrators also brought unconventional props. Manish Mandal, a student, sported jewelry fashioned from 'Melody' chocolate wrappers while holding a banner with "Fraud detergent powder" written in Devanagari script.

Groups affiliated with AISF from Pune added rhythm to the demonstration by playing musical instruments.

Coinciding with Mahatma Gandhi's birth anniversary, the protest stage featured quotations on non-violence and simplicity alongside tributes to Babasaheb Ambedkar.

Songs from the film "Rang De Basanti", and A R Rehman's Vande Mataram were also played.

The Shiv Sena (UBT) had extended support to the CJP's agitation. Its local MLA Mahesh Sawant said party leader Aaditya Thackeray did not remain present as he was unwell.

CJP leader Saurav Das targeted Delhi Police over detention of protesters at Jantar Mantar.

"Delhi Police has again resorted to brutality. We warn Delhi Police to improve or we will improve you," Das said.

CS Directs DCs to Certify 100% Coverage of Eligible Farmers under AgriStack

Reviews district-wise progress of land records digitisation across J&K

Observer News Service

SRINAGAR: Chief Secretary, Atal Dulloo on Friday chaired a comprehensive review meeting to assess the progress of digitisation of land records and implementation of AgriStack across Jammu and Kashmir.

The meeting has a particular focus on district-wise progress in creation of Farmer IDs, generation of Unique Land Parcel Identification Numbers (ULPINs), digitisation and integration of cadastral maps through Bhunaksha and proposed integration of digitised land records with RBI's Unified Lending Interface (ULI).

The meeting besides ACS, Finance; was attended by Secretary, Revenue; Divisional Commissioner, Jammu/Kashmir; Deputy Commissioners; Managing Director, AgriStack; Director, Land Records; representatives of RBI, BISAG-N and NIC besides other concerned officers.

Taking a detailed district-wise appraisal of each component separately, the Chief Secretary enquired from Deputy Commissioners about the reasons for



delays and the gaps between targets and achievements.

He directed the district administrations to ensure that no eligible farmer is left out of AgriStack or Farmer ID registration, and asked them to furnish certificates to this effect after due verification.

The Chief Secretary also directed the Deputy Commissioners to fix responsibility wherever undue delays are observed, besides conducting frequent field inspections to monitor both progress and quality. He further enjoined upon them to

depute other concerned officers to undertake regular field inspections and submit weekly progress reports.

ACS Finance, Shailendra Kumar, stressed the need to prioritise farmers available in villages, observing that they constitute the overwhelming majority of the target population, while exceptional cases of absentees could be taken up subsequently.

He advised against generalising exceptions and urged the field agencies to make every effort to complete AgriStack work without further delay.

The ACS Finance also asked Deputy Commissioners to formulate specific operational guidelines for different situations encountered by field functionaries, so that procedural issues do not become a reason for delaying the work.

On this occasion the Secretary, Revenue, Kumar Rajeev Ranjan, gave out instant solutions to the issues raised by DCs. He also took this occasion to apprise the meeting that J&K has achieved 100 per cent digitisation coverage across its foundational land administrative units, covering all

20 districts, 207 tehsils and 6,818 villages.

As many as 68,62,596 land parcels (Khasras) have been digitised. The backlog of 6,47,274 mutations has also been incorporated across all 20 districts, leaving no pending backlog.

Moreover it was given out that the Department has received 14,48,748 grievances, of which 14,38,571 were non-quasi-judicial. As many as 14,27,576 non-quasi-judicial grievances have been resolved.

The meeting was informed that against a base of 71,04,737 Khasras across 6,818 villages, data entry for AgriStack has progressed substantially, with 65,77,944 Khasras submitted, 58,17,502 verified and 57,30,681 approved, representing 80.7 per cent of the total base.

In Jammu Division, 2,770 out of 3,750 villages have been fully approved, with an overall Khasra approval rate of 80.8 per cent. Similarly in Kashmir Division, 1,945 out of 3,068 villages have been fully approved, with an overall Khasra approval rate of 80.5 per cent.

Vocational Trainers' Protest Enters Day 9

Agencies

SRINAGAR: As vocational trainers in Jammu and Kashmir continued their protest for the ninth consecutive day on Friday, a vocational trainer from Kupwara, Bashir Ahmad Gojri, died after suffering a cardiac arrest.

Mohammad Asif, a vocational trainer told KNO that Gojri was working at a Government High School in Kupwara and had been under considerable stress and frustration over the uncertainty surrounding the future of vocational trainers.

"Bashir Sahib had an elderly mother at home who was dependent on medicines. He leaves behind three very young children, two daughters and a son and a sister who is yet to be married. The family was dependent on his income," Asif said at the protest site at Polo Ground, Srinagar.

He said colleagues received the news on Thursday late evening that Gojri had suffered a cardiac arrest.

Asif said the prolonged uncertainty over employment had been a source of worry for vocational trainers and their families, adding that Gojri's death had come at a time when trainers were pressing the government to address their long-pending concerns.

The trainers continued their protest at Polo Ground



on Friday, demanding job security, a comprehensive service and employment policy and an end to the involvement of private outsourcing companies in vocational education.

The core issue behind the agitation is the employment arrangement under which vocational trainers working in government schools are engaged through Vocational Training Providers (VTPs), rather than through a direct and clearly defined government employment framework.

Notably, trainers have been seeking an end to the outsourcing system, continuity of their services and a formal policy governing their employment. The trainers say they have been providing vocational education in government schools for years but continue to face uncertainty over their jobs, service conditions and future.

"We demand to include a comprehensive job policy, protection and continuity of services, resolution of service-related concerns

and removal of the private VTP arrangement," said a protesting trainer.

Another protesting trainer, Jeelani, said the prolonged uncertainty had affected vocational trainers and their families. "We have families to support and responsibilities at home. After over 11 years of service, we want clarity about our jobs and our future," he said.

The trainers said they have repeatedly approached the authorities with their demands and are seeking a concrete policy rather than continued uncertainty.

It is important to mention here that, the vocational education programme was introduced in government schools in J&K under the Samagra Shiksha framework in 2016, with implementation involving private Vocational Training Providers. Trainers have since repeatedly raised concerns over the employment structure and sought a direct and stable framework for their services—(KNO)

Amazon Great Indian Festival 2026 to Begin October 8, Major Deals Announced

Observer News Service

Amazon's Great Indian Festival 2026 will begin on October 8, offering customers festive discounts across smartphones, electronics, fashion, beauty, home appliances, groceries and other categories.

The e-commerce giant said customers can avail themselves of up to 80 percent discounts on smartphones, laptops, tablets, consumer electronics and appliances, besides deals across more than 1,500 fashion and beauty brands. Discounts of up to 70 percent will also be available on books and everyday essentials.

Customers using SBI credit and debit cards or credit card EMI will be eligible for a 10 percent instant discount, while Amazon Pay ICICI Bank Credit Card users can earn unlimited 5 percent cashback. Prime members will also receive ad-



ditional benefits, including extra cashback on lakhs of products.

Amazon said early deals are already live, allowing shoppers to access selected offers ahead of the main sale. The company is also highlighting brands including Samsung, Apple, Sony, LG, Xiaomi, Nike and L'Oréal Paris as part of the festive campaign.

The company said its quick-commerce service, Amazon Now, has expanded to more than 120 cities, offering delivery of thousands of products within minutes. Its festive shopping experience will also feature AI-powered tools such as Rufus

and Lens AI, enabling customers to compare products, check price histories, receive personalised recommendations and set deal alerts.

Amazon Pay is offering additional festive benefits, including savings on flights, hotels and bus bookings. Customers can also explore deals through Amazon Bazaar, Amazon Launchpad, Amazon Karigar and Saheli, Amazon Local Shops and small-business sellers.

Amazon said the festival will feature millions of products and special offers across categories, giving customers a wide range of options for festive shopping.

KIIT Ranked 4th Best University in India

Observer News Service

BHUBANESWAR: KIIT Deemed to be University (KIIT-DU) has once again demonstrated its academic excellence by securing the 4th position among universities in India and the top position in eastern India in the Times Higher Education (THE) World University Rankings 2027, released today.

The University has moved up one place in the national rankings from last year. In the global rankings, KIIT-DU has been placed in the 501-550 cohort, marking a significant improvement over the previous year despite increased participation from institutions worldwide.

The latest ranking reflects broad-based institutional growth, with notable gains in teaching quality, alongside



stronger performance in research environment, industry engagement and international outlook.

KIIT-DU's upward movement, in a competitive global landscape, reflects its sustained institutional strategies, robust quality assurance frameworks, and continued investment in infrastructure and academic development.

This milestone reflects the vision of KIIT's leadership, the dedication of its faculty, the achievements of its researchers, and the

vibrant global community of its students.

Expressing happiness over the achievement, Dr. Achyuta Samanta, Founder of KIIT and KISS, said, "Every state aspires to have a university ranked among the top universities globally. I am happy that KIIT, despite being a young university in comparison to others, has been placed among the world's top premier universities. This accomplishment is a source of pride for Odisha specifically and for India as a whole."

6.8 Kg Banned Polythene Seized During Checking Drive in Baramulla

Agencies

BARAMULLA: Baramulla Police conducted a polythene checking drive at Wagoora Market, seizing 6.8 kilograms of banned polythene and imposing a fine of Rs 5,300, officials said.

An additional fine of Rs 200 was also imposed under the Cigarettes and Other Tobacco Products Act (COTPA) during the enforcement drive.

The action assumes significance as indiscriminate use and disposal of polythene contributes to plastic pollution, with discarded plastic remaining in the environment for prolonged periods and posing risks to land and aquatic ecosystems.

The Central Pollution Control Board has noted that mismanaged plastic waste, particularly single-use plastic, has emerged as a major environmental

challenge and has adverse impacts on terrestrial and aquatic ecosystems.

Polythene bags can also enter drains and water channels, contributing to blockages and litter accumulation, while their improper disposal and burning can create further environmental and health concerns. CPCB has emphasised reducing dependence on use-and-throw plastics and promoting reusable alternatives.

Wildlife Department Asks Birdwatchers Not to Share Exact Locations of Migratory Birds

SRINAGAR: As Wildlife Week begins and the migratory bird season approaches, the Jammu and Kashmir Wildlife Protection Department has urged birdwatchers, wildlife photographers and visitors to avoid sharing exact locations, GPS coordinates and other identifiable details of migratory bird congregations on social media.

The advisory was issued by the Office of the Range Officer, Lakes Range Hokarsar, Wetlands Division, Srinagar, amid expectations of large congregations of migratory and resident birds across Kashmir's wetland habitats.

The department said responsible wildlife photography and social-media posts can help create awareness about Kashmir's avian diversity and the ecological importance of wetlands. However, it cautioned that publicly available location information could inadvertently expose vulnerable bird concentrations and sensitive habitats to poachers, hunters and others involved in illegal wildlife activities.

The advisory comes as Kashmir's wetlands prepare for the seasonal arrival of migratory birds, which use the region's wetland network as feeding and resting grounds during their seasonal movements.

The department has appealed to visitors and wildlife enthusiasts to exercise caution while documenting and sharing sightings, particularly where posts could reveal the precise location of large bird congregations.

The warning highlights the growing importance of responsible wildlife tourism and photography, particularly at sensitive wetland habitats where increased public attention can help conservation but unrestricted location-sharing may also create risks. (Observer News Service)

Hangul Population Rises from 127 in 2008 to 323

SRINAGAR: The population of Jammu and Kashmir's iconic Hangul has risen to 323 according to the 2025 census, continuing an upward trend from 289 recorded in 2023 and 127 in 2008, even as conservation efforts increasingly focus on protecting the species' wider habitat and movement corridors.

The latest population figure was presented during the sixth meeting of the J&K Wildlife Board in December 2025, where officials also briefed the board on efforts to operationalise the Hangul Breeding Centre at Tral.

The increase represents a significant change from the population levels recorded in the earlier censuses and comes after years of conservation and protection measures focused particularly on the Dachigam landscape and adjoining habitats.

However, conservation organisations working with the Wildlife Department have highlighted that the long-term protection of Hangul depends not only on population numbers but also on maintaining connectivity between fragmented habitats.

The Wildlife Trust of India's Hangul Recovery Project has identified potential Hangul presence in parts of Kupwara, Bandipora, Ganderbal, Pulwama and Anantnag and mapped corridors used by the species to move in and out of Dachigam National Park.

According to the project, some of these corridors are fragmented and Hangul also uses areas outside protected areas during winter. Such movements bring the species into landscapes involving multiple landowners and human activity, making coordination with local communities and authorities important for securing safe passage.

The conservation initiative is therefore focused on identifying threats, restoring connectivity and involving communities and government agencies in protecting the species across its wider range. [KNT]

Kargil Publishes Final Panchayat Electoral Rolls for 548 Panch Constituencies

SRINAGAR: The Office of the Electoral Registration Officer, Kargil, has notified the final publication of Panchayat Electoral Rolls, 2026, covering all 548 Panch Constituencies falling under 70 Panchayat Halqas across the district's 10 blocks.

According to a notice issued by the Electoral Registration Officer and Assistant Commissioner Revenue, Kargil, the lists of amendments to the draft Panchayat Electoral Rolls have been prepared with reference to Oct 1, 2026, as the qualifying date in accordance with the J&K Panchayati Raj Rules, 1996.

Copies of the final rolls, along with the lists of amendments, have been made available for public inspection during office hours at the offices of Assistant Electoral Registration Officers at all block headquarters, all Panchayat Halqas in the respective blocks and with the concerned Panchayat Electoral Booth Officers of the respective Panchayat Halqas.

The notice, dated Oct 1, was issued by Jahangeer Akhoun, JKAS, Electoral Registration Officer (Assistant Commissioner Revenue), Kargil, for public information and inspection of the final electoral rolls. (Observer News Service)

Apple Orchard Vandalized in Shopian's Kiloora, Family Seeks Action

SRINAGAR: An apple orchard in Kiloora area of Shopian district was allegedly vandalized by unidentified miscreants during the night, with several fruit-bearing trees reportedly felled, causing significant financial losses to the affected family.

According to the family, several apple trees carrying ripe fruit were deliberately damaged and felled with long sticks under the cover of darkness. The incident has caused distress to the family, particularly as the apple harvesting season is currently underway.

The orchard is owned by Zahoor Ahmad, a resident of Kiloora, according to the family, which has urged the authorities to launch an immediate investigation into the incident and identify those responsible.

The family has also sought strict legal action against the perpetrators, saying the damage to fruit-bearing trees has resulted in financial loss at a time when growers are engaged in harvesting their produce. [KNT]

Car Falls Into River on Zanskar Road, Three Reported Missing

KARGIL: Three persons are reported missing after an Alto car skidded off the road and fell into a river in the Zanskar area of Kargil district, according to preliminary information.

A joint search and rescue operation has been launched by teams of the Ladakh Police, Army and local volunteers to trace the missing occupants.

Rescue personnel are searching the river and surrounding areas as efforts continue to locate the persons reported missing in the accident.

The identities of the occupants and the circumstances leading to the accident were not immediately known. Further details are awaited. [KNT]

Education Must Prepare Children for Life: Sakina Itoo

Agencies

SRINAGAR : Education Minister Sakina Itoo on Friday said the education system must prepare children not merely to secure jobs or score good marks in examinations, but to face life with confidence, responsibility, practical knowledge and strong values.

Addressing a gathering at the SKICC here in connection with the Gandhi Jayanti commemorative event, minister Itoo as per KNS said the occasion was not merely about remembering a great personality but also an opportunity to reflect on how Gandhi's principles could be strengthened in contemporary life.

She said Gandhi's philosophy was not limited to knowledge from books, but was aimed at creating responsible human beings who could improve their character, thinking and conduct.

In today's rapidly changing world, it is not enough to simply impart informa-



tion to our children. We have to develop practical knowledge, critical thinking and creativity in them, she said.

The Minister said new technologies and changing circumstances were creating new opportunities as well as challenges, making it necessary for students to learn how to understand situations, ask questions, solve problems and acquire new skills.

She said the objective of education should not be restricted to helping students obtain a job, but should also be to develop confidence, responsibility and social consciousness. We have to prepare a gen-

eration that can adapt itself to changing circumstances and continuously improve, she said.

Minister Itoo said educational institutions should provide greater exposure to practical subjects and skills, particularly in areas such as agriculture, health, technology and other fields connected with everyday life and employment opportunities.

She said Jammu and Kashmir has a rich tradition in art, literature, culture and spirituality, and modern education must be integrated with technology and new skills while ensuring that students continue to respect their cultural roots and traditions.

The Minister stressed that Gandhi's message of mutual respect and tolerance must also become part of education, saying schools should be spaces where children learn to listen to one another and understand that a difference of opinion does not mean enmity.



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