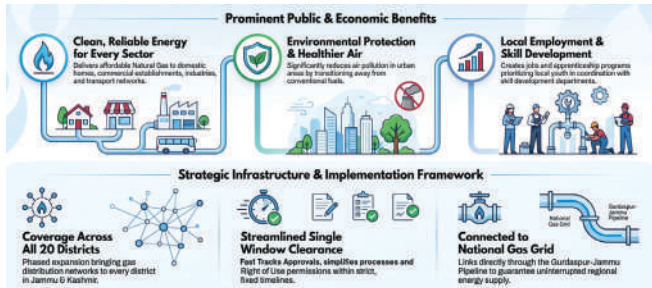


J&K Rolls Out City Gas Policy

All 20 districts to get wider access to CNG, PNG



Observer News Service

Srinagar: The Jammu and Kashmir government has notified the City Gas Distribution (CGD) Policy, 2026, aimed at expanding access to Piped Natural Gas (PNG) and Compressed Natural Gas (CNG) across all 20 districts of the Union Territory.

Approved by the Council of Ministers, the policy seeks to create a clear, investor-friendly and time-bound framework for expanding the use of natural gas among households, commercial establishments, industries and the transport sector.

The framework provides for coverage across all 20 districts, along with single-window and time-bound clearances for gas distribution projects. It also streamlines procedures for setting up CNG stations and introduces standardised Right of Way (RoW) norms.

Major industrial estates, including those in Kathua, Samba and Pulwama, will be prioritised for gas connectivity under

the policy.

According to the government, the policy is expected to improve access to safe, affordable and cleaner energy while helping reduce fuel costs and strengthen the competitiveness of industries in the Union Territory.

The government also expects the expansion of the city gas network to attract green investments and generate opportunities for employment, apprenticeships and skill development. Chief Minister Omar Abdullah congratulated Food, Civil Supplies and Consumer Affairs Minister Satish Sharma and the department for notifying the policy.

He said the Jammu and Kashmir City Gas Distribution (CGD) Policy 2026 is a major step towards expanding access to clean fuel, strengthening industrial competitiveness and modernising the energy infrastructure in the Union Territory.

"The City Gas Distribution Policy will help | [More on P6](#)

Rail Connectivity Boosting J&K Tourism, Horticulture & Industry: LG

Interacts with delegation of media representatives from Mumbai

Observer News Service

Srinagar: Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha on Thursday said the expansion of railway infrastructure in Jammu and Kashmir is giving a boost to tourism, horticulture and industrial sectors in the Union Territory.

Sinha made the remarks while interacting with a delegation of media representatives from Mumbai at Lok Bhavan here.

Highlighting infrastructure modernisation in J&K, the LG said the realisation of rail



connectivity from Kashmir to Kanyakumari marked a significant milestone in the region's development.

He said improved railway infrastructure was

contributing to growth across tourism, horticulture, industry and other sectors of the economy.

Sinha also stressed the importance of strengthening connectivity in border areas, saying it was vital for both local economic development and national security.

The Mumbai-based media delegation, accompanied by Western Railway Chief Public Relations Officer Vineet Abhishek and senior railway officials, is on a four-day visit to Jammu and Kashmir to study the | [More on P6](#)

Hailstorms, Rain & Gusty Winds Hit Kashmir, Crops Damaged

Bandipora worst hit; MeT forecasts another spell of rain over next 48 hours

Observer News Service

Srinagar: Torrential rains accompanied by hailstorms, gusty winds and thunderstorms lashed several parts of Kashmir on Thursday evening, damaging standing crops and orchards and disrupting normal life in some areas.

Bandipora in north Kashmir was among the worst-affected areas, with residents describing the hailstorm as unusually intense. Hailstones reportedly covered roads and fields within minutes, while strong winds added to concerns among farmers dependent on standing

crops and fruit orchards.

"It was terrible. The hailstones came down heavily and within minutes the ground was covered with hail," said Fayaz Ahmad, a resident of Bandipora.

Heavy hail and strong winds were also reported from parts of Ganderbal, Baramulla and Kupwara. In Kupwara, hail and heavy rain affected paddy fields and apple orchards, while crop damage was also reported from some areas of Ganderbal.

Traffic movement was affected in some areas during the hailstorm, while rainfall was reported from | [More on P6](#)

India Advises Nationals In Saudi To Stay Alert

Press Trust Of India

New Delhi: India on Thursday advised its nationals in Saudi Arabia to remain alert and vigilant amid an evolving security situation in the Gulf kingdom, asking them to stay indoors as necessary and follow instructions issued by local authorities through official channels.

The advisory by the Indian Embassy in Riyadh came amid a recent escalation in hostilities involving Saudi Arabia and the Iran-backed Houthis group.

In the last few weeks, Houthis have been targeting Saudi border regions, energy facilities, and civilian infrastructure using armed drones and missiles.

"In view of the current situation, all Indian nationals in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia are advised to remain alert and vigilant, stay indoors as necessary, and follow the instructions issued | [More on P6](#)



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2

Early Disease Detection Requires Quality Procedures, Systematic Exams: Experts

Press Trust Of India

An inspection time of at least seven minutes was associated with nearly 3.4 times higher detection of gastric cancers and dysplasia, highlighting how systematic examination, adequate mucosal visualisation and documentation can influence early identification of disease, experts at the World Congress of Gastroenterology (WCOG) 2026 said.

Gastrointestinal cancers account for about a quarter of all cancer cases and nearly a third of cancer deaths globally, with the burden projected to almost double by 2050, they said.

The issue of early detection, along with advances in endoscopy, artificial intelligence and minimally invasive treatment, featured prominently at the three-day congress, which concluded here on Saturday.

One of the most striking findings discussed at the congress was the association between the quality and duration of upper gastrointestinal endoscopy and cancer detection.

Spending at least seven minutes inspecting the upper gastrointestinal tract during endoscopy was associated with about 3.4 times higher detection of gastric cancers and dysplasia.

Dr Pramod Garg, head of the department of gastroenterology and human nutrition at AIIMS Delhi, said, "Earlier detection depends on both identifying people at risk and ensuring that diagnostic procedures are performed to the highest possible standard. High-quality endoscopy can create an important opportunity to identify disease at a stage when intervention can make a greater



difference."

India's changing cancer profile also featured prominently, with growing attention around early-onset colorectal cancer and the factors that may be contributing to its rise, Garg, who is also president of Indian Society of Gastroenterology and co-chair of the steering committee, WCOG 2026, said.

Research discussed at WCOG 2026 examined the potential roles of genetics, environmental exposures and the gut microbiome, raising important questions around how prevention and diagnostic strategies need to evolve as colorectal cancer affects younger populations.

Gallbladder cancer added another distinctly India-relevant dimension to the cancer conversation. Discussions examined the progression from gallstones and chronic inflammation to malignancy, including the potential contribution of large or high-risk gallstones, chronic infections and

environmental exposures.

Greater awareness of suspicious gallbladder wall changes, appropriate imaging and timely multidisciplinary evaluation could help address delays in diagnosis.

The changing burden of liver disease was another major area of focus, with non-invasive approaches to identifying people at risk of metabolic and alcohol-related liver disease gaining importance. Discussions also reflected the changing causes of liver cancer in India, with metabolic factors becoming increasingly relevant alongside infectious causes.

Artificial intelligence featured across gastrointestinal and liver medicine, with applications spanning prediction, diagnosis and clinical decision-making. The conversation is increasingly moving from the potential of AI to the evidence required for its clinical use, with data quality, external validation, explainability, accountability and integration into clinical workflows

emerging as critical considerations.

Dr Govind Makharia, professor, department of gastroenterology and human nutrition at AIIMS Delhi and Chairman, Local Organising Committee, WCOG 2026, said, "AI has the potential to strengthen diagnosis and decision-making across gastroenterology, while advanced endoscopy is expanding what can be treated through minimally invasive approaches. The next step is ensuring that these technologies are supported by robust evidence and integrated responsibly into clinical practice."

The prevention conversation extended beyond cancer itself. H pylori, which affects an estimated 40 per cent of the global population, remains an important risk factor in the pathway towards gastric atrophy and gastric cancer, placing greater emphasis on early testing, eradication and confirmation of successful treatment. Dr Barry Marshall, Nobel Laureate in Physiology or Medicine and a senior gastroenterologist, said, "H pylori is much more than an ulcer organism. If the infection persists for many years, it can cause chronic inflammation in the stomach and increase the risk of gastric cancer. That gives us an opportunity because this is a potentially preventable cause of cancer."

Marshall also highlighted the importance of identifying infected individuals early and ensuring that eradication has been successful, particularly as antibiotic resistance increasingly complicates treatment. His comments come amid growing international attention around H. pylori "screen-and-treat" strategies for gastric cancer prevention.

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The Jammu And Kashmir Board Of School Education

New Campus Bemina Srinagar

I have passed/appeared in Secondary School Examination (Class- 10th)under Roll No. 107034056 Session: Annual Regular Year 2025 through the Jammu and Kashmir Board of School Education. The error has been committed by the parent against my Mother's name as Nargis Instead of Nargis Ara



Now, I have applied for correction/rectification of error in the Jammu and Kashmir Board of School Education. New Campus Bemina. Srinagar, if any person has any objection in this regard, may file the same in the office of the Assistant Secretary, Certificates-KD within seven days from the date of Publication of this notice, after the expiry of said period no objection will be entertained.

Name: Muhammad Zeeaan Darzi
Father's name: Takhmeen Ahmad Darzi
Mother's Name: Nargis Ara

DOB: 24-12-2008
Residence: Mohalla Qazi Hamam Baramulla
Mobile no: 9419963773 / 700649851

inf

PUBLIC NOTICE

This is to inform the general public that the name of the consumer/owner against Consumer No. 0213040021338 has been recorded in the Power Agreement as Ali Mohd Wani, whereas his correct and actual name is Ghulam Ali Wani S/o Abdul Rahim Wani, R/o Gund Khaja Qasim.

The concerned department/authorities are requested to kindly correct the name in the Power Agreement and update their official records from Ali Mohd Wani to Ghulam Ali Wani S/o Abdul Rahim Wani.

Any person having any objection in this regard may submit the same to the concerned office within 7 days from the date of publication of this notice. No objection shall be entertained thereafter.

Ghulam Ali Wani
S/o Abdul Rahim Wani
R/o Gund Khaja Qasim
Consumer No.: 0213040021338

bmj

PUBLIC NOTICE

I, Kaiser Ashraf Mir S/o Mohammad Ashraf Mir, R/o Aripanthan, Tehsil Beerwah, District Budgam, have completed the MPPHW Diploma Course through SAM College of Para Medical Sciences, Beerwah, Session 2019-20, under Diploma No. 10583 and Examination Roll No. MM-11/81959.

I have lost/misplaced my Marks Card, Diploma Certificate, Character/Provisional Certificate and Experience Certificate. I intend to obtain duplicate copies of the said certificates from the concerned authorities.

Any person having any objection to the issuance of duplicate certificates in my favour may submit the same before the concerned authorities within 7 days from the date of publication of this notice. No objection shall be entertained thereafter.

Kaiser Ashraf Mir
S/o Mohammad Ashraf Mir
R/o Aripanthan, Tehsil Beerwah, District Budgam

bmj

PUBLIC NOTICE

I, Shubeena Sidiqi, D/O Mohd Sidiqi, R/O Lal Bazar, Molvi Stop, Srinagar, do hereby notify that in my account records with J&K Bank Branch Lal Bazar (Account No: 1501040100014002), my name is incorrectly recorded as Shubeena Sidiqi, D/o Mohammad Sidiqi Sofi R/o Bul Bul Bagh, Barzalla Srinagar, while as my correct details are **SHUBEENA SDIQI, D/O MOHD SIDIQI**, and my correct current residential address is **LAL BAZAR, MOLVI STOP, SRINAGAR**. Now the same is to be corrected. Objections, if any, may be conveyed to the Branch Manager, J&K Bank Lal Bazar, within 7 days of this publication.

ABASS ADVI

**SHUBEENA SDIQI, D/O MOHD SIDIQI
R/O LAL BAZAR, MOLVI STOP, SRINAGAR**

The Jammu And Kashmir Board Of School Education

Sub Office Baramulla

I have passed/appeared in Secondary School Examination (Class- 10th) under Roll No. 3136202 Session: Annual Regular Year 2019 through the Jammu and Kashmir Board of School Education. The error has been committed by the parent against my Father's name as Rafiq Ahmad Ganie Instead of Rafiq Ahmad Ganaie



Now, I have applied for correction/rectification of error in the Jammu and Kashmir Board of School Education. New Campus Bemina. Srinagar, if any person has any objection in this regard, may file the same in the office of the Assistant Secretary, Certificates-KD within seven days from the date of Publication of this notice, after the expiry of said period no objection will be entertained.

Name: Muntazir Rafiq
Father's name: Rafiq Ahmad Ganaie
Mother's Name: Gulshan
DOB: 09-05-2005
Residence: Malik Bagh Pattan
Mobile no: 6006758975

fko

Govt. of Union Territory of Jammu & Kashmir							
OFFICE OF THE EXECUTIVE ENGINEER R&B DIVISION RAJBAGH SRINAGAR.							
E-NIT No.96 /R&B/RAJ/ of 2026-27 issued under Endorsement No: 8571-81 Dated: 08.10.2026.							
For and on behalf of the Lt. Governor of Union Territory of Jammu & Kashmir, e-tenders (in single cover system) are invited on Percentage (%age) basis from approved and eligible Contractors registered with the J&K Govt., CPWD, Railways, and/or other State/ Central Governments for the following works under Pothole Program 2026-27.							
S.No	Name of Work	Base Cost Excl. GST ₹ in Lacs	TOTAL / Adv. Cost (Base Cost + GST) ₹ in Lacs	Cost of Tender Document	EMD	Time of Completion	Class of Contractor/ Agency
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
1	Repair and Filling of Potholes by way of Macadamization from Jahangir Chowk to Airport Road	16.95	20.00	₹ 800/-	₹ 4000/-	07 Days	BEE/CEE
2	Repair and Filling of Potholes by way of Macadamization from Rambagh to Railway Bridge Mochuwa.	16.95	20.00	₹ 800/-	₹ 4000/-	07 Days	BEE/CEE
3	Repair and Filling of Potholes by way of Macadamization from Natipora to Nowgam.	16.95	20.00	₹ 800/-	₹ 4000/-	07 Days	BEE/CEE
4.	Repair and Filling of Potholes by way of Macadamization from Main Chowk Sanat Nagar to Rangreth.	16.95	20.00	₹ 800/-	₹ 4000/-	07 Days	BEE/CEE
5.	Repair and Filling of Potholes by way of Macadamization from Yayil to Wanabal Road.	16.95	20.00	₹ 800/-	₹ 4000/-	07 Days	BEE/CEE
Position of AA No.: Accorded:- Dy. Director Planning PW(R&B) Department Civil Secretariat J&K vide Authorization No. E-7659593) Dated: 27-09-2026. Accorded vide No's.							
Position of TS No.							
1. CE (R&B) CK/TS/564 of 2026 Dated:- 07.10.2026 2. CE (R&B) CK/TS/565 of 2026 Dated:- 07.10.2026 3. CE (R&B) CK/TS/566 of 2026 Dated:- 07.10.2026 4. CE (R&B) CK/TS/567 of 2026 Dated:- 07.10.2026 5. CE (R&B) CK/TS/568 of 2026 Dated:- 07.10.2026							
Position of Funds: Budgeted / Committed.							
Major Head: Pothole Program 2026-27 (REVEX Budget)							
1. The bidding documents, which would include qualifying information, eligibility criteria, specifications/drawings, a bill of quantities (B.O.Q.), a set of contract terms and conditions, and other details, can be viewed/downloaded from the departmental website www.jktenders.gov.in on the dates listed below:							
1	Date of Issue of Tender Notice	08.10.2026.					
2	Period of downloading of bidding documents	09.10.2026 from 10:00 AM					
3	Bid submission Start Date	09.10.2026 from 10:00 AM					
4	Bid Submission End Date	15.10.2026 Up to 04:00 PM					
5	Date & time of opening of Bids (Online)	16.10.2026 at 11:30 A.M in office of the Executive Engineer, PWD (R&B) Division Rajbagh Srinagar.					
2. Bids must be accompanied with Cost of Tender document in the shape of <u>Treasury Challan under M.H-0059</u> in favour of <u>Executive Engineer, R&B Division Rajbagh, Srinagar</u> (Tender inviting Authority) (The Date of Treasury Challan & EMD should be between the date of start of bid and Bid Submission End date) pledged to <u>Executive Engineer, R&B Division Rajbagh, Srinagar</u> (Tender Receiving Authority).							
3. At the time of tendering, all bidders must upload Earnest Money/Bid Security equal to 2% of the Advertised Cost in the form of CDR/FDR/TDR/BG pledged to the Tender Receiving Authority, i.e. <u>Executive Engineer, R&B Division, Rajbagh Srinagar</u> . The Earnest Money/Bid Security of 2% will be released to the successful bidder only after submission of Performance & Additional Performance Security (wherever Applicable) and Drawal of Agreement (FORM-25).							
8. Additional Conditions for Macadam Tender (For Non-HMPO)							
In case the prospective bidders bidding for Macadam Work does not own or possess a Hot Mix Plant (HMP), such bidders shall be considered eligible, subject to the following conditions;							
1. Bidder shall mandatorily upload a duly executed Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with the Hot Mix Plant Owner (HMPO), along with valid Registration Certificate of the Plant.							
2. In addition to the Prime Contractor, the HMPO shall independently upload the following documents:							
a) Valid Enlistment Certificate / HMPO Registration Certificate.							
b) GST Registration Certificate.							
c) Latest GST Clearance in Form GSTR-3B.							
d) Details of GST-linked Bank Account.							
3. The Bid Security (Earnest Money Deposit) amounting to 2% of the bid value shall be submitted jointly by the Prime Contractor and the HMPO, with each party contributing an equal share of 1%.							
4. The Performance Security, including any Additional Performance Security as may be applicable under the provisions of the NIT, shall be furnished jointly by the Prime Contractor and the HMPO, with each party bearing an equal proportion of 50%, and shall remain binding on both parties for due and faithful performance of the Contract.							
5. Both the Prime Contractor and the HMPO shall be jointly responsible for the quality of execution and strict adherence to all contractual obligations. All contractual liabilities, including but not limited to blacklisting, debarment, forfeiture of Performance Security, and other punitive actions, shall be concurrently enforceable against both parties in the event of failure to rectify any defects or damages arising during execution or within the Defect Liability Period (DLP).							
6. The HMPO shall enter into MoU with only one Prime Contractor. The "One HMPO – One Bidder" principle shall be strictly enforced. In the event that an HMPO is found to have executed MoUs with multiple Prime Contractors, all such bids shall be summarily declared as Non-Responsive and liable for rejection.							
These Conditions shall supersede the above conditions as laid down under Clause (1-47) as envisaged above, wherever the prospective bidders bidding for Macadam Work does not own or possess a Hot Mix Plant (HMP).							
No: 8571-81 DIPK-6539/26				Executive Engineer, (R&B) Rajbagh Division Srinagar (NM)			
Dated: 08.10.2026.							

PUBLIC NOTICE

I, MAHJABEEN AKHTER C/O: GH NABI BABA R/O: DREYGAM KHASI PORA District Budgam, is seeking for the correction with regard to my name, which has been erroneously written as "MEHJABEENA " in official records e.g., bank etc. instead of my correct name i.e. "MAHJABEENA AKHTER".and Account number is (0435040800000742) If anyone has any objection in this regard, He/She can inform the competent authority (J&K Bank Branch Kremshora) within seven days from the date of publication of this notice.

MAHJABEEN AKHTER
C/O:GH NABI BABA
R/O: DREYGAM KHASI PORA BUDGAM

rko

Subject: - Grant of Registration of the Proposed Travel unit under the name & style" M/s THE TRAVEL SOCIETY Situated at NEAR PUBLIC PARK SAIDPORA EIDGAH SRINAGAR

PUBLIC NOTICE

Whereas I Ms HUSFA IBINI BILAL D/o Mr BILAL AHMAD LALA R/o BRARI PORA NAWA KADAL SRINAGAR Kashmir intends to apply in the Department of Tourism for Registration of my proposed Travel Unit under the name and style "M/s THE TRAVEL SOCIETY situated at NEAR PUBLIC PARK SAIDPORA EIDGAH SRINAGAR, Kashmir under Tourist Trade Act 1978/82/2011-12.

Whereas, I will submit State Subject/Domicile Certificate, Qualification Certificate, Pan Card, Experience Certificate (Minimum 05 Years), Character Certificate (Police Department), Bank Statement (Minimum Balance 10000), Site Plan, Affidavit, Rent Deed duly attested by Sub-Registrar, Printing Material (Letter Head/Visiting Card), Photograph of the unit (Indoor and Outdoor) and Two Passport size photographs to the Department of Tourism as per prescribed checklist prior to Registration of my unit as an Excursion Agency / Adventure tour operator.

Now as per J&K Registration of Tourist Trade Act 1978/82/2011/12, before my case is processed for registration by the Competent Authority, the matter is hereby notified for information of general Public/Financial Institutions/Bank/ Organization, etc. for objection, if any and the same should reach to the Deputy Director Tourism Registration (e-mail Id :-ddtreg123@gmail.com) within a period of 7 days from the publication of this notice in leading local Newspaper/newspapers of the valley. No objections beyond a period of 7 days shall be entertained.

mdl

PUBLIC NOTICE

I, Nazeer Ahmad Reshi, S/o Abdul Khaliq Reshi, R/o Kanloo, Tehsil Pattan, District Baramulla, Jammu & Kashmir, do hereby notify the public that my name is wrongly mentioned as "Nazeer Ahmed Reshi" instead of "Nazeer Ahmad Reshi" and my address is wrongly recorded as "Kinloo Pattan" instead of "Kanloo Pattan" in my Passport bearing No. N5232024. My correct and actual name is "Nazeer Ahmad Reshi" and my correct address is "Kanloo Pattan" as recorded in my Aadhaar card and school records. I am applying for correction/change of name and address in my official records. Objections, if any, may be conveyed to the concerned passport authorities within 7 days.

Nazeer Ahmad Reshi
R/o Kanloo, Tehsil Pattan, District Baramulla, J&K

MAHDI THE AGENT

اطلاع عام

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Seven IUST Scientists Enter World's Top 2% List

The Awantipora university's representation has risen from one scientist in 2024 to seven this year, marking a significant increase in its international research visibility



Syed Sammar Mehdi

Srinagar: Seven scientists from the Islamic University of Science and Technology in Awantipora have been named in the 2026 World's Top 2% Scientists database, giving the varsity its highest representation in the global ranking.

The list, released Oct. 7, was compiled by researchers associated with Stanford University and Elsevier. It uses standardized

citation indicators from Scopus, including citations, authorship and co-authorship, to assess researchers' scientific impact.

The IUST scientists are Prof. Shakil Ahmad Romshoo, the university's vice chancellor; Dr. Basharat Nabi Dar and Dr. Aamir Hussain Dar from Food Technology; Dr. Shakeel Ahmad Khanday from Physics; Dr. Mohd. Younus Bhat from Mathematical Sciences; | [More on P6](#)

A Newspaper, Four Names And A Decade-Long Fraud Trail Police Arrest Kashmir Land Fraudster After Nine-Month Hunt

KO Web Desk

Srinagar: An 80-year-old former Ayurvedic doctor accused of duping land buyers in Kashmir using multiple identities and forged documents has been arrested after a nine-month hunt.

The accused, identified as Somnath Koul, allegedly operated under several names,



including Mohan Lal Dhar, Brijnath Bhat and Hadinath Dhar. Police had reportedly dubbed him the "Charles Sobhray of Kashmir" for his ability to evade investigators.

Police allege that Koul had been targeting prospective land buyers for nearly a decade by identifying properties left behind by Kashmiri Pandit migrants, The Indian Express

reported. He would allegedly pose either as the owner of the property or as an attorney authorised to facilitate its sale, using forged documents to enter into agreements before disappearing with the money.

The investigation began after a south Kashmir resident approached the Economic Offences Wing of the Crime Branch in | [More on P6](#)

J&K Govt Fixes 21-Day Deadline For 18 Building NOCs

Observer News Service

Srinagar: The Jammu and Kashmir Government has fixed a 21-day deadline for issuing 18 types of No Objection Certificates (NOCs) required for building permissions across various departments.

The timeline has been notified under the Jammu and Kashmir Public Services Guarantee Act, 2011, through an order issued by the General Administration Department on Thursday.

The notified services cover NOCs from | [More on P6](#)

Deepfakes Have Become A Big Challenge: PM Modi

Says Digital Threats Have Crossed Borders; Calls For Global Framework To Combat Cyber Fraud

KO Web Desk

Srinagar: Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Thursday called for a global mechanism to combat cyber fraud and deepfakes, saying digital threats have crossed national borders and require coordinated action by governments, technology companies, telecom operators and financial institutions.

Inaugurating the 10th edition of the India Mobile Congress (IMC) 2026, Modi urged the Global System for Mobile Communications Association (GSMA) and telecom operators worldwide to work towards mechanisms that can prevent digital fraud before it reaches users.

He said India had gained considerable experience in tackling such threats and was ready to share its learnings with other countries.

"Technology can achieve scale only when it gains people's trust," Modi said.

Highlighting the cross-border nature of cybercrime, the | [More on P6](#)



308 POCSO Cases Reported In J&K During 2024

Agencies

Srinagar: Jammu and Kashmir recorded 308 cases under the Protection of Children from Sexual Offences (POCSO) Act in 2024, with nearly three-fourths of the cases registered under provisions dealing with penetrative and aggravated penetrative sexual assault, according to National Crime Records Bureau (NCRB) data.

Of the total POCSO cases, 228 were registered under Sections 4 and 6 of the Act, which deal with penetrative sexual assault and aggravated penetrative sexual assault.

Another 65 cases were registered under Sections 8 and 10, relating to sexual assault and aggravated sexual assault.

Seven cases were registered under Section 12, concerning sexual | [More on P6](#)

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Dr. Afroz Ahmad Bisati
Guest of Honour

Mr. Danish Renu
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KIND ATTENTION RAIL PASSENGERS! IMPORTANT INFORMATION

RUN OF MORE FESTIVAL SPECIAL TRAINS-2026

In order to clear extra rush of passengers during this Festival Season, Railways have decided to run the following additional Festival Special Trains as per details given below:

04064/04063 Delhi Jn.-Gaya Jn.-Delhi Jn. Reserved Festival Spl. Exp. (6 Days in a week) Trips			
Train No. 04064	ARR.	DEP.	STATIONS
---	---	11:00	Delhi Jn.
07:15	---	---	Gaya Jn.

Days of run : 04064 Ex. Delhi Jn. from 11.10.2026 to 30.11.2026 (Except Saturday) and 04063 Ex. Gaya Jn. from 12.10.2026 to 01.12.2026 (Except Sunday)

Composition: 2 Tier AC, 3 Tier AC, Sleeper & General.

Stoppages: New Delhi, Tundla Jn., Govindpur, Subedarganj, Pt. Deendayal Upadhyaya Jn., Bhabua Road, Sasaram, Dehri-on-Son & Anugrah Narayan Road Stations.

04088/04087 New Delhi-Patna Jn.-New Delhi Reserved Festival Special Express (Daily) Trips			
Train No. 04088	ARR.	DEP.	STATIONS
---	---	15:50	New Delhi
12:45	---	---	Patna Jn.

Days of run : 04088 Ex. New Delhi from 10.10.2026 to 30.11.2026 (Daily) and 04087 Ex. Patna Jn. from 11.10.2026 to 01.12.2026 (Daily)

Composition: 2 Tier AC, 3 Tier AC, Sleeper & General.

Stoppages: Tundla Jn., Govindpur, Prayagraj Jn., Pt. Deendayal Upadhyaya Jn., Dildarnagar Jn., Buxar, Raghunathpur & Ara Jn. Stations.

01483/01484 Khadki-Hazrat Nizamuddin-Khadki Superfast Special (Bi-Weekly) Trips			
Train No. 01483	ARR.	DEP.	STATIONS
---	---	17:30	Khadki
18:10	---	---	Hazrat Nizamuddin

Days of run : 01483 Ex. Khadki from 09.10.2026 to 20.11.2026 (on every Tuesday, Friday) and 01484 Ex. Hazrat Nizamuddin from 10.10.2026 to 21.11.2026 (on every Wednesday, Saturday)

Composition: 2 Tier AC & 3 Tier AC

Stoppages: Lonavala, Kalyan Jn., Bhiwandi Road, Vasai Road, Palghar, Vapi, Valsad, Surat, Vadodara Jn., Ratlam Jn., Bhawani Mandi, Kota Jn., Sawai Madhopur & Mathura Jn. Stations.

04221/04222 Varanasi Jn.-Bathinda Jn.-Varanasi Jn. Reserved Special Express (Weekly) Trips			
Train No. 04221	ARR.	DEP.	STATIONS
---	---	20:40	Varanasi Jn.
17:00	---	---	Bathinda Jn.

Days of run : 04221 Ex. Varanasi Jn. from 11.10.2026 to 22.11.2026 (on every Sunday) and 04222 Ex. Bathinda Jn. from 12.10.2026 to 23.11.2026 (on every Monday)

Composition: 3 Tier AC Economy & General

Stoppages: Maa Belha Devi Dham Pratapgarh Jn., Rae Bareilly Jn., Utraitha Jn., Alam Nagar, Bareilly Jn., Moradabad Jn., Najibabad Jn., Saharanpur Jn., YamunanagarJagadhri, Ambala Cantt., Rajpura Jn., Patiala, Dhuri Jn., Barnala & Rampura Phul Stations.

04634/04633 Firozpur Cantt.-Purnea Jn.-Firozpur Cantt. Reserved Spl. Exp. (Weekly) Trips			
Train No. 04634	ARR.	DEP.	STATIONS
---	---	17:30	Firozpur Cantt.
03:00	---	---	Purnea Jn.

Days of run : 04634 Ex. Firozpur Cantt. from 15.10.2026 to 26.11.2026 (on every Thursday) and 04633 Ex. Purnea Jn. from 10.10.2026 to 28.11.2026 (on every Saturday)

Composition: 3 Tier AC, Sleeper & General

Stoppages: Makhu, Lohian Khas Jn., Nakodar Jn., Phillaur Jn., Dhandari Kalan, Chandigarh, Ambala Cantt., Yamunanagar Jagadhri, Saharanpur Jn., Moradabad, Bareilly, Shahjehanpur, Sitapur Jn., Gonda Jn., Gorakhpur, Chhapra, Sonpur, Hajipur Jn., Shahpur Patoree, Barauni Jn., Begusarai, Khagaria Jn., Mansi Jn., Nalgachia & Katihar Jn. Stations.

Revision in Frequency and Extension in Periodicity of Train No. 04090/04089 New Delhi-Danapur-New Delhi via Delhi Jn. Reserved Festival Special Superfast

Train No. & Name	Existing Frequency & Day of run	Revised frequency & day of run	Date w.e.f.
04090 New Delhi-Danapur Special	Friday (Weekly)	Friday, Wednesday (Bi-Weekly)	07.10.2026
04089 Danapur-New Delhi Special	Saturday (Weekly)	Saturday, Thursday (Bi-Weekly)	07.10.2026

Existing Dates	Extension Upto	Additional Trips	No. of Additional Trips
Ex. New Delhi 20.11.2026	27.11.2026	14, 21, 28.10.2026 & 04, 11, 18, 25, 27.11.2026	08 Trips
Ex. Danapur 21.11.2026	28.11.2026	15, 22, 29.10.2026 & 05, 12, 19, 26, 28.11.2026	08 Trips

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07651/07652 Jalna-Chhapra Jn.-Jalna Special Express (Weekly) Trips			
Train No. 07651	ARR.	DEP.	STATIONS
---	---	23:35	Jalna
03:15	03:25	---	Varanasi Jn.
09:35	---	---	Chhapra Jn.

Days of run : 07651 Ex. Jalna from 14.10.2026 to 28.10.2026 (on Every Wednesday) and 07652 Ex. Chhapra Jn. from 09.10.2026 to 30.10.2026 (on Every Friday)

Composition: 2 Tier AC, 3 Tier AC, Sleeper & General.

Stoppages: Chhatrapati Sambhajanagar, Nagarsool, Manmad Jn., Bhusaval Jn., Khandwa Jn.,Harda, Itarsi Jn., Pipariya, Gadawara, Narsinghpur, Jabalpur, Katni Jn., Maihar, Satna Jn., Manikpur Jn., Prayagraj Chheoki, Jaunpur Jn., Aunrihar Jn., Ghazipur City & Ballia Stations.

07621/07622 Nanded-Hazrat Nizamuddin-Nanded Special Express (Weekly) Trips			
Train No. 07621	ARR.	DEP.	STATIONS
---	---	08:45	Nanded
14:00	---	---	Hazrat Nizamuddin

Days of run : 07621 Ex. Nanded from 17.10.2026 to 28.11.2026 (on Every Saturday) and 07622 Ex. Hazrat Nizamuddin Jn. from 18.10.2026 to 29.11.2026 (on Every Sunday)

Composition: 1st AC, 2 Tier AC, 3 Tier AC, Sleeper & General.

Stoppages: Purna Jn., Parbhani Jn., Selu, Partur, Jalna, Chhatrapati Sambhajanagar, Manmad Jn., Jalgaon Jn., Bhusawal Jn., Khandwa Jn., Itarsi Jn., Bhopal Jn., Bina Jn., Virangana Lakshmbai Jhansi Jn., Gwalior Jn., Agra Cantt. & Mathura Jn. Station.

07021/07022 Charlapalli-Hazrat Nizamuddin-Charlapalli Special Express (Weekly) Trips			
Train No. 07021	ARR.	DEP.	STATIONS
---	---	19:20	Charlapalli
02:00	---	---	Hazrat Nizamuddin

Days of run : 07021 Ex. Charlapalli from 19.10.2026 to 30.11.2026 (on Every Monday) and 07022 Ex. Hazrat Nizamuddin from 21.10.2026 to 02.12.2026 (on Every Wednesday)

Composition: 2 Tier AC, 3 Tier AC, Sleeper & General.

Stoppages: Kazipet Jn., Ramgundam, Manchiryal, Bellampalli, Sirpur Kaghaznagar, Balharshah, Nagpur Jn., Itarsi Jn., Bhopal Jn., Bina Jn., Virangana Lakshmbai Jhansi Jn., Gwalior Jn., Dhaulpur, Agra Cantt., Mathura Jn., & Kosi Kalan Stations.

07023/07024 Charlapalli-Hazrat Nizamuddin-Charlapalli Special Express (Weekly) Trips			
Train No. 07023	ARR.	DEP.	STATIONS
---	---	19:45	Charlapalli
05:00	---	---	Hazrat Nizamuddin

Days of run : 07023 Ex. Charlapalli from 20.10.2026 to 24.11.2026 (on Every Tuesday) and 07024 Ex. Hazrat Nizamuddin from 22.10.2026 to 26.11.2026 (on Every Thursday)

Composition: 2 Tier AC, 3 Tier AC, Sleeper & General.

Stoppages: Kazipet Jn., Ramgundam, Manchiryal, Bellampalli, Sirpur Kaghaznagar, Balharshah, Nagpur Jn., Itarsi Jn., Bhopal Jn., Bina Jn., Virangana Lakshmbai Jhansi Jn., Gwalior Jn., Dhaulpur, Agra Cantt., Mathura Jn., & Kosi Kalan Stations.

04083/04084 New Delhi-Shri Mata Vaishno Devi Katra-New Delhi Reserved Spl. (Weekly) Trips			
Train No. 04083	ARR.	DEP.	STATIONS
---	---	14:00	New Delhi
03:00	---	---	Shri Mata Vaishno Devi Katra

Days of run : 04083 Ex. New Delhi on 09.10.2026 & 16.10.2026 (Friday) and 04084 Ex. Shri Mata Vaishno Devi Katra on 10.10.2026 to 17.10.2026 (Saturday)

Composition: 1st AC, 2 Tier AC, 3 Tier AC, Sleeper & General.

Stoppages: Sonapat, Panipat Jn., Kurukshetra Jn., Ambala Cantt., Dhandari Kalan, Jalandhar Cantt., Pathankot Cantt., Martyr Captain Sunil Kr. Choudhary Kathua, Jammu Tawi & Martyr Captain Tushar Mahajan Stations

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KO VIEW

Two Years of Omar

Omar Abdullah entered office in October 2024 with two promises hanging over his government.

One was political: restore Jammu and Kashmir's statehood. The other was deeply personal for thousands of families: create jobs and make government work again.

Two years later, statehood remains unresolved. The Jammu and Kashmir Assembly passed a resolution seeking its restoration, and Abdullah has continued to raise the issue with the Centre.

He has met Union Home Minister Amit Shah several times, and the question has remained at the centre of his political campaign.

But statehood is not the only measure by which his government will be judged.

For a young person preparing for a government examination, Delhi's position on statehood can feel distant. What feels immediate is the vacancy notification, the examination date, the result and the appointment letter.

That is where the government faces a harder test.

Figures placed before the Assembly show that JKPSK and JKSSB collected 113.91 crore in application fees between 2023-24 and 2025-26. During the same period, JKPSK advertised 2,586 posts in 2023-24, 1,400 in 2024-25 and only 357 in 2025-26. JKSSB advertised 4,228 posts in 2023-24, 5,044 in 2024-25 and 1,731 in 2025-26.

The sharp fall in advertised posts in 2025-26 is hard to ignore.

These figures need attention because jobs are where people feel the performance of government most directly.

The government can point to work in education, health, power and infrastructure. Abdullah has also set a target of round-the-clock electricity supply by 2027-28 and cited improvements in peak power availability. These are useful measures, but they will take time to show their full effect.

The bigger question is how much of that development reaches an ordinary household.

A government in Jammu and Kashmir also has to deal with a complicated administrative structure. The elected government does not have the same powers as a full state government. Disputes over the authority of the bureaucracy and the role of the lieutenant governor have already surfaced publicly.

That makes the remaining three years important.

Abdullah cannot control when statehood will return. He can, however, push his administration to make recruitment faster, public services cleaner and development easier to see in people's daily lives.

Statehood may define his political tenure, but jobs, schools, hospitals, electricity and the ordinary experience of dealing with government will define it for many people.

The next three years will show how much of the government's promise can be felt beyond the Assembly floor.



Anuj Kumar Verma

“Aluminium is not a known carcinogen, and a healthy adult who eats from foil occasionally faces limited risk. But cumulative exposure is another case, and a person with kidney disease who orders dinner three nights a week from a restaurant using non-food-grade sheets takes on a risk that no menu mentions.

What Lies Beneath the Shine

Some foil-like packaging sold for hot food may actually be plastic film coated with aluminium, raising questions about compliance and safety.

At a packing-material shop in the Parade market, I asked for aluminium foil marked IS 15392, the Indian Standard mandated for bare foil that touches food.

The rolls shown to me had none of these details: no standard number, batch number or packing date.

I insisted, and the vendor had nothing to produce.

The 1 kg pack was marked at Rs 860, but he quoted Rs 500. With a little bargaining, he made clear, the price could come down to Rs 400.

A price that drops by more than half after a minute of haggling makes you wonder how cheaply the product was made.

At a large store in Gandhi Nagar, the foil displayed IS 15392 on its pack. Both packs gleamed, and only one named a standard.

The law leaves little room for doubt. The Food Safety and Standards (Packaging) Regulations, 2018, and FSSAI's compendium, Version-V of 2 April 2025, demand food-grade material for anything touching food.

For bare aluminium foil that means IS 15392:2003, with conformity certificates from NABL-accredited laboratories.

Unmarked rolls and cheap foil envelopes nonetheless sell openly, and the kitchens buying them fill them with tikkas, parathas, biryanis and curries, steaming, oily and acidic, from Jammu and Srinagar to Anantnag, Baramulla and Kathua.

Hotels, dhabas and cloud kitchens seldom ask whether the sheet was ever meant for such heat.

Other parts of the country show what enforcement looks like.

A BIS raid in Chembur, Mumbai, in May 2024 found food-packaging foil stored and sold without the standard mark, which attracts penalties under Section 17(1)(a) of the BIS Act, 2016: up to two years in prison, or a minimum fine of Rs 2 lakh, or both.

In 2026, BIS seized around 2,350 foil rolls from a unit in Mandoli, northeast Delhi, over certification and ISI-mark violations.

Kashmir's regulators have shown their own capacity. Media reports cite 13,944 routine FDA inspections in 2025 and 1,211 food-safety cases filed in 2025-26, with 2,733 cases still pending

across the Territory.

A department that moves against rotten meat and adulterated ghee can fairly be asked why the material pressed against that meat and ghee escapes the same scrutiny.

The answer may lie in what the shiny sheet actually is.

Many cheap rolls and envelopes are no bare aluminium at all. They are metallised polyester, BOPP or polyamide films, plastic bases with a vacuum-deposited layer of aluminium only 30 to 50 nanometres thick, or laminates such as PET/PE and BOPP/PP, which suit snack and tea packets.

Non-food-grade versions, sometimes printed and bonded with unspecified adhesives, are cut and sold as foil for hot, oily meals without meeting IS 15392 or any other food-contact standard.

A buyer holding such a sheet can-

“Kashmir's regulators have shown their own capacity. Media reports cite 13,944 routine FDA inspections in 2025 and 1,211 food-safety cases filed in 2025-26, with 2,733 cases still pending across the Territory.

not tell the laminate from the metal, because the gleam is the point of the product.

What leaches from unverified packaging has been measured.

Researchers associated with Manipal tested 13 food and drug packaging samples and published their findings in F1000Research in 2024. All 13 samples had arsenic above permissible limits, while 10 had vanadium or cadmium above the limits.

Reviews confirm that aluminium moves from foil and laminates into acidic and fatty food, especially when hot.

A 2024 study in Food Bioscience found unsafe metal levels in fish roasted in foil at high temperature.

Aluminium is not a known carcinogen, and a healthy adult who eats from foil occasionally faces limited risk. But cumulative exposure is another case, and a person with kidney disease who orders dinner three nights a week from a restaurant using non-food-grade sheets takes on a risk that no menu mentions.

The remedy involves three steps,

and none needs new legislation.

A supply-side sweep should send joint FDA and BIS teams into wholesale and retail outlets in Jammu, Srinagar, Anantnag, Baramulla, Kathua and the other hubs to lift samples of foil rolls and envelopes sold for food use, test them against IS 15392, and check for the ISI mark and a valid BIS licence.

Sellers found holding non-compliant foil should face seizure, penalties and, where warranted, prosecution.

On the demand side, surprise inspections of restaurants, dhabas, tandoor outlets, bakeries and cloud kitchens that pack hot food in foil or foil-lined wrappers should include immediate sampling of the packaging, with improvement notices and fines for violations and suspension of FSSAI registration for repeat offenders.

For the public, a simple advisory

should tell consumers to look for the ISI mark, to avoid hot food wrapped in unmarked shiny sheets, and to prefer glass or stainless steel for acidic and oily dishes, backed by an FDA portal or helpline for reporting suspicious packaging.

The customer who collects a warm parcel at the counter has no means of testing it, and the restaurant that bought the foil was never shown a certificate.

Between them is a vendor who can sell the same roll for Rs 860, Rs 500 or Rs 400 depending on the buyer's patience, which suggests the sheet is judged by its shine alone.

Anyone eating from it is taking part in a test that nobody designed, and the results will surface slowly, in kidneys and bloodstreams, long after the meal has been forgotten.

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

What Science Still Cannot Explain

From machine consciousness to dark matter and the origin of life, the biggest discoveries of 2026 have exposed as many unanswered questions as they have solved.



Danish Bhat

The most telling sentences in the science of 2026 begin with a concession.

Artificial intelligence can analyse enormous quantities of information, predict molecular structures and help researchers design experiments. But no established evidence shows that any present system possesses subjective awareness.

Quantum processors have improved and error correction has progressed, while the machines remain largely experimental. Planetary atmospheres are being examined for chemical signs of biology, and a habitable environment lies a long way from confirmed life.

The headlines announce a new era of discovery, but the qualifications describe the year better, with power expanding around a core of questions nobody has answered.

Medicine shows the difference between capability and understanding in its most human form.

AI contributes to the interpretation of diagnostic images, to drug discovery and to the identification of potential treatments, and in physics and astronomy it works through data

that would otherwise demand enormous human effort.

Personalised medicine is retiring the assumption that patients with the same disease should receive identical treatment, since genetic information, molecular characteristics and individual biological responses now influence therapeutic decisions.

Personalised immunotherapies and experimental cancer vaccines seek to train the immune system to recognise and attack malignant cells. The adjective in that sentence does honest work, because an experimental vaccine is a hope still under test.

Gene editing sharpens the point, as CRISPR-based methods have entered clinical medicine for selected conditions, and scientists are working to improve the precision of genetic modifications and to deliver treatments safely to particular tissues. Extending the benefits to more diseases depends on research into safety, effectiveness and accessibility, and the last of those three words decides who benefits.

A therapy that works in a laboratory and cannot reach a patient has improved science more than it has improved a life.

Neuroscience can now study individual nerve cells and neural networks with remarkable precision. Optogenetics uses light-sensitive proteins to influence selected neurons and has transformed experimental work on memory, movement, behaviour and neurological disorders. Brain-computer interfaces translate certain neural signals into computer commands or other communication for people with paralysis or severe communication difficulties, although the systems remain limited.

Scientists can also identify neural processes

“The disciplines now lean on one another. Artificial intelligence assists biological discovery, quantum physics influences computing, neuroscience interacts with engineering, and space exploration depends on advanced computational methods. That interdependence is the genuine achievement of the year, and it has a consequence the headlines skip.

tied to perception, memory and decision-making without explaining why physical activity in the brain comes with subjective experience.

That disparity lies directly beneath the machines built to perform activities associated with human intelligence.

Computer scientists have produced the performance while neuroscientists cannot yet explain the experience, so nobody holds the instrument that could say whether a machine has crossed from computation into awareness.

Space tells the same story at a larger scale. The James Webb Space Telescope continues to contribute observations on the formation of early galaxies and on planets orbiting other stars, and researchers look for liquid water and suitable energy sources in places that might host life.

Dark matter and dark energy exist in cosmology to explain gravitational behaviour and the expansion of the universe speeding up, and scientists still cannot say what either one is.

Energy research tells it too. Nuclear fusion, the process that powers the Sun, promises large quantities of energy from comparatively abundant fuel. Experimental facilities are working toward sustained reactions with practical output.

Plasma control, materials and reactor engineering are improving, but commercial fusion remains an unresolved technological challenge. Climate modelling, satellite observations, batteries and renewable systems help scientists understand and reduce environmental risks. The problems of energy security, pollution, climate change and sustainable development are tied to one another.

India's space programme, pharmaceuti-

cal research, digital technologies, biotechnology and emerging quantum initiatives give it a place in these developments. Its institutions and researchers can contribute significantly to global discoveries, provided sustained investment goes into fundamental research, infrastructure, scientific education and innovation.

The condition is the argument in miniature, since the discoveries of 2026 reach people only through the unglamorous spending that precedes them.

The disciplines now lean on one another. Artificial intelligence assists biological discovery, quantum physics influences computing, neuroscience interacts with engineering, and space exploration depends on advanced computational methods.

That interdependence is the genuine achievement of the year, and it has a consequence the headlines skip.

Greater technological power has not brought complete understanding, and the origin of existence, the emergence of life and the nature of consciousness remain open.

Using discoveries responsibly for human welfare means keeping speculation apart from established knowledge, a discipline the honest ledger of 2026 makes easy to follow, since the established column is the shorter one.

The fields have begun to depend on one another, which leaves their unanswered questions depending on one another too.

—
The author is an Engineering Graduate and serves as the State Spokesperson for BJP Jammu & Kashmir.

A Father's 34-Year Fight to Get His Sons a School

In a remote Jammu and Kashmir village, one father's decades-long effort to educate his sons reveals the barriers disabled nomadic families face.



Sajad Hameed

Haji Hanife Dhadkai, 65, speaks on behalf of his two sons, Shabir Ahmad, 34, and Aftab Ahmad, 18, who were born deaf and mute.

Over several decades, he has searched for schooling, treatment and some measure of independence for both men. His search keeps bringing him back to a single sentence. "We have been asking for a school since 1990," he said. "The children need basic education."

The family lives in Dhadkai, a remote Gujjar village in Doda district that has drawn outside attention for decades because of the remarkably high number of residents who live with hearing and speech impairments.

Hanife says his household once counted five members with similar disabilities, and some of his daughters have since married. Other families in the village face the same struggle, he says, made heavier by thin access to schools, healthcare, roads and government services.

health centre, water supply and additional school staff. Officials ordered work on an incomplete 800-metre stretch of road and the preparation of a proposal for another link road.

Hanife draws a firm line between a government visit and a functioning service.

Media from many corners of India came to Dhadkai, he says, photographers took pictures, blood tests were done and department after department stopped by, while daily life on the ground stayed the same.

He remembers the government distributing 72 hearing aids in 2004, which gave little benefit to some residents whose hearing loss was profound.

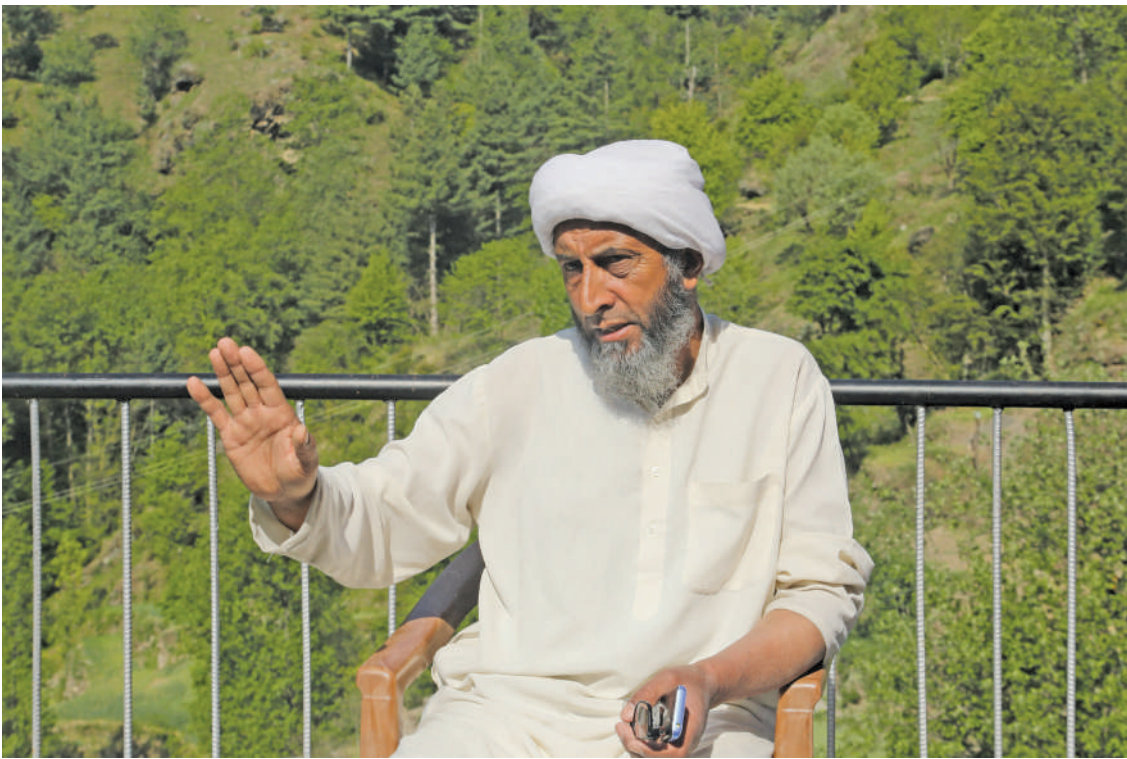
A school finally opened in May 2024, housed in two rooms of the existing Government High School in Dhadkai and staffed by a trained sign-language teacher.

Social worker Mujtaba Fazili backed the initiative and said he would bear the teacher's salary and other expenses at the start.

Hanife made his first request in 1990, so those two rooms opened after roughly thirty-four years of asking.

The story widens once it meets the movement of Gujjar-Bakarwal families, whose lives follow the seasons.

The last Census, in 2011, recorded 1.49 million Scheduled Tribe people in the erstwhile Jammu and Kashmir, among them 980,654 Gujjars and 113,198 Bakarwals.



The road beside the herds proves harder still, and he describes trouble meeting the family at nearly every step of the climb.

His household depends on its animals and on seasonal work. Riyaz sometimes finds labour connected to the apple and walnut harvests and spends other stretches unemployed at home.

He receives a disability pension of about ₹1,250 a month, he says,

whether a person can take part in the household economy at all.

The loss weighs heavier when a family has little room to absorb it.

Hanife describes the same pressure in Dhadkai, where a family of six depends on a father who works all day and then cares for his deaf children at home. "The father has to work during the day," he said, a simple sentence that captures the family's entire struggle.

Education provides one of the clearest measures of the distance between mobile tribal families and the services meant for them.

A 2021 survey of J&K's seasonally migrating population recorded literacy of 16.74 percent among the 6.12 lakh people surveyed, according to an analysis of its results.

Male literacy stood at 19.38 percent, compared with 14.08 percent among women.

The same analysis links these figures to seasonal migration, long distances, weak infrastructure and the end of mobile schooling beyond some levels, all of which have disrupted the education of Gujjar-Bakarwal children.

The government has tried to adapt schooling to movement. Seasonal education centres and mobile schools have served children of nomadic communities, while the Tribal Affairs Department has expanded hostels and scholarships.

Disability makes that responsibility even harder.

A child who needs sign language, specialised teaching, hearing assessment, assistive technology or

records disability by type, age, sex and rural or urban residence, covering hearing, speech, movement, visual and multiple disabilities, with district figures for Doda, Rajouri and Anantnag. The Census also counts Gujjars and Bakarwals as populations of their own.

The public tables stop short of showing how many disabled Gujjar-Bakarwal people lose access to pensions, certificates, schooling, healthcare or assistive devices while on the move.

A population can be counted while the barriers around it stay hidden.

NITI Aayog has highlighted the need for more granular disability data, so planners can find weaknesses in existing schemes and improve policy.

Zubair Ahmad, a disability-rights expert whose name has been changed, said the picture blurs when disability and migration are recorded apart.

"It becomes difficult to know how many people are actually facing these combined barriers," he said, adding that the disparity can influence how services are planned, where resources are directed and whether support finds people when they need it.

Officials have made efforts to close the distance.

The Tribal Affairs Department has mapped the transhumant population and, in recent years, introduced measures intended to ease seasonal movement, among them transport arrangements and

assistance.

A 30-day tailoring programme ran in 2024 in remote Dhadkai-B, where 35 women registered, among them specially abled women who are deaf and mute.

These initiatives show that officials recognise the problem, but the harder question is whether support finds people consistently, particularly those who travel with difficulty or whose families move alongside their animals.

Nasir Ahmad Chara, 40, says his health held steady until about three years ago. A back problem developed while he travelled toward the mountains with Bakarwal families, he says, and walking or running has since become a struggle.

"I was completely fine before," he said.

He receives about 1,200 a month in pension, though he sometimes waits four or five months for the money. The sum is small, and the larger issue is the distance between entitlement and access.

A delayed payment in a settled town can mean a hard month, while a person moving through mountain pastures may need a whole journey to get to an office, a hospital or a bank.

Treatment for Hanife's family came only through effort far beyond what most households can manage.

His family later sent children outside Jammu and Kashmir for care. One operation at Sir Ganga Ram Hospital in Delhi cost around ₹12-13 lakh, while other children received treatment in Hyderabad and Madhya Pradesh with help from donors.

Some gained the ability to hear or speak afterward.

That outcome depended on money, outside help and the means to travel. Families whose lives already involve constant movement find that disability complicates each journey and places every fixed institution further away.

The government has recognised Dhadkai's needs, documented the circumstances of transhumant communities and created schemes for education, welfare and disability support. The Census has counted disability among Scheduled Tribes.

Hanife has outlasted committees, surveys and visits, while Shabir and Aftab wait in the same village where their father first asked for a school in 1990.

When summer comes, the herds will climb again toward the high pastures, and the father will go on speaking for two sons while the space between those systems and the people moving through the mountains waits to be seen.



Gujjar-Bakarwal families who move seasonally with their herds between mountain pastures and settled areas find these barriers even harder to overcome.

Medical researchers have documented the pattern for years.

A 2015 study in the Indian Journal of Medical Research examined families from the village and found considerable genetic heterogeneity in hearing loss, identifying mutations in several genes. The study noted that a 2005 survey by the Social Welfare Department had reported 72 hearing-impaired people.

The district administration has acknowledged the problem as well. The Doda administration said that Dhadkai has many deaf or mute residents and that the issue had persisted for decades. Officials said residents had reported children being born with disabilities and that several agencies had visited the village for research.

The administration formed a three-member committee of the Tehsildar, the Tribal Social Welfare Officer and the Zonal Education Officer, and directed it to visit the village once a fortnight. It asked education authorities to prepare a proposal for a school for deaf and mute children, ordered screening of children below two years of age, and directed officials to facilitate ST certificates and health cards.

The same government record shows residents raising other basic needs, including roads, a primary

Bakarwals are traditionally pastoral nomads who drive sheep and goats between higher summer pastures and lower winter areas, while Gujjars have historically been tied to cattle and buffalo rearing.

Researchers and officials often discuss the two communities together because of their shared social and cultural links.

The scale of that seasonal movement is substantial.

A 2021 survey by the J&K Tribal Affairs Department identified about 6.12 lakh transhumant people. The department's then secretary said the population was mapped through more than 75,000 locations, with more than 10,000 enumerators and surveyors involved.

The survey covered movement inside districts, between districts, between provinces and between states. Its findings highlighted how hard it is to keep essential services within reach as families travel from one seasonal settlement to the next, a difficulty that multiplies for a person with a disability, since a single barrier becomes several once the journey begins.

Riyaz Ahmad Khan, 25, of Rakhi Brah in Anantnag, has lived with a leg disability since childhood. His Gujjar-Bakarwal family travels with its animals through the seasons, and his relatives take him along.

"Walking normally is already difficult for a person with a disability," he said.

though the money follows an irregular schedule, coming after a month at times and after three or four months at others.

"What can ₹1,250 a month do when the daily expenses are so high?" he asked.

Government schemes exist for people in his position. District administrations in J&K have distributed wheelchairs, crutches, hearing aids, artificial limbs and other assistive devices through special camps. One such camp in Doda in 2021 gave devices to 37 beneficiaries.

A single distribution differs from a system that stays within reach as a family moves.

Riyaz says the government also gave him a scooter, which is kept about four kilometres from his home, so he still covers that distance on foot. Sometimes a vehicle is available to him, and sometimes the road simply stays long.

Gulzar Ahmad Awana, 37, of Koteranka in Rajouri, became permanently disabled after lightning struck him while he tended animals in the upper mountains. He has two children and says the government extended him little support, even keeping the medicines he needed out of his hands.

He believes the surgery he required might have returned him to work. "I wanted to earn for my children," he said.

For people whose work is tied to herds, physical ability decides more than health, since it determines



regular therapy requires far more than a classroom that follows the herd. For Shabir and Aftab, even the first step of finding an appropriate school remains open.

The Census of India maintains a table on disability among Scheduled Tribes in Jammu and Kashmir. Its 2011 C-20(ST) dataset

systems for identifying migratory families. It has also expanded seasonal education centres and other tribal welfare programmes.

In Dhadkai, the district administration has proposed a dedicated school, screening of young children, employment support, health cards, certificates and self-employment

— The author is a visual journalist covering human rights, politics and technology in South Asia. This story was supported by the International Foundation for Disability Inclusion's Journalism Fellowship on Disability Inclusion.

CONTD. FROM FRONT PAGE

J&K Rolls Out

expand access to clean and reliable energy while creating an enabling environment for industry and investment. It is an important step towards building a cleaner, more efficient and sustainable energy future for Jammu and Kashmir," the chief minister said. He said the policy envisages phased expansion of City Gas Distribution networks across all 20 districts, bringing cleaner and reliable natural gas closer to consumers while supporting the transition away from conventional fuels.

A key focus of the policy is to simplify and accelerate project implementation through single-window, time-bound clearances, and streamlined procedures for establishing CNG stations and standardised Right of Way norms, he said.

He described it as an important step towards cleaner growth, sustainable development and a modern energy ecosystem in Jammu and Kashmir.

Rail Connectivity

region's railway network and infrastructure.

Hailstorms, Rain

several other parts of Jammu and Kashmir. Cloudy conditions prevailed over most areas.

The extent of damage to crops and orchards in Bandipora, Kupwara and Ganderbal was yet to be officially assessed, and no district-wise loss estimates were immediately available.

Rain, Snow Forecast

Meanwhile, the Meteorological Centre has forecast a wet spell in Jammu and Kashmir, with light rain likely at scattered places over the next two days and light snowfall possible over higher reaches.

The weather is expected to remain partly to generally cloudy on October 9 and 10. A brief spell of light rain is possible at a few places towards the evening of October 9, while generally dry conditions are likely on October 11 and 12.

Another spell of rain may occur towards the evening or night of October 13.

On October 14 and 15, generally cloudy weather with light rain and light snowfall over higher reaches is expected at many places, accompanied by thunderstorms and gusty winds.

The weather is likely to remain generally dry from October 16 to 18, according to the forecast.

The Meteorological Centre has advised farmers to continue harvesting and ensure safe storage of harvested

apples and paddy in view of the expected weather conditions.

Temperatures Above Normal

Despite the rainfall and cloudy conditions, temperatures remained above normal in several areas.

Srinagar recorded a maximum temperature of 28.2°C, around four degrees above normal, while the minimum temperature settled at 10.9°C, which was 3.4 degrees above normal. Jammu recorded a maximum temperature of 31.5°C and a minimum of 20°C.

Pahalgam recorded a maximum of 23.6°C and a minimum of 6°C, while Gulmarg recorded a maximum of 19°C and a minimum of 6°C.

India Advises

by local authorities through official channels," the mission said.

It also strongly advised Indian nationals against circulating or reposting videos or news related to the ongoing events.

The Indian Embassy in Riyadh, along with the Consulate in Jeddah and its outsourced services through VFS, continues to function normally, the advisory said.

The 24x7 helpline of the Pravasi Bharatiya Sahayata Kendra remains available at toll-free number 8002471234, it said.

The Indian community has also been advised to follow the official social media handles of the embassy for updates.

The security situation in Saudi Arabia has deteriorated in recent weeks.

The country's airports have also come under attack in the latest escalation.

According to Saudi authorities, over the last two days, two people were killed and 28 injured in an attack at Abha International Airport, while one person was killed and eight others injured in an attack on King Khalid International Airport in Riyadh. The attacks have been attributed to Houthi militants.

India on Thursday strongly condemned the attacks, saying the targeting of civilian infrastructure was "completely unacceptable".

The deteriorating security situation has also affected air services between India and Saudi Arabia.

Air India and Air India Express have cancelled flights to and from Riyadh until October 10, while Akasa Air has cancelled its Kochi-Riyadh and Riyadh-Kochi services on Thursday.

Air India Express said affected passengers have been offered complimentary rescheduling or a full refund.

It operates 16 weekly flights to Riyadh from Bengaluru, Kochi, Kannur and Kozhikode.

Air India has also cancelled its Riyadh services until October 10. It operates seven weekly flights to Riyadh from Delhi and Mumbai.

The airline said flight AI2243 from Delhi to Riyadh returned to the national capital on Thursday and was subsequently cancelled, with full refunds offered to passengers.

Seven IUST Scientists

Dr. Muzaffar Ahmad Macha from the Watson-Crick Centre for Molecular Medicine; and Dr. Manzoor Ahmad Rather from Chemistry.

IUST had one scientist on the list in 2024 and six in 2025. The rise to seven this year comes as the university expands doctoral research, externally funded projects, interdisciplinary work and publications in international journals.

The researchers work in fields ranging from food science and molecular medicine to physics, chemistry and mathematics, giving the university representation across several areas of scientific research.

Romshoo called the recognition a source of pride for the university and credited the faculty members for strengthening its international research profile.

He said IUST would focus on research infrastructure, external funding, interdisciplinary projects and national and international collaborations.

308 POC SO Cases

harassment of children, while five cases were registered under Sections 14 and 15, which deal with the use of children for pornographic purposes.

Three additional cases were registered under Sections 17 to 22 of the POC SO Act, covering offences including abetment and other related provisions.

Overall, J&K recorded 887 cases of crimes against children during 2024, with POC SO cases accounting for 308 of the total. (KNT)

Police Arrest

November last year, alleging that he had paid Rs 93 lakh for five kanals of land in Drusoo, Pulwama, along with 300 poplar trees in Bijbehara.

When the buyer approached a court to have the agreement ratified, he was reportedly informed that the land did not belong to the person named as the seller.

The Crime Branch registered an FIR against Koul on April 1. In one transaction, investigators found that he had

allegedly presented himself as the attorney of a Kashmiri Pandit migrant, while in another he claimed ownership of the property.

The documents listed addresses in Jammu and Bengaluru, but police teams found Koul missing from both locations.

The witness

A breakthrough came through Ghulam Mohidin Dar, a Budgam resident who had signed one of the agreements as a witness.

Crime Branch officials reached Dar's residence in August. He allegedly told them that he would change his clothes and accompany them, but escaped after members of his family confronted the police team.

Dar was arrested on September 17 following a chase from Rajbagh towards Kanipora.

Investigators found that Dar, described as an influential land broker, had allegedly been helping Koul find prospective buyers.

His interrogation also helped investigators piece together Koul's multiple identities.

Four identities

According to the report by The Indian Express, Koul is listed as Brijnath Bhat in his service records. Police found that he possessed two voter identity cards and two Aadhaar cards carrying different names.

His voter cards identified him as Brijnath Bhat and Hadinath Dhar, while the Aadhaar documents carried the names Somnath Koul and Mohan Lal Dhar.

Police then turned to biometric verification. Investigators found that Koul's fingerprints had been damaged, while repeated attempts to obtain an iris match failed.

According to officials, Koul claimed that his fingertips had been accidentally burnt. An Aadhaar official reportedly suggested that his difficulty with iris verification could have been linked to previous eye surgery.

The investigation found that an Aadhaar card had been issued to him in the name of Brijnath Bhat in 2016. In 2022, the name on the Aadhaar was changed to Somnath Koul. Police are examining how the change was made.

The newspaper clue

As investigators struggled to locate Koul, an unusual clue emerged.

Dar told police that Koul was an avid newspaper reader. Besides his preferred Urdu newspaper published from Kashmir, he also subscribed to several newspapers from Jammu.

Investigators began tracking this newspaper-reading pattern, which eventually led them to a house in

Zewan on Srinagar's outskirts where Koul had been staying.

On September 24, police reached the house while looking for him. A woman who answered the door reportedly told them that Koul had already left. When investigators asked to see the room where he had been staying, she took them there.

Police found the elderly man inside, bringing the months-long search to an end.

The newspaper habit that eventually led police to Koul emerged as one of the more unusual clues in the investigation.

Earlier cases

After his arrest, Crime Branch officials searched their database for cases involving the different names associated with Koul. They found at least four earlier cases dating back to 2017.

In the oldest case, a complainant alleged that Koul, identifying himself as Brijnath Bhat, posed as an attorney for land in Goshabugh, Pattan. A deal was allegedly struck for 11 kanals and three marlas for Rs 55 lakh, with Rs 9.17 lakh paid in advance. Koul subsequently disappeared.

In 2021, he allegedly used the same identity while offering to sell one-and-a-half kanal of migrant land at Gulab Bagh Pandach in Srinagar. Police said he collected Rs 47 lakh from the buyer before disappearing. A chargesheet was subsequently filed in absentia.

Two further complaints were received in 2023, police said. In those cases, Koul allegedly offered the same property near Humhama to two different buyers. He reportedly used the name Brijnath Bhat with one buyer and Hadinath Dhar with the other, collecting a combined Rs 1 crore.

In the latest case, investigators allege that he had taken Rs 15 lakh from a prospective buyer before disappearing.

Koul is currently in Srinagar Central Jail in judicial custody.

Senior Superintendent of Police, Crime Branch/Economic Offences Wing Kashmir, Abdul Waheed Shah, said the department was treating land fraud seriously, particularly because such transactions can wipe out the savings of families.

He said the Crime Branch was investigating complaints against brokers as well as any officials who may have been involved, while urging people to exercise caution before entering into land transactions.

Deepfakes Have

Prime Minister said a person sitting

in one country, with the help of someone in another country, could commit a crime in a third country.

He also described deepfakes as a major emerging challenge, stressing the need for coordinated efforts to protect people from digital fraud and manipulation.

Modi Welcomes GST Reforms

Separately, Modi welcomed the latest round of GST reforms approved by the GST Council, saying the measures would focus on faster decisions, lower compliance costs and automated refunds.

In a post on X, Modi said the reforms were aimed at making GST administration more efficient, transparent and citizen-friendly.

The GST Council, at its 57th meeting on Thursday, approved the removal of the power of tax officials to arrest taxpayers and raised the threshold for prosecution fivefold to Rs 5 crore.

The Council also approved faster and largely automated refunds and reduced the general penalty from Rs 25,000 to Rs 10,000.

Modi said the Council's recommendations on removing arrest provisions, greater decriminalisation and simplifying procedures would have a positive impact.

Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman announced the decisions following the Council meeting.

J&K Govt Fixes

the Revenue, Nazool, Custodian, Forest, Wildlife, Ecology, Environment and Remote Sensing, and Pollution Control Board departments, among others.

The deadline also applies to building-related clearances from the J&K Sainik Cooperative Housing Building Society, J&K Cooperative Department, Provisional Rehabilitation Organisation, Jal Shakti Department, Power Development Department, Heritage Department and Public Works Department.

NOCs from town planning authorities and development authorities, including the Srinagar Development Authority and Katra Development Authority, have also been brought under the 21-day timeline.

The order specifies designated officers responsible for issuing the services, along with first and second appellate authorities in case the stipulated timelines are not followed.

The move is aimed at bringing various building-related clearances under a time-bound public service delivery framework and providing applicants a defined mechanism for seeking redress in case of delays.



29th year OF PUBLICATION

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UNRAVEL KASHMIR

SKIMS Issues Winter Advisory, Urges Precautions against Respiratory, Cardiac Ailments

Observer News Service

SRINAGAR: The Sher-i-Kashmir Institute of Medical Sciences (SKIMS) has issued a public health advisory ahead of winter, urging people to take preventive measures against respiratory, cardiovascular and neurological complications that can worsen during the colder months.

The advisory, issued by the Department of Internal & Pulmonary Medicine, SKIMS, said viral infections tend to spread more easily during fall and winter, while exposure to cold weather can aggravate chronic conditions, particularly asthma, chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD), cardiovascular ailments and certain neurological disorders.

The institute advised people to stay adequately protected from the cold, maintain hand hygiene, avoid unnecessary exposure to crowded places and ensure timely vaccination against

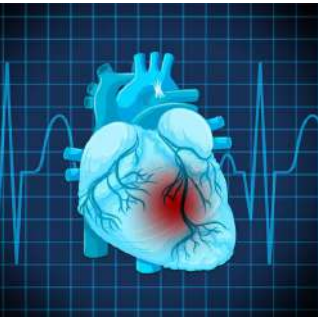
influenza and pneumonia.

People have been advised to wear multiple layers of clothing to retain body heat and minimise exposure to cold outdoor air, particularly when temperatures drop below freezing. Those venturing outdoors should keep their nose and mouth covered and take adequate precautions against cold air.

SKIMS also stressed frequent handwashing and avoiding touching the face, particularly the nose and mouth. Adequate hydration and indoor physical activity have been recommended to support cardiovascular and lung health.

The advisory further urged people to exercise caution on icy and slippery surfaces, recommending footwear with good traction and walking through well-lit areas to prevent falls.

Emphasising the importance of adequate rest, the institute recommended seven to nine hours of sleep every night and



advised people to manage stress and anxiety, which can trigger seizures in some individuals.

Special emphasis was placed on vaccination against influenza and pneumonia, with SKIMS noting that vaccination can lower the risk of respiratory infections.

Patients with hypertension have been advised to monitor their blood pressure regularly and continue prescribed medicines without interruption. Those suffering from chronic illnesses have also been urged to strictly follow their treatment

plans and doctors' advice.

Asthma and COPD patients have been advised to follow their action plans during exacerbations and carry rescue inhalers, if prescribed. The institute also cautioned against smoking and exposure to second-hand smoke.

People have been advised against strenuous outdoor activity during severe cold and urged to exercise caution while using space heaters. Proper ventilation should be maintained indoors, while excessive dryness should be avoided.

SKIMS strongly cautioned against self-medication, particularly the unnecessary use of antibiotics, noting that antibiotics do not treat viral infections and their inappropriate use can contribute to antimicrobial resistance.

SKIMS Lists Emergency Warning Signs

The institute urged people to seek medical attention if cough or breathlessness worsens, or if

new-onset fever is accompanied by a fall in oxygen saturation.

Left-sided chest pain with worsening breathlessness should be treated as an emergency, as it may indicate a heart attack. Similarly, sudden weakness of an arm or leg, difficulty speaking, facial drooping or disturbance in gait could signal a stroke and require immediate hospital care.

Patients have also been advised to consult doctors if symptoms remain uncontrolled despite routine medication or begin interfering with daily activities.

Regarding home oxygen, SKIMS said it may be considered when oxygen saturation falls below 88 per cent on a pulse oximeter, with a target saturation of 89-92 per cent as advised.

The institute urged the public to remain vigilant throughout winter, particularly while caring for vulnerable individuals and those living with chronic respiratory, cardiovascular and neurological conditions.

HC Gives SMC Final Opportunity On Balgarden Violations

M Ahmad

SRINAGAR: The High Court of J&K and Ladakh has granted the Srinagar Municipal Corporation (SMC) a last and final opportunity of three weeks to comply with its directions concerning unauthorised commercialisation, building violations and illegal parking in the Balgarden area here, warning that failure to do so could invite coercive action. A bench of Justice Wasim Sadiq Nargal, hearing a petition filed by Ghulam Rasool Zargar and others, observed that the directions issued by the Court had not been complied with in letter and spirit despite a timeline having been prescribed by the authorities themselves.

The Court noted that it had, in its earlier order dated November 26, 2025, directed the authorities to submit an action plan for implementing the recommendations of a committee aimed at curbing unauthorised conversions, violations and illegal parking in Balgarden Srinagar. It had also directed the Chief Secretary to constitute a committee headed by the Commissioner, Srinagar Municipal Corporation, to identify officials responsible for the alleged violations and fix accountability. The Court observed that the requisite report fixing responsibility had not been placed before it and that the earlier order remained unimplemented in its entirety.

As part of the proposed three-month action plan, the SMC had undertaken to issue final show-cause notices to owners of identified structures, scrutinise building permissions, initiate legal action where documents were not produced, halt fresh and renewal trade registrations in unauthorised cases and strengthen enforcement monitoring.

The plan also envisaged preparation of a parking plan in consultation with the Traffic Department and Srinagar Smart City Limited, including designated parking slots, no-parking zones, parking inventory and deployment of traffic wardens. The Court further directed the authorities to comply with its direction regarding the constitution of the accountability committee, noting that although the matter had been referred to the Administrative Department, the Chief Secretary himself was required to act on the Court's order.

During the hearing, Joint Commissioner (Planning) Gulzar Ahmad, Chief Enforcement Officer Suhail Nabi Chintsaz and the concerned Ward Officer Niyaz Ahmad appeared in person and assured the Court that the directions would be brought to their logical conclusion without further delay. They sought three weeks' final opportunity for compliance.

Accepting the assurance, the Court granted the authorities three weeks to submit final compliance, making it clear that failure would constrain it to initiate appropriate coercive measures for wilful disobedience/non-compliance of its order. The matter has been listed for October 27

WORLD SIGHT DAY

Don't Ignore Blurred Vision, Ophthalmologists Warn



Agencies

SRINAGAR: Prolonged exposure to smartphones, computers and other digital screens is increasingly being associated with eye strain and vision-related complaints, with ophthalmologists advising people to adopt preventive measures and undergo regular eye examinations.

Doctors said the growing dependence on digital devices has made eye health a major concern, particularly among children, elderly people and those already suffering from conditions such as diabetes and hypertension.

Ophthalmologists said continuous screen viewing requires the eyes to remain focused at a close distance for extended periods, which can result in digital eye strain, commonly known as computer vision syndrome.

They said people experienc-

ing prolonged screen exposure may develop symptoms including blurred vision, dryness or irritation of the eyes, headaches and discomfort in the neck and shoulders.

Doctors also cautioned that children could be particularly vulnerable, with prolonged near-work and reduced outdoor activity being associated with an increased risk of developing myopia or short-sightedness at an early age.

Speaking to KNO, ophthalmologist Dr Tariq Ahmad stressed the importance of periodic eye examinations, particularly among the elderly.

He said that with increasing longevity, age-related eye disorders, including age-related macular degeneration (AMD), are becoming increasingly common.

"Among elderly patients, an eye check-up every six months is necessary. Age-related macular degeneration has become more common, and its

incidence has doubled over the past decade," Dr Tariq said.

He said early detection and timely treatment remain crucial in preventing avoidable deterioration of vision. "As a general recommendation, people should undergo regular eye examinations, while children should have their eyes checked at least once a year, even when they do not have any obvious symptoms," he said.

Another ophthalmologist, Dr Shugufta, said several major causes of vision loss and blindness can either be prevented or effectively managed if detected at an early stage.

"Refractive errors, cataract, glaucoma and diabetic retinopathy are among the important causes of preventable blindness. Regular screening is therefore extremely important," she said.

She advised people to pay attention to their diet and include green leafy vegetables, fresh fruits and nutritious sources of protein, including fish, in their daily meals.

Dr Shugufta added that people suffering from diabetes, hypertension and other systemic diseases require more frequent ophthalmic evaluation.

Ophthalmologist Dr Sajad Ahmad highlighted the rapid advances in technology and research transforming the diagnosis and treatment of eye disorders.

Tourists Rescued from Dal Lake as Winds Strand Shikara



Observer News Service

SRINAGAR: Amid gusty winds and rain, around 15 tourists were safely rescued after their Shikara got stranded in Dal Lake in Srinagar, officials said here on Thursday.

An official said that the tourists, who were enjoying their Shikara ride on Dal Lake, were safely rescued after their Shikara got stranded near Nehru Park amid strong winds and rain.

He said that upon receiving in-

formation about the incident, CRPF and SDRF personnel and rescue teams immediately launched a rescue operation and safely evacuated all the stranded tourists.

"The exact number was not counted at the time of the rescue, while the number of tourists may have been more than 15," he said.

Meanwhile, an investigation has been taken up, while the official said that all the tourists were safe and sound—(with KNO inputs)

J&K Holds First-Ever Online Parliament for Persons with Disabilities

Observer News Service

SRINAGAR: Jammu and Kashmir on Wednesday hosted its first-ever Online Parliament for Persons with Disabilities (PwDs), providing a democratic platform for participants to voice their concerns and recommendations before MLA Kaiser Jamsheed Lone.

Held under the theme "Call for a Just and Inclusive Society", the event featured detailed deliberations on education, accessible infrastructure, employment, reservation, social security and government welfare schemes.

Mohammad Auyyob Mir, Research Scholar at Aligarh Muslim University, convened the programme, while Waseem Khaliq moderated the proceedings. Javid Ahmed Talk, founder and chairperson of the ZABAP Institute of Inclusive Education and Humanity Organisation, highlighted challenges confronting PwDs in J&K.

Participants, including women, persons with locomotor disabilities and those from rural areas, shared their experiences and policy suggestions. Khaliq stressed the need to move from formal equality to substantive justice.

Srinagar's Craft Legacy Takes Centre Stage at Islamia College

Observer News Service

SRINAGAR: A group of young students at Islamia College of Science and Commerce came together to explore Kashmir's rich arts, crafts and cultural heritage during a special conversation titled "Mashq-e-Pa'aez... Naqsh-o-Nigar", organised against the backdrop of the World Craft Council's anniversary celebrations.

The programme, organised by the college's Design and Innovation Cell (DIC) in collaboration with EdRAAK Srinagar, focused on Srinagar's recognition as a World Craft City and

the opportunities and challenges associated with preserving its traditional craft heritage.

The conversation brought together students, craft practitioners, designers and heritage enthusiasts to discuss papier-mâché, Pashmina, cuisine, fashion, oral traditions and other elements of Kashmir's cultural identity. Participants also undertook a walk through the lanes of the old city, exploring craft and culinary traditions.

College Principal Aijaz Ahmad Hakak said such initiatives help sensitise students to the significance of

Srinagar's World Craft City recognition and encourage young people to take an active role in arts, crafts and heritage.

Dr Zahoor Ahmad Jhat, Head of the Department and DIC, said collaborations with organisations such as EdRAAK provide students opportunities to engage with art, heritage and creative practices beyond the classroom.

Craft and Heritage Consultant and EdRAAK founder S Iliyas Rizvi, who presented "Srinagar: The Craft City", stressed the need to connect Gen Z with Kashmir's traditional crafts

through contemporary approaches.

NIFT graduate and visiting faculty Jasirah Qadri spoke on branding Kashmiri crafts, while master papier-mâché craftsman Ustaad Syed Sajjad Hamedani highlighted the importance of mentorship and platforms for emerging artisans.

The session also featured young entrepreneurs and craft enthusiasts who shared experiences related to Pashmina, crochet, hand-knitting and craft revival, underlining the need to ensure that Kashmir's traditional skills remain relevant to future generations.



UNIVERSITY OF KASHMIR

OFFICE OF THE EXECUTIVE ENGINEER, CONSTRUCTION DIVISION

NOTICE INVITING E-TENDER

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

S.No	Name of Work	Est. Cost (Rs. In Lacs)	Cost of T/Doc in shape of E-Challan (in Rs.)	Earnest Money in Rs.	Time and Date for Submission of E-Tender.	Date & Time of Opening of Bid	Class of Contractor
1	Construction of the Boundary Wall and Chain-Link Fencing at Nursery, Naseem Bagh Campus, U.O.K	14.82 Lacs	Rs.600/-	29,640/-	10/10/2026 to 27/10/2026 (4:30 PM)	28/10/2026 (2:30 PM)	"BEE, CEE & DEE"

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

NIT No: F(E.Tend)(Cons. Boundary Wall Nursery)(UCD)/KU/21/26
DATED: 07/10/2026

DIPK-NB-1833-26
DT: 08/10/2026

Executive Engineer

GOVT. OF JAMMU & KASHMIR DEPARTMENT OF MATERIALS MANAGEMENT (PURCHASE-I) SHER-I-KASHMIR INSTITUTE OF MEDICAL SCIENCES SOURA, SRINAGAR, KASHMIR Tel: 0194-2403929 (Ext: 2275)

Email Id:ammopurchase1@skims.ac.in

E-NIT NO.: SIMS 325 (PI) Tender 07 OF 2026
DATED: 06-10-2026

Subject: Notice inviting e-tenders for supply of "Various Non-Perishable Dietary Items" for SKIMS Canteen, Soura Srinagar (J&K) on annual rate contract basis.

E-tenders under two bid cover system are invited for and on behalf of Lt. Governor of Jammu & Kashmir UT through Director Sher-I-Kashmir Institute of Medical Sciences Soura, Srinagar from the registered manufacturers and authorized dealers/suppliers having registration of commercial taxes (GST), Municipality etc for supply of various dietary items on annual rate contract basis for the Canteen of Sher-I-Kashmir Institute of Medical Sciences, Soura. The tender documents are available at www.jktenders.gov.in.

Description	Tender Fee	Earnest Money
Non-perishable dietary Items for SKIMS Canteen	Rs. 1,500/-	Rs. 1,00,000/-

Nomenclature	Schedule
Tender download start date	06.10.2026
Clarification end date	12.10.2026
Online Bid submission start date	16.10.2026
Bid submission end date	22.10.2026 upto 6:00 pm
Last date for submission of original EMD / Demand Draft	28.10.2026 upto 12:00 Noon
Technical bid opening date	28.10.2026 upto 12:00 Noon

Note: Items shall be allotted to lowest bidder on item-wise basis subject to qualifying technical evaluation & sample evaluation.

Complete bidding process will be online on government e-tendering portal, www.jktenders.gov.in & the bids should be submitted strictly in accordance with the provisions of the detailed NIT.

Sd/-
Sr. Materials Management Officer
Purchase

No.: SKIMS-MMOP-I//2026-Purl-4387-92
DIPK-NB-1830/26
Dated: 08.10.2026.

'Fearless, Intense, One of a Kind'

Film Fraternity Remembers Nana Patekar

Press Trust of India

MUMBAI: Rajinikanth, Shah Rukh Khan, Akshay Kumar, Manisha Koirala, Madhuri Dixit, Alia Bhatt and several other cine personalities across industries on Thursday expressed shock at the sudden death of Nana Patekar, remembering the actor for his fearless personality and distinctive screen presence.

The 75-year-old actor died in the early hours of Thursday after suffering a heart attack. He was found unconscious at his Goa apartment and was taken to a private hospital where he was declared dead.

"I can't believe my dear friend Nanaji is no longer with us. My deepest condolences to his family and loved ones. May his soul rest in peace," Rajinikanth posted on X.

Akshay, who famously worked with Nana in the 2007 comedy blockbuster "Welcome" where the veteran actor's character of don Uday Shetty earned him an ardent fanbase, said he was deeply saddened by the ac-

tor's passing.

"He was one of those rare actors who never needed to do too much to make you sit up and watch. That voice, that intensity, that honesty in every performance... he was completely his own," Akshay wrote in a post on X.

"There are so many memories from those sets that I'll always hold close. Nana ji was truly one of a kind. It's hard to believe you're gone. Thank you for all the memories. You will be missed more than words can say," said the actor, who last collaborated with Nana for 2025's "Housefull 5".

Shah Rukh, who worked with Patekar on the 1992 movie "Raju Ban Gaya Gentleman", remembered him as a "masterful actor and an unbeatable carrom champion".

According to the superstar, Patekar had a strange way of showing affection.

"He would shout at you first, and then somewhere between the third or fourth insult, you realised you were being hugged. He loved me and I loved him



back. He was a mentor, a teacher, a critic and a friend who beat me and everyone else around him in carrom game after game and relished his victories.

"All I can say is, I will miss you dearly and carry your words in my heart till the end of time....'hero banne ke chakar mein actor mat khona'. May your soul rest in peace Nana and Allah bless you," he said.

Manisha, who collaborated with Nana on acclaimed movies "Khamoshi: The Musical" and "Agni Sakshi", said she is sad-

dened by his demise.

"A remarkable presence and a true stalwart of the craft. His contribution to cinema and his dedication to his craft will always be remembered. May his soul rest in peace," she said.

Superstar Salman Khan, Nana's co-star from "Khamoshi", wrote on social media, "Nanaaaaa... Rest in peace."

Madhuri, who featured with Nana in "Parinda" and "Prahaar", remembered him as a "great artist, an influential personality and an unforgettable voice".

"With Nana Patekar's passing, the film industry has lost a truly priceless and legendary artist. My heartfelt condolences to his family and loved ones," she said on Instagram.

Pareesh Rawal, another co-star from "Welcome", posted on X, "Bhau... Nana Saheb.

Insanely honest and intense. Love and respect for ever."

Sunny Deol said though he never shared the screen space with Nana, he will forever miss the actor.

"Still can't believe Nana is not among us... We always shared a very special bond that went back many years. Fearless, full of life, he always did what he wanted to do. That's how I'll always remember him. Will miss you, Nana," he wrote.

Alia said Nana was one of a kind, "Farewell, Nana Sir. You've made the world laugh, cry, and feel so much more in between," she added.

Calling Patekar a "legend", Madhavan said he was deeply moved and inspired by his performance in the 1991 critically-

acclaimed movie film "Prahaar: The Final Attack".

"Thank you for the unforgettable moments in the Theatres, and the invaluable lessons to actors... There will be none other like you, sir. RIP," he said.

Anupam Kher, who is currently in the US, said Nana's sudden death was "incredibly difficult" to accept.

"Direct, unpretentious, with his own way of saying even the most difficult things. I will miss you, my friend. Your warmth. Your hugs."

Javed Akhtar said, "Today we have lost only an unusual and unique actor but a true Indian rooted in our motherland always with Gus to call a spade a spade. Nana saheb like me millions and millions will miss you."

Raveena Tandon said she shared a wonderful rapport, built on mutual respect, warmth and genuine fondness.

"He was truly lionhearted — courageous, strong and generous in spirit. I will always cherish the memories of the time we spent working together."

Sanjay Dutt said Nana's death is a huge loss to the film industry.

"It's still hard to believe that my brother, my friend Nana, is no longer with us. I have so many fond memories of the time we spent together, memories I will always hold close... We have lost a remarkable actor, a great artist and a truly special human being."

Farhan Akhtar said Nana's demise has left a void that will be deeply felt, adding that while the veteran actor will be missed, he will never be forgotten.

"His work in the arts and his commitment to social causes remain an inspiration to us all," he added.

Manoj Bajpayee said Nana's journey in cinema had inspired many aspiring actors who came to Mumbai hoping to make a career in films.

"He made you believe that your craft, your individuality and being true to who you are could be enough to make your own place. We have lost one of our finest actors.

You will be deeply missed," he said.

Trump Renews Nobel Bid as Iran War Rages

KO Web Desk

SRINAGAR — Donald Trump wants the Nobel Peace Prize. Again. And this time the US President says the arithmetic is simple: eight wars settled, hostages brought home and more conflicts stopped before they could start.

There is, however, an awkward footnote to the peace résumé — Iran.

Even as Trump made another public pitch for the world's most celebrated peace award from the Oval Office on Wednesday, the war his administration launched against Iran is still running into its eighth month, leaving a trail of deaths, economic disruption and turmoil in global energy markets.

None of that appeared to dent the President's confidence.

"I've done stuff that nobody else has ever done. I'm not bragging; I'm just telling you the facts," Trump told reporters.

Then came the number he believes should make Oslo sit up.



"I settled eight wars."

With the Nobel Peace Prize due to be announced on Friday, Trump suggested that denying him the honour could actually hurt the Nobel Committee more than him.

"They have a reputation for maybe not giving it to people like me," he said, adding that it would be "a great discredit to them" if his record went unrewarded.

In other words: no pressure, Nobel Committee.

Peace Prize, Meet Iran

The timing of Trump's latest Nobel sales pitch is striking.

The US-Iran war has stretched into its eighth month, taking a heavy human toll and disrupting one of the most sensitive arteries of the global economy.

Among the darkest episodes was the strike on a school in Minab in southern Iran, where large numbers of children were killed. Senior Iranian political, military and scientific figures have also been killed during the conflict.

The war has meanwhile disrupted movement through the Strait of Hormuz, sending repercussions through oil, shipping and insurance markets and adding pressure to an already fragile global economy.

So while Trump counts the wars he says he has ended, the war being fought on his own watch remains conspicuously difficult to squeeze into the Nobel citation.

Trump nevertheless suggested

another peace deal could be on the way, apparently referring to the Iran conflict.

If so, the President could find himself making the unusual case for a Peace Prize partly on the strength of ending a war his own administration started.

And Then There's Obama

No Trump Nobel pitch would be quite complete without Barack Obama.

The former president received the Nobel Peace Prize in 2009, something that has long rankled Trump.

"Obama got it, and he didn't do anything. He still doesn't know what he got it for," Trump said.

Trump argued that Obama received the prize almost immediately after entering the White House, while he himself had accumulated an actual record of peacemaking.

His case, as he presented it, was therefore straightforward: Obama got one; Trump says he has done much more.

AI Express, AI Cancel Riyadh Flights till Oct 10

Press Trust of India

NEW DELHI: Air India Express and Air India have cancelled flights to Riyadh till October 10 amid disruptions due to attacks at the airport.

Saudi Arabia's two airports, in Riyadh and Abha, came under attack, reportedly by Houthi militants.

Air India Express and Air India flights en route to Riyadh returned on Thursday, sources said.

"In view of the evolving situation in the region, we have cancelled flights to and from Riyadh until 10 October. Affected guests are being offered complimentary rescheduling or a full refund on cancellation. We continue to monitor the situation closely," Air India Express said in a statement on Thursday.

Air India Express operates 16 weekly flights to Riyadh from four Indian cities — Bengaluru, Kochi, Kannur and Kozhikode.

Air India has also cancelled its services to and from Riyadh till October 10. The

airline operates 7 weekly flights to Riyadh from Delhi and Mumbai.

"The affected guests are being offered a full refund on cancellation. We are closely monitoring the situation," the airline said in a statement.

On Thursday, Air India said the AI2243 flight from Delhi to Riyadh returned to the national capital and the flight was subsequently cancelled.

Full refunds have been offered to passengers.

In a post on X, Akasa Air said that in view of the evolving security situation in Riyadh, it has cancelled QP 523 Kochi - Riyadh and QP 524 Riyadh - Kochi flights on Thursday.

"We continue to monitor and assess the situation on a real-time basis, and further changes will be notified accordingly," it said.

In recent days, there has been an escalation in the hostilities between the Iran-backed Houthi group and Saudi Arabia. There have been attacks with armed drones and missiles.

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