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Waqf's Friday Sermon Move Sparks Row In J&K

Political Leaders Oppose Move, Allege Religious Interference

Andrabi Says No Order Issued, Scholars Free To Decide Sermon Topics



Observer News Service

Srinagar: The Jammu and Kashmir Waqf Board's proposal to introduce common themes for Friday sermons across its affiliated mosques and religious institutions has triggered a political and religious controversy, with Chief Minister Omar Abdullah, PDP president Mehbooba Mufti and several religious and political figures opposing the move.

Waqf Board chairperson Dr Syed Darakhshan Andrabi, however, on Tuesday clarified that no order had been issued making uniform Friday sermons mandatory, asserting that religious scholars and preachers were free to decide the subjects they wished to address.

Addressing a press conference in Srinagar, Andrabi said neither

she nor any Waqf Board official could dictate what should be preached from the pulpit, maintaining that the decision rested with independent religious scholars, preachers and sermon-givers.

"Even Darakhshan Andrabi cannot take any decision, nor can my officer take any decision. It is the decision of the independent scholars, our preachers, our sermonists, that we should try to remove the vices in society," she said.

She said the initiative was intended to draw attention to pressing social concerns, particularly those affecting the younger generation, including drug abuse, family issues, suicide and mental trauma.

"If we want to talk about drugs today, then we will talk about drugs." | [More on P6](#)

DGP Directs JKP To Intensify Intelligence-Led Operations

Observer News Service

Srinagar: Director General of Police Nalin Prabhat on Tuesday directed officers of the Jammu and Kashmir Police (JKP) to strengthen operational preparedness, enhance inter-agency coordination and remain vigilant to address emerging security challenges and maintain peace across the Union Territory.

Chairing an operational review meeting in hybrid mode at Police Control Room (PCR) Kashmir here, the DGP

emphasised the need to strengthen the professional competence and operational readiness of the force.

"All officers should remain alert, proactive, and operationally prepared," he said.

At the outset, senior officers briefed the DGP on operational preparedness, key security developments and measures being undertaken to maintain peace and security across Jammu and Kashmir. They also highlighted efforts to strengthen intelligence-gathering | [More on P6](#)



Photo : Abid Bhat

Fresh Snowfall In Upper Reaches, Rain Brings Chill To Kashmir

Gulmarg, Sonamarg, Zojila Among Areas To Receive Snow; Wet Spell To Continue Till Oct 15

Observer News Service

Srinagar: Higher reaches of Kashmir received fresh snowfall while rain and gusty winds lashed the plains, including Srinagar, on Tuesday,

bringing down daytime temperatures across the Valley as the Meteorological Department forecast a wet spell till October 15.

Fresh snowfall was reported from several high-altitude

areas, including Gulmarg, Sonamarg, Gurez Valley, Razdan Pass in Bandipora, Wussan in Ganderbal, the Zojila axis, Sadhna Top and Sinthan Top. Mount Affarwat in Gulmarg and areas near

Harmukh Peak also received fresh snow.

The weather conditions followed the influence of an active Western Disturbance over Jammu and Kashmir. Intermittent

SC To Hear Plea Against Immunity Law For CEC, ECs

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, Oct 13: The Supreme Court on Tuesday agreed to hear a plea challenging the validity of a provision of a 2023 law that grants immunity to the chief election commissioner and election commissioners in respect of certain acts undertaken in the discharge of their official duties.

A bench of Chief Justice Surya Kant and Justices Joymalya Bagchi and V Mohana issued notice to the Centre and the Election



Commission seeking their responses on the plea filed by NGO Association for Democratic Reforms.

The plea has sought to declare Section 16 of the Chief Election Commissioner and Other Election Commissioners (Appointment, Conditions of Service and Term of Office) Act, 2023 to be unconstitutional.

Section 16 of the Act says, "Notwithstanding anything contained in any other law for the time being in force, no court shall entertain or continue any civil or criminal proceedings against any person who is or was a Chief Election Commissioner or an Election | [More on P6](#)

CJP Leaders Booked; INDIA Bloc Plans Legal Challenge

Delhi Police on Tuesday registered an FIR against Cockroach Janta Party (CJP) leaders Saurav Das, Ashutosh Ranka and other members for allegedly entering the Jantar Mantar | [More on P6](#)

Shah Targets Rahul, Warns of 2029 Poll Defeat

Union Home Minister Amit Shah on Tuesday hit out at Congress leader Rahul Gandhi over the opposition protests against CEC Gyanesh Kumar and said they should be prepared | [More on P6](#)

PM Scholarship Scheme Hits 94.3% Of Annual Target In J&K

Press Trust of India

Jammu: The Prime Minister's Special Scholarship Scheme (PMSSS) has achieved 94.3 per cent of its annual target for the academic session 2026-27 in Jammu and Kashmir, with 4,715 scholarships allotted against the target of 5,000, an official said on Tuesday.

PMSSS provides students of Jammu & Kashmir and Ladakh through the All India Council for Technical Education (AICTE) counselling process, an opportunity to pursue undergraduate studies in institutions outside these Union Territories, with financial support towards academic fees and maintenance expenses. The scheme aims to improve access to quality higher education, enhance skills and expand employment opportunities for youth.

During the current academic session 2026-27, 1,894 scholarships have been allotted under general degree courses against

2070, 2,741 scholarships under professional courses against 2,830 and 80 scholarships under medical and BDS courses against the target of 100, an official spokesman said.

He said the current achievement is significantly higher than the full-year figures recorded during the previous three academic sessions.

PMSSS had recorded 3,627 beneficiaries in 2023-24, 3,674 in 2024-25 and 3,585 in 2025-26. The current-year allotment is already 1,130 higher than the 2025-26 figure, registering an increase of around 31.5 per cent, the spokesman said.

He said the Higher Education Department, Government of J-K, has been facilitating and coordinating the implementation of PMSSS in the UT, including timely commencement of registration and counselling, besides facilitating through facilitation centres and facilitation-cum-document verification centres | [More on P6](#)

Darbar Move To Jammu On Oct 31, Nov 1; CM Reviews Arrangements



Directs Security, Transport, Healthcare Arrangements; Winter Secretariat To Function In Srinagar

Observer News Service

Srinagar: Chief Minister Omar Abdullah on Tuesday reviewed

arrangements for the Darbar Move Session 2026-27, directing departments to ensure a smooth and secure transition of government offices from Srinagar to Jammu, with adequate transport, security, healthcare and accommodation facilities for employees.

Chairing a | [More on P6](#)

CM Meets Delegations On Film Promotion, Industry, Education

Chief Minister Omar Abdullah on Tuesday met several delegations and individuals at the Civil Secretariat here, discussing issues related to film promotion, industrial infrastructure, regional development, education and youth empowerment. Filmmaker Onir, associated with Anticlock Films, Mumbai, called on the Chief Minister and discussed matters | [More on P6](#)

Power, Water Promises Test NC's Two-Year Record

Observer News Service

Srinagar: Two years after the National Conference (NC) formed the government in Jammu and Kashmir, several of its key commitments on electricity and drinking water remain at different stages of implementation, with some yet to move beyond the announcement stage.

The party had outlined an eight-point agenda in its 2024 Assembly election manifesto, covering 200 units of free electricity, the transfer of hydropower projects from the National Hydroelectric Power Corporation (NHPC) to Jammu and Kashmir, a one-time settlement of electricity arrears, relief in industrial power

tariffs, free drinking water and improved access to water in remote areas.

The agenda also included plugging leakages in the implementation of the Jal Jeevan Mission (JJM) and increasing Jammu and Kashmir's share of free power generated by NHPC-owned projects from 10 per cent to 40 per cent.

However, progress across these areas has been uneven. While a free electricity scheme has moved towards implementation for a limited category of households, other measures, including the proposed transfer of hydropower projects and the expansion of the Union Territory's free-power share, have yet to see concrete action.

The government's first budget narrowed the scope of the 200-unit free electricity commitment to households covered under the Antyodaya Anna Yojana (AAY), a category accounting for around 8.6 per cent of the population. The scheme remains at the tendering stage, leaving its implementation dependent on the completion of the required process.

The proposed transfer of hydropower projects from NHPC to Jammu and Kashmir has also seen no visible movement, with no proposal under consideration for taking the process forward.

The issue is significant for the Union Territory, which continues to | [More on P6](#)

2 Killed, 7 Injured In Road Mishaps

KO Web Desk

Srinagar: Two people, including a 12-year-old girl, were killed and seven others injured in three separate road accidents in Rajouri, Ramban and Doda districts of Jammu and Kashmir on Tuesday, officials said.

The girl, identified as Afia Kousar, was travelling with her father, Abdul Fareed, and grandfather, Makha, in a car from their native Bhangai village in Thanamandi towards Rajdhani when the vehicle skidded off the road and overturned in a nearby field at Islampur village in Rajouri district.

The accident occurred on Tuesday afternoon, officials said.

Rescuers shifted the injured to a hospital for treatment, while the | [More on P6](#)



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Government of Jammu & Kashmir

Office of the Executive Engineer, Trans. Line Maintt.

Division-VII, JKPTCL Bemina, Srinagar-190010

Ph. No. 0194-3516481

e-mail: tlmd-vii.sgr@jk.gov.in

NOTICE INVITING TENDER

e- NIT No-TLMD-7/08 of 2026-27. Dated: 13-10-2026

For and on behalf of the Managing Director JKPTCL J&K, e-tenders (in Two Covers) valid for 180 days from reputed, experienced and financially sound Contractors/ Firms /Original Manufacturers fulfilling the eligibility criteria specified in the Standard Bidding Documents are invited for the works detailed below. e- Tenders need to be accompanied by earnest money deposit (EMD) @ 2% of the estimated cost in the shape of DD/CDR/FDR/BG from any Nationalized/Scheduled Bank pledged to Executive Engineer TLMD-VII JKPTCL Srinagar

The Cost of Tender Documents shall be deposited through Bank Account of Executive Engineer Transmission Line Maintenance Division-7, Srinagar bearing CD A/C No. 0367010200000182 and the bank receipt shall be uploaded

The complete bidding process is online. Bids must be submitted online only. The Standard Bidding Document is available at website <http://jktenders.gov.in>.

S.#	Scope of Work	Qty	Estimated Cost	EMD @ 2%	Tender Fee Incl. GST	Time of Completion
1.	Commissioning of 02 No. 220kV Bays for LILO of 220kV D/C Wagoora-Budgam-Zainakote Transmission Line at GSS Budgam and Circuit-II bay of Wagoora Budgam	Complete Job	Rs. 70.56 Lac	Rs. 1.41 Lac	Rs. 1000.00	120 Days

The information regarding schedule of downloading of the tender document, seeking of clarifications and submission dates thereof is as per the table below:

CRITICAL DATES

Date of Issue of Tender Notice	13-10-2026
Online Start date of downloading of Tender Documents	14-10-2026 (10:00 Hrs.)
Bid clarification start date	14-10-2026 (11:00 Hrs.)
Bid clarification end date	17-10-2026 (14:00 Hrs.)
Online Start date & time of e-Bid submission	17-10-2026 (11:00 Hrs.)
Online Last date & time of e-Bid submission	07-11-2026 (14:00 Hrs.)
Online Techno-Commercial Bids Opening Date & time	09-11-2026 (12:00Hrs.)
Venue for opening of Bids	Office of the Executive Engineer TLMD-VII Srinagar

- Position of Administrative Approval = Accorded
- Position of Funds = Alloted
- Major Head = UT Capex Budget 2026-27
- Only the bidders possessing the qualifying criteria as mentioned in the SBD should participate in the bidding process.
- Clarifications if any can be sought from the office of the under signed one-mail tlmd-vii.sgr@jk.gov.in
- Before participating in the bids, the bidder shall acquaint himself with the site of work and local conditions.
- The Department reserves the right to reject any or all the bids without assigning any reason thereof.

Sd/-
Executive Engineer
TLMD-VII Srinagar

No: TLMD-7/ 2850-53
Dated: 13-10-2026

DIPK-NB-1870/26
DATED: 13-10-2026

Government of Jammu and Kashmir

Public Works (R&B) Department
Civil Secretariat, Srinagar

Subject: Representations for inclusion of names in the Final Seniority List of Junior Engineers (Civil), Diploma Holders.

NOTICE

WHEREAS, a tentative Seniority List of Junior Engineers (Civil), Diploma Holders, was issued vide Notice under endorsement No. PWD-HRM2/29/2021-05 (94847) dated 22.09.2025 for inviting of objections, if any, from the members of the service; and

AND WHEREAS, the objections received thereof from certain Junior Engineers (Civil), Diploma Holders, were duly examined and considered by the Department and, accordingly, the Final Seniority List of Junior Engineers (Civil), Diploma Holders, was issued vide Government Order No. 144-PW (R&B) of 2026 dated 23.04.2026;

AND WHEREAS, after issuance of the said order, the following officials have staked claim and have approached the Department through representations seeking inclusion of their names in the Final Seniority List notified vide Government Order No. 144-PW (R&B) of 2026 dated 23.04.2026:

S. No.	Name of the Official
1.	Nareesh Kumar
2.	Shabir Ahmad Malik
3.	Naveet Gupta
4.	Shabir Ahmad Mir
5.	Rohit Manmar
6.	Abdul Hadi
7.	Waseem Ahmad Laway
8.	Mohammad Asif
9.	Ajaz Hussain Mintoo
10	Abid Hussain

AND WHEREAS, the representations submitted by the aforesaid officials have been examined and scrutinized in the Department and all these claims put forth by the above mentioned Officials lack clear service details besides, after further scrutiny, it has come to fore that some of these claims have not been submitted through the concerned Heads of Departments/Chief Engineers with specific recommendations and the claims are also not supported by the requisite documentary evidence(s).

NOW, THEREFORE, through the medium of this notice the above-mentioned officials are advised to submit their representations/claims, along with the requisite documents & service records as indicated below, to the concerned Chief Engineer/Head of Department (HoD) under whom they are presently posted, for proper scrutiny, verification and specific recommendations:

- Service Book, duly completed and attested by the concerned DDO.
- Initial Appointment Order.
- Matriculation Certificate.
- Any other relevant document/evidence relied upon in support of the claim.
- Degree/Diploma and acceptance order by the Department, if any.
- Regularization Order as Junior Engineer, if elevated from contractual/ lower post.

The concerned officials are further advised not to submit any claim/representation directly to the Administrative Department without prior scrutiny and recommendations by the concerned Chief Engineer/HoD and any representation/claim submitted directly before the Administrative Department, without following the prescribed channel, shall not be entertained.

The concerned Chief Engineers/Heads of Departments (HoDs) are also requested to scrutinize the claims/representations made by these applicants with reference to the relevant service records and applicable rules/instructions and furnish specific and categorical recommendations regarding the admissibility or otherwise of each claim, duly supported by the requisite documents and after proper scrutiny and verification, forward the case(s) to the Public Works (R&B) Department within one week from the date of receipt of the representation/claim, for further examination and consideration.

It is also clarified that mere submission of a representation or supporting documents or mention in the above list shall not confer any right upon the applicant(s) for inclusion, correction or alteration of his/her position in the Final Seniority List, and each claim shall be considered on its merits in accordance with the applicable rules and the records available on the matter on the recommendations of the concerned Chief Engineers/Heads of Departments (HoDs) after verification/scrutiny of records.

DIPK-6670/26
dated: 13-10-2026

No. PWD-HRM2/29/2021-05 (94847)

Under Secretary to the Government
Dated: 12-10-2026

PUBLIC NOTICE

I, NISAR HUSAIN KATH, son of ALI MOHAMMAD KATH, resident of Jammu & Kashmir, hereby declare that my name has been incorrectly recorded as NISSAR HUSAIN KATH in my Driving Licence No. JK04 2020 0000348. As per my Aadhaar Card, my correct name is NISAR HUSAIN KATH.

Henceforth, I shall be known as NISAR HUSAIN KATH for all official and legal purposes.

Any person having any objection to the above-mentioned name change may submit their objection to the concerned Regional Transport Office (RTO), Srinagar, within 7 (seven) days from the date of publication of this notice. No objection shall be entertained thereafter.

MEDIA LINE ADVT

PUBLIC NOTICE

This is information for the general public that in Adhar card bearing No 6201 9015 6491 the name is entered as Riyaz Ahmed Khan while my actual name is Reyaz Ahmad Khan. Now i want its correction, in this regard if anybody having any objection may contact Concern department with in a period of seven days. No objection shall be entertained after that.

REYAZ AHMAD KHAN
S/O NOOR MOHAMMAD KHAN
R/o PAMPOSH COLONY NATIPORA.

mcb

PUBLIC NOTICE

This is information for the general public that in Adhar card bearing No 7915 0651 3501 the name is entered as JAISHA BHAT while my actual name is JAISHA BILAL. Now i want its correction, in this regard if anybody having any objection may contact Concern department with in a period of seven days. No objection shall be entertained after that.

JAISHA BILAL
D/O BILAL AHMAD BHAT
R/o RAJ BAGH SRINAGAR.

mcb

PUBLIC NOTICE

This is information for the general public that in Adhar card bearing No 966785504985 the name is entered as GH HUSSAN KUMAR S/O GH MUSTAFA KUMAR while My actual name is GH HUSSAIN KUMAR S/O MUSTAFA KUMAR. Now i want its correction, in this regard if anybody having any objection may contact Concern department with in a period of seven days. No objection shall be entertained after that.

GH HUSSAIN KUMAR
S/O MUSTAFA KUMAR
R/o KAKANMARAN BUDGAM.

mcb

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PUBLIC NOTICE

ww It is notified for the information of the general public that my original Class 12th Discharge Certificate (DC) and Character Certificate (CC) issued by Government Higher Secondary School, Tilgam have been lost/misplaced. The duplicates of the same have been prepared vide File No. 2 and Serial No. 262 dated 30/01/2024. If anyone finds the original certificates, please return them to the address mentioned below or contact the school authorities within 7 days from the publication of this notice. Objections, if any, should be filed before the Principal of Government Higher Secondary School, Tilgam, within the stipulated time. Any misuse of the lost original certificates shall not be my responsibility.

Candidate Name: Farhat Jan
Father's Name: Ghulam Ahmad Teli
Residence: Chandeer Seer, Pattan, District Baramulla, J&K;
Class: 12th fko

PUBLIC NOTICE

I have applied for the issuance of Fertilizer licence under name and style "Sami traders". If anybody has any objection in this regard he/she may file them in the concerned office within seven days. After that no objection shall be entertained.

Shamima Akhter
W/o Bashir Ahmad Tantray
Pathallan Pattan District. Bla FKO

PUBLIC NOTICE

The DOB OF my daughter has been wrongly written in SCHOOL RECORDS AS 10-11-2013 While her correct DOB is 10-11-2012. Now I have applied for the correction of the same if anybody has any objection in this regard he/she may file them in the Govt High School Hardu Aboora within seven days. After that no objection shall be entertained.

Altaf Ahmad Khanday
F/o Humaira Altaf
R/o Hardu Aboora bmg

PUBLIC NOTICE

Subject: Notice regarding issuance of Legal Heir Certificate Public at large is hereby informed that an application has been submitted before the concerned authority for issuance of a Legal Heir Certificate in respect of Late Ghulam Mohammad Sheikh S/o Abdul Rahman Sheikh R/o Aqilpora Razwen Tehsil Magam District Budgam date of death 10-05-2026. The deceased is stated to have left behind the following legal heirs:

Shah Bano	Wife of deceased.
Sheikh Siraj Ul Alam	Son of deceased.
Mudasir Ahmad Sheikh	Son of deceased.
Mehbooba Akhter	Daughter of deceased
Jabeena Akhter	Daughter of deceased
Shameema Akhter	Daughter of deceased
Irshada Akhter	Daughter of deceased

Any person having any objection, claim, interest or information contrary to the above-mentioned facts and proposed issuance of the Legal Heir Certificate is hereby called upon to file the same before the concerned authority within 15 days from the date of publication of this notice.

In case no objection is received within the stipulated period, the matter shall be processed in accordance with the applicable rules and the Legal Heir Certificate may be issued in favour of the persons found entitled thereto.

Applicant
Sheikh Siraj Ul Alam BMG
S/o Ghulam Mohammad Sheikh
R/o Aqilpora Razwen Magam

PUBLIC NOTICE

Subject: Legal Heirship of Late Ghulam Ahmad Parray I, Fatima Begum, W/o Late Ghulam Ahmad Parray, R/o Goigam, Tehsil Kawarhama, District Baramulla, J&K UT, hereby inform the general public that my husband, Late Ghulam Ahmad Parray, S/o Munawar Parray, passed away on 01-04-2026. The following are the legal heirs of my deceased husband:

Fatima Begum – Wife, Age 77 years
Ashaq Hussain Parray – Son, Age 32 years
Posha Bano – Daughter, Age 31 years
Umar Ahmad Parray – Son, Age 26 years
Snowber Gul – Daughter, Age 18 years
Rabiya Jan – Daughter, Age 14 years

Any person having any objection regarding the above-mentioned legal heirs is hereby asked to file the same before the concerned Revenue Department within 07 (seven) days from the date of publication of this notice, failing which the matter shall be processed as per the applicable rules.

Sd/-
Fatima Begum
W/o Late Ghulam Ahmad Parray
R/o Goigam, Tehsil Kawarhama,
District Baramulla, J&K UT. FKO

PUBLIC NOTICE

MOHD ARIF S/O MOHD BASHIR R/O bunikhet Buni Khet (Dhooni khet) DIST Punch it is information for general Public that I want to apply for DEE Class Contractor Card if anybody is he/ she may contact at Chief Engineer CI &D Wing JKPOC Bemina within a period of seven days No objection Shall be entertained

AB



भारतीय विमानपत्तन आर्थिक विनियामक प्राधिकरण
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भारत सरकार/Government of India

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Ph.: 011-24695044

PUBLIC NOTICE

STAKEHOLDERS' CONSULTATION MEETING ON
DETERMINATION OF TARIFF FOR THE AERONAUTICAL SERVICES FOR ALLURI
SITARAMA RAJU INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT, BHOGAPURAM (VTZ) FOR
THE FIRST CONTROL PERIOD (01.04.2026 – 31.03.2031)

Airports Economic Regulatory Authority of India (AERA) has issued Consultation Paper No. 06/2026-27 on 01.10.2026 (which is available on AERA website at URL www.aera.gov.in) w.r.t the Tariff Determination for the Aeronautical Services for Alluri Sitarama Raju International Airport, Bhogapuram (VTZ) for the First Control Period (01.04.2026 – 31.03.2031).

In accordance with the provision of Section 13(4) of the AERA Act, 2008, the various tariff proposals of the Authority contained in the Consultation Paper, are put forth for Stakeholders' Consultation. A Stakeholders Consultation Meeting in hybrid mode (Physical/Online) in this regard is scheduled on 16th October, 2026 (Friday) at 3:30 PM at:

Stakeholders Room, 3rd Floor, Udaan Bhawan,
Safdarjung Airport, New Delhi – 110003.

All stakeholders like Passengers/Passengers' Associations, General Public, Airport Operators, Airlines, Industry Associations/Bodies, Independent Service providers for Cargo, Ground Handling Fuel Farm etc., are requested to join the said meeting and give their valuable suggestions/comments/views on the aforesaid Consultation Paper on tariff proposal of Alluri Sitarama Raju International Airport, Bhogapuram (VTZ).

Participants joining in person may send their confirmation to AERA before the above-mentioned date of meeting with Name, email address, mobile number, vehicle number by email (to director-ps@acra.gov.in and rajan.guptal@acra.gov.in). Online link will be shared on AERA website (<https://acra.gov.in>) before the Stakeholders meeting under Tab "News and Announcements".

CBC 03112/11/0016/2627

Sd/-
Secretary, AERA



CITY

Lal Chowk Post Office To Remain Open Till 9 PM

Observer News Service

Srinagar: In a move aimed at making postal services more accessible, the Lal Chowk Post Office in Srinagar will remain open till 9 pm instead of the existing 5 pm, allowing customers four additional hours to book mail and parcels.

In a statement issued, a spokesperson said the revised timings would particularly benefit shopkeepers, business establishments and tourists visiting Lal Chowk, one of Srinagar's busiest commercial hubs.

Adam Mohiuddin, IPoS, Senior Superintendent of Post Offices, said the extension was intended to make postal services more convenient for people who cannot visit the post office during regular working hours.

"Extension of working hours is intended to make postal services more accessible and convenient for people, particularly those unable to visit the post office during regular working hours," Mohiuddin said.

MLA Tanvir Sadiq Lays Foundation Stone for Alipora Chowk Upgrade

Observer News Service

Srinagar: MLA Zadibal and Chief Spokesperson NC, Tanvir Sadiq has laid the foundation stone for the upgradation of Alipora Chowk at Bank Mill Stop in Srinagar at an estimated cost of 82.97 lakh, aiming to improve traffic movement and road safety at the busy junction.

The junction serves as an important link between the Hazratbal Shrine and Soura Hospital and has witnessed frequent accidents and severe traffic congestion, Sadiq said in a statement shared on social media.

Emphasising the need to improve urban infrastructure beyond routine road construction, Sadiq said junction improvements, drainage, macadamisation and better traffic management were essential for making Srinagar's roads safer and more accessible.

He said the development of key junctions would help ease traffic congestion, strengthen connectivity and contribute to the overall improvement of the city's infrastructure.

DIPR, Islamia College Hold Awareness Programme to Combat Drug Abuse

Observer News Service

Srinagar: The Cultural Unit Kashmir of the Department of Information and Public Relations (DIPR), in collaboration with Islamia College of Science and Commerce, Srinagar, on Tuesday organised a day-long awareness programme under the Nasha Mukht Abhiyan, calling for collective efforts to protect young people from the growing menace of drug abuse.

The programme aimed to sensitise students about the harmful consequences of substance abuse and encourage them to adopt a healthy, responsible and pro-

ductive lifestyle. Principal of Islamia College of Science and Commerce, Dr Aijaz Ahmad Hakak, emphasised that creating awareness about drug abuse was a collective responsibility and a duty of every individual.

He called upon students, teachers and members of civil society to work together to safeguard the younger generation from the devastating consequences of substance abuse, stressing the importance of sustained awareness and community participation in tackling the problem.

Addressing the gathering, Assistant Exhibition and Cultural Officer of Cultural Unit Kashmir,

DIPR, Syed Shakeel Shan, urged students to reconnect with Kashmir's rich Sufi heritage and the timeless teachings of Sufi saints, which promote peace, compassion, discipline and moral integrity.

He stressed the importance of respecting elders, following their guidance and strengthening moral values to resist negative influences and make responsible choices in life.

Shan also encouraged students to focus on education, creativity, innovation and social service, observing that meaningful engagement in constructive activities could play an important role in preventing

substance abuse and fostering a healthier society.

The programme featured thematic skits, musical performances and awareness speeches presented by artists of Cultural Unit Kashmir and National Service Scheme (NSS) volunteers of the college.

Through creative performances and thought-provoking presentations, the participants highlighted the harmful effects of drug addiction and conveyed a strong message against substance abuse. The performances also underscored the importance of individual responsibility and collective action in promoting a drug-free society.

PARAS Srinagar Offers Joint Replacement Surgeries Under Ayushman Bharat

Initiative aims to make advanced orthopaedic care accessible to eligible patients



Observer News Service

Srinagar: PARAS Health Srinagar has announced joint replacement surgeries for eligible patients under the Ayushman Bharat Pradhan Mantri Jan Arogya Yojana (AB-PMJAY), in a move aimed at improving access to specialised orthopaedic treatment for people facing financial constraints.

The initiative seeks to benefit patients suffering from debilitating knee and hip conditions that cause persistent pain, restrict mobility and affect their ability to perform everyday activities. An experienced team of orthopaedic specialists at the hospital will undertake the procedures, supported by comprehensive clinical care and hospital facilities.

The initiative is expected to provide financial relief to eligible beneficiaries who require joint replacement surgery but may find the cost of advanced treatment difficult to afford.

Dr Murtuza Habib, Facility Director, PARAS Health Srinagar, said the initiative reflects the hospital's commitment to making quality healthcare more accessible across Jammu and Kashmir.

"Joint pain and mobility-related problems can significantly affect a person's

independence, confidence and everyday life. Through joint replacement surgeries under Ayushman Bharat, our endeavour is to help eligible patients access expert orthopaedic care without the burden of prohibitive treatment costs. Our team of specialists is committed to providing comprehensive care, with a focus on patient safety, recovery and improved quality of life," he said.

Seema Vig, Senior Vice President and Regional Director, PARAS Health, said access to quality healthcare should not be restricted by financial circumstances.

"By extending joint replacement services under Ayushman Bharat, we aim to support eligible patients in regaining mobility and living healthier, more independent lives. We remain committed to strengthening specialised healthcare services and bringing advanced treatment closer to the communities we serve," she said.

Joint replacement surgery is commonly recommended for patients with severe joint damage, advanced arthritis and other conditions that significantly impair movement and daily functioning. Depending on the patient's condition and clinical assessment, knee or hip replacement may be advised when other treatment options are no longer sufficient.

Secretary Tourism Reviews Functioning Of SKICC



Observer News Service

Srinagar: Secretary Tourism, Avny Lavasa chaired an introductory meeting to review the overall functioning, management and operational capability of the Sher-i-Kashmir International Convention Centre (SKICC), the premier Government-run international convention centre in Jammu and Kashmir.

On arrival, the Secretary was accorded a warm welcome by SKICC officials led by the Director General, SKICC, Mufi Fareduddin. During the meeting, the SKICC management gave a detailed presentation on the Centre's operational capability, its importance as a leading MICE (Meetings, Incentives, Conferences and Exhibitions) destination, and other key aspects of its functioning. The Director General briefed the Secretary on the current status of bookings, the revenue structure and the Centre's future plans. Issues relating to the

“The SKICC management gave a detailed presentation on the Centre's operational capability, its importance as a leading MICE (Meetings, Incentives, Conferences and Exhibitions) destination, and other key aspects of its functioning

promotion of SKICC and its MICE services were also discussed. The Secretary gave a patient hearing to the issues raised and assured all possible support to take SKICC to new heights as a world-class convention destination.

Earlier, the Secretary toured the entire Centre to get a first-hand feel of its facilities and infrastructure.

The Secretary was accompanied by senior officers of the Department, including Special Secretary Tourism, Suraj Parkash Rukwal, Director Planning and Director Finance.

NORTHERN RAILWAY
Invitation of Tenders through E-Procurement system.
Sr.Divisional Material Manager, N.Rly., Store Branch DRM Office, Firozpur for and on behalf of President of India, invited tenders through e-procurement system for the supply of the following items:-

Tender No.	Description	Quantity	Due date
94265181A	SIC of HRE (Hydraulic Re-railing Equipment)	01 Set	11.11.2026

Note: Above tenders with detailed description are uploaded on IREPS site i.e. www.ireps.gov.in. The firm, who desires to participate against e-tenders, is advised to electronically register themselves on the above website for which they would require to have a class III digital certificate form certifying Agencies authorized under IT Act 2000 by Govt. of India. Manual offers against e-tenders will not be accepted.

Tender Notice No. 09/2026-27 Date: 12.10.2026 3545/2026

NORTHERN RAILWAY
Notice for Tender for Development and operation of Warehouse on Railway land at Bari Brahman Railway station for a period of 25 years.
Sr. Divisional Commercial Manager, Divisional Railway Manager's Office, Jammu Division, for and on behalf of the President of India invites e-tender from interested eligible parties for "Development and operation of Warehouse/ Storage Units through private investment near/at Bari Brahman Railway station for a period of 25 years." under schedule-3 as per Master Circular 2026 on "Rail Based Logistics through development of Gati-Shakti Multi-Modal Cargo Terminals (GCTs) and 'Cargo Related Facilities' (CRF) issued vide Railway Board's letter no. 2021/TC(FM)/18/23 dated 14.02.2026. Eligible and interested parties may submit their interest.
For more details & Other information kindly visit Indian Railway's website: www.ireps.gov.in or contact 9596732950.
Last date of submission of Tender: Upto 15:00 Hrs. on 04.11.2026.
No.: NR-FZRCOML(GDS)/22/2026-CCTC/JAT/NR Date: 13.10.2026 3561/2026

PROCLAMATION REQUIRING THE APPEARANCE OF ACCUSED PERSON
See Section 84 BNSS
Whereas complaint has been made before me that accused Person **Yaseen Rasool Ghani @ Umar Gul** S/o Gulam Rasool Ghani **R/o:** Baba Pora Habbra Kadal Srinagar CPO Jammu and Kashmir has committed (or is suspected to have committed) the offence in **FIR No. 166/2026 U/s: 69/351(2) Bhartiya Nyaya Sanhita-2023, PS: Shaheen Bagh, Delhi**, and it has been returned to a warrant of arrest thereupon issued that the said accused person(s) **Yaseen Rasool Ghani @ Umar Gul**, cannot be found and whereas it has been shown to my satisfaction that the said accused person(s) **Yaseen Rasool Ghani @ Umar Gul**, has absconded (or is concealing himself to avoid the service of the said warrant). Proclamation is hereby made that the said accused person **Yaseen Rasool Ghani @ Umar Gul**, of **FIR No. 166/2026 U/s: 69/351(2) Bhartiya Nyaya Sanhita-2023, PS: Shaheen Bagh, Delhi**, is required to appear before this Court to answer the said complaint on or before **30.11.2026**.

By Order
Dr. Raj Kumar Singh
Judicial Magistrate First Class-11 South East
Court Room No. 09 Main Building
Saket Court Complex, New Delhi

DP/14124/SE/2026
(Court Matter)

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 :-

02252/02251 New Delhi–Patna Jn.–New Delhi		Trips	
Reserved Vande Bharat Festival Special Exp. Train		36	
Train No. 02252	STATIONS	Train No. 02251	
Arr.	Dep.	Arr.	Dep.
---	08:35	New Delhi	23:30
21:30	---	Patna Jn.	10:00

Days of Run: 02252 Ex New Delhi on 16.10.26, 18.10.26 & 21.10.26 to 25.11.26 (Mon, Wed, Sat) and 02251 Ex Patna Jn. on 17.10.26, 19.10.26 & 22.10.26 to 26.11.26 (Tue, Thu, Sun).

Stoppages: Aligarh Jn., Kanpur Central, Prayagraj Jn., Pt. Deen Dayal Upadhyaya Jn., Buxar & Ara stations

Accommodation: Executive Chair Car & AC Chair Car

04652/04651 Amritsar-Jaynagar-Amritsar		Trips	
Reserved Festival Special Express Train		40	
Train No. 04652	STATIONS	Train No. 04651	
Arr.	Dep.	Arr.	Dep.
---	10:55	Amritsar	15:00
02:30	02:40	Lucknow	22:40
20:00	---	Jaynagar	04:15

Days of Run: 04652 Ex Amritsar on every Wed, Fri, Sun from 16.10.26 to 29.11.26 & 04651 Ex Jaynagar on every Fri, Sun, Tue from 18.10.26 to 01.12.26.

Stoppages: Jalandhar Cantt, Ludhiana Jn, Ambala Cantt, Panipat Jn., Delhi Jn, Moradabad, Lucknow Jn, Shahganj Jn, Phephna Jn, Ballia, Sahatwar, Bakulha, Chhapra, Muzaffarpur Jn, Samastipur Jn, Darbhanga Jn & Madhubani stations

Accommodation: Sleeper & General

04094/04093 Delhi Jn.-Santragachi Jn.-Delhi Jn. Reserved Festival Special Exp. Train		Trips	
Train No. 04094		Train No. 04093	
Arr.	Dep.	Arr.	Dep.
---	00:30	Delhi Jn.	00:25
07:40	---	Santragachi Jn.	18:10

Days of Run: 04094 Ex Delhi Jn. on 14.10.26 (Wednesday) & 04093 Ex Santragachi Jn. on 15.10.26 (Thursday).

Stoppages: Tundla Jn., Govindpuri, Prayagraj Jn., Pt. Deen Dayal Upadhyaya Jn., Bhabua Road, Sasaram, Dehri On Sone, Anugraha N Road, Guraru, Gaya Jn., Koderma, Hazaribagh Rd, NSC Bose Jn, Gomoh, Bhojudih Jn., Adra, Bankura, Bishnupur, Midnapore & Kharagpur stations

Accommodation: 2 Tier AC, 3 Tier AC, Sleeper & General

04406/04405 Shakur Basti-Mansi Jn.-Shakur Basti Unreserved Festival Special Exp. Train		Trips	
Train No. 04406		Train No. 04405	
Arr.	Dep.	Arr.	Dep.
---	19:10	Shakur Basti	11:30
02:30	---	Mansi Jn.	04:30

Days of Run: 04406 Ex Shakur Basti on 05.11.26, 06.11.26, 07.11.26, 10.11.26, 11.11.26, 12.11.26, 13.11.26 & 14.11.26 & 04405 Ex Mansi Jn. on 07.11.26, 08.11.26, 09.11.26, 12.11.26, 13.11.26, 14.11.26, 15.11.26 & 16.11.26.

Stoppages: New Delhi, Ghaziabad, Aligarh Jn, Tundla Jn, Etawah Jn, Kanpur Central, Unnao Jn, Aishbagh, Badshahnagar, Barabanki Jn, Gonda Jn, Basti, Khalilabad, Gorakhpur Jn, Deoria Sadar, Siwan Jn, Chhapra, Sonpur, Hajipur Jn, Shahpur Patoree, Barauni Jn, Begusarai & Khagariajn. stations

Accommodation: Sleeper & General

04129/04130 Mirzapur-Utraitia-Mirzapur Unreserved Mela Special Train		Trips	
Train No. 04129		Train No. 04130	
Arr.	Dep.	Arr.	Dep.
---	16:05	Mirzapur	08:30
21:03	21:05	Rae Bareilly Jn.	02:03
23:10	---	Utraitia	01:00

Days of Run: 04129 Ex Mirzapur upto 26.10.26 & 04130 Ex Utraitia upto 27.10.26.

Stoppages: Vindhyachal, Meja Road, Naini Jn, Prayagraj Jn, Prayag Jn, Kunda Hamnagarj, Unchahar Jn, Rae Bareilly Jn & Bachhrawan stations

Accommodation: General Class

04485/04486 New Delhi-Shri Mata Vaishno Devi Katra-New Delhi Reserved Festival Special Express Train		Trips	
Train No. 04485		Train No. 04486	
Arr.	Dep.	Arr.	Dep.
---	14:00	New Delhi	23:30
20:30	20:35	Jalandhar Cantt.	16:15
03:00	---	Shri Mata Vaishno Devi Katra	10:00

Days of Run: 04485 Ex New Delhi on 14.10.26, 18.10.26 and 20.10.26 & 04486 Ex Shri Mata Vaishno Devi Katra on 15.10.26, 19.10.26 and 21.10.26.

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

Accommodation: 1st AC, 1st AC cum 2 Tier AC, 2 Tier AC, 3 Tier AC, Sleeper Class

For detailed information regarding stoppages and timings of above train, please call RailMadad Helpline No. 139 or visit enquiry website: www.enquiry.indianrail.gov.in or NTES App.

04638/04637 Amritsar Jn.-Chhapra- Amritsar Jn. Reserved Festival Special Express Train		Trips	
Train No. 04638		Train No. 04637	
Arr.	Dep.	Arr.	Dep.
---	19:40	Amritsar Jn.	00:20
20:45	---	Chhapra	22:15

Days of Run: 04638 Ex Amritsar Jn. on every Monday from 19.10.26 to 30.11.26 & 04637 Ex Chhapra on every Tuesday from 20.10.26 to 01.12.26

Stoppages: Beas Jn., Jalandhar City Jn., Phagwara Jn, Dhandari Kalan, Sirhind, Rajpura, Ambala Cantt, Yamunanagar Jagadhri, Saharanpur, Moradabad, Bareilly, Shahjahanpur, Sitapur Jn, Gonda Jn., Gorakhpur Jn, Kaptanganj Jn, Padrauna, Tamkuhi Road, Thawe Jn, Siwan Jn & Ekma stations

Accommodation: Sleeper Class

04640/04639 Chheharta-Muzaffarpur Jn.- Chheharta Reserved Festival Special Express Train		Trips	
Train No. 04640		Train No. 04639	
Arr.	Dep.	Arr.	Dep.
---	08:35	Chheharta	21:30
18:05	18:13	Moradabad	11:00
13:10	---	Muzaffarpur Jn.	16:00

Days of Run: 04640 Ex Chheharta on every Monday from 19.10.26 to 30.11.26 & 04639 Ex Muzaffarpur Jn. on every Tuesday from 20.10.26 to 01.12.26

Stoppages: Amritsar Jn., Beas Jn., Jalandhar City Jn., Ludhiana Jn, Sirhind, Rajpura, Ambala Cantt, Yamunanagar Jagadhri, Saharanpur, Moradabad, Bareilly, Shahjahanpur Jn., Sitapur Jn, Gonda Jn., Gorakhpur Jn., Kaptanganj Jn, Siswa Bazar, Bagaha, Narkatiaganj Jn, Bettiah & Sagauli Jn stations

Accommodation: 2 Tier AC, 3 Tier AC & Sleeper Class

09083/09084 Bandra Terminus-Gorakhpur Jn.-Bandra Terminus Weekly Unreserved Spl. Train (Special Fare)		Trips	
Train No. 09083		Train No. 09084	
Arr.	Dep.	Arr.	Dep.
---	04:30	Bandra Terminus	11:15
14:50	14:52	Barabanki Jn.	03:00
19:30	---	Gorakhpur Jn.	22:45

Days of Run: 09083 Ex Bandra Terminus on 18.10.26 and 25.10.26 & 09084 Ex Gorakhpur Jn. on 20.10.26 and 27.10.26.

Stoppages: Borivali, Palghar, Vapi, Surat, Vadodra Jn., Rattlam Jn., Kota Jn., Sawai Madhopur Jn., Idgah Agra Jn., Tundla Jn., Kanpur Central, Aishbagh, Barabanki Jn., Gonda Jn. & Basti stations

Accommodation: General Class

04085/04086 New Delhi-Shri Mata Vaishno Devi Katra-New Delhi Reserved Festival Special Train		Trips	
Train No. 04085		Train No. 04086	
Arr.	Dep.	Arr.	Dep.
---	14:00	New Delhi	23:30
20:30	20:35	Jalandhar Cantt	16:15
03:00	---	Shri Mata Vaishno Devi Katra	10:00

Days of Run: 04085 Ex New Delhi on 15.10.26 and 17.10.26 & 04086 Ex Shri Mata Vaishno Devi Katra on 16.10.26 and 18.10.26.

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

Accommodation: 2 Tier AC, 3 Tier AC & Sleeper Class

03437/03438 Malda Town–Haridwar– Malda Town Special Train		Trips	
Train No. 03437		Train No. 03438	
Arr.	Dep.	Arr.	Dep.
---	10:00	Malda Town	23:55
01:00	01:10	Varanasi	09:05
17:00	---	Haridwar	18:35

Days of Run: 03437 Ex Malda Town on every Saturday from 17.10.26 to 28.11.26 & 03438 Ex Haridwar on every Sunday from 18.10.26 to 29.11.26.

Stoppages: New Farakka, Barharwa Jn, Sahibganj Jn, Kahalgaon, Bhagalpur, Sultanganj, Jamalpur Jn, Abhaipur, Kiul Jn, Mokama, Bakhtiyarpur Jn, Rajendra Nagar Terminal, Patna Jn, Danapur, Ara, Buxar, Pt. Deen Dayal Upadhyaya Jn., Varanasi, Sultanpur, Utraitia, Alam Nagar, Bareilly, Moradabad & Laksar stations

Accommodation: 3 Tier AC, Sleeper & General Class

01207/01208 Nagpur Jn.-Samastipur Jn.-Nagpur Jn. Weekly Special Train		Trips	
Train No. 01207		Train No. 01208	
Arr.	Dep.	Arr.	Dep.
---	10:40	Nagpur Jn.	11:30
08:13	08:15	Barabanki Jn.	15:08
23:45	---	Samstipur Jn.	03:00

Days of Run: 01207 Ex Nagpur Jn. on every Wednesday from 21.10.26 to 11.11.26 & 01208 Ex Samastipur Jn. on every Friday from 23.10.26 to 13.11.26.

Stoppages: Betul, Itarsi Jn., Bhopal Jn., Virangana Lakshmbai Jhansi Jn., Kanpur Central, Aishbagh Jn., Barabanki Jn., Gonda Jn., Basti, Gorakhpur Jn., Chhapra Jn., Sonpur Jn., Hajipur Jn. & Muzaffarpur Jn. stations

Accommodation: 3 Tier AC, Sleeper & General Class

01207/01208 Nagpur Jn.-Samastipur Jn.-Nagpur Jn. Weekly Special Train		Trips	
Train No. 01207		Train No. 01208	
Arr.	Dep.	Arr.	Dep.
---	10:40	Nagpur Jn.	11:30
08:13	08:15	Barabanki Jn.	15:08
23:45	---	Samstipur Jn.	03:00

Days of Run: 01207 Ex Nagpur Jn. on every Wednesday from 21.10.26 to 11.11.26 & 01208 Ex Samastipur Jn. on every Friday from 23.10.26 to 13.11.26.

Stoppages: Betul, Itarsi Jn., Bhopal Jn., Virangana Lakshmbai Jhansi Jn., Kanpur Central, Aishbagh Jn., Barabanki Jn., Gonda Jn., Basti, Gorakhpur Jn., Chhapra Jn., Sonpur Jn., Hajipur Jn. & Muzaffarpur Jn. stations

Accommodation: 3 Tier AC, Sleeper & General Class

01207/01208 Nagpur Jn.-Samastipur Jn.-Nagpur Jn. Weekly Special Train		Trips	
Train No. 01207		Train No. 01208	
Arr.	Dep.	Arr.	Dep.
---	10:40	Nagpur Jn.	11:30
08:13	08:15	Barabanki Jn.	15:08
23:45	---	Samstipur Jn.	03:00

Days of Run: 01207 Ex Nagpur Jn. on every Wednesday from 21.10.26 to 11.11.26 & 01208 Ex Samastipur Jn. on every Friday from 23.10.26 to 13.11.26.

Stoppages: Betul, Itarsi Jn., Bhopal Jn., Virangana Lakshmbai Jhansi Jn., Kanpur Central, Aishbagh Jn., Barabanki Jn., Gonda Jn., Basti, Gorakhpur Jn., Chhapra Jn., Sonpur Jn., Hajipur Jn. & Muzaffarpur Jn. stations

Accommodation: 3 Tier AC, Sleeper & General Class

01207/01208 Nagpur Jn.-Samastipur Jn.-Nagpur Jn. Weekly Special Train		Trips	
Train No. 01207		Train No. 01208	
Arr.	Dep.	Arr.	Dep.
---	10:40	Nagpur Jn.	11:30
08:13	08:15	Barabanki Jn.	15:08
23:45	---	Samstipur Jn.	03:00

Days of Run: 01207 Ex Nagpur Jn. on every Wednesday from 21.10.26 to 11.11.26 & 01208 Ex Samastipur Jn. on every Friday from 23.10.26 to 13.11.26.

Stoppages: Betul, Itarsi Jn., Bhopal Jn., Virangana Lakshmbai Jhansi Jn., Kanpur Central, Aishbagh Jn., Barabanki Jn., Gonda Jn., Basti, Gorakhpur Jn., Chhapra Jn., Sonpur Jn., Hajipur Jn. & Muzaffarpur Jn. stations

Accommodation: 3 Tier AC, Sleeper & General Class

01207/01208 Nagpur Jn.-Samastipur Jn.-Nagpur Jn. Weekly Special Train		Trips	
Train No. 01207		Train No. 01208	
Arr.	Dep.	Arr.	Dep.
---	10:40	Nagpur Jn.	11:30
08:13	08:15	Barabanki Jn.	15:08
23:45	---	Samstipur Jn.	03:00

Days of Run: 01207 Ex Nagpur Jn. on every Wednesday from 21.10.26 to 11.11.26 & 01208 Ex Samastipur Jn. on every Friday from 23.10.26 to 13.11.26.

Stoppages: Betul, Itarsi Jn., Bhopal Jn., Virangana Lakshmbai Jhansi Jn., Kanpur Central, Aishbagh Jn., Barabanki Jn., Gonda Jn., Basti, Gorakhpur Jn., Chhapra Jn., Sonpur Jn., Hajipur Jn. & Muzaffarpur Jn. stations

Accommodation: 3 Tier AC, Sleeper & General Class

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KO VIEW

Sermons Aren’t Scripts

The Jammu and Kashmir Waqf Board’s proposal for uniform Friday sermons has created a political and religious controversy, drawing opposition from Chief Minister Omar Abdullah, PDP president Mehbooba Mufti and Kashmir’s chief cleric, Mirwaiz Umar Farooq.

The dispute raises a basic question about the limits of administrative authority in religious affairs.

An initiative presented as a means of promoting social harmony should not become a source of division.

The Board, headed by senior BJP leader Darakhshan Andrabi, proposed forming a core committee of muftis, imams and khathees to identify common topics for Friday sermons at affiliated mosques and shrines. Its stated aims include promoting religious awareness, moral values, unity and social welfare.

These are legitimate concerns, as religious scholars can play a constructive role in addressing drug addiction, family problems and other challenges facing communities.

The controversy, however, concerns who decides what religious leaders preach and whether common guidance could become an administrative directive.

Omar Abdullah called the move an unacceptable attempt by the BJP to interfere in Muslim religious affairs. Mehbooba Mufti described it as interference in religious practice, while the Mutahida Majlis-e-Ulema, headed by Mirwaiz Umar Farooq, argued that religious guidance belongs to recognised scholars and institutions rather than administrative authorities.

The Board chairperson has since denied that any order prescribing uniform sermons was issued and maintained that preachers remain free to choose their subjects.

That clarification is important, but reports of the proceedings have raised questions about the initiative’s actual status. A Waqf Board official reportedly told clerics at an October 11 meeting that a directive for common sermons had been issued about a month earlier.

The Board must resolve this contradiction clearly. If the proposal involves voluntary coordination among scholars, it should say so explicitly and establish safeguards against compulsory implementation. If officials intend to prescribe sermon topics, the Board must explain the legal basis and limits of that authority. Public confidence cannot rest on conflicting accounts of what an institution intends to do.

There is a clear difference between scholars agreeing voluntarily to address shared social concerns and an administrative body directing religious discourse. A common discussion about drug addiction may benefit congregations, but local imams should retain the freedom to decide how such concerns relate to their communities.

Religious guidance earns respect through knowledge, trust and the freedom to speak.

Political leaders should also avoid turning the dispute into another contest that deepens communal suspicion. The issue warrants scrutiny without exaggerated claims about motives or consequences.

The Board has administrative responsibilities concerning Waqf properties, and its work should remain focused on those duties while respecting religious independence.

The Power Behind
the Portfolio

With key postings controlled by the Lieutenant Governor, Jammu and Kashmir’s elected government needs ministers who can make its own bureaucracy answer.



Farooq Ahmad Khan



An officer who raises legal concerns, points to financial irregularities or flags a genuine risk is doing an important job. A capable minister listens, examines the advice and changes course when the facts support it.

can fulfil their responsibilities when administrative channels bypass them.

An experienced minister understands how government works beyond public announcements. He knows how a file can keep moving on paper while the actual work remains undone. He can tell when further examination is needed, when repeated consultations cause delays, when financial concerns have a sound basis and when legal arguments are being used

to avoid a decision.

He also knows what to ask when an officer says a proposal is under examination. He asks what needs to be examined and why.

If approval is pending, he asks when it was sought, what remains unresolved and who needs to act. When an officer points to an obstacle, he asks whether there is a lawful way around it.

These questions turn vague assurances into clear decisions, assigned responsibilities and deadlines.

Experience also teaches a minister to exercise restraint.

An officer who raises legal concerns, points to financial irregularities or flags a genuine risk is doing an important job. A capable minister listens, examines the advice and changes course when the facts support it.

Managing a department takes knowledge and sound judgment. Anger and public reprimands achieve little. The goal should be an administration that gives honest advice and carries out lawful decisions. Accountability to the public and the work of government must guide officials, rather than personal loyalty to any individual.

Senior leaders with years of experience in the Assembly and government understand how the system works. This knowledge helps them deal more effectively with senior officials.

But age and years in office alone do not make someone a capable minister. What counts is the ability to understand a department, ask the right questions, check whether decisions are carried out and remain accessible to the public.

Younger legislators can have these skills too and should get the chance to develop them.

A strong ministry brings together their energy and fresh ideas with the judgment of colleagues who have years of experience in government.

The same principle should guide the choice of portfolios. A minister who gets a department that matches his knowledge can help the whole government perform better.

Giving a portfolio to settle a political bargain, however, can leave both the minister and the public disappointed.

Experienced ministers alone cannot fix the larger problem. That will take clearer rules on how powers are shared and the restoration of statehood.

Until then, choosing the right ministers becomes even more important. They must use the powers they have with confidence, persistence and a clear understanding of their limits.

The Chief Minister has many demands to consider, but administrative ability should be high on the list.

People will eventually judge the Council of Ministers by how well departments respond and how quickly decisions lead to results.

Taking the oath gives a minister the office, but making the government work gives that office real meaning.

The author is an advocate, a former civil servant and Honorary Chairman of The City School, Kakapora. He can be reached at advofarooqahmadkhan@gmail.com.

The Limits of Cheap Credit

Rising Mudra disbursements and lower lending costs tell part of the story. The larger question is whether affordable finance reaches viable businesses and supports growth.



Aksa Muzamil

When the Reserve Bank of India cuts its benchmark rate, the expectation is clear: cheaper loans will encourage businesses to invest, grow and create more jobs.

Between the rate cut and a Kashmiri business owner deciding whether to take a loan, there are hurdles that economic theory often overlooks.

These hurdles can determine whether cheaper credit leads to new investment in the valley’s small businesses.

National figures show that lower interest rates do lead to cheaper loans, to some extent.

According to the Economic Survey 2025-26, the RBI cut its benchmark by a cumulative 100 basis points between April and November 2025. The weighted average lending cost on fresh rupee loans from scheduled commercial banks fell by 64 basis points to 8.71 per cent in November, while the average on outstanding loans fell by 56 basis points to 9.21 per cent.

Banks passed on less than the full cut, which proves little by itself, since the two costs respond to different financial conditions and need not move in step.

The difference does show how much can

change between a central bank’s decision and a borrower’s experience.

Jammu and Kashmir’s Economic Survey 2025-26 gives a clearer picture of lending in the region.

Bank deposits stood at 2,03,524 crore and advances at 1,28,073 crore on September 30, 2025, a credit-deposit ratio of 62.93 per cent.

In the first half of the financial year, micro, small and medium enterprises took 23 per cent of priority-sector credit flow, against 48 per cent for agriculture.

Those numbers place small enterprises within the banking system, but they leave out how many viable businesses were refused, what individual firms paid, and how much of the money became investment.

A ratio cannot say whether the region has too little credit or enough.

The record also holds good news that needs to be taken at face value.

Up to September 2025, 4,231.50 crore had been disbursed under the Pradhan Mantri Mudra Yojana to 1,95,880 beneficiaries in the region, compared with 3,375.18 crore to 1,66,038 beneficiaries a year earlier, an increase of roughly 25 per cent.

Anyone claiming that small-business finance is simply unavailable in Kashmir has to explain those figures. Disbursement, however, is where the record stops.

It cannot tell us whether the businesses grew more profitable, hired more workers, or took on repayment burdens that later proved heavy.

Documentation stands between many borrowers and the loans that cost less. A bank has to judge whether a borrower can repay, which means reading financial statements, outstanding liabilities and credit risk. A small business

may sell a good product and have room to grow, but still fail to produce the documents that prove its position.

The RBI’s Annual Report 2024-25 named information asymmetry, excessive documentation and a lack of transparency as obstacles in MSME lending.

In June 2024, the central bank told banks to adopt a uniform 14-day turnaround for applications of up to 25 lakh from micro and small businesses, to track those applications, and to give reasons when they are rejected.

The directive governs processing, and approval remains the bank’s call, but it concedes that the road to formal finance can be a barrier in its own right.

Another challenge for Kashmir’s small businesses is the mismatch between when they earn money and when their loan payments fall due.

A handicraft dealer buys raw material and sets production going months before any goods are sold. A tourism enterprise may earn a large share of its income in a short travel season.

The exact seasonal pattern varies by business and needs local evidence, but the financial problem is plain: a loan can become cheaper while its repayment schedule stays fixed.

A monthly instalment that is easy in a busy month can be punishing in a lean one, even for an enterprise that earns enough over the year to survive.

Repayment plans that match a business’s seasonal income could make bank loans more useful, where practical. This does not mean every seasonal business needs delayed payments or that monthly instalments are always a poor fit.

A loan’s repayment terms matter as much as its interest rate. Even cheap credit may fail

to support business growth if the repayments do not match the business’s needs.

Uncertainty also influences a business owner’s decision to borrow.

The owner weighs the cost of a loan against the profit an investment might bring and the risk of losing money.

Kashmiri merchants, hotels and businesses that transport goods often face delays, bad weather and changing customer demand. These problems affect both costs and earnings.

A dealer may have goods ready for sale but struggle to get them delivered on time. A guesthouse owner planning improvements may be unsure how many visitors will book rooms next season.

Such risks reduce the expected returns from an investment, even when borrowing becomes cheaper.

A business owner may decide against a bank loan simply because future earnings seem too uncertain.

Lower interest rates reduce borrowing costs, but they cannot guarantee customers, reliable transport or better working conditions.

Formal finance is also only one of the places a business can turn.

Supplier credit, advance payments from buyers, personal borrowing and informal lenders all fill gaps. Some bring useful flexibility, while others cost a great deal or bind a borrower to a single intermediary.

An informal financier has no reason to follow the RBI’s benchmark the way a bank loan linked to an external reference does, so a cut can lower the cost of eligible formal borrowing while the terms from an informal lender stay where they were.

For an enterprise that depends on such lenders, the gains from easing may stay largely indi-

rect. How widespread that dependence is among Kashmir’s small businesses, and what it costs them, are questions for local research rather than assumption.

Digital tools could make loan applications easier by helping banks assess a business’s finances. Transaction records and data shared with the business owner’s consent can help lenders understand income and spending.

However, some businesses still deal partly in cash, and payment records alone cannot show how profitable a business is, what it owes or how much risk it faces.

Digital records can help banks make better decisions, but lenders still need to assess each business carefully.

None of this shows that monetary policy has failed Kashmir’s small enterprises. Lending costs fell nationally during the easing period, and Mudra disbursements in the region grew.

What the official figures leave unanswered is how widely the benefits spread among different types of local business, whether repayment terms matched their incomes, and how much of the new finance reached output and employment.

The statistics count the loans that were made, but they say nothing of the applications that failed on paperwork, the loans a guesthouse owner never sought, or the installment that fell due in the leanest month of the year.

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Kashmir's Casual Relationship With Time

What begins as a joke about local habits reveals a deeper disregard for other people's time, work and commitments.



Bilal Ahmad Khanday

A few days ago, as I stepped out of a local mosque, I noticed a notice from the Block Development Office announcing a Gram Sabha at 10 am the following morning at the local Panchayat Ghar.

I had work to finish in the fields, but I decided to attend the meeting.

On Gandhi Jayanti, I returned home at 9.30 am, postponed the rest of my work and drank a cup of tea hurriedly before setting out. The Panchayat Ghar was barely ten minutes away on foot.

I reached at 10.10 am. The gate was locked.

A few men were sitting in a nearby park beside the Jamia Masjid. I greeted them and asked about the meeting. One man told me the officials would probably arrive around 11 am. When I pointed out that the notice specified 10 am, another man laughed and said, "In Kashmir, 10 does not mean 10."

His laughter seemed to dismiss the question before the meeting had even begun. I later learnt from an ex-panch that the official had informed him over the phone about the revised arrival time. The delay had become so common that people around me regarded my concern as unnecessary.

I waited, thinking about the work I had left unfinished in the fields. The official's time had been adjusted, but mine had simply been spent.

The same understanding of time appeared again at a wedding feast.

The invitation card announced that

lunch for men would be served at 2 pm sharp. Since the venue was nearby, I left home at 1.45 pm and walked briskly towards the marriage hall.

An acquaintance met me on the way and asked why I was hurrying. I told him lunch would begin shortly. He smiled at my innocence and predicted that the food would be served only after 4 pm. He had enough experience of weddings in Kashmir to make the prediction with confidence.

I reached the venue five minutes before the advertised time. The hall was almost empty. When I asked a member of the host family about lunch, he explained that 2 pm had traditionally appeared on invitation cards even though guests and hosts alike expected the meal much later. Both sides understood the arrangement, he said, and had grown accustomed to it.

That explanation troubled me more than the empty hall.

A time printed on a card had lost its meaning, while the people involved continued to use it as though it meant something definite.

We tend to treat these delays as harmless features of Kashmiri social life. Someone laughs, another person makes a joke, and the matter ends there. Our familiarity with the habit has made it difficult to see what it costs us.

The person who arrives on time becomes the fool, while the person who keeps others waiting enjoys the comfort of a shared excuse.

The cost goes beyond wasted time.

A farmer who leaves his fields for a public meeting has set aside work that could have been completed before the day ends. Someone travelling to an office may spend hours waiting for an officer whose schedule has little connection with the appointment announced to the public. People who attend religious seminars, political gatherings and social functions routinely find that the advertised starting time bears little relation to the actual



The official retains control over his schedule, while villagers must rearrange theirs. Repeated often enough, such experiences teach people to distrust announcements and to plan around anticipated delays rather than stated commitments.

beginning.

A delayed meeting also weakens public participation.

A Gram Sabha is meant to bring villagers into a space where local concerns can be discussed. Its usefulness depends partly on people being able to plan their day around it. When an official summons the public for a particular hour but turns up much later, the public bears the cost of that decision.

Someone with work in the fields, household responsibilities or a long journey home may find it harder to stay.

The imbalance is plain and painful.

The official retains control over his schedule, while villagers must rearrange theirs. Repeated often enough, such experiences teach people to distrust announcements and to plan around

anticipated delays rather than stated commitments.

Our weddings reveal a related contradiction.

Hosts print a specific time, guests interpret it as an approximation, and both sides proceed with the same understanding. The arrangement may appear convenient because nobody expects strict punctuality. But it also makes the stated time almost useless.

Those who come early lose hours, while those who come late face little social cost.

The habit survives partly because we have made it collective.

A person who arrives late can point to everyone else doing the same. A host can explain that guests know how weddings work. An official can cite other engagements.

Each explanation makes sense within the arrangement, while the arrangement itself remains beyond

scrutiny.

That evening, I asked my wife for a cup of tea. She told me to wait five minutes. I waited for at least twenty. By then, I had become sufficiently aware about our local understanding of time to refrain from complaining.

The episode was amusing, but it also brought the day's experiences together. The language of time had become elastic in public offices, at wedding feasts and even at home.

The scale of the consequences differed, but the underlying assumption remained the same: a stated time could be treated as a suggestion, and the person waiting would eventually adjust.

Punctuality is often presented as a personal virtue, but it also expresses how we regard other people's lives.

Arriving when we say we will allows others to plan their work, keep their commitments and use their hours as they choose. Public officials have a particular responsibility here because their appointments involve people who have come seeking services or participating in local decisions.

Kashmir does not need another elaborate campaign to teach people the meaning of a clock. It just needs ordinary commitments to regain their meaning.

A meeting announced for 10 am should begin at 10 am, and a wedding invitation specifying 2 pm should give guests a reasonable basis for planning their arrival.

Perhaps the first change will come when we stop treating the punctual person as someone who has misunderstood local customs. The person who turns up on time has understood the announcement exactly as it was written.

The more difficult question is why the rest of us have learnt to read it differently.

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The Minaret I Watched Fall

I photographed the leaning tower of Lucknow's Diyanat-ud-Daula Kerbala in 2013 and appealed for its protection. Eleven years later, its collapse exposed the cost of leaving a historic monument to decay.



Haidar Abbas

On June 21, 2013, I took two colleagues, Aarzoo and Atif, to Diyanat-ud-Daula Kerbala in Lucknow. They drove from the trans-Gomti side of the city, and we set out under a scorching summer sun to photograph a minaret that had begun to lean dangerously. The tower rose about 50 feet above the compound, its growing tilt suggesting that the structure could fall at any time.

I wanted the photographs to draw attention to the danger. We spent hours documenting the damage, and I shared the images with Lucknow Society, an organisation devoted to the city's culture, literature and history. I also wrote an article urging the authorities to intervene.

Nothing changed.

On October 12, the minaret collapsed inside the compound.

I returned to the article I had written in 2013, now confronted with the outcome I had feared. The tower had stood for more than a century and a half. Its danger had been visible, its condition documented and its preservation entrusted to the Archaeological Survey of India. Still, it fell.

The collapse could have claimed lives. The surrounding neighbourhood is densely populated, and a tower of that height falling beyond the compound could have struck nearby homes or people passing through the area. Fortunately, the debris remained inside the premises. A possible human disaster was averted, even as Lucknow lost another piece of its architectural inheritance.

I have spent years writing about the monuments, people and places of this city. The loss hurts because Diyanat-ud-Daula Kerbala represents much more than an old building. It recalls a period when Lucknow's architecture expressed the ambitions, faith and artistic traditions of its rulers and residents.

When the Swarna Shatabdi Express began running between New Delhi and Lucknow in 1989, announcements along the route highlighted the specialities of the cities along the way. Firozabad was known for its bangles, Kanpur for its leather, and Lucknow for its Imambaras. The description captured the city's distinctive place in India's cultural history.

During the Nawabi period, from 1722 to 1856, Lucknow developed a remarkable architectural heritage. That world suffered a decisive rupture when the British deposed Wajid Ali Shah, the last Nawab of Awadh, and sent him into exile in Calcutta, now Kolkata.

Even there, the displaced ruler recreated elements of his former home around the Hooghly River and in Metiabruz, drawing inspiration from the buildings he had left behind along the Gomti.

Diyanat-ud-Daula Kerbala emerged during the final years of that era.

Muhammed Ali Khan, a lieutenant in Wajid Ali Shah's Akhtari-Paltan military battalion, built the complex in 1852. The king had bestowed on him the title Diyanat-ud-Daula, meaning someone who kept his word.

Khan modelled the building on the mausoleum of Imam Hussain in Kerbala, Iraq. Soil brought from Kerbala was mixed with Indian construction materials, connecting the monument to the distant shrine.

The complex became a centre of religious observance and cultural life. Its campus covered about 100,000 square feet, and a golden-coloured dome dominated the structure. Traditional Lakhauri bricks gave the building its distinctive character, while the towering minaret called worshippers to prayer five times a day.



I have spent years writing about the monuments, people and places of this city. The loss hurts because Diyanat-ud-Daula Kerbala represents much more than an old building. It recalls a period when Lucknow's architecture expressed the ambitions, faith and artistic traditions of its rulers and residents.

Khan later accompanied the exiled king to Metiabruz. He died there, but his body returned to Lucknow for burial inside the monument he had built. His final resting place reflected the attachment he retained to the city and its traditions.

By 2013, that inheritance had suffered years of neglect. Brass and gold-painted bricks that once adorned the dome had gradually disappeared. Later repairs replaced the original

finish with golden paint. The minaret presented a more immediate danger.

I wrote at the time that its pronounced tilt demanded urgent attention. Experts needed to examine the tower and determine whether to reduce its height or adopt another method to secure it. My appeal sought a technical intervention that could prevent the structure from falling.

The photographs I shared with Lucknow Society recorded the

damage. My article explained the danger. Neither brought the response the monument needed.

The Archaeological Survey of India protects 743 monuments in Uttar Pradesh, and 191 fall under its Lucknow circle, the largest concentration in the state. That responsibility extends to buildings whose deterioration threatens both historic architecture and public safety.

Lucknow's celebrated religious complexes include the Bada Imambara, Chota Imambara, Shah Najaf, Sibtainabad, Rauza-e-Kazemain, Tal Katora, Rauza-e-Imam Raza, Ghara Wali Kerbala, Imambara Mughal Sahiba and several other Imambaras and shrines. Many have suffered serious neglect. Their condition threatens the physical remains of a city whose history survives in its religious practices, architectural details and shared memories.

The journey to Diyanat-ud-Daula Kerbala passes through neighbourhoods where that history remains

woven into daily life. Starting near King George Medical College, built on the site of the former Panch Mahal, the route proceeds through Nakhas market and Manzoor Nagar, passes a Shia orphanage and the historic Rauza-e-Kazemain, and leads into a densely populated neighbourhood.

The monument stands among homes and busy streets, where the failure to secure a deteriorating tower can have consequences far beyond the building itself.

My attachment to monuments has always driven me to document their condition and press for their preservation. The collapse of this minaret has left me asking whether the institutions responsible for protecting our heritage understand the cost of delayed action.

The immediate task is to assess the remaining structure, establish a sound conservation plan and examine other monuments showing similar signs of deterioration. The collapse should prompt a serious review of how authorities identify structural risks, respond to public appeals and maintain protected buildings.

Lucknow earned its reputation as the city of Imambaras through generations of craftsmanship, faith and patronage. These buildings survived the fall of kingdoms and the exile of rulers who commissioned them. Their survival today depends on the people and institutions entrusted with their care.

I photographed the leaning minaret in June 2013 because I believed someone could still save it. Eleven years later, its remains stand as evidence of what happened when that opportunity passed.

My old photographs preserve the tower as it was, tilted but standing. They also preserve a question that the collapse has made impossible to ignore: how many more monuments must fall before those responsible act while there is still time?

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No Terror Network Should Find Safe Haven In Region: Shah

Calls For Joint Action Against Terror, Drugs, Organised Crime

KO Web Desk

Srinagar: Union Home Minister Amit Shah on Tuesday called for stronger regional cooperation among BIMSTEC countries to combat terrorism, disrupt terror financing and organised crime, and ensure that terrorist networks do not find safe havens in the region.

Addressing the first home ministers' meeting of the Bay of Bengal Initiative for

Multi-Sectoral Technical and Economic Cooperation (BIMSTEC), Shah said the partnership was based on the understanding that the security arrangements of each member country contributed to the security of others.

Emphasising India's policy of "zero tolerance" towards terrorism, he called for enhanced cooperation against cross-border organised crime, drug trafficking, human trafficking and emerging cyber threats.

Shah said member countries needed a collective resolve to prevent terrorist networks from finding shelter, establishing bases and training facilities, mobilising resources or conducting

activities against other countries in the region.

Highlighting counter-terrorism and law enforcement as key areas of cooperation, he called for the exchange of actionable intelligence through existing nodal agencies and greater co-ordination to combat terror financing and organised crime.

According to a government statement, Shah stressed the importance of timely intelligence sharing, financial investigations, mutual legal assistance and extradition to ensure that criminals and terrorists were brought to justice.

He urged member countries to strengthen cooperation in mutual legal assistance and

extradition in accordance with their national laws and applicable agreements. He also called for closer coordination among law enforcement, intelligence and border management agencies.

Shah identified five key areas for cooperation: drug control, counter-terrorism and legal cooperation, repatriation of fugitive criminals, cybersecurity and cybercrime investigations, and institutional cooperation and capacity building.

He urged the member countries to translate regional cooperation into practical mechanisms that would improve public safety and strengthen the capabilities of their respective

agencies.

"Drug Trafficking Is Death Trafficking"

Addressing the issue of narcotics smuggling, Shah said the problem could not be tackled through the efforts of a single country and required a coordinated regional response.

"We must adopt a whole-of-region approach. The illegal proceeds from drugs provide financial strength to organised crime and are also used for terrorist financing. The diversion of precursor chemicals and transactions through the dark web make this challenge even more complex," he said.

Shah said India viewed drug trafficking as "death trafficking"

and asserted that there was nothing "golden" about the narcotics trade, referring to the internationally known Golden Crescent and Golden Triangle drug-trafficking routes.

He described drug trafficking as an attack on the lives of young people, society, culture and the future of coming generations, stressing the need for coordinated efforts to disrupt the networks involved.

India To Set Up Disaster Management Centre

Shah also identified disaster management cooperation as a priority for the BIMSTEC region, recalling that Prime Minister Narendra Modi had proposed establishing a BIMSTEC Disaster

Management Centre in India during the grouping's sixth summit.

The proposed centre is planned to be established in Jamnagar, Gujarat.

Shah said the initiative reflected India's role as a first responder in disaster management across the region and urged member countries to participate actively in making the centre operational.

BIMSTEC comprises Bangladesh, Bhutan, India, Myanmar, Nepal, Sri Lanka and Thailand. The regional grouping aims to promote economic and technical cooperation among countries bordering the Bay of Bengal and its neighbourhood.

CONTD. FROM FRONT PAGE

Waqf's Friday

If we want to talk about daughters, if there is no marriage, then we will talk about it. If children are committing suicide, then why are they doing it? Why is there trauma in our society? Everyone has decided," Andrabai said.

Stressing that the Board had issued no directive requiring common sermons, she said, "There is no order. There is no order anywhere."

Andrabai also clarified that the proposed core committee would comprise religious scholars and that she would not be part of it. She said the scholars would independently decide the subjects and manner of their sermons.

"Whatever our religious scholars want, they will do it in their own way. There is no interference in that," she said.

The Waqf chief said religious scholars could play an important role in addressing social problems and urged political leaders to focus on issues affecting people rather than oppose initiatives aimed at tackling social evils.

Responding to Chief Minister Omar Abdullah's allegations of BJP interference in Muslim religious affairs, Andrabai questioned where such interference had taken place and defended the Board's functioning during her tenure.

"Where did BJP interfere? If I am the leader of BJP, I am proud. I feel very proud today that I am from BJP," she said.

Omar Calls Proposal Unacceptable

Earlier, Chief Minister Omar Abdullah had termed the proposal "unacceptable", accusing the BJP of attempting to interfere in the religious affairs of Muslims and calling on the Waqf Board chairperson to withdraw the initiative.

In a post on X, Omar said, "This is an unacceptable attempt by the BJP to interfere in the religious affairs of Muslims and will not be accepted under any circumstances. The BJP-appointed Chairperson must immediately halt this misplaced attempt to please her masters."

PDP president Mehbooba Mufti also criticised the proposal, questioning who would decide what imams should preach during Friday sermons.

Addressing a press conference in Srinagar, Mehbooba said local religious scholars were better placed to understand the concerns of their respective communities.

"Our imams and maulvis know what to say and when to speak," she said, arguing that mosques had largely been built through contributions from local people and that religious scholars understood the issues facing their communities.

Mehbooba described Jammu and Kashmir as "a laboratory for the BJP" and called for the Waqf Board to be brought under the administrative control of the Jammu and Kashmir government. She also suggested that religious matters be addressed through established bodies of Islamic scholars, including the Muthahida Majlis-e-Ulema (MMU), headed by Mirwaiz Umar Farooq.

MMU, Political Leaders Oppose Move
The MMU also opposed the proposal, saying even the suggestion that a statutory body could determine or regulate what was preached from the mimbar was unacceptable.

In a statement, the amalgam of religious and socio-religious organisations said religious guidance fell within the domain of Ulema, Imams and recognised religious institutions. It maintained that a state-linked administrative body should not prescribe sermon topics or scripted speeches.

The MMU urged the Waqf Board to restrict itself to the management, maintenance and protection of Waqf properties and institutions rather than intervene in religious discourse.

Former Srinagar Mayor Junaid Mattu also criticised the proposal, questioning the meaning of religious freedom if the government were to determine what imams could say during Friday sermons.

"If the BJP wants to decide what our Imams say in Friday sermons, what is left in this pretense of 'freedom of religion'??? Or the Constitution?" Mattu wrote on X.

Describing the move as "a page out of a Margaret Atwood novel", Mattu termed it an assault on religion, culture, language and history.

Budgam MLA Aga Muntazir Mehdi also opposed the proposal, saying the Waqf Board's role should remain

confined to managing Waqf properties and institutions rather than dictating religious discourse.

Mehdi said religious scholars were capable of identifying issues concerning their communities and deciding what needed to be addressed during Friday sermons. He cautioned that prescribing common themes could potentially be used to promote a particular narrative through religious institutions.

Aga Syed Hassan Mosavi Al-Safavi, president of Anjuman-e-Sharie Shaiyan, also opposed the reported move to standardise Friday sermons, saying religious guidance must remain the domain of qualified Ulema. He urged the Board to confine itself to administrative responsibilities, warning that prescribing common sermon topics could undermine the independence of religious scholars and interfere with established religious practices.

The controversy followed Andrabai's announcement that a core committee comprising Muftis, Imams and Khateeb would be constituted to identify and finalise common sermon topics for Waqf-affiliated religious institutions. Her clarification on Tuesday came amid mounting opposition from political and religious figures.

DGP Directs JKP

mechanisms and improve operational effectiveness.

During the review, Prabhat stressed the need to intensify intelligence-led operations and maintain heightened vigilance. He called for seamless information-sharing among district police units, intelligence agencies and other security forces to ensure effective responses to security threats.

The DGP directed officers to intensify patrolling, strengthen area domination and undertake focused operations based on actionable intelligence.

Border Security, Surveillance In Focus
Emphasising the use of technology, Prabhat called for leveraging available tools to enhance surveillance, improve situational awareness and strengthen the response capabilities of field formations.

He also directed officers to strengthen security arrangements in border areas, closely monitor sensitive locations and coordinate efforts to prevent infiltration and other security threats.

The DGP stressed the importance of engaging local communities to build trust and encourage the sharing of timely information that could assist security agencies.

He also called for effective utilisation of the tenant verification application and directed officials to maintain updated digital records of tenants and their verification status.

Police Station Inspections, Traffic Enforcement

Emphasising institutional discipline and effective supervision, Prabhat directed senior officers to conduct frequent inspections of police stations to review official records, ensure proper upkeep and hygiene of police premises, and assess the welfare and living conditions of personnel.

He stressed the need for routine checks to maintain discipline, punctuality, professional conduct and operational readiness among police personnel at all levels.

The DGP also directed the Traffic Police to intensify enforcement against traffic violations, ensure strict compliance with regulations and take appropriate action against offenders.

He emphasised sustained traffic management efforts to promote road safety, ensure smoother traffic movement and improve public convenience.

India Hits Back

announcement by India's Ministry of Home Affairs identifying 28 places and geographical features in Ladakh on the official map of the Survey of India. The exercise was carried out in consultation with the Ladakh administration and local stakeholders, the government said.

The locations include Gogra and Hot Spring, two key friction points along the Line of Actual Control (LAC), the de facto border separating Indian- and Chinese-controlled territory in the region.

India said the move was intended to ensure accurate identification of the locations and improve public awareness of the sensitive border region.

"No amount of denial by the Chinese side can change this established fact," Indian External Affairs Ministry spokesperson Randhir Jaiswal said, reiterating that the Union Territory of Ladakh was an "integral and inalienable" part of India.

Jaiswal described the Home Ministry's October 2 announcement as self-explanatory, saying the places and features had been formally identified on the Survey of India map in consultation with local stakeholders.

China's Foreign Ministry spokesperson Mao Ning said Beijing had never recognised what she described as the "so-called Union Territory of Ladakh" and opposed India's decision to standardise the names.

"This move by India is illegal and void and does not change the fact that the western sector of the China-India boundary belongs to China," Mao told a media briefing in Beijing.

The latest exchange underscores the continuing sensitivity surrounding territorial claims along the Himalayan frontier, where the two Asian neighbours have sought to stabilise relations following years of military tensions.

The eastern Ladakh standoff began in May 2020 after a violent clash between Indian and Chinese troops in the Pangong Lake area. The confrontation led to a prolonged deployment of troops and military equipment along the LAC.

Both sides began a disengagement process in 2022, although the border remains a source of tension between the nuclear-armed neighbours.

Gogra and Hot Spring were among the areas that saw military friction during the standoff and are important for Indian patrols along the LAC.

The other locations named by India include Alisha Giri, Brangsa, Chapchinal Pass, Kanishka Peak, Karun Pir mountain, Kukseel, Martand Giri, Parpik Glacier, Skamri Glacier, Shachmirik Pass, Shkorga Valley and Zorawar Peak.

The list also includes Dehra Compass, Drak Karmo, Jolmori, Kumarayana Point, Panglung, Rinchen Zangpo, Sakyasri Giri, Guru Rinpoche, Shamal Lungpa, Yangpa River, Marpa Lotsava Ri, Milarepa Kangri, Shiva Ri and Maheshwara Ri.

India's move to formalise the names on its official map is aimed at improving geographical identification and documentation, while China's response reflects its continuing rejection of India's territorial and administrative claims in the region.

Neither side indicated on Tuesday that the latest disagreement over place names would alter its position on the boundary dispute.

PM Scholarship Scheme

for students.

The department also plays an important role in the verification and review mechanism under the scheme through the UT-level review committee headed by the commissioner secretary, Higher Education Department, with the J-K director colleges as its member secretary, he said.

The spokesman said the accelerated progress during the current academic session reflects coordinated efforts of the Higher Education Department, concerned authorities and field-level facilitation mechanisms to ensure that eligible students are able to avail the benefits of PMSSS.

With 4,715 of the 5,000 scholarships already allotted, the scheme is expected to further strengthen access to quality higher education and expand educational opportunities for the youth of J-K, he said.

SC To Hear Plea

Commissioner for any act, thing or word, committed, done or spoken by him when, or in the course of acting or purporting to act in the discharge of his official duty or function."

The bench tagged the plea with a separate pending petition raising similar issue.

In January this year, the top court had agreed to examine a separate plea challenging the immunity granted to the CEC and the ECs under Section 16 of the 2023 Act.

It had issued notice to the Centre and the Election Commission seeking their responses on the plea filed by NGO 'Lok Prahari'. The top court had then refused to stay the provision.

The plea claimed the provision "gives unprecedented, unbridled power to the CEC and ECs by providing them complete blanket permanent immunity for life from any civil and even criminal proceedings for their wrongdoings in gross misuse of their office".

CJP Leaders Booked

area without authorisation, as the opposition INDIA bloc vowed to challenge the denotification of the protest site and continue its campaign against alleged electoral irregularities.

The developments came amid heightened tensions over demands for Chief Election Commissioner Gyanesh Kumar's resignation over alleged irregularities in the Special Intensive Revision (SIR) of electoral rolls.

The opposition leaders, along with civil society members and representatives of student organisations, met at Congress leader Rahul Gandhi's residence to discuss the future course of their campaign against what they have termed "vote chori".

Addressing reporters after the meeting, Gandhi said the opposition would challenge the decision to remove Jantar Mantar from the list of designated protest sites.

"The one method of expression of democracy was Jantar Mantar, and now, the government has decided that Jantar Mantar can no longer be used to express democratic feelings. Well, we are going to challenge that idea," he said.

Gandhi asserted that political and public resistance would continue irrespective of the role played by institutions, adding that the opposition was united in its fight for the restoration of democracy.

"We are all standing here together as one. As I said yesterday, there are no parallel protests, there is one singular protest and the protest has one mission – restoration of democracy in India," he said.

The former Congress president accused the government and the Election Commission leadership of undermining democratic institutions and said those responsible would be held accountable.

Asked about the opposition's legal recourse, Gandhi said the leaders had respect for the Supreme Court and the judicial system but would continue their political campaign regardless of the outcome.

"No matter what happens, no matter which institution plays a role, or does not play a role, political resistance will continue, people's resistance will continue and it will triumph," he said.

The meeting was attended by Congress president Mallikarjun Kharge, Congress Parliamentary Party chairperson Sonia Gandhi, Congress general secretary Priyanka Gandhi Vadra, RJD leaders Tejashwi Yadav and Manoj Jha, CPI general secretary D Raja, CPI(M) general secretary M A Baby, TMC MPs Sagarika Ghose and Mahua Moitra, and other opposition leaders.

Civil society members Prashant Bhushan and Yogendra Yadav were also present.

Kharge said the leaders discussed the prevailing political situation and ways to carry forward the campaign seeking Kumar's resignation.

RJD leader Tejashwi Yadav said the opposition was united in its fight to protect democracy, while CPI general secretary D Raja vowed to continue the campaign for the restoration of Jantar Mantar as a protest site.

CPI(M) general secretary M A Baby alleged that the government had committed "vote chori" and was now taking away the protest site. Other opposition leaders also criticised the denotification and reiterated their demand for action against Kumar over the alleged electoral irregularities.

Shah Targets Rahul,

once again for a "crushing defeat" in 2029 as people of the country are with the BJP, NDA and Prime Minister Narendra Modi.

Shah also said the kind of "negative politics" the Congress has been engaged in will not benefit it as the opposition party needs to understand people and connect with the public.

"I want to tell Shri Rahul ji and his associates to prepare themselves once again for a crushing defeat in 2029. In the 2029 general elections, the NDA is

going to win with a resounding majority, and the Congress is going to face defeat for the fourth consecutive time.

"The people of this country are with Narendra Modi ji, with the BJP, with the NDA. You cannot deny this truth," he told reporters here.

Slamming Gandhi, Shah said people of India know his plans of "getting infiltrators registered as voters".

"I want to ask Shri Rahul Gandhi ji directly: Is this the result of the SIR? The SIR started only after 2024.

"Ever since you became the principal leader of the Congress, and later its president, and now the Leader of the Opposition, the Congress party has continuously lost elections. You need to engage in introspections. You cannot win the trust of the country's people through fabricated media events and echoes of lies," he said.

2 Killed, 7 Injured

girl's body was taken to the mortuary for legal formalities.

In a separate accident, an apple-laden truck plunged into a gorge at Nachlana along the Jammu-Srinagar National Highway in Ramban district during the early hours of Tuesday, killing the driver.

The deceased was identified as Sadiq Khan, a resident of Rajasthan. The truck's helper, Mohd Sikander, sustained injuries and was admitted to a hospital for treatment, officials said.

The truck was travelling from Srinagar to Gujarat when the accident occurred.

In the third accident, at least four passengers were injured after a mini-bus overturned near Kheleni in Doda district. The injured were shifted to a hospital for treatment, officials said.

Power, Water Promises

depend on power purchases to meet demand despite having substantial hydropower potential. The transfer of projects and a higher share of free electricity have long figured in discussions on improving J&K's power availability and financial position.

Another commitment was a one-time settlement of pending electricity dues. The electricity amnesty scheme, however, expired on March 31, 2026, with no fresh extension announced.

The position of industrial consumers has also emerged as a concern. Instead of the promised tariff relief, industrial electricity charges have increased by nearly 10 per cent, adding to operating costs for businesses.

On drinking water, the commitment to provide free supply to households has yet to translate into a concrete measure. The promise to extend access to remote and inaccessible areas was linked to the broader objective of improving water infrastructure and ensuring reliable supply.

The implementation of the Jal Jeevan Mission, which aims to provide tap-water connections to rural households, has also faced delays, with no fresh allocations reported for taking stalled works forward.

The mission's implementation has come under scrutiny over alleged irregularities and leakages. A House committee examined the issue, including discrepancies in the procurement of pipes. The government has, however, contested aspects of the findings.

The concerned minister has acknowledged discrepancies in pipe procurement, but the government's stated approach has been to pursue the schemes identified in the report rather than proceed against all the roughly 3,200 projects initially under scrutiny.

The manifesto had also promised to raise Jammu and Kashmir's share of free electricity from NHPC-owned projects from 10 per cent to 40 per cent. No concrete action has been taken on this front so far.

With two years of its term completed, the status of these measures presents a mixed picture: the free-power initiative has been confined to a narrower beneficiary group and remains at the preparatory stage, while several other commitments on power generation, consumer relief and drinking water continue to await implementation.

The remaining period of the government's term will determine whether these commitments translate into tangible benefits for households, industrial consumers and communities facing gaps in water supply. (inputs from KNO)

Darbar Move To

high-level meeting, the Chief Minister stressed the need for meticulous planning and close coordination among departments to ensure the safe movement of employees and official equipment.

The meeting was attended by Deputy Chief Minister Surinder Kumar Choudhary, Chief Secretary Atal Dulloo, Additional Chief Secretary, Estates, Shaleen Kabra, Additional Chief Secretary, Power Development Department, Ashwini Kumar, Additional Chief Secretary to the Chief Minister, Dheeraj Gupta, administrative secretaries, senior police officers, divisional commissioners of Kashmir and Jammu, deputy commissioners of Srinagar and Jammu, Director Information and other officers. Jammu-based officers participated through video conferencing.

At the outset, Commissioner Secretary, General Administration Department, M. Raju, gave a detailed presentation on transport and logistical arrangements for the Darbar Move convoy.

CM Meets Delegations

concerning the promotion and development of the film sector in Jammu and Kashmir.

A delegation comprising Lokesh Kumar Gupta, General Manager, IRCON, also met Abdullah and discussed possibilities for expanding IRCON International Limited's role in industrial infrastructure development in the Union Territory.

Mehnaz A.G. Nadiadwal, author, social activist and Founder and Trustee of the Mehnaz A.G. Nadiadwal Foundation (MAGN Foundation), called on the Chief Minister and discussed initiatives aimed at the progress, development and welfare of the region.

A delegation led by Mudassir Mushtaq Raina, Manager Operations, Unacademy Kashmir, apprised Abdullah of the Wisdom Aptitude Talent Hunt (WATH), an educational initiative aimed at identifying, nurturing and empowering talented youth across Jammu and Kashmir.

Major General Anupinder Bevi, VSM, Additional Director General, NCC Directorate J&K and Ladakh, also called on the Chief Minister and expressed gratitude for the support extended by the government to the NCC Directorate J&K and Ladakh.

Fresh Snowfall In Upper

rainfall and overcast skies prevailed across the plains, with showers and gusty winds continuing in several areas till the last reports came in.

The fresh snowfall added to the wintry conditions at popular tourist destinations, while falling temperatures brought a chill to the region.

The Meteorological Department has forecast generally cloudy weather with light to moderate rain at many places across Jammu and Kashmir on October 14 and 15, accompanied by light snowfall over higher reaches.

Thunderstorms, lightning, gusty winds and hailstorms at isolated places are also likely during the wet spell, the department said.

Weather conditions are expected to improve on October 16, when the region is likely to experience generally dry weather, although isolated places may receive brief spells of light rain. Mainly dry conditions are forecast from October 17 to 24.

Farmers, Travellers Advised Caution
The Meteorological Department has advised farmers to ensure the safe storage of harvested apples, paddy and other crops during the wet spell in view of the possibility of rainfall and gusty winds.

Travellers, transporters and the general public have also been advised to plan their journeys carefully and follow traffic advisories, particularly while travelling through higher reaches and mountain passes where snowfall could lead to slippery road conditions.

The department has cautioned people travelling along important mountain routes to remain alert during the forecast period.

Srinagar Records 20°C, Jammu 30.5°C
According to India Meteorological Department (IMD) data, Srinagar recorded a maximum temperature of 20 degrees Celsius on Tuesday, 2.8 degrees below the seasonal normal. The minimum temperature settled at 11.2 degrees Celsius, 4.9 degrees above normal.

Dengue Cases Decline in J&K, Doctors Urge Vigilance

Down from 3,000 in 2025, 7,000 in 2024; 2022 saw 8,269 cases, 18 deaths; health experts call for eliminating mosquito breeding sites, warn of severe complications from reinfection

Observer News Service

SRINAGAR: Jammu and Kashmir has reported around 1,200 dengue cases so far this year, marking a considerable decline compared to the previous few years, even as health experts have urged people to remain vigilant against the mosquito-borne disease and take preventive measures.

Health experts cautioned that despite the comparatively lower number of cases, dengue can lead to serious, potentially life-threatening complications if warning signs are ignored or medical attention is delayed.

According to health data, accessed by KNO, J&K reported around 3,000 dengue cases in 2025, 7,000 in 2024, 6,403 in 2023 and 8,269 in 2022—the highest number recorded in the Union Territory. The 2022 outbreak also claimed 18 lives. In comparison, cases were almost negligible more than a decade ago, with only two cases in 2009 and none in 2010.

Doctors at Government Medi-



cal College (GMC) Jammu have advised people not to become complacent because of the decline, stressing that timely diagnosis, adequate hydration, medical supervision and mosquito-control measures remain essential.

Health experts said dengue is transmitted through the bite of an infected Aedes mosquito, particularly Aedes aegypti. Symptoms generally develop four to ten days after an infected bite and may last three to seven days.

"The period when the fever

starts settling can be particularly critical for some patients. People should not assume that recovery has begun simply because the temperature has come down. Any warning signs during this phase require immediate medical evaluation," experts said.

They explained that dengue can affect platelet counts and blood vessels, increasing the risk of bleeding, fluid leakage and, in severe cases, damage to vital organs. Doctors also warned that a subsequent in-

fection involving a different strain can increase the risk of severe disease.

Common symptoms include high fever, severe headache, pain behind the eyes, muscle and joint pain, nausea, vomiting, skin rashes and extreme weakness.

Doctors cautioned against ignoring severe abdominal pain, persistent vomiting, difficulty breathing, bleeding from the nose or gums, blood in vomit or stools, unusual tiredness, restlessness or irritability.

The advisory notes that nearly one in every 20 dengue patients may develop severe dengue. "People experiencing warning signs should not delay visiting a healthcare facility. Early medical assessment and appropriate supportive treatment can help prevent complications," doctors said.

They also cautioned against self-medication, noting the absence of a specific antiviral treatment makes prevention, early diagnosis and proper clinical management particularly

important.

Experts stressed that eliminating mosquito breeding sites is among the most effective ways to reduce transmission, as Aedes mosquitoes can breed in small quantities of stagnant water collected in flower pots, buckets, discarded tyres, coolers, containers and even bottle caps.

"People must take preventive measures before mosquito breeding increases. Removing stagnant water, keeping water-storage containers covered and maintaining clean surroundings are essential steps," doctors said.

Residents have been advised to regularly inspect their homes and neighbourhoods, empty and clean water containers, use mosquito repellents and wear full-sleeved clothing. Doctors also recommended installing screens on doors and windows and using mosquito nets while sleeping, including during daytime rest, as dengue-carrying mosquitoes are commonly active during daylight hours. (with KNO inputs)

Jammu Residents Clean Up Homes After Record Rainfall

Press Trust of India

JAMMU: Jammu residents are struggling to clear mud and water from their homes after record rainfall triggered flash floods here, inundating residential colonies, damaging roads and drains, and hindering water supply.

Jammu received 185.6 mm rainfall on Sunday. To put it into perspective, the earlier record for peak October rainfall was set in 1955, when the region logged 160 mm rainfall throughout the month.

As a result, over two dozen localities lie inundated, while landslides and mudflows triggered by the intense rainfall have choked roads and drains at several places.

Residents in low-lying areas have been removing thick layers of mud, slush and debris from their houses for the past two days, alleging that inadequate drainage facilities, coupled with clogged drains and damaged embankments, have repeatedly led to flooding -- despite assurances from authorities.

In Jammu's Dream City locality, Sunita Devi, her sister Nirmala and other family members, have been struggling to clean their residence after floodwaters from an adjoining drain brought in mud and debris, damaging refrigerators, sofas, beds and other household articles.

"We have been cleaning our house for the past two days. Almost all household items have been damaged due to mud and slush," Sunita said.

Recounting the ordeal, she claimed they had contacted police for assistance, but they were of no help, and urged the family to con-



tact other emergency services. "Everyone we called directed us elsewhere. Who are we supposed to turn to in such a situation?" Sunita wondered.

Her sister Nirmala alleged that the adjoining drain had not been cleaned since last year and its retaining wall had broken, allowing mud and debris to inundate the locality.

"The government collects taxes from us, but where does the money go? Will the authorities wake up only after someone loses their life?" she said.

Nirmala said the family had spent a significant sum this year on various repairs and other expenses, and would now have to cough up more money to make their home habitable again.

"We faced a very similar situation last year. Nothing has changed. Who is helping us? The MLA came and left without properly inspecting the situation," Nirmala claimed.

She also questioned the maintenance of drains, saying residents had to pay labourers for their own pockets to get them cleared so that stormwater could flow out.

In Jawahar Nagar, Bharati and his son Ishu have been cleaning their house after floodwaters from the nearby nallah inundated their first floor, damaging household goods worth lakhs.

"The floods have be-

come an annual feature. Despite assurances by the MLA and Jammu Municipal Corporation, nothing has been done to raise the embankment. Surveys have been conducted, but there has been little progress on the ground," Bharati said.

He alleged that the repeated flooding is weakening the foundation of his house and called for strengthening drainage channels and embankments to protect residents living along water bodies.

Significant waterlogging following the downpour was reported from Tawi, Roop Nagar, Upper Roop Nagar, Amit Nagar, Gumpul, Pukhoo, Bantalab, Talab Tillo, Rajinder Nagar, Pirkho, Hazuri Nagar, Colonel Colony, Bhawani Nagar, Nai Basti, Dream City, Gorkha Nagar, Jawahar Nagar, Udhaywala, Muthi and Lower Roop Nagar, and other localities.

In Amit Nagar, Roopnagar and Muthi, vehicles were reportedly swept away by flash floods, while damaged roads and waterlogged lanes disrupted movement.

Residents said incomplete drainage works and inadequate stormwater channels have exacerbated the situation, bringing floodwaters into homes. They urged the administration to complete pending drainage works, strengthen vulnerable embankments and repair damaged roads.

The latest flooding has also revived concerns over the lack of lasting repairs following the devastating rainfall of August 26, 2025. Residents said damaged roads, incomplete drains and half-measures on the ground have caused persistent troubles during heavy rainfall.

Preliminary assessments by the administration and concerned agencies indicate damages exceeding Rs 10 crore to roads, lanes and other infrastructure in the city. The estimate could rise after a detailed assessment.

Several roads have developed potholes or suffered erosion, while water supply pipelines and electricity infrastructure have also been affected in some areas, officials said.

The Public Works Department is expected to assess the damage and prepare repair proposals, while municipal teams have begun removing accumulated silt and debris from affected localities, they said.

The Jammu Municipal Corporation has launched a cleaning drive -- deploying health, sanitation and transport department personnel to clear drains, lanes and roads in affected localities.

The drive covers Nank Nagar, Jeevan Nagar, Digiana, Talab Tillo, Bantalab Nagar, Muthi and other areas. Municipal teams are using heavy machinery to remove accumulated mud and debris, with dozens of tipper trucks engaged in transporting the waste, officials said.

Health Officer Dr Shahid Hussain said the heavy rainfall has left several localities covered in mud and wastewater, prompting deployment of sanitation workers and machinery.

Strengthen Operational Preparedness To Maintain Peace: DGP Prabhat Directs Officers

Agencies

SRINAGAR: Calling on the officers to ensure effective coordination to address emerging security challenges, Director General of Police Nalin Prabhat on Tuesday directed them to strengthen operational preparedness to maintain peace and security across Jammu and Kashmir.

Chairing an operational review meeting in hybrid mode at PCR Kashmir here, DGP Prabhat, according to KNO laid emphasis on strengthening the professional competence and operational preparedness of J&K Police. "All officers should remain alert, proactive, and operationally prepared," he said.

The meeting was attended by the top officers who at the outset of the meeting briefed the chair on the operational preparedness and key security-related developments in the UT of J&K.

They apprised the DGP of the measures being undertaken to maintain peace and security, the steps taken to strengthen intelligence-gathering mechanisms, and the efforts made to enhance overall operational effectiveness across the Union Territory.

During the review, the DGP emphasised the need to strengthen intelligence-based operations and maintain heightened vigilance. Stressing the importance of inter-agency co-ordination, the DGP called for seamless information sharing among District Police, intelligence agencies, and other security forces to ensure effective operational outcomes.

DGP Prabhat stressed the need to intensify pa-

trolling, strengthen area domination, and undertake focused operations based on actionable intelligence.

The DGP underscored the importance of leveraging available technology to enhance surveillance, improve situational awareness, and strengthen the response capabilities of field formations. The chair also called for enhanced security in border areas, with close monitoring of sensitive locations, strengthened engagement with local communities to build trust and encourage the sharing of timely information, and coordinated efforts to prevent infiltration and other security threats.

DGP Prabhat also emphasised the effective utilisation of the tenant verification application and called for the maintenance of updated digital records of tenants and their verification status.

Emphasising the importance of institutional discipline and effective supervision, the DGP directed senior officers to conduct frequent inspections of Police Stations to review the maintenance of official records, ensure proper up-keep and hygiene of police premises, and assess the welfare, cleanliness, and living conditions of police personnel.

DGP Prabhat further stressed the need for routine checks to maintain discipline, punctuality, professional conduct, and operational readiness among personnel at all levels.

The DGP also directed Traffic Police to intensify enforcement against traffic violations, ensure strict compliance with traffic regulations, and take appropriate action against offenders.

Woman's Body Recovered By SDRF, NDRF In Jammu Outskirts

JAMMU: The body of a woman, who was swept away by floodwaters in the outskirts of Jammu city, was recovered on Tuesday after three consecutive days of search by the State Disaster Response Force (SDRF), National Disaster Response Force (NDRF) and local police, officials said.

Ruksana Kouser, wife of Mohd Kaleem, was swept away by a strong current in the Bagani Talab-Flora nallah in the Chinore area of Jammu city following heavy rainfall on October 11, they said.

"The woman's body was recovered from the flood channel on Tuesday evening during the search operation in flood-affected areas, including Gumpul in Domana," Deputy Superintendent of Police (SDRF) Albeena Malik said. The family members express gratitude to the teams for ensuring the recovery of the body of their kin. Rescue personnel faced challenging conditions due to strong water currents and difficult terrain, she said.

SDRF Commandant Mohd Aslam visited the affected areas to assess the situation and review the ongoing search operation, officials said. He was accompanied by Subdivisional Police Officer (SDPO), Domana, Tahir Sheikh, Deputy Superintendent of Police (SDRF) Dinesh Gupta and Deputy SP (Trainings), SDRF, Rohit Dev Singh. The officers interacted with personnel deployed on the ground and assessed the operational challenges, they said.

Aslam directed the teams to maintain coordinated efforts and carry out the search operation with dedication and determination, officials said.

According to family members, the incident occurred when the couple was caught in the strong current while trying to prevent their car from being swept away by floodwaters. Kaleem was attempting to reverse the vehicle after it stalled, they said. (Press Trust of India)

HC Stays Trial Court Order in Land Dispute, Seeks Explanation for Delay

SRINAGAR: The High Court of J&K and Ladakh has stayed a trial court order restraining construction on a disputed portion of land in Srinagar, while seeking an explanation for the delay in deciding an application related to the matter.

A bench of Justice Wasim Sadiq Nargal, while hearing a petition filed by M A Bawli and others, directed the Registrar Judicial to obtain a report from the court of the 2nd Additional Munsiff, Srinagar, explaining why an order had not been pronounced on an application seeking clarification despite arguments having concluded on 3 October last year. The Court also directed the Registrar Judicial to summon the scanned record of the case from the trial court and issued notice to the respondent, M M Ganai, in the main petition and the connected application.

The dispute concerns the demolition of a wall and proposed construction over a contested portion of property.

The petitioners challenged a trial court order dated March 9, 2024, which directed them not to continue demolition or construction over the disputed area until the next date of hearing. The order had been passed after the plaintiff alleged that the ongoing work exceeded the permission granted by the competent authority.

The petitioners contended that the trial court had earlier, on February 5, 2024, modified its interim directions and permitted construction subject to the filing of an indemnity bond. Under the earlier order, they said, the defendants were required to demolish the construction, restore the previous position and compensate the plaintiff if the suit was eventually decided in his favour.

They argued that the subsequent order, passed in the guise of a clarification, effectively reversed the earlier decision and was not permissible under law.

Taking note of the submissions and the record, the High Court observed that a prima facie case had been made out for the court's intervention. It also noted that arguments on the clarification application had concluded on October 3, 2025, but the trial court had yet to pronounce its order.

The court further observed, prima facie, that once the interim application had been disposed of after considering the rights of both parties and the balance of convenience, there was no occasion to upset that order through a clarification in the manner alleged.

The court directed that the impugned order dated March 9, 2024, shall remain stayed, subject to objections from the other side, until the next date. However, the trial court has been permitted to proceed with the matter in accordance with law. The case has been listed for further consideration on October 31. (KO Correspondent)

MP Mian Altaf Seeks Early Opening Of Sarai For Patients

ANANTNAG: Member of Parliament (MP) Mian Altaf Ahmad Larvi visited Government Medical College (GMC) Anantnag on Tuesday to assess the progress of a Sarai (rest house) under construction to provide accommodation and respite for patients from distant areas and their attendants.

During the visit, the MP inspected the facility and took stock of the work completed so far. He observed that the Sarai could offer considerable relief to patients and their families, particularly those travelling long distances for medical consultations, investigations and treatment at the medical college.

However, the MP expressed concern over the delay in completing the project, stating that the facility should have been made available to the public much earlier.

Calling for its early utilisation, Mian Altaf said the portions of the Sarai that had already been completed should be opened for public use without waiting for the entire project to be finished.

He said making the completed sections functional would provide immediate relief to patients and attendants, while the remaining construction and expansion work could continue simultaneously.

The MP said he had previously taken up the matter with the Deputy Commissioner Anantnag and held discussions with officials of the Public Works Department (PWD) to explore measures for making the facility operational.

He added that he would once again take up the issue with the concerned authorities to expedite the process and ensure that the infrastructure was put to use at the earliest. (KNO)

Father-Son Duo Held After Narcotics, Arms Seizure In Ganderbal

GANDERBAL: A father-son duo has been taken into custody after a joint search operation led to the recovery of 577 grams of a charas-like substance, rifles and other material from their residence in the Bunkpora Tulmulla area of Ganderbal district on Tuesday, officials said.

An official said that the search was conducted by police, CRPF and other agencies following inputs about suspected narcotics and substantive activities.

He said the team recovered 577 grams of a charas-like substance, one 12-bore rifle, one chhara gun, four gelatin sticks and around 250 grams of a gunpowder-like substance during the search.

"Four empty 12-bore cartridges, a lead slab and pellets weighing around 6.6 kilograms, 26 kilograms of bleaching powder and cotton used for rifle cleaning were also seized," the official said, adding that the two persons, identified as Bashir Ahmad Dar and his father, Abdul Majeed Dar, both residents of Bunkpora Tulmulla, were taken into custody.

The official said FIR No. 30/2026 has been registered in this regard and further investigation is underway—(Observer News Service)

Drug Addiction, Peddling Declining Significantly in J&K: ADGP

Observer News Service

SRINAGAR: Drug addiction and peddling have declined significantly across Jammu and Kashmir, Additional Director General of Police (ADGP) Nitish Kumar said on Tuesday, attributing the progress to the Nasha Mukta campaign launched under the leadership of Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha.

Speaking to reporters on the sidelines of the Jashn-e-Dal water sports event in Srinagar, Kumar said the campaign had received an overwhelming response across the Union Territory, contributing to a reduction in drug-related activities.

"Drug addiction and drug peddling have not completely stopped, but there has certainly been a significant reduction," he said, acknowledging that the challenge persists despite the progress made.

KSSIA Backs Ease of Doing Business Act

Observer News Service

SRINAGAR: The Kashmir Small Scale Industrial Association (KSSIA) has welcomed the Jammu and Kashmir Ease of Doing Business Act, 2026, while urging the government to notify clear implementation rules at the earliest to ensure environmental protection and public safety.

At a meeting of its Executive Council at its Baghi Ali Mardan Khan office, chaired by president Syed Fazal Illahi, the association unanimously supported the legislation, describing it as a long-awaited reform "could reduce bureaucratic hurdles, generate employment.

KSSIA said simplifying business procedures should not be interpreted as weakening regulatory safeguards.

It expressed disappointment over objections raised by the Group of Concerned Citizens (GCC), arguing that concerns about the legislation's implementation were premature before the rules and guidelines had been notified.

The association also called for greater scrutiny of environmental degradation over the past three decades, citing unplanned development in Pahalgal, Gulmarg and Sonamarg, besides the commercialisation of residential areas such as Karan Nagar, Baggarden, Jawahar Nagar and Rajbagh.

KSSIA members questioned the lack of comparable accountability for past administrative decisions, maintaining that environmental protection and public to the reform.

International Day for Disaster Risk Reduction Observed at GDC Women Pulwama

Observer News Service

PULWAMA: MY Bharat Pulwama in collaboration with, Government Degree College for Women Pulwama, organised a comprehensive seminar on local disaster risk reduction strategies to mark the International Day for Disaster Risk Reduction.

The programme witnessed enthusiastic participation from student volunteers, National Youth Volunteers (NYVs), NSS volunteers and representatives of various civic organisations. The seminar focused on strengthening community preparedness, promoting resilient housing and developing effective disaster response mechanisms.

Dr. Sameer Fayaz from the Department of Geography served as the resource person, highlighting the importance of grassroots awareness, disaster response teams, safe construction practices, proper land-use planning and strict enforcement of safety codes. Participants discussed the crucial stages of disaster management, including rescue, relief and rehabilitation, while emphasising the need for regular mock drills and public awareness campaigns.



sising the need for regular mock drills and public awareness campaigns.

The speakers stressed that disaster resilience begins at the community level, with youth playing a vital role in preparedness and emergency response.

The event was held under the guidance of Sh. Divyanshu Jaiswal, District Youth Officer (DYO), MY Bharat Pulwama, and with the support of Principal, GDC Women Pulwama, Prof. (Dr.) Sami Jan. Dr. Nisar Ahmad Wani, Dean Students Welfare, delivered the concluding remarks, while Dr. Fahim Ul Hassan, NSS Programme Officer, coordinated and moderated the programme. The seminar concluded with a collective commitment to promote disaster awareness and build safer, more resilient communities.

India Issues Saudi Alert, Airlines Suspend Flights

Trans Asia News

NEW DELHI: India on Tuesday advised its nationals in Saudi Arabia to remain vigilant and follow local authorities' instructions amid an escalating security situation, after an attack on Riyadh's King Khalid International Airport killed an Indian national and injured several others.

The Indian Embassy in Riyadh urged citizens to remain calm, stay indoors in the event of an aerial attack and rely on official channels for updates. It also cautioned them against circulating videos or news related to the ongoing hostilities.

The advisory follows the death of Mohammed Yousef Ali in the October 10 attack on the airport, which also left 11 other Indian nationals injured, according to the embassy.

India's ambassador to Saudi Arabia and embassy officials at-

tended Ali's funeral in Riyadh on October 12, the mission said, offering condolences to his family.

Of the injured Indians, four remained in intensive care, four were receiving treatment in general wards and three had been discharged, the embassy said. Officials were visiting hospitals and maintaining contact with the injured and their families to provide assistance.

The attacks come amid escalating hostilities involving Saudi Arabia and Yemen's Iran-backed Houthis movement, with reports of drone and missile strikes targeting infrastructure in the kingdom. The latest developments have disrupted air travel and prompted heightened security precautions.

Airlines suspend Saudi flights until October 17

India's major airlines have suspended flights to several Saudi cities until October 17, citing



the evolving security situation and risks to safe operations.

IndiGo said services to and from Riyadh, Jeddah, Dammam and Medina had been cancelled until that date. Air India and Air India Express suspended flights connecting Riyadh, Dammam and Jeddah, while Akasa Air halted services to and from Riyadh and Jeddah.

The airlines said affected passengers were being offered refunds or complimentary re-scheduling, depending on the carrier's policy. They added that they were monitoring developments and would assess when services could safely resume.

Saudi Arabia's General Authority of Civil Aviation has announced the suspension of operations at King Khalid International Airport in Riyadh, the

Indian Embassy said.

Flight services at other major Saudi airports, including Dammam, Jeddah and Medina, were continuing, although disruptions remained, the mission added.

Scheduled flights operated by Saudi carrier Saudia were continuing from Dammam, Jeddah and Medina. Flynas was operating scheduled services on the Dammam-Lucknow route, according to the embassy.

The mission advised Indians to remain in contact with their airlines and confirm flight status before travelling to airports.

Alternative routes and visa relief

Indians seeking to leave Saudi Arabia during the disruption may consider flights from neighbouring Gulf countries, particularly Qatar and Bahrain, the embassy said. Such travel would depend on obtaining the necessary visas under the re-

spective countries' rules.

The embassy also said Saudi authorities would not impose fines on Indian nationals who entered the kingdom on visit, tourist, Umrah or business visas but were forced to overstay because flights were unavailable.

However, those whose visas had expired were advised to leave the kingdom as soon as flights became available.

The Consulate General of India in Jeddah issued a similar advisory, particularly for Umrah pilgrims travelling to and from Jeddah and Medina. It urged travellers to check with airlines before leaving for airports and remain in contact with travel agents and tour operators regarding cancellations, rescheduling, accommodation and alternative arrangements.

Both missions said they were coordinating with airlines and local authorities to assist affected Indian nationals.

24-hour helplines opened

The Indian Embassy in Riyadh has opened a 24-hour control room to assist citizens affected by the disruption.

It provided the following contact details:

Telephone: +966-11-4884698
Toll-free number within Saudi Arabia: 8002471234
WhatsApp: +966-536216082 (messages only)
Email: cw.riyadh@mea.gov.in

The Indian Consulate in Jeddah also operates a round-the-clock control room for assistance.

The latest disruption comes after airlines temporarily suspended services to Riyadh last week following reported attacks on the airport. The extension of cancellations through October 17 leaves passengers facing continued uncertainty over travel plans, particularly those undertaking religious pilgrimages or seeking to return to India.

Rahul Hosts Tea for Oppn MPs, Civil Society Members

Press Trust of India

NEW DELHI: Leader of Opposition in the Lok Sabha Rahul Gandhi hosted INDIA bloc leaders and members of student organisations and civil society at his home for tea here on Tuesday.

Among the leaders present at Gandhi's 5, Sunehri Bagh Road residence were Tejashwi Yadav and Manoj Jha of the RJD, Mahua Maji (JMM), Harender Malik, Anand Bhaduria and Mohibullah Nadvi (SP), M A Baby (CPI-M), D Raja and P Sandosh Kumar (CPI), AISA chief Neha Bora, Dipankar Bhattacharya (CPI-ML) and Mahua Moitra (TMC).

Congress president Mallikarjun Kharge and Congress Parliamentary Party chief Sonia Gandhi, besides party leaders K C Venugopal, Jairam Ramesh, Shashi Tharoor and Pawan Khera were also present on the occasion.

Earlier, in a post in Hindi on X, Gandhi said, "I have invited the leaders of the INDIA bloc, opposition MPs, student organisations and civil society comrades to my home for tea. In this people's movement to protect democracy, we are all together -- and this movement will continue relentlessly.

"After tea, we will all come together and present our case in front of the me-

dia. All protests are one," Gandhi said.

Sources said deliberations on the strategy for joint protests against "vote chori" and to press for Chief Election Commissioner (CEC) Gyanesh Kumar's resignation are also expected to take place during the meeting at Gandhi's residence.

This comes a day after the raging protests over the vote-theft charge reached the Supreme Court's doorstep. Opposition stalwarts, joined by activists and civil society members, undertook a "March for Democracy" on a heavily-barricaded route and filed a joint petition against the Special Intensive Revision (SIR) of the electoral roll and alleged poll irregularities in a major show of strength in the national capital. The opposition has been demanding the CEC's resignation over alleged irregularities in the SIR.

A mammoth crowd carrying flags and posters descended on central Delhi's Connaught Place, with Leaders of Opposition (LoPs) in the Lok Sabha and the Rajya Sabha, Gandhi and Kharge respectively, Samajwadi Party (SP) chief Akhilesh Yadav, Trinamool Congress (TMC) supremo Mamata Banerjee, D Raja, M A Baby, Tejashwi Yadav and NCP-SCP leader Supriya Sule, among others, joining the march.

IMF Raises India's Growth Forecast to 7% in FY27

Press Trust of India

WASHINGTON: The International Monetary Fund (IMF) has raised India's growth forecast to 7 per cent in 2026-27, higher than the 6.4 per cent in July, on the back of resilient domestic demand and robust services activity, placing the country among the fastest-growing major economies.

"India remains among the fastest-growing major economies, with growth in 2026 projected at 7.0 per cent," the IMF said in the World Economic Outlook (WEO) report released at its annual meeting in Bangkok.

"This reflects stronger-than-expected momentum, supported by resilient domestic demand and robust services activity," the report said.

It said India is projected to grow at 7 per cent in 2027-28, up from the July estimate of 6.7 per cent.

It said India's growth remained robust, underpinned by domestic demand and services, despite higher oil prices.

Hezbollah to Compensate War-Hit Homeowners in Lebanon

AP

BEIRUT: Hezbollah will pay up to USD 14,000 in aid to families whose homes in Lebanon were destroyed or made uninhabitable during the war with Israel, the head of the group's Executive Council said Tuesday.

At a news conference, Ali Daamouh accused the Lebanese state of failing to carry out its duties to help the displaced.

He said families who lost their homes in Beirut and its southern suburbs would receive USD 14,000 each, while those elsewhere in Lebanon would get USD 12,000. Each payment includes USD 8,000 for furniture, with the rest intended to cover rent.

Daamouh did not say how many families would benefit or how much the payments would total.

The initiative appears aimed at bolstering public support and signalling defiance to the Lebanese govern-

ment and the United States, which has sought to cut off Hezbollah's funding.

The press conference was group's first on such payments since its latest two wars with Israel, which killed more than 8,000 people and destroyed tens of thousands of homes in Lebanon.

In recent years, the United States has increased its sanctions on individuals and institutions that Washington says Hezbollah uses to funnel money into Lebanon. Flights from Iran to Lebanon have been banned for nearly two years as part of efforts to pressure the Iran-backed group.

The latest war began when Hezbollah fired rockets into Israel in early March, two days after the US and Israel launched a war on Iran. Israel launched a ground invasion, capturing dozens of Lebanese villages and towns along the border, before a US-brokered ceasefire ended the conflict in late June.

Court Scraps Look-Out Circular in ₹247-Cr PNB Fraud Case

Press Trust of India

NEW DELHI: A Delhi court has rescinded a look-out circular (LOC) issued against an accused in a Rs 247-crore fraud case involving the Punjab National Bank (PNB) registered by the CBI, saying the seriousness of an allegation cannot be the sole determinant for a circular's continued operation.

An LOC is an administrative alert used by law-enforcement agencies in India to monitor or restrict the travel of an individual at international borders.

Special Judge Dinesh Kumar of the Rouse Avenue Courts was hearing a plea by accused Akash Gupta, saying he was stopped at the Bengaluru airport immigration counter while he was leaving for Australia to secure admission for his son to an educational institution, and learnt for the first time that there was an

LOC against him.

The plea sought the circular's cancellation, saying the court had earlier allowed Gupta to travel abroad, following which he had complied with all conditions and returned on time, and besides, he had cooperated with the investigation throughout.

In an order dated October 7, the court noted that the agency had filed its final report in the case and that Gupta was not arrested during the probe.

"Therefore, the investigating agency is under an obligation to explain why his continued restriction on foreign travel is now necessary," the court said.

It said Gupta's return to India despite having an opportunity to remain abroad after the court's earlier permission supports his contention that he has not attempted to evade the process of law.

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15	₹25.9L	₹9.0L	4.3x
20	₹51.8L	₹12.0L	6.5x
25	₹97.5L	₹15.0L	10.5x
30	₹1.9Cr	-	-

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