29th year OF PUBLICATION

KASHMIR OBSERVER®

Wednesday 18 November 2026 | Srinagar | Vol: 29 | Issue: 282 | Pages: 08 | Price: ₹3

www.kashmirobserver.net ● twitter.com / kashmirobserver ● facebook.com/kashmirobserver ● Postal Regn: L/159/KO/SK/2014-2016

PM Calls For Peace As Global Tensions Mount

Press Trust Of India



Manila: Amid the geopolitical tension, what the world needs today is peace, stability and predictability, Prime Minister Narendra Modi underlined at the ASEAN-India Summit, the East Asia Summit and the Quad Summit in Philippines, Foreign Secretary Vikram Misri said on Tuesday.

Misri, in a briefing, said the prime minister has just completed a short but very intense visit to Manila, where he participated in the 23rd India-ASEAN Summit, the 21st East Asia Summit and the 7th Quad Leaders Summit.

At each of the three meetings, the prime minister underlined that in a world that has seen a great deal of geopolitical tension, flux and stresses and strains, what the world really needs today is peace, stability and predictability, Misri said.

Calling the Quad Summit a "very substantive and forward-looking meeting", he said it reaffirmed the commitment of all four partners to a free and open Indo-Pacific and reaffirmed their commitment to advancing practical cooperation between themselves.

The Quad summit was attended by Prime Minister Narendra Modi, US President Donald Trump, Australian Prime Minister Anthony Albanese and Japanese Prime Minister Sanae Takaichi.

Saying Manila holds a very special place for the Quad, Misri said it was here in 2007 that officials from the Quad countries first met and subsequently, 10 years later in 2017, when Quad cooperation was taken up once again, the leaders met in this very city.

"And so therefore, it is very fitting that almost a decade later in 2026, the 7th Quad Summit is being held here in this city," he said.

"The summit was also consistent with ASEAN centrality being held on the sidelines of the ASEAN Summit and its outcomes build on the progress of the five Quad foreign ministers meetings that have taken place in the last roughly 20 months and the three foreign ministers' meetings that have been held this year alone in Delhi, in Manila and in Atlanta," he said.

Talking about the key outcomes, Misri said the Quad leaders agreed to launch a Quad business forum for the first time, bringing together businesses, academics and industries from the three countries.

The prime minister announced in | More on P6

NGT Orders Probe Into Waste Dumping In Kashmir's Saffron Fields

The tribunal has appointed a joint committee to investigate alleged pollution at Patalbagh, where farmers say garbage dumping has damaged saffron cultivation on nearly 2,000 kanals of land.

Ansar Hussain



At Patalbagh in Pampore, where saffron growers depend on carefully tended fields for their annual harvest, a municipal waste dumping site has become a source of growing concern. Farmers say garbage dumped by the local municipality has damaged their fields, increased rodent populations and destroyed saffron corms over the past three years.

Their complaints have now reached the National Green Tribunal, which has ordered an investigation into the environmental impact of the dumping site in one of Kashmir's best-known saffron-growing areas.

Hearing Original Application No. 602/2026, filed by environmental activist Dr. Raja Muzaffar Bhat against the Jammu and Kashmir government and others, the tribunal's Principal Bench took serious cognizance of the unscientific disposal of municipal solid waste by the Municipal Committee Pampore.

The bench, headed by NGT Chairperson Justice Prakash Shrivastava and Expert Member Dr. Afroz Alam, directed the formation of a joint committee to inspect the site and assess the damage. It gave the committee eight weeks to complete its investigation and submit a factual report, including details of action taken.

The Deputy Commissioner of Pulwama will coordinate the inspection.

The committee will include representatives | More on P6

Srinagar Records Season's First Sub-Zero Night

Observer News Service

Srinagar: Srinagar recorded its first sub-zero night of the ongoing winter season on Tuesday, with the minimum temperature settling at minus 0.1 degrees Celsius, as freezing conditions gripped several parts of Kashmir.

According to details, the tourist resorts of Gulmarg and Pahalgam recorded minimum temperatures of minus 3.4 degrees Celsius and minus 3.8 degrees Celsius, respectively.

Director of the Meteorological Department Mukhtar Ahmed said Srinagar recorded minus 0.1 degrees Celsius during the night, marking the lowest minimum temperature in the city so far this season.

This was also the first time this winter that the night temperature in Srinagar dipped below the freezing point.

In the Jammu | More on P6

Crime Branch Can Probe Graft Cases: HC

M Ahmad

Srinagar: The High Court of J&K and Ladakh has answered in the affirmative the question of whether the Crime Branch has jurisdiction to investigate corruption-related offences involving public servants, holding that the Anti-Corruption Bureau (ACB) does not enjoy exclusive authority to investigate offences under the Jammu and Kashmir Prevention of Corruption Act, Svt. 2006. | More on P6

CM Warns Firms Against Hiring Outsiders

KO Web Desk



Srinagar: Chief Minister Omar Abdullah on Tuesday warned companies setting up operations in the Union Territory against bypassing local youth in recruitment, saying the government would not accept the excuse of a lack of trained manpower.

Abdullah said companies could be given six months to a year to train local candidates, but would have to provide employment opportunities to young people from Jammu and Kashmir.

"We will not tolerate the excuse that trained local youngsters are not available. We can give you six months or a year to train our youth. We have academies, training facilities, colleges | More on P6

J&K To Enforce 25% EWS Quota In Private Schools

Rules under RTE Act in final stage of notification; government to reimburse schools for eligible students

Observer News Service

Srinagar: Jammu and Kashmir is set to implement a 25 per cent reservation for children belonging to economically weaker sections (EWS) and disadvantaged groups in private schools across the Union Territory, Education Minister Shamim Firdous said on Tuesday.

The provision, mandated under Section 12(1)(c) of the Right of Children to Free and Compulsory Education (RTE) Act, requires private schools to reserve 25 per cent of entry-level seats for eligible children from economically weaker and disadvantaged backgrounds.

Firdous announced the decision during a review meeting with senior officers of the School Education Department, representatives of private school associations, parents' associations and | More on P6



GOVT. OF JAMMU & KASHMIR
SRINAGAR MUNICIPAL CORPORATION
OFFICE OF THEEXECUTIVE ENGINEER LEFT RIVER WORKS DIVISION

Ph. No. 0194-2458118

CORRIGENDUM NOTICE

Corrigendum to Sr. No 06 of NIET no 59 of 2026-27 dated : 16-11-2026 please read estimated cost and EMD as 2,24000/- and 4480/- instead of 340000/- and 6800/- respectively.

Rest all shall remain same.

Sd/-
EXECUTIVE ENGINEER, LEFT RIVER WORKS DIVISION,
SRINAGAR MUNICIPAL CORPORATION.

NO: SMC/EELRWD/2610-2619
DIPK-NB-2142/26 Dated: -17/11/2026.

Government of Jammu & Kashmir.

OFFICE OF THE EXECUTIVE ENGINEER (R&B) DIVISION-SRINAGAR-CORE

NOTICE INVITING TENDERS

SINGLE COVER SYSTEM (BELOW Rs. 2.50 Crores)

NIT No: - 73 of R&B /Sgr-Core/2026-27 **Dated: - 14/11/2026 (E-tendering)**

For and on behalf of the Lt. Governor of UT J&K, e-tenders are invited on **%age basis** from approved and eligible Contractors registered with J&K UT Govt., PW(R&B), CPWD, Railways and other State/Central Governments for each of the following works: -

S. No	Name of Work	Adv. Cost (in lacs, incl GST)	Cost of T/Doc. (in Rupees)	Earnest Money (In Rupees)	Time of comp.	M. Head	Ref to Auth/A.A	Ref To TS	Class of Contractor
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
1.	Construction of Fire and Emergency Station M.R Gunj Srinagar.	161.66/-	2600/-	323320/-	365 Days	Capex Budget 2026-27	710-(DF&ES) OF 2026 Dated: - 29.09.2026 endr. Vide DFES-PLAN/10/2021-02(CC79530)	SE/PWD(R&B)/Sgr-North/TS/114 of 2026 Dated:- 12.11.2026	AAY

Position of funds =Committed

Project Authority = Director Fire and Emergency Services, J&K

1	Date of Issue of Tender Notice	14/11/2026
2	Period of downloading of bidding documents	From 14/11/2026 06.00 P.M to 23/11/2026 6.00 P.M
3	Bid submission **Start Date**	14/11/2026 from 06.00 PM
4	Bid Submission **End Date**	23/11/2026 6.00 PM
5	Date & time of opening of Bids **(Online)**	25/11/2026 at 12.00 P.M in the Office of the Executive Engineer Division Srinagar Core.

1. **All Bidders have to quote the rates in BOQ Inclusive of GST.**
2. The Bidding documents Consisting of qualifying information, eligibility criteria, specifications, Drawings, bill of quantities (B.O.Q), Set of terms and conditions of contract and other details can be seen/downloaded from the departmental website www.jktenders.gov.in as per above schedule:

Note: - The Bidders are advised to read all conditions laid down in the NIT carefully before uploaded softcopy any short fall found in the soft copy the tender shall be rejected.

2.1 Bids must be accompanied with cost of Tender document (as mentioned above) in shape of Treasury Challan in favour of Executive Engineer **R&B Division Srinagar-CORE, Safa Kadal Srinagar** (The Date of Treasury Challan must be between the date of start of bid and Bid Submission End date, also mentioning the NIT No/S.No. / Name Of The Work).

2.2 **The 1st lowest bidder has to produce an amount equal to 5% of contract as Performance Security in the shape of CDR/FDR** in favour **Executive Engineer (R&B) Division Srinagar-Core** (as the case may be) within 15 days after the date of receipt of letter of acceptance and shall be released after successful completion of DLP. The Bank Guarantee should be valid for 45 days beyond DLP.

In case of the abnormally low bids the Successful bidder will have to provide additional performance security in the shape of CDR/FDR/BG as per the breakup given below pledged to Executive Engineer R&B Division Srinagar-Core (tender receiving authority).as per circular issued by J&K Finance Department (Codes Division) under No.: - FD-Code/441/2021-02-158 Dated: 08-08-2025

Moreover, the additional performance security percentage shall be rounded off to the next lower percentage based on whether the decimal point of the percentage of bid price is below 0.5% or next higher percentage based on whether the decimal point of the percentage of bid price Is 0.5% or more.

S.No	Percentage of unbalanced bid Viz. advertised cost on account of low rates	Additional Performance Security
1	Upto and including 10% below	Nil
2.	>10% upto and including 20% below project cost. Example: If the bid is 12% below project cost, that's 2% below the 10% limit → Additional Security = [0.1% ×(12-10)] = 0.2% of bid price.	Incremented by 0.1% for every percentage of bid price below 10% of project cost put to bid starting at 11% with the additional performance guarantee being 0.1% and this additional guarantee percentage shall be applied on the bid price.
3	>20 % or more below project cost. Example: If the bid is 25% less than project cost, that's 5% below the 20% limit → Additional Security = [1%+(0.2% × (25-20)] = 2% of bid price.	Incremented by 0.2% for every percentage of bid price below 20% of the project cost put to bid in addition to 1% of the bid price and this additional guarantee percentage shall be applied on the bid price.

The Additional performance security shall be treated as part of the performance security.

The earnest money/bid security of 2% will be released to the successful bidder only after the submission of a Performance Security of 5% of the allotted cost, Performance Security shall be released after successful completion of the DLP/Maintenance Period and additional performance security shall be released after completion of work.

3. Bidders can resubmit/withdraw the bids as specified.
4. The bids for the work shall remain **valid for a period of 120 days from the date of opening of bids.**
5. The earnest money shall be forfeited, If: -

a) Any bidder/ tenderer withdraws his bid/ tender during the period of bid validity or makes any modifications in the terms and conditions of the bid.
b) Failure of Successful bidder to furnish the required performance security within specified time period issue of letter of intent.
c) In case contractor fails to execute the agreement within 28 days after fixation of contract.
6. Instruction to bidders regarding e-tendering process

No: EE/Sgr-core/6536-41
DIPK-7757/26
Dated: 17.11.2026

Sd/-
Executive Engineer
(R&B) Division Srinagar Core

PUBLIC NOTICE
This is inform to the general public that my name has been wrongly mentioned in my aadhar as NASIMA BEGUM While as my actual name is NASEEMA BEGUM C/O JAVEED AHMAD MIR R/O GAGAL LOLAB KUPWARA District KUPWARA 193223 Now I want to apply for the correction of the same if anybody is having any objection he/she may contact concerned authority within the period of seven days after that no objection will be entertained.
NASEEMA BEGUM C/O :- JAVEED AHMAD MIR
R/O :- GAGAL LOLAB , KUPWARA fkor

PUBLIC NOTICE
This is inform to the general public that my name has been wrongly mentioned in my aadhar as ASIF MUSHTAQ While as my actual name is ASIF AHMAD DAR C/O MUSHTAQ AHMAD DAR R/O SHATWARI NEGRIMALPORA KUPWARA District KUPWARA 193222 Now I want to apply for the correction of the same if anybody is having any objection he/she may contact concerned authority within the period of seven days after that no objection will be entertained.
ASIF AHMAD DAR
C/O :- MUSHTAQ AHMAD DAR
R/O :- SHATWARI NEGRIMALPORA, KUPWARA FKO

PUBLIC NOTICE
This is inform to the general public that my name has been wrongly mentioned in my aadhar as HAROON ASHRAF TANTRAY While as my actual name is MOHAMMAD AMAAN TANTRY C/O MOHD ASHRAF TANTRY R/O KRUSAN LOLAB KUPWARA District KUPWARA 193223 Now I want to apply for the correction of the same if anybody is having any objection he/she may contact concerned authority within the period of seven days after that no objection will be entertained.
C/O :- MOHD ASHRAF TANTRY
R/O :- KRUSAN LOLAB, KUPWARA FKO

COURT OF SPECIAL MOBILE MAGISTRATE BUDGAM
PUBLIC NOTICE
An application has been filed by Rafiqa D/o Fazul Din Kalas R/o Dragger Kachwari Tehsil Khansahib District Budgam, seeking an order for delayed registration of her birth, stated to have taken place on 18.03.1970 at Dragger Kachwari Tehsil Khansahib District Budgam.
Now, therefore, the general public is hereby informed that any person having any objection to the delayed registration of the aforesaid birth may file their objections before this Court within seven days from the date of publication of this notice, failing which the application shall be considered and decided in accordance with law.
Sd/-Special Mobile Magistrate
MCB Budgam

The Jammu And Kashmir Board Of School Education
New Campus Bemina Srinagar



I have passed/appeared in Secondary School Examination (Class- 10th, 11th, 12th)under Roll No:. 313475 Session: Bi-Annual Year 2003 through the Jammu and Kashmir Board of School Education. The error has been committed by the self error against my Father's Name and Registation No:
as Mohs Anwar Khan, Registration No B98-30639 Instead of Mohd Anwar Khan , Registratioin No: B-98-30639-3007
Now, I have applied for correction/rectification of error in the Jammu and Kashmir Board of School Education. New Campus Bernina. Srinagar, if any person has any objection in this regard, may file the same in the office of the Assistant Secretary, Certificates-KD within seven days from the date of Publication of this notice, after the expiry of said period no objection will be entertained.
Name: Riheela Khan
Father's name: Mohd Anwar Khan
Mother's Name: Marufa Sultan
DOB: 08-03-1983
Residence: Wanpora Gurez
Mobile no: 60005417963
fko

PUBLIC NOTICE
It is hereby notified to the general public that I, Saima Majeed Wani D/O Late Abdul Majeed Wani, R/O Drugjan, Dalgate, Srinagar, have lost the original Death Certificate of my father, Late Abdul Majeed Wani, bearing Registration No. 761, dated 09-02-2012.
The details of the deceased are as under:- Name: Abdul Majeed Wani- Father's Name: Haji Ghulam Mohammad Wani
Date of Death: 24-01-2012- Address: Drugjan, Dalgate, Srinagar
Despite my best efforts, the said Death Certificate could not be traced. I intend to apply for the issuance of a duplicate Death Certificate from the concerned authorities.
Any person having any objection in this regard may submit the same before the concerned authority within the stipulated period, failing which no claim or objection shall be entertained.
Saima Majeed Wani
D/O Late Abdul Majeed Wani
Media line advt R/O Drugjan, Dalgate, Srinagar

PUBLIC NOTICE
I have changed my name from (old name)
Sarika Khatun to (new name)
Sarika . In future i will be known as (new name)
Sarika.
If anybody is having any objection he/she may contact passport office srinagar, within 7 days.
After 7 days no objection will be accepted.
Media line advt

PUBLIC NOTICE
I Mushtaq Ahmed Bhat S/o Mohd Sultan Bhat R/o Sheeraz Colony Soura hereby inform that my father Mohd Sultan Bhat , who was the Registered Consumer of PDD having Electric Connection bearing Consumer (no.020400024458) We paid our bill regularly now I intend to transfer the electric connection on my name "'Mushtaq Ahmed Bhat".
If any person or party has any objection in this transfer.He or they may file their objection in writing in the office of the AEE Sub Division Zakura within 7 (seven) days from the Date of Publication.No objection shall be entertained after stipulated Time Period.
Mushtaq Ahmad Bhat
S/o Mohd Sultan Bhat
R/o Sheeraz Colony Soura
phone 9419454915
Media line advt

PUBLIC NOTICE
This is inform to the general public that my name has been wrongly mentioned in my aadhar as RAYSHAD MAQBOOL GANIE While as my actual name is RAYSHAD MAQBOOL C/O MOHAMMAD MAQBOOL GANIE R/O SAHIPORA KRALGUND KUPWARA District KUPWARA 193302 Now I want to apply for the correction of the same if anybody is having any objection he/she may contact concerned authority within the period of seven days after that no objection will be entertained.
RAYSHAD MAQBOOL
C/O :- MOHAMMAD MAQBOOL GANIE
R/O :- SAHIPORA KRALGUNG , KUPWARA FKO

PUBLIC NOTICE
This is inform to the general public that my name has been wrongly mentioned in my aadhar as ISHRAT BANO While as my actual name is ISHRAT HASSAN C/O GHULAM HASSAN LONE R/O GUZRIYAL KRALPORA KUPWARA District KUPWARA 193224 Now I want to apply for the correction of the same if anybody is having any objection he/she may contact concerned authority within the period of seven days after that no objection will be entertained.
ISHRAT HASSAN
C/O :- GHULAM HASSAN LONE
R/O :- GUZRIYAL KRALPORA, KUPWARA FKO

PUBLIC NOTICE
This is information for the general public that in Adhar card of my daughter bearing No 290280001186 the name is entered as SEHREEN AKHTER while her actual name is SEHREEN RASHEED. 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.
ABDUL RASHEED SOFI
F/O SEHREEN RASHEED
R/o QAZIBAGH BUDGAM
CELL. 9906451661 mcb

PUBLIC NOTICE
1, Sajad Ahmad Bhat, S/o Ab Gani Bhat, R/o Tral Payeen (Kanjbal), hereby notify the general public that my father's name has been inadvertently recorded as "Ab Ganie Bhat" in my service records instead of its correct spelling, i.e. "Ab Gani Bhat".
I intend to get the aforesaid discrepancy rectified in my service records. Any person having any objection in this regard may submit the same before the concerned authority within seven (07) days from the date of publication of this notice. No objection shall be entertained thereafter.
Sajad Ahmad Bhat
S/o Ab Gani Bhat
R/o Tral Payeen (Kanjbal)
Mobile No.: 9797112515 inf

PUBLIC NOTICE
I, Sajad Ahmad Bhat, S/o Ab Gani Bhat, R/o Tral Payeen (Kanjbal), hereby inform the general public that my Discharge Certificate and Character Certificate issued by Government M.L. Boys Higher Secondary School, Tral, have been misplaced and are not traceable despite my best efforts.
I intend to obtain duplicate certificates from the concerned institution. Any person having any objection in this regard may submit the same before the concerned authority within seven (07) days from the date of publication of this notice. No objection shall be entertained thereafter.
Sajad Ahmad Bhat
S/o Ab Gani Bhat
R/o Tral Payeen (Kanjbal)
Mobile No.: 9797112515 inf

PUBLIC NOTICE
This is inform to the general public that my name has been wrongly mentioned in my aadhar as ZAHIDA BANO While as my actual name is ZAHIDA AKHTER C/O ABDUL RASHID GANIE R/O KANTPORA KHANTIPORA KUPWARA District KUPWARA 193223 Now I want to apply for the correction of the same if anybody is having any objection he/she may contact concerned authority within the period of seven days after that no objection will be entertained.
ZAHIDA AKHTER
C/O :- ABDUL RASHID GANIE fko
R/O :- KANTPORA KHANTIPORA , KUPWARA

PUBLIC NOTICE
This is inform to the general public that my name has been wrongly mentioned in my aadhar as IMTIYAZ AHMAD MALIK While as my actual name is IMTIYAZ AHMAD MIR C/O MOHAMMAD RAMZAN MIR R/O GUSHI KUPWARA District KUPWARA 193222 Now I want to apply for the correction of the same if anybody is having any objection he/she may contact concerned authority within the period of seven days after that no objection will be entertained.
IMTIYAZ AHMAD MIR
C/O :- MOHAMMAD RAMZAN MIR
R/O :- GUSHI , KUPWARA fko

PUBLIC NOTICE
I, Fatima Banoo W/o Gh. Mohi Uddin Bhat, R/o Magam, Tehsil Magam, District Budgam, do hereby inform the general public that my name has been wrongly recorded in my Aadhaar Card as Fatima Bano W/o Ghulam Mohi Uddin Bhat, whereas my correct name, as per my valid Passport, is Fatima Banoo W/o Gh. Mohi Ud Din Bhat. Furthermore, my Date of Birth has been wrongly mentioned in my Aadhaar Card as 18/07/1958, whereas my correct Date of Birth, as per my Passport, is 01/01/1963.
Now, I have applied for correction of my name and Date of Birth in my Aadhaar Card as per my Passport. Any person having objections, if any, in this regard may file the same before the concerned authorities within seven days from the date of publication of this notice. No objections shall be entertained thereafter.
Sd/-
Fatima Banoo
R/o Magam, Budgam bmg

NOTICE FOR GENERAL PUBLIC
This is information for the general public that i IRSHAD AHMAD MALIK have applied for the fresh "D" class contractor. If any body having any objection regarding the same they may submitt their objection written to the Cheif Engineer Civil investigation wing JKPD, Bemina within a period of 7 days from the date of this notice. No objection will be entertained after that.
IRSHAD AHMAD MALIK
S/O ABDUL RASHID MALIK mcb
R/O ZANIGAM BUDGAM.

Court Rejects Bail Plea Of Ex-DySP's Son In Rifle Threat Case

M Ahmad

Srinagar: A court here on Tuesday rejected the bail plea of a youth accused of allegedly threatening a neighbour and his family members with an INSAS rifle, observing that his release at this stage could "jeopardise" the fairness of the ongoing investigation.

The court of Special Mobile Magistrate PT&E, Srinagar, Massarat Jabeen dismissed the bail application of Junaid ul Yousuf Bandh, son of retired Deputy Superintendent of Police Mohammad Yousuf Bandh, in connection with FIR No. 123/2026 registered at Police Station Nigeen.

According to the prosecution, the case was registered following a complaint by Hilal Shah of Saderbal Hazratbal Srinagar, who alleged that the accused and his father had been continuously harassing and intimidating him and his family.

The complainant alleged that on November 8 around 9:30 am, the accused came out carrying a rifle and threatened him and his family members with dire consequences. The incident was reportedly captured by CCTV cameras installed in the vicinity.

During the investigation, police seized an INSAS rifle, one magazine and 40 rounds of ammunition. The court was informed that the weapon had been officially allotted to the Personal Security Officer (PSO) deployed with retired DySP Mohammad Yousuf Bandh, father of the accused.

Taking note of the circumstances surrounding the weapon, the court observed that the manner in which it allegedly came into the possession of the accused, including its custody and movement, required detailed investigation.

The court observed that police-issued weapons were entrusted to designated personnel for lawful official purposes and public security and were not meant to be used as instruments of private intimidation or to settle neighbourhood disputes.

It observed that the alleged use or display of a firearm in a residential locality had the potential to create fear and insecurity among the complainant's family and other residents.

The prosecution opposed the bail plea, citing the possibility of the accused influencing or intimidating the complainant and other material witnesses. It also submitted that several crucial investigative steps were yet to be completed, including forensic examination of CCTV footage, scientific examination through FSL/DPL Srinagar and questioning of the PSO to whom the rifle had been allotted.

The court noted that the investigation was required to establish the chain of custody of the weapon, the circumstances in which it allegedly came into the accused's possession and whether electronic and oral evidence corroborated the complaint.

The court further observed that the complainant and the accused were neighbours, making the apprehension of direct or indirect pressure on the complainant and his family a relevant consideration while deciding the bail application.

While taking note of the accused's status as a student, permanent residence and willingness to cooperate with the investigation, the court held that these factors did not sufficiently address the concerns regarding possible witness intimidation and the pending examination of material evidence.

The court clarified that the invocation of Section 109(1) of the Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita (BNS) did not, by itself, create an absolute statutory bar against bail. However, it said the overall circumstances and investigative requirements weighed against the accused's release at this stage.

"The balance, at this stage, tilts against grant of bail," the court observed, holding that the accused's release would be premature.

The bail application was accordingly dismissed, with liberty to the accused to approach the court afresh in case of a material change in circumstances, including completion of the pending investigative steps.

493 Fire Incidents Reported in Srinagar Till October, Electrical Faults Major Cause

Observer News Service



Srinagar: Srinagar district has recorded 493 fire incidents till October this year, fewer than the corresponding period last year, with electrical faults accounting for more than 90 per cent of fire incidents, Deputy Director, Fire and Emergency Services (F&ES) Kashmir, Aqib Husain Mir, said on Tuesday.

Addressing a press conference in Srinagar, Mir said the department had issued a detailed winter safety advisory as the use of heating appliances increases during the cold months, urging people to take precautions to prevent fire accidents and loss of life and property.

He said unsafe handling of heating appliances, electrical faults and poor maintenance of equipment were among the major causes of fire incidents.

The Deputy Director advised people to purchase only standard, ISI-marked heating appliances from authorised dealers and get old equipment inspected and serviced by qualified technicians before using it during winter.

He urged households to get electrical wiring checked, replace damaged or outdated wires and avoid overloading sockets and extension boards. He recommended installing suitable safety devices, including MCBs and RCCBs/ELCBs, with the help of qualified electricians.

On the use of LPG bukharis, Mir stressed the need for proper ventilation, warning that their improper use could lead to carbon monoxide poisoning, which can cause serious health complications and even prove fatal. He also advised people to switch off LPG bukharis before going to sleep.

Regarding kangris, he urged residents to keep them away from curtains, bedding, clothes and other inflammable materials and avoid leaving them unattended.

The department also cautioned against placing electric blankets on wet surfaces or using them alongside hot water bottles, warning that electrical leakage could trigger short circuits and cause burn injuries. People were advised to switch off electric blankets before sleeping.

The officer further advised households against storing dry grass, fodder, charcoal and other combustible materials in residential attics or close to houses, as these could accelerate the spread of fire. with KNO inputs

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

AIRPORTS

SHIEK UL ALAM AIRPORT: 01942303311

RAILWAYS

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

HIGHWAY STATUS

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

HIJRI CALENDAR

07 Jumada al-Sani
1448

PRAYERS

FAJR	5: 38
ZUHR	12:14
ASR	3: 52
Magrib	5: 32
ISHA	6: 56

CRPF Cup

8 Matches Played In Srinagar On 2nd Day

Agencies

Srinagar: On the second day of the fourth edition of CRPF Cup 2026 eight league matches were played across four venues in Srinagar on Monday.

According to the details, the matches were played in two sessions at SK Ground, Kashmir University Ground and SP College Ground, with several teams registering convincing victories.

In the morning session, BRCC Lasjan defeated Al-Ummah Cricket Club Ganderbal by 10 wickets after bowling them out for 35 runs. Lasjan chased down the target in just 4.1 overs without losing a wicket. Meeran Yousuf was named Player of the Match.

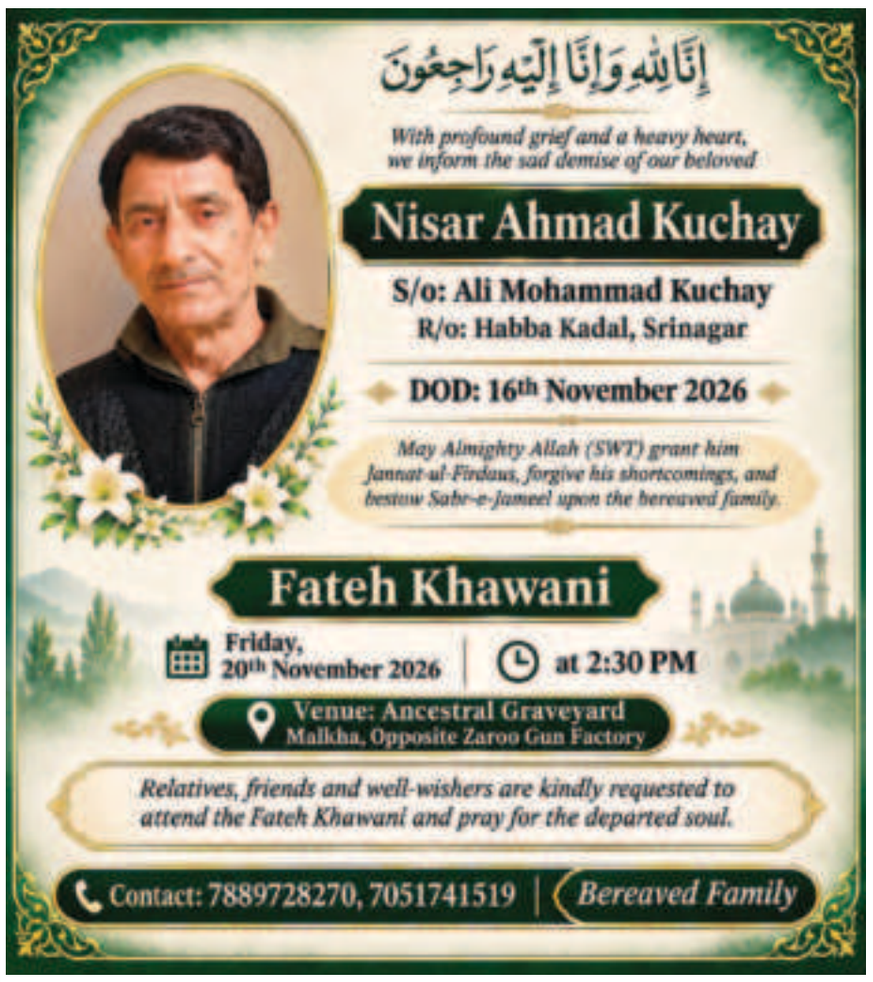
Royal Tigers Ganderbal registered an eight-run win over Flying Rangers Anchar, Srinagar, in a closely contested encounter. After posting 199/8, they restricted their opponents to 191 runs. Sofi Inayat was named Player of the Match.

Thunder Strikers Zewan defeated University of Kashmir by seven wickets, chasing down a target of 103, while Muraad 7th Street Cricket Club beat City Hunks Ganderbal by 32 runs.

In the afternoon session, North Star XI defeated R R R Labertal, Budgam, by 76 runs, while Shiv Warriors Budgam secured an eight-run victory over Batwara Sports Club.

Crescent XI Rangil Ganderbal defeated Handjan Hurricanes by 39 runs, while Samar XI Chadoora registered the biggest victory of the day, beating Pamposh Riders Cricket Club by 85 runs.

The CRPF said the tournament provides a platform for local cricketing talent, particularly young and emerging players, to showcase their abilities while promoting sportsmanship and discipline—(KNO)



PUBLIC NOTICE

I want to correct my name in my Aadhaar card bearing No. 4319 2499 1917 from Qaiser Ahmad to Kaiser Ahmad Chat as per my Matriculation certificate. Now the same is to be corrected. Objections, if any, may be conveyed to the concerned authorities within a period of 07 days. After that no objection will be entertained. ABASS ADVT.

KAISER AHMAD CHAT S/O ABDUL HAMEED CHAT
R/O BEMINA, SDA COLONY, SRINAGAR

PUBLIC NOTICE

I want to correct my name in my Aadhaar card bearing No. 4495 6310 8163 from Sajad Ahmed to Sajad Ahmed Mughal as per the Affidavit. Now the same is to be corrected. Objections, if any, may be conveyed to the concerned authorities within a period of 07 days. After that no objection will be entertained. ABASS ADVT.

SAJAD AHMED MUGHAL S/O MOHD GAYASS
R/O CHANIPORA PAYEEN, KUPWARA J&K

PUBLIC NOTICE

I want to correct my name in my Aadhaar card bearing No. 3722 9604 6530 from Mahmooda Bano to Mehmooda as per my Birth Certificate. Now the same is to be corrected. Objections, if any, may be conveyed to the concerned authorities within a period of 07 days. After that no objection will be entertained. ABASS ADVT.

MEHMOODA D/O ABDUL RAHMAN SHEIKH
R/O SHANKARPORA BAGHI MEHTAB, SRINAGAR

J&K Bank

The Jammu & Kashmir Bank Ltd.
IAPM Department,Zonal Office Srinagar,
M. A. Road, (Opposite Women's College), Srinagar-190001, Kashmir.
0194-2452658, Ext.:132;iapmd.kmr@jkbmail.com

POSSESSION NOTICE

Notice under Section 13 (4) of the SARFAESI ACT, 2002 read with Rule 8 (1) of the Security (Enforcement) Interest Rules, 2002

Whereas the Authorized Officer of the Jammu & Kashmir Bank Limited under the Securitization and Reconstruction of Financial Assets and Enforcement of Security Interest (SARFAESI) Act, 2002 and in exercise of powers under Section 13(2) of the said Act read with Rule 3 of the Security Interest (Enforcement) Rules 2002, issued Demand Notice dated 05.09.2026 thereby calling upon 1) Mr. Sadam Hussain S/O Showkat Hussain Bhat R/O Rajbagh, near Al-Farooq Masjid, Srinagar , 2) Mrs. Shireen Sofi W/O Showkat Hussain Bhat R/O Rajbagh, near Al-Farooq Masjid, Srinagar (Co-borrower in HLP-2663), 3) Ms. Iqra Showkat D/O Showkat Hussain Bhat R/O Rajbagh, near Al-Farooq Masjid, Srinagar, 4) Ms. Shahroo Kitab D/O Showkat Hussain Bhat R/O Rajbagh, near Al-Farooq Masjid, Srinagar, 5) Ms. Muskaan Kitab D/O Showkat Hussain Bhat R/O Rajbagh, near Al-Farooq Masjid, Srinagar (All legal heirs of deceased borrower/mortgagor), and the guarantors namely 6) Mr. Javaid Ahmad Dar and 7) Mr. Bashir Ahmad Reshi to repay an amount of Rs. 1, 13, 52, 837.78 (Rupees One Crore Thirteen Lacs Fifty Two Thousand Eight Hundred Thirty Seven and Paise Seventy Eight Only) being the balance outstanding as on 31.08.2026 in the account of the borrower, within 60 days from the date of the said notice together with the future interest and other charges thereon.

The said borrowers having failed to repay the said amount, notice is hereby given to the said borrowers in particular and the public in general that the undersigned being authorized officer of the J&K Bank Ltd. has taken possession of the mortgage property described herein below, in exercise of the powers conferred on me under Section 13(4) of the said Act read with Rule 8 of the said Rules, on 17.11.2026

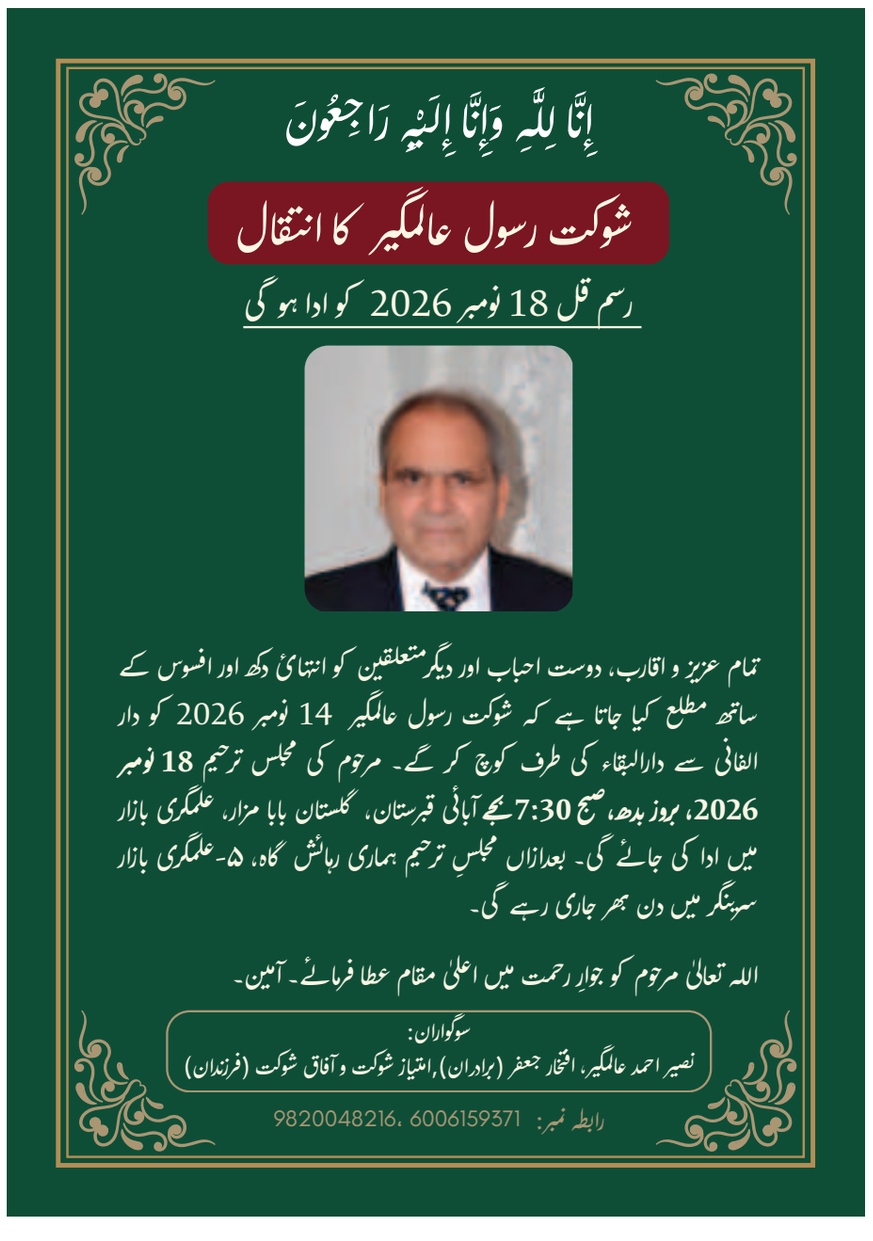
The borrowers in particular and the public in general are hereby cautioned against dealing with the said property in any manner whatsoever and any dealings with the said property will be subject to the charge of the J&K Bank Limited for the amount aggregating to 1,16,43,748.78 (Rupees One Crore Sixteen Lacs Forty Three Thousand Seven Hundred Forty Eight and Paise Seventy Eight only) as on 31.10.2026 together with future interest thereon from 01.11.2026 and other charges incurred or to be incurred.

The borrower's attention is invited to the provisions of Sub-section (8) of Section 13 of the Act, in respect of the time available, to redeem the secured assets.

Description of the Immovable Property

Residential House along with land measuring 01 Kanal 08 Marlas falling under Khasra No.1530/61, 1437/58, 1531/61, 1941/1448/59 (musha), Khata No.621 & 815 and Khewat No.124 & 230 situated at Estate Kursu Padshahibagh, Tehsil and District Srinagar standing in the name of Mr. Showkat Hussain Bhat (Deceased borrower/mortgagor).

Sd/ Authorized Officer



KASHMIR OBSERVER®

Printed & Published by Sajjad Haider on behalf of Kashmir Observer LLP
Printed at: K.T Press Pvt. Ltd 120-Electronic Complex, Industrial Estate, Rangreth-Budgam
Published from: 5-Boulevard Srinagar J&K
Editor-in-Chief : Sajjad Haider
Managing Editor: Bilal Handoo
News Editor: Farzana Nisar
Online Editor: Syed Hamid
Head Layout & Design: Muntazir Yaseen,
Digital Media Head: Amir Ali Shah
Distribution & Advertising: Firdous Ahmad
RNI Registration No: 69503/98
Postal Registration No-L/159/KO/SK/2014-16
Legal Counsel: Tasaduq Khwaja
Switchboard: (0194) 2502327 | +91 8899256463
Editorial: (0194) 2502327
Email: editor@kashmirobserver.net

KO VIEW

Courts Before Conscience

Kashmir's dependence on the National Green Tribunal to protect its natural resources exposes a serious failure of local governance.

The tribunal's latest intervention over municipal waste dumping in Pampore's saffron fields is another instance of a region's environmental institutions failing to prevent damage until citizens seek justice beyond the Union Territory.

The case concerns the Municipal Committee Pampore's alleged unscientific disposal of solid waste in Patalbagh, an important saffron-growing area. Farmers say the dumping has increased rodent populations and destroyed saffron corms on nearly 2,000 kanals of land over the past three years. They have sought compensation for their losses.

The NGT has ordered a joint committee comprising representatives of SKUAST-Kashmir, the Union Environment Ministry and the Jammu and Kashmir Pollution Control Committee to inspect the site, assess the pollution and establish whether the dumping ground has statutory clearances. The Deputy Commissioner of Pulwama will coordinate the inspection, and the committee must submit its report within eight weeks. The intervention provides a route to accountability. It also raises questions about the performance of the institutions already entrusted with environmental protection.

Municipal authorities have responsibilities for waste disposal, pollution control agencies have monitoring duties, and district administrations have powers to enforce regulations.

Their collective failure to prevent such dumping points to serious weaknesses in enforcement.

Pampore's saffron gives Kashmir international recognition and supports the livelihoods of farming families. Its cultivation depends on agricultural land that demands careful management. Allowing municipal waste disposal to threaten this resource reflects a failure to reconcile basic urban administration with the protection of agriculture.

But the problem goes beyond Pampore.

The NGT has repeatedly intervened in disputes involving Dal Lake, Wular Lake, wetlands, illegal mining and waste disposal in Jammu and Kashmir. Its involvement in these cases demonstrates the importance of judicial oversight, but the repeated need for such intervention also raises questions about the effectiveness of local environmental monitoring.

The tribunal can order inspections, seek reports and direct remedial action. It cannot replace the administrative machinery responsible for preventing violations in the first place. Nor can environmental protection depend indefinitely on activists taking public authorities to court after damage has occurred.

The responsibility also extends to communities. Public tolerance of illegal dumping, encroachment and the destruction of common resources allows environmental violations to continue. Civic accountability must accompany institutional enforcement.

The immediate priority at Patalbagh is a credible assessment of the damage, appropriate compensation for affected farmers where liability is established, and action against any violations identified by the committee. The findings should be made public, with clear responsibility assigned to the authorities concerned.

Kashmir's environmental state cannot depend on repeated interventions from the NGT. Its administration must enforce the laws already in place, while citizens must defend the natural resources on which their livelihoods and collective inheritance depend.

Protecting Kashmir must begin with those entrusted with governing it.

Meat, Money and Morality

Repeated seizures of unsafe meat expose failures in food regulation, but they also raise harder questions about commercial honesty, religious leadership and society's responsibility to protect public health.



Ahmad Ayaz

The seizure of rotten meat at Budgam Railway Station has brought an ugly problem back into public view.

Meat is an ordinary purchase for families in Kashmir, often made with the expectation that the seller has taken care of its quality and freshness.

They pay for food, trusting that what reaches their kitchens is fit to eat. But when traders knowingly sell rotten meat as fresh, that trust becomes a means of making money at the expense of another person's health.

The Budgam incident is especially troubling because similar seizures have been reported before, at different locations in Kashmir.

The recurrence raises serious questions about the effectiveness of official action.

What happened to those earlier investigations? Were the people responsible prosecuted? Did authorities identify the suppliers and distribution networks?

Most importantly, what changed after those cases came to light?

Repeated seizures suggest that confiscating a consignment, registering a case and issuing an official statement have done little to prevent the next incident.

The problem goes beyond the trader caught with an unsafe consignment. It reaches into the system through which meat is procured, transported, stored and distributed, and into the commercial values that govern those activities.

There is a difference between selling a product of poor quality and knowingly exposing another person to a health hazard.

A trader who conceals the condition of rotten meat and sells it as fresh commits a serious betrayal of public trust. The customer has little reason to suspect that the food purchased for a family meal could be harmful. Children and elderly people may be particularly exposed to the consequences.

Profit earned through such deception has little connection with an honest livelihood. Business depends on trust between the seller and the buyer. Once a trader treats the customer's ignorance as an opportunity for personal gain, the transaction becomes an act of exploitation.

This is also where Kashmir's wider social and religious institutions need to examine their own contribution.

Religious scholars regularly condemn such incidents and call upon the government to take strict action. Their criticism is justified, but public condemnation after a scandal has surfaced represents only one part of their responsibility.

Religious leadership has considerable influence in Kashmiri society. That influence could be used more consistently to promote honesty in business, fair dealing and respect for other people's health and rights.

Sermons and religious gatherings frequently address individual conduct and spiritual obligations. Commercial dishonesty, food adulteration, cheating, bribery and exploitation of consumers also need sustained attention.

Islam places clear obligations on those engaged in commerce. The Quran condemns dishonesty in weights and measures, while the teachings of Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) prohibit deception in transactions.

> "Families buying meat should never have to wonder whether the food they bring home has been concealed behind a false appearance of freshness. Their protection cannot depend on a chance inspection or another public scandal.

A well-known Hadith recorded in Sahih Muslim describes how the Prophet discovered that a food seller had concealed wet grain beneath apparently good grain. He instructed the seller to expose the defective portion so buyers could see its actual condition.

The lesson applies directly to the sale of meat.

Concealing spoilage while presenting food as fresh violates the principles of honest commerce. Halal consumption also involves concern for cleanliness, proper handling and protection from harmful contamination.

The permissibility of the animal alone cannot settle questions about the condition of the food reaching consumers.

Religious scholars are not food inspectors, and regulatory enforcement belongs to the government. Their responsibility lies in helping build a social environment in which cheating customers becomes morally unacceptable, rather than a business risk to be taken when inspections are unlikely.

Civil society and market associations also have work to do.

Public outrage in Kashmir often follows a familiar course. An incident emerges, statements appear, citizens demand action and the administration announces an investigation.

As media attention moves elsewhere, public scrutiny weakens. Earlier cases gradually disappear from public memory, leaving little pressure to establish what happened after the initial seizure.

Civil society organisations should press authorities to disclose investigation findings and the outcomes of previous cases. Market associations must discourage dishonest practices among their members and protect traders who conduct business honestly.

Those who compromise food quality for higher profits should not gain an advantage over competitors who follow proper standards.

The media, too, has a responsibility beyond reporting the quantity of meat seized or the number of people detained.

Journalists should follow the supply networks, examine earlier investigations and question whether regulatory agencies have corrected the failures exposed by previous incidents.

Consumers can contribute by reporting suspicious practices to the competent authorities, while exercising care before making unverified allegations against particular businesses.

These efforts, however, cannot substitute for government enforcement. Departments responsible for food safety, veterinary services, municipal regulation and market inspections have a statutory obligation to protect public health. Their work must cover the full supply chain, beginning with the source of the meat and continuing through transportation, storage and distribution.

Authorities should establish where consignments originate, who transports them, where they are stored and which establishments receive them.

Scientific testing, proper documentation and regular inspections of storage facilities should form part of routine enforcement.

Such checks should take place throughout the year, rather than mainly after media reports or public complaints.

Previous cases also need a fresh examination. Investigators should establish whether prosecutions followed, whether the supply networks were identified and whether deficiencies in inspection procedures were corrected.

If unsafe meat continues to enter the market despite existing regulatory arrangements, supervisory responsibility must also come under scrutiny. Accountability should extend to officials whose negligence or failure to enforce the law is established.

The larger concern is the separation between the values society publicly celebrates and the conduct it tolerates in ordinary commercial life.

Kashmir has a strong religious and social identity, but that identity gains substance through everyday dealings. Honest weights, clean food, fair prices and respect for customers are practical expressions of ethical conduct.

Families buying meat should never have to wonder whether the food they bring home has been concealed behind a false appearance of freshness. Their protection cannot depend on a chance inspection or another public scandal.

The Budgam seizure should therefore lead to answers that remain available after the headlines disappear.

The government must establish how the meat entered the market and who was responsible. Religious institutions and community organisations must examine how commercial honesty can become a sustained part of public education. Traders must understand that their livelihood holds obligations towards the people who buy from them.

A society's moral condition is tested in ordinary transactions, often far away from public speeches and religious gatherings.

The meat sold in a neighbourhood shop may reveal more about its commercial ethics than any public declaration of virtue.

When a family cannot trust the food it buys, the failure reaches well beyond the counter.

It enters the home, the kitchen and the most basic relationship between a seller and the people who depend on him.

—

The author is a columnist and national TV debater. He can be reached at ahmadayaz08@gmail.com.

A Toothache Kashmir Should Fix

Jammu and Kashmir has 5,753 unemployed dental surgeons, while shortages in public health facilities leave families struggling to find basic dental care close to home.



Farooq Ahmad Khan

A child's first tooth is usually greeted with excitement in the valley.

Parents call relatives, grandparents lean closer and someone reaches for a phone to capture the little white mark inside a familiar smile.

Teeth grow, childhood advances and chewing becomes effortless.

Years later, the same family may find itself travelling a considerable distance to get a painful tooth examined, while thousands of trained dentists in Jammu and Kashmir wait for government employment.

This is an uncomfortable contradiction in the Union Territory's public health system.

Jammu and Kashmir has thousands of qualified dental surgeons seeking work, but its public facilities have limited provision for dental care, particularly outside district hospitals.

The problem is larger than an employment backlog. It concerns the way the government plans its health services and connects trained professionals with people who need them.

Kashmir has an old Persian saying for a toothache: "Dardi dandaan, ikhraji dandaan." If a tooth hurts, pull it out.

The expression belongs to a time when extraction was often the quickest answer to dental pain. It also holds an amusing certainty about difficult decisions.

I remember hearing it used about marriage, too, by men who wanted to end one without considering the obligations involved. A complicated human problem could be reduced to a simple act of pulling.

Dentistry has moved well beyond that approach.

A decayed tooth can often be repaired with a filling, while root canal treatment can save one whose inner tissue has become infected. Bridges, dentures and implants can restore much of the ability to chew after tooth loss. Modern dentistry is built around preserving teeth wherever possible, diagnosing disease early and treating conditions before they become severe.

The profession has developed several specialised branches to do this work.

Conservative dentistry and endodontics focus on repairing and preserving teeth. Periodontology treats gum disease and the tissues supporting teeth, while prosthodontics restores or replaces damaged and missing teeth. Orthodontics corrects the alignment of teeth and the bite. Paediatric dentistry looks after children, and oral and maxillofacial surgery deals with impacted teeth and jaw injuries. Oral medicine and radiology assist diagnosis, oral pathology examines diseased tissue, and public health dentistry focuses on prevention at the community level.

Jammu and Kashmir has trained professionals in these fields. The public system's ability to use their skills remains the larger question.

A September 2026 reply by the Health and Medical Education Department to the Legislative Assembly put the number of registered unemployed dental surgeons at approximately 5,753. The department disputed the claim that no recruitment process had taken place since 2008.

That year, however, continues to feature in public reporting as the last major recruitment drive.

The government could settle the disagreement through a transparent account of recruitment advertisements, posts referred for selection and appointments made since then.

The staffing figures supplied to the Assembly reveal a problem that a recruitment dispute cannot explain away.

In February, Health Minister Sakeena Itoo said all sanctioned dental surgeon posts at district hospitals had been filled. The position below that level was very different.

Only three dental surgeon posts had been sanctioned at New Type Primary Health Centres, of which two were filled. Sub-centres had no sanctioned dental surgeon posts.

A filled post at a district hospital may look satisfactory on a government spreadsheet. A family living far away needs to know whether a dentist works at its nearest health centre, on which days patients can be examined and whether the facility has the equipment and supplies to provide treatment.

> **The sight of** thousands of qualified dentists waiting for jobs while patients struggle to find nearby care is an administrative failure that should be easier to correct than the pain of a tooth that has been left untreated.

These are different measures of public access, and the second is the one that patients experience.

The government has also acknowledged that dental surgeons work against temporary posts created beyond the regular establishment.

The February Assembly reply put these positions at 143, comprising six in Jammu Division and 137 in Kashmir Division. In September, the department linked the processing of proposals for new posts to the lifting of austerity measures.

That explanation leaves room for practical decisions while financial restrictions remain.

The government could publish the locations of these 143 surgeons, identify the communities served by their facilities and examine whether their deployment corresponds with local demand.

Such information would help identify places where existing staff could serve more patients and districts where additional positions are necessary.

My years in the State Forest Corporation gave me an opportunity to see how government administration can reorganise itself when a public responsibility grows. I remember a time when a Chief Conservator headed the Forest Department. Over the years, specialised wings developed and a separate Forest Protection Force was established. The administration adapted to the work it was expected to perform.

Dentistry has undergone a similar expansion in professional expertise. Its public delivery system should reflect that development.

A parent dealing with a child's toothache, however, needs something much simpler than an elaborate administrative structure: a nearby facility with a qualified person who can examine the child and provide treatment.

The Health and Medical Education Department should begin with a district-wise account of dental services, identifying facilities with dentists, functioning dental chairs, adequate staff and supplies. Existing vacancies should then be filled according to public need, available surgeons deployed where access is poor and additional posts created in phases. Remote communities could also benefit from dependable visiting dental services and clear referral arrangements.

A child's first tooth brings a family together. A painful tooth years later can send that same family searching for help.

Between those two moments lies a public responsibility that Jammu and Kashmir has the trained workforce to fulfill.

The sight of thousands of qualified dentists waiting for jobs while patients struggle to find nearby care is an administrative failure that should be easier to correct than the pain of a tooth that has been left untreated.

—

The author is an Advocate practising before the High Court of Jammu and Kashmir and Ladakh. He can be reached at advofarooqahmadkhan@gmail.com.

The Kashmiri Kitchen Under Siege

Packaged foods and sugary drinks are displacing traditional diets, exposing a new generation to metabolic diseases while weakening Kashmir's connection with its food heritage.



Dr. Waseem Ahmad

Kashmir once understood food as medicine long before nutrition science entered medical journals.

A traditional Kashmiri kitchen built health through habit, season, and memory. Families cooked haakh fresh from nearby fields, dried vegetables for winter months, fermented pickles in clay jars, and simmered pulses over slow fires that filled homes with warmth.

Those meals emerged from physical labour, local soil, and practical knowledge passed through generations.

That system sustained metabolic health in a harsh climate that demanded stamina and endurance. Villages depended on foods that strengthened the body through winter and supported long days in orchards, paddy fields, and mountain terrain.

Kashmiri cuisine grew through necessity, though it carried remarkable nutritional intelligence within it.

Today, that inheritance faces destruction from an industry that sells convenience as progress.

Plastic wrappers now crowd the Kashmiri dastarkhwan. Supermarket shelves in Srinagar and Anantnag display instant noodles, processed meats, frozen snacks, sugary drinks, and brightly packaged chips that dominate household spending.

Kitchens that once relied on fresh produce and whole grains now depend heavily on ready-to-cook mixes and industrial snacks engineered for speed and repetition.

This shift moved rapidly through the valley during the last three decades. Processed food spending has surged while household investment in vegetables, fruits, and pulses has weakened. Aggressive advertising campaigns drove this transformation with remarkable precision.

Food corporations linked packaged snacks to status, freedom, and urban sophistication. Teenagers now view branded drinks and imported junk food as symbols of modern life rather than occasional indulgences.

That marketing strategy succeeds because ultra-processed foods target biology as much as desire.

These products contain little resemblance to actual food. Manufacturers build them from refined starches, processed fats, chemical flavouring agents, emulsifiers, added sugars, and synthetic additives designed to intensify craving.

Scientists increasingly describe ultra-processed foods as industrial formulations rather than meals. Every ingredient serves a commercial purpose tied to shelf life, hyper-palatability, and repeat consumption.

Packaging deepens the deception. Labels filled with words like "multigrain," "baked," and "zero cholesterol" create a false impression of wellness. Consumers scanning supermarket aisles assume these products support healthy living. Most contain excessive sodium, refined carbohydrates, and inflammatory fats that gradually damage metabolic function.

Kashmiris face this assault with a particular biological vulnerability.

South Asians possess a well-documented tendency toward visceral fat accumulation and insulin resistance even at relatively low body weight. Doctors often describe this as the Asian Phenotype. A slim appearance therefore provides little protection against metabolic disease. Fat builds silently around internal organs while blood sugar regulation steadily deteriorates.



THE KASHMIRI DASTARKHWAN ONCE DEFENDED PUBLIC HEALTH WITH REMARKABLE WISDOM. That wisdom still exists in village kitchens, family recipes, and seasonal traditions waiting to regain their place at the center of daily life.

Ultra-processed food accelerates this process dramatically.

Hospitals throughout Kashmir now report growing numbers of younger patients with fatty liver disease, metabolic syndrome, hypertension, and early diabetes. Cases once associated with middle age increasingly appear among people in their twenties and thirties. Kidney disorders linked to processed fats and excessive sugar consumption have also climbed sharply.

Physicians throughout the valley witness the same trend every day: damaged diets producing damaged bodies at younger ages.

Children face the gravest consequences because exposure now begins early. Sugary drinks and bakery products dominate school canteens, birthday parties, and neighbourhood shops. Dentists increasingly treat severe tooth decay among children who consume sweetened beverages daily. Pediatricians encounter rising signs of insulin resistance long before adulthood begins. Digital marketing intensifies the crisis by targeting adolescents through gaming apps, influencers, and social media campaigns that glamourize junk food consumption.

Mental health specialists also report troubling connections between highly processed diets and rising anxiety, poor concentration, and cognitive decline among young people. Food choices influence brain chemistry as directly as they influence waistlines. A generation raised on sugar spikes and chemical additives enters adulthood with metabolic systems under enormous strain.

Urban working families face another trap disguised as efficiency.

Long work hours and changing lifestyles push many households toward instant meals and food delivery applications. Quick consumption replaces communal cooking. Dining tables once centered on conversation, preparation, and family participation now revolve around screens and packaged containers. A traditional meal needed time and cooperation. Ultra-processed food thrives through isolation and speed.

That cultural loss matters deeply.

Kashmiri cuisine preserved knowledge about agriculture, weather, preservation, and nutrition through ordinary domestic routines. Grandmothers taught children how to dry vegetables for winter, prepare traditional breads, ferment pickles, and balance seasonal ingredients.

Each recipe connected families to land and climate. Packaged food severs that relationship completely.

Children raised on factory-made meals grow distant from farming traditions and disconnected from local ingredients.

Agriculture suffers alongside public health. Industrial food production depends heavily on refined wheat, sugar, and palm oil monocultures that enrich large corporations while sidelining local grains and diverse crops.

Traditional staples such as ragi, bajra, and jowar once supported ecological balance and dietary diversity. Current food systems reward uniformity instead of nourishment.

Kashmir therefore confronts more than a nutrition problem. The valley faces a public health emergency tied directly to culture, economics, and identity.

Diabetes projections for the coming decade paint a grim picture for family finances and healthcare systems already under pressure.

Chronic illness drains household savings, weakens productivity, and places lifelong burdens on younger generations. Public institutions cannot solve this crisis through medical treatment alone. Prevention must become central policy.

Front-of-pack warning labels should identify products high in sugar, sodium, and harmful fats with clear visual markers consumers immediately understand. Sugary beverages deserve higher taxation similar to tobacco control strategies that successfully reduced smoking rates in many countries. Advertising directed at children needs strict oversight, especially through digital platforms designed to influence young consumers continuously.

Schools should teach nutrition as a practical life skill rather than a decorative chapter in textbooks. Community cooking programs, local food festivals, and school gardens can reconnect younger Kashmiris with traditional ingredients and culinary knowledge rooted in the valley's own history.

Kashmir stands at a decisive moment. Every household now chooses between two futures. One leads toward chronic disease, mounting medical costs, and cultural amnesia packaged in bright colours and plastic foil. The other restores value to food that nourishes the body while sustaining memory, land, and community.

The Kashmiri dastarkhwan once defended public health with remarkable wisdom. That wisdom still exists in village kitchens, family recipes, and seasonal traditions waiting to regain their place at the center of daily life.

The valley's fate may depend on whether Kashmir chooses the packet or the hearth.

— The author is an agricultural analyst who writes on farming, climate, food systems, and cultural change in Kashmir. He can be reached at waseembhatspn@yahoo.com.

A Legacy Left to Sink

Their carved wooden interiors once drew visitors from around the world. Today, Kashmir's houseboats face mounting costs, deteriorating lakes and dwindling family interest.



Mohammad Anamul Haque Ahanger

A cold mist drifted over Dal Lake one November afternoon as an elderly couple walked slowly along Srinagar's boulevard carrying the last belongings rescued from their sinking houseboat.

The woman gripped a plastic bag holding a samovar and a folded prayer mat. Water dripped from the hem of the man's wool pheran. Several meters behind them, their wooden houseboat leaned heavily into the lake, its carved balcony submerged beneath dark green water.

"Son, can you make a phone call on this number?" the man asked, handing over a creased piece of paper.

His voice weakened during the call. "Please tell our son the boat has failed," he said. The talk ended within moments. The couple settled near the embankment and stared toward the collapsing structure while tourists passed nearby in brightly painted shikaras.

Scenes like this have become increasingly common along Dal Lake, Nigeen Lake and parts of the Jhelum River, where Kashmir's houseboat industry faces mounting pressure from ecological decline, rising maintenance costs, changing tourism patterns and a growing generational divide. Owners, environmental researchers and tourism officials describe a slow deterioration that has gathered force over decades.

Kashmir's houseboats once stood at the center of the valley's tourism identity. Travellers from Europe and North America spent weeks living on the lakes during the 1970s and 1980s. Guidebooks celebrated hand-carved cedar interiors, floating flower markets and evening gatherings on wooden decks overlooking the water.

Several visitors returned year after year, forming long relationships with the families who operated the boats.

Houseboat owners estimate that Kashmir had between 1,500 and 2,000 operational boats during that period. Figures from the Jammu and Kashmir Houseboat Owners Association place the current number near 750.

Several stretches of the Jhelum River reveal an even sharper decline. More than 200 houseboats once operated there. Roughly 60 to 70 remain today.

Tschoont Koul, a historic cluster of houseboats in Srinagar, shows the scale of the contraction clearly. Empty moorings line large sections of the waterway where brightly painted vessels once stood side by side during peak tourism seasons.

Economic pressure sits at the center of the crisis. Owners estimate annual maintenance expenses between 5 lakh and 8 lakh for a single boat. Construction costs for a new houseboat exceed 3 crore. Winter occupancy often falls below 15 percent, leaving many operators dependent on a brief summer tourism window.

Physical decay appears everywhere on the lake. Wooden planks bend under years of water exposure. Moss spreads through aging cedar panels. Traditional wooden shingles have given way to tin-sheet roofing on several boats because owners struggle to afford extensive repairs.

Rising water levels have accelerated the deterioration, according to residents and environmental observers. Concrete structures and illegal construction around Dal Lake narrowed natural drainage channels over time, reducing the lake's capacity to absorb seasonal inflow.

Older boats remain partially submerged during wetter months, speeding up rot in century-old timber foundations. "When I was a child, the water reached my waist," said Ghulam Mohammad, a longtime owner near Rainawari. "Today it reaches my chest. Every year brings more damage." Environmental decline has altered daily life on the lake in profound ways.

Dal Lake functioned as a disposal channel for untreated sewage from nearby settlements for decades, damaging water quality and accelerating weed growth. Government agencies introduced sewage treatment systems in recent years, and officials say nearly 95 percent of houseboats now connect to shore-based treatment infrastructure.

Lake conditions continue to worsen during warmer months. Large sections of Dal Lake turned visibly green earlier this year because of algal blooms linked to rising temperatures and changing water conditions. Environmental researchers point toward climate change, declining snowmelt and warmer summers as major contributors to the lake's growing ecological stress.

"The water looks cleaner in some places," one owner said while clearing weeds beside his boat. "Warmer temperatures bring faster weed growth, and the fish keep disappearing."

Older residents speak about the transformation with visible sadness. Families once swam freely in the lake and relied on fishing for daily income. Several residents now avoid direct contact with the water because of pollution and weed accumulation.

Tourism trends have also shifted sharply during recent years. Younger travellers increasingly seek heated rooms, uninterrupted internet access and curated travel experiences suited to social media culture. Resorts in Gulmarg and Pahalgam now attract much of that demand.

Several houseboat owners upgraded interiors with modern bathrooms, air-conditioning systems and internet connectivity. Many operators lacked the financial resources required for extensive renovations. Regulatory restrictions surrounding construction and restoration added another layer of uncertainty.

"We see hotels filling quickly during tourist season," said Yousuf Ahmad, whose family has operated a houseboat for three generations. "Several boats here remain empty for weeks."

Security incidents continue to hit Kashmir's tourism economy with exceptional speed. The deadly April 2025 attack in Pahalgam triggered cancellations throughout the valley within days. Hotel operators, taxi drivers, houseboat owners and daily-wage labourers all faced immediate losses during what many expected would become a profitable tourism season.

Several owners had borrowed heavily to renovate boats before spring arrivals began. Empty bookings and rising debt followed soon afterward.

"One incident changes the entire season," said a younger owner near Nigeen Lake. "Visitors cancel immediately because they see Kashmir as one destination."

A deeper rupture now runs through many houseboat families themselves.

Younger Kashmiris increasingly seek careers in Delhi, Bengaluru and Dubai rather than continue work on the lake. Salaried employment gives predictable income and long-term financial stability that tourism rarely provides. Elderly owners often remain alone aboard boats built by fathers and grandfathers while younger relatives establish lives elsewhere.

Repair work gets postponed repeatedly because timber costs continue to climb. Restrictions on new construction have also limited expansion in the name of environmental protection. Owners describe mounting uncertainty surrounding permits, restoration work and future investment.

Several operators spoke openly about the fate awaiting abandoned boats. Scrap dealers already dismantle damaged vessels for timber and metal. Entire sections of Srinagar's waterways could lose their floating communities within the next decade if present conditions continue.

Government officials and tourism groups have proposed several measures aimed at slowing the decline.

Chief Minister Omar Abdullah discussed loan deferments and financial assistance for tourism sectors affected after the Pahalgam attack. Industry groups also seek transparent digital systems for permits and registration renewals because current procedures involve lengthy delays and rising unofficial expenses.

Cultural advocates increasingly argue that Kashmir's houseboats deserve recognition as a form of intangible heritage. Tourism planners and younger entrepreneurs have also begun discussing broader commercial possibilities tied to the lakes. Floating cafés, bookstores, cultural spaces and heritage experiences could create new revenue streams while attracting younger visitors.

Several operators have already started experimenting with those ideas. Refurbished boats now host private dinners, small art exhibitions and cultural gatherings during peak tourism months.

Kashmir's houseboats survived floods, political upheaval and economic downturns for more than a century. Rising costs, warming waters and a fading inheritance now place that floating civilization at one of the most consequential moments in its history.

— The author is a Political Science graduate from Amar Singh College, Srinagar, and is currently pursuing a Master's degree at Jamia Millia Islamia. He can be reached at inaamahangar29@gmail.com.

Between the Campus and the Kitchen

Moving between academic independence and domestic responsibilities, a working woman discovers how differently time, identity and labour are experienced at university and at home.



Insha Irshad

It is Friday. I close my books, shut my laptop and pack my bag, with a sense of relief, excited to spend weekend at home.

Weekends are much-awaited by people who live away from home for study or work. As one of them, I begin counting down to this moment from Monday itself, drawn by the promise of rest and leisure.

But over time, I have begun to question this assumption: Is the weekend truly a time of rest for a working woman?

For me, it is not.

On Saturdays, I become a different person. I am no longer the woman I am during the working days at the university. With the arrival of the weekend, my role shifts from a public and professional self to a domestic one, from a worker to a caregiver at home.

The shift is deeply felt. It is a transition between two different ways of being.

In varsity, life is as fast as time. While at home, it is as slow as the last light of day. The structured and disciplined routine of campus life filled with lectures, readings, and discussions gives way to an entirely different routine.

At home, the expectations are softer, but heavier. The day no longer unfolds around intellectual pursuits, but around responsibilities and roles as a daughter, a sister, and an aunt to a newborn who needs constant love and care.

My life at work is driven by intellectual engagement. I am encouraged to think freely, form my own opinions, and express them without hesitation. I ask questions, exchange ideas, and engage with conversations that deepen my understanding of the world around me.

My opinions hold weight, my voice finds space, and my time largely belongs to me. That world nurtures my intellectual independence. At home, this independence takes on a quieter and more restrained form. Life revolves around care, belonging, and shared responsibilities.

The day revolves around the needs of others and the routines that demand participation rather than reflection. There is comfort in this life, along with a sense of rootedness and continuity, but it also demands another kind of labour. Time and space are no longer entirely my own. They are shared, negotiated, and influenced by the routines of family life.

My days at university begin with work, followed by lectures, talks over tea with colleagues, discussions with professors, and hours spent in the library. One task leads to another, with a swiftness to think, read and respond. The mind remains occupied through out the day, keeping me intellectually alert.

The day at home begins with familiar and continuous tasks: helping around the house, preparing meals, attending to family needs, adjusting to routines, and setting things in order. These responsibilities derive the flow of the day and leave little that feels entirely my own. The freedom I associate with weekends gradually gives way to a different sense of duty.

Relationships become central to how life is lived and understood. Life is guided by an ethic of care, where responsibility and attentiveness to others determine everyday existence.

This idea resonates with Nel Noddings in Caring: A Feminine Approach to Ethics and Moral Education: "We are not isolated individuals but relational beings, and our moral life is grounded in caring. Caring is the very bedrock of all successful education."

Time at home is measured through roles fulfilled and responsibilities managed. Even moments of rest come with the awareness of unfinished tasks waiting nearby.

Discussions at home take a different tone, often centred on everyday concerns and practical needs rather than ideas and exploration. They sustain family life, relationships, and the small demands of daily living.

In this space, I notice my voice changing too. It becomes gentler and more accommodating, guided by the need to listen, adjust, and respond to others.

At home, I cook meals, often without a moment to sit and taste them fully. At the university, I find the time and space to stop and savour, though at a cost. What an irony.

On Monday, I pick up my bag from the same place where I left it on Saturday, though the time spent at home makes it feel as if much longer has passed. The university begins to feel like a fresh start once again.

Neither of these spaces feels complete on its own. Each defines a different part of me. The university gives me the freedom to think, question, and dream beyond familiar horizons, while home grounds me in relationships, care, and belonging.

My identity no longer feels fixed. In one space, I exist as a thinking subject. In another, I exist as a relational one.

I move constantly between these worlds, adjusting myself to their different expectations and becoming more aware of who I am in the process. It becomes a silent conversation with the self.

For many women balancing work and home, weekends simply mark a transition from one role to another, from one form of labour to another, from the intellectual to the relational.

The challenge lies in holding these identities together without losing oneself in the process.

— The author holds a Master's degree in Political Science and is currently engaged in academic research as a Research Assistant on an ICSSR-funded project and as a PhD scholar. She can be reached at inshairshad97@gmail.com.

541 Nominations Filed as Ladakh Hill Council Polls Draw Huge Response

Press Trust Of India



Leh: The Ladakh Autonomous Hill Development Council elections have witnessed an overwhelming response, with 541 candidates filing their nominations for the December 4 polls, setting the stage for keen contests across the Union Territory, officials said.

Tuesday was the last day for filing nominations for the hill council elections across Ladakh's eight districts, including six newly created ones – Sankoo, Zanskar, Drass, Sham, Changthang and Nubra.

Earlier, only Leh and Kargil had elected hill councils.

As many as 541 candidates filed their nominations to contest 100 seats spread across the eight districts, the officials said.

They said the massive turnout reflected a strong commitment to the democratic process, signalling that the people of Ladakh have firmly rejected recent demands by the Leh Apex Body (LAB) and the Kargil Democratic Alliance (KDA), including climate activist Sonam Wangchuk, to defer the elections over harsh winter conditions and migration of locals.

The political landscape for the upcoming polls features a competitive mix of national, regional and independent contenders, the officials said.

Independents accounted for the largest share of nominations, with 276 aspirants entering the fray, followed by the Congress with 126 candidates and the BJP with 125 nominees.

The Jammu and Kashmir National Conference (JKNC) has fielded 14 candidates.

Kargil recorded the highest number of candidates, with 104 aspirants contesting across 21 constituencies, followed by Sankoo, where 98 candidates are in the fray for 13 seats.

Zanskar has 56 candidates contesting nine constituencies, while Drass has 53 candidates for seven seats, the officials said.

In Sham district, 50 candidates are contesting across nine constituencies, while Changthang and Nubra have 38 candidates each.

Changthang has 16 constituencies, the highest among the six new districts, while Nubra has nine.

In the two older districts, Leh has 29 candidates contesting 22 constituencies, while Kargil has 104 across 21 segments, the officials said.

Scrutiny of nominations will take place on November 18, while candidates will be able to withdraw their nominations until November 20, with 3 pm fixed as the deadline.

Migratory Birds Start Landing in Kashmir, Census Soon

Agencies



Srinagar: Marking the beginning of the winter migration season in Kashmir, birds from different countries have started arriving in the Valley.

An official of the Wildlife Department said migratory birds have started reaching at several wetlands, including Hokersar, Wular, Shallabugh, Hygam and Mirgund. "Their numbers are expected to swell in the coming weeks," he said, adding, ""The department will conduct a census soon to assess the arrival and population of migratory birds in different wetlands of Kashmir. The exercise will help determine the number of species visiting the Valley and monitor their distribution across various habitats."

It's in place to mention here that the annual arrival of migratory birds marks the beginning of the winter migration season in the Valley, as thousands of birds travel from colder regions, including Siberia, Central Asia, China and parts of Europe, to spend the winter in Kashmir's relatively milder climatic conditions.

Another official said the wetlands of Kashmir provide important winter habitats for several species of migratory birds, which travel thousands of kilometres during their seasonal migration. "Among the species commonly recorded in the Valley during winter are mallards, pintails, teals, coots, greylag geese, pochards, gadwalls, wigeons, shovellers and tufted ducks," he added.

The wetlands of Hokersar, Wular, Shallabugh, Hygam and Mirgund serve as important feeding and resting grounds for these birds during their stay in Kashmir.

Officials said the migratory birds also use different water bodies across the Valley for feeding, with many of them moving between wetlands during the day and night.

The department has undertaken management measures in several wetland reserves to maintain suitable habitats for the visiting species. These include maintaining water levels, improving water channels and creating pools to facilitate feeding and movement.

However, officials said poaching remained a concern, particularly in water bodies and habitats that fall outside adequately protected wetland areas.

The Wildlife Department deploys field staff and watchers to monitor vulnerable areas and prevent illegal hunting of migratory birds, they said.

The annual migration of birds to Kashmir is also considered an important indicator of the ecological significance of the Valley's wetlands, which provide breeding, feeding and resting habitats for several resident and migratory species.

Officials said the upcoming census would provide a clearer picture of the seasonal arrival of birds and help the department assess the condition of their habitats.(KNO)

15 Charge-sheeted for Misappropriation of Ration Worth 50 Lakhs in Rajouri

Press Trust Of India

Jammu: Anti-Corruption Bureau (ACB) has charge-sheeted two government officials and 13 government ration dealers and salesmen for allegedly misappropriating subsidised government ration worth over Rs 50 lakh in Jammu and Kashmir's Rajouri district, officials said.

The accused include Abdul Majid, then Tehsil Supply Officer (TSO), Rajouri, and Mohd Aslam, then storekeeper at the Government main food store, Rajouri, both now retired, besides 13 government ration dealers and salesmen of the district, they said.

The charge-sheet in a case registered in 2018 under sections of the Prevention of Corruption Act was presented before the Court of Special Judge, Anti-Corruption, Rajouri, for further judicial proceedings today, they said.

According to the ACB, the case was registered on September 28, 2018, following a joint surprise check into allegations of misappropriation of government ration worth lakhs of rupees, meant for distribution among above poverty line (APL), below poverty line (BPL) and Antyodaya Anna Yojana (AAY) beneficiaries in the district.

The surprise check, conducted in November 2017 at the main store in Rajouri and other locations, revealed that the then TSO and storekeeper, allegedly in connivance with government salesmen and private ration dealers, had misappropriated subsidised government foodgrains, causing wrongful loss to the state exchequer and depriving poor and weaker sections of the society of subsidised ration, they said.

During the investigation, the ACB obtained and scrutinised relevant records and secured opinions from the Forensic Science Laboratory (FSL) and the FCS&CA Department, they said.

The investigation prima facie established that the accused, by allegedly abusing their official positions and acting in furtherance of a well-knit conspiracy, embezzled subsidised ration from the Government Main Food Store, Rajouri, they added.

The accused also allegedly fraudulently withdrew government funds in the form of carriage commission and loading and unloading charges against the ration that had been misappropriated, resulting in a total loss of more than Rs 50 lakh to the state exchequer, the ACB said.

After obtaining the requisite prosecution sanction from the competent authority, the ACB presented the charge-sheet before the designated court for further judicial proceedings.

CONTD. FROM **FRONT PAGE**

PM Calls For

the Quad meeting that India was very interested in hosting this summit in the first quarter of 2027, Misri said.

"The leaders also announced the Indo-Pacific maritime surveillance collaboration. The first exercise under this construct will be conducted on the sidelines of Exercise Sea Dragon in March next year, in 2027, in Guam," he said.

"This is an exercise and an initiative that will take forward the existing cooperation between the Quad countries on maritime domain awareness. It will address shared challenges such as illegal fishing and trafficking," Misri said.

The Quad leaders also announced a partnership for cable connectivity and resilience and emphasis was also placed on cyber cooperation between the Quad countries, Misri said.

The summit this time resulted in new practical tools that the leaders hoped would advance peace, stability and prosperity in the Indo-Pacific and for the benefit of the four Quad countries, Misri said.

"The mechanisms under the Quad will continue with meetings of the foreign ministers in the coming months as well as the other mechanisms under this leadership structure," Misri said.

NGT Orders Probe

from Sher-e-Kashmir University of Agricultural Sciences and Technology of Kashmir (SKUAST-K), nominated by its vice chancellor, the regional director of the Union Environment Ministry and a nominee of the Jammu and Kashmir Pollution Control Committee.

The tribunal has asked the team to examine the extent of pollution at Patalbagh, assess its impact on saffron cultivation and surrounding areas, and establish whether the dumping site has the statutory clearances needed to operate.

The investigation will focus on nearly 2,000 kanals of saffron-growing land that farmers say have suffered damage from the dumping.

Bhat welcomed the order, describing it as an important step toward protecting Kashmir's saffron heritage from lasting ecological damage. He said affected farmers had also demanded compensation for their losses.

According to Bhat, the dumping site has contributed to an increase in the rodent population, with rodents destroying saffron corms in fields over the past three years. Saffron corms are the underground structures from which the plants grow and form the basis of future cultivation.

The tribunal's intervention has brought relief to growers in Pampore, Patalbagh, Samboora and neighbouring villages, who say their complaints had gone unanswered.

"NGT was our last hope as all the doors of justice had been shut down," said Irshad Ahmad, a national award-winning saffron grower from Patalbagh.

Irshad said farmers hoped the investigation would lead to the closure of the dumping site and compensation for those who had suffered losses.

"We are sure that this garbage dumping site will be closed down soon and affected farmers paid compensation as well. SKUAST-K, JKPCC, MoEFCC team will definitely do justice with us," he said.

The case is scheduled to return to the tribunal on February 3, 2027.

The inspection represents a chance to establish the extent of the damage and seek accountability for Pampore's saffron growers.

The committee's findings will also determine whether a waste disposal site operating beside one of Kashmir's most valuable agricultural landscapes meets environmental requirements.

Srinagar Records

region, Jammu city recorded a minimum temperature of 11 degrees Celsius, while Katra registered 10.6 degrees, Batote 6.9 degrees, Banihal 9.8 degrees and Bhaderwah 1.1 degrees Celsius.

Meanwhile, the Meteorological Centre Srinagar has forecast generally dry weather across Jammu and Kashmir from November 17 to 21, with partly cloudy conditions likely towards November 20 and 21.

Dry weather is also expected to continue from November 22 to 27, with no significant precipitation indicated during the forecast period.

The Meteorological Department has predicted a further gradual fall in minimum temperatures across Jammu and Kashmir until November 19.

Night temperatures are expected to improve slightly by 1-2 degrees Celsius thereafter, the department said.

The continued drop in temperatures has been attributed to prevailing dry weather conditions, with clear skies during the night allowing the mercury to fall across several parts of the region.

J&K To Enforce

members of civil society.

According to an official spokesperson, the rules governing the implementation of the provision are in the final stage of notification and will be issued shortly.

The government will reimburse schools for admissible expenditure incurred on providing free and compulsory education to eligible children in accordance with the applicable rules and procedures.

The initiative aims to promote inclusive education and ensure that children from underprivileged backgrounds have access to quality schooling in private institutions alongside their peers.

The meeting also discussed the textbooks prescribed by private schools. It was decided that private schools affiliated with the Jammu and Kashmir Board of School Education (JKBOSE) must follow its curriculum and prescribe JKBOSE textbooks containing content aligned with the NCERT syllabus.

The minister stressed that students should not be burdened with unnecessary additional or supplementary books, saying the National Education Policy (NEP) 2020 advocates a balanced, flexible and child-centred approach to learning.

Education, she said, should not become an excessive financial burden on parents or subject students to undue academic pressure.

She advised private schools to exercise caution while prescribing additional books and learning materials, suggesting that supplementary resources, wherever necessary, could be made available through libraries, book banks, e-books and other digital platforms instead of compelling parents to purchase multiple books.

Firdous also took note of complaints regarding the alleged sale of textbooks at exorbitant prices and said unnecessary and excessive prescription of books would not be tolerated.

The meeting further deliberated on school uniforms, notebooks, writing materials and other educational supplies.

The minister made it clear that schools must not restrict parents to specific vendors or shops operating within school premises.

Parents, she said, must be free to purchase uniforms, books, notebooks and other supplies from vendors of their choice without facing unnecessary restrictions or financial pressure.

Reaffirming the government's commitment to improving the education system, Firdous said schools must prioritise students' academic progress, creativity, critical thinking and overall development rather than placing excessive emphasis on textbooks and supplementary materials.

CM Warns Firms

and universities," Abdullah said while addressing a gathering in Kathua.

He said the youth of Jammu and Kashmir had demonstrated their capabilities in several fields and were only waiting for opportunities to prove themselves.

"Our youngsters are only waiting for opportunities. The moment they get a chance, they leave their mark. Companies will have to employ our youngsters. Only when local youth are working in these companies will I consider that justice has been done to us," he said.

Citing the presence of people from J&K in various military regiments and across different parts of the country, Abdullah said the region had no shortage of talent.

He also highlighted the achievements of local youth in sports, saying they had demonstrated their abilities not only in football and hockey but also in running, rowing and other disciplines.

Abdullah made the remarks while laying foundation stones and inaugurating development projects worth over Rs 30 crore across Jammu, Samba and Kathua districts.

On urban development, he described Kathua as an important gateway for goods entering and leaving the region as well as a significant tourist destination.

The chief minister also referred to the proposed international-standard cricket stadium in Kashmir, expressing satisfaction over the resolution of the land-related issue that had delayed the project.

"Due to certain reasons, the issue of land had become an obstacle. Today, I am happy to say that you have resolved the demand concerning the land. Jammu and Kashmir will now have an international-level facility through this initiative," he said.

On agriculture, Abdullah said the Centre and the Jammu and Kashmir government were working to improve farmers' incomes, stressing that their difficulties must be addressed and they must receive fair returns for their efforts.

He identified unpredictable weather as one of the major challenges facing farmers and called for greater use of technology to reduce dependence on rainfall for irrigation.

Referring to an approximately Rs 12-crore Command Area Development project at Gagwal in Samba district, he said the initiative, supported by the Centre, would provide irrigation facilities to 400 hectares of agricultural land spread across seven villages.

Once completed, the project would reduce farmers' dependence on rainfall for irrigation and help improve agricultural productivity and income, he said.

Abdullah assured that the project would be completed within the stipulated timeframe and said contractors would be held accountable not only for executing the work but also for monitoring the infrastructure for a few years after its commissioning.

He described the initiative as the first of its kind in Jammu and Kashmir, saying it would help build experience in operating and maintaining irrigation infrastructure, including pumps and the solar-powered system.

"I assure you that the project will be completed within the stipulated time and water will reach your fields. My colleagues and I will visit again, open the gates and personally see water flowing into your fields," he said.

Abdullah also said he had conveyed to BJP MLA Surjeet Singh Salathia that political differences should not come in the way of fulfilling commitments made to the people.

He also laid the foundation stone for strengthening the Central Artificial Breeding Station at Hakkal in Jammu at a cost of Rs 11.83 crore.

Crime Branch Can

A bench of Justice Sanjay Parihar observed that Section 3 of the Act expressly recognises the competence of police officers of the prescribed rank, including those belonging to the regular Police and Crime Branch, to investigate corruption offences, subject to compliance with statutory requirements.

The Court passed the judgment while partly allowing a petition filed by two doctors, Dr. Gulzar Ahmad and Dr. Abdul Lateef Salik, who had challenged the jurisdiction of Crime Branch Kashmir to investigate allegations that they had facilitated the issuance of a false age certificate to help a man secure regularisation and permanent employment in the Public Health Engineering Department.

Rejecting their contention that corruption cases could be investigated exclusively by the Vigilance Organization, now known as the ACB, the Court held that Section 3 of the Prevention of Corruption Act does not impose such a restriction.

It clarified that a police officer not below the rank of Deputy Superintendent of Police (DySP) is competent to investigate offences under the Act without prior permission of a Magistrate. An officer below that rank may investigate only after obtaining the requisite order from a Magistrate of the First Class, while officers of the Vigilance Organization can exercise such powers subject to the specific authorisation prescribed under the Act.

The Court further observed that SRO 202 dated June 3, 1999, empowered the Crime Branch to investigate specified categories of offences and matters, including those concerning the conduct of public servants.

It held that an administrative circular regulating the distribution of investigative work between different agencies cannot override statutory powers or curtail jurisdiction conferred under law.

The case originated from allegations that the principal accused, G H Bhat, had procured and used a false age certificate to secure regularisation and permanent employment in the PHE Department.

According to the prosecution, the Medical Board, comprising the two petitioners and the then Chief Medical Officer, Dr. Abdul Samad Sheikh, had assessed Bhat's age as 32 years on December 16, 1999, placing his approximate year of birth in 1967.

However, verification of the service and school records of his son, M S Bhat, revealed his date of birth as February 25, 1966. The investigating agency alleged that the assessment would make the father younger than his biological son, raising serious questions about the genuineness of the certificate.

The prosecution alleged that the doctors had abused their official position and acted in concert with the beneficiary to facilitate his regularisation and enable him to draw salary and other service benefits from the State exchequer.

Examining the forgery allegations, the Court observed that the certificate had admittedly been issued by the authorised members of the Medical Board and there was no allegation that the signatures or seals were forged, that the doctors had impersonated another authority, or that the document had been altered without lawful authority.

Relying upon the Supreme Court judgment, the Court held that merely making a document containing an incorrect statement does not necessarily amount to making a false document within the meaning of Section 464 RPC.

"The falsity of a statement contained in a document is not, by itself, sufficient to constitute forgery," the Court observed.

It held that the offences under Sections 467, 468 and 471 RPC were not prima facie attracted against the doctors duo as the foundational requirement of making a false document was not established.

However, the Court distinguished the forgery allegations from those relating to cheating, criminal conspiracy and corruption, observing that the alleged deliberate manipulation of the age assessment to secure pecuniary benefits could attract other penal provisions.

It held that the allegations of deliberate misrepresentation, alleged concert between the doctors and the beneficiary, and the consequent conferment of financial benefits from the State exchequer provided sufficient prima facie grounds for proceedings under Sections 420 and 120-B RPC, read with Section 5(2) of the Prevention of Corruption Act.

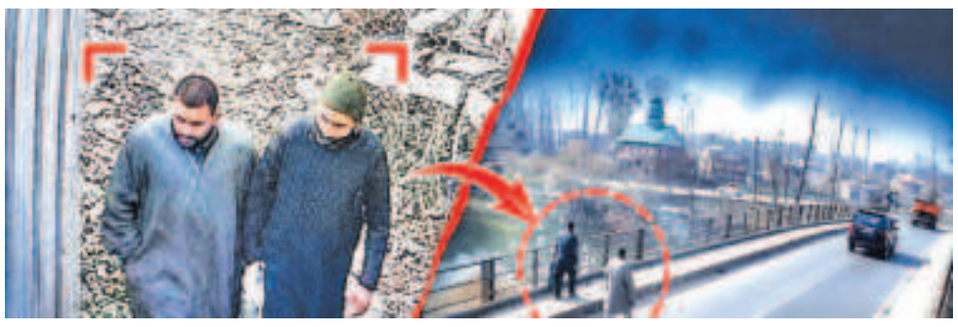
On the scope of its inherent powers under Section 482 CrPC, the Court observed that such jurisdiction cannot be used as a substitute for trial or to undertake a meticulous appreciation of disputed evidence at the stage of quashing criminal proceedings.

Accordingly, the Court rejected the challenge to the Crime Branch's jurisdiction, quashed the FIR and consequential proceedings against the doctors under Sections 467, 468 and 471 RPC, but allowed proceedings under Sections 420 and 120-B RPC, read with Section 5(2) of the Prevention of Corruption Act, to continue.

The investigating agency has been permitted to complete any remaining investigation and present the final report before the competent court, subject to compliance with statutory requirements, including sanction for prosecution wherever applicable.

CCTV Tracks Terror Duo Before & After CRPF Attack

Press Trust of India



KULGAM: Umar Nisar Dar, one of the terrorists involved in the November 11 attack on CRPF personnel here, allegedly provided shelter and logistical support for nearly six months to terrorist commander Lateef Bhat and the duo conducted reconnaissance before executing their plan, according to officials.

Dar, a former bread-maker who had been reported missing by his family, was killed in an encounter with the security forces here on Monday, barely a week after he allegedly joined The Resistance Front (TRF), an offshoot of the Pakistan-based Lashkar-e-Taiba (LeT).

Both Dar and LeT commander Bhat were traced to Laru bypass, leading to an encounter that left the former dead. Bhat, one of the most wanted and the only surviving local terrorist in the Kashmir valley, managed to escape. A massive search operation continued in a vast area around the encounter site for the second day on Tuesday to track and neutralise him.

The officials said that according to the investigation, Dar had been working closely with Bhat and had allegedly provided him shelter and logistical support for almost six months before the duo undertook reconnaissance and carried out the attack on the CRPF party in Akhran village, leaving three troopers injured.

An analysis of CCTV footage from November 10 and 11 showed that both Dar and Bhat were captured on multiple cameras installed at the identified locations, the officials said.

They said the footage documented their movements while conducting reconnaissance and subsequently fleeing after the attack.

The duo had conducted reconnaissance at multiple locations, including Mir Bazar, Akhran, Hablish and Kilam, on November 10, apparently to identify potential targets and plan strikes against the security forces, the officials said.

Following Dar's disappearance, his family had lodged a missing report at the Kulgam police station. The subsequent investigation established that he had joined the TRF immediately after the November 11 attack, they said.

After days of intense search, the officials said the Army and the Special Operations Group of Jammu and Kashmir Police launched a cordon and search operation after local police received intelligence inputs that two youths suspected of involvement in the attack were moving near the Laru bypass on Monday.

On noticing the movement of the security forces, the two suspects fled to two nearby schools located near an apple orchard, where students were present.

After being alerted, nearby Army units and the CRPF joined the operation and an initial cordon was established. The immediate priority was to evacuate the children from the two schools to prevent any civilian casualties, a process that took around 90 minutes, the officials said.

After the area was cleared of civilians, the security forces launched the operation, killing Dar, a resident of Arreh village, who was earlier involved in a stone-pelting incident on the security forces, they said.

Bhatt has not been traced so far and is believed to have sustained bullet injuries.

The officials said the latest findings have provided investigators with crucial leads into the sequence of events leading up to the Akhran attack, the alleged support network behind it and the subsequent movement of the suspects.

They said the joint search operation for Bhat continued uninterrupted through the night, with troops remaining deployed across the area to prevent his escape and trace his possible movement.

Drones and sniffer dogs have been deployed as part of the extensive search operation, while security personnel are conducting systematic searches of suspected hideouts and other vulnerable locations. Additional forces have also been deployed to strengthen the cordon and ensure that no possible escape route remains unguarded, they said.

The officials said the search operation has been extended to dozens of villages surrounding the site of Monday's encounter, with security forces maintaining heightened surveillance and carrying out door-to-door searches at identified locations.

The area has been placed under close watch as teams work to establish Bhat's possible route of escape and whereabouts.

Senior police and security officials are personally monitoring the operation and maintaining close coordination among the forces on the ground, the officials said.

J&K Bank Transforms 127 Army Goodwill Classrooms With Digital Tech



SRINAGAR: In a significant CSR initiative, J&K Bank today inaugurated the Project 'Pehal -Smart Shiksha' at Army Goodwill School, Highground, Anantnag. The ceremony marked the formal inauguration of 127 smart classrooms set up under the initiative across 27 Army Goodwill Schools in Jammu & Kashmir and Ladakh. The classrooms will benefit more than 8,000 students.

Reflecting their role as the primary beneficiaries of the project, three students formally inaugurated the initiative by cutting the ribbon in the presence of General Manager and Divisional Head (Kashmir) Arshad Qadri, Deputy General Manager (CSR) Syed Adil Bashir Andrabi, Zonal Head (Anantnag) Khavar Mehraj Handoo, Colonel Shariqullah, Commandant, 342, Colonel Kapil Varsinay, NCLO, Northern Command, Colonel Bilawari, 15 Core, Srinagar besides Principal Army Goodwill School, Anantnag, Shabir Ahmad, and other senior bank officials, teachers, and students.

While terming education as a priority within the Bank's wider CSR programme, General Manager & Divisional Head (Kashmir) Arshad Qadri said, "In today's rapidly evolving world, access to quality education increasingly depends on access to technology and modern learning resources. It is therefore essential that students in remote and underserved areas are not left behind in this transformation."

He also highlighted the Bank's ongoing support for specialised coaching for students of Classes 11 and 12 across seven Army Goodwill Schools. "The programme provides structured academic guidance for competitive entrance examinations such as JEE and NEET, helping students pursue higher education in engineering and medicine. Together, these initiatives reflect the Bank's commitment to strengthening education, from improving foundational learning experiences to creating pathways for higher education and professional success," he said.

Speaking on the occasion, Colonel Shariqullah emphasised the importance of working together. He said, "A country's progress is a collective effort. The Indian Army, NGOs, institutions like J&K Bank, teachers and, above all, students themselves all have a part to play. We thank J&K Bank for extending smart classroom technology to some of the remotest Army Goodwill Schools across Jammu & Kashmir and Ladakh through this CSR initiative." (Observer News Service)

SEVEN-DAY ULTIMATUM:

CCIK Warns Of Closure Of Restaurants, Hotel Eateries

Observer News Service



SRINAGAR: The seven-day ultimatum issued by the Chamber of Commerce and Industry Kashmir (CCIK) on Tuesday has put the Valley's hospitality sector on the brink of a possible shutdown, with the traders' body warning that restaurants and hotel eateries will remain closed if those responsible for supplying rotten meat are not identified and exposed.

The ultimatum follows the recovery of over 2,000 kg of rotten meat by Railway Police from a railway cargo in central Kashmir's Budgam district. The consignment was allegedly transported in ordinary packets without the required refrigeration facilities.

Addressing a press conference here, CCIK President Tariq Ghani expressed outrage over the incident and criticised food safety and municipal authorities for failing to dismantle what he described as a "drug-like mafia" involved in the supply of rotten meat.

While appreciating the swift intervention by Jammu and Kashmir Police and other authorities, Ghani questioned the delay in identifying those behind the consignment.

"Today is the fourth day, and so far, nothing has happened," he said.

Recalling an earlier seizure of large quantities of rotten chicken and mutton, Ghani said the failure to identify those responsible had encouraged the recurrence of such incidents.

"It was repeated because last time, you caught rotten meat in huge quantities... yet you did not bring those responsible to the forefront. This encouraged them," he said.

Describing the circulation of rotten and adulterated meat as a serious public health concern, Ghani linked the issue to growing concerns over cancer cases and emerging illnesses among children in Jammu and Kashmir.

He accused the authorities of reacting only after such incidents come to light instead of addressing the problem at its source.

"Go to the root of this, go to the real level! What kind of mafia is operating here? This has become a drug-like mafia; just like drugs are smuggled, now rotten meat is coming in too," he said.

Appealing to Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha and Chief Minister Omar Abdullah, the CCIK president demanded that the suppliers and dealers involved be publicly identified through television, newspapers and social media.

He also called for a social boycott of those responsible and demanded that the strictest legal provisions, including the Jammu and Kashmir Public Safety Act, 1978, be invoked against them. "This person truly deserves the PSA, and there should be no two opinions about it," Ghani said.

PM Shri School Students Explore Agricultural Sciences At SKUAST-K

Observer News Service



BANDIPORA: In an initiative aimed at promoting experiential learning and scientific temper among students, more than 150 students of PM Shri Government Secondary School Laharwalpora, Bandipora, accompanied by their teachers, visited the Faculty of Agriculture, SKUAST-Kashmir, Wadura, where they interacted with eminent faculty members and gained valuable insights into various fields of agricultural sciences.

During the exposure visit, the students interacted with the following distinguished faculty members including Prof. Najeeb-ul-Rehman Sofi, Dean, Faculty of Agriculture, SKUAST-Kashmir.

Dr. Arif Hussain Wani, Associate Professor, Division of Horticulture.

Dr. Vikas Gupta, Associate Professor, Division of Plant Pathology.

Dr. Prajjal Dey, Assistant Professor, Division of Basic Sciences and Humanities.

Prof. Najeeb-ul-Rehman Sofi, Dean, Faculty of Agriculture, personally interacted with the students and shared valuable insights about agricultural education, research and emerging opportunities in the sector.

Dr. Arif Hussain Wani highlighted the significance of high-density apple cultivation and production, besides explaining the immense potential of commercial cut-flower cultivation under polyhouse conditions. Dr. Vikas Gupta introduced the students to mushroom cultivation, while Dr. Prajjal Dey familiarised them with the functioning and importance of the Bio-fertilizer Production Unit.

The faculty members shared their expertise and practical knowledge, introducing students to the importance of horticulture, plant pathology, mushroom cultivation and bio-fertilizer production.

The interaction provided students with an opportunity to connect classroom learning with real-life scientific applications and explore emerging opportunities in agricultural sciences. The visit was particularly significant in exposing young learners, many of whom come from rural backgrounds, to the world of higher education, scientific research and innovation. It also reinforced the importance of agriculture as a field of knowledge, livelihood and sustainable development.

MMU To Deliver Common Friday Khutbah On Food Adulteration, Moral Decline

Observer News Service

SRINAGAR: The Muttahida Majlis-e-Ulama (MMU), Jammu and Kashmir headed by Mirwaiz Umar Farooq, has decided to deliver a common Friday Khutbah on the theme "Food Adulteration, Moral Decline and Collective Responsibility" in mosques across Jammu, Kashmir and Ladakh this coming Friday, as part of its ongoing initiative to address pressing social and moral issues through coordinated religious guidance. In this regard, the MMU Khutbah Consultative Committee met today at the Auqaf Office of the historic Jama Masjid, Srinagar, to deliberate upon and finalise the proposed Khutbah.

The MMU has expressed grave concern over repeated incidents of food adulteration, particularly the recent seizure of large quantities of rotten meat, alongside reports of unsafe and substandard food products being sold across Jammu and Kashmir. These disturbing developments have raised serious concerns about public health, declining ethical standards in commercial practices, and the effectiveness of existing food safety mechanisms.

The MMU decided that the common Khutbah would emphasise the need for greater public awareness, collective responsibility, government accountability and strict enforcement of food safety regulations. It would also seek to sensitise people to these concerns in the light of Islamic teachings and encourage responsible conduct at every level of society.

PAYAAM – The Craft & Design Bazaar Concludes Three-Day Showcase



SRINAGAR: The Jhelum Waterfront came alive with three days of creativity, craftsmanship and dialogue as PAYAAM – The Craft & Design Bazaar, organised by the National Institute of Fashion Technology (NIFT), Srinagar, concluded its three-day showcase on November 15, 16 and 17.

Bringing together artisans, designers, students and the wider creative community, Payaam emerged as a vibrant platform for celebrating Kashmir's rich craft heritage while exploring new possibilities through design, innovation and collaboration.

The three-day event featured curated design showcases, craft exhibitions, live demonstrations, interactive sessions, roundtable discussions and meaningful exchanges between students and master artisans. It witnessed the participation of several schools and colleges and attracted distinguished members of civil society, artists, academicians, journalists, entrepreneurs, cultural organisations and other stakeholders from across the region.

Through Payaam, NIFT Srinagar reaffirmed its commitment to strengthening Kashmir's craft and design ecosystem. The event sought to create meaningful connections between traditional knowledge and contemporary design practices, positioning artisans not merely as custodians of heritage but as active participants in the evolving creative economy.

Addressing the occasion, the Director, NIFT Srinagar, expressed the hope that NIFT's expertise and institutional resources would contribute positively to the region's craft and design landscape. She emphasised that NIFT, through its multidisciplinary approach to world-class design education, research and innovation across Fashion Communication, Textile Design, Lifestyle Accessories and Fashion Design, has the potential to contribute to diverse sectors and emerging opportunities. (Observer News Service)

UNIVERSITY OF KASHMIR
NAAC Accredited Grade "A++" | HAZRATBAL, SRINAGAR

BRIEF ADVERTISEMENT NOTICE No. 19 OF 2026
Dated: 13-11-2026

Online Applications are invited from the eligible candidates for the positions of Associate Professor available in various Departments/ Institutes/ Centres of the University as indicated below:-

1. **Main Campus:**
Arabic, Bio-Chemistry, Bio-Technology, Botany, Centre of Central Asian Studies, Chemistry, Computer Science, Centre for Distance & Online Education, Economics, Education, Electronics & Instrumentation Technology, English, Geography & Disaster Management, Hindi, History, Institute of Home Science, Iqbal Institute of Culture & Philosophy, Shah-i-Hamdan Institute of Islamic Studies, Kashmiri, Law, Library & Information Science, Linguistics, Management Studies, Mathematics, Persian, Pharmaceutical Science, Political Science, Centre of Research for Development, Shaikh-Ul-Aalam Centre for Multidisciplinary Studies, Sociology, Statistics, Tourism, Hospitality and Leisure Studies, Urdu & Zoology.

IMPORTANT DATES:

I.	Submission of Online Forms/Hard Copy from:	**17th November, 2026**
II.	Last date for Submission of Online Forms	**16th December, 2026**
III.	Last date for Submission of Hard copy	**23rd December, 2026**

The detailed Advertisement Notice/s containing essential qualifications, reservation of posts and other terms & conditions will be available on the University website www.kashmiruniversity.net under Jobs/Recruitment link from **17th November, 2026**.

Note:- The availability of posts mentioned above are tentative and is subject to addition/ alteration/ deletion which, if any, shall be reflected in the detailed final Advertisement Notice.

No: F/Advt./KU-Asso-Prof/Rect/26
Dated: 13-11-2026

DIPK-NB-2140-26
DT: 17/11/2026

Sd/- Deputy Registrar
(Recruitment)

GOVERNMENT OF JAMMU AND KASHMIR
DIRECTORATE OF TOURISM, KASHMIR
Tel / Fax 0914 - 2502279 / 2502281

E- Bid Document (Auction ID:)

Out-sourcing of "Cafeteria at Yanner, Ganeshpora Pahalgam for a period of 03+02 years on License Basis through GeM Portal.

No: Estates / 15-B/DTK/516 dated:- 17/ 11 /2026

For and on behalf of the Lt. Governor of J&K Union Territory, e - bids are invited online through GeM Portal for Out-sourcing of "Cafeteria at Yanner, Ganeshpora Pahalgam on License Basis through GeM Portal. The details are as under:

S.No	Particulars	Date/Amount	Remarks
1	PQ (Pre-Qualification) Submission Start Date	19.11.2026 10:00 AM	Nil
2	PQ (Pre-Qualification) Submission End Date	25.11.2026 04:00 PM	Nil
3	PQ (Pre-Qualification) Assessment End Date & Time	28.11.2026 04:00 PM	Nil
4	EMD Start Date	30.11.202610:00 AM	Nil
5	EMD End Date	02.12.2026 4:00 PM	Nil
6	EMD (Bid Security) Amount in shape of CDR/FDR/DD	Rs.1,00,000 /- (Rupees one lac only)	To be pledged in favour of Accounts Officer, Directorate of Tourism, Kashmir.
7	Bid Submission/Auction Start Date	04.12.2026 10:00 AM	Nil
8	Bid Submission/Auction End Date & Time	05.12.2026 4:00 PM	Nil
9	Reserve Bid Amount	Rs.10,00,000/- (Rupees Ten lacs only)	Nil
10	Bidding Time Extension	Not Applicable	Not Applicable

The e-auction shall be finalized by the Outsourcing Committee under the Chairmanship of Director Tourism, Kashmir. Reliable/ resourceful and experienced agencies/persons, who fulfill the ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA (PRE QUALIFICATION) detailed as under shall only be eligible to participate in the e – bidding process.

PRE –QUALIFICATION (PQ) CRITERIA (TO BE UPLOADED ON GEM PORTAL)

1. The bidder shall upload a valid domicile certificate/State Subject of J&K.
2. The bidder shall have to upload a valid Character Certificate from Revenue Department issued on or after 01.04.2026 or alternatively copy of a valid PASSPORT.
3. The bidder shall have to upload PAN Card & Aadhar Card.

Sd/-
Dy. Director Tourism
Estates

DIPK-7768-26
DT: 17/11/2026

Houthis at Aden's Doorstep as Saudi-Backed Defences Crumble

Agencies

LONDON- Ansarallah fighters, also known as Houthis, are closing in on Aden, Yemen's southern capital and the principal stronghold of the Saudi-backed government forces, after a series of battlefield gains forced government troops to abandon strategic positions near the Bab al-Mandeb Strait.

The Iran-backed fighters have reportedly advanced to within 60 kilometres of Aden following the withdrawal of Saudi backed forces from the Dhubab airport area and the coastal belt around Bab al-Mandeb. The fall of the Kharaz military camp in Lahj province has further weakened the defensive line protecting the western approaches to the city.

The rapid advance has placed Aden under growing pressure, with pro-Saudi forces reportedly shifting troops from the Red Sea coast to reinforce the city and neighbouring provinces. Military officials have begun digging tunnels, building defensive positions and filling sandbags around Aden amid fears of a further Houthi push.

The developments mark a major reversal for the Saudi-backed forces, whose counteroffensive, launched in October with promises of full operational support, has struggled to contain the Ansarallah advance.

Ansarallah military sources claim their forces have secured around 7,100 square kilometres across ten districts in Taiz and Lahj governorates. Military spokesman Brigadier General Yahya Saree said the operation had repelled and destroyed 12 divisions, comprising 60 brigades of Saudi-led forces commanded by Saudi officer Muhammad Talal al-Balawi.

Saree also claimed that hundreds of military vehicles and armoured personnel carriers had been destroyed, disabled or captured, while large quantities of weapons and ammunition had been seized. These battlefield claims have not been independently verified.

The group says the operation was aimed at securing areas used by Saudi-backed forces to launch attacks against Yemen. Saree insisted that the campaign was not directed against people in southern Yemen but against forces aligned with Riyadh.

Strategic choke point in Houthi hands

The latest gains have major implications beyond Yemen's battlefield. Ansarallah now claims control over a substantial stretch of the Red Sea coastline, including positions around Bab al-Mandeb, one of the world's most important maritime chokepoints and the southern gateway to the Suez Canal.



Yemeni civilians celebrate while riding in the back of a pickup truck in the Bani Matar district, Yemen, Saturday, Sept. 12, 2026, as they follow a convoy carrying Houthi prisoners freed in Mokha on its way to Sanaa following the Houthi takeover of the southern Red Sea port city. PHOTO: AP

The development comes as shipping through the Strait of Hormuz remains disrupted, increasing the strategic importance of Saudi Arabia's Red Sea outlet at Yanbu.

The kingdom relies on its 1,200-kilometre East-West pipeline to transport around four million barrels of crude daily to Yanbu. Tankers carrying the oil towards Asian markets must pass through Bab al-Mandeb, now increasingly exposed to the conflict.

Ansarallah has repeatedly threatened to target Saudi interests and has claimed attacks on the kingdom's infrastructure, including its East-West pipeline and King Khalid International Airport in Riyadh. Saudi authorities have reported damage to the pipeline but said crude supplies continued flowing.

Saudi command shake-up

The deteriorating military position has prompted a shake-up in the Saudi-led coalition's command. King Salman on November 16 appointed Lieutenant General Fayyad bin Hamed Al-Ruwaili as commander of the coalition's Joint Forces, replacing Lieutenant General Fahd bin Hamad al-Salman.

The move comes amid mounting pressure on Saudi-backed forces, whose command structure has been weakened by divisions among southern factions.

The collapse of the alliance between Riyadh and the UAE-backed Southern Transitional Council has further complicated the government's position. Former allies have turned against one another, while the Ansarallah fighters have exploited the divisions to consolidate their territorial gains.

Military analysts say fragmented command and poor coordination have undermined the government forces. The withdrawal from the western approaches to Aden has raised fresh questions about their ability to defend the city.

Aden under pressure

While Ansarallah has not announced an immediate assault on Aden, its growing presence around the city could put the port and airport within range of its forces.

Ansarallah spokesman has vowed to continue operations inside Saudi territory until what he described as aggression against Yemen ends and the blockade is lifted. He also reiterated the group's policy of "siege for siege" and "escalation for escalation".

For now, the battle for Aden remains uncertain. But with Ansarallah fighters advancing through Lahj and consolidating their hold on the Red Sea coast, the Saudi-backed forces face one of their most serious military challenges since the war began.

Ladakh's Black-Necked Crane Population Rises 25% to 108

Press Trust of India

LEH/JAMMU: The population of the 'near threatened' black-necked crane, the state bird of Ladakh, has increased to 108 in 2026, a nearly 25 per cent rise from the 87 recorded last year, marking a significant achievement in wildlife conservation in the Union territory.

The 2026 breeding-season survey recorded 86 adult cranes and 22 juveniles, compared to 70 adults and 17 juveniles in 2025, indicating sustained breeding activity across the Changthang region, an official spokesperson said.

Among the surveyed breeding sites, Chushul recorded 16 birds, followed by Tsokar and Kargyam with 15 each and Korzok with 14, he said. "These four sites together accounted for 60 birds, nearly 56 per cent of the total population recorded across the Changthang range."

The recorded adult population has registered an average annual growth rate of around 12.9 per cent between 2021 and 2025, while the number of juveniles increased from 17 last year to 22 this year, the spokesperson said.



Lt Governor V K Saxena appreciated the efforts of the Ladakh Environment Protection Force (EPF), particularly ex-servicemen inducted into the force, for protecting nesting sites, eggs and hatchlings from the threat posed by free-ranging dogs.

He also lauded local communities, particularly the youth, for actively participating in conservation initiatives and becoming partners in protecting Ladakh's ecological heritage.

"This is a monumental milestone for Ladakh and a matter of immense pride for all of us. The black-necked crane is not merely our state bird; it is a cherished symbol of Ladakh's unique ecological heritage," Saxena said.

The encouraging rise in the recorded numbers reinforces the administration's resolve to protect the species and its natural habitat, he said, emphasising that conservation of wildlife and fragile ecosystems was a shared responsibility.

The L-G expressed confidence that the black-necked crane population would continue to increase in coming years.

Native to the Tibetan plateau and the trans-Himalayan region, the black-necked crane is classified as 'near threatened' on the IUCN Red List.

Earlier this year, the Ladakh administration had organised the first-ever Black-necked Crane Festival to generate awareness about conserving the species and its natural habitat.

The festival highlighted the ecological significance of Changthang's high-altitude wetlands and sought to encourage greater participation of local communities, particularly young people, in wildlife conservation.

Pakistan, Iran Push Regional Coordination

Press Trust of India

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan's Chief of Defence Forces Asim Munir has stressed the importance of sustained engagement and close coordination with Iran to promote regional peace and stability, the army said on Tuesday.

Field Marshal Munir, who is also the Chief of Army Staff, made the remarks during a meeting with a high-level Iranian delegation led by Foreign Minister Abbas Araghchi in Rawalpindi on Monday, according to a statement by the Pakistan Army.

The two sides "underscored the importance of sustained engagement, mutual trust and close coordination between the two brotherly countries for promoting regional peace and stability," the statement said.

Araghchi appreciated Pakistan's constructive role in promoting regional peace and stability and expressed Iran's desire to further strengthen bilateral relations, it said.

The two sides also exchanged views on exploring avenues to address common security challenges.

The remarks come amid continuing tensions in West Asia following the outbreak of a military conflict on February 28, when joint US-Israeli strikes killed Iran's Supreme Leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei and several senior political and military officials.



Iran subsequently launched large-scale retaliatory missile and drone attacks on Gulf countries hosting US military facilities, including the UAE, Qatar, Kuwait, Bahrain and Saudi Arabia. The attacks disrupted regional airspace and damaged civilian and energy infrastructure.

The conflict has also severely disrupted commercial shipping through the Strait of Hormuz, a key global energy route through which a significant share of the world's oil and liquefied natural gas supplies passes.

Pakistan played a key mediating role in efforts to end the hostilities, with an interim agreement, known as the Islamabad Memorandum of Understanding, signed between Washington and Tehran in June.

The interim agreement envisaged an end to military operations, the reopening of the Strait of Hormuz and the lifting of the US naval blockade of Iranian ports.

