

Good Morning

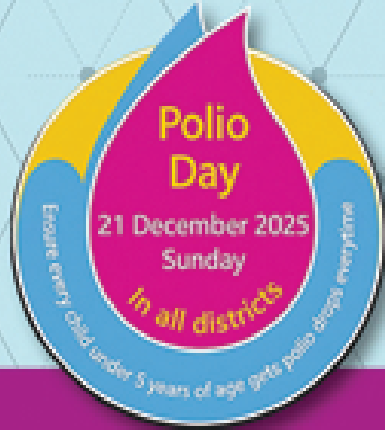
Kashmir

16th
Year Of Publication



I underlined need for coordinated action against terrorists, enablers & ideologues to eradicate ecosystem & safe haven. The real security gains since 2019 must be defended & every single terrorist & its supporter operating in valley, forest, hills or village must be neutralised.

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Polio Day
21 December 2025
Sunday
In all districts

Pulse Polio Campaign

"Do Bood Zindagi Ki"

Don't forget this Date.
Healthy children lead the way, let polio fade away



DIPK-9117/25
Dated: 18/12/2025

Department of Information & Public Relations, J&K

[@informationprjk](#) [Information & PR, J&K](#) [@diprjk](#) [@dipr_jk](#)

NIA Arrests Ninth Accused Yasir Dar In Delhi Blast Case



SRINAGAR: The National Investigation Agency (NIA) on Thursday arrested another key accused in connection with the Delhi bomb blast that killed 11 persons and injured several others in the area around Red Fort last month.

According to the NIA, Yasir Ahmad Dar from J&K's Shopian district is the ninth accused to be arrested in the case RC-21/2025/NIA/DLI.

He was nabbed by NIA from New Delhi and placed

under arrest under relevant provisions of the UAPA Act 1967 and BNS 2023.

"NIA investigations have revealed Yasir's active role in the conspiracy behind the car bomb blast that rocked the national capital on November 10. An active participant in the conspiracy, he had sworn allegiance and taken an oath to carry out self-sacrificial operations," the anti-terror investigative agency said in its press note.

Investigations by the NIA have further shown that Yasir was in close contact with the other

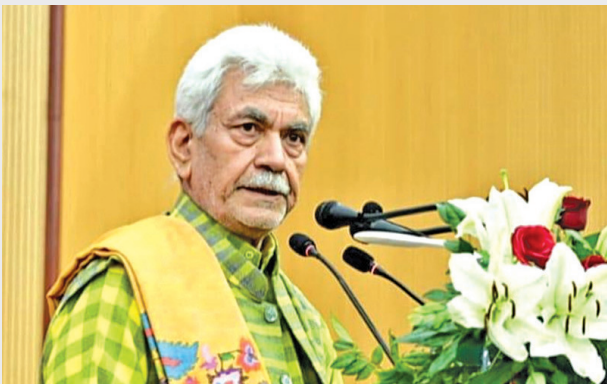
Terrorists, OGWs And Those Intimidating Common Citizens Will Be Treated Equally: LG Addresses UT Level Security Conference In Jammu

GMK NEWS NETWORK

JAMMU: Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha on Thursday said that collaborative efforts of J&K Police, Army, Intelligence agencies and Central Armed Police Forces (CAPFs) have led to a significant decline in terrorist violence in Jammu and Kashmir. He reiterated that armed terrorists, their supporters, OGWs and those intimidating the common citizen will be treated equally, and added the government must ensure that such elements will pay a very heavy price for their action.

The Lieutenant Governor expressed these remarks during a UT Level Conference on the lines of DGPs/IGPs conference in Jammu Thursday.

In his address, the Lieutenant Governor said that under the leadership of



Hon'ble Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi and Hon'ble Union Home Minister Shri Amit Shah, the UT level security conference will serve as the hub for deliberation and collaboration to develop a whole of government approach to counter terrorism in all its form.

He also observed that during DGPs/IGPs conference in Raipur this year,

threadbare discussions were held on the theme 'Viksit Bharat: Security Dimensions', which reflects GoI's commitment to transform our policing institutions to meet the demands of a rapidly changing world.

The Lieutenant Governor underlined the need for coordinated action against the terrorists, enablers and the ideologues to

Under the guidance of Prime Minister & Home Minister, threadbare discussions were held on the theme 'Viksit Bharat: Security Dimensions'

Lieutenant Governor underlined the need for coordinated action against the terrorists, enablers and the ideologues

The real security gains since 2019 must be defended and every single terrorist and its supporter operating in valley

In the past 6 years, we have strengthened the security grid and the collaborative efforts of J&K Police, Army, Intelligence agencies

Armed terrorists, OGWs and those elements intimidating the common citizen should be treated equally.

The landscape of security threats has undergone a profound change in recent years.

We need to shift from reactive to proactive security strategies and use sophisticated tools like AI to counter terrorism, terror financing

J&K To Crack Down On Bird Hazards Near Airports



AGENCIES

SRINAGAR: In a move to safeguard air travel, the Jammu & Kashmir government has constituted two committees to monitor and regulate activities prohibited under Rule 91 of the Indian Aircraft Rules, 1937.

The government has constituted two committees, one each for Kashmir and Jammu, for strict implementation of the Rule 91, which prohibits activities near airports which attract birds, as these can cause dangerous bird strikes to aircraft.

According to an order issued by General Administration Department, the committee for Jammu is headed by the

Releases ₹805.27 Cr Centre Approves 44 Flood Management Projects For J&K: Govt

RAJA SYED RATHER

SRINAGAR: The Centre has approved 44 flood management projects for Jammu and Kashmir since the Eleventh Plan, through an estimated cost of ₹ 2,594.12 crore; of this, ₹805.27 crore has been released as central assistance till March 2025.

The Ministry of Jal Shakti informed the Lok Sabha, that Jammu and Kashmir has received funds for 43 flood management projects under the Flood Management Programme (FMP) during Eleventh and Twelfth Plans, while one more project was approved for the 2017-26 period.

Additionally centre has



released ₹25.91 crore to J&K against an approved allocation of ₹9.98 crore under the River Management Activities and Works related to Border Areas (RMBWA) component.

The Ministry clarified that flood management projects are implemented by State and UT governments, as the Centre provides technical support and financial assistance for flood control works in critical areas—(KNO)

Chillai Kalan Nears, Temperatures Fall Across Valley, Snowfall Expected

MeT Predicts Snowfall In Higher Areas On Dec 21-22

SAJID RAINA

KASHMIR: Minimum temperatures across Jammu and Kashmir and Ladakh fell further on Thursday, as the region approaches the 40-day-long harshest cold period, Chillai Kalan, beginning December 21, coinciding with forecasts of snowfall over Kashmir.

According to the data obtained, several parts of the Kashmir Valley recorded sub-zero temperatures, with Zojila Pass at -17.0°C, Awantipora at -3.8°C, Pulwama at -3.2°C, and Pampore at -1.8°C.

Srinagar registered a minimum of 0.2°C, while Qazigund recorded 0.8°C. In contrast, Gulmarg and Kulgam were relatively warmer at 1.6°C and 2.0°C,



respectively.

In Jammu division, Katra was the coldest at 12.1°C, followed by Jammu Airport at 11.5°C and Jammu city at 11.0°C. Banihal and Baderwah recorded 5.7°C and 5.0°C, respectively, while Rajouri dipped to 3.0°C.

Ladakh also experienced near-freezing conditions, with Leh recording a temperature of minus 3.4°C.

A comparison with Tuesday's data indicates a further fall in night temperatures across most areas.

'34,428 Km Of New Railway Tracks Added To J&K'

RAJA SYED RATHER

SRINAGAR: The delays in several railway infrastructure projects in Jammu and Kashmir are linked to different challenges like land acquisition, forest clearances, difficult terrain and other statutory issues, the Union Ministry said on Thursday. However, the Centre has asserted that it is making sustained efforts to expedite the execution of these projects.

The details were shared by Railway Minister Ashwini Vaishnaw in a written reply to a question raised by Lok Sabha members Mala Roy and Dr. Raj Kumar Chab-bawal.

Highlighting projects related to Jammu and Kashmir, the Ministry said, "capacity augmentation works on the Jalandhar-Pathankot-Jammu Tawi section, a critical rail corridor serving as the main rail link to the Union Territory. The project aims to improve connectivity, operational efficiency and passenger movement to and from J&K."

In recent years, the construction of railways has gained momentum. Between 2014 and 2025, 34,428 km of new tracks were commissioned, which shows a huge acceleration in the project execution when compared to 7,599 km added during 2009-14.

Fog Blankets Kashmir, Travel Disrupted

SAJID RAINA

SRINAGAR: Dense fog blanketed Kashmir on Thursday, snarling traffic and disrupting travel during morning and evening rush hours

Witnesses said, that several roads across the Valley, including Srinagar-Jammu highway, Baramulla-Handwara, and Pulwama-Kulgam routes and other Srinagar city roads saw a low visibility due to thick fog.

Officials warned drivers to exercise caution and follow traffic advisories to avoid accidents.

"Fog has reduced visibility to less than 50 metres in many parts of the Valley, affecting both local and inter-district travel," said a Traffic Police officer. "We have deployed additional personnel to guide traffic and ensure smooth movement on key routes."

"Transporters

Draw Lessons From 'Op Sindoor,' Remain Prepared For Future Challenges: Rajnath

SAJID RAINA

NEW DELHI: Asking Air Force commanders to draw lessons from 'Operation Sindoor' and remain prepared for future challenges, Defence Minister Rajnath Singh on Thursday said that action against the terrorist camps in Pakistan and PoK demonstrated India's high-impact, short-duration operational capability.

Addressing the Indian Air Force Commanders' Conclave here, Singh, said the Indian Air Force plays a key role in safeguarding national interests amid a changing global security environment.



He said the operation reflected the ability of the armed forces to act with speed and coordination.

The Defence Minister while referring to the strikes on terror camps during 'Operation Sindoor' and the subse-

quent response to actions by Pakistan said, "Public confidence in the armed forces, particularly in air defence preparedness, was evident as people remained calm during attempts to target Indian installations."

Singh underlined the need for a clear assessment of an adversary's offensive and defensive capabilities to maintain an operational edge.

He said commanders must stay vigilant and ready to deal with emerging threats.

Referring to recent conflicts including the Russia-Ukraine war, the Israel-Hamas conflict, the Balakot air strikes and Operation

Centre Promoting Tourism In J&K Through Multiple Schemes: Union Min



SAJID RAINA

NEW DELHI: The Centre is promoting tourism in Jammu and Kashmir through multiple schemes aimed at destination development and strengthening tourism infrastructure, Union Tourism Minister Gajendra Singh Shekhawat told the Rajya Sabha on Thursday.

Replying to a parliamentary question, Shekhawat,

said the Ministry of Tourism is promoting destinations and tourism experiences across the country, including Jammu and Kashmir, under its Domestic Promotion and Publicity, including Hospitality (DPPH) and Overseas Promotion and Publicity (OPP) schemes.

"These initiatives are designed to attract both domestic and international tourists and

JKEDI trains 258 entrepreneurs under RAMP, concludes MDPs in 13 districts

GMK NEWS NETWORK

SRINAGAR: The Jammu and Kashmir Entrepreneurship Development Institute (JKEDI) on Thursday successfully concluded the fourth batch of Management Development Programmes (MDPs) across 13 districts of the Union Territory under the Raising and Accelerating MSME Performance (RAMP) scheme. The scheme is funded by the Ministry of MSME, Government of India, and implemented by the Industries and Commerce Department, Government of Jammu and Kashmir.

The six-day intensive MDPs, conducted from December 12, 2025, were held simultaneously in Anantnag, Bandipora, Baramulla, Budgam, Ganderbal, Kulgam, Pulwama, Shopian, Srinagar, Jammu, Kathua, Reasi and Udhampur. A total of 258 aspiring and existing entrepreneurs successfully completed the 30-hour structured training programme, which comprised expert interactions and field exposure visits. Notably, 243 women



entrepreneurs participated in the batch, marking a significant stride towards gender inclusivity in the region's entrepreneurial ecosystem. The programmes were conducted by the respective District Centres of JKEDI under the overall supervision of the Director, JKEDI.

The MDPs were designed to enhance managerial, financial and strategic competencies of participants, enabling them to scale up their enterprises, improve competitiveness

and develop sustainable business models. The initiative aligns with the broader objectives of the RAMP programme, which seeks to strengthen and modernise the MSME ecosystem across the country.

The carefully curated curriculum, developed by subject matter experts, covered key areas including business planning, marketing strategies, use of digital tools, financial literacy, statutory compliance, innovation and leadership development. The

training also featured mentorship sessions, case studies, interactive discussions and hands-on workshops to provide participants with practical, real-world business insights.

Sector-specific sessions formed an important component of the MDPs, with experts from the District Industries Centres (DICs) and the Labour and Employment Department interacting with participants to share domain-specific guidance. In addition, field visits to successful enterprises were organised to provide firsthand exposure to operational best practices.

The programmes were regularly monitored by designated Range and Reviewing Officers, who interacted with participants to assess training quality and gather feedback, ensuring effective implementation and impact. The successful conclusion of the MDPs in 13 districts reflects JKEDI's continued commitment to fostering entrepreneurship and building local capacity to drive economic growth in Jammu and Kashmir.

JKEDI hosts Smarter Capital Mentorship Program at Pampore

GMK NEWS NETWORK

SRINAGAR: Jammu & Kashmir Entrepreneurship Development Institute (JKEDI) on Wednesday hosted a Smarter Capital Mentorship Programme at its main campus, Sempora, Pampore, aimed at enabling startups to transform innovative ideas into scalable and investment-ready ventures.

The day-long programme brought together startups, entrepreneurs and ideators for focused knowledge-sharing, strategic discussions and one-on-one mentorship sessions designed to strengthen entrepreneurial decision-making and growth planning.

The mentorship was led by Director, One Capital Ltd, Khalid Wani, who shared valuable insights on investment strategies, global market trends and building high-growth businesses.

Addressing the participants, he underlined the fundamentals of startup success, stating that converting an idea into a scalable enterprise requires clarity of vision, disciplined execution and strategic access to capital. He emphasized that mentorship plays a crucial role in bridging the gap between entrepreneurial potential and performance, adding that initiatives like Smarter Capital are aimed at equipping startups in

Jammu & Kashmir with the tools to compete at a global level. He further highlighted vision, resilience and adaptability as key attributes for entrepreneurial success.

The programme featured interactive sessions focused on refining business models, addressing operational challenges and aligning ventures with investor expectations.

More than 80 startups, aspiring entrepreneurs and ideators actively participated in discussions, strategy workshops and personalized mentoring interactions.

Participants appreciated the practical orientation of the programme that helped them sharpen their

business models and think strategically about investor readiness and global scalability.

Organised under the Jammu & Kashmir Start-up Policy 2024-27, the initiative is part of JKEDI's broader efforts to nurture a new generation of entrepreneurs capable of building sustainable, technology-driven enterprises that contribute to the economic growth of the Union Territory.

The programme was coordinated by the Centre for Innovation, Incubation and Business Modeling (CIIBM) team, with active support from faculty, ensuring a holistic entrepreneurial learning experience.

PM Vishwakarma. DIC Kulgam conducts orientation programme on 'Marketing & Entrepreneurship'

GMK NEWS NETWORK

KULGAM: District Industries Centre (DIC) Kulgam in collaboration with Ministry of MSME, Srinagar Thursday conducted an awareness cum orientation programme on Marketing and Entrepreneurship under PM Vishwakarma.

Additional District Development Commissioner Kulgam, Mohd Altaf Khan presided as chief guest of programme. General Manager, District Industries Centre, Kulgam, Dr Bashir Ahmad Lone; Assistant Director MSME, Saheel Alagband, Principal Polytechnic, Principal ITI, Faculty Members of IUST, District CSC Head, Representatives from MSME Srinagar, Industrial Promotion Officer and other officials of DIC Kulgam were present in the programme. General Manager, Dis-

trict Industries Centre, Kulgam gave awareness on the PM Vishwakarma scheme disseminating information among traditional artisans and craftsmen about the various benefits available under the scheme and encouraged them to avail the benefits.

Assistant Director, MSME, in his inaugural address, sensitized participants about importance of marketing and branding of the products made by the traditional skilled artisans cum craftsmen.

The technical session, led by the faculty of IUST, emphasized on Strategies for Effective Product Promotion, Branding, Packaging, Showcasing, Social Media Marketing and Community Based Events and Effective Costing, Budgeting and Inventory Management for Small Businesses to upgrade the skills of PM Vishwakarmas.

DARS Hosts Workshop on Weed Management at Sopore

GMK NEWS NETWORK

BARAMULLA : The Dryland Agriculture Research Station (DARS), Rangreth, organized an Awareness-cum-Capacity Building Programme titled "Impact of Weeds on Agriculture, Human Health, and Ecosystems" at the Faculty of Agriculture, Wadoora, Sopore.

The event, conducted under the aegis of the Indian Society of Weed Sciences, Jabalpur, was aimed at students and field functionaries of the faculty.

Expert speakers detailed how weeds aggressively compete with crops for essential resources such as nutrients, water, and sunlight. The programme also raised awareness about the primary mechanisms through which weeds contribute to significant reductions in crop yield and broader ecological damage.

In his address, the Dean

of the Faculty of Agriculture, SKAUST-Kashmir, Wadoora, Prof. Shakeel Ahmad Mir, stated, "Weeds interfere with critical agricultural operations like harvesting and irrigation, leading to yield losses. Effective weed management is crucial for supporting farmers on a larger scale."

The session featured contributions from several prominent figures, including Dr. Fayaz Ahmed Bahar, Professor-cum-Chief Scientist, DARS, Budgam; Prof. Bashir Ahmad Ali, Head, Division of Agronomy, FOA, Wadura; Prof. Mohammad Ashraf Bhat, Associate Director Research, DARS, Budgam; and Prof. Mohammad Anwar Bhat, Associate Director Education, IE Cell, SKUAST-Kashmir, Shalimar.

The occasion also saw the release of a relevant publication, and certificates were distributed to the participants.

SMC Organises Health, Wellness Camp

GMK NEWS NETWORK

SRINAGAR: Reaffirming its commitment to employee welfare and preventive healthcare, the Srinagar Municipal Corporation (SMC) organised a comprehensive Health and Wellness Camp at its Head Office in Karan Nagar, in collaboration with



Noora Hospital, Srinagar. The camp was inaugurated by the Commissioner, SMC, Faz

Lul Haseeb, and was attended by Nuzhat Qureshi, Joint Commissioner SMC (Administration);

Suhail ul Islam, Joint Commissioner, along with other senior officers of the Corporation.

The camp witnessed enthusiastic participation from officers and staff across various wings of SMC, underscoring the Corporation's strong institutional focus on employee well-being.

DC Budgam Chairs Review Meeting on Revision of Stamp Rates

GMK NEWS NETWORK

BUDGAM: A review meeting regarding the revision of stamp rates for the year 2026 was chaired by the Deputy Commissioner (DC) Budgam, Dr. Bilal Mohi-ud-Din Bhat, at the District Headquarters.

The meeting was attended by the ADC Budgam Mehraj-ud-din Shah, General Manager, District Industries Centre Budgam Zahid Ahmad; Assistant Commissioner Revenue, Budgam; Assistant Commissioner Panchayat, Budgam; Divisional Forest Officer, PP Forest Division Budgam; Sub Registrar, Budgam; Town Planner, Housing and Urban Development Department, Budgam; Sub-Divisional Magistrate Beerwah/Chadoora/Khansahib; and Executive Officers of Municipal Councils/Committees of Budgam, Beerwah, Chadoora, Charari-Sharief, Khansahib and Magam.

During the meeting, a detailed review of the existing stamp rates was undertaken in light of the proposed revisions for 2026.

The DC emphasized that the revision process



must be carried out in a scientific, data-driven and objective manner, taking into account prevailing market trends, recent developmental activities, and variations in land use patterns across urban, semi-urban and rural areas of the district.

He directed that a comparative analysis of current stamp rates and proposed revised rates be conducted with due consideration to infrastructure growth, commercial viability, residential expansion and overall economic activity in different locali-

ties. The DC highlighted about importance of ensuring uniformity, transparency and rationality in the revised rates so as to prevent both undervaluation and undue financial burden on the public.

The DC further stressed the need for close inter-departmental coordination, directing all concerned departments to furnish relevant inputs and factual data within the prescribed timeframe.

He underlined that the revised stamp duties must be well-documented, properly justified and aligned

with existing legal provisions and government policies.

The DC also emphasised timely finalization of the exercise so that the revised stamp duties are notified and implemented uniformly with effect from 1st January, 2026, ensuring smooth administration and enhanced revenue realization for the district.

He directed all concerned officers to submit their detailed reports and recommendations promptly for further examination and necessary action at the District Level.

DC B'la Reviews Arrangements for R-Day Celebrations



GMK NEWS NETWORK

BARAMULLA: Deputy Commissioner Baramulla, Minga Sherpa, Thursday chaired a meeting at the Main Meeting Hall of DC office to review the preparation for the upcoming Republic Day-2026 celebration across Baramulla.

The DC directed all concerned departments to work in close coordination to ensure seamless arrangements for the national event.

The DC issued strict instructions for setting up awareness stalls highlighting various Government-sponsored schemes, while the DYSSO were tasked with organizing a cricket match as part of the celebrations.

The Chief Medical Officer was instructed to organize a medical camp during the event. Directions were also issued to concerned departments to ensure proper sanitation, uninterrupted essential

services, adequate fire and emergency preparedness, and robust security arrangements.

Further, the District Information Officer was directed to ensure proper sound system arrangements and comprehensive media coverage of the event while ARTO Baramulla was instructed for ensuring transport for the students performing during the Republic Day function.

For felicitation during the celebrations, all departments were asked to submit nominations of employees for exemplary performances on or before 10 January.

The Deputy Commissioner emphasized coordinated efforts among all stakeholders to ensure successful celebrations of Republic Day-2026.

The meeting was attended by the officers from the civil administration, police, army, BSF and other concerned agencies.

DC B'pora Reviews Preparations for 'Prashasan Gaon Ki Or' Week

GMK NEWS NETWORK

BANDIPORA: Deputy Commissioner Bandipora Thursday chaired a meeting to review and finalize arrangements for the successful conduct of 'Prashasan Gaon Ki Or' Week, scheduled to commence from December 19 across the district.

During the meeting, the Deputy Commissioner

ducted shall be submitted to the District Level Monitoring Committee, headed by the Programme Officer, ICDS. Departments were asked to focus on key performance parameters and ensure proper documentation.

Sub-Divisional Magistrates were directed to closely monitor and supervise all activities being carried out in their respec-



directed all departments to organize dedicated camps at the grassroots level during the week, with a special focus on redressal of public grievances and delivery of government services. Emphasis was laid on ensuring maximum outreach so that benefits reach intended beneficiaries in a time-bound and transparent manner.

The Deputy Commissioner further directed that daily progress reports and data on activities con-

tive subdivisions, while District Heads of Departments were instructed to ensure smooth functioning of camps and adequate deployment of manpower and resources.

The Deputy Commissioner stressed the importance of coordinated efforts among all departments to make Prashasan Gaon Ki Or Week impactful and result-oriented, with public satisfaction and effective service delivery as the primary objectives.

Awareness programme on 'Prevention of Sexual Harassment of Women' held in Kulgam

GMK NEWS NETWORK

KULGAM: In compliance with the directions of the J&K LSA, District Legal Services Authority (DLSA), Kulgam, under the Chairmanship of Aijaz Ahmad

Khan, Chairman District Legal Services Authority (Pr. District & Sessions Judge) Kulgam, organized an awareness programme on Prevention of Sexual Harassment of Women at Workplace Act 2013, at

South Kash Coaching Centre Kulgam, Thursday.

During the event, Deputy LADC and Asst. LADCs delivered lectures on the significance of Prevention of Women from Sexual Harassment at

Workplace Act and also provided detailed information on the various schemes introduced by NALSA. The programme was attended by the DLSA staff, LADCs, PLVs, students, and teachers of the institution.

UNION TERRITORY OF JAMMU AND KASHMIR,
OFFICE OF THE EXECUTIVE ENGINEER JAL SHAKTI PHE
MECHANICAL DIVISION SRINAGAR

EXTENTION NOTICE
Corrigendum (II) to this office e-NIT NO: JSMDS/e-NIT-22 of 11/2025

Name of Works: **Supply, installation, testing and commissioning of Borewell submersible Pumping unit at WSS B&J Hospital.**

Due to poor response, the critical dates extended as below.

01.	Bid down load end date	19-12-2025 up to 4:00 PM
02.	Bid Submission end date	19-12-2025 up to 4:00 PM
03.	Date and time of opening of bids	20-12-2025 at 2:00 PM

Rest all the terms and conditions shall remain the same as laid down in the e-Nit No. referred to above
No. JSMDS/CC/3794-97
Dated: 16/12/2025
DIPK-9081-25
DT: 18/12/2025

SD
Executive Engineer,
Jal Shakti PHE Mechanical
Division, Srinagar

Satish Sharma reviews functioning of key departments in Kupwara

GMK NEWS NETWORK

KUPWARA: In continuation with the government's public outreach programme, Minister for FCS&CA, Transport, Youth Services and Sports, IT, Science and Technology, Satish Sharma, along with Advisor to the Chief Minister, Nasir Aslam Wani Thursday reviewed the progress and performance of several departments during a meeting held at Kupwara.

The meeting was attended by MLA Kupwara Mir Mohammad Fayaz, MLA Karnah Javid Ahmad Mirchal, MLA Langate Khurshid Ahmad Sheikh, Deputy Commissioner Kupwara Shrikant Suse, ADC Handwara, RTO Kashmir, Joint Director FCS&CA and Joint Director Youth Services & Sports, Chief Planning Officer and other concerned district officers.

While reviewing the Food, Civil Supplies & Consumer Affairs Department, the Minister was informed that a total of 6,67,755 beneficiaries have been registered under NFSA and non-NFSA categories in the district. It was further informed that 267.81 metric tonnes of rice

have currently been stocked at the main FCS&CA depot at Bumhama. Adequate stock of rice, atta and sugar have already been pre-positioned in border and snow-bound areas, including Karnah, Machil, Keran, Budnamal, Jumgund and Kumkadi, which are being serviced through 170 centres.

The Minister emphasized the need to ensure an uninterrupted supply of essential commodities, particularly in snow-bound and hard-to-reach areas, so that the residents do not face any inconvenience during harsh weather conditions.

Reviewing the Transport Department, the ARTO Kupwara apprised the Minister of the number of passenger buses, trucks and cabs operating in the district. It was informed that ₹15.91 crore have been realized during the ongoing financial year 2025-26 through fees, taxes, fitness and passenger tax. Additionally, ₹5 lakh have been disbursed under the Road Accident Victim Fund during the current year.

Responding to demand of public representatives, the Minister announced the issuance of government buses to all



Assembly Constituencies of the district to facilitate daily commuting for the public. Regarding solarization of government buildings, it was informed that 398 buildings

have been solarized so far, and smart meters have been installed in 17 buildings. Additionally, 2,798 solar street lights have been installed during the financial year 2024-25 while 344 more have been proposed for installation in the current financial year. It was also informed that 13 solar agriculture pumps have been allotted in the district, of which, 10 have already been installed. He also directed the concerned officers to ensure installation of solar lights in all shrines and stadiums of the district. Meanwhile, various solar lights were issued on the spot to all 6 constituencies of the district.

Regarding Hydro Power Plants, the Minister stressed upon the concerned agencies to speed up the execution of work on these projects, which shall augment the power scenario in the district.

Regarding formulation of plans, the Minister enjoined upon all the officers to ensure utmost coordination with the concerned MLAs while making plans for different works.

The Minister also reviewed the activities of the Youth Services & Sports Department in

the district. The Advisor to Chief Minister, while speaking on the occasion, asked the officers to work in close synergy with the elected representatives while formulating and executing the government schemes and initiatives.

Earlier, the Chief Planning Officer Kupwara presented a detailed district profile of Kupwara.

Afterwards, the Minister, along with the Advisor to Chief, distributed solar lights among all the constituencies of the district.

Later, the Minister, along with Advisor to Chief Minister, had a field visit during which he inspected Playground of HSS Kupwara and Sports Stadium Galizoo.

MLA Kupwara was also present on the occasion.

The Minister directed the officers to prepare a comprehensive DPR for construction of State of Art Sports facilities at these two grounds.

The Minister met several deputations and directed the officers to ensure time-bound redressal of all their genuine grievances at the earliest.

Global tariffs threaten Papier-Mâché livelihoods



REHAN QAYOOM MIR

SRINAGAR: Ahead of the Christmas festival, artisans in Kashmir known for their intricate papier-mâché craft Thursday said that the lingering effects of a U.S. tariff are disrupting their livelihoods.

They say increased duties and stricter import regulations have made their handmade goods significantly more expensive and less competitive in key Western markets like the United States and Europe, squeezing a centuries-old cultural industry.

Veteran artist, Haji Mohammad Akhtar of Zadibal, who has worked on papier-mâché for over four decades along with his sons, said the festive season this year hasn't brought the usual business momentum.

"Work is going on but sales are low. Compared to last winter, demand from outside India, especially the U.S. and Europe has dropped. Freight and custom costs have gone up

sharply," Akhtar said.

Exporters said that U.S. tariff hikes and stricter import rules continue to negatively affect small art markets—making handmade crafts more expensive for overseas buyers.

"These crafts used to be regular goods to U.S. and European stores, but additional duties and tighter import norms have made our handmade work costlier overseas," said another artisan.

Mir Arshad Hussain of Bota Kadal who has won the top prize at the International Fajr Festival of Handicrafts in Iran, echoed similar concerns.

"This art gives Kashmir its global identity, yet there's little institutional help. Export channels are shrinking and younger people see no security in this work," he said.

"Despite all odds, we keep on working to preserve the legacy of Kashmiri art. We are pretty optimistic that the trade will uptick again," he said—(KNO)

'Hope for new recruitment' Aspirants welcome LG Sinha's decision to terminate 103 firemen

AGENCIES

SRINAGAR: Days after the Jammu and Kashmir government terminated the services of 103 firemen appointed in the Fire and Emergency Services (F&ES) Department, a group of aspirants who had raised objections to the 2020 recruitment process welcomed the decision here on Thursday.

The government action followed the findings of a probe committee which concluded that the recruitment process carried out in 2020 involved serious irregularities, including alleged question paper leakage.

Addressing reporters in Srinagar, the aspirants said the termination order fulfilled assurances given to them earlier by Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha during a meeting at Lok Bhavan.

They said they had submitted material and representations over the years pointing to flaws in the selection process.

The aspirants said the probe committee had recorded that paper leakage was a major issue in the recruitment process.

They added that although all evidence had not yet been made public, the government decision reflected acceptance of the findings of the inquiry.



They credited advocate Abhinav Sharma for pursuing the matter and bringing the issue into the public domain.

They also acknowledged the role of BJP leader Ravinder Raina, saying he had spoken in support of action and called for justice for the candidates.

The aspirants said they had been raising the issue since 2020, when the selection list was made public, and had staged protests in Srinagar and Jammu over the past several years.

They claimed they were meritorious candidates who had qualified physical tests more than once and that their records were available with the department.

They alleged that their objections were ignored at the time the recruitment was completed and said

timely action could have prevented the situation.

According to them, a total of 692 aspirants were affected by the alleged irregularities.

The group said they had faith in the Lieutenant Governor and expressed hope that further steps would be taken to ensure justice and employment opportunities for eligible candidates.

They also thanked the media for coverage of the issue and acknowledged the cooperation extended by Kothibagh Police during their protests.

The aspirants appealed to political leaders to support their demand for fair recruitment and said their objective was limited to securing employment through a transparent process.(KNS).

Javid Dar calls for vigorous awareness campaign on Agri, allied schemes

GMK NEWS NETWORK

JAMMU: Minister for Agriculture Production, Rural Development, Panchayati Raj, Cooperative and Election Department, Javid Ahmad Dar, Thursday addressed the Multi-Stakeholder Platform Meet-2 under the Jammu & Kashmir Comprehensive Agricultural Development Programme (JKCIP/HADP) at Kisan Kendra, Talab Tillo, Jammu.

The Minister highlighted

agriculture remains the backbone of Jammu & Kashmir's economy and stressed the need to empower the farmers for sustainable regional development.

He emphasized the launching of a vigorous awareness campaign on agriculture and allied sector schemes to ensure maximum outreach and benefits to the farming community. He underlined the need to promote market-driven production, strengthen market link-

nologies in agriculture and horticulture, stating that the goal is to transform the traditional farming into a modern, income-oriented and market-driven system.

Later, the Minister visited the Rural Development Department Jammu, interacted with the officials and reviewed the progress of ongoing developmental works in Jammu division.

The event was attended by the Mission Director JKCIP/HADP, Directors of Agriculture,



the importance of such platforms in bringing together the farmers, FPOs, government departments, agri-entrepreneurs, financial institutions, researchers and civil society to collectively work for growth of agriculture and allied sectors. He reiterated that

ages, reduce dependency on middlemen, encourage public-private partnerships and foster inclusive decision-making involving small and marginal farmers, women and youth.

The Minister also called for replication of successful innovations and tech-

Horticulture and Animal Husbandry, MD JK AGRO, experts from SKUAST-J and Universities, representatives of financial institutions including J&K Bank and PNB, members of the Kissan Advisory Board, farmers, FPOs and budding entrepreneurs.

Farooq Shah chairs meeting of Committee on Petitions



GMK NEWS NETWORK

JAMMU: A meeting of the Committee on Petitions held here Thursday under the Chairmanship of MLA, Pirezada Farooq Shah to review the petitions referred to the Committee.

Legislators, Salman Sagar, Mushtaq Guroo and Vijay Kumar were also present in the meeting.

Threadbare discussions were held on various issues related to widespread adulteration of essential food commodities within Jammu & Kashmir besides encroachment and illegal distribution of land in

Khimber, Tehsil Hazratbal, Srinagar and action being taken by the concerned authorities as highlighted in the petition.

The Chairman highlighted the objectives of the Committee and sought cooperation from the concerned departments to discuss and resolve all pending issues through petitions lying before the Committee on priority basis.

The concerned officers from Food Safety and Revenue departments briefed the Committee about the present status and action taken by the authorities on the petition.

The Committee directed the concerned officers to take stringent action against those involving in adulteration in essential food commodities in Jammu and Kashmir.

The Committee also sought detailed report regarding various aspects of petitions for scrutiny by the Committee so that the required steps could be taken accordingly.

The Members of the Committee gave their valuable suggestions and stressed resolution of the public interest issues transparently and effectively by the Committee.

Crime Branch files charge sheet against two in fake govt job scam case

IAN5

SRINAGAR: The Crime Branch of J&K Police has submitted a charge sheet against two accused in the fake government job scam case, officials said on Thursday.

A statement by the Crime Branch Kashmir said, "The Economic Offences Wing (EOW) Kashmir of Crime Branch Kashmir has filed a charge sheet in FIR No. 08/2024 under Sections 420 and 120-B IPC against two accused persons in connection with a cheating and conspiracy case involving a fake promise of a government job. The charge sheet has been presented before the Hon'ble Court of the Chief Judicial Magistrate, Budgam, for judicial determination."

The case owes its origin to a written complaint alleg-

ing that Ishrat Bano, daughter of Mohd Ayoub Bhat, a resident of Zirhama, District Kupwara, dishonestly induced the complainant to part with a sum of Rs 11,00,000 on the false pretext that her husband would arrange a government job for him.

"Acting on this assurance, the complainant transferred the said amount into a bank account. Despite repeated assurances, neither was any government job arranged nor was the money returned," the statement said.

Upon receipt of the complaint, a detailed probe was initiated by the Economic Offences Wing, Kashmir. During the investigation, it surfaced that the amount was credited into the bank account of accused Gulzar Ahmad Wani alias Shahid,

son of Shamas Din Wani, a resident of Zirhama/Liderwan, District Kupwara.

The probe further revealed that there existed no husband-wife relationship between the accused Gulzar Ahmad Wani alias Shahid and Ishrat Bano, exposing the conspiracy and fraudulent intent behind the transaction.

"The investigation established prima facie involvement of both accused in acts of cheating and criminal conspiracy. Consequently, the case was registered at Police Station EOW Kashmir (Crime Branch Kashmir) and, after completion of the investigation, the allegations were found to be proved. Accordingly, the charge sheet has been submitted before the competent court for judicial adjudication," the statement added.

PMAY-U houses Crosses 45,000 Mark in J&K: Govt

RAJA SYED RATHER

SRINAGAR: More than 45,000 houses have been sanctioned under the Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana-Urban (PMAY-U) and PMAY-U 2.0 in Jammu and Kashmir, the government of India informed the Lok Sabha on Thursday. It added that Ladakh has received approval for more than 1,400 houses under the scheme.

In a written reply to the Lok Sabha, the Ministry of State for Housing and Urban Affairs, Tokhan Sahu said, that out of 45, 112 sanctioned houses, 34, 453 houses have been completed and occupied. While in Ladakh, 1,434 houses have been approved, and 934 houses stand completed and occupied.

Housing and urban development are State and UT subjects, and the implemen-

tation of schemes such as PMAY-U, AMRUT, Swachh Bharat Mission-Urban and PM e-Bus Sewa is carried out by the respective UT administrations with financial and technical support from the Centre, said the Ministry.

It was informed that PMAY-U scheme, which was launched in 2015 to provide all-weather pucca houses with basic civic amenities to eligible urban beneficiaries and the deadline for completion has been extended till December 31, 2025.

Based on the experience gained from PMAY-U, the Centre launched PMAY-U 2.0 in September 2024 to extend housing support to an additional one crore beneficiaries across the country over the next five years. This scheme also includes slum dwellers and adds a dedicated Affordable Rental Housing component.—(KNO)

Good Morning Kashmir

EDITORIAL

Jashn-e-Chilla-i-Kalan

Answer To Reviving Warmth, Heritage?

As Kashmir prepares to enter Chilla-i-Kalan, the most unforgiving 40 days of winter beginning December 21, the Valley once again turns to its cultural anchors for warmth and meaning. The Department of Handicrafts and Handloom's initiative to organise Jashn-e-Chilla-i-Kalan, coinciding with Pheran Day, is undoubtedly well-intentioned and symbolically rich. Yet the larger question remains: can a two-day celebration truly revive the warmth, heritage and resilience it seeks to showcase?

Held on December 20 and 21 at Kashmir Haat, the event positions itself as a tribute to the Valley's enduring relationship with craft, climate and culture. By foregrounding traditional Zari (tilla) and Aari embroidery, art forms historically inseparable from the Pheran, the festival rightly reminds us that in Kashmir, warmth has never been merely functional; it has always been an expression of refined artistry. On the surface, the initiative appears to stitch together winter survival with cultural pride.

The inclusion of master artisans from across the Valley, live demonstrations and direct interaction with visitors is another welcome step. In an age where machine-made replicas flood markets and genuine craftsmanship is increasingly marginalised, such visibility does restore a measure of dignity to artisans. Hand-embroidered Pherans, Pashmina shawls and winter garments displayed at the venue assert that Kashmiri craft is not a museum piece but a living, breathing tradition shaped by patience, skill and generational knowledge.

However, symbolism alone cannot be mistaken for solution. Kashmir's artisans are not struggling due to lack of festivals; they are struggling because of shrinking markets, exploitative middlemen, declining purchasing power and inadequate institutional support. A two-day event, however vibrant, risks becoming a seasonal spectacle unless it is followed by year-round policy intervention. Celebrating resilience without addressing economic precarity borders on romanticising hardship.

Jashn-e-Chilla-i-Kalan also raises an uncomfortable question: is the state content with showcasing heritage, or is it prepared to protect it? Fair pricing, assured procurement, modern marketing channels, export facilitation and social security for artisans remain largely absent from the conversation. Without these, heritage is reduced to a decorative backdrop, admired briefly and forgotten once the stalls come down.

Beyond Textbooks

How NEP 2020 Is Building India's New Generation



DR. BROTATI CHAKRABORTY

India stands at a defining moment in its educational journey. The National Education Policy (NEP) 2020 is not merely a reform document; it is a blueprint for reshaping the nation's human capital for the next three decades. At the heart of this transformation lies one bold idea: education must shift from memorisation to mastery, from marks to skills, from conformity to creativity. For the first time, India is imagining a system where every learner becomes a confident, competent, and self-reliant individual equipped to thrive in a rapidly changing world.

"India will not rise on information alone; it will rise on the skills, creativity, and confidence we nurture in every child."

NEP 2020 redefines learning for the 21st century, recognising that the knowledge economy demands far more than theoretical understanding. The policy emphasises that children must learn not only what to learn, but how to learn, why to learn, and how to apply what they learn. This shift marks a powerful transformation: learning becomes meaningful only when students can connect concepts to real-life situations, solve authentic problems, and express their ideas with clarity and confidence.

Why Skill Education, Why Now?

The world of work is changing at unprecedented speed. The World Economic Forum's Future of Jobs Report (2024) states that nearly 40 percent of today's skills will be irrelevant within five years. Automation, artificial intelligence, and digital disruption are reshaping every industry. New careers are emerging, traditional jobs are evolving, and employers are prioritising skills over degrees.

India, with one of the largest youth populations globally, cannot afford to prepare students for yesterday's world. NEP 2020 recognises this urgency and seeks to build future-ready citizens who can innovate, lead, and solve complex problems. Skill education bridges the gap between the classroom and the contemporary world, ensuring that students learn by doing, thinking, exploring, collaborating, and creating.

A Transformative Blueprint of Skills Under NEP 2020

1. Holistic and Multidisciplinary Learning



NEP 2020 breaks down the rigid boundaries between arts, science, commerce, and vocational education. By encouraging students to explore multiple disciplines, the policy promotes versatility- a key attribute in the modern workforce. A student of physics can learn classical dance; an artist can learn coding; a commerce student can pursue environmental science. Such freedom fosters creativity, critical thinking, and problem-solving.

2. Vocational Education for Every Child

One of the most revolutionary aspects of NEP 2020 is the integration of vocational education from Grade 6. Students are exposed to practical skills such as gardening, carpentry, electrical work, digital design, coding, financial literacy, and local crafts. This exposure nurtures dignity of labour and builds hands-on competence. By 2025, NEP aims for 50 percent of learners to have vocational exposure- an unprecedented national target.

3. 21st Century Skills as the New Foundation

NEP aligns the Indian education system with global standards by emphasising essential future skills:

- Critical thinking
- Communication skills
- Creativity
- Digital literacy
- Computational thinking
- Collaboration
- Problem-solving
- Emotional intelligence

These are now being integrated into teaching practices, curriculum design, and assessment methods across schools.

4. Experiential Learning as Core Pedagogy

NEP transforms classrooms into active spaces of engagement rather than passive spaces of lecturing. It promotes:

- Project-based learning
- Art-integrated learning
- Sports-integrated education
- Role plays and simulations
- Inquiry-based learning
- Hands-on experiments
- Community-based projects

Children actively construct knowledge rather than simply receiving it.

5. Technology-Enabled Skill Development

NEP embraces technology as an essential ally in personalised learning. Digital libraries, virtual labs, coding modules, adaptive assessments, AI-led personalised platforms, and blended learning opportunities democratise education for students across urban and rural India. Technology is no longer an add-on; it is a scaffold that supports learning at every stage.

6. Entrepreneurial Mindset and Innovation

India's economic future depends on young innovators and entrepreneurs. NEP 2020 encourages entrepreneurship through:

- Innovation labs
- School start-up clubs
- Financial literacy modules
- Business simulation exercises
- Idea competitions
- Design-thinking workshops

Students learn risk-taking, creativity, teamwork, and decision-making- skills essential for entrepreneurship and leadership in the future job market.

Teachers: The Real Drivers of Skill Education

No policy can succeed without empowered teachers. NEP 2020 transforms the teacher's role from a knowledge-deliverer to:

- Mentor
- Facilitator
- Innovator
- Skill coach
- Emotional guide

How Women Are Leading Bharat's Education Revolution

Why Women-Led Education Is Shaping The Future Of Bharat



DR DEEBA

Women-led development in education is a lived reality unfolding quietly across classrooms,

villages, towns, and universities. From early childhood centres to higher education institutions, women are shaping how India learns, thinks, and prepares for the future. Education has become one of the strongest spaces where women's leadership is transforming society from the ground up. For generations, Indian women have been the backbone of teaching. In primary schools especially, women teachers form the majority. They are often the first link between a child and formal education. Their presence makes schools feel safe, caring, and familiar, especially for young girls whose families worry about sending them outside the home. This trust is the foundation on which education stands. Women teachers do much more than teach lessons. They understand family realities, health issues, and social pressures that children face. When a girl misses school due to household work, early marriage pressure, or safety concerns, it is often a woman teacher who notices first and speaks to the family. This human connection keeps thousands of girls in school every year.

Women-led development in education in Bharat is the result of years of deliberate government focus on inclusion, access, and empowerment. Education has been identified as the most powerful tool for social transformation, and within this vision, women have been placed at the centre- as students, teachers, leaders, and nation-builders. This approach recognises that when women rise

through education, entire families and communities rise with them. To begin this transformation, the government focused on the most basic but critical issue: access to education for girls. For decades, many girls remained out of school due to poverty, social bias, or lack of nearby institutions. Government programmes addressed this gap by expanding school networks, especially in rural, tribal, and border areas, ensuring that distance and safety no longer stopped girls from learning.

Building schools alone was not enough, so the government worked to change social attitudes. The Beti Bachao Beti Padhao initiative linked the education of girls with national development and dignity. By combining awareness campaigns with enrolment drives, the programme helped families understand that educating daughters is not a burden but a strength for society and the nation.

As enrolment increased, retention became the next challenge. The government recognised that many girls dropped out during upper primary and secondary stages due to safety concerns and household pressures. To address this, residential schooling models like Kasturba Gandhi Balika Vidyalayas were strengthened. These institutions provided not just education but also security, nutrition, and confidence, allowing girls to continue learning without fear or interruption. Parallel to student-focused initiatives, the government invested heavily in women as educators. Large-scale recruitment of women teachers ensured that classrooms became more inclusive and sensitive spaces. Women teachers brought empathy, discipline, and trust into schools, especially in conservative regions where parents were more comfortable sending daughters to women-led classrooms.

Once women entered teaching in large numbers, attention shifted to improving their professional capacity. Government-led teacher training programmes focused on modern pedagogy, child psychology, and



inclusive teaching practices. These initiatives empowered women teachers to move beyond rote learning and adopt student-centred methods that benefit all learners, particularly girls. Infrastructure development further strengthened this ecosystem. The government prioritised separate toilets for girls, clean drinking water, and hygienic school environments. These seemingly simple steps played a crucial role in reducing absenteeism and dropout rates among adolescent girls, making schools places of dignity rather than discomfort.

Financial support became another important pillar. Scholarships, free textbooks, uniforms, and bicycles were provided to girls from economically weaker sections. These measures reduced the financial pressure on families and reinforced the message that the state stands behind the education of every girl child. The National Education Policy 2020 gave a long-term vision to these efforts. By explicitly emphasising gender equity and women's participation in leadership, NEP created a framework where women-led development in education could grow sustainably. It acknowledged that women must not only teach but also shape educational institutions and policies. Digital education initiatives launched by the government further expanded women's role in education. Platforms like DIKSHA enabled women teachers to access training, share resources, and reach students beyond physical classrooms. During times of disruption,

women educators played a key role in keeping learning alive through digital means.

Higher education also saw focused intervention. Policies encouraging women's enrolment in universities, professional courses, and research programmes helped narrow gender gaps. Hostels, fellowships, and safety measures made campuses more accessible to women from diverse backgrounds. Government-funded fellowships and research grants supported women scholars in pursuing advanced studies. This investment helped build a strong base of women academics who contribute to knowledge creation, policy research, and teaching at higher levels, strengthening women's leadership in intellectual spaces. Skill development was carefully linked with education to ensure economic empowerment. Government-backed vocational and skill programmes allowed women students to gain practical abilities alongside formal education. This connection between learning and livelihood gave education real meaning for women and their families. At the community level, the government encouraged women-led self-help groups and local organisations to support education initiatives. These groups played an important role in adult literacy, early childhood education, and school enrolment campaigns, extending the reach of formal education systems.

Education policies worked alongside social protection measures to create safer environments for learn-

ing. Monitoring systems introduced by the government strengthened accountability. Gender-disaggregated data allowed policymakers and administrators to track enrolment, attendance, and dropouts among girls. This data-driven approach helped target interventions where they were needed most. As systems matured, women began occupying more leadership positions within education administration. Women principals, block officers, and education planners brought participatory governance and community engagement into decision-making, improving school management and trust. Inclusive education policies ensured that women from minority, tribal, and marginalised communities were not left behind. Special hostels, language support, and scholarships allowed education to reach those who had been historically excluded, making women-led development truly inclusive. Public campaigns and government messaging continued to reinforce the value of women's education. By consistently presenting educated women as contributors to national growth, the state helped reshape cultural attitudes and social expectations.

Today, women-led development in education stands as a visible outcome of sustained government commitment. Women teachers, scholars, administrators, and students are not exceptions but a growing norm across Bharat's education system. The government's role in advancing women-led development in education has been comprehensive and purposeful. By improving access, ensuring dignity, providing financial support, enabling leadership, and shaping inclusive policies, the state has created an environment where women can lead education confidently. When women lead education, they nurture minds, strengthen society, and secure Bharat's future.

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Gurez – An Epitome Of Stunning Beauty



RAYEES AHMAD KUMAR

Kashmir, the paradise on earth, is famous for its pleasant climate and stunning natural beauty. Snow-capped lofty peaks, crystal-clear waters, and mesmerising green meadows add immensely to its charm and breathtaking landscapes. Besides these features, the valley is also known for its many mountain passes: Sinthan Top leading to Kishtwar, Zojilla opening towards Ladakh, Sadhna Top leading to Karnah Valley, and Z-Gali connecting to Machil Valley of Kupwara district. In Bandipora district, famous for ilm, adab, and aab, the renowned Razdan Pass serves as the gateway to the enchanting Gurez Valley.

Gurez, one of the three Legislative Assembly segments of Bandipora district, comprises the two tehsils of Tulail and Gurez. I had never visited this valley before, but last week I finally decided to explore this stunningly beautiful region, surrounded on all sides by towering mountains. I left my Ganderbal residence early in the morning and reached Sumbal, from where I boarded a Sumo bound for Bandipora. Upon reaching Bandipora, I refreshed myself with a few sips of hot tea at a local hotel and then took my middle seat in the Sumo heading toward Dawar, the main town of Gurez. Within an hour, we reached the first halt station, Tragbal, the main headquarters of the Border Security Forces responsible for handling security-related matters on the Bandipora-Gurez road.

We were not permitted to proceed



further, as the road had become slippery at multiple locations due to freezing snow accumulated after the higher reaches received the season's first snowfall. We were made to wait until 1:30 p.m., after which we were allowed to proceed following rigorous security checks. Passing through zigzag curves along an extremely fascinating yet frightening route gave me a completely new experience, as I had never travelled on such dangerous roads before. At every curve and blind turn on this prestigious road, one could read warning lines written on signboards advising drivers to limit speed, remain extra cautious, and avoid reckless driving. The mountainous terrain beyond

Tragbal was completely shrouded in a silvery blanket of a few inches of snow. Traffic on the road was sparse, as very few vehicles ply during November and December due to the extremely frosty and chilly conditions. I took out my phone and clicked several photographs, and through videography preserved the fascinating scenes and breathtaking sights. Another point close to Gurez Valley where our identities were checked was the famous TCP Kanzalwan. Moving a few kilometres ahead, I witnessed the first habitable location, Koragbal, on this historical route. A small colony of about forty to fifty homes, one wonders how the residents manage to live in harmony with nature, far away

from the hustle and bustle of densely populated areas.

One of the most fascinating sights during the journey was the Kishanganga Power Project and its mighty dam, majestically built between two lofty mountains. After crossing a couple of other habitable villages, I finally reached Dawar, the main administrative centre of Gurez Valley, at about 4:30 p.m. Immediately after disembarking from the vehicle, the chilling gusts of icy wind forced me to search for a comfortable room for a safe night's stay, as the temperature at that time had dropped to -9°C. The Sumo driver, a local resident of Mintrigam village, kindly helped me arrange a decent room. I took hot sips

of tea at a nearby stall and requested the same driver to show me some beautiful and historical places in the main Gurez Valley.

We visited the Shina Cultural Centre, Wanpora village, and a few other places of interest. By evening, we returned, and I took some rest in the rented room. After having dinner at a local hotel, I retired to bed early. By 9 p.m. on 12-11-2025, the temperature had plunged to -14°C. The next morning, when I woke up, the water taps refused to flow, as the bone-chilling cold had frozen them completely. With great difficulty, I managed to perform ablution and offered the dawn prayers. At 10:30 a.m., I boarded a Sumo heading towards Bandipora to return to my workplace, and by 3:30 p.m., I was back in Bandipora.

On our return journey, the passengers requested a short halt at Tragbal to have tea. Indeed, it was a wonderful and memorable trip, one that I will cherish for years to come, as the route passes through some of the most naturally untouched and breathtakingly beautiful places. Gurez a remote valley in the Kashmir Himalayas, is 86 kilometres from the district headquarters, Bandipora, situated at 2400 metres above sea level and surrounded by snow-capped mountains. Its inhabitants, often called Dards, speak the Shina language and have their ancestral connections with the Gilgit Valley. The pyramid-shaped mountain peak in Gurez is named after 16th-century poetess Habba Khatoon – the Nightingale of Kashmir.

It is believed that when Yousuf Shah Chal was imprisoned by Mughal Emperor Akbar, his wife Habba Khatoon was looking for him near the peak. He too belonged to the Dard tribe of Gilgit. The roar of the mighty Kishanganga River and the log wood houses make Gurez truly an epitome of beauty that lulls a visitor to a sound sleep.

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Rising Anti-Semitic Violence In Australia



DR. SATYAWAN SAURABH

Australia has long been viewed as a multicultural democracy, where diverse religious, racial, and cultural communities have experienced relatively peaceful coexistence. The Jewish community has also been a strong and respected part of this social fabric. However, in recent years, particularly since 2023, the increase in targeted violence against Jewish institutions, synagogues, and individuals has seriously challenged this perception. Incidents of arson, hate graffiti, threats, and attacks are not merely criminal acts, but also expose deeper layers of growing polarization, intolerance, and insecurity in Australian society. Therefore, it is natural to question why anti-Semitic violence is increasing and how the state can balance civil liberties while ensuring internal security.

To understand the rise of anti-Semitic violence, it is first necessary to consider the global geopolitical context. International events like the Israel-Gaza conflict are no longer confined to West Asia. Thanks to digital media and global information flows, their impact reaches distant societies instantly. In Australia, this conflict has also led to emotional polarization, where criticism of foreign policy or military actions often turns into collective blame for the Jewish community. This blurring of the line between political disagreement and religious-ethnic identity provides ideological legitimacy to anti-Semitic violence.

Additionally, the spread of extremist ideologies has emerged as a serious factor. Right-wing extremism, white supremacist thinking, and certain radical networks have long linked Jews to conspiracy theories. The spread of these ideas has become faster and more widespread in the digital age. Social media platforms, encrypted messaging apps, and online forums create echo chambers where



hate is presented as normal behavior. When individuals repeatedly see the same inflammatory content, violence gradually becomes portrayed as a legitimate and necessary response.

Disinformation and conspiracy theories also play a significant role in fueling anti-Semitic violence. Historically, there has been a tendency to blame Jews for economic crises, pandemics, and political instability. In modern times, this trend has taken on a new form through social media. The COVID-19 pandemic, the global economic recession, or complexities related to international financial institutions are often attributed to the Jewish community. When repeated, these false narratives gain a foothold in the social consciousness and create a psychological basis for violence.

Certain structural weaknesses in the internal security framework also exacerbate this problem. Recent events have raised questions about the effectiveness of the arms licensing

system, mental health assessments, and intelligence monitoring. If signs of potential violent tendencies are not identified in time, so-called "lone wolf" attacks can cause serious harm. This is not just a failure of the police, but a challenge to preventive governance, where anticipating risks and timely intervention are essential.

Under these circumstances, the most pressing challenge facing the state is to maintain a balance between internal security and democratic freedoms. Security in a democratic society cannot simply mean strict laws and surveillance. The state's primary responsibility is to uphold the rule of law, which includes prompt and effective action against hate crimes. Strong prosecution and punishment of cases of anti-Semitic violence are essential to send a clear message that hatred and violence have no place in society. Furthermore, providing justice and support to victims is essential to rebuilding trust.

Intelligence coordination is the backbone of internal security. Delays or inconsistencies in information sharing between federal and state agencies can lead to potential threats being overlooked. Monitoring online radicalization, analyzing suspicious activity, and timely intervention—all these measures are essential. But this surveillance must be targeted and proportionate. Indiscriminate surveillance not only violates citizens' privacy but can also breed distrust in democratic institutions.

Governance of the digital space has become an essential component of internal security. Curbing anti-Semitic violence is difficult without controlling online hate speech and disinformation. Platform accountability, transparent regulations, and prompt action mechanisms are essential. Furthermore, it is essential to ensure that legitimate political dissent and peaceful protest are not suppressed. Freedom of expression is fundamental to

democracy, and security measures should not undermine it.

Community engagement is an important, yet often overlooked, aspect of internal security. Faith-based dialogue with the Jewish community and other minorities makes security efforts more effective. When communities feel like partners with the state, they play an active role in reporting suspicious activities and countering radical influences. The involvement of community leaders, grievance redressal mechanisms, and victim support services strengthen social cohesion.

Education and public discourse are key to long-term solutions. Anti-Semitic violence is rooted not only in current political events but also in historical prejudices. Holocaust education, multicultural curricula, and interfaith dialogue can build social immunity against hatred. The media also plays a crucial role. Responsible reporting, fact-checking, and avoiding inflammatory language can reduce social tensions.

The state's response to anti-Semitic violence also poses a test of Australia's democratic values. If security measures begin to stigmatize particular communities or become a means of suppressing dissent, they can themselves become part of the problem. Therefore, a rights-based security approach is essential, in which security and freedom are considered complementary. Clearly distinguishing between criticism of foreign policy and anti-Semitic hatred is central to this balance.

Ultimately, the rise in anti-Semitic violence in Australia is not just a law and order issue, but also a social warning. It shows how global polarization, digital disinformation, and internal vulnerabilities can combine to destabilize democratic societies. The solution lies neither in strict laws nor in blanket leniency, but in a balanced, rights-based, and community-centered strategy. Only through targeted policing, integrated intelligence, responsible digital regulation, and social dialogue can hate crimes be effectively combated. Only when minority protections and democratic freedoms reinforce each other can multicultural democracies become truly secure and sustainable.

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India's Export Surge Reflects Resilience Amid Global Uncertainties: Govt

INDIAN

NEW DELHI: Driven by diversification, innovation, and strategic trade reforms, India continues to strengthen its exports despite the uncertainties in global markets, according to an official statement issued on Thursday.

This growth reflects India's resilience, with high-value commodities, widening global partnerships, and policy reforms supporting a more balanced and globally integrated trade trajectory amid global headwinds triggered by the US tariff turmoil.

The statement pointed out that India has inked a

series of major Free Trade Agreements (FTAs), the most recent being the Comprehensive Economic Partnership Agreement (CEPA) with Oman, while active negotiations are also ongoing with several other countries. This is expected to lead to further export diversification, which, in turn, would strengthen trade stability, competitiveness, and long-term economic security amid global uncertainties.

India's exports have jumped by a robust 15.52 per cent to \$ 73.99 billion in November this year from \$64.05 billion in November 2024. Consequently, the country's trade deficit narrowed by over 61 per

cent from \$17.06 billion to \$6.64 billion, according to official figures compiled by the Commerce Ministry.

India's trade agreements with other economies reinforce its commitment to inclusive growth, benefiting farmers, artisans, workers, and MSMEs while safeguarding core national interests. Most recently, the India-Oman agreement builds on long-standing bilateral ties, creating a forward-looking and balanced economic framework, the statement said.

The increase in exports was seen across key merchandise and services sectors, alongside steady

demand from major partner countries. This performance underscores the resilience of India's export sector amid evolving global trade conditions.

Merchandise exports during November 2025 rose to \$38.13 billion from \$31.94 Billion in November 2024, registering a growth of 19.38 per cent over the year.

Services export for November 2025 increased to \$35.86 billion as compared to \$32.11 billion in November 2024, indicating a growth of 11.67 per cent in a year.

The share of merchandise exports was 51.53 per cent, whereas service

exports constituted 48.47 per cent share in total exports in November 2025.

Readymade garments of all textiles, a labour-intensive sector, continue to contribute positively. Exports rose to \$1,247.37 million with a 11.27 per cent increase in November compared to last year.

India's drugs and pharmaceutical sector, which is recognised as the Pharmacy of the World, experienced 20.19 per cent growth in exports over the year. Indian pharma exports are destined to more than 200 countries around the globe, including the highly regulated markets of the US, Western Europe, Japan, and

Australia, indicating diversification in this sector too.

Export of Gems and jewellery also registered a growth of 27.8 per cent in November. Indian jewellery is admired for its craftsmanship, design, and cultural richness. Demand is growing in key markets such as the US, the United Arab Emirates, Hong Kong, and Europe, especially for gold, diamond, and coloured gemstone jewellery.

India has also witnessed a remarkable surge in petroleum product exports over the last decade. It is the seventh-largest exporter of refined petroleum products and ranks

among the top five refining nations globally. The export growth for November is estimated at 11.65 per cent, with key export destinations including South Asian, African, and European countries.

Engineering goods, a traditional pillar of India's exports, have recorded steady growth, with the US as the top destination, followed by the UAE, Germany, the UK, and Saudi Arabia. To sustain momentum, the government has rolled out measures such as Zero Duty EPCG and the Market Access Initiative (MAI) to support exporters and boost overseas revenues, the statement added.

FROM THE FRONT PAGE

NIA Arrests Ninth

accused persons in the case, including Dr Umar Nabi (the deceased perpetrator of the bombing) as well as Mufti Irfan.

Working closely with various central and state agencies, NIA continues to move with alacrity to unravel the complete conspiracy behind the terror attack.

Earlier this month, the agency conducted extensive searches at the premises of several accused and suspects in J&K and Uttar Pradesh and seized various digital devices and other incriminating materials.

These were preceded by similar searches at the premises of the prime accused, Dr Muzammil Shakeel Gania and Dr Shaheen Saeed, in the Al Falah University complex and other places in Faridabad (Haryana).

Notably, on December 9, the NIA arrested the eighth accused, Dr Bilal Naseer Malla of Baramulla.

A white collar terror module operated by local doctors was busted by J&K Police and Haryana Police in the Faridabad area.

This led to the arrest of two conspirators, Dr Adil Rather and Dr Muzammil Ganai, while the third conspirator, Dr Umar Nabi, evaded arrest.

Dr Umar Nabi carried out the blast of his explosive-laden car near the Red Fort, in which the bomber was killed, while 11 innocent civilians also became victims of the explosion.

Terrorists, OGWs And

eradicate ecosystem and the safe haven.

"The real security gains since 2019 must be defended and every single terrorist and its supporter operating in valley, forest, hills or village must be neutralised," the Lieutenant Governor said.

The Lieutenant Governor said in the past 6 years, we have strengthened the security grid and the collaborative efforts of J&K Police, Army, Intelligence agencies and Central Armed Police Forces (CAPFs) have led to a significant decline in terrorist violence, in the number of operating terrorists and recruitment.

"Armed terrorists and its supporters, OGWs and those elements intimidating the common citizen should be treated equally. We must ensure they pay a very heavy price for their action," the Lieutenant Governor said.

The Lieutenant Governor also discussed strategies to tackle evolving threats, enhancing intelligence capabilities, and building next-level security grid for new-age security challenges.

"The landscape of security threats has undergone a profound change in recent years. We need to shift from reactive to proactive security strategies and use sophisticated tools like AI to counter terrorism, terror financing, radicalisation, and narco-terrorism threats," the Lieutenant Governor said.

The one-day UT level security conference was attended by Senior J&K Police, Intelligence, Civil Administration and CAPFs officials.

J&K To Crack Down

Divisional Commissioner, Jammu, and comprises Administrative Secretary, Civil Aviation Department; Deputy Commissioner, Jammu; Commissioner, Jammu Municipal Corporation; Senior Superintendent of Police, Jammu ;Director, Urban Local Bodies, Jammu (Member); Member Secretary, J&K Pollution Control Board (Member); and Director, Airport Jammu

The committee for Kashmir is headed by Divisional Commissioner, Kashmir and comprises Administrative Secretary, Civil Aviation Department; Deputy Commissioner, Srinagar; Deputy Commissioner, Budgam; Deputy Commissioner, Pulwama; Commissioner, Srinagar Municipal Corporation; Senior Superintendents of Police, Srinagar/Budgam/Pulwama; Director, Urban Local Bodies, Srinagar; Member Secretary, J&K Pollution Control Board and Director, Airport Srinagar (Secretary)

As per its term of references, the committee would immediately identify and map all unauthorized slaughterhouses, meat shops, dairies, piggeries, garbage dumps and other prohibited facilities within 10 km range of International Airport, Srinagar.

The committees have also been man-

dated to ensure strict enforcement measures including closure or relocation of non-compliant units, in coordination with Urban Local Bodies, Municipal Corporations, Pollution Control Board and law enforcement authorities.

The committees would institutionalise the compliance monitoring mechanism with quarterly reports to be submitted to the Director General of Civil Aviation, Government of India—(KNO)

Chillai Kalan Nears,

Srinagar fell from minus 1.6°C to 0.2°C, Qazigund rose slightly from minus 3.0°C to 0.8°C, while Pulwama recorded a rise from minus 4.4°C to minus 3.2°C.

Pampore's minimum climbed from minus 4.0°C to minus 1.8°C, whereas Awantipora slightly warmed from minus 3.2°C to minus 3.8°C.

Jammu region also showed variations, with Jammu city rising from 9.0°C to 11.0°C, Katra from 11.1°C to 12.1°C, and Bhaderwah from 3.4°C to 5.0°C. Leh in Ladakh warmed from minus 6.3°C to minus 3.4°C.

The Meteorological Department has issued an advisory warning of possible moderate to heavy snowfall in the higher reaches of Kupwara, Bandipora, and Ganderbal, particularly on December 21.

Travellers and transporters have been advised to plan their journeys accordingly and follow all traffic and administrative guidelines.

The weather update for Jammu and Kashmir indicates light to moderate snow over higher areas of the Kashmir division and light to moderate rain in many plains on the night of December 20, extending to the evening of December 21.

Scattered light rain or snow is expected on December 22, after which no significant precipitation is forecast until December 31.

Two back-to-back Western Disturbances are likely to affect J&K between Saturday and Tuesday, bringing snowfall to higher reaches and light rainfall in plains, according to independent forecaster Faizan Arif.

Dry and cloudy weather is expected across the Union Territory on Thursday and Friday, while mostly dry conditions will prevail on Saturday (Dec 20). However, a few higher-altitude areas, particularly along the Sonamarg-Drass axis and in Kupwara and Bandipora, may record light snowfall, he said.

The first Western Disturbance is expected to impact the region from Saturday night, with precipitation starting over the higher reaches. The second system is likely to join on Monday (Dec 22) and persist until Tuesday afternoon (Dec 23), prolonging snowfall in north Kashmir, especially in the Kupwara higher reaches. Snowfall in Bandipora, Ganderbal, and Baramulla in the higher elevations is also expected.

Snow accumulation is likely to be light to heavy over elevated areas, while plains may receive light rainfall, with moderate showers in some locations.

"Tourist spots, including Gulmarg and Sonamarg are expected to witness light to moderate snowfall. Dry snow is possible over Kupwara and nearby areas between Monday night and Tuesday morning due to relatively lower temperatures," he added.

In Jammu division, plains are likely to see mostly cloudy weather with light rain, the middle reaches may receive light to moderate rainfall, and the higher reaches could record light to moderate snowfall.

Faizan Arif noted that overall precipitation is not expected to be high, but cold temperatures could lead to notable snow accumulation above 3,200 metres.

"Flight operations are expected to remain unaffected, air pollution levels are likely to drop, and the risk of forest fires may reduce," he added—(KNO)

and regular coordination with concerned authorities to fast-track clearances.

He reiterated that railway projects, particularly those linked to Jammu and Kashmir, are approved while keeping in view aspects like strategic importance, connectivity to remote and border areas, socio-economic benefits and overall availability of funds.

The Minister also informed the parliament that as on April 1, 2025, Indian Railways has sanctioned 431 infrastructure projects across the country, including new lines, gauge conversion and doubling works, covering 35,966 km at an estimated cost of about 6.75 lakh crore—(KNO)

Fog Blankets

have been advised to take precautionary measures and avoid unnecessary travel during peak fog hours," the official added.

Passengers travelling on highways reported delays as vehicles moved at slow speeds. "We had to drive the car at a very low speed in the morning due to the dense fog. It took us over an hour to cover just a few kilometres," said Mohammad Irfan, a daily commuter from Baramulla to Srinagar.

Meteorological officials said that the fog is likely to persist for the next few days, particularly during early mornings and late evenings, due to dropping night temperatures.

Residents are urged to take precautions, especially those travelling in fog-prone hilly areas. "Motorists should use fog lights, maintain safe distances, and follow all traffic rules," said another official.

Meanwhile, the administration has also advised tourists to check road conditions before travelling and to avoid unnecessary night journeys, particularly in higher reaches where fog tends to be denser—(KNO)

Draw Lessons From

Sindoor, Singh said air power has emerged as a key element in modern warfare. "The air power functions not only as a tactical resource but also as a strategic instrument, enabling leadership to convey intent through speed, reach and precision," he added.

The Defence Minister said warfare in the 21st century is shaped by technology and adaptability.

He pointed to the growing role of cyber operations, artificial intelligence, unmanned systems, satellite-based surveillance and space-related capabilities.

He said precision weapons, real-time intelligence and data-driven decision-making have become integral to military planning.

Singh reiterated the government's commitment to strengthening India's security apparatus. He said the proposed Sudarshan Chakra air defence initiative, announced by Prime Minister Narendra Modi earlier this year, would contribute to the protection of national assets.

He said the development of indigenous jet engines has been taken up as a national mission.

The Defence Minister said the government is working with private industry, start-ups and MSMEs to support modernisation of the Armed Forces through initiatives such as iDEX and ADITI.

He said that as of November 2025, 672 winners had emerged from 565 challenges under iDEX, including 96 winners linked to Indian Air Force requirements.

Describing Operation Sindoor as an example of coordination among the three Services, Singh stressed the importance of jointness to improve operational effectiveness.

He also referred to the Indian Air Force's role in humanitarian assistance and disaster relief missions in India and abroad.

The conclave was attended by Chief of Defence Staff General Anil Chauhan and senior Indian Air Force commanders. Air Chief Marshal A P Singh briefed the defence minister on operational readiness—(KNO)

Centre Promoting

increase footfall," he said.

The minister said the Centre is also sup-

porting tourism infrastructure development in Jammu and Kashmir through central sector schemes such as Swadesh Darshan, the Pilgrimage Rejuvenation and Spiritual Heritage Augmentation Drive (PRASHAD), and Assistance to Central Agencies for Tourism Infrastructure Development (ACATID).

Financial assistance under these schemes, he said, is provided to states and Union Territories to supplement their efforts.

Under the Swadesh Darshan scheme, several projects were sanctioned in Jammu and Kashmir during 2016-17 under the Himalayan Circuit. These include development of the Jammu-Srinagar-Pahalgam-Bhagwati Nagar-Anantnag-Salamabad Uri-Kargil-Leh circuit at a sanctioned cost of Rs 77.33 crore, with Rs 67.37 crore released, and development of tourist facilities at Jammu-Rajouri-Shopian-Pulwama for Rs 81.60 crore, of which Rs 67.35 crore has been released.

Other projects under the scheme include the construction of tourism assets damaged in the 2014 floods under the Prime Minister's Development Package for Rs 90.43 crore, with Rs 74.70 crore released, and the development of tourist facilities at Mantalai and Sudhmahadev at a sanctioned cost of Rs 91.99 crore, with Rs 91.93 crore released.

The minister said tourism facilities were also developed at Anantnag-Pulwama-Kishtwar-Pahalgam-Zanskar-Padum-Daksum-Ranjit Sagar Dam at a cost of Rs 86.39 crore, with Rs 69.95 crore released, and at Gulmarg-Baramulla-Kupwara-Kargil-Leh at a cost of Rs 91.84 crore, with Rs 85.80 crore released.

Under the PRASHAD scheme, Rs 40.46 crore was sanctioned for development works at the Hazratbal Shrine in Srinagar, against which Rs 34.30 crore has been released. He added that under ACATID, a sound and light show at Nigeen Lake was sanctioned for Rs 5 crore, with Rs 3.08 crore released—(KNO)

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India, Oman sign pacts across key sectors to bolster ties

MUSCAT: India and Oman signed a Comprehensive Economic Partnership Agreement (CEPA) and three MOUs covering the fields of maritime heritage and museum, agriculture and allied sectors, as well as higher education, according to a joint statement issued by the two countries at the end of the two-day visit of Prime Minister Narendra Modi to Muscat on Thursday.

India and Oman also adopted a Joint Vision Document on Maritime Cooperation and signed an executive programme for cooperation in millet cultivation and agri-food innovation. Besides, an MoU between the Oman Chamber of Commerce & Industry and Confederation of Indian Industry was also signed during the occasion.

Sultan Haitham bin Tarik and Prime Minister Modi held consultations and expressed satisfaction at the excellent state of bilateral relations, spanning trade, investment, defence, security, technology, education, energy, space, agriculture, culture and people-to-people ties, the statement said.

They also reviewed the ongoing initiatives and cooperation in the areas identified in the Joint Vision Document, adopted during the visit of the Sultan to India in December 2023.

The two sides noted that trade and commerce have been a key pillar of bilateral cooperation between the two countries and emphasised the potential for further growth and diversification in bilateral



trade. Both sides acknowledged the immense potential to promote trade in areas, including textiles, automobiles, chemicals, equipment, and fertilisers.

The two countries welcomed the signing of the India-Oman Comprehensive Economic Partnership Agreement (CEPA), which is an important milestone in the bilateral economic relationship. Both leaders acknowledged that CEPA shall be mutually beneficial to both countries, and they encouraged the private sector of both countries to benefit from this agreement.

Recognising that India is one of the fastest-growing emerging economies and acknowledging Oman's progress in economic diversification, both sides expressed interest in exploring investment opportunities in priority sectors of mutual interests including infrastructure, technology, manufacturing, food security, logistics, hospitality and others.

The two leaders took note of discussions on exploring mechanisms to facilitate bilateral trade in local currencies. They also welcomed ongoing prog-

ress on the Bilateral Investment Treaty, recognising its potential to support economic cooperation and a robust, investor-friendly environment.

Both sides discussed ways to enhance their bilateral partnership in the energy sector. While expressing satisfaction at the bilateral energy trade, they agreed that there is vast potential to further enhance it.

During the visit, they also adopted a Joint Vision Document on Maritime Cooperation, reflecting their shared commitment to regional maritime security, the blue economy, and the sustainable use of ocean resources.

Both sides also acknowledged health cooperation as one of the important pillars of their partnership and expressed interest to further strengthening collaboration in this field.

They took note of ongoing discussions and initiatives, including the proposal to establish an Ayush chair at the National University of Science and Technology and an information cell in Oman to facilitate cooperation in the field of traditional

medicine.

They also reaffirmed their commitment to agricultural cooperation and welcomed the signing of the MoU in the area of agriculture and allied sectors to advance collaboration in agricultural science, animal husbandry, and aquaculture. Both sides further agreed to enhance cooperation in millet cultivation through training and scientific exchanges.

Noting their growing cooperation in technology, including IT services, digital infrastructure, and space applications, the two sides also noted with satisfaction the deepening of cultural cooperation and strong people-to-people ties. They welcomed the joint exhibition "Legacy of Indo-Oman Relations" and took note of ongoing discussions on culture digitisation initiatives.

Both sides welcomed the MoU on Maritime Heritage and Museums, enabling collaboration between museums, including through joint exhibitions and research.

Both sides acknowledged ongoing cooperation in education and scientific exchange, including the forthcoming India-Oman Knowledge Dialogue. The MoU on Higher Education would be a key enabler in facilitating the exchange of faculty and students, institutional collaboration and promoting joint research.

The Omani side also expressed interest in discussing air service traffic rights, including a number of destinations and code-sharing provisions. The Indian side took note of the request, the statement said.

US Special Envoy to meet Qatar, Egypt, Turkey officials in Miami on Gaza

WASHINGTON: The United States will hold fresh consultations with key Middle Eastern partners this week as Washington intensifies diplomatic engagement over the future of Gaza amid continuing regional volatility. "Special Envoy Witkoff will meet Friday in Miami with senior officials from Qatar, Egypt and Turkey to discuss the next phase in Gaza," a senior State Department official said.

The Miami meeting brings together three countries that have played

prominent roles in regional diplomacy since the Gaza war erupted. No agenda for the meeting has been made public.

However, the reference to the "next phase" points to discussions beyond immediate hostilities, including security arrangements, humanitarian access, and longer-term political considerations, officials here said.

Qatar and Egypt have served as central intermediaries in past negotiations over Gaza, including efforts on ceasefires and humanitarian access.

Turkey, on the other hand, has been seeking an

active diplomatic role since the conflict began, engaging regional and international actors.

The Gaza conflict began after the October 2023 Hamas's brutal attack on Israel, triggering a large-scale Israeli military response and a prolonged humanitarian crisis in the enclave. Civilian casualties and widespread destruction have drawn sustained global concern.

President Donald Trump has repeatedly cited Gaza and broader Middle East developments in recent remarks.

Speaking at a White

House Hanukkah reception, Trump said, "We did our ceasefire agreement to end the war in Gaza, which everybody said was an impossibility," and added that the United States had "begun the new era of that beautiful peace in a place that nobody thought peace was possible, the Middle East."

In his address to the nation on Wednesday, Trump said his administration had "ended the war in Gaza, bringing for the first time in 3,000 years peace to the Middle East and secured the release of the hostages, both living and dead."

Union Territory of Jammu and Kashmir

Office of the Executive Engineer Jal Shakti PHE Mechanical Division Srinagar

EXTENTION NOTICE

Corrigendum (II) to this office e-NIT NO: JSMDS/e-NIT-24 of 11/2025

Name of Works:

Repair to the 11 KV, 1000 KW SRIM by way of Replacement of Damaged NDE Bearing and other allied works at WSS Tangnar 2nd.

Due to poor response and to have a healthy competition, the critical dates extended as below.

01.	Bid down load end date	19-12-2025 up to 4:00 PM
02.	Bid Submission end date	19-12-2025 up to 4:00 PM
03.	Date and time of opening of bids	20-12-2025 at 2:00 PM

Rest all the terms and conditions shall remain the same as laid down in the e-NIT No. referred to above

No. JSMDS/CC/3798-3801

Dated: 16/12/2025

DIPK-9080-25

DT: 18/12/2025

SD

Executive Engineer,

Jal Shakti PHE Mechanical

Division, Srinagar

Union Territory of Jammu and Kashmir

Office of the Executive Engineer PUBLIC WORKS(R&B) DIVISION AWANTIPORA

Email: rb-awantipora@jk.gov.in

NO: T-1/EEA/8274-78 | Dated: 17/12/2025

EXTENSION NOTICE

Subject: - Restoration of Road Surface by way of RCC Spun pipes at various roads Of Subdivision Tral.

Reference: - 1. This office e-NIT No. 140/EEA/RNB of 2025-26/7875-85 Dated 08-12-2025.

The critical dates for the above noted Work is hereby extended as under:

1	Bid Submission End Date	24 -12-2025 upto 4. 00P.M
2	Date & time of opening of Technical Bids (Online)	25-12-2025 upto12.00 P.M

All other terms & Conditions shall remain same as per above mentioned NIT.

Sd/-

Technical officer

Sd/-

Executive Engineer

R&B Division Awantipora.

Government of Jammu and Kashmir

SCHOOL EDUCATION DEPARTMENT

Office of the Chief Education Officer Srinagar

Subject: Tentative Seniority List of Non-Teaching Officials of District Srinagar.

NOTICE

All Principals, Zonal Education Officers, Headmasters and Non-Teaching Officials of District Srinagar are hereby impressed upon to review and verify the tentative seniority list of Non-Teaching employees (viz. Librarian, Junior Librarian, Junior Assistant, Laboratory Assistant, Library Assistant & Class IV) as detailed in Annexures A to F (respectively) uploaded on the official website of this office: www.ceosrinagar.com.

Any variations or objections related to service particulars, if identified, must be submitted to this office within seven (07) days from the publication of this notice in the print media. Submissions shall include all relevant documentary evidence, duly authenticated by the DDO concerned. No objections will be considered after the stipulated deadline.

No.: CEO/SGR/Estt/NT/Info(Sen)/13931-36

Date: 10/12/2025

DIPK-9076-25

DT: 18/12/2025

Chief Education Officer

Srinagar

Govt. Medical College

KARAN NAGAR SRINAGAR-190010

PUBLIC NOTICE

Govt. Medical College Srinagar is pleased to inform resumption of the MRI services at Govt. SMHS and Govt. Super specialty Hospital Srinagar which went for maintenance (de-icing of the magnet) for optimal performance and uninterrupted functioning and accordingly during the maintenance period, the arrangements with regard to MRI investigations were made at Govt. Psychiatry Hospital [IMHANS] and Govt. Bone and Joint Hospital Srinagar for the patients of Govt. SMHS, Govt. Super specialty Hospital and other Associated Hospitals Srinagar. The process of de-icing has now been completed, therefore, the MRI services at Govt. SMHS/Super specialty Hospital Shreen Bagh Srinagar will resume from tomorrow i.e., 18-12-2025 and the MRI investigations will be carried out within the campus. We sincerely acknowledge our gratitude to the patients in particular and general public for bearing us with during the maintenance process. The process was aimed to ensure patient safety and obtaining optimal performance.

No. AH-09/2025/7000-06

Dated: 17/12/2025

DIPK-9115-25

DT: 18/12/2025

Mohammad AShrif Hakak [JKAS]

Administrator

Associated Hospitals Srinagar

US targets Iran oil network, names India-linked shipping firms



WASHINGTON: The Trump Administration on Thursday sanctioned 29 vessels tied to a covert petroleum shipping network. Among them are companies and operations linked to India involved in moving Iranian oil worth hundreds of millions of dollars.

The US Department of the Treasury said the action was aimed at cutting off revenue streams used by the Iranian regime to support terrorism and other illicit activities.

Principal Deputy Spokesperson Tommy Pigott said the United States was acting "to stem the flow of the Iranian regime's revenue used to support terrorism and other illicit activities."

Treasury said the sanctions include a network of companies and vessels operated by Hatem Elsaid Farid Ibrahim Sakr, an Egyptian businessman, as well as multiple shipping firms active in countries including the United Arab Emirates, India, the Marshall Islands and Panama. Sakr's companies were linked to seven of the 29 vessels named in the action.

"This action further constrains Iran's ability to export petroleum and petroleum products through

obscure and fraudulent mechanisms," Pigott said.

India-linked entities named include the Barbados-flagged vessel Flora Dolce, owned and managed by India-based Rukbat Marine Services Co, which has transported millions of barrels of Iranian fuel oil since April 2025.

The Panama-flagged Auroura, owned and operated by India-based Golden Gate Ship Management, was cited for transporting millions of barrels of Iranian petroleum products, including naphtha and condensate.

Another vessel, Ramya, operated and managed by India-based Darya Shipping Private Limited, was said to have transported more than 100,000 barrels of Iranian petroleum products since September 2025.

According to the Treasury's Office of Foreign Assets Control (OFAC), the sanctioned vessels are part of Iran's so-called "shadow fleet," which exports Iranian petroleum and petroleum products through deceptive and fraudulent shipping practices.

The vessels and associated management firms have been involved in transporting Iranian crude oil and products, including fuel oil, bitumen, naphtha, and condensate.

B'desh situation has security implications for Northeast: Report

NEW DELHI: The current situation in Bangladesh has significant security implications for India's Northeast region, said a Parliamentary Committee report, recommending the strengthening of intelligence-sharing mechanisms as well as ensuring that it does not become a haven for groups operating against New Delhi's security interests.

This condition poses a strategic challenge for India since the Liberation War of 1971, where India needs to be careful in handling it, said the report from Parliament's Committee on External Affairs headed by Congress leader Shashi Tharoor.

The report on the future of India-Bangladesh relations was presented in the Lok Sabha on December 18.

It voiced concern over the growing influence of foreign powers, particularly China, in Bangladesh's infrastructure, port development, and defence sectors, recommending that India closely monitor these activities to safeguard its strategic interests, especially in sensitive regions like the Siliguri Corridor and the Bay of Bengal.

The report, comprising the committee's observations and recommendations, traced the development of the unrest to factors including the rise of Islamic radicals, "intensifying Chinese and Pakistani influence", and the "collapse of the dominance of Sheikh Hasina's Awami League".

The committee expressed concern over the political uncertainty in Bangladesh since August 2024, marked by incidents

of political violence and the rise of extremism.

It commended a non-interventionist approach during this period and stressed the importance of supporting free, fair, and credible elections in Bangladesh to restore political stability.

It highlighted the ongoing attacks on minority communities in Bangladesh, including assaults on places of worship and cultural institutions.

It urged the Ministry of External Affairs to prioritise the protection of minorities in its diplomatic engagements and to advocate for swift and effective action by Dhaka to ensure the safety and rights of all.

The report also emphasised the historical and cultural ties between India and Bangladesh, which have been solidified through landmark agreements such as the Land Boundary Agreement and maritime boundary settlement.

Despite recent political challenges in Bangladesh, including concerns over democratic freedoms, the committee urged India to maintain a constructive and pragmatic approach.

The Parliamentary Committee report also recommended sustained diplomatic engagement with political, social, and civil society groups in Bangladesh to promote mutual respect and counter anti-India narratives.

India's humanitarian approach in hosting Bangladesh's former Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina was acknowledged in the report, while recommending that the committee be kept informed on developments on the extradition request.

