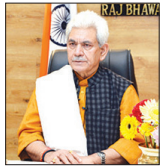


Good Morning

Kashmir

16th
Year Of Publication

Office of LG J&K
@OfficeOfLGJandK



On Goa Liberation Day, humble tributes to the martyrs & freedom fighters, who made supreme sacrifices to liberate Goa from colonial rule. Saluting the bravehearts of our armed forces for their courage & valour. I pray that the Goa continues to scale new heights of development.

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Two Drops of Life

India is polio free. But polio still exists in few countries and it may come back. Ensure your child's complete protection. Make sure polio vaccine is given every time so that India maintains its victory over polio.



Department of Information & Public Relations, J&K



J&K Braces For Rain, Snow; Two-Month Dry Spell Likely To Break



IAN S

SRINAGAR: After an extended dry spell of over two months, Jammu and Kashmir is likely to get rain and snow during the next 48 hours as the Meteorological (MeT) Department on Friday forecasted moderate snowfall in the higher reaches and rain in the plains starting late evening on December 20.

Mukhtar Ahmad, Director of the local MeT Department, said that snow in the higher reaches and rain in the plains of the union territory are expected during the

night intervening December 20 and December 21, and the same is likely to continue till late afternoon on December 21.

The officer said some higher reaches in Ganderbal, Bandipora and Kupwara districts might receive heavy snowfall, particularly on December 21.

Authorities in Baramulla, Kupwara, Bandipora and Ganderbal districts have issued advisories asking people living in the higher reaches not to venture out of their homes during snowfall.

During the **P-06**

Young Generation Must Inculcate Ancient Values, Ideals In Present-Day Life: LG

Releases 4Th Edition Of “Kartavya Marg”

GMK NEWS NETWORK

JAMMU: Emphasizing the relevance of traditional wisdom in the modern era, Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha Friday called upon the youth to inculcate ancient values and ideals into their present-day lives.

“The young generation must inculcate ancient values and ideals in our present-day life,” Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha said while releasing the 4th edition of “Kartavya Marg”, annual in-house magazine published by Kailakh Jyotish and Vedic Sansthan Trust, at Lok Bhawan.

The Lieutenant Governor congratulated and extended his best wishes to the editor and everyone associated with the publication.



He applauded Kailakh Jyotish and Vedic Sansthan Trust for its commitment and dedicated efforts towards promotion of India's ancient knowledge traditions, folk culture, astrology, and Vedic sciences, while fostering moral awareness, and cultural pride within society.

He said the complete

knowledge system rooted in the Vedas and encompasses a holistic worldview will offer solutions to modern challenges.

“Our ancient texts like Vedas and Upanishads are a treasure of knowledge in mathematics, medicine, physics, botany, chemistry, arts and **P-06**

- Complete Indian Knowledge system rooted in the Vedas and encompasses a holistic worldview
- Our ancient texts like Vedas and Upanishads are a treasure of knowledge in mathematics, medicine, physics, botany, chemistry, arts
- Various philosophical schools and art and architecture are profoundly relevant today to build a resilient society
- Indian culture, ethics and values help in navigating complex challenges and cultivating virtues to promote harmony
- Our ancient knowledge system and embedded wisdom offer a blueprint for a successful modern world

Kashmir Safe, Normal: ATOAI Prez



REHAN MIR

SRINAGAR: Appreciating security forces and locals for restoring confidence and normalcy in Jammu and Kashmir, President of Adventure Tour Operators Association of India (ATOAI) Ajeet Bajaj on Friday urged tourists to rediscover the region.

Addressing a news conference here after ATOAI's 17th annual convention, Bajaj, said the perception of insecurity about Kashmir must change. “Everything is normal here and we have seen it for ourselves,” he added.

“This is the jewel in the crown of **P-06**

12 Cancelled, 18 Delayed At Srinagar, Jammu Airports



AGENCIES

SRINAGAR: Widespread fog over North India disrupted air traffic on Friday, severely affecting operations at Srinagar and Jammu airports, with 12 flights getting cancelled and 18 delayed.

“At Srinagar International Airport, seven flights were cancelled and twelve were delayed due to poor visibility and adverse weather at departure points including Delhi, Amritsar and

Kolkata. At Jammu Airport, five flights were cancelled and eight delayed, bringing the total to 12 cancellations and 18 delays across both airports,” officials said.

At Srinagar, airlines most affected included IndiGo, Air India and SpiceJet, while at Jammu, Air India, SpiceJet and AirAsia experienced significant disruptions.

Meanwhile, the Airport Authority of India (AAI) issued an advisory stating that airport **P-06**

Free Ration, LPG Cylinder Promises To Be Fulfilled Within 6 Months: Min Sharma

Says We Will Respond To Terrorism With Tourism, No One Will Sleep Hungry

REHAN QAYOOM

SRINAGAR: Minister for Food, Civil Supplies and Consumer Affairs (FCS&CA) Satish Sharma on Friday said that no one will sleep hungry in J&K and government will fulfil its promise of free ration and LPG cylinders within the next six months.

Talking to reporters here, Minister Sharma, according to the news agency—Kashmir News Observer (KNO) said, “Promises of free ration and gas cylinders will be fulfilled within next six months. Welfare of the poor remains a top priority. All necessary steps are being taken to ensure that all commitments are met.”

The Minister said: “We are peace-loving people. Our mes-



sage is clear and we will respond to terrorism with tourism. The government will stand by every poor family. No one will sleep hungry and our promises will be fulfilled within the next six months.”

“A comprehensive plan has been put in place to ensure uninterrupted food supplies during the harsh winter months, particularly in snow-bound and high-

altitude districts,” the Minister said, adding, “Essential commodities have been dumped across all winter zones. There will be no shortage even during extended highway closures.”

He also shared that the department has initiated the ‘procurement of 20 mobile testing laboratories’ for district-level quality checks. “Each district will have a mobile **P-06**

CS Assesses Cyber Security Framework Implementation Across J&K

GMK NEWS NETWORK

JAMMU: Chief Secretary, Atal Dulloo, Friday chaired a high-level meeting to review the progress achieved under the Cyber Security Action Plan being implemented across the Union Territory of Jammu and Kashmir.

The meeting was attended by Administrative Secretaries of all departments, Inspector General of Police (Crime), Commissioners of Jammu and Srinagar Municipal Corporations, Deputy Director General, NIC, Chief Executive Officer, JaKeGA, and other senior officers con-

cerned.

At the outset, the Chief Secretary undertook a comprehensive review of the initiatives launched to strengthen the cyber security architecture of the UT. He assessed the status of decommissioning of redundant government websites and sought updates on the security audit of departmental portals, installation of Endpoint Detection and Response (EDR) and Unified Endpoint Management (UEM) solutions in the offices of Heads of Departments, besides other measures aimed at safeguarding government digital **P-06**

3 Doppler Radars Operational IMD Strengthens Weather Forecasting Network In J&K

AGENCIES

SRINAGAR: The weather monitoring in Jammu and Kashmir has been equipped with advanced monitoring and forecasting systems, with three Doppler Weather Radars (DWRs) currently operational across the Union Territory, the Government of India said on Friday.

According to the Ministry of Earth Sciences, Doppler Weather Radars are functioning at Banihal Top, Jammu and Srinagar, which significantly amplify the real-time weather surveillance and early warning capabilities across Jammu as well as the Kashmir valley.

Under Mission Mausam, the India Meteorological Department (IMD) is using next-generation forecasting models such as the Bharat Forecast System (Bharat-FS), which operates at a high spatial resolution of six kilometres and provides short **P-06**

Over 17,000 Street Vendors Benefit Under PM SVANidhi In J&K; ₹48 Cr Disbursed

RAJA SYED

SRINAGAR: Nearly 17,000 street vendors in Jammu and Kashmir have benefited from the Prime Minister Street Vendor's AtmaNirbhar Nidhi (PM SVANidhi) scheme and over 48 crore loan disbursed so far, as per the official data tabled in Parliament shows.

In a written reply by the Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs in response to a Lok Sabha question, a total of 17,315 street vendors in Jammu and Kashmir are registered as beneficiaries under this scheme.

The data further reveals that loans amounting to 50.83

FILE PHOTO



crore have been approved in favour of these vendors. So far, 48.18 crore has already been disbursed, which depicts a high disbursal rate in the Union Territory.

The Ministry said, “Urban Local Bodies (ULBs) play a key role in identifying eligible street vendors through surveys conducted under the Street Vendors (Protection of

Livelihood and Regulation of Street Vending) Act, 2014, or through verification of applications submitted on the PM SVANidhi portal.”

After the verification is completed, eligible vendors are provided with Certificates of Vending, identity cards or Letters of Recommendation (LoR). Then their loan applications are sent to banks and other lending institutions for approval and disbursement. Urban Local Bodies (ULBs) also facilitate vendors through handholding, mobilising applicants and coordinating with banks to ensure loans are released promptly.

For effective **P-06**

Saffron Growers Say Porcupines Inflicting ‘Large-Scale’ Damage To Corms



JAHANGEER GANAIE

PULWAMA: Already battling the adverse impacts of climate change, saffron growers in Pampore and adjoining areas of south Kashmir's Pulwama district are facing a serious challenge - large-scale damage to saffron corms by porcupines.

Farmers fear that if urgent measures are not taken, saffron production, which has already witnessed a steep decline over the years, may

fall even further.

Growers from Pampore, Konibal, Dusoo, Lethpora and nearby villages said that porcupines have been digging out saffron corms from fields almost every night, leaving behind damaged beds and shattered hopes. The situation has aggravated farmers' anxiety, especially at a time when the availability of quality corms is already limited.

“Climate change has already disrupted our crop cycle. Irregular **P-06**

EOW Kashmir files chargesheet in fake railway job scam

AGENCIES

SRINAGAR: The Economic Offences Wing (EOW) of Crime Branch Kashmir has filed a chargesheet in a fake Railway recruitment scam, booking three persons for allegedly cheating job seekers by issuing forged appointment letters, officials said.

The chargesheet in FIR No. 08/2025 has been presented before the Judicial Magistrate First Class, Beerwah, Budgam, under Sections 420 (cheating), 468 (forgery), 471 (using forged documents) and 120-B (criminal conspiracy) of the IPC.

The accused have been identified as Abdul Hamid Sheikh of Chewdara, Beerwah in Budgam district; Adil Shah of Sonwar, Srinagar; presently residing at Zewan; and Mufti Ghulam Hassan Kumar of Hibi-Dangerpora, Sopore, pres-



ently residing at Rutsuna, Beerwah.

Officials said the case was registered on the basis of a written complaint filed by Mufti Ghulam Hassan Kumar, who alleged that Abdul Hamid Sheikh and Adil Shah had provided him fake appointment letters claiming recruitment through the Railway

Recruitment Board, New Delhi. The letters were found to carry forged seals and fabricated signatures of the Deputy General Manager, Northern Railway, Paharganj, New Delhi. During investigation, the EOW found that the appointment letters were fake and that the accused had allegedly conspired

to lure victims with promises of government jobs and extracted money from them.

The probe further revealed that the complainant, Mufti Ghulam Hassan Kumar, was also involved in the scam. Officials said he had allegedly collected money from other victims on the false pretext of providing Railway jobs and issued fake job orders to them. His role surfaced during investigation, establishing his alleged involvement in the conspiracy, they said.

After completion of investigation, the final report under Section 173 of the CrPC was submitted before the court for judicial determination.

The EOW said it remains committed to curbing economic offences and protecting the public from fraudulent job rackets. (KNS).

HED organizes One-Day Training Camp for NMBA Nodal Officers

GMK NEWS NETWORK

SRINAGAR: A One-Day Training Camp for Nasha Mukth Bharat Abhiyan (NMBA) Nodal Officers was successfully organised in hybrid mode at the Mini Auditorium of Islamia College of Science & Commerce, Srinagar.

The programme was organised by the Higher Education Department (HED) in collaboration with the Civil Society Forum Kashmir, with active participation from the Jammu & Kashmir Health Department, J&K Police and IMHANS Kashmir.

The training programme aimed to sensitise and equip NMBA Nodal Officers with practical knowledge and skills related to substance abuse prevention, early identification of substance users, mental health awareness, counselling mechanisms, rehabilitation strategies, and inter-departmental coordination.

More than 70 NMBA Nodal Officers from the Kashmir Division participated in the programme, while 71 Nodal Officers from the Jammu Division joined the programme virtually, reflecting wide institutional engagement across the Union Territory.

Prof. (Dr.) Sheikh Ajaz Bashir, Director Colleges, Higher Education Depart-



ment (Member of the Task Force for Rehabilitation of Victims of Drug Abuse), in his inaugural address emphasised the need for coordinated and sustained efforts among academic institutions, health services, civil society organisations, and law enforcement agencies to effectively address substance abuse.

He stated that the Mentor-Mentee model in colleges will be further strengthened and made outcome-oriented, with a focused mandate to identify at-risk students, facilitate early intervention, and shield youth from substance abuse through mentoring and support mechanisms, including closer monitoring of stu-

dent attendance patterns and timely flagging of absenteeism.

He further highlighted the importance of encouraging students to voice their concerns through the Higher Education Department's initiatives such as the SIGMA platform, and reiterated the Department's firm commitment to proactive interventions under the Nasha Mukth Bharat Abhiyan, while urging NMBA Nodal Officers to translate the learnings from the training programme into effective action at their respective institutions.

The host College Principal, Prof. (Dr.) Tehmina Yousuf, highlighted the growing concern of sub-

stance abuse among youth and underscored the critical role of educational institutions and NMBA Nodal Officers in prevention, early intervention, and awareness generation.

During the programme, Abdul Waheed Shah, SSP Crime Branch, Kashmir, and Mohd Anwar-ul-Haq, SSP Anti-Narcotics Task Force (ANTF), J&K, shared valuable insights on drug abuse trends, preventive mechanisms, and the legal framework governing antinarcotics efforts.

The technical sessions were conducted by experts from IMHANS Kashmir, who addressed mental health dimensions of substance use disorders, early identification of at-risk individuals, counselling strategies, and referral mechanisms. The sessions witnessed interactive participation from the NMBA Nodal Officers.

The training camp reaffirmed the collective commitment of all stakeholders towards creating a drug-free, healthy, and supportive academic environment. The Higher Education Department reiterated that sustained capacity building, awareness generation, and institutional ownership will remain central to its strategy in safeguarding the youth of Jammu & Kashmir from the menace of substance abuse.

DC Kupwara reviews Winter Preparedness



GMK NEWS NETWORK

KUPWARA: Deputy Commissioner (DC) Kupwara, Shrikant Suse Friday convened a review meeting with officers of various line departments to assess and strengthen the district's preparedness in light of weather advisory and snowfall prediction.

The meeting was attended by ADC Kupwara, Gulzar Ahmad Khan; ADC Handwara, Javid Naseem Masoodi, ACR, SDM Lolab, OC Beacon, all Tehsildars as well as officers from R&B, PMGSY, KPDC, MED, Municipal Committees, Food Civil Supplies & Consumer Affairs and health department.

Regarding Winter Stocking & Essential Supplies, the Food Supplies department informed that sufficient stock of rice, sugar, atta and Fuel/LPG has been ensured in the district especially in border areas to cater to the needs of the people during the harsh winter period.

Regarding Snow Clearance and Machinery Readiness, the Mechanical, R&B, BEACON, PMGSY briefed the Chair on the availability and deployment plans of snow clearance equipment and machinery at key locations to ensure road connectivity in the event of heavy snowfall. The departments were directed to ensure utmost coordination for snow clearance at the earliest.

The Electric Divisions informed about the buffer stock of transformers and

other key spares, ensuring rapid restoration of electricity in extreme weather conditions.

The Health officials presented measures taken to ensure availability of medical emergency response, essential medicines, and ambulance services in high-altitude and hard to reach areas.

The DC directed that district and tehsil-level control rooms be kept operational 24x7 during winter to monitor weather developments and coordinate swift responses to public grievances and exigencies.

Addressing the gathering, the DC underscored the imperative of inter-departmental coordination, timely execution of action plans, and proactive steps to mitigate winter-related challenges. He urged all departments to maintain continuous readiness, particularly in sectors prone to snowfall and connectivity disruptions.

He further emphasized that every stakeholder must work with diligence to ensure that essential services including transport, power, food supply, healthcare, and snow clearance remain fully functional even under severe winter conditions. He also directed to ensure all staff of these departments to remain at their headquarters only.

ADC Handwara, SDM Lolab and concerned tehsildars were directed to monitor response from all line department in their respective jurisdiction.

District-Level Sensitisation Workshop under AWPB 2025-26 Held in Kulgam



GMK NEWS NETWORK

KULGAM: Agriculture Production and Farmers Welfare Department Kulgam organised a 2nd District-Level Sensitisation and Educational workshop at Townhall Block Devsar under the Project and Knowledge Management component of the annual work plan and budget (AWPB) 2025-26 of the Jammu and Kashmir competitiveness and Agri-culture and Allied project (JKCIP).

MLA Devsar, Peerzada Feroz Ahmad Shah presided over the workshop as the Chief Guest and Addl. District Development Commissioner, Altaf Ahmad Khan participated as a Guest of Honour.

Addressing the participants including farmers, youth Club members and Agri-Entrepreneurs highlighted the pivotal role of youth in nation-building and environmental stewardship. He encouraged the Youth Club members to act as ambassadors of change in their respective blocks, taking the lessons learned from the workshop back to their communities.

Addl. District Development Commissioner, while speaking on the occasion, stressed the need for crop diversification of High Value Crops, urging youth to move beyond traditional farming practice and adopt innovative market-oriented agriculture. He also

highlighted that JKCIP benefits are being extended in four blocks including Devsar, Behibagh, Manzgam and D. K. Marg, while farmers in other blocks can avail support under the Holistic Agriculture Development Programme (HADP).

At the outset Chief Agriculture Officer Kulgam, Farooq Ahmad Reshi highlighted the background of the programme and the significance of youth engagement in shaping a progressive farming society and urged the participants to utilize the training to positively influence their communities, promote constructive activities and contribute to grassroots developmental initiatives especially with reference to environmental issues and climate change.

Resource persons from KVK Kulgam and MRCFC Khudwani delivered technical sessions on youth mobilization, community development, social awareness on environmental issues, climate change and disaster management. The trainees were also briefed about opportunities available under different government schemes aimed at youth empowerment.

Sub Divisional Agriculture Officers Kulgam & Qaimoh, Agriculture Extension Officers and other officials from agriculture department also participated in the training programme.

Good Governance week Kickstarts in B'la with Insightful Seminar

GMK NEWS NETWORK

BARAMULLA: As part of the nationwide campaign to promote transparency, accountability and citizen-centric administration, Good Governance Week was Friday kickstarted across District Baramulla with an insightful seminar held at the Conference Hall of Government Boys Degree College (GDC), Baramulla.

The seminar was presided over by Dr. Farooq Ahmad Lone, Retired IAS Officer, and was attended by Principal GDC Boys' Baramulla, Dr. Mohd Shafi Lone; Dr. Khurshed Alam, Professor IMPARD; Prof. Tariq Ahmad Chalko, Assistant Commissioner Revenue; Arshad Ahmad Khan, District Information Officer; Iftakhar Naseem, besides faculty members, students and other officers and officials.

The programme marked the beginning of a week-long series of activities aimed at strengthening the interface between the administration and the public, ensuring responsible governance, transparency and timely delivery of public services.

Speaking on the occasion, Dr. Farooq Ahmad Lone emphasized that good governance is reflected in the prompt, transparent and efficient resolution of public grievances. He



stressed that officers must remain easily accessible to citizens, listen to their concerns with empathy and ensure time-bound delivery of services to build public trust in governance institutions.

During the panel discussion, speakers highlighted the core objectives of Good Governance Week, which include effective grievance redressal, transparency in decision-making, accountability of public institutions and enhanced public outreach, particularly in rural and remote areas.

The session also deliberated on special initiatives planned during the week, including grievance redressal camps, outreach programmes under "Prashasan Gaon Ki Ore", awareness drives, public interactions and on-the-spot resolution of public issues.

In addition to the district-level programme, similar Good Governance Week activities were organized across Sub-Divisional and Block levels of District Baramulla, wherein Sub-Divisional Magistrates (SDMs), Block Development Officers (BDOs) and other district and sectoral officers presided over awareness programmes, public interactions and grievance redressal sessions to directly engage with citizens at the grassroots level.

The speakers also elaborated on various governance reforms being implemented by the government and underscored the importance of active citizen participation in ensuring the successful execution of these initiatives, reaffirming the administration's commitment to transparent, accountable and people-centric governance across the district.

GOOD GOVERNANCE WEEK

"Prashasan Gaon Ki Ore" Campaign Commences in Kulgam

GMK NEWS NETWORK

KULGAM: As part of Good Governance Week 2025 and under the Sushasan Sapta initiative, the "Prashasan Gaon Ki Ore" campaign commenced across District Kulgam with the objective of taking governance to the doorsteps of the people.

Grievance redressal camps were organised at block, tehsil and panchayat levels, where district and sectoral officers listened to public grievances and ensured their prompt redressal. The camps witnessed active participation from the public, who raised issues related to various departments.

The Deputy Commissioner Kulgam, Athar Aamir Khan, also visited several areas of the district, interacted with the people and personally listened to their demands and concerns, directing the concerned officers for timely resolution.

During the day, domicile, income and other essential certificates were distributed to eligible beneficiaries. Awareness and registration camps were also held to educate citizens about various government schemes and facilitate on-the-spot registrations.

Secretary DLSA Budgam reviews Delivery of Legal Aid Services

GMK NEWS NETWORK

BUDGAM: District Legal Services Authority (DLSA) Budgam, under the aegis of the J&K Legal Services Authority, convened a review meeting with Para Legal Volunteers (PLVs) and other functionaries of DLSA and Taluka Legal Services Committees (TLSCs) of District Budgam.

The meeting, held in ADR Centre, was chaired by Secretary, DLSA Budgam, was aimed to review the effectiveness of ongoing legal services programmes,

identify challenges in their implementation, strengthen coordination among PLVs, TLSCs, and other stakeholders, and streamline the delivery of legal aid services. It also provided a platform for sharing feedback and best practices to enhance public awareness and improve access to justice in the district.

While addressing the participants, the Secretary, DLSA Budgam, emphasized the need to strengthen coordination and cooperation among PLVs, officials, and other stakeholders

to ensure institutional growth and the welfare of legal aid beneficiaries. She highlighted the crucial role of PLVs in reaching out to marginalized and vulnerable sections of society and encouraged them to conduct door-to-door campaigns, seminars, awareness programmes, and activities through Legal Aid Clinics and Legal Aid Clubs. PLVs were also directed to get details of convicts if any in there areas so that their applications for Premature release, Parole or Furlough could be processed.

OFFICE OF THE CHILD DEVELOPMENT PROJECT OFFICER POSHAN PROJECT BIJBEHARA

Provisional selection list of Sanginis (AWWs) of Anganwadi Centre Khiram "C" Panchyat Halqi : Khiram Gujrat Panch ward Number :06 and Anganwadi Centre: Khiram "C" Panchayat Halqa : Khiram Gujrat ward No: 06 vide advertisement Notice No: advertisement Notice No: 10 of 2024 Dated: 16.12.2024 issued under endorsement NO:C-DPO/Poshan/Bij/2024/Adv./1462-85 NO: CDPO/Poshan/Bij/2024/Adv./1462-85 Dated:- 16.12.2024 followed by Re-advertisement Notice No:01 of 2025 Dated: 28.04.2025 and approved by DLSC to ADDC Anantnag vide No: DPO/Poshan/Ang/2025-26/1672 Dated:08.09.2025 and final approval by Additional District Development Commissioner Anantnag vide No: ADDC/ANG/2025-26/924 Dated: 03.10.2025

S.No	Name of Candidate	Parentage/Spouse Name	Residence	Date of Birth	AWC for which Provisionally Selected/Tentative	Ward	Qualification	Max Marks as per 10th class	Marks Obtained	%age	Addl.02 points as per HR Policy	Total Merit	Remarks
1.	Tamanna Ashraf Lone	D/o Mohd Ashraf Lone	Khiram	11.04.2025	Khiram "C"	06	12th	500	462	92.4%	0	92.4	Selected

No:- CDPO/Poshan/Bij/2025-26/ 465
Dated:- 16 /12/2025.
DIPK-9147-25
DT: 19/12/2025

Sd/=
Child Development Project Officer
Poshan Project Bijbehara
Member Secretary

CS assesses implementation of UCF, lake conservation measures

GMK NEWS NETWORK

JAMMU: Chief Secretary, Atal Dulloo, Friday reviewed the implementation and progress of housing and urban development initiatives, including the Urban Challenge Fund, the Auto Development Control Regulation (Auto DCR) system for building permissions, and ongoing conservation and development works of Dal and Nigeen lakes.

The review meeting was attended by Commissioner Secretary, Housing & Urban Development Department (H&UDD); Secretary, Rural Development Department (RDD); Vice Chairman, Jammu Development Authority (JDA); Commissioner, Jammu Municipal Corporation (JMC); Vice Chairman, Lakes Conservation and Management Authority (LCMA), besides other senior officers.

During the meeting, the Chief Secretary emphasized the need to optimally leverage the Urban Challenge Fund and directed the concerned departments to target at least 1 percent of the Rupees one lakh crore earmarked by the Government of India under the scheme. He further advised that the identified projects be sup-



plemented with additional funding support from SASCI to ensure smooth, timely, and uninterrupted execution.

Stressing the strategic importance of the initiative, the Chief Secretary underscored the need for careful identification of projects that would contribute meaningfully towards making urban centres sustainable, resilient, and future-ready, keeping in view population growth and evolving civic needs.

Reviewing the implementation of the Auto DCR system for construction permissions, the Chief Secretary directed the H&UDD to integrate the platform with the RERA portal to ensure statutory compliance under the Act. He also instructed the Rural Development Department to adopt a similar online building permission system for rural areas, with technical support

from NIC, after finalization of the requisite building bye-laws.

Commissioner Secretary, H&UDD, Mandeep Kaur, highlighted the significance of the Urban Challenge Fund for Jammu and Kashmir and apprised the meeting of the projects identified under the scheme. She revealed that these include augmentation of parking infrastructure, residential housing projects, sanitation initiatives, wastewater management systems, and other urban utility services aimed at improving the quality of life in cities.

The Commissioner, JMC, Devansh Yadav, informed the meeting that the Auto DCR system enables automatic scrutiny of CAD drawings of building plans, ensuring compliance with municipal and provincial bye-laws without manual intervention. He noted that the system

significantly reduces processing time while enhancing transparency and efficiency in granting building permissions.

He further added that the platform facilitates online submission and tracking of proposals, defines a clear hierarchy with assigned roles and responsibilities, generates alerts and MIS reports, and features a user-friendly dashboard integrated with a payment gateway and digital signature facility. The system also enables seamless procurement of required No Objection Certificates (NOCs) from internal and external departments.

Secretary, RDD, Aijaz Asad, informed that the formulation of building bye-laws for rural areas is in the final stage and that the department is planning to introduce a similar single-window online system to grant building permissions

in rural areas in an effective and time-bound manner.

The Vice Chairman, LCMA, Manzoor Ahmad Qadri, briefed the Chief Secretary on the conservation and beautification measures being undertaken for the Dal and Nigeen lakes. He provided a status update on ongoing works and upcoming projects aimed at protecting and rejuvenating the lake ecosystem.

The projects include bi-methanation of weeds and lake waste, installation of musical and high-jet fountains, development of a theme park along the lake banks, and preparation of an integrated management plan for long-term conservation of the lake ecosystem. He also informed about the eco-hamlets project, which envisages construction of sewerage networks and allied developmental works for households located within the lake areas being completed under PMDP and other schemes.

The Chief Secretary reiterated the importance of coordinated efforts, timely execution, and sustainable planning to ensure that urban development and environmental conservation go hand in hand across Jammu and Kashmir.

Div Com Kashmir reviews Republic Day Arrangements

Stresses Inter-Departmental Coordination for Flawless Celebrations

GMK NEWS NETWORK

SRINAGAR: In view of the upcoming Republic Day celebrations, the Divisional Commissioner Kashmir, Anshul Garg, on Friday convened a comprehensive meeting of divisional-level officers to finalize a detailed plan ensuring a smooth, peaceful, and vibrant observance of the national festival.

The meeting was attended by the Deputy Commissioner Srinagar, Commissioner SMC, DIG Central Kashmir, and senior officers from various departments including Information, Education, Health, JalShakti, R&B, MED, PDD, Youth Services & Sports, Tourism, Hospitality & Protocol, Floriculture, Colleges, Culture, Traffic Police, and other security agencies.

Chairing the meeting, the Divisional Commissioner directed the Joint Director, Information Kashmir to ensure timely playing of Shehnai Vadan, nomination of a commentator, installation of a public addressing system, and organization of quiz and essay writing competitions as part of Republic Day activities.

He instructed the DIG Armed Police to designate an officer responsible for



unfurling the National Flag on the day of the event. The Director Floriculture was directed to make creative floral arrangements for the decoration of the dais.

SSP Security was asked to ensure comprehensive security arrangements at the venue, including the safety of VIPs and deployment of anti-sabotage teams. Police and other security agencies were further directed to facilitate the orderly and disciplined entry of participants.

To ensure the comfort of participants, the R&B Department was instructed to arrange proper seating, waterproof tentage and installation of display screens at the venue besides illumination of key infrastructure across the city.

The Mechanical Engineering Department (MED) was directed to ensure road clearance in case of snowfall, while the Srinagar Municipal Corporation (SMC) was asked to keep dewatering pumps

ready at the venue.

The Div Com emphasized that practice sessions for contingents and cultural troupes should commence from January.

The Hospitality & Protocol Department was directed to arrange refreshments for participants, while the District Administration was tasked with the distribution of invitation cards for the main function and the At-Home programme.

Also, SMC was instructed to ensure cleanliness and sanitation of the venue. Fire & Emergency Services Department was directed to deploy fire tenders, the Health Department to set up medical kiosks, and the Traffic Police to identify parking spaces and issue a traffic diversion plan to ensure smooth vehicular movement.

Similarly, RTC and SSCL were asked to provide buses to various departments, including the Education Department, for ferrying participants to and from the venue.

Viral Video of Patient on Trolley: GMC Handwara Orders Time-Bound Inquiry

GMK NEWS NETWORK

SRINAGAR : Health authorities in Jammu and Kashmir have ordered a time-bound inquiry after a video surfaced on social media showing a patient being pushed on a hospital trolley along an open road outside Government Medical College (GMC), Handwara.

Officials said an inquiry committee was constituted immediately after the video went viral to ascertain the circumstances leading to the incident. The panel has been directed to submit its report by 11:00 am on December 20, 2025.

According to an official order, the commit-

tee includes Prof. (Dr) Abdul Qayoom Lone, HoD Anaesthesia; Prof. (Dr) Javid Ahmad Bhat, HoD Orthopedics; and Prof. (Dr) Rafiq Ahmad Tagoo, HoD Dentistry.

Sources said the committee will examine the availability and functioning of diagnostic services, adherence to standard operating procedures for patient transfer, and inter-departmental coordination.

Authorities said the findings will help identify lapses, if any, and ensure corrective measures to prevent recurrence, adding that appropriate action will be taken based on the inquiry report.

GMC Sgr Hosts Guest Lecture on "Application of Preventive Medicine in Digital Era"



GMK NEWS NETWORK

SRINAGAR: The Postgraduate Department of Pharmacology, Government Medical College (GMC), Srinagar, on Friday organized a guest lecture on "The Application of Preventive Medicine in the Future Digital Era" at the GMC Auditorium.

The programme was organised under the direction of Prof. (Dr.) Iffat Hassan, Principal and Dean, Government Medical College Srinagar, with emphasis on strengthening academic excellence through technology-enabled teaching, promoting evidence-based preventive medicine, and encouraging the adoption of digital health tools, pharmacovigilance systems, and data-driven clinical decision, making in medical education and healthcare delivery.

The lecture was delivered by Prof. (Dr.) H. S. Rehan, Director, Department

of Pharmacology, Lady Hardinge Medical College, New Delhi. He elaborated on the transformative role of digital health technologies in advancing preventive medicine, with particular emphasis on pharmacovigilance systems, real-time adverse drug reaction (ADR) reporting, artificial intelligence-driven risk stratification, and big-data analytics for population-based public health surveillance.

Prof. Rehan highlighted the integration of electronic health records (EHRs), clinical decision support systems (CDSS), mobile health applications, and digital epidemiology tools as key enablers for early disease detection, rational drug use, and enhanced patient safety. He also underscored the importance of interoperability, data governance, and ethical use of digital platforms in strengthening healthcare delivery within the preventive healthcare framework.

Dense fog disrupts life in Kashmir; several flights cancelled

Poor visibility across Valley parts slowed traffic



SAJID RAINA

SRINAGAR: Dense fog and inclement weather conditions disrupted normal life across parts of Kashmir on Friday, affecting road traffic and leading to the cancellation of several flights at Srinagar International Airport, officials said.

Witnesses said that the poor visibility prevailed in Srinagar and adjoining districts during the early morning hours, slowing vehicular movement on major roads.

Traffic police advised commuters to exercise caution, particularly on highways and city arteries, as

visibility dropped sharply at several locations.

At Srinagar International Airport, at least seven flights were cancelled due to bad weather and operational reasons, according to airport authorities. Air India flights AI-3423/3424 and AI-1799/1810 operating between Srinagar and Delhi were cancelled due to adverse weather conditions in the national capital.

IndiGo flights 6E-6164/6165 on the Srinagar-Amritsar sector were cancelled owing to poor weather in Amritsar, while SpiceJet flight SG-661/664 on the Srinagar-Delhi route was also cancelled because of bad weather in Delhi, officials said.

cial said.

In addition, SpiceJet flight SG-180/181 and IndiGo flights 6E-6961/6962 on the Srinagar-Kolkata sector, along with flight 6E-2044, were cancelled due to operational reasons.

Airport authorities advised passengers to check the status of their flights with the respective airlines before proceeding to the airport and expressed regret over the inconvenience caused.

Meanwhile, meteorologists said cold and foggy conditions, coupled with stagnant air, have also contributed to deteriorating air quality in some urban pockets of the Valley.

The officials urged residents to remain cautious while travelling, avoid unnecessary movement during low visibility hours, and follow advisories issued by traffic and weather departments.

Meanwhile, residents reported thick fog blanketing residential and commercial areas of Srinagar, impacting routine activities and causing delays for officegoers and students—(KNO)

ATOAI declares Kashmir 'India's Adventure Capital', vows global push for valley tourism

REHAN QAYOOM MIR

SRINAGAR: Declaring Jammu and Kashmir as the "Adventure Capital of India", President of the Adventure Tour Operators Association of India (ATOAI), Ajeet Bajaj, on Friday said the association will partner with local stakeholders to transform the Valley into a world-class adventure tourism destination.

Bajaj said the 17th ATOAI annual convention themed "Safe, Sustainable and Resilient Adventure Tourism", received an "overwhelming" response, with delegates touring Pahalgam, Gulmarg and Sonmarg.

"Our members returned impressed, Jammu and Kashmir truly has everything that makes it a global adventure hotspot," Bajaj said.

He added that the ATOAI held B2B sessions



with local tour operators to build direct business links and ensure that "local enterprises benefit directly from national and international traffic."

"The mountains are magnificent, the people are welcoming, and the spirit of adventure is unmatched. We want to steadily reopen all adventure zones and

position Kashmir firmly on the global adventure map," Bajaj said.

He said the ATOAI is also coordinating with the Ministry of Tourism to accelerate the revival of tourism in the Union Territory, describing the region as "the crown jewel of India's adventure landscape"—(KNO)

SCM Projects nears Completion; work over ₹6,600 cr executed in Jmu, Sgr

RAJA SYED RATHER

SRINAGAR: Jammu and Kashmir has made a substantial headway under the Smart Cities Mission (SCM), as data presented in the Parliament records the majority of approved projects in Jammu and Srinagar nearing completion.

In a written reply to Lok Sabha, the Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs, said that Jammu and Kashmir has received ₹941 crore as Central Financial Assistance under SCM, of which ₹864.6 crore has already been utilised. A total of 288 projects amounting to ₹6,603.5 crore were taken up in the Union Territory. Of these, 279 projects, amounting to ₹6,364.7 crore, have been completed, while nine projects totalling to an amount of ₹238.8 crore

are under execution, indicating an overall completion rate of more than 96 per cent.

Under Smart City, Srinagar has witnessed significant progress as 156 out of 161 projects have been completed so far. The completed projects in Srinagar account for ₹5,23.6 crore, while five projects with a cost of ₹110.8 crore are under execution. While in Jammu city, 127 projects with a total cost of ₹2,969.1 crore were approved under the mission. Of these, 123 projects worth ₹2,841.1 crore have been completed, while four projects are still undergoing, which cost ₹128 crore.

While highlighting the objective of Smart Cities, the Union Government clarified that the Smart Cities Mission is not the development of entire cities, but focused

area-based development through retrofitting, redevelopment, greenfield projects and pan-city initiatives. These also include interventions in smart mobility, water supply, sanitation, governance, energy and environment sectors, it added.

The Ministry further informed that the projects are implemented through Special Purpose Vehicles (SPVs) and are audited as per provisions of the Companies Act, 2013, with audits conducted by State Audit authorities.

Aimed to improve urban infrastructure and quality of life through technology-driven and sustainable solutions, the Smart Cities Mission was launched in June 2015 and during the different rounds of the national challenge process, Jammu and Srinagar were selected—(KNO)

Good Morning

Kashmir

EDITORIAL

Mobile Labs, Moral Failure And The Test Of Governance

Food Supplies Minister Satish Sharma's assurance that the government will act "strictly" against food adulteration once laboratory reports arrive is, on the face of it, comforting. His announcement that every district in Jammu and Kashmir will be equipped with mobile food testing laboratories is also a long-overdue administrative step. Yet, beyond these promises lies a harsher truth: food adulteration in J&K is no longer merely a regulatory lapse, it is a moral collapse and a governance stress test.

For years, consumers across the Valley and Jammu region have complained of adulterated milk, spices, oils, meat and now even eggs. Action, however, has largely followed a predictable pattern, public outrage, official statements, sampling, and prolonged waits for laboratory confirmation. By the time reports arrive, evidence has vanished, traders have shifted operations, and public anger has cooled. In this cycle, accountability is the biggest casualty.

The proposed procurement of twenty mobile testing laboratories is welcome, but it also raises uncomfortable questions. Why did it take repeated food scares and public distrust for the administration to acknowledge the urgent need for on-the-spot testing? Why has enforcement remained reactive rather than preventive? Food safety cannot depend on viral videos or media pressure; it must be a continuous, visible and feared regulatory presence.

Minister Sharma's remark that adulteration reflects a "deeper moral crisis" is accurate, but morality alone cannot be the state's defence. When greed thrives unchecked, it is often because the cost of wrongdoing is low and enforcement is weak. Miscreants do exist in every society, but it is the responsibility of the state to ensure that fear of law outweighs temptation of profit. Sympathy for "resource constraints" cannot excuse failures in protecting public health.

The minister also spoke of "limited resources and unlimited expectations." While this may reflect the administrative reality of a Union Territory, it risks sounding like a pre-emptive justification for underperformance. Ensuring safe food is not an extravagant expectation, it is a basic constitutional obligation. Free ration, electricity, and winter stockpiling are essential welfare measures, but they lose moral force if the food supplied is unsafe or adulterated.

Sharma's political remarks, praising Chief Minister Omar Abdullah as a fighter, seeking liberal financial support from New Delhi, and stressing the need for statehood restoration, highlight a broader issue. Governance in J&K remains trapped between promises and permissions, between expectations and authority. But food safety cannot wait for statehood, nor can it be deferred to future financial packages. Lives are at stake now.

The claim that winter preparedness is complete and essentials have been stocked is reassuring, especially for vulnerable areas. Yet preparedness must also mean vigilance. Harsh winters often create black markets, hoarding and adulteration, exploiting desperation and inaccessibility. This is precisely when enforcement must be at its strongest.

If mobile labs are to be more than symbolic gestures, their results must be made public, penalties must be swift and exemplary, and officials must be held accountable alongside traders. Without visible punishment, assurances will remain hollow.

Food adulteration is not just an administrative challenge, it is a betrayal of trust. The government's credibility will not be judged by press statements or procurement plans, but by whether unsafe food disappears from markets and offenders disappear from business. This is the real test before the Omar Abdullah government—and one it cannot afford to fail.

■ When The Wind Speaks

Western Disturbances, Mother's Wisdom, And The Weather Of J&K

MOHD AMIN MIR

For fifty years I walked the land of Jammu & Kashmir, watched the seasons turn, and heard the rivers rise and fall, and yet I learnt one of nature's simplest truths from my mother. She said, "When the wind blows from the west, it brings rain and snow." My mother was no trained scientist; she did not study charts or read synoptic analyses, yet she spoke an elemental truth, a truth that meteorology would formalise decades later as Western Disturbances.

Today, with scientific clarity offered by experts like Sonam Lotus and Mukhtar Ahmad, scholars of Earth science, we understand not just that the west wind brings weather, but why it happens, how it shapes the climate and life of this region, and how indigenous wisdom long observed the same phenomena. Both perspectives, lived experience and modern science, are correct. Together they reveal a richer story of how the skies above Jammu & Kashmir work.

The science of Western Disturbances, the lived knowledge of people like my mother, and the profound impacts these systems have on water, agriculture, tourism, and cultural life.

The Anatomy of a Western Disturbance: Science Meets Wind

Western Disturbances (WDs) are not hearsay or old wives' tales; they are well-documented meteorological phenomena. They are extratropical storms, low-pressure systems that originate far away in the Mediterranean Sea, Caspian Sea, or even over Europe. Driven by the subtropical westerly jet stream, they travel eastward, carrying moisture across hundreds of kilometres. When these systems reach the towering chain of the Himalayas, the moisture is forced upward, cooling and condensing into clouds that release rain in the plains and snow in the mountains.

This is not a theory; it is observable atmospheric physics. As the Western Disturbance hits the mountains, the rising air undergoes orographic lift, where heavy snowfall and precipitation occur because air cools as it ascends the slopes of the Himalayas.

For a region like Jammu & Kashmir, where winters are long and the landscape varies from high peaks to fertile valleys, this mechanism is fundamental to the climate. The region relies on these systems for snowfall in the high altitudes and rainfall in the valleys and plains, especially during the October to March period when the Indian monsoon is absent. So when my mother spoke of the west wind bringing rain and snow, her simple observation echoed a complex truth of atmospheric dynamics that scientists only began to quantify with satellite data and seasonal forecasting tools decades later.

From Mediterranean Seas to Kashmiri Skies: The Journey of a Storm

Western Disturbances begin thousands of kilometres away. They form as disturbances in the upper atmosphere over the Mediterranean region — remnants of larger cyclonic systems that have run their course over the sea. As these systems move east, they are



shepherded by powerful wind currents known as the westerly jet stream. The jet stream, a fast-moving ribbon of air at high altitude, is what carries these disturbances across Afghanistan and Pakistan toward northern India. In this voyage, they occasionally pick up additional moisture from bodies of water like the Arabian Sea, enhancing their capacity to produce precipitation when they encounter mountainous terrain.

When the disturbance encounters the Himalayas, including the Pir Panjal range and the Great Himalayan Wall, it cannot pass through easily. Instead, it releases its moisture in the form of dense cloud cover, rain, and snowfall, particularly over the Kashmir Valley, Ladakh, and higher reaches of the region. This process explains why valleys such as Srinagar can experience rain, while nearby mountain passes like Gulmarg or Sonamarg receive heavy snow, even from the same disturbance. The altitude matters; the air cools faster at higher elevations and precipitates as snow, while at lower elevations it falls as rain or sleet.

Understanding this journey from the Mediterranean to the Himalayas gives scientific structure to what my mother saw simply as "a wind from the west brings weather." Her observation was a distilled truth of atmospheric physics.

Wisdom from the Soil: My Mother's Weather School

My mother never opened a textbook on jet streams or low-pressure systems. She learned weather by watching the sky turn gray, by feeling the shift in winds, by smelling the freshness that precedes a snowfall, and by seeing farmers adjust their fields in anticipation of rain. Her knowledge was empirical, rooted in decades of observation.

For generations, shepherds and farmers in Jammu & Kashmir have watched the same skies. They have learned that a sudden puff of wind from the west often preludes changing weather: the smell of wet earth before rain, the chill that deepens before snow. In mountainous communities, seasonal rhythms — like when to sow crops or prepare fields — were historically tied to these natural signs long before meteorological stations dotted the region.

This indigenous knowledge complements scientific frameworks. Where scientists offer mechanisms and models, local wisdom offers patterns and intuition honed over lifetimes. The two are not contradictory; they are different

lenses looking at the same truth.

The Many Faces of Western Disturbances: Blessing and Challenge

Western Disturbances are not uniform benevolence. They are powerful, sometimes unpredictable, and their effects can be both life-sustaining and destructive.

Water Security and Agriculture: Snow deposited on the mountains acts as a natural reservoir. As winter transitions to spring, the snowmelt feeds rivers like the Jhelum, which are lifelines for irrigation, drinking water, and hydroelectric power. This meltwater is crucial for agricultural cycles across Jammu & Kashmir and beyond. Without sufficient snowfall from these disturbances, water levels in rivers and streams can drop, threatening crops and local livelihoods. For a region dependent on Rabi crops, such as wheat, barley, and mustard, which are planted in winter and harvested in spring, the timing and quantity of precipitation are central to agricultural success.

Tourism and the Winter Economy: In a place like Gulmarg, Sonamarg, and Pahalgam, snow is economic capital. Ski resorts, winter sports, and the pristine beauty of snow-clad peaks draw tourists from across India and the world. A robust WD season fuels the tourism industry, while weak snowfall can dampen this economic engine.

Yet, when Western Disturbances are too intense or erratic, they can cause travel disruptions: road closures on the Jammu-Srinagar National Highway, blocked passes like Zojila, and flight cancellations due to low visibility and heavy snow.

Hazards: Avalanches, Landslides, and Extreme Weather

Not all impacts are gentle or beneficial. Heavy snowfalls increase the risk of avalanches in high terrain. Meanwhile, rainfall in lower areas during a WD can trigger landslides, threatening villages, bridges, and highways. Furthermore, climate scientists increasingly observe that Western Disturbances can interact with other atmospheric systems, sometimes producing unexpected and extreme weather events outside their usual season.

Climate Change: A New Chapter in an Ancient Story

In recent years, the patterns of Western Disturbances themselves are shifting under the influence of climate change. Studies suggest that these systems may occur outside their traditional winter months, and their intensity has

become more variable. Scientists have linked this to changes in upper-air wind patterns and increased moisture availability from warmer seas.

This has two important implications:

- **Erratic Weather:** Regions like Jammu & Kashmir may experience unseasonal rain or snow, sometimes too little, sometimes too much, disrupting long-standing agricultural and water cycles.
- **Increased Extremes:** The potential for sudden heavy precipitation events increases, which can exacerbate flooding, landslides, and infrastructure damage.

This adds urgency to understanding Western Disturbances not only as weather events but as dynamic components of a climate system in flux. It also underscores the value of combining scientific forecasting with local, generational knowledge of weather patterns.

The Confluence of Science and Nature's Teachers

What, then, do we make of my mother's simple wisdom and the complex science of experts like Sonam Lotus and Mukhtar Ahmad? The answer is that both are true. My mother's observation, that a wind from the west brings rain and snow — captures the phenomenological pattern of Western Disturbances. Scientific meteorology explains how and why that pattern occurs. Neither diminishes the other. Instead, together they create a fuller understanding of the climate of Jammu & Kashmir — one that honors both lived experience and empirical science.

This convergence speaks to a deeper truth: that human beings, through attentive observation over long periods, can discern patterns that science later codifies. My mother, observing skies and winds, tapped into the same natural logic that satellite instruments and atmospheric models reveal.

Listening to the Wind

For generations, people in Jammu & Kashmir have lived in intimate relation with the weather, guided by mountains, rivers, and skies. Western Disturbances are part of that environment, bringing rain where it is needed and snow where it nourishes the rivers and soils of this land. Today, as we confront the challenges of climate change and increasing weather variability, our task is not to choose between science and tradition, but to synthesize them. We must honor the wisdom of those who learned from nature directly, even as we refine our understanding with instruments and models. When the west wind blows and snow begins to fall on the high ridges, or rain patters in the valley below, we may think of the sky as a storyteller. It tells its story through wind and cloud, through rain and snow. And if we listen — with both observational wisdom and scientific insight, we will understand the language of the weather.

That understanding, at once humble and profound, is what Jammu & Kashmir's people have learned in fields and homes, just as I learned from my mother. And this is the story worth telling, a story of wind, wisdom, and weather.

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When Winter Hesitates

Kashmir, Climate Change And The Weight Of Our Responsibility

DR. RIZWAN RUMI

This winter, Kashmir feels like a valley holding its breath. From the alpine reaches to the plains below, something vital is missing – not just snow, but the certainty of seasons. The mountains stand exposed, meadows remain green when they should be white, and the familiar silence of snowfall never arrives. What once felt extraordinary has begun to feel disturbingly ordinary. The question is no longer why this winter, but what future are we quietly walking into?

Kashmir lies cradled within the Himalayas, a region scientists describe as one of the world's most climate-sensitive zones. Research consistently shows that the Himalayan region is warming faster than the global average. Even marginal increases in temperature are enough to alter snowfall patterns, pushing snowlines higher, converting snow into rain and shrinking the duration of winter itself. Glaciers, ancient keepers of water, are retreating

year after year, thinning silently while life downstream remains unaware of the cost.

Snow in Kashmir has always been more than beauty. It is water stored in patience. It feeds rivers gently, seeps into aquifers, replenishes wetlands and sustains agriculture through long summers. Reduced snowfall weakens this natural cycle. The Jhelum and its tributaries grow erratic, wetlands shrink further, and the delicate balance between abundance and scarcity begins to tilt. Today's snowless winter may translate into tomorrow's water stress, crop uncertainty and ecological imbalance.

The human consequences unfold quietly. Farmers watch seasons shift. Orchardists note changes in chilling hours critical for apple yields. Pastoral communities struggle with altered grazing patterns. Winter tourism—once a reliable source of livelihood—becomes uncertain, fragile and risky. Behind every empty hotel room or cancelled booking lies a household recalculating survival. Climate change here is not an abstract concept



discussed in conferences; it is a lived disruption.

Yet nature does not bear this burden alone. Our choices echo loudly across these mountains. Unregulated construction has scarred fragile slopes. Forests, once Kashmir's natural climate moderators, have been thinned or fragmented. Wetlands that absorbed floods and nurtured biodiversity are steadily encroached upon. Traffic congestion and emissions rise, plastic clogs streams, and tourism often grows without restraint or responsibility. We ask nature to

give endlessly while forgetting to give back.

Global warming is a shared crisis, but accountability begins at home. Sustainability cannot remain confined to policy documents or environmental slogans. It must translate into action, stronger protection of forests and wetlands, climate-sensitive urban planning, regulated tourism, renewable energy adoption, waste reduction, and public awareness rooted in local realities. Development must learn restraint; progress must learn humility.

There is also a moral dimension we rarely acknowledge. The Himalayas have given Kashmir water, fertility, protection, and beauty for centuries. To ignore their distress is to betray a relationship far older than modern borders or economies. Climate justice is not only about emissions and data; it is about responsibility to future generations who deserve winters they can trust.

Kashmir without snow is not just a visual loss; it is a warning written across the mountains. The land is not angry; it is exhausted. And exhaustion, when ignored, turns into collapse.

Winter is hesitating, as if unsure whether it is still welcome. The mountains are waiting, rivers are remembering, and nature is asking us, softly, urgently, to choose wisely. If we listen now, the snow may yet return as a blessing, not a memory. If we do not, silence will become the coldest season of all.

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IDEAS, OPINIONS AND VIEWS EXPRESSED IN ARTICLES PUBLISHED ARE WRITERS' OWN AND MAY NOT BE FOUND IN ACCORD WITH THOSE OF GOOD MORNING KASHMIR

From Physics To Finance: A Universal Guide For Scientific Mind



DR. REYAZ AHMAD

For those with a technical or analytical background, the world of finance often seems like a chaotic departure from the orderly laws of nature. However, by applying the logic of physics to economics, an aspiring investor can uncover the fundamental "laws" that govern wealth creation.

The Laws of Market Motion

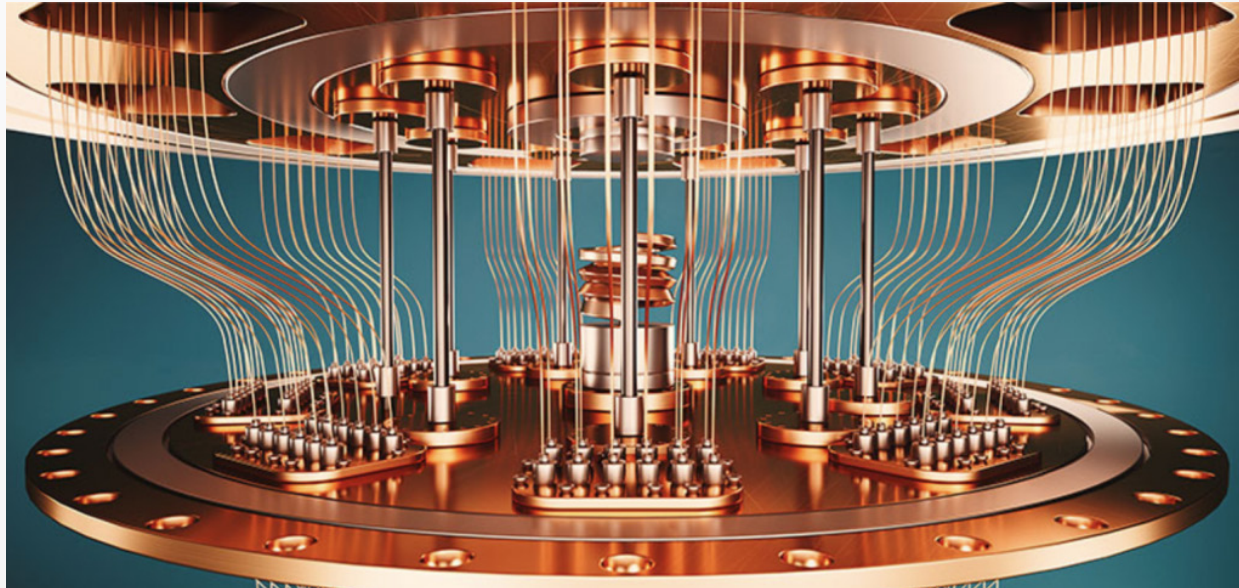
Equilibrium (Supply and Demand): In physics, forces balance to reach equilibrium. Similarly, financial markets seek a price point where the quantity buyers want equals the quantity sellers offer.

The Analogy: Think of market price as a planetary orbit. Just as planets are held in a stable path by balanced forces, prices settle where supply and demand intersect. If prices are too high, a "surplus force" pushes them down; if too low, "excess demand" pulls them up.

The Caveat (Chaos Theory): Unlike identical particles in a vacuum, markets are driven by humans. Human emotion (fear and greed) introduces "noise" and uncertainty, making financial systems behave more like chaotic systems than predictable Newtonian clockwork.

Momentum (Newton's First Law): An object in motion tends to stay in motion. In finance, this is known as "momentum investing."

The Analogy: A stock trend often continues in its current direction until an external "force"—such as new economic data or a change in business fundamentals—disrupts it.



The Warning: Even Isaac Newton lost a fortune in the South Sea Bubble because he could calculate the motion of stars but not the "madness of men." Blindly following momentum without understanding the fundamentals is dangerous.

Thermodynamics: Risk and Reward

No Free Lunch (The Second Law): The most inviolable rule in investing is the relationship between risk and return.

The Analogy: Just as a "perpetual motion machine" is impossible because you cannot create energy without input, you cannot generate financial returns without taking on risk. If a scheme promises massive wealth with zero risk, it violates the "physics" of finance and is likely a scam.

Potential Energy: A low-risk asset (like a government bond) is like a ball resting on the floor—it has low potential energy and is stable. A high-risk asset (like a volatile stock) is like a ball perched high on a hill. It has high potential energy (high possible returns), but it faces a greater risk of falling.

Forces of Growth and Decay

Compounding (Exponential Growth): Time is an investor's greatest lever due to the mathematics of compounding.

The Analogy: Compounding is comparable to organic exponential growth, such as bacteria multiplying or a snowball rolling downhill gathering mass. Money earns interest, and that interest earns its own interest. Over long periods, this feedback loop creates an upward curve that accelerates significantly.

The Lesson: Start early. The "snowball" needs a long hill (time) to gather maximum size.

Inflation (Friction and Entropy): Holding cash is not a "neutral" act; it is an act of losing value.

The Analogy: Inflation acts like friction on a moving object or the radioactive decay of a substance. If your money sits idle, its purchasing power erodes over time.

The Application: To simply maintain your wealth's value, you must generate returns that match the rate of inflation. To grow wealth, your "thrust" (investment returns) must

exceed this frictional force.

System Architecture: Building a Portfolio

Budgeting (Resource Allocation): Before investing, one must secure the resources. The 50/30/20 rule is a universal framework for this.

The Method: Allocate 50% of income to Needs, 30% to Wants, and 20% to Savings/Investments.

The Mindset: Treat the 20% investment allocation like a scientist prioritizing critical resources for an experiment. "Pay yourself first" rather than investing only what is left over by chance.

The Emergency Fund (Buffer Capacitor): Before entering the market, an investor needs a safety net (typically 3-6 months of living expenses).

The Analogy: This fund acts like a buffer capacitor in a circuit or a backup generator. It absorbs unexpected shocks (job loss, medical emergency) so you aren't forced to disrupt your primary system (selling investments at a loss) when a crisis hits.

Diversification (Signal-to-Noise Ratio): Never put all capital into a single asset.

The Analogy: A diversified portfolio is like an "ensemble of experiments." Individual experiments (stocks) may yield noisy data or fail, but combining many independent results averages out the noise to reveal a stable trend.

Structural Integrity: It is also likened to a table with many legs. If one leg breaks (a specific stock or sector crashes), the table stands because it is supported by others.

The Global Laboratory

Geographic Diversification: Investors often suffer from "home bias," investing only in their local country. However, physics and economics operate globally.

The Concept: Just as weather patterns differ across the globe, economic climates vary by region. A recession in one country might coincide with a boom in another.

The Strategy: By spreading investments across developed markets (steady, lower volatility) and emerging markets (higher growth potential, higher volatility), an investor smooths out the "turbulence" of the portfolio.

Summary Analogy

To generalize the investor's journey described in the text:

View your financial life as designing a long-range rocket.

Fuel: You need capital, generated by disciplined budgeting (the 50/30/20 rule).

Thrust: You need compound interest to overcome the downward pull of gravity (inflation).

Stability: You cannot control the atmospheric turbulence (market volatility), so you design the rocket with redundant systems (diversification) to ensure that if one component fails, the mission continues.

Trajectory: You must aim for a long-term horizon, ignoring minor fluctuations, much like an astronaut focuses on the destination rather than the changing weather patterns observed from space.

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Int'l Human Solidarity Day

Human Solidarity: The Last Hope For A Fragmented World



LALIT GARG

International Human Solidarity Day is observed every year on 20 December. It was proclaimed by the United Nations General Assembly in 2005 with the primary objective of creating awareness about the importance of solidarity in promoting poverty eradication, sustainable development, and unity in diversity so that global challenges can be addressed collectively. While observing this day, the focus remains on themes such as "Solidarity through Innovation and Technology", "Youth-led Solidarity", and "Solidarity for the Sustainable Development Goals."

The world today is passing through a strange and paradoxical phase. On the one hand, science, technology, and communication have transformed the entire planet into a small village; on the other, distances between human beings, poverty, illiteracy, distrust, and hostility are steadily increasing. War, terrorism, violence, racism, religious extremism, and economic inequality have cast a serious shadow on the very purpose of human civilization. In such times, International Human Unity and Solidarity Day is not only an inspiration for building an egalitarian social order rooted in renewed human values, but also an opportunity for self-reflection and self-correction for humanity as a whole. The core spirit of this day is clear: poverty must be eradicated, development must reach the last person, and a human being must first be recognized as a human being—only thereafter by nation, religion, language, color, or ideology. At a time when the world is increasingly fragmenting into

camps and blocs, reawakening the consciousness of "human first, and human always" has become the greatest necessity of our age.

Indian thought, centuries ago, gave the timeless maxim "Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam" the world is one family. Today, this idea is not only relevant but more essential than ever. It does not merely signify that the Earth is one family; it also implies that the happiness, suffering, dignity, and existence of every member of this family are equally important. Unfortunately, the modern world has reduced this profound philosophy to a beautiful slogan. In practice, national interest, sectarian interest, and personal gain are often placed above human interest. As a result, innocent children are scorched in the fires of war, ordinary citizens live under the shadow of terror, and millions are forced to survive below the line of hunger and deprivation due to economic exploitation. Human Solidarity Day reminds us that as long as human vision remains narrow, peace will remain nothing more than a distant dream.

Today's wars are not fought only on borders; they are also waged in ideas, information, and mindsets. Somewhere hatred is spread in the name of race, somewhere violence is justified in the name of religion, and somewhere aggressive nationalism suppresses the gentle voice of humanity. Terrorism is the most lethal manifestation of this distorted mentality, it recognizes neither religion nor human values. In such an environment, talking about peace may appear idealistic or impractical to some. Yet history bears witness that violence has never provided a lasting solution. The protection of existence is possible only through peace, dialogue, and coexistence. Human Solidarity Day is an effort to re-establish this truth in the global conscience.

In its Millennium Declaration, the United Nations General Assembly identified solidarity as one of the fundamental values of international relations in the twenty-first century. According to this principle, those who



are least affected or least benefited must receive greater support from those who are more privileged. In the context of globalization and rising inequality, strengthening international solidarity has therefore become indispensable. The United Nations firmly believes that promoting a culture of solidarity and sharing is essential to fighting poverty. Through initiatives such as the establishment of the World Solidarity Fund for Poverty Eradication and the proclamation of International Human Solidarity Day, the concept of solidarity has been advanced as a crucial element in the fight against poverty and in ensuring the participation of all stakeholders.

Human solidarity does not merely mean extending help during times of crisis; it means embracing sensitivity, compassion, equality, and empathy in everyday life. When we move past the suffering of war-affected people in other countries as just another news headline, our humanity dies a little. When refugees are seen as a burden and the pain of poor nations is ignored, the idea of global unity becomes hollow. The message of human solidarity is that blood shed anywhere wounds the entirety of

humanity, and tears shed anywhere symbolise our collective failure. This day teaches us that diversity is not our weakness but our greatest strength. Languages may differ, and modes of worship may vary, yet human suffering, hope, and dreams are fundamentally the same everywhere.

In this age of violence and war, speaking the language of peace requires courage. Peace is not merely the silence of weapons; it is trust born out of justice, equality, and respect. As long as deep economic inequalities persist in the world, as long as the development of some nations is built on the exploitation of others, genuine human unity cannot be achieved. Therefore, Human Solidarity Day also demands social and economic justice. It reminds us that prosperity is meant not only for consumption but for sharing, and that power is meant not for domination but for protection.

Today, there is an urgent need for education, media, and politics to promote the values of human unity. Children must be taught from an early age that understanding another's pain is not a weakness but the greatest strength. A sense of global citizenship must be nurtured among youth,

enabling them to see themselves not merely as citizens of one nation, but as responsible members of the entire human family. Technology should be used not to spread hatred, but to enhance dialogue and understanding. Only then will this day transcend being just a date on the calendar and become a living inspiration for life.

Solidarity does not signify only governmental cooperation; it encompasses the welfare of all people. The United Nations actively promotes human rights and social development initiatives aimed at building an equitable world where everyone has access to opportunities for growth. This commitment reflects a deep faith in universal progress, with solidarity as its foundation. The concept of solidarity itself forms the bedrock of the United Nations' mission. Collective security is a principle that encourages cooperation among nations. The UN Charter emphasizes that member states should strive to maintain international peace and security through cooperation, enabling nations to unite against threats such as armed conflict and terrorism. Recognizing the interconnected nature of global challenges, the United Nations advocates international cooperation to address issues like poverty, hunger, and climate change. Solidarity manifests through partnerships that promote the sharing of resources and strengthen the efforts of every nation.

Ultimately, International Human Unity and Solidarity Day calls us back to a simple yet profound truth: the greatest identity of a human being is being human. If we can preserve this identity, the dark nights of war, terror, and violence will begin to fade on their own. By translating the spirit of Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam into practice, we can build a world where existence is guided not by fear but by trust, where power resides not in weapons but in compassion, and where future generations remember us as a humanity that chose unity over division.

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NDPP Welcomes Vishal Chopra as NATF Chairman, Pledges Support in Anti-Terror Fight

GMK NEWS NETWORK

SRINAGAR: Vishal Chopra's appointment as the Chairman of the National Anti-Terrorism Front (NATF) was formally welcomed by the National Democratic People's Party (NDPP) in a ceremony held here on Friday. The event saw NDPP Chairman, Navneet Mishra, felicitating Chopra and extending the party's warm congratulations.

Describing the appointment as "the need of the hour," Mishra hailed it as a proud moment for Jammu & Kashmir that one of its own has been entrusted with such a critical national responsibility. He expressed strong confidence that under Chopra's stewardship, the nation's efforts to counter terrorism and anti-national forces would be significantly bolstered.

"It is a privileged moment



for us that Vishal Chopra has taken on this vital role. We are assured that his leadership will bring renewed vigour to safeguarding our nation's security," stated Mishra.

In his address, the newly appointed NATF Chairman, Vishal Chopra, reaffirmed an uncompromising stance against all forms of terrorism. He outlined a firm commitment to combat not only direct terrorist activities but

also the networks of Over Ground Workers (OGWs) and the threats posed by white-collar terrorism.

"No form of terrorism will be tolerated. Our resolve is absolute to take strict and decisive action to protect national security and preserve the unity of the country," Chopra asserted.

Navneet Mishra, assuring complete collaboration, declared that the NDPP would extend its full

support to Mr. Chopra and the NATF in all endeavours aimed at eradicating terrorism. He emphasized the party's commitment to all initiatives that ensure peace, security, and stability across the nation.

The occasion marked a display of political unity and a shared resolve towards the national objective of countering terrorism and strengthening internal security.

FROM THE FRONT PAGE

J&K Braces For Rain,

last two months, almost all the water bodies have been flowing at very low discharge as rivers, streams, springs and lakes have been adversely impacted by the dry spell.

An extended dry spell has given rise to chest-related ailments as a bad cold, dry cough and flu have become common complaints at hospitals across the Valley these days.

Doctors have advised people, especially children and elderly people, not to expose themselves to long periods of cold and chilly air.

The 40-day-long period of harsh winter cold called the 'Chillai Kalan' starts on December 21 and will end on January 30. During this period, most water bodies in the Valley freeze as the minimum temperature drops between minus 6 to minus 8 degrees Celsius. The day temperature remains below two digits during the Chillai Kalan, thereby narrowing the gap between minimum and maximum temperatures.

The minimum temperature was minus 2.1 degrees Celsius in Srinagar, minus 2.6 in Pahalgam and one in Gulmarg on Friday. Jammu city had 9.9 degrees Celsius, Katra 9.2, Batote 6.7, Banihal 3.5 and Bhaderwah 2.3 degrees as the minimum temperature.

Young Generation

humanities. Various philosophical schools and art and architecture are profoundly relevant today to build a resilient society," the Lieutenant Governor said.

The Lieutenant Governor emphasized that the endeavours like "Kartavya Marg" play an inspiring role in connecting the younger generation with their traditions and cultural heritage. He said the young generation must inculcate ancient values and ideals in our present-day life.

The Lieutenant Governor observed that the Indian culture, ethics and values help in navigating complex challenges and cultivating virtues to promote harmony and oneness in the society.

"Our ancient knowledge system and embedded wisdom offer a blueprint for a successful modern world while ensuring the well-being of all, roadmap for sustainable development and innovation and a holistic framework to effectively deal with issues like climate change to build a sustainable future," the Lieutenant Governor said.

Mahant Rohit Shastri, President, Shri Kailakh Jyotish and Vedic Sansthan Trust, informed that the annual publication is brought out in Hindi, Sanskrit, English, and Dogri, ensuring that its message of knowledge, culture, and values reaches readers from diverse linguistic and cultural backgrounds.

Members of the Trust, including Prof. Sharat Sharma, Dr. Vishav Gupta, Shri Rajeev Sharma, Shri Vinay Agrawal, Shri Vinay Jamwal, Shri Nigam Gupta, Shri Rakesh Gandotra, Shri Naresh Raina, Shri Lucky Sharma, Shri Prabodh Sharma, Shri M.L. Verma, Dr. Vivek Arya, Shri Yoginder Singh, and Shri Satish Jandyal were present on the occasion.

Kashmir Safe,

India's tourism sector. We are proud of our men and women in uniform who have ensured peace and security and we want to get more tourists back to Jammu and Kashmir at the earliest," Bajaj said.

He said that the sense of normalcy now visible across the Valley must translate into tourism revival. "Our members returned deeply impressed by the peace and positivity they witnessed," he added.

Another senior ATOAI delegate, who has been visiting Kashmir for over three decades, said, "I have travelled here for 35 years and never felt safer anywhere else. The hospitality and warmth are unmatched," he said, adding that 2026 "will be a great year for Kashmir tourism."—(KNO)

12 Cancelled, 18

operations across North India may continue to face disruptions and urged passengers to stay connected with their airlines for real-time updates.

The Ministry of Civil Aviation (MoCA) also appealed to travellers to rely only on official communication channels, allow extra time for airport processes and assured that facilitation teams are assisting passengers at major airports—(KNO)

Free Ration, LPG

lab vehicle to monitor ration and food quality. Strict action will follow against adulteration," he said, referring to recent issues involving raw meat and eggs.

Admitting that resource limitations remain a challenge, the minister said: "We inherited several problems and expectations have multiplied a thousandfold in the past decade. Despite limited funds, we are working with honesty and fairness. Justice will be done."

On the issue of pending ration cards and split families, Sharma said discrepancies are being addressed. "We have requested the Centre to extend special concessions to J&K given its unique geography. Split families, widows and other deserving groups are genuine cases and we are committed to their inclusion," he said.

He said the department's Departmental Promotion Committees (DPCs) are being streamlined to ensure that posts created are absorbed swiftly. "Many employees have worked hard for years. I will personally ensure justice is done to the first three districts by January," Sharma said, adding that it was a commitment of the Omar Abdullah government to deliver fairness and merit-based progress.

He also appreciated the Chief Minister's support and Delhi's assistance, saying: "Our Chief Minister is positive and determined. Without Delhi's support, it would have been difficult. We expect liberal funding ahead similar to the progressive aid seen during Dr. Manmohan Singh's tenure."

The minister said coordination with the Punjab government is ongoing to address inter-state food supply issues, which were delayed earlier due to administrative and logistical hurdles.

He said winter sports and tourism are being revived as part of J&K's broader development vision. "We are introducing downhill cycling, water sports and skiing in Sonmarg. The aim is to turn youth passion into profession and to fight drugs through sports," he said.

Highlighting the government's wider developmental approach, Sharma added that the administration is also working on the solarisation of 200 units including shrines, construction of new playgrounds and supporting tourism-based employment—(KNO)

CS Assesses Cyber

infrastructure against emerging cyber threats.

The Chief Secretary also reviewed the progress of key projects, including augmentation of the State Data Centre (SDC), operationalization of a Mini Security Operations Centre (SOC), adoption of official government e-mail IDs by employees, expansion of Government Drive usage, and capacity-building initiatives undertaken to promote cyber hygiene across departments.

Stressing the need for a holistic and robust protection mechanism for IT assets, the Chief Secretary directed that all concerned Drawing and Disbursing Officers (DDOs) to complete the inventorization of IT assets on the e-SAM portal within the next one month to strengthen monitoring and security of government assets.

He further instructed the NIC to prepare a comprehensive action plan within a month for augmenting the capacity of the State Data Centre and implementing additional cyber security measures to make the system foolproof across J&K.

Earlier the IGP, Crime, Sujit Singh appraised the meeting about a comprehensive and in-depth assessment of cyber forensic capabilities at CICE, J&K. He added that the process involves a detailed examination of existing systems, emerging requirements and future-ready initiatives aimed at strengthening cyber forensic infrastructure across the UT.

Singh further apprised that a structured three-phase approach has been adopted for this purpose. The first phase focuses on a thorough evaluation of technical specifications and proposed tools required for the establishment of CICE and Cyber Police Stations.

The second phase involves examination of these tools in the context of emerging cyber threats such as deep fakes, encrypted mobile communications and data breaches. The third phase entails comparative analysis and consultations regarding the latest tools available in the market.

During the meeting, Secretary, Information Technology Department, Dr. Piyush Singla, gave detailed overview of the implementation of cyber security plan in J&K. He informed that the security audit of departmental websites has been completed, and 35 redundant websites have been decommissioned after due consultation with the concerned departments.

He further apprised that EDR and UEM solutions have been successfully deployed across the Civil Secretariat complexes in Jammu and Srinagar, covering nearly 5,100 devices, with an additional 15,000 devices in HoD offices scheduled to be secured by January 2026.

The meeting was also informed that 28 departments have initiated the census of IT assets following nomination of users, while 14 departments have been asked to expedite the process. With regard to the adoption of official government e-mail IDs, it was informed that the user base has reached 1.81 lakh, with about 35,000 users added since May 2025, and 3,500 requests processed since the last review meeting.

Other cyber security initiatives discussed included deployment of 19 honey pots by the department, with CERT-In scheduled to provide training for their effective usage. It was also revealed that the white listing of USB/pen drives remains limited to 30 cases, while the number of Government Drive users has increased to 318 across departments.

CEO, JaKeGA, Mahima Madan, briefed the meeting on key interventions undertaken by the agency, including migration of select applications to the national MeghRaj Cloud, augmentation of the State Data Centre, operationalization of the Mini SOC at Jammu, which is planned to be upgraded into a full-fledged SOC and the phased migration of government websites from IPv4 to IPv6 by the end of the current year.

Emphasizing a proactive and coordinated approach to cyber security, the Chief Secretary underscored that robust digital safety mechanisms are vital for ensuring efficiency, transparency, and reliability in governance. He directed all departments to work in close coordination with the IT Department, plug existing gaps, adopt best cyber security practices, and complete all pending tasks within the stipulated timelines.

IMD Strengthens

to medium range rainfall forecasts up to ten days, informed the Ministry.

These forecasts are now generated at the panchayat and cluster-of-panchayat levels, proving beneficial to weather-sensitive regions like Jammu and Kashmir.

The government has also introduced a new system known as the Mithuna Forecast System-- a new generation global coupled model integrating atmosphere, land, ocean and sea-ice components. This is being used to improve district-level forecasts for extreme weather events, including heavy rainfall, snowfall, heatwaves and fog—a phenomenon frequently occurring in J&K.

The Ministry further stated that artificial intelligence and machine learning-based tools are now being integrated into the forecasting chain to enhance nowcasting and impact-based warnings. These systems help generate more reliable alerts for disasters such as flash floods, cloudbursts and avalanches, which are common in hilly and mountainous areas like Jammu and Kashmir.

To issue timely weather advisories, satellite-based monitoring, through INSAT platforms and real-time data from radar networks, is being used. These are then disseminated through IMD websites, mobile applications such as Meghdoot, Mausam and Damini, and other digital platforms.

The Government said that the expansion of weather forecasting infrastructure will continue to happen under Mission Mausam. It includes setting up additional radars to address the coverage gaps and further strengthen disaster preparedness and climate resilience in vulnerable regions, including Jammu and Kashmir—(KNO)

Over 17,000 Street

implementation of the scheme, the Union Government asked the State and UT administrations, including Jammu and Kashmir, to regularly monitor the performance of ULBs and lending institutions. Pertinently, SVANidhi was introduced to offer affordable working capital loans to street vendors affected by the COVID-19 pandemic, to help them restart their businesses and pave a way for self-sufficiency—(KNO)

Saffron Growers Say

rainfall, warmer winters and prolonged dry spells have badly affected saffron. Now porcupines are destroying whatever is left," said Abdul Rashid Shah, a saffron grower from Konibal. "When a corm is damaged, there is no flowering. That directly means

zero production and a direct hit on our livelihood."

Farmers said that saffron, often called "red gold", is a highly sensitive crop and, unlike orchards, growers have minimal options to protect it from wildlife damage.

"For orchardists, there are methods like covering tree trunks or fencing, but for saffron we don't have such solutions," said Ishrat Ahmad, another grower from Pampore. "We try to scare porcupines away using lights, horns and noise, but it is not possible to stay awake the entire night. The animals return again and again."

According to the cultivators, porcupines are particularly active between December and March, a period crucial for the survival and development of planted corms. During this time, they dig out and consume large quantities of corms, causing irreversible damage to future yields.

Farmers said that saffron production in Kashmir has already been declining due to multiple factors, including a shrinking cultivation area, changing weather patterns linked to climate change, a lack of timely irrigation, and the unavailability of high-quality corms.

"Porcupines are adding salt to our wounds," Ishrat said. "If this issue is not addressed immediately, there will be no saffron corm left in these fields in the coming years."

The growers recalled that a few years ago, a repellent spray provided by SKUAST-Kashmir offered some temporary relief, but the effect was short-lived, and the problem persists.

"We are not experts. The government must consult technical experts and scientists who can guide us on effective and sustainable ways to prevent porcupine damage," said another grower from Lethpora. "So far, no long-term solution has been provided."

Locals said they have repeatedly brought the issue to the notice of the concerned departments, including agriculture and wildlife authorities, but no concrete steps have been taken.

"We are not asking for compensation alone. We want preventive measures," said a group of farmers. "If saffron cultivation collapses further, it will not only affect farmers but also Kashmir's identity, as Pampore saffron is known worldwide."

The farmers have appealed to the authorities to intervene at the earliest, deploy expert teams on the ground and introduce scientifically proven measures to protect saffron corms from porcupines before the damage becomes irreversible—(KNO)

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