

Good Morning Kashmir

17th Year Of Publication

Office of LG J&K
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Greetings to all CISF personnel & their families on @CISFHQRs Raising Day. CISF's unwavering commitment to securing our nation's critical infrastructure is truly commendable. Nation is proud of your service and sacrifices. I salute your bravery & steadfast dedication to duty.

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Three JSD Workers Disengaged In J&K For 'Anti-National' Activities

TERMINATION

GMK NEWS NETWORK

JAMMU: The Jammu and Kashmir government on Tuesday disengaged services of three workers of Jal Shakti Department for their alleged involvement in anti-national activities.

Officials said Showkat Ahmad Zargar, a resident of Iqbal Mohalla Bijbehara in Anantnagar district, who was working as a Daily Rated Wager (DRW) in Bijbehara, has been disengaged from service with immediate effect.

An FIR No. 53/2019 was registered against him under Section 307 RPC, 7/27 Arms Act and Sections 16 and 18 of the Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act (UAPA), the government order said.

The chargesheet in the case has already been filed and the matter is currently under trial.

In another order, the government disengaged Liyaqat Ali Bhagwan, a resident of Bhagwan Mohalla Huller in Kishtwar district, who was working as a Need Based Casual Labourer (NBCL) and posted at Berwar, Kishtwar.

The officials said FIR No. 230/2019 was registered

against him under Sections 13, 18, 19, 38 and 39 of the UAPA and the chargesheet has been filed after completion of investigation.

Similarly, Kousar Husain Bhagwan, a resident of Hunjala in Kishtwar district, working as a Need Based Casual Labourer and posted at Huller under PHE Sub-Division Kishtwar, has also been disengaged.

He is also facing allegations in FIR No. 230/2019 under Sections 13, 18, 19, 38 and 39 of the UAPA, and the case is presently under trial.

The orders were issued by the Jal Shakti Department in the interest of administration following references from the Home Department, officials added.

The government has been terminating the services of those public servants, who have remained involved in anti-national and subversive activities in the union territory.

The termination orders are issued based on detailed investigation by the CID into the activities of government servants.

These investigations have revealed that continuation of such involved •P-06

Tulip Garden To Open March 16 With 1.8 Million Blooms Across 70 Varieties

Flower Bed Count Raised From 35 To 42 Per Patch For More Vibrant Floral Display



REHAN QAYOOM

SRINAGAR: The Indira Gandhi Memorial Tulip Garden, also recognised as Asia's largest tulip garden, will open for visitors on March 16, officials from the Floriculture Department said on Tuesday.

The garden, located on the foothills of the beautiful Zabarwan Range and the beautiful Dal Lake, has been fully prepared to welcome tourists and locals for the much-awaited tulip season.

Director Floriculture Kashmir Mathoora Masoom said that the decision to open the garden has been taken as tulips have started blooming and preparations for the season have been completed.

An official from Floriculture Department said this year the garden will showcase around

1.8 million tulips of nearly 70 to 75 varieties, offering visitors a colourful and vibrant floral spectacle.

Earlier, officials indicated that the opening date would depend largely on favourable weather. Assistant Floriculture Officer Imran Ahmad had said that the department was monitoring climatic conditions before announcing the final opening schedule.

He had informed us that, apart from bulb planting, a series of finishing works was carried out in the garden to ensure a smooth visitor experience.

These works included repairing and tightening railings, reshaping flower beds, upgrading pathways, painting infrastructure and improving public facilities such as washrooms.

Officials also said that flower-bed density has been increased this year to enhance the garden's visual impact. Earlier, around 30 to 35 beds would fit into a particular patch, but this year the number has been increased to over 42 beds in the same space, making the floral display denser and more attractive for visitors.

The annual opening of the tulip garden marks the beginning of the spring tourism season in Kashmir, drawing thousands of visitors from across the country and abroad.

The garden witnessed a record-breaking footfall last year, with 8,55,125 visitors visiting during the 30-day opening period from March 26 to April 24, 2025.

The unprecedented number included locals, domestic tourists and international •P-06

72000 J&K Rural Youth Trained Under DDU-GKY: Centre

AGENCIES

SRINAGAR: The Government of India on Tuesday said that more than 72,000 rural youth from Jammu & Kashmir have been trained under the Deen Dayal Upadhyaya Grameen Kaushalya Yojana (DDU-GKY), while over 45,000 of them have been placed in jobs since the inception of the scheme.

According to the information shared in Lok Sabha, the Ministry of Rural Development, said that a total of 72,602 candidates from J&K have been trained and 45,618 placed under DDU-GKY till January 2026.

Replying to an unstarred question in the Parliament, Minister of State for Rural Development Kamlesh Paswan said that the Deendayal Antyodaya Yojana-National Rural Livelihood Mission (DAY-NRLM) is implementing skill development programmes for rural youth through DDU-GKY and Rural Self Employment Training Institutes (RSETI).

The DDU-GKY is a placement-linked skill development programme aimed at empowering rural poor youth aged between 15 and 35 years by equipping them with employable skills and linking them with regular wage employment. •P-06

Rain, Snow End Prolonged Dry Spell In Kashmir



SAJID RAINA

SRINAGAR: Rain lashed several parts of Kashmir while higher reaches received fresh snowfall, ending a prolonged dry spell that had persisted for months and bringing relief to residents and farmers across the Valley.

Officials said that light rainfall was recorded in parts of central Kashmir, including Srinagar and Budgam, while moderate to heavy showers were witnessed in several areas of north and south Kashmir.

The higher reaches, including the Sonamarg-Zojila axis, Sinthan Top, Sadhna Top, Peer Ki Gali and Razdan Top, received fresh snowfall during the night and early hours of Tuesday, they said.

The Meteorological Centre Srinagar said the Valley is likely to witness generally cloudy weather with light to moderate rain and snowfall in higher reaches at many places on March 10 and 11.

According to the MeT department, a few higher reaches of Kupwara, •P-06

Govt Aims To Transform AWCs Into Vibrant Early Learning Spaces: Sakeena Ito

GMK NEWS NETWORK

JAMMU: Minister for Social Welfare, Education, Health and Medical Education, Sakeena Ito Tuesday chaired a comprehensive review meeting to discuss various proposals focusing on enhanced convergence of Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE) framework with Education, Health, and other allied departments to further strengthen the early learning ecosystem at Anganwadi Centres across Jammu and Kashmir.

The meeting was attended by Commissioner Secretary, Social Welfare Department (SWD), Sarmad Hafeez; Mission Director POSHAN, Sajad Hussain Ganai; Director Finance and Director Planning SWD, Child Development Project Officers (CDPOs) of Jammu and other concerned officers.

During the meeting, the Social Welfare Minister took detailed assessment of various interventions proposed by the SWD for upgrading existing framework for ECCE and strengthening its convergence with Anganwadi Centres.

The meeting focused on enhancing foundational learning, improving nutritional outcomes, and ensuring holistic development of children in the 3-6 years age group through coordinated implementation of ECCE policies across the Union Territory.

During the review, the Minister underscored the critical importance of early childhood education as the cornerstone of

development of children. •P-06



Over 90% Land Parcels In J&K Geo-Referenced Under DILRMP: Centre

RAJA SYED RATHER

SRINAGAR: The Government of India on Tuesday informed the Lok Sabha that over 90 per cent land parcels in Jammu & Kashmir have been geo-referenced under the Digital India Land Records Modernization Programme (DILRMP).

According to the details shared by Union Minister for Rural Development Shivraj Singh Chouhan, a total of 68,36,683 land parcels have been identified in Jammu & Kashmir, out of which 62,00,609 parcels (90.70 per cent) have already been geo-referenced.

The Minister, said the geo-referencing of cadastral maps is being carried out under DILRMP to ensure precise land boundaries and minimise disputes related to land ownership.

He said the Centre has been implementing the programme



with 100 per cent financial assistance since 2016-17 to modernise and digitise land records and the registration process across States and Union Territories, including Jammu & Kashmir.

The government further informed that Record of Rights (RoR) and other land records have been digitised and made accessible online through respective State and UT portals

to provide real-time land information to citizens.

According to the reply, digitised land records are maintained by respective States and UTs with secure servers and prescribed data protection measures, while the Centre is also supporting awareness programmes and training initiatives to improve access and usage of digital land records—(KNO) •P-06

CS Pushes For Fast-Track Recruitment To Fill Vacancies Across Departments

GMK NEWS NETWORK

JAMMU: Chief Secretary, Atal Dulloo Tuesday chaired a meeting to review the status of vacancies and the progress of recruitments being undertaken through the Jammu and Kashmir Public Service Commission (JKPSC) and the Jammu and Kashmir Services Selection Board (JKSSB) across various departments of the Union Territory.

The meeting was attended by the concerned Administrative Secretaries; Chairperson, JKSSB; Secretary, JKPSC and other concerned representatives from different departments.

While reviewing the progress, the Chief Secretary stressed the need for expeditious filling of all critical vacancies to strengthen governance and improve public service delivery. He called

upon all Administrative Secretaries to hold regular follow-up meetings with their departments and recruitment agencies to ensure that pending issues are resolved and vacancies are filled at the earliest.

He emphasized that timelines fixed for ongoing recruitment drives must be strictly adhered to, and directed that all posts received by the recruiting agencies should be advertised without delay.

The Chief Secretary further advised the recruiting agencies to prepare and publish examination calendars simultaneously, enabling aspirants to have clarity regarding the schedule of examinations and adequate time to prepare.

During the review, the Chief Secretary also took note of several bottlenecks affecting certain recruitments in JKPSC •P-06



Looking Beyond Narrow Indicators

J&K's Economy Shows Growth, Structural Strength, Resilience

IANIS

SRINAGAR: A closer look at the structural strength and resilience of Jammu and Kashmir's economy by travelling beyond the narrow economic indicator gives an entirely different outlook.

Instead of being dependent, conflict-ridden, driven by public sector employment, budgetary support and by tourism cycles, the years 2024-2025 and 2025-2026 show a marked shift and improvement in Jammu and Kashmir's economy.

Most satisfying in this marked improvement is the emerging fact that the Union Territory's economy is no longer defined merely by recovery as it is entering a phase of structural consolidation and diversified growth, performing well beyond conventional mea-



sures of output and income.

Improved security conditions and administrative normalisation have created an enabling environment for economic activity. The resulting stability naturally reduces uncertainty, revives consumer confidence, and encourages both public and private investment.

This stabilisation was evident in April 2025, when a

terrorist attack in the Pahalgam region disrupted tourism and temporarily halted economic momentum. The collapse in tourist arrivals and livelihoods exposed the Valley's historical vulnerability to security shocks.

Despite these inherent fault lines, the response under Operation Sindoor marked a qualitative break from the past. Swift security

deployment, confidence-building measures, and visible governance, including a cabinet meeting in Pahalgam, helped restore trust and revive activity.

The development proved that Kashmir's economy is no longer structurally fragile. This change has helped policymakers to move beyond short-term relief to a long-term economic architecture, particularly in infrastructure, energy, tourism, and human capital development.

During 2025-26, Jammu and Kashmir's Gross State Domestic Product (GSDP) continued its upward trajectory, growing faster than its pre-2019 long-term average. At current prices, GSDP was estimated at around Rs 2.65 lakh crore in FY 2024-25.

The Union Territory now contributes roughly •P-06

Army Foils Infiltration Bid, Terrorist Killed

SAJID RAINA

JAMMU: Army on Tuesday said that it foiled an infiltration bid by killing a terrorist along the Line of Control in the Nowshera sector of Rajouri district.

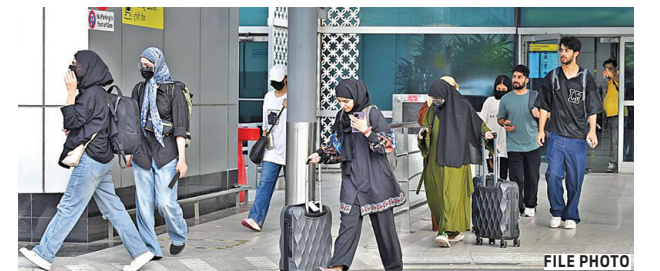
An official said that alert troops detected the movement of two suspected terrorists in the Jhangar area of Nowshera around 3 pm. "Troops engaged the infiltrators, resulting in an encounter in which one terrorist was killed," he added.

"The operation was launched by Army's White Knight Corps, which is responsible for operations in the region," he said, adding, "After the attempt was foiled the area was cordoned off to track the second terrorist believed to have fled towards the nearby forests."

Search operations were continuing in the area when this report was filed. Meanwhile, security forces launched a search operation in Samba district after suspected drone activity was detected near the International Border late Monday night.

Officials said the suspected drone movement was noticed over the Daboh area, prompting •P-06

...With No Official Evacuation Plan Stranded Indian Students In Iran Prepare For Complex Armenia Route



JAHANGEER GANAIE

SRINAGAR: Indian medical students stranded in Iran, including dozens from Jammu and Kashmir, are preparing to return home through a complicated Armenia route after the Indian Embassy in Tehran declined to announce a formal evacuation plan, leaving students to book their own tickets and bear most of the travel expenses themselves.

According to the latest update shared with students by the Embassy, those willing to leave Iran may travel via the

Armenia border, but only after fulfilling a set of conditions.

Students must first book their own flight tickets from Armenia to New Delhi and submit a confirmed ticket with the PNR number to the Embassy, states the advisory, accessed.

"Only after verification will the Embassy inform them when they may travel from their current location to the Armenian border. No student will be permitted to cross the border without a confirmed onward ticket," it added.

Students have also been told they must pay a visa fee of 10 US •P-06

NIT, NIELIT Launch Five-Day Bootcamp on Intelligent Drone Technology

GMK NEWS NETWORK

SRINAGAR: A five-day Bootcamp on "Intelligent and Secure Drone Technology" was inaugurated at National Institute of Technology Srinagar (NIT Srinagar), in collaboration with the National Institute of Electronics and Information Technology (NIELIT) Jammu & Kashmir.

The bootcamp is being supported by the Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology (MeitY), Government of India, under the SwaYam initiative. It has brought together students, engineers, researchers, and professionals for hands-on training in drone technologies.

In his welcome address, Dr. Dinesh Kumar Rajendran highlighted the growing importance of drones in security, disaster management, surveillance, agriculture, logistics, and infrastructure monitoring.

He emphasized the need to build indigenous expertise in UAV design and operation. He shared insights from his work on drone systems, emphasizing the integration of engineering, electronics, and artificial intelligence to develop intelligent, secure drone platforms.

Prof. Sheikh Nazir Ahmed presented an overview of the collaborative NIT-NIELIT Drone Program and discussed initiatives aimed at strengthening research and training in unmanned aerial systems.

The five-day bootcamp features sessions on drone components, DGCA regulations, flight simulation, FPV drone assembly, logis-



tics drones, communication systems, UAV structural analysis, and AI applications in drones, along with hands-on demonstrations and flight testing.

Participants in the program include representatives from security and disaster response agencies such as the Central Reserve Police Force (CRPF) and the National Disaster Management Authority (NDMA), along with professionals from drone technology companies and faculty and students from various engineering and educational institutions, reflecting strong collaboration between academia, industry, and government organizations.

During the event, organizers also announced an upcoming six-month advanced drone training program to be jointly conducted by the National Institute of Electronics and Information Technology and National Institute of Technology Srinagar.

The program will focus on drone design, UAV electronics, autonomous navigation, AI integration, drone communication systems, and real-world applications,

appreciated the collaboration between academic institutions and government agencies.

He said today, drone technology is no longer limited to research laboratories or defense applications. It has rapidly evolved into a powerful tool with wide-ranging applications across sectors.

"In a region like Jammu and Kashmir, where geography often presents unique challenges, drone technology can play a transformative role in improving accessibility, monitoring natural resources, and enhancing public services," Prof. Rehman said.

In-Charge Director, NIELIT J&K, Mr. Ashaq Hussain Dar, stressed the importance of developing a skilled workforce in drone technology.

"Programs like this bootcamp are therefore extremely valuable as they equip participants not only with technical knowledge but also with an understanding of ethical, regulatory, and security aspects," he added.

The inaugural ceremony concluded with a vote of thanks by Ms. Sumaya Akhtar, acknowledging the contributions of organizers, speakers, and participants.

The five-day bootcamp is aimed to provide participants with comprehensive exposure to emerging drone technologies, their practical applications, and the importance of security in unmanned aerial systems.

It focuses on enhancing technical knowledge in areas such as drone design, navigation systems, data collection, surveillance applications, and safe operational practices.

.....VALEDICTORY PARADE

584 CRPF Recruits Pass Out from Lethpora Training Centre

GMK NEWS NETWORK

PULWAMA: In a significant milestone for the Central Reserve Police Force (CRPF), the Passing Out Parade for the 105th Batch (Soldier/General Duty) was held on Tuesday at the Recruits Training Centre (RTC) in Lethpora. A total of 584 recruits formally graduated, marking their induction into the ranks of the country's largest paramilitary force.

The ceremony, held at the Lethpora Campus in District Pulwama, was a display of immaculate discipline and precision. The parade was reviewed by the Director General of the CRPF, Shri Gyanendra Pratap Singh (IPS), who took the salute and commended the recruits for their flawless drill and turnout.

The event was attended by a host of senior officials, underscoring its importance. Shri Deepak Kumar (IPS), Special Director General (Training), and Shri Rajesh Kumar (IPS), Additional Director General, Jammu & Kashmir Zone, were pres-



ent alongside other senior officers from the force, civil administration, and associated agencies.

The highlight of the ceremony was the crisp and synchronized drill exhibition presented by the passing out recruits, which instilled a deep sense of pride among the spectators. Assistant Commandant Shri Shashi Bhushan Singh, serving as the Parade Commander, led the battalion through the meticulously choreographed maneuvers that marked the culmination of their 44 weeks of grueling basic training.

In recognition of exceptional performance during the training period, the Director General awarded medals and trophies to recruits who distinguished themselves in various disciplines.

Addressing the newest Soldiers (GD) of the force, Shri Gyanendra Pratap Singh congratulated them and their instructors for the high standard of training displayed. He urged the young soldiers to steadfastly uphold the values, traditions, and rich ethos of the CRPF. Emphasizing the multifaceted role of a modern paramilitary sol-

dier, the DG called upon them to balance professional competence with human sensitivity, both during peacetime duties and operational deployments. He concluded his address by directing the recruits to abide by their oath of allegiance, respect the Constitution of India, and always keep human rights paramount in the discharge of their duties.

With their training successfully completed, the 584 recruits now embark on their journey as proud Soldiers of the Central Reserve Police Force, ready to serve the nation.

PW Announces Free Online Education for Orphan Students of J&K



GMK NEWS NETWORK

SRINAGAR: Education company PhysicsWallah (PW) announced free online education for orphan students of Jammu & Kashmir. The initiative was unveiled by Founder and Teacher, PhysicsWallah (PW), Alakh Pandey, during Vishwas Diwas, the annual flagship event bringing together students and educators while exploring academic support opportunities. This step comes as a part of the organisation's ongoing efforts to support the continuation of education for students facing personal and financial hardship.

Under the initiative, orphan students across Jammu & Kashmir can join any PW online batch of their choice, free of cost, through the PW App, allowing them to continue learning without having to move from their hometowns. The support covers school learning and competitive exam preparation, with access to lessons, practice material, and academic guidance, helping ease financial pressure after personal loss through

online learning. Speaking on the occasion, Alakh Pandey, Teacher and Founder, PhysicsWallah (PW), said, "Education matters most when it supports students during difficult phases of life. Through this initiative, we are making an effort to ensure that students facing personal losses in Jammu & Kashmir are able to continue their education without financial barriers. When a student is willing to learn, it becomes important for institutions to step forward with support. By offering access to PW's online batches, we are trying to encourage these students to move ahead with confidence."

Alongside its digital programmes, PW JKBOSE Wallah, the stateboard vertical of PhysicsWallah (PW), provides academic guidance and preparation support for students of Classes 9 to 12 preparing for the stateboard examinations. Through its digital platforms, PW aims to provide academic guidance and learning support while attempting to cater to students' diverse learning needs in the region. (PR)

DC Budgam reviews progress under HADP, JKCIP in district

GMK NEWS NETWORK

BUDGAM: Deputy Commissioner (DC) Budgam, Athar Aamir Khan Tuesday reviewed the progress achieved under the Holistic Agriculture Development Programme (HADP) and Jammu & Kashmir Competitiveness Improvement Project (JKCIP) in the district.

During the meeting, the DC conducted a detailed department-wise review of applications received, approvals, units established and funds released under various components of the programmes.

It was informed that under HADP a total of 42,168 applications have been received across departments including Agriculture, Animal Husbandry, Fisheries, Horticulture, Horticulture Planning & Marketing, Sericulture and Sheep Husbandry.

The review revealed that 6,188 units have been established during the financial year 2025-26, taking the cumulative number of units established in the district to 12,809.

Department-wise figures indicate that Agriculture department has established 3,507 units during the year while Animal Husbandry department has established 1,610 units. Similarly, 491 units have been established by Hor-

ticulture department, 507 by Sheep Husbandry, 23 by Fisheries, 40 by Sericulture and 10 by Horticulture Planning & Marketing.

The meeting also reviewed the status of JKCIP implementation in the district. It was informed that 12,287 registrations have been made for various activities under the scheme, out of which 8,856 cases have been approved by the District Level Committee.

Further, 608 units have been taken up for establishment under JKCIP and 589 units have been completed so far.

Speaking on the occasion, the DC directed the concerned departments to expedite the processing of pending applications and ensure timely establishment of approved units so that the benefits of the schemes reach the intended beneficiaries.

He emphasized effective coordination among departments and stressed on maximizing the impact of HADP and JKCIP to strengthen livelihood opportunities and boost the agriculture and allied sectors in the district.

Besides, CPO budgam Javid Ahmad Najjar, CAO Budgam, CHO Budgam, CAHO Budgam, Officials from various agriculture and allied departments were present during the meeting.

KU launches week-long training programme on Fish Breeding and Rearing



GMK NEWS NETWORK

SRINAGAR: The University of Kashmir (KU) launched a week-long Start-up/Entrepreneurship Training-cum-Demonstration Programme on "Fish Breeding and Rearing" at the Main Campus. The programme is being organised by the Department of Zoology under the University's Skill Development and Entrepreneurship initiative.

Hosted by the Fish Nutrition Research Laboratory, Department of Zoology, the training programme will run from March 10 to March 16, 2026, and is aimed at unemployed youth, farmers, traders, emerging entrepreneurs and other stakeholders associated with the aquaculture sector.

Speaking at the inaugural session, Vice-Chancellor KU, Prof. Nilofer Khan, said that the fisheries and aquaculture sector holds significant potential for generating sustainable livelihood opportunities in Jammu and Kashmir.

"Focused hands-on training in areas such as fish breeding, seed production and scientific rearing can help young people establish micro-enterprises and strengthen local supply chains," she said, urging participants to utilise the programme as a platform for developing viable start-ups.

Registrar KU, Prof.

Naseer Iqbal, said that such initiatives help bridge the gap between university laboratories and real-world enterprises and encourage participants to explore government support mechanisms to scale promising ideas into sustainable businesses.

Earlier, Head, Department of Zoology KU and Convener of the programme Prof. Tariq Ahmad, highlighted the department's vision, academic achievements and its ongoing efforts in promoting research and training in fisheries and aquaculture.

In his welcome address, Prof. Imtiaz Ahmad, faculty at the department and organiser of the programme, outlined the objectives of the training, which include imparting practical skills in broodstock management, hatchery operations, fry and fingerling rearing, and the use of economical feed ingredients for cost-effective fish production.

Co-organiser of the event, Dr. Yahya Bakhtyar briefed the participants about the technical sessions, field demonstrations and interactive modules planned during the week-long programme. Around 35-40 participants are attending the training, which will provide exposure to laboratory and field facilities as well as guidance on start-up planning in the fisheries sector.

DC Anantnag visits GMC, Associated Hospital Anantnag

GMK NEWS NETWORK

ANANTNAG: Deputy Commissioner Anantnag, Dr. Bilal Mohiud Din Bhat Tuesday conducted a visit to Government Medical College Anantnag (Dialgam) and the MMAB, Associated Hospital (Janlatmandi) to take stock of the ongoing projects and review the healthcare services and facilities being provided to the patients.



Principal GMC, ADC, MS AH, officers from executing agencies and other officers and officials accompanied the Deputy Commissioner.

At GMC, the Principal apprised the DC about the major projects completed in 2024-25 and 2025-26 and the status of ongoing works. It was informed that Cath Lab at the cost of Rs.12.63 Crore and nursing college at estimated cost of Rs. 5 Crore have been developed. Besides, pipe laying for water was done at the cost of Rs. 4.50 Crore.

In ongoing works, Fire Fighting System at AH coming at cost of Rs. 4.98 Crore has achieved physical progress of 80 percent and is expected to be completed by Sep-2026. Further, the construction work on 50 bedded Critical Care Block which is coming at a cost of Rs. 23.75 Crore is under process.

Regarding the financial progress, the DC was informed that out of Rs. 1996.39 Lakh released under Capex during the current FY 2025-26, Rs.

988.49 Lakh which is approximately 50 percent have been utilised so far.

The DC issued on spot directions to the concerned authorities to expedite pace of work and the financial progress on the works. He also called for providing the essential amenities, sports, co curricular and other facilities to the students and staff of the college.

During the visit of AH,



the DC inspected MRD Section and took stock of the functioning of online registration and Scan and Share services. He issued directions for completion of the Critical Care Block project in a time bound manner and also recommended adding two floors for the Sarai for ease of attendants.

The hospital authorities briefed the DC about functioning of different departments, patient inflow and the measures being taken to improve healthcare delivery at the institution.

The DC interacted with doctors, paramedical staff and patients to take first-hand feedback regarding the quality of healthcare services and availability of medicines and diagnostic facilities.

The Deputy Commissioner emphasized the need for maintaining high standards of cleanliness, patient care and timely medical services. He asked the concerned authorities to address any shortcomings on priority so that people receive quality healthcare services without inconvenience.

GOVERNMENT OF JAMMU & KASHMIR DIRECTORATE OF TRIBAL AFFAIRS

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Subject: Extension of timeline for filling of online application and Completion of verification process for the Pre-Matric & Post Matric Scholarship for ST Students of J&K during the Academic Year 2025-26.

NOTICE

It is hereby notified for the information of all the concern that timeline for receipt and verification of online applications on National Scholarship Portal (NSP) for Pre-Matric (9th & 10th) and Post Matric scholarships for ST students of Jammu & Kashmir for the Academic Year 2025-26 called for wide Notice(s) issued under endorsement No: DTA/PMS/2025-26/2742 2804 Dated: 14.08.2025 (post matric) read with corrigendum No: DTA/PMS/2025 26/427-88 dated: 18.08.2025 and endorsement No: DTA/PMS/2025-26/489-502 Dated: 19.08.2025(pre-matric) with respect to verification and defective application is further extended as per details indicated in the table given below:

S.No.	Name of the Scheme	Defective Application Verification	Last Date for Institution Verification after extension	Last Date for State/District Nodal Officer Verification after Extension
1.	Pre-Matric Scholarship to ST Students for J&K	20th of March 2026	20th of March 2026	27th of March 2026
2.	Post-Matric Scholarship to ST Students for J&K	20th of March 2026	20th of March 2026	27th of March 2026

No: DTA/Sch/PMS/2025/ 1614-95 Dated: 09-03-2026 DPK-11739-25 DT: 10/03/2026 (Mohd Mumtaz Ali) JKAS, Director Tribal Affairs J&K

PM extends birthday wishes to CM Omar; prays for his long life, good health

GMK NEWS NETWORK

NEW DELHI: Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Tuesday extended birthday greetings to Jammu and Kashmir Chief Minister Omar Abdullah, wishing him a long life and good health.

Taking to social media platform X, the Prime Minister conveyed his wishes to the National Conference leader on the occasion of his birthday.

"Greetings to Jammu and Kashmir CM Shri Omar Abdullah Ji on his birthday. May he be blessed with a long life and wonderful health," PM Modi said.

Omar Abdullah was born on March 10, 1970, in Rochford, Essex, England. He belongs to one of the most prominent political families in Jammu and Kashmir. His grandfather, Sheikh Muhammad Abdullah, popularly known as the "Lion of Kashmir," was a towering political figure in the region and played a crucial role in shaping its political landscape. In 1939, Sheikh Abdullah founded the Jammu and Kashmir National Conference, which later emerged as one of the region's most influential political parties.

Omar's father, Farooq Abdullah, also served mul-



multiple terms as the Chief Minister of Jammu and Kashmir and has been a key leader in the National Conference. His mother, Mollie Abdullah, is British, which gave Omar a multicultural upbringing that combined influences from both India and the United Kingdom.

For his early education, Omar studied at Burn Hall School in Srinagar and later attended the Lawrence School in Sanawar, Himachal Pradesh. He subsequently moved to Mumbai, where he completed his Bachelor's degree in Commerce from Sydenham College. After finishing his undergraduate studies, he pursued higher education in Scotland and obtained a postgraduate degree in Business Administration from the University of Strathclyde.

Omar Abdullah entered

the National Conference, secured a strong mandate in the Assembly elections by winning 42 out of the 90 seats.

The oath-taking ceremony was held in Srinagar and was attended by several prominent political leaders, including Congress MP Rahul Gandhi. Omar Abdullah's Cabinet includes five ministers from the National Conference, while the Congress party extended outside support to the government without joining the Cabinet.

During his inaugural address, Abdullah emphasised the importance of restoring statehood to Jammu and Kashmir and addressing the concerns of residents who felt sidelined during the period of Presidential rule.

Following the abrogation of Article 370 in August 2019, Omar Abdullah was placed under preventive detention for several months. In the 2024 Lok Sabha elections, he contested from the Baramulla constituency but was defeated by Engineer Sheikh Rashid.

Apart from his political career, Omar Abdullah has also been associated with initiatives aimed at promoting education and tourism in Jammu and Kashmir. He has supported various charitable activities and trusts working for social welfare.

JKTPO showcases J&K's Agro, Food excellence at 40th edition of AAHAR 2026

GMK NEWS NETWORK

NEW DELHI: The Jammu and Kashmir Trade Promotion Organisation (JKTPO), under the aegis of the Industries and Commerce Department, government of Jammu and Kashmir, is showcasing the region's rich agro and food processing potential at the 40th edition of AAHAR 2026.

Pertinently, AAHAR is Asia's largest Food & Beverage and Hospitality exhibition, being held from 10 to 14 March, 2026 at Bharat Mandapam, New Delhi under the Raising and Accelerating MSME Programme (RAMP).

The event is being organised by the India Trade Promotion Organisation (ITPO) in association with the Ministry of Food Processing Industries. It is being attended by the leading food and beverage companies, hospitality industry stakeholders, exporters, buyers, policymakers and trade professionals from across the globe.

The exhibition aims to further consolidate India's position as a trusted and competitive partner in global food supply chains by providing valuable platform for the entrepreneurs from Jammu & Kashmir to gain market exposure, engage with industry stakeholders and explore new business opportunities. The region's distinc-



tive products and culinary traditions received encouraging response from the visitors and buyers, further contributing to the success of AAHAR 2026 as a key platform for showcasing India's vibrant food and beverage sector globally.

The exhibition is expected to feature over 1,800 exhibitors and 155 international participants from 17 countries, alongside thousands of verified global buyers and several high-level international trade delegations.

The mega event was inaugurated by the Union Commerce & Industry Minister Piyush Goyal. It reflects the Government's strong commitment towards strengthening India's food processing ecosystem, enhancing

export competitiveness and expanding global market access for Indian food products.

The Jammu and Kashmir Pavilion, located at Hall No. 1, First Floor IF-23, provides a vibrant platform for MSMEs, FPOs and women entrepreneurs to showcase their premium offerings. The Pavilion highlights Jammu and Kashmir's world-renowned Geographical Indication (GI)-tagged products such as Saffron, Garlic, Rajmah, Basmati Rice, Sulai (Acacia) and multifloral honey, Millets, along with organic honey, essential oils, herbs, ground spices, pulses, dry fruits, dehydrated fruits and vegetables.

The Jammu & Kashmir Pavilion will serve as a focused platform for

the exporters and entrepreneurs from the UT to showcase their high-quality products, explore new trade partnerships and enhance the visibility of J&K's agri-based value chains in national and international markets.

Participation in AAHAR 2026 is expected to generate valuable B2B interactions, business leads and potential trade partnerships for the entrepreneurs from Jammu and Kashmir, further strengthening the region's presence in the evolving global food market.

Speaking on the occasion, Managing Director, JKTPO, stated that the participation at AAHAR 2026 demonstrates the organisation's continued commitment towards promoting MSMEs, food processors and agri-entrepreneurs from Jammu and Kashmir by connecting them with major trade platforms. He emphasized that such initiatives play a crucial role in enhancing market access, product visibility and export potential of the region's unique agri and food products. The participation of JKTPO at AAHAR 2026 reaffirms Jammu & Kashmir's position as an emerging hub for premium agri, horticulture and value-added food products, while contributing to the broader vision of strengthening India's food processing and agri-export ecosystem.

Govt launches Auto Scrutiny Portal, amends building Bye-Laws to boost Ease of Doing Business

GMK NEWS NETWORK

JAMMU: The Jammu and Kashmir government has notified amendments to the Unified Building Bye-Laws (UBBL) 2021 under the provisions of Jammu and Kashmir Development Act, 1970 and J&K Municipal Act 2000.

The move is aimed at promoting Ease of Doing Business, rationalizing development controls and digitizing approvals. The reforms are expected to strengthen the compliance across all Urban Local Bodies and Development Authorities in the Union Territory.

The amendments simplify land use regulations,

merge multiple sub-categories into four broad primary uses and allow Affordable Group Housing in Industrial zones, promoting inclusive land utilisation. Setback norms have been rationalized and Commercial Floor Area Ratio (FAR) has been enhanced up to 400 (subject to norms), thereby increasing development potential. Further, the minimum Right of Way requirement for specified commercial and industrial activities has been reduced from 12 meter to 6 meter to facilitate economic growth, particularly in smaller urban areas.

The government has also launched the Auto Scrutiny Based Building Permission and CLU portal

with Auto-DCR technology, introducing a fully digital, rule-based and time-bound system for processing building permissions across all Urban Local Bodies and Development Authorities in the Union Territory.

Under the new framework, building plans submitted online are automatically scrutinized by the system against the provisions of the UBBL, Master Plans, Zonal Plans and applicable development controls. The software generates instant compliance reports identifying deviations, if any, thereby ensuring transparency and uniform interpretation of regulations.

The portal integrates Change of Land Use (CLU) with Building Permission, reducing timelines from 60-90 days to 30 days.

The portal allows self-certification and auto-approval for Low-Risk Buildings, empowering registered architects and engineers to certify compliance with building norms. The system ensures transparency, uniform interpretation of regulations and eliminates subjectivity.

The Auto Scrutiny Portal also facilitates online fee calculation, digital payment, real-time application tracking, downloadable approvals and a digital record repository. Applicants can monitor

the status of their cases at every stage, ensuring complete transparency.

The amendments also introduce energy efficiency and environmental compliance provisions, including Eco Niwas Samhita norms, with incentive-based benefits such as additional FAR and fast-track approvals.

These comprehensive amendments mark a transition towards transparent, technology-driven, and compliance-oriented urban governance, ensuring planned, sustainable, and citizen-centric development across Jammu & Kashmir. The URL of the revamped portal is <https://obps.jk.gov.in>.

Body of soldier missing after river crossing exercise in J&K, recovered

IANAS

JAMMU: The body of an Indian Army soldier, who went missing during a river crossing exercise, was recovered on Tuesday a day after the accident.

Officials said that the body of the soldier who had gone missing during a river-crossing training exercise in Rajouri district of Jammu and Kashmir a day earlier, was recovered today.

"The body of Sepoy Akshit Sharma was recovered from the Manawar stream in the Khour area by a joint search party of the Army, the National Disaster Response Force (NDRF) and local rescuers this morning.

"Sepoy Sharma had gone missing on Monday during a river-crossing exercise conducted by the Army in the Sundarbani area of Rajouri district.

"Following the incident, a search operation was launched by the Army with the assistance of NDRF and local rescuers", officials said.

Army soldiers discharge duties in high altitude



SEPoy AKSHIT SHARMA
10 MAR 2026
We Salute Our Braveheart

mountains and in rugged terrain in J&K and Ladakh in highly inhospitable and challenging weather and geographical conditions.

The Indian Army also mans the world's highest battlefield, the Siachen Glacier in the Ladakh region.

The Siachen Glacier is a glacier located in the eastern Karakoram range of the Himalayas, just northeast of the point NJ9842 where the Line of Control between India and Pakistan ends in northeastern Kashmir.

At 76 kms long, it is the longest glacier in the Karakoram and second-longest in the world's non-polar areas. It falls from an alti-

tude of 5,753 metres (18,875 ft) above sea level at its head at Indira Col on the India-China border down to 3,620 metres (11,875 ft) at its terminus.

The entire Siachen Glacier, with all major passes, has been under the control of India as part of the union territory of Ladakh since 1984 with Pakistani posts located 1 km below more than 100 Indian posts on the ridge.

It is to acclimatise and train the soldiers for these challenging duties, that tough on ground training exercises and fatigues are carried out for the army personnel in J&K and Ladakh Union Territories.

Sakeena Itoo interacts with representatives of Confederation of PCOs

GMK NEWS NETWORK

JAMMU: Minister for Social Welfare, Education, Health and Medical Education, Sakeena Itoo, Tuesday held an extensive interaction with representatives of the Confederation of Physically Challenged Organisations and took stock of various issues and grievances of Persons with Disabilities (PWDs) across Jammu and Kashmir.

The interaction was held with an aim to strengthen welfare measures, improve accessibility and ensure that development reaches every person, including those living with disabilities across Jammu and Kashmir.

The meeting was attended by Commissioner Secretary, Social Welfare department (SWD), Sarmad Hafeez; Director Social Welfare Kashmir, Mohammad Akbar Wani; Mission Director POSHAN/ICDS, Sajad Hussain Ganai; Director Social Welfare Jammu, Ranjeet Singh; Director Finance SWD, other senior officers of SWD, members of Confederation of Physically Challenged Organisations and other concerned officers, either in person or through



video conferencing.

During the interaction, the Minister emphasised that inclusive governance remains core priority of the Government.

"The rights, dignity and welfare of PWDs are non-negotiable. Our policies are being continuously reviewed to ensure equal opportunities and access for all," she stated.

Highlighting several ongoing initiatives, Minister Sakeena informed the participants that the Social Welfare department is actively working towards welfare of PWDs and outreach programmes are being enhanced to ensure welfare schemes reach beneficiaries in remote and underserved areas. "Focus is being laid on improving accessibility for PWDs in public infrastructure, edu-

cational institutions and government offices in line with inclusive development goals", she said.

During the meeting, the Minister issued several key directions aimed at strengthening support mechanisms for PWDs. She asked officials to explore providing Antyodaya Anna Yojana (AAY) ration cards to disabled individuals without parental support. She also directed the department to examine the feasibility of constructing dedicated hostel facilities for Persons with Disabilities in both Jammu and Srinagar.

In a significant decision, the Minister instructed the department to appoint a Nodal Officer at the administrative level to serve as a single-point contact for addressing grievances and concerns

of Persons with Disabilities.

Assuring stakeholders that their voices would shape future policies, the Minister said genuine suggestions received during consultations would be incorporated wherever feasible. She stressed that continuous dialogue between the Government and stakeholder organisations is essential for designing responsive and need-based welfare programmes.

Appreciating the role of such organisations, the Minister acknowledged their contribution in advocating for disability rights and bridging the gap between the Government and beneficiaries. She called for collaborative efforts to build an inclusive society where no individual is left behind.

RDD Vendors' Association calls on Javid Dar, raises pending payment issue

GMK NEWS NETWORK

JAMMU: A delegation of the Kashmir RDD Vendors' Association on Tuesday called on Minister for Rural Development, Javid Ahmed Dar and raised issues related to pending payments for works executed by vendors between 2017 and 2020.

During the meeting, the delegation apprised the Minister of the difficulties being faced by vendors due to delay in release of payments for works carried out under various Rural Development Department projects during the period.

The members requested the Minister to intervene and ensure early clearance of the pending dues, stating that many vendors have been facing financial stress due to prolonged delays.

The Minister gave a patient hearing to the concerns raised by the delegation and assured them that the matter would be examined and taken up with the concerned authorities for appropriate action.

GOVERNMENT OF JAMMU & KASHMIR
OFFICE OF THE DEPUTY COMMISSIONER, BARAMULLA
(Email: aosectionbaramulla@gmail.com. Fax No. 01954234005)

AUCTION NOTICE

The Auction Committee intends to auction the dead stock / obsolete / unused electric / electronic items available in DC Office, Baramulla. The auction shall be held on 18th March 2026, at 11:00 AM in the premises of the DC Office Baramulla. The bidders / interested parties shall have to deposit an amount of Rs:5000/- (Rupees Five Thousand Only) in the form of Demand Draft payable to Accounts Officer, I/O Deputy Commissioner Baramulla, as security deposit, failing which no person shall be allowed to participate in the bidding. The successful bidder has to deposit the bidding amount within 07 days from the date of authorization failing which the security deposit shall be forfeited. The successful bidder has to clear the site within 03 days. Further, the Auction Committee reserves the right to either accept or reject the bid. The minimum reserve bid shall be Rs:41020/- (Rupees Forty-One Thousand Twenty Only).

The list of items / detailed description can be had from the office of the Deputy Commissioner Baramulla during office hours on all working days.

No: DCB/AO/Auction/ 7094-7104
DT: 10/03/2026

DIPK-11769-25
DT: 10/03/2026

Adtl. Deputy Commissioner
Baramulla

Good Morning Kashmir

EDITORIAL

Fueling The Valley: A Test Of Economic Resilience

As the snow recedes and the Indira Gandhi Memorial Tulip Garden prepares for an early opening on March 16, Kashmir stands on the cusp of a vital tourist season. However, the optimism of a bustling spring is being shadowed by a darkening global energy horizon. The urgent plea from the Kashmir business fraternity for a steady LPG supply is not merely a local administrative request; it is a canary in the coal mine for how regional economies must navigate the fallout of the current Iran-US-Israel conflict. The Global Siphon

The arithmetic of the crisis is daunting. With the Strait of Hormuz—the transit point for 20% of global oil and a significant portion of India's LPG imports—facing severe disruptions, the world has been plunged into a "black gold" shock. Price Volatility: Brent crude has touched highs near \$120 per barrel this week, translating to immediate inflationary pressure on transport and heating. Supply Rationing: Domestic oil marketing companies have already extended the LPG refill waiting period to 25 days to curb panic booking. Priority Shifts: The Government of India has rightly prioritized the fertilizer sector and domestic households, but this leaves the commercial "leisure" sector—the backbone of Kashmir's economy—in a precarious position. The Kashmir Conundrum

For the Kashmir Valley, LPG is more than just cooking gas; it is the lifeblood of the hospitality industry. A shortage during the peak tourist influx could lead to: Service Disruptions: Hotels and restaurants, already facing a temporary suspension of commercial supplies in some parts of India, cannot sustain a season on empty cylinders. Reputational Damage: Tourism thrives on the promise of comfort. If the "Paradise on Earth" cannot provide basic heating or hot meals, the long-term brand of Kashmir tourism suffers. Economic Fragility: After years of seeking stability, the local business community cannot afford a season "frozen" by high fuel costs or dry supply chains. The Path Forward

The Government of India (GOI) must treat the Valley's energy security as a strategic priority. While the Ministry of Petroleum and Natural Gas has ordered increased production, a specific "tourist-season buffer" for J&K is essential. The administration should consider emergency stockpiling at the Pampore and Anantnag bottling plants and ensure that the Srinagar-Jammu National Highway remains a "green corridor" for fuel tankers, regardless of global price swings. The conflict in West Asia is a geopolitical storm we cannot control, but how we shield our most vulnerable and vital economic hubs—like the Kashmir Valley—will be the true measure of our national economic resilience.

FairPoint

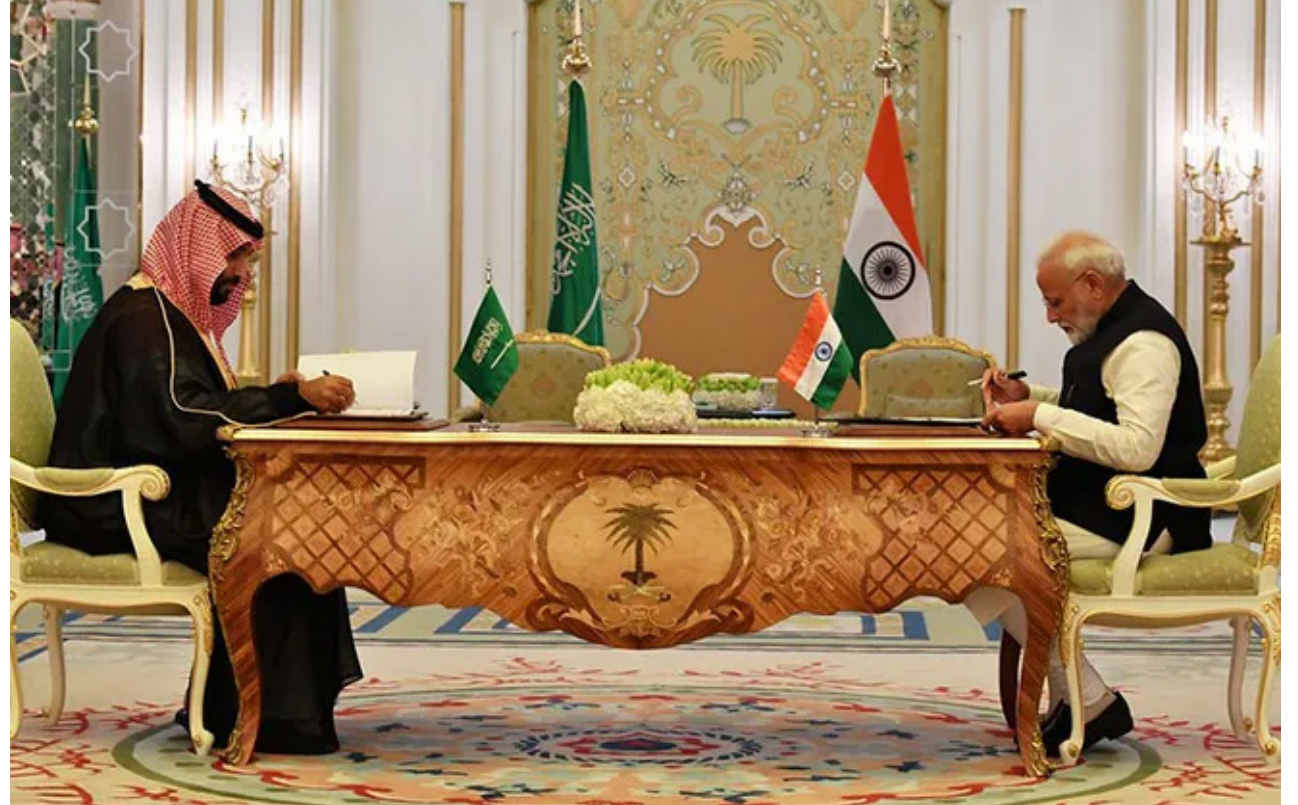
Oppn May Find Faults, But Modi Govt Holds Its Nerve In West Asia

DEEPIKA BHAN

It is easy to criticise. It is even easier to find faults and raise one's voice in protest. Opposition parties in India have always been good at doing so -- and in many ways, that is essential for a healthy democracy. But there are moments when history is unfolding, when decisions are tactical and strategic, and when the nation's security and long-term interests are at stake. In such moments, perhaps the instinct to immediately point fingers can wait.

Unfortunately, that restraint is not always visible in public discourse. With the escalating tensions between the US, Israel, and Iran threatening to draw much of the world into a wider conflict, the geopolitical situation has become precarious for many countries. For nations like India, the challenge lies in navigating an extremely delicate diplomatic balance. The situation is akin to walking between the devil and the deep sea -- a narrow path where a misstep could have far-reaching consequences.

So far, India appears to have managed this balancing act with caution and maturity.



India's external diplomacy is being handled with notable care by its diplomats, even as the Modi government continues to maintain equilibrium amid rapidly evolving global developments. The complexity of the situation became evident when an Iranian warship, IRIS Dena, which had recently visited Visakhapatnam as part of a naval exercise organised by the Indian Navy, was torpedoed by a US submarine off the southern coast of Sri Lanka in the early hours of March 4.

The incident triggered immediate shock and disbelief, followed quickly by alarm and criticism. The shock stemmed from the fact that the vessel had been a guest of India only days earlier. It was reportedly not on a combat mission and was believed to be unarmed when it was attacked. The alarm was understandable because the incident occurred so close to India's maritime neighbourhood. And the criticism came from sections of the Opposition, who saw the episode as an opportunity to question the government's diplomatic posture.

But was it really a moment that exposed weakness on India's part? Not quite. In reality, there was little that New Delhi could have done in that specific situation.

The criticism continued until it emerged that another Iranian vessel, IRIS Lavan, had been permitted to dock in India. External Affairs Minister S. Jaishankar later confirmed this development.

The ship had approached India on February 28 -- the very day Israel and

the US launched their strikes on Iran, reportedly killing Supreme Leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei. India approved the request for docking on March 1, and the vessel arrived in Kochi on March 4 -- coincidentally, the same day IRIS Dena was attacked. All 183 crew members of IRIS Lavan are currently being accommodated in naval facilities in the area.

This decision demonstrates that India's diplomacy is neither reactive nor indifferent. It reflects a careful attempt to manage humanitarian considerations while navigating complex geopolitical realities.

Before such facts emerged, criticism had already begun to gather pace. Some voices even attempted to give a religious or ideological colour to what was essentially a complex geopolitical situation. It was also unfortunate that the Congress party rushed to issue statements even before New Delhi formally articulated its position on the rapidly evolving West Asia crisis following the initial US-Israel strikes on Iran.

Why the Congress party chose to respond so quickly is not difficult to understand. Electoral calculations often shape political responses. This is not the first time such reactions have been seen. The party has questioned several military actions taken by India in the past, including the Balakot airstrikes, Operation Sindoor, and other operations targeting Pakistan-based terror infrastructure. Seen in that context, its quick response to the US-Israel-Iran conflict was perhaps predictable.

New Delhi, however, has largely stayed away from rhetorical posturing. Instead, it has responded cautiously and at appropriate moments, often through actions rather than loud declarations. Diplomacy, especially in times of conflict, rarely unfolds in television studios or on social media platforms. Much of it happens quietly and deliberately behind closed doors.

India's approach so far reflects that understanding. India has deep and complex relationships with all the principal actors involved in the unfolding crisis. Its strategic partnerships across the region are well known. At the same time, millions of Indians work across West Asia, and any regional instability directly affects their safety as well as India's economic interests.

Balancing these relationships during a conflict of this scale is far from easy. India has so far managed to maintain a calibrated approach -- neither rushing into dramatic public positions nor retreating into silence.

At the domestic level, too, the government appears to have kept the situation largely stable. In neighbouring countries such as Pakistan and Bangladesh, economic disruptions and fuel shortages have triggered public anxiety. Pakistan, for instance, recently announced an overnight increase of Pakistani Rs 55 per litre in petrol and high-speed diesel prices -- the steepest hike in its history. Despite that increase, shortages continue to trouble consumers.

There are also fears of a broader energy crisis in Pakistan, where electricity generation remains heavily dependent on imported LNG.

In contrast, India's energy supplies remain stable, and daily life continues without major disruptions. At a time of global uncertainty, this relative stability is not insignificant.

Critics argue that the government should adopt clearer or stronger positions on the conflict. But if diplomacy were truly that simple, many of the world's crises would never have emerged in the first place. Effective diplomacy often requires patience, restraint and careful calculation.

India's current posture reflects precisely that -- a pragmatic attempt to remain non-aligned while engaging constructively with all stakeholders in pursuit of its national interests.

So far, India appears to be walking this geopolitical tightrope with steady steps. The path ahead remains narrow, the winds of global politics are unpredictable, and the risks are real. But careful diplomacy, strategic patience and political maturity can help the country navigate these turbulent times.

In moments like these, the Opposition's urge to criticise loudly may be strong. Sometimes, the wiser course lies not in shouting louder, but in acting more carefully.

(Deepika Bhan can be contacted at deepika.b@ians.in)

FROM INSECURITY TO DIGNITY

Why Contractual Employees Deserve Regularization

MOHD ISHAQ SHAH

There is a wise saying that every death deserves dignity before death. Likewise, every citizen of the country deserves work with honour and dignity combined with security. There are certain parameters that the authorities need to take into account for the regularisation of all types of temporary employees and especially contractual lecturers at School/ College level.

First of all, there is an ethical parameter that requires taking into consideration while initiating such a process or thinking about it. When a person serves a govt department for 5-7 years with the hope that s/he will be regularised and his job will be given a security up to the attainment of superannuation. And this hope turns into despair when, after said period of time, it is not done so. And the complete life cycle of a temporary worker gets adversely impacted. So the moral/ethical perspective is that if a govt utilises the service of a worker for 7 years on the least honourarium, it becomes their moral responsibility to make them regular and secure their future. Now, is the matter of discussion whether the govt can absorb all these employees in a regular capacity or not? As a reference, I would like to quote here orders from other states of India that have regularised contrac-

tual employees, and especially lecturers/assistant professors, in the subsequent paragraph of this write-up.

Administrative perspective: various states like Assam, Manipur, Mizoram, Haryana, and Rajasthan have regularised such a category of employees. So it is obvious that our UT can also take such initiatives to secure the future of thousands of unemployed/underemployed youth. And it is a very positive factor that the govt has been seeking data on such employees from the concerned departments. And the process in this regard has been initiated.

Legal perspective: The question that arises in the mind of every Tom, Dick and Harry is how can a contractual employee be regularised when he/she has produced an affidavit/agreement before the appointed authorities at the time of selection. How can this agreement be nullified and such employees be given a regular job? I would like to quote a famous saying that rules are made to be broken or changed, which implies that the man-made laws are always alterable and modifiable. Contract agreement is not any divine law that can't be changed or modified. In early 2026, the Supreme Court of India reinforced that state entities cannot deny regularisation to long-serving contractual employees (e.g., over a decade) working on sanctioned posts, deeming it arbitrary, exploitative, and a violation of



Article 14. The Court held that contractual labels cannot erase constitutional rights to fair treatment.

Doctrine of Legitimate Expectation: Workers with repeated yearly extensions for a long duration have a legitimate expectation of regularisation. "Model Employer" Obligation: The State must act with fairness and not exploit workers by keeping them on temporary contracts while extracting regular work. Sanctioned Posts Requirement: Regularisation is primarily mandated for employees working against sanctioned, vacant posts following a due selection process. Arbitrary Termination: Abruptly ending the services of long-term contract employees, solely on the basis of contract nomenclature, is unconstitutional. Limitations: The court noted that contractual staff cannot claim equal status as a right in all situations, particularly if hired through contractors or if the appointment

manifesto. And hopefully all the categories of such employees are likely to be regularised in a phased manner.

So the conclusion would be like that, keeping in view all the perspectives, it is obligatory for a state/UT govt to regularise the services of all the temporary employees who have given their prime time to the state and have in a way contributed to the state's welfare. And secure the future of the employees and their children. Otherwise, we are exploiting our own people for whom the state claims to be working for the benefit of. Which seems altogether to be paradoxical in nature as well as implication. Because public safety and welfare are the chief concerns of every govt., which under constitutional provisions can't be undermined. Hence, in this regard, my suggestion to the intellectual community, academicians, politicians and social workers combined with the media fraternity is to come forward in support of these employees so that the future of our community is safeguarded. I have tried a little bit to put forward my broken words to the readers to comprehend and respond in a sensible way so that a joint consensus is achieved, which may further lead us to the strategic planning to do something good for our people.

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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

Why World Needs A New Peace Initiative

LALIT GARGG

After the Second World War, the world attempted to build an international order in which power could be restrained through rules and institutions. For nearly eight decades, despite many ups and downs, this global system continued to function in one form or another. International institutions, multilateral agreements, diplomatic dialogue, and shared norms were all intended to prevent the world from descending into the principle of "might makes right," where the powerful devour the weak. With this vision, institutions such as the United Nations, the World Trade Organization, the World Health Organization, and UNESCO were established. These institutions did not make global politics ideal, but they ensured that power was at least tempered by a framework of rules and moral responsibility. Today, however, that very system is passing through an unprecedented crisis.

A new trend is rapidly emerging in global politics in which cooperation, dialogue, and multilateralism are being replaced by unilateral action, military strength, and the pursuit of immediate national gains. In particular, policies pursued by Donald Trump accelerated this tendency. The country that once played a leading role in building and protecting a rules-based international order now appears increasingly distant from several international agreements and institutions. During Trump's first term itself, this shift became visible when the United States began withdrawing from arrangements such as the Paris Climate Agreement and the Iran Nuclear Deal, while also distancing itself from institutions like the World Health Organization and UNESCO. These steps conveyed a clear message: if an agreement appears to conflict with short-term national interests, it can simply be abandoned. Such an approach dealt a serious blow to the spirit of global cooperation that had long formed the foundation of the international system.

Today the situation has become even more complex. Wars and conflicts are increasingly being accepted as normal occurrences in several parts of the world. The ongoing Russia-Ukraine War and the continu-



ing Israel-Hamas War are among the most tragic examples. These conflicts have placed millions of lives in peril, reduced cities to rubble, and destabilized the global economy. The greatest tragedy of war is that it rarely leads to a lasting solution. Even those who claim victory ultimately inherit devastation and suffering. History bears witness that wars have never brought true glory to humanity; they have only produced destruction, fear, and instability. War severely damages the environment, destroys economic resources, fuels inflation, reduces employment opportunities, and deepens feelings of insecurity and mistrust within societies.

One of the most alarming developments today is that violence and war are gradually becoming normalized. At times, the purpose of war is not genuine resolution but rather image-building in domestic politics, displays of power, or diversion from internal crises. Under such circumstances, both global morality and international law begin to weaken. If powerful nations themselves start breaking the rules, the credibility of the entire system comes under threat. A troubling pattern of double standards is also visible in matters of human rights. Some nations are sharply criticized, while similar actions elsewhere are ignored. As a result, human rights

risk becoming a geopolitical instrument rather than a universal moral value. If the international community truly wishes to safeguard humanity, it must adopt the same standards for all nations. In this context, an important question arises: Is the world moving once again toward an era where "might is right" becomes the guiding principle of international politics? If that happens, it will pose a grave danger not only to smaller nations but to the entire human civilization.

India's historical perspective becomes especially significant in such circumstances. Since independence, India has consistently supported the principles of sovereignty, non-interference, and multilateral cooperation. It has believed that global challenges can only be addressed through collective effort. For this reason, India has always emphasized peace, dialogue, and diplomacy. At a time when the global order appears fragile, India's role becomes even more crucial. India is not only an emerging economic power but also the representative of an ancient civilization that has long upheld the ideals of non-violence, coexistence, and universal humanity. The tradition of non-violence championed by Mahatma Gandhi and India's spiritual heritage continue to offer moral guidance to the world.

In this context, there are growing

expectations that Narendra Modi will utilize India's expanding global influence to advance the cause of world peace more actively. In recent years, India has raised the voice of peace, cooperation, and development on several international platforms. The time has now come to expand these efforts further. India should take initiatives at the global level to promote ceasefires, dialogue, and diplomatic solutions. Whether it is the conflict between Russia and Ukraine or the tragedy unfolding in West Asia, new avenues for negotiation and engagement are urgently needed. If India plays a constructive role in mediation and peace efforts, it could emerge as a balancing force in global politics.

Alongside this, serious reflection is required on the escalating race for nuclear weapons and advanced armaments. The rapid accumulation of modern weapons across the world represents a grave threat to humanity. At any moment, the miscalculation or political ambition of a single nation could push the world toward catastrophic destruction. Therefore, renewed international efforts toward disarmament and arms control are essential. If the global community collectively chooses dialogue and cooperation over war, it will not only ensure stability but also enable humanity to set new benchmarks of

development and prosperity. That is the most urgent need of our time—and the greatest hope for the future. At a time when the world is grappling with the tensions of war, violence, and power rivalry, global attention naturally turns toward India. India is a land where peace, coexistence, and non-violence are not merely political ideals but deeply rooted philosophies of life. It is from this soil that the timeless principle of "Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam" emerged, offering the vision of the entire world as one family.

Mahatma Gandhi transformed this ancient Indian wisdom into a powerful moral and political force in the modern era, demonstrating that conflicts can be resolved not through violence but through truth, compassion, and dialogue. India's spiritual heritage—enriched by the teachings of great sages like Mahavira and Gautama Buddha—reminds humanity that peace alone forms the foundation of lasting development and global harmony. In today's unstable global environment, India's vision of non-violence, its spiritual strength, and its commitment to universal welfare can offer the world a new direction—guiding humanity away from the blind race of conflict and toward a path of cooperation, harmony, and enduring peace.

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Oil, Inflation, And Insecurity: How Middle East Tensions Hit Home

IRFAN ATTARI

From oil routes to food prices, the escalating tensions between Israel, the United States, and Iran threaten to ripple through the global economy. The conflicts in the Middle East do not usually stay in the area. Conflicts in this area, which is particularly important for strategy, have caused economic shocks all across the world, from the oil shocks of the 1970s to the current regional crises. The world is once again on the edge of an economic domino effect that could affect everything from the cost of living for the common person to the energy markets. This is happening as tensions build between Israel, the US, and Iran.

People talk a lot about the military and political elements of the conflict, but the economic effects that are happening behind the scenes might be just as important. The Strait of Hormuz is one of the most vital commercial routes in the world, and these worries are all about it.

The Energy Lifeline is in trouble
The Strait of Hormuz is not simply a little body of water between Iran and the Gulf states; it is one of the most crucial energy chokepoints in the world. Every day, this line moves about 20% of the world's oil supply. Military conflict, maritime blockades, or threats to security can all quickly change the way international energy markets work. The market can be unstable since this area is likely to be unstable. Oil traders, shipping businesses, and insurance companies begin to take risk into account, which leads the price of crude oil around the world to rise quickly. These kinds of changes could have a big effect on the international economy, which still depends a lot on fossil fuels. Long-term hostilities could cause Saudi Arabia, the United Arab Emirates, and Kuwait, which are key Gulf oil producers, to send less oil. Energy prices always go up when supply becomes unpredictable but global demand stays the same. This has an effect on both people and businesses.

The Stress on New Economies



Changes in energy prices affect individuals all throughout the world, but they hurt poorer countries the most. Many countries in South Asia, Africa, and even some sections of Latin America need oil from other countries to keep their economies expanding and critical services running. For example, imports provide more than 80% of India's crude oil needs. The country's import bill goes up directly when the price of oil goes up a lot around the world. This makes the national currency weaker and the budget deficit greater. After that, governments have to decide whether to allow fuel prices rise at home or spend a lot of money to keep them low. Gas prices are increasing up, which means that millions of people, especially those who live in rural or low-income areas, have to pay more for transportation and basic commodities. The price of gas for farming goes up, public transportation costs more, and small businesses have a hard time keeping their pricing low as they grow.

Inflation and the Cost of Living

Every Day

People often say that oil is the lifeblood of modern economies, and they are right. Energy is needed by almost every business, whether it is to make things, move things, or make meals. As oil prices rise, companies all along the supply chain have to spend more to keep their operations running. In the end, these costs make individuals pay more for things and services. This is what economists term "cost-push inflation." It happens when firms have to raise prices because it costs them more to make things.

Families who are already having a hard time due to economic volatility can see their buying power drop quickly because of inflation. Families that are already having difficulties making ends meet are having even more trouble because the prices of basics like food, electricity, gas, and household products are increasing up.

Food Systems and Supply Chains

Conflicts between countries that have nothing to do with energy markets can hurt global agricultural systems. Farming needs fuel for trans-

portation, irrigation, and machines, hence it is crucial. Many fertilizers demand a lot of energy to create, therefore their prices go up when energy prices go up. Because of this, farmers have to pay more to make things, which makes food prices go up in both domestic and global markets. In places where food security is already unstable, this chain reaction might make things far worse.

Because of recent events like the virus and regional wars, global supply systems are already under a lot of stress. They might not be able to absorb another huge shock. Shipping delays, higher insurance costs for maritime routes, and problems with logistics might make international trade more difficult.

An economy that connects the whole world

The current situation makes it quite clear how interwoven the economies of the world are. A military conflict in the Middle East can have effects on petroleum prices in South Asia, food prices in Africa, and stock markets in Europe and North

America. In today's globalized world, geopolitical conflicts quickly spread through economic networks. Countries are connected in such a way that conflicts that happen far away affect the whole world, including maritime lines, energy infrastructure, and financial markets.

People who live far away from conflict zones often suffer from higher costs, less stable economies, and slower economic growth.

The Economic Necessity of Diplomatic Engagement

Even when tensions are rising, diplomacy is still the best way to stop things from getting worse. It is very important for the global economy and the balance of power in the region that important marine routes like the Strait of Hormuz are safe.

So, global powers, regional stakeholders, and international organizations should put communication and dispute resolution at the top of their lists of things to do. Long-term military conflicts can have a big negative impact on the economies of countries that are not directly involved, and they can also cause damage to the areas around them.

The problems in the Middle East are not just political; they are a real test for the world economy. We are seeing the first signs: supply chains are under a lot of stress, oil prices are going up, inflation is becoming a bigger worry, and the economy seems to be in a state of uncertainty.

History has proved over and over that the costs of war go beyond the borders of a country. Stability in one area helps the whole world grow in a globalized culture, while instability puts the financial security of millions of people at risk.

People that initiate wars around the world frequently do not suffer the most. Instead, it is carried by regular people all around the world whose lives are influenced by factors they cannot control.

(The author is an activist. He writes on problems in society, changes in policy, and developments that take place across the globe)

Three JSD Workers

persons in government servants is fraught with serious risks to maintenance of law and order and the security of the state. Tulip Garden To Open travellers who thronged the garden to witness more than 1.7 million blooming tulips. With an even larger display planned this year, officials expect the garden to once again be one of the major tourist attractions in Srinagar during spring—(KNO)

72000 J&K Rural

The Minister said the programme ensures social inclusion with provisions for participation of Scheduled Castes, Scheduled Tribes, women and persons with disabilities. The government further said that under RSETI, a total of 1,22,400 candidates have been trained in Jammu & Kashmir since inception till January 2026, while 89,915 of them have been settled in self-employment or micro-enterprises. RSETI's function as training institutes aimed at promoting self-employment and entrepreneurship among rural youth through short-term training programmes along with post-training support. The scheme is implemented through a partnership between the Ministry of Rural Development, sponsor banks and State/UT governments, with a mandate to establish one RSETI in each district—(KNO)

Rain, Snow End

Bandipora, Ganderbal, Anantnag and Kishtwar may receive moderate snowfall during this period.

In view of the fresh snowfall, authorities suspended vehicular movement on the Bandipora-Gurez road after snow accumulation at Razdan Top made the high-altitude pass slippery and unsafe for traffic.

An official said traffic on the road connecting Bandipora with the remote Gurez Valley has been suspended as a precautionary measure. "Due to snowfall at Razdan Top and slippery conditions, movement on the Bandipora-Gurez road has been suspended till further orders," the official said, adding that the road will be reopened after weather conditions improve and clearance operations are completed.

Razdan Top, located at an altitude of over 11,000 feet, serves as the main road link between Gurez Valley and the rest of Kashmir through Bandipora district.

The picturesque tourist resort of Sonamarg in central Kashmir's Ganderbal district also received fresh snowfall on Tuesday, blanketing the valley and bringing down temperatures in the area.

Reports from Ladakh said several parts of Kargil district received light to moderate snowfall after a prolonged dry spell, while rainfall was recorded in lower areas.

Snowfall was reported along the Zojila axis, the Barsoo region and the Zanskar valley, while Kargil town and adjoining lower areas witnessed rain, officials said.

Residents said the snowfall has brought relief to the local population, especially farmers who had been waiting for snow throughout the winter.

The MeT department has forecast generally dry weather from March 12 to 14, followed by cloudy conditions with the possibility of light rain or snowfall in higher reaches at scattered places from March 15 onwards.

Authorities have advised people to remain cautious, as temporary traffic disruptions may occur over the higher passes in Kupwara, Bandipora, Ganderbal, Anantnag, and Kishtwar due to weather conditions.

Meanwhile, the Jammu and Kashmir Disaster Management Authority said an avalanche with low danger is likely above 2,500 metres in the Bandipora district over the next 24 hours and advised people in vulnerable areas to stay alert—(KNO)

Govt Aims To Transform

lifelong learning and cognitive development. She directed the officers to prepare a time-bound action plan for proper implementation of these initiatives, ensuring quality standards and achieving measurable outcomes in child development indicators across Jammu and Kashmir.

Highlighting the pivotal role of Anganwadi Centres, the Minister directed officials to transform these centres into vibrant early learning spaces equipped with child-friendly infrastructure, activity-based learning materials and trained human resource. "Anganwadi workers serve as first educators for children, they must be empowered through continuous capacity-building programmes and modern pedagogical tools", she asserted.

Calling for stronger inter-departmental coordination, the Minister stressed convergence between the Social Welfare, School Education, Health & Medical Education Department and Rural development departments to ensure seamless delivery of services to young children and mothers.

"Early childhood care is not merely a welfare initiative but a long-term investment in human capital. A child who receives proper nutrition, care and early education grows into a confident and capable citizen," the Minister observed.

She further instructed officers to strengthen parental awareness campaigns focusing on nutrition, early stimulation and pre-school readiness, particularly in rural and under-served areas.

The Minister also reviewed plans for digital monitoring mechanisms, improved infrastructure support and enhanced learning assessment tools to track developmental milestones among children enrolled at Anganwadi Centres.

During the meeting, Commissioner Secretary SWD gave a detailed presentation on proposed initiatives for strengthening of ECCE in J&K and its convergence with other allied depart-

ments. He informed the Minister that through these initiatives Universal access and equity in early learning will be boosted which will lead to holistic development of child.

The Commissioner Secretary also apprised the Minister that strategies like mentorship programme in which Teachers from nearby primary schools will mentor Anganwadi Workers, ensuring seamless transition from pre-school to Grade-I and improving pedagogical quality through monthly on-site visits. He also said that University and college students will be made stakeholders who will participate as interns under Mission POSHAN, acting as Poshan Mitras and supporting nutrition awareness, growth monitoring, and learning activities.

The Commissioner Secretary also informed that Officer Adoption Programme is proposed by which Government officers will adopt Anganwadi Centres, providing mentorship, monitoring implementation, and strengthening community engagement with monthly visits and structured reporting.

He also apprised the Minister that Anganwadi Centres are being positioned as community hubs of integrated services.

The Commissioner also outlined other initiatives like a four-tier training ecosystem involving DIETs, NIPCCD, MLTCs and mentor teachers for Capacity Building, Digital Transformation of Anganwadi Services like QR-enabled Anganwadi Centres, One Child One Card digital identity system, APAAR ID integration for preschool children, Poshan Tracker digital monitoring as well as Real-time service visibility for communities. He also briefed the Minister about other key initiatives like Poshan on Wheels for doorstep services and beneficiary registration, Ring the Bell Campaign promoting punctuality and transparency, NGO partnership initiative "Sanwarein Bachpan" for strengthening foundational learning and POSHAN Vatika nutrition gardens across AWCs.

CS Pushes For Fast-Track

and JKSSB. He examined each issue in detail and directed the concerned departments to issue necessary clarifications and resolve procedural hurdles immediately so that the recruitment process is not delayed.

Observing that prolonged recruitment cycles often create uncertainty for job aspirants, the Chief Secretary underscored the importance of conducting recruitment within a defined timeframe. He noted that a predictable recruitment cycle would allow applicants to plan their careers better and reduce anxiety among candidates.

During the meeting, the Commissioner Secretary, General Administration Department (GAD), M.Raju presented a comprehensive overview of vacant posts across government departments. The data revealed that a total of 40,661 posts are currently vacant in different departments, including 3,808 Gazetted, 24,507 Non-Gazetted, and 12,351 Multi-Tasking Staff (MTS) posts.

Among major departments, Health & Medical Education accounts for a significant share of vacancies with 2,497 Gazetted, 8,088 Non-Gazetted and 2,712 MTS posts, while other departments with substantial vacancies include Agriculture Production, Power Development, Finance, Revenue, Forest, Public Works (R&B) and Youth Services & Sports.

While reviewing the recruitment being undertaken by the JKSSB for Non-Gazetted and MTS posts the Chairperson SSB, Vikas Kundal revealed that since 2019 the Board has received 46,744 posts, out of which 9,260 were withdrawn, leaving 37,484 posts for recruitment. The Board has already completed selections for 32,956 posts, including 27,449 selections pertaining to this period.

He further added that at present, 10,035 posts remain under different stages of recruitment with JKSSB. These include 2,532 posts yet to be advertised, 4,768 posts at the examination stage, 1,258 at the selection stage, and 1,477 posts under live advertisements awaiting completion of the recruitment process.

Meanwhile the Secretary, JKPSB, Bashir Ahmad Dar apprised the meeting about the status of posts referred to the JKPSB for recruitment. He divulged that at present, 1,745 Gazetted posts are under process with the Commission out of these, against 1,573 posts selection schedule has already been drawn, while 172 posts are yet to be scheduled due to certain procedural issues. He also gave out that a recruitment timeline has been worked out by the Commission for filling these posts. As per the schedule, 630 selections are targeted for completion by March 2026, 476 during April-May 2026, 158 during June-July 2026, and 309 during August-September 2026.

Additionally department-wise analysis shows that the highest number of posts with JKPSB pertains to Health & Medical Education (872 posts) followed by School Education (470 posts), General Administration (170 posts) and Higher Education (129 posts), among others.

The meeting was informed that all departments have shared the latest status of advertised posts, vacant positions and posts proposed to be referred to recruiting agencies. It was resolved that all clear vacancies without legal or procedural issues will be referred to the respective recruiting agencies at the earliest for timely recruitment.

J&K's Economy Shows

0.7-0.8 per cent to India's GDP, a meaningful share given its population size, terrain challenges, and climatic constraints.

Rather than being driven solely by government consumption, growth is increasingly supported by capital expenditure, service-sector expansion, tourism-linked enterprises, and sectoral diversification.

Rising per capita income, growing at over 10 per cent annually, signals that economic gains are spreading to households dependent on tourism, trade, transport, and allied services.

This structural shift shows that the services sector is the new economic backbone, accounting for over 60 per cent of GSDP. This sector has emerged as

the principal driver of economic momentum.

Tourism, trade, transport, communications, and public administration form the core of this expansion. The surge in tourist arrivals in 2024-25 generated strong multiplier effects.

The post-Pahalgam contraction highlighted tourism's centrality, but also its evolving resilience. Reopening of key tourist destinations, gradual improvement in hotel occupancy, and targeted campaigns such as "Return to Kashmir 2025" restored the tourist footfall.

Unlike being cyclic as earlier, tourism growth is now more broad-based and institutionally supported. Jammu and Kashmir recorded a historic high in tourist arrivals, with over 2.36 crore visitors in 2024, followed by a steady 1.62 crore in the 2025 season.

The region has seen a massive surge since 2019, with over 7.85 crore tourists visiting between 2023 and 2025. Investments in eco-tourism, heritage conservation, winter tourism, and urban amenities are reducing seasonality and environmental stress.

Tourism now contributes to employment stability, cultural preservation, and regional branding. All-weather road connectivity, tunnels, rail links, and airport expansion have reduced physical isolation that historically constrained growth.

Improved logistics have lowered transportation costs, stabilised supply chains, and expanded market access for local producers.

During periods of disruption, this infrastructure proved critical to enabling the faster reopening of markets and tourist circuits.

Beyond GDP accounting, infrastructure improves access to healthcare and education, reduces regional disparities, and integrates Kashmir more firmly with national markets.

Connectivity has evolved into a growth multiplier, turning geographic disadvantage into a strategic opportunity.

Hydro-electric power is one of Jammu and Kashmir's most underappreciated growth drivers. Hydropower also aligns the Union Territory with India's clean energy and climate commitments. When assessed beyond immediate financial returns, the energy dividend significantly enhances economic resilience.

Agriculture and horticulture support high-value rural growth. Agriculture remains central to livelihoods, contributing around 18-20 per cent of GSDP, but its composition is changing rapidly.

Traditional subsistence farming is giving way to high-value horticulture, medicinal plants, and agri-processing. Apples, saffron, walnuts, and floriculture are driving this transformation. Policy support for orchard rejuvenation, cold-chain infrastructure, and digital advisory platforms has raised productivity and reduced post-harvest losses.

Though smaller in share, the industrial sector has shown steady improvement. Food processing, handicrafts, handlooms, pharmaceuticals, and construction-linked manufacturing have benefited from improved connectivity and policy incentives. MSMEs play a critical role in absorbing local labour and linking rural and urban economies. Investment proposals exceeding Rs 1.6 lakh crore, with nearly 2,000 units operational, reflect growing investor confidence. While large-scale industrialisation remains constrained by terrain and ecology, niche, value-added industries are emerging as sustainable avenues for growth.

Urban development has become another pillar of economic performance. Investments in smart city initiatives, municipal reforms, housing, sanitation, and urban transport are enhancing productivity in cities such as Srinagar and Jammu.

Economic planning increasingly integrates disaster resilience and climate sensitivity. Investments in flood management, river training, resilient infrastructure, and early warning systems reduce vulnerability to climate shocks.

Given the region's exposure to floods, earthquakes, and extreme weather, resilience itself has become an economic asset.

With one of the youngest populations in the country, Kashmir's long-term economic trajectory depends on skill development and diversification of employment.

Growing engagement in IT-enabled services, creative industries, sports, tourism management, and digital entrepreneurship reflects a changing labour profile.

Government-led skilling initiatives, combined with digital connectivity, are opening up non-traditional employment pathways.

Equally important is the social resilience demonstrated during recent disruptions. Community cooperation, the revival of festivals, and renewed trust between citizens and institutions strengthened recovery and reinforced grassroots efforts.

Jammu and Kashmir Budget 2026-27 reinforces the Union Territory's shift from recovery-led spending to resilience-driven development. With a total outlay of Rs 1,13,767 crore, comprising Rs 33,127 crore for capital (development) expenditure and Rs 80,640 crore for revenue expenditure, the budget underscores a calibrated push towards asset creation while meeting routine administrative and social commitments.

Own revenue is estimated at Rs 31,800 crore, complemented by Rs 42,752 crore in central assistance, underscoring the continued importance of external fiscal support in sustaining the region's development momentum.

The budget prioritises capital expenditure over consumption, focusing on infrastructure, connectivity, power, tourism, urban renewal, and human capital.

Jammu and Kashmir's economy has moved beyond recovery into a phase of resilient, diversified growth. Backed by infrastructure-led integration, service expansion, energy development, industrial revival, and human capital investment, the region is redefining its economic growth trajectory.

As India advances toward long-term development goals, Jammu and Kashmir's experience offers that true economic performance cannot be measured by numbers alone; it must be judged by resilience, inclusion, sustainability, and confidence.

By these meaningful and broader indicators, Jammu and Kashmir is not just performing; it is performing beyond expectations.

Army Foils Infiltration

security forces to initiate countermeasures and deploy additional personnel.

Teams were conducting searches in the area to ensure that no weapons, explosives or nar-

cotics are dropped from the drone, they said. Pertinently, drone sightings and attempts to drop arms or narcotics from across the border have been reported in parts of the Jammu region in recent years, prompting security agencies to strengthen surveillance and counter-drone measures along the border.

Officials said the situation is under close watch and further action would be taken based on findings from the ongoing search operations. Notably, the KNO quoting official sources, had earlier reported that security forces have been placed on high alert across Jammu and Kashmir following intelligence inputs about possible infiltration attempts by terrorists along the Line of Control (LoC) and the International Border.

According to security officials, several terrorist launching pads across the border have reportedly become active in recent days, raising concerns about possible attempts to push infiltrators into the Union Territory.

Official sources said the Army, Border Security Force (BSF) and police have intensified surveillance and patrolling along the borders, particularly in the Samba, Jammu, Rajouri and Kupwara sectors—(KNO)

Stranded Indian Students

dollars at the Armenian border. Those who arrive in Armenia earlier than their scheduled flight date will have to arrange and pay for their own accommodation until departure. The Embassy has said that if around 40 to 50 students opt for the Armenia route, it may arrange a bus and possibly one night's accommodation in Urmia before the journey to the border. However, it has made clear that students travelling this route do so at their own responsibility.

Under the tentative plan, students willing to travel will first confirm their participation. If sufficient numbers are available, a bus will be arranged to Qom, where they will stay overnight at Embassy-arranged accommodation. The following day, they will travel to the Zulfa border crossing into Armenia. Students have been advised to maintain a gap of five to seven days between leaving Iran and their flight from Armenia to India to avoid complications.

The Embassy's formal advisory, however, remains unchanged — students have been asked to stay where they are for now, and no official evacuation has been announced.

Dr Mohammad Momin Khan of the All India Medical Students Association (AIMSA) confirmed that many Indian students, including those from J&K, are planning to return via the Armenia route. Nearly all students from Urmia University of Medical Sciences have expressed an intention to leave.

"More than 50 students from Urmia University have already booked their tickets and are expected to reach New Delhi on March 15 via Dubai, with departure scheduled around 1:25 AM. Another group from the same university is likely to arrive on March 16," Dr Khan said. Students from Qom are also planning to join the group bound for Armenia, with several in the process of booking tickets. Students told AIMSA that the first batch will serve as a test case. If they reach India safely, others are expected to follow in the coming days.

Families back home remain deeply anxious, urging the Government of India to arrange structured evacuation flights rather than leaving students to navigate a multi-country journey through a conflict zone on their own.

"Our children are studying there and are scared due to the prevailing situation. The government should arrange proper evacuation flights instead of asking them to travel through different countries," a parent from Kashmir said.

Several parents noted that the Armenia route would cost each student approximately Rs 1 lakh, a sum many families cannot afford. They have sought the urgent intervention of the External Affairs Minister and other concerned authorities.

"Our children should not be forced to arrange such complicated travel in a tense situation. The government must intervene and arrange proper evacuation flights," another parent said—(KNO)



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Steep US tariffs strained ties with India, stalled momentum within Quad: Senate report

IAN S

WASHINGTON: US tariffs imposed on India in 2025 triggered a "crisis of trust" between the two countries and slowed momentum in the Quad partnership, according to a report released by Democratic members of the US Senate Foreign Relations Committee.

The report says that steep tariffs introduced by the Donald Trump administration in August 2025 strained relations with India, one of Washington's most important strategic partners in the Indo-Pacific. "In India, a country with which the past five American Presidents and both parties in Congress have sought to build a lasting strategic partnership, President Trump imposed tariffs... so steep that it provoked a crisis of trust in the relationship," the report said.

The document states that the standoff lasted for six months and was partly driven by tensions over India's continued imports of Russian oil and Washington's efforts to claim credit for mediating the 2025 India-Pak-



istan conflict.

According to the report, the dispute strengthened political voices within India that have historically opposed closer strategic cooperation with the United States.

"The crisis emboldened the Russia-aligned voices in India that have long resisted meaningful cooperation between the world's two largest democracies," the report said.

The tensions also affected the Quad grouping, which includes the United States, India, Japan, and Australia.

The report said the dispute "stalled momentum" within the Quad and led to the postponement of a planned US-India Leaders' Summit.

This diplomatic pause created opportunities for both China and Russia to deepen engagement with New Delhi.

The report notes that Chinese President Xi Jinping and Russian President Vladimir Putin met with Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi on multiple occasions during this period.

It also highlighted PM Modi's visit to China—the first in seven years—as an example of how geopolitical dynamics shifted during the dispute.

The report says such developments demonstrate how tensions between Washington and New Delhi can reshape strategic alignments in Asia.

The Indo-Pacific region

is central to global geopolitics, accounting for roughly half the world's population and nearly two-thirds of the global economy, the report notes.

For the United States, maintaining strong partnerships in the region—particularly with India—is considered critical to balancing China's growing economic and military power.

But the Senate report warns that inconsistent policies toward allies risk undermining that strategy.

"Over the past year, tariff policies, termination of foreign assistance programs, and wavering commitments to allies... have called into question America's commitment to a free and open Indo-Pacific," the report said.

China, the report adds, has taken advantage of these tensions by increasing military activity in the Taiwan Strait and strengthening economic influence across the region.

The findings come at a time when the United States and India have sought to deepen defence cooperation and technology partnerships while managing differences over trade and Russia policy.

Govt fully committed to protecting Aravalli range, says Environment Minister Bhupender Yadav in RS

IAN S

NEW DELHI: Union Minister for Environment, Forest and Climate Change Bhupender Yadav on Tuesday reaffirmed the government's strong commitment to protecting the Aravalli Range while responding to a discussion in the Rajya Sabha.

During the debate on the functioning of his ministry, Yadav said that the Supreme Court of India had positively acknowledged the ministry's Green Aravalli Project in its recent decision.

He noted that the initial paragraphs of the court's judgment praised the government's initiative and recognised its efforts, while also advising continued vigilance in protecting the mountain range.

The minister was responding to remarks made by a member of Congress regarding the Aravalli range and the Supreme Court's observations.

Taking a swipe at the opposition, Yadav said that in the past, court rulings during previous governments often raised questions about their efficiency. However, he emphasised that the recent judgment



acknowledged the government's efforts to conserve the Aravalli region.

"I want to make it clear that we are fully committed to the conservation of the Aravalli mountain range. If the court requires any positive assistance from the government in this matter, we are ready to extend complete cooperation," he said.

Yadav also mentioned that the Supreme Court had suggested the formation of a High-Power Committee (HPC) to monitor conservation efforts. He stated that the government's approach towards this proposal is entirely positive and that it will fully comply with the court's directions.

Highlighting ongoing initiatives, the minister said the government has already launched the Aravalli Green Wall Project aimed at restoring and protecting the ecosystem of the Aravalli region. Conservation work is being initiated across 29 districts connected to the Aravalli range, with plans to secure the entire ecological belt.

Referring to other environmental issues, Yadav said that environmental concerns related to the Nicobar Islands had recently been raised before the National Green Tribunal. The government, he added, has addressed all environmental concerns and submitted a detailed response

before the tribunal.

Stressing the importance of environmental protection, the minister said nature is a priceless heritage of the country, and its preservation is a collective responsibility. At the same time, he stressed that while pursuing industrial development, it is equally essential to follow environmental laws and standards.

Yadav further stated that the government is carrying forward the commitment of Prime Minister Narendra Modi to ensure that India becomes part of the global solution to climate change rather than part of the problem.

He highlighted initiatives such as the 'Ek Ped Maa Ke Naam' tree-plantation campaign and the Mission LiFE movement to promote public participation in environmental protection.

The minister underlined the government's belief in maintaining a balance between environmental protection and economic growth. He cited the ministry's guiding principle, "Prakriti Rakshati Rakshitah," which means that if people protect nature, nature will in turn protect them.

Bengal polls: EC directs state administration to mandatorily conduct CAPF route marches by March 14



IAN S

KOLKATA: The Election Commission of India (ECI), on Tuesday, directed the West Bengal administration to mandatorily complete the first phase of conducting the route marches and area domination exercises of the available Central Armed Police Force (CAPF) personnel in all districts of the state by March 14.

Already, a total of 480 companies of the CAPF have arrived in West Bengal in two separate batches.

"The ECI had on Tuesday directed the state government to ensure that the first phase of route marches and area domination exercises are conducted in each of the 294 Assembly constituencies in the state by 8 p.m. on March 14," an insider from the office of the West Bengal Chief Electoral Officer (CEO).

The ECI had already completed the district-wise process of allotment of the available 480 companies of CAPF.

Meanwhile, on Tuesday, the ECI had also announced that retired IAS officers from West Bengal cadre, Subrata

Gupta, who had been the acting special roll observer for the ongoing Special Intensive Revision (SIR), will also be appointed the central observer for the forthcoming state Assembly polls.

The CEO's office said that the ECI is extremely happy with Subrata Gupta's performance so far as the special roll observer during the SIR process, and therefore it has decided to appoint him as the central observer for the forthcoming West Bengal Assembly polls.

At the same time, the ECI, on Tuesday, had sought the details of officers-in-charge of police stations in those districts in West Bengal where large scale post-poll violence took place after the 2021 West Bengal Assembly elections.

The Commission, on Tuesday, had sought the details of these policemen from the Acting Director General of West Bengal Police, Peeyush Pandey.

Apart from that, the Chief Election Commissioner Gyanesh Kumar has sought the details of those officers-in-charge at that point in time.

CM Mamata Banerjee halts indefinite 'anti-SIR' sit-in protest in Kolkata

IAN S

KOLKATA: West Bengal Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee, on Tuesday, halted her indefinite anti-Special Intensive Revision (SIR) sit-in protest in West Bengal at Esplanade in Kolkata, which started from the afternoon of February 6.

Announcing the withdrawal of the sit-in protest on Tuesday evening, the Chief Minister said that since the Supreme Court's judgment on the SIR had opened further room for justice, and following the request of the Trinamool Congress General Secretary Abhishek Banerjee, Mamata Banerjee had decided to halt the protest.

"I could have continued with the sit-in demonstration for even 50 days had I wished to. I had been on a continuous hunger strike for 26 days before, on the issue of land acquisition at Singur in Hooghly district. But since the Supreme Court's verdict on the SIR had opened further room for justice, and following the request of Abhishek Banerjee, I have decided to withdraw my sit-in protest. However, our movement on this issue and against the SIR will continue unless the people get full justice," Chief Minister Banerjee noted.

According to the Chief Minister, the next date of hearing in the matter in the apex court is March 25, and there is a possibility that the polling dates for the forthcoming Assembly elections in West Bengal might be announced by March 15.

"But since the ball will be in the Supreme Court



then, this episode will not end. Whatever the Supreme Court had observed today had been based on our suggestions," Chief Minister Banerjee claimed.

She also accused the Election Commission of India (ECI) and the Chief Election Commissioner (CEC) Gyanesh Kumar of deliberately trying to delay the upcoming elections for West Bengal.

"The Supreme Court has also said that it would consider the West Bengal matter as a special case. The Supreme Court has the power to include the names of voters in the voters' list even a day before the election," the Chief Minister said.

Abhishek Banerjee said that the Supreme Court has criticised the ECI on Tuesday.

"The Calcutta High Court has been directed by the apex court to open an Appellate Tribunal Bench of former judges, so that those whose names are being deleted will have a chance to apply again. This victory is a victory for democracy," he added.

He also said that at the press conference earlier on Tuesday, the CEC deliberately dodged several queries from the journalists.

Rs 6.75 crore bank fraud: CBI court in Lucknow sends four convicts to 8-year jail

IAN S

LUCKNOW: A Special CBI Court in Lucknow on Tuesday sentenced four persons to Rigorous Imprisonment (RI) for 8 years in a Rs 6.75 crore bank fraud in Uttar Pradesh and slapped a fine of Rs 70 lakh each on them, an official said.

The Special Court punished Ramji Mishra, Shyamji Mishra, Akhilesh Kumar Mishra and Manishi Pandey,

all private persons, said a CBI statement.

The court also held two private companies guilty in the case. The two private firms are: Manishi Enterprises, Varanasi, and Mirzapur Carpets. The court imposed a joint fine of Rs 2 crore on the two firms, it said.

The CBI registered the case on March 13, 2001, against S. N. Verma, the then Branch Manager, Central Bank of India, Mirzapur and

others on the allegations that Mirzapur Carpets availed credit facilities from the Bank's Mirzapur Branch in 1996 using forged documents.

At the time of the alleged offence, Ramji Mishra was its Managing Director and Shyamji Mishra and Akhilesh Kumar Mishra were its Directors, said the CBI.

After completion of the investigation, the CBI filed a combined chargesheet on March 17, 2004, against seven

accused and two firms.

The chargesheet named Verma, the then Branch Manager, Yadu Nath Dubey, Pankaj Kumar Tiwari, Manishi Pandey, Ramji Mishra, Shyamji Mishra, Akhilesh Kumar Mishra, Manishi Enterprises, through its main Executive Partner, and Mirzapur Carpets, through its Managing Director, for causing wrongful loss to the tune of Rs 6.75 crore to the bank using forged bills.

Lok Sabha: Nishikant Dubey targets Rahul Gandhi over remarks abroad and frequent foreign visits

IAN S

NEW DELHI: Lok Sabha witnessed heated political exchanges between the treasury benches and opposition on Tuesday as members began debating the no-confidence motion against Speaker Om Birla. During the discussion, Bharatiya Janata Party MP Nishikant Dubey strongly defended the Speaker and launched a sharp attack on the opposition, particularly Congress MP Rahul Gandhi.

Dubey argued that parliamentary disagreements in the past had never resulted in such a step against the Speaker. Referring to earlier disruptions and confrontations involving different parties, he said that despite intense political clashes, the BJP had never supported a move that challenged the authority of the Speaker.

During his speech, Dubey displayed a book in the House



and made remarks about India's first Prime Minister, Jawaharlal Nehru. He questioned several of Nehru's historical decisions, including the handling of the Sino-Indian War of 1962 and aspects of India's foreign policy during that period.

His remarks triggered strong objections from opposition benches, with several members protesting the references made during the debate.

Dubey also directly targeted Rahul Gandhi, accusing him of spreading what he described as "propaganda"

against the government. He played Gandhi's speeches abroad and questioned remarks made about Indian institutions, including the Election Commission of India.

The BJP MP further alleged that Gandhi had repeatedly made statements overseas that portrayed India's democracy in a negative light. He also raised questions about the number of foreign trips undertaken by the Congress leader.

Defending the Speaker, Dubey said that Birla maintained neutrality in conducting House proceedings. According to him, the Speaker had treated all political parties fairly and had never taken decisions under pressure from any particular group.

He added that Birla consistently emphasised respect for parliamentary traditions and the dignity of the Lok Sabha. Despite frequent disruptions and politi-

cal confrontations in recent years, Dubey said the Speaker had tried to conduct proceedings strictly within the framework of constitutional and parliamentary rules.

The BJP MP also noted that opposition members were given adequate opportunities to present their views. On several occasions, he said, leaders from opposition parties were allotted time under parliamentary rules to express their concerns and participate in debates.

Highlighting Birla's approach during difficult circumstances, Dubey said the Speaker had shown patience and restraint even during periods of intense disruptions in the House. He also referred to Birla's role during the COVID-19 pandemic, stating that the Speaker helped ensure that parliamentary proceedings continued safely while prioritising the health and safety of Members of Parliament.

IN THE COURT OF COLLECTOR/ ADDL. DEPUTY COMMISSIONER BUDGAM

No:DCB/ADC/Reader/26/F-598/818
Dated: 09/03/2026

In the case of:

1. Abdul Khaliq Bhat S/o Habibullah Bhat.
2. Mohamamd Shafi Bhat.
3. Sajad Ahmad Bhat .
4. Mst. Hasina
5. Mst. Naza sons & daughters of Abdul Rahim Bhat Rs/o Nadirgund Peerbagh Tehsil & District Srinagar.

(Appellants)

Vs

1. Bashir Ahmad Bhat.
2. Farooq Ahmad Bhat.
3. Ghulzar Ahmad Bhat.
4. Mehraj-ud-din Bhat sons of Abdul Ahad Bhat Rs/o Nadirgund Peerbagh Tehsil & District Srinagar.
5. Mst Rafiq D/o Abdul Ahad Bhat R/o Nadirgund Peerbagh Tehsil & Distract Srinagar A/P Gogoo Budgam.
6. Mushtaq Ahmad Bhat.
7. Ghulam Mohammad Bhat
8. Fayaz Ahmad Bhat.
9. Abdul Qayoom Bhat
10. Ali Mohammad Bhat.
11. Showkat Ahmad Bhat.
12. Mst Jabeena A/P Gogoo Budgam.
13. Mst Tabasum A/P Hyderpora Srinagar sons & daughters of Ghulam Qadir Bhat.
14. Mst Rehti Wd/o Ghulam Qadir Bhat all residents of Nadirgund Peerbagh Tehsil & district Srinagar.

(Contesting Respondents)

15. Abdul Hamid Dar.
16. Mushtaq Ahmad Dar.
17. Mst Mehmooda sons & daughter of Mst Zoonaa Rs/o Maloora HMT Tehsil Shalteng Srinagar.
18. Ghulam Mohammad Dar.
19. Mst Sara sosn & daughter of Mst Fazi Rs/o Nowbugh Bugam Tehsil Chadoora.

(Pro-forma respondents)

In the matter of: Appeal against mutation order No 132 dated 06-07-2000 of estate Nambal Narkarah Tehsil & District Budgam.

NOTICE

The above titled appeal case is under adjudication before this court, the respondents have been summoned a number of times, but pro-forma respondents (respondent No 15-19) failed to appear before this court on the scheduled date of hearings. Now through the medium of this public notice, the pro-forma respondents are hereby informed to attend this court on the 14-03-2026 at 10:30 am. In case the pro-forma respondents fail to appear before the court on the scheduled date & time, ex-parte proceedings shall be initiated against them without further intimation.

Sd/
Collector/
Addl. Deputy Commissioner
Budgam

DIPK-11737-25
DT: 10/03/2026

YSS-JKSC Cricket Premier League

Udhampur Fighters beat Poonch Giants by 26 runs

GMK SPORTS DESK

JAMMU: Udhampur Fighters secured a convincing 26-run victory over Poonch Giants in the YSS-JKSC Cricket Premier League played at M A Stadium in Jammu on Tuesday, Ramban Eagles delivered a commanding all-round performance to defeat Poonch Giants by 74 runs, Kathua Heros defeated Jammu Nawabs by 12 runs.

In the first match of the day, Udhampur Fighters, after winning the toss, opted to bat first and posted a competitive 164/4 in 20 overs. The innings was anchored by captain Gourav Khajuria, who scored an impressive 55 runs off 43 balls, striking six boundaries.

Himanshu Chandan provided solid support with an unbeaten 48 off 42 balls, including five fours and a six. Towards the end, Sunil Kumar added quick runs with a brisk 32 not out from 19 deliveries, helping the team reach a strong total.

For Poonch Giants, Ashish was the most effective bowler, claiming 2 wickets for 20 runs in 4 overs, while Umar and Aleem Malik picked up one wicket each.

Chasing 165, Poonch Giants struggled to keep up with the required run rate despite a fighting effort from Sajad Sheikh, who top-scored with 46 runs from 46 balls. Harmeet Singh added 17 runs, while Umar contributed 16, but the team could only manage 138/6 in their 20 overs.

Udhampur Fighters' bowling attack delivered a disciplined performance, with Sunil Kumar leading the charge by taking 3 wickets for 31 runs. Ashish and Munish also chipped in with crucial wickets to restrict the opposition.



With this win, Udhampur Fighters strengthened their position in the league, thanks to strong batting from Khajuria and Chandan and a match-winning bowling spell by Sunil Kumar.

In the second match of the day, Ramban Eagles, after winning the toss elected to bat first and posted a competitive 185/6 in 20 overs, thanks to impressive half-centuries from Shoaib Naik and Mohsin Ilahi. Naik anchored the innings with a well-crafted 59 off 46 balls, striking nine boundaries and maintaining steady momentum through the middle overs. Ilahi then accelerated the scoring with an unbeaten 54 off 31 deliveries, smashing seven fours and a six at a strike rate of over 174.

A quick cameo from Raja, who blasted 30 runs from just 14 balls, including three sixes, further strengthened Ramban Eagles' total and pushed the side to a formidable total of 185.

For Poonch Giants, Rehan Aslam was the most effective bowler, claiming 2

wickets for 34 runs, while Umar and Aleem Malik chipped in with wickets but struggled to contain the run flow.

Chasing 186, Poonch Giants never found their rhythm as the Ramban Eagles bowlers kept striking at regular intervals. The top order collapsed early, with Nitu Ram Bainsain leading the attack. He produced a match-winning spell of 3 wickets for 23 runs in four overs, dismantling the opposition's top order.

Despite resistance from Umar (24) and Zaheer Sheikh (23 not out), Poonch Giants managed only 111/7 in their 20 overs, falling well short of the target.

Ramban Eagles captain Mahboob Sulaman also contributed with the ball, taking a wicket while maintaining tight control in the middle overs. The disciplined bowling effort ensured the Eagles sealed a comfortable victory.

In the third match of the days, Kathua Heros batting first after winning the toss, posted a competitive 146/7 in 20 overs. The

innings was anchored by Puri Abhinav, who scored a steady 43 off 33 balls, striking three boundaries. Ram Dayal contributed 22 runs, while a late flourish from Nehal Khajuria, who remained unbeaten on 29 off just 14 deliveries, helped push the total to a challenging score.

For Jammu Nawabs, Chaitanya Dogra was the standout bowler, claiming 3 wickets for 20 runs in 4 overs, while Vijay Dogra and Akash Sharma chipped in with one wicket each.

In response, Jammu Nawabs were all out for 134 runs despite an explosive knock of Ishtiyaq Elahi Robby, who smashed 58 off 31 balls, including four fours and four sixes. His aggressive innings kept Nawabs ahead of the required rate despite wickets falling at regular intervals.

Kathua Heros fought back through their bowlers, with Vansh delivering an impressive spell of 3/22 in 4 overs, while Ram Dayal picked up two wickets to keep the contest alive.

Olympian Arif Khan urges sports ministry to develop Infra in Gulmarg to meet global standards

GMK SPORTS DESK

NEW DELHI: Two-time Olympian Arif Mohammad Khan has urged the Union sports ministry to enable at least one proper infrastructure on the slopes of Gulmarg to prepare Indian athletes for global events. A full season of "at least five months till April-end" is needed to train and compete on the slopes of Kangdoori in Gulmarg to prepare our top skiers, he said.

Lauding the Khelo India Winter Games initiative, Arif said: "Six editions of the Khelo India Winter Games have provided an incredible platform to athletes but now we have to look at ways of winning medals at major global competitions."

Arif entered the history books at the recently-concluded Winter Olympics in Milano-Cortina in Italy. In the men's slalom race, the Alpine skier finished 39th. It was an improvement of 10 places on India's previous best Winter Olympics result in the event, set by Kishore Ratna Rai at Calgary 1998.

Saying his record finish



in the giant slalom event has put India "in the global ski map," Arif said it was time to invest wisely in winter sports in India and start winning medals at the Asian level. Since 2020, all six editions of Khelo India Winter Games have taken place in Gulmarg in Jammu & Kashmir. Leh in Ladakh has been hosting the ice games since 2024.

It is pertinent to mention that the Union minister for youth affairs and sports, Dr Mansukh Mandaviya, has announced the 2027 edition of Khelo India Winter

Games to become a 15-day event to make Gulmarg a global winter sports destination. Arif, who learnt his ropes on the slopes of the Pir Panjal mountains, said it was an excellent idea to merge sports and tourism together.

"We have the athletes and there are ones who can be better than me. But we are missing infrastructure, coaches and funding. Given the government's intention to develop winter sports, I can see better things in the future. We need at least one fully-developed infrastruc-

ture in Gulmarg that can function for a good five months," said Arif, adding, "I can guarantee we will win medals at the top Asian level in 10-15 years."

Saying his finish at the Winter Olympics should inspire youngsters to take up winter sports as a career, Arif felt that a national federation was required immediately to understand the requirement of athletes. "The government is doing a lot through its policies to streamline governance in sports bodies. Winter sports like skiing needs immediate government intervention and full support," the 36-year-old said.

Arif is training three young boys. Two of them are from Jammu & Kashmir and one is from Himachal Pradesh. "There are a lot of talented athletes in the hilly states and Union Territories. Some skiers are also emerging from South India but the availability of year-round facilities is a major handicap. At least, skating has all-weather facilities in Dehradun and Leh. Gulmarg can be a priority now," Arif pointed out.

Santner to lead NZ squad for five match T20I series against SA

SIANS

NEW DELHI: Mitchell Santner will lead an expanded New Zealand men's cricket team squad in the upcoming five-match T20I series against South Africa.

New Zealand finished second in ICC Men's T20 World Cup 2026 after losing India to 96 runs.

The series will kick off at Bay Oval on Sunday. It will feature double-header match days alongside the New Zealand women's national team and the South Africa women's T20I series.

Several Blackcaps players returned home after losing the World Cup final to

India in Ahmedabad. Selectors have decided to effectively name two squads to manage player workloads.

Santner will be joined by Devon Conway and Lockie Ferguson for the first three matches. Kyle Jamieson, Cole McConchie, Jimmy Neesham, Ben Sears, and Ish Sodhi are available for the entire series after lighter workloads during the global tournament.

The double-header matches will follow quickly after the opener. The schedule includes games at Seddon Park on Tuesday and Eden Park on Friday, March 20, before the last two matches in Wellington and

Christchurch. New Zealand also recognized domestic performers by including top-order batters Katene Clarke and Nick Kelly, along with spinner Jayden Lennox, who are in line to make their T20I debuts during the series.

Clarke received his first call-up after an impressive Super Smash season where he led the tournament's run charts with 431 runs, including an unbeaten century that helped Northern Brave win the domestic T20 title.

"Katene is someone we've been watching for a while now, so it was great to see him excel in the Super Smash and earn his first

BLACKCAPS selection," said selector Gavin Larsen. "He's an explosive player with plenty of power and a variety of shots. He has shown he can be destructive in the power play, but he can also bat deep in an innings."

Lennox earned his first T20 call-up after a strong performance during his ODI debut series against India in January. He recorded figures of 3-84 across 20 overs against a competitive batting line-up. Kelly has been a reliable performer for the Wellington Firebirds and gets his first T20 opportunity after making his ODI debut against Pakistan last year.

High Court of J&K, Ladakh felicitates J&K Ranji Trophy team

GMK NEWS NETWORK

JAMMU: The High Court of Jammu & Kashmir and Ladakh Tuesday felicitated the Jammu & Kashmir Ranji Trophy team for historic achievement of winning their maiden Ranji Trophy title in the 2025-26 season, marking a landmark moment in the sporting history of the Union Territory.

The felicitation ceremony was held in presence of Chief Justice Arun Palli along with Justice Sanjeev Kumar, Justice Rajnesh Oswal, Justice Sanjay Dhar, Justice Mohd. Akram Chowdhary, Justice Wasim Sadiq Nargal, Justice Rajesh Sekhri and Justice Sanjay Parihar besides Judges of the High Court of Jammu & Kashmir and Ladakh.

The ceremony was also attended by Brigadier Anil Gupta, Member Administration JKCA, Registrar General, M. K. Sharma, other officers of the Registry of the High Court, members of Bar and other dignitaries.

Congratulating the team, the Chief Justice and Judges praised the players for their



dedication, perseverance, discipline and teamwork, which culminated in this historic triumph. It was observed that the victory reflects the resilience and sporting excellence of the young players and serves as a source of inspiration for aspiring sports persons across Jammu & Kashmir and the country.

During the event, commemorative T-shirts were presented to the members of the victorious team, including Captain Paras Dogra, as a token of appreciation for their extraordinary achievement. The Judges also presented a commemorative trophy to the team in recognition of

their historic triumph.

Speakers on the occasion noted that Jammu & Kashmir's maiden Ranji Trophy victory, since the team's Ranji debut in 1959, represents a moment of profound pride and historic significance for the region. The achievement was described as a testament to the players' unwavering determination and commitment to excellence.

The High Court also expressed pride in associating with this momentous achievement and celebrating the success of the young champions who have brought immense joy and recognition to Jammu & Kashmir.

West Indies players depart India after nine-day wait

SIANS

NEW DELHI: Cricket West Indies (CWI) have confirmed that commercial travel arrangements have been secured for members of the West Indies national cricket team currently in India after continued delays with a charter flight organised by the International Cricket Council (ICC).

West Indies are one of the

teams stranded in India due to the ongoing Israel-Iran conflict leading to the closure of the airspace in West Asia.

"In the interest of the well-being and safety of its players and support staff, Cricket West Indies advised the ICC that it was no longer prudent to continue waiting on the charter arrangements, which remain uncertain. Multiple approaches have since

been made through CWI, players, and other partners, in coordination with the ICC, to secure commercial travel to facilitate the squad's safe return. It is important to note that some players and staff have already departed, with the remaining members scheduled to depart today, Tuesday, 10th March, and tomorrow, Wednesday, 11th March 2026," CWI said in a statement.

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Movies Schedule
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VISHAL BHARDWAJ FILM

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