

Good Morning Kashmir

17th Year Of Publication

Office of LG J&K @OfficeOfLGJandK



The time has come for India to reclaim its place, guiding a challenge-ridden world. We must steadfastly prepare our youth to forge a formidable India - one that shall knit nations in unbreakable unity, kindling in them the noble pursuit of universal peace and human welfare.

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Asia's Largest Tulip Garden Opens To Visitors

CM Omar Abdullah Inaugurates Tulip Festival-2026



GMK NEWS NETWORK

SRINAGAR: Chief Minister Omar Abdullah Monday inaugurated the annual Tulip Festival-2026 here at the iconic Indira Gandhi Memorial Tulip Garden situated at the foothills of the Zabarwan, marking the arrival of the spring season in the Kashmir Valley.

With the inauguration of the festival, Asia's largest tulip garden was formally opened to visitors, presenting a spectacular floral display of nearly 1.8 million tulips representing more than 75 vibrant varieties, spread across the terraced landscape of the garden overlooking the scenic Dal Lake. Ministers Sakeena Itoo,

Javid Ahmad Dar, Satish Sharma, Advisor to the Chief Minister Nasir Aslam Wani and Members of the Legislative Assembly including Tanvir Sadiq, Salman Sagar, Ahsan Ahmad Pardesi and Mushtaq Ahmad Guroo accompanied the Chief Minister during the inaugural ceremony.

Among others present on the occasion were Commissioner Secretary Floriculture Zubair Ahmad, Managing Director J&K Bank Amitabh Chatterjee, Vice Chancellor SKUAST-K Prof. Nazir Ahmad Ganai, Director SKIMS Prof. M. Ashraf Ganie, Director Information Nitish Rajora, Director Floriculture, Mathura Masoom, Director • P-06

CM Reviews Stock Position Of LPG, Petrol, Essential Commodities

GMK NEWS NETWORK

SRINAGAR: Chief Minister Omar Abdullah Monday chaired a high-level meeting to review the stock position of essential commodities and petroleum products in Jammu and Kashmir in view of the upcoming festivals of Eid and Navratras and the prevailing geopolitical situation in West Asia.

The meeting was attended by Ministers Sakina Itoo and Satish

Sharma, Advisor to the Chief Minister Nasir Aslam Wani, Chief Secretary Atal Dulloo, Principal Secretary Home, Commissioner Secretary Food, Civil Supplies and Consumer Affairs, Commissioner Secretary Information, heads of departments, Deputy Commissioners of all districts, Director Information, Executive Director Indian oil Corporation Ltd Ashutosh Gupta, representatives of • P-06

Shab-e-Qadr Observed With Religious Gaiety Across J&K



GMK NEWS NETWORK

SRINAGAR: Shab-e-Qadr, the Night of Power, was observed with religious gaiety across Jammu and Kashmir on Monday.

According to reports, the biggest congregational prayers were held at Dargah Hazratbal in Srinagar and Khankah-e-Faiz Panah in

Chrari Sharief town of central Kashmir's Budgam district while the historic Jamia Masjid in Nowhatta, which was closed for the last Friday prayers, was also open for devotees.

Massive congregational prayers were also held at shrines of Saeed Yaqoob Sahab (RA) Sonwar, Sayeed Mansoor Sahab (RA), • P-06

Youth Must Lead Path Of Building Safer Prosperous J&K: LG Sinha

Unveils Bust Of Maharaja Ranbir Singh At Central Sanskrit University

Nation owes Shri Maharaja Ranbir Singh Ji a profound debt for his reforms and thriving Jammu Kashmir

Shri Maharaja Ranbir Singh did not merely rule Jammu Kashmir but he bestowed it a new vision, restructured it

Renaming of Central Sanskrit University's Campus proves that consciousness he ignited continues to guide society

Shri Maharaja Ranbir Singh saw Jammu Kashmir as a living entity-not mere land, but a vibrant structure where culture breathed

The time has come for India to reclaim its place, guiding a challenge-ridden world

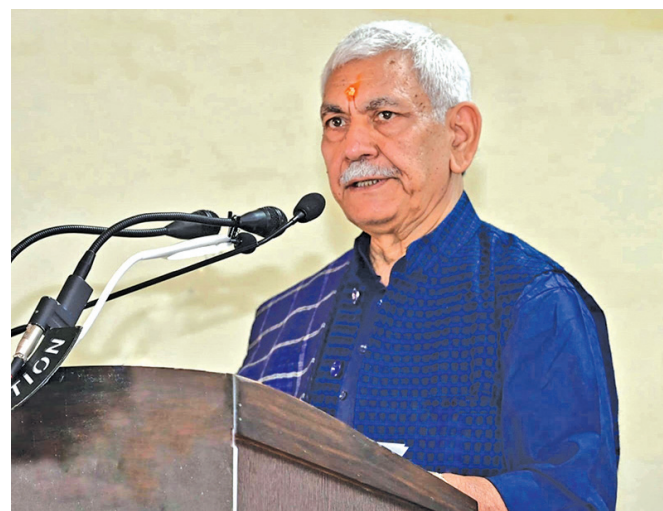
Youth must enrich not just India but global intellectual and moral consciousness

GMK NEWS NETWORK

JAMMU: Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha on Monday emphasized that the youth must lead the way by adhering to principles, in order to build a safer and more prosperous future for the Union Territory.

"Our Youth now bear the duty to embrace his expansive, humane values and contribute to nation-building. As today's Jammu Kashmir embodies Shri Maharaja Ranbir Singh Ji's foresight, this campus must reflect his ideals," LG Sinha said while speaking at the unveiling ceremony of the bust of Shri Maharaja Ranbir Singh Ji at the Central Sanskrit University, Jammu Kot Bhalwal and renaming of the University's Jammu Campus as 'Shri Maharaja Ranbir Singh Campus'.

Lieutenant Governor said that the Nation owes Shri Maharaja Ranbir Singh Ji a profound debt for his reforms, building vibrant culture and forging a robust and thriving Jammu Kashmir.



"Shri Maharaja Ranbir Singh saw Jammu Kashmir as a living entity-not mere land, but a vibrant structure where culture breathed life and reforms channeled energy. For him, its soul resided not just in mountains and rivers, but in intellectual and spiritual values," the Lieutenant Governor said. The Lieutenant Governor

nor said that Shri Maharaja Ranbir Singh did not merely rule Jammu Kashmir but he bestowed it a new vision, restructured it, illuminated it with knowledge, adorned it with cultural abundance, and left a legacy for generations which is rich on material, intellectual, and spiritual planes. "Renaming of Central San-

skrit University's Jammu Campus proves that the consciousness Shri Maharaja Ranbir Singh Ji ignited continues, 150 years on, to guide Jammu and Kashmir's society," the Lieutenant Governor said.

The Lieutenant Governor observed that the youth must lead the path of principles, building a safer and prosperous Jammu Kashmir.

"Our Youth now bear the duty to embrace his expansive, humane values and contribute to nation-building. As today's Jammu Kashmir embodies Shri Maharaja Ranbir Singh Ji's foresight, this campus must reflect his ideals," the Lieutenant Governor said.

The Lieutenant Governor emphasised on building a society technologically potent yet humanely sensitive. He called upon the Youth to enrich not just India but global intellectual and moral consciousness. "India, driven by human welfare, remains committed to world peace and shared prosperity. The time • P-06

Snowfall Continues In Upper Reaches, Plains Get Rain



AGENCIES

SRINAGAR: Several upper reaches of Kashmir received fresh snowfall, while plains witnessed rainfall for the second consecutive day on Monday, leading to slippery road conditions and temporary suspension of traffic on some key routes, officials said.

According to the details available, fresh snowfall was reported from multiple high-altitude areas across North and Central Kashmir, including Gurez Valley and other upper reaches of Bandipora district, Gulmarg in Baramulla, Kupwara, Handwara, and Pahalgam in South Kashmir, officials said.

Snowfall was also recorded at mountain passes and tourist destinations, affecting road connectivity and movement in several areas. The plains of the Valley, including Srinagar city, experienced intermittent rainfall during the day, bringing down temperatures and adding to the chill in the region.

Officials said snowfall in the upper • P-06

21-Day Fuel Stock In J&K, Kerosene Supply Temporarily Resumed: Min Sharma

Warns Of Licence Cancellation For Hoarders, Urges People To Avoid Panic Buying

REHAN QAYOOM

SRINAGAR: Jammu and Kashmir has sufficient stocks of fuel and essential commodities to last around 21 days, Food and Civil Supplies Minister Satish Sharma said on Monday. He added that kerosene distribution, which was suspended after J&K was declared kerosene-free, had been temporarily resumed, with around 2.5 litres to be provided per family amid the ongoing geopolitical crisis.

Speaking to reporters on the sidelines of the Tulip Show inauguration by Chief Minister Omar Abdullah in Srinagar, Sharma said the administration is closely monitoring the supply chain and will take strict action against those indulging in black-marketing.

"We have sufficient stock for



around 21 days. Some people have been found involved in black-marketing, and whoever is found guilty, whether it is a petrol pump or a gas agency, their licence will be cancelled," the minister said.

Sharma said that although Jammu and Kashmir had earlier

become a kerosene-free region, the government has decided to reintroduce kerosene distribution as a temporary relief measure during the current situation. "We were a kerosene-free state, but we have started kerosene distribution again. This will provide significant support to people," he said.

The minister said the government's priority is to ensure the uninterrupted availability of essential commodities and prevent inconvenience to the public. "We are servants of the people. Anyone involved in adulteration, hoarding or creating artificial scarcity will face strict action, no matter how influential they are," he said.

Later, in a video statement, Satish Sharma said the government is monitoring the situation on an hourly • P-06

CS Reviews Youth Sports Initiatives, Emphasises Wider Participation

GMK NEWS NETWORK

JAMMU: Chief Secretary, Atal Dulloo Monday chaired a comprehensive review meeting to assess the performance of the Youth Services & Sports Department and the Jammu & Kashmir Sports Council, with a special focus on expanding youth engagement in sports and creative activities across all districts of Jammu and Kashmir.

The meeting was attended by Commissioner Secretary, Youth Services & Sports; Director General, Youth Services & Sports; Secretary, Sports Council and other senior officers of the Department.

The Chief Secretary took a detailed review of the initiatives undertaken by the department and the Sports Council to strengthen the sports ecosystem across the UT through grassroots competitions, talent identifica-

tion programmes, national-level sporting events and digital youth engagement platforms.

The Chief Secretary maintained that sports and creative arts play a crucial role in shaping the character of young people by instilling discipline, teamwork, perseverance and a sense of responsibility. He observed that active participation in sports as well as creative pursuits such as art, music and cultural activities helps channel the energy of youth in a constructive direction while nurturing confidence and leadership qualities, competitive spirit in them.

He noted that in the present context, when drug abuse has emerged as a serious concern affecting sections of youth in Jammu and Kashmir, promoting sports and creative engagement becomes even more important. He • P-06



Tulip Garden Opens, Tourists Spellbound By Blooming Colours

Over 1.8 Million Blooms From 70-75 Varieties On Display

REHAN QAYOOM

SRINAGAR: Tourists thronged the Tulip Garden here on Monday as it opened for visitors, with many left mesmerised by the vibrant display of colours spread across the sprawling garden.

The garden, known as the Indira Gandhi Memorial Tulip Garden, is showcasing more than 1.8 million tulips from over 70-75 varieties this year, creating a spectacular floral landscape that drew large crowds on the opening day.

Tourists from different parts of the country were seen strolling through the terraced garden, clicking photographs and admiring the colourful blooms. Many described the experience as "breathtaking" and said the vast stretch of flowers made the visit memorable.



"It is absolutely beautiful. We have seen tulips in pictures, but seeing millions of them blooming together is a different experience altogether," Riya Sharma, a tourist from Mumbai, said.

Another visitor, Rahul Mehta from Delhi, said the garden looked like a "carpet of colours." "Every row

has a different shade. You just keep walking, and the colours keep changing. It is one of the most beautiful sights we've seen," he said.

Tourists expressed hope that the bloom would last longer so that more visitors could witness the spectacle. "This is our first visit to Kashmir, and the tulip

garden has made it even more special. It feels like walking through a painting," said a tourist from Gujarat.

Officials said the tulip bloom marks the beginning of the spring tourism season in Kashmir and is expected to attract a large number of visitors in the coming weeks—(KNO)

Rs 364 Crore Spent On J&K Elections In 2024

AGENCIES

SRINAGAR: The expenditure for conducting Parliamentary and Assembly elections in Jammu & Kashmir in 2024 touched Rs 364 crore, official documents reveal.

According to records accessed, the combined cost of the two elections amounted to Rs 364.57 crore. Of this, Rs 205.37 crore was spent on the Lok Sabha polls, while Assembly elections accounted for Rs 159.20 crore.

As per documents, Audit certificates worth Rs 200.22 crore have been submitted to the Government of India for reimbursement of expenditure incurred by the J&K administration on the Lok Sabha polls.

"During 2024-25, the Ministry of Law & Justice, Legislative Department, reimbursed an amount of Rs 81.19 crore to the UT Government on account of expenditure incurred on the Parliamentary elections 2024," the document states.

As per rules, the expenditure on Lok Sabha elections is borne by the Union Government, while the cost of Assembly elections is borne by the State/Union Territory.

The election expenditure was primarily utilised for security • P-06

Stranded Indian Students Face Chaos Amid Iran Evacuations

Flight Cancellations, Border Blockades Leave Many Waiting, Parents Urge Govt Action



JAHANGEER GANAIE

SRINAGAR: Indian students fleeing Iran are facing a chaotic homeward journey, with nearly 70 stranded at Dubai airport after flight cancellations, and another group blocked at the Azerbaijan border for two days running. Parents are accusing the government of failing to facilitate even the basic logistics of their return despite leaving families to bear all expenses.

At Dubai International Airport, flights were temporarily cancelled earlier on

Monday, leaving around 70 Indian students waiting anxiously for hours. According to the latest update shared with them, boarding was expected to begin around 4:20 pm Dubai time, bringing some relief to the stranded group.

According to details obtained, a separate group of students attempting to cross into Azerbaijan from neighbouring regions has been stuck at the border crossing for two days. Around 100 Indian students from Islamic Azad University and other institutions managed • P-06

422 lakh person-days generated under MGNREGA; Secy RDD reviews progress

GMK NEWS NETWORK

JAMMU: Secretary, Rural Development Department (RDD) and Panchayati Raj, Mohammad Aijaz Asad, Monday chaired a comprehensive review meeting to assess the physical and financial progress under the Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act (MGNREGA) for the current financial year 2025-26 and to lay the groundwork for FY 2026-27.

During the meeting, the Secretary reviewed key performance indicators including overall expenditure, employment generation, completion of works, asset geo-tagging, e-KYC status and preparation of the Annual Action Plan for the upcoming financial year.

He directed officers to ensure that all incomplete works under the scheme are completed at the earliest. He observed that a new scheme is likely to replace the existing one in the near future, making it imperative for departments to complete all ongoing works without delay.

The Secretary was informed that the UT has recorded a total expenditure of ₹1,307.1 crore during FY 2025-26, of which ₹1,133.8 crore (86.7%) has been spent on wages. Mate-



rial expenditure stood at ₹133.3 crore, while administrative costs amounted to ₹39.9 crore.

Aijaz Asad said that 7,23,412 households were provided employment across the 20 districts, generating 421.69 lakh person-days (PDs).

Emphasizing accountability, he instructed the Assistant Commissioners Development (ACDs) to conduct daily reviews and ensure that monitoring remains directive and result-oriented. He urged ACDs to demonstrate leadership at the district level and personally ensure completion of works within stipulated timelines.

Highlighting the urgency as the financial year draws to a close, the Secretary made it clear that no negligence or delay will be tolerated and directed that 72,000 works must be completed by March 25.

He also informed that the department has recently released ₹175 crore to the districts and directed

that the funds be utilized for clearance of pending liabilities so that beneficiaries and stakeholders receive their due payments without delay.

Aijaz Asad further instructed officials to ensure 100 percent completion of e-KYC under the scheme.

Reviewing the Yekdhara GP Planning status, he directed that the process be completed by March 19, stressing the need to clear all pending cases. He also asked the Directors of Jammu and Kashmir divisions to closely monitor the process to ensure timely completion.

The Secretary directed that the Annual Action Plan for 2026-27 be finalized and submitted at the earliest. He also instructed that the geo-tagging of assets be completed by March 22.

Emphasizing awareness and outreach, he called for effective implementation of the Samvaad (IEC campaign) to enhance public participation and aware-

ness about departmental schemes.

The Secretary urged ACDs and other officials to discharge their duties with dedication, integrity and transparency, warning that strict action will be taken against any employee found involved in violation of the laid down norms.

He further advised that upcoming plans should focus on sustainable, community-benefiting works, including innovative and theme-based projects, and directed that all social audit issues be resolved promptly.

The Secretary reiterated that all deadlines must be adhered to strictly and directed both Directors to conduct regular reviews to ensure progress on the ground.

The meeting was attended by Director RDD Kashmir Shabir Hussain Bhat, Additional Secretary Waseem Raja, Superintending Engineers (REW), Assistant Commissioners Development and Executive Engineers of all districts.

NIT Sgr hosts expert lecture on sustainable catalysts for energy, environment

GMK NEWS NETWORK

SRINAGAR: The Department of Physics at National Institute of Technology Srinagar on Monday organised an invited lecture on "Development of Sustainable Heterogeneous Catalysts for Energy and Environmental Applications" in collaboration with the Indian National Young Academy of Science (INIAS) under its outreach activity.

The lecture was delivered by noted scientist Venkata Krishnan, Professor at the School of Chemical Sciences, Indian Institute of Technology Mandi, and Associate Editor of the New Journal of Chemistry.

The programme was held at the High-Tech Lecture Hall and was attended by senior faculty members Prof. M. A. Shah, Prof. Mohd. Ikram, Dr. Vijay Kumar, Dr. Mohd. Zubair Ansari and Dr. Ravi Kumar, along with other faculty members.

It also witnessed the participation of a large number of undergraduate and postgraduate students, PhD scholars and faculty members from the Departments of Physics and Chemistry.

During his lecture, Prof. Krishnan provided deep insights into the development of sustainable heterogeneous catalysts and their growing significance in addressing global energy and environmental challenges.

He highlighted how



innovative catalytic materials can play a crucial role in clean energy production, environmental remediation and green chemical processes.

Prof. Krishnan also discussed the latest research trends in catalyst design, surface chemistry and nanostructured materials, explaining how these technologies can improve energy efficiency and reduce environmental pollution.

He also encouraged young researchers to focus on interdisciplinary approaches and pursue research that contributes to sustainable technological development.

In his message, Director NIT Srinagar, Prof. Binod Kumar Kanaujia, said that the institute remains committed to promoting advanced research and academic collaboration in emerging areas of science and technology.

"Lectures by distinguished scientists not only enhance academic exposure for students but also inspire them to pursue innovative research that addresses real-world challenges related to energy and the environment," he added.

Institute's Registrar, Prof. Atikur Rehman, also appreciated the initiative and said that such academic engagements strengthen the research culture at the institute.

"The interaction with renowned scientists provides valuable learning opportunities for students and encourages them to explore interdisciplinary research avenues," he said.

Earlier, Dr. Vijay Kumar, Assistant Professor, Department of Physics and coordinator of the event, delivered the welcome address and introduced the guest speaker.

Dr. Kumar, who is also

a member of the Indian National Young Academy of Science (INIAS), highlighted the importance of such outreach lectures in promoting scientific engagement and exposing students and young researchers to cutting-edge developments in interdisciplinary research.

The event concluded with a vote of thanks delivered by Prof. M. A. Shah, Dean Alumni and International Affairs at NIT Srinagar, who also presented a copy of his book to the guest speaker as a token of appreciation.

The programme ended with an interactive question-and-answer session, where students and scholars engaged with the speaker on various aspects of catalytic science, sustainable energy technologies and their practical applications in addressing environmental challenges.

DC Srinagar reviews health infrastructure projects at JLNM Hospital

GMK NEWS NETWORK

SRINAGAR: Deputy Commissioner (DC) Srinagar, Akshay Labroo on Monday inspected the progress of ongoing health infrastructure upgradation works at JLNM Hospital Rainawari and reviewed development works at Urban Primary Health Centre S.R. Gunj in the Shahr-e-Khaas area of the city.

The DC was accompanied by Chief Planning Officer Fayaz Ahmad Dar, Superintending Engineer R&B, Shabir Ahmad, Chief Medical Officer Dr Tahir Sajad, Medical Superintendent JLNM Hospital Dr Tariq, Zonal Medical Officer SR Gunj, Dr Shafiqat, Executive Engineers R&B, Arif Hazari and other concerned officers.

During the visit to JLNM Hospital, the Deputy Commissioner conducted an on-site inspection of several key projects including the construction of a 100-bedded additional block, the District Integrated Public Health (DIPH) Laboratory and a biomedical waste shed.

While reviewing the construction of the additional hospital block, the



newly constructed Biomedical Waste Shed developed by the Public Works Department (R&B) for the safe and scientific disposal of biomedical waste. He directed the concerned agency to handover the facility to the hospital administration promptly to ensure improved sanitation and environmental safety within the hospital premises.

Interacting with hospital staff, the DC stressed the need to maintain high standards of patient care and efficient delivery of healthcare services to ensure that the public does not face inconvenience.

Later, the Deputy Commissioner visited the Urban Primary Health Centre (UPHC) S.R. Gunj at Maharaj Gunj and reviewed the progress of the remaining works at the facility. He directed the executing agency to accelerate the pace of construction so that the project is completed at the earliest for the benefit of the local population.

The DC further instructed officials to ensure that the UPHC S.R. Gunj is made fully operational soon.

DC directed the executing agency to accelerate the pace of work and ensure timely completion of the project aimed at significantly enhancing patient care services at the hospital.

He also inspected the construction of the District Integrated Public Health Laboratory being established under the PM-Ayushman Bharat

Health Infrastructure Mission. The facility is expected to strengthen disease surveillance and public health response mechanisms in the district.

The DC instructed the concerned agency to expedite the remaining work and make the laboratory operational at the earliest.

The Deputy Commissioner also inspected the

DC Kulgam chairs District Road Safety Committee meeting

GMK NEWS NETWORK

KULGAM: Deputy Commissioner (DC) Kulgam, Shahzad Alam, Monday chaired a meeting of the District Road Safety Committee at the DC Office, Kulgam, to finalize the district Road Safety Plan and review measures aimed at improving road safety across the district.

During the meeting, the DC emphasized the urgent onboarding of District Hospital, Sub-District Hospitals (SDHs) and Primary Health Centres (PHCs) on the e-DAR portal to ensure timely reporting and management of road accident cases. He also stressed the effective implementation of the PM RAHAT scheme



to facilitate prompt assistance to accident victims.

The DC issued strict directions to the concerned departments for the implementation of the norms and guidelines of the Supreme Court Committee on Road Safety (SCCoRS) and the Road Safety Policy 2025.

He called for coordinat-

ed efforts among all stakeholders to strengthen road safety mechanisms in the district.

Special focus was laid on engineering-based remedial measures, including the identification and rectification of accident-prone black spots on major roads. The DC directed the concerned

departments to accelerate the installation of crash barriers and road safety signages at vulnerable locations to minimize accidents and enhance commuter safety.

The meeting also reviewed the overall road safety scenario in the district and discussed strategies to ensure better traffic management, awareness generation and strict enforcement of road safety regulations.

Among others, the meeting was attended by ADC, SE, R&B; Joint Director Planning, Additional SP, ACR, Executive Engineer, R&B, PMGSY, ARTO, CMO and other officers from Police, R&B, Transport and Traffic.

Deputy Chief Minister greets people on Shab-e-Qadr

GMK NEWS NETWORK

JAMMU: The Deputy Chief Minister, Surinder Choudhary, Monday extended his warm greetings to the people of Jammu and Kashmir on the auspicious occasion of Shab-e-Qadr.

In his message, the Deputy Chief Minister said

that the holy night of Shab-e-Qadr holds immense religious and spiritual significance for the Muslim community, as it is a time of deep devotion, reflection and prayers.

He said that on this sacred night, people seek divine blessings from the Almighty and pray for peace, prosperity and

well-being of all. "Let us pray for continued harmony, brotherhood and progress in our society," he said.

The Deputy Chief Minister further said that Jammu and Kashmir has always been a shining example of communal harmony, where people participate in each other's

festivals and occasions with warmth, mutual respect and a shared sense of unity.

He expressed hope that the occasion would further strengthen the bonds of brotherhood and inspire people to work collectively for peace, harmony and prosperity in the region.

Union Territory of Jammu & Kashmir,
OFFICE OF THE EXECUTIVE ENGINEER R&B DIVISION KRALPORA

Short Term E tendering NIT No 82/RnB/Kralpora of 2025-26 Dated:- 14-03-2026

For & on behalf of the Lt. Governor Jammu & Kashmir (UT), e-tenders are being invited on Percentage basis from approved and eligible Contractors registered with the J&K UT Government, CPWD, Railways, and other State/Central Governments for the following works

S.No	Name of Work	Adv. Cost (In Lacs)	Cost of T/Doc. (In Rupees)	Earnest Money Deposit	Time of completion	Date and time of opening	Class of Contractor	Major Head
1.	Balance works of Construction of building for Elementary Building less School Pry at PS Gasla Naka Dardpora and PS Chapran Kachama	7.84	300/-	15680	15 days	24-03-2026 (Noon)	Cee/Dee	Samagra Shiksha PAB 2021-22

Position of AAA/TS : Accorded
Position of funds:- Available
No: Div-KRPL/5253-67
Date: 14-03-2026

- The bidding documents, which would include qualifying information, eligibility criteria, specifications/drawings, a bill of quantities (B.O.Q), a set of contract terms and conditions, and other details, can be viewed/downloaded from the departmental website www.jktenders.gov.in on the dates tabulated below:

1	Date of Issue of Tender Notice	16.03.2026
2	Period of downloading of bidding documents	16.03.2026 (9:00 AM) to 23.03.2026 (6:00PM)
3	Bid submission Start Date	16.03.2026 (9:00 AM)
4	Bid Submission End Date	23.03.2026 (6:00PM)
5	Date & time of opening of Bids (Online)	24.03.2026 (12:00 Noon) In the Office of Executive Engineer R&B Division Kralpora.

Upload/Disclose the bank account number which is linked with the GSTIN along with proof. No payments shall be released by the department to any other bank account except the one linked with the GST registered number of the successful bidder.

- Bids must be accompanied with Cost of Tender Document in the shape of Treasury Challan (dated between the bid start date and the Bid Submission End date) deposited in M.H. 0059 in favour of Executive Engineer R&B Division Kralpora (tender inviting authority). Treasury Challan must be written boldly and clearly with Name of Work, Name of the Contractor along with Contact No, NIT No and Serial No of Work on NIT (if any).
- At the time of tendering, all bidders must upload earnest money/bid security equal to 2% of the Advertised Cost in the form of CDR/FDR
- pledged to the tender receiving authority, i.e. Executive Engineer R&B Division Kralpora. Besides that, the successful bidder will have to provide Performance Security @ 5% of the allotted Cost in the form of CDR/FDR at the time of contract award, strictly in accordance with the Government's circular instructions from time to time. The earnest money/bid security of 2% will be released to the successful bidder only after the submission of a Performance Security of 5% of the allotted cost, which will be released after successful completion of the DLP/Maintenance Period.
- In case of abnormally low bid price the Circular instructions issued by the Finance Department vide No FD-Code/441/2021-02-158 dated 08-08-2025 regarding seeking of additional performance security from the selected bidder for quoting ALB are as follows:
 - Where the bid price is below 10% but not below 20% of the project cost put to bid, the additional performance guarantee/Security percentage shall be incremented by 0.1% for every percentage of bid price below 10% of the project cost put to bid starting at 11% with the additional bid performance guarantee being 0.1% and this additional performance guarantee percentage shall be applied on bid price.
 - Where the bid price is below 20% or more below of the project cost put to bid, the additional performance guarantee percentage shall be incremented by 0.2% for every percentage of bid price below 20% of the project cost put to bid in addition to 1% of the bid price and this additional performance guarantee percentage shall be applied on bid price.
 - The additional performance guarantee percentage shall be rounded off to the next lower percentage based on whether the decimal point of the percentage of the bid price is below 0.5% or next higher percentage based on whether the decimal point of the percentage of the bid price is 0.5% or more.
 - The additional performance security shall be treated as part of the performance security and shall be released after successful completion of DLP.

Sd/-
Executive Engineer
R&B Division Kralpora

DIPK-11925-25
DT: 16/03/2026

CS launches Auto-DCR Building Permissions to boost urban governance in J&K

GMK NEWS NETWORK

JAMMU: In a major step towards digital transformation of urban governance in Jammu & Kashmir, the Chief Secretary Monday inaugurated two key digital platforms developed by the Housing & Urban Development Department (H&UDD) aimed at enhancing transparency, efficiency and ease of doing business across Urban Local Bodies in the Union Territory.

The platforms launched include the Auto Scrutiny-based Building Permission and Change of Land Use (CLU) Portal integrated with GIS-based Master Plans using AutoDCR technology, and the Unified Web Portal of the Housing & Urban Development Department, J&K.

The launch event was attended by Commissioner Secretary, Housing & Urban Development Department; Commissioner, Jammu Municipal Corporation; Vice Chairman, Jammu Development Authority; Special Secretary, H&UDD; Director, Urban Local Bodies, Jammu; Chief Town Planner, Jammu; Chief Architect, J&K; Chief Information Security Officer,

H&UDD, and other senior officers.

Speaking on the occasion, the Chief Secretary emphasized that these initiatives mark an important milestone in the digital transformation of urban governance in Jammu & Kashmir, enabling faster service delivery, improved regulatory compliance and greater citizen engagement.

He observed that the integration of automation, GIS technology and digital financial systems would help build a more efficient, transparent and citizen-centric urban administration across the Union Territory.

The Commissioner Secretary, H&UDD, Mandeep Kaur termed the Auto Scrutiny-based Building Permission and CLU Portal a landmark reform in the building approval process. She described it as a first-of-its-kind initiative in the country which brings together automation, spatial intelligence and regulatory compliance on a single digital interface.

She added that the system leverages Auto-DCR technology to automatically scrutinize Auto-CAD drawings submitted by applicants and instantly



verify compliance with the provisions of the J&K Unified Building Bye-Laws (UBBL), 2021, including its amendments and Master Plan regulations.

Integrated directly with the GIS-based Master Plans of Urban Local Bodies, the portal automatically fetches land-use details of every plot, thereby eliminating manual errors and ensuring complete zoning compliance from the initial stage of application submission, she added.

The digital platform also provides automated scrutiny of building plans, algorithm-based

randomization and auto-escalation of applications to ensure adherence to regulatory timelines. In addition, it functions as a single-window system for submission and processing of No Objection Certificates (NOCs) from multiple departments, significantly reducing delays and procedural bottlenecks.

The portal is also designed to empower technical professionals including architects, draftsmen and engineers by enabling their participation in the approval ecosystem through structured digital workflows. The initiative

is expected to significantly improve the Ease of Doing Business (EoDB) in the urban sector while enhancing transparency and accountability in building permission processes across the Union Territory.

On the occasion, the Chief Secretary also launched the Unified Web Portal of the Housing & Urban Development Department, developed under the National Urban Digital Mission (NUDM) of the Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs, Government of India.

The unified portal serves as a single digital gateway for

accessing information, services and digital platforms related to urban governance in Jammu & Kashmir. It integrates multiple digital initiatives of the department, including systems developed under the UPYOG (Urban Platform for Delivery of Online Governance) framework.

Among the major initiatives highlighted on the portal is the NMAM-based Finance and Accounting Module for Urban Local Bodies, which introduces an accrual-based double-entry accounting system for municipalities. The system enables real-time recording of municipal financial transactions, automated preparation of financial statements, online audit facilities and monitoring of fund utilization through digital dashboards.

The portal also showcases the upcoming Mobile-Based Revenue Collection System for Urban Local Bodies, which will facilitate QR code-based digital payments for various municipal services such as sanitation charges, water tanker services, trade licenses and other municipal dues.

The system will support payments through UPI, Bharat Bill-

Pay, digital wallets and other online payment gateways, ensuring fully transparent and cashless transactions. It will also generate automated digital receipts, enable real-time revenue monitoring through dashboards and integrate seamlessly with the Finance and Accounting Module for automatic accounting entries.

Officials of the Housing & Urban Development Department informed that the digital revenue collection system will help eliminate revenue leakages, enhance transparency in municipal collections and significantly improve the financial sustainability of Urban Local Bodies. It will also facilitate real-time monitoring of revenue streams and strengthen accountability in field-level collection mechanisms.

The newly launched digital platforms are expected to play a pivotal role in empowering citizens, streamlining regulatory processes and accelerating urban development across the Union Territory, in line with the vision of "Empowering Citizens, Enabling Governance, Transforming Urban Life across J&K."

Rana inaugurates water release into Ranbir Canal

Praises timely desilting; assures adequate irrigation for farmers



GMK NEWS NETWORK

AKHNOOR: Minister for Jal Shakti, Javed Ahmed Rana, Monday inaugurated the release of water supply into the main Ranbir Canal at its intake structure near Steel Bridge in Akhnoor, ensuring the timely availability of irrigation water for agricultural purposes across the canal's command areas.

Among those present on the occasion were MLA Akhnoor Mohan Lal, MLA Nagrota Devyani Rana, Chief Engineer I&FC Jammu Manoj Gupta and other senior officers of the Irrigation and Flood Control (I & FC) Department.

Speaking on the occasion, the Minister said that the Ranbir Canal plays a vital role in supporting agriculture in the command area, providing irrigation to vast tracts of farmland from Akhnoor to R. S. Pura. He assured the farming community that adequate water supply would be maintained during the forthcoming irri-

gation season to meet the agricultural requirements.

The Minister also highlighted that the mandatory desilting of canals had been carried out in advance to enhance the discharge capacity of the canal system and ensure that irrigation water reaches even the villages located at the tail end of the network.

The Minister personally oversaw the preparatory works, directing the department to complete them efficiently.

Pertinently, the annual desilting of the canal network is a planned maintenance exercise aimed at restoring the canal system to its original design capacity by removal of accumulated silt, weeds and other obstructions from the canal bed and banks.

This ensures smooth and efficient flow of irrigation water across the distribution network, including remote and tail-end areas that often face supply constraints.

The officials informed

that the desilting works are being undertaken during the canal closure period from January to March, when irrigation demand is at its lowest, thereby minimising disruption to agricultural activities while preparing the canal network for the upcoming crop cycle.

Notably, for the past three consecutive years, the Irrigation and Flood Control Department has succeeded in completing the desilting works within two months instead of the earlier three-month schedule.

As a result, the canal is now being recharged in March, nearly a month earlier than the previous practice of reopening around April 13.

Commending the efforts of the department, the Minister praised the officers and field staff of I & FC for their dedication in completing the desilting works ahead of schedule. He directed that any remaining works be completed at the earliest to ensure uninterrupted irrigation during the upcoming agricultural season.

Rana further stated that several new projects are in the pipeline to strengthen the flood protection infrastructure across the region, aimed at safeguarding the lives, agricultural land and public property from potential flood risks.

Javid Dar visits Zawoora CoE; emphasises research-based practices to support farmers



GMK NEWS NETWORK

SRINAGAR: Minister for Agriculture Production, Rural Development and Panchayati Raj, Cooperative and Election Department, Javid Ahmad Dar, Monday visited the Centre of Excellence (CoE) for Horticulture at Zawoora to review its functioning and assess the technological interventions being adopted to enhance the horticultural crop productivity in the Kashmir Valley.

The Minister took stock of the facilities available at the centre and enquired about the modern technologies and innovative practices being implemented to improve the crop yield and quality. He emphasized the importance of adopting advanced horticultural techniques and strengthening research-based practices to support the farmers

and boost the horticulture sector.

Highlighting the significance of traditional horticultural crops of the Valley, Javid Ahmad Dar stressed that special attention must be given to preserving and promoting indigenous varieties of walnuts and almonds. He noted that these crops possess strong potential in the face of changing climatic conditions and can play a vital role in strengthening the region's horticultural economy.

The Minister also directed the department to ensure wider dissemination of high-quality planting material and modern horticultural practices among the farmers so that they can benefit from improved productivity and better market opportunities.

Director Horticulture Kashmir, Vikas Anand,

briefed the Minister about the initiatives undertaken by the department to promote fruit cultivation and strengthen horticulture infrastructure in the region. He informed that the Centre of Excellence at Zawoora is providing high-quality varieties of walnuts, almonds and other fruit plants to the growers, aimed at enhancing the productivity and maintaining superior quality standards.

The Minister appreciated the efforts of the department and reiterated the government's commitment towards supporting the farmers and expanding the horticulture sector through innovation, research and improved planting material.

MLA Lal Chowk Sheikh Ahsan Ahmed and MLA Chanapora Mushtaq Guroo accompanied the Minister during the visit.

LG greets people on Shab-e-Qadr

GMK NEWS NETWORK

JAMMU: Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha Monday extended his heartiest greetings to the people on the occasion of Shab-e-Qadr.

In a message, the Lieutenant Governor said: "On the auspicious occasion of Shab-e-Qadr, I extend my heartiest greetings and best wishes to all.

This holy night epitomizes the virtues of selfless service, compassion,



and divine grace. May the Almighty accept our prayers on this blessed night, and continue to guide us on the path of love, unity, and communal harmony."

CM Omar greets people on Shab-e-Qadr

GMK NEWS NETWORK

SRINAGAR: Chief Minister Omar Abdullah Monday extended his heartfelt greetings to the people of Jammu and Kashmir, on the sacred occasion of Shab-e-Qadr (Lailat-ul-Qadr), which is being observed tonight.

In his message, the Chief Minister highlighted the immense spiritual significance of the blessed night, which falls in the last ten days of the holy month of Ramadan and is regarded as a night of divine mercy, forgiveness and countless blessings.

He said that Shab-e-Qadr offers an opportunity for believers to engage in prayers, seek forgiveness and strengthen their commitment to the values of compassion, humility and service to humanity.

The Chief Minister expressed hope that the



prayers offered on this sacred night would bring peace, prosperity and harmony to Jammu and Kashmir and the entire country.

He urged people to remember the underprivileged and those in need, and to continue upholding the spirit of unity, brotherhood and mutual respect that forms the essence of the holy month.

The Chief Minister prayed for the well-being of the people and wished that the blessings of this holy night bring peace, happiness and progress to every household.

Manuscript preservation in J&K gains momentum

Pr Secy Culture inaugurates workshop on 'GYAN BHARATAM MISSION'

GMK NEWS NETWORK

JAMMU: The Department of Archives, Archaeology & Museums in collaboration with Indira Gandhi National Centre for Arts (IGNCA), Regional Centre J&K, Monday organised a 3 day workshop-cum-Training program on 'GYAN BHARATAM MISSION' and launch of National Survey of Manuscripts at Indian Institute of Integrative Medicine (IIIM), Canal Road Jammu.

Principal Secretary, Culture Department, Brij Mohan Sharma, highlighted various aspects of implementation of the central sponsored flagship programme besides importance of this awareness cum training programme regarding survey and conservation of manuscripts.

The Principal Secretary said that this Government of India's flagship programme



was launched by the Prime Minister, Narendra Modi in September 2025 at an International Conference in Delhi. The program aims to identify, catalogue and digitize approximately one crore manuscripts across the country and conserve them using scientific technology, making the documents accessible in the public domain for scholars worldwide.

He observed that around 35,000 manuscripts have been identified in Jammu and Kashmir, with cataloguing complete. Besides, digitiza-

tion is underway at private institutions and Kashmir University's Persian Department, accelerated by a Government of India cluster centre.

Director, Archives, Archeology and Museum, Kuldeep Krishan Sidha highlighted the objectives of launching of Gyan Bharatam and National Manuscripts Survey. He also elucidated the key activities including conservation, capacity building, technology and digitization, linguistic and translation, research, publication and awareness. He highlighted various other

aspects regarding National Manuscripts Survey, scope of the Survey, organisational support, survey execution process, role of responsibility, ethical guidelines, monitoring and other important aspects of the programme.

Dr Jahagir Iqbal, HOD and Cluster Head Gyan Bharatam Mission, Department of Persian, Kashmir University, gave comprehensive detail about the roadmap to the concerned officers and participants about how to collect the information about Manuscripts and its conservation during surveys in their respective areas.

Coordinator, Regional Cluster Centre, Gyan Bharatam Shashvat Art Gallery, Museum and Manuscript Library, Upper Bazar Jammu, Dr Suresh Abrol, also spoke and encouraged the participants about the working in the field of survey and con-

servation, documentation and digitization of Manuscripts under Gyan Bharatam Mission.

Professor and Head (Conservation), IGNC, Professor Achal Pandya, also gave a PowerPoint Presentation regarding how to collect manuscripts and its conservation and gave awareness on other aspects of the survey program.

The participants raised and highlighted queries about different aspects of the survey program.

Among others, Assistant Professor Dr Satyender Kumari, IGNC, Project Managers, IGNC, Jitendra Chauhan and Dr Nitin Kumar, Deputy Director, Archive, Archeology and Museum, Dr Sangeeta Sharma besides senior officers of concerned departments and other stakeholders were present in the program.

Government of Jammu & Kashmir

OFFICE OF THE EXECUTIVE ENGINEER IRRIGATION & FLOOD CONTROL DIVISION KUPWARA

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Executive Engineer
Irrigation and FC Division Kupwara

Good Morning Kashmir

EDITORIAL

Shab-e-Qadr: A Night Of Mercy And Forgiveness

Tonight, Muslims across the world observe the blessed night of Shab-e-Qadr, also known as Laylatul Qadr — one of the most sacred nights in Islam. It is believed to be the night when the Holy Quran was first revealed, making it a moment of immense spiritual importance for the Muslim Ummah.

On this night, believers remain engaged in prayers, reciting the Quran and seeking forgiveness from Allah for their sins. Mosques and homes resonate with supplications as people spend the night in devotion, hoping for mercy and blessings.

Shab-e-Qadr is seen as a night when prayers are accepted and forgiveness is granted to those who sincerely repent. It is also a time for reflection, urging believers to strengthen their faith, correct their mistakes and move forward with compassion and humility.

As millions bow in prayer and raise their hands in supplication, the night brings with it a message of hope, reminding the faithful of Allah's boundless mercy and the power of sincere repentance.

Fairpoint

Rahul Gandhi's Alarm Versus India's Striking Diplomatic Success



DEEPIKA BHAN

The image of a ship carrying cooking gas safely heading home may not ordinarily evoke strong emotions. But in a world shaken by conflict and uncertainty, the sight of two Indian-flagged LPG carriers cutting through the tense waters of the Strait of Hormuz felt like something more than routine maritime movement. It felt like reassurance.

At a time when the US-Israel-Iran confrontation threatens to destabilise one of the world's most critical energy corridors, the successful passage of the Indian vessels 'Shivalik' and 'Nanda Devi' has quietly demonstrated the strength of India's diplomatic balancing. In the midst of a volatile geopolitical storm, New Delhi managed what many countries struggle to do -- protect its strategic interests without being dragged into the conflict.

The two LPG tankers, owned by the Shipping Corporation of India (SCI), began their journey back home after what officials described as a "carefully coordinated operation" conducted with the cooperation of Iran and other regional stakeholders. Such operations rarely happen overnight.

Behind the scenes were multiple diplomatic engagements, sensitive negotiations, and constant monitoring of developments in a rapidly evolving conflict zone.

The breakthrough reportedly came after several rounds of inter-governmental discussions between India and Iran. Prime Minister Narendra Modi held a telephonic conversation with Iranian President Masoud Pezeshkian, while External Affairs Minister S. Jaishankar engaged with his Iranian counterpart Seyed Abbas Araghchi on issues related to maritime safety and energy security.

For India, the significance of this development extends far beyond the safe movement of two ships.



The Strait of Hormuz is one of the world's most important energy arteries, through which a large portion of global oil and gas shipments pass. Any disruption there has immediate implications for countries dependent on energy imports, including India.

In that context, the safe transit of Shivalik and Nanda Devi sends a reassuring message to Indian households. It indicates that even in the midst of international tensions, India's diplomatic and logistical mechanisms remain capable of safeguarding critical supplies.

The development has also unfolded against the backdrop of a heated political debate at home. The Opposition, particularly the Congress party, has questioned the government's foreign policy choices during the ongoing West Asian crisis. Congress leader Rahul Gandhi has said that India has drifted away from its traditional non-aligned stance and is moving closer to the US and Israel.

According to Gandhi, such a tilt could potentially damage India's long-standing ties with Iran and undermine strategic initiatives like the Chabahar port project.

Speaking in the Parliament premises recently, the Lok Sabha Leader of Opposition suggested that India's energy security had been "compromised due to flawed foreign policy decisions" and alleged that the government had effectively allowed Washington to influence its relation-

ships with oil suppliers.

In a healthy democracy, criticism of government policy is both legitimate and necessary. But the larger global reality must also be acknowledged. The tensions between the US-Israel and Iran are not an isolated regional dispute; they have the potential to affect global energy markets, shipping routes, and economic stability.

If the conflict intensifies or stretches into a prolonged confrontation -- as seen in the Russia-Ukraine war -- its ripple effects will be felt across continents. In such circumstances, governments worldwide are focused on ensuring domestic stability while maintaining diplomatic channels abroad.

India is no exception. The priority in such moments is to ensure that citizens do not face unnecessary disruptions in essential supplies. Panic and speculation can often create bigger crises than the conflict itself.

So far, the situation on the ground suggests that fears of an immediate energy disruption have not materialised. Petrol prices have remained stable, piped natural gas continues to be supplied in urban areas, and LPG cylinders are still reaching households.

Authorities have, however, cautioned against panic buying and hoarding. In one unusual incident reported from Hapur district in Uttar Pradesh, officials seized 55 LPG cyl-

inders from the residence of a Samajwadi Party leader amid rumours of shortages. This was shocking, as SP leaders have been very vocal about the potential gas crisis.

The Opposition has been very aggressive over the cooking gas situation, has criticised the government's responses to developments involving Iran's Supreme Leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei, and questioned whether India's claim of "strategic autonomy" is gradually tilting toward Washington. Rahul Gandhi has been attacking the government vehemently, using words like 'compromise'.

But the facts on the ground indicate a clear diplomatic reality. If India had indeed abandoned its independent foreign policy space, it is difficult to imagine Iran facilitating the safe passage of Indian-flagged vessels through the Strait of Hormuz during a period of heightened tensions. Similarly, India recently allowed an Iranian naval ship to dock in Kochi for logistical assistance -- an act that reflects continued engagement rather than diplomatic distance.

These developments underline the nature of India's evolving foreign policy approach. Rather than rigid alliances, New Delhi increasingly pursues what policymakers describe as "multi-alignment" -- maintaining functional relations with competing global powers while prioritising national interests.

In a world where geopolitical rivalries are intensifying, this balancing act is not easy. But it allows India the flexibility to navigate crises without becoming entangled in them.

Ultimately, diplomacy is often most effective when it works quietly, away from the glare of political noise. The journey of Shivalik and Nanda Devi through one of the world's most sensitive maritime corridors is a reminder of that truth.

The real story of those ships goes far beyond cargo moving across the sea. It is the story of a nation ensuring that, even in the midst of global turbulence, its vital lifelines continue to flow -- steady, silent, and secure. For once, Rahul Gandhi could acknowledge this reality, for it concerns India and the strength of its diplomacy, not the fortunes of the BJP. But that, one suspects, is unlikely to happen. (IANS)

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

WORLD SOCIAL WORK DAY 2026

Co-Building Hope And Harmony In A Divided World



IMRAN MAQBOOL WANI

Every year, the global community observes World Social Work Day 2026 to recognize the efforts of social workers who dedicate their lives to supporting people and strengthening communities. In 2026, the day will be observed on 17 March, carrying the theme "Co-Building Hope and Harmony: A Harambee Call to Unite a Divided Society." At a time when many societies face division, mistrust, and inequality, this theme delivers a timely and powerful message: our future can only be built together.

Across the world, communities face social, economic, and cultural challenges. Differences in identity, beliefs, and opportunities often create distance between people. In such situations, the importance of social work grows. Social workers stand alongside individuals and communities during difficult times. They listen, guide, and help people find strength even in hardship. From my perspective, social work is more than just a profession. It is a commitment to humanity and to the dignity of every person. Social workers often work quietly,



away from public attention, yet their contributions are deeply meaningful. They support vulnerable children, assist families in crises, counsel those dealing with emotional struggles, and help communities rebuild trust and cooperation. The theme's use of the word "Harambee," meaning "all pull together," beautifully captures the spirit of social work. It reminds us that real progress happens when people unite for a common purpose. No single institution or group can solve social challenges like poverty, inequality, and social exclusion. These issues require cooperation among communities, governments, organizations, and individuals.

In many societies, divisions are growing as people lose the habit of listening to one another. Social workers help rebuild this connection. By encouraging dialogue, empathy, and understanding, they help communities rediscover the value of unity. They remind us that behind every difference lies a shared human experience. The idea of co-building hope is also central to this year's theme. Hope is not something that appears automatically. It is created when people support one another, when communities work together, and when societies prioritise compassion and justice. Social workers play an essential role in nurturing this hope by empowering indi-

viduals and communities to shape their own futures.

There is also a deeper moral message behind this work. In the Holy Qur'an, Allah reminds humanity: "Whoever saves one life, it is as if he has saved all of humanity." Qur'an 5:32. This verse highlights the value of serving humanity and protecting human dignity. In many ways, social work reflects this principle. By supporting individuals in need and strengthening communities, social workers contribute to society's well-being.

Observing World Social Work Day 2026 is therefore not only about celebrating a profession. It is also an opportunity to reflect on our collective

responsibility as members of society. Building harmony and unity cannot be left to social workers alone. Every individual has a role to play in creating a more compassionate and inclusive world. Small actions can have a powerful impact. Showing kindness, supporting those in difficulty, listening with empathy, and promoting understanding between communities can all contribute to social harmony. When people act with responsibility and care for others, the foundations of a stronger society are built.

At a time when division often dominates public discourse, the message of this year's theme offers a hopeful direction. It reminds us that unity is still possible, and that cooperation remains the strongest path toward progress.

"Hope is not built by one person alone; it grows when communities stand together and care for one another."

As we mark this important day, let us recognize the dedication of social workers and renew our commitment to the values they represent. A peaceful and inclusive society can only emerge when people work together with empathy, respect, and shared responsibility. In the end, the message is simple but profound: When humanity stands together, Hope becomes stronger than division.

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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

■ The Hidden Mathematics Of Eid

How Faith, Time, And Charity Come Together In Meaningful Celebrations



DR. REYAZ AHMAD

For many people, Eid arrives as joy. It comes with prayer, gratitude, family gatherings, new clothes, warm embraces, sweet dishes, charity, and the sighting of the new moon. But beneath this spiritual and social beauty lies another remarkable dimension that often goes unnoticed: Eid is also deeply connected with mathematics. Starting from the calculation of the lunar calendar to the geometry of Islamic art, from the arithmetic of charity to the playful elegance of mathematical greetings, Eid quietly demonstrates that numbers are not cold abstractions. They are woven into the rhythm of devotion, community, and celebration.

At first glance, mathematics and Eid may seem like two very different worlds. One appears emotional, sacred, and communal; the other seems logical, exact, and analytical. Yet the more closely one looks, the more the two appear beautifully intertwined. Eid does not merely happen on a random day. It is linked to the movement of the moon, the structure of the Islamic calendar, and the astronomical relationship between the Sun, Moon, and Earth. The beauty seen in mosque architecture and festive decoration is not accidental either. It often rests on proportion, symmetry, repetition, and geometric harmony. Even acts of worship associated with Eid, particularly charity, involve calculation, fairness, and measurable responsibility. In this sense, Eid is not only a celebration of faith; it is also a living lesson in the order and elegance of creation.

The most direct mathematical connection to Eid lies in the determination of its date. Eid al-Fitr marks the beginning of Shawwal, the month that follows Ramadan, and its arrival depends on the Islamic lunar calendar. Unlike the Gregorian calendar, which is based on the solar year, the Hijri calendar follows the lunar cycle. This makes the Islamic year shorter by roughly ten to twelve days. As a result, Eid moves through the seasons over time. Sometimes it falls in spring, sometimes in winter, and sometimes in the intense heat of summer. This annual movement is not confusion; it is mathematics in motion.

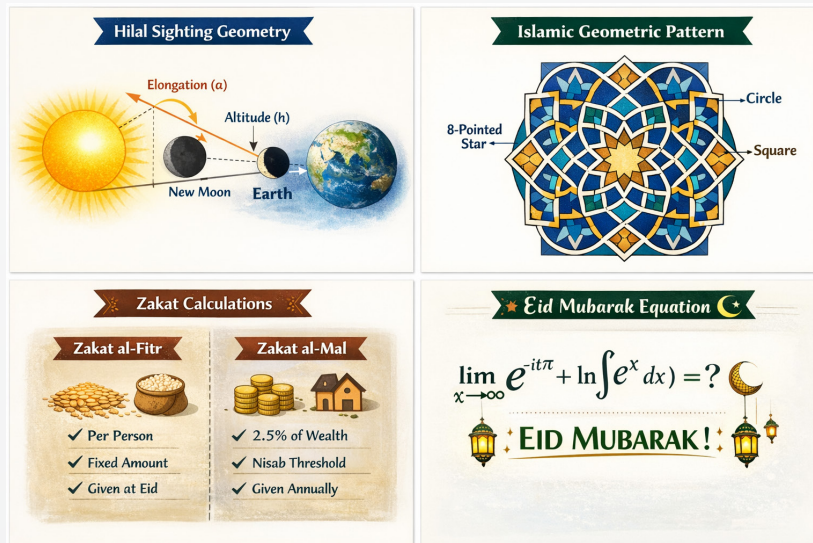
The attached content highlights how scholars and astronomers use cyclical patterns, modulo arithmetic, and lunar calculations to estimate and understand these shifts. What common people often experience simply as "the moon has been sighted" is, in truth, part of a larger mathematical relationship between celestial bodies.

This alone is enough to inspire wonder. A believer waits for Eid with the heart, but the heavens move with law and precision. The crescent moon is not merely a symbol of beauty; it is also a sign governed by angles, visibility, altitude, and position. The visibility of the Eid moon depends on the angular geometry between the Sun, Moon, and Earth, and that spherical trigonometry can be used to estimate whether the crescent is likely to be seen from a given location. In other words, when communities gather in hopeful anticipation of the new moon, they are standing at the meeting point of spirituality and science. The sighting of the hilal becomes an event where faith looks upward and mathematics quietly explains what the eye hopes to see.

But the mathematics of Eid does not end with the calendar. It also appears in the visual world that surrounds the celebration. Eid is often marked by decorations, calligraphy, patterned cards, mosque designs, and motifs that reflect centuries of Islamic artistic tradition. These designs are not only beautiful; they are structured. Symmetry, tessellation, proportion, and repetition all play central roles. There is enough evidence that points to the use of geometric construction, rotational symmetry, 8-pointed stars, interlaced forms, and carefully repeated patterns that can fill space without gaps or overlaps. Such art is not merely decorative. It represents discipline, balance, and the idea that beauty can emerge from order.

This is one of the great messages hidden within Islamic visual culture: mathematics can be spiritual. A repeated star pattern on a wall, a symmetrical arch in a mosque, or an elegantly arranged Eid card all remind us that beauty is not chaos. Harmony has structure. Design has logic. Repetition has purpose. The artistic tradition associated with Eid and Islamic civilization teaches that precision does not kill beauty; it produces it. There is a profound lesson here for modern society. We often separate the emotional from the rational, the artistic from the scientific, and the sacred from the mathematical. Yet Eid suggests otherwise. It tells us that the human soul can be moved by what is orderly, and that numbers themselves can serve beauty.

The 8-pointed star discussed above is a particularly striking example. Built



from circles, squares, and rotated forms, it shows how a simple geometric idea can produce a rich visual pattern. Such designs are common in Islamic art because they reflect both balance and infinity. They begin from a centre and then expand outward in disciplined repetition, suggesting unity and multiplicity at once. This is not unlike the experience of Eid itself. A single act of worship, a single moon sighting, a single prayer congregation, or a single act of charity radiates outward into family, society, and community. The geometry of Eid becomes a metaphor for the social and spiritual expansion of goodness.

Then there is the economic mathematics of Eid, which may be even more socially powerful. Eid is not only about celebration; it is also about responsibility. No festival can be truly beautiful if the poor are forgotten. This is where the arithmetic of charity becomes morally significant. The discussion on Zakat al-Fitr and Zakat al-Mal, shows how fixed measures, percentages, thresholds, and distribution principles enter into the spiritual life of Muslims. Here mathematics becomes an instrument of justice. A percentage is not merely a number; it is a discipline of conscience. A threshold is not merely an economic line; it is a reminder that wealth carries accountability.

This is where Eid's mathematics becomes deeply human. The numbers behind charity are not there to make giving mechanical; they are there to make it fair, measurable, and practical. Without calculation, generosity can remain vague. With calculation, it becomes organized and effective. The poor do not benefit from emotions alone; they benefit when com-

passion is translated into action. In this sense, the mathematics of Eid teaches a timeless social lesson: a just society needs both feeling and structure. Good intentions matter, but systems matter too. Charity that is measurable is more likely to be fulfilled. Responsibility that is quantified is harder to ignore.

There is also an educational beauty in the way mathematics can be used to communicate the joy of Eid. A playful example such as a calculus-based "Eid Mubarak" greeting using logarithms and exponential expressions. At one level, these are humorous academic exercises. At another level, they reveal something important: mathematics does not have to be dry or intimidating. It can be festive, imaginative, and culturally rooted. When students encounter mathematics through familiar celebrations, it becomes less abstract and more meaningful. An Eid-themed problem, a geometric pattern, a moon-sighting model, or a charity calculation can make learning feel alive.

This has special importance for education today. Many students grow up seeing mathematics as a burden rather than a language of life. They solve equations in classrooms without ever being shown how mathematics shapes calendars, architecture, economics, design, and community life. But Eid offers a powerful bridge. It shows that mathematics is not confined to textbooks; it lives in the sky, in the mosque, in the marketplace, in patterns, and in acts of worship. Such a perspective can transform the teaching of mathematics from memorization into appreciation. It can help young learners see that mathematical thinking is not separate

from culture, identity, or faith. Rather, it can deepen all three. There is, perhaps, an even larger philosophical message here. Mathematics is often described as universal. It does not belong to one nation, one language, or one era. Eid, too, is universal in a different sense: it is celebrated across continents, cultures, and communities. When the two intersect, we are reminded that truth has many forms. Some truths are felt in the heart; some are seen in the sky; some are drawn in a pattern; some are measured in a calculation. Eid gathers them together. It invites us to remember that the Creator of mercy is also the Creator of order, proportion, rhythm, and law.

In a world increasingly divided between the technical and the spiritual, this insight matters. Modern society often produces specialists who know how to calculate but not how to celebrate, or how to celebrate but not how to think deeply. The mathematics of Eid suggest that human flourishing requires both. It asks us to see intelligence not as the enemy of devotion, but as one of its companions. It tells us that wonder can be both emotional and intellectual. One can stand beneath the Eid moon with prayer on the lips and mathematics in the mind, and neither diminishes the other.

That is why the hidden mathematics of Eid deserves to be appreciated more widely. It enriches our understanding of the festival. It reveals the precision behind the calendar, the logic behind the beauty, the fairness behind the charity, and the creativity behind the greetings. More importantly, it reminds us that faith is not disconnected from knowledge. On the contrary, faith often becomes more meaningful when we recognize the patterns, structures, and wisdom embedded in the world around us.

Eid, then, is not only a day of celebration. It is also a quiet testimony to the harmony between the spiritual and the mathematical. The moon announces it, geometry adorns it, arithmetic disciplines it, and human joy completes it. We celebrate with our hearts, but we arrive there through patterns written into creation itself.

And perhaps that is the most beautiful equation of all: when faith meets order, when beauty meets structure, and when devotion meets understanding, the result is not merely a festival. The result is Eid.

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The Betrayal Of Marx's Forgotten Promises



NAVEED QAZI

Karl Marx remains one of the most polarising figures in modern intellectual history. His name is often invoked in debates about freedom, oppression, and economic justice. Yet, for many, Marx's legacy is overshadowed by the grim record of regimes that claimed to follow his philosophy, Stalin's Soviet Union, Mao's China, Pol Pot's Cambodia. These governments presided over famines, purges, and mass repression, leaving millions dead. But to equate Marx's writings with these atrocities is to miss the deeper truth: Marx's ideals were about human emancipation, dignity, and democratic participation. The tragedy lies in how those ideals were betrayed, distorted, and weaponised by authoritarian leaders.

At the heart of Marx's philosophy was the idea of human liberation. In his Economic and Philosophical Manuscripts of 1844, Marx described alienation as the estrangement of workers from their labour, their creativity, and their fellow humans. Scholars such as Oliver Christ, writing in the European Scientific Journal, have emphasised that Marx saw emancipation as overcoming these four dimensions of alienation. His dream was of a society where 'the free development of each is the condition for the free development of all'. Contrast this with Stalin's Soviet Union, where millions were sent to gulags, silenced by censorship, or starved through forced collectivisation. Mao's Great Leap Forward, intended to modernise China, instead produced one of the deadliest famines in history. These regimes replaced Marx's emancipatory vision with coercion and fear.



Marx argued that workers should collectively control production and governance. His reflections on the Paris Commune in The Civil War in France praised it as a model of grassroots democracy. Bernard Harcourt later described the Commune as a 'glorious harbinger of a new society', underscoring Marx's democratic ethos. Yet, in practice, communist states centralised power in one-party bureaucracies. Stalin dismantled worker councils, replacing them with rigid hierarchies loyal to the state. Mao's China silenced dissenting voices, even within the Communist Party. Instead of empowering workers, these regimes disempowered them, creating new elites who ruled in the name of Marx but betrayed his democratic vision.

Marx's critique of capitalism centred on alienation. Vanita Chawadha, in the International Journal of Humanities and Social Science Invention, has shown how Marx's concept

of alienation remains relevant in contemporary labour societies, where workers still struggle with disconnection from their work. Authoritarian regimes did the opposite of Marx's hopes. Stalin's industrialisation campaigns imposed brutal quotas, turning labour into drudgery. Mao's collectivisation uprooted peasants from their land, forcing them into communes where individuality was crushed. Pol Pot's Cambodia reduced human beings to mere instruments of agricultural output, erasing culture and intellectual life. Instead of ending alienation, these regimes deepened it, stripping work of meaning and humanity.

Marx famously declared: 'Workers of the world, unite!' His vision was internationalist, transcending borders and national rivalries. Isaac Deutscher, in his lecture On Internationalism and Internationalism, reminds us that Marx saw solidarity across nations as essential to emancipation. Yet communist regimes

often turned inward, consumed by nationalist agendas. Stalin promoted 'socialism in one country', abandoning international solidarity for geopolitical dominance. Mao's China clashed with the Soviet Union, fracturing the global communist movement. Pol Pot's Khmer Rouge pursued xenophobic policies, targeting minorities and isolating Cambodia from the world. Instead of uniting workers globally, these regimes entrenched nationalist rivalries and Cold War blocs.

Marx distrusted concentrated power and warned against bureaucratic domination. In his Critique of Hegel's Philosophy of Right, he argued that bureaucracy could become a new ruling class, suffocating democratic participation. Andre Liebich, writing in JSTOR, explains how Marx saw bureaucracy as a danger to genuine emancipation. Yet communist states became synonymous with bureaucracy and cults of personality. Stalin's image loomed over every aspect of Soviet life, Mao's portrait dominated Tiananmen Square, and Pol Pot ruled Cambodia through fear and secrecy. These leaders built massive surveillance states, elevating themselves above the people they claimed to serve. Marx's suspicion of concentrated power was ignored, replaced by authoritarianism masquerading as socialism.

The distortion of Marx's ideals matters because it continues to shape how his philosophy is perceived. Critics argue that Marxism inherently leads to authoritarianism, pointing to the record of twentieth-century communist states. Supporters counter that Marx envisioned democratic worker control, not dictatorship, and that the blame lies with leaders who corrupted his vision. Vanessa Christina Wills, in Oxford Academic, reconstructs Marx's critique of ideology as a liberatory project, showing that Marx's ethical vision was not about rigid dogma but about freeing human beings from exploitation. For the Global South and struggling societies, where debates about governance, freedom, and justice remain deeply relevant, Marx's ideas deserve a

fresh reading. His critique of exploitation and inequality resonates in a world where economic disparities are widening. But his ideals must be separated from the authoritarian distortions that tarnished his legacy.

The lesson is not to dismiss Marx outright, nor to romanticise him uncritically. Instead, we must recognise the gap between his ideals and their betrayal. Marx's writings remind us that true liberation requires democracy, dignity, and solidarity. Authoritarianism, whether cloaked in Marxist rhetoric or any other ideology, undermines these values. For the Global South and struggling societies grappling with questions of justice, Marx's vision offers both inspiration and caution. Inspiration, because his call for human emancipation speaks to universal aspirations. Caution, because history shows how easily ideals can be corrupted when concentrated power replaces democratic participation.

Karl Marx did not kill millions. His writings did not prescribe gulags, famines, or purges. What killed millions were authoritarian regimes that betrayed his ideals, using his name to justify repression. Marx's principles—human emancipation, democratic worker control, the end of alienation, international solidarity, and distrust of concentrated power—were noble aspirations. Their distortion into authoritarianism is one of history's great tragedies.

As the Global South and struggling societies reflect on questions of governance and justice, Marx's forgotten promises deserve to be revisited. Not as dogma, but as a reminder that true liberation lies in dignity, democracy, and solidarity. The challenge is to reclaim those ideals from the shadows of history and to ensure they are never again betrayed by authoritarianism masquerading as emancipation.

Naveed Qazi is an author of thirteen books, and for feedback can be mailed at naveedqazi@live.com. For details on his writing career, visit his personal website www.naveedqazi.com

Asia's Largest Tulip

Handicrafts, Mussarat ul Islam senior officers of the Floriculture Department and a large number of visitors and tourists.

Speaking on the occasion, the Chief Minister expressed hope that the onset of spring would usher in renewed optimism, prosperity and growth for the people of Jammu and Kashmir, particularly for the tourism sector which serves as a major driver of the region's economy.

He stated that the Tulip Festival has emerged as one of the most prominent tourism events in the Kashmir Valley and provides an excellent platform to showcase the breathtaking natural beauty, cultural richness and hospitality of Kashmir to visitors from across the country and around the globe.

Chief Minister complimented the Floriculture Department for making the Tulip Garden ready in time and said that officers and gardeners of Floriculture department deserve to be appreciated for their efforts in curating this garden. CM said that in time to come, the Floriculture Department shall be developing its own rootstock so that dependence on importing of bulbs is gradually reduced and this would also require support of SKUAST Kashmir.

Extending a warm welcome to tourists visiting Kashmir, the Chief Minister said that the mesmerizing beauty, vibrant colours and soothing fragrance of the blooming tulips would offer visitors a unique and unforgettable experience.

The Chief Minister appealed to tourists from across the country and around the world to visit Jammu & Kashmir during the spring season and experience its unmatched natural beauty.

He further remarked that Jammu and Kashmir is blessed with unparalleled natural splendor and scenic landscapes that continue to attract nature lovers and travellers from different parts of the world. He expressed hope that visitors to the Tulip Garden would not only cherish the beauty of the flowers but would also carry with them a message of peace, harmony and prosperity from the Valley.

The Indira Gandhi Memorial Tulip Garden, recognized as Asia's largest Tulip garden, remains one of the most sought-after spring attractions in Kashmir and is expected to draw thousands of visitors during the ongoing Tulip Festival-2026.

This year, around 18 lakh tulips of over 70 varieties, along with nearly one lakh other bulbous flowers including daffodils, hyacinths and narcissus, have been planted, adding vibrant colours to the valley's spring landscape.

On the occasion, Chief Minister also released a tourism promotional song titled 'wadi-e-sumbul' produced by Department of Information and Public Relations.

During the event, the Chief Minister inaugurated souvenir point established by the Floriculture Department.

He also inaugurated exhibition of Handicrafts and Handloom department and inspected the stalls.

CM Reviews Stock

oil companies, and other concerned officers. The outstation officers attended the meeting through online mode.

During the meeting, the Chief Minister reviewed the availability and supply position of petroleum products, Liquefied Petroleum Gas (LPG) and other essential commodities across Jammu & Kashmir.

Addressing the officers, the Chief Minister emphasized that the administration must remain vigilant and proactive to ensure that no artificial scarcity, hoarding or black marketing is allowed to take place in any district.

"I think the administration as a whole is well aware of the situation and also on top of things. I would just like to reiterate that while the Food and Supplies Department does its work, this must be complemented and supplemented in the districts," the Chief Minister said.

He directed all Deputy Commissioners to maintain strict oversight at the district level to ensure smooth supply and fair distribution of essential commodities.

"Ensuring that there is no hoarding, artificial scarcity or black market conditions created will require strong oversight at the district level. Since all districts and Deputy Commissioners are connected to this meeting, please take these instructions on board," he said.

The Chief Minister further stressed that the administration must remain alert as the duration of the current crisis remains uncertain.

"We don't know how long this will last. It could last a couple of days, it could last a few weeks. Let us assume it may last longer than we are comfortable with. Therefore, the alert that we are on must continue to ensure that no artificial scarcity or black marketing situations are created," he said.

He also directed the Information Department to keep the public regularly informed about the stock position and supply of essential commodities to prevent rumours and panic buying.

"Ensure that the Information Department keeps people informed on a regular basis so that we keep reassuring people about our strong position and the available supplies. By detailing the steps taken and the stock position, we can ensure that elements trying to misuse the situation are not able to do so," the Chief Minister said.

The Chief Minister also directed the administration to maintain constant vigil over the availability of commercial LPG, particularly in view of the ongoing Navratras, the upcoming Eid and the beginning of the tourist season. He called for taking inputs from stakeholders such as restaurateurs and hoteliers before any rationalization of commercial LPG supply is undertaken in view of tourist inflow expected and festive seasons ahead.

Earlier during the meeting, Minister Satish Sharma, who holds the portfolio of Food, Civil Supplies and Consumer Affairs, shared inputs and drew attention to certain elements that may attempt to exploit the prevailing situation. He assured the meeting that any unscrupulous elements trying to take advantage of the circumstances would be dealt with strictly and made an example of.

Similarly, Chief Secretary Atal Dulloo stressed that Deputy Commissioners must ensure that no violations such as black marketing, hoarding or profiteering occur in their respective districts. He directed them to extend all possible support to the Legal Metrology and Food, Civil Supplies and Consumer Affairs departments to ensure effective monitoring and enforcement during the current situation.

Commissioner Secretary Food, Civil Supplies and Consumer Affairs Saurabh Bhagat gave a detailed presentation on the supply and stock position of petroleum products and LPG in Jammu and Kashmir.

The presentation highlighted that despite the global disruptions affecting the stock position of petroleum products and LPG in Jammu and Kashmir remains stable.

The meeting was informed that adequate reserves of petrol, diesel and LPG are available across storage facilities and distributorships in J&K.

To ensure sustained availability and prevent misuse, several regulatory measures have been implemented.

The meeting was also informed that the Delivery Authentication Code (DAC) system has been introduced to ensure that LPG cylinders are delivered only to genuine consumers. Oil marketing companies have also launched an e-KYC campaign to verify customer authenticity and identify inactive or duplicate LPG connections.

Regarding non-domestic LPG supplies, a temporary cap of 20 percent of the average monthly consumption has been placed, while ensuring uninterrupted supply to essential institutions such as hospitals and educational establishments.

The presentation further informed that the Government of India has provided an ad-hoc allocation of 468 kilolitres of PDS Superior Kerosene Oil (SKO) for cooking and lighting purposes, primarily targeting vulnerable groups including Antyodaya Anna Yojana families.

Shab-e-Qadr Observed

Makhdoom Saifab (RA), Shrine of Gous-ul-Azam Dastgeer (RA) at Khanyar, Khwaja Naqashband Sahab (RA) and other shrines in Kashmir.

Reports said that thousands of devotees offered nightlong prayers at the mosques across Jammu and Kashmir. At many places, local priests, individuals and molvis used public addressing system of mosques to recite Quran and Naath Khani throughout the night.

Shab-e-Qadr, also known as the "Night of Power," falls during the last ten days of the holy month of Ramadan and holds immense spiritual significance for Muslims.

It is believed to be the night when the first verses of the Holy Quran were revealed to Prophet Muhammad (PBUH).

The Holy Quran describes the night as "better than a thousand months," making worship and prayers on this night highly rewarding.

Devotees said the night holds deep spiritual value and offers an opportunity for reflection and supplication. "We pray for peace, prosperity and the well-being of our families and society," said Mohammad Ashraf, a devotee preparing to visit Hazratbal shrine for the prayers.

Meanwhile, authorities had made elaborate arrangements to facilitate the devotees expected to attend the night-long prayers.

Officials said arrangements regarding lighting, water supply, sanitation and security were put in place to ensure the smooth observance of the sacred night.

Notably, every year, Shab-e-Qadr draws an ocean of worshippers to mosques and shrines across Kashmir and parts of Jammu and Kashmir, with devotees spending the entire night engaged in supplications, recitation of the Quran and voluntary prayers in the hope of attaining Allah's mercy and forgiveness—(KNO inputs)

Youth Must Lead

has come for India to reclaim its place, guiding a challenge-ridden world. We must steadfastly prepare our youth to forge a formidable India- one that shall knit nations in unbreakable unity, kindling in them the noble pursuit of universal peace and human welfare," the Lieutenant Governor said.

The Lieutenant Governor said that ancient India's journey was never one-sided: one hand held science, the other culture.

"We emphasized personalities blending Brahma-gupta's intellect and Buddha's wisdom. This campus must nurture such souls," he further said.

The Lieutenant Governor also assured financial assistance for establishment of Gurukul, Sanskrit Pathshala, or Ved Pathshala in the region.

Dr Karan Singh, former Union Minister; Padma Shri Prof. Vishwamurti Shastri; Prof. Shrinivasa Varakhedi, Vice Chancellor, Central Sanskrit University, Jammu; Dr Kamal Kishor Mishra, Department of Sanskrit University of Calcutta; Prof. R.G. Murali Krishna, Registrar, Central Sanskrit University, Jammu; Prof. Satish Kumar Kapoor, Director, HoDs and faculty of the university, senior officials, prominent citizens and students in large number were present.

Snowfall Continues

reaches of Bandipora, Gurez, Kupwara, Handwara, Baramulla and Pahalgam led to slippery conditions on several roads, while higher passes witnessed fresh accumulation of snow.

Due to the fresh snowfall and slippery road conditions, authorities suspended vehicular movement on some key routes, including the Bandipora-Gurez road and the Mughal Road, which connects Kashmir with the Pir Panjal region.

Traffic on the Srinagar-Kargil highway was also affected after snowfall at the Zojila Pass made the road unsafe for travel, officials said.

They said road clearance operations are being carried out by the Border Roads Organisation and other agencies wherever required.

Meanwhile, the Meteorological Department said the weather conditions are expected to remain erratic for the next few days.

According to the MeT forecast, intermittent light to moderate rain in plains and snowfall in higher reaches is likely at several places across Jammu and Kashmir till March 20.

On March 17, the weather is expected to remain partly cloudy with the possibility of brief spells of light rain or snowfall at isolated higher-altitude locations, officials said.

Between March 18 and 20, the region may witness generally cloudy skies with intermittent light to moderate rain or snowfall at many places, mainly during night and morning hours.

The MeT department has advised travellers and transporters to plan their journeys carefully, particularly while moving through high-altitude areas and mountain passes.

Farmers have also been advised to suspend farm operations till March 20 in view of the expected adverse weather conditions, officials added—(KNO)

21-Day Fuel Stock

basis and has deployed multiple enforcement teams across districts to prevent hoarding and artificial

shortages of LPG, petrol and other essential commodities.

He warned that LPG distributors, petrol pump owners or traders found violating rules will face blacklisting and cancellation of licences.

Sharma appealed to the public to avoid panic buying, assuring that the government has adequate domestic supplies and is coordinating with the Government of India to enhance LPG allocation for the region.

He added that the government has also decided to provide around 2.5 litres of kerosene per family as a temporary relief measure to support households during the ongoing crisis.

Highlighting the tourism potential of Kashmir, the minister said the government led by CM Abdullah is committed to development and strengthening the tourism sector.

Calling Kashmir the "Switzerland of India", he expressed hope that the region will witness record tourist footfall this year, particularly with the opening of Asia's largest tulip garden in Srinagar.

"We hope tourists will arrive in record numbers and there will be no inconvenience to them. Our focus remains prosperity and progress," the minister said—(KNO)

CS Reviews Youth

said that such platforms provide a positive environment and meaningful opportunities that keep young people productively engaged and away from harmful influences. He stressed that sustained investment in sports and creative initiatives at the grassroots level can equip youth with valuable life lessons, strengthen their resilience and guide them towards a disciplined, healthy and purposeful future.

Speaking on the occasion, Commissioner Secretary Youth Services & Sports, DrShahid Iqbal Choudhary presented a detailed overview of the department's initiatives aimed at expanding youth participation in sporting activities while simultaneously strengthening sports infrastructure across districts so that young talent can access quality training facilities closer to their homes.

He stated that the department remains committed to providing year-round opportunities for youth to participate in sporting as well as creative activities. Efforts are also underway to bring national and international sporting events to Jammu and Kashmir, which not only help nurture local talent but also generate enthusiasm among sports lovers by providing opportunities to witness leading athletes performing in the Union Territory.

The Commissioner Secretary took this opportunity to inform that the first-ever Draft Youth Policy for Jammu and Kashmir has been prepared to provide a strategic roadmap for youth empowerment, leadership development and sports promotion. Sports-based interventions are also being integrated into the Nasha Mukta J&K campaign through themed tournaments, youth ambassadors, awareness drives and training of coaches to identify early signs of substance abuse among youth, he added.

Presenting the performance of the Directorate of Youth Services & Sports, Director General YS&S, Anuradha Gupta informed the meeting that mass participation programmes launched by the department have witnessed an overwhelming response from youth across Jammu and Kashmir.

She informed that the flagship grassroots sports league "Leagues of Classics - Enjoy the Game 1.0" has already engaged more than 2.23 lakh youth as of March 13, 2026 in sports such as cricket, football and volleyball at zonal and district levels, with participation expected to reach around 2.53 lakh by April 2026.

To promote winter sports among youth in mountainous regions of the Union Territory, snow skiing training programmes were organised during January-February 2026 at Gulmarg, Gurez Valley, Bhaderwah and Sonamarg. These programmes engaged young participants in the Under-14, Under-17 and Under-19 categories, providing them with exposure to winter sports and professional training.

The meeting also reviewed the successful organisation of "SRIJAN - The Making of a Legacy," the first national-level sports conference hosted by the Directorate of Sports earlier this year. The conference brought together sports administrators, policymakers and experts from across the country to deliberate on strategies for strengthening grassroots sports ecosystems.

The meeting was further informed that online engagement initiatives conducted through the MyBharat portal have significantly expanded outreach among young people. The number of registered youth on the portal increased from 3.21 lakh in December 2025 to more than 7.10 lakh by March 2026, reflecting growing participation in online fitness challenges, quizzes and sports awareness programmes.

Additionally, the department has uploaded over 10,000 youth engagement activities on the Youth Engagement and Empowerment Portal (YEEP), placing it among the leading departments in the Union Territory in terms of youth outreach and activity reporting.

The Chief Secretary was also apprised of the extensive calendar of sports and youth activities planned in the coming months. These include inter-school, district and UT-level competitions in 36 sports disciplines recognised by the School Games Federation of India for the U-14, U-17 and U-19 categories, organisation of "Leagues of Classics - Enjoy the Game 2.0" across all 20 districts, and "Aarohan 2026 - Viksit J&K Young Leaders' Dialogue and National Youth Festival" scheduled to be held at the Sher-i-Kashmir International Conference Centre in Srinagar with participation of around 1,400 youth from across the country.

Other initiatives include Mini Marathon 2.0 (Srinagar Edition) to promote physical fitness among youth, the "Back to Bachpan" initiative aimed at reviving traditional games such as Gilli Danda and Stapoo among children, as well as Spring and Autumn Art Festivals to encourage creativity and cultural expression among youth across districts.

The Directorate also proposed the establishment of cluster-based sports clubs in 788 school clusters across Jammu and Kashmir to identify and nurture sporting talent in the 8-14 years age group through scientific training and talent identification protocols aligned with the framework of the Sports Authority of India.

Presenting the performance of the Sports Council, Secretary Nuzhat Gul informed the meeting that the Union Territory has witnessed a significant surge in sports participation during the current financial year.

She added that between April 1, 2025 and February 28, 2026, the Council organised 1,076 sports activities across 50 disciplines, engaging over 32.33 lakh youth across Jammu and Kashmir. The government has fixed a target of 37.50 lakh youth engagement for the financial year 2025-26, which is expected to be exceeded with participation projected to reach around 37.75 lakh by March 2026.

Moreover it was given out that athletes from Jammu and Kashmir have also delivered commendable performances at national and international levels, winning

28 international medals including 9 gold, 10 silver and 9 bronze, along with 469 medals at national events comprising 138 gold, 137 silver and 194 bronze medals.

The Chief Secretary also reviewed the progress of sports infrastructure projects being implemented by the Council under the Special Assistance to States for Capital Investment (SASCI) scheme. It was informed that 53 Cr out of the approved outlay of 55 Cr has already been released and fully utilised.

It was highlighted that more than 50 sports infrastructure projects across districts are ready for inauguration, including a Synthetic Football Ground at Gassu Hazratbal, an Olympic-standard swimming pool at Gindun Rajbagh, and several indoor sports halls in districts including Bandipora, Shopian and Budgam. Significant progress has also been reported on major projects such as the development of Khel Gaon at Budgam and construction of synthetic hockey fields and football turfs at Jagti and Bandhuraakh.

The Sports Council also presented its roadmap for April 2026 to March 2027, which includes hosting several national and international sporting events in the Union Territory. Major upcoming events include the International Rafting Championship in September 2026, the South Asian Wushu Championship and the Asian Aerobic Gymnastics Championship, all proposed to be organised in Srinagar.

In addition, the Council plans to launch several new initiatives including a Women Rugby League, Thang Ta League, and Chess and Carrom Leagues to provide wider sporting platforms for athletes across different age groups.

Concluding the meeting, the Chief Secretary reiterated the government's commitment to developing state-of-the-art sports infrastructure and expanding opportunities for youth across the Union Territory. He emphasised that sustained investment in sports and youth engagement will not only nurture sporting talent but also promote healthy lifestyles, discipline and positive social engagement among the young population of Jammu and Kashmir.

Rs 364 Crore Spent On

arrangements, allowances of polling staff, transportation of election materials, voter awareness campaigns, and setting up polling infrastructure across constituencies.

It is worth mentioning that the Lok Sabha elections in Jammu & Kashmir were conducted in five phases between April 19 and May 20. Four months later, the Assembly elections were held in three phases from September 18 to October 1—(KNO)

Stranded Indian Students

to cross the border two days ago, but since then, authorities have barred further movement, leaving many stranded near the crossing point.

The Azerbaijan blockade has caused financial damage. Several students had booked air tickets, costing over Rs 60,000 each, expecting to fly out via Azerbaijan, but were unable to use them when the border closed. With no clarity on when they will be allowed to cross, many cannot even reschedule their flights.

"We were expecting the government to evacuate our children studying in Iran, but they failed to do so. We have had to bear all expenses on our own, but the government is failing in even facilitating their return," a parent said, urging the Government of India to take up the matter with neighbouring countries to ensure students could reach safely.

More than 50 Indian students safely arrived in New Delhi on Sunday, though several expressed frustration that the government had not arranged direct evacuation flights from Armenia to Delhi as they had hoped.

To facilitate onward travel, buses arranged by the Jammu and Kashmir State Road Transport Corporation (JKSRTC) were stationed outside the airport under the supervision of the J&K government. However, only six students opted to use the service. The majority arranged their own travel. Some boarded private buses to Kool Kars Bus Terminal, others booked domestic flights to reach their hometowns more quickly.

The All India Medical Students Association (AIMSA) said it was maintaining regular contact with stranded students and coordinating with authorities to ensure those stuck at transit points received necessary support.

With the Azerbaijan border still shut and flight disruptions continuing at Dubai, the situation remained fluid, with many students hoping travel restrictions would ease and smoother arrangements would be made for their safe return—(KNO)



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Govt to ensure steady, uninterrupted supply of essentials: Satish Sharma

GMK NEWS NETWORK

SRINAGAR: Minister for Food, Civil Supplies & Consumer Affairs, Transport, IT, Youth Services & Sports, Science and Technology, Satish Sharma, Monday said that the government is closely monitoring the situation to ensure that the supply of essential commodities across Jammu and Kashmir remains smooth and uninterrupted despite global disturbances.

Addressing the media, the Minister said that the impact of the prevailing international situation is being felt across the world as well as in Jammu and Kashmir. However, he assured the people that the administration is taking all necessary measures to safeguard the interests of the public and prevent any disruption in availability of essential commodities.

Issuing a stern warning to those attempting to exploit the situation, the Minister said strict action will be taken

against anyone involved in black marketing, hoarding or creating artificial scarcity of essential commodities.

"Whether it is an LPG distributor, a petrol pump owner or any dealer of essential commodities, if anyone is found indulging in such illegal activities, they will be blacklisted and made an example of. The government will not tolerate any attempt to exploit the public during such circumstances," maintained the Minister.

Satish Sharma informed that he is personally monitoring the situation on an hourly basis and recently participated in a high-level meeting chaired by the Chief Minister to review the preparedness of various departments.

During the meeting, the Chief Minister directed the departments including Civil Supplies and Legal Metrology to maintain strict oversight to ensure smooth supply and prevent irregularities.

The Minister said that more



than 20 teams led by the Legal Metrology Department have been deployed across the districts to monitor the situation round the clock and ensure that consumers do not face any inconvenience.

Highlighting the steps being taken to augment the supply, Sharma said that the government has written to the Union Minister seeking enhancement of LPG commercial quota supply to meet the growing demand from commercial

tourism bookings for the coming weeks are already encouraging and expressed confidence that the Union Territory will witness an all-time high influx of tourists this season. "While some forces try to destabilize peace, the people of Jammu and Kashmir continue to strengthen the economy through tourism and development," he remarked.

The Minister also informed that hospitals and educational institutions will continue to receive 100 per cent supply of LPG to ensure uninterrupted services.

Providing an update on the supply chain, Sharma said that vessels carrying LPG are already enroute and expected to reach the ports soon, which will further stabilize the supply situation. He also announced that the government has decided to provide 2.5 litre of kerosene oil per family under the AAY category as a relief measure. He explained that although Jammu and Kashmir had earlier been

declared a kerosene-free region, the sudden surge in demand for alternative cooking options has necessitated it.

The Minister said that the J&K administration has requested the Government of India to enhance kerosene allocation and provide additional support to the Union Territory so that other categories are also covered during the current circumstances.

Satish Sharma also urged the public to remain calm and avoid panic buying, stating that unnecessary stockpiling only creates artificial shortages and benefits unscrupulous elements.

"We appeal to the public not to fall prey to rumors. Some mischievous elements try to spread panic during such situations for personal gain. The government is fully prepared and there is no need for the people to panic," he said.

To counter misinformation, the Minister said that the department has coordinated with the Directorate of Infor-

mation, district administrations and other stakeholders to launch awareness campaigns and ensure that accurate information reaches the public. He further informed that district-level task forces have been constituted and vehicles have been deployed to maintain real-time monitoring of supply and distribution.

The Minister reiterated that any complaint regarding irregularities will be addressed promptly and strict action will follow in case of violations.

"As the Chief Minister has said, this situation may continue for a few weeks. Therefore, we are working on a war footing to ensure that the people of Jammu and Kashmir face no inconvenience on this account," he added.

The Minister appealed to the citizens to cooperate with the administration and maintain patience, emphasizing that unity, compassion and responsible behaviour will help overcome the present challenges.

KU VC felicitates CCCP Residential Coaching Programme Qualifiers of JKPS

GMK NEWS NETWORK

SRINAGAR: Vice Chancellor University of Kashmir (KU) Prof Nilofer Khan on Monday felicitated 11 candidates from its Centre for Career Counselling, Coaching and Placement (CCCP) who qualified the Jammu and Kashmir Public Service Commission (JKPSC) Combined Competitive Examination-2024 (CCE-2024).

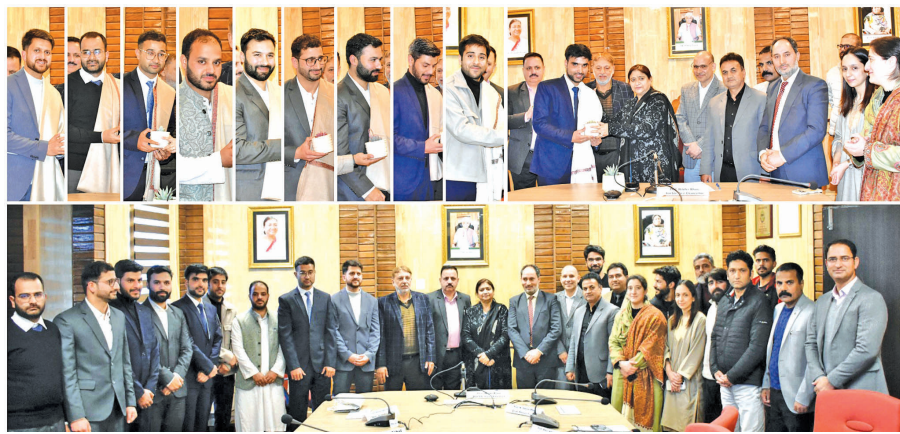
The ceremony was held at the University Main Campus where Prof. Nilofer Khan, felicitated the successful aspirants for their achievement.

The results of the JKPS CCE-2024 were declared by the Jammu and Kashmir Public Service Commission on March 13, in which 11 candidates from the CCCP Civil Services Residential Coaching Programme of KU secured positions in the merit list.

The programme is a flagship initiative of the University aimed at providing structured coaching and academic support to civil services aspirants, particularly those from economically underprivileged sections and female candidates.

The programme offers a fully residential academic environment with facilities including free accommodation, a 24x7 library, high-speed internet, structured test series and continuous mentorship to help aspirants prepare for competitive examinations.

Congratulating the



successful candidates, Vice-Chancellor KU Prof. Nilofer Khan described the achievement as a moment of pride for the University and a testament to the dedication and hard work of the aspirants.

She said the University remains committed to strengthening academic support systems that enable young aspirants to compete successfully in prestigious examinations.

"I have personally monitored the progress of the Civil Services Residential Coaching Programme and have made frequent visits to the Centre to ensure that the vision behind establishing this initiative is implemented effectively," Prof. Khan said while appreciating the determination of the successful candidates.

Prof. Khan also acknowledged the role of the programme's Overseeing Committee headed by Dean Research KU Prof. Mohammad Sultan Bhat and comprising Registrar

KU Prof. Naseer Iqbal, Director CCCP Prof. Nazir Ahmad, Special Secretary to the VC KU Dr. Ashfaq Zarrari and Chief Accounts Officer/FA KU Ms. Zafira for their guidance and supervision.

She also appreciated the efforts of the other members of CCCP team including Deputy Director CCCP Dr. Yahya Bakhtiyar and Ms Fatima Ali faculty at CCCP for their sustained mentorship and academic support to civil services aspirants.

On the occasion, Dean Academic Affairs KU Prof. Shariefuddin Pirzada, Dean Research KU Prof. Mohammad Sultan Bhat, Registrar KU Prof. Naseer Iqbal and Special Secretary to the VC KU Dr. Ashfaq Zarrari also shared their views. They highlighted the consistent academic support and mentorship provided by the University through CCCP and congratulated the successful candidates and their families for the remarkable

achievement.

Earlier Director CCCP KU Prof. Nazir Ahmad, in his remarks, said that the success of the candidates reflects the sustained efforts made by the CCCP team, coordinators, mentors and the Overseeing Committee over the past few years to develop the Centre into a vibrant residential academy dedicated to preparing aspirants for civil services and other competitive examinations.

Deputy Director CCCP Dr. Yahya Bakhtiyar proposed vote of the thanks on the occasion whileas Coordinator CCCP Dr. Hakim Yasir Abbas conducted the proceedings of the ceremony.

On the occasion, the successful candidates also shared their experiences at CCCP and acknowledged the guidance, mentorship and academic support they received at the University which helped them successfully clear the JKPS CCE-2024 examination.

Arrangements for upcoming religious festivities reviewed at G'bal

GMK NEWS NETWORK

GANDERBAL: To review preparations for the upcoming religious occasions of Shab-e-Qadr, Eid-ul-Fitr, Navroz, Navratri and Ramnavmi, the Additional Deputy Commissioner (ADC) Ganderbal, Syed Fahim Bihagi Monday chaired a meeting of officers, here.

The meeting focused on ensuring coordinated and efficient arrangements for the smooth observance of these religious occasions across the district.

The ADC emphasized that all departments must work in close coordination and ensure that necessary facilities are put in place well in advance on the auspicious occasions of Shab-e-Qadr, Eid-ul-Fitr, Navroz,

Navratri and Ramnavmi.

He directed the concerned departments to ensure proper arrangements for traffic regulation, parking, sanitation, street lighting, drinking water, power supply and healthcare services, particularly at major mosques, shrines, temples and other places of large gatherings.

Reviewing the preparedness of various departments, the ADC stressed uninterrupted power supply during the auspicious days and asked the concerned authorities to ensure adequate drinking water availability. Deployment of water tankers at prominent religious places was also directed to facilitate devotees.

Municipal Authorities and Rural Develop-

ment Department were instructed to maintain cleanliness across the district including at congregation sites, Mosques, Shrines and Temples and ensure proper functioning of street lights at key locations. Municipal Council Ganderbal was also directed to place mobile convenience at appropriate place near Eidgah Ganderbal to facilitate public.

For smooth traffic management, the ADC directed the Traffic Police and ARTO to ensure availability of transportation to ferry devotees to religious places including Hazratbal, Jinab Sahib Saura besides others and prepare a comprehensive traffic and route plan, ensure proper regulation of vehicular movement.

They were also direct-

ed to arrange transport facilities from Wadhama Transit Camp to Kheerbhawani Temple for the convenience of devotees during Navratri and Ramnavami.

The Health Department was asked to establish first aid and medical camps equipped with staff, ambulances and essential medicines at main congregation places and major Shrines besides temples. The Fire and Emergency Services were directed to remain on alert and ensure round-the-clock readiness.

The ADC stressed all concerned officers to work with added zeal and utmost coordination for the seamless and hassle-free culmination of large congregations of Shab-e-Qadr, Eid-ul-Fitr, Navroz, Navratri and Ramnavmi across the district.

Dy CM lays foundation stone for PMGSY roads, convenes public outreach camps

GMK NEWS NETWORK

RAJOURI: Deputy Chief Minister Surinder Choudhary Monday laid the foundation stone for two important road projects under the Pradhan Mantri Gram Sadak Yojana aimed at strengthening the rural connectivity in Nowshera division.

The projects included construction and maintenance of L021 Link Road from Helipad Ground Jhanghar to Ashok Gate Sarya via Purkhali in Block Qila Darhal, with a length of 4.0 km and sanctioned cost of Rs. 1001.92 lakh and L024 Chowki to Kanara East via Nalli Mohalla (Link Road) in Block Nowshera, having a length of 2.50 km with a sanctioned cost of Rs. 565.20 lakh. These projects are expected to significantly improve the connectivity and facilitate smoother transportation for the local population.

The Deputy Chief Minis-

ter also laid the foundation stone for construction of an Irrigation Guest House at Rajal, Nowshera, which will strengthen the infrastructure of the irrigation department and facilitate better field supervision and departmental functioning in the area.

Speaking on the occasion, the Deputy Chief Minister said that the government is committed to strengthen rural infrastructure and ensure that development reaches every corner of the Union Territory. He emphasized that better road connectivity will enhance access to essential services, markets and educational institutions for residents of remote areas.

Later, the Deputy Chief Minister convened public outreach camps at the foundation stone laid sites, where he interacted with the local residents and listened to their grievances.

Several issues were projected by the public,

including unscheduled power cuts, scarcity of drinking water in Chowki, upgradation of GMS Sarya and GMS Jhanghar and speedy implementation of schemes under the Jal Jeevan Mission.

The Deputy Chief Minister assured the public that their genuine concerns would be taken up with the concerned departments for early redress.

Among others present on the occasion were Chief Engineer PWD, Tilak Raj; ADC Nowshera Pritam Lal Thapa; DFO Nowshera Shweta Deona, ALC Pradyot Gupta, Executive Engineer PWD (R&B) Nowshera Sarwar Mehmood besides other district officers and officials.

Meanwhile, a meeting regarding the ongoing development projects and FCA cases of Forest Division Nowshera was also chaired by the Deputy Chief Minister at Nowshera.

The meeting was

attended by the Conservator of Forests, West Circle Rajouri, along with district officers of sister wings of the Forest Department. Additional Deputy Commissioner Nowshera, Chief Border Roads Organisation, Superintending Engineer Public Works Department Rajouri and Superintending Engineer PMGSY also attended the meeting.

During the meeting, the Divisional Forest Officer Nowshera apprised about the status of ongoing projects and various FCA cases pertaining to Nowshera Forest Division.

The Deputy Chief Minister reviewed the progress of the works and emphasized the need for timely coordination among all concerned departments for early resolution of issues.

On the occasion, the Deputy Chief Minister also planted a sapling in the DFO campus at Nowshera as a gesture towards promoting environmental conservation.

رمضان كريم

Ramadan

2026 | 1447 Hijri

Sehri & Iftaar Time Schedule

10 Days Of Rahmat

RAMADAN	DATE	DAY	SEHRI TIME	IFTARI TIME
1	19 FEB	THURSDAY	05:49	06:21
2	20 FEB	FRIDAY	05:48	06:22
3	21 FEB	SATURDAY	05:47	06:23
4	22 FEB	SUNDAY	05:46	06:24
5	23 FEB	MONDAY	05:45	06:24
6	24 FEB	TUESDAY	05:44	06:25
7	25 FEB	WEDNESDAY	05:42	06:26
8	26 FEB	THURSDAY	05:41	06:27
9	27 FEB	FRIDAY	05:40	06:28
10	28 FEB	SATURDAY	05:39	06:29

10 Days Of Magfirat

RAMADAN	DATE	DAY	SEHRI TIME	IFTARI TIME
11	01 MARCH	SUNDAY	05:38	06:30
12	02 MARCH	MONDAY	05:37	06:31
13	03 MARCH	TUESDAY	05:36	06:32
14	04 MARCH	WEDNESDAY	05:34	06:33
15	05 MARCH	THURSDAY	05:33	06:33
16	06 MARCH	FRIDAY	05:31	06:34
17	07 MARCH	SATURDAY	05:30	06:34
18	08 MARCH	SUNDAY	05:28	06:35
19	09 MARCH	MONDAY	05:27	06:36
20	10 MARCH	TUESDAY	05:26	06:37

10 Days Of Najat

RAMADAN	DATE	DAY	SEHRI TIME	IFTARI TIME
21	11 MARCH	WEDNESDAY	05:25	06:38
22	12 MARCH	THURSDAY	05:24	06:38
23	13 MARCH	FRIDAY	05:23	06:39
24	14 MARCH	SATURDAY	05:20	06:40
25	15 MARCH	SUNDAY	05:19	06:41
26	16 MARCH	MONDAY	05:18	06:42
27	17 MARCH	TUESDAY	05:16	06:42
28	18 MARCH	WEDNESDAY	05:15	06:43
29	19 MARCH	THURSDAY	05:14	06:44
30	20 MARCH	FRIDAY	05:12	06:45

DUA FOR IFTAR

اللَّهُمَّ إِنِّي لَكَ صُومْتُ وَبِكَ آمَنْتُ وَعَلَيْكَ تَوَكَّلْتُ وَعَلَى رِزْقِكَ أَفْطَرْتُ

DUA FOR SEHRI

وَبِصَوْمِ غَدٍ نَّوَيْتُ مِنْ شَهْرِ رَمَضَانَ

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Fringe players in focus as hosts look to respond in high-scoring Hamilton



AGENCIES

Unusually difficult conditions for batting allowed for only 184 runs and 13 wickets, in 31.1 overs of play at Mount Maunganui. So both New Zealand and South Africa might enjoy the change of scenery on Tuesday when the series shifts to Hamilton, which yielded a first innings total of 240 in its most recent T20 game. Katene Clark made 97 off 58 for Northern Districts that day, highlighting the value he can bring as a see-ball-hit-ball opener, which prompted the selectors to call him up. Initially, Clark was meant to play only the final two matches of this series but has been drafted in early to cover for Bevon Jacobs who has been ruled out of Tuesday's game with bruising on his left knee.

New Zealand and South Africa are competing against each other with largely experimental squads. The Black Caps have high hopes for Tim Robinson and Jacobs, however their inability to negotiate conditions when they weren't in their favour at Bay Oval was disappointing. In contrast, South

Africa's second string led by the 19-year-old fast bowler Nqobani Mokoena, comeback man Gerald Coetzee and T20 specialist Ottneil Baartman seized the early initiative and never gave it up. In a five-match series such as this, there is time for a little ebb and flow. New Zealand, 0-1 down, will hope it is their turn to take charge now.

Lockie Ferguson had an excellent T20 World Cup leading into the final, but in Ahmedabad he wilted, going for 48 runs in two overs. New Zealand didn't trust their point-of-difference fast bowler to complete his spell that day. Perhaps a return to more familiar surroundings will help him find his mojo. In his only previous T20 at Hamilton, Ferguson picked up 2 for 25 against Bangladesh in March 2021.

Tony de Zorzi missed the bus to the T20 World Cup due to injury and South Africa's performance there - going unbeaten to the semi-final - suggested that the team they eventually ended up with was the one they should've picked in the first place. Now given a chance with many of those players resting, de Zorzi

will want to push his case and eventually become one of those first-teamers.

Both teams picked up injury concerns in the first T20I on Sunday and given the quick turnaround around Jordan Hermann (hamstring) may not have enough time to recover and hold onto his place in the XI. Ish Sodhi, meanwhile, has been ruled out of the whole series with a broken thumb. Jacobs, for now, is out for the second T20I alone.

New Zealand (probable): 1 Devon Conway (wk), 2 Tom Latham, 3 Tim Robinson, 4 Nick Kelly, 5 Josh Clarkson, 6 Mitchell Santner (capt), 7 James Neesham, 8 Cole McCoinchie, 9 Zak Foulkes, 10 Kyle Jamieson, 11 Lockie Ferguson

Connor Esterhuizen brings out the sweep, New Zealand vs South Africa, 1st men's T20I, Mount Maunganui, March 15 2026

South Africa (probable): 1 Tony de Zorzi, 2 Wiaan Mulder/Jordan Hermann, 3 Connor Esterhuizen, 4 Rubin Hermann, 5 Jason Smith, 6 Dian Forrester, 7 George Linde, 8 Gerald Coetzee, 9 Keshav Maharaj (capt), 10 Nqobani Mokoena, 11 Ottneil Baartman

Chinnaswamy stadium receives government clearance to host IPL 2026 final

AGENCIES

Bengaluru's M Chinnaswamy Stadium has been cleared to host IPL 2026 after a government-appointed Expert Committee approved the venue for use on Monday.

The immediate implication is that Chinnaswamy - scheduled to host the season opener between Royal Challengers Bengaluru (RCB) and Sunrisers Hyderabad on March 28 - will also stage one play-off game and the final, in keeping with the tradition of the defending champions hosting the title clash.

A committee, appointed by Karnataka's home minister G Parameshwara, conducted a thorough review of the stadium premises on Friday. The day-long audit involved several checks for structural compliance as well as measures taken to enhance crowd control



around the venue.

On Monday, the final nod was given following a meeting between the Karnataka State Cricket Association (KSCA) officials, RCB's top brass as well as members of the expert committee, chaired by G Maheshwar Rao.

The Chinnaswamy will host five RCB home games, while two others will be played at the Shaheed Veer Narayan Sta-

dium in Raipur, as per a pre-arranged agreement between the franchise and the Chhattisgarh government.

RCB has committed to engaging with KSCA to roll out digital QR coded tickets as one of several measures to tackle overcrowding around the venue. They have also partnered with the Bengaluru Metro Rail Corporation (BMRC) to ensure hassle-free travel.

The metro services will be extended until 1am on match days, while ticketing formalities are being worked out. It's likely those with match tickets can travel free of cost. BMRC is also likely to increase frequency of trains on all routes to prevent overcrowding.

As for structural measures, the KSCA have increased the number of entry points by constructing six new gates around the Chinnaswamy, while widening existing entry gates. The old NCA premises had also been equipped with ramps and tarpaulin sheets to become a holding area for fans, as they make their way towards their respective stands.

The Bengaluru police and the KSCA are working to ensure Cubbon Road - which runs alongside the main entrance of the venue - will be cleared for vehi-

ular movement at specific intervals on match days.

The IPL has announced the schedule only for the first two weeks of the competition in 2026. In the first leg, KSCA will host one more game (apart from the opener) on April 5, involving RCB and Chennai Super Kings.

Chinnaswamy last hosted a competitive fixture during IPL 2025. Since then, the venue has been mired in controversy following the death of 11 fans during RCB's victory celebrations on June 3.

All of KSCA's structural changes to comply with short-term measures recommended by the expert committee have happened in two months, following the December elections where Venkatesh Prasad, the former India fast bowler, assumed office after winning a tense election.

Gill: 2027 ODI World Cup is the 'ultimate goal'

AGENCIES

India ODI captain Shubman Gill has identified winning the 2027 ODI World Cup as the "ultimate goal", especially after coming "so close" to lifting the trophy in 2023. India had lost in the final of the 2023 World Cup to Australia after an unbeaten run in the tournament.

"Definitely, it does. That is the ultimate goal," Gill said on Star Sports during the BCCI awards. "We felt like we were so close last time when we were here in [the final] in India. To be able to get another crack at it in South Africa, it's going to be a great opportunity for us."

"Winning a World Cup in any format for the country is the ultimate goal. So obviously, that is something that sometimes runs in my mind."

The 2027 ODI World Cup will be played between 14 teams in South Africa, Zimbabwe and Namibia,



and is scheduled for October-November.

India's T20I captain Suryakumar Yadav, who recently led them to the T20 World Cup title, said if there was a game that he would want to replay, it was the 2023 ODI World Cup final, and win it.

"Definitely, 2023 World Cup final at Ahmedabad. [I would] love to replay that and win it," he said.

Suryakumar further said India's 2024 T20 World Cup triumph acted as a spark, leading to various Indian teams across genders and age groups winning ICC titles in recent years.

Samson on World Cup win: 'India is going to do this more and more often'

AGENCIES

Sanju Samson, whose late exploits in the recent T20 World Cup led India to the title, believes that the team is poised to rule global cricket for years to come. Speaking on the sidelines of the BCCI awards 2026 in Delhi, Samson said it was during the World Cup that he realised how much the team needed him to perform.

"Not yet, I am still like, when I get up in the morning I'm like, 'has it really happened?' So honestly, that's the feeling," Samson said about the T20 World Cup win.

"But I feel that in the coming years with the quality of players we have in our country, this is going to be repeated. The amount of players which are coming up and definitely India is going to do this more and more often."

Samson was named Player of the Tournament after a historic campaign,



scoring 321 runs at a strike rate of nearly 200 in just five innings. Despite not playing initially, he delivered 80-plus scores in the must-win Super Eight match against West Indies, the semi-final against England, and in the final against New Zealand.

Samson said he had been dreaming of helping India win a World Cup. "You can only dream where you want to go, but you can't definitely ride the path towards it," he said. "So my life or my career has been one of the best examples. I definitely wanted to do this a couple of years ago."

"I want to win a World

Cup for my country, but it had its own plan, its own script. So, but more like a movie. I enjoyed it."

"As I said before, I wanted to do something like this, then I got pulled out of my journey, and then suddenly, the team wanted me to come and contribute, and that's when I actually mentally flipped a bit... I think, before that, in the New Zealand series, the focus was all about myself."

"But in the World Cup, the focus is all about the team, what the team requires. And in the Zimbabwe game, right from that moment, everyone wanted me to contribute. I had a role to play."

The Taskin-Mustafizur-Rana combination gives Bangladesh 'more chance to win matches'



AGENCIES

Mehidy Hasan Miraz said that the decision to press on with an unchanged fast-bowling attack for the deciding ODI against Pakistan was the best one for Bangladesh, since those were "our best bowling options".

Bangladesh trusted the same playing XI in all three matches - with Taskin Ahmed, Mustafizur Rahman and Nahid Rana leading the attack - and won 2-1, a result that came at a time of great turbulence in the country's cricket. The call to not tinker with the XI was a surprising one given the usual rotation policy in the fast-bowling department.

"We went into the match with our best bowling options," Mehidy said after Bangladesh won the third ODI on Sunday. "Mustafiz, Taskin and Rana have been bowling really well. Taskin gave us turning points in the match with his wickets. Otherwise we would have lost the match. We had planned to give

players full opportunities, as we believe it gives us more chance to win matches.

"We have to keep our ranking points in mind [to qualify for the ODI World Cup next year]. It is most important for us in the coming days. It will help us in automatic qualification for the World Cup in 2027. We are focused on winning matches and winning series."

Taskin, who took four wickets in the decider, Rana and Mustafizur took 19 wickets in the ODI series at a collective average of 21.84. Rana had starred in the first game with a five-wicket haul. Mustafizur didn't take too many wickets, but effected crucial breakthroughs in all three games.

On Sunday, Taskin took all the big wickets: Sahibzada Farhan with a rising delivery and blowing through Mohammad Rizwan to start with. Pakistan were 17 for 3 at that stage. Later, he got rid of Faheem Ashraf by cramping the left-hand batter for room and finally had the prized wicket of Salman Agha with a

slower delivery that the Pakistani centurion couldn't time as he went for a big hit.

"Taskin is among our most experienced cricketers. He is a really hard-working cricketer who uses his experience," Mehidy said. "Taskin knows what to bowl in each situation. He knows how to motivate himself. Mustafiz never panicked despite getting hit for two sixes. He kept coming back. I think we have to give value to such experienced cricketers."

Rana, who was adjudged Player-of-the-Series, showed his quality after returning to the ODI side. "I think Nahid Rana bowled very 'well, especially if you consider that he was making a comeback into the side," Mehidy said. He took a five-wicket haul in his return match. Taskin and Mustafiz both bowled well. We bowled them out for 114 runs in the first game. I think we bowled well in the second game post the 12th over. We made a great comeback in that game [but lost after being bundled for 114]."

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