

Good Morning

Kashmir

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GMK

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BJP Finalises Plan For July 20 ‘Secretariat Gherao’ Protest



AGENCIES

SRINAGAR: The Jammu and Kashmir unit of the BJP on Friday finalised its preparations for the ‘Secretariat Gherao’ protest on July 20, a party spokesperson said.

The BJP has organised the “peaceful” and “democratic” protest to raise the voice of the people against alleged corruption, arbitrary governance and policies that undermine the interests of the youth and democratic institutions, the spokesper-

son said.

J-K BJP president Sat Sharma and Leader of Opposition in Assembly Sunil Sharma chaired the comprehensive review meeting to assess the preparations for the proposed march to be held here, the spokesperson said.

“Organisational arrangements, coordination among various party units, mobilisation of workers and logistical preparations were reviewed to ensure peaceful and disciplined conduct of the march,” he said.

Lakhanpur To Be Developed As Street Food Hub In J&K: Dr. Jitendra

GMK NEWS NETWORK

JAMMU: Union Minister Jitendra Singh on Friday said that Lakhanpur has been selected among 50 towns across the country to be developed as a ‘street food hub’ under the PM SVANidhi initiative, while announcing the construction of aRs 1.5 crore gateway monument at the entry point to Jammu and Kashmir.

The minister, who was accorded a warm welcome by street food vendors and traders during his visit to the Lakhanpur Vendors



Market, said the Narendra Modi government has, for the first time, prioritised the welfare of street vendors through a dedicated national

Amarnathji Yatra-2026

Over 3.5 Lakh Visit Amarnath Shrine In First 15 Days: LG Sinha

Visits Nunwan Base Camp, Inspects Facilities For Amarnath Pilgrims

GMK NEWS NETWORK

SRINAGAR: More than 3.50 lakh pilgrims have paid obeisance at the Amarnath cave shrine in the first 15 days of the annual pilgrimage, Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha said on Friday, asserting that the Yatra is progressing smoothly amid enhanced facilities and security arrangements.

Lieutenant Governor visited the Nunwan base camp of the annual Amarnath Yatra and reviewed the arrangements for pilgrims, directing all departments to work in mission mode to ensure their safety, comfort and welfare.

The Lieutenant Governor directed all departments to work in mission mode to ensure the welfare of the pilgrims.

“Today marks 15 days since the pilgrimage began, and in these 15 days more than 3.50 Lakh pilgrims have had darshan of Baba Bholenath. By the grace of Lord Shiva, the yatra is proceeding smoothly. There is great



enthusiasm among devotees coming from every corner of the country, and local residents and service providers are also actively engaged in making this sacred pilgrimage a success,” the Lieutenant Governor said.

The Lieutenant Governor directed the officials to ensure that the environment remains fully protected. He further instructed for special cleanliness drives along both routes and camps.

“We are dedicated to a waste-free Shri Amarnath Ji Yatra and we must, working together under a whole-of-government approach, fulfill this commitment,” the Lieutenant Governor told the officials.

The Lieutenant Governor directed the officers to regularly obtain feedback from the pilgrims and ensure prompt redressal of any issues brought to their notice. He instructed that all services provided to the

pilgrims should strictly follow a 100 percent prepaid system to ensure transparency and prevent overcharging.

In view of the forecast of heavy rainfall over the coming days, the Lieutenant Governor directed the Administration and all stakeholder agencies to remain fully prepared, strengthen contingency measures and ensure the safety, security and convenience of the pilgrims under all

TODAY MARKS 15 DAYS SINCE THE PILGRIMAGE BEGAN, AND IN THESE 15 DAYS MORE than 3.50 Lakh pilgrims have had darshan of Baba Bholenath. By the grace of Lord Shiva, the yatra is proceeding smoothly. There is great enthusiasm among devotees coming from every corner of the country, and local residents and service providers are also actively engaged in making this sacred pilgrimage a success."

Govt Transfers Five IPS Officers To Newly-Set Up Cyber Coordination Centre

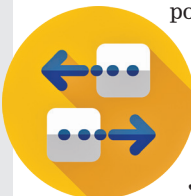
AGENCIES

JAMMU: The Jammu and Kashmir government Friday ordered a major reshuffle in the police department, transferring five senior IPS officers to the newly-established JK Cyber Crime Coordination Centre (JK4C) as part of a concerted effort to strengthen the Union Territory’s cybercrime fighting apparatus.

The transfers, ordered with immediate effect, were issued by the Home Department, according to a government order accessed news agency Kashmir News Service (KNS).

Sheikh JunaidMehmood, IPS, currently holding the charge of In-charge IGP, has been posted as the Chief Executive Officer of JK4C. Sameer Sharma, IPS, who was serving as DIG Armed Jammu, has been transferred and posted as DIG of the cyber coordination centre.

Mohammad Yaseen-Kichloo, IPS, Principal of Police Training School Talwara, has been made SSP Administrative Wing of JK4C with the additional charge of SSP Cyber Operations Wing. Ramnish Gupta, SSP CICE Jammu, has been posted as SSP Cyber



PM Modi Flags Off India’s First Hydrogen Train

GMK NEWS NETWORK

NEW DELHI: Prime Minister Narendra Modi Friday flagged off India’s first hydrogen-powered train between Jind and Sonapat at Jind railway station in Haryana.

The Prime Minister also laid the foundation stone and dedicated development projects worth around 14,700 crore rupees, including National Highway projects including Delhi-Amritsar-Katra Expressway, which will reduce travel time

between Delhi and Katra to about six hours.

Addressing the gathering, Prime Minister Modi said Indian Railways has undergone a major transformation over the past twelve years and described the hydrogen train as a historic milestone that has given Jind a special place in India’s history.

Haryana Chief Minister Nayab Singh Saini and Railway Minister Ashwani vaishnav were also present on this occasion. Speaking on the occasion,



Kashmir Sizzles As Srinagar Logs Third-Hottest July Day In A Decade

SAJID RAINA

SRINAGAR: Srinagar on Friday recorded its hottest day of the season so far as the mercury touched 35 degrees Celsius, while the Meteorological Department predicted a major shift in weather pattern from July 19, warning of heavy rainfall, flash floods and landslides in parts of Jammu and Kashmir next week.

MeT Department’s data accessed, revealed that maximum temperature in Srinagar settled at 35.0 degrees Celsius, nearly five degrees above normal and higher than the previous July high of 34.5 degrees Celsius recorded on July 10.

Official records show the day’s maximum was the third-highest July temperature recorded in Srinagar since 2016, after 37.4 degrees Celsius on July 6, 2025, and 36.2 degrees Celsius on July 29, 2024.



The minimum temperature in the city was recorded at 22.0 degrees Celsius, around 3.3 degrees above normal, reflecting unusually warm night conditions.

Elsewhere, Jammu was the hottest place in the Union Territory at 35.8 degrees Celsius, followed by Srinagar and Kupwara at 35.0 degrees each. Qazigund recorded 33.2 degrees Celsius, Kokernag 32.9 degrees, Bhadarwah 31.5 degrees, Katra 31.8 degrees and Banihal 30.8 degrees, while the tourist resorts of Pahalgam and

Gulmarg registered comparatively cooler maximum temperatures of 27.4 degrees and 25.6 degrees Celsius, respectively.

The weather department said hot and humid conditions are likely to continue on Saturday, with brief thundershowers possible at scattered places.

From July 19, weather conditions are expected to change, with rain and thundershowers likely at many places. Heavy rainfall accompanied by brief intense showers is forecast

CS Reviews Ease Of Doing Business In J&K

GMK NEWS NETWORK

SRINAGAR: Chief Secretary, Atal Dulloo, Friday chaired a high-level meeting to review the best practices adopted by leading States in promoting Ease of Doing Business (EoDB) and Ease of Living, with a view to examining their suitability for implementation in Jammu & Kashmir.

The meeting was attended by various Administrative Secretaries and senior officers of the concerned departments.

At the outset, the Chief Secretary was given detailed presentations on the governance and regulatory reforms undertaken by the States of Maharashtra and Gujarat, highlighting their initiatives aimed at creating a business-friendly ecosystem through simplification of procedures, digital governance, regulatory reforms and citizen-centric



service delivery.

The presentations outlined a wide range of initiatives adopted by the two States, including reduction in regulatory compliances, elimination of redundant procedures, end-to-end digitization of government services, strengthening of single-window systems, rationalization of inspections, decriminalization of minor regulatory offences, investor facilitation mechanisms, time-bound service delivery, simplification of land and construction-related approvals and adoption of technology-driven governance models.

The reforms implemented under the Business Reform Action Plan (BRAP), District BRAP, deregulation initiatives and Jan Vishwas framework were also highlighted during the meeting.

Reviewing the

Tourist Boom Leaves Trail Of Plastic Waste Across Kashmir's Offbeat Destinations

SAJID RAINA

SRINAGAR: The growing influx of tourists to Kashmir’s lesser-known destinations, driven by soaring temperatures across the plains, has triggered concerns over plastic pollution and inadequate waste management, with locals and environmentalists warning that the fragile ecosystems are coming under increasing pressure.

According to the details available, the popular destinations such as Gurez, Tulail, Uri, Sonamarg and Keran Valley in North Kashmir have witnessed a sharp rise in number of tourists this summer. However, residents say the boom in tourism has been accompanied by indiscriminate dumping of plastic bottles, food wrappers and



other non-biodegradable waste.

In Gurez, locals said the banks of the Kishanganga River and nearby meadows are increasingly littered with waste left behind by visitors.

“Many tourists leave their garbage at campsites or scenic spots instead of disposing of it properly. Either they should

carry it back or hand it over to local hosts for safe disposal,” said Mumtaz Ahmad, a homestay owner in Gurez.

Residents said the absence of a structured waste collection and disposal system has compounded the problem, with litter often finding its way into streams, rivers and

nearby habitations. Surinder Valley in Bandipora district, which has emerged as a popular summer destination, is also witnessing a rise in plastic waste, locals said.

“The beauty of this place is attracting more tourists, but many are leaving behind plastic waste. If this continues, it will damage the environment that people come here to enjoy,” said local resident Aqib Najar.

Visitors also pointed to the lack of basic facilities, including dustbins and signboards encouraging responsible waste disposal.

Environmental activists said the increasing tourist footfall must be matched by better waste management infrastructure and greater public awareness.

“The administration

NC Protest For Statehood Attempt To Create Confusion: Sajad Lone

AGENCIES

SRINAGAR: Peoples Conference president Sajad Lone on Friday said the protest scheduled by the National Conference on the first day of the Monsoon session of Parliament was a process to create confusion by taking Jammu and Kashmir’s statehood issue to pan-India politics.

“I cannot be certain of the National Conference’s true motive, but it seems that this is less a genuine campaign for statehood, leaving statehood as a secondary and diminished consolation prize,” Lone told reporters here.

He said the ideal way to pursue restoration of statehood was for the Omar Abdullah government to call an emergency session of the Jammu and Kashmir Legislative Assembly and pass a resolution.

“Then we should go as an all-party delegation to meet the Prime Minister and the Home Minister. If the statehood is still not restored, then we can move on to other options,”

'Future Of Wular Lake Rests On Its Villages'

30 Wular Villages To Be Clustered For Scientific Waste Management Facilities: CCF



WARIS FAYAZ

SRINAGAR: Stressing that community participation is the cornerstone of environmental conservation, Chief Conservator of Forests Kashmir Irfan Rasool Wani on Friday said the future of Wular Lake depends largely on the people living in its surrounding villages, as they are the first responders to prevent pollution from reaching the lake.

Speaking on Wular conservation initiatives, CCF Kashmir, said authorities are

implementing a cluster based solid waste management model under which 30 villages in the Wular catchment will be covered through Material Recovery Facilities (MRFs) to scientifically process waste generated in the immediate vicinity of the lake.

He said the initiative aims to intercept waste at its source and prevent it from entering Wular, one of Asia’s largest freshwater lakes.

“Wular Lake’s future rests with its villages. The first responders are the

Kupwara Panchayat Secretary Suspended Over PMAY-G Irregularity Allegations

GMK NEWS NETWORK

KUPWARA: The Assistant Commissioner Development (ACD), Kupwara, has placed a Panchayat Secretary under suspension pending an inquiry into alleged discrepancies in the implementation of the Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana-Gramin (PMAY-G). According to an official order issued by the Office of the Assistant Commissioner Development, Danish Hanif Lone, Panchayat Secretary of Magam-C, has been sus-

pending with immediate effect and attached to the office of the Assistant Commissioner Panchayat, Kupwara, pending completion of the inquiry. The order states that the action has been taken following allegations of discrepancies under the PMAY-G scheme. To probe the allegations, the authorities have constituted a two-member inquiry committee under the chairmanship of the Assistant Commissioner Panchayat, Kupwara.

The committee comprises the Block Development Officer, Headquarters Kupwara, and Abdul Rashid Kumar, Junior Assistant in the Office of the Assistant Commissioner Development, Kupwara. The committee has been directed to conduct an in-depth inquiry into the allegations and submit its report within 15 days. The suspension order, issued by the Assistant Commissioner Development, Kupwara, came into effect immediately. [KNT]

DC Kulgam visits Mata Kulwagishori Temple Bungam, Mata Katyani Temple Kakran



GMK NEWS NETWORK

KULGAM: Deputy Commissioner (DC) Kulgam, Shahzad Alam Friday visited Mata Kulwagishori Temple, Bungam, and Mata Katyani Temple, Kakran, to review and finalise arrangements for the smooth conduct of the Annual Maha Yagya.

During the visit, the DC took stock of the preparations and inspected the facilities being put in place for devotees. He reviewed arrangements related to drinking water, sanitation, health services, security, and other essential amenities. The DC directed all concerned departments

to ensure that all arrangements are completed well in time and that round-the-clock coordination is maintained for the smooth and hassle-free conduct of the religious event. The DC was accompanied by ADC Viqar Ahmad Giri, Tehsildar Kulgam, CEO, Municipal Council Kulgam, and other officials.

FSD intensifies enforcement drive, 95 inspections conducted across UT

48 food samples lifted for quality, safety and labelling compliance

GMK NEWS NETWORK

SRINAGAR: Continuing its efforts to safeguard public health and enhance consumer confidence, the Food Safety Department, Jammu & Kashmir, has intensified its enforcement and surveillance activities across the Union Territory. The organization is undertaking sustained inspections and enforcement sampling to ensure that food available in the market is safe, wholesome, and compliant with the provisions of the Food Safety and Standards Act, 2006. As part of the enforcement drive, 95 inspections were con-

ducted across all districts of the Union Territory. During the inspections, 48 food samples were lifted for analysis to verify their quality, safety, and compliance with prescribed food safety standards. In addition, samples were collected for label scrutiny to ensure adherence to mandatory labelling requirements and to protect consumers from misleading claims and misbranded food products. The food samples collected comprised of Edible Oils, Spices, Honey, Cereal Products, Milk & Milk Products, Sugar, Sweets & Confectionery (SBC), and Prepared Foods. The analytical results of these samples will determine their conformity with

the prescribed standards, and strict legal action shall be initiated against Food Business Operators found violating the Food Safety and Standards Act, 2006 and the regulations framed thereunder. The Organization also appealed to consumers to remain vigilant while purchasing food products by checking manufacturing and expiry dates, ensuring proper labelling, and purchasing only from licensed food business operators. Consumers have been requested to report any suspected unsafe or adulterated food product through Toll-Free Helpline No. 104 or email at cfs-jandk.fnd@jk.gov.in.

DC G'bal reviews arrangements for Independence Day-2026 celebrations

GMK NEWS NETWORK

GANDERBAL: Deputy Commissioner (DC) Ganderbal, Jatin Kishore Friday chaired a high-level meeting to review arrangements for the smooth and befitting celebration of the forthcoming Independence Day across the district. Reviewing department-wise preparedness, the DC stressed close coordination among all stakeholders to ensure that the national festival is celebrated with dignity, enthusiasm and active public participation. The meeting reviewed arrangements for the district-level function at Qamaria Stadium, Ganderbal, including security, traffic management, seating, parking arrangements, barricading, sanitation, drinking water, uninterrupted power supply with backup, medical facilities, fire and emergency services, public address system, transportation, hospitality, illumination of government buildings and other logistical requirements. It was informed that the National Flag will be hoisted by the Chief Guest,



followed by a march past by contingents of District Police, CRPF, Armed Police, SSB, Police Training School Manimgam, Forest Protection Force and students from educational institutions. Patriotic cultural performances by school students will also be presented. The DC directed all departments to complete assigned works well before the scheduled rehearsals and ensure proper illumination of the Mini Secretariat and other government offices, bridges and clock tower to ensure a festive atmosphere during the festival. He instructed that special cultural programmes highlighting patriotism, social harmony and awareness under Nasha Mukt Abhiyan be organised while showcasing

the district's rich cultural heritage. The full dress rehearsal will be held on August 13 ahead of the main celebrations on August 15. The Chief Medical Officer was directed to deploy medical teams and ambulances during rehearsals and the main event, while the Municipal Council was asked to ensure cleanliness and sanitation. Departments concerned were instructed to provide uninterrupted drinking water, electricity and other essential facilities. The DC directed the District Information Officer to ensure effective public address arrangements and wide dissemination of the Flag Code. He also asked all departments to install hoardings highlighting their major developmental

PM Gati Shakti training programme conducted at Shopian

Master trainers imparted hands-on sessions to officials

GMK NEWS NETWORK

SHOPIAN: Additional District Development Commissioner (ADDC) Shopian, Dr. Nasir Ahmed Lone Friday presided over a district-level training programme on PM Gati Shakti National Master Plan at the Mini-Secretariat, Shopian. The programme was organised to enhance the capacity of district officers in leveraging PM Gati Shakti digital platform for integrated infrastructure planning and coordinated project implementation. Addressing the participants, the ADDC highlighted the importance of PM Gati Shakti initiative in ensuring seamless planning, avoiding duplication of works and accelerating infrastructure development through convergence among departments. He stressed the need for timely



update of departmental data on the portal and directed officers to make optimum use of the platform for efficient planning, monitoring and execution of developmental projects. The ADDC called for close collaboration among all departments to ensure the successful implementation of the PM Gati Shakti framework and facilitate sustainable, inclusive and well-planned development across the district. Master trainers imparted detailed training to the participating officers and officials on the effective use of the PM Gati Shakti portal, including GIS-based

planning, infrastructure mapping, data uploading, digital layers, and preparation of integrated development proposals. The sessions also covered the significance of accurate data entry and the use of the portal for evidence-based decision-making. Officers discussed district-specific infrastructure requirements, implementation challenges and measures required for improving the quality of information uploaded on the portal. GM, DIC, Shurjeel Ali Naik; CPO, CEO, CMO, other officers and officials of various departments attended the training.

SKUAST-K reviews Research Roadmap at 58th, 59th REAC meetings

GMK NEWS NETWORK

SRINAGAR: Sher-e-Kashmir University of Agricultural Sciences and Technology of Kashmir (SKUAST-K) convened the 58th and 59th meetings of the Research and Extension Advisory Committee (REAC) to review the University's research and extension agenda, assess progress on key initiatives, and chart future priorities for technology development and dissemination. Chairing the meetings, Vice-Chancellor, Prof. Nazir Ahmad Ganai called for demand-driven, farmer-centric and impact-oriented research to advance the bioeconomy, agribusiness, climate-resilient agriculture, value addition, entrepreneurship and technology commercialization. Congratulating the University's scientists for developing improved crop varieties and farmer-oriented technologies, he said these focus areas would be pivotal in realizing the vision of Viksit Bharat @2047 and positioning Jammu & Kashmir as a hub of innovation-led agricultural development. He also released several university publications during the meeting. Prof. Raihana Habib Kanth, Director Extension, presented the agenda and highlighted REAC's role in aligning the University's research and extension



programmes with the evolving needs of farmers and other stakeholders. The committee reviewed the Action Taken Report (ATR), proposals for varietal release before the University Varietal Release Committee (UVRC) and State Seed Sub-Committee (SSSC), progress of minikit trials, and fresh research proposals submitted by various faculties and research stations. The House was informed that SKUAST-K has transferred 87 technologies to end users, released eight improved crop varieties, advanced 13 additional varieties for release, and initiated 15 minikit trials to facilitate on-farm validation and wider adoption of the technology. The university also reported significant outreach through its extension programs, training 5,550 beneficiaries under the Holistic Agriculture Development Program (HADP), 6,550 through Krishi Vigyan Kendras

(KVKs), 850 through the Directorate of Extension, and 16,000 participants under MSME-supported skill development initiatives, underscoring its commitment to strengthening farmers' capacities, entrepreneurship and rural livelihoods. Concluding the deliberations, Prof. Ganai reiterated the need for stronger collaboration among research institutions, government departments and stakeholders to accelerate innovation, improve farmers' livelihoods and build a resilient, knowledge-driven agricultural economy in Jammu & Kashmir. The meetings were attended by the Director Agriculture, Kashmir; representatives of the Departments of Sheep Husbandry and Fisheries; Deans, Directors, and Heads of Divisions; KVK program coordinators; scientists; and other members of the Research and Extension Advisory Committee.



Health Camp held at Vibrant Village Amroyee in Karnah

GMK NEWS NETWORK

KUPWARA: A comprehensive health camp was organised Friday at vibrant village Amroyee in Karnah Sub-Division to provide accessible healthcare services to the residents of the remote border area. During the camp, free medical consultations were provided to the residents, while X-ray services were also made available through a Handheld X-Ray (HH X-Ray) machine, enabling on-the-spot diagnostic support. The camp also facilitated the generation of Ayushman Vay Vandana

Cards and Golden Cards for eligible beneficiaries, thereby helping residents avail the benefits of government-sponsored healthcare schemes. In addition, a team from the Rashtriya Bal Swasthya Karyakram (RBSK) was deputed to the camp to conduct health screening and provide necessary healthcare services to children. The initiative reflects the administration's commitment to taking essential healthcare services to the doorsteps of people residing in remote and border areas, ensuring inclusive and accessible healthcare for all.

KPDCL announces Power Shutdown in Kashmir parts

GMK NEWS NETWORK

SRINAGAR: Chief Engineer, Distribution, KPDCL has informed that the Shutdown of 33 KV Sharifabad Narbal line will be observed due to which power supply to Narbal, Kawoosa, Lawaypora, Suzaith, Sanoor, Malpora, Redbugh, Railway Station Mazhama and adjoining areas will be affected from 10 AM to 10:30 AM and 05 PM to 5:30 PM on 18 July 2026. Similarly, shutdown of 33 kV KP Bagh line will be observed due to which power supply to KP Bagh, Soiteng, PHE, Mehjoor Nagar, Jawahar Nagar, Kursoo Rajorbagh, Zero Bridge, Gogjibagh, Lalmandi and adjoining areas will be affected from 08 AM to 02 PM on 20, 23 & 27 July 2026. Likewise, shutdown of 33 kV Exhibition line and 33 kV Silk Factory line will

be observed due to which power supply to Exhibition, Baranpathar, Batamaloo, Danderkha, Silk Factory, Allochibagh, Rambagh, LD Hospital, Old Barzulla, Solina and adjoining areas will be affected from 08 AM to 11 AM on 20 July 2026. Similarly, shutdown of 33 KV Pampore-SIDCO line will be observed due to which power supply to IE Khrew and Cement Plants, Pampore, Khadermoh, Zewan, Tengan and adjoining areas will be affected from 08 AM to 02 PM on 19 July 2026. Further, shutdown of 132 kV Zainakote Patan Magam line Kkt-I will be observed due to which power supply Magam, Beerwah, Mazhama, Kongam-dara, Kunzer, Dhobiwan, Khag, Aripanthan, Arizal and adjoining areas will be affected from 08 AM to 02 PM on 18 July 2026.

Smart Meter Installer Electrocuted While Working in Srinagar, Dies

GMK NEWS NETWORK

SRINAGAR: An 18-year-old youth died after allegedly coming into contact with a high-tension power line while installing a smart electricity meter in the Khimber Zakura area of Srinagar on Friday. The deceased was identified as Murtaza Khatana, son of Abdul Rasheed Khatana, a resident of Garkoot in Uri area of Baramulla district. According to hospital sources, the youth was brought to the

Sher-i-Kashmir Institute of Medical Sciences (SKIMS), Soura, in an unconscious condition after sustaining an electric shock while carrying out installation work. His attendant told the authorities that Murtaza accidentally came into contact with a high-tension (HT) line while installing a smart meter, causing him to sustain a severe electric shock before falling to the ground and suffering multiple injuries. However, doctors at SKIMS declared him brought dead on arrival. [KNT]

GOVERNMENT OF JAMMU AND KASHMIR

OFFICE OF THE COLLECTOR

(SUB-DIVISIONAL MAGISTRATE) BEERWAH

Pin Code:- 193411 Phone No:- 01951-275325 Email id:- sdmbeerwah13@gmail.com

PRELIMINARY NOTIFICATION

Whereas, it appears to the appropriate Government that a total of 01 Kanal land is required in the village Kanigund Tehsil Beerwah District Budgam for public purpose namely construction of Middel School Kanigund.

Whereas, the above said project is exempted from conducting SIA study based on Committee report constituted under Rule 4 of The Jammu & Kashmir Right to Fair Compensation and Transparency in Land Acquisition, Rehabilitation and Resettlement (Social Impact Assessment and Consent) Rules, 2023.

Whereas, no families are to be displaced due to the land acquisition and no rehabilitation & resettlement is to be done.

Therefore, it is notified that for the above said project in the village Kanigund, Tehsil Beerwah, District Budgam, a piece of land measuring 01 Kanal whose detailed description is as following, is under acquisition:

S.No.	Khasra No.	Type of title	Type of land	Area under acquisition		Trees		Structures	
				Kanal	Marla	Variety	Number	Type	Plinth area
01	31	Private	Rural	01	00	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil
Total				01	00				

This notification is made under the provisions of Section 11 (1) of the Right to Fair Compensation and Transparency in Land Acquisition, Rehabilitation & Resettlement Act, 2013 (Act no. 30/2013), to all who it may concern.

A plan of the land may be inspected in the office of the undersigned on any working day during the working hours. The government has authorized the undersigned and his revenue field staff to enter upon & survey land, take levels of any land, dig or bore in to the sub-soil & do all other acts required for the proper execution of work as provided and specified in section 12 of the Act.

Under sub section (4) of section 11 of the Act, no person shall make any transaction or cause any transaction of land i.e. sale/ purchase, etc or create ay encumbrances on such land from the date of publication of such notification without prior approval of the undersigned.

Objections to the acquisition, if any, may be filed by the person interested within 60 (sixty days) from the date of publication of this notification as provided under section 15 of the Act before the undersigned.

No: COLL/SDM/BRW/LAS/2026-27/ 60-68

Date: 09/07/2026

DIPK-3419-26

DT: 17/07/2026

Collector

Sub-Divisional Magistrate

Beerwah

Labourers' sons from Verinag, Shopian crack NEET-UG 2026 with flying colours

JAHANGEER GANAIE

SRINAGAR: In a remarkable display of determination and resilience, two sons of daily-wage labourers from south Kashmir have qualified the prestigious NEET-UG 2026 examination, proving that hard work, consistency and family support can overcome even the toughest financial challenges.

Their success has become a source of inspiration for hundreds of aspiring students across Jammu and Kashmir, particularly those from economically weaker backgrounds who dream of pursuing careers in medicine.

One of the successful candidates, Mehran Amin from Batagund village in Verinag, Anantnag district, secured 610 marks and achieved an impressive All India Rank (AIR) 7,000 in one of the country's toughest medical entrance examinations.

Born into a humble family, Mehran prepared for the examination with unwavering dedication



despite financial constraints. His achievement has brought immense pride not only to his family but also to the entire Verinag area, where residents have hailed his success as an example of what determination and perseverance can accomplish.

Mehran reflected on his journey, saying life is full of ups and downs, but one should never lose patience or deviate from one's goals.

"There are many difficult phases in life and sometimes circumstances are not in your favour. But if you remain patient, stay focused and continue working hard, success will eventually come. Consis-

tency is the key to achieving any goal," he said.

Expressing his desire to become a doctor, Mehran said the medical profession is one of the noblest careers as it provides an opportunity to serve humanity while earning dignity and respect.

"Being a doctor is not only about earning a livelihood; it is about helping people, especially those who cannot afford proper healthcare. That is what motivates me," he added.

Residents of Batagund congratulated the young achiever, saying his success has inspired students from rural areas to dream big regardless of their economic background.

Shariq Muzaffar, son of a daily-wage labourer from Manihal village in Shopian district, also scripted an inspiring success story by securing 601 marks out of 720 in NEET-UG 2026.

His achievement has been widely celebrated in his native village, where neighbours and well-wishers congratulated the family for their perseverance and sacrifices.

Sharing his preparation strategy, Shariq advised future NEET aspirants to focus on building strong conceptual understanding rather than relying on shortcuts.

"The first step is to clear your basics in every subject. Once your foundation is strong, everything else becomes easier. Never lose hope, remain consistent and trust the process. Success doesn't come overnight, but continuous hard work always pays off," he said.

Recalling his academic journey, Shariq said he was only an average student until Class 10, but later realised the impor-

ance of disciplined study and determined effort.

"I was an average student till Class 10. After that, I started working seriously towards my goal. I could not clear NEET in my first attempt, but instead of giving up, I learnt from my mistakes, took a drop year, worked even harder and finally succeeded in my second attempt," he said.

Shariq credited his mother for standing by him throughout his journey and providing constant encouragement during difficult times.

"My mother supported me in every situation. Her sacrifices, motivation and belief in me gave me the strength to continue even when things became difficult," he said.

He also highlighted the indispensable role parents play in a student's success.

"The support and encouragement of parents is equally important. Their sacrifices inspire us to keep moving forward and never give up, even during challenging times," Shariq added—(KNO)

Government establishes JK4C to combat cyber crimes across J&K

GMK NEWS NETWORK

SRINAGAR: In a significant step towards strengthening the cyber-security architecture and enhancing the capacity to combat cybercrime in the Union Territory of Jammu and Kashmir, sanction has been accorded for the establishment of the Jammu & Kashmir Cyber Crime Coordination Centre (JK4C) as an independent organization under the overall superintendence and control of the Director General of Police, J&K.

The newly established JK4C will serve as the nodal cybercrime coordination agency for the Union Territory and will be responsible for coordinating, preventing, detecting and investigating cyber-crimes across Jammu and Kashmir. The Centre will function in close alignment with the Indian Cyber Crime Coordination Centre (I4C) under the Ministry of Home Affairs, Government of India, ensuring seamless coordination with the national cybercrime framework.

According to order issued by home department, the JK4C will be headed by an officer of



the rank of Inspector General of Police (IGP), who will function as the Chief Executive Officer (CEO) of the Centre.

As part of the restructuring, the subject of cybercrime has been detached from the Crime Wing of J&K Police and will henceforth be exclusively handled by the JK4C.

The Government has further ordered that the existing two Zonal Cyber Crime Investigation Centres of Excellence (CICEs) and 23 District Cyber Police Stations shall become integral components of the JK4C, thereby creating a unified and coordinated institutional mechanism for tackling cybercrime across the Union Territory.

The order also stipulates that the proposal for creation of various posts required for the functioning of the JK4C shall be processed separately in accordance with the pre-

scribed procedure after completion of all requisite formalities.

Pending the creation and regular filling of sanctioned posts, the Police Headquarters, J&K, has been directed to deploy the required number of police personnel of the rank of Deputy Superintendent of Police (DySP) and below from the existing police strength to ensure the Centre becomes operational without delay.

The Government has also approved the organizational structure, tentative staff strength, operational framework, workflow of various verticals, and the functions and responsibilities of different divisions and units of the JK4C, as detailed in the annexure accompanying the Government Order.

The establishment of the JK4C is expected to significantly enhance the Union Territory's preparedness to address emerging cyber threats, improve inter-agency coordination, strengthen cybercrime investigations, and provide a more robust institutional framework for safeguarding citizens against cyber-enabled offences.

Govt orders major reshuffle in Info Dept, 16 officers transferred

GMK NEWS NETWORK

SRINAGAR: The Jammu and Kashmir government on Friday effected a major reshuffle in the Information Department, ordering the transfer and posting of 16 officers, including District Information Officers (DIOs) and officials awaiting promotion, with immediate effect.

An order issued by Commissioner/Secretary R Alice Vaz, IAS, under Government Order No. 28-JK(ID) of 2026 accessed said the transfers were made in the interest of administration.

According to the order, Showkat Hussain Ganie has been transferred from Shopian to Kulgam as DIO, while Erim Aziz has been moved from Budgam to a vacant post of Information Officer in the DIPR. Rajinder Kumar Dingra has been posted as Cultural Officer, Jammu, relieving Mohit Sharma of the additional charge of the post.

In a significant move, Abhimanyu Singh, who was holding additional



charge of Kishtwar, has been placed at the disposal of the Director, Public Relations (KBI), New Delhi, till further orders. His salary, however, will be drawn against the vacant post of Programme & Coordination Executive in the DIPR.

Adil Manzoor Wani has been shifted from Bandipora to Kupwara as DIO.

Among those awaiting promotion, Rajinder Paul Singh, Gulshan Sumbria and Majeed Ahmad Ganai have been posted as Editors in the DIPR against vacant posts. Gulshan Sumbria, currently on deputation in New Delhi, will continue to work as Editor on deputation basis in the Office of Deputy Director, Information (KBI), till further orders.

Gulshan Ara has been asked to look after the charge of Assistant Director, Information (Advertisement) in Kashmir, with her salary drawn against a vacant Editor post. Shabir Ahmad Bhat has been posted as Field Publicity Officer, Kashmir, relieving Abdul Raqib Bhat of additional charge.

Gurpreet Singh, Liyaqat Ali Mir, Mohammad Owais Gurkoo, Natyapal Singh and Parvaiz Ahmad Lone have been posted as DIOs in Kathua, Budgam, Bandipora, Ramban and as Information Officer (Youth), Kashmir, respectively. Sajad Ahmad Shah has been posted as DIO, Shopian, and will also hold additional charge of Rajouri.

The order further clarified that Gulshan Ara, presently in Pay Level-8, shall have no preferential right to claim promotion to the higher post of Assistant Director over other senior officers.

All officers have been deemed relieved from their present places of posting with immediate effect, the order added. (KNS)

Court denies bail to accused in Farooq Abdullah attempt-to-murder case

GMK NEWS NETWORK

JAMMU: The Principal Sessions Court, Jammu, on Friday rejected the bail application of Kamal Singh, who was allegedly caught red-handed while attempting to murder former Jammu and Kashmir Chief Minister Dr. Farooq Abdullah, citing the gravity of the offence, public safety and democratic stability.

According to the court, the seriousness of the allegations, the potential impact on public order and the possibility of the accused repeating the offence weighed heavily against granting him bail.

Principal Sessions Judge R.N. Watal, in an order passed on July 17, 2026, dismissed the plea filed by the accused in connection with FIR No. 29/2026 registered at Police Station Gangyal, Jammu, under Section 109 of the Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita (BNS) and Section 3/25 of the Arms Act (later noted as Section 30).

Advocate Prince Khanna, who represented Kamal Singh, sought bail on the grounds of innocence, advanced age, and medical ailments, including neurological and psychiatric disorders. The defence argued that the accused had no intention of harming Dr. Farooq Abdullah and had merely attempted to approach him during a wedding function to take a photograph. It was also contended that the investigation was sub-



stantially complete and that the accused deserved bail considering his medical condition.

Opposing the application, Public Prosecutor Heman-shu Parkash argued that the allegations involve a grave and politically motivated attempt to murder a prominent public figure. He submitted that granting bail at this stage could undermine public confidence in the criminal justice system, create fear among witnesses, and encourage similar acts. The prosecution further informed the court that the accused had allegedly stated during questioning that he would attempt to kill Dr. Farooq Abdullah again if given another opportunity and expressed no remorse for the incident.

According to the prosecution case, the incident occurred on March 11, 2026, during a wedding function at Royal Park, Greater Kailash, Jammu, where Dr. Farooq Abdullah and Deputy Chief Minister Surinder Choudhary were present. Investigators alleged that Kamal Singh fired from a revolver at Dr. Abdullah with the intention of killing him, although the bullet missed

its target. Police recovered the weapon of offence, live cartridges, a fired cartridge case, and other evidence during the investigation. A Special Investigation Team (SIT) later conducted a detailed probe.

The prosecution also placed before the court forensic and documentary material, including handwritten notes allegedly authored by the accused, which investigators claimed reflected longstanding resentment and hatred towards Dr. Farooq Abdullah over issues linked to the migration of Kashmiri Hindus and loss of property during the militancy period. According to the investigation, forensic examination confirmed that the writings belonged to the accused.

In its detailed order, the court observed that offences involving attacks on public figures are not merely crimes against an individual but have far-reaching consequences for public order, democratic stability, and the rule of law. The judge held that individual liberty must be balanced against societal interest, particularly in cases carrying serious

CBI arrests J&K PWD assistant engineer for accepting ₹30,000 bribe

GMK NEWS NETWORK

JAMMU: The Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) on Friday said it has arrested a Jammu and Kashmir Public Works Department (PWD) assistant engineer after allegedly catching him red-handed while accepting a Rs 30,000 bribe to process compensation for a house damaged during a PMGSY road project in Doda.

In a statement, a spokesperson said the accused assistant engineer was posted with the PWD for the implementation of the Pradhan Mantri Gram Sadak Yojana (PMGSY) in Jammu and Kashmir.

The spokesperson said the CBI registered the case on July 16, 2026, following a complaint alleging that the complainant's house was damaged during the execution of the PMGSY road project connecting Thathri and Kathawa in Doda district, making the complainant eligible for compensation of around Rs 10 lakh.

He said the accused allegedly demanded a bribe of Rs 50,000 for processing and releasing the compensation amount. After negotiations, the accused agreed to accept Rs 30,000 from the complainant.

The spokesperson said the CBI laid a trap on July 16 and caught the accused red-handed while demanding and accepting the Rs 30,000 bribe. Investigation into the case is underway.—(KNO)

Three Missing Kashmir Girls Traced in Amritsar

GMK NEWS NETWORK

SRINAGAR: Srinagar Police on Friday said it traced and recovered three minor girls from Amritsar in Punjab within 72 hours of their disappearance following a coordinated operation with the Punjab Police.

According to police, the recovery was made in connection with FIR No. 63/2026 registered under Section 137(2) of the Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita (BNS) at Police Station Ram Munshi Bagh.

Police said that imme-

diately after receiving the complaint, an investigation was launched and officers developed crucial leads regarding the whereabouts of the missing girls. A dedicated police team was subsequently dispatched to Punjab, where, with the assistance of the Punjab Police, all three girls were traced and recovered safely from Amritsar within 72 hours.

The girls are being brought back to Srinagar, where the required legal formalities will be completed. Police said further investigation into the case

is underway in accordance with the law.

Srinagar Police thanked the Punjab Police for its timely cooperation and support during the operation, saying the coordinated efforts of both forces ensured the safe recovery of the minors.

Reiterating its commitment to the safety of children and the public, the police appealed to citizens to immediately report cases of missing persons or any suspicious activity to the nearest police station to enable prompt action.

Four illegal properties of drug peddlers demolished in Khansahib

NAVEED UL HAQ

BUDGAM: The District Administration Budgam, in coordination with District Police Budgam, on Friday demolished several illegally constructed properties belonging to alleged drug peddlers in Khansahib subdivision as part of the ongoing anti-drug campaign under the Nasha Mukht Abhiyaan.

Officials said that the demolition drive was carried out in the Parnewa and Arigam villages of Khansa-

hib by teams of the Revenue Department and Jammu and Kashmir Police in the presence of the concerned revenue and police officials.

During the operation, authorities demolished four illegal properties, including four shops, a cowshed and a tile factory, allegedly constructed on encroached Khaicharai land by persons involved in NDPS-related cases.

The action, officials said, is part of the administration's sustained drive to dismantle illegal assets linked to drug

peddling and curb the menace of narcotics in the district.

Officials added that the demolition drive sends a strong message that no leniency will be shown towards those involved in the drug trade, and that action against illegal assets linked to narcotics offences will continue. The district administration reiterated its commitment to continue sustained action against drug peddlers and all illegal assets connected with narcotics-related activities to ensure a drug-free society—(KNO)

150 quintals of waste cleared in mega clean-up drive at Haijan Brenwar

NAVEED UL HAQ

BUDGAM: Around 150 quintals of plastic waste and other garbage were removed from the Haijan Brenwar Valley in central Kashmir's Budgam district during a large-scale cleanliness drive organised on Friday, officials said.

The campaign was conducted by the Pir Panjal Forest Division, Budgam, in collaboration with Jammu & Kashmir ECO Watch, the Tehsil Legal Services Committee (TLSC) Chadoora, the Human Rights and Anti-Corruption Forum, besides several local organisations.

Forest officials, volunteers, members of civil society organisations and residents from nearby vil-

lages participated in the drive, collecting heaps of non-biodegradable waste from different parts of the valley to restore its natural environment.

Range Officer Rameez Raja told KNO that the Forest Department will enforce strict measures against the use of plastic in the valley, including the establishment of anti-polythene checkpoints. He urged tourists and locals to cooperate in making Haijan Brenwar a "Zero Waste" destination.

"Haijan Brenwar belongs to all of us, and it is our collective responsibility to keep it clean and protect its natural beauty," said Raja said. "We specifically appeal to horse riders and temporary shopkeepers operating in the area

to ensure proper waste disposal and discourage visitors from littering. They should also counsel tourists about maintaining cleanliness so that this pristine destination remains pollution-free for future generations."

Block Forester Jehangir Ahmad said protecting forests from pollution requires collective efforts and appealed to all stakeholders to support conservation initiatives.

District Nodal Officer of J&K ECO Watch, Syed Farhat, welcomed the Forest Department's zero-waste initiative and appreciated DFO Budgam Syed Waseem and his team for introducing measures aimed at protecting the valley's fragile ecosystem—(KNO)

BJP Strengthens South Kashmir Foothold as New Entrants Join in Awantipora

GMK NEWS NETWORK

AWANTIPORA: In a significant development for the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) in South Kashmir, nearly a dozen young men from the Barsoo area of Awantipora officially joined the party on Friday. The induction took place during a joining ceremony organized under the leadership of senior BJP leader and former Pulwama District President, Mohd Lateef Bhat.

Welcoming the new entrants into the party fold, Bhat emphasized that the enthusiasm of the youth reflects a growing trust in the BJP's vision for the region. "The participation of young people reflects their growing confidence in the BJP's vision and commitment to development, good governance, and public welfare," Bhat stated. He urged the new members to focus on grassroots-level work and contribute meaningfully to societal

betterment.

The event was also attended by other prominent party functionaries, including BJP Youth General Secretary Arafat Khan and the OBC Constituency President. Both leaders extended a warm welcome to the new members and encouraged them to actively participate in strengthening the party's organizational base across the district.

The newly inducted youths expressed their determination to serve the public and work for the holistic development of the region under the BJP's banner. Their induction is seen as a strategic boost for the party as it seeks to expand its footprint in the politically sensitive Kashmir Valley.

The joining programme concluded with a pledge by the new members to uphold the party's principles and work towards the welfare of the community.

Good Morning Kashmir

EDITORIAL

J&K's Practical Shortcut To Better Governance

Jammu & Kashmir is standing at a fascinating crossroads. The recent review meeting led by Chief Secretary Atal Dulloo, focusing on the governance models of Maharashtra and Gujarat, points to a refreshing dose of administrative pragmatism. Let's be honest: in governance, you don't get extra points for reinventing the wheel. If another state has already figured out how to cut through red tape, copying their homework isn't just smart; it's common sense.

Too often, we treat "governance" as a buzzword reserved for investor summits and glossy brochures. But at its core, good governance is about making daily life a little less exhausting for the average citizen. Ease of Doing Business: Creating a predictable, transparent environment where entrepreneurs can launch ideas, local industries can breathe, and young people can find meaningful work without getting swallowed by bureaucracy.

Ease of Living: Making sure that when a citizen needs a basic government service, they aren't subjected to endless paperwork, confusing office visits, and avoidable delays. Over the last few years, J&K has made solid strides. But governance isn't a static goalpost; it's a muscle that needs continuous training. Looking outward to see what works elsewhere is a sign of a confident administration. The current discussions aren't just high-level philosophy; they focus on practical, tech-driven tools that can radically change how the public interacts with the state: True Digitisation: Moving beyond "paper scanned into PDFs" to actual digital workflows. Single-Window Systems: Giving businesses one clear entry point for approvals rather than making them run from department to department. Time-Bound Service Delivery: Creating clear, non-negotiable deadlines for government approvals. Rationalized Inspections: Ending the culture of surprise, redundant audits that disrupt businesses.

The Golden Rule of Policy: A reform is only as good as its adaptation. J&K cannot simply copy-paste policies from Mumbai or Ahmedabad. Any new practice must be carefully tailored to the unique geography, social fabric, and administrative realities of the Union Territory. At the end of the day, success won't be measured by the number of signed MOUs or sleek PowerPoint presentations. The true metric is much simpler: Does a local shopkeeper get their licence faster? Is a young entrepreneur's startup approval seamless? Do everyday citizens feel a sense of trust when they interact with local authorities?

J&K has unmatched economic and cultural potential. By focusing on citizen-centric, transparent, and responsive governance, the administration can turn administrative efficiency into its greatest competitive advantage. If the momentum from these latest reviews translates into real, on-the-ground action, the future looks incredibly promising.

Leaving A Trail Of Destruction

The True Cost Of Our Mountain Getaways



DR. RIZWAN RUMI

We proudly call Kashmir "Paradise on Earth". When summer arrives or a long weekend gives us a brief window of respite, thousands of us pack our tents, load our vehicles and head toward the mountains. We seek refuge in the untouched landscapes of Gurez, the serene expanses of the Warwan Valley, the high-altitude trails of the Kashmir Great Lakes circuit and the lush, hidden meadows of Daksam. We seek an escape from the chaotic hum of urban centers, looking to heal our minds in the lap of pristine wilderness. We take breathtaking photographs, post vibrant, enviable updates on social media and loudly profess our profound love for nature.

Yet, the moment we pack up our camps to return to the comfort of our city lives, a deeply unsettling paradox is laid bare. We leave behind a heart-breaking reality: a trail of plastic bottles, aluminum foil wrapper remnants, disposable styrofoam plates, half-burnt plastic packaging and scattered polythene bags. The very landscapes we claimed to love just hours prior are transformed into temporary dumping grounds. We are treating our absolute ecological sanctuaries like open-air dustbins, exhibiting a reckless disregard for the delicate environment that hosted us.

This behavior exposes a severe contradiction in our collective consciousness. We pride ourselves on our rich culture, hospitality and appreciation of beauty, yet we treat our public lands and wilderness areas with systematic disrespect. The ecological footprint of modern recreational tourism in Kashmir has evolved from a minor localized issue into an environmental emergency that threatens the fundamental integrity of our mountain systems.

The Hidden Crisis Above 11,000 Feet

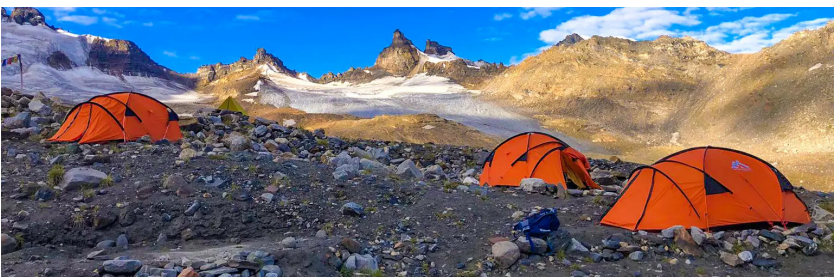
The scale of this crisis is no longer invisible, nor is it confined to urban peripheral zones. According to recent field metrics from environmental tracking groups and regional department reports, our high-altitude alpine lakes are bearing the primary brunt of this unmanaged tourist rush. The Kashmir Great Lakes circuit alone saw unprecedented numbers of registered trekkers this season—far exceeding the carrying capacity of these fragile, high-altitude eco-zones. During recent community-led cleanliness drives along the Harmukh range, volunteers collected dozens of heavy gunny bags filled entirely with pure plastic trash, clustered heavily around the pristine, vulnerable waters of Gangabal Lake and Nandkol Lake.

Environmentalists and glaciologists warn that at altitudes exceeding 11,000 feet, the natural weathering, biological degradation and breakdown processes are incredibly slow. Sunlight is limited, and sub-zero winter temperatures stall any natural decomposition. A single plastic bottle, synthetic wet wipe, or cigarette butt discarded near these glaciers will remain entirely intact for centuries, leaching microplastics and toxic chemical additives directly into the permafrost. Even worse, the dense accumulation of dark, synthetic garbage alters ground albedo—the measure of how much light hits the surface and reflects back without being absorbed—and local ground temperatures, adding to the structural stress of our rapidly melting Himalayan glaciers.

Furthermore, the hydro-ecological link cannot be ignored. When we litter at an alpine campsite, we are not just marring a beautiful view; we are directly poisoning the precise freshwater headwaters that serve as the lifelines for our entire valley. The snow-melt feeds streams like the Kishanganga, the Lidder and the Sindh, which eventually provide drinking and agricultural irrigation water to millions downstream. Our garbage at 12,000 feet effectively becomes the toxicity in our drinking water at sea level.

The Illusion of "Someone Else's Job"

The most troubling facet of this ecological crisis is not a lack of primary education or digital awareness; it is our deeply ingrained collective behavior and sense of entitlement. We are a literate, highly connected and politically aware society. We know plastic pollutes. We understand that it chokes local mountain wildlife, destroys topsoil health and degrades the pristine scenic aesthetic that sustains our multi-million dollar tourism economy. Yet, we casually toss plastic wrappers under centuries-old pine trees or throw water bottles out of moving vehicle windows, operating under



the comfortable illusion that it is "someone else's job" to restore the landscape.

Nature does not destroy its own habitat, nor do wild animals consciously poison their own water paths. Only humans do. We readily point fingers at municipal bodies, tourism development authorities, and local governance for poor regional waste management infrastructure. However, it is an exercise in intellectual dishonesty to blame the state for our own lack of basic civic morality. No government official carried that specific plastic bottle up to a remote, roadless Gurez meadow or a high ridge in Warwan and threw it onto the wild meadow flowers—we did that ourselves. The primary fault lies not in the lack of trash cans in the wilderness, but in our refusal to carry our own waste back to the point of origin.

The Language of Force: Heavy Penalties and Enforcement

Because we have completely failed to self-regulate or develop an intrinsic ethic of wilderness conservation, regional administrations are being forced to step in with rigid, heavy-handed measures. The District Administration has recently imposed a strict, total ban on single-use plastics across key eco-tourism sectors including the Gurez Valley. Checkposts are now actively operating at critical transit points like Tragbal and Pethkoot, where executive enforcement teams, backed by local law enforcement, are thoroughly inspecting incoming commercial and private vehicles for contraband plastics.

Tourists caught littering now face immediate, on-the-spot heavy financial penalties, and systemic protocols are being leveraged to trace vehicles tossing trash onto mountain roads. While these strict steps are entirely necessary to stave off immediate ecological collapse, it remains a stinging cultural embarrassment. It is a sad commentary on our societal maturity that we require police checkpoints, administrative force, and monetary penalties just to compel us to keep our own beautiful homeland clean. True civic pride should stem from internal respect, not the fear of an administrative fine.

Reclaiming Our Civic Responsibility: A

Blueprint for Sustainable Travel

If we genuinely love Kashmir and wish to preserve it for those who follow us, we must immediately transition from careless consumers of nature to active, militant protectors of it. True exploration requires absolute, non-negotiable accountability. The next time you plan a trek or a camping expedition to Gurez, Warwan, Bangus, or any offbeat valley, you must commit deeply to a strict "Pack It In, Pack It Out" philosophy:

- Zero Single-Use Plastic: Ditch packaged plastic water bottles completely. Invest in heavy-duty, reusable steel or copper flasks, and utilize portable gravity filters, UV purifiers, or chlorine dioxide tablets to safely drink from mountain streams.
- The Dedicated Trash Pouch: Always dedicate a specific, durable, waterproof compartment of your backpack or vehicle entirely to trash storage. Every wrapper, wet wipe, piece of foil, and empty tin you bring into the alpine zone must return to the city with you for scientific, municipal disposal.
- Active Group Accountability: If you observe a fellow camper, friend, or even a stranger dropping a piece of litter, call them out immediately but politely. Public peer accountability is vastly more effective than a passive, ignored government signpost.
- Leave the Trail Better: Make it a personal, mandatory rule to pick up at least three pieces of plastic left behind by previous, less responsible groups on your route. Leave nothing but your footprints; take nothing but your memories and your own waste.

Nature does not need us; we desperately need nature. The mountains, glaciers, and alpine meadows of Kashmir will endure long after we are gone, but their capacity to sustain human life and provide spiritual solace depends entirely on how we treat them today. If we continue to treat our pristine meadows and high-altitude sanctuaries as open garbage bins, we will lose them irreversibly.

The next generation will not inherit the lush, green paradise we enjoyed; they will inherit mountains of faded plastic, contaminated topsoil, microplastic-laden water tables, and dried-up streams. Let us enjoy the wilderness of Kashmir, but let us protect it with fierce civic pride. It is time to step up and fulfill our basic responsibility as guardians of this land before the paradise we boast of to the world is permanently lost to our own carelessness.

We must remember that tourism without environmental ethics is simply destruction in slow motion. Let us act before the silence of our dying mountains speaks louder than our words.

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Inflation, Dual Income And The Changing Family

Does Working Women Really Make Life More Expensive?



DR. PRIYANKA SAURABH

Today, if any middle-class family is asked what their biggest concerns are, the answers will likely be similar—expensive education for their children, the dream of owning a home, rising healthcare costs, and the ever-increasing cost of everyday life. Even after years of saving, an average working person is unable to purchase a home. Private school fees have become so high that children's education has become the largest share of the family budget. Therefore, the natural question is: why has this happened?

In recent years, a growing view has emerged that the primary cause of these problems is the large-scale entry of women into the workforce. It is argued that when both husband and wife began earning, the total income of families increased. The market seized on this opportunity and raised the prices of housing, schools, and other essential services. Supporters of this view also argue that women's departure from the home weakened families, affected childrearing, and increased social instability.

This argument may seem appealing to some at first glance, as it is becoming increasingly difficult for most urban families to survive on a single income. However, any social and economic change cannot be analyzed based on a single factor. Society, the economy, and families are influenced by many interconnected factors. Therefore, it is essential to approach this debate from a factual and balanced perspective, not from emotions.

First, it's important to understand that housing prices in most countries around the world, including India, haven't risen solely due to rising household incomes. A variety of factors, including urbanization,

limited land, a growing population, the popularity of real estate as an investment, government policies, construction costs, the complexities of land acquisition, and easy credit access, all influence property prices. If women's employment alone were the driving force behind housing prices, then housing should always be the most expensive in countries with higher female labor force participation. However, the reality is much more complex.

Similarly, the rising cost of education is linked to a variety of factors. The expansion of private education, competition for modern facilities, the attractiveness of the English medium, rising expenditure on technical resources, teacher salaries, transportation, building construction, and the commercialization of education have all played a significant role in increasing fees. To say that school fees have risen solely because women have started working would be an oversimplification of economic realities.

Yet, this idea hides a significant concern. That concern is the changing structure of the family and the quality of life. It is true that in earlier times, joint families shared childcare, elderly care, and household responsibilities. Today, in smaller families, when both husband and wife are working, there is a lack of time. Time spent with children has decreased. Stress, mental pressure, and work-life balance issues have increased. However, the solution to these problems lies not in confining women to the home, but in creating social and economic policies that can balance family and work.

History also doesn't view this topic as simplistically as it's often portrayed on social media. Women have contributed to agriculture, animal husbandry, handicrafts, trade, and family businesses for centuries. Even during the Industrial Revolution, a significant number of women worked in factories. Therefore, to say that women in history were always homemakers doesn't fully reflect reality. The only difference is that in the past, a large por-



tion of their labor was reflected in unpaid domestic tasks, while today that same labor is more clearly visible in the form of paid employment.

It's also true that the economic value of domestic work is often underestimated. Managing the home, raising children, caring for the elderly, and maintaining family order are vital tasks for any society. Whether a man or woman fulfills these roles, they should be respected. Similarly, if a woman chooses to pursue a job that suits her education, qualifications, and desires, her decision should be equally respected. True empowerment means the right to choice, not the imposition of a single lifestyle on everyone.

From an economic perspective, it's also worth considering that if millions of women suddenly leave the workforce, it would have a serious impact on a country's productivity, tax collection, consumption, and economic growth. Women play a vital role in many sectors—education, health, banking, information technology, administration, and scientific research. Their absence from these sectors would impact not only families but also the progress of the entire nation.

The real problem likely lies elsewhere. Over the past few decades, productivity has not risen at the same pace as the average citizen's real purchasing power. Wealth has become increasingly concentrated in a few hands. Essential services like education and health

have been rapidly privatized. Land availability in metropolitan areas has remained limited. Investors have turned housing into an investment tool rather than a living necessity. As a result, housing has become increasingly out of reach for the average family. Similarly, education has ceased to be a service and has become a major industry. Ignoring these structural causes and placing the entire responsibility on women's employment is not the solution.

Certainly, modern lifestyles have posed new challenges for families. Caring for young children, caring for the elderly, lack of communication in marital relationships, and increasing mental stress are real problems. Solutions to these problems will come from flexible working hours, maternity and paternity leave, quality daycare, family-friendly policies, and a sensitive workplace environment. Blaming women alone will neither reduce inflation nor strengthen families.

It's also important to understand that for many women, employment isn't a hobby, but a necessity. Rising inflation, children's education, medical expenses, housing loans, and future financial security have made dual income a necessity for many families. On the other hand, millions of women also want to work to fulfill their talents, self-reliance, and contribute to society. Attributing their decision solely to a market

conspiracy limits both their individuality and their rights.

We must recognize that the roles of both men and women are changing in society. If both earn, then household responsibilities should be shared by both. Raising children is not just the mother's responsibility; the father's is also equally responsible. Similarly, financial responsibility should not be solely the man's, but should be shared by both, depending on need and consent. The success of the modern family lies in this partnership.

The greatest need today is not blame, but balance. We need a society where families are strong and women's talents are nurtured. Where domestic work is respected as well as professional achievement. Where children have the time of both parents and the opportunity to fulfill their dreams. Economic policies should ensure that education and housing are accessible to the common citizen. Private institutions should be effectively regulated, quality government schools and hospitals should be strengthened, and transparency and affordability should be ensured in the housing sector.

Ultimately, to say that women's employment is the root of all today's economic problems is neither fair nor fact-based. It would be equally wrong to say that there are no problems in the modern system. The reality lies somewhere between these two extremes. Increasing economic pressure on families, lack of time for children, and social change are serious issues, but to address them, we need comprehensive economic reforms, family-friendly policies, and gender-based support, not blaming one half of society for the problems. The strength of any civilization grows when it can strike a balance between rights and responsibilities, freedom and family, development and human values. This balance will form the foundation of a healthy, prosperous, and sensitive society of the future.

(Dr. Priyanka Saurabh, PhD (Political Science), is a poet and social thinker.)

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

Credibility Gap: How Social Media Is Redefining Facts



AUBAID AHMAD AKHOON

"Freedom Of The Press Is Not Merely The Freedom To Publish; It Is The Responsibility To Inform, Educate, Question And Inspire Society With Truth."

In any democratic setup, criticism is vital for governance, accountability as well as transparency. Recently, in the name of criticism, especially with the advent of digital media, rising TV ratings and social media's propagation of 'virals', a thin line between criticism is getting blurred and is becoming more of a tool to troll, outrage and polarize society.

Criticism is always healthy when it highlights the flaws, policies, mistakes and loopholes, while constructive criticism is when along with the flaws and mistakes, suggestions and remedies are also provided. Trolling is more of deriding, ridiculing, defaming and sensationalising without any valid reasons. It is high time that we should stand up to this new form of censorship and save our democratic values, public discourse and sanity.

This trolling wave has engulfed our social media sites and some of our TV channels also, where instead of having informed and intelligent discussions on matters of fact which affect millions of people, we are witnessing the most sensationalized ad-hoc debates where even the basic



decorum of discussion is lacking. The most ridiculous thing about this whole scenario is that people are associating this trolling with freedom of speech. It is not freedom of speech, which is being exercised here, but rather license. License to outrage, license to hate, license to abuse, license to deride, license to defame and license to mislead.

Freedom of Speech was never meant to be used as a tool for spreading poison, lies, hatred and malice. The credibility of our public discourse is at stake here when even the most basic facts are being questioned. Journalism's main motto should not be to become just another political weapon by sensationalizing the situations when the very basics of democracy require it to question the very system, institutions and machinery.

A great Nigerian Nobel laureate Wole Soyinka rightly said, "The greatest threat to freedom is the absence of criticism". However, absence of appropriate criticism, criticism without credibility is also dangerous, which actually is propaganda in disguise. Praise without credibility is public relations, while criticism with-

out credibility is propaganda.

This difference between praise and criticism has been discussed in the realms of poetry and literature too. Tanqeed in the Urdu literature is not always censure. It actually means to criticize, discuss, appreciate, evaluate and review a subject matter with an unbiased and unprejudiced outlook. However, Tanqeed does not support suppression. It tries to uplift and improve things by providing a healthy constructive critique. This way Tanqeed is different from criticism or censure. A good Tanqeed evaluates both the positives and negatives so that the readers can also form an opinion about the subject matter themselves. The whole concept of Tanqeed is similar to the role of journalism today, where a journalist should not become a booster or a basher but an honest intermediary who deals in facts, opinions, thoughts, analysis and everything else that constitutes public discourse.

A great Urdu scholar Altaf Hussain Halli's Tanqeed on Urdu ghazal (a poetic genre) is an eye opener. At the time when almost everyone was criticizing Urdu ghazal and dismiss-

A great Nigerian Nobel laureate Wole Soyinka rightly said, "The greatest threat to freedom is the absence of criticism". However, absence of appropriate criticism, criticism without credibility is also dangerous, which actually is propaganda in disguise.

ing it as obsolete, Altaf Hussain Halli did not resort to outright dismissal. He appreciated the efforts of the ghazal writers while also discussing

their weaknesses in his book 'Muqaddama-e-Sher-o-Shairi'. He actually laid down the foundation for reforming the Urdu ghazal which eventually bore fruits in later years. Today, Altaf Hussain Halli is respected by one and all for his honest and unbiased Tanqeed.

Another great Urdu critic Prof. Ale Ahmad Suroor also believed that criticism is among the most solemn duties of a writer. He further said that a critic should aim at building standards, not lowering them when discussing any subject. Similarly, we believe that a critic (or a journalist) should aim at becoming a truth seeker and a democratizer of human thought, and not resort to sensationalism and mudslinging when discussing the very serious matters which require a level head to analyze and present facts in an honest manner.

Today in this competitive world of media, the biggest threat to healthy criticism is social media's promotion of outrageous content as it helps the channel or the page to go viral. Similarly, in order to get TRPs, TV channels air more of sensational debates where two sides of a single coin fight each other. In such scenarios, trolling has become more of a virtue and sensationalism has become the new facts.

Actually, the whole debate around the credibility of the facts is the most important aspect because when the public discourse starts becoming more of opinion-based, the facts themselves become questionable. In such a scenario, the democratic setup will only suffer because ultimately it is the common man who is the most affected by all this chaos, confusion, polarization and mistrust.

This is one of the biggest challenges journalism is facing today in the 21st century.

To be continued....

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The Digital Orchard

Smart Irrigation In Kashmir's High-Density Apple Farms

BASIT AFZAL

In Kashmir's high-density apple orchards, success is increasingly being determined not just by how much water is available but by how precisely it is managed. As weather patterns become more unpredictable and water availability more uncertain, orchardists are finding that every irrigation decision, from when to switch on a pump to how long the water is delivered, can influence tree health, fruit quality and ultimately the season's entire harvest. Precision is becoming the new standard for apple cultivation.

Unlike traditional apple orchards, high-density plantations contain more trees per hectare and are designed for intensive production in a shorter period of time. This makes the need for precise irrigation even more essential, because even small inconsistencies in water can alter tree health and fruit output. And because the margin for error is much smaller, the need for reliable and well-managed systems is much greater. Although they yield faster returns, high-density orchards also represent a greater financial investment, as initial establishment costs would include specialised planting material, support systems, drip irrigation infrastructure and site preparation. This would make unpredictable weather more consequential than in traditional orchards.

Automation is the central part of a broader shift towards smart orchard management. Increasingly, tools such as soil moisture sensors, weather stations, drones and mobile-controlled irrigation systems are being introduced to help farmers make data-driven decisions throughout the growing cycle. These technologies address more than just convenience. It allows farmers to respond more quickly to changing field conditions while reducing the time they spend operating infrastructure manually. Pumps can be scheduled around the specific crop's requirements, valves can be managed remotely, and farmers can receive updates on their devices without needing to visit every field. In high-yield apple orchards, where irrigation timing directly correlates with fruit quality and output, this kind of control is becoming more valuable.

With digital irrigation and real-time monitoring giving farmers greater visibility over their routine operations,



they are then free to focus more on high-value farm work such as pruning or pest management. In a labor-intensive sector such as this, freeing up time and manpower can also help orchardists address workforce shortage issues and time management.

The growth of smart irrigation in Kashmir is being driven through collaboration between researchers, technology companies, the government, and growers. Government-backed horticulture programs and subsidy schemes for these high-density plantations have accelerated adoption across Kashmir. Initiatives such as the High-Density Plantation Scheme ushered in the replacement of traditional orchards to high-density plantations through financial assistance and the Mission for Integrated Development of Horticulture (MIDH) helped to promote drip irrigation, fertigation and other precision practices. As these farmers invest in modern orchards, the demand for technologies that reduce labor requirements and simplify management is also growing.

Academic institutions, such as Sher-e-Kashmir University of Agricultural Sciences and Technology (SKUAST-Kashmir), continue to study innovative precision irrigation practices and provide technical support to orchardists. At their agri-tech labs, researchers produced an AI-powered robotic sprayer, with built-in detection capabilities, which lowers overall costs as well as runoff. Multinational companies, such as Jain Irrigation, have helped to expand the adoption of smart drip and micro-irrigation systems in the region. Its NutriCare fertigation system allows growers to automate the delivery of nutrients, ensuring trees receive consistent input while reducing manual intervention. Building upon this growing ecosystem, Acres of Ice, an IoT-based climate-tech company, is developing FlowNet, an automated pump and valve controller, designed for micro-irrigation systems. Powered by battery and solar backup, it allows orchardists to remotely schedule irrigation, monitor pumps through a mobile application and receive per-

formance updates without needing to visit the field. Oftentimes, these organizations and universities will also form partnerships to bring low-cost, efficient tools straight to the farmer.

As Kashmir's apple industry continues to transition towards high-density cultivation, smart irrigation could become as fundamental as the orchards themselves. Combining generations of traditional horticultural knowledge with digital tools, growers can make more informed decisions, use water more efficiently and build orchards better equipped for an increasingly unpredictable climate. Technologies such as FlowNet represent a small part of this broader shift, one that seeks not to replace the experience of the orchardists, but to give them better control of one of their most valuable resources.

Basit Afzal is a co-founder of Acres of Ice, a climate-tech company working to strengthen water security and climate resilience across the Himalayan region. With a background in engineering, mechanics

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and business, he focuses on developing practical and scalable solutions that combine nature-based approaches with IoT technologies to address water scarcity and support sustainable agriculture. He can be mailed at spornila@acresofice.com

Physics Wallah Celebrates Student Performance in NEET 2026

GMK NEWS NETWORK

SRINAGAR: Education company PhysicsWallah (PW) has announced its NEET 2026 results, with multiple students securing spots in the top NEET All India Rank (AIR). Ravikant Diwakar (AIR 55), Shivansh Anand (AIR 152), Divyansh Jaiswal (AIR 173), and Sakshi Kumari (AIR 192) were some of the high-performing students, to name a

few. These achievements are a testament to the flexibility of the learning ecosystem that PW tries to provide, with students securing high scores through either online courses or offline, tech-enabled PW Vidyapeeth centres, depending on their individual preferences and learning styles. Additionally, an event was held in Srinagar, celebrating the strong performance of students. Junaid Shah (AIR1864

), Rooman Manzoor (AIR 2633) and Ikhtlaq Mohammad Lone (AIR 3156), amongst others, were some of the high-performing students of PhysicsWallah in the city. “I am so happy to see my hard work pay off,” said Ravikant Diwakar. “PW’s batches completely cleared up all my confusion. The teachers explained the concepts so well that I actually understood the logic behind the formulas

instead of just memorising them. Whenever I got stuck on a tough problem, the video explanations showed me the right steps instantly, which saved me a lot of time.” “Getting this score feels amazing, and I’m glad all my effort worked out,” said Shivansh Anand. “The biggest help for me was the daily practice papers. Taking those regular tests taught me exactly how to pace myself and manage my

time without panicking. The teachers also helped clear my doubts and showed me where I was making mistakes, which helped me fix them before the real exam.” Alakh Pandey, Founder and CEO of PhysicsWallah (PW), said, “Congratulations to every NEET 2026 aspirant who poured their hard work, discipline, and heart into this journey. Your dedication is truly commendable. To those celebrating their

results today, your success is well-earned. And to those who fell short of their goals, remember that this exam is just a single milestone, not the measure of your worth or your future. Your potential is vast, and this is merely one chapter in a long, successful journey ahead.” PhysicsWallah’s (PW) approach to NEET coaching is built on offering accessible, affordable, and high-quality learning. The platform inte-

grates tech-led solutions such as daily practice questions, mock tests with video solutions, 24x7 doubt resolution, and AI-personalised revision journeys, ensuring that students stay on track, regardless of their location or background. This year, approximately 20 lakh students appeared for NEET (UG) 2026, with 11.21 lakh candidates qualifying for admission to various undergraduate medical programmes.

FROM THE FRONT PAGE

Lakhanpur To Be

scheme. Addressing vendors and traders, Singh said successive governments had ignored the concerns of street vendors, but the PM SVANidhi scheme has brought them into the mainstream by providing financial assistance, dignity and sustainable livelihood opportunities. He said Lakhanpur’s selection in the first phase of the Street Food Hub initiative reflects the government’s commitment to empowering small vendors while creating organised, hygienic and visitor-friendly vending spaces.

According to the minister, the proposed Street Food Hub will be developed in two clusters near the old bus stand and the Sales Tax Office in Lakhanpur market. Spread over 1,754.25 square metres, the project will provide modern vending infrastructure while promoting Dogra cuisine and other regional delicacies.

Located at the gateway to Jammu and Kashmir from Pathankot and on the route to the Shri Mata Vaishno Devi shrine, Lakhanpurnwitnesses heavy movement of tourists, pilgrims and transit travellers, making it an ideal location for the project, he said.

Singh said the government had received 126 proposals from 32 states and Union Territories covering 106 Urban Local Bodies and seven Census Towns, with Lakhanpur being selected in the first phase.

The Union minister also announced that a landmark gateway to Jammu and Kashmir, along with beautification works at Lakhanpur, will be developed at an estimated cost of over Rs 1.5 crore.

He said part of the funding would come from his Members of Parliament Local Area Development Scheme (MPLADS) allocation, while the remaining amount would be mobilised from other available resources.

During the visit, Singh inaugurated a statue of Maharaja Gulab Singh at Lakhanpur, describing it as a tribute to the Dogra ruler’s contribution to nation-building and the history of Jammu and Kashmir.

Referring to major infrastructure projects in the region, the minister said the long-delayed ShahpurKandi project has become operational, while work on the Ujh Multipurpose Project is expected to begin soon after the project reaches the final stage of approvals.

He said the Ujh project, pending for decades, would significantly improve irrigation facilities in Kathua, Samba and parts of Jammu district besides ensuring better utilisation of water resources.

Singh also said approvals have been obtained for naming Kathua railway station after Shaheed Captain Sunil Sharma and expressed confidence that the formal process would be completed shortly.

On the issue of shifting the vehicle fitness testing facility from Kathua to Samba, the minister said the move was necessitated by the establishment of a modern automated testing facility at Samba and added that a similar facility for Kathua was under consideration.

Local vendors thanked the Union minister for securing the Street Food Hub project for Lakhanpur, saying it would provide a cleaner, organised and dignified working environment while improving facilities for pilgrims, tourists and other visitors.

Over 3.5 Lakh

circumstances. He also directed that each tent should have a mandatory Fire Extinguisher.

During his visit, the Lieutenant Governor interacted with the pilgrims and discussed about their experience during the holy pilgrimage. The pilgrims expressed satisfaction over the arrangements and appreciated the cleanliness, sanitation arrangements, security, accommodation facilities and invaluable support of the personnel engaged in Yatra duties.

The Lieutenant Governor stated that the expansion of infrastructure and pilgrim facilities in recent years has been reflected positively in the feedback from devotees. He said, alongside

these advancements, it is essential to ensure that every pilgrim can access these facilities seamlessly, without any impediment.

The Lieutenant Governor also interacted with shopkeepers, service providers, langar-sevadars, volunteers, and lauded their valuable contribution in facilitating the smooth pilgrimage of the devotees of Baba Barfani.

Speaking to the media-persons, the Lieutenant Governor said: “Through the seamless coordination of all departments of J&K administration, Police, Army, security forces, Shrine Board and all stakeholders, the arrangements for this year’s pilgrimage are significantly enhanced. Feedback from the pilgrims has been overwhelmingly positive. This pilgrimage continues to drive vital economic benefits for Jammu Kashmir. Furthermore, following the Hon’ble Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi ji’s appeal for visiting pilgrims to purchase local products, a large number of devotees are buying local products such as handloom and handicrafts. In the days to come, this pilgrimage will be remembered as a truly memorable and historic one.”

The Lieutenant Governor was accompanied by Shri VK Birdi, IGP Kashmir; Shri M. Suleman Choudhary, IGP Traffic J&K; Shri Sujit Kumar Singh, IGP Security; Dr. Shahid Iqbal Choudhary, Nodal Officer for Pahalgam Axis; Shri Anshul Garg, Divisional Commissioner Kashmir; Shri Javid Iqbal Matoo, DIG South Kashmir Range; Dr. Bilal Mohiuddin Bhat, Deputy Commissioner, Anantnag; Shri Amod Nagpure Ashok, SSP Anantnag, Ms Anoo Malhotra, DG Rural Sanitation; and senior officers of Shrine Board, civil administration, police and security forces.

Govt Transfers

Investigation Wing. In a separate move, Shwetambri Sharma, SP who was awaiting a posting, has been assigned as SP of the Online Crime against Women and Children Wing.

The government said the salaries of the transferees will be drawn against overall reserves till further orders. All officers have been deemed relieved from their previous postings with immediate effect.

The reshuffle comes amid rising incidents of cyber fraud, online financial scams, and digital crimes against women and children in the Union Territory, with officials emphasising the need for a specialised and dedicated cyber response framework.

PM Modi Flags

Railways Minister Vaishnav called the launch of the country’s first hydrogen-powered train a historic achievement, saying it reflects India’s resolve to develop indigenous hydrogen technology.

Among the projects, Prime Minister Modi dedicated to the nation include a 157.92 km four lane fully access controlled Delhi Amritsar Katra Expressway developed at a cost of around rupees 9680 crore rupees. The Prime Minister also dedicated to the nation the 33.81 kilometer long four lane partially access controlled Ambala-Kala Amb highway on NH- 7 and NH-344. Another project was the 40-60 km long Jind -Gohana Green-field highway on NH-352A.

The Prime Minister also dedicated the nation’s elevated railway track at Kurukshetra and laid the foundation stone of Sikh museum at Kurukshetra. He also laid the foundation stone of the 24-27 km long Hansi-Barwals Brownfield Highway Project.

Prime Minister Modi also fulfilled the dreams of home of five beneficiaries of the PM Awas Yojana (Gramin) in Jind today by symbolically handing over the keys to their homes .

Commending the people of Jind and Haryana, Mr. Modi remarked that the seriousness with which they embraced the ‘Swachhata Se Swagat’ (Welcome through Cleanliness) initiative was truly heart-warming. He urged everyone to

make cleanliness an inherent part of their nature and values, integrating it into their daily lives.

It is noteworthy that prior to the Prime Minister’s visit to Jind, a ‘Swachhata Se Swagat’ campaign was conducted in Haryana from July 13 to 17 to welcome him with cleanliness.

Kashmir Sizzles

at isolated locations in the Jammu division.

A more active wet spell is expected between July 20 and 22, when widespread rain and thundershowers are likely across Jammu and Kashmir. The department has forecast heavy to very heavy rainfall at a few places in the Jammu division, while some districts in both divisions could witness intense showers and torrential rain.

Rain activity is expected to persist at many places on July 23 before easing to isolated spells on July 24 and 25.

The MeT Department has warned of flash floods, landslides and mudslides in vulnerable areas during July 20-22. It also cautioned that heavy rainfall could lead to a significant rise in water levels in rivers and streams, resulting in water-logging and minor flooding in low-lying areas.

Farmers have been advised to suspend agricultural operations during the period of heavy rainfall, while residents and government agencies have been asked to remain alert and plan their activities accordingly—(KNO)

CS Reviews Ease\

reforms presented during the meeting, the Chief Secretary observed that Jammu & Kashmir has already undertaken several governance reforms over the past few years and now needs to further accelerate the pace of administrative transformation by adopting proven national best practices suited to the Union Territory’s governance framework.

He stressed that reforms aimed at improving Ease of Living should complement economic reforms by ensuring hassle-free access to government services, minimizing procedural delays and enhancing public satisfaction.

The Chief Secretary emphasized that immediate focus should be laid on rationalization and whitelisting of services, further simplification of regulatory processes, decriminalization of minor offences and undertaking the necessary amendments in the relevant Acts, Rules and regulations to create a more enabling and investor-friendly ecosystem.

Addressing the officers, the Chief Secretary observed that sustained and well-directed reforms invariably translate into greater investor confidence and increased investments. He said that several States and UTs have emerged as frontrunners in governance reforms and service delivery, and Jammu & Kashmir should proactively emulate such proven best practices rather than reinventing the wheel.

He remarked that there are numerous success stories across the country that offer valuable learning opportunities for the UT. By adopting these tested models and adapting them to local requirements, J&K can accelerate its reform agenda while avoiding duplication of effort and ensuring faster outcomes.

He directed the Centre for Innovation, Transformation and Governance (CITaG) to undertake a comprehensive assessment of the reforms already implemented in the Union Territory vis-à-vis those adopted by leading States, and accordingly prepare a roadmap outlining the future course of action. He stressed that such an assessment should clearly identify the existing gaps and prioritize reforms that can be implemented in the days to come.

Underscoring the importance of adopting an investor-centric approach, the Chief Secretary said that all reforms must be viewed from the perspective of entrepreneurs and investors rather than from the standpoint of govern-

ment departments. He maintained that governance systems should be designed to make compliance simpler, approvals faster and service delivery more efficient and transparent.

He further impressed upon CITaG to formulate a comprehensive, well-defined and time-bound action plan with clearly identifiable milestones and measurable outcomes for implementation of these reforms in Jammu & Kashmir. He also directed the organisation to maintain close coordination with the concerned authorities in Maharashtra and Gujarat to gain a deeper understanding of their reform processes, implementation strategies and institutional mechanisms so that the best practices can be effectively adapted to the needs of the Union Territory.

The meeting concluded with a consensus that the adoption of proven governance models from across the country, suitably customized to local requirements, would significantly strengthen institutional efficiency, enhance investor confidence and further the Government’s vision of achieving higher standards of Ease of Doing Business and Ease of Living in Jammu & Kashmir.

Tourist Boom Leaves

and the public need to work together. Sustainable waste management and responsible tourism are essential to protect these ecologically sensitive destinations," environmental activist Shakir Ahmad said.

Officials said efforts are underway in coordination with local bodies to put in place sustainable waste management measures to preserve the ecological balance of the region’s emerging tourist destinations—(KNO)

NC Protest For Statehood

he said. Lone, who is an MLA from the Handwara segment, said his party’s position on Jammu and Kashmir’s status has not changed.

Lone said major political decisions in a democracy require consensus, and not unilateral calls to the street.

"In early August 2019, Farooq Abdullah and Omar Abdullah had travelled to Delhi without taking other parties into confidence, only for a photograph with the prime minister to emerge the next day with assurances that nothing was going to change," he said.

'Future Of Wular

people themselves. They have to ensure that solid waste does not enter the lake," Wani said.

He urged residents of villages including Watlab, Zurimanz and Bangladesh to take ownership of waste management and work towards transforming their habitations into model villages for environmental conservation.

Wani said the government will complement community efforts by creating the required infrastructure, including Material Recovery Facilities and other measures to check waste flow into the lake.

Referring to legacy waste sites, he said the government and concerned departments will intervene wherever required to scientifically remediate old dumping sites. He cited the example of Zalwan in Bandipora, where authorities are acting in compliance with court directions to clear accumulated waste and restore the site.

The Chief Conservator said Wular Conservation and Management Authority, in collaboration with the Forest Department, is implementing the lake’s master plan with equal emphasis on ecological restoration, sustainable tourism and livelihood generation for local communities.

He added that while infrastructure and government intervention are essential, the long term success of Wular conservation ultimately depends on active public participation and responsible waste management practices at the village level—(KNO)

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Commissioner SMC inspects Integrated Animal Birth Control Centre at Tengpora



GMK NEWS NETWORK

SRINAGAR: Commissioner, Srinagar Municipal Corporation (SMC), Faz Lul Haseeb, Friday conducted a comprehensive inspection of the Integrated Animal Birth Control (ABC) Centre and Cattle Pond at Tengpora to review the functioning of the Corporation's stray animal management facilities and assess ongoing measures aimed at strengthening animal welfare, public health, and urban sanitation.

The Commissioner was accompanied by the Joint Commissioner (Administration), Executive Engineers, DFO SMC and other senior officers of the Corporation.

During the visit, the Commissioner reviewed the implementation of

the Animal Birth Control Programme, including the sterilization and anti-rabies vaccination of stray dogs in accordance with the Animal Birth Control Rules and the guidelines of the Animal Welfare Board of India (AWBI). He also inspected the veterinary infrastructure, operation theatres, post-operative recovery units, cattle shelters, feeding arrangements, sanitation facilities, and other essential support infrastructure at the integrated complex.

Interacting with veterinary professionals and field personnel, Commissioner emphasized strict adherence to prescribed animal welfare protocols and directed the concerned officers to ensure scientific, humane, and efficient management of stray dogs and cattle while maintaining

the highest standards of veterinary care, hygiene, and sanitation.

The Commissioner directed the officers to undertake extensive plantation across the premises to improve the environmental ambience of the facility and stressed the need for intensive sanitation and regular upkeep of all sections. He further instructed that appropriate signage be installed at all functional units to facilitate better identification and operational efficiency.

To strengthen animal care services, he also directed the establishment of a modern feed preparation and distribution facility with a robust inventory and stock monitoring system to ensure the timely availability and efficient management of animal feed.

Highlighting the importance of the integrated facility, the Commissioner observed that it is a vital component of the Corporation's strategy for scientific and humane stray animal management, contributing significantly to public health, rabies control, environmental hygiene, and sustainable urban governance. He reaffirmed SMC's commitment to continuously upgrading the facility through modern infrastructure, improved operational systems, and best management practices.

The inspection forms part of Srinagar Municipal Corporation's sustained efforts to modernize civic infrastructure, promote responsible animal welfare practices, and build a cleaner, safer, and healthier urban environment.

Assembly secretariat seeks Dy CM's response over breach of privilege notice

MLA Pathania alleges deliberate exclusion from official functions

AGENCIES

SRINAGAR: The Legislative Assembly Secretariat has sought Deputy Chief Minister Surinder Choudhary's comments regarding a notice of breach of privilege filed against him by a legislator, who alleged that he was deliberately excluded from official functions during the Deputy CM's visit to his constituency.

Acting on the directions of Speaker Abdul Rahim Rather, the Legislative Assembly Secretariat has written to the Deputy CM's office, seeking his response to the notice of breach of privilege filed by R.S. Pathania, who represents the Udhampur East Assembly segment.

"The matter was placed before the Hon'ble Speaker, who has been pleased

to direct that comments of the Hon'ble Deputy CM be obtained in the first instance," reads the Assembly communiqué to the Deputy CM's office.

The Deputy CM's office has been directed to submit its response within seven days, so that it may be placed before the Speaker for consideration.

Pathania had last month filed a notice of breach of privilege and contempt of the House against the Deputy CM with the Assembly Secretariat, alleging that he was kept out of the loop during an outreach camp and a series of on-the-spot inspections of projects in his constituency.

He further alleged that the Deputy CM's actions constituted a prima facie breach of the immunities and privileges of a member of the House—(KNO)

DC G'bal reviews arrangements for Urs Mubarak of Qamar-Ud-Din Bukhari (RA)

GMK NEWS NETWORK

GANDERBAL: Deputy Commissioner (DC) Ganderbal, Jatin Kishore Friday convened a meeting of district officers to review and finalize the necessary arrangements for the upcoming Urs Mubarak of Hazrat Qamar-Ud-Din Bukhari (RA) to be held in Ganderbal.

Representatives of Qamaria Auqaf Trust informed during the meeting that the week-long Urs Mubarak will commence from the 21st of July while the main Urs day shall be observed on 25th. The main congregation is expected to witness a significant gathering of devotees at the revered shrine of Hazrat Qamar-Ud-Din Bukhari (RA) in Reshipora Saloora.

A detailed discussion was held regarding the various arrangements required for the smooth and successful conduct of the religious event.

The meeting finalized comprehensive plans related to uninterrupted power supply, safe drinking water, medical facilities, fire safety, transport

and parking, sanitation, security, and traffic regulation.

The DC directed all concerned departments to ensure that all arrangements are put in place well before the commencement of the Urs to provide a smooth, safe, and comfortable experience for the devotees.

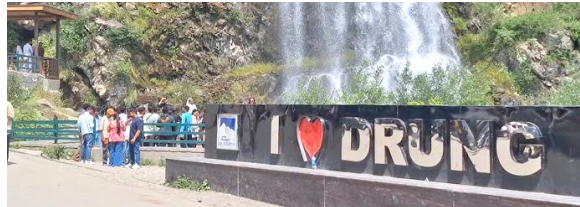
The Fire & Emergency Services Department was instructed to deploy fire tender at the venue, while the Health Department was asked to station an ambulance with adequate emergency medicines and medical staff.

The Municipal Council Ganderbal was directed to maintain cleanliness in and around the shrine premises, including the approach roads.

To ensure safety and order during the large gatherings, the Police and Traffic Departments were tasked with maintaining security and managing traffic regulations effectively. The ARTO was asked to ensure proper transport and parking arrangements for the convenience of the devotees.

Protect Drung or lose livelihood: GDA warns stakeholders on plastic use

Sense of belongingness vital to protect tourist destinations, says CEO



WARIS FAYAZ

SRINAGAR: The Gulmarg Development Authority (GDA) on Friday warned stakeholders at famous tourist destination Drung in Tangmarg against the use of polythene and plastic, stating that strict action will be taken against those violating the ban.

GDA Chief Executive Officer Tariq Hussain, said that protecting the natural ecosystem of Drung is essential for sustaining tourism and the livelihoods of people dependent on the destination.

The CEO said the water body at Drung caters to several habitations and any form of pollution can have long term consequences for the environment and local communities.

He stressed the need for a sense of belongingness among residents, business operators and visitors to ensure cleanliness of the

tourist spot.

"Drung serves as a source of livelihood for many. Stakeholders must understand that protecting this place is directly linked with protecting their own interests," Hussain said.

He warned that the administration will take tough measures against those found using polythene and plastic material despite repeated advisories.

"We urge everyone to stop using such material. Any violation will invite strict action. We have to work together to keep tourist destinations be it Gulmarg, Drung or any other clean and preserve its ecological importance," he added.

It is noteworthy that the GDA on Friday conducted a cleanliness drive at Drung, a popular tourist destination, where officials and stakeholders participated in efforts to improve sanitation and protect the local water body—(KNO)

Bear Enters Sonamarg Market, Sparks Panic Among People

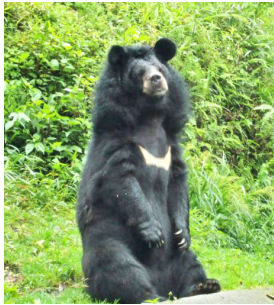
GMK NEWS NETWORK

GANDERBAL: Panic gripped the Sonamarg market in central Kashmir's Ganderbal district after a bear was spotted roaming through the busy commercial area during the night, prompting concern among residents over the increasing movement of wild animals into human habitations.

According to local sources, the bear wandered through the market apparently in search of food before disappearing into the nearby area. No injuries or damage were reported in the incident.

People attributed the recurring movement of bears and other wild animals to the accumulation of garbage in and around the market, saying improperly managed waste has become a major attraction for wildlife.

They urged the authori-



ties to ensure regular garbage collection and scientific waste disposal to discourage wild animals from venturing into populated areas, warning that such encounters pose risks to both humans and wildlife.

Locals also appealed to the Wildlife Department to step up surveillance in vulnerable areas and take appropriate preventive measures to minimize human-wildlife conflict, particularly during the tourist season when Sonamarg witnesses a heavy influx of visitors. [KNT]

DC Kupwara inaugurates Aadhar Seva Kendra

Important initiative by UIDAI to strengthen resident-centric Aadhaar services

GMK NEWS NETWORK

KUPWARA: Unique Identification Authority of India (UIDAI) has operationalised a new UIDAI Aadhaar Seva Kendra (ASK) at Kupwara, marking another significant step towards strengthening resident-centric Aadhaar services in the Union Territory of Jammu & Kashmir.

The UIDAI Aadhaar Seva Kendra was inaugurated by Deputy Commissioner, Kupwara, Shrikant Suse, in the presence of Chief Planning Officer, Kupwara, Parvaiz Ahmad Lone. The inauguration ceremony was hosted by UIDAI Regional Office, Chandigarh and attended by V. Siva Subramanian, Deputy Director, UIDAI, and Shoaib Mohamad Khan, State Project Manager, UIDAI. Representatives from service provider, Rajnish Mehta, Regional Manager BLS International; Peer Mubashir Shah, Cluster Manager, and Aijaz Ahmad Wani, Operations Manager were also present on the occasion.

The newly established Kupwara Aadhaar Seva Kendra is equipped with



four operational Aadhaar enrolment and update kits to provide seamless Aadhaar-related services to residents. The centre offers a comprehensive range of Aadhaar services under one roof, including new enrolment, demographic updates, biometric updates, document verification, correction of Aadhaar details, and grievance redressal.

The Aadhaar Seva Kendra functions on all working days except public holidays, ensuring greater accessibility, convenience, and an enhanced service experience for residents of Kupwara and the surrounding areas.

During his visit, the Deputy Commissioner interacted with residents availing Aadhaar services and the staff at the centre.

He reviewed the Aadhaar enrolment and update procedures and appreciated the efforts being made to provide efficient, transparent, and citizen-friendly services.

UIDAI officials informed the Deputy Commissioner that the centre has been designed as a fully inclusive and resident-friendly facility with amenities such as wheelchair accessibility, accessible washrooms, comfortable waiting areas, and a dedicated grievance redressal mechanism. Residents can also conveniently book appointments online for Aadhaar services through the UIDAI Aadhaar Appointment Portal.

Mandatory Biometric Updates (MBU) for eligible children aged 5 to 17 years are currently being pro-

vided free of cost up to 30 September 2026. The facility is available both at the Aadhaar Seva Kendra and through special school-based Aadhaar camps being conducted across District Kupwara.

The DC termed the operationalisation of the UIDAI Aadhaar Seva Kendra at Kupwara as important milestone in strengthening digital governance, improving service delivery, and enhancing the ease of living for residents in line with the vision of Digital India and inclusive governance.

Speaking on the occasion, UIDAI officials reiterated the Authority's commitment to expanding high-quality, accessible, and technology-driven Aadhaar services across Jammu & Kashmir.

LCMA shares Dal Lake restoration, weed management expertise with LDA Manipur

GMK NEWS NETWORK

SRINAGAR: A delegation from the Loktak Development Authority (LDA) Imphal, Manipur led by its Project Director, Heisnam Balkrishna visited the Lake Conservation and Management Authority (LCMA), Srinagar to study the functioning of the Authority and its initiatives for the conservation and management of Dal Lake and exchange the experiences in management of waterbodies.

The delegation called on the Vice Chairman, J&K LCMA, Khurshid Ahmad Shah, and held discussions on lake con-



servation, aquatic weed management, ecological restoration, environmental monitoring, and other technical aspects of lake management.

During the interaction, the Vice Chairman briefed the delegation on the organizational structure, mandate and functioning of LCMA and highlighted the scientific and sustainable interventions being

implemented for the restoration and long-term conservation of Dal Lake. He emphasized that such interactions among lake management agencies facilitate the exchange of technical knowledge, innovative practices and field experience, thereby strengthening conservation efforts across the country.

During a technical ses-

sion attended by senior officers, engineers, and scientists of LCMA, the visiting team was apprised of ongoing restoration works, mechanized weed harvesting, environmental monitoring and other conservation initiatives. The delegation also expressed keen interest in the floating jetties installed by LCMA at various locations of Dal Lake and explored the possibility of introducing similar infrastructure in Loktak Lake.

The delegation later visited Dal Lake to oversee the weed management operations, restoration activities and floating jetties being undertaken by JK LCMA.

UNION TERRITORY JAMMU & KASHMIR

OFFICE OF THE EXECUTIVE ENGINEER R&B DIVISION SOPORE.

NOTICE INVITING TENDER

NIT NO- 53 OF RNB-SOPORE OF 2026-2027 E-TENDERING DATED: 17.07.2026.

For and on behalf of the Lt. Governor, J&K, e-tenders (in Single Cover System) are invited on Percentage rate basis from approved and eligible contractors registered with J&K State Govt. CPWD, Railways and other State/Central Governments for the following works:

S.No.	Name of Work	Adv. cost	Cost of Tender Documents In Rupees	E/ Money	Time for completion of work	Time & Date of Opening of Bid	Class of Contractor	M. H of Account	Position of TS
1	2	3	4		5	6	7	8	9
1	Construction of sub centre at Goripora.	49.30	1100/-	98600	120 days	30.07. 2026	AAY/BEE	Distt. Sector Health	SE (R&B) Bla 65 of 206-27 dated: 16.7.2026 for Rs. 49.30 lacs

Project Authority: DDC Baramulla.

Position of funds: Available

Position of AA. Recorded by District Development Commissioner Baramulla vide his order No:123/DDC of 2026 dated: 10.07.2026

1,

The Bidding documents consisting of qualifying information, eligibility criteria, specifications, Drawings, bill of quantities (B.O.Q), Set of terms and conditions of contract and other detail's can be seen/downloaded from the departmental website www.jktenders.gov.in as per schedule of dates given below

1	Date of issue of tender Notice	17.07.2026
2	Period of downloading of bidding documents	17.07.2026 to 29.07.2026
3	Bid Submission start date	17.07.2026
4	Bid submission End date	29.07.2026 (4.00 PM)
5	Date and time of opening of bides (online)	30.07.2026 (12 PM) in the office of Ex. Engineer R&B Division. Sopore

2,

Bids must be accompanied by a Treasury Challan (dated between the bid start date and the Bid Submission End date) with NIT No. Name of work and S.No. deposited in M.H. 0059 in the name of Executive Engineer R&B Division Sopore (tender inviting authority) as the cost of the tender document.

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/BG pledged to the tender receiving authority, i.e. Executive Engineer R&B Division Sopore . Besides that, the successful bidder will have to provide Performance Security @ 5% 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 after submission of a performance security of 5% of the quoted cost which will be released after completion of the DLP/ Maintenance Period.

3(b) Geotag Photographs Minimum 03 sets (01 set Comprising of Photograph before, during and after execution of work) of size 26 cm x21 cm to be provided.

Unbalanced Bid:- In case bid of the successful bidder is unbalanced, the Successful bidder will have to provide additional performance security in the shape of CDR/FDR/BG pledged to Executive Engineer R&B Division Sopore (tender receiving authority) vide Principal Secretary to Government Finance department's circular issued under endorsement No: DF-Code/ 441/ 2021-02-158 dated" 8.8.20025.

a: 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 the bid price.

b. Where the bid price is 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 guaranteepercentage shall be applied on the bid price.

c. The additional performance guarantee percentage shall be rounded off to the next lower percentage based on whether the decimal point of the percentage of bid price is below 0.5% or next higher percentage based on whether the decimal point of the percentage of bid price is 0.5% or more.

d. The additional performance security shall be treated as part of the performance security . Additional performance security shall be taken only after approval of next higher authority.

The additional performance security shall be released only after successful completion of work.

4 The date and time of opening of Bids shall be notified on web Site www.jketenders.gov.in and conveyed to the bidders automatically through an e-mail message on their e-mail address. The bids of Responsive bidders shall be opened online on same web site in the office of the Tender receiving authority).

5, The bids for the work shall remain valid for a period of 120 days from the date of opening of technical Bids.

For and on behalf of the Lt. Governor of J&K UT,

No 3965-74

Dated: 17.07.2026.

DIPK-3420-26

DT: 17/07/2026

sd/-

Executive Engineer,

R&B Division Sopore

FIFA WC: 'Messi remains our pride, Yamal represents the future,' says Barca president Laporta ahead of final

IAN S

NEW YORK: Barcelona president Joan Laporta believes Monday's FIFA World Cup final between Argentina and Spain represents a symbolic passing of the torch, with Lionel Messi carrying the legacy of the club's golden generation and Lamine Yamal emerging as the face of its future.

Speaking ahead of the title clash at MetLife Stadium, Laporta said Barcelona's famed La Masia academy will once again be in the global spotlight, with Messi captaining Argentina while Spain boasts a squad packed with current and former Barcelona players, including teenage sensation Yamal.

"Messi has reached another World Cup final, and that makes everyone associated with La Masia proud. He represents everything Barcelona has achieved over the years, while Lamine represents what lies ahead. We are fortunate that both reflect the footballing identity of our club," Laporta told RAC1 as quoted by Goal.com.

The Barcelona chief described the final as a celebration of the club's youth development system, pointing to the strong club presence in Spain's squad.

"As president, it gives me immense satisfaction to see so many players who have come through our system performing on football's biggest stage. Along with Lamine, players like Pau Cubarsi, Pedri, Gavi, Dani Olmo, Ferran Torres, Eric Garcia and Joan Garcia show the strength of our academy," he said.

Messi made 778 official appear-

ances and scored a record 672 goals for FC Barcelona. During his tenure from 2004 to 2021, he established himself as the all-time top scorer for a single club in football history and won 35 major trophies, including 10 La Liga titles and 4 UEFA Champions League titles. While Yamal is currently playing for the club.

Laporta added that the World Cup final underlines Barcelona's continued influence on the international game, regardless of which side lifts the trophy.

"We are proud to have eight players representing Spain. For them, there is no bigger international match than a World Cup

final, and for Barcelona it is a reflection of the quality we continue to produce," he said.

Comparing the two finalists, Laporta said Argentina and Spain approach the game with contrasting styles.

"Argentina are a very competitive and physically intense team, while Spain rely more on collective football and positional play, a style that is closely linked with Barcelona's philosophy. It should be a fascinating contest between two different approaches to the game," he added.



Lord's Test win over England a really inspiring one for young Indian cricketers, says Niki Prasad



IAN S

NEW DELHI: Niki Prasad, who captained India to the 2025 U19 Women's T20 World Cup title, believes the senior women's team's historic 270-run win over England in the first-ever women's Test at Lord's has been a huge source of inspiration for young cricketers striving to break into the national side.

Earlier on Monday, Harmanpreet Kaur's side pulled off a landmark triumph in the first-ever women's Test held at Lord's after bundling out England for 186. Wicketkeeper-batter Yastika Bhatia struck 113, becoming the first woman to score a century in a Test at Lord's, while Kranti Gaud's five-wicket haul earned her a place on the historic honours board.

Off-spin bowling all-rounder Sneha Rana then wrapped up the contest with a four-wicket haul in the second innings, as India sealed their second-highest Test win by runs and, overall, their fourth-biggest Test victory.

"I think definitely watching them play such good cricket - it was

really inspiring to see them win, and especially coming right after the T20 games. It is pretty difficult to adapt to Test matches, especially in India, as we do not play a lot of red-ball cricket.

"So I think the way they went over there and handled the situation and played according to the situation and got that century and five-for, I think it was really inspiring for us as young cricketers to watch that and see how the Indian women's team were able to achieve that historical win. So it was really inspiring," Niki, a JSW Sports-supported athlete, told IANS in an exclusive conversation on Friday.

Niki recently featured for the India A women's team on their tour of England, where they won the 50-over series 2-1. The right-handed batter also spoke about the increasing emphasis on red-ball preparedness at the domestic level via the revival of inter-zonal multi-day tournaments and specialised camps at the BCCI CoE in Bengaluru.

"I think here in India, we're slowly starting to get a lot of red-ball tournaments. I think they had

added one to the domestic circuit - the senior multi-days. Even when there are camps happening at CoE, they also prepare us to be able to play red-ball cricket.

"I think that preparation has started slowly, and we've already seen the result of that - India winning at Lord's. So I think from now on in the next couple of years, we are just going to keep getting better in all the formats, not just one," she said.

Looking ahead, Niki revealed that a month-long targeted camp at the CoE, starting in August, along with a busy India A calendar, will keep her occupied for the next six months. "Definitely - like, there are a lot of tournaments that are coming up for India A. Also, we have this targeted camp next month, which is starting in August.

"That's like one whole month of camp. So, I think we are going to get used to playing T20, one-day, and test matches in that camp. That would be a really good preparation going forward to the domestic or to the WPL and India A series, and that is what is looking like for the next six months," she concluded.

Sir Garry Sobers, cricket's greatest all-rounder, dies at 89

IAN S

NEW DELHI: Cricket legend Sir Garfield Sobers (Garry), widely regarded as the greatest all-rounder the game has ever produced, has died at the age of 89, bringing to an end the remarkable life of one of the sport's most celebrated figures.

Former West Indies captain Sobers leaves behind an unmatched legacy built on remarkable achievements with both bat and ball. The West Indies icon will always be remembered as the first player to hit six sixes in a single over in first-class cricket. He accomplished this feat in



1968 at St Helen's Ground in Swansea while playing for Nottinghamshire against Glamorgan.

Born in Barbados, Sobers made his first-class debut at just 16 in 1953. The following year, he earned a West Indies Test cap. His rise to greatness was quick. In 1958, against Pakistan, he scored an unbeaten 365, set-

ting a new world record for the highest individual Test score. This record stood until his fellow countryman Brian Lara broke it in 1994.

Sobers retired from international cricket in 1974 at the age of 38. His ability to contribute in all aspects of the game meant he was always in demand worldwide.

Throughout his impressive international career, Sobers played 93 Tests for the West Indies. He scored 8,032 runs at an impressive average of 57.78 and took 235 wickets at 34.03. He still holds the fourth-highest batting average among players with over 5,000 Test runs.

Chennai Grand Masters 2026: Firouzja beat Gukesh to extend lead after second round

IAN S

CHENNAI: French Grandmaster (GM) Alireza Firouzja eked out yet another gruelling victory to register his second straight win in the fourth edition of the Chennai Grand Masters 2026, India's most prestigious classical chess tournament, at the Westin Hotel in Chennai on Friday.

Firouzja, who had defeated GM M Praneesh with black pieces on the opening day, got the better of world champion Dommaraju Gukesh after 69 moves to take his tally to two points after two rounds.

Organised by MGD1, the tournament witnesses eight grandmasters face off in a double-round robin format and offers a prize purse of



Rs 75,00,000 and valuable FIDE Circuit points.

After Deepraj Mukherjee, General Manager of Westin Chennai Velachery, made the ceremonial first move in the game between Firouzja and Gukesh, the Frenchman opted for a Ruy Lopez opening with white. It looked like Gukesh could hold out against the French GM in a

knight-pawn ending, but a pawn sacrifice by Firouzja opened the door for a clinical win.

M Praneesh, who had lost his opening round with white, did not take any chances with black pieces against GM Dmitry Andreikin and settled for a draw by repeating in just 18 moves.

GM Arjun Erigaisi also

RESULTS (ROUND 2)

- GM Hans Niemann (1) drew with GM Nihal Sarin (1)
- GM Alireza Firouzja (2) beat GM D Gukesh (0.5)
- GM Dmitry Andreikin (1) drew with GM M Praneesh 0.5
- GM Nodirbek Abdusattorov (1) vs GM Arjun Erigaisi (1)
- Round 3 Pairings:
- GM Arjun Erigaisi vs Hans Niemann
- GM M Praneesh vs GM Nodirbek Abdusattorov
- GM D Gukesh vs GM Dmitry Andreikin
- GM Nihal Sarin vs GM Alireza Firouzja

played it safe against GM Nodirbek Abdusattorov with black pieces, and the Uzbek signed the peace treaty after 43 moves. GM Nihal Sarin also held Hans Niemann to a draw after a marathon 132-move game in which he thwarted all the moves of his US opponent to gain the upper hand.

Earlier, Firouzja registered the sole win of

the opening day against Indian GM M Praneesh in the fourth edition of the Chennai Grand Masters 2026, India's most prestigious classical chess tournament. Firouzja, playing black, defeated Praneesh in a marathon game that lasted 79 moves, with the Frenchman making the most of his pawn on the f-file in a rook-pawn ending.

'Why has it come this far?' - Ashwin demands clarity for Rohit and Kohli ahead of 2027 ODI WC

IAN S

NEW DELHI: Former India off-spinner Ravichandran Ashwin has strongly questioned the team management and national selectors over the prolonged uncertainty on future of veteran batters Rohit Sharma and Virat Kohli, and has demanded immediate clarity for the duo ahead of the 2027 ODI World Cup.

IANS had reported that the Ajit Agarkar-led selection committee were unlikely to pick Rohit in the ODI format after the third and final game of the series, currently tied at 1-1, at Lord's in London on Sunday.

Ashwin also stated that if the decision-makers had already resolved to move past the legendary pair for the upcoming mega event in South Africa, Zimbabwe and Namibia, the roadmap should have been explicitly communicated to them immediately after India's Champions Trophy triumph in March 2025.

"Yashasvi Jaiswal is pushing hard from behind. But if, as a selector, coach, captain or whoever the decision-maker is - if you've already decided in your mind that these players are



not going to the 2027 World Cup, and you don't want them... then that should have been communicated immediately after the Champions Trophy. I know it's a double-edged sword," Ashwin said on his YouTube show Ash Ki Baat.

Acknowledging that being phased out is never easy for any cricketer, Ashwin stated that transparent communication remains vital to prevent senior players from feeling unwanted in the dress-

ing room. "If you go and tell players that you want to move on from them, no player will feel good about it. Even if the selectors or the coach had come to me in Australia and said, 'We want to move past you. We're done with you.' "I would also have felt bad. I'd think, 'One bad series... is that enough? Every player is allowed one poor series.' That's how every player would feel. But once it's done, you can at least say, 'Okay...

the communication was clear," he observed.

Questioning the timing of the current uncertainty, Ashwin expressed bewilderment over why the situation has been allowed to linger with less than a year left for the global event's commencement.

"Maybe it has already happened in Rohit's case. Maybe it has happened in Virat's case. Virat has been excellent. Rohit has been more than decent. So why have we allowed this to drag on until August 2026... when there are only 10-12 months left before the 2027 World Cup in South Africa? Why has it come this far? That's my only question.

"If either of those two players doesn't feel wanted, two things will happen. First, they cannot perform at their best. Second, they will start feeling low about themselves for simply being there. Think about it once.

"If you're in a house where people don't want you to stay, can you really live comfortably in that house? We're going to South Africa in September-October. Do we need Virat Kohli and Rohit Sharma? If you ask me, I would want that experience," concluded Ashwin.

INOX

SRINAGAR

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SCHEDULE

SATURDAY

18TH JULY

Call 95416 13868 For Ticket Assistance

DHAMAAL 4
(HINDI) (U/A 13+)
HINDI
U/A 13+
11:15 AM, 02:10 PM, 07:30 PM

THE ODYSSEY (A)
ENGLISH WITH ENGLISH SUBTITLES
A
ENGLISH WITH ENGLISH SUBTITLES
12:25 PM, 02:10 PM, 03:50 PM, 05:35 PM, 07:15 PM
HINDI
10:45 AM

EVIL DEAD BURN
(ENGLISH WITH ENGLISH SUBTITLES) (A)
A
10:00 AM, 05:05 PM