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Kashmir

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Govt Faces Opposition Heat

J&K Power Tariff To Rise 6.83%

PIRZADA SHAKIR

SRINAGAR: Electricity consumers in Jammu and Kashmir will pay higher tariffs from September 1 after the Joint Electricity Regulatory Commission (JERC) approved an average 6.83% increase for the 2026-27 financial year, adding to political pressure on the regional government over its unfulfilled promise of 200 units of free electricity.

The revised tariffs will apply to bills for electricity consumed from September 1, according to an order issued by the regulator.

The commission said the tariff increase was necessary to partially address a revenue gap faced by Jammu Power Distribution Corporation Ltd (JPDCL) and Kashmir Power Distribution Corporation Ltd (KPDC), but limited the increase to avoid a sharp rise in consumer bills.

The two distribution companies had sought a 5% across-the-board increase in their tariff proposals.

JERC said the combined annual revenue requirement of the two companies, after its prudence check, stood at Rs 10,275.72 crore, against projected revenue of Rs 7,352.87 crore at existing tariffs, leaving a gap of Rs 2,922.85 crore.

"If this entire gap was to be met through tariff alone, the hike would

LG Sinha Meets PM Modi In Delhi, Discusses J&K Situation

Presents Nasha Mukt J&K Abhiyan Coffee Table Book, Discusses Key Issues

GMK NEWS NETWORK

SRINAGAR: Jammu and Kashmir Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha met Prime Minister Narendra Modi in New Delhi on Saturday and briefed him on the overall situation in the Union Territory.

The meeting covered various matters concerning Jammu and Kashmir, including the prevailing situation and key issues related to the Union Territory.

Sinha apprised the Prime Minister of the latest developments as well as the security, administrative and developmental scenario in Jammu and Kashmir.

Lieutenant Governor also presented the Nasha Mukt Jammu Kashmir Abhiyan – 100 Days Campaign Coffee Table Book to him. According to the details available,



the book designed, curated and published by DIPR J&K, captured the journey, and collective efforts of the 100-day campaign towards building a drug-free Jammu Kashmir.

Pertinently, LG Sinha spearheaded the movement against

the drugs in the Union Territory and led rallies across all the 20 districts in the region. The drive against drugs evoked a massive response from the people with thousands participating in the rallies and other programmes held

LG Attends 10-Year Celebration Of IIM Jammu



GMK NEWS NETWORK

JAMMU: The Lieutenant Governor, Manoj Sinha joined the Board of Governors, faculty, students, alumni and dignitaries today to celebrate 10 years of IIM Jammu. Reflecting on IIM Jammu's remarkable journey, the Lieutenant Governor said that from a modest beginning to its current standing as one of India's fastest-emerging business schools, the Institute has scripted a new history while setting out an ambitious roadmap for the decade ahead.

Recalling that IIM Jammu started a decade ago with just 56 students on a temporary campus on Canal Road, the Lieutenant Governor noted that the institute

Rain Brings Brief Relief In J&K



SAJID RAINA

SRINAGAR: Intermittent rain lashed parts of Jammu and Kashmir on Saturday, bringing some relief from hot and humid conditions even as the Meteorological Centre here warned of possible flash floods, mudslides and landslides in vulnerable areas due to intense showers.

The weather remained generally hot and humid across the Union Territory, with scattered to many places witnessing rain and thundershowers. Brief spells of intense rainfall were likely at isolated places, particularly in parts of the Jammu division, mainly during the early morning

JERC Introduces ToD Tariff In J&K; Agriculture Exempted

RIYAZ BHAT

SRINAGAR: The Joint Electricity Regulatory Commission (JERC) has officially introduced Time-of-Day (ToD) tariff electricity billing across Jammu and Kashmir for all categories except for the agricultural consumers.

JERC however clarified that the ToD tariff is applicable in addition to energy charges for all consumers except agriculture having a sanctioned load of more than 10 kW.

JERC order establishes an eight-hour peak window car-

rying a 10% surcharge for residential users and a matching eight-hour daytime window offering a 20% rebate.

The official documents of JERC in this regard said, "ToD tariff is applicable in addition to energy charges for all consumers except Agriculture having a sanctioned load of more than 10 kW."

JERC said that for the implementation of the ToD tariff, peak hours will be considered as 6Am to 9Am and 5Pm to 10Pm, a total eight hours duration in a day and solar hours will be 9Am to 5Pm,

Pulwama Attack

NIA Court Denies Bail Plea Of Insha Jan, Says Charges Prima Facie True

GMK NEWS NETWORK

NEW DELHI: A special NIA court has dismissed the bail application filed by Insha Jan, who is facing trial for her alleged role in the 2019 Pulwama suicide bombing that resulted in the deaths of 40 Central Reserve Police Force (CRPF) personnel.

In its ruling, the court observed that the case files contained adequate evidence to establish that the charges against her are apparently credible on the surface.

In a detailed 15-page order delivered on August 20, Special



FILE PHOTO

Judge Prem Sagar determined that the legal embargo outlined under Section 43-D(5) of the Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act (UAPA) applies to the accused, thereby preventing her from being granted bail at this procedural juncture.

Jan, a native of Harkipora village in south Kashmir's Pulwama district, was taken into custody alongside her father, Peer Tariq Ahmad Shah, on March 3, 2020. She currently stands trial under the Ranbir Penal Code (RPC), the UAPA, the Arms Act, and the Explosive Substances Act, with formal charges having been framed against her on December 10, 2022.

According to the NIA's indictment, Jan is accused of being part of the terrorist conspiracy and maintaining persistent communication with Pakistani terrorist Muhammad Umar

Cross-Border Terror Conspiracy Case

NIA Searches 10 Locations Across Kashmir



GMK NEWS NETWORK

SRINAGAR: The National Investigation Agency (NIA) on Saturday conducted searches at 10 locations across Srinagar, Kupwara, Anantnag, Pulwama and Budgam Districts as part of its ongoing investigation into a cross-border terror conspiracy case involving Pakistan-based handlers and a network of local Over

Ground Workers (OGWs) accused of providing logistical and other support to infiltrated terrorists.

In a statement issued, a NIA spokesman said, "The searches were aimed at recovering further documentary, digital and material evidence linked to the conspiracy and determining the roles of individuals allegedly associated with the local support network."

Modern Apple Grading, Packing Technology Brings Better Returns For Kashmir Growers

'Grading Technology Creates Jobs, Business Opportunities, Improves Market Competitiveness'

JAHANGEER GANAIE

SRINAGAR: The growing adoption of modern apple grading and packing technology across Kashmir is bringing a significant change to the region's traditional fruit trade, with growers reporting better returns, improved quality control and more efficient post-harvest handling of their produce.

Horticulture remains one of the main pillars of Kashmir's rural economy, with thousands of farming families depending on apple cultivation either directly or through allied activities such as packaging, transportation, storage,



trading and labour. However, despite producing large quantities of apples, growers have

for years struggled to realise the full value of their produce, particularly because of inconsistent grading, packaging and quality standards.

Stakeholders in the industry believe the introduction of modern grading lines could help address several of these longstanding challenges. The technology enables apples to be mechanically sorted according to size, quality and other parameters before they are packed, allowing growers and traders to present a more uniform product in the

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Dy CM Flags Lack Of Respect For Elected Representatives

AGENCIES

JAMMU: Deputy Chief Minister Surinder Choudhary on Saturday rejected claims that the National Conference (NC) led government was delaying the elections to Panchayati Raj Institutions (PRIs) but asserted that there should be an administrative and political structure in which elected representatives could genuinely exercise their powers.

Citing the existing Union Territory arrangement, he said, "Today, this is the Omar Abdullah government, but we do not have the police, nor do we have our own IPS or IAS cadre. So what kind

'Issue Show-Cause Notice If I Violated Ideology': Ruhullah To NC

REHAN QAYOOM

SRINAGAR: National Conference (NC) Member Parliament (MP) Aga Ruhullah Mehdi on Saturday questioned his party leadership over its approach towards Jammu and Kashmir's constitutional rights, saying the party had given him a mandate to fight for those rights but was now asking him to resign for continuing the same fight. He challenged the leadership to issue him a show-cause notice if he had violated its ideology or stand.

Addressing reporters here, Ruhullah, said the party leadership should follow a formal process if it believed he had violated the party's ideology. "They are failing to face accountability.



I ask them, why are we not able to fight, why are we not able to follow the principles we have promised people? I get the answer from them: resign," he said.

"If they want me to resign, at least they should issue a show-cause notice. They should ask me, 'You have violated the ideology of the party in various

GI QR labelling begins at Quality Control Lab of Handicrafts Dept

Lab shall certify non-textile, languishing crafts to improve market reach

GMK NEWS NETWORK

SRINAGAR: In a significant boost to Geographical Indication (GI) testing and certification, particularly for non-textile and languishing crafts, the Department of Handicrafts and Handloom, Kashmir, Saturday formally launched the GI QR Code Management System at its Quality Control Division (QCD) in Srinagar.

Following the NABL-accredited IICT and PTQCC laboratories, the QCD has become the third GI Lab in Jammu & Kashmir. It will now test and affix GI labels on a range of products including Wagguv, Gabba, felted Namdah, Walnut Wood Carving, Chain Stitch, Khatamband and Crewel.

The introduction of GI QR labels for fading crafts such as Wagguv and



Namdah is expected to provide a major fillip to these traditional skills, enhancing their brand value in domestic and international markets. "This initiative marks an important expansion of GI certification beyond premier, high-value products such as Kashmir Pashmina, hand-knotted carpet, and Kani and Sozni embroidered shawls," he added.

The Chief Minister had recently inaugurated the refurbished QCD Laboratory, which has been equipped with a High-Resolution Digital Microscope and other required paraphernalia. The upgradation was funded by the Ministry of Textiles under the National Handicrafts Development Programme as well as the UT Capex Budget. Until recently, the lab had been labelling

only non-GI handmade products from Kashmir.

The GI QR labelling system will certify the authenticity of selected handmade products and help them capture the affordable market segment. It will complement the Department's ongoing efforts in capacity building and improved packaging, with special focus on languishing crafts such as Namdah, Gabba and Wagguv that hold strong market potential both within and outside the Union Territory.

The Department has urged artisans, weavers, and other stakeholders to approach the QCD Laboratory to get their products labelled at nominal user charges, thereby adding much-needed brand value to Kashmir's exquisite middle-segment handmade crafts.

FDA conducts enforcement Drive to check quality, safety of milk products

GMK NEWS NETWORK

SRINAGAR: The Food & Drugs Administration (FDA), J&K conducted a special enforcement drive across the Union Territory to check the quality and safety of milk and milk products and ensure compliance with the prescribed food safety standards.

During the drive, 198 inspections were conducted and 178 samples of milk and milk products were collected from different districts for testing of prescribed quality and safety parameters. The inspections also

covered establishments dealing with milk and milk products, including checks of hygiene and sanitary conditions, handling practices, storage conditions and compliance with food safety requirements.

The samples collected during the drive have been forwarded to the designated Food Testing Laboratories for analysis. The analytical results will be examined and further regulatory action, wherever required, shall be taken in accordance with the provisions of the Food

Safety and Standards Act, 2006.

The Food & Drugs Administration, J&K will continue inspection, sampling and surveillance of milk and milk products across the Union Territory to monitor compliance with prescribed food safety standards and ensure that safe and quality milk is made available to consumers.

Consumers have been requested to report suspected cases of unsafe or adulterated food through the Toll-Free Helpline No. 104 or by email at cfsjandk.fnd@jk.gov.in.

Dir Agri visits S.M Farm Kreeri, takes stock of activities



GMK NEWS NETWORK

SRINAGAR: Director Agriculture Kashmir, Sartaj Ahmad Shah Saturday visited Seed Multiplication Farm Tapper Kreeri and took stock of various agriculture activities there.

The Director inspected different blocks, hi-tech poly houses at the farm and reviewed various innovative interventions and technologies adopted at the farm.

Speaking on the occasion, the director expressed satisfaction over the transformation of the farm and appreciated the concerned officers for their role in the successful implementation of different modern technologies.

The director said that the department is committed to transform all the seed multiplication farms of Kashmir into model farms so as to achieve the seed production at optimum levels. He said Tapper form is one of the most productive vegetable farms in the UT of J&K. He asked the concerned officers to strategize the cultivation operations in an environment friendly manner with minimum stress on natural resources.

Director Agriculture was accompanied by Chief Agriculture Officer Baramulla and Seed Production Officer Srinagar.

EOW Kashmir chargesheets habitual offender in fake job fraud case

GMK NEWS NETWORK

SRINAGAR: The Economic Offences Wing (EOW) Kashmir of the Crime Branch J&K has chargesheeted a man in connection with an alleged fake government job fraud case, officials said on Saturday.

The chargesheet against Abdul Majeed Mir, a resident of Lashtiyal Kalaroos in Kupwara, was filed before the Court of Chief Judicial Magistrate, Kupwara, in connection with FIR No. 18/2026 registered under Sections 420, 468, 471 and 201 of the RPC, they said.

According to the Crime Branch, the accused allegedly cheated the complainant of lakhs of rupees on the pretext of providing him a government job and subsequently furnished a fake and forged appointment order purportedly issued by the chairman-cum-chief executive officer of J&K Bank.

A probe was ordered following a written complaint and the allegations were found to be established during the investigation based on evidence collected, officials said.

The case has now been concluded with the presentation of the chargesheet before the court for judicial determination, they said. Mir is a habitual offender and has been involved in 15 criminal cases registered across the Kashmir Valley, the Crime Branch said. He was arrested on July 18, 2026, and is presently lodged in Central Jail Srinagar in connection with FIR No. 12/2026 of the EOW Kashmir, it added.

The Crime Branch has advised people to remain vigilant against economic frauds, particularly fake job offers, and report suspicious activities to the SSP, EOW Kashmir.

DC Srinagar chairs DLSCC meeting

GMK NEWS NETWORK

SRINAGAR: A meeting of District Level Screening cum Coordination Committee (DLSCC) was Saturday held under the chairmanship of Deputy Commissioner (DC) Srinagar, Akshay Labroo here at the meeting Hall of the DC Office Complex.

The meeting conducted a detailed review of cases and claims submitted under SRO-43 by the next of kin (NoKs) of persons killed in terror-related incidents in Srinagar District.

The meeting was attended by the Additional Deputy Commissioner Srinagar, Aadil Fareed, IAS Probationer, Aakash Garg, SP headquarter, Umer Shah, Additional SP CID, Ashok Kumar, Assistant Commissioner Revenue, Umar Gulzar, District Social Welfare Officer, Mohammad Yousuf, District Health Officer, Dr Rubena, Tehsildars of South, Eidgah, Khanyar & Shalteng, senior officers from BSF, Army and other security agencies, besides Officials from the concerned departments.

At the outset, the Committee undertook a comprehensive deliberation on various cases/claims and supporting documents submitted under SRO-43 by NoKs of those killed in terror related incidents in Srinagar district. After a detailed examination, the Committee recommended cases to the Government for consideration for compassionate appointment under the SRO-43 while some cases were recommended for cash compensation.

DC Sgr lays foundation stone for Additional Accommodation Block at Zila Sainik Bhawan

GMK NEWS NETWORK

SRINAGAR: Deputy Commissioner (DC) Srinagar, Akshay Labroo, who is also the President, Zila Sainik Welfare Board Saturday laid the foundation stone for the construction of an Additional Accommodation Block at Zila Sainik Bhawan in presence of Director Sainik Welfare Department, J&K, Brigadier Pankaj Chib, SM, VSM.

The proposed block is aimed at strengthening the existing infrastructure of Zila Sainik Bhawan and providing additional accommodation and welfare facilities for ex-servicemen, war widows, serving personnel and their families from across the districts of the Kashmir Division.

Speaking on the occasion, the Deputy Commissioner highlighted the commitment of District Administration Srinagar towards the welfare and safe and comfortable accommodation for ex-servicemen and their dependents. He emphasized the need to ensure accessible and adequate support to members of the armed forces community through dedicated welfare infrastructure.

The DC said that the additional accommoda-



tion block will enhance the accommodation capacity of Zila Sainik Bhawan and facilitate better delivery of various welfare services to eligible beneficiaries, particularly wards of ex-servicemen and martyrs who temporarily stay in Srinagar for educational purposes.

He further stressed the need to incorporate a Skill Development Training Centre in the proposed block to impart skill-based training to wards of ex-servicemen and martyrs, besides local students, thereby enhancing their employability and self-reliance.

On the occasion, the DC appreciated the efforts of the concerned Officers, including the Chief Planning Officer Srinagar, Superintending Engineer R&B, Executive Engineer R&B and the Zila Sainik Welfare Board, for their dedicated efforts in accelerating and completing various projects at Zila Sainik

Bhawan, including the parking shed and solarisation.

The DC also mentioned that 100 bedded hostel for wards of ex-servicemen and martyrs has already been completed at Peerbagh and urged the Zila Sainik Welfare Board to take necessary steps for its early operationalisation so that the intended beneficiaries can avail benefit of the facility.

Additional Deputy Commissioner Mir Imtiyaz Ul Aziz, Additional Deputy Commissioner Aadil Fareed, IAS Probationer Aakash Garg, Chief Planning Officer, Fayaz Ahmad Dar, Superintending Engineer, R&B North, Shabir Ahmad, Executive Engineer R&B Karan Nagar Division, Abdul Quayum, District Social Welfare Officer, Mohammad Yousuf, Tehsildar South, Sajad Rasool Shah and senior official of Zila Sainik Bhawan including Abdul Rasid War were present on the occasion.

DC Kulgam Inaugurates Blood Donation Camp at District Hospital

GMK NEWS NETWORK

KULGAM: A voluntary blood donation camp was organized Saturday by the Health Department at District Hospital Kulgam as part of efforts to strengthen emergency healthcare services, replenish blood bank reserves and promote the spirit of community welfare.

Deputy Commissioner Kulgam, Shahzad Alam, inaugurated the camp in the presence of officers and officials of the district administration.

Former DDC Chairperson Kulgam, Medical Superintendent District Hospital Kulgam, senior health officials, medical officers, administrative staff and local youth volunteers participated



actively in the donation drive.

The camp was organized with the objective of replenishing blood stocks and raising public awareness about the critical importance of voluntary blood donation. The initiative also sought to encourage greater community participation in supporting patients requiring blood during emergencies, surgeries and trauma cases.

Speaking on the occasion,

the Deputy Commissioner appreciated the voluntary donors, including local youth, civil society members, government employees and healthcare professionals, for coming forward to support the noble cause. He emphasized that voluntary blood donation is a significant humanitarian service that can directly contribute to saving precious lives.

DC Budgam visits Qazibagh, Ichgam for land Identification for Dev of playfields

GMK NEWS NETWORK

BUDGAM: Deputy Commissioner (DC) Budgam, Athar Aamir Khan, Saturday visited Qazibagh and Ichgam areas to identify and survey suitable land patches for the development of playfield facilities for the local youth and sports enthusiasts.

During the visit, the Deputy Commissioner inspected various potential sites and shall explore the availability and suitability of land for the establishment of playfields in both areas.

The Deputy Commissioner directed the concerned officers to undertake the necessary survey and complete other requisite formalities for taking forward the development of sports infrastructure in both villages.

During visit and inspection of land patches, the Deputy Commissioner interacted with local youth delegations and sports lovers, who apprised him of their demands regarding the



development of playfields and other sports facilities, including construction of approach roads, boundary walls and augmentation of essential infrastructure.

Urging the younger generation to embrace sports for positive growth and development, the Deputy Commissioner said, "Sports play a vital role in channelising the energy and potential of our youth in a positive direction. The District Administration is committed to creating better sporting infrastructure and providing adequate facilities to enable young people to participate and excel in sports."

He further said that the

development of playfields and sports infrastructure remains a priority of the District Administration, with focused efforts being made to provide youth with appropriate platforms to showcase their talent and promote a vibrant sports culture in society.

"We want our youth to have safe, accessible and well-equipped spaces where they can pursue and nurture their sporting talent. The District Administration will continue to work in coordination with the concerned departments and local communities to develop and improve sports facilities at the grassroots level," he added.

DC Budgam reviews progress under Mission YUVA, HADP, JKCIP

GMK NEWS NETWORK

BUDGAM: Deputy Commissioner (DC) Budgam, Athar Aamir Khan, Saturday reviewed implementation and progress under Mission YUVA, Holistic Agriculture Development Programme (HADP), Jammu and Kashmir Competitive-ness Improvement in Agriculture and Allied Sectors Project (JKCIP)

and Pradhan Mantri Fasal Bima Yojana (PMFBY) in the district.

At the outset, the Deputy Commissioner called for fast-track processing, sanctioning and timely disbursement of cases under Mission YUVA. He directed the concerned departments and agencies to ensure that eligible aspiring entrepreneurs receive the benefits under the scheme without unnecessary delay. The DC emphasized

the need for extensive capacity-building and awareness programmes among aspiring youth regarding various government schemes and flagship programmes.

He said that better awareness, handholding and capacity-building would enable the youth to avail available opportunities and improve their economic and employment prospects.

Reviewing the onboarding of businesses on the Open Network for Digital Commerce (ONDC), the Deputy Commissioner stressed the need to register shopkeepers, business unit holders, Self-Help Groups (SHGs), grocery sellers and other eligible stakeholders on the platform to facilitate greater market access and better economic opportunities to them.

Emphasized maximum enrolment of farmers under Daksh Kisan, with focused efforts towards their skill development and capacity-building, the DC directed the concerned departments to undertake sustained awareness and mobilization campaigns to ensure wider participation of farmers and enhance their skills for improved productivity and livelihoods.

KTA Opposes Power Tariff Hike, Says Move Will Further Hit J&K Economy

GMK NEWS NETWORK

SRINAGAR: The Kashmir Trade Alliance (KTA) has strongly opposed the latest electricity tariff hike approved by the Jammu and Kashmir Electricity Regulatory Commission (JERC), terming it an additional burden on consumers, traders and businesses at a time when the economy of Jammu and Kashmir is already passing through a difficult phase.

KTA President Aijaz Shahdhar said the tariff increase could further weaken economic activity and hurt businesses that are already struggling with rising operational costs, subdued demand and declining purchasing power. He said that instead of providing an impetus to the economy and extending support to the business community, the government was creating additional difficulties for people and enterprises.

“The economy of Jammu and Kashmir is already facing a downslump. At such a time, the priority of the government should be to provide an impetus to economic activity,

support businesses and reduce the burden on people. Instead, increasing electricity tariffs will raise the cost of doing business and put further pressure on an economy that is already struggling,” Shahdhar said.

He said the tariff hike was particularly difficult to justify when consumers continued to face power curtailments and unreliable supply in several areas. “People were promised relief in electricity bills, including 200 units of free electricity, but instead they are now being asked to pay more. This is a contradictory approach. Consumers cannot be expected to continuously bear higher costs while the quality and reliability of supply remain a concern,” he said.

Shahdhar said traders, manufacturers, hotels, restaurants, workshops and other commercial establishments would be directly affected by the increase, with higher electricity bills adding to their already substantial operating expenses.

“Every increase in the cost of electricity has a cascading effect. Businesses will either

have to absorb the additional cost, which will affect their viability, or pass it on to consumers through higher prices. Neither option is good for an economy that needs growth and recovery,” he said.

The KTA urged the government to reconsider the tariff hike and take up the matter with JERC in the larger public interest. It also called for urgent measures to strengthen the power sector by reducing transmission and distribution losses, improving revenue collection and ensuring reliable electricity supply.

“The government should be reducing the cost of doing business and creating an environment where trade and industry can expand. Burdening consumers and businesses with higher power tariffs at this juncture will only make economic recovery more difficult,” Shahdhar said.

The KTA said it would continue to oppose measures that impose an additional financial burden on the people and business community of Jammu and Kashmir.

Kashmir Idea Goes Global

Shahid Sulaiman Wins Rangelands Restoration Award 2026

ZUBAIR QURESHI

SRINAGAR: When a person from a remote village in Central Kashmir earns recognition on an international platform for an idea rooted in the mountains of his own region, the achievement deserves to be seen beyond the award itself.

Shahid Sulaiman, founder of Himalayan Pastoral Trust (HPT), has been conferred the Rangelands Restoration Award 2026 for his contribution to rangeland conservation, pastoralism and the development of the Alpine Pond Solution, an intervention aimed at addressing water scarcity in high-altitude grazing areas.

Shahid is among 20 awardees from different parts of the world recognised for efforts towards restoring, governing and sustaining rangelands. The recognition came at an event on rangeland management and pastoralism held under the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD).

For Shahid, the journey is significant not simply because of an international award, but because it connects a local problem with a solution that has relevance beyond Kashmir.

Himalayan pastoral communities depend heavily



ily on high-altitude grazing areas. Water availability remains one of the challenges faced by livestock herders, particularly in remote pastures where access to reliable water sources can be limited. The Alpine Pond Solution seeks to respond to that challenge by creating water resources for livestock while supporting the sustainability of pastoral livelihoods.

“The recognition is not only for an individual; it reflects the knowledge and experience of pastoral communities that have lived with and managed these landscapes for generations.”

Shahid’s work also highlights an important point: environmental solutions do not always have to begin in laboratories or policy offices. They can emerge from communities that understand their landscapes through lived experience.

Rangelands are often discussed primarily in terms of ecology, biodiversity and climate resilience. But they are also working landscapes and sources of livelihood. For pastoral communities, their condition directly affects livestock, household incomes and traditional ways of life.

That is why the protection of rangelands cannot be separated from the protection of pastoral livelihoods.

“If we want to conserve rangelands, we also have to strengthen the communities whose livelihoods depend on them.”

Sulaiman’s recognition comes as 2026 is being observed as the International Year of Rangelands and Pastoralists. The global initiative has brought greater attention to the ecological, economic and cultural importance of rangelands and the communities that depend on them.

Sakeena Itoo inaugurates new AYUSH building at D.H. Pora

Addresses public gathering; listens to local issues, grievances

GMK NEWS NETWORK

KULGAM: Minister for Education, Social Welfare, Health and Medical Education, Sakeena Itoo, Friday inaugurated the newly constructed AYUSH building for Government Ayush Dispensary at Khaloora, D.H. Pora.

The inauguration of the healthcare centre in the village was much needed demand towards strengthening the healthcare infrastructure and enhancing access to AYUSH based healthcare services for the local population and people from adjoining areas.

Constructed at a total cost of 30 lakh, the

AYUSH facility is aimed at strengthening the delivery of AYUSH healthcare services at the grassroots level and complementing the existing healthcare infrastructure in the region. The facility will provide an important platform for promoting traditional systems of medicine and ensuring wider availability of AYUSH services, particularly for people living in rural and adjoining areas.

The Minister highlighted the significance of strengthening the primary healthcare structure in the rural areas. She said the government is taking several steps towards the direction of ensuring

ing accessible and quality healthcare services for all citizens of J&K.

Sakeena Itoo also addressed a public meeting at Khaloora and interacted with the local residents, listening to their concerns and taking feedback on various developmental and public service-related issues. She assured the people that their genuine concerns would be examined on priority and necessary action would be taken by the concerned departments.

Later, the Minister handed over engagement letters to recently engaged Anganwadi helpers of Zone DH Pora by the ICDS (Poshan Abhiyaan).

NEWS

GMK NEWS NETWORK

SRINAGAR: Chief Minister Omar Abdullah Saturday said that educational institutions are not merely producing educated girls but are nurturing confident young women, whose confidence provides a strong assurance that the future of Jammu and Kashmir is secure.

The Chief Minister was addressing the Annual Day function, titled ‘Clock Tower Cosmos’, organised by Presentation Convent Higher Secondary School, Rajbagh, Srinagar. The school is also commemorating 250 years of the Presentation Congregation and its own 90-year legacy in Kashmir.

Former Chief Minister Dr Farooq Abdullah, MLA Zadibal Tanvir Sadiq, Provincial Leader-North India Sister Gleetus Rani, Principal Presentation Convent Higher Secondary School Mary Jarsi, faculty members, parents, students and other dignitaries attended the function.

Reflecting on the role of the institution in shaping generations of students, the Chief Minister said, “We are not just producing educated girls. We are producing confident girls.



And this confidence gives me the confidence that the future of Jammu and Kashmir will be secure.”

Recalling his association with the institution, the Chief Minister said he had started his schooling here as a kindergarten student nearly five decades ago, when the school was a co-education school. He remarked that this often comes as a surprise to many, as Presentation Convent in Kashmir has long been perceived as an institution that has been exclusively for girls.

Expressing happiness at returning to his alma mater, Omar Abdullah said it was particularly heartening to witness the confidence, talent and composure of the students today.

“Fifty years ago, I was a student of this great institution,” he recalled.

The Chief Minister also acknowledged the rich history of the Presentation Congregation and the institution, saying that the ideals with which the congregation was founded 250 years ago and the ethos that led to the establishment of Presentation Convent School in Srinagar continue to remain alive.

He said the school had transformed over nine decades from being merely a school into a distinguished institution, with its reputation reflected in the demand for admission. “Presentation Convent Higher Secondary School is one of those institutions where people seek recommendations for admission. That is a testament to the success that Presentation Convent School has been able to attain in its 90 years of history here,” he said.

Recalling his school days, the Chief Minister fondly remembered the school grounds where students assembled and marched to music, besides recalling the teachers and Sisters who had led the institution over the years.

He said Presentation Convent has contributed significantly to society by producing civil servants, doctors, police officers, engineers, business leaders, sportspersons and lawmakers.

The Chief Minister stressed that education must go beyond academic achievement and should encourage young people to think independently and speak up. “We have to teach our children not just to follow, not just to obey, but to question, to ask, to demand,” he said.

Referring to the cultural

performances presented by the students, Omar Abdullah said one of the most powerful messages of the evening came through a musical skit that questioned whether society was truly equitable and fair to its daughters.

The skit highlighted several serious social issues concerning women and girls, including child marriage, acid attacks, female foeticide, domestic violence, and gender based violence.

The Chief Minister particularly appreciated the message conveyed by the students that responsibility for violence and discrimination against women cannot be placed on the victims.

“It is not the girl who is responsible for what happens. It is us who have not been able to teach our sons how to be better human beings,” he recalled, describing the message as an eye-opening one for society.

He said the confidence, talent and composure displayed by the students were particularly encouraging.

“The talent that we saw here, the confidence, but also the ability to not get shaken, gives me immense confidence,” he said.

GMC employees suspend protest after HM's assurance on recruitment rules

Say trust placed in minister's assurance, ‘will monitor progress until Sep 30 deadline’

JAHANGEER GANAIE

SRINAGAR: The Coordinating Committee representing non-gazetted employees of the five newly established Government Medical Colleges (GMCs) of Jammu and Kashmir has decided to temporarily suspend its ongoing peaceful protest following the intervention and written assurance of Health and Medical Education Minister Sakina Itoo that the final Model Recruitment Rules for non-gazetted employees will be framed and published by September 30, 2026.

The decision comes after nearly a week of agitation by employees, who had launched their indefinite peaceful protest on August 17, seeking finalisation of recruitment rules governing their service conditions, recruitment, promotions and other related matters.

The employees welcomed the framing process of the final Model Recruitment Rules and said they were suspending the protest in the larger interest of patients, students, medical education



and uninterrupted healthcare services.

The issue came up for detailed discussion after Health Minister Sakina Itoo invited representatives of non-gazetted employees of the five new GMCs for a meeting on August 20. The meeting, chaired by the Health Minister on August 21, was attended by senior officials, including the Commissioner Secretary, ARI & Trainings; Additional Secretary, Health and Medical Education; Director Finance, HME; Under Secretary, HME; and representatives of the concerned Government Medical Colleges.

During the meeting, the minister directed the concerned authorities to finalise and publish a Model Recruitment Rule applicable uniformly to all the newly estab-

lished Government Medical Colleges.

According to the Coordinating Committee, the minister assured the employees that the process would be completed by September 30, 2026, providing a definite timeline for resolving the long-pending issue.

Following the assurance, the Coordinating Committee held discussions with representatives of employees from all five newly established GMCs and decided to suspend the protest temporarily until the stipulated deadline.

The committee said the decision had been taken in good faith and keeping in view the larger public interest, particularly the need to ensure that patient care, medical education and essential healthcare services at the institutions remain unaffected.

Kishtwar horror

Altaf Bukhari demands exemplary punishment, time-bound probe

GMK NEWS NETWORK

SRINAGAR: Apni Party President Syed Muhammad Altaf Bukhari on Saturday expressed profound grief and anguish over the Kishtwar tragedy, wherein a minor girl died while being taken to hospital after an alleged forced abortion.

In a post on X, the party chief termed the incident deeply painful and said it has shaken people across Jammu and Kashmir. He said the most disturbing aspect of the case is the alleged involvement of a teacher in impregnating the minor girl.

“People in Kishtwar are observing a shutdown and holding protests, demanding a transparent, time-bound investigation, and stringent action against anyone found responsible. These are entirely legitimate demands and this is the least that the administration is expected to do in this matter,” Altaf Bukhari said.

He further stated that the tragedy should compel society to introspect, adding that protecting the dignity and safety of children is a collective moral responsibility. “Our society must wake up and ensure that our daughters are able to live with safety, dignity, and security. Therefore, it is imperative that whoever is found guilty is awarded exemplary punishment in accordance with the law,” he said.

The Apni Party chief said he was deeply hurt and disturbed, and extended his thoughts and prayers to the bereaved family.

Notably, police have arrested a government school teacher and his brother in connection with the case and registered an FIR under various sections of the Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita (BNS) and the Protection of Children from Sexual Offences (POCSO) Act.



MPs, MLAs, industrial representatives call on CM Omar at Raabita



GMK NEWS NETWORK

SRINAGAR: A number of public representatives, industrial representatives Saturday called on Chief Minister Omar Abdullah at Raabita office here and discussed various matters of public importance.

Rajya Sabha MPs Chowdhary Mohammad Ramzan and Gurwinder Singh Oberoi called on the Chief Minister and discussed various matters of public importance.

MLAs Zafar Ali Khatana from Kokernag and Choudhary Mohd. Akram from Surankote also called on the Chief Minister and apprised him of various issues and matters pertaining to their respective constituencies.

President of the Federation Chamber of Industries, Kashmir (FCIK), Shahid Kamili, former FCIK President Shakeel Qalander and FCIK General Secretary Afaz Ahmad also called on the Chief Minister. During the meeting, the delegation raised key issues concerning the industrial sector and discussed measures to strengthen local production, support enterprises and boost economic activity across Jammu & Kashmir.

Several other individuals and delegations called on the chief minister and apprised him of several issues and grievances.

The Chief Minister heard the delegations and representatives and discussed the issues raised during the meetings.

Good Morning

Kashmir

EDITORIAL

Electricity Tariff Hike

Betrayal Of Promise, Not A Policy Of Relief

The 6.83 per cent increase in electricity tariff in Jammu and Kashmir could not have come at a more politically inconvenient time. At a time when households are struggling with rising living costs and the government is repeatedly speaking of economic relief, an electricity tariff hike sends an entirely different message: that the burden of adjustment is once again being shifted onto the common consumer.

What makes the increase particularly contentious is not merely the percentage involved, but the promise that preceded it. The National Conference came to power with a clear political commitment to provide 200 units of free electricity to every household. That promise created expectations among ordinary families, particularly those already struggling to manage household budgets. Instead of moving towards that commitment, consumers are now being asked to pay more.

Leader of Opposition Sunil Sharma has rightly described the move as a "betrayal" of public trust. His criticism is politically motivated, but the question he has raised cannot simply be dismissed as opposition rhetoric. Where is the promised 200 units of free electricity? That is the question the government must answer directly and convincingly.

A government cannot seek votes on the strength of a promise and then expect citizens to remain silent when precisely the opposite direction is taken. If circumstances have changed, the government owes the public an honest explanation. If financial constraints have made the promise difficult to implement, those constraints should be placed before the people transparently. What is unacceptable is allowing a major electoral commitment to gradually disappear from public discussion while tariffs move upward.

The government may have its own justification for the hike. Electricity distribution has costs, power purchases are expensive, infrastructure requires investment and the power sector in J&K has long faced financial and operational challenges. These are legitimate concerns. But they cannot become an excuse for avoiding political accountability.

The real issue is not whether tariffs can ever be increased. It is whether ordinary consumers are receiving better services in return for what they pay. Frequent power disruptions, overloaded distribution systems, damaged transformers and inadequate infrastructure remain familiar complaints in many areas. Before asking consumers to shoulder additional costs, the administration must demonstrate that every rupee collected is being converted into reliable electricity supply and stronger infrastructure.

The business community too has reason to be concerned. For small shops, workshops, hotels, restaurants, bakeries and manufacturing units, electricity is not a luxury; it is a basic input. Any increase in power costs eventually finds its way into the cost of production and services. At a time when businesses are already coping with multiple operating expenses, another tariff burden could weaken competitiveness and discourage investment.

The government must therefore avoid treating this as merely an accounting exercise. Electricity is an essential service, and tariff policy has a direct bearing on household welfare, employment, business activity and the overall cost of living. If a tariff increase is unavoidable, there must be a credible social and economic protection mechanism for vulnerable consumers.

More importantly, the government must revisit its promise of 200 free units. If the commitment is still on the agenda, a clear roadmap, timeline and eligibility framework should be made public. If it is no longer financially feasible in its original form, the government should have the courage to tell the people why.

Why Degrees Don't Owe You A Luxury Life

SAHIL MANZOOR BHATTI

Education never means getting employment, handsome salaries, and all that comes with a job. Education simply means gaining control over everything within ourselves – our anger, arrogance, dishonesty, jealousy, and other weaknesses. True education develops our character and teaches us how to deal with life. How beautiful it is whenever I see educated people engaging in different livelihood activities. We know that in our country, almost everyone wants a government job. Yet, those who get into government service often start complaining: "What is so special about a government job?" I have a friend whose earnings are many times higher than mine. I also have a neighbour who earns in a few days what some people earn in an entire month.

My perspective regarding employment is quite clear. People who have zeal, enthusiasm, and a thirst to do something in any field rarely complain about what they have achieved or what they have lost. Different people have different stories when it comes to their choices of employment. Some people may not be highly qualified, yet they have positive smiles on their faces and live their lives happily. On the other hand, some highly qualified people, such as engineers, teachers, doctors, and lecturers, complain that their earnings are insufficient, that they cannot afford a luxurious lifestyle, or that they cannot live like princes.

How Can We Be Happy?

For me, earnings are not everything. I believe in satisfaction. The person who is satisfied with his or her qualifications, profession, and earnings is a successful person. No one can defeat such a person's dreams or easily make them unhappy. Actually, it is our own mindset that often creates problems. We keep looking at what others are doing without knowing their background. Different people have different strengths and different financial circumstances, so it is not possible for everyone to sail in the same boat.

Some people can make something great from very small things, while others have bigger opportunities because of their family background, financial status, education, or



other advantages. Yet, they sometimes fail to make good use of those opportunities. This raises an important question: why do some people have great opportunities but fail to use them to achieve their life goals? Today, this thought came into my mind, and I decided to write about it.

Literally, I have been enjoying delicious masala (a mixture of gram) and lawasa tandoori chapatti for the last couple of decades, along with chutneys of different varieties, such as coriander, chilli powder, green chilli, curd, and pieces of salad. One of the sellers from Parneva, Khansahib, Budgam, has been selling these items for a long time. I like his behaviour and the way he presents his masala and lawasa with delicious chutney. He keeps the chutney in copper utensils, which adds to the traditional charm. What attracts me most is his behaviour. Even when members of the community call him "Sir," he remains humble and gentle.

Today, I see similar food items being sold outside colleges, schools, sports stadiums,

and other busy places. Such efforts by our educated youth to earn a livelihood should be appreciated. The government should support them by providing financial assistance and suitable permanent spaces so that they can earn with dignity and with proper governmental support.

There are great minds in the government, and I hope such initiatives for employment and self-reliance among our youth will be appreciated and supported.

How Can We Generate Employment with Little Financial Support? We can start a business from a footpath and gradually build it into a successful enterprise within a few years through honesty, hard work, and enthusiasm.

Anyone can become what he or she wants to become, but proper guidance and a great vision are necessary. Willingness plays a vital role and can uplift a person from any situation. There is no need to start a business with millions. When you start small, you remain calm because you have less fear of bankruptcy and fewer financial

pressures. Always try to learn from zero and then move higher. The higher you go, the calmer and wiser you should become.

We should never claim that we are educated and then ask why we are unemployed. For your kind consideration, an educated person should never give up simply because employment opportunities are limited. How is it possible that you spend 20 or 30 years learning how to tackle life's issues and deal with problems, but when it comes to employment, you give up? Never blindly follow what others say. Come out of your comfort zone and try your best. Success does not come through discussions and lame excuses. It comes through hard work, patience, willingness, and perseverance.

Different people have different stories, different opportunities, and different journeys. What matters most is not how much we earn, but how meaningfully and honestly we live our lives.

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Do Women Need Permission To Dream?



BHAT AFREEN

There is a simple truth that we often forget: a society cannot move forward if half of its population is held back. Women are not merely members of families; they are students, teachers, doctors, farmers, entrepreneurs, artists, administrators, scientists, leaders, carers, and countless other things. They contribute to society in ways that are sometimes visible and sometimes unnoticed. Yet, despite their contributions, many women still have to fight for opportunities and respect that should naturally belong to every human being. That is why women's empowerment is not just a fashionable phrase or a topic for speeches. It is a real social need.

Women's empowerment means creating a world in which women have the freedom, confidence, education, resources, safety, and opportunities to make decisions about their own lives. It does not mean putting women above men. It means removing the barriers that prevent women from standing beside men as equal participants in society. One of the strongest foundations of women's empowerment is education. Education does much more than help a person find a job. It teaches people how to think, question, understand their rights, and make informed decisions.

When a girl receives a good education, the benefits often extend beyond her individual life. She can become financially independent, support her family, understand health and legal issues better, and encourage the next generation to value learning. Unfortunately, in some communities, girls are still asked to compromise on their education because of financial difficulties,



household responsibilities, early marriage, or the belief that educating a girl is less important than educating a boy. Such thinking needs to change. A daughter's education is not an expense with no return; it is an investment in the future of a family and society.

Economic independence is another important part of empowerment. A woman who has the opportunity to earn, save, manage money, or start a business generally has greater freedom to make choices about her life. But economic empowerment is not simply about having a job. Women also need fair wages, safe working environments, opportunities for promotion, access to financial services, and the freedom to choose the work they want to do. At the same time, we should remember that not every woman wants or is able to follow a traditional career. A woman who chooses to dedicate herself to her family and household should not be considered less valuable. Homemaking involves enormous responsibility and deserves respect. True empowerment means giving women choices rather than forcing them into a particular definition of success. Another major obstacle is the presence of stereotypes. From childhood, boys and girls can be taught different expectations. Boys may be encouraged to be ambitious and independent, while girls may be expected to be quiet,

obedient, and cautious. A girl who speaks confidently may be labelled negatively, while the same behaviour in a boy may be praised as leadership.

These double standards can quietly shape a person's entire life. We need to teach children that qualities such as courage, kindness, intelligence, leadership, responsibility, and ambition do not belong to one gender. A girl should be allowed to dream of becoming an engineer, pilot, police officer, teacher, entrepreneur, scientist, athlete, civil servant, or anything else she is capable of becoming.

Safety is also fundamental to empowerment. It is difficult to speak about freedom when women are afraid of harassment, violence, discrimination, or exploitation. Women should be able to travel, study, work, and participate in public life without constantly feeling unsafe. Strong laws are important, but laws alone cannot solve the problem. Society must also develop a culture in which violence and harassment are never normalised or excused. Families have an especially powerful role to play. Empowerment does not always begin in a parliament, office, or courtroom. Sometimes it begins at a dinner table. It begins when parents listen to their daughter's opinion. It begins when a family invests equally in the education of sons and daughters. It begins when a

brother learns to respect his sister's choices and when a father tells his daughter that her dreams matter.

Women themselves also play an important role in this journey. Supporting other women, sharing knowledge, mentoring younger girls, and speaking against discrimination can create a chain of empowerment. Progress becomes much stronger when women do not have to compete with one another simply to receive opportunities. However, women's empowerment should not become a competition between men and women. Men and boys are also important partners in creating equality. A man who respects women, challenges harmful stereotypes, shares household responsibilities, supports women's education, and speaks against violence is contributing to empowerment. Technology has opened new doors as well. Today, women can learn through online courses, work remotely, sell products online, build businesses, access information, and connect with people across the world. But the digital world also has challenges, including online harassment and unequal access to technology.

Therefore, digital literacy and online safety should become part of modern education for girls and women. There is also a deeper issue that deserves attention: women should be allowed to define success for

themselves. Society often tells women what they should look like, how they should behave, when they should marry, what career they should choose, and what kind of life they should lead. Empowerment means giving women the confidence to make these decisions for themselves while respecting the rights and choices of others. A truly empowered woman does not need to prove that she is better than anyone else. She simply knows that her voice matters, her choices matter, and her future matters. The responsibility for women's empowerment therefore belongs to all of us—families, schools, governments, workplaces, communities, men, and women themselves.

We need better education, fair opportunities, stronger protection from violence, economic independence, equal treatment, and a change in the attitudes that have been passed from one generation to another. But change does not always require a grand movement. It can begin with something as small as encouraging a girl to continue her studies, listening to a woman's opinion, supporting a female entrepreneur, sharing household responsibilities, or refusing to laugh at a sexist joke. Women do not need permission to have dreams. They need opportunities to pursue them. When a girl is educated, a future is educated. When a woman becomes financially independent, a family can become stronger. When women participate in leadership, new perspectives enter decision-making. And when women live with dignity and security, society as a whole becomes healthier. Women's empowerment is ultimately about building a society where talent is not limited by gender and where a person's future is determined by ability, effort, character, and choice, not by whether they were born a boy or a girl. The real measure of progress is not how loudly we speak about equality, but how fairly we practise it. When women rise, society does not lose its balance, it gains strength.

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Harassment Of Girl Students In Schools

Crisis Of Trust In The Temple Of Education



DR. PRIYANKA SAURABH

Schools are not just places for learning. They lay the foundation for children's personality development, values, discipline, and a secure future. When parents send their children to school, they trust that teachers will not only impart knowledge but also ensure their child's safety and dignity. But when, under the guise of this trust, a teacher molests, behaves inappropriately, or sexually harasses a student, it's not just the child who suffers the consequences; the entire educational system is put on trial.

Reports of inappropriate behaviour by teachers toward female students in schools have surfaced from time to time. The nature and facts of each incident may be different, so it's unfair to blame someone based solely on an allegation. However, suppressing a complaint once it's made, attempting to silence the girl, or delaying the matter to protect the institution's reputation is an even more serious problem. The reputation of any school cannot be more important than the safety of its children.

The relationship between a teacher and a student is fundamentally based on trust. A teacher possesses both knowledge and authority. Students naturally value their teacher's words and often consider them the most trustworthy adult after their parents. This is why, if a teacher abuses this trust and authority, it is difficult for a child to protest. During adolescence, children often cannot discern whether an adult's behaviour is normal or inappropriate. Fear, shame, social pressure, worries about exams and the future, and the fear of whether their voice will be believed can prevent them from complaining. Therefore, simply asking, "Why didn't the child complain earlier?" is not enough. The real question should be: Has the school created a safe environment where the child can speak out without fear?

The most dangerous element in such cases is often silence. Many families, fearing social stigma, are reluctant to complain. Some suppress the matter, fearing that the child's education will be affected. School administrations, too, may sometimes try to resolve the complaint internally, fearing a tarnished image of the institution. However, such silence can encourage abuse. If a child's complaint is not taken seriously, it can send the message that the institution's reputation is more important than her safety. This message is deeply concerning for any civilised society.

Therefore, parents, teachers, and school management must understand that filing a complaint is not a disgrace but a step toward safety. Allegations should be investigated impartially, and if proven guilty, action should be taken in accordance with the law and institutional rules. The role of school administration should not be limited to taking action after an incident occurs. Security arrangements should be robust in advance. Proper verification of teachers and staff, a clear code of conduct, rules for dealing with students, and a secure complaint system are essential.

Schools should educate children about appropriate and inappropriate touch, how to recognise uncomfortable behaviour, and how to report it to a trusted adult. This education should be provided not only to female students but also to all children. They should also be made aware that they are not responsible for any inappropriate behaviour. Schools should have a complaint system where children can express their concerns without fear. The availability of female teachers, trained counsellors, or other trusted adults can be crucial in this regard.

The POCSO Act, 2012, exists in India to protect children from sexual offences. This law provides important protections in cases of sexual offences against children under the age of 18. Schools and their staff must have a basic understanding of this law. It is not appropriate to suppress a serious complaint simply by considering it an "internal school matter". Depending on the nature of the case, it may be necessary to inform and cooperate with the appropriate authorities. The purpose of the legal process is not only to punish the accused but also to protect the safety, dignity, and rights of the victimised child.



Even today, after such incidents, questions are often raised in society about a girl's behaviour, clothing, time, friendships, or social media activities. This thinking is wrong and harmful. A girl's clothing, her conversation, or her trust in a teacher does not give an adult the right to behave inappropriately. The responsibility lies with the person who abuses their position, age, and authority. Instead of scaring girls in the name of safety, they must be given confidence. They must be assured that if someone makes them uncomfortable, they can speak up without shame or fear.

Most teachers shape children's futures with complete honesty and dedication. Therefore, it is unfair to tarnish the entire teaching community with the alleged or proven misconduct of a few individuals. However, this very reason increases teachers' professional conduct responsibilities even more. Teachers have constant contact with children, so they must be especially mindful of boundaries and professional decorum. Schools should have clear rules regarding situations such as personal messages, inappropriate comments, unnecessary physical contact, or private conversations. Teachers' behaviour should reflect respect, equality, and security.

School administrations should send a clear message that any form of sexual or inappropriate behaviour toward children is unacceptable. However, "zero tolerance" should not mean taking action against anyone without investigation. It truly means taking every complaint seriously, following a fair process, ensuring

the safety of the child, and taking appropriate action based on the investigation's findings. Upon receiving a complaint, the school should prevent any circumstances between the accused teacher and the student that could pressure the child or compromise her safety. Any attempt to influence the investigation, intimidate witnesses, or pressure them to withdraw the complaint should be taken seriously.

Parents also need to create an environment of dialogue with their children. If a child feels uncomfortable with the behavior of a teacher or other person, they should listen carefully instead of interrupting. Immediate blame or scolding may cause a child to hide their problems in the future. Parents should regularly ask their children about their experience at school, whether they are afraid or uncomfortable with anyone, and whether anyone is forcing them to do things they don't like. The more comfortable the communication, the more readily children will be able to share their problems.

Today, teachers and students also connect through digital media. Online classes, messaging apps, and social media have made communication easier, but they have also brought new challenges. Schools should establish clear digital codes of conduct. Prioritising institutional channels for official communication between teachers and students, prohibiting private and inappropriate conversations, and establishing clear mechanisms for preserving digital evidence are essential. Children should also be taught that if someone attempts to send inappropriate messages or conversations online, they

should report them to a trusted adult instead of hiding them.

The media should also exercise sensitivity when reporting such incidents. Sensationalism, revealing the identity of the child, or presenting unverified allegations as fact can be detrimental to both justice and the victim. The media's role is not only to highlight the incident but also to question the accountability of the system. Was the complaint heard? Is the child safe? Did the school follow due process? Was the investigation fair? Are institutional deficiencies being addressed to protect children? Such questions make public discourse more meaningful.

If guilt is proven, legal action is necessary, but punishment alone will not completely eliminate the problem. We must change the culture of schools. We must create an environment where children know they will be heard and teachers understand that their rights come with responsibilities. Every school should have a child protection policy, regular awareness programmes, teacher training, a clear complaint process, and communication with parents. Students should be informed of their rights. School inspection systems should also expand beyond mere paperwork to examine actual safety standards.

The incident of molestation or sexual harassment of a student in school is not merely a crime or a case of indiscipline. It is an attack on the very trust that parents rely on to send their children to school. Therefore, it is essential to treat every such complaint with seriousness, sensitivity, and impartiality. We should neither accept every allegation as true without investigation nor suppress every complaint for fear of defamation. The right path is to ensure the safety of the child, conduct an impartial investigation, take legal action if found guilty, and address institutional deficiencies.

A civilized society is defined by how safe it protects its children. A temple of education will only truly be called a temple of learning when it combines dignity with knowledge, compassion with discipline, and accountability with authority. The safety of children transcends the prestige of a school. Suppressing a student's voice does not solve the problem, but rather deepens it.

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

Religion, Reason, And Democracy

DR. SATYAVAN SAURABH

Religion is not merely a matter of worship or rituals in human life. It is deeply rooted in one's faith, culture, morality, tradition, and outlook on life. For thousands of years, religious texts have imparted to society the message of moral values, duty, compassion, restraint, truth, and philanthropy. This is why millions of people read religious texts with reverence and draw inspiration from them in their lives. But faith cannot mean accepting everything written in a book without questioning it, without understanding its context, and without testing it with logic.

The most pressing question today is whether everything written in religious texts should be accepted as literal truth. If a statement bears the imprint of historical circumstances, if it reflects a particular social system, if its meaning has changed in today's context, or if its interpretation promotes discrimination between humans, is it anti-religion to question it? Certainly not. Questioning is the first step to knowledge and the hallmark of a healthy society.

It is a grave mistake to consider religion and critical thinking as incompatible. Faith may be a personal belief, but when the interpretation of a religious idea begins to influence public life, law, education, social relations, or civil rights, public debate on that idea becomes natural and necessary. In a democracy, an idea cannot be exempt from criticism simply because it originates from a religious context.

An important distinction must be made here—criticism of religion and insulting a religious figure are two different things. Questioning a statement in a religious text, its interpretation, or its social impact should not be done with the intention of insulting the dignity of any religious person. Criticism should be directed at an idea, not at a person. Argument should be answered with logic, not emotional outrage.

In our society, we often see a tendency that when a question is raised about something in a religious text, the focus of the discussion shifts from answering the question to the questioner's intentions. They are labeled anti-religion, anti-tradition, or anti-social. This shuts down dialogue and fosters fanaticism. If



an answer to a question is available, it should be presented peacefully. If there are different interpretations of a statement, they should be discussed. And if something existed in a historical context, its context should be explained.

Reading religious texts out of context and context can also create problems. Society thousands of years ago was unlike today's society. The social structure, governance system, education, science, family system, and economic conditions of that time were different. Therefore, to understand the meaning of an ancient statement, it is essential to understand its original context, language, symbols, and the social conditions of that time. A literal interpretation of the same statement in modern times can often lead to assumptions that are completely different from the original context.

Therefore, religious texts should be studied not only with devotion, but also with a view of knowledge, history, language, and philosophy. Devotion inspires humanity, while reason helps us understand the true meaning. A balance of both contributes to a more mature society.

The most sensitive issue arises when an interpretation of a religious statement attempts to justify gender inequality, caste discrimination, untouchability, violence, social exclusion, or hatred against a particular community. Modern democratic society is founded on equality, freedom, dignity, and justice. Therefore, any interpretation that diminishes human dignity is bound to raise questions.

The Constitution also plays a crucial role here. In a diverse country like India, different religions, sects, languages, and traditions coexist. Our social life is governed not by any single religious text, but by the civil rights and duties established by the Constitution. Every citizen has the right to their own religious beliefs, but they must also respect the freedom and equality of others.

Therefore, it is essential to strike a balance between religious freedom and critical thinking. No one should be prevented from expressing their faith, and no one should be allowed to violate the rights of others in the name of their faith.

Another challenge is the arbitrary interpretation of religious texts. Sometimes, the interpreters of religious texts have more influence than the original text itself. Different scholars interpret the same statement differently. Some consider it symbolic, some historical, some spiritual, and some literal. Therefore, to claim that only one interpretation is the ultimate truth is not intellectually sound.

The goal of religious education in society should not only be to teach people what to believe, but also to explain why. Asking questions will not diminish their faith; rather, it will likely deepen their understanding. A faith that fears questions can weaken; but a faith that can face questions becomes more mature and stronger.

Today, in the digital age, this topic has become even more important. In the name of religious texts, incomplete quotes, mis-

translations, and statements taken out of context spread rapidly on social media. People often believe a viral post to be true without even consulting the original text. This leads to religious controversies and increased social tension. Therefore, before objecting to a statement, it is essential to verify whether it actually appears in the original text, its correct translation, and its accompanying context.

The critic also has a responsibility. If they are questioning a statement in a religious text, they should support their arguments with evidence, context, and logic. Deliberately misquoting, insulting followers of a religion, or inciting religious sentiments is not critical thinking. It is merely creating controversy.

Similarly, religious scholars have a responsibility not to mistake criticism for hostility. Society changes, language changes, and questions change. If an old interpretation poses a problem in today's context, reconsidering it may not be a sign of a religion's weakness, but rather a sign of its vitality.

Religious traditions have a long tradition of introspection. Saints, philosophers, and reformers have periodically questioned dogmas. They have attempted to convince society that the fundamental purpose of religion is to unite, cultivate morality, and cultivate compassion, not to separate human beings from each other.

In this context, we must adopt a broad principle—we should not hesitate to accept what strengthens humanity, compassion, truth, justice, and equality; and we should not be afraid to question what appears to be contrary to these values.

This approach should not be limited to any one religion. If we consider it a freedom to question the writings of one religious tradition, then the same freedom should apply to other religious traditions. Selective criticism is not impartiality. True intellectual freedom means that all ideas should be judged equally by logic.

It must also be understood that religious texts are not merely historical documents. They are connected to the sentiments of millions of people. Therefore, restraint in language is essential when discussing them. Tough questions can be asked, but without using derogatory language. Disagreement with an idea can be expressed, but without demeaning its adherents. This is the hallmark of civilized discourse.

Today, India is in particular need of such dialogue. On one hand, religious faith is the foundation of life for a large segment of society, while on the other, scientific thinking, constitutional values, and modern education are expanding. Instead of pitting these two against each other, we must build bridges of dialogue.

If religious literature is studied in schools and universities, it can be explained not only from the perspective of faith, but also through history, sociology, philosophy, literature, and comparative studies. This will help students understand different traditions and develop both tolerance and discernment. Understanding religious diversity does not mean accepting any particular religion; it is a means to understand society.

Ultimately, the question is not whether everything in religious texts is true or false. Such generalizations lead to both extremes. The real need is to understand each statement in its context, purpose, language, and social impact. Draw inspiration from what reinforces timeless moral values; understand what is symbolic as symbolic; and engage in logical and peaceful debate on interpretations that conflict with modern human dignity.

Faith must be respected, but conscience cannot be silenced in the name of faith. Asking questions is not disrespect. Disagreement is not rebellion. Criticism is not hostility. And reconsidering an idea is not a betrayal of one's culture.

If religion makes a person a better human being, then it need not fear questions. True faith is not weakened by rational discourse, but rather grows more mature. Therefore, the need today is not to put any religion on trial, but to test every idea against the touchstone of reason, humanity, the Constitution, and truth.

After all, books are for humans, not humans for books. The purpose of words is to improve life. If the interpretation of a word breeds hatred, discrimination, or injustice among humans, then society has not only the right but also the responsibility to question that interpretation.

There should be faith, there should be devotion, but conscience should also remain alive – because a society that runs away from questions can save tradition, but not progress.

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

J&K Power Tariff

have been around 40%,” the commission said, adding that such an increase would have resulted in a “tariff shock” for consumers.

The regulator factored in Rs 2,420.78 crore in financial support committed by the Jammu and Kashmir government as subsidy under Section 65 of the Electricity Act, 2003.

With the revised tariff, revenue from consumers is expected to rise to Rs 7,854.94 crore, while the remaining gap of Rs 2,420.78 crore will be met through government grant-in-aid, according to the order.

The decision drew criticism from opposition leaders, who said the tariff increase contradicted the government’s earlier promise to provide 200 units of free electricity.

Jammu and Kashmir People’s Conference chief and MLA Handwara Sajad Lone said consumers were being asked to pay more despite waiting nearly two years for the promised benefit.

“People in Jammu and Kashmir will now have to pay more from their pockets for electricity,” Lone said in a post on X, arguing that the 6.83% increase was a shock for consumers who had been promised 200 units of free electricity.

Lone also alleged that increased load allocations in non-metered areas had contributed to higher monthly bills.

In a separate post, Lone said Chief Minister Omar Abdullah, who also holds the power portfolio, had approved the Power Development Department’s proposal for a 5% tariff increase before JERC ultimately approved a higher 6.83% increase.

He said the tariff decision would impose an additional burden of more than Rs 500 crore on consumers.

Peoples Democratic Party leader and MLA Pulwama Waheed Ur Rehman Para also criticised the increase, saying it came at a time when unemployment and inflation were putting pressure on households.

“The government imposed a 6.83% power tariff hike,” Para said, questioning the gap between the government’s election promises of 200 units of free electricity, free gas and free ration and the latest increase in power bills.

The tariff decision comes as Jammu and Kashmir’s power distribution companies continue to face a substantial gap between the cost of supplying electricity and revenue collected from consumers.

The regulator’s decision seeks to distribute that burden between consumers and government support rather than recover the entire deficit through tariffs.

LG Sinha Meets

in J&K.

The meeting was held in New Delhi, with the two leaders discussing matters concerning the Union Territory.

Officials said that LG Sinha also apprised the Prime Minister about various matters concerning Jammu and Kashmir, including the prevailing situation and key issues related to the Union Territory. “Latest developments and the overall security, administrative and developmental scenario of Jammu and Kashmir were also discussed during the meeting,” they added.

LG Attends 10-Year

has since grown into a nationally recognised and internationally engaged centre for management education. He observed that IIM Jammu is now the fifth IIM in the country to hold both AMBA and EFMD accreditation, and it has built academic partnerships with institutions across France, Morocco, South Korea, Greece, the United Kingdom, Germany, Australia, Poland, Sweden, Taiwan and, most recently, Brazil. He said the research output at the institute has also expanded sharply, growing from just two published papers in 2017 to close to 350 this year.

The Lieutenant Governor commended the hard work and a decade of consistent effort under the leadership of Director Professor B.S. Sahay, the faculty and the Board of Governors, describing the institute’s trajectory as a model that other business schools are beginning to look to for inspiration.

“I have seen details of one achievement after another, along with several distinctive initiatives that have become an inspiring example, a role model, for other business schools. I am certain that, in the future, people will remember these achievements as a standard and an ideal, and will seek to emulate them,” he said.

The Lieutenant Governor invoked the founding stories of three of the world’s most respected business schools - Harvard, built on the discipline of case-based learning; Stanford, built on connecting the classroom to real-world enterprise through Silicon Valley; and Wharton, built on mastering the complexities of global capital markets. Each, the Lieutenant Governor observed, succeeded not by trying to be everything, but by committing to one distinctive idea and pursuing it with patience over generations.

The Lieutenant Governor said that IIM Jammu now stands at a similar starting point and the decisions it makes over the coming years will shape its identity for decades to come. He emphasised four priorities for the IIM Jammu.

“A distinctive academic identity should be the priority. Rather than relying primarily on case studies drawn from Western business schools, IIM Jammu should build its own tradition of case writing rooted in the realities of Indian enterprise including the logistical and entrepreneurial challenges unique to Jammu Kashmir and Ladakh. Experiential learning. We need to move education beyond the lecture hall. Every student to undertake a real, tangible project before graduation, whether through the institute’s Entrepreneurship Centre, a policy challenge, or direct engagement with local businesses supported by its Centre for Small Business Development.

Research with a sharp edge should be the focus. Building on the institute’s rapid growth in research output, a deeper focus should be on questions specific to border economies, sustainable development and frontier entrepreneurship, areas where IIM Jammu is uniquely positioned to lead. Placements should be seen as a nation-building exercise. I hope within a decade, IIM Jammu graduates would be recognised for reshaping major companies and founding leading enterprises. Each graduate should be seen as a contributor to India’s goal of becoming a developed nation by 2047,” the Lieutenant Governor said.

He said the real examinations take place in corporate boardrooms, markets and in life itself, where the data is often incomplete, stakeholders have differing opinions and there is no teacher to provide ready-made answers.

“IIM Jammu’s growth must now be converted into new discoveries. IIM Jammu must ask itself what can be done in the fields of administration, sustainable development and entrepreneurship in the economies of border areas. I believe that great institutions are great because, when the nation faces difficult questions, it looks to them for answers. If IIM Jammu continues to move forward with complete confidence over the next ten years, I am certain that its name will be spoken across the world with immense pride and respect,” the Lieutenant Governor said.

On the occasion, the Lieutenant Governor released seven coffee-table books of IIM Jammu.

Padma Shri Dr. Milind Pralhad Kamble, Chairman, Board of Governors (BoG), IIM Jammu; Shri Sriram Dandekar, Former Chairman, BoG, IIM; Shri Anand Kripalau, Member, BoG, IIM Jammu; Prof. B.S. Sahay, Director IIM Jammu; Shri S. Shivakumar, Operating Partner, Advent International; Vice Chancellors of various Universities; Head of Departments, Faculty and students of IIM Jammu; prominent citizens and senior officials of Police and Civil Administration were present.

Rain Brings Brief

and afternoon hours, the MeT said.

According to the evening weather bulletin, Srinagar recorded a maximum temperature of 32.2 degrees Celsius and a minimum of 20.6 degrees Celsius, while Jammu recorded a maximum of 32.7 degrees and a minimum of 24.9 degrees.

Pahalgam recorded 25.5 degrees Celsius as the maximum and 15.4

degrees as the minimum, while Gulmarg remained the coolest among the stations, recording a maximum of 20.8 degrees and a minimum of 11.4 degrees.

Qazigund recorded 30.4 degrees Celsius as the maximum and 18 degrees as the minimum, Kupwara 31 degrees and 17.9 degrees, and Kokernag 30.6 degrees and 17.6 degrees, respectively.

Banihal recorded a maximum of 28.4 degrees Celsius and a minimum of 18.5 degrees, Batote 27.4 degrees and 19 degrees, Katra 31 degrees and 23.5 degrees, and Bhandarwah 29.6 degrees and 18 degrees.

During the 24 hours ending 8:30 am, Pahalgam received 1 mm of rainfall and Jammu 3.2 mm, while Srinagar recorded 0.0 mm. During the period from 8:30 am to 5:30 pm, Pahalgam received 4 mm, Srinagar 0.6 mm and Jammu 0.3 mm of rainfall.

The MeT said the weather is expected to remain mostly fine on August 23, though a few places could receive thundershowers during the early morning and afternoon hours. A short-duration shower is possible at a few places on August 24, while similar conditions are likely on August 25 and from August 26 to 28, mainly towards the afternoon.

From August 23 to 28, the overall weather is expected to remain largely hot and humid, with brief spells of rain and thundershowers at scattered places.

The department has also forecast another spell of light to moderate rain and thundershowers at scattered to many places from August 29 to 31, with brief intense showers likely, particularly in the Jammu division.

The MeT cautioned that localised heavy rainfall could trigger flash floods, mudslides and landslides in vulnerable areas and advised people to exercise caution during periods of intense rainfall.

Risk of high-intensity showers will continue. As such, flash floods are possible in a few spots,” the weather department said.

Farmers have been advised to continue harvesting and other agricultural operations according to local weather conditions.

The MeT also advised orchardists to undertake spraying preferably during the morning hours. In hilly areas, spraying should ideally be completed by late morning, preferably by noon, to minimise the risk of showers developing during the afternoon.

In the plains, spraying can be extended into the afternoon if required, while farmers in hilly areas have been advised to complete the activity by late morning and, where possible, in installments.

The weather department said mostly dry conditions are expected over much of the coming week, but intermittent showers and the possibility of high-intensity rainfall at isolated locations will continue—(KNO)

JERC Introduces

an eight hours duration in a day.

“During peak hours a 20 percent surcharge on energy charges will be applicable for industrial (LTIS, HT industry HTPIU) and commercial (LT non-domestic consumers and general-purpose bulk supply). For all other consumer categories, a 10 percent surcharge during peak hours will be applicable. During solar hours a 20 percent rebate on energy charges will be applicable for all categories,” JERC said.

It also said that the remaining hours not covered under peak hours or solar hours shall be treated as normal hours and shall be billed at the normal energy charge without any ToD surcharge or rebate

The Commission said that the petitioners (JPDCL & KPDCCL) had proposed to modify the existing ToD tariff with certain modifications.

The Commission observes that MoP, GoI under the Electricity (Rights of Consumers) has recommended that the ToD tariff during peak hours would be 20 percent and 10 percent respectively higher than a normal period tariff.

“The surcharge is continued as 20 percent and 10 percent respectively for industrial & commercial consumers and other consumers, respectively. The rebate of 20 percent is applicable for solar hours,” reads the documents.

“The Commission decides that ToD tariff shall be applicable to all consumers, except agricultural consumers, having sanctioned load/contract demand above 10 kW, subject to availability of compatible metering and billing infrastructure,” JERC said

Pertinently, KPDCCL had proposed a ToD tariff for the peak morning and evening hours.

KPDCL in a petition filed before the regulatory authority JERC had proposed a 20 percent hike in ToD tariff during peak hours for all domestic and commercial consumers.

The proposal however had excluded the agriculture sector in accordance with the regulations of the Ministry of Power (MoP)—(KNO)

NIA Court Denies

Farooq. The agency alleges that Farooq, along with another Pakistani operative named Mohd Kamran Ali, contributed to orchestrating the Pulwama attack prior to being neutralized by security forces in separate gunfights.

Furthermore, she is accused of supplying provisions, refuge, and additional logistical backing to the two terrorists and other Jaish-e-Mohammed (JeM) operatives.

The prosecution also asserts that the widely circulated footage of suicide bomber Adil Ahmad Dar, which emerged following the February 14 assault, was filmed at her residence on January 28 and 29.

The court’s judgment followed a review of submissions from both the defense counsel and the National Investigation Agency (NIA).

The defense primarily based its arguments on Jan’s lengthy pretrial detention, the alleged sluggishness of the trial proceedings, and her medical condition. Conversely, the NIA pushed back against the bail request, underscoring the gravity of the allegations, the evidence compiled during the probe, and the constraints imposed by UAPA’s Section 43-D(5).

The defense maintained that Jan has remained in custody for over six years and contended that the protracted nature of the trial rendered her continued detention unjustifiable.

The petition noted that of the 240 prosecution witnesses listed, only 49 had been examined thus far, and the defense argued that at the current rate, the trial could stretch on for many additional years.

It was also claimed that the witnesses who had already testified did not implicate the applicant in the offenses, and that no incriminating items were recovered from her possession.

In addition, the defense invoked her health issues, stating she suffers from persistent dermatological conditions, cervical spondylosis, and chronic headaches requiring specialized care. Jan also asserted that her involvement in the case was “entirely fabricated and lacking any reasonable basis.”

In its rebuttal, the NIA dismissed the plea as unfounded and legally flawed.

“The accused is a highly motivated terror associate involved in a grave and serious offence which she committed and gave effect to in a well-planned manner, reflecting her maturity of mind rather than innocence, indicating that her plea is more like a shield to dodge or dupe the arms of law,” the agency told the court.

The probe agency further detailed that Jan, alongside her father, facilitated a secure haven for JeM militants in their home, supplying them with meals and other essentials.

According to the NIA, she and her family were introduced to the JeM operatives via a neighbor in May 2018. It added that Pakistani terrorists Farooq and Ali arrived at their residence in June 2018, and over time, the militants began visiting regularly, bringing weapons and ammunition.

The agency highlighted that in January 2019, Farooq, bomber Dar, and Sameer Ahmad Dar came to her house bearing sophisticated arms and stayed for an extended period.

The NIA also leaned on digital evidence, including WhatsApp exchanges, voice notes, and photographs retrieved from Farooq’s mobile device following his death.

In its ruling, the court heavily weighted the provisions of Section 43-D(5) of the UAPA, which stipulates that an accused in custody under the relevant chapters cannot be granted bail if the court, upon reviewing the case diary or chargesheet, finds reasonable grounds to believe that the accusations are prima facie true. Citing “sufficient evidence” to establish this threshold, the court

turned down the bail request.

The judge also dismissed the argument that trial delays alone should warrant bail in these circumstances, noting that proceedings are actively underway with witnesses being deposed.

“If the applicant is released on bail, there is every likelihood that she will influence the key witnesses which might hamper the process of justice,” the judge stated.

On the subject of her health, the court concluded that her ailments were not life-threatening and did not necessitate urgent intervention for release, though it directed the jail superintendent to ensure she receives all necessary medical care.

NIA Searches 10

“The case, which originated from FIR No. 0024/2026 registered at Police Station Zakoor, Srinagar, was subsequently re-registered by the NIA as RC-02/2026/NIA/JMU under Section 23 of the Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act, 1967, Sections 7 and 25 of the Arms Act, 1959, and Section 4 of the Explosive Substances Act, 1908,” the statement said, adding “The investigation began following the arrest of an alleged OGW associated with the proscribed terrorist organisation Lashkar-e-Taiba (LeT) during the late-night hours of March 31, 2026, at a naka point. A hand grenade and live ammunition were allegedly recovered from his possession. During the subsequent investigation, Pakistani terrorists allegedly linked to the conspiracy were arrested, while investigators also established the identities and alleged roles of members of the local support network.”

“According to the investigation conducted so far, Pakistan-based handlers allegedly maintained links with local associates who were being used for communication, logistical arrangements, movement and concealment of terrorists, provision of shelter, reconnaissance and other forms of facilitation. Investigators are also examining the financial trail, communication channels, movements of the accused, and the source of arms and explosives to establish the full extent of the alleged network and its activities,” it added.

“The searches conducted today were a part of the continuing investigation into the larger conspiracy and the alleged support mechanism facilitating cross-border terrorism. Further evidence recovered during the searches is being examined and corroborated with other material collected in the case,” the statement said, adding, “The investigation remains ongoing to identify all persons allegedly involved and determine their respective roles in the conspiracy. Further legal action, including arrests or recoveries, may follow based on the evidence and findings emerging during the investigation.”—(KNO)

Modern Apple Grading,

market. Several modern grading facilities have now been established at different locations in the Valley, with some units coming up with government assistance. While such technology was earlier largely associated with large cold-storage and controlled-atmosphere facilities, its increasing availability at smaller and localised units is making mechanised grading accessible to a wider section of growers.

The shift is also expected to reduce the time and labour involved in traditional manual sorting and packing. More systematic handling can help minimise damage to fruit, improve presentation and ensure that apples of similar quality are packed together, factors that can influence buyers and market prices.

“With modern grading lines, apples are sorted and packed in a much more organised manner. The fruit reaches the market in better condition and in less time. Properly graded and well-packed apples naturally attract buyers and can help farmers get better prices,” Basit Ahmad, a grading-line unit holder in Pulwama said.

Growers and entrepreneurs associated with the sector said the benefits extend beyond the farm gate. Improved grading and packing are creating demand for skilled and semi-skilled workers while also generating business for transporters, packaging suppliers, traders and other people associated with the horticulture supply chain.

Azhar Ahmad, owner of a cold-storage facility, said the difference between conventional and modern packing methods was becoming increasingly visible.

“Earlier, growers had to depend largely on manual sorting and packing. It consumed considerable time and labour, while maintaining uniform quality was difficult. With grading lines, the process has become faster, more systematic and efficient,” he said.

He added that the lack of adequate grading infrastructure had previously put Kashmir’s growers at a disadvantage compared to producers in other parts of the country.

“For a long time, Kashmir was behind in terms of modern grading and packing facilities. Even when the quality of the fruit was good, inconsistent grading and packaging affected its market value. With more such units being established, that gap is gradually narrowing,” Ahmad said.

For growers, the technology is also being viewed as an important tool to reduce post-harvest losses and improve market competitiveness. A local apple grower said farmers could no longer depend entirely on traditional practices if they wanted to compete in increasingly organised domestic and international markets.

“Farmers have to adopt modern technology and improve the way their produce is handled after harvesting. Grading lines are an important step in that direction. We are already seeing that properly graded and packed apples receive better attention from buyers,” he said.

Industry stakeholders, meanwhile, maintain that modern grading should be accompanied by improvements across the entire horticulture supply chain, including scientific storage, packaging, transportation, marketing and market linkages.

Experts said standardised grading and packaging could play a crucial role in establishing a stronger identity for Kashmir apples in major domestic markets and eventually expanding their presence in international markets.

They said uniform quality classification would also make it easier for buyers to assess the produce, strengthen consumer confidence and reduce discrepancies in pricing. Better post-harvest management, they added, could ultimately increase the share of value reaching growers.

The expansion of grading infrastructure is therefore being seen not merely as a technological upgrade but as part of a broader transformation of Kashmir’s horticulture sector. With greater investment in modern handling, scientific storage and organised marketing, stakeholders believe the Valley can add more value to its world-renowned apple crop while creating new employment and business opportunities—(KNO)

Dy CM Flags Lack Of

of government is this?”

So the NC government would not want PRI elections to be held only for the elected representatives “to later be ignored, denied respect and not even recognised by the officers,” he told reporters while responding to a question about BJP charging the NC-led government of deliberately delaying the elections to panchayat and urban local bodies.

“We have never said we do not want elections. We have said, give us statehood. They (BJP leadership) tell us it will be given at an appropriate time,” Choudhary said.

Earlier, the government had said the process to hold local bodies elections was underway, and polls would be conducted after the completion of administrative formalities such as voter lists, reservations, and delimitation.

“Today, if we make someone a sarpanch or a DDC (district development council) member, would the officers actually listen to them.

“What is the point of holding such elections,” he asked, adding that the people wanted genuine and meaningful elections, not merely symbolic elections.

Choudhary was speaking to reporters after conducting a surprise inspection of a government hospital here.

Choudhary defended his brother, suspended police officer Vijay Choudhary, in the Enforcement Directorate’s case and termed it “selective targeting.”

“My brother is someone who has fought against militancy and has survived militant attacks,” he said.

Choudhary said that despite his brother’s service for which he should have been rewarded, he was being targeted, and warned that the files would one day be opened and those responsible would have to answer.

The deputy chief minister asserted that he would not be intimidated by the filing of a case against his brother, adding that “every oppression has an end.”

Choudhary, however, said any matter concerning his family should be decided by the judiciary rather than being debated by him in public.

“I would rather leave it to the investigating agencies and the court. I have complete faith in my judiciary,” Choudhary told reporters on the sidelines of his inspection of a government hospital here.

The ED has booked Vijay under the Prevention of Money Laundering Act (PMLA), while an FIR has already been registered against him by the Anti-Corruption Bureau (ACB). The case relates to allegations of managing dozens of assets through benami transactions and money laundering.

The deputy chief minister also criticised the functioning of the BJP and said the party seeks Muslim votes during elections but resorts to “Hindu-Muslim politics” once elections are over, calling it “unfortunate” for Jammu and Kashmir and the country.

He also said there had been significant improvement in hospital management after the formation of the NC-led government, stressing the need to treat doctors and paramedical staff properly and urging people to remain vigilant about these issues.

Choudhary condemned the recent death of a minor girl during an alleged attempt to terminate her pregnancy after she was raped by her school teacher, saying the government would not tolerate any form of violence, injustice or cruelty against children.

Calling the incident “unfortunate and disturbing”, Choudhary said police have already taken action in the case.

“Any injustice or cruelty against girls—or children in general—will not be tolerated,” the deputy chief minister said, asserting that none should assume that they can mistreat and violate anyone with impunity.

A 15-year-old girl from a tribal community was allegedly raped repeatedly by a teacher in her school for several months resulting in pregnancy, and death following a botched abortion, in Chatroo area of Kishtwar district on Thursday. Police have arrested the accused teacher, besides the headmaster of the school and his brother.

“There are no words to adequately condemn what happened,” he said, stressing that the government would never tolerate such incidents.

The deputy chief minister also clarified that the police do not come under the administrative control of the elected Jammu and Kashmir government. However, he said this could not be an excuse for allowing injustice to be committed against people, particularly girls.

“If such things continue to increase, the Omar Abdullah government will not tolerate it. We will go to whatever extent necessary to stop such incidents,” he said, adding that the government would take every step to prevent such acts.

Talking to reporters after conducting a surprise inspection at a government hospital in Jammu, the deputy chief minister further said he has taken strong exception to deployment of girl students at reception counters at the hospital and has ordered immediate corrective measures.

Choudhary said he visited the hospital following complaints that the facility was not being properly managed.

“I came here because there had been complaints of mismanagement. I wanted to see the situation myself,” he said, adding that he has observed several issues and directed the hospital superintendent for urgent rectification.

“I was particularly surprised to see that girls who have come here to study have been made to sit at the reception. That is not their job,” he said.(PTI)

'Issue Show-Cause

places... you have violated the stand of the party,” Ruhullah said, adding that he is ready to answer any such notice.

The Srinagar MP questioned the party’s present political approach, alleging that it had diluted the larger fight for constitutional rights. “We have taken votes from the people. They are missing there. They have weakened the fight themselves. They have diluted it,” he said. “Instead of 370, instead of constitutional rights and guarantees, they have come to statehood and business rules,” he said.

Mehdi said his position was based on the mandate received from the people and not on any personal political interest. “If I wanted to deceive people, I would have changed my language. I am fighting to implement that mandate,” he said, adding that he had received a people’s mandate in addition to the party ticket.

Ruhullah said he had pursued the issue of constitutional guarantees both inside and outside Parliament, including through political advocacy and engagement with opposition parties. “For that, I have strived in Parliament, outside Parliament, on the streets, in Constitution Club, Jantar Mantar. I have tried lobbying with other political parties,” he said.

The Member Parliament said restoration of statehood alone could not resolve the Kashmir issue and argued that constitutional guarantees and protections also needed to be restored. “The status of Kashmir has to be restored according to the wishes and will of the people of J&K, in which the constitutional guarantees and protections have to be restored,” he said.

Turning to the 6.83 per cent electricity tariff hike, Ruhullah questioned the Omar Abdullah-led government over the increase, recalling the NC’s 2024 Assembly election promise of providing 200 units of free electricity. “I will prove it. During the election, we promised people of 200 units of free electricity,” he said.

Mehdi said nearly two years had passed since the elections and questioned the failure to provide the promised free power. “The same chief minister said that he will throw the metres in the river. He couldn’t throw them in the river,” he said. “Instead of giving 200 units for free, as you yourself said, how many per cent did you increase? Six per cent? Six per cent increase, nearly seven per cent increase. Now I will ask the same question.”

The MP said his political fight extended beyond his differences with the NC leadership and included reservation, constitutional rights and what he described as the absence of political character in Jammu and Kashmir. “The fight for the reservation is not over yet. I am also fighting for the reservation,” he said. “The biggest fight is for the constitutional rights which were snatched from us. I feel that the biggest fight is for the political character which is missing. There is no character in our politics.”

Ruhullah criticised what he described as the erosion of political principles and values, alleging that parties make promises before elections and subsequently dilute them after coming to power. “They think that they will tell people one principle and one promise before the election. After the election, they will sell that principle and will violate the promises and will destroy the values. It is because character is missing in politics. The values are missing in politics,” he said.

Mehdi said he wanted a new generation to enter politics with conviction, principles and values. “I want this fight to be fought by the new generation who have the conviction to take this system in their hands and throw it out of the system. I want to bring value, character and principles which we have lost,” he added.

The Member Parliament questioned the accountability and punishment in the Kishtwar rape case, calling the incident alarming and stressing the need for deterrence. “This is a serious matter,” he said, questioning the application of capital punishment and whether it is being applied consistently irrespective of the identity or religion of those involved—(KNO)

Javed Rana reviews implementation of PM Van Dhan Vikas Yojana in J&K

GMK NEWS NETWORK

JAMMU: Minister for Jal Shakti, Forest, Ecology & Environment and Tribal Affairs, Javed Ahmed Rana, Saturday chaired a meeting to review the implementation of the PM Van Dhan Vikas Yojana (VDVY) in Jammu and Kashmir, with focus on formation and functioning of Self Help Groups (SHGs) under the scheme.

The meeting was attended by the Mission Director, NRLM), Director Finance, Tribal Affairs Department and Joint Director Planning, Tribal Affairs Department.

During the meeting, the Minister held detailed discussions on the financial and physical progress achieved under the scheme besides assessing the initiatives undertaken for formation and strengthening of SHGs. He also reviewed the progress of activities aimed at providing livelihood opportuni-



ties to tribal communities through collective enterprise, value addition and better utilisation of locally available forest and other resources.

Javed Rana emphasised that implementation of the PM Van Dhan Vikas Yojana should translate into tangible livelihood and income-generation opportunities for tribal communities, particularly for women and other members associated with SHGs. He directed the concerned officers to accelerate the formation of more SHGs and ensure wider coverage of eligible beneficiaries across tribal areas. He stressed the need

for identifying potential beneficiaries, facilitating their mobilisation and providing the necessary institutional and technical support to enable SHGs to function as sustainable livelihood groups.

The Minister called for close coordination between the Tribal Affairs Department and JKRLM to ensure effective implementation of the scheme. He directed the officers to maintain regular monitoring of both physical achievements and financial utilisation. He stressed that the benefits of the scheme should reach the grassroots level and that all interventions must

be aligned with the objective of empowering tribal communities, strengthening livelihoods and promoting sustainable economic opportunities.

Javed Rana directed the officers to undertake a focused review of progress at regular intervals and address any bottlenecks hampering the implementation of the scheme.

The Minister sought detailed information regarding the training and capacity-building efforts undertaken under the scheme, particularly those targeting tribal artisans and small-scale entrepreneurs in far-flung areas.

Rana asked the officials to intensify the efforts to expand market linkages for tribal products at regional and national level, asking the departments to identify the existing implementation gaps, strengthen inter-agency collaboration and submit fresh proposals in areas where interventions are most urgently needed.

HUDD warns against sale, use of electric shock devices for street dogs

GMK NEWS NETWORK

SRINAGAR: The Housing & Urban Development Department (HUDD), J&K, has taken serious note of the advertisement and sale of an electrically operated shock device being marketed as a "Dog Stick" and promoted for "safety from dogs and wild animals in streets."

The device is being advertised by M/s Gambs Enterprises, Old Bus Stand, Pulwama, Jammu & Kashmir.

The Department has cautioned that electric shock guns, stun devices, electric prods or similar devices shall not be used for stray animals as it violates Sections 3 and 11(1)(a) of the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals Act, 1960, which impose a duty to prevent unnecessary pain or suffering to animals and prohibit treating an animal so as to subject it to unnecessary pain or suffering.

The Department has also drawn attention to the Arms Act, 1959 and Arms

Rules, 2016. Under Section 5 of the Arms Act, sale, transfer, exposure or offer for sale, or possession for sale of firearms or other prescribed classes of arms requires the requisite licence. Contravention of Section 5 may attract Section 25(1)(a) of the Act.

The Arms Rules, 2016 specifically regulate Electronic Disabling Devices (EDDs). Depending upon their statutory classification and specifications, such devices may fall within the restricted or permissible arms categories, and Rule 89(3) provides that EDDs shall be sold only through authorised arms and ammunition dealers holding the requisite licence.

The Department has accordingly taken cognisance of the advertisement by M/s Gambs Enterprises and is examining the matter with the competent authorities to ascertain the legal classification of the device, the authority/licence under which it is being sold and its intended use.

Sankalp Hub organises Awareness Programme at AWC Dairoo

GMK NEWS NETWORK

SHOPIAN: Sankalp Hub for Empowerment of Women, Mission Shakti, Shopian, organised an awareness programme at Anganwadi Centre (AWC), Dairoo, Shopian, with the objective of sensitising women about their rights, government welfare schemes, women-centric initiatives and support services available to them.

During the programme, participants were sensitised about various government schemes and initiatives aimed at promoting the social, economic and overall empowerment of women. The team also elaborated on the objectives of Beti Bachao Beti Padhao (BBBP), emphasising the importance of protecting, educating and empowering the girl child and ensuring equal opportunities for girls.

Detailed awareness was also imparted regarding the Pre-Conception and Pre-Natal Diagnostic

Techniques (PCPNDT) Act, with particular emphasis on preventing sex selection, safeguarding the dignity of the girl child and promoting a healthy gender balance in society.

The participants were further informed about important helpline numbers and support services available to women, enabling them to seek timely assistance in cases involving violence, distress, exploitation or other challenges.

As part of the programme, an interactive grievance-redressal session was conducted, providing women with an opportunity to openly share their concerns, problems and difficulties. The Sankalp Hub team patiently heard their grievances and provided appropriate guidance regarding relevant schemes, services and institutional mechanisms available for resolution. The participants were encouraged to approach the concerned departments and support institutions whenever necessary.

JKEDI Organises Entrepreneurship Orientation Prog in Qalamabad

GMK NEWS NETWORK

SRINAGAR: Under the leadership of Mohammad Younis Malik, Director JKEDI, the Jammu & Kashmir Entrepreneurship Development Institute (JKEDI), organised an Entrepreneurship Orientation Programme (EOP) for the students of Boys Higher Secondary School (BHSS), Qalamabad, Kupwara.

The programme commenced with an engaging brainstorming session on "Identifying Opportunities", encouraging students to look at challenges around them as potential opportunities for innovation and enterprise. The discussion soon developed into a fruitful debate on

why entrepreneurship could be the way forward for the youth, encouraging students to think beyond conventional employment and explore entrepreneurship as a means of creating value and employment.

The second part of the programme featured an interactive business simulation exercise, conducted by seasoned JKEDI faculty, including Dr Sameer Jan Bhat Teaching Associate, Dr Mohammad Furkan Khan, Assistant Faculty and Dr Irem Hussainie, Assistant Faculty. The simulation provided students with practical exposure to business decision-making, teamwork, problem-solving, opportunity assessment and market-oriented thinking.

OFFICE OF THE CHILD DEVELOPMENT PROJECT OFFICER, POSHAN PROJECT GANDERBAL.

ADDRESS: ARAMPORA ROAD DUDERHAMA GANDERBAL | PH. NO. 0194-2416002

Subject: -- Merit list of the applicants for the Post of Sahayikas (AWHs) applied in pursuance of Advertisement Notice No. 04 CDPO, Gbl of 2026 dated 27-06-2026.															
S. No.	Name of the AWC with Panch Ward/ M-Ward	Panchayat Halqa/ M-Ward	Name of the Honorary post	Particulars of the Applied candidate	Form S. No.	DOB	Qualification	Basic qualification Required	Marks obtained	Percentage in Basic qualification	points	Additional 2 points in case candidate of Ex AWH	Total points	Remarks	Final Remarks
1	Babawayail Bala-7	Babawayil	Sahayika (AWH)	Gul Pari D/O Mohd Yaseen Khan R/O Babawayil Bala	2	05-04-1998	8th	Matric	0	0.00	0.00	2	2.00	Voluntarily working as AWH since last Two years	Eligible
2	Wanipora, Saloora 13	Wanipora	Sahayika (AWH)	Aamena Akhter W/O Ishtaq Ahmad Bhat R/O Wanipora	21	04-03-1991	9th	Matric	0	0	0	0	0.00	Eligible	Eligible
3	Manzampora, Saloora 16	Saloora-B	Sahayika (AWH)	Rehana Akhter W/O Akhter Mohi Ud Din Rather R/O Saloora	12	05-05-1987	Matric	Matric	188/ 500	37.60	37.60	0	37.60	Over-age	Not eligible
4			Sahayika (AWH)	Tabsum Hassan W/O Sheikh Nisar Ali R/O Saloora	20	10-04-1987	10+2	Matric	211/ 500	42.00	42.00	0	42.00	Over-age	Not eligible
5			Sahayika (AWH)	Khushboo Ahmad W/O Siraj Ud Din Tantary R/O Saloora	22	10-10-1997	10+2	Matric	280/ 500	56	56	0	56.00	Eligible	Eligible
6	A-1 Beehama-A	Beehama	Sahayika (AWH)	Dilshada W/O Mehraj Ud Din Rather R/O Beehama	16	25-03-1990	9th	Matric	0	0	0	2	2.00	Voluntarily working as AWH since last 6 months	Eligible
7	A-1 Beehama-F	Beehama	Sahayika (AWH)	Arifa Bano W/O Mushtaq Ahmad Rather R/O Beehama	18	08-01-1990	9th	Matric	0	0	0	2	2.00	Voluntarily working as AWH since last 8 months	Eligible
8	Wani Mohalla, Nunnar 8	Nunnar	Sahayika (AWH)	Shahnaza Karim W/O Mehraj Ud Din Najar R/O Nunner	11	03-08-1990	10+2	Matric	174/ 500	34.80	34.80	2	36.80	Voluntarily working as AWH since last one years	Eligible
9	Nowpora, Tullamulla 5	Tullamul-la-B	Sahayika (AWH)	Sumaya Ali W/O Javid Ahmad Lone R/O Tullamulla	5	05-11-1992	10+2	Matric	199/ 500	39.80	39.80	0	39.80	Eligible	Eligible
10			Sahayika (AWH)	Zahida Nabi W/O Ajaz Ahmad Bhat R/O Tullamulla	8	15-10-1990	8th	Matric	0	0.00	0.00	2	2.00	Voluntarily working as AWH since last one years	Not eligible
11	Shah Mohalla, Ringil 3	Ringil	Sahayika (AWH)	Parveena Hassan W/O Mohammad Amin Ahanger	6	15-02-1989	10+2	Matric	235/ 500	47.00	47.00	2	49.00	Voluntarily working as AWH since last one years	Eligible
12	Kastoripora 6	Hatbura	Sahayika (AWH)	Neelofar Jan W/O Showkat Ahmad Ganie R/O Kastoripora	13	01-12-1989	10+2	Matric	248/ 500	49.60	49.60	2	51.60	Voluntarily working as AWH since last one years	Eligible
13	Hajam Moh, Takiya Busserbugh 9	Busserbugh	Sahayika (AWH)	Tajallie Tabsum W/O Azad Ahmad Shah R/O Takiya Busserbugh	24	10-12-1989	9th	Matric	0	0.00	0.00	2	2.00	Voluntarily working as AWH since last 6 months	Not eligible
14	Tang Mohalla, Busserbugh 5	Busserbugh	Sahayika (AWH)	Rafia Bano W/O Farooq Ahmad Reshi R/O Busserbugh	19	11-11-1991	9th	Matric	0	0	0	2	2.00	Voluntarily working as AWH since last one years	Eligible
15	Mukdam Mohalla, Gundirehman 7	Harran	Sahayika (AWH)	Chesfeeda Bano W/O Ishfaq Ahmad Malla R/O Gundi Rehman	23	17-11-1990	8th	Matric	0	0.00	0.00	2	2.00	Voluntarily working as AWH since last 6 months	Eligible

Subject: - Selection list of candidates for the Post of Sahayikas (AWHs) in AWCs of Poshan Project Ganderbal.													
The below proposed selection list of candidates who have applied for the post of Sahayika (AWH) in pursuance of Advertisement Notice No. 04 CDPO, Gbl of 2026 dated 27-06-2026 in respect of Poshan Project Ganderbal is hereby published for the information of all concerned/general public. Objection if any, with regard to the proposed selection of the candidate(s) be submitted with in a period of 07 days from the date of issuance of this notice in the office of undersigned. No appeal/ objection will be accepted after the laps of stipulated period.													
S. No.	Name of the AWC	Panchayat Halqa / M-Ward	Particulars of the applied candidates	Marital Status	Date of Birth	Qualification	Basic Qualification Required	Marks Obtained	%age in Basic Qualification	Additional points In case of candidate of Ex. AWH	Total Points	Remarks	
1	Babawayail Bala-7	Babawayil	Gul Pari D/O Mohd Yaseen Khan R/O Babawayil Bala	05-04-1998	8th	Matric	0	0.00	0.00	2	2.00	Voluntarily working as AWH since last two years	
2	Wanipora, Saloora 13	Wanipora	Aamena Akhter W/O Ishtaq Ahmad Bhat R/O Wanipora	04-03-1991	9th	Matric	0	0	0	0	0.00	Eligible	
3	Manzampora, Saloora 16	Saloora-B	Khushboo Ahmad W/O Siraj Ud Din Tantary R/O Saloora	10-10-1997	10+2	Matric	280/ 500	56	56	0	56.00	Eligible	
4	A-1 Beehama-A	Beehama	Dilshada W/O Mehraj Ud Din Rather R/O Beehama	25-03-1990	9th	Matric	0	0	0	2	2.00	Voluntarily working as AWH since last 6 months	
5	A-1 Beehama-F	Beehama	Arifa Bano W/O Mushtaq Ahmad Rather R/O Beehama	08-01-1990	9th	Matric	0	0	0	2	2.00	Voluntarily working as AWH since last 8 months	
6	Wani Mohalla, Nunnar 8	Nunnar	Shahnaza Karim W/O Mehraj Ud Din Najar R/O Nunner	03-08-1990	10+2	Matric	174/ 500	34.80	34.80	2	36.80	Voluntarily working as AWH since last Two years	
7	Nowpora, Tullamulla 5	Tullamulla-B	Sumaya Ali W/O Javid Ahmad Lone R/O Tullamulla	05-11-1992	10+2	Matric	199/ 500	39.80	39.80	0	39.80	Eligible	
8	Shah Mohalla, Ringil 3	Ringil	Parveena Hassan W/O Mohammad Amin Ahanger	15-02-1989	10+2	Matric	235/ 500	47.00	47.00	2	49.00	Voluntarily working as AWH since last one years	
9	Kastoripora 6	Hatbura	Neelofar Jan W/O Showkat Ahmad Ganie R/O Kastoripora	01-12-1989	10+2	Matric	248/ 500	49.60	49.60	2	51.60	Voluntarily working as AWH since last one years	
10	Hajam Moh, Takiya Busserbugh 9	Busserbugh	Tajallie Tabsum W/O Azad Ahmad Shah R/O Takiya Busserbugh	10-12-1989	9th	Matric	0	0.00	0.00	2	2.00	Voluntarily working as AWH since last 6 months	
11	Tang Mohalla, Busserbugh 5	Busserbugh	Rafia Bano W/O Farooq Ahmad Reshi R/O Busserbugh	11-11-1991	9th	Matric	0	0	0	2	2.00	Voluntarily working as AWH since last one years	
12	Mukdam Mohalla, Gundirehman 7	Harran	Chesfeeda Bano W/O Ishfaq Ahmad Malla R/O Gundi Rehman	17-11-1990	8th	Matric	0	0.00	0.00	2	2.00	Voluntarily working as AWH since 6 months	

DIPK-4880-26
DT: 22/08/2026

Sd/=
Child Development Project Officer,
Poshan Ganderbal.

PUBLIC NOTICE

I, Aijaz Hamid Lone, S/o Abdul Hamid Lone, R/o Khargam, Pattan, District Baramulla, have lost my Original B.Tech Certificate in Electronics and Communication Engineering (YEAR 2017, under Roll No: ECE-1353), awarded by the Islamic University of Science and Technology (IUST), Awantipora. Now I am applying for the issuance of a Duplicate Copy of the said certificate. Any person having any objection to the issuance of the duplicate certificate may report the same to the Department of Examination, Islamic University of Science and Technology (IUST), Awantipora, within 7 (seven) days from the date of publication of this notice, no objection will be heard after that.

Aijaz Hamid Lone
S/o Abdul Hamid Lone
R/o Khargam, Pattan, District Baramulla

Football: Hull City stun Manchester United on return to Premier League



IAN S

HULL: Hull City on Saturday pulled off a miraculous win over Manchester United on their return to the Premier League after a decade. The Tigers, who are playing English top-flight football for the first time since 2016-17, beat the 13-time winners 2-0 with goals from Semi Ajayi and Nampalys Mendy at the MKM Stadium.

Ajayi opened the scoring sheet in the 17th minute with his strike from close range after a corner kick. The joy doubled when club-record signee Mendy scored on his debut in the 38th minute from another set piece. This time, Regan Slater set things up for the French-born Senegalese defender to smash the other into the back of the net, hitting the Red Devils with a double whammy.

The side was bolstered after Marcus Rashford was handed the No.9 shirt on his return from Barcelona, where he was on loan. However, the England international started on the bench and came on only after they were 0-2 down, as he failed to inspire a comeback.

Not many gave Hull a chance, who survived relegation from the Championship in 2024-25 only on goal difference, but then turned things around next year after a stellar run in the Championship in 2025-26. They won the Championship playoff final by beating Middlesbrough earlier this year.

Defender Ajayi reflected on the historic win. "Yeah, it was amazing. It kind of capped off a really good start that we had. We had a couple of chances before that, which we didn't manage to put away, but that one put us in the lead of the game, gave us something to protect but also to build on, so I was buzzing to get the goal that put us on the way and get the three points," he told TNT Sports.

The loss puts question marks over the Red Devils and their preparations for the Premier League. They last won the English title in 2012-13 under Sir Alex Ferguson, and their recent disaster leaves them plenty of work to do if they have to challenge for the title against the likes of current holders Arsenal and Manchester City.

United boss Carrick was confident the loss won't end things for them. "We have a bit to improve on; it was never going to be perfect today, but I think, you know, going behind and giving ourselves a lot to do makes it more difficult, typical of one of those games of a newly promoted team at home...After that, we had moments, we had opportunities, we just didn't have that spark to put them away or create any more, so bitterly disappointed with the result today, but it won't knock us," he told TNT Sports after the game.

'The game is far from over': Shoriful backs Bangladesh to bounce back against Australia



IAN S

MACKAY: Bangladesh pacer Shoriful Islam believes his team are still firmly in the second Test despite a difficult opening day against Australia, insisting that their chance to turn the contest around will come when they bowl again.

Shoriful was the stand-out performer for Bangladesh on Saturday, claiming 6-35 as Australia reached 165/8 at stumps on Day 1 after bowling the visitors out for just 64 earlier in the day.

"The message in the dressing room was that the game is far from over and our turn to bowl is coming up. We are still well in the game. InshaAllah, we will try to make sure the entire second innings belongs to us," Shoriful said after the day's play, as quoted by The Daily Star.

Australia had earlier been in complete control after Mitchell Starc produced a devastating opening spell, taking five wickets in just 22 deliveries before finishing with figures of 6/12. Pat Cummins claimed three wickets, and Josh Hazlewood one as Bangladesh were dismissed in only 34 overs.

However, Bangladesh hit back through Shoriful, who produced an equally impressive spell with the ball. His six-wicket haul included a five-for that was the second-fastest by a Bangladesh bowler in Test cricket.

The left-arm pacer also became the leading wicket-taker for Bangladesh on the day, while his contribution with the bat was limited to 14 runs as he top-scored for his side.

Shoriful said his personal achievement of claiming his first five-wicket haul was pleasing, but insisted that a Bangladesh victory would mean far more.

"Alhamdulillah, everyone feels good getting their first five-for. But I'll feel best if we win the match, because we lost that previous one. I'm not overthinking or excessively celebrating just because I got five wickets. If we win the match, I'll be very happy," he said.

Bangladesh had Australia reeling at 41/3 before Steve Smith and Cameron Green combined for a 77-run partnership off 112 balls.

Shoriful eventually broke the stand by trapping Smith LBW, before Bangladesh struck four more times in a space of just 14 balls to reduce Australia to 148/8.

Green and Nathan Lyon then steadied the hosts, putting together an unbeaten 17-run partnership to take Australia to 165/8 at the close.

Despite Bangladesh's batting collapse, Shoriful said Australia had also struggled against the moving ball and backed his teammates to respond in their second innings.

"It was just a bad day for us. Not just for us. Look at them, they are struggling too. InshaAllah, we will bounce back strongly in the next innings," he said.

The 25-year-old also explained how the conditions at Mackay helped the fast bowlers, with the wind adding to the movement available with the new ball.

"We were bowling from that end where the wind was against us, which helped the ball swing a bit more. With the new ball, it was consistently swinging for quite a long time, around 15 to 20 overs. They capitalised on that advantage. In the next innings, our batters will try to cover that up," he said.

Australia, who trail 1-0 in the two-match series after Bangladesh's historic win in Darwin, currently hold a 101-run lead with two wickets remaining on a surface that has offered significant assistance to the fast bowlers.

SPORTS

2nd Test: We are trying to improve and get some runs and take 20 wickets, says de Silva

IAN S

COLOMBO: Sri Lanka captain Dhananajaya de Silva has called on his fast bowlers to raise their game and bolster the side's confidence as the hosts aim to replicate India's template from Galle to square the series when the second game begins at the SSC Ground on Sunday.

Sri Lanka suffered a 165-run loss in Galle and are eyeing a turnaround to get crucial 12 World Test Championship (WTC) points. "It's about putting runs on the board. That's what India did (at Galle). For the first two days they batted and got 460 runs. We are trying to improve and get some runs and take 20 wickets.

"We are one down and disappointed. Here we need to play well from the outset. Even though we are short on experience, we have a lot of talent. A lot of players have performed well in the Test and 'A' team. The pitch is quite dry and will be good for batting in the first two days. In terms of combination, we will have the same - two seamers and two spinners," de Silva said in the pre-match press conference.

Quizzed on squad changes for the second Test, a debut for opener Kamil Mishara is on the cards, apart from a potential shuffle in the pace bowling department. "He scored a hundred in a T20 last week; if you followed him in the last few months, he has scored well. We are also looking at a left-arm pacer, maybe Vishwa Fernando," de Silva revealed.

A recurring point of concern for Sri Lanka has been the lack of high-pace options and outright match-winning spells from their seamers on home soil. De Silva admitted the current squad remains limited in options beyond Lahiru Kumara and lead seamer Asitha Fernando.

"Even with Lahiru Kumara, we have tried very hard to get him to play injury-free. At the moment, given our resources, Lahiru Kumara is the best match to partner Asitha. Asitha's line and length are perfect, and Lahiru Kumara has the pace. With the resources we have now, these are the best players.

"I'd also like for there to be two or three bowlers who can bowl at more than 140kph, but unfortunately we only have one bowler like that (in the Test set-up). For now I haven't been given a huge plan about who we could bring into the Test set-up. I'm hoping we will produce more cricketers like that in future."

He further emphasised that deploying two fast bowlers remains central to his ideal Test playing eleven. "Every match we've played under me, we've had two pace bowlers, whereas in the past, we would only bowl one. I believe pacers have a role to play in Sri Lanka. If your fast bowlers can get wickets here, they can get wickets anywhere. That's something we have to learn quickly.

"Foreign pace bowlers have taken five wickets in Galle, for instance, but recently, none of our seamers have done that at Galle or SSC. Our fast bowlers lack that confidence. If they can raise their game a little bit - (by) a few percent - we can move forward better as a team," he concluded.



'We have to be at our best from first match': Ludhiana Lions' Arshdeep Singh ahead of Sher-e-Punjab T20 League

IAN S

CHANDIGARH: The excitement is building up as the Sher-e-Punjab T20 League 2026 is all set to begin on August 30 at the I.S. Bindra Stadium in Chandigarh. Six teams will battle it out for the coveted title, with some of Punjab's finest cricketing talent set to take centre stage.

Among the teams in the competition are the Ludhiana Lions, who have made a major statement by picking India's left-arm pace sensation Arshdeep Singh as their marquee player. The fast bowler is delighted to be part of the tournament and is looking forward to representing the Lions in what promises to be an exciting season.

Speaking about the tournament and his preparations, Arshdeep said, "It feels great to be part of the Sher-e-Punjab T20 League. There is a lot of excitement around the tournament, and I am really looking forward to being part of the Ludhiana Lions and this journey.

"The preparations have been very good so far. We have spent a lot of time working on our skills, understanding our roles and preparing for different match situations. Now, the main focus is to take that confidence from the training ground into the matches," he said.

Arshdeep also highlighted the positive atmosphere within the Ludhiana Lions camp, with players pushing each other during the preparation sessions.

"Everyone has been very serious during the practice sessions. There is healthy competition within the squad, and that is always a good sign for any team. We have also worked on different match situations because T20 cricket can change very quickly. One over, one partnership or one wicket can change the entire game, so the aim is to be ready for every situation and make the right decisions under pressure," he added.

With several quality players expected to feature in the tournament, Arshdeep believes the competition will be intense from the very beginning. However, he feels the key will be to stay focused on each game rather than looking too far ahead.

"The competition is going to be tough because every team has quality players. There are no easy games in T20 cricket, so we will have to be at our best from the first match. We don't want to look too far ahead. The focus will be on taking one game at a time, executing our plans and continuing to improve as the tournament progresses. If we can stay consistent and play according to our plans, hopefully we can have a good campaign," Arshdeep said.

The India pacer also spoke about the importance of the Sher-e-Punjab T20 League in providing a platform for young cricketers from the state. With youngsters getting an opportunity to share the dressing room with experienced players, Arshdeep believes the tournament can play an important role in shaping the next generation of Punjab cricketers.



2nd Test: My job is to win trophies, not views and likes, says India head coach Gambhir

IAN S

COLOMBO: India head coach Gautam Gambhir dismissed concerns over team rankings and heightened media scrutiny, adding that his sole priority is winning trophies rather than acting the popularity contest as his side prepare for the second Test against Sri Lanka, starting at the SSC Ground on Sunday.

"My job is to win trophies, not views and likes. That's all I believe in and that is the difference between me and everyone," Gambhir told reporters in a pre-match press conference.

He also rejected that India has been struggling in Tests due to the ongoing transition period, which has led to them being ranked fourth in the format. "Not at all. We are not struggling that much. Rankings do not matter. I think we are going through a transition and I am sure that people sitting in the press box and in the commentary box know that we are going through a transition.

"Despite of that, yes, there will be blips, ups and downs. But I thought that since the last one year after the England tour, I think we have played reasonably consistent cricket and Test cricket as well. So I think you guys can go by the ranking, but we don't because we know that wherever we are heading, we are heading in the right direction."

Gambhir also reflected on discussions around player workload management and his alignment with the selection committee head Ajit Agarkar, who's with the team in Colombo, to ensure core players remain available for important assignments.

"We have heard discussion about everything. It's not with BCCI, but overall that we want our best players to be playing as much cricket as possible and it's good for Indian cricket as well because if there is continuity and if we can put our best players on the path as regularly as we can, it is only going to help us get the results as well.

"I wish I could talk and tell you about the conversations only that we - me and the chairman of selectors have. It's only about how we want to move forward with Indian cricket and what is important and what are the right decisions to make for the betterment of Indian cricket and all those things.



INOX SRINAGAR

MOVIE LIST

23 August 2026, Sunday

IRUMUDI
(TELUGU WITH ENGLISH SUBTITLE) (U/A)
09:30 AM

AWARAPAN 2
(HINDI) (U/A 16+)*
12:20 PM 03:10 PM 06:00 PM
HINDI ATMOS
10:55 AM 04:40 PM 07:30 PM

INSIDIOUS: OUT OF THE FURTHER
(HINDI) (A)
04:05 PM
ENGLISH WITH ENGLISH SUBTITLES
10:55 AM 08:20 PM

SPIDER-MAN: BRAND NEW DAY*
(3D ENGLISH ATMOS WITH ENGLISH SUBTITLES) (U/A 13+)
01:45 PM

PAW PATROL: THE DINO MOVIE
(ENGLISH WITH ENGLISH SUBTITLES) (U7+)
06:20 PM

BETHLEHEM KUDUMBA UNIT
(MALAYALAM WITH ENGLISH SUBTITLES) (U/A 13+)
01:05 PM

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