

Good Morning

Kashmir

17th
Year Of Publication

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Milad-un-Nabi (SAW) eve

Dargah Hazratbal Glows With Lights, Prayers

REHAN QAYOOM



SRINAGAR: Thousands of devotees gathered at Hazratbal on Tuesday evening ahead of Eid-e-Milad-un-Nabi (SAW), filling the shrine and adjoining areas with spiritual fervour.

Families carrying prayer mats, elderly devotees and young men and women made their way towards the shrine, adding to the growing crowds where special prayers, durood-o-azkar, naats and religious gatherings continued through the night.

For people across Kashmir, the intervening night of August 25 and 26 is more than a date on the calendar; it is a night of remembrance and devotion.

The scene is familiar to generations of Kash-

miris: roads filled with devotees, mosques glowing with lights, families arriving from far-off areas and people walking towards Hazratbal as the night deepens.

Mohammad Salam Dar, a devotee in his 70s, said that it was difficult to explain what Hazrat-

bal means to him on this night. "People come with love in their hearts and prayers on their lips," he said.

Abdul Jabbar, another devotee, said the gathering reminded people of the values associated with the Prophet's life. "We come

here not only to pray, but to remember his teachings of mercy, patience, compassion and brotherhood," he said.

As the evening progressed, the atmosphere around Hazratbal changed visibly. The hum of vehicles mixed with the

● P-06

LG Grooms People On Milad-Un-Nabi (SAW)

GMK NEWS NETWORK

SRINAGAR: Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha has extended his greetings to the people on the eve of Milad-un-Nabi,

marking the birth anniversary of Prophet Muhammad.

In a message the Lieutenant Governor said: "On the blessed occasion of Milad-un-Nabi, I extend my heartfelt greetings and best wishes to everyone.

The life and teachings of Prophet Muhammad remain

an eternal beacon of peace, equality, and compassion for all humankind. On this sacred day, let us pledge to live by his values of love, kindness, and universal brotherhood and work together to foster a more harmonious, inclusive and united society."

Warming High-Altitude Zones Put J&K Glaciers At Greater Risk: Study

Researchers Call For Stronger Climate Monitoring, Early-Warning Systems In Himalayas

SAJID RAINA



SRINAGAR: Climate change is increasing the vulnerability of the Himalayan region, with rising temperatures, changing snow patterns and accelerating glacier retreat posing growing risks to water security and climate-induced hazards in Jammu and Kashmir,

according to a new study.

The study, published in 2026 and based on long-

term observations and climate projections, found a significant rise in mean

annual temperatures across several parts of the Himalayas since the early 20th century.

The researchers used Climatic Research Unit (CRU) observational data covering 1901-2020 and Coupled Model Intercomparison Project Phase 6 (CMIP6) climate models to examine historical and projected

● P-06

'Speaks From Bedrooms'

NC MP Hits Back At Opposition

WARIS FAYAZ



SRINAGAR: National Conference MP Choudhary Ramzan said the Jantar Mantar protest over the restoration of statehood had drawn national attention to the issues being faced by the people of Jammu and Kashmir.

Speaking with reporters in Handwara, the MP said people across the country were now aware of what Jammu and Kashmir had faced and what it had lost over the years.

Taking a dig at the opposition, Ramzan said its criticism of the government was largely disconnected from

the realities on ground.

"What the opposition says is just from their bedrooms," he said.

He said J&K is currently going through immense challenges and several issues were beyond the government's immediate control.

However, he expressed confidence that the situation would change and the people of J&K would see better days ahead—(KNO)

In Kashmir

88.8% Of Homes Near Apple Orchards Have No Pesticide Buffer Zone: Study

UMAISAR GULL GANIE



SRINAGAR: A new study by researchers has found that nearly 90 per cent of households located near apple orchards in Kashmir have no buffer zone separating their homes from pesticide-treated land, leaving them exposed to chemical drift.

The study published in the International Journal of Social Impact, surveyed 509 households across all ten districts of the Valley, developing a compos-

ite Residential Proximity Index (RPI) based on six indicators: distance from orchards, presence of buffer zones, pesticide storage practices, disposal methods, awareness of pesticide toxicity,

and post-spray health symptoms.

The study found that 41.06 per cent of surveyed households were located within just 200 metres of orchards, a distance the authors

● P-06

PSC Pushes Panic Button On Recruitment Rules

Calls Them Obsolete, Redundant; Seeks Their Urgent Revision

GMK NEWS NETWORK

SRINAGAR: Terming the existing recruitment rules as "obsolete" and "redundant," the Jammu and Kashmir Public Service Commission (JKPSC) has recommended their urgent revision.

In its Annual Report for 2025-26, the Commission expressed serious concern over what it described as decades-old recruitment rules of government departments. "Recruitment Rules

of most of the State Government Departments framed decades ago are very old, outdated, obsolete and have become redundant and require their revisions and updating to keep pace with the fast-changing social, economic and technological scenario, as well as efficiency and expertise required for handling assignments of complex nature in view of the diversification and specialization in the field of governance and

● P-06

Assures Teachers Of Support

CM Calls For Shared Responsibility To Shape Future Of J&K Children

GMK NEWS NETWORK



SRINAGAR: Chief Minister Omar Abdullah Tuesday said that the responsibility of shaping the future of our children cannot be placed on teachers alone, stressing that the Government, parents and teachers must work together to prepare children for a rapidly changing world.

Addressing a one-day Education Conference organized by the

J&K Teachers Forum at Sher-i-Kashmir International Convention Centre (SKICC), the Chief

Minister said teachers play a crucial role in determining the future of children, but placing the entire responsibility on them would be unfair and add unnecessary pressure to an already demanding profession.

The conference, themed "Child is Our Priority", brought together educators, researchers, policymakers and teachers to deliberate on key issues confronting the education sector, ● P-06

No More Power Tariff Hike During My Tenure: CM Assures People

WARIS FAYAZ

TANGMARG: Assuring that Jammu and Kashmir won't see any further power tariff hike during his tenure, Chief Minister Omar Abdullah on Tuesday said that the latest revision was imposed out of compulsion and not by choice.

Addressing a gathering here in North Kashmir, CM Omar, defended the tariff revision and hit back at opposition parties, saying

● P-06

Three Held With Grenades, HM Posters In Shopian

GMK NEWS NETWORK

SHOPIAN: Security forces on Tuesday arrested three persons during a naka-checking operation in South Kashmir's Shopian district and recovered two hand grenades and five posters allegedly bearing Hizbul Mujahideen (HM) markings.

An official said that the trio was apprehended along with a motorcycle during the naka-checking operation.

He identified them as Junaid Ahmad Dar, Amir Yousif and Junaid Muzaffer, all residents of

● P-06

'Will Answer In Few Days' Aga Ruhullah On Farooq Abdullah's Resignation Remark

WARIS FAYAZ



TANGMARG: Srinagar MP Aga Syed Ruhullah Mehdi on Tuesday said he would respond in the coming days to National Conference president Dr Farooq Abdullah's call for his resignation, while maintaining that he holds the veteran leader in high regard.

Speaking with reporters, Ruhullah, said it is not possible that Farooq Abdullah asks him for something and he doesn't give it to him. "It is not possible that I send him

back empty-handed".

Ruhullah was responding to a query on Dr Farooq remark that he should resign from the Lok Sabha and seek a fresh mandate from the people.

"He has asked for something at this age. ● P-06

CM Omar Abdullah extends Eid-e-Milad-un-Nabi greetings



GMK NEWS NETWORK

SRINAGAR: Chief Minister Omar Abdullah Tuesday extended warm greetings to the people of Jammu and Kashmir on the auspicious occasion of Eid-e-Milad-un-Nabi (SAW), marking the birth anniversary of Prophet Muhammad (Peace Be Upon Him).

In his message, the Chief Minister said the life and teachings of the Holy Prophet (SAW) offer a timeless beacon of peace, compassion, equality, tolerance and brotherhood for humanity. He called upon people to imbibe these values in their daily lives and work towards building a more harmoni-

ous, inclusive and compassionate society.

“Eid-e-Milad-un-Nabi (SAW) reminds us of the timeless message of the Prophet (SAW), rooted in kindness, tolerance and service to humanity. Let us dedicate ourselves to following this noble path and promote unity, brotherhood and mutual respect across all sections of society,” the Chief Minister said.

The Chief Minister also prayed for peace, prosperity and well-being of the people of Jammu and Kashmir, expressing hope that the auspicious occasion would further strengthen communal harmony, mutual understanding and a shared spirit of service across the region.

Eid-e-Milad-un-Nabi (S.A.W) Div Com Kashmir extends warm greetings

GMK NEWS NETWORK

SRINAGAR: Divisional Commissioner Kashmir, Anshul Garg, extended warm and heartfelt greetings to the people of Kashmir on the auspicious occasion of Eid-e-Milad-un-Nabi (S.A.W.), commemorating the blessed birth anniversary of Prophet Muhammad (S.A.W.).

In his message, the Divisional Commissioner prayed that this sacred occasion brings peace, prosperity, happiness and well-being to all. He emphasized the enduring values of compassion, brotherhood, tolerance and mutual respect that the occasion inspires.

Shri Garg also expressed hope that Eid-e-Milad-un-Nabi (S.A.W) would further strengthen communal harmony, unity and peaceful coexistence across the region, fostering a spirit of mutual understanding and goodwill among all sections of society.

DC Shopian calls for strict COTPA compliance

GMK NEWS NETWORK

SHOPIAN: Deputy Commissioner (DC) Shopian, Shishir Gupta, Thursday chaired a meeting of the COTPA District Level Coordination Committee (DLCC) to review measures for effective implementation of tobacco control laws and curbing tobacco use in the district.

The meeting held detailed discussions on the enforcement of the Cigarettes and Other Tobacco Products Act (COTPA), prevention of tobacco use among youth and strengthening awareness regarding the harmful effects of tobacco consumption.

He stressed upon the concerned departments to constitute market-checking committees headed by the respective Tehsildars for regular inspections and strict enforcement of tobacco control provisions.

He further directed that the sale of tobacco products within 100 metres of educational institutions be strictly prohibited, with regular inspections to ensure compliance. The concerned officers were asked to take necessary action against violators as per the provisions of law.

The DC called for coordinated efforts by all stakeholders to ensure effective implementation of COTPA and create a tobacco-free and healthier environment for children and youth.

The meeting was attended by Additional Deputy Commissioner, Dr. Zakir Hussain Faaz; SSP Shopian, Rameez Rashid; CMO, Dr. Salma Bhat; DHO, Dr. Shafkat Khan; BMOs; representatives from the Directorate of Health Services, Kashmir, and other concerned officers.

MLA B'pora reviews employment generation, livelihood promotion

GMK NEWS NETWORK

BANDIPORA: Member of Legislative Assembly (MLA) for Bandipora Constituency, Nizamuddin Bhat, chaired a departmental review meeting at the Conference Hall, Mini Secretariat Bandipora, to assess the progress of various departments and initiatives aimed at employment generation, entrepreneurship promotion and strengthening livelihood opportunities in the district.

During the meeting, the MLA stressed the need to make the employment and livelihood sector viable, calling for effective improvements and tangible outcomes on the ground. He directed the concerned departments to identify issues affecting employment generation and take them up with the elected representatives for timely resolution, including issues related to manpower.

Reviewing the industrial sector, he stressed the need for greater focus on the Industrial Estate, better inter-departmental coordination and regular communication with higher authorities. He called for increased activity generation and directed departments to work towards creation of productive establishments and strengthen linkages among departments dealing with economic and livelihood activities.



The MLA also emphasised the need to promote products unique to Bandipora and provide sustained support to traditional and local crafts, including Kangri, and quality wool products. He called for optimum utilisation of available resources and urged the departments to focus on practical and tangible interventions that generate employment and improve livelihoods.

Reviewing the Handicrafts sector, it was informed that 15 training centres are functioning in the district for skill development and promotion of traditional crafts, while a significant number of artisans have been registered with the department.

The meeting also reviewed the progress of Jammu and Kashmir Rural Livelihoods Mission (J&K RLM), wherein it was informed that around 1,200 Self Help Groups (SHGs) are functioning in Bandipora, besides various community-based organisations contributing

towards women-led livelihood generation and socio-economic empowerment.

The MLA also reviewed the initiatives of the Khadi and Village Industries Board (KVIB), including employment-oriented schemes such as PMEGP and REGP, and stressed the need for effective implementation of such programmes to expand self-employment opportunities across the district.

He called upon all concerned departments to work in close coordination, strengthen communication mechanisms and ensure that available government schemes and resources translate into visible benefits and sustainable employment opportunities for the people of Bandipora.

The meeting was attended by representatives and officers from the concerned departments, including DIC, Handicrafts, Handloom, J&K RLM, KVIB and other employment and livelihood-oriented institutions.

Experts Stress Quality, Science as GLP-1 Therapies Expand in Diabetes Battle

GMK NEWS NETWORK

NEW DELHI: With India home to over 100 million adults living with diabetes, a number projected to exceed 150 million by 2050—medical experts are calling for a renewed focus on treatment quality and evidence-based care as advanced therapies become more widely available across the country.

While GLP-1 receptor agonists have emerged as a transformative class of medications for type 2 diabetes, leading endocrinologists emphasize that accessibility must be matched by rigorous scientific standards to ensure optimal patient outcomes.

Indian patients face a particularly challenging disease trajectory. Type 2 diabetes develops nearly a decade earlier than in Western populations, progresses more aggressively, and carries a significantly higher lifetime risk of cardiovascular disease and chronic kidney disease, according to recent research published in Diabetologia.

Yet despite these alarming trends, only one in ten people with diabetes in India achieve recommended blood sugar targets, highlighting critical gaps in timely treatment and disease management.

"The diabetes burden in India requires us to look beyond blood sugar control alone," said Dr. Shariq

Masoodi, Consultant Endocrinologist based in Srinagar. "GLP-1 receptor agonists have transformed the management of type 2 diabetes by addressing multiple aspects of the disease, including weight management and cardiovascular and kidney risk reduction."

Dr. Masoodi stressed that as these therapies become more accessible, "it is equally important to ensure they are supported by robust science, proven quality and extensive clinical evidence."

Quality as a Multidimensional Concern
The conversation around GLP-1 therapies extends well beyond the active ingredient itself, experts note.

"For complex GLP-1 therapies, quality is not just about the molecule itself," explained Dr. Bashir Laway, Consultant Endocrinologist also practicing in Srinagar. "It is defined by the science behind the medicine, the recombinant DNA technology used to produce it, the precision of the manufacturing process and the depth of clinical evidence supporting its use."

Dr. Laway emphasized that these considerations are "critical for physicians

when selecting therapies for a chronic condition such as type 2 diabetes, where treatment is often lifelong."

GLP-1 receptor agonists represent an important advancement in diabetes care by stimulating insulin secretion when blood sugar levels are elevated, reducing gastric emptying, and regulating appetite. This multifaceted approach helps address several interconnected aspects of type 2 diabetes simultaneously.

As access to GLP-1 therapies continues to expand across India, experts believe the conversation must center on maintaining high standards of quality. For complex peptide-based medicines, quality is embedded in the science behind the therapy, the recombinant DNA technology used to develop it, the precision of the manufacturing process, and the strength of clinical evidence supporting its long-term use.

With India poised to become home to the world's largest diabetes population in the coming decades, the emphasis on quality and evidence-based treatment selection has never been more urgent.

DC Shopian chairs meeting on setting up De-Addiction Centre

GMK NEWS NETWORK

SHOPIAN: Deputy Commissioner (DC) Shopian, Shishir Gupta, Tuesday chaired a meeting to review the steps for setting up a dedicated District De-Addiction Centre under the Scheme Action Plan for Drug Demand Reduction.

The proposed centre aims to provide comprehensive support, treatment and rehabilitation services to individuals affected by drug dependence across the district.

During the meeting, the DC highlighted that the facility will focus on medical treatment, counselling, rehabilitation and social

reintegration, while also strengthening preventive measures and community awareness campaigns.

Reaffirming the District Administration's commitment to creating a drug-free Shopian, the DC stressed the importance of sustained prevention, timely treatment and rehabilitation, along with active collaboration among government departments, community leaders and other stakeholders.

He further underscored that the initiative will help streamline and coordinate de-addiction services at the district level, complementing ongoing anti-drug

efforts under the Nasha Mukti Jammu and Kashmir Abhiyaan.

The proposed centre will provide focused and coordinated services for the treatment, counselling, rehabilitation and social reintegration of persons struggling with drug dependence.

Additional Deputy Commissioner, Dr. Zakir Hussain Faaz; ACR, Shakoor Ahmed Dar; ASP, Rameez Rashid; SDM Zainapora, Bilal Ahmed; Assistant Director Employment, Nida Yousof; CEO, Bashir Ahmed Shah, and other concerned officers were present in the meeting.

DC Kulgam visits Shrine of Hazrat Sheikh Noor-ud-Din Wali (RA)

GMK NEWS NETWORK

KULGAM: Deputy Commissioner (DC) Kulgam, Shahzad Alam, Thursday visited the revered shrine of Hazrat Sheikh Noor-ud-Din Noorani (RA) at Chimmer, D.H. Pora, and paid obeisance at the holy shrine.

During the visit, the DC reviewed the arrangements and facilities being put in place for devotees, particularly in view of the forthcoming Eid Milad-un-Nabi (SAW) celebrations.

The Deputy Commissioner took stock of the overall arrangements at the shrine and its adjoining areas, including cleanliness, sanitation, drinking water, electricity, road connectivity, parking and other essential facilities required for the smooth and comfortable movement of devotees.

The DC interacted with members of the shrine



management committee, local residents and other stakeholders and took detailed feedback regarding the developmental requirements and issues affecting the area. He assured them that all genuine concerns would be examined and addressed in coordination with the concerned departments.

While reviewing the preparations for Eid Milad-un-Nabi (SAW), the DC stressed the need for coordinated efforts among all concerned departments to ensure adequate arrangements for the expected congregation of devotees.

He directed the officers to ensure proper cleanliness and sanitation in and around the shrine, uninterrupted availability of essential amenities and timely completion of all necessary arrangements.

The DC also directed the concerned officers to remain vigilant and responsive to any requirement that may arise during the Eid Milad celebrations.

Accompanying the Deputy Commissioner were SDM Noorabad Bashir ul Hassan, AEE R & B, Reyaz Ahmad, AEE PDD, Javid Ahmad Wagay and other concerned officers.

Nishat Ansari Remembered for His Multifaceted Literary

GMK NEWS NETWORK

SOPORE: The Jammu and Kashmir Academy of Art, Culture and Languages (JKAACL), in collaboration with Daira-e-Adab Delina, organised a one-day symposium at Government Degree College Sopore to commemorate the 26th death anniversary of noted poet, writer, critic, educationist and translator, late Nishat Ansari, and to deliberate upon his life, personality and multifaceted literary contributions.

The symposium aimed at paying tribute to the distinguished literary personality while providing a scholarly platform for writers, poets, academicians, teachers, students and literature enthusiasts to critically examine his poetic and prose works and reflect on his enduring contribution to the literary and intellectual landscape of Jammu and Kashmir.

The programme was divided into two sessions. The first session comprised the inaugural and academic proceedings, while the second session featured a poetry recital. The first session was presided over by Fayaz Telgami. Shahnaz Rashid was the Chief Guest, while Sheikh Ghulam Mohammad was the Guest of Honour. Javed Iqbal Khan, Editor of Kashmiri Shiraza, was also part of the presidium. Dr. Gulzar Ahmad Rather,



Assistant Editor Kashmiri, JKAACL, conducted the proceedings.

Welcoming the distinguished guests, scholars, writers, poets, teachers, students and other participants, Javed Iqbal Khan highlighted the importance of remembering the contributions of eminent literary figures of Kashmir and undertaking fresh scholarly and critical studies of their works. Describing Nishat Ansari as a multifaceted literary personality, he said that his contribution was not confined to poetry alone, but extended to prose, education and translation as well.

Chief Guest Shahnaz Rashid appreciated the initiative of organising the symposium in memory of Nishat Ansari and emphasised the importance of preserving Kashmir's rich literary heritage. He observed that such academic and literary gatherings provide an effective platform for understanding the contributions of writers and poets in a contemporary context and for introducing their works to

younger generations.

Guest of Honour Sheikh Ghulam Mohammad highlighted Nishat Ansari's contribution to the literary and intellectual life of Kashmir. Referring to his work in poetry, prose, education and translation, he stressed the need for systematic research, compilation and documentation of his literary legacy.

The keynote address was delivered by Shahid Delnavi, who presented a comprehensive overview of Nishat Ansari's literary personality and creative contributions. He shed light on various aspects of his poetry and prose and emphasised the need to study his literary work in the broader social, cultural and literary context of Kashmir.

Shaukat Shan presented a research paper focusing on important dimensions of Nishat Ansari's literary contribution and creative sensibility. He examined the relationship between the poet's language, literature and the socio-cultural milieu of his times, stressing the need for close textual reading and critical analysis of his works

DLSA G'bal initiates steps for establishment of Village Legal Aid Clinics

GMK NEWS NETWORK

GANDERBAL: District Legal Services Authority (DLSA) Ganderbal has initiated steps for establishment of Village Legal Aid Clinics at identified village Anderwan of the district for mega drive of NALSA scheme under Phase-1.

The village Anderwan comprises two Panchayat Halqas namely Anderwan-A and Anderwan-B consisting of seven wards each. Accordingly, a team of DLSA Ganderbal comprising of Deputy Legal Aid Defence Counsel (LADC) and Para-Legal Volunteers



(PLVs) visited Anderwan to assess local requirements and facilitate establishment of the proposed Clinics as per the SOP for the mega drive.

During the visit, one room each in the Panchayat Ghars of Anderwan-A and Anderwan-B was

identified and earmarked for the respective Village Legal Aid Clinics. The Clinics will provide accessible platforms for legal awareness, identification of eligible beneficiaries, free legal advice and assistance, dissemination and facilitation of benefits under relevant

NALSA Schemes mentioned in the SOP for mega drive commencing from today and will culminate after expiry of 60 days.

The outreach activities will cover the identified NALSA Schemes relating to education and schooling, children, senior citizens, persons with mental illness and intellectual disabilities, victims of human-wildlife conflict, acid attacks, trafficking and commercial sexual exploitation, workers in the unorganized sector, Veer Parivar and poverty alleviation schemes, besides other relevant legal

services and entitlements. Awareness regarding free legal services under Section 12 of the Legal Services Authorities Act, 1987 will also be undertaken.

The initiative aims to bring legal services closer to vulnerable and disadvantaged sections at the grassroots level and facilitate their access to justice and welfare benefits.

DLSA Ganderbal will undertake and supervise the legal awareness and outreach activities in accordance with the Operational Modalities prescribed for the 60-day Mega Drive.

CM lays foundation stone for Fruit & Vegetable Mandi in Tangmarg

Says modern mandi will strengthen horticulture economy, improve market access

GMK NEWS NETWORK

TANGMARG: Chief Minister Omar Abdullah Tuesday laid the foundation stone of a modern Fruit & Vegetable Mandi at Wussan Bangil, Karhama, Tangmarg, marking the beginning of a long-pending demand of the area and a significant step towards strengthening the horticulture marketing infrastructure in the Tangmarg-Gulmarg belt.

The proposed mandi will be developed on 50 kanals of land, with direct access to the Tangmarg-Gulmarg Road. Envisaged as a modern and organised marketing facility, the mandi will cater to the major horticulture belt of Tangmarg and adjoining areas and is expected to benefit around nine lakh people across 19 blocks in Baramulla and Budgam districts.

The facility will provide growers with an organised platform for the handling, grading, sorting, packaging and marketing of fruit and vegetable produce, besides



strengthening market linkages and logistics in the region. It is expected to bring buyers closer to producers, improve price realisation for farmers and reduce post-harvest losses through better handling, storage and supply-chain facilities.

Addressing a large public gathering after laying the foundation stone, the Chief Minister said the project represented the fulfilment of a major and long-standing demand of the people of the area and underlined the need to look beyond tourism while assessing the economic potential of Kashmir.

“Often, when we speak to people outside J&K, they feel that there is nothing but tourism in Kashmir

and that our entire economy revolves around tourism. But when I explain to them that agriculture, horticulture, fruits, dairy and other sectors contribute much more, they are surprised,” he said.

The Chief Minister said the establishment of the mandi was particularly important for Tangmarg because the area is a major horticulture-producing belt. “Your fruits and vegetables were being grown here, but to take them to the market you had to travel to far-off markets. You did not always get buyers. Now, through this market, the buyers will come here and, through the buyers, you will get a better rate,” he said.

He said the modern infrastructure would also help ensure better quality of produce and facilitate its access to wider markets. The project, he added, would create a new source of income for the area and give a major boost to the rural economy.

Emphasising that the success of the mandi would also depend on connectivity, Omar Abdullah directed that the road leading to the facility be improved and widened. “Along with this fruit market and vegetable market, we will have to fix this road as well. Even if it is a 1.5 to 2 km stretch, we will have to widen it and improve its condition so that people do not face any difficulty,” he said.

Land Records goes Digital, Farmer Services gets Smarter

J&K advances AgriStack frame work under DILRMP

GMK NEWS NETWORK

SRINAGAR: In a major step towards modernising land administration and creating a more transparent, citizen-centric system of Revenue and Agricultural services, Jammu and Kashmir has accelerated the digitisation and updation of land records while simultaneously preparing the verified land database for integration with the AgriStack framework of the Government of India under its Digital India Land Records Modernization Programme (DILRMP).

The exercise, being undertaken by the Revenue Department in collaboration with BISAG-N, covers nearly 70 lakh land parcels, with more than 2,500 Revenue field functionaries having been provided role-based access for data entry, verification and approval. The initiative has been designed not as a mere exercise in scanning or data entry, but as a comprehensive process of digitisation, updation, verification, public scrutiny and authentication of land records.

Land records form the foundation of a wide range of public services, including ownership verification, mutations, agricultural benefits, credit, insurance, compensation and land-

related transactions. Recognising the importance of an accurate and accessible Record of Rights, the Revenue Department has adopted a departmental, field-driven model for the present exercise.

A dedicated software platform has been developed in collaboration with BISAG-

Patwari acts as the Maker, entering the record; the Girdawar/Naib-Tehsildar acts as the Checker, verifying it against the source Revenue record; and the Tehsildar acts as the Approver, providing final approval.

This segregation of responsibilities creates successive checks against tran-



N, providing for village-wise management of land-record data through a structured relational database. Unlike a simple scanned copy of a physical register, the digital record captures individual particulars in defined data fields, enabling systematic searching, comparison, validation, monitoring and authorised updating.

A key feature of the exercise is the Maker-Checker-Approver mechanism, designed to ensure that a record is not accepted merely on the basis of data entry.

Under the system, the

scription errors, omissions, incorrect shares, spelling discrepancies and other inconsistencies. Every stage is electronically recorded, thereby creating an audit trail and fixing responsibility for the information entered and approved.

The Department has supplemented this institutional workflow with additional layers of supervision. Regular reviews have been undertaken at the highest administrative levels, while District-level Mentors and Prabhari Officers have been deployed to monitor both progress and

quality. District committees have also undertaken cross-Tehsil verification to provide an additional layer of independent scrutiny.

The Government has also placed the landholder at the centre of the verification process. More than 6,800 village-level camps have been organised for public reading of Jamabandis, enabling landholders to examine the records and report discrepancies relating to names, shares, mutations and other particulars.

This public verification mechanism has been complemented by making digitised land records available for public viewing through the JK Zameen Sudhaar portal. Over 13 lakh rectifications have already been completed on the basis of discrepancies detected during verification and grievances received from the public.

The Government has simultaneously addressed the critical issue of pending mutations so that digitisation does not result in merely reproducing an outdated physical record in electronic form.

Approximately 7 lakh backlog mutations have been incorporated into the digitised Record of Rights and subjected to the prescribed verification and approval process.

Pawan Singh attends National Conference with States, UTs, I&PR Secretaries

GMK NEWS NETWORK

NEW DELHI: Special Secretary, Information Department, Jammu & Kashmir, Pawan Singh Rathore, attended the National Conference with States/UTs and Information & Public Relations (I&PR) Secretaries convened by the Ministry of Information & Broadcasting, Government of India, at Vigyan Bhawan, New Delhi.

The conference brought together senior officers from the Centre and States/UTs to deliberate upon strengthening coordination in the fields of public broadcasting, media, film, creative industries, information dissemination and the emerging Media & Entertainment (M&E) ecosystem. The deliberations also focused on facilitating greater participation of States and UTs in national initiatives and ensuring that the benefits of the rapidly expanding creative economy reach talent and institutions across the country.

A comprehensive agenda covering 15 key areas was discussed during the conference. These included implementation of the “Right of



Way (RoW) mechanism for cable operators by State Governments, roadmap for WAVES 2027, strengthening WAVES Bazaar and market access, expansion of public service broadcasting infrastructure, integration of the Indian Cine Hub (ICH)/Film Facilitation Office (FFO) portal, adoption of the single-window ICH portal for film shooting and live-event permissions, strengthening public service broadcasting through content co-production and State-specific programming, promotion of the live-events sector, capacity building of DIPR officers, transition to the digital framework under the Press and Registration of Periodicals (PRP) Act, 2023, strengthening libraries, promotion of low-cost cinema in rural and under-

served areas, accessibility standards in cinema halls, operationalisation of the WAVES State Ecosystem and State partnership for the Create in India Challenge (CIC) – Season 2.

The conference highlighted the WAVES platform as an important national initiative for bringing together the creative industries, technology, startups, investors, creators and global industry leaders.

The proposed roadmap for WAVES 2027 envisages a wider and more diverse ecosystem comprising the CEO Roundtable, Creatosphere, WAVEX, WAVES Bazaar, Global Leaders’ Track, WAVES Cultural, Thought Leaders’ Track and Exhibition & Country Pavilions.

The Exhibition and Bharat Pavilion component is proposed to provide a global showcase of India’s media and entertainment capabilities, culture and creative industries, besides promoting India as a global filming destination. The initiative also seeks to facilitate high-value partnerships and deal-making while showcasing Indian intellectual property, innovation and immersive experiences.

SEC gives go-ahead to Rs 664.54 Cr Disaster Recovery interventions

1,227 Works and 8,804 Houses to be Restored across J&K

GMK NEWS NETWORK

SRINAGAR: The State Executive Committee (SEC) of the Department of Disaster Management, Relief, Rehabilitation and Reconstruction (DMRR&R), chaired by Chief Secretary, Atal Dulloo, Tuesday accorded approval to a comprehensive set of disaster recovery and reconstruction interventions to be taken up across Jammu and Kashmir under the Post-Disaster Needs Assessment (PDNA) assistance sanctioned by the Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA) through the National Disaster Management Authority (NDMA).

The meeting was attended by Additional Chief Secretary, Finance; Principal Secretary, Home; Commissioner Secretary, Forests; Commissioner Secretary, School Education, besides senior officers of DMRR&R and representatives of other concerned departments.

The third meeting of the SEC reviewed the action plans submitted by various departments for undertaking restoration and reconstruction works aimed at



rebuilding damaged public infrastructure, restoring essential services, reviving livelihoods and strengthening the disaster resilience of communities across the UT.

The approved interventions involve an immediate financial outlay of Rs 664.54 Cr, covering 1,227 infrastructure works and restoration of 8,804 fully and severely damaged houses.

Chairing the meeting, the Chief Secretary emphasised that the sanctioned assistance should be utilised strategically as per the original proposals to create a stronger and more disaster-resilient Jammu and Kashmir rather than merely restoring the damaged infrastructure only.

He directed all concerned departments to ensure optimum and timely utilisation of the available funds, stressing that the entire assistance package should contribute towards strengthen-

ing disaster preparedness, building resilient infrastructure, restoring livelihoods and enhancing the Union Territory’s capacity to respond effectively to future disasters.

The Chief Secretary called for close coordination and adherence to prescribed timelines and quality standards so that the benefits of the recovery programme reach the affected population at the earliest.

During the meeting, Principal Secretary, DMRR&R, Chandraker Bharti, presented a comprehensive reconstruction and development roadmap before the SEC.

The proposed interventions form part of the wider Rs 1,416 Cr Departmental Plan for 2026-27, mapped against the overall approved assistance ceiling of Rs 1,534.58 Cr sanctioned under the PDNA framework.

Sakeena Itoo greets people on Eid-e-Milad-un-Nabi (SAW)

GMK NEWS NETWORK

SRINAGAR: Minister for Health and Medical Education, Social Welfare and Education, Sakeena Itoo has extended her heartfelt greetings to the people of Jammu and Kashmir on the auspicious occasion of Eid-e-Milad-un-Nabi (SAW), marking the birth anniversary of Prophet Muhammad (SAW).

In her greeting message, the Minister said that this sacred day reminds us of the timeless values of compassion, kindness, and service to humanity, which form the essence of the life and teachings of the Holy Prophet (SAW). She expressed hope that this pious occasion will inspire people to strengthen bonds of brotherhood, promote peace and harmony, and work collectively for the welfare of society.

“On this revered occasion, let us pledge to walk on the path of truth, compassion, and selfless service shown to us by the Prophet Muhammad (SAW)”, she said. The Minister also highlighted that true way of celebrating this blessed and sacred day is to uphold the values of empathy, patience, and mutual respect in our daily lives.

Deputy CM extends Greetings on Eid-e-Milad-un-Nabi (SAW)

GMK NEWS NETWORK

JAMMU: Deputy Chief Minister, Surinder Choudhary, has extended warm greetings to the people of Jammu and Kashmir on the auspicious occasion of Eid-e-Milad-un-Nabi (SAW).

In his message, Deputy Chief Minister said that the sacred occasion is a reminder of the noble teachings of the Holy Prophet (SAW), who showed humanity the path of truth, compassion, and service to mankind.

He expressed hope that the blessed day will inspire people to uphold the values of peace, harmony, mutual respect, and brotherhood, thereby fostering unity and collective progress in society.

Deputy Chief Minister added that the true way of celebrating this day is by practicing patience, spreading goodwill, and extending support to those in need.

Surinder Choudhary also prayed for peace, prosperity, and well-being of all citizens, especially the people of Jammu and Kashmir.

Satish Sharma extends Eid-e-Milad-un-Nabi (SAW) greetings

GMK NEWS NETWORK

SRINAGAR: Minister for Food, Civil Supplies & Consumer Affairs, Information Technology, Youth Services & Sports, Science & Technology and ARI & Trainings, Satish Sharma, has extended his heartfelt greetings to the people of Jammu and Kashmir on the auspicious occasion of Eid-e-Milad-un-Nabi (SAW), marking the blessed birth anniversary of Prophet Muhammad (SAW).

In his message, the Minister said that Eid-e-Milad-un-Nabi (SAW) is a sacred occasion that reminds humanity of the timeless message and noble teachings of the Holy Prophet (SAW), centred on compassion, peace, justice, kindness, brotherhood and selfless service to humanity.

Satish Sharma said that the life and teachings of Prophet Muhammad (SAW) provide enduring guidance for building a society founded on mutual respect, harmony, tolerance and concern for the welfare of others. He expressed hope that the occasion would inspire people to strengthen the bonds of brotherhood and work collectively for peace, prosperity and the well-being of society.

“On this blessed occasion, let us reaffirm our commitment to the noble values of compassion, truth, patience, forgiveness and service to humanity taught by the Holy Prophet Muhammad (SAW), and strive to incorporate these values in our everyday lives,” the Minister said.

DC Anantnag reviews arrangements for Eid Milad-un-Nabi (SAW)

GMK NEWS NETWORK

ANANTNAG: Ahead of Eid Milad-un-Nabi (SAW) and the Friday Following, the Deputy Commissioner (DC), Anantnag, Dr. Bilal Mohiuddin Bhat, Tuesday visited the Kabamarg and Baba Hyder Reshi (Reshmool) shrines to review the arrangements being put in place for the smooth observance of these auspicious occasions.

Notably, a large number of devotees are expected to visit these shrines and other important places during the holy days.

The Deputy Commissioner was accompanied by the SEs of R&B, Hydraulics, and KPDCL, SDM Dooru, ACR, concerned Tehsildars and BMOs, CEO MCA, AEs/AEs, and other ground-level functionaries.

During the visit, the DC offered prayers and took a detailed assessment of the arrangements concerning sanitation, streetlights, drinking water, power supply, road connectivity,

parking, traffic management, healthcare, fire safety measures, and other essential facilities required for the convenience of devotees. He also took stock of the ongoing upgradation and renovation works at these religious sites.

At the shrines, the respective management committees apprised the DC of various requirements necessary for the smooth observance of the holy days.

Taking immediate note, the DC issued directions to the concerned departments to provide the necessary facilities at these venues in a smooth and hassle-free manner. He instructed them to ensure proper lighting, sanitation and cleanliness,, uninterrupted power supply, and other essential facilities at the shrines as well as on the approach roads leading to the religious sites for the convenience of devotees. He stressed that all essential services should remain functional during this period, particularly during the evening and night hours.

Javed Rana attends Tribal Convention on Forest Rights Act in Pulwama

Hints at development of Sangerwani as model tribal tourism village

GMK NEWS NETWORK

PULWAMA: Maintaining that the Forest Rights Act (FRA), 2006 serves as a catalyst for tribal welfare and livelihood enhancement, Minister for Jal Shakti, Forest, Ecology & Environment and Tribal Affairs, Javed Ahmed Rana, Thursday said that effective implementation of the Act is essential for empowering the forest-dwelling tribal communities, safeguarding their legitimate rights and creating sustainable livelihood opportunities.

He said this while participating in a Tribal Convention on the Forest Rights Act, 2006, at Sangerwani, Rajpora, Pulwama where he also interacted with the locals to assess their grievances.

MLA Rajpora, Ghulam



Mohi ud din Mir, MLA Pampore, Hasnain Masoodi, former legislator Mohd Khalil Bandh and officers from the district administration were present on the occasion.

The convention focused on creating greater awareness about the provisions of the Forest Rights Act and strengthening community participation in its effective implementation. Detailed discussions were held on the rights and entitlements being provided under the legislation, the process

for filing and verification of claims and the role of Gram Sabhas and other stakeholders in ensuring that eligible forest-dwelling tribal communities receive the rights guaranteed to them under the Act.

The convention was attended by a large number of people from various areas who raised various sector specific and development demands. They sought intervention of the Minister in early redress of the same.

The people highlighted issues concerning augmentation and upgradation of water filtration plants to ensure the availability of safe and reliable drinking water. They sought strengthening of healthcare and educational infrastructure, including improvement of existing facilities and provision of better services for the local population. The people also highlighted the need for improvement and upgradation of road infrastructure, particularly the repair of damaged stretches and better connectivity to facilitate smooth movement of people and goods.

Addressing the gathering, the Minister assured that the government remains committed to strengthen the basic infrastructure and improve the

Good Morning

Kashmir

EDITORIAL

Electricity Tariff Hike

A Compulsion Cannot Become An Excuse

Chief Minister Omar Abdullah's defence of the 6.83 per cent electricity tariff hike may explain the government's financial predicament, but it does little to answer the larger question: why should ordinary consumers bear the burden of inefficiency and unpaid government dues?

The Joint Electricity Regulatory Commission's decision to raise tariffs from September 1 has understandably triggered public concern. The Chief Minister says the increase was a compulsion arising from mounting losses in the power sector and rising input costs. He has also pointed out that previous governments approved significantly higher tariff increases. But comparing today's hike with those of the past cannot, by itself, make the present burden acceptable.

The real issue is not whether the increase is six, 10 or 15 per cent. The real issue is who is responsible for the losses and who ultimately pays for them.

The figures presented before the Legislative Assembly expose an uncomfortable contradiction. Jammu and Kashmir's power distribution companies are struggling with thousands of crores in unpaid dues, even as consumers are being asked to accept higher tariffs in the name of financial sustainability. Total outstanding electricity dues were put at Rs 3,747.35 crore, including Rs 2,310.22 crore with KPDC and Rs 1,437.13 crore with JPDC. What makes the situation more difficult to defend is that a substantial portion of these arrears is owed by government departments, public sector undertakings and security establishments. The Public Health Engineering Department alone reportedly owes around Rs 1,300 crore, while the Irrigation and Flood Control Department has dues exceeding Rs 580 crore. Security establishments, municipal bodies, the Home Department and even the Power Development Department itself are among those carrying substantial liabilities.

This raises a fundamental question: if the government is itself one of the biggest defaulters, why should the common consumer be made to pay more for the government's financial indiscipline? Tariff rationalisation may be unavoidable in the long run. Power generation, transmission and distribution involve enormous costs, and a financially distressed electricity sector cannot remain sustainable indefinitely. But tariff revision must go hand in hand with accountability, recovery and efficiency.

Before asking households to accept higher bills, the administration must demonstrate that every serious effort is being made to recover outstanding dues from institutional defaulters. There can be no credible argument for financial discipline if government departments continue accumulating unpaid bills while paying consumers are repeatedly told to tighten their belts. The government also needs to distinguish between genuine inability to pay and habitual default. Welfare measures for the poorest households can and should continue, but subsidies must be targeted, transparent and fiscally sustainable. The previously announced provision of 200 units of free electricity to eligible Antyodaya households is a welfare intervention; it should not be used to obscure the larger structural weaknesses of the power sector.

The Chief Minister is right on one point: the government cannot celebrate a tariff hike. But neither can it expect people to accept the increase merely because it is described as a "compulsion." A compulsion becomes credible only when the government shows that every alternative has been exhausted.

Jammu and Kashmir needs a serious power-sector reform strategy, better collection efficiency, reduction of transmission and distribution losses, strict action against habitual defaulters, timely payment of government electricity bills and transparent accounting of subsidies.

The public is unlikely to object to paying a reasonable price for reliable electricity. What it will rightly object to is paying more while powerful institutional consumers accumulate crores in unpaid bills.

The tariff hike, therefore, should not become merely another revenue-raising exercise. It should be accompanied by a clear roadmap for recovering arrears and reducing losses. Consumers can understand financial compulsion; what they cannot accept is being made to finance institutional inefficiency without accountability.

If the government wants people to share the burden of rescuing the power sector, it must first demonstrate that those who owe the system billions will also be made to pay.

Muhammad: A Mercy To All The Worlds



TUFAIL SHAH

The Qur'an presents the Prophet Muhammad with a universal description of extraordinary theological and ethical significance: "We have not sent you except as a mercy to all the worlds" (Qur'an 21:107). This verse provides an appropriate framework for reflecting upon the life, mission, and enduring legacy of the Prophet , particularly on the occasion of 12 Rabi' al-Awwal, traditionally commemorated by many Muslims in connection with his blessed birth. His life represents a remarkable synthesis of spiritual devotion, moral integrity, social justice, political wisdom, compassion, and principled leadership.

Muhammad was born in Makkah into the distinguished Banu Hashim clan of Quraysh. His father, 'Abdullah, died before his birth, and he lost his mother, Aminah, at the age of six. Two years later, his grandfather, 'Abd al-Muttalib, also passed away, after which his uncle, Abu Talib, assumed responsibility for his upbringing. These experiences of bereavement and vulnerability formed an important part of the human context in which the future Messenger developed. The Qur'an itself subsequently drew attention to his orphanhood: "Did He not find you an orphan and he lost you shelter?" (93:6). His early life gave him an intimate understanding of loss, dependence, hardship, and the dignity of those who live without social or economic security.

As a young man, Muhammad became distinguished among his people for his truthfulness, trustworthiness, modesty, and sound judgment. His reputation as al-Sadiq and al-Amin preceded his Prophetic mission. He worked as a shepherd and later engaged in trade, experiences that connected him closely with ordinary economic and social life. His character was already marked by qualities that would later become central to his Prophetic mission: honesty in public dealings, compassion towards the vulnerable, and an aversion to injustice and moral corruption.

When revelation commenced, the Prophet confronted not merely a set of theological misconceptions but an entire social order sustained by tribal privilege, economic exploitation, and inherited hierarchy. His proclamation of tawhid, the absolute oneness of Allah, challenged the religious foundations of Makkah's polytheistic system. Yet the implications of his message extended far beyond theology. The Qur'anic call to worship one God was inseparable from demands for justice, accountability, charity, protection of the weak, and recognition of the inherent dignity of human beings.

The Qur'anic message challenged the



assumption that wealth, lineage, or tribal power conferred intrinsic superiority. It called upon the privileged to recognize their obligations towards the poor, orphans, widows, slaves, and other vulnerable members of society. Consequently, the Prophet's message represented a profound challenge to established structures of power. The Makkan elite responded with increasing hostility, subjecting the early Muslims to persecution, social exclusion, torture, and, in some cases, death. The Prophet nevertheless remained steadfast, refusing to allow persecution to turn the struggle for justice into an exercise in personal vengeance.

The thirteen years of the Makkan period were therefore years of extraordinary patience and moral endurance. The migration of some Muslims to Abyssinia and, subsequently, the Hijrah to Madinah demonstrated that the Prophetic strategy was not confined to confrontation. Where peaceful refuge was possible, it was sought. Where dialogue could prevent violence, dialogue was pursued. Where agreements could protect human life and establish social stability, agreements were concluded.

The Treaty of Hudaibiyyah, concluded in the sixth year after the Hijrah, provides perhaps one of the clearest examples of the Prophet's political wisdom and commitment to peaceful resolution. Although several of its provisions initially appeared difficult to some of his companions, the Prophet understood the strategic and moral value of suspending hostilities. The resulting period of relative peace facilitated communication, reduced violence, and enabled the message of Islam to reach wider sections of Arabian society. Hudaibiyyah therefore illustrates a central feature of Prophetic leadership: peace was not regarded as an abandonment of principle but as a means through which justice, security, and human welfare could be advanced.

This principle became even more evident

during the conquest of Makkah. After years of persecution and armed conflict, the Prophet entered the city with a large Muslim force. The balance of power had been decisively transformed. Yet the conquest was not converted into an occasion for collective revenge. The Prophet instructed his forces to avoid unnecessary bloodshed, and the inhabitants were largely granted security and amnesty. Those who had previously persecuted him and his followers were confronted with a leader who possessed the power to punish but chose, in circumstances where forgiveness was possible, to forgive.

The significance of this episode extends beyond its immediate historical context. It demonstrates the distinction between power and vengeance. The Prophet did not regard victory as a license for humiliation or retaliation. His conduct revealed that true strength lies not simply in the capacity to defeat an adversary but in the moral discipline to exercise power responsibly. His mercy was therefore not a sign of political weakness; rather, it was an expression of moral authority.

At the same time, the Prophetic model cannot be reduced to an abstract ideal of pacifism. His mercy existed alongside an uncompromising commitment to justice. He opposed aggression, defended the Muslim community, upheld treaties, protected rights, and established principles of accountability. His example demonstrates that mercy and justice are not contradictory values. Mercy without justice can leave the oppressed vulnerable, while justice without mercy can degenerate into vengeance. The Prophetic model seeks to preserve both: justice as the protection of human rights and mercy as the restraint of power.

The universality of the Prophet's mission is captured by the Qur'anic expression "a mercy to all the worlds." His message transcended tribal, ethnic, and geographical boundaries. He challenged racial and tribal arrogance,

emphasized human dignity, strengthened the rights of women, protected orphans and the poor, condemned exploitation, and established principles of social responsibility. His teachings repeatedly emphasized that human beings are accountable before Allah and that social privilege cannot exempt anyone from moral responsibility.

The Prophet consequently transformed mercy from an individual virtue into a principle of social organization. Mercy was expressed through the protection of the vulnerable, the feeding of the poor, the fair treatment of dependents, the honoring of agreements, the avoidance of unnecessary conflict, and the forgiveness of personal wrongs. His life demonstrated that spirituality cannot be separated from ethical conduct and that devotion to Allah must manifest itself in the treatment of other human beings.

The commemoration of 12 Rabi' al-Awwal, therefore, acquires its deepest significance when it becomes an occasion for ethical and intellectual reflection rather than merely historical remembrance. To remember the Prophet is to examine the extent to which his values shape contemporary Muslim individual and collective life. His truthfulness challenges dishonesty; his compassion challenges indifference; his commitment to justice challenges oppression; his patience challenges impulsiveness; and his restraint in victory challenges the misuse of power.

The enduring relevance of the Prophetic example lies precisely in this integration of faith and conduct. Muhammad was not only a spiritual teacher but also a moral reformer, statesman, community-builder, arbiter, and defender of justice. His leadership demonstrated that religious conviction can coexist with intellectual prudence, political realism, compassion, and principled restraint.

The Prophet began his earthly life as an orphan and concluded his mission having transformed the religious, moral, and social consciousness of Arabia, with consequences that continue to shape human history. His response to suffering was patience, to injustice was principled resistance, to opportunity was responsibility, and to victory was restraint and mercy. His life therefore gives substantive meaning to the Qur'anic declaration that he was sent "as a mercy to all the worlds."

On the occasion of 12 Rabi' al-Awwal, the most profound form of remembrance is consequently to renew our commitment to the ethical vision of his Prophetic mission: faith grounded in character, justice tempered by mercy, strength governed by restraint, and leadership exercised as a responsibility before Allah and humanity. The enduring challenge of his Sunnah is not simply to admire the Prophet as a historical figure, but to allow his moral example to transform our individual conduct, our institutions, and our societies.

Tufail Shah is an observer and commentator who writes on contemporary issues, social developments, and matters of public interest.

Hormuz Is No Longer Just An Energy Chokepoint



NAVEED QAZI

The latest Iran war, especially after February 2026, has changed the meaning of control over the Strait of Hormuz. After repeated clashes between Iran and Israel, followed by direct American involvement and a prolonged confrontation with Tehran, control of Hormuz is no longer simply about whether oil tankers can pass. It has become a test of sovereignty, deterrence, alliance credibility and the limits of great-power pressure.

Whoever can credibly disrupt Hormuz can affect the economic decisions of countries far beyond the Middle East. The United States Energy Information Administration estimates that petroleum liquids passing through the strait averaged 4.9 million barrels a day in the second quarter of 2026. Before the conflict, the figure was 21.6 million barrels a day.

Iran does not need to completely close the strait to gain strategic value from it. It only needs to make commercial shipping dangerous, uncertain or difficult. Recent attacks on vessels, conflicting claims about whether the waterway is open, and the sharp fall in shipping show how this works. Reuters reported that only a small number of commodity vessels were passing through the strait during the stand-off, while Iran and Washington gave different accounts of its status. A choke point becomes powerful not when every ship is physically

stopped, but when shipowners decide that using the route is no longer worth the risk.

This is why the political importance of Hormuz is greater now than during way earlier Iranian threats to close it. In the past, the threat was mainly a possibility. Today, the strait is part of an actual war whose effects stretch from Iran to the Gulf and beyond. The International Institute for Strategic Studies, writing in Survival, argues that there is no realistic military way to simply reopen the waterway under current conditions. This reveals the central problem: military power may protect individual ships, but it cannot easily create political stability.

Iran's leverage, however, should not be seen as unlimited. As Kamran Taremi explains in Iranian Studies, Iranian territory and islands overlook the passage. But Iran also depends on access to the Gulf. A long-term closure would even hurt Iranian trade, exports and relations with neighbouring countries as well as its enemies. Tehran can increase the cost of using the waterway, but it cannot avoid the consequences of prolonged isolation.

The war has changed the political calculation because Iran now has fewer reasons to act. At the same time, restraint will automatically protect its economic interests. When a country believes that its own security is already under direct attack, the line between escalation and deterrence becomes very thin. Iran needs to accept this reality at large. Hormuz can then become a bargaining tool and it does not necessarily have to be permanently closed. The threat of disruption alone can force Washington, Gulf monarchies, Asian energy importers and European governments to consider the economic cost of continuing the war. Saudi Arabia, the United Arab



Emirates, Qatar, Kuwait, Bahrain and Oman have long depended on American security guarantees while maintaining different levels of engagement with Iran. If Washington cannot guarantee safe and predictable navigation without a prolonged confrontation, Gulf governments have a reason to diversify their diplomatic relationships, strengthen regional security arrangements and reduce their dependence on one outside power. Pirouz Mojtahed-Zadeh's Security and Territoriality in the Persian Gulf shows why maritime geography cannot be separated from questions of sovereignty, territory and regional security. Asian economies are particularly vulnerable because the Gulf remains an important source of their energy. Even countries that buy little or no Iranian oil can suffer from higher energy prices, shipping costs, insurance premiums and inflation. Poorer countries that depend heavily on imports face the greatest risks because they have less money available to absorb energy shocks.

The legal questions are also important. The United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea establishes navigation rights and limits the ability of a coastal state

to block lawful passage. The basic principle is clear: an international waterway cannot become the private property of whichever country has the stronger navy. The United Nations secretary-general has called for the restoration of navigation rights and freedoms around the strait, warning that continued escalation could have serious consequences for international peace and security and the global economy.

International law therefore looks at the situation in Hormuz through several competing principles: freedom of navigation, the sovereignty of coastal states and the prohibition on the unlawful use of force. The strait's status as an international waterway is especially important. Transit passage is protected for international navigation, while countries bordering the strait still have important sovereign and security interests. At the same time, deliberate attacks on commercial ships or unlawful interference with navigation can raise questions under international humanitarian law and the UN Charter. Neither Iran's geographic position nor America's military power gives either side an unlimited legal right to control the waterway by force.

There is also an important lesson about American power. Washington can send naval forces, impose sanctions, escort ships and threaten economic retaliation. But military power alone cannot solve the political problem created by a war involving Iran, Israel and several regional actors. Caitlin Talmadge's analysis in Foreign Affairs makes this point in strategic terms: Hormuz gives Iran asymmetric advantages, making the task of reopening the strait much more difficult than simply sending naval forces into the Gulf.

The biggest consequence is that Hormuz has become a bargaining arena over the future of the regional order. If Iran can use disruption of shipping to win diplomatic concessions, it strengthens the credibility of coercive deterrence. If the United States responds with an indefinite blockade and further escalation, it could show that even an overwhelming military power cannot restore normal shipping without a political settlement.

Hormuz is not Iranian territory, as Iran has signed UNCLOS though it has not fully ratified it. However, it is probable that Tehran cannot control global trade forever. But the war has shown that physical control of the entire strait is not necessary to exercise political influence. Fear, uncertainty and the possibility of disruption can be enough.

Therefore, the eventual settlement will matter far beyond the Gulf. It will determine whether Hormuz returns to being a shared artery of global commerce or remains a reminder that, in an age of fragmented power, geography can still hold the world economy hostage.

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

UPI: Transforming India's Payment Landscape

India's digital payments ecosystem has undergone a remarkable transformation over the past decade. It is driven by the vision of creating a simple and secure payment system accessible to every citizen. The Unified Payments Interface (UPI), developed by the National Payments Corporation of India (NPCI), has emerged as a cornerstone of India's digital payments revolution. Today, UPI is accepted in 11 countries, with Greece and the Maldives being the latest to adopt India's real-time payment platform.

UPI and its Evolution

With interoperable design and ease of use, UPI has fundamentally changed the way individuals, businesses and government entities transact.

- Real-time payment system that powers multiple bank accounts through a single mobile application of any participating bank or payment service provider.
- Integrates multiple banking services, fund transfers and merchant payments on a single platform.
- Enables round-the-clock digital payments.
- Uses two-factor authentication and end-to-end encryption to enhance transaction security.

Over the past decade, UPI has evolved into the backbone of India's digital payments ecosystem. Following are some of the key milestones in the evolution of UPI:

2016

- UPI was launched on a pilot basis in April 2016 with 21 member banks.
- In August 2016, it was rolled out to the public as participating banks made their UPI-enabled mobile applications available on the Google Play Store.
- The BHIM application was launched in December 2016 to enable digital payments using UPI. It allows users to make direct bank-to-bank transactions through mobile devices.

2017

- Dynamic QR, a retail merchant platform enabling UPI payments via dynamic QR codes was launched, which dynamically included transaction specifics like payee info and exact totals, removing manual amount entry.

2018

- UPI 2.0 was introduced with enhanced features to make digital payments simpler, more secure and seamless.



- Invoice in the Inbox allows users to view bills or invoices before authorising payments.
- Signed Intent and QR enables simplified payment authorisation while maintaining security.
- UPI Mandates enables recurring payments through pre-authorised instructions.
- Overdraft account linking allows users to make UPI transactions using their overdraft accounts.

2019

- SEBI allowed retail individual investors to use UPI as an alternative payment mechanism when applying for IPOs through designated intermediaries.
- UPI crossed the milestone of one billion transactions in a month in October 2019, reflecting rapid nationwide adoption.

2020-2022

- UPI AutoPay was launched to support recurring e-mandates for subscriptions, utility bills, insurance premiums, SIPs and EMIs.
- Feature phone users were brought into the digital payments' ecosystem through the launch of UPI 123PAY. It allows transactions through interactive voice response (IVR) number, app-based functionality, missed calls-based

approach and proximity sound-based payments.

- UPI Lite was introduced to enable low-value transactions in a faster and PIN-less manner.
- The integration of credit cards with UPI further expanded digital payment options for users.
- During FY 2021-22, UPI processed transactions worth over US\$1 trillion and crossed 5 billion monthly transactions in March 2022.
- It also expanded internationally with its launch in Bhutan, marking its first cross-border deployment.

2023

- Credit Line on UPI was introduced, allowing pre-sanctioned bank credit lines to be linked as a funding account.
- UPI accounted for ~70% of India's digital payment transactions during FY 2023-24.

2024

- UPI Circle was introduced, enabling primary users to authorise secondary users with pre-defined transaction limits on the primary user's bank account.
- RBI enhanced the UPI transaction limit for tax payments from 1 lakh to 5 lakh per transaction. Higher limits also apply to select

categories, including capital markets, IPO subscriptions, loan collections, insurance, healthcare and education.

- The per-transaction limit for UPI 123Pay was raised to 10,000, expanding its range of use cases.
- The UPI Lite wallet limit was increased to 5,000, with the per-transaction limit raised to 1,000.

2025

- On-device authentication for UPI was introduced, enabling payments through smartphone fingerprint or face unlock.
- Aadhaar-based Face Authentication simplified UPI PIN onboarding, especially for first-time users, senior citizens and those without easy access to cards.

UPI Today

UPI has witnessed unprecedented growth in both transaction volume and value, reflecting its widespread adoption by individuals, businesses and financial institutions.

From FY 2016-17 to FY 2025-26:

- Annual transaction volume increased from 2 crore transactions to over 24,162 crore transactions. It represents ~12,000-fold increase.
- Annual transaction value grew from 0.07 lakh crore to ~ 314 lakh

crore, recording more than 4,000-fold increase.

UPI has transformed the scale and reach of digital payments in India. In July 2026:

- The UPI ecosystem comprises 741 live banks, reflecting its widespread adoption across India's banking sector.
- UPI processed 2,365.8 crore transactions; and
- Total transaction value stood at 29.87 lakh crore.

UPI's Global Footprint

UPI has emerged as a leading real-time payment system globally. As of 2024, UPI accounted for ~49% of global real-time payment transaction volume. This achievement was highlighted by the International Monetary Fund (IMF) in its "Growing Retail Digital Payments: The Value of Interoperability" report, published in June 2025.

UPI's Global Footprint Continues to Expand

- UPI is operational in Bhutan, Nepal, Singapore, the UAE, France, Sri Lanka, Mauritius and Qatar, enabling seamless cross-border digital payments.
- In June 2026, NPCI International Payments Limited partnered with ACLEDA Bank Plc. to launch UPI acceptance in Cambodia, further strengthening India's cross-border digital payment connectivity
- In June 2026, UPI went Live in Greece for Cross Border Remittances, where eligible customers can transfer money instantly, securely, and seamlessly between Greece – India (through Euro-bank).
- On 30th July 2026, Cross Border Remittances between the Maldives Instant Payment System, 'Favara', and India's UPI went live, marking a transformative milestone in cross-border digital financial connectivity and bilateral economic cooperation between the Maldives and India.
- As on date, UPI is live in 11 foreign countries for UPI Acceptance and/or Cross Border Remittances.

A Decade of Digital Transformation

UPI has transformed the way India transacts by making digital payments simple, secure and interoperable. Its rapid adoption, continuous innovation and expanding global presence have made UPI a key component of India's Digital Public Infrastructure.

Courtesy - PIB Srinagar

Communists Of Cambridge



BHABANI SHANKAR NAYAK

Nestled in the county of Cambridgeshire, the historic city of Cambridge is bisected by the River Cam and defined by its eponymous university. Yet, beneath the dreaming spires and academic prestige lies a starkly divided municipality in eastern England, Cambridge is one of the most economically unequal cities in Britain. The railway line, a casual traveller's marker, serves as a brutal socioeconomic scar, demarcating the impoverished north and east from the affluent enclaves that lie opposite. This entrenched class divide, far from being a modern anomaly, has long nurtured a vibrant, albeit fragmented, communist movement in the city that persists in various guises to this day.

In 2004, the King's College Student Union voted to take down the historic red flag, but the iconoclasm proved superficial; left-wing ideology and revolutionary fervour remained deeply ingrained within the university's fabric. According to a recent survey by the Cambridge Marxist Society, thirty-two per cent of young people still profess a positive view of communism. It is within this intellectual milieu that the ghosts of the "Cambridge Five"—Kim Philby, Donald Maclean, Guy Burgess, Anthony Blunt, and John Cairncross, continue to exert a potent influence. For these men, espionage was less an act of treason and more a profound ideological choice: a commitment to working-class solidarity that super-



seded the jingoistic nationalism of a crumbling British empire based on colonial plunder, racism and apartheid. It was class, not nation, that defined their ideological act in defence of the Soviet Union, a commitment to working-class solidarity that superseded all nationalist propaganda against the USSR. Their revolutionary conviction remains unparalleled in the city's political history.

This legacy was not confined to clandestine circles. In the 1946 local elections, communist candidate Pearl Lilley secured 20.2 per cent of the vote in the Cambridge Borough Council, a seat normally considered a safe Conservative hold (the victorious Tory candidate won by a mere 3.3 per cent). The Trumpington ward, in particular, emerged as a stronghold of party support. The alternative policies articulated by the Cambridge Communist Party in their post-war pamphlets

possess a startling contemporaneity. Their demands—for spacious housing, comprehensive healthcare, maternity and child welfare, robust education, recreational clubs, and progressive town planning that segregated commercial thoroughfares from residential tranquillity—read like a blueprint for modern urban equity. Crucially, they offered fiscal strategies to fund this infrastructure, pre-emptively answering the perennial objection: "Where will the money come from?" Furthermore, they championed a cooperative retail model structured for public benefit, laying out a thirty-five-page manifesto and its vision that interwove domestic reform with militant anti-fascist and anti-Nazi mobilization. The issues they raised and the alternatives they offered have lost none of their relevance for Cambridge and the wider country today.

The communists of Cambridge were never parochial; their fight was inherently internationalist, extending solidarity to anti-colonial and anti-racist struggles against British imperialism, apartheid. And colonial plunder. This global conscience was galvanised by the presence of the American bass-baritone, activist, and communist Paul Robeson, whose concerts at the Cambridge Regal were not mere entertainment but acts of political communion. Robeson's subsequent tours of Scottish mining towns and northern England exemplified the party's strategy of weaving cultural outreach with mass mobilisation to raise class consciousness, expand class organisation and class struggle.

Today, as racially motivated hate crimes surge and people of colour face increasing hostility in Cambridge and across the country, the

It was class, not nation, that defined their ideological act in defence of the Soviet Union, a commitment to working-class solidarity that superseded all nationalist propaganda against the USSR.

communists continue to remain at the vanguard of anti-racist action. Yet the pressing question lingers: will communists repay the historic debt of solidarity to the black community through substantive action, rather than belated, haphazardly crafted statements? Will their solidarity be proven not in ink, and speeches but in the defiant presence of their feet on the streets, defending those under siege because of their skin colour?

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Dargah Hazratbal

sound of prayers as groups of devotees moved towards the shrine, while volunteers and officials worked to manage the crowds.

Inside and around the shrine, the recitation of durood and naats added to the distinct spiritual atmosphere. The night-long Shab Khwaani is underway, with devotees expected to continue prayers and religious observances through the night.

On Wednesday, people across Jammu and Kashmir will observe Eid-e-Milad-un-Nabi (SAW), with prayers, religious discourses, recitation of the Quran, durood and naats being held at mosques and shrines.

Religious scholars and clerics are expected to speak about the life and teachings of Prophet Muhammad (SAW), particularly his message of compassion, mercy, patience and brotherhood.

With a massive movement of devotees expected, the Traffic Police City Srinagar has issued a detailed traffic advisory for the intervening night of August 25 and 26 and the Friday following Eid-e-Milad-un-Nabi on August 28.

According to the advisory, vehicles coming from north Kashmir after reaching Shalteng will be routed through Parimpora, Qamarwari Cement Bridge, Noorbagh, Sekidafar, Eidgah, Alimasjid, Sazgaripora, Hawal, Alamgari Bazar, Mill Stop, Molvi Stop, Botshah Mohallah and Kanitar before reaching the University parking area through the Saderbal side.

Vehicles from south Kashmir reaching Panthachowk will proceed through Stone Quarry, Batwara, Sonwar Bazar, Ram Munshi Bagh, Gupkar, Grand Palace, Zethiyar Ghat, Nishat, Foreshore Road and Habbak Crossing before entering the Naseembagh-side University parking area.

Devotees travelling from Budgam and adjoining areas will use the Hyderpora-Tengpora-Bemina Bypass-Bemina Crossing-Qamarwari route and thereafter proceed through Noorbagh, Sekidafar, Eidgah, Alimasjid, Sazgaripora, Hawal, Alamgari Bazar, Mill Stop, Molvi Stop, Botshah Mohallah and Kanitar to the Saderbal-side University parking.

Those travelling from Lal Chowk will be routed through SRTC Crossing, Ikhwan Chowk, Bhoori Kadal, Rajouri Kadal, Gojwari Chowk, Hawal, Alamgari Bazar, Mill Stop, Molvi Stop, Khanyar Chowk, Botshah Mohallah and Kanitar.

Vehicles from Ganderbal will use the Nagbal-Zakoora-Habbak route to reach the Naseembagh parking area.

Traffic Police has also prescribed separate return routes to prevent congestion after the congregations.

Vehicles from north and central Kashmir will be parked inside the University campus through the Sir Syed Gate on the Saderbal side, while vehicles from south Kashmir, including Ganderbal, will use the Naseembagh-side University parking through Budshah Gate.

Those coming from Rainawari and Khanyar towards Hazratbal can use the NIT Parking/Multi-Level Parking at Hazratbal. A separate traffic camp at Hazratbal has been earmarked for VIP and official vehicles—(KNO)

Warming High

changes in temperature and snow conditions across the Himalayan region.

For Jammu and Kashmir, which forms part of the western Himalayas, the findings are particularly significant as the region's glaciers, snowfields and mountain ecosystems play an important role in sustaining rivers and water resources.

According to the study, CMIP6 projections indicate substantial warming in high-altitude areas of the Greater Himalayas and Trans-Himalayan ranges by the end of this century, with the magnitude of warming depending on future greenhouse gas emissions.

Under high-emission scenarios, the researchers project considerable changes in surface temperature and snow amount, conditions that could accelerate glacier retreat and alter the timing and availability of meltwater.

The changes could have implications for Jammu and Kashmir, where communities, agriculture, hydropower and ecosystems depend heavily on mountain water resources.

The study also highlighted the growing risk of glacial lake outburst floods (GLOFs), which occur when water accumulated in glacial lakes is suddenly released, potentially sending destructive floodwaters downstream.

The eastern Himalayas have already emerged as a major GLOF risk hotspot, but researchers cautioned that climate-driven changes could alter the geographic distribution of such risks, making improved monitoring important across the Himalayan region.

For J&K, the findings underscore the vulnerability of high-altitude areas and glacier-fed river systems to changes in temperature and precipitation.

The researchers stressed the need for stronger climate monitoring, improved predictive modelling and early-warning systems to prepare Himalayan communities for climate-related hazards.

They also called for enhanced ground-based observations alongside satellite remote sensing to better understand changes in glaciers, seasonal snow cover and high-altitude hydrology.

The study noted that the Himalayas contain more than 15,000 glaciers and provide freshwater to a vast population

across South Asia, making changes in the region's cryosphere a concern extending well beyond the mountains.

The researchers said reducing greenhouse gas emissions remains critical, while adaptation measures and better hazard preparedness will be essential to address the increasing vulnerability of Himalayan regions such as Jammu and Kashmir.

The study was authored by Protyu-sha Mukhopadhyay, T P Sabin, Swagata Payra, Akhouri Pramod Krishna and Parthasarathi Mukhopadhyay—(KNO)

PSC Pushes Panic

functioning of government organizations,” the report noted.

The Commission stressed that diversification in fields such as education, medical sciences and computer sciences must be accommodated and incentivized through updated service rules.

It said that modernizing recruitment rules would also help reduce litigation.

The apex recruitment body of the UT further pointed out that draft recruitment rules submitted by departments for concurrence are often incomplete. “The proposal for seeking concurrence of the J&K PSC on the draft recruitment rules is being submitted incompletely by some Administrative Departments in respect of comparative statements, creation/abolition orders and concurrence of the Finance Department in case of change of nomenclature/creation of posts. In order to ensure uniformity, the Commission issued a checklist for submitting draft recruitment rules, and the same has been forwarded to all the Departments,” the report stated.

The Commission has called for immediate notification of recruitment rules for which it has already conveyed its concurrence.

It cautioned that no amendment in service rules should be made without consulting the PSC, as required under existing regulations.

The PSC has also recommended that departments must consider minimum qualifications while revising recruitment rules. “It has been noticed that in various departments, a certain category of posts is eligible for promotion to the next level post even without the basic minimum qualification as per the existing recruitment rules of the concerned departments,” the report reads—(KNO)

88.8% Of Homes Near

said sharply increases the likelihood of pesticide drift reaching residential areas. Compounding this, 88.80 per cent of homes had no intercepting buffer zone at all. More than 70 per cent of households reported unsafe disposal of pesticide packets, containers and leftovers, largely through open dumping near orchards, while 45.38 per cent stored pesticides within their domestic living space rather than outside.

Using the composite RPI, which scores households from 0 to 6 based on how many risk conditions apply to them, the study classified about one-fourth of households as high-risk (score 5-6), reflecting a combination of close orchard proximity, absent buffer zones, unsafe pesticide handling, low awareness and reported health symptoms. Over half fell into the moderate-risk category (score 3-4), while only a small share of households qualified as low-risk (score 0-2). Combined, three-fourths of surveyed households fell within the moderate-to-high risk bracket.

The study also found that 55.01 per cent of respondents reported experiencing health symptoms following pesticide spraying, and 61.30 per cent had only low to moderate awareness of the health hazards posed by pesticide exposure.

The study said that horticultural land in Jammu and Kashmir has expanded dramatically, from 48,000 hectares in 1970-71 to 212,000 hectares in 2022, citing Directorate of Horticulture data. Apple cultivation, it said, remains the primary consumer of pesticides in the region, accounting for 83 per cent of usage, split between fungicides (71.1%), insecticides (15.4%) and acaricides (7.7%). Commonly used pesticides in Kashmir’s orchards include chlorpyrifos, mancozeb and captan, some of which are classified as carcinogenic, alongside dithane, dimethoate, carboxin, synthetic pyrethroids and endosulfan.

Unlike agricultural regions in the plains where farmland is typically separated from residential areas, the study pointed out that Kashmir’s hilly terrain results in apple orchards sitting in close spatial proximity to homes, meaning residents can be exposed to pesticide drift even without any direct occupational involvement in horticulture.

The researchers called for the demarcation of multi-layered vegetative buffer zones around residential spaces to intercept wind-driven pesticide drift, and recommended that pesticide-treated areas be temporarily labelled as “no entry zones” for a few days after spraying to reduce exposure. They also recommended that doors and windows be kept closed during active spraying periods, and that new construction within or near orchard spaces be planned with pesticide exposure risk in mind.

The researchers noted that relocating the large population currently living near active pesticide-treated land is not a feasible solution, making buffer zones and safer handling practices the more immediate priority. They also called for future research combining geospatial mapping with environmental and biological monitoring, including testing of soil, water and

food, as well as biological samples such as blood and urine, to build a fuller picture of pesticide contamination in the region—(KNO)

CM Calls For

the challenges being faced by teachers and students, and the way forward.

Reflecting on the changing nature of the teaching profession, Omar Abdullah said the challenges before teachers today are very different from those faced 10, 15 or 20 years ago.

“There was a time when we could not even think of complaining about teachers. From KG to Class 12, I do not remember ever complaining to my parents about any teacher,” he said, adding that children today are growing up in a vastly different environment.

He said that while children must certainly be encouraged to ask questions, they must also learn to listen and engage with the answers they receive.

The Chief Minister recalled former President Dr APJ Abdul Kalam’s emphasis on the role of parents and teachers in shaping the minds of children and building a better society.

“Today, when we put more responsibility on you, I also realize that it is not as easy to be a teacher today as it was 10 to 20 years ago,” he said.

He pointed out that teachers today have to compete for the attention of children with smartphones, social media, multiple television channels and now artificial intelligence.

“Today, you are competing with a smartphone, social media, channels, so many things. And now artificial intelligence. At the same time, how difficult it must be for a teacher to decide whether the child’s assignment is his own creation or the help of artificial intelligence,” the Chief Minister remarked.

Omar Abdullah also acknowledged that the Government itself often adds to the responsibilities of teachers by involving them in a range of activities beyond classroom teaching.

From preparing students for cultural programmes on the occasion of national events to organizing activities on various important commemorative days or participating in events such as Nasha Mukht Bharat campaigns or election-related duties, teachers are frequently called upon to shoulder additional responsibilities, he said.

The Chief Minister assured the teaching community that the Government would address their genuine service-related and professional concerns, including transfers, Departmental Promotion Committees, vacancies and other issues.

“If you have problems with transfers, if you have problems with DPCs, if you have problems with vacancies, if you have problems with other things, then we have to solve those problems,” he said, assuring the teachers that he and Education Minister Sakina Itoo would work together to resolve their issues.

Omar Abdullah said there was a need to acknowledge the difficult conditions in which many teachers work, particularly in remote and rural schools.

“It is not easy to provide education in the remote schools of the village. It is difficult to work there,” he said, calling for greater attention to teachers who serve in such areas despite lacking influence or access to people in positions of power.

He also pointed to disparities in the distribution of teachers, noting that some city schools have more teachers and fewer students, while remote schools continue to face shortages.

The Chief Minister underlined that addressing infrastructure deficiencies and filling vacancies were responsibilities of the Government and not of teachers.

“There are gaps in the infrastructure. We talk about smart classes, but how far have we been able to take them? Smart classes are far away. In some places, we are still not able to provide the right infrastructure for the schools—with schools functioning in rented accommodation, unsafe buildings,” he said.

He said that while the Government was gradually working to improve school infrastructure, the responsibility for fixing these deficiencies rested with the administration.

Chief Minister said that providing infrastructure, filling up of vacancies is the responsibility of the Government. “Strengthening your hands so that you can do your work properly is the responsibility of me and my colleagues,” he said.

The Chief Minister urged teachers to focus on helping children identify their aspirations and preparing them to contribute positively to Jammu and Kashmir.

He said that while J&K had made considerable progress since 1947, the pace of global change was accelerating and the education system needed to prepare children for a very different future.

“We have progressed a lot from 1947 to today. But the world is changing very fast. The changes that took 30, 40 or 50 years will happen very fast in the next 20 or 30 years. We have to prepare our kids for that,” he said.

He stressed that the ultimate objective should be to equip children with the skills, confidence and values necessary to make a positive contribution to Jammu and Kashmir.

“It is all for J&K. And it is not your responsibility alone,” he said, adding that teachers would succeed only when the Government succeeded in creating the right environment for them to work.

“You will only be able to succeed if we succeed. If we fix your situation, if we improve the school, then you will improve the future of your kids,” Omar Abdullah said.

Referring to the issue of the Teacher Eligibility Test (TET), the Chief Minister said the Government had repeatedly attempted

to raise the matter and would continue to make its voice heard.

“We will try to address it but with the hope that we will improve the education of J&K students,” he said.

The Chief Minister also emphasized that teachers should not feel that the Government was placing the entire burden of educational transformation on their shoulders and then leaving them to deal with the challenges alone.

“Don’t think that we have given you all the responsibility, that you do it and we leave. That won’t happen,” he said.

Minister for Education Sakina Itoo and Advisor to the Chief Minister Nasir Aslam Wani also addressed the conference and highlighted the pivotal role of teachers in society. They also outlined various initiatives undertaken by the Omar Abdullah-led Government since assuming office, including the reversal of the winter session in Kashmir valley and in winter zones of Jammu division.

MLA Beerwah Dr Shafi Ahmed Wani, MLA Khansahab Saifuddin Bhat, Director School Education Kashmir Naseer Ahmed Wani, Chief Education Officers, Chairman J&K Teachers Forum Mohd Shafi Rather, office bearers of the Forum and a large number of teachers were present on the occasion.

No More Power Tariff

previous dispensations had significantly hiked electricity rates during their rule.

“I acknowledge the increase in electricity tariffs, but we did not do it out of happiness. It was a compulsion,” CM Omar said, adding that his government had tried to keep the additional burden on consumers to a minimum.

Comparing the latest revision with previous tariff hikes, the Chief Minister said, “When these people were in power, they increased the tariff by 13-15 per cent four years ago.”

Referring specifically to the PDP-BJP coalition government, CM Omar said, “When Mehbooba Mufti Sahiba was the Chief Minister, the electricity rates were increased by 13.5 to 14 per cent.”

Questioning the criticism of the latest hike, the Chief Minister asked why similar objections were not raised when previous regimes increased the rates. “Why did you remain silent at that time? At that time, didn’t you feel that injustice was being done to the people?” he asked.

CM Omar assured consumers that his government would not increase electricity tariffs further.

“I assure you, my complete effort will be that, God willing, during this government, after this, we will not increase the electricity rates any further. No more than this,” he said.

The Chief Minister said the government would now focus on improving basic services and infrastructure, including drinking water, schools, healthcare, roads and horticulture infrastructure.

He also reiterated that his government would fulfil the commitments made to the people during the remaining three-and-a-half years of its term—(KNO)

Three Held With

Kulgam.

The recovered material has been taken into custody, while further investigation is underway, he added—(KNO)

Aga Ruhullah On Farooq

I respect him. I don't want him to ask me for something and I return it to him empty-handed," he added.

Asked whether he would accept Farooq Abdullah's challenge, Ruhullah said he will give an answer in a few days—(KNO)



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Over a dozen Tral villages suffer due to closed unsafe Lariyar Bridge

MLA Rafiq Naik offers Rs 32 lakh for temporary diversion

JAHANGEER GANAIE

PULWAMA: More than a month after the Lariyar Bridge in Tral was declared unsafe for traffic, residents of over a dozen villages continue to face hardship as no temporary diversion has yet been provided at the site.

The 40-year-old bridge was declared unsafe by the Roads and Buildings (R&B) Department after cracks developed in its structure. Following the safety assessment, authorities stopped traffic on the bridge as a precautionary measure, disrupting an important connectivity link for people living in the surrounding areas.

Since its closure, residents have been compelled to use longer alternative routes to reach Tral town and adjoining areas.

Residents said that the prolonged disruption has affected daily commuters, students, employees, traders and patients, besides increasing travel time and transportation expenses. They urged the adminis-



FILE PIC

tration to establish a temporary diversion immediately so that connectivity could be restored until a permanent bridge is constructed.

Meanwhile, MLA Tral Rafiq Naik said the issue has been taken up with the concerned authorities and assured that a temporary diversion would be constructed soon.

Naik said he has also conveyed to the authorities that he is ready to allocate Rs 32 lakh from his Constituency Development Fund (CDF) for construction of the diversion as an interim measure until a permanent solution is put in place.

“I have taken up the issue with the concerned authorities and the diversion will come up soon. I have also told the authorities that I am ready to provide Rs 32 lakh from my CDF for construction of the diversion so that people do not continue to suffer until permanent measures are taken,” Naik said.

“The bridge is a vital link for several villages, and its closure has affected almost every section of society. People have already suffered for more than a month. We hope the promised diversion is constructed at the earliest,” a resident said.

Residents said that while the safety of commuters could not be compromised, authorities should have made an alternative arrangement immediately after closing the bridge.

“We appreciate the decision to stop traffic on an unsafe bridge, but there should have been a temporary alternative from the very beginning. Students, patients, employees and traders are all facing difficulties because of the closure,” a resident said.

Locals reiterated their demand for the construction of a new permanent bridge, saying the existing structure is old and has developed serious structural defects.

They urged the administration, R&B Department and other concerned agencies to expedite both the temporary diversion and the process for a permanent replacement, stating that prolonged disruption of the vital link could continue to affect education, healthcare, trade and other essential activities in the area—(KNO)

DDC Anantnag reviews Bijbehara-Anantnag Road Widening Project

GMK NEWS NETWORK

ANANTNAG: District Development Commissioner (DDC), Anantnag, Dr. Bilal Mohiuddin Bhat, Tuesday chaired a key meeting with concerned officers to review the proposed widening of the Bijbehara-Anantnag Road and the shifting of utilities affected by the project. During the meeting, the DDC directed the revenue authorities to undertake a proper demarcation of the land and ensure a comprehensive survey of the proposed alignment. He stressed the need to prepare a sustainable and realistic Detailed Project Report (DPR) after conducting a thorough site inspection.

Dr. Bilal directed the



officers to identify and address all issues likely to arise during the execution of the project, including land acquisition, utility shifting, structures falling within the proposed alignment, encroachments, and

illegal constructions.

The DDC emphasized that all necessary provisions and associated costs must be incorporated into the DPR to ensure the smooth and timely execution of the road-widening

project. He directed the officers to undertake coordinated field visits and ensure that all technical, revenue, and utility-related aspects are properly assessed before the finalization of the DPR.

He further directed the agencies concerned to take the necessary measures to remove encroachments and illegal constructions falling within the proposed alignment, in accordance with applicable rules and procedures.

The meeting was attended by Addl Deputy Commissioner, SE Hydraulics, CPO, ACR, XEN R&B, XEN KPDCL, Tehsildars of Bijbehara and Anantnag, Executive Officer Municipal Committee Bijbehara besides other concerned officials.

UPI: From small steps within India to giant leap in global financial arena

IAN S

NEW DELHI: When Prime Minister Narendra Modi launched BHIM UPI (Bharat Interface for Money – Unified Payments Interface) App during the inauguration of the “DigiDhanMela” on December 31, 2016, he had urged people to make digital payments a habit to transform the country into a cashless economy.

On Tuesday, he recalled the transformative journey that has marked a major turning point in India’s digital payment journey. Highlighting the scale and reach it has achieved in a decade, PM Modi posted on X that UPI’s remarkable journey is something every Indian can be proud of and

invited citizens to share their experiences of using the platform and how it has impacted their daily lives.

Digital payments have indeed emerged as one of the most remarkable innovations in India’s financial ecosystem, reshaping the way citizens transact and positioning the country as a global leader in digital payments. What was initially a modest platform has become the backbone of India’s financial transactions, which, as observed by the Prime Minister in another post, “registered nearly a 13,000-fold rise in transaction value”.

In the first month of operations in August 2016, UPI recorded around 90,000 transactions, while in FY

2025-2026 it accounted for 84 per cent of India’s digital payments.

Meanwhile, the number of banks live on the platform increased to 703 in FY2025-26 from 44 in FY 2016-17, which is said to include public and private sectors, small finance, and cooperative banks.

Developed by the National Payments Corporation of India (NPCI), UPI allows Indian users to make real-time payments using apps like BHIM, PhonePe, Google Pay, and Paytm. The numbers themselves tell a compelling story. In its first year, UPI processed fewer than 2 crore transactions. By 2026, that figure rose to more than 24,000 crore transactions,

worth nearly Rs 314 lakh crore. The Prime Minister has repeatedly highlighted these figures to underscore India’s leadership in digital payments, noting that UPI now accounts for nearly half of global real-time payment transactions.

In its June 2025 report, titled “Growing Retail Digital Payments: The Value of Interoperability”, the International Monetary Fund (IMF) highlighted UPI as the largest retail fast-payment system globally by transaction volume. It stated that UPI’s scale and interoperability have been key drivers of its rapid adoption, enabling users to freely choose among multiple apps and banks while maintaining seamless transactions.

DC Srinagar reviews renovation works at Narayan Temple Bulbul Lanker



GMK NEWS NETWORK

SRINAGAR: Deputy Commissioner(DC) Srinagar, Akshay Labroo, on Tuesday visited the Narayan Temple at Bulbul Lanker in the Share-Khaas area of the District to inspect the renovation and upgradation works being taken under the Government’s Heritage Conservation Scheme.

During the visit, the DC was accompanied by Additional Deputy Commissioner, Mir Imtiyaz Ul Aziz, Joint Commissioner SMC, Nuzhat Qureshi, IAS Probationer Aakash Garg, Chief Planning Officer, Fayaz Ahmad, Superintending Engineer R&B North, Shabir Ahmad, SDM East, Zubair Ahmad, Chief Medical Officer, Dr Tahir Sajad, Executive Engineer, Water Works Division, Aijaz Rafiq, Executive Engineer, R&B Division Core, Arif Hazari, Executive Engineer KPDCL, Syed Abrar, Tehsildar Khanyar, Syed

Shahid, ZMO MR Gunj, Dr Shafqat, Executive Engineer, City Drainage SMC, and other concerned.

During the visit, the Deputy Commissioner reviewed the conservation works being executed on the Temple and its allied structures on heritage pattern.

The DC emphasized the need for quality execution, close coordination among departments and timely completion of the works on the religious and heritage assets while upgrading associated infrastructure while ensuring that the heritage character and architectural significance of the temple are preserved.

He also directed the concerned agencies to address issues related to essential services and infrastructure in a coordinated manner so that the restoration work progresses smoothly and the site receives the required civic and utility support.

SWD Srinagar organizes awareness session on "Dignity and Personal well-being"

GMK NEWS NETWORK

SRINAGAR: The Social Welfare Department (SWD), SANKALP-HEW Srinagar organised an awareness session on “Dignity and Personal Well-Being” at Government Boys Higher Secondary School (GBHSS), Mujgund, Srinagar Thursday.

The session focused on sensitizing students about the importance of maintaining personal dignity, self-respect, emotional well-being, healthy habits and responsible behaviour in their day-to-day lives. The participants were encouraged to develop a positive attitude towards themselves and others and to understand the importance of seeking appropriate support whenever required.

The Officials from SANKALP-HEW Srinagar highlighted the significance of personal well-being in building confidence, promoting healthy relationships and creating a respectful and supportive environment at home, in educational institutions and in society.

The programme witnessed active participation from the students, who interacted with the officials of SANKALP-HEW Srinagar and shared their views and experiences during the session.

The Department of Social Welfare, Srinagar, reiterated its commitment to organizing such awareness and sensitization programmes for the overall well-being, empowerment and development of students and young people.

Javid Dar greets people on Eid-i-Milad-ul-Nabi (SAW)

GMK NEWS NETWORK

SRINAGAR: Minister for Agriculture Production, Rural Development and Panchayati Raj, Cooperatives and Election Department, Javid Ahmad Dar has extended his warm greetings and best wishes to the people of Jammu and Kashmir on the auspicious occasion of Eid-i-Milad-ul-Nabi (SAW).

In his message, the Minister said that the blessed occasion offers an opportunity to reflect upon the exemplary life and timeless teachings of Prophet Muhammad (SAW), which continue to inspire humanity towards peace, compassion, brotherhood, tolerance, justice, humility and service to mankind.

Javid Dar said the teachings of the Prophet Muhammad (SAW) emphasise respect for human dignity, care for the vulnerable, forgiveness and peaceful coexistence. He called upon people to imbibe these values in their daily lives and work collectively towards strengthening the bonds of social harmony, mutual respect and communal amity in society.

The Minister expressed hope that the auspicious occasion would usher in peace, prosperity, happiness and well-being for the people of Jammu and Kashmir and further strengthen the spirit of unity and brotherhood across the Union Territory.

Government of Jammu and Kashmir OFFICE OF THE CHILD DEVELOPMENT PROJECT OFFICER POSHAN PROJECT TREHGAM KUPWARA

Subject: Merit cum Tentative Selection List of Sahayikas (Anganwadi Helpers) of Poshan Project Trehgam. (PUBLIC NOTICE)

Whereas, Pursuant to the Human Resource Policy for recruitment of Sanginis (Anganwadi Workers/AWWs) and Sahayikas (Anganwadi Helpers/AWHs) issued vide Government Order No. 222-JK(SWD) of 2022 dated 30-11-2022 and Government Order No. 103-JK(SWD) of 2023 dated 28-04-2023, the vacancies of Sahayikas (Anganwadi Helpers/AWHs) have arisen due to various reasons, i.e., attaining the age of sixty, resignation, death, etc.

Whereas, this office submitted the vacancy position to the District Programme Officer, Kupwara vide No. CDPO/POSHAN/TRH/Estt/26/21 Dated: 13-04-2026, who further submitted it to the Mission Director, Poshan Jammu and Kashmir for accord of approval for recruitment of Sahayikas (Anganwadi Helpers) at vacant positions.

Whereas, the Mission Director, Poshan J&K, accorded approval for the recruitment of Sahayikas (Anganwadi Helpers) vide letter No: MD/POSHAN/22263-73 Dated: 18-06-2026 which was further communicated by the District Programme Officer, ICDS Kupwara to this office vide letter No. DPO/POSHAN/KUP/26/4749-59 Dated: 19-06-2026.

Whereas, this office advertised (02) vacant posts of Sahayikas (Anganwadi Helpers) against Anganwadi Centre Hallow Mohalla Hirri (PH Hirri-B Ward NO 02), Wani Mohalla Laderwan-C (PH Laderwan Ward No. 04), vide this office advertisement notification No. 06-CDPO-TREHGAM of 2026 Dated: 02-07-2026, and Extension Notice No. CDPO/POSHAN/TRH/ADV/2026-27/247-262 dated: 23-07-2026, published in daily newspapers Kashmiri Convener and Chattan on 03-07-2026, and Asian Express, Srinagar News, Global Post and Fajar on 24-07-2026, respectively, and also uploaded on departmental/district websites for wide publicity.

Whereas, in response to the said advertisement notice, the following number of applications were received within the prescribed/ Stipulated time; the details are as under

S. No	Name of Anganwadi Center	Ward No	No of Applications Received
01.	Hallow Mohalla Hirri	02	02
02.	Wani Mohalla Laderwan-C	04	01

Whereas, the requisite screening has been conducted as envisaged in Government Order No. 222-JK(SWD) of 2022 dated 30-11-2022 and Government Order No. 103-JK(SWD) of 2023 dated 28-04-2023, and a merit panel has been prepared.

Whereas, the merit list along with the tentative selection list was prepared as per the criteria laid down in the said Govt. Orders and placed before the committee. After thorough deliberations and analysis, the Selection Committee approved the merit list cum tentative selection list for wide publication in local newspapers, display at the offices of all committee members, respective Panchayats Ghars, and on the department’s website, as well as the NIC website at the Deputy Commissioner’s office, inviting objections (if any).

Therefore, the merit-cum-tentative selection list attached at Annexure-A and Annexure-B of this notification is hereby published today on 25-08-2026 for inviting appeals/objections (if any). The appeal/objection (if any) against the said merit-cum-tentative selection list shall be filed in the office of the Child Development Project Officer, Poshan Project (ICDS) Trehgam, Main Road, Near Post Office Trehgam, against proper receipt, within ten days from the date of publication of the merit cum tentative selection list during working hours (up to 4:30 PM). No appeal/objection shall be entertained after the lapse of the last date.

ANNEXURE-A

Merit List of candidates who have applied for the post of Sahayikas (Anganwadi Helpers) for Anganwadi centre Hallow Mohalla Hirri (PH Hirri-B Ward NO 02), Wani Mohalla Laderwan-C (PH Laderwan Ward No. 04)

S. No	Index No	Name of Candidate	Parentage/ Spouse Name	Residence/ Panchayat Halqa	Location of AWC	Ward No	D.O.B	Qualification	Marks obtained in 10 th Out of	Total Merit	Remarks
1	02	Ulfat Ara	D/o Gh Ahmad Mir W/o Mashooq Danish Mir	Hirri B	Hallow Mohalla Hirri	02	01-02-1991	10 th	258/500	51.6	
2	01	Rubeena Bano	D/o Ab Ahad Lone W/o Tahir Ahmad Mir	Hirri B	Hallow Mohalla Hirri	02	01-01-1991	10 th	170/500	34	
3	03	Shugufta Bano	D/o Mohammad Sultan Mir W/o Sadam Hussain Wani	Laderwan	Wani Mohalla Laderwan-C	04	05-03-2002	10 th	208/500	41.6	

ANNEXURE-B

Tentative Selection list for the post of Sahayikas (Anganwadi Helpers) for Anganwadi centre Hallow Mohalla Hirri (PH Hirri-B Ward NO 02), Wani Mohalla Laderwan-C (PH Laderwan Ward No. 04)

S. No	Index No	Name of Candidate	Parentage/ Spouse Name	Residence/ Panchayat Halqa	Location of AWC	Ward No	D.O.B	Qualification	Marks obtained in 10 th Out of	Total Merit	Remarks
1	02	Ulfat Ara	D/o Gh Ahmad Mir W/o Mashooq Danish Mir	Hirri B	Hallow Mohalla Hirri	02	01-02-1991	10 th	258/500	51.6	
2	03	Shugufta Bano	D/o Mohammad Sultan Mir W/o Sadam Hussain Wani	Laderwan	Wani Mohalla Laderwan-C	04	05-03-2002	10 th	208/500	41.6	

No: CDPO/POSHAN/TRH/ADV/2026-27/338- 353
Dated:- 25-08-2026

DIPK-4985-26
DT: 25/08/2026

Child Dev. Project Officer
Poshan Project TREHGAM

Government of Jammu & Kashmir DEPARTMENT OF WILDLIFE PROTECTION OFFICE OF THE WILDLIFE WARDEN, SHOPIAN

Wildlife-shopian@jk.gov.in wildlifeshopian2009@gmail.com

Corrigendum to E-NIT No. 03 of 2026-27 dated 19.08.2026

In partial modification of the E-NIT No. 03 of 2026-27 dated 19.08.2026 issued by under endorsement No. WLW-Spn-Estt/2026/1189-91 dated: 18.08.2026, regarding the work "Upgradation of Inspection Hut at Dongimarg (Peer Ki Gali), Hirpora WLS", the following amendments shall be read in the tender document:

- Financial Turnover: The prescribed financial turnover requirement is hereby exempted.
- Work Experience: The prescribed work experience/similar nature of work requirement is hereby exempted.
- EMD: The EMD shall be submitted only in the form of CDR/FDR, duly pledged in favour of Wildlife Warden, Shopian. The option of BG shall not be applicable.
- Other Terms: All other terms and conditions of the E-NIT shall remain unchanged.

No: WLW-Spn-Estt/2026/1254-56
Dated: 24.08.2026

DIPK-4994-26
DT: 25/08/2026

Wildlife Warden,
Shopian Wildlife Division

B'pora clinches U-14 Girls Kabaddi Title as Provincial-Level Competition concludes



GMK SPORTS DESK

BANDIPORA: The Inter-District Provincial-Level U-14 Girls Kabaddi Competition, organised by the Department of Youth Services and Sports, Bandipora, concluded Thursday at Higher Secondary School Nadihal, with District Bandipora emerging as the winner and District Anantnag securing the runner-up position.

The competition witnessed enthusiastic participation from young athletes representing different districts, providing them a platform to showcase their sporting talent, teamwork, discipline and competitive spirit.

In the keenly contested final, District Bandipora displayed an impressive performance to secure the championship title, while District Anantnag finished

as the runner-up.

The concluding ceremony was attended by District Youth Services and Sports Officer (DYSSO) Bandipora, Ab Majeed Rather besides officials and field staff of the department were also present on the occasion.

On the occasion, DYSSO Bandipora congratulated the winning team for their commendable performance and also lauded District Anantnag for putting up a strong fight to finish as runners-up. He encouraged all participating teams, particularly those who could not make it to the final, to remain focused, continue training with dedication and treat the experience gained from the championship as a stepping stone towards greater achievements. He emphasised that every

match played, every challenge faced and every effort made on the field contributes to the growth and development of a young sportsperson.

While speaking on the occasion, the DYSSO Bandipora also expressed gratitude to the District Administration, District Information Officer Bandipora, Chief Medical Officer Bandipora, Principal HSS Nadihal, besides officials, field staff and other supporting staff for their valuable cooperation and contribution towards the smooth and successful conduct of the championship.

The Department of Youth Services and Sports congratulated the winning team, runners-up and all participating athletes, and appreciated their commitment towards sports and healthy competition.

DC Anantnag inaugurates U-17 Girls Cricket Tournament



GMK SPORTS DESK

ANANTNAG: Deputy Commissioner (DC), Anantnag, Dr. Bilal Mohiuddin Bhat Tuesday inaugurated the Inter-District Provincial Level (IDPL) Under-17 Girls Cricket Tournament at Government Higher Secondary School, Bijbehara.

The inaugural ceremony was attended by SE R&B, Syed Ishfaq Ahmad, ACR, Tariq Ahmad Malik and DYSSO, Zahoor Ahmad Wani, besides sports officials, players and accompanying staff.

The tournament is being organised by Department of Youth Services & Sports (YSS), J&K and District Administration, Anantnag, with the objective of providing young girl cricketers a competitive platform and identifying promising sporting talent from across the districts.

Speaking on the occasion, the DC appreciated YSS Department for organising the tournament and providing young girls such opportunities to excel in sports. He interacted with the participants and encouraged them to play with passion, discipline and dedication for making best from such bigger platforms.

Emphasizing the importance of sports and games, Dr. Bilal said that these engagements have active role in youth empowerment by inculcating discipline, leadership and other positive values among them. These activities are instrumental in keeping youth away from drugs and other negative influences besides promoting the cause of a healthy society, he remarked.

With 20 district teams participating in the tournament, the host district

has made comprehensive arrangements for players and accompanying officials of the visiting teams to conduct the mega sports event in a comfortable, smooth and well-organised manner.

The tournament is being conducted at multiple well-maintained venues, with matches being played on a league basis, providing each team adequate opportunities to showcase their talent and compete at the provincial level. A dedicated selection process through experienced selectors and officials has also been planned following the conclusion of the tournament.

The tournament will be helpful in promoting women's cricket, strengthening grassroots sports and identifying sporting talent, while providing young athletes meaningful opportunities to compete, perform and progress in their sporting careers.

India U20 men's team ready for Tashkent qualifiers after unbeaten Bengaluru run

IAN S

NEW DELHI: With four unbeaten friendly matches under their belt and no goals conceded, the India U20 men's team are heading into the final stretch of their preparations for the AFC U20 Asian Cup China 2027 Qualifiers. The Blue Colts will depart for Tashkent on Wednesday.

India recorded three wins and a draw across their four international friendlies in Bengaluru earlier this month, beating Singapore twice (3-0 and 1-0), drawing 0-0 with Yemen, and securing a 1-0 victory in the second match against the West Asian side. The results provided Mahesh Gawali's side with valuable match exposure ahead of the three crucial qualifiers in Uzbekistan.

For winger Vishal Yadav, who

started in all four friendlies, the Bengaluru camp provided the team with the opportunity to work collectively towards the challenge ahead. "The camp is going really well so far. We are working together for the Qualifiers and putting in our best effort to be fully prepared for the three games ahead."

The four friendlies also allowed the players to test themselves against different styles of opposition and identify areas for improvement. India scored five goals across the matches while keeping four consecutive clean sheets.

"The friendly matches against Singapore and Yemen were very important for us. They gave us a chance to test ourselves against strong opposition, understand where we need to improve and gain confidence. Yemen, in particular, were good both with and

without the ball. The matches were challenging both physically and tactically, which helped us prepare better for the upcoming competition," said Yadav.

The two matches against Yemen also offered defender Sumit Sharma Brahmacharimayum a significant personal milestone, as he captained the Blue Colts in both games. The centre-back described the experience as both an honour and a responsibility.

"It felt like a huge honour and a big responsibility to be the captain of the national team. Being captain in such big games gave me more confidence and extra motivation to lead the team and communicate better with my teammates. I was proud of the trust the coaches and my teammates showed in me, and it made those two games special."

Almuqet FC Make Emphatic Debut with 7-1 Victory in Srinagar Premier Division

GMK SPORTS DESK

SRINAGAR: Almuqet Football Club made an emphatic entry into the Srinagar Premier Division Football League 2026, defeating Arco FC 7-1 at the TRC Turf Football Stadium in its first competitive outing.

Making their league debut, Almuqet FC produced a confident and attacking display, marking an encouraging start for a club with a long-term vision of developing a competitive senior team while creating a strong pathway for young footballers in Jammu & Kashmir.

Almuqet FC is a football initiative of Almuqet Systems Private Limited (ASPL), established in 2010 and headquartered at STPI, Rangreth, Srinagar. Through the club, ASPL aims to bring meaningful corporate support to football and contribute to a more structured and



sustainable sporting ecosystem in J&K.

The club's vision is to establish a professionally managed football club and academy that can identify, nurture and develop local talent, while progressively competing at the highest levels of Indian football.

Its current squad includes players with experience in Youth National Teams, the I-League, Srinagar Premier Division and Kashmir Super League, supported by an experienced coaching and management team.

Muzamil Mahmood,

Head Coach, Almuqet FC (AFC A License), said the manner of the team's beginning was more important than the scoreline. "This is a new club and our vision is to provide a pathway to players and play good-quality football. The result does not

matter much to me; what matters is that we started well and our management has trusted us. This is only the beginning. We have a lot to learn and improve." He said.

Zaffar Owais Andrabi, CEO, Almuqet Systems Private Limited, congratulated the team and said the victory was only the first step. He said "Kashmir has a remarkable football culture and enormous talent. We need better pathways, stronger structures and more opportunities for young players to progress. We want to build a club that young footballers can look towards a platform that helps them dream, develop and compete, and ultimately takes the talent of Kashmir to the highest levels of Indian football."

Almuqet FC's focus in future will be on building consistency, developing its players and establishing itself as a significant force in Kashmir football.

Duleep Trophy: North strike late to leave West needing 67 runs with three wickets in hand; Roy, Shahbaz lead East Zone to semis

IAN S

BENGALURU: North Zone produced a dramatic late fightback on Day 3 of their Duleep Trophy quarter-final against West Zone, picking up four wickets in the final 33 minutes of play to turn the contest on its head and leave their opponents needing 67 runs with only three wickets in hand, at the BCCI Centre of Excellence in Bengaluru on Tuesday.

West Zone were firmly in control about halfway through the third session, due to a 111-run stand between Musheer Khan and Ruturaj Gaikwad, which put their team on the path to victory. However, when Gaikwad was dismissed, it led to a collapse and gave North Zone fresh hope as they entered the final morning.

Although Gaikwad had appeared at ease even in the face of the kind of delivery the surface had to offer, he reached his fifty in less than a run-a-ball and was apparently going to lead West Zone home with Musheer. Yet his innings was ended by a run-out when he tried to steal a quick single - this being



the first run-out of his first-class career.

The dismissal had an immediate effect on the momentum. Less than three overs afterwards, Musheer fell just short of his century in an attempt to play a one-handed sweep; he was nicked off the toe-end as the ball kicked and turned sharply, thus ending his counter-

attacking innings.

Musheer played well in relation to the conditions, choosing his shots against the quick bowlers and attacking on the leg side. He made use of his feet when facing the spinners and depended on his usual sweep shot, but it was that same shot which eventually cost him.

After that, West Zone lost two quick wickets as the North Zone took advantage of the sudden change in momentum. Urvil Patel finished his innings without being dismissed, with Shardul Thakur and Tanush Kotian coming in next, and Tushar Deshpande also being able to contribute with the bat.

Abid Mushtaq, who had not taken a wicket until late in the innings, played a vital part in the change of direction by getting enough turn from the pitch to dismiss Shams Mulani and Mukesh Choudhary.

Earlier, in their second innings, North Zone had reached 222 after being at 107/4 at the start of the day, with Ayush Badoni scoring a fifty and Nishant Sindhu adding 44 from seventh position. The team then fell to 158/7 before Anshul Kamboj managed three sixes, which enabled them to pass 200.

Mulani and Kotian made the most of the grip and bite that the pitch provided, between them taking eight wickets. The West Zone team will now play on the last morning with 67 runs still needed and three wickets left.

INOX

SRINAGAR

MOVIE

Schedule

26 AUGUST 2026 WEDNESDAY

AWARAPAN 2

(U/A 16+)

HINDI

11:10 AM

01:55 PM

TOXIC:

A FAIRY TALE FOR GROWN-UPS

(A)

HINDI

02:00 PM

04:45 PM

05:45 PM

HINDI ATMOS

11:30 AM

03:15 PM

07:00 PM

SPIDER-MAN:

BRAND NEW DAY

(U/A 13+)

ENGLISH

WITH ENGLISH SUBTITLES

11:00 AM

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