

Good Morning

Kashmir

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Winter Chill Grips Kashmir

Fresh Snowfall In Higher Reaches



GMK NEWS NETWORK

SRINAGAR: Higher reaches of Kashmir received fresh snowfall, while the plains were lashed by rains on Tuesday, with the meteorological department forecasting a wet spell over the next 48 hours, officials said here.

Many areas in the higher reaches of Kashmir received light to moderate snowfall as the valley came under the influence of an active Western Disturbance, they added.

The officials said fresh snowfall was reported from the tourist resorts of Gulmarg and Sonamarg as well as from the Zojilla Axis.

The plains, including Srinagar, the summer capital of Jammu and Kashmir, were lashed by rains, which continued when the last reports came in, the officials said.

The fresh snowfall on the upper reaches of Gulmarg marked another spell of wintry weather in the region, while intermittent rainfall and overcast skies prevailed across several areas of the Valley.

Gulmarg experienced chilly conditions, with temperatures hovering around 10 degrees Celsius in the early afternoon, accompanied by rainfall in the lower areas of the resort.

According to the Meteorological Department, the prevailing western disturbance is expected to bring light to moderate rainfall at many places across Jammu and Kashmir, with snowfall over higher reaches, till October 15.

The weather ●P-06

Strengthen Operational Preparedness To Maintain Peace Across: DGP

GMK NEWS NETWORK

SRINAGAR: Calling on the officers to ensure effective coordination to address emerging security challenges, Director General of Police Nalin Prabhat on Tuesday directed them to

strengthen operational preparedness to maintain peace and security across Jammu and Kashmir.

Chairing an operational review meeting in hybrid mode at PCR Kashmir here, DGP Prabhat, according to the news agency—Kashmir ●P-06

CM Reviews Arrangements For Darbar Move



GMK NEWS NETWORK

SRINAGAR: Chief Minister Omar Abdullah Tuesday reviewed arrangements for the Darbar Move Session 2026-27 at a high-level meeting, directing all concerned departments to ensure a smooth, secure and well-coordinated transition of offices from Srinagar to Jammu, along with adequate facilities for employees.

The meeting was attended by Deputy Chief Minister

Surinder Kumar Choudhary, Chief Secretary Atal Dulloo, Additional Chief Secretary, Estates, Shaleen Kabra, Additional Chief Secretary, Power Development Department, Ashwini Kumar, Additional Chief Secretary to the Chief Minister, Dheeraj Gupta, Administrative Secretaries, Inspector General of Police, Traffic, J&K, Divisional Commissioners of Kashmir and Jammu, Deputy Commissioners of Srinagar and ●P-06

No Scope For Terrorist ‘Safe Havens’ In India: Amit Shah

Says India Has Always Adopted Zero-Tolerance Policy Against Terrorism

SAJID RAINA

SRINAGAR: Asserting that there is no scope for terrorist “safe havens” in India, Union Home Minister Amit Shah on Tuesday called for stronger regional cooperation among BIMSTEC member countries to combat terrorism, disrupt terror financing and prevent terrorist networks from establishing their bases in any nation.

Addressing the first meeting of home ministers of the seven-member regional grouping in New Delhi, Shah, according to the news agency—Kashmir News Observer (KNO) urged countries to strengthen intelligence-sharing mechanisms and coordinate their efforts against terrorist networks, organised crime and cross-border activities.

He said India follows a policy of “zero tolerance” towards terrorism and called on member countries to ensure that their territories are not used to harbour, recruit or train terrorists, raise funds or plan activities against neighbouring states.

“India has always adopted a



‘zero tolerance’ policy against terrorism,” Shah said, stressing that the security arrangements of each member country should contribute to the security of others.

He called for the timely exchange of verified and actionable intelligence on terrorists, their associates, financial channels and cross-border networks to strengthen regional security.

HM Shah also urged member countries to cooperate on mutual legal assistance and extradition, in accordance with their domestic laws and applicable agreements, to ensure that those involved in criminal activities are brought to justice.

The Union Home Minister said terrorism, organised crime and drug trafficking were interconnected challenges that required coordinated action across the region.

He called for a “whole-of-region approach” to tackle narcotics smuggling, pointing out that proceeds from the illegal drug trade could be used to finance organised crime and terrorist activities.

“The diversion of precursor chemicals and financial transactions conducted through the dark web has made the challenge more complex, requiring closer cooperation among law enforcement agencies,” he said.

The Union Home Minister also sought coordinated efforts to combat human trafficking, cybercrime and financial fraud, and called for stronger information-sharing ●P-06

Around 1,200 Dengue Cases Reported In J&K This Year



JAHANGEER GANAIE

SRINAGAR: Jammu and Kashmir has reported around 1,200 dengue cases so far this year, marking a considerable decline compared to the previous few years, even as health experts have urged people to remain vigilant against the mosquito-borne disease and take preventive measures.

Health experts cautioned that despite the comparatively lower number of cases, dengue can lead to serious, potentially life-threatening complications if warning signs are ignored or medical attention is delayed.

According to health data, J&K reported around 3,000 dengue cases in 2025, 7,000 in 2024, 6,403 in 2023 and 8,269 in 2022—the highest number recorded in the Union Territory. The 2022 outbreak also claimed 18 lives. In comparison, cases were almost negligible more than a decade ago, with only two cases in 2009 and none in 2010.

Doctors at Government Medical College (GMC) Jammu have advised people not to become ●P-06

TIMELY INTELLIGENCE SHARING CAN STRENGTHEN REGIONAL SECURITY; DRUG
proceeds used for terror financing, India does not believe in attacking other countries.”

NC Govt’s 2-Year Report Card

Ruling Party’s Key Commitments On Power, Water Remain Unfilled

REHAN QAYOOM

SRINAGAR: In the 2024 Assembly elections, the National Conference had pledged to provide relief from the power and water crisis faced by the people of Jammu and Kashmir. Two years into its tenure, however, the NC Government has delivered little on its core promises of free electricity, water supply, and respite to industries from power tariffs. While certain schemes were announced to implement these commitments, most remain either unimplemented or diluted.

As per a copy of the manifesto available, the NC had made eight promises regarding electricity and water for the people of J&K. As the Government completes two years in office on October 16, 2026, the status of these pledges and the actions taken by the Government over the past two years



to fulfil them.

Free electricity: The NC manifesto assured 200 units of free electricity to households.

Action: In its first budget, the Government restricted the benefit to Antyodaya Anna Yojana (AAY) families, who constitute about 8.6% of the UT’s population. Even this has not materialised, with the Government recently admitting in the Assem-

bly that the scheme is still at the tendering stage.

Transfer of power projects: In its manifesto, the party had promised to seek transfer of hydro power projects from NHPC to J&K in line with recommendations of the PM’s Working Group. The Rangarajan Committee (2006), formally known as the Working Group on Economic Development of ●P-06

RBI Will Continue Efforts To Keep Rupee Stable: FM Sitharaman

AGENCIES

NEW DELHI: Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman on Tuesday said the rupee has depreciated “significantly” over the past year and a half, and the RBI will continue its efforts to prevent excessive volatility in the domestic currency.

Speaking at the Bloomberg New Economy Forum 2026, Sitharaman said the rupee has reached a low against the US dollar, and the RBI is taking efforts through its regulatory powers to ensure the domestic currency stays stable.

“They are not trying to fix the rupee. They are trying to stop the volatility. And for that, there is a lot of effort from the RBI side. So, these efforts from the RBI... will continue not to...fix the rupee. We would appreciate it if the rupee finds its own (value),” the minister said.



The Reserve Bank over the weekend announced a slew of measures to stem rupee fall.

The central bank announced the creation of a special window for oil marketing companies, which will take the dollar demand away from the spot market and tightened rules governing forex derivatives trades to curb speculative bets against the rupee.

It also asked banks to create a 20 per cent ●P-06

Ladakh An Integral Part Of India, No Denial By China Can Change This: MEA

GMK NEWS NETWORK

NEW DELHI: India on Tuesday reiterated that the Union Territory of Ladakh was an integral and inalienable part of the country, asserting that no denial by China could change this position.

Responding to media queries over comments made by the Chinese side on Ladakh, Ministry of External Affairs (MEA) spokesperson Randhir Jaiswal said India’s position on the territory remained unchanged.

“It is reiterated that the UT of Ladakh is an integral and inalienable part of India. No amount of denial by the Chinese side can change this established fact,” Jaiswal said.

Clarifying the Union government’s recent announce-



ment concerning 28 places and geographical features in Ladakh, the MEA spokesperson said the Ministry of Home Affairs’ press release was self-explanatory.

He said the 28 places and fea-

tures had been identified with standardised names on the official map of the Survey of India in consultation with the Union Territory administration and local stakeholders.

According to Jaiswal, the

exercise was aimed at facilitating the accurate identification of these places and improving public awareness about them.

The clarification comes

IT IS REITERATED
that the UT of Ladakh is an integral and inalienable part of India. No amount of denial by the Chinese side can change this established fact,”

amid differences between India and China over territorial claims and developments relating to Ladakh. India has consistently maintained that Ladakh is an integral part of the country.

Indian Embassy Issues Fresh Advisory In Saudi Arabia

GMK NEWS NETWORK

SRINAGAR: Indian diplomatic missions in Saudi Arabia have issued fresh advisories to Indian nationals amid continuing flight disruptions, urging them to follow local safety instructions, avoid sharing videos or news related to the unfolding situation and check flight updates with airlines.

The advisories follow the suspension of services by several Indian airlines to Saudi cities until October 17 amid an evolving security situation.

The Indian Embassy in Riyadh has advised Indian nationals to remain calm and vigilant, stay indoors in the event of an aerial attack and follow instructions issued by local authorities through official channels. It has also urged them not to circulate or repost videos or news related to the ongoing events.

According to the Embassy, Air India and Air India ●P-06

Fresh Snowfall Raises Hope For Strong Winter Season In Gulmarg

Tourists Enjoy Season's First Snowfall, Stakeholders Pin Hopes On Winter Rush



WARIS FAYAZ

SRINAGAR: Fresh snowfall in the upper reaches of Gulmarg has delighted tourists and raised hopes for a strong winter tourism season, with stakeholders expecting a surge in visitors to the famous ski resort in north Kashmir’s Baramulla district.

The Affarwat slopes, home to the iconic Gulmarg Gondola, received fresh snowfall on

Tuesday, draping the mountains in white and offering visitors an early glimpse of the region’s winter charm.

Tourists were seen enjoying the snowfall, taking photographs and soaking in the snow-covered landscape.

“We are lucky to witness this,” a group of tourists from Delhi said.

The snowfall has also boosted optimism among tourism ●P-06

MD NHM chairs Introductory review Meeting of NHM J&K

Stresses strengthening Healthcare Delivery and Infrastructure

GMK NEWS NETWORK

SRINAGAR: Athar Amir Ul Shafi Khan, Mission Director, National Health Mission (NHM), Jammu & Kashmir, Tuesday chaired a comprehensive introductory review meeting to evaluate ongoing performance, financial progress, human resource frameworks, and healthcare infrastructure across the Union Territory.

Reviewing annual financial planning, resource allocations, and fund utilization patterns, the Mission Director emphasized transparent and efficient fund management to support robust healthcare delivery across all districts. Highlighting maternal and child health indicators, the meeting noted that J&K continues to maintain exceptional performance through high institutional deliveries and robust antenatal care coverage supported by central and UT welfare schemes.

The review placed special focus on the extensive network of Ayushman Arogya Mandirs operational across the region, which success-



fully bring comprehensive primary healthcare, free essential drugs, diagnostics, and tele-consultations closer to grassroots communities. Significant progress under major capital works, including the construction of Critical Care Blocks, Integrated Public Health Labs, and Block Public Health Units, was thoroughly assessed to ensure timely project completion and enhanced critical care capabilities.

The successful implementation of the TB Mukht Bharat Abhiyan and the rollout of Diplomate of National Board postgraduate courses across district hospitals and community health centers were commended as major milestones that mitigate specialist shortages and reduce unnecessary tertiary care

referrals.

Furthermore, the continuous operation of the 102/108 ambulance network, free dialysis services under the PM National Dialysis Programme, and the Tele-MANAS mental health helpline, NP-NCD were acknowledged for providing seamless public services.

Urging officers to accelerate facility quality assurance certifications, and ensure rigorous grassroots monitoring, Athar Amir Ul Shafi Khan stressed that continuous inter-departmental coordination and streamlined medical supply chains remain vital to elevate public healthcare standards. He placed specific stress on improving the functioning of RBSK, PC & PNDT, Tele-Sanjeevani, and DBT schemes.

DC Ganderbal chairs Introductory Meeting Calls for Teamwork, Accountability, Efficient Public Service Delivery

GMK NEWS NETWORK

GANDERBAL: Deputy Commissioner (DC) Ganderbal, Shreya Singhal, Tuesday chaired an introductory meeting with district and sectoral officers at the Conference Hall, Mini Secretariat Ganderbal, to review departmental functioning, discuss key priorities and strengthen inter departmental coordination for effective delivery of public services.

During the meeting, the Deputy Commissioner interacted with the officers and took stock of the functioning of their respective departments, ongoing developmental activities and key administrative priorities. She emphasised the importance of coordinated efforts among all departments to ensure effective governance and timely delivery of public services.



The DC appreciated the teamwork and coordinated efforts of the district administration and stressed that collective responsibility, mutual coordination and a shared commitment to public service are essential for taking the district forward. She called upon all officers to work as one team, maintain close coordination and ensure that developmental initiatives translate into tangible benefits for the people.

Stressing the need for swift and efficient execution of official work, the DC directed the officers to ensure timely disposal of matters, expedite developmental works and avoid

unnecessary delays in decision-making and implementation. She emphasised that public grievances must be addressed promptly and that the administration must remain accessible, responsive and sensitive to the needs of the general public.

The Deputy Commissioner further stressed upon all officers to discharge their duties with honesty, integrity, dedication and a strong sense of accountability. She underscored the importance of transparency in administrative functioning and directed the officers to take responsibility for the tasks assigned to them and ensure their timely completion.

Athar Amir assumes Charge as Mission Director NHM J&K

GMK NEWS NETWORK

SRINAGAR: Athar Amir Ul Shafi Khan, Tuesday formally assumed charge as the Mission Director, National Health Mission (NHM), Jammu & Kashmir, at the State Health Society, NHM Office, Old Secretariat, Srinagar.

Upon his arrival, he was warmly welcomed by the NHM staff, reflecting their enthusiasm and strong confidence in his leadership.

He took over the charge from outgoing Mission Director, Akriti Sagar, who was present on the occasion and provided a brief overview of the ongoing operations and functioning of the office. The joining



ceremony was also attended by the Director Planning NHM J&K, FA & CAO SHS NHM J&K, Divisional Nodal Officer NHM Kashmir, and other senior officers of NHM.

Addressing the officers and staff during his inaugural address, Athar Amir Ul Shafi Khan underscored the critical importance of

teamwork, innovation, and a people-centric approach in healthcare delivery. He reaffirmed his unwavering commitment to the core objectives of the National Health Mission, ensuring accessible, affordable, and quality healthcare for every resident of Jammu & Kashmir.

Highlighting the Union Territory's unique geographical and logistical healthcare challenges, the newly appointed Mission Director called for collective efforts and innovative solutions. He emphasised that the health and well-being of the people of J&K will remain the absolute central focus of all future NHM initiatives and programs.

EDP training of JKREGP beneficiaries concludes at JKBRSETI Kulgam

GMK NEWS NETWORK

KULGAM: Entrepreneurship Development Programme (EDP) training for 36 beneficiaries under the Jammu and Kashmir Rural Employment Generation Programme (JKREGP) of the Jammu and Kashmir Khadi and Village Industries Board (JKKVIB) concluded Tuesday at RSETI Kulgam.

The concluding ceremony was presided by Vigar Ahmad Giri, Additional Deputy Commissioner (ADC), Kulgam in the presence of the Director, JKB RSETI Kulgam,

and the District Officer, JK KVVIB, Kulgam. 36 beneficiaries, whose loan cases have been sanctioned under the JKREGP scheme, are associated with projects involving a total Margin Money subsidy of ₹1,06,29,500.

During the concluding ceremony, the ADC, along with the other dignitaries, distributed training completion certificates among the beneficiaries upon successful completion of the EDP training. The programme aimed to equip aspiring entrepreneurs with essential entrepreneurial skills, business management

techniques, financial literacy and the practical knowledge required to establish and manage their respective business ventures successfully.

Vigar Ahmad Giri appreciated the initiative aimed at promoting entrepreneurship and self-employment among the beneficiaries and encouraged them to make effective use of the training received to establish sustainable business ventures. He emphasised the importance of entrepreneurship in generating employment opportunities and contributing to the socio-economic development of the district.

DIPR, Islamia College organise awareness programme under NMA

GMK NEWS NETWORK

SRINAGAR: In continuation of its series of awareness initiatives under the Nasha Mukht Abhiyan, the Cultural Unit Kashmir, Department of Information and Public Relations (DIPR), in collaboration with Islamia College of Science and Commerce, Srinagar, Tuesday organised an impressive day-long awareness programme aimed at sensitising students about the growing menace of drug abuse and promoting a drug-free society.

Principal, Islamia College of Science and Commerce, Dr. Aijaz Ahmad Hakak, emphasised that creating awareness about drug abuse is a collective responsibility and a prime duty of every individual. He called upon students, teachers and civil society to work together to safeguard the younger generation from the devastating conse-



quences of substance abuse.

Addressing the gathering, Assistant Exhibition and Cultural Officer (AECO), Cultural Unit Kashmir, DIPR, Syed Shaheel Shan, urged students to reconnect with Kashmir's rich Sufi heritage and the timeless teachings of Sufi saints, which advocate peace, compassion, discipline and moral integrity. He stressed the importance of respecting elders, following their guidance and strengthening moral character to resist nega-

tive influences and make responsible choices in life.

He also encouraged students to remain focused on education, creativity, innovation and social service, observing that a meaningful and productive engagement in life can play a vital role in preventing substance abuse and building a healthier society.

The programme featured impactful thematic skits, musical performances and awareness speeches presented by artists of the Cultural Unit Kashmir and NSS

volunteers of the college.

Through creative expression and thought-provoking presentations, the participants highlighted the harmful consequences of drug addiction and conveyed a strong message in favour of a healthy, responsible and drug-free lifestyle. The performances enthralled the audience and reinforced the importance of collective action against substance abuse.

The event witnessed the participation of faculty members, NSS offi-

cers, DIPR officers and a large number of students, reflecting a shared commitment towards the Nasha Mukht Abhiyan.

At the conclusion of the programme, mementoes and certificates of appreciation were presented to the participating students, artists and the Principal in recognition of their contribution and support towards the awareness initiative.

Prof. Wahid expressed gratitude to DIPR for collaborating with the college in organising the programme. He appreciated the efforts of the Cultural Unit Kashmir, the participating artists, NSS volunteers and faculty members for making the event meaningful and impactful. He also reiterated the college's commitment to supporting initiatives aimed at creating awareness among youth and promoting a drug-free society.

SDRF, F&ES conduct Live Rescue Demonstration in Guzarbal



GMK NEWS NETWORK

BANDIPORA: As part of a series of public awareness programmes, the State Disaster Response Force (SDRF) and Fire and Emergency Services (F&ES) conducted a live rescue demonstration at Panchayat Ghar, Guzarbal, to sensitise the public about safety measures and emergency response during drowning incidents, floods and other disaster situations.

During the demonstration, the teams showcased

various rescue techniques and educated participants about essential safety precautions and appropriate response measures to be adopted during emergencies to prevent loss of precious lives.

Officials from the Revenue Department, Flood Control, SDRF, Police, Fire and Emergency Services, District Information Office and Control Room participated in the programme. Teachers, students and local residents were also present on the occasion.

Minga Sherpa assumes charge as DC Jammu

GMK NEWS NETWORK

JAMMU: Minga Sherpa, Tuesday assumed office as Deputy Commissioner, Jammu.

Soon after joining, the Deputy Commissioner took a round of the DC Office complex and inspected the functioning of different sections. He took stock of the working environment and stressed punctuality, discipline and responsiveness in public dealing.

He later held an interaction with the officers of the district administration and



took a review of the overall administrative set up. He discussed key sectors and the ongoing developmental and public service delivery activities in the district. He directed the officers to work in coordination to ensure effective and timely delivery of services to the people.

DC Budgam chairs Introductory Meeting with District, Sectoral Officers



GMK NEWS NETWORK

BUDGAM: Deputy Commissioner (DC) Budgam, Jatinder Kishore, Tuesday chaired an introductory meeting with district and sectoral officers to review ongoing developmental works and the implementation of government schemes across the district.

The meeting was attended by CPO Budgam, ACR, CEO, CMO, SDMs, SEs, Tehsildars, BDOs, and other sectoral officers from various departments.

During the meeting, the Deputy Commissioner reviewed the progress of ongoing projects, departmental performance and the implementation of key government schemes, including JKICIP, HADP, PMAY, Mission Yuva, Agristack, Solid Waste Management, Udyam Jagrati, RDDS and DLC cases.

He directed all executing agencies to ensure timely completion of developmen-

tal works while maintaining quality standards. He also instructed officers to work with sincerity and dedication, ensure saturation of targets and cover all eligible beneficiaries under government welfare schemes within the stipulated timelines.

The Deputy Commissioner further directed officers to ensure timely tendering of all approved works so that projects are taken up and completed without delay.

Emphasising effective monitoring, the Deputy Commissioner called for regular reviews of major infrastructure projects and schemes to identify and resolve bottlenecks. He instructed officers to closely monitor progress and ensure that all assigned targets are achieved in a time-bound manner. He also highlighted the importance of public participation in planning and implementing development initiatives.

KU Marks International Day for Disaster Risk Reduction

Experts Call for Household-Level Preparedness

IRFAN TILGAMI

SRINAGAR: Emphasizing that effective disaster mitigation begins within families and local communities, the University of Kashmir (KU) observed the International Day for Disaster Risk Reduction at its main campus on Monday under the theme 'Resilience Starts at Home.'

The event was organized by the Department of Geography and Disaster Management (DGDM) to highlight the critical role of public awareness, scientific planning, and community participation in minimizing the loss of life and property during natural and human-induced emergencies.

Inaugurating the programme, Kashmir University Vice-Chancellor Prof. Nilofer Khan stressed that institutional readiness must be paired with proactive individual action.

"Disaster preparedness begins with awareness and responsible action at the individual and family levels," Prof. Khan said, urging edu-



cators and researchers to help communities adopt simple, reliable safety measures to build resilience from the grassroots up.

KU Registrar Prof. Naseer Iqbal underscored the responsibility of academia in risk reduction, stating that educational institutions must actively equip young people with the skills and mindset needed to respond swiftly during crises.

Prof. Shamim Ahmad, Registrar of the Islamic University of Science and Technology (IUST), called for institutional synergy, noting that "scientific understanding, greater awareness, and strong inter-institutional coordination are essential to strengthening disaster preparedness across the

region." Addressing the technical dimensions of hazard mitigation, Prof. Ghulam Jeelani, Dean of the School of Earth and Environmental Sciences, highlighted the importance of studying local geographical and environmental vulnerabilities. He noted that informed spatial planning and grassroots participation remain the most effective tools to mitigate regional hazards.

Earlier, welcoming the gathering, Head of the DGDM Prof. G.M. Rather reflected on the global significance of the observance, while faculty member Dr. Mohammad Shafi Bhat briefed attendees on the core objectives of the initiative.

ITI Seer Hamdan organises Cyber Awareness, Hygiene Session for Trainees

GMK NEWS NETWORK

ANANTNAG: Industrial Training Institute (ITI) Seer Hamdan organised a Cyber Awareness-cum-Hygiene Session for its trainees with the objective of sensitising them about the safe, responsible and secure use of digital technologies.

The session focused on creating awareness among trainees about the importance of cyber hygiene, online safety and adopting responsible digital practices in an increasingly technology-driven world. The initiative aimed to equip students with essential knowledge and practical precautions to protect themselves from cyber threats, online frauds and potential misuse of digital platforms.

The trainees were sensitised about the importance of creating strong passwords, safeguarding their



personal and sensitive information, and avoiding the unnecessary sharing of private details on online platforms. They were also advised to exercise caution while accessing unfamiliar websites, downloading applications and interacting with unknown individuals online.

Emphasis was laid on remaining vigilant against suspicious links, fraudulent messages, phishing emails and unauthorised applications that may compromise personal information or lead to financial and digital security risks. The trainees were encouraged to verify the authenticity of online communications before clicking on links,

sharing information or downloading files.

The session further highlighted the need to develop responsible digital habits, maintain privacy on social media and use internet-based services judiciously. The trainees were urged to remain alert to emerging cyber threats and follow basic cyber safety measures in their daily lives.

The awareness programme formed part of the institute's efforts to promote digital literacy and ensure that trainees are equipped with the knowledge and skills necessary to navigate the digital environment safely and responsibly.

Drugs Control Deptt conducts major Enforcement Drive across Shopian

GMK NEWS NETWORK

SHOPIAN: Drugs Control Department Shopian carried out an enforcement drive across multiple areas in District Shopian, including Nagisharan, Hajipora, Lundoora, Hermain, Alamganj, DK Pora, Imam Sahib and Adkher under the supervision of the Assistant

Drugs Controller, Shopian.

During the inspections, officials thoroughly verified compliance with the Drugs & Cosmetics Act, 1940, scrutinizing records for scheduled formulations, CCTV operation, computerized billing and overall licensing conditions.

Five medical shops were closed on the spot for vio-

lations observed during inspection.

Additionally, licensees were strictly instructed to maintain proper purchase and sales documentation and to dispense habit-forming medicines exclusively against valid prescriptions from Registered Medical Practitioners to prevent drug diversion and misuse.

CM Omar meets delegations, individuals at Civil Secretariat



GMK NEWS NETWORK

SRINAGAR: Chief Minister Omar Abdullah Tuesday met several delegations and individuals at the Civil Secretariat here and discussed issues relating to film promotion, industrial infrastructure, regional development, education and youth empowerment.

Onir, filmmaker associated with Anticlock Films, Mumbai, called on the Chief Minister and discussed matters concerning the promotion and development of the film sector in Jammu and Kashmir.

A delegation com-

prising Lokesh Kumar Gupta, General Manager, IRCON, also met the Chief Minister and discussed possibilities for expanding IRCON International Limited's role in industrial infrastructure development in Jammu and Kashmir.

Mehnaaz A.G. Nadiadwala, author, social activist and Founder and Trustee of the Mehnaaz A.G. Nadiadwala Foundation (MAGN Foundation), called on the Chief Minister and discussed initiatives aimed at the progress, development and welfare of the region.

A delegation led by

Mudassir Mushtaq Raina, Manager Operations, Unacademy Kashmir, apprised the Chief Minister of the Wisdom Aptitude Talent Hunt (WATH), an educational initiative aimed at identifying, nurturing and empowering talented youth across Jammu and Kashmir.

Major General Anupinder Bevi, VSM, Additional Director General, NCC Directorate J&K and Ladakh, also called on the Chief Minister and expressed gratitude for the support extended by the government to the NCC Directorate J&K and Ladakh.

CS Education reviews academic initiatives, infrastructure at GDC Hiranagar

GMK NEWS NETWORK

KATHUA: Commissioner Secretary Education, Ram Niwas Sharma, Tuesday visited the Government Girdari Lal Dogra Memorial Degree College, Hiranagar and reviewed its institutional profile, infrastructure, academic facilities and achievements.

During the visit, Principal Dr. Pragya Khanna gave a detailed PowerPoint presentation highlighting the college's institutional growth, academic initiatives, infrastructure, student achievements and future development plans.

The college also presented its institutional compendium, "Navprivartan", a chronicle of transformation, documenting its journey of growth, innovation and development. The brochure of an upcoming national conference was also shared, underscoring the institution's commitment to promote research, academic discourse and intellectual engagement.

The Commissioner Secretary appreciated the college's initiatives, including the Institution's Innovation Council (IIC), Unnat Bharat Abhiyan, skill development programmes

and Memoranda of Understanding (MoUs) with the institutions and organisations across the country to strengthen academic collaboration and broaden opportunities for the students. He also took note of the college's achievements in sports, students' participation in hackathons and efforts to foster innovation, creativity, entrepreneurship and experiential learning.

Interacting with the students, Ram Niwas Sharma encouraged them to set clear goals, pursue their ambitions with dedication and work relentlessly towards achieving success. He advised them to explore diverse career avenues, including opportunities in

the government sector and entrepreneurship while emphasising the importance of commitment, perseverance and self-belief.

The Commissioner Secretary expressed appreciation for the well-maintained college campus and the effective utilisation of available space and infrastructure for academic purposes. He lauded the institution's efforts to optimise the existing resources and provide a conducive environment for teaching, learning and the overall development of students.

SDM Hiranagar Phulail Singh, CEO Kathua Kewal Krishna and Tehsildar Hiranagar Anoop Kumar were also present on the occasion.

Ramesh Kumar assumes charge as Secretary RDD&PR

Reviews progress of flagship rural development schemes

GMK NEWS NETWORK

SRINAGAR: Ramesh Kumar Tuesday formally assumed charge as Secretary, Rural Development Department and Panchayati Raj (RDD&PR), Jammu and Kashmir.

Following his assumption of office, Ramesh Kumar convened an interactive meeting with the senior officers and officials at the Civil Secretariat, Srinagar. They discussed the department's priorities, ongoing initiatives and the way forward for strengthening rural development and Panchayati Raj institutions across Jammu and Kashmir.

The meeting was attended by Secretary in RDD, Rachna Sharma, Director Finance, Umar Khan, Joint Director Planning, Kamal Kumar, Additional Secretary RD&PR, Waseem Raja and Under Secretaries of the department.

The Secretary reviewed

the operational status and progress achieved under several flagship programmes, including the Viksit Bharat-Guarantee for Rozgar and Ajeevika Mission (Gramin) (VB-G RAM-G), Pradhan Mantri Awaas Yojana-Gramin (PMAY-G), National Rural Livelihood Mission (NRLM), Integrated Watershed Management Programme (IWMP), Rashtriya Gram Swaraj Abhiyan (RGSA) and Himayat.

The review focused on taking stock of the department's ongoing initiatives and reinforcing the implementation of programmes aimed at improving the rural livelihoods, strengthening

Panchayati Raj institutions, creating rural infrastructure, providing housing assistance to eligible households and expanding livelihood opportunities for rural youth and women.

Emphasising the fundamental mandate of the Rural Development Department, the Secretary said that the department primarily serves the rural population and must remain focused on addressing the needs and aspirations of people at the grassroots level. He directed the officers to accord priority to projects and interventions that deliver direct, visible and measurable benefits to the public.

No order on uniform Friday sermons, says Waqf Chief

GMK NEWS NETWORK

SRINAGAR: Jammu and Kashmir Waqf Board chairperson Darakhshan Andrabi on Tuesday denied that the board had issued any directive requiring imams to deliver sermons on specific topics, saying religious scholars and preachers were free to decide what they wanted to discuss. BookLocal Tours

Defending the proposal for mosques and shrines under the board to address common social issues during Friday sermons, Andrabi said the initiative was intended to tackle problems such as drug addiction, suicide and other social concerns affecting young people.

"Jammu-Kashmir Waqf Board is a religious board. It includes religious preachers, mosques, shrines, and scholars. If we do not talk about the problems in our society, who will?" she said.

She maintained that the decision on sermon topics rested with imams and religious scholars, not the board or political leaders. Kashmiritourism packages

"Here, Dr Syed Darakhshan Andrabi does not take decisions. Our scholars, preachers, imams and khateeb take decisions on religious matters," she said.

Explaining the rationale behind the proposal, Andrabi said a common theme could help amplify the impact of sermons on local communities.

"If there is a particular problem in Srinagar, and it is discussed in 10 mosques, it will have an impact on society, on that young person and on the present generation," she said.

Similarly, she said, imams could address specific problems in other areas, including drug addiction, by devoting a few minutes to the issue during their sermons. ExploreHistory

Andrabi rejected allegations that the initiative was being driven by the BJP or the Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh (RSS), insisting that

there was no political or government interference.

"There is no role of any government machinery in this. Nor will Darakhshan Andrabi decide anything. The imams themselves will decide what their role will be," she said.

She also referred to the remarks of Mirwaiz Umar Farooq, who had addressed social evils during his Friday sermon at Srinagar's Jamia Masjid.

"I was very happy to see that Dr Umar Farooq Sahib has also stressed this before us. He is saying exactly the same thing: that we need to talk about social evils and focus on one topic so that it has an impact on society," Andrabi said. BookLocal Tours

Her remarks came amid criticism of the Waqf Board's reported move to



encourage uniform themes for Friday sermons, with political leaders questioning whether the board could direct religious preachers on what to say.

Andrabi dismissed calls to withdraw the decision, arguing that no binding order had been issued.

"What decision? Which decision? What rule has been issued? Can imams not speak for themselves now? Will our politicians not allow imams to speak for themselves if they want to stop social evils?" she said.

Asked whether the board had issued any directive, she said it had not.

"No directive has gone from here. At that time, all the scholars said that if they want to speak against drugs in Poonch, they will. It is their choice. They may also choose not to speak," she said.

Andrabi said the proposed discussions could also cover issues such as difficulties faced by women in getting married and the cutting of beards, adding that religious scholars would determine which subjects to address.

"If our politicians want there to be no discussion

on drugs, no discussion on social evils, no discussion on daughters who are not getting married, then let there be no discussion," she said.

She urged political leaders to refrain from politicising religious matters and defended the board's work over the past four years.

"Our aim is to make the Jammu-Kashmir Waqf Board number one, and in these four years we have done work that nobody had done before. We have not allowed politics to enter it," she said.

Andrabi also accused political leaders of opposing the board's initiatives for political reasons, adding that she remained confident in the judgment of the imams and scholars associated with it.

"I am very satisfied with our imams because whatever decision they take will be right, and it will be their own choice," she said.

She reiterated that the board would continue working on religious and social issues for as long as she remained its chairperson.

"We are working for the Deen, and we will continue working for the Deen as long as I am in this chair," she said.

Dr Jitendra Interacts with DC over Bhalla-Sani road accident

GMK NEWS NETWORK

DODA: Union Minister Dr Jitendra Singh Tuesday interacted with Deputy Commissioner Doda Krishan Lal over the Bhalla-Sani road accident and directed that best possible medical care be provided to the injured.

Pertinently, four persons had sustained injuries in the accident involving a mini-bus in Bhalla-Sani area earlier today. All the injured were referred to Associated Hospital, GMC Doda, where they are admitted and stated to be stable.

During the telephonic conversation, Dr Singh enquired about the condition of the injured and emphasized that all necessary treatment and assistance be ensured at GMC Doda.

The Deputy Commissioner apprised the Union Minister of the situation and assured that the district administration will facilitate proper treatment and all required support to the injured.



Lal Chowk Post Office will remain open for 12 hours for booking of Mail

GMK NEWS NETWORK

SRINAGAR: In a major step towards improving public convenience, the Lal Chowk Post Office in Srinagar will remain open from 9 am to 9 pm, instead of the existing timings of 9 am to 5 pm.

The extended working hours will enable customers to avail themselves of mail and parcel booking services beyond 5 pm. The initiative is aimed at providing better postal services to shopkeepers, business establishments and tourists visiting Lal Chowk, one of Srinagar's busiest commercial hubs.

Shri Adam Mohiuddin, IPoS, Senior Superintendent of Post Offices, said "Extension of working hours is intended to make postal services more accessible and convenient for people, particularly those unable to visit the post office during regular working hours."

Shri Mohiuddin said the extended timings would provide shopkeepers with greater flexibility to book their mail and parcels after completing their business activities during the day. Tourists visiting the city would also benefit from the facility, as they would have additional time to access postal services.

The move is expected to improve customer convenience and strengthen the delivery of postal services in the Lal Chowk area. By keeping the post office operational until 9 pm, the department aims to cater to the needs of a wider section of the public and ensure greater accessibility to essential postal facilities.

MVD Pulwama intensifies checking drives across Pulwama

GMK NEWS NETWORK

PULWAMA: On the directions of Transport Commissioner J&K, Vishesh Paul Mahajan, Enforcement Squad of the Assistant Regional Transport Office (ARTO) Pulwama carried out a vehicle checking drive today along the Newa and Ring Road stretches in Pulwama.

The drive targeted traffic rule violations to ensure road safety and illegal vehicle trade practices across the area.

During the inspection, the squad recommended the suspension of three driving licences and three vehicle registration certificates. In addition, one registration certificate was recommended for blacklisting. A total amount of Rs 56,000 is expected to be recovered from the violators as compound penalties.

In a related action, the team inspected Alamdar Automobiles located at Rajpora, Pulwama. The dealership was found operating without the required authorization for selling vehicles. The enforcement squad issued a formal warning to the management and shut down the premises immediately for unauthorized commercial activity.

The Enforcement Squad stated that these inspection drives will continue on a regular basis to enforce transport regulations throughout the district.

Secretary Tourism reviews functioning of SKICC

GMK NEWS NETWORK

SRINAGAR: Secretary Tourism, Avny Lavasa, Tuesday, chaired an introductory meeting to review the overall functioning, management and operational capability of the Sher-i-Kashmir International Convention Centre (SKICC), the premier Government-run international convention centre in Jammu and Kashmir.

On arrival, the Secretary was accorded a warm welcome by SKICC officials led by the Director General, SKICC, Mufti Fareeduddin. Before the meeting, she toured the entire Centre to get a first-hand feel of its facilities and infrastructure.

During the meeting, the SKICC management gave a detailed presentation on the

Centre's operational capability, its importance as a leading MICE (Meetings, Incentives, Conferences and Exhibitions) destination, and other key aspects of its functioning. The Director General briefed the Secretary on the current status of bookings, the revenue structure and the Centre's future plans.

Issues relating to the promotion of SKICC and its MICE services were also discussed. The Secretary gave a patient hearing to the issues raised and assured all possible support to take SKICC to new heights as a world-class convention destination.

The Secretary was accompanied by senior officers of the Department, including Special Secretary Tourism, Suraj Parkash Rukwal, JKAS, Director Planning and Director Finance. The meeting concluded with a vote of thanks.



J&K Govt Authorises Mining Officers to File Complaints Before Special Courts

GMK NEWS NETWORK

SRINAGAR: The Jammu and Kashmir Government has authorised designated officers of the Geology and Mining Department to file written complaints before special courts in cases involving illegal mining and violations of minor mineral rules.

The authorisation, issued by the Mining Department through a notification dated October 12, empowers officers at different levels to initiate complaints within their respective jurisdictions under Rule 83 of the Jammu and Kashmir Minor Mineral Concession, Storage, Transportation and Prevention of Illegal Mining Rules, 2016.

According to the notification, the Director, Geology and Mining, J&K, will have jurisdiction across the Union Territory and in districts where the District Mineral Officer is below the rank of Assistant Mineral Officer.

Joint Directors of Geology and Mining in Jammu and Kashmir divisions will exercise powers within their respective divisions, while Deputy Directors will be authorised to file complaints within their respective jurisdictions. Read History

Other officers of the department posted in districts will also be empowered to file complaints, provided they hold a rank not below that of Assistant Mineral Officer.

In a further measure aimed at strengthening enforcement, the government has authorised any officer of the department not below the rank of Assistant Mineral Officer who detects an illegality or violation during an inspection in any district to file a complaint before the competent Special Court having jurisdiction over the offence.

The notification refers to the Special Courts designated through Government Order S.O. 302 of 2025, dated November 27, 2025.

KPDCL Announces Power Shutdowns Across Kashmir

GMK NEWS NETWORK

SRINAGAR: The Kashmir Power Distribution Corporation Limited (KPDCL) Tuesday announced scheduled power shutdowns on several transmission and distribution lines in Kashmir during October and early November, affecting multiple areas, including parts of South and Central Kashmir.

According to an official notification issued by the Chief Engineer, Distribution, KPDCL, power supply to areas served by the 33 kV Alasteng-Nagbal line will remain affected from 9 am to 3 pm on October 14, 17 and 19.

The affected areas include Shuhama, Bakura, Fethapora, Gadoora, Tulbagh, Chundhuna, Saloora, Sherpathri and adjoining localities.

The shutdown of the 132 kV Habbak-Badampora transmission line, covering towers 67-71 and 75-78, will also affect power supply to Shuhama, Bakura, Darend, Nagbal, Fethapora, Gadoora, Tulbagh, Chundhuna, Saloora, Sherpathri and adjoining areas from 9 am to 3 pm on October 14, 17, 18, 19 and 21. Meanwhile, the 33 kV Awantipora-Sangam-II line will remain shut from 9 am to 3 pm on October 17, 22 and 24. The affected areas include Siamoh, K-Koot, Kiagam, Hariparigam, Chakoor, Gulzarpora, Panzgam, Railway and adjoining localities.

Power supply to Hajin, Preng, Madwan, Banyar, Hakbara, Chandergeer and adjoining areas will be affected from 11 am to 3 pm on October 15 and 19 due to the shutdown of the 33 kV Badampora Army line.

The Chief Engineer has also announced a shutdown of the 132 kV Kangan-Badampora transmission line from 9 am to 3 pm on October 31 and November 2 and 4. The affected areas will include Beehama, Arampora, Arch, Nunner, Manigam, Duderhama, Mals-haibagh, Wayil, Gutlibagh and adjoining localities. In a separate update, KPDCL said the approved shutdowns of the 33 kV HMT line and the 33 kV Nehalpora-Markundal line, scheduled for October 14, had been cancelled.

Good Morning

Kashmir

EDITORIAL

Protect The Harvest,
Prepare For Winter

Kashmir's autumn has begun to show signs of an approaching winter, with rain, gusty winds and light snowfall expected over the higher reaches of Jammu and Kashmir over the next few days. While such changes are part of the Valley's seasonal cycle, the timing of this spell makes it particularly important for farmers, fruit growers and people travelling through mountainous areas.

According to the Meteorological Centre Srinagar, unsettled weather is likely to continue from October 13 to 15, with light to moderate rain and thunderstorms at many places and light snowfall over higher elevations. Although dry weather is expected to return after a brief possibility of rain on October 16, the immediate concern is how well the region prepares for the approaching spell.

For Kashmir's farming community, October is no ordinary month. Apple growers are busy gathering the season's produce, while paddy farmers are bringing their crops home after months of hard work. Much of a family's annual income may depend on what is harvested and safely stored during these crucial weeks. A spell of rain and strong winds can therefore mean more than a change in weather; it can threaten livelihoods already exposed to rising costs and uncertain market returns.

The advisory asking farmers to store harvested apples, paddy and other crops safely is timely. But advice alone may not be enough. Not every farmer has access to adequate storage facilities, and many small growers have limited resources to protect their produce from sudden weather changes. The agriculture and horticulture departments must remain accessible, ensure that warnings reach villages promptly and provide practical assistance wherever possible.

Apple growers, in particular, need a clear window to complete harvesting and move their produce to markets. Any disruption at this stage can add to transportation costs and increase the risk of losses. The administration should keep a close watch on road conditions and ensure that weather-related disruptions do not unnecessarily delay the movement of fruit.

The situation in the higher reaches deserves equal attention. Light snowfall over mountain passes and important roads may affect traffic, particularly in areas where weather conditions can change rapidly. Travellers and transporters should check official advisories before setting out, while traffic authorities must keep road users informed about changing conditions. For residents of remote areas, road connectivity is not simply a matter of convenience; it is often essential for access to medical care, food and other necessities.

There is also a need for precautionary measures in towns and villages. Gusty winds can damage weak structures, bring down branches and disrupt electricity supply. The concerned departments should inspect vulnerable locations and remain prepared to respond quickly to complaints and emergencies. Such preventive steps may appear routine, but they can spare people considerable hardship when the weather turns unfavourable.

The forecast of generally dry weather from October 17 to 24 offers some relief. Yet it should not encourage complacency. Kashmir has repeatedly experienced how quickly weather conditions can change, particularly in the mountains. Preparedness must be based on official forecasts and ground conditions rather than assumptions about how the next few days will unfold.

There is no reason for people to panic over the latest forecast. Rain and snowfall are natural features of Kashmir's changing seasons. What matters is whether the administration, farmers and the public take the necessary precautions in time. A weather advisory serves its purpose only when people understand the risks and the concerned departments act on the information.

For a farmer, protecting the harvest may mean protecting an entire year's earnings. For a truck driver, it may mean avoiding a dangerous mountain route. For a family in a remote village, it may mean ensuring that essential supplies remain accessible.

As autumn slowly gives way to winter, Kashmir must take these warnings seriously. The weather may be beyond human control, but avoidable losses and unnecessary hardship are not inevitable. Timely action, effective coordination and public awareness can make a real difference.

The test is not merely whether we receive a weather warning, but whether we act before the rain and snow arrive.

The Academic Rankings Trap

How The Battle For Ranking Diminishes The Pursuit Of Higher Learning



BHABANI SHANKAR NAYAK

Policymakers in higher education, the majority of university leaders, and managers—Vice Chancellors, Deans, and Heads of Departments—are neither trained to conduct research nor qualified to teach, yet they frame policies for learning and teaching, research strategies, and norms for ranking institutions, teacher performance, and research outputs and evaluate impacts. Such bureaucratic and managerial interventions have reduced institutions of higher learning to merely marketplaces of useless regulations, compliances and certificates. It is not surprising that the entire higher education sector is directionless and functions like degree mills and qualification-selling shops offering last-chance discounts.

There are no winners in the battle to rank teaching, research, and institutions of higher learning. In this rat race of the ranking game, there is no finishing line and no winner; there is only the creation of a toxic culture of performance in the pursuit of a meaningless number in the ranking factory. That number does not reflect critical contributions to knowledge that address issues concerning the essence and emancipation of human beings and their society. The managers of higher education use ranking numbers to inflate their pay and bonuses, whereas teachers and researchers are left having to enlarge the lenses of their glasses to read and write to participate in this academic hunger game. This perverse managerial game is designed to control and destroy research and new knowledge production—a slow process that takes time to brew—but ignorant and arrogant managers replace that slow process with a culture of instant coffee, in which so-called essentialist publications in well-ranked journals are meaningless in terms of their contribution to advancing knowledge and social progress.

The business of ranking is a zero-sum game in which victory is an academic illusion that lacks even basic human excitement. The metrics and methodology used in the ranking of teaching, research, and institutions are not only flawed but also



That number does not reflect critical contributions to knowledge that address issues concerning the essence and emancipation of human beings and their society.

fail to understand the local institutional and individual contexts in which research and teaching take place. The league tables and the scoring of research and teaching do not represent socially meaningful education. There are more than 25 global rankings of universities, yet they have failed to produce quality in research and teaching. It is the normative nature of the sector that is difficult to measure or represent through numbers. However, reckless ranking continues as if it were a prestigious exercise, when in reality it is designed to expand the commercialisation and commodification of education, learning, and teaching.

The compliance regimes embedded in teaching and research ranking frameworks take away valuable time from knowledge production and dissemination. In such an environment, both students and teachers suffer, and the quality of both research and teaching

declines. A poem, a piece of art, a photograph, a physics paper, a philosophical treatise, or economic-model-driven research each has its own importance within its own discipline and audience; measuring these outputs in terms of reductionist numbers within the empirical tradition distorts their distinct purposes.

The ranking regime is fundamentally based on a culture of compliance performance rather than performance in research and teaching. The entire ranking exercise is designed to domesticate creativity and the research culture, promoting a certain type of knowledge while silencing critical voices within research and teaching—because critical voices question power and reject its dominant narratives. The intellectual priority of the ranking regime is to create research outputs and narratives concomitant with funding agencies and regimes of power. It prioritises the objectives of the establishment rather than investigating issues that affect people and their everyday lives.

The idea of emancipatory knowledge creation and dissemination is pushed to the margins and often abandoned by universities in the name of producing quick, Mickey Mouse impact cases. The ranking exercise replaces the fundamental questions of teaching and research in higher education with ranking questions, in search of positions and numbers in an Excel sheet managed by people without any form of academic credentials. The ranking regime creates conditions that replace critical thought with simple, meaningless numbers and scores.

The objective and subjective questions of life are filtered by the ranking regime, which reshapes teaching and learning so that education becomes a commodity for sale and profit rather than a pursuit of knowledge. The question here is not about

the flawed aims, objectives, ideas, data, and methodology behind the ranking regime, but about the absolutely unnecessary ranking exercise itself. This battle of ranks does not contribute to the growth of universities or institutions of higher learning. It only serves the purpose of the higher education market, where managers make profits while students and teachers lose their space and freedom to pursue knowledge and skills that fulfil both the essence and emancipatory logic of life.

Rankings do not reflect the quality of research and teaching. They accelerate university managers' marketing strategies to grab money from students through student fees and from governments through research funding and grants. They help elite institutions capture the lion's share of public money, whereas local institutions continue to suffer from structural funding marginalisation shaped by the ranking of teaching and research. Institutions that were established, and individuals who were trained, to pursue knowledge for the greater common good in society are now chasing the number of publications, funding applications, and a make-believe research culture and environment designed to attract funding. This rat race destroys the conditions of research and teaching.

Despite the misleading nature of rankings, managers and governments continue to support the culture of ranking. The shallow nature of ranking destroys societal trust in institutions of higher learning, because they behave like marketplaces in pursuit of ranking instead of producing the critical research necessary for knowledge dissemination.

The ranking exercise destroys the cooperative conditions necessary for both research and teaching as a collective activity. Rankings deepen a toxic culture of performance and competition and replace the collaborative culture of knowledge production. The empiricist culture promoted by rankings destroys the critical culture of knowledge creation and dissemination. The biased and dubious data used in ranking undermine universities and public trust in these institutions of higher learning. Therefore, all forms of ranking exercise that ranks teaching, teachers, research, researchers, journals and publishers need to be abandoned for good.

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Double Standards: A Crisis Of Global Credibility



LALIT GARG

Being a global superpower does not entitle a nation to impose its will on the world or allow its might to become an instrument of coercion. The true worth of power lies in responsibility, fairness and credibility, not in the number of countries a nation can threaten or pressure. Unfortunately, the policies of US President Donald Trump have raised a fundamental question before the international community: will the world order be governed by rules and principles, or by the convenience and self-interest of powerful nations? Trump's recent decision to purchase Russian diesel has brought this contradiction into sharp focus. On October 9, 2026, following a conversation with Russian President Vladimir Putin, Trump announced that Russia would immediately supply more than 300,000 tonnes of diesel to the American and global markets. Further supplies of 500,000 tonnes in November and one million tonnes subsequently were also announced. The US administration granted temporary relief from restrictions on Russian diesel imports, according to international media reports.

The irony is unmistakable. Until recently, the United States had been reprimanding countries for purchasing Russian oil. India, in particular, faced an additional 25 per cent tariff over its Russian oil imports, while tougher measures against countries engaged in Russia's energy trade were also proposed. The Lindsey O. Graham Sanctioning Russia and Iran Act of 2026, passed by the US Congress, provided a legislative basis for the possibility of additional tariffs on countries purchasing Russian

energy. Yet the same America is now opening its doors to Russian diesel under pressure from domestic energy requirements and rising fuel prices. The question is not whether the United States has the right to secure fuel for its people. Every sovereign nation has that right. The real question is why a decision portrayed as morally indefensible when taken by India, allegedly financing Russia's war machinery, becomes a matter of national necessity when America makes it. Does morality change at national borders? Are international rules meant only for weaker nations?

The central contradiction in Washington's approach lies in its selective interpretation of energy sanctions. The United States has repeatedly linked Russian energy purchases to the financing of the war in Ukraine. Yet when rising diesel prices began burdening American farmers, truckers and consumers, the administration turned to the very source it had urged others to avoid. According to Reuters, diesel prices in the United States had reached approximately \$6.28 per gallon on October 8. With the midterm elections scheduled for November 3, rising fuel costs have become a political challenge for the Trump administration. This reveals the difference between rhetoric and reality. When India purchases Russian oil to protect its economy, energy security and millions of consumers, it is lectured on international morality. But when American voters face expensive fuel, those same principles recede into the background, giving way to national interest. What kind of policy demands adherence to principles from others while creating exceptions for oneself? Preaching is easy; practising the same standards is far more difficult.

The Hindi proverb "Par Updesh Kushal Bahutere"—many are adept at preaching to others—aptly captures this American inconsistency. A country that expects the world to respect international rules



must demonstrate consistency, transparency and accountability in its own conduct. Double standards do more than weaken the moral standing of a powerful nation; they also erode the confidence of its allies and strategic partners. For India, the issue is particularly significant. The country depends heavily on imported petroleum to meet its energy needs. Oil procurement is therefore not merely a commercial transaction; it directly affects the national economy, inflation, transportation, agriculture, industry and the everyday lives of ordinary citizens. Rising global oil prices increase the cost of fuel, freight and essential commodities. India's energy security consequently depends on reliable supplies, affordable prices and the freedom to make decisions in accordance with its national interests. Ignoring these considerations under pressure from a superpower would be neither practical nor prudent. Purchasing Russian oil does not automatically amount to endorsing the war in Ukraine, just as questioning the fairness or effectiveness of energy sanctions does not mean defending military aggression. These are distinct issues that must be assessed independently.

Efforts to end the war, safeguard Ukraine's sovereignty and protect civilian lives remain essential. At the same time, the effectiveness

and fairness of economic sanctions deserve impartial scrutiny. If energy purchases are considered a means of financing war, the same standard must apply to every country. Targeting weaker nations or geopolitical rivals while permitting exceptions when domestic circumstances demand them undermines the very moral justification offered for such restrictions. Trump's decision has also provoked concern in Ukraine. President Volodymyr Zelenskyy has criticised the move as beneficial to Russia, arguing that it could provide Moscow with additional resources to sustain the war. The decision has drawn criticism from American lawmakers as well. Trump's subsequent suggestion that Zelenskyy should be replaced as Ukraine's leader has further complicated the situation.

The question of who leads a sovereign nation belongs to its people and its constitutional framework. If the United States presents itself as a champion of democracy and freedom, it must also respect the political sovereignty of other countries. Peace initiatives deserve support, but placing disproportionate pressure on a nation already suffering from war cannot be considered just or constructive. This episode offers the world an important lesson: being a superpower and being a trusted

power are two different things. The former derives from economic, military and political resources; the latter is earned through fairness, consistency, integrity and responsible conduct.

The United States remains one of the world's most influential economic and political powers. However, repeated inconsistencies in its policies risk damaging its international standing and undermining confidence in its leadership. The familiar maxim, "As you sow, so shall you reap," applies not only to individuals but also to nations. A country that disregards the consequences of its own double standards may eventually find its credibility diminished and its influence weakened. If Washington considers purchasing Russian diesel a legitimate response to its domestic economic needs, it must acknowledge that India and other nations have an equally legitimate right to protect their energy security. The principles applied to one country cannot be dismissed when another invokes them. Fairness in international relations requires common standards, not selective exemptions.

India, too, must draw the appropriate lessons from this development by strengthening its energy security, economic resilience and strategic autonomy. Neither blind opposition to another country nor unquestioning support for a powerful ally serves the national interest. What matters is the independent assessment of every decision in the light of national priorities, international peace and universally applicable principles. Ultimately, power can compel the world to yield for a time, but only just and consistent conduct can win lasting trust. America's greatest challenge today is not merely to demonstrate its strength, but to preserve its credibility. History judges nations not simply by the magnitude of their power, but by the integrity, wisdom and responsibility with which they exercise it.

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PM Package And The Question Of Dignity

**OMKAR DATTATRAY**

The recent order of the Department of Migrant Relief, Rehabilitation and Reconciliation (DMRR&R), reportedly stipulating a series of preconditions for Prime Minister's Package employees before they can take possession of transit accommodation, has raised serious questions about the very philosophy and purpose of the return and rehabilitation policy for displaced Kashmiri Pandits. The controversy is not merely about an affidavit, a few administrative clauses or the formalities attached to government accommodation. At its core lies a far more consequential question: whether a policy conceived to facilitate the dignified return, rehabilitation and reintegration of displaced employees into the Valley is gradually being reduced to a labyrinth of bureaucratic conditionalities, thereby defeating the very objective for which it was formulated.

The Prime Minister's Package was never intended to be an employment arrangement in isolation. It was conceived against the larger backdrop of displacement, insecurity and prolonged separation from the native habitat of Kashmiri Pandits. Employment in the Valley was envisaged as an important instrument of rehabilitation, but employment alone could never constitute comprehensive rehabilitation. A person cannot reasonably be expected to return to a difficult and security-sensitive environment merely on the strength of an appointment order while being left to grapple with the fundamental question of safe and dignified accommodation. Employment, security and residential stability were therefore intrinsically intertwined components of the rehabilitation architecture. It is against this backdrop that the construction of transit accommodation for PM Package employees assumes particular significance.

These quarters were not conceived as an ordinary governmental housing scheme detached from any social or rehabilitative purpose. They were created precisely to facilitate employees who had returned or were expected to return to Kashmir in order to discharge their official responsibilities. Government ownership of these properties is unquestionable, and the administration is entirely justified in prescribing reasonable regulations for their occupation, maintenance, security and eventual vacation. No employee can legitimately claim an unrestricted proprietary interest in government accom-

modation. Conditions prohibiting subletting, unauthorised transfer, misuse of premises, non-payment of legitimate charges or violation of security regulations are perfectly understandable and administratively defensible.

The difficulty, however, arises when routine regulation of government property begins to metamorphose into an elaborate mechanism of conditionality that potentially dilutes the substantive purpose of rehabilitation itself. An affidavit should ordinarily constitute a solemn declaration or undertaking concerning lawful occupation and responsible use of government property. It should not become an instrument through which an employee is compelled, as a precondition for obtaining possession, to acquiesce in provisions that disproportionately curtail legitimate rights, create excessive uncertainty or effectively transform an entitlement flowing from a government rehabilitation arrangement into a discretionary favour.

The distinction is fundamental. The government undoubtedly possesses the authority to regulate its property, but administrative authority cannot be divorced from administrative purpose. A government accommodation constructed specifically for PM Package employees must be administered in a manner consistent with the policy objective that occasioned its construction. If the conditions imposed upon the intended beneficiaries are so onerous, precarious or restrictive that they render possession uncertain or rehabilitation illusory, then the administration must introspect whether procedure has begun to eclipse purpose. The irony becomes even more pronounced when one considers the protracted history of these transit quarters. PM Package employees have waited for years for suitable accommodation, with projects facing delays, incomplete infrastructure and repeated extensions of deadlines.

Many employees have continued to live in rented premises despite serving in the Valley under circumstances that have often involved substantial personal and familial insecurity. When, after such prolonged waiting, accommodation finally becomes available, possession ought logically to represent the culmination of an important chapter in the rehabilitation process. It should not become the threshold of another bureaucratic ordeal in which the employee is presented with an array of conditions before being permitted to occupy a quarter constructed specifically for that purpose.

The word "transit" itself deserves scrutiny. Transit accommodation is, by its very nomenclature, temporary. Yet when employees have spent years serving in Kashmir, facing uncertainty and security concerns, perpetual dependence upon temporary arrangements raises a deeper policy contradiction. Rehabilitation implies the restoration of stability, dignity



and a reasonable degree of normalcy. If an employee remains permanently suspended between displacement and rehabilitation, with accommodation itself continuing to be precarious, the terminology of rehabilitation begins to acquire an almost semantic character rather than a substantive one. A genuinely rehabilitative policy cannot be confined to the proposition that a displaced employee has been provided a government job in Kashmir. Return is not merely physical movement from one geographical location to another. Nor can rehabilitation be reduced to the issuance of appointment orders, posting directions and residential allotments shorn of human considerations.

Genuine rehabilitation necessarily encompasses security, accommodation, dignity, institutional support, social reintegration and a reasonable sense of permanence. To expect employees to return and serve while simultaneously subjecting them to conditions that create an atmosphere of perpetual uncertainty would amount to reducing rehabilitation to a bureaucratic abstraction. Security assumes particular importance in this context. PM Package employees have historically expressed concerns regarding their safety, and the administration itself has had to deliberate upon security arrangements for transit accommodations. In such circumstances, secure government housing cannot be treated as a mere perk or conventional service benefit. It is intrinsically connected with the viability of the rehabilitation policy. An employee who is expected to discharge official duties in Kashmir must have a reasonably secure place to live.

The provision of such accommodation is therefore not simply an act of governmental generosity; it is part of the infrastructure necessary for making the return policy operational. The affidavit requirement, therefore, deserves to be examined not merely by reading individual clauses in isolation but by assessing the cumulative burden that they impose upon the employee. Every condition should satisfy the elementary tests of necessity, reasonableness and proportionality. Is it genuinely necessary to protect government property? Is it rationally connected with the legitimate administra-

tive objective? Is the burden imposed upon the employee proportionate to the interest the government seeks to safeguard? If a particular condition is intended merely to prevent misuse, it can ordinarily be justified. But if it creates arbitrary insecurity of tenure, imposes disproportionate liabilities or restricts legitimate avenues of grievance redressal, its inclusion demands considerably greater justification.

There is also a larger question of administrative propriety. A substantive government policy should not be imperceptibly diluted through an affidavit presented to beneficiaries at the stage of taking possession. If eligibility and allotment are governed by established government orders and transparent criteria, beneficiaries should not discover, at the final stage, that additional conditions have been superimposed upon their possession. Such a practice can create the unfortunate impression that an employee is being asked to surrender legitimate protections in exchange for something that the rehabilitation framework itself contemplated providing. The administration, of course, must safeguard public property. But there is no inherent contradiction between protecting government assets and preserving the dignity and legitimate interests of employees.

A carefully drafted undertaking can prohibit subletting, unauthorised occupation, transfer, misuse and structural damage; require adherence to security protocols and payment of prescribed charges; and provide for vacation when lawful entitlement ceases. None of these objectives requires the creation of conditions that undermine the fundamental spirit of rehabilitation. The matter is therefore not one of government versus employees, nor should it be reduced to an adversarial contest between administrative authority and individual demands. The real issue is whether governmental power is being exercised in consonance with the declared purpose of the policy. The administration possesses authority, but authority carries with it an obligation to act reasonably, transparently and consistently with the objectives for which the relevant scheme was created.

After decades of displacement, a Kashmiri Pandit employee returning to the Valley under the Prime Min-

ister's Package should not be made to feel that the very accommodation intended to facilitate that return is an uncertain concession available only upon acceptance of an onerous set of conditions. Such an approach risks converting rehabilitation into a transaction and return into a contractual compliance exercise. It would be an unfortunate paradox if an employee who has already made the difficult decision to serve in Kashmir were subsequently confronted with an institutional framework that communicates insecurity rather than reassurance.

The government must therefore undertake a comprehensive, clause-by-clause review of the recent DMRR&R order and distinguish between legitimate conditions governing government property and provisions that may inadvertently erode the rehabilitative character of the accommodation scheme. If any condition is found to be excessive, ambiguous, disproportionate or inconsistent with existing policy, it should be suitably modified or withdrawn. The process should also be transparent so that employees understand precisely the nature of their rights, obligations and tenure. Ultimately, the success of the return and rehabilitation policy cannot be measured merely by the number of employees appointed, the number of quarters constructed or the number of affidavits obtained. It must be measured by whether displaced employees are enabled to live and work in Kashmir with security, dignity, stability and confidence. Employment without accommodation remains incomplete; accommodation without security remains inadequate; and security without dignity cannot constitute meaningful rehabilitation.

The government has every legitimate right to retain ownership and regulatory control over its residential assets. But government property created for a specific rehabilitative purpose must also remain faithful to that purpose. The administration must ensure that procedural formalities do not become an impediment to the substantive objective of rehabilitation. Otherwise, a policy originally conceived as a bridge between displacement and dignified return could paradoxically become an elaborate bureaucratic edifice standing between the displaced and the very rehabilitation that was promised to them.

The fundamental principle should therefore be unequivocal: government property must remain government property, but government property created for rehabilitation must remain an instrument of rehabilitation. If the conditions attached to its possession begin to defeat that objective, then the issue is no longer merely administrative—it becomes a profound question about the credibility, compassion and constitutional integrity of the entire return and rehabilitation policy.

(The Author is a columnist, Social and KP activist)

■ Nostalgia

The Streets Remember What We Forget

**SYED MAJID GILANI**

When I look back at Srinagar today, many memories come back to me through the businesses I saw around me. They were ordinary things at the time, but somehow they have stayed with me. I have been watching this since the 1990s. One business would begin to do well, people would notice it, and before long, the same kind of business would start appearing in different parts of the city. Sometimes it seemed as if the whole city had suddenly discovered the same idea.

I remember the small kiriyana shops of those years. The 1990s were not easy years in Srinagar. Curfews, hartals and restrictions on movement were familiar parts of life, and people often preferred buying their daily needs from somewhere close to home. A room facing the road could become a shop. A small portion of a house could be turned into one. Even a little space along a boundary wall was enough. A few shelves, some everyday items, and a shop was ready. Slowly, these little grocery shops became part of almost every colony and mohalla. They became part of the daily rhythm



of neighbourhood life.

Then came the photostat and lamination shops. Students needed copies of notes, people needed forms and applications, and offices needed documents. Certificates and important papers were copied and laminated. For some years, photostat shops seemed to be everywhere. I can still remember people standing around, waiting for their documents.

Soon after, the STD, ISD and PCO booths became common. Today, when almost everyone carries a mobile phone, it is difficult to imagine what those little booths once meant. If you wanted to make a telephone call, you went to a PCO. Sometimes there was a small queue. Sometimes you waited for someone to finish talking. If the call was important, you stayed there patiently. Many PCOs also offered photostat, fax and lamination services. For a while, they were a familiar sight in Srinagar.

As landline telephones became more common and, later, mobile phones arrived, the PCOs slowly began to disappear. There was no particular day when they ended. They simply became

unnecessary.

I also remember the computer training institutes. Computers were new and exciting then, and young people wanted to learn typing, MS-DOS, Windows and other basic computer skills. One institute opened, then others followed. For many young people, entering a computer institute was their first close encounter with a machine that seemed to belong to the future.

Not long after, Internet cafés began appearing across the city. Going to an Internet café was itself an experience. We went there to send emails, search for information, browse websites or simply explore this new world that had opened before us. I still remember sitting in front of those computers and waiting for a page to open. Sometimes the waiting seemed longer than the actual browsing. Today, the Internet is in our phones, and the cafés that once seemed so modern have almost disappeared. Yet for those of us who experienced them, they remain part of a particular Srinagar.

With time, coaching centres too began to mushroom, appearing across

the city. Students and parents began looking for them, and soon they could be found in many parts of the city. After that came fast food. Burgers, pizzas, rolls and other quick foods began appearing in different areas. One outlet would become popular, and before long, several others would appear, offering much the same products and services.

In recent years, departmental stores have become more common. In almost every other market, one can find them. There are businesses today that were not even part of our imagination when the old PCOs and Internet cafés were still part of everyday life. Then came another trend, the mushrooming of journalism. With smartphones in almost every hand, every other person seemed to become a journalist or photo-journalist. Social media opened an enormous space for this, welcoming everyone with a camera, a story and an audience. Today, this trend is in full bloom.

Over the years, I kept seeing the same kind of change in different forms. Businesses came, became common, changed with time and, in some cases, disappeared. Some remained for years. Some were replaced by something new. Some survived by changing themselves. When I think about all this now, I remember not only the businesses but also the Srinagar around them. I remember the colonies, the mohallas, the familiar faces, the small counters, the queues, the signboards and the streets we travelled every day without giving them a second thought. We were simply living our lives. We never thought that one day these ordinary things would become memories.

A shop opened on a familiar street. Years passed. Another signboard came up. An old one disappeared. A business we once saw everywhere slowly became part of the past, and something new took its place. The city kept moving while we were busy with our own lives. I have watched Srinagar change like this since the 1990s. When I look back now, these businesses seem like little markers of time. Each one takes me back to a particular period, to the way the streets looked, the things people needed, the places they went and the way the city felt.

Perhaps, while reading this, someone will remember the first PCO from which they made a telephone call. Someone may remember sitting in an Internet café and waiting for a page to load. Someone may remember the computer institute they first entered, a little grocery shop in their colony or old mohalla, or the first fast-food outlet they visited with friends. We may all remember different things, but they belong to the same Srinagar.

This is simply a small glimpse into my Srinagar, the Srinagar I have watched since my school days. At the time, these were just ordinary shops and businesses we passed every day. Today, they have become memories. And perhaps, somewhere among these memories, you may find a little bit of your own Srinagar too.

Syed Majid Gilani is a storyteller, opinion writer and government officer. He writes on nostalgia, Srinagar, family, faith, betrayal, resilience and moral values. He can be contacted at syedmajid6676@gmail.com.

Two-day eye screening camp begins at NIT Srinagar

GMK NEWS NETWORK

SRINAGAR: The Medical Unit of the National Institute of Technology (NIT) Srinagar, in collaboration with Kashmir Eye Hospitals, organised a two-day Mega Eye Screening-cum-Awareness Camp at the institute's Medical Unit on October 13 and 14. A total of 332 patients were examined and treated on the first day.

The initiative aims to promote eye health awareness among students and encourage regular eye check-ups for the early detection and timely treatment of vision-related problems.

Director NIT Srinagar, Prof Anurag Misra, said the institute remains committed to the health and well-being of its students and staff.

"Good health is essential for academic performance and overall development. Initiatives such as this eye screening camp help students understand the importance of preventive healthcare and seeking timely medical advice. We appreciate the collaboration with Kashmir Eye Hospitals in bringing spe-



cialised eye-care services to our campus," he said.

Prof Anurag Misra also stressed the need for doctors and the Medical Unit to focus on screening for glaucoma, a serious eye condition that can lead to irreversible vision loss if not detected and managed in time.

He emphasised the importance of early identification, regular eye examinations and timely referral for specialised treatment to

prevent avoidable vision impairment.

Dr Adil Majeed Mir, Director of Kashmir Eye Hospitals, said the camp provided an opportunity for patients to undergo eye examinations and receive medical advice.

"Regular eye check-ups are important for identifying vision-related problems at an early stage. Students often spend long hours reading, studying and using digital screens,

making awareness about eye health and timely screening particularly important," he said.

A team of 12 medical professionals, including Dr Jasiya and Dr Reem Javid, examined and treated patients during the camp and provided guidance on eye care.

Medical Officer at NIT Srinagar, Dr Gowhar Nabi, emphasised the importance of making preventive healthcare an integral part of campus life.

"Many eye-related problems can be managed more effectively when identified early. Students should not ignore symptoms such as blurred vision, eye strain or persistent discomfort and should seek professional advice when needed. Regular screening and awareness can play an important role in protecting eye health," he said.

Mohammad Abrar Khan, Senior Pharmacist from Medical Unit was the coordinator of the event. The camp will continue on October 14, providing further opportunities for students and others to access eye-screening services and professional guidance.

DC Pulwama reviews progress of Agriculture, Allied Sectors



GMK NEWS NETWORK

PULWAMA: Deputy Commissioner (DC) Pulwama, Kuldeep Krishan Sidha, Tuesday chaired a comprehensive review meeting of the Agriculture and Allied Sectors at the Meeting Hall of the Administrative Complex, Pulwama, to assess the physical and financial progress of schemes and review the implementation of key interventions across the district.

During the meeting, the officers of Agriculture, Horticulture, Animal Husbandry, Sheep Husbandry and Fisheries departments gave detailed presentations highlighting the physical and financial achievements under their respective sectors, status of applications, beneficiary coverage, credit linkage, expenditure and implementation of various schemes.

Important interventions undertaken, interventions requiring support from the District Administration and field visits conducted by the concerned officers were also reviewed.

The Deputy Commissioner directed all concerned officers to ensure time-bound disposal of pending applications, strengthen inter-departmental coordination and closely monitor scheme implementation at the field

level.

He stressed effective utilisation of funds, timely completion of ongoing works and ensuring that the benefits of government schemes reach eligible farmers and beneficiaries without delay.

The DC further directed departments to identify key interventions requiring support from the District Administration and submit concrete proposals for prompt resolution. He also called for regular field inspections, close monitoring of physical and financial progress and timely corrective measures, while emphasising coordinated efforts to achieve targets under HADP and other flagship schemes within prescribed timelines, with focus on improving service delivery, promoting mechanisation, strengthening allied activities and enhancing income opportunities for farmers and other stakeholders.

The meeting was attended by Additional District Development Commissioner Pulwama, Gulzar Ahmad Bhat; Chief Planning Officer, Pulwama, Aashiq Khanday; DSEO, CAO, CHO, CAHO, DSHO, LDM J&K Bank, DDM, NABARD, AD Fisheries, AMO, Horticulture (P&M), Pulwama, besides other concerned officers.

JKEDI concludes Entrepreneurship, SKP under RAMP Scheme



GMK NEWS NETWORK

SRINAGAR: The Jammu & Kashmir Entrepreneurship Development Institute (JKEDI), Srinagar, Tuesday successfully concluded the Entrepreneurship and Skill Development Programme (ESDP) under the Raising and Accelerating MSME Performance (RAMP) scheme at the Govt. College for Women, M.A Road, Srinagar.

The program was organised in collaboration between JKEDI and Govt. College for Women, M.A Road, Srinagar at the district level. The 20-day training programme drew an enthusiastic response from students, who participated actively throughout the sessions.

Professor Dr. Yasmeen Farooq, Principal of the college, attended as the Guest of Honour. The valedictory function was also attended by Dr. Naila Khanday, Range Officer, JKEDI, Central Kashmir; Shabir Hussain Shah, District Nodal Officer, JKEDI Srinagar; Dr. Sheeba, Assistant Convenor EDC, Govt. College for Women and designated course team for the program from JKEDI.

Professor Dr. Yasmeen Farooq expressed satisfaction over the successful conduct of the programme and congratulated JKEDI

for organising the 20-day training within the college. She noted that the collaboration between JKEDI and the institution had provided valuable practical exposure to students and would inspire more young women to explore entrepreneurship as a viable career path.

Dr. Naila Khanday, in her welcome address, motivated the participants, encouraging them to convert the skills acquired during the training into sustainable enterprises and to view entrepreneurship as an empowering career option.

Addressing the participants, Shabir Hussain Shah, emphasised the transformative power of entrepreneurship. "Entrepreneurship is the path to self-reliance. The future belongs to those who embrace emerging opportunities with a positive mindset and choose to become job creators rather than job seekers," he said.

The ESDP under the RAMP scheme equips aspiring entrepreneurs with essential competencies in business development, financial planning, and market awareness. The batch recorded strong student participation and received positive feedback, reflecting the growing interest among youth in enterprise creation.

Dr. Asha Lakra reviews implementation of Tribal Welfare Schemes in Anantnag

GMK NEWS NETWORK

ANANTNAG: Member of the National Commission for Scheduled Tribes (NCST), Dr. Asha Lakra, Tuesday chaired a comprehensive review meeting at the Meeting Hall of the DC Office Complex, Anantnag, to assess the implementation of various safeguards, welfare schemes, developmental programmes and infrastructure projects aimed at protecting the rights and promoting the socio-economic welfare of Scheduled Tribe (ST) communities in the district.

During the meeting, Dr. Lakra undertook a detailed review of the progress achieved under various tribal welfare initiatives and assessed the role of different departments in ensuring that the benefits of government schemes



reach eligible beneficiaries. She stressed the need for effective implementation of welfare measures, timely resolution of pending issues and removal of administrative bottlenecks that may hinder the delivery of benefits to members of Scheduled Tribe communities.

Emphasising account-

ability and a result-oriented approach, the NCST Member directed the concerned officers to ensure strict adherence to prescribed timelines, strengthen monitoring mechanisms and improve coordination among departments for effective implementation of welfare schemes. She underscored the impor-

tance of ensuring that eligible beneficiaries are adequately informed about the schemes and safeguards available to them and are able to access the intended benefits without unnecessary delays.

Deputy Commissioner Anantnag, Dr. Bilal Mohi-Ud-Din Bhat, briefed the Member on the status of implementation of various tribal welfare schemes, ongoing developmental works and initiatives being undertaken by the district administration and line departments for the welfare and upliftment of Scheduled Tribe communities. He also apprised her of the progress made by the concerned departments and the measures being taken to facilitate the delivery of government benefits to eligible beneficiaries.

ACB, Education Deptt organise vigilance awareness programme in Pulwama

GMK NEWS NETWORK

PULWAMA: The Anti-Corruption Bureau (ACB) J&K, South Kashmir, in collaboration with the School Education Department, Pulwama, Tuesday organised a Vigilance Awareness and Sensitisation Programme at Government Girls Higher Secondary School, Pulwama, as part of Vigilance Awareness Week 2026 being observed on the theme "Probity for Prosperity."

The programme was aimed at sensitising officers

and heads of educational institutions about vigilance measures, ethical conduct, transparency, accountability and the importance of maintaining integrity in the discharge of official duties.

Heads of educational institutions from across the district participated in the programme. The session provided an opportunity to deliberate upon the adverse impact of corruption on public service delivery and the need for greater transparency and accountability in the functioning of govern-

ment institutions.

DySP, Anti-Corruption Bureau, South Kashmir, Bahar Ahmad Khan, Senior Prosecution Officer, South Kashmir, Umar Mansoor and Inspector ACB South Kashmir, Bilal Ahmad addressed the participants and highlighted the importance of vigilance awareness in preventing corrupt practices and strengthening public trust in government institutions.

The speakers emphasised that integrity, honesty and accountability must remain central to public service.

They also sensitised the participants about their responsibilities in ensuring transparent and ethical functioning of educational institutions and encouraged them to act as ambassadors of integrity within their institutions and society.

The programme further highlighted the important role of educational institutions in creating awareness among students and the wider community about the harmful effects of corruption and the significance of responsible citizenship.



Government of Jammu & Kashmir
OFFICE OF THE EXECUTIVE ENGINEER PW(R&B)
DEPT. MECHANICAL DIVISION SOUTH KASHMIR.



**NOTICE INVITING TENDERS**
SINGLE COVER SYSTEM
e-NIT No: 21 of R&B /MDSK / 2026-27, Dated: 10-10-2026
For and on behalf of the Lt. Governor, UT J&K, e-tenders (In single cover system) are invited on Percentage basis from approved and eligible Contractors registered with J&K Govt., CPWD, Railways and other State/ Central Governments for the following works: -

S. No	Name of Work	Adv. Cost (Rs. In Lacs)	Cost of T/ Doc. (In Rupees)	Earnest money (In Rupees)	Time of completion	M.H of Account	Class of Contractor	Project Authority
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
1.	Balance work of Lift shafts for DSITC of 28 Nos (G+5) 08 Passengers MRL Lifts at Transit Accommodation at Lethpora-Phase-1, Pulwama	48.35	1100/-	2% of Adv cost	30 days	PMDP-4235	BEE & AAY	JK DMRRR

Position of AAA:
1) Authorization Accorded by the DMRRR vide O.M.DMRRR-Plan/47/2023, Dated:09/08/2024 by the Government of India, Ministry of Home Affairs, Department of Jammu, Kashmir and Ladakh affairs
2) Principal Approval through Minutes of Meeting chaired by Chief secretary vide No: DMRRR-MR/35/2025; Dated: 09-12-2025.
3) Authorization conveyed vide No. SE/PS/7243-45; Dated 10/10/2026 by Superintending Engineer PWD (R&B) Circle, Pulwama-Shopian.
Position of funds: Committed.
Technical sanction No: EE/Mech/R&B/TS/07 of2026-27 dated: 10/10/2026
The Bidding documents Consist of qualifying information, eligibility criteria, specifications, Drawings, bill of quantities (B.O.Q), Set of terms and conditions of contract and other details can be viewed/downloaded from the departmental website www.jktenders.gov.in as per schedule of dates given below-

1	Date of Issue of Tender Notice	10-10-2026
2	Period of downloading of bidding documents	17-10-2026
3	Bid submission Start Date	10-10-2026
4	Bid Submission End Date	17-10-2026 4:00 PM
5	Date & time of opening of Bids (Online)	19-10-2026 12:00 PM

- Every participating contractor to mandatorily disclose the bank account number which is linked with their GSTIN at the time of bid submission. No payments shall be released by the Government Department/Agency to any other bank account except the one linked with the GST registered number of the successful bidder. (As per circular No. 01(ADM) FD of 2025 Dated 08-07-2025 of J&K Finance Department)
(The participating contractor may disclose his Bank Account as per the format, devised as Annexure- A of the NIT and submit/upload the same accordingly at the time of submission of the bid).
- Bids must be accompanied with cost of Tender document/Tender Fee to be deposited in Cash in Centralized Designated Pooling JK Bank Account Bearing No: 0470010200000099, IFSC: JAKAOLALANG)
(In case the participating bidder wishes to deposit the requisite amount physically at any branch of the Bank other than using UPI or any other mobile application, the said bidder has to upload the Transaction Receipt as per devised format forming Annexure-Z to this NIT, duly signed by the concerned Branch Manager with proper seal.)
- All the bidders must deposit Earnest money /Bid security equal to 2% of advertised cost in Cash in Centralized Designated Pooling JK Bank Account Bearing No: 0470010200000099, IFSC: JAKAOLALANG)
(In case the participating bidder wishes to deposit the requisite amount physically at any branch of the Bank other than using UPI or any other mobile application, the said bidder has to upload the Transaction Receipt as per devised format forming Annexure-Z to this NIT, duly signed by the concerned Branch Manager with proper seal.)
- The Successful bidder will have to provide performance security @ 5% of contract value to be deposited in Cash in Centralized Designated Pooling JK Bank Account Bearing No: 0470010200000099, IFSC: JAKAOLALANG), which shall be released after successful completion of DLP / maintenance period.
(In case the successful bidder wishes to deposit the requisite amount physically at any branch of the Bank other than using UPI or any other mobile application, the said bidder has to upload the Transaction Receipt as per devised format forming Annexure-Z to this NIT, duly signed by the concerned Branch Manager with proper seal.)
- The date and time of opening of Bids shall be notified on Web Site www.jktenders.gov.in and conveyed to the bidders automatically through an e-mail message on their e-mail address. The bids of Responsive bidders shall be opened online on same Web Site in the Office of Executive Engineer R&B Division south Kashmir (tender receiving authority).
- The bids for the work shall remain valid for a period of 120-days from the date of opening of technical bids
- The earnest money shall be forfeited, If: -
 - Any bidder/ tenderer withdraws his bid/ tender during the period of bid validity or make any modifications in the terms and conditions of the bid.
 - Failure of Successful bidder to furnish the required performance security within the specified time limit.
 - Failure of Successful bidder to execute the agreement within 28 days after fixation of contract.
- All other terms and conditions as defined in GFR-2017, Manual for Procurement of works, Engineering Manual-2020 shall be applicable.

No: R&B/MDSK/2154-58
Date: 10/10/2026
DIPK-6688-26
DT: 13/10/2026

Sd/-
Executive Engineer
PW(R&B) Mechanical Division
South Kashmir

20 JKAP IR Holds Police-Public Samvad at Parihaspora

GMK NEWS NETWORK

PARIHASPORA: 20 JKAP IR organised a Police-Public Samvad at Parihaspora to mark the birth anniversary of Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel, highlighting his contribution to nation-building, administrative reforms and the strengthening of India's governance system.

The programme aimed to sensitise the public, particularly youth, about the ideals and administrative vision of Sardar Patel, popularly known as the Iron Man of India.

During the interaction, participants were briefed about Patel's role in establishing a strong and unified administrative framework in independent India. His



emphasis on integrity, discipline, impartiality, accountability and dedication to public service was highlighted as essential to effective governance.

The discussion also focused on Patel's contribution to strengthening the All India Services, including the IAS and IPS, and his vision of a professional,

impartial and nationally oriented civil service. His role in the integration of princely states and the consolidation of national unity was also discussed.

Addressing the gathering, Commandant 20 JKAP IR, Surjeet Kumar, JKPS, said Sardar Patel's administrative legacy continued to inspire public servants

to uphold honesty, professionalism, discipline and a strong sense of responsibility towards citizens.

He urged the youth to imbibe the values of unity, discipline and responsible citizenship, and contribute positively to society. He also stressed the importance of police-public cooperation, saying mutual trust, understanding and respect were essential for effective administration and stronger community relations.

The Police-Public Samvad provided a platform for participants to exchange views and understand the importance of public participation in strengthening governance and fostering better relations between the police and the community.

21st Junior National Soft Tennis C'ship concludes on a high in Srinagar

GMK SPORTS DESK

SRINAGAR: The 21st Junior National Soft Tennis Championship, organised at Gindun Stadium, Rajbagh, Srinagar, from October 5 to October 10, 2026, concluded successfully with a grand closing ceremony held on October 10, 2026, at the Sher-i-Kashmir Indoor Sports Complex (SKISC), Srinagar.

The championship, organised in conjunction with J&K Sports Council, brought together the talented young soft tennis players from across the country, celebrating sporting excellence, discipline, unity and the spirit of healthy competition.

The closing ceremony was graced by Hossein Rafeian, President of the Iran Soft Tennis Association, as the Chief Guest. His presence added international significance to the occasion and reflected the growing scope for cooperation and friendship through soft tennis. Samaneh Hanifi, wife of Hossein Rafeian, attended as the Guest of Honour.

Among the distinguished guests were Sayna Sadat Hashemi, International Affairs representative; Narinder Pal Singh and Mrs Nirmala,



Joint Secretaries of the Amateur Soft Tennis Federation of India (ASTFI); Nazrul Islam, President of the Private Schools Association; Dr. Fayaz Ahmad; Fazali, Chairman of Dolphin School, Pulwama and other dignitaries, officials, and representatives associated with ASTFI and sports.

The championship witnessed enthusiastic participation from teams representing different states of India, providing young athletes with a valuable platform to showcase their talent, determination and competitive spirit at the national level. Throughout the tournament, the players demonstrated remarkable dedication, sportsmanship, and discipline, making the

championship a memorable sporting occasion.

Addressing the gathering, the distinguished guests appreciated the efforts made to organise the championship successfully in Srinagar and emphasised the importance of providing young players with opportunities to compete at higher levels. The presence of the President of the Iran Soft Tennis Association further highlighted the potential for international engagement and the strengthening of sporting relations through soft tennis.

Special appreciation and sincere thanks are extended to the Jammu & Kashmir Sports Council for its valuable support and cooperation in facilitating the successful

conduct of the championship. The association also placed on record its gratitude to the Amateur Soft Tennis Federation of India (ASTFI) for its guidance, coordination and continued commitment to the promotion and development of soft tennis across the country.

The successful organisation of this prestigious national championship is a testament to the dedication, planning and tireless efforts of the J&K Amateur Soft Tennis Association, which deserves special credit for hosting the event in Srinagar. From coordination and arrangements to providing a platform for young athletes from across India, the

association played a significant role in ensuring that the championship concluded on a high note.

The association also acknowledged the contributions of participating state associations, team managers, coaches, technical officials, volunteers and all those who worked behind the scenes to make the event a success. Their collective efforts helped create a positive and encouraging environment for young sporting talent.

The closing ceremony concluded on a note of pride, appreciation and renewed commitment to the promotion of soft tennis among the youth.

The J&K Amateur Soft Tennis Association reaffirmed its commitment to continue its efforts to promote soft tennis in Jammu & Kashmir and contribute meaningfully to the growth of the sport at the national and international levels.

The organisers expressed their gratitude to all participating States, players, coaches, managers, officials, J&K Sports Council, The Jammu and Kashmir Bank Limited, and all other stakeholders whose cooperation has contributed to the successful commencement of the championship.

Delhi trail Bengal by 88 runs in Ranji Trophy's Group C contest

AGENCIES

KALYANI: Delhi were placed at 101 for three, still 88 runs behind Bengal, at stumps on the third day of their Ranji Trophy Elite Group C match here on Tuesday.

Pacers Akash Deep and Mukesh Kumar struck once each, while Yash Dhull was forced to retire hurt, leaving the visitors needing a strong batting display on the final day. Bengal had earlier posted 429 in their only innings, a lead of 189 runs.

Resuming at 304 for three, Bengal were bowled out for 429 on the back of centuries from Sudip Kumar Gharami (133) and Abhishek Porel (149), with Sumanta Gupta chipping in with 50.

Ayush Badoni was the pick of the Delhi bowlers, returning 5/43 in 18 overs, while Navdeep Saini and Divij Mehra took two wickets each.

In their second innings, Delhi were steadied by skipper Badoni (24 not out) and Anuj Rawat (25 not out) after slipping to 59



for three at one stage.

In another Group C match, Kerala still trailed Jharkhand by 318 runs in the first innings with four wickets in hand, as the hosts closed in on three points from a likely draw at the Keenan Stadium.

Jharkhand had posted a massive 587, and in reply Kerala were 269 for six. Abhishek Nair led the response with a solid 126 (204 balls, 10 fours, 5 sixes), but no other Kerala batter converted a start.

Gujarat were in command against Odisha in

Ahmedabad after taking a first-innings lead of 115 runs, with one day's play left.

Resuming at 205 for two, Gujarat were bowled out for 439 in reply to Odisha's 324. Vedant Trivedi struck 108 off 171 balls (13 fours, 1 six), while Aarya Desai (94) and Urvil Patel (85) both fell short of three figures. Harshal Patel chipped in with a late 60 off 92 balls, including five fours and four sixes.

In their second innings, Odisha were 119 for four, a slender lead of four runs with six wickets in hand. (PTI)

Thyagarajan, Siraj shine as Hyderabad drub Tripura by innings and 40 runs

AGENCIES

SECUNDERABAD: Hyderabad started their Ranji Trophy 2026-27 campaign with an innings and 40-run win over Tripura on the third day of their Elite Group B match here on Tuesday.

Pacers Tanay Thyagarajan and Mohammad Siraj shared eight wickets between them as Hyderabad bundled out Tripura, overnight 99 for seven, for 120 in their second innings.

Hyderabad amassed seven points from the match, including a bonus point. Thyagarajan was the destroyer-in-chief with a six-wicket haul (6/52) while India pacer Siraj ended up with two for 19 from nine overs.

Thyagarajan dismissed overnight batter Sentu Sarkar early in the first session and Tripura offered a little fight thereafter.

Resuming their second innings in a difficult position, Tripura needed a substantial partnership to extend the contest, but Hyderabad's disciplined attack ensured that no such stand developed. The visitors' lower order struggled to counter the movement and accuracy of the home bowlers.



Thyagarajan kept the pressure on with a probing spell and was rewarded with wickets at regular intervals. His six-wicket haul completed a memorable match for the bowler, who had already played a key role in restricting Tripura during the first innings.

Siraj, returning to domestic cricket, complemented Thyagarajan effectively from the other end. Bowling with pace and control, he conceded only 19 runs in nine overs and made it difficult for the Tripura batters to score freely.

Once Sarkar was removed, Hyderabad sensed an early finish and attacked the remaining batters with close catchers around the wicket. Tripura's resistance lasted only briefly as the innings folded for 120, giving

Hyderabad a comprehensive victory.

The result also gave Hyderabad the maximum possible points from the match, with the bonus point strengthening their position at the start of the campaign.

Hyderabad will now face Andhra in the second match of the group from October 18, while Tripura will be up against Assam.

Andhra optimistic but Nair stands firm

In Vijayawada, Karnataka led Andhra by 32 runs in their second innings after the hosts posted 418 in reply to the visitors' first-innings total of 274.

Karnataka were 176 for four at stumps on the third day, with star batter Karun Nair and captain Ravichandran Smaran batting on 81 and 21, respectively.

Hazlewood surpasses Brett Lee in Test wicket-takers' list after career-best outing against SA

IAN S

DURBAN: Australia fast bowler Josh Hazlewood surpassed former speedster Brett Lee in the list of bowlers taking most wickets for Australia in Test cricket with a career-best six-wicket haul in the first Test against South Africa at Kingsmead in Durban on Tuesday.

Hazlewood led the charge for the Aussies with his best haul of 6-49 as he played a vital role in bowling out the Proteas for 206 in the second innings to set up a 214-run win in Durban.

The right-arm speedster has gone past Lee and has become Australia's sixth-highest wicket-taking fast bowler with 311 scalps. Coming into the Test, Hazlewood had 303 wickets, but he took eight in the



match, with two coming in the first innings too. Lee had scalped 310 wickets in the format during his illustrious career.

He is the eighth-highest wicket-taker overall for Australia as late spin legend Shane Warne leads the chart with 708 scalps. Nathan Lyon is the only other spinner in the top 10 as he holds the second spot with 573 wickets.

Meanwhile, Hazlewood has also surpassed the likes of West Indies pacer Kemar Roach (304), ex-England speedster Fred Trueman (307), former Windies off-spinner Lance Gibbs (309), and former Proteas speedster Morne Morkel (309) during this Test. He is level with ex-Indian fast bowlers Ishant Sharma and Zaheer Khan on 311 and has Mitchell Johnson next, with the

former Aussie speedster having 313 wickets to his name.

Hazlewood produced brilliance on Day 5 to plot South Africa's downfall. With the Proteas on 102/4 at the start of the final day and needing 319 for an improbable win, Hazlewood took four of the six wickets, including crucial wickets of Wiaan Mulder and Maroc Jansen. Mulder showed resistance as he played 110 balls for 29 but fell to Hazlewood.

Jansen blended resistance with attacking courage but was cleaned up on 35 off a jaffa from the Aussie star, while he also bounced off Simon Harmer in the same over. He got Jansen before bouncing off Anrich Nortje for the final wicket to seal a memorable win.

Atal's ton and lower-order fight help Afghanistan secure famous draw against Bangladesh

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ABU DHABI: Afghanistan secured an epic draw against Bangladesh in their one-off Test at the Sheikh Zayed Stadium in Abu Dhabi on Tuesday on the back of a marvellous century from Sediqullah Atal and a lower-order heroic fight from Yamin Ahmadzai, Qais Ahmad and Zia-ur-Rehman Akbar.

Asked to chase an improbable target of 479, Afghanistan made 346/8 and, more importantly, batted 142 overs to produce a famous draw. Bangladesh let several chances slip by and could not manage to pick up the remaining two wickets, with Qais going back unbeaten on 49 from 80 balls and Zia-ur-Rehman playing blocking 12 balls without a run.

It was a brilliant fourth innings defence set up by Atal. He dropped anchor and made 111 from 332 balls in what could be a defining innings in his Test career. He batted for eight hours and 34 minutes for this result, which is now the seventh longest knock recorded in the fourth innings of a Test. Atal's hundred is also the first by an Afghan player in the fourth innings of a Test.



Afghanistan resumed the final day on 132/3 with Atal and Hashmatullah Shahidi in the middle. Shahidi was retired hurt early in the first session after a throw from a deep fielder hit his knee. Atal played time with Ikram Alikhil as he reached his fifty off 166 balls and later also survived a missed stumping from Litton Das on 70.

However, Alikhil's 33-run resistance came to an end just before lunch

when he gloved a pull for Das to take a brilliant one-handed catch as Afghanistan went to lunch break at 203/4 and Shahidi still in the hut.

Atal then found Ismat Alam in the second session as the latter made four runs from 60 balls to kill time in a 40-run stand. However, Alam was dismissed by Mehidy Hasan Miraz shortly after Atal scored his hundred. Shahidi then walked in

but was dismissed before tea on 36 as Afghanistan were in trouble at 265/6 after the second session. With one complete session to play, Atal was left with the lower order.

To make matters worse for Afghanistan, he was dismissed in the first hour of the final session to leave them 281/7 and still some 22 overs were left with only three wickets in hand.

Bangladesh made some errors in the field as they missed a couple of run-out chances, while Hasan Mahmud dropped Qais at mid-wicket. Bangladesh found life again when Ahmadzai was dismissed for 19, with Mominul Haque taking a brilliant catch at short fine leg to send Afghanistan eight down.

However, Qais and Zia-ur-Rehman blocked the remaining balls, and Qais also took a hamstringing treatment in the end to pull off a historic draw.

Brief Scores: Bangladesh 346 (Tanzid 83, Shadman 67; Saleem 4-82) and 372/7 (Litton 102, Shanto 82, Saleem 2-69) drew with Afghanistan 240 (Rahmat 105, Malik 62, Mahmud 5-55) and 346/8 (Sediqullah Atal 111, Rahmat 51, Qais 49*, Ebadot 3-50)

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