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Good Morning Kashmir

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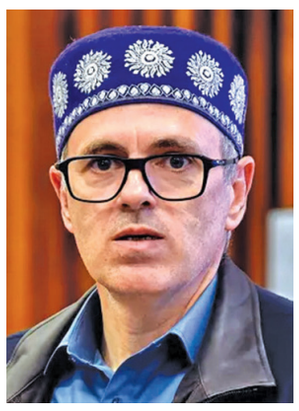


Had the immense privilege of joining our courageous soldiers for the traditional 'Bada Khana' at Sukna Military Station on the eve of Diwali. This gathering is a true celebration of collectiveness, where ranks fade and we all sit together as one family.

J&K Notifies Private Universities Rules

CM Says Move To Boost Higher Education

GMK NEWS NETWORK



JAMMU: The Jammu and Kashmir government has notified the Private Universities Rules, 2026, paving the way for the establishment of reputed national and international institutions of higher learning in the Union Territory, with Chief Minister Omar Abdullah describing the move as a significant step towards strengthening the higher education sector and expanding opportunities for the youth. JammuKashmir Travel

The rules provide for streamlined approval procedures, 25 percent reservation for J&K domiciles in admissions and employment, effective regulatory oversight and stringent penalties for violations, with a focus on transparency, accountability and academic standards, the Office of the Chief Minister said in a post on X.

Congratulating Minister for Education Shamim Fidrous on the notification, Abdullah said the move marked a significant step towards facilitating the establishment of reputed national and international institutions of higher learning in the Union Territory.

He said the new framework would facilitate institutional investment, expand educational and employment opportunities for local youth, and promote excellence in teaching, research and innovation.

The chief minister said the initiative would encourage the establishment of institutions across disciplines, including STEM, medicine, law, business studies and liberal arts, while advancing the government's objective of making quality higher education accessible to students within J&K and • P-06

NC Dissident Camp Divided Over Demands For Removal Of Top Functionaries

PIRZADA SHAKIR



SRINAGAR: A group of National Conference (NC) legislators dissatisfied with the party's internal functioning appears divided over the demands being raised during its recent meetings. The differences have emerged over calls for the removal of Chief Minister Omar Abdullah's advisor Nasir Aslam Wani and Deputy Chief Minister Surinder Choudhary from their positions.

Good Morning Kashmir spoke to around five MLAs associated with, or familiar with, the dissident camp.

While some legislators have called for changes in key government positions, others have argued that the group's primary objective should be to ensure that elected representatives are heard and that their constituencies receive fair treatment, rather than seeking the removal of particular individuals.

One MLA said the legislators wanted their concerns to be heard and their position within the party respected, indicating that the issue went beyond individual appointments.

Another said grievance redressal was his primary concern and that he was not seeking anyone's removal. Instead, he wanted the government machinery to become more accountable and responsive to elected representatives.

"There are a few MLAs in the group who may have personal issues with certain appointments, but removing people does not serve the cause of the people who voted for me or the party," another legislator said.

A different MLA said he would support the removal of the officials if it resulted in a more responsive administrative system. However, he questioned the purpose of such changes if they did not translate into better governance.

"If removing someone ensures that the system becomes responsive, then it is fine. Otherwise, there is no point. I would prefer all constituencies to be treated equally, irrespective of who represents them," the legislator said.

The extent of participation in the dissident meetings also appears to be a point of difference. One MLA claimed he had never formally been part of the group and had only been invited to a lunch hosted at the residence of legislator Qaisar Jamsheed.

"When I entered, I saw that around 16 MLAs were already there. Since then, it has become a compulsion for me," he said, without elaborating further.

However, another legislator argued that the removal of Deputy Chief Minister Surinder Choudhary from the Roads and Buildings portfolio was necessary, alleging that he had failed to discharge his responsibilities fairly and had treated legislators from different constituencies arbitrarily.

The differing positions suggest that the group, which has sought the party leadership's intervention over its grievances, does not appear to have a unified position on the remedies it wants.

The dissident legislators on Friday met party president Farooq Abdullah and Chief Minister Omar Abdullah to convey their grievances over the party's internal functioning.

During the meeting, the legislators are understood to have raised concerns about their lack of access, the handling of constituency-related issues and the need for greater accountability within the government.

However, many legislators appear more concerned with establishing an effective grievance-redressal mechanism and ensuring equitable treatment of constituencies rather than changes in appointments.

IF REMOVING SOMEONE ENSURES THAT THE SYSTEM BECOMES RESPONSIVE, THEN IT is fine. Otherwise, there is no point. I would prefer all constituencies to be treated equally, irrespective of who represents them,"

LG Greets People On Deepawali

GMK NEWS NETWORK

JAMMU: The Lieutenant Governor, Manoj Sinha has greeted the people on the eve of Deepawali.

In his message, the Lieutenant Governor has said: "On the auspicious occasion of Deepawali, I extend warm greetings and best wishes to all.

The festival of Deepawali celebrates the eternal victory of light over darkness, virtue over vice, and justice over injustice. On this joyous occasion, let us rededicate ourselves to bringing happiness and prosperity into the lives of all citizens, spreading the warmth of

CM Omar Greets People On Diwali

GMK NEWS NETWORK

JAMMU: Chief Minister Omar Abdullah Saturday extended warm greetings to the people of Jammu and Kashmir and to all those celebrating Diwali across the country and abroad.

In his message, the Chief Minister said that Diwali, the festival of lights, symbolises the triumph of good over evil and the victory of truth and righteousness. He observed that the festival conveys the enduring message of hope, harmony and compassion, while reinforcing the values of unity and mutual • P-06

Prez Murmu Wishes Citizens On Diwali

IANS

NEW DELHI: President Droupadi Murmu on Saturday extended greetings to the citizens on the eve of the Diwali festival, urging youth to contribute enthusiastically towards building a 'Viksit Bharat' while being guided by Indian values.

She also appealed people to preserve the environment and live with harmony.

In her message, • P-06

Kashmir Markets Wear Festive Look On Diwali



REHAN QAYOOM

SRINAGAR: Markets across Kashmir wore a festive look on Saturday as people thronged shopping areas for last-minute purchases ahead of Diwali, with shops decorated with colourful lights, flowers and other festive items.

Sweet shops, firecracker stalls and stores selling decorative items witnessed a rush of customers, while families were seen purchasing sweets, lamps, gifts and other items associated with the festival.

"The markets look beautiful with colourful lights and decorations. We have come out with our family to buy sweets and other items and enjoy the festive atmosphere," Rahul • P-06

Employees Say It's Nothing New

J&K NHM Employees To Get 5% Annual Increment From April 1

JAHANGEER GANAIE



SRINAGAR: The Jammu and Kashmir Government has sanctioned a 5% annual increment for eligible contractual employees engaged under the National Health Mission (NHM) for the financial year 2026-27, a move that will benefit thousands of healthcare workers across the Union Territory.

However, the announcement has drawn a lukewarm response from NHM employees' representatives, who have termed the increment a routine annual exercise rather than any special concession, reiterating their demand for salary enhancement, job security and other service-related benefits.

According to an order issued by the Mission Director, NHM J&K, the increment will be applicable to eligible contractual employees working at the State, Divisional, District and Block levels, including those engaged under the National Urban Health Mission (NUHM) and various disease control programmes.

The order states that the sanction has been accorded in pursuance of the approval of the NHM State Programme Implementation Plan (SPIP) 2026-27 for Jammu and Kashmir, conveyed by the Union Ministry of Health and Family Welfare on June 19, 2026.

As per the notified schedule, contractual employees who completed one year of service on or before March 31, • P-06

PM Modi Extends Diwali Greetings To Citizens

GMK NEWS NETWORK



NEW DELHI: Ahead of joining defence personnel to celebrate Diwali, Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Saturday extended greetings to all countrymen on the occasion of the festival of lights.

In a social media video titled "Have a great Diwali", the Prime Minister greeted citizens and informed them that he celebrates the festival enthusiastically every year and will do so this year as well.

"On the occasion of Diwali, the entire country is illuminated. The festival of lights symbolises our pledge against darkness," he said.

"May this festival bring happiness, wellbeing and prosperity for all. Just like you all, I also celebrate this festival with enthusiasm. Like every year, I will again be celebrating Diwali with our brave defence personnel. Once again, greetings to all of you on the occasion of Diwali," said PM Modi.

Earlier, PM Modi met Vice President C.P. Radhakrishnan and extended greetings on the eve of Diwali.

The Vice President's office took to X to share information about the meeting. "Vice-President Shri C. P. Radhakrishnan warmly received Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi at the Uprashtrapati Bhawan today and exchanged Deepawali greetings," said the Vice President's office.

The Vice President later reached Ayodhya • P-06

Crackdown Intensifies

Pakistan Turns To Drones, Heavy Weapons As PoK Protests Spread

IANS



NEW DELHI: After a brief lull, Pakistan-occupied Kashmir (PoK) is once again witnessing widespread unrest. Protests demanding basic amenities and fundamental rights have continued for more than three months, with no indication of subsiding.

Pakistan has resorted to the use of force, enforced disappearances, and threats in an attempt to quell the agitation, but protesters have refused to back down. With tear gas, firing, and lathi charges failing to break the protests, Pakistani forces have now reportedly turned to drones to target private homes.

An official described the use of drones to target private homes as a major escalation, reflecting Pakistan's desperation to contain the protests.

"Pakistan had turned to this tactic after its earlier use of force, including tear gas, firing and lathi charges, failed to deter protesters in PoK or bring the agitation to an end," the official said.

In fact, such actions only mobilised the people further and made them more determined to take part in the protests, the official said. When the protests began, it was advocacy groups like the Joint Action Awami Committee (JAAC) that were leading it.

Now it has become a people's movement and has reached beyond Rawalakot and even reached the capital city of Muzaffarabad. Students from Chehla University and the Jamia Kashmir Muzaffarabad are now part of the protests.

The students took to the streets to express solidarity with the people of PoK, who have been facing a severe crackdown by the Pakistani security establishment.

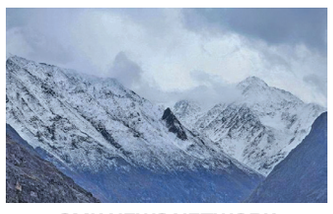
Another official said that students joining the JAAC is bad news for the Pakistani establishment.

"Not only does it signal how wide the protests are reaching, but it is also an indication that the people are not going to take things lying down," the official added.

The use of drones on residential complexes is a dangerous escalation in PoK. It indicates that the security forces are ready to kill innocent people so that this could drive fear in the minds of the protesters, the official said.

Officials said drones were being used not only to target residential complexes but also to carry out strikes near protest sites. Protesters have further alleged that, • P-06

'WD To Bring Rain, Snowfall From Nov 12'



GMK NEWS NETWORK

SRINAGAR: Weatherman on Saturday said that Jammu and Kashmir is likely to witness a spell of rain and snowfall from November 12 onwards as a Western Disturbance is expected to affect the region.

An official of the Meteorological Centre Srinagar said, weather is expected to remain generally dry on November 8 and 9, while generally cloudy conditions are likely to prevail on November 10 and 11. "Light spell of rain over plains and light snowfall over higher reaches at scattered places is expected towards on the evening or night of November 10," he added.

"Weather will remain generally cloudy on • P-06

Kashmir Parents Seek Change In School Timings

Urges Govt To Revise Timing To 10 Am To 3 Pm In Srinagar,



RIYAZ BHAT

SRINAGAR: Amid freezing morning temperatures, parents of school children of winter zones of Kashmir division on Saturday demand for a change in school timings.

Parents urge School Education Department to revise the timing in educational institutes of the region from 10 am to 3 Pm in Srinagar and 10:30Am to 3:30 outside the Srinagar Municipality Limits.

One of the parents, Nasreena Jan said, "My two kids are primary-level students, and for more than a week now, they have been constantly telling me that they shiver in the cold when they leave for school."

She said, "There is a dire need for a change in school timing for the students. The winter has already arrived and the government must take a call on revising the school timing."

Another parent, Showkat Ahmad Dar narrated the same ordeal. He said, "As the new academic session started this week, the School Education Department must revise its current school timing in both the Srinagar and peripheries of Kashmir region." • P-06

Commissioner SMC reviews NGT Action Plan, AMRUT 2.0 Projects

GMK NEWS NETWORK



SRINAGAR: Commissioner, Srinagar Municipal Corporation (SMC), Dr. Basharat Qayoom, Saturday chaired a review meeting at the SMC Headquarters, Karan Nagar, to assess the implementation of the National Green Tribunal (NGT) Action Plan and review the progress of ongoing projects under AMRUT 2.0.

The meeting took stock of the progress achieved under various components of both initiatives, with particular focus on water supply augmentation, quality parameters, interdepartmental coordination and timely execution of approved works.

Reviewing the progress under AMRUT 2.0, the Commissioner stressed that strengthening the city's water supply infrastructure and addressing areas facing water shortages must remain a priority. He directed the concerned executing agencies to expedite the ongoing works and ensure that all projects are completed within the stipulated timelines while maintaining the prescribed technical and quality standards.

The Commissioner observed that the commissioning of the approved AMRUT 2.0 projects is expected to bring further improvement in supply of different localities of Srinagar, including Batamaloo, Aloochibagh, Jenab Sahab Soura, Bagwanpora, Lal Bazaar, Natipora, Malbagh, Jawahar Nagar, HMT and Lawaypora.

Emphasising the importance of quality in public infrastructure, Dr. Basharat directed the concerned officers to ensure that all prescribed quality parameters are duly addressed during execution, with no compromise on technical specifications or standards. He called for closer field-level supervision, regular assessment of physical and financial progress and prompt resolution of bottlenecks affecting the pace of work.

The Commissioner remarked that the people of Srinagar deserve better basic civic facilities and that ongoing developmental initiatives must translate into tangible improvements in the quality of services delivered to citizens. He stressed that all concerned departments and executing agencies must work in close coordination and with a clear sense of responsibility to address existing infrastructure gaps and improve the availability and reliability of essential civic services.

Taking up the NGT Action Plan, the Commissioner reviewed the status of various environmental interventions and stressed the need for coordinated efforts by all stakeholder departments to ensure effective implementation of the prescribed measures and compliance with the directions of the National Green Tribunal. He called for regular monitoring and timely action on all pending issues.

The Commissioner further directed the concerned departments and executing agencies to submit comprehensive and updated reports on the status of works under their respective jurisdictions, clearly indicating the progress achieved, pending activities, implementation-related challenges and proposed timelines for completion. The reports shall facilitate a detailed assessment of project implementation, identify areas requiring intervention and ensure effective monitoring and timely follow-up.

Reiterating the need for accountability and effective project management, the Commissioner directed all concerned officers to maintain close coordination, strengthen monitoring at the field level and ensure that ongoing projects are completed expeditiously without compromising quality.

Jashn-e-Harud celebrated with enthusiasm in Shopian

GMK NEWS NETWORK



SHOPIAN: The first-ever 'Jashn-e-Harud', organised by the District Administration Shopian, was celebrated with great enthusiasm and fervour in Shopian Saturday, witnessing an overwhelming public response and huge participation from people from different parts of the district.

MLA Zainapora Showkat Hussain Ganie, MLA Shopian Shabir Ahmad Kullay, Deputy Commissioner Charandeep Singh, Senior Superintendent of Police Mushtaq Ahmed Choudhary, other officers and people from all corners of Shopian participated in the festival.

The event showcased the rich heritage, vibrant culture, traditional art and timeless traditions of Shopian through a variety of activities and exhibitions.

A number of departmental and thematic stalls were set up on the occasion, showcasing various welfare schemes, developmental initiatives, local products, traditional crafts, artefacts, horticulture produce and achievements of different departments.

Cultural programmes, including traditional performances, folk songs, and other activities, further added colour to the celebrations.

Speaking on the occasion, the DC highlighted the unique significance of the Harud season for Shopian, described it as not merely a season but an integral part of the district's identity, deeply connected with its horticultural economy and way of life.

He said that Shopian is predominantly a horticultural district and Harud marks the period when farmers reap the fruits of their hard work. He added that for the people of Shopian, Harud represents not only an season but also an economic harvest, given the central role of horticulture in the district's economy.

The DC said that there is significant scope for further development of horticulture-related enterprises and value addition in the district. He emphasised the need to establish and promote more horticulture-based enterprises to generate employment, strengthen the local economy and provide greater returns to farmers.

He assured that the District Administration is committed to promoting horticulture-related enterprises and supporting initiatives aimed at creating sustainable livelihood opportunities for the people.

The DC also stressed the importance of environment-conscious and sustainable development, stating that development must go hand in hand with environmental responsibility and preservation of the district's natural wealth.

Success stories of beneficiaries were also presented, with beneficiaries highlighting their journeys in establishing successful ventures and adopting agri-allied farming activities.

The celebrations continued with enthusiastic participation from the public, with visitors appreciating the stalls, exhibits, local products, artefacts and cultural performances showcased during the event.

RTO Kashmir reviews functioning of ARTO Office Bandipora



GMK NEWS NETWORK

BANDIPORA: Regional Transport Officer (RTO), Kashmir, Qazi Irfan Saturday visited the office of the Assistant Regional Transport Officer (ARTO), Bandipora, and reviewed its overall functioning, administrative performance and delivery of public services.

During the visit, the RTO reviewed various citizen-centric services, including issuance of driving licences, vehicle registration, permits and fitness certification. He also assessed the pendency of applications and progress in service delivery through the SARATHI and VAHAN portals.

Emphasising accountability and efficiency, the RTO directed the officers and officials to ensure timely disposal of applications in accordance with the provisions of the Jammu and Kashmir Public Services Guarantee Act. He stressed that the public should not face unnecessary delays or repeated visits to the office for availing services.

The RTO also stressed transparency, proper record maintenance, public-friendly behaviour and regular monitoring of pending cases. He called for intensified enforcement of the Motor Vehicles Act and Rules, with special focus on road safety and compliance with traffic regulations.

On the occasion, ARTO Bandipora, Mukhtar Ahmad briefed the RTO about the functioning of the office, disposal of public grievances, pendency of applications and steps taken to improve service delivery.

The RTO appreciated the efforts of the ARTO and his team and urged them to continue working with dedication and professionalism to ensure transparent, efficient and hassle-free transport services to the people of District Bandipora.

MY Bharat Anantnag organises block-level Youth Parliament

GMK NEWS NETWORK



ANANTNAG: Mera Yuva Bharat (MY Bharat), Anantnag, organised a Block-Level Neighbourhood Youth Parliament at Public English Medium Secondary School, Bijbehara, Block Bijbehara, under the theme "Nasha Mukt Yuva for Viksit Bharat."The programme aimed to sensitise young people about the harmful effects of substance abuse and encourage them to contribute towards building a healthy, responsible, and developed India.

The programme was graced by Mr. Mudasir Ahmad, SDPO Bijbehara, as the Chief Guest. Mr. Manzoor Ahmad, Principal, attended as the Special Guest, while Mr. Sheikh Farooq, Lecturer, was present as the Guest of Honour.The resource persons for the programme were Ms. Kounser Jan (Teacher, Education), Mr. Adil Shaban (Lecturer, Education), Mr. Aashiq Hussain Lone (Lecturer, Education), and Mr. Hilal Ahmad Teeli (Teacher, Education), who shared valuable insights on substance abuse prevention, youth responsibility, and the importance of promoting a drug-free society.

During the programme, informative lectures were delivered to educate participants about the adverse consequences of drug abuse and the importance of adopting a healthy, disciplined, and positive lifestyle. The speakers urged young people to stay away from drugs and actively participate in spreading awareness about substance abuse within their communities.Yoga activities were also conducted to highlight the importance of physical fitness, mental well-being, and healthy habits in promoting a drug-free society. An interactive discussion was another key highlight of the programme, during which young participants shared their views, ideas, and suggestions on the theme "Nasha Mukt Yuva for Viksit Bharat." The participants emphasised the importance of youth engagement, community awareness, family support, and collective efforts in addressing the growing challenge of substance abuse.

Mission Director NHM reviews Health Sector in Anantnag

Inspects GMC Associated Hospital and SDH Achabal

GMK NEWS NETWORK



ANANTNAG: Mission Director, National Health Mission (NHM), J&K, Athar Amir ul Shafi Khan, Saturday visited District Anantnag and reviewed the implementation of various national health programmes and healthcare services in the district.

The Mission Director chaired a comprehensive review meeting at the Conference Hall, Government Medical College (GMC), Anantnag, Dialgam, attended by Principal GMC Anantnag, Heads of Departments, Chief Medical Officer, Deputy Chief Medical Officer, District Tuberculosis Officer, Medical Superintendents, Block Medical Officers and district and block programme management teams.

During the meeting, he took a detailed review of key health programmes, including Maternal and Child Health, Routine Immunisation, JSY, JSSK, PMSMA, RBSK, National NCD Programme, Ambulance Services, Blood Bank Services, Dialysis Services, Critical Care Services, PM-ABHIM infrastructure projects and the DNB Programme at GMC Anantnag.

He assessed the performance of the district in terms of institutional deliveries, antenatal care, high-risk pregnancy tracking, immunisation coverage, screening of non-communicable diseases, referral services and availability of essential healthcare facilities.

The Mission Director stressed the need for saturation of all health schemes, improvement in service delivery, 100 percent data reporting and timely utilisation of funds. He directed the concerned officers to strengthen maternal and child healthcare, ensure the availability of essential medicines, diagnostics and manpower, improve referral mechanisms and expedite ongoing infrastructure projects under PM-ABHIM.

He also emphasised accountability, effective monitoring and coordinated efforts among health institutions to ensure quality healthcare services reach every eligible beneficiary.

Later, the Mission Director visited Associated Hospital, GMC Anantnag and Sub-District Hospital (SDH) Achabal, where he inspected various departments and reviewed the healthcare facilities. He interacted with doctors, hospital staff and patients and took stock of the availability of medical equipment, medicines, manpower and patient care services.

SWD G'bal organises exposure visit for children under Mission Vatsalya



GMK NEWS NETWORK

GANDERBAL: The Social Welfare Department (SWD) Ganderbal organised a one-day exposure visit for the boys and girls residing in Child Care Institutions (CCIs) of the district under Mission Vatsalya.

As part of the initiative, the children were taken to Bage Gul-e-Dawood and Mughal Gardens to provide them with an opportunity for recreation, social interaction and exposure to places of natural beauty and historical significance.

The visit was flagged off by the Additional District Development Commissioner (ADDC), Ganderbal, Manzoor Ahmad Bhat, who extended his best wishes to the children and encouraged them to participate in such activities for their overall growth and personality development.

During the flag-off ceremony the ADDC was accompanied by the District Social Welfare Officer, Ganderbal, who highlighted the department's commitment towards the care, protection, well-being and holistic development of children residing in Child Care Institutions.

SWD organizes Community Awareness Programmes on Financial Literacy

GMK NEWS NETWORK

SRINAGAR: Social Welfare Department (SWD), Srinagar, through SANKALP–Hub for Empowerment of Women (HEW), Srinagar, organized a series of Community Awareness Programmes at Khonkhan, Dalgate, with the objective of empowering women and community members through awareness, information and access to various government welfare initiatives.

A Community Awareness Programme on Financial Literacy, Financial Assistance Schemes and other Social Security Schemes was organized at Khonkhan, Dalgate. The programme aimed at educating participants about the importance of financial independence, responsible financial management, savings and awareness of various government-sponsored financial assistance and social security schemes. Participants were sensitized about the benefits, eligibility criteria and procedures for accessing these schemes so that eligible beneficiaries could avail themselves of the available government support.

Additionally, an awareness programme was organized at Mission POSHAN Zone Khonkhan on the occasion of National Cancer Awareness Day 2026. Resource persons from the Department of Health imparted valuable information regarding cancer prevention, early warning signs, risk factors, preventive measures and the importance of timely diagnosis and treatment. Special emphasis was laid on breast and cervical cancer awareness, regular health screenings and adopting healthy lifestyle practices.

The programmes witnessed active participation from women and beneficiaries of Mission POSHAN. The participants were encouraged to utilize the information shared and disseminate awareness within their families and communities.

Through these initiatives, the Department of Social Welfare, Srinagar, through SANKALP-HEW Srinagar, reaffirmed its commitment to promoting women's empowerment, financial inclusion, health awareness and grassroots-level outreach by facilitating access to information about various government schemes and services.

NDRF conducts Tabletop exercise in Handwara to strengthen disaster preparedness



GMK NEWS NETWORK

KUPWARA: District Administration Kupwara organised a Tabletop Exercise in collaboration with the National Disaster Response Force (NDRF) at Handwara and Zachaldara, aimed at strengthening disaster preparedness, enhancing inter-departmental coordination and ensuring an effective response to emergency situations.

The programmes were coordinated by Tehsil Handwara and Tehsil Zachaldara, with Tehsildar Handwara, Zeeshan Khan, presiding over the session at Handwara and Revenue officials at Zachaldar.

The exercise focused on reviewing disaster management plans, assessing the preparedness of concerned departments and discussing coordinated response mechanisms to deal with potential disasters and other emergency situations. The participating officials deliberated on the roles and responsibilities of various departments, communication protocols, resource mobilisation and the timely delivery of emergency services.

The exercise also provided an opportunity to identify potential gaps in the existing disaster response arrangements and explore measures to improve coordination among all stakeholder departments. Special emphasis was laid on preparedness, prompt decision-making and ensuring a swift and coordinated response during emergencies to minimise loss of life and property.

The programmes conducted at Handwara and Zachaldara reflect the commitment of the District Administration Kupwara towards strengthening disaster management mechanisms and building a resilient community through advance planning, coordination and capacity-building initiatives.

Educated youth to be trained for PO examination, Cyber Hygiene

GMK NEWS NETWORK

PULWAMA: Deputy Commissioner (DC) Pulwama, Kuldeep Krishan Sidha, Saturday chaired a Financial Literacy programme at the District Administrative Complex, Pulwama, organised in collaboration with ICICI Bank.

The programme focused on promoting financial literacy, safe banking practices, awareness about digital and financial frauds, and providing awareness about ICICI Bank's PO Programme.

Speaking on the occasion, the Deputy Commissioner called for structured, day-wise awareness programmes across all colleges of the district, commencing next week, aimed at sensitising students about financial literacy, Cyber Security and the PO Programme of the bank. He further instructed the ICICI Bank representatives to prepare an informative pamphlet detailing the available opportunities, eligibility requirements and application procedures for wider circulation among students to facilitate awareness and informed participation.

The Chief Education Officer Pulwama was also directed to facilitate similar programmes in educational institutions in coordination with the Zonal Education Officers.

On the occasion, the DC further stressed the need for sustained institutional engagement to equip students with relevant knowledge, skills and awareness.

SYSF organises Student–Administration Interactive Session at GDC Sopore

GMK NEWS NETWORK



BARAMULLA: Continuing its efforts to promote meaningful youth participation and strengthen engagement between students and public institutions, Save Youth Save Future Foundation (SYSF), through its Students' Wing, NEXGEN, organised the second session of its Students–Administration Interactive Series at Government Degree College (GDC), Sopore.

Following the successful first session at Government Degree College, Baramulla, the Sopore interaction brought together students from different localities to engage directly with administrative and police leadership.

The programme was attended by Syed Fakhruddin Hamid, Deputy Commissioner, Baramulla, as the Chief Guest, along with Neha Jain, SP Sopore. Wajahat Farooq Bhat, Founder and Chairman of SYSF Foundation, Anika Nazir, Head of the Women's Wing, College Principal, faculty members, other dignitaries and students were also present.

During the interactive session, students shared their concerns, ideas and suggestions regarding academic facilities, career opportunities, employment, youth welfare and various civic and developmental issues affecting their villages and towns. The interaction provided them with an opportunity to discuss their everyday challenges and present constructive suggestions directly to the concerned authorities.

Deputy Commissioner, Syed Fakhruddin Hamid listened attentively to the students, responded to their queries and assured them that the issues and suggestions raised would receive due consideration. He further assured necessary administrative assistance and support through the concerned departments.

SP Sopore, Neha Jain, also interacted with the students, heard their concerns and assured them that matters falling within the purview of the police administration would be taken up appropriately and addressed.

CM congratulates Edu Min on notification of Private Universities Rules, 2026

Says new framework to attract reputed institutions, expand opportunities for local youth

GMK NEWS NETWORK



JAMMU: Chief Minister Omar Abdullah has congratulated Minister for Education Shamim Firdous on the notification of the Jammu and Kashmir Private Universities Rules, 2026, describing it as a significant milestone in the government's efforts to expand access to quality higher education and strengthen the region's academic ecosystem.

The Chief Minister said the new Rules establish a comprehensive regulatory framework for setting up and operating private universities in Jammu and Kashmir, creating an enabling environment for reputed national and international institutions to establish their campuses in Jammu and Kashmir.

He observed that the simplified approval mechanism, including a provision for preliminary scrutiny within 30 days, would facilitate a more efficient and transparent process for institutions seeking to invest in the higher education sector. At the same time, the framework provides for effective regulatory oversight to ensure accountability, quality assurance and adherence to prescribed academic standards.

Emphasising the importance of safeguarding local interests, the Chief Minister said the provision for a minimum 25 per cent reservation for J&K domiciles in student admissions, as well as teaching and non-teaching positions, would help ensure that the benefits of institutional expansion translate into meaningful educational and employment opportunities for local youth.

He said the Rules also envisage a dedicated regulatory mechanism to monitor admissions, fee structures and academic standards, backed by stringent penalties for violations, including irregularities in admissions, excess fee collection, issuance of invalid degrees, deficiencies in faculty strength and qualifications, and inadequate infrastructure.

The Chief Minister said the new framework would open avenues for the establishment of institutions across a wide range of disciplines, including Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM), Medicine, Law, Business Studies and Liberal Arts. This, he observed, would broaden academic choices for students, promote interdisciplinary learning and create greater opportunities for teaching, research and innovation within Jammu and Kashmir.

He expressed confidence that the entry of reputed institutions would enable local students to access quality, globally benchmarked education closer to home while attracting leading academics, researchers and scholars, besides encouraging research collaborations and institutional partnerships from across the country and abroad.

The Chief Minister reiterated that the government was committed to creating a transparent, predictable and investor-friendly environment that encourages responsible private investment while protecting students' interests and maintaining the highest standards of academic quality.

He also acknowledged the contribution of Minister for Health and Medical Education Sakina Itoo, who held the Education portfolio at the time the Jammu and Kashmir Private Universities Bill was passed during the Budget Session of the J&K Legislative Assembly earlier this year, and appreciated her role in advancing the legislative process.

Sagar Visits Alusteng Grid Station

Directs Adequate Power Supply During Winter

GMK NEWS NETWORK



SRINAGAR: Minister for Power Development Department (PDD), Revenue, Relief and Rehabilitation, Disaster Management and Elections, Ali Mohammad Sagar, Saturday visited the 220/132/33 KV Grid Station at Alusteng to review the power supply scenario and assess the preparedness of the department for the upcoming winter months.

During the visit, the Minister took a detailed assessment of the functioning of the grid station, its existing capacity, power distribution arrangements and measures being undertaken to ensure adequate and reliable electricity supply to consumers, particularly in Srinagar and Ganderbal districts.

Emphasising the need for uninterrupted power supply during the winter months, the Minister directed the officers to minimise unscheduled power cuts and ensure that consumers are provided adequate electricity as per the prescribed curtailment schedule. He stressed that effective planning, timely maintenance and better coordination among field functionaries were essential to address the challenges associated with increased power demand during winter.

The Minister asked the Chief Engineers and other senior officers to maintain close coordination with local representatives and residents, regularly assess ground-level requirements and address public grievances promptly to ensure positive feedback from consumers. He also directed the officers to pay special attention to Kangan and adjoining areas and take appropriate measures to resolve issues related to power supply.

The Minister also stated that an amnesty scheme for electricity consumers is in the pipeline, adding that the proposal is under consideration.

The Minister was informed that the Alusteng Grid Station, having an existing transformation capacity of 320 MVA, caters to several areas of Srinagar and Ganderbal districts, including Alusteng, Shuhama, Nagbal, Gadoora, Tulbagh and adjoining areas through its associated receiving stations.

To strengthen the transmission infrastructure and meet the growing power demand, the capacity of the grid station is proposed to be augmented from the existing 320 MVA to 475 MVA at an estimated cost of approximately Rs 56.78 crore.

The Minister observed that the proposed augmentation would significantly strengthen the power transmission network and improve the availability, reliability and quality of electricity supply to the adjoining areas of Srinagar and Ganderbal.

Chief Engineers of the concerned wings of the Power Development Department and other senior officers were present during the visit.

Later, the Minister met several deputations and individuals who apprised him of various public issues and developmental requirements. The Minister gave a patient hearing to their grievances and assured them that genuine issues would be taken up with the concerned departments for their timely resolution.

Reiterating the government's commitment towards improving public service delivery, Ali Mohammad Sagar directed the officers to remain responsive to people's concerns and ensure that all necessary arrangements are put in place well in advance to provide reliable and adequate power supply throughout the winter season.

Search process for SKUAST-Kashmir VC begins

LG constitutes selection panel, applications invited from eligible candidates

AGENCIES

SRINAGAR: The process for the appointment of the Vice-Chancellor of Sher-e-Kashmir University of Agricultural Sciences and Technology-Kashmir (SKUAST-K) has begun, with Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha constituting a selection committee to recommend a panel of suitable candidates for the post.

The selection committee has started its task by inviting applications from eligible candidates for the position.

According to a notification issued by the Agriculture Production Department, the Vice-Chancellor's post will be filled on a tenure basis for a period of up to three years or until the incumbent attains the age of 65 years, whichever is earlier.

Candidates applying for the post should not be more than 62 years of age as on the closing date for submission of applications.

As per the eligibility criteria, applicants must be eminent agricultural scientists or academicians with outstanding credentials and a Ph.D. in Agriculture, Veterinary Sciences, or a related discipline. They should have at least 10 years of experience as a Professor or in an equivalent position in a reputed academic institution. The candidates must also possess a minimum of three years' administrative experience as a Dean, Joint Director, Director, or in an equivalent position at a university or national institution.

Another eligibility criterion is at least five years of experience as the Head of a Department, Division, or an equivalent academic unit in a reputed institution, along with a minimum of 20 research publications in peer-reviewed national or international journals, including books, and demonstrated experience in leadership.

The process has begun before the current Vice-Chancellor, Prof. Nazir Ganaie, completes his extended tenure. Prof. Ganaie was granted a two-year extension with effect from December 16, 2024, and is scheduled to complete the term on December 15, 2026—(KNO)

Div Com Jammu inspects ongoing works under Ring Road Project

GMK NEWS NETWORK



JAMMU: Divisional Commissioner Jammu, Vikas Kundal Saturday conducted an extensive inspection of the ongoing works under the Jammu Ring Road Project to review the pace of construction of tunnels and other infrastructure components.

The Divisional Commissioner was accompanied by Deputy Commissioner Jammu, Minga Sherpa, Project Director NHAI Rajiv Kumar, members of the NHAI team, ACR Jammu and other concerned officers.

During the inspection, the Divisional Commissioner visited Tunnel-1 and Tunnel-2 connecting Kheri to Jagti and took on-site feedback regarding the pace of construction, execution-related challenges and other issues affecting the smooth progress of the project.

The Project Director NHAI apprised the Divisional Commissioner of the challenges being faced during the construction of Tunnel-1, particularly loose soil conditions, which have been affecting the pace of work.

The Divisional Commissioner directed the Project Director NHAI and executing agencies to expedite the pace of construction across all ongoing components and ensure close coordination among the concerned agencies for timely completion of the project. He also stressed the need to address the site-specific challenges through appropriate measures and maintain close monitoring of the ongoing works.

Later, the Divisional Commissioner also inspected Balicharan Road towards Satwari and reviewed the condition and related infrastructure aspects

Rare female Sambar Deer spotted in Sinthan Top Forest

UMAISAR GULL



ANANTNAG: A female sambar deer has been spotted in the forests of Sinthan Top in south Kashmir's Anantnag district, with wildlife officials describing the sighting as rare.

The animal was reportedly sighted by passengers travelling on the Kashmir side of Sinthan Top near Daksum. Officials believe the deer may have become separated from its group.

Wildlife Warden South, Bijbehara, Sajad Ahmad Bhat said the Sinthan Top forest area is connected to the Kishtwar belt, and the animal may have either migrated from that side or moved to lower elevations in search of habitat.

"Our men are deployed in the area and are receiving such inputs. Wild goats have also been sighted there," he said.

Another wildlife official said sightings of female sambar deer in Kashmir are uncommon, as the species occurs in relatively smaller numbers in the Valley and is more commonly found in the Jammu region.

The sambar (Rusa unicolor) is the largest deer species found in the Indian subcontinent.

According to the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN), the sambar has been listed as a Vulnerable species on its Red List since 2008 due to significant population declines caused by hunting and habitat loss.

Jammu and Kashmir is home to a rich diversity of flora and fauna, including several rare and endangered species such as the Hangul, Kashmir musk deer, Markhor and Asiatic ibex—(KNO)

Mortal remains of Adnan likely to reach Srinagar today

'Autopsy, Bangladesh Embassy NOC, embalming completed'

AGENCIES

SRINAGAR: Mortal remains of a Kashmiri student Adnan Altaf Rathar, who died in Bangladesh on November 4, are likely to reach Srinagar on Sunday.

A source said that the repatriation process has entered its final stage, with only packing and handover of the mortal remains to the family remaining. "It is likely to be completed by Sunday morning," he added.

Pertinently, the matter to get the mortal remains of Adnan from Bangladesh was taken up by Chief Minister Omar Abdullah with the Ministry of External Affairs, while Jammu and Kashmir Health and Medical Education Minister Sakina Itoo had requested Union Health Minister J P Nadda to intervene to help the grief-stricken family.

Meanwhile, National Convenor of the Jammu and Kashmir Students Association (JKSA), Nasir Khuehami, told KNO that the embalming process had been delayed due to difficulties in arranging a government-authorised doctor, further compounded by Friday being an official holiday in Bangladesh.

He said embalming was mandatory before international transportation, as airlines require the prescribed procedure and documentation before accepting mortal remains. "We are hopeful that the remaining formalities, including packing and handover to the family, will be completed by Sunday morning. Subject to their completion and flight arrangements, we expect Adnan's mortal remains to reach India on Sunday," he said.

Khuehami said the delay has caused immense pain and anguish to the bereaved family, particularly Adnan's mother, who is also in Bangladesh.

He further said he had spoken to Chief Minister's Advisor Nasir Aslam Wani, who assured him that an ambulance would be arranged to transport Adnan's mortal remains from Srinagar Airport to his native place in Sopore—(KNO)

Digital Verification

Ration dealers question advance payment demand

Raise concerns over Rs 1 lakh security deposit, e-KYC machines

REHAN QAYOOM

SRINAGAR: Fair Price Shop dealers in Kashmir have raised concerns over additional financial requirements, including a proposed licence fee of Rs 2,000 and the demand for advance payments, questioning why dealers were being asked to pay before procuring the required machines and other equipment.

On face authentication, they sought continuation of fingerprint and OTP-based verification options alongside face recognition to ensure elderly and ailing beneficiaries do not face difficulties in collecting ration.

The concerns come amid the Food, Civil Supplies and Consumer Affairs Department's push for Aadhaar-based e-KYC and face authentication in ration distribution. During a review meeting on November 5, Commissioner Secretary FCS&CA Sourabh Bhagat directed officials to intensify efforts to complete the e-KYC of pending beneficiaries and introduce the Face Authentication Application from the current month's ration distribution cycle.

A top official of the department SAID that the upgradation of machinery was part of a routine process and there was no need for worry.

He said the new e-KYC machines would have all verification options, including OTP and face recognition, adding that the move was part of efforts to ensure transparency. "Everything is transparent these days and there is no need for any sort of panic," he said—(KNO)

A ration dealer said the new face authentication system could create difficulties for beneficiaries, particularly elderly and ailing people.

"If this system is implemented, it will create many problems," he said.

Another dealer said arranging the required equipment and meeting additional financial requirements was becoming difficult with their existing earnings.

"We are being asked to arrange mobile phones for the new system. These things involve considerable expenses. How are small dealers supposed to manage all this with their existing income?" he said.

The dealers also expressed concern over the requirement of a Rs 1 lakh security deposit, saying such a financial burden would be difficult to manage.

They also flagged the Rs 1 lakh security deposit, licence fee and advanced demand of cash before taking a ration digital verification.

Seven drug peddlers arrested in separate anti-narcotics operations: Police

GMK NEWS NETWORK



SRINAGAR: Police have arrested seven alleged drug peddlers in separate operations in Anantnag, Baramulla and Handwara districts of Kashmir, recovering heroin, charas and other narcotic substances from their possession, officials said on Saturday.

In Anantnag, Police Post Sangam apprehended Reyaz Ahmad Mir, son of Ab Rehman Mir, a resident of Khelen Litter, during naka checking and recovered heroin from his possession.

In a separate operation at Marhama, another police team from the same police post arrested Zubair Sultan Reshi, son of Mohd Sultan Reshi, a resident of Sether Sangam, and recovered charas from his possession.

Meanwhile, Police Post DK Pora apprehended Rayees Ahmad Khan, son of Gh Mohi-ud-Din Khan, a resident of Damhal, and recovered charas from his possession.

In two separate operations, Police Post Dialgam arrested Yawar Ahmad Gani, son of Mohd Iqbal Gani, and Ubaid Manzoor Doobi, son of Manzoor Ahmad Doobi. Both are residents of Fathepora. Charas was recovered during their personal searches.

In Baramulla, a police team intercepted a passenger vehicle (Sumo), bearing registration number JK05N-9646, during a naka checking operation at Cheradari. The vehicle was travelling from Baramulla towards Chandoosa.

During checking, a passenger identified as Ubair Ahmad Mochi, son of Abdul Ahad Mochi, a resident of Kalantara Bala, was found carrying a bag containing two polythene packets of bhang-like substance weighing approximately 822 grams.

The police called the concerned Magistrate and independent witnesses to the spot and completed the requisite legal formalities, including seizure proceedings, in accordance with the prescribed procedure.

In Handwara, police intercepted a tipper bearing registration number JK05B-5479 during naka checking at Batagund. A charas-like substance concealed inside the vehicle's dashboard was recovered. The driver, identified as Irshad Ahmad Dar, son of Gh Nabi Dar, a resident of Shanoo Langate, was arrested.

All seven accused have been taken into custody, and further investigation into the cases is underway.

Police reiterated their commitment to intensifying the crackdown on drug trafficking and urged the public to cooperate in the collective fight against the drug menace—(KNO)

Govt approves 5% annual increment for NHM contractual staff

JAHANGEER GANAIE

SRINAGAR: Minister for Health and Medical Education Sakina Itoo on Saturday said the government has fulfilled its promise by sanctioning a 5 per cent annual increment for eligible contractual employees engaged under the National Health Mission (NHM) in Jammu and Kashmir for the financial year 2026-27.

In a post on X, Itoo, described the decision as an important step towards recognising the dedication and contributions of NHM employees in strengthening healthcare delivery across the Union Territory.

She said NHM employees continue to play a vital role in the healthcare system and reiterated the government's commitment to their welfare.

"Our commitment to the welfare of healthcare workers remains steadfast. We will continue working towards a stronger, more responsive and inclusive healthcare system under the leadership of Hon'ble Chief Minister Jenab Omar Abdullah," she wrote.

The 5 per cent annual increment is expected to provide financial relief to eligible contractual employees working under NHM across Jammu and Kashmir—(KNO)

Good Morning Kashmir

EDITORIAL

NHM Increment

A Small Relief, Bigger Questions Remain

The five per cent annual increment sanctioned by the National Health Mission (NHM) for eligible contractual employees in Jammu and Kashmir is a welcome move. For thousands of workers who have kept the healthcare system running despite years of contractual uncertainty, the decision offers some financial relief and recognition of their service.

The benefit will cover employees working at state, divisional, district and block levels, including those engaged under NUHM and various Disease Control Programmes. Its phased implementation, based on completion of one year of qualifying service, provides a clear timeline for extending the benefit.

However, the order must translate into actual relief on the ground. Eligible employees should not have to chase officials or face unnecessary delays to receive an increment already sanctioned by the Mission. Performance assessment and service verification should remain fair, transparent and free from personal considerations.

More importantly, the government must recognise that contractual healthcare workers deserve more than periodic increments. Many have spent years working in hospitals, health centres and field units, performing duties that are central to public healthcare delivery. They work under pressure, often in difficult conditions, but continue to face uncertainty about their jobs and future.

A five per cent increase is certainly better than no relief, but it does little to address the larger concerns of inadequate remuneration, job security and long-pending demands for a dignified service framework.

The government must use this opportunity to revisit the overall working conditions of NHM employees. Those who have devoted years to serving people cannot be left waiting indefinitely for recognition and stability.

The increment is a welcome step, but the real measure of the government's commitment will be how seriously it addresses the future of these workers. They deserve not just appreciation for their service, but security and dignity in return.

Good Morning Kashmir

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Breaking The Chains

How Kashmiri Women Rewrote The Rules Of Sport

SHAHEENA NABI



The sports landscape in Jammu and Kashmir over the last decade has undergone an amazing revolution. Once restricted by geographical and social limitations, Kashmiri women have now broken out and rewritten their story in their own way. Breaking through the conventional restrictions, Kashmiri women and girls are creating ripples in national and international circuits.

Through the ages, the conservatism of society and the absence of proper sporting facilities have prevented Kashmiri girls from participating in competitive sports. Nevertheless, a paradigm shift brought about by some determined young women, in conjunction with grassroots efforts, the security forces, and sporting authorities, has brought about a change.

Sports are no longer considered a leisure activity but have come to be recognized as a means for empowerment and a source of income. There is a growing trend among families in Kashmir to encourage their daughters to join the sporting arena. In addition to changing perceptions within the family structure, schools in the area, leaders, and civil society institutions are now working together to break down old social stigmas. Sports are seen more and more as a vehicle that builds up psychological strength, develops leadership skills, and can even provide college scholarships. Parents who were reluctant to let their daughters out at night now take pride in accompanying them to morning practice sessions.

Bright Stars in the Global Arena

The girls of Kashmir have shown that the combination of natural talent and determination can help one overcome all challenges to achieve prestigious medals and international fame:

Sadia Tariq: Breaking new ground in the field of martial arts, the girl born in Srinagar achieved international recognition by winning the gold medal in the Moscow Wushu Stars championship. Her success inspired hundreds of other young girls in the region to choose combat sports.

Sheetal Devi: Coming from the Kishtwar district, Sheetal Devi has amazed the whole world. This girl, who was born without arms, developed an unusual technique of shooting with her feet using her shoulder and mouth and became a world champion Paralympic archer. She is the gold medal winner of the Asian Para Games and the youngest Indian Paralympic medallist.

Jasia Akhtar: The pioneering spirit was shown by Jasia Akhtar as she became the first woman from the state of Jammu and Kashmir to crack open the world of women's professional cricket, setting an example for the next generation of women cricketers.

Martial Arts & Combat Sport Legends: Athletes such as Munntaha Baba (champion martial artist and coach) and Afreen Hyder (Taekwondo) have always been regular winners at the national level.

They have changed from mere regional legends into universal representations of tenacity. The exceptional stories of their lives demonstrate that pure natural ability, coupled with sheer determination, can overcome all physical and socio-economic limitations. Additionally, these successes have had an inspirational ripple effect and encouraged media groups, sporting companies, and even governments to focus on the dormant talents in the Himalayas.

New Horizons: Beyond Traditional Games

Though cricket and football are still favorite games of the people of the region, Kashmiri women have started playing new and unconventional games.

Winter Games: The introduction of new games such as the Khelo India Winter Games has seen the girls take up skiing, snowboarding, ice stock games, and snow rugby.

Biking and Powerlifting: Biking teams with young women such as Ulfat Mushtaq and Mehak Mushtaq often get into the limelight in national sports leagues.

It is evident from their involvement in sports that have niches that they are willing to explore undiscovered territories. There is massive involvement of women in ice games, water sports in Dal and Wular lakes, and mountaineering in high-altitude areas. The involvement of these girls in such sports, other than conventional school games, shows that they can adapt well and are highly physically enduring.

Institutional Support and Coaching at Grassroots Level

The unique experiences of the athletes are largely driven by improved infrastructure. The modern indoor stadiums, turfed fields, and coaching academies set up by J&K Sports Council and other organizations at the national level have been able to make up for the shortcomings in the past. Athletes who became champions in their own right are now mentoring girls from distant villages by setting up local academies. Women and girls from Kashmir who stand out in the domain of sports go beyond tales of being decorated for their achievements and successes, and become a living example of what human will and cultural and societal development can accomplish. Being able to raise the flags of their nation and the whole world to such heights all the time proves that the valleys of Kashmir are filled with the prowess of great athletes. This exceptional group of women continues to smash any barriers in their way and reach incredible successes. It is certain that the future of sports in Jammu and Kashmir will be unbeatable.

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Diwali Shouldn't Put Your Vision At Risk



DR. NIKHIL PRAJAPATI



Diwali celebrations bring lights, gatherings and festivities, but certain aspects of the celebrations can also affect eye health. Exposure to smoke and dust can cause irritation, while firecracker sparks, flying particles and chemical substances can lead to more serious injuries. Knowing the difference between temporary discomfort and symptoms that require medical attention can help prevent complications and protect your vision.

Smoke and air pollution can irritate the surface of the eyes, causing redness, watering, itching and a gritty sensation. People who already experience dry eyes or allergies may find these symptoms particularly uncomfortable during the festive season. Moving away from smoky surroundings and avoiding rubbing the eyes can help reduce irritation. If symptoms persist or worsen, an eye specialist should be consulted rather than relying on home remedies.

Dust and other foreign particles can also enter the eyes during outdoor celebrations. Rubbing the eyes may scratch the delicate surface and make the irritation worse. If a loose particle enters the eye, gently rinsing it with clean water may help remove it. However, if the particle remains stuck, appears embedded or causes significant pain, it should not be removed by force. Medical attention is necessary if discomfort continues or vision is affected.

Firecracker injuries require particular caution. Sparks, heat and flying debris can cause burns, scratches and damage to deeper structures of the eye. Such injuries can affect both people handling firecrackers and those watching from nearby. Maintaining a safe distance, following safety instructions and avoiding attempts to relight firecrackers that fail to ignite can reduce the risk. If an injury occurs, the eye should not be rubbed or pressed, and urgent medical assessment should be sought, even if the damage initially appears minor.

Chemical exposure is another concern. If a chemical or irritating substance enters the eye, rinse it immediately with plenty of clean running water and seek medical advice. Do not try to neutralise the substance with another product or apply unprescribed eye drops. If the injury involves a penetrating object, an embedded particle or significant trauma, avoid applying pressure or attempting to remove anything lodged in the eye and seek emergency care.

Certain symptoms should never be ignored, regardless of their cause. Sudden blurred vision or loss of sight, severe pain, marked sensitivity to light, bleeding or difficulty opening the eye may indicate a serious problem. These symptoms warrant urgent medical attention rather than waiting to see whether they improve. Even when symptoms seem mild, persistent redness, watering or discomfort deserves attention if it does not settle.

Simple precautions can help reduce the likelihood of eye problems during Diwali. Keeping a safe distance from firecrackers, limiting exposure to heavy smoke, avoiding rubbing the eyes and taking care when handling substances that may cause irritation are all sensible steps. People should also avoid using home remedies or medication without knowing the cause of their symptoms, as these may delay appropriate treatment.

Diwali is a time to enjoy the celebrations with family and friends, and eye problems need not become an unwelcome part of the festivities. Taking a few precautions and getting eye problems checked without delay can help you enjoy the festive season without putting your vision at risk.

Author is Head of Clinical Services, Centre for Sight, Ahmedabad

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Between Merit And Justice

The Unheard Concerns Of Educated Youth



DR RIZWAN RUMI

For thousands of educated young people in Jammu and Kashmir, government employment is not merely a career choice; it represents years of hard work, family sacrifices, financial investment and the hope of building a secure future. Behind every recruitment notification are hundreds of young men and women who have spent years preparing for competitive examinations, often postponing personal ambitions and carrying the expectations of their families. However, the recent recruitment advertisements have once again brought an important concern to the forefront: the growing anxiety among Open Merit aspirants over their share of employment opportunities and the future of recruitment in Jammu and Kashmir.

The latest recruitment notification issued by Jammu and Kashmir Bank on November 6, 2026, has intensified this discussion. The bank has announced 1,397 vacancies across Jammu and Kashmir and Ladakh, including 343 Probationary Officer and 1,054 Banking Associate posts. Of the total, 1,356 vacancies are allocated to Jammu and Kashmir, with reports indicating that 40 per cent will fall under Open Merit and the remaining 60 per cent under various reserved categories.

Similarly, the Jammu and Kashmir Services Selection Board's Advertisement Notification No. 09 of 2026, covering 2,863 posts, has allocated 1,178 positions to Open Merit and 1,685 to reserved categories. These figures have naturally generated questions among aspirants who believe that their concerns deserve greater attention in the ongoing debate over the reservation framework.

The issue, however, needs to be examined with sensitivity, constitutional understanding and a broader perspective. Reservation in India has a historical and constitutional purpose. It seeks to address generations of social exclusion, inequality and inadequate representation. Its importance in creating opportunities for historically disadvantaged sections cannot be overlooked. At the same time, the aspirations and concerns of Open Merit candidates are equally legitimate and deserve a fair hearing.

The problem arises when a large section of educated youth begins to feel that the recruitment framework does not adequately address their expectations or provide sufficient opportunities in an already competitive employment market. These candidates are not necessarily questioning the rights of others; many are simply asking whether their own difficulties are being recognised by policymakers.

For an average middle-class family in Kashmir, preparing a child for government employment is often a long and expensive undertaking. Parents invest their savings in education, coaching and other preparatory expenses. Young graduates spend years studying for examinations, sometimes moving from one recruitment notification to another, hoping that the next opportunity will finally bring success. The situation becomes more difficult when recruitment opportunities are limited, examinations are delayed and age eligibility becomes a growing concern. A candidate who spends several years preparing for government employment cannot recover those years once the prescribed age limit is crossed. For such aspirants, every recruitment notification carries enormous significance.

The uncertainty surrounding the reservation policy has added another dimension to this anxiety. The government constituted a Cabinet Sub-Committee in December 2024 to examine and rationalise the existing reservation framework. According to the government's response in the Legislative Assembly in September 2026, the committee had completed its work and submitted its recommendations, but a final decision was still awaited. This prolonged uncertainty has left many aspirants wondering when the government will arrive at a conclusive decision. For young people who are preparing for examinations today, policy



clarity is not an abstract administrative matter. It directly affects their career planning, eligibility and expectations.

There is also a need to understand that Open Merit is not the exclusive preserve of candidates belonging to the unreserved category. It is an open pool in which candidates from all categories can compete on merit. A reserved-category candidate who qualifies on merit in the Open Merit list is entitled to be considered against an Open Merit vacancy without consuming the reserved-category quota, subject to the applicable recruitment rules.

Therefore, the debate should not be presented as a contest between communities. Such an approach would only deepen social divisions and distract from the real question of equitable opportunities. The objective should be to ensure that the reservation framework fulfils its constitutional purpose while also maintaining public confidence in the fairness and transparency of recruitment. The government must recognise that unemployment in Jammu and Kashmir is not limited to any one category. Educated youth across social and economic backgrounds are struggling to find suitable employment. Thousands possess postgraduate degrees, professional qualifications and specialised skills, yet continue to wait for opportunities that match their education and abilities.

There is also an economic dimension to this problem. Prolonged unemployment affects not only individuals but entire families. It delays marriages, increases financial dependence, creates uncertainty and sometimes forces qualified young people to look for employment outside their home region. The emotional cost of repeated examination attempts and unsuccessful recruitment cycles is equally significant.

In this context, the government needs to take a number of practical steps. First, it should communicate a clear and time-bound decision on the recommendations of the Cabinet Sub-Committee. Second, recruitment agencies should publish transparent category-wise vacancy distributions with every notification so that candidates understand the applicable framework. Third, recruitment examinations should be conducted regularly, without unnecessary delays in advertisements, examinations and final selection lists.

The government should also examine the difficulties faced by candidates approaching the upper age limit, particularly those who have lost valuable years waiting for recruitment processes to move forward. Any age-relaxation measure, if considered, should be examined within the applicable legal and constitutional framework. Most importantly, policymakers should engage with aspirants, student organisations and other stakeholders before taking decisions that have far-reaching consequences for the future of educated youth.

The responsibility of the government is not merely to issue recruitment notifications; it is also to maintain public confidence in the system. Every eligible candidate, irrespective of background, should feel that the process is transparent, predictable and fair. Social justice and equal opportunity should complement each other rather than be portrayed as competing ideals. Jammu and Kashmir cannot afford to leave an entire generation feeling uncertain about its future. The aspirations of Open Merit candidates deserve to be heard, just as the constitutional rights of reserved communities deserve to be protected. A mature society must be capable of discussing both concerns without allowing the debate to turn into hostility or social confrontation.

The present discussion should therefore serve as an opportunity for the government to revisit the issue with seriousness, transparency and sensitivity. The objective must be to build a recruitment system that protects constitutional guarantees, recognises genuine disadvantage and inspires confidence among all sections of society. After all, a young person who studies for years, competes in examinations and dreams of contributing to the development of Jammu and Kashmir should not be left feeling that the system has stopped listening. The question is not about taking opportunities away from someone else. It is about ensuring that every deserving young person has a fair opportunity to move forward.

The future of Jammu and Kashmir depends on its educated youth. Their concerns cannot remain unheard indefinitely.

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Diwali

Let Festival Of Lights Shine With Environmental Brightness

YOGESH KUMAR GOYAL

Diwali is the festival of lights, a celebration of joy and the welcoming of happiness. But when this very celebration fills our lungs with suffocation and turns our surroundings toxic, it is only natural to question our sensitivity and social responsibility. For centuries, Diwali has been celebrated in India with the glow of earthen lamps and modest fireworks. This festival symbolises the victory of good over evil and light over darkness. However, over the past few decades, its character has changed so dramatically that it now resembles a 'war of fireworks'. A festival whose true spirit lies in light and tranquillity has increasingly become synonymous with noise, smoke and pollution.

In recent years, the proliferation of highly explosive firecrackers has overshadowed the simplicity of this sacred festival. These very firecrackers play a major role in pushing air pollution to alarming levels and making an already deteriorating environmental situation even more critical.

Traditional firecrackers, packed with gunpowder and designed to produce dazzling flashes of light, not only cause serious damage to life and property within moments but also severely pollute the air, noise environment and soil. These firecrackers contain chemical elements such as barium, copper, sulphur and lead, which remain suspended in the atmosphere for up to 100 hours after they explode. Barium is radioactive and toxic, copper compounds increase the risk of cancer, while sulphur contributes to respiratory illnesses. The smoke emitted by firecrackers contains poisonous gases such as sulphur dioxide, nitrogen oxides and carbon monoxide, which directly affect the lungs, heart and eyes. Exposure to these pollutants increases the risk of headaches, allergies, coughing, bronchitis, pneumonia, insomnia and even serious diseases such as cancer.

The threat of noise pollution is equally alarming. In many places, the sound produced by firecrackers reaches 130 to 150 decibels, a level that is dangerous to human ears. This can lead to



hearing loss, stress, sleep deprivation and abnormalities in heart rhythm.

Not only human beings, but animals, birds and domestic pets are also severely affected by this noise and pollution. Research indicates that the intense sounds of firecrackers can cause permanent damage to the hearing ability of dogs and other animals. Another serious impact of air pollution has been observed on male reproductive health. According to some experts, pollution has been associated with a decline of up to 40 per cent in sperm count, increasing the risk of infertility. Every tenth person in the country is reportedly suffering from asthma, and polluted air has become a threat even to unborn children in the womb. At a time when the air is already toxic due to stubble burning, industrial emissions, dust from damaged roads and construction activities, indiscriminate fireworks for just one night make this crisis even more alarming.

Taking note of the seriousness of pollution caused by firecrackers and the imperative of environmental protection, the Supreme Court has issued important directions regarding the use and sale of green firecrackers. The court has made it clear that the responsibility for ensuring clean air and controlling pollution is not confined to Delhi-NCR alone but is a collective responsibility of the entire country. While permitting the use of green firecrackers, the court has emphasised strict monitoring of their quality, certification and sale.

Through its order dated October 29, the court introduced some additional and stringent provisions. Under these, only those green firecrackers are permitted to be manufactured and sold in Delhi-NCR that have valid certification from the Council of Scientific and Industrial Research's National Environmental Engineering Research Institute (CSIR-NEERI) and the Petroleum and Explosives Safety Organisation (PESO), and are included in the institutions' authorised lists. A product-specific QR code has been made mandatory on every package so that the authenticity of the manufacturer, registration, licence and testing certificate can be verified. The manufacture and sale of barium-containing firecrackers, as well as firecracker chains and garlands, have also been prohibited. Directions have further been issued to cancel licences, seize firecrackers and initiate prosecution against those involved in illegal sales or violations of the court's orders. The court has also made it clear that merely issuing orders is not enough; their effective implementation and the responsible participation of citizens are equally essential.

Although, under the clear directions of the Supreme Court, only green firecrackers are permitted, the irony is that conventional polluting firecrackers continue to be sold openly, from marketplaces to neighbourhood lanes, in blatant violation of restrictions and guidelines. Laws and judicial decisions can become meaningful only when citizens also understand and fulfil their responsibilities.

India already has laws in place to control air and noise pollution, but administrative indifference is often evident when it comes to ensuring their proper implementation. In environmental matters, the role of the public is as decisive as that of the judiciary. If people themselves remain insensitive, even the courts cannot protect the environment single-handedly. We must understand that the real beauty of Diwali lies not in the explosive sounds of firecrackers but in the gentle, luminous flame of earthen lamps. This is a festival that illuminates our minds, homes and society rather than covering them in smoke. Cleaning homes and surroundings has traditionally been an integral part of Diwali, but today the same occasion is increasingly turning into a blanket of waste, gunpowder residue and plastic. What kind of celebration is this that takes away our very breath?

The time has come to connect our traditions with modern wisdom and environmental awareness. If we wish to use firecrackers, we should restrict ourselves to the limited and controlled use of green firecrackers alone. Let us illuminate our homes and courtyards with earthen lamps, plant at least one sapling and teach our children that true light is one that is sustainable, one that gives life rather than spreads poison. In Australia, during a festival celebrated in December, people indulge in fireworks, but every family also plants a tree on the same day.

It is a small tradition, but its environmental message is profound. India, too, can adopt such traditions where celebrations and environmental protection remain in harmony. Today, when the air in Delhi and several other cities is already dangerously polluted, we must acknowledge that the celebration of a single night should not come at the cost of our future. We must give our children a Diwali that illuminates not just their eyes but also their hearts. Let Diwali be a festival of earthen lamps, not explosive fireworks, because true light is the one that spreads the message of compassion and responsibility along with brightness.

The author is a journalist. He can be mailed at mediacaregroup@gmail.com

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

Rs 7.93 cr approved for border tourism infrastructure dev

SAJID RAINA

SRINAGAR: The government has accorded administrative approval for the creation of tourist infrastructure to promote border tourism in Uri area of north Kashmir's Baramulla district at an estimated cost of Rs 7.93 crore.

According to a post shared by the Office of Chief Minister Omar Abdullah on X, the project will cover Uri town, Bosiyan-Gingal, Mahura, Garkote and Bela Boniyar.

The project, includes the development of tourist huts, facilitation centres, riverfront and scenic parks, viewpoints, trekking paths and public conveniences.

The initiative aims to strengthen touriasm infrastructure in the border areas of Uri and promote the region as a tourist destination while creating opportunities for local economic growth—(KNO)

FROM THE FRONT PAGE .....

J&K Notifies Private

developing the region as a competitive destination for higher learning and research.

Prez Murmu Wishes

the President said: "On the auspicious occasion of Diwali, I extend my heartfelt greetings and best wishes to all Indians living in India and abroad."

She noted that the joyous celebrations of the festival of lights followed Lord Ram's return to Ayodhya after his victory over demon king 'Ravan'.

"Lord Ram beheld the beautiful rows of illuminated lamps. This forms the cultural and devotional significance of Diwali. The festival also symbolises the auspicious beginning of Ram Rajya," she added.

President Murmu emphasised that the festival of Diwali marks the victory of virtues over negative tendencies.

"It also signifies the end of suffering and the beginning of a joyful and prosperous life. On this occasion, people worship Lord Ganesh for auspicious beginnings and well-being, and Mahalakshmi Mata for prosperity. Prayers are offered for the happiness of all," she said.

Whishing good health, happiness and prosperity to every citizen of the country, the President said: "May we preserve the environment, live with harmony and may our patriotic youth, guided by Indian values, contribute enthusiastically to building a 'Viksit Bharat'."

Earlier in the day, Prime Minister Narendra Modi also extended greetings to all countrymen on the occasion of the festival of lights.

In a social media video titled "Have a great Diwali", the Prime Minister greeted citizens and informed them that he celebrates the festival enthusiastically every year and will do so this year as well.

"On the occasion of Diwali, the entire country is illuminated. The festival of lights symbolises our pledge against darkness," PM Modi said.

"May this festival bring happiness, well-being and prosperity for all. Just like you all, I also celebrate this festival with enthusiasm. Like every year, I will again be celebrating Diwali with our brave defence personnel. Once again, greetings to all of you on the occasion of Diwali," he added.

LG Greets People

compassion and solidarity.

Let us reach out to extend support and happiness to those in need. I pray that Maa Lakshmi, Bhagwan Ganesh, and Prabhu Shri Ram bring their blessings to every home.

May the festival bring happiness and prosperity to all and illuminate their lives with lights of hope and joy."

CM Omar Greets

respect that define India's rich cultural diversity.

The Chief Minister expressed hope that the festival would bring happiness, peace and prosperity to every household.

"May the festival of Diwali illuminate every home with happiness and usher in peace, prosperity and progress in Jammu and Kashmir and across the country," he said.

Kashmir Markets Wear

Sharma a resident said.

Shopkeepers said the demand for sweets, decorative lights, traditional lamps and gift items had picked up ahead of the festival, with customers continuing to visit markets for last-minute shopping.

Markets across the city were illuminated with colourful lights and decorations, adding to the festive atmosphere as people prepared to celebrate the festival with their families.

Diwali, the festival of lights, will be celebrated across the country on Sunday, with people marking the occasion by lighting lamps, offering prayers and exchanging sweets—(KNO)

J&K NHM Employees

2026, will be entitled to the increment with effect from April 1, 2026.

Similarly, employees completing one year of service between April 1 and September 30, 2026, will receive the benefit from October 1, 2026, while those completing one year of service after September 30, 2026, will become eligible from April 1, 2027.

The order further directs the concerned Drawing and Disbursing Officers (DDOs) and Controlling Officers to extend the benefit only to eligible contractual employees after verifying their qualifying service and satisfactory performance in accordance with the applicable NHM guidelines.

Meanwhile, reacting to the order, JKNHMEAK Chief Spokesperson Abdul Rauoof rejected the government's claims of fulfilling its commitments towards NHM employees, saying the 5 percent increment was part of the routine annual budgetary framework and should not be projected as a special achievement.

He said the annual increment was already incorporated into the NHM budgetary framework approved by the Government of India and did not address the broader concerns of employees who have been demanding better service conditions for years.

"NHM employees are still waiting for meaningful decisions on salary enhancement, equal pay for equal work, job security, social security and retirement benefits. A routine annual increment cannot be considered a substitute for these long-pending demands," he said.

Rauoof particularly appealed to Health and Medical Education Minister Sakeena Itoo to recall the meeting held on September 18, 2026, in her Civil Secretariat chamber in Srinagar with representatives of the JKNHMEA Joint Coordination Committee, during which several employee-related issues were discussed and assurances were reportedly extended.

He said employees were expecting concrete decisions following the meeting but were disappointed over the continued delay in addressing their grievances.

"Government must honour the commitments made during that meeting instead of expecting NHM employees to remain silent indefinitely. The continued delay, despite repeated assurances, is pushing employees towards the streets once again. We do not want confrontation, but the patience of NHM employees is not unlimited," he said.

The JKNHMEAK spokesperson urged the government and the Health and Medical Education Department to take concrete steps towards resolving the employees' demands, warning that continued inaction could leave them with no option but to resume democratic and peaceful protests to secure their legitimate rights.

He maintained that NHM employees, who have been contributing to the healthcare delivery system across Jammu and Kashmir, deserve a comprehensive policy addressing their financial and service-related concerns rather than periodic assurances—(KNO)

PM Modi Extends

on Saturday to participate in Deepotsav 2026, said an official.

During his visit, the Vice President's schedule includes offering prayers at the Shri Ram Janmabhoomi Temple and participating in the symbolic coronation ceremony of Prabhu Shri Ram in Ayodhya. He will also felicitate revered saints on the occasion, the official said in a statement.

Ayodhya Deepotsav 2026 on Saturday will mark the 10th anniversary of the grand festival of lights ahead of Diwali on Sunday.

Organisers are aiming to light over 30 to 33 lakh earthen diyas across 56 ghats, including the primary centre at Ram Ki Paidi and the Saryu river banks, said a statement.

Pakistan Turns

alongside the deployment of drones, fresh consignments of heavy weapons are being moved into the region.

An Intelligence Bureau official said that the deployment of drones and the new consignments of heavy weapons being sent to PoK is a clear sign that there would be a major escalation in violence.

There is every likelihood of mass casualties, with civilians being the main target, the official said.

"The establishment has further tightened restrictions on the media. Although curbs were already in place, state-fed information continued to be broadcast. However, there is now a complete blackout, with no news outlet in Pakistan making any mention of PoK," the official said.

This is yet another sign that Pakistan is planning to launch an all-out offensive against the people of PoK, the official added.

For now, the people of PoK are defying the force that is being used on them.

Multiple threat tactics have not worked. Further, the promises that the establishment has made to groups such as the JAAC have not been fulfilled, and this has added to the anger of the people.

The biggest protest site is at D-Chowk in Rawalakot. The security deployment is the highest here.

Despite force being used at D-Chowk, not a single protester has moved, and this shows how defiant the people are. In recent weeks, the establishment has also been accused of sabotage plots.

There have also been attempts to infiltrate the protest sites with pro-establishment elements, allegedly with the intention of sabotaging the agitation.

In the latest such incident, three security personnel in plain clothes allegedly infiltrated a protest site and attempted to open fire on the protesters. However, the protesters managed to thwart the alleged sabotage attempt.

Amid growing concerns over the escalation, six United Nations human rights experts had questioned the decision to designate the JAAC as a proscribed terrorist organisation.

The intention of proscribing the JAAC is to justify the force being used against them. Pakistan wants to send out a message that force is not being used on protesters, but against those part of terror groups, an official said.

'WD To Bring Rain,

November 12 and 13, with light to moderate rain in plains and light to moderate snowfall over higher reaches at many places, particularly towards the evening or night of November 12," the official said.

A separate prediction issued by Kashmir Weather Forecast also indicated that the second Western Disturbance has gained intensity and is likely to affect Jammu and Kashmir between November 12 and 14.

It said moderate to heavy snowfall is possible over higher reaches, while rain is expected over the plains of Jammu and Kashmir.

The forecast further indicated the possibility of the season's first snowfall in Gulmarg, Sonamarg, Doodhpathri and the plains of Pahalgam.

According to the forecast, higher reaches of Kupwara and Bandipora may receive moderate snowfall, while higher reaches of central and south Kashmir are likely to receive light to moderate snowfall.

Weather is expected to improve thereafter, with partly cloudy conditions forecast for November 14 and 15.

Meanwhile, the MeT has advised farmers to continue harvesting and other agricultural operations until November 10 and ensure the safe storage of harvested crops.

Travellers and transporters have been advised to plan their journeys accordingly, as fresh snowfall over higher reaches may disrupt traffic on important mountain passes and hilly roads. The forecast has also indicated the possibility of thunder and gusty winds at a few places between November 10 and 12.

Meanwhile, day temperatures remained above normal across most weather stations in Jammu and Kashmir on Friday.

According to the MeT's daily weather bulletin, Srinagar recorded a maximum temperature of 23.2 degrees Celsius, which was 5.9 degrees above the seasonal average, while the minimum settled at 2.0 degrees Celsius.

Qazigund recorded a maximum of 22.3 degrees Celsius and a minimum of 2.0 degrees Celsius, while Pahalgam recorded 18.0 degrees Celsius as its maximum and 0.0 degrees Celsius as its minimum.

Kupwara recorded a maximum temperature of 23.0 degrees Celsius and a minimum of 1.5 degrees Celsius, while Kokernag recorded 20.4 degrees Celsius and 0.2 degrees Celsius, respectively.

Gulmarg recorded a maximum of 13.8 degrees Celsius and a minimum of 1.2 degrees Celsius.

In the Jammu region, Jammu city recorded a maximum temperature of 29.5 degrees Celsius and a minimum of 14.0 degrees Celsius.

No rainfall was recorded at the listed weather stations during the 24 hours ending at 8:30 am on November 7, the bulletin said—(KNO)

Kashmir Parents Seek

Dar said, "Nothing is more important than the health and wellbeing of our kids. If the government does not change the school timing, I would prefer to keep my kids at home rather than risking their health."

The parents urged the government to revise the school timing. "In view of the cold temperatures in the morning, the government must change the school timing from 10 am to 3 Pm in Srinagar and 10:30 Am to 3:30 outside the Srinagar Municipality Limits. The School Education Department must prioritize the health and wellbeing of the students."

Pertinently, the government in mid-October had ordered a change in school timing for all government and private schools from October-15 asking schools falling in the Srinagar municipal limits to function from 10am to 3:30 Pm and 10:30 am to 4 pm to the school falling outside the Srinagar municipal limits—(KNO)



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Sakeena Itoo holds Public Darbar at Asthal, listens to public grievances

Lays foundation stones for Flood Protection works at Asthal and Reshipora

GMK NEWS NETWORK



KULGAM: Minister for Health and Medical Education and Social Welfare, Sakeena Itoo, today visited Asthal village of Kulgam district and held a Public Darbar to interact with people and take stock of their developmental demands and grievances.

During the interaction, people from the area projected various issues and developmental demands before the Minister. She gave a patient hearing to the public and assured that all genuine demands would be addressed in a phased and time-bound manner.

On the occasion, the Minister laid the foundation stone of a flood protection work at Asthal, being executed under NABARD at an estimated cost of ₹834.44 lakh by the Flood Control Division Anantnag through Flood Control Sub-Division DH Pora. The project aims to safeguard the area against flood threats and protect agricultural land and public infrastructure.

Sakeena Itoo also laid the foundation stone of a flood protection work at village Reshipora under UT Capex, at an estimated cost of ₹75.27 lakh. The work is being executed by the Flood Control Division Anantnag through Flood Control Sub-Division DH Pora.

Addressing the gathering, the Minister reiterated the Government's commitment, under the leadership of Chief Minister Omar Abdullah, towards ensuring inclusive and equitable development. She said that public outreach programmes and direct interaction with people are vital for responsive and accountable governance.

The Minister directed the concerned departments to work in close coordination and ensure timely completion of developmental works. She assured the public that their welfare and developmental needs would continue to remain a priority.

On the occasion, the Minister also disbursed cheques amounting to ₹55 lakh among 10 beneficiaries under Mission YUVA to support the establishment of various business units.

WWC, SKIMS Organise Awareness, Interactive Session for Women Employees

GMK NEWS NETWORK





SRINAGAR: The Women Welfare Committee, Sher-i-Kashmir Institute of Medical Sciences (SKIMS) and SKIMS Medical College, under the guidance of its Chairperson, Professor Sadaf Ali, and the patronage of Director SKIMS, Professor Mohammad Ashraf Ganie, organised an awareness and interactive programme titled "HER WELL-BEING, OUR PRIORITY" on Friday. The programme aimed to sensitise women employees about the various institutional committees and mechanisms available for addressing their concerns, grievances and workplace-related issues.

The programme was anchored by Sister Saleema Jee and Sister Qurat-ul-Ain. The programme witnessed encouraging participation from women employees belonging to different cadres across the institute, reflecting their keen interest in the initiative.

The programme commenced with an address by Dr. Shamila Hamid, Member Secretary, Women Welfare Committee and Additional Professor, Department of Community Medicine, who provided an overview of the committee's journey since its inception in October 2024. She highlighted the initiatives undertaken by the committee during 2025, which included an awareness programme on financial literacy, a health screening camp focusing on non-communicable diseases (NCDs), and a programme incorporating mental health awareness and dietary counselling for women employees.

She emphasised that the Women Welfare Committee is committed to promoting awareness, providing a supportive platform for counselling and interaction, and addressing the concerns of women employees. She reiterated the committee's resolve to undertake further initiatives aimed at improving the overall well-being of women working at the institute.

This was followed by an informative presentation by Dr. Shahida Nasreen, Additional Professor, Department of Radiation Oncology, who sensitised the participants about the various committees functioning within SKIMS for grievance redressal and employee support. She explained the roles and responsibilities of these committees, including the mechanisms available for addressing general grievances and complaints related to sexual harassment at the workplace, while highlighting the appropriate channels through which employees can seek assistance.

Dr. Iqra Nazir, Additional Professor, Department of Anaesthesiology, delivered an informative talk on the rights of women at the workplace. She highlighted the importance of awareness regarding workplace rights, dignity, equality, safety and the mechanisms available to protect women employees from discrimination and harassment.

Addressing the gathering, Professor Sadaf Ali, Head, Department of Surgical Gastroenterology and Chairperson, Women Welfare Committee, congratulated the committee members for their dedication and commitment towards women welfare and appreciated the enthusiastic participation of the employees. She emphasised that the Women Welfare Committee is envisioned as an approachable and supportive platform where women employees can freely share their concerns, difficulties and grievances. She encouraged them to approach the committee without hesitation, assuring them of a patient and empathetic hearing.

The programme was graced by Professor Mohammad Ashraf Ganie, Director, SKIMS and Ex-Officio Secretary to the Government, who lauded the efforts of the Women Welfare Committee in undertaking initiatives for the welfare of women employees. He highlighted the indispensable role of women in every sphere of institutional and societal development and stressed the need to create a supportive, inclusive and women-friendly working environment. He also emphasised the importance of introducing practical women welfare initiatives at SKIMS, including the establishment of a breastfeeding clinic and a crèche facility, among other supportive measures, to address the needs of women employees.

The interactive session provided an opportunity for participants to engage with the speakers, seek clarifications and share their perspectives. The programme received an encouraging response, with participants appreciating the initiative and the committee's efforts to create awareness and establish an accessible platform for women employees.

CM Omar Abdullah-led Government approves ₹7.93 crore project to boost border tourism in Uri

GMK NEWS NETWORK

JAMMU: The Jammu and Kashmir Government, led by Chief Minister Omar Abdullah, has accorded Administrative Approval for the creation of tourist infrastructure to promote border tourism in Uri at an estimated cost of ₹7.93 crore.

The comprehensive project envisages infrastructure development across five locations — Uri Town, Bosiyan-Gingal, Mahura, Garkote and Bela Boniyar — with a focus on enhancing tourist facilities and improving the overall visitor experience.

The proposed interventions include the development of tourist huts, facilitation centres, riverfront and scenic parks, viewpoints, trekking paths and public conveniences. The initiative aims to strengthen tourism infrastructure while providing visitors with better facilities to explore the region's scenic landscapes and natural attractions.

The project is expected to give fresh impetus to tourism-related economic activities in Uri, create livelihood opportunities for local communities and strengthen the area's potential as an emerging border tourism destination.

Chief Minister Omar Abdullah expressed hope that the initiative would enhance Uri's profile on the tourism map, promote its rich natural heritage and generate new avenues of economic growth for the local population.

KPDCL aannounces power shutdown in Kashmir parts

GMK NEWS NETWORK

SRINAGAR: Chief Engineer, Distribution, KPDCL Saturday informed that the Shutdown of 33 kV Silk Factory line will be observed due to which power supply to Rambagh, Allochibagh, Tulsibagh, Burzullah, LD Hospital, Spinning plant and adjoining areas will be affected from 09 am to 03 pm on 10, 17 & 21 November 2026.

Similarly, shutdown of 132 KV Switchyard at 100 MVA, 132/33 KV GSS Badampora will be observed due to which power supply to Kurhama, Yangpora, Baroosa, Old Dab, Checki baba salun, Sainik School, Rabitar, Kondbal, GCET Safapora, Lar, Waliwar, Watlar, Repora, Tulmulla, Dangerpora, Theeru, Larsun, Safapora, Central University, Gratbal, Jarakobagh, Hajin, Preng, Madwan, Banyari, Hakbara, Army Camp, Chandgeer, Aloosa, Malangam, Quil, Nishat, Papchan, Ajas, SK Bala, Sadunara, Bazipor, Nadihal, Guroora, Argam, Wanpora, Dawar, NHPC, Tragbal, Peerbaba, Razdan Top and other adjoining areas will be affected from 09 am to 03 pm on 14 & 17 November 2026.

Likewise, shutdown of 132/33 KV Grid Substation Cheshmashahi will be observed due to which power supply to Zabarwan Park, Centaur Hotel, SKICC, Nehru Park, Dalgate, Dal Lake, CM Residence, Dy. CM Residence, Raabita House, DC Residence, Gupkar, Church Lane, Radio Kashmir, CD Hospital, Kohnakhan, J&K Bank Head Office, Lal Chowk, Chief Justice Residence, Regal Chowk, IMPA, Banquet Hall, MLA Hostel, Paras Hospital, Ishber, Brein, Nishat, Foreshore Road, Pathan Bagh, Tailbal, Arabal, Parry Chowk, SKUAST, Dara, Darbagh, Theed, Badamibagh Cantonment and adjoining areas will be affected from 09 am to 03 pm on 10 November 2026.

Furthermore, shutdown of 33 kV Khunmoh SIDCO-II line will be observed due to which power supply to Industrial Estate Khonmoh from 09 am to 03 pm on 15 November 2026.

Javid Dar calls for sustainable transformation of agriculture sector; stresses scientific farming, soil conservation, farmers' empowerment

GMK NEWS NETWORK



SRINAGAR: Minister for Agriculture Production, Finance, Mining and Cooperatives Departments, Javid Ahmad Dar, today called for a concerted approach towards transforming the agriculture sector of Jammu and Kashmir through adoption of scientific farming practices, technological interventions, crop diversification and sustainable management of natural resources.

The Minister was addressing a District-Level Exhibition-cum-Kissan Mela organised by the Department of Agriculture Production and Farmers Welfare, Kashmir, under the National Mission on Agricultural Extension and Technology (NMAET)–Agricultural Technology Management Agency (ATMA) at Darbagh, Harwan, Srinagar.

MLA Hazratbal, Salman Ali Sagar; Director Agriculture Kashmir, Sartaj Ahmad Shah; Chief Agriculture Officer Srinagar, Mir Aijaz Hassan; senior departmental officers, agricultural experts, progressive farmers and other stakeholders attended the programme.

The event commenced with a vibrant band display by the local youth club, reflecting community participation and youth engagement.

The dignitaries subsequently visited various departmental stalls showcasing modern agricultural technologies, improved crop production practices, farm machinery, innovative farming interventions and farmer-oriented schemes.

Addressing the gathering, Javid Dar described agriculture and allied sectors as vital pillars of Jammu and Kashmir's economy and emphasised the need to make farming more productive, remunerative and sustainable. He urged the farmers to move towards scientific and technology-driven agricultural practices, adopt crop diversification and make informed use of modern farming techniques to enhance productivity and improve their income. He stressed that agricultural development must be guided by the needs of farmers, with particular emphasis on strengthening grassroots extension services and ensuring effective delivery of government support.

The Minister underscored the importance of maintaining soil health, advocating judicious use of chemical fertilisers, soil-test-based nutrient application and integrated nutrient management. He observed that conservation of natural resources and adoption of sustainable farming practices were essential for safeguarding agricultural productivity for future generations.

Emphasising the need for stronger institutional support, he called upon departmental officers and field functionaries to maintain regular engagement with the farming communities, disseminate scientific advisories and ensure that the benefits of government schemes reach eligible beneficiaries in a transparent and timely manner.

Javid Dar highlighted the immense potential of agriculture and allied activities in generating employment and strengthening rural livelihoods, particularly for young people. He encouraged the farmers to explore emerging opportunities in diversified agriculture and allied sectors to improve economic resilience.

MLA Hazratbal, Salman Ali Sagar, highlighted the significance of agriculture in the socio-economic development of Jammu and Kashmir. He stressed the importance of strengthening agricultural infrastructure, expanding the outreach of government schemes and ensuring adequate institutional support to the farming community.

FDA intensifies festive food safety enforcement across all districts ahead of Diwali

276 inspections conducted, 02 licences suspended, 132 food samples lifted, 800 kg of sweets destroyed

GMK NEWS NETWORK

JAMMU: In view of the forthcoming Diwali festivities, the Food and Drugs Administration (FDA), Jammu & Kashmir, has intensified its festive enforcement-cum-sampling drive across all districts to ensure the availability of safe, hygienic and quality food products to consumers.

During the two-day enforcement drive, 276 inspections were conducted and 132 food samples were lifted from various food establishments for analysis. The enforcement activities also resulted in the compounding of 34 cases under Section 69 of the Food Safety and Standards Act, 2006, with a total fine of ₹39,000 realised.

Furthermore, 13 cases were recommended for legal action under Sections 56 and 58 of the Act for violations relating to unhygienic and insanitary conditions in food processing and handling. Section 56 of the Act provides for a penalty extending up to ₹1 lakh for carrying out food processing or manufacturing under unhygienic or insanitary conditions, while Section 58 provides for a penalty extending up to ₹2 lakh for contraventions for which no specific penalty has been separately provided under the Act.

In addition, two food business licences were suspended for violations of the conditions of licence. Further, 14 Improvement Notices were issued under Section 32 of the Act, directing the concerned Food Business Operators (FBOs) to rectify the identified deficiencies within the stipulated period and ensure compliance with the prescribed food safety and hygiene requirements.

As part of the enforcement action, 800 kg of sweets were destroyed in Jammu and Kathua districts after being found processed under poor sanitary and unhygienic conditions. The estimated value of the destroyed sweets amounts to ₹1,44,000.

The FDA, J&K, has appealed to the general public to remain vigilant while purchasing food articles during the festive season and to procure food products only from licensed or registered Food Business Operators. Consumers are also advised to check the labelling, manufacturing and expiry dates of packaged food products and report any suspected instance of food adulteration or violation of food safety norms to the concerned authorities.

PUBLIC NOTICE

I, Misra Bano, wife of Late Mohd Ramzan Dar, resident of Malikpora, Pulwama, hereby inform the general public that the electricity connection bearing Consumer ID No. 0211010000850 is currently registered in the name of my husband, Late Mohd Ramzan Dar, son of Late Ab. Ahad Dar, resident of Malikpora, Pulwama. Now, I intend to transfer the said electricity connection into my own name, i.e., Misra Bano, wife of Late Mohd Ramzan Dar, resident of Malikpora, Pulwama. Upon transfer, all future rights, responsibilities, and liabilities related to the above connection shall rest solely with me. If any person has any objection to this proposed transfer, they may contact concerned department (PDD, Subdivision Pulwama) within 7 days from the date of publication of this notice. No claims or objections shall be entertained after the expiry of the said period.

Misra Bano Wife of Late Mohd Ramzan Dar
Resident of Malikpora, Pulwama

GOVERNMENT OF JAMMU & KASHMIR

OFFICE OF THE EXECUTIVE ENGINEER JAL SHAKTI (PHE) MECHANICAL DIVISION (NORTH) SOPORE

EXTENSION CORRIGENDUM

Sub: Extension of e-tenders.
Ref: 1. This office E-NIT No. 26 of 2026-27, S. No. 04.
2. This office E-NIT No. 28 of 2026-27, S. No. 01.
3. This office E-NIT No. 29 of 2026-27, S. No. 02.

Due to poor response the above referred e-NITs are hereby extended as hereunder:

S. No.	Particulars	Date and time
1	Last date for online submission of bids	13-11-2026 (06:55 pm)
2	Date of online opening of bids	14-11-2026 (12:30 pm)

All other terms and conditions shall remain same.

No.: PHE/MDNS/DB/4885-88
Dated: 05-11-2026
DIPK-7481-26
DT: 07/11/2026

Sd/-
Executive Engineer
Jal Shakti (PHE) Mechanical Division (North)
Sopore

Government of Jammu & Kashmir

OFFICE OF THE EXECUTIVE ENGINEER MACHINERY DIVISION SRINAGAR

MECHANICAL & HOSPITAL ENGINEERING DEPARTMENT, KASHMIR

Fax No: 0194-2497093

GIST of e-Tender

e -NIT No:	MDSK/TS /2026-27/28
Dated	07.11.2026

For and on behalf of the Lt. Governor, J&K UT e-tenders are invited on percentage basis from registered/reputed firms for the below mentioned work: -

Name of the Work	Cost of Tender Doc. (In Rs)	Estimated Cost (In Rs)	Bid Security/EMD in (In Rs)	Position of AA	Position of TS
1	2	3	4	5	6
Fabrication and supply of lateral mounting plates for mounting of variable Snow ploughs to Tata 713, Tata 715, Ashok Leyland Guru 715 and Ashok Leyland stallion LRV Snow clearance machinery of Machinery Division Kashmir.	100/-	2,19,000/-	10,950/-	Works programme approved by CE vide order No. M&HED/K/Acctt/26 of 2026-27 Dt.30.04.2026.	Sanctioned Vide No 20 Of 2026-27 Dated; 07/11/2026

The bidding document consisting of qualifying information, eligibility criteria, specifications, Bill of quantities (B.O.Q), Set of terms and conditions of contract and other details can be seen/downloaded from the Govt. website www.jktenders.gov.in as per schedule of dates given below :-

01	Publish date	07 -11-2026 (18:00hrs)
02	Date of start of downloading of bid document	07-11-2026 (18:30 hrs)
03	Bid submission start date	07 -11-2026 (18:55hrs)
04	Bid submission end date	16 - 11-2026 (09:30 hrs)
05	Date and time of opening of bids (online)	16- 11-2026 (14:00 hrs)

No: MDSK/ TS/3261-64
Date: 07.11.2026

DIPK-7479-26
DT: 07/11/2026

Sd/
Executive Engineer,
Machinery Division, Srinagar

Sheep Husbandry Deptt Distributes 46 Elite Texel Rams Among Progressive Farmers

GMK NEWS NETWORK



SRINAGAR: Department of Sheep Husbandry, Kashmir, Saturday organised a special programme at Sheep Breeding Farm, Khimber, for the distribution of 46 elite Texel male sheep among progressive farmers across different districts of Kashmir.

The programme was chaired by the Hon'ble Minister for Agriculture Production, Jenab Javed Ahmad Dar, in the presence of MLA Khansahib Jenab Saif-ud-Din Bhat, MLA Hazratbal Jenab Salman Sagar and Director Sheep Husbandry Kashmir, Dr. Basharat Amin Khuthu and other senior officers of the Sheep Husbandry Department.

Addressing the gathering, the Hon'ble Minister appreciated the efforts of the Department in strengthening the sheep sector and emphasised the need to introduce improved breeding practices, enhance meat production and improve the economic condition of sheep farmers.

The Department imported 450 elite Texel sheep from Australia in April 2025 under the Holistic Agriculture Development Programme (HADP), at a total cost of approximately ₹13.50 crore. The imported consignment comprised of 338 ewes and 112 rams.

Following their establishment at Sheep Breeding Farm, Khimber, the Department initiated pure-line Texel breeding as well as crossbreeding with Kashmir Merino sheep to improve the genetic potential and productive performance of the local sheep population.

As part of today's initiative, 46 selected elite Texel male sheep, weighing more than 35 kg, were distributed among progressive farmers across different districts of Kashmir.

The animals are being provided for one breeding cycle, after which they shall be returned to the Department. The initiative aims to assess their performance under field conditions and evaluate the growth and adaptability of their progeny.

The Department is also undertaking initiatives in advanced breeding techniques, including Embryo Transfer Technology, to accelerate the multiplication of superior genetic stock.

Speaking on the occasion, the Director, Sheep Husbandry Kashmir, highlighted the Department's continued efforts towards improving local sheep breeds, strengthening breeding infrastructure, providing veterinary and vaccination facilities and promoting scientific sheep farming practices.

He observed that the initiative represents an important step towards taking improved sheep genetics from departmental breeding farms directly to farmers' fields, with the ultimate objective of increasing sheep productivity and farmers' income.

The programme concluded with a call to farmers to ensure proper feeding, management and care of the valuable breeding animals so that the intended objectives of the programme are achieved.

ISL 2026/27: Brison and Irfan star as Chennaiyin FC rout defending champions East Bengal 5-3

IANS



CHENNAI: Chennaiyin FC registered their first victory of the 2026–27 season of the Indian Super League (ISL) in emphatic fashion, humbling defending champions East Bengal FC 5-3 in an eight-goal thriller at the Jawaharlal Nehru Stadium in Chennai on Saturday.

Brison Fernandes struck twice in the opening 18 minutes to put the hosts in control, while Ramon Tanque converted a first-half penalty. Irfan Yadwad then netted a brace after the break to cap a dominant attacking display, as East Bengal's first league defeat of the season came despite goals from Aké Loba, Dani Ramírez and David Lalhlansanga.

Chennaiyin made a blistering start, with Fernandes opening the scoring in the fourth minute with a right-footed finish, assisted by Yadwad. The winger doubled his tally in the 18th minute with a delightful finish that beat Prabhsukhan Gill, to make it 2-0 to the hosts.

East Bengal responded in the 29th minute when Loba found the net with a right-footed strike. However, Chennaiyin restored their two-goal advantage just before half-time, as Tanque converted a penalty in the 41st minute to make it 3-1.

The visitors reduced the deficit early in the second half after a handball by Muhammed Saheef resulted in a penalty. Ramírez stepped up and converted from the spot in the 47th minute, bringing East Bengal back in the game.

But Chennaiyin restored their two-goal advantage just shy of the hour mark with Yadwad finding the net. The forward completed his brace in the 67th minute, finishing after being set up by Tanque to make it 5-2 and put the contest firmly in Chennaiyin's favour.

East Bengal continued to push and found a late consolation through Lalhlansanga in stoppage time, with Hardik Bhatt providing the assist. However, Chennaiyin held on to secure a memorable 5-3 victory and their first three points of the campaign.

The result marked a significant setback for East Bengal, who had conceded just one goal in their ISL campaign before this fixture. Chennaiyin, meanwhile, will look to build on their attacking momentum as they continue their campaign, while East Bengal and head coach Antonio Lopez Habas will aim to regroup following the defeat.

IFL 2026/27: Sreenidi Deccan hold Real Kashmir to 1-1 draw in Srinagar

IANS



SRINAGAR: David Castañeda Muñoz scored in the 52nd minute as Sreenidi Deccan FC came back from a goal down and held Real Kashmir FC to a 1-1 draw in an entertaining encounter in the Indian Football League (IFL) 2026–27 at the TRC Stadium in Srinagar on Saturday.

Lesotho forward Thabiso Nelson Brown, who was named the Man of the Match for his goal, put the Snow Leopards ahead in the 19th minute with their first strike of the season, before Colombian striker David Castañeda Muñoz restored parity for the Deccan Warriors in the 52nd minute as both sides settled for a point apiece.

With this result, Sreenidi Deccan moved into third position on the table, while Real Kashmir opened their account with one point to move into eighth position above Samaleswari SC.

Turning out in their traditional yellow shirts in front of their home supporters, Real Kashmir began the match on a fluid note, stringing together attacks in the opening quarter through midfielders Ningthoukhongjam Rohen Singh, Lalawmpuia Sailo (Omoma), and Mohit Mittal alongside Under-22 forward Khullakpam Zahir Khan.

The Snow Leopards earned a dangerous free-kick in the 10th minute right on the edge of the six-yard box, though the Sreenidi backline of Pritam Kotal, Gurmukh Singh, Nishu Kumar, and Jagdeep Singh managed to survive the scare in a major let-off for the visitors.

Minutes later, Sreenidi Deccan threatened at the other end on the counter-attack. Skipper David Castañeda broke behind the Real Kashmir defence, marshalled by Cameroonian defender Alain Eyenga and Shanid Valan, to find himself in a one-on-one situation inside the box, only for Real Kashmir goalkeeper Susnata Malik to produce a brilliant save from point-blank range.

Real Kashmir's early pressure finally told in the 19th minute following a spectacular delivery from Omoma. Trinidad and Tobago striker and captain Marcus Leric Jr Joseph rose to meet the cross with a firm header that was saved by Sreenidi goalkeeper Kamaljit Singh, but the rebound fell kindly in front of Thabiso Nelson Brown, who produced a clinical finish to open the Snow Leopards' scoring account for the season.

The hosts continued to enjoy the lion's share of possession and dominated the midfield exchanges as the contest moved into the second quarter. Sreenidi Deccan, anchored by Pronay Halder, were largely restricted to counter-attacks as they searched desperately for a way to shift the momentum.

Formula 1: Verstappen tops Antonelli and Norris in FP3 ahead of Sao Paulo Grand Prix

IANS



SAO PAULO: Former champion Max Verstappen finished fastest in Free Practice 3 ahead of the Sao Paulo Grand Prix, the Red Bull driver beating Kimi Antonelli, who has already clinched the 2026 Drivers' Championship, and Lando Norris to the top of the leaderboard on Saturday.

The Dutchman, who is due to serve a grid penalty for Sunday's race, posted a 1m 11.622s, leaving him just 0.025s clear of Antonelli at the Autódromo José Carlos Pace, the venue confirmed as staying on the Formula 1 calendar until 2035.

Despite the threat of rain and thunderstorms in the area, most drivers and teams were in no rush to immediately head out once the session began at 1130 local time on Saturday.

However, Nico Hulkenberg, the Audi driver having had no running on Friday as his car was driven by Freddie Slater in FP1, ventured out before suffering an early mechanical issue which curtailed any further running.

George Russell was another to hit the track; the Briton set for a five-place grid penalty due to an Internal Combustion Engine (ICE) change, while Mercedes teammate Antonelli reported a problem with his steering wheel.

The potential issue didn't prevent the new World Champion from jumping to the top of the times at the 10-minute mark, the Italian posting a 1m 12.497s as all drivers used Pirelli's medium tyre for their runs.

Lance Stroll's challenging season continued as the Aston Martin driver was soon told of a problem with his car and to return to the pits, the Canadian's running coming to an end after just 15 minutes due to an Energy Recovery System (ERS) issue.

Antonelli lowered the benchmark further, posting a 1m 12.214s to go fractionally faster than Verstappen, with the Dutchman running off the track at Turn 4 when attempting to respond with another effort.

The Red Bull driver is set to start from the back of the grid in Brazil after several power unit changes, with both Ferraris of Lewis Hamilton and Charles Leclerc also given 10-place grid drops for ICE changes.

Hamilton could be due further power unit changes, though; the Briton reported "strange vibrations with the engine" and returned to the pits.

The seven-time World Champion eventually headed back out but returned immediately with "smoke in the cockpit" and a sub-optimal engine noise, with his session coming to an end as 25 minutes remained on the clock.

Toss has played a part, no frustration over totals, says Jamieson after narrow loss to India

IANS



WELLINGTON: New Zealand fast bowler Kyle Jamieson has played down concerns over his side's batting after another sub-par showing in the ODI series against India, adding that the toss had been a key factor and batting first in bowler-friendly conditions had proved tricky for both teams.

New Zealand were bowled out for 134 in the second ODI here at the Hnry Stadium, coming just a few days after being dismissed for 185 in the series opener in Auckland. India, however, had to dig deep in the rain-affected chase and scraped home by four runs (DLS method) to take a 2-0 lead in the five-match series.

"I think we've seen, like, probably throughout, like the tosses played a part in terms of the result. Batting first has been a little bit trickier than second, when it gets under lights and a little bit of moisture. Never any real frustration around totals and that sort of thing.

"There are days where we'd like more runs, and there are days where I'm sure the batters would like us to take a few more wickets too. So, just, part and parcel. I'm sure the boys will be reflecting and learning as they always do and hoping for a good effort in Hamilton," said Jamieson in the post-match press conference.

The two sides meet in the third ODI in Hamilton on Tuesday. The tall fast bowler said the surfaces had been difficult to read for the side batting first, with uneven bounce making it hard to judge a competitive score. "I think we've probably seen across both the T20s and one-dayers, right? The team that's batted first has probably had to just be a little bit cautious around the wicket.

Told him to wait, but Shami lost hope of Test recall after not being picked for NZ series, says Siddiqui

IANS



NEW DELHI: Mohammed Shami's childhood coach Badruddin Siddiqui said he and the senior pacer's family had repeatedly asked him to hold off on quitting Test cricket, but the veteran fast bowler made up his mind after concluding that his chances of a recall had ended with the non-selection for Tests against New Zealand.

Shami brought the curtain down on his Test career on Friday night, exactly 13 years after he made his debut in the longer format against the West Indies at the Eden Gardens. Shami, who could extract seam and swing with the new and old balls, ends his Test career with 229 wickets from 64 matches at an average of 27.71, including six five-wicket hauls.

He is India's 12th-highest wicket-taker in the format and sixth on the list among fast bowlers. "See, it was going on for a very long time. But I had stopped him from doing it and told him to wait a little longer. He was getting disturbed a lot for the past one year.

"I mean, when you were not getting a chance to play and perform, then every player would get disturbed. So, it was going on for a long time. But now, when he thought that after the New Zealand series, there is no hope left for a recall, he decided to make this announcement," Siddiqui told IANS on Saturday.

He also revealed that Bhuvneshwar Kumar's return to the national side had briefly given them reason to feel hopeful for a recall for Shami, but it never happened. "It has been going on for a long time. His elder brother, his family, and everyone told him to wait a little longer and not be in a hurry.

"But he had been getting this feeling to move on for the past few days. It seemed to me that when Bhuvaneshwar Kumar was given a recall to the T20I team, it was possible that Shami would also get a chance in the New Zealand series, one-day or Test series. But it did not happen, and what can I say now?"

Siddiqui said Shami rarely let his frustration show, even as the wait wore him down. "I always used to stop him in the past from doing this. Now it seems like he totally made up his mind to retire from Tests. He was very pareshaan (worried) in the last few days due to this. He didn't open up much in front of me and used to be normal.

"I would tell him, 'Mehnat karna hamara kaam hai, baaki sab upar walle pe chodho, and fit raho kyonki khelne ka mauka aa sakta hai (Doing hard work is all we can do, leave the rest to God and keep yourself fit if a chance to play comes)', he said.

"He would do that, and whenever he came to me, he used to practice with the kids. He used to call me and tell me that he is coming and the kids, whether batters or bowlers, would go to him and play and practice with them from morning to evening," he added.

Shami hadn't played for India in any format since the victorious Champions Trophy final against New Zealand in Dubai in March 2025. His return to international cricket had come only a couple of months earlier, in a T20I series against England in January, after a lengthy layoff following an operation on the Achilles tendon in his knee and subsequent knee problems post the 2023 ODI World Cup at home.

Siddiqui could not understand how a bowler who was consistently delivering for his state could be considered unfit to play Tests. "When a child like Shami is performing, you said that he is unfit. He played Ranji Trophy and bowled 20 overs - how can he be unfit? After that injury, he was performing. It is not that he is bowling too many overs and not getting wickets.

"He was picking 4-5 wickets and making his team win. The Bengal team has surged in performances, and the new bowlers who are playing with him have started performing well as they are playing alongside such an experienced bowler. But we, the coaches of India, or in the administration, are not able to understand. Look, we have good bowlers, but they are inexperienced.

