

Kashmir Convener



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India's Water Will Be Now Utilised For The Country: PM Modi

KC News Network

NEW DELHI: In an apparent reference to the Indus Waters Treaty being put in abeyance, Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Tuesday said earlier even the water which rightfully belonged to India went outside the country but it will now flow for India's benefit and will be utilised for the country.

Addressing the ABP Network's 'India@2047' Summit, Modi asserted that for taking big decisions and achieving objectives, it is important to give primacy to national interest and believe in the country's capability.

The prime minister said that when people look at the country now, they can proudly say "democracy can deliver", and stressed that the government was moving from GDP-centric approach to progress based on Gross Empowerment of People (GEP).

While speaking about the work done on the interlinking of rivers, Modi quipped



that water is a topic of intense discussion in the media lately.

"Earlier, even the water which rightfully belonged to India was going outside the country. Now India's water will flow for the country's interest and will be useful for it," he said in an apparent reference to India

putting Indus Water Treaty in abeyance as part of countermeasures against Pakistan after the Pahalgalam terror attack.

Referring to the new Vaaqf law, Modi said the need for reforming the law was being felt for decades, but to satisfy a votebank even this noble work was

defamed.

"Now the amendments have been made which in the real sense will help poor Muslim mothers and sisters and poor Pasmanda Muslims," he said.

In his address, he said the biggest dream of this changing India is to become 'Viksit Bharat' by 2047.

"The country has the capabilities, resources and the willpower for it," he said.

Speaking about the finalisation of the India-UK free trade agreement, Modi said it is a historic day as this pact between two big and open market economies will mark a new chapter in the development of the two countries.

"This will boost economic activity in India and will open new ways and opportunities for Indian businesses and MSMEs," Modi said. The prime minister said India is not only carrying out reforms, but by actively engaging with the world, it is also making itself a vibrant trade and commerce hub.

>>SEE ON P-7

J&K set for civil defence mock drill today

● Emergency response system to be tested; sirens to sound at multiple locations

Sajid Raina

SRINAGAR : Jammu and Kashmir is all set to witness a civil defence mock drill on Wednesday.

According to the details available with the news agency—Kashmir News Observer (KNO) the directions to hold the nationwide exercises have been passed by the Ministry of Home Affairs.

An official said that the preparations for conducting mock drills in J&K have been finalized and tomorrow sirens will be activated at various locations in the union territory to test emergency response systems. "Public is requested to remain calm and not be alarmed," he added.

The official said that Union



Home Secretary Govind Mohan on Tuesday reviewed the civil defence preparedness across the country through a high-level video conference with Chief Secretaries and heads of civil defence of all states and union territories.

"The aim is to assess readiness in the event of a hostile attack, with a specific focus on improving coordination and training across all levels of

administration," the official said, adding, "Over 270 civil defence districts' across India, which include sensitive locations such as military installations, health institutions, schools will be covered under the drill."

These drills, the official said, are designed to test air-raid warning systems, public alert mechanisms, and bunker management procedures.

>>SEE ON P-7

Govt extends coverage under Public Distribution System

KC News Network

SRINAGAR: In a significant move aimed at strengthening food security across Jammu and Kashmir, the Department of Food, Civil Supplies & Consumer Affairs, Government of Jammu and Kashmir, has enhanced inclusion measures under the Public Distribution System (PDS). The information was given by Minister for Food, Civil Supplies & Consumer Affairs, Transport, Science &



Technology, Information Technology, Youth Services & Sports and ARI & Trainings, Satish Sharma, here today while interacting with the media.

"In accordance with the Government Order No. 47-JK(FCS&CA) of 2024, the new directive mandates the inclusion of children aged six years and above in family ration cards. These children will be incorporated into relevant categories such as Antyodaya Anna Yojana (AAY), Priority Household (PHH), Non-Priority Household (NPHH), or Exclusion, in accordance with existing guidelines", maintains the minister. The Minister further said that in a

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CM Omar launches JK Pension Suvidha portal

● Portal to streamline pension settlement process

KC News Network

SRINAGAR : Chief Minister Omar Abdullah today launched the Pension Suvidha Portal at the Civil Secretariat here. Developed by the Finance Department, J&K in collaboration with the National Informatics Center (NIC) and the Principal Accountant General (A&E), J&K, the portal marks a significant step towards digitizing the pension sanctioning process for government employees.

The event was attended by Advisor to the Chief Minister Nasir Aslam Wani, Additional Chief Secretary Education Shantmanu, ACS to CM Dheeraj Gupta, Administrative Secretaries of Agriculture Production Department, Finance, Information Technology, Social Welfare, Forest, Food, Civil Supplies & Consumer Affairs, Public Works Department, Rural Development Department, Cooperatives, Law Department.



The event was also attended by Principal Accountant General (A&E) J&K along with his team of officers, Principal Resident Commissioner J&K, MD & CEO Jammu and Kashmir Bank Ltd, Director General, Funds Organization/Codes/Audit & Inspection/

Budget/Local Fund, Audit & Pension, Directors of Finance/Financial Advisors of all Administrative Departments, Director Accounts and Treasuries, Jammu / Kashmir, State Informatics

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War Has Long-Term Effect But Cong Stands With Govt: Karra

KC News Network

SRINAGAR: Jammu and Kashmir Congress chief Tariq Hameed Karra on Tuesday said an India-Pakistan war can have long-term consequences but his party stands firmly with the government on any action it chooses to take against the Pahalgalam massacre perpetrators.

His comments come amid the Centre asking several states to conduct mock drills on May 7 amid rising tensions with Pakistan following the April 22 terror attack in the verdant meadows of Baisaran that left 26 dead.

"War is war. It is a dangerous word that has long-term consequences. The situation now has become such that



the government wants to take action against terrorism.

"The Congress party is behind them (government) if it takes any action which is in the best interests of the country,"

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Amid tensions, Army, BSF on high alert in J&K

Sajid Raina

SRINAGAR : Amid escalating tensions between India and Pakistan, the Army and Border Security Force (BSF) are on high alert along the Line of Control (LoC) and International Border (IB) across Jammu and Kashmir (J&K).

Pertinently, the Pahalgalam terror attack that left 26 civilians, mostly tourists dead, and its cross border linkages have led to the heightened tensions between

the two nations. India has downgraded the diplomatic ties with Pakistan, has suspended trade, closed border gates and deported all Pakistani nationals from India.

An official told the news agency—Kashmir News Observer (KNO) along with the nationwide civil defence mock drills to be held on Wednesday, the Army and BSF will remain on high alert along the LoC and the International Border. "Armed forces have been directed to maintain tight vigil and not to lower the guard," the official added.

Meanwhile, amid the rising tensions, Indian forces apprehended a Pakistani national near the LoC in the Poonch district. The individual was arrested at a time when relations between India and Pakistan are

already strained.

Senior officials stated that the arrested man is being questioned to ascertain further details about his intentions.

Pakistan Army once again violated the ceasefire agreement along the Line of Control (LoC), continuing their pattern of unprovoked firing in several areas.

The latest incident occurred on the night of May 5-6, when Pakistani troops opened fire using small arms across the LoC in multiple sectors, including Kupwara, Baramulla, Poonch, Rajouri, Mendhar, Naushera, Sunderbani, and Akhnoor.

This marks the 12th consecutive night of ceasefire violations by Pakistan, further aggravating the already

fraught situation between the two neighboring countries.

In response to the provocations, the Indian Army carried out a strong and calibrated retaliation, adhering to standard operating procedures to maintain security and safeguard personnel and infrastructure in the region.

These repeated violations of the ceasefire agreement, which was established in February 2021, have significantly undermined the credibility and effectiveness of the agreement.

Truce violations instill fear. The relentless violations following the April 22, Pahalgalam terror attack, have instilled widespread fear

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CS pushes for swift claim settlements, financial inclusion of all in J&K



KC News Network

SRINAGAR: Chief Secretary, Atal Dulloo, today chaired a comprehensive review meeting to assess the implementation status of various financial inclusion and social security schemes of the Government of India being executed through banks and financial institutions in J&K.

Besides Principal Secretary, APD and Principal Secretary, Finance Departments, the meeting was attended by MD, J&K Bank; Commissioner Secretary, Social Welfare; Commissioner Secretary, Tourism;

Secretary, Revenue; Secretary, RDD; MD, JKRLM; Convenor, UTLCB; representatives from NABARD, SIDBI and other banks operating here.

The meeting focused on the progress under major schemes including Pradhan Mantri Jan Dhan Yojana (PMJDY), Pradhan Mantri Suraksha Bima Yojana (PMSBY), Pradhan Mantri Jeevan Jyoti Bima Yojana (PMJJBY), Atal Pension Yojana (APY), saturation of unbanked rural areas, priority sector lending, credit flow to MSMEs, agriculture sector

>>SEE ON P-7

India, UK seal landmark free trade agreement

KC NEWS NETWORK

NEW DELHI: India and the United Kingdom on Tuesday announced the conclusion of a landmark Free Trade Agreement (FTA) that eliminates tariffs on a majority of goods and services, marking a major step forward in their Comprehensive Strategic Partnership.

The deal is accompanied by a Double Contribution Convention aimed at easing cross-border taxation and investment flows.

Prime Minister Narendra Modi confirmed the development in a post on X, writing: "Delighted to speak with my friend PM @Keir_Starmer. In a historic milestone, India and the UK have successfully concluded an ambitious and mutually beneficial Free Trade Agreement, along with a Double Contribution Convention. These landmark agreements will further deepen our Comprehensive Strategic Partnership, and catalyse trade, investment, growth, job creation, and innovation in both our economies. I look forward to welcoming

>>SEE ON P-7

Pahalgalam attack 'barbaric', Govt must respond effectively: Owaisi in Sgr



Mubashir Alam Wani

SRINAGAR: All India Majlis-e-Ittehadul Muslimin (AIMIM) Chief Asaduddin Owaisi on Tuesday said the central government should respond effectively in response to the Pahalgalam terror attack that claimed the lives of over two dozen people.

"We want our government to give an effective response to it. We have said the same in the all-party meeting," Owaisi said after arriving in Srinagar this morning.

This is the first visit of AIMIM Chief to the Valley following the deadly attack in Pahalgalam on April 22, 2025. Earlier, he had visited Kashmir last month to attend a marriage ceremony.

Speaking to reporters, Owaisi, as per the news agency—Kashmir News Observer (KNO), termed the incident a 'cowardly and barbaric attack'. "It was a cowardly attack.

We have condemned it and are still condemning it. We have seen how terrorists from Pakistan killed 26 people," Owaisi said.

He said that the way people were killed by asking males about their religion was barbaric and inhumane. "Those who couldn't recite the Kalma were fired upon. This is barbaric," he said.

Owaisi said the local Kashmiris are bearing the brunt of the attack, stating that the tourism sector has taken a hit after the Pahalgalam terror attack.

Responding to a question about the death of 22-year-old Imtiyaz Ahmad Magray from

>>SEE ON P-7

For first time people of Kashmir came out to show anger against Pahalgalam attack: CM Omar Abdullah

Rehan Qayoom Mir

SRINAGAR: Chief Minister Omar Abdullah on Tuesday said that after the Pahalgalam terror attack—which left 26 people mostly tourists dead—people of Kashmir for the first time came on streets to show their anger.

Talking to reporters here the Chief Minister, according to the news agency—Kashmir News Observer (KNO) said, "What happened in Kulgam shouldn't have happened, but not only Kulgam, the news of arrests, which is coming from different places in Kashmir—for the first time, the people of Jammu & Kashmir, especially Kashmir, came on the street against the attack and have shown their anger. This message shouldn't be conveyed to them that they all are being punished."

On the SDRF personnel conducting a mock drill in Dal

Lake, the Chief Minister said, "During the past few days, two boats have capsized in Dal Lake and we have asked the SDRF to



deploy their teams to prevent tragedies and loss of life.

"Asked whether SDRF personnel have been deployed in Dal Lake after the MHA issued instructions to make civil defence preparations, Omar quipped, saying, "I don't work in MHA. I work in J&K government."

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Rahul Gandhi should apologise as he insulted Hindus by calling Lord Ram mythological: VHP

NAGPUR: The Vishva Hindu Parishad (VHP) on Tuesday accused Congress leader Rahul Gandhi of insulting the Hindu community by calling Lord Ram a "mythological figure", and demanded an apology from him.

Addressing a press conference here, VHP general secretary (organisation) Milind Parande said the Hindu community should not let leaders like Gandhi come to power.

During an interaction at a US university last month, Gandhi rejected the BJP's idea of what constitutes a Hindu and asserted all great Indian social reformers and political thinkers – Jyotirao Phule, BR Ambedkar, Mahatma Gandhi and even Guru Nanak, Basava and Buddha – said the same thing, "Carry everybody with you, satya (truth) and ahimsa (non-violence)," "This, to me, is the bedrock of Indian tradition and history. I don't know of one person whom we consider great in India who wasn't of this type. I can't think of one. All are mythological figures. Lord Ram was of that time, where he was forgiving, he was compassionate," the Congress leader had said.

Parande said, "During his interview in US-based Brown University, Gandhi called many subjects of Indian history as mythology and even called Lord Ram



a mythological figure. By doing so, he has insulted the Hindu community and Hindu faith on foreign land." "It is not surprising as in 2007, the then Congress government had filed an affidavit in the Supreme Court in the Ram Setu case, stating that Lord Ram is a mythological figure. Hence, I feel Congress and its leaders are continuously insulting the Hindu community. VHP condemns this and demands that Rahul Gandhi should apologise for his statements," he said.

Gandhi does not know that anyone who opposes Lord Ram gets destroyed,

he added.

"And this is what will happen. I think Hindu community should not let such people come to power...people whose only aim is power. Rahul Gandhi continuously gives anti-Hindu statements. Hence, it is important that people who care for the interest of Hindus should sit in central and state governments," he said.

Talking about the Pahalgam terror attack, he said jihadist violence was on the rise everywhere.

"The way innocent people were killed

in Pahalgam, the way their religion was asked before being killed ruthlessly – it raises a question mark over the saying that terrorism does not have a religion," he said.

"The Hindu community is being attacked by those indulging in jihadist violence. If a section of Muslim think that they can scare the Hindu community through violence, then it is their misunderstanding. Certainly, the grave of jihadists will be dug in India and the Hindu community will dig it," the VHP leader said.

When asked about the VHP's stand on the decision to conduct a caste census, he said, "I feel a lot of things will come to light if the census of the entire society is conducted. But I feel the subject of the caste census of the entire population has become a little different."

However, VHP believes and works towards the goal that Hindu community should rise above caste and be united. Since the government has decided and as many people have demanded, caste census will be implemented, Parande said.

The VHP is operating with the focus of keeping the Hindu society united, enhancing the nationalist character, patriotism among the community members, he said. (Agencies)

Five Bangladeshi nationals held for illegal stay in Navi Mumbai

THANE: Five Bangladeshi nationals have been arrested from a locality in Navi Mumbai for allegedly staying in the country without valid documents, police said on Tuesday.

A team from the Anti-Human Trafficking Cell (AHTC) of Navi Mumbai Police raided a premises at Karanjade in Panvel on Sunday morning and found six Bangladeshi nationals, including two women, living there, a police spokesperson said.

He said five were taken into custody after preliminary verification of their immigration status.

"Three of the accused overstayed in India even after their visas had expired, while the other two had entered the country illegally without any valid travel documents or permissions," the official said.



He said investigations revealed that the accused had managed to fraudulently acquire Indian identity documents, including Aadhaar and PAN cards and voter IDs.

Three accused had even secured Indian passports, he added.

The official said an FIR has been registered at the Panvel Town police station against the accused, Anna Khatun Akash Gazi (35), who was caught with her six-year-old daughter, Alo Khatun Ismail Gazi (31), Istrafil

Islam Gazi (25), Kia Akash Gazi (21) and Akash Latif Gazi (40).

He said Mohammad Ismail Aminoddin Yerulkar (52), a retired Indian national, has been named as co-accused for allegedly helping the group obtain Indian identity documents and facilitating their illegal stay in the country.

"The arrested accused were produced before a magistrate on Monday and have been remanded to police custody until May 9 for further investigation," the official said.

Entire country stands by Govt in wake of Pahalgam attack: Gehlot

JAIPUR: Former Rajasthan chief minister Ashok Gehlot has said that the entire country is standing by the Government in the wake of the Pahalgam terror attack.

The veteran Congress leader also said Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Defence Minister Rajnath Singh should have complete freedom over the decisions that need to be taken in the aftermath of the terror strike that has killed 26 people, mostly tourists, in south Kashmir's Pahalgam.

However, he also said that it has been 13 days since the April 22 terror attack and people are still looking for answers from the government that talks big.

Asked about the Pahalgam terror strike, Gehlot said on Monday, "I cannot comment on that because the opposition has said that we are with the government. So I believe that no one should comment on it."

He said decisions will have to be taken by the government after contemplating.

"Such decisions are not taken in a hurry. Such decisions are not taken in over-enthusiasm or over-reaction. These decisions will have to be taken after thinking carefully and considering what is in the best interest of the country," Gehlot told reporters here.

Cong Chief Kharge Writes To PM Modi, Calls For Dialogue With All Parties On Caste Census

NEW DELHI: Congress president Mallikarjun Kharge has urged Prime Minister Narendra Modi to draw upon the Telangana model for the caste survey, remove 50 per cent cap for reservation and immediately implement Article 15(5) providing for reservations for SCs, STs and OBCs in private educational institutions.

In a letter to Modi, Kharge also called on the prime minister to have a dialogue with all political parties soon on the issue of the caste census.

"Conducting any exercise such as the caste census which gives the backward, the oppressed and the marginalized sections of our society their rights cannot and should not be considered divisive in any way," Kharge said.

"Our great nation and our large-hearted people have



always come together as one whenever needed, just as we have done after the recent cowardly terrorist attacks in Pahalgam," he said in his letter to Modi dated May 5.

The Congress believes that conducting the caste census in the comprehensive manner is absolutely necessary to ensure social and economic justice and equality of status and opportunity as pledged in the Preamble of our Constitution, Kharge said.

Sharing Kharge's letter on

X, Congress general secretary in-charge communications Jairam Ramesh said, "Following the CWC meeting on May 2nd, the Congress President Mallikarjun Kharge ji wrote to the PM last night on Mr. Modi's sudden and desperate U-turn on the caste census – even as the nation's anguish and anger at the brutal Pahalgam terror attacks continued unabated."

"Kharge ji has made three very specific suggestions," he said.

SYL canal row: SC directs Punjab, Haryana to cooperate with Centre for amicable resolution

NEW DELHI: The Supreme Court on Tuesday directed the governments of Punjab and Haryana to cooperate with the Centre to resolve the Sutlej-Yamuna Link (SYL) canal row.

A bench of Justices BR Gavai and Augustine George Masih was informed by the Centre that it has already taken effective steps to resolve the issue amicably.

"We direct both the states to cooperate with the Union of India in arriving at an amicable solution," the bench said.

The bench said it would hear the matter on August 13 if it is not resolved by then.



"We have made efforts for mediation, but the states have to walk the talk," Additional Solicitor General Aishwarya

Bhati, appearing for the Centre, told the bench.

The SYL canal was conceptualised for the effective

allocation of water from the Ravi and Beas rivers.

The project envisaged a 214-km canal, of which 122 km was to be constructed in Punjab and 92 km in Haryana.

Haryana has completed the project in its territory, but Punjab, which launched the construction work in 1982, later shelved it.

The dispute between the two states has been lingering on for decades.

The top court had on January 15, 2002, ruled in favour of Haryana in a suit filed by it in 1996 and directed the Punjab government to construct its portion of the SYL canal.

OFFICE OF THE EXECUTIVE ENGINEER Sub Transmission Division Ganderbal

Kashmir Power Distribution Corporation Limited
email: exengineer12@gmail.com

Corrigendum Notice

Ref:-STD/GBL/03 of 2025-26 Dated: 22-04-2025

Name of the work: - "Stage contract for Maintenance of 33/11 KV Receiving Stations for District Ganderbal & Bandipora in respect of STD Ganderbal for the Year 2025-26 OR till next Stage Contract is finalized"

This is for the information of all the bidders that there has been an error in few particulars of the BOQ regarding NIT - STD/GBL/03 of 2025-26 Dated: 24-04-2025 for "Stage contract for Maintenance of 33/11 KV Receiving Stations for District Ganderbal & Bandipora in respect of STD Ganderbal for the Year 2025-26 OR till next Stage Contract is finalized". The Particulars may be read as:

Item No	Item posted in BOQ	Actual Item required
19	Supply Installation, Testing and Commissioning of 11 KV VCB Panel including Transportation from divisional store and supply of all accessories, clamps & Stand for commissioning of panel in (along with GTP and Test Certificate)	Supply Installation, Testing and Commissioning of 11 KV VCB Panel including supply of all accessories required for commissioning of panel (along with GTP and Test Certificate).
20	Installation, Testing and Commissioning of 11 KV VCB Panel and supply of all accessories, clamps & Stand for commissioning of panel.	Installation, Testing and Commissioning of 11 KV VCB Panel.
25	Supply, Installation, testing and Commissioning of various 33 KV C&R Panel including supply of all accessories, clamps & Stand for commissioning of C&R panel including Transportation from divisional store including earthing termination complete Job (along with GTP and Test Certificate)	Supply, Installation, testing and Commissioning of 33 KV C&R Panel including supply of all accessories, clamps & Stand for commissioning of C&R panel, including earthing termination complete Job (along with GTP and Test Certificate)

No:- STD/GBL/Ts/157-63.
Dated: 05-05-25

DIPK-NB-389/25

Sd/-
Executive Engineer
STD Ganderbal

Government of Jammu & Kashmir

OFFICE OF THE EXECUTIVE ENGINEER JAL SHAKTI WATER SUPPLY MASTER PLAN DIVISION.

GIST OF E-NIT No.09/WSMP of 05-2025, Date:-05/05/2025

For and on behalf of the Lieutenant Governor, Union Territory of J&K e-tenders (in Single Cover System) are invited from approved and eligible contractors registered with J&K Union Territory Govt., for the following Work.

S.No	Name of Work	ADVT COST. (Rs. in Lacs)	EMD COST in Rupees	COST OF T/DOC	Class of Contractor	Time Allowed For completion	Major Head of Account
1.	PROVIDING WATER SUPPLY FACILITIES AT YATRA CAMP PANTHACHOWK FOR SHRIAMARNATHJI YATRA 2025 (SHRIAMARNATHJI YATRA)	Rs.10.52 Lacs	2% of Advertised Cost	Rs. 1000/-	BEE & CEE	30 Days	SHRI AMARNATH JI YATRA(3452)

The E-NIT consisting of qualifying information, eligibility criteria, bill of quantities (BOQ), terms and conditions of contract can be seen/downloaded from the departmental web site (jktenders.gov.in) as per the dates shown below: -

S.No.	Description	Date		
		DD	MM	YYYY
1	Publishing date of ENIT	05	05	2025
2	Download start date	05	05	2025
3	Bid submission start date	05	05	2025
4	Bid submission end date	15	05	2025
5	Bid opening date	16	05	2025

NO: WSMP/CC/669-77
Dated:- 05-05-2025

DIPK-1170/25

Sd/-Executive Engineer,
Jal Shakti WSMP Division
Srinagar

GOVERNMENT OF JAMMU AND KASHMIR

OFFICE OF THE BLOCK MEDICAL OFFICER SALLAR (MEDICAL DIRECTOR YATRA PAHALGAM)

e-mail: bmosallar2020@gmail.com

NIT No: MD/SANJY/2025/85-89 Dated: 05/05/2025

Subject: - Retender for Providing of pony/porter services during the Shri Amarnath Ji Yatra-2025 from Chandanwari to various stations (up & down) to Dardkoot.

NOTICE INVITING TENDERS

On behalf of the District Level Committee constituted by Chief Medical Officer Anantnag vide Order No. CMOA/Est-II/484-91 Dated: 11/04/2025, for Shri Amarnath Ji Yatra – 2025 (Pahalgam Axis), District Anantnag online tenders are invited from Pony-Walas having valid registration from the department of Tourism J&K or any other competent authority empowered by the Government for Supply of Pack & Riding Horses/Ponies/Porters on Hire Basis for carrying Men & Materials from Chandanwari to different Yatra Medical Aid Centres up to Dardkoot for smooth conduct of Shri Amarnath-Ji Yatra 2024 during the entire Yatra period. The engagement shall be purely on a temporary basis and as per the terms and conditions laid down herein. The approval for the above tender has been granted by the District Level Committee, as communicated by the Chief Medical Officer Anantnag, through communication No. CMOA/Yatra/883-86 Dated 19/04/2025. Important Dates and Cost of EMD & Tender Fee:

S.No	Event	Date
01.	Date of Issue of Tender Notice	05-05-2025
02.	Period of downloading of bidding documents	From 05-05-2025 (03:00 PM) to 10-05-2025 (04:00 PM)
03.	Bid Submission Start date	05-05-2025 (03:00PM)
04.	Bid Submission End date	10-05-2025 (04:00PM)
05.	Date and Time of Opening of Bids (Online)	12-05-2025 (10:00AM)
06.	Earnest Money Deposit	Rs. 110000 (Rupees One Lakh Ten Thousand Only)
07.	Tender Fees	Rs. 500 (Five Hundred Only)

The tender document is available on the official website www.jktenders.gov.in. Interested and eligible bidders may view, download, seek clarifications, and submit their e-Bids online as per the schedule mentioned. The quoted rates shall be firm and inclusive of all applicable taxes, duties, WCT, freight, and transportation up to the designated sites. The rates shall also cover any charges related to mandatory testing/inspection by designated agencies. No extra charges will be paid or reimbursed beyond the quoted prices. Bids must be accompanied with the scanned copy of cost of Tender document in shape of Bank receipt deposited in the J&K Bank, Pahalgam (Account No: 0122040500004744) IFSC Code: JAKAOPHLGAM in favour of Medical Director Yatra Pahalgam (Block Medical Officer Sallar), J&K and Earnest Money / Bid Security in shape of CDR/FDR pledged to Medical Director Yatra Pahalgam J&K. The date and time of opening of bids shall be notified on the official e-tendering portal: www.jktenders.gov.in. The bids of responsive bidders shall be opened online, in the office of the Block Medical Officer, Sallar, in the presence of the District Level Committee constituted for SANJY-2025 (Pahalgam Axis). Bids shall remain valid for 7 days from the date of opening of financial bids.

Terms & Conditions:

- Supply Timeline: The successful bidder shall ensure supply of ponies/porters within 05 days from the date of issuance of the contract.
- Security Deposit: The L1 Bidder (Successful Bidder) shall furnish additional performance security in the form of CDR/FDR within 02 days of bid opening. Unbalanced Tender and Additional Performance Security Deposit as under: -

S. No.	Percentage of Unbalanced Tender (Low Rates)	Additional Performance Security
1	Up to and including 15% below	Nil
2	Greater than 15% and up to 20% below	5%
3	Greater than 20% and up to 25% below	10%
4	Greater than 25% and up to 30% below	15%
5	Greater than 30%	20%

- Penalty for Delay: Delayed supplies shall attract a penalty of 2% per week (maximum 10% of contract value) for non-compliance or delays.
- Age and Physical Standards: No Porter shall not be over or underage. Physically handicapped individuals shall not be engaged.

DIPK-1148/25

Sd/-Block Medical Officer, Sallar
(Medical Director Yatra Pahalgam)

Wild Boars Return After Decades, Wreak Havoc on Bandipora’s Paddy Fields

SUHAIL RATHER

BANDIPORA: Wild Boars have resurfaced in Bandipora district after more than a decade and has wreak havoc in agricultural land destroying paddy nurseries.

Farmers told Kashmir Convener that the attacks by wild boars is turning out to be a disaster for agriculture in Bandipora this year and demand government intervention.

Reports have emerged from villages including Aragam, Garoora, Hajin, and Ajas, where farmers say wild boars are destroying paddy seedlings overnight. “We sow paddy seeds during the day, but by morning the fields are devastated by wild boars,” said Hilal Ahmad, a farmer from Aragam.

Wildlife experts trace the origin of the Indian wild boar in Kashmir to the era of Maharaja Gulab Singh, who is believed to have introduced the species to the region in the mid-19th century. Historical accounts, including those of British officer Walter Roper Lawrence, mention



wild boar meat being a delicacy among Dogras and Sikhs. Sajad Ahmad, another farmer from the area, said, “They come at night in groups and destroy entire patches. We’ve started putting up

temporary fences, but it’s not enough.”

With the sowing season already delayed due to erratic weather, farmers fear the crop damage could severely impact their yield this year. They have appealed to the district administration and the wildlife department for immediate intervention.

Wildlife Warden for North Kashmir, Intesar Suhail, acknowledged the reports but said the department has limited options. “Wild boars move in flocks and are difficult to control. Farmers should adopt community-based nurseries so that they can collectively monitor and protect their crops,” he advised.

The affected communities are now urging authorities to deploy protective measures and provide compensation for the damages, warning that if the issue persists, it could lead to significant agricultural losses in the district.

Indian Army Holds Lecture on Drug Abuse and Narco-Terrorism in Reasi

REASI: In a continued effort to raise awareness about the rising threat of drug abuse and narco-terrorism, the Indian Army organized a special lecture session in the remote village of Shikari in Reasi district.

The session, attended by local youth and community members, focused on educating participants about the harmful consequences of drug addiction on individuals and society. Army officials, in collaboration with medical professionals, discussed the physical, psychological, and social impact of substance abuse, while encouraging the adoption of a healthy and disciplined lifestyle.



Participants actively engaged in the discussions, seeking guidance on preventive strategies and rehabilitation options. The initiative also highlighted the critical role that families, educators, and the wider society must play in addressing this growing menace.

A spokesperson from the Army said the initiative is part of broader social welfare efforts aimed at empowering local communities through education and awareness. “The Indian Army remains committed to building a drug-free, healthy and prosperous society,” the spokesperson stated.

Such outreach programs reinforce the Army’s dedication not only to national security but also to the welfare and upliftment of the local population.

Indian Army Conducts Medical Patrol in Azmatabad, Rajouri to Aid Remote Villagers

Rajouri, May 6: In a continued effort to provide essential healthcare services in remote areas, the Indian Army conducted a medical patrol in Azmatabad village of Rajouri district, Jammu and Kashmir. The initiative aimed to deliver basic medical support and raise awareness about common illnesses and preventive health practices among the local populace.

During the patrol, Army medical personnel interacted with residents, including the Sarpanch, Panches, and villagers, offering free health check-ups and distributing medicines. A total of 132 individuals—43 men, 37 women, and 52 children—received medical consultations and treatment during the outreach.

A lecture was also held to highlight the importance of personal hygiene, nutritious eating habits, and maintaining a balanced lifestyle to enhance overall well-being in the community.

Given the difficult terrain and limited access to regular healthcare, the initiative was met with great enthusiasm and gratitude from villagers. Residents appreciated the Army’s genuine outreach and shared suggestions to further improve local livelihoods.

The event not only provided much-needed healthcare but also reinforced the bond between the Army and the people—strengthening the relationship between the Jawan and the Awam. The Army’s continued commitment to public welfare in inaccessible areas stands as a testament to its service to the nation.

Public advisory issued for Civil Defence Mock Drill

JAMMU/SRINAGAR: To enhance Civil Defence preparedness for emergencies, a Civil Defence Mock Drill is being conducted on May 7, 2025 (Wednesday) at 4:00 PM across Jammu and Kashmir.

“To enhance the Civil Defence preparedness for emergencies, a Civil Defence Mock Drill will take place on Wednesday, May 7, 2025 at 4:00 PM. As part of the drill, sirens will be activated at various locations in UT. This is a practice exercise to test our emergency response systems.

We kindly request all members of the public to remain calm and not be alarmed. Your cooperation is essential in making this safety initiative a success,” a public advisory issued by Office of the Director Civil Defence & SDRF reads.

BJP Lal Chowk Holds Workers’ Convention at Rajbagh

SRINAGAR: The Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) Lal Chowk Constituency on Monday convened a Workers Committee Meeting at Rajbagh, witnessing active participation from senior leaders, office bearers, executive members, and grassroots workers.

As part of the party’s organizational fortification drive, Shakti Kendra units were formally constituted during the meeting. Each unit has been tasked with finalizing its respective booth-level teams and appointing a dedicated Mann Ki Baat Incharge to ensure wider outreach of Prime Minister Narendra Modi’s monthly radio programme at the grassroots level.

Addressing the gathering, BJP senior leader and Lal Chowk constituency in-charge, Er. Aijaz Hussain, emphasized the need for discipline, structure, and team spirit. “Our strength lies in our structure and sincerity. With teamwork, discipline, and people-centric efforts, we will deliver on the expectations of the people,” he said.

BJP Vice President of the Minority Morcha, Amarjeet Singh, also addressed the workers and lauded their commitment. He urged them to remain steadfast in promoting the party’s vision of inclusive development and national unity.

Lal Chowk Constituency President, Umer Shafi, thanked the attendees for their participation and called on the cadre to redouble their efforts in strengthening the party’s presence at the booth level.

The meeting concluded with a reaffirmed commitment to unity, grassroots empowerment, and strategic readiness for upcoming electoral and organizational challenges.

Bandipora Admin, 14 RR Organises Blood Donation Camp

BANDIPORA: Bandipora district administration in collaboration with District Hospital Bandipora and 14th Rashtriya Rifles (RR) organised a Blood Donation camp at Sonerwani on Tuesday wherein more than 22 units of blood was donated by the volunteers.

An official spokesperson said the camp was organised under the theme “Donate Blood, Save Lives – Be a Hero in Someone’s Story Today.”

He said the event aimed to encourage voluntary blood donation and raise awareness about its life-saving importance. The medical team of the Army, along with doctors and paramedical staff from Sub-District Hospital (SDH) Bandipora, coordinated the drive.

Officials from the civil administration and Army personnel actively participated and donated blood during the camp.

Speaking on the occasion, Medical Superintendent of District Hospital Bandipora, Dr Masrat, said such initiatives play a vital role in meeting the emergency blood requirements of patients. He urged more people to come forward and donate blood, calling it a noble and safe act of service to humanity.

Dr Masrat further informed that more such camps would be organised in the coming months and expressed gratitude to all donors and volunteers for their participation.

Illegal Mining Suspected in Collapse of Under-Construction Footbridge at Shadipora

BANDIPORA/GANDERBAL |: An under-construction footbridge connecting Shadipora in Bandipora with Latti Gujd Roshan in Ganderbal collapsed into the Jhelum River late Monday night, triggering fresh concerns over unregulated sand mining in the area. Fortunately, no injuries were reported as the incident occurred during night hours.

The bridge—long awaited by locals—had been under construction since 2014 and was reportedly close to completion. The structure was meant to improve inter-district connectivity and ease access for hundreds of villagers.

Early Tuesday morning, the Executive Engineer of the Sumbal Division visited the site to assess the damage. He told Kashmir Convener that while the exact cause of the collapse is yet to be determined, illegal sand extraction in the vicinity could have compromised the structural integrity of the bridge.

“Unregulated mining can significantly weaken riverbanks and foundation supports. Though the final cause is subject to investigation, illegal mining may have contributed to the collapse,” he said.

Residents, who have waited nearly a decade for the bridge, expressed anger over the lack of proper oversight and delays in construction. They are now demanding a time-bound inquiry and immediate reconstruction of the bridge under stricter monitoring.

Local voices also emphasized the need for stringent action against illegal mining operations along the Jhelum, warning that continued neglect could endanger more lives and infrastructure in the region.



Altaf Bukhari Holds Workers’ Meeting in Hajin, Slams Harassment of Apni Party Cadre

Hajin, Bandipora |Jammu and Kashmir Apni Party President Syed Mohammad Altaf Bukhari on Monday convened a workers’ meeting in Hajin, Bandipora to review grassroots-level issues and express solidarity with his party cadre, who he claimed are facing harassment.

“My workers are being harassed, and I won’t let anyone do that. I came here to hear their grievances and sufferings, and to tell them that Altaf Bukhari stands with them,” he said while addressing the gathering. The meeting saw enthusiastic participation from local workers and functionaries, who highlighted several organizational and public concerns.

Bukhari also launched a scathing attack on traditional political parties, accusing them of misleading voters with false promises and emotional slogans during the recent assembly elections. “It’s been months since the formation of the government, yet major public issues remain unresolved,” he said.



He condemned the recent terror attack in Pahalgam, terming it a cowardly attempt to disrupt peace and development. Expressing deep sorrow over the incident, he extended condolences to the bereaved families and urged authorities to ensure justice.

Senior party leaders including Apni

Party Senior Vice President and former Cabinet Minister Ghulam Hassan Mir, District President Syed Shaffat Qazmi, and Sonawari Constituency In-charge Imtiyaz Parry also addressed the meeting. They reaffirmed the party’s focus on public welfare, development, and strengthening grassroots democracy.

Eight Vehicles Seized in Srinagar Night Raids Over Illegal Mineral Transport

BILAL HABIB

Srinagar: In a decisive action against illegal mineral transportation, the Department of Geology and Mining,



Srinagar, in coordination with local police, seized eight vehicles during late-night raids in different parts of the city.

The crackdown, supervised by District Mineral Officer Dr. Mohammad Saleem, was carried out in Khanyar, Parimpora, and Qamarwari areas. Officials said the seized vehicles were transporting minerals without valid e-challans, violating established legal protocols.

“These vehicles were operating in complete disregard of regulations, and penalties will be imposed before their release,” said an official from the department while speaking to Kashmir Convener.

The raids were part of an ongoing campaign aimed at curbing illegal mining and ensuring strict compliance with mineral transport regulations. The department reiterated that only minerals procured from authorized sources and transported with valid e-challans (Form A) from the official portal will be allowed.

Officials also issued stern warnings to individuals and entities involved in unauthorized mining, cautioning that violators will face stringent legal consequences. The department affirmed that such enforcement drives will continue to preserve the ecological balance and uphold the law.

Retired Education Officer Pushvinder Singh Bali Honoured for Promoting Communal Harmony in Tral

PULWAMA: In a heartwarming display of communal harmony, retired Zonal Education Officer and respected trade union leader Pushvinder Singh Bali has been widely lauded for his generous act of granting road access to a local Muslim graveyard in Saimoh, Tral. The gesture, which addresses a long-standing community need, has touched hearts across the Pulwama district and beyond.

Mr. Bali, son of Jager Singh and a native of Saimoh, Tral, voluntarily provided a pathway through his land to ease access to the community graveyard—an act that has become a symbol of unity, compassion, and interfaith respect.

Prominent local figures, including



former BJP District President Pulwama Mohd Lateef Bhat, former District General Secretary Mohd Shafi Wani, and former Tral Constituency President Farooq Ahmad Wani, visited Mr. Bali to personally thank him for his noble initiative.

“This act exemplifies true brotherhood

and coexistence,” said Mohd Shafi Wani. “Pushvinder Singh Bali has set a shining example of empathy and unity in a time when such values are most needed.”

Community members echoed similar sentiments, describing the move as a powerful gesture that fosters interfaith cooperation and addresses a vital need in the area.

Mr. Bali’s action is being hailed not only as a practical solution to a local problem, but also as a meaningful step toward building bridges between communities. His selfless deed has earned him the admiration of people from all walks of life and stands as a testament to the enduring spirit of unity in Jammu and Kashmir.

Editorial



Gaganyaan

India's ambitious human spaceflight mission, Gaganyaan, has officially entered its final phase. With the first crewed flight now scheduled for the first quarter of 2027, the country stands at the cusp of becoming the fourth nation to independently send humans into space. The announcement by Union Minister Dr. Jitendra Singh on Tuesday marks a defining milestone in India's journey from launching satellites to preparing astronauts. What makes Gaganyaan exceptional is not just its technological complexity but its economic sensibility. At a fraction of the cost incurred by traditional space powers, India is preparing to launch its astronauts into orbit using an entirely indigenous ecosystem—from rockets to recovery systems. As Dr. Singh rightly pointed out, the mission exemplifies India's ability to achieve "maximum results with minimum expenditure." The successful completion of the first Test Vehicle Abort Mission (TV-D1) and the preparations for the second (TV-D2) later this year, along with planned uncrewed orbital flights, reflect ISRO's methodical and safety-focused approach. The Human-rated LVM3, crew and service modules, and the Crew Escape System are undergoing rigorous final testing. The Indian Navy's involvement in recovery operations further illustrates the multi-agency coordination driving this national effort. Gaganyaan is more than a space mission. It is a bold statement of India's technological maturity, policy foresight, and strategic ambition. With astronauts already trained in Russia and undergoing mission-specific preparation in India, the nation is not only building hardware but nurturing human potential. The benefits are already tangible—spinoffs in robotics, materials science, medicine, and electronics are fueling innovation across sectors. Crucially, this mission is democratizing the Indian space sector. Following key reforms, startups and private industry are now part of the Gaganyaan ecosystem, contributing to components, software, and systems. It has become India's mission, not just ISRO's, creating jobs, building skills, and inspiring young minds. As India looks toward establishing a space station by 2035 and landing an Indian on the Moon by 2040, Gaganyaan is the first giant leap. It symbolizes not just a scientific achievement but a reassertion of India's capability to shape the future of space exploration on its own terms. The countdown to 2027 has begun—not just to a launch, but to a new chapter in India's tryst with the stars.

BOOK REVIEW



Aasif Ahmad Shah

The book by Amitav Ghosh, 'In an Antique Land', is a beautifully written piece in which he explores human connection, displacement, and the fragility of cultural memory. He also emulsifies two seemingly disparate narratives. One is Amitav's ethnographic Journey in Egypt's rural part during the 1980s and also the historical quest to trace the life of Bomma, who is a 12th-century enslaved Indian and whose imprints survived in the Geniza documents of Cairo. This book by Amitav is not a simple one; it transcends the boundaries of anthropology, memoir, boundaries of genre, toughness in fieldwork, and Historical detective work into a well-defined narrative which is intellectually rigorous and emotionally resonant. Amitav's fictional writing is filled with respect for everybody's daily life. This book encourages a reader to think about the history, personal identity, and global connections like trade, migration, and the lasting effects of post-colonialism- all these are interwoven deeply.

The book fundamentally is a meditation on the fluidity of human experiences. Amitav, who is a product and an anthropologist trained mainly in the West, arrives in the villages 'Lataifa' and 'Nashawy' of Egypt, who is both an outsider and curious about the new area and who has a Scholar's discipline with rich experience of methodology and approach, but not with the context of the socio-political dynamics of villages of Egypt. Interaction of Amitav Ghosh's with Villagers figures like with Abu Ali, Introspective Ustad Mustafa, and the young restless energetic guy Nabeel reveals a world of different experiences and hardships like of religion devotion of people in Egypt, economic difficulties and how it produces the various types of emotions and attachments, and a cautious hospitality of the people towards the strangers' suspicious hidden motives. Entering any field can be challenging, and Amitav effectively illustrates this complexity. He emphasises that acquiring information is not a straightforward process; it involves more than mere "observation and experimentation" by the researcher. Instead, those you interact with—your conversational partners—act as anthropologists themselves. They

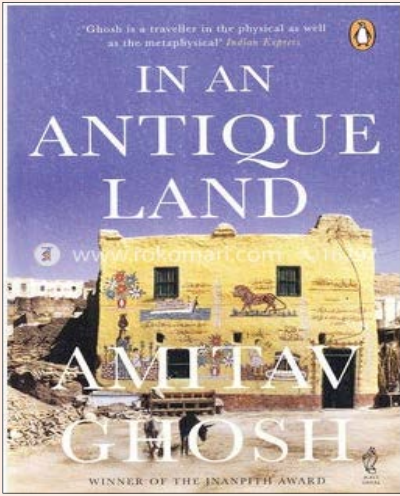
In The Shadows Of Memory: A Sociological Reading Of 'In An Antique Land'

experiment with you, influencing how you interpret their responses and the information they provide. It is through this collaborative engagement that they allow you to observe and understand their lives and insights. Amitav does not romanticise rural life, but he portrays it with an Anthropologist's precision and a novelist's empathy, and he is capturing the tensions between the present modernity and the old tradition., Community life and individual aspirations. His identity as a non-muslim Indian temporary sojourner becomes a way of seeing and a lens through which he navigates these relationships, constantly negotiating the power dynamics inherent in his role as Observer and participant.

Ghosh reconstructs the story of Bomma from fragments of medieval correspondence between a Jewish Merchant, Abraham Ben Yiju, and his associates. Bomma, an enslaved or freedman, is a marginal presence in the records. Ghosh imbues him with life and imagines the journey of Bomma from India to the Middle East within the vibrant cosmopolitanism of the Indian Ocean trade. This has been a world where religious and cultural boundaries are not rigid. Still, they are flexible and are integrative, where jews, Muslims, and Hindus collaborated in commerce and coexisted in shared spaces. Ghosh's evocation of this era is meticulous, drawing on archival evidence to paint a picture of a pre-modern globalised world that feels distant and eerily familiar. Yet the sparseness of Bomma's record—a name, a few references—underscores the precariousness of subaltern voices, preserved only by chance and revived through Ghosh's imaginative labour. The past, characterised by its flexibility and integration, bears little resemblance to the current political dynamics, which lean towards nationalism. The stark difference between Egypt in the 1980s and its ancient past prompts contemplation on how colonialism and modernity have disrupted traditional cultural integration and varied identities.

If we take Sociological insight, this book, 'In an antique land,' offers a profound commentary about identity as a relational and historically contingent phenomenon. In the medieval Indian Ocean, identities were not fixed as we witness now; networks of mobility and trade shaped them. This book shows us that in medieval times, figures like Bomma and Ben Yiju were flexible and adapted to multiple roles, such as merchant, enslaved person, and ally. Modernity and post-colonialism have significantly altered Egypt's historical adaptability and integrity dynamics. Post-colonial structures, such as the nation-state,

religious orthodoxy, and global economic disparities, shape the experiences of the Egyptian villagers that Ghosh encounters. These factors contribute to a decreased acceptance of multiculturalism compared to the pre-colonial era. The villagers create a nar-



row lens through which they view Ghosh, which is marked by suspicion regarding his Indianness and secular demeanour. This scepticism reflects how post-colonialism has surfaced their definitions of inclusivity and exclusivity, highlighting the increasing polarisation of differences—a legacy of colonial divisions compounded by contemporary geopolitical tensions. This shift illuminates the concept of "Othering." In this context, the "Othering" is less about social, political, or economic hierarchies and more about Ghosh being suspected as an untrustworthy source of information, thereby limiting his chances as a participant observer. This form of "Othering" indicates that individuals are classifying him as an ally of the imperialist country or someone aligned with extractive interests.

One significant sociological theme in the book is the interplay of memory and storytelling. Much like the written accounts in Bomma's life story, the oral histories of the people from Egyptian villages serve as fragile repositories of collective identity that are at risk of being erased by modernisation and globalisation. Ghosh's conversations with the villagers uncover a deep-seated attachment to local traditions about their socio-economic sustainability. However, these traditions are under pressure as young men like Nabeel are drawn to the Gulf's economic opportunities and aspire to migrate for

work, which exemplifies the unwritten stories of many who are the same as him. Similarly, Bomma's narrative endures primarily through the accidental preservation of the Geniza, which poignantly highlights how much human history can be lost over time. Ghosh's storytelling blends meticulous scholarship with creative narrative, which acts as an act of resistance against this erasure, offering a means to reclaim the agency of those who live on the margins.

Despite its brilliance, the book is not without its shortcomings. The readers who are not accustomed to scholarship will not be able to understand the context of the book; this book is not for everyone; many may find the wording easy, but will not be able to under the contextual relationship among the paragraphs. Another thing is that Ghosh has mainly highlighted the male voices in the book, which can be perceived as against not taking the gender dynamics at the surface. Additionally, the emotional resonance of Ghosh's departure from Egypt feels somewhat understated, leaving certain aspects of his journey unresolved. This unresolved thing can also be a good thing because it can bring curiosity to the reader or help the science develop, but many don't like this; they feel that what they have read is incomplete. His romanticised view of medieval Egypt's multiculturalism tends to oversimplify the historical complexities involving class, religion, and servitude. According to scholar Javed Majeed, there appears to be a lack of dialogic depth in the exchanges between Ghosh and his informants.

The book 'In an Antique Land' by Amitav Ghosh is a remarkable work that encourages readers to perceive the world through a kaleidoscope of perspectives. It offers a blueprint for navigating diverse regions and emphasises the significance of connections in our global landscape. The text highlights the persistence of bias in research, despite being undesired in scholarly inquiries, as illustrated in the written texts of Research methodology. Additionally, the book profoundly explores themes such as identity, power, and memory. It is an invaluable resource for readers engaged in research and fieldwork, particularly those collecting primary data.

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THE PATH OF POISON

Danish Ashraf Khan

A drug, a trap, a deadly game,
It hides in dreams but brings only shame.

The light of life faded away,
Even a mother's prayer began to stray.

Friends walked off, bonds were torn,
In rivers of tears, all hopes were gone.

One puff, one sip, one wrong turn,
The world turned cold, with no concern.

The hand that once walked by your side,
Now says, "You're lost, I won't abide."

Body weak, face pale, eyes full of pain,
Even the soul cries, again and again.

A mother waits at her broken door,
"Bring him back, O Lord," she prays once more.

But before he could rise, it was too late,
Addiction had sealed his cruel fate.

Yet there is time, don't let it waste,
Turn back now, make life a better place.

Danish Ashraf, hear this call,
You can rise again, you won't always fall.

Life is a gift, dreams can still shine,
Break these chains, your soul can align.

Choose the light, let darkness go,
You've got the strength — let the whole world know.

Poet can be reached at
Khandanishashraf506@gmail.com



IF SHE IS

By Qaiser-e-Shokin

- If she is the painting, then I'm the painter
- If she is the poem, then I'm the poet
- If she is the moon, then I'm the sun
- If she is the soul, then I'm the body
- If she is the heart, then I'm the vein
- If she is the art, then I'm the artist

- If she is the melody, then I'm the song
- If she is the flame, then I'm the fire
- If she is the wish, then I'm the desire
- If she is the rain, then I'm the ground
- If she is the lost, then I'm the found
- If she is the breath, then I'm the air
- If she is the dream, then I'm the prayer

Satish Sharma conducts surprise visit to MD RTC, Director, FCS&CA, Kashmir offices

Reviews records, interacts with staff

SRINAGAR: In an endeavour to ensure transparency and accountability, Minister for Food, Civil Supplies & Consumer Affairs, Transport, Science & Technology, Satish Sharma, conducted a surprise inspection of offices of the Managing Director's Road Transport Corporation (RTC) headquarters and Director, Food, Civil Supplies & Consumer Affairs, Kashmir here today. During the visit, the Minister reviewed operational and administrative records to assess compliance with government norms and efficiency in service delivery. He also interacted with the staff, encouraging open dialogue about their

roles, challenges and suggestions for improvement. The Minister assured full support from service enhancement measures.



The officers and officials present at the RTC office briefed the Minister on key operational aspects, ongoing projects and the government for modernizing the SRTC and improving public transport services across the state.

While interacting with the Director, FCS&CA, Kashmir, the Minister was given a brief about the activities being undertaken by the Department in order to ensure hassle-free deliverance of food grains and other civil supply services to the public. "The objective of today's visit was to understand the ground realities and ensure that the departments are functioning smoothly and in the best interests of the public," said the Minister. "It is essential to maintain a culture of accountability and I commend the staff for their cooperation and dedication, he maintained"

Dy CM reviews performance of J&KKVIB, JKPCC

SRINAGAR: Deputy Chief Minister, Surinder Kumar Choudhary, today chaired a meeting to review the performance of Jammu & Kashmir Khadi and Village Industries Board (J&KKVIB) and Jammu and Kashmir Projects Construction Corporation (JKPCC) at Civil Secretariat Srinagar.

The meeting was attended by Commissioner Secretary Industry & Commerce Vikramjit Singh, CEO J&K KVIB Jagdish Chander, senior officers from the Board and district officers. In the review meeting of KVIB, the concerned official gave a PowerPoint Presentation to apprise the meeting of the functioning besides the physical and financial achievements of the Board.

It was apprised that there are three main schemes being implemented by the KVIB including PMEGP, JKREGP and SFURTI. It was further informed that the main objective of all the schemes is to generate employment opportunities, to foster a strong rural economy, enhance socio-economic status of rural artisans and promote environment friendly and sustainable development in Khadi or Micro Industrial Sector. Highlighting achievements of the boards, the official informed that 19444 males and 13689 female have been provided benefits under PMEGP whereas 4010 males and 937 females were provided benefits under JKREGP to promote entrepreneurship in J&K in

last six years. Besides, 8 cluster projects have been approved under

of the units in order to maximise their gains. Commending the Board's



SFURTI scheme. It was also informed that under JKREGP, 1637 cases have been sponsored, out of which, 1148 have been sanctioned. It was further informed that 115 bee keeping training camps have been organised by KVIB in Kashmir division.

Addressing the officers during the meeting, Surinder Choudhary, who is also the Chairman of KVIB, emphasized on the need of active engagement of all stakeholders to amplify employment opportunities across the Jammu & Kashmir.

He reiterated the importance of making these employment generation programmes inclusive, ensuring equal opportunities for all segments of society, particularly marginalized communities, women and individuals with disabilities.

The Dy CM emphasised upon the officers to simplify the process of establishment of income generating units under such programmes for all.

He maintained that the applicants should be provided training for better management

efforts in employment creation across J&K, he urged the officers to adopt a robust monitoring and evaluation framework to guarantee target-oriented implementation of schemes. He stressed the importance of aligning all activities with the overarching goals and objectives.

Surinder Choudhary also highlighted the need for synchronized efforts by the implementing agencies and banks to ensure that the benefits of employment generation programmes such as PMEGP and JKREGP reach the target population effectively.

The Dy CM asked the Board to ensure convergence with other departments and establish forward and backward linkages with the skill training so as to provide end-to-end assistance and required handholding to the job seekers and young entrepreneurs.

Later, the Deputy Chief Minister convened a meeting with senior officials of Jammu & Kashmir Projects Construction Corporation (JKPCC) to review its functioning and issues being faced by the Corporation.

Javed Rana visits GMC Rajouri; meets Ghani Bus accident victims

RAJOURI: Minister for Jal Shakti, Forest, Ecology & Environment and Tribal Affairs, Javed Ahmed Rana, today visited the Government Medical College



(GMC) Rajouri to enquire about the health of the passengers injured in the tragic bus accident that occurred at Ghani in the Mendhar area.

During his visit, the Minister interacted with the injured patients and assured them of all possible support for their treatment and speedy recovery. He directed the Medical Superintendent and the hospital staff to provide the best possible medical care and extend every necessary assistance to the victims.

The Minister was accompanied by Additional

District Development Commissioner Rajouri, Dr. Raj Kumar Thapa, along with other district and sectoral officers.

Expressing deep concern over the rising number of road accidents in the Pir Panjal region, the Minister called for urgent and concrete measures to enhance road safety.

He emphasised the need to improve road infrastructure across the hilly and accident-prone areas. He asked for strengthening driver training and licensing systems, strict enforcement of traffic regulations, regular inspection of commercial and passenger vehicles, launch of targeted public awareness campaigns on road safety and detailed data analysis of past accidents to identify and address key risk factors.

Later, the Minister met with various public delegations at Dak Bungalow, Rajouri, and listened to their issues and concerns.

He issued on-the-spot directions to the concerned officers for time bound redressal of genuine public grievances.

Javid Dar meets delegations; assures prompt redress of public concerns

SRINAGAR: Minister for Agriculture Production Department, Rural Development Department and Panchayati Raj, Javid Ahmad Dar, today met with various delegations at Civil Secretariat to assess and address their issues and concerns.

The Minister, while assuring them of prompt resolution to their concerns, emphasised the government's commitment towards addressing the needs and issues of the people.

The Minister took stock of representations from different deputations and individuals taking note of their demands and grievances.

He assured the delegations that their concerns would be addressed on priority basis.

The Minister reiterated that the government is committed to take all necessary measures to fulfil the desires and aspirations of the people. He emphasized the importance of effective implementation of policies and programs to ensure the well being and prosperity of the citizens.

Javid Dar said that the government would work tirelessly to resolve the concerns and issues raised by the delegations.

DC Srinagar assesses ongoing TB control efforts at grassroots level

SRINAGAR: In order to assess ongoing Tuberculosis control efforts and to acknowledge the significant strides made towards TB elimination at the grassroots level, a comprehensive review meeting on National Tuberculosis Elimination Programme (NTEP) cum felicitation ceremony recognizing the achievements under the TB Free Panchayat initiative for the year 2024, was held under the Chairmanship of Deputy Commissioner (DC) Srinagar, Dr. Bilal Mohi-ud-Din Bhat at the Meeting Hall of the DC Office Complex, here.

Speaking on the occasion, DC acknowledged the commendable efforts of the Health Department and other stakeholders, appreciating the dedication

shown by the teams at various levels.

Dr Bilal also sought a renewed commitment from all participants to sustain and accelerate the momentum towards TB elimination, ensuring continued



collaboration and support at all levels of governance and healthcare delivery in Srinagar District.

DC further underscored that the achievement reflects the collaborative efforts of

the District administration, Health, Panchayat level staff and community health workers in combating Tuberculosis at the grassroots level.

On the occasion, a detailed and insightful presentation outlining

attained the status of TB Free Panchayat under the Silver category for two consecutive years, marking a significant public health milestone.

Furthermore, the chair was apprised of the current diagnostic infrastructure and emphasized the critical need to strengthen it further.

The demand was specifically requested to consider the provision of additional NAAT (Nucleic Acid Amplification Test) machines to the district to enhance the rate of upfront NAAT testing, enabling faster and more accurate TB diagnosis, which in turn would facilitate the initiation of timely treatment and contribute to the broader goal of TB elimination.

ECI initiates interactions with Political Parties to strengthen electoral process

SRINAGAR: In continuation to the Election Commission of India's emphasis on fostering enhanced engagement with different stakeholders, it has initiated interactions with National and State political parties.

These interactions would provide a long-felt need of constructive discussions which enable National and State Party Presidents to share their suggestions and concerns directly with the Commission.

This initiative aligns with the Commission's broader vision of further strengthening the electoral process in accordance with the existing legal framework with all stakeholders.

Earlier, a total of 4,719 all-party meetings have been conducted including 40 meetings by CEOs, 800 by DEOs and 3879 by EROs engaging over 28,000 representatives of various political parties.

ACR Kishtwar inspects civic/road infrastructure from Kuleed Chowk to Saffron Development Park

KISHTWAR: In line with the directions of Deputy Commissioner Kishtwar, Rajesh Kumar Shavan, the Assistant Commissioner Revenue (ACR) Kishtwar, Idrees Lone conducted a comprehensive inspection of works from Kuleed Chowk to Saffron Development Park, Berwar.

The inspection primarily focused on critical civic infrastructure and road inspection including pothole repairs and drain maintenance. The ACR issued clear directions to the GREF team to expedite pothole-filling operations and ensure timely desilting of drainage channels to prevent waterlogging and ensure smooth commuter movement, especially in light of various upcoming Yatras including Shree Machail Mata Ji Yatra 2025. The ACR also reviewed ongoing measures to curb encroachments along the route, emphasizing the importance of maintaining unhindered access to public infrastructure. He called for coordinated efforts among departments to safeguard public assets and uphold the convenience and safety of the general public. The ACR was accompanied by Tehsildar Kishtwar Nirbhay Sharma, RDD officials and GREF Team besides other concerned staff.



Team of Tourism, Revenue, PWD, Forest depts conduct spot visit

JAMMU: In line with the Chief Minister's directions regarding promotion of tourism infrastructure in Jammu province and periodical review by Atul Duloo, Chief Secretary, a joint team of officers from Tourism, Revenue, PWD and Forest Departments conducted on spot visit to assess the site's potential for development of an adventure Hub at Aithem near Surinsar lake in Jammu district.

The team was led by Aijaz Qaiser, Joint Director Tourism, Jammu.

The site has already been recommended by the experts from the Indian Institute of Mountaineering & Skiing Gulmarg for Paragliding.

The visit was intended to develop Aithem as an adventure Hub for various adventure activities besides exploring the option of recreational and leisure tourism in addition to

its suitability for paragliding.

In order to speed up the planning process and its subsequent execution, Commissioner Secretary Tourism, Yasha Mudgal, has directed the field officers to take the line departments and stakeholders on board during the planning phase of every project so that infrastructure blends with the natural surroundings, adhering to eco-friendly development norms. The adventure Hub will come up as a major attraction site for the nature lovers, bird watchers, star gazers and adventure enthusiasts. The project will have state of the art facilities like eateries, public conveniences, Sunrise and Sunset points and Yoga platform.

Pertinently, the department of tourism has already trained a batch of 23 paragliders in P1, P2, P3 levels in collaboration with NIMAST Training Institute, Seppa, Arunachal Pradesh.

Vikas Gupta, Director Tourism Jammu, has taken up the matter with the Atal Bihari Vajpayee Institute of Mountaineering and Allied Sports, Manali, for imparting advance courses in paragliding (P4 & SIB) to the same set of 23 paragliders so that they can be eligible for their certification as tandem pilots.

To assess the site from a technical perspective including wind speed, wind direction and the gradient of the take-off point, the trained paragliders took-off solo test flights for the first hand experience and assessment. Their valuable insights on the infrastructure and interventions required to enhance the site's appeal and safety were also sought.

The team also assessed the site to include Zip-line and para motoring activities alongside projects besides setting up of a state of the art paragliding project.

SHEW Mission Shakti organises awareness programme at Dunaroo Keller

SHOPIAN : With an aim to empower women through knowledge and access to government welfare initiatives, Sankalp Hub for Empowerment of Women (SHEW) Mission Shakti Shopian today organized a comprehensive awareness programme at the Dunaroo Keller ST area.

During the programme, participants were thoroughly sensitized about a range of welfare schemes aimed at improving the socio-economic status of women and girls.

Detailed awareness was provided on various central and UT-sponsored welfare schemes designed for the upliftment of women and marginalized communities. The team explained the eligibility conditions for availing different schemes and guided participants on the documentation required for smooth application processes.

Essential helpline numbers, including women helpline services and emergency support

were encouraged to take up entrepreneurship and were informed about financial



contacts, were shared to ensure timely assistance in distress situations.

The functioning and support services of the One Stop Centre were discussed, including legal aid, counselling, temporary shelter and police facilitation. Information was also disseminated about government-sponsored skill training programmes to enhance employability and self-sufficiency among women. On the occasion, women

assistance, subsidies, and mentorship available under various schemes.

Emphasis was laid on the importance of women's health, and the right to quality education for girls, along with details of health and scholarship schemes. The programme also covered social security benefits, including widow, divorce and old-age pensions, and financial assistance available under marriage support schemes for economically weaker sections.

Two days Pre-Lok Adalat concludes at Budgam

BUDGAM: In connection with the upcoming 2nd National Lok-Adalat scheduled on 10th May, District Legal Services Authority (DLSA) Budgam successfully concluded 02 days Pre Lok Adalat on Tuesday.

The said Pre Lok Adalat was held under the directions and supervision of O.P Bhagat, Chairman DLSA (Ld. Pr. District & Sessions Judge) Budgam and under the guidance of Nusrat Ali Hakak, Secretary DLSA Budgam. The two days Pre-Lok

Adalat was scheduled for the amicable settlement/ compromise of pre-litigation matters (PHE, BSNL etc) at ADR Centre, Budgam for which one bench was constituted which was presided over by Nusrat Ali Hakak (Secretary DLSA) and was assisted by Javid Ahmad Mir, Deputy LADC.

Overall 1395 Pre-Litigation matters were taken up by the said bench, out of which a maximum number of cases got settled and the said Pre Lok Adalat was very successful.

6th Marshal of the Air Force Arjan Singh Memorial Hockey Tournament Concludes in Chandigarh

Chandigarh: The 6th edition of the Marshal of the Air Force Arjan Singh Memorial Hockey Tournament concluded on Monday at the Raghbir Singh Bhola Hockey Stadium, Air Force Station Chandigarh.

The week-long tournament, held from April 29 to May 6, featured twelve competitive teams, including Air Force hockey teams and participants from two foreign nations.

Air Marshal PK Ghosh, Air Officer-In-Charge,

Administration, presided over the closing ceremony as Chief Guest and felicitated the winners.

In a closely contested final match, Indian Railways emerged victorious over Rail Coach Factory, Kapurthala, winning 3-1 in a penalty shootout following a 2-goal tie. Atuldeep was adjudged Man of the Match, while Amritpal Singh was declared Player of the Tournament.

The Chief Guest presented trophies, medals, and cash

awards of 3,00,000 to the winners and 2,00,000 to the runners-up. The event also honoured prominent international hockey players for their contribution to the sport.

The tournament commemorates the legacy of Marshal of the Air Force Arjan Singh, DFC, a celebrated war hero and passionate hockey enthusiast, who continues to inspire generations of air warriors both on the field and beyond.

PART-II

Snow Flames: A Metaphysical and Existential Cartography of Majrooh Rashid’s Poetic Vision



SHABEER AHMAD LONE

The Gospel of Time

Time is a viewless chariot,
racing
from the Beginning,
constantly
along the highway,
lending to absolute stillness;
covertly passing by us,
who are lost in contemplation
of being and nothingness.
It takes along:
the fog in our minds,
scent that wafts out from the human hearts,
waking dreams
denied to the seeing eyes,
ultimately sinks them into oblivion,
at the end of dark tunnel.

(Inspiration: Naseer Ahmad Nasir's poem)

Prof. Majrooh Rashid's "Snow Flames" distills Kashmir's spiritual and existential anguish into global resonance. "Hope" mirrors Agha Shahid Ali's poetic defiance-life blooming amidst desolation and stands as resilient like Dickinson's winged metaphor. "Darvesh" channels Rumi's mystical arc: from ecstasy to inner illumination and whirls in Blakean spiritual fire. "A Soliloquy" recalls Eliot's The Waste Land-memory's weight and time's erosion and mourns with Ghalibian introspection. "Hemlock" invokes Socratic martyrdom, echoing Neruda and Darwish-where words risk death but redeem truth a Luminous, timeless cartography of the soul. These verses, rich in Sufi, classical, and modern echoes, universalize the Kashmiri soul's cry: poetry as resistance, remembrance, and renewal.

A Soliloquy
All my life,
stay busy
clearing the mind
of the debris
from the broken promises
and crumbling hopes,
gathering it
in the worn out palms
I went by the riverside,
buried it under the slopes of the great River.
And you,
you are there,
stuck in the past,
unaware of the brilliant present,
soon it will be all history.
Will sink into oblivion
second by second.
Hemlock
Last poetic lines
If only I were Socrates
I would drink the words
gladly
draught by draught.

Memory in M. Rashid's poetry is not nostalgic reminiscence but an existential tethering to being itself. In poems such as "Mother's Sermon" and "On Father's Day," loss is neither sentimentalized nor overcome; rather, it becomes the very site where absence calls forth the deepest forms of presence. This sensibility places M. Rashid in profound dialogue with Czeslaw Milosz, who wrote: "Our memory is our coherence, our reason, our feeling, even our action. Without it, we are nothing." Rashid's recovery of tenderness through remembrance is not a retreat but an affirmation-an existential act that redeems the fleeting into the luminous.

Pain, far from being an accidental intrusion, becomes in poets's vision the very forge of authentic selfhood. In "Pain Scented the Air" and "Celebrating Barrenness," suffering emerges as a spiritual alchemy, mirroring Nietzsche's intuition that "one must still have chaos in oneself to give birth to a dancing star." Majrooh Rashid neither wallows in pain nor romanticizes it; he recognizes, with Rumi, that "the wound is the place where the Light enters you." Pain, distilled through the poetic process, becomes not a dead weight but a sacred burden-a cross carried in the hope of resurrection. His flames do not destroy but purify, recalling Schuon's assertion that "to suffer in the world is to participate, however obscurely, in the universal mystery of purification."

In Snow Flames, Prof. Majrooh Rashid fuses Kashmiri mystic and revolutionary traditions, weaving snow and flames into a living symbol of silent longing/endurance. In a sense like the Sufis, he reveals inner burning beneath stillness, while his voice, defiant yet tender, carries the timeless hope of renewal and transcendence.

In his mystical poems such as "The Ladder of Mystery" and "Road to Light," Majrooh Rashid maps the arduous ascent of the soul toward the Real, yet his mysticism is stripped of escapism. As Whitman proclaimed, "I believe a leaf of grass is no less than the journey-work of the stars," so poet finds the sacred within the immanent, insisting that the ladder to heaven must be constructed with acts of compassion on earth. The "Road to Light" is paved with ethical awakenings, small fidelities to truth, beauty, and justice, rather than grandiose mystical flights. His vision recalls

Muhammad Iqbal's call for a dynamic, self-affirming spirituality wherein the ego (khudi) is not annihilated but perfected in service to the Divine.

Majrooh Rashid's later poems-"Who am I?", "The Cosmic Path," "Black Hole," "My Poems," and "Typo"-move deeper into philosophical and ontological terrains. "Who am I?" voices the fundamental existential cry, the anguished questioning that Heidegger captures in Being and Time when he speaks of Dasein's burden of existence. Rashid's self becomes a question mark inscribed against the infinite, an echo of Whitman's eternal query: "What is the grass?" "The Cosmic Path" charts the journey of the soul across the galaxies of meaning, risking the dark abysses of

that timeless fellowship of souls-Darwish singing amid ruins, Milosz memorializing imperilled beauty, Whitman embracing the cosmos within a blade of grass, Eliot plumbing the burnt-out ends of modern days.

Majrooh Rashid's poetry offers no facile redemption, no utopian assurances; rather, it gifts us something rarer: the courage to dwell within the paradoxes of existence without losing wonder, the wisdom to embrace transience without capitulating to despair, and the faith to recognize, with Rumi, that "where there is ruin, there is hope for treasure." In his incandescent verses, the ephemeral is transfigured into the eternal, sorrow becomes a deeper form of praise, and the burning of the heart



despair while bearing the secret hope of arrival. "Black Hole" warns of the self's implosion into egotism and nihilism, a chilling affirmation of Camus' warning that the only serious philosophical question is whether life is worth living. Yet Majrooh Rashid's answer, like Camus', is a defiant yes-not through naïve hope but through courageous fidelity to beauty and truth.

In a sense Snow Flames mirrors Einstein's "theory of eternity" by collapsing time into a poetic simultaneity-where memory, loss, and longing coexist as luminous presences. Like Einstein's timeless universe, Majrooh Rashid's verses transcend temporal borders, turning snow and flame into symbols of enduring inner truths. The collection becomes a lyrical echo of eternal now-philosophical, mystical, and profoundly human.

"My Poems" and "Typo" reveal a profound humility before the mystery of language and being. Rashid's acknowledgment of himself as a "typo" in the cosmic manuscript resonates with Eliot's lament in Four Quartets that "every attempt / is a wholly new start, and a different kind of failure." Yet it is precisely through this recognized imperfection, this holy unknowing, that Rashid's poetry finds its luminous authenticity. Like Hafiz's cupbearer, he staggers but does not fall; he sings, albeit hoarsely, from the depths of the tavern of existence.

Prof. Majrooh Rashid's "Snow Flames" and later works thus emerge not only as a chronicle of individual sensibility but as a profound cartography of the human condition itself-its agonies, aspirations, bewilderments, and triumphs. In weaving the delicate textures of snow with the consuming urgency of flame, he joins

becomes the dawning of true light. His is a poetry of witness and wisdom, elegy and awakening, brokenness and beatitude. In a time thirsting for depth, M. Rashid reminds us that the soul's true home is not found in the vanquishing of suffering, but in its transmutation into love, vision, and song. And so, like snow flames melting into the fire of unseen suns, his words continue their quiet, inexhaustible work-rekindling the ancient human hope that even amidst the ash and ice, the soul may yet rise, luminous, whole, and free.

"Snow Flames" marks a luminous addition to the growing canon of Kashmiri English literature. That it springs from the pen of a discerning critic, gifted storyteller, and multilingual poet only deepens its resonance. It not only offers a path to personal transformation, but also nurtures a deeper connection with the self, nature, and the world.

In sum, Snow Flames is a luminous contribution to contemporary poetry, offering readers a rich tapestry of metaphysical and existential themes. Its introspective depth and stylistic fineness invite readers into contemplative space, reflecting the complexities of the human experience/condition. It is a work that deserves enduring recognition, and I wish both the book and its author every success on this meaningful journey.

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Continued From P1...

India's Water

"For taking big decisions and achieving objectives, it is important to give primacy to national interest and believe in the capability of the country," he said.

"For decades, a counterstream prevailed in the country. There was a time when, before taking a big decision, it was thought, 'what would the world think? Will we get votes or not?' And decisions and big reforms languished due to such reasons," Modi said.

He said the country does not move forward like this and it advances when the basis of decisions is 'Nation First'.

In the last decade, India has moved forward with this mantra, and the results are there for all to see, he said.

"Our government has taken decisions which had been languishing and did not see the light of day due to a lack of political willpower," he said.

Modi said direct benefit transfer weeded out 10 crore fake beneficiaries, saving Rs 3.5 lakh crore. (Agencies)

J&K set

In Jammu and Kashmir, the Directorate of State Disaster Response Force (SDRF) and Civil Defence Kashmir has issued a public advisory notifying residents of the scheduled mock drill.

According to the advisory, the drill will begin at 4:00 PM on Wednesday, and sirens will be activated as part of the exercise.

It urged residents not to panic, and to cooperate fully with officials during the simulation. "This is a practice exercise to test our emergency response systems. Please remain calm and do not be alarmed," reads the official notice issued by the SDRF & Civil Defence Kashmir.

"To enhance the Civil Defence preparedness for emergencies, a Civil Defence Mock Drill will take place on Wednesday, May 7, 2025, at 4:00 PM. As part of the drill, sirens will be activated at various locations in Kashmir. This is a practice exercise to test our emergency response systems. We kindly request all members of the public to remain calm and not be alarmed. Your cooperation is essential in making this safety initiative a success," the Directorate of SDRF and Civil Defence Kashmir stated in another public advisory.

Authorities across all states and the union territories have been instructed to ensure active public participation. Students, hospital staff, government and private sector employees, railway and metro officials, and members of the police, paramilitary, and defence forces will be part of the exercise.

The MHA has said that the civil defence framework is an important component of national preparedness, especially given "new and complex threats."

It stated that such drills improve the passive defence strategy and help safeguard civilian lives and infrastructure.

Officials have also been directed to ensure communication systems are tested, bunkers are cleaned, made accessible and designated personnel are familiar with evacuation procedures.

The government said that the civil defence drill is part of a broader initiative to improve grassroots-level readiness and empower local communities to respond effectively to emergencies.

Meanwhile, Srinagar Police, in collaboration with the Tourist Police and State Disaster Response Force (SDRF), conducted a mock drill in Dal Lake on Tuesday to strengthen emergency response capabilities.

Simulating rescue operations for boat capsizing and drowning incidents, the exercise was held to improve real-time response to such emergencies.

The drill followed recent boat accidents due to high velocity winds, resulting in death of a youth.

Senior officers, including SSP Enforcement and SSP Srinagar, monitored the exercise

War Has Long-

Karra told reporters in response to a question. Asked about the security forces' anti-terror actions in the Valley, including the detention of people and demolition of houses of terror associates, Karra asked the government to be cautious and ensure no innocents were harmed in the process.

"We have already said that it is for the government to decide how to run this process. But we have also advised it to approach with caution and take care that no innocents are harmed," he said.

About the government's decision to enumerate caste in the next census exercise, Karra said it was a matter of pride for the Congress as it was Rahul Gandhi who "forced the government's hands" into taking the step.

"The cabinet's approval for caste census is a matter of pride for the Congress. We are happy that it was because of the consistent hard work of Rahul Gandhi that the government was forced to approve the caste census," he said. (Agencies)

CM Omar launches

Officer, NIC J&K and other concerned. The outstation officers and officials attended the launch via video conferencing.

The Chief Minister formally inaugurated the portal and congratulated the Finance Department, AG's office, J&K Bank and all stakeholders involved in the initiative.

Chief Minister said, "Whatever we can do to simplify the retirement process and post-retirement of our employees, I think that is a responsibility that lies on our shoulders. Employees who have served J&K and its people for long years, they deserve a simplified process. And the more we do for our employees, I think the more we need to appreciate it."

Extending his congratulations to the officers and his best wishes to all pensioners who will benefit from the initiative, the Chief Minister said that verification of pensioners also needs to be made pensioner-friendly as every year pensioners have to prove that they are still alive and have to submit various documents and to visit offices in person. "So this initiative, I think, is something that all employees will appreciate," he said.

Highlighting the inclusive nature of the portal, he

said it also covers ex-legislators who are pensioners. "So my suggestion would be that together with the Assembly Secretariat, some sort of briefing material can be sent out to all the ex-legislators, so that they are aware of this change and how better to utilize it," he added. Acknowledging the challenges faced by employees nearing retirement, he noted that the last few months of service are often consumed by paperwork. He emphasized that more often than not, efforts are made to post such employees close to Srinagar or Jammu to ease their transition. "With this initiative, I believe that process will be simplified. Now, going ahead, what we must always try and do is to ensure that employees get their dues on time," he said.

The Chief Minister also pointed out that timely disbursement of dues—such as GP fund—is a recurring concern among employees. "So for that, in the Finance Department, we are working closely to ensure that these sort of issues are resolved. But generally, clearly, the initiative that has been taken today, I think, is a welcome one," he remarked.

Earlier, Director General Accounts & Treasuries Fayaz Ahmad Lone presented an overview of the Pension Suvidha Portal. The portal supports the digitization of pension records for 2,40,000 pensioners under the Old Pension Scheme (OPS). He added that data collection was executed through multiple modes: treasury visits for 2,31,127 pensioners, home visits for 7,002, video calls for 1,819 pensioners residing abroad, and postal notices to 9,513 individuals. The portal captures comprehensive data including name, date of birth, service details, and photographs of pensioners.

Notably, he said, the initiative has helped identify and rectify several anomalies, including pension disbursement after death in some cases, duplicate dearness allowance payments, and premature cessation of recoveries.

He informed that the objectives of the portal include streamlining and digitizing pension processing, enhancing efficiency and transparency, reducing paperwork, reconciling pension disbursement with banks, and enabling real-time tracking of pension application status.

Key features of the portal include early SMS and email alerts issued eight months before an employee's retirement, online application submission with required document uploads, and integration with JKHRMS and JKPaysys for service and salary details. It is also linked with the offices of the Accountant General and J&K Bank for seamless electronic data exchange.

The portal facilitates the issuance of PPOs, provides post-retirement services tracking, and supports online KYC updates and the use of Jeevan Pramaan for life certificate submission.

The streamlined workflow involves eight stages: registration, application submission by the employee, DDO review and approval, sanction by the Pension Authority, submission to the AG's office, authorization and PPO number issuance, payment processing by the Treasury, and final completion.

The portal engages a wide range of stakeholders. Retiring employees can initiate and monitor their pension cases, while DDOs and Pension Authorities are responsible for verification and processing. The Accountant General's office authorizes PPOs, treasuries handle payments, and pensioners can view disbursement details, request for revision, and apply for transfer of pension accounts online.

On the occasion, the Chief Minister also handed over a settled pension case to Ragubhir, a retired employee who superannuated on 30th April this year.

Govt extends

bid to ensure no eligible citizen is left behind, the Department of FCS&CA has been directed for undertaking identification and inclusion of previously omitted eligible beneficiaries into the PDS framework, adhering to established norms.

"A notable provision of the order addresses the inclusion of widows and divorcees who were not previously covered under the system. Upon notifying the department, such individuals will be eligible for issuance of separate ration cards based on their financial status and eligibility under the National Food Security Act (NFSA)", the Minister emphasised.

The Minister further said that the initiative reaffirms the government's commitment towards promoting inclusive access to food and essential supplies, especially among vulnerable sections of society.

Amid tensions, Army,

and panic among the people living in the frontier areas. "For 12 consecutive nights, 53 incidents of small-arms fire and mortar shelling have been reported in villages across Kupwara, Baramulla, Poonch, Rajouri, and Akhnoor," an official told KNO.

Residents, rattled by the constant sound of gunfire, are fleeing to safer areas or fortifying their homes and bunkers. "We live in constant fear. Every night, we hear the sound of shells landing near our homes," said Farooq Ahmad, a resident of Uri.

"I don't know how long we can stay like this. Our children are scared to even sleep," added Shabir Ahmad from Poonch.

The escalating violence, coupled with the severed India-Pakistan diplomatic ties, have heightened anxieties about a potential military escalation. "We're caught in the middle. No one seems to care about the people who are suffering here," said Rukhsana Begum, a resident of Rajouri

For first time people

Pertinently, the Ministry of Home Ministry had on Monday directed the Chief Secretaries of all the States and Union Territories to strengthen civil defence preparedness in vulnerable areas and districts.

A letter written by the Additional Director General (ADG) Civil Defence, which is in possession of KNO reads: "The issue of strengthening of civil defence set up and maintaining optimum civil defence preparedness in the categorized CD towns/districts at States/UTs has been emphasized by the Prime Minister and

the Union Home Minister during their address at the 'Chintan Shivir', held at Surajkund, Haryana on 27 & 28 Oct 2022."

Pahalgam attack ‘

Kulgam, Owaisi said an inquiry should be conducted to ascertain the circumstances that led to the death, stating that he has read the statements of his relatives in the media

India, UK seal

PM Starmer to India soon."The agreement follows Commerce Minister Piyush Goyal's visit to London on April 28. While talks were initially expected to conclude by April 29, discussions extended into May, reflecting the complexity and scale of the negotiations. The FTA comes after a nine-month pause in talks, which resumed in February. The agreement is expected to boost trade volumes, simplify market access, and open new opportunities for businesses in both nations.

CS pushes

initiatives including Kisan Credit Cards (KCC), and skilling interventions undertaken through Rural Self Employment Training Institutes (RSETIs) established in the UT.

While reviewing the current status of population coverage under these schemes, the Chief Secretary also took stock of the compliance on earlier directions issued to financial institutions. He directed the concerned agencies to ensure saturation of all identified unbanked rural centres before the stipulated deadline of June this year.

Stressing on the need for prompt and efficient claim settlements, Dulloo observed that the success of these social security schemes should be judged not merely by the number of beneficiaries enrolled, but also by the speed and effectiveness of claim settlements.

He emphasized that financial institutions must instill confidence in public by providing full assistance in processing and settling their genuine claims, and proactively reaching out to families, especially in case of the death of insured members, to ensure timely support.

To ensure the schemes reach the most deserving, the Chief Secretary directed for the inclusion of Self Help Group (SHG) members registered with JKRLM and their families under all applicable social security schemes. He also instructed for coverage of registered building and construction workers under Atal Pension Yojana, with the premium to be borne by the Building and Other Construction Workers Welfare Board here.

Dulloo also called for formulation of a focused strategy to enhance credit flow under the priority and MSME sectors, ensuring that all banks meet the targets assigned to them. He also enquired about the progress in rolling out the 'Gramin Credit Score' system for agricultural lending on the lines of the CIBIL score used for individual borrowers.

The Chief Secretary also reviewed IT-enabled financial interventions such as the distribution of RuPay Debit Cards under PMJDY and Smart Cards for KCC beneficiaries. He assessed progress made in designing loan products to promote High-Density Plantation, rural homestays, and properties identified under the Svamitva Yojana.

Further, he sought an update on the Credit Grievance Redressal Portal, being developed for the convenience of all bank customers in the UT. He was informed that the portal is ready for launch and will soon be made operational to facilitate efficient resolution of customer grievances.

During the meeting, Principal Secretary, Finance, Santosh D. Vaidya, highlighted the noteworthy performance of J&K Bank, stating that it had achieved an 11% year-on-year growth in its business, significantly reduced its Non-Performing Assets (NPAs) to 3.37%, and brought down its cost-to-income ratio to 58% from the earlier 71%. He appreciated the bank administration for these achievements and termed the performance as satisfactory and commendable.

Managing Director, J&K Bank, Amitava Chatterjee, also shared important statistics on the implementation of social security schemes across the UT. As the lead bank and Convener of UTLCB, he detailed the bank's efforts to popularize financial inclusion schemes and expand credit outreach to the priority sectors.

He pointed out that the latest statistics clearly reflect significant improvement over the figures presented in the previous review meeting held under the chairmanship of the Chief Secretary. He pointed out that the UT has recorded significant strides in financial inclusion and social welfare coverage as per the performance data for various centrally sponsored schemes thereby highlighting the growing participation of citizens and strong involvement by banking institutions here.

In its presentation the Convener UTLCB, Rayees Maqbool revealed that J&K currently hosts 2,197 brick-and-mortar bank branches in addition to 5,135

Banking Correspondents (BCs) and a network of 2,661 ATMs operated by 37 banks and financial institutions ensuring that one banking touch point is available per 1,227 of population.

The meeting was apprised that efforts are underway to fully cover the remaining 21 URCs identified by RBI here under tier 5 areas (population under 5,000) with banking touch points. It was given out that 150 additional Gram Panchayats are scheduled to be covered by May 15, 2025, by J&K Bank.

Regarding the implementation of Pradhan Mantri Suraksha Bima Yojana (PMSBY), an accident insurance scheme for citizens aged 18–70 years saw 6.04 lakh enrollments during FY 2024–25; reaching the cumulative coverage of 23.57 lakh beneficiaries in the UT.

About the performance J&K Bank had registered 2.29 lakh accounts, SBI (1.27 lakh), and HDFC Bank (39,096) with 285 claims settled with Rs. 5.69 Cr disbursed during the year.

With respect to Pradhan Mantri Jeevan Jyoti Bima Yojana (PMJJBY) offering life insurance for citizens aged 18–50 years an impressive number of 2.47 lakh new enrolments were done during the previous financial year with cumulative coverage reached 9.67 lakh and settlement of 668 claims with Rs. 13.34 Cr disbursed during the previous financial year.

Atal Pension Yojana (APY) targeting unorganized workers also registered an significant progress with 24,230 new account openings, cumulatively reaching 2.48 lakh accounts since inception.

As far as the priority sector lending is concerned under the Annual Credit Plan 2024–25, J&K's banks collectively achieved 92% of the credit disbursement target, totalling Rs. 36,575 Cr. J&K Bank emerged as the top contributor, surpassing targets at 139% for physical targets and 134% in credit volume. The Micro, Small, and Medium Enterprises (MSME) sector absorbed Rs. 22,688 Cr, accounting for 62% of priority sector lending. A total of 2.96 lakh accounts were supported with J&K Bank leading the table with Rs. 5,537 Cr disbursements in this sector.

The meeting was informed that the agriculture sector too received focused attention with Rs. 6,430 Cr disbursement out of a target of Rs. 11,056 Cr, achieving nearly 58% of the set goal.

Under PM Mudra and PM Vishwakarma Yojana aiming at empowering the entrepreneurs as on March 31, 2025 substantial disbursements were made under Shishu, Kishor, and Tarun categories providing support to small entrepreneurs, women, and youth-led micro businesses

It was added that under PM Vishwakarma Yojana, growing traction was observed across various trades. The RSETI performance in skilling of rural masses (since 2009) depicted training of 1,07,672 trainees, and starting of 78,059 ventures (72.5%), and nearly 50% beneficiaries availing bank credit to start their respective enterprises.

Defence pacts with India being amended, says Maldives

MALE: The Maldives on Tuesday said existing defence agreements with India are being amended to ensure they do not compromise the Maldives' sovereignty and independence, media reports said here.

Defence Minister Mohamed Ghassan Maumoon



also told Parliament members that 74 Indian soldiers stationed in the Maldives, who were repatriated under an agreement reached with India last year, were unarmed while in the Maldives.

Maumoon's statements come days after Maldivian President Mohamed Muizzu, during a marathon 15 hour press conference, said that there is nothing to worry about the agreements signed by the previous government with other countries, including with India.

Muizzu's comments had drawn criticism from the opposition leader who demanded his apology for making "false claims" during the 2023 election campaign regarding the pacts with nations such as India.

On Tuesday, while answering questions raised by

Parliament members, Maumoon said, the agreements formed with India as part of long-standing close ties between the two countries had been amended or is being amended "to ensure that they protect the sovereignty and independence of Maldives," according to a report in newsportal edition.mv.

The Public Service Media (PSM News), the state-run news agency, quoted the minister as saying that since the Maldives gained independence in 1965, more than 100 agreements were signed with India and of those, the defence ministry oversees four.

One of the key agreements under review pertained to the development of a naval dockyard at Uthuru Thilafalhu with Indian assistance, the PSM News said.

Ahead of the 2023 election and when it was in opposition, the People's National Congress (PNC) led by Muizzu, had criticised aspects of the Uthuru Thila Falhu agreement, claiming that certain provisions conflicted with national policy.

The minister said such clauses are now being amended, but did not share further details, edition.mv said.

Citing confidentiality clauses, the minister said the agreements and their amendments could not be made public but said he would disclose them if formally the parliament's Committee on National Security Services requested it.

The Maldives and India witnessed a downturn in bilateral ties since pro-China president Muizzu assumed office in November 2023. Within hours of his oath, he had demanded the withdrawal of Indian military personnel from his country.

Subsequently, the Indian military personnel were replaced by civilians in a mutually agreed manner between March and May 10.

On Tuesday, while addressing questions regarding Indian military personnel in the Maldives, Defence Minister Maumoon confirmed that no Indian forces were currently stationed in the country.

"Of the 71 Indian personnel previously deployed, all have been repatriated following bilateral discussions, with the final contingent departing on 9 May 2024. Indian soldiers had not carried weapons while stationed in the Maldives," the PSM News quoted the minister as saying.

The minister also clarified that the Indian military presence had been limited to providing operational support for Dornier aircraft and helicopters operating under India's assistance programme, he said, adding, "The withdrawal was a necessary step to ensure national sovereignty remains uncompromised."

Earlier on Saturday, Muizzu, during his marathon press conference, said he was working in line with his pledge to disclose the military agreements and blamed delays on confidentiality issues.

"Bilateral discussions are ongoing. There are no issues. However, we are trying to disclose through the bilateral discussions since I made a pledge. There are no concerns," he said.

Prior to the 2023 elections, Muizzu's PNC had expressed concerns over the agreements signed with other countries, especially India, by the previous Maldivian Democratic Party (MDP) government.

Soon after on Saturday, former foreign minister and opposition MDP chief Abdulla Shahid criticised Muizzu, saying the people of the Maldives and India deserve an apology for his false claims over the pacts during the 2023 election campaign.

"Muizzu won the 2023 presidential election on the back of a campaign that claimed these agreements threatened our sovereignty and territorial integrity," Shahid posted on X.

"That narrative has now collapsed under his own words.

The people of Maldives and India deserve an apology and a serious accounting for the harm caused."

NOTICE

i have lost the marks certificates of Three Years Bachelor's Degree at GDC Bandipora, issued by University of Kashmir under registration No 3100-BPB-2012. Now i want to apply for the duplicate of the same. Anybody having objection in this regard may file the same before the Concerned office at University of Kashmir within seven days from the date of publication of this notice. No objection will be entertained thereafter.

Ovis Ahmad Wani
S/O Bashir Ahmad Wani
R/O Onagam Bandipora
Regd No 3100-BPB-2012

JMC team seizes huge stocks of banned Polythene material in Rajiv Nagar

JAMMU: In a major crackdown on the illegal storage and distribution of banned materials, the Jammu Municipal Corporation (JMC) seized approximately 40 metric tonnes (40,000 kg.) of polythene from the Narwal area, specifically from a warehouse located along Rajiv Nagar Road, late Monday evening.

The operation was led by the Corporation Commissioner Devansh Yadav, who was present at the site along with a dedicated team of municipal officials. A truck fully loaded with polythene was discovered parked at the warehouse, alongside a substantial quantity of polythene stored inside the premises.

The team also uncovered a large stock of gutka packets during the raid.

Given the magnitude of the seizure, police personnel and administrative officials were called to the scene to support the operation. The team carried out a thorough inspection of the premises, including registers and equipment found within the warehouse.



Commissioner Yadav stated that the seized polythene appears to be single-use plastic, which is banned. However, the material will be sent to the Pollution Control Committee for laboratory

analysis to confirm its composition. "By appearance, it seems to be single-use polythene, but we will wait for lab results to confirm," he added.

He further mentioned that individuals present at the warehouse fled the scene upon seeing the JMC team. Investigations are now underway to identify the persons involved in the storage and intended distribution of the polythene. Authorities are also looking into the origins of the consignment and its intended recipients.

"The police will investigate who owns the warehouse and to whom this polythene was being supplied. Strict action will be taken against those found responsible," Commissioner

Yadav affirmed.

This action underscores JMC's commitment to enforcing environmental regulations and curbing the use of banned plastic materials within city limits.

"I think if you look at his overall performance, he's been able to be a wicket taker, he's bowled a number of different roles for us and he's been able to mix and match depending on who's selected in the team