



NATIONAL CONFERENCE ON COLD WATER FISHERIES

Under PM's leadership, J&K rises as India's top trout producer: LG Sinha

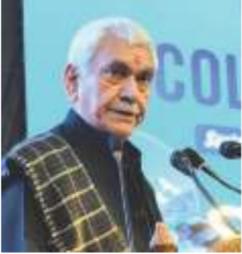
Expresses gratitude to Gol for integrated Aqua Park Project for Anantnag

Rehan Qayoom Mir

Srinagar, Mar 14: Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha on Saturday said that focussed efforts under the guidance of Prime Minister Narendra Modi have made Jammu Kashmir the top trout producer in the country.

Addressing the National Conference on Cold Water Fisheries, organised by Central Fisheries Department, LG Sinha, according to the news agency—Kashmir News Observer (KNO) said, "Under the guidance of PM Modi, our focused efforts have made Jammu Kashmir the top trout producer among India's cold-water states."

The event was also graced by Rajiv Ranjan Singh, Union



Minister for Fisheries, Animal Husbandry & Dairying (MoFAHD) and Panchayati Raj.

In his keynote address, the Lieutenant Governor highlighted the remarkable surge in fish production in the UT and infrastructure upgrades since 2020, reaffirming administration's

resolve to empower fish farmers and propel them toward lasting prosperity.

"Jammu Kashmir holds promise as a national model for integrated fisheries development. The value-chain approach will generate jobs, cut post-harvest losses, and boost fish farmers' incomes."

Our strategic initiatives have positioned J&K as the leader in trout production across all cold-water states. Under Holistic Agriculture Development Programme (HADP), launched in 2022, Rs. 233 crore was allocated for fisheries to incentivize entrepreneurship, establish hatcheries, trout farming & value-added ventures," the Lieutenant Governor said.

The Lieutenant Governor said that over | More on P6

Scale up trout production, boost farmers' income: Union Minister Singh

Announces Rs 100-crore aqua park; calls for stronger value chain, farmer cooperatives



Rehan Qayoom Mir

Srinagar, Mar 14: Calling for a major expansion of cold-water fisheries, Union Minister for Animal Husbandry, Dairying and Fisheries Rajiv Ranjan Singh on Saturday said trout production must be scaled up to enhance the income of farmers and tap growing export opportunities.

While addressing the National Conference on Cold Water Fisheries at the Sher-e-Kashmir International Conference Centre, the Minister, according to the news agency—Kashmir News Observer (KNO), announced a Rs 100-crore Integrated Aqua Park at Anantnag in South Kashmir. "The Centre is focusing | More on P6

Climate change affecting Kashmir's ecosystem: CM Omar

Calls for adopting scientific techniques to protect nature

Rehan Qayoom Mir

Srinagar, Mar 14: Asserting that climate change is affecting Kashmir's ecosystem, Chief Minister Omar Abdullah on Saturday called for adopting scientific techniques to protect nature and natural activities.

Addressing the National Conference on Cold Water Fisheries at the Sher-e-Kashmir International Conference Centre (SKICC), CM Omar, according to the news agency—Kashmir News Observer (KNO) said, "Unusual weather patterns are already being witnessed in the region. Who would have imagined Srinagar witnessing such warm weather in February? Even flowers have started blooming earlier than usual and the



Indira Gandhi Memorial Tulip Garden is ready much earlier this year."

He said scientific research, modern infrastructure, value addition and better market linkages are essential to increase production while ensuring sustainability and livelihood security for fish farmers in the region. "Science, research and innovation must guide the future growth of the sector while ensuring livelihood security for fish farmers," he added. | More on P6

J&K, Ladakh likely to rely on 30% coal energy by 2030

Riyaz Bhat

Srinagar, Mar 14: Jammu & Kashmir and Ladakh Union Territories are likely to depend on nearly 30 per cent of coal-based energy by the year 2030.

According to official documents available with the news agency—Kashmir News Observer (KNO), the likely total projected contracted capacity for the year 2035-36 is around 11,001 Megawatts (MW).

"The projected contracted capacity consists of 3239 MW from coal, 129 MW from gas, 68 MW from nuclear, 3666 MW from hydro, 2040 MW from solar, 598 MW from Distributed Renewable Energy (DRE) and 1261 MW from MTOA or STOA," it reads.

The documents reveal that the capacity shall be able to meet the projected demand with prescribed reliability

criteria. It further said that any deviations in the commissioning schedule of the planned capacity could result in a situation where the UT is unable to meet the projected peak demand and energy requirements identified with the available resources.

"Such changes may also lead to an increase in the cost of reliably meeting the UT's power demand," it reads.

In February 2025, KNO reported that Jammu and Kashmir has informed Central Electricity Authority (CEA) that it has planned an additional 2200 Megawatts (MWs) of power till 2030.

This includes nearly 1,000 MWs of coal and solar energy, with the officials saying that "Last JKPDD has already entered a Power Purchase Agreement (PPA) of coal-based power of over | More on P6

Great futures not forged by fate, but by resolve, says LG Sinha

Releases book 'Mehsoos-Stories of social transformation' in Srinagar



KT News Desk

Srinagar, Mar 14: Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha on Saturday called upon the people to introspect and contribute to social progress.

"Ask yourself: What am I doing for my community? What legacy am I building for the people? What inheritance do I

wish to leave for future generations? The answers within you will reshape our tomorrow," the Lieutenant Governor said while speaking at the release event of the book "Mehsoos-Stories of social transformation" at DIPR Auditorium, Media Complex, Srinagar. The book highlights inspiring grassroots stories of selfless

service and transformative social initiatives undertaken by volunteers of Sewa Bharti J&K and Ekal Vidyalaya Foundation of India.

"This book is inspiring chronicles for the people. I want these tales of Sewa Bharti's sacrifices, Ekal Vidyalaya's dedication, volunteers' commitment, and the | More on P6

MHA revokes NSA detention of Sonam Wangchuk

KNO Desk

New Delhi, Mar 14: The Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA) on Saturday revoked the detention of activist Sonam Wangchuk under the National Security Act with immediate effect.

The MHA in a statement, issued to news agency—Kashmir News Observer (KNO), said: "After due consideration, the government has decided to revoke the detention of Sonam Wangchuk with immediate effect."

It said that the government remains committed to providing all necessary safeguards for Ladakh.

Referring to the Ladakh situation, the MHA said, "In the backdrop of the serious law and order situation that arose in the peace-loving town of Leh on September 24, 2025, Sonam Wangchuk was detained on September 26, 2025 under

the provisions of the National Security Act (NSA) pursuant to an order issued by the District Magistrate, Leh, with a view to maintaining public order. He has already undergone nearly half of the period of detention under the said Act," it said.

The statement said that the Government has been actively engaging with various stakeholders and community leaders in Ladakh with a view to addressing the aspirations and concerns of the people of the region. "However, the prevailing atmosphere of bandhs and protests has been detrimental to the peace-loving character of the society and has adversely affected various sections of the community, including students, job aspirants, businesses, tour operators and tourists and overall economy," it said.

The statement further said that the | More on P6

'Almond Blossom' festival reflects Kashmir's heritage, spirit of renewal: CM Omar

Inaugurates online ticketing portal for gardens across J&K

Rehan Qayoom Mir

Srinagar, Mar 14: Stating that the Almond Blossom festival symbolizes Kashmir's timeless connection with nature and its vibrant cultural traditions, Chief Minister Omar Abdullah on Saturday said that Badamwari has always been a cherished part of Srinagar's heritage.

Addressing the inaugural ceremony of the 'Almond Blossom Festival-2026' here in old city, CM Omar, as per the news agency—Kashmir News Observer (KNO), said, "The blooming



almond blossoms mark not only the arrival of spring but also the spirit of renewal, hope and cultural vibrancy that defines Kashmir." He said the festival

symbolizes Kashmir's timeless connection with nature and its vibrant cultural traditions. "Badamwari has always been a cherished part of Srinagar's heritage. The blooming almond blossoms mark not only the arrival of spring but also the spirit of renewal, hope and cultural vibrancy that defines Kashmir," he said.

He said such festivals help revive historic spaces while promoting tourism and creating economic opportunities for local artisans and artists.

"Events like | More on P6

Wildlife Board urges officials to explore crop damage compensation for farmers

KNO Special Correspondent

Srinagar, Mar 14: In a significant move, the Wildlife Board for Union Territory of Jammu & Kashmir has asked officials to explore possibility of compensating damages caused to crops by wild animals.

In its 6th meeting held on December 29, 2025, the Board discussed problems faced by farmers due to wild boar, blue bull (nilgai), and monkeys damaging agricultural fields.

According to the record note of the meeting, a copy of which is in possession of

news agency—Kashmir News Observer (KNO), the Board desired that the possibility of compensating farmers for such losses be explored.

"Issues relating to damage to agricultural crops caused by wild boar, blue bull and monkeys were also discussed. The Board desired that the possibility of compensating farmers for losses caused by wild animals be explored," reads minutes of the meeting.

The meeting was chaired by Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha and was attended Minister | More on P6

MeT predicts rain, snow from today

Sajid Raina

Srinagar, Mar 14: Rain and snowfall are likely across Jammu and Kashmir from March 15 as a series of Western Disturbances are set to affect the region over the next few days, the India Meteorological Department said on Saturday.

According to the details available with the news agency—Kashmir News Observer (KNO) the Meteorological Centre in Srinagar has predicted that erratic weather conditions will continue till March 20, with intermittent rain in plains and snowfall in higher reaches.

The first Western Disturbance is expected | More on P6

Corruption can't be fought by agencies alone, citizen cooperation key: Director ACB

'We act against officials at all levels, not just lower ranks'

Rehan Qayoom Mir

Srinagar, Mar 14: Director, Jammu and Kashmir Anti-Corruption Bureau (ACB) Shakti Kumar Pathak has said that corruption continues to remain one of the biggest challenges to governance in Jammu and Kashmir, but asserted that increasing public complaints indicate rising trust in anti-corruption institutions.

He said the bureau is committed to acting on credible complaints against corrupt officials at all levels, stressing that public cooperation is crucial in tackling corruption across Jammu and Kashmir.

Speaking in an interview podcast, Director Pathak, as reported by the news agency—Kashmir News Observer (KNO), said the fight against corruption cannot be carried out by investigative agencies alone and requires active participation from citizens.

"Corruption cannot be the responsibility of one agency alone. It is the duty of the public as well. Until people decide that they do not want to be involved



in corruption, the problem will continue," he said.

Pathak said the growing number of complaints received by the ACB reflects greater confidence among citizens that their grievances will be addressed. "Normally, people approach us when they feel the situation has crossed the line. The increase in complaints is actually a positive sign that people believe action is being taken," he said.

Post-2019 framework strengthened anti-corruption system

The ACB Director said the anti-corruption system in the

region has strengthened following the 2019 reorganisation of J&K, as the vigilance framework is now aligned with national laws and institutions.

He said the bureau now operates under the national vigilance structure linked with the Central Vigilance Commission, making the legal framework comparable to the rest of the country. "In that way, the anti-corruption law applicable across India is now applicable here as well," he said.

Awareness drives to encourage complaints

Pathak said the ACB has also increased public outreach

programmes to make citizens aware of complaint mechanisms and the role of vigilance institutions.

He said the bureau organised several programmes during Vigilance Awareness Week, held around the birth anniversary of Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel on October 31, with the theme "Vigilance is Shared Responsibility".

According to him, the bureau reached nearly 50,000 people during these campaigns to explain how citizens can file complaints and how corruption cases are investigated.

ACB not biased against lower-rank officials

Responding to criticism that the ACB acts more aggressively against lower-rank officials while remaining passive against bureaucrats or politicians, Pathak said the perception is incorrect.

He explained that most trap cases involve lower-rank officials because they are typically the ones dealing directly with cash transactions. "The officers who deal directly with cash and smaller payments are usually at the lower level. That is why trap cases are more visible at that level," he said.

However, he clarified that the ACB is | More on P6

Rana directs timely completion of desilting works to ensure smooth irrigation

KT NEWS DESK

JAMMU, MARCH 14: Minister for Jal Shakti, Javed Ahmed Rana, on Saturday conducted a detailed inspection of the irrigation canal network from Belicharana to Sutchetgarh to review the progress on ongoing desilting works and assess the preparedness of the irrigation infrastructure ahead of the ensuing agricultural season.

During the visit, the Minister, as per an official statement, inspected various stretches of the canal system, including the distribution network and key syphons to evaluate the pace and quality of desilting operations.

The inspection was undertaken ahead of the scheduled recharging of canals with the objective of ensuring uninterrupted water supply to tail-end areas during the forthcoming irrigation season.

The Minister was accompanied by MLA, Dr. Gharu Ram Bhagat, Chief Engineer, Irrigation and Flood Control, Manoj Gupta, SDM R.S. Pura, Anuradha Thakur and other officers from the district administration and Irrigation and Flood Control Department.

With the irrigation and cropping seasons approaching, the Irrigation and Flood Control Department has intensified preparations to ensure that canals are thoroughly desilted and restored for smooth and efficient water flow.

These efforts aim to guarantee adequate irrigation facilities for the farmers during the crucial agricultural period.

During the inspection, the Minister directed the senior field officers to ensure that all desilting and maintenance works are completed within the stipulated timeframe so that irrigation water can be supplied without disruption to the farming community.

He informed that water is likely to be released into the canal network within the next seven days.



He emphasized that all pending desilting and repair works must be completed before the release to ensure the system remains fully functional ahead of the cropping season.

The Minister inspected several key components of the irrigation network including main Ranbir Canal at Belicharana, the canal syphon at Dharab, MRC Muraliyam, D10, D10A and the Tanda Branch at R.S. Pura.

The Minister further instructed that the silt removed during the desilting process should be promptly cleared from canal embankments and disposed of in a scientific manner so that it does not slide back into the canals or obstruct the free flow of water.

"The timely desilting and restoration of the canal network will

significantly improve water flow to agricultural fields, benefiting thousands of acres of cultivable land in the command area. This will ensure a reliable irrigation supply to farmers and facilitate timely sowing during the upcoming agricultural season," the Minister said.

He observed that regular maintenance of canals is essential to preserve their water-carrying capacity and to minimize the risk of breaches, overflow and waterlogging during peak irrigation periods and the monsoon season. Such preventive measures, he said, are vital for protecting standing crops and safeguarding agricultural lands.

The Minister added that improved canal flow also contributes to natural groundwater recharge through controlled seepage, which helps sustain the local

water table and supports long-term water security for farmers.

Taking serious notice of the dumping of waste into canals, the Minister directed the SDM RS Pura to take strict measures to prevent the practice. He stated that dumping garbage into irrigation channels leads to choking of waterways and pollutes irrigation water, adversely affecting both agriculture and the environment. He stressed that effective monitoring and public awareness are necessary to keep the canal system clean and functional.

The Minister also appealed to the public to cooperate with the authorities and refrain from throwing waste into agricultural canals, emphasizing that maintaining clean waterways is essential for efficient irrigation and sustainable water management.

Enforce timely loan repayments, adopt sound financial management practices: Yasha Mudgal

Chairs review meeting of Anantnag Central Cooperative Bank Ltd



KT NEWS DESK

JAMMU, MARCH 14: Commissioner Secretary, Cooperative Department, Yasha Mudgal, Saturday chaired a comprehensive review meeting held to evaluate the performance and operational status of the Anantnag Central Cooperative Bank Ltd. (ACCB) at the JCC Bank Rail Head Complex.

The meeting, as per an official statement, was attended by the senior officials, including Registrar, Cooperative Societies, Mohammed Shafiq Chak; Director Finance, Cooperative Department; Assistant General Manager, NABARD, Ravi Shankar Sharma; other senior officers from the department and branch heads of the bank.

General Manager, ACCB, Intikhab Hussain, delivered a detailed PowerPoint Presentation highlighting the bank's physical and financial performance. The overview encompassed key parameters such as deposit mobilization, advances, loan disbursement, liquidity management, asset quality, profitability, productivity, and human resource management. He also outlined ongoing initiatives aimed at enhancing the operational efficiency, strengthening internal controls, and transforming the bank into a financially sound, customer-centric institution with improved service delivery to members and customers.

The meeting featured in-depth discussions on the bank's overall financial health, operational challenges, and strategic priorities. Key focus areas included measures to reduce Non-Performing Assets (NPAs), strengthen

recovery mechanisms, improve profitability, and ensure long-term sustainability.

The Commissioner Secretary was briefed on various operational aspects, performance indicators, challenges encountered and proposed strategic interventions to fortify the cooperative banking framework across Jammu and Kashmir.

Emphasizing the critical importance of financial discipline, Yasha Mudgal directed the officials to prioritize robust recovery strategies, enforce timely loan repayments and adopt sound financial management practices. She instructed the concerned officers to focus on achieving the targeted financial benchmarks, particularly improving the Capital to Risk-Weighted Assets Ratio (CRAR), enhancing overall financial stability and ensure regulatory compliance.

The Commissioner Secretary further asked all the officers to work with full dedication. She reaffirmed the bank's commitment to proactive steps for boosting operational efficiency, elevating financial performance and delivering superior banking services to members and customers.

She reiterated the need to increase quality loan disbursement, modernize management systems and accelerate recovery efforts. She asked the Branch managers to expand high-quality lending while ensuring effective recovery of outstanding dues, and to implement aggressive measures to bring NPAs down to targeted levels.

GOVERNMENT OF JAMMU AND KASHMIR DIRECTORATE OF TOURISM, KASHMIR

Email: dydirectorestates@gmail.com, Tel/Fax 0914-2502279/2502281

E - Bid Document (Auction ID: 31977)

Out-sourcing of "Operation Management" of Health Club at Kokernag for a period of 03 years (extendable upto 05 years) on License Basis through GeM Portal.

No: Estates/66-B/DTK/ 91 dated 12/03/2026

For and on behalf of the Lt. Governor of J&K Union Territory, e - bids are invited online through GeM Portal for Outsourcing the "Operation Management" of Health Club at Kokernag for a period of 03-years (extendable upto 05 years) on License Basis through GeM Portal. The details are as under:

S.No	Particulars	Date/Amount	Remarks
1	PQ (Pre-Qualification) Submission Start Date	16.03.2026 10:00 AM	Nil
2	PQ (Pre-Qualification) Submission End Date	23.03.2026 04:00 PM	Nil
3	PQ (Pre-Qualification) Assessment End Date & Time	25.03.2026 04:00 PM	Nil
4	EMD Start Date	26.03.2026 10:00 AM	Nil
5	EMD End Date	02.04.2024 4:00 PM	Nil
6	EMD (Bid Security) Amount in shape of CDR/ FDR/DD	Rs. 51,000/- (Rupees Fifty One Thousand Only)	To be pledged in favour of Accounts Officer, Directorate of Tourism, Kashmir.
7	Bid Submission/Auction Start Date	03.04.2026 10:00 AM	Nil
8	Bid Submission/Auction End Date & Time	06.04.2026 4:00 PM	Nil
9	Reserve Bid Amount	Rs.5,15,000/- (Rupees Five Lakh and Fifteen Thousand Only)	Nil
10	Bidding Time Extension	Not Applicable	Not Applicable

The e-auction shall be finalized by the Outsourcing Committee under the Chairmanship of Director Tourism, Kashmir. Reliable/resourceful and experienced agencies/persons, who fulfill the **ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA (PRE QUALIFICATION)** detailed as under shall only be eligible to participate in the e - bidding process.

PRE -QUALIFICATION (PQ) CRITERIA (TO BE UPLOADED ON GEM PORTAL)

- The bidder should be a domicile of J&K and shall upload a valid domicile certificate.
- The bidder shall have to upload a Character Certificate from the concerned Additional Dy. Commissioner (ADC) / Police Station or alternatively copy of a valid PASSPORT.
- The bidder shall have to upload self-attested PAN Card & Aadhar Card.

DIPK-11901/25
DATED: 14-03-2026

Sd/-
Dy. Director Tourism Estates

Government of Jammu & Kashmir OFFICE OF THE EXECUTIVE ENGINEER PWD(R&B) DIVISION ANANTNAG

NIT NO 173 OF R&B/Anantnag/2025-26 /E-TENDERING/ 13964-73, DATED 12-03-2026

For and on behalf of the Lt. Governor, Union Territory of J&K e-tenders are invited on %age basis from approved and eligible Contractors registered with J&K Govt. CPWD, Railways and other State/Central Governments for each of the following works:-

S. No	Name of Work	Estimated Cost (Rs in Lacs)	Cost of T/Doc. (in Rs)	Earnest Money (In Rs)	Time of Completion	Major Head of Account	Class of Contractor
1.	Construction of lane from H/O Ab Rashid Pushoo to H/O Gh Rasool Dar at Reshi Colony Anantnag	1.45 Lacs Contract Price exclusive of GST: 1.23 + (18% GST Amount 0.22)	200	2900/-	15 Days	District Capex Budget (CDF) 2025-26	DEE Class & MSME's Only
2.	Construction of lane from H/O Bashir Ahmad Sheikh to main road Reshi Colony Anantnag	2.46 Lacs Contract Price exclusive of GST: 2.09 + (18% GST Amount 0.37)	200	4920/-	15 Days	District Capex Budget (CDF) 2025-26	DEE Class & MSME's Only
3.	Construction of Lane from H/O Ab Rashid Siraj to H/O Masrat Ahmad Shah at Reshi Colony Anantnag	2.48 Lacs Contract Price exclusive of GST: 2.10 + (18% GST Amount 0.38)	200	4960/-	15 Days	District Capex Budget (CDF) 2025-26	DEE Class & MSME's Only
4.	Construction of lane from new Graveyard upto main road at Bangidar Anantnag	2.04 Lacs Contract Price exclusive of GST: 1.73 + (18% GST Amount 0.31)	200	4080/-	15 Days	District Capex Budget (CDF) 2025-26	DEE Class & MSME's Only
5.	Construction of Slab & Trash Guard over Existing Drain from the H/O Mohd Ibrahim to H/O Mohd Akber Mir at New Colony Hazratbal Anantnag.	1.98 Lacs Contract Price exclusive of GST: 1.68 + (18% GST Amount 0.30)	200	3960/-	15 Days	District Capex Budget (CDF) 2025-26	DEE Class & MSME's Only

Project Authority : District Development Commissioner Anantnag.
Position of AAA : Accorded vide Order No. 128 - DDCA of 2026, Dated 10.03.2026.
Position of TS : Accorded.

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

S. No.	Particulars	Dated
1.	Date of Issue of Tender Notice	From 12-03-2026 To 12-03-2026 (04:00 PM)
2.	Period of Downloading of bidder documents	From 23-03-2026 To 23-03-2026 (04:00 PM)
3.	Bid submission Start Date	From 12-03-2026 To 23-03-2026 (04:00 PM)
4.	Bid Submission End Date	To 23-03-2026 (04:00 PM)
5.	Date and time of opening of bid(online)	24-03-2026 (11:00 AM)

Bids must be accompanied with cost of tender document in shape of Treasury Challan / receipt (Under MH- 0059 PWD) in favour of Executive Engineer R&B Division Anantnag [Tender Inviting Authority] (NIT No., Name of Work/Item No., to be mentioned on the Treasury Challan / Receipt) (The Date of Treasury Challan should be between the date of Start of Bid and Bid Submission End Date) and EMD (2% of advertised Cost) in the shape of CDR/FDR/BG pledged to Executive Engineer PWD(R&B) Division Anantnag (Tender receiving Authority). (The Date of EMD(CDR/FDR/BG) should be between the date of Start of Bid and Bid Submission End Date and validity of EMD at the time of opening of Bids shall be a period of 45 Days beyond Bid Validity of 120 Days). The same EMD should not be used in more than one Tender/Bid.

1. All other terms and conditions are as same as laid in PWD Form 25.

DIPK-11861/25
DATED: 14-03-2026

(Er. Mohammad Waseem)
Executive Engineer,
R&B Division Anantnag

CS reviews proposal for campus cultural activities

Directs culture, education departments to formulate structured action plan

KT NEWS DESK

Jammu, Mar 14: Chief Secretary Atal Dulloo on Saturday chaired a review meeting to examine a proposal for extending cultural activities to schools and higher education institutions across all districts of Jammu & Kashmir, with the aim of harnessing and channelising the creative potential of the youth through structured arts-based interventions.

The meeting, convened under the aegis of the Department of Culture, was attended by senior officers of the Culture and School Education departments along with other stakeholders.

Chairing the meeting, the Chief Secretary called for a well-structured and actionable plan for attracting the young population of J&K towards arts and cultural activities. He suggested that a number of selected High Schools, Higher Secondary Schools and higher education institutions be identified and utilised as nodal centres for discovering, nurturing and giving direction to potential talent in art forms including poetry, creative writing, theatre, visual arts, painting and music.

The CS underlined the critical importance of identifying and engaging resource persons from diverse art forms as an essential prerequisite for the success of the programme. He emphasised that youth engagement through the arts is fully in consonance with



the spirit and vision of the National Education Policy (NEP) 2020, which advocates for a holistic, experiential and multidisciplinary approach to learning.

The Chief Secretary stressed that participation of youth in cultural activities must be made impactful and interactive, moving beyond passive reception to active engagement. "We need to encourage our youth to participate meaningfully in such activities. The engagement has to be impactful and interactive," he observed.

Underlining the broader significance of culture as a sector, Atal Dulloo noted that culture is a great cause of economic activity and its relevance will only grow in the age of automation and Artificial Intelligence. "Culture and the arts will

foster meaningful human existence in the age of AI. It is not just about heritage preservation, it is about building a future-ready generation rooted in identity and creativity," he remarked.

A detailed presentation on "Youth Engagement and Empowerment through Arts in Jammu & Kashmir" was made by renowned theatre personality and founder-director of Natrang, Balwant Thakur, who outlined a comprehensive, multi-phase framework for integrating arts-based interventions in educational institutions across the Union Territory.

The presentation highlighted the need for integrated arts-based interventions encompassing theatre and storytelling, music and dance and visual arts and crafts as purposeful

tools within educational processes. It underscored that art builds confidence, creativity and critical thinking, strengthens communication and public speaking skills, bridges gaps in traditional education, fosters leadership qualities through empathy and collaboration and prepares youth to compete at national and international levels.

The proposed programme outlined a three-phase implementation strategy: Phase I focused on Exposure and Awareness through formation of Travelling Art Units conducting live performances at schools, especially in underserved and remote areas; Phase II covering Identification and Capacity Building of Trainers by selecting and training serving government school teachers as Art Resource Persons; and

Phase III entailing District-Level Implementation through deployment of Art Resource Persons, formation of School Art Clubs, organisation of workshops and art camps and District and UT-level Art Festivals for talent recognition.

The Chief Secretary directed joint formulation of a detailed, time-bound plan of action, assuring that approvals would be accorded at the earliest. He advised that implementation be commenced without delay, with a robust feedback mechanism put in place to continuously improve the programme. "Start with these activities, take feedback from the beneficiaries, improve further and make it a truly impactful initiative for our youth," the Chief Secretary concluded.

JKAS Rank-2 holder shares success mantra

REHAN QAYOOM MIR

Srinagar, Mar 14: From hours of isolation with books to the pinnacle of success. Meet the new JKAS sensation from Vijaypur who opens up about the marathon journey behind her spectacular Rank-2.

young civil services aspirant Simranjeet Kaur opened up about her journey, her strategy, and her vision for the future.

Kaur said, "Honestly, it is a surreal feeling. God has been very kind. I was expecting a good result because I had put in the effort, but I was not expecting Rank-02."

She said, "The competition is very tough, so to see my name that high on the list is just unbelievable. It is a great feeling to see the pride in people's eyes because of my hard work."

"Without a doubt, my family, my father and my entire family have stood by me from the very beginning of this journey. There were moments of stress and isolation during the preparation, and they were my rock. Their belief in me never wavered, which kept me

going," Kaur said.

She further said that the preparation for an exam like JKAS is a long marathon. "There were definitely periods where I had to isolate myself from social gatherings to focus. It gets stressful when you are sitting with books for hours, not knowing if it will pay off. But you have to push through that."

On asking about her academic background and educational strategy, Kaur said that she was studying in an Army Public School. "My interest in governance and society was sparked early on. I chose Humanities up to my 12th standard, and for my graduation, I pursued Political Science. That foundation helped me understand the syllabus better."

"I believe in the combination of hard and smart work. You can study for twelve hours a day, but if you aren't utilising that time smartly, it won't yield results. Time management is crucial," Kaur said.

Continued on www.kashmirthunder.com

Police constitute SIT to probe assassination bid on Dr Farooq

KNO

Srinagar, Mar 14: Jammu and Kashmir Police have constituted a Special Investigation Team (SIT) to thoroughly probe recent assassination attempt on former Chief Minister and National Conference President Dr Farooq Abdullah in Jammu.

The SIT, comprising seven officers including one of the rank of Senior Superintendent of Police (SSP), has been formed under the supervision of the Deputy Inspector General (DIG) of the Jammu-Samba-Kathua (JSK) Range.

The team has been tasked with conducting a comprehensive investigation and submitting its findings at the earliest.

An order copy reads: "On 11.03.2026, Shri Farooq Abdullah, former Chief Minister of Jammu and Kashmir and President of the Jammu and Kashmir National Conference, was attending a marriage ceremony at Royal Park Banquet Hall, Greater Kailash, Jammu. At about 2210 hours, while the protectee was leaving the venue, an individual flashed a revolver and attempted to open fire from close range. However, owing to the prompt action



of the police personnel deployed with the protectee, the attempt was foiled. In this regard, a case FIR No. 29/2026 under Section 109 of the BNS and Section 3/25 of the Arms Act has been registered at Police Station Gangyal, Jammu."

It added that considering the seriousness and sensitivity of the case, a Special Investigation Team (SIT) comprising the following members under the supervision of the DIG, JSK Range, has been constituted to conduct a thorough investigation.

The SIT members include SSP Sanjay Sharma, SP Headquarters Irshad Hussain Rathar, DySP Arvind Kumar Sambyal, Inspector Saroop Singh, Inspector Paramjeet Singh, Inspector Sanjeev Chib (SHO Gangyal) and Inspector Shariq Majeed. The order

further states that the SIT must complete the investigation promptly and thoroughly while adhering to the statutory timeframe.

Pertinently, the assassination attempt took place earlier this week when Abdullah was attending a wedding function in the Greater Kailash area of Jammu. As he was leaving the venue, a man approached him and allegedly attempted to fire from close range using a pistol. However, the attempt was foiled as security personnel reacted swiftly and overpowered the attacker. The former chief minister escaped unhurt due to the quick response of his security staff and commandos present at the venue.

Police identified the accused as a 63-year-old man

Cross-Party leaders called on Farooq Abdullah

KT News Desk

SRINAGAR: A large number of party functionaries, legislators, opposition leaders, MLAs and people from different walks of life called on Party President Dr. Farooq Abdullah to express their good wishes following his close shave from a deadly assassination attempt. Party's Vice President and Chief Minister Omar Abdullah was also present on the occasion.

Continued on www.kashmirthunder.com

from Jammu, who was immediately taken into custody following the incident. During preliminary questioning, the accused claimed that he had been harbouring a personal grudge against Abdullah for many years and had been planning the attack for a long time.

They added that the weapon used in the attack was reportedly a licensed firearm—(KNO)

Eid marred by mutton price hike in Kashmir

Public blames Govt for spike; dealers say no official meetings held ahead of festival this year

REHAN QAYOOM MIR

Srinagar, Mar 14: With the holy month of Ramadan nearing its end and Eid al-Fitr just days away, mutton prices in several Kashmir markets have reportedly surged to nearly rupees 800 per kilogram, triggering widespread anger among consumers who accuse authorities of failing to regulate the market.

Residents from various parts of Srinagar and other districts said that the steep hike has placed an additional burden on households already grappling with rising living costs during the holy month.

"Every year, the same story repeats. As Ramadan approaches its final days and Eid draws closer, mutton prices shoot up overnight, and there is no one from the government on the ground to check the rates," said a resident from Srinagar's Bemina area. "For a middle-class family, paying Rs 800 per kilo is simply unaffordable."

Another consumer questioned the absence of enforcement teams in markets. "If the government has fixed rates or rules, why are they not being implemented? People are being forced to buy at whatever price is demanded," he said.

Many shoppers accused authorities of ignoring the issue despite repeated public complaints. "Officials



move around in vehicles and make statements, but when it comes to regulating essential food items, they are nowhere to be seen," a group of residents from downtown Srinagar said.

When contacted, Mehraj ud Din, General Secretary of the Mutton Dealers Association Kashmir, told KNO that authorities have not taken any concrete steps to address the situation.

"The government is not doing anything at all. They are sleeping over the issue," he said, adding that officials appear more active on social media rather than resolving problems affecting traders and consumers. He said the

issue of livestock transportation from Punjab has also been flagged multiple times by traders, but nothing has been done so far despite the passing of over three months.

"Trucks carrying livestock still face harassment and delays at checkpoints such as Shambhu and Madhopur, while the government has not been able to resolve the issue yet," he said.

Several other mutton dealers said that the absence of a proper regulatory framework has also contributed to the problem.

They said that after the administration scrapped the earlier Jammu and Kashmir Mutton (Licensing and

Control) Order, 1973, which allowed authorities to regulate the trade and enforce price notifications, the market has largely been left to operate without effective oversight.

"If the government really wants to control prices, they should bring a proper law or pass a bill once the elected Assembly is in place and create a clear regulatory system for the trade," a dealer said.

Another trader said the government cannot simply blame dealers when there is no clear mechanism in place. "When the previous regulatory order was removed, the government stepped back from price control. Now the market runs on supply and demand," he said.

Sources in the mutton dealers' association revealed to KNO that this is the first time in many years that no meeting was held between authorities and traders ahead of Ramadan and Eid.

"In earlier years, meetings used to be conducted at district levels to review supply and prices. Even officials at the block level, including BDOs, would coordinate with traders. But this year, no such meeting was held. It seems the government is either asleep or deliberately ignoring the issue," a dealer said.

Minister for Food, Civil Supplies and Consumer Affairs Satish Sharma did not respond to repeated calls from this correspondent—(KNO)

Police arrest drug peddler in Pulwama

KNO

Srinagar, Mar 14: Acting against drug trafficking, Police in Pulwama arrested a drug peddler and recovered charas-like substance during naka checking in Litter.

According to a statement, a police party from Police Station Litter at a checkpoint established at Rakh Litter and checking pedestrians and vehicles. During checking, a person carrying a polythene bag was seen approaching from Litter towards Rakh Litter. On noticing the police party, the person attempted to flee from the spot, however, the police team acted swiftly and apprehended the individual. During search, substantial quantity of charas-like substance was recovered. He has been identified as Nawaz Ahmad Khan son of Gull Mohammad Khan resident of Wachi, Shopian.

Accordingly, a case vide FIR No. 29/2026 under relevant section of law has been registered at Police Station Litter and investigation has been taken up.

J&K Police remains committed to its sustained efforts to eradicate the menace of drugs from society and urges the public to cooperate by sharing any information related to drug trafficking—(KNO)

101 students to reach home today from Iran

JAHANGEER GANAIE

Srinagar, Mar 14: In a significant development in the ongoing evacuation of Indian medical students from Iran, the first batch of around 101 students, including many from Jammu and Kashmir, is expected to reach India on March 15.

The first batch will depart at 1:25 AM from Zvartnots International Airport in Yerevan, Armenia, after crossing into the country from Iran. The students will travel via Dubai before reaching India.

As per the travel schedule, the flight is expected to arrive in Mumbai at around 4:15 AM, while another group will reach New Delhi at approximately 9:55 AM on March 15.

Officials said that around 90 students have already crossed into Azerbaijan, while others are currently on their way towards



different international borders as part of the evacuation route being facilitated for Indian nationals stranded in Iran.

Most of the students in the first batch belong to Urmia University of Medical Sciences, Tehran

University of Medical Sciences, and Shahid Beheshti University of Medical Sciences, institutions that host a large number of Indian medical students, particularly from Jammu and Kashmir.

However, the evacuation

schedule has faced certain disruptions. Two previously scheduled flights—one expected to reach Mumbai on March 14 and another planned for March 17—have been cancelled, leading to changes in travel arrangements and delays in the evacuation process.

Meanwhile, Dr Mohammad Momin Khan, National Vice President of the All India Medical Students Association (AIMSA), said that efforts are on to bring back all students stranded in war-hit Iran.

Students from Isfahan and Arak, who are currently staying in their respective hostels, have requested that concerned authorities, including AIMSA, raise their concerns with the authorities and expedite their relocation. They said uncertainty regarding their evacuation schedule is causing anxiety among them.

Several students from Islamic Azad University and Iran

University of Medical Sciences, including those who were earlier relocated from Tehran, have already reached Azerbaijan as part of the evacuation route, while others are still travelling towards the border checkpoints.

Another group of students has successfully reached Tabriz after travelling from Qom, where they had stayed overnight. They are now moving towards the Armenian border, from where further travel arrangements are expected to be made.

Students studying in Kerman were shifted to Qom on the evening of March 13, while those from Shiraz University of Medical Sciences are also currently stationed there and are awaiting further instructions regarding their evacuation and travel arrangements.

Continued on www.kashmirthunder.com

Union Budget FY 2026-27: A Push For India's Services Exports

Building on India's strong services export performance

Press Information Bureau

India's services sector has emerged as one of the strongest performers of the economy, playing an increasingly important role in driving growth, productivity, and global integration. According to the World Bank, the share of services in India's GDP rose to 49.9% in 2024, which is about 1.5 percentage points above the pre-pandemic average, an increase greater than the global average and the majority of developed economies. This expansion has been supported by productivity improvements driven by rapid adoption of digital technology and deeper integration of Indian firms into the global value chain.

The Union Budget 2026-27 further reinforces this trajectory through targeted tax reforms for IT services, incentives for cloud and data centres, simplified compliance mechanisms, and trade facilitation measures aimed at enhancing India's global competitiveness in services trade. It also envisions making India a global leader in services, with a 10% global share by 2047 and in order to achieve this goal, setting up of a high level 'Education-to-Empowerment and Enterprise' Standing Committee has been proposed for Viksit Bharat.

The Committee will focus on identifying high-potential services sub-sectors capable of generating growth and employment. It will also address cross-sectoral policy and regulatory issues, including standards and accreditation frameworks, and explore avenues to further expand India's services exports. The Committee will also assess the impact of AI and emerging technologies on jobs and skills, while proposing measures for AI integration in education, workforce upskilling and reskilling, AI-enabled job matching, formalisation of informal work, and attraction of global talent and skilled diaspora.

As the services sector evolves, services trade has emerged as an important contributor to India's external sector performance, with rising exports supporting overall trade growth amid changing global conditions.

INDIA'S SERVICES EXPORT PERFORMANCE AND DRIVERS

Growth and Recent Performance

India's services exports have maintained strong momentum in FY2025-26, supported by sustained global demand for Indian services. Over the period April-January 2025-26, services exports are estimated at USD 348.4 billion.

Rising Contribution of Services Sector in Economic Growth

Amid geopolitical disruptions, services exports have emerged as a critical buffer for India's external sector, helping mitigate external vulnerabilities and sustain trade stability. The increasing importance of services exports is clearly reflected in their rising contribution to overall economic activity.

Growing Share in GDP: India's services exports share in GDP averaged 9.7% during FY23-FY25, marking a notable rise from 7.4% in the pre-pandemic period, and highlighting the growing role of the services sector in supporting economic growth. This stabilising contribution strengthened further in the first half (H1) of FY26, with the share of services exports in GDP increasing to 10%, highlighting the continued expansion and resilience of India's services-led growth trajectory.

Supporting Labour Market Stability: The services sector has also emerged as a major source of employment generation. It accounts for nearly 30% of total employment. Over the past six years, the sector added nearly 40 million jobs, in the post-COVID recovery period, highlighting its role as an important labour market shock absorber.

Sectoral Drivers of Services Exports

According to the RBI's survey on computer software and information technology-enabled services (ITES), software services exports increased by 7.3% year-on-year in FY25, reflecting sustained momentum in India's digital services exports. During this period, computer services accounted for over two-thirds of India's total software services exports, while BPO services remained the most significant component of ITES exports.

This strong performance reflects the broader resilience of India's services sector, supported by the sustained expansion of software, BPM, consulting, and fintech segments, which continue to drive overall services exports. Supported by robust global demand for digital services, software services remain the largest component. It accounts for over 40% of total services exports and has expanded at an average rate of 13.5% during FY23-FY25 compared to 4.7% in FY16-FY20. Alongside this, business services exports have gained momentum in recent years, reinforcing the sector's expanding contribution to India's external sector strength. In FY23-FY25, Professional and management consulting has emerged as the second-largest contributor, growing at 25.9% and thereby resulting in increasing its share from 10.5% in FY16-FY20 to 18.3% in FY23-FY25.

Together, these segments account for over 65% of services exports, highlighting India's growing specialisation in cross-border and knowledge-intensive activities.



Budget Focus on Services Sector: A Push for the Economy

India has established itself as a global leader in software development, IT-enabled services, knowledge process outsourcing, and software-related contract R&D services. Recognising this strong global position, the Union Budget 2026-27 proposed a range of reforms aimed at supporting and facilitating the growth of the IT and IT-enabled services sector.

Boosting Cloud Services Exports through Data Centre Incentives

One of Union Budget's most distinctive initiatives is the introduction of incentives to attract global cloud service providers operating through India-based data centre infrastructure. Recognising the need to enable critical infrastructure and boost investment in data centres, the Budget proposes tax holidays until 2047 for foreign companies delivering cloud services to global clients using infrastructure located in India. In addition, related entities providing data centre services from India are proposed to benefit from a safe harbour margin of 15% on costs.

Safe Harbour Reforms for IT Services

To simplify compliance, the Union Budget proposed to consolidate software development services, IT enabled services, knowledge process outsourcing services, and contract R&D services relating to software development, under a single category of Information Technology services with a common safe harbour margin of 15.5%, while increasing the safe harbour threshold for IT services from 300 crore to 2,000 crore.

The safe harbour regime shall also be approved through an automated rule-driven process without the need for tax officer, and once opted for, IT services companies will be allowed to continue under the same safe harbour provisions for a period of five consecutive years at their discretion.

Advance Pricing Agreement (APA) Reforms

For IT services companies who want to conclude Advance Pricing Agreement (APA), the Budget also proposes to fast-track the Unilateral APA process for IT services companies, with an objective of concluding agreements within 2 years. The period of 2 years can be extended by a further period of 6 months on taxpayer's request. The facility of filing modified returns available to entities entering into an APA is also proposed to be extended to their associated entities.

Unilateral Advance Pricing Agreement (APA) Unilateral Advance Pricing Agreement (UAPA) under the Income-tax Act, 1961 refers to an agreement entered into between a taxpayer and the Central Board of Direct Taxes (CBDT) to determine, in advance, the price charged or its determination, for specified international transactions or specified domestic transactions, for a fixed period of time.

Additional Budget Initiatives for Supporting Services Sector

The Union Budget FY 2026-27 has also introduced initiatives aimed at strengthening India's services ecosystem through skill development. Some of them relate to traditional medicine, medical value travel and tourism-linked infrastructure.

Developing skilled Care givers: A strong Care Ecosystem, covering geriatric and allied care services will be built. A variety of NSQF-aligned programmes will be developed to train multiskilled caregivers combining core care and allied skills, such as, wellness, yoga and operation of medical and assistive devices. In the coming year, 1.5 lakh caregivers will be trained.

Strengthening India's Care Economy Driven by rapidly aging populations, increased life expectancy, and a rise in chronic diseases, the demand for caregivers has been increasing globally. According to ILO, plugging

existing, significant, gaps in care services could generate almost 300 million jobs. Against this backdrop, the announcements of Budget 2026-27 in developing a strong Care Ecosystem, covering geriatric and allied care services is expected to expand the pool of India's care giver professionals who can significantly contribute to this global demand.

AYUSH: As India focuses on expanding the global reach of AYUSH, the announcements in Budget 2026-27 are expected to enhance the global acceptability and recognition of these traditional branches of medicine along the lines of the massive global recognition that Yoga has achieved today. The following measures have been announced:

Setting up of 3 new All India Institute of Ayurveda

Upgradation of the WHO Global Traditional Medicine Centre in Jammu that will bolster evidence-based research, training and awareness for traditional medicine.

Upgradation of the AYUSH pharmacies and Drug Testing Labs for higher standards of certification ecosystem

Boosting Tourism: A host of measures have been announced for boosting tourism which includes the following:

Medical Value Travel: Aimed at positioning India as a global hub for medical value tourism, the government will be supporting the setting up of five regional medical tourism hubs in partnership with the private sector.

Upskilling of Guides: Launching a pilot scheme to upskill 10,000 guides across 20 iconic destinations. This initiative features a 12-week hybrid training programme developed in collaboration with the Indian Institute of Management (IIM).

Development of Archaeological Sites: Boosting heritage and cultural tourism by developing 15 major archaeological sites, including Lothal, Samath, and Hastinapur, into world-class experiential hubs. The initiative focuses on enhancing visitor infrastructure, promoting sustainable tourism, and launching a new Buddhist Circuit in the Northeast to boost religious tourism.

Focus is also on building on India's potential and opportunity to offer world-class trekking and hiking experiences.

High-Speed Rail for Tourism Connectivity: The proposed high-speed rail routes (Mumbai-Pune; Pune-Hyderabad; Hyderabad-Bengaluru; Hyderabad-Chennai; Chennai-Bengaluru; Bengaluru-Varanasi, and Varanasi-Siliguri) aims to potentially cut travel times between major business centres and culturally significant destinations.

NEW DRIVERS OF SERVICES EXPORT COMPETITIVENESS

Rising GCC Footprint

India's expanding services exports are increasingly supported by the country's emergence as a global hub for Global Capability Centres (GCCs), which grew at a compound annual growth rate (CAGR) of around 7% between FY20 and FY25. GCCs have become a key channel through which services are delivered cross-border from India. As of FY24, India hosts over 1,700 GCCs employing more than 1.9 million professionals, making it the world's largest hub for captive global operations.

Over time, GCCs have evolved from support-oriented functions into integral components of multinational firms' global operations undertaking high-value activities such as product development, AI-enabled digital services, cybersecurity, analytics, and engineering, directly contributing to India's exports of knowledge-intensive and digitally delivered services. Their expansion has been supported by India's labour arbitrage, strong physical and digital infrastructure, cost competitiveness, SEZ-linked incentives, and a vibrant startup ecosystem, all

of which enhance overall efficiency.

India's AI and Digital Ecosystem

India's growing capabilities in artificial intelligence and digital technologies further reinforce this export growth. According to the Stanford AI Index Report 2025, India ranks second globally in AI skill penetration, reflecting the availability of advanced digital talent supporting global service delivery. International organisations also highlight India's improving technological readiness, with the country rising from 48th in 2022 to 36th in 2024 under UNCTAD's Frontier Technologies Readiness Index. India additionally ranks among the leading countries in cloud infrastructure services, supported by one of the world's largest populations that can leverage a significant mass of AI developers.

Rapid growth in data consumption, cloud adoption, and AI deployment is accelerating investments in digital infrastructure, with India's data centre capacity projected to increase from around 1.4 GW in 2025 to nearly 8 GW by 2030. This expansion strengthens India's ability to deliver digitally enabled services globally. The country's rising innovation ecosystem is reflected in growing AI start-ups, venture investment, and one of the fastest growth rates in generative AI patent filing worldwide.

Global Trade Agreements Boosting Services Exports

India's expanding network of trade agreements has played an important role in strengthening market access for its services sector across global markets. These agreements provide greater mobility for professionals, and new opportunities for Indian service providers across a wide range of services.

India-UK CETA

Expanded Market Access: UK has provided comprehensive and deep market access in 137 sub-sectors in areas of India's interest such as IT/ITeS, Business Services, Professional Services, Financial, Telecom and Education services.

Easier Access for Indian Professionals: Indian professionals will benefit from simplified visa procedures and liberalised entry categories, making it easier to work in the UK. These professionals are deployed by companies to work in UK across all service sectors and those on contracts such as architects, engineers, chefs, yoga instructors, and musicians.

Agreement on Social Security: Both sides also reached an understanding during signing of the CETA to conclude an Agreement on Social Security, which will come into force at the same time as CETA. Accordingly, an Agreement on Social Security relating to Social Security Contributions has been signed by both countries on 10th February 2026. It seeks to avoid double social security contributions for employees of both countries on temporary assignments in each other's territories for periods of up to 36 months.

The Agreement on Social Security Contributions along with mobility and market access commitments in CETA is expected to enhance India-UK partnerships in the service sector, leveraging the high skills and innovative service sectors of both countries.

India-EU Free Trade Agreement (FTA)

Expanded Market Access: The EU has extended commitments across 144 services subsectors, including IT/ITeS and professional services, enabling Indian providers to expand exports and support innovation, productivity and business growth across both economies.

Mobility and Social Security Support: Facilitative provisions have also been built to facilitate mobility of Indian AYUSH practitioners to EU, mobility of Indian students to EU as well as maintain/conclude/adopt social security arrangements between India and EU member states.

India-Oman Comprehensive Economic Partnership Agreement (CEPA)

Expanded Market Access: Oman has taken commitments across 127 services subsectors, including professional services, computer and related services and audio-visual services. For the first time in any FTA, Oman has committed for a defined category of professionals, including accounting, engineering, medical, IT, education, construction and consulting services. A framework for cooperation has been put in place in the area of health and traditional medicine.

Expanded ICT Ceiling: The ceiling for Intra-Corporate Transferees (ICTs) has been enhanced from 20% to 50%, enabling Indian companies to deploy a larger number of managerial and specialist personnel.

India-New Zealand Free Trade Agreement (FTA)

Expanded Market Access: New Zealand has offered commitment across 118 services sectors. Facilitative provisions have been built in for promoting trade in Ayurveda, yoga, and other traditional medicine services with India, and enabling Mobility and Post Study Work for Indian students.

Visa Access for Skilled Indians: A quota of 5,000 visas for skilled Indians for stay upto 3 years in the sectors of interest to India has also been committed by New Zealand.

These provisions create unprecedented

Key Takeaways

- Services exports recorded USD 348.4 billion in Apr-Jan FY26
- Services exports reached 10% of GDP in first half of FY26 (Apr-Sept)
- Software services lead India's services exports, while business and consulting services have emerged as key growth drivers
- Union Budget 2026-27 announces provisions for tax holidays until 2047 for foreign companies, delivering cloud services to global clients using infrastructure located in India, Safe Harbour Reforms for IT Services, and reforms in Advanced Pricing Agreements (APA)
- Expanding Global Capability Centres (GCCs), AI capabilities, and improved global market access are driving India's services export growth

opportunities for Indian youth and professionals to gain global exposure.

India-European Free Trade Association (EFTA) Trade and Economic Partnership Agreement (TEPA)

Expanded Market Access: Under the TEPA, 128 sub-sectors have been committed by Switzerland, 114 by Norway, 107 by Liechtenstein, and 110 by Iceland. It also offers binding commitment of \$100 bn investment and 1 million direct jobs in the next 15 years.

Enhanced Mobility Provisions: EFTA has offered mobility FTA plus commitments in a range of service sectors/sub-sectors under Contractual Service Suppliers and Independent Professionals.

Mutual Recognition Agreements (MRAs): Mutual Recognition Agreements (MRAs) have been enabled in professional services such as nursing, chartered accountancy, and architecture.

India-Australia Economic Cooperation & Trade Agreement (Ind-Aus ECTA)

Expanded Market Access: Under the ECTA, Australia has provided commitments across nearly 135 sub-sectors.

Enhanced Mobility Provisions: Australia has also extended high quality temporary entry and temporary stay commitments (up to 4 years) for Intra Corporate Transferees, Contractual Service Suppliers and Independent Executives. Besides commitments on Business Visitors and Installers and Services have also been undertaken. Post study work visa up to 4 years for Indian students will also be provided.

Offshore Tax Relief: As per the agreement under IAECTA, Australia also amended their domestic taxation law to stop the taxation of offshore income of Indian firms providing technical services to Australia. This has enabled Indian Tech Companies to enhance their competitiveness in the international market.

Comprehensive Economic Cooperation and Partnership Agreement with Mauritius

The agreement grants Indian service providers access to around 115 subsectors across key service industries, expanding opportunities and strengthening bilateral economic cooperation.

Global Investment Strengthening Services Exports

Rising foreign investment in India's services sector support the rapid expansion of Global Capability Centres and deepening international trade partnerships, which have helped in strengthening India's position as a preferred destination for globally delivered services.

Services-sector FDI inflows accounted for an average 80.2% of total FDI during FY23-FY25, up from 77.7% in the pre-pandemic period, reflecting growing investor confidence in India's services export ecosystem. Investment has remained concentrated in information and communication services (25.8%) and professional services (23.8%), reflecting India's strength in digital and knowledge-intensive activities.

These sectors highlight how digitally enabled and knowledge-intensive services, supported by global partnerships, continue to drive foreign investment aligned with India's expanding services exports.

Conclusion

India's services exports have recorded strong and consistent growth in recent years, emerging as one of the most resilient drivers of the country's external sector performance. Building on its kartavya, the Union Budget 2026-27 further reinforces services export growth through targeted tax reforms, digital infrastructure incentives, skill development initiatives, and measures aimed at enhancing global competitiveness of India's services sector.

With talent, technology, and global partnerships converging, India's services sector stands poised to carry the nation's growth story onto the global stage.

The views expressed by contributors on this page are their own and do not necessarily reflect the policies or positions of the newspaper

First National Lok Adalat of 2026 held across J&K

Justice Sanjeev Kumar inaugurates proceedings in Jammu, settlements worth Rs 55.86 crore recorded across 194 benches in UT

KT News Desk

JAMMU, MARCH 14: Continuing its endeavor to fulfil the constitutional commitment of providing swift, cost-effective, and efficient dispute resolution to the masses in general and the litigant public in particular, the J&K Legal Services Authority under the patronage of Justice Arun Palli, Chief Justice, High Court of J&K and Ladakh (Patron-in-Chief, J&K Legal Services Authority), the dynamic leadership of Justice Sanjeev Kumar, Executive Chairman, J&K Legal Services Authority and the able guidance of Justice Sanjay Dhar, Chairperson, High Court Legal Services Committee, as per an official statement, organized the first National Lok Adalat for the year 2026 across the UT of Jammu & Kashmir, to promote amicable settlements in a wide range of cases, including MACT claims, matrimonial disputes, cheque bounce cases under the Negotiable Instruments Act, money recovery, commercial disputes, and compoundable criminal offences.

To ensure maximum participation and effective disposal of cases, pre-Lok Adalat sittings and pre-counselling sessions



were conducted well in advance across the districts of the Union Territory, encouraging parties to explore amicable settlement of their disputes. Several awareness programmes, meetings and sensitization sessions were also conducted by the Legal Services Institutions to promote the concept and importance of Lok Adalats among litigants and stakeholders.

Justice Sanjeev Kumar, Executive Chairman, J&K Legal Services Authority inaugurated the 1st National Lok Adalat at District Court Complex, Jammu. Upon his arrival, the Executive Chairman was received by Mr. R. N. Watal, Principal District

& Sessions Judge (Chairperson, DLSA) Jammu, Shazia Tabassum, Member Secretary, J&K Legal Services Authority, Smt. Maleeka Sharma, Secretary, DLSA Jammu along with other Judicial Officers of the District Judiciary.

During his visit, the Executive Chairman inspected various benches constituted for the Lok Adalat and interacted with the Presiding Officers, members of the benches, Advocates and litigants, appreciating the arrangements made for the smooth and effective conduct of the Lok Adalat. Several disputes were amicably settled on the spot with the active intervention of the benches. MACT

compensation cheques were also distributed among eligible beneficiaries, providing timely relief to the claimants.

As per the information received from various Legal Services Institutions working in different districts across the UT of J&K, out of total 76,707 cases taken up by 194 Benches in the day long National Lok Adalat, 67,993 cases were amicably settled and disposed off involving an amount of Rs.55,86,33,017/- as compensation/settlement amount in cases like Motor Accident Claims, civil, criminal, labour disputes, Electricity and Water Bills, Land Acquisition, Family matters, cheque dishonor and Bank Recovery etc.

While interacting, Justice Sanjeev Kumar, Executive Chairman, J&K Legal Services Authority appreciated the efforts of Judicial Officers, Secretaries of District Legal Services Authorities, Advocates, Legal Aid Defense Counsels (LADCs), Para Legal Volunteers (PLVs), court staff and all stakeholders for their wholehearted participation in the successful conduct of the 1st National Lok Adalat of the year 2026.

Highlighting the importance of Lok Adalats, the Executive

Chairman stated that Lok Adalats serve as an effective mechanism for alternative dispute resolution by enabling parties to settle disputes amicably in a speedy and cost-effective manner, thereby reducing pendency of cases and strengthening the justice delivery system. He urged the litigant public to take maximum advantage of such initiatives and resolve their disputes through consensus.

Shazia Tabassum, Member Secretary, J&K Legal Services Authority also appreciated the coordinated efforts of the Legal Services Institutions across the UT of J&K in making the Lok Adalat a success and reiterated that the Authority will continue to strengthen the mechanism of Alternative Dispute Resolution (ADR) to ensure that justice reaches every section of society, particularly the marginalized and underprivileged. She further informed that the 2nd National Lok Adalat of the current calendar year shall be held on May 09, 2026 and those litigants who could not get their cases either listed in Saturday's Lok Adalat or could not settle the same for any reason can avail the opportunity in the next Lok Adalat.

Nasha Mukht Abhiyaan: DIPR Shopian conducts awareness camp

KT News Desk

SHOPIAN, MARCH 14: An awareness programme under the ongoing IEC Campaign on Nasha Mukht Abhiyaan, J&K was conducted Saturday by the Department of Information and Public Relations (DIPR) Shopian in collaboration with the Education Department at Government Higher Secondary School (GHSS) Barbugh Imam Sahib.

SDM Zainapora, Bilal Ahmed attended the programme as the Chief Guest. While speaking on the occasion, he highlighted the measures being taken to tackle the menace of illegal cultivation of cannabis and destruction of wild bhung.

He urged the audience to cooperate with the administration in eliminating the menace of drug abuse and illegal cultivation. He also advised students to stay away from narcotics and become ambassadors of a drug-free society.

While inaugurating the event, District Information Officer, Showkat Hussain Ganie highlighted the growing menace of drug abuse and stressed the need for collective efforts to eradicate it from society. He urged the participants to adopt a healthy lifestyle and spread awareness among people, especially the youth, about the harmful effects of drugs.

Other speakers emphasized

that public cooperation, awareness and strong willpower are essential to make the Nasha Mukht Abhiyaan a successful movement at the grassroots level.

On the occasion, two skits highlighting the ill effects of drug abuse were presented by the students of GHSS, Barbugh Imamsahib and Raja Art and Cultural Foundation Dooru, which were widely appreciated by the participants and officials present on the occasion.

Slogan writing and painting competitions were also held on the theme of drug-free society in which 30 students from different schools participated. In the Painting Competition, Sweeba Kausar, Mohammed Huzafa and Sehreen Iqbal secured first, second and third positions respectively.

Similarly in the Slogan Writing Competition, Rahail Hussain, Sahiba Showkat and Artiza Manzoor secured first, second and third positions respectively.

All winners were felicitated with mementos and certificates, while all participants were also honoured for their participation.

Among others present on the occasion were Tehsildar Barbugh Imamsahib, Principal GHSS, Barbugh Imamsahib, teachers and staff, besides a large number of students who pledged to contribute towards making society drug-free.

Mission Shakti Shopian organizes Capacity Building Programme for ASHA Workers



KT News Desk

SHOPIAN, MARCH 14: Sankalp Hub for Empowerment of Women, Mission Shakti Shopian, in collaboration with the Department of Health, organized a Capacity Building Programme for ASHA Workers under the Beti Bachao Beti Padhao (BBBP) initiative at the Mini Secretariat Shopian Saturday.

The programme aimed to enhance the knowledge and skills of ASHA workers who play an important role in promoting maternal and child health, nutrition awareness, and preventive healthcare at the grassroots level.

On the occasion, the Chief Medical Officer Shopian, Arshid Hussain Tak highlighted the vital role of ASHA workers in strengthening healthcare delivery in rural and remote areas.

He appreciated their dedication in spreading awareness about maternal health, institutional deliveries, immunization, and child care.

Deputy Chief Medical Officer, Shopian, Nazir Ahmad also addressed the gathering and stressed the importance of continuous training for frontline health workers.

He encouraged ASHA workers to promote safe motherhood practices and awareness about the importance of protecting and educating the girl child in line with the objectives of Beti Bachao Beti Padhao.

CHO Hermain shared insights on community health initiatives and emphasized the importance of coordination between health workers and community institutions to ensure that government health schemes reach the intended beneficiaries.

DC Kulgam reviews arrangements for upcoming festivities

KT News Desk

KULGAM, MARCH 14: To review arrangements for the smooth celebration of Shab-i-Qadr, Navratras and Eid-ul-Fitr festivals in the district, the Deputy Commissioner Kulgam, Shahzad Alam Saturday convened a meeting of officers and prominent citizens of the district here at Mini-Secretariat Kulgam.

ADDC, Altaf Ahmad Khan; Additional Deputy Commissioner, Viqar Ahmed Giri; Joint Director Planning, Malik Suhail; ACD, Bilal Kamgar; ACR, Riyaz Ahmad Shah, senior officers of various departments, besides members of local management committees.

Threadbare discussions were held on various arrangements related to security, drinking water, power supply, first-aid, sanitation, checking of rates, fire tenders, repair of street lights, lifting of garbage, traffic, etc.

Necessary directions were issued to district heads of various departments to ensure fool-proof arrangements pertaining to their respective department during the festivals.



The DC, as per an official statement, instructed the Police Department to make sufficient security arrangements to avoid any untoward incident during the festive season.

Executive Engineer Jal Shakti was instructed to ensure regular supply of drinking water and to press tanker services where ever required besides Executive Engineer KPDCI was directed to ensure uninterrupted power supply during the festivals.

Stressing on maintaining

cleanliness in the town and villages the DC directed the CEO MC and other concerned to take necessary steps and ensure proper cleanliness.

Keeping in view the festive season, concerned officers were directed to conduct extensive checking of the market to prevent any overcharging by the shopkeepers.

Traffic department was directed to deploy adequate number of traffic personnel at traffic jam prone areas to avoid any traffic congestion during the festival.

Naari Leads Swachhata: SMC organises Health Camp

KT News Desk

SRINAGAR, MARCH 14: On the occasion of International Women's Day, the Srinagar Municipal Corporation (SMC) organised a comprehensive Health Camp at its Head Office, Karan Nagar, in collaboration with Government Medical College Srinagar (GMC) and Associated Hospitals, Srinagar.

The initiative was held under the theme "Naari Leads Swachhata", highlighting the vital role of women in advancing sanitation, public health, and community well-being.

The health camp was organised on the directions of Faz Lal Haseeb, Commissioner SMC, as part of the Corporation's ongoing commitment to safeguarding the health and welfare of its workforce, particularly women who play a pivotal role in maintaining sanitation and cleanliness across the city.

The programme was conducted under the supervision of Dr. Fauzia Habib, Health Officer, SMC, who meticulously coordinated the initiative and ensured its successful execution in collaboration with the medical team from GMC and Associated Hospitals, Srinagar.

A team of specialist doctors and trained paramedical

staff from GMC and Associated Hospitals carried out medical consultations, health screenings, and general health assessments for the female sanitation workers as well as the female staff of the SMC Central Office. The camp focused on preventive healthcare, early diagnosis, and raising awareness on hygiene and well-being, particularly for women engaged in sanitation and public service.

Dr. Rehana Kausar, Consultant, GMC Srinagar, was also present during the programme and coordinated the participation of the specialist medical team, ensuring that comprehensive medical care and professional guidance were provided throughout the camp.

The initiative reflects SMC's sustained efforts to promote women's health, dignity, and empowerment while recognising the invaluable contribution of women in leading sanitation and cleanliness initiatives under the spirit of "Naari Leads Swachhata."

Through such programmes, the Corporation continues to reaffirm its commitment to building a healthier workforce and fostering a cleaner, safer, and more sustainable urban environment.

MP Mian Altaf Ahmad chairs DISHA meeting, reviews progress of CSSs

KT News Desk

ANANTNAG, MARCH 14: Member of Parliament Anantnag-Rajouri Parliamentary Constituency, Mian Altaf Ahmad on Saturday chaired a meeting of the District Development Coordination and Monitoring Committee (DISHA) at Dak Bungalow, Anantnag to review the progress of various Centrally Sponsored Schemes (CSSs) being implemented in the district.

The meeting, as per an official statement, was attended by MLA Pahalgam, Altaf Ahmad Wani, MLA Bijbehara, Dr. Basheer Ahmad Shah (Veeri), MLA Shangus (Anantnag East), Reyaz Ahmad Khan, District Development Commissioner (DDC) Anantnag, Dr. Bilal Mohiud Din Bhat, Principal GMC Anantnag, ADC, SES PWD, KPDCI & PHE, GM DIC, DPO, CPO, ACR, ACD and other district and sectoral officers of concerned departments and engineering wings.

At the outset, the DDC briefed the chair through a detailed Presentation about the status and progress of various flagship programmes and developmental works being executed across



the district.

During the review, the meeting was informed that under Jal Jeevan Mission, against the target of 1,32,915 Functional Household Tap Connections (FHTCs), 1,23,516 connections (around 93%) have already been provided across the district.

The meeting also reviewed the implementation of housing schemes including Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana-Gramin (PMAY-G) and Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana-Urban (PMAY-U), where emphasis was laid on timely completion of sanctioned houses and ensuring that

eligible beneficiaries receive the benefits under the schemes.

Progress under RDD sector including initiatives like MGNREGA and PMAY(G) was also reviewed, with focus on livelihood generation, creation of durable assets, construction of houses for the eligible and development works in rural areas.

The chair further reviewed the progress of road connectivity projects under PMGSY R&B, BRO and NHAI and stressed to expedite road construction works to enhance connectivity to far-flung and rural areas of the district.

Similarly, implementation of health and sanitation programmes including National Health Mission (NHM), Ayushman Bharat-Pradhan Mantri Jan Arogya Yojana (PMJAY) and Swachh Bharat Mission (SBM) was also discussed with emphasis on strengthening healthcare services and sanitation infrastructure.

The chair further directed for construction of public amenities under SBM while ensuring regular maintenance in places lacking such facilities.

Taking the review of government initiatives like Dharti

Abha JJGA, KGVBS, Agriculture, Horticulture, Animal and Sheep Husbandary Programs, the MP said these are directly related with the welfare of the tribal population. The programs need to be implemented in a holistic and sustainable manner with proper community awareness, he remarked.

The progress of livelihood and financial inclusion initiatives such as National Rural Livelihoods Mission (NRLM), Pradhan Mantri Jan Dhan Yojana (PMJDY), PMSBY, PMJJBY & Mudra which aim to promote financial empowerment and

insurance coverage were also reviewed.

While reviewing the progress, the MP emphasized the need for timely completion of developmental works and adherence to quality standards especially in PHE, Irrigation & Flood Control, PWD, PMGSY, KPDCI and other sectors. He directed the concerned departments to expedite the pace of ongoing projects, remove bottlenecks and ensure proper interdepartmental coordination for effective implementation of these projects.

Main Altaf expressed satisfaction on implementation of PMMVY, NSAP, PM Poshan and PM Vatika besides other schemes of the ICDS, Social Welfare and Education. He was further briefed about the performance of PM SRI Schools which are running as per the National Education Policy-2020.

The MP stressed that the benefits of flagship programmes such as HADP, Mission YUVA and PM SGMBY must reach every eligible beneficiary and underscored the importance of strengthening public service delivery in Health, Education and Social Welfare Departments and addressing genuine issues of the

people. He called for enhancing grassroots awareness of all these initiatives so that the eligible people in remote areas receive the benefits.

The MP assured the committee that the issues regarding JIM, R&B, Health, Education Agriculture and other important areas will be taken up with the concerned authorities. He asked the concerned departments to draft proposals in consultation with the elected public representatives and in accordance with the relevant rules & guidelines.

The MP said that genuine issues raised by the MLAs will be discussed at proper forums. He further directed the departments to explore the possible solutions to problems faced by the public regarding drinking water, irrigation, road connectivity, horticulture, agriculture, health and education and put in place the alternative arrangements for public convenience.

The meeting concluded with directions from the chair to all departments to ensure transparency, accountability and improved coordination for successful implementation of public welfare and developmental initiatives in the district.

Add'l Comm'r State Taxes reviews performance of Kashmir Division Calls for leveraging data, reports, inputs by specialised teams

KT News Desk

Srinagar, Mar 14: Additional Commissioner, State Taxes (Administration & Enforcement), Kashmir, Parveez Ahmad Raina, on Saturday chaired a comprehensive review meeting to assess the performance and progress of the department in Kashmir Division. The meeting was attended by Deputy Commissioners State Taxes Enforcement (North/

Central Kashmir) Shahnawaz Shah; Deputy Commissioner State Taxes IT, Data Analytics Kashmir, Reyaz Ahmad Shah and all jurisdictional State Taxes Officers of the Kashmir Division. The meeting focused on key agenda items, including year-on-year revenue realisation, action taken on reports generated by GST Analytics & Fraud Detection (BISAG), growth in cash and IGST settlements, progress in cases

initiated under Section 65 of the JK GST/CGST Act, efforts to curb the menace of fake Input Tax Credit (ITC), Nil-Filers, payments released by Drawing and Disbursing Officers (DDOs) and resultant tax paid by taxpayers, scrutiny of returns under Section 61 of the Act, enforcement activities and their outcomes, as well as utilisation of various analytical reports and their results. During the circle-wise review,

the Additional Commissioner evaluated the progress made by each circle towards target achievement, including DRC-03 realised as a result of assessments, follow-up on non-filers, and actions initiated as per the Act. Parveez Ahmad Raina emphasised the critical need to leverage data, reports, and inputs generated by specialised teams such as the Special Investigation Unit (SIU), Business Intelligence

Unit (BIU), and field enforcement units. He stressed meticulous scrutiny, integration of field inputs, and available reports to effectively curb fake ITC and other fraudulent practices. The Additional Commissioner reiterated that the overarching purpose of these efforts is to ensure achievement of assigned revenue targets, containment of fraudulent activities, promotion of fair-trade practices, and safeguarding the

revenue of the state exchequer. The department remains committed to strengthening GST compliance, enhancing enforcement, and utilising technology-driven analytics for transparent and efficient tax administration in the Kashmir Division. Later, Commissioner State Taxes, Jammu & Kashmir, P.K. Bhat joined virtually, providing strategic guidance and reinforcing the department's resolve to

achieve revenue excellence. He highlighted the positive impact of recent GST rate rationalisation, particularly in key sectors such as cement (reduced from 28% to 18%) and automobiles (with entry-level vehicles now at 18% and simplified structures boosting affordability and sector growth), which is expected to stimulate consumption, ease compliance, and support infrastructure and mobility.

CONTD. FROM FRONT PAGE

Under PM's leadership,

recent years, fish production and related infrastructure have seen substantial growth. "Trout output rose from 1,663 tons in FY 2021-22 to a record 2,650 tons in 2024-25. Private sector trout units increased from 936 to 1,649; hatcheries from 1 to 9; trout feed mills from zero to 6 by 2024; RAS units from 2 to 9; and biofloc units from 10 to 59," he said.

The Lieutenant Governor expressed gratitude to Government of India for sanctioning a Rs 100 crore Integrated Aqua Park Project to be established in District Anantnag. This project will strengthen aquaculture infrastructure, boost cold-water fisheries development, increase fish production and create employment opportunities in the region.

The Lieutenant Governor said that rapid economic-social progress of Jammu Kashmir demands relentless effort from every societal segment, especially our farmer brothers.

"At the heart of development lies our vibrant farming community, who are not mere producers, but the bedrock of our identity and economy. Now is the time to honor their role with due respect, investment, and technology.

Our citizens, workers, entrepreneurs, farmers, and artists embody innovation and ready to craft a self-reliant tomorrow," the Lieutenant Governor said.

The Lieutenant Governor observed that Fisheries Sector faces challenges like climate change impacts, rising water temperatures, water scarcity, slow growth of native species, and fish health risks.

"To unlock its full potential, we must advance cold-water agriculture scientifically, genetically improve trout and carp breeds, prioritize climate-resilient systems, disease diagnostics, and aquatic health management. Innovation in indigenous feeds and robust seed-feed supply chains are vital for Fisheries Sector," he said.

Model Guidelines for the Development of Cold-Water Fisheries was released on the occasion. Best FFPOs, Progressive Fish farmers, and Fisheries Start-ups were felicitated. Sanction letters were also handed over to beneficiaries under Kisan Credit Card and other schemes.

The conference brought together policymakers, experts, researchers and stakeholders from various states and UTs to explore collaborative pathways for sectoral advancement. The discussions centered on sustainably harnessing the potential of India's cold-water fisheries for long-term growth and prosperity.

Omar Abdullah, Chief Minister J&K; Prof. S P Singh Baghel, Union Minister of State for Fisheries, Animal Husbandry and Dairying; Javid Ahmad Dar, Minister for Agriculture Production, Rural Development & Panchayati Raj, J&K; Dr. Abhilaksh Likhli, Union Secretary, Department of Fisheries; Dr Ashish Chandra Verma, Additional Chief Secretary, Agriculture Production department, J&K; Sagar Mehra, Joint Secretary, Department of Fisheries, Gol; Dr. J.K. Jena, Deputy Director General (Fisheries Science), ICAR; Prof. Nazir Ahmad Ganai, Vice Chancellor, SKUAST-Kashmir, senior officials, policymakers, experts, researchers and stakeholders were present. (KNO)

Scale up trout

on strengthening aquaculture infrastructure, value addition and market linkages to accelerate the growth of cold-water fisheries in Jammu and Kashmir," he said, adding, "The project would strengthen aquaculture infrastructure and accelerate the development of the cold-water fisheries sector in Jammu and Kashmir."

"We must scale up trout production and strengthen the incomes of cold-water fish farmers by improving productivity, promoting value addition and tapping export markets where these species have strong demand," the minister said.

He stressed that the Centre is focusing on end-to-end value-chain development, ensuring cold-water regions can efficiently produce, process and market trout and other high-value fish species through modern infrastructure and improved market linkages.

Singh said the Integrated Aqua Park in Anantnag would serve as a hub for innovation, training, processing and aggregation, helping local entrepreneurs and fish farmers expand their enterprises and create new employment opportunities in the region.

The Union Minister also urged states and Union Territories to organise fish farmers into cooperatives and Fish Farmer Producer Organisations (FFPOs) so that they can better access government schemes, infrastructure support and institutional credit.

He noted that financial assistance through fisheries development initiatives, including funding support available under the Fisheries and Aquaculture Infrastructure Development Fund, would help local enterprises scale operations and strengthen the aquaculture ecosystem.

During the conference, Singh also released the Model Guidelines for the Development of Cold-Water Fisheries, which provide a comprehensive framework covering scientific seed

stocking, cage and pen-based aquaculture, governance mechanisms, biodiversity conservation and improved value-chain linkages to ensure sustainable development of the sector.

Notably, the conference was attended by Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha, Chief Minister Omar Abdullah, Union Minister of State S. P. Singh Baghel and Agriculture Production Minister Javid Ahmad Dar, along with policymakers, scientists, industry representatives and fisheries stakeholders from across the country. (KNO)

Climate change

CM Omar said, "The government must support fishermen and aquaculture entrepreneurs by improving infrastructure, especially in remote areas, and strengthening post-production facilities, value addition and market linkages."

"Our responsibility is to strengthen those who have taken up fisheries as their livelihood. We must help them increase production and ensure better facilities so their incomes are protected," he said.

The Chief Minister said hosting the national conference in Srinagar would help Jammu and Kashmir learn best practices from other hill states such as Himachal Pradesh and Uttarakhand as well as states in the Northeast.

He noted that the conference had already provided new insights, including examples of innovative aquaculture practices in other parts of the country.

Referring to a youth entrepreneur from Hyderabad producing around 200 metric tonnes of trout using advanced techniques despite the tropical climate, Omar said technology can overcome geographical limitations and regions like Jammu and Kashmir must adopt modern practices to stay ahead.

Highlighting Kashmir's long history in trout farming, the Chief Minister said the region has more than 126 years of experience since trout was introduced around 1900.

"Our experience should not go to waste. We must share our knowledge while also learning from others," he said.

Notably, the conference, organised by the Department of Fisheries, Ministry of Fisheries, Animal Husbandry and Dairying, brought together policymakers, researchers and stakeholders from several states including Jammu and Kashmir, Ladakh, Sikkim, Arunachal Pradesh, Nagaland, Manipur, Meghalaya, Tamil Nadu, Maharashtra, Karnataka and Kerala.

Union Minister Rajiv Ranjan Singh, Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha and other senior officials also attended the conference. On the occasion, the Union Minister announced that an Integrated Aquaculture Park will be developed at Kokernag to further strengthen the fisheries sector in Jammu and Kashmir. (KNO)

J&K, Ladakh likely

390 MWs under Shakti Policy." This news agency in December 2025 had reported that Jammu and Kashmir imports more than 95 per cent of its electricity—a stark dependency that leaves the region vulnerable as it grapples with an 800 MW power deficit.

In that month, Jammu and Kashmir was importing electricity ranging from 2900 MWs to 3100 MWs during the peak hours.

The officials had said that during the other hours, the region is importing electricity ranging from 2400 MWs to 2800 MWs.

The official, however, had clarified that the power import includes all the sources including the power allocated from the centre and other Power Purchase Agreements (PPAs). (KNO)

Great futures

transformation in our communities to reach beyond J&K and ignite countless volunteers across India," the Lieutenant Governor said.

The Lieutenant Governor highlighted that Jammu Kashmir brims with boundless promise to shape a radiant future. He said that the UT of J&K has natural abundance, dynamic youth, and citizens driven by service.

"Great futures are not forged by fate, but by resolve and collective endeavour. A prosperous Jammu Kashmir will be defined not by economic metrics alone, but by a quality of life every citizen cherishes," the Lieutenant Governor said.

The Lieutenant Governor emphasised on five resolutions- Social Harmony, Family Awakening, Environmental Stewardship, Civic Duty and Self-Reliance - to transform Jammu Kashmir as an exemplary, leading Union Territory.

"First resolution is social harmony and I urge all citizens to unite with patience and courage, fostering mutual respect across communities to bridge generations, cultures, faiths, and ideas. Second, families must root themselves in core values, emerging aware and empowered to shape the next generation's destiny.

Third resolution is environmental stewardship. Jammu Kashmir, earth's paradise, is nature's unique gift-its rivers, mountains, and forests remind us we are custodians of irreplaceable heritage. Sustainable development is true foresight; let us collectively safeguard this legacy for posterity.

Fourth resolution is civic duty. Citizens must evolve the system into one of shared participation. A robust democracy thrives where people are active, informed, and accountable.

Fifth resolution is Self-Reliance. We must focus on building capacity to meet needs while empowering others. Let us grow economically robust, stewarding resources for enduring progress," the Lieutenant Governor said.

He said that these five resolutions are not mere ideas, but our collective mandate to ensure robust socio-economic growth.

Prof Rakesh Kumar Jha, President, Sewa Bharti J&K; Suman Dhir, President Ekal Vidyalaya Foundation; Dr Farooq Dar, Vice President, Sewa Bharti J&K; Pradeep Kapoor, General Secretary, Sewa Bharti; Ajay Takoo, Fayaz Ahmed Mir and other office bearers and volunteers of Sewa Bharti and Ekal Vidyalaya Foundation of India attended the book release ceremony.

Rajiv Pandey, DIG CKR; Akshay Labroo, Deputy Commissioner Srinagar, senior officials and prominent citizens from different walks of life were also present.

MHA revokes

Government remains committed to fostering an environment of peace, stability, and mutual trust in Ladakh so as to facilitate constructive and meaningful dialogue with all stakeholders.

The MHA statement said the government remains hopeful that the issues concerning the region will be resolved through constructive engagement and dialogue, including through the mechanism of the High-Powered Committee as well as other appropriate platforms. "The government remains committed to fostering an environment of peace, stability, and mutual trust in Ladakh to facilitate constructive and meaningful dialogue with all stakeholders," it added. (KNO)

MeT predicts rain

to influence the region from March 15, bringing light to moderate rain and snowfall at many places on March 15 and 16. Higher altitude areas such as Gulmarg and Sonamarg are likely to receive fresh snowfall, while some mountain passes may record snowfall ranging from about six inches to nearly two feet during the 48-hour period.

Officials said daytime temperatures are likely to fall from the afternoon of March 15 and may remain 5 to 8 degrees Celsius below normal on March 16. Two more western disturbances are expected to affect the region from late evening of March 17 to March 20, bringing intermittent spells of rain or snowfall at several places.

Weather conditions are likely to remain mostly dry between March 21 and 23, while scattered rain or snowfall in higher reaches may occur again on March 24 and 25, officials said. The department has advised travellers and transporters, especially those moving through higher reaches and mountain passes, to plan their travel accordingly.

"Thunderstorms accompanied by gusty winds of 40-50 kmph are also possible at a few places during March 15 and 16. Farmers have been advised to suspend farm operations between March 15 and March 20," the MeT said.

Temperature data released by the weather office on Saturday stated that Srinagar recorded a maximum temperature of 19.4 degrees Celsius, about four degrees above normal, while Jammu recorded 29.7 degrees Celsius, around four degrees above normal.

The minimum temperature settled at 4.4 degrees Celsius in Srinagar, while Gulmarg recorded minus 0.6 degrees Celsius. Meanwhile, an independent weather monitoring group, Kashmir Weather, said three western disturbances are expected to impact Jammu and Kashmir in quick succession from March 15.

"Widespread rain and snowfall activity is expected on March 15 and 16, with higher reaches likely to receive fresh snowfall. Two more Western Disturbances may bring intermittent showers from March 17 to March 20 with breaks between spells," it said in its update. (KNO)

Wildlife Board urges

for Forests, Environment and Ecology Javed Ahmad Rana, Chief Secretary and officials from different departments. Farmers across Jammu & Kashmir face heavy losses every to their agricultural crops due to wild animals such as monkeys, wild boar and blue bull (nilgai), and monkeys. These animals often, destroying standing crops, which directly impacts livelihoods in rural areas. (KNO)

'Almond Blossom'

the Almond Blossom Festival provide a wonderful platform to showcase the grandeur of Kashmir's spring season, cultural heritage, traditional crafts and artistic talent. These also help attract tourists and encourage community participation in preserving our heritage," he added.

The event was organised by the Floriculture

Department and witnessed participation from officials, artists and a large number of visitors including students and tourists.

Among those present were ministers Javid Ahmed Dar and Satish Sharma, Advisor to the Chief Minister Nasir Aslam Wani, MLA Zadibal Tanvir Sadiq, Commissioner Secretary Floriculture Zubair Ahmad, Director Floriculture Mathura Masoom, Director Handicrafts Mussarat-ul-Islam and other senior officers, including officials from Jammu & Kashmir Bank.

During his visit, the Chief Minister took a tour of the almond alcove and interacted with enthusiastic visitors who sought selfies with him, adding to the festive atmosphere at the historic garden.

He also commended the Floriculture Department for developing Badamwari and opening it for visitors on time, which has already witnessed a large footfall of tourists and locals during the early spring season.

On the occasion, CM Omar also inaugurated an online ticketing portal (e-ticketing system) for gardens across Jammu and Kashmir aimed at simplifying the ticketing process and improving visitor convenience.

"The introduction of online ticketing for our gardens is an important step towards modernising tourist facilities and ensuring a seamless experience for visitors," he said, adding that the initiative will make access to gardens easier and more efficient for tourists as well as locals.

The Chief Minister also inspected an exhibition set up at the venue where progressive farmers, florists and artisans had displayed their produce and handicrafts.

He appreciated the stall owners for showcasing a wide range of products and commended their contribution towards preserving Kashmir's traditional crafts and promoting horticulture and floriculture.

Meanwhile, later-on, talking to reporters on the sidelines of the event, CM Omar said the festival marks the beginning of Kashmir's tourist season. "Today's event marks the beginning of our tourist season, which will continue with the inauguration of the Indira Gandhi Memorial Tulip Garden the day after tomorrow. We hope a large number of tourists will visit and enjoy the beauty of Kashmir," he said.

Commenting on tourism challenges, the Chief Minister said rising international flight fares and fuel surcharges could affect the tourist season but expressed optimism about visitor arrivals. "Ticket prices on international flights are increasing and fuel surcharges have been introduced, which may impact the tourist season. Even then, we remain hopeful that the number of visitors will rise this year," he said.

Termining the release of activist Sonam Wangchuk as a positive step, CM Omar said, "We should never have arrested him under the NSA. Now that he is released, it is good, but the situation should not have arisen in the first place. Similarly, peace in Ladakh and the fulfilment of promises there remain important."

On global developments, the Chief Minister said that efforts to maintain peace and stability in the region are important. "Iran allowing Indian ships to pass through the Strait of Hormuz is a positive development. Anything that helps maintain fuel prices is beneficial. But above all, we want peace. Leadership decisions in Iran should be left to its citizens and peace in the region is ultimately in our own interest," he said.

On local security issues, CM Omar said authorities are reviewing security arrangements following attacks on public figures but stressed that such incidents should not have occurred.

"As an expression of goodwill, the cases against youngsters who were first-time offenders, many of whom hardly participated in protests should be revoked and they should be released, especially with Ramzan and Eid approaching," he said. (KNO)

Corruption can't

ready to act against higher authorities if a complainant comes forward. "If someone dares to come to us with a complaint against a higher official, we will definitely lay a trap. But such traps require a complainant who is willing to cooperate with us," he said.

Verification before trap operations

Pathak said the bureau follows a strict verification process before initiating trap operations to ensure complaints are genuine and not motivated.

He said a separate team conducts secret verification of both the complainant and the accused official before proceeding further. "We verify the entire record of the complainant as well as the person against whom the complaint is made. Only when we are satisfied that the demand is genuine do we proceed with a trap," he said.

According to him, the team conducting verification is different from the team that eventually carries out the trap operation, ensuring impartiality in the process.

Safeguards against false complaints The ACB Director acknowledged that false or malicious complaints do occur and said the

bureau has mechanisms to prevent innocent officials from being framed. He said anonymous and pseudonymous complaints are generally not entertained in accordance with government guidelines.

However, Pathak added that in rare cases where allegations appear credible and involve officials with questionable reputations, the bureau may conduct limited verification.

He said legal provisions also exist to take action against those who file false complaints, referring to relevant sections of criminal law dealing with false information. "Our responsibility is not only to catch corrupt officials but also to ensure that honest officers are not wrongly implicated," he said.

Recruitment and governance processes On allegations surrounding recruitment irregularities, including issues related to the Fire and Emergency Services recruitment case, Pathak said that most government systems are designed properly, but sometimes fail during implementation.

"Rules and processes are designed carefully by experts. Problems arise when individuals try to exploit loopholes or manipulate the system," he said.

He added that investigations are initiated whenever credible complaints are received.

J&K Bank scam under investigation When asked about the alleged large-scale scam involving Jammu and Kashmir Bank, the Director ACB said the case remains under investigation, and the agency is progressing with the probe.

"Investigation is a long process. Evidence has to be collected, documents examined and links between the accused established. It cannot be concluded in just a few days after registering an FIR," he said.

He said people often expect immediate results once an FIR is registered, but corruption investigations require careful evidence collection and legal scrutiny.

Viral trap videos not released by ACB Pathak addressed concerns about videos of trap cases going viral on social media. He said the ACB does not release such videos and ensures that operations are conducted discreetly. "Our effort is always to secure the area where the trap is conducted so that media or others do not interfere with the proceedings," he said.

However, he added that when operations take place in public spaces, bystanders or media may capture visuals which later circulate on social media.

At the same time, he said officials involved in corruption should also consider the consequences of their actions on their families and reputation.

Action after trap cases According to Pathak, officials caught in trap cases are arrested and suspended in accordance with legal provisions.

He said departmental inquiries are also conducted simultaneously. However, he acknowledged that the lengthy legal process sometimes results in accused employees being reassigned to different posts while the trial continues. "After suspension and departmental inquiry, some employees may be assigned other duties as the court trial takes time," he said.

Only 1-2% complaints lead to FIRs Explaining the complaint-handling system of the bureau, Pathak said only a small percentage of complaints eventually lead to criminal cases.

He said the ACB receives a large number of complaints relating to development works, administrative issues and alleged irregularities in government departments.

Many of these complaints are first examined by departmental vigilance officers (DVOs), who review the matter within their departments. "If the issue is within the department's capacity to resolve, it is handled there. If it involves serious legal or corruption aspects beyond their jurisdiction, it is referred back to the ACB," he said.

Joint surprise checks and verifications The Director said the bureau also conducts Joint Surprise Checks (JSCs) in cases involving allegations such as substandard construction or misuse of public funds.

In such cases, ACB teams conduct inspections along with officials from the concerned department to examine records, verify documents and collect samples if necessary.

Based on the findings, the bureau decides whether the case warrants the registration of an FIR.

He said multiple layers of scrutiny, including preliminary verification, miscellaneous verification and open verification, are followed before initiating criminal proceedings.

"Only about one to two per cent of complaints ultimately result in FIR registration," he said.

'Public support essential to fight corruption' Reiterating the need for citizen participation, the Director ACB said the fight against corruption will become stronger only when people actively refuse to participate in corrupt practices. "If citizens come forward with complaints and support investigations, corruption can be tackled more effectively," he said. (KNO)

Govt working to minimise impact of global conflicts on people: PM

Says Congress trying to create panic

PTI

Silchar, Mar 14: Asserting that the Centre was working to minimise the impacts of global conflicts on the people, Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Saturday alleged that the opposition Congress was acting "irresponsibly" by trying to create panic in the country.

Addressing a public meeting in Assam's Silchar after unveiling projects worth over Rs 23,550 crore, Modi alleged that the Congress had ignored the development of the Northeast for decades, and allowed a drawing of the border during Independence that cut off Barak Valley's access to the sea.

"As the world is facing wars, our effort is to minimise their impact on the people of the country. The Congress should have performed the role of a responsible political party, but it failed to do so. It is trying to create panic among the people," he alleged.

"They do not have any vision either for Assam or the nation, but only know how to abuse Modi, spread rumours, lies, and create false reels to mislead people," he claimed.

Modi also took on the Congress over its shirtless protest at the AI Impact Summit in Delhi last month, accusing the party of defaming the nation.

"The entire world is interested in AI, and the successful summit in Delhi was attended by global leaders, tech companies and their heads. But, the Congress tried to embarrass the country by indulging in a 'kapda phar' (tearing of clothes) exhibition," he said.

Modi said the entire country



condemned "this vulgar" protest, but the "royal family of the Congress" is "patting themselves on the back".

"Congress is left with nothing but to tear its own clothes," he added.

Alleging that the Congress engages in activities against the nation's interest, the PM said it can never ensure the welfare of the people of any state.

"Congress is losing one election after another, and in the near future, the party will hit a century of its losses. The despair of its losses has led it to open a front against the nation, and its leaders are busy defaming the country," he said.

Modi alleged that the Congress kept the Northeast away from both "dil (heart) and Delhi", ensuring that development did not reach the region's people, leaving them mired in violence and backwardness.

"Just as the Congress left the Northeast on its own, in a similar way, it played a major role in weakening the Barak Valley. When India became Independent, Congress allowed a border to be drawn that cut off Barak Valley's access to the sea," he alleged.

"Barak Valley, once known as an industrial centre, was stripped of its very strength. For decades after independence, Congress governments remained in power, yet the region saw little development. Today, the BJP government is working to change that," he added.

Modi said connectivity is being developed in the Barak Valley to link it to other parts of the Northeast and West Bengal.

"It will be developed as a big logistics and trade hub of the region," he said, noting that Barak Valley is also at the centre of the government's Act

East Policy and will be a bridge connecting India with South-east Asia.

The PM alleged that Congress misguided Assam's youth into paths of violence and terrorism, while the BJP has ensured the state becomes a place of unlimited opportunities where they can reach for the sky.

"Where Congress stops thinking, we start working," he said, noting that the BJP's mantra is to give priority to those left behind in development.

"Assam's youth have immense opportunities in the semiconductor and technology sectors. The current era of peace and progress has been achieved through immense sacrifices, which must be protected from regressive forces," he said.

Modi said education, skill development, and healthcare have become the primary

pillars of the government's development thrust.

Assam is rapidly emerging as a health hub, with AIIMS and cancer hospitals now forming a strong network, he said.

The PM said that during the Congress rule, the border villages were considered the "last villages", but his government views them as the nation's "first villages".

"The second phase of the Vibrant Village Program has begun from the Cachar district and is already bringing visible improvements to border areas. The historical neglect of these areas is now being replaced by proactive development and strategic focus," he said.

The PM said the state government has performed a "historical duty" by granting land rights to thousands of families of tea garden workers.

"Granting of land rights is not only a legal security that ensures dignity, but will now also allow these families to access central schemes for housing, electricity, and water," he said.

Referring to former PM Manmohan Singh, Modi said he represented Assam for 10 years but did not give a single paisa to the farmers of the state, whereas the BJP has given them more than Rs 20,000 crore.

"The region's journey of progress is now unstoppable, supported by its rich language and culture. The development projects inaugurated today are just the beginning of a new era for the Barak Valley," he said.

Commercial LPG sale starts in 29 states, UTs

Raids stepped up to check black-marketing



PTI

New Delhi, Mar 14: Commercial LPG cylinder distribution has begun in 29 states and Union Territories, while authorities have stepped up raids and surprise inspections across the country to curb hoarding and black-marketing amid heightened pressure on cooking gas supplies, a senior oil ministry official said on Saturday.

Sujata Sharma, Joint Secretary in the Ministry of Petroleum and Natural Gas, said panic booking continues to rise despite the fact that there are enough stocks available to meet domestic household requirements of cooking gas LPG.

India, she said, has adequate crude oil inventories, and domestic refineries are operating at full capacity, ensuring sufficient availability of petrol and diesel across the country.

"There are no dry-out reports from any retail outlets. Our refineries are operating at full capacity, and sufficient petrol and diesel are available. Based on our requirements, we produce adequate petrol and diesel domestically and do not need to import," she said.

Sharma said domestic LPG supply is being prioritised even as the government continues to closely monitor the situation amid the prevailing geopolitical developments that hampered energy supplies from the Gulf countries. India imports 88 per cent of its

crude oil needs, 50 per cent of its natural gas requirement and 60 per cent of its LPG demand.

Before the US and Israel attacked Iran on February 28, and Tehran retaliated by hitting US bases in neighbouring countries as well as Israel, more than half of the crude oil requirement came from the Middle East countries, 30 per cent of gas from the region and 85-90 per cent of LPG.

The war has led to an effective blockage of the Strait of Hormuz, which is the usual sea transit for energy from the Gulf countries. While India has managed to source crude oil from other countries, including Russia, the hit on gas supply has led to cuts for industrial users and to commercial establishments such as hotels and restaurants.

"The situation is a matter of concern for all of us, but we are ensuring that household consumers do not face inconvenience. Domestic consumers have been prioritized, and LPG cylinder supply is being ensured for them," she said.

However, LPG refill bookings have surged sharply due to panic buying by consumers.

"Yesterday, the number of bookings was about 75 lakh, and it has now increased to around 88 lakh. This is nothing but panic booking," the official said, urging consumers to book cylinders only when required.

AI cannot replace legal mind, judges must uphold ethics: SC judge

PTI

New Delhi, Mar 14: Used intelligently, AI may save time and make some aspects of legal work more manageable, but it cannot replace the trained mind of a lawyer, the ethical responsibility of an officer of the court or the disciplined judgment required of a judge, Supreme Court Judge, Justice Vikram Nath said on Saturday.

Addressing a conference here, Justice Nath further said technology may help draft a note, but it cannot be permitted to invent the law; at the same time, the misuse of AI cannot lead the judicial system to the opposite extreme of refusing to engage with it altogether.

Expressing concerns over



the instances of AI-generated material having been used carelessly, even in the Supreme Court, including reference to citations and authorities that do not exist, Justice Nath said false citations are not merely technical mistakes; they strike at the integrity of legal submissions

and the credibility of the adjudicatory process itself.

"But a tool must remain a tool. It cannot replace the trained mind of a lawyer, the ethical responsibility of an officer of the court or the disciplined judgment required of a judge," Justice Nath said.

PUBLIC NOTICE

I have changed my name from (Old Name) Mohd Yaqoob Khan S/o Gh Nabi Khan to (New Name) Mohammad Yaqoob Khan S/o Ghulam Nabi Khan. In future i will be known as (New Name) Mohammad Yaqoob Khan S/o Ghulam Nabi Khan. If anybody is having any objection he/ she may contact passport office, Srinagar within 7 days. After 7 days no objection will be accepted.

Mohammad Yaqoob Khan
S/o Ghulam Nabi Khan
Passport no. N1537842
R/o Kuzwera Chadoora Budgam

GOVERNMENT OF JAMMU & KASHMIR

Office of the Executive Engineer, Mechanical & Hospitals Division Baramulla

e-mail, ID: xenmhd.bla@jk.gov.in

CORRIGENDUM-I

Subject: - Extension of Critical Dates of e-NIT No. 106 of 2025-26; Dated: - 09-03-2026

Reference: - Tender IDs: - 2026_PWDJK_305658_1

Due to administrative reasons, and with reference to the above-cited e-NIT, the critical dates are hereby extended as follows:

S. No	Description	Re-Scheduled date
1	Date of Downloading	09-03-2026 (06:15 PM) to 23-03-2026 (06:00 PM)
2	Date of uploading	09-03-2026 (06:30 PM) to 23-03-2026 (06:55 PM)
3	Due date of opening of tender	24-03-2026 (01:00 PM)

Sd/-
Executive Engineer
Mechanical & Hospitals Division Baramulla

No:-M&HDB/TS/4842-44
Dated: - 14-03-2026

DIPK-11866/25
DATED: 14-03-2026

Movies Schedule

Sunday, 15th March

DHURANDHAR (A)
HINDI - 02:40 PM

O' ROMEO (A)
HINDI - 11:00 AM, 06:45 PM

CALL 95416 13868 FOR ASSISTANCE WITH TICKETS

TICKETS AT: www.bookmyshow.com | www.inoxmovies.com
Paytm, Innox App, or directly from the booking counter at the cinema.

Government of Jammu and Kashmir Health & Medical Education Department Human Resource Management Branch Civil Secretariat, J&K, Jammu

NOTIFICATION

Jammu, the 10th of March, 2026

Subject: Tentative Seniority List of Chief Medical Officers and equivalents (Retired/In-service) of Health and Family Welfare (Gazetted) Service as on 01.01.2026.

Whereas, the Final seniority list of 70 Chief Medical Officers and equivalents was issued vide Government Order No. 213- HME of 2015 dated 10.06.2015 by the Health and Medical Education Department;

Whereas, on the recommendation of DPC/JKPSC, 95 BMOs/Medical Officers were regularized/confirmed as Chief Medical Officers and equivalents vide Govt. Order No. 296- JK(HME) of 2023 dated 10.04.2023.

Whereas, a final seniority list of only 24 Chief Medical Officers and equivalents was issued vide Government Order No. 796- JK(HME) of 2023 dated 26.09.2023;

Whereas, the names of 59 Chief Medical Officers and equivalents were inadvertently not incorporated in the aforementioned final seniority list, which now requires to be updated;

Whereas, the instant matter has been examined and it has been decided to incorporate the names of 59 leftover confirmed CMOs and equivalents (retired) in the updated seniority list;

Now, therefore, the tentative seniority list of Chief Medical Officers and equivalents of the J&K Health and Family Welfare (Gazetted) Service as it stood on 01.01.2026, forming Annexure- A of this notification is notified for information of all the concerned. Any CMO and equivalent who is aggrieved with the position assigned to him/her can make an appeal/file their objection under the relevant provisions of J&K Civil Service (Classification, Control and Appeal) Rules, 1956, before the Human Resource Management (HRM) Branch of the Health and Medical Education Department within a period of 07 days from the date of issue of this Notification.

The tentative seniority list will be available on the official website of H&ME Department www.hme.jk.gov.in. The list shall also be available in the Directorate of Health Services Jammu/Kashmir and Directorate of Family Welfare.

Sd/-
(M. Raju) IAS
Commissioner/Secretary to Government

No: HME/HRM/34/2023- 02(cc No. 7200610)
Dated: 10.03.2026

DIPK-11907/25
DATED: 14-03-2026

Trump threatens Iran's oil infrastructure after US bombs strategic island

AP

Dubai, Mar 14: President Donald Trump said US forces "obliterated" military targets on Iran's Kharg Island, home to the main terminal that handles the country's oil exports. The speaker of the Iranian parliament had warned that such strikes would provoke a new level of retaliation.

Meanwhile, an American official said 2,500 more Marines and an amphibious assault ship were sent to the Middle East nearly two weeks into the US-Israeli war with the Islamic Republic.

Iran has continued to launch widespread missile and drone attacks on Israel and neighbouring Gulf states, and has effectively closed the Strait of Hormuz, through which a fifth of the world's traded oil passes, even as US and Israeli warplanes pummel military and other targets across Iran.

2 tankers are loading oil from Iran's Kharg Island, a vessel-tracker says

According to TankerTrackers, two tankers were loading oil on Kharg on Saturday, hours after the US said it struck Iranian military facilities there.

Lebanon's Health Ministry says 26 paramedics have been killed by Israeli strikes

Another 51 paramedics and medical workers have been wounded since the latest round of Israel-Hezbollah fighting began on March 2.

The latest strike on Friday night in the southern village of Burj Qalaouiyah hit a health care centre, killing 12 people



and seriously wounding one. A search is ongoing for four people who are still under the rubble, the ministry said.

The ministry said that Israel has been intentionally targeting medical workers, adding that claims by Israel's military spokesman that ambulances are being used for military purposes are pretexts to justify the attacks.

Earlier Saturday, the Israeli military's Arabic spokesman said Hezbollah is widely using ambulances for military purposes. He said the militant group should stop, or the Israeli military will act.

UAE reports drone and missile attacks. Nine ballistic missiles and 33 drones were fired Saturday toward

the United Arab Emirates, the Defence Ministry said.

It said the total number of projectiles fired at the country since Feb. 28 included 1,600 drones, 294 ballistic missiles and 15 cruise missiles. The attacks have killed six people and wounded 141 others, it said.

Iranian lawmaker says Ukraine's drone support makes it a legitimate war target

In a post on X Saturday, Ebrahim Azizi, the head of Iran's parliamentary committee on national security and foreign policy, said that by providing drone support to Israel, Ukraine has "effectively become involved in the war." He said the entire country became a target for Iran.

BCCI to felicitate T20 World Cup-winning Indian team at Naman Awards

PTI

Mumbai, Mar 14: The Suryakumar Yadav-led Indian team, which scripted history by winning the T20 World Cup, will be felicitated by the BCCI during its annual 'Naman Awards' ceremony here on Sunday.

The highlight of the BCCI Naman Awards 2026 will be the felicitation of all five Indian teams that have captured ICC titles recently, a historic first, the Indian cricket board announced on Saturday.

The Gautam Gambhir-coached side defeated New Zealand by 96 runs in the final in Ahmedabad on March 8 to become the first team to win the T20 World Cup three times, the first to successfully defend the title and the first to achieve the feat on home soil.

The ceremony will also honour the other Indian sides who lifted ICC trophies in the recent past, including the senior women's team that won the ODI World Cup 2025, the men's



team that clinched the ICC Champions Trophy 2025, the Under-19 Cricket World Cup 2026 and the women's U-19 T20 World Cup team of 2025.

Meanwhile, the BCCI also officially confirmed several individual honours that were already known earlier this week.

India's Test and ODI captain Shubman Gill will receive the Polly Umrigar Award for Best International Cricketer (Men) for the 2024-25 season, while Smriti Mandhana will be honoured as the Best International Cricketer

(Women) for the fifth time in her career.

Former stalwarts Roger Binny and Rahul Dravid will be conferred the Col. C.K. Nayudu Lifetime Achievement Award, the board's highest honour, while former India captain Mithali Raj will receive the BCCI Lifetime Achievement Award for Women.

Binny, a member of India's 1983 Cricket World Cup-winning team and the tournament's highest wicket-taker, later served the game as coach, selector and BCCI president from 2022 to 2025. Dravid, one

of India's greatest batters with over 24,000 international runs, also played a key role in shaping the country's next generation of cricketers and was the head coach when India won the T20 World Cup in the previous edition in 2024.

Among other awardees, Ira Jadhav will receive the Jagmohan Dalmiya Trophy for Best Woman Cricketer (Domestic), while Shafali Verma will be honoured as the Best Woman Cricketer in the Senior Domestic One-Day format.

Ayush Mhatre will receive the Lala Amarnath Award for Best All-Rounder in domestic limited-overs competitions, while Vidarbha's Harsh Dubey will get the award for Best All-Rounder in the Ranji Trophy.

The Mumbai Cricket Association will also be recognised as the best performing state association in BCCI domestic tournaments after winning four titles and finishing runners-up in two competitions during the season.

White House now begging world, including India, to buy Russian oil: Iran FM

PTI

Dubai, Mar 14: Iranian Foreign Minister Abbas Araghchi has said the US, despite "bullying India" to end Russian oil imports, is now begging them to buy crude from Moscow, two weeks after its war with Iran.

"The US spent months on bullying India into ending oil imports from Russia," said Araghchi on Friday in a post on social media platform X.

"After two weeks of war with Iran, White House is now begging the world — including India — to buy Russian crude," he added.

This comes after, on March 5, the US issued a 30-day waiver allowing India to buy Russian oil, having previously imposed



heavy sanctions related to the war in Ukraine.

Calling out Europe's stance on the conflict in West Asia, the minister termed the war on Iran "illegal" and said that Europe thought backing an illegal war on Iran would win US support against Russia.

He even termed the current stance of the Trump administration towards

the purchase of Russian crude oil as "Pathetic".

Starting February 28, the US and Israel launched a joint attack on Iran, which came after days of build-up with US President Donald Trump ramping up the pressure on Tehran to agree to a new deal on its nuclear programme.

Iran's retaliation escalated the war to the entire Gulf region.

This could be Dhoni's 'last season', says Irfan Pathan



PTI

New Delhi, Mar 14: Former India all-rounder Irfan Pathan believes the upcoming edition of the Indian Premier League could be the "last time" fans see MS Dhoni turning out for Chennai Super Kings.

As the 2026 IPL approaches, once again the talks surrounding Dhoni's retirement has again gathered pace.

The speculation intensified after CSK traded Sanju Samson from Rajasthan Royals, a move that many felt could allow the veteran to further minimise his on-field involvement this season while continuing to mentor the side.

"CSK is incomplete without MS Dhoni. This season might be the last time we see him in the yellow jersey and it's tough to imagine CSK and the IPL without him,"

Irfan said on JioHotstar's 'Game Plan'.

"As soon as the IPL comes around, we start seeing Mahendra Singh Dhoni again, which means he is fully prepared for it, and he is looking very fit as well," he added.

The 44-year-old has already joined the CSK camp in Chennai earlier this month and has been training alongside the squad led by captain Ruturaj Gaikwad.

Pathan said Dhoni's role could increasingly revolve around guiding the group and helping the next generation of leaders develop within the side.

"This season, Dhoni will play an important role in bringing everyone together. I'm not sure how many games he will play. But his presence in the dressing room will help a lot."

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

رمضان المبارك

1447 H / 2026 CE

وقت افطار	اعتتام سحری	رمضان المبارک	تاریخ
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06:34 PM	05:30 AM	17	07
06:35 PM	05:28 AM	18	08
06:36 PM	05:27 AM	19	09
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06:38 PM	05:25 AM	21	11
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06:44 PM	05:14 AM	29	19
06:45 PM	05:12 AM	30	20

وقت افطار	اعتتام سحری	رمضان المبارک	تاریخ
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06:33 PM	05:34 AM	14	04
06:33 PM	05:33 AM	15	05

DUA FOR SEHRI
وَيَصُومُ غَدَ تَوَيْتَ مِنْ شَهْرِ رَمَضَانَ
I intend to keep the fast for tomorrow in the month of Ramadan

DUA FOR IFTAR
اللَّهُمَّ إِنِّي لَكَ صُمْتُ وَبِكَ آمَنْتُ [وَعَلَيْكَ تَوَكَّلْتُ] وَعَلَى رِزْقِكَ أَفْطَرْتُ
O Allah! I fasted for You and I believe in You and I put my trust in You and I break my fast with Your sustenance

Kashmir Thunder
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