



Under PM Modi's leadership country freed from Naxalism, terrorism in J&K: Amit Shah

Says Prime Minister has launched 'Demography Mission' to study demographic changes

KT News Desk

New Delhi, Jul 09: Union Home Minister Amit Shah on Thursday said that under the leadership of Prime Minister Narendra Modi, the country has been freed from Naxalism and terrorism in Jammu & Kashmir and the North-East, which is an indicator of our collective success.

Addressing the Land Border Districts' Superintendents of Police Conference-2026 in the National Capital, Shah, according to the news agency—Kashmir News Observer (KNO) said, "In the next three years, we will inflict serious damage on the narcotics menace and achieve victory over it as well. A strong system is being built to make the country completely infiltration-free and to ensure that infiltration does not happen at all."

Shah said that earlier, problems were permanent and solutions were temporary. "In the Modi government, we are striking at the roots of the problems and making the solutions permanent," he added.

Shah said that the conference



has given an institutional shape to the comprehensive approach towards border security. He added that in the coming times, we will also move forward holistically to ensure coastal border security.

He said that this conference will focus on discussing problems related to border security, addressing concerns regarding their resolution, and formulating appropriate policy measures in this direction.

Shah said that India's border security system, based on the vision of a Smart Border, will

become the most modern in the world in the coming years.

He said that the PM Modi led government, along with the associated border guarding forces, state and district administrations, relevant stakeholders of the Government of India, and local citizens - through their mutual integration - is constructing a strong quadrangular security grid.

Shah emphasized that a secure border, prosperous border region, and a vigilant society together can make the country secure.

INVESTMENT IN BORDER INFRASTRUCTURE INCREASED BY 400%

Shah said that PM Modi led Government has increased investment in border infrastructure by 400 percent and has adopted a scientific approach to strengthening border security.

He said that under the Vibrant Villages Programme, Prime Minister Narendra Modi has described the country's last village as its first village. "Under this initiative, efforts are being made to prevent migration, generate employment, and ensure 100% implementation of government welfare schemes."

PM MODI LAUNCHES DEMOGRAPHY MISSION

Shah said that Prime Minister Modi has launched the 'Demography Mission' to study demographic changes, identify abnormal factors contributing to demographic growth, and recommend measures to prevent such changes in the future.

He said that PM Modi led Government is committed to curbing abnormal demographic growth caused by unnatural factors | [More on P6](#)

Amarnath Yatra 2026

LG directs strict legal action against fraudulent registration practices

Calls for maintaining close coordination, vigilance

Lauds coordinated efforts of civil, police admin

Says surge in number of yatris positive sign for J&K tourism



KT News Desk

Srinagar, Jul 09: Calling for strict legal action against those found involved in fraudulent registration practices of Amarnath Yatris, Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha on Thursday emphasized the

need to maintain the close coordination and vigilance in ensuring effective crowd management, hassle-free registration process and dissemination of timely information updates to the pilgrims throughout the pilgrimage.

According | [More on P6](#)

Pilgrim count nears 2 lakh; 8,150 arrive in Kashmir

28,583 devotees pay obeisance on day 7

Umairsar Gul Ganie

Srinagar, Jul 09: The annual Amarnath Yatra is all set to cross the 2-lakh pilgrim mark on Friday, with 28,583 devotees paying obeisance at the holy cave shrine on Thursday.

According to the details available with the news agency—Kashmir News Observer (KNO) the eighth batch of 8,150 pilgrims arrived at twin base camps after leaving from Jammu towards Kashmir under tight security arrangements this morning. | [More on P6](#)

CS directs strengthening of Yatra facilities, track tiling

KT News Desk

Chief Secretary, Atal Dulloo on Thursday chaired a high-level review meeting to assess the arrangements put in place

for the ongoing Shri Amarnath Ji Yatra-2026 and issued directions for further strengthening the facilities and services being provided to the pilgrims to ensure the safe, smooth and | [More on P6](#)

Farooq invites 52 leaders to Jantar Mantar for J&K statehood protest

Sonia Gandhi, BJP J&K chief, Mirwaiz, Grand Mufti among invitees

KT News Desk

Srinagar, Jul 09: National Conference President Dr. Farooq Abdullah on Thursday wrote to 52 national and regional leaders, inviting them to join a protest at Jantar Mantar, New Delhi, to demand the restoration of statehood to J&K.

The invitation letters have been sent to top leaders of the INDIA bloc, non-aligned parties, as well as J&K-based regional parties.

In the letter, a copy of which is in possession of news agency—Kashmir News Observer (KNO), the NC president described the protest as a "solemn and democratic" demonstration against the "unconscionable delay" in restoring statehood to Jammu & Kashmir.

Referring to August 5, 2019, when the Union Government

abrogated Article 370 and downgraded J&K into two Union Territories, the NC president said the Centre had assured Parliament that statehood would be restored "at an appropriate time."

"The people of Jammu & Kashmir have remained dignified and patient... We did not take to the streets. We went, instead, to the ballot box," he wrote, adding that elections were held peacefully in 2024 and an elected government under CM Omar Abdullah is now functioning.

In the letter, he wrote that statehood remains withheld and elusive, and that no explanation is forthcoming and no timeline is being offered.

"And yet, Statehood-that most basic constitutional right, that most elementary unit of self-governance in a federal democracy -remains withheld and | [More on P6](#)

Tourism without sustainability 'unqualified disaster': CM Omar

Says J&K must shift from volume to value tourism for sustainable future

Rehan Qayoom Mir

Srinagar, Jul 09: Calling tourism without sustainability an "unqualified disaster", Chief Minister Omar Abdullah on Thursday said Jammu and Kashmir must gradually transform from a volume-driven tourism model to a value-based tourism economy.

Addressing the inaugural session of the Conclave on Sustainable Tourism Planning at the Sher-i-Kashmir International Convention Centre (SKICC) here, Omar, as per the news agency—Kashmir News Observer (KNO) said, "The future of the sector depends on planned development, environmental protection and meaningful participation of local communities."

CM Omar said that Jammu and Kashmir has reached a stage where it must decide whether it wants to continue pursuing high tourist numbers



or focus on generating greater value through sustainable tourism. "If we do not build sustainability into tourism, it may survive for a few years, but it will not survive in the long run. Tourism without sustainability is an unqualified disaster," he said.

The Chief Minister said the answer to whether Jammu and

Kashmir should remain a volume-based destination or become a value-based one should shape every tourism policy and master plan in the future.

"Do we want to earn because we charge 100 tourists one rupee each, or because we charge one tourist 100 rupees? If we answer that question honestly and prepare our | [More on P6](#)

Army Chief assesses operational readiness along LoC

Visits forward areas in Poonch, Rajouri, Sunderbani

Sajid Raina

Srinagar, Jul 09: A day after assessing operational preparedness in Kashmir, Army Chief General Dhiraj Seth on Thursday reviewed the security situation along the Line of Control (LoC) and the counter-insurgency grid in the Pir Panjal region.

An official told the news agency—Kashmir News Observer (KNO) that the Army chief visited forward areas in Poonch, Rajouri and Sunderbani, where he was briefed by the White Knight Corps on the prevailing security environment, operational deployments and the overall counter-insurgency framework along the LoC.

The official said that senior commanders apprised the Army Chief of the surveillance architecture, field-level innovations, integrated operational readiness and the progress of infrastructure development in



the forward areas.

General Seth reviewed initiatives aimed at strengthening connectivity and improving facilities in border villages, besides assessing ongoing people-centric programmes being implemented in the region, the official added.

Pertinently, on Wednesday, the Army Chief had visited the headquarters of the Srinagar-based Chinara Corps, where he reviewed the overall security situation in the Valley, operational | [More on P6](#)

Heat persists across J&K; MeT predicts heavy rain from Jul 11

Sajid Raina

Srinagar, Jul 09: The Meteorological (MeT) Centre Srinagar on Thursday said Jammu and Kashmir is likely to witness hot and humid weather over the next few days, while warning of heavy rainfall, flash floods and landslides in vulnerable areas of the Jammu division between July 11 and 12.

According to details shared by the MeT department to the news agency—Kashmir News Observer (KNO), the weather is expected to remain generally hot and humid on July 9 and 10, with scattered spells of rain and thundershowers across the Union Territory. A few places in the Jammu division may also experience brief but intense heavy showers.

On July 11 and 12, many places are likely to receive one or two spells of rain and thundershowers, with isolated heavy rainfall and intense showers expected over the Chenab Valley and Pir Panjal range of Jammu division.

The weather is expected to remain largely hot and humid from July 13 to 16, | [More on P6](#)

KNO IMPACT

Agri Dept assures support to Pulwama's vermi compost entrepreneur

Promises technical, institutional assistance for expanding organic farming venture

Jahangeer Ganaie

Pulwama, Jul 09: A day after Kashmir News Observer (KNO) highlighted the inspiring journey of a young Physics Honours graduate from Pulwama who established a vermi compost production unit under the Holistic Agriculture Development Programme (HADP), a team of officials from the Agriculture Department on Thursday visited his village to assess the project and encourage the budding entrepreneur.

According to the details available with news agency—Kashmir News Observer (KNO) acting on the directions of the Director Agriculture Kashmir Sartaj Ahmad Shah, Chief Agriculture Officer (CAO) Pulwama Waheed-ur-Rehman and other

departmental officials, visited Laribal village in Kakapora to inspect the vermi compost production unit established by progressive farmer Haroon Rashid Bhat.

During the visit, the officers inspected the functioning of the unit, reviewed the composting process and interacted with the entrepreneur regarding production, marketing prospects and future expansion plans.

The officials appreciated Haroon's initiative, describing it as a model of how educated youth can successfully venture into agriculture-based entrepreneurship while contributing to sustainable farming and rural employment.

The Chief Agriculture Officer assured the entrepreneur that the Agriculture Department | [More on P6](#)

Census 2027

J&K completes House Listing Ops digitally across 24,071 blocks

KT News Desk

Srinagar, Jul 09: The first phase of Census 2027, namely the House Listing Operations (HLO), has been successfully completed across the Union Territory of Jammu & Kashmir, marking a significant milestone with

The meeting besides the Director, Census Operations, J&K and Ladakh was attended by Commissioner Secretary, H&UDD; Commissioner Secretary, Education; DG, Planning and other senior officers from the Department of Census Operations.

Chairing the meeting, the Chief Secretary appreciated the dedicated efforts of the Directorate of Census Operations, district administrations and thousands of field functionaries for successfully completing the first phase of Census 2027 within the stipulated timeframe.

He emphasized the importance of maintaining the same



momentum during the forthcoming Census activities and called upon all stakeholder departments to continue extending full cooperation for the timely and successful completion of the remaining phases of Census 2027.

The achievement was highlighted during the 5th Meeting of the Union Territory Level Census Coordination Committee (UTLCCC), chaired by the Chief Secretary wherein the Chief

Principal Census Officer and Director, Directorate of Census Operations, Jammu & Kashmir and Ladakh, Amit Sharma presented a comprehensive review of the field operations and outlined the roadmap for the upcoming phases of Census 2027.

During the presentation, Amit Sharma informed that the month-long House Listing Operations were conducted successfully from 1st June to 30th June, 2026, | [More on P6](#)

Govt launches pilot project to revive Kashmir's almond industry

Jahangeer Ganaie

Pulwama, Jul 09: In a significant initiative aimed at reviving Kashmir's centuries-old almond industry, the Department of Horticulture has launched a pilot project on high-density almond cultivation in South Kashmir's Pulwama district.

According to the details available with the news agency—Kashmir News Observer (KNO) the project, spread over 100 kanals at the Fruit Plant Nursery in Nowgam area of Nawa, is expected to demonstrate the potential of modern cultivation techniques in increasing almond production and making the crop economically viable once again.

An Official said the pilot project has been introduced as part of the department's efforts to reverse the steady decline in almond cultivation across the Valley. By adopting high-density plantation techniques, the department hopes to improve productivity, ensure better orchard management, enhance farmers' earnings and | [More on P6](#)

Mutton Dealers' Issues

Satish Sharma secures breakthrough during meetings in Punjab

KT News Desk

CHANDIGARH, JULY 9: In a significant step towards resolving the long-pending issues faced by the mutton dealers, Minister for Food, Civil Supplies & Consumer Affairs, Information Technology, Youth Services & Sports, and Science & Technology, Satish Sharma on Thursday held a series of meetings with the Punjab Government, resulting in immediate directions for addressing the concerns of the trading community.

The Minister, as per an official statement, held detailed discussions with the Punjab's Animal and Sheep Husbandry Minister, the Chief Secretary of Punjab, the Secretary, Science & Technology and the Secretary, Rural Development & Panchayati Raj.



The primary focus of the meetings was to find an immediate and practical resolution to the issues affecting the mutton dealers, which have been causing hardships to the traders and impacting the smooth movement of livestock. During the

marathon deliberations, Satish Sharma strongly projected the concerns of the mutton dealers. He emphasized the need for coordinated action between the governments of Jammu and Kashmir and Punjab to facilitate hassle-free movement of livestock

while ensuring compliance with all regulatory requirements.

Responding positively to the Minister's intervention, the Punjab Government issued on-the-spot instructions to the concerned departments to take immediate steps for resolving the issues. The decisions taken during the meetings are expected to significantly ease the difficulties being faced by the mutton dealers and ensure smoother coordination between Punjab and J&K.

Expressing satisfaction over the outcome of the meetings, Satish Sharma said that safeguarding the interests of traders and ensuring uninterrupted supply of essential commodities remains a priority of the Government. He said the positive response from the Punjab Government reflects the spirit of cooperative federalism and interstate coordination in resolving

issues affecting the livelihoods of thousands of people.

The meetings also featured extensive discussions on strengthening cooperation in the field of animal husbandry. Both sides explored measures to improve livestock management, disease control, scientific breeding practices and veterinary services through greater collaboration and exchange of best practices.

In separate discussions with the senior officials, the Minister also reviewed opportunities for enhanced cooperation in the fields of Science & Technology, innovation, digital governance and research. He stressed the need to leverage technology for improving public service delivery and promoting sustainable development.

Director Information, DIPR employees condole demise of Majeeb Ahmad's son

KT News Desk

SRINAGAR, JULY 09: Director Information and Public Relations, Shreya Singhal Thursday expressed profound grief and sorrow on demise of the son of Majeeb Ahmad, Information Officer, DIPR.

During a condolence meeting held at Media Complex Srinagar, the Director Information, as per an official statement, conveyed her deepest condolences to Majeeb Ahmad and his family during this hour of immense grief. She prayed for peace of the departed soul and patience upon the bereaved family to endure this profound loss.

Meanwhile, DIPR employees also condoled the demise of beloved son Majeeb Ahmad. They also expressed heartfelt sympathies with the bereaved family and prayed for strength and courage to them to bear this irreparable loss.

The officers and employees also observed a two-minute silence and prayed for eternal peace to the departed soul.

Among others, Joint Director Information (Hqrs), Dr. Zahoor Ahmad Raina; officers and officials of DIPR also attended the condolence meet.

GOVERNMENT OF JAMMU & KASHMIR
OFFICE OF THE EXECUTIVE ENGINEER SEWERAGE & DRAINAGE DIVISION No. IIND SRINAGAR.

Phone/ Fax No. 0194-2950058

GIST _ OF _ E-NIT _ No :- 09 _S&D IIND OF 2026-27
D A T E D :- 06 - 07 - 2026

For and on behalf of the Commissioner Srinagar Municipal Corporation, e- tenders are invited on Percentage basis from the Registered PWD Civil Contractors whose registration cards are valid in terms of standing rules, for the below mentioned works strictly as per the terms and conditions given hereunder:

Sl. No.	Name of work	Estt. Cost of work incld. Depttl. materials (Amount in lacs)	Earnest Money	Class of Contractor	Time of completion.	Cost of Tender Document in the shape of Treasury Challan (Rs.)	Head of Account
1.	Construction of drain from house of Zahoor Ahmad Kuchay to house of Ghulam Mohammad Ronga at Khandabhaban Nawa Kadal	Rs.2.47	Rs.4940-	DEE	15 Days	Rs.100/-	District Capex 2026-27

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 the schedule of dates given hereunder:-

01.	Date of issue of Tender Notice	06.07.2026
02.	Period of down loading of bidding documents	06.07.2026 from 04.00 P.M to 14.07.2026 up to 4.00 PM
03.	Bid Submission Start Date	06.07.2026 from 04.30 AM
04.	Bid Submission end Date	14.07.2026 up to 4.00 PM
05.	Date & time of opening of Bids on line	15.07.2026 at 11.30 PM in the office of Executive Engineer, Sewerage & Drainage Division No. II, SMC, Daresk Kadal Srinagar or any subsequent date convenient date to the tender Opening Authority
06.	List of soft copies to be uploaded	Scanned copy of Treasury challan (cost of tender document) with Sl. No. of NIT/ Name of the work (without overwriting). Scanned copy of CDR/ FDR/BG (Earnest Money)(without Over writing). Scanned copy of GST Registration with latest clearance and PAN Card. Scanned copy of JKPWDOMS Registration card with latest renewal on JKPWDOMS PORTAL, Cell No./ e-mail ID and correspondence address. NIT (Terms and conditions) duly signed by the bidder. BOQ.

TERMS AND CONDITIONS

I. In case the bids are found unbalanced / abnormally low bid price, the Successful bidder has to produce/ deposit Performance Security/ additional performance security in shape of FDR/CDR/BG pledged to Executive Engineer Sewerage & Drainage Division 2nd, SMC Srinagar within three days after opening the bids, as per the circular instructions of the Finance Department Circular No. FD Code/441/2021-02 158 Dated:- 08.08.2025. The Performance Security /Additional performance security shall be released after the successful completion of Defective Liability (DLP) period of the work on the recommendation of AEE concerned.

II. Where the bid price is below 10% but not below 20% of the Advertised cost put to bid, the additional performance guarantee / security percentage shall be incremented by 0.1% for every percentage of Bid Price Below 10% of advertised cost put to bid starting at 11% with the additional bid performance guarantee being 0.1% and this Additional Performance Guarantee percentage shall be applied on the bid Price.

III. Where the Bid Price is 20% or more below the advertised cost put to bid the Additional Performance Grantee percentage shall be incremented by 0.2&% for every percentage of Bid Price Below 20% of project cost put to bid in addition to 0.1% of the bid price and this additional performance guarantee percentage shall be applied on the bid price.

IV. Additional Performance Security shall be treated as part of Performance Security.

V. In case of tie bids the department shall identify the tied bidder and shall select the LI based on the draw lots, in presence of tied bidders, if they chose to be present

VI. The Successful Bidder has to produce Hard Copies within three days after opening of Bids.

VII. Bidders are advised to read the NIT carefully before participate in the Bidding process.

VIII. Treasury Challan (Tender Document Fee) should be a fresh i.e, between the date of issue of tender notice & bid submission end date.

IX. The payment of work on account of work done shall be made under rules subject to availability of funds under the prescribed head of account.

X. The tender receiving authority reserves the right to accept or reject or cancel any bid / tender / NIT or all tenders without assigning any reason therefor.

XI. In terms of Government order Circular No.01 (Adm) FD of 2025 Dated:- 08.07.2025 that "Every participating supplier/contractor to mandatory disclose the bank account number which is linked with their GSTIN at the time of bid submission. No payment shall be released by the Government Department /Agency to any other bank account except the one linked with the GST registered number of the successful bidder"

XIII Additional Terms & Conditions in terms of Circular Instructions issued under No. 7760278 HUD-Plan/106/2026-01 Dated:- 06.06.2026 shall also be applicable which are as under.

INDICATIVE TIME LINE FOR EXECUTION OF DEVELOPMENT WORKS

Sr No.	Estimated Cost	Execution Period
1.	Up to ₹2.00 lakh	1 month
2.	₹2.00 lakh – ₹10.00 lakh	Up to 2 months
3.	₹10.00 lakh – ₹25.00 lakh	2–3 months
4.	Above ₹25.00 lakh – ₹1.00 crore	3–4 months
5.	Above ₹1.00 crore – ₹5.00 crore	4–8 months
6.	Above ₹5.00 crore – ₹20.00 crore	8–12 months
7.	Above ₹20.00 crore – ₹100.00 crore	12–18 months
8.	Above ₹100.00 crore	18–24 months

Building Projects.

Sr No.	Project Type	Execution Period
1.	Small office building / health centre	6–9 months
2.	School building	6–9 months
3.	District office complex	6–12 months
4.	Hospital building	6–12 months
5.	Multi-storey office complex	6–12 months
6.	Large institutional campus	6–18 months

Additional Conditions.

a. Additional time may be allowed for scattered works, congested sites, difficult terrain, or specialized services if justified ground.

b. Start of work: generally, start within 7 days of the notice to proceed.

c. Milestones are prescribed during execution (¼, ½, and ¾) progress stages.

d. Defect Liability Period: minimum 3 years.

e. Liquidated damages: 1% of contract value per week of delay, subject to a maximum of 10%.

f. Time of treated as an essential condition of the contract.

g. Extension of time (EOT) may be granted where justified by hindrances or Departmental delays.

NO.S&D-II/ 1398
Dated:- 06.07.2026

DIPK-3042/26
DATED: 09-07-2026

SD/-
Executive Engineer,
S&D Division IInd, Sgr.

Khushalsar-Gilsar Lake System

VC LCMA inspects, reviews conservation, demarcation measures

KT News Desk

SRINAGAR, JULY 09: Vice Chairman, J&K Lake Conservation & Management Authority (LCMA), Khurshid Ahmad Shah, Thursday conducted an extensive inspection tour of the Khushalsar Gilsar lake system, covering Gil Kadal, Sazgaripora, Saidapora, and other adjoining areas in and around the waterbodies to review the progress of conservation and protection measures being undertaken by the Authority.

The Vice Chairman, as per an official statement, was accompanied by the Superintending Engineer, Collector, all Executive Engineers, Assistant Executive Engineers (AEEs), Junior Engineers (JEs), Revenue officials, and other officers and officials of the Authority.

During the visit, the Vice Chairman undertook a comprehensive on the spot review of the demarcation exercise being carried out by the field teams. He



inspected the identified land parcels and assessed the progress achieved in the field.

Stressing the importance of clearly establishing the boundaries of the water bodies and their protected areas, he directed the demarcation teams to expedite the pegging and marking of all identified land to ensure proper identification, protection, and effective monitoring of these ecologically significant assets.

Interacting with the field staff, the Vice Chairman emphasized the need

for sustained vigilance and coordinated efforts in carrying out conservation activities. He instructed the concerned officers to ensure that the demarcation work is completed in a time bound manner while maintaining complete accuracy and transparency. He further directed that regular inspections be conducted to prevent any encroachment or unauthorized activity within the demarcated areas.

Reviewing the condition of the water body, the Vice Chairman directed that the Water Master and barge be

mobilized and shifted to the Khushalsar Gilsar water body on priority Thursday itself so that cleaning and other restoration activities can be intensified without any delay. He emphasized that all necessary logistical arrangements should be made immediately to ensure that the machinery becomes operational at the earliest.

The Vice Chairman also reviewed the existing protective measures along vulnerable stretches of the Khushalsar Gilsar water bodies. Recognizing the need for strengthening the physical protection of the lake boundaries, he directed the Engineering Wing of LCMA to immediately prepare a detailed proposal for installation of chain link fencing around the identified vulnerable locations. He observed that appropriate fencing would help secure the demarcated land, discourage encroachments, and support the long-term preservation and restoration of the water bodies.

District Admin Bandipora sets up Plastic Checkpoint at Tragbal to protect Gurez Valley's fragile ecology



KT News Desk

BANDIPORA, JULY 09: In a significant step towards preserving the pristine environment of Gurez Valley, the District Administration Bandipora Thursday established a Plastic Checkpoint at Tragbal on the Road to Gurez with the active support of the Indian Army and launched the 'Polythene-Free Gurez' Campaign to curb the use of single-use polythene and plastic and promote sustainable tourism in the valley.

On the occasion, the Deputy Commissioner Bandipora, Indu Kanwal Chib, as per an official statement, said that the initiative, envisioned in line with the vision of the Hon'ble Prime Minister of India for environmental conservation and cleanliness, has been launched under Swachh Bharat Mission (Grameen) and would be implemented in letter and spirit.

The Deputy Commissioner inaugurated the newly established Plastic Checkpoint at Tragbal on the Road to Gurez, where she interacted with visitors and tourists proceeding towards Gurez Valley. She appealed to them to cooperate with the District Administration in making Gurez a polythene-free tourist destination

by avoiding the use of single-use plastic and adopting eco-friendly alternatives.

The Deputy Commissioner said that with the opening of Gurez Valley for the tourist season, a considerable increase in polythene and plastic waste had been noticed. She stressed that protecting the valley's fragile ecosystem was a collective responsibility and called upon all visitors to actively support the campaign by carrying reusable and environment-friendly materials.

To facilitate the campaign, the District Administration, with the active support of the Indian Army, established the Plastic Checkpoint at Tragbal on the Road to Gurez, where sustainable and environment-friendly alternatives, including steel water bottles and cloth bags, had been made available for travellers. In addition, a washroom facility and a food point were also established for the convenience of visitors.

The Deputy Commissioner urged tourists and other visitors to extend their wholehearted support to the initiative and contribute towards keeping Gurez clean, green and free from plastic pollution.

CS sets monthly targets for PM-SGMBY, Solarization Mission

KT News Desk

Srinagar, July 9: Chief Secretary, Atal Dulloo on Thurs-day chaired a comprehensive review meeting to assess the progress achieved under the PM Surya Ghar: Muft Bijli Yojana (PM-SGMBY) and the ongoing Solarization of Government Buildings Programme across the Union Territory.

The meeting was attended by Additional Chief Secretary, Power Development Department; Additional Chief Secretary, Finance; Divisional Commissioner, Jammu & Kashmir; Managing Director, JPDCL/KPDCL; CEO, JAKEDA besides representatives of several other concerned departments.

While taking this review the Chief Secretary emphasized the need to achieve the targets assigned to both the Power Distribution Companies (DISCOMs) within the stipulated timelines. He directed the concerned agencies to ensure installation of all the rooftop solar (RTS) systems pertaining to nearly 57,000 beneficiaries where vendor agreements have already been executed, so that these consumers receive the benefits of the scheme without any delay.

Stressing the importance of timely implementation, the Chief Secretary instructed the concerned departments to prepare a well-defined timeline for achieving the targets considerably before the sunset date of the PM Surya Ghar: Muft Bijli Yojana, thereby ensuring that Jammu & Kashmir fully utilizes the opportunity provided under the flagship programme of the Government of India.

Reviewing the progress of the Solarization of Government Buildings, the Chief Secretary called upon the Science & Technology Department and JAKEDA to expedite execution and ensure that all identified government buildings are brought under rooftop solar coverage in a mission mode.

He directed that over 1,400 more government buildings under the CAPEX mode and around 1,300 buildings under the RESCO mode be targeted for completion by the end of



July 2026. He also stressed the simultaneous completion of smart metering in all commissioned buildings to ensure effective net metering, accurate energy accounting and optimum utilization of the installed solar assets.

Speaking during the meeting, Additional Chief Secretary, Power Development Department, Ashwani Kumar, outlined the roadmap for bridging the existing implementation gaps and highlighted the measures being taken to further streamline execution.

He elaborated upon the strategy to strengthen inter-agency coordination, simplify operational processes and accelerate the pace of implementation so that the targets under both the PM Surya Ghar: Muft Bijli Yojana and the Solarization of Government Buildings Programme are achieved within the prescribed timelines.

Additional Chief Secretary, Finance, Shailendra Kumar, while appreciating the progress made under the scheme, suggested that districts demonstrating outstanding performance should be suitably recognized to encourage healthy competition among the implementing agencies. He particularly commended the exemplary work carried out in the Kupwara and Shopian districts in the implementation of this Yojana, and recommended that the officers and field functionaries responsible for these achievements be appropriately appreciated to motivate similar performance across the Union Territory.

The meeting was informed by the MD, KPDCL, Mehmood Ahmad Shah that under PM Surya Ghar: Muft Bijli

Yojana, the Government of India has fixed a national target of one crore residential rooftop solar installations by 31st March 2027. In line with this, Jammu & Kashmir has set a target of 83,500 residential consumers for itself, comprising 39,500 consumers under JPDCL and 44,000 consumers under KPDCL.

Reviewing the implementation status, the Chief Secretary was further informed that as on 07 July 2026, rooftop solar systems had been installed for 37,138 residential consumers across Jammu & Kashmir with a cumulative installed capacity of 133.40 MW. These installations have enabled beneficiaries to receive Central Financial Assistance amounting to Rs 291.38 crore, while the Union Territory has additionally extended Rs 10.50 crore as UT subsidy, thereby significantly reducing the financial burden on consumers and encouraging wider adoption of rooftop solar systems.

The Chief Secretary also reviewed the progress achieved under the ambitious programme for Solarization of Government Buildings, being implemented through JAKEDA under both CAPEX and RESCO modes.

The meeting was informed by CEO, JAKEDA, PN Dhar that Jammu & Kashmir has emerged as one of the leading performers in the country in this sector. The Union Territory presently ranks 3rd among all States and Union Territories in the number of government buildings solarized, with 8,131 government buildings already equipped with rooftop solar power

systems, representing 36.14 per cent of the 22,494 identified government buildings across the UT.

Additionally under the CAPEX mode, against an allocated capacity of 65 MW covering 5,500 government buildings, rooftop solar systems have already been installed on 3,338 buildings with a cumulative installed capacity of 46.30 MW. Besides these completed works, material has already been supplied for 1,462 additional buildings, while material for another 800 buildings is currently under transit, indicating substantial progress towards completion of the remaining works. The meeting was further informed that under the RES-CO model, the Government has envisaged development of 175 MW rooftop solar capacity covering approximately 8,000 government buildings. Work orders have already been issued for 1,360 buildings, with competitively discovered tariffs ranging between Rs 4.19 and Rs 5.27 per unit, ensuring economical and sustainable power generation for public institutions.

The Chief Secretary instructed all implementing agencies to maintain close inter-departmental coordination, ensure strict adherence to project timelines and continuously monitor district-wise performance. He further directed that progress under both the residential rooftop solar programme and government building solarization initiative be reviewed regularly so that Jammu & Kashmir achieves its mission of solarization within the stipulated timeframe.

Delegations call on LG Sinha



KT News Desk

Srinagar, July 09: Chander Prakash Ganga, Member of Legislative Assembly from Vijaypur called on Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha on Thursday.

He discussed various development issues and public welfare initiatives concerning Samba district. He also highlighted the need to expedite developmental works in the Purmandal block.

In the meantime, Tarun Singla, Chairman, Federation of Industries Jammu (FOIJ) and President, Bari Brahmana Industries Association (BBIA), called on Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha. Singla projected various issues of the industrial sector and also discussed important matters pertaining to sustainable industrial growth in the Union Territory. Meanwhile,

Thakur Darshan Kumar, Member of Legislative Assembly from Basohli called on Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha and submitted a concept note for es-establishment of the Indian School of Pahari Paintings at Basohli in District Kathua.

Another delegation from Frisal Kulgam led by Anayat-Ullah Rather, former Member, District Development Council called on Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha and projected various development issues of Frisal and Qaimoh blocks in Kulgam district.

Meanwhile, Acharya Swami Shri Jitendranath Maharaj, Peethadheesh, Nath Peeth, Shri Devnath Math met the Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha at Lok Bhavan.

He was accompanied by Suresh Haware, Member, Shri Amarnath ji Shrine Board, and members of Shri Dev-nath Math.

Sustainable tourism key to J&K's future: CM's Advisor

Rehan Qayoom Mir

Srinagar, Jul 09: Chief Minister Omar Abdullah's Advisor, Nasir Aslam Wani, on Thursday said Jammu and Kashmir must shift its focus from tourism promotion to sustainable tourism, warning that unregulated growth could damage destinations and threaten the sector's long-term future.

Addressing a conclave on sustainable tourism at SKICC here, Wani said the rise in tourist arrivals has brought greater responsibility to preserve destinations.

"We have achieved remarkable success in tourism promotion, but now we must preserve our destinations. If we fail to protect them, we risk losing both our identity and tourist footfall," he said.

He called for the preparation and timely implementation of realistic master plans for tourist destinations, saying delays have resulted in unregulated construction and infrastructure gaps.

Wani said the government should develop new tourism destinations instead of concentrating visitors at a few traditional hotspots.

"We should identify and develop greenfield destinations with proper road connectivity and infrastructure so that tourist flow is distributed across Jammu and Kashmir," he said.

Wani stressed that tourism infrastructure must include adequate parking, food courts, public amenities and designated spaces for local stakeholders such as pony owners, guides and vendors.

Highlighting the growing waste burden at tourist spots, Wani said scientific garbage disposal systems are



essential to preserve the Valley's natural assets.

He also pitched for regulating the carrying capacity of tourist destinations and improving traffic management to prevent congestion.

Referring to the increasing number of private vehicles entering J&K from outside, Wani suggested introducing user charges to regulate traffic and generate revenue for tourism infrastructure.

"The number of outside vehicles has increased significantly. It is time to regulate this through user charges so that congestion is reduced and revenue is generated for better infrastructure," he said.

He also called for training programmes for hotel staff, taxi drivers, pony owners and other tourism stakeholders to strengthen Kashmir's traditional hospitality.

"Our hospitality has always been our biggest strength. We need to train everyone associated with tourism so that every visitor leaves with a memorable experience and returns again," he said.

He also expressed hope that collective efforts would make Jammu and Kashmir the cleanest and most sustainable tourist destination in the country—(KNO)

J&K drafting long-term sustainable tourism strategy

Rehan Qayoom Mir

Srinagar, Jul 09: Director of Tourism Kashmir, Syed Qamar Sajad, on Wednesday said the government has begun consultations with tourism stakeholders to formulate a long-term strategy for sustainable tourism development while safeguarding the region's fragile natural resources.

Speaking to reporters on the sidelines of a one-day tourism conclave at SKICC, Sajad said the event marked the beginning of a comprehensive roadmap that will be developed in collaboration

with tourism trade bodies and officials managing destinations across Jammu and Kashmir.

The proposed framework, he said, will focus on promoting tourism while ensuring environmental conservation, stressing that Kashmir's natural resources remain the region's biggest attraction for visitors.

Highlighting the challenges posed by climate change, Sajad said global warming is a worldwide phenomenon and Jammu and Kashmir must play its part through sustained environmental initiatives.

Continued on
www.kashmirthunder.in

LoP Sharma meets BJP president Nitin Nabin

KNO

Srinagar, Jul 09: In a significant development, Leader of Opposition, Sunil Kumar Sharma on Thursday met BJP president Nitin Nabin in New Delhi, just two days after his own visit to Jammu & Kashmir.

Sources said that Sharma was called to New Delhi for an urgent meeting with Nabin. "The meeting took place in the afternoon at BJP headquarters and lasted for over one hour," sources disclosed.

Nitin Nabin was in Jammu & Kashmir on 6th and 7th of this meeting—(KNO)



Moderation urged in Kashmiri beverages

Jahangeer Ganaie

Srinagar, Jul 09: Tea and coffee are an integral part of daily life in Kashmir, with beverages such as traditional Noon Chai, Kahwa, Yellow Tea and coffee consumed in almost every household. However, health experts say that making informed choices about what, when and how much people can drink significantly reduces the risk of lifestyle diseases and improves overall well-being.

A public health awareness advisory issued by Dr. S. Muhammad Salim Khan, Professor, Department of Community Medicine, Government Medical College Srinagar, compares the nutritional value, health benefits and potential risks of the beverages most commonly consumed in Kashmir.

The advisory encourages people to limit excess sugar, salt and caffeine while adopting healthier drinking habits.

"Tea and coffee are not harmful when consumed in moderation. The real concern lies in excessive sugar, salt and

caffeine intake, which over time can contribute to obesity, hypertension, diabetes and heart disease," Dr. Khan said.

According to the advisory, plain Green Tea and traditional Kashmiri Kahwa are among the healthiest beverages due to their high antioxidant content and low calorie count.

Kahwa, prepared with green tea leaves, saffron, cinnamon, cardamom and almonds, contains only about 5 to 25 calories per cup and offers several health benefits, including improved digestion, relaxation and antioxidant protection. However, adding excessive sugar or honey may reduce these benefits.

Similarly, plain Green Tea contains just 2 to 5 calories per cup, supports metabolism, promotes heart and brain health and is rich in antioxidants. Experts recommend consuming it during the morning or afternoon while avoiding it with meals, as it may reduce iron absorption.

The advisory notes that Noon Chai, the iconic pink salted tea of Kashmir, remains an important part of the



region's culinary tradition but should be consumed in moderation because of its high salt content.

Prepared using green tea, baking soda, salt and milk, Noon Chai provides hydration, warmth and calcium when milk is added. However, excessive

consumption may contribute to high blood pressure, fluid retention and increased cardiovascular risk, particularly among people with hypertension, kidney disease or heart failure.

LIMIT NOON CHAI TO ONE OR TWO CUPS DAILY

Experts recommend limiting Noon Chai to one or two cups daily, preferably during breakfast or on cold mornings.

The commonly consumed Yellow Tea, prepared with black tea, milk and sugar, provides antioxidants and improves alertness. However, excessive sugar significantly increases its calorie content and may contribute to obesity, diabetes and dental problems.

Health experts recommend consuming Yellow Tea in the morning or afternoon and limiting intake to one or two cups per day with minimal or no added sugar.

BLACK COFFEE WITHOUT SUGAR ONE OF THE HEALTHIEST BEVERAGES

The advisory highlights that Black Coffee without sugar remains one of the healthiest caffeinated beverages due to its extremely low calorie content and high caffeine concentration.

Black coffee enhances alertness, improves physical performance and contains virtually no calories. However, consuming it excessively or late in the day may trigger acidity, anxiety, palpitations and sleep disturbances.

Coffee prepared with milk and sugar offers calcium and sustained energy but also contains significantly more calories and added sugars, increasing the risk of weight gain and diabetes if consumed regularly.

The advisory estimates caffeine levels in commonly consumed beverages: Noon Chai: 20–40 mg per cup, Yellow Tea: 30–50 mg, Kahwa: 10–30 mg, Green Tea: 15–30 mg, Black Coffee: 80–100 mg and Milk Coffee: 60–80 mg

KEEP TOTAL DAILY CAFFEINE INTAKE BELOW 400 MG

For healthy adults, experts recommend keeping total daily caffeine intake below 400 mg, while pregnant women should generally limit caffeine consumption to less than 200 mg per day. The advisory also provides recommendations for people with specific medical conditions: Individuals with hypertension should prefer Kahwa or unsweetened tea and restrict salted Noon Chai. People with diabetes should avoid adding sugar to tea or coffee.

Continued on
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EDITORIAL

Friday Brief: Every Human Being Deserves Honour And Respect

In a world increasingly fractured by religious intolerance and sectarian strife, the teachings of Islam offer a profound and urgent reminder: every human being, regardless of faith, deserves respect. The Quran and Hadith provide clear guidance that respect for fellow humans is not optional but a core religious duty. The Quranic formula for coexistence is remarkably simple yet transformative: "For you your religion,

for me mine" (109:6). This verse establishes the principle of mutual respect as the foundation of a peaceful society. The Quran also declares that God has honoured all human beings, stating in Surah Al-Isra: "We have certainly honoured the children of Adam" (17:70). This honour is not conditional upon religion, race, or status — it is inherent to every human being. Even the dignity of a non-Muslim in a Muslim state is so sacred that the

Prophet (PBUH) warned: "Whoever hurts a non-Muslim citizen of a Muslim state hurts me, and he who hurts me annoys God". The Prophet (PBUH) even made a severe declaration: "Someone who unjustly kills a non-Muslim citizen cannot attain a whiff of Heaven". The most powerful illustration of this principle comes from the life of the Prophet Muhammad (PBUH). When a Jewish funeral procession passed by, the Prophet (PBUH) stood

up out of respect. When his companions reminded him that the deceased was Jewish, he replied: "Was he not a human being?" The Prophet (PBUH) discovered a commonality between himself and that Jew — both were human beings created by God. For him, this commonality was enough to justify respect. This prophetic example teaches us that respect is not owed to people because they share our beliefs, but because they share our

humanity. The lesson for us is clear: religious diversity is a fact of life. Following the prophetic example means respecting all people, showing kindness, and living in peace. We must treat every person with decency, remembering that "no difference should be made between people in respect and honour". This is not merely social etiquette; it is a religious duty that honours God's creation and fulfils the spirit of Islamic teachings.

AI And Islamic Law: A Practical Approach

Islamic legal thought demonstrates how a pre-modern intellectual tradition can still engage meaningfully with cutting-edge technologies

In a rapidly evolving technological landscape, questions about how artificial intelligence (AI) should be governed are increasingly urgent.

The "AI and Faith" podcast brings together technologists, legal scholars, and religious thinkers to explore how ancient wisdom traditions can inform modern ethical dilemmas. One recent conversation between host Pablo and legal scholar Salah Al-Din examined how Islamic legal theory-particularly Sharia-can provide a structured ethical lens for thinking about AI.

Far from being a rigid legal code frozen in time, the discussion reframes Sharia as a dynamic interpretive framework that has historically adapted to new technologies, from telegraphs to satellite television-and now to AI.

Sharia: More Than a Fixed Legal Code
A central theme of the conversation is correcting common misconceptions about Islamic law. Sharia is often perceived as a strict, unchanging rulebook. However, as Salah explains, the term Sharia literally means "the path"-a guiding framework rooted in the Quran and the teachings and practices of the Prophet Muhammad.

Rather than functioning as a single codified system, Sharia includes:

The Quran, considered the foundational revelation

Prophetic traditions (Sunnah), which record the sayings and practices of the ProphetA broad ethical and spiritual worldview that spans worship, morality, law, and social conduct

Alongside Sharia sits fiqh, the human interpretation of Islamic law. Fiqh is not fixed; it evolves through scholarly reasoning and differs across regions, schools of thought, and historical contexts.

A third important concept is the fatwa, an advisory legal opinion issued by scholars in response to specific questions-such as whether a financial transaction or a new technology is permissible.

Together, these concepts form a system that is not only legal but deeply interpretive and adaptive.

Technology Through an Ethical Lens



The podcast highlights a crucial insight: Islamic legal reasoning has always had to respond to technological change without explicit textual guidance.

Salah describes how scholars historically dealt with questions not mentioned in foundational texts. When new technologies emerge-whether printing presses, telegraphs, television, or AI-scholars rely on interpretive principles rather than direct scriptural references.

A key historical example discussed is the introduction of satellite television in parts of the Middle East. At the time, some religious authorities issued fatwas declaring satellite dishes impermissible (haram), fearing moral harm from unrestricted content. Yet over time, satellite TV became widespread, normalized, and even diversified to include both conservative religious programming and secular entertainment.

The lesson is not simply that religious rulings change-but that ethical evaluation of technology is always mediated through context, interpretation, and social impact.

The Five Ethical Objectives of Sharia

A major analytical tool in Islamic jurisprudence is the concept of maqasid al-sharia-the higher objectives or purposes of law. These provide a framework for evaluating whether something benefits or harms society.

They are commonly summarized as protecting:

Faith (religion) - preserving spiritual practice and belief

Life - safeguarding human life and wellbeing

Intellect - protecting human reasoning and knowledge

Wealth - ensuring fair economic and property systems

Lineage and honor - preserving family structure and social integrity

When applied to AI, these categories become a lens for ethical evaluation:

Does AI strengthen or undermine religious practice and meaning?

Does it protect or endanger human life (e.g., in healthcare or warfare)?

Does it enhance understanding or contribute to misinformation?

Does it create equitable economic value or concentrate wealth unfairly?

Does it preserve dignity, identity, and social trust?

These questions shift the debate from "Is AI good or bad?" to "In what ways does AI promote or harm essential human goods?"

Custom and Analogy: Law as Living Interpretation

Another key insight from the discussion is that Islamic legal reasoning incorporates custom ('urf) and analogy (qiyas).

Custom refers to the collective practices of societies and industries. This means that technological norms-how people use AI, regulate it, and integrate it into daily

life-can themselves become sources of ethical reasoning.

Analogy allows scholars to extend principles from past cases to new ones. For example, rules about intoxicants were extended beyond specific substances to include any mind-altering agents.

This method is especially relevant for AI, where direct scriptural references do not exist. Instead, scholars ask: What is AI most similar to in its effects, and what principles apply to that analogy?

Historical Parallels: From Telegraphs to AI

One of the most striking parts of the conversation is a historical reference to a 1911 scholarly text discussing whether telegraph messages could be trusted for religious rulings such as confirming the start of Ramadan.

The concern at the time was epistemological: How do we know information transmitted through technology is reliable?

This mirrors modern concerns about AI: Hallucinations and misinformation

Lack of transparency in data sources

Trust in automated systems

Authenticity of generated content

Just as scholars once debated whether telegraphs could be trusted, today's debates center on whether AI-generated outputs can be relied upon in legal, religious, or ethical decision-making.

AI in Contemporary Islamic Practice

Today, responses to AI within Muslim communities are diverse and evolving.

Three broad approaches emerge:

1. Restrictive Approach

Some argue AI should be avoided due to risks of misinformation, moral harm, or misuse-similar to early resistance to television or satellite media.

2. Alternative Development

Others advocate building "ethical alternatives," such as Islamic-focused media platforms or AI systems trained on religious texts and values.

Examples include emerging large language models developed in regions such as the Gulf, as well as nonprofit-driven tools focused on Islamic knowledge and finance.

3. Regulatory and Ethical Integration

A third approach focuses on developing guidelines that allow AI use while aligning it with ethical principles. This mirrors how Islamic finance operates within global banking systems-often adapting rather than replacing existing structures.

New Ethical Challenges: Representation and Authenticity

The conversation also raises sensitive issues unique to AI:

Generating images or videos of religious figures, which is traditionally prohibited in Islamic contexts

Creating synthetic depictions of sacred events

The risk of AI fabricating religious texts or misquoting scripture

These challenges are not merely technical-they are deeply theological and ethical, touching on questions of reverence, authenticity, and authority.

As Salah notes, misuse or misunderstanding of AI in religious contexts could easily lead to strong prohibitions if perceived as violating core values.

Ancient Frameworks, New Questions

The central insight from the podcast is not that Islamic law provides ready-made answers to AI-but that it offers a structured ethical methodology for grappling with uncertainty.

By emphasizing:

public benefit and harm

long-standing ethical objectives

interpretive reasoning

and the role of custom and analogy

Islamic legal thought demonstrates how a pre-modern intellectual tradition can still engage meaningfully with cutting-edge technologies.

Ultimately, the conversation suggests that AI ethics-whether religious or secular-may depend less on inventing entirely new moral systems and more on revisiting the deep, time-tested question: How do we ensure that powerful tools serve human flourishing rather than undermine it?

Courtesy: IslamiCity

Notes By Hand Promote Better Learning Than Notes By Keyboard

Notetaking by hand fosters better learning and is an important aging therapy

Bernard J. Luskin

Taking notes using keyboards instead of longhand has become common practice. However, while using a keyboard is fast and easy, learning psychology research suggests that laptop note taking is less effective for dexterity and memory than longhand note taking. Note taking by hand is also important because it has lifetime benefits for aging as well as for study and performance results. Note taking by hand vs. using keyboards is a worthy area of study for long term benefit.

In examining the differences, I found a number of studies (see references below) concluding that students who took notes on laptops performed worse on conceptual questions than students who took notes longhand.

Keyboard note takers tend to transcribe lectures and other information verbatim rather than processing information by hand and reframing information in their own words. Keyboard notes are less effective in learning than handwritten notes. In summary, laptop note taking takes the narrative directly from the speaker into the computer, without as much analysis going through the head of the note taker. Handwritten notes more effectively require and provoke thought. So, let's explore what this means?

Research on the learning psychology of handwritten notes reveals that:



Handwriting boosts memory — Electroencephalogram (EEG) studies show that when learners write words by hand compared with typing there is deeper semantic brain processing, improved word learning and better memory.

Handwriting activates broader brain networks — FMRI studies show that handwriting activates brain regions involved in reading acquisition, whereas typing does much less.

Handwriting supports higher-order thinking — Learners who handwrite notes engage more in conceptual processing, selecting and synthesizing information rather than transcribing verbatim. This leads to

better long-term understanding, memory, and learning.

My own experience and conclusions are that handwriting engages deeper cognitive processing, more effective memory use, and is actually more of a psychomotor process than keyboard use. Therefore, handwritten notes are more memorable, recallable, and lead to increased learning. In addition, the use of fine motor skills is necessary for learning exercises and to maintain all of the neural networks in the brain. This is particularly significant in aging, since handwriting progressively declines with aging and note taking offers physical therapy to treat the decline. Handwriting itself is an acquired

Key points

- Handwritten notes require more thought than typed computer notes.
- You cannot write as fast as you type, forcing you to process and summarize information more effectively.
- Handwriting engages more senses, i.e., visual, motor, touch, and thought, than typing.
- Handwriting notes is an important mental and physical therapy for aging.

complex cognitive and motor skill resulting from activating and exercising the brain as well as one's physical capabilities.

While research shows that handwriting is a key practice in support of lifelong learning, most schools no longer teach cursive writing. Yet we know that cursive writing is a key to the development of handwriting, and that lifetime note taking by hand aids in learning, and acts as a therapy for brain and psychomotor fitness. My view is that note taking through cursive writing should be restored in our educational system because of its benefits. In my opinion, cursive writing opportunities, workshops and courses should be offered at the elementary, secondary and higher education levels. It is never too late to achieve some level of improvement.

Keeping up on your use of handwriting is

a key to better learning and is an effective physical therapy in aging. Having been an educator and family therapist for more than sixty years, my recommendation is that each of us continue to work on our handwriting, and "keep taking cursive notes for a lifetime!"

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Courtesy: Psychology Today

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Public service, grassroots development foremost priority: Javed Rana

KT News Desk

SRINAGAR, JULY 09: MLA Rajpora, Ghulam Mohiuddin Mir, MLA Uri, Dr Sajad Shafi and MLA Pampore, Hasnain Masoodi, Thursday called on Minister for Jal Shakti, Forest, Ecology & Environment and Tribal Affairs, Javed Ahmed Rana, at the Civil Secretariat here.

During the meeting, the MLAs, as per an official statement, apprised the Minister in detail of the pending public grievances and developmental requirements of their respective constituencies. Issues raised included augmentation and restoration of drinking water supply schemes, repair and maintenance of damaged irrigation channels, protection concerns related to forest land and long-pending demands for strengthening of flood control infrastructure in vulnerable areas.

MLA Rajpora, Ghulam Mohiuddin Mir, drew attention to irrigation and drainage-related issues in his constituency and urged the intervention of the Minister.

MLA Uri, Dr Sajad Shafi, highlighted the need for early completion of water supply augmentation works in his constituency



while MLA Pampore, Hasnain Masoodi, raised concerns pertaining to environmental degradation and sought the Minister's intervention for early redressal of public grievances related to his constituency.

Responding to the concerns raised, Javed Rana assured the MLAs that all genuine demands would be taken up on priority and resolved in a time-bound manner. "The Omar Abdullah government is committed to ensure that no genuine grievance of the people goes unaddressed. Public service and grassroots development remain our fore-most priority and we will leave no stone unturned in reaching out to every constituency," the Minister said.

Emphasising the need for timely execution of works in all constituencies, Rana directed

the concerned officers to resolve all pending issues in a time-bound manner to ensure that developmental projects do not suffer delays.

He stated that his department has already initiated action on several demands raised by public representatives in recent months. He said the officers have been directed to expedite the pending works and furnish periodic compliance reports. "Development works once approved must reach completion without unnecessary delay. I have asked the concerned engineers and officers to personally monitor progress on the ground and ensure accountability at every level," he added.

The MLAs expressed confidence that the issues raised would receive early attention, benefiting the people of Rajpora, Uri and Pampore constituencies.

Committee on Government Assurances examines ATR in respect of assurances pertaining to PWD

KT News Desk

SRINAGAR, JULY 09: A meeting of the Committee on Government Assurances of the Jammu and Kashmir Legislative Assembly was held Thursday at the Assembly Secretariat under the Chairmanship of MLA Ali Mohammad Sagar.

MLAs Ghulam Mohi Ud Din Mir, Chander Prakash, Iftkar Ahmad, Mehraj Malik, Shabir Ahmad Kullay besides Financial Commission (ACS) PWD (R&B) Anil Kumar Singh, Secretary JKLA Manoj Kumar Pandit, Assistant Director JKLA Syed Ahmad Wani and senior officers from PWD attended the meeting.

The Secretary JKLA, as per an official statement, briefed the representatives of Public Works Department about the mandate, powers and functioning of the Committee and what constitutes a Government Assurances as per legislative practices and precedents. He highlighted the significance and importance of the Committee. He also informed the Committee that directions issued by the Speaker, Deputy Speaker or the Chairman involving action on the part of the Government or Ministers are also treated as assurances and are monitored by the Committee till their compliance.



During the meeting, the Members participated in deliberations and raised several issues. They highlighted the public demands pertaining to the Public Works (R&B) Department, particularly concerning development and infrastructure development.

ACS Public Works (R&B), assured the Committee that all the issues and concerns projected by the Members would be examined carefully and addressed in a phased manner,

subject to the availability of resources and other administrative requirements.

Emphasizing the significance of the Committee, the Chairman observed that the Committee on Government Assurances plays a vital role in strengthening the legislative oversight by ensuring executive accountability. He said that assurances, promises and undertakings made by Ministers on the Floor of the House carry the solemn responsibility of the government and must be

fulfilled within the stipulated timeframe. He stressed that timely implementation of such assurances not only upholds the dignity and sanctity of the Legislature but also reinforces public confidence in democratic institutions.

The Chairman directed the ACS to furnish constituency-wise and scheme-wise details of funds allocated and released under various schemes in the next meeting to facilitate a comprehensive review by the Committee.

DC Budgam reviews progress on demarcation of Hokersar Wetland



KT News Desk

BUDGAM, JULY 09: Deputy Commissioner (DC) Budgam, Athar Aamir Khan Thursday chaired a meeting to review the progress of the ongoing demarcation of Hokersar Wetland, a designated Ramsar Site.

The meeting, as per an official statement, was attended by Assistant Commissioner Revenue (ACR) Budgam, Afroza Bano; SDM (West) Srinagar, Irfan Bahadur; Divisional Forest Officer, DFO Wild life, Mohd Altaf, Photo Interpretation Division J&K, Divisional Forest Officer, Settlement & Demarcation Srinagar, Range Officer Hokersar, Tehsildar Budgam, Naib Tehsildar, Regional Director, Survey & Land Records Srinagar, Settlement Assistant, Regional Director Survey & Land Records Srinagar, besides other concerned officers.

During the meeting, the DC took detailed review of the progress achieved in the demarcation process.

He assessed the status of field verification, boundary

assessment, geo-referenced mapping, and the availability of relevant revenue and survey records required for the exercise.

The DC said that scientific and accurate demarcation is imperative for its long-term conservation and protection. He stressed that the exercise should be carried out with precision and in accordance with the prescribed norms.

The DC underscored the importance of close coordination among the Revenue, Forest and Survey & Land Records departments to ensure smooth execution of the demarcation process.

The DC Stresses on time bound completion of the demarcation process, submit regular progress reports, and ensure completion of the demarcation exercise within the stipulated timeframe.

The DC said that clear identification of the wetland boundaries is essential to prevent encroachments and strengthen conservation measures aimed at preserving the ecological integrity and biodiversity of the Ramsar Site.

J&K Higher Education Council Executive Committee meets at KU

Deliberates on DYD, AI integration, innovation & NEP-2020 roadmap

KT News Desk

Srinagar, July 09: The Executive Committee Meeting of the Jammu and Kashmir Higher Education Council (JKHEC) was held at the University of Kashmir, on Thursday, bringing together eminent academicians, policymakers and heads of higher educational institutions from J&K to deliberate on transformative initiatives aimed at strengthening the higher education ecosystem of Jammu and Kashmir.

The meeting, as per a statement, was chaired by Prof. Dinesh Singh, Vice-Chairman, J&K Higher Education Council, who emphasised the need for promoting innovation-driven, interdisciplinary and learner-centric approaches in higher education institutions in accordance with the vision and spirit of the National Education Policy (NEP)-2020.

Addressing the members, Prof. Singh underlined the importance of reimagining higher education through creativity, flexibility, experiential learning and problem-solving.

He stressed on taking forward the Design Your Degree (DYD) programme as an innovative academic initiative aimed at enabling students to explore multidisciplinary learning pathways and develop skills suited to contemporary challenges.

Prof. Singh said universities and colleges must evolve as dynamic centres of ideas, innovation and research where students are encouraged to think independently, undertake meaningful projects and engage with real-world

challenges.

He also highlighted the significance of integrating Artificial Intelligence (AI) into academics, teaching-learning processes and research, enabling institutions to remain responsive to emerging global developments.

Earlier, Prof. Nilofer Khan, Vice-Chancellor, University of Kashmir, in her remarks highlighted the University's commitment towards advancing academic excellence, research, innovation and student-centric reforms.

Prof. Khan said the University of Kashmir remains committed to achieving the objectives envisioned under NEP-2020 by strengthening collaboration among universities, colleges and government institutions. She said the J&K Higher Education Council has created an important platform for collective thinking and developing a shared roadmap for transforming higher education across Jammu and Kashmir.

The Committee reviewed the progress achieved on decisions taken during previous meetings of the Higher Education Council and held detailed deliberations on strengthening the implementation of the Design Your Degree initiative, promoting undergraduate research, entrepreneurship and innovation-led education.

Prof. Shobha Bagai, Director, Cluster Innovation Centre, University of Delhi, shared her insights on multidisciplinary education, innovation ecosystems and experiential learning models. She emphasised the need to encourage creativity, research aptitude and entrepreneurial thinking among students from

the undergraduate level and highlighted the importance of designing academic frameworks that connect classroom learning with practical problem-solving.

The Executive Committee also discussed the integration of Artificial Intelligence in teaching, learning and research programmes across higher educational institutions. Members deliberated upon strategies to leverage AI for enhancing academic practices, improving research outcomes and preparing students for future opportunities.

The meeting also reviewed initiatives related to entrepreneurship and innovation, proposed programmes under the Higher Education Council framework, and discussed budgetary provisions and other academic matters.

The meeting was attended by Shri Ram Niwas Sharma (IAS), Principal Secretary to Government, Higher Education Department, J&K; Prof. Umesh Rai, Vice-Chancellor, University of Jammu; Prof. Shakil A. Romshoo, Vice-Chancellor, Islamic University of Science and Technology; Prof. Mohammad Mobin, Vice-Chancellor, Cluster University Srinagar; Prof. K. S. Chandrasekar, Vice-Chancellor, Cluster University of Jammu; Prof. Sheikh Ajaz Bashir, Director Colleges, J&K; Prof. (Dr.) Seema Naz, Nodal Principal, Government College of Education (IASE); Dr. Naveen Anand, Principal, Government College for Women, Parade Ground Jammu; and Dr. Gunet Singh Sudan, OSD to Vice-Chairman, J&K Higher Education Council, among others.

ADDC Baramulla reviews PMAY-U, directs timely disposal of PMAY 2.0 cases

KT News Desk

BARAMULLA, JULY 09: Additional District Development Commissioner (ADDC) Baramulla, Pranjal J. Hazarika, Thursday chaired a review meeting to assess the progress of the Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana-Urban (PMAY-U) in the district.

The meeting, as per an official statement, reviewed the physical and financial progress achieved under the scheme, the status of beneficiary verification, the progress of PMAY 2.0, and the recovery of funds from beneficiaries who have failed to commence construction despite receiving the first installment under PMAY-U.

The ADC directed the concerned officers to expedite the recovery

process in accordance with the prescribed guidelines and ensure strict monitoring of such cases.

Reviewing the implementation of PMAY 2.0, the ADC directed all concerned officers to complete and process all pending cases for sanction within one month. He emphasized timely verification of applications and close coordination among the concerned departments to ensure that eligible beneficiaries receive the benefits of the scheme without delay.

Tehsildars, Executive Officers of Municipal Councils and Municipal Committees, along with other concerned officers, attended the meeting and presented updates on the progress of PMAY-U and PMAY 2.0 in their respective jurisdictions.

DC Reasi reviews monsoon preparedness

KT News Desk

REASI, JULY 09: Deputy Commissioner Reasi Kumar Abhishek, who is also Chairman of the District Disaster Management Authority, Thursday chaired a meeting to review preparedness and response measures for the monsoon season across the district.

The Deputy Commissioner, as per an official statement, assessed the preparedness of all departments in dealing with potential challenges arising from heavy rainfall, flash floods, landslides, waterlogging and disruption of essential services. Coordinated efforts among departments are required to ensure public safety

and minimise inconvenience to residents during the monsoon season.

The DC instructed officers concerned to conduct field visits to all vulnerable locations and inspect drainage channels and watercourses. He directed that blocked channels should be cleared immediately to ensure smooth flow of rainwater and prevent waterlogging, flooding and damage to public infrastructure. All executing agencies were further directed to keep required machinery and equipment deployed in advance so that restoration and relief operations can be undertaken without delay in case of heavy rainfall or landslides.

Mobile Passport Van to Provide Passport Services in Kargil on July 13-15

KT News Desk

Srinagar, July 09: The Passport Seva Project (PSP) under the Ministry of External Affairs, Government of India, has introduced Mobile Passport Van Services to ensure seamless passport facilities for applicants residing in different jurisdictions, including remote and far-flung areas. Under this initiative, the Regional Passport Office (RPO), Srinagar, will operate a Mobile Passport Van in Kargil district for facilitating passport-related services to applicants.

The Mobile Passport Van, as per a PIB statement, will remain stationed for two days at the Tourist Facilitation Centre,



Bemathang, Kargil on July 13 (Monday) to July 15, 2026 (Wednesday). Applicants from Kargil and adjoining areas can avail passport services by booking appointments through the official Passport Seva website.

Applicants are required to visit the website and select "Passport Van" as the service

option while choosing their preferred appointment slot for the specified dates.

Speaking on the initiative, B. S. Rawat, Passport Officer, Srinagar, said that the Mobile Passport Van Service reflects the Government of India's commitment to extending citizen-centric passport services to people living in remote regions and ensuring greater accessibility, transparency and convenience in passport delivery mechanisms.

The applicants should report to the designated location at the scheduled time on the date of appointment and may contact the Mobile Passport Van Team Registration Number PB65BF1377 for any further assistance.

Central Silk Board Organises MRMA 2.0 Orientation Workshop for northern region in Budgam

KT News Desk

Budgam, July 09: The Central Silk Board (CSB), Ministry of Textiles, Government of India, organised the Mera Resham Mera Abhimaan (MRMA) 2.0 Orientation Workshop for the Northern Region at the NIFT Campus, in Ompora, Budgam Thursday.

The workshop, as per a PIB statement, was attended by more than 60 officers from the State Sericulture Departments of Uttarakhand, Haryana, Punjab, Jammu & Kashmir and Himachal Pradesh, along with scientists from the Central Silk Board.

The MRMA 2.0 campaign was launched on June 22, 2026 in 218 districts across the country. The programme is a continuation of the



MRMA 1.0 campaign launched in 2025, which covered around one lakh sericulture stakeholders. The 100-day MRMA 2.0 campaign aims to strengthen stakeholder outreach, field-level planning, digital reporting and coordinated implementation in the sericulture sector.

The inaugural session was attended by Dr. N. Sakthivel,

Director, CSB-CSR&TI, Pampore; Shri Syed Azhar, Joint Director, NIFT Srinagar; Shri Pradeep Kumar, Director, Sericulture, Uttarakhand; Shri J.R. Samartha, IFS, Joint Director (Administration), Central Office, CSB, Bengaluru; Shri Ajaz Ahmad Bhat, IAS, Director, Sericulture Development

Department, Jammu & Kashmir; and Dr. Naresh Babu N., IFS, Joint Secretary (Technical) and MRMA Chief Coordinator, Central Silk Board, Bengaluru. The speakers highlighted the role of MRMA 2.0 in strengthening the sericulture sector through baseline surveys, district-level planning, stakeholder consultation and scientific interventions.

During the technical session, Dr. Vishaka G.V., Scientist-C and MRMA Programme Coordinator, Central Silk Board, Bengaluru, made a presentation on the MRMA 2.0 campaign covering baseline survey, stakeholder consultation, district plan preparation, campaign action plan and reporting mechanisms.

Committee on Ethics discusses code of conduct, Proposes orientation, institutional outreach

KT News Desk

Srinagar, Jul 09: MLA Nizam-Ud-Din Bhat on Thursday chaired a meeting of the Committee on Ethics of the Jammu and Kashmir Legislative Assembly. The meeting was attended by legislators Salman Sagar,

Peerzada Feroze, Kuldeep Raj Dubey, Satish Kumar, Surinder Kumar and Arvind Gupta, along-side senior officers from the Assembly Secretariat.

The Committee initiated deliberations on establishing a foundational framework to encourage public confidence in

parliamentary institutions and their members. Acknowledging contemporary challenges faced by the legislative bodies, the members unanimously emphasised the necessity of upholding stringent norms, ethical standards and core values to guide the public conduct and

responsibilities of representatives. To this end, the Committee resolved to formulate a comprehensive Code of Conduct to serve as an institutional guide for members.

Recognizing the vital role of ethical values in public life, the Committee decided to organize an

orientation programme for all members of the Legislative Assembly.

This initiative will include a comparative study of the operational frameworks of ethics committees across various State Legislatures, as well as the Lok Sabha and Rajya Sabha. To adopt best practices, the Committee

emphasized the necessity of undertaking study tours to witness the practical functioning of these institutional mechanisms outside the Union Territory.

In a bid to institutionalize the evolving ethical standards, the Committee resolved to broaden its scope of engagement. The

members proposed expanding outreach to external academic and civic institutions, including universities. This external consultation aims to gather diverse inputs on public expectations and define contemporary benchmarks for the conduct of public representatives both within and outside the House.

CONTD. FROM FRONT PAGE

Under PM Modi's

through a ruthless approach. Union Home Minister said that the primary cause of demographic changes in border areas is illegal infiltration.

Union Home Minister said that to make border security impenetrable, PM Modi led government has established a quadrangular, transforming India's approach from reactive to proactive.

He said that the Modi Government is moving from an isolated border outpost system towards the creation of an integrated security grid.

The Union Home Minister also emphasized the importance of ensuring that information on demographic changes caused by abnormal factors in border areas is communicated from the grassroots to the highest level at the earliest possible stage.

Shah said that the PM Modi led Government is fencing the 1,610-km-long India-Myanmar border at a cost of 31,000 crore.

GOVT'S OBJECTIVES ARE TO PREVENT PROXY WAR

He said that the Government's objectives are to prevent proxy war, illegal infiltration, the spread of radicalization, narcotics trafficking, smuggling, drone-related threats, cybercrime, organized crime, and demographic changes; to make border areas more livable; to prevent migration from these regions; and to ensure their security.

Union Ministers of State for Home Affairs, Nityanand Rai and Bandi Sanjay Kumar, Union Home Secretary, Director of the Intelligence Bureau (IB), Directors General of Police of the border states, and several senior officials were present on the occasion. (KNO)

LG directs strict

to the details available with the news agency—Kashmir News Observer (KNO) the Lieutenant Governor today visited the Yatra Transit Camp and Yatri Niwas at Pantha Chowk in Srinagar and reviewed the arrangements made for the pilgrims of ongoing Amarnath Yatra.

The Lieutenant Governor interacted with the officials and pilgrims and enquired about the facilities. He directed the officials to ensure that every devotee of Lord Shiva receives round-the-clock care.

LG Sinha lauded the coordinated efforts of district administration, all line departments, Shrine Board, Police, security forces and other stakeholders.

"All departments and security agencies need to maintain the close coordination in ensuring hassle free pilgrimage," he said. "From registration to accommodation and food, no pilgrim should face any inconvenience. It must be our collective responsibility to make their stay in Jammu Kashmir divine and comfortable."

The Lieutenant Governor took stock of the arrangements, including accommodation, sanitation, security, healthcare, drinking water, power supply, firefighting measures and other essential services made by different departments aimed at ensuring the comfort and safety of the yatriis.

"The figures from the past week reveal that this year's Shri Amarnath Ji Yatra has witnessed a greater number of devotees compared to last year. This surge is not only a blessing for our spiritual heritage but also a positive sign for tourism in Jammu Kashmir, giving fresh momentum to the local economy."

"I want that the rich handicrafts and handloom products of Jammu Kashmir should travel across the country and this unique heritage find a place in every devotee's home. This will honor our artisans and it will also strengthen the spirit of One District One Product campaign, weaving together faith, culture and prosperity," the Lieutenant Governor said.

The Lieutenant Governor was accompanied by Nalin Prabhat, DGP; Dr. Mandeep K. Bhandari, CEO, Shri Amarnathji Shrine Board; V K Birdi, IGP Kashmir; Anshul Garg, Divisional Commissioner Srinagar; Rajiv Pandey, DIG CKR; Dr. GV Sundeep Chakravarthy, SSP Srinagar; Akshay Labroo; Deputy Commissioner, Srinagar; Faz Lul Haseeb, Municipal Commissioner Srinagar and other senior officers. (KNO)

Pilgrim count

Official figures revealed that 28,583 pilgrims paid obeisance at the shrine on Thursday, taking the total number of devotees since the commencement of the pilgrimage on July 3 to 1,71,501.

Among those who performed darshan were 17,004 men, 10,766 women, 298 children, 187 sadhus, 25 sadhvis, besides 303 security personnel.

Meanwhile, 8,150 pilgrims departed from the Bhagwati Nagar Yatri Niwas in Jammu in a convoy of 334 vehicles comprising 175 buses, 55 medium motor vehicles (MMVs) and 104 light motor vehicles (LMVs).

Of the total, 3,445 pilgrims are travelling via the Baltal route, while 4,705 pilgrims are heading through the traditional Pahalgam route.

The batch includes 5,663 men, 1,960 women, 15 children, 432 sadhus, 77 sadhvis and three transgender devotees. The Baltal convoy left Jammu at 2:50 am, followed by the Pahalgam convoy at 3:38 am under elaborate security arrangements.

With thousands of pilgrims continuing to arrive in Jammu and fresh batches proceeding towards the Valley every day, officials expect the total number of devotees performing darshan

to cross the two lakh mark on Friday, subject to favourable weather and smooth movement along both routes.

The 57-day pilgrimage, which began on July 3, is scheduled to conclude on August 9 on the occasion of Raksha Bandhan. (KNO)

CS directs strengthening

hassle-free conduct of the annual pilgrimage.

The meeting was attended by senior officers from the Civil Administration, Shrine Board, and security establishment, including Administrative Secretaries, senior officers of Police, CAPFs, BRO/BEACON, Heads of Departments, Divisional Commissioner, Kashmir, Deputy Commissioners/SSPs of Anantnag and Ganderbal; Director Information; besides other concerned officers.

Reviewing the progress of the Yatra, the Chief Secretary took note of the extensive arrangements made and their further augmentation in view of the unprecedented response from pilgrims this year. It was informed that the pilgrimage has witnessed an overwhelming turnout since the commencement of yatra this year.

The meeting held detailed deliberations on the recommendations presented by the Chief Executive Officer, Shri Amarnath Ji Shrine Board, Dr. Mandeep K. Bhandari based on the reports of various committees constituted to assess the status of arrangements on the ground. The discussions focused on identifying additional measures required to make the arrangements more robust, reliable and responsive to the needs of the pilgrims.

The meeting reviewed the status of infrastructure and facilities at Yatra camps, langars and along both the Baltal and Pahalgam routes. It was highlighted that the recommendations include complete tiling of the pilgrimage track up to the Holy Cave Shrine to enhance the safety of pilgrims, widening of narrow stretches of the track and bridges at vulnerable locations to prevent overcrowding, construction of retaining walls in landslide-prone areas, augmentation of rain shelters and waiting sheds, installation of iron barricades for effective queue management, and ensuring adequate availability of palkis and stretchers for prompt evacuation during medical emergencies.

The meeting also comprehensively reviewed the availability of essential public amenities across the Yatra camps and holding areas. These included adequate toilet and bathing facilities, uninterrupted drinking water supply, regular sanitation and cleanliness of camps, scientific waste management, and efficient functioning of first-aid and medical facilities.

Moreover the need for installation of additional digital display boards for dissemination of advisories, strengthening fire fighting infrastructure, and enhancing disaster preparedness through adequate mitigation equipment and emergency response mechanisms was also discussed.

During the meeting concerned heads of the departments presented updates regarding the facilities created by their respective departments and informed the meeting about the progress achieved in implementing the recommendations made by the committees.

The Divisional Commissioner, Kashmir, along with the Deputy Commissioners of Anantnag and Ganderbal, apprised the meeting of the overall conduct of the Yatra and the arrangements made on the ground.

Emphasising the need for continuous monitoring and timely corrective action, the Chief Secretary directed all the line departments to constitute dedicated audit teams to undertake regular inspections of facilities and infrastructure along both the Yatra routes. He instructed these teams to identify any deficiencies or implementation gaps and ensure their immediate rectification.

Stressing the importance of seamless coordination among all stakeholder departments and agencies, the Chief Secretary called for prompt resolution of issues through effective inter-agency coordination. He asserted that there should be no scope for delays, complacency or lackadaisical approach in the discharge of responsibilities, reiterating that the safety, security and convenience of every pilgrim remain the highest priority of the administration.

Farooq invites 52

elusive to us. There is no explanation forthcoming. There is no timeline offered. There is only silence. This is not merely a delay. It is an affront to the democratic will of an entire people," Farooq wrote.

The invitation letters have been sent to all leaders of the INDIA bloc, including Sonia Gandhi, chairperson, Congress parliamentary party; Mallikarjun Kharge, president, Indian National Congress; Rahul Gandhi, leader of opposition, Lok Sabha; M.K. Stalin, president, Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam; Mamata Banerjee, chairperson, All India Trinamool Congress; Akhilesh Yadav, president, Samajwadi Party; Lalu Prasad Yadav, national president, Rashtriya Janata Dal; Sharad Pawar, national president, Nationalist Congress Party; Uddhav Thackeray, Shiv Sena (UBT); and Arvind Kejriwal, national convener, Aam Aadmi Party.

Other non-aligned national leaders invited include Asaduddin Owaisi, President, All India Majlis-e-Ittehadul Muslimeen; Sukhbir Singh Badal, President, Shiromani Akali Dal; Naveen Patnaik, President, Biju Janata Dal; and Y.S. Jagan Mohan Reddy, President, YSR Congress Party.

All major political parties and political figures from J&K have been invited to the meeting. Surprisingly, the BJP state president has also been invited to the meeting.

The leaders invited from J&K include Ghulam Nabi Azad, Chairman, Democratic Progressive Azad Party; Mehbooba Mufti, President, Jammu & Kashmir Peoples Democratic Party; Sat Paul Sharma, State President, Bharatiya Janata Party; Syed Mohammad Altaf Bukhari, President, Jammu and Kashmir Apni Party; Sajjad Gani Lone, President, Jammu and Kashmir Peoples Conference; Tariq Hameed Karra, President, J&K Pradesh Congress Committee; Mohammed Yousuf Tarigami, State Secretary, CPI(M), Hakeem Mohammad Yaseen Chairman PDF and Abdul Rashid Sheikh, founder and chief leader, Jammu and Kashmir Awami Ittehad Party.

The invitation letters have also been sent to Mirwaiz-e-Kashmir Moulvi Muhammad Umar Farooq, chairman, MMU; and Mufti Nasir-ul-Islam, Grand Mufti of J&K. (KNO)

Tourism without

Master Plans accordingly, the objective of sustainable tourism will be achieved," he said.

CM Omar said Jammu and Kashmir remained dependent on volume tourism largely because of three decades of conflict, during which the region struggled to attract visitors and sought to project itself as a normal tourist destination through higher tourist footfall.

"For nearly 30 to 35 years, Kashmir was known more for turmoil than its beauty. Under those circumstances, attracting large numbers of tourists became important. But now the time has come to move beyond numbers," he said.

Referring to last year's security incident, Omar said it once again exposed the vulnerability of Kashmir's tourism ecosystem.

"One incident and everything vanished. In March we were complaining about traffic jams, and in April there was hardly anyone. That reminded us how fragile tourism can be," he said, adding that the renewed tourism momentum should now be used to build a more resilient and sustainable sector.

The Chief Minister said tourism planning must focus on practical issues such as traffic regulation, parking infrastructure, waste management, water availability and scientific urban planning at tourist destinations.

He said most tourist spots suffer from severe traffic congestion because of inadequate parking infrastructure and poor traffic management.

Highlighting the recent controversy over the odd-even traffic management experiment at one of the tourist destinations, Omar said policies imposed without consultation often create more problems than they solve.

"The intention may have been good, but the plan was introduced without discussing it with stakeholders. Tourists who had already booked taxis and transport services faced unnecessary inconvenience. Sustainable tourism requires sustainable planning, not temporary measures that are withdrawn within days," he said.

Omar stressed that tourism management should be based on long-term planning rather than ad hoc decisions.

He also laid emphasis on scientific solid waste management, saying waste generation is not solely linked to tourist arrivals.

"A destination generates waste because people live there as well. Sustainable waste management has to account for both tourists and local residents," he said.

The Chief Minister also called for reducing single-use plastic and said environmental conservation requires a change in public behaviour as much as government intervention.

"We have to treat Gulmarg, Pahalgam, Sonamarg and Dal Lake the same way we treat our own homes. Unless that mindset develops, sustainability will remain difficult to achieve," he said.

Expressing concern over growing water scarcity, CM Omar said sustainable tourism cannot exist without proper water management.

"Water is becoming an increasingly scarce resource. Across destinations, water supply is emerging as a serious challenge. Tourism planning must include sustainable water management," he said.

He also expressed concern over widespread violations of building regulations and said master plans lose credibility if they are not implemented uniformly. "A master plan is only as good as its enforcement. If we cannot enforce it fairly, then it is better not to have one. Selective enforcement only creates resentment among local communities," he said.

The Chief Minister said master plans should not remain theoretical exercises prepared in offices but must be framed after extensive consultations with local stakeholders who have lived in these destinations for generations.

"We have to carry local communities with us. Tourism policies cannot succeed without their participation and confidence," he added.

Calling for carrying capacity-based tourism planning, Omar said not all tourist destinations have the same ecological sensitivity.

"Our destinations must continue earning from tourism without suffering because of tourism," he said.

Describing Jammu and Kashmir's natural landscape as its greatest tourism asset, Omar said environmental conservation must remain central to all future tourism policies.

"We are not Disneyland. We are not Universal Studios. We are not Las Vegas or Dubai. All we

have is our natural beauty, and that is exactly what we must preserve," he said.

Advocating value tourism over mass tourism, Omar cited countries and destinations such as Bhutan, Dubai and the Maldives, saying they have gradually shifted towards high-value tourism instead of relying only on visitor numbers.

He said the government's responsibility is to create infrastructure and conditions that allow people to earn better from tourism while protecting the environment. (KNO)

Army Chief assesses

preparedness along the LoC and the hinterland, as well as the Army's combat readiness.

During the briefing, officers informed him about operational deployments, counter-terrorism operations, inter-agency coordination, evolving security challenges and arrangements made for the ongoing Amarnath Yatra.

The Army Chief also reviewed measures related to technology induction, capability enhancement and integrated combat preparedness across operational theatres.

General Seth commended troops for their professionalism and dedication under challenging conditions and urged them to remain mission-focused, operationally agile and maintain the highest standards of operational excellence.

Notably, the Army Chief also called on Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha and Chief Minister Omar Abdullah in Srinagar. (KNO)

Heat persists across

although scattered rain and thundershower activity is likely, particularly in parts of the Jammu division.

The MeT department has advised people to stay away from nallas, streams and landslide-prone areas, warning that heavy rainfall during the afternoon and early morning hours on July 11 and 12 could trigger flash floods, landslides and mudslides at vulnerable locations in the Chenab Valley and Pir Panjal region.

Meanwhile, temperatures remained above normal across most parts of Kashmir on Thursday. Srinagar recorded a maximum temperature of 32.6 degrees Celsius, 1.9 degrees above normal, while Qazigund and Kupwara registered 31.0 degrees Celsius and 33.5 degrees Celsius, respectively. Pahalgam recorded 27.0 degrees Celsius, Gulmarg 23.0 degrees Celsius, and Jammu city 35.5 degrees Celsius, close to the seasonal average.

The MeT said residents should remain alert and follow weather advisories, particularly in flood- and landslide-prone areas. (KNO)

Agri Dept assures

would provide every possible technical guidance and institutional support to strengthen and expand the vermi compost project.

He said the department is committed to encouraging innovative agri-startups and youth-led enterprises under HADP and other government programmes aimed at promoting organic farming and improving farmers' incomes.

Officials said such initiatives not only generate employment opportunities but also help reduce dependence on chemical fertilisers, improve soil fertility and promote environmentally sustainable agricultural practices across Jammu and Kashmir.

Expressing gratitude, Haroon Rashid and his father thanked the Agriculture Department for standing by them throughout the process of establishing the unit.

They said the department's continuous technical guidance, encouragement and field-level support played a crucial role in turning the idea into reality.

"Without the department's support, this project would not have been possible. Their guidance gave us the confidence to establish the unit and pursue agriculture-based entrepreneurship," Haroon said.

His father thanked the officers for recognising his son's efforts and motivating him to continue working towards promoting organic farming in the region.

The visit comes a day after KNO carried a detailed report on Haroon's entrepreneurial journey. A Physics Honours graduate, Haroon chose self-employment over waiting for a government job after attending an awareness programme under the Holistic Agriculture Development Programme (HADP).

Inspired by the programme, he established a vermi compost production unit in Laribal around four months ago by procuring quality earthworms from Haryana and using locally available cow dung to produce organic manure.

The venture has already created employment for several local youth and is expected to begin commercial production shortly. Haroon believes the project can help meet the rising demand for organic fertilisers in Jammu and Kashmir, where a significant portion of vermi compost is still sourced from outside the Union Territory. (KNO)

J&K completes House

with 100 per cent digital data collection, making the entire exercise paperless and technology-driven. The field operations were completed smoothly across all districts of the Union Territory without any major technical impediments, reflecting the robustness of the digital Census ecosystem and the preparedness of the field machinery.

For the successful conduct of the exercise, it was divulged that 24,071 House Listing Blocks (HLBs) were created covering 295 Census

Charges across Jammu & Kashmir. A massive capacity-building programme preceded the field operations, wherein 30 Master Trainers, 614 Field Trainers and 29,269 Enumerators and Supervisors, including reserve staff, were trained through 813 structured training batches.

To facilitate seamless field work, more than 27,000 digital Census kits were distributed across the Union Territory, while adequate reserve equipment was also maintained to address any contingency. Special emphasis was laid on ensuring comprehensive coverage of migratory and other difficult-to-reach populations so that every household was brought within the ambit of the Census.

The meeting also laid emphasis on timely disbursement of honorarium to Enumerators, Supervisors and other field functionaries, with directions to the district administrations to ensure that payments are released expeditiously within this month in accordance with the approved government norms.

Looking ahead, the Directorate outlined the next major Census activities. The meeting was informed that preparations would now commence for the creation of District Census Handbooks (DCHB), an important publication containing village and town-level demographic, socio-economic and infrastructural information.

The field work for the DCHB is going to be culminated by October 2026, immediately after the completion of Population Enumeration in snow-bound areas, as approved by the Office of the Registrar General and Census Commissioner of India.

The meeting also reviewed the preparations for Population Enumeration (Phase-II) of Census 2027 in snow-bound and inaccessible areas, which is scheduled to be conducted in September 2026. Training programmes for Administrative Officers, Charge Officers, Field Trainers, Enumerators and Supervisors will be completed by the end of August, while appointment of field functionaries and allotment of Enumeration Blocks will be finalized well in advance to ensure timely commencement of field operations.

It was further informed that, based on detailed field assessment, the number of notified snow-bound areas has increased substantially for Census 2027. A total of 1,103 villages and three municipal areas across sixteen districts have been identified for advance Population Enumeration, compared to 546 villages during Census 2011, ensuring better coverage of remote and inaccessible habitations before the onset of winters here.

Govt launches

encourage growers to return to almond cultivation.

The traditional almond sector in Kashmir has witnessed a sharp decline over the past several years due to erratic weather patterns, low yields and diminishing profitability. Faced with uncertain returns, a large number of farmers have shifted from almond cultivation to high-density apple orchards, which offer significantly higher production and better financial returns from comparatively smaller land holdings.

Pulwama, once known for its extensive almond orchards, has also undergone a major transformation in recent years. Thousands of kanals of traditional almond plantations across the district have been converted into high-density apple orchards, raising concerns over the gradual disappearance of one of Kashmir's oldest horticultural crops.

OBJECTIVE IS TO EVALUATE PERFORMANCE OF HIGH-DENSITY ALMOND PLANTATIONS

Chief Horticulture Officer Pulwama, Riyaz Ahmad Shah, said the pilot project represents an important step towards restoring confidence among almond growers.

The objective of this project is to evaluate the performance of high-density almond plantations under local conditions. If the results are encouraging, the model will be extended to farmers across the district so that they can adopt modern cultivation practices, increase production and improve their income," Shah said.

He said the department is committed not only to increasing almond cultivation but also to preserving an important part of Kashmir's horticultural heritage.

"Our aim is to revive this traditional industry by introducing scientific and high-density cultivation methods. We want farmers to see almonds as a profitable crop once again while ensuring that this historic horticultural legacy is preserved for future generations," he added.

SCIENTIFIC ORCHARD MANAGEMENT CAN PLAY A KEY ROLE

Experts believe that introducing improved varieties, scientific orchard management and high-density plantation techniques could play a key role in restoring the competitiveness of almond cultivation in Kashmir. They say the success of the Pulwama pilot project could pave the way for similar initiatives in other almond-growing areas of the Valley.

Despite the decline in cultivated area, almond farming continues to support the livelihoods of thousands of families in South Kashmir, particularly in Pulwama. Growers and horticulture experts hope that if the new model proves successful, it will encourage farmers to diversify their orchards, strengthen the region's almond industry and help restore a crop that has long been an integral part of Kashmir's horticultural identity. (KNO)

Eye on Indo-Pacific: India, Australia deepen ties across nuclear, maritime, mineral sectors

PTI

Melbourne, Jul 9: India and Australia on Thursday sealed a raft of landmark pacts spanning civil nuclear energy, maritime security and critical minerals sectors, as Prime Minister Narendra Modi and his Australian counterpart Anthony Albanese reinforced the vital role of the bi-lateral partnership in ensuring a peaceful Indo-Pacific.

Modi held wide-ranging talks with the Australian leader, a day after landing in Australia from Indonesia in the second leg of his three-nation tour that is aimed at boosting trade and defence ties against the backdrop of an increasingly fractured geopolitical environment.

Following the Modi-Albanese meeting, the two sides unveiled an India-Australia joint declaration on defence and security, a joint statement on energy ties and a roadmap for collaboration in cyber, critical technologies and supply chains.

The pact on civil nuclear energy will facilitate the commercial supply of uranium from Australia to India to help New Delhi's nuclear power projects.

The two sides also decided to work expeditiously on the proposed Comprehensive Economic Cooperation Agreement as well as on a bilateral investment protection pact.

"Today, we have signed an important agreement in the field of nuclear energy. This will open the way for uranium supplies from Australia to India and give new impetus to our clean energy objectives," Modi said in his media statement.

"Our cooperation in critical minerals is vital to our strategic security and clean energy transition. With this in mind, today we have launched the Australia-India Partnership on Cyber, Critical Technologies, and Supply Chains," he said.

Modi said both sides will also work together on a critical minerals corridor.

The prime minister also mentioned growing engagement between the two



countries in the defence domain and emphasised the importance of a free and stable Indo-Pacific.

The new initiatives to bolster defence ties came amid growing concerns over China's increasing military muscle-flexing in the Indo-Pacific.

"The Indo-Pacific is not just the confluence of two oceans. It also symbolises the shared aspirations of like-minded democracies like India and Australia," he said.

"Today, we have issued an important Joint Declaration to enhance cooperation in defence and security. Through the India-Australia Defence Innovation Corridor, we will work to connect defence startups and industries," he said.

The prime minister said the India-Australia Maritime Security Collaboration Roadmap will give new impetus to shared efforts in the Indo-Pacific.

"We will also move forward together in shipbuilding, ship repair, and maintenance," he said.

Modi also said that India and Australia recognised that terrorism poses a serious challenge not just to any one country, but to all of humanity.

"Therefore, our fight against terrorism is shared, our resolve unwavering, and our cooperation continues to strengthen," he said.

"We also believe that the tensions and conflicts raging in many parts of the world can only be resolved through dialogue and diplomacy. Together, we will further strengthen peace, stability, freedom of navigation, and a rules-based order throughout the Indo-Pacific region," he said.

In his remarks, Albanese said Australia's relationship with India has never been more consequential than it is today.

The Australian prime minister said the pact on nuclear energy will facilitate uranium exports from Australia to India for peaceful purposes.

"The arrangement facilitates Australian uranium exports to India to help increase the share of non-fossil fuel power capacity, providing an additional market for the Australian resources sector," he said.

Albanese said the two sides are focusing on diversifying ties to grow from strength-to-strength.

PM's 3-nation visit yielding 'unprecedented' strategic gains: BJP

PTI

New Delhi, Jul 9: The BJP on Thursday said Prime Minister Narendra Modi's ongoing three-nation tour has been marked by several "unprecedented" achievements, including a major BrahMos missile deal with Indonesia, agreements on critical minerals and the development of strategic infrastructure that strengthen India's global standing. Modi is currently on a three-nation visit to Indonesia, Australia and New Zealand.

Addressing a press conference at the BJP headquarters here, party national spokesperson Tuhin Sinha said every foreign visit by Modi reflects the government's commitment to development and national progress.

"This visit, too, has been associated with several significant and, in many ways, unprecedented achievements that deserve greater attention," he said. Sinha termed the proposed BrahMos missile agreement with Indonesia the "biggest outcome" of the visit and said India has agreed to supply the supersonic cruise missile system to Jakarta under its "largest-ever" defence deal, valued at around Rs 5,400 crore.

He also highlighted cooperation in the critical minerals sector, saying the partnerships with Indonesia and Australia will strengthen India's semiconductor, electric vehicle and renewable energy ambitions.

"In the last two years, India has signed critical minerals agreements with 25 countries. Indonesia is one of the world's leading producers of nickel, while Australia is a key source of rare earths. These partnerships will strengthen India's ambitions in semiconductor manufacturing, EV production and renewable energy," he said.

Possible to run Namo Bharat trains every three minutes if required: NCRTC

PTI

New Delhi, Jul 9: With the Namo Bharat corridor currently witnessing around one lakh passengers daily, and trains are operating at intervals of about 10 minutes, which could be reduced to three minutes if required, NCRTC Managing Director Shalabh Goel said.

Goel said NCRTC continuously assesses travel demand across the corridor and makes operational adjustments as required.

Considering the rising commuter demand, the corporation has recently introduced 18 additional trips during peak hours between Sarai Kale Khan and Meerut South, he said.

Goel said the corridor has witnessed a steady and encouraging increase in ridership, with around one lakh passengers travelling on the network every day. The cumulative ridership of the corridor has crossed about 3.5 crore passenger journeys.

"At present, trains are available at intervals of about 10 minutes and are comfortably accommodating the existing ridership. If required, we also have the flexibility to increase its frequency to 3 minutes," Goel said in an interview to PTI on Tuesday.

Goel said that 100 per cent of the Namo Bharat trainsets are manufactured in Savli, Gujarat.

Keeping this in view, NCRTC has consistently focused on integrating Namo Bharat stations with other modes of public transport, including Indian Railways, Metro systems, ISBTs and city bus services, wherever feasible, he said.

Goel said the operationalisation of the foot over bridge equipped with travelers connecting Sarai Kale Khan Namo Bharat Station with Hazrat Nizamuddin Railway Station in May 2026 resulted in about a 30 per cent increase in footfall.

Muslim personal law recognising puberty as age of marriage violates POCSO Act: Allahabad HC

PTI

Prayagraj, Jul 09: The Allahabad High Court, in a significant judgement, has held that Muslim personal law recognising puberty as the age of marriage cannot override laws like Prohibition of Child Marriage Act (PCMA) and Prevention of Children from Sexual Offences (POCSO) which criminalises sexual relations with a child.

A bench of justices JJ Munir and Achal Sachdev observed that the age of marriage for every citizen of the country irrespective of religion is same as has been spelt out by the PCMA.

The bench made these observations while dismissing a writ petition filed by Rubi and 18 others seeking to quash an FIR registered against them for allegedly assaulting and obstructing a police and child line rescue team. The rescue team was attacked when



it intervened to stop the impending marriage of a 16-year-old Muslim girl in Bulandshahr district.

It was submitted before the court on behalf of the petitioners that under the Shariat law, a girl is eligible for marriage after she attains the age of puberty, generally regarded as 15 years. They contended that the PCM Act, 2006, would not affect the petitioners' personal law regarding marriage. The court, however rejected the argument as it noted that no

personal law can wipe out the prohibition of child marriage brought about by the PCMA or the statutory effects of the POCSO Act. The bench noted that if the marriage of a person below 18 years was permitted, carnal relations being almost inseparable from the institution of marriage, it would result in acknowledged violation of the POCSO Act. Acknowledging a division of opinion among various high courts on this issue, the bench stated that it was in "complete agreement" with the Kerala High Court's reasoning that no personal law can override the prohibition on child marriage.

The bench also referred to the Supreme Court's 2025 order where in the top court expressed doubt on the issue (whether personal laws can prevail over the PCM Act) pending passage of the Prohibition of Child Marriage (Amending) Bill 2021, introduced in Parliament on December 21, 2021.

Government of Union Territory Jammu & Kashmir OFFICE OF THE EXECUTIVE ENGINEER (R&B) DIVISION GANDERBAL

NOTICE INVITING TENDER

CIVIL WORKS

e-FreshNIT No. 29/EE/R&B/Divn/Gbl of 2026-27 under Endorsement

No.:4231-36

Dated:- 09-07-2026

For and behalf of the Lieutenant Governor, UT of J&K, e-tenders are invited on Percentage Basis from approved and eligible Contractors registered with J&K Govt., CPWD, Railways and other State/Central Governments for the following works:-

S.No	Name of the Work	Adv. Cost (Rs.InLacs)	Cost of T/Doc. (In Rupees)	Earnest Money (In Rupees)	Time of Completion	Class Of Contractor
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
01	Road cut charges connection WSS Watshan Manigam road b.w.o macadamization.	Rs.39.20 Lacs	Rs.1100/=	Rs.78,400/=	30-Days	BEE/AAY Class with HMPO or MoU with Registered HMPO

Major Head: 8443-D/C

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

1	Date of Issue of Tender Notice	09-07-2026
2	Period of Downloading of Bidding Documents	09-07-2026
3	Bid Submission Start Date	09-07-2026 from 04:00 PM
4	Bid Submission End Date	14-07-2026 upto 04:00 PM
5	Date & Time of Opening of Technical Bids (Online)	15-07-2026 at 11:00 AM in the Office of PW(R&B) Division Ganderbal.

1. Bids must be accompanied with cost of Tender document (as mentioned above) in shape of Treasury Receipt/e-Challan in favour of Executive Engineer (R&B) Division Ganderbal. NOTE: The Date of Treasury Challan and CDR must be between the date of start of bid and Bid Submission End date. Any deviation shall render the bidder as Non-Responsive.

2. The Bidders shall upload earnest money equal to 2% of the Advertised Cost in the shape of CDR/FDR/BG at the time of tendering pledged in favour of Executive Engineer R&B Division Ganderbal.

3. The 1st lowest bidder has to produce an amount equal to 5% of Allotted Cost as performance security in shape of CDR/FDR/BG pledged to Executive Engineer R&B Division Ganderbal within 03 days before Fixation of contract and shall be released after completion of DLP and the 2% EMD shall be released in favour of successful bidder only after the receipt of 5% Performance Security.

4. Unbalanced Bid: As per the Circular Instructions of Finance Department Vide No. (Principal Secretary to Government Finance Department's circular issued under endorsement No: FD-Code/441/2021-02-158 Dated:- 08.08.2025), which is reproduced as:-

> Where the bid price is below 10% but not below 20% of the project cost put to bid, the additional performance guarantee/security percentage shall be incremented by 0.1% for every percentage of bid price below 10% of the project cost put to bid starting at 11% with the additional bid performance guarantee being 0.1% and this additional performance guarantee percentage shall be applied on the bid price.

> Where the bid price is 20% or more below of the project cost put to bid, the additional performance guarantee percentage shall be incremented by 0.2% for every percentage of bid price below 20% of the project cost put to bid in addition to 1% of the bid price and this additional performance guarantee percentage shall be applied on the bid price.

> The additional performance guarantee percentage shall be rounded off to the next lower percentage based on whether the decimal point of the percentage of bid price is below 0.5% or next higher percentage based on whether the decimal point of the percentage of bid price is 0.5% or more.

The additional performance security shall be treated as part of the performance security.

In case bid of the bidder is unbalanced. The lowest bidder (L-1) has to provide additional performance security, immediately after issuance of LOA/LOI. The successful bidder shall submit the additional performance security in shape of CDR/FDR/BG within 03 days after the issuance of LOA/LOI and in case of the delay in submission of additional performance security, the tender shall be re-advertised without any notice at the cost, risk and responsibility of the L-1 or penalty shall be imposed as per the rules.

5. The date and time of opening of Bids shall be notified on the website www.jktenders.gov.in and conveyed to the bidders automatically through an e-mail message on their e-mail address. The Bids of Responsive bidders shall be opened online on same Website in the Office of Executive Engineer R&B Division Ganderbal.

6. The bids for the work shall remain valid for a period of 120 days from the date of opening of Technical Bids.

7. The earnest money shall be forfeited if:-

A Any bidder/tenderer withdraws his bid/tender during the period of bid validity or makes any modifications in the terms and conditions of the bid.

B Failure of Successful bidder to furnish the required performance security within the specified time limit.

C Failure of Successful bidder to execute the agreement within 28 days after fixation of contract.

Sd/- Executive Engineer
PW(R&B) Division Ganderbal

No.:4231-36 Dated: 09-07-2026

DIPK-3074/26
DATED: 09-07-2026

GOVERNMENT OF UNION TERRITORY JAMMU & KASHMIR

OFFICE OF THE EXECUTIVE ENGINEER MECHANICAL AND HOSPITALS DIVISION HANDWARA

E-mail, id, xenmhd-handwara@jk.gov.in

TENDER NOTICE INVITING E-TENDER

e-NIT No:	MHDH/TS/2026-27/eNIT/25
Date:	08/07/2026

For and on behalf of the Lieutenant Governor of Jammu & Kashmir, Executive Engineer, Mechanical & Hospitals Division Handwara, invites online e-bids in Two Cover system on items wise basis from experienced registered/reputed firms or authorized dealer's/workshop holders for the below mentioned work:

S.No	Name of Work	Estimated Cost (Rs. in Lacs)	Cost of T/Doc. (In Rupees)	Earnest Money Deposit(In Rupees)	Time of Completion	Administrative Approval	Technical Sanction
01.	Repairs and maintenance of Departmental Snow Clearance Machines of MHD, Sub Division II, Handwara stationed at SCCR Ganderbal.	1.2883	200.00	2600.00	15 days	Accorded	Accorded

1. Downloading of Bids: The Tender document Consisting of qualifying information, eligibility criteria, specifications, Bill of quantities (B.O.Qs), Set of Terms & Conditions of Contract and other details can be seen/downloaded from the Govt. website www.jktenders.gov.in from 09/07/2026 (1800hrs)

2. Submission of Bids: The bidders shall deposit their bids in electronic format on the above website from 10/07/2026 (1000hrs) to 28/07/2026 (1400hrs) in two covers.

3. Opening of Bids: The bids uploaded on the website up to due date and time will be opened on 28/07/2026 (1600hrs) in the Office of the Executive Engineer, Mechanical & Hospitals Division Handwara.

4. The bidders are required to submit their offers in two (02) covers.

5. The bid for the work shall remain valid for a period of 180 days from the date of opening of bids. (Cover-II)

Sd/-
Executive Engineer
Mechanical & Hospitals Division
Handwara

No: - MHDH/TS/875-82
Dated: -08/07/2026

DIPK-3070/26
DATED: 09-07-2026

US, Iran exchange intensifying fire across Mideast, threatening interim deal to end war

AP

Dubai, Jul 9: The United States launched new airstrikes against Iran early Thursday, and Tehran responded by targeting US-allied Mideast countries in an exchange of fire that threatened an interim deal intended to help end the war in the Middle East.

Back-and-forth attacks, including a day earlier, have repeatedly threatened the ceasefire, but Thursday's appeared bigger all around, with sirens sounding at least three times in Bahrain, home to the US Navy's 5th Fleet headquarters, and missiles targeting Kuwait and Qatar.

Sirens sounded Thursday afternoon in Jordan as well, where the US has stationed troops and aircraft.

An Iranian official accused the US of launching an airstrike later Thursday targeting the area around Iran's sole nuclear power plant, and other explosions were reported elsewhere in the country during the afternoon.

The strikes came hours after US President Donald Trump said recent Iranian attacks on ships in the Strait of Hormuz signalled the end of a fragile ceasefire and threatened to escalate the conflict if they didn't stop.

That raised concerns that the region could tip back into a war that would engulf several countries and could halt energy shipments through the strait that are crucial for the global economy.

In Iran, the two days of American airstrikes have killed at least 14 people and wounded another 78, Iran's Health Ministry said Thursday — most of those reportedly members of the armed forces.

In Kuwait, the military said falling debris wounded one person as it shot down three



ballistic missiles, a cruise missile and 10 drones. Bahrain said it shot down incoming fire, without elaborating. There was no immediate word of damage in Qatar.

US strikes hit more targets

The US military's Central Command said it hit some 90 targets across Iran, releasing black-and-white footage of what appeared to be strikes on an airport runway and missile launchers.

The US said the strikes were intended to "further degrade" Iran's ability "to threaten freedom of navigation" in the strait, through which a fifth of the world's traded oil and natural gas passed before the war began with US and Israeli attacks on February 28. Attacks on ships — and the threat of them — virtually halted traffic in

the waterway during the conflict, causing the price of oil to skyrocket and raising prices on many basic goods, including food, far beyond the region. Iranian state media reported explosions in several locations, including Bushehr, home to Iran's nuclear power plant complex, and southern port cities.

In Iran's southwestern Khuzestan province, at least three people were killed Thursday, state media reported. In Iranshahr, authorities said a strike killed a firefighter at an airport. Those fatalities followed the deaths of at least nine members of Iran's armed forces in Wednesday's strikes, according to state media. It wasn't clear when the other death happened and who was killed.

For the first time since April, US strikes

also appeared to target Iranian bridges. State media reported a strike on a railway bridge in Iran's northeastern Golestan province, and the Revolutionary Guard said two bridges were attacked on the route to Mashhad, where officials plan to bury the late Ayatollah Ali Khamenei on Thursday.

Meanwhile Thursday, the state-run IRNA news agency quoted Ehsan Jahanian, a local official in Bushehr, as accusing the US of striking near Iran's Bushehr nuclear power plant. He said the strike came around noon, hours after the US military's Central Command said it had ended its strikes on Iran. Central Command did not immediately respond to a request for comment.

During the Iran war, several strikes hit in the area around the plant, which is managed by Russian technicians, but caused no damage to the plant itself.

Trump warns that it will get 'much worse' if attacks on shipping happen again

After leaving a NATO summit in Türkiye, Trump posted several videos on his social media site of what he said were explosions in Iran and issued another warning to the Islamic Republic.

"This is in retribution for yesterday's bombing of ships by Iran. If it happens again, it will get much worse!" Trump wrote.

Trump said earlier in the day that the latest back-and-forth fighting would not result in "long-term" military action.

"Anything that happens is going to happen very fast," Trump said.

Trump also renewed his past threats to hit Iran's civilian infrastructure, including electric and desalination plants, and to seize Kharg Island, through which some 90 per cent of Iranian oil exports pass.

The exchange of fire began after Iran

attacked three tankers in the Strait of Hormuz on Tuesday.

The new attacks, despite the ceasefire, could reflect a divide among Iran's leadership. Hard-liners want to ensure lasting control over the waterway, which is a globally important conduit for fuel shipments and has become a critical lever in confronting the West. Pragmatists want a permanent peace deal to lift international sanctions and provide desperately needed economic relief.

Parliament Speaker Mohammad Bagher Ghalibaf, a key negotiator in talks seeking a permanent end to the war, was defiant in a post on X on Thursday morning: "America still hasn't learned that bullying and breaking promises are no longer cost-free. Let me put it plainly: If you strike, you'll get hit."

Strikes raise fears that war could resume

Trump fuelled concerns that the war could restart by saying Wednesday that the interim agreement to pause the fighting was "over." He added that he would allow negotiations to continue, though he cast doubt on the outcome.

"They can talk, but I think they're wasting their time," he said.

Iranian Deputy Foreign Minister Kazem Gharibabadi, also a top negotiator, retorted on X that Trump's remarks "are not a sign of power but an admission of the failure" of the US policy toward Iran.

Negotiations to reach a final deal were due to start after the funeral for Khamenei, who was killed in the war's first moments. The funeral, which ends Thursday, was supposed to be a period of lower tensions.

The talks are meant to focus on the toughest matters, including fully reopening the strait and rolling back Tehran's disputed nuclear programme.

UN launches appeal for nearly \$300 mn in Venezuela quake relief



AFP

Caracas, Jul 9: The United Nations launched an urgent appeal Wednesday for nearly \$300 million toward Venezuela earthquake relief operations after the death toll from the disaster rose to more than 3,600 people.

There is huge humanitarian need after one of Latin America's worst earthquake disasters left thousands of people homeless and thousands more still missing. In badly damaged La Guaira, families are still digging for the bodies of loved ones in the rubble.

"Donors are already stepping up, and I pay tribute to them, and I thank them," UN humanitarian chief Tom Fletcher said during a meeting on the disaster. Officials were appealing for \$296 million to provide urgently needed aid for 1.3 million people over six months, he said.

Caracas also called Wednesday for the release of frozen assets to help

raise funds for the country's recovery.

"We call upon all countries currently holding blocked funds belonging to Venezuela to initiate a plan to release these funds so that they can be used for recovery efforts," Foreign Minister Yvan Gil told the UN meeting.

"There are accounts belonging to the Venezuelan state in various parts of the world that have been frozen as a result of illegal sanctions," Gil referenced gold held by Britain and finances frozen by the United States.

The US government has already lifted a number of economic sanctions against Venezuela for four months to facilitate relief operations. Washington had imposed sweeping economic sanctions on Venezuela, particularly from 2019 onward, in an effort to squeeze the leftist government of president Nicolas Maduro, whom the United States considered illegitimate.

Esports World Cup opens in Paris

PTI

Paris, Jul 9: The first international edition of the world's largest esports gaming event -- the Esports World Cup -- began at the Paris Expo Porte de Versailles here on Thursday.

Running through August 23, the EWC will see more than 2,000 elite players, 200 leading esports Clubs from over 100 countries, competing across 25 tournaments in 24 of the world's most popular games for a share of a record-breaking USD 75 million (Rs 716 crore) prize pool.

The event follows the largest Road to EWC qualification program in history, with more than 1.5 million players competing across 330 tournaments, publisher leagues and premier international circuits to earn their place on the world's biggest esports stage.

NATO touts \$50 billion in arms deals as leaders meet in Ankara

REUTERS

Ankara Jul 9: Defense companies from NATO member states gathered in Ankara this week for an industry forum held alongside the alliance's annual summit, where officials touted more than \$50 billion in defense procurement and industrial agreements as allies sought to demonstrate their commitment to bolstering military spending.

While some announcements involve firm contracts and procurement plans, others remain subject to further negotiations, approvals or future development.

The agreements come as European allies face continued pressure from US President Donald Trump to shoulder a greater share of the alliance's defense burden.

Following are the deals announced so far:

SAAB Swedish defense equipment maker Saab said NATO will begin formal negotiations on the acquisition of up to 10 GlobalEye airborne early warning and control aircraft.

CEO Micael Johansson told reporters the company could start deliveries as soon as 2030, and the final price would be roughly \$400 million to \$450



million per aircraft.

LOCKHEED MARTIN, RHEINMETALL

Lockheed Martin and Rheinmetall signed a memorandum of understanding on Tuesday to jointly produce ATACMS missiles in Germany, a move that would mark the first manufacture of the short-range ballistic missile outside the United States. Separately, the United States will establish a maintenance facility in Europe for Lockheed Martin's advanced PAC-3 air defense missile.

US Undersecretary of Defense Michael Duffey said on Tuesday. Washington is not

ruling out production of the missile abroad, he added, although it is not yet clear where the facility will be located. The UK will spend \$254 million on Lockheed Martin's long-range Precision Strike Missiles (PrSM), with the first deliveries expected in 2027, Britain's Ministry of Defense said. It added the UK could join current program partners Australia and the US to further develop the missile.

NORTHROP GRUMMAN NATO Secretary General Mark Rutte said allies will buy up to five Northrop Grumman MQ-4C Triton high-altitude surveillance

drones, with Norway, Finland, Germany and Denmark signing a letter of intent for the purchase.

AIRBUS NATO will launch a strategic airlift fleet of Airbus A400M transport planes and expand its A330 MRTT tanker fleet by one aircraft, NATO Secretary General Mark Rutte said.

ISAR AEROSPACE German rocket maker Isar Aerospace signed a contract with Canada's Maritime Launch Services to build and use a dedicated launch pad for its Spectrum rocket at Spaceport Nova Scotia, eastern Canada.

ACCENTURE, LEONARDO IT consulting firm Accenture and Italian defense company Leonardo signed a seven-year contract worth about 200 million euros to design and operate a secure NATO communications network.

GERMANY, US Germany has agreed with the US to acquire Raytheon-made Tomahawk cruise missiles and station them on German territory, Chancellor Friedrich Merz told lawmakers in Berlin on Thursday, removing uncertainty on the future of the program after President Donald Trump said in May he would reduce US military presence in the country.

Palani, Usmani, Rudie elected as ICC Associate Member Directors



Palani and Van Vuuren will join the ICC Board for the first time, while Usmani has been re-elected after serving as an Associate Director over the past two years.

PTI

Edinburgh, Jul 9: France's Gurusur-murthy Palani, Mubashshir Usmani of United Arab Emirates and Namibia's Rudie van Vuuren have been elected as Associate Member Directors on the International Cricket Council (ICC) board for a two-year period.

The election was held during the ICC Annual Conference here on Wednesday.

The three elected Directors will represent the Associate Members on the ICC Board.

Palani and Van Vuuren will join the ICC Board for the first time, while Usmani has been re-elected after serving as an Associate Director over the past two years.

The election was contested by five candidates, with the incumbent Directors Usmani, Imran Khwaja and Mahinda Vallipuram joined by Palani and Van Vuuren.

A total of 43 Associate Members were eligible to vote in the election. USA Cricket and Cricket Canada were ineligible to participate as they remain suspended from ICC Membership.

The result will require an election for Palani's position on the Chief Executives' Committee as he is unable to hold both positions.

"Associate Members play a vital role in the continued growth and global expansion of our sport, and I look forward to working closely with them as we build on the strong progress being made across all regions."

"I would also like to express my sincere appreciation to Imran Khwaja and Mahinda Vallipuram for their dedication and service to Associate cricket," said ICC chairman Jay Shah in a statement.

Egyptian Football Association 'cannot remain silent' about officiating in loss to Argentina

AP

Atlanta, Jul 9: The Egyptian Football Association (EFA) said Wednesday it "cannot remain silent" after what it believes was unfair and biased officiating in Egypt's 3-2 round of 16 loss against Argentina. Egypt coach Hossam Hassan and several players criticized the officiating after being left in disbelief as Argentina scored three unanswered goals in 13 minutes to pull off one of the biggest comebacks in World Cup history.

"Defending the rights and interests of the Egyptian national team is not a matter that can be ignored, minimized, or treated as secondary," the EFA said in a statement. "It is a responsibility that we carry with full conviction and determination."

FIFA's chief of refereeing



Pierluigi Collina, in a statement issued later Wednesday, said while constructive discussion about decisions would always be part of football, "unfounded allegations have no place in our sport."

"Nobody can question the integrity of the FIFA World Cup match officials," he said.

"When this happens, it may provoke reactions that lead to threats against them and their families. This is not right."

The EFA said that the referee failed to use the Video Assistant Referee (VAR) system appropriately, leading to the loss to Argentina.

Egypt appeared to have

netted its second goal in the 58th minute, but a VAR review determined that Marwan Attia had fouled Argentina defender Lisandro Martínez early in the buildup up to the goal.

"Several key incidents raised serious concerns and left profound questions about the consistency and fairness of decisions that directly influenced the course of the game," the EFA statement read.

Collina said "during a competition, we prefer not to focus on specific incidents," but he defended the Attia decision.

"If a foul is identified in the build-up and is deemed to have had an impact on the goal, the VAR will recommend an on-field review," Collina said. "There is no defined limit regarding either the distance from goal or the amount of time between the incident and the goal."