



GOVERNMENT OF JAMMU AND KASHMIR
DIRECTORATE OF TOURISM KASHMIR

TRC, Srinagar, Kashmir, 190001

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Sub:- Mandatory Compliance with Safety Norms, Overloading Prevention, Fare Regulation and Manual Propulsion Guidelines for shikara operations in Dal Lake & other water bodies.

Order No: 04 of 2025

Dated: 18-04-2025

With the increasing flow of tourists and regular operation of shikaras and other vessels in Dal Lake and other water bodies, it is imperative to make sure all safety rules are strictly followed. To protect the lives of passengers and ensure smooth and responsible operations of shikaras, the following instructions are being issued for immediate compliance by all shikara owners and operators.

1. All shikaras must be registered with the Tourism Department and must display the assigned registration number prominently. Only registered shikaras are permitted to operate in the lakes. Any unregistered or unauthorized shikara found in operation shall be seized immediately.
2. Every shikara must carry a sufficient number of life jackets, equal to or more than number of passengers being ferried at any time. Child size life jackets for children aged 1-12 must be available if minors are onboard.
3. All passengers must be made to wear life jackets before boarding. No shikara shall operate unless all passengers are wearing proper safety gear.
4. Operators must ensure life jackets are in good condition and there are no tears, broken straps or deflated material.
5. Every shikara must have a visible signboard displaying maximum permissible passenger capacity. All shikaras must visibly display their Registration numbers and emergency helpline numbers of tourism police, disaster response team and nearest fire and rescue station numbers. Shikara must also carry their valid identity and registration documents at all time while operating. Under no circumstances shall any shikara carry more passengers than the prescribed capacity. Overloading is strictly prohibited and shall attract immediate punitive action.
6. Shikara owners must ensure regular inspection and maintenance of their boats to maintain structural integrity. Any shikara found in poor or unsafe condition shall be barred from operation.
7. Shikara operating during dawn, dusk or during low visibility must have functioning navigation lights for better visibility. They shall also carry waterproof whistles for any distressing signals.
8. Each shikara shall be equipped with a basic first aid kit for emergency use.
9. Shikara operator must remain updated with local weather advisories and shall refrain from operating during high winds and inclement weather.
10. All shikara must immediately report any accidents to the Tourism Department within two hours of such incidents.
11. Shikaras must operate solely through manual rowing/oars. The use of motors or any mechanical propulsion system in shikara is strictly prohibited unless specifically approved by Tourism Department. Any shikara found using an unauthorized Motor shall be immediately seized and strict action will be taken against the operator under applicable rules.
12. All shikara operators must strictly follow the fare rates notified by the Department of Tourism. Overcharging or demanding additional payments from tourists is strictly prohibited. Rate cards must be clearly displayed on each shikara. Any complaints of overcharging will lead to strict action including suspension of registration and penalties as per law.
13. Random safety checks will be conducted by Tourism Department and police to enforce these directions and violations shall invite strict action including suspension or cancellation of registrations and seizure of the vessel.

Prescribed Authority

Deputy Director Tourism,
Registration Kashmir.

No: Reg./761/DTK/339

Dated: 18-04-2025.

Copy to:

1. Divisional Commissioner Kashmir for kind information.
2. Commissioner Secretary to the Government Tourism Department Civil Secretariat Srinagar for information.
3. Vice Chairman J&K Lake Conservation Management Authority for information.
4. Deputy Commissioner Srinagar for kind information.
5. Senior Superintendent Srinagar Police Srinagar for information.
6. Deputy Director Enforcement for information.
7. In-charge Nigeen Club/Manasbal for information.
8. The Chairman Kashmir Houseboat Owners Association for information.
9. All Shikara Associations for information and strict adherence.
10. P.A to Director for favour of information to the Director Tourism Kashmir.