

## Incessant Rains Cause Flood-Like Situation in Kashmir

People Being Evacuated From Low Lying Areas, MeT Predicts Gradual Improvement From Today



KO Photo | Abid Bhat

### Agencies

**Srinagar:** A relentless downpour since Sunday evening has plunged several districts into chaos and brought normal life to a standstill in Jammu & Kashmir.

The incessant rain, coupled with fresh snowfall in higher altitudes, has caused a notable

increase in the water levels of rivers and streams across the valley. Despite this, authorities have moved to allay fears of imminent flooding, citing active monitoring and precautionary measures in place.

The rains also triggered flash floods in many parts of Kashmir including Kupwara and the district

administrations across the valley have put the disaster response machinery on high alert.

Amid an imminent flood threat posed by the ongoing incessant rains, authorities in Srinagar have devised a holistic evacuation plan in different localities of the summer capital.

In Phase-I, the people of Kursoo | [More on P6](#)

### Major Roads, Highways Closed

The Jammu-Srinagar national highway was closed Monday following multiple landslides triggered by rains that lashed wide parts of Jammu and Kashmir overnight, officials said. The highway, the only all-weather road linking Kashmir with the rest of the country, was blocked by landslides at Mehar, Gangroo, Mom Passi and Kishtwari Pather in Ramban district. | [More on P6](#)

### Schools Closed, Exams Postponed

Authorities in Kashmir have announced closure of all schools in the valley on Tuesday as a precautionary measure in view of the rising water level in rivers and streams due to incessant rainfall over the past three days. The University of Kashmir has also suspended classwork in the main and satellite campuses and | [More on P6](#)

### Boy Dies, Houses Damaged

A 13-year-old boy died as a fresh landslide hit the Satarsu area of Ramban on Monday afternoon. Deputy Commissioner, Ramban, Baseer-ul-Haq, said that a minor boy aged between 9-10 years has lost his life after a rock fell on a residential house in Kalapani, Satarsu area of Ramban late afternoon. "A house where two-three families were living got damaged | [More on P6](#)

### Over 300 Families Relocated In Kupwara

As many as 336 families from the flood-affected areas of Kupwara district were relocated to safer places on Monday by the District Administration | [More on P6](#)



### Rivers, Tributaries Likely To Cross Danger Mark: I&FC Dept

#### Majid Nabi

**Srinagar:** Since the unceasing rains over the past 24 hours have caused rivers and streams to swell across the valley, authorities have urged residents living in low-lying areas to exercise caution as the water level in rivers and tributaries is anticipated to cross the danger mark.

In order to prevent mishaps, the Irrigation and Flood Control (I&FC) Department has asked people to heed the administrations' advisory in

word and spirit. Miftah Alam Buchh, Technical Officer to Chief Engineer I&FC department, said that with continued rain in Kashmir, the Jhelum's flow may increase as more water reaches it from tributaries in south Kashmir.

"Water level in river Jhelum is under control and hasn't yet reached the danger mark yet. Nevertheless, the level would increase further since it is expected that the water flow from South Kashmir will | [More on P6](#)



### Sinking Land Cuts Off Ramban Village, Hundreds Homeless

A natural tragedy has struck Pernote village of Jammu and Kashmir's Ramban district where 74 families were forced to leave their belongings and homes on the mercy of God without knowing what will happen to them in the near future. Their houses have been completely damaged after a six to seven kilometer long portion of a mountain is continuously sinking leading to excessive | [More on P6](#)



### BARAMULLA LS SEAT Engineer Rashid's Nomination Filed

#### PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**Srinagar:** The Awami Ittehad Party on Monday fielded its jailed leader Abdul Rashid Sheikh alias Engineer Rashid from the Baramulla Lok Sabha seat in Jammu and Kashmir. The office bearers of the party filed the nomination papers on behalf of Rashid before the returning officer for the constituency, which is going to polls on May 20 in the fifth phase of Lok Sabha elections. The 56-year-old former MLA from Handwara

### ARTICLE 370 ABROGATION Voice Discontent Through Votes: Mehbooba

#### Press Trust Of India

**Srinagar:** PDP president Mehbooba Mufti asked the voters of Jammu and Kashmir on Monday to register their unhappiness over the abrogation of Article 370 of the Constitution through their votes in the ongoing Lok Sabha election.

Addressing a roadside meeting in the Larkipora area of Anantnag district, the former Jammu and Kashmir chief minister said, "This is not an Assembly election. This is not about whether the PDP, the



National Conference or the Congress will win. This election is about sending a message that the decisions taken in 2019 and what followed are not acceptable to the people."

The Bharatiya Janata Party-led Centre abrogated the

provisions of Article 370, which gave special rights to Jammu and Kashmir, in August 2019 and bifurcated the erstwhile state into Union territories.

Mufti said Jammu and Kashmir has been through very tough times in the past and the present situation is also a difficult one.

"The people of Jammu and Kashmir have witnessed tough times in the past. Those did not last and neither will this (situation), but only if we fight it together through peaceful and | [More on P6](#)

### ANANTNAG-RAJOURI LS POLLS Parties Seeking Poll Deferment Due To Fear Of Loss: Dr Farooq

#### Press Trust Of India

**Srinagar:** National Conference president Farooq Abdullah on Monday claimed that the fear of loss was making some parties seek postponement of elections in Anantnag-Rajouri Lok Sabha seat.

"There was a massive flood in Kashmir in 2014, the destruction was widespread. We asked to postpone the elections at that time. Did they defer it? What is the compulsion now? "They can see their defeat and



because of the fear they want to defer the elections. Let them defer, we will still defeat them," Abdullah told reporters here. Several political parties and

leaders have written to the Election Commission, seeking deferment of the polls in Anantnag-Rajouri Lok Sabha seat on the grounds of inclement weather affecting the Mughal road that connects South Kashmir to Poonch-Rajouri area - the two regions of the newly-carved out constituency.

Those who have submitted their representation to the EC include Jammu and Kashmir BJP chief Ravinder Raina, Apni Party president Altaf Bukhari, DPAP candidate | [More on P6](#)

### Kashmir's Electoral Dynamics Post-Article 370 Four Fronts Emerge, BJP's Influence In Spotlight

#### Agencies

**Srinagar:** The landscape of electoral politics in Kashmir has taken a fascinating turn in the wake of the first Lok Sabha elections post the abrogation of Article 370.

In a notable development, the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) has chosen to remain on the sidelines, yet its influence looms large over the proceedings as four distinct fronts have emerged in Kashmir's political arena.

As per news agency Kashmir News Observer, the absence of BJP from the electoral fray has not diminished its centrality in the discourse, with four distinct fronts shaping the contest. The first

front, the India Alliance, sees the National Conference (NC) and the Congress joining forces. The second front comprises the Apni Party and the People's Conference, aiming to counter the NC's dominance. The third front features the lone player, the Peoples Democratic Party (PDP), which sets its sights on challenging both the BJP and the NC. Finally, the fourth front is led by Ghulam Nabi Azad's newly formed Democratic Progressive Azad Party (DPAP), which has fielded candidates in two constituencies.

The electoral battle unfolds across three key regions of Kashmir - South, Central, and North. While

South Kashmir remains a stronghold for the PDP, the NC and the People's Conference hold sway in the North.

In the electoral contest between the NC and Congress, allies in the India Alliance, the focus remains on countering the BJP's influence. The NC faces stiff opposition not only from its traditional rival, the PDP, but also from the alliance of the People's Conference and the Apni Party, which garner support from influential figures like Sajjad Gani Lone and Nazir Khan.

The PC-Apni Party alliance directly challenges the NC's authority, questioning its inaction during the Article 370 abrogation and its track record on development and security issues. Recently, one | [More on P6](#)

### No Relief In Sight: Kashmir Power Cuts Expected To Last Long

#### Auqib Javeed

**Srinagar:** Earlier last week, Kashmir Power Distribution Corporation Limited (KPDC) announced that the Kashmir Valley will face heightened power curtailment due to limited power availability. According to KPDC, the increased curtailment measures are unavoidable until power availability improves in the region.

The corporation asked consumers to bear with the situation and ensure judicious use of power especially in peak hours. "Due to limited power availability, there has been an unavoidable increase in power curtailment. These restrictions will be eased once power availability improves," KPDC



in a post on X said. "Please bear with us & ensure judicious use of power, especially during peak hours. Avoid exceeding sanctioned load/hooking," the corporation added. The announcement came as a shocker for people from across Kashmir who raised concerns about the | [More on P6](#)

### VDCs Want Weapons, Enhanced Allowances

**Basantgarh:** Village Defence Guards (VDCs), mostly armed with 303 rifles and bolt action rifles, are highly determined to safeguard their villages from the threat posed by Pakistan-sponsored terrorism and want the government to equip them with automatic weapons along with enhanced remuneration to take on terrorists effectively.

The VDCs, earlier known as Village Defence Committees (VDCs), were formed in the

Jammu region in 1995 to offer self-defence capabilities to villagers in the face of continuous terrorist threats. Under the scheme, each VDC used to have a Special Police Officer (SPO) as its in-charge and there were 10-15 other volunteer members, mostly ex-service personnel.

In 2022, the policy of VDCs was revamped by the home ministry and Village Defence Groups were | [More on P6](#)

### Slain VDG Member Laid To Rest Amid Rains

**Village Defence Guard (VDG) Mohd Sharief,** who lost his life in a gunfight with terrorists, was laid to rest amid pouring rain at his ancestral village in Jammu and Kashmir's Udhampur district on Monday, with mourners | [More on P6](#)





# Studies Examine Effects Of Climate Change On Deserts, Dust Levels Around World

Press Trust Of India

Warming of the Arctic is reducing dust levels around the world by changing the way winds blow over deserts, thereby affecting how the dust is transported, according to a new research.

Researchers explained that driven by human-induced climate change, the Arctic region is warming at a rate faster than the rest of the world — known as Arctic amplification.

This process changes the routes of storms and patterns of winds over major sources of dust in West and South Asia namely the Arabian Peninsula and the Thar Desert between India and Pakistan, they said.

The previous studies have documented reducing dust levels across India, particularly northern India, the Persian Gulf Coast and much of the Middle East.

The latest findings implied that increase in greenhouse gas emissions coming from human activities have reduced dust levels, said the researchers, led by Harvard University.

Ironically, this meant that as humans pursue net-zero emissions, winds could likely return to blowing the same way in these regions as they did pre-warming, they said.

Therefore, alongside of emissions mitigation worldwide, the researchers called for anti-desertification measures by the local governments to keep the dust levels in check.

"At the local level, we need to be thinking about stronger anti-desertification actions such as reforestation and irrigation management and how to better monitor urban-level dust concentrations in concert with broad climate mitigation strategies," said Michael B McElroy, a professor at Harvard University, US, and lead author of the study published in the journal Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences.



Another study by the researchers at the Chinese Academy of Sciences charted trends in the expansion and shrinking of oases around the world. The findings are published in the journal Earth's Future.

They found that globally, oases grew by more than 2.2 lakh square kilometres from 1995 to 2020, driven mostly due to intentional oasis expansion projects in Asia.

The researchers also found, how-

ever, that desertification drove the loss of more than 1.34 lakh square kilometres of oases over the same period, also mostly in Asia, leading to a net growth of 86,500 square kilometres over the study period. They used satellite data to look for green, vegetated areas within dryland areas, indicating an oasis, and analysed changes.

The authors said that most of the growth in oases were from the artificial expansion of oases, which may not be sustainable in the future. They called for improving water resource management, promoting sustainable land use and encouraging water conservation.

A study, also published in the journal Earth's Future in 2023, predicted the Thar Desert to turn green before the turn of this century.

## Office Of The Naib Tehsildar Kreeri

Subject - Application of Raja Begum W/o Late Fayaz Ahmad Najar R/o Reshipora Tehsil Kreeri for the issuance Of OBC (Other Backward Classes) in favor of Sadaf Fayaz and Mutahira Fayaz Daughters of Late Fayaz Ahmad Najar

### Public Notice

Regarding the Subject cited above the applicant has submitted the file in the office of the undersigned for the issuance of OBC in this connection a report of patwari haqla concerned has been sought which reveals that the applicant is currently residing in village Reshipora and belongs to the Najar Community having annual income of Rs.120000/- (One lakh Twenty thousand rupees) the details of the family of the applicant are as follows:

S.No	Name Of the Family Member	Relationship with the Family	Age	Occupation	Annual Income
01	Ghulam Mohd Najar	Head	76	Carpenter	120000/-
02	Fazi Begum	Wife	70	Old Aged	
03	Raja Begum	Daughter In Law	42	H/W	
04	Sadaf Fayaz	Grand Daughter	18	Student	
05	Mutahira Fayaz	Grand Daughter	16	Student	
06	Muneesa Fayaz	Grand Daughter	11	Student	
07	Yahya Fayaz	Grand Son	9	Student	

Therefore, through this Public Notice objections are being sought from general public, if any person has any objection, he/she can submit their objections in the office of the undersigned within 07 days (Seven days) positively from the date the notice has been published. No objection shall be entertained after the stipulated time period.

Naib Tehsildar

## Office Of The Naib Tehsildar Kreeri

Subject Application of Bashtarat Shafi S/o Mohammad Shafi Najar R/O Reshipora Tehsil Kreeri for issuance of OBC (Other Backward Classes) in favor of Self

### Public Notice

Regarding the Subject cited above the applicant has submitted the file in the office of the undersigned for the issuance of OBC in this connection a report of patwari haqla concerned has been sought which reveals that the applicant is currently residing in village Reshipora and belongs to the Najar Community having annual income of Rs 120000 (One Lakh Twenty Thousand Rupees) The details of the family of the applicant are as follows:

S	Name of the family Member	Relation with the Family	Age	Occupation	Annual Income
01	Mohammad Najar	Head	52	Carpenter	120000/
2	Gulshana Begum	Wife	47	H/W	
03	Bashar at Shafi	Son	24	Student	
4	Sharifa Shafi	daughter	22		
5	Shawreana Shafi	daughter	20		
5	Ubaiddullah Bin Shafi	Son	14		

Therefore, through this Public Notice Objections are being sought from general public, if any person has any objection, he/she can submit their objections in the office of the undersigned within 07 days (Seven days) positively from the date the notice has been published. No objection shall be entertained after the stipulated time period.

Naib Tehsildar

## Office of the Naib Tehsildar Tilgam

Executive Magistrate 1st Class

Subject: Application of Mehzana Bashir D/o Bashir Ahmad Mir R/o Wanigam Bala Tehsil Pattan regarding obtaining RBA Certificate

### Public Notice

General Public is hereby informed through this notice that the applicant file is currently under process in the office of undersigned regarding obtaining RBA certificate. In this matter report of patwari haqla wanigam bala records that the applicant is a permanent resident of said village and is residing here from more than 15 years and has not migrated from the said village the annual family income of the applicant from all sources is Rs 96000/-. Family details of the applicant are give below.

S. No	Name	Parentage	Age	Occupation
1	Bashir Ah Mir	Khazir Mohd Mir	52	Labour
2	Saleema begum	w/o Bashir Ah Mir	50	H/W
3	Jama Begum	W/o Khazir Mohd	80	Old aged
4	Mehnaz Bashmir	D/o Bashir Ah Mir	17	Student
5	Aabiro Bashir	--	16	--
6	Aarzo Bashir	--	15	--
7	Zahid Bashir	S/o Bashir Ah	11	--

In this connection if any person(s) has any objection(s) he/she can visit the undersigned's office within 07 days from the date of publication of this notice. After that no objection will be considered.

Naib Tehsildar

### Public Notice

I Nissar Ah Dar S/o Gh Mohd Dar R/o Bonzangam Beerwah is applying for issuance of DEE Class Contractor Card. If anybody has any objection in this regard he/she may file his/her objection in the office of the Superintending Engineer R&B Circle Srinagar/Budgam within a period of seven days from the date of publication of this notice. After that no objection shall be entertained.

Bmg

## Office of the Naib-Tehsildar Pattan

Executive Magistrate 1st Class

Subject: Issuance of Registration orders in respect of delayed Birth

### Public Notice

The registrar Births and deaths (EO Municipal Council Pattan/Block Development Officer Pattan) has submitted a case file pertaining to Birth of Aalim Irshad malla S/o Irshad Ah Malla R/o ChukJamal Mir Pattan Tehsil Pattan District Baramulla with verified date of event (birth) as 28-02-2021 occurred at SDH Pattan

In this connection, if anybody having any objection to the issuance of said registration may contact this office within seven (07) days, after which no objections shall be entertained.

Executive Magistrate 1st Class

fko\_r

Naib Tehsildar Pattan

Subject:- Grant of Registration of the Proposed Travel unit under the name & style "Thrill Top Journey" Situated at Tapper Waripora.

### Public Notice

Whereas, I Mr.Basit Ahmad Bhat S/O Bashir Ahmad Bhat R/o Tapper Waripora Bala Kashmir intends to apply in the Department of Tourism for Registration of my proposed Travel Unit under the name and style "Thrill Top Journey situated at Tapper Waripora near Masjid Hanfiya, Tapper-Kreeri road, Kashmir under Tourist Trade Act 1978/82/2011-12.

Whereas, I will submit State Subject/Domicile Certificate, Qualification Certificate, Pan Card. Experience Certificate (Minimum 05 Years), Character Certificate (Police Department). Bank Statement (Minimum Balance 10000), Site Plan, Affidavit, Rent Deed duly attested by Sub- Registrar, Printing Material (Letter Head/Visiting Card), Photograph of the Unit (indoor and Outdoor) and Two Passport size photographs to the Department of Tourism as per prescribed checklist prior to Registration of weak as an Excursions Agency/Adventure Tour Operator Now as per J&K Registration of Tourist Trade Act 1978/82/2011/12, before my case is processed for registration by the Competent Authority, the matter is hereby notified for information of general Public/Financial Institutions/Bank/Organization, etc for objection, if any and the same should reach to the Assistant Director Tourism Gulmarg: Tourism Registration (e-mail lld-ddtreg123@gmail.com) within a period of 7 days from the publication of this notice in leading local newspaper/ newspapers of the valley. No objections beyond a period of 7 days shall be entertained.

fko

### Public Notice

I "Mudasir Ahmad Sofi" S/o Mohd Jamal Sofi having Admission No. 2446 have lost my original Discharge Certificate of class10th issued by Govt. Higher Secondary School, Lar Ganderbal in the year 1999. Now, I want to apply for issuance of Duplicate Discharge certificate. Anybody having any objection to the issuance of the said Duplicate Discharge Certificate may approach the office of the Principal, Govt. Higher Secondary School within 10days from the date of issuance of this notice.

su

### Public Notice

I have changed the name of my ward in school records from Barirah To Barirah Masood if anybody has any objection in this regard he/she may file his/her objection in the office of the Presentation convent Hr. Sec. School Rajbagh Srinagar within a period of seven days from the date of publication of this notice. After that no objection shall be entertained.

**Masood Ahmad Wani**  
F/o Barirah Masood  
R/o House No 100, Gulberg Colony Hyderpora  
Srinagar

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## GOVERNMENT OF JAMMU AND KASHMIR Office Of The Executive Engineer Irrigation Division Ompora Budgam.

(Email ID: ifckmrxenidompورا@gmail.com)

e-NIT.No.010F 04/2024

For and on behalf of the LT. Governor of Union Territory of Jammu and Kashmir e-tenders on percentage basis are invited from approved and eligible contractors Registered with Union Territory of J&K Govt.

S. No	Name of work	Estt. Cost of work amount in lacs	Earnest Money @ 2%	Time of completion	Class of contract	Cost of tender document	Head of account
1	Stage contract for urgent nature restoration works under M.H. M and R-2702 for Sub-Division Khansahib for the Year 2024-2025.	6.00	12000	Financial year 2024-25	All	600	M&R-2702
2	Stage contract for urgent nature restoration works under M.H. M and R-2701 for Sub-Division Beeru (Lar Canal) for the Year 2024-2025.	7.00	14000	Financial year 2024-25	All	700	M&R-2701
3	Stage Contract for urgent nature Restoration works under M.H.2702 (M and R) for Sub Division Beeru for 2024-25 for Humrikhul, Sikanrikhul, Panzwalkhul, Khahkhul, Chattakhul, RathsunKhul, Fresin-Gurvinkhul, Sonmaikhul, Gabigrathkhul, Lainzkhul, Malla khul , Suresh khul (tail reach), Maninarkhul, Gogaldarakhul (Tail reach)	6.00	12000	Financial year 2024-25	All	600	M&R-2702

No of works Advertised: -03 (Three).

Position of Funds (Budgetary provision).

Position of Technical Sanction Accorded.

Position of Administrative Approval accorded.

The NIT consisting of qualifying information, eligibility criteria specifications, Bill of quantities, set of terms and conditions of contract and other details can be seen / downloaded from departmental website www.jktenders.gov.in

1.	Publishing date	27-04-2024 (5 PM)
2.	Download date start	27-04-2024 (5 PM)
3.	Bid submission date starts	27-04-2024 (5 PM)
4.	Bid submission date ends	04-05-2024 upto (4 PM)
5.	Bid Opening date	06-05-2024 at (11 AM)

The bids shall be deposited in electronic format on the departmental website.

General terms and conditions:-

- The Bids shall be deposited in electronic format on the website jktenders.gov.in from 27-04-2024 to 04-05-2024 up to 16.00 hrs. The Bids will be opened on 06-05-2024 at 11:00 AM. Online documents can be seen and downloaded from the website.
- The complete bidding process will be online.
- Technical bids of bidder shall be opened online in the office of the Executive Engineer, Irrigation Division Ompora Budgam.
- Bid document contains qualifying criteria for bidder, specification, conditions and other details.
- Any item / items not included in the rate list but found necessary during the execution of work shall be paid as per the rates of J&K SSR 2022.
- Any omission / Typographic error shall be read as per the J&K SSR 2022, and as per the corrigendum / errata issued to J&K SSR 2022 in vogue.
- The rates should be strictly quoted as per the unit advertised in the rate list.
- The contractor shall inspect & examine the site, and shall satisfy himself about the location of the site, its approaches and nature of the ground and sub soil before uploading the bids/submission of tender.
- If the contractor fails to complete the work within the stipulated time period, the penalty of RS.0.01% of the allotted cost of work shall be imposed upon the Contractor recurring on daily basis. In addition to penalty prescribed in agreement form 25/26 double.
- During the execution of work, department reserves the right to vary the quantity provided in the contract.
- Tender drawings furnished with the tender document shall not be deemed as working drawings. These may vary from the actual working drawing.
- The contractor shall carry out the various mandatory tests as per specification (e.g the crushing strength of concrete i.e. cube tests, gradation test for aggregate, slump test etc) as directed by Engineer in-charge. All testing charges/expenses etc shall be borne by the contractor.
- The concrete mix shall be designed as per revised BIS (IS: 10262 of 2009) and concreting shall be strictly done as per the mix design by the contractor.

Bid Security/Earnest Money and cost of Tender Document/Declaration form

- Bid must be accompanied with Earnest money in shape of CDR/FDR and to be pledged in favour of Executive Engineer Irrigation Division Ompora and must be uploaded online and released after completion of DLP.
- In case of bid of the first lowest bidder/tender is found unbalanced he shall have to produce additional performance security in shape of CDR/FDR/BG before fixation of contract as per the following breakup

S.No	%age of unbalance bid viz advertised dcost on account of low rates	Additional performance security
1	Upto 0 to 15% below	Nil
2	Greater than 15% and upto 20% below	3%
3	Greater than 20% and upto 25% below	3.5%
4	Greater than 25% and upto 30% below	4%
5	Greater than 30% below	5%

3. Earnest Money shall be refunded/released to the successful bidder (L1) on receipt of 5% performance security. The Earnest Money of other participants shall be released on receipt of Treasury Challan/Treasury receipt.

Bidders must ensure to upload their bids in Single cover. The intending tenderers must ensure to upload the following necessary documents/ certificates with the online tender otherwise on line tender will not be accepted / opened.

- copy of valid registration card, PAN, & latest GST return and latest income tax return with seal and signature with the bid.
- The cost of tender document fee should be deposited in treasuries under MH-0702 in favour of Executive Engineer Irrigation Division Ompora and the necessary treasury Challan must be uploaded online. (Name of work to be mentioned on the Treasury Challan/receipt).
- The tenderer whose tender is declared 1st lowest after opening of the price bid, the hard copy, of all uploaded online shall have to be produced in original in the divisional office within seven days. In case of non-submission of the hard copy of requisite documents as mentioned, in the NIT the tender shall be rejected and the offered rates of the 2nd lowest tenderer shall be considered at the risk and cost of the lowest tenderer.
- a) The tenderer should quote his rate in such a way that the total amount of work amounts without any fractional amount.
- b) Other terms and conditions shall be same as laid down in detailed tender document of the work and form of contract (Agreement form-25).
- The Quantities given in the estimate shall be Subject to change as per the design within the allotted cost.
- Un-balanced tender shall be rejected without assigning any reason.

Sd/  
Executive Engineer  
Irrigation Division  
Ompora Budgam

No:-358-72 DPK-261/24 Date:-29-04-2024

### ازنیابت پٹن

عنوان:- درخواست منجانب ریجنل انجینئر ہیراچھوہ جمنیہ ضلع ہندوستان کی نسبت حصول ڈیپنڈنٹ سرٹیفکیٹ

اشتیہار ہرخاص وعام  
معاملہ مندرجہ عنوان صدر میں درخواست سائل ہیراچھوہ ضلع ہندوستان کی نسبت حصول ڈیپنڈنٹ سرٹیفکیٹ زیر کاروائی ہے اس بارے میں پوری حلقہ سے طلب کیا گیا جس سے عیاں ہے کہ سائل کا شوہر فیاض احمد ولد عبدالرشید ملہا سکا نے موضع جمنیہ میں مورثہ 19-12-2022 کو فوت ہو چکا ہے اور موتی مذکور کے پسماندگان بیٹے ہیں

ریجنل انجینئر ہیراچھوہ موتی 50 سال گھریلو کام  
عابد فیاض ہیراچھوہ موتی 26 سال زریعہ  
فاضل فیاض ہیراچھوہ موتی 20 سال زریعہ  
سرایہ فیاض ہیراچھوہ موتی 24 سال زریعہ

اس کے علاوہ ایک اور کوئی فرزند نہیں ہے۔ سرٹیفکیٹ زیر بحث اجراء کرنے میں اگر کوئی عارضی حائل ہو تو وہ بھی عارضی طور پر منظور کیا جائے گا۔ اس کے علاوہ ہر خاص و عام کوئی عارضی حائل نہیں ہوگا۔  
دفتری اوقات کے دوران پیش کریں۔ بعد کے لیے میعاد کوئی عارضی حائل قبول نہیں ہوگا۔  
ناصب تحصیلدار FKO

ازعدالت ایکٹو کلیمو مجسٹریٹ باطلاس تحصیلدار ناروہ مل خلیع بڈگام  
عنوان: درخواست حبیب فیاض ولد فیاض احمد نجار ساکن آٹھ تحصیل ناروہ مل خلیع بڈگام  
برادر اجرائی OBC سرٹیفکیٹ جمنیہ سائل

اشتیہار ہرخاص وعام

معاملہ مندرجہ عنوان صدر میں سائل نے ایک درخواست ہیراچھوہ ضلع ہندوستان کی نسبت حصول OBC سرٹیفکیٹ پیش کی ہے جو کہ کاروائی ہے اس بارے میں پوری حلقہ سے پورے طلب کی گئی ہے جس سے عیاں ہے کہ سائل موضع آٹھ میں کاسوت دار ہے اور ہیراچھوہ سے تعلق رکھتا ہے۔  
سائل کا کہہ بیٹے ہے۔

فیاض احمد نجار ولد عبدالرشید ہیراچھوہ 68 سال ترکھان والد سائل  
محمود ہانوز مجسٹریٹ ہیراچھوہ 55 سال گھریلو کام والد سائل  
ساند فیاض ہیراچھوہ 26 سال زریعہ ہمشہر سائل  
عابد فیاض ہیراچھوہ 24 سال زریعہ  
شاز فیاض ہیراچھوہ 22 سال  
حبیب فیاض ہیراچھوہ 20 سال ز سائل خود

اس کے علاوہ کوئی فرزند نہیں ہے سائل کے کہنے کی سالا سالا عدنی تقریباً ایک لاکھ ہزار روپے تک ہے۔ سرٹیفکیٹ زیر بحث اجراء کرنے میں اگر کسی حائل کو کوئی عارضی حائل ہو تو وہ بھی عارضی طور پر منظور کیا جائے گا۔ اس کے علاوہ ہر خاص و عام کوئی عارضی حائل نہیں ہوگا۔  
بمغز کے لیے میعاد کوئی عارضی حائل نہیں ہوگا۔  
ناصب تحصیلدار bmg





# Rains Inundate Srinagar, Locals Question Smart City Initiative

Observer News Service

Srinagar: As heavy rainfall drenched the valley, several areas of Srinagar city, including the iconic Boulevard, have been inundated, prompting concerns among locals and pedestrians alike.

Pedestrians and residents have criticized the Smart City initiative, citing its alleged contribution to the transformation of parts of Srinagar into virtual water pools.

Expressing dismay, locals from different parts of Srinagar city said the continuous downpour since Sunday has turned streets into streams, making it difficult to carry out daily activities. The authorities need to take immediate action to address this issue.

Basit, a local from Nowhatta said, "We feel like we're walking on rivers, as the roads have been waterlogged in almost every part of Srinagar, causing problems."

Another local, Zuhab, echoed similar sentiments saying, "Where is the smart city? Where do all those promises go? It has only been raining since last night, and Srinagar has been waterlogged. What are the authorities doing?"

He added, "If it continues to rain for three to four days, we'll have to swim on our roads instead of walking, as our roads have already turned into pools and we don't see any development anywhere, only fake promises."

Moreover, locals from Boulevard, Dalgate, Karan Nagar, Khayam, Khanyar, Sonwar, Nowhatta and other areas have called on authorities for swift measures to tackle the situation.

Meanwhile, the Srinagar Municipal Corporation in a handout said that in the face of heavy rainfall, the SMC has "demonstrated exemplary work".

"As per directions given by Commissioner SMC, Dr Owais Ahmad, the staff, particularly the drainage wing of SMC, remained alert and was seen working on the ground to tackle the issue of water inundation due to continuous and heavy rainfall," it said.

## Rain-Induced Inundation, SMC Responds Swiftly

Srinagar: In the face of heavy rainfall, the Srinagar Municipal Corporation (SMC) has demonstrated exemplary work, with its staff particularly the drainage wing, working tirelessly on the ground to tackle the issue of water inundation due to continuous and heavy rainfall.

With areas like Gogji Bagh, Hazratbal, Pamposh Colony, Palpora, Sir Sayed Market Gogji Bagh, Humhama, Bemina, Jawahar Nagar, Khanyar, Eidgah, HMT, TRC, Makia Point Boulevard, etc., affected by water logging, SMC swiftly mobilized its men and machinery to address the situation with remarkable efficiency.

Through the strategic use of dewatering machines and the deployment of personnel, the SMC is effectively managing the stormwater, ensuring minimal disruption to the residents of Srinagar.

The corporation's strong commitment to citizen welfare is evident in its prompt response to grievances reported through its 24x7 Control Room/Social Media Platform. By maintaining a vigilant stance and engaging in proactive communication, the SMC aims to deliver seamless services to the residents of Srinagar.

Driven by a dedication to the well-being of residents, the SMC vows to continue taking proactive measures to address any challenges arising from adverse weather conditions.

For further information or assistance, citizens are encouraged to contact the 24x7 Control Room of Srinagar Municipal Corporation through the following helpline numbers: - 0194-2470465, - 0194-2474499, - 1800-180-7038.

With areas like Gogji Bagh, Hazratbal, Pamposh Colony, Palpora, Sir Sayed Market Gogji Bagh, Humhama, Bemina, Jawahar Nagar, Khanyar, Eidgah, HMT, TRC, Makia Point Boulevard, etc affected by water logging, the SMC swiftly mobilized its workforce and machinery to address the situation with remarkable efficiency," the statement reads.

It adds, "In a bid to enhance grievance redressal mechanisms, the SMC has made its 24x7 Control Room which works round the clock easily accessible and actively interacts with the general public, through the following helpline numbers: 0194-2470465, - 0194-2474499, 1800-180-7038," it reads further.—(KNO)



PIC: Abid Bhat/KO

# DC Srinagar Assesses Flood Control Preparations, Mitigation Measures

Observer News Service

Srinagar: In the wake of incessant rains and inclement weather conditions, Deputy Commissioner Srinagar, Dr. Bilal Mohi-Ud-Din Bhat, who is also the Chairman District Disaster Management Authority (DDMA), chaired a meeting of concerned officers to review the flood control and mitigation preparations in the district.

Senior Superintendent of Police, Ashish Mishra was also present in the meeting.

At the outset, the DC stressed on utmost co-ordination among line departments and formulating an efficient plan to ensure prompt response to any flood like situation in the district.

He directed the officers to remain in the state of readiness by mobilizing men and machinery on ground particularly at vulnerable spots to avoid any loss to human lives or property damages.

The DC laid emphasis on round the clock monitoring of vulnerable flood prone areas and ensuring timely dissemination of information among the people viz. flood alerts, evacuation points/centres, transportation plans, etc., so that people are updated about the evacuation/rescue plans well in time. He directed the concerned Officers to focus on the identified vulnerable spots so that rapid action is ensured in case of need or to arrest embankment breach, if any.

The DC further directed the concerned departments to formulate rescue plans, identify safe control room locations and also prepare a backup plan. He asked for strengthening communication with the ground level staff and people during any emergency so that people do not panic and get actual information about rescue measures and places available for the public.

The CMO was directed to ensure that important machinery/medicines at health institutions are kept at safer places in all the Health Institutions.

He was also asked for evolving proper SoPs to deal with the floods as like the 'Code Blue' being followed in Hospitals, where every

concerned individual is fully acquainted with their responsibilities in the times of emergency. Similarly, the Deputy Director FCS&CA Department was asked to make necessary arrangements to protect the food grains from any damage due to rising water levels.

The Department was asked to distribute Ration for the month of May, 2024 among the consumers of the District in advance in wake of the inclement weather predictions.

Likewise, SMC, Mechanical Engineering, Mechanical Irrigation, SRTC, State Motor Garages and other line departments were directed to ensure all flood mitigation measures.

Additional Deputy Commissioner, Syed Ahmad Kataria; Additional Deputy Commissioner, Dr Khalid Hussain Malik; Chief Planning Officer, Fayaz Ahmad; Superintending Engineers of Hydraulic, Mechanical Irrigation, R&B, Chief Medical Officer, Deputy Directors of Tourism, FCS&CA, SRTC, State Motor Garages, Officers from Irrigation & Flood Control and other concerned departments were present in meeting.

## Admin Chalk Out Evacuation Plan In Civil Lines

Srinagar: Authorities in Srinagar have devised a holistic evacuation plan amid an imminent flood threat posed by the ongoing incessant rains in different localities of the summer capital.

In Phase-I, the people of Kursoo Padshahi Bagh, Mehjoor Nagar, Charlipora, Gund Chandal, Naik Pora and Kursoo Ghat are to be evacuated to Sanatnagar

Marriage Hall and inhabitants of Rambagh, Old Barzulla, Gung Bugh, Bulbul Bagh inhabitants are to be shifted to Marriage Hall Goripora. In Phase-II, the Jawahar Nagar, Lal Mandi, Ikhrjapora inhabitants are to be shifted to ERA Complex Rambagh and residents of Gogji Bagh, Solina, Alochi Bagh and Magarmal Bagh to MET High School Rawatpora.

# LS Polls-2024 General Observer For 02-Srinagar PC Visits

Observer News Service

Srinagar: General Observer for 02-Srinagar Parliamentary Constituency (PC), Mukul Kumar today visited various Distributions and Collection Centres established for smooth conduct of the General Election to Lok Sabha-2024.

The General Observer inspected Distribution and Collection Centre's of 20-Khanyar, 21-Habbakadal and 24- Zadibal for Srinagar Lok Sabha Seat established at Burn Hall School, SP Higher Secondary School and SP College respectively.

During his visit, the General Observer took detailed assessment of facilities and arrangements put in place for surveillance and security of Election related material and machinery kept at these centers for the Lok Sabha Elections.

He instructed the concerned to ensure all safety measures and adherence to the guidelines of Election Commission of India in letter and spirit for protection of

election related material and machinery at these centres.

Kumar stressed the concerned Assistant Returning Officers (AROs) to make sure all necessary measures have been put in place to facilitate smooth and efficient election process.

He asked them to make proper arrangements for polling staff, adequate parking and separate entry/exit of the vehicles carrying election material at Strong Rooms cum Collection/Distribution Centre's.

He also laid emphasis on placing adequate spaces for counters to be placed at Collection/Distribution Centre's in order to avoid any cluttering during distribution/ collection of election materials.

While interacting with the AROs and other concerned staff, the General Observer underscored the importance of ensuring that all Strong Rooms cum Collection/Distribution Centers adhere to prescribed standards of Election Commission of India to uphold the integrity and fairness of the electoral process.

## PUBLIC NOTICE

I, Sajid Khan, son of Manzoor Ahmad Khan, need to correct my name on my driving license from "Sajid Khan" to "Sajid Manzoor." If anyone has objections he/she may file his/her objection in the concerned RTO Office within a period of seven days from the date of publication of this notice. After that no objection shall be entertained.

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**HIGHWAY STATUS**

- Sgr-Jammu highway - ( Closed )
- Mughal Road - ( Closed )
- Srinagar- Leh- ( Closed )

**HIJRI CALENDAR**  
21 Shawal 1445

PRAYERS	
FAJR	4 : 13
ZUHR	12:28
ASR	5: 17
Magrib	7:16
ISHA	8: 45

## This Day In History

- 1064- German King Henry IV gives away Utrecht county of West Friesland
- 1315- French chamberlain Enguerrand de Marigny is hanged on the public gallows at Montfaucon after being convicted of sorcery
- 1483- Orbital calculations suggest that on this day, Pluto moved inside Neptune's orbit until July 23, 1503
- 1492- Christopher Columbus is given royal commission by Spanish monarchs Isabella I and Ferdinand II to equip his fleet to the New World
- 1492- Spain announces it will expel all Jews
- 1506- Philip of Burgundy & England sign trade agreement
- 1527- Henry VIII of England and Francis I of France sign the Treaty of Westminster, pledging to combine their forces against Holy Roman 1573 -The spire of Beauvais Cathedral, France, which made it the tallest human-made monument in the world at the time, collapses (never rebuilt)
- 1616- King James I of England leaves Brielle
- 1650- French rebel Henri de la Tour Turenne signs treaty with Spain
- 1661- Tsjeng Tsj'eng-Kung begins siege of Dutch fort Zeelandia, Formosa
- 1725- Emperor Charles VI & King Philip IV of Spain sign Treaty of Vienna
- 1789- George Washington is inaugurated as the first President of the United States of America at Federal Hall in NYC
- 1790- Colonial troops occupy Bonni's marroon village
- 1794- The Battle of Boulou is fought, in which French forces defeated the Spanish under General Union.
- 1798- US Department of the Navy forms
- 1804 - The New Hague Theater opens in The Hague, the Netherlands
- 1860 - Navaho indians attack Fort Defiance (Canby)
- 1863 - Battle of Snyder's Bluff, Virginia (part of the Vicksburg Campaign of the American Civil War): General Sherman beaten by Confederate forces
- 1897 - English physicist J. J. Thomson announces his discovery of the electron in a lecture to the Royal Institution
- 1904 - Ice cream cone makes its debut
- 1945 - Red Army opens attack on German Reichstag building in Berlin.
- 1945 - Soviet Army frees Ravensbruck concentration camp
- 1945 - US troops attack the Elbe
- 1945 - Record 48 U-boats sunk by the Allies this month
- 1945 - Adolf Hitler commits suicide along with his new wife Eva Braun in the Führerbunker in Berlin as the Red Army captures the city.
- 1961 - Premier Fidel Castro of Cuba receives Lenin-Peace Prize
- 1962 - NASA civilian pilot Joseph A Walker takes X-15 to 75,190 m
- 1974 - US President Richard Nixon hands over partial transcripts of Watergate tape recordings
- 1975 - North Vietnamese troops capture Saigon, ending the Vietnam War
- 1976 - Muhammad Ali beats Jimmy Young in 15 for heavyweight boxing title
- 1984 - 1,700 skiers participate in an alpine event at Are, Sweden
- 1984 - Strong winds cause a 30 min delay in Toronto Blue Jays game
- 1989 - World Wide Web (WWW) is first launched in the public domain by CERN scientist Tim Berners-Lee
- 1990 - US 66th manned space mission STS 31 (Discovery 10) returns from space
- 1990 - US hostage Frank Reed freed after 4 years in hands of pro-Iranians
- 1992 208th & final episode of "The Cosby Show" on NBC-TV
- 1993 - The World Wide Web source code is released by CERN, making the software freely available to all.



KASHMIR OBSERVER<sup>TM</sup>

Tuesday | 30-04-2024

## Inclement Weather, Power Crisis

In the middle of spring, the Valley is finding itself grappling with two significant challenges: the looming threat of floods and an unprecedented power crisis. The heavy rains have raised concerns about potential flooding. At the same time, the people of Kashmir are facing a severe shortage of electricity, plunging the Valley into darkness despite the arrival of spring.

The recent heavy rains and snowfall have led to a rise in the water levels of rivers and streams in Kashmir. Upper reaches of the region have experienced fresh snowfall, further exacerbating the situation. The Meteorological Department has forecasted more rains and light snowfall over the next few days, which could potentially worsen the flooding situation.

Despite these alarming developments, the administration has assured the public that there is currently no immediate threat of flooding in the Valley. The Irrigation and Flood Control (I&FC) department has been actively monitoring the situation, and as of now, the water levels in most areas remain below the warning threshold. However, given the unpredictable nature of weather patterns, it is imperative that the administration takes proactive measures to prepare for any eventualities.

The people of Kashmir are already facing a severe power crisis, described by many as the worst in decades. Despite recent hikes in electricity tariffs and the installation of smart meters, the Valley is experiencing prolonged power outages, disrupting daily life for its residents. The situation has become so dire that even areas with metered electricity supply are facing frequent disruptions, forcing residents to resort to primitive lighting sources like gas lamps and candles.

The impact of this power crisis is widespread, affecting not only residential areas but also businesses and essential services. Patients relying on medical equipment such as oxygen concentrators are particularly vulnerable, as frequent power outages threaten their lives. The lack of electricity has also disrupted household routines, with women, primarily responsible for household chores, bearing the brunt of the crisis.

It is evident that the administration must urgently address these pressing issues. Firstly, measures must be taken to prepare for potential floods on a war-footing. The administration should ensure that adequate resources and manpower are in place to deal with any emergency situations that may arise. Secondly, steps must be taken to stabilize the power supply in Kashmir. The Kashmir Power Development Corporation Limited (KPDC) must work towards improving power availability and reducing the frequency of power outages. The people of Kashmir deserve better, and it is the responsibility of the administration to ensure their safety and well-being.

# Election Sans a Boycott Call

*Despite changes in recent years, active participation in mainstream politics in Kashmir remains a distant reality*



RIYAZ WANI

“  
True, the Valley has witnessed an unprecedented change in the past five years. Politicians are now able to campaign deep into the interiors of Srinagar, itself a huge change from the past. But the city remains far from active participation in politics

As the election campaign for the parliamentary polls heats up in Jammu and Kashmir, one can't help but notice the absence of the call for boycott of the exercise from any quarters. And while this has happened for the first time since the beginning of the separatist struggle in 1989, it doesn't guarantee the absence of an election boycott this time around. Alternatively, perhaps the people may turn out in overwhelming numbers to vote. And in both cases, the outcome of the polls will be profoundly impacted.

Since the early nineties when separatists began championing boycott of the elections, the trend has experienced diminishing returns: It is now only in urban areas where a significant section of population stick to boycotting the exercise, while in countryside the people generally go out and vote.

Now, the question arises whether people in cities and towns will vote in large numbers in the absence of a public boycott call. Many of them may choose to still boycott. And a range of emotions or absence of them may lead them to act in this way. For example, a substantial section of people still do believe that casting a vote is a betrayal of Kashmir cause, irrespective of the independent merit of this thinking.

Overall, the people may also not vote as they have no previous experience of doing so. Over the past more than three decades, generations of people have grown up boycotting elections in the Valley. This has entrenched a culture of election boycott that would be hard to shrug off, more so in urban areas. The people wouldn't vote because the exercise remains deeply stigmatized.

Or they wouldn't vote simply because they haven't.

What would, however, dictate outcomes in the ongoing exercise is the percentage of people who wouldn't vote. There is a dormant separatist constituency which, if it chooses to vote, would certainly give a distinct advantage to a candidate with a strident pro-Kashmir stance. And should this constituency boycott, then everything is up in the air. The result could become distorted and even an unpopular candidate could win. There are numerous such examples over the past three decades when candidates with little to no political standing won elections by margins of a few hundred or a few votes and went on to occupy top positions in the government. The precedent can very well repeat, if the anticipated voluntary boycott does come to pass.

So, in hindsight, one can ask, if boycotting the elections was the right strategy? The tangled question cannot be answered in yes or no. The question isn't new; it's been discussed before, even within separatist ranks. In fact, over the past decade and a half, the moderate separatists had chosen to distance themselves from the electoral exercise rather than issue a call for boycott. Their reasoning was simple: exhorting boycott of elections made them a party to the democratic exercise and, in the event of people voting in large numbers - as happened often - they would logically be deemed to have no public support for their brand of politics.

However, the hardliners never bought into this argument. They argued that they needed to publicly reject an exercise that they opposed and saw as undermining their political goal. The

debate has never been resolved in favour of either party. Nor is it likely to be settled in the near future. Despite the invisibility of separatist politics following the abrogation of Article 370 in 2019, its legacy continues to resonate in the present. And election boycott is one such issue. But it would be interesting to see how Srinagar and the towns in the South and North Kashmir would vote. More so, Srinagar city which has consistently boycotted polls since 1987 when the allegedly rigged Assembly polls were held. The city has been in a limbo ever since. Though there has been an occasional furtive urge to re-assert its electoral power, Srinagar is still a long way off from political participation. Will this election change this? It remains to be seen.

True, the Valley has witnessed an unprecedented change in the past five years. Politicians are now able to campaign deep into the interiors of Srinagar, itself a huge change from the past. But the city remains far from active participation in politics. Ditto for other major towns in south, north and central Kashmir. This may take a long time to become a reality. Conversely, things could very well go back to square one. The debate about boycott and participation in polls might rear its head again. Kashmir may have changed beyond recognition in recent years, but it is also true that much of this change is not organic but forced and could easily unravel.

*Views expressed in the article are the author's own and do not necessarily represent the editorial stance of Kashmir Observer. The author is the Political Editor at Kashmir Observer*



Save and Invest — Best  
Habit for Financial Safety

Did you know?

Irshad Mushtaq

Saving money and investing wisely are essential components of financial stability and security. Often, people overlook the importance of saving and investing, especially at a young age. It is easy to spend money as soon as it is earned, without considering the future. However, understanding the power of compound interest and making informed investment decisions can significantly impact one's financial wellbeing in the long run.

As young individuals, it may be challenging to grasp the concept of wise investment. Many people only realize the importance of investing wisely when they are older and regret not starting sooner. Therefore, it is crucial to educate the new generation, our young brothers, sisters, and children, about the significance of saving and making informed investment choices.

Elders possess valuable experience and have faced financial challenges in their lives. Their guidance can help the younger generation make better financial decisions. By learning from the experiences of their elders, young individuals can avoid common pitfalls and make informed investment choices.

Financial health is a critical aspect of overall wellbeing. While a steady income or successful business can contribute to financial security, saving and wise investing are the keys to long-term financial stability. It is essential to seek advice from trusted financial professionals and take proactive steps towards saving and investing wisely.

There are various asset classes available for investment, such as gold, silver, real estate, stocks, mutual funds, and insurance. While some may view insurance as an investment, it is important to understand its primary purpose for risk management. Investing in insurance products often comes with limitations on returns, liquidity, and high fees.

Before investing in any asset, one should consider factors such as liquidity, potential returns, transparency, and annual wealth growth. Seeking guidance from financial experts can help individuals make informed decisions and avoid common investment traps. It is crucial to save for oneself rather than for agents or salespeople, as saving money requires diligence and careful consideration.

In conclusion, saving and investing wisely are crucial for financial security and stability. By educating the younger generation about the importance of saving and making informed investment choices, we can empower them to build a secure financial future. Investing time and effort into learning about different asset classes and seeking professional advice can help individuals make sound financial decisions. Ultimately, investing wisely and avoiding common pitfalls can lead to long-term financial success.

The author can be reached at irshad@bp.sharekhan.com



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## Response to "Coexisting with Wildlife"

Many thanks to Kashmir Observer for publishing a thought-provoking and a need-of-the-hour article, "Coexisting with wildlife" (April 28, 2024) on human-animal conflict, which has been a major concern in the country in recent years. It raises a few important questions like, where this is heading towards and why animal deaths and loss of human lives, and properties from man-animal conflicts take serious turns. Perhaps, one major reason for the persistence

of man-animal conflict is that people migrating to the forest floor for employment and for other purposes have no knowledge about the behavior of animals and their movements.

India's highest rate of urbanization has caused a hasty expansion of human settlements into areas that were once exclusively wildlife habitats. With vaguely defined boundaries for fauna, human-occupied areas in India have increasingly become the hangouts for wandering wild animals. Conflict with wildlife has reached un-

precedented levels, with predators attacking livestock, thus leading to retaliatory animal killings. The deadly human-animal conflict has largely been the consequence of a fast growing human population's inability to find sustainable ways to co-exist with the country's bustling wildlife. Human population increase and its consequent demand for natural resources have led to degradation and fragmentation of natural habitats. As a result, humans and wildlife compete for the same diminishing resources. Mitiga-

tion of human-wildlife conflict is thus becoming one of the major concerns for both wildlife managers and the scientific community. It is therefore necessary to address the issue in a holistic manner, and co-create palliative solutions with full engagement of all the relevant stakeholders. Also, more investments in research, testing and sharing coordinated and systematic approaches are needed to tackle the man-animal conflict.

Ranganathan Sivakumar



# Student's Success Starts Locally

Aubaid Ahmad Akhoun

As the frenzy of exams subsides, students and parents embark on the next chapter of their educational journey – the pursuit of admissions and coaching. However, amidst this flurry of activity, it's crucial to reflect on the choices made and their profound impact on our youth's future. Let's delve deeper into the pivotal role of parents, the influence of peer pressure, the significance of local education, and the necessity of ethical teaching practices in shaping a vibrant educational landscape.

## THE PARENTAL INFLUENCE

One of the most concerning trends during this period is the undue influence exerted by parents on their children's choice of subjects. While parental guidance is invaluable, it's imperative to prioritize the interests and aptitudes of the students themselves. Pushing children into fields they have little interest in can lead to disengagement and frustration. Instead, parents should encourage their wards to explore their passions and talents, empowering them to make informed decisions about their academic paths.

## PEER PRESSURE DYNAMICS

Peer pressure also plays a significant role in shaping students' choices. Many young learners opt for subjects based on their friends' preferences rather than their own interests or career aspirations. While camaraderie is essential, it should not overshadow individual agency and self-discovery. Students must recognize that their academic journey is uniquely their own, and they should choose subjects that resonate with their personal goals.

## THE CASE FOR LOCAL EDUCATION

Amidst the chaos of admissions, the selection of coaching centers requires careful consideration. While corporate coaching centers may offer flashy facilities, there's a compelling case for supporting local tuition centers. These grassroots institutions provide a personalized learning experience with teachers who understand the local context. By patronizing local establishments, parents not only contribute to the local economy but also create job opportunities within their communities.

## ADVANTAGES OF LOCAL TUITION CENTERS

Local tuition centers play a



vital role in imparting moral education and fostering a sense of community. Through parent-teacher meetings and interactive sessions, these centers promote holistic development and provide a support network for students and their families. Moreover, by emphasizing the importance of attendance and punctuality, they instill essential life skills that extend far beyond the classroom.

## THE ETHICAL IMPERATIVE IN TEACHING

Recent incidents circulating on social media by some of the reputed corporate coaching centre /branches in Kashmir highlights the need for ethical teaching practices and shed light on unethical behavior within educational settings. As educators, it's imperative to uphold ethical standards and prioritize moral integrity in the pursuit of knowledge. Let's address these concerns and reaffirm our commitment to nurturing honest, sincere professionals who will contribute positively to society.

Teachers hold a sacred responsibility to nurture young minds with integrity and respect. Education should remain a sanctuary of enlightenment, free from unethical behavior that undermines the trust between educators and students.



**In our quest for progress and development, we must prioritize the cultivation of moral character in our future professionals. It's not merely doctors and engineers that we require, but honest doctors and sincere engineers who uphold ethical values in their practice**

In the present age, moral education is as crucial as secular education because knowledge without moral principles is like a fruitless tree, a futile endeavor.

The Quran underscores moral education as a central theme, with numerous verses emphasizing the formation of good character and embodiment of morality.

The teacher can impart others the same knowledge that they themselves have access to. However, the teaching profession is far from easy; it demands constant hard work, up-to-date knowledge, dedication, passion, ethics, humanity, consciousness, spirituality, and a calm demeanor. Knowledge is intrinsically tied to morality. Knowledge pursued solely for personal gain is like poison, lacking in productivity.

Parents should equip their children with the light of moral education as well as conventional education so that they can move forward with moral awareness and join the ranks of righteous children. In collective responsibility, we need a society where it is imperative to lay the foundation for an environment free from immorality, shamelessness, oppression, murder, unjust bloodshed, bribery and wrongdoing, because the influence of the environment on morality is also felt.

Educators bear a sacred responsibility to impart knowledge with integrity and uphold moral principles in the classroom.

Teaching extends beyond the transmission of information; it is about nurturing well-rounded individuals who possess not only academic prowess but also moral consciousness.

## UNETHICAL CONDUCT IN EDUCATION

The emergence of videos depicting irresponsible behavior by educators is a cause for concern. Using unrelated, unethical content during classes not only undermines the integrity of education but also sets a poor example for students. Such actions have no place in the noble pursuit of knowledge and must be addressed with urgency and diligence.

In light of recent events, it is essential for educational institutions to reaffirm their commitment to ethical conduct. This includes implementing clear guidelines for appropriate teaching practices and fostering a culture of accountability among educators. By upholding ethical standards, we ensure that education remains a beacon of enlightenment and progress.

## CULTURAL RELEVANCE AND LANGUAGE

Embracing local languages and cultural nuances enhances students' understanding of concepts. Making learning accessible and relatable fosters a deeper

connection to education. Let's celebrate cultural diversity and ensure that every student has equal access to quality education in a language they understand.

## THE ROLE OF MORALITY IN NATION-BUILDING

Maulana Rumi saying in Persian is very popular:

"Suhbat e sauleh tura saulah kunad  
Suhbat E tauleh tura tauleh kunad"

Meaning "In the companionship of good people man learns good and man learns evil in the company of bad people"

Maulana Rumi's timeless wisdom reminds us that the death of morality is, in essence, the death of a nation. In our quest for progress and development, we must prioritize the cultivation of moral character in our future professionals. It's not merely doctors and engineers that we require, but honest doctors and sincere engineers who uphold ethical values in their practice.

Let's heed Rumi's wisdom and create environments where goodness flourishes and ethical principles guide every interaction.

## EDUCATIONAL RESPONSIBILITY

As we navigate the post-exam rush, let's reaffirm our commitment to student-centered education and the promotion of ethical teaching practices. By empowering students to pursue their passions, supporting local education initiatives, and upholding ethical standards in teaching, we can create a more inclusive and empowering educational landscape for generations to come. Together, let's build a brighter future where every student has the opportunity to thrive and succeed.

Finally the death of morality is actually the death of the nation. We don't need doctors and engineers - we need honest doctors and sincere engineers.

By instilling values of honesty, sincerity, and responsibility in our educational systems, we lay the foundation for a brighter, more ethical future. Together, let's strive to uphold the highest standards of integrity in education and nurture a generation of professionals who will contribute positively to society's advancement.

The author is an Educational Columnist, Motivational Speaker, and Associate Editor of the weekly educational publication 'Education Quill'.

# ALGORITHM AVERSION

## Who Trusts Algorithms to Make Decisions?

Peter Slattery

In today's world, algorithms are everywhere—curating our Spotify playlists, suggesting YouTube videos, and even helping us make financial decisions. But despite their prevalence and power, many of us are still hesitant to fully rely on them. Researchers call this "algorithm aversion"; we tend to distrust algorithmic advice even when it outperforms human judgment.

## WHAT FACTORS DRIVE DISTRUST OF ALGORITHMS?

One review of personal and contextual factors has suggested that distrust of algorithms is driven by many different factors, outlined in the table below.

To better understand the personal and contextual factors that influence algorithmic aversion, Vinicius Ferraz and a team of researchers at Heidelberg University, and Rhine-Waal University recently conducted a study using a controlled online environment.

In this study, participants were asked to make a series of decisions, choosing among three options that offered different financial rewards. The goal was to consistently select

the option with the highest payout. This task was well-suited for an algorithm with reinforcement learning capabilities, which could learn from previous decisions to make optimal choices.

At each decision point, participants had two choices: They could either make the decision independently or delegate the decision-making to the algorithm. By observing the participants' behavior and analyzing the factors that influenced their decision to trust or distrust the algorithm, the researchers aimed to gain insights into the underlying causes of algorithmic aversion.

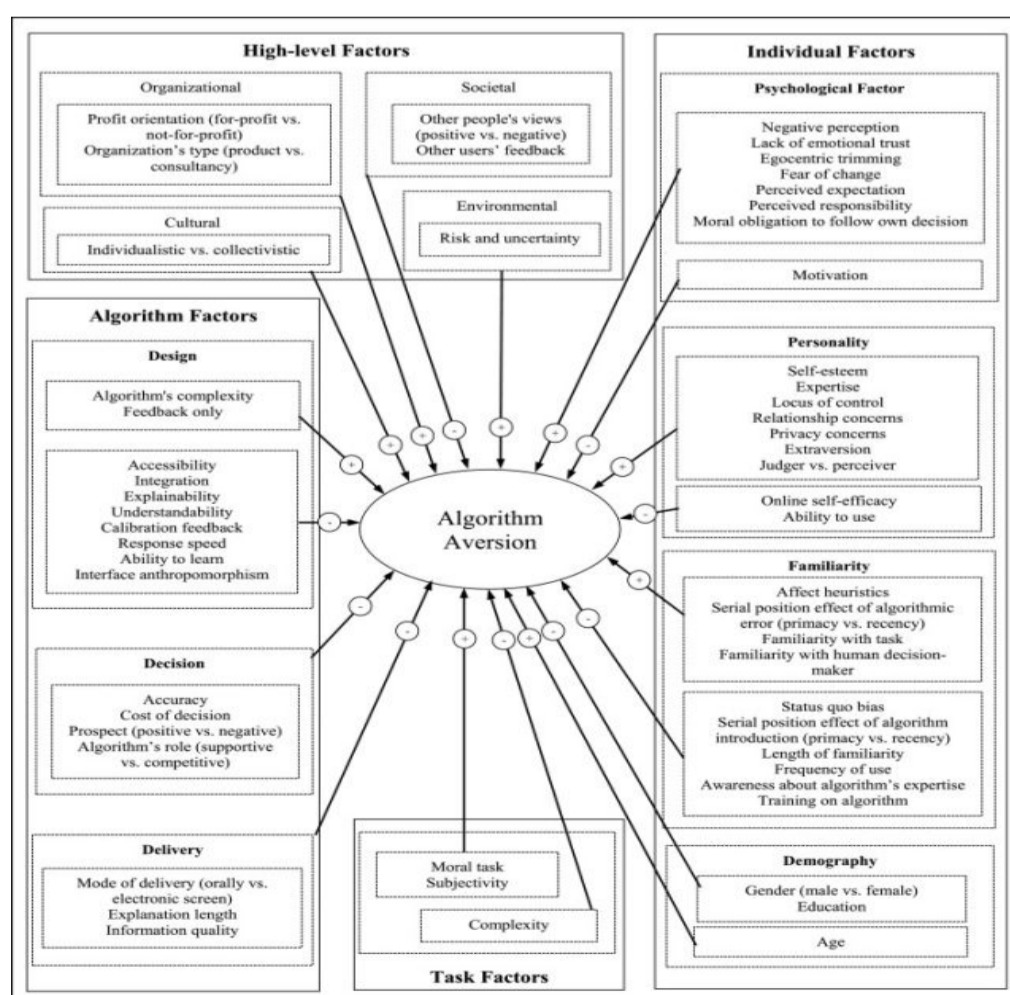
## THE FINDINGS

They found that the most significant factors were age, extraversion, and generalized trust.

Three of the more interesting findings are discussed in more detail below.

## THE ROLE OF PERSONALITY

From a demographic perspective, age emerged as a significant predictor of algorithm aversion, with younger participants showing a greater propensity to trust and delegate to AI. Specific personality traits also significantly influ-



enced the interaction.

Participants high in extraversion and openness—traits linked to a willingness to explore new experiences—were more likely to delegate decisions to algorithms, viewing AI as an enhancement to their decision-making processes. Conversely, those with high levels of neuroticism, characterized by anxiety and a propensity for worry, showed a strong aversion, likely due to fears of negative outcomes and a lack of control over automated decisions.

## THE ROLE OF GENDER

The study highlighted a gender divide: Women not only delegated decisions less frequently on average, but also tended to react more strongly than men when the algorithm made mistakes. This could stem from higher expectations that automated systems should perform reliably.

## THE ROLE OF CONTEXT

Trust in algorithms increased when participants were provided clear explanations about how the algorithms functioned. This transparency allowed users to understand and rationalize the AI's decision-making

process, resulting in a higher propensity to delegate decisions compared to the baseline. Even more pronounced was the effect of automation, where the algorithm took over the entire task effort, significantly boosting delegation rates as participants appreciated the convenience and efficiency of full automation.

However, introducing a cost for using the AI, even a symbolic one, led to a stark decrease in trust. The payment group showed much lower levels of delegation, highlighting the sensitivity of trust to perceived value and fairness.

## LOOKING AHEAD

We are on the brink of a future heavily influenced by AI; therefore, it is increasingly important that we understand the factors that influence engagement with AI. By fostering a better understanding of algorithm aversion and its underlying causes, we can design better AI systems and prepare society to interact more effectively with them.

The article was originally published by Psychology Today



## Nesterra in association with Fashion Carpets Brings Elegance to Srinagar Homes: A Stylish Revolution Begins

Srinagar, April 29th, 2024- Nesterra, the pioneering premium home furnishings brand in the upholstery and drapery segment from the house of Sutlej Textiles & Industries Ltd. from the prestigious K.K. Birla group, is all set to elevate the home décor scene in Srinagar for those seeking luxury and style in home furnishings. Moreover, Fashion Carpets, a retail store which sells premium fabric collections, also recently announced the grand opening of its new store in one of the most fabric prominent areas of Srinagar, featuring a curated selection of Nesterra's most elegant home décor collection.

Nesterra's Home Décor offers a comprehensive collection of fabric used for making upholstery, cushion cover, tapestries, etc. This carefully chosen assortment of Nesterra is now available to Srinagar customers seeking to transform their homes with sophistication and refined elegance, featuring you. Fashion Carpets has carefully selected the most attractive / captivating

masterpieces from Nesterra offering a broad selection of all the 36 unique collections produced by the brandevry piece, from stylish carpets to exquisite accessories, radiates sophistication and fine craftsmanship.

Speaking about the recent store launch, Smita Joshi, VP of Home Textiles and Design Expert, Nesterra, said, "At Nesterra, we believe in the providing the best solutions to consumers and provide beautiful interiors full of color, nature, and individuality for their home décor. With Nesterra, you can take charge of your interior design. Our thoughtfully selected range of textiles enables countless combinations. One can weave together a dynamic fabric of colors and textures, or mix strong, statement items with soothing neutrals, to create a place that represents an individual's personality. With the debut of this new store, Srinagar's people will have a unique chance to interact with Nesterra's well-known designs. Fashion Carpets is dedicated to providing the

entire range of Nesterra collections, even though it isn't an exclusive Nesterra retailer. This guarantees that consumers will find the ideal pieces to enhance their homes."

Further adding to this, Irfan Sheikh, Founder & Owner of Fashion Carpets stated that, "We are delighted to showcase Nesterra's exceptional home décor collection to Srinagar. The brand perfectly complements our dedication to providing consumers with the newest trends and superior quality products. Fashion Carpets recognizes the importance of offering a variety of options that embrace both international design trends and reflect regional tastes and cultural influences."

Nesterra and Fashion Carpets have collaborated closely to curate a diverse collection that caters to a wide range of consumer preferences and tastes. The store's commitment to providing a seamless and enjoyable shopping experience ensures all visitors can find the perfect pieces to create their dream home.

## CONTD. FROM PAGE 1

### Incessant Rains

Padshahi Bagh, Mehjoor Nagar, Charlipora, Gund Chandal, Naik Pora and Kursoo Ghat are to be evacuated to Sanatnagar Marriage Hall and inhabitants of Rambagh, Old Barzulla, Gung Bugh, Bulbul Bagh inhabitants are to be shifted to Marriage Hall Goripora.

In Phase-II, the Jawahar Nagar, Lal Mandi, Ikhrapora inhabitants are to be shifted to ERA Complex Rambagh and residents of Gogji Bagh, Solina, Alochi Bagh and Magarmal Bagh to MET High School Rawatpora.

Under the Phase-II only, the inhabitants of Maisuma, Gow Kadal, Kukar Bazar, Sheikh Bagh, Abi Guzar and Samandar Bagh Barbarshah are to be evacuated to IMPA.

During the last 24 hours, Srinagar has recorded a rainfall of 38.6mm while Qazigund and Pahalgam in South Kashmir have recorded a precipitation of 64.4 mm and 51.7 mm respectively.

According to the details, Kupwara in north Kashmir and Kokernag in south have recorded a rainfall of 4.2 mm and 43.6 mm rainfall respectively, the details available with KNO, reads.

In the last 24 hours, Gulmarg, a famous ski-resort, has received a precipitation of 30.2mm.

Director Meteorological department (MeT), Dr Mukhtar Ahmad told KNO that the intensity of rains have decreased in a number of areas this evening and there is a forecast of dry spell from May 01-May 05.

He added that the weather is expected to remain wet till late evening and a light spell of rain is expected tomorrow as well.

However, as per the advisory issued by MeT, the farmers have been advised to suspend farm operations till tomorrow.

Temporary disruption of traffic over higher reaches of Zojila, Sinthan Pass, Mughal Road, Razdan pass etc, the advisory reads, adding that water logging is expected in low lying areas and there is a possibility of landslides & shooting stones.

Temporary increase in water level in Jhelum & tributaries and other local streams & Nallas are expected, the advisory reads.

However, the fresh wet spell has not affected the power supply anywhere across Kashmir, the government has said.

Kashmir Power Distribution Corporation Limited (KPDC) Chief Engineer, Sandeep Seth told KNO that the power supply remains uninterrupted across Kashmir valley till Monday late evening.

"As per our assessment, we have distributed over 1300 Megawatts of power on Monday that depicts there are no issues or any major fault in electricity in almost all parts of the valley," he said.

On asking about the precautionary measures in view of incessant rains in Kashmir valley, the Chief Engineer said that they are monitoring the situation round the clock. "We deal issues in accordance with the weather situations."

Additionally, an avalanche struck the Sarbal area of Sonamarg in central Kashmir's Ganderbal district on Monday. Fortunately, there were no reported casualties or financial losses, as the avalanche occurred in a forested area.

### Sinking Land

damage to the property and ecology. 74 families with over 500 souls have been directly affected by the sinking and most of the families have been relocated to community hall in Maitra area of Ramban and some have been placed in a safer place in the Pernote area in tents. But as the rain continues, these tents were damaged and those people are also being relocated to Maitra.

On April 25 (Thursday) people noticed that their houses are developing cracks and when they started enquiring they found that the entire village was sinking, which forced them to leave in search of safer places.

The only road link from district headquarters Ramban to Sangaldan and Gool areas of the district got snapped and with felling of two towers, the power supply to the subdivision Gool also got damaged.

The district administration was immediately informed by the locals and they rushed to the spot to assess the situation arising out of the unprecedented event.

Additional Deputy Commissioner (ADC) Ramban, Varunjeet Charak, looking after the situation and camping in the area, said that the entire area has been declared a no-go zone and nobody is being allowed to move towards the area. "The situation is unprecedented and is not in anybody's control. The teams of National Disaster Relief Force (NDRF) and Union Territory Disaster Relief Force (UTDRF) are on the spot to tackle the situation but as the area continues to sink, no immediate action can be taken at the damaged site," he informed.

The Pernote village is situated around seven kilometers from DC Office Ramban on Gool-Sangaldan road and the damaged portion is around six to seven kilometers in height and two to three kilometers in width. The sinking started from the bottom, which is around 50 meters from the river Chenab.

According to the officials the area is continuously sinking and one evening if the sinking is recorded 10 meters, the next morning it becomes 20 meters. The area has loose soil with minimal rocks and water is also present inside which was witnessed by the officials as well.

A team of geological experts from New Delhi has taken the samples of the soil and has assessed the situation. The team is expected to submit their report soon and this will give us an idea as to why the area is sinking and what measures we need to take to stop it," the ADC said.

Due to the sinking of the land, road connectivity and electricity supply to Gool sub-division was damaged and it was after three days that electricity supply was restored and a road from Digdol area was opened for light motor vehicles.

"For heavy vehicles, we are considering allowing trucks and other heavy vehicles from the Mahore area of Reasi district to bring essential items. At present there is no dearth of essential commodities in the area but still supply will be

restored soon," the ADC added.

But as the area has witnessed heavy rains since last night, administration has asked people to stay away from the area and nobody is being allowed to move beyond Maitra. (KNO)

### Major Roads, Highways

The rains are continuing, hampering restoration works, they said, advising commuters to avoid journey on the highway till it is cleared of the debris.

Mughal road, an alternate route linking Poonch and Rajouri districts in Jammu with south Kashmir's Shopian district, remained closed for the third day owing to snowfall in Peer Ki Gali and adjoining areas, the officials said.

Amid the incessant rains, authorities in Kishtwar have ordered closure of schools in the district.

The decision to suspend class work for the day has been taken in the interest of prioritising the safety and well-being of students, staff, and the broader community given the current challenges posed by the adverse weather conditions, an official said.

He said efforts are on to restore water supply to Kishtwar town which was snapped following significant damage to the main 250 mm diameter water supply pipes of the Naigad Water Supply scheme at Hunjala on Sunday.

Police officials said two houses were damaged due to landslide at Basha-Simbool village of Kishtwar, while dozens of livestock perished in incidents of lightning and flash floods in Ramban and Samba districts overnight.

In its advisory, the officials in the Traffic department said, the people are advised to undertake journey only after confirming the status of the road from Traffic control units.

As per the details the hundreds of commuters remained stranded on different major roads and highways after the routes were closed for vehicular movement as a precautionary measure. "The stranded commuters have been stopped at the safer places and will be allowed to ply only after the weather conditions improve and the road is closed," the officials said.

Meanwhile, the commuters in Srinagar and other areas had to face tremendous hardships today as the roads remained submerged with the muddy water amidst the intermittent moderate rainfall across Kashmir.

The lanes and bi-lanes in Srinagar and elsewhere remained submerged, giving tough times to the commuters to commute.

However, the Srinagar Municipal Corporation (SMC) has stated that the staff, particularly drainage wing of SMC remained alert and is tackling the issue of inundation in different areas.

The areas like Gogji Bagh, Hazratbal, Pamposh Colony, Jalpora, Sir Sayed Market Gogji Bagh, Humhama, Bemina, Jawahar Nagar, Khanyar, Eidgah, HMT, TRC, Makia Point Boulevard and etc were affected by water logging, the SMC swiftly mobilized its workforce and machinery to address the situation with remarkable efficiency.

Through the strategic use of dewatering machines and the deployment of personnel, the SMC is effectively managing the storm water, ensuring minimal disruption to the residents of Srinagar, the spokesman said.

Moreover, the citizens have been asked to contact the 24x7 Control Room of Srinagar Municipal Corporation in case of any issue related to water logging or others.

However, the air traffic as well as the train services remained unaffected throughout the day.

### Schools Closed,

postponed all examinations that were scheduled to be held on Tuesday.

The water level in water bodies across Kashmir has been rising due to the continuous rainfall, according to officials.

While a danger warning has been issued for the Pohru Nallah in Kupwara district, the water level in other water bodies of the valley, including the Jhelum river, is still below the alert mark. The meteorological department has forecast wet weather till Tuesday evening.

The Directorate of School Education, Kashmir, issued the order to suspend classes in all schools up to the higher secondary level on Tuesday.

The step has been taken as a precautionary measure in view of the incessant rainfall, according to the order.

The meteorological department said, "The weather will improve from tomorrow. The weather will be generally dry with no major activity from May 1 to May 5."

Earlier in the day, heavy rainfall in Kupwara district forced authorities to suspend classes in schools.

"In view of inclement weather and avalanche warning issued by JKDMA, the class work in all the schools is suspended across the district on April 29 as a precautionary measure for the safety of students," an official had said.

He had said however, teaching and non-teaching staff shall attend their duties to monitor the situation and ensure safety of assets of their respective institutions.

Some areas of Handwara and Kupwara towns have been waterlogged, prompting authorities to launch an evacuation operation for the affected residents.

### Boy Dies, Houses

after a rock fell on it, leaving a minor boy dead, whose hand has been retrieved so far," he said, adding that the rescue operation has been launched to trace the rest parts of the body of the minor boy.

In a similar incident, the landslide damaged a residential house in Bujthala area of Uri in north Kashmir where seven persons were simultaneously buried under the debris.

"Seven persons have been rescued so far from the debris after a landslide hit a residential house in the locality," officials said.

Deputy Commissioner Baramulla Minga Sherpa wrote on X: "Team of Dist Admin B'ta @BaramullaPolice & Lachhipura Battalion of @ChinarcorpsA along with locals rescued 7 persons trapped under debris after their house collapsed due to heavy rains in Bujthala, Tehsil Baniyar, Uri. Two persons injured in the incident are being shifted to the nearest medical

facility for treatment."

Moreover, a government building, housing the Handloom department's office has suffered damage in north Kashmir's Kupwara district also.

According to an official, around 8-10 houses were damaged due to heavy rain in Mandi Area of Poonch. SDM Ashfaq Hussain said, "8-10 houses were damaged in heavy rainfall. Some houses are fully damaged and some are partially damaged. A few roads have also been damaged. A relief amount will be given to the affected as per the rules. We are providing tents to the affected families. We have identified vulnerable spots and places of alternate accommodation in the area."

Meanwhile, a man received injuries as a landslide blocked Baba Reshi-Gulmarg road in North Kashmir Baramulla district on Monday.

A landslide occurred at Cherdari Baba Reshi road due to which Baba Reshi-Gulmarg road was blocked. An official said that one person namely Zahoor Ahmad Wani got injured, he was shifted to GMC Baramulla for medical treatment.

Meanwhile efforts are on to clear the road.

### Over 300 Families

Kupwara. Of these, 198 families have been evacuated from Handwara tehsil alone. Also, 51 villages of the district have been partly affected, while 5 villages of Handwara have been fully affected by the floods.

It was given out that floods have damaged some major infrastructure assets in the district which include Shumriyal Bridge, Khumryal Bridge (side walls), Shatmuqam Bridge, Sohiora- Hayhama bridge, Farkyan bridge, two RRD buildings at Kupwara and AD Handicrafts office building, Shumryal- Gundajhanger road got cut-off due to scouring and a breach in Doban Kachama dam.

Meanwhile all the border roads have been closed due to fresh snowfall and avalanche threat. The District Administration has assured the general public that there is no need to panic as all the men and machinery have been pressed into service for necessary rescue, relief and restoration measures.

Water level is continuously monitored and evacuation measures are underway in the flood prone areas. It was also given out that 21 Shelter homes have been established across the district.

The general Public has been advised to approach the District Control Room headed by Additional Deputy Commissioner/Assistant Commissioner Revenue and Tehsil Level control Rooms, headed by the concerned Tehsildars, for any assistance. Meanwhile class work remained suspended in the schools of the district today.

The Deputy Commissioner (DC) Kupwara, Ayushi Sudan has directed for immediate restoration measures to connect Shumryal and Gundajhanger villages. The DC accompanied by other officers, during the day undertook an extensive tour of the affected areas, where she took stock of the flood situation and directed concerned to focus on evacuation measures so that precious lives are saved.

Later, she took a review of the flood situation in a meeting of the District Disaster Management Authority and passed directions to all the concerned people involved in the rescue, relief and restoration works. Ayushi urged the residents not to venture close to water bodies and Nallahs and cooperate with the District Administration. (KNO)

### Rivers, Tributaries

swell Jhelum once it passes the tributaries," Alam told Kashmir Observer.

Replying to a query concerning the possibility of a flood-like situation following non stop rain in Kashmir, he said that it would be premature to predict whether or not the situation of the sort will occur because the water levels in Jhelum and Sangam have not yet touched the danger mark.

Alam however was quick to add that cement and sandbags had been dispatched to the potential breach places.

"The department is closely monitoring the situation and is prepared to handle any challenges that may emerge in the wake of the rain. We work in tandem with the district administration and urge residents who live near rivers, tributaries, and nallahs to exercise caution since the apprehensions of landslides have increased," he added.

The department, he said, is getting reports regarding the situation from each district head office and has made all the necessary arrangements to deal with any potential threat.

### Parties Seeking

Saleem Parry, Peoples Conference leader Imran Reza Ansari and two Independent candidates.

In response to a question, Abdullah said it was the job of the media to tell the people whether the statements made by Prime Minister Narendra Modi were true or false.

"The prime minister is making statements; he has a right to do so. It is your job to check whether his statements are true or false," he said.

On the prime minister asserting that the National Conference "will not raise" the issue of Article 370, Abdullah said, "When the storm will come here, that day they will also know".

On the BJP's claim of crossing the 400-seat mark in the Lok Sabha elections, Abdullah said, "They may win all 543 seats, you are ready for your murder. When you will be stabbed, then you will recall what Farooq Abdullah was saying. If you did not rise to save the Constitution, India will not last. There will be conflict and turmoil everywhere in India."

He also hit out at the BJP for claiming credit for the construction of the Ram temple at Ayodhya.

"You talk about Ram temple construction. Did they construct the Ram Mandir? Muslims, Sikhs, Christians, everyone has contributed to the construction of the Ram temple.

"But it is unfortunate that they claim that it belongs to only them. Like, Allah sent the Quran. It is for everyone, it is not only for Muslims. We Muslims are at fault that we kept the Quran at home but never tried to understand it," he said.

On the Centre's assertion that the situation in Jammu and Kashmir has improved after the abrogation of Article 370, the former chief minister said people have been pushed into poverty.

"The situation has improved dramatically, they have improved so much that I do not have words to describe it. We should be thankful to Allah that the edible oil prices are touching the sky, poverty has also risen skywards, and the poor have been crushed by electricity prices.

"Look where the LPG prices have gone. Ask all this to a poor man. Why are you asking me? Educated youths are sitting at home without any employment. They have reached the state of suicide."

"Look at the prices of medicines. I am a diabetic. I used to take insulin which used to cost Rs 400, then it went to Rs 700 and now it has gone to Rs 1100. What will a poor person do? Where will he get the money from? And you are saying we are developing," he said.

"Be Cautious About EVMs"

The NC President urged people to remain cautious of the Electronic Voting Machines (EVMs) when they come to vote on polling day.

According to him, there is a risk that votes intended for one party may be registered for another.

NC patriarch recounted how a friend from Karnataka shared a video showing his experience inside a polling booth. Even while pressing the EVM, there was neither a response nor any light emanating from the machine. "It is very much possible that the officers would use those votes for some other party. Therefore, I urge you all to stay cautious and not to leave the polling booth before properly verifying whether the machine is in working condition and whether the green light is illuminated on its top. If you do not see any light, ask the polling staff to rectify it. Do not leave the booth until you hear the sound and see the light. We must remain vigilant. The present time is one of tough ordeals," Farooq said.

The NC President further alleged that democratic institutions are being constantly eroded and that Election Commission members are now being handpicked by the government itself. "Earlier, the Prime Minister, Chief Justice of India, and leader of the Opposition selected ECI members. Now the Chief Justice has been replaced by a minister of the Modi cabinet. Imagine what will happen if they (NDA) manage to secure a brute majority," Farooq said in his address.

He alleged that surveys are being conducted in Kashmir, asking for details of households and proof of residency. "The second phase will require us to present proof that we belong here. To them, we are all infiltrators. Therefore, people must vote in these elections to foil such plays," Farooq said.

### Voice Discontent

democratic ways," she said.

Mufti said people might have been upset with the People's Democratic Party (PDP) for some time, but they do realise that the party has saved them from the task force, counter-insurgent Ikhwan group and POTA.

"It was during the tenure of (former Jammu and Kashmir chief minister and Mehbooba Mufti's father) Mufti Mohammad Sayeed that a new era of development was started, a dialogue process was started between India and Pakistan and there seemed to be some movement on key issues," she said.

The PDP president is contesting the Lok Sabha election from the Anantnag-Rajouri constituency, where polling is scheduled to be held on May 7.

### Engineer Rashid's

was arrested in 2019 and charged by the National Investigation Agency under various sections of the Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act (UAPA).

He is currently in Delhi's Tihar jail. Rashid was first elected to the Jammu and Kashmir Legislative Assembly from the Langate segment in 2008 and was reelected from the same seat in 2014. He had contested the 2019 Lok Sabha polls from Baramulla constituency and stood third. National Conference leader and former chief minister Omar Abdullah and People's Conference president Sajad Gani Lone are the other candidates from Baramulla.

### VGDs Want Weapons

introduced, members of whom are called Village Defence Guards (VGDs). It was not only the name, the structure of the committees has also been changed. Unlike VDCs where only SPOs were paid, all VGDs are now paid.

According to the annual report of the Ministry of Home Affairs for 2022-23, a total of 4,153 Village Defence Groups and 32,355 SPOs were engaged in Jammu and Kashmir in different responsibilities for the protection of civilians and anti-terrorists operations under the direct supervision of district superintendents of police or senior superintendents of police.

The VGDs came under focus when one of its members Mohd Sharief was killed in a gunfight with terrorists in Panara village here in Jammu and Kashmir's Udhampur district early Sunday. The encounter had happened in the area, once a hot-bed of terrorism, after a long gap of over 17 years.

"Government provided us with weapons to defend our villages from the enemy forces. We want the government to equip us with automatic weapons so that we can take on the terrorists effectively," VDG Gul Mohammad told PTL.

Attending the last rites of his colleague in Lower Panara village on Monday, he said they have always stood shoulder-to-shoulder with the security forces to ensure that the area remains free of terrorism.

"One of our brothers laid down his life and his sacrifice will not go waste. We will avenge his killing and are alert," he said.

Abdul Hameed, another VDG member, said the government has notified a new scheme for them about two years ago but "some of us are still not getting their dues. The government should look into it and ensure that all the VDG members are paid their remuneration on time besides increasing the allowances."

Pawan Kumar also demanded equipping the VGDs with automatic weapons to take on the terrorists effectively.

"We are ready and will not allow them to settle down," he said.

While the VGDs are paid Rs 4,500 per month in more vulnerable areas, others are paid a uniform rate of Rs 4,000 per month.

The remuneration of SPOs of Jammu and Kashmir Police has been enhanced up to Rs 18,000 per month. SPOs having experience of less than three years are paid Rs 6,000, those with more than three years and less than 5 years are paid Rs 9,000, those having experience of more than five years and less than 10 years are paid Rs 12,000.

Meanwhile, SPOs with experience of more than 10 years and less than 15 years are paid Rs 15,000, and those having experience of more than 15 years are paid Rs 18,000 per month.

Saifuddin, a former sarpanch of Panara village, supported the demand for automatic weapons and enhanced wages for VGDs and said when terrorism spread its tentacles to the village in 1990 when several unemployed youth of the area were lured into militancy by vested interests.

"We supported police and other security agencies in clearing the area of terrorism. The last encounter took place here in 2007," he said.

Lauding the bravery of Sharief, he said the VGDs are carrying .303 rifles which takes five minutes to load, while the terrorists are armed with small automatic weapons and can empty a full magazine within a few minutes.

He said there are four police posts which need to be strengthened with manpower. "Our youth are brave and are ready to join the forces. Some of the VDCs have attained the age of 60 years and they want their sons to replace them."

### Slain VDG Member

demanding a relief package for proper rehabilitation of his five minor daughters, wife and mother.

Sharief (47) was killed when a group of terrorists, who have recently infiltrated from across the border, attacked a joint patrolling party of police and VDG in Panara village of Basantgarh, some 155 kms from winter capital Jammu, early Sunday.

The body of the deceased was handed over to his family Sunday evening after a wreath laying ceremony at Basantgarh police station.

Additional Director General of Police, Jammu zone, Anand Jain paid rich tributes to the brave-heart for valiantly fighting the terrorists who fled after the initial gunfight.

A massive search operation by police, army and paramilitary forces is underway in the dense forest to track down and neutralise the fleeing terrorists.

Hundreds of locals from the villages and adjoining areas, including VDG members, joined his funeral prayers despite heavy rains. He was later buried at his ancestral graveyard.

Mourners made a beeline outside Sharief's house to express their sympathies with the family and expressed their hope that the government will announce a rehabilitation package for the poor family which lost its only bread-earner.

Fatima Begum, the wife of Sharief, said she is proud of the sacrifice of her husband for the country but is also pained at his loss.

"Who will take care of my five minor daughters now?" she said as his shell-shocked daughters -- aged between five and 15 years -- sat in front of their mother in a room of their house at Lower Panara.

Begum said she was preparing breakfast for the family when Sharief came and told him that he is leaving for an operation, 'never to return back alive'.

Naseema Bano, sister-in-law of Sharief, said it is now the responsibility of the government to take care of the poor family who lost its bread-earner.

"He laid down his life for the nation and we are proud of his sacrifice but his loss is painful as well and cause of concern for his wife, five minor daughters and elderly mother. The government should come forward and assure the family," Bano, who resides in Ram Nagar, said.

She said they came to know about the firing and tried to contact Sharief on Phone but "some policeman picked up the phone and said he had suffered a bullet injury. The reality was that he was dead with at least six bullet wounds on his body".

Mohd Abaaz, brother of Sharief and also a VDG member, said they were together when terrorists opened fire on them during area domination patrolling.

"There were two groups of terrorists with nine members. I told him to be careful but he was caught in an open area and became a direct target. I along with another member took a shield in a nearby house. They rained about 50 bullets non-stop (before fleeing)," he said.

Abaaz said the encounter had taken place after a gap of more than 15 years. "We had encounters in the past and we are ready to take on them (terrorists)".

He said the government will take care of his family, especially the minor daughters and also equip the VGDs with automatic weapons besides ensuring timely release of their monthly allowances.

Begum expressed hope that the government will announce the ex-gratia relief for the family including a government job for one of the daughters. PTL

### No Relief In Sight:

power schedules.

"Adding the extra curtailment to the existing power schedule will be a mockery of the power availability," locals said.

"The power supply is already at the worst level and



## Erratic Weather Looms As Threat To Fruit Crops in Kashmir



### Agencies

**SRINAGAR:** Fruit growers in Kashmir are much worried due to the erratic weather conditions for the last few weeks now. Growers from various parts of Kashmir told the news agency that the livelihood of around 60 percent of the population who are directly dependent on the horticulture sector is under threat as erratic weather conditions will trigger diseases in their orchards. Muhammad Yousof, a fruit grower from Shopian, said that erratic weather conditions will lead to different diseases in orchards and impact the quality of the fruit as well. These rainy weather conditions are also impacting the leaves of fruit trees which in turn is impacting their produce. Sameer Ahmad, another grower, said that last year due to the same weather conditions, there was a very low fruit set due to which growers suffered losses. "This sector gets affected by one or the other factors almost every year be it hailstorms, erratic weather conditions, road

issues, low demand and many other things," he said. Growers said that the horticulture sector is under threat due to climate change for the last several years. They said that despite following the spray schedule in letter and spirit, new diseases are coming to the fore every year due to which farmers are very much worried. "Every year we have to fight new challenges and there is a need to implement a crop insurance scheme," they said. Bashir Ahmad Basheer, Chairman of Kashmir Valley Fruit Growers and Dealers Union told KNO that last year due to similar weather conditions, fruit produce was less by around 30 percent while a major portion of the produce was c grade. The government must implement crop insurance schemes so that growers won't suffer every year. He said they have met higher officials regarding this issue and have got assurance about the implementation of the scheme. "We are hopeful that positive things will be taken in this regard," Bashir said—(KNO)

## Persistent Rainfall Disrupts Spray Schedules for Apple Growers

### Agencies

**SRINAGAR:** Apple growers in Kashmir are facing significant challenges in maintaining their spray schedules due to the persistent rainfall in the region. As per news agency, Kashmir has been witnessing frequent rainfalls during the month of April so far following which routine spraying of pesticides and fertilizers crucial for the health and yield of apple orchards has been disturbed. Mohammad Akbar Bhat, a seasoned apple grower from the Sopore district, expressed his concerns, stating, "The rains have been erratic lately. It's becoming increasingly challenging to adhere to our spray schedules. Prolonged moisture on the leaves and fruits can lead to fungal infections and pest infestations, jeopardizing the quality and quantity of our produce." The disruption in the spray schedule comes at a critical time for apple growers, as the flowering and fruit-setting stages are crucial for determining the yield of the upcoming season. Any deviation from the recommended spraying regimen could result in decreased productivity and compromised fruit quality, impacting the livelihoods



of thousands of farmers dependent on apple cultivation. While many farmers said their sprays didn't succeed, some said they missed the crucial sprays due to the erratic weather. "We had planned for sprays, which will boost the fruit setting. Due to the erratic weather, we couldn't follow it. Even some of the farmers sprayed pesticides, which was followed with rains on the same day, hence it didn't succeed," said Mumtaz Ahmad Khan, an orchardist. The growers are also worried about the significant drop in the temperature. "At this point of time orchards need dry and warm weather. It plays an important role in

fruit setting. We have been witnessing during the last few years that drop in temperature during the spring season led to poor fruit setting," he added. In addition to the logistical challenges posed by the rains, there are also concerns regarding the potential runoff of sprayed chemicals into water bodies, which could have adverse environmental consequences. "During this season, growers spray multiple pesticides to prevent any diseases to the plant. Due to the rains, the pesticides concentration in our water bodies could increase," said Irshad Ahmad Bhat, a botanist and environmentalist—(KNO)

### SONAMARG ROAD ACCIDENT

## 5th Body Retrieved, One Still Untraced

### Agencies

**GANDERBAL:** The fifth body has been retrieved on Monday morning from Nallah Sindh in Kullan area of Central Kashmir's Ganderbal district where an accident took place on Sunday. As reported earlier, four persons died after a cab (JK13B-8950) carrying nine persons including the driver rolled down into Sonmarg stream near Gagangheer area yesterday. "Among the missing two people, one body has been retrieved while the efforts are on to trace another body," an official told the news agency. However Gund Police in this regard have already registered a case under FIR number 14/2024, under section 279, 337 IPC at Gund PS. Meanwhile, Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha expressed



grief over the loss of lives in a road accident in Sonamarg. In a condolence message, the Lt Governor said: "I am deeply saddened to learn about the loss of precious lives in an unfortunate road accident in Sonamarg, Ganderbal today. In this hour of grief, my thoughts are with the bereaved families. Praying for the speedy recovery of the injured. I have issued instructions to the District Administration to render all necessary assistance, as provided in rule, to the affected persons."—(KNO)

## SSP Traffic Insists Drivers To Avoid Overloading, Rash Driving

### Agencies

**GANDERBAL:** A day after a vehicle fell into a gorge on Sonamarg road resulting in multiple deaths, SSP Traffic Rural Kashmir visited Gagangheer-Sonamarg area, urging drivers to avoid overloading and rash driving. Accompanied by DySP Ganderbal/Bandipora and DTI Ganderbal/Bandipora, he directed police personnel stationed at TCP Sonamarg to manage traffic effectively. As per news agency, due to ongoing wet weather conditions, Zojila road has been suspended for at least two days, with vehicles stranded on the road. Travellers are advised to

stay updated on road conditions and comply with safety instructions during this period. Meanwhile, the Traffic Police has issued a weather advisory due to continuous snowfall and adverse climatic changes in hilly areas. It advised motorists to avoid travel on routes prone to landslides and areas with high water levels near rivers and streams. "Specifically, travel is discouraged on Sadhna Top, Kupwara Machil road, Gurez-Bandipora road, Hung area of Sonmarg, Zojila Stretch of SSG road, Mughal road, Sinthan top, and similar routes until weather conditions improve. Vehicular traffic will not be permitted on these routes until further notice," it said—(KNO)

### MAN-ANIMAL CONFLICT

## Wildlife Dept Organizes Week Long Technical Workshop-Cum Training Programme

### KO NEWS SERVICE

**SRINAGAR:** The Department of Wildlife Protection, UT of J&K, headed by Pr. Chief Conservator of Forests (WL)/Chief Wildlife Warden, J&K Sarvesh Rai, launched a week-long Technical Workshop cum Training Programme on Human-Wildlife Conflict on Monday. In a statement issued by the Department of Wildlife Protection J&K, week long technical workshop cum training programme is scheduled from 29th April, 2024 to 4th May 4 on Human Wildlife Conflict for the frontline staff of Kashmir Region comprising of Forest Territorial, Forest Protection Force and Wildlife Department. The workshop-cum-training for the frontline staff shall be imparted in three phases for three circles viz Srinagar, North and South Circle. The inaugural ceremony took place at the Nature Interpretation Center of Dachigam National Park at 10:00 am, graced by Chief Guest T. Rabi Kumar, IFS, Additional Pr. Chief Conservation of Forests, Kashmir. Perwaiz Ahmed Wani, DCF, Wildlife Warden, Central, delivered the welcome address, extending greetings to all dignitaries, guests, and participant trainees. As per the release, attendees in-

cluded Divisional Forest Officers, Deputy Directors of Forest Protection Force, Wildlife Wardens, and representatives from various organizations such as the National Society for Water Resources, Wetlands & Forests, Wildlife SOS, and Wild Life Trust of India. Notable among the experts were Ashish Dasgupta and his team from Himachal Pradesh, renowned for their expertise in Man-Wildlife Conflict management. Rashid Yahya Naquash, Regional Wildlife Warden, HQS, UT of Jammu and Kashmir, provided an overview of the historical and statistical data related to human-wildlife conflicts in the region. Pradeepchandra Wahule, IFS, Regional Wildlife Warden, Kashmir, emphasized the significance of such training programs in enhancing technical skills to address wildlife issues effectively. Addressing the gathering, Chief Guest T. Rabi Kumar, IFS, Addl. Pr. Chief Conservator of Forests, Kashmir, expressed satisfaction with the initiative and highlighted practical strategies for conflict resolution, stressing the importance of future programs. Dr. Mohsin Ali Gazi, MVSC, Veterinary Officer, Department of Wildlife Protection, concluded the inaugural session with a formal vote of thanks—(KNO)

## District Admin Kishtwar Puts Disaster Response Machinery On High Alert

### Observer News Service

**KISHTWAR:** District Administration Kishtwar has put the disaster response machinery on high alert amid heavy rains being experienced in the region from the last 4 days. Reports from the concerned Tehsildars have indicated damage to about one dozen houses in Tehsil Nagseni, Mughalmidan and Kishtwar. In Tehsil Nagseni, a Kacha house was fully damaged,

while in Tehsil Mughalmidan, 07 pacca houses and 2 kacha houses were partially damaged due to rains. Similarly, a pacca house and a cow shed suffered major damages, while a mud house and private school building were partially damaged in Kishtwar Tehsil. The district administration under the overall supervision of District Magistrate, Dr. Devansh Yadav, promptly relocated the affected families to

nearby safe places, while the Red Cross team is actively involved in delivering relief material and essential support to the affected people. In response to the situation, the public has been advised to avoid unnecessary travel to vulnerable spots. In case of emergencies, citizens can contact the control room on 01995-259555 or 9484217492, besides PCR Contact numbers - 9906154100- 01995-259193 and 100.

## No One Dared To Throw A Single Stone In J&K After Art 370 Abrogation: Amit Shah

### Agencies

**BIHAR:** Union Home Minister Amit Shah said that no one has dared to throw a single stone in Jammu and Kashmir as opposed to the leader's warning that "rivers of blood" will be flowing in the state if Article 370 is abrogated. "When PM Modi became the Prime Minister for the second time, he abrogated Article 370 on August 5, 2019. When I was there to present the Bill for abrogating Article 370 in Parliament, Some said that if Article 370 is removed, rivers of blood will flow in Kashmir. Today I have come to tell him that no one has dared to throw



a single stone in five years, let alone rivers of blood," Shah said speaking at a public meeting in Bihar's Begusarai. PDP leader Mehbooba Mufti had said that rivers of blood will flow if Article 370 is abrogated. Attacking Congress President Mallikarjun Kharge for allegedly saying that people of Rajasthan and Bihar have no connection with people from

Kashmir, Shah said, "Isn't Kashmir ours? Congress president (Mallikarjun) Kharge says what Rajasthan and Bihar have to do with Kashmir. You have crossed 80 years of age but do not have much idea about this country. Every child in Bihar can sacrifice his life for Kashmir." The Union Home Minister also claimed that the Congress party in alliance with the Rashtriya Janata Dal had "nurtured" Article 370 like their "illegitimate child." "Wasn't it the need to remove Article 370? The Congress party and Lalu Yadav were nurturing Article 370 like their illegitimate child for 70 years," Shah said.

## Tarigami Urges ECI Not To Postpone Polls In Anantnag Rajouri LS Constituency

### Agencies

**SRINAGAR:** CPI (M) leader Mohamad Yousof Tarigami on Monday urged the Election Commission not to postpone polls in the Anantnag-Rajouri Lok Sabha seat. Tarigami, while addressing press conference after EC sought a report from Chief Secretary and the Chief Electoral Officer on representations submitted by some parties seeking rescheduling of elections in the constituency due to bad weather conditions. The BJP and some parties



which are not fighting elections are hatching conspiracy to reschedule polls, citing bad road condition on the Mughal road. Such steps will harm the electoral process in J&K and credibility of Election Commission, he said—(KNO)

## Gulmarg Development Authority Spearheads Initiatives For Sustainable Tourism

### KO NEWS SERVICE

**BARAMULLA:** Chief Executive Officer (CEO), Gulmarg Development Authority (GDA) presided over a meeting at the GDA office in Tangmarg, focusing on a plantation drive, beautification of Gulmarg, and the promotion of homestays to foster eco-friendly tourism. The meeting delved into a multitude of issues concerning the preservation and enhancement of Gulmarg's natural beauty and its transformation into an eco-friendly tourist destination. Furthermore, extensive discussions were held regarding the development of Drung tourist destination and its sur-



rounding areas, emphasizing the holistic growth of Gulmarg's tourism ecosystem. The CEO emphasized the importance of collaboration among officials to discover novel attractions that would not only draw tourists to Gulmarg but also to its neighboring regions. Model policies concerning homestays were deliberated upon, with a strong emphasis on coordination with local stakeholders

eager to provide homestay accommodations for tourists. The meeting was attended by senior officials including the Divisional Forest Officer (DFO) Tangmarg, Wildlife Warden of North Division, DFO Social Forestry Baramulla, District Floriculture Officer, Assistant Director Tourism in Gulmarg, Assistant Executive Engineer of R&B Sub-Division Gulmarg, and noted Environmental Lawyer Nadeem Qadri.

## Shopian Village Without Piped Water Supply

Urge authorities to supply potable water

### Jahangeer Ganaie

**SHOPIAN:** Residents of Darbagh village in Shopian's Zainpora have demanded potable water supply in their area with several residents yet to get piped water connection. The residents of the area told news agency—Kashmir News Observer (KNO) that the area has been facing a water crisis for a long time now but no steps are being taken in this regard. The residents of new colony Darbagh said that since years the residents of the area have been facing inconvenience due to unavailability of potable water in the area. They said that this area is around 25 kilometres from main town Shopian and they have to travel long distances to fetch water. Imtiyaz Ahmad, a local, said that the residents of the area continue to consume contaminated water for years as they don't have access to potable water yet. He said that during wet weather, they have been facing more inconvenience as it isn't easy to travel for long distances during inclement weather conditions. Farooq Ahmad another local said that due to the consump-



tion of unsafe water, the threat of water-borne diseases looms large over the area. He said that they were assured by the authorities several times but on ground nothing has been done. Locals said that they have brought this issue in notice of higher ups several times but to no avail. They requested higher ups to look into the matter at the earliest so that they can have a sigh of relief. An official of the concerned department said that area is being covered under Jal Jeevan Mission and residents will get potable water soon. He said that a 1.5 inch pipe has been laid there but that isn't enough to cater to all households. He assured that a main pipeline is being laid in the area after which people won't face any problems while a filtration plant will be started soon there—(KNO)

## Ishfaq Jabbar's Party To Support Apni Party In Srinagar Lok Sabha Seat

### Agencies

**SRINAGAR:** Jammu Kashmir United Movement (JKUM) led by former legislator Ishfaq Jabbar on Monday extended support to Apni Party candidate Muhammad Ashraf Mir for the Lok Sabha polls in Srinagar constituency, slated to be held on May 13. Addressing a news conference, Apni party vice-president and Ishfaq Jabbar, as per the news agency, said they will contest the Lok Sabha polls in Srinagar together. "We will not fight the elections separately as it will be advantageous to some other parties, who have landed the people in trouble," Jabbar said. He added that they will jointly pitch for restoration of



statehood, end to power crisis, eliminate drug menace and other issues. "We have seen the worst situation and won't allow those parties responsible for it to win the elections. Therefore, after Altaf Bukhari requested us to join hands, we have decided to support Muhammad Ashraf Mir to ensure his victory," he said—(KNO)



# Kohli Shuts Down Strike Rate Critics With Fiery IPL Knock

Agencies

**BENGALURU:** Virat Kohli brushed aside criticism of his strike rate with a sublime half-century in the Indian Premier League (IPL) on Sunday as the former Indian captain continued his good form ahead of the Twenty20 World Cup in June. The Royal Challengers Bengaluru batsman smashed an unbeaten 44-ball 70 against Gujarat Titans as the bottom-placed team comfortably chased down 201 runs for their third victory in 10 matches.

Despite accumulating 500 runs for the seventh time in an IPL season, Kohli's strike rate of 147.49 has come in for scrutiny ahead of the T20 World Cup in the U.S. and West Indies. Australia's Travis Head has the highest strike rate among the top 10 batsmen in the IPL scoring charts with 211.25 after eight games, ahead of West Indian Sunil



Narine on 184.02.

Kohli is eighth in the strike rate rankings in that list.

"All the people who talk

about strike rates and me not playing spin well are the ones who love talking about this stuff," Kohli said after Benga-

luru's nine-wicket win.

"But for me, it's just about winning the game for the team. And there's a reason why you

do it for 15 years - because you've done this day in and day out; you've won games for your teams.

"I'm not quite sure if you've been in that situation yourself to sit and speak about the game from a box. I don't really think it's the same thing (as playing out there)."

Bengaluru lost seven of their first eight games and Kohli said they wanted to put their early season woes behind them.

"We wanted to step up for ourselves and play for a bit of self-respect," he added.

"We can't carry on in a big tournament like we did in the first half, so it's just about going out there and playing the cricket we want to.

"With the ball as well, we're attacking the game way more, and the bowlers are being courageous. The fielders are putting bodies on the line. That's the way we want to play."

## PCB Finalises Champions Trophy Venues



Press Trust of India

**LAHORE:** The Pakistan Cricket Board (PCB) has earmarked Karachi, Lahore and Rawalpindi as venues for next year's Champions Trophy, continuing to insist that the tournament will stay in the country despite speculation of a 'hybrid model' being under consideration to ensure India's participation.

The Champions Trophy, which was last held in England in 2017, is expected to be held tentatively in February-March next year.

India have not yet confirmed participation and there is speculation that the ICC could use the 'Hybrid Model' and hold the country's matches at a neutral venue if the team does not get government clearance to travel. The ICC has already made it clear that it will not ask any member nation to defy government policy.

"We've sent the schedule for the matches in Pakistan for the ICC Champions Trophy," PCB chairman Mohsin Naqvi said at a press conference in Lahore.

"The ICC's security team came and we had a very good meeting.

They looked at arrangements here and we'll also share stadium upgrade plans with them.

"We are trying to ensure we host a very good tournament in Pakistan," Naqvi informed.

The PCB has been steadfast in insisting that the tournament will not be altered in any way to accommodate India.

The 'Hybrid Model' of hosting was used in the Asia Cup last year. The Asian Cricket Council, headed by BCCI secretary Jay Shah, held India's matches in Sri Lanka even though Pakistan was the official host of the tournament.

Naqvi also conceded that condition of all three proposed venues is currently sub-standard in terms of hosting international games of cricket.

"If you look at Gaddafi (here), it is good but the viewing experience is not great for cricket. Football maybe, not cricket," Naqvi said. "We need to improve facilities in the stadiums, where there are some old problems. Karachi is in bad shape. So on May 7, we will finalise bids from international companies who will come and help us design.

## World T20: National Selection Committee To Meet Today



Press Trust of India

**NEW DELHI:** The national selection committee led by Ajit Agarkar will meet BCCI secretary Jay Shah in Ahmedabad on Tuesday to finalise the 15-member squad for the ICC T20 World Cup in the Americas but the official announcement might happen a day later.

The BCCI secretary is the convenor of the senior selection committee (men) and with Shah busy with his political commitments, it is understood that the meeting will be held in Ahmedabad.

The second wicketkeeper's slot and all-rounder Hardik Pandya's place in the side will be the two talking points of the selection meeting.

It is understood that KL Ra-

hul (IPL strike rate of 144 and 378 runs so far) and Sanju Samson (385 runs at a strike rate of 161) are still locked in a battle for the second wicketkeeper's slot.

Rajasthan Royals captain Samson has for the first time in over a decade been a consistent performer for his IPL side but there is no way his No. 3 batting slot is going to get him a place in the India team.

Another school of thought is that someone like Samson, who has 25 T20s under his belt but an average of just 20 and a strike rate of around 135, should not be considered based on just one good IPL season.

In case of Rahul, it can be said that one senior member of the coaching staff will cer-

tainly go all out to push for his inclusion but many believe that the stylish right-handed batter's approach in T20 cricket remains archaic.

However, he is still considered a better bet than Samson at No. 5 or 6 on slowish Caribbean tracks.

The other option, Jitesh Sharma, is in very poor form, while Dhruv Jurel hasn't got a chance to keep wickets. During the last game in Lucknow, he did get an opportunity to bat long and scored a fifty.

Left-handed batter Tilak Varma, who is also a handy off-spinner, remains an option along with pacer Sandeep Sharma, the Punjab veteran whose slower variations at the death have played a big role in Rajasthan Royals' surge to the top of the IPL table.

## Short TAKES

### Badminton Trials For Boys & Girls Of AAG On May 1

The Jammu & Kashmir Sports Council on Monday announced that Badminton selection trials for boys and girls of all age groups will be held on May 1 in Srinagar.

The Badminton trials will be held at SKISC in Gogji Bagh, Srinagar, from 3:30 PM onwards. The trials will be conducted by JKSC PMDP Badminton Centre. Interested athletes can call 9796559736 for further inquiries.

### IPL: Rahul Faces Captaincy Test As LSG Clash with MI

With T20 World Cup selection round the corner, KL Rahul will have one final chance to stake claim on the second wicketkeeper's spot in the Indian team when Lucknow Super Giants host Mumbai Indians in the Indian Premier League here on Tuesday.

Rahul's strike-rate in T20 cricket has always been a bone of contention. However, in the 2024 edition, he has scored 378 runs at a strike rate of 144.27 but it is still less than that of Rishabh Pant (160.60) and Sanju Samson (161.08).

### LSG's Mayank Cleared For Action



India's newest pace sensation Mayank Yadav has completely recovered from his lower abdominal strain and is expected to be listed in the playing 12 for Lucknow Super Giants' home IPL match against Mumbai Indians here on Tuesday.

Mayank, who repeatedly bowled 155-plus thunderbolts, got back-to-back 'player of the match' awards in the first two games before sustaining a strain after bowling one over in his third game.

### Thiago Silva To Leave Chelsea At End Of Season

Brazilian defender Thiago Silva announced on Monday his departure from Chelsea at the end of season after four years at the Premier League club but said he hoped to return in a different role.

The 39-year-old joined from Paris St Germain on a free transfer in August 2020 and has made 151 appearances for Chelsea, winning the Champions League, Club World Cup and Super Cup.

### AFC To Scrap Presidential Term Limits, Undermining FIFA Reforms

The Asian Football Confederation could soon abolish term limits for its president and other elected officials, continuing a trend among international sports bodies toward easing anti-corruption rules and letting leaders stay in office.

Qatar and Saudi Arabia are among four AFC members who are proposing to end term limits when the Asian soccer body meets in Bangkok next month ahead of the FIFA Congress there on May 17.

## Bayern Fans Can Give Us Advantage Against Madrid: Tuchel

Agencies

**MUNICH:** Bayern Munich manager Thomas Tuchel has urged the home fans to create a special atmosphere when they host Spanish giants Real Madrid in the Champions League semi-final first leg at Allianz Arena on Tuesday, as his side chases a seventh European crown.

Bayern advanced into the last four of the Champions League for the first time since winning the tournament in 2020, while record 14-times champions Madrid last took home the trophy in 2022.

Joshua Kimmich scored the only goal in the quarter-final second leg at home to help Bayern beat Premier League side Arsenal 3-2 on aggregate.

"We need the atmosphere to be incredible. We also need the fans to support us, even in moments when it's more difficult. Together with the fans, we need to create an atmosphere that gives us



an advantage," Tuchel told reporters on Monday.

"When you're playing against Real Madrid, you're also up against the aura, the legend that surrounds them. Our focus will be fully on the game. We're all looking forward to a great match.

"(Madrid have) clear patterns. It's a mix of a

midfield diamond and two holding, two attacking midfielders. It's very flexible, experienced and automated."

Tuchel will have a few injury doubts to key players going into the clash, including 21-year-old playmaker Jamal Musiala, who has 12 goals and seven assists across all competi-

tions this season.

"As of right now, nothing is 100% certain," the German said.

"Konrad Laimer, Matthijs de Ligt and Dayot Upamecano will undergo some final checks soon. Things look good for Konni (Konrad). We also need to wait and see with Jamal Musiala and Leroy Sane."

## Premier League Clubs Vote In Favour Of Spending Cap: BBC

Agencies

**LONDON:** Premier League clubs have agreed in principle to implement a spending cap after receiving majority support with a final vote expected in June, the BBC reported on Monday.

The clubs have tentatively agreed to put a limit on how much money they can spend, with the cap based on how much money the lowest-earning club in the league makes from television rights. Reuters has contacted the Premier League for comment.

The Athletic said the measure was discussed at the English top flight's shareholders meeting in London on Monday, adding that the cap can come into effect as early as the 2025-26 season. There were 16 clubs that voted in favour of the new guidelines, with Chelsea abstaining and Manchester City, Manchester United and Aston Villa dissenting, the Independent said.



Premier League clubs had agreed in principle to introduce new financial rules next season, voting in April to go ahead with squad cost ratio rules to replace the current Profitability and Sustainability Rules (PSR). Clubs will likely be limited to

spending 85% of their revenue on transfers, wages and agents fees if the new rules are adopted at the Annual General Meeting in June.

PSR will still be in place next season with a transition period in 2024-25, as will points deductions, which will also remain

part of the new rules once adopted. Everton were deducted 10 points in November, reduced to six on appeal, before they received a second deduction to take their points loss to eight for breaching PSR. Nottingham Forest, meanwhile, were deducted four points.