

**Observer News Service** 

Srinagar: The sudden fury of flash floods that tore through Ramban have left a trail of destruction, flattening homes and collapsing parts of the Jammu-Srinagar National Highway. Three people lost their lives in Baghana village when their house collapsed, and several shops and vehicles were swept away. Many residents found themselves stranded along the Jammu-Srinagar National

Highway, which remains closed due to landslides and continuous shooting stones, with authorities stating that it could take up to three days to restore traffic.

"We are working hard to clear the highway. If all goes well, we may allow one-way traffic within two to three days," officials said, adding that no passenger vehicles are currently stranded on the highway.

The district is facing widespread destruction, with at least 45 houses completely damaged and 250 others impacted. Rescue operations are ongoing, with teams from NDRF, SDRF, and local volunteers working around the clock. Heavy machinery is also being used to clear debris and repair the damaged road. The Indian Army, CRPF, and the civil administration are coordinating efforts to assist those stranded and deliver essential services.

Due to the severe weather and damage, all government and private educational institutions in the district will remain closed on Tuesday. Alternative routes have been arranged for Light Motor Vehicles heading to Kashmir, with authorities considering allowing Heavy Motor Vehicles on Mughal Road.

#### About Dozen Villages Severely Hit

The flash-floods and landslides triggered by heavy rain and cloudbursts severely affected nearly a dozen villages in Ramban district, a senior government officer said on Monday and added the authorities had mobilised resources to restore essential services and provide relief to the affected people.

Divisional Commissioner (Jammu) Ramesh Kumar also said various teams are on the ground to assess the damage.

Efforts are underway to provide an alternative road connectivity through the Mughal Road and the Sinthan Top road to the Kashmir valley | More on P6

## Omar Reviews NH Situation In Ramban



Observer News Service

Jammu: Chief Minister Omar Abdullah on Monday said the devastation caused by flash floods and landslides triggered by heavy rain and cloudbursts in Ramban district could not be declared a "national disaster", even as he assured adequate relief to the affected families. Abdullah was | More on P6

#### 'Felt Like The End': Tourists Recount

urdev Singh and his family, and a few others were planning to travel to Kashmir on the evening of April 19 but decided to stay back at a hotel due to torrential rain at that time. That decision almost turned fatal after they found themselves caught up | More on P6

#### Traffic Diverted To Mughal Road

s the landslide-hit Jammu-Srinagar National Highway remained shut for a second consecutive day on Monday, the reopening of the Mughal Road connecting the twin border districts of Rajouri and Poonch in | More on P6

#### No Shortage Of Essentials: Div Com

mid long queues at petrol pumps and growing public anxiety due to the continued closure of the Jammu-Srinagar National Highway, the Divisional Commissioner Kashmir, V K Bidhuri on Monday reassured residents that there is no shortage | More on P6

#### Newlyweds Trek Through Flood-Hit Roads

n the wake of flash floods and landslides that wreaked havoc in Jammu and Kashmir's Ramban district, several newlywed couples found themselves facing unexpected challenges on what should have been the start of their | More on P6

**Local Bodies Polls** 

## Cabinet To Finalize OBC Quota Framework

Agencies

Srinagar: The cabinet will soon decide on the recommendations of a three-member panel regarding reservation for Other Backward Classes (OBCs) in Panchayats and Urban Local Bodies (ULBs).

Sources said that the panel's report would be presented before the cabinet for a final decision. "The report is being put up for the cabinet decision after getting approval from the concerned ministers," they said, adding that the implementation of the panel's findings is expected to be swift once approved.

The three-member panel headed by Justice (Retd.) Janak Raj Kotwal and including Raj Kumar Baghat (retired IAS officer) and Prof. (Dr.) Mohinder Singh Badwal (former dean, SKUAST, Jammu), submitted its report to Chief Secretary Atul Dulloo on February 27.



The cabinet decision on the report holds significant importance as it could pave the way for the long-awaited local bodies elections in the Union Territory. The five-year term of local bodies in J&K ended in January 2014, leaving officials to exercise powers previously held by elected representatives of Panchayats and ULBs.

The delay in polls has been attributed to the issue of OBC reservation. | More on P6

## No Major Weather Disruption Expected Till Apr End: MeT

Observer News Service

Srinagar: After three days of widespread rains, the weather across Jammu and Kashmir is expected to remain largely stable over the next ten days, with the Meteorological (MeT) Department ruling out any major weather activity till the end of April.

In the last 24 hours, wide-spread light to moderate rain accompanied by thunder, lightning, and gusty winds swept across Jammu and Kashmir. The gusty winds reached a maximum speed of 31 knots in some areas. Several places also witnessed hailstorms.



According to the forecast issued by the MeT office, light rain and thundershowers are likely to occur in parts of the Valley and isolated pockets of the Jammu some areas.

Several places also witnessed hailstorms.

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Hailstorms
Batter South
Kashmir
Orchards

ailstorms continued to wreak havoc in multiple areas across South Kashmir for the third straight day, causing further losses to the fruit growers and orchardists.

The recent spell of erratic weather, including hail and strong winds, damaged apple and other fruitbearing trees in several villages.

Shopian, known as the | More on P6

**PSA Detentions On 'Insufficient Grounds'** 

## Message Of Law Being Lost: High Court

M Ahmad

Srinagar: Message of law is being lost to the "sponsoring authority" as well as to the "detention order making authority", resulting in repeat of preventive detention taking place on insufficient material, the J&K and Ladakh High Court said on Monday as it quashed detention orders under Public Safety Act.

A bench of Justice
Rahul Bharti made
the observations as it
quashed the detention
order under PSA against
one Mohammad Afreen
Zargar, a resident of Barmulla
who was booked under the
legislation on 10 September

"This Court has repeatedly held and maintained the position of law that furnishing of bail orders related to a person whose preventive detention is being sought becomes essential and indispensable on the part of the sponsoring authority i.e., the Law and Enforcement agency of the District to be procured and placed along with the dossier before the detention order making authority so as to apprise it about the facts and

circumstances which led to the bail of the prospective detenue in the criminal case being referred in the dossier to project a prospective detenue to be falling within the

to be falling within the scope of mischief of Section 8 of the Jammu & Kashmir Public Safety Act, 1978," the court said, adding, "Despite ad nauseum reiteration of position of law in this respect through the judgments of this Court, the message of law is being lost to the sponsoring authority as well as to the More on P6

MIRAE ASSET Sharekhan

# Stress-free Investments

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1, 10 Samad Complex, Ma Link Road, Srinagar, Srinagar, Jammu & Kashmir, Srinagar – 190001

Waqf Issue

## Don't Give Political Colour To Judicial Challenge: CM

KO Web Desk

Srinagar: Chief Minister Omar Abdullah on Monday said the Supreme Court has the power to review the decisions taken by the Centre or state governments and stressed that a challenge to any legislation before the apex court should not be given a political hue.

"Everyone (institution) has a role. The Supreme Court has been given the powers to review decisions taken by the Centre or state government. Did we not go to the SC in Article 370 case? This is not the first

time that the apex court has been moved (in the Waqf case). Was not Indira Gandhi's decision to impose the Emergency challenged in the court? "If today someone is going to the SC, it should not be given a political hue. The court has its own jurisdiction and the legislature

Abdullah told reporters here. He was responding to questions on the criticism from some quarters over the apex court hearing petitions challenging the Waqf (Amendment) Act.

has its own jurisdiction,"

The chief minister said while there | More on P6

## NC Dissolves Kashmir Youth Wing

Observer News Service

Srinagar: Ruling National Conference on Monday disbanded the Kashmir chapter of its youth wing, with an aim to bring fresh faces to the fore.

"As approved by Jammu and Kashmir National Conference President Dr Farooq Abdullah, province committee, zonal committees, district committees and block committees of the Youth National Conference in Kashmir are disbanded with immediate effect," the National Conference announced.

The party said MLA Hazratbal Salman Ali Sagar has been nominated as in-charge president of the Youth | More on P6

No 5- Dal Lake Boulevard Srinagar, 190001, Kashmir

Monday - Saturday (9am - 6pm)

#### PUBLIC NOTICE

I want to change my name in my aadhar card bearing no 7888 2822 8283 from Jali Bano (old name ) to Jalley (New name). if anybody has any objection in this regard he/she may file them in the concerned office within seven days. After that no objection shall be entertained

R/O:- Khrew Pulwama

#### PUBLIC NOTICE

I want to change my name in my aadhar card bearing no 7798 5876 8864 from Ghulam Ahmad Baba (old name ) to Ama Baba (New name). if anybody has any objection in this regard he/she may file them in the concerned office within seven days. After that no objection shall be entertained

R/O:- safapora, Bandipore

#### **PUBLIC NOTICE**

I have los the RC of my vehicle bearing regd no: JK01AD 7195. Now I have applied for the duplicate of the same if anybody has any objection in this regard he/she may file them in the office of the RTO Srinagar within seven days. After that no objection shall be entertained.

**Gh Mohammad Sheikh** S/o Mohammad Abdullah Sheikh

### **PUBLIC NOTICE**

I want to transfer the electricity connection bearing cosumer ID No 0204020002345 from Ali Mohammad Bhat R/O Rainawari Bhat Mohalla To Mohammad Rafig Bhat

S/O. Mohammad Qasim Bhat R/O. Rainawari Bhat Mohalla. If anybody has any objection in this regard he/she may file them office of the PDD Sub Division Rainawari within seven days. After that no objection shall be entertained. Mohammad Rafig Bhat

S/O. Mohammad Qasim Bhat R/O. Rainawari Bhat Mohalla

#### **Public Notice**

My name and DOB has been wrongly written in my Adhaar card as Sumaira Bano , DOB 16-02-1989 while my correct namd and DOB is Sameera Jan, DOB 17-03-1991 which needs to be corrected. If anybody has any objection in this regard he/she may file them in the concerned office within seven days. After that no objection shall be entertained.

Sameera Jan D/O Gh Qadir Ganaie R/O Goshbugh Pattan

#### Office Of The Naib Tehsildar Sariwarpora

Sub.. issuance of registration order in respect of delayed birth..

**Public Notice..** 

The registrar birth BDO pattan has submitted a case file pertaining to birth of Tassaduq Majeed Najar s/o Abdul Majeed Najar R/o Sariwarpora Tehsil Pattan with verified date of birth 86/04/2008 occurred at home in this connection if any body having objection for issuance of said certificate he may contact to this office within 04 days after that no objection shall be entertained..

fko

Naib Tehsildar sariwarpora

## Office of the Naib Tehsildar Tilgam

**Executive Magistrate 1st Class** Subject: Issuance of Registration Orders in respect of delayed Birth/Deaths.

**Public Notice** 

The Registrar Births and Deaths Block Development Office Patan has submitted a case file pertaining to birth of Zaara Ayoub D/o Mohammad Ayoub Wani R/o Wanigam Bala Tehsil Patan with date of event (birth) as Wani R/o Wanigam Bala Tehsil Patan with date of event (birth) as 22-09-

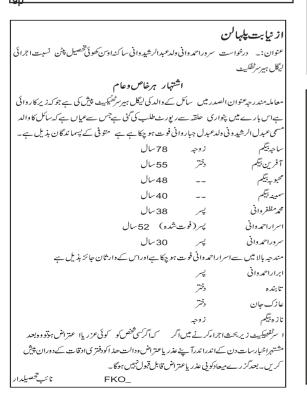
In this connection if anybody having objections to the issuance of said registration may visit this office within seven (07) days, after which no objection shall be entertained

**Executive Magistrate 1st Class** Naib Tehsildar Tilgam

## **NOTICE**

I want to change my name in my Aadhaar Card bearing No. 3882 2562 5194 from Faakera to Humaira Jan. In this regard if any body is having any objection may convey to Aadhaar Centre Srinagar within a period of seven days, after that no objection shall be entertained.

**Humaira Jan** D/o: Parvaiz Ahmad Langoo R/o: Near Sheikh Imam Ud Din Masiid Shaheed Guni. Srinagar



## Why Healthy Eating May Be The Best **Way To Reduce Food Waste**

The Conversation

ustralians waste around 7.68 million tonnes of food a year. This costs the economy an estimated AUD 36.6 billion and households up to AUD 2,500 annually.

Much of this food is wasted at home. So while consumers are increasingly aware of sustainability issues, awareness does not always translate into better food management in practice.

Our previous research revealed people differ in the ways they generate and dispose of

Our latest study takes a closer look at two groups who care deeply about food, for different reasons. It exposes a paradox: people who prioritise healthy eating waste less food, while those focused on sustainability do not necessarily follow through with waste reduction.

This suggests encouraging healthier eating habits might be a better way to cut household food waste than sustainability messaging alone.

Sustainability awareness doesn't always mean less waste

To understand how food values influence waste, we surveyed 1,030 Australian consumers living in Adelaide between April and May 2021. We set quotas for age, sex and household income to match national demographics. We wanted to find out who wasted more

food: nutrition-conscious or sustainabilityconscious consumers? We asked each person how they plan meals

and shop, what they value when buying food, and how much food they throw away each week.

Our results show nutrition-conscious consumers tend to plan meals in advance, use shopping lists and avoid over-purchasing. These behaviours contribute to both



healthier diet and less food waste.

We found consumers who make more nutrition-conscious food choices tended to waste less edible food. A one-point increase on our nutrition scale corresponded to a 17.6 per cent reduction in food waste, compared to people with lower scores on the nutrition scale.

On the other hand, those who prioritise sustainability over nutrition did not show any significant reduction in edible food waste. These consumers tend to choose environmentally friendly products. They typically prefer to shop locally, buy organic produce and avoid excessive food packaging. But that does not necessarily translate into wastereducing behaviours.

Those concerned with sustainability tend to buy more food than they need. They have good intentions, but lack strategies to man-

age and consume the food efficiently. Unfortunately this means sustainably sourced food often ends up in landfill. Integrating nutrition and food waste mes-

Our research reveals a disconnect between purchasing choices and what actually hap-

pens to the food at home. This highlights an opportunity for policymakers and campaigns aimed at reducing food waste. Rather than focusing solely on sustainability, including messages about

improving nutrition can boost health and

reduce food waste at the same time. Some successful interventions already demonstrate the potential of this approach. For example, an Australian school-based programme found children involved in preparing their own meals wasted less food than they did before the programme began.

These students learned about food waste and healthy eating, participated in workshops on meal preparation and composting, and helped pack their own lunches - with less food waste as a result.

5 ways to reduce food waste

So, what can households do to reduce food waste while maintaining a healthy diet? Our research suggests the following key strategies:

1) plan ahead - creating a weekly meal plan and shopping list helps prevent impulse purchases and ensures food is consumed before it spoils

2) buy only what you need - over-purchasing, even of sustainable products, can lead to unnecessary waste

3) store food properly - understanding how to store fresh produce, dairy, and leftovers can significantly extend their shelf life

4) prioritise nutrition – choosing foods that fit into a balanced diet naturally leads to better portion control and mindful consumption, reducing waste

5) use what you have - before shopping, check your fridge and pantry to incorporate existing ingredients into meals.

Reducing waste is a bonus

People are often more motivated by personal health benefits than abstract environmental concerns. Our research suggests this is the key to reducing household food waste. Encouraging meal planning for a balanced diet, careful shopping to avoid over-purchasing, and proper food storage, can make a big difference to the amount of food being wasted. This will not only help households save thousands of dollars each year, but also promote healthy eating habits.

Ultimately, developing a more sustainable food system is not just about buying the right products. It's about how we manage, prepare and consume them.

#### Office of the Naib Tehsildar Pattan

Sub.. issuance of registration order in respect of delayed birth..

### **Public Notice**

The registrar Birth BDO pattan has submitted a case file pertaining to birth of Saif ul Islam Bhat s/o Sarfaraz Ahmad Bhat R/o Delina Baramulla with verified date of birth 22/04/20222 occurred at North End Hospital Tapper pattan in this connection if any body having objection for issuance of said certificate he may contact to this office within 04 days after that no objection shall be entertained..

Naib Tehsildar Pattan

#### Office Of The **Naib Tehsildar Pattan**

Sub.. issuance of registration order in respect of delayed birth.

Public Notice..

The registrar birth EO MC pattan has submitted a case file pertaining to birth of Urooj Manzoor D/o Manzoor Ahmad Khanday R/o Khanday mohalla pattan with verified date of birth 15/11/2008 occurred at home in this connection if any body having objection for issuance of said certificate he may contact to this office within 04 days after that no objection shall be entertained...

Office Of The

**Naib Tehsildar Pattan** 

Sub... issuance of registration order in respect

**Public Notice..** 

The registrar birth EO MC pattan has

submitted a case file pertaining to birth of

Pakeeza Mushtaq D/o Mushtaq Ahmad Najar

R/o Ussan Khoie tehsil pattan Distt baramulla

with verified date of birth 29/12/2017

occurred at SDH pattan in this connection

if any body having objection for issuance of

said certificate he may contact to this office

within 04 days after that no objection shall be

of delayed birth..

entertained.

Naib Tehsildar Pattan

Naib Tehsildar Pattan

#### Office Of The Naib Tehsildar Pattan

Sub . issuance of registration order in respect of delayed birth..

Public Notice..

The registrar birth EO MC pattan has submitted a case file pertaining to birth of Khadija Binti javaid D/o Javaid Ahmad Mir R/o kooti Mohalla Janwara Tehsil Dangerpora with verified date of birth 02/06/2021 occurred at SDH pattan in this connection if any body having objection for issuance of said certificate he may contact to this office within 04 days after that no objection shall be entertained..

Naib Tehsildar Pattan

#### Office Of The **Naib Tehsildar Pattan**

Sub.. issuance of registration order in respect of delayed birth..

Public Notice.

The registrar birth EO MC pattan has submitted a case file pertaining to birth of Luqmaan Lateef D/o Lateef Ahmad Lone R/o Takiabal Darnambal with verified date of birth 25/05/2020 occurred at SDH pattan in this connection if any body having objection for issuance of said certificate he may contact to this office within 04 days after that no objection shall be entertained.

Naib Tehsildar Pattan

#### JAMMU AND KASHMIR SERVICES SELECTION BOARD (JKSSB) CPO Chowk, Panjtirthi, Jammu/Zam Zam Complex, Rambagh, Srinagar

www.jkssb.nic.in

**GOVERNMENT OF JAMMU AND KASHMIR** 

**NOTIFICATION** 

Subject: Document Verification of candidates falling under consideration zone for the posts of Junior Stenographer/Junior Scale Stenographer – Supplementary Document Verification thereof.

All such candidates who are falling under consideration zone and were called for Document Verification for the following posts, vide this office Notification Nos. JKSSB-COE0EXAM(UT)/56/2023-03 (7245277) dated: 02-04-2025 and JKSSB-COE0EXAM(UT)/56/2023-03 (7245277) dated: 09-04-2025, but could not appear before the Document Verification Committee(s) on 11-04-2025 due to various reasons, are hereby given last and final opportunity to appear before the Document Verification Committee on 25-04-2025 (Friday) from 11:00 AM to 04.30 PM at JKSSB, Central Office, CPO Chowk, Panjtirthi, Jammu (Jammu Centre based candidates) and at JKSSB, Central Office, ZamZam Complex, Rambagh, Srinagar (Kashmir Centre based candidates), failing which no further claims in this regard shall be entertained at any stage.

S. No.	Advertisement No.	Item No.	Department	Name of Post
1	04 of 2021	636	Animal/Sheep Husbandry & Fisheries	Junior Stenographer
			Department	
2	05 of 2021	710	Agriculture Production & Farmer's Welfare	Junior Stenographer
3	05 of 2021	711	Agriculture Production & Farmer's Welfare	Junior Stenographer
4	05 of 2021	712	Agriculture Production & Farmer's Welfare	Junior Stenographer
5	02 of 2022	18	Rural Development &Panchayati Raj	Junior Scale Stenog- rapher

Reyaz Ahmad Malik (JKAS) Controller of Examinations J&K Services Selection Board

No.: JKSSB-COE0EXAM(UT)/56/2023-03 (7245277) DIPK-606/25 Dated: 21-04-2025

**GOVERNMENT OF JAMMU AND KASHMIR** 

## JAMMU AND KASHMIR SERVICES SELECTION BOARD (JKSSB)

CPO Chowk, Panjtirthi, Jammu/Zam Zam Complex, Rambagh, Srinagar

www.ikssb.nic.in

**NOTIFICATION** 

Subject: Document Verification of candidates falling under consideration zone for the posts of Steno Typist, advertised vide Notification No. 02 of 2021 – Supplementary Document Verification

All such candidates who are falling under consideration zone and were called for Document Verification for the following posts, vide this office Notification Nos. JKSSB-COE0EXAM(UT)/56/2023-03 (7245277) dated: 03-04-2025 and JKSSB-COE0EXAM(UT)/56/2023-03 (7245277) dated: 14-04-2025. but could not appear before the Document Verification Committee(s) on 16-04-2025 due to various reasons, are hereby given last and final opportunity to appear before the Document Verification Committee on 25-04-2025 (Friday) from 11:00 AM to 04.30 PM at JKSSB, Central Office. CPO Chowk, Panjtirthi, Jammu (Jammu Centre based candidates) and at JKSSB, Central Office, ZamZam Complex, Rambagh, Srinagar (Kashmir Centre based candidates), failing which no further claims in this regard shall be entertained at any stage.

S. No.	.Advertisement No.	Item No.	Department	Name of Post
1	02 of 2021	297	Health & Medical Education Department	Steno Typist
2	02 of 2021	298	Health & Medical Education Department	Steno Typist
3	02 of 2021	299	Health & Medical Education Department	Steno Typist
4	02 of 2021	300	Health & Medical Education Department	Steno Typist
5	02 of 2021	301	Health & Medical Education Department	Steno Typist
6	02 of 2021	302	Health & Medical Education Department	Steno Typist
7	02 of 2021	303	Health & Medical Education Department	Steno Typist
8	02 of 2021	304	Health & Medical Education Department	Steno Typist
9	02 of 2021	305	Health & Medical Education Department	Steno Typist

Reyaz Ahmad Malik (JKAS) Controller of Examinations J&K Services Selection Board

No.: JKSSB-COE0EXAM(UT)/56/2023-03 (7245277)

## Office Of The Principal **Government Degree College Mattan**

Mattan Anantnag (J&K)-192125

Website: www.gdcmattan.ac.in Cell: +91-9419056413 Email: principalgdcmattan@gmail.com Dated: - 21-04-2025

No:-DCM/25/Ext-NOTICE / 1409-11

## **EXTENSION NOTICE**

In continuation to this office Notice Inviting Tender No. DCM//25/NIT/1339-43, Dated 03-04-2025 and Extension Notice No. DCM/25/NOTICE/1384-86, Dated 12-04® 2025 regarding the invitation of tenders from experienced and reputed canteen contractors/individuals of UT of J&K for running College Canteen at GDC Mattan for the session 2025-26, the date for submission of application forms is hereby further extended up to 23-04-2025 till 4:00 PM.

The terms and conditions mentioned in the initial tender notice shall remain unchanged.

DIPK-626/25 dated: 21-04-2025

Principal Government Degree College Mattan

## **GV Sundeep Chakravarthy Assumes Charge As SSP Srinagar**

**Observer News Service** 

Srinagar: GV Sundeep Chakravarthy, IPS, officially took over as the new Senior Superintendent of Police (SSP) Srinagar on Monday.

Upon his arrival at the SSP office, Chakravarthy was welcomed by outgoing SSP Imtiyaz Hussain Mir, JKPS, along with other senior officers. A ceremonial Guard of Honour was presented, followed by a formal handover ceremony in which Mir transferred the charge to his successor.

Shortly after assum-

ing office, Chakravarthy chaired an introductory meeting with the district police officers. During the interaction, he underlined the importance of maintaining professionalism, dedication, and proactive policing. He urged officers to remain committed to public service and to address community issues with sincerity and efficiency.

The officers assured cooperation and pledged to work as a team under his leadership to ensure peace and strengthen the bond of trust between the police and the public.

## **Police Solves Theft Case In City**

**Observer News Service** 

Srinagar: Srinagar Police has solved a theft case and arrested the accused person involved in the commission of the crime.

On 15th April, 2025, Police Post Bagyas received a written complaint from an individual namely Tauseef Ahmad Mir son of the Mohammad Ashraf Mir resident of Kaksarai, stating that during the intervening night of 14th-15th April 2025, unknown person(s) had stolen approximately Rs. 10 lakhs from a drawer inside his shop in Kaksarai, Srinagar.

Accordingly, a case vide FIR No. 38/2025 under relevant sections of law was registered in Police Station Safakadal and investigation initiated.

During the course of multiple investigation.

suspects were questioned regarding their involvement. Moreover, analysis of technical evidence and detailed CCTV footage led to the arrest of the accused person identified as Umar Ahmad Mir son of Mohammad Ashraf Mir resident of Chanipora, Karnah.

Upon his disclosure, stolen cash amounting to Rs 750,530, scooty, and a mobile phone purchased with the stolen money were recovered from his possession.

Further investigation into the case is ongoing to uncover additional links.

J&K Police is committed to eliminating social crimes from the society. Respectable citizens are requested to share information of antisocial elements with the Police in eradicating crimes and maintaining peace and order in the society.

## **Pothole-Ridden Roads Leave Commuters Frustrated**

Srinagar: Commuters across Srinagar are grappling with deteriorating road conditions, as numerous stretches remain riddled with potholes and uneven surfaces, leading to daily traffic snarls and posing sig-

Prominent among the affected areas is the Rambagh-Mehjoor Nagar bund, where residents have long decried the road's poor state. Despite repeated appeals, the thoroughfare continues to be a source of inconvenience for daily travelers.

Similarly, the Nowgam to Kanihama stretch has seen minimal maintenance, with large potholes making navigation treacherous, especially during nighttime or inclement weather. The situation is exacerbated by inadequate street lighting and poor drainage, leading to water accumulation and further road degradation.

## MIR FAMILY BEREAVED

With profound grief and sorrow we inform the demise of ALI MOHAMMAD MIR of Wanabal, Rawalpora Srinagar, who left for heavenly abode on 20th April, 2025 (22, Shawwal, 1446). May Allah rest his gentle soul in Janat-ul-Firdous. His Rasme-Chaharum will be observed at his ancestral graveyard at Wanabal



on 24th April 2025 (Thursday) at 9.30 am, followed by a daylong condolence meeting at his residence. Ladies are requested not to bring any fruit with them

BEREAVED FAMILY Arshid Mir and Sajad Mir +91 70069 37090

## انتقسال يُرملال



په خبرنهایت بی د که کیساتھ دی جاتی ہے که محمدالوب شوری ولد غلام نبی شوری سائحنه قادی کدل، راجوری کدل حال ویژرناگ نو شهره مورخه**20**ماه ا پریل **2025** کوال دنیائے فانی سے رحلت کر گئے۔ مرحوم نہایت ہی نیک سیرت اورملنسار انسان تھے۔اللّٰہ تعالیٰ مرحوم کو کروٹ کر وَٹ جنت الفردوس عطافر مائے اورلواحقین کو پیصدمه غظیم بر داشت کرنے

کی ہمت عطافرمائے ۔مرحم کی اجتمائی فاتحہ خوانی مورخہ22ماہ اپریل 2025 شج 10 بج ان کے آبائی مُقبره واقع مله کھاہ نزدیک پولیس اسٹشن نوہیٹ سرینگر انجام دی



## **Tulip Garden To Close For Public From April 24**

**Observer News Service** 

Srinagar: Asia's largest Tulip Garden, nestled at the foothills of the Zabarwan Range in Srinagar, has witnessed a historic tourist influx during the 26-day-long Tulip Show 2025, with a recordbreaking 8.14 lakh visitors walking through its gates.

As per official data, a total of 8,14,727 tourists visited the Indira Gandhi Memorial Tulip Garden from March 26 to April 20, 2025, setting an all-time record for the garden since its inception. The vibrant bloom of over 1.7 million tulips of various colors and varieties attracted visitors from across Jammu and Kashmir, the rest of India, and several international locations.

The single highest footfall was recorded on April 6, when 81,352 people visited the garden, followed by 70,430 on April 13. Weekends and the peak blooming days saw massive crowds, under-

The single highest footfall was recorded on April 6, when 81,352 people visited the garden, followed by 70,430 on April 13. Weekends and the peak blooming days saw massive crowds, underlining the growing appeal of the annual tulip festival

lining the growing appeal of the annual tulip festival.

In just the opening week, the garden recorded over 1.56 lakh visitors, and the momentum continued to rise steadily. Among the total footfall, 3,121 foreign tourists were also counted, reflecting the garden's global allure.

Officials attributed the unprecedented turnout to a blend of improved infrastructure, targeted promotional efforts, and consistently pleasant weather throughout the blooming period. Additions such as new flower beds, upgraded fountains, and better walking paths enhanced the garden's charm, encouraging more visitors than ever before.

"This year has been phenomenal. The combination of full bloom, sunny weather, and high tourist inflow created the perfect atmosphere for record footfall," said an official from the Department of Floriculture.

Meanwhile, authorities have announced that the Tulip Garden will be closed to the public from the evening of April 24, as the blooming season has nearly ended. The garden was thrown open to tourists on March 26.

With yet another record in the books, the 2025 Tulip Show has further cemented the garden's position as one of Kashmir's top

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#### **HIGHWAY STATUS**



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



**PRAYERS FAJR** 4:23 **ZUHR** 12:32 **ASR** 5:13 7:10 Magrib **ISHA** 8:37

## This Day In History

- 536 St. Agapetus I ends his reign as Catholic Pope 1056 - Supernova Crab nebula last seen by the naked eve
- 1073 Pope Alexander II buried and Ildebrando chosen as Pope Gregory VII
- 1145 19th recorded perihelion passage of Halley's
- 1164 Raynald of Dassel names Guido di Crema as anti-pope Paschalis III
- 1370 Building begins on the Bastille fortress in
- 1500 Pedro Álvares Cabral is the first european to discover Brazil, landing near Monte Pascoal, claims 1521 - French King Francois I declares war on Spain
- 1529 Treaty of Saragosa: Spain & Portugal divide eastern hemisphere
- 1648 English army claims King Charles I responsible for bloodshed
- 1659 Lord Protector Richard Cromwell disbands **English parliament**
- 1671 King Charles II sits in on English parliament 1674 - Netherlands & Munster sign peace treaty
- 1676 Battle of Etna Neth/Spain vs France, M de Ruyter fatally wounded
- 1677 Battle at Catania: between French & Dutch
- 1692 Edward Bishop is jailed for proposing flogging as a cure for witchcraft in Salem, Massachusetts
- 1809 Battle at Eckmuhl Napoleon beats Austria
- 1817 Curacao prohibits use of white paint due to
  - fierce sunlight
- 1823 Baltic Club (Exchange) forms in London 1823 - R J Tyers patents roller skates
- 1838 English steamship "Sirius" docks in NYC
- after crossing the Atlantic, first transatlantic steam passenger service 1864 - US mints 2 cent coin (1st appearance of "In
- God We Trust") 1876 - Pyotr Ilyich Tchaikovsky completes his ballet
- "Swan Lake" 1876 - Philadelphia Nationals Wes Fisler scores
- baseball's 1st run 1884 - Thomas Stevens starts 1st bike trip around
- world (2 yrs 9 mths) 1884 - US recognizes King Leopold II's Congo Free
- 1889 A 1.9 million-acre tract of Indian Territory for white colonial settlement in Oklahoma officially starts at 12pm
- 1893 Francis Dhanis army occupies Kasongo
- 1915 1st military use of poison gas (chlorine, by Germany) in WW I
- 1915 The Second Battle of Ypres begins on the Western Front
- 1916 France battles at Fort Douaumont
- 1926- Persia, Turkey & Afghanistan sign treaties of security
- 1930- British troops battle pro-independence revolutionaries in the Jalalabad hills near Chittagong, Bengal province, British India. 80 troops and 12 revolutionaries killed
- 1930- US, Britain & Japan sign London Naval Treaty 1931- Egypt & Iraq sign peace treaty
- 1943- RAF shoots down 14 German transport planes over Mediterranean Sea
- 1944 Allies land near Hollandia, New Guinea
- 1945- Battle of Berlin: Upon being informed that a planned counter-attack never happened, Adolf Hitler flies into a rage, denounces the German Army and concedes World War II is lost
- 1946- Socialist Unity Party of Germany (SED) is founded in East Germany via a merger of the Social Democratic Party of Germany (SPD) and the Communist Party of Germany (KPD)
- 1954- USSR joins UNESCO

cosmonauts returned to Earth

- 1969- 1st human eye transplant performed 1971- Soviet spacecraft Soyuz 10 launched
- 1971- Soyuz 10 launches as the world's first mission to the first-ever space station (the Salyut 1) however the docking was unsuccessful and the
- 1972- NASA Apollo 16 astronauts John Young & Charles Duke ride the Lunar Rover on the moon



## KASHMIR OBSERVER®

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🔪 KO VIEW

# Srinagar's Housing Crunch?

rinagar is now grappling with a growing housing crisis that threatens to become only worse in the coming years. The latest numbers tell a stark story: from a population of 1.78 million today, Srinagar is projected to touch nearly 3 million by 2035. But is the city ready to accommodate this growth? Clearly, not yet.

The city needs at least 300,000 new housing units in the next two decades. But it is already short by nearly 19,000 units - and that's just today. What makes the challenge more complex is Srinagar's geography. With only 160 square kilometers currently developed out of the 766 earmarked in the Master Plan, and large swathes marked as flood-prone or ecologically sensitive, the space to build is limited. Urban expansion, therefore, must be sustainable.

Property prices have soared as demand outpaces supply. In some areas, real estate rates are now over Rs 14,000 per square foot, putting home ownership out of reach for much of the middle class, not to think of the growing numbers of urban poor. This is creating a widening disparity between the haves and have-nots. Over the past two decades, Kashmir has witnessed a real estate boom in the high-end and luxury segment, but this has only put the availability of housing beyond the reach of lower- and middle-income families, many of whom are now forced to look for homes outside the city or settle for cramped, inadequate spaces.

While the government has rolled out policies like Land Pooling and Transferable Development Rights (TDR), and extended the PMAY-Urban scheme, these efforts have had limited impact so far. There's also talk of new townships in Bemina and a grand satellite city backed by the NBCC. But here again, experts warn - unless these projects prioritize affordability and sustainability, they risk becoming enclaves for the elite rather than solutions for the masses.

So, the government's intervention becomes urgent. The city's growing housing needs require a creative response. We have to choose between sprawl and smart planning. Unchecked construction is not the solution, as that will further impact the city's fragile ecology. Already, Srinagar has borne the brunt of the unplanned, horizontal growth of housing colonies, some of whom have been built on swampy land. At the same time, we can't delay affordable housing for our growing population, a large section of whom is not in position to buy land at current rates, let alone construct a house. Srinagar's housing future hinges on bold, inclusive planning that balances growth with affordability, sustainability, and the needs of its people.



Irshad Mushtaq

or someone just stepping into the world of investing, the stock market can feel like a maze. But there's a simpler, safer starting point: ETFs, or Exchange-Traded Funds.

An ETF is like a basket of investments—stocks, bonds, gold, or other assets—bundled together and traded on stock exchanges. Instead of buying one company's stock, you buy into a group. For example, a Nifty ETF includes shares from India's top 50 companies. This spreads out your risk: if one stock dips, others may balance it out.

That's called diversification, and it's a big reason ETFs are smart for beginners. You don't need to spend hours researching which stock to pick. You don't need to follow company news daily. An ETF gives you broad exposure with just one purchase.

ETFs are also cost-effective. They usually come with lower fees than mutual funds and can be traded during the day like regular stocks, offering flexibility and control.

In India and globally, there are ETFs for nearly every sector—tech, pharma, gold, auto—or even international indexes like the NASDAQ 100. So you can build a smart, well-rounded portfolio without deep financial knowledge.

Another bonus: transparency. ETFs disclose their holdings regularly, so you always know what you're investing in. Plus, they are regulated by financial authorities, adding an extra layer of trust.

For new investors, ETFs offer a low-stress, low-risk way to learn about markets, build confidence, and watch money grow steadily. It's not about chasing the next hot stock, it's about starting strong and smart.

In short: ETFs simplify investing without sacrificing opportunity.

----Writer is a reputed financial advisor in Srinagar.



## **Kashmir's Job Myth**

Young Kashmiris face a bleak future as the government job dream fades, pushing the need for new paths like entrepreneurship.

Ikkz Ikbal



A generation raised on the promise of government jobs now finds that dream fading into an uncertain reality.

or years, landing a government job in Kashmir was the ultimate goal. It was a sign of stability, respect, and lifelong security. One secure position could sustain an entire family. But times have changed now.

Today, the picture is starkly different. Over 370,000 young people are registered as unemployed in Jammu and Kashmir. Government job openings are few and far between, while competition is more intense than ever. The odds, frankly, are not in anyone's favor.

Yet the dream persists. Across the Valley, thousands of young people continue to pin their hopes on government exams, clinging to a version of success that no longer exists. Many spend years preparing for tests that may never lead to a job. Some clear the exams but are left waiting indefinitely for appointments that may or may not come.

Meanwhile, the private sector—still growing, still unstable—offers little solace. Unlike their parents, young Kashmiris today are expected to achieve financial independence without job security, pensions, or generational wealth. They're being asked to build lives in a market that doesn't support them.

The toll is visible. I've seen it in my classrooms and among former students. Young men and women feel defeated before they even begin. Some grow frustrated; others grow silent. In tragic cases, a few lose all hope entirely.

We need to understand what this generation is facing. And we need to stop telling them that the problem is laziness or ambition. This is not a character flaw, it's an economic reality.

What's holding us back, in part, is a deep cultural attachment to outdated ideas of success. In Kashmir,

we spend extravagantly on weddings and homes, often at the cost of long-term investments in our children's futures. A family might pour its life savings into a single ceremony, but balk at the idea of helping a child start a business.

What if we reversed that thinking? Imagine the impact if those same resources were used to fund a startup, finance a course, or support a new trade. Imagine if families backed their children's ideas with the same enthusiasm they reserve for marriage arrangements.

pressure, uncertainty, and fear. They need support, not scolding. They need space to try, to fail, and to find their own path. What they don't need is to be told they're weak or ungrateful.

This isn't just about jobs. It's about how we, as a society, respond to the changing world. It's about whether we're willing to adapt or insist on a broken system.

Change is possible. But it starts with us: parents, teachers, policymakers, and community leaders. We have to expand what

## Kashmir's youth aren't lazy— they're trapped in a system that refuses to evolve.

That shift in priorities could change lives.

We also need to do a better job of encouraging self-employment and entrepreneurship. There's growing potential in sectors like agribusiness, tourism, tech, and e-commerce. But young people are often discouraged from exploring these paths because they're not "respectable" in the eyes of society.

This mindset has to go. We can't keep telling young people to chase opportunities that no longer exist while ignoring the possibilities right in front of them.

The older generation has a role to play here too. They must stop comparing today's reality with their own past. What worked decades ago doesn't work now. Jobs aren't guaranteed. Pensions aren't promised. And mental health struggles, once brushed off, are very real.

Young people are dealing with

we consider a "successful" career. We have to invest in education that teaches practical skills, not just test preparation. We have to create real opportunities for young people, and we have to support them when they take risks.

The youth of Kashmir are not lazy. They are not entitled. They are navigating a world that looks nothing like the one we grew up in. They deserve our understanding, and more importantly, our action.

If we continue to push them toward a future that no longer exists, we risk losing them entirely. Let's not wait for that to happen. The time to act is now.

- Ikkz Ikbal is Principal at Maryam Memorial Institute, Pandithpora Qaziabad. He holds Masters in Biotechnology. Views expressed in this article are author's own and don't necessarily reflect KO's editorial policy.



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## When Muscle Replaces Mandate

write with deep concern and a heavy heart over the recent events in the Jammu & Kashmir Assembly session. What we witnessed was not a dignified debate on public welfare, but a public display of personal grudges. It was an unsettling erosion of ethics and discipline.

The Assembly, which should be a place of lawmaking and leadership, instead became a stage for drama. Heated arguments, personal attacks, and adjournments marked the session more than any constructive discussion. Many of our elected representatives appeared more focused

on settling scores than solving problems. Sadly, the hopes people placed in their leaders before the elections are fading fast.

This decline in conduct is not just an internal issue of the Assembly, it spills into public life. From news broadcasts to social media, people are watching their leaders trade insults instead of ideas. One incident, in particular, saw a disagreement over the Waqf Bill descend into a shouting match, complete with vulgar language and finger-pointing, continuing even outside the Assembly complex. These moments, caught on

camera, made our public house look more like a battleground than a hall of governance.

of governance.

The 21-day budget session that began on March 3 and ended on April 9, 2025, was marked more by personal feuds than policy focus. There was hardly any serious discussion on the issues that actually matter to the people - health, education, unemployment, infrastructure. Instead, we saw some leaders acting like action heroes, others like mob leaders, forgetting the voters who put them there.

It is high time we ask: where are the ethics? Where is the sense

of duty? Remarks like "His father has disinherited him" are not just inappropriate, they erode public faith in democracy.

Let this be a wake-up call. Both individuals and parties must approach the Assembly floor with open minds and a focus on public welfare, not personal vendettas. Until that happens, promises will remain unfulfilled, and the public will continue to feel disillusioned.

Sincerely, Ayaan Saroori Jammu & Kashmir

## When Mountains Move

Engineering
Without Ecosystems
Tunnels and highways may promise progress, but in the Himalayas, ignoring nature carries a heavy cost.



Dr. Waseem Ahmad

he Srinagar-Jammu National Highway is a key link between Kashmir and the rest of India. Every day, it carries essential goods, medical supplies, tourists and commuters. But behind this lifeline lies a growing problem. Landslides, tunnel collapses, and cloudbursts, like the recent one in Ramban, are disrupting traffic more often than ever before. These are not just natural events. They are signs of increasing stress on a fragile mountain ecosystem.

The Himalayas, especially in Jammu and Kashmir, are young and unstable mountains. They are still changing and settling. Their forest cover helps prevent erosion, absorbs rain, and stabilizes the soil. However, this natural balance is being damaged by heavy construction activities. New roads, widened highways and tunnels are being built quickly, using large machines and explosives, without much attention to the environment.

Construction is often carried out without detailed studies of the terrain. Experts like geologists and ecologists are rarely consulted before work begins. As a result, roads are cut into steep slopes without proper support systems. Drainage channels are either poorly designed or missing. This weakens the land and makes it more likely to slide during rainfall.

High-end machines like tunnel boring rigs and earth movers are impressive but are being used in ways that ignore the sensitive nature of the mountains. Rather than adjusting the machines to suit the region,



the land is being forced to adjust to the machines. This has dangerous consequences. When the soil structure is disturbed, even moderate rainfall can trigger landslides.

Environmental Impact Assessments (EIAs), which are meant to check the possible harm from construction, are often incomplete or ignored. Construction companies, working under tight deadlines and political pressure, tend to overlook safety and environmental standards. Contracts are often awarded to the same companies, some with poor track records in sustainable development. Regular checks on materials, safety and environmental guidelines are often skipped.

The result is clear. In recent years, weather-related disasters on this highway have increased. What was once rare is now common. Each landslide or roadblock cuts off Kashmir from the rest of the country, delaying supplies, affecting livelihoods and risking lives.

Climate change is making things worse. Rainfall patterns have become unpredictable, with sudden and intense downpours. Without tree cover and stable slopes, the land cannot absorb the excess water. This turns rain into floods and cloudbursts into disasters.

This does not mean that roads

and tunnels are not needed. For the people of Kashmir, better roads are essential for access to healthcare, education and markets. The question is not whether we need development, but how we build it.

Sustainable development in the Himalayas requires careful planning. Every project should start with a full ecological and geological survey. Local communities and environmental experts must be included from the beginning. Construction methods should avoid excessive drilling and blasting. Regular audits should check if companies are following rules, and the public should have access to reports on safety and environmental impact.

The Himalayan region is not just a construction site. It is a living ecosystem, deeply interconnected and highly sensitive. When its balance is disturbed, the damage can be severe and long-lasting.

The highway to progress must not come at the cost of nature. If we continue to ignore the warnings from these mountains, the risks will only grow. Development must respect the land it passes through. În Kashmir, that means building with care, not force.

> - The author is a South Kashmir based Scientist

# The Geography of Collapse

Highway expansion through the fragile Himalayas is tearing apart slopes and tipping the environment into crisis.



Dr. Masoon A. Beig

Between the mountain towns of Banihal and Ramban in lammy and Vechnical in Jammu and Kashmir, the land is breaking apart. Boulders fall without warning. Slopes collapse. The National Highway-44, a lifeline that connects Jammu to Srinagar, is being expanded. But the cost of this four-lane upgrade is being paid by the mountains themselves.

This stretch of road lies in one of the most geologically fragile regions of the Himalayas. These are young mountains, still forming, still shifting. The slopes here are steep and made of loose rocks, clay, and shale. When disturbed, they do not hold. Cutting into them for road expansion upsets their natural balance and makes landslides more likely.

Climate change is adding fuel to the fire. The region is seeing more intense rainfall, sudden cloudbursts, and warmer temperatures. Rainwater quickly fills cracks in the soil, making slopes heavy and unstable. The cloudburst near Seri village in 2022 washed away an entire section of the highway in just minutes. Rising temperatures also break down rock through repeated freezing and thawing. These changes make an already risky terrain even more dangerous.

The way construction is done often ignores these realities. One common method is toe cutting, where the bottom of a slope is removed to make space for the road. This weakens the entire slope, making it more likely to collapse. Tunnels, like the ones built between Nashri and Banihal, pass through unstable rock. Without careful study, they can trigger



The road itself is not the only problem. Along NH-44, shops, eateries, and houses have popped up

quickly, many built without drainage systems or slope support. When it rains, water seeps into the soil, making it heavier and more likely to slide. In some places, the natural flow of water is blocked, causing it to pool in dangerous areas.

Traffic adds more stress. NH-44 carries thousands of vehicles each day, including trucks, buses, and army convoys. The constant shaking from heavy traffic loosens rocks and disturbs the soil. In narrow areas like Ramsu and Nachlana, where the road is already prone to landslides, the extra pressure from traffic makes things worse. Pollution and heat from idling vehicles also weaken the environment further.

Another major concern is deforestation. Trees are nature's way of keeping slopes stable. Their roots hold the soil and soak up extra rainwater. But large numbers of trees have been cut down to make way for the highway. With no tree cover, the rain hits bare soil, washing it away. The loss of forest has also harmed local wildlife and reduced the land's ability to deal with sudden weather changes.

Each year, landslides damage vehicles, delay transport, and sometimes take lives. Essential

supplies are disrupted. Travelers are stranded. Yet most responses are short-term, focusing only on clearing debris rather than preventing future damage.

The solution lies in working with nature, not against it. Road construction in this region should be guided by scientific studies of the land. Slope cutting and tun-neling must be done with care and proper planning. Retaining walls should be reinforced with plants that help hold soil. Reforestation must become a priority, using native trees and grasses.

Drainage systems need to be repaired or rebuilt to manage water better. Monitoring systems can provide early warnings of slope movement. Reducing traffic through alternate routes like the Mughal Road or the Sinthan-Kishtwar link can ease the load on NH-44. A reliable railway line from Jammu to Srinagar would help too.

The mountains are not taking revenge. They are reacting to pressure. This is not just a road project gone wrong. It is a reminder that geography matters. And if we ignore the signals, nature will keep pushing back.

- Dr. Masoon A. Beig teaches Geography at Altaf Memorial Government Degree College, Kelam Kulgam. He specialises in mountain environments and human impact on fragile terrains.

## What We Lost with Faisal Bashir

His death is a painful reflection of what we have become, a society that treats dreams like assembly-line products and turns ambition into a burden too heavy for young shoulders.

## **Ummar Jamal**

n the morning of April 19, I opened my phone to the kind of message that makes your stomach drop and your heart pound. Faisal Bashir, 19, a boy from Kupwara, had been found dead in his rented room in Dudwana. The JEE results had come out just

He didn't make it. And he couldn't take the pressure.

And suddenly, the quiet grief of one family became a mirror to the noise we've all been pretending not to hear.

I didn't know Faisal personally, but I've known many like him. Young boys and girls with tired eyes and hopeful hearts. Children who grow up believing their future rests on a single exam, who carry the weight of entire families' expectations as they try to memorise the periodic table one more time before bed.

I've lived that pressure. I just chose to walk away from it.

Back in school, when I told people I was opting for Humanities in Class 11, it felt like I'd committed a crime. My relatives reacted as if I had thrown my future away. "You're wasting your potential," they said, just because I wasn't running in the NEET-JEE rat race.

But I knew what I loved: writing, debating, law. I knew I didn't want to spend my best years chasing a dream that wasn't mine.

And it wasn't easy. There were days I doubted myself. But looking back now, seven years later, I'm grateful I listened to that quiet voice inside me. I debated on national television. I became the youngest President of the Jammu and Kashmir Students Association. My words found space in top national newspapers. I found a path that made me feel alive.

Had I followed the conventional route, I don't think I would've known this version of myself.



That's why Faisal's death shakes me so deeply. Because I know that feeling. The pressure. The loneliness. The sinking dread of disappointing everyone you love.

Faisal was not weak. He was failed by a system that tells children their worth is defined

by a rank, by an exam that measures memorisation more than curiosity, by a society that calls you successful only if you become a doctor or an engineer.

We've turned education into a punishment. Coaching centres pop up in every corner like fast-food joints, offering "success packages" to desperate parents. Their hoardings show toppers with wide grins, but no one talks about the sleepless nights, the panic attacks, the quiet breakdowns. No one talks about what happens when you don't make it.

And year after year, children die.

Their names flicker briefly in the news, then disappear. But the system that pushed them over the edge stays intact.

We need to stop pretending this is normal. Why should a child feel that not cracking NEET or JEE is the end of their future? Why don't we celebrate poets, artists, social workers, or sportspersons with the same pride? Why have we let success become such a narrow, suffocating thing?

Children are not born dreaming of degrees. They dream of flight. We are the ones who tell them their wings are only valid if they fly in

one direction. It's time we rewrite that story.

Schools must have counsellors, not just to deal with mental health after damage is done, but to build emotional resilience from the start. Parents must learn that love is not measured in grades. Media must show us more than just NEET toppers, they must show us the designers, the change-makers, and others.

We need laws that regulate coaching centres so they don't prey on fear. We need campaigns that showcase the beauty of different paths. We need teachers who teach children how to think, not just what to write in an OMR sheet.

Most of all, we need to ask ourselves what kind of future we are building. The one where children live with joy and purpose, or one where they quietly disappear after failing a test. Faisal's death should haunt us.

And it should move us to act. Not with token sympathy, but with real change. Because if we don't, there will be more Faisals. More rooms left cold and quiet. More dreams buried too soon.

- Ummar Jamal is a Kashmir-based columnist. He tweets at @ummar\_jamal and can be reached at umarjamal968@gmail.com.

#### **Ramban Battles**

as restoration of the Jammu-Srinagar National Highway could take time due to the massive damage, he said.

Cutting across party lines, political leaders urged the Centre to declare the tragedy a "national disaster" and provide adequate financial assistance to the families affected to restart their lives.

"About 10 to 12 villages, including Seri, Bagna, Panote and Khari, have suffered varying degrees of damage and our teams are on the ground to make a complete assessment so that the affected population are provided relief," the divisional commissioner told reporters.

Kumar visited the affected villages and was briefed about the situation by Deputy Commissioner Baseer-ul-Haq

"Restoration of essential services, including water and electricity, is underway and joint teams of the National Disaster Response Force (NDRF), State Disaster Response Force (SDRF), army, police and other agencies are on the ground to improve the situation," he said.

The divisional commissioner said the Jammu-Srinagar National Highway had suffered extensive damage, with certain stretches sunk and washed away while some others were buried under sludge and boulders.

"The highway will take time to get restored, even as our efforts are underway. We will have to check the cracks for stability. The retaining walls have also been damaged," Kumar said, advising the stranded commuters to utilise the alternative Mughal Road and the Sinthan Top road for the time being.

He said efforts were being made to make the Mughal Road, connecting the twin districts of Poonch and Rajouri in Jammu to south Kashmir's Shopian, two-way as soon as possible to allow heavy vehicles carrying essential commodities to the valley.

The Sinthan Top road connects Kishtwar in Jammu with Anantnag in Kashmir but a fresh spell of snowfall forced its closure three days ago. Work is underway to restore the link.

Senior BJP leader and Leader of Opposition Sunil Sharma visited the affected villages and said, "We have come to assess the situation and submit a report to Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Union Home Minister Amit Shah."

"We want the government to declare it as a national disaster and announce a rehabilitation package for the affected population," Sharma told reporters.

Condoling the deaths of the three persons, he said the BJP was standing with all those who lost their dwellings and would ensure that they were properly rehabilitated by the government.

National Conference MLA Arjun Singh Raju demanded that the tragedy be declared a "national disaster" and said villages in the hilly areas had suffered major damage.

"The full assessment can be made only when the roads leading to the villages in the hills are opened. The administration is making efforts on a war footing and we are hopeful of restoring essential supplies by later this evening," he said.

Police, army and Central Reserve Police Force (CRPF) personnel, along with civil volunteers, have been at the forefront to provide relief, especially to hundreds of the stranded commuters and tourists.

After assessing the ground situation, a defence spokesperson said the army initiated immediate action in coordination with civil administration officials.

"While no emergency requisition has been made, civil authorities have assured they will seek army assistance should the need arise," the spokesperson said.

He said Quick Reaction Teams (QRTs) from Banihal, Karachial, Digdaul, Maitra and Chanderkote were rapidly mobilised to provide relief to the stranded travellers.

Army personnel extended support by distributing tea and hot meals, offering temporary shelters, and providing basic medical aid to those in need, he added.

Eight army columns are currently on standby at key locations to assist further, if required, the spokesperson said and added the army remained steadfast in its commitment to stand by the citizens in times of crisis, ensuring safety, support and timely assistance.

Union minister Jitendra Singh also praised the army for its efforts to reach out to the affected population.

"While the district administration team led by an energetic deputy commissioner has been commendably on the job, it is time also to acknowledge and thank the Indian Army for its timely assistance, which played a crucial role in providing relief to the local population,"

he said in a post on social media.

"I feel gratified to inform (you) that the army has set up medical aid camps, distributed essential medicines and ensured access to food and clean drinking water. They have also made special arrangements for tea and basic meals for the affected population. Needless to say, the Indian Army (is) at the service of the nation, not only during the war-time but equally as much during the peacetime crisis," the Udhampur MP further said.

## **Omar Reviews**

speaking to reporters at Kela Morh, a few kilometres from the Ramban district headquarters along the Jammu-Srinagar National Highway. The highway was shut for a second consecutive day due to

multiple landslides in the area.

The chief minister was supposed to visit the flood- and landslide-hit villages in Ramban town but had to return to Srinagar due to the approach road being washed away. He promised to tour the villages on Tuesday through the Jammu side

Three persons, including two minor siblings, were killed and more than 100 people rescued after cloudburst-induced floods and landslides on Sunday caused massive damage to infrastructure, including roads and residential buildings.

Abdullah was scheduled to visit the calamity-affected areas but bad weather prevented helicopter operations. The chief minister travelled by road after he was informed that the Banihal sector of the national highway had been cleared, officials said.

Braving fresh rainfall, Abdullah reached Maroog around 5:30 pm and later walked towards the worst-hit Kela Morh to personally take stock of the situation, the officials said.

"This is not a national disaster but a localised one. It is a disaster and, accordingly, relief will be provided to the victims for rebuilding their lives," Abdullah told reporters when asked if his government would approach the Centre for declaring the calamity as a "national disaster".

He said the district administration had been directed to assess the damage and submit a detailed report.

"Immediate relief will be provided to the affected population. We will make arrangements on our own for a package and I will also talk to the Centre," he

"If the weather permits, I will personally take stock of the situation on the ground in other flood-hit areas of Ramban town and also chair a meeting of officers on Tuesday," he added.

The chief minister, who walked nearly two kilometres over the damaged road and was briefed by Deputy Commissioner Baseer-ul-Haq Chaudhary and officials of the National Highways Authority of India (NHAI), said the national highway's restoration was the top priority.

"A number of vehicles are buried under landslide debris. The road has also suffered extensive damage and we have to change its alignment. We have to remove the debris and clear the buried vehicles. The effort is to make the highway trafficable as soon as possible," Abdullah

He said this stretch of the national highway was the most difficult and the officials were of the opinion that it would take two to three days to clear it while the remaining section would be cleared in the next 24 hours.

Deputy Chief Minister Surinder Choudhary visited the flood-affected areas on Sunday with Ramban MLA Arjun Singh Raju and Banihal MLA Sajad Shaheen on the directions of the chief minister, who was in Delhi at the time.

Abdullah reached Srinagar early on Monday and announced that he would visit Ramban later in the day.

Earlier, NHAI project director Purshottam Kumar said they were faced with a challenging situation due to massive deposits of muck on the national highway at more than a dozen places, especially on the four-kilometre stretch

between Seri and Maroog.

"The height of the sludge at some places is more than 20 feet," he said and added the highway was likely to take five to six days to reopen.

## 'Felt Like The End':

in the sudden flash floods and landslides that hit Ramban district.

"The hotel staff approached us around 3 am (on Sunday) and said floodwater had entered the hotel and that the level was rising," said Singh from Ludhiana in

Still shaken by the horrifying experience, Singh praised the swift action of the hotel staff and police for helping them move to safety. However, their car got buried under debris from the landslide.

Three persons, including two minor siblings, were killed and more than 100 people were rescued after heavy rainfall and cloudbursts triggered flash floods, landslides and mudslides and caused massive damage to infrastructure, including roads and residential buildings, in Ramban district.

Hundreds of vehicles were left stranded on the strategic 250-kilometre Jammu-Srinagar National Highway -- the only all-weather road linking Kashmir with the rest of the country -- while many were buried under the debris.

Singh, who was accompanied by his parents, wife and two-year-old daughter, was among eight tourists from Punjab caught in the flash floods and landslides in the hilly district.

He said a landslide brought down a huge amount of muck from the hill to the main road, burying all vehicles.

"We thought there was no chance of escape, given the situation. However, the hotel staff helped us leave the hotel safely and, later, a police rescue team shifted us to a post amid heavy rain," Singh said

"It felt like the end," another tourist said.

Thanking the almighty for saving their lives, he requested the district administration to help them retrieve their

Also from Punjab, Sanjeev Kumar, who was also heading to Kashmir with

his two friends, escaped from the hotel with the help of the staff after breaking a window.

"The scene was scary as heavy rain, cloudbursts and landslides were continuously taking place. We were thinking of taking shelter on the flyover, hoping that it would be safe," he said.

However, he said police personnel came rushing and evacuated them to the local gurdwara.

"The roof of my car was visible when I left the hotel but there was no trace of it or that of the other parked vehicles when I returned later. All are buried under the debris," he said, requesting the district administration to inform them about the time when they would clear the debris to retrieve their vehicles so that they could plan their return

## **Traffic Diverted**

Jammu to south Kashmir's Shopian district brought huge relief to the stranded people.

The authorities had initially decided to restrict traffic on the recently-opened Mughal Road to one way -- Kashmir to Jammu. However, the all-weather national highway's closure prompted the diversion of traffic and the deployment of additional police personnel to ensure smooth movement on both sides, officials said.

As a precautionary measure, a high alert has been issued for all health institutions located along the alternate corridor—from Sunderbani to Bhimber Gali and Dehra Ki Gali.

Acknowledging the potential for a surge in patient inflow, accident cases and emergency referrals due to increased traffic, health authorities have directed all healthcare facilities along the Mughal Road to remain fully operational 24x7 until further notice.

"In view of the closure of National Highway NHW-144 (Jammu-Srinagar) via Ramban, all vehicular traffic has been diverted through the Mughal Road. Consequently, all health institutions located along the Mughal Road corridor—from Sunderbani to Bhimber Gali and Dehra Ki Gali—are hereby placed on high alert and directed to remain fully functional on a 24x7 basis until further orders," reads the circular issued by CMO Raiouri.

The directive aims to ensure uninterrupted healthcare services and emergency response readiness amid rising vehicular movement.

Accordingly, all types of leaves, including casual, earned, and station leave for medical officers, paramedical staff, drivers, support staff, and administrative personnel, are cancelled with immediate effect, it mentions.

As per the circular, maternity leave will be permitted as per existing norms. "Block Medical Officers (BMOs) concerned are instructed to ensure adequate manpower deployment through rational rotation and ensure that night duty rosters are prepared and strictly adhered to," it states.

Additional instructions include ensuring the availability of ambulances, emergency medicines, fuel, and other essential logistics at all times.

The directive called for the deployment of fully equipped Mobile Medical Teams along the Mughal Road within respective jurisdictions to provide immediate assistance to travellers and accident victims. "Any difficulty, shortage, or untoward incident must be brought to the notice of this office immediately. This order has been issued in the interest of public service and shall remain in force until further communication. Noncompliance will be viewed seriously and dealt with under the relevant service rules," the circular adds.

## **No Shortage Of**

of essential supplies in the Valley, including fuel, LPG, and food grains.

"All essentials are adequately stocked. There is no need to panic or resort to hoarding," Bidhuri said while addressing reporters in Srinagar.

"There is enough buffer stock of food grains for over a year. LPG supplies are also well in place with 17 days' worth of reserves already in stock," he said.

Regarding the fuel situation, the Divisional Commissioner said that Kashmir consumes around 1,000 kilolitres of diesel per day and currently has 12,500 kilolitres available, which is sufficient for 12 to 13 days.

He added that the Valley consumes approximately 625 kilolitres of petrol per day and at present nearly 10,000 kilolitres are in stock.

"There is no need to line up at fuel stations or hoard supplies. The situation is fully under control," Bidhuri said, urging people to remain calm and not spread unnecessary fear.

A petrol pump operator at Sanat Nagar echoed similar sentiments. "There is no shortage at our station, or any other nearby stations. We are receiving supplies as usual, and the public should avoid panic buying, which creates artificial scarcity," he said.

Meanwhile, the Jammu-Srinagar National Highway (NH-44) will remain closed for vehicular movement on Tuesday (April 22) as restoration work could not be completed, Traffic Police Headquarters said in its latest advisory.

"People are advised not to undertake journeys on Jammu-Srinagar NHW (NH-44) until restoration work is completed and the surface is traffic-worthy," the advisory said.

Other key road updates include

Kishtwar-Sinthan-Anantnag road (NH-244), closed due to fresh snowfall. Srinagar-Sonamarg-Gumari (SSG) Road, only one-way traffic for LMVs with anti-skid chains, followed by HMVs (only six-tyre vehicles), will be allowed from Kargil to Srinagar, subject to weather and clearance. Vehicles will be allowed from Minamarg until 1:30 PM.

Also, on Mughal Road, passenger vehicles will be allowed from both sides—Jammu to Srinagar and vice versa—via Poonch, from 9:00 AM to 3:00 PM, subject to road and weather conditions, and the cut-off timings for vehicles on various routes and advisory numbers for confirmation have been issued. Commuters are advised to check with traffic control units before planning travel.

In the meanwhile, an official handout says, Divisional Commissioner (Div Com) Kashmir, Vijay Kumar Bidhuri on Monday said that there is an adequate stock of essential commodities including LPG, Diesel & Petrol available across the Valley.

"Significant efforts are underway to repair and restore the National Highway to facilitate the movement of vehicles. Bidhuri maintained that restoration work is expected to be completed within four or five days while one-way Light Motor Vehicles are allowed to ply on Mughal Road." reads the statement.

The statement also reads, Div Com made these remarks while chairing a meeting of officers to evaluate the availability of essential supplies in the region and to assess damage incurred by orchardists.

"Addressing the meeting, he underscored that there is enough fuel stock to last for over 12 days and urged citizens to refrain from causing unnecessary panic or queuing at petrol stations," the statement reads, adding the LPG stock is sufficiently available for 17 days, while the 10,000 Kilolitres of petrol will suffice the requirement for 16 days and similarly 12,500 Kilolitres of diesel are available in the Valley.

"To address profiteering by some traders, the Div Com instructed Deputy Commissioners to constitute joint teams to conduct thorough market inspections, while Superintendents of Police were asked to deploy personnel at petrol stations to discourage queuing by people. Regarding damage to apple orchards from severe weather conditions, Bidhuri directed Deputy Commissioners to constitute joint teams to assess the extent of the damage caused by heavy rains, strong winds, and hailstorms, and to submit their findings promptly," reads the statement.

Additionally, it reads, concerning the evacuation of stranded tourists, the Div Com instructed the SSP Traffic Rural and the DC of Shopian to prioritize the movement of tourist vehicles via the Mughal Road. The meeting was attended by Commissioner SMC; Deputy Commissioners, SSPs, Directors of IMD, Health, Tourism, FCS&CA, VC LCMA, ULB, officers of various departments including Agriculture, Horticulture, School Education, Traffic, Transport, KPDCL, 1&FC, PHE, PWD etc. (KNO)

## **Newlyweds Trek**

marital journey

The cloudburst-triggered disaster blocked roads, leaving many stranded and forcing them to navigate through the muck and debris of the ravaged

terrain.

Newlyweds Nazir Ahmad and Zaheera
Bano, though, found themselves walking through the difficult conditions,
their wedding attire unscathed but their
spirits lifted by the experience. Despite
the exhaustion, they described the ordeal as an unexpected yet unforgettable
part of their wedding day. "It was tiring,
but in a way, it made the day even more
special," said Ahmad.

Other couples, too, faced similar struggles. Sunil Kumar, leading his wedding procession with his guests, was forced to walk through the debris-filled roads to reach his bride's residence. "We are helpless before nature, but since our marriage date was fixed long ago, we decided to go ahead with it," Kumar said, making his way through the devastation caused by the landslides.

While Nazir Ahmad and Zaheera were lucky enough to receive a lift from Army personnel for part of their journey, many others, like Mashkoor Ahmad from Neel, walked long distances to continue with their wedding celebrations despite the challenging conditions.

The flash floods and landslides, which have claimed lives and caused widespread damage to infrastructure, left the Jammu-Srinagar National Highway blocked, stranding hundreds of vehicles. Restoration efforts are underway, with authorities working to provide alternative routes while assessing the damage to affected villages. Divisional Commissioner (Jammu) Ramesh Kumar confirmed that several villages have been impacted, with relief efforts already in progress.

## **Cabinet To Finalize**

In February 2024, the parliament amended J&K's Panchayat and Municipal laws to grant reservation for OBCs. After amendments in the laws, the LG-led administrative council setup a three-member panel to finalize the reservation framework for OBCs in local bodies. (KNO)

## No Major Weather

occur in parts of the Valley and isolated pockets of the Jammu division on

Monday afternoon. The brief spell may also be accompanied by gusty winds.

Weather is expected to remain dry on April 22 and 23 across the region. However, another spell of thundershowers, accompanied by gusty winds and the possibility of hailstorm, is predicted in the afternoons of April 24 and 25 at scattered places.

"The weather is expected to remain dry again from April 26 to 30. Overall, no major weather activity is anticipated till the end of this month except light rain or thundershower during 21, 24 & 25 April afternoon," the MeT Department said.

The advisory appealed to people to stay inside and at safe places during thunder, lightning and gusty winds.

#### **Hailstorms Batter**

apple bowl of Kashmir, has been among the worst-hit districts, with scores of orchardists reporting heavy losses just ahead of the flowering season.

Fruit growers are demanding immediate and effective compensation from the government, lamenting years of delays and hurdles in the relief process.

While the administration has swung into action with the usual damage assessment surveys, farmers on the ground remain skeptical of any meaningful relief. "Every time a natural calamity hits, officials conduct surveys with cameras and clipboards. But compensation never comes on time, sometimes it never comes at all," said Ghulam Rasool, a fruit grower from Zainapora to the news agency Kashmir News Trust.

Several farmers echoed similar frustration, claiming that although damage assessment teams regularly visit their orchards, the compensation process remains riddled with delays and official apathy. "We are asked to fill forms, attach documents, and wait endlessly. In the meantime, loans pile up and produce is lost. We cannot run our homes on surveys," said another orchardist from Keller area of Shopian.

They said the fruit economy, being the backbone of Kashmir's agriculture sector, requires proactive support during such calamities, not just paperwork. "It's the same story every year—hailstorms, losses, surveys, and then silence. The government must put an end to this ritualistic approach," said fruit dealer Shabir Ahmad.

Growers have urged the administration to expedite the compensation mechanism through a streamlined policy that guarantees timely disbursal of financial relief. They also called for setting up a dedicated disaster fund for horticulture-related losses and emphasized the need for crop insurance schemes that are both accessible and effective.

In its advisory, the MeT has stated that all concerned are advised to plan accordingly and follow the administration and traffic advisories.

The farmers have been advised to resume the farm operations from tomorrow (April 22) onwards, it reads, adding that since due to the continuous rain during the past 3 days, the possibility of landslides, shooting stones and rock fall at vulnerable places can't be ruled out.

Fruit growers are demanding immediate and effective compensation from the government, lamenting years of delays and hurdles in the relief process.

The recent spell of erratic weather, including hail and strong winds, damaged apple and other fruit-bearing trees in several villages. Shopian, known as the apple bowl of Kashmir, has been among the worst-hit districts, with scores of orchardists reporting heavy losses just ahead of the flowering season.

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## **Message Of Law**

detention order making authority resulting in repeat of preventive detention taking place on insufficient material and getting quashed through the indulgence of this Court." The present case is no

different than what the pool of cases has been suffering quashment from the Court, the bench added.

"The preventive detention of the petitioner in the present case is, thus, held to be vitiated with suppression and withholding of documents related to the petitioner (Zargar)," the court said, adding, "Therefore, the preventive detention of the petitioner being made a device to overreach the criminal court which came to grant bail in favour of the petitioner and, thus, imposing a punitive imprisonment upon the petitioner through preventive detention mode."

Meanwhile, a bench of justice Mohammad Yousuf Wani quashed detention order under PSA against one Irshad Ahmad Dar by District Magistrate Baramulla on 21 July 2023.

"The preventive detentions need to be passed with great care and caution keeping in mind that a citizen's most valuable and inherent human right is being curtailed," the court said.

"The arrests in general and the preventive detentions in particular are an exception to the most cherished fundamental right guaranteed under Article 21 of the Constitution of India," the court said and underlined that the preventive detentions are made on the basis of subjective satisfaction of the detaining authority without being backed by an immediate complaint as in the case of the registration of the FIR and, as such, is a valuable trust in the hands of

the trustees.

"The provisions of Clauses (1) and (2) of Article 22 of our Constitution are not applicable in the case of preventive detentions," the court said, adding, "So, the provisions of Clause (5) of the Article 22 of our Constitution requiring for application of mind, subjective satisfaction, inevitability of the detention order, proper communication of the grounds of detention and the information of liberty to make a representation against the detention order are the imperative and inevitable conditions rather requirements for passing of a detention

### **Don't Give Political**

was some discussion on the Waqf Amendment Act in the Legislative assembly, the National Conference moved to the Supreme Court and got some relief.

"Where is the negative impact? At least, the SC has directed the Centre to move back two steps. Non-Muslims' interference in Waqf has been stayed while self-declared Waqf has not been stopped. Let the SC do its work, we will wait for its verdict," he added.

"The Waqf issue has been taken to the SC by parties, not the government. The NC has taken. If the BJP has said something about their MP, what is the need to comment on it?" he said, when asked about the controversial remarks made by BJP MP Nishikant Dubey about the Supreme Court

Supreme Court.

"If the BJP has said something about their MP (Dubey), what is the need to comment on it?" he said.

On the conditions in the Ramban district which has been hit by flash floods and landslides, Abdullah said the situation in some areas of the district was "really very bad, especially around the highway".

"Yesterday, I had sent the Deputy CM on the spot. The local MLAs from Banihal and Ramban are also there on the ground. Efforts are being made for the early restoration of the highway.

"We are in the process of providing

relief to the families who have lost their homes. We are talking to the Centre for deployment of NDRF. We will also tap the PM's relief fund and other relief funds so that the losses suffered by people can be compensated," he said.

The chief minister said while the Jammu-Srinagar highway has been

closed due to landslides at Ramban, the

traffic was moving on the Mughal Road,

which connects the Valley to the Jammu

region via Poonch-Rajouri region.

Abdullah sought to assure the residents of Kashmir that there was no death of essentials in the Valley.

dearth of essentials in the Valley.

"I want to assure the people that there is no shortage of essentials in the Valley and there is no need to resort to hoarding. Clear directions have been given to the officers to take strict action wherever there is any unreasonable price hike or black marketeering going on.

"They should involve the police in market checking and make arrests, if need be," he added.

## NC Dissolves

National Conference for the time being.

"Consequent upon the above orders, Mr Salman Ali Sagar is nominated as in-charge President, YNC Kashmir, who will consult the following senior leaders from Kashmir Province and come up with his recommendation for appointing a new Provincial President," the party said in an X post.

The senior leaders to be consulted include Minister Sakina Ittoo, Habba Kadal MLA Shamim Firdous, Eidgah MLA Mubarak Gul, Srigufwara-Bijbehara MLA Basheer Ahmad Shah Veeri, Uri MLA Sajjad Shafi and Choudhary Mohammad Ramzan.

Salman Ali Sagar said the party leadership has granted 30 days to form the new bodies of Youth National Conference at provincial, zonal, district and block levels.

"We want to bring fresh faces to the fore. Several of the previous office-bearers have progressed and are now MLAs," he said.

**Observer News Service** 

JAMMU: Election Commission

of India has described as base-

less the allegations regarding

discrepancies or irregularities in the final electoral rolls after

completing the Special Sum-

mary Revision, asserting that

the Commission is committed

to ensuring free and seamless

elections with focus on trans-

The final Electoral Rolls pub-

lished on 6th and 7th January

2025 following the country-

wide Special Summary Revi-

sion (SSR) has witnessed an unprecedented level of accep-

tance, with very few first or

second appeals filed under Sec-

tion 24 of the Representation of

These appeals pertained to corrections under Section 22

and inclusions under Section 23

As per the data released by

ECI, this comprehensive exer-

cise covered nearly 10.5 lakh

polling booths across the coun-

try and was conducted with

the active involvement of 13.87

lakh Booth Level Agents (BLAs)

nominated by the political parties, spanning 4,123 Assembly

The absence of any large scale

appeals indicates a broad con-

sensus and acceptance of the

updated electoral rolls by all

stakeholders. Accordingly, the Electoral Rolls published post-

Constituencies nationwide.

the People Act, 1950.

of the Act.

parency in the entire process

**Final Electoral Rolls** 

**Published After SSR 2025:ECI** 

RAMBAN TRAGEDY

## Mehbooba Blames Human-**Induced Environmental Damage**



**Observer News Service** 

SRINAGAR: Former Jammu and Kashmir Chief Minister Mehbooba Mufti on Monday held reckless environmental practices responsible for the tragic landslide in Ramban, terming the calamity a consequence of unchecked human interference

Speaking to reporters, Mufti underscored the growing ecological degradation in the region, pointing to rampant deforestation and unregulated mountain-cutting as key factors behind such disasters.

"The way we cut down forests and slice through moun-

tains without a second thought, all in the name of development, we end up inviting destruction," Mufti said. "These tragedies are no longer just natural— they are the result of our own negligence."

She urged the government to urgently prioritise evacuation and relief efforts. "Many people are missing, lives have been lost, and others may still be buried under debris," she said, highlighting the dire situation on the ground.

According to Mufti, several vehicles were buried under the landslide, while road blockages have left women, children, and elderly passengers stranded in harsh conditions.

She appealed to the administration to intensify rescue operations and ensure swift relief for those affected. Mufti added that she had instructed her party's General Secretary to visit the disaster site immediately and coordinate assistance efforts.

## **Transporters Await Over Rs 200 Crore Payment For Amarnath Yatra Duty**



**Observer News Service** 

**SRINAGAR:** Transporters from Kashmir Valley who had deployed thousands of vehicles for security purposes during the 2024 Shri Amarnath Yatra have appealed to the authorities to clear their long-pending payments, claiming they are under severe financial distress.

According to the transporters, dues amounting to over Rs 200 crore remain unpaid despite assurances that payments would be cleared within 15 days of the Yatra's conclusion. "It has been more than eight months, and not a single rupee has been released," one of the aggrieved transporters said.

The vehicles were provided through the Regional Transport Office (RTO) Kashmir for deployment during the pilgrimthe Assembly election period. suffer," they said.

However, the transporters say they are now being forced to run from pillar to post to claim their rightful dues.

"We procured our vehicles on loans and are unable to pay EMIs to banks. Our vehicles risk being seized, and we can't even afford school fees for our children," another transporter lamented.

With the 2025 Yatra set to begin in June, transporters said it is unjust that they may be asked to prepare for a fresh round of deployment when the previous year's dues are still unsettled. They have made a direct appeal to the Home Department to intervene and ensure the immediate release of their pending payments.

"This is not just about business. It's about our survival. We fulfilled our duties in good faith and now we are being left to

## 'Spray Orchards Now To **Prevent Fungal Infections'**



**Agencies** 

SRINAGAR: Horticulture experts have urged apple growers across Kashmir to act immediately and spray recommended fungicides if they missed the pre-rain spraying schedule, warning of an increased risk of scab and other fungal diseases.

Dr Tariq Rasool, a plant pathologist at Sher-e-Kashmir University of Agricultural Sciences and Technology (SKUAST), Srinagar said orchards sprayed before the rainfall are currently protected and do not require immediate attention. However, growers who failed to spray prior to the rains are at a higher risk of fun-

gal infections. "Scab is a common fungal disease that can significantly reduce fruit quality and yield. Spraying immediately after rainfall is essential for disease

prevention," he said.
Dr Rasool addressed the concerns among orchardists regarding poor fruit set and frequent fruit drop, despite following several techniques. "Those

facing these recurring issues may consider transitioning to high-density apple plantations, which are typically more pro-ductive and less vulnerable to such problems," he suggested.

Speaking on Alternaria, a fungal disease more prevalent in low-lying areas, the expert warned against the use of oily fungicides, which can worsen the infection. "Growers dealing with Alternaria should consult horticulture department experts or SKUAST specialists for accurate diagnosis and treat-

ment." he advised. In areas recently hit by hailstorms, Dr Tariq recommended that orchardists follow official guidelines and apply specific fungicides suggested by au-thorities to mitigate damage

and protect the crop. Dr Omar, another expert from SKUAST, said it is important to stay updated with departmental advisories. "Or-chardists who follow official guidelines are better protected from diseases and more likely to produce high-quality fruits, he said. - (KNO)

## **Driver Loses Vehicle In** Ramban Landslide, Returns **Home Empty-Handed**



**Agencies** 

BANDIPORA: Firdous Ahmad, a Tavera driver from Kema village in north Kashmir's Bandipora district, had never imagined that he would return home empty-handed, leaving behind the vehicle that had carried his livelihood, now buried under the layers of mud

on the Ramban highway. In the early hours of Sunday, Ahmad, was heading toward Jammu when landslides hit the Srinagar-Jammu national highway near Ramban.

By the time he reached Kailamode around 3:30 am, the rain had intensified. Within minutes, the parts of the road collapsed, triggering panic among the drivers.

"We had slowed down because of the rain," Firdous said. "Just five minutes later, water

**Observer News Service** 

**RAMBAN:** Calling the recent

cloudburst in Ramban a "major

calamity," Leader of Opposi-

tion and senior BJP leader Sunil

Sharma on Monday urged the

Central Government to declare

the tragedy a national disaster.

fellow BJP leaders, visited the

cloudburst-hit areas to take

stock of the situation and

evaluate the extensive damage

Speaking to reporters dur-

ing the visit, Sharma said the

devastation warranted a na-

tional-level response. "We will

request the Centre to officially

declare this tragedy as a na-

He expressed profound grief

over the human and material

tional disaster," he said.

caused by the flash floods.

Sharma, accompanied by

came gushing in. I was with another driver. I told him to get out. Our priority was to save our lives." The landslide swept away several vehicles into a deep gorge, he said, adding that his vehicle was not among those that fell but was buried in the mud.

Only a portion of its side remains visible now. With no way to recover it, Firdous left the vehicle behind and returned home.

"I came back today, leaving the vehicle stuck in the mud,' he said. "That wasn't just a vehicle. It was the only source of income for my family."

Firdous is the sole earner for a family of six, including his four children and an elderly, unwell father who requires regular medication. "His treatment alone costs me four to five thousand rupees a month," he said. "Every expense in the house

**LoP Sunil Sharma Seeks National Disaster** 

had been lost and around 20

to 30 shops were completely

destroyed. "We are preparing

a detailed report which will be

submitted to the Government

dents that the BJP stands with

them in this difficult time and

pledged that the party, while

in the opposition, would work

constructively to ensure ad-

He assured the affected resi-

of India," Sharma added.

**Status For Ramban Cloudburst Tragedy** 

was managed through that car.' He had been working independently, taking passengers to Jammu and back to support

his family. The loss of his ve-

hicle has brought everything to a halt. "With the vehicle gone, I have nothing," he said. "I don't know how I will manage now. I've been taking care of my children and father through this work. I just want to be able

to start again." Standing quietly in his home, Firdous now hopes for support

from the people around him. He also urged people to exercise caution during weather advisories. "Weather conditions can change suddenly, as we saw during the landslide. People must stay alert and follow weather warnings to avoid such unforeseen dangers," he said-(KNO)

victims. "We will make sure the

Jammu and Kashmir Govern-

ment takes prompt and appro-

priate measures to support the

Reaffirming people's con-

Narendra

fidence in the leadership of

Modi, Sharma said both the

Centre and the UT administra-

tion were committed to ex-

tending every possible help to

those impacted by the disaster.

cloudburst triggered severe

flash floods in Ramban last

week, damaging infrastruc-

ture and livelihoods and caus-

ing the temporary closure of

the Jammu-Srinagar National

forts are currently underway

as officials continue to assess

The Hajj departures will begin from May 4, and return flights

are scheduled between June 17

Meanwhile, only 3,624 pil-

Relief and rehabilitation ef-

It is noteworthy that the

affected population," he said.

Minister

## SSR in January 2025 are now to In J&K, Sex Ratio At Birth Rises

SRINAGAR: Jammu & Kashmir has emerged as a quiet success in India's public transformation, making notable progress in child health, gender equity, infrastructure and regulatory enforcement. The recently released Annual Report 2024–25 of the Ministry of Health & Family Welfare paints a promising picture of a region steadily climbing the ladder of healthcare development.

At the forefront is the UT's achievement of the Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) target for Under-5 Mortality Rate (U5MR), years ahead of the 2030 deadline, the report accessed reveals.

These health outcomes are reinforced by targeted interventions under schemes like the National Health Mission, which has enabled the establishment of Special Newborn Care Units, District Early Intervention Centres, and Mother and Child Health Wings. The rollout of eSanjeevani telemedicine, Ayushman Arogya Mandirs and health screening programs has extended healthcare reach into remote corners of the valley and the Jammu

Gender equity in birth outcomes also saw improvement. As per Sample Registration System (SRS) data from 2018-2020, Jammu & Kashmir's sex ratio at birth\*\* has increased to 921 females per 1,000 males, up from

be treated as undisputed. It may be recalled that the SSR 2025 exercise was conducted with particular emphasis on States and Union Territories slated for Assembly Elections after the 2024 Lok Sabha Elections.

The Election Commission of India (ECI) has reiterated its commitment to free, fair, inclusive and transparent electoral processes. It views the smooth completion and acceptance of the SSR 2025 as a major step forward in strengthening the foundations of democracy.

As far as Jammu and Kashmir is concerned, the whole exercise was conducted meticulously with not a single first or second level appeal reported in the Union Territory. This accuracy and proficiency ensured in the SSR for J&K is testament to the commitment of Election Commission of India towards ensuring a transparent and efficient electoral process, while upholding the sanctity of a democratic system.

'The lack of appeals following the publication of the electoral rolls is a testament to the transparency, inclusiveness and robustness of the SSR process. With active participation from political parties through their Booth Level Agents, we are confident that the electoral rolls published in January 2025 reflect a high level of accuracy and public trust," said a representative of the Chief Electoral Office (ECI).

## To 921: MoHFW Annual Report

With a U5MR 1,000 live births, Jammu & Kashmir is among the few regions in the country to meet this milestone early. The Infant Mortality Rate (IMR) has dropped to 17, while the Neonatal Mortality Rate (NMR) stands at 12, and the Early Neonatal Mortality Rate (ENMR) at 8 all pointing to improved maternal and child healthcare services across the UT.

918 during 2017-19. While modest, this upward trend indicates the beginning of a cultur-al and healthcare shift towards valuing the girl child.

Crucially, this progress comes alongside effective enforcement of the Pre-Conception and Pre-Natal Diagnostic Techniques (PC&PNDT) Act, 1994 – a law designed to prevent sex-selective practices. As of June 2024, 841 diagnostic centres are registered across J&K. Only one court case is currently ongoing, and five machines have been seized or sealed — a low violation rate that reflects better monitoring and compliance. J&K is also among the 22 States/UTs that have adopted online platforms for clinic registration and record-keeping under the Act, ensuring greater transparency.

Infrastructure development dds another strong pillar to the story. The under-construction AIIMS in Vijaypur (Jammu) is being developed at a cost of ₹1856 crore and will house 750 beds along with a 100-seat MBBS programme and a 60-seat nursing programme. Additionally, a new Nursing College has been sanctioned under the Centre's initiative to set up 157 such colleges co-located with medical colleges. The foundation stone for this institution in J&K has already been laid, strengthening the pipeline of trained healthcare professionals.

The digital health ecosystem in the UT is also expanding. With the adoption of the Ayushman Bharat Digital Mission (ABDM), residents of J&K are now part of a unified, tech-enabled healthcare platform - from outpatient registrations to feedback systems like Mera Aspataal, to mother and child tracking through the RCH Portal.

As Jammu & Kashmir continues on this trajectory, it offers a compelling model for health progress through a combination of smart infrastructure, digital innovation, and proactive policy enforcement – all while ensuring no region is left behind—(KNO)

### equate assistance reaches the losses, stating that three lives the scale of the destruction. Hajj-2025: 3-Day Vaccination Camp **Begins Across J&K**

**Observer News Service** 

**SRINAGAR:** A total of 3,624 pilgrims from Jammu and Kashmir will perform the Hajj pilgrimage this year while a three-day vaccination drive is underway across all 20 districts of the Union Territory.

Executive Officer of the J&K State Haj Committee, Dr Shujaat Ahmad Qureshi said that out of the total, 3,300 pilgrims will travel via Srinagar embarkation point. He said among the rest, 480 will leave from Delhi, 10 from Mumbai and 2 from Hyderabad.

Additionally, 242 pilgrims from Ladakh will also embark from Srinagar, he added.

He said the vaccination drive is being conducted on April 21, 22, and 23. "Pilgrims from re-



mote areas can arrive at the Haj House in Bemina one or two days in advance, and all arrangements for their stay have been made," Dr Qureshi said.

Regarding the flight schedule, he said that on April 9 and 14; two flights are scheduled per day, while on other days one flight will operate daily.

grims from Jammu and Kash-mir are set to perform Hajj this year, a substantial decrease from 7,008 in 2024 and 35,000 This 70 percent drop over two years is attributed to ris-

and June 28.

ing costs, the discontinuation of government subsidies, and logistical challenges. Notably, a significant factor contributing to the decline is

region. the 80% cut in India's private Hajj quota by Saudi Arabia, affecting over 52,000 Indian pilgrims, including many from Jammu and Kashmir. This abrupt decision has left numerous pilgrims in uncertainty.

## **Commuters Opt For Mughal Road To Reach Jammu**

**Agencies** 

**SRINAGAR:** With the continued closure of the Srinagar-Jammu National Highway (NH-44) for the past two days due to land-slides triggered by heavy rainfall, a large number of commuters have turned to the historic Mughal Road as an alternative

route to reach Jammu. The closure of the vital highway has disrupted the movement of vehicles, especially trucks carrying essential supplies, causing significant inconvenience to travellers and transporters alike.

According to officials, the

restoration work on NH-44 is underway while efforts are being made to clear the landslide debris and repair damaged stretches of the road. "Men and machinery have

been pressed into service, and efforts are on to restore traffic at the earliest," said an official from the Traffic Department. In the meantime, the Mughal Road, which connects Shopian in

South Kashmir with Poonch in Jammu region, has witnessed a noticeable increase in traffic volume. An official said that hundreds of LMVs were allowed from

Shopian towards Poonch today.



He said that traffic was allowed after getting green signal NH-44 may take some time from BRO and efforts are on to Authorities have deployed allow HMVs on the road, adding additional personnel to manage that the efforts will be made to traffic and ensure smooth pasallow traffic from both sides on sage along this route.

relief at having an alternate route available, though many voiced concerns over the narrow and winding stretches of the Mughal Road, which can pose risks, especially during bad weather conditions. They have demanded that a

Commuters have expressed

tunnel must be constructed on the route at an earliest so that it can become an all-time alternative route.

Officials have advised commuters to plan after proper confirming the road condition and traffic plan only so as to avoid any kind of inconvenience—(KNO)

## **BCCI Central Contracts: Rohit, Virat** Retained In Top Grade; Iyer, Kishan Back

**Press Trust of India** 

**NEW DELHI:** The BCCI on Monday retained megastars Rohit Sharma and Virat Kohli in the top bracket of its annual players contract list, less than 24 hours after they played sublime knocks to win IPL games for their respective franchises.

The out-of-favour duo of Shreyas Iyer and Ishan Kishan also returned to the fold in lower brackets in a 34-strong list of centrally-contracted players, which also includes pace spearhead Jasprit Bumrah and Ravindra Jadeja in the highest-paid A+ category. Iyer and keeper-batter Ishan Kishan were dropped from the list last year for allegedly ignoring domestic cricket.

Both Rohit and Kohli figure in A+ category but it remains to be seen if the Mumbai batter will be asked to lead the team in England in the upcoming five-Test series when his red ball form has been patchy.

The BCCI mandarins are however tight-lipped on the is-



Gambhir's view will also matter in taking a final decision.

The BCCI offers contracts in four categories: A+, A, B and C with annual retainership valuation of Rs 7 crore, Rs 5 crore, Rs 3 crore and Rs 1 crore respectively. It is learnt that national

selectors after discussion with head coach Gambhir and secretary Devajit Saikia had prepared the contract list at least two weeks back but held back the announcement.

Interestingly, it was announced hours after both veterans hit sparkling knocks -- especially skipper Rohit, who was going through a lean patch. While Kohli hit an unbeaten 73-run knock against Punjab Kings. Rohit came up with an unbeaten 76-run knock against Chennai Super Kings.

Iyer was included in B category while wicketkeeper-batter

in category C. Rishabh Pant, who was demoted to category B during the 2023-24 season as he didn't play due to his recovery from a lifethreatening accident, is back in A category in place of the retired Ravichandran Ashwin.

#### **BCCI Central Contracts List:**

A+ category: Rohit Sharma, Virat Kohli, Jasprit Bumrah, Ravindra Jadeja

A category: Mohammed Siraj, KL Rahul, Shubman Gill, Hardik Pandya, Mohammed Shami, Rishabh Pant

B category: Suryakumar Yadav, Kuldeep Yadav, Axar Patel, Yashasvi Jaiswal, Shreyas Iyer.

C category: Rinku Singh, Tilak Verma, Ruturaj Gaikwad, Shivam Dube, Ravi Bishnoi, Washington Sundar, Mukesh Kumar, Sanju Samson, Arshdeep Singh, Prasidh Krishna, Rajat Patidar, Dhruv Jurel, Sarfaraz Khan, Nitish Kumar Reddy, Ishan Kishan, Abhishek Sharma, Akash Deep, Varun Chakaravarthy, Harshit Rana.

## Oasis Educational Institute Shines In Indo-Nepal Cricket League



**Observer News Service** 

**SRINAGAR:** Oasis Educational Institute Nowgam etched its name in the annals of sporting achievements as their team delivered a commendable performance in the recently concluded

6th Indo-Nepal Prize Money Cricket League. The tournament.

held at the Adarsh Nagar Sports

Stadium in Birgunj, Nepal, from

April 8 to 12, saw the JK Cricket

Team, with significant represen-

tation from Oasis, secure a welldeserved 3rd position.

Sheikh Mohd Shafi, General Secretary of the JK Soft Ball Cricket Association, extended his heartfelt congratulations to the team for their impressive showing. Echoing this sentiment, Team Secretary Firdousa Ahad also lauded the entire squad and Coach Eidi Gulzar for their dedication and hard work.

Special appreciation was reserved for Ashiq Masoodi, Chairman of Oasis Educational Institute, whose unwavering support proved instrumental in the team's journey throughout the tournament.

## ADGP Armed J&K Declares Inter-Battalion Sports Meet 2025 Open

**Observer News Service** 

JAMMU: Anand Jain, Additional Director General of Police (Armed), J&K, declared the Inter-Battalion Sports Meet 2025 open on Monday during a vibrant inaugural ceremony at Gulshan Ground here.

While addressing the gathering, Jain extended a warm welcome to all the participating contingents from the 34-Armed Police units and expressed satisfaction over the meticulous preparations made for the successful conduct of the event.

As the Chairman of the fiveday sporting extravaganza, the ADGP commended the officers entrusted with various responsibilities for their dedicated ef-



forts in organizing the meet. A total of 34 units—18 based

in the Valley and 16 from the Jammu region—are participating in 40 different sporting disciplines, including events for Gazetted Officers.

Highlighting the importance of such events, Jain said that the Sports Meet is a celebration of strength, spirit, solidarity, within the Armed

Police. "Today, we are not merely inaugurating a sports competition but reaffirming a tradition that embodies discipline, dedication, and determination—the core values of our Police Parivar," he stated.

Iain also extended greetings to the retired and serving Police Officers, Players, Managers, and Spectators present

## **IPL 2025:** DC Eye Gains From **Openers Against Confident LSG**



**Press Trust of India** 

LUCKNOW: Delhi Capitals will expect a more productive effort from their openers when they visit the 'City of Nawabs' to face an increasingly confident Lucknow Super Giants in an IPL match here on Tuesday.

The Capitals' opening has been a bit of roulette so far this season with Faf du Plessis, Jake Fraser-McGurk, Abhishek Porel and the latest entrant Karun Nair coming in at the pole position.

In fact, in the last five matches they had three different opening combinations between those four batters, producing partnerships of 23, 34 0, 9, 0.

It also had to do with the injury of Du Plessis, and the South African's fitness will be closely watched ahead of this match.

Thus far, it looked like a minor glitch because the Capitals have won five of their seven matches and the middle-order under the aegis of KL Rahul too worked like a well-oiled machine.

But Lucknow's competent bowling unit of Digvesh Rathi, Ravi Bishnoi, Avesh Khan and Shardul Thakur, though he is a bit expensive, has choked the opposition without much fanfare.

The way Avesh excelled in the



18th and 20th over against Rajasthan Royals in LSG's two-run win is an example of that.

It might have also doubled the confidence of the Super Giants that they can pull off wins from any situation. Therefore, the Capitals will not

like to leave the task of building the innings to Rahul and his middleorder colleagues as they have been doing so often this time.

Instead, the DC management will like to see their middle-order driving in the early advantage given to them by the top two.
In contrast, the Lucknow outfit

has a solid top three with Mitchell Marsh, Nicholas Pooran and Aiden Markram firing more often than not and it has given them an edge over opponents in the Power Play phase.
Both DC and LSG have 10 points

and a win will keep them safely perched in the higher echelons of the points table ahead of the jostlers.

But the lukewarm form of skipper Rishabh Pant has been a massive issue for LSG. He has merely 106 runs from eight games and 63 of those came in a single match. His strikerate of 98 is also a tad worrisome.

Against Delhi, Pant will have to deal with an excellent bowling unit comprising Mitchell Starc, Kuldeep Yadav, Vipraj Nigam and Mukesh Kumar.

Match starts at 7.30 pm.

## **Short TAKES**

## **Rohit Sharma Thanks Abhishek Nayar Days After Sacking By BCCI**

ndia captain Rohit Sharma on Monday thanked his longtime friend Abhishek Nayar, days after the latter was removed as national team assistant coach by the BCCI.

Rohit, who roared back to form with an unbeaten 76 for Mumbai Indians in the IPL on Sunday, shared a photo of himself celebrating his fifty on Instagram and tagged Nayar in the caption.

'Thanks bro @ABHISHEKNAYAR," the 37-year-old Rohit wrote on Monday.

Rohit and Nayar go back a long way, having played together for Mumbai in the domestic circuit. In recent years, Nayar is known for conducting one-on-one sessions with Rohit when the India captain is in the city.

Nayar's coaching expertise is also widely respected, with players like Shreyas Iyer and KL Rahul among those who have benefitted from his guidance.

The BCCI had recently sacked Nayar, fielding coach T Dilip, and conditioning coach Soham Desai following a performance review after India's disappointing Test run.

## **Injured Samson To Miss RCB Game, Will Continue Rehab In Jaipur**

Rajasthan Royals on Monday confirmed that skipper Sanju Samson will miss the upcoming away game against Royal Challengers Bengaluru as he continues his recovery from the side-strain he suffered during the game against Delhi Capitals.

Samson has already missed Royals' home against Lucknow Super Giant's and are scheduled to clash with

RCB on Thursday. The Royals' medical staff hasn't set a date for Samson's return. In Samson's absence, Riyan Parag will

continue to lead the side. Riyan had also led the Royals in the first three games of the season as Samson was only allowed to bat and not keep wickets.

In Samson's absence, Dhruv Jurel will continue to keep wickets.

In the seven games that he has played so far, Samson has scored 224 runs with one half-century.

Under Parag, Royals lost three out of the four games with only victory coming against Chennai Super Kings. Royals are currently languishing at number eight in the points table with six defeats in eight games so far.

## **Mehidy Helps Trim Zimbabwe Lead Against Bangladesh In 1st Test**

Bangladesh off-spinner Mehidy Hasan claimed a five-for and Zimbabwe's lead was reduced to 25 runs by the end of day two Monday of the first test. Half-centuries by opener Brian Bennett (57) and Sean Williams (59) led Zimbabwe to 273 and a firstinnings lead of 82.

But that was down to 25 by day's end when Bangladesh reached 57-1 at stumps, with opener Mahmudul Hasan (28) and Mominul Haque (15), who hit 56 in the first innings, in the middle.

After bowling out Bangladesh for 191, Zimbabwe resumed on 67 without loss and looked set for a significant innings lead but Mehidy triggered a collapse. Zimbabwe lost its last five wickets for 80 runs.

Zimbabwe was initially unsettled by pacer Nahid Rana, who took 3-74.

Mehidy, who was expensive in the morning session. readjusted his line and length to take Zimbabwe's last five wickets and earn his 11th test five-for.

## **Serie A Matches In Italy Postponed After Death Of Pope Francis**

Ttaly's top-flight soccer league Serie A has postponed all of Monday's fixtures following the death of Pope

Pope Francis, the first Latin American leader of the Roman Catholic Church and a lifelong soccer fan has died, the Vatican said in a video statement on Monday. He was 88, and had survived a serious bout of double

"Following the passing of His Holiness, Lega Nazionale Professionisti Serie A can confirm that todav's league games in Serie A and Primavera 1 have been postponed," the league said in a statement.

"The date of the rearranged fixtures will be announced in due course."

## Miserable Manchester United Sets Another Unwanted Premier League Record

**Agencies** 

**MANCHESTER:** Manchester United set another unwanted club record on Sunday after losing 1-0 to Wolverhampton.

A 15th league loss of the season is the most United has suffered in any single campaign in the Premier League era and emphasizes the club's ongoing decline.

United has dominated England's top flight since the inception of the Premier League in 1992 – winning 13 titles. But it has not been crowned champion since 2013 when former manager Alex Ferguson retired.

Last season it set a new high for league losses with 14 defeats. With five rounds still to go, Ruben Amorim's team has already gone past that bench-

"We need to fight for wins, score goals and try to get more points," Amorim said. "This season is going to end like this. We need to take the positives, try to work on the

things we need to improve. "We have to work and try to



be better in the first game of next season.'

Amorim said in January that this might be the worst team in the club's history and the lows have kept on

A 15th league loss is the most for any United team since the 1989-90 campaign when it was defeated 16 times

Premier League statistician

Worst Points Total In Premier League

in England's old Division One. Opta said an eighth home defeat in the league was the most since United was beaten nine times in 1962-63

United is already certain to set the club's worst-ever

points total in the Premier League. The latest loss left it on 38 points. United's lowest total was 58

in the 2021-22 season. Even a perfect finish would only see United amass 53 this term. The record 20-time English champion is also on course to

record its lowest league finish

in the Premier League. The previous low was set by Erik ten Hag's team last season when finishing eighth in the standings - the club's worst final position in 34 years. United is currently 14th

and 11 points behind eighth-

## **Silver Lining**

placed Bournemouth.

But Amorim could still end the campaign on a successful note by winning the Europa League. United staged a dramatic fightback to beat Lyon 5-4 on Thursday and advance to the semifinals of Europe's second tier competition.

United plays Athletic Bilbao in the next round. The Europa League winner also qualifies for next season's Champions League. (AP)

## Leverkusen's CEO Unveils 'Gentleman's Agreement' To Let Coach Alonso Go

**Agencies** 

Dayer Leverkusen and their **D**coach Xabi Alonso have a "gentleman's agreement" that would allow the Spanish manager to leave if one of the clubs he played for during his career calls him up, the German club's CEO Fernando Carro said on Monday.

The 43-year-old former midfielder, who had a remarkable career playing for Liverpool, Real Madrid, Bayern Munich and his childhood club Real Sociedad, has been rumored as the strongest candidate to succeed Carlo Ancelotti in the Spanish capital.

The 65-year-old Italian manager's future with Real Madrid is uncertain following their Champions League quarter-final exit, with multiple reports suggesting he could step away from his position at the end of the season to take over the Brazilian national team's vacant spot, which could further open the door for Alonso's return to Madrid.

The former Spanish international, who is under contract until June 2026, has done an excellent job at Bayer Leverkusen in his short managerial career. He led them to their first Bundesliga title, ending Bay-



ern Munich's 11-year domination, as well as triumphs in the German Cup and DFB Supercup.

'We have a gentlemen's agreement that if any of the teams he has played for calls, we would sit down and talk and we wouldn't put any obstacles in his way," Carro told reporters in Madrid on Monday, before attending the Laureus Awards in which Bayer Leverkusen have been nominated as

Breakthrough of the year. "(Last year) Xabi had offers from important clubs but he assured us that he would stay with us. Maybe it is a bit early to talk as the season is still ongoing.

"Maybe things can happen. So we have given ourselves some time there is not much more to say other than that.' Carro said that Leverkusen's

relationship with Real Madrid "is excellent" but said there has been no contact whatsoever regarding Alonso from the Spanish club. "We are not naive, but the posi-

tion of the coach is very important for a club and we are preparing the next season with him," Carro said.

"If at the end of the day there is interest from another club and he is interested in going to that club, we have a relationship that we would have to talk about. "Xabi's will is important in this, he respects us a lot and we respect Xabi".