

# KASHMIR OBSERVER

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KO Photo | Faisal Khan

## Homes Flattened, Highway Sinks Ramban Battles Aftermath Of Flash Flood Fury

### 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

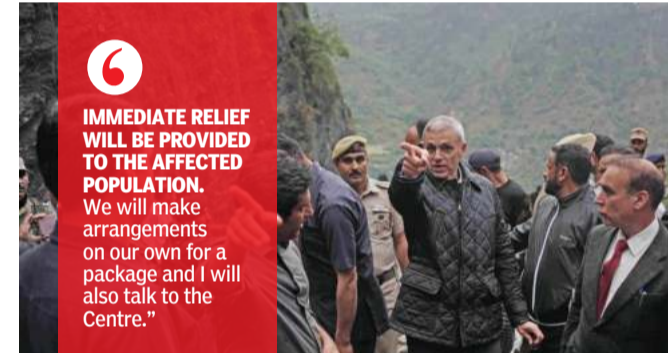
The flash-floods and landslides triggered by heavy rain and cloudbursts severely affected nearly a dozen villages in

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](#)

**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."

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

Surdev 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

As 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

Amid 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

In 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 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, widespread 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.

According to the forecast issued by the MeT office, light rain and thundershowers are likely to | [More on P6](#)

### Hailstorms Batter South Kashmir Orchards

Hailstorms 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 fruit-bearing 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 2024.

"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 detainee in the criminal case being referred in the dossier to project a prospective detainee 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](#)



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### 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 has its own jurisdiction," 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.

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](#)

**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  
 Jalley  
 R/O:- Khrew Pulwama jvd

**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  
 Ama Baba  
 R/O:- safapora, Bandipore jvd

**PUBLIC NOTICE**  
 I have lost the RC of my vehicle bearing regd no: JK10AD 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** bmg

**PUBLIC NOTICE**  
 I want to transfer the electricity connection bearing consumer ID No 0204020002345 from Ali Mohammad Bhat R/O Rainawari Bhat Mohalla To Mohammad Rafiq Bhat S/O, Mohammad Qasim Bhat R/O. Rainawari Bhat Mohalla. If anybody has any objection in this regard he/she may file them in the office of the PDD Sub Division Rainawari within seven days. After that no objection shall be entertained.  
 Mohammad Rafiq Bhat S/O, Mohammad Qasim Bhat R/O. Rainawari Bhat Mohalla  
 Mobile: 9622710410 inf

**Public Notice**  
 My name and DOB has been wrongly written in my Adhaar card as Sumaira Bano, DOB 16-02-1989 while my correct name 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 Goshugh Pattan fko

**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..  
 SD  
 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 Pattan with date of event (birth) as 20/01/2014, occurred at home and Zaidan Bin Ayoub S/o Mohammad Ayoub Wani R/o Wanigam Bala Tehsil Pattan with date of event (birth) as 22-09-2015, occurred at home.  
 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  
 Pattan fko

**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 Masjid Shaheed Gunj, Srinagar** sp

**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..  
 SD  
 fko 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 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 entertained.  
 SD  
 fko 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 Takial 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.  
 SD  
 fko Naib Tehsildar Pattan

**Office Of The Principal Government Degree College Mattan**  
 Mattan Anantnag (J&K)-192125  
 Website: www.gdcmmattan.ac.in Cell: +91-9419056413 Email: principalgdcmmattan@gmail.com  
 No:-DCM/25/ Ext- NOTICE / 1409-11 Dated: - 21-04-2025  
**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

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

## The Conversation

Australians 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 food waste. 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 sustainability-conscious 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 a



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 waste-reducing 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 messaging Our research reveals a disconnect between purchasing choices and what actually happens 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 22/04/2022 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..  
 SD  
 fko 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..  
 SD  
 fko 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..  
 SD  
 fko 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 Takial 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.  
 SD  
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**Office Of The Naib Tehsildar Pattan**  
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**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 Takial 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.  
 SD  
 fko Naib Tehsildar Pattan

**GOVERNMENT OF JAMMU AND KASHMIR**  
**JAMMU AND KASHMIR SERVICES SELECTION BOARD (JKSSB)**  
 CPO Chowk, Panjtirthi, Jammu/Zam Zam Complex, Rambagh, Srinagar  
 www.jkssb.nic.in  
**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 Department	Junior Stenographer
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 Stenographer

Rayaz 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.jkssb.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 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: 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

Rayaz Ahmad Malik (JKAS)  
 Controller of Examinations  
 J&K Services Selection Board  
 No.: JKSSB-COE0EXAM(UT)/56/2023-03 (7245277)  
 DIPK-616/25  
 Dated: 21-04-2025

## 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 Intiyaz 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 full 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 named 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 investigation, multiple

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, scooter, 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 anti-social elements with the Police in eradicating crimes and maintaining peace and order in the society.

## Pothole-Ridden Roads Leave Commuters Frustrated

Agencies

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 significant safety hazards.

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.



## 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 record-breaking 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 tourist attractions.

- TRAFFIC POLICE : 9419993745, 01998-266686
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- QAZIGUND: 01951-296153

**HIGHWAY STATUS**

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

HIJRI CALENDAR 23 Shawwal 1446	PRAYERS	
	FAJR	4: 23
ZUHR	12:32	
ASR	5: 13	
Magrib	7:10	
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 eye
- 1073 - Pope Alexander II buried and Ildebrando chosen as Pope Gregory VII
- 1145 - 19th recorded perihelion passage of Halley's Comet
- 1164 - Reynald of Dassel names Guido di Crema as anti-pope Paschalis III
- 1370 - Building begins on the Bastille fortress in Paris
- 1500 - Pedro Álvares Cabral is the first european to discover Brazil, landing near Monte Pascoal, claims it for Portugal
- 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 fleet
- 1692 Edward Bishop is jailed for proposing flogging as a cure for witchcraft in Salem, Massachusetts
- 1809 - Battle at Eckmuhl - Napoleon beats Austria Archduke Karl
- 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 Fislser 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 State
- 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
- 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 cosmonauts returned to Earth
- 1972 - NASA Apollo 16 astronauts John Young & Charles Duke ride the Lunar Rover on the moon

### 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 **Rasm-e-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

### انتقال پر مجال

یہ خبر نہایت ہی دکھ کیساتھ دی جاتی ہے کہ محمد ایوب شوری ولد غلام نبی شوری صاحب قادی کدل، راجوری کدل، حال ویزناگ نو شہرہ موزہ 20 ماہ اپریل 2025 کو اس دنیا سے فانی سے رحلت کر گئے۔ مرحوم نہایت ہی نیک سیرت اور مخلص انسان تھے۔ اللہ تعالیٰ مرحوم کو کروٹ جنت الفردوس عطا فرمائے اور لواحقین کو یہ صدمہ عظیم برداشت کرنے کی ہمت عطا فرمائے۔ مرحوم کی اجتنابی فاتحہ خوانی موزہ 22 ماہ اپریل 2025 صبح 10 بجے ان کے آبائی مقبرہ واقع محلہ کھانہ نزدیک پولیس اسٹیشن نو ہنڈ سرینگر انجام دی جائے گی۔

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KO VIEW

Srinagar's  
Housing Crunch?

Srinagar 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.



New to Markets? Let  
ETFs Lead the Way

Irshad Mushtaq

For 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 Ikkal

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

For 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 Ikkal 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.



All letters intended for publication must include the writer's name and address, even if a pseudonym is used. Letters are edited as clarity, space and accuracy of expression require. Our publishing a letter does not mean we agree with everything or even anything in it. -EDITOR

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When Muscle Replaces Mandate

I 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.

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

The 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. In 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 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



cave-ins or cracks on the surface.

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 tunneling 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, Kalam 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

On 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 a day before.

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 sportspeople 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 umarjama1968@gmail.com.



## 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 with nature.

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 pilgrimage and were also used during the Assembly election period.

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 suffer," they said.

## '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 fungal 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 productive 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 treatment," he advised.

In areas recently hit by hailstorms, Dr Tariq recommended that orchardists follow official guidelines and apply specific fungicides suggested by authorities to mitigate damage and protect the crop.

Dr Omar, another expert from SKUAST, said it is important to stay updated with departmental advisories. "Orchardists 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

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

was managed through that car."

He had been working independently, taking passengers to Jammu and back to support his family. The loss of his vehicle 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)

## LoP Sunil Sharma Seeks National Disaster Status For Ramban Cloudburst Tragedy

Observer News Service

**RAMBAN:** Calling the recent cloudburst in Ramban a "major calamity," Leader of Opposition and senior BJP leader Sunil Sharma on Monday urged the Central Government to declare the tragedy a national disaster.

Sharma, accompanied by fellow BJP leaders, visited the cloudburst-hit areas to take stock of the situation and evaluate the extensive damage caused by the flash floods.

Speaking to reporters during the visit, Sharma said the devastation warranted a national-level response. "We will request the Centre to officially declare this tragedy as a national disaster," he said.

He expressed profound grief over the human and material losses, stating that three lives



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 of India," Sharma added.

He assured the affected residents that the BJP stands with them in this difficult time and pledged that the party, while in the opposition, would work constructively to ensure adequate assistance reaches the

victims. "We will make sure the Jammu and Kashmir Government takes prompt and appropriate measures to support the affected population," he said.

Reaffirming people's confidence in the leadership of Prime Minister Narendra Modi, Sharma said both the Centre and the UT administration were committed to extending every possible help to those impacted by the disaster.

It is noteworthy that the cloudburst triggered severe flash floods in Ramban last week, damaging infrastructure and livelihoods and causing the temporary closure of the Jammu-Srinagar National Highway.

Relief and rehabilitation efforts are currently underway as officials continue to assess the scale of the destruction.

## Hajj-2025: 3-Day Vaccination Camp Begins Across J&amp;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.

The Hajj departures will begin from May 4, and return flights are scheduled between June 17 and June 28.

Meanwhile, only 3,624 pilgrims from Jammu and Kashmir are set to perform Hajj this year, a substantial decrease from 7,008 in 2024 and 35,000 in 2017.

This 70 percent drop over two years is attributed to rising costs, the discontinuation of government subsidies, and logistical challenges.

Notably, a significant factor contributing to the decline is 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 landslides 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 from BRO and efforts are on to allow HMVs on the road, adding that the efforts will be made to allow traffic from both sides on

## Final Electoral Rolls Published After SSR 2025:ECI

Observer News Service

**JAMMU:** Election Commission of India has described as baseless the allegations regarding discrepancies or irregularities in the final electoral rolls after completing the Special Summary Revision, asserting that the Commission is committed to ensuring free and seamless elections with focus on transparency in the entire process.

The final Electoral Rolls published on 6th and 7th January 2025 following the country-wide Special Summary Revision (SSR) has witnessed an unprecedented level of acceptance, with very few first or second appeals filed under Section 24 of the Representation of the People Act, 1950.

These appeals pertained to corrections under Section 22 and inclusions under Section 23 of the Act.

As per the data released by ECI, this comprehensive exercise covered nearly 10.5 lakh polling booths across the country and was conducted with the active involvement of 13.87 lakh Booth Level Agents (BLAs) nominated by the political parties, spanning 4,123 Assembly Constituencies nationwide.

The absence of any large scale appeals indicates a broad consensus and acceptance of the updated electoral rolls by all stakeholders. Accordingly, the Electoral Rolls published post-SSR in January 2025 are now to

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).

## In J&amp;K, Sex Ratio At Birth Rises To 921: MoHFW Annual Report

Agencies

**SRINAGAR:** Jammu & Kashmir has emerged as a quiet success in India's public health 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.

With a U5MR of 17 per 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.

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 region.

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

918 during 2017-19. While modest, this upward trend indicates the beginning of a cultural 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 adds 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 Asptaal, 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)

# 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 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-



sue since head coach Gautam 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

Ishan Kishan made a comeback 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 life-threatening 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, Prasad Krishna, Rajat Patidar, Dhruv Jurel, Sarfaraz Khan, Nitish Kumar Reddy, Ishan Kishan, Abhishek Sharma, Akash Deep, Varun Chakaravarty, 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 perfor-

mance 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 well-deserved 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.

## 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 middle-order 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 strike-rate 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.

## 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 five-day 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.

Jain also extended greetings to the retired and serving Police Officers, Players, Managers, and Spectators present at the event.

## 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 benchmark.

"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 coming.

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

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

**Worst Points Total In Premier League**

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-placed Bournemouth.

**Silver Lining**

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

**Bayer Leverkusen** and their 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

to decide... We are very calm and 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 position 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."

## Short TAKES

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

**I**ndia captain Rohit Sharma on Monday thanked his long-time 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

**R**ajasthan 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 Giants 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

**B**angladesh 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 first-innings 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

**I**taly's top-flight soccer league Serie A has postponed all of Monday's fixtures following the death of Pope Francis.

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 pneumonia.

"Following the passing of His Holiness, Lega Nazionale Professionisti Serie A can confirm that today'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."