

## Blood On The Meadows: Pahalgam's Day Of Horror Leaves 26 Dead

### Reactions

#### PM Narendra Modi

**I** strongly condemn the terror attack in Pahalgam, Jammu and Kashmir. Condolences to those who have lost their loved ones. I pray that the injured recover at the earliest. All possible assistance is being provided to those affected. Those behind this heinous act will be brought to justice...they will not be spared! Their evil agenda will never succeed. Our resolve to fight terrorism is unshakable and it will get even stronger.

#### President Droupadi Murmu

**T**he terrorist attack on tourists in Pahalgam of Jammu and Kashmir is shocking and painful. It is a dastardly and inhuman act which must be condemned unequivocally. Attacking innocent citizens, in this case tourists, is utterly appalling and unpardonable. My heartfelt condolences to the families who have lost their dear ones and my prayers for the quick recovery of the injured.

#### Amit Shah

**A**nguished by the terror attack on tourists in Pahalgam, Jammu and Kashmir. My thoughts are with the family members of the deceased. Those involved in this dastardly act of terror will not be spared, and we will come down heavily on the perpetrators with the harshest consequences. Briefed PM Shri @narendramodi Ji about the incident and held a meeting with the concerned officials via video conferencing. Will shortly leave for Srinagar to hold an urgent security review meeting with all the agencies.

#### LG Sinha

**A**nti-terror ops launched to neutralise terrorists. Entire nation is angry & blood of our forces is boiling. I want to assure the nation that perpetrators of Pahalgam attack will have to pay a very heavy price for their heinous act. My heartfelt condolences to bereaved families.

#### Omar Abdullah

**T**he death toll is still being ascertained so I don't want to get into those details. They will be officially conveyed as the situation becomes clearer. Needless to say this attack is much larger than anything we've seen directed at civilians in recent years.

#### Donald Trump

**"**Deeply disturbing news out of Kashmir. The United States stands strong with India against Terrorism. We pray for the souls of those lost, and for the recovery of the injured. Prime Minister Modi, and the incredible people of India, have our full support and deepest sympathies."

#### Vladimir Putin

**K**indly accept the sincere condolences over the tragic consequences of the terrorist attack in Pahalgam, whose victims were civilians — citizens of various countries. This brutal crime has no justification whatsoever.

### Observer News Service

Srinagar: A day of leisure in the lush green pastures of Baisaran turned into one of the bloodiest afternoons Kashmir has seen in years. Armed terrorists stormed the famed tourist meadow near Pahalgam on Tuesday, gunning down 26 people, mostly visitors from outside the Valley, in a chilling act of violence that shattered the fragile sense of calm in the region. Pony rides, picnics and laughter gave way to screams, gunfire and chaos, leaving behind a scene of unimaginable horror.

"Two to three gunmen, disguised in military uniforms, stormed the meadow and began firing at tourists without warning, targeting women, elderly people, and families enjoying pony rides," said a witness.

Videos that surfaced on social media showed



blood-soaked survivors waiting beside lifeless bodies, crying for help.

One tourist, in a chilling video, recounted how her husband was shot in front of her eyes. Eyewitnesses described how the calm of a regular Tuesday afternoon was shattered by gunfire, as tourists enjoying

pony rides and picnics suddenly found themselves in a nightmare. Cries for help echoed, while bodies lay motionless in pools of blood.

Panic spread as tourists ran for cover, but the open space left them with no place to hide. One tourist recalled that the attackers first asked victims for their

names before opening fire.

A tourist from Nagpur, currently receiving treatment in GMC Anantnag, recounted, "We saved ourselves by sheer luck. Never thought we would make it out alive. We were enjoying ourselves, and as we were heading back, we suddenly heard gunshots and ran for our lives."

"I don't know what happened to my friends. We came as a group of 20," another tourist, with a gunshot wound in his arm, said.

The group of tourists at Baisaran came from several states, including Karnataka, Maharashtra, and Gujarat.

"We were standing in the stand, and customers had gone to the upper side. At around 2:45 pm, people started running around. When we asked, we found that a gunshot | More on P10

#### Syed Mohammad Burhan

**W**hat began as a peaceful family vacation for Pallavi and Manjunath, a couple from Shivamogga, Karnataka, turned into an unimaginable tragedy when terrorists opened fire on them in the Baisaran Valley, a scenic location near Pahalgam in Kashmir. On Tuesday afternoon, the family, visiting the famous valley often called | More on P10



'They Shot My Husband In Front Of Me'

### Amit Shah Arrives In Srinagar For Security Review



#### Observer News Service

Srinagar: Union Home Minister Amit Shah arrived in Srinagar to review the security situation in Kashmir following a deadly terror attack in Pahalgam in which 26 people were killed, officials said.

Hours after the attack on tourists, Shah rushed to Srinagar and drove straight to

the Raj Bhavan from the airport. He is scheduled to chair a high-level meeting of security officials, the officials said.

The home minister is likely to visit Pahalgam on Wednesday, they added.

Terrorists opened fire at a famed meadow near Kashmir's Pahalgam town on Tuesday afternoon, killing 26 people, mostly tourists, | More on P10

### 'Grieving Bride' Image Becomes Symbol Of Attack

#### Syed Mohammad Burhan

Srinagar: A powerful and tragic image of a young woman holding her wounded husband has become the face of the Pahalgam terror attack that shocked Kashmir on Monday. The couple, reportedly on their honeymoon, were caught in the middle of the ruthless attack.

In the now-viral photo, the woman, her wrists still adorned with the red bangles of a newlywed, sits in stunned silence, her eyes gazing into the distance. Beside her lies her husband, motionless, his head resting on the ground.

The couple, said to be enjoying a meal of bhelpuri, were attacked in the tourist-filled place. In a chilling video shared



online, the woman can be heard pleading for help: "We were having bhelpuri when they came. They shot my husband. Please save my husband!"

Though their names remain unconfirmed, the image capturing both love and unimaginable horror has sparked an outpouring of grief and anger. On social media, many expressed their shock. One user wrote, "This is heartbreaking." Another | More on P10

### Political Leaders Condemn, Demand Accountability

#### Press Trust Of India

New Delhi: The deadly terror attack targeting tourists in Jammu and Kashmir's Pahalgam on Tuesday drew strong condemnation and outrage with Prime Minister Narendra Modi asserting that the perpetrators will not be spared and their evil agenda will never succeed.

The opposition, at the same time, demanded accountability claiming the government's claims of normalcy in Kashmir have fallen flat, with the Congress seeking an immediate all-party meeting and stressing that the attack "must not go unanswered effectively".

President Droupadi Murmu, Vice President Jagdeep Dhankhar and Speaker Om Birla were among the leaders who said the attack on innocent citizens is utterly unpardonable and condoled the loss of lives.

Home Minister Amit Shah briefed Prime Minister Modi, who is in Saudi Arabia, and rushed to Srinagar to take stock of the situation after one of the biggest terror attacks in recent times. | More on P10

### Kashmir Mourns: Locals Hold Candlelight Protests In Solidarity



#### Observer News Service

Srinagar: In a powerful display of resilience and unity, people from various parts of Jammu and Kashmir organized candlelight protests to show sympathy for the tourists targeted in the Pahalgam area of Anantnag district. Locals in Pahalgam came together for a peaceful march, expressing solidarity with the victims and sending a global message of peace.

The march, which included youth, shopkeepers, ponywalas, and hotel owners, started in the town square, with participants carrying

candles and placards reading "We Stand for Peace" and "Tourists Are Our Guests." The procession moved through the main market, ending at the Lidder River, where a moment of silence was held for the victims.

A local hotel owner emphasized the importance of tourism to the region, stating, "Tourism is our lifeline. Without it, we have nothing. We are here to show that Pahalgam stands united against violence and in favor of peace."

Another youth reassured tourists of their safety, condemning | More on P10

### Emergency Helpline Set Up For Tourists

The Jammu and Kashmir government on Tuesday set up a round-the-clock emergency helpline to assist tourists in the wake of the Pahalgam terrorist attack.

"A 24x7 emergency help desk has been established by Anantnag district administration for tourists requiring assistance or information. Tourists can contact 01932222337, 7780885759, 9697982527 or 6006365245 for information or assistance." | More on P10

### Private Schools To Remain Shut

The Private Schools Association Jammu and Kashmir (PSAJK) has announced that all private educational institutes in the Kashmir Valley will remain closed on Wednesday, April 23, 2025, in mourning for the victims of the Pahalgam terrorist attack.

The terrorist attack, which took place in Pahalgam in South Kashmir's Anantnag district on April 22, resulted in the tragic loss of 28 lives, most of whom were innocent tourists. Many | More on P10

### DEADLIEST ATTACK IN VALLEY SINCE 2019

- ◆ Pulwama CRPF Attack: 40 Security Personnel Killed, February 2019
- ◆ Kulgam Amarnath Attack: 8 Killed, July 2017
- ◆ Kulgam Labourers Attack: 9 Killed, June 2006
- ◆ Pulwama Market Bombing: 16 Killed, Including School Children, June 2005
- ◆ Nandimarg Massacre: 24 Kashmiri Pandits Killed, March 2003
- ◆ Lower Munda IED Blast: 19 Killed, November 2002
- ◆ Chandanwari Attack: 11 Amarnath Yatris Killed, 2002
- ◆ Legislature Complex Attack: 36 Killed in Suicide Blast, October 2001
- ◆ Sheshnag Attack: 13 Amarnath Pilgrims Killed, July 2001
- ◆ Nunwan Attack: 32 Killed, Including Amarnath Pilgrims, August 2000
- ◆ Chattisinghpura Massacre: 36 Sikhs Killed, March 2000

### PM To Cut Short Saudi Visit

#### Press Trust Of India

New Delhi: Prime Minister Narendra Modi is heading home on Tuesday night from Jeddah as he has decided to cut short his visit to Saudi Arabia in view of the terror attack in Kashmir's Pahalgam that killed 26 people, official sources said.

PM Modi skipped the official dinner hosted by Saudi Arabia and has decided to cut short his visit, they said.

He will leave for India tonight, the sources said.

While he was originally scheduled to return on Wednesday night, he will now arrive in India early Wednesday morning.

Terrorists opened fire at a famed meadow near Kashmir's Pahalgam town on Tuesday afternoon, killing 26 people, mostly tourists, in what is the deadliest attack in the Valley since the Pulwama strike in 2019.

The 26 dead | More on P10

### Religious Leaders & Trade Bodies Call For Shutdown

#### Observer News Service

Srinagar: Religious organizations, trade bodies, and political leaders in Kashmir have called for a shutdown on Wednesday, April 23, to express solidarity with the victims of the deadly terror attack in Pahalgam that left 28 people, mostly tourists, dead.

Mirwaiz Kashmir, Moulvi Umar Farooq, in a post on X, stated that the Muthahida Majlis Ulema (MMU), in support of the bereaved families, has urged the people of Jammu and Kashmir to peacefully protest this heinous crime by observing a shutdown tomorrow.

"Whoever kills an innocent soul...it is as if | More on P10



No.: EE/R&B/BM/CS/493-500  
DIPK-662/25      Dated: 22.04.2025



## Man Sustains Injuries In Attack Involving Sharp-Edged Weapon

Observer News Service

**SRINAGAR:** A man was injured after being attacked with a sharp-edged weapon in Lal Nagar area of Chanapora in Srinagar on Tuesday late evening, officials said.

An official said that soon after the attack, the man was shifted to SMHS hospital for treatment.

He said that he has injuries in throat and left wrist and is being treated by doctors at the hospital.

The injured has been identified as Mohammad Saleem Jeelani of Pirbagh, Hyderpora.

Police have taken cognisance of the incident and further investigation is underway.

## Husband Killed, Wife Injured In Road Accident

Observer News Service

**SRINAGAR:** A speedy car skidded off the road and plunged into Dal Lake on Tuesday afternoon—leaving a man dead and his wife injured, officials said.

An official said that the incident took place around 4:45 PM when a Swift car bearing registration number JK01N-7373 lost control near SKICC and fell

into the lake.

He said that a duo were rescued and immediately shifted to a nearby hospital for treatment.

In the meantime, sources said, as soon as they were shifted to SMHS hospital, the doctors declared him brought dead.

The deceased has been identified as Waheed Ahmad Dar, son of Abdul Rashid Dar, resident of Pulwama.

## Artisans, Advised To Avail Benefit Of Scholarship

Observer News Service

**SRINAGAR:** Department of Handicrafts and Handloom, Kashmir, has called upon all registered artisans and weavers to take advantage of the Educational Assistance Scheme for their kin, which has been introduced by Jammu & Kashmir Government in 2022.

This initiative is aimed at supporting educational aspirations of children from families of registered artisans and weavers across the region. The scheme offers financial assistance to students from Class 1 up to Post Graduation in technical and professional courses and is open to families with an annual income up to Rs 90,000.

Explaining the key features, a spokesperson of the Handicrafts and Handloom Department said, that the

level of financial support is determined by the student's course or class and all assistance shall be transferred directly to beneficiaries in Direct Benefit Transfer (DBT) mode, to ensure transparency and timely disbursal. "Applications can be submitted through the Department's district offices," he added.

Laying stress upon its broader impact, the spokesman stated apart from financial aid, the scheme is an investment in the future of artisan families. "Education is the bridge that connects our rich heritage with a promising future," he said, adding that empowering the young-generation through education shall foster a self-reliant and resilient artisan community capable of preserving traditional crafts while embracing modern knowledge and opportunities.

## Awareness Programme Under 'Drug Free J&K' Campaign Held



Observer News Service

**SRINAGAR:** As part of the ongoing Drug Free J&K campaign, an awareness programme was organized at Government High School (GHS) Lawaypora with the aim of combating drug abuse and promoting a healthy, addiction-free lifestyle.

The programme, held on the directions of Deputy Commissioner (DC) Srinagar, Dr. Bilal Mohi-Ud-Din Bhat, focused on sensitizing the local population especially the youth about the harmful effects of drug abuse.

The event saw active participation from officials representing the Srinagar Municipal

Corporation (SMC), Education Department, Health Department, Excise Department, Social Welfare Department, and other concerned departments. School staff and students also took part in the programme.

Speakers at the event highlighted the importance of collective community responsibility in addressing the growing challenge of substance abuse. They urged the youth to channelise their energy into constructive and developmental pursuits.

Interactive sessions were conducted to ensure meaningful engagement and to effectively communicate the campaign's message.

## SMC Celebrates 'World Earth Day-2025'

Observer News Service

**SRINAGAR:** In celebration of 'World Earth Day-2025', Commissioner, Srinagar Municipal Corporation (SMC), Dr.Owais Ahmed today reaffirmed its dedication to environmental sustainability and climate action.

This year's theme, 'Our Power, Our Planet,' highlights the shared responsibility of the general Public to protect the environment and promote renewable energy solutions.

As part of the commemorative activities, Commissioner SMC took part in a symbolic

tree-planting ceremony at the SMC headquarters, emphasizing the importance of reforestation and green initiatives. The gesture underscores the critical role trees play in combating climate change, enhancing air quality, and conserving biodiversity.

"Today, we renew our commitment to safeguard our planet for the benefit of future generations," said Commissioner SMC, adding, "Every small step counts, and collectively, our efforts can lead to a healthier, more sustainable environment."



**A BIRD'S EYE VIEW** of Srinagar city captured from Koh-e-Suleiman.

KO PHOTO, SYED MOHAMMAD BURHAN

# Orientation Programme For YUVA DOOTs Concludes

Observer News Service

**SRINAGAR:** A two-day training-cum-orientation programme for YUVA DOOTs (Youth Ambassadors) concluded successfully at the Kashmir Government Polytechnic (KGP), Gogjibagh Srinagar, witnessing the participation of selected and reserve candidates from across the district.

The programme was organized on the directions of the Deputy Commissioner (DC) Srinagar, Dr. Bilal Mohi-Ud-Din Bhat under the aegis of Mission YUVA, aiming to build a strong network of grassroots youth mobilizers for entrepreneurship development.

The programme was presided over by Additional District Development Commissioner (ADDC) Srinagar, Rifat Aftab, who highlighted the importance of youth-led development and grassroots entrepreneurship.

In her address, she emphasized the importance of youth-led initiatives in promoting self-reliance and economic sustainability at the grassroots level. She lauded the efforts of the Department in reaching out to the youth and encouraged YUVA DOOTs to act as catalysts of positive change within their communities.

Over the course of two days, training was imparted to all 190 selected YUVA DOOTs, along with 100 reserve YUVA DOOTs, equipping them with the knowledge, skills, and tools required to guide aspiring entrepreneurs and to spread awareness about self-employment schemes under Mission YUVA.

Deputy Director Employment Srinagar, Dr. Sheeba Inayat presented an overview of Mission YUVA, its objectives, and the Institutional Business Support Mechanism, emphasizing



the importance of Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) for result-oriented implementation.

During the programme, the District Employment Officer provided detailed insights into the operational structure of the programme, roles and responsibilities of YUVA DOOTs, and the support framework available at the district level.

District Career Counselling Officer shared findings from the Baseline Survey, conducted to identify youth with entrepreneurial potential across various Panchayats and wards of the district. She guided the participants on targeted mobilization, focusing on aspirants most likely to benefit from the initiative.

The training programme also featured interactive sessions conducted by resource persons from JKEDI, J&K

Bank, and DE&CC Srinagar, which included PowerPoint presentations and live demonstrations of the Mission YUVA App/Portal. Key topics such as mobilization techniques, scheme eligibility, documentation processes, and reporting mechanisms were thoroughly covered.

The sessions saw enthusiastic participation from the YUVA DOOTs, (Youth Ambassadors) who actively engaged in discussions, asked relevant questions, and shared valuable suggestions.

With a well-defined action plan and comprehensive training, the YUVA DOOTs are now equipped to begin their grassroots outreach activities, promoting entrepreneurship and youth-led development across District Srinagar under Mission YUVA initiative.



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COMPULSIVE DISORDER**

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**9070806160**



- TRAFFIC POLICE : 9419993745, 01998-266686
- PCR: 0194-2452092,2455883
- PDD: 0194-2450213
- FIRE AND EMERGENCY SERVICES : 2479488,2452222,2452155
- CAPD: 18001807011
- SMC HEALTH OFFICER: 9469409081
- Ambulance: Kashmir EMS Service: +91 94841 00200


**AIRPORTS**

SHIEK UL ALAM AIRPORT: 01942303311




**RAILWAYS**


- SRINAGAR: 0194-2103259
- ANANTNAG: 01932-228243
- BARAMULLA: 0194-102029
- BIJBERA: 01932-228243
- PAMPORE: 01933-294132
- PATTAN: 01954-293507
- QAZIGUND: 01951-296153



**HIGHWAY STATUS**

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





**HIJRI  
CALENDAR**

24 Shawwal  
**1446**

**PRAYERS**

FAJR	4:22
ZUHR	12:31
ASR	5:16
Magrib	7:11
ISHA	8:38

## This Day In History

- 1229- Christian king Ferdinand III of Castile conquers the Arab-held town of Cáceres as part of the reconquest of Almorah Spain
- 1344- Order of the Garter founded by English King Edward III, the most senior knighthood in the UK with just 24 living members plus the monarch (or 1348)
- 1348- The Order of Garter founded by English King Edward III, Britain's highest civic or military honor
- 1504- King Maximilian I routes troops to Bavaria
- 1563- Cornerstone laid for El Escorial, new Spanish royal palace commissioned by Philip II, by architect Juan Bautista de Toledo
- 1633- Sweden & Protestant German monarchy form Union of Heilbronn
- 1660- Treaty of Oliwa is established between Sweden and Poland
- 1661- English king Charles II crowned in London
- 1662- Connecticut chartered as an English colony
- 1702- Queen Anne is crowned at Westminster Abbey, London
- 1789- President-elect George Washington moves into Franklin House, New York, first official resident of a US President
- 1795- William Hastings acquitted in England of high treason
- 1798- Dutch emperor accepts new Constitution
- 1826- Missolonghi, Greece captured by Turks
- 1827- Irish mathematician and astronomer William Rowan Hamilton presents his Theory of Systems of Rays
- 1849- Russian writer Fyodor Dostoyevsky and members of the Petrashevsky Circle are arrested in St. Petersburg
- 1861- Arkansas troops seize Fort Smith on the Arkansas River
- 1867- Queen Victoria & Napoleon III turn down plans for a channel tunnel
- 1908- Denmark, Germany, Britain, France, Netherlands & Sweden sign North Sea accord
- 1918- Dover Patrol overthrows Germany U-boat in East Sea
- 1918- Raid of Zeebrugge; the British navy attempts to block German vessels from leaving port by sinking obsolete ships - mostly fails
- 1920- Turkish Grand National Assembly 1st meets in Ankara, under the leadership of Mustafa Kemal Atatürk denounces the government of Sultan Mehmed VI and announces a temporary constitution
- 1921- Charles Paddock runs world record 100m (10.4 secs)
- 1923- Inauguration ceremonies take place at Gdynia, Poland to mark its new status as a temporary military port and fishers' shelter
- 1924 British Empire Exhibition opens at Wembley, London
- 1925 - Having badly defeated Spain and driven her out of Spanish Morocco, the native Rif, led by Abd-el-Krim, turn on the French in French Morocco
- 1941 - Greece Army surrenders to German Nazis RAF brings Greek king George II to Egypt
- 1942 - 4-day allied bombing on Rostock begins
- 1943 - British & US offensive directed at Tunis and Bizerta
- 1949 - Netherlands annexes Elten & Tudderden
- 1965 - Launch of 1st Soviet communications satellite becomes 1st in-flight casualty
- 1971 - Soyuz 10 launched; cosmonauts become 1st in Salyut 1 space station
- 1972 - Apollo 16 astronauts explores Moon surface
- 1978 - USSR performs nuclear test at Eastern Kazakh/ Semipalinsk USSR
- 1984 - AIDS-virus identified as HTLV-III (acquired immune deficiency syndrome)
- 1992 - McDonald's opens its 1st fast-food restaurant in China
- 1993 - Eritrea votes to secede from Ethiopia
- 1997 - Omaria massacre in Algeria: 42 villagers are killed.
- 2003 - Beijing closes all schools for two weeks because of the SARS virus.
- 2012 - 38,000 London Marathon entrants have their home and email contacts published in a data protection breach
- 2013 - 28 people are killed and 70 are injured during clashes between police and Sunni Muslims in Hawija, Iraq
- 2013 - 21 people are killed during violent unrest in Xinjiang, China
- 2018- Armenian President Serzh Sargsyan resigns after 10 years in office after mass protests against him beginning an unconstitutional third term
- 2018- Mario Abdo Benitez is elected President of Paraguay



## US, India Can Accomplish Much More Together: Vance

Press Trust Of India

US Vice-President JD Vance on Tuesday called on India to give greater access to its markets, buy more American energy and defence hardware as he outlined the vision for stronger ties between the two countries.

In an address at an event here, Vance said there is much



that the US and India can accomplish together in diverse areas including high technology, defence, trade, and energy.

Both India and US are working towards a bilateral trade agreement based on shared priorities, he said.

The future of the 21st century will be determined by the strength of India and the US, he said.

Trade relations must be based on fairness, Vance said referring to President Donald Trump's policy on trade and tariff.

We want to make a bright new world, he said.

Vance also said President Trump seeks to rebalance global trade so that the US, with friends like India, can build a better future.

In defence, our countries enjoy a close relationship and we can build many military platforms together, he said.

Vance also lauded Modi's leadership.

"I told Prime Minister Modi last night that he has approval ratings that would make me jealous," he said.



PM Narendra Modi with Saudi Arabia's Crown Prince and Prime Minister Mohammed bin Salman Al Saud. File photo

## India, Saudi to ink 6 pacts Modi to discuss Hajj quota with Crown Prince

Press Trust Of India

New Delhi: India and Saudi Arabia are set to sign at least six memoranda of understanding (MoUs) on Tuesday during Prime Minister Narendra Modi's visit to Jeddah, with talks ongoing late Monday to finalise a few more agreements, according to sources.

Highly placed sources told PTI that Modi will also discuss issues relating to Hajj including the quota for Indian pilgrims during his meeting with Crown Prince and Prime Minister of Saudi Arabia Mohammed bin Salman Al Saud in the evening.

Meanwhile, PM Modi said on Tuesday said India deeply values its long and historic ties with Saudi Arabia, asserting that their relations have acquired a strategic depth and momentum in recent years.

In his departure statement ahead of his two-day visit to the kingdom, he said both countries have developed a mutually beneficial and substantive partnership, including in the domains of defence, trade, investment, energy and people-to-people ties.

"We have shared interest and commitment to promote regional peace, prosperity, security and stability," Modi said, noting that it will be his third visit to the country and the first one to the historic city of Jeddah.

He said he looked forward to participating in the second meeting of the Strategic Partnership Council and building upon the highly successful state visit of Mohammed bin Salman to India in 2023.

Modi described the crown prince as "my brother". He said he is also eager to connect with the "vibrant" Indian community in Saudi Arabia that continues to serve as the living bridge between the two nations and makes an immense contribution to strengthening the cultural and human ties.

Among the deliverables, the two sides are expected to sign agreements in the fields of space, energy, health, science and scientific research, culture and advanced technology.

"Meetings in Riyadh continued late Monday to finalise details, with over a dozen MoUs under discussion, some to be signed at the official level," an official told PTI.

Sources added that efforts were underway 24 hours before Modi's arrival to conclude additional trade, investment, and defence agreements.

Modi will arrive on Tuesday afternoon at the invitation of Saudi Arabia's Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman, marking the first visit by an Indian prime minister in 40 years to Jeddah.

"Jeddah is a very, very significant city in terms of connectivity between India and Saudi Arabia because for centuries, Jeddah was the port for the trade between the two countries, and it is also a gateway to Mecca. So anyone who is coming for Umrah and Hajj lands up in Jeddah and then goes to Mecca," Indian ambassador to Saudi Arabia Suhel Ajaz Khan told PTI ahead of the prime minister's visit.

## Ex-DGP's Wife After Stabbing: 'Killed The Monster'



Press Trust Of India

New Delhi: Police probing former Karnataka DGP Om Prakash's murder case have arrested his wife Pallavi on a complaint by their son Kartikesh that he suspected that his mother and sister were involved in the murder.

"Investigation Officer has arrested Pallavi Om Prakash (64). She will be produced before the Magistrate," an officer said on Monday.

Wife threw chilli powder at former Karnataka DGP, stabbed him multiple times: Sources

He added that the case has been transferred to the Central Crime Branch of Bengaluru (CCB) for further investigation.

Meanwhile, when police took Pallavi to the scene of crime, she told reporters present there that "domestic violence" was the reason behind the extreme step.

Prakash, a 1981 batch IPS officer hailing from Bihar, was found dead in a pool of blood in the ground floor of his three-storeyed house in the posh HSR Layout in the city on Sunday.

It is learnt that after a heated exchange of words, Pallavi allegedly threw chilli powder on Prakash's face before stabbing him to death, police sources said.

As the hefty former police chief of Karnataka scrambled for relief from the burning sensation, Pallavi stabbed him multiple times with a knife and bottle, killing him on the spot, sources said.

She then made a video call to her friend and said, "I have killed the monster," sources claimed.

In his complaint, Kartikesh

alleged that his mother Pallavi had been threatening to kill his father for the past one week.

"Due to these threats, my father had gone to stay at his sister's house," he stated.

"Two days ago, my younger sister Kriti went there and pressured my father to return home. She brought him back against his will," Kartikesh alleged.

He said on Sunday around 5 PM, when he was at the Karnataka Golf Association in Domlur, his neighbour called him and informed that his father was found lying downstairs.

"I rushed home (located in HSR Layout) and found police officers and people present on the spot. My father was lying in a pool of blood with injuries on his head and body. A broken bottle and a knife were there next to his body. He was then taken to St John's Hospital," he explained.

"My mother Pallavi and my sister Kriti went to fight with my father often. I strongly suspect that they are involved in the murder of my father. I request you to initiate legal action in this case," he said in his complaint to the police.

The murder was the culmination of frequent run-ins between the couple, the sources said.

It is learnt that there was a property dispute involved in the crime pertaining to a land in Dandeli in Karnataka.

A few months ago, Pallavi had approached the HSR Layout police station to lodge a complaint.

When the staff there did not oblige, she staged a 'Dharna' (sit-in demonstration) in front of the police station, sources claimed.

## US, Iran Report Progress In Nuclear Talks, Will Meet Again

Agencies

ROME: The United States and Iran made progress in a second round of high-stakes talks on Tehran's nuclear programme on Saturday and agreed to meet again next week, both sides said.

The Oman-mediated talks in Rome lasted about four hours, Iranian state television and a senior US official said. Tehran's top diplomat Abbas Araghchi declared it a "good meeting" that yielded progress.

"This time we managed to reach a better understanding on a series of principles and goals," he told Iranian state TV.

The senior US official said in a statement, "Today, in Rome over four hours in our second round of talks, we made very good progress in our direct and indirect discussions."

Iran's foreign ministry

spokesman Esmaeil Baqaei said the parties "agreed to resume indirect talks at a technical level over the next few days and subsequently continue at the level of two senior negotiators next Saturday", April 26.

The US official confirmed another meeting next week but did not specify which day or where.

Oman said the third round would be in Muscat, returning to the site of the first talks a week ago.

Those were the first discussions at such a high level between the foes since US President Donald Trump abandoned a landmark nuclear accord in 2018.

Western countries including the United States have long accused Iran of seeking to acquire nuclear weapons - an allegation Tehran has consistently denied, insisting that its programme is for peaceful civilian purposes.

After Saturday's talks, Oman's foreign ministry said

Araghchi and US Middle East envoy Steve Witkoff had agreed to keep negotiating.

The talks, it said, "aim to seal a fair, enduring and binding deal which will ensure Iran (is) completely free of nuclear weapons and sanctions, and maintaining its ability to develop peaceful nuclear energy".

Omani Foreign Minister Badr Albusaidi said the talks were "gaining momentum and now even the unlikely is possible".

Baqaei said the delegations had been "in two different rooms" at the Omani ambassador's residence, with Albusaidi passing messages between them.

Tehran and Washington have had no diplomatic relations since shortly after Iran's 1979 Islamic revolution.

After returning to office in January, Trump revived his "maximum pressure" campaign of sanctions against Iran.

## Who Might Succeed Pope Francis? Nine Possible Candidates

Agencies

VATICAN CITY: Predict who the next pope will be at your peril.

An old Italian saying warns against putting faith, or money, in any presumed front-runner ahead of the conclave, the closed-door gathering of cardinals that picks the pontiff. It cautions: "He who enters a conclave as a pope, leaves it as a cardinal."

But here are some cardinals who are being talked about as "papabili" to succeed Pope Francis, whose death at the age of 88 was announced by the Vatican on Monday. They are listed in alphabetical order.

Jean-Marc Aveline, archbishop of Marseille, French, aged 66.

According to the French press, he is known in some domestic Catholic circles as John XXIV, in a nod to his resemblance to Pope John XXIII, the round-faced reforming pope of the early 1960s.

Pope Francis once quipped that his successor might take the name of John XXIV.

Aveline is known for his folksy, easy-going nature, his readiness to crack jokes, and his ideological proximity to Francis, especially on immigration and relations with the Muslim world. He is also a serious intellectual, with a doctorate in theology and a degree in philosophy.

He was born in Algeria



to a family of Spanish immigrants who moved to France after Algerian independence, and has lived most of his life in Marseille, a port that has been a crossroads of cultures and religions for centuries.

Under Francis, Aveline has made great career strides, becoming bishop in 2013, archbishop in 2019 and a cardinal three years later. His standing was boosted in September 2023 when he organized an international Church conference on Mediterranean issues at which Pope Francis was the star guest.

If he got the top job, Aveline would become the first French pope since the 14th century, a turbulent period in which the papacy moved to Avignon.

He would also be the youngest pope since John Paul II. He understands but does not speak Italian — potentially a major drawback for a job that also carries the title Bishop of Rome and requires a lot of familiarity with Roman power games and intrigues.

## Ramdev's 'Sharbat Jihad' Remark Shocks Court's Conscience: Delhi HC



Press Trust Of India

The Delhi High Court on Tuesday observed that Yoga guru Ramdev's purported remark of "sharbat jihad" on Hamdard's Rooh Afza shook its conscience and was indefensible.

Justice Amit Bansal, who was hearing a plea by Hamdard National Foundation India against Ramdev's Patanjali Foods Ltd, said, "It shocks the conscience of the court. It is indefensible. You (counsel for Ramdev,) instructions from your client otherwise there will be a strong order".

The counsel for Hamdard apprised the court that recently, while promoting Patanjali's gulab sharbat, Ramdev claimed that the money earned

from Hamdard's Rooh Afza was used to build madrasas and mosques.

Later, Ramdev defended his remark and said that he did not name any brand or community.

Senior advocate Mukul Rohatgi, representing Hamdard, said the case goes beyond disparagement and it was a case of creating "communal divide".

"This amounts to hate speech. He says it is a sharbat jihad. He should carry on his business. Why is he troubling us?" the senior lawyer said.

As the counsel who had to argue the case for Ramdev was not available, the court would take up the matter again after some time.

### NEWS MAKERS

## Shakti Dubey tops UPSC civil services exam 2024

Shakti Dubey has topped the civil services examination 2024, the results of which were declared on Tuesday by the Union Public Service Commission (UPSC).

Dubey has done her graduation (Bachelor of Science) in Biochemistry from the University of Allahabad.

She qualified for the examination with political science and international relations as her optional subject, a statement issued by the commission said.

Harshita Goyal, a Bachelor of Commerce graduate from MS University of Baroda, secured the second rank with political science and international relations as her optional subject. Dongre Archit Parag, who has a Bachelor of Technology (B.Tech) degree in electrical and electronics engineering from VIT, Vellore, stood third in the rank with philosophy as his optional subject.

The civil services examination is conducted annually in three stages—preliminary, main, and interview—by the UPSC



to select officers of the Indian Administrative Service (IAS), Indian Foreign Service (IFS), and Indian Police Service (IPS), among others.

The 2024 preliminary exam was conducted on June 16 last year. A total of 9,92,599 candidates applied for this examination, out of which 5,83,213 candidates actually appeared in the examination.

A total of 14,627 candidates qualified for the written (main) examination held in September. Out of these, 2,845 candidates quali-

fied for the personality test or interview.

Of these, 1,009 candidates (725 men and 284 women) have been recommended by the commission for appointment to various Services. Among the top five rank-holders are three women and two men.

Shah Margi Chirag, who has a Bachelor of Engineering degree in computer engineering from Gujarat Technological University, Ahmedabad, secured the fourth rank with sociology as her optional subject. Aakash Garg, who has a B.Tech degree in computer science from Guru Gobind Singh Indraprastha University, Delhi, came fifth, with sociology as his optional subject.

The top 25 candidates comprise 11 women and 14 men. Their educational qualifications range from graduation in engineering, humanities, science, commerce, medical science, and architecture from premier institutions of the country, such as IIT, NIT, VIT, JNU, University of Delhi, and University of Allahabad, the UPSC said.

## Anurag Kashyap booked for remarks on Brahmins



An FIR was registered against filmmaker Anurag Kashyap by the Raipur Police on the charge of promoting enmity between different groups over his purported remarks on Brahmins, an official

said on Tuesday.

A case was registered at City Kotwali police station on Monday based on a complaint lodged by Raipur-based Pandit Neelkanth Tripathi, national vice president and Chhattisgarh in-charge of Rashtriya Brahman Mahasangh (Bharat), the official said.

Recently, Kashyap made casteist remarks against the Brahmin community on his social media platform, which is extremely insulting and ill-intentioned. The remark has hurt the sentiments of the Brahmin community and posed a threat to social harmony, the official said quoting the complaint.

Kashyap was booked under Sections 196 (promoting enmity between different groups on grounds of religion, race, place of birth, residence, language, etc) and 302 (Uttering words, etc, with deliberate intent to wound religious feelings of any person) of the Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita (BNS), he said, adding that further probe is underway.



## FCIK Strongly Condemns Terror Attack On Tourists

Observer News Service

**SRINAGAR:** The Federation of Chambers of Industries Kashmir (FCIK) unequivocally condemns the barbaric and inhumane attack on innocent tourists in Pahalgam, who had come to the Valley with their families seeking peace, relaxation, and the beauty of its cool climate.

In an official statement, FCIK expressed profound shock and grief over this senseless act of violence that has claimed the lives of more than two dozen innocent people and devastated families who arrived here with joy and hope. This appalling act is not only an assault on human life but a direct attack on the soul of Kashmir—its centuries-old tradition of hospitality, warmth, and harmony.

“Let it be stated in the strongest terms that neither any true Kashmiri nor any follower of Islam can ever support or justify such a cowardly act. Islam is a religion rooted in peace, mercy, and the sanctity of life. The killing of innocent people is strictly forbidden and stands in

stark contradiction to both the teachings of Islam and the values of Kashmiri society,” reads the statement.

FCIK has extended its deepest sympathies and heartfelt condolences to the bereaved families of the victims.

“Our thoughts and prayers are with those who have lost their loved ones and those injured in this tragic incident. We urge the authorities to ensure the best possible medical care and support for the victims and their families,” the statement further said.

Kashmir has always prided itself on its hospitality. This tragedy has deeply wounded every conscientious resident of the Valley. We stand united in our unequivocal condemnation of terrorism in all its forms and reaffirm our commitment to peace, communal harmony, and the safety of every resident and visitor.

We call upon all segments of society to stand together, raise their voices against such brutality, and work collectively to restore faith, peace, and healing in the Valley.

## Earth Day: ‘Time To Invest In Our Planet Is Now’

Agencies

**SRINAGAR:** As the globe marked Earth Day on April 22, environmental experts in Jammu and Kashmir called for urgent, sustainable action to address escalating ecological threats, stressing that investment in the planet is essential for a secure and sustainable future.

Earth Day 2025 arrives at a time when the world faces mounting environmental crises including climate change, deforestation, pollution, and the unsustainable exploitation of natural resources.

Experts from the region told reporters that the environmental degradation in Kashmir, a fragile ecological zone, is particularly concerning. Dr Suhaib, an environmental expert, stressed that everyone—governments, corporations, and citizens—must take responsibility for preserving the environment. “We must be accountable. The time has come to invest in our planet for a safe and sustainable future,” he said. “People must support and advocate for environmental protection and climate action.”

Dr Suhaib emphasized the need for widespread awareness, saying real change will only happen when people grasp the seriousness of vanishing glaciers, polluted rivers, and disappearing forests.

Dr Omar, another environmental expert, revealed alarming statistics: “Over 70% of glaciers in Kashmir have disappeared. Fertile agricultural lands—especially those used for growing apples, pears, and plums—are rapidly being diverted for infrastructure projects like highways and railways.”

He highlighted the loss of wetlands in the Jhelum basin, saying their area has declined from 288.96 sq km in 1972 to 266.45 sq km in 2019. “Around 22 wetlands in and around Srinagar have vanished due to urban sprawl, now replaced by risky constructions prone to flooding,” he said.

Dr Omar also decried the destruction of Karewas—ancient sedimentary plateaus critical for agriculture and archaeology—especially in Pulwama, Budgam, and Baramulla. These lands are being razed for clay extraction to aid railway construction, leading to massive siltation in the Jhelum and its flood channels.

He called on the government to regulate tourism sustainably and limit visitors to a site’s ecological carrying capacity.

Experts agreed that Earth Day must not be a token celebration. “It should be a daily commitment by every individual and institution to preserve and protect the only home we have,” they said.

ing resources. We believe in leading by example.”

Mirchi amplified the message across its platforms, urging citizens to take simple steps like tree planting, minimizing waste, and conserving water—proving that even small actions can lead to a massive collective impact.

A senior official from the Social Forestry Department remarked,

“Our partnership with Radio Mirchi brought life and reach to the Earth Day drive. Their platform helped us connect with the community in a powerful, relatable way.”

Adding further strength to the campaign, BSF 64 Battalion hosted the plantation activity, showcasing the collective spirit of defense forces, civic bodies, and media coming together for a cause.

Zahid Aslam Moghal, Regional Director, Social Forestry Kashmir, appreciated Radio Mirchi for this vital initiative.

“We must act before it’s too late. Whether it’s water pollution, land degradation, or deforestation—each of us has a role to play. Every small step counts.”

This Earth Day, Radio Mirchi didn’t just talk green—it acted green, inspiring the Valley to move towards a cleaner, greener tomorrow.

## 14 From J&K Qualify UPSC CSE 2024

Agencies

**SRINAGAR:** The Union Public Service Commission (UPSC) on Tuesday declared the results of Civil Services Examination (CSE) 2024 in which at least fourteen candidates from Jammu and Kashmir have qualified it.

Besides, two other candidates have qualified from the Union Territory of Ladakh.

Iram Choudhary has topped in Jammu and Kashmir and has secured 40th All India Rank (AIR) in the UPSC 2024 exams. The official list further reveals that Mohammad Muneeb Bhat has secured 131AIR rank, Akshay Parihar with 261st.

It also states that Haris Mir from Jammu and Kashmir has secured 314th AIR rank followed by Manil Bejotra with

401st, Aakash Gupta with 467th, Ghulam Hadir with 633rd, Sadaf Malik with 742nd, Yassar Ahmed Bhatti with 768th, Vishal with 439th, Nazir Ahmad Bijran with 847th, Harjot Singh with 948th and Arshad Aziz Qureshi with 993rd respectively.

The UPSC statement said that out of 5,83,213 candidates that appeared in the exams, 1,009 qualified for the civil services examinations.

It also said that a total of 14,627 candidates had qualified for appearance in the Written (Main) Examination out of which 2,845 candidates qualified for the personality test of the examination.

Nazir Ahmad Bijran who had secured 847th rank said that it was not an easy task for him to achieve the success.

“Ever good position where we can serve the public demands some extra effort.”

Hailing from Kangan area of Ganderbal, Nazir studied in a local private school and after the 12th standard he pursued B.Tech in Civil Engineering from the Islamic University of Science and Technology (IUST), Awantipora.

He later pursued a Master’s degree in Economics from Jawaharlal Nehru University (JNU), Delhi.

Before qualifying UPSC, Nazir had cracked JKAS exams and is currently working as BDO Langate. “I always dreamed of cracking the UPSC. My success in the UPSC exams is not merely my hard-work. There has been an immense support from my family to achieve this milestone.”—(KNO)

## Pahalgam Attack Puts Peak Tourist Season At Risk

Agencies

**SRINAGAR:** In a serious jolt to Kashmir’s fragile tourism revival, a terrorist attack on a group of tourists in Pahalgam’s Baisaran area on Tuesday afternoon left 27 persons dead, triggering fear and concern among local stakeholders ahead of the peak travel season.

Officials informed that unidentified terrorists opened fire at a tourist group in the upper reaches of Baisaran, a popular trekking and picnic spot in Pahalgam in south Kashmir.

The attack comes at a time when the valley has been witnessing a steady increase in tourist arrivals after years of disruption. Pahalgam, known for its scenic beauty and proximity to the Amarnath Yatra route, draws thousands of visitors annually, including families, trekkers, and pilgrims.

The assault has sparked anxiety among tourism stakeholders. “This is heart-breaking. Just when bookings were picking up and hotels were filling up, this attack will definitely lead to cancellations,” said Riyaz Ahmad, a hotel owner in Pahalgam.

Locals fear that the incident could reverse recent gains in rebuilding Kashmir’s image as a peaceful tourist destination. “Our livelihood depends on tourism. One such incident and everything goes back to zero. We appeal for proper security measures in tourist zones,” said Shabir Lone, a



pony handler in the area.

“We were just starting to see a positive shift in tourism, but this attack will send a negative message to our visitors,” said Bashir Ahmad, a local tour operator. “Many of our clients have already expressed concerns over safety, and it’s going to take a lot to reassure them,” he added.

Tour operator Shakir Bhat said tourism had just begun to show signs of recovery after years of turmoil. “This attack will certainly have a detrimental impact on the upcoming tourist season, especially with families and international travellers,” he said.

Meanwhile, the Kashmir Chamber of Commerce and Industry (KCCI) has expressed deep anguish over the attack on tourists in Pahalgam and strongly condemned this dastardly act of violence.

The KCCI demanded that authorities investigate this

gruesome attack on a fast-track basis and ensure that the culprits are swiftly brought to justice.

The chamber extended heartfelt condolences to the families of those who lost their lives in this tragic incident and prayed for the speedy recovery of the injured tourists. It appealed to the authorities to provide the best possible medical treatment to all those affected.

The KCCI said it believes this targeted attack is designed to harm Kashmir’s reputation and undermine the flourishing tourism industry. Such acts of violence go against the hospitable nature of Kashmiri people who have always welcomed visitors with open arms, it said.

The chamber reiterated its commitment to supporting all measures that ensure the safety and security of tourists visiting the Kashmir Valley—(KNO)

**WE WERE JUST STARTING TO SEE A POSITIVE SHIFT IN TOURISM, but this attack will send a negative message to our visitors.”**

## Education For All Is Our Prime Motto: Dy CM



Observer News Service

**SRINAGAR:** Education for all is one of our prime agendas and the government will take comprehensive measures to enhance educational standards while addressing the concerns of the teacher fraternity.

Deputy Chief Minister, Surinder Kumar Choudhary, stated this while addressing a one day convention on “How To Raise Standard Of Education” organised by the Jammu Kashmir Teachers’ Joint Action Committee (JKTJAC) here today.

Joint Director School Education, Shuba Mehta, Chairman KJTJAC, Saleem Sagar, President KJTJAC, Vinod Sharma, General Secretary, Najam Jafri besides teachers were present during the convention.

Speaking on the occasion, the Deputy Chief Minister lauded the role of teachers in building the society. He hailed the efforts of KJTJAC in

highlighting the demands and grievances of teacher fraternity. He asserted that standard of education can be raised through various strategies, including building educational partnerships, providing individualized learning, embracing technology and increasing global awareness.

The Dy CM stressed on exploring new strategies for teachers to adapt their instruction to meet the diverse needs of learners in the classroom. He suggested revising curriculum to include global issues, cultural diversity and critical thinking skills to prepare the students for a globalized world.

Choudhary also advocated professional development for teachers through workshops, training programs and collaborations. He emphasized the importance of teacher mentorship and coaching to support new and experienced educators in their professional growth.

The Dy CM said that focus should be on improving teachers’ training, reducing rote learning and creating a more inclusive learning environment. He also emphasized the need for creating opportunities for students to connect classroom learning with practical, real-world applications through internships, mentorships and project-based learning.

Earlier, the President KJTJAC highlighted the genuine issues of the teaching fraternity while seeking speedy redress for the same. These included revival of ReT scheme, transfer policy for regularised ReT teachers, exemption of teachers from all sorts of non teaching assignments, revival of Old Pension Scheme, clearance of GP Fund bills and Gratuity of the employees and timely DPC of staff.

The Dy CM assured the Association that the government would look into all their issues for redress in a phased

## Ramban Locals Stop CM’s Vehicle, Omar Listens To Grievances



Agencies

**RAMBAN:** Chief Minister Omar Abdullah faced an emotionally charged atmosphere in Ramban on Tuesday as locals stopped his convoy during his visit to the flash flood and landslide-hit region. The demonstrators, many of whom lost property and livelihood in the natural calamity, expressed frustration over what they called “slow relief measures” and “lack of timely help.”

The Chief Minister, who had

arrived in the area braving rough weather a day earlier, halted his convoy to personally engage with the protesting locals. He patiently listened to their grievances and assured them that the government was committed to providing all possible assistance to the affected families.

Yesterday, Omar Abdullah visited Kali Morh along the Jammu-Srinagar National Highway, one of the worst-hit zones, to supervise the ongoing relief operations and assess the extent of the destruction. [KNT]

## Statehood Our Promise, Will Be Restored To J&K: Anurag Thakur

Observer News Service

**SRINAGAR:** Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) Member of Parliament Anurag Thakur on Tuesday reiterated that the restoration of statehood to Jammu and Kashmir remains the government’s commitment and will be fulfilled in due course.

Addressing a press conference in Srinagar, Thakur emphasized that implementing simultaneous elections across the country under the ‘One Nation, One Election’ initiative could boost India’s GDP by 1.5 percent.

“Statehood is our promise and it will be restored to Jammu and Kashmir,” Thakur asserted.

Highlighting the BJP’s firm stance on internal security, Thakur said there is no room for terrorism in Jammu and Kashmir. “Across the country, our fight against Naxalism and terrorism continues. Many Naxalites have surrendered, and in J&K, we are witnessing significant relief as security forces have taken stringent actions against terrorism,” he said, underlining the BJP’s zero-tolerance policy on terrorism.

On the proposal of ‘One Nation, One Election’, Thakur said the Joint Parliamentary Com-



mittee (JPC) formed to deliberate on the matter is actively engaged in discussions. “I believe simultaneous elections will save public money, increase voter turnout, and reduce the burden on government employees deployed for electoral duties,” he stated, adding that the move could lead to a 1.5 percent increase in GDP growth.

He further dismissed any claims of judicial pressure regarding the Wakf Amendment Act, saying the Supreme Court has upheld the government’s positions on various matters, including Triple Talaq and Article 370.

Thakur accused the Congress and other opposition parties of misleading the public on key issues. “In Jammu and Kashmir, development is underway. We are witnessing a tourism boom. Triple Talaq has brought relief to Muslim women,” he added.

## Teachers Forum Strongly Condemns Pahalgam Terror Attack

Observer News Service

**SRINAGAR:** The Jammu and Kashmir Teachers’ Forum, affiliated with the All India Secondary Teachers Federation (AISTF), under the leadership of Chairman Mr. Showkat Ali Beigh, together with the entire leadership, unequivocally and resolutely condemns the barbaric and reprehensible terrorist attack at Baisaran Meadow, Pahalgam.

This abhorrent act of violence, which claimed the lives of 27 innocent tourists, stands as a grotesque assault on humanity, peace, and the cherished values of unity and compassion that define our society.

“We extend our profound condolences to the bereaved families of the victims and offer heartfelt prayers for the swift recovery of those injured in this despicable act. The deliberate targeting of defenseless civilians, who were simply enjoying the serene beauty of Pahalgam,

underscores the sinister motives of those who seek to sow fear and disrupt the harmony of Jammu and Kashmir. Such acts of terror are an affront to civilized society and must be met with unwavering determination to uphold justice and restore peace,” Mr Beig added

Meanwhile, State President Sheikh Mohammad Ashraf, Senior Vice Chairman Mir Ahmadullah, Vice Chairman Bashir Ahmad Thokar, UT General Secretary Mir Bashir Ahmad, Vice State President Mehraj-ud-Din Zargar, Chief Spokesperson Tahir Ahmad Sofi, Chief Organizer Bilal Ahmad, Chief Disciplinarian Gulzar Ahmad Sofi, Provincial President Irfan Nazeer, along with all District Presidents and zonal level leaders across Jammu & Kashmir, have also strongly condemned this inhuman act of terror and demanded stern and decisive action against the perpetrators to ensure justice and safeguard the dignity of human life.

## People Demand Basic Facilities Along Mughal Road

Observer News Service

**SRINAGAR:** With the strategic Srinagar-Jammu National Highway (NH-44) shut for the third straight day due to landslides caused by bad weather, travelers have increasingly turned to the Mughal Road. However, the lack of essential facilities on this key alternative route has drawn public ire.

The highway closure has significantly disrupted vehicular movement, particularly affecting trucks transporting vital supplies, and has led to widespread inconvenience for both transporters and the general public.

An official from the Traffic Department said that road restora-

tion work is in full swing. “Men and machinery are on the job. We are doing everything possible to restore traffic movement as soon as possible,” the official said.

The Mughal Road, which links Shopian in south Kashmir to Poonch and Rajouri in Jammu, has seen a surge in traffic. On Monday, light motor vehicles (LMVs) were allowed from Shopian to Poonch, and on Tuesday, movement was permitted in both directions. Thousands of LMVs have successfully used the route over the last two days.

Authorities, including the Border Roads Organisation (BRO), are now considering allowing heavy motor vehicles (HMs) on the route, the official added.



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KO VIEW

Ramban Floods

The flash floods that ripped through Ramban this week reduced the homes and a part of the Jammu-Srinagar highway, a lifeline for the Valley, to rubble. Three lives were lost in Baghana village. Shops, and vehicles, were washed away.

To be fair, the response by disaster teams and the army has been quick and commendable. Volunteers and officials went to work round the clock. But the tragedy has raised some pertinent questions. It is about our preparedness for extreme weather events. More so, in as ecologically fragile a place as J&K. After all, we are witness to a catastrophe of 2014 floods, which more or less sank Srinagar and the swathes of Jammu region.

So flash floods in Ramban following a cloudburst does trigger a sense of de javu. We have already witnessed how a few days of heavy rain in 2014 triggered a Valleywide flood. An overflowing Jhelum drowned Srinagar and parts of the countryside causing a large-scale loss of life and property. Since then, the situation hasn't improved at all. In fact, in several aspects it has become even worse. Srinagar and the larger Valley remain hopelessly vulnerable to another deluge.

This has created a deeply uncertain situation in the Valley. We are, time and again, reminded of our vulnerability to flooding whenever there are two or more days of uninterrupted rain in a warmer season. More so, in Srinagar whose new-found susceptibility to flood threatens to put a question mark on its viability as a summer capital. That is, unless we conceive and execute a course of action that drastically reduces this vulnerability.

If anything, it highlights how little has been done by way of infrastructure building to protect the Valley from flooding. True, in recent years, the dredging of Jhelum and the repairing of its embankments have been done in terms of enhancing our capacity to prevent the flood.

Now, what if Kashmir once again experiences the uninterrupted rainfall for a few days? Considering the Valley's erratic weather, such a prospect isn't unlikely. While we can't prevent natural disasters, we can certainly enhance our preparedness for them. On the Jammu-Srinagar highway, on the other hand, the government needs to further make efforts to stabilize the vulnerable spots. One can only hope that the current administration understands the enormity of the challenge and sets about in right earnest building our defences against a repeat of the 2014 scenario, or the other natural disasters, which could be sooner than we are prepared for.



Kashmir's Real Estate Slowdown

Irshad Mushtaq

Kashmir's residential real estate market has had a remarkable run. In just over two decades, property prices have soared. Some plots that sold for a few lakhs in the late 1990s now command crores. That's an average annual return of nearly 18-20%, outpacing many traditional investments. But those glory days appear to be fading. The sector now faces a slowdown, and investors are beginning to ask tough questions.

The reasons are layered. First, the broader economy has tightened. Borrowing costs are up. Home loan interest rates that once hovered between 5% and 8% are now less inviting. That makes property harder to buy, and harder to sell. Liquidity, once a given, has become a challenge. It's no longer easy to offload land at a profit.

Second, real estate is no longer the only star performer. Gold, for instance, has delivered a steady 10-11% return over three decades, and mutual funds or stocks offer easier entry and quicker exits. These new options attract younger investors who value flexibility as much as growth.

Third, the story in Kashmir is not unique. Global property markets, from Mumbai to Manchester, show similar patterns — strong past growth, but present fatigue. Supply has outpaced demand in many areas. Prices are now flat or rising slowly.

For Kashmiri investors, this means a shift in mindset. Instead of banking on quick returns, they may need to think long-term — or look at rental income rather than resale value. It also makes sense to diversify. Property might still be part of the portfolio, but it shouldn't be the whole plan.

The real estate market in Kashmir isn't dead, it's maturing. And in a mature market, strategy matters more than speculation.  
- Writer is a Srinagar-based reputed financial advisor.



Kashmir's Agrarian Ghost Story

Beneath the cryptic codes LB6 and S432 lies the story of Kashmir's agrarian revolution — a bold promise to put land in the hands of the tiller, now caught in legal limbo.

Mohammad Amin Mir

“Decades have passed, but LB6 and S432 still shape land ownership in Jammu and Kashmir. And now, as the state digitizes its land records under the Digital India Land Records Modernization Programme, these old codes are throwing up new problems.

If you flip through the old revenue records of Jammu and Kashmir, you'll come across codes like LB6 and S432. These are obscure labels, that to most people mean little. Yet these cryptic entries hold stories of land, power, justice, and unfinished reform. They're not just dusty bureaucratic leftovers; they're echoes of a time when Kashmir tried to turn the tide of history by giving land to those who worked it with their hands.

To understand what LB6 and S432 mean, we have to go back more than seventy years, to the sweeping land reforms that followed India's independence. At that time, Jammu and Kashmir was still emerging from the shadows of princely rule. The state's feudal order allowed a handful of powerful landlords to control vast stretches of farmland, while those who actually tilled the soil remained poor and powerless.

Then came the Big Landed Estates Abolition Act of 1950. It was one of the most radical agrarian reforms in South Asia. It aimed to break up the big estates and transfer ownership to the actual cultivators. The law capped landholdings and took away the excess from the landlords, redistributing it to tenants. This was more than a policy decision; it was a bold attempt to correct historical injustice. And it's in this context that LB6 was born.

LB6 stands for “Lagan Billa 6.” In revenue records, it marks land given to tillers under land reform laws, especially the 1950 Act and the later 1976 Agrarian Reforms. If you were a cultivator in continuous possession, paying rent to the landlord, and recognized by the

state as a lawful tenant, you had a chance to be declared the rightful owner. For these new landowners, LB6 became a symbol of dignity, stability, and recognition. It was the paper trail of a revolution.

But not all who worked the land got their fair share. Enter S432, a code rooted in Section 432 of the Jammu and Kashmir Land Revenue Rules. Unlike LB6, S432 didn't confer ownership. It referred to people temporarily occupying land, often refugees or displaced persons after the Partition, who were listed in records as “tenants-at-will.” These were people allowed to use land, but with no guarantee it would ever be theirs.

A “tenant-at-will” is someone who cultivates land with the owner's or state's permission, but can be asked to leave at any time. Many hoped to eventually gain ownership, but the laws were clear: unlike under LB6, no rights accrued automatically. Some tenants-at-will were later granted land titles, especially if they met the criteria for ownership. But many remained in legal limbo, their rights undefined.

Decades have passed, but LB6 and S432 still shape land ownership in Jammu and Kashmir. And now, as the state digitizes its land records under the Digital India Land Records Modernization Programme, these old codes are throwing up new problems. There are mismatched entries, conflicting interpretations by revenue officials, and unresolved petitions by cultivators who want their S432 lands recognized as LB6. Some people have lived and worked on the same land for generations, but have no clear title to it.

To make things worse, confu-

sion over these classifications has opened the door to illegal sales and land grabs. Without a clear legal status, land originally meant for the poor can easily fall into the hands of speculators. People with LB6 entries may find themselves treated like tenants, while those with S432 entries may suddenly be asked to vacate.

This isn't just a bureaucratic mess, it's a crisis of justice. These records reflect promises made to the people of Kashmir. LB6 lands are a testament to those promises kept. S432 lands are a reminder of those still waiting to be fulfilled.

The government has a chance to correct course. It must clearly define what each category means and set up district-level committees to review pending cases. Land records should be digitized with legal clarity, and farmers must be made aware of their rights. Crucially, the state must protect these lands from fraudulent sales and misuse.

In the end, LB6 and S432 are more than dry entries in a ledger. They are living symbols of a state's attempt to rewrite its own story, from one of feudal domination to one of fairness and opportunity. The question is whether that story will reach its promised end. Or whether it will remain buried in dusty files, under codes few understand, but many live by.

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expressed in this article are  
author's own and don't necessarily  
reflect KO's editorial policy.



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Wine Culture Turning Kashmir's Streets Into Shame

Through this letter, I wish to express deep concern over the unchecked rise of alcohol abuse in public spaces across Kashmir, most alarmingly along the Boulevard and other key tourist areas. The sight of drunkards lying unconscious on pavements, loitering in public places, or engaging in unruly behavior is becoming disturbingly common. This is not just an eyesore; it is a public safety hazard and a shameful blot on the cultural fabric of our society.

Kashmir has long been known for its hospitality, moral strength, and serene landscapes. It is heartbreaking to witness these values being eroded by a wave of public intoxication that seems to go unchallenged. Instead of ensuring clean and secure public spaces, it appears that law enforcement has reduced its role to merely gatekeeping the bars and wine shops. Once the shutters are up, what follows outside is chaos. Inebriated individuals sprawl across roadsides, causing panic and discomfort

among passersby, especially women and tourists.

Such unchecked behavior not only creates an atmosphere of fear but also risks denting Kashmir's image as a culturally strong and tourist-friendly destination. It raises serious questions: Are we to allow our public spaces to be hijacked by alcohol-fueled lawlessness? Have the authorities completely abdicated their responsibility toward public decency and safety?

It is high time the administration

cracked down on this menace with decisive and visible action. Random checks, stricter penalties, and public awareness campaigns must be initiated immediately. Merely licensing liquor shops isn't governance, ensuring public order is.

We must not allow our streets to become open bars and our culture to be diluted by negligence. Kashmir deserves better.

Sincerely,  
Zameer Ul Haq  
Srinagar



# The Quiet Strength of Rumaisa

At just fourteen, a Pulwama girl took on the responsibility of her family’s survival. Her gritty courage has since sparked a transformation, turning her village into a community defined by resilience and hope.

Gowher Bhat

In the serenity of South Kashmir, a small village called Barpora rarely makes the news. There are no busy streets, no trendy cafés, and no famous landmarks. But if you take a walk through this sleepy hamlet, you might meet a girl whose life story is anything but ordinary. Her name is Rumaisa, and she has shown what true strength looks like.

Rumaisa's story is not about fame or feats. It is about survival. It is about facing life's hardest challenges and keeping on, even when everything seems impossible.

At just fourteen, when most girls her age were in school and dreaming of small pleasures, Rumaisa was already taking care of her family. Her father, once the strong leader of their home, had become a shadow of himself. He started to slip into long silences. Some days he would not even recognize his own children.

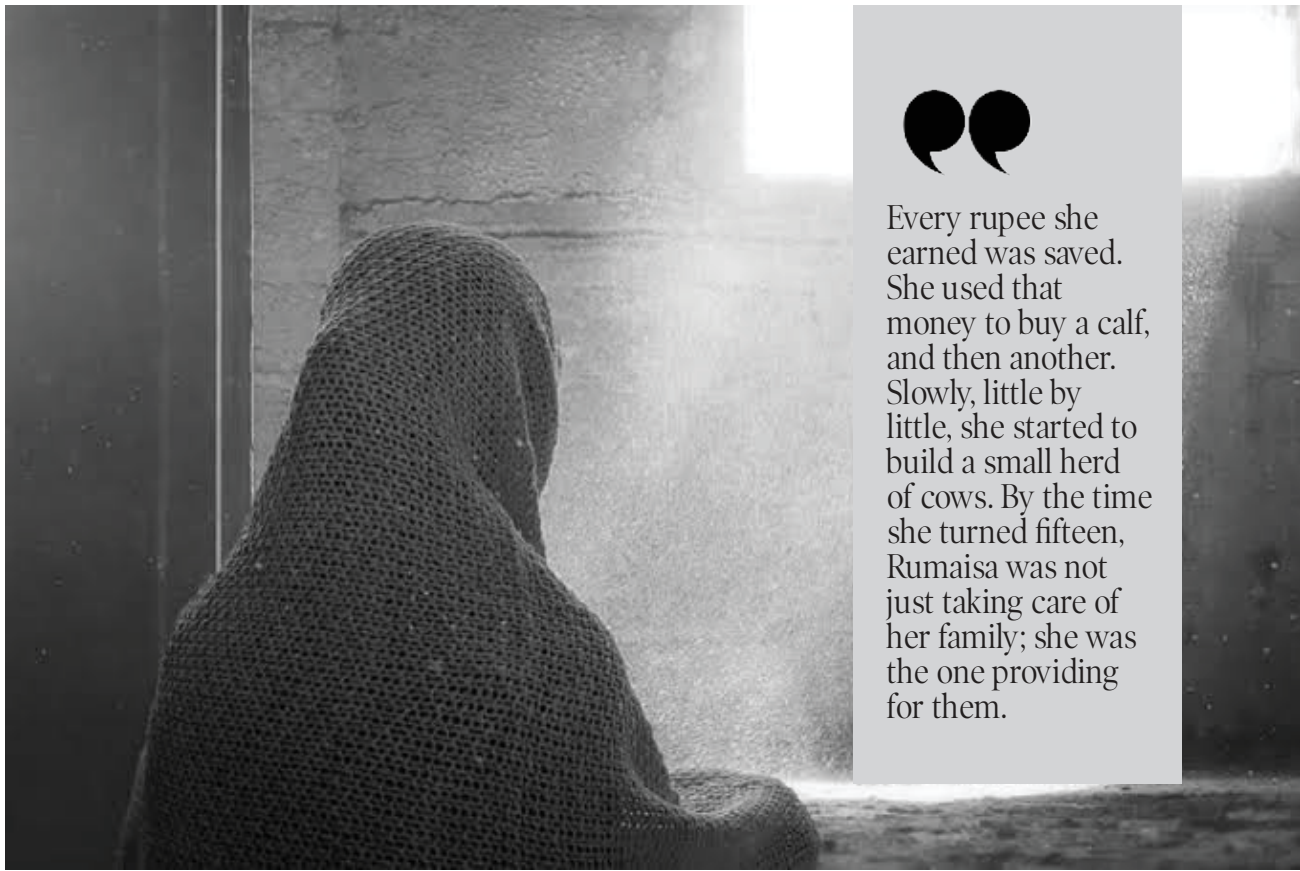
There were no doctors to explain what was happening. No one had the words for it. Rumaisa understood, even if she didn't know why this was happening. "I lost him even before he died," she says softly. "I had to make peace with that, even though I didn't understand what was going on."

Her mother, who had always been strong, could not handle the stress of caring for a sick husband and three young children. She began to fall apart. With no income, no support, and no one to turn to, the family's world grew darker.

And then, when Rumaisa thought things couldn't get worse, they did. Her uncle, who lived just down the street, refused to help. Rumaisa went to him, asking for help to get medicine for her father. He didn't even open the door. "I begged him just once," Rumaisa says. "But he didn't even listen."

That was the moment Rumaisa decided that if no one else was going to help, she would have to.

The very next day, Rumaisa stepped into a world that no child should have to face. She didn't wait for someone to fix things. She wrapped her scarf tightly around her head and started working. While most girls her



age went to school, Rumaisa started gathering firewood, helping women in the fields, and selling vegetables before the sun even rose. "Work doesn't wait for tears," she says. "And neither does hunger."

Every rupee she earned was saved. She used that money to buy a calf, and then another. Slowly, little by little, she started to build a small herd of cows. By the time she turned fifteen, Rumaisa was not just taking care of her family; she was the one providing for them.

She cooked. She cleaned. She milked cows and sold the milk before going to school. She took her father to the city for treatment,

riding on crowded buses while holding his hand. She made sure her younger sister had the things she needed, even though Rumaisa herself wore shoes that were falling apart.

There were no applause, no recognition. No one called her inspiring. But every day, Rumaisa showed up. "I didn't have the luxury to break," she says. "My mother needed me. My siblings needed me. There was no one else."

Soon, the other girls in Barpora started noticing what Rumaisa was doing. They watched as she passed by with her buckets of milk. One of them, Shazia, decided to follow in Rumaisa's footsteps.

"She taught me how to save from selling

milk," Shazia says. "She didn't make me feel small. She made me believe that we didn't have to wait for someone to rescue us. We could do it ourselves."

Rumaisa never intended to start a movement. She just wanted to make sure no one else felt as alone as she had. As other girls began to learn from her, they created small groups. They started raising hens, selling milk, and saving money.

It was a quiet movement, one that didn't need a name. Rumaisa didn't shout about it. She didn't ask for attention. She simply lived her life in a way that showed others how to live with strength.

Years passed, and things started to change. Rumaisa's brother, now old enough, helped with the cattle. Her sister, once a child, began dreaming of becoming a teacher. Through all the challenges, Rumaisa held onto one hope—a home of her own, a place to rest.

In her early thirties, she married in a small ceremony. For a brief time, life seemed a little softer. But then, less than a year later, her husband passed away. Once again, Rumaisa faced a deep loss.

"I cried in silence," she says. "But I still had people to live for. My sister. My brother. My mother. I couldn't let the grief take over."

Despite the losses, Rumaisa's strength never faltered. She kept going. And slowly, her quiet strength began to touch the people around her. The girls who once watched from the windows now followed her example. They learned how to raise livestock, how to start small businesses, how to live with hope in difficult times.

Rumaisa didn't ask for any recognition. She didn't need people to notice her. She just wanted to make sure that the people she loved would be okay. And in doing that, she became a quiet symbol of what it means to truly be strong.

Today, if you walk through Barpora, you won't see her face on a billboard. But if you listen closely, you will hear her name spoken with respect. She is the girl who refused to give up. She is the girl who carried her family through their hardest days, not by asking for help but by showing others how to be strong.

Her legacy is not built on loud achievements or public applause. It is built on the quiet, everyday acts of survival. Rumaisa never asked to be a hero. She just lived in a way that inspired others to do the same.

Her name may not be known outside Barpora, but in this village, she is remembered with admiration. Her story proves that true strength doesn't need to shout. Sometimes, it is the quietest acts that make the most lasting impact.

*Author is an English language instructor based in Pulwama.*

# Valley's Persian Cat Paradox

A wave of luxury pet culture is sweeping through Kashmir, where Persian cats have become symbols of class and lifestyle. But beneath the fur lies a deeper question—what are we really choosing to value?

Er Haya Aijaz

A quiet trend has taken over many homes in Kashmir. Persian cats, once seen as rare and fancy pets, are now everywhere. What began as a love for soft, pretty animals has turned into something bigger. It has become a show of status and, sometimes, a sign that our priorities are changing in the wrong way.

You'll now find young people spending hours booking vet visits, getting their cats scanned, and going through surgeries like ovary removal and castration. Yes, for cats.

There was a time when the youth of

this valley were known for their knowledge, respect for elders, and connection to faith. These days, many seem more focused on pet grooming, spa sessions, imported litter, and designer cat food. They rush to care for their cats but don't always show the same care when their parents are unwell or when their community needs them.

It's now considered "normal" to spend thirty to forty thousand rupees a month on a single Persian cat. And it doesn't stop with one. Some families keep five or ten cats at a time, spending lakhs of rupees every year. That amount could easily support a whole family. Instead, it's being spent on pets for the

sake of appearing stylish or rich.

Traditionally, Kashmiris raised animals like goats or hens, not just for fun but also for food and income. Now, someone walking with goats is laughed at, while a person pushing a cat in a stroller is seen as classy. How did we flip the script so badly?

We are becoming servants to our pets. The strange part is that animals were always meant to support human life, not the other way around. A dog sees the human as its leader. A cat acts like it's in charge. And many of us are okay with that.

But here's the real worry: where are we headed? Islam encourages kind-

ness to animals, but never told us to place them above people. The Prophet (PBUH) taught compassion, not show-off culture. We were meant to take care of orphans, help our families, pray, and seek knowledge. When did cats become more important than all that?

Today, many young people no longer attend religious classes or read books. But they know everything about cat breeds, diets, and diseases. It's not just a hobby, it's become an escape from real life.

Our faith gave us the values of learning, worship, and good action. But those are slowly being replaced by consumer

habits, laziness, and the need to impress others. This obsession is changing how we see ourselves and how we use our time and money.

This is not just about cats. It's about the bigger picture. We are losing touch with the things that once gave our lives meaning: family, faith, and community.

It's time to ask ourselves what really matters. Pets are not the problem. Losing sight of our purpose is. We can still love animals, but let's not forget to care for people too.

*Er Haya Aijaz is a Research Scholar and can be reached at haya.wani87@gmail.com*







# Scientists Find Possible Chemical Signs Of Life On A Faraway Planet

Associated Press

Astronomers have found possible chemical signs of life on a distant planet outside our solar system, though they caution more work is needed to confirm their findings.

The research, led by scientists at the University of Cambridge, detected evidence of compounds in the exoplanet's atmosphere that on Earth are only produced by living organisms and contended it's the strongest potential signal yet of life.

Independent scientists described the findings as interesting, but not nearly enough to show the existence of life on another planet.

"It is the strongest sign to date of any possibility of biological activity outside the solar system," Cambridge astrophysicist Nikku Madhusudhan said during a livestream on Thursday.

By analysing data from the James Webb Space Telescope, the researchers found evidence of dimethyl sulfide and dimethyl disulfide in the atmosphere of the planet known as K2-18b. The planet is 124 light-years away; one light-year is equivalent to nearly 6 trillion miles.

On Earth, those two compounds are produced primarily by microbial life, such as marine phytoplankton.

The planet is more than double Earth's size and more than 8 times more massive. It's in the so-called habitable zone of its star. The study appeared in the journal *Astrophysical Journal Letters*.

Madhusudhan stressed that further research is needed to rule out any errors or the possibility of other processes, besides living organisms, that could produce the compounds.

David Clements, an astrophysicist at Imperial College London, said atmospheres on other planets are complex and difficult to understand, especially with the limited information available from a planet so far away.

"This is really interesting stuff and, while it does not yet represent a clear detection of dimethyl sulfide and dimethyl disulfide, it is a step in the right direction," he said in comments released by the Science Media Center in London.

More than 5,500 planets orbiting other stars have been confirmed so far. Thousands more are in the running out of the billions out there in our Milky Way galaxy alone.

## PUBLIC NOTICE

I want to change my name in my aadhar card bearing no 7888 2822 8283 from Jali Banu (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 JVD  
R/O:- Khrew Pulwama

# 'Brain Activity During Lucid, Vivid Dreaming Suggests Consciousness Can Arise In Sleep'

Press Trust Of India

Researchers have found brain activity unique to lucid dreaming – in which one is aware they are dreaming while still in the dream – suggesting that a conscious experience can arise from within sleep, they said.

Linked to REM, or rapid eye movement, sleep, a lucid dream can feel intensely vivid and real, often accompanied by a degree of control over how the dream unfolds.

The international team of researchers, led by those at Radboud University Medical Center, The Netherlands, collected data from multiple sleep labs to create the largest sample size for a study of this kind, they said.



Findings, published in the *Journal of Neuroscience*, "open the door to a deeper understanding of lucid dreaming as an intricate state of consciousness by pointing to the possibility that conscious experience can arise from within sleep itself," lead author Catagay Demirel, Radboud University Medical

Center, said.

"This work offers a perspective that could challenge the traditional binary view of sleep and wakefulness in future research," Demirel said.

While lucid dreaming is studied to understand the basis of consciousness – or how the brain creates the feeling of 'being' – the phenomenon is also studied for its therapeutic effects in treating depression, anxiety and nightmare disorder.

However, progress in understanding consciousness is hindered by small sample sizes and diverse electroencephalogram setups, which measure electrical activity in the brain, the team said.

For this study, the researchers compared brain activity during lucid dreaming, REM sleep (when lucid dreaming was not going on) and while being awake.

The team found brain activity distinct to lucid dreaming, such as a reduced intensity of gamma waves – which helps consolidate memory while sleeping.

The study also found reduced levels of 'beta activity' – which is related to alertness and usually falls during sleep – in the brain's central and parietal areas. These regions process sensory information such as touch, temperature and pressure.

The study's findings reflect a shift in which brain regions get activated and how brain regions communicate while one experiences a lucid dream, the researchers said.

# Dignified Farewell

## Transforming Kashmir's Final Rides

In Kashmir, it is a painful irony that the departed, who leave behind a lifetime of earnings, are often transported to their final resting place in load carriers – vehicles they would never have used for commuting while alive. This stark contrast raises a profound question: shouldn't every soul be granted a dignified farewell, just as they lived with dignity? It is time to ensure that the last journey of our loved ones reflects the respect and honor they deserve.

Since launching a dedicated funeral service in Islamabad in 2014, Mother Helpage now invites you to donate generously to provide these services for Srinagar, Budgam, and Baramulla.



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# ISLAMIC UNIVERSITY OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

AWANTIPORA, KASHMIR.

Tele: 01933-247954/247955. Website: [www.iust.ac.in](http://www.iust.ac.in)

## Admission Notification No. 01 of 2025 (B. Tech. Engineering Programmes) for the Academic Session 2025

On-line Applications are invited from eligible candidates for admission to below mentioned programmes for the Academic Session 2025. The candidates are advised to peruse Admission Guidelines (available on the University website) & go through the Admission Procedure to check the eligibility criteria/ other details before filling and submitting their Online Application Forms:

Under-Graduate Programmes	Eligibility
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>➤ B.Tech. Civil Engineering</li><li>➤ B.Tech. Computer Science &amp; Engineering</li><li>➤ B.Tech. Electrical Engineering</li><li>➤ B.Tech. Electronics &amp; Communication Engineering</li><li>➤ B.Tech. Mechanical Engineering</li><li>➤ B.Tech. Robotics &amp; Automation</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>➤ Having passed 10+2 from the J&amp;K Board of School Education or from any other recognized board with Physics, Chemistry &amp; Mathematics as compulsory subjects. <b>AND</b></li><li>➤ Having appeared in JEE Main (Paper-I) 2025.</li></ul> <p><small>*The selection shall be based on candidate's performance in the JEE Main (Paper-I) 2025 only*</small></p>

### IMPORTANT DATES:

Availability of Online Application Forms	24-04-2025 (Thursday)
Last Date for submission of Online Application Forms / Deposition of Application Fee	08-05-2025 (Thursday)

### NOTE:

- The candidates whose result of the Qualifying examination is yet to be declared can also apply and they shall be considered for admission provisionally on their own risk and responsibility of fulfilling the prescribed eligibility criteria.
- Admission Notification for all other programmes shall be issued separately.

For any further query/information, the candidates may contact the Admission Officials on EPABX: 01933-247252(EXT: 2086)

Email ID: [admissions@iust.ac.in](mailto:admissions@iust.ac.in)

No: IUST/DAA-Acad/25/554

DIPK-NB-269/25

Dated: 22-04-2025

DATED: 22-4-2025

Sd/-  
Assistant Registrar, Academics

## Government of Jammu & Kashmir OFFICE OF THE BLOCK MEDICAL OFFICER TRAL NIT

On behalf of Government of J&K Union Territory sealed tenders affixing revenue stamp of Rs.10 are invited from the registered dealers for rate contract of spectacles Year 2025-26 (with variable sizes/numbers) given to beneficiaries under COB Scheme at CHC Tral. The tenders/bids shall reach to the office of u/sd. within 10 days from the date of publication of this notice. The detailed terms & conditions can be had from the office of u/sd. and interested bidders can get the same from the office of u/sd. during the official hours prior to one day of the closing date

NO: BMO/TRL/EST/199-200  
Dated:- 22 /04/2025

Block Medical Officer  
Tral

## Government of Jammu & Kashmir OFFICE OF THE BLOCK MEDICAL OFFICER TRAL NIT

On behalf of Government of J&K Union Territory sealed tenders affixing revenue stamp of Rs.10 are invited from the registered dealers for the delivery of diet preferably cooked food for the Year 2025-26 given to beneficiaries under JSSK Scheme at CHC Tral. The tenders/bids shall reach to the office of u/sd. within 10 days from the date of publication of this notice. The detailed terms & conditions can be had from the office of u/sd. and interested bidders can get the same from the office of u/sd. during the official hours prior to one day of the closing date

NO: BMO/TRL/EST/197-198  
Dated:- 22 /04/2025

Block Medical Officer  
Tral

DIPK-691/25

DATED: 22-04-2025



India Aims To Double Share Of Manufacturing In GDP To 23% Helped By Sunrise Sectors: FM



Press Trust Of India

**SAN FRANCISCO-** Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman on Monday said India plans to increase the share of the manufacturing sector from 12 per cent to 23 per cent over the next two decades, aiming to create jobs and drive economic growth.

India is focussing on 14 identified sunrise sectors like semiconductors, renewable energy components, medical devices, batteries and labour intensive industries, including leather and textile, to enhance the share of manufacturing in GDP, she said while speaking at Hoover Institution at Stanford University California.

For India, she said, "scaling up manufacturing is essential to absorb a youthful workforce, reduce import dependencies and build competitive global supply chains".

Observing that the world is undergoing a complete reset with regard to manufacturing in the view of industrial revolution 4.0, she said, India, too, is witnessing changes.

"In India's GDP, the service sector's contribution is about 64 per cent and if that is one side, at the lower end, the gig economy's growth is rapid. In fact, if 7.1 million people are in the

gig economy today, as of 2021-22 data, we expect that to go to 230 million by 2030. That's not manufacturing," she said.

"So the service sector disproportionately contributes both to the GDP and to employment... but that's not to say manufacturing should be left aside. We have been hoping to increase the contribution of manufacturing from 12 per cent to about 22-23 per cent," she said, replying to a question as to what share of jobs the manufacturing sector will account for in the next decade, or by 2047.

The government has identified 14 sunrise sectors -- semiconductors, renewable energy components, medical devices, hydrogen mission, batteries and so on in order to strengthen manufacturing and introduced the production-linked incentive (PLI) scheme to promote them.

PLI is being offered to sectors that also have greater employment potential like electronic goods and similarly labour intensive sectors like textile and leather.

Highlighting the importance of manufacturing sector, she said, it binds societies and lends cohesion to communities by providing employment opportunities and financial strength to communities.

For long-term growth, she said, manufacturing emerges as a key engine for transformation.

"Manufacturing has historically been a cornerstone of the economic transformation of nations from 19th century Britain to 21st century East Asia. It creates a forward and backward linkages, catalyses skilling and pushes demand for infrastructure and governance reforms," she said.

Gold Surges ₹1,800 Per 10 Gram To Breach ₹1 Lakh-Mark In Delhi

Press Trust Of India

**NEW DELHI-** Gold prices surged by Rs 1,800 to zoom past the crucial Rs 1 lakh-mark for 10 grams in the national capital on Tuesday amid buying rush by local jewellers and stockists in anticipation of increased demand during Akshaya Tritiya and wedding season even as global macroeconomic uncertainties continued to fuel safe-haven chase.

According to the All India Sarafa Association, the precious metal of 99.9 per cent purity climbed Rs 1,800 to hit the lifetime peak of Rs 1,01,600 per 10 grams from Monday's closing level of Rs 99,800 per 10 grams.

Gold of 99.5 per cent purity also jumped by Rs 2,800 to hit a record high of Rs 1,02,100 per 10 grams in the local markets on Tuesday. It had settled at Rs 99,300 per 10 grams in the preceding session.

Akshaya Tritiya, which is considered the most auspicious day to buy gold, falls on April 30. The ongoing wedding season will continue till May end.

The yellow metal has spurted by Rs 22,650 per 10 grams, or nearly 29 per cent, since December 2024.



Meanwhile, silver prices remained flat at Rs 98,500 per kg on Tuesday.

"The new all-time-high attained by the yellow metal is primarily influenced by the rising tensions between President Donald Trump and US Fed Chair Jerome Powell regarding the interest rate cut.

"Additionally, weakness in the US dollar following the tensions between Trump and Fed Chair Powell, and uncertainties around the US-China trade war are another crucial factors that has pushed gold price to a record high," Colin Shah, MD at Kama Jewelry, said.

While the gold price is on an upward trajectory, the fall in US dollar will make gold affordable in other currencies, keeping the demand-price dynamics bal-

anced, Shah said.

"In the domestic markets, it is observed that gold price witnesses a slight rise around festive season like Akshaya Tritiya, in reflection to the spike in demand.

"The sentimental and cultural value attached towards investing in yellow metal on auspicious occasions like this will keep the demand upbeat, irrespective of the price trend, he added.

In the futures trade on the Multi Commodity Exchange (MCX), the most-traded June contract of the precious metal surged by Rs 2,079 or 2.14 per cent to reach a record high of Rs 99,358 per 10 grams.

Later, it pulled back from the record level to trade at Rs 98,450 per 10 grams, up by Rs 1,171 or 1.2 per cent with a interest of 21,899 lots.

**THE NEW ALL-TIME-HIGH ATTAINED BY THE YELLOW METAL** is primarily influenced by the rising tensions between President Donald Trump and US Fed Chair Jerome Powell regarding the interest rate cut.

Investors' Wealth Jumps Rs 33.55 Lakh Cr In 6 Days Of Market Rally

Press Trust Of India

**NEW DELHI-** Equity investors became richer by Rs 33.55 lakh crore in six days of market rally where the benchmark Sensex jumped nearly 8 per cent during this period.

The 30-share BSE benchmark index climbed 187.09 points, or 0.24 per cent, to settle at 79,595.59 on Tuesday.

Since April 9, the BSE benchmark Sensex has jumped 5,748.44 points, or 7.78 per cent. During this period, the market capitalisation of BSE-listed firms surged by Rs 33,55,384.01 crore to Rs 4,27,37,717.23 crore (USD 5.02 trillion).

"Nifty extended its winning streak for the sixth straight session, closing at 24,167.25, while Sensex gained 187 points to 79,595.59. Despite the gains, markets showed signs of a breather amid overbought conditions. The positive sentiment was underpinned by continued FII buying and optimism over India benefiting from the US-China trade tensions," Prashanth Tapse, Senior VP (Research), Mehta Equities Ltd, said.

From the Sensex pack, ITC, Hindustan Unilever, Mahindra



& Mahindra, HDFC Bank, Eternal, Kotak Mahindra Bank, State Bank of India, and ICICI Bank were the major gainers.

On the other hand, IndusInd Bank fell the most by 4.88 per cent. Power Grid, Bharti Airtel, Infosys, and Bajaj Finserv were also among the laggards.

"Despite negative global cues related to Trump-fed tensions, the national market has maintained its optimism. The RBI's relaxed liquidity coverage ratio guidelines, which are anticipated to enhance credit growth, boosted the finance sector. Foreign inflows have remained consistent for the fourth consecutive day, driven by a weakening dollar and competitive valuations.

"Additionally, domestic macroeconomic conditions

are improving, with declining inflation and rising expectations of further rate cuts by the RBI, which are likely to lower costs and stimulate demand. These factors are expected to support corporate earnings in FY26," Vinod Nair, Head of Research, Geojit Investments Ltd, said.

The BSE smallcap gauge jumped 0.82 per cent and midcap index went up 0.81 per cent.

Among BSE sectoral indices, realty jumped 2.40 per cent, FMCG (1.87 per cent), consumer durables (1.43 per cent), healthcare (0.75 per cent), consumer discretionary (0.72 per cent) and bankex (0.61 per cent).

BSE teck, BSE-focused IT, power, utilities, IT and telecommunication were the laggards.

Govt's Constant Endeavour Is How To Increase Farmers' Income: Chouhan

Press Trust Of India

**CHANDIGARH-** Asserting that agriculture is the backbone of the Indian economy, Union Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan on Tuesday said the Centre's constant endeavour is how to improve agriculture and increase farmers' income.

The agriculture sector, along with other related sectors, is going to play a key role to realise Prime Minister Narendra Modi's vision of "Viksit Bharat" (developed India) by 2047, the Agriculture and Farmers' Welfare Minister said at an event in Karnal, Haryana.

"Our constant endeavour is how to improve agriculture and increase income of farmers," Chouhan said.

Chouhan was addressing a gathering after the inauguration of Gene Editing Laboratory at ICAR-Indian Institute of Wheat and Barley Research in Karnal.

Chouhan praised the scientists for developing new crop varieties. Today, India is at number two position after China in wheat production, he said.

Praising the farmers, Chouhan said they are 'annadata' (food giver) and added food is essential for life and therefore, farmers are 'jivan datas' (life givers) too. Agriculture is the backbone our economy, he further said.

Chouhan stressed that per hectare crop production has to be increased. He also stated that there has been a 25 per cent increase in wheat production during the past 10 years.

Improved seed varieties are also required and institutes like ICAR are doing the good job, he said. "We will have to



come up with varieties which consume less water and are resistant to heat. Bio-fortified varieties are also needed," he told the scientists.

"We have to connect farmers with science," he said.

Earlier in the day, Chouhan attended the 21st convocation of ICAR-National Dairy Research Institute (ICAR-NDRI), Karnal. According to a NDRI statement, Chouhan emphasized that diversification of agriculture along with adoption of latest techniques of animal husbandry should be followed. He was of the view that if efforts are properly made, Indian dairy products would be made available across the world.

To fulfil such sort of objective, institutes like NDRI and the students studying here can play a significant role, he opined.

Speaking at the NDRI event, Bhagirath Choudhary, Union Minister of State for Agriculture and Farmers Welfare, said NDRI has made commendable efforts in the sphere of dairy farming and animal husbandry, which have provided new direction to the Indian dairy industry.

Choudhary that in India, milk, dairy products are not only a part of the diet, but are also a symbol of culture, economy and self-reliance.

India Poised To Benefit From Supply Chain Realignments: RBI Bulletin

Press Trust Of India

**MUMBAI-** India is poised to benefit from supply chain realignments, diversified FDI sources, and engagement with global investors seeking resilience and scale, given its already established trade linkages, said the RBI's April bulletin.

Moreover, India's consistent strength in services exports and remittance inflows continues to provide a vital buffer for the current account, said an article on 'State of the Economy' in the bulletin.

"Calibrated policy support can help India turn global volatility into an opportunity and strengthen its position in the emerging world economic landscape," it said.

It also noted that escalation of trade and tariff tensions and the resultant financial market volatility have raised concerns regarding the weakening of global growth in the near term.

"Although the dampening global economic outlook could impact India's economic growth through weaker external demand, the domestic growth engines, viz., consumption and investment, are relatively less susceptible to external headwinds," the article said. Prospects for the farm sec-

tor have been boosted by the forecast of an above normal southwest monsoon for 2025, which could augment farm incomes and keep food prices under check, it noted. The Reserve Bank of India (RBI), however, said the views expressed in the bulletin article are of the authors and do not represent the views of the central bank.

The Indian economy continues to remain resilient on strong domestic growth impulses and sound macro-fundamentals despite strong global headwinds emanating from trade tensions. Consumers and businesses remain optimistic regarding the economic outlook, the article stated.

High frequency indicators suggest that aggregate demand remained broadly resilient during Q4:2024-25. Indicators such as E-way bills and toll collections recorded robust y-o-y growth in double digits in March 2025, despite a sequential moderation in the latter.

The article further said that global growth outlook remains downcast, as uncertainty surrounding tariffs and the individual policy responses of different countries could result in lower investments spending, subdued consumer confidence, and a slowdown in global trade.



RBI Asks Banks To Migrate To '.Bank.In' Domain By Oct

Press Trust Of India

**MUMBAI-** The Reserve Bank on Tuesday directed banks to start migration of their existing domains to the '.bank.in' domain and complete the process by October 31 this year, aimed at combating increasing instances of fraud in digital payments.

In the wake of fraud in digital payments, the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) has decided to introduce the '.bank.in' exclusive internet domain for Indian banks.

The initiative aims to reduce cybersecurity threats and malicious activities like phishing; and, streamline secure financial services, thereby enhancing trust in digital banking and payment services.

"It has now been decided to operationalise the '.bank.in' domain for banks through the Institute for Development and Research in Banking Technology (IDRBT), which has been authorised by National Internet Exchange of India (NIXI), under the aegis of the Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology (MeitY), to serve as the exclusive registrar for this domain," it said in a statement. Banks may contact IDRBT at sahyog@idrbt.ac.in to initiate the registration process. IDRBT shall guide the banks on various aspects related to the application process and migration to the new domain.

All banks have been advised to commence the migration of their existing domains to the '.bank.in' domain and complete the process at the earliest and in any case, not later than October 31, 2025, the RBI said.

I-T Dept Introduces 'E-Pay Tax' Feature On Portal

Press Trust Of India

**NEW DELHI-** The income tax department on Tuesday said it has introduced the 'e-Pay Tax' feature on its official online portal to make it simple for taxpayers to pay taxes.

"The 'e-Pay Tax' feature introduced by the Department is an elegant, efficient, and hassle-free method to fulfil your tax obligations," the tax department said in a statement.

Gone are the days of long queues at banks, tedious form-filling, and the looming anxiety of last-minute tax payments. Recognising the need for simpler and more accessible payment methods, and in another step towards digitally empowering the taxpayers, the Income Tax Department has introduced the 'e-Pay Tax' feature on its official online portal, it added.

"The feature also encourages a culture of timely compliance by eliminating friction in the tax payment process. It brings tax administration closer to the citizen, especially for individuals and small businesses, offering a direct digital route for them," the tax department said.

Trade Pact With India Will Help Open New Markets For American Goods: USTR

Press Trust Of India

**NEW DELHI-** The proposed trade pact with India will help open new markets for American goods and create new opportunities for workers, farmers, and entrepreneurs in both countries, the USTR said on Tuesday. US Trade Representative (USTR) Jamieson Greer said that there is a "serious" lack of reciprocity in the trade relationship with India.

The USTR also welcomed Vice President J D Vance and Prime Minister Narendra Modi's statement reaffirming the importance of the India-US COMPACT (Catalyzing Opportunities for Military Partnership, Accelerated Commerce & Technology) initiative and highlighting the progress in the negotiations for a Bilateral Trade Agreement (BTA), launched by both nations on February 13.

"These ongoing talks will help achieve balance and reciprocity by opening new markets for American goods and addressing unfair practices that harm American workers. India's constructive engagement so far has been welcomed and I look forward to creating new opportunities for workers, farmers, and entrepreneurs in both countries," he said.

Vance is in India on a four-day visit. The two countries are aiming to finalise the first phase of the pact by the fall (September-October) this year. India and the US have finalised the terms of reference outlining the roadmap for negotiations of the proposed BTA, according to the USTR statement.

Agri Dept Jammu, CABI Launch Awareness Campaign On FAM

Observer News Service

**JAMMU-** The Department of Agriculture, Jammu, in collaboration with the Centre for Agriculture and Bioscience International (CABI), officially launched a comprehensive awareness campaign on the identification and management of Fall Armyworm (FAW) at Kisan Kendra, Talab Tillo today.

The campaign was inaugurated by Director Agriculture Jammu, Arvinder Singh Reen, in the presence of Joint Director Agriculture Extension Satish Sharma; Regional Director South Asia, CABI Dr. Vinod Pandit; Deputy Director Central Dr. Ashwani Sharma; Deputy Director Trainings Alok Pandotra; Agriculture Chemist Dr. Aman Jyoti Sharma; PWPlus Country Coordinator India (CABI) Dr. Manju Thakur and Subject Matter Specialist, RL Darmesh Vaid.

In his inaugural address, Director A.S. Reen emphasized the serious threat posed by Fall Armyworm to Kharif crops, particularly maize. He highlighted several preventive and management strategies, including deep ploughing before the cropping season, manual removal of egg masses, use of pheromone traps, and drone-based pesticide applications. He stressed that integrated pest management (IPM)—including cultural, mechanical, and biological methods—should be prioritized, with chemical controls considered as a last resort.

He further noted the importance of such awareness campaigns in empowering farmers with the knowledge needed to protect their crops and livelihood.



# CUKashmir holds 16th Academic Council, takes decisions for academic excellence

Ganderbal, Apr 22: Central University of Kashmir (CUKashmir) today convened its 16th Academic Council (AC) meeting at Tulmulla Campus with Vice-Chancellor, Prof. A Ravinder Nath in chair.

Reaffirming the university's commitment to academic innovation and inclusive education, Vice-Chancellor, Prof. A Ravinder Nath, in his opening address to the members, highlighted the University's continuous academic and research advancements, and emphasized CUKashmir's unwavering commitment to align with National Education Policy 2020 (NEP-2020), citing numerous structural reforms, academic policy revisions in the recent academic sessions.

Prof. A Ravinder Nath also presented key initiatives rolled out during the current academic session. He introduced student-centric policies that echoed the university's motto of accessibility, excellence, and innovation, to the Academic Council members.

Prof. A Ravinder Nath said the "Earn While Learn" scheme marks a ground-breaking shift

in student engagement, allowing students to gain work experience and financial support while continuing their studies. As Academic and Outreach Interns the students will get work experience in varied fields "from library assistants to tech support roles and campus services, students now have access to meaningful work engagements that promote self-reliance, time management, and real-world skills," he said. The Council while approving the same hailed this move as a "win-win" for both institutional efficiency and student empowerment.

He further added that the Student Aid Fund (SAF) aims to bridge the financial gap for students from socio-economically disadvantaged backgrounds. "Designed to ensure that no deserving student is left behind, the fund provides financial assistance based on merit-cum-means, especially in cases of unforeseen hardship or economic distress," he added. "These welfare schemes not only embody the ideals of inclusive education but also reflect CUK's moral



commitment to social equity." The Academic Council appreciated the holistic implementation

of reforms in line with NEP-2020, demonstrating the university's proactive role in national

educational transformation. Prof. A Ravinder Nath also informed the members about

international and national MoUs, including partnerships with: Lincoln University, Malaysia, Universitas Hindu Negeri, Indonesia, Hemvati Nandan Bahuguna Garhwal University, University of Kashmir and INFLIBNET Centre, Gujarat for the promotion of faculty and student exchange, joint research, and shared academic resources.

The Council also approved the start of many new schools, departments and launch of new demand driven programmes in the coming years. These include the introduction of M. Tech in Civil Engineering, MBA (Executive), Master's in Psychology, and M.A. in Educational Technology, Educational Administration, among others being started from the next academic session. "These programmes cater to emerging fields and professional demands, equipping students with contemporary skills," CUKashmir VC added. The revised course structure as per NEP-2020 and curriculum of all the programmes offered by CUKashmir was also approved by the council.

Prof. Kshiti Bhusan Das, Vice Chancellor, Central University

of Jharkhand, Prof. K V Rao, Professor, Osmania University, Prof. M Vanaja, Professor, Dean School of Education, MANUU, Dr. Suman David, Professor, National Institute of Technology, Karnataka, Prof. Vijay Bhaskar Reddy and Prof. Dashavantha Reddy, Osmania University (Special Invitees), Dean Academic Affairs, Prof. Shahid Rasool, Registrar, Prof. M Afzal Zargar, Controller of Examinations, Finance Officer, Librarian, Deans of Schools, Heads and Coordinators of departments, senior faculty members, and administrative staff attended the meeting. While endorsing the agenda the members expressed great satisfaction about the growth of the University and were impressed by the recent unique initiatives taken by the University, which they believe will help the university achieve excellence in the coming years.

Earlier, the external members planted saplings inside the campus to mark the Earth Day 2025. The programme was organised by Dr. Muhammad Latief, Officer In-charge, Division of Landscape and Green Mission.

CONTD. FROM PAGE 3

## Blood On The

had been fired. We immediately started moving away from this area," a local, Gulzar Ahmad, said.

"This attack will definitely impact tourism here because after this, no matter what we do, we will never be able to win back the trust of people," he added.

The 26 dead included two foreigners and two locals, a high ranking official said without getting into details. The toll is still being ascertained, Jammu and Kashmir Chief Minister Omar Abdullah said while describing the terror attack as "much larger than anything we've seen directed at civilians in recent years".

The attack, which comes as US Vice President J D Vance is visiting India and just as the tourist and trekking season is picking up momentum, took place around 3 pm, officials said.

Baisaran, about six kilometres from the resort town of Pahalgam, is an expansive meadow ringed by dense pine forests and mountains and a favourite with visitors from across the country and the world.

Armed terrorists came into the grassland, dubbed 'mini Switzerland', and started firing at tourists milling around eateries, taking pony rides or just picnicking, officials and eyewitnesses said. At least 20 people were injured in the strike in the volatile Kashmir Valley where tourists have so far mostly been spared.

As news of the terror attack targeting tourists in Kashmir spread, The Resistance Front (TRF), a shadow group of the banned Pakistan-based Lashkar-e-Taiba (LeT) terror group, claimed responsibility.

Officials said it was possible the terror group members could have crossed over from Kishtwar in Jammu and reached Baisaran through Kokernag in south Kashmir.

Union Home Minister Amit Shah briefed Prime Minister Narendra Modi, who is on a visit to Saudi Arabia, and reached Srinagar in the evening for an urgent security review meeting with all agencies.

Officials said Shah is likely to visit Pahalgam on Wednesday.

"I strongly condemn the terror attack in Pahalgam, Jammu and Kashmir. Condolences to those who have lost their loved ones. I pray that the injured recover at the earliest. All possible assistance is being provided to those affected," the prime minister said on X.

"Those behind this heinous act will be brought to justice... they will not be spared! Their evil agenda will never succeed. Our resolve to fight terrorism is unshakable and it will get even stronger," he added.

Among those killed was Karnataka businessman Manjunath Rao, who was from Shivamogga.

Chief Minister Siddaramaiah condoled the death and called a meeting of officials. A team of officials from Karnataka left for Kashmir, an official statement said.

With Baisaran accessible only by foot or horses, choppers were deployed to evacuate the injured. The families of those killed and injured were taken to the government-owned Pahalgam Club under tight security.

The entire district administration and police force were mobilised and ambulances pressed into service.

Some of the injured were brought down from the meadow by local people on their ponies.

Army, CRPF and local police rushed to Baisaran, much sought after by filmmakers in the 1980s, after initial news came in of gunshots being heard, officials said.

A massive anti-terrorist operation has been launched to hunt down the assailants and security forces have

fanned out in all directions, they said.

The Jammu and Kashmir administration set up 24X7 emergency control rooms in Anantnag and Srinagar.

## 'They Shot My

the "Mini Switzerland" of Kashmir, were ambushed by armed men. The serene beauty of the pine-clad hills, which had attracted tourists for years, became the backdrop for a nightmare that would haunt Pallavi forever.

"They came out of nowhere," Pallavi recalled, her voice shaky with emotion as she recounted the moment of terror. "I could see it in their eyes — they were looking for someone like us." The attack, sudden and brutal, left Manjunath, a businessman, dead, shot at point-blank range while Pallavi and their young son miraculously survived the ordeal.

In a voice filled with disbelief, Pallavi described the horror she endured as her husband was killed in front of her. "I begged them to kill me too after they shot my husband. One of them looked at me and said, 'I won't kill you. Go tell this to Modi.'" Her words, raw and anguished, have reverberated across the country, sending shockwaves everywhere.

Despite the overwhelming fear and pain, Pallavi expressed her gratitude for the swift response of the local Kashmiri community, who rushed to her aid. "Three locals came forward and rescued me. They helped me get out of there. I would have been stuck or maybe even killed if not for them," she said. "They didn't think twice."

The family had been enjoying a peaceful stay in Pahalgam and had made their way to Baisaran on horseback, a popular route for tourists seeking breathtaking views and some quiet time. But on that fateful afternoon, their joyride was derailed.

Back in Shivamogga, Manjunath's family and neighbors are struggling to cope with the sudden loss of a man they described as hardworking, kind, and deeply devoted to his family. He leaves behind Pallavi and their son, who is still in a state of shock, unable to comprehend the loss.

Pallavi has now appealed to the authorities to expedite the process of bringing her husband's body back to Karnataka. "It's not easy to bring the body down from there. It has to be airlifted," she explained. "We are requesting urgent help to bring him back home. My son keeps asking when his father will come. What should I say to him?"

The pain of the loss is unbearable for Pallavi, who reflects on what could have been a simple family memory. "He just wanted to show our son snow for the first time," she said, her voice breaking. "This place was supposed to be a memory for us. Now it's where I lost everything."

## Amit Shah Arrives

in what is the deadliest attack in the valley since the 2019 Pulwama strike.

The dead included two foreigners and two locals, a high ranking official said without getting into details.

The toll is still being ascertained, Jammu and Kashmir Chief Minister Omar Abdullah said while describing the terror attack as "much larger than anything we've seen directed at civilians in recent years".

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As news of the attack spread, The Resistance Front (TRF), a shadow group of the banned Pakistan-based Lashkar-e-Taiba (LeT) terror group, claimed responsibility.

The officials said it was possible members of the terror group could have crossed over from Kishtwar in Jammu and reached Baisaran through Kokernag in south Kashmir.

## 'Grieving Bride'

simply said, "Her silence is louder than her cries."

The stark contrast between the woman's wedding bangles and the violence that tore apart her life has resonated deeply with people across the country.

Authorities have labeled the attack as a deliberate effort to destabilize the region and discourage tourism. A senior police officer condemned the violence, saying, "This is an act of cowardice. Targeting innocent tourists only pushes Kashmir further into pain."

The attack has prompted a large-scale search operation in Pahalgam, as authorities work to bring the perpetrators to justice.

## Political Leaders

Describing it as a dastardly and inhuman act that must be condemned unequivocally, Murmu said, "Attacking innocent citizens, in this case tourists, is utterly appalling and unpardonable. My heartfelt condolences to the families who have lost their dear ones and my prayers for the quick recovery of the injured."

In a post on X, the prime minister said, "They (terrorists) will not be spared! Their evil agenda will never succeed. Our resolve to fight terrorism is unshakable and it will get even stronger."

Modi also conveyed his condolences to those who lost their loved ones in the attack.

"I pray that the injured recover at the earliest. All possible assistance is being provided to those affected," he said.

Before leaving for Srinagar, Shah said he held a meeting with the officials concerned via video conferencing.

"Anguished by the terror attack on tourists in Pahalgam, Jammu and Kashmir. My thoughts are with the family members of the deceased. Those involved in this dastardly act of terror will not be spared, and we will come down heavily on the perpetrators with the harshest consequences," Shah said in his post on X.

Lieutenant Governor of Jammu and Kashmir Manoj Sinha, who was in the national capital, Union Home Secretary Govind Mohan, Director of Intelligence Bureau Tapan Deka and a few senior officials accompanied the home minister.

"Anti-terror ops launched to neutralise terrorists. Entire nation is angry and the blood of our forces is boiling. I want to assure the nation that perpetrators of the Pahalgam attack will have to pay a very heavy price for their heinous act. My heartfelt condolences to bereaved families," Manoj Sinha said on X.

"The death toll is still being ascertained so I don't want to get into those details. They will be officially conveyed as the situation becomes clearer. Needless to say this attack is much larger than anything we've seen directed at civilians in recent years," CM Omar Abdullah said in a post on X.

"I'm shocked beyond belief. This attack on our visitors is an abomination. The perpetrators of this attack are animals, inhuman and worthy of contempt. No words of condemnation are enough. I send my sympathies to the families of the deceased," he said.

Altaf Ahmad Wani, National Conference MLA from Pahalgam,

described the attack as "cowardly" and said targeting innocent persons is against the teachings of Islam.

"The attack was very painful and unfortunate and took place at an unexpected location which is about five kilometres from Pahalgam (bus stand). It is used for trekking and the people go there on horses," he told reporters.

Peoples Democratic Party (PDP) Chief, Mehbooba Mufti condemned the attack and said that such violence must be denounced. "I strongly condemn the cowardly attack on tourists in Pahalgam, which tragically killed five and injured several as being reported for now. Such violence is unacceptable and must be denounced. Historically, Kashmir has welcomed tourists warmly, making this rare incident deeply concerning. A thorough investigation is needed to bring the perpetrators to justice and examine potential security lapses. Ensuring visitor safety is paramount, and steps must be taken to prevent future attacks. Our thoughts are with the victims and their families," she wrote.

Mirwaiz Umar Farooq in a post on X said that such violence is unacceptable and against the ethos of Kashmir. "Deeply disturbing news from Pahalgam of a cowardly attack on tourists that has resulted in tragic loss of life. Such violence is unacceptable and against the ethos of Kashmir which welcomes visitors with love and warmth. Condemn it strongly. Thoughts and prayers with the families of victims and wishing speedy recovery to the injured," Mirwaiz wrote.

Maulana Masroor Abbas Ansari, a prominent religious leader, strongly condemned the terrorist attack on unarmed and innocent tourists in Pahalgam. He said that the Pahalgam terrorist incident is extremely condemnable, brutal, and an inhuman crime.

"This cowardly act is not only an attack on our religious and moral values but also a heinous attempt to tarnish the identity of the Valley known for its hospitality and peace," he said.

Maulana Masroor stated that terrorism has no religion. Such elements are enemies of humanity, and they can have no connection with Islam or any religion. He further said, "This attack has not only pierced our hearts but also brought shame upon the entire humanity. We clearly say that tourists are our guests, and ensuring their safety is a collective responsibility. An attack on them is an attack on the honor of the entire Kashmiri nation. We cannot remain silent against this oppression."

Pahalgam town, which was teeming with tourists this morning, went into complete silence. Tourists began leaving in droves.

The incident comes when Kashmir is witnessing a surge in tourist arrivals after reeling under militancy for years.

The Congress said the terror attack on innocent tourists in Pahalgam is a blot on humanity and the government should ensure accountability instead of making hollow claims about normalcy in Jammu and Kashmir.

"I strongly condemn the cowardly terror attack on innocent tourists in Pahalgam, Jammu & Kashmir. The entire nation is united in fighting the scourge of cross-border terrorism," Congress president Mallikarjun Kharge said in a post on X.

"These dastardly targeted attacks are a blot on humanity. News reports indicate that precious lives have been lost. On behalf of the Congress party, my heartfelt condolences to the families of the victims. Our thoughts and prayers are with the injured."

"India's National Security is paramount and we urge the GOI to take corrective measures to ensure the same," he said.

Leader of Opposition in Lok Sabha Rahul Gandhi said the news of the cowardly terrorist attack in Pahalgam is extremely condemnable and heartbreaking.

Expressing his condolences to the bereaved families, he said the whole country is united against terrorism.

"Instead of making hollow claims on the situation being normal in Jammu and Kashmir, the government should now take accountability and take concrete steps so that such barbaric incidents do not happen in the future and innocent Indians do not lose their lives like this," he said.

## Kashmir Mourns:

the attack and affirming that the people of Pahalgam welcome all visitors with open arms.

Protests also took place across other areas, including Srinagar, Sopore, Baramulla, Handwara, and Kupwara. Protesters carried candles and placards, calling for justice and expressing sorrow over the attack. Slogans such as "Stop Innocent Killings," "Tourists Hamari Jaan Hai," and "Stop Terrorism" echoed through the streets, demanding that the perpetrators be held accountable.

In Handwara, locals sent a strong message of solidarity, stating, "The people of Kashmir stand with the tourists. Don't be afraid — these acts will not go unanswered. Our neighboring country must stop its efforts to disrupt peace here."

The protests, which also took place in Srinagar's Makkah Market, reflected the collective defiance against terror, with many calling for the world not to judge Kashmir based on the actions of a few. Protesters argued that the attack was designed to harm the region's image and disrupt its peace.

Candlelight protests were also held in Kupwara, Baramulla, and Jammu, with Bajrang Dal workers joining in.

The attack, which left dozens of tourists dead and many more wounded, has shocked the nation, and the entire region remains in mourning.

## Emergency Helpline

an official spokesperson said. He said an emergency control room has been established in Srinagar as well.

Tourists can contact 01942457543, 01942483651 or 7006058623 for assistance on the Pahalgam terror incident, he said.

## Private Schools

others were left injured in the horrific incident. The attack, described as one of the deadliest in recent years targeting civilians, has shaken the region to its core and left the people of Kashmir in mourning.

PSAJK, in a statement released on Tuesday, expressed deep shock and sorrow over the attack, which it condemned in the strongest terms. The statement read, "In light of the tragic events, all private schools of Jammu and Kashmir will remain closed tomorrow as a mark of respect and solidarity with the families of the victims."

The association further emphasized that the decision to close schools was in response to the heinous act of violence and to observe a day of mourning and protest. "This decision is a testament to the association's commitment to promoting peace and humanity in the region," the statement added.

The President of PSAJK, G N Var, also conveyed his condolences and called for a collective stand against the violence. "We strongly condemn the terrorist attack at Pahalgam and stand in solidarity with the families of the victims. Closing our schools is a small gesture to express our grief and

outrage," Var said. He also urged the public to come together in these difficult times and work towards fostering peace.

The call for the school closure comes as a part of the broader wave of protests and shutdowns that have been announced by various organizations across the Valley in response to the attack. Religious organizations, political leaders, and trade bodies, including the Chamber of Commerce and Industry Kashmir (CCIK) and Jammu and Kashmir Hoteliers Club (JKHC), have also expressed their solidarity with the victims and their families.

## PM To Cut Short

included two foreigners and two locals, a high ranking official said without getting into details.

The toll is still being ascertained, Jammu and Kashmir Chief Minister Omar Abdullah said while describing the terror attack as "much larger than anything we've seen directed at civilians in recent years".

Earlier, Modi strongly condemned the terror attack and said those behind the "heinous act" will be brought to justice.

"I strongly condemn the terror attack in Pahalgam, Jammu and Kashmir. Condolences to those who have lost their loved ones. I pray that the injured recover at the earliest. All possible assistance is being provided to those affected," he said in a social media post.

"Those behind this heinous act will be brought to justice... they will not be spared! Their evil agenda will never succeed. Our resolve to fight terrorism is unshakable and it will get even stronger," he said.

## Religious Leaders

he had slain mankind entirely," he quoted from the Quran, condemning the brutal killings and highlighting that such acts are deeply opposed to the principles of peace and humanity upheld by Islam.

Grand Mufti of Jammu and Kashmir, Mufti Nasir-ul-Islam, also supported the call for a shutdown to express solidarity with the victims and their families.

The Kashmir Traders and Manufacturers Federation (KTMF) condemned the horrific attack, calling the killings senseless and inhumane. KTMF President Mohammad Yaseen Khan expressed deep sorrow and extended condolences to the victims' families. "We strongly condemn this attack, which goes against the values of peace, hospitality, and humanity that our region has always upheld," he said.

Political leaders including Sajad Gani Lone, President of Peoples Conference (PC), and Mehbooba Mufti, President of Peoples Democratic Party (PDP), have both expressed support for the shutdown and the silent protests organized by business and travel associations across the Valley.

"I appeal to the people of Kashmir to express their outrage in any form against these brutal killings," Sajad Lone said, while Mehbooba Mufti emphasized the importance of unity in the face of this tragedy. "This attack is not just on a select few; it is an attack on all of us. We stand together in grief and outrage," she wrote.

The shutdown is expected to see the closure of businesses and transport services across Kashmir as a collective expression of grief and protest against the violence.

The attack on Tuesday afternoon by gunmen targeting tourists in Pahalgam has shocked the region. Authorities are continuing efforts to bring the perpetrators to justice, and the region remains in mourning as it comes together to honor the victims.



# IPL 2025: Misfiring SRH Face Resurgent Mumbai Indians

Press Trust of India

**HYDERABAD:** The misfiring Sunrisers Hyderabad will hope for a happy homecoming when they take on a resurrected Mumbai Indians here on Wednesday, eyeing a much-needed victory to revive their campaign in the Indian Premier League.

With only two wins in seven outings, SRH are in a desperate situation. Their power-packed batting has let them down more often than not while their bowlers are not making any strong impression either.

That SRH are a one-dimensional side has been proven by the manner in which it has struggled on slow and turning pitches. The Pat Cummins-led outfit has lost two home matches too.

Their four-wicket defeat to MI in Mumbai on a tricky Wankhede pitch with grip and turn was the most recent instance of their frailties being exposed in challenging conditions.



SRH batters thrive on flat wickets which produce high-scoring contests and having a favourable surface against MI would give them the best chance to find some momentum. Abhishek Sharma and Travis Head will have their task cut out against MI given SRH's

chances of winning hinge, to a large extent, on the left-handed opening pair. Their success in the powerplay defines the team's fortunes in a contest. Abhishek smacked a 55-ball 141 in his last outing here against Punjab Kings to record the highest individual total for

any batter in this IPL. There will be, however, some concerns around Head who hasn't gone all guns blazing like he usually does and SRH will want their Australian star to be at the top of his game. A defeat would put SRH in a tough situation. They will also

have to be wary of their head-to-head record against Mumbai Indians. The team has won 10 out of their 24 matches while losing 14.

For Mumbai Indians, it is a perfect opportunity to test their resurgence in an away game before they return home to face Lucknow Super Giants in Mumbai on Sunday.

Mumbai Indians have put their disappointing start to the IPL behind with three consecutive wins.

The five-time champions are coming off a massive nine-wicket hammering of Chennai Super Kings on a batting-friendly wicket on which they went over the line chasing a target near 180 with more than four overs to spare.

Rohit Sharma's sensational 76 not out and Suryakumar Yadav's 68 not out with all his trademark shots coming out fluently signalled the return to form of MI's two batting pillars.

Match starts at 7:30pm IST.

## Short TAKES

### Shivam Dube Announces Cash Reward For 10 Budding Athletes

In a heart-warming gesture, India all-rounder Shivam Dube on Tuesday promised to provide Rs 70,000 each to 10 budding athletes from Tamil Nadu.

Dube, who plays for Chennai Super Kings, made the touching decision during the Tamil Nadu Sports Journalists' Association's awards and scholarships function in Chennai.

Dube's reward was in addition to the scholarship of Rs 30,000 given by the TNSJA.

The cricketer, who was part of India's T20 World Cup 2024 winning squad, said such awards, however small in nature, will work as an inspiration for young athletes to bring laurels to the country.

The talents who were awarded the scholarship were: PB Abhinandh (table tennis), KS Vhenisa Sree (archery), Muthumeena Vellasami (para athletics), Shameena Riaz (squash), Jayant RK, S Nandhana (both cricket), Kamali P (surfing), R Abinaya, RC Jithin Arjunan (both athletics), and A Takkshanth (chess).

### Day 3: Bangladesh Fights Back Against Zimbabwe In First Test

Najmul Hossain Shanto hit 60 not out as Bangladesh fought back against Zimbabwe on a rain-truncated day three of the first cricket test.

Shanto's knock, which included seven boundaries, helped Bangladesh reach 194-4 in its second innings with a 112-run overall lead before bad light forced an early stumps Tuesday.

Jaker Ali is 21 not out.

After the entire first session was washed out due to a wet outfield, Bangladesh resumed on 57-1 — still 25 behind Zimbabwe — and appeared to be in control thanks to Shanto, its captain, and Mominul Haque.

But Zimbabwe struck back with the wickets of Mominul, who made 47 after 56 runs in the first innings, and Mushfiqur Rahim.

Shanto and Ali stabilized the innings and have shared a 39-run partnership for the fifth wicket.

Bangladesh was dismissed for 191 in its first innings and trailed by 82 runs after Zimbabwe replied with 273 all out.

### Man City Collect Biggest UEFA Bonus

Premier League side Manchester City were allocated around 5.17 million euros (\$5.94 million), the most of any UEFA club, as part of the European football governing body's Club Benefits Programme to encourage national team participation by players.

A record 233 million euros were distributed to 901 clubs from all 55 member associations for releasing players to national team competitions: the 2020-21 and 2022-23 UEFA Nations League, European Championship qualifiers 2022-24 and Euro 2024.

Spanish side Real Madrid were allocated 4.79 million euros while Inter Milan of Serie A were given 4.65 million euros.

Clubs received an equal share for each player released for each UEFA Nations League and Euros qualifying match, as well as a fixed amount per player per day during the final tournament.

Clubs throughout the football pyramid benefited with a tenth-tier side — Yorkshire Amateur of England — receiving 7,300 euros.

The total amount for the release of players in this cycle was 100m euros, up from 70m for the previous cycle.

### Burnley, Leeds United Both Promoted To Premier League

Burnley beat Sheffield United 2-1 to seal automatic promotion to the Premier League on Saturday with the result also sending Championship leaders Leeds United up alongside them.

Leeds had earlier thrashed Stoke City 6-0 to go top of the Championship on 94 points with two matches remaining and needed Burnley to then not lose to third-placed Sheffield United to make sure they would finish in the top two.

Burnley duly obliged with Josh Brownhill scoring twice at Turf Moor either side of Tom Cannon's equaliser as they extended their unbeaten league run to 31 games.

Scott Parker's side, who were relegated last season, joined Leeds on 94 points to leave Sheffield United on 86 and now facing the prospect of trying to join them via the playoffs.

Fourth-placed Sunderland are guaranteed a playoff place despite a 1-0 home defeat by Blackburn Rovers who kept alive their slim hopes of a top-six finish.

Fifth-placed Bristol City went down 3-1 at relegation battlers Luton Town, but remained above Coventry City who also lost 3-1 to bottom club Plymouth Argyle.

## India Pacer Bumrah Named Wisden's Leading Men's Cricketer



Press Trust of India

**NEW DELHI:** India's premier pacer Jasprit Bumrah was on Tuesday named as Leading Men's Cricketer in the World while prolific batter Smriti Mandhana grabbed the honour in the women's category in the 2025 edition of Wisden Cricketers' Almanack.

The two Indian players were

honoured for their stand-out performances last year.

The 31-year-old Bumrah picked up 71 Test wickets in season 2024 at an average of 14.92, the most by any bowler with such an economy in a single year. He became the first Test bowler in history to claim 200 wickets at an average of less than 20.

In the Border-Gavaskar Tro-

phy in Australia, Bumrah almost single-handedly carried India's attack with 32 wickets at an average of 13.06.

At the T20 World Cup, he was named Player of the Tournament for his 15 wickets at an economy rate of just 4.17, leading India to their first ICC trophy since 2013.

Women's team senior batter Smriti Mandhana made it an India double as she was named as Wisden's Leading Women's Cricketer in the World.

The 28-year-old Mandhana scored 1659 runs across formats in 2024 — the most by a woman cricketer in a calendar year of international cricket — including four ODI hundreds, which was another record.

West Indian Nicholas Pooran was named as the Leading T20 Player in the World.

## England Tour: 6 Names For 2 Reserve Middle-Order Slots



Press Trust of India

**NEW DELHI:** The national selection committee is expected to name the India and India A squad for the Test tour of England in the second week of May and there will be at least six contenders for a couple of reserve middle-order slots that would be up for grabs.

**B Sai Sudharsan:**

With seven tons in 29 first-class games, Sai Sudharsan is a player to watch out for even in red ball cricket. He has already been a big hit for Gujarat Titans in the IPL. The reason why selectors will have a closer look at the southpaw is his tight technique and he also did well for India A in Australia before getting injured.

**Shreyas Iyer:**

Shreyas Iyer 2.0 is a player who cannot be ignored as he has come back to red ball cricket with a far more tighter technique and plays the short ball way better than he did during his earlier stint.

On the England tour, experience will be of premium and having played 14 Tests, including one in England in 2022, Iyer knows a thing or two about challenges.

**Rajat Patidar:**

If one goes purely by statistics, then Patidar has probably blown away his chance at Test cricket by not even getting a single fifty against

England at home. However, there are very few players outside the current India set-up who are as classy as the MP batter with strokes all round the park.

**Karun Nair:**

One of India's only two triple centuries in Test cricket, Karun Nair lost his way in the middle before finding his mojo for Vidarbha in what has been a dream domestic season with more than 850 first-class runs.

**Devdutt Padikkal:**

Another sinewy left-hander, who got a chance to make his Test debut in Australia due to the absence of Rohit Sharma in the first game, Padikkal did show glimpses of his talent in the second innings during an effective stand with Yashasvi Jaiswal. He has been in good touch in IPL and if he doesn't make the senior team cut, he will be in and around the India A team for sure.

**Sarfraz Khan:**

After he scored a 150 against New Zealand in Bengaluru in October, Sarfraz should have sealed his place in the Test squad but some atrocious shot selection in the following Tests put him down in the pecking order.

In Australia, he was more of a tourist and wasn't even discussed for a place in the first XI. However for the sake of continuity, selectors can still look at him.

## DYSSO Budgam Hosts Table Tennis, Chess Events In Multiple Zones

Observer News Service

**BUDGAM:** The Department of Youth Services and Sports Budgam, under the leadership of District Youth Services and Sports Officer Ghulam Hassan Lone, organised a series of Inter-School Zonal Level competitions across various zones of the district, sparking enthusiasm and vibrant participation among students.

Zone Budgam witnessed an energetic Chess championship for girls in Under-14 and Under-17 age groups at the Sports Stadium Budgam. The event was inaugurated by Zonal Physical Education Officer (ZPEO) Budgam Tariq Ahmad, alongside Incharge Activity Officer Kousar Ahmad Shah. Participants from both government and private insti-



tutions took part, displaying sharp intellect and sportsmanship on the chessboard.

Meanwhile, Zone Khansahib hosted a thrilling Table Tennis competition for both boys and girls under the Under-14 and Under-17 categories. The event was conducted at BHSS Khansa-

hib and was inaugurated by Mushtaq Ahmad (PEM), the overall Activity Incharge, and Khan Muneer Aslam (PEI), accompanied by other respected staff members. A large number of enthusiastic students showcased their athletic skills, making the event a grand success.

## Real Madrid Boss Carlo Ancelotti Seems Unconcerned By Speculation Over Future

Agencies

Real Madrid manager Carlo Ancelotti dismissed suggestions on Tuesday he is under mounting pressure at the club as they sit second in the La Liga standings and were knocked out of the Champions League last week.

Ancelotti's future has been questioned following their Champions League quarter-final loss to Arsenal, with multiple reports suggesting he could leave Real at the end of the season to take over the Brazil national team.

Bayer Leverkusen coach Xabi Alonso and former Liverpool manager Jurgen Klopp are among the names that have been linked with the top job at Real in recent



weeks.

Asked if he was feeling the pressure, the Italian manager told reporters: "The club is aware that it has been a more complicated year than last year."

"Together we manage the difficulties. The honeymoon continues. I'm very happy, very happy, with a lot of pressure, but that's

how it always is.

"You see success very close and it's normal for stress to increase, but stress is fuel for me, it doesn't bother me, it gives me more energy to think about more things. As long as I continue to get up in the morning, everything is fine."

Real are still chasing success on multiple fronts and

sit second in the league standings with 69 points from 32 matches, four behind rivals Barcelona.

They face Barca in the Copa del Rey final this weekend, but before that will travel to 12th-placed Getafe for a league meeting on Wednesday, where they will be without Kylian Mbappe and Ferland Mendy.

Forward Mbappe suffered an ankle injury in Real's 2-1 quarter-final second leg loss to Arsenal last week, while defender Mendy is recovering from a hamstring injury.

"(Mbappe and Mendy) are not ready for tomorrow, but they will train these days and I think they will both be available for Saturday's game," Ancelotti said.

## Milan's Cup Motivation Not About Ruining Inter's Treble Bid, Says Coach Conceicao

Agencies

A Milan can salvage something from a disappointing season with success in the Coppa Italia and do not need the motivation of spoiling neighbours Inter Milan's bid to win the treble, manager Sergio Conceicao said on Tuesday.

Milan are ninth in the Serie A standings, out of the Champions League and well off the pace to qualify for next season's competition, while Inter are top of the domestic league and in the semi-finals of Europe's elite club competition.

Last season, Inter secured the Scudetto with a win over Milan, but Conceicao has enough reasons of his own to want to overcome their rivals in Wednesday's Cup semi-final return leg, which is poised at 1-1 after the first game at San Siro.

"The motivation does not come from the opponent, but from our work day by day," Conceicao told reporters. "Unfortunately, there are no more chances in the



league, even for the Champions League, and so we only think about tomorrow."

Conceicao does, however, realise the importance of the game for a club like Milan, who cannot be content

with only winning the Italian Super Cup this season.

"It's an important match for everyone, players, clubs and fans and we are aware of that," he said.

"Milan have to fight for the Scudetto and the Champions League, they are used to this despite the last few years. For a club like Milan it must be normal to reach the final of the Coppa Italia."

"I congratulate Inter for the Champions League and the championship, this shows its strength. But for us this match is fundamental because we want to win and get to the final to give a trophy to the fans."

Bologna lead Empoli 3-0 in the other semi-final with the second leg of that match being played on Thursday.

Milan defender Kyle Walker, on loan from Manchester City, fractured his elbow two weeks ago and midfielder Ruben Loftus-Cheek has been recovering from appendicitis, but Conceicao will have both players available against Inter.





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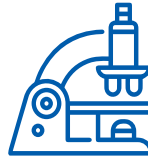
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