

## Homes Razed, Hundreds Detained Crackdown Intensifies After Pahalgam Attack



KO Photo | Faisal Khan

Press Trust Of India

Srinagar: Authorities in Kashmir have launched an extensive crackdown on terrorists and their sympathisers following the deadly attack in Pahalgam that killed 26 people, mostly tourists, officials said on Saturday.

Security forces are targeting known terrorist associates and sympathisers across the Valley to prevent further attacks, officials said. Over the past 48 hours, five houses belonging to terrorists or their aides have been demolished, and hundreds of overground workers (OGWs) have been detained for questioning.

Houses of five terrorists or their associates have been demolished in the past 48 hours with officials saying similar action will be taken against others involved in terror activities.

Mysterious blasts blew up the houses of two active terrorists

-- Aadil Thoker in the Bijbehara area of Anantnag district and Asif Sheikh in the Tral area of Pulwama district.

While Thoker has been named as one of the three terrorists involved in the gruesome killing of tourists in Pahalgam, Sheikh's involvement in the attack has also not been ruled out, officials said.

The blasts took place after security forces raided the houses on Thursday night, they added.

On Friday night, the house of Ahsan ul Haq Sheikh in the Muran area of Pulwama district was torn down, officials said, adding that he was "trained in Pakistan" in 2018 and had recently "infiltrated" into the Valley.

In a similar action in Chotipora of the Shopian district, the house of an active top Lashkar-e-Taiba (LeT) commander Shahid Ahmad Kuttay was razed, they said. Kuttay, active for the | More on P6

## 'Bunkers Reopened, Crops Hastened' LoC Tense, Civilians On Alert After Pahalgam Attack

Observer News Service

Jammu: Living in the shadow of escalating tensions between India and Pakistan, villagers along the volatile International Border (IB) and Line of Control (LoC) in Jammu and Kashmir are taking urgent steps to prepare for potential conflict. The deadly terror attack in Pahalgam, which claimed 26 lives, has shattered the relative calm established by the renewed ceasefire agreement of 2021, sparking fear and a flurry of activity in the border regions.

Across villages in Poonch, Rajouri, and northern Kashmir areas like Uri, Keran,



Tangdhar, and Gurez, residents are engaged in a determined effort to clear and maintain long-abandoned underground bunkers. These shelters, built by the government to protect civilians from

cross-border firing, are being rediscovered and readied for potential use.

"Nobody knows what will happen next," said Balbir Kour, a former village leader from Treva in the R S Pura

sector. "We have decided to prepare the underground bunkers so that we can save ourselves in case there is shelling or firing from across the border."

The renewed sense of urgency comes despite a period of relative peace following the 2021 ceasefire, which brought much-needed respite after years of frequent violations, including a record high of over 5,000 incidents in 2020. However, the Pahalgam attack, and the subsequent tough stance adopted by India, has reignited anxieties.

Adding to the preparations, villagers are | More on P6

## India, Pak Armies Trade Fire Across LoC

The Pakistani military resorted to unprovoked firing all across the Line of Control and Indian troops effectively responded to them, military sources said on Saturday. The exchange of fire for a second consecutive night came amid heightened tension between India and Pakistan following Tuesday's Pahalgam terror attack

that killed 26 civilians. The Pakistani troops fired at Indian positions along the Line of Control (LoC) on Thursday night as well and India had responded appropriately. "On the night of April 25 and 26, unprovoked small arms firings were carried out by various Pakistan Army post all across | More on P6

## 'No Live Coverage Of Army Movement'

## Govt Issues Advisory To Media Channels

Observer News Service

New Delhi: The government asked media outlets on Saturday to refrain from live coverage of defence operations and movement of security forces, contending that such reportage may inadvertently help hostile elements.

The advisory comes in the wake of reporting on defence matters following the terror attack in Jammu and Kashmir's Pahalgam that killed 26 people, mostly tourists.

"In the interest of national security, all media platforms, news agencies, and social media users are advised to exercise utmost responsibility and adhere strictly to existing laws and regulations while reporting on matters concerning defence and other security-related operations," said the advisory by the Ministry of Information and Broadcasting. "Specifically: | More on P6

## Ramban Not Forgotten Amid Pahalgam Tragedy: CM Reviews Relief, Restoration Efforts



Observer News Service

Jammu: In his third visit to Ramban in a short span, Chief Minister Omar Abdullah Saturday reviewed the situation and progress of relief

and restoration efforts in the flood-affected areas of the district.

Touring extensively the severely impacted Dharmkund area and chairing a high-level review meeting | More on P6

## 'Nearly 80 Families Relocated'

Nearly 80 families were relocated and are being provided with assistance following the recent cloudburst-triggered flash floods that claimed the lives of three persons in this district of Jammu and Kashmir, a senior government official said on Saturday. Ramban Deputy Commissioner (DC) Baseer ul Haq Chaudhary said over 80,000 kanals of agricultural land and 544 structures, including schools, | More on P6

## PAHALGAM ATTACK

## Pakistan Offers To Join 'Neutral' Probe

KO Web Desk

Srinagar: Pakistan on Saturday offered to join any "neutral and transparent" probe into the Pahalgam terrorist attack that killed 26 people.

"The recent tragedy in Pahalgam is yet another example of this perpetual blame game, which must come to a grinding halt. Continuing with its role as a responsible country, Pakistan is open to participating

in any neutral, transparent and credible investigation," Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif said while addressing the army-cadets passing-out parade at the Pakistan Military Academy in Khyber-Pakhtunkhwa's Kakul.

Echoing his views, Interior Minister Mohsin Naqvi in a press conference in Lahore said, "If neutral people of any third country carry out a probe into this incident, we are ready to cooperate | More on P6

## Omar Questions Offer

Chief Minister Omar Abdullah on Saturday questioned Pakistan's offer to join any "neutral and transparent" probe into the terror attack in Pahalgam that killed 26 people on April 22. "The recent tragedy in Pahalgam is yet another example of this perpetual blame game, which must come to a

## POLICE RAID MORE THAN 60 PLACES IN SRINAGAR, detains 175 suspects in Anantnag.

## India, Pak Fighting For 1,500 Years On Border: Trump

Press Trust Of India

New York: US President Donald Trump has said there has always been tensions between India and Pakistan and the two countries will figure it out between themselves "one way or the other".

Trump made these remarks on Friday after he was asked about tensions between India and Pakistan in the wake of the Pahalgam terror attack in which 26 civilians were killed and if he would be talking to the leaders of the two nations.

"I am very close to India and I'm very close to Pakistan, as you know. And they've had that fight for 1,000 years in Kashmir. Kashmir has been going on for 1,000 years, probably longer than that. And it was a bad one yesterday, though, that was a bad one. Over 30 people," Trump said during a press gaggle with reporters aboard Air Force One on the way to Rome. There have been "tensions on that border for 1,500 years.



So you know, the same as it's been, but they'll get it figured out one way or the other. I'm sure... I know both leaders. There is great tension between Pakistan and India. But there always has been", he said.

India on Wednesday suspended the Indus Water Treaty (IWT) and downgrade diplomatic ties with Islamabad. That call was taken by India after the attack Tuesday in Pahalgam that killed 26 people, mostly tourists.

The Resistance Front (TRF), a proxy of the banned Pakistan-based | More on P6

## Traffic To Remain Suspended On Jmu-Sgr NH Today

Observer News Service

Srinagar: The traffic on the Jammu-Srinagar national highway will remain suspended for 24 hours, beginning Sunday morning, for widening of road damaged due to recent landslides especially near Ramban town, an official said.

According to an order issued by Deputy Commissioner, Ramban, Baseer-ul-Haq Chaudhary, the traffic will be halted on the highway for repair work from 8 am on Sunday to 8 am on Monday.

A traffic department official clarified that the traffic will remain suspended on the 250-km highway, the only all

weather road linking Kashmir with rest of the country, between Nashri Tunnel to Banihal Tunnel -- a 66-km stretch in Ramban which suffered damages at several places especially between Maroog and Seri following multiple landslides triggered by heavy rains on April 20.

"There will be no movement of any kind of vehicle after 5 pm today (Saturday) from Qazigund towards Jammu and from Udhampur towards Srinagar. Load carrier operators carrying perishable items or live stock are advised to load their vehicles accordingly," a spokesperson of the traffic | More on P6

## J&K Ministers Mobilized Across India To Address Harassment Fears

Observer News Service

Srinagar: In the aftermath of the Pahalgam attack that left several tourists injured, Jammu and Kashmir Chief Minister Omar Abdullah has dispatched key cabinet ministers across major cities of India to ensure the safety and security of J&K natives amid reports of harassment.

Deputy Chief Minister Surinder Kumar Choudhary arrived in Mumbai today, where he will interact with students, business leaders, and other members of the J&K community at Sahyadri Guest House, Walkeshwar, Malabar Hill.



Residents wishing to meet him have been asked to contact Vikas Sethi, Additional PRO to the Deputy CM, at 7780926074 or 9622491579.

Meanwhile, Minister for Health and Medical Education, Sakeena Itoo, met the Governor of Punjab and Administrator of UT Chandigarh, Gulab Chand Kataria, at Raj Bhavan, urging immediate steps | More on P6

## Dry Spell, Heat Wave Predicted Across J&K

Agencies

Srinagar: The weatherman here has predicted a dry spell from Sunday and has said that there is a possibility of a heat wave at a few places across J&K for the next few days.

Director Meteorological department (MeT), Dr Mukhtar Ahmad said that the weather is expected to remain generally dry from tomorrow upto May 01.

He added that there is a possibility of light rain and thundershower at isolated places on May 02 and May 03.

The MeT has, however, stated that there is a possibility of generally hot & dry weather over Jammu division with heat wave at isolated places for the next few days.

The MeT has asked people to

stay hydrated & drink plenty of water, fluid & stay indoors and avoid working in the open during peak hours (12-3 pm).

Moreover, an independent weather forecaster, Aadil Maqbool has stated generally dry or sunny weather is expected at most places of Jammu and Kashmir during the next 5-6 days.

He added that between April 28 and May 01, a heat wave-like condition is predicted at some parts of Jammu and Kashmir.

"No rain or any local activity is expected until 01 May," he said. Significantly rise in day temperatures is expected from tomorrow, he said, adding that the farmers are advised to resume farm or spraying operation from tomorrow onwards.(KNO)

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# Trump's Kashmir Slip

After the Pahalgam bloodbath, Donald Trump's ignorant remarks reveal a bigger story: America's long history of missing the plot in Kashmir.

Ahsan Maqbool

Donald Trump's latest gaffe about Kashmir would almost be funny if the stakes weren't so bloody.

Speaking aboard Air Force One, Trump claimed India and Pakistan have been fighting over Kashmir for "a thousand years."

The American President made it sound an ancient war when in reality, the two nations have been locking horns over Kashmir since 1947, when they were carved out of British India.

But Trump's blunder is not just a one-off slip. It's a symptom of something bigger: decades of American blindness to a conflict that's shaped South Asia's destiny. And the timing could not have been worse.

Just days earlier, Kashmir had seen one of its bloodiest attacks in years, setting off fresh fears of escalation between India and Pakistan. The US response? A confused, half-hearted statement calling for "restraint on both sides."

And now, Trump's careless remarks have only deepened the sense that Washington still does not get Kashmir, and never really has.

From the very beginning, America's approach has been a mess of missed chances, half-measures, and wishful thinking.

After the 1947 partition, when Kashmir's Hindu ruler chose to join India despite a Muslim-majority population, Pakistan sent tribal fighters to seize the territory. India responded by airlifting troops. A brutal war followed, ending with a UN-brokered ceasefire and a divided Kashmir.

The UN called for a plebiscite, a vote for Kashmiris to decide their fate, but that never happened. India refused, Pakistan protested, and the US, already distracted by Cold War calculations, started picking sides based on convenience rather than principle.

In the 1950s, Washington cozied up to Pakistan, seeing it as a useful ally against Soviet expansion. Military aid poured in, strengthening Pakistan's army, and by extension, its ambitions in Kashmir.

India, proudly non-



aligned and leaning toward Moscow, grew deeply suspicious. Early American half-promises to mediate only fed Indian distrust, a resentment that simmers to this day.

By the 1960s, with Vietnam spiraling out of control, Kashmir slipped further down America's list of priorities. When war broke out again in 1965, Washington stuck to bland calls for negotiation, unwilling to risk alienating either side.

In 1971, as India backed Bangladesh's fight for independence, the U.S. tilted toward Pakistan, even dispatching a naval task force to the Bay of Bengal. It was a clumsy, Cold War-driven move that alienated India for a generation.

Through the 1980s, America barely noticed as Kashmir's internal politics imploded. A rigged 1987 election fueled resentment among Kashmiri Muslims, sparking an armed insurgency. Pakistan, flush with U.S. aid from the Afghan jihad against the Soviets, eagerly armed many young Kashmiris.

Washington, obsessed with beating Moscow, looked the other way. By the time the Soviet Union collapsed, Kashmir had turned into a full-blown conflict theatre, and America had barely registered the shift.

It took nuclear tests by both India and Pakistan in 1998 to snap Washington awake. Suddenly, Kashmir wasn't just a regional problem. It was a nuclear flashpoint.

The Kargil war the following year brought the two countries to the brink. The Clinton administration, in a rare show of focus, pres-

ured Pakistan to back off. It worked, barely.

Even when these groups attacked the Indian Parliament in 2001 and the Jammu and Kashmir Assembly, the U.S. responded with platitudes. As long as Pakistan was "helping" against al-Qaeda, its Kashmir campaign was quietly tolerated.

India tried to turn the terrorism narrative to its advantage, highlighting Pakistan's double game. Yet, even with growing international sympathy, New Delhi struggled with its own failures in Kashmir. Political alienation, security crackdowns, and a refusal to engage with local leaders kept resentment alive.

Inside the Valley, the sands shifted. Indigenous militant groups faded and got replaced by foreign jihadists. Pakistan-ruled "Azad Kashmir" became a political dead zone, while Jammu and Kashmir became a competing turf war. What little chance there was for a simple solution evaporated.

Yet American policy, even today, often treats Kashmir as a neat Hindu-Muslim dispute. Trump's clumsy talk of Hindu and Muslims "not getting along" is just the latest example. The truth is, Washington has lumped a complex reality into crude binaries.

At the same time, the two nuke-neighbours of South Asia stay at loggerheads. India, the stronger side, believes time is on its side, that Kashmir can be absorbed through patience and policing. Pakistan clings to proxy war, hoping to bleed India into compromise. Neither side has much incentive to take risks for peace.

That leaves the U.S. with a choice: keep managing crises one by one, or finally play a smarter, longer game. That would mean pressing Pakistan to dismantle its jihadi networks, using military aid as leverage. It would also mean nudging India, behind the scenes, toward political reforms and meaningful dialogue with Kashmiris.

Trump's thousand-year fantasy only reminds us how little America has learned. And how much it still needs to.

Writer is a senior political analyst based out of Delhi.

# "Unfair" Treaty

As Delhi scraps the 1960 pact with Pakistan, Kashmiris are once again left asking: when will anyone hear their grievance?

Mumtaz Khan

It took a horrific tragedy — the attack in Pahalgam that killed 26 people — for Delhi to suspend the Indus Waters Treaty, one of the world's most celebrated but deeply unequal water-sharing agreements. In the rush of diplomatic expulsions and border shutdowns, one voice stood out.

Jammu and Kashmir Chief Minister Omar Abdullah, speaking bluntly, said, "Let's be honest, we have never been in favour of the Indus Water Treaty. It has been the most unfair document to our people."

The treaty, signed in 1960 between Prime Minister Jawaharlal Nehru and Pakistan's Ayub Khan, with the World Bank as broker, divided rivers like lines on a map. Kashmir wasn't even consulted.

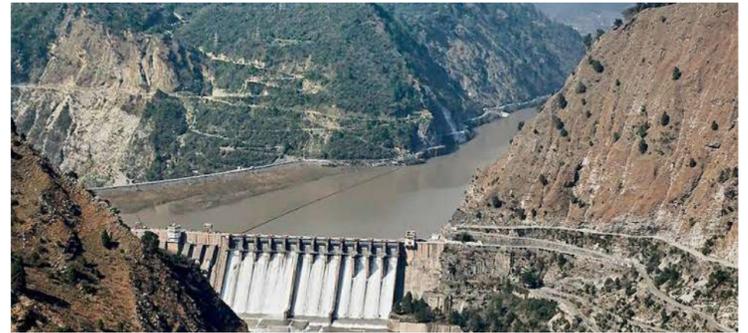
The Indus, Jhelum, and Chenab — rivers

signed over Kashmiris' heads, written in a language that ignored their dreams. Their rivers were treated as resources to be allocated between the two nations, while they themselves were treated as afterthoughts.

This week, when Delhi suspended the treaty, it framed the move as punishment for Pakistan. In Kashmir, the feeling was different: maybe a chance had opened, but maybe old wounds were simply being ignored once again.

The question now is simple: will Kashmir finally get a say in how its rivers are used? Or will decisions still be made in Delhi and Islamabad, with Kashmir left holding the short end of the stick?

The stakes are higher than ever. Climate change has altered river flows. Snow melts earlier. Glaciers shrink. Communities that depend on steady water face growing uncertainty. Kashmir needs dams for drinking



water, irrigation, and flood control. It needs smart, sustainable hydropower projects to bring energy to remote areas.

None of this can happen without acknowledging what the old treaty never did, that Kashmiri people are the primary stakeholders of these rivers.

The Indus, Jhelum, and Chenab are not just waterways. They are part of Kashmir's memory. The Jhelum winds through the heart of Srinagar, carrying houseboats and prayers alike. The Chenab powers through Kishtwar's mountains, a raw force of nature. The Indus sustains Ladakh's high-altitude communities, where rivers mean life itself.

Delhi's decision to scrap the treaty is being hailed in some quarters as strategic boldness. It could be that. But if it simply replaces one form of centralization with another, it will solve nothing.

A new framework must be built with Kashmiris at the center, not on the sidelines. The people who live beside these rivers, farm their banks, and pray that their waters should shape their future. Anything less would be a repetition of history, with all its injustice.

Until then, the rivers will keep flowing, indifferent to maps and treaties, waiting for a fairer world to catch up.

Writer is a Srinagar-based scholar. Views expressed in this article are author's own and don't necessarily reflect KO's editorial policy.

Until the afternoon of 22 April, Pahalgam's meadows buzzed with the laughter of tourists. By evening, they were stained with blood.

Gunmen, faces hidden and motives unclear, fired indiscriminately at a group of visitors, killing a local youth and 25 others. The town known as Kashmir's "valley of shepherds" became, for a few hours, a valley of shock.

The attack was swift, ruthless, and devastating. Videos from the scene captured the stunned faces of victims, their plans for a peaceful holiday shattered beyond repair. Ambulances, too few and too late, struggled to navigate the narrow roads. The sense of helplessness was overwhelming.

In the days that followed, grief swept across Jammu and Kashmir. Shops shuttered, protests erupted, and every political and religious group, often bitterly divided, united in condemning the violence. For a rare moment, Kashmir's fractured voices spoke as one, demanding justice.

New Delhi blamed Islamabad, flew Home Minister and senior officials to the Valley. International allies offered support and urged zero tolerance for terrorism. Amid the flood of statements, hard questions rose: how could this happen in what was supposed to be a "normal" Kashmir?

After the revocation of Article 370 in 2019, the government celebrated rising tourist numbers and new investment opportunities as proof of peace. But initial findings reportedly suggest the Pahalgam attack was an intelligence failure. Despite a surge of visitors at the popular meadow of Baisaran, security forces allegedly overlooked actionable warnings. And that's raising many questions.

The violence in Pahalgam has also fanned an older, uglier flame: Islamophobia.

Across India, Kashmiri Muslim students and traders have been attacked, taunted, and ostracised. They're being blamed for the actions of terrorists they have never met. Videos of beatings and harassment are now circulating on social media, deepening the atmosphere of fear.

It is a dangerous mistake. The Quran, Islam's sacred text, says, "Whoever kills an innocent soul...it is as if he had slain mankind entirely." Yet this central message of peace is drowned out by political opportu-

# Old Wounds Reopen

After Pahalgam, questions surface about the true state of security and semblance.

Ayaan Saroori



ism and communal hatred. Terrorism has no religion, but prejudice does. And it feeds easily on tragedy.

Amid all this, New Delhi has responded with hard steps: suspending visas for Pakistani citizens and put-

ting the Indus Waters Treaty of 1960 under review. These moves are designed to send a signal to Islamabad. But retaliation abroad cannot substitute for reflection at home.

The Pahalgam attack was not just a failure of security. It was a failure of imagination. And that's why Kashmir is paying the price despite being hospitable and heroic in its darkest hour.

The Valley has endured decades of conflict. Its people know better than anyone the cost of violence. What they need is not the mirage of normalcy, but the reality of safety, dignity, and freedom from fear.

Until that is understood, the meadows of Kashmir will remain haunted by grief and by the dreams that never got a chance to bloom.

New Delhi blamed Islamabad, flew Home Minister and senior officials to the Valley. International allies offered support and urged zero tolerance for terrorism. Amid the flood of statements, hard questions rose: how could this happen in what was supposed to be a "normal" Kashmir?

Ayaan Saroori is a Jammu and Kashmir-based writer. Views expressed in this article are author's own and don't necessarily reflect KO's editorial policy.

# As Kashmir Grieves, The Sand Mafia Strikes

While Kashmir mourns the Pahalgam bloodbath, organised criminals loot its hills and rivers, aided by corrupt lots.

Dr. Raja Muzaffar Bhat

When a tragedy strikes Kashmir, there's always a group of people ready to profit from the pain. I've seen it before.

During the Amarnath agitation in 2008, the curfews of 2010 and 2016, the lockdown after Article 370 was scrapped, and the Covid shutdowns, our forests were plundered, illegal buildings sprang up, and wetlands were encroached.

Now, after the Pahalgam killings, it's happening again. But this time, it's not just the forests under attack. It's our karewas, rivers, and mountains.

On Friday, April 25, 2025, I was driving through Darwan village near Charar Sharief in Budgam district. I had gone to meet a friend and we had lunch together after prayers at Wataloo village. As we left around 4:30 PM, something caught my eye. A small hillock by the roadside had been razed to the ground. It looked like a bomb had hit it.

We pulled over and got out of the car. Sand was scattered everywhere. Deep gashes in the earth showed the tell-tale signs of JCB cranes and tipper trucks. Although there was no activity at that moment, Friday being a day of rest, the damage was fresh. Locals told me the excavation had been happening daily, especially after the Pahalgam carnage diverted the police and administration's attention. They work day and night, I was told, using gazetted holidays, shutdown, and tragedies as cover.

I took videos and photographs and immediately posted them online, tagging the Geology and Mining Department. Predictably, they didn't respond. Only Was-eem Gul, the Divisional Forest Officer of Pir Panjal Forest Division, replied to my message. He promised action. The next day, he even shared a copy of an official letter he had sent to his team. The local



forest officers called me too, assuring me they would act.

I also informed the new SHO of Charar Sharief, Mudasir Nazar, who is known for being active and people-friendly. I'm hopeful he will help curb this illegal mining and identify the police personnel who may be supporting these criminals.

That night, I couldn't sleep. Images of the wounded hills haunted me. I decided I had to escalate the issue.

The next morning, I wrote to the Jammu and Kashmir Pollution Control Committee, asking them to impose Environmental Compensation on both the violators and the Geology and Mining Department. I addressed the letter to Chairperson Vadu Yadav and Member Secretary Ghanshyam Singh.

**TECHNOLOGY LIKE DRONES, ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE, AND CCTV surveillance could have transformed the situation. But the officials don't want that. They don't want to lose their cuts from the sand mafia's profits.**

The responsibility to stop illegal mining lies with the District Mineral Officers (DMOs) of the Geology and Mining Department. But many of them, it appears, are working hand in glove with the mafia. For years, I've been raising alarms about the destruction of karewas and riverbeds across Budgam and elsewhere, but there has been no serious action.

Since the Pahalgam tragedy, the looting has only worsened. Even the remote mountain slopes near Charar Sharief are being gouged out for clay and sand. It's as if the criminals have no fear. And why would they? When the officials themselves are complicit, there's no one left to enforce the law.

I keep asking myself: isn't it the government's job to protect these resources? Isn't it a crime to let our land be torn apart this way?

Other parts of India have taken serious steps to control illegal mining. In 2021, the Goa bench of the Bombay High Court slammed the police for failing to curb sand mining in rivers and ordered the seizure of illegal boats and trucks. In Uttar Pradesh, after an Allahabad High Court order in 2016, the government installed CCTV cameras and even deployed drones around rivers and mining sites. Tamil Nadu's Madras High Court issued similar orders in 2018 to protect the Cauvery and Coleroon riverbeds.

But in Jammu and Kashmir, despite earning over 130 crore rupees from riverbed mining leases, the Geology and Mining Department has not installed a single CCTV camera at mining sites. They haven't even bothered to monitor their tax posts. This is not negli-

gence. This is collusion.

For years, I have demanded that they install surveillance systems along the Doodh Ganga, Shali Ganga, Romshi, Rambiara, Sasara, Sukhnag rivers, and the karewas. Every request has been ignored. It's obvious why: transparency would end the racket.

Technology like drones, artificial intelligence, and CCTV surveillance could have transformed the situation. But the officials don't want that. They don't want to lose their cuts from the sand mafia's profits.

I'm not speaking from frustration alone. In March 2022, the National Green Tribunal imposed a penalty of one crore rupees on the Geology and Mining Department in a case I had filed, for facilitating illegal riverbed mining in the Doodh Ganga. Even that massive fine hasn't deterred them.

Now, while the entire nation mourns the deaths at Pahalgam, the same department is turning a blind eye to the destruction of karewas and hills in Budgam.

I have already written to the Pollution Control Committee to take strict action. If they fail, I will have no option but to approach the National Green Tribunal once again.

Our rivers, our mountains, our karewas, they belong to all of us. They are not the property of a few criminals and their friends in the government. If the state won't act, the citizens must.

Because if we don't fight for our land, who will?

*Dr Raja Muzaffar Bhat is an Acumen Fellow, Chair of the J&K RTI Movement, head of the Climate Action Group, and an Anant Fellow for Climate Action. Views expressed in the article are the author's own and do not necessarily represent the editorial stance of Kashmir Observer.*

## The Peacemaker Kashmir Never Forgot

In a land torn by tempers and tension, Maulana Mustafa Hussain Ansari was a go-to pacifist. His life's work was not to lead with pitch, but to heal with patience.

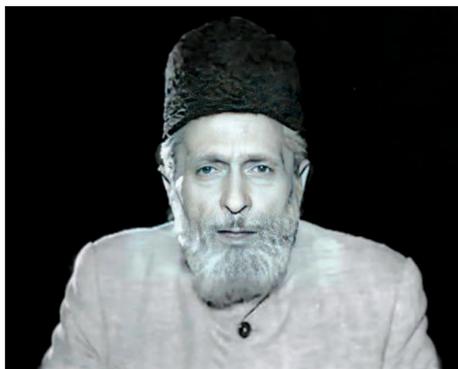
Dabirah Hassan

Whenever tensions flared in his life and times, it was Maulana Mustafa Hussain Ansari people often turned to first. No matter how deep the mistrust, no matter how angry the streets grew, he would find a way to bring calm back into the room.

He did not do it by preaching from high pulpits or shouting across walls. He simply showed up, listened carefully, and spoke in a way that made even the most furious voices slow down. His strength was not in the size of his following. It was in the steadiness of his presence. It had always been like that. Maulana Mustafa chose the slower road when quicker, louder roads were available.

After years of study in the seminaries of Najaf, he returned home to a Kashmir already cracking under political and sectarian pressure. Some scholars stayed away from the mess. Some picked sides. Maulana Mustafa did neither. He believed that the real work was not in winning arguments but in winning hearts.

He carried his knowledge lightly. People said that even when he spoke on complicated matters of faith, his language stayed simple enough for a farmer to understand. He translated heavy, sacred texts into Urdu and Kashmiri because he wanted the common man to find a way into



those books. His commentaries and novels, more than forty in number, traveled from village to village, often by word of mouth.

Maulana Mustafa warned against the dangers of blind loyalty. He reminded people that no leader or group should be followed without question. In a time when picking sides often felt like the only way to survive, he asked for something harder. He asked for patience and thoughtfulness.

When anger broke out in neighborhoods or families, it was often him that both sides trusted enough to call. He did not come in waving flags or issuing fatwas. He came in quietly, sat among them, and helped them remember that they were tied to each other in deeper ways than they sometimes knew.

His novels, like Inteqam and Qabeelah, were not just

stories but warnings. They showed how small grudges could harden into battles, and how forgiveness, though harder, was the only real victory.

Later in life, when sickness made walking and speaking harder, Maulana Mustafa turned to poetry. His verses, collected in Safar-e-Nataam — The Incomplete Journey — were filled with the soft sadness of a man who knew that not every seed planted in a lifetime would bloom in his own time.

Today, nineteen years after his death, he remains mostly a memory spoken in low tones. His books gather dust in libraries. His poetry sits quietly on shelves. But among those who still believe that peace is something you build quietly, person by person, Maulana Mustafa Hussain Ansari remains a light that has not gone out.

## Valley Finds Voice

Emraan Hashmi's restrained performance highlights a film that sidesteps jingoism to find a more human story in Kashmir's ongoing tragedy.

Shubam Mehra

Ground Zero arrives at a time when Kashmir is at the center of heated debates, often portrayed as a place of violence and stark political divides. Yet, Tejas Prabha Vijay Deoskar's film takes a different approach, choosing to explore the quieter, more complex human side of this ongoing conflict.

While not without its flaws, the flick presents a refreshing break from the typical action-packed, revenge-driven narratives associated with Kashmir in mainstream cinema.

Emraan Hashmi steps away from his usual roles to deliver a quietly powerful performance as Narendra Nath Dhar Dubey, a BSF officer in Srinagar tasked with neutralizing a terrorist network led by Ghazi Baba.

What's remarkable about Hashmi's portrayal is the restraint he brings to a character who could have easily veered into the territory of a jingoistic hero. Dubey isn't just a soldier; he's a man caught in the web of duty, morality, and the weight of the personal sacrifices that come with it.

Unlike many films that focus on the heroics of soldiers, Ground Zero goes deeper, presenting the emotional toll on the men who risk their lives daily.

The film sheds light on the constant danger faced by BSF officers and the grim realities of life in a conflict zone. It also provides a nuanced portrayal of Kashmiris, showing them not merely as victims or perpetrators, but as people navigating an incredibly complex, often



dangerous, landscape.

A poignant moment in the film shows Dubey's daughter wishing for a life where she doesn't have to face armed soldiers as she goes to school. An innocent dream that feels distant, but one worth fighting for. This moment encapsulates the film's core, suggesting that amidst the violence, the true struggle is for peace, for a future free of fear.

What sets Ground Zero apart from its peers is its refusal to indulge in war cries. There's no hero rising above a sea of enemies, no glorification of violence as a solu-

tion. Instead, the film gives us a more intimate view of the valley, where both the security forces and the locals are struggling with their own set of burdens. It doesn't present a simple dichotomy of good versus evil but, instead, paints a picture of a region where everyone is caught in a difficult, morally ambiguous situation.

However, the film is not without its flaws. The pacing at times feels uneven, especially in the second half, where the action picks up and certain storylines feel rushed. Characters such as Zoya Hussain's in-

telligence officer and the Delhi-based officers are not given enough room to develop, leaving them feeling somewhat one-dimensional in an otherwise complex narrative.

Yet, in spite of these shortcomings, Ground Zero remains a standout. It doesn't just ask questions. It shows that, in the end, the most significant battle is not against the enemy, but for the humanity and future of the people caught in the middle.

*The reviewer is a film critic based out of Mumbai.*

## LG Sinha Pays Tributes To Maharaja Hari Singh On His Death Anniversary

Jammu, Apr 26: Jammu and Kashmir Lt Governor Manoj Sinha paid tributes to Maharaja Hari Singh, the last Dogra ruler, here on his death anniversary on Saturday, describing him as a statesman with great foresight, Jammu travel guide

"Humble tributes to Maharaja Hari Singh Ji on his Punyatithi. A progressive thinker and a statesman of great foresight, his exceptional contributions to the motherland and unwavering commitment to social reforms and inclusive governance continue to inspire us," Sinha said in a post on X.

Jammu and Kashmir Dharmarth Trust also paid floral tributes to the erstwhile princely state's ruler.

A 'havan' was organised at the historic Shree Raghunath temple in the heart of Jammu to mark the occasion, a spokesperson of the trust, founded by the Dogra rulers, said.

Devotees, priests and trust members participated in the event, which concluded with a collective prayer for peace and harmony in the region, the spokesperson said.

## Govt Ensuring Employment Opportunities Keep Growing For Youth: PM Modi

NEW DELHI, Apr 26: Prime Minister Narendra Modi asserted on Saturday that his Government is taking several measures to ensure that the opportunities for employment and self-employment keep growing.

Addressing the 15th edition of Rozgar Mela after distributing more than 51,000 appointment letters to recruits in different departments of the Central Government, he said it is a time for unprecedented opportunities for youngsters.

In the virtual event, he noted that the International Monetary Fund has said India will remain the fastest-growing major economy, asserting that employment opportunities will be rising in every sector.



The production and export in automobile and footwear industries have hit new records, generating employment in large numbers, Modi said.

Citing the difference his Government has made, the Prime Minister listed out that cargo being handled through inland water transport has surged to 145

million tonnes from 18 million tonnes before 2014 while national waterways have increased from five to 110, and their length from 2,700 km to over 5,000 km.

The prime minister said a big highlight was that growth has been inclusive and noted that the participation of women has risen in every sector.

Three of the five toppers in this year's UPSC exam are women, he said, adding over 90 lakh self-help groups have more than 10 crore women working for them.

India's women power is scaling new heights in fields ranging from bureaucracy to space and science, and the government is also focusing on empowering rural women, he said.

In this decade, the youth has powered India's rise in technology, data, and innovation, Modi said while noting that the country leads in real-time digital transactions.

When the youth actively contributes to nation-building, the country experiences accelerated development and earns recognition on the

global stage, he said.

Modi said his government is ensuring at every step that employment and self-employment opportunities for the country's youth continue to grow.

Mentioning initiatives like Skill India, Startup India, and Digital India, the prime minister said they are creating new opportunities for the youth and providing an open platform to showcase their talents.

India's youth are demonstrating to the world through their dedication and innovation the immense potential that the country possesses, he added.

Modi asserted that the World Audio Visual and Entertainment Summit (WAVES), to be held in

Mumbai, will also be a big opportunity for youngsters to showcase their skills on a global platform.

They will also get to understand Artificial Intelligence and immersive media, and the event will infuse a new energy into the sphere of digital content, he said, adding that for innovators in the media, gaming, and entertainment, WAVES is an unprecedented opportunity to showcase their talent.

In this budget, the prime minister said, the Government has announced the 'Manufacturing Mission' with a goal to promote the 'Make in India' initiative and provide the country's youth with the opportunity to create products of global standards.

### CONTD. FROM FRONT PAGE

#### Crackdown Intensifies

past three to four years, has been involved in many anti-national activities, the officials claimed.

At the Matalhama area of the Kulgam district, the residence of Zakir Ahmad Ganie, who has been active since 2023 and was under surveillance for his alleged involvement in multiple terror-related activities, was also pulled down during the night, they said.

With this, five residences of alleged terrorists have been razed.

The security forces have also rounded up hundreds of overground workers (OWGs) and their supporters -- mostly in four south Kashmir districts -- in their bid to track down the terrorists who carried out the attack on Tuesday.

One alleged OWG was killed in firing by terrorists during one such operation in Bandipora district on Friday, officials said.

Altaf Lalli was killed when security forces took him to a terrorist hideout in the Kulnar area of Bandipora district after he pointed out the location of the ultra.

Two policemen were also injured in the firing by the terrorists, who managed to escape, the officials said.

Raids were carried out at more than 60 places on Saturday in Srinagar "to dismantle the terrorist ecosystem", a J&K Police spokesman said. Raids were carried out at more than a dozen places, including Safakadal, Soura, Pandach Bemina, Shalteng, Lal Bazar and Zadibal areas, they said.

In Anantnag district, search operations are being carried out round-the-clock as security forces step up vigilance.

Mobile vehicle check-points have been put up across the district to monitor any suspicious movement, the officials said.

Officials said that joint teams of J&K Police Army, CRPF and other security forces have launched extensive search and cordon operations across South Kashmir's Anantnag District. "As part of these operations, numerous raids were conducted at various locations throughout the district. Day and night search operations are underway with heightened vigilance. So far, around 175 suspects have been detained for questioning to dismantle the support networks aiding terrorist activities," said an official.

He said that to further enhance security, additional Mobile Vehicle Check Points (MVCPs) have been established across the district to monitor suspicious movements and ensure public safety. "Moreover, Cordon and Search Operations (CASOs), ambushes, and intensified patrolling have been launched, particularly in high-density forest areas, to flush out any possible terrorist presence and secure the district," he added.

The police spokesman said extensive searches were conducted at multiple locations across the city at the residences of OGWs and terrorist associates of proscribed terrorist outfits and in the furtherance of investigations into cases registered under the Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act (UAPA).

"In its relentless efforts to dismantle the terrorist ecosystem, Srinagar Police conducted searches across the length and breadth of the city at the residences of OGWs and terrorist associates involved in cases registered under UAPA," the spokesman said.

He said the searches were conducted in accordance with proper legal procedures in the presence of Executive Magistrates and independent witnesses under the supervision of the officers of J-K Police.

They were carried out to seize weapons, documents, digital devices, etc. with the objective of evidence collection and intelligence gathering to detect and deter any conspiratorial or terrorist activity against the security of the nation.

"This decisive action of J&K Police aims to dismantle the terrorist ecosystem in Jammu and Kashmir by identifying and taking legal action

against individuals engaged in such anti-national and criminal activities," he added.

The spokesman said the police remain committed to maintaining peace and security in the city.

"Any individual found furthering the agenda of violence, disruption, or unlawful activities will face strict legal consequences under the law," it warned.

#### LoC Tense, Civilians

also prioritizing the harvesting of crops near the border fence. In Treva, while women clean the bunkers, men are speeding up the wheat harvest. "We are soldiers without weapons and are always ready to face the enemy," declared Seva Ram, a local resident.

Similar scenes of preparedness are unfolding in border villages of Samba and Kathua districts. Mohd Farooq, from Salotri village near the LoC in Poonch, echoed the sentiment of resilience, stating, "The situation is tense and we are as usual standing strong behind our soldiers to teach Pakistan a lesson."

The heightened apprehension is not unfounded. While the Jammu border had remained largely peaceful, the Kashmir Valley witnessed cross-border firing for two consecutive nights following the Pahalgam attack. Although no casualties were reported, these incidents served as a stark reminder of the ever-present threat.

The Pahalgam attack, which killed mostly tourists, triggered national outrage, with Prime Minister Narendra Modi vowing to hunt down the perpetrators and their backers. In response to the attack's cross-border links, India announced a series of strong measures, including a potential suspension of the Indus Waters Treaty, closure of the Attari border crossing, and expulsion of Pakistani military officials. Pakistan retaliated by closing its airspace to Indian airlines and suspending trade.

Adding to the tense atmosphere, a resident of Poonch revealed the palpable fear in the region. "People had forgotten the bunkers but are being cleaned again now for safety as there is an atmosphere of fear, but we hope harmony will prevail in the valley."

Despite the underlying anxiety, a strong sense of solidarity with the Indian forces prevails. "We are with the government, we stand by them. We strongly condemn the terror attack and we are in support of our army and administration. Whenever they need us, we are ready to provide any possible support, even lay down our lives," asserted a resident from the Pir Panjal range.

The fragile peace along the LoC was further strained by unprovoked firing from Pakistani Army posts across multiple locations on the night of April 25-26. Indian troops responded with small arms fire, and while no Indian casualties were reported, the exchange highlighted the precarious situation.

"A potential breakdown of the ceasefire agreement is unfortunate for border residents like us. We are the ones who bear the brunt of shelling, losing our homes, livelihoods, and sometimes our loved ones," lamented Ajaz Ahmad, a local resident.

Saleem Khan, from Karnah, emphasized the disruption of the recent peaceful years. "We have lived in peace for four years, but now uncertainty looms over our lives once again."

An Indian Army official confirmed that the situation across all forward areas is being closely monitored, with the recent firing seen as attempts to destabilize the region. While the exchanges have been limited, the local population remains on high alert, steadfast in their support for the Indian military as they navigate the renewed threat of cross-border conflict.

#### India, Pak Armies

the LoC in Kashmir," a source said. "Indian troops responded appropriately with small arms," they said.

No casualties were reported in the firing.

The Pakistan military has been put

on high alert following India's assertion that it would hunt down the terrorists involved in the Pahalgam strike.

In view of the cross-border linkages to the Pahalgam attack, India on Wednesday announced a raft of punitive measures, including the suspension of the 65-year-old Indus Waters Treaty, closing of the Attari land-border crossing and the expulsion of Pakistani military attaches.

New Delhi also asked all Pakistanis who entered the country via the Attari land border to leave by May 1.

In its response, Pakistan on Thursday announced shutting its airspace to all Indian airlines and suspended trade with New Delhi, including through third countries.

Pakistan also rejected India's suspension of the Indus Waters Treaty and said any measures to stop the flow of water belonging to Pakistan under the pact would be seen as an "act of war".

Amid nationwide outrage over the Pahalgam attack, Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Thursday said the killers would be pursued "to the ends of the earth" as he promised to "identify, track and punish every terrorist and their backers".

#### Govt Issues Advisory

No real-time coverage, dissemination of visuals, or reporting based on 'sources-based' information related to defence operations or movement should be undertaken," it stated.

The advisory also said that premature disclosure of sensitive information may inadvertently assist hostile elements and endanger operational effectiveness and the safety of personnel.

The advisory cited past incidents such as the Kargil war, the Mumbai terror attacks of 2008, and the Kandahar hijacking, when "unrestricted coverage had unintended adverse consequences on national interests".

#### India, Pak Fighting

Lashkar-e-Taiba claimed responsibility for the attack.

In response to the India's decision to suspend the IWT, Pakistan on Thursday threatened to suspend the Simla Agreement and put other bilateral accords with India on hold. Pakistan also suspended all trade, closed its airspace for Indian airlines and said any attempt to divert the water meant for it under the Indus Water Treaty will be considered an Act of War.

Islamabad also closed the Wagah border post, cancelled visas given to Indians under the SAARC Visa Exemption Scheme (SVES) and asked military advisers at the Indian High Commission to leave-mirroring steps taken by India over the Pahalgam terror attack.

#### Ramban Not

in Ramban, the Chief Minister assessed the extent of damages and the ongoing response operations.

Speaking on the occasion, the Chief Minister emphasized that his primary purpose was to reassure the people of Ramban that the government stands firmly with them during this challenging time. He reiterated that despite the tragic incident in Pahalgam, the government continues to prioritize relief and rehabilitation work in Ramban.

"My primary purpose in coming here was to assure the people of Ramban that, although there was a very serious incident in Pahalgam, we have not forgotten Ramban," Chief Minister Omar Abdullah said.

He said that he didn't want the people of Ramban to feel that all our attention is now focused only on Pahalgam, and that Ramban has been neglected. "Therefore, as soon as my work in Srinagar eased, I immediately came to Ramban, met my colleagues, met the administration, and reviewed the situation here," he said.

The Chief Minister lauded the efforts of the District Administration, particularly Deputy Commissioner Ramban, and Senior Superintendent of Police, for their swift and coordinated

response, which led to the restoration of traffic on NH-44 within 24 hours alongside the simultaneous launch of rescue and restoration operations.

He noted visible improvements along the National Highway and other affected regions, resulting in smoother vehicular movement and relief to stranded and affected populations.

Stressing the importance of long-term rehabilitation, the Chief Minister directed the District Administration to identify land for resettling displaced families and to allot five marlas of land to each affected family. He further stated that disaster management planning for Jammu and Kashmir will be reoriented to address the climatic changes witnessed in recent years.

"I have instructed the administration and the Deputy Commissioner that many people have not only lost their houses but also the land on which their houses stood. I have directed the DC to identify an alternate site, and once that is done, we will provide plots of five-marlas of land to the affected families," the Chief Minister said.

Responding to concerns raised by public representatives, the Chief Minister directed the Deputy Commissioner to submit a proposal for the provision of three months' free ration to residents of affected areas.

He also instructed officials to assess the need for a special relief package for individuals who have suffered commercial losses and damages to shops and business establishments, supplementing the assistance available under the State Disaster Response Fund (SDRF).

"Under the SDRF norms, commercial losses are not compensated. Nevertheless, I have asked the DC to prepare a proposal under SDRF provisions, whether for relief to commercial establishments or for providing free ration to those who have suffered the most. We are committed to approving these proposals once submitted," CM Omar Abdullah said.

The Chief Minister informed that funds under the SDRF have already been released and assured liberal financial support for relief, rehabilitation, and restoration activities in Ramban. He emphasized that the government is working through a phased approach focusing on rescue, recovery, restoration, and rebuilding to restore normalcy in the affected areas.

#### 'Nearly 80 Families

also suffered damage in the district due to the natural calamity on April 20.

Chaudhary was briefing a meeting chaired by Chief Minister Omar Abdullah, who reviewed relief and restoration efforts during his third visit to Ramban.

Besides the loss of three precious human lives, the deputy commissioner said over 1,000 livestock also perished, while 11 key locations along the Jammu-Srinagar National Highway were severely affected by multiple landslides triggered by heavy rains in the district.

"A total of 93 vehicles were recovered, and 496 structures sustained damage. Of the 27 Jal Shakti department schemes affected, nine have been partially restored. Approximately 80,498 kanals of agricultural land and 46 schools also suffered damage," the officer said.

He said the district administration has established control rooms and camp offices near affected sites and set up multiple relocation centres equipped with basic amenities.

Forty-five families from Dharmkund have been relocated to NHP Colony, and 24 families from Kow Bagh and Pernote have been sent to Maitra Community Hall, the DC informed.

Teams from NDRF, SDRF, Civil volunteers and various NGOs were mobilised for immediate assistance, he said, adding that 26 ambulances were deployed for emergencies, and the ration was distributed among stranded truck drivers.

In addition, adequate manpower and machinery have been deployed

for restoration work, he said.

Separately, ration supplies were transported on ponies along the Sencha-Bhagna road to ensure delivery to remote households, Chaudhary added.

He also said ex-gratia relief of Rs 1 lakh each has been disbursed to the families of all three deceased individuals from Red Cross funds.

Stressing the importance of long-term rehabilitation, the Chief Minister directed the district administration to identify land for resettling displaced families and to allot five marlas of land to each affected family.

He said the disaster management planning for Jammu and Kashmir will be reoriented to address the climatic changes witnessed in recent years.

#### Pakistan Offers

with them."

Talking about the suspension of the Indus Water Treaty by India, Sharif said any attempt to stop, reduce or divert the flow of water belonging to Pakistan would be responded to with full force and might.

Sharif threatened to use all options if the water of its share was stopped by India.

"Water is our lifeline and a vital national interest, and its availability will be safeguarded at all costs and under all circumstances," he said.

He said the entire nation stood by the armed forces of Pakistan to safeguard every inch of the homeland. "Our valiant armed forces are capable and remain fully prepared to defend the country's sovereignty and its territorial integrity against any misadventure," he said.

"Our armed forces are a symbol of valour, exemplary discipline and unwavering commitment to the nation."

"Peace is our preference but must not be construed as our weakness," the prime minister said, adding that "we will never compromise on our dignity and security of the country".

Sharif said, "Pakistan has always condemned terrorism in all its forms and manifestations."

"We have endured immense loss of over 90,000 casualties and economic losses exceeding USD 600 billion," he said, adding that there cannot be a more powerful manifestation of "our commitment that we will not tolerate any kind of terrorism of any hue and colour".

The prime minister said he regretted that India continued the pattern of exploitation, levelling baseless allegations and false accusations without a credible investigation or verifiable evidence.

Sharif said Muhammad Ali Jinnah had called Kashmir a jugular vein of Pakistan. He said the "globally recognised dispute" remained unresolved despite UN resolutions.

"Pakistan shall continue to support the right of self-determination of the Kashmiri people till they achieve their rights through their great struggle and sacrifices," the prime minister said.

At the press conference in Lahore, Interior Minister Naqvi also demanded "neutral inquiry" into the Jaffar Express train hijacking in Balochistan last month and alleged India's involvement in it.

He said Pakistan is handling the situation which arose after the Pahalgam attack "with patience" and warned India of taking any step towards war.

"Let me tell you, we are warriors and they (Indian) are not. We don't want war. We don't support terrorism. If India takes one step towards war, then we are ready to respond with two steps," he said, adding that Pakistan wants thorough investigation into the Pahalgam attack to reach the "real culprits".

"We call for a neutral and independent body to lead the inquiry. Pakistan is fully prepared to cooperate with any neutral investigators to ensure that the truth is uncovered and justice is served," Naqvi said.

#### Traffic To Remain

department said.

The one-way traffic on the highway was restored on April 23 to facilitate

stranded passengers to move out of Kashmir following a deadly terror attack in Pahalgam a day earlier. The attack left 26 persons, mostly tourists, dead.

In his order, the deputy commissioner Ramban granted sanction to National Highway Authority of India (NHAI) for taking the 24-hour traffic haltage to undertake the widening of damaged road portions in order to ensure the safety and well-being of the commuters.

The four-km Maroog-Seri stretch of the highway was worst-hit in the natural fury, burying dozens of vehicles including trucks and damaging the retaining walls and vehicle parapets.

#### J&K Ministers Mobilized

to safeguard J&K students and businesspeople in the region. The Governor assured full cooperation, promising that the Punjab and Chandigarh administrations would ensure their security.

Ittoo also held discussions with Punjab Chief Secretary K A P Sinha, requesting proactive measures to restore a sense of safety among the affected communities. She has stationed herself in Chandigarh and Punjab and invited anyone facing issues to reach her at 9419004823 or 7006065102.

In Dehradun, the Minister for Food, Civil Supplies, and Sports arrived to interact with J&K students and residents. Those seeking to meet him can contact 9419180515, 9906204222, or 9796491417.

Similarly, Minister Javed Ahmed Rana has reached Lucknow to engage with J&K natives living in Uttar Pradesh. He will be available at VVIP Guest House, Mahatma Gandhi Marg, and will also meet senior officials of the UP Government. Residents can reach out through Muddasir Latifi Tasir (9419168268) or Raiyaz Ahmed (9103792688).

In Shimla, Agriculture Production Department Minister Javed Dar met Himachal Pradesh Chief Minister Sukhvinder Singh Sukhu to discuss collaborative efforts to ensure the safety and welfare of J&K-origin workers, students, and entrepreneurs in the state. Dar, who has set up camp in Shimla for the day, is reachable via 9419032430 or through his Private Secretary at 9622222666.

The deployment of ministers across key cities comes amid heightened anxiety following the April 22 attack on tourists in Pahalgam. The J&K Government has reiterated its commitment to providing all necessary support to its citizens residing outside the Union Territory.

#### Omar Questions

grinding halt. Continuing with its role as a responsible country, Pakistan is open to participating in any neutral, transparent and credible investigation," Pakistan Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif said on Saturday.

"First they (Pakistan) did not accept that something happened in Pahalgam. Then they even said it was done by India. They were the ones who first accused us, so it's difficult to say anything about them," Abdullah told reporters here.

Asked about Sharif's remarks, Abdullah said, "I do not want to comment much on their (Pakistani leaders) statements. I regret the incident, which should not have happened." On the Indus Waters Treaty of 1960 with Pakistan, which India put in abeyance for the cross-border links to the Pahalgam attack, and the dams constructed over the Chenab River, Abdullah said, "Why are you linking the two? What does the water treaty have to do with these things? Whether the Indus Water Treaty is suspended or not, what does it have to do with these projects?" The chief minister was in Ramban to review the restoration of essential services following flash floods and mudslides in the region.

During his visit, Abdullah went to the flash flood-hit Dharam Kund village, where three persons were killed and dozens of houses were damaged on April 20.

## 2 Minute Silence Observed For Pahalgam Terror Victims On Jammu border

Press Trust Of India

**JAMMU:** A two-minute silence was observed for the Pahalgam attack victims on Saturday, before the start of the BSF's beating retreat ceremony at border outpost Octroi near the International Border in Suchetgarh sector, an official said.

The Border Security Force, which mans the border and conducts the twice-a-week ceremony on the weekend, also read out the names of 26 victims, mostly tourists, who were gunned down by the terrorists in south Kashmir's famous Pahalgam hill resort on April 22. The 'Wagah-Attari-style'

ceremony, comprising a structured parade by BSF men, was launched in October 2021 as part of the government's border tourism promotion programme.

Last February, an electric-bus service was started from Jammu to Suchetgarh border to help people commute to the outpost.

The BSF, however, on Friday closed an Octroi gate leading to the zero line for the visitors as a precautionary measure.

All the same, the beating retreat ceremony will continue to be held twice a week as per scheduled at 5.30 pm on Saturday and Sunday, the official said.

## Terrorist Hideout Busted, Huge Cache Of Arms Seized In Kupwara

Observer News Service

**SRINAGAR:** A huge cache of arms and ammunition was seized as security forces busted a terrorist hideout in Jammu and Kashmir's Kupwara district on Saturday, police said.

The development came days after terrorists gunned down 26 people near Pahalgam.

Acting on specific intelligence inputs, a search operation was launched by the security forces in the forested area of Sedori Nala, Mushtaqaqad Machil (the Samsha Behak forest region), in the north Kashmir district, a police official said.

He said a terrorist hideout was successfully located and busted during the operation.

A significant cache of arms and ammunition, including five AK-47 rifles, eight AK-47 maga-

zines, a pistol magazine, 660 rounds of AK-47 ammunition, a pistol round and 50 rounds of M4 ammunition, was seized from the site, the official said.

This was a major success, especially in view of indications that terrorists were preparing to carry out activities aimed at disturbing peace and order in the region, he added.

The timely action by the security forces has dealt a major blow to such nefarious designs and averted potential threats to the civilian lives and public safety, he said.

Twenty-six people, mostly tourists, were killed and several injured when terrorists opened fire at a meadow near the popular tourist town of Pahalgam in south Kashmir's Anantnag district on Tuesday afternoon.

## Anti-Corruption Bureau Books Police Personnel In Disproportionate Assets Case

Observer News Service

**JAMMU:** The Anti-Corruption Bureau (ACB) in Jammu and Kashmir lodged a disproportionate assets case against a police personnel on Saturday and conducted searches at his residential and commercial premises here, an official said.

The case against Selection Grade constable Dushant Sharma was registered under the relevant sections of the Prevention of Corruption Act at the ACB Jammu police station, the official said. He said the case was lodged on the basis of the outcome of a secret verification conducted into allegations that the accused public servant had acquired huge assets, both moveable and immovable,

disproportionate to his known sources of income, in his own name as well as in the names of his family members.

The verification revealed that Sharma had accumulated huge assets, including a palatial house, a shopping store with a residential building, restaurants, several plots of land, luxury cars and costly electronic items, the official said.

During the course of the investigation, he said searches were conducted at the residential and commercial premises of the accused at Gadigarh and Miran Sahib in the presence of independent witnesses and magistrates.

Further investigation of the case is on, the official said.

## Training Programme On Natural Farming Concludes At Gurez



Observer News Service

**BANDIPORA:** A week-long training programme to promote natural farming - a chemical free farming involving livestock and diversified crop system concluded on Saturday at Krishi Vigyan Kendra (KVK) Gurez.

KVK Gurez conducted the training programme under National Mission on Natural Farming (NMNF) supported by the Ministry of Agriculture & Farmers Welfare.

The programme aimed to train the grassroots workers-Krishi Sakhis / Community Resource Persons (CRPs) for further dissemination among farming communities, covering all three regions viz Dawar, Bagtore and Tulail comprising 15 clusters.

Two Krishi Sakhis from each cluster were trained making a total of 30 trainees under the ambit of the programme.

The event covered 30 thematic areas discussed and deliberated at length through power point presentations followed with practical demonstrations and field visits.

The programme witnessed participation from District Agriculture officer Bandipora, SDAO

Bandipora, Block Development officer Gurez, scientists from SKUAST-Kashmir, officers from Animal Husbandry, Sheep Husbandry who were entrusted as the Resource Persons as well.

Speaking at the concluding ceremony, Sub Divisional Magistrate, Gurez, Mukhtar Ahmad, appreciated the efforts of KVK Gurez for inculcating skill, imparting knowledge to the farmers for overall development of Agriculture and allied sectors in Gurez under harsh climatic conditions.

Head KVK Gurez, Dr Hilal Ahmad Malik reiterated directions of the Vice-Chancellor SKUAST-Kashmir, Prof Nazir Ahmad Ganai to boost the farming sector with focus on niche crops without promoting any chemical or synthetic application and informed that Natural farming was one such programme to achieve the excellence.

Chief Agriculture officer, Bandipora during his virtual deliberation with Krishi Sakhis stressed upon more practical knowledge and desired Krishi Sakhis to serve as bridge between Research system and farming community especially women farmers who perform most of the farm operations under hill conditions.

## INDUS WATER TREATY SUSPENDED

# Centre To Study Full Use Of Pak Water Share

Press Trust Of India

**NEW DELHI:** The Centre is planning to undertake a study to look into ways to maximise the use of the quantum of water from the three rivers that Pakistan had earlier used under the Indus Water Treaty, now that the agreement has been suspended, officials said.

The proposal was made at a high-level meeting on Friday chaired by Home Minister Amit Shah that discussed the future course of action on the Indus Waters Treaty of 1960, which has been kept in abeyance following the Pahalgam terror attack in which 26 people were killed.

Under the World Bank-brokered treaty, India was granted exclusive rights to the water of the eastern rivers - the Sutlej, Beas, and Ravi - amounting to an average annual flow of about 33 million acre-feet (MAF). The water of the western rivers - the Indus, Jhelum and Chenab - with an average annual flow of around 135 MAF, were largely allocated to Pakistan.

With the treaty now put in abeyance, the government is looking at ways to utilise the water of the Indus, Jhelum and Chenab.

After Friday's high-level meeting, Jal Shakti Minister C R Paatil asserted that the government is working on a strategy to ensure that not a



single drop of water flows into Pakistan.

He said Prime Minister Narendra Modi has issued a slew of directives, and the meeting was held to follow up on them. Shah made several suggestions at the meeting for their effective implementation.

"We will ensure that not a single drop of water flows into Pakistan from India," the Jal Shakti Minister had said after the meeting. Sources said the government is working on a long-term plan to ensure the effective implementation of its decisions.

According to an official, the ministry has been asked to conduct a study to look at ways to utilise the water from the three western rivers.

Experts have spoken about the lack of infrastructure that may limit India's capability of completely utilising the water it gets from the decision to suspend the treaty.

"The real issue is with the western rivers where infra-

structure limitations prevent us from immediately stopping water flows," Himanshu Thakkar of the South Asia Network on Dams, Rivers and People (SANDRP) said.

"We have several projects underway in the Chenab basin that will take five to seven years to complete. Until then, water will continue to flow to Pakistan by gravity. Once these are operational, India will have control mechanisms that currently do not exist," Thakkar had said.

Shripad Dharmadhikary, an environmental activist and the founder of Manthan Adhyayan Kendra, has also cautioned against assuming that India could rapidly divert water flows. "At present, we lack the major infrastructure needed to stop water from flowing into Pakistan," he said.

In response to India's decision on the water-sharing agreement, Pakistan's Senate, in a resolution, has said the move amounted to "an act of war".

**THE PROPOSAL WAS MADE AT A HIGH-LEVEL MEETING ON FRIDAY** chaired by Home Minister Amit Shah that discussed the future course of action on the Indus Waters Treaty of 1960, which has been kept in abeyance following the Pahalgam terror attack in which 26 people were killed.

## Satish Sharma Meets Uttrakhand CM, Discusses Issues Of J&K Students

Observer News Service

**DEHRADUN:** Minister for Transport and Food, Civil Supplies & Consumer Affairs, Satish Sharma today met Chief Minister of Uttarakhand, Pushkar Singh Dhami here to discuss the issues of J&K students and business community in the aftermath of Pahalgam attack.

During the meeting, safety and security of students from Jammu & Kashmir studying in Uttarakhand and the issues of business community were discussed.

During the meeting, Satish Sharma briefed the Chief Minister about the purpose of visit to Uttrakhand. He informed the Chief Minister that J&K Government and people of Jammu and Kashmir have strongly condemned the recent barbaric attack on tourists.

A telephonic conversation was also held between CM of Uttarakhand and CM of J&K during the meeting. The Uttarakhand CM assured that all students from Jammu & Kashmir are completely safe in the state, and the government is fully committed to provide them with all the required support and assistance.

The Uttrakhand CM emphasized that the state government is making every effort to ensure a bright future for the students.

The Chief Minister and Satish Sharma also discussed strengthening the coordination and co-operation between Uttarakhand and Jammu & Kashmir.



Earlier, Minister for Transport and Food, Civil Supplies & Consumer Affairs, Satish Sharma held series of meetings with the Uttarakhand Administration in Dehradun to address the concerns of students from Jammu and Kashmir studying in various universities and professional colleges, as well as businessmen operating in the city, besides individuals from J&K.

The visit was undertaken by Satish Sharma on the directions of Chief Minister, Omar Abdullah.

During his interactions and deliberations, Sharma raised several issues related to the safety and security of the J&K students and business community, especially in the wake of recent tragic attack in Pahalgam, Jammu and Kashmir. He urged the administration to take proactive measures to instil a sense of security among the affected groups.

The Dehradun Administration assured the Minister of full cooperation and assured him the safety and well-being of all residents and students from Jammu and Kashmir in Dehradun.

As part of his visit, Sharma personally interacted with a cross-section of J&K students

and business professionals based in Dehradun and nearby areas. He also connected with several students, businessmen, labourers, travellers etc over the phone to address their concerns, given the prevailing situation. Based on the feedback obtained from by these individuals, Satish Sharma discussed the same with the concerned authorities of the Uttrakhand for immediate redressal.

The Minister reassured the students and the community that the Omar Abdullah-led government is fully committed towards welfare and security of its citizens across the country. He encouraged them to use the helpline numbers circulated by the J&K Government for any assistance or emergencies.

Later, Satish Sharma also visited DIT University, Maya Devi University, UPES university, the Wildlife Institute of India and several other institutions in Dehradun to discuss security concerns of students with college Administrations. He also interacted with students from J&K in these universities.

## Neglected DRAINAGE Crisis At Barsoo

# Residents Appeal For Urgent Intervention

Observer News Service

**AWANTIPORA:** Residents of Barsoo village in Tehsil Awantipora have raised serious concerns over a critical drainage issue at Main Stop Barsoo, a problem that according to residents has persisted since the construction of the Four-Lane NH-44 project executed by Ramky Infrastructure Limited.

"The natural flow of rainwater and surface runoff from the upper reaches of Barsoo was inadvertently blocked during the highway construction, resulting in severe waterlogging and frequent flooding in the area" locals said.

Commuters, and businesses have been grappling with persistent hardships and safety hazards due to the infrastructural oversight.

In response to the growing crisis, authorities constructed a narrow culvert beneath the road as a stopgap measure. However, the culvert often clogs and fails to effectively channel the water. Presently, an L-shaped side drain temporarily carries surface water, but it frequently overflows, spilling onto the main road and posing grave risks to both pedestrians and motorists.

Speaking to Observer News Service, Er. Aadil Manzoor Dar, Lumbardar of Barsoo and a noted Social and RTI Activist, said, "The problem has worsened over the years. Despite repeated pleas and representa-

tions to the Rural Development, Revenue, and other concerned departments, there has been no concrete action. We are now compelled to appeal directly to the Hon'ble Lieutenant Governor and Chief Minister for immediate intervention."

Highlighting the residents' key demands, Dar added, "We urge the NHAI PIU Srinagar to construct a direct, linear drainage channel connecting the affected area to the River Jhelum. Additionally, the Revenue Department must conduct an inspection to identify and remove any encroachments that are obstructing the original drainage paths. Without these steps, the problem will continue to endanger lives and livelihoods."

Residents argue that administrative apathy has left them vulnerable to health and safety risks, particularly during the rainy seasons when the overflow becomes unmanageable. "The surface water flooding the main road isn't just an inconvenience - it's a major hazard. Every rainy spell turns commuting into a nightmare," Dar remarked.

The residents have pinned hope that the authorities will act before the upcoming monsoon season further exacerbates their suffering. "We have waited too long. It's time the government listened to the voice of Barsoo and treated this matter with the urgency it deserves," Dar concluded.



## NC Delegation Visits Syed Adil Hussain's Family In Pahalgam

Observer News Service

**SRINAGAR:** The Jammu and Kashmir National Conference delegation including MLAs Altaf Ahmad Wani, Salman Ali Sagar, Ahsan Pardesi, State Spokesperson Imran Nabi Dar, Zahir Abdullah & Zamir Abdullah today visited Hapatnard area in Pahalgam and visited the residence of Shaheed Syed Adil Hussain who gave the supreme sacrifice while protecting tourists in the horrific Baisaran massacre. Together they offered Fatiha

for the deceased and prayed for peace to the departed.

The delegation also included a representative from Raja Rani tour and travels Maharashtra Tour Operators Association Mr. Abhijeet Patil.

The delegation also met Nazakat Shah who was instrumental in saving eleven innocent lives on the fateful day. The delegation members applauded his valour and bravery and said his selfless act will always be recorded and remembered in the annals of history.

### OFFICE OF THE NAIB TEHSILDAR PATTAN

Sub. Issuance of registration order in respect of delayed birth

#### PUBLIC NOTICE

The registrar birth BDO Singapora has submitted a case file pertaining to birth of Reyaz Ahmad Ganie s/o Gh Nabi Ganie R/o Hanjiwera Payeen with verified date of birth 03/03/1988 occurred at home in this connection if any body having objection for issuance of said certificate he may contact to this office within 04 days after that no objection shall be entertained..

SD  
Naib Tehsildar Pattan

### OFFICE OF THE NAIB TEHSILDAR PATTAN

Sub. Issuance of registration order in respect of delayed birth

#### PUBLIC NOTICE

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

SD  
Naib Tehsildar Pattan

### OFFICE OF THE NAIB TEHSILDAR PATTAN

Sub. Issuance of registration order in respect of delayed birth

#### PUBLIC NOTICE..

The registrar birth EO MC pattan has submitted a case file pertaining to birth of Fatima Shah Nawaz D/o Shah Nawaz Rasool Parry R/o Agri Kalan with verified date of birth 18/07/2020 occurred at SDH pattan in this connection if any body having objection for issuance of said certificate he may contact to this office within 04 days after that no objection shall be entertained.

SD  
Naib Tehsildar Pattan

### OFFICE OF THE NAIB TEHSILDAR PATTAN

Sub. Issuance of registration order in respect of delayed birth

#### PUBLIC NOTICE.

The registrar birth EO MC pattan has submitted a case file pertaining to birth of Mehmat Wasim Bhat R/o Wasim Ahmad Bhat R/o Malpora pattan with verified date of birth 30/06/2021 occurred at SDH pattan in this connection if any body having objection for issuance of said certificate he may contact to this office within 04 days after that no objection shall be entertained.

SD  
Naib Tehsildar Pattan

### OFFICE OF THE NAIB TEHSILDAR PATTAN

Sub. Issuance of registration order in respect of delayed birth

#### PUBLIC NOTICE..

The registrar birth BDO Sherabad khore has submitted a case file pertaining to birth of Aleeza D.o.B 19/05/2019 and Ayra Jan D.o.B 16/04/2021 D/o Jahangir Ahmad Wani R/o Hanjiwera Bala Tehsil Pattan occurred at home in this connection if any body having objection for issuance of said certificate he may contact to this office within 04 days after that no objection shall be entertained.

SD  
Naib Tehsildar Pattan

### GOVERNMENT OF JAMMU AND KASHMIR

## DIRECTORATE OF HEALTH SERVICES, KASHMIR BEMINA, SRINAGAR.

Dr. Shakir Farooq Najar,  
S/o Farooq Ahmad Najar,  
R/o 780/79, Khram Srigufwara, District Anantnag.  
NO: Est-3/1-133/2645-48

Dated: 24.04.2025.

**Subject:-Un-authorized absence of doctor and issuance of Show Cause Notice thereof.**

Whereas, you were appointed as Medical Officer on the recommendations of PSC vide Government order NO.750-JK (HME) of 2024 dated 08.11.2024 and posted at PHC Konibal Block Pampore, District Pulwama and,

Whereas, the Chief Medical Officer, Pulwama vide letter NO:-CMO/Pu/MO (Unauthorized)/102/69-70 dated 04.04.2025 reported that you are unauthorizedly absent from your legitimate duties during probation period with effect from 06.03.2025 and,

Whereas, you should note that un-authorized absence from duties tantamount to loss of appointment in terms of Article 128 of J&K,CSR.

Now, therefore through the medium of this notice, you are given opportunity to resume your duties at PHC Konibal, Block Pampore within 10 days from the date of issuance of this notice, failing which it shall be presumed that you are not interested to serve more in the department and action as warranted under rules shall be initiated against you for resorting to un-authorized absence.

DIPK-871-25  
DT: 26/04/2025

Sd/=   
Director Health Services Kashmir.

# Subplots Galore As Evenly Matched RCB & Delhi Capitals Clash At Kotla

Press Trust of India

**NEW DELHI:** Virat Kohli and K L Rahul will headline the battle of anchors while Mitchell Starc versus Josh Hazlewood in the pace department can only add more spice to the contest between the in-form Delhi Capitals and Royal Challengers Bengaluru in the IPL here on Sunday.

Things can change rather quickly in the IPL but on current form, both DC and RCB are expected to make the play-offs. Two points at the Feroz Shah Kotla will significantly help the winning team in that context.

Kohli remains the biggest draw as he returns to his 'home ground' at the back of five half-centuries in nine games. Four of them have come away from



the Chinnaswamy Stadium and despite being in the opposition camp, the Delhi crowd will be hoping the Indian superstar extends his prolific run in the tournament.

Slower surfaces this sea-

son has made stroke-making tougher but RCB's leading run-getter Kohli has thrived on that challenge to flourish for his team. Another batter who has done remarkably well under the circumstances is Rahul,

who has scored the most runs for Delhi Capitals.

Not part of India's T20 set-up, Rahul has forced the selectors to take notice with his stellar performances in the middle order and behind the stumps.

**Starc versus Hazlewood**

The two champion Australian fast bowlers, Hazlewood and Starc, have already showed the immense value they bring to their respective IPL teams. Hazlewood is among the leading wicket takers in the tournament with 16 scalps and effectively won the game for RCB in their previous outing against Rajasthan Royals with an exemplary 19th over.

His compatriot Starc is not far behind on the impact table and coincidentally it was also

against Royals that he came up with a barrage of wide yorkers to seal the game for DC. Their duel will be exciting to say the least.

**Kuldeep versus Suyash**

Kuldeep has foxed the batters in the middle overs throughout the IPL with his googly causing maximum damage to the opposition. Besides 12 wickets in eight games, the left-arm wrist spinner has conceded runs at a frugal rate of 6.50 runs per over.

His presence will pose the biggest challenge to the in-form RCB batters on Sunday night.

Delhi boy Suyash Sharma has also given a good account of himself in RCB jersey and will be using all his local knowledge to out-think the DC batters. Match starts 7.30 PM IST.

## Inter Zone District Level Volleyball Tourney Ends In Ganderbal

Observer News Service

**GANDERBAL:** The District Youth Services and Sports Office Ganderbal, under the supervision of Sheikh Shafiqat Iqbal DYSSO Ganderbal, organised the Inter Zone District Level Volleyball Competition for Boys and Girls Under-17 at the Government College of Physical Education Gadoora, Ganderbal. Teams from all four zones of the district participated in the competitions.

During his visit, DYSSO Ganderbal interacted with the student players, emphasizing the importance of maintaining physical fitness and adopting a healthy lifestyle through regular



sports activities. Later, Shafiqat Iqbal felicitated the winner and runner-up teams with trophies.

Zone Tullamulla showcased exceptional performance and clinched the titles in both the boys' and

girls' categories, while Zone Ganderbal secured the runner-up position in both events.

Meanwhile, Inter School Zonal Level competitions are being held across various zones of the district.

## Newcastle, Chelsea Win To Boost Top-Five Hopes In Premier League

Agencies

**LONDON:** Newcastle and Chelsea picked up victories in the Premier League on Saturday to move into the Champions League qualification positions as Ipswich became the third and final team to be relegated.

On the day Newcastle manager Eddie Howe returned to the dugout after recovering from pneumonia, his team's 3-0 win over Ipswich at St. James' Park was significant at both ends of the standings.

Newcastle jumped into third place in the congested race to finish in the top five and secure a spot in next season's Champions League. Meanwhile, Ipswich's return to the Championship was confirmed, with the team partly owned by pop star Ed Sheeran joining Southampton and Leicester back in the second tier.

It's the second straight season that the three promoted clubs have gone straight back down.

Chelsea climbed into fifth place, two points be-



hind Newcastle and one behind Manchester City, by beating Everton 1-0 thanks to Nicolas Jackson's first-half goal.

Just five points separate Newcastle and seventh-place Aston Villa, which wasn't in action in the Premier League on Saturday. Instead, Villa was playing Crystal Palace at Wembley Stadium in the first of the FA Cup semifinals.

In other league results, Jamie Vardy's long goodbye to Leicester — after confirming Thursday he'd be leaving at the end of the season — began with having a penalty saved in a 3-0 loss at Wolverham-

pton. Matheus Cunha, linked heavily with a summer move to Manchester United, scored one goal and set up two for Wolves.

Last-place Southampton conceded in stoppage time to lose 2-1 at home to Fulham and stay on 11 points — tied for the lowest-ever tally for a single season in the Premier League, set by Derby County in the 2007-08 season.

Brighton scored in the 89th minute and again in stoppage time to secure a 3-2 win over West Ham, whose winless run extended to seven games under recently hired manager Graham Potter — formerly of Brighton.

## 300 Is Possible In IPL, Any Team Can Do It: Rinku Singh

Press Trust of India

**KOLKATA:** Kolkata Knight Riders' swashbuckling batter Rinku Singh feels the Indian Premier League has now reached a stage where a team breaching the magical 300-run barrier in an innings won't be a surprise.

The countdown to IPL 2025 was dominated by chatter around the real possibility of teams going past 300 in an innings in this edition of the league thanks to the franchises' relentless focus on sustained power hitting.

During a chat with JioHotstar, Rinku backed the possibility of a team breaching the 300-run mark, citing past successful chases as proof of how the game has evolved.

"Yes, we can do it. IPL has reached a stage where even 300 is possible; last year, Punjab chased a total of 262 runs. All teams are strong this season - anyone can get to 300," the big-hitting Rinku said.

After scaling 250 thrice during their runners-up finish last year, Sunrisers Hyderabad came close to reaching 300 in their opening game this season.

However, they eventually ended at 286/7 against Rajasthan Royals, which was a run short of their own previous best of 287/3 against RCB last year, which is also IPL's record total. Rinku also reflected on his role as a finisher, sharing insights on fitness and composure.



"I usually bat at No. 5 or 6 - I've done that for UP and in the IPL, so I'm used to it. I focus a lot on fitness because with 14 matches in the IPL, it's my responsibility to maintain my body and recover well.

"I also speak to Mahi Bhai often - he tells me to stay calm and play according to the match situation. Things fall into place when you stay composed."

Rinku also opened up on how he continues to evolve as a batter by learning from senior players like Andre Russell in the KKR squad.

"I've been learning since I started playing in the IPL. I observe Russell closely, especially how he bats in the final overs, and how he uses his body to generate power. I keep watching and picking up things from him," Rinku said.

## Kuldeep Gupta To Conduct Kabaddi Refresher-Fresher Course

Observer News Service

**General Secretary J&KK Amateur Kabaddi Association & Technical Director Asian Kabaddi Federation will conduct the Kabaddi Refresher-Fresher Course at Jaipur on behalf of Amateur Kabaddi Federation of India. Gupta will hold the course along with three other members E. Bhaskaran, Jagmohan and Tejnarayan.**

There will be three groups, i.e., One Refresher Course and two Fresher Courses. The first Refresher course will be held from 27th to 30th April, Fresher Course will start 1st to 4th May and 2nd Fresher Course will be from 5th to 8th May in Jaipur.

The validity of the Fresher-Refresher course is three years from the date of last examination & needs to be renewed accordingly to sustain the eligibility for officiating kabaddi tournaments. The Amateur Kabaddi Federation of India will provide free accommodation and food during the kabaddi course.

The minimum age is 21 years and maximum age limit fixed is 58 years for the AKFI or affiliated units & all Certified officials, after attending age of 50 years the official has to undergo a fitness & performance test conducted by AKFI once in every two years.



## Sinner Does Not Expect Easy Road On Return From Doping Ban

Agencies

**Jannik Sinner** held onto his world number one ranking ahead of his return from a three-month doping ban, but the Italian does not expect his comeback to be as smooth when he takes to the court again at the Rome Masters next month.

Sinner has not played since winning the Australian Open at the start of the season and accepted a ban in February following a deal with the World Anti-Doping Agency, which had challenged a tribunal's decision to clear him after two positive tests.

The 23-year-old was allowed to return to training on April 13 and his suspension will end on May 4, before his competitive return at the Italian Open, which gets underway three days later.

Sinner, who spent time building fitness mindful of the French Open starting on May 25, was assured of retaining the top ranking for his



home tournament after his closest challenger Alexander Zverev crashed to an early defeat in Monte Carlo.

"We're training very hard. Hopefully we'll get some momentum going again ahead of the clay season. It certainly won't be easy for me," Sinner told broadcaster ORF Suttirol.

"The first games will be really difficult. But hopefully I'll be able to get back into the rhythm and

then we'll see how it goes."

Sinner, who trained with Britain's world number six Jack Draper at the Tennis Club de Beaulieu in France recently, said there were plenty of positives from his enforced absence from the tour.

"I think at the beginning of the three months, it was quite nice," Sinner added.

"A bit of time away from all the grind, I spent time with family, with friends. I was doing new things and getting to know myself better, finding out where I stand."

"I think it helped me a lot."

**Federer To Serve As Le Mans Starter**

Roger Federer will serve as official starter for this year's 24 Hours of Le Mans sports car race in June, organisers said on Thursday.

The Swiss tennis great will lower the flag to start the 93rd edition of the endurance race at 4 p.m. on June 14 at the Sarthe circuit in

north-west France.

The Automobile Club de l'Ouest invites a well-known international personality to start the race every year. Last year's was flagged away by French soccer World Cup-winner Zinedine Zidane.

"It will be a tremendous privilege to welcome Roger Federer as the official starter of the 24 Hours of Le Mans. His influence extends far beyond tennis," said ACO president Pierre Fillon.

Federer, winner of 20 grand slam titles, said it was a huge honour. "I've always been fascinated by the commitment, precision and resilience it (the race) demands," he added.

Ferrari have won the last two editions. Switzerland's Sebastian Buemi is a four times winner and triumphed most recently with Toyota in 2022.

Other Swiss winners are Neel Jani (2016) and Marcel Fassler (2011, 2012 and 2014).

## Short TAKES

### CAB Pays Tribute To Pahalgam Victims; KKR, PBKS Wear Black Bands

In a gesture of respect and solidarity, the Cricket Association of Bengal (CAB) paid tribute to the victims of the terror attack in Pahalgam before the IPL match between Kolkata Knight Riders and Punjab Kings at the Eden Gardens here on Saturday.

To honour those who lost their lives, a minute's silence was observed before the start of play. KKR and PBKS players also wore black armbands during the match to pay tribute to the victims of the terror attack.

The customary ringing of the Eden bell, which has been the tradition for several years before the start of a match, was not done on Saturday as a mark of respect.

Present on the occasion were CAB president Snehasish Ganguly, secretary Naresh Ojha, treasurer Prabir Chakrabarty, joint secretary Debabrata Das, among others. Also present was former Australia cricketer and PBKS assistant coach Brad Haddin.

Twenty-six people, mostly tourists, were killed and several injured when terrorists opened fire at a meadow near the popular tourist town of Pahalgam in south Kashmir's Anantnag district on Tuesday.

### Mumbai Indians, LSG Set For Intense Mid-Table IPL Battle

Rampaging Mumbai Indians will look to maintain their winning run in a vital mid-table battle against a dangerous Lucknow Super Giants in an Indian Premier League clash here on Sunday.

Placed fourth and sixth respectively, MI and LSG both have an impressive 10 points in their kitty and are only separated by the net run rate, having won five matches each and lost four in nine games so far.

While these two teams will battle for on-field supremacy at the Wankhede Stadium, Mumbai's unrelenting heat and humidity will also play its part in testing the players' readiness to give it all in adverse conditions.

For the visitors, a negative NRR of -0.054 is something they would be keen to improve while hoping that their skipper Rishabh Pant is able to get a big score under his belt.

Pant has managed a lowly 106 runs in nine matches so far this season while shuffling across batting positions to discover what works for him, but none of his efforts seem to have worked for the India wicketkeeper-batter. Match starts at 3:30pm IST.

### Illegal IPL Streaming: Fairplay Hired Celebs As Ambassadors, Says ED

The Fairplay website allegedly indulged in illegal broadcast of IPL matches in 2023, appointed "top-line celebrities" like Ranbir Kapoor and Sanjay Dutt as brand ambassadors to "create a perception of legitimacy and mainstream acceptance", the ED has said in its chargesheet.

The Enforcement Directorate (ED) recently filed the chargesheet against 11 accused, including arrested persons -- Chirag Shah and Chintan Shah -- and firms linked to the scam.

The website is accused of illegally livestreaming the Indian Premier League (IPL) matches and causing "huge" commercial loss to Viacom18, which had the broadcast rights.

Special judge for cases under the Prevention of the Money Laundering Act (PMLA) A C Daga took cognisance of the chargesheet on Friday.

## CARVING LIGHT IN THE SHADOWS



Maulana Mustafa Hussain Ansari

In the sixty-three eventful years of his life, Maulana Mustafa Hussain Ansari waged an unrelenting campaign of reform through his spoken and written word — a mission that history will record in golden letters.

When the Maulana entered public life in Kashmir after completing his education in Najaf, he found a society fractured by factions, mired in personality cults, and steeped in obscurantism. With keen insight into the social psyche, he diagnosed the underlying causes of these ailments early on and embarked on a tireless, often thankless, mission of reform. Undeterred by entrenched resistance, he persevered with unwavering determination, leaving behind a treasure trove of lectures, sermons, articles, and books for future generations of reformists.

One of the most remarkable aspects of Maulana Mustafa's legacy was his transcendence of sectarian divides. Followers from various schools of thought sought his advice, guidance, and wisdom. His universal appeal made him a powerful instrument of peace during volatile times. Time and again, he was called upon to mediate and defuse tensions in different parts of Kashmir — a role he fulfilled with extraordinary grace, wisdom, and dexterity. Even today, the void he left in this critical field is profoundly felt.

Beyond the pulpit, Maulana Mustafa enriched Kashmir's intellectual heritage with his eloquent pen. His writings continue to nourish the minds and spirits of those who seek knowledge and truth.

His style — whether in speech or writing — was uniquely his own. He rendered the Holy Qur'an into simple language, making its profound message accessible to all. His exploration of the eloquent Nahjul-Balagha revealed its deeper nuances and secrets with remarkable ease. With a rare ability to simplify complex theological and contemporary issues, he captivated and educated younger generations.

Maulana Mustafa authored around 40 significant works. Among his major contributions are:

- Minhaaj-ul-Qur'an (an Urdu commentary on the Qur'an)
- Misbah-ul-Quran (a Kashmiri commentary, with two chapters published under Kashf-ul-Aneeq-fi-Sharh-e-Qanoon-al-Ameeq)
- The first-ever Kashmiri translation and commentary on the Nahjul-Balagha
- Aftaab-e-Nabuwat (a biography of the Prophet Muhammad, pbuh)
- Qateel-e-Nainava (a biography of Imam Hussain, AS, published posthumously)

In addition, Maulana ventured into historical fiction, authoring three acclaimed novels: Inteqaam, Qabeelah, and Saazish. Other notable works include Aakhri Tabassum, Mujrim, Al Meezaan, Khayaban, Islam Mein Haq-e-Talaq, Shahrae Hayat, and Mere Jigar Ka Lahu.

His final scholarly work, Rakht-e-Safar, written two years before his passing, reflects on humanity's preparation for the ultimate journey — a poignant testament that mirrored his own spiritual readiness.

In his later years, even before illness set in, Maulana Mustafa became increasingly absorbed in remembrance of the Divine. His poetic talent, largely unknown during his lifetime, emerged posthumously through verses compiled by his close associates. This collection, aptly titled Safar-e-Nataam ("Incomplete Journey"), hints at the many more contributions admirers had hoped he would make.

Today, on his 19th death anniversary, seekers of knowledge and the spiritually inclined continue to remember Maulana Mustafa Hussain Ansari with deep reverence and enduring affection.

MUSTAFA ANSARI FOUNDATION