

Armed Forces Have 'Complete Freedom' For Retaliation: PM

Defence minister Rajnath Singh, national security advisor Ajit Doval and chiefs of the three services attend high-level meeting as India weighs response to massacre in Pahalgam

Press Trust of India

New Delhi: Prime Minister Narendra Modi asserted on Tuesday that the armed forces have "complete operational freedom" to decide on the mode, targets and timing of India's response to the Pahalgam terror attack, as he chaired a meeting with the top



defence establishment. During the high-level meeting, which was attended by Defence Minister Rajnath Singh, National Security Advisor Ajit Doval

and the chiefs of three services, Modi affirmed that it is the national resolve to deal a crushing blow to terrorism, government sources said.

Modi expressed complete faith and confidence in the professional abilities of the armed forces.

"They have complete operational freedom to decide on the mode, | [More on P6](#)

PM To Chair Four Meetings Today

Prime Minister Narendra Modi is scheduled to chair four back to back meetings in the National Capital on Wednesday to review security preparedness in wake of the Pahalgam terror attack that left 26 people, mostly tourists, dead.

According to the details, Prime Minister Modi will chair the Cabinet Committee on Security (CCS) – the country's highest decision-making body on national security – meeting at around 11 am. It will mark the second round of discussions at the highest level since the Pahalgam attack. Security preparations are likely to be discussed at this meeting.

Pertinently, PM Modi had chaired the CCS meeting a day after the Pahalgam terror strike and had announced a series of measures | [More on P6](#)

Parihar, Azeem New HC Judges

Observer News Service

Srinagar: The President of India on Tuesday appointed senior judicial officers, Sanjay Parihar and Shahzad Azeem as judges of the High Court of Jammu & Kashmir and Ladakh.

In a notification the president appointed Sanjay Parihar and Shahzad Azeem as judges of the High Court of J&K and Ladakh.

"In exercise of the power conferred by clause (1) of Article 217 of the Constitution of India, the President is pleased to appoint S/Shri (i) Sanjay Parihar and (ii) Shahzad Azeem to be Judges of the Jammu & Kashmir and Ladakh High Court with effect from the date they assume charge of their respective offices," reads the notification, issued by Union Ministry of Law & Justice.

The Supreme Court Collegium headed by Chief Justice of India Justice Sanjiv Khanna, in its meeting held on April 16, 2025, had approved | [More on P6](#)

Cross-border Firing Intensifies

Pakistani troops continued unprovoked firing across the Line of Control (LoC) for the fifth consecutive night in Jammu and Kashmir, officials said

on Tuesday. In the intervening night of Monday and Tuesday, the Pakistan Army opened fire using small arms at Indian positions in sectors | [More on P6](#)

96 JKAS Officers Transferred

Observer News Service

Srinagar: In a significant administrative shake-up, the Jammu and Kashmir Government on Tuesday transferred and posted 96 officers in the interest of smooth functioning across departments. The reshuffle, which took immediate effect, aims to strengthen governance and improve efficiency within the administration.

Key appointments include Rakesh Magotra, JKAS, who has been transferred from the J&K Services Selection Board to serve as Special Secretary in the Department of Forest, Ecology, and Environment. Naseer Ahmad Wani, JKAS, shifts from Special Secretary at the Jal Shakti Department to Public Works (R&B) Department, while Vir Krishan Dhar, JKAS, moves from the Joint Electricity Regulatory Commission to the Department of Disaster Management.

Among other | [More on P6](#)

Bundled Into Buses, Driven to Wagah Kashmir's Families With Pak Ties Face Sudden Deportation

Farzana Nisar

Srinagar: At around 9:45 pm on Monday, the silence of the night was shattered by the sound of boots marching through the narrow lanes of Khanda, Budgam. Army men surrounded the house of Sanam Fariyal, a Pakistani-origin woman married to a Kashmiri, who had made Kashmir her home since 2017. She now found herself at the center of an unexpected and cruel twist of fate. The military had arrived to enforce an



order she never saw coming—deportation back to Pakistan.

Leaving behind her three children, all of whom were born in Kashmir, Fariyal's departure has created a situation of 'mourning' in the family. "She had all the documents." | [More on P6](#)

Over 1,000 Indians Leave Pakistan

More than 1,000 Indians have left Pakistan for their home via the Wagah border over the last six days after they were forced to cut short | [More on P6](#)

Humanitarian Concern: Mufti

Peoples Democratic Party (PDP) President Mehbooba Mufti on Tuesday urged the government to reconsider the decision to deport Pakistani citizens who are married to Indians and have been living here for many years. She said a compassionate approach needs to be adopted.

"The recent government directive to deport all Pakistani nationals from India has raised serious humanitarian concerns, particularly | [More on P6](#)

Pahalgam Logs Hottest April Ever

Srinagar's Hits 80-Yr High



Observer News Service

Srinagar: Pahalgam, the picturesque tourist resort in Kashmir, recorded the highest maximum temperature in April in the last about eight decades on Tuesday, officials said.

Srinagar recorded the highest maximum temperature in April in the last about eight decades on Tuesday, officials said.

Pahalgam in south Kashmir's Anantnag district on Tuesday recorded the maximum temperature of 27.8 degrees Celsius — 7.6 degrees above | [More on P6](#)

JKBOSE Class 12 Results Today

Agencies

Srinagar: Jammu and Kashmir Board of School Education is set to declare Class 12th annual regular results on Wednesday (tomorrow) afternoon, officials said.

A top official in the Board of School Education confirmed that annual regular results of Class 12th will be declared (tomorrow) on Wednesday afternoon. Results being declared shortly are just rumours, the official said.

It is important to note that more than 93,000 students wrote the Class 12th annual regular examination, which commenced on 16th February.

As per the official figures, 1,02,298 students across Jammu and Kashmir have registered for the Class 12th annual regular examination, out of which 93,586 fall in | [More on P6](#)

CM Reviews Summer Preparedness For Jammu

Observer News Service

Jammu: Chief Minister Omar Abdullah Tuesday underscored the importance of robust inter-departmental coordination to ensure uninterrupted essential services and swift response mechanism during the upcoming summer season across Jammu division.

Chairing a high-level review meeting, the Chief Minister assessed the readiness of various departments to address challenges likely to emerge during the summer months.

Advisor to the Chief Minister Nasir Aslam Wani, Chief Secretary Atal Dulloo, Additional Chief Secretary Education Shantmanu, Additional Chief Secretary (ACS) Jal Shakti Shaleen Kabra, ACS to Chief Minister Dheeraj Gupta, Administrative Secretaries of various departments, Divisional Commissioner Jammu,

Managing Director JPDCL, Commissioner JMC, Deputy Commissioners of all districts of Jammu division, representatives from BRO and other concerned departments attended the meeting both in person and virtually.

During the meeting, the Chief Minister conducted a department-wise review of summer preparedness, covering Jal Shakti (PHE, Irrigation & Flood Control), Health & Medical Education, Power Development Department (PDD), Public Works (R&B), Fire & Emergency Services, Forest, JPDCL, JMC, and others.

Highlighting the need to minimise public inconvenience during heatwave conditions, Omar Abdullah stated, "Coordination between all line departments is vital to ensure uninterrupted essential services to citizens during summer months."

He further | [More on P6](#)



With no tourists in sight, a group of Shikara wallas play cricket in a Srinagar parking lot. KO Photo By Faisal Khan

Pahalgam Crackdown No Innocent Should Be Harmed: Ruhullah

Observer News Service

Srinagar: National Conference MP Aga Syed Ruhullah Mehdi on Tuesday said he supports the Centre's actions to bring perpetrators of the Pahalgam attack to justice and appealed to the government to ensure no innocent is harmed in the process.

"We are with any action, whatever way it is taken, that revolves around justice," Ruhullah told reporters here in south Kashmir.

The Lok Sabha MP from Srinagar visited the family of ponywala Adil Hussain Shah who was one of the victims of last week's Pahalgam terror attack.

"I do not want to do politics or comment over what steps the Centre is taking. The Government of India should do whatever is possible to bring the culprits to justice and give justice to those innocents who



were killed," he said

However, the MP said, the government should make sure that while the culprits are hunted and punished, innocent people are not harmed.

"For that, the Government of India and the forces here should keep in mind that no innocents like labourers, ponywala, taxi drivers, are harmed in the process. If even a single innocent is harmed, it defeats the whole idea | [More on P6](#)

Boom To Bust



DAYS AFTER THE DEADLY PAHALGAM CARNAGE, the official decision to temporarily close 40-odd tourist resorts in Kashmir has further slumped the season."

How Kashmir Tourism Tanked After Pahalgam Tragedy

Farzana Nisar

Srinagar: The wooden gate of Aadil Ahmad's guesthouse in Aharbal swings open every few hours, but no one walks in. The bookings have vanished. The tourists are gone. And the hills above the waterfall, once humming with trekkers and tea stalls, now sit in uneasy silence.

"Everything stopped overnight," Aadil says. "We thought

2025 would be our best season since the lockdowns and pandemic. Instead, it's the worst kind of experience."

It has been just over a week since terrorists opened fire on tourists at Baisaran in Pahalgam, killing 26 people in an attack that shocked even a region hardened by conflict.

Within days, the Jammu and Kashmir administration ordered the closure of 48 tourist resorts across the



Valley. There was no detailed roadmap on how long the closures would last. Places like Doodhpathri,

Bangus, Sinthan Top and Verinag — which have slowly emerged as new favourites among visitors looking for lesser-known escapes — were abruptly closed off.

In Srinagar, even the Jamia Masjid, the historic mosque in the heart of the old city, was temporarily taken off the tourist map.

"No one is saying security is not important," said Shaista Jan, who runs a hillside

homestay in Yousmarg. "But the way it was handled made everyone panic. We had no clarity. Just orders."

Shaista had spent months preparing her home for guests — restocking mattresses, repainting rooms, even borrowing money to expand the kitchen. But all her bookings were cancelled after Pahalgam tragedy, before the new order came as a fresh blow. | [More on P6](#)

Tourism Operators Ordered To Refund Bookings

The Divisional Commissioner's office Tuesday directed all tourism service providers in Kashmir to assist tourists affected by the current situation in the region by refunding booking amounts.

In an official communication issued by the Deputy Director (E&S), referencing Circular No. Reg/100/368/DTK dated April 26, 2025, the Directorate of Tourism, Kashmir, | [More on P6](#)



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'Anaemia In Pregnancy Linked To 47% Higher Risk Of Heart Condition In Child At Birth'

Press Trust Of India

Being anaemic during pregnancy could be linked to a 47 per cent higher chance of the child having a heart condition at birth, according to a study conducted on women in the UK. Anaemia, or iron deficiency, has been studied to be common among people with congenital heart disease — in which one has heart defects at birth affecting the organ's function.

"We already know that the risk of congenital heart disease can be raised by a variety of factors, but these results develop our understanding of anaemia. Knowing that early maternal anaemia is so damaging could be a game changer worldwide," corresponding author Duncan B. Sparrow, from the University of Oxford, UK, said. In this study, published in the British Journal of Obstetrics and Gynaecology, the researchers analysed health records of women who became pregnant between January 1998 and October 2020. Over 2,700 women participants had a child diagnosed with a heart problem at birth, while 13,880 women did not. Haemoglobin levels are measured in the first 100 days of pregnancy, according to the country's National Institute



for Health and Care Excellence guidelines. More than 120 children with congenital heart disease and 390 children with normal heart function were found to have had anaemia. "This is the first study in a UK population that demonstrates an association between maternal anaemia in early pregnancy and CHD (congenital heart disease) in offspring, demonstrating a 47 per cent higher odds of CHD in the child," the authors wrote. In a 2021 study published in Nature Communications journal, the researchers had identified anaemia in pregnant mice as a risk factor for causing heart defects in offspring mice, which was "previously unknown".

The team said that the effects of anaemia in mid-to-late pregnancy on the foetus's development are well understood and include a low weight of the child at birth. However, evidence on the link between anaemia in pregnancy and congenital heart disease in children is "mixed and weak", they said. In this study, the team looked at the link between anaemia in early pregnancy and the risk of the child being born with a heart condition. "Because iron deficiency is the root cause of many cases of anaemia, widespread iron supplementation for women — both when trying for a baby and when pregnant — could help prevent congenital heart disease in many newborns before it has developed," Sparrow said.

PUBLIC NOTICE

My name has been wrongly written in my adhaar card as Ghulam Nabi Lone S/o Mohammad Maqbool Lone while my correct name is Gh Nabi Lone S/o Mohd Maqbool Lone which needs to be corrected. If anybody has any objection in this regard he/she may file them in the concerned office within seven days. After that no objection shall be entertained.
Gh Nabi Lone
S/o Mohd Maqbool Lone
R/o Ussan Khoie fko

OFFICE OF THE ASSISTANT REGIONAL TRANSPORT OFFICER BUDGAM

Subject:- Necessary Correction/change in address in data to the License No.JK-0420160029763 issued in favour of SYED ZEESHAN ALI KAZIMI Parentage SYED MAQBOOL HUSSAIN KAZIMI
Whereas an application has been recieved by one SYED ZEESHAN ALI KAZIMI Parentage SYED MAQBOOL HUSSAIN KAZIMI wherein he claimed that the Name and parentage has been wrongly recorded in the records of Driving Licenses as SYED ZEESHAN ALI KAZIMI Parentage SYED MOHD MAQBOOL QAZIMI Which needs to be changed as SYED ZEESHAN ALI KAZIMI Parentage SYED MAQBOOL HUSSAIN KAZIMI.

Now therefore it is notified for the information of the general public that objections if any in this regard shall reach in written in the office of the Assistant Regional Transport officer Budgam within a period of 7 days from the date of publication of this notice in the daily newspaper. After expiry of stipulated time no objection will be entertained.

Assistant Regional Transport officer
Budgam Kashmir

mcb

Public Notice

This is to inform all concerned authorities and the general public that the parentage details of my children, as listed below, have been incorrectly recorded in the school records. I hereby seek to rectify and update the same to reflect the correct parentage.

The details of the children are as follows:

- Name: Muhammad Zaid
Roll No.: 03 Class: 8th Yellow
School: R.P. School, Alamdar Colony, Lal Bazar
- Name: Ahmad Ibraheem
Roll No.: 18 Class: UKG Green
School: R.P. School, Alamdar Colony, Lal Bazar
- Name: Zikra
Roll No.: 15 Class: 6th Red
School: R.P. School, Mallabagh

The correct parentage to be reflected in all school records is as under:

Father's Name: Gulam Jeelani
Mother's Name: Seema Tabasum
Residence: House No. 16, Baghi Usman Colony 2, Near Chinar Trees, Zakura, Gulab Bagh, Srinagar.

This notice serves to seek No Objection from all concerned individuals and the public at large for the aforementioned correction. Any objections, if any, may be communicated in writing within seven (7) days from the date of this notice.

inf

Office of the Naib Tehsildar Pattan

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

Public Notice

The registrar birth BDO pattan has submitted a case file pertaining to birth of Kamila Shabir D/o Shabir Ahmad Ganie R/o Ganjipora Buran Tehsil Pattan with verified date of birth 30/06/2015 occurred at home in this connection if any body having objection for issuance of said certificate he may contact to this office within 04 days after that no objection shall be entertained..

SD

fko

Naib Tehsildar Pattan

Office of the Naib Tehsildar Pattan

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

Public Notice

The registrar birth BDO pattan has submitted a case file pertaining to birth of Nusrat Qadir d/o Ghulam Qadir Ganie R/o Ganjipora Buran Tehsil Pattan with verified date of birth 04/03/2009 occurred at home in this connection if any body having objection for issuance of said certificate he may contact to this office within 04 days after that no objection shall be entertained.

SD

fko

Naib Tehsildar Pattan

Office of the Naib Tehsildar Pattan

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

PUBLIC NOTICE..

The registrar birth EO MC pattan has submitted a case file pertaining to birth of Mohd Alim Nazroo S/o Shahzad Ahmad Nazroo R/o Aram Mohalla Pattan with verified date of birth 08/09/2016 occurred at SDH pattan in this connection if any body having objection for issuance of said certificate he may contact to this office within 04 days after that no objection shall be entertained.

SD

fko

Naib Tehsildar Pattan

Office of the Naib Tehsildar Pattan

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

Public Notice..

The registrar birth EO MC pattan has submitted a case file pertaining to birth of Ajwa Jan D/o Sonaullah Sofi R/o Palpora pattan with verified date of birth 10/03/2020 occurred at SDH pattan in this connection if any body having objection for issuance of said certificate he may contact to this office within 04 days after that no objection shall be entertained.

SD

fko

Naib Tehsildar Pattan

اطلاع عام

سرٹیفکیٹ میں Basit Bashir اندراج

Basit Bashir Najar جو ہے جب کہ اصلی نام

ہے کو درستی کرنی مطلوب ہے اگر اس کے بارے میں کسی

شخص کو کوئی اعتراض ہو تو وہ سات دن کے اندر اندر B.D.O

گاندربل کے دفتر میں پیش کرے نئے میعار گزرنے کے

بعد کوئی اعتراض قابل قبول نہیں ہوگا۔

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S/O BASHIR AHMAD NAJAR
R/O BAKURA Alusteng Ganderbal
9149912359

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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 Amaan Aijaz Dar s/o Aijaz Rasool Dar R/o Yadipora pattan with verified date of birth 13/08/2020 occurred at SDH pattan in this connection if any body having objection for issuance of said certificate he may contact to this office within 04 days after that no objection shall be entertained.

SD

fko

Naib Tehsildar Pattan

Office of the 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 Mariya Ashiq D/o Ashiq Ahmad Malla R/o Daslipora Singapora with verified date of birth 04/09/2019 occurred at SDH pattan in this connection if any body having objection for issuance of said certificate he may contact to this office within 04 days after that no objection shall be entertained.

SD

fko

Naib Tehsildar Pattan

Office of the Naib Tehsildar Pattan

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

Public Notice..

The registrar birth EO MC pattan has submitted a case file pertaining to birth of Alina shabir D/o Shabir Ahmad dar R/o Rasraypora with verified date of birth 23/01/2021 occurred at SDH pattan in this connection if any body having objection for issuance of said certificate he may contact to this office within 04 days after that no objection shall be entertained.

SD

fko

Naib Tehsildar Pattan

NOTICE FOR GENERAL PUBLIC

This is information for the general public that I have changed my name from (Old name) Parray Sartaj bashir to (New Name) Sartaj Bashir. In future i will be known as Sartaj Bashir.

If any body is haing any objection he/ she may contact Passport Office Srinagar within 7 days. After 7 days no objection will be accepted.

Sartaj Bashir
S/o Bashir Ahmad Parray
R/o Bon- Malkhama Magam Budgam
7006255601

bmg

BEFORE THE HON'BLE COURT OF DISTRICT JUDGE BARAMULLA .

IN THE CASE OF:- Caveat application captioned below:-

- Ghulam Mohammad Bhat S/o Abdul Samad Bhat.
- Abdul Rahim Bhat S/o Abdul Samad Bhat.
- Farooq Ahmad Bhat S/o Wali Mohammad Bhat.
- Hilal Ahmad Bhat S/o Wali Mohammad Bhat.
- Waseem Ahmad Bhat S/o Wali Mohammad Bhat.
- Irshad Ahmad Bhat S/o Abdul Rahim Bhat.
- Mohammad Rafiq Bhat S/o Abdul Rahim Bhat.
- Bilal Ahmad Bhat S/o Ghulam Mohammad Bhat.
- Mst. Fatima D/o Ghulam Mohammad Bhat, all residents of Pallahallan Pattan.
- Abdul Ahad Bandroo S/o Ghulam Mohi-ud-din Bandroo R/o Housing Colony Ompora Budgam..

..Caveators

Versus

Public at large

...Non-caveators

IN THE MATTER OF:- Caveat Application.

May it please your Honour.

The caveators most humbly submits as under:-

1. That the caveators have entered into an agreement for leveling of the land falling under Survey Numbers 3276, 3389, 3391, 3392, 3393 and 3390 of Mouza Pallahallan after obtaining the permission from the government in this behalf, by which the non-applicants/caveators are aggrieved and they are in their efforts to halt the process of levelling of the land in question and the non-caveators may institute suit before this Hon'ble court.

2. That the Caveators through the medium of the instant caveat application seeks to submit that should any motion be made by the non-caveators on the subject afore-mentioned, let no orders be passed in the interim application, unless the caveators are given a chance to present their case against the same.

3. That the caveat is complete in all respects and the requisite document is annexed herewith.

In the premises it is, therefore, prayed that should any motion be made by the non-caveators on the subject, let no orders be passed in the interim application, unless the caveators are given a chance to present their case against the same. For which act of kindness the applicant as is duty bound in law shall ever pray.

fko

Caveator through counsel.

PUBLIC NOTICE

I have applied for the issuance of Pesticides And Insecticide License under title "Kashmir Crop Essentials situated at Wan-ikher Near Masjid Umar . If anybody has any objection in this regard he/she may file them in the office of the Director Horticulture Lal Mnadi Srinagar within seven days. After that no objection shall be entertained
Jahangir Ahmed Wani
S/O Abdul Jabbar Wani
R/O Lalpora Wanikhal Kunzer bmg

SP College Organizes Seminar To Commemorate ‘World Book Day’

Observer News Service

SRINAGAR: Department of Library & Information Science S. P. College Srinagar organized a one day seminar on the theme ‘Read your way: Printed Books vs E-Books’ on the occasion of World Book and Copy Rights Day today at S P College Auditorium.

Principal S P College cum Seminar Chief Patron, Dr. Bashir Ahmed Sheikh addressing the seminar stressed that everyone should read hard copies as well as e-books to shape better human development to serve society.

He further explained Reading books is important because it expands knowledge, enhances cognitive function, stimulates imagination, and develops empathy. It also improves vocabulary, writing skills, and critical thinking, contributing to personal and professional growth. Reading can also be a source of entertainment and relaxation, offering a break from daily stressors.

HOD Department of Library and Information Science Kashmir University, Dr. Sumeer Gul was invited as KeyNote speaker of the event. Dr. Gul presented a detailed paper on celebrating World Book & Copy Rights Day and explained that by celebrating this day humans connect their souls with the books and their authors as well.

In his address to the gathering, he said World Book Day is a global event to promote the love of reading and the importance of

books. It aims to encourage people of all ages to discover the joy of reading, celebrate authors and illustrators, and raise awareness about the power of books to shape our understanding of the world.

The second guest speaker Librarian Govt. Degree College Womens Baramulla, Dr. Ruman Gull spoke on a broader topic ‘Printed books vs e-Books’. He explained the importance of both and said aim should be reading to achieve academic and professional objectives. He briefed the gathering that the choice between e-books and printed books is largely a matter of personal preference, with each format offering distinct advantages. e-Books excel in portability, convenience, and cost-effectiveness, while printed books provide a more tangible, immersive reading experience.

Librarian GDC Sogam, Aashiq Hussain Wafai, invited speaker, spoke on a topic ‘How to assist physically challenged and blind library users’ and provided detailed information on tools which can be used to serve physically challenged library users.

Earlier, Librarian S P College Srinagar, Dr. M Iqbal Bhat explained why UNESCO is organizing World Book Day every year on 23rd April, he informed audience that 23rd April is death anniversary of William Shakespeare, Miguel de Cervantes and Inca Garcilaso and this is the reason UNESCO chose this date to pay tribute to these authors.

Awareness Prog On Welfare Schemes At GGHS Chanapora

Observer News Service

SRINAGAR: To educate students about their legal rights and the various welfare schemes available to them and their families, District Legal Services Authority (DLSA) Srinagar, organised an awareness programme on free legal aid and social welfare schemes at Government Girls High School (GGHS), Chanapora.

The event was held under the guidance of Shazia Tabasum, Member Secretary, J&K Legal Services Authority and under the Supervision of Tasleem Arief, Chairman DLSA (Principal District & Sessions Judge) Srinagar, and Sajad Ur Rehman, Sub-judge/ Secretary DLSA Srinagar.

Para Legal Volunteer, Sai-

ma, who served as the resource person for the programme sensitized students about the importance of free legal aid, how to access it, and the broader role of the DLSA in ensuring justice for all, especially for the marginalized sections of society.

She also highlighted key social welfare schemes that could significantly benefit students and their communities, encouraging them to spread awareness within their families and neighbourhoods.

The main objective of the awareness programme was to empower young minds with knowledge about the availability of free legal services and to instill in them an understanding of the various government welfare initiatives aimed at promoting social justice and inclusivity.

DLSA Convenes Meeting Of Legal Aid Defence Counsels

Observer News Service

SRINAGAR: To assess and enhance the functioning of the Legal Aid Defence Counsel System, ensuring quality legal representation for underprivileged sections of society, District Legal Services Authority (DLSA) Srinagar Tuesday convened a comprehensive Legal Aid Defence Counsels (LADC) review meeting.

The meeting was held under the guidance of Shazia Tabasum, Member Secretary, J&K Legal Services Authority and under the supervision of Tasleem

Arief, Chairman of the DLSA (Principal District & Sessions Judge) Srinagar.

The meeting was chaired by Tasleem Arief, Chairman, DLSA Srinagar/ Principal District & Sessions Judge, Srinagar and witnessed the participation of all Legal Aid Defence Counsels associated with DLSA Srinagar.

The meeting focused on streamlining the workflow, addressing practical challenges faced by counsels, and reiterating the importance of professional ethics and dedication towards assigned cases.

PUBLIC NOTICE

I want to change my name in my aadhar card bearing no 8001 4984 5529 from Shazad Showket (old name) to Shahzada Akhtar (New name).. If anybody has any objection in this regard he/she may file them in the concerned office within seven days. After that no objection shall be entertained.

Shahzada Akhtar
R/O :- Ellahi Bagh Srinagar

jvd

PUBLIC NOTICE

I Mohammad Shafi Wani want to change my Daughter's name in her aadhar card bearing no 3636 3283 1705 from Mehroob Neesa (old name) to Mehroof Jan (new name) . If anybody has any objection in this regard he/she may file them in the concerned office within seven days. After that no objection shall be entertained.

Mohammad Shafi Wani
F/o :- Mehroof Jan
R/O :- Wagam Budgam

jvd



Following the Pahalgam terror attack, security forces intensified frisking and surveillance operations in Srinagar. KO Photo Faisal Khan

Competition Success Corner Inaugurated At Central Library SKUAST

Observer News Service

Srinagar: Sher-e-Kashmir University of Agricultural Sciences and Technology of Kashmir (SKUAST-K) inaugurated the Competition Success Corner (CSC) at the Central Library,, a major step towards empowering students and scholars with specialized resources for competitive examinations and academic advancement. The inauguration was solemnized by Prof. N. A. Ganai, Hon'ble Vice Chancellor of SKUAST-K, who dedicated the facility to the students, marking a transformative milestone in the university's academic journey. The CSC has been established as a state-of-the-art facility, setting a benchmark in the academic landscape at both the national and state levels. With a mission to foster a culture of academic excellence, self-improvement, and competitive preparedness among its students. The event was graced by Directors, Registrar, Dean Faculty of Horticulture, Dean Student Welfare, Heads of Divisions, Faculty

members and students who hailed the initiative as a testament to SKUAST-K's "Student-First Philosophy".

Prof. Shabir Ahmad Wani, Director Planning and Monitoring, SKUAST-K, underscored the strategic importance of such initiatives in enhancing student competitiveness and institutional excellence. Today's world demands more than just academic degrees. "This Competition Success Corner will play a pivotal role in equipping students with the tools, resources, and motivation required to thrive in highly competitive environments. It aligns perfectly with University's vision of fostering capable, confident, and forward-thinking graduates" Prof. Wani said. The Competition Success Corner features a wide selection of preparatory materials for Civil Services, Agricultural Research, Banking, UGC NET-JRF, ICAR JRF-SRF and various other national & state-level competitive exams, he stated. It is also fully equipped with print and digital resources, providing students

with an enabling environment for self-study, group discussion, and peer mentorship, he remarked.

In his address, Prof. N. A. Ganai, highlighted the importance of creating an enabling academic ecosystem that supports students beyond the classroom. The Competition Success Corner is more than just a collection of books; it is a gateway to opportunities. It symbolizes our commitment to nurturing future leaders, researchers, and civil servants, he said. This initiative is part of SKUAST-K's broader strategy to align academic services with the evolving needs of students in a competitive world, promoting a holistic and inclusive learning environment, he stated The launch of the CSC stands as a shining example of SKUAST-K's progressive academic planning - where infrastructure meets inspiration and access meets aspiration. It is expected to significantly enhance student engagement, competitiveness, and career readiness across disciplines.



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HPVT

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It's not just
RECURRENT HANDWASHING AND CHECKING
BUT
UNSEEN PAIN
distress *myths and stigma*
associated with OCD



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- PAMPORE: 01933-294132
- PATTAN: 01954-293507
- QAZIGUND: 01951-296153

HIGHWAY STATUS



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



PRAYERS

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

This Day In History

- 1064- German King Henry IV gives away Utrecht county of West Friesland
- 1315- French chamberlain Enguerrand de Marigny is hanged on the public gallows at Montfaucon after being convicted of sorcery
- 1483- Orbital calculations suggest that on this day, Pluto moved inside Neptune's orbit until July 23, 1503
- 1492- Christopher Columbus is given royal commission by Spanish monarchs Isabella I and Ferdinand II to equip his fleet to the New World
- 1492- Spain announces it will expel all Jews
- 1506- Philip of Burgundy & England sign trade agreement
- 1527- Henry VIII of England and Francis I of France sign the Treaty of Westminster, pledging to combine their forces against Holy Roman 1573 -The spire of Beauvais Cathedral, France, which made it the tallest human-made monument in the world at the time, collapses (never rebuilt)
- 1616- King James I of England leaves Brielle
- 1650- French rebel Henri de la Tour Turenne signs treaty with Spain
- 1661- Tsjing Ts'j'eng-Kung begins siege of Dutch fort Zeelandia, Formosa
- 1725- Emperor Charles VI & King Philip IV of Spain sign Treaty of Vienna
- 1789- George Washington is inaugurated as the first President of the United States of America at Federal Hall in NYC
- 1790- Colonial troops occupy Bonni's maroon village
- 1794- The Battle of Boulou is fought, in which French forces defeated the Spanish under General Union.
- 1798- US Department of the Navy forms
- 1804 - The New Hague Theater opens in The Hague, the Netherlands
- 1860 - Navaho Indians attack Fort Defiance (Canby)
- 1863 - Battle of Snyder's Bluff, Virginia (part of the Vicksburg Campaign of the American Civil War): General Sherman beaten by Confederate forces
- 1897 - English physicist J. J. Thomson announces his discovery of the electron in a lecture to the Royal Institution
- 1904 - Ice cream cone makes its debut
- 1945 - Red Army opens attack on German Reichstag building in Berlin.
- 1945 - Soviet Army frees Ravensbruck concentration camp
- 1945 - US troops attack the Elbe
- 1945 - Record 48 U-boats sunk by the Allies this month
- 1945 - Adolf Hitler commits suicide along with his new wife Eva Braun in the Fuhrerbunker in Berlin as the Red Army captures the city.
- 1961 - Premier Fidel Castro of Cuba receives Lenin-Peace Prize
- 1962 - NASA civilian pilot Joseph A Walker takes X-15 to 75,190 m
- 1974 - US President Richard Nixon hands over partial transcripts of Watergate tape recordings
- 1975 - North Vietnamese troops capture Saigon, ending the Vietnam War
- 1976 - Muhammad Ali beats Jimmy Young in 15 for heavyweight boxing title
- 1984 - 1,700 skiers participate in an alpine event at Are, Sweden
- 1984 - Strong winds cause a 30 min delay in Toronto Blue Jays game
- 1989 - World Wide Web (WWW) is first launched in the public domain by CERN scientist Tim Berners-Lee
- 1990 - US 66th manned space mission STS 31 (Discovery 10) returns from space
- 1990 - US hostage Frank Reed freed after 4 years in hands of pro-Iranians
- 1992 208th & final episode of "The Cosby Show" on NBC-TV
- 1993 - The World Wide Web source code is released by CERN, making the software freely available to all.
- 2002 - A referendum in Pakistan overwhelmingly approves the Presidency of Pervez Musharraf for another five years

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KO VIEW

IWT Under Strain

The Indus Waters Treaty, once celebrated as a landmark achievement in transboundary water cooperation, is facing increasing strain in the wake of the Pahalgam terrorist attack that killed 25 tourists and one Kashmiri pony operator. India has suspended the 65 year old treaty which has otherwise outlived the wars between the two countries. Yet, beyond the familiar script of escalating tensions, the suspension also revives long-neglected questions about Kashmir's own grievances with a pact that shaped its hydrological destiny.

People in J&K have been complaining that the treaty was signed without involving Jammu and Kashmir, even though the rivers originate here. The narrative also goes that the treaty leads to economic losses that amount to billions of rupees annually. Since terminating the treaty may not be legally feasible, J&K leaders have always demanded that the region be compensated for the state's losses under the treaty. Kashmiris thus see the Indus Waters Treaty as a historic injustice that robs them of control over their most valuable resource - water - and stifles their economic growth and energy independence. J&K has emerged as the biggest loser under the treaty with the region struggling to meet its own irrigation and energy needs. Experts estimate that only 40% of Kashmir's cultivable land is currently irrigated. Ironically, despite being rich in water resources, Kashmir remains a power-starved state.

But this discussion has little relevance in the current circumstances when we are dealing with the fallout of one of the most gruesome terrorist attacks. The decision to suspend the treaty has been taken in the light of that. This has thrown the survival of the treaty into doubt, if not now then at least in the long term. The lingering abysmal state of relations between India and Pakistan points in that direction. Truth is that cross-border terrorism from Pakistan only takes the situation down this path. This has already forced the central government to harden its stance on the treaty. In January 2023, India sent a notice to Pakistan demanding modification of the Indus Waters Treaty which wasn't spelled out in concrete detail. Indian government officials mostly sought "renegotiation" or "scrapping" of the treaty. The differences are nowhere closer to resolution. In fact, they are going to become only worse if attacks continue from across the border. At the same time, a water dimension to the Indo-Pak conflict will only add to the fraught nature of the regional situation. In the end, the fate of the Indus Waters Treaty may well become a litmus test—not just of India-Pakistan diplomacy, but of whether justice, security, and regional equity can find a place in the subcontinent.



Why ETFs Matter to Kashmir

Irshad Mushtaq

ETFs, or Exchange Traded Funds, have revolutionized the way people invest globally. They are similar to mutual funds in that they pool money to buy a variety of assets. But there are important differences that make ETFs a popular choice for investors.

ETFs were first introduced in the early 1990s in the United States to offer a more liquid way for investors to access index funds. Over time, they spread to other markets, including India, where they were introduced later but quickly gained traction.

The key advantage of ETFs is how they are traded. Unlike mutual funds, which are priced once a day, ETFs are traded on stock exchanges like individual stocks. This means investors can buy and sell them throughout the day, giving them flexibility and real-time pricing.

For investors, ETFs offer transparency, diversification, and lower costs. They allow individuals to track their investments in real time, providing a clear view of market performance. Like mutual funds, ETFs invest in a range of assets, spreading risk. Additionally, they tend to have lower expense ratios than actively managed funds, making them an affordable option for many.

In India, ETFs have become a core part of the investment landscape. Popular ones include Nifty BeES, which tracks India's top 50 companies, and Gold ETFs, which let investors gain exposure to gold without owning it directly.

As ETFs continue to grow, they offer a flexible, cost-effective way for both new and seasoned investors to manage their portfolios. Whether in India or globally, understanding ETFs can open the door to smarter investing.

Writer is a Srinagar-based reputed financial advisor.

J&K's Shifting Numbers

The growth narrative of Jammu and Kashmir is gaining headlines, but on the ground, inequality, inflation, and fragile livelihoods tell a different story. For many, prosperity remains out of reach.

Malik Daniyal

Jammu & Kashmir's economic outlook for 2024-25 looks optimistic on paper. With real GSDP projected to grow at 7.06%, and nominal figures expected to climb over 11%, the region seemingly signals a return to macroeconomic stability.

The per capita income, too, is set to rise by 10.6%, crossing 1.54 lakh. These numbers, tabled in the latest Economic Survey by Chief Minister Omar Abdullah, make for confident headlines. But they don't convey the discomfort beneath this so-called recovery. Despite the outward sheen of economic progress, the lived reality for many in J&K remains unchanged.

Growth, by its very definition, must be inclusive. Yet in this case, the figures orbit high above the households they claim to uplift. Can a 7% GDP growth rate, without structural correction, deliver not just jobs—but dignity?

The composition of this growth shows that the tertiary sector dominates, contributing over 61% to GSDP—driven largely by tourism and services. Agriculture and manufacturing trail behind, contributing 20% and 18.3%, respectively.

A region with a deep agrarian and craft-based identity is now overwhelmingly service-reliant, exposing it to volatility. Tourism may have hit record numbers in 2024, but its gains remain unequally distributed. Luxury operators thrive while peripheral players, like artisans and small-scale hoteliers, continue to struggle.

This service-sector tilt is further compromised by the informal nature of employment. Most tourism-linked jobs are seasonal, underpaid, and devoid of any social security net. Weavers in Srinagar still earn wages frozen at 2019 levels, even though handicraft exports have reportedly increased. What kind of growth celebrates exports while the exporter's household runs on 5-year-old pay?

The same contradiction plays out in the industrial data. Over 6.37 lakh jobs have been "created" through 1,984 new industrial units since 2019. But a majority of these jobs are in low-value micro-enterprises—food processing units, small packaging outlets, and ancillary services—which depend heavily on government incentives. Such growth may inflate job numbers, but it does little for income security or human capital development. It builds volume, not value.

This fragility is compounded by restricted credit flow. J&K's Credit-Deposit Ratio stands at 62.01%, significantly lower than the national average. This suggests banks remain hesitant to lend, especially to small enterprises and rural sectors. Without access to capital, small businesses remain small, and job creation remains shallow.

But the real question remains: how can the economy grow if its growth is not felt in the wallets of its people? How can growth metrics be truly meaningful if they fail to address the rising cost of living?



This fragility is compounded by restricted credit flow. J&K's Credit-Deposit Ratio stands at 62.01%, significantly lower than the national average. This suggests banks remain hesitant to lend, especially to small enterprises and rural sectors

J&K's current economic structure and government policies need to be critically examined for the underlying issues that hinder inclusive growth. The growth trajectory, while commendable on paper, overlooks the structural inequalities that persist. Without reforms that address these inequalities, the growth will remain skewed. Inflationary pressures, along with a lack of substantial wage increases for those in the informal sector, only deepen the divide.

Government policies have not been adequately tailored to benefit the working class and rural segments, thus perpetuating a cycle of poverty that exists alongside the supposed economic progress.

Rural J&K tells an equally paradoxical tale. Horticulture, now a high-value sector, has slowly replaced traditional cereal crops. While this transition sounds efficient, it has made rural incomes more volatile. Apple prices have become a function of global demand, local weather, and market manipulation. As one farmer in Shopian puts it, "A single bad year wipes out what took decades to build."

The 5,013-crore Holistic Agriculture Development Plan (HADP) aims to stabilize this uncertainty through 29 projects over five years, but its impact will depend less on budgetary allocations and more on implementation, price stabilization, and access to warehousing.

The growing inequality between rural and urban populations cannot be ignored. While urban regions like Srinagar and Jammu see the benefits of development, rural pockets like Kupwara, Poonch, and Rajouri still struggle. These areas have not been able to tap into the same economic opportunities, leading to deepening disparity. If the rural-urban divide continues to widen, the potential for long-term discontent, both economically and politically, becomes inevitable.

Another silent crisis undermin-

ing this growth story is inflation. In 2024, J&K witnessed a 4.5% inflation rate—higher than the national decline to 5%, even as per capita income reportedly surged. Fuel, cereals, and electricity have become significantly more expensive, eating into household budgets.

Daily wage earners, already outside formal employment protections, now bear the brunt of price rise without wage revision. Anecdotes from ground zero tell a consistent story: a construction worker in Jammu spends double on ration today than he did in 2020, but his income has remained flat. Is this the dignity promised by development?

The state's fiscal strategy exacerbates this situation. The non-tax revenue now forms 32% of total receipts, driven largely by increased electricity tariffs. While this may look like prudent budget management, it is effectively a transfer of the burden from the state to the citizen. At a time when inflation is squeezing the poor, this policy shift feels tone-deaf.

The region also needs to address the sustainability of its growth. The environmental costs associated with unchecked tourism, industrial expansion, and the over-exploitation of natural resources remain high. The shift towards tourism-centric development has led to significant environmental degradation, especially in fragile ecosystems like Kashmir's alpine zones.

While economic growth is important, it should not come at the expense of environmental sustainability. The future of J&K's economy hinges on finding a balance between development and conservation. Without incorporating sustainable practices, this growth will be unsustainable, damaging not only the environment but the long-term viability of the economy itself.

Critics may argue that post-2019, J&K has undergone signifi-

cant reforms—land laws liberalized, investment summits held, and infrastructure boosted. That may well be true. Investment in new industrial units has reached 9,606 crore since 2019. But the question remains: investment for whom?

The dominance of low-value sectors, the absence of local procurement mandates, and the failure to build regional supply chains mean that much of this capital flows in and out without anchoring itself in the local economy.

What J&K needs is not just investment, but embedded investment—the kind that builds institutions, strengthens local ecosystems, and trains people rather than replacing them.

In tourism, luxury houseboats and hotels should be mandated to procure at least 30% of supplies locally and reserve a fixed percentage of jobs for residents from high-unemployment districts. Such models are not alien, as states like Sikkim and Himachal have successfully adopted community-linked tourism policies.

The most worrying aspect of the current growth model is its potential to leave behind the very people it promises to uplift. Inequality within J&K is growing—between districts, between urban and rural belts, between formal and informal workers.

While heartlands witness investment, hinterlands still rely heavily on subsistence economies. If growth does not bridge these disparities, it may eventually deepen political and economic alienation.

One metric captures this paradox perfectly: J&K's per capita income now equals 77.3% of the national average—up from 71.9% in 2014-15. This is a positive trend. But to celebrate this without addressing who makes up the 22.7% gap is to mistake arithmetic for achievement.

In economic terms, J&K is facing a K-shaped recovery, where some sectors and regions rise, while others fall behind.

The top end of the economy benefits from reforms, investment, and demand, but the bottom is caught in stagnation. This pattern, if uncorrected, could lead to discontent far deeper than any GDP percentage can measure.

Ultimately, the real test of development in J&K is not whether GDP reaches 7% or 8%. It is whether a farmer in Anantnag, a weaver in Budgam, and a student in Kupwara feel the economy moving in their favor.

Growth must transcend mere numbers and should be an experience that is felt, shared, and lived. Until then, progress remains a mirage, a promise that vanishes upon closer inspection.

As things stand, J&K's economy is growing, but dignity, stability, and hope still wait their turn.

Writer studies at the University of Delhi and can be reached out at mdaniyal.054@gmail.com. Views expressed in this article are author's own and don't necessarily reflect KO's editorial policy.



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Rivers of Trust Run Dry After Pahalgam

The recent terror attack in the Baisaran Valley of Pahalgam, where over two dozen innocent tourists were killed, has left the entire country in mourning. What was once a peaceful, scenic retreat has turned into a site of tragedy. The attackers are reportedly backed by terror groups based in Pakistan. This has reopened a long-standing but sensitive debate: Should India continue to honor the Indus Waters Treaty?

The Indus Waters Treaty, signed in 1960 and brokered by the World Bank, divides control over six rivers between India and Pakistan. India manages the eastern rivers — Ravi,

Beas, and Sutlej — while Pakistan has control over the western ones — Indus, Jhelum, and Chenab. India can use the western rivers for hydropower, but without altering the flow in a way that harms Pakistan.

Even in times of war, the treaty held. But after Pahalgam, many Indians are asking: Why should we keep such an agreement with a country sheltering those who harm our people?

There is talk in New Delhi of using Article 62 of the Vienna Convention to withdraw from or suspend the treaty. This would be a huge shift. Though India is within its rights to review international treaties under

changed circumstances, this move would have consequences — legal, diplomatic, and humanitarian.

Pakistan relies heavily on these rivers for drinking water and agriculture. Any disruption could lead to water shortages, unrest, and economic trouble. On a larger scale, scrapping the treaty could escalate tensions between the two countries and even draw global attention and criticism. The World Bank may intervene again, and India could face pressure from world powers interested in peace in South Asia.

On the other hand, India could use this moment to boost its hydropower potential and speed up water

projects in Jammu & Kashmir. But these take time and planning, and often face environmental challenges.

Some experts believe this is more about pressure than policy — a warning to Pakistan and the world that India is no longer willing to tolerate repeated attacks without consequence. But others caution that breaking the treaty might do more harm than good, especially for a country aiming to be a global leader.

The pain of Pahalgam is real. But India must tread carefully, with justice in mind, but wisdom in action.

Sincerely,
Dr. Rizwan Rumi

Media, Myth and Method

TOURIST TAKE

Kashmir Is Beyond Prime Time Lies

Stranded by a landslide and shaken by tragedy, a tourist from Gujarat recounts how the soul of Kashmir—its people—shone through the darkness of terror and television hatemongering.

Rimmi Vaghela

I'm writing with a heavy heart from Jammu, where my plan of revisiting the paradise called Kashmir were shattered. Not by fear, but by circumstances and the weight of sorrow.

It's April 27, 2025, and I'm sharing my story, hoping it reaches those who still believe in the warmth of humanity over the divisive noise of prime-time media.

My family and I had planned a journey to Pahalgam for April 22–24, followed by days in Srinagar until May 3. The excitement of walking through Kashmir's valleys, breathing its crisp air, and soaking in its timeless beauty kept us awake at night. But when we arrived in Jammu on April 21, our plans unraveled.

The all-weather road connecting Jammu to Srinagar was blocked by a massive landslide near Ramban district. Stranded, we considered the Mughal Road to reach Pahalgam, a grueling 15–16-hour journey. But with young children and elderly parents, the thought of such a trip felt daunting. We let go of that plan, hoping for another way.

Then, on the evening of April 22, calls from family in Ahmedabad flooded in, their voices trembling with worry. News of a horrific terror attack in Pahalgam—the first of its kind in Kashmir's history—shook us to the core.

Twenty six lives lost, countless dreams broken. I won't delve into the details; the pain is too raw, and the stories spun by prime-time channels only deepen the wounds. They thrive on hatred, weaving narratives that pit us against each other for TRP greed and political gain. But I refuse to let their lies define my story. Instead, I want to share two encounters that reminded me why Kashmir remains the heaven of my heart.

Local Muslims, including horse riders, taxi drivers, and tour guides, heroically saved the lives of many travelers. Notably, Syed Adil Hussain Shah made a heroic sacrifice, while Nazakat Ali displayed remarkable bravery in rescuing numerous individuals.

In 2018, after my article "Prime Time Lies" was published in one of the dailies of Kashmir, I received over 400 responses from Kashmiris - ordinary people, CRPF personnel, and others who poured out their love and longing for peace. Among them was Tehseen Khan from Srinagar, a young man who

became like a brother to me.

Our bond, born through emails and shared hopes, grew into something sacred. When Tehseen learned we were canceling our trip, he called me on the morning of April 24, his voice breaking. "Don't you trust us?" he asked.

Those words pierced my soul. He shared how the attack had shattered him, how he saw tourists in Srinagar markets and felt an urge to apologize, to offer chocolates to their children, to ask forgiveness for a crime that wasn't his. "I want them to feel safe," he said, his voice thick with guilt he

Local Muslims, including horse riders, taxi drivers, and tour guides, heroically saved the lives of many travelers. Notably, Syed Adil Hussain Shah made a heroic sacrifice, while Nazakat Ali displayed remarkable bravery in rescuing numerous individuals.

didn't deserve.

I tried to comfort him, to tell him it wasn't his fault, but his heart was heavy with the weight of Kashmir's pain. Tehseen's love, his humanity, is the true face of Kashmir—a face prime-time lies can never erase.

Then there was Muneeb, a taxi driver from Awantipora, who drove us to Jammu airport today, April 27. With thousands of tourists canceling plans and train tickets impossible to find, we had no choice but to book flights, each ticket costing over ₹13,000. It's a bitter pill when airlines exploit desperation.

But Muneeb was different. As we spoke during the ride, he learned of our canceled trip, the landslide, and the Pahalgam attack. His eyes glistened with sorrow. "Please don't give up on Kashmir," he urged. "Come back. This is our home, and you are our

guests."

When we reached the airport, he refused to take his fare. It took every ounce of insistence to make him accept it, and even then, his hands trembled with emotion. Muneeb's kindness wasn't just a gesture; it was a plea for us to see Kashmir's soul.

These aren't isolated stories. Across social media, tourists are sharing videos of Kashmiris offering them food, shelter, and assurances of safety. My phone hasn't stopped ringing with friends from the Valley condemning the attack, their voices united in grief and resolve. This is Kashmiriyat—the melting pot of cultures that Kalhana wrote of in 'Rajatarangini'.

Even families who lost loved ones in Pahalgam are standing tall, pleading, "Don't make this about religion. Terrorism has no faith." Yet, as Kashmiris extend their hands in love, fundamental forces twist the narrative. Kashmiri students in colleges across India are facing attacks, scapegoated for a crime they mourn as deeply as we do.

One more thing, I want to share here. Due to recent developments, many tours originally planned for Kashmir have shifted to Himachal Pradesh. Popular hill stations like Dalhousie, Khajjiar, Chamba, etc. which previously saw fewer visitors, are now bustling with tourists, alongside well-known destinations like Shimla and Manali. Doesn't it indicate anything else?

I canceled my trip not out of fear but because the joy we carried for Kashmir was dimmed by tragedy. The landslide, the attack—it stole our excitement, but it couldn't steal my faith in Kashmir's people.

To those reading this, I request you: don't let prime-time lies cloud your heart. Kashmir is not just its pristine lakes or snow-capped peaks; it's the divine beauty of its people, who, even in their darkest hour, choose love over hate.

I'll return to Ahmedabad today noon, but a piece of my heart stays in Kashmir. To every nature lover, every seeker of beauty, I say this: come to Kashmir. Fall in love with its meadows, its rivers, and its people. Let their warmth defeat the venom of communalism. Let us prove that love prevails over hatred. Kashmir is waiting, not just as the heaven of the earth, but as the heaven of humanity.

Writer hails from Ahmadabad.

ACADEMIC ACCOUNT

When Journalism Becomes Judgment

When tragedy strikes, media coverage can unite a nation, or deepen its divides. Kashmir's recent tragedy reveals how social media disrupted the one-sided story and restored a fuller truth.

Seema Sangra

The power of media lies in its ability to shape public perception, all the more during the crisis. It has the power to intensify the situation during any crisis, mitigate its impact, or distort the truth.

In times of crisis, the risks of misinformation and manipulated narratives grow significantly, making the threat of information disorder more severe. Consequently, the need to prevent and combat such disorder becomes increasingly urgent.

Media's responsibility grows manifold during such times, and it must empower its citizens to think critically and behave mindfully by providing access to multiple perspectives, and positive stories. Media must check the tone of its reporting and restrain from any angle that can instigate unrest.

As a journalism student, we were taught that media must uphold their independence and prioritise the public interest, as they play a vital role in fostering social cohesion, integrating diverse communities, and serving as an inclusive platform for pluralistic debate.

Unfortunately with the emergence of private players, breaking news culture, consistent need to stay ahead from each other, desire for high TRPs, lack of monitoring of ethical journalistic practices, and the wrong precedent set by some of successful journalists and TV anchors have created a culture that is turning the reporting, mostly biased and presents a single story.

During the TV panel discussions, a staple of our modern media landscape, the anchor's role become significant. The anchor's responsibility is to ensure a balanced debate, presenting diverse viewpoints, keeping discussions on track, and verifying facts to prevent misinformation.

Unfortunately, the role in present scenario is misunderstood by the reporters. They believe to advocate a single perspective and anyone that does not agree with it is treated with aggression and disrespect. This unethical conduct not only disrupts the studio environment but also influences viewers at home, who rely on these debates for information, specially during times of crisis.

A good example of media narrative and perception building can be culled out from the Vietnam war. It is often said that America lost the war not on the battlefield, but at home, a defeat significantly

shaped by journalism.

When CBS News anchor Walter Cronkite declared in 1968 that he believed the U.S. could not win the war, his words carried immense weight, fueling political divisions and shifting public opinion. The war, many argue, was not only misreported at the time but is also misremembered today.

A thought-provoking piece in The Washington Post once asked: "Did the News Media, Led by Walter Cronkite, Lose the War in Vietnam?" The very question underscores the enduring power of media framing, a reminder that

Locals opened their homes to stranded tourists, offering free food and shelter. Taxi drivers provided rides to the airport without charge. Youth from the valley organised protest marches condemning the violence, while the business and artist communities voiced their anguish. Prominent bloggers shared heartfelt messages, highlighting the solidarity of Kashmiris in the face of adversity.

how a story is told can be as consequential as the events themselves.

In today's scenario, another major player is social media. From 2006 onwards, with the rise and popularisation of platforms like Facebook, Instagram, Twitter (now X), and TikTok (presently banned in India), there is a surge of citizen journalism, where by users also become the content creators.

The community size of some of the bloggers is larger than most popular news houses and publications. This gives enormous power to these bloggers, besides individual posts at times of crisis bring in firsthand information in real time, sometimes difficult for larger cit-

ies based news channels.

Also sometimes reports by citizens and bloggers bring in the other perspective to larger audiences who are otherwise dependent on conventional media narrative.

In the recent Pahalgam terror attack, while the most of the conventional media specifically TV Channels reported a single narrative, and diverted the discussions to a divisive tone, social media brought forward a different narrative. Ordinary citizens, tourists, and bloggers shared videos, photos, and firsthand accounts that painted a picture of resilience, compassion, and unity.

Locals opened their homes to stranded tourists, offering free food and shelter. Taxi drivers provided rides to the airport without charge. Youth from the valley organised protest marches condemning the violence, while the business and artist communities voiced their anguish. Prominent bloggers shared heartfelt messages, highlighting the solidarity of Kashmiris in the face of adversity.

If not for the counter-narratives on social media, the world might have accepted a one-dimensional version of events, reinforcing stereotypes rather than revealing truth.

This brings to my mind Chiamanda Ngozi Adichie's powerful 2009 TED Talk, where she warned of the perils of a single story. Though in a different context, she says: "All I had heard about them was how poor they were, so that it had become impossible for me to see them as anything else but poor. Their poverty was my single story of them."

Her most striking insight was: "When we reject the single story, when we realise that there is never a single story about any place, we regain a kind of paradise."

Today, social media acts as that liberating force, challenging dominant narratives, amplifying marginalised voices, and restoring the lost 'paradise' of nuance. In a world still prone to oversimplification, that multiplicity of stories remains our greatest defense against misunderstanding.

This time social media changed the single story of Kashmiris!

Seema Sangra, a native of Jammu & Kashmir, is the Program Leader for the Media Studies Department at Amity University, Dubai Campus. With a passion for media and storytelling, she also serves as the Media Advisor to the Kashmir Film Festival.

The Kashmiri Chef Who Serves More Than Food

A Pulwama boy puts his dreams aside to selflessly serve his family and community, balancing work and volunteerism with unwavering dedication.

Gowher Bhat

At first ray in Pulwama's Pingalgam, Junaid Ahmad walks in his barn and milks cows. He moves carefully and cautiously, ensuring his livestock are well-fed before turning his attention to the most important part of his life—his family.

At just 24, Junaid is the sole provider for his mother and three younger sisters. His days are driven by an unwavering commitment to them.

The sudden death of his father years ago left Junaid with a heavy burden—one that few his age could carry.

Yet, he never complains, never seeks praise. Instead, his life has become a testament to the quiet power of love and duty.

His restaurant in Pingalgam, a modest eatery that locals call the best in the area, serves as his livelihood. But his work isn't just about making ends meet. It's about giving his family the future they deserve.

"My sisters' happiness is my first concern," he says with a soft smile, explaining his dedication

to saving every penny to ensure their weddings. His own future is an afterthought.

When Junaid isn't tending to his family or cooking at the restaurant, he's thinking of others.

It is mostly during the month of Ramadan that Junaid's true spirit of service shines brightest. Rather than seizing the opportunity to increase his profits, he shuts his restaurant and volunteers at a seminary for underprivileged children in a nearby town.

For a full month, Junaid wakes before dawn, preparing meals for the children who fast through the day. After hours of cooking and serving, he doesn't just fill their stomachs. He fills their lives with warmth and care.

"It's not about recognition or money," Junaid says, his hands worn from years of work but still gentle. "I do it because it's my duty to serve. These children are the future. If I can help, I will."

His presence, and the food he provides, become a source of comfort. The children see him not just as a cook but as a mentor, an older brother who listens to their stories and shares his wisdom. To



them, Junaid is family.

This deep-rooted sense of duty

extends far beyond Ramadan. If

there is a wedding or a community event in Pingalgam, Junaid is always the first to offer his help.

Often, he'll close his restaurant and join in, personally assisting with cooking and offering groceries from his own pocket. "If I have the means to help, I will," he says quietly.

The people of Pingalgam recognize his selflessness, speaking of him with admiration and respect. Ghulam Rasool, a local baker, says, "Junaid's kindness is unmatched. He only wants to help others." Anwar, the village tailor, adds, "He's a role model. He teaches us that service is more important than wealth or fame."

Through his acts of service, Junaid has become a symbol of compassion and humility in a world often consumed by self-interest. Though his life remains simple, his ambitions are clear: to build a home, expand his dairy business, and one day perhaps buy a car.

But none of these dreams are for himself. They are for those he loves. "I want them [his family members] to be happy," he says. "When they are settled, I will think about my own happiness."

Armed Forces

targets and timing of our response,” a source quoted Modi as saying.

Chief of Defence Staff General Anil Chauhan was also part of the meeting, which was held amid India weighing its options for counter-measures following the Pahalgam terror attack which left at least 26 civilians, mostly tourists, dead.

Modi has vowed to pursue the terrorists behind the attack and their patrons, a clear reference to Pakistan which has a history of sponsoring terror strikes in India, to the “ends of earth” and inflict the harshest punishment on them “beyond their imagination”.

Terrorists had gunned down tourists, who were from different parts of the country, in the popular destination of Pahalgam in Kashmir exactly a week ago on April 22.

This most brutal attack on civilians in a long spell of time in the region has sparked a wave of outrage across the country and a demand for retaliatory action against the perpetrators and their handlers.

The prime minister’s tough assertions coupled with his government’s avowed muscular stand on the issues of national security have heightened expectations of a stringent counteraction from India.

In the past, the Modi government carried out surgical strikes inside Pakistan after the terror attack on army soldiers in Uri in 2016 and the Balakot air strike after the killings of CRPF personnel in Pulwama.

Following the terror strike in Pahalgam, India has taken a series of measures targeting Pakistan, including putting in abeyance the Indus Waters Treaty with the neighbouring country.

Earlier in the day, Union Home Secretary Govind Mohan had chaired a high-level meeting which was attended by chiefs of three paramilitary forces and senior officers of two other security organisations, sources said. There was no official word on its agenda.

PM To Chair

targeting Pakistan.

In the CCS meeting the government decided to put the Indus Waters Treaty of 1960 in abeyance with immediate effect. The integrated check post at Attari was closed with immediate effect. Pakistani nationals who had entered India through valid endorsements were asked to return before May 1, 2025.

It was decided that Pakistani nationals will no longer be allowed to travel to India under the SAARC Visa Exemption Scheme (SVES). All previously issued SVES visas are deemed cancelled. Pakistani nationals currently in India under SVES visas were asked to leave the country within 48 hours.

Other decisions included declaring the Defence, Military, Naval, and Air Advisors in the Pakistani High Commission in New Delhi as persona non grata and were given one week to leave India.

Officials said that after chairing the CCS meeting, PM Modi will also lead the meeting of the Cabinet Committee on Political Affairs (CCPA). Besides the Prime Minister, the CCPA comprises Defence Minister Rajnath Singh, Home Minister Amit Shah, Road Transport Minister Nitin Gadkari, Health Minister JP Nadda, Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman, and other senior ministers.

The Cabinet’s Economic Affairs Committee will meet thereafter, followed by a cabinet meeting.

Cross-border

opposite Kupwara and Baramulla districts in north Kashmir, as well as the Akhnoor sector in Jammu, Lt Colonel Suneel Bartwal, PRO (Defence), Northern Command said the Indian Army responded in a measured and effective manner.

This series of incidents began Thursday night, hours after India announced the suspension of the Indus Water Treaty following the killing of 26 civilians in a terror attack in Pahalgam.

Since then, Pakistani troops have opened fire across the LoC at multiple locations, including on the intervening night of April 27-28 in Kupwara and Poonch districts.

“There have been no casualties on the Indian side,” Bartwal said.

Officials said the security grid along the LoC in Jammu and Kashmir has been placed on high alert. The Army and Border Security Force (BSF) are conducting round-the-clock patrols and maintaining strict vigilance. They are also deploying advanced surveillance technology, including high-tech drones and other monitoring equipment, to track any movement across the border.

The repeated ceasefire violations have caused concern among residents in border villages. Schools have started preparing students for potential emergencies by conducting mock drills and evacuation exercises.

“We are training children on how to take shelter quickly and where to gather in case of firing,” said Mohammad Younis, a school principal in the Tangdhar area.

Meanwhile, authorities on Tuesday announced the closure of several tourist destinations near the LoC, including Gurez, Keran, Tangdhar and Uri. These places had seen a rise in tourist footfall since the February 2021 ceasefire agreement between India and Pakistan.

“The administration has decided to shut down tourism in these areas until the situation becomes clear,” a government official said.

Locals said the ceasefire pact of 2021 had brought a period of calm to the region, allowing people to resume normal life. That sense of security is now under strain.

“Since 2021, we have been living peacefully,” said Nizakat Ahmad, a resident of Uri. “We fear the shelling may return. We have already lost people in the past.”

Parihar, Azeem

the proposal for their appointments as judges of the High Court of J&K and Ladakh.

With these appointments, the strength of judges in J&K High Court has gone up to 15 against the sanctioned strength of 25 judges- 19 permanent judges and six additional judges.

Born on December 19, 1968, in Palmar, Kishtwar, Sanjay Parihar began his judicial career on December 1, 1997. Over the years, he has held key positions, including Principal District and Sessions Judge, Jammu, and Special Judge for Anti-Corruption (CBI cases), handling several high-profile cases.

Shahzad Azeem, who entered judicial service on August 5, 2011, has served as Director of the J&K Judicial Academy and Registrar General of the High Court.

96 JKAS Officers

significant changes, Dhananter Singh, JKAS, is reassigned from the Department of Forest to the Health and Medical Education Department as Additional Secretary. Additionally, Ms. Sonali Arun Gupta, IKAS, has been posted as Additional Secretary in the J&K Academy of Art, Culture, and Languages, and Atul Gupta, JKAS, takes over as Chief Executive Officer of the Tourism Development Authority in Billawar-Duggan.

This reshuffle also includes administrative transfers in key positions, including the housing, education, and tourism sectors, reflecting a broader strategy for improving public service delivery.

The order further stipulates several adjustments and promotions, including the shifting of Harbans Lal, JKAS, to the Finance Department and the appointment of Umar Shafi Pandit, JKAS, as Principal at the Revenue Training Institute in Srinagar.

Kashmir’s Families

She was on a long-term visa that was valid till November 26,” Fariyal’s brother-in-law said. “Her four-year-old daughter, Fatima, has been searching for her mother. We don’t know how to console her.”

On Tuesday, Jammu and Kashmir authorities began the deportation process of 59 Pakistani nationals, most of whom were natives of Pakistan-occupied Kashmir (PoK). The deportation is part of a series of significant actions taken by the government a day after the terrorist attack in Pahalgam, which resulted in the tragic loss of 26 lives.

According to a Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA) order, all valid visas issued by the Government of India to Pakistani nationals, except long-term, and diplomatic visas, have been revoked with immediate effect from April 27. However, it has been observed that even women holding long-term visas (LTV) are being deported.

As per police sources, all the detained individuals had earlier been served notices to leave India by the Senior Superintendent of Police (SSP), CID Special Branch (SB) Kashmir, who also holds the charge of Foreigners Registration Officer (FRO) in Kashmir, they said.

Sources said that the detained Pakistani nationals will be facilitated to reach the Wagah border where they will be handed over to Pakistani authorities after completing necessary formalities.

These deportees were collected from various districts across the valley and transported in buses to Punjab, where they would be handed over to Pakistani authorities at the Wagah border. The majority of the deportees were wives and children of ex-militants, who had returned to the valley under the 2010 rehabilitation policy for former militants.

Of those being deported, 36 had been living in Srinagar, nine in Baramulla, nine in Kupwara, four in Budgam, and two in Shopian.

The move has triggered anxiety among the families involved, especially as many of the women have been living in Kashmir for years with established family ties.

So far, there has been no official public statement regarding the number of detentions, but sources confirmed that preparations are underway and being handled at senior administrative levels..

Shameema Akhtar, the mother of

Constable Mudasir Ahmad Sheikh, who died in May 2022 while fighting terrorists, was said to be one of the deportees. However, she was later allowed to stay back.

“Reports circulating on social media regarding the alleged repatriation of the mother of Shaheed Constable Mudasir Ahmad @Bindaas are false, baseless, and categorically denied,” Baramulla police said in a statement, adding that the public and media to refrain from spreading misinformation

In a carefully worded clarification, Shameema’s brother-in-law Mohammad Younus said martyr Mudasir’s mother has returned home as she was not taken for deportation. “We are thankful to the Government of India,” Younus said.

Earlier, Mudasir’s uncle had told reporters that his sister-in-law belonged to Pakistan-occupied Kashmir and, as such, she should not have been deported.

“My sister-in-law is from Pakistan-occupied Kashmir, which is our territory. Only Pakistanis should have been deported,” Younus said.

After Mudasir’s death, Union Home Minister Amit Shah visited the family, and so did the Lieutenant Governor, twice, he said.

“My bhabhi was 20 years old when she came here and has been living here for 45 years now. My appeal to (PM Narendra) Modi and Amit Shah is that they should not do it,” Younus said.

Shameema had married Mohammad Maqsood, now a retired police officer, before the eruption of militancy in Jammu and Kashmir in 1990.

The main Baramulla town square has been named Shaheed Mudasir Chowk in memory of the policeman.

Mir Muhammad Hussain, a resident of Pandrethan Srinagar who returned to Kashmir in mid eighties was deported along with his ailing wife and son late on Monday night. The family was taken away in an ambulance as terminally ill wife was on oxygen support. In a similar case, a woman who had recently given birth was deported, leaving her newborn behind.

A Pakistani national who married a jawan of the Central Reserve Police Force (CRPF) was also sent back from Jammu for deportation to her country of origin, officials said on Tuesday. Minal Khan, who was accompanied by her husband Munir Khan, a resident of Garhota, left Jammu for the Wagah border. She had married him online, they said.

She urged the government to not separate those who married in the country from their children. “We should be allowed to stay with the family,” Minal Khan said.

She, however, added, “We condemn the barbaric killings of innocents in the attack. They should be punished severely.”

In Baramulla’s Delina, three families have gathered, each facing the same uncertainty and fear. Among them is 21-year-old Malaika, whose family is in a state of distress after receiving calls from the authorities about their documents. Malaika’s mother, Imrana Mehar, originally from Pakistan, came to Kashmir in 2014 through Omar Abdullah’s rehabilitation policy for the wives and children of former militants. Both Malaika and her sister were born in Pakistan and have lived in Kashmir since their early years.

“I know they will take us away soon,” inconsolable Malaika told Kashmir Observer over a phone call. “My father is ill, my mother works as a tailor, we can’t bear this separation.”

Most of these women had married former Kashmiri militants who had crossed over to Pakistan or Pakistan-Occupied Kashmir (PoK) for arms training during the height of militancy in the 1990s and early 2000s.

Over the years, many militants grew disillusioned with violence and sought to return home under a 2010 rehabilitation policy announced by the Omar Abdullah-led government.

The policy aimed to offer a peaceful reintegration to militants who had renounced militancy and wanted to live a normal life. However, it did not officially include a provision for the Pakistani wives they brought back with them.

Despite this gap, hundreds of families — mostly through the Nepal route — returned, believing they would be allowed to stay and rebuild their lives in Kashmir.

Initially, these women faced social and bureaucratic challenges but gradually integrated into local communities. They raised families, sent their children to schools, and contributed quietly to local economies. Some even acquired basic documentation like Aadhar cards, voter IDs, and ration cards, further strengthening their ties to the region.

However, legal ambiguities about their citizenship status remained unresolved for years.

Now, facing the threat of deportation, the women say they feel trapped between two worlds — rejected by the country of their origin and denied acceptance in the place they now call home.

Several of them emphasize they

have no future or social support back in Pakistan, where returning families are often viewed with suspicion or hostility.

“We have no home there anymore,” one woman said. “Our home is here — in Kashmir.”

Humanitarian Concern

in Jammu and Kashmir. Many affected are women who came to India 30-“40 years ago, married Indian citizens, raised families and have long been part of our society,” Mufti said in a post on X.

She said deporting individuals who have lived peacefully in India for decades would be inhumane and would inflict deep emotional distress on the families.

“We urge the government to reconsider this decision and adopt a compassionate approach regarding women, children and elderly. Deporting individuals who have lived peacefully in India for decades would not only be inhumane but also would inflict deep emotional and physical distress on families who now know no other home,” she said.

Several Pakistani women married to ex-militants came to Kashmir in 2013 under the then-chief minister Omar Abdullah’s policy that enabled the rehabilitation of ultras who had gone to Pakistan or Pakistan-Occupied Kashmir for arms training but abjured violence and wished to return to the Valley.

Over 1,000

their visits because of the cancellation of visas in the wake of the Pahalgam terror attack, an official said on Monday.

“Over 1,000 Indians have left Pakistan for their home via the Wagah border over the last six days. Similarly, more than 800 Pakistanis have returned home by Monday,” a government official said.

He added that those possessing long-term visas from both countries are facing problems in repatriation.

On Sunday, 236 Pakistanis returned home and 115 Indians crossed into their homeland.

At Wagah, Pakistan Rangers and India’s Border Security Force thoroughly checked the papers of the repatriated citizens before allowing them to proceed with immigration.

On April 22, terrorists opened fire in Kashmir’s Pahalgam killing 26 people, in the deadliest attack in the Valley since the Pulwama strike in 2019.

The Resistance Front (TRF), a proxy of the banned Pakistan-based Lashkar-e-Taiba (LeT), claimed responsibility for the attack.

In New Delhi, the Cabinet Committee on Security (CCS) on Wednesday decided, among other things, to close the Integrated Check Post at Attari with immediate effect. The Attari-Wagah border is located near Amritsar in India and Lahore in Pakistan.

New Delhi cancelled SAARC visa privileges to visiting respective nationals, a step soon followed by Islamabad.

Pakistani nationals will not be permitted to travel to India under the SAARC Visa Exemption Scheme (SVES) and any such visas issued in the past to Pakistani nationals are deemed cancelled.

In Pakistan, individuals holding long-term visas, Overseas Citizens of India (OCI) and those with ‘No Objection to Return to India’ stamps were denied border crossing.

The Ministry of External Affairs (MEA) said all existing valid visas issued by India to Pakistani nationals stand revoked with effect from April 27 and added that the medical visas issued to Pakistani nationals will be valid only till April 29.

Mirroring India’s steps, Islamabad on Thursday 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.

“All cross-border transit from India through this route shall be suspended, without exception. Those who have crossed with valid endorsements may return through that route immediately but not later than April 30,” Pakistan said. (PTI)

Pahalgam Logs

the normal for this time of the season, and the highest ever.

The previous highest was 27.4 degrees Celsius recorded on April 28, 1979, officials said.

Srinagar recorded the maximum temperature of 30.8 degrees Celsius on Tuesday, the second-highest in April ever, they said.

The all-time maximum in the city is 31.1 degrees Celsius, recorded on April 20, 1946, they said.

The day temperature in the city on Tuesday was 7.7 degrees above the season’s normal.

Heatwave conditions continue to prevail across the Kashmir valley, as the day temperatures hover 5.5 to 8.4 degrees above the normal.

The Meteorological department has said the weather would likely remain dry and hot in J&K over the next 24 hours.

There is a possibility of rain at isolated places on Thursday.

JKBOSE Class 12

soft zone areas while 8,712 students fall in hard zone areas of Jammu and Kashmir.

The J&K Board has set up 989 exam centres—873 in soft zone areas and 116 exam centres in hard zone areas of Jammu and Kashmir for the students of Class 12th.

This year, the Class 10th to 12th board examinations were scheduled in the month of February as the government restored the previous November session in schools. (JKNS)

CM Reviews Summer

stressed the importance of a swift response mechanism amid rising temperatures and the possibility of heatwave, water shortages or power outages.

“Response time to any kind of exigency should be minimised,” he asserted.

Engaging directly with Deputy Commissioners, the Chief Minister reviewed district-level preparedness and urged them to prioritise timely, effective response to weather-related challenges.

He emphasised the need to keep personnel ready and machinery in working condition to ensure the uninterrupted functioning of essential services.

“Preparedness is not just about having systems in place but ensuring that those systems work seamlessly when put to the test,” Omar Abdullah noted, adding that preparedness must be proactive rather than reactive.

While commending field-level officers for their proactive planning, he called upon them to maintain a constant state of readiness and ensure grievance redressal mechanisms remain accessible and effective for public facilitation during emergencies.

Divisional Commissioner Jammu delivered a detailed presentation highlighting preparations for the upcoming summer season, with a focus on the availability of drinking water, electricity supply management, and medical emergency response strategies.

The meeting was informed that in respect of forest fire management, high-risk districts like Nowshera, Jammu and Reasi have been prioritized with 175 control rooms and awareness drives. Water supply preparedness would include vulnerability mapping, infrastructure maintenance, and deployment of tankers, while IEC campaigns to deal with heatwave effect are being conducted.

It was informed that Power infrastructure is being strengthened through transformer upgrades, pruning of tree branches and activation of emergency teams. It was given out that the Health Department has stocked essential supplies, operationalized Heat Stroke Rooms, and mandated daily reporting of heat-related illnesses.

Divisional Commissioner also informed the meeting that Schools in the summer zone will follow revised timings from May 1, and the school bag policy is in effect. Irrigation canals have been desilted, and flood control rooms activated, with mitigation plans in place for vulnerable districts, he said.

JMC has readied monsoon rescue units, upgraded drainage equipment, and deployed water sprinklers and coolers for heatwave relief, he told the meeting.

He added that BRO and PMGSY have mapped landslide and flood-prone sites, ensuring machinery is in place for rapid response.

The Chief Minister directed departments to activate control rooms, maintain buffer stocks of essential supplies, and deploy quick response teams to vulnerable areas.

He also instructed the deployment of an adequate number of water tankers in areas prone to shortages.

Additionally, he directed the ACS Jal Shakti to install GPS trackers on all water tankers to ensure accountability and oversight of their field operations.

The Chief Minister also called for timely maintenance of key roads, particularly the Srinagar-Jammu National Highway, Mughal Road, and other vital routes.

No Innocent

of justice. I request that the reaction be based on bringing justice... innocents should not be affected,” he said.

Ruhullah said the country’s reaction to the attack -- in which 26 people, mostly tourists, were killed -- “should centre around justice”.

“We are with justice, we are with that reaction. We want a united voice to be raised across the world for justice and that the people of J-K get a permanent respite from this violence. The people of J-K are the biggest losers in this irrespective of religion.

“We are the victims and we want the ways for peace to be found. The people of J-K will be the beneficiaries of peace. So, we are with the country in its reaction -- be it diplomatically or through some other ways,” he said.

After the April 22 Pahalgam attack,

authorities in Jammu and Kashmir have launched a major clampdown against the terror ecosystem, raiding hundreds of places, detaining scores of suspects and razing homes of terrorists.

To a question about J&K Chief Minister Omar Abdullah’s refusal to ask for statehood for political gain in the face of the tragedy, Ruhullah said it was right as the assembly session was called for paying tributes to the victims of the terror attack.

“It was a session to pay tributes and if he (Abdullah) thought it right not to talk about statehood, then it is right. But, it (statehood) is an issue that needs to be addressed...,” he said.

How Kashmir Tourism

Industry leaders say the damage is already widespread. “We have lost 90% of our bookings,” said a top hotelier. “The government should have anticipated the economic fallout. A more measured approach could have helped balance safety and livelihood.”

Tourism in Kashmir isn’t just a business — it’s the spine of a seasonal economy. Every year, from April to June, thousands of families make their living from hotel bookings, taxi rides, pony services, food stalls, handicrafts, and guiding treks through alpine trails. For many, this window is the only time they earn enough to survive the rest of the year.

Recent official data shows just how high the stakes are. In the first three months of 2024, Kashmir recorded over 2.1 million tourist arrivals — the highest ever for the period. The tourism department had projected the April-June quarter to exceed 3.5 million visitors, based on advance bookings. That optimism has now been replaced with cancellations and refund requests.

In Pahalgam, Ghulam Nabi, a pony handler for nearly two decades, said he has barely made a few hundred rupees since the attack. “This is the season when we earn everything. Now it feels like we’ve been erased.”

At Srinagar airport, arrivals have dropped sharply. Passenger footfall fell from 17,653 on April 23 to just over 14,000 by April 26. Airlines say flights are running, but the seats are half-empty.

Even those who don’t work in the travel sector directly are feeling the pinch. Photographers who shoot destination weddings, event planners, dry-fruit sellers and transporters say their work has come to a halt.

“We were finally recovering after years of disruption,” said a cab driver from Anantnag. “Now I spend the day just waiting for a call. But the phone doesn’t ring.”

While some government officials have said the tourist resort closures are temporary and will be reviewed, there is still no clear timeline or official communication on what benchmarks will be used to reopen the sites.

Local tour operators say the uncertainty has made things worse. “People can handle bad news. But they cannot plan around silence,” said a travel agent in Srinagar.

Back in Aharbal, Aadil stands outside his empty guesthouse and stares at the hill road that usually carries a line of cars by this time of year.

“I still keep the lights on in the evening,” he says. “Just in case someone changes their mind and decides to come.”

Tourism Operators

directed all tourist trade operators — including hoteliers, guesthouse owners, homestay and houseboat operators, travel agents, and excursion providers — to ensure necessary assistance to tourists.

“In view of the present circumstances, all stakeholders in the tourism sector are requested to refund any booking amounts received and waive cancellation fees to mitigate the inconvenience caused to tourists,” the letter stated.

Tour operators have been asked to comply with the directive in both letter and spirit to uphold the region’s reputation as a tourist-friendly destination.

The order comes in the wake of the April 22 terror attack in Pahalgam, after which several hotels including 5-Star and those owned by big businessmen, refused to follow refund orders. Despite clear directives from the Ministry of Tourism and the Jammu and Kashmir Tourism Department mandating full refunds, many hotels are offering “credit notes” instead of returning the money.

A circular issued by the tourism department following the April 22 incident instructed all tourism service providers — including hotels, houseboats, homestays, and travel agents — to waive cancellation fees and refund booking amounts. “All tourist trade operators must offer necessary assistance to tourists and refund booking amounts to affected stakeholders,” the circular reiterated.

However, complaints from tourists and travel agents suggest that many hotels are either delaying refunds by up to three weeks or refusing them outright. Some hotels have informed customers that their advance payments have already been invested, making immediate refunds difficult.

JJM Covers Over 1.29 Lakh Households In Kupwara

Agencies

SRINAGAR: Over 1.29 lakh rural households in north Kashmir's Kupwara district have been provided with tap water connections under the Jal Jeevan Mission (JJM), with 26,000 still pending, data reveals.

According to the government data, the district comprises 355 villages and a total of 1,56,179 rural households. Of these, 1,29,755 households have already been provided with Functional Household Tap Connections (FHTCs), marking a substantial coverage of over 83%.

Khurshid Ahmad Shah, Mission Director Jal Jeevan Mission (JJM), Jammu & Kashmir, while reviewing the progress, directed officers to fast-track the execution of the remaining 26,000-plus households to achieve universal coverage swiftly.

The director was informed about the operational challenges — failure of nine bore wells due

to insufficient discharge, of which the chair directed that the drilling of these bore wells be closely monitored in coordination with the Superintending Engineer concerned to avoid further delays.

On the non-starter status of General Service Reservoirs (GSRs) in the remote Keran sector, officials assured the MD that allotments have been issued and work is set to begin within a week, pending weather improvements.

To strengthen the integrity of the Har Ghar Jal (HGJ) status, the director instructed that all HGJ-reported villages be formally certified without further delay. He assigned the charge to the Superintending Engineer, Hydraulic Circle Kupwara, to take over the certification process and ensure accountability across the board.

Shah said the government is committed to providing safe and adequate drinking water to every rural household—(KNO)

Three OGWs Of LeT Arrested In Hajin: Police

Observer News Service

BANDIPORA: Three Over Ground Workers (OGWs) of Lashkar-e-Taiba (LeT) were arrested on Tuesday in the Hajina area, police said.

Bandipora police had received specific information regarding movement of some OGWs of terrorist outfit LeT in Hajin area, a police spokesman said in a statement.

Acting on this information a joint Naka was established at Shahgund Nursery, by Bandipora police along with CRPF 45 Bn and 13 RR Army.

During Naka Checking three suspected persons who were coming from Khusarpura towards Shahgund, while seeing police party they tried to flee from the spot, but were nabbed tactfully. Upon questioning the

said persons disclosed their identities as Shahzad Ahmad S/o Mohammad Khalil, Danish Ahmad Parray S/o Gh Mohammad Parray and Ather Iqbal S/o Gh Mohammad Rafique all residents of Hajin and further confessed that they were working as OGW's of terrorist outfit LeT.

Upon their personal search, incriminating material (illegal arms and ammunition) including Chinese Hand Grenade (02 No. 's), 7.62 MM Magazine, (01 No.), 7.62 MM, live rounds (17 No's) were recovered from their possession, police said.

In this regard, police said that a case under FIR number 33/2025 under sections 18,23,39 UAP act and 7/25 I.A act stands registered at Police Station Hajin, and further investigation has been taken up.

DIPR Organizes Cultural Awareness Drive To Tackle Drug Abuse



Observer News Service

BANDIPORA : In a continued effort to combat the rising menace of drug abuse, the Department of Information and Public Relations (DIPR) Bandipora, in collaboration with the Cultural Unit of DIPR Srinagar, on Tuesday held an awareness-cum-cultural programme at the Auditorium Hall of N.M. Higher Secondary School, Kalosa.

The event was conducted under the umbrella of the Nasha Mukht Jammu Kashmir Abhiyaan, a government campaign aimed at eradicating substance abuse. Deputy Commissioner (DC) Bandipora, Manzoor Ahmad Qadri, presided over the function, which saw a significant turnout, including Additional Deputy Commissioner Zaffar Hussain Shawl; District Programme Officer ICDS, Yaar Ali Khan; District Information Officer Aadil Manzoor Wani; DySP DAR Ahmad Shafee; Excise and Taxation Officer North Kashmir, Danishwar Shafi; DySP C.L. Verma; DyCEO Dr. G.M. Pujoo; Principal N.M. Higher Secondary School, and a large number of students from different schools.

In his address, DC Qadri underscored the role of family in the fight against drug addiction. He urged parents to remain alert to behavioural changes in their children and to play a proactive role in guiding them toward positive pursuits. He called for united action across all levels of society to counter the growing threat of substance abuse. Highlighting the campaign's holistic framework, ADC Bandipora presented a comprehensive overview of Nasha Mukht Jammu Kashmir Abhiyaan, focusing on its pillars of awareness, education, rehabilitation, and grassroots engagement. He emphasized the significance

of student involvement and school-based awareness, as well as panchayat-level Information, Education, and Communication (IEC) initiatives.

Welcoming the guests, District Information Officer Aadil Manzoor Wani detailed the objectives of the ongoing IEC campaign, which aims to spread anti-drug messaging to every corner of the district.

Addressing the audience, DySP C.L. Verma shared insights into the law enforcement measures being undertaken to control drug trafficking and use. He also shed light on the grave social, economic, and health-related impacts of substance abuse, advocating youth engagement in sports and other constructive activities.

Dr. Anjum Reshi, Medical Officer at the Drug De-addiction Centre Bandipora, emphasized the shared responsibility of families, educators, and society in tackling drug addiction. She highlighted the rehabilitation services available in the district and encouraged individuals in need to seek help without stigma. The event featured powerful skits by artists from the Cultural Unit of DIPR Srinagar and students of Higher Secondary School Manthrigam, vividly portraying the damaging effects of drug addiction on individuals, families, and the wider community. The performances resonated deeply with the audience and were met with enthusiastic applause.

In addition, students presented speeches and poetry promoting the vision of a drug-free society. A pledge ceremony, led by the DIPR Cultural Unit, affirmed the collective resolve to fight drug abuse. Participants in the skits and speech competitions were felicitated with cash prizes for their contributions to the campaign.

Dry Fruit Prices Surge As Attari-Wagah Border Closure Disrupts Afghan Supply

Agencies

SRINAGAR: The recent closure of the Attari-Wagah border following the Pahalgam terror attack has impacted the import of dry fruits from Afghanistan to India. Experts predict that this interruption will have considerable effects on the domestic dry fruit market, especially in Kashmir.

Dry fruit dealers said that prices for certain dry fruits have already risen by approximately 10-15 per cent in the past week. They warned that if the disruptions continue, prices are likely to increase further in the coming days.

On average, between 15 and 20 trucks carrying dry fruits used to cross into India daily via the Wagah border, with numbers rising during festivals like Diwali.

Due to the closure of the Attari-Wagah border since April 22, many trucks carrying perishable goods have reportedly returned without delivering supplies, creating a supply gap that might benefit local producers.

Local traders and associations in Kashmir said the reduced competition from Af-



ghan imports could boost the demand and value for indigenous products such as Kashmiri almonds, walnuts and saffron. This shift may lead to better prices and increased market share for local farmers and traders.

Bahadur Khan, President of the Dry Fruit Association of Kashmir, said imports of dry fruits from other countries should be halted to enhance the value of local products. He lamented the cutting down of almond and walnut trees in Kashmir due to the availability of dry fruits from abroad.

"Despite the superior taste and quality of local dry fruits,

consumers often prefer the imported versions based on their size and shape, rather than considering flavour," Khan said.

He added that while prices for many items have increased, the prices of Kashmiri almonds, walnuts and other products have remained stagnant. "When we were buying a 15 kg tin of mustard oil for Rs 1,000, the price of walnut kernels was around Rs 500 per kg, and that remains the same," he said.

Khan held the horticulture department responsible for the decline of Kashmir's dry fruit industry—(KNO)

DUE TO THE CLOSURE OF THE ATTARI-WAGAH BORDER SINCE APRIL 22, many trucks carrying perishable goods have reportedly returned without delivering supplies, creating a supply gap that might benefit local producers.

Gold Sales Dip In Kashmir As Wedding Season Starts

Agencies

SRINAGAR: With the wedding season beginning in Kashmir—traditionally a peak period for gold sales, jewellers across the Valley are witnessing an unexpected slump in business, as soaring and unstable gold prices keep buyers away.

Traders say the demand for gold has plummeted to less than 10 percent of usual levels, with customers delaying purchases in the hope of a price correction.

"The market is practically stagnant," said Bashir Ahmad, President of the All Kashmir Gold Dealers and Workers Association. "Even though it's marriage season, we aren't seeing the kind of rush we used to. People are sitting at home, and shopkeepers are idle."

Describing rates as high, Ahmad said that gold prices currently stand approximately at Rs 8,200 per gram for 18-carat and Rs 9,650 per gram for 24-carat gold rates. However, he believes the issue is not just the high cost but the unpredictability of the market.

"In Kashmir, there's an old saying that when gold starts falling, people wait for it to fall further," Ahmad said. "This



wait-and-watch approach hurts our business. If the price stabilises, even at a high point, people may start buying again. But as long as the price keeps fluctuating, it creates hesitation."

According to traders, customers are postponing purchases, hoping that the rates will eventually come down. Traders said that this approach has severely impacted business in a sector that depends heavily on seasonal momentum, especially during weddings.

Stressing the urgent need for market stability, Ahmad said, "If gold prices stay constant, whether high or low, for two to three months, we can plan ahead, and buyers will return. But in this current cli-

mate of volatility, even hopeful buyers are holding back."

Ahmad also pointed to global economic uncertainties and currency fluctuations as factors driving the erratic gold prices, leaving local traders in a precarious position.

"As traders, we don't control the global markets," Ahmad added. "All we can do is pray that the rates come down so that we can get back to work."

Traders said that as May was approaching, typically another high point for weddings in Kashmir, they were hoping that either the prices will settle or drop enough to revive consumer confidence and bring much-needed relief to the sector—(KNO)

J&K Bank CEO Amitava Chatterjee Appointed Chairman Of JKB Financial Services Ltd.

Observer News Service

SRINAGAR: In a key development that marks a new chapter in the leadership journey of its wholly owned subsidiary, J&K Bank's Managing Director & CEO Amitava Chatterjee has been inducted as the Nominee Director and Chairman on the Board of JKB Financial Services Limited (JKBFSL).

The induction was formalized during the 74th Board Meeting of JKBFSL held today at the Bank's Corporate Headquarters in Srinagar.

The meeting, marking a significant milestone in the company's governance and strategic roadmap, was attended by the Directors on JKB FSL Board Syed Rais Maqbool, Sunil Gupta, Mohammad Muzafar Wani, and the company's Managing Director Syed Aadil Bashir Andrabi. Also present were key members of the management team including the Company Secretary, Chief Financial Officer, Head of Risk Management Services, and Head of IT.

Welcoming the new Chair-



man, MD JKBFSL Syed Aadil Bashir Andrabi, along with the Board members, expressed confidence in Mr Amitava Chatterjee's leadership to steer the company toward its next phase of growth and transformation. The Board and management reaffirmed their commitment to upholding the values of excellence, transparency, and shareholder value under his guidance.

Speaking on the occasion, Chairman Amitava Chatterjee commended the consistent financial performance and the remarkable growth trajectory of JKBFSL. He lauded the team's dedication to operational excellence and acknowledged the company's increasing relevance in the regional

financial services landscape.

JKBFSL, a registered member of NSE and BSE and a depository participant, is engaged in equity broking and distribution of mutual funds across all AMCs in India. Its core services include Equity Broking, Margin Trading Facility, Mutual Fund & ETF Distribution, and facilitation of Initial Public Offerings (IPOs).

With a strategic focus on expanding its client base, enhancing market presence, and upgrading digital platforms, JKBFSL is poised to play a pivotal role in delivering cutting-edge financial services across the Union Territories of Jammu & Kashmir and Ladakh.

Notably, Mr Amitava Chatterjee's appointment comes at a crucial juncture as the company accelerates its efforts to achieve ambitious growth targets, including client activation, capital expansion, and digital innovation. His leadership is expected to provide strategic direction and governance oversight as JKBFSL scales new heights in the dynamic financial services space.

SCHOLARSHIP SCAM

ACB Registers Embezzlement Case Against ZEO Chandanwari

Observer News Service

BARAMULLA: Anti-Corruption Bureau (ACB) on Tuesday said to have presented a charge-sheet before Court of Special Judge Anti-Corruption Baramulla, against ZEO Chandanwari & Jr Asst for misappropriation and embezzlement of over Rs 27 lacs out of scholarship funds meant for Gujjar Bakerwal & Pahari speaking students.

A spokesman in a statement issued said that "on receipt of a complaint titled Ghulam Qadir Mir versus Education Zone Boniyar through State Vigilance Commission J&K for conducting probe into the allegations of fraud and embezzlement in scholarship funds of Pahari speaking and Gujjar-Bakerwal students in Education Zone Chandanwari, district Baramulla, a verification was conducted during which allegations levelled in complaint were substantiated."

"Accordingly on the basis of findings and recommendations of the Enquiry Officer, three separate cases/FIRs including the case FIR No. 19/2018 & two other similar cases, i.e., FIR No. 20/2018 & FIR No. 21/2018 were registered at Police Station Vigilance Organization Kashmir (P/S VOK), (Now Police Station Anti-Corruption Bureau Baramulla) against different officers/officials of three different education zones of District Baramulla for misappropriation/embezzlement of scholarship funds and investigations were initiated. After registration of case thorough investigations were conducted by anti-corruption Bureau into the allegations of fraud/ embezzlement in scholarship funds meant for Pahari Speaking and Gujjar-Bakerwal students in Education Zone Chandanwari, District Baramulla during academic years 2009-10, 2010-11 and 2011-12 by the accused public servants of education department," reads the statement.

The investigations conducted revealed that an amount approx. 27 lac was embezzled/ misappropriated by the accused public servants which was meant for the students belonging to Gujjar & Bakerwal community of education zone chandanwari District Baram-

ulla during the academic year 2009-10, 2010-11 and 2011-12, it added.

"The vital records i.e. Acquittance Registers for the year 2009-10, 2010-11 and 2011-12 were maintained by the accused in which fictitious names of nonexistent students were inserted, and a huge amount was shown disbursed against fictitious students. Moreover, it was also found that the funds for Gujjar and Bakerwal students for the year 2009-10, 2010-11 and 2011-12 were obtained on the higher side than the actual roll & an excess amount of Rs. 23,15,400 was also embezzled/ misappropriated by the accused public servants in conspiracy with each other."

Investigations conducted reveal that accused public servants in connivance with one another by abuse of their official position & authority acted in violation of laid down norms of disbursement and also added many fictitious names of students from Gujjar Bakerwal /Pahari speaking categories thereby inflating the actual number of beneficiary students ,by this way they not only conferred undue pecuniary benefits upon themselves but also caused commensurate loss to state exchequer, reads the statement.

"After completion of investigations the charge Sheet (Challan) of the case as envisaged under section 173 Cr.PC was submitted before Hon'ble Court of Spl Judge anti-corruption court Baramulla against accused public servants (1). Abdul Rashid Mir, the then Zonal Education Officer Chandanwari (Now retired) S/o Abdul Gaffar Mir R/o Hundi Nowshera Uri, A/P Gantmulla Bala Baramulla and (2). Bashir Ahmad Lone, the then Junior Assistant in the Office of ZEO Chandanwari (Now retired) S/o Wali Mohammad Lone R/o Bijhama Boniyar Uri under sections 5(1)(c), 5(1)(d) r/w 5(2) Jammu & Kashmir Prevention of Corruption Act. Samvat 2006, and Section 468, 471, 201 & 120-B RPC for judicial determination. Both the accused were presented before Hon'ble court who were released by court after taking bail," it reads, adding that next date for hearing has been fixed by court as 15-07-2025.

Narco-Terrorism Case: Man Booked Under NDPS In Kupwara

Observer News Service

SRINAGAR- Police on Tuesday said that a man was booked under NDPS in a Narco-Terrorism case in North Kashmir's Kupwara district.

In a statement, the police said that in a major crackdown on narco-terrorism, Zakir Hussain Ghakahd, son of Abdullah Ghakahd and resident of Karnah, has been detained under the Prevention of Illicit Traffic in Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances Act (PIT NDPS). The detention was ordered by the Divisional Commissioner, Kashmir, under Order No. DIVCOM-"K"/73/2025 dated 26-04-2025.

Zakir Hussain has been found actively involved in cross-border drug smuggling. He procured narcotics from various sources, including from across the border, and distributed them through a network of local drug peddlers, primarily targeting school and college students. The proceeds from this illegal trade were being used to fund terror-related activities in the Valley, contributing to increased drug addiction

and criminal behavior among local youth.

His involvement came to light following the operation by Police Station Karnah which led to the busting of a narco-terror module. During the operation, 7 kilograms of heroin and two live IEDs were recovered from a vehicle, and several associates of Zakir Hussain were arrested. Subsequent investigation revealed that Zakir Hussain was the main supplier of the seized contraband.

Though his name did not initially appear in FIR No. 38/2022, his role surfaced during the investigation, leading to the framing of charges against him. He was later released on bail but continued his involvement in drug trafficking and terror-related activities. In light of continued threats to public safety, preventive detention under PIT NDPS was deemed necessary.

Law enforcement agencies remain fully committed to eradicating the drug menace and dismantling its deep-rooted connections with terrorism in the region, reads the statement.

Hope India & Pak Don't Go To Extent Of Nuclear War: Dr Farooq

Have extended full support to PM to decide on any action

Agencies

SRINAGAR: Exuding hope that India and Pakistan don't go to the extent of nuclear war, National Conference (NC) President Dr Farooq Abdullah on Tuesday said that they have extended complete support to Prime Minister Narendra Modi to decide on any action following Pahalgam terror attack.

Replying to a query on PM Modi's statement on Armed Forces having been given full authority to take action, Abdullah, said, "It is upto him (PM Modi) to take any decision."

On Pakistan's reported nuclear power threat, he said, "India too has a nuclear power and had even before Pakistan. I remember when I visited Pokhran with Vajpayee Ji. He had stated that we would never use it until we are attacked by someone. Like always, we won't use it, until they (Pakistan) want to use it. But it should not happen"

Pertinently, Abdullah had yesterday said that following the terror attack in Pahalgam, the nation wants an action beyond Balakote that would end the Pahalgam like attacks forever—(KNO)

Suryavanshi Takes Indian Cricket By Storm

Press Trust of India

NEW DELHI/JAIPUR/PATNA: His parents were emotionally overwhelmed and full of gratitude, while the cricketing world was left wide-eyed in amazement as 14-year-old Vaibhav Suryavanshi announced his arrival as the next big thing in Indian cricket with a marauding IPL hundred that shattered records and reputations alike.

The baby-faced big-hitter from Bihar's Samastipur was the toast of the nation after becoming the youngest to smash an IPL hundred and his 35-ball century was also the second fastest of the league.

The cricketing world, meanwhile, was still trying to figure out just how could a 14-year-old hammer 11 towering sixes and seven fours and accumulate 94 of his 101-run knock in boundaries.

The spectacular show took place on Monday night when his team Rajasthan Royals knocked the wind out of Gujarat Titans' sail with his singular effort.

Amid all this, his parents



mostly thanked all those who backed their son. Father Sanjiv, who sold his farm land to fuel Vaibhav's ambition, said, "He has made our village, Bihar and the whole of India proud."

"We could not be happier and are celebrating. I want to thank the Rajasthan Royals who worked on him extensively in the last three-four months," he added.

Royals invested in Suryavanshi's talent by spending Rs 1.10 crore at the mega auction last year, almost four times his base price of Rs 30 lakh. Monday's blitzkrieg came af-

ter a whirlwind 34-run knock on IPL debut by Suryavanshi that came off 20 balls and featured the first-ball six that fixed the spotlight firmly on his cherubic face.

"It was a normal thing for me. I have played Under-19 for India and also at the domestic level, where I have hit first ball sixes. I was not under pressure to play out the first 10 balls. In my mind I was clear that if the ball comes in my radar, I will hit it," Suryavanshi told the IPLT20 website.

"I am what I am because of my parents. My mother, for the sake of my practice schedule, wakes up at 3 in the morning after going to sleep at 11, sleeping barely three hours.

"She then prepares meals for me. My father left his work to support me. My elder brother is taking care of his work and the household is running with great difficulty. But papa is backing me," he said.

"...God ensures that those who work hard never fail. The results that we are seeing and the success that I am achieving is because of my parents."

Short TAKES

Struggling CSK Look To Turn Around Fortunes Against PBKS

Their play-off hopes all but over, Chennai Super Kings would look to turn around a floundering campaign when they square off against a better-placed but erratic Punjab Kings in their Indian Premier League match here on Wednesday.

It has been a disappointing season for five-time champions CSK, languishing at the bottom of the table with just two wins out of nine games.

PBKS, on the other hand, are placed fifth in the standings with five wins from nine matches and would look to rise up with a victory against a demoralised CSK side, which failed to get its combinations right so far in the season.

What has been most disheartening for CSK is their inability to master the home conditions at the Che-pauk, considered a fortress for a long time.

CSK would be desperate to register their third win of the tournament to keep slim hopes of making it to the playoffs alive.

Match starts at 7:30pm IST.

Vaibhav Will Break Into Indian Team In 1-2 Years: Childhood Coach

Vaibhav Suryavanshi's childhood coach Manish Ojha expects his 14-year-old ward to break into India's T20 team in the next one or two years.

Suryavanshi, on Monday, made a record 38-ball-101 to become IPL's youngest centurion at 14 years and 32 days.

The left-handed batter smashed 11 sixes and seven fours in his stunning onslaught against Gujarat Titans' potent bowling attack to hand Rajasthan Royals an eight-wicket win in Jaipur.

"As a coach, it is a proud moment for me. For a state like Bihar, which is not strong in sports, it is like ray of sunlight. He would have motivated many people, he has put Bihar on the map of cricket in India," Ojha told PTI videos.

"I feel that if he continues to play like this, he will definitely break into India's T20 squad in 1-2 years."

Suryavanshi has already played for India U-19s and made his first-class debut in January 2024.

Vaibhav Gets Massive Windfall From Bihar CM Nitish Kumar

Bihar Chief Minister Nitish Kumar announced a prize money of Rs 10 lakh for the 14-year-old Vaibhav Suryavanshi who hit a historic ton against Gujarat Titans on Monday.

Nitish congratulated Suryavanshi for his impeccable performance and on Tuesday announced a prize of Rs 10 lakh from the state government.

"Congratulations and best wishes to Vaibhav Suryavanshi of Bihar, who became the youngest player (14 years) to score a century in the history of IPL. He has become a new hope for Indian cricket as a result of his hard work and talent. Everyone is proud of him," the Bihar CM wrote on X.

"I met Mr Vaibhav Suryavanshi and his father in 2024, and at that time, I wished him a bright future. After his brilliant performance in IPL, I also congratulated him over the phone. Vaibhav Suryavanshi, a young cricketer from Bihar, will also be given a prize money of Rs 10 lakh by the state government. I wish that Vaibhav creates new records for the Indian team in the future and brings glory to the country," Nitish added.

Premier League Opens Office In Mumbai

The English Premier League is expanding its global footprint with the opening of a new office in Mumbai, strengthening its commitment to one of football's most passionate fan bases.

The Mumbai hub will build on nearly two decades of Premier League engagement in India, where the League has run grassroots initiatives since 2007 through its Premier Skills programme, supporting thousands of coaches and young people in 18 states.

At elite level, the Premier League has collaborated with the Indian Super League since 2014, sharing expertise in governance and development. Their joint Next Gen Cup youth tournament will feature its sixth edition in Mumbai next May, featuring ISL youth teams competing against Premier League Under-19 sides.

"We and our clubs have a fantastic and knowledgeable fanbase in India, and we know football continues to grow in popularity," Premier League Chief Executive Richard Masters said.

Inter-School Zonal Level Competitions Thrive Across Budgam

Observer News Service

BUDGAM: Under the guidance of District Youth Services and Sports Officer Budgam, Gh. Hassan Lone, the Department of Youth Services and Sports organised inter-school zonal level competitions across the district, showcasing vibrant participation from students in various sports disciplines.

Zone Narbal hosted a thrilling Inter-School Cycling competition with over 225 students from government and private schools. The 8-kilometer race began at 7:10 AM from ZPEO Narbal to Mazhama Flyover and back. The event was officially flagged off by DDC Narbal, Riyaz Ahmad Rather, in presence of respected guests and officials.



Medical facilities were arranged to ensure safety, and a prize distribution ceremony concluded the event. An Inter-School Volleyball competition for boys under AAG category was held at BHSS Nagam. Students from across the zone participated with enthusiasm, demonstrating excellent skills and sportsmanship.

Zone Khansahib conducted a cycling event for Under-14 and Under-17 boys and girls. The race route ran from IPTS Heights School to Shanipora. Organised by the zonal activity team and supported by the Health Department, the event drew large participation and highlighted the sporting talent in the area.

Zone Ganderbal Lifts Zonal District Level U-17 Football Title

Observer News Service

GANDERBAL: The Department of Youth Services and Sports Ganderbal on Tuesday conducted the Inter-Zone District Level Football Tournament for Boys Under-17 at the GCOPE ground, Gadoora. The event witnessed participation from all four zones of the district.

District Youth Services and Sports Officer Ganderbal Sheikh Shafiqat Iqbal graced the occasion as the chief guest. He interacted with the student players and officials, offering valuable insights into the game of football. Iqbal emphasised the importance of maintaining physical fit-



ness, highlighting key aspects like strength, stamina, speed, flexibility, and skill. The thrilling final was decided by a penalty shootout and the final match saw a fierce contest between Zone Ganderbal and Zone Tullamulla. Both teams displayed exceptional skills and resilience, keeping the scoreboard unchanged through regular play.

The match was ultimately decided by a penalty shootout, in which Zone Ganderbal triumphed by scoring three goals to Zone Tullamulla's one, clinching the championship. Both finalists were awarded trophies by Dr. Showkat Hussain, Assistant Professor GCOPE Gadoora, along with senior officials of the department.

Wular Premiere League 2025 Holds 20 Matches, 43 More To Go

Observer News Service

SOPORE: The Wular Premiere League 2025, being organised by the Sports Association Tarzoo, is progressing smoothly and successfully. Out of a total of 63 scheduled matches, 20 matches have already been completed with great enthusiasm and discipline. The remaining 43 matches, including the much-awaited final, are lined up in the coming weeks.

The SAT management is actively engaged in daily preparations to ensure the smooth conduct of every match and is also gearing up for a grand and memorable final match.

"The coordination between the teams has been commendable – team captains are showing excellent cooperation, players are displaying true sportsmanship, and the locals are extending their full support and encouragement from all



levels," the association said in a press release on Tuesday.

With such positive energy and commitment, WPL 2025 is shaping up to be a great celebration of sports, unity, and community spirit.

Baramulla Holds Zonal Level Open Volleyball Tournaments

Observer News Service

BARAMULLA: As part of its unwavering commitment to promote a healthy and drug-free society and on the directions of the Deputy Commissioner Baramulla, Youth Services and Sports Baramulla, in collaboration with the Social Welfare Department Baramulla, launched Zonal Level Open Volleyball Tournaments under the Nasha Mukh Bharat Abhiyan across various zones of the district.

On Tuesday, Zone Dangerpora hosted a spirited volleyball match under this initiative at Higher Secondary School Dangerpora. A highly competitive match was played between Cluster Tuijjer and Cluster Dangerpora, reflecting the enthusiasm and active participation of youth in spreading



the message of a drug-free lifestyle through sports.

Simultaneously, Zone Sopore began its NMBA Volleyball tournament at Boys Higher Secondary School Sopore.

Adding to the momentum, Zone Singpora Pattan also joined the campaign by organising an open volleyball tournament at High School Malmoo Pattan.

Yamal Says Barcelona Must 'Play Like We Know How' Against Defensive Inter In CL Semis

Agencies

BARCELONA: The fear that Lamine Yamal provokes in defenders when he gets the ball on Barcelona's right flank has inevitably conjured up comparisons to a young, floppy-haired Lionel Messi.

Now, Barcelona 17-year-old star will face one of the very few teams that Messi never could score against when Inter Milan visits on Wednesday in the opening game of their Champions League semifinal.

But let the record state that Yamal wants nothing do to with that Messi version 2.0 talk. Nor does he think Inter supposedly had Messi figured out – even if he sure would like to score against the Italian side and help Barcelona reach its first European final in a decade.

"I don't want to be compared to any player, much less Messi. He is the best in the world," Yamal said Tuesday at Barcelona's training grounds during his

first news conference for the club, during one of his biggest weeks as a player.

"So what if Messi never scored against Inter? He scored against so many teams, and I sure hope I can score tomorrow," Yamal said about the Barcelona great who once held him in his arms as a baby.

Sporting his new dyed blond hairdo, the teenager who has emerged as arguably the top young talent in global soccer said that he was only focused on trying to help his team on its quest for a treble of titles.

100 GAMES IN BURGUNDY-AND-BLUE

Yamal still has more than two months before turning 18, but the Inter game will be his 100th game for Barcelona's senior team.

"Not everyone can play that many games at age 18, so I am proud of that," he said, adding that the jitters he used to feel when he started in the elite were now gone.

The Champions League semi-



final is his biggest match so far for Barcelona, right up there with the Copa del Rey final that Yamal helped Barcelona win

against Real Madrid on Saturday. Yamal delivered two assists in that clasico thriller to set up Pedri González's opener

and Ferran Torres' clutch equalizer to send it into extra time, where Barcelona came out on top 3-2.

During that comeback win, Yamal said he told a teammate that it didn't matter how many goals Madrid scored, since "they can't hang with us this season."

Yamal will now take that same swagger with him against one of the top defenses in Europe; Inter has kept a Champions League-leading eight clean sheets this campaign.

Barcelona boasts the top attack with 37 goals scored, compared to just 19 for Inter. Yamal has notched four of those while passing for teammates to add another four.

"Everyone knows that Inter is a great defensive team and good on the counter," Yamal said. "We will have to be good with the ball and play like we know how to as a team."

The winner of the two-match series will face either Paris Saint-Germain or Arsenal in Munich on May 31.

AGE IS ONLY A NUMBER

Yamal took Barcelona by storm last season when he swept up records, including for youngest scorer in La Liga, at age 16. His boom continued last summer when he became the youngest scorer in the history of the European Championship, curling in the goal of the tournament in the semifinals against France before Spain won the final over England on his 17th birthday.

He has kept it up this season for Barcelona. His 14 goals and 24 assists across all competitions also have Barcelona closing in on the La Liga title.

And just when it looked like there were no more records left, he went and became the youngest player to score in a clasico.

Yamal is taking his rapid rise in stride, brushing aside questions that it could all be happening too fast, at too young an age.

"I think soccer is not about age, it is about talent and mentality of each player," he said. "Age is just a number."