

## Ample Food Stocks, No Need To Panic: Govt

Press Trust Of India

New Delhi: The government on Friday said the country has ample food stocks to meet domestic demand but warned traders and wholesalers against hoarding essential food items creating artificial shortages.

The warning came as the conflict between India and Pakistan widened with Pakistan resorting to unprovoked shelling and drone attacks in border towns.

In a social media post, Union Food and Consumer Affairs Minister Pralhad Joshi also urged citizens not to panic or rush to the markets to purchase foodgrains.

"Don't believe in propaganda messages regarding food stocks in the country. We have ample food stocks, far exceeding required norms. DONT PAY HEED TO SUCH MESSAGES".

"Traders, wholesalers, retailers or business entities which engage in trading of Essential Commodities are directed to cooperate with Law Enforcement agencies. Any person indulging in hoarding or stockpiling, shall be prosecuted under relevant sections of the Essential Commodities Act," Joshi said.

Later in an official statement, Joshi asserted there is no shortage of essential commodities in the country.

"I want to assure everyone that we currently have stocks many times higher than the normal requirement-whether it is rice, wheat, or pulses such as chana, tur, masoor, or moong. There is absolutely no shortage, and citizens are advised not to panic or rush to the markets to purchase food grains," he said.

# 300-400 Pak Drones Shot Down By India On Thursday: FS



KO Web Desk

Srinagar: Indian armed forces responded proportionately and adequately to Pakistan's attempts to target Indian installations last night, Foreign Secretary Vikram Misri said on Friday.

The foreign secretary was addressing a press conference here.

Pakistan violated Indian airspace to target our military installations on the intervening night of May 8 and 9, Wing Commander Vyomika Singh said.

She said Pakistan sent 300-400 drones in 36 locations from

Leh to Sir Creek last night to target Indian military installations and the drones were shot down by the Indian military.

Pakistan violated Indian airspace to target our military installations, she said.

In his remarks, Misri said the Pakistani side targeted places of worship with a particular design and it is a new low even for that country.

Pakistan's armed forces launched multiple attacks using drones and other munitions along the entire western border on the intervening

night of May 8-9, which were "effectively repulsed", the Indian Army said on Friday.

Pakistani troops also resorted to "numerous ceasefire violations" along the Line of Control in Jammu and Kashmir, the Indian Army said in an early morning post on X.

It also shared a small video clip with the post, asserting that all nefarious designs will be responded with force.

"OPERATION SINDOOR - Pakistan Armed Forces launched multiple attacks using drones and | More on P6

## Drone Attacks On Srinagar Airport Thwarted: Officials

Blasts Heard In Jammu, Parts Of South Kashmir

Press Trust Of India

Srinagar: Drone attacks on Srinagar airport and Awantipora air base were thwarted late on Friday, while blasts were heard in Jammu and parts of the south Kashmir region, officials said. The attack came a day after

India thwarted attempts by the Pakistan military to hit Indian military installations using drones and missiles. The sky was lit up in Baramulla district as the Indian military shot down Pakistani drones. Blasts were heard and sirens sounded in | More on P6

## Night Of Shells: Ground Report From Poonch



Syed Sammar Mehdi

Srinagar: When the first shells landed just after sundown, Fakhar Din was inside with his children, finishing dinner. By midnight, his home in Baila village had collapsed around him.

"We had just enough time to run," he said, standing beside the wreckage of mud bricks and twisted tin that once formed his roof. "Everything is gone."

On the night of May 8, Pakistani forces fired a fresh wave of mortars | More on P6

## Srinagar, Jammu Airport To Remain Shut Till May 15

Observer News Service

Srinagar: 24 airports in northern and western parts of the country, including Srinagar and Chandigarh, have been shut for civilian flights till May 15, sources said on Friday.

Earlier, these airports were closed for civilian flights till May 10 in view of the military conflict between India and Pakistan.

Airlines on Friday said that their flights have been cancelled due to temporary closure of airports till May 15.

The sources said at least 24 airports have been closed for civilian flights till 05:29 hours of May 15. The airports include Chandigarh, Srinagar, Amritsar, Ludhiana, Bhuntar, Kishengarh, Patiala, Shimla, Dharamsala, and Bathinda.

Jaisalmer, Jodhpur, Leh, Bikaner, Pathankot, Jammu, Jannagar, and Bhuj are among the other airports that have been temporarily closed for civilian flights.

"Following a notification from aviation authorities on continued closure of multiple airports in India, Air India flights to and from the following stations -- Jammu, | More on P6

## Haj Flights Cancelled

The Jammu and Kashmir Haj Committee on Friday announced the cancellation of the May 10 Haj flight amid continued military escalation across the region, deepening uncertainty for hundreds of anxious pilgrims. In an official notification, the committee stated that Flight No. SG-5210, | More on P6

## LG Sinha Visits Uri, Assesses Damage From Pak Shelling



Observer News Service

Jammu: Jammu and Kashmir Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha on Friday visited the Uri sector to assess the damage caused by Pakistani shelling in civilian areas over the past three nights. Sinha directed the

administration to provide immediate relief to the affected families and ensure their safety.

"Took assessment of the damage to the civilian area and residential houses caused by unprovoked shelling by Pakistan in the border villages of Lagama and | More on P6

## 'Pahalgam Terror Attack Avenged'

Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha on Friday said that under Prime Minister Narendra Modi's leadership India is committed to neutralize terrorists and the message is clear that no one will be allowed to inflict injuries on Indian citizens. LG Sinha visited Uri and while interacting with soldiers | More on P6

## HC Quashes PSA Of Ex-Bar Leader

M Ahmad

Srinagar: The exercise of preventive detention jurisdiction is a double-edged sword which is unsparing both for the hand which wields it and the hand which bears its blow, the High Court of J&K and Ladakh has said while quashing detention order under Public Safety Act against former secretary of erstwhile Kashmir Bar Association advocate Mohammad Ashraf Bhat.

"If mishandled by the wielder of said sword, then the effect stays on the side of the wielder whereas the relief passes on to the side of the person aimed to suffer its blow, and which precisely is the situation in hand before this Court in the context of the present case," a bench of Justice Rahul Bharti said while quashing the 71-year-old Bhat's PSA detention order under PSA passed by the Deputy Commissioner Srinagar on 16 July last year.

"The respondent No.2--District Magistrate, | More on P6

## CJ Orders Judicial Staff In Border Courts To Relocate

M Ahmad

Srinagar: Chief Justice of J&K and Ladakh High Court on Friday asked Judicial Officers and the staff of the Courts at Karnah, Kralpora, Gurez and Uri to leave the places of their residence and move to some safe zone.

According to a circular, the order has been taken in view of the prevailing situation on account of the recent escalation and continued intense cross-border artillery firing by Pakistan along the line of control in border areas of Karnah, Kralpora, Uri, and Gurez.

Besides, the Chief Justice has ordered ensuring court documents and records are safe.

"The Judicial Officers and court staff at Karnah, Kralpora, Gurez and Uri shall remain available at all times at their

places of stay to deal with any business of emergent nature which shall be transacted on the virtual mode."

Besides, the Principal District and Sessions Judges, Baramulla, Badipora and Kupwara, shall make all the necessary arrangements for hearing of any exceptionally urgent Civil/Criminal matter(s) pertains to the courts of Karnah, Kralpora, Gurez and Uri from the places of stay of judicial Officers through virtual mode, the circular said.

"Any court staff in distress, need or difficulty of any kind shall seek the assistance of the Principal District and Sessions Judges," it said, adding, "These directions shall remain in force till 12 May, 2025." | More on P6

## PM Reviews Security With DM, CDS, 3 Service Chiefs

Press Trust Of India

New Delhi: Prime Minister Narendra Modi chaired a high-level meeting with the top defence establishment on Friday to take stock of the security situation.

With conflict between India and Pakistan heating up, Modi met Defence Minister Rajnath Singh, National Security Advisor Ajit Doval, and the three service chiefs and the Chief of Defence Staff to strategise over the future course of action.

Rajnath Singh carried out a comprehensive review of the national security scenario with the top military leadership, a day after Pakistan's attempts to target Indian military installations were repelled.

Every aspect of the evolving security situation was discussed in the meeting, it is learnt.

The meeting was attended by Chief of Defence Staff Gen



Anil Chauhan, Army Chief Gen Upendra Dwivedi, Air Chief Marshal A P Singh, Navy Chief Admiral Dinesh K Tripathi and Defence Secretary Rajesh Kumar Singh.

India last night neutralised Pakistan military's attempt to hit military stations in Jammu, Pathankot, Udhampur and some other locations with missiles and drones.

"Defence Minister Rajnath Singh chaired a high-level meeting to review the security

situation along the western border and operational preparedness of the Indian armed forces," a defence ministry spokesperson said.

After the Pakistani attempts were foiled last night, the defence ministry said India remains "fully prepared to defend its sovereignty and ensure the safety of its people," Indian military officials said the Pakistani drones and missiles were effectively engaged by Indian armed | More on P6

## Escalation Won't Benefit Anyone: Omar

Observer News Service

Jammu: Warning Pakistan that continued escalation from across the border would only hurt them, Jammu and Kashmir Chief Minister Omar Abdullah called Thursday's aerial strikes on Jammu one of the "most serious assaults" on the city since the 1971 war.

He said that Pakistan should focus on de-escalation amid the ongoing military conflict in the wake of Operation Sindoor.


The chief minister lauded the armed forces for their swift response in neutralising aerial threats and ensuring that not a single drone reached its intended target.

"The way civilians have been targeted, and the kind of attacks



carried out in Jammu city--I don't think Jammu has been targeted like this since the 1971 war," Abdullah told reporters in Vijaypur during his visit to relief camps and a hospital in Jammu and Samba districts.

He added that multiple locations in Jammu, and even an ammunition depot in Anantnag, were | More on P6




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Ministry of External Affairs  
Government of India

## KAILASH MANASAROVAR

### YATRA

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**ELIGIBILITY** : Indian Nationals aged between 18 and 70 years as on 1st January 2025

**SELECTION** : By Computerised draw, followed by medical tests.

**REGISTRATION**: Only through Online application.  
For details visit website: <https://kmy.gov.in>

Telephone: 011-23088133









## Govt Intervention Brings New Hope For Fair Elections In FCIK

Observer News Service

Srinagar: In a crucial development set to restore faith in the democratic functioning of Kashmir's premier industrial body, the Chief Minister's Secretariat has responded positively to the concerns raised by the newly constituted Advisory Committee of the Federation of Chambers of Industries Kashmir (FCIK) regarding the recent election crisis within the organisation.

The intervention comes after mounting dissatisfaction among members of the industrial fraternity with the now-dissolved Election Commission of FCIK, which was accused of serious constitutional violations, procedural irregularities, and lack of transparency. The discontent had reached a boiling point, with multiple legal interventions and widespread resentment stalling the electoral process and severely hampering the Federation's ability to represent the interests of industrialists across the Valley.

In response to a detailed memorandum submitted on 6th May 2025 by the FCIK

President Shahid Kamili and endorsed by 26 Presidents of various industrial estates and district-level units, the Chief Minister's Office has formally directed the Director, Industries and Commerce, Kashmir to deploy neutral observers from the Industries and Commerce Department to oversee the FCIK election process.

The Director has also been asked to examine and act upon the request to place the FCIK office at Industrial Estate Bazullah under his temporary custody until the conclusion of the electoral process

The Director has been further asked to ensure that the upcoming elections are conducted strict-

ly as per the FCIK Constitution and bylaws.

The newly constituted Advisory Committee, formed during an Extraordinary General Body Meeting on 4th May 2025, has been entrusted with the responsibility of steering FCIK through this transitional phase.

Entrusted with full constitutional authority by the General Body, the newly constituted Advisory Committee is empowered to establish a fresh, impartial Election Commission tasked with conducting free, fair, and transparent elections in strict accordance with the FCIK Constitution, under the oversight of external neutral observers and government-appointed representatives.

This move by the government is being widely hailed across the industrial landscape of Kashmir as a turning point in the effort to restore credibility and legitimacy to FCIK.

Hailing the intervention, the members of the newly constituted Advisory Committee said that the Chief Minister's timely and just intervention has given new hope to the thousands of entrepreneurs and industrialists who rely on FCIK as their collective voice.

"We are fully committed to conducting free, fair, and constitutionally compliant elections under the supervision of neutral observers, and we will work closely with the Director of Industries and Commerce to make that happen", they said.

The members of the industrial community echoed this sentiment, reaffirming their support for the newly constituted Advisory Committee and expressing confidence that the electoral process, long delayed and discredited, will now proceed with transparency, accountability, and inclusiveness.

## GMC Srinagar Directs Faculty On Leave To Resume Duties Immediately

Observer News Service

Srinagar: In light of the prevailing situation, the Principal of Government Medical College (GMC) Srinagar has issued a directive asking all faculty members currently on leave, except those on maternity or medical leave to report back to duty without delay.

The directive, which ap-

plies to all teaching staff of GMC Srinagar and its associated hospitals, emphasizes the need for full staffing to ensure uninterrupted medical services.

"In view of the present circumstances, all faculty members who are on leave, except those on maternity or medical grounds, are hereby directed to resume their duties immediately," the Principal's order states.

### OFFICE OF THE NAIB TEHSILDAR KREERI

Subject: Application Mohammad Assadullah Malla S/o, D/o, W/o Khazir Mohammad Malla R/o Bangdara Reshipora for the issuance of the Income Dependent certificate.

#### Public Notice

Regarding the subject cited above, in this connection, a detailed report was sought from the patwari concerned which reveals that the applicant family consists of 05 members and the Annual income of the applicant Family from all sources consists of Rs. 92000/- Moreover, family structure of the applicant is as under:

S. No	Name of Legal Heir	Relation with Dependent	Age	Occupation	Marital Status
1	Mohd Assadullah Malla	Self	56	Labourer	Married
2	Naseema Begam	Wife	50	H/W	do
3	Mohd Shafi Malla	Son	25	Unemployed	Unmarried
4	Aljaz Ah Malla	Son	23	Student	Unmarried
5	Fahmeeda Akther	Daughter	27	H/W	Unmarried

It is further submitted that Mohd Assadullah Malla, S/o, D/o, W/o Khazir Mohd Malla, is Labourer by profession and is sole earning hand in the said family. The applicant needs Income Dependent certificate in favour of Fahmaeada Akther for Marriage Assistance. The applicant has applied for issuance of Income Dependent certificate. As such the instant matter is published through newspaper. If anyone is having any kind of objection, He/she may approach this office within 7 days (Seven Days) of the publication of this notice. After passing of stipulated time of 7 days (Seven Days), No objections will be entertained.

Naib Tehsildar  
Kreeri

fko\_r

### NORTHERN RAILWAY E-AUCTION NOTICE

The Senior Divisional Commercial Manager/FS, Northern Railway, Firozpur for and on behalf of President of India, invites E-Auction from eligible and registered bidders for the following works over Firozpur Division.

**Catalogue No.:** EAFZR-SLR25-69 **Auction Start:** 27/05/2025 at 11:00 Hrs.  
**Name of work:** Allotment of contract for leasing of parcel space in Train No./SLR compartment: 14630/R1, 14633/F1, 22552/F1, 12014/F1, 14633/F2, 14633/R1 & 12204/F1.

**Catalogue No.:** EAFZR-SCANNER-19 **Auction Start:** 27/05/2025 at 11:00 Hrs.  
**Name of work:** Allotment of Contract for the work of provision of Parcel Scanner Machine for scanning of all outgoing parcels at Firozpur Cantt., Jalandhar Cantt., Ludhiana & Jalandhar City Railway Station.

For other details and registration, please visit Railway website [www.ireps.gov.in](http://www.ireps.gov.in).

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## ‘Yellow-Alert’ Sgr City Receives Heavy Rainfall

Observer News Service

Srinagar: Amidst the two-day yellow alert, Jammu and Kashmir parts, especially the southern areas and Srinagar, the summer capital of the region received heavy rainfall on Friday afternoon.

Reports of heavy rainfall were received from Shopian, Kulgam, Anantnag in South Kashmir and some parts of northern region and in Srinagar.

Notably, the weatherman here has issued a ‘yellow alert’ till tomorrow (May 10), predicting brief spells of light rain, thunder-

shower and gusty winds at scattered to fairly widespread places across Jammu and Kashmir.

Director Meteorological department (MeT), Dr Mukhtar Ahmad said that partly to generally cloudy with spell of light to moderate rain, thundershower and gusty winds are expected at scattered to fairly widespread places.

The MeT Director has further predicted the possibility of brief spell of light rain and thundershower at isolated places on May 12, adding that there is a forecast of generally dry weather conditions from May 13 to May 17.

Meanwhile, in its advisory, the MeT has advised the people

to follow administration and traffic advisory.

The people have been also advised to avoid boating, shikara riding in Dal Lake, Wular Lake & other water bodies during inclement weather and gusty winds.

According to the Advisory, the MeT has forecasted intense showers at few vulnerable places may lead to landslides and mudslides.

The MeT also said that there is a forecast of significant rise in day temperature from 13th onwards mainly in Jammu division—(with KNO inputs)

## Dog Menace Persists In City

Observer News Service

Srinagar – The persistent threat posed by stray dogs across Kashmir shows no sign of abating, with official figures revealing an average of 18 dog bite cases reported every single day.

Health department data indicates that Kashmir witnesses between 6,000 to 6,500 cases of dog

bites annually—a number that has sparked growing concern among residents and healthcare professionals alike.

A senior officer at the Srinagar Municipal Corporation (SMC), speaking on condition of anonymity, said that the unchecked proliferation of stray dogs is closely linked to poor waste management. “The main

culprit is open garbage dumping, especially from meat and poultry shops. These areas become breeding grounds for dogs. The only long-term solution is scientific waste disposal and public cooperation,” he stated. He also appealed to residents to be especially cautious during early mornings and evenings, when dog activity is highest.

## OBSESSIVE COMPULSIVE DISORDER

### 8 WEEK FREE GROUP THERAPY

I did wash my hand ....  
but ....  
did I clean it enough?  
?Wash it again?  
is it clean now?

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

**KASHMER /Kashmir American Society of Healthcare,**  
**Medical Education & Research**  
**in collaboration with**  
**HPVT (Help Poor Voluntary Trust).**  
**is initiating a free 8 weeks Group therapy for the individuals**  
**suffering with OCD by**  
**a team of counselling clinical psychologists led by leading**  
**consultant clinical psychologist of J&K.**

If you or some one you know is experiencing symptoms of OCD, seeking professional help is crucial.

You do not have to fight your battles alone.

There is no need for referral , simply call us for registration.

Happy & Healthy minds Office, HPVT  
Building (First Floor), Dareshi Kadal  
Chowk, Srinagar

9070806160



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

### AIRPORTS

SHIEK UL ALAM AIRPORT: 01942303311



### RAILWAYS

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



### HIGHWAY STATUS



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



**HIJRI  
CALENDAR**  
12 Zil-Qadah  
1446

### PRAYERS

FAJR	4: 00
ZUHR	12:27
ASR	5:19
Magrib	7:24
ISHA	8: 57

## This Day In History

- 1797 - 1st US Navy ship, the "United States," is launched
- 1801 - First Barbary War: The Barbary pirates of Tripoli declare war on the United States of America (1st US foreign war)
- 1804 - British Prime Minister Henry Addington resigns, replaced by William Pitt the Younger
- 1857 - Indian Mutiny against rule by the British East India Company begins with the revolt of the Sepoy soldiers in Meerut
- 1862 - Battle of Plum Run Bend, Tennessee
- 1864 - Battles at Spotsylvania Court House, Virginia
- 1865 - Confederate President Jefferson Davis captured by Union troops at Irwinsville Georgia (US Civil War)
- 1871 - Peace of Frankfurt-am-Main concluded between France & Germany ends Franco-Prussian war
- 1872 - Victoria Woodhull becomes 1st woman nominated for US presidency by Equal Rights Party at Apollo Hall, NYC
- 1910 - Halley's Comet closest approach to Earth in 1910 pass
- 1915 - Canadian physician Cluny MacPherson first presents his gas mask invention to the British War Office
- 1917 - Atlantic ships get destroyer escorts to stop German attacks
- 1918 - HMS Vindictive sunk to block entrance of Ostend Harbor
- 1925 - To control demonstrations against foreigners, British troops in Shanghai fire into a crowd, leading to a boycott against British goods
- 1933- Nazis stage public book burnings in Germany
- 1933- Paraguay declares war on Bolivia
- 1940- French troops arrive in Zealand/Brabant Netherlands
- 1940- Nazi armies attack Netherlands, Belgium & Luxembourg
- 1940- Winston Churchill succeeds Neville Chamberlain as British PM
- 1940- World War II: The first German bombs of the war fall on England at Chilham and Petham, in Kent.
- 1942-World War II: The Thai Phayap Army invades the Shan States during the Burma Campaign.
- 1944- Chinese offensive in West-Yunnan
- 1945- Allies capture Rangoon from the Japanese
- 1945- Russian troops occupied Prague
- 1948- 1st attack by Egyptian irregular forces at Kfar Darom Israel
- 1956- French government sends 50,000 reservists to Algeria
- 1959- Soviet forces arrive in Afghanistan
- 1967- Stockholm Vietnam Tribunal declares US aggression in Vietnam/Cambodia
- 1968- Vietnam peace talks began in Paris between the US & North Vietnam
- 1969- Apollo 10 transmit 1st color pictures of Earth from space
- 1979-Vivekananda (Sri Lanka) completes nonstop cycle ride of 187 hrs, 28 min, around
- Viagra Maha Devi Park, Colombo, Sri Lanka [From May 2]
- 1994- Nelson Mandela sworn in as South Africa's 1st black president
- 1994- Silvio Berlusconi forms Italian government with 5 neo-fascists
- 1995-- Britain lifts a 23-year ban on ministerial talks with Sinn Féin
- 1995 In South Africa, 104 miners killed in an elevator accident
- 1996- 2 US Marine helicopters collided during joint US & British war games
- 1996- Excel Communications, Inc. becomes the youngest company ever to join the New York Stock Exchange (NYSE), trading under the symbol (ECI)
- 2000- India's population reaches 1 billion, baby girl Aastha born at Delhi's Safdarjung Hospital chosen as symbolic billionth
- 2005- A hand grenade thrown by Vladimir Arutyunian lands about 65 feet (20 metres) from U.S. President George W. Bush while giving a speech to a crowd in Tbilisi, Georgia, it malfunctions and does not detonate



# Law School Is Breaking Us

India’s legal education system is producing top lawyers but unsettling young minds in the process. A student insider reveals what’s going wrong.



Faizan Fayaz

I didn’t think law school would make me feel smaller. I walked in excited, maybe even a little smug, thinking I’d landed among the country’s sharpest minds. And I had. But I hadn’t prepared for the weight of silence, the kind that grows in hostel corridors, in back benches, in the long, tired eyes of students pretending they’re okay.

I’ve been a student representative for years now. That means I’ve had more conversations in stairwells and hostel rooms than I’ve had in classrooms. I’ve watched brilliant classmates slowly fade out. First missing breakfast, then lectures, then whole days.

Once, I found a student sitting alone in a dark room. He was shaking. When I asked what was wrong, he just said, “I can’t take it anymore.” He wasn’t talking about one bad day. He was talking about everything.

We’re made to sit through marathon lectures, six hours straight, barely a pause. Professors drone on while we’re expected to process complex judgments and legal theory like machines.

The system assumes that teaching is the hard part. It isn’t. Listening, absorbing, keeping up—that’s where the real pressure lives. You walk out exhausted but there’s still moot prep, assignments, and internship deadlines waiting.

**Then there’s the invisible hierarchy.** Everyone knows their place. Juniors stay quiet, seniors rule. Some take it too far. One time, a junior came to me with bruises, actual bruises. A senior had hit him over a petty disagreement. The junior had a history of depression and told me, in a flat voice, that he had been thinking of ending his life. I got him help. He’s still around. But what about the others who never say a word?

Disability makes it harder. We talk a lot about rights, about accessibility, about equality. We even study laws that promise these things. But inside our own campuses, students with disabilities are left to fend for themselves.

A visually-impaired student once told me he couldn’t access a single reading for weeks. Students with mobility issues face stairs, cracked ramps, and nar-

row doors. And those with mental health struggles are offered blank stares or casual suggestions like, “Try yoga.”

The gap between school and law school is brutal. You arrive at 18, still figuring yourself out, and suddenly you’re competing with peers who seem smarter, sharper, faster. Romantic relationships are whispered about. Faculty scold you for wasting time if you smile too much, socialize too freely. The message is clear: don’t feel too much, don’t live too much. Just study.

**And that’s what makes this crisis so tragic.** It doesn’t have to be this way. What we need is simple. Shorter, more engaging classes. Counselors who are trained and available. Professors who are sensitized. Mentorship that heals, not hazes.

Law schools don’t need to be wellness resorts. They just need to be human.

We are training future lawyers. The ones who will defend the Constitution, who will fight for justice. But how can we do that if our own dignity is eroded before we ever reach the courtroom?



**Disability makes it harder.** We talk a lot about rights, about accessibility, about equality. We even study laws that promise these things. But inside our own campuses, students with disabilities are left to fend for themselves.

Sometimes I wonder what kind of lawyers we’re becoming. Ones who can quote every article of the Constitution, but don’t know how to ask for help. Ones who win arguments in court but lose the battle inside their own heads.

**We need to change that.** For the sake of students. For the sake of the law. Because justice should start at home. And for us, that means starting with the law school itself.

*The author is a law student and activist. Views are personal.*

# Played for a Fool

*Unregulated cricket tournaments in Kashmir are exploiting passion, not promoting talent.*

Malik Yaseen

Across the valley, kids gather on dirt fields, their eyes set on the dream of making it big. But in the scramble for fame and recognition, an ugly reality is emerging.

Local cricket tournaments are capitalizing on that dream, turning a beloved sport into a cash cow while leaving the players with nothing but false hope.

Organisers of these so-called “mega” cricket tournaments ask teams

where else, should be about opportunity, not exploitation. It’s time for the authorities to step in and regulate these tournaments.

First, cap entry fees. No more outrageous fees that only benefit organisers. Second, make basic amenities mandatory. Every tournament should provide drinking water, first aid, and adequate facilities. Third, mandate that only licensed organisers run these events. No more fly-by-night operations without watch.

But the responsibility doesn’t fall solely on authorities. Players themselves must realise that these local,



to pay anywhere from 5000 to 6000 to enter. In return, teams get nothing but the possibility of being eliminated after just one game.

The structure is simple: a knockout format with little chance to showcase real skill, where the best teams rarely make it past the first round.

Yet, organisers rake in large sums as they draw in 32 to 64 teams, each hoping for a chance at something bigger.

But what do the players get? Poorly maintained grounds, a mat laid over uneven turf instead of a proper pitch, no medical support, and often no access to basic necessities like drinking water or food.

Injury is an ever-present risk, and the lack of safety measures only makes it worse. Many of the players are young, mostly students or unemployed youth, and for them, 6000 is not pocket change. They pay with hope, expecting exposure, but receive nothing but disappointment.

**This isn’t cricket; this is exploitation.** Behind every tournament, the organisers see nothing but profit. They offer nothing in return. No proper infrastructure, no facilities, no support. It’s a hollow event that thrives on passion, yet fails to deliver the most basic requirements for player safety and comfort.

Cricket in Kashmir, like every-

unorganised tournaments aren’t the way forward. If you’re serious about playing professionally—if you dream of representing India or playing at the national level—then these matches won’t get you there.

Social media stardom from viral videos hitting sixes on small, poorly maintained grounds is a hollow achievement. It’s a fleeting moment of fame, and that’s all it will ever be. You might get likes on Instagram, but when you show up for real selection trials, the harsh truth is you won’t even make it past the first round.

Real cricket is played on turf wickets, not mats. It’s about facing bowlers who challenge you, not a batting pitch that caters to ego-stoking sixes. If you’re serious about your career, seek out proper coaching, compete in recognised tournaments, and train where the game is treated seriously.

The problem isn’t talent; Kashmir has it in abundance. The problem is the lack of opportunity, the lack of structure, and the exploitation of dreams. Instead of nurturing cricket, we’re allowing it to be used as a business—one that profits off the hopes of young players who deserve better.

*The author can be reached at malikyaseen4@gmail.com. Views expressed in this article are author’s own and don’t necessarily reflect KO’s*

# Who Speaks for Children?

*Emotional suppression in Kashmiri homes is often cloaked in religious virtue. But children are bearing the cost.*

Hirra Sultan

I’ve spent too many Fridays listening to sermons that begin with paradise and end with guilt.

The voice from the pulpit always reminds me to honour my parents, to treat them as divine, to seek their approval as if it were a key to heaven. And for the longest time, I believed it. I swallowed it like medicine, bitter but necessary.

They never tell you, though, how heavy that medicine can be.

In our homes, parents are not just guardians. They are myths in motion. Their word is law, even when it wounds. Their dreams are scripts for their children to act out, never to revise. And if a child dares to edit even a line—chooses a different career, questions a custom, loves someone unexpected—the script is torn up, and the child becomes a sinner.

We are not allowed to grow. We are expected to remain small, obedient, always grateful. We are raised not to think for ourselves but to reflect our parents’ expectations like clean, polished mirrors. And when we crack under the weight of that reflection, the blame is ours. It always is.

The verse they often quote—“do not even say ‘uff’ to your parents”—comes with a quiet clause they forget to mention. When they reach old age, when they are in your care. Not when they are fit and controlling. Not when they use religion like a leash. Not when they call your voice rebellion and your choices disobedience.

Obedience. That word echoes in every room I have ever lived in. But

obedience, I have learned, is owed only to God. To parents, there is kindness, not servitude.

We confuse the two. We blur them until kindness feels like silence and obedience like virtue. In doing so, we raise children who do not trust their own thoughts. Who feel guilty for existing in ways that do not please. Who leave home at the first chance and never really return. Not in body, not in heart.

There is something terrifying about growing up and realizing that the peo-

If Allah gave us tongues and thought and heart, it was not so we could bury them under parental approval. It was so we could live—with integrity, with compassion, with courage.

I do not write this in anger. I write it in longing. For a home where a child’s opinion is not an act of defiance. For a world where love is not so conditional. For a prayer that sounds less like command and more like understanding.

I do not want to break the sacred bond between parent and child. I want

**Children are not unfinished versions of their parents. They are whole, distinct souls. They are not vessels for someone else’s redemption. They are not tools for mending old family wounds.**

ple who taught you to pray also taught you to disappear. That love often came with conditions. That you had to earn it by giving up small pieces of yourself—your voice, your freedom, your joy. And when you refused, even once, they said you had forgotten God.

But I remember God in quiet, trembling ways. In the space between pain and understanding. In the moments I choose not to shout back. In the times I remind myself that I was not created to live afraid.

Children are not unfinished versions of their parents. They are whole, distinct souls. They are not vessels for someone else’s redemption. They are not tools for mending old family wounds.

to cleanse it of fear. I want to tell every mother and father that raising a child was never a favour, it was a trust. And trust, once broken, takes a lifetime to rebuild.

The children who leave are not heartless. They are just tired. They are seeking the one thing they were promised but never felt—peace.

And peace, like love, is a two-way street.

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*The writer is a Srinagar-based techie whose works have appeared in multiple publications. Views expressed in this article are author’s own and don’t necessarily reflect KO’s editorial policy.*

# Berigam’s Spiritual Heartbeat

*For centuries, villagers have walked barefoot to the shrine of a forgotten saint who gave up everything for the valley’s soul.*

Rayees Ahmad Kumar

In the village of Berigam, tucked between the foothills of South Kashmir and the serene orchards, there’s a tomb that draws crowds.

No royal lineage, no battlefield glories—just a saint who came, stayed, and never asked for attention.

His name was Syed Dawood Simnani [RA], and for the villagers, his memory is not a relic, but a rhythm.

He arrived from Simnan, a city of scholars in Persia, sometime in the late 14th century.

A cousin to Mir Syed Ali Hamadani [RA], the beloved Sufi who brought Islam’s deeper roots to Kashmir, Simnani came not with a caravan of 700 Sayyids, but with a quieter mission. He had been a judge, a learned man, but he left his title behind. He chose a village few had heard of. And he stayed.

Berigam then was just earth and echo. Small homes, kind hands, Hindu rites. The villagers had never seen a man like him. They watched as he settled on a knoll. The local Kumar clan offered him land for teaching and speaking.

There was no mosque, no microphone. Just a man and his voice. He spoke of mercy, of restraint, of truth. They say his sermons could still a field. Word spread. Villagers from Akingam, Gundipora, Bogund walked miles barefoot to hear him. He had no miracles, only wisdom. But it was enough.

When the crowd outgrew the space, the Kumar family offered more land. A shrine was raised from local stone. He lived there. He died there. And now, centuries later, he is still there.

Every year on the 7th of Jamadiul Sani, Berigam transforms. Children count down the days. Chickens are set aside for feasts. Relatives arrive by bus, by foot, by instinct. Women scrub floors and boil rice. Men string lights

**“Berigam then was just earth and echo. Small homes, kind hands, Hindu rites. The villagers had never seen a man like him. They watched as he settled on a knoll. The local Kumar clan offered him land for teaching and speaking.**

around the shrine. The urs begins.

It is part prayer, part festival. Through the night, verses of the Qur’an rise with the smoke of kangris. The air smells of cardamom and wood-fire. Once, folk artists performed under moonlight. Snack-sellers still line the road, hawking tabruk: blessed walnuts, warm bread, syrupy fritters. Elders recall simpler times when even poultry was raised with this day in mind.

But this is no nostalgic gathering. It pulses with meaning. Births and weddings are timed around the urs. Disputes are postponed. Plans wait. Nothing happens in Berigam before the saint is remembered.

Syed Dawood Simnani [RA] didn’t build an empire. He planted an idea. That a man could walk away from power, cross mountains, and give everything for the love of God. His life was one long act of surrender. And the people remember.

At his tomb, prayers are whispered not for miracles, but for strength. That’s what they come for, what they’ve always come for. A chance to feel anchored. To believe, even briefly, in something larger than themselves.

A saint, wrote Rumi, can do more in death than a thousand living men. In Berigam, that feels true. He didn’t conquer. He stayed.

*The writer hails from Qazigund.*



# Trolled for Topping

From school results to national TV debates, confident Kashmiri girls are becoming soft targets for faceless trolls. A disturbing pattern is emerging, and it's silencing the very voices Kashmir needs.

Fiza Masoodi

When 18-year-old Sana received the news that she had topped her Class 12 board exams, her modest home erupted with celebration. Sweets were passed around, phone calls poured in, and her cousins danced in the courtyard. Her success was a rare joyful moment for a family living amid everyday uncertainty.

But joy quickly gave way to silence. A photo of Sana, wearing a sweatshirt and sporting a cropped haircut, began circulating on social media, especially X. Within hours, she was ridiculed online for looking "like a boy." A harrowing hashtag mocked her gender expression. Some even questioned her religion and upbringing.

"My daughter had done nothing wrong," said her father, his voice breaking. "We raised her to study hard and be honest. We are proud of her. But she's a kid, and if her appearance has hurt anyone, we apologise."

The trolls were mostly faceless. Anonymous accounts with vague bios, political memes, and sometimes even AI-generated profile pictures. Their weapon: a steady stream of mockery disguised as satire. Their aim: to shame a girl for being seen.

This wasn't the first time. Some years ago, a high school topper from Kashmir gave a short interview to a local news outlet. In the video, she smiled nervously and shared her dream. It was shared widely at first as a source of inspiration, until it wasn't.

People began nipping at her voice, her choice of words, her confidence.

"Suddenly, I was being called arrogant," she recalled. "They made memes out of my video. They turned

my dream into a joke."

The trolling spread across platforms. Users compared her to TV characters meant to ridicule modern girls. She was accused of "seeking fame" and being "too forward." Screenshots of her interview were passed around with sarcastic captions.

"I stopped checking my phone," she said. "It was like I'd committed a sin by speaking confidently."

Digital abuse against women is a global concern, but in Kashmir, it carries added weight. With limited public representation and high societal scrutiny, young women who speak out or stand out are often left isolated. Online platforms, rather than leveling the field, have become echo chambers for misogyny, masked in sarcasm and cultural policing.

When a young Kashmiri girl recently appeared on national television and spoke articulately about misinterpretation of Kashmiris amid growing hostility after the Pahalgam terror attack,

women from marginalised communities—particularly those in conflict regions—face "more frequent and more severe abuse online." Kashmir, with its complex socio-political landscape, offers little recourse or institutional support for victims of digital bullying.

"There is a deep discomfort with female agency here," said Dr. Saba Mir, a researcher on gender and media. "Any woman who breaks from the script—by speaking up, dressing differently, or achieving something—is quickly pulled back through online shame."

Psychologists worry about the long-term effects. "This isn't just cyber-bullying," said Dr. Arif Shah, a child psychologist. "It's a social disciplining tool. It punishes visibility. It teaches young girls that the cost of being seen is too high."

While some girls retreat, others push forward. They continue to write and speak. A girl trolled some years ago now mentors high schoolers, but avoids the internet. Sana, though



**WHAT PASSES AS HUMOR ONLINE IS, IN TRUTH, A SYSTEMATIC SILENCING OF YOUNG WOMEN WHOSE ONLY FAULT IS AMBITION AND ASSERTION."**

she was praised by journalists and commentators across India. But back home, she faced the same old music.

"Speaking nonstop doesn't make you a Kashmir expert," read one post. Others accused her of being "detached from ground reality," even though she lives in Kashmir. Some criticized her English. Several posts went viral not for what she said, but how she said it.

According to the 2022 Amnesty International report on online abuse,

shaken, is quietly preparing for the next exam.

Many in Kashmir believe that the celebration of a young girl's brilliance shouldn't end in a torrent of hate.

"Yet in today's Kashmir, every milestone seems to come with a backlash," said researcher Saba, quoted above.

"What passes as humor online is, in truth, a systematic silencing of young women whose only fault is ambition and assertion."

# The Poison We Breathe

Environmental pollution is a growing threat to health worldwide. In Kashmir, like much of the world, it is a crisis that demands urgent attention.

Sahil Jahangir Mir

In every breath we take and every drop of water we drink, pollution quietly spreads its toxic grip. It is no longer a distant worry, a problem for the future. It is here, now, affecting billions globally.

And places like Kashmir, where the land and air have nurtured generations, are succumbing to harmful pollutants.

Pollution, in all its forms, is an invisible killer: pervasive, urgent, and often overlooked.

Across the globe, environmental pollution is responsible for around 13 million deaths every year, a staggering figure that paints a grim picture of the health crisis we are all facing.

The very air we breathe, the water we drink, the food we consume, and even the sounds and lights that surround us, all carry hidden dangers. These dangers, though often invisible to the naked eye, silently erode our health, dignity, and the beauty of the world around us.

Kashmir, known for its pristine valleys and cool mountain breezes, is not immune to the ravages of pollution. The air, once crisp and pure, is now tainted with the fumes of vehicles, industrial waste, and the burning of fossil fuels. This is not just an issue in Srinagar but in many towns and villages where the impacts of urbanization are beginning to show.

The fine particulate matter in the air—small enough to enter the lungs and bloodstream—poses a severe risk to health. It causes respiratory diseases like asthma, chronic obstructive pulmonary disease, and even lung cancer.

For those living near highways or industrial zones, the consequences are even worse. Children, the elderly, and those with pre-existing condi-

tions are particularly vulnerable.

Water, the lifeblood of Kashmir, is not immune either. It flows through the region's rivers and streams, bringing life to crops and villagers. But now, those same waters are becoming carriers of disease.

Industrial waste, untreated sewage, and plastic waste pollute freshwater sources, leading to waterborne diseases like cholera and dysentery. Unsafe drinking water, especially for infants and children, leads to unnecessary deaths. The once pristine springs and streams now bear the marks of neglect.

These aren't just local concerns; they are part of a broader global crisis. Contaminants like heavy metals and chemicals leach into the water, threatening not just the immediate population but future generations as well.

In Kashmir, where agriculture is still a lifeline for many, soil pollution is another threat creeping under the radar. The use of pesticides and chemicals, combined with industrial waste, is poisoning the very earth that nourishes crops.

These toxins, entering the food chain through plants and animals, find their way into human bodies. The long-term effects are devastating—cancer, neurological disorders, and reproductive problems. We are tainting the land that has fed us for centuries, and the results will be felt for generations.

At first glance, noise and light might seem like minor pollutants compared to air, water, or soil. But their impact is real.

The constant hum of construction, traffic, and urban life fills the air, contributing to stress, anxiety, and sleep disturbances. It is a pervasive form of pollution that wears us down over time.

Similarly, the light pollution from cities, with their glowing skies and

constant artificial illumination, disrupts natural cycles. It interferes with sleep, hormonal balance, and can even lead to more serious health issues like depression and increased cancer risk.

The hardest truth, though, is how disproportionately pollution affects the poor and marginalized.

In Kashmir, as elsewhere, the poorest communities are often the ones living closest to industrial sites, landfills, or highways. They are the ones most exposed to the harmful effects of pollution, and yet they often lack the resources to protect themselves.

These communities struggle to access clean water, breathe fresh air, and find safe places to live. They are left to bear the burden of pollution without the tools to fight back.

The solution is not simple, nor is it immediate. But it is necessary. Governments, both local and global, must enforce stricter environmental regulations. Industries must be held accountable for the waste they produce. Sustainable practices must become the norm rather than the exception.

Healthcare systems need to integrate environmental risk factors into their practices, helping communities understand the connection between their environment and their health.

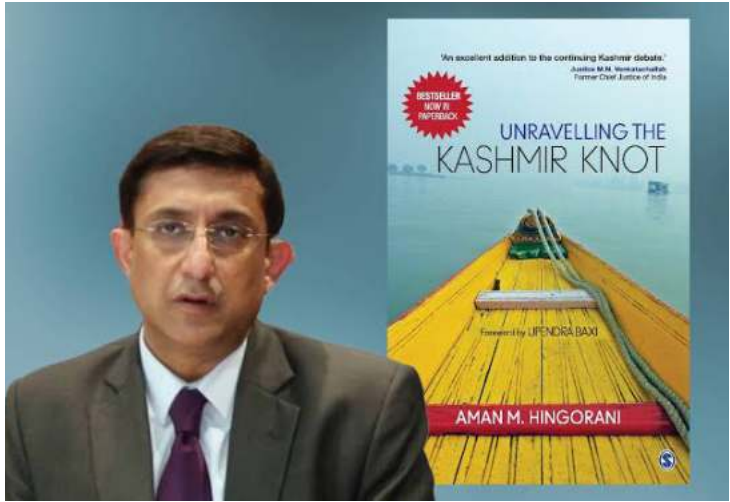
Public awareness campaigns can teach individuals about the simple steps they can take to reduce their environmental footprint—whether it's conserving water, reducing plastic use, or supporting green energy initiatives.

Pollution is a global crisis, but the solutions are within our grasp. From Kashmir to the farthest corners of the world, we must act now.

*The author is an environmental researcher and columnist based in Dharambugh Kralapora, Kashmir.*

## Lawyer's Ledger

Unfolding history through rulings and records, a senior advocate finds clarity where chaos long reigned.



Showkat Andrabi

In Unravelling the Kashmir Knot, senior advocate Dr Aman Hingorani turns to the law to decode one of South Asia's longest-running discords.

With the eye of a jurist and the patience of a historian, Hingorani lays out a case: that Kashmir chapter was not born of spontaneous dispute or cultural clash, but rather manufactured in the closing act of British imperialism, then compounded by miscalculations from distant capitals.

What emerges is less a polemic and more a forensic report.

Hingorani doesn't traffic in sentiment. Instead, he brings together a patchwork of court rulings, declassified records, UN debates and diplomatic notes to trace a straight line from the Partition to present-day plight. This is not just a history lesson, but a legal reckoning. And Hingorani wants the world, quite literally, to judge.

The core of his argument is stark: the political problem was not inevitable, but engineered. Britain, he writes, carved Pakistan out of India to maintain a pliable regional partner, and deliberately left Kashmir's fate open to fuel division.

The princely state's Instrument of Accession in 1947 should've settled the matter. But subsequent events muddied the waters beyond recognition.

Hingorani is at his sharpest when unpacking the legal and diplomatic gaffes of independent India. He takes Nehru's idealism to task, critiques the UN's tooth-

less role, and argues that India's failure to push for legal finality has allowed Pakistan and China to entrench themselves in territories that rightfully belong to India.

But the book does not stop at critique. It proposes a solution - one both radical and grounded: take the matter to the International Court of Justice.

This, Hingorani insists, would depoliticise the issue, clarify India's legal position, and potentially close the door on decades of cynical narratives. It is a gamble, perhaps, but one rooted in logic.

What gives this book heft is Hingorani's blend of roles - lawyer, scholar, teacher, and mediator. He writes with clarity, but never compromises on detail. Some sections, especially those dealing with early diplomatic exchanges, require slow reading. But even the densest passages are lit with insight.

This is a book written not just with a mind for the courtroom, but with a heart aware of Kashmiri tragedy. Without slipping into emotions, Hingorani acknowledges the human cost of inaction - the lives caught in standoffs, the generations raised in shadow.

In an age of simplistic binaries, Unravelling the Kashmir Knot offers something rarer: a calm, rigorous, and deeply informed voice.

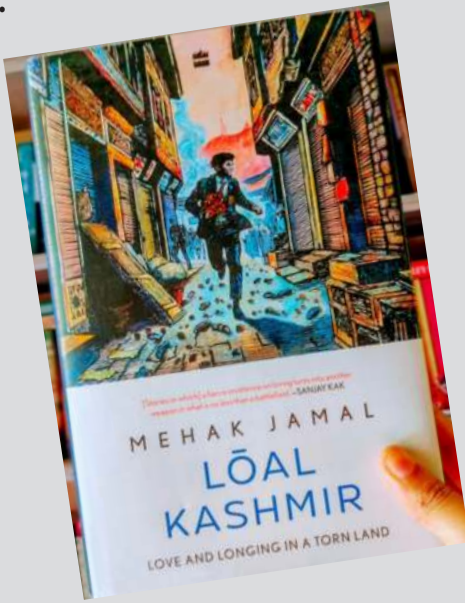
The legal route, the book advocates, may not solve the problem overnight. But as Hingorani argues, it might be the cleanest cut through the tangle.

*The writer is a Srinagar-based teacher.*

## Sweet Sixteen Stories

Mehak Jamal's debut doesn't flinch. And neither will you.

The book is divided into three parts: Otru (the day before yesterday), Rath (yesterday), and Az (today). But Kashmir doesn't move in straight lines. It loops.



Fiza Masoodi

In Kashmir, even love is at a crossroads. It waits in shadows. It hides in scribbled notes passed under doors. It flickers, briefly, on borrowed phones before the signal dies again.

In Loal Kashmir, Mehak Jamal curates sixteen such moments. True stories of love trying to breathe in a place that shifts like sand.

This is not the love of ballads and Bollywood. It is quieter, hungrier, half-formed. It doesn't gallop; it limps. It learns to speak in silences. It disappears mid-sentence. It waits, sometimes forever, for curbs to lift.

Jamal, a Kashmiri filmmaker, began collecting these stories in 2019, just after New Delhi revoked the region's autonomy and switched off the internet. Lovers were cut off mid-call. Fiancés vanished into vacuum. Weddings happened without witnesses. But love survived another spell of strife.

The book is divided into three parts: Otru (the day before yesterday), Rath (yesterday), and Az (today). But Kashmir doesn't move in straight lines. It loops.

In these pages, a girl's father disappears in the '90s and she still waits by the door. A bride writes her own nikah vows because no maulvi will marry her to a man from the other side of the border. A teenager, caught in a crackdown, is forced by soldiers to read his love letter aloud on the street.

Jamal does not write with fire-

works. Her prose is spare, surgical. She does not romanticize rigidity. She listens, records, steps back. The result is a mosaic of aching restraint.

In Post-it, a man leaves sticky notes on a car windshield during curfew hours—their only form of conversation. In Matador, a Hindu boy and Muslim girl fall in love just as his family flees the Valley.

Years later, they meet again in a Delhi street, say nothing, and keep walking. What more is there to say?

Kashmiri words—loal, sahibo, tchur—punctuate the text like mines of meaning. Untranslated, unapologetic. They belong to the soil, heavy with things English cannot hold.

Some stories feel rushed, ending in obituary-style updates: married, migrated, gone. A few are burdened by too much context, as if the politics must always explain the love. But these are small bruises on an otherwise vital book.

Because what Loal Kashmir offers is not closure, but clarity. That in a place where being seen can be problem, to love is to risk exposure. And yet, they risk it all for love.

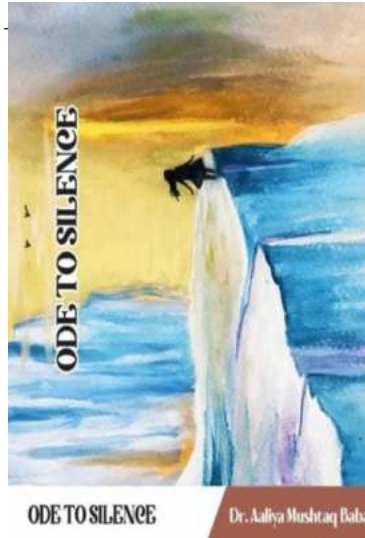
This is the poetry of Jamal's work. Not in how it is written, but in what it captures: the fragile tenderness in a valley that has seen too much grief.

Love, here, is not a subplot. It is a form of culture. And Loal Kashmir just celebrates that.

*The reviewer is a Srinagar-based storyteller. Her debut book on Myth of Mountains is coming out later this year.*

## When Silence Speaks

In An Ode to Silence, Dr. Aaliya Mushtaq Baba writes like a woman tracing her way through fog, with steady hands and a heart.



This collection of poems in the work of Aaliya Mushtaq, a young poet from Kashmir, and her experience of silence in her life. The book is a collection of poems, in various forms, which make them appear as if they are a collection of poems in a collection of poems.

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There is a stillness that comes after snowfall. The kind that quiets the world without warning. Dr. Aaliya Mushtaq Baba's An Ode to Silence carries that same hush. Her words do not arrive to impress. They arrive to stay.

This is not a loud book. It does not chase the reader. It waits. With 80 pages of delicate, thoughtful verse, Baba offers something rare: poems that do not demand to be heard, yet echo long after they're read. The silence in her poetry is not empty. It is alive.

Each poem feels like a private note left in a drawer. You open one and find a memory, folded into itself. A woman making tea in a dim kitchen. A child remembering a garden that no longer grows. A mind returning to words that were never said out loud.

Baba writes with an unshaken calm. She doesn't decorate her language. She doesn't need to. Her choice of words is plain, but never dull. They feel honest, unfiltered, as if she trusts her reader the way one might trust a confidante. This trust shapes the rhythm of the book. It's what makes the poems feel like they belong not just to the poet, but to anyone who has ever endured quietly.

There is deep knowledge here. The kind that does not announce itself with fireworks. Baba, an academic from Srinagar, has long studied the intersections of identity, memory, and voice. That wisdom moves like an undercurrent through her poetry. But it never

overpowers the emotional clarity of her work. Her poems breathe. They hold pause. They give space.

Much of her verse is grounded in womanhood: its ache, its beauty, its complexity. Yet she avoids the trap of making her speakers martyrs. They are not asking for pity. They are asking to be seen.

In one poem, the weight of silence becomes a necklace of invisible graves. In another, love lingers like breath on glass. These are not metaphors meant to astonish. They are truths, quietly laid bare.

The book's design is clean, its size intimate. It feels like something you could carry in a coat pocket, to pull out on a bus ride or a sleepless night. At ₹295, it may seem a little steep for its length. But poetry is not sold by the page. It is measured by the silence it breaks, and the ones it honors.

An Ode to Silence does not tell you how to feel. It simply waits beside you, holding your sorrow without question. It listens, without judgment. And in doing so, it becomes more than poetry. It becomes a kind of shelter.

For those who have lived through quiet storms, for those who have built whole worlds inside their heads, this book will feel like recognition. A mirror with soft edges. A whisper that understands.

*Fatima Khan is a Civil Engineering graduate from NIT Srinagar and currently works at ZSS, a global consulting firm.*



CONTD. FROM FRONT PAGE

300-400 Pak Drones

other munitions along entire Western Border on the intervening night of 08 and 09 May 2025. Pak troops also resorted to numerous ceasefire violations along the Line of Control in Jammu and Kashmir," the post said.

The drone attacks were "effectively repulsed" and a "befitting reply" was given to the ceasefire violations, the Indian Army said.

"#IndianArmy remains committed to safeguarding the sovereignty and territorial integrity of the Nation. All nefarious designs will be responded with force," it added.

The developments followed the precise missile strikes carried out by the Indian armed forces on nine terror targets in Pakistan-occupied Kashmir (PoK) and Pakistan early Wednesday under Operation Sindoor, in retaliation for the April 22 Pahalgam terror attack.

The Ministry of Defence on Thursday reiterated that any attack on military sites in India will invite a "suitable response".

In a late night statement on Thursday, the defence ministry said, "Military stations at Jammu, Pathankot and Udhampur were targeted by Pakistani-origin #drones and missiles along the International Border in J&K today."

"The threats were swiftly neutralised using kinetic and non-kinetic capabilities in line with the established standard operating procedures (SOPs). No casualties or material losses were reported. India remains fully prepared to defend its sovereignty and ensure the safety of its people," it said.

'Places Of Worship

reflective of Islamabad's evil design and efforts to deceive and mislead the world. Foreign Secretary Vikram Misri said on Friday.

Citing Pakistan's attack on a gurdwara in Amritsar and its subsequent attempt to blame it on Indian armed forces, Misri said Islamabad's thinking that India would attack its own cities is the kind of "deranged fantasy" that only the Pakistani state can come up with.

At a media briefing, the foreign secretary blasted Pakistan's provocative and escalatory actions to try and target Indian cities and civilian infrastructure using drones last night.

Misri especially hit out at Pakistan for its "blatantly farcical denial" of these attacks saying it is yet another example of Islamabad's duplicity and the "new depths" that it is plumbng to in its "quest for disinformation".

The foreign secretary's remarks came as tensions between the two countries soared significantly following India's strike on terror infrastructure in Pakistan and Pakistan-Occupied-Kashmir under Operation Sindoor' early Wednesday.

Misri was severely critical of Pakistan for targeting religious places with an aim to give a communal colour to the current situation, and pointed to an incident of Pakistan attacking a gurdwara in Poonch and another religious place in Amritsar.

"Instead of owning up to these attacks, Pakistan made the preposterous and outrageous claim that it was the Indian armed forces and the Indian Air Force that was targeting cities like Amritsar and trying to put the blame on Pakistan," he said.

"This is nothing but a desperate attempt by Pakistan to disown its acts of aggression; but it is also true to its efforts to deceive and mislead the world. It will not succeed," Misri said.

He said that "we would attack our own cities" is the kind of deranged fantasy that only the Pakistani state can come up with.

Perhaps they do it because they are well versed in such action as their history would show, he said.

Misri described it as a "blatant lie" Pakistan's allegations of India targeting the Nankana Sahib Gurdwara using a drone.

"This is again yet another blatant lie and part of Pakistan's disinformation campaign. As we saw in the Pahalgam attack, Pakistan is again trying desperately to impart a communal hue to the situation with an intention to create discord," he said.

"Again, we are not surprised. India's steadfast unity in itself is a challenge to Pakistan," he said.

Misri said in view of the existing security scenario, the Kartarpur Sahib corridor has been suspended.

On India's strikes on Bahawalpur's Markaz Subhan Allah -" the nerve centre of Jaish-e-Mohammed linked to the killing of Daniel Pearl, a journalist with The Wall Street Journal, Misri said the terror outfit was "directly or indirectly" responsible for his death.

"Bahawalpur is the headquarters of the Jaish-e-Mohammed terrorist group that is proscribed by the UN. Its leader Masood Azhar, is a proscribed individual," he said, responding to a question.

"You brought up the connection with the tragic death or killing of Daniel Pearl of the Wall Street Journal. The JeM was in some way directly or indirectly responsible for the death of Daniel Pearl," he said.

"But the real connection is through Ahmed Omar Saeed Sheikh, the British Pakistani jihadi who was held in India but was finally released in 2000 and he was the person who lured Daniel Pearl to his...murder," Misri said.

Ample Food

Meanwhile, Union Agriculture Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan on Friday reviewed the food stock situation in the country as well as preparedness for ensuing kharif sowing season which starts with the onset of monsoon rains.

The agriculture minister directed officials to be prepared to assist farmers in bordering states with sowing operations to ensure that they do not face difficulties due to the ongoing conflict between India and Pakistan.

Chouhan said he would speak with chief ministers of bordering states/UT like Jammu and Kashmir and Punjab regarding requirements in case villages need evacuation.

Elaborating on the food supply situation, the food ministry said the current rice stock

stands at 356.42 lakh tonne against a buffer norm of 135 lakh tonne. Similarly, wheat stock is 383.32 lakh tonne against a buffer norm of 276 lakh tonne.

"Thus, demonstrating a strong surplus over the required buffer norms, ensuring nationwide food security," the statement said.

In addition, India currently holds about 17 lakh tonne of edible oil stocks.

"Domestically, the availability of mustard oil is ample during the ongoing peak production season, further supplementing edible oil supply," it said.

The ongoing sugar season started with a carry-over stock of 79 lakh tonne. Production is estimated at 262 lakh tonne, after accounting for the diversion of 34 lakh tonne for ethanol production.

Sugar marketing year runs from October to September.

As of now, around 257 lakh tonne of sugar has already been produced.

Considering the domestic consumption of 280 lakh tonne and exports of 10 lakh tonne in 2024-25 marketing year, the closing stock is expected to be around 50 lakh tonne which is more than the consumption of two months.

The production outlook for the 2025-26 sugar season is also promising due to favourable climatic conditions, the ministry said.

Blackout In Kashmir

sirens were heard at a few places, officials said. The blackout was enforced after attacks in Jammu and Srinagar, which sent the locals rushing to their homes in panic.

"Intermittent sounds of blasts, probably heavy artillery, can now be heard from where I am," Chief Minister Omar Abdullah said in a post on X.

He also posted a picture of the city in darkness, captioning the post as, "Blackout in Jammu now. Sirens can be heard across the city."

He said in another post, "It's my earnest appeal to everyone in and around Jammu please stay off the streets, stay at home or at the nearest place you can comfortably stay at for the next few hours. Ignore rumours, don't spread unsubstantiated or unverified stories and we will get through this together."

Drone Attacks

the Jammu region and south Kashmir as many parts plunged into darkness, officials said.

In Srinagar, mosque loudspeakers were used to convey to locals to switch off their lights as a precautionary measure.

The military said drones were spotted in Baramulla, Srinagar, Avantipora, Nagrota, Jammu, Ferozpur, Pathankot, Fazilka, Lalgarh Jatta, Jaisalmer, Barmar, Bhuj, Kuarbet and Lakhi Nala.

"Drones have been sighted at 26 locations ranging from Baramulla in the north to Bhuj in the south, along both the International Border and the Line of Control with Pakistan," it said.

These include suspected armed drones posing potential threats to civilian and military targets, it added.

"Regrettably, an armed drone targeted a civilian area in Ferozpur, resulting in severe injuries to members of a local family," a military official said.

The injured have been provided medical assistance and the area has been sanitised by security forces. "The Indian Armed Forces are maintaining a high state of alert, and all such aerial threats are being tracked and engaged using counter-drone systems," said the official.

The situation is under close and constant watch, and prompt action is being taken wherever necessary, he said.

"Citizens, especially in the border areas are advised to remain indoors, limit unnecessary movement, and strictly follow safety instructions issued by local authorities. While there is no need for panic, heightened vigilance and precaution are essential," the official said.

Heavy cross-border shelling was underway along the International Border in Suchetgarh and Ramgarh sectors of Jammu and Samba districts.

Chief Minister Omar Abdullah said in a post on X, "Intermittent sounds of blasts, probably heavy artillery, can now be heard from where I am."

He also posted a picture of the city in darkness, captioning the post as, "Blackout in Jammu now. Sirens can be heard across the city."

In another post, he said,"It's my earnest appeal to everyone in and around Jammu please stay off the streets, stay at home or at the nearest place you can comfortably stay at for the next few hours. Ignore rumours, don't spread unsubstantiated or unverified stories and we will get through this together."

On Thursday evening, Indian air defence units intercepted at least eight missiles fired by Pakistan towards the border areas of Jammu, including the strategically important Jammu airport, defence sources had said.

Likening the attack to the tactics used by Hamas, sources said all "cheap" rockets directed at the Jammu region were intercepted and neutralised by air defence units.

The missiles were aimed at key locations, including Satwari (Jammu airport), Samba, RS Pura, and Arnai.

A sudden power outage had plunged Jammu city into darkness following two loud explosions, likely resulting from the interception of the intruding drones. Immediately after, sirens were blared throughout the city, alerting residents to seek shelter.

The aerial objects had attempted to strike the strategic Jammu airport and its surrounding areas, which house the army, air force, and paramilitary installations.

Tension between the two neighbours soared after the Indian Armed Forces on Wednesday conducted precision strikes targeting terror launchpads in Pakistan and Pakistan-occupied Kashmir (PoK) in response to the April 22 attack by terrorists in Jammu and Kashmir's

Pahalgam in which 26 people, mostly tourists, were killed.

Night Of Shells:

across the Line of Control, targeting civilian areas in and around Poonch.

The attack came less than 24 hours after a previous barrage killed 15 and wounded over 40 people. This time, the shelling was worse, residents said — more frequent, more intense, and deeper into populated zones.

For the people of Poonch, it was another night of fear and flight. At least 400 families left their homes between dusk and dawn. The wounded arrived at District Hospital Poonch in a steady stream.

Among them was 11-year-old Rameez, limping from a leg wound. "We heard a sound like a whistle," he said softly. "Then a loud bang. Then nothing but dust."

In Baila, entire blocks lie in ruins. Roofs have caved in. Glass shards from blown-out windows litter the roads. Shell marks scar the walls of what's left standing.

In the nearby town of Mandi, which has so far been spared direct hits, families from Sawjini, Baila and parts of Poonch city began arriving late into the night. The government vacated the Boys Higher Secondary School to serve as an emergency shelter.

By morning, classrooms meant for students had turned into makeshift dormitories.

"Most families arrived without anything," said Ajaz Ahmed Jan, Member of the Legislative Assembly from Haveli, who has been on the ground coordinating relief. "We've asked people in Mandi to contribute whatever they can — food, clothes, bedding."

The response from the community has been swift. Mosques have opened their courtyards, gurdwaras their langars.

In the middle of one such effort, local shopkeeper Amarjeet Singh paused to hand a blanket to a crying woman. "We are all the same here," he said. "There is no Hindu, no Muslim, no Sikh in this pain."

Residents describe the May 8 shelling as more destructive than the previous day. They say between 40 and 50 shells landed every half hour during the night. Most landed in civilian areas, including neighborhoods previously considered safe.

In one lane near Poonch city's main bazaar, a mortar round had split the road in half.

"We've seen tension at the border before," said Nazir Hussain, a retired schoolteacher. "But never like this. Never in the heart of town."

The violence has also disrupted education. Dozens of students from Poonch, stranded in Jammu due to road closures, are awaiting evacuation. "We are trying to bring them back safely," said MLA Jan. "Their families are worried sick."

As the second night of shelling fades into another uncertain day, Poonch is left with grief, broken homes and unanswered questions.

The town remains quiet now, but few believe the calm will last.

Srinagar, Jammu Airport

Srinagar, Leh, Jodhpur, Amritsar, Chandigarh, Bhuj, Jammagar and Rajkot -- are being cancelled till 0529 hrs IST on 15 May," the airline said in a post on X.

Air India also said customers holding valid tickets for travel during this period will be offered a one-time waiver on rescheduling charges or a full refund for cancellations.

In a post on X, IndiGo said in accordance with the latest directives from the relevant authorities, all flights to and from 10 destinations will remain cancelled until 0529 hours on May 15 due to temporary airport closures.

The airports are Srinagar, Jammu, Amritsar, Leh, Chandigarh, Dharamsala, Bikaner, Rajkot, Jodhpur and Kishangarh. "These precautionary measures have been instituted with your safety and security as our highest priority," the airline said.

The military conflict between India and Pakistan has intensified. Under Operation Sindoor, armed forces had carried out strikes on terror targets in Pakistan and Pakistan-occupied Kashmir on Wednesday in retaliation against the Pahalgam terror attack that had killed at least 26 people last month.

24 airports in northern and western parts of the country, including Srinagar and Chandigarh, have been shut for civilian flights till May 15, sources said on Friday.

Earlier, these airports were closed for civilian flights till May 10 in view of the military conflict between India and Pakistan.

Airlines on Friday said that their flights have been cancelled due to temporary closure of airports till May 15.

The sources said at least 24 airports have been closed for civilian flights till 05:29 hours of May 15. The airports include Chandigarh, Srinagar, Amritsar, Ludhiana, Bhubert, Kishengarh, Patiala, Shimla, Dharamsala, and Bathinda.

Jaisalmer, Jodhpur, Leh, Bikaner, Pathankot, Jammu, Jammagar, and Bhuj are among the other airports that have been temporarily closed for civilian flights.

"Following a notification from aviation authorities on continued closure of multiple airports in India, Air India flights to and from the following stations -- Jammu, Srinagar, Leh, Jodhpur, Amritsar, Chandigarh, Bhuj, Jammagar and Rajkot -- are being cancelled till 0529 hrs IST on 15 May," the airline said in a post on X.

Air India also said customers holding valid tickets for travel during this period will be offered a one-time waiver on rescheduling charges or a full refund for cancellations.

In a post on X, IndiGo said in accordance with the latest directives from the relevant authorities, all flights to and from 10 destinations will remain cancelled until 0529 hours on May 15 due to temporary airport closures.

The airports are Srinagar, Jammu, Amritsar, Leh, Chandigarh, Dharamsala, Bikaner, Rajkot, Jodhpur and Kishangarh. "These precautionary measures have been instituted with your

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Haj Flights Cancelled

originally scheduled for Saturday, stands cancelled "due to the prevailing situation." The committee assured that a revised schedule would be issued once the security and operational environment stabilises.

"Due to the prevailing situation, the flight has been cancelled. A revised schedule will be communicated accordingly," the notification read.

"So far, four Haj flights and over 250 commercial flights have been cancelled since May 7, including 84 on Friday alone, with 42 arrivals and 42 departures, an official at Srinagar International Airport said. He added they are yet to confirm when normal operations will resume.

Meanwhile, Dr. Shujhat Ahmad Qureshi, Executive Officer of the J&K Haj Committee said, "We are in touch with all concerned agencies, but as of now, the situation remains unchanged and uncertain. Pilgrims and their families are requested to remain patient until we receive clearance for rescheduling."

Escalation Won't

among the targets, but all attempts failed. Abdullah on Thursday strongly condemned the recent wave of cross-border strikes through drones, missiles and shelling in the Jammu and Poonch districts.

Clarifying the current situation, the chief minister said, "We did not create this situation. Our people were attacked in Pahalgam, and innocent civilians were killed. We had to respond."

He warned that continued escalation from across the border would only hurt Pakistan.

"This continuous escalation from Pakistan's side benefits no one. Pakistan gains nothing from this, nor will they succeed. They should silence their guns and help normalise the situation here," he said.

He further counselled them, saying they should act wisely and focus on de-escalation rather than escalation.

Referring to the back-to-back attacks the previous night, he said "What happened last night—first around 9 pm, then again at 4:30 am—clearly shows an attempt to escalate. But they will be the ones to suffer the most."

The chief minister highlighted the situation in Poonch as the most critical. "There was heavy damage in Poonch city. Most of the casualties and injuries are from there," he said.

"I just visited the hospital in Jammu, and all the admitted patients are from Poonch. One critically injured person was shifted to PGI Chandigarh for surgery today," he added.

He said his deputy chief minister is trying to reach Poonch to meet the affected families.

During his visit to camps at Mishriwala, Nagbani, Kot Bhalwal in Jammu district and Vijaypur in Samba, he interacted with displaced families and assured them of full government support.

"I assured them that my government stands firmly with them in these difficult times," he said, adding that he had directed officials to ensure all necessary facilities are provided without delay.

"All necessary facilities have been arranged at the camps—two meals a day, tea, medical care, and sanitation. Doctors, ambulances, and transport services are all in place," Abdullah said.

Acknowledging the discomfort faced by the displaced, he added, "I know this is not an ideal situation and they want to return home. But we had no choice but to bring them here. We are doing our best to minimize their inconvenience."

He also shared a lighter moment from the visit, mentioning that some children had asked for play equipment, and "I am thankful to our minister, who brought it in his own vehicle and handed it over to them."

Later, the chief minister visited a Government Medical College Hospital in Jammu to inquire about the well-being of the injured and prayed for their swift recovery.

He also reviewed the situation following the recent drone attacks across the region.

PM Reviews

forces and the attempts by the enemy were thwarted.

Pakistan's fresh attempts to target Indian military installations came less than 24 hours after a similar attempt.

On Thursday afternoon, the defence ministry said Indian armed forces foiled Pakistan's attempts to target military installations in 15 cities in the northern and western parts of the country using missiles and drones.

It said the Pakistani military attempted on Wednesday night to target Awantipura, Srinagar, Jammu, Pathankot, Amritsar, Kapurthala, Jalandhar, Ludhiana, Adampur, Bhatinda, Chandigarh, Nal, Phalodi, Uttarlai, and Bhuj.

Defence Minister Singh on Thursday said no limit will become an obstacle to protect India's sovereignty and the nation is fully prepared for such responses.

The Indian armed forces on early Wednesday carried out missile strikes on nine terror targets in Pakistan-occupied Kashmir (PoK) and Pakistan under Operation Sindoor in response to the Pahalgam terror attack.

LG Sinha Visits

Gingal in Uri. I've directed the district admin to provide immediate relief to the affected families and ensure their safety and security," Sinha said in a post on X.

The lieutenant governor interacted with

residents of Gingal, which witnessed heavy overnight shelling. "Interacted with citizens during my visit to Gingal, Uri. Visited Lagama village in Uri and took appraisal of damage due to unprovoked firing by Pakistan. The nation is standing strong with the affected families," Sinha said.

'Pahalgam Terror

stationed near the Line of Control (LoC) said. "The nation under the leadership of PM Modi has vowed to neutralize terrorists and my message is clear—if you inflict injury on any Indian citizen, we will hunt you down."

"I want to tell the people of Union Territory of Jammu Kashmir that peace is foundation of prosperity and our men in uniform will ensure that Jammu Kashmir and Bharat is peaceful and prosperous," he said.

The Lieutenant Governor asked them: "How is the Josh?" His question met with an energetic "High, Sahebi!" from the troops, echoing the mood of soldiers' readiness to destroy the enemy.

The Lieutenant Governor said, "Our soldiers have just one dream and one resolve-- Destroy the enemy and its capability to attack Bharat and to safeguard our citizens and Bharat's sovereignty and territorial integrity. I am seeing determination in your eyes and I want to tell the people across the country that they are in safe hands. Entire nation is drawing inspiration from your valour. May prabhu Shri Ram give you the strength to decimate the enemy."

The Lieutenant Governor said the nation has always been proud of the armed forces and whenever a country faced any crisis, our soldiers have boosted the pride of Mother India by making the supreme sacrifice.

"Your history is full of valour and courage. India always advocated for peace. After brutal massacre of our citizens at Pahalgam, the main objective was to destroy the terrorist hideouts. "Operation Sindoor" avenged Pahalgam terror attack by destroying terror factories inside Pakistan. But, the enemy is targeting our military establishment and our citizens. We are giving them a befitting reply," the Lieutenant Governor told the soldiers.

The Lieutenant Governor said that due to courage and determination of our soldiers, Jammu Kashmir and the country sleeps peacefully.

"If someone tries to disturb our peace again and again then they will be taught such a lesson that their next 10 generations will remember it. The entire 140 crore Indians are standing strong with our soldiers. I pray to God to give you strength so that you can once again write the saga of India's bravery," the Lieutenant Governor said.

He said that attempts were made by Pakistan, but the Indian armed forces have already foiled all their nefarious designs.

"J&K administration is ensuring that people here don't face any inconvenience. I went to villages in the border areas that suffered losses. The injured and the families of those who died have been given ex-gratia," he said.

He added that the loss is being ascertained, and there is a need to construct new bunkers in these areas. "In the coming days, new bunkers will be constructed," he said.

HC Quashes PSA

Srinagar, if had acted with due diligence at his end, would have come across with a fact from the records of his office that the petitioner (Bhat) was subjected to preventive detention in the year 2019 which came to be set aside by the intervention of the High Court of Jammu & Kashmir and Ladakh," the bench said, adding, "This omission is too serious to be taken casually much less by this Court as being the guardian of the fundamental rights of a citizen of India which the petitioner undoubtedly is."

Bhat's preventive detention, the court said, is further flawed because he was being kept uninformed about the fate of his written representation which was made not only to the Advisory Board but also to the District Magistrate Srinagar and to the Principal Secretary to Government, Home Department, Union Territory of Jammu & Kashmir.

"These two grounds are self-sufficient by themselves to render the preventive detention of the petitioner bad in the eyes of law," the court said while quashing the PSA detention against Bhat.

"The petitioner (Bhat) is directed to be restored, without loss of any time, to his personal liberty by his immediate release from the concerned Jail," the court said, adding, "to that effect the Superintendent of the concerned Jail detaining the petitioner (Bhat) to act in compliance of the directions hereby being issued with respect to the release of the petitioner (Bhat) from preventive detention custody."

HC Imposes

take suitable action including penal measures on the basis of the findings of the enquiry to ensure accountability of individual officers who have acted in violation of the law in the instant case.

Earlier, the court underlined that the "arbitrary and unilateral actions" of the former State (now Union Territory) cannot be countenanced, as the State (now UT) has failed to adhere to the due process of law and has attempted to revisit an issue that was conclusively resolved in 1958, when the predecessors-in-interest were designated as tenants-at-will, and later when proprietary rights were granted pursuant to a Government Order in

1966, which facilitated the attestation of mutations and the registration of sale deeds.

"Consequently, this Court believes that the officials of the State (now UT) who execute or endorse such unlawful actions should face disciplinary measures, and their illegal transgressions should result in criminal as well as disciplinary repercussions, as public accountability for public officials must be the norm."



## DC Reviews Healthcare Arrangements At District Hospital Poonch

Observer News Service

**POONCH:** Deputy Commissioner Poonch Vikas Kundal conducted a comprehensive visit to District Hospital Poonch to review healthcare arrangements and ensure the facility is fully prepared to meet medical needs in the eventuality of emergency.

During the visit, the Deputy Commissioner interacted with patients undergoing treatment and enquired about the quality of care, availability of essential medicines, and support services. He conducted a thorough inspection of various hospital wards, emergency units, and other key departments to assess overall readiness and responsiveness.

The Chief Medical Officer (CMO), Medical Superintendent

and other senior officials from the district administration accompanied him during the visit. They briefed the Deputy Commissioner on the hospital's functioning, recent patient inflow, and ongoing improvements in medical infrastructure.

Given the prevailing circumstances in the border region, the Deputy Commissioner Poonch emphasized the importance of maintaining a high state of preparedness in the health sector. He directed hospital authorities to remain vigilant, ensure timely treatment for all, and maintain efficient coordination among staff.

The visit underscored the administration's commitment to safeguarding public health and ensuring uninterrupted medical services, especially during sensitive times.



## DM Assures Continuity Of Essential Supplies In Poonch

Observer News Service

**POONCH:** In light of the cross border shelling, the District Magistrate Poonch Vikas Kundal visited several areas of the district to assess the situation, interact with the public, and ensure uninterrupted delivery of essential services.

A major focus of the visit was on the families affected by the recent tragic events. The DM met with the bereaved families, personally consoled the demise of their loved ones, and stood in solidarity with them in this difficult time. As a mark of immediate support, he disbursed an ex gratia relief of Rs. 6 lakh among the Next of the Kin of those deceased.

During the visit, he also reviewed the availability of critical

cal supplies such as food grains, LPG, medicines, and drinking water. He assured the public that all essential services are being maintained and that the administration is fully committed to addressing the needs of every resident.

He directed concerned departments to remain on high alert and continue working in close coordination to ensure timely service delivery, especially in remote and vulnerable areas.

The District Magistrate urged citizens to stay calm, avoid rumors, and cooperate with the administration in maintaining peace and order.

Senior officials from the civil and police administration accompanied him during the visit.

## Distt Admin Baramulla Establishes 24x7 Joint Control Room

Observer News Service

**BARAMULLA:** In view of the prevailing situation and to strengthen public service delivery, the District Administration Baramulla has established a 24x7 Joint Control Room at the District Emergency Operation Centre (DEOC), in the office of the Deputy Commissioner, Baramulla.

The initiative operates under the overall supervision of the District Disaster Management Authority (DDMA), Baramulla.

The Joint Control Room will serve as a centralized hub to facilitate interdepartmental coordination, monitor devel-

opments, disseminate timely information, and provide a platform for public grievance redressal. It aims to ensure efficient resolution of issues arising in real time and provide support during emergencies.

Citizens can reach the Joint Control Room via the following landline and mobile/WhatsApp numbers: Landline Numbers: 01952234210, 01952234343; Mobile/ WhatsApp Numbers: 7006493646, 7006504312, 7006090764, 7006271972, 7006921302.

District Administration has urged the public to make use of this facility for any emergency support, information, or grievance redressal.

## Govt Makes Key Appointments In Jal Shakti Department

Observer News Service

**SRINAGAR:** In a significant development, the Jammu and Kashmir Government has approved the elevation and appointment of two senior officers in the Jal Shakti Department.

Upon their elevation, I/c Superintending Engineer, Mohammad Taj Chowdhary has been appointed as Chief Engineer, Jal Shakti (PHE) Kashmir on incharge basis, while I/c Superintending Engineer, Tirath Ram, has been appointed as Chief Engineer, Irrigation & Flood Control, Kashmir on incharge basis.

These appointments have been made in view of the exceptional circumstances arising from significant vacancies and a shortage of senior officers at the top level in the department.

The Establishment-cum-Selection Committee had

thoroughly discussed and recommended these elevations, underscoring the government's commitment to filling critical positions.

Meanwhile, Jal Shakti Minister, Javed Ahmed Rana, has ordered the elevation of five Executive Engineers to Superintending Engineers, effectively filling up all vacancies at the Superintending Engineer level in the Department.

This move is expected to bolster the implementation of vital water supply projects in Jammu and Kashmir.

Rana's proactive interventions have already begun to transform the human resource landscape in the Jal Shakti Department.

To ensure efficient project delivery, the Minister has directed to ensure regular monitoring and evaluation of top-level officers' performance.



## Dy CM Holds Meeting With Locals, Officials At Rajouri



Observer News Service

**RAJOURI:** In the wake of prevailing situation along the border areas, Deputy Chief Minister, Surinder Choudhary, on Friday chaired a high level meeting with the district administration and prominent citizens of civil society at Rajouri to discuss public safety and seek suggestions regarding evacuation and rehabilitation of affected population.

Additional District Development Commissioner, Dr. Raj Kumar Thapa, briefed regarding the steps being taken by the district administration for the safety and security of people affected due to shelling near the Line of Control (LoC).

Addressing the gathering, the Deputy CM stated that the situation has escalated due to unprovoked provocation by Pakistan, necessitating precautionary measures to safeguard the civilian lives. He assured that both UT and Central Governments are fully committed towards ensuring the safety and timely evacuation of residents living in vulnerable areas.

During the meeting, various issues were raised by the public and civil society, including direct chopper service from Rajouri to Jammu for critical patients, deputation of officials for follow-up on patients being referred outside the UT, action against misuse of social media platforms, promotion of communal harmony and constitution of peace committees to prevent theft in vacated areas in case of migration, setting up of migrant camps in both government and private educational institutions, improvement of medical facilities at GMC Rajouri including a special ward for border shelling victims, availability of ambulances and generators at GMC, timely completion of 180-bedded hospital building at GMC and regulation of fare for transportation vehicles during the crisis.

Prominent leaders including

### Sakeena Itoo, Javed Dar Visit Kupwara

Observer News Service

**KUPWARA:** On the directions of Chief Minister, Omar Abdullah, Cabinet Ministers, Sakeena Itoo and Javed Ahmad Dar visited frontier district Kupwara to assess the situation in view of the cross border shelling in the district.

During the visit, the Ministers visited Government Degree College Sogam to assess the well-being of displaced families of Machil rehabilitated in the college building.

They also visited Government Boys Higher Secondary School (BHSS) Kupwara to enquire about the welfare of displaced families of Tangdhar, Karnah and Keran areas, currently rehabilitated in the school premises.

The Ministers, during the visit, interacted with the affected families and assured them all possible assistance from the

government. They assured them that the present government is continuously monitoring the situation and is committed towards the welfare of the people displaced by cross border shelling.

Interacting with the officers of district administration on the occasion, the Ministers directed them to establish all basic facilities at these centres and ensure well being of these displaced families. They asked them to continuously monitor the facilities at these centres and deploy staff at these shelter homes.

The Ministers also asked them to keep doctors and other paramedical staff at these centres for constant care of the displaced civilians.

MLA Uri, Sajjad Shafi; MLA Lolab, Kaysir Jamsheed Lone and other officers of district administration accompanied the Ministers during the visit.



MLA Rajouri, Iftikhar Ahmed, MLA Thanamandi, Muzaffar Khan, MLA Kalakote, Randhir Singh and DDC Vice Chairperson, Shabir Khan along with several civil society members actively participated and shared constructive suggestions.

The Deputy CM directed the authorities to prioritize civilian safety and security and ensure swift rehabilitation and assistance to the affected families. He stressed the importance of maintaining communal harmony and urged coordination between civil society and administration in these testing times.

Prior to the meeting, the Deputy Chief Minister visited the migrant camps set up at

Thandi Kassi and interacted with the displaced families. He also visited GMC Rajouri, where he took stock of medical arrangements and interacted with the patients, particularly those injured or shifted due to border shelling. He issued directions for improving healthcare services and providing best possible treatment to all affected individuals.

The meeting was attended by ACR Mohd Jahangir Khan, ACD Auqil Naveed, Principal GMC Dr A.S. Bhatia, Executive Engineer JPDCL, Mohd Rasheed, Executive Engineer Jal Shakti, Rajiv Khajuria and other senior officers from the district and line departments.

## Family Support Crucial In Combating Drug Addiction: Experts

Agencies

**SRINAGAR:** As the rise in drug addiction cases continues to be a concern among people, health experts said strong family support is vital for those battling substance abuse.

Without emotional backing from loved ones, many addicts find it difficult to maintain sobriety, often falling back into addiction due to social stigma and negative judgment from their families, they said.

Counselor Sabreena Jan said addicts who receive consistent care and encouragement from their families have a better chance of recovery.

"Emotional stability and reassurance from family members can be a turning point in a person's recovery," she said. "When addicts feel accepted and supported, it motivates them to stay committed to sobriety."

She said that while medical

treatments and counselling are crucial, the continuous presence and understanding of family members are what truly sustain an addict's journey to recovery.

However, Jan expressed concern that many relapses are not due to treatment failure but stem from shame and criticism faced at home and in society.

"The taunts and judgment addicts encounter from their families often push them back into addiction. Both families and communities need to adopt a more compassionate approach," she urged.

Dr Aadil, a Medical Officer at the ATF in District Hospital Shopian, said most patients seeking help are opioid users, particularly those addicted to



heroin.

"Approximately 90-95% of our patients are heroin users," he said. "Out of the 650 patients registered here, virtually all are male."

He highlighted the importance of family involvement beyond just accompanying patients to treatment centres. "Parents should monitor their children's behaviour, social circle, and even check belongings if necessary. If they notice any suspicious changes, they should consult a healthcare professional immediately," he said.

Dr Aadil added that treatment at the facility is free and includes medication and counselling. "We also conduct family sessions to teach loved ones how to support and deal with an addicted family member with empathy and care," he explained.

Experts agree unanimously that family participation in the recovery process benefits not only the patient but also helps other members understand and cope with the challenges of addiction—(KNO)

## Director FCS&CA Takes Stock Of Essential Commodities, Fuel

Observer News Service

**BARAMULLA:** In view of the prevailing situation, Director Food Civil Supplies and Consumer Affairs (FCS&CA) Kashmir, Abdul Rashid War Friday visited district Baramulla and chaired a meeting to review

the stock and supply position of essential commodities and fuel in the district.

During the meeting, the concerned Officer apprised the chair about the stock position/distribution status of various areas.

It was further informed

that the district has sufficient quantities of food grains available including petroleum products.

It was brought into notice that food grains for the border areas of Baramulla have already been dumped up to July-2025.



## Satish Sharma Assures Complete Support To Displaced Residents At Mishriwala

Observer News Service

**JAMMU:** Minister for FCS&CA, Transport, Youth Service Sports Satish Sharma visited camp, where several families from Pargwal sector and other catchment areas have taken refuge following intense cross-border shelling.

The shelling has forced many villagers from the border areas of Pargwal to flee their homes for safety, prompting swift action by the administration to relocate and house them at the Mishriwala relief camp.

During his visit, the Minister interacted with the affected residents, listened to their grievances and reviewed the facilities being provided to them. He expressed deep solidarity with the displaced families and assured them that the government stands firmly with them during this difficult period.

"The safety and dignity of every citizen is our utmost priority," said the Minister. "We are fully committed towards ensuring that those affected by the cross-border violence do not

face any further hardship. I have directed the district administration to ensure all necessary facilities, including adequate shelter, food, drinking water, medical aid and sanitation are made available without delay."

The Minister also reviewed the relief operations and took stock of the arrangements made at the camp. He instructed the officials to maintain regular health check ups, proper sanitation and timely distribution of essential commodities. He asked the concerned to give special attention to children, elderly and women to ensure their specific needs are met.

He appreciated the swift response of the district administration, security forces and civil society volunteers who are working tirelessly to provide relief and maintain peace and order during the crisis.

The Minister stated that the situation along the border is being closely monitored and the government is taking all possible diplomatic and administrative steps to ensure the safety of civilians and prevent further loss.

## Div Com Reviews Facilities For Border Area Residents



Observer News Service

**RAJOURI:** Divisional Commissioner Jammu, Ramesh Kumar and Inspector General of Police Jammu, Bhim Sen Tuti on Friday visited Nowshera to assess the arrangements made for the residents evacuated from areas near the Line of Control (LoC) due to cross-border shelling.

Deputy Commissioner Rajouri, Abhishek Sharma, and Senior Superintendent of Police Rajouri, Gaurav Sikarwar were present during the visit.

The Divisional Commissioner visited relief camps where the evacuated families have been accommodated and inspected the facilities being provided to them, including shelter, food, medical care, and other essential services.

The officials at the evacuation centre briefed the Divisional Commissioner about the efforts and arrangements being made to mitigate the hardships faced by the affected population, while ensuring their safety.

The Divisional Commissioner was apprised about civic amenities and other logistics made available for the evacuated population.

While interacting with the affected people, the Divisional Commissioner and IGP Jammu listened to their concerns and assured all support and assistance from the Administration.

The Divisional Commissioner directed the district administration to ensure timely assistance, adequate medical facilities, and other supplies to all the camps in the sub division.

The Divisional Commissioner and IGP Jammu directed the administration to evacuate people from all vulnerable areas to safer locations on priority and ensure round-the-clock security arrangements in the affected areas.

Additional Deputy Commissioner Nowshera Pritam Lal Thapa and other district and sectoral officers were also present during the visit.

### Illegal Transfer Of State Land

## ACB Registers Case Against Tehsildars, Others In Nagrota

Observer News Service

**JAMMU:** Anti-Corruption Bureau (ACB) on Friday said to have registered a formal case against the then revenue officers of Nagrota and others for facilitating illegal transfer of a big chunk of State land in favour of the land grabbers.

A spokesman in a statement said that "ACB Jammu registered a formal case FIR No. 07/2025 u/s 5(1)(d) r/w Sec. 5(2), J&K PC Act, Svt. 2006 & Sec. 120-B, 420, 467, 468, 471, RPC at P/S ACB Jammu against (1) Riaz Ahmed, the then Patwari Nagrota, (2) Rajesh Kumar Thakur, the then Tehsildar Nagrota, (3) Nissar Ahmed Shad, then Tehsildar Nagrota, the beneficiaries and others, for facilitating illegal transfer of a big chunk of State land in favour of the land grabbers and the beneficiaries by abusing their official positions."

"During the course of verification, it surfaced that an inheritance mutation No. 624 dated 25.07.2017 of the land measuring 04 kanals under Khasra No. 899 min of village Panjgrain was mutated in fa-

vour of Sudarshan Singh & Raghbir Singh sons of late Krishan Singh and Bidhya Devi in equal shares, despite the fact that mutation No. 527 dated 06.11.2008 of the said land was without signatures of Patwari concerned and was attested in favour of said Krishan Singh in violation of the provisions of Govt. Order No. LB-6/C of 1958 and S-432 of 1966 when mutation No. 527 was already attested by the then Tehsildar Nagrota under Roshni Act on 06-11-2008. The mutation in question does not exist in the revenue record."

As per Jamabandi of 1969-70 of village Panjgrain, the land in question was recorded as State land with kind of soil as Gair Mumkin Jaar, whereas the entries of the beneficiaries have not been found recorded since 1957-58 in the said Jamabandi, which is one of the requisite conditions as per the provisions of Govt. Order No. LB-6/C of 1958 and S-432 of 1966. Moreover, the kind of soil was also Gair Mumkin Jaar, which is not covered under Govt. Order No. S-432 of 1966, the statement reads.



# Soaring India-Pakistan Tensions Force IPL 2025 Suspension

BCCI says national interest above all else

Press Trust of India

**NEW DELHI:** The Indian Premier League was on Friday suspended because of the deepening military confrontation between India and Pakistan with the BCCI saying that national interest trumps other considerations at a time when the country is responding to a terror attack and unwarranted aggression from across the border.

A cloud of uncertainty had loomed over the future of the ongoing edition since the cancellation of Thursday's match between Punjab Kings and Delhi Capitals in Dharamsala midway following air raid alerts in neighbouring cities of Jammu and Pathankot.

"The BCCI has decided to suspend the remainder of the on-



going IPL with immediate effect for one week," BCCI secretary Devajit Saikia stated in a press release, after early information from the Board suggested that the suspension was indefinite.

"Further updates regarding the new schedule and venues of the tournament will be an-

nounced in due course after a comprehensive assessment of the situation in consultation with relevant authorities and stakeholders," it added.

The high-profile league was to wind up on May 25 in Kolkata as per the original schedule. The Board would look to conduct the

remaining 16 matches (12 league and four knockouts) at an opportune time and there is speculation that the month of September could be an option if the scheduled Asia Cup is scrapped.

"At this critical juncture, the BCCI stands firmly with the nation. We express our solidarity with the Government of India, the Armed Forces and the people of our country," the Board statement read.

"The Board salutes the bravery, courage, and selfless service of our armed forces, whose heroic efforts under Operation Sindoor continue to protect and inspire the nation, as they lead a resolute response to the recent terrorist attack and the unwarranted aggression by Pakistan's armed forces," it added.

The BCCI said that while

cricket remains a national passion, it is not greater than the sovereignty, integrity, and security of the country.

"The BCCI remains firmly committed to support all efforts that safeguard India and will always align its decisions in the best interest of the nation," it stated.

The Board also thanked stakeholders like the official broadcaster, the title sponsor and all associate partners for "putting national interest above all other considerations."

The military confrontation had caused significant anxiety among the foreign players, according to league sources and they will be flying back over the next few days. Sixty two overseas players were signed up by the 10 franchises at the mega-auction last year.

## Khyber Kashmir Super League Names Nivia As Official Ball Partner

Observer News Service

**SRINAGAR:** Khyber Cement Kashmir Super League 2025, powered by Athwas Hyundai, on Thursday announced Nivia as the official ball partner. The organisers say the upcoming season is poised to be the biggest and most competitive yet, uniting football fans across the valley.

This year's edition will feature six formidable teams, battling it out across 19 matches in a format designed to deliver maximum excitement and fierce competition. The league will feature six corporate teams.

The tournament will kick off with a round-robin league stage, where each team plays against every other team once – totalling 15 matches. The top four teams from the league stage will qualify for the playoffs, which will include:

- Qualifier 1 (1st place vs 2nd place)
- Eliminator (3rd place vs 4th place)
- Qualifier 2 (Loser of Qualifier 1 vs Winner of Eliminator)
- Grand Finale (Winner of Qualifier 1 vs Winner of Qualifier 2)

All matches will feature the newly launched Nivia official match ball, the same high-performance ball used in the Indian Super League.

"This major upgrade in equipment signals a new era of professionalism and competitiveness in the Kashmir Super League. We're incredibly proud to bring this level of quality and organization to football in the Valley," said Kashmir Super League organisers. "With top sponsors like Khyber Cement, Athwas Hyundai, and the introduction of the Nivia ISL-standard ball, we're setting a new benchmark for the sport in our region."



## From Dharamsala To Delhi Via Jalandhar: How IPL Teams Were Moved

Press Trust of India

**DHARAMSALA:** Punjab Kings and Delhi Capitals contingents were on Friday evacuated from Dharamsala and were escorted to the Jalandhar railway station in batches through Hoshiarpur amid tight security, Kangra's Superintendent of Police Shalini Agnihotri has revealed.

The squads are currently in transit to New Delhi aboard a special train, said the official.

The IPL match between Punjab and Delhi was called off mid-way on Thursday after Pakistan attempted to invade the airspace near Chandigarh with a drone attack, mandating an Indian retaliation.

"On Friday morning, the entire contingents of both teams, including players, coaching staff, and broadcast personnel, were moved in around 40 to 50 small vehicles



from Dharamsala to Hoshiarpur, located at the Punjab border," the official said.

She said this convoy was escorted by the Kangra Police and the Punjab Police took over the security arrangements once the vehicles reached Hoshiarpur.

From there, they were moved to Jalandhar to board the specially arranged train.

Speaking on the evacuation process on Thursday, Agnihotri said: "The stadium

was cleared within 20 minutes. Our first priority was the safety of everyone present. Both teams' players were immediately called back from the ground and shifted to their respective hotels under tight security."

Earlier in the day, the IPL was suspended because of the military confrontation, which was triggered by the April 22 Pahalgam terror attack in which 26 people were gunned down.

### Short TAKES

#### All J&K Chess Association Announces Kashmir Province Chess C'ship

The All J&K Chess Association has announced the Kashmir Province Chess Championship 2025-26, a prestigious event aimed at nurturing young chess talent across the region.

The association in a statement said that the tournament will be held at Srinagar Sports Club in Wazir Bagh and will feature competitions in multiple age groups: Under-07, Under-09, Under-11, Under-13, Under-15, Under-17, and Under-19 – for both boys and girls.

"This championship is designed to select the best players from Kashmir division who will go on to represent the region in the upcoming UT Level Chess Championships 2025-26, scheduled to begin on May 21 in Srinagar or Jammu," the statement reads.

Participants must register by submitting their entry forms no later than May 14, 2025, by 5:00 p.m. No on-spot entries will be allowed. Interested players may contact: 9649260371, 7006401589, or 9697345389.

#### UAE Set To Decline PCB Request To Host PSL Games

The PCB's plans to conduct the remaining Pakistan Super League matches in the UAE may not succeed as the Emirates Cricket Board is "unlikely to approve" its request due to the border tensions between India and Pakistan.

A source close to the developments in the Emirates Cricket Board (ECB) has indicated that the Board is set to reject the request from the Pakistan Cricket Board (PCB), which has already announced that the PSL would be held in the UAE. The source has cited "security concerns potentially emanating from the rising tension between India and Pakistan."

It is learnt that the recent developments have made the Emirates Cricket Board "vary of being perceived as an ally of PCB", which it believes the act of hosting the PSL may suggest.

#### Aussie Stars May Quit IPL As Indo-Pak War Tensions Explode

Rising cross-border tensions between India and Pakistan are casting a long shadow over the Indian Premier League 2025, with several Australian cricketers reportedly weighing their options and considering an early exit due to growing security concerns.

On Thursday, intensified shelling along the Line of Control and reports of drone and missile activity triggered anxiety across IPL camps.

According to the Sydney Morning Herald, multiple Australian players have conveyed fears for their safety to their agents, though none have spoken publicly yet. Their concerns have prompted Cricket Australia and the Australian Cricketers' Association to maintain constant communication with all affected players.

Big-name Australians currently in India – including Sunrisers Hyderabad skipper Pat Cummins, Mitchell Starc, Josh Hazlewood, Travis Head, and Mitchell Marsh – now find themselves at the center of an increasingly volatile situation. Coaches Ricky Ponting and Brad Haddin are also caught in the uncertainty surrounding the league.

28<sup>th</sup> year OF PUBLICATION

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