

## ‘EVERY HOUR DIMS HOPE’

# Families Wait For Missing Loved Ones In Kishtwar

### 82 Untraced As Rescue Operation Enters 3rd Day



#### Observer News Service

Srinagar: Two days after a devastating cloudburst struck Chisoti village in Kishtwar district, anxious relatives of the missing continue to wait with fading hope.

With rescue operations entering the third day on Saturday, grief-stricken

families said they were “hoping against hope,” as every passing hour dimmed the chances of survival for their loved ones.

So far, 82 people — 81 pilgrims and one CISF personnel — remain untraced after the flash floods hit the Padder subdivision on Thursday afternoon. The calamity has

already left 60 people dead and over 100 injured.

Jammu, Udhampur and Samba districts accounted for the highest number of missing — about 60 people. Four residents each from Haryana and Madhya Pradesh and one from Himachal Pradesh are also among those reported untraced, | [More on P6](#)

### Man Rescued Alive After 30 Hours

In the wooded valleys of Kishtwar, people often recall an age-old saying in the Dogri language which roughly translates to “Whom Mata Machail protects, none can harm.” Nowhere did this faith ring truer than in Chisoti village during rescue operations on Friday.

Amid the devastation caused by the cloudburst, Subhash Chandra, who had been running a langar for Mata Machail pilgrims, was rescued alive after being trapped under debris for nearly 30 hours.

“Whom God saves, no one can kill” is a saying here. Subhash, who has been serving devotees for so many years, feeding them selflessly, was protected by Mata herself,” said Leader of Opposition Sunil Sharma, who had been overseeing the rescue operations | [More on P6](#)

### CM Announces Ex-Gratia Relief For Kishtwar Victims



#### Observer News Service

Srinagar: Chief Minister Omar Abdullah on Saturday announced ex-gratia relief for those affected by the recent cloudburst and flash floods in Chisoti village of Kishtwar district.

During a visit to the disaster-struck village, he announced the financial aid from the Chief Minister's

Relief Fund as a “measure of solidarity and immediate relief” to the affected people, and also assured them long-term support.

Omar took firsthand stock of the devastation caused by the cloudburst on Thursday afternoon that left 60 people dead, over 100 injured and 82 others missing.

The families of those who lost | [More on P6](#)

### Will Ensure Reconstruction of Homes Damaged: LG

Says Relief & Essential Supplies Directed Immediately

#### Observer News Service

Jammu: Jammu and Kashmir Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha on Saturday took stock of the rescue and relief operations in the cloudburst-hit Kishtwar district and said he will ensure reconstruction of homes damaged in flash floods.

Sinha directed senior officials to ensure uninterrupted supply of essentials to the affected people.

The LG said he will ensure the reconstruction of homes damaged in flash floods at Chasoti village in Kishtwar.

“Spoke to Senior Officials and took stock of the rescue and relief operations at Chasoti, Kishtwar. I will ensure the | [More on P6](#)

### 2,800+ Events, 550 Deaths In A Decade

## Study Finds Sharp Rise In Extreme Weather In J&K



#### Observer News Service

Srinagar: Jammu and Kashmir has witnessed a surge in extreme weather events over the past decade, claiming hundreds of lives, a new study published in Mausam, the journal of the India Meteorological Department

(IMD), has revealed.

Between 2010 and 2022, the region recorded 2,863 incidents, resulting in 552 deaths. Lightning was the most frequent hazard with 1,942 incidents, followed by 409 cases of heavy rain-fall and 168 flash floods. However, | [More on P6](#)

### Heavy Rain Forecast Till Aug 19

The Meteorological Department has issued a weather warning for heavy rain and thunderstorms across Jammu and Kashmir between August 17 and 19, cautioning of possible cloudbursts, flash floods, landslides, mudslides, and shooting stones in vulnerable areas. According to officials, several parts of | [More on P6](#)

### CM Flags Risk Of Disasters In Himalayas

Chief Minister Omar Abdullah on Saturday expressed deep concern over the recent natural calamities in J&K, Himachal Pradesh and Uttarakhand, stressing the need to consult experts to “mitigate risks and dangers” in the fragile Himalayan belt. | [More on P6](#)



Kashmiri Pandits take out procession to celebrate Janmashtami In Srinagar. KO Photo By Abid Bhat

### Unauthorised Absence On I-Day Function

## Medical Officer Suspended In Bandipora

#### Observer News Service

Srinagar: The Medical Superintendent of District Hospital Bandipora on Saturday suspended Dr. Sabia Salam, Medical Officer, for unauthorised absence from duty and failure to attend the official Independence Day function, terming her conduct as ‘a serious breach of discipline’.

As per the suspension order, Dr. Salam failed to report for scheduled duty on August 14, 2025, which adversely affected patient care at the hospital.

Furthermore, the officer also remained absent on August 15 despite clear and written instructions to attend the Independence Day celebrations.

The order said that such conduct amounts to “disrespect and disregard for a national event” and is “indiscipline unbecoming of a government servant.”

Invoking Rule 31 of the Jammu & Kashmir | [More on P6](#)

## Digital Meltdown In J&K: 91 Govt Websites Down

#### KO Web Desk

Srinagar: In a stunning revelation, the Jammu & Kashmir government has disclosed that 91 official websites remain non-operational, affecting public access to vital services across the Union Territory.

The Jammu & Kashmir e-Governance Agency (JaKeGA), in response to a Right to

Information (RTI) application filed by Syed Adil—an activist from Central Kashmir's Ganderbal district—confirmed that the websites are down due to the non-availability of ‘safe to host’ certificates.

According to JaKeGA, the websites were taken offline because the concerned departments failed to conduct mandatory security audits, reported

news agency KNO.

It further stated that these audits are now underway through CERT-In empanelled agencies. “In addition, websites already hosted by the Jammu & Kashmir State Data Centre and lacking a ‘safe to host’ certificate are being audited by the third-party auditor, M/S Grant Thornton, appointed by the Government of Jammu &

Kashmir,” reads the response from JaKeGA's administrative officer, who also serves as its Public Information Officer (PIO) under the RTI Act.

To a query whether any temporary or alternative arrangements had been made to ensure service continuity, JaKeGA dodged the question, saying, “The information in this regard can be provided by the

concerned departments.”

These websites have been inaccessible since the first week of May.

Syed Adil slammed the government's failure to restore these websites.

“It has been officially revealed that 91 websites are down, but the actual number could be around 150,” he said. “There has | [More on P6](#)

## Rotten Food Scare Hits Kashmir Eateries, Sales Plunge 80%

#### Agencies

Srinagar: Restaurants and cafes across Kashmir are witnessing a sharp decline in business after authorities seized 1,200 kilograms of rotten and unfit meat from various locations in the Kashmir Valley in the last couple of weeks.

Restaurant owners report up to an 80 per cent drop in customers, leaving dining halls nearly empty, as people avoid eating outside.

Sharing details about the losses, Babar Chowdhary, head of the Jammu and Kashmir Hotel and Restaurant Association said that the industry has lost more than half its market in recent weeks.



He said over 80 per cent of restaurant sales have been affected across the Kashmir Valley, with Srinagar city being the most impacted. “The restaurants, cafeterias

and other eateries in Srinagar are empty these days and people avoid eating outside,” he said.

Chowdhary added that the rotten meat | [More on P6](#)

### Narco & Terror Cases

## IGP Calls for Stronger Probes, Higher Convictions

#### Observer News Service

Srinagar: Inspector General of Police (IGP) Kashmir, V. K. Birdi on Friday directed district police chiefs to focus on strengthening investigations and ensuring higher conviction rates, particularly in cases linked to narco-terrorism and other serious crimes.

Chairing a meeting of district SSPs and SPs, the IGP reviewed the overall security and crime scenario across Kashmir. He stressed the need for quality investigations backed by strong evidence collection to ensure that

offenders face strict punishment in courts.

While assessing the security measures, IGP Birdi urged officers to intensify area domination exercises and night patrolling in vulnerable areas to strengthen the security grid.

The IGP Kashmir reiterated the commitment of the J&K Police in maintaining safety and security in the region.

He urged the officers to work for ensuring transparency, accountability and swift resolution of cases to safeguard the rights and safety of citizens. | [More on P6](#)

## Assessee Must Respond To Tax Summons: SC

#### Press Trust Of India

New Delhi: The Supreme Court has held that an assessee must comply with a summons and furnish a response to a show cause notice when it is issued by the central or the state tax authority.

“Assessee” under the Income Tax Act of 1961 refers to any individual or entity that holds the legal liability of tax payment or any other financial commitments as specified by the Act.

Thus, laying down guidelines to prevent duplication of adjudication by central and

state GST authorities, a bench of Justices J B Pardiwala and R Mahadevan said that mere issuance of a summons does not enable either the issuing authority or the recipient to ascertain that proceedings have been initiated.

“Where a summons or a show cause notice is issued by either the Central or the State tax authority to an assessee, the assessee is, in the first instance, obliged to comply by appearing and furnishing the requisite response, as the case may be.

“Where | [More on P6](#)





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## Scholarships This Week

Kashmir Observer in association with Buddy4Study.com presents scholarships available for the meritorious students of Jammu and Kashmir

### Scholarship Name 1 Schaeffler India Social Innovator Fellowship Program 2025

**Description:** Schaeffler India invites applications from individuals aged 18 to 35 who are building innovative, sustainable solutions with the potential to create meaningful social impact across India.

**Eligibility:** Applicants must be Indian residents aged 18 to 35 years as of 1st July 2025. The fellowship is open to early-stage start-ups or NGOs with a working prototype ready for implementation.

**Prizes & Rewards:** Exclusive mentorship at IIMA Ventures, IIM Ahmedabad, paired with an inspiring fellowship grant and access to extensive networking opportunities.

**Last Date to Apply:** 25-08-2025  
**Application mode:** Online applications only  
**Short Url:** [www.b4s.in/observer/SIA4](http://www.b4s.in/observer/SIA4)  
**QR Code:** <https://d2w711p59qkl0r.cloudfront.net/static/images/scho-media/20251754974617.png>

### Scholarship Name 2 NextGen Edu Scholarship Program 2025 - 26

**Description:** A social impact initiative by the EY Global Delivery Services that offers financial assistance to Class 11 students enrolled in government or private schools across India.

**Eligibility:** Students who are currently enrolled in Class 11 in any government or private school in India are eligible. Must have scored a minimum of 60% marks in Class 10. The total family income from all sources should not exceed INR 3 lakh per annum. Students from Karnataka, Delhi NCR, Maharashtra, Telangana, West Bengal, Kerala, and Tamil Nadu will be given preference. Children of employees of Buddy4Study and EY Global Delivery Services are not eligible to participate in the scholarship.

**Note:** Girls, children of a single parent, transgender individuals, orphans, and persons with disability are encouraged to apply.



**Prizes & Rewards:** Financial aid of 15,000 to help students continue their education after Class 10.

**Last Date to Apply:** 10-09-2025  
**Application mode:** Online applications only  
**Short Url:** [www.b4s.in/observer/EYGDS11](http://www.b4s.in/observer/EYGDS11)

**QR Code:** <https://d2w711p59qkl0r.cloudfront.net/static/images/scho-media/nextgen-edu-scholarship-program-2025-261754974389.png>

### Scholarship Name 3: Panasonic Ratti Chhatr Scholarship 2025-26

**Description:** Panasonic invites applications from students enrolling in B.E./B.Tech. courses at the Indian Institutes of Technology (IITs).

**Eligibility:** Open to students across India who have secured admission into B.E./B.Tech. programs at any IIT (Indian Institute of Technology) for the academic year 2025-26. Applicants must have completed their Class 12 examination with a minimum of 75% marks or be awaiting their final results. The annual family income should not

exceed INR 8,00,000 from all sources. Only candidates from the 2025-26 batch are eligible to apply.

**Prizes & Rewards:** INR 70,250 per year for four years  
**Last Date to Apply:** 04-09-2025  
**Application mode:** Online applications only  
**Short Url:** [www.b4s.in/observer/RCSPP6](http://www.b4s.in/observer/RCSPP6)  
**QR Code:** <https://d2w711p59qkl0r.cloudfront.net/static/images/scho-media/2025-261754975364.png>

### Scholarship Name 4 Aspire Scholarship Program 2025-26

**Description:** Aspire Scholarship Program 2025-26 is a CSR initiative of SWAYAM Charitable Trust, a not-for-profit organization set up by Mr. Ajai Chowdhry and his family. The scholarship aims to provide financial support to underprivileged students pursuing B.Tech courses at 11 prestigious engineering institutions across India.

**Eligibility:** Students joining the first year of B.Tech courses at any of the speci-

fied 11 institutions can apply. The annual family income of the applicants should not exceed INR 6 lakh from all sources.

**Prizes & Rewards:** A total of 28 beneficiaries will be awarded scholarships based on the actual fee structure. The scholarship fund will be provided for academic expenses such as tuition fees, hostel fees, food, and related expenses. The duration of the scholarship will be 4 years, subject to meeting the specified criteria for yearly renewal.

**Last Date to Apply:** 31-08-2025  
**Application mode:** Online Applications Only  
**Short Url:** [www.b4s.in/observer/ASPI4](http://www.b4s.in/observer/ASPI4)  
**QR Code:** <https://d2w711p59qkl0r.cloudfront.net/static/images/scho-media/2025-261753160299.png>

### Scholarship Name 5 Corteva Agriscience Scholarship Program 2025-26

**Description:** An initiative of Corteva Agriscience Seeds Pvt. Ltd., this program aims to provide financial assistance to meritorious students pursuing undergraduate, postgraduate, or doctoral courses in the area of agriculture and allied streams.

**Eligibility:** Female students in post-graduate (MBA/M.Sc./M.Tech.), doctoral, or undergraduate courses in government colleges. The applicant's annual family income must be 6,00,000 or less. Students from across India can apply. Children of employees of Corteva & Buddy4Study are not eligible.

**Prizes & Rewards:** For UG students: 25,000  
For PG students: 35,000  
**Last Date to Apply:** 31-08-2025  
**Application mode:** Online applications only  
**Short Url:** [www.b4s.in/observer/CASP5](http://www.b4s.in/observer/CASP5)

**QR Code:** <https://d2w711p59qkl0r.cloudfront.net/static/images/scho-media/corteva-agriscience-scholarship-program-2025-261752846824.png>

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I, Anisa Geelani wife of Iqbal Ahmad Gani, resident of 217-Firdous Colony Main Road Buchpora Srinagar, have to change my name from Anisa Iqbal to Anisa Geelani for passport reissuance. In future, I shall be known as Anisa Geelani for all purposes. If anyone has any objection in this regard, they may contact the Passport Office, Srinagar, J&K within seven days from the date of publication of this notice. Objections received after the stipulated period will not be entertained.

Media line

## PUBLIC NOTICE

I have lost my 9th pass Discharge Certificate . Now I have applied for the duplicate of the same if anybody has any objection in this regard he/she may file them in the office of the Govt High Secondary School Palhallan within seven days. After that no objection shall be entertained.

Rifat Aara  
D/O Gh Nabi Hajam  
R/O Palhallan Pattan

bmg

## PUBLIC NOTICE

I have joined Team "Fearless Fighters" to play in the upcoming cricket tournament. If anybody has any objection in this regard, he/she may file the same in the concerned office within seven (07) days from the date of this notice. After that, no objection shall be entertained.

Name: Rayaz Ahmad Malik  
S/o: Gulam Mohammad Malik  
R/o: Iskenderpora

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## 12,000 Kgs Of Unsafe Meat Seized In A Week

Agencies

Srinagar: In the ongoing crackdown against unsafe food practices, authorities have seized and destroyed nearly 12,000 kilograms of unsafe and decomposed frozen meat across Jammu and Kashmir over the past few weeks.

According to officials of the Food Safety Department said that the seized stock included over 8,000 kgs in Kashmir and more than 3,000 kgs in Jammu, much of it found unbranded, improperly stored or dumped on roadsides.

"The consignments were declared unfit for human consumption and subsequently destroyed," the officials said.

As per the officials, the operation has also led to the sealing of two establishments and the registration of cases against the offenders. "Wherever we found unsafe or de-

"Here, storage units can maintain temperatures only up to -4°C, which is inadequate for frozen consignments. At present, there may be four to five such units, but none are up to standard," the official said.

Authorities said the ongoing crackdown was a part of a routine monitoring exercise that gained urgency after large dumps of decomposed meat surfaced in recent weeks. While some consignments were traced to offenders, others were found abandoned along roadsides, making it difficult to establish their source.

The officials at the Food Safety Department said that they have written to the Commissioner for Food Safety to further probe the supply chain and identify points of origin.

Officials stressed that ensuring food safety is a joint responsibility. "Sup-



**"The consignments were declared unfit for human consumption and subsequently destroyed,"**

composed meat, it was seized and destroyed. Two establishments have already been locked by police and cases have been registered against them," a senior official said.

Notably, the seizures have highlighted gaps in the valley's storage infrastructure. Officials said that Srinagar lacked proper cold storage facilities, required to preserve frozen meat at -18°C.

pliers, hoteliers and purchasers must verify proper branding, expiry dates and licenses before buying meat," the official said.

Meanwhile, the Hotel and Restaurant Association of Kashmir on Saturday also urged the government to establish strict testing facilities at Lakhanpur the gateway to Jammu and Kashmir and to impose a ban on unbranded frozen meat entering J&K—(KNO)



PIC: Abid Bhat/KO

## Janmashtami Celebrated With Fervour In Srinagar

Agencies

Srinagar: The heart of Srinagar, Lal Chowk Saturday witnessed vibrant celebrations on the occasion of Janmashtami, as devotees gathered in large numbers to mark the birth anniversary of Lord Krishna with prayers, bhajans and colourful processions.

Amid chants of "Hare Krishna, Hare Rama," devotees carrying flags and idols of Lord Krishna moved through the city centre, drawing the attention of passers-by.

The heart of Srinagar—Lal Chowk echoed with chants and hymns, creating a festive atmosphere.

Rajesh Kumar, one of the devotees participating in the procession said that it was heartening to see such celebrations taking place in the centre of Srinagar. "Janmashtami is a reminder of peace, love and devotion. We are happy to celebrate it openly," he said.

Another devotee, Meena Sharma, said the participation of children in cultural performances and bhajan singing made the event even more joyful. "These celebrations bring our community together and strengthen our faith," she said.



PIC: Abid Bhat/KO

**"Janmashtami is a reminder of peace, love and devotion. We are happy to celebrate it openly,"**

Similarly, the organisers of the event said the celebrations at Lal Chowk are a way of keeping traditions alive. "For us, it is not just a religious occasion but also a cultural festival that promotes har-

mony," said one of the organisers.

Notably, the authorities had made security and traffic arrangements to ensure the smooth conduct of the celebrations, which concluded peacefully—(KNO)

## 25-Year-Old Dies of Electrocution in Rangreth

Observer News Service

Srinagar: A 25-year-old youth died after receiving an electric shock while repairing a wire at his home in Rangreth area of Srinagar, officials said.

According to officials, the youth

was repairing an electric wire at his residence when he received a severe shock. He was immediately shifted to a hospital for treatment, where doctors declared him brought dead.

The deceased was later identified as Nasir Ahmad Shergojre, son of Mohammad Yousuf Shergojre, a resident of Rangreth Srinagar.

### PUBLIC NOTICE

I want to change the name on electricity bill bearing consumer ID No: 0206050005348 from Assadullah Sheikh S/o Wali Mohammad Sheikh TO Sajad Ah Sheikh S/o Assadullah Sheikh . if anybody has any objection in this regard he/she may file them in the office of the PDD Sub Divn Narbal within seven days After that no objection shall be entertained.

Sajad Ah Sheikh S/o Assadullah Sheikh  
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## آٹھویں بری پیر خراج عقیدت



آج سے 8 سال قبل یعنی کہ 17 اگست 2017 ہمارا لخت جگر علاقہ کا رہبر عزیز، رفیق و شفیق جد سے ایثار، ہمدرد و ملسار، اسلام کا غرور، غریبوں کا ہمدرد، بیوقوفوں کا سہارا آج ہی کے دن خالق کا نکت سے جاملے۔ مرحوم ہمیشہ دینی زندگی میں مسکندوں میں دینی مجلسوں میں قرآن شریف و حدیث مبارکوں کا ترجمہ و تفسیر سنا کر سامعینوں کو انگلیک بار منتظر کرتے تھے۔ مرحوم کے اعلیٰ اصول، سبق آموز مودات کبھی بھی فراموش نہیں کر سکتے۔ آپ کی پرکشش شخصیت کبھی بھی بھول نہیں پائے گے۔ ہم سب رفیق و شفیق ہمسایہ دوست و احباب اور رشتہ دار دعا کرتے ہیں کہ اللہ تعالیٰ سجاد احمد صاحب کو جنت الفردوس میں اعلیٰ مقام عطا کرے آمین۔

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### HIGHWAY STATUS



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



**HIJRI CALENDAR**

22 Safar  
1447

### PRAYERS

FAJR	4: 22
ZUHR	12:35
ASR	5: 21
Magrib	7:20
ISHA	8: 47

## This Day In History

- 1180- Yoritomo Minamoto leads uprising against Kiyomori Taira who installed his grandson, Emperor Antoku, to the throne
- 1544- A French city of Saint-Dizier seized by Imperial army of Holy Roman Emperor Charles V during Italian War (1842-46)
- 1585- Antwerp surrenders after 8 months siege by Duke of Parma
- 1717- France, Russia & Prussia sign agreement
- 1743- Sweden & Russia sign peace treaty
- 1787- Jews are granted permission in Budapest Hungary to pray in groups
- 1788- Losantville, Ohio (now Cincinnati) founded
- 1795- Slave revolt at Knip plantation, Curacao
- 1796- British defeat Batavian navy in Saldanha Bay, South Africa
- 1808- Napoleon asks King Louis for Holland brigade towards Spain
- 1835- Solymon Merrick patents wrench
- 1836- British parliament accept registration of birth/ marriage/death
- 1859- 1st air mail (in a balloon) took off from Lafayette, Indiana
- 1862- Confederate troops under Edmund Kirby Smith enter Kentucky
- 1863- Federal batteries & ships attacked Fort Sumter in South Carolina
- 1869- 1st international boat race (River Thames, Oxford beats Harvard)
- 1870- Mrs Esther Morris becomes 1st US woman magistrate (South Pass, Wyoming)
- 1876- Richard Wagner's opera "Götterdämmerung" premieres in Bayreuth
- 1877- American astronomer Asaph Hall discovers Mars' moon Phobos
- 1879- Ferdinand de Lesseps forms French Panama Canal Company
- 1883- The first public performance of the Dominican Republic's national anthem, Himno Nacional
- 1891- Electric self-starter for automobile patented
- 1892- Russian/French generals Obruchev/ Boisdeffre signs Double Alliance
- 1897 -W B Purvis patents electric railway switch
- 1903- Joe Pulitzer donates \$1 million to Columbia University & begins the Pulitzer Prizes in America
- 1904- Boston's Jesse Tannehill no-hits Chicago White Sox, 6-0
- 1904 -George H. Reid succeeds John Watson as Prime Minister of Australia
- 1905- Dutch government of Theo de Meester begins
- 1907- Bishop forbids Christian membership of Dutch Textile Union
- 1908- Bank of Italy (now Bank of America) opens new HQ, the Bank of Italy building at Clay & Montgomery, San Francisco
- 1908- Booth Tarkington & Harry Leon Wilson's play "Man from Home" premieres in New York
- 1908- Projection in Paris of the very first animated cartoon, "Fantasmagorie" realized by Émile Cohl
- 1914- Lithuania surrenders to Germans
- 1915- German troops over run Kovno, Lithuania
- 1916- Bulgarian offensive in Macedonia
- 1917- Italy declares war on Turkey
- 1918- British troops attack Baku, Azerbaijan
- 1918- Turkish troops overthrow Caucasus
- 1924- French-German trade agreement signed
- 1933-Soviet Union test GIRD-R1 rocket ("Object 09")
- 1938- 1st aircraft owned by US Forest Service in service (Oakland)
- 1940- Hitler orders total blockade of Great Britain
- 1944- Russian troops arrive at Austria-Prussia border
- 1945- Sukarno and Mohammad Hatta declare Indonesia (Dutch East Indies) independent from the Netherlands
- 1945- Korea is divided into North and South Korea along the 38th parallel
- 1947- The Radcliffe Line, the border between Union of India and Dominion of Pakistan is revealed
- 1950- Indonesia gains independence from Netherlands
- 1959- USSR & Iraq signs contract for building Iraqi nuclear reactor
- 1960 -Francis Gary Powers U-2 spy trial opens in Moscow



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KO VIEW

Zero Tolerance  
Needed

This weekend, Kashmir finally saw the debate shift from panic to solutions. While social media posts drew attention to unsafe meat, traders and hoteliers emphasized a more pressing issue: the lack of strict oversight and regulation in the supply chain.

The crisis began with raids that uncovered hundreds of kilograms of rotten and unlabelled meat. Chicken stored without refrigeration, decomposed mutton, and shipments lacking expiry dates revealed serious gaps in monitoring. Authorities have promised zero tolerance, but reactive measures alone cannot prevent future problems.

Traders note that while online campaign raised awareness, the real solution lies in stronger, systematic safeguards. Occasional inspections or viral outrage are not enough when unsafe products can still slip into markets unnoticed. Residents, meanwhile, remain cautious, unsure which vendors are trustworthy and which are cutting corners.

The frozen meat supply chain has come under particular scrutiny. On Saturday, the Jammu and Kashmir Hotel and Restaurant Association called for stricter testing of all consignments at Lakhanpur, the main entry point to the valley. Their recommendations are clear: no unbranded frozen meat should enter without verified hygiene, proper labelling, and expiry checks. A fully functional laboratory at the border would allow real-time testing and prevent compromised products from reaching local markets.

Beyond entry-point checks, experts and traders argue for ongoing monitoring, traceable supply chains, and swift penalties for violators. Regular audits and a transparent reporting system would reassure consumers and protect honest businesses from reputational damage.

Kashmir cannot rely on temporary crackdowns or social media attention to ensure food safety. Long-term solutions require action from regulators, suppliers, and civil society alike.

Every shipment of meat must be properly tested, traced, and held to consistent standards, not just after it reaches a local market.

Food is more than a commodity. It is trust, health, and safety. Kashmir deserves a system that guarantees all three.

This scandal is a warning: without stronger oversight and regulation, the cycle of panic, risk, and public mistrust will repeat.

“Mental illness is rarely spoken about in Kashmiri homes. A boy struggling with low moods is told to “man up.” A girl who cannot eat or sleep is told her faith is weak. Seeking help from a psychiatrist risks being branded “pagal”, a label that can ruin chances of marriage, jobs, and dignity.

Er Navaid Runyal

Kashmir’s Battle Within

An unspoken crisis of the mind is unfolding in Jammu and Kashmir, hidden behind taboos and unspoken fears.

Depression is often mistaken for sadness. People say it will pass, that it is just a phase, or that one should pray harder and push through.

Yet depression is far more than that. It reshapes how a person feels, thinks, and lives. It steals sleep, drains energy, dulls interest, and sometimes takes away even the will to go on.

This struggle is everywhere in Kashmir.

The valley known for its beauty effortlessly hides an inner storm. The young, who should be dreaming and building futures, are instead weighed down by fear, joblessness, and isolation. Talk to almost any student, and you will hear the same undertone: hope is slipping away.

Growing up here means growing up with uncertainty.

In 2019, when Article 370 was revoked, the region went through months of internet blackout. For students, it felt like their futures had been cut off. Those preparing for competitive exams suddenly found themselves directionless, left behind as the rest of the world moved ahead.

For many others, the heavier burden is unemployment. Jammu and Kashmir has one of the highest jobless rates in the country, especially among educated youth. Degrees rarely translate into jobs. Recruitment exams are delayed or cancelled. Paper leak scandals have shattered trust.

I have met young men who once dreamed of becoming engineers but now spend their days idle, unsure what lies ahead. Some leave, searching for work in distant cities, carrying the ache of separation from home. Others stay back, caught in despair.

This is not just an economic story. It is also a mental health crisis. Depression grows in those empty spaces between ambition and reality, between effort and disappointment.

What makes it worse is the silence.

Mental illness is rarely spoken about in Kashmiri homes. A boy struggling with low moods is told to “man up.” A girl who cannot eat or sleep is told her faith is weak. Seeking help from a psychiatrist risks being branded “pagal”, a label that can ruin chances of marriage, jobs, and dignity.

So young people swallow their pain, and families look the other way.

Meanwhile, social media adds its own weight. Reels and feeds often act as mirrors of what Kashmiri youth feel they lack.



“Young Kashmiris are growing up in a time and place where survival itself requires courage. If they feel unheard, they should try reaching out to a friend, a teacher, a counselor, anyone who will listen.

On the screen, everyone else appears happier, richer, more successful. With each scroll, the distance between their lives and the world outside only seems to widen.

The results are distressing. More young lives are being lost to self-harm. A brilliant student gives in under academic pressure. A young girl ends her life after harassment. Another boy loses hope when exams are cancelled yet again.

These are shattered families, unfinished journeys, and grief that rarely finds words.

So what can be done?

The first step is to talk openly about mental health. Families must learn that depression is not weakness. Schools should provide safe spaces, with trained counselors who can listen and guide. Teachers must be equipped to notice the warning signs early.

The government, too, has a responsibility. Joblessness is not just a statistic. It is a wound that eats into young minds.

Transparent recruitment, skill-building, and support for local start-ups can help restore hope. Mental health services must be expanded: helplines that actually work, affordable therapy, and clinics in every district.

And there must be spaces for young people to express themselves.

Kashmir has always been a land of poetry, music, and storytelling. These forms of expression can heal. Encouraging youth to share their voices may not erase trauma, but it can lighten the load.

Young Kashmiris are growing up in a time and place where survival itself requires courage. If they feel unheard, they should try reaching out to a friend, a teacher, a counselor, anyone who will listen.

Depression in Jammu and Kashmir is a humanitarian crisis. The youth carry both the scars of conflict and the seeds of change.

If they are given support, safe spaces, and opportunities, the valley’s future can still shine brighter than its past. What cannot continue is silence.

The author is a geotechnical engineer from Ramban, Jammu and Kashmir.

Art of Continuity

Generations of Kashmiri hands have embroidered culture into life itself. To keep that story alive, the past must meet innovation and trust.

Irshad Mushtaq

Long before machines and screens, Kashmiris lived by trust and shared purpose.

Communities thrived because honesty was an everyday practice, and artisans created not just objects of beauty, but the very fabric of social harmony.

The roots of this enduring tradition reach across continents and centuries. More than 700 artisans journeyed from Central Asia under the guidance of Shahi Hamadan (RA), bringing skills and vision that would seed generations of craft.

Later, under the reign of King Zain-ul-Abidin, known as Badshah, the valley saw a careful intertwining of social infrastructure, agriculture, and artistic development.

Canals flowed, crops thrived, and artisans prospered as vital members of a cohesive, thriving society.

Yet today, that legacy stands at a precipice. The rush of modernity threatens to overshadow centuries of craftsmanship and the values embedded within them.

Technology offers speed, scale, and global reach, but it can also dilute, commodify, and erase.

The question is urgent: how do we protect the soul of these crafts while embracing the tools of our time?

Kashmiri artisans continue their work, often against financial and social pressures. Their persistence is a testament to resilience. And therein lies the opportunity: technology can amplify tradition.

Thoughtful innovation can expand the reach of Kani shawls, carpets, and woodwork, connecting them with markets that crave uniqueness, quality, and story.

Global consumers increasingly seek authenticity. They desire goods that carry history, care, and skill - qualities intrinsic to Kashmiri work.

By fusing heritage with innovation, the valley can meet this demand, ensuring that both its economy and cultural identity remain vibrant.

The future need not be a choice between progress and preservation. It can be a synergy of both.

Beyond spiritual, we must remember, Shah Hamdan’s legacy was economic foresight. He nurtured skills, fostered community, and seeded prosperity that endured through centuries.

Today, his model offers guidance. Trust, sincerity, and collective care can be as foundational to commerce as they are to culture.

Imagine a Kashmir where artisans inherit centuries of knowledge yet are encouraged to experiment and innovate. Think about a region where each creation reflects the weight of tradition but also the spark of modern imagination. Imagine a society where honesty, respect, and credibility are not aspirations, but the very ground upon which enterprise, art, and community flourish.

Reviving this vision is not a retreat into nostalgia. It is an active, deliberate choice to weave the old and new together: tradition and technology, patience and creativity, history and future.

Every knot in a carpet, stitch in a shawl, and



carved pattern can carry both the wisdom of ancestors and the promise of tomorrow.

The stakes are higher than preservation alone. This is about fostering an economy rooted in culture, a society that values integrity as much as innovation, and a community that uplifts its artisans as they uplift the valley.

Protecting heritage, then, is economic, social, and profoundly human.

“Kashmiri crafts are living legacies, capable of shaping a future as vibrant as their past. They invite us to imagine a world where beauty, trust, and ingenuity coexist.

Kashmiri crafts are living legacies, capable of shaping a future as vibrant as their past. They invite us to imagine a world where beauty, trust, and ingenuity coexist.

This is a call to action, philosophical and practical, to honour the past without being trapped by it, embrace technology without erasing identity, and craft a Kashmir where heritage and innovation walk hand in hand.

In preserving and evolving these traditions, we cultivate a society rooted in creativity, trust, and enduring prosperity.

Kashmir has always been more than its mountains, rivers, or valleys. It is hands that shape it, communities that nurture it, and traditions that define it.

The time to honour them, and to craft a future worthy of their legacy, is now.

The author is a Srinagar-based reputed financial advisor.



# What Does Road Rage Tell About Class Conflict in Kashmir?

Walter Lawrence's observations from the past continue to reflect key elements of social and cultural life in Kashmir today.

Wajahat Qazi

I love Kashmir. That's a given. Its natural beauty- gushing rivers, majestic mountains, lush forests, sparkling springs, streams and rivers- overlaid by a spiritual ingress, can only be inspiring - a balm to the mind, body and soul. But, its social dynamic, its permutations, combinations and manifestations - a rudely jarring note to the region's natural characteristics leave a lot to be desired-to understate the issue. What is this social dynamic I am referring to?

Before explicating, I would lay out my perspective and class position. An 'upper class' Kashmiri with a distinguished lineage dating back centuries, I lived a very sheltered, cosseted life till serendipity intervened in the late 90's. Conditions in Kashmir then, precarious, militated against my continued stay here. My family 'conspired' to manoeuvre me from Kashmir. To repeat, from sheer serendipity, I landed at the Fatal Shore, Australia. But my abiding love for Kashmir remained. In class one day, a Professor, after saying hello, hello to me a couple of times said: 'Just your body is here in Australia. But you are in Kashmir'.

This was as astute an observation as it was accurate.

Another day, the school manager, who knew about the troubles in Kashmir, after hearing my romance about Kashmir told me, 'better stay here. Its safer.' I raised my arms in the air and said, 'No way'. After many years, based on a retrospective, I realized that my personality and psychic make up, after frazzling and defraying in the Kashmir of 90's had healed in Australia. A quasi new person had evolved. But this was a retrospective- no matter how true.



My sheltered and cosseted life and being in a bubble of an elite private school in Kashmir had shielded me from many facets of life in Kashmir- some of them pretty ugly ones. (I am sure and have no doubt in my mind that there are outstandingly redeeming features about Kashmiri society and culture but at the same time there are insalubrious ones too.) When I returned from Australia to Kashmir, the ugly features stood out (along with salubrious ones). These were so poignant and defined by alacrity that I felt like an outsider to Kashmir, my home and hearth. What were these ungainly and ugly characteristics?

A traffic incident that happened today at a certain stretch of a road may illustrate and throw these into relief. As I drove my SUV on the road stretch, a 'load carrier' guy,

without a thought drove from the other side of the road in to the side I was driving- roughly, brazenly and rudely. I almost crashed into him. I questioned his rude driving with a gesture. He responded probably with a rude word (abuse) and a rude gesticulation and followed me. I stopped my SUV on the side of the road. But the load carrier guy stopped bang in the middle of the road. A beeline of vehicles stopped behind him. I told him to park his load carrier by the side to allow other vehicles to pass. He refused flatly, got off his load carrier and began yelling obscenities, oblivious to the traffic jam he had caused. I didn't realize that the people in their cars were his audience.

'Do you think you are in a big car you can run over us poor people,' he yelled.

He looked around to see the effect of his statement.

'No,' I said. 'I was driving and you barged in from the other side.'

'You are blind, pointing out to my glasses. Did you not see the speed breaker,' he asked in a stentorian voice (a lie).

'There was no speed breaker,' I said. 'We can go to the spot and check again.'

'I won't go,' he yelled.

'Well then, let the police sort out the matter,' I said calmly.

'Are you now threatening a poor man with police,' the man glowered.

By then, a crowd had gathered, most glowering at me. An elderly man blocked my car with his scooter. It was the mohalla (locality) of the load carrier guy. He was in his element, playing to an audience, playing the poor man 'harassed' by a 'rich guy' with an SUV.

There was an aura of vigilantism that the load carrier

guy was provoking. I stood my ground. The crowd dissipated. A gut asked me to leave the matter as it was muttering, 'when you're on the road, these things happen'. A young guy walked over to me, whispered in my ear, saying the man was uncouth and ill-mannered: 'Please go'.

While the incident described in this vignette happened today,

many many years after my Australian sojourn, and after multiple wanderings across the western world, it set me thinking about class, public decency (or lack of it) and class dynamics in Kashmir, and other insalubrious aspects of our society.

Obiter Dictum, all this is not for one moment to suggest that an absolute civilized and civil dynamic defines social and public space dynamics in the West. Yes, in relative terms, there is more decency, civility in the West's public spaces and places. But there're odious and atrocious behaviors too. But, on balance, most western societies score way above us on and in these metrics and indices.

Now, back to the class and class conflict angle: in Kashmir it would appear that traffic is the great leveller. Yes, I am using the term rather facetiously: what I mean and refer to is on the road, and by virtue of road rage, the angst of the underprivileged classes manifests itself in rage, power plays and power trips.

There is anger against the monied classes. For prudential reasons this anger is not displayed during business interactions, and other similar ones. But when there is equivalence of power, while driving, in instances of road rage this anger comes to the fore. Classes bandy around each other and if there's a hapless driver driving a car associated with wealth and money, he is the target.

By and large, in Kashmir, mostly there is, in these kinds of incidents, mostly shouting, yelling, an odd punch here and there. That is, usually, these incidents are not very serious. But their nature does not mean that these are not unpleasant.

I used the vignette to illustrate the reality of class differences, class conflict and how these manifest in Kashmir.

There then is a decided class structure here with each class exhibiting features that are usually associated with it. Capital, access to capital, in some or most instances, is the historical intervening variable and so is habitus- the structuring environment of a given person(s).

While the intensity and nature varies across countries and regions, Kashmir may not be too different from other societies in this respect - from a class, capital and class conflict perspective but there are features peculiar to us.

This reminds of a British resident, Walter Lawrence, who, roughly, a couple of centuries ago, wrote an account of Kashmir and Kashmiris in what is held to be a classic on Kashmir: 'The Valley of Kashmir'. When I returned from the west, I dismissed Lawrence's account of Kashmiris - not a very flattering portrait- as an Orientalist trope- a prejudiced one.

But over time I've realized there's a decided element of truth to his portrait of us Kashmiris- sadly.

The incisive of these characteristics pertain to our social and cultural classes and attributes peculiar to them and Kashmiris relationship to and with power. Again sadly- it appears only the form has changed.

Can this change and morph into a civil, civilized public behaviour and a class angle shorn of conflict? I do not have a theory to offer here nor an ideology. But I rest the case on hope!

— With a Master's with Distinction in International Relations from the University of Aberdeen, Scotland, Wajahat Qazi has explored global affairs both academically and in practice, having worked as Associate Editor at Kashmir Observer.

## Rituals Beyond the Valley

At a colleague's wedding in Nagrota, I witnessed how culture and memory live on, even far from the valley we call home.



Syed Majid Gilani

January 2024 arrived with its usual winter chill, but in my inbox, a wedding invitation glowed with colour.

It came from Ravi, my young colleague, along with a call. His voice was warm, insisting that Mushtaq Ahmed and I attend. Neither of us had ever witnessed a Kashmiri Pandit wedding.

The invitation was an entry into a living tradition, one that had survived decades of absence.

We left Srinagar before sunrise, boarding the train that ran only as far as Banihal. Outside, the valley stretched in serenity. Apple orchards, paddy fields, and the slow curves of rivers painted the landscape.

In Banihal, we stepped down among other passengers and crossed to the bus stand. The place hummed with the rhythm of travel. Buses honked, vendors called, and people steered suitcases and parcels.

We found a cab, a Tavera, and began the highway stretch to Jammu.

Nagrota appeared with the routine bustle of the highway, and Rajiv, Ravi's cousin, greeted us with a smile. Every detail of our reception had been arranged by Ravi.

From there, the jour-



**The air filled with aroma: nadru yakhyn, chuk wangan, chaman tamatar, dum aloo, and haakh. Stalls offered aloo paratha, papads, champ, gol gappa, sweets like gulab jamun and layered pastries.**

ney led to the TRT Migrant Camp, a space that carries decades of exile in its walls.

Standing among the rows of temporary homes, I was transported back to ninth grade, when Kashmiri Pandits left the valley almost overnight.

Houses were locked, orchards abandoned, and cattle untended. Families carried what they could: a few belongings, documents, and hope.

Here, at the camp, history and celebration collided. Sorrows lingered beneath the welcome, but resilience and warmth were immediate.

Ravi's parents received us in the Janj Ghar. Noon chai arrived, salty and steaming, accompanied by small snacks. The flavor carried memory of home, ritual, and shared heritage. A sense of belonging grew in the warmth of their smiles, and the familiarity of gestures that spoke louder than words.

The wedding rituals mir-

rored those in the valley. Wanwun, gaywun, the soft cadence of prayers and songs, and the saffron-tinted kehwa created continuity across time and displacement.

Small differences existed, but they were subtle. The threads of shared culture remained unbroken.

The main ceremony moved to Eden Farm, a large hall buzzing with preparation. Ravi guided us to the kitchen, where cooks from Kishtwar arranged the feast.

The air filled with aroma: nader yakhyn, chuk wangan, chaman tamatar, dum aloo, and haakh. Stalls offered aloo paratha, papads, champ, gol gappa, sweets like gulab jamun and layered pastries.

Each scent and sight became part of the celebration, as essential as the rituals themselves.

The matamaal ceremony followed in the afternoon. Maternal relatives were welcomed with reverence, the hall alive with Kashmiri gaywun

singers and a full orchestra from Srinagar.

Their voices, rising and falling, carried language, memory, and a collective identity.

I watched guests, children, elders, and felt that culture is more than ceremonies. It is persistence, carried forward through song, food, and gesture.

When the wedding ended, as Mushtaq and I prepared to leave, the camp seemed to speak.

On the road back to Srinagar, I thought of the valley and its missing Pandit community. Homes, orchards, streets, even rivers seemed to hold their memory. When they come back, it won't just be a homecoming. It will be the valley becoming whole again.

— The author is a government officer by profession and storyteller by passion. He can be reached at syedmajid6676@gmail.com.

## Trust on the Page

A teacher reading a textbook in a Srinagar school reminded me how screens are shaping, and sometimes breaking, the bonds between students and educators.

Muntashir Kifayat Hussain

The other day, I visited a school in Srinagar with a friend during lunchtime. We stepped into the office, expecting the usual bustle. Every teacher I saw had a phone in hand, scrolling endlessly, pausing occasionally to laugh at a video or glance at a social media post.

Then I noticed a teacher in the corner, absorbed in a book, the NCERT class 10 science textbook. He turned the pages with care, a slow light in his expression that no screen could replicate. I sat nearby, careful not to disturb him, watching him read.

When he stood and walked out, I followed. I asked him if he read physical books daily. "Yes," he said. "My students connect with me because I don't need my phone to answer their questions. They trust me, and that trust changes everything."

He asked why children today often lack the closeness to their mothers that previous generations had. Babies are fed from plastic bottles. Earlier, they were breastfed at the mother's chest.

The physical bond fades, and so does affection. The connection between student and teacher can be just as fragile.

Books, he explained, sharpen focus, encourage deep thinking, and let teachers understand their students. Notes in margins, repeated reading, and reflecting on passages build knowledge that sticks. Phones fragment attention, offering answers without effort.

A teacher who relies on a screen in front of students delivers half-churned knowl-



edge. Students absorb it, trust erodes, and the bond between teacher and learner shifts toward the device.

I had seen it before: teachers consulting their phones for answers while students watch. The ritual of teaching, like preparation, dialogue, and thoughtful pause, is replaced by convenience.

The School Education Department in Kashmir has issued repeated directives to curb phone use during instructional hours. Still, in many classrooms, phones dominate. The problem grows every year, and with it, the erosion of focus and trust.

Solutions, the teacher suggested, are simple. Phones should stay on the headteacher's desk during class. Any urgent calls or messages should go through the headteacher. Every school needs a well-stocked library. Newspapers should be available for teachers and students. ICT tools should supplement learning, not re-

place it. Lesson plans should be prioritized, and heads of institutions held accountable for weekly updates.

The teacher's words stayed with me long after I left the school. Reading, he reminded me, is an act of care. When a teacher reads, they model curiosity and patience. They show students that knowledge is a process, not an instant search result.

Every page turned by hand, note in a margin, and discussion sparked by a book restores something a screen cannot: focus, depth, and human connection.

Visiting that office in Srinagar, I realized how fragile the classroom trust has become in Kashmir. Phones are useful tools, but they cannot replace the presence of a teacher who has read, reflected, and prepared.

The lesson goes beyond education: it is about the bonds we nurture and the attention we bring to those bonds.

In the classrooms of Kashmir, screens threaten to sever what books have always held together: patience, understanding, and the power of shared learning.

— The author is an educator and academic monitor at BHIS Narabal, Budgam.



**The physical bond fades, and so does affection. The connection between student and teacher can be just as fragile.**



# PM Monitoring Rescue Operations In Kishtwar: Jitendra Singh

## Agencies

Jammu: Union minister Jitendra Singh on Saturday reached out to people admitted in the Government Medical College here with injuries from the cloudburst and flash floods that struck a remote village in Kishtwar district two days ago.

Singh said the search and rescue operations are continuing round the clock and Prime Minister Narendra Modi is personally monitoring the situation.

He said 53 bodies have been recovered so far.

“Prime Minister Modi is personally monitoring the rescue and relief operations. On the very first day, he held a review meeting. On Friday, he spoke to the Lieutenant Governor and the Chief Minister and received a briefing. He continues to assess the situation from time to time,” Singh told reporters at the hospital.

Singh, who had visited the disaster-hit Chisoti village on Friday night and returned on Saturday afternoon, was briefed about the treatment given to the injured.

“When the Prime Minister himself is monitoring the efforts, every government department is fully active and working in tandem. The compensation will also be more than expected,” he said.

He said the Union Territory

government has no reservations in this matter.

“Along with the Army, BSF, CRPF and other Central forces, the Government of India and the state administration are fully involved in rescue operations. The DGP (director general of police) himself is camping there as part of the support structure. The Border Roads Organisation is involved as there is a lot of debris to be cleared,” he added.

Terming it a “big catastrophe”, Singh said, “When compared to similar calamities in Himachal Pradesh and Uttarakhand, this is the biggest catastrophe so far. This is a testing time for all of us.”

He explained that the Air Force support structure could not operate in Chisoti due to weather constraints. “We dispatched vehicles carrying equipment overnight so that the rescue operation does not fall short of them. But two Indian Air Force helicopters are still stationed in Udhampur, ready for deployment.”

The Union minister said that different news channels are reporting different figures, but according to the official data, 53 bodies have been recovered till last night. “Except for four, the rest of the bodies have been identified,” he said.

Praising hospital administration's efforts in giving proper care for the patients, he said, “These patients did not have

severe physical injuries but suffered psychological trauma. Sixty-six patients were hospitalised. Currently, 52 injured are still under treatment, while the rest have been discharged.”

The minister said that most of the patients have only soft tissue injuries as they were trapped in mud rather than under big rocks. “They were fortunate not to have suffered head injuries and that their condition is mostly psychological. They will be discharged gradually so that they can recover better at home, in a familiar environment.”

On the rescue operation, he said it has been going on day and night with full intensity.

“The main problem is the huge amount of debris. One person who was trapped under the debris came out safely today. He was a worker at a community kitchen (langar). Operations are being carried out cautiously. Heavy machinery cannot be used recklessly as anyone trapped underneath could get injured.”

Singh said help desks are being set up in the hospital to provide information to people.

On the rush of pilgrims and the village infrastructure during the tragedy, Singh said that before 2014, only local people used to visit the Machail Mata temple.

“After 2014, more people started coming from outside.

The credit goes to the government for improving the facilities. Earlier, there was no mobile connectivity, roads, electricity or toilets. The MP fund was used to provide toilets, electricity connections, water points, solar towers and mobile towers. Recently, the road work was completed. Even a new bridge was constructed, which has now been washed away.”

He said the number of pilgrims increased due to the improved facilities. “The timing also coincided with Jannashtami, other festivals and a weekend, so a lot of people gathered there. Most of the victims are from Udhampur, Jammu and Reasi districts,” he said, adding that pilgrim tourism here had turned into weekend tourism, which increased the numbers further.

On suspension of the Machail Mata yatra, he said it was not stalled beforehand because there was only forecast for rain, not for cloudburst.

“The meteorological department had forecast rainfall, but giving prior warning about a cloudburst is very difficult. This was a natural calamity for which no one was prepared,” he said.

“The entire episode lasted barely 15 seconds but caused massive destruction. In future, care will be taken to regulate the pilgrimage in light of such possible situations,” he added.

# GMC Jammu Takes Lead In Providing World Class Treatment To Kishtwar Victims

## Observer News Service

Srinagar: On the night of August 14, when the entire nation was preparing to celebrate the 79th Independence Day, a team of medical professionals at GMC Jammu stood on alert, awaiting a stream of ambulances rushing in from Kishtwar. These vehicles carried victims who had suffered not only severe physical injuries but also deep mental trauma following a devastating natural disaster.

The moment the sirens echoed through the GMC Jammu emergency block, the hospital sprang into action. Within seconds, porters and helpers wheeled patients into the triage room, where medical teams immediately began treatment. Critical cases were swiftly put on ventilators, those requiring urgent surgeries were rushed to operation theatres, and patients with minor injuries received prompt wound care and suturing.

The nursing staff went beyond their call of duty — not only delivering exceptional medical care but also serving as companions, friends, and emotional support systems for the traumatized victims. Families who accompanied the injured were given equal compassion and care. Every step of

the treatment process was supervised by senior professors, heads of departments, and GMC administration, ensuring seamless coordination.

The combined teamwork of doctors, nurses, technical experts, sanitation and security staff, operation theatre personnel, and administrators ensured that not a single life was lost due to negligence. Core departments like Orthopaedics, Anaesthesia, and Surgery were ably supported by Neurosurgery, ENT, Dental, Ophthalmology, Medicine, Blood Bank, and Lab Services. Meanwhile, medical engineering wings — mechanical, electrical, and civil — maintained uninterrupted facilities despite the incessant rains. The flawless precision with which GMC Jammu managed this crisis was a testament to the highest levels of professionalism.

This was not the first time GMC Jammu rose to the occasion. From Operation Sindoor to mass accidents and other large-scale tragedies, the institution has consistently proven its expertise in handling medical emergencies. Its work has even drawn praise from premier institutes like PGI Chandigarh, whose Director personally lauded GMC Jammu's Principal for the

extraordinary response.

On that fateful night alone, GMC Jammu received 66 critical patients and performed nearly 25 major surgeries, saving countless lives. The efforts continued the following day with more surgeries and on-going care. Thanks to the tireless dedication of the team, not a single patient required referral to a higher medical institute.

Beyond medical treatment, the administration also ensured a clean, hygienic, and comforting environment for patients and their families. Many victims arrived covered in mud and dust, and the nursing staff painstakingly cleaned them, dressed their wounds, offered clean clothes, and provided emotional reassurance. Children brought in alone, scared and injured, were treated with parental affection. Staff could be seen feeding a frightened child or sponging debris off an injured boy, embodying the true spirit of service.

GMC Jammu salutes its real heroes — doctors, nurses, technicians, engineers, sanitation workers, and security staff — who stood as pillars of strength in this tragedy. They are the role models society must look up to, deserving of all respect and admiration.

## CONTD. FROM FRONT PAGE

### Families Wait For

while others hailed from Doda, Reasi and Rajouri districts.

#### Tragedy Strikes Pilgrimage Route

The disaster struck Chisoti — the last motorable village en route to the Machail Mata temple — around 12.25 pm on August 14. The deluge flattened a makeshift market, a langar (community kitchen) for the yatra, and a security outpost.

At least 16 residential houses and government buildings, three temples, four water mills, a 30-metre-long bridge, and over a dozen vehicles were also damaged.

The annual Machail Mata yatra, which began on July 25 and was scheduled to conclude on September 5, has remained suspended for the third consecutive day.

#### Villages In Mourning

In Benagarh village near Jammu, locals are waiting for any news of seven residents — including four children — who went missing during the yatra. While the body of Mamta was retrieved and handed over to her family, the rest remain untraced.

“The entire village is in grief. We are hopeful the rescuers will find them alive,” said Ajay Kumar, a relative, adding that many villagers have not eaten since the tragedy struck. He also questioned why the yatra was not halted despite weather warnings.

#### Parents' Anguish

The parents of Vanshika and Disha, two children still missing, broke down on reaching Jammu. “I saw my world crashing before my eyes. My daughters have gone away from me,” their mother wept. Their father said he searched hospitals and mortuaries: “I have seen a headless body, but that did not belong to my daughters.”

In Jammu's Bishnah, the body of Happy Sharma, another pilgrim, was brought home on Friday for cremation. Six others from his area, including five children, remain unaccounted for.

#### Missing Across Districts

From Samba's Sarai village, Poonam and her daughters Rashika and Namika are missing, while her husband and son survived. “The entire village is praying for their safe return,” said Surinder Singh, a former sarpanch.

In Vijaupur, Shahi Paul, his wife Savita Devi, their children Kaniya and Shivam, and two relatives remain untraced. Pilgrims from Madhya Pradesh, Haryana and Himachal Pradesh are also among the missing.

Five residents of Jammu's New Plot locality have not returned, while bodies of four from Janipur have been recovered. A CISF personnel, Manoj Kumar Biswal, is also among those still missing.

#### Rescue Efforts Intensify

A coordinated rescue operation involving the Army, Police, NDRF, SDRF, BRO, civil administration and local volunteers continued through Saturday. Teams have been sifting through rubble, debris and riverbanks in search of the missing.

Officials said 46 bodies have so far been identified and handed over to families after legal formalities. Rescue teams are expected to continue operations over the coming days as distraught relatives wait for answers.

#### Explosives Used To Blast Giant Boulders

As the massive rescue operation in Chisoti

village entered its third day on Saturday, rescuers blasted huge boulders blocking access to dozens feared trapped under rubble after Thursday's devastating cloudburst.

With large boulders hampering rescue efforts, the NDRF and SDRF teams used explosives to clear the way for excavators and rescuers. “Every hour is crucial. We are trying to reach those still stuck under debris,” an official said. (inputs from PTI)

### Man Rescued

in the village.

He said that it is a matter of great happiness that Subhash will again be able to set up the langar and serve Mata's devotees. “The greatest gift of his life is that Mata saved him.”

Union Minister Dr Jitendra Singh, at a press conference in Jammu, also mentioned about Subhash's rescue and said “he came out alive. He was part of those running langar”.

Singh said when the cloudburst-triggered flash floods struck the village on August 14, an estimated 200-300 pilgrims were in the langar and about 1,000 to 1,500 were in the area.

Subhash, from Udhampur, has long considered serving the devotees of Mata Machail his duty. Every pilgrimage season, he, along with his other colleagues, used to set up a langar (community kitchen) to feed thousands of weary yatriis who trekked through the rugged mountains.

His langar, where hundreds of devotees were being fed daily, was swept away when flash floods occurred in the afternoon. Many pilgrims at the site were buried under logs and rubble.

Rescue teams of the Army, police, NDRF, SDRF and local volunteers were clearing debris near the langar on Friday when they discovered him alive. Four bodies, which were lying around Subhash, were also recovered from the same spot.

“This is the first time in the operation that someone has been rescued alive. It feels like nothing short of a blessing,” an Army official said.

On Saturday, four more people were rescued alive.

“This gives hope that some more may still be alive under the debris,” Sharma said, thanking the Army and others involved in the operation.

After being rescued, Subhash was admitted to the hospital and later shifted to the Kishtwar district hospital for specialised treatment. He was eventually discharged as his injuries were not serious, Naib Tehsildar Sushil Kumar said.

Locals hailed his survival as divine intervention, saying that his years of service to pilgrims had been rewarded.

On August 14, the langar turned into the epicentre of unimaginable devastation when the cloudburst struck and torrents of water and debris swept through it. Survivors, many of them injured and in shock, estimate that nearly 200 to 300 people were present there, making it one of the deadliest tragedies in the region in decades.

The disaster hit Chisoti — the last motorable village en route to the Machail Mata temple — at around 12.25 pm, leaving 60 people dead and over 100 others injured.

So far, 82 people — 81 pilgrims and one CISF personnel — are reported missing after the cloudburst-induced flash floods hit the village in Padder sub-division of Kishtwar district on Thursday afternoon. Jammu, Udhampur and Samba districts accounted for the highest number of 60 missing people.

The deluge flattened a makeshift market, the langar and a security outpost. At least 16 residential houses and government buildings, three temples, four water mills, a 30-metre-long bridge and over a dozen vehicles were also damaged in the flash floods.

The annual Yatra, which began on July 25

and was scheduled to conclude on September 5, remained suspended for the third consecutive day on Saturday. The 8.5-kilometre trek to the 9,500-foot-high shrine starts from Chisoti, which is located about 90 km from Kishtwar town.

-PTI

### CM Announces Ex-Gratia

lives in the calamity would receive Rs 2 lakh each, while those who sustained severe injuries would be given Rs 1 lakh and those with minor injuries Rs 50,000, Omar said.

For structural damages, the chief minister announced Rs 1 lakh for fully damaged houses, Rs 50,000 for severely damaged ones, and Rs 25,000 for partially damaged structures.

Omar was accompanied by his Advisor Nasir Aslam Wani, Chairman of District Development Council Pooja Thakur, MLAs Inderwal Pyarelal Sharma and Ramban Arjun Singh Raju, and former minister Sajjad Ahmad Kitchloo, along with the inspector general of police and divisional commissioner from Jammu, deputy commissioner and senior superintendent of police from Kishtwar, and other senior civil and police officers.

Upon his arrival, the chief minister was briefed on the scale of destruction by Army personnel using a virtual reality headset, a government spokesperson said.

The chief minister, who reached Kishtwar on Friday evening, travelled by road to the affected village early on Saturday morning.

Expressing profound sorrow over the tragic loss of lives and widespread damage, the chief minister assured people that the government stands firmly with them in this hour of grief. He also issued directions for the immediate restoration of essential infrastructure in the affected areas.

Omar also met bereaved families and those affected by the tragedy, and promised immediate assistance and long-term rehabilitation.

### Will Ensure Reconstruction

reconstruction of homes damaged in flash floods,” the LG said in a post on X.

Tragedy struck Chasoti — the last motorable village enroute to the Machail Mata temple — around 12:25 pm on August 14 that left at least 60 people dead and over 100 injured. It flattened a makeshift market, a community kitchen site for the pilgrimage, and a security outpost.

At least 16 houses and government buildings, three temples, four water mills, a 30-meter-long bridge, and over a dozen vehicles were also damaged in the flash flood.

### Study Finds Sharp

heavy snowfall proved deadliest, with 42 events causing 182 deaths.

Kupwara, Bandipora, Baramulla, and Ganderbal reported the most casualties from snowfall, while Kishtwar, Anantnag, Ganderbal, and Doda were worst-hit by flash floods.

The study, authored by IMD scientists and an ICAR researcher used data from 10 IMD stations and four decades of rainfall records. The findings showed a strong link between heavy snowfall and mortality.

IMD Srinagar Director Mukhtar Ahmed warned that climate change will intensify such events, as the atmosphere's moisture capacity in higher regions has already increased by 7–10 percent.

He stressed the urgent need for stronger disaster management, especially on vulnerable pilgrimage routes like the Machail Yatra in Kishtwar, recently devastated by a cloudburst. (inputs from KINS)

### Heavy Rain Forecast

the Jammu division — including Jammu, Reasi, Udhampur, Rajouri, Poonch, Samba, and Kathua — are likely to receive heavy rainfall,

while Doda, Kishtwar, Ramban, and some areas in Kashmir division may witness moderate to intense showers accompanied by gusty winds.

Authorities have advised people to avoid rivers, streams, and unstable structures during this period. Travelers, transporters, tourists, and trekkers have been urged to plan journeys with caution.

The Met has further forecast hot and humid weather with brief thundershowers between August 20 and 22, followed by a fresh spell of light to moderate rainfall across J&K from August 23 to 25.

### CM Flags Risk

Speaking to reporters during his visit to the cloudburst-hit Chasoti village in Kishtwar district, Omar said the entire Himalayan region is increasingly vulnerable to glacial lake bursts and sudden cloudbursts. “We are all now prone to these freak weather events. We will have to collectively and individually consult experts to see what can be done to reduce such risks,” he said.

The Chief Minister noted that the tragedy in Kishtwar, where over 60 people were killed and more than 80 reported missing after Thursday's cloudburst, highlighted the urgent need for preparedness. “The missing number is not final. Some may be out of mobile coverage or stranded. Figures will keep changing,” he added.

Asked about regulating pilgrimages, Omar said earlier yatras were limited to a few hundred pilgrims, but now thousands undertake the journey. “Given changing weather patterns, we may have to think of more regulation and registration. But any step must be taken in consultation with religious leaders and locals, as emotions are deeply attached,” he said.

Pointing to the devastation, Omar said the flash floods had transformed a riverbank into a lake by bringing down massive rocks. “Some people may have been washed away. Our effort is to trace them and hand over bodies to families with dignity,” he added.

### Medical Officer

Civil Services (Classification, Control and Appeal) Rules, 1956, read with Article 128 of the J&K Civil Service Regulations, the Medical Superintendent placed Dr. Salam under suspension with immediate effect, pending an inquiry into the matter.

During the suspension period, Dr. Salam will remain attached to the Head of the Department, Ophthalmology, District Hospital Bandipora, and will receive subsistence allowance as per applicable rules.

### Digital Meltdown

been little follow-up from the government to restore these websites, which reflects a lack of seriousness.”

Minister for Information Technology, Satish Sharma couldn't be contacted for comments.

### Rotten Food Scare

and unbranded, unlabelled frozen food seizure has caused this situation and that the government must act tough against the culprits.

He demanded stricter inspections of meat entering the Union Territory and the establishment of a food-testing laboratory at Lakhanpur. “The rotten meat scandal has affected everyone in the business and damaged public confidence,” he said.

Similarly, shops and restaurants, including the longstanding Khayam Food Court, have reported the same losses, saying they have been hit hard by the ongoing scare.

One shop owner said their sales have dropped by nearly 50 per cent over the past two weeks. “Even regular customers are hesitant to eat here, and new customers are avoiding the shop entirely,” he said.

He said that people are scared after hearing

about the rotten meat seizure, which has completely shaken their trust in the market. “We have been serving fast food to the valley for decades, but this sudden loss of confidence has left us worried about sustaining the business and retaining our staff,” he added.

The ongoing food safety crisis in Jammu and Kashmir escalated after authorities seized over 12,000 kilograms of decomposed and unlabelled meat from various locations across the region.

The Food and Drug Administration (FDA) Commissioner, Smriti Sethi, earlier confirmed to KNO that the operation was initiated following continuous tip-offs, allowing the department to trace the supply chain and conduct targeted raids. (KNO)

### IGP Calls for

The meeting was attended by all the range DisG, district SsSP and other senior officers.

The IGP Kashmir took an overall assessment of the security situation of the Kashmir Zone. This was followed by the presentations of district SsSP highlighting their efforts in crime prevention and maintenance of law & order in their respective districts.

The deliberations, according to the officials, centered around the resolution of general crime cases, as well as matters related to NDPS, UAPA, absconders and other offenses. Actions taken under preventive laws and pending inquest proceedings were also discussed

### Assessee Must

an assessee becomes aware that the matter being inquired into or investigated is already the subject of an inquiry or investigation by another authority, the assessee shall forthwith inform, in writing, the authority that has initiated the subsequent inquiry or investigation,” the bench said.

The top court said the respective tax authorities shall communicate with each other to verify the veracity of the assessee's claim after receipt of such intimation.

“We say, so as this course of action would obviate needless duplication of proceedings and ensure optimal utilisation of the Department's time, effort, and resources, bearing in mind that action initiated by one authority enures to the benefit of all.

“If the claim of the taxable person regarding the overlap of inquiries is found untenable, and the investigations of the two authorities pertain to different ‘subject matters,’ an intimation to this effect, along with the reasons and a specification of the distinct subject matters, shall be immediately conveyed in writing to the taxable person,” the bench added.

The apex court said the taxing authorities are well within their rights to conduct an inquiry or investigation until it is ascertained that both authorities are examining the identical liability.

Any show cause notice issued in respect of a liability already covered by an existing show cause notice shall be quashed, it said.

“However, if the Central or the State tax authority, as the case may be, finds that the matter being inquired into or investigated by it is already the subject of inquiry or investigation by another authority, both authorities shall decide inter se which of them shall continue with the inquiry or investigation.

“In such a scenario, the other authority shall duly forward all material and information relating to its inquiry or investigation into the matter to the authority designated to carry the inquiry or investigation to its logical conclusion,” the bench said in its August 14 judgement.

The judgement came on a plea by Armour Security, a public limited company providing security services and registered with the Delhi GST authorities, involved in a dispute concerning tax demands and investigations.



## Kashmiri Gastroenterologist Marks 50th Successful POEM Procedure

Observer News Service

**SRINAGAR:** In a groundbreaking achievement, renowned Kashmiri Gastroenterologist Dr Hameed Raina has successfully performed his 50th Peroral Endoscopic Myotomy (POEM)—a minimally invasive procedure for Achalasia Cardia, a rare esophageal motility disorder that often causes severe difficulty in swallowing and regurgitation. The patient, a 47 year old woman who had silently suffered for over a decade, experienced complete relief following the intervention. She was discharged home the next day of the procedure.



POEM, a cutting-edge, scarless endoscopic treatment, is considered a revolutionary alternative to conventional open surgery for achalasia. It requires immense technical skill and is performed at only a few elite medical centers globally.

Dr. Raina is the only doctor in Jammu & Kashmir and La-

dakh performing such high-end Third space endoscopic procedures, including STER, EFTR, G-POEM, and ESD and many other endoscopic procedures like interventional EUS procedures and Bariatric Obesity procedures like TORE and ESG. These techniques represent the pinnacle of minimally invasive GI surgery, mastered by only a select group of gastroenterologists worldwide.

Over the past few years, Dr. Raina has earned international acclaim in the field of advanced GI endoscopy. He has been regularly invited as a live demonstrator, expert commentator, and faculty at leading global conferences in Gastroenterology and GI Surgery, showcasing his expertise to audiences across continents.

This milestone not only highlights Dr. Raina's exceptional skill and dedication also places Kashmir on the global map of advanced endoscopic innovation.

## Secretary H&ME, DHS Mobilise Emergency Medical Response



Observer News Service

**JAMMU:** In the wake of the cloudburst that struck the Chashoti area of District Kishtwar and under the supervision of Secretary Health and Medical Education, Dr Sayed Abid Rasheed Shah, the Directorate of Health Services Jammu (DHS Jammu) has initiated emergency medical response measures to assist those affected.

Director Health Services Jammu Dr Abdul Hamid Zargar reached Padder, Kishtwar on AUGUST 14 and launched a co-ordinated response to provide urgent medical care and support to the victims. Administrative Secretary H&ME also

reached Padder on AUGUST 15 to oversee the medical aid facilities being provided.

Multiple medical teams comprising doctors, paramedical staff and emergency health personnel were deployed to the affected areas. These teams are working around the clock to provide medical aid to the injured and affected families.

A fleet of fully equipped ambulances has been deployed to ensure timely transfer of critical patients to nearby health institutions for advanced treatment. Emergency medical camps have also been established near the affected zone with essential medicines, first aid and trauma care facilities.

## Free Eye Screening Camp Held at Madina Public High School



Observer News Service

**SRINAGAR:** Payaam International, in collaboration with ASG Eye Hospital conducted a Free Eye Screening Camp at Madina Public High School, Gund Khawaja Qasim for public and students.

The camp was joined by ophthalmologists Dr. Maqsood and Dr. Irfan offering their professional services to all attendees. The initiative focused on early detection of eye problems, providing medical advice, and creating awareness about eye health among underserved communities.

Dozens of students and local residents benefited from com-

prehensive eye check-ups, with special attention given to those requiring further treatment or corrective measures.

Chairman Payaam International, Z.A. Malik, expressed his heartfelt gratitude to ASG Eye Hospital for their generosity and dedication to community health. "Such collaborative efforts bring essential healthcare to those who need it most, and we are proud to work alongside ASG Eye Hospital in serving the public," he stated.

The camp received an overwhelming response from the local community, underscoring the importance of accessible healthcare services for all.

## I-Day Celebrated At District Court Complex Udhampur



Observer News Service

**UDHAMPUR:** District Legal Services Authority (DLSA) Udhampur in collaboration with the District Judiciary Udhampur, celebrated the 79th Independence Day on August 15, 2025, at the District Court Complex Udhampur.

The programme commenced with a ceremonial guard of honour, followed

by the hoisting of the National flag by Virinder Singh Bhou, Principal District and Sessions Judge Udhampur/Chairman DLSA Udhampur, accompanied by the singing of the national anthem. Kamlesh Pandit, Additional District and Sessions Judge Udhampur played a key role in organising and conducting the Independence Day celebration at the District Court Complex Udhampur.

## CS Pledges Full Rehabilitation Measures During Chisoti Visit

Observer News Service

**PADDAR (KISHTWAR):** Chief Secretary, Atal Dulloo visited Chisoti village of Paddar in Kishtwar district to take stock of the situation in the aftermath of the recent cloudburst.

Senior officers including the Divisional Commissioner, Jammu; IGP, Jammu; DC, Kishtwar; SSP, Kishtwar and other concerned officers accompanied the Chief Secretary during this visit.

During the visit, the Chief Secretary reviewed the extent of damage to habitations and infrastructure, besides interacting with affected families, local officials, and rescue teams engaged in relief and restoration efforts.

He held intense deliberations with the rescue teams of NDRF, SDRF, local police and security forces there about the kind of measures taken so far. He also took this occasion to talk to local people about the relief operations, health facilities and others being extended to them post this disaster.



The Chief Secretary issued instant instructions for ensuring immediate relief measures, proper rehabilitation of affected families, and early restoration of essential services in the area. He called upon all line departments to work in close coordination to ensure timely response and minimize inconvenience to the public. He impressed upon the Divisional and district administrations to closely monitor the progress

and simultaneously inform him about the same on daily basis.

Reassuring the local population, the Chief Secretary affirmed that the government is fully committed to extending every possible support for relief and recovery operations. He directed the concerned authorities to remain vigilant and proactive in addressing the needs of the affected communities.

**DURING THE VISIT, THE CHIEF SECRETARY REVIEWED THE EXTENT OF DAMAGE to habitations and infrastructure, besides interacting with affected families, local officials, and rescue teams engaged in relief and restoration efforts.**

## Minister Rana Conducts Tour Of Landslide-Affected Areas

Observer News Service

**POONCH:** Minister for Jal Shakti, Forest, Ecology & Environment and Tribal Affairs, Javed Ahmed Rana, today undertook a comprehensive tour of landslide-affected areas of Surankote and Mendhar subdivisions of Poonch district.

The visit was held with an aim to assess on-ground damage, oversee restoration efforts and ensure immediate relief and rehabilitation measures for affected communities.

Accompanied by senior officials of the District Administration and engineers from line departments, the Minister conducted site visits along the Surankote-Jharanwali-Mendhar Road, inspecting landslide-impacted areas in Jarranwali Gali, Phambrnarh, and Narh.

The Minister also held a detailed review at major landslide sites of Surhoti as well as near Jawahar Navodaya Vidyalaya (JNV), Surankote, where infrastructure and public connectivity has been severely disrupted.

He directed all concerned departments, including PWD, RDD and Disaster Management authorities, to initiate immediate damage assessment and undertake swift restoration of public infrastructure.



He emphasized upon the officers to adopt coordinated inter-departmental approach to ensure relief reaches every affected soul without any delay.

"The Government stands firmly with the people in this hour of need," the Minister said, assuring affected families that the Omar Abdullah-led Government will provide all necessary assistance to help them recover and rebuild their lives.

Earlier Rana also visited Jogger Park, located near the Sher-e-Kashmir Bridge in Poonch town and directed the Irrigation & Flood Control (I&FC) Department to prepare a Detailed Project Report (DPR) for the upgradation and extension of the jogging track up to the Police Lines.

He instructed for installa-

tion of a synthetic surface to provide residents with a modern fitness facility set against the picturesque riverfront, aiming to promote a healthier lifestyle for all age groups.

The Minister also visited Miran Public School in Janyar Dingla, where he engaged with students, teaching faculty and the school management.

Interacting with the young learners, Rana highlighted the transformative power of education and its role in shaping a progressive and equitable society.

"Education is the strongest tool for empowerment," he stated, reaffirming the Government's unwavering commitment to ensuring quality education is accessible to all, particularly in remote and rural regions.

## 61 Dengue Cases Reported This Year So Far

Agencies

**SRINAGAR:** Dengue cases are on the rise in Jammu & Kashmir, with a total of 61 reported so far this year.

An official informed that these cases include 24 from Jammu, 3 from Samba, 10 from Kathua, 7 from Udhampur, 3 from Reasi, 5 from Rajouri, 2 each from Doda and Poonch, and four cases from other states.

He said dengue cases are projected to surge post-monsoon and advised people to take "preemptive" measures to combat the painful mosquito-borne disease in the absence of any vaccine.

The dengue caused by viruses transmitted by infected mosquitoes has always been a health concern, the official said, adding that people need to take precautions to protect themselves from falling prey to the virus.

Meanwhile, doctors have advised people to use mosquito repellents and wear full sleeves shirts to save themselves from mosquito bites, which they said choose to breed in stagnant water accumulated by waterlogging mainly during the monsoon.

They said the best way to



prevent dengue fever is to eliminate pockets of stagnant water that serve as mosquito breeding sites at home, at schools, workplaces and their vicinity, and to avoid mosquito bites.

The mosquitoes that spread dengue are active during the day. "Cover as much of your body as possible and use mosquito nets if sleeping during the day and spray the nets with insect repellents," they said.

The most common symptoms, as per doctors, are fever and headache, eye pain (typically behind the eyes), muscle, joint or bone pain, rash, nausea and vomiting.

If anyone has stomach or belly pain, tenderness, vom-

iting (at least 3 times in 24 hours), bleeding from the nose or gums, vomiting blood, or blood in the stool and feeling tired, restless, or irritable, they must consult a doctor, the advisory mentions.

The mosquito remains active mostly at dusk and dawn, and people must wear clothes that minimise skin exposure to these mosquitoes, the doctors added.

In 2024, J&K recorded approximately 7,000 dengue cases. The year 2023 saw 6,403 cases, and 2022 recorded the highest ever—8,269 cases with 18 deaths. The earlier years saw lower figures, including just two cases in 2009, zero in 2010, and gradual increases in subsequent years—(KNO)



## GMC Jammu Leads in Providing World-Class Treatment to Kishtwar Tragedy Victims

Observer News Service

**JAMMU:** On the night of 14th August, when every Indian was preparing for the celebration of the 79th Independence Day, a team of medical professionals in GMC Jammu was eagerly waiting to receive a horde of ambulances arriving from Kishtwar carrying unfortunate victims who suffered not only physical but mental injuries following a natural disaster of paramount proportions.

As soon as the ambulance sirens started sounding in the GMC Jammu emergency, the teams became active. Without losing even a minute, the porters and helpers took the patient trolleys to the triage room where the medical teams immediately started providing medical support and treatment. There was no time to lose, split-second decisions were taken. The very sick were put on ventilators. Those requiring emergency surgeries were shifted to operation theatres. Those with superficial injuries were given suitable treatment. Their wounds were cleaned and sutured carefully by trained staff.

The nursing staff not only provided excellent nursing care but also were sisters, mothers, friends of those who suffered mental and physical trauma. Not only the patients were looked after, their accompanying family members were too given tender care and emotional support by trained staff. Needless to say everything was being closely monitored and done under the expert vision of Heads of departments, Heads of units, Senior professors, GMC administration.

The combined teamwork of all including administration, doctors, nursing staff, technical staff, security staff, sanitation staff, operation theatre staff ensured no life was lost due to

any laxity. The core treating departments like Orthopaedics, Anaesthesia, Surgery were ably supported by others like Neurosurgery, ENT, Dental, Ophthalmology, Medicine, Blood bank, Lab services and others. Not to mention here, the medical engineering departments (mechanical, electrical, civil) ensured seamless civic facilities despite challenges like incessant rains. The clock-like precision shown by GMC Jammu staff in providing medical management to the patients is an example of high-end professionalism.

There is no doubt that GMC Jammu has proven itself again and again as the leading health provider of the region be it during Operation Sindoor, mass accidents, tragedies etc. GMC Jammu's expertise to handle such mass medical crises has set a shining example for one and all in medical circles. The leading medical institutes of the region like PGI Chandigarh has appreciated the work done by GMC Jammu's medical team in handling such mass crises. The Director PGI Chandigarh has applauded Principal GMC Jammu after seeing such spectacular performance.

On the 14th fateful night, GMC Jammu received 66 critical patients. On the same night, around 25 major surgeries were performed thus saving precious lives. The medical care continued on the following day too when more surgeries were performed. The un-tiring efforts of GMC's team has been applauded by all sections of society. The GMC team ensured that there was no need to refer even a single patient to any other higher institute for want of medical expertise. The GMC administration not only ensured highest quality medical care, but also ensured a clean and hygienic and friendly environment for patients and their accompanying family members.

## Janmashtami Celebrated With Religious Fervour In Poonch



Observer News Service

**POONCH:** Krishna Janmashtami, marking the birth of Lord Krishna, was celebrated with devotion in Poonch today.

The celebrations were attended by Deputy Commissioner Poonch Ashok Kumar Sharma and Senior Superintendent of Police Shafket Hussain Bhat, along with senior district officials.

Addressing the gathering at Geeta Bhavan, the Deputy Commissioner extended greetings to the people of Poonch. He praised the spirit of harmony and brotherhood among the devotees and emphasised the importance of unity during culturally significant events.

Prominent citizens, religious leaders and SSP Poonch Shafket

Hussain Bhat also addressed the gathering, appreciating the peaceful and joyous environment of the celebrations.

A Shobha Yatra was taken out from Shree Geeta Bhavan, featuring tableaux and traditional performances reflecting cultural heritage and devotion to Lord Krishna. The Deputy Commissioner, SSP and other officials joined the procession, expressing solidarity with the community.

The day's festivities began with a sacred pooja followed by an Akhand Kirtan, where devotional hymns echoed throughout the temple premises. The Shobha Yatra passed through the main streets of Poonch city, drawing large crowds. Local residents lined the route, offering refreshments to participants.

## Krishna Janmashtami Celebrated In Rajouri

Observer News Service

**RAJOURI:** Krishna Janmashtami was celebrated with devotion in Rajouri district today. The celebrations included a Jhanki Yatra, which began from the Sanatan Dharma Sabha Ashram premises, passed through the Old Bus Stand and concluded back at the Ashram.

Deputy Commissioner Rajouri Abhishek Sharma and Senior Superintendent of Police Gaurav Sikarwar joined the devotees during the festivities.

A large number of people from different walks of life participated in the event, offering

prayers and taking part in the celebrations. Devotional songs, bhajans and chants in praise of Lord Krishna created a festive atmosphere across the town.

The organisers expressed gratitude to the district administration and police authorities for their support in ensuring the smooth conduct of the programme.

Krishna Janmashtami marks the birth of Lord Krishna, the eighth incarnation of Lord Vishnu. The festival is observed with fasting, devotional singing, enactments of Krishna's childhood (Jhankis) and mid-night prayers, signifying the divine moment of his birth.











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