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A Night of Duty, A Valley In Mourning

Forensic Sampling Turns Fatal: 9 Dead, 32 Injured In Nowgam PS Blast

Observer News Service

Srinagar: A massive explosion ripped through the Nowgam Police Station on Srinagar's outskirts late Friday night, killing nine people and injuring thirty-two others. Senior officials confirmed that the blast was "accidental," not a terror attack, and occurred while a specialised forensic team was handling explosive material seized from a recently busted Jaish-e-Mohammed-linked "white-collar" terror module in Haryana's Faridabad.

Among the nine killed were Naib Tehsildar Muzaffar Ahmed Khan and Suhail Ahmad Rather of the Revenue Department, Inspector Israr Ahmad Shah of the State Investigation Agency (SIA), three FSL personnel — Selection Grade Constable Aijaz Afzal Mir, Constable Mohammad Amin Mir, and Constable Showkat Ahmad Bhat, | [More on P6](#)



KO Photo | Abid Bhat



VICTIMS

• Naib Tehsildar Muzaffar Ahmad Khan — Revenue Dept.

• Suhail Ahmad Rather — Revenue Dept.

• Inspector Israr Ahmad Shah — State Investigation Agency

• Aijaz Afzal Mir (SgCt) — Forensic Science Lab (FSL)

• Mohammad Amin Mir (Ct) — FSL

• Showkat Ahmad Bhat (Ct) — FSL

• Javid Mansoor Rather (SgCt) — Crime Branch Photographer

• Arshid Ahmad Shah (Ct) — Crime Branch Photographer

• Mohammad Shafi Parray — Tailor attached to sampling team



LG Pays Tributes To Victims, Orders Probe Into Blast

Observer News Service

Srinagar: Jammu and Kashmir Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha on Saturday ordered a probe into the Nowgam Police Station blast that killed nine people and injured over 30, and visited hospitals to meet the injured. The Lieutenant Governor visited SMHS

and Ujala Cygnus hospitals in Srinagar, where he moved from ward to ward, interacting with the victims and enquiring about their recovery. He directed doctors to ensure the best possible medical care and assured the injured and their families of full government support. Doctors briefed the LG on the | [More on P6](#)

'He Left After Dinner & Never Returned'

Observer News Service

He left home after dinner, promising to return soon. But Mohammad Shafi Parray, a 47-year-old tailor from Wanabal and president of his local mosque, never made it back. A dutiful family man and a devout | [More on P6](#)

Kupwara Grieves Its Fallen Inspector

KO Web Desk

Hundreds of people gathered in Muqam Shahwali, Drugmulla, on Saturday evening to bid farewell to Inspector Israr Ahmad Shah, one of the nine victims of the accidental blast that ripped through the | [More on P6](#)

From Crime Scene To Coffins

NT, FSL Members & Photographers Among Victims

Observer News Service

Those killed in the Nowgam Police Station blast included Selection Grade Constables (SgCts) Javid Mansoor Rather | [More on P6](#)

₹10 Lakh Ex Gratia For Families Of Deceased

Observer News Service

Srinagar: The Jammu and Kashmir government on Saturday announced an ex gratia of Rs 10 lakh for the family of each of the deceased in the accidental blast in Nowgam police station.

The compensation will be provided from the Chief Minister's Relief Fund. Those severely injured

will get Rs 1 lakh each, Chief Minister Omar Abdullah said on his official X account.

"As a mark of solidarity and immediate succour, the government has announced ex gratia relief from the Chief Minister's Relief Fund at Rs 10 lakh for each deceased and Rs 1 lakh for those severely injured," he said.

On the directions of the chief minister, | [More on P6](#)

CM Promises Compensation For Damaged Buildings

Chief Minister Omar Abdullah on Saturday said the government will compensate for damages caused to nearby structures by the accidental blast at Nowgam police station. Omar said the government | [More on P6](#)

'It Felt Like An Earthquake'

The Blast That Ripped Through Nowgam's Sleep

KO Web Desk

Srinagar: The grim aftermath of Friday night's powerful explosion inside the Nowgam Police Station unfolded on Saturday morning, as investigators combed through mangled debris, burnt vehicles, and twisted metal in what officials described as one of the deadliest accidental blasts in recent years.

The blast, triggered by the "accidental detonation" of seized explosives, claimed nine lives and injured at least 29 others. By dawn, the area resembled a disaster zone — roofs



and scorched police vehicles reduced to mangled frames. Piles of concrete, twisted tin sheets, and burnt documents lay scattered across the premises, while | [More on P6](#)

Videos showed scenes of devastation: shattered windows, blown-off doors,

Political Leaders Condole Nowgam Deaths

KO Web Desk

Srinagar: Political leaders in Jammu and Kashmir on Saturday expressed deep sorrow over the accidental explosion at Nowgam Police Station that killed nine people and injured 32 others.

In a post on X, Jammu and Kashmir Chief Minister Omar Abdullah expressed grief over the incident, calling it a tragic loss.

"The chief minister has expressed deep sorrow and grief over the tragic accidental explosion at Nowgam Police Station, which claimed precious lives and left several personnel injured," his office said.

He also conveyed condolences to the bereaved families and prayed for the speedy recovery of the injured.

Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha, who earlier ordered a probe into the cause of the incident, also expressed anguish over the tragedy.

"Deeply anguished by the loss of precious lives due to the extremely tragic accidental blast at Nowgam Police Station in Srinagar. My condolences to the bereaved families. I pray for speedy recovery of the injured," Sinha said on X.

Official sources said the LG cancelled a scheduled security review | [More on P6](#)

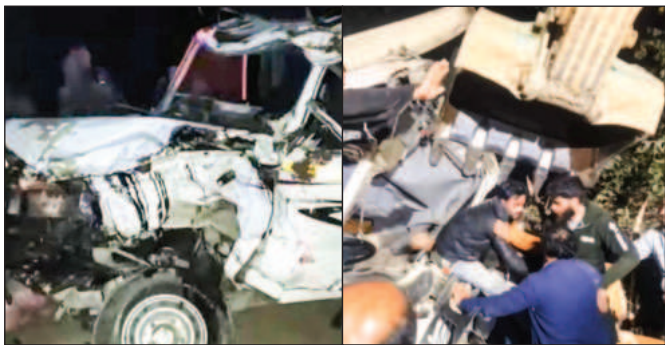
Budgam Tragedy: Dumper-Sumo Collision Claims 4 Lives, Several Injured

CM Omar Expresses Grief; Orders Probe, Medical Assistance

Observer News Service

Srinagar: At least four people lost their lives while several others were injured after a collision between two vehicles in Central Kashmir's Budgam district on Saturday evening, officials said.

According to reports, a dumper truck collided with a Tata Sumo passenger vehicle at Waterwani along the Budgam Ring Road around 10:30 pm. The impact of the crash was severe, leaving four passengers dead on the spot and several



others critically wounded.

Local residents, passersby, and police personnel rushed to

the scene and helped shift the injured to a nearby hospital. Rescue | [More on P6](#)

Red Fort Blast: Ganderbal Youth Among Dead

Family Says They've Lost Contact Since Nov 10

Agencies

Srinagar: A youth from Kangan Ganderbal is among the victims killed in the car explosion near Delhi's Red Fort on November 10 evening, which left more than 10 people dead and over 20 injured.

The 32-year Bilal Ahmad Sangoo son of Ghulam Hassan Sangoo had been working as a cart-puller in Delhi for the past six years.

Elder brother of the deceased Farooq Ahmad said, "Police have told us that verification is on. His picture is circulating on social media and we



have recognized him. He is my brother."

Farooq said that they lost

contact with him soon after the explosion. "His phone has remained switched off since."

SSP Ganderbal Khalil Ahmad Poswal said that police received a report from the family that Bilal was indeed working in Delhi at the time of the blast. "A family member will have to travel to Delhi for a DNA test, and the body will be handed over only after a positive DNA match," the SSP added.

According to the reports, Bilal's cart was destroyed in the Red Fort blast.

His brother said that Bilal was unmarried, and he stayed alone, making a living by loading, unloading, and ferrying goods in his cart in the national capital. | [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: Ericsson Empowering Girl Scholarship Program 2025-26

Description: Ericsson invites applications from meritorious female students currently studying in the 2nd year of the Engineering program from anywhere in India. The scholarship is meant to support meritorious female students coming from underprivileged sections of society.

Eligibility: Open for female students across India only. Applicants must be studying in the 2nd year of an engineering program in Information Technology, Computer Science, Information and Communication Technology or Tele Communication streams at state/UGC recognized colleges in India. Applicants must have scored at least 6.5 GPA or equivalent marks in the previous final examination. The annual family income of the applicant from all sources must not exceed INR 6,00,000. Preference to applicants with disabilities/ single parents/orphans. Children of Ericsson and Buddy4Study employees are not eligible.

Prizes & Rewards: A fixed scholarship of INR 75,000
Last Date to Apply: 30-11-2025
Application mode: Online applications only
Short Url: www.b4s.in/observer/EEGSS
QR Code: https://d1e9eg0t05513.cloudfront.net/static/images/scho-media/ericsson-empowering-girl-scholarship-



program-2025-261762498355.png

Scholarship Name 2: WINGS — Women INspiring Growth in STEM Scholarship Program

Description: WINGS — Women INspiring Growth in STEM Scholarship Program aims to inspire and empower young women to pursue STEM education with confidence, curiosity, and purpose. Launched by IIT Bombay's Distinguished Alumnus Bharat Desai and Neerja Sethi, WINGS — Women INspiring Growth in STEM Scholarship Program is an initiative to support female undergraduate students at IIT Bombay pursuing STEM disciplines. Eligibility: Female students enrolled in undergraduate programs at IIT Bombay (from 2026-27). Not availing any other tuition grant or scholarship.

Must maintain a CPI of 6.0 or above.
Prizes & Rewards: Full tuition fee support (2,00,000 per annum).
Last Date to Apply: 01-09-2025
Application mode: Interest Form Mode Online
Short Url: www.b4s.in/observer/WINGS1
QR Code: https://d1e9eg0t05513.cloudfront.net/static/images/scho-media/wings-women-inspiring-growth-in-stem-scholarship-program1761897671.png

Scholarship Name 3: Mahindra Big Boss Nayi Pehchan Scholarship 2025-26

Description: The Mahindra Big Boss Nayi Pehchan Scholarship 2025-26 is designed to empower children of freelance tractor mechanics by offering a scholarship of INR 6,000 annually to support their educational journey
Eligibility: Children of freelance tractor mechanics. Aged 7 to 21 years, enrolled in school, college, or vocational courses. 50% marks (or equivalent) in the previous class/semester. Open to students across India. Children of Buddy4Study or Mahindra & Mahindra Ltd. employees are not eligible. Prizes & Rewards: Students will receive a scholarship amount of INR 6000/-.
Last Date to Apply: 15-11-2025
Application mode: Online applications only
Short Url: www.b4s.in/observer/MAMF1
QR Code: https://d1e9eg0t05513.cloudfront.net/static/images/scho-media/mahindra-big-boss-nayi-pehchan-scholar-

ship-2025-261760593208.png

Scholarship Name 4: BYPL SASHAKT Scholarship 2025-26

Description: The BYPL SASHAKT Scholarship Program 2025-26 is an initiative by BSES Yamuna Power Limited (BYPL) dedicated to supporting the higher education of students from economically weaker sections of society. It offers financial assistance of up to INR 30,000 to final-year undergraduate students enrolled in any stream at government institutes across Delhi. Eligibility: Must be Indian nationals with permanent residence in Delhi. Must be in the final year of a regular or distance UG course at a government institute in Delhi. Minimum 55% marks in the last qualifying examination are required. Annual family income must be up to INR 6,00,000. Priority will be given to candidates pursuing Nursing, Para-Medical, B.Ed, Engineering, or CA courses, students from Central and East Delhi, and those willing to take up employment after graduation. Prizes & Rewards: Selected students will receive a Scholarship amount up to INR 30,000
Last Date to Apply: 21-11-2025
Application mode: Online applications only
Short Url: www.b4s.in/observer/BYPL6
QR Code: https://d1e9eg0t05513.cloudfront.net/static/images/scho-media/bypl-sashakt-scholarship-2025-261759212211.png
courtesy - buddy4study.com

From Office of the Advocate Javid Ahmad Navoo

In the case of
Gulzar Ahmad Khanday
Abdul Majeed Khanday
Sons of Late Abdul Rahim Khanday
Residents of Sari Warpora Pattan

(Caveator)

V/s

Public at large

In the Petition in terms of Section 148-A

The caveators have reason to believe that Non-Caveator may file any Application, Petition, Ap- peal, Suit or any other type of proceeding before the Hon'ble Court and on the ground of distorted facts/misrepresentation and cooked story and may seed in obtaining some relief/order at their back/in exparte against the caveators and in such eventuality the caveators will be put in irreparable loss and inconvenience. It would be proper that caveators be given an opportunity of being heard by the Hon'ble court before passing any order.
fko Sd/advocate

PUBLIC NOTICE

It is informed to the General public that my name / father's name and (DOB) Date of birth in my Aadhar Card bearing Aadhar No:- 4799 2677 9155 has been wrongly mentioned as Mohamad Latef Mir S/O. Gani Mir instead of Latif Ahmad Mir. S/O. Ab Gani Mir .DOB.25.02.1967. as per school record and Birth Certificate bearing Reg No.B202501052380000162. Now I am applying for its Correction as per school and Birth certificate record .if anybody having any objection in this regard he/she may contact the same in the office of the General Manager Ranbir Govt Press Jammu within a period of seven days from the publication of this notice. No objection will be entertained after expiry of stipulated period.



Latif Ahmad Mir fko
S/O. Ab Gani Mir
R/O :- Langate .Tehsil :- Langate . Distt : Kupwara .
Post office Langate Pin Code 193302 .

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GOVERNMENT OF JAMMU AND KASHMIR (UT)

OFFICE OF THE MEDICAL SUPERINTENDENT DISTRICT HOSPITAL KULGAM

Email: Tel: 01931-260398

No: MS/DHK/2092-95 Dated: 15 /11/2025

Short Term Tender Notice for Procurement of Cement Flower Vases

The Medical Superintendent, District Hospital Kulgam, on behalf of the Government of J&K, invites sealed quotations from bonafide registered suppliers / citizens / supply agencies for the procurement of flower vases for the year 2025-26 as mentioned in ITEM-B. The interested registered suppliers / citizens / supply agencies may submit their financial quotation documents in the prescribed format in separate sealed covers within 05 days

Details of items are as follows:

ITEM B

S. No.	Description of Items	Specifications	Qty	Remarks
1	Large Cement Vase	3' × 2.5'	10 Nos.	Cement
2	Fountain	3' × 18"	2 Nos.	Cement
3	Polygon Shape	Standard	10 Nos.	Cement
4	Square	Standard	10 Nos.	Cement
5	Oval Shaped	Standard Size	10 Nos.	Cement
6	Brown Square	Standard Size	10 Nos.	Cement

Intending eligible quotationers may obtain the quotation document free of cost from the OFFICE OF THE MEDICAL SUPERINTENDENT, DISTRICT HOSPITAL KULGAM between 10:00 AM to 3:00 PM up to 19-11-2025.

Financial documents sealed in separate covers must be delivered by or before 19-11-2025 up to 3:30 PM. All sealed quotations received will then be opened on the same day in the office at 4:00 PM, if possible.

The undersigned reserves the right to accept or reject any or all of the tenders without assigning any reason whatsoever.

Medical Superintendent
District Hospital Kulgam

DIPK-8153/25
dated: 15-11-2025

Government of Jammu & Kashmir

OFFICE OF THE BLOCK MEDICAL OFFICER KHANSAHIB

Subject: Revised Open bid Auction for sale of one-story standing Building/Demolition and lifting of the material located in the premises of SDH Khansahib.

REVISED OPEN BID AUCTION

For and on behalf of the Governor of Jammu & Kashmir (UT) an open bid revised auction for sale of one-story old building in standing position/demolition and lifting of material by the bidder located in the premises of Sub District Hospital Khansahib is being conducted on 17/11/2025 (Monday) in presence of Auction Committee. The interested bidder/professional parties/Contractors are invited for Open Bid Auction on the scheduled date on spot at the venue. The bidder shall have to deposit ₹5000/- (Five Thousand rupees) in shape of bank CDR/FDR (refundable) pledged in the name of Block Medical Officer Khansahib. As per the assessment of Executive Engineer, R&B Department, Khansahib the valuation cost of building is Rs 116644/- (One lack sixteen thousand six hundred and forty four rupees).

Terms & Conditions:-

- The bidder has right to see the building before to submit the CDR/FDR along with copy of Adhaar Card.
- The Auction will start from rs 116644/- and will end on highest successful bidder.
- The auction committee reserves the right to accept or reject the auction bid without any assign thereof.
- The auction will be started at 11.00 A.M in the morning and end at 4.30 P.M. at Sub District Hospital Khansahib.
- The successful bidder has to demolish the building structure at his own cost. No labour charges will be paid on account of building demolition by this office.
- The successful bidder has to lift the demolished building material from the premises within weeks' time positively from the date of allotment Order.
- The bidder who submits the CDR/FDR shall only take part in the Auction.
- The successful bidder will have to pay auctioned amount on the same day in the name of BMO Khanshaib in shape of Cheque & ADHAAR Card to present Auction Committee on spot.
- The successful bidder is himself responsible to watch 81 ward of the auctioned material after date of allotment.

No.BMOK/ 2356-61
DIPK-8160/25
Dated: 15.11.2025

Block Medical Officer
Khansahib

OFFICE OF THE EXECUTIVE ENGINEER PWD (R&B) DIVISION QAZIGUND

Government of Jammu & Kashmir

NOTICE INVITING TENDERS

NIT No.37 OF R&B/QAZIGUND/2025-26 /E-TENDERING/4016-30 DATED:14-11-2025

For and on behalf of the Lt. Governor, Union Territory of J&K e-tenders are invited on %age basis from approved and eligible Contractors registered with J&K Govt. CPWD, Railways and other State/Central Governments for each of the following works:-

S. No	Name of Work	Estimated Cost (in Rs)	Basic Cost (In Rs)	GST Amount (In Rs)	Cost of T/ Doc. (in Rs)	Earnest Money (In Rs)	Time of Completion	Head of Account	Position of AAA	Class of Contractor
1.	Development of Path & Renovation of Pantry/JE Room at Sub Division Qazigund.	498987.87	422871.08	76116.79	200/=	9980/=	20 Days	MH:2216	Authorization No.ARD/	DEE Class & MSME's Only

Position of TS: Accorded

The NIT Consisting of qualifying information, eligibility criteria, specifications, Bill of quantities (B.O.Q), Set of terms- and conditions of contract and other details can be seen/downloaded from the departmental websitewww.jktenders.gov.in as per schedule of dates given below:

S. No.	Particulars	Dated	
1	Date of Issue of Tender Notice		14.11.2025
2	Period of Downloading of bidder documents	From 15.11.2025 To 24.11.2025	(11:00 AM) (04:00 PM)
3	Bid submission Start Date	From 15.11.2025 To 24.11.2025	(11:00 AM) (04:00 PM)
4	Bid Submission End Date	To 24.11.2025	(04:00 PM)
5	Date and time of opening of bid (online)	25.11.2025	(11:00 AM)
			In the office of Executive Engineer PWD(R&B) Division QAZIGUND.

1. Bids must be accompanied with cost of tender document in shape of Treasury Challan / Receipt (Under MH- 0059 PWD) in favour of Executive Engineer R&B Division QAZIGUND [Tender Inviting Authority] (Name of Work to be mentioned on the Treasury Challan / Receipt) (Refer Govt. order No. O.M.No. A/24 (2017)-651 Dt 07-06-2018 (The Date of Treasury Challan should be between the date of Start of Bid and Bid Submission End Date) and EMD (2% of advertised Cost) in the shape of CDR/FDR/BG pledged to Executive Engineer PWD(R&B) Division QAZIGUND (Tender receiving Authority).

2. All the Bidders have to submit Earnest Money/Bid Security (EMD@2%of Advertised Cost) in the shape of CDR/FDR/BG. Non submission of Earnest Money/Bid Security shall render the bidder as Non-responsive.

3. The 1st lowest responsive (Successful) Bidder has to produce an amount equal to 5% of contract as Performance Security in the shape of CDR/FDR/BG in favour of Executive Engineer R&B Division QAZIGUND (Tender receiving authority) within 03 Days before fixation of Contract and shall be released after successful completion of Defect Liability Period(DLP) of the work. Failure to produce Performance Security shall render the L1 as non-responsive and case for debarring of the Contractor for a period of 01 Year be forwarded to Higher Authorities.

4. The Earnest Money Deposit (EMD@2% of Advertised Cost) in the shape of CDR/FDR/BG of the successful Bidder shall be released after receiving Performance security @5% of the allotted cost in the shape of CDR/FDR/BG and same shall be released after successful completion of Defect Liability Period (DLP) of the work.

5. Note: a. MSME's are required to pay only 50% of Tender Document Cost or Rs 500/- whichever is lower. MSME's are required to pay only 50% of the amount of EMD/ Bid Security or Rs 5000/- whichever is lower.

The bidders are requested to quote their rates excluding GST. GST @18Percentshall be added tothe contract value by the allotting authority at the time of issuance of allotment.

6. The date and time of opening of Bid shall be notified on Web Site www.jktenders.gov.inand conveyed to the bidders automatically through e-mail message on their e-mail address. The bids of Responsive bidders shall be opened online on same Web Site in the office of Executive Engineer PWD(R&B) Division QAZIGUND.

7. Thebidsfortheworkshallremainvalidforaperiodof120days from the date of Opening of Technical bids.

8. The Earnest Money/Performance Security shall be forfeited If:

a) Any bidder/tenderer withdraws his bid/tender during the period of bid validity or makes any modification in the terms and conditions of the bid.

b) Failure of successful bidder to furnish the required performance security within specified time period before issue of letter of intent.

c) SuccessfulBidderfailstoexecutetheagreementwithin28daysafterfixationofcontract.

d) If at any stage of work, the Bidder back up from the contract, again the Performance security/EMD as well as work done claim will be forfeited.

9. Instruction to bidders regarding e-tendering process.

a. Biddersareadvisedtodownloadbidsubmissionmanualfromthe"Downloads"optionaswellasfrom"Bidders Manual Kit" on website www.jktenders.gov.in to acquaint bid submission process.

b. To participate in bidding process, bidder shave toget'Digital Signature Certificate(DSC)'as per Information Technology Act-2000. Bidders can get digital certificate from any approved vendors.

c. ThebiddershavetosubmittheirbidsonlineinelectronicformatwithdigitalSignature.NoFinancialbidwillbe accepted in physical form.

d. Bids will be opened online as per time schedule mentionedinPara-1.

e. Biddersmustensuretouploadscannedcopyofallnecessarydocumentswithbid. Note: - Scan all the documents on 100 dpi with black and white option.

10. Thedepartmentwillnotberesponsiblefordelayinonlinesubmissionduetoanyreasons.

11. Scanned copy of cost of tender document in the shape of Treasury Challan / Receipt in favour of Executive Engineer PWD(R&B) Division QAZIGUND (The Date of Treasury Challan should be between the date of Start of Bid and Bid Submission End Date and EMD in the shape of CDR/FDR/BG pledged to Executive Engineer PWD(R&B) Division QAZIGUND must be uploaded with the documents of the bid. The Original Treasury Challan (Cost of Tender Document), EMD and other relevant bid documents shall be obtained from the lowest bidder before the fixation of the Contract.

12. Bidders are advised not to make any change in BOQ (Bill of Quantities) contents. In no case they should attempt to create similar BOQ manually.

13. Price escalation and taxes: The %age quoted by the bidder entirely in Indian Rupees, shall be deemed to include price escalation and all taxes up to completion of the work. Deduction on account of taxes shall be made from the bills of the contractor on gross amount of the bill as per the rates prevailing at the time of recovery.

14. Bidders are advised to use "My Documents" area in their user on R&B e-Tendering portal to store such documents as are required.

15. In case of CRF and other specified project, there Levant guideline/standard bidding document shall be followed.

16. The tender/ bid is liable to rejection if it does not fulfill the requirement as laid down in NIT

17. Performance Security shall be released after DLP is over successfully.

18. All other terms and conditions are assumes laidinPWDForm25.

Sd/-

Executive Engineer,
PW (R&B) Division QAZIGUND//

No. 4016-30
DIPK-8147/25
DATED: 15-11-2025

Health Minister, Officials Assess Care of Nowgam Blast Injured

Observer News Service

SRINAGAR: Minister for Health and Medical Education Sakeena Itoo, Divisional Commissioner Kashmir Anshul Garg, and Deputy Commissioner Srinagar Akshay Labroo on Saturday visited Ujala Cygnus Hospital and SMHS Hospital to enquire about the condition and treatment of those injured in the accidental explosion at Nowgam Police Station.

During her visit to Ujala Cygnus Hospital, Minister Sakeena Itoo interacted with the attending doctors, seeking a first-hand assessment of the medical care being provided to the injured. She instructed the medical staff to ensure the best possible treatment and to take consultations from premier government institutions such as SKIMS and SMHS if required. She also met the injured persons and their families, took feedback on the medical care, and assured them of full support from the government. Calling the

incident deeply unfortunate and shocking, she offered words of comfort and sympathy.

Meanwhile, Divisional Commissioner Anshul Garg and Deputy Commissioner Akshay Labroo visited both SMHS and Ujala hospitals to review the treatment arrangements. The Divisional Commissioner was briefed by medical officers about the condition of the injured and the progress of their recovery. He directed the healthcare teams to provide quality treatment, timely medication, and all necessary facilities without any delay.

Both officers interacted with the injured individuals, enquired about their well-being, and assured them that every required assistance will be extended. They also expressed grief over the loss of precious lives in the tragic accident and conveyed condolences to the bereaved families, praying for the swift recovery of all those injured.

Shakil Naqshbandi Named Naib Imam of Jama Masjid Srinagar



Observer News Service

Srinagar: The Anjuman Auqaf Jama Masjid Srinagar has appointed Shakeel Ahmad Naqshbandi as the Naib Imam-e-Hai of the historic Jama Masjid Srinagar.

According to the Anjuman, the decision was taken in consultation with the current Imam-e-Hai, Ahmad Sayeed Naqshbandi, citing his advanced age and health considerations.

"Anjuman Auqaf Jama Masjid Srinagar has, in accordance with the wish of the Imam-e-Hai of Jama Masjid and senior scholar Janab Ahmad Sayeed Naqshbandi, and due to his advanced age and health concerns, entrusted his honour-

able son Janab Shakeel Ahmad Naqshbandi with the responsibility of Naib Imam-e-Hai of the Central Jama Masjid Srinagar," the statement said.

The announcement was made by Anjuman President and Mirwaiz Muhammad Umar Farooq during a ceremony held after Friday prayers, where Shakeel Ahmad was formally inducted through a dastar bandi (turban-tying ceremony) in the presence of senior members of the organisation.

During the event, Mirwaiz Umar acknowledged the long service of Ahmad Sayeed Naqshbandi and expressed hopes that the newly appointed Naib Imam-e-Hai would continue the institution's religious and community responsibilities.



LG Manoj Sinha met the injured in the accidental blast at Nowgam Police Station who are undergoing treatment at Ujala Cygnus and SMHS Hospital. KO Photo

Sealed Blast Site Makes Nowgam Epicentre of Media Attention

From midnight chaos to dawn deadlines, journalists camp at Wanbal stretch

Observer News Service

Srinagar: The morning after the deadly explosion inside Nowgam Police Station turned the usually quiet Wanbal stretch into a makeshift newsroom, a blur of cameras, tripods and satellite vans lined bumper to bumper as journalists waited through the cold morning for official word and a glimpse of inside from behind sealed cordons.

The blast site remained completely out of bounds, fortified by multiple layers of police barricades. All lanes leading toward the Nowgam Police Station stayed shut through the day, forcing reporters and photojournalists to set up camp hundreds of meters away, near the main Wanbal junction.

By noon, the scene, as per KNO, resembled a full-fledged outdoor newsroom: reporters live-streaming from roadside spots, photographers climbing embankments for distant visuals and stringers spacing between parked OB vans, chasing every minor update.


For many, it was the continuation of a sleepless assignment that had begun the previous night. Several media teams had been on the ground from Friday midnight, when the powerful blast ripped through the Nowgam Police Station, working through the freezing night, filing updates and visuals until 3 AM, before returning early in the morning to resume coverage.

"Most of us haven't slept. We have been here since last night," said a video journalist, resting his camera against

a tripod near the barricade. "The lanes are sealed; we can only report from this stretch. Still, we can't leave, every small movement matters."

Another senior journalist said he had been working on the Nowgam story till late night and sent his copy to the office around 1:30 a.m. "I was working till around 1:30 in the night and early in the morning I had to file another story. My head was literally spinning, I had to take a 'paracetamol' before I could return to the site again," he said with a smile while his eyes were full of sleep.

Officials present at Nowgam, said the access to the Nowgam Police Station remained restricted as police, CRPF and forensic teams continued examination and collection of evidence throughout the day.



सत्यमेव जयते

MINISTRY OF SOCIAL JUSTICE & EMPOWERMENT
GOVERNMENT OF INDIA


DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL JUSTICE & EMPOWERMENT
announces

SCHOLARSHIPS FOR SCHEDULED CASTE
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<ul style="list-style-type: none">Parents'/Guardians' annual income not exceeding Rs. 2.50 LakhStudents pursuing courses in recognised institutions/ Universities/Colleges/ Schools	<ul style="list-style-type: none">All recognised courses from class XI onwardsApplications are accepted and verified by the State Government/Union TerritoryCoverage of the poorest households	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Compulsory non-refundable fees (including tuition fee)Academic allowance ranging from Rs. 2500 to Rs. 13500 per annum10% extra allowance for Divyang (specially abled) students

- Student should have a valid Mobile Number, Aadhaar Number (UID), Aadhaar seeded Bank Account, Income Certificate, Previous Year Marksheet and Caste Certificate.

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CBC 38101/11/0034/2025



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- BARAMULLA: 0194-102029
- BIJBHARA: 01932-228243
- PAMPORE: 01933-294132
- PATTAN: 01954-293507
- QAZIGUND: 01951-296153



HIGHWAY STATUS



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



HIJRI
CALENDAR

24 Jumada al-Awwal
1447

PRAYERS

FAJR	5: 38
ZUHR	12:14
ASR	3: 52
Magrib	5:32
ISHA	6: 55

This Day In History

- 13- General Tiberius' (later Emperor) triumphant procession through Rome after siege of Germany
- 534 - Second and final revision of the Justinian Code published, a codified set of imperial and classical laws begun initially in 528
- 1491- An auto de fe, held in the Braserio de la Dehesa outside of Ávila, concludes the case of the Holy Child of La Guardia with the public execution of several Jewish 1519- City of Havana moved to its current location to avoid mosquito infestations
- 1532- Spanish conquistador Francisco Pizarro captures Inca Emperor Atahualpa after a surprise ambush at Cajamarca in the Peruvian Andes
- 1572 - Troops under Don Frederik (the Spanish General Fadrique Alvarez de Toledo) occupy and plunder Zutphen, Netherlands
- 1581- Tsar Ivan the Terrible attacks his son and heir, Ivan Ivanovich, with a scepter after an argument leading to the latter's death three days later
- 1632 - Battle of Lützen: Significant battle of Thirty Years' War - Swedish and Saxon forces defeat the Holy Roman Empire, at cost of the death of Swedish King Gustavus Adolphus
- 1676- 1st colonial prison organized in Nantucket, Massachusetts
- 1677 - French troops occupy Freiburg
- 1700 - Monarch of Brandenburg becomes king of Prussia
- 1764- Native Americans surrender to British in Indian War of Chief Pontiac
- 1771- West Indian Company & Amsterdam divide up Suriname
- 1776 -1st gun salute for an American warship in a foreign port - US Andrew Doria at Fort St Eustatius (Dutch Caribbean isalnd)
- 1776- American Revolutionary War: British and Hessian troops take Fort Washington, New York marking one of biggest losses by US forces
- 1776 -British troops capture Fort Washington during American Revolution
- 1798- Kentucky becomes first state to nullify an act of Congress
- 1805- Battle at Schongraben: Russian army stop French
- 1840- New Zealand officially becomes a British colony
- 1841- Life preservers made of cork are patented by Napoleon Guerin (NYC)
- 1875- Battle of Gundet: Ethiopian emperor Yohannes beats Egyptians
- 1894- French captain Henri Decoeurs troops reach Nikki, West Africa
- 1905- Dutch Russian Count Witte becomes Prime Minister of Russia
- 1907- Oklahoma becomes the United States 46th state
- 1916- Russian La Satannaya ammunition factory explodes, killing 1,000
- 1917- British occupy Tel Aviv and Jaffa
- 1918- Hungarian People's Republic declared
- 1922 - Turkish kalief/sultan Mehmed VI asks British army for help.
- 1943 - World War II: American bombers strike a hydro-electric power facility and heavy water factory in German-controlled Vemork, Norway.
- 1945 - Founding of UNESCO (United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization).
- 1950 - Egyptian King Faruk demands departure of all British troops.
- 1962 - Kuwait adopts constitution (1st, Islamic).
- 1965 - Venera 3 launched, 1st to land on another planet (crashes into Venus).
- 1973 - Skylab 4 launched into Earth orbit.
- 1982 - 5th space shuttle mission: Columbia lands at Edwards Air Force Base after 5 days in space.
- 1982 - Space Shuttle Columbia completes its 1st operational flight.
- 1984 - 14th Shuttle Mission (51A) -Discovery 2-lands at Kennedy Center.
- 1988 - Pakistan's Benazir Bhutto's PPP wins 1st free Pakistani elections in 11 years.
- 1989 - UNESCO adopts the Seville Statement on Violence at the twenty-fifth session of its General Conference.
- 1993 - Russian President Yeltsin shuts Lenin museum.

KASHMIR OBSERVER®

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Legal Counsel: Tasaduq Khwaja
Switchboard: (0194) 2502327 | +91 1947969705
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Email: editor@kashmirobserver.net

Cracks in the Campus

A varsity built to change Kashmir's border belt is sinking under vacancies, stalled leadership and financial chaos. The region cannot afford this collapse.

Sheikh Umar Ahmad

When Baba Ghulam Shah Badshah University opened in 2002, it changed what the Pir Panjal region imagined for itself. Families in Rajouri and Poonch had waited for a place where their children could study without leaving home or settling for limited options. Late Prof. Masud Choudhary believed a university on those hills could bridge generations of distance from opportunity. The early years reflected that belief. New buildings came up, classrooms filled, and the campus carried an energy that touched the entire border belt. The story today carries a different mood. A university once built to empower a region is struggling to stand on its feet. A recent RTI reply revealed that more than half of all sanctioned teaching posts remain empty. All 22 professor posts are unoccupied. Only two associate professors are in place out of 50 sanctioned positions. Departments depend on 80 assistant professors and 17 lecturers, many working on temporary contracts. This kind of shortage drains the academic culture of a university. Research slows, students lose mentors, and courses become shells of what they should be. The administrative machinery shows similar cracks. Crucial positions such as Controller of Examinations, Principals and Assistant Registrars lie vacant. The Deputy Commissioner of Rajouri currently holds additional charge as Registrar, a sign of how stretched the system has become. A university that serves one of J&K's most sensitive districts needs steady academic leadership, not temporary arrangements meant for crisis management.

Leadership concerns rise inside the campus as well. Senior roles have long been held by academicians from Aligarh Muslim University, including the current Vice-Chancellor and Dean Academic Affairs. Their expertise carries weight. The results on the ground, though, paint a different picture. Departments in Artificial Intelligence, Data Science and Tourism exist on paper, though student enrolment remains thin. A modern department creates impact only when it links academic content with real jobs and local needs. Students do not see that connection here. The long pause in convocations reflects the deeper trust deficit. The last convocation took place in December 2012. Thousands of graduates still wait for the ceremony that marks the completion of their degrees. Registration fees were collected for several planned events that never took place. A special convocation announced in 2023 faded away as well. A university owes its students recognition of their achievement. When this basic promise breaks, confidence in the institution erodes. The financial troubles deepen the crisis. Government grants touched 34.95 crore in 2024-25, though the salary bill alone stood at 48.48 crore. Internal revenue has fallen sharply from 79.33 crore in 2022-23 to 7.06 crore in 2024-25. Total income is 28.87 crore against an expenditure of 51.99 crore. The Wakf Board's annual 2 crore support has remained pending since 2019. These numbers show how far the university has slipped from stability. A special audit ordered by the J&K Government flagged irregularities in procurement, misuse of welfare funds and re-employment of retired officials in posts involving financial powers. Even basic purchases breached official rules. The audit captured what students and staff have been expressing for years.

The atmosphere inside the campus carries this strain. Faculty fury has become common. Students speak about outdated labs, crumbling hostels and limited placement support. These are young people from districts that rely heavily on higher education for mobility and stability. Their university should have been a ladder toward those goals. Repairing this institution calls for action that does not wait for another crisis. A full-time Registrar must be appointed without delay. Senior academic positions need strong and committed leadership. A transparent recruitment drive is essential to fill the 142 vacant teaching posts. The university also needs an independent financial and performance audit that is made public, so that confidence can be rebuilt through clarity rather than assurances.

Curricula across departments must align with industry demand and local potential in technology, tourism and applied sciences. Convocations must return to the academic calendar. Alumni networks need to be revived to help students find internships, mentorship and jobs. BGSBU sits in a region where education is one of the strongest tools for progress. It carries a responsibility that goes far beyond its campus boundary. Prof. Masud Choudhary imagined a university that would lift the entire Pir Panjal. Losing that vision would deeply harm a generation that depends on it.

The author is a Research Scientist based in the USA and an alumnus of BGSB University. Views expressed are personal.

Kashmir's Shrinking Families

A sharp drop in fertility shows how governance, economics, and the ideals of modernity are reshaping family life in Kashmir.

Falak Aslam

Looking at today's numbers for Kashmir, it's hard to connect them to the stories older generations tell. Families that once filled entire court-yards and spanned generations are now smaller. The Total Fertility Rate in Jammu and Kashmir has fallen to 1.4, well below the replacement level of 2.1.

According to the NFHS-5 survey, this is a sharp drop from 2.0 just five years ago. The change carries real political weight in a region where representation has already thinned since 2019. Seat allocation is still based on the 1971 Census, and a new delimitation after 2026 could boost states with growing populations while leaving shrinking regions like Kashmir with less influence. As I looked closer at these changes, I kept asking what caused them and who benefits from the transformation of our families. Kashmir's demographic story is tied up with debates on development, governance, and what the world now calls population management. These words sound technical, even harmless, but they hide strong ideas about how societies should look and how much life they should contain. Population reduction is often presented as a path to prosperity, backed by examples of wealthy nations with smaller families.

Global development narratives repeat this idea, mixing promises of growth with calls for family planning in poorer regions. The small, efficient household has come to symbolize modernity. But in reality, many families who stop at one or two children are driven less by the appeal of modern life and more by economic pressure. Wages fall short, secure jobs are hard to find, and education and healthcare demand careful planning. For many, shrinking families reflect stress and scarcity more than progress. Real change takes time, resources, and political will. In many places, states turn to population control because it seems easier to measure and manage. India's history is full of such efforts. Family planning programs were embedded in Five-Year Plans, public campaigns, and, at darker moments, the sterilization drives of the mid-1970s. International aid often tied development funds to adopting these policies.

It was early morning in Saudi. The city was just waking up, but my phone was already buzzing with news: one of our largest international partners had withdrawn from a project we had spent months preparing. The loss would set us back by a quarter and force a complete redesign of our roadmap. I sat for a few minutes, silent, staring at the skyline, caught between disappointment and determination. The city sparkled with ambition, but that morning it felt indifferent. I remember thinking: this is the test. That day taught me something fundamental about leadership. Not the setback itself, but what comes next. Do you show up again tomorrow with the same conviction and discipline, even when plans fall apart? Success, I reckon, is shaped by how you handle the painful setbacks no one else sees. It isn't about what you do once in a while, but what you do every single day. It's the choice to stand up, come back, and keep going. There is a simple, unglamorous truth I have carried through decades of building, leading, and scaling organizations across continents: the hardest thing in life is showing up every day, with consistency, patience, focus, and grit.

The world celebrates breakthroughs, but resilience often goes unnoticed. We cheer innovation while repetition gets little attention. Experience has taught me this: success grows during slog hours, through routines few notice, and with the patience to keep doing the same thing until it works. As a global CEO working across hospitality, real estate, retail, automotive, and emerging markets, I've seen the same patterns repeat everywhere. No matter the culture or sector, the principles of leadership stay the same. Consistency matters more than intensity. Greatness rarely comes in dramatic moments. It grows through steady, deliberate work: the calls no one notices, the revisions, and the discipline to keep refining what others give up on. Intensity fades quickly, but consistency lasts. Leaders who endure focus on building systems rather than chasing moments.

The message reaching communities was clear: smaller families promise a better future. Choice dominates this conversation. We are told we are free to decide how to build our families. That freedom feels empowering, though the pressures behind it run deep. When incentives favour smaller households, jobs grow less secure, and everyday life becomes more costly, personal decisions are shaped by forces far beyond the home. The state rarely needs to give orders. Governance works through subtle signals that silently reshape what feels normal.

The state rarely needs to give orders. Governance works through subtle signals that silently reshape what feels normal. Migration fills gaps, letting wealthier regions and industries import workers without investing in long-term social support. Kashmir shows this clearly. The Report on Migration in India (2020-21) records over 1.22 lakh migrant workers coming to the region for jobs. Migrant labour keeps businesses running, but it also exposes deeper imbalances. Local economies weaken when young people leave in search of opportunities, and reliance on external workers grows. What once seemed a by-product of modern life now drives political and economic dependence on the centre. Falling fertility changes the cultural landscape, too. Kashmiri families have long carried a sense of continuity through children. Losing larger households shifts how care passes across generations. Elders rely on smaller circles of support, and communities built on shared responsibilities feel the strain. Rising substance abuse among young people adds another layer of concern. Fertility drops when society absorbs this level of disruption. Population is never neutral. Choices about fertility touch questions of faith, identity, responsibility, and autonomy.

Kashmir's demographic shift shows how numbers emerge from history, governance, and daily struggle. This story asks us to look beyond the simple idea that smaller families equal progress. It calls us to see the human world behind the statistics. Families make difficult decisions in a landscape shaped by policy, economic pressures, and forms of control that rarely feel like control. Kashmir's demographic future will shape its politics, culture, and sense of self. To understand where the valley is headed, we must move past the notion that fewer children automatically mean development. We need to see how life is governed and how those decisions reshape the world we inherit.

The author is a Master's student in the Department of Political Science, University of Kashmir, and can be contacted at: falakaslam99000@gmail.com



mal.

Michel Foucault called this process bio-power, a form of power that manages life rather than simply repressing it. It sets standards for what counts as responsible or modern behaviour. The low fertility rate in Kashmir now feels like the normal pattern. Many young couples assume having fewer children is simply the way society moves. The choice feels personal, though it often reflects larger political and economic pressures. Foucault argued that capitalism depends on this kind of population management. It needs stable, predictable workforces and populations that can be governed without strain.

The focus is less on improving systems that support people and more on adjusting how many people exist. This perspective helps explain why falling fertility across many Indian states seems to follow the logic of contemporary capitalism. The economy no longer depends on large numbers of workers. Automation reduces the need for human labour, and welfare systems struggle to

What a Saudi Setback Taught Me About Success

A Kashmiri strategist reflects on how showing up each day defines true leadership.

Khair Ull Nissa Shah

Across every company and market I've entered, the same pattern repeats. Organizations fail not from lack of ambition but from losing consistency. They stop showing up with the dedication that once drove them.

I've seen young founders lose momentum because they confused speed with impact. Sometimes the wisest choice is to wait, letting ideas mature and people grow into their roles. It takes courage to slow down while the world rushes ahead. Patience allows ideas to evolve and people to rise to their potential. Markets shift, partnerships fail, economies transform, supply chains crumble, and technology changes overnight. Leaders who endure are those who adjust without losing their essence. Entrepreneurship, like life, is often unromantic. Behind every head-

line about growth lies exhaustion, self-doubt, and tough choices. Silent sacrifices, failed experiments, and uncomfortable conversations shape character. Late nights, recalibrations, and failures no one hears about build strength. True leadership is the courage to stay when walking away feels easier. These lessons came through setbacks, pivots, contracts that collapsed, products that failed to launch, and markets that closed overnight. Failure has been my most honest teacher. It humbles, sharpens, and rebuilds you. Success validates, but



The author is a global CEO and strategist working across international markets, entrepreneurship ecosystems, and sustainable growth initiatives.

A Kashmiri Mother's Long Walk Toward Tomorrow

A modest home in the pines has become a place of learning, healing, and hope under the steady guidance of a determined mother.

Gowher Bhat

The first light reaches the upper slopes of Shopian slowly, as if unsure of its place. It filters through the tall pines, settles on the wet grass, and softens the distant sound of roosters.

Mornings arrive early in these hills. The lanes stay empty, the homes stay still, and the whole village feels as if it is waiting for something to begin.

Inside one modest house, though, the day is already in motion.

Safeena Khan rises before the sun does. The house is dim, the kitchen still cold, and the faint scent of last night's fire hangs in the air.

She moves with purpose, placing pots on the stove, checking the milk cans, stirring dal for breakfast. Her children will wake soon, and she wants the home to feel warm when they do.

Safeena is forty-one, a widow who has lived most of her life in these forested hills. Her days carry the weight of work from before dawn till late night. Fine lines mark her face, but her eyes hold something stronger than fatigue. They carry an energy that refuses to bow.

Her son Ayaan limps into the kitchen, leaning against the doorframe. His voice shakes as he speaks. "Maa, my legs hurt today. Can't I stay home?"

Safeena kneels beside him, her hand covering his. "Pain passes, beta. Your courage stays. Every step you take today walks toward your dream." Her words are soft enough to soothe him and firm enough to guide him.

Nearby, Bisma adjusts her hearing aid with determination written across her small face. "Maa, teach me. I want to learn like the others."

Safeena kisses her forehead. "Your voice is strong, my star. We will learn everything together." Her tone carries a calm promise, one



she has lived by for years.

Their life follows a pattern that leaves little room for rest.

Safeena steps outside after finishing breakfast and turns to the cows, milking them with practiced ease. A village helper manages the fodder and the stall while Safeena checks the containers that she will later carry to the market.

Milk, vegetables, and pulses bring in a small amount, enough to keep the family standing.

Inside, the children eat quickly. Ayaan leaves for school, moving with careful steps across the uneven paths. Safeena watches him long after he turns a corner. Worry and pride often sit together in her heart. Bisma stays by her side, notebook ready. Safeena teaches her

slowly, shaping letters with her fingers and speaking each sound with patient clarity.

She finished her M.A. in Education recently, studying late at night after the household work was done. She applies for jobs with hope that rarely dims. Rejections arrive with the regularity of the seasons, though she never allows them to settle inside her. Her children's future gives her a direction. Everything else becomes noise.

Her love takes many forms. With Ayaan, she guides him through stretches and exercises, lifting him when his legs falter and cheering when he finds balance. "One more step, beta. Feel your strength," she says, counting softly as he moves.

With Bisma, she listens to every attempt at speech as if it carries the promise of a sunrise. "Speak, my girl. I hear every bit of you," she says, drawing the child close.

Evenings are a race against time. Dinner simmers on the stove as schoolbooks lie open on the floor.

The helper heads home, and Safeena begins her second shift of the day. She checks the accounts for the milk she sold, tallies the vegetables she will take to the market, and folds away clothes before sitting down to help Bisma with her lessons.

The hills outside turn blue as the sun dips behind them. Birds return to their nests. The sound of faraway machinery fades. Safeena often steps out for a moment then, taking in the trees that have stood strong through storms and snowfall. The forests soothe her. They remind her that strength grows in silence and perseverance.

Her neighbours speak of her often. Some mention the burden she carries. Others mention her courage. Safeena hears both, though she keeps her gaze on the future. "Life tests us in its own ways," she says. "We rise because we must."

Her children learn this spirit from her. Ayaan pushes himself when the exercises test his limits. Bisma

speaks with growing clarity and confidence. One evening, she looks up from her notebook and says, "Maa, I want to be like you."

Safeena wipes her eyes before they fall. "You will grow stronger than me, my heart. You will take our story forward."

After the children sleep, Safeena sits by the window and goes through job listings. She writes applications carefully, checks them twice, and imagines the day she will receive a positive reply. She thinks of Ayaan walking with ease, Bisma speaking without struggle, and a home guided by ambition rather than survival.

India has nearly eight million children with disabilities, according to UNESCO's report on education. A little over half go to school. Many never step inside a classroom. In this landscape, Safeena's efforts carry the weight of countless families who fight for a future that often feels distant.

Every night, she holds her chil-



INDIA HAS NEARLY EIGHT MILLION CHILDREN WITH DISABILITIES, ACCORDING TO UNESCO'S REPORT ON EDUCATION. A little over half go to school. Many never step inside a classroom. In this landscape, Safeena's efforts carry the weight of countless families who fight for a future that often feels distant.

dren close and tells them the same thing. "We will keep moving forward, beta. Our strength will guide us."

Her life in the hills of Shopian speaks through actions more than words. It is a life shaped by resolve and lit by love.

With each step she takes, Safeena builds a path for her children, a path toward dignity and possibility. The forest around her grows in confidence. In her own way, so does she.

When dawn returns to the village, Safeena watches her children rise. Their faces catch the pale morning light as she whispers, "Together, we rise."

— The author is an educator and writer from Pulwama.



WITH EACH STEP SHE TAKES, SAFEENA BUILDS A PATH FOR HER CHILDREN, A PATH TOWARD DIGNITY AND POSSIBILITY. The forest around her grows in confidence. In her own way, so does she.

Parnotsa To Poonch: Journey Of A Hill Kingdom

Tracing the rise of Poonch from its earliest rulers to the age of shifting powers and borderlands.

Shahid Ahmed Hakla Poonchi

Long before borders cut across the Pir Panjal, a fierce hill kingdom called Parnotsa ruled these heights. It rose 3,300 feet above the sea, held tight by ridges that stood like walls against the storms racing up from the plains.

The Poonch Tohi River shaped the early life of this land. Its small streams fed farms, guided settlements, and supported trade. People built homes close to the water and grew their societies in sheltered valleys.

Surrounded by hills and deep river systems, Parnotsa became organised early. It did not grow into a mighty empire, but it carried its own way of life with confidence.

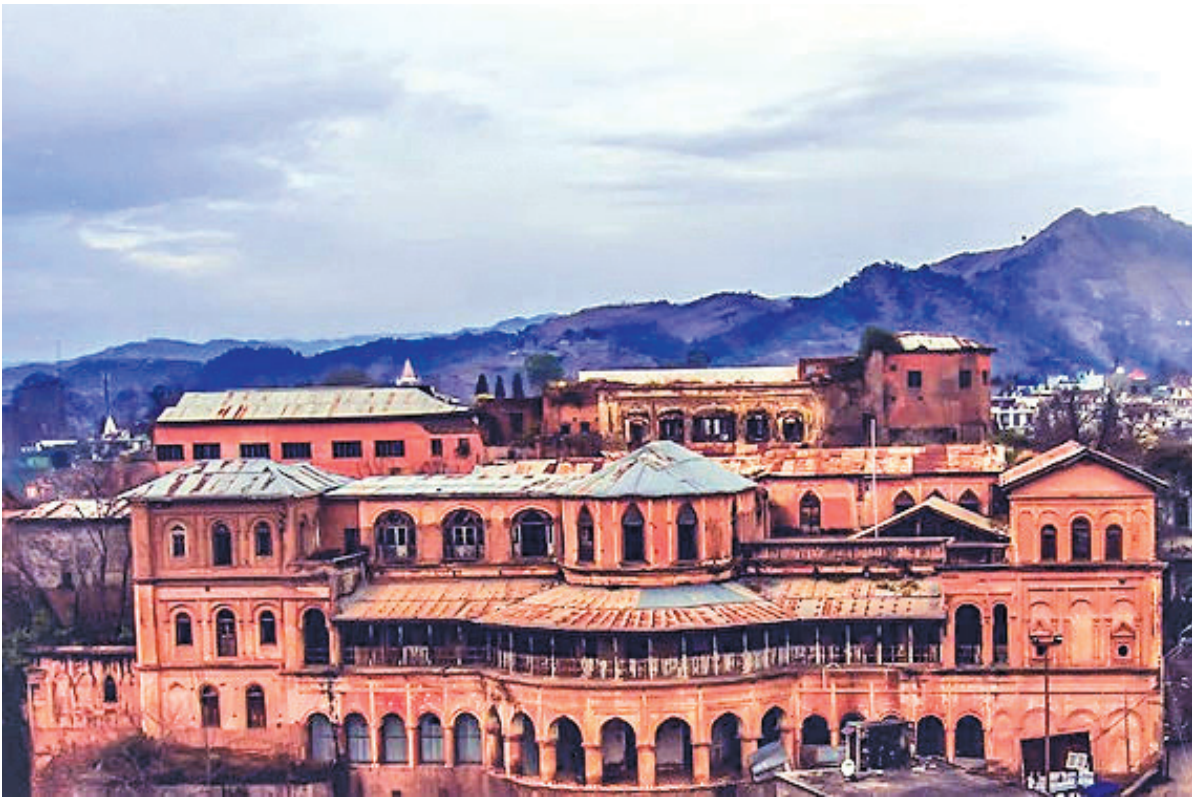
When the Chinese traveller Hiuen Tsang reached the region in 633 A.D., he found a land already known to traders and pilgrims. He had walked across high passes and through sharp wind before entering the valley. His record shows that the kingdom had a calm and settled character. The mountains guarded it, and the rivers connected it to the world outside.

The region that we call Poonch today stood between the Jhelum and the Chenab. These two rivers were like long arms stretching through ancient trade routes.

Traders, soldiers, and wandering monks often passed through these hills on their way to Kashmir or the plains.



THE PERIOD SAW THE RISE OF MAHMUD GHAZNAVI FROM THE WEST. THE HINDU SHAHI KINGS OF PUNJAB, JAIPAL, ANANDPAL, AND TRILOCHANAPALA TRIED TO STOP HIM. They fought many battles near Peshawar and the Indus. When they lost ground in the plains, they moved into the hills and sometimes took shelter in the Poonch Tohi valley and Lohara.



The old state of Parnotsa sat in the valleys of the Poonch Tohi and its many feeders. The Pir Panjal marked the north, Rajapuri or Rajouri lay in the east, the Punjab plains opened in the south, and the Jhelum flowed in the west.

One of the most used old routes from Bhimbar to Kashmir cut through the southeastern corner of this region. This gave Parnotsa natural importance. It became a gateway between two distinct worlds.

The town of Poonch grew on a gentle slope above the right bank of the Poonch Tohi, near its meeting point with the Bitarh. A traveller standing there could watch the valley stretch out like a large bowl surrounded by forested walls.

The town stood midway between Bhimbar and Srinagar, connected by a road that moved through the Suran valley and crossed the Haji Pir Pass. Kotli sat twenty miles away and could be reached by following the river or by climbing the Sona and Nandheri passes through Mankot.

In its present form, Poonch district has six tehsils: Haveli, Mendhar, Surankote, Mandi, Balakote, and

Mankote.

To the north and northeast lie Baramulla and Pulwama of the Kashmir valley. To the northwest lie parts now under Pakistan. Rajouri holds the southern side.

After 1947, half of Haveli tehsil and the entire Bagh and Sudhmatta tehsils of the old state went across the Line of Control.

The region carried many names through time. Parnotsa appears to be the earliest. Alexander Cunningham wrote Punacha or Punach. Kashmiris said Proons. Hiuen Tsang recorded Pun nu tso. Moorcroft wrote Prunch or Pruntz. General Court also used Prunch. Mirza Mogal Beg wrote Punja, and the traveller Vigne used PUNCH.

What we call Poonch today slowly grew out of these forms.

By the middle of the 19th century, Poonch had become a lively town with a mix of cultures. It had a government



WHEN THE BATTLES SHOOK THE REGION, VIGRAHARAJA HELD THE THRONE OF LOHARA. His line carried forward the legacy of hill rulers who guarded narrow passes, protected their valleys, and watched the fate of great empires unfold beyond their ridges.

garden, two colleges for Hindu students, two mosques, and two shrines of Muslim saints, Sayed Gufur and Ali Parka Takia. People of many faiths lived and worked together, sharing streets, festivals, and neighbourhoods.

The earliest known capital of this hill state was Lohara, now called Loran. It lies northeast of today's Poonch town. This region was known as Darvabhisara, stretching between the Jhelum and the Chenab. It was one of the early organised states in this mountain belt.

When Hiuen Tsang travelled down from Kashmir towards the plains, he passed through Poonch and Rajouri before moving towards Sialkot. He likely crossed through Akhnoor on his way. Poonch was under Kashmir's control at that time. He described the country as having a boundary of about two thousand li, nearly three hundred and thirty three miles. Although this was larger than the actual area, it showed how the landscape impressed him.

The ancient Kashmiri chronicle Rajataringini also mentions Parnotsa. It appears as a feudatory under Lalitaditya Muktapada of Kashmir in the

late seventh century A.D. He is said to have organised Parnotsa as part of his wider territory.

Sir Aurel Stein believed that the Lohara state, which included Poonch, was founded by Nara around 830 A.D. Nara was likely a local chief from the Khasha tribe. He ruled until nearly 870 A.D. His son Naravahana took the throne next and ruled until around 890 A.D.

Naravahana lived at the same time as Sankravarman, the powerful king of Kashmir. When Sankravarman returned from a campaign against the Gujars of the Punjab region, he suspected Naravahana of dishonesty and ordered him and his supporters killed.

After Naravahana, rulers named Phulla, Satavahana, Chanda, Chandaraja, and Sanha Raja held the throne.

Sanha Raja is remembered for his daughter Didda, who married into the royal family of Kashmir. Didda later became one of the most influential queens in Kashmir's history.

Sanha Raja's son Udayaraja died around 1000 A.D. and his son Vighraharaja succeeded him.

This period saw the rise of Mahmud Ghaznavi from the west. The Hindu Shahi kings of Punjab, Jaipal, Anandpal, and Trilochanapala tried to stop him. They fought many battles near Peshawar and the Indus. When they lost ground in the plains, they moved into the hills and sometimes took shelter in the Poonch Tohi valley and Lohara. Some of their last stands took place near the meeting point of the Tohi and the Jhelum.

These defeats slowly ended the Shahi influence in the early eleventh century.

When these battles shook the region, Vighraharaja held the throne of Lohara. His line carried forward the legacy of hill rulers who guarded narrow passes, protected their valleys, and watched the fate of great empires unfold beyond their ridges.

— The author is an independent researcher. He can be reached at shahidhaklag60@gmail.com

Delhi-Blast Case: Pathankot Surgeon, Nuh Doctors Detained

KO Web Desk

New Delhi: Investigating agencies have detained a doctor from Punjab's Pathankot for questioning as part of the expanding probe into the Delhi blast and the recently uncovered "white-collar terror module", police sources said on Saturday.

The detained 45-year-old surgeon has been employed at a private medical college and

hospital in Pathankot for over two years. Before this, he had worked at Al Falah University in Haryana's Faridabad district, which has emerged as a common link among several suspects in the case, the sources said.

His detention follows Friday's coordinated raids in Haryana's Dhauj, Nuh and nearby areas, during which two doctors from Nuh district were also taken

into custody for questioning. One of them had completed his MBBS apprenticeship at Al Falah University, which ended on November 2, while the other, a former student, is currently working at a private hospital in Nuh, according to police sources.

Earlier, agencies had arrested eight people, including three doctors associated with Al Falah University, after busting what they described as a "white-collar

terror module" spread across Jammu and Kashmir, Haryana and Uttar Pradesh. The module allegedly had links to terrorist groups Jaish-e-Mohammed and Ansar Ghazwat-ul-Hind. Officials seized 2,900 kg of explosive substances during the operation.

Hours after the module was uncovered on Monday, a high-intensity blast ripped through a slow-moving car near the

heavily crowded Red Fort metro station area in Delhi, killing 13 people and injuring several others. A DNA test later confirmed that Dr Umar Nabi, an assistant professor at Al Falah University, had been driving the vehicle at the time of the explosion.

On Friday night, the Delhi Police Special Cell, assisted by a National Investigation Agency (NIA) team, detained two more Al Falah University doctors,

identified as Mohammad and Mustakim, from Nuh. According to sources, both were allegedly in contact with Dr Muzammil Ganaie, who has been arrested as part of the broader terrorism investigation. They were also known to Dr Umar Nabi. Initial questioning revealed that one of the detainees had travelled to Delhi on the day of the blast for an interview at AIIMS, officials said. Their interrogation is

underway to determine the nature and extent of their involvement, if any.

In a separate operation in Nuh, agencies detained a man identified as Dinesh alias 'Dabbu' for allegedly selling fertilisers without a licence. Investigators are examining whether he supplied NPK fertiliser, which can be used in making improvised explosive devices, to members of the module.

CONTD. FROM FRONT PAGE

A Night of Duty

two crime branch photographers — Javid Mansoor Rather and Arshid Ahmad Shah, and Mohammad Shafi Parray, a local tailor assisting the team.

Thirty-two others — including twenty-seven police personnel, two revenue officials, and three civilians from nearby areas — were injured and shifted to various hospitals for treatment.

The blast, which severely damaged the police station building and nearby structures, was so powerful that successive smaller explosions followed, initially hampering rescue operations. Windows in homes up to a kilometre away were shattered.

"Houses - as far as 300-500 metres away - suffered extensive damage," locals said.

Blast Accidental, No Sabotage: DGP

Director General of Jammu and Kashmir Police Nalin Prabhat and Joint Secretary (Kashmir) in the Union Home Ministry, Prashant Lokhande dismissed speculation of sabotage and called it an "unfortunate accident." Both officials declined to take questions from reporters.

Briefing media, the DGP said the seized ammonium nitrate and related substances had been stored at the police station in accordance with the procedure followed during live investigations.

"The explosion took place around 11:20 pm while the Forensic Science Laboratory (FSL) team was extracting samples from a large and unstable cache of explosive material," DGP Prabhat said. "Due to the sensitive nature of the recovery, the handling was being done with utmost caution. Unfortunately, an accidental explosion occurred during the process."

"One personnel of SIA (State Investigation Agency), three personnel of the FSL team, two crime photographers, two revenue officials who were part of the magistrate's team, and one tailor who was associated with the team, were among those killed," the DGP said.

He said 27 police personnel, two revenue officials, and three civilians from the adjacent were sustained injuries in the incident.

"The injured were immediately evacuated to the nearest hospital, where they are being treated. The police station building has been severely damaged, and even the adjacent buildings have been affected," he said.

The extent of the damage due to the explosion is being ascertained, and the cause for "this unfortunate incident" is being inquired into, Prabhat added.

The DGP said the police stands in solidarity with the families of the deceased in this hour of grief.

As the probe begins, officials say the focus will be on whether any lapse occurred in handling or storing the explosives. "The cause of the accident is being investigated," Prashant Lokhande, Joint Secretary in the Ministry of Home Affairs, said. "Any speculation at this stage is unnecessary."

Owing to the "unstable and sensitive" nature of the recovery, it was being handled very carefully under expert supervision, the joint secretary said.

From Faridabad to Nowgam: The Explosives Trail

The cache, weighing nearly 360 kilograms, contained ammonium nitrate, potassium nitrate, sulphur, and other chemicals. The material had been transported from Faridabad to Srinagar in a Tata 407 pickup truck as case property linked to the Nowgam Police Station, officials said.

Officials said the explosives were recovered from a rented flat in Faridabad belonging to Dr Muzzamil Ganaie, one of the key accused in a terror-linked investigation that began after threatening posters appeared in Bunkpora, Nowgam, in mid-October. CCTV analysis led to multiple arrests, including Dr Shaheen Sayeed, Maulvi Irfan Ahmad, and others linked to Al Falah University, where investigators uncovered the huge stockpile of chemicals.

The accused doctors, including Dr Ganaie, Umar Nabi (who died when an explosives-laden car detonated near Delhi's Red Fort on November 10, killing 13), and Muzaffar Rather (absconding), are believed to have been running a sophisticated radical module. The role of Dr Adeel Rather, Muzaffar's brother, remains under investigation.

'He Left After Dinner

community volunteer, Parray was among the nine people killed in the accidental blast inside the Nowgam Police Station on Friday night.

Parray had joined the investigators early that morning and remained at the police station for most of the day, returning home only twice — once for Friday prayers and later for dinner. After dinner, he put on his warm clothes and left home again to help the investigators collect the remaining samples from the explosive material seized from Faridabad, Haryana.

When he left home that night, his wife, daughter and two sons did not know they were seeing the lone breadwinner of the family for the last time.

Neighbours said that when the family inquired about his whereabouts immediately after the blast, police initially told them that Parray had sustained injuries. Early on Saturday, officers informed the family that he had succumbed to his injuries and asked them to identify the body.

As the news of his death spread, relatives and locals gathered at the two-storey house in Wanabal, from where wails could be heard from a distance. Women tried to console his wife and children, but grief filled every corner of the house.

"He was my sister's brother-in-law, and a man

of character. He was also the president of the local mosque," an elderly relative said. "He came home for prayers at 1 p.m., had lunch, and then went back to the police station. He returned in the evening, had dinner, and went back again."

Locals said Parray was the sole bread-earner for his family, which survived on the income from his small tailoring shop located at Wanabal Chowk.

Jawhar Ahmad Wani, a neighbour, said the neighbourhood was awakened by the sound of the blast late Friday night. "We first thought it was an air blast. Some window panes of our house were also shattered, even though we live around one kilometre away. We rushed outside to check and came to know about the blast in the police station," he said.

He recalled that Parray had gone to the local mosque for Friday prayers earlier in the day and had also collected donations for the structure.

After the blast, locals rushed to the scene and helped police pick up the dead and the injured. "We found body parts scattered around. I picked up someone's arm," Wani said. Another resident, Tariq Ahmad, added, "When we heard about Parray, we rushed to the scene. He did not have any legs. We also identified him."

As relatives and locals submit to fate, they have made one collective appeal: that the government support the family and provide a job to one of its members. "We request the government, especially the Lieutenant Governor, to do something for the family so that it can sustain itself. The government should provide a job to his son," Wani said.

The tailor's death has left his family and neighbourhood in deep shock. His wife, daughter and two sons are now faced with the uncertainty of rebuilding their lives without him.

Neighbours remember Parray's quiet presence in the mosque and his habit of helping others, whether it was mending clothes or volunteering his time.

For his neighbours, his loss is not just another number in the list of casualties, but the absence of a man who was always available when called upon.

He wasn't a cop or a scientist — just a man who agreed to lend a hand. Hours later, his family waited for a knock that never came.

Kupwara Grieves

Nowgam Police Station on Friday night.

The atmosphere in the Kupwara village was heavy with grief as residents, friends, and colleagues remembered the officer for his quiet nature, humility, and dedication to duty.

Shah, who joined the Jammu and Kashmir Police in 2011, was serving with the State Investigation Agency (SIA). Known among his peers for being meticulous and soft-spoken, the 34-year-old officer was remembered as "humble first, and an officer later."

"He mainly focused on his work. He wouldn't interfere in anything unnecessary," said Ghulam Mohammad, his neighbour, as a steady stream of mourners entered the courtyard of Shah's ancestral home, offering prayers and words of comfort to the family.

Shah is survived by his wife, two young children, and elderly parents — all struggling to come to terms with the sudden loss. Villagers said he was a patient listener, deeply respected across the community for his simplicity and sincerity.

"He was like a younger brother to all of us," said Mohammad. "Soft-spoken, gentle and always respectful. We haven't just lost an officer, we've lost a wonderful human being."

As the vehicle carrying his tricolour-draped coffin reached the village, cries broke out. Men tried to hold back tears, while women clutched one another for support. Children stood silently beside their elders, watching as the body was brought home for the final rites.

The funeral prayers were held at the local Eidgah, where hundreds gathered. Senior police officers, district officials, and residents from neighbouring areas attended the prayers, reflecting the respect Shah had earned during his service.

"It is a devastating loss for the entire force," said a senior police officer present at the funeral. "Inspector Shah was honest, dedicated, and always ready to take up difficult assignments."

Villagers who knew him since childhood said he was the pride of Drugmulla — a young man who worked his way up through the ranks and never distanced himself from his roots. "We saw him grow from a bright boy into a brave officer," said Abdul Rashid, an elderly villager. "Today, the whole of Kupwara is mourning."

Shah's colleagues described him as dependable and calm under pressure — someone who rarely spoke much but was always available when needed.

For his family, the loss is immeasurable. For his colleagues, it is a professional and personal void. And for his village, it is the passing of a man who carried himself with quiet dignity.

"He was quiet, diligent, and deeply respected," a fellow officer said. "In life, he never sought attention — in death, he left an entire valley grieving."

NT, FSL Members

and Arshid Ahmad Shah, both photographers with the Crime Branch. They were responsible for documenting evidence at crime scenes and during sensitive operations. Colleagues said their work often formed the visual foundation of cases built against terror suspects and criminal networks.

According to officers, Javid and Arshid had built a reputation for precision and professionalism. "They were always on call, always ready to

move, whether it was a distant district or a late-night operation," a senior officer said. "Their loss is both a personal blow and a professional setback for the department."

Also killed were SgT Aijaz Afzal Mir and Constables Mohammad Amin Mir and Showkat Ahmad Bhat, all attached to the Forensic Science Laboratory (FSL). They were conducting the task of handling, sampling, and cataloguing the seized explosives when the blast occurred.

Officials said the FSL team had been working for two consecutive days due to the large volume of material that had to be processed under standard procedure. "When everyone else steps back from danger, the FSL team steps forward," a police official said. "They work quietly but are vital to both investigation and safety processes."

The two revenue officials who died were identified as Naib Tehsildar Muzaffar Ahmed Khan and local chowkidar (village-level functionary) Suhail Ahmad Rather. Both had been at the police station to complete documentation and legal formalities related to the seizure.

Colleagues in the Revenue Department described Muzaffar Ahmed as a meticulous officer who kept his records updated and was accessible to people in his jurisdiction. Suhail Rather served as a link between the administration and residents and was often the first point of contact for villagers seeking assistance.

Amid tears and sobs, thousands of mourners on Saturday attended the funeral prayers of Naib Tehsildar Muzaffar Ahmad at his ancestral graveyard in Soibugh, Budgam. Heartbreaking scenes unfolded as relatives, neighbours, and officials bid him a final farewell.

Senior officials, including Deputy Commissioner Budgam Dr. Bilal Mohiuddin Bhat, SSP Budgam Nikhil Borkar, and several officers from the police and revenue departments attended the funeral and offered condolences to the bereaved family.

Newly elected MLA Budgam Aga Muntazir Mehdi was also present at the last rites, standing with the family during the burial. The body was carried through the village amid emotional sloganeering, with mourners chanting, "Shaheed ki jo maut hai, woh qoum ki hayat hai," as prayers were offered for the departed soul.

Ahmad was among those killed in the high-intensity explosion at the Nowgam Police Station on Friday evening, which authorities have described as an accidental detonation of seized explosive material.

LG Pays Tributes

condition of the victims and the treatment being provided. Later, the LG visited the Police Control Room (PCR) headquarters, where he laid a wreath and offered floral tributes to the police personnel, revenue officials, and a civilian who lost their lives in the blast.

In a post on X, LG Sinha said, "Laid a wreath and offered my solemn tributes to the Police Personnel, Revenue Officials and a Civilian who lost their lives in an accidental blast at Nowgam Police Station last night. The nation will forever remain indebted to their selfless service and supreme sacrifice in the line of duty. Interacted with the bereaved families and expressed my deep condolences. The nation stands shoulder to shoulder with them in this difficult hour."

The LG arrived in Srinagar from Jammu following the incident, which claimed nine lives — including State Investigation Agency (SIA) Inspector Israr Ahmad Shah, Crime Branch photographers Javid Mansoor Rather and Arshid Ahmad Shah, Selection Grade Constable Aijaz Afzal Mir, Constables Mohammad Amin Mir and Showkat Ahmad Bhat from the Forensic Science Laboratory (FSL), Naib Tehsildar Muzaffar Ahmad Khan, local chowkidar Suhail Ahmad Rather, and civilian tailor Mohammad Shafi Parray.

Officials said the explosion occurred when a specialised team was handling and sampling a large cache of ammonium nitrate-based explosives seized from a terror module in Faridabad. The material, stored in the Nowgam Police Station yard, is believed to have detonated accidentally during inspection.

Meanwhile, Divisional Commissioner Kashmir Anshul Garg and Deputy Commissioner Srinagar Akshay Labroo also visited SMHS and Ujala Cygnus hospitals to enquire about the condition of the injured. Both officials directed hospital administrations to provide quality healthcare, timely medication, and all necessary facilities for the victims.

Chairs High-Level Meeting With Top Officials

LG Manoj Sinha on Saturday chaired a high-level meeting with top police and civil administration officials to review the situation and ongoing investigation. The meeting was attended by Chief Secretary Atal Dulloo, DGP J&K Nalin Prabhat, ADGP CID Nitish Kumar, ADGP SJM Gilani, Divisional Commissioner Kashmir Anshul Garg, and IGP Kashmir V.K. Birdi.

Sources said that the Lieutenant Governor directed the administration to extend all possible assistance to the families of the deceased and ensure the best treatment for the injured. He also called for a thorough investigation into the handling of the seized explosives and instructed officials to maintain a high level of vigilance to prevent any further untoward incidents.

₹10 Lakh Ex Gratia

Jammu and Kashmir Health Minister Sakina Itoo visited some families who lost their loved ones in the accidental explosion at Nowgam Police Station to offer her condolences.

"She later visited the hospital to inquire about

the injured and assured them that the government stands firmly with the affected families in this hour of grief," Omar added.

An "accidental" explosion ripped through the Nowgam police station in Srinagar, killing nine people and injuring 32 others, senior officials said while underlining that it was not a terror attack.

The explosion occurred around 11:20 pm on Friday when a specialised team was extracting samples from a large and "unstable" cache of explosives confiscated in connection with an ongoing 'white-collar' terror module investigation.

A bulk of the explosives was stored securely in an open area at the Nowgam police station.

CM Promises

stands firmly with the victims' families and will provide every possible support to them.

"The chief minister has assured that the government stands firmly with the families who lost their loved ones in the tragic Nowgam police station explosion and will provide every possible support to them. He has also directed health minister Sakina Itoo to ensure the best treatment for the injured and assured that the damaged structures will be duly compensated," read a post on his official X handle.

The Blast That

personal belongings — torn shoes and half-burnt uniforms — told their own story of panic and loss.

Locals said the explosion's shockwave was so intense that it shattered windows hundreds of meters away. Debris landed near the Nowgam bridge, about half a kilometre from the police station. "We saw pieces of metal and blood marks even on the bridge walls," said a resident. "The sound was deafening; for a moment, we thought it was an earthquake."

By Saturday morning, all approach lanes leading to the police station were sealed, with security personnel erecting barricades and restricting entry. Only forensic experts and senior officers were allowed inside as the search for evidence and remaining traces of explosives continued.

"The entire area is under technical examination," said an officer monitoring the cordoned zone. "Entry remains restricted for safety reasons."

Among the wreckage, investigators found several gutted vehicles, including motorbikes and cars. A water storage tank inside the compound had burst under pressure, flooding parts of the site. The boundary wall was blown apart, exposing nearby homes that also bore the brunt of the blast — their windows smashed, curtains shredded, and ceilings cracked.

Residents across Nowgam, Natipora, Barzulla, and adjoining localities reported hearing the explosion around 11:20 p.m. "It felt as if the ground had lifted," said another resident. "Everything shook — the sound echoed for several seconds."

By morning, top officials, including DGP J&K Nalin Prabhat, IGP Kashmir V.K. Birdi, and IG CRPF Pawan Kumar, visited the site to assess the damage and oversee the ongoing investigation. A detailed probe has been ordered into the cause of the detonation and handling of the seized explosive material.

The Nowgam Police Station and surrounding area will remain sealed until forensic and technical teams complete their examination. (inputs from KNO)

Political Leaders

meeting in Jammu and flew to Srinagar to assess the situation.

Congress president Mallikarjun Kharge, however, said the Srinagar blast is a wake-up call for the Central government to strengthen intelligence and anti-terror mechanisms, and it cannot run from accountability.

He demanded an urgent all-party meeting to discuss the "growing threat" of terrorism that continues to receive support from external forces.

Rahul Gandhi also expressed concern and paid tributes to the deceased, while hoping for the early recovery of the injured.

Former chief minister and PDP president Mehbooba Mufti said the incident highlighted the risks faced by police personnel.

"This heartbreaking incident lays bare the risks and difficult conditions under which our police personnel serve to keep the rest of us safe. My heartfelt condolences to the bereaved families and prayers for the swift recovery of the injured," she said in her post.

People's Conference president Sajad Lone called the blast "heartbreaking."

"The accidental blast at the Nowgam Police Station is heartbreaking. Heartfelt condolences to families of those who lost their lives. May they muster the courage to bear this loss," he wrote.

Democratic Progressive Azad Party (DPAP) president Ghulam Nabi Azad also expressed pain over the tragedy.

"Deeply pained by the tragic blast at Nowgam Police Station, Srinagar, while handling recovered explosive material, which claimed nine lives and injured many. My heartfelt condolences to the bereaved families and prayers for the swift recovery of the injured," he said on X.

Hurriyat Conference chairman Mirwaiz Umar Farooq also mourned the deaths and demanded accountability.

"The tragic loss of lives in last night's explosion at the Nowgam Police Station has left everyone shocked and deeply saddened. A comprehensive investigation is imperative to establish how such a large quantity of explosive material was handled with apparent negligence," Mirwaiz said.

He said the public deserves full transparency regarding the findings and prayed for patience and strength for the affected families.

The explosion, which occurred late Friday night, took place while a specialised team was extracting samples from a cache of ammonium nitrate-based explosives seized from a terror module in Faridabad and stored in the Nowgam Police Station yard. Police have termed the blast accidental.

Budgam Tragedy:

operations continued late into the night as authorities worked to clear the mangled vehicles from the road.

"Four persons were declared brought dead at the hospital, while five others are undergoing treatment," officials said, adding that efforts are underway to ascertain the identity of the deceased.

The deceased have been identified as Zainab (10), daughter of Nisar Ahmad Rather; Nisar Ahmad Rather (40), son of Ghulam Ahmad Rather; Bashir Ahmad Rather (36), son of Mohammad Qasim Rather; and Khatoon (60), wife of Ghulam Hussain Rather — all residents of Mahwara village.

Seven others sustained injuries in the crash. They include Zoonia Bano (70), wife of late Ghulam Mohammad Rather; Shah (50), wife of Mohammad Qasim Tantray; Gulshan (50), wife of Ghulam Mustafaa Rather; Safiya (40), wife of Mohammad Qasim Dar; Tasaduq Hussain (25), son of Bashir Ahmad Dar; and Raja (48), wife of Mehdi Rahter, all residents of Mahwara, along with Jasbeer Singh (32), son of Veru Singh of Gurdaspur, Punjab, who was working as a crane conductor at the Ring Road site in Narbal.

Meanwhile, Chief Minister Omar Abdullah expressed deep shock and grief over the tragic accident. "Have directed the administration to provide every possible assistance and ensure urgent medical care for the injured. The cause of the accident shall be thoroughly investigated," CM Omar said in a post on X.

Police have taken cognizance of the incident and initiated an investigation into the circumstances that led to the collision.

Red Fort Blast:

The small space, just enough to park a goods cart, under a tree in Chandni Chowk's cycle market, has been lying vacant since Monday night.

"Kashmiri yahaan apni rickshaw lagaata tha (Kashmiri used to park his rickshaw here)," 45-year-old Shiv Singh Nagar told The Indian Express.

On Friday afternoon, battery-operated goods carts - or "rickshaws" - lined the cycle market, a row of shops selling bicycles and bicycle parts two lanes away from the site of the explosion. Bilal's cart was destroyed in the blast in which 10 people were killed and 30 injured.

Bilal moved to Delhi as a teenager 16 years ago from Ganderbal in Jammu & Kashmir. He was not married, and he stayed alone, making a living by loading,

unloading, and ferrying goods in his cart. He parked the cart under a tree at night, and slept in it; all his belongings were in a single bag, his friends at the cycle

market said. "I called him (Bilal) around 6.50 that evening to ask where he was. I had sent him to deliver some goods at

Kashmere Gate. He said he was at the Red Fort traffic signal," Nagar said. "And then I heard the explosion, and

the ground trembled."

Nagar said he called Bilal again at 7.01 pm, and that he managed to speak with him. "He said that he was injured and that they were taking him to hospital. That was our last conversation," Nagar said.

Nagar said he had been friends with Bilal ever since the latter arrived in Delhi, and that they had worked together ever since. "We went to the hospital's Emergency ward twice, but could not meet him. We will always feel the regret of not being able to see him before he died," Nagar said.

Bilal's friends came to know of his death after police came to the market on Thursday. "We did not believe them, we thought it must be some other Bilal," Nagar said.

Bilal's friends recalled that he would bring back apples and walnuts from his annual visits to Kashmir.

"He once also brought ghee and pickles. All this is fresh from Kashmir, he would say," Nagar said. "He would call his family at night, speak to them on video call. He would ask him to come back to Kashmir, but he would say that he liked staying here," he added.

Bilal's family had been wanting him to go for a wedding at the home of his older sister, but Bilal was in two minds. "He was working in Raipur for a few months to earn some extra money, and he came back to Delhi before Diwali. I told him to go, and that I would lend him some money if he needed it. But before he could make up his mind, this happened," Nagar said.

Lala Ram (57), who also operates a cart, recalled his banter with Bilal on Monday.

"He called out to me from far away and teased me, 'buzurg aadmi ho, ab toh kaam chhod do'. (You're an elderly man now, you should stop working.) I could never have imagined that would be the last time I would see him."

Parveen Kumar Arora, who has a shop in the market, said Bilal was liked and trusted. "Everybody knew him, he used to deliver even expensive goods. When it rained, he would take shelter outside our shop," Arora said.

NOWGAM BLAST AFTERMATH



LIEUTENANT GOVERNOR MANOJ SINHA interacted with the bereaved families and expressed my condolences.



OVERCOME WITH GRIEF, the son of Showkat Ahmad from Qamarwari is led by family members during his father's funeral rites.

J&K Academic Session 2024-25 Short by Over 30%

Observer News Service

SRINAGAR: In the recently concluded academic session, Jammu and Kashmir has recorded deficit academic days by more than 30 percent.

An official informed KNO that in the academic year 2024-25, Jammu and Kashmir has recorded below 150 working academic days against the mandated 220 days.

It also said that there shall be a minimum of at least 180 academic days in a year. "In one academic year, at least 180 working academic days are considered



fairly good but unfortunately, there were less than 150 academic days due to the inclement weather, flood like situation and extended summer vacations."

"Although, almost all the government schools complete their syllabi but there were time constraints that burdened the kids," the official said.

In September, Education Minister Sakina Itoo had said that 'students studies got badly affected, initially due to a war-like situation, heatwave and then a flood-like situation in Jammu and Kashmir.'

In view of the situation, the Jammu and Kashmir Board of School Education (BOSE) had announced syllabus relaxation of 15 percent for 10th, 11th and 12th standard examination.

BOSE in a notification had said that the decision was taken upon the recommendations received from the DSEK and DSEJ and pleas received from other stakeholders regarding reduction in syllabus due to delayed commencement of academic session this year coupled with disruptions in academic calendar due to heat wave, torrential rains, cloudbursts and floods.

Unscheduled Power Cuts Add to Woes of Tral Residents



REPRESENTATIONAL PIC

Observer News Service

AWANTIPORA: Ahead of the winter, the residents across Tral, Awantipora and adjoining villages in South Kashmir's Pulwama district are expressing deep resentment over persistent and unscheduled power cuts, which they say have upended routine life far earlier than expected.

Residents from multiple localities including Tral town, Nowdal, Dadsara, Awantipora, Charsoo, Lurgam, Pinglish and Koil reported that power supply has become increasingly unreliable over the past several weeks, despite regular bill payments and repeated assurances from the Power Development Department (PDD).

For students preparing for examinations, the situation has become particularly stressful. "Electricity disappears every couple of hours without any warning. The evenings are already cold, and it becomes very difficult to study or even sit comfortably in our rooms," Zahid Ahmad, a resident of Tral town told KNO.

Residents in Awantipora narrated similar experiences. "Outages have become routine now. We hardly get any uninterrupted power in the evenings, which is the time families need it the most," said Sameer Ahmad of Awantipora's Reshpora area.

He added that despite repeated complaints, the issue remains unresolved.

In Nowdal area of Tral, locals accuse the authorities of making annual promises without concrete action. "Every winter we are told there will be a proper curtailment schedule, but what we actually face is power supply that remains off for most parts of the day. These hollow assurances serve no purpose," said Ashiq Hussain Bhat.

Shopkeepers and small business owners in Tral and Awantipora said the outages are severely affecting livelihood. "Our work depends on electricity, and the sudden cuts have led to losses. Even inverters and generators aren't able to cope with the prolonged breakdowns," said Mohammad Amin, a trader from Bus Stand Tral.

In Charsoo village of Awantipora, residents described the situation as intolerable. "We are paying hefty tariffs, but the service is deteriorating. Winters are harsh here, and this kind of erratic supply makes life miserable," said Lateef Ahmad, a local farmer.

Women in several households also voiced concerns, saying the cuts have disrupted evening chores and affected children. "Cooking, heating water, managing kids—everything becomes ten times harder when electricity goes off again and again," said Shabnam, a resident of Dadsara.

People across these areas are demanding that the PDD publish a clear, reliable, and strictly followed curtailment schedule, especially for the winter months, so households can plan their daily routines accordingly. They also appealed to the administration to ensure stable supply during evening hours when temperatures drop significantly.

A PDD official, when contacted, acknowledged the increasing demand but said efforts are underway to stabilize the system. "Power demand has risen across Kashmir with the drop in temperature. We are carrying out transformer augmentation, repairs, and maintenance to ensure better supply. Our teams are trying to reduce inconvenience as much as possible," the official said.

Aga Ruhullah Answerable to NC: Dr Farooq

Observer News Service

SRINAGAR: National Conference (NC) President, Dr Farooq Abdullah Saturday said that the Member Parliament from Srinagar constituency, Aga Syed Ruhullah Mehdi is answerable to the party for whatever he has done.

Talking to reporters here Abdullah, as per KNO said, "Ruhullah is an MP because of the 'plough' (NC). He should love this plough and strengthen it. Our workers have done a good job, we have got a good number of votes but the winning and losing are part of life," he said.

Abdullah while reacting to the party's defeat in Budgam Assembly by-election, said the outcome should be taken as a "lesson" rather than a setback, and that the party will work on its shortcomings.

He said the party must reflect on the reasons behind the loss. "We should be happy; it gives us a lesson. We should not panic. Defeat teaches us a lesson, and wherever there are shortcomings, we will try to improve them," he said.

Pertinently, Peoples Democratic Party (PDP) registered a historic win in Budgam for the first time, defeating the National Conference candidate by a margin of 4,478 votes. The Budgam seat, long considered a



stronghold of NC, slipped from the party's grip in the by-election held after Chief Minister Omar Abdullah vacated the constituency to retain Ganderbal.

Meanwhile, speaking about the massive blast in Nowgam Police Station, Abdullah said: "This is our mistake; those who understand this explosive better should have been consulted first about how to deal with it instead of trying to handle it ourselves. It has resulted in the loss of 9 lives, besides causing extensive damage to the houses nearby," he said.

He added that such a situation is being witnessed at a time when the people have not come out of the crisis in Delhi where fingers are being pointed at every Kashmiri. "When will that day come when they will accept that we are Indians and we are not responsible for this? Ask those who are responsible why these doctors had to take this path? What was the reason? There is a need for a thorough study and investigation," he added.

Budgam By-Poll Must Be Seen Broadly: Rather

Observer News Service

SRINAGAR: Jammu & Kashmir Legislative Assembly Speaker and senior National Conference (NC) leader Abdul Rahim Rather on Saturday said the party's defeat in the Budgam by-election must be understood within a broader political landscape, not as an isolated event. He maintained that the votes polled in favour of the winning PDP candidate were not exclusively PDP's own support base.

Speaking to reporters, Rather described the outcome as "unfortunate" and pressed for a thorough probe into alleged electoral malpractices, insisting that legal action should follow if any wrongdoing is established. "This should be investigated thoroughly, and legal action must be taken against whoever is involved," he said.

Reflecting on NC losing the Budgam seat for the first time, he said that elections inevitably involve both victories and defeats. "We must accept the people's verdict. Winning and losing are part of democracy," he remarked.

Clarifying that he no longer plays an active political role, Rather broke down the vote pattern of the by-election.



He noted that the PDP had secured 17,500 votes in 2024, even without the support of either Maulvi Sahib or Maulvi Iftikhar Sahib's base at the time. "Today, all those votes have come together, reaching around 21,000. They have only gained about 3,500 votes. These are not PDP votes; these belong to their candidates and their families," he said.

On allegations of doctors being harassed during the poll process, Rather said the matter should be left to the courts. "Courts should investigate and determine who was involved and who was not. No innocent person should be harassed," he added.

When asked whether NC leaders would be able to address public grievances following the defeat, he pointed to the large turnouts at public meetings as evidence of the expectations people continue to place on their representatives.

Dulloo Calls for Robust Action Plan for J&K's Youth Engagement Campaign

Observer News Service

JAMMU: Chief Secretary Atal Dulloo Saturday chaired a high-level meeting to review departmental preparedness for the upcoming Youth Engagement & Empowerment Programme, a UT-wide initiative aimed at fostering meaningful participation of young people in cultural, educational, entrepreneurial, and community-oriented activities across all districts of Jammu & Kashmir.

The meeting was attended by several senior Administrative Heads, including the Additional Chief Secretary, Agriculture Production Department; Principal Secretary, Culture; Commissioner Secretaries of Information, Youth Services & Sports, Industries & Commerce, Floriculture, and Rural Development Departments; Divisional



Commissioners of Jammu and Kashmir; Secretary, IT; Secretary, Skill Development Department; Director General, Economics & Statistics; Director General, YS&S; DDG, NIC; Director Colleges; and other senior officers. Deputy Commissioners of all districts participated through video conferencing.

During the meeting, the Chief Secretary sought detailed inputs from each department on their proposed activity calendars and strategies for the mega youth engagement campaign. He

directed all departments to upload their comprehensive action plans on the dedicated portal created for the programme, along with details of nodal officers and date-wise reports of activities to be conducted.

Highlighting the vast potential for cultural enrichment, the Chief Secretary urged the Culture Department to design a vibrant and inclusive programme on the lines of initiatives by the Youth Services & Sports Department. He advised launching extensive cultural engagement

activities in coordination with educational institutions across the UT, including poetry recitations, painting competitions, quizzes, skits, essay writing contests, and debates in schools and colleges.

The Chief Secretary also took this occasion to highlight the role of departments like Information, YS&S, School Education, Higher Education, Skill Development and that of the Agriculture and Industries departments for making this Youth Engagement programme a huge success here.

Industrial Estate Sopore Unit Holders Call on MLA

Unitholders at the Industrial Estate Sopore on Saturday called on MLA Irshad Rasool Kar and sought immediate action on long pending issues that affect daily operations at the estate.

The unit holders, as per KNO flagged problems in water supply, electricity, the need for a working dispensary and the demand for an ATM inside the estate. The MLA, while speaking to reporters, said he has asked the concerned departments for reports on the recently installed lights and the status of water supply. He promised timely intervention on all raised points.

Meanwhile, Estates President, Javid Bhat said the interaction with the MLA Kar was productive. "The estate is among the most active in the valley. It provides livelihood to more than 400 people. Almost 200 of them are workers from outside the region", Bhat said, adding this scale of livelihood makes the estate a crucial economic hub for the area.

He urged the MLA to ensure that the government delivers stable electricity and upgrades the transformer without delay. (Observer News Service)

Rural Empowerment at Core of Govt Initiatives: Itoo

Minister for Health & Medical Education, Social Welfare and Education, Sakeena Itoo, on Saturday carried out an extensive developmental tour of Kulgam district, where she inaugurated a series of public infrastructure projects and laid foundation stones for new works aimed at strengthening health, education and rural connectivity across the region.

During her visit to Government Degree College (GDC) Kulgam, the Minister laid the foundation stone for a Multipurpose Sports Complex in the presence of MLA Kulgam M.Y. Tarigami and MLA Devsar Peerzada Feroze Ahmad. Director School Education Kashmir, Principal GDC Kulgam, ADC Kulgam, CEO Kulgam, CMO Kulgam, senior officers, faculty members and students were also present.

She later inaugurated a Health and Wellness Centre at Chamgund, inspecting various sections of the facility. Interacting with health officials, she underlined the vital role such centres play in remote and rural belts, urging staff to deliver the best possible medical care to local residents.

At Government Higher Secondary School D.K. Marg Noorabad, the Minister inaugurated a Library Block, Computer Lab, and Art & Craft Lab, where she interacted with staff and students. She said the Government led by Omar Abdullah has prioritised strengthening the education sector, especially in far-flung areas, and encouraged students to make full use of the new facilities for their academic and personal growth. (Observer News Service)

JMC Launches Initiative to Restore Water Bodies

Jammu Municipal Corporation has launched a comprehensive initiative to restore and revitalize the traditional water bodies under its jurisdiction. With ponds, wells and traditional water sources rapidly disappearing due to urbanization and increasing aridity, the Municipal Corporation is committed to conserving natural resources and raising public awareness about their importance.

Taking a major step towards the conservation of traditional water ponds, the Jammu Municipal Corporation continues to strengthen its efforts. Today, in Ward No. 75, Durgochak area of Sangrampur, MLA Surendra Kumar, along with Municipal Commissioner Dr. Devansh Yadav, laid the foundation stone for the conservation and complete restoration of a historic pond.

A total of Rs. 23.36 lakh has been earmarked for the project. The rejuvenation plan includes cleaning the pond, installing guardrails, constructing a walkway around the pond, planting ornamental plants, and developing high-quality green banks. The aim is to restore the ecological balance of the water body and transform it into a clean, green and attractive recreational spot for the local community. (Observer News Service)

Aga Muntazir Calls Nowgam Police Station Explosion a 'Major Lapse'

Newly elected MLA from Budgam Aga Syed Muntazir on Saturday called for a thorough probe into the accidental explosion at Nowgam Police Station that claimed nine lives and left more than thirty injured. Describing the incident as a serious lapse, he questioned how highly sensitive explosive material was kept in an open area within the police station. Speaking to reporters, Muntazir said the tragedy demanded full-scale accountability. "It is a big lapse. How was such sensitive material stored in the open inside a police station? Those responsible must be questioned and appropriate action must follow," he said.

According to KNT, the MLA also urged the administration to ensure the best possible medical care for the injured. "I appeal to the authorities to take proper care of all injured personnel and civilians. They must receive the highest standard of treatment," he added. (Observer News Service)

EJAC Expresses Sorrow over the Nowgam Incident

Employees Joint Action Committee Jammu and Kashmir (EJAC) has expressed profound grief and sorrow over the tragic blast in Nowgam, which resulted in the loss of several lives and left many others injured. In a statement, Senior Trade Union Leader and President EJAC, Fayaz Ahmad Shabnam conveyed deep anguish and heartfelt condolences to the families of those who lost their lives. He also prayed for the swift and complete recovery of all those injured in the incident.

Terming the episode as extremely unfortunate, Shabnam said that such tragic events should never be repeated. He stressed the need to ensure an environment where the lives of people are protected at all costs. Shabnam extended his sympathies to the affected families, reaffirming EJAC's solidarity with them during this difficult time. (Observer News Service)

Jadeja's 4/27 Puts India On Brink Of Victory On Crumbling Eden Track

Press Trust of India

KOLKATA: The nightmare of facing Ravindra Jadeja on an Eden Gardens track, deteriorating between deliveries, turned into a reality for the South African batters as India closed in on victory by the end of the second day in the opening Test.

At stumps, Jadeja's 4 for 27 in 13 overs saw South Africa in tatters at 93 for 7 with an overall lead of 63. Skipper Temba Bavuma (29 batting off 78 balls) was waging a lone battle but to even fight on the third day, which will certainly be the last of this game, South Africa will need at least 125 runs which looks improbable at the moment.

If Simon Harmer's classical off-spin had brought South Africa back into the contest earlier in the day, Jadeja was always go-



ing to be a resident menace on a crumbling surface with his immaculate length and ability to

attack the stumps, letting the surface take care of the rest. Left-arm chinaman Kuldeep

Yadav accounted for 2/12, while Axar Patel took 1/30, giving Jadeja the perfect support.

Bowling at a stretch in a 13-over non stop spell from the dreaded Club House End, Jadeja's relentless accuracy on a two-paced, dust-spewing surface swung the game back India's way in a dramatic finish to a day that saw 15 wickets to tumble (discounting Shubman Gill's retired hurt).

Introduced in the ninth over of the innings -- the second after tea -- Jadeja struck almost immediately.

His very first ball turned sharply past Aiden Markram's outside edge; the next one overpitched on middle, turned away, and Markram's attempted sweep ballooned off a thick top-edge to Dhruv Jurel at short leg. Stand-in captain Rishabh

Pant, taking charge after Gill's neck spasm, backed Jadeja in a non-stop spell from the more treacherous end. The move paid off handsomely.

Wiaan Mulder (11) feathered a beauty that kissed the outside edge; two balls later Tony de Zorzi (2) was done in by a hint of turn that grazed the glove, clipped pad and looped to short leg.

Tristan Stubbs (5) misread the line and length altogether, beaten on the inside as Jadeja hit middle to claim his fourth -- also his 250th Test wicket in India, behind only Kumble, Harbhajan and Ashwin.

Earlier in the day, Jadeja had contributed a valuable 27 with the bat, entering the elite club of Ian Botham, Kapil Dev and Daniel Vettori as only the fourth cricketer with the double of 4000 Test runs and 300 wickets.

1st Test: Shubham Gill Stretched Out With Neck Injury

India skipper Shubman Gill's availability for the remainder of the opening Test is in serious doubt after he was stretchered into an ambulance with his neck immobilised on Saturday evening, hours after retiring hurt during India's first innings on day two at the Eden Gardens.

Gill had initially walked off on four clutching the back of his neck on Saturday after suffering what appeared to be a whiplash while slog-sweeping Simon Harmer for four. The physio attended to him immediately, and the opener retired hurt on four after facing just three balls.

But the situation seemed more concerning later on Saturday as he was seen being taken away with his neck secured in a cervical collar, raising further concern about the severity of the injury.

India bowling coach Morne Morkel blamed it on bad night's "sleep and not his workload". (PTI)

Ravindra Jadeja Goes To Rajasthan Royals At A Reduced Fee

Charismatic allrounder Ravindra Jadeja and keeper-batter Sanju Samson are now set to play for Rajasthan Royals and Chennai Super Kings respectively after the high-profile trade was confirmed by the franchises ahead of the upcoming edition of the Indian Premier League.

With the deadline for player retention ending later on Sunday, CSK stalwart Jadeja has switched base to Rajasthan Royals albeit at a much reduced fee, while Samson, who has led RR for four seasons, will be donning the yellow CSK jersey in IPL 2026.

An IPL media advisory said on Sunday that Jadeja's IPL fee had been revised from Rs 18 crore to Rs 14 crore, while Samson will play for CSK at his existing league fee of Rs 18 crore.

Pace-bowling stalwart Mohammed Shami will don the Lucknow Super Giants jersey after a trade from Sunrisers Hyderabad. He will move to the new franchise at his existing fee of Rs 10 crore. (PTI)

Australia Pacer Hazlewood Out Of 1st Ashes Test v England

Australia fast bowler Josh Hazlewood will miss at least the first Ashes test against England beginning in Perth next Friday due to a hamstring injury.

Initial scans cleared him of major damage, but Cricket Australia said on Saturday that a follow-up scan confirmed the strain. He will join captain Pat Cummins on the sidelines for the Perth test, severely depleting Australia's fast bowling attack in the Ashes opener.

Brendan Doggett is poised for an Ashes test debut after secondary scans revealed the extent of Hazlewood's injury. Hazlewood suffered the strain on Wednesday while playing a Sheffield Shield domestic first-class match at the Sydney Cricket Ground.

Hazlewood will remain at home, rather than joining teammates on the flight to Perth. It is unclear when or whether he will be fit enough to feature in the five-test series. (AP)

Sarfraz Khan: Don't Need To Change Anything With My Batting

Press Trust of India

MUMBAI: India and Mumbai batter Sarfraz Khan on Saturday said he isn't "frustrated at all" about not scoring as heavily this season as he usually does in domestic cricket, adding that there is nothing he needs to change in his batting.

With his omission from Indian Test side in the background, Sarfraz has endured a tough Ranji Trophy season so far, managing only 111 runs in four matches at 22.20 and without a single score of fifty.

The right-hander batter's returns are indeed low for the lofty standards he has set in the Ranji Trophy in the seasons preceding his India Test call-up. He made 556 runs in 2022-23 season in six matches at 92.66, piled up as many as 982 runs in 2021-22 at 122.75 in six matches, and before that, Sarfraz smacked 928 runs in the 2019-20 season



in six matches at 154.66.

"I do not think I need to change anything because I am doing good. I have always played a lot of balls (in training) and even now I try to practice as much as I can," Sarfraz told the media during Mumbai's training session here at the Wankhede Stadium on Saturday.

"I do not think I need to change anything because I am doing good. I have always played a lot of balls and even now I try to practice as much as I can," the right-handed batter said ahead of the clash against Pondicherry.

Santosh Trophy Selection Trials Kick Off In Srinagar & Jammu

Observer News Service

SRINAGAR: The J&K Sports Council on Saturday kicked off open selection trials for the 79th Edition of Senior Men's National Football Championship for the Santosh Trophy at Srinagar and Jammu.

The trials were conducted under the supervision of selection committee constituted by JKSC. Ishfaq Ahmed, a renowned football coach, led the trials at Synthetic Turf Football Stadium in Srinagar and was assisted by Javed Sofi.

Scores of players attended the trails and showed off their skills.

In addition to the local Jammu players, players from other districts also participated in the trails, which were held at Synthetic Turf Parade Ground Jammu. Coaches Ricky Kumar and Ramiz Malik helped the selection committee to conduct the trials.

The trails will resume on Sunday and might be extended for an additional day in order to give players ample time to demonstrate their game.



Rising Stars Asia Cup: India To Continue 'No Handshake Policy' v Pak



Press Trust of India

DOHA: Teen batting sensation Vaibhav Suryavanshi will be aiming to keep the entire Pakistan Shaheens attack on tenterhooks even as the India A side, led by Jitesh Sharma, continues to follow BCCI's 'No Handshake' policy against the arch-rivals in a Rising Stars Asia Cup T20 match here on Sunday.

During the Asia Cup in September, India's T20 skipper Suryakumar Yadav didn't shake hands with Salman Ali Agha as a show of solidarity for victims of the Pahalgam terror attack. And Jitesh Sharma, who

was the second wicket-keeper in that tournament and is captain of India A in ongoing event is expected to follow his senior's footsteps and not shake hands with Pakistan Shaheens skipper Irfan Khan either at toss or after the match.

However, the cynosure of all attention will be Suryavanshi, the 14-year-old, who had taken world cricket by storm with a century during the last edition of the IPL. He smashed an incredible 144 off 52 balls with 15 sixes against UAE and became the youngest Indian batter to score a hundred in senior international representative (A team) cricket.

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