

# Kashmir Convener



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## Govt's Decade-Long Defence Push Edges India During Operation Sindoor

CONVENER NEWS DESK

**NEW DELHI:** India's powerful and seamless air defence response to Pakistan's recent missile attacks has drawn global attention, with officials crediting a decade-long modernization drive under Prime Minister Narendra Modi's leadership for the nation's preparedness.

Following the precision strikes of Operation Sindoor—which destroyed nine terrorist camps across Pakistan and Pakistan-occupied Kashmir (PoK)—Pakistan retaliated by attempting to target Indian military installations in Jammu & Kashmir, Punjab, Rajasthan, and Gujarat.

However, every single missile launched by Pakistan was inter-

cepted or neutralised before reaching its intended target.

Defence experts while talking to Kashmir Convener hailed the defensive success as a testament to India's strengthened air defence ecosystem, a result of sustained investment, integration, and indigenous development undertaken since 2014.

Official sources confirmed that systems such as the Integrated Counter-Unmanned Aerial System (UAS) Grid, S-400 Triumph squadrons, Barak-8 MR-SAMs, Akash Surface-to-Air Missiles, and DRDO's anti-drone technologies worked in perfect coordination to create an impenetrable aerial shield.

"The synergy of these technologies ensured that not one Pakistani missile could breach Indian airspace," defence sources told

Kashmir Convener.

"But India didn't just defend. It responded. In one of the most assertive postures in recent years, the Indian Armed Forces launched Operation Sindoor, targeting and destroying a Chinese-origin HQ-9 air defence unit in Lahore and damaging critical radar infrastructure inside Pakistan".

Senior officials emphasized that such swift and precise retaliation reflects a decade of strategic military preparedness. Since 2014, the Modi-led government has reshaped India's air defence architecture.

Among the flagship initiatives was the Rs 35,000 crore deal for five S-400 Triumph squadrons signed with Russia in 2018—three of which are now operational along India's sensitive western and northern

borders. India also signed a \$2.5 billion deal with Israel in 2017 for Barak-8 Medium Range Surface-to-Air Missiles (MR-SAM), which now protect major airbases and military installations.

Indigenously developed Akash missile batteries, DRDO's counter-drone systems, and Man-Portable Counter Drone Systems (MPCDS), installed in 2024, have added multiple layers of tactical defence.

"This multi-tiered system came into play during Pakistan's missile launches, proving India's ability to detect, jam, and eliminate threats across multiple fronts," sources added. Defence Sources said Operation Sindoor also marked a turning point in India's offensive capabilities. For the first time,

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## Soldiers want to Destroy the enemy: LG Manoj Sinha

●Interacts with frontline Soldiers in Uri Baramulla

KC News Network

**SRINAGAR:** The Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha paid a visit to frontline soldiers in Baramulla and Uri sectors, today. The Lieutenant Governor, who addressed and interacted with the soldiers stationed near the LoC, asked them: "How is the Josh?" His question met with an energetic "High, Saheb!" from the troops, echoing the mood of soldiers' readiness to destroy the enemy.

The Lieutenant Governor said that our Soldiers have just one dream and one resolve—Destroy the enemy and its capability to attack Bharat and to safeguard our citizens and Bharat's sovereignty and territorial integrity.

"I am seeing determination in your eyes and I want to tell the people across the country that they are in safe hands. Entire nation is drawing inspiration



from your valour. May prabhu Shri Ram give you the strength to decimate the enemy," the Lieutenant Governor said.

The Lieutenant Governor said that the nation under the leadership of Hon'ble Prime Minister Narendra Modi has vowed to neutralize terrorists and my message is clear—if you inflict injury on any Indian citizen, we will

hunt you down.

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

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We will avenge their suffering by defeating the enemy: LG Sinha

KC NEWS NETWORK

**SRINAGAR:** Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha today visited the border villages of Lagama and Gingal in Uri and took assessment of the damage to the civilian area and residential houses caused by unprovoked shelling by Pakistan.

The Lieutenant Governor interacted with the local residents and directed the district administration to provide immediate relief to the affected families and ensure their safety and security.

During his visit to the safe shelter centre in Baramulla, the Lieutenant Governor met the families affected due to unprovoked firing by Pakistan and assured them that Hon'ble Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi is taking all possible measures

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## India's Unity A Challenge For Pak: Foreign Secretary

KC News Network

**NEW DELHI:** Asserting that India has responded to all the actions of Pakistan, Foreign Secretary Vikram Misri on Friday slammed the neighbouring country for indulging in false propaganda that India attacked its own cities and religious places.

Addressing a special joint briefing here, Misri, according to the news agency—Kashmir News Observer (KNO), said, "Pakistan is propagating blatant lies. Their claim that the Indian attacked its own cities is nothing short of a deranged fantasy. This



is a country (Pakistan) well-versed in such acts, and they now imagine others would stoop to the same level. Let me state for the record—it was Pakistan that attacked cities in Punjab, it was their drones that violated our airspace, and

it was their artillery that killed our civilians."

Misri slammed Pakistan for blatantly denying these attacks, saying, "Telling blatant lies are yet another example of their duplicity

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## 300-400 Pakistani drones targeted Indian locations

KC NEWS NETWORK

**NEW DELHI:** The women officers of the Indian Armed Forces made a startling disclosure about Pakistan's nefarious plot in the ongoing military face-off and told the press that its army fired around 300-400 drones on the intervening nights of May 8 and May 9 at about 36 locations along the Western border.

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## Escalation won't benefit anyone: CM Omar

KC News Network

**JAMMU:** Warning Pakistan that continued escalation from across the border would only hurt them, Jammu and Kashmir Chief Minister Omar Abdullah



called Thursday's aerial strikes on Jammu one of the "most serious assaults" on the city since the 1971 war.

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

The chief minister lauded the armed forces for their swift response in neutralising aerial

threats and ensuring that not a single drone reached its intended target.

"The way civilians have been targeted, and the kind of attacks carried out in Jammu city—I don't think Jammu has

strongly condemned the recent wave of cross-border strikes through drones, missiles and shelling in the Jammu and Poonch districts.

Clarifying the current situation, the chief minister said, "We did not create this situation. Our people were attacked in Pahalgam, and innocent civilians were killed. We had to respond." He warned that continued escalation from across the border would only hurt Pakistan.

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

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

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

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## Takes Stock Of Relief Efforts In Jammu & Samba

Lauds security forces for swift response to cross-border aggression

KC News Network

**JAMMU:** Chief Minister Omar Abdullah today rushed to Jammu to take stock of the situation following heightened tensions, drone attacks in Jammu and intense shelling in border districts of Jammu. With airports closed, the Chief Minister proceeded to Jammu by road early morning.

Chief Minister visited several camps and lodgement centres in Jammu and Samba

districts, including those set up at Mishriwala, Nagbani, Bishnah and Thandi Khui, to assess the relief arrangements made for the public who have been evacuated to these shelters.

CM was accompanied by Advisor to the Chief Minister Nasir Aslam Wani and Minister for Food, Civil Supplies & Consumer Affairs Satish Sharma and other concerned officers. During the visit, the Chief Minister interacted with the

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## BSF kills 7 terrorists in Samba sector



Yogesh

**JAMMU:** The Border Security Forces (BSF) on Friday said to

have foiled an infiltration bid by neutralizing seven terrorists in Samba sector, who were trying to infiltrate last night with the

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## MHA writes to states, UTs to strengthen Civil Defence measures

KC News Network

**NEW DELHI:** In light of the current security environment and the threat of hostile attacks, the Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA) has urged all states and Union Territories (UTs) to augment civil defence measures under the Civil Defence Act and Rules of 1968.

Highlighting Section 11 of the Civil Defence Rules, 1968, the Ministry in a letter titled "augmentation of civil defence measures in the states/UTs" reminded that state governments are empowered to undertake all necessary actions for the protection of people and property, and to ensure the uninterrupted functioning of vital services during a hostile attack.

In the letter issued, considering the last night attacks by Pakistani forces in Jammu and Jaisalmer regions, the provision also authorizes the use of local authority funds for such emergency measures, giving them precedence over other financial obligations.

In the communication, the Ministry has requested that "states and UTs invoke Section 11 and grant emergency procurement powers to their respective Directors of Civil Defence." This

for the protection of persons and property from injury or damage, or for ensuring the due maintenance of the vital services, in the event of hostile attack. The funds of the local authority shall be applicable



step is aimed at enabling swift and efficient implementation of precautionary and protective measures.

"In the current hostile attack scenario, I would like to draw your kind attention towards Section 11 of the Civil Defence Rules, 1968, which inter-alia empowers the State Governments, to take such measures, which in the opinion of the state government necessary

to the payment of the charges and expenses incidental to such compliance, and priority shall be given to such compliance over all other duties and obligations of the local authority," reads the letter.

"I shall be grateful, if Section 11 of the CD Rules, 1968, can be invoked and necessary Emergency Procurement Powers to the Director Civil

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## Jammu gripped by panic & chaos amid escalating tensions

Yogesh

**JAMMU:** Jammu is reeling under a wave of panic and uncertainty following recent escalations in the India-Pakistan conflict, triggered by the deadly Pahalgam terror attack on April 22, which claimed 26 lives, and subsequent cross-border hostilities.

Reports of explosions near the Line of Control (LoC) in Rajouri and Poonch, coupled with a Pakistani attempt



to target Jammu airport on May 8-9, have plunged the region into chaos, prompting panic buying, early market closures, evacuations, and severe traffic disruptions on key roads leading to 'safer districts'.

The residents of Jammu have rushed to stock up on essentials, with reports of long queues at grocery stores, pharmacies, and fuel stations.

Social media posts on X describe a frenzied atmosphere, with ATMs running out of cash and shops struggling to keep up with demand. "Panic in #Jammu, people are rushing to stores for grocery, medicine, and essentials," a user posted on May 9.

Local authorities have urged calm, but the fear of further escalation has led to widespread hoarding. Major markets across Jammu have begun closing early as shopkeepers prioritise safety amid reports of sirens and a complete blackout enforced in Jammu and surrounding areas.

Authorities have ordered evacuations from areas deemed vulnerable, particularly near border districts like Kathua, Jammu, Samba, Rajouri and Poonch.

The government has intensified security measures, with residents in high-risk zones being relocated to safer locations. It has issued helpline numbers to assist those affected, including emergency control rooms in all district headquarters. However, the scale of the evacuation has strained resources, with many residents expressing frustration over limited access to transport and information.

Deputy Chief Minister, Surinder Choudhary chaired a high-level meeting with the district administration and prominent citizens of

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# History is witness those who challenged India’s self-respect got befitting reply: Congress

**NEW DELHI:** History is witness that whenever someone challenged India's self-respect, they got a befitting reply, the Congress said on Friday and asserted that its Jai Hind Yatra, being taken out across the country, was in support of India's brave soldiers.

Congress general secretary in-charge communications Jairam Ramesh said once again India had been challenged and its tolerance and patience tested, with terrorists having ruthlessly killed innocent people.

They will have to pay the price for this, Ramesh asserted.

“History is witness... whenever someone has challenged the self-respect and self-esteem of India, we have given them a befitting reply,” the Congress leader said in a post in Hindi on X.

“When our soldiers roar with passion to sacrifice every drop of their blood to protect this land, the heart of the enemy shivers. Once again we have been challenged, our tolerance and patience tested. The terrorists have ruthlessly killed our innocent people, they will have to pay the price for this,” Ramesh said.

Every single Congress worker stands with the country's army in this difficult time, he added.



“We are taking out a Jai Hind Yatra across the country today in support of our brave soldiers. We are proud of our soldiers. 'Jai Hind ki Sena',” Ramesh said.

The Congress also reiterated its solidarity with the government in whatever decision it takes against Pakistan.

Congress spokesperson Ragini Nayak said Congress president Mallikarjun Kharge and Leader of Opposition in the Lok Sabha Rahul Gandhi had consistently said “we are with the government of India in thought, word and deed”.

“If the Indian government takes any major decision against Pakistan, then our full cooperation and support is with the

government. Today, we will reiterate this message through the Jai Hind Yatra,” she said during a press conference at the party's 24, Akbar Road, headquarters.

The Indian Army is working day and night to give a befitting reply to the attacks of Pakistan and, in such a situation, “it is our duty to come together to boost the morale of the Indian Army,” she said.

The Congress appeals that it is the responsibility of the government to prioritise the safety of people in all villages and cities near the India-Pakistan border, Nayak said.

“We express our deepest condolences to those who lost their lives in Poonch and

it is also the government's responsibility to take care of their families and provide prompt treatment to the injured,” she said.

“It is hoped that the government will take strong steps in this direction. The Indian Army will take revenge from Pakistan for the blood of innocent Indians,” she added.

On the intervening night of Wednesday and Thursday, India neutralised the Pakistan military's attempt to hit military stations in Jammu, Pathankot, Udhampur and some other locations with missiles and drones.

On Thursday afternoon, the defence ministry said the Indian Armed Forces had foiled Pakistan's attempts to target military installations in 15 cities in the country's northern and western parts.

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

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

Early on Wednesday, the Indian Armed Forces carried out missile strikes on nine terror targets in Pakistan-occupied Kashmir (PoK) and Pakistan under Operation Sindoor in response to the April 22 Pahalgam attack. (Agencies)



year only 250 personnel were granted permanent commission.

Senior advocate Maneka Guruswamy, appearing for colonel Geeta Sharma, referred to the case of Colonel Sofia Qureshi, one of the two women officers who had briefed the media on the Operation Sindoor on May 7 and 8. Guruswamy said Colonel Qureshi had to approach this court for a similar relief related to permanent commission and now she has made the country proud.

The bench without commenting much on the submission said the case before the top court was purely a legal one, having nothing to do with the achievements of the officers.

In its February 17, 2020, the top court said absolute exclusion of women from all positions, except staff assignments, in the Army was indefensible and their blanket non-consideration for command appointments without any justification couldn't be sustained in law. The apex court, which allowed permanent commission (PC) to women officers in the Army, said an absolute prohibition of women Short Service Commission officers to obtain anything but staff appointments evidently did not fulfil the purpose of granting PC as a means of career advancement in the Army.

## Pakistan’s shameless support for terrorists shows it’s now fighting for its existence: Adityanath

**LUCKNOW:** Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath on Friday said Pakistan's open support for terrorists killed in India's recent retaliation proves the country is not just a shelter for terrorism but is now “struggling for its own existence.”

“After India's action, when terrorists were killed, Pakistan's top military officers and politicians were seen attending their funerals. This shameless display should open the eyes of the world,” he said while addressing a gathering here on the occasion of Maharana Pratap Jayanti.

He was referring to the Indian armed forces on Wednesday carrying out precise missile strikes on nine terror targets in Pakistan-occupied Kashmir (PoK) and Pakistan under Operation Sindoor.

Adityanath added, “Pakistan is not merely protecting terrorism – it is directly involved in it. Its involvement has now



become so clear that it will have to fight even for its own survival.” Referring to the April 22 terror attack in Pahalgam, Jammu and Kashmir, where tourists were targeted, the chief minister said India had resolved to give a strong reply. Jammu travel guide “You all must have seen how barbarically our tourists were attacked. Prime Minister Narendra Modi took a firm resolve, and

our brave soldiers have given Pakistan a befitting response,” he said.

Adityanath urged citizens to maintain national unity and support the armed forces during this “testing time.”

“Every Indian must act responsibly. If any miscreant tries to spread unrest, we must remain alert and expose any act that endangers national security,” he said.

He also warned about misinformation being spread through social media platforms. “There will be attempts to spread rumours. But we must ignore such noise and follow the leadership of Prime Minister Modi. India will win – there is no doubt,” the chief minister asserted. Adityanath also said that Maharana Pratap Jayanti serves as an inspiration for standing united in difficult times. “Let this occasion remind us to stand shoulder-to-shoulder with our security forces and boost their morale,” he said.

## Bangladesh’s interim Government mulling to ban ousted ex-PM Hasina’s party

**DHAKA:** Bangladesh's interim government on Friday said it would take a “quick decision” on banning deposed prime minister Sheikh Hasina's Awami League.

The announcement by the interim government chief Professor Muhammad Yunus's office in a statement came after student-led newly floated National Citizen Party (NCP) activists overnight rallied in front of his official residence demanding Hasina's party be disbanded. NCP leadership had spearheaded the massive student-led protests that resulted in the ouster of Hasina on August 5 last. Yunus had taken over on August 8. Those students came together to form the NCP earlier this year. “The government considers with seriousness the recent demand raised on behalf of different political parties, organisations and the people to disband Awami



League over allegations of autocratic rule and terrorist activities,” the interim government statements said. The government has established contacts with different political parties and “will take a quick decision in consultation with them,” it said.

The NCP set up a makeshift stage near Yunus's official residence ‘Jamuna’ after midnight Thursday. The party activists also offered Friday prayers at the scene.

The government statement came as leaders of different Islamist parties and groups such as Jamaat-e-Islam, its student front Islami Chhatra Shibir and Hefazat-e-Islam on Friday also joined the rally of the NCP. The statement urged everyone to keep restraint until a decision is made and added that the government has disbanded what it called as “terrorist Chhatra League”, regarded as Awami League's front organisation. “Our movement has started. This campaign may continue for one day or even a month. We will have to remain on the street until the announcement of banning Awami League is made,” an NCP leader Sarjis Alam told the rally. The activists also chanted slogans against the Awami League. Earlier, NCP leader Abul Hasnat Abdullah on Thursday night initiated the sit-in protest near Yunus's residence along with several supporters and other leaders such as Nahid Islam joined him after midnight.

## ‘In Prevailing Situation, Let’s Not Bring Their Morale Down’: SC On Women Army Officers

**NEW DELHI:** The Supreme Court on Friday asked the Centre not to release from service Short Service Commission women Army officers challenging the denial of permanent commission to them asking not to “bring their morale down” in “the prevailing situation”.

A bench of Justices Surya Kant and N Kottiswar Singh which posted a batch of pleas filed by 69 officers for hearing in August, said they should not be released till the next hearing.

“In the prevailing situation let's not bring their morale down. They are brilliant officers, you can use their services somewhere else. This is not the time that they be asked to roam around in the Supreme Court. They have a better place to be and serve the country,” Justice Kant said. Additional Solicitor General Aishwarya Bhati, appearing for the Centre, said it was an administrative decision based on a policy to keep the armed forces young.

She urged the top court not to grant any stay on their release and said the Indian Army needed young officers and every year only 250 personnel were granted permanent commission. Senior advocate Maneka Guruswamy, appearing for colonel Geeta Sharma, referred to the case of Colonel Sofia Qureshi, one of the two women officers who had briefed the media on the Operation Sindoor on May 7 and 8.

Guruswamy said Colonel Qureshi had to approach this court for a similar relief related to permanent commission and now she has made the country proud. The bench without commenting much on the submission said the case before the top court was purely a legal one, having nothing to do with the achievements of the officers.

## RSS Congratulates Govt, Armed Forces For ‘Decisive Action’ Against Pak-Backed Terrorists

**NEW DELHI:** The RSS congratulated the government and the armed forces on Friday for taking decisive action against Pakistan-sponsored terrorists and their ecosystem, and said it was necessary and inevitable for India's security.

The actions taken under Operation Sindoor will serve justice to the victims of the Pahalgam terror strike and enhance India's self-respect and morale, the RSS said.

“We congratulate the central government leadership and our armed forces for the decisive action taken under ‘Operation Sindoor’ against Pak-sponsored terrorists and their supporting ecosystem following the cowardly attack on unarmed tourists at Pahalgam,” RSS chief Mohan Bhagwat and the organisation's general secretary, Dattatreya Hosabale, said in a statement.

This action will serve justice to the aggrieved families and the entire country in the aftermath of the brutal massacre of “Hindu tourists”, he said.

“We totally agree that military action being taken against terrorists, their infrastructure and support systems in Pakistan is necessary and inevitable for the security of the country. In



this hour of national crisis, the entire country stands with the government and armed forces in spirit and action,” Bhagwat added.

He also condemned the attacks carried out by the Pakistani army on religious places and civilian-settlement areas on India's borders, calling those “savage and inhuman”, and expressed his condolences to the families of the victims.

“In this challenging time, the Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh appeals to all citizens to ensure full compliance of instructions being given by the government and administration. “Along with this, while discharging our

sacred civic duty, we all have to be cautious and do not let any conspiracy of anti-national forces succeed in disrupting social unity and harmony,” he added.

The RSS chief urged citizens to display patriotism and be ready to cooperate with the Army and civic administration, “wherever and however” required.

He also appealed to people to strengthen all efforts to maintain national unity and security.

Tensions have escalated between the two neighbouring countries after Indian armed forces carried out missile strikes early on Wednesday on nine terror targets in Pakistan and Pakistan-occupied Kashmir (PoK), including the Jaish-e-Mohammad stronghold of Bahawalpur and Lashkar-e-Taiba's base in Muridke, in retaliation for the April 22 terror attack in Pahalgam.

According to the defence ministry, the Pakistani military attempted to target Avantipura, Srinagar, Jammu, Pathankot, Amritsar, Kapurthala, Jalandhar, Ludhiana, Adampur, Bathinda, Chandigarh, Nal, Phalodi, Uttarlai and Bhuj on Thursday night. Jammu travel guide

UT of Jammu & Kashmir

OFFICE OF THE EXECUTIVE ENGINEER

R&B DIVISION TANGDAR

E-mail:- eernttangdar@gmail.com,

TENDER NOTICE

TWO COVER SYSTEM

E-tendering NIT No: 04-TANGDAR/223-28 of 2025-26

DATED:- 02/05/2025.

Executive Engineer PW(R&B) Division TANGDAR on behalf of Lt. Governor of J&K, invites percentage rate bids (EPC Mode) in electronic tendering system for the following works from the eligible and approved contractors registered with J&K UT Govt. CPWD, Railways and other State Governments.

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

S. No	Name of Work	Adv. Cost (Rs inlacs)	Cost of T/Doc (In Rs.)	E/ Money (Bid Security) (Rs in lacs.)	Time of completion For Construction work	Tender Call	Time and Date of opening of tenders online (Technical Bid)	Class of contractor
1	2	5	6	7	8	9	10	11
1	Construction of 1x39 mtr span truss girder bridge over Nallah Qazinag at Jub Chitterkote (S054 NABARD Rdiff XXX)	480.14	5500/-	9.61	03 Years	1st	27.05.2025	AAY Class Only

M.H Account = (RIDE -XXX).

Position of AAA- Accorded Vide Order No CE(R&B)/NK/AA/DB/16 of 2024-25 Dated: 10.03.2025

1	Date of Issue of Tender Notice	02/05/2025
2	Period of downloading of bidding documents	03/05/2025 from 11.00 AM.
3	Date, Time and Place of Pre Bid meeting	05/05/2025 at 11.00 A.M in the Office of the Superintending Engineer PWD(R&B) Circle Kupwara.
4	Bid submission Start Date	06/05/2025 from 10.00 AM.
5	Bid Submission End Date	26/05/2025 upto 4.00 PM.
6	Date & time of opening of Bids (Online)	27/05/2025 at 11.00 A.M in the Office of the Superintending Engineer PWD(R&B) Circle Kupwara.
7	Date & time of opening of Financial Bids (Online)	To be notified after technical bid evaluation is completed

2. Bids must be accompanied with cost of Tender document in shape of Treasury Challan/ E-Challan (Under MH- 0059 PWD) in favour of Executive Engineer R&B Division TANGDAR (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 (The Date of EMD should be between the date of Start of Bid and Bid Submission End Date) pledged to Superintending Engineer PWD(R&B) Circle Kupwara (Tender receiving Authority).

3. 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 No-responsive.

4. 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 Superintending Engineer PWD(R&B) Circle Kupwara within 15 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 shall be forwarded to Higher Authorities.

5. The Earnest Money Deposit (EMD@2% of Advertised Cost) in the shape 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.

6. The date and time of opening of Bids shall be notified on Web Site www.jktenders.gov.in and conveyed to the bidders automatically through an e-mail message on their e-mail address. The bids of Responsive bidders shall be opened online on same Web Site in the Superintending Engineer PWD(R&B) Circle Kupwara (Tender Receiving Authority).

7. All other terms and conditions shall be strictly as per SBD circulated by this office letter No. CE/RBK/HD/29158-88 dated 10-02-2018

Sd/- Executive Engineer

PWD(R&B) Division TANGDAR

DIPK-1256/25

## Leaders of 27 nations join Putin to celebrate 80th Victory Day at Moscow’s Red Square

**MOSCOW:** Leaders of 27 nations joined Russian President Vladimir Putin in celebrating the 80th anniversary of the Soviet Union's victory over Nazi Germany in the Second World War.

Addressing the Victory Day parade at the Red Square here, Putin underscored that the defeat of Nazi Germany was accomplished through the collective efforts of Allied Nations, and the opening of the second front by the Normandy landing of the Allied forces contributed to bringing the victory in the Great Patriotic War of the Soviet people closer.

“The complete defeat of Nazi Germany, militarist Japan, and their satellites across various regions of the world was achieved

through the joint efforts of the Allied Nations. We will always remember that the opening of the Second Front in Europe, following the decisive battles on Soviet territory, helped bring victory closer,” he said. The Victory Day celebrations in Moscow are being attended by leaders of 27 foreign states, including Chinese President Xi Jinping and his Brazilian counterpart Luiz Inacio Lula da Silva. India was represented by Minister of State for Defence Sanjay Seth, as due to ongoing Operation Sindoor, Prime Minister Narendra Modi or Defence Minister Rajnath Singh were unable to travel abroad. The other leaders who attended the Victory Day parade include Serbian President

Aleksandar Vucic, Slovak Prime Minister Robert Fico, President of Republika Srpska Milorad Dodik, Belarus President Alexander Lukashenko, Cuban President Miguel Diaz-Canel, General Secretary of the Communist Party of Vietnam To Lam, Egyptian President Abdel Fattah El-Sisi, Palestinian President Mahmoud Abbas, Venezuelan President Nicolas Maduro, Ethiopian President Taye Atske Selassie, and Guinea-Bissau President Umaro Sissoco Embalo. This year, the military parade on Moscow's Red Square involved over 11,000 troops, including 1,500 combatants of the special military operation and 183 WWII and advanced weapons systems



# CAT Upholds Dismissal of Kashmir University Professor on National Security Grounds

**SRINAGAR:** Central Administrative Tribunal (CAT) Srinagar Bench has upheld the dismissal of Dr. Altaf Hussain Pandith, a senior professor from the Department of Chemistry at the University of Kashmir.

The Professor was dismissed on May 13, 2022 under Article 311(2)(c) of the Constitution of India on the orders of the Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha for alleged terror links

A division bench of the CAT consisted of Justice D.S. Mahra and Administrative Member Justice Prasant Kumar, rejected Pandith's plea challenging his removal from service.

The tribunal ruled that the University of Kashmir qualifies as a "State" under Article 12 of the Constitution and that the post of a university professor constitutes a civil post under the Government of Jammu and Kashmir, thereby making Article 311 applicable.

Dr. Pandith through his counsel Advocate M Ashraf Wani had contended that the university, being a statutory autonomous body, does not fall under the ambit of "State" and that his position did not qualify as a civil post.

He had further argued that the Lieutenant Governor lacked the constitutional authority to invoke Article 311(2)(c), and that the action was

devoid of substantial material.

However, representing the government, Advocate Waseem Gul submitted that the Univer-

The tribunal upheld this argument, pointing to the deep administrative and financial linkages between the university and the govern-



sity of Kashmir is under the financial, functional, and administrative control of the UT government, and thus falls within the definition of a "State."

ment—highlighting provisions of the Jammu and Kashmir University Act, 1969, which mandate government oversight over appointments, funding, audits, and decision-making.

The tribunal also affirmed the competence of the Lieutenant Governor to exercise powers under Article 311(2)(c) as an administrator appointed under Article 239(1) of the Constitution, especially after the Jammu and Kashmir Reorganisation Act, 2019 vested such powers in the Lieutenant Governor on behalf of the President.

The CAT further stated that the dismissal order was preceded by a recommendation of a high-level committee which, after scrutinising evidence of Dr. Pandith's alleged links with banned outfits such as Jamaat-e-Islami and Lashkar-e-Taiba, advised action in the interest of national security.

In accordance with settled legal principles laid down in landmark Supreme Court cases such as Tulsiram Patel and A.K. Kaul, the tribunal ruled that when national security is at stake, due inquiry may be dispensed with if the competent authority is satisfied that it is not expedient to hold one.

While the tribunal acknowledged that judicial review remains available in such cases, it held that the material placed on record did not suggest mala fide intentions or arbitrary use of power. Consequently, the dismissal was declared legally valid and constitutionally sustainable.

## Deputy Director FCS&CA reviews Stock supply position, working of Department in Bandipora

**Bandipora:** Deputy Director Food Civil Supplies and Consumer Affairs (FCS&CA Kashmir) Department Mohammad Rafeeq Bhat Friday chaired a meeting to review the stock supply position and functioning of the department in the district.

He was accompanied by Assistant Director Mr. Naseer Ahmad Baba, Tehsil Supply Officers and other senior officials of the district, besides representatives from various oil marketing companies were also present in the meeting.

On the occasion Bhat was given a detailed presentation regarding the functioning of the department.

He was informed that the district has ample reserves of essential commodities including rice, LPG, petrol and diesel. He was informed that all the major stores, Fair Price Shops and Government Sale Depots of the district are fully functional with ample stock.

It was also informed that there is sufficient stock of rice, atta, petrol, diesel and LPG available in Gurez.



## Sajad Lone Opens Doors of Handwara Residence for Shelling-Affected Families

**HANDWARA:** In a humanitarian gesture and amid escalating border tensions in District Kupwara, Member of Legislative Assembly (MLA) Handwara and Chairman of the Jammu and Kashmir People's Conference, Sajad Gani Lone, has opened his office-cum-residence in Handwara to accommodate families affected by cross-border shelling.

Taking to X, Lone extended a heartfelt invitation to all those displaced or impacted by the shelling, stating, "I very humbly invite all those who are affected by shelling in District Kupwara to stay at my office cum residence at Handwara. It is a large place and I am sure it can accommodate many families. These are tough times and together we will face them."

He further assured that arrangements for lodging and basic amenities would be put in place by tomorrow, and added that his party workers have been directed to assist all affected individuals, regardless of political affiliation.

For coordination and support, residents can contact: Ashique Hussein: +91 99068 61596, Ashraf Bandy: +91 99066 42888, Rahil Dar: +91 70063 24441. Lone prayed for the safety and well-being of all residents in these difficult times.(KNS)

## Dr. Farooq offers Friday congregational prayers at Hazratbal

**SRINAGAR:** The Jammu and Kashmir National Conference President Dr. Farooq Abdullah and Vice President Omar Abdullah on Friday extended greetings to the people on Buddha Purnima.

The duo in their greetings message said that the message of Buddha enlightened people on the path of salvation with the virtues of compassion, peace and truth.

They hoped that the day augurs well for increased prospects of peace and prosperity. General Secretary Ali Muhammad Sagar, Advisor to HCM Nasir Aslam Wani, Chief Spokesperson Tanvir Sadiq, Party MPs Mian Altaf Ahmad, Aga Syed Ruhullah Mehdi have also greeted the people on the occasion of Buddha Purnima.

Meanwhile, party president Dr. Farooq Abdullah offered Friday congregational prayers at Asar-e-Dargah Hazratbal. He prayed for lasting peace and prosperity in J&K and Ladakh. He was accompanied by Zamir Abdullah and Zahir Abdullah.

## 2nd National Lok Adalat Deferred

**SRINAGAR, MAY 9:** In accordance with directives from the Executive Chairman of the National Legal Services Authority (NALSA), the 2nd National Lok Adalat, originally scheduled for May 10, 2025, has been postponed due to the prevailing circumstances.

Consequently, the event will not take place on the scheduled date in the Union Territory of Jammu & Kashmir.

## DC visits District Hospital Poonch, reviews healthcare arrangements

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

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

The Chief Medical Officer (CMO), Medical Superintendent and other senior officials from the district administration accompanied him during the visit. They briefed the Deputy Commissioner on the hospital's functioning, recent patient inflow, and ongoing improvements in medical infrastructure. Given the prevailing circumstances in the border region, the Deputy Commissioner Poonch emphasized the importance of maintaining a high state of preparedness in the health sector. He directed hospital authorities to remain vigilant, ensure timely treatment for all, and maintain efficient coordination among staff. The visit underscored the administration's commitment to safeguarding public health and ensuring uninterrupted medical services, especially during sensitive times.

## BJP Leader Bilal Ahmad Wani Slams Admin Over Shadipora-Ganderbal Bridge Collapse

**BANDIPORA:** Bilal Ahmad Wani, Vice President of the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) in Bandipora, has voiced serious concern and resentment over the collapse of the under-construction Shadipora-Ganderbal footbridge, a long-awaited project meant to ease transportation woes in the area.

The incident, which occurred recently, has triggered anger and disappointment among locals, who had pinned hopes on the bridge to improve connectivity between Bandipora and Ganderbal. The sudden collapse, before the bridge could even be completed, has raised serious doubts about the quality of construction and the level of official oversight.

Wani criticized the administration and engineering authorities for what he termed as a "complete failure in supervision." He questioned why proper checks on the quality of materials and construction standards were not enforced throughout the project's execution.

"This kind of negligence not only hampers development but endangers the lives of common people," Wani said, urging the government to take the matter seriously. He called for an immediate inquiry into the incident, along with strict accountability for those responsible.

He further appealed to the administration to expedite the reconstruction of the bridge so that the affected residents do not continue to suffer due to official apathy.

## Awareness Lecture on Govt Welfare Schemes Held at Dharamkot, Doda

**DODA:** In a bid to raise awareness and educate the local population about key government initiatives, a lecture on various welfare schemes was organised at Dharamkot in district Doda on Thursday. The session was part of an ongoing outreach effort to inform and empower residents about the benefits available under different central schemes.

During the lecture, Mr. Sandeep Singh spoke in detail about prominent welfare programs such as the Pradhan Mantri Kaushal Vikas Yojana (PMKVY) and other financial assistance schemes aimed at supporting skill development for minorities. He provided valuable insights into how these schemes can help youth build productive and sustainable careers, and encouraged them to take full advantage of such opportunities.

The session witnessed the participation of 10 local youth and residents, who expressed their gratitude for the informative and engaging presentation. Many said that such awareness programs are crucial in helping the younger generation make informed decisions about their future.

The event successfully contributed to enhancing awareness and fostering a sense of empowerment among the attendees. Organisers said similar sessions will be held in the future to ensure more people from remote areas benefit from government initiatives.



## Evacuations Continue in Gurez Valley Amid Fear of CFV

**BANDIPORA:** Tensions along the Line of Control (LoC) have escalated in the aftermath of Operation Sindoor, prompting mass evacuations from Gurez Valley in north Kashmir's Bandipora district. As fears of cross-border shelling mount, authorities have initiated the evacuation of residents from forward areas.

According to local sources, over 40 to 50 vehicles carrying families have already left the valley following orders from the administration. The exodus comes amid growing concern over the lack of adequate safety infrastructure in the region.

Videos accessed by this reporter reveal that, in the absence of proper underground bunkers, some residents have begun clearing roadside culverts to use as makeshift shelters. Others are pooling community resources to construct temporary bunkers in a bid to protect themselves from potential

shelling. Raja Ajaz Khan, a resident of the remote Tulail Valley, voiced the widespread anxiety. "Tulail doesn't

Bandipora.

Local officials confirmed the precautionary measures and assured that



have enough bunkers to keep people safe in case of shelling," he said. Khan appealed to the government to provide immediate support, including essential supplies and temporary shelters, for families now migrating towards

efforts were being made to ensure the safety of the civilian population. As the situation develops, residents and authorities alike remain on high alert, bracing for further flare-ups along the volatile border.

## Sakeena Itoo, Javed Dar Visit Shelling Affected Areas Of Baramulla, Uri



**BARAMULLA:** On the directions of Chief Minister, Omar Abdullah, Cabinet Ministers, Sakeena Itoo and Javed Ahmad Dar, today visited frontier district Baramulla and took stock of ongoing situation due to cross border shelling.

During the visit, the Ministers visited GMC Baramulla and enquired about the well being of citizens injured in the recent shelling incidents. They expressed solidarity with the injured victims and their family members.

The Ministers directed the medical staff of the hospital to provide immediate and effective treatment to the injured citizens. They assured the victims and their family members that the Government stands with them in these difficult times and we are committed to their well being.

Later, the Ministers also visited Uri and took on-spot assessment of various areas affected by ongoing shelling. They met the affected families and directed authorities to prioritize civilian safety and ensure swift rehabilitation efforts of affected families.

The Ministers also met the grieving family of Nargis, a young woman killed during the ongoing shelling. They offered condolences to the affected family and assured them every possible support and assistance from the government. They also met other affected families in Uri and directed authorities to prioritize civilian safety and swift rehabilitation efforts.

The Ministers, in the meanwhile, visited Sub district Hospital Uri and met the injured civilians. They directed the hospital administration to keep sufficient medical care stock available at the facility to deal with any kind of exigency.

Later, the Ministers also visited GDC Uri and met the victims of cross border shelling rehabilitated in the college building. The Ministers urged the administration to keep all possible facilities available for the victims and ensure basic necessities are available round the clock for their well being. They also directed the administration to keep sufficient doctors and medical staff available for their routine checking.



# Five reasons why young-onset dementia is often missed

BY: MOLLY MURRAY

Around 57 million people worldwide have dementia. While most cases of dementia are diagnosed in older adults, about 7% of cases occur in people under 65. This number may be even higher as young-onset dementia continues to be under-recognised. This means many people may be missing out on the support they need.



Here are five reasons young-onset dementia remains under-recognised:

- Dementia is typically associated with older age  
When you hear the word “dementia” do you picture someone under 65? While dementia is usually associated with older adults, the condition doesn’t discriminate based on age. In fact, anyone (even children) can be diagnosed with different forms of dementia.
- But this common assumption means many younger people may not seek a diagnosis from their doctor, as many don’t assume dementia could be causing any of the symptoms they’re experiencing.
- Doctors, too, often fail to consider the possibility of a younger person having dementia. Many people diagnosed with young-onset dementia initially had their symptoms dismissed. Some doctors even showed little concern for their experiences. It also isn’t uncommon for younger adults to be told they’re “too young” to have dementia.
- It’s not surprising then that these experiences lead to frustration, with patients and their families feeling unheard and neglected by the healthcare system.
- Fight back against disinformation. Get your news here, direct from experts
- Get newsletter
- The misunderstanding that dementia is a disease of older adults leaves people with young-onset dementia fighting to be heard.
- Symptoms are different
- Dementia is most often linked to short-term memory loss. However, cognition (which encompasses all of our mental processes, from thinking to perception) is very

complex. For this reason, dementia can lead to a huge variety of symptoms – such as changes in personality and language, difficulties recognising objects, judging distances or coordinating movement and even hallucinations and delusions. Compared to dementia in older adults, people with young-onset dementia are more likely to experience symptoms other than memory loss as the earliest signs of the condition. For instance, research shows that for around one-third of

Doctors, too, often fail to consider the possibility of a younger person having dementia. Many people diagnosed with young-onset dementia initially had their symptoms dismissed. Some doctors even showed little concern for their experiences. It also isn’t uncommon for younger adults to be told they’re “too young” to have dementia.

people with young-onset Alzheimer’s disease, the earliest symptoms they had were problems with coordination and vision changes.

Rarer causes of dementia

Dementia is an umbrella term that encompasses a range of brain disorders that all cause problems with cognition. In older adults, the most common cause of dementia is Alzheimer’s disease – accounting for 50-75% of cases. But in people under 65, only around 40% of dementia cases can be attributed to Alzheimer’s disease.

Instead, young-onset dementia tends to be caused by

rarer neurodegenerative conditions, such as frontotemporal dementias. Frontotemporal dementias only affect around one in 20 people diagnosed with dementia. These conditions affect parts of the brain responsible for personality, behaviour, language, speech and executive functioning.

For example, primary progressive aphasia is one type of frontotemporal dementia. This condition affects around three in every 100,000 people. Primary progressive aphasia mainly alters a person’s ability to communicate and understand speech.

Secondary dementias are also more common in people with young-onset dementia. These are dementias that are caused by another underlying medical condition, disease (such as Huntington’s disease or a brain tumour) or external factor (such as a viral infection, substance misuse or head injury).

Recognition of these rarer forms of dementia is increasing – thanks in part to celebrities such as Fiona Phillips, Pauline Quirke and Terry Jones opening up about their experiences. But there’s still much less understanding around treatment options and managing symptoms when it comes to these rarer forms of dementia. Rarer dementias are also linked to atypical symptoms, which often go missed. This prolongs the diagnostic journey.

Symptoms overlap with other conditions

Symptoms of young-onset dementia have considerable overlap with those common in certain mental health conditions, such as bipolar disorder, psychosis, depression and anxiety. Symptoms might also include apathy, feelings of panic, irritability, hallucinations and delusions.

Early symptoms of young-onset dementia may also be misdiagnosed as menopause in women, as well as a period of burnout.

Of course, not everyone experiencing these symptoms will have young-onset dementia. But it’s important we raise awareness about symptom overlap to make the diagnosis process easier for those who do.

Experiences differ between people

The type and severity of a person’s symptoms can vary due to a variety of factors – such as their physical health, their social environment and even their stress levels. This all leads to significant variability in how dementia is experienced.

A person’s cognitive reserve (the brain’s ability to maintain good cognitive function despite damage or brain changes) also affects their experience of dementia symptoms and how they cope with them. Some people may adapt more effectively, drawing on strong support networks, psychological resilience or their own personal coping strategies to overcome these challenges.

All of these factors together can make it difficult to recognise symptoms of young-onset dementia, especially in its early stages.

Need for awareness

The under-recognition of young-onset dementia is significant. It contributes to the lack of resources, specialised care and advice, appropriate support and early diagnosis for people with young-onset dementia. While this is improving, greater awareness still needs to be brought to the experience of dementia in younger adults – especially given research shows that the progression of cognitive decline is more pronounced in younger adults.

If you’re worried about yourself or a family member showing signs of dementia, it’s important to discuss symptoms and seek support early. You can also contact local dementia support organisations such as Alzheimer Scotland, Dementia UK, and Alzheimer Society, who can provide information, resources and guidance on support options.

(The author is a PhD Candidate, University of the West of Scotland-The Conversation)





# CM Omar Abdullah holds interaction with civil society members in Jammu

**JAMMU:** In the wake of the recent drone attacks in Jammu, Chief Minister Omar Abdullah held interaction with civil society members to discuss steps taken for public safety, state of preparedness and the importance of maintaining communal harmony during these critical times.

During the interaction, the Chief Minister urged the public to remain calm and vigilant, appealing to citizens not to panic and to rely solely on verified and official sources of information.

Minister Satish Sharma, Advisor to the Chief Minister Nasir Aslam Wani, Deputy Commissioner Jammu, Senior Superintendent of Police Jammu, Director Social Welfare Department Jammu, Director Food, Civil Supplies & Consumer Affairs Jammu, Regional Transport Officer Jammu, senior police officers and other concerned officers were also present during the interaction.

Stressing the importance of effective communication, he outlined a set of measures aimed at enhancing public awareness and strengthening the emergency response mechanism across the region.

The Chief Minister informed the participants that safety guidelines and verified updates would be disseminated through the Department of Information using local television, radio channels and an official WhatsApp channel.

The Chief Minister reiterated alert to ensure a swift and coordinated emergency response.

Chief Minister Omar Abdullah concluded the session by expressing gratitude to the civil society members for their participation and support. He reaffirmed the government's unwavering commitment to protecting the lives and well-being of every citizen during this time of crisis.

The interaction saw participation from a broad spectrum of civil society members, including ex-servicemen, former police chiefs of the J&K Police, heads and presidents of industry & commerce, trade and travel associations, former ministers and representatives of various political parties. Educationists, academicians, stakeholders from the tourism sector, heads of religious organizations representing Hindu, Muslim, Sikh, and Christian communities, representatives of Gujjar and Bakarwal groups, lawyers' bodies, fruit and mandi associations, transporters and NGOs were also present.

The participants appreciated the Chief Minister for convening such an interaction at a time of heightened tensions.

They pledged their full support under the leadership of Chief Minister Omar Abdullah and affirmed their commitment to standing united with the government during the ongoing crisis.



He also emphasized the role of the Traffic Department in raising awareness about emergency alert sirens and signals. The deployment of police personnel in sensitive areas was discussed as a means to manage panic and assist with crowd control, while designated relief camps, functional bunkers, and healthcare facilities are being kept in a state of readiness.

The meeting was informed that in order to ensure the uninterrupted supply of essential commodities, the government is maintaining supply chain and regulating prices. Fire services, ambulances, and Civil Defence units have been placed on high

## Satish Sharma visits Pargwal displaced residents at Mishriwala

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

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

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

"The safety and dignity of every citizen is our utmost priority," said the Minister. "We are fully committed towards ensuring that those affected by the cross-border violence do not face any further hardship. I have directed the district administration to ensure all necessary facilities, including adequate shelter, food, drinking water, medical aid and sanitation are made available without delay."

The Minister also reviewed the relief operations and took stock of the arrangements made at the camp.

He instructed the officials to maintain regular health check ups, proper sanitation and timely distribution of essential commodities. He asked the concerned to give special attention to children, elderly and women to ensure their specific needs are met.

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

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



## Sakeena Itoo, Javed Dar visit Kupwara to assess well-being of shelling affected families

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

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

They also visited Government Boys Higher Secondary School (BHSS) Kupwara to enquire about the welfare of displaced families of Tangdhar, Karnah and Keran areas, currently rehabilitated in the school premises. The Ministers, during the visit, interacted with the affected families and assured them all possible assistance from the government. They assured them that the present government is continuously monitoring the situation and is committed towards welfare of the people displaced by cross border shelling.

Interacting with the officers of district administration on the occasion, the Ministers directed them to establish all basic facilities at these centres and ensure well being of these displaced families. They asked them to continuously monitor the facilities at these centres and deploy staff at these shelter homes. The Ministers also asked them to keep doctors and other paramedical staff at these centres for constant care of the displaced civilians.

## REC Posts 15,713 Crore Profit in FY25; Recommends Final Dividend of 2.60 per Share

**New Delhi:** REC Limited has announced a strong financial performance for the fiscal year 2024-25, reporting a standalone net profit of 713 crore, marking a 12% increase over 14,019 crore in the previous year.

The Board of Directors, in its meeting on Thursday, also recommended a final dividend of 2.60 per equity share, taking the total dividend for FY25 to 18 per share, up from 16 per share in FY24, subject to shareholders' approval at the forthcoming Annual General Meeting.

The company attributed its robust growth to strong performance across all business verticals, favourable reset of interest rates on loan assets, and efficient finance cost management. As a result, REC was able to maintain its spreads and net interest margins, contributing to its highest-ever annual profit.

The annualised Earnings Per Share (EPS) surged to 59.55 as on March 31, 2025, compared to 53.11 a year ago.

During the fourth quarter of FY25, REC registered disbursements of 45,538 crore, up 16% from 39,374 crore in Q4 FY24. The net interest income 0.86%, following the resolution of five such assets worth 6,171 crore. REC's loan book, or Asset

for the quarter rose sharply by 38% to 5,876 crore, while total income increased by 24% to 15,174 crore. Net profit for the quarter stood at 4,236 crore, reflecting a 5% rise on a year-on-year basis. The net interest margin also saw a slight improvement, rising to 3.64% from 3.60% in the same period last year.

For the full financial year, REC's total disbursements touched 1,91,185 crore, recording an 18% increase from 1,61,462 crore in FY24. The net interest income grew by 27% to 19,878 crore, and total income rose by 19% to 55,980 crore. Asset quality also improved significantly during the year, with net credit-impaired assets dropping to 0.38% from

Under Management (AUM), continued its upward trajectory, reaching 5.66 lakh crore as on March 31, 2025, compared to 5.09 lakh crore a year earlier.

The net worth of the company grew by 13% to 77,638 crore during the same period. With a comfortable Capital Adequacy Ratio (CRAR) of 25.99%, the company is well-positioned to support future business expansion and capital requirements.

Official spokesperson said the financial results reveals REC's continued focus on sustainable growth and its commitment to rewarding shareholders while maintaining a strong and resilient financial foundation.



## Div Com, IGP Jammu visit Nowshera to review facilities for border area residents shifted to relief camps

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

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

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

The officials at the evacuation centre briefed the Divisional Commissioner about the efforts and arrangements being made to assure all support and assistance from the Administration. The Divisional Commissioner directed

mitigate the hardships faced by the affected population, while ensuring their safety.

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

While interacting with the affected people, the Divisional Commissioner and IGP Jammu listened to their concerns and the district administration to ensure timely assistance, adequate medical facilities, and other supplies to all the camps in the sub division. The Divisional Commissioner and IGP Jammu directed the administration to evacuate people from all vulnerable areas to safer locations on priority and ensure round-the-clock security arrangements in the affected areas.



## J&K, Leh airports to remain closed till May 14, Haj flights cancelled for 3rd day

Rehan Qayoom Mir

**Srinagar:** For the third consecutive day, the authorities have decided to close three airports including Srinagar International Airport till May 14 amid heightened tensions between India and Pakistan, disrupting flight operations, including the Haj pilgrimage schedule from the Valley.

The Jammu and Kashmir Haj Committee has now cancelled the tomorrow's May 10 flight, extending the uncertainty for hundreds of pilgrims.

In an official notification, the committee announced the cancellation of Flight No. SG-5210, originally scheduled for Saturday.

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

"So far, four Haj flights and over 250 commercial flights have been cancelled since May 7, including 84 on Friday alone, with 42 arrivals and 42 departures, an official at Srinagar International Airport told the news agency—Kashmir News Observer (KNO). He added they are yet to confirm when normal operations will resume.

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

Meanwhile, major airlines have extended flight suspensions and issued fresh advisories. IndiGo Travel Advisory: "Your safety and security remain paramount. Due to the current situation, all flights to and from Srinagar, Jammu, Amritsar, Leh, Chandigarh, Dharamshala, Bikaner, Jodhpur, Kishangarh, and Rajkot are cancelled. We are monitoring the situation closely and are in continuous coordination with all authorities.

They also wrote: "we will keep you informed through official updates and are available to support you with changes to your travel plans. Thank you for your understanding and patience."

SpiceJet Travel Advisory: "Important Travel Update: Due to the ongoing situation, our flights to and from Leh, Srinagar, Jammu, Dharamshala, Kandla and Amritsar are cancelled. We sincerely apologize for the inconvenience this may cause to our valued passengers and appreciate your understanding.

Akasa Air Advisory: Akasa Air has suspended all flights to and from Srinagar until further notice and is offering passengers full refunds or free rescheduling. "We regret the inconvenience caused and are closely monitoring the situation," the airline stated. Other airlines, including Vistara and Go First, are also expected to issue updated advisories shortly. Passengers are urged to regularly check their flight status through airline websites or customer service helplines and avoid unnecessary travel to the airport.

Meanwhile, the authorities have decided to close the airports across Jammu & Kashmir and Ladakh till May 14—(KNO)

## Dy CM reviews border situation, holds meeting with locals, officials at Rajouri

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

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

Addressing the gathering, the Deputy CM stated that the situation has escalated due to unprovoked provocation by Pakistan, necessitating precautionary measures to safeguard the civilian lives.

He assured that both UT and Central Governments are fully committed towards ensuring the safety and timely evacuation of residents living in vulnerable areas.

During the meeting, various issues were raised by the public and civil society, including direct chopper service from Rajouri to Jammu for critical patients, deputation of officials for follow-up on patients being referred outside the UT, action against misuse of social media platforms, promotion of communal harmony and constitution of peace committees to prevent theft in vacated areas in case of migration, setting up of migrant camps in both government and private educational institutions, improvement of medical facilities at GMC Rajouri including a special ward for border



shelling victims, availability of ambulances and generators at GMC, timely completion of 180-bedded hospital building at GMC and regulation of fare for transportation vehicles during the crisis.

Prominent leaders including MLA Rajouri, Iftikhar Ahmed, MLA Thanamandi, Muzaffar Khan, MLA Kalakote, Randhir Singh and DDC

## Deputy Commissioner visits District Hospital Poonch, reviews healthcare arrangements

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

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

key departments to assess overall readiness and responsiveness.

The Chief Medical Officer (CMO), Medical Superintendent and other senior officials from the district administration accompanied him during the visit. They briefed the Deputy Commissioner on the hospital's functioning, recent patient inflow, and ongoing improvements in medical infrastructure.

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

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



## District Magistrate meets public, affected families in Poonch, assures continuity of essential supplies

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

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

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

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

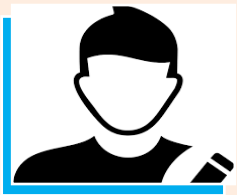
The District Magistrate urged citizens to stay calm, avoid rumors, and cooperate with the administration in maintaining peace and order.

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





# Are Experts A Better Alternative Than Democratic Representatives?



HANEEN FARID

A common solution explored whilst citing the flaws of the democratic system is to replace it with 'rule by experts'- also known as epistocracy. The motivation behind this is that experts, being equipped with the ability to form policies and directives, are at least objectively better at governance as compared to any other segment or entity.

Furthermore, it is argued that it is unfair for citizens who are

sion on rumors or deeply ingrained biases, such as believing a candidate is "better" simply because of their affiliation with a powerful family or local political dynasty, without considering their actual abilities or agenda.

Third, the morally unreasonable electorate: This group allows prejudice to guide their decision, for instance, voting only for a candidate from their village or community while disregarding more capable candidates from other regions of Kashmir, purely because of regional loyalties or biases.

Because in all these cases, decision-making amounts to imposing a rule on innocent individuals without possessing adequate grounds for such selection, this casts doubt on the legitimacy of the outcome. When high-stake decisions are imposed upon innocent persons, all individual decisions need to be made in a competent manner and by reasonable persons, which can be argued to be unlikely in a democracy.

Even if citizens might voluntarily trust experts to manage public affairs, the trust demanded under such a system is coercive. Rule by experts risks domination, where dissent is dismissed as irrational, further entrenching inequality and limiting genuine public participation. Ultimately, such a system risks undermining the very principles of fairness and inclusion it seeks to improve.

### Is there an ideal solution?

To enable meaningful participation that upholds the value of political inclusion, it is essential for people to be free to hold their own beliefs, express their views, reflect on issues, and develop reasons to challenge state policies. This is important because the exchange of beliefs is a way of treating others with dignity and recognizing them as autonomous individuals.

At the same time, it is also important to recognize that promoting mutual respect does not require every aspect of a



'incompetent', 'ignorant', 'irrational' or 'morally unreasonable' to command political power over others by deciding the regime that rules over them. It also holds that an innocent individual should not have to suffer in this type of system.

Historically, people have been unjustly barred from voting based on factors like race or gender. Hence, epistocrats assert that if voting restrictions can exist for the wrong reasons, it is not unreasonable to consider that there might be valid reasons—such as intellectual ability or expertise—to limit voting rights. For instance, modern democracies already prevent children, felons, and those deemed mentally unfit from voting or holding power due to their perceived lack of competence. In this sense, democracies are already somewhat epistocratic, which opens the door to arguments in favour of governance by experts, as I will explore further.

### Is Democracy Always Just?

A system is democratic to the extent that the key political power rests equally in the hands of the people- at least at large; it is a method of decision-making that determines how a regime may use its authority, including the threat of force, to ensure compliance with its laws and regulations. The competence principle, to put it simply, holds that it is not just to deprive people of life, liberty or property or change their life prospects substantially using coercion as well as threats of coercion as a consequence of decisions that an incompetent decision-making body makes.

### Thus, this suggests that:

- i) People with poor judgement or bad moral character must not serve on a decision-making body.
  - ii) When it is known that certain decisions were made incompetently, they must not be enforced and people should have no obligation to submit to these.
- For these reasons, it can be argued that since democracies can, in principle, allow 'ignorant', 'misinformed', 'morally unreasonable' or 'irrational individuals' to wield their political power over others, it dispenses political power in an irresponsible manner.

### Can an Uninformed Electorate Harm Democracy?

Let us further delve into this concept by exploring three types of electorates to make this idea clearer;

First, the uninformed electorate: These voters are indifferent to the policies or the candidates' qualifications and make their choice based on arbitrary factors, such as the candidate's popularity in their constituency or simply voting because of a familiar last name such as Bhatt or Lone.

Second, the irrational electorate: These voters pay some attention to the election and key issues but base their deci-

### Is 'rule by experts' a better alternative?

While the idea of 'rule by experts' may seem appealing, especially when ordinary citizens are perceived to lack the wisdom of experts, it faces significant challenges. To begin with, access to education is often a privilege reserved for certain races, classes, and even genders; giving special consideration to these groups would only amplify existing biases. This would lead to a systematic overrepresentation of some groups and the underrepresentation of others in the electorate, likely resulting in unjust outcomes that benefit privileged groups while disadvantaged others. For example, if only individuals from affluent families in Kashmir—such as those with access to private schools or resources to study abroad—are eligible to govern, they are likely to share similar priorities and interests, meaning that rule by experts would primarily serve those interests.

Critics of this system argue that such disparities in political inclusion, whether based on class, race, or gender, are inherently unjust. In Kashmir, for instance, consider how individuals from urban areas like Srinagar often have easier access to higher education and resources compared to those in remote regions such as Kupwara or Kulgam. If policies were designed to give more electoral power to the educated, it would likely result in an overrepresentation of urban elites while marginalizing rural populations.

Beyond issues of representation, another objection to epistocracy is that while experts may make reasonable decisions on behalf of the public, these decisions may not always be meaningful or acceptable to the people. This is because understanding or appreciating such decisions often requires training and intellect that non-experts may lack. Furthermore, when experts dictate what people should believe, it raises concerns about domination, undermining a key moral and political value: political inclusion. In such a system, experts impose not only an obligation to believe them but also a duty to obey, restricting individuals' ability to form their own opinions, reflect on what the state should do, or develop arguments to challenge authority.

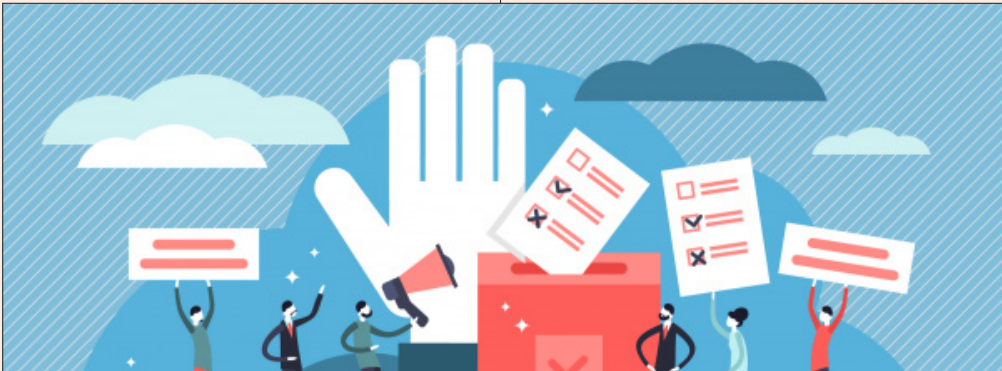
system to operate in the same way or to the same degree. For example, consider a public debate where certain participants resort to inflammatory or divisive language—it could silence voices offering practical, well-informed, and inclusive perspectives. In such cases, restricting such uncivil or partisan speech can be potentially justified to ensure that the focus remains on constructive dialogue and genuine problem-solving.

In the context of a pure epistocracy, where experts possess specialised knowledge in both politics and morality, political inclusion may indeed be limited. However, proponents of epistocracy argue that this system has the potential to deliver better outcomes compared to traditional democracy. Moreover, they point out that democracies already impose certain exclusions, such as for children, felons, and those deemed mentally unfit, based on their suitability for political decision-making. In this sense, democracies and epistocracies are not entirely different.

Overall, an epistocracy could consider reasonable limitations while ensuring that these exclusions are grounded in fairness and necessity. While political inclusion is a key value, it may sometimes need to be balanced with the need for effective governance and informed decision-making, provided that such restrictions are implemented thoughtfully and justly. But regardless of which system of governance is in place, any restrictions must be implemented thoughtfully and justly, with clear safeguards to prevent misuse, perpetuation of systemic inequalities, or the marginalization of vulnerable groups.

Disclaimer: This commentary is inspired by a debate in political philosophy, and references Kashmir to make arguments more contextually relevant. It is not intended to advocate for replacing democracy-in whatever capacity - in the valley.

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# Continued From P1...

## Govt’s Decade-Long

Indian-manufactured loitering munitions—suicidal drones ordered in 2021—were deployed in combat, executing coordinated strikes on enemy positions. Harop drones, originally of Israeli origin and now being produced in India, were used to destroy key Pakistani defence assets in Lahore and Karachi. “Rafale fighter jets, armed with SCALP and HAMMER missiles, provided aerial cover and executed surgical precision strikes deep inside hostile territory”. According to defence officials, India’s defence doctrine under the Modi government has been about building long-term strategic resilience rather than short-term spectacle. “It is not just about defending the skies anymore; it’s about controlling them,” said a senior official. With its technological edge and strategic foresight, India has not only secured its borders but also reinforced its position as a regional military power capable of launching and absorbing high-stakes operations. “Operation Sindoor has sent a decisive message to adversaries: India will defend with force and respond with precision” experts said.

## Soldiers want

The Lieutenant Governor said the nation has always been proud of the armed forces and whenever country faced any crisis, our soldiers have boosted the pride of Mother India by making the supreme sacrifice. “Your history is full of valour and courage. India always advocated for peace. After brutal massacre of our citizens at Pahalgalam, the main objective was to destroy the terrorist hideouts. “Operation Sindoor” avenged Pahalgalam terror attack by destroying terror factories inside Pakistan. But, the enemy is targeting our military establishment and our citizens. We are giving them a befitting reply,” the Lieutenant Governor told the soldiers. The Lieutenant Governor said that due to courage and determination of our soldiers, Jammu Kashmir and the country sleeps peacefully. “If someone tries to disturb our peace again and again then they will be taught such a lesson that their next 10 generations will remember it. The entire 140 crore Indians are standing strong with our soldiers. I pray to God to give you strength so that you can once again write the saga of India’s bravery,” the Lieutenant Governor said.

## India’s Unity

and new depths they are planting in their campaign for disinformation.” “What I wish to underline is the brazenness of Pakistan’s denial. Their government claims they did not target religious places. However, the facts on the ground are unambiguous. They attacked Gurdwara and Church in Poonch. Two students were killed in the artillery attack,” he said, adding, “The disinformation that is coming from Pakistan that India targeted the Nankana Sahib Gurudwara through drone attack, this is a blatant lie, as we saw in the Pahalgalam attack, Pakistan is trying desperately to give a communal hue to the situation with an intention to create discord...India’s steadfast unity in itself is a challenge to Pakistan.” Misri said, “Over the past 24 hours Pakistan made desperate attempts to target civilian areas, including religious sites and densely populated cities in Punjab and Jammu & Kashmir but all their nefarious designs were foiled.”

Asked if India would respond to attacks carried out by Pakistan, the Foreign Secretary said, “We have already given them a befitting reply.” He said that in view of the current security situation and direct attacks on religious institutions, the Kartarpur Corridor has been closed until further notice. Referring to India engaging with the different countries on the diplomatic front, Misri said, “India has responded with strength and restraint. The Ministry of External Affairs has engaged directly with the US Secretary of State and the Secretary of Defence. We have also spoken with the Foreign Minister of Norway. Our partners have expressed solidarity and pledged cooperation in counterterrorism efforts. India will firmly counter any attempt to escalate the situation.”

Asked about the missile attack on Bhalwalpur from where the journalist Daniel Pearl was abducted and then killed, Misri said, “Bhalwalpur continues to be the headquarters of the proscribed Jaish-e-Mohammed (JeM) group. Its leader, Masood Azhar, is an internationally designated terrorist. We also recall the gruesome murder of journalist Daniel Pearl — JeM was directly or indirectly complicit. The British-Pakistani jihadi Omar Sheikh, who was arrested in India and then released in 2000, lured Pearl and facilitated his killing. This is the kind of extremist mindset we are confronting.”

He reiterated that the Indus Water Treaty is currently in abeyance. “Given the evolving scenario, I have nothing further to add at this point,” he added. “At the IMF meeting scheduled for later today, India will present its position and raise concerns over Pakistan’s misuse of international funds and its destabilizing behavior,” Misri said

## 300-400 Pakistani

The drones are apparently Turkey-made. However, an evidence to this effect is awaited. “The possible purpose of such large-scale aerial intrusion was to attempt infiltration and test India’s air defence system and collect intelligence,” informed the women officers, Colonel Sofiya Qureshi and Wing Commander Vyomika Singh, during a special press briefing by the Ministry of External Affairs (MEA) on ‘Operation Sindoor’. Last night, Pakistan targeted multiple cities, including military installations with volley of drones and missile attack, however, all were repulsed by India’s robust air defence system and this left the Pakistani Army flustered and panicky. The women officers further informed that the forensic investigation of the wreckage of the drones

is being done, however, “initial reports suggest that they are Turkish Asisguard Songar drones”. Colonel Sofiya Qureshi said: “On the night of May 7 and 8, the Pakistani army violated Indian airspace several times over the entire western border with the intention of targeting military infrastructure. It also fired heavy caliber weapons along the Line of Control. However, all their attempts were neutralised by us via kinetic and non-kinetic means.” Wing Commander Vyomika Singh said that an armed UAV of Pakistan Army even attempted to target Bhatinda military station, which was detected and neutralised in due time. The woman officer also informed that India launched armed drones at four air defence sites in Pakistan, in response to its attacks, and one of these drones also destroyed an AD radar.

## We will avenge

for their safety and security and necessary actions are being taken to protect every resident of Uri. He also met the injured residents of Uri at the GMC Baramulla and prayed for their quick recovery. He directed the officials to provide best possible treatment and care to the injured. “The nation is wholeheartedly behind the affected families in all aspects. We will avenge their suffering by defeating the enemy,” the Lieutenant Governor said.

## Jammu gripped

civil society at Rajouri to discuss public safety and seek suggestions regarding the evacuation and rehabilitation of the affected population. He said the situation has escalated due to unprovoked provocation by Pakistan, necessitating precautionary measures to safeguard civilian lives. Choudhary assured that both the UT and central governments are fully committed towards ensuring the safety and timely evacuation of residents living in vulnerable areas. Deputy Commissioner Poonch, Vikas Kundal also conducted a comprehensive visit to District Hospital Poonch to review healthcare arrangements and ensure the facility is fully prepared to meet medical needs in case of any emergency. During the visit, the DC interacted with patients undergoing treatment and enquired about the quality of care, availability of essential medicines, and support services. He conducted a thorough inspection of various hospital wards, emergency units, and other key departments to assess overall readiness and responsiveness. Major roads connecting Jammu to Doda and Kishtwar have been choked with traffic as residents and tourists attempt to flee to safer areas or return to their homes from Jammu after last night’s situation on the border. There was severe congestion on the Jammu-Doda and Jammu-Kishtwar roads, with vehicles stranded for hours. Amid the chaos, reports have emerged of transporters and private operators overcharging passengers desperate to leave Jammu. Tourists and locals alike have faced inflated fares for buses, taxis, and private vehicles, with some alleging price gouging by unscrupulous operators.

To alleviate the pressure on stranded passengers, the administration has launched special train services from Katra to New Delhi. Four special trains were introduced to accommodate the “extra rush” of passengers, particularly non-locals fleeing the Jammu region. Sources indicate that additional trains are being planned to ferry residents and visitors from Jammu to Delhi and other major cities, though exact schedules remain fluid due to the ongoing crisis. The situation in Jammu remains tense, with reports of drones, missiles, and explosions in the sky contributing to widespread fear. A complete blackout was enforced on May 8, and air raid sirens were activated after Pakistan’s failed attempt to target Jammu airport.

The Border Security Force (BSF) foiled a major infiltration bid in Samba district on May 8, and security forces are conducting extensive search operations in Doda and Kishtwar to dismantle terror networks linked to the Pahalgalam attack. Given the situation, the people of Jammu are left grappling with fear, uncertainty, and logistical challenges. Authorities have urged residents to cooperate with security measures and follow guidelines, but with the spectre of further conflict looming, the path to stability remains fraught

## BSF kills 7

were specifically targeted, and so were several cities in Rajasthan, Gujarat, and Punjab. But all missiles and drones sent by Pakistan were neutralised. No loss or casualty was reported. Pakistani troops then resumed firing at Indian posts and villages near the border and the LOC. Indian troops gave a befitting reply, destroying several Pakistani Army posts. The civil administrations had enforced a blackout all night in cities near the border, like Jammu, Srinagar, and several places in Punjab and Rajasthan

## MHA writes

Defence of your state and UT, may be granted so that efficient implementation of the necessary precautionary measures can be implemented.” Officials emphasized that timely action and preparedness at the state and local levels are essential to mitigate the impact. The call to strengthen civil defence measures follows a serious security incident along the India-Pakistan border as Pakistan on Thursday night launched a series of coordinated drone and missile attacks along India’s western border, targeting regions in Jammu and Kashmir, and Rajasthan. According to Indian defense officials, the attacks were largely intercepted by India’s air defense systems, including the S-400 missile defense system, preventi

## Escalation won’t

But they will be the ones to suffer the most.” The chief minister highlighted the situation in Poonch as the most critical. “There was heavy

damage in Poonch city. Most of the casualties and injuries are from there,” he said. “I just visited the hospital in Jammu, and all the admitted patients are from Poonch. One critically injured person was shifted to PGI Chandigarh for surgery today,” he added. He said his deputy chief minister is trying to reach Poonch to meet the affected families. During his visit to camps at Mishriwala, Nagbani, Kot Bhalwal in Jammu district and Vijaypur in Samba, he interacted with displaced families and assured them of full government support. “I assured them that my government stands firmly with them in these difficult times,” he said, adding that he had directed officials to ensure all necessary facilities are provided without delay. “All necessary facilities have been arranged at the camps—two meals a day, tea, medical care, and sanitation. Doctors, ambulances, and transport services are all in place,” Abdullah said. Acknowledging the discomfort faced by the displaced, he added, “I know this is not an ideal situation and they want to return home. But we had no choice but to bring them here. We are doing our best to minimize their inconvenience.” He also shared a lighter moment from the visit, mentioning that some children had asked for play equipment, and “I am thankful to our minister, who brought it in his own vehicle and handed it over to them.”

Later, the chief minister visited a Government Medical College Hospital in Jammu to inquire about the well-being of the injured and prayed for their swift recovery. He also reviewed the situation following the recent drone attacks across the region.

## Takes Stock Of Relief

displaced families and reviewed the provision of food, shelter, medical aid and other essentials. “All efforts shall be made to ensure that all necessities are provided to the people during this difficult time,” he said, directing the administration to remain alert and responsive to emerging needs. In view of civilian displacement caused by the hostilities, the government has established relief camps at multiple locations across border districts. The Chief Minister also held discussions with senior district officers to assess the overall situation and ongoing relief measures, reiterating the government’s firm commitment to the safety and welfare of all affected citizens.

The Chief Minister expressed deep sorrow over the loss of civilian lives due to incessant shelling in border areas, particularly in Poonch district which witnessed the highest number of casualties and injuries. He informed that the injured are receiving treatment at Government Medical College Jammu, while those grievously wounded have been referred to Chandigarh for advanced medical care. Chief Minister Omar Abdullah also commended the forces for their swift and effective action in repelling last night’s cross-border attacks from Pakistan at multiple locations across both Jammu and Kashmir divisions. He asserted that India reserves the right to defend its people and territory with full strength. “Our security mechanisms responded with commendable speed and precision, ensuring the defense of all targeted areas,” the Chief Minister said. “If innocent people of ours are harmed, the nation reserves every right to defend itself in any way. It is Pakistan which must stop aggression for peace to prevail. If they keep on taking the offensive, they are sure to suffer. Our forces are fully capable of giving a proportionate response.”

## Cross-border shelling leaves trial of destruction across J&K villages

Waris Fayaz

**SRINAGAR:** A fresh wave of intense cross-border shelling late Thursday night left a trail of destruction along Jammu and Kashmir’s Line of Control (LoC), engulfing multiple villages in Uri, Kupwara and Poonch in chaos, fear and devastation. The shelling, which began around midnight and continued for hours, damaged residential homes, commercial establishments, and vehicles—leaving civilians to pick up the pieces once again. In Uri villages, residents while speaking to the news agency—Kashmir News Observer (KNO) described a night of terror. “The shelling didn’t stop till 5 AM. We kept praying for our lives,” said a local. One civilian was killed, and two others were injured in the shelling, while dozens of homes were left severely damaged. “It took a whole life to build our houses, and now we are left with nothing,” said one resident, standing amid the rubble of his home. Kupwara’s Keran and Chowkibal sectors also bore the brunt of the shelling. Although no casualties were reported from these areas, the damage to property was extensive. “We’re not meant for this—we want peaceful lives,” said a villager, breaking down in tears as evacuation teams moved them to safer zones. Authorities swiftly launched evacuation efforts across Baramulla, Kupwara and Poonch with the government requisitioning buses from private schools and transport operators to shift affected families. Relief centers were set up in safer areas in Uri, Boniyar and Baramulla town, where hundreds have taken shelter. “We are leaving out of fear. The government is accommodating us, but our hearts remain with our homes,” said Fayaz Ahmed, a resident of Badgara, Uri. Sentiments of fear, frustration and exhaustion echoed across the region. “We’re used to the shelling, but we plead—let it end once and for all. War is not the answer,” said another Uri resident. “Civilians are dying, and we’re losing everything to this madness. The government must introspect and take real steps for peace.”

Meanwhile, the locals renewed demands for the construction of community bunkers, citing repeated failure to provide adequate long-term safety measures despite recurrent ceasefire violations. “We have nowhere to go when firing starts. Bunkers are the minimum

we deserve,” said a displaced villager in Kupwara. In Poonch, which also witnessed heavy shelling over the past few days, casualties were reported earlier in the week. On Friday, Chief Minister Omar Abdullah visited the affected villages, describing the situation as deeply distressing. “Poonch has suffered a huge loss. We are working to ensure relief, assistance, and the safety of residents,” he said. Meanwhile, Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha visited Uri to take stock of the situation. He met the injured at GMC Baramulla, assuring families of full support and promising all possible measures for safety and rehabilitation. “We stand with the people of Uri and other LoC villages in this hour of distress,” he stated. It is noteworthy that the fresh escalation follows the Pahalgalam terror attack, which claimed 26 lives. In response, the Indian Army launched Operation Sindoor, targeting terrorist infrastructure across the border. Since then, tensions have only intensified, pushing border communities once again into the crossfire

## Pope Leo XIV celebrates first Mass after historic election as Pope Francis’ successor

**VATICAN CITY:** Pope Leo XIV celebrates his first Mass on Friday after his historic election as the first North American pope, meeting with the cardinals who chose him to lead the Catholic Church and follow in Pope Francis’ reform-minded footsteps. Leo, the Chicago-born Augustinian missionary Robert Prevost, surprised the world Thursday when he emerged on the loggia of St. Peter’s Basilica, overcoming the traditional prohibition against a pope from the United States. The 69-year-old wore the traditional red cape — which Francis had eschewed on his election in 2013 — and trappings of the papacy, suggesting a



return to some degree of rule-following after Francis’ unorthodox pontificate. But in naming himself Leo, the new pope could also have wanted to signal a strong line of continuity: Brother Leo was the 13th century friar who was a great companion to St. Francis of Assisi, the late pope’s namesake. “Together, we must try to find out how to be a missionary church, a church that builds bridges, establishes dialogue, that’s always open to receive — like on this piazza with open arms — to be able to receive everybody that needs our charity, our presence, dialogue and love,” Leo said in near-perfect Italian in his first comments to the world. Prevost had been a leading candidate for the papacy since Francis tapped him to be head of the Vatican’s powerful Dicastery for Bishops, which vets bishop nominations around the world. There had long been a taboo on a US pope, given America’s superpower status in the secular world, but Prevost prevailed, perhaps because he’s also a Peruvian citizen and had lived for years in Peru, first as a missionary and then as bishop.

Francis, the first Latin American pope, clearly had his eye on Prevost and in many ways saw him as his heir apparent. He sent Prevost to take over a complicated diocese in Peru in 2014, then brought him to the Vatican in 2023. Earlier this year, Francis elevated Prevost into the senior ranks of cardinals, giving him prominence going into the conclave that few other cardinals had. Since arriving in Rome, Prevost had kept a low public profile but was well-known to the men who count. Significantly, he presided over one of the most revolutionary reforms Francis made, when he added three women to the voting bloc that decides which bishop nominations to forward to the pope. “Even the bishops of Peru called him the saint, the Saint of the North, and he had time for everyone,” said the Rev. Alexander Lam, an Augustinian friar from Peru who knows the new pope. The crowd in St. Peter’s Square erupted in cheers Thursday when white smoke poured out of the Sistine Chapel shortly after 6 p.m. on the second day of the conclave. Waving flags from around the world, tens of thousands of people were surprised an hour later when the senior cardinal deacon announced the winner was Prevost.

NOTICE

This is an information for general public that the Name of my Son has been Mistakenly Mentioned in his Birth certificate issued by Municipal Council Bandipora as Muntazir Rayaz, while as his Actual and correct name is Muntazir Rayaz Lone, Now i want to apply for its correction in this regard any person having any objection he/she may file the Objections in office of the Municipal council Bandipora within a period of seven days from the date of the publication of this notice, after that no objection shall be accepted.

**Rayaz Ahmad Lone.**  
**F/O Muntazir Rayaz Lone.**  
**R/O Wanpora Badwan, Gurez,**  
**District Bandipora, jammu and**

US President Donald Trump said it was “such an honour for our country” for the new pope to be American. “What greater honour can there be?” he said. The president added that “we’re a little bit surprised and we’re happy.” An Augustinian pope The last pope to take the name Leo was Leo XIII, an Italian who led the church from 1878 to 1903. That Leo softened the church’s confrontational stance toward modernity, especially science and politics and laid the foundation for modern Catholic social thought. His most famous encyclical, Rerum Novarum of 1891, addressed workers’ rights and capitalism at the beginning of the industrial revolution and was highlighted by the Vatican in explaining the new pope’s choice of name.

Vatican watchers said Prevost’s decision to name himself Leo was particularly significant given the previous Leo’s legacy of social justice and reform, suggesting continuity with some of Francis’ chief concerns. Specifically, Leo cited one of Francis’ key priorities of making the Catholic Church more attentive to lay people and inclusive. “He is continuing a lot of Francis’ ministry,’ said Natalia Imperatori-Lee, the chair of religious studies at Manhattan University in the Bronx. But she also said his election could send a message to the US church, which has been badly divided between conservatives and progressives, with much of the right-wing opposition to Francis coming from there. “I think it is going to be exciting to see a different kind of American Catholicism in Rome,’ Imperatori-Lee said. Archbishop Bernard Hebda, of the Archdiocese of St. Paul and Minneapolis, told reporters he never thought he would see an American pope, given the questions of how he would navigate dealing with a U.S. president, especially someone like Trump. “And so I just never imagined that we would have an American pope, and I have great confidence that Pope Leo will do a wonderful job of navigating that,” he said.

Looking ahead Leo was expected to celebrate Mass with cardinals in the Sistine Chapel on Friday, deliver his first Sunday noon blessing from the loggia of St. Peter’s and attend an audience with the media Monday in the Vatican auditorium, Vatican spokesman Matteo Bruni said. Beyond that, he has a possible first foreign trip at the end of May: Francis had been invited to travel to Turkey to commemorate the 1,700th anniversary of the First Council of Nicaea, a landmark event in Christian history and an important moment in Catholic-Orthodox relations. Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew I, the spiritual leader of the world’s Orthodox Christians, welcomed Leo’s election and said he hoped he would join the anniversary celebration.

The new pope was formerly the prior general, or leader, of the Order of St. Augustine, which was formed in the 13th century as a community of “mendicant” friars—dedicated to poverty, service and evangelization. Vatican News said Leo is the first Augustinian pope. In Peru, he is known as the saintly missionary who waded through mud after torrential rains flooded the region, bringing help to needy people, and as the bishop who spearheaded the lifesaving purchase of oxygen production plants during the COVID-19 pandemic. “He worked so hard to find help, that there was not only enough (money) for one plant, but for two oxygen plants,” said Janinna Sesa, who met Prevost while she worked for the church’s Caritas nonprofit. “He has no problem fixing a broken-down truck until it runs,” she added. (AP)

NOTICE

This is an information for general public that in my Driving licence bearing Registration No: JK-1520100000358, my name has been Mistakenly Mentioned as Mohsin Nazir Dar, while as my Actual and correct name is Mohsin Nazir, S/O Nazir Ahmad Dar. Now i want to apply for its correction in this regard any person having any objection he/she may file the Objections in office of the Assistant Regional Transport Office Bandipora, with in a period of seven days from the date of the publication of this notice after that no objection shall be accepted.

**Nazir Ahmad Dar.**  
**F/O Mohsin Nazir.**  
**R/O S.K -Bala- Sonawari District**  
**Bandipora.**

NOTICE

This is an information for general public that the DOB of my Son has been Mistakenly Mentioned in his school records as, 16-04-2011, while as his Actual and correct DOB as per his Birth certificate is, 16-04-2013. Now i want to apply for its correction in this regard any person having any objection he/she may file the Objections in office of the principal R P School Nadihal Bandipora with in a period of seven days from the date of the publication of this notice, after that no objection shall be accepted.

**Shaheen Iqbal Shah.**  
**F/O Mohammad Hadi Shah.**  
**R/O Nadihal Bandipora , jammu and**  
**kashmir .**



Any delays to the PSL are likely to impact Pakistan's international calendar, too. Bangladesh are due to arrive in Pakistan three days after the PSL final, originally slated for May 18, with the first of five T20Is to begin on May 25 in Faisalabad. The PCB told ESPNcricinfo that no decision had yet been taken on the fate of that series.