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Jammu and Kashmir: Tunnel blocked, migrants die of cold on mountain route

All three deceased were residents of Hinghal village in Ramban district. While two teens were employed at a fast food joint in the Valley, Mohi-ud-Din was a labourer.

Written by **Arun Sharma** | Jammu | Published: April 2, 2020 1:53:46 am

All three deceased were residents of Hinghal village in Ramban district. While two teens were employed at a fast food joint in the Valley, Mohi-ud-Din was a labourer. (File Photo/Representational)

Denied passage through the Jawahar Tunnel to their homes in Jammu, a group of migrants working in Kashmir took a perilous detour through the snow-clad higher reaches of the Pir Panjal range — a decision that proved fatal for three of them, and left another seriously injured.

While three people from the group made it home safely on Tuesday night, Zubair Ahmed (18), Riyaz Ahmed (19), Ghulam Mohi-ud-Din (30) and Parvaiz Ahmed got stuck at Nagimandu, nearly 5 km from Duligam.

As they did not reach home till Wednesday morning, the police, army and locals launched a search for them, only to find them trapped in 4-5 feet of snow.

Illyas Banihali, the head of NGO Crisis Management, who, along with his volunteers, was among the first to reach the victims, said two of the deceased were found alive and even asked for warm water from the villagers.

Before they could be taken to a hospital, however, they breathed their last.

The two teenagers and Mohi-ud-din appeared to have died of extreme cold, he said. The injured man, Parvaiz Ahmed, has been hospitalised at Banihal and his

condition is stated to be stable.
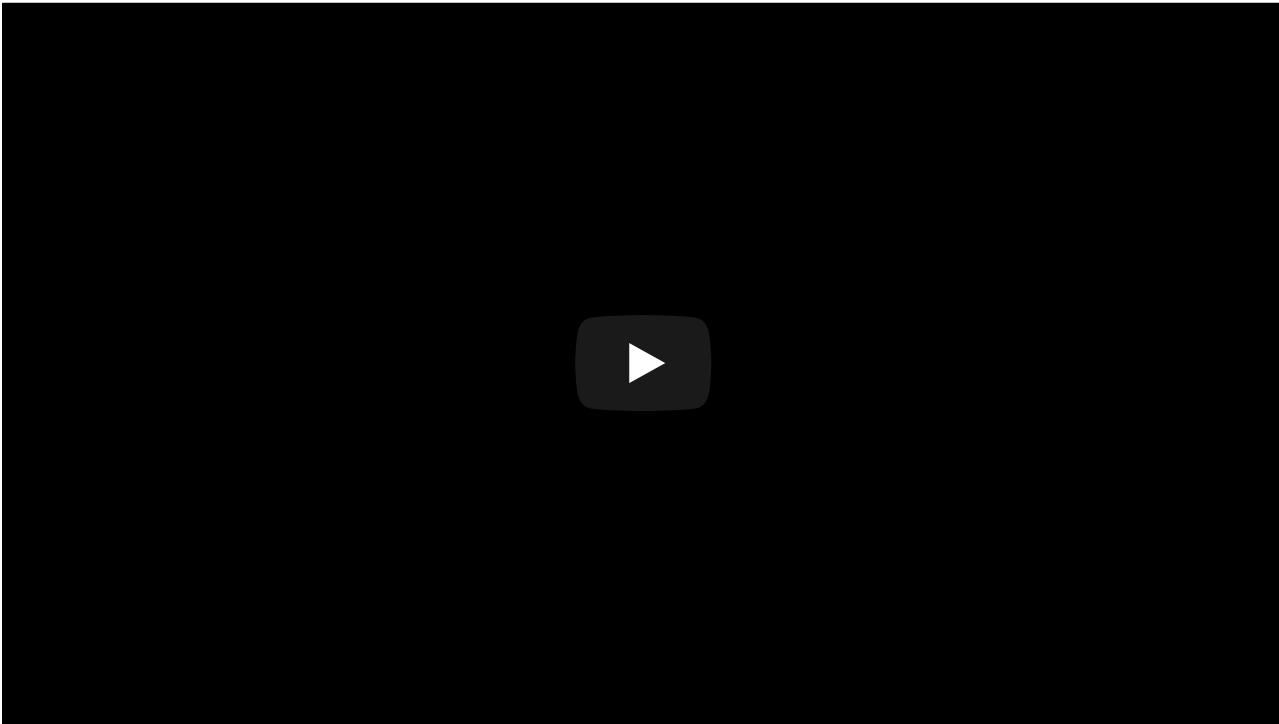
Ramban SSP Haseeb-ur-Rehman said they had chosen to cut short their journey through the mountains, fearing they might not be allowed to pass through Jawahar Tunnel which connects Kashmir's Anantnag district with Jammu's Ramban.

All three deceased were residents of Hinghal village in Ramban district. While two teens were employed at a fast food joint in the Valley, Mohi-ud-Din was a labourer.

The latter, said villagers, had almost made it home, but returned to rescue the other three, fearing that they were lost.

Parvaiz's father, Abdul Majid, said that a vehicle on Monday dropped the group at Qazigund, and from there, they walked nearly 25 km to reach Jawahar Tunnel-only to be denied passage through it. Instead of returning to Srinagar, they went towards Veerinag's Kapran village and stayed at a madrassa for the night. On Tuesday morning, they decided to take an alternate and shorter route through a mountainous peak over Jawahar Tunnel, he added.

Several cases of migrants taking mountainous routes have emerged in recent days. On Tuesday, the police arrested 33 labourers in Doda district who had walked through passes that were closed for heavy snow.

The same day, the Army intercepted 21 labourers and two students who were heading towards Rajouri district's Thanamandi area from Srinagar via Mughal Road. All of them had run out of supplies.

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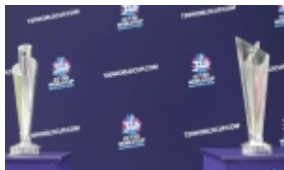
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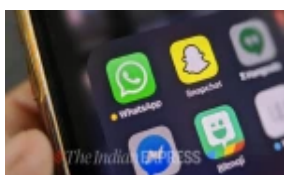Staging T20 World Cup 'very high risk', admits Cricket Australia

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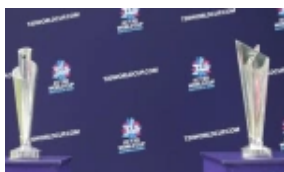Lockdown hairstyle: People want Abhishek Bachchan's signature hairband look

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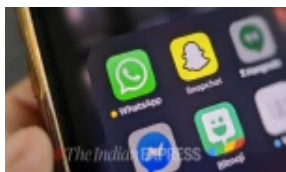## MUST READ

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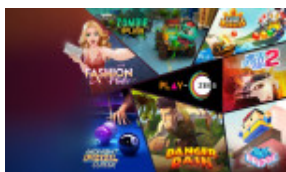New scam alert: Don't share WhatsApp verification PIN with anyone

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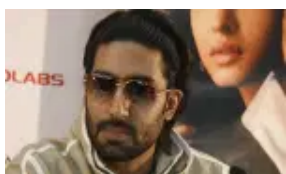## Borderlands: The Handsome Collection is free for a limited time on the Epic Store

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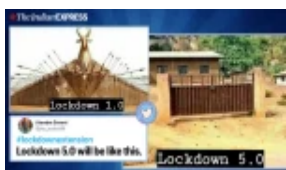
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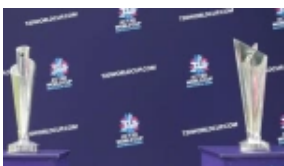

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