



P3 CITY

WATER LOGGING SUBMERGES CITY AREAS

The residents of various localities of Kashmir's capital city Srinagar Friday lamented water logging in the city areas after incessant rains lashed the valley for the last two days. The residents of Mominabad, Batamalo, and Bilal Colony Qamarwari expressed resentment...

P5 THINK

WHY I LIKE TEACHING ON ZOOM

Many accounts of teaching on Zoom or other online platforms recount its horrors. And much is horrible: teachers and students without stable internet connections or adequate technology...



P7 STATE

LADAKH TO GET ALL WEATHER ROAD CONNECTIVITY: LG

Lieutenant Governor of Ladakh RK Mathur Friday said that the Union Territory administration is working tirelessly for all-weather road connectivity...



Age is a hell of a price to pay for wisdom
—George Carlin

NEWS DIGEST**Heart Attack Kills KAS Officer**

SRINAGAR: A Kashmir Administrative Service (KAS) officer on Friday died after suffering a massive heart attack in Udhampur district of Jammu division. Sajad Sumbria, who was presently posted as District Information Officer suffered a heart attack at his residence in Udhampur on early Friday morning following which he [More On P6](#)

2 Deaths, 73 New Cases In J&K

SRINAGAR: Coronavirus claimed lives of two more people in Jammu and Kashmir on Friday, while 73 fresh cases of infection, including twenty-three travellers were detected across the Union Territory during the last 24 hours. Both the deaths, officials said, were reported from Kashmir Valley thus raising the total number of Covid-19 related fatalities in [More On P6](#)

Soldier Dies After Vehicle Rolls Into Stream

SRINAGAR: A soldier was killed and three others injured in a road accident in Damhal Hanjipora in south Kashmir's Kulgam district on Friday morning. An official said that an Army vehicle of 9 Rashtriya Rifles (PARA) met with an accident near Adijan bypass, DH Pora, according to news agency KNO. He said that the vehicle fell into a nallah, in which water flow was [More On P6](#)

Youth Found Dead In Orchard

SRINAGAR: A youth was found dead on Friday in an orchard in Bellow area of south Kashmir's Pulwama district. 30-year-old Sameer Ahmad Rather was found dead in an orchard at Bellow, almost seven kilometres from his residence in Arigam in south Kashmir's Pulwama district, officials said Friday. Rather, they said, had left his [More On P6](#)

Militant Arrested In Doda: Police

JAMMU: Security forces arrested a militant and seized arms and ammunition from a house in Jammu and Kashmir's Doda district on Friday, officials said. A joint cordon and search operation was launched by the Army, the CRPF, the SSB and the JK-Police in Bikheryan village, they said. During the operation, a militant, identified as Firdous Ahmed, was [More On P6](#)



A man raises his hands in supplication as the unseen cleric of Hazratbal Shrine displays a relic believed to be from beard of Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) on the occasion of Me'raj-e-Aalam on Friday. KO Photo, Abid Bhat

Me'raj-e-Aalam Celebrated With Religious Fervor Across Kashmir

Thousands Converge At Hazratbal Shrine To Have Glimpse Of Holy Relic

Agencies

SRINAGAR: Amid COVID-19 pandemic and inclement weather conditions, Shab-e-Me'raj, the night of ascent when the Holy Prophet Muhammad (SAW) ascended to the heavens, was on Friday observed with religious fervor across Jammu and Kashmir. Notably, Muslims every year celebrate on 27th of Rajab (Islamic calendar), the Isra and Me'raj, the two parts of a Night Journey that prophet Muhammad (pbuh) took during a single night around the year 621. Within Islam it

signifies a physical journey. During Me'raj, the command for five daily prayers (Salaat) was also given to the Holy Prophet.

Thousands of devotees from the different parts of the Valley thronged Dargah Hazratbal shrine, housing the relic of the Prophet (Pbuh). However, unlike previous years, no night long prayers were held at Dargah Hazratbal shrine and at the historic Jamia Masjid.

Nonetheless, the devotees offered mandatory Friday congregational prayers at Hazratbal shrine and had a glimpse of the holy relic after

all the prayers today.

Emotional scenes were witnessed at Hazratbal shrine when the holy relic was displayed after every prayer especially after the Friday congregational prayers during which they raised their hands for prayer.

Special prayers were held at almost all the shrines and local Masjids here in Kashmir where the religious clerics highlighted the importance of the night and its blessings. The teachings and aspects of the life of Prophet Muhammad (Pbuh) were also highlighted [More On P6](#)

Grameen Bank Branch 'Looted' In Baramulla

Agencies

Srinagar: An unknown pistol-borne person on Friday afternoon looted a branch of Grameen Bank Branch in Ogmuna, Kunzer Tangmarg area of north-Kashmir's Baramulla district. Reports said that a person made the heist at the bank branch and ran away with cash. A police official said that as per bank officials the unknown gunman fired one pistol round in air this afternoon when most of the staff had gone to offer prayers. Later the gunman, as per bank staff, decamped with around Rs 2.24 lakh, the official said.

Talking to the media about the reported robbery, SSP Abdul Qayoom [More On P6](#)

NARCO-MILITANCY CASE

NIA Seizes Rs 91L Drug Proceeds In Samba

Press Trust Of India

JAMMU: In the ongoing probe into the Handwara narco-militancy case, the National Investigation Agency on Friday recovered Rs 91 lakh concealed in a field in Samba district of Jammu and Kashmir, an NIA spokesperson said.

The recovery was made on the disclosure of five persons, who were arrested on March 1 from Srinagar and Jammu and are presently on a 15-day remand, he said.

"Based upon examination and disclosure of arrested

accused persons, the NIA conducted searches and recovered proceeds of narcotics smuggling to the tune of 91 lakh. The amount was found concealed in a field in Gurval village in the jurisdiction of police station Ramgarh (Samba)," the spokesperson said.

He said an investigation revealed that the arrested accused, Romesh Kumar, had received the cash proceeds of drugs from narco-smugglers based in Kashmir for himself as well as for further channelisation to different militant entities. [More On P6](#)

**STATUS ROW**

DDC Members Meet LG, Govt Says 'Issues Resolved'

Observer Monitoring Desk

JAMMU: The Jammu and Kashmir government said on Friday that "all issues of District Development Council (DDC) representatives have been resolved amicably."

As per a statement issued here, District Development Council delegates met the Lieutenant Governor, Manoj Sinha here at Raj Bhavan.

"The interaction was held in a pleasant and amicable atmosphere," reads the official statement, adding, "Reiterating J&K Government's commitment to safeguarding the interests of DDC representatives, the Lt Governor observed that the three-tier Panchayati Raj system was established

to empower the grass-root democracy."

It further reads: "said Now, the true democracy is flourishing in the UT, which is not merely about governance but feeling of fraternity, brotherhood, and attitude of respect and reverence towards each other. We have to work together to meet the developmental aspirations of the people. The administration will ensure the three-tier Panchayati Raj system is strengthened in the UT, the Lt Governor told the DDC members."

The delegation comprised of DDC Chairpersons, Vice-Chairpersons, and members including Bharat Bhushan, Saraf Singh Nag, Bari Andrabi, Irfan Panditpuri, Ms. Nuzhat Ishfaq, [More On P6](#)

BJP MLA Attempts Suicide By Consuming Sanitiser

Agencies

BHUBANESWAR: A BJP legislator on Friday attempted suicide by consuming sanitiser in the Odisha Assembly over paddy procurement issues in the state.

Subash Chandra Panigrahi, an MLA from Deogarh constituency, tried to consume sanitiser as a mark of protest when Food Supplies and Consumer Welfare Minister Ranendra Pratap Swain was replying to the House on the paddy procurement issues.

Parliamentary Affairs Minister Bikram Keshari Arukha and other legislators managed to prevent Panigrahi from consuming sanitiser and recovered the toxic material from him.

"I tried to consume sanitiser as the state government left me with no option. Even though the farmers' [More On P6](#)

Rains Drench Valley, Snowfall In Parts Of North Kashmir



KO Photo: Abid Bhat

Agencies

SRINAGAR: Most parts of north Kashmir including

Gulmarg and Kupwara besides Pahalgam received fresh snowfall even as incessant rains [More On P6](#)

500 Vehicles Stranded As Landslide Blocks Highway

The 270-km Jammu-Srinagar National Highway was closed for traffic after heavy rain triggered a landslide in Jammu and Kashmir's Ramban district, officials said. Over 500 vehicles are stranded along the highway, the only [More On P6](#)

PDD To Issue New Power Schedule From March 15

Agencies

SRINAGAR: The Power Department has decided to come out with a new curtailment schedule from March 15 if there is improvement in weather in next few days.

Sources said that Advisor to

Lieutenant Governor, Baseer Ahmad Khan has directed officers to prepare the new schedule for supplying electricity from March 15.

Chief Engineer PDD Aijaz Ahmad Dar said they were working to frame a new power curtailment [More On P6](#)

'An Obnoxious Move': Politics Over Pheran Angers Kashmir



Aliza Noor

As rumours ran rampant over the possible pheran proscription recently, many Kashmiris flooded the virtual world with fiery texts and pleasant pictures of their traditional gown.

The defiant act, many argued, showed how intrinsic the winter wear is to the lives of Kashmiris.

But the anger over the growing politicisation of pheran only peaked when photos showed locals in Kashmir being stopped by paramilitary forces—and told to remove their pherans, as part of a fresh and flash security strategy stemming from the recent rattling strike in the heartland.

Pheran is a long woollen garment or cloak which is mostly used in harsh winters to protect oneself from freezing cold. Worn by both Kashmiri Muslims and Kashmiri Pandits, it is one of the most common identity

markers of a Kashmiri.

Before the locals would feel humiliated in a broad day light in the city centre, pheran had become news when rightwing Bajrang Dal called for a ban on the traditional attire. Reportedly, some figures in the ruling party have thrown their weight behind the call.

The demand came after two policemen were shot at point blank range by a militant at Barzulla locality of Srinagar. The militant had concealed the gun under his pheran.

More Than a Piece of Cloth

But as the fringe outfit is fishing in the troubled waters of the valley with its pheran polemics, author and scribe Gowhar Geelani dubs the 'war cry' as a blatant belligerence.

"The call for ban on pheran by far-right Hindu extremist groups is aimed at cultural aggression and to serve rounds



of insult to Kashmiris," Geelani said.

It has nothing to do with any security-related incident, he added. "Even Prime Minister Narendra Modi wore pheran when he visited Kashmir. So, to score a political point it is okay for

politicians to use pheran as a symbol, but a common Kashmiri is deprived from his/her right to respect culture and preserve tradition and identity."

This is also what most of the Kashmiris feel, that while [More On P6](#)

Lower stress levels lead to lesser consumption of fast food

Agencies

The findings of a recent study suggested that overweight low-income mothers of younger kids, after participating in a study, ate lesser fast-food meals and high-fat snacks.

They did so not because the researchers of the study told them to do so, but because the lifestyle intervention being evaluated helped lower their stress. The research is published in a recent issue of the journal *Nutrients*.

The 16-week program was aimed at preventing weight gain by promoting stress management, healthy eating, and physical activity. The methods to get there were simple steps tucked into lessons on time management and prioritising, many demonstrated in a series of videos featuring mothers like those participating in the study.

"We used the women's testimonies in the videos and showed their interactions with their families to raise awareness about stressors. After watching the videos, a lot of intervention participants said, 'This is the first time I've realised I am so stressed out' - because they've lived a stressful life," said Mei-Wei Chang, lead author of the study and associate professor of nursing at The Ohio State University.

"Many of these women are aware of feeling impatient, and having head and neck pain and trouble sleeping - but they don't know those are signs of stress," Chang added.

An analysis of the study data showed that the women's lowered perceived stress after participating in the intervention was the key factor influencing their eventual decrease in consumption of high-fat and fast foods.



Chang said, "It's not that these women didn't want to eat healthier. If you don't know how to manage stress, then when you are so stressed out, why would you care about what you eat?"

The 338 participants, overweight or obese moms between the ages of 18 and 39, were recruited from the Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants, and Children (WIC), which serves low-income mothers and children up to age 5. Those eligible for the program must have an annual household income no higher than 185 percent of the federal poverty line.

Chang said these women are likely to face a number of challenges that could cause them stress: financial difficulties, living in run-down neighbourhoods, frequent moves, unstable romantic relationships and households bustling with little kids. It's also common for this population to retain 10 or more pounds of pregnancy weight after childbirth and risk life-long obesity and potential problems for themselves and new babies if they become pregnant again.

During the trial, the 212 participants randomised into the intervention group watched a total of 10 videos in which women like them gave unscripted testimonials about healthy eating and food preparation, managing their stress, and being physically active. Participants also dialed in to 10 peer support group teleconferences over the course of the study.

Chang and colleagues previously reported that as a group, the women in the intervention arm of the study were more likely to have reduced their fat consumption than women in a comparison group who were given print materials about lifestyle change.

This newer analysis showed that the intervention's lessons alone did not directly affect that change in diet.

When the researchers assessed the potential role of stress as a mediator, the indirect effect of the intervention - reducing participants' perceived stress - was associated with less consumption of high-fat foods, including fast food. A 1-point reduction in the scale measuring stress was linked to a nearly 7 per cent reduction in how frequently the women ate high-fat foods.

The intervention focused on showing the women examples of how they could achieve a healthier and less stressful lifestyle rather than telling them what they had to change.

"I learned a lot from those women. Everything needs to be practical and applicable to daily life - anytime, anywhere," Chang said.

Some examples: Comparing a bag of chips to a bag of apples - the chips might be half the price, but they supply far fewer family snacks. Or using a household responsibility chart to assign tasks to young children, and encouraging moms to reward kids with a hug or individual attention when they follow the instructions. And taking deep breaths to counter the feeling of being overwhelmed.

When it came to stress management, the researchers focused on advising the women to shift their thinking, and not to blame themselves when things go wrong, rather than to take on solving the problems that caused them stress.

"We raised their awareness about stressors in their lives, and unfortunately a lot of these problems are not within their control," Chang said.

"So we teach them ways to control their negative emotions - remember that this is temporary, and you can get through it. And give them the confidence to look to the future," Chang concluded.

Study suggests mindfulness meditation improves quality of life in heart attack survivors

Agencies

An eight-week programme of mindfulness meditation improves the quality of life and reduces fear of activity in heart attack patients, according to recent research.

The research was presented today at ESC Acute Cardiovascular Care 2021, an online scientific congress of the European Society of Cardiology (ESC).

"A heart attack is a serious life-threatening event and survivors can suffer from low quality of life," said study author Dr Canan Karadas of Hacettepe University, Ankara, Turkey. "One reason is a fear of movement, called kinesiophobia, which limits daily activity due to concerns of another heart attack."

"Mindfulness refers to the mental state achieved by focusing awareness on the present moment, including thoughts, feelings, and physical sensations. It has drawn increasing attention to treating chronic conditions such as high blood pressure. Our study examined its effect on fatigue, kinesiophobia, and quality of life after an acute myocardial infarction," continued Dr Karadas.

The study included 56 patients who had experienced a heart attack. The average age at enrolment was 55 years. Participants were randomly assigned to a mindfulness or control group for eight weeks. Patients in the control group attended one 15-minute individual education session on the structure and function of the heart, the coronary arteries, and diseases of the heart.

Patients assigned to the mindfulness intervention attended an individual session which included a 15-minute description of the technique. This was followed by 15 minutes of supervised practice: patients were asked to sit comfortably on a chair with their backs straight and eyes closed.

They were then instructed to breathe deeply - inhaling through the nose and exhaling through the mouth using the diaphragm - and focus on their breathing and the present moment. Participants received a recording of the instructions via WhatsApp and were asked to repeat the 15-minute



session every day at home in a quiet room. Daily reminders (text messages or phone calls) were used to motivate patients to practice the meditation and to evaluate their compliance with the study protocol.

Fatigue, kinesiophobia, and quality of life were assessed at baseline and weeks four, eight and 12 using the Piper Fatigue Scale, Tampa Scale for Kinesiophobia Heart questionnaire, and MacNew Heart Disease Health-Related Quality of Life questionnaire which examines patients' feelings about how their heart condition affects daily function overall and in three areas (physically, emotionally, and socially).

At baseline, there were no differences in the three variables between the intervention and control groups. By week four, patients in the mindfulness group had less fear of movement compared to the control group - a benefit that was sustained at weeks eight and 12. Patients in the mindfulness group had better quality of life overall and in all three areas than those in the control group at week eight, while at week 12 they continued to report better emotional function. Measurements of fatigue did not vary between the two groups at any time point.

Dr Karadas noted that participants only reported mild fatigue at the beginning of the study which may explain why meditation did not have any impact.

She said: "Our study shows that mindfulness can reduce fear of movement and improve quality of life in heart attack survivors, with effects extending beyond the completion of the intervention. One explanation may be that meditation replaces catastrophic thinking with positive thoughts, making patients feel less emotionally and physically vulnerable."

'Pregnant women have higher anxiety levels compared to fertility patients'

Agencies

Pregnant women had higher levels of anxiety compared to fertility patients during the Covid pandemic, according to the findings of an online survey in Japan.

The findings were published in the *Journal of Affective Disorders Reports*.

"The pandemic has changed the social environments of pregnant women and fertility patients," says Tohoku University clinical psychologist Koubon Wakashima.

For example, restrictions in Japan meant that pregnant women have been unable to participate in group parenting classes or travel to their parents' homes to receive traditional childbirth assistance. Medical institutions in the country reported fewer women accessing infertility treatments.



Wakashima and colleagues at Tohoku University, Hokkaido University and the National Foundation of Brief Therapy posted a survey on several pregnancy and fertility websites towards the end of May and the beginning of June 2020. Almost 300 pregnant women and 13 women undergoing

fertility treatment responded to a Japanese version of the Fear of COVID-19 Scale, originally developed by Iranian researchers.

Analyses of the surveys revealed that pregnant women in Japan had higher levels of anxiety compared to fertility patients. Their anxiety levels were associated with increased stockpiling and monitoring of their own health. Pregnant women who considered social networking services an important information source expressed lower levels of anxiety compared to those who preferred newspapers and TV.

The pandemic has changed the social environments of pregnant women and fertility patients

Finally, the researchers compared the results of their survey to a similar one done in Iran and found

that pregnant Japanese women demonstrated higher levels of anxiety compared to pregnant Iranian women.

The scientists acknowledge that their study has several limitations regarding, for example, the ability to assess strict causal relationships between anxiety and various coping behaviours, and a lack of detailed information on the media content the women were accessing.

Nevertheless, they suggest the results indicate the importance of improving communications that can help pregnant women cope with feelings of anxiety in addition to relaying information on infection prevention.

The team next aims to analyse how fear of COVID-19 varies by occupation and by time of year. They also plan to investigate how one person's fears impact other family members.

University of Kashmir, Srinagar Notice

The candidate whose particulars are given below has reported to the University that he / she has lost his/her University Certificate/s and has applied for issuance of duplicate certificate/s:

Name: Tariq Ahamd Sheikh
Parentage:- Gh Mohi-ud-din Sheikh
Residence:- Pinjoora Tangmarg Bla
Registration No : 1596-BC-2004
Certificate/s lost:- 1st , 2nd and 3rd Year Marks Card

Roll No/s:- 29510, 12625, 10726
Session/ Year : Dec 2006- Feb 2007, Dec 2007- Feb 2008, Dec 2008 - Jan 2009

Before University will consider issuance of Duplicate Certificate/s in favour of the candidate, any person having any objection shall report to the undersigned within one week from the date of issuance of this notice. The original certificate/s issued to the candidate be treated as cancelled

No: F(Duplicate/) KU Assistant Controller of Examinations (PG/UG/Prof)



The Jammu and Kashmir State Board Of School Education Branch Baramulla Notice for General Public

The applicant/ candidate whose photograph is published in this notice and claiming to have lost her qualification certificate/s issued under S.No/s 011647 pertaining to HSE -II (12th) respectively, as per below mentioned details:-

Name: Tariq Ahamd Sheikh
Parentage:- Gh Mohi-ud-din Sheikh
Residence:- Pinjoora (Kawarhama) Tangmarg Bla

Details of Certificate lost
Secondary School Examination (Class 10th)
Roll No/s :- 373212 year & session 2001
Date of Birth:- 05-04-1994 Reuslt :- Pass

The said candidate has approach to this office for issuance of Duplicate Qualification /Marks Certificate/s, so before the same is processed and provided to the candidate, under rules, anybody having any objection in this regard, may file his/her objection in the office of hthe undersigned within a period of seven days from the date of publication of this notice. After that no objection shall be entertained.

(Besides the above referred "Qualification / Marks Certificate/s" be treated as "CANCELLED")

No: F(Cer is-I-DQC)/B/KD/17
Dated 15-01-2018
bmg



Assistant Secretary
Branch Office Baramulla

Jammu & Kashmir Water Resources Regulatory Authority

November - April
Ashok Nagar, Satwari, Jammu - 180004.
Tele No.: 0191-2458845 Fax No.:2458930.



May - October
Syed Chowk, Brein Nishat, Srinagar-191121.
Tele No. 0194 - 2461829, Fax No.: 2461867

Website :www.jkswwra.nic.in, E-mail : swrrajk@gmail.com

OFFICE ACCOMODATION REQUIRED ON RENT

The Jammu & Kashmir Water Resources Regulatory Authority requires office accommodation at Srinagar as per the details mentioned below: -

Rooms with attach Washroom = 10 Nos.
Rooms without Washroom = 16 Nos.
Hall = 3 Nos.
Common Washroom = 3 Nos.

The accommodation should be on the road side and should have parking space for at least ten vehicles. The interested parties can contact the JKWRA at the following Nos.:-

Tele No.: 0191-2458845
Fax No.: 0191-2458930

Sd/-Executive Engineer J&K Water Resources Regulatory Authority

DIPK-NB-6338/20



DRIZZLING DEVOTION: On the eve of Me'raj-e-Alam, faithful thronged the Hazratbal shrine amid rains on Friday.

Restrictions On Mirwaiz Tightened: APHC

Observer News Service

Srinagar: All Parties Hurriyat Conference Friday said its chairman Mirwaiz Umar Farooq who is under house arrest since August 2019, was again not allowed to offer Friday prayers at central Jamia Masjid in Srinagar.

In a statement, APHC said, "After the authorities went back on their decision to release the Hurriyat chairman last Friday, and people at Jamia Masjid protested against it, the restrictions on the Mirwaiz have been further tightened and even his personal staff is not allowed to go inside his premises."

On the other hand authorities in Downtown Srinagar are conducting nocturnal raids and arresting young boys and booking them under PSA to create fear," it added.

"APHC said such moves are highly regrettable and authoritarian to say the least. Forced suppression is no guarantee to peace," the statement said.

APHC said the authorities should release the Mirwaiz and all political prisoners and youth languishing in detention centers and jails and engage in constructive dialogue with all stakeholders for peaceful resolution of the Kashmir issue and peace in the subcontinent.

Landslide Hits Power Canal Disrupting Water Supply To Srinagar Parts

Observer News Service

Srinagar: The water supply to Srinagar's Downtown, Soura, Lal Bazar and other adjacent areas is likely to remain affected after a landslide occurred in a power canal at Nuner Ganderbal on Friday.

Officials said that the water supply from Preng in Ganderbal has been curtailed following an occurrence of a landslip in a power canal in the district which is the main raw water source to entire water supply system of Rangil.

"This is to inform our residents that water supply from the Rangil treatment plant has been curtailed after the raw water supply from Preng in Ganderbal was reduced following an occurrence of a landslip in a power canal in the district," district administration Srinagar tweeted.

In another tweet, the administration said that the water supply from the plant will remain affected until completion of ongoing restoration work in the affected canal.

"The supply from the plant will remain affected until completion of ongoing restoration work in the affected canal. Thank you," it tweeted.

Meanwhile, officials said that men and machinery have been pressed into services and the repairing process is being carried out overnight and is likely to be completed by tomorrow—(KNO)

Waterlogging Submerges City Areas

Residents Blame Defunct Drainage System, Demand Dewatering Pumps

Observer News Service

Srinagar: The residents of various localities of Kashmir's capital city Srinagar Friday lamented water logging in the city areas after incessant rains lashed the valley for the last two days.

The residents of Mominabad, Batamaloo, and Bilal Colony Qamarwari expressed resentment against the authorities for failing to provide a proper drainage system in the area saying that it has caused a flood-like situation in their respective areas.

"In absence of drainage facility, lanes and by-lanes are submerged. It has become difficult for us to even venture out of our homes. The snow has started to melt and water has seeped into the foundations of our houses. Walls of various houses have developed cracks," said Iftikhar Alam, a resident of Qamarwari.

Failure of authorities to construct drainage system in Batamaloo and Qamarwari roads is also taking a heavy toll on the locals.

"We are facing a lot of hardships for the last few months," the residents said, "a

Commissioner SMC Reviews De-watering Exercise

Srinagar: The Srinagar Municipal Corporation (SMC) Friday started de-watering submerged areas in the early hours of the morning and pressed into the services both the mobile and stationed pumps across the city, particularly at the vulnerable points.

An SMC statement said that following reports of waterlogging, Commissioner SMC Athar Amir Khan took an extensive review on dewatering progress after extensive field visits at different working stations and areas under submergence to take stock of de-watering exercise that is going on constantly because of unprecedented showers.

He visited dewatering stations at Sonwar, Regal Lane, Jehangir Chowk, Nursing Garh, Zampa Kadal, Darish Kadal, Shaheen Colony Palpora, Bemina, Mominabad and Batamaloo.

Commissioner passed on directions to the concerned to keep dewatering stations in full operational mode round the clock and keep the standby diesel/generator sets in a state of readiness at the permanent dewatering stations.

He reiterated both men and machines should work on war footing to ensure no civilian faces any inconvenience due to the rainwater.

The officials apprised Commissioner SMC of the ground situation and the men and machinery in place to dewater inundated areas.

number of times we appealed government but till date our problems are not addressed, it is a total failure of government," the residents said.

The choked drains in city areas, according to aggrieved locals of various

localities, allow waterlogging, resulting in immense hardships to commuters and locals. The residents of Mehjoor Nagar said water logging forced locals to stay indoors.

Locals at other areas like Rambagh said that due to the choking of drains in absence of cleaning, pungent smell has engulfed the area. "We have many times requested the concerned authorities to undertake cleaning of the drains, however, no action has been taken so far," said Me'raj-ur-Rehman, one of the locals.

Residents of Jawahar Nagar, Bemina and its adjoining areas also complained of water-logging. A senior official of Srinagar Municipal Corporation said that a permanent de-watering station is working "round the clock" for clear city roads.

The residents of both the areas said that they have repeatedly demanded de-watering pumps as the water has entered their homes and damaged the plinth.

They also added that they have repeatedly appealed concerned authorities but no heed is paid to their pleas.

Azadi Ka Amrut Mahotsav Dal Lake Hosts Shikara Rally

Observer News Service

SRINAGAR: In connection with the celebrations of Azadi Ka Amrut Mahotsav, a Shikara rally was held at Dal Lake.

The rally was flagged off by the Advisor to Lieutenant Governor, Baseer Ahmad Khan from SKICC lawns on the banks of Dal Lake here.

As many as 100 Shikaras were part of the grand rally which culminated at Nehru Park.

Divisional Commissioner Kashmir, Pandurang K Pole; Deputy Commissioner Srinagar Dr Shahid Iqbal Choudhary; VC Lakes & Water Ways Authority, Director Tourism Kashmir, Director Rural Development Kashmir, Director Education Kashmir, Commissioner SMC and other senior officers were present on the occasion.

Mayor SMC, Junaid Azim Mattu, DDC Chairmen, members of District Development Councils and large number of people also took part in the Shikara rally.



Later, a cultural event was organised at Nehru Park during which variety of cultural programmes were presented to mark the first leg of the nationwide event India@75 for celebrating 75 years of Independence of India.

Srinagar Youth Starts Milk ATM Service

Observer News Service

Srinagar: After the first Milk ATM installed in South Kashmir's Pulwama district, a young man has opened an outlet in Baghat area of Srinagar.

Danish Rafi Masoodi, a B. Tech Civil Engineer, after completing his studies in 2018, said rather than applying for a job, he decided to start his own business.

"After completing my studies, I explored some options for business besides making some more preparations for further studies. However, I had already made my mind that I won't go for a job and start a business," Masoodi said while.

Masoodi said they have a chilling and collection centre in Newa area of district Pulwama where they have a direct tie-up with dairy farms and producers.

"After the milk is tested, the milk goes to end-user through Milk ATMs which is attached with the milk cooler keeping milk at 4°C," he said. "We also have consumers registered with us to whom we delivery milk at home."

DIAL-EMMA



- TRAFFIC POLICE : 9419993745, 01998-266686
- PCR: 0194-2452092,2455883
- PDD: 0194-2450213
- FIRE AND EMERGENCY SERVICES : 2479488,2452222,2452155
- CAPD: 18001807011
- SMC HEALTH OFFICER: 9469409081

AIRPORTS

SHIEK UL ALAM AIRPORT: 01942303311



RAILWAYS



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

HIGHWAY STATUS



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



HIJRI
CALENDAR
28 Rajab
1442

PRAYERS

FAJR	5: 22
ZUHR	12: 41
ASR	4:55
Magrib	6:39
ISHA	8:00

This Day In History

- 1567 - Battle at Oosterweel: Spanish troops destroy Geuzenleger
- 1569 - Battle of Jarnac, Count of Anjou defeats Huguenots
- 1591 - Battle at Tondibi: Moroccan army under Judar defeats Sultan Askia Ishaq II of Songhai
- 1865 - Confederate President Jefferson Davis signs bill authorizing use of slaves as soldiers (US Civil War)
- 1881 - Alexander II of Russia is assassinated by members of far-left terror group 'People's Will' who throw a bomb at him in the city of St. Petersburg
- 1884 - Siege of Khartoum, Sudan begins by Mahdist forces, lasts 10 months
- 1900 - British troops occupy Bloemfontein, capital of the Orange Free State (Boer War)
- 1911 - The Colonial-Born and Settlers Indian Association is formed at a meeting in Durban, South Africa, and has at its aim to fight the infamous 3 poll tax
- 1912 - Bulgaria and Serbia conclude an alliance pact ostensibly against Austria, but it secretly provides for a possible war against Turkey
- 1918 - Trotsky gains control of the Red Army
- 1920 - After the German government is forced to cut its army to 10,000 men, military groups plot an unsuccessful coup - a revolt ended by a general strike
- 1921 - Mongolia (formerly Outer Mongolia) declares independence from China
- 1922 - George Bernard Shaw's "Back to Methusaleh V" premieres in NYC
- 1935 - Driving tests introduced in Great Britain
- 1938 - In a process known as Anschluss, Austria is annexed into Nazi Germany
- 1938 - World News Roundup is broadcast for the first time on CBS Radio in the United States.
- 1943 - Failed assassin attempt on Hitler during Smolensk-Rastenburg flight
- 1963 - Indonesia & Netherlands reinstate diplomatic relations
- 1964 - Turkey threatens Cyprus with armed attack
- 1969 - Apollo 9 returns to Earth
- 1970 - Digital Equipment Corp introduces PDP-11 minicomputer
- 1973 - Syria adopts constitution
- 1986 - Soyuz T-15 carries 2 cosmonauts to Soviet space station Mir
- 1986 - Microsoft has its Initial public offering.
- 1989 - 27th shuttle, Discovery 8, launched, 1st woman to do the countdown
- 1989 - FDA orders recall of all Chilean fruit in US
- 1991 - Saudi Arabia and Iran say OPEC oil production cuts will take effect April 1
- 1992 - An earthquake registering 6.8 on the Richter scale kills over 500 in Erzincan, eastern Turkey.
- 1995 - Anti-fascist Kazakhstan anti-parliament forms
- 1997 - India's Missionaries of Charity chooses Sister Nirmala to succeed Mother Teresa as its leader
- 1997 - Phoenix lights seen at night over Phoenix, Arizona by hundreds of people, and by millions on television. Now a hotly debated controversy.
- 2003 - The journal Nature reports that 350,000-year-old footprints of an upright-walking human have been found in Italy
- 2012 - 19 people are shot dead in a bus attack in Ethiopia
- 2012 - Encyclopaedia Britannica announces that it will no longer publish printed versions of its encyclopaedia
- 2012 - 110 people are killed and 63 are missing after a ferry collides with an oil tanker near Dhaka, Bangladesh
- 2012 - 28 people, including 22 children, are killed in a motorway bus crash near Sierre, Switzerland
- 2013 - 10 people are killed by a suicide bombing in Kunduz province, Afghanistan
- 2013 - The European Parliament rejects a European Union budget for the first time
- 2013 - An Embraer 821 aeroplane crashes and kills 9 people in Para, Brazil
- 2013 - North Korea shreds the Korean Armistice agreement
- 2014 - After protests earlier this month, the Israeli parliament votes 65 to 1 for legislation that ends exemptions from military service for ultra-Orthodox Jewish seminary students
- 2015 - Cyclone Pam causes widespread damage in Vanuatu and the South Pacific, including 15-16 deaths.
- 2016 - Suicide Bombing in Ankara, Turkey kills 37 people

From KO Archives

Musharraf Accepts Cricket Invitation

ISLAMABAD - Pakistani President Pervez Musharraf has accepted an offer to travel to India to watch the cricket series between the two countries.

A Pakistan Foreign Ministry spokesman said Gen Musharraf had yet to decide which matches he would be attending.

It will be his first trip to India since a tense summit meeting between the two countries in Agra in 2001.

"We are looking at the schedule of the president," foreign office spokesman Jalil Abbas Jilani told foreign news agency.

"It depends on the convenience of the president," he added.

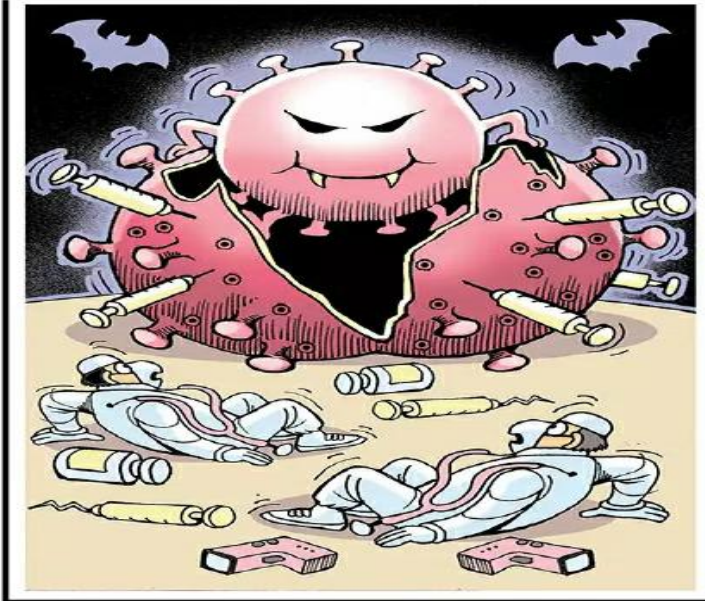
Indian Prime Minister Manmohan Singh told parliament he hoped the president and his family would enjoy their visit.

(Kashmir Observer, 13 March, 2005)

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NO HOLDS BARRED



To advance the peace process, the leadership of both countries must think outside the box and act decisively. While there is a potential for strong domestic backlash, Pakistan should recognise the Line of Control as a permanent border

India Pakistan Ceasefire

Modi-Khan Re-Engagement?



Saad Hafiz

The recent announcement of a ceasefire along the Line of Control in Kashmir between India and Pakistan is welcome news. It would be naive to think that the peace process will be easy, given the tragic history of the region. But recognizing the futility of conflict between nuclear-armed neighbors is a good start. The specter of mutually assured destruction is a strong wake-up call for long-time adversaries

The recent announcement of a ceasefire along the Line of Control in Kashmir between India and Pakistan is a welcome news. While the de-escalation was initiated by the respective militaries, it is an opportunity for a broader thaw in relations. The restoration of frozen diplomatic engagements and people-to-people contacts can be logical next steps.

It would be naive to think that the peace process will be easy, given the tragic history of the region. The hot-button issues of Kashmir and cross-border terrorism continue to bedevil mutual ties. But recognizing the futility of conflict between nuclear-armed neighbors is a good start. The specter of mutually assured destruction is a strong wake-up call for long-time adversaries.

Cutting military losses and civilian deaths helps in calming public opinion. But it will take a lot of confidence-building to speed up peace efforts. As in the past, hardliners on both sides with a vested interest in continued conflict could play a disruptive role. We should expect setbacks, mishaps, and, probably, occasional skirmishes going forward.

Both countries have drifted far away from the good neighborly relations desired by earlier leaders. Mahatma Gandhi said "both India and Pakistan are my country" days before his assassination by a Hindu extremist. Mohammad Ali Jinnah, the founder of Pakistan, wanted India and Pakistan to have "an association similar to that between the US and Canada."

The hope and momentum for peace from the 2003 ceasefire quashed by the 2008 Mumbai terrorist attacks, blamed on elements based in Pakistan. In turn, Pakistan accused India of dragging its feet on resolving the Kashmir issue. But neither country should forego the opening created



by the current stoppage of hostilities, despite expected stumbling blocks.

The 1972 Shimla Agreement, mutually agreed to by India and Pakistan, can serve as a blueprint to rebuild mutual relations. Its guiding principles emphasise respect for each other's territorial integrity and sovereignty; non-interference in each other's internal affairs; respect for each other's unity, political independence; sovereign equality; and renouncing hostile propaganda.

Conditions on the ground do favor India. Prime Minister Modi goes from strength to strength. His Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) has expanded its electoral footprint across the country. Modi has shrug-off well-founded criticism that his Hindu majoritarian nationalism is eroding Indian secular and democratic traditions. The Indian economy appears to be handling the negative effects of the Covid-19 pandemic reasonably well. A re-occurrence of India's recent serious

border incidents with a much stronger China seems to be the only major threat on the horizon.

On the other hand, Prime Minister Imran Khan recently won a narrow vote of confidence from the lower house of Parliament. The Pakistan economy is a basket case, overburdened by loans and teetering on default. Khan doesn't have the strong performance record and immense political capital to match Modi. For now, Khan can count on the support of his powerful military benefactors. In any case, the push for peace with India will need the blessing of the all-powerful Pakistan military that has veto power on national security decisions.

The United States and China can play a key role in reducing tensions between India and Pakistan. The US's interest is that India remains focused on developing its economic and military might to serve as a counterweight to China. Similarly, China is keen to as-

sist Pakistan's military modernization aimed at containing India. But it doesn't want to risk the billions it has invested in the struggling Pakistan economy in case of an India-Pakistan conflict.

To advance the peace process, the leadership of both countries must think outside the box and act decisively. While there is a potential for strong domestic backlash, Pakistan should recognise the Line of Control as a permanent border. It must end assistance for the lingering insurgency in Indian Kashmir through the infiltration of militant fighters. India must cease the widespread human rights violations against its Kashmiri citizens.

It is time to find the political will to end the perpetual animosity and bloodshed. This means giving up hubris and triumphalism and reviving the bonds of shared culture, religion, race, and language. The unfortunate practice of feeding delusional nationalisms must halt.

India and Pakistan should focus on the common challenges of poverty, unemployment, and climate change. They must strive for open borders, thriving trade, and strengthening regional connectivity. Achieving honorable and sustainable peace, however difficult, is the only way forward.

Views expressed in the article are the author's own and do not necessarily represent the editorial stance of Kashmir Observer

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China's Uighurs: The Case For Genocide Has Been Made. Will The World Act?



Myriam François

In 2014, Chinese President Xi Jinping launched the "people's war on terror" in southern Xinjiang, where Uighurs make up nearly 90 percent of the population. Describing the area as the front line in the battle against "religious extremism", the Chinese government launched "re-education camps" - now home to around a million people - and subjected detainees to forced labour, sterilisation, rape and torture, in what appears to be a top-down drive to eradicate the culture and identity of China's Muslim minorities.

Xi urged his party to emulate aspects of the US "war on terror" after a series of deadly attacks that China blamed on Uighur extremists. Since then, evidence has mounted of a state-led terrorism campaign, which the Chinese government denies. The international community has been cautious about indicting China for several reasons; chief among them are economic ties.

If the visible commission of genocide holds no consequence, what is the meaning of any other international law?

- John Packer, University of Ottawa

China accounts for over a fifth of the world's cotton supply, widely used throughout the global fashion industry and consumed around the globe. Foreign

investment in China was up 31 percent in 2020 to around £110bn (\$153bn), with China among the UK's top five trade partners. China contributed £13.6bn (\$18.9bn) to the UK's underlying total trade deficit in the first half of 2020, more than any other country in that period.

This goes some way towards explaining UK Prime Minister Boris Johnson's expression of "grave concerns" about rights abuses in Xinjiang, without a declaration of genocide. But pressure is growing for his party to accept the verdict of a proposed parliamentary judicial committee, which could determine whether genocide is being committed by a trade partner, thus calling the UK-China relationship into question.

The EU, too, is highly reliant on trade with China. In January, members of the European Parliament condemned the European Commission for signing a controversial investment agreement with China, saying it undermined the EU's credibility on human rights, given the absence of any means to enforce Chinese assurances over the eradication of forced labour in Xinjiang.

The strongest condemnation so far has come from the former Trump administration, which described events in China as a genocide in January - a line the Biden administration seems intent on maintaining. But while evidence has been mounting for years of a systematic campaign by Chinese officials, no country has thus far been able to bring forward a legal determination of genocide, as this is a matter for the International Criminal Court - but China's UN Security Council seat means it can veto any referral to the ICC.

Unequivocal determination

Now, however, a groundbreaking report by more than 50 independent



If the visible commission of genocide holds no consequence, what is the meaning of any other international law

experts in international law, genocide, China's ethnic policies and the Xinjiang region has concluded that China is committing genocide against the Uighurs, in breach of the UN Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide, to which China and 151 other states are parties.

The 25,000-word report arrives at a historic and unequivocal genocide determination, based on international law and the relevant binding treaty, the Genocide Convention, applied to the available evidence. It concludes that as a highly centralised, authoritarian state in full control of its territory, population and state agents, China cannot dissociate itself from the range of policy, law and practice constituting genocide, and thus bears responsibility for violations of the Genocide Convention.

While statements such as the US declaration of a Uighur genocide represent

a policy condemnation, a formal breach of the Genocide Convention could have serious legal implications, most notably by enabling those responsible for the genocide to be arrested in countries that are signatories.

The report details the Chinese state's intent to destroy the Uighurs based on explicit statements, policy directives and legal regulations

The report details the Chinese state's intent to destroy the Uighurs based on explicit statements, policy directives and legal regulations originating at the highest levels, with Xi, as recently as September 2020, vowing to continue these policies for years to come.

The report presents evidence that China plans to continue these policies until Uighurs and other Muslim nationalities "would be extinct", with high-level officials following orders to "round up everyone", "wipe them out completely ... destroy them root and branch", and "break their lineage, break their roots, break their connections and break their origins". Officials repeatedly characterised the mass internment of Uighurs in dehumanising terms, such as "eradicating tumours" and spraying weeds with "chemicals to kill them all".

'Moment of truth'

The ultimate hope is that other state parties to the Genocide Convention will take urgent action to fulfil their obligations under the treaty, and that businesses who source their products in the region will reassess and withdraw, or shift their supply chains.

John Packer, a law professor at the University of Ottawa and one of the report's contributors, compared its conclusion to "a Munich moment". Asked whether the world can continue to look away, he responded: "Unlike 1938, there

now exist express norms and standards, and there is abundant evidence in hand as a result of global information technology. And there is far greater interdependence. But has the world learned anything? This is a moment of truth - for leadership and also for creativity in finding a way forward... for talented but principled diplomacy. It cannot be a moment of moral failure."

Unlike much of the political tussle over global ascendancy, particularly between the US and China, the report relies on international law. The finding of ongoing violations of the Genocide Convention obliges the 151 other state parties to act, Packer said. "To ignore it or soft-pedal would be a challenge to the entire rules-based international order. If the visible commission of genocide holds no consequence, what is the meaning of any other international law?"

Asked what concrete measures could be expected to flow from this report, Packer said: "While individual states may and should take appropriate steps, beginning with careful attention not to be complicit in any way (such as contributing to or benefiting through trade), all manner of diplomatic responses should be considered (such as withdrawal from the Olympics) and permissible actions on trade, investment and other engagements and relations. Business as usual cannot be the outcome. An emergency meeting of the UN Security Council should be called, with a coordinated response on the multilateral level."

This report represents the most significant legal consensus yet to emerge on genocide in China. The question now is whether the very foundations of our international system of law will be upheld, and at what cost.

Why I like teaching on Zoom

There may be less human warmth but there can be more human connection

Viet Thanh Nguyen

But multimedia lectures work easily and even better on Zoom. I no longer have to memorise students' names — their names are listed underneath their faces. And on Zoom, the students get a close-up of the photos and video clips, and with the lectures automatically recorded, they can review them or, if they miss a lecture, listen to them later

Many accounts of teaching on Zoom or other online platforms recount its horrors. And much is horrible: teachers and students without stable internet connections or adequate technology; too much intimacy, with overcrowded homes that teachers or students might find embarrassing for others to see; and not enough intimacy, with the human connection attenuated online.

As a college professor, I, too, miss some of the elements of teaching in a classroom, including the intellectual energy that can flow around a seminar table, the performative aspect of lecturing to a large audience and the little chats that take place by happenstance during breaks or after class with students.

What I don't miss is my 10-mile drive to campus and back. I don't miss pondering my wardrobe choices in the morning. The relative informality of the Zoom era means that I would feel overdressed if I wore a blazer to teach. And if I don't wear a blazer, I don't have to wear slacks. Or put on shoes. Why would I wear shoes inside my house, anyway?

More important, with my smaller graduate classes of 10 to 20 students, I have noticed little fall-off in intellectual quality. Looking at 10 or 20 faces on a screen is manageable, and the experience is a pretty faithful replication of a real-world seminar. Break-out rooms for smaller discussions are simple to arrange, and they lack the cacophony of overheard conversations in live settings. My teaching evaluations have been positive if a little less effusive than usual, perhaps because of the lack of human warmth that being face to face makes possible.

Videoconferencing also allows for meetings with far-flung participants elsewhere in the country — or in other countries — that would have been too expensive and environmentally wasteful to convene in the live era. Now it's customary to have a visitor call in from across the country or an ocean and to conduct seminars with colleagues from around the world. Less human warmth, but more human connection.



Stultifying on video

I am now teaching about a hundred undergraduate students in a class on the American war in Vietnam. If a lecture is only someone talking for an hour, that can indeed be stultifying on video — but that would also be true in a classroom.

Back in the live era, I did my best to animate my lectures by roaming the lecture hall, memorising the students' names so I could call on them, encouraging questions and using PowerPoint slides replete with photos, historical quotations and clips of movies and documentaries.

Teachers who haven't done multimedia lectures might reasonably experience an extra burden of work preparing them for Zoom.

But multimedia lectures work easily and even better on Zoom. I no longer have to memorise students' names — their names are listed underneath their faces. And on Zoom, the students get a close-up of the photos and video clips, and with the lectures automatically recorded, they can review them or, if they miss a lecture, listen to them later.

Surprisingly, the discussions in my video classes have been better than those in the live era. I don't

need to look out at a sea of a hundred stone faces or a hundred blank boxes. Instead, I ask a half-dozen students to participate in a student panel for each lecture; I call on them and ask them questions throughout the lecture, which means the class doesn't have to listen to just me all the time. It turns out that the students are much less shy speaking on video than they might be before a live audience. Less human warmth, but less stage fright.

Student chatter in class is now also fun. I wouldn't want students chatting in a live class, but I like seeing their occasional exclamations in the chat window, as when one amazed student said of Country Joe and the Fish's 1965 song "I-Feel-Like-I'm-Fixin'-to-Die Rag" that "this song kind of slaps."

Polling students' opinions is easy, too. I tried to do this with hand-held clickers years ago; the technology was costly and cumbersome.

There are also some environmental benefits to video teaching. Though digital interfacing still has a green cost (a fact that many people overlook), it can be less than that of physical interfacing. As I write this during my office hours, for which no student has ever shown up, I take comfort in knowing that I did not have to drive to

campus to sit in an office waiting for no one to come.

To be sure, I'm a college professor; I don't assume that what's true for me is true for, say, elementary-school teachers. It's no doubt true that smaller children need less screen time and benefit from being in one another's company, while being forced into isolation at home has been damaging to many.

I'm also aware that whether or not one enjoys video teaching as a teacher or student is saturated with issues of temperament, learning preference or ability, access, space, student-teacher ratio and quality of technology (and comfort with using it).

But those issues affect live classrooms as well, which means that technology or the lack of it, Zoom or no Zoom, is perhaps less important to a good educational experience than socioeconomic equity, the competence of teachers and the willingness of students.

Finally, I'm mindful that many college teachers are already underpaid, have too many students, are always on call and have no job security. It's easy to imagine a situation where video conferencing allows for even greater demands on overworked teachers.

But again, the problem is not so much with the technology as with an exploitative academic marketplace where the majority of college teachers are not on the tenure track and have become "freeway fliers", driving from one gig to another on different campuses. At least with Zoom, they don't have to drive to be exploited.

We are all now participants in a forced experiment in mass online teaching. Many might go back with relief to in-person teaching after the pandemic, but it seems likely that some of video conferencing's benefits will remain, and that both teachers and students might want to be given a choice about how to mix online with face-to-face learning.

Regardless of what impact videoconferencing will have on our teaching after the pandemic, I am sure college professors can all agree on one thing: We should never, ever have in-person faculty meetings again.

The Gulf News

If Apple and other tech companies have their way, it will only become harder to have our phones and other devices repaired by third-party businesses.

Smartphones and many other tech devices are increasingly being designed in ways that make it challenging to repair or replace individual components.

This might involve soldering the processor and flash memory to the motherboard, gluing components together unnecessarily, or using non-standard pentalobe screws which make replacements problematic.

Many submissions to an Australian "right to repair" inquiry have called on tech manufacturers to provide a fair and competitive market for repairs, and produce products that are easily repairable.

The right to repair refers to consumers' ability to have their products repaired at a competitive price. This includes being able to choose a repairer, rather than being forced by default to use the device manufacturer's services.

But it seems Apple doesn't want its customers to fix their iPhones or Macbooks themselves. The company has lobbied against the right to repair in the United States and has been accused of deliberately slowing down iPhones with older batteries.

Opposition against the right to repair from tech companies is to be expected. Cornering consumers into using their service centres increases their revenue and extends their market domination.

In its defence, Apple has said third-party repairers could use lower quality parts and also make devices vulnerable to hackers.

It also defended its battery warning indication as a "safety" feature, wherein it started to alert users if their phone's replacement battery hadn't come from a certified Apple repairer.

In the US, Apple's independent repair provider program grants certain providers access to the parts and resources needed to fix its devices. Independent repair shops in 32 countries can now apply, but the scheme has yet to extend outside the US.

Impact on users

With the iPhone 12 — the latest iPhone offering — Apple has made it even harder for third-party repairers to fix the device, thereby increasing users' reliance on its own services.

Apple has hiked its repair charges for iPhone 12 by more than 40%, compared with the iPhone 11. It is charging more

The Impossible Repair

Ritesh Chugh



Until the push for right to repair legislative reform gathers pace globally, consumers will have little choice but to pay up to big companies to access their authorised repair services. If they don't, they may risk losing their warranty, ending up with a non-functional device and even infringing upon the manufacturers' software copyrights

than A\$359 to fix an iPhone 12 screen outside of warranty and A\$109 to replace the battery.

Historically, third-party repairers have been a cheaper option. But using a third-party repairer for an iPhone 12 could render some phone features, such as the camera, almost inoperable.

According to reports, fixing the iPhone 12's camera requires Apple's proprietary system configuration app, available only to the company's own authorised technicians.

It's not just Apple, either. Samsung's flagship phones are also quite tricky for third-party repairers to fix.

Impact on environment

When certain parts for repairs aren't available, manufacturers will produce new phones instead, consuming more energy and resources. In fact, manufacturing one smartphone consumes as much energy as using it for ten years.

As smartphones become harder to repair, electronic waste will grow. Apple and Samsung both cited environmental benefits when they announced they would no longer ship chargers with their phones.

Yet, they've turned a blind eye to the environmental damage that would arise

from completely cornering the repair market.

The average Australian home has 6.7 devices, including televisions, personal computers, laptops, tablets and smartphones. With diminishing opportunities for repair, the environmental burden from disposing of these devices will increase.

What is being done?

Phone giants make it tough for third-party repairers to do their job in a variety of ways. This includes constantly changing designs, adding hurdles to the repair process, and restricting access to parts,

diagnostic software and repair documentation.

Meanwhile, consumers are left with broken phones and huge repair bills — and repairers are left with less business.

The fight to remove barriers to repair is gaining momentum outside Australia, too, in countries including Canada, the United Kingdom and the United States. Legislative reforms have been introduced in the European Union and Massachusetts.

France has introduced a Repairability Index requiring electrical and electronic equipment companies to inform consumers about their products' repairability on a scale of one to ten.

This takes into account the ease of repairability, availability and price of spare parts and availability of technical repair documents.

The path moving forward

Until the push for right to repair legislative reform gathers pace globally, consumers will have little choice but to pay up to big companies to access their authorised repair services.

If they don't, they may risk losing their warranty, ending up with a non-functional device and even infringing upon the manufacturers' software copyrights.

Ideally, phone companies (and others) would assist users with the repair process by providing replacement parts, repair documentation and diagnostic tools to third-party repairers.

This would also help Apple and Samsung reduce their carbon footprint and achieve their environmental goals.

Although the way things are going, it's unlikely tech companies will be able to escape their self-inflicted repair obligations. In the past, Apple CEO Jeff Williams has said:

We believe the safest and most reliable repair is one handled by a trained technician using genuine parts that have been properly engineered and rigorously tested.

But with only so much workforce available even to Apple, sharing the load with smaller repairers will help.

And for consumers' benefit, the right to repair legislation must be taken seriously, with consistent repairability scores developed across the globe.

By arrangements with
The Conversation

Ambani Bomb Scare Probe: Delhi Govt Seeks Report Regarding Seizure Of Mobile Phone From Tihar Jail

Press Trust of India

NEW DELHI: The Delhi government has sought a report from the director general of Delhi Prisons regarding the seizure of a mobile phone from Tihar Jail, after the police approached jail authorities in connection with the Mukesh Ambani bomb scare probe.

Tihar Jail authorities have seized a mobile phone which is suspected to have been used for operating a Telegram channel used to claim responsibility for terror acts/ threats, the Delhi Police said on Friday.

The police said the mobile phone was recovered from a barrack in Central Jail No 8 of Tihar where

Tehseen Akhtar alias Monu, who was the chief of terror outfit Indian Mujahideen was lodged. He shares the barrack with other inmates.

Delhi Home Minister Satyendar Jain told reporters that a probe has been ordered into the matter and action will be taken against anyone found to be at fault. Jain has also written to the DG (Prisons) in this regard and sought a report about seizure of a mobile phone from the jail.

On Thursday, a senior Mumbai Police official had said a Telegram channel through which an organisation named Jaish-ul-Hind had claimed responsibility for placing an explosives-laden SUV near industrialist Ambani's residence

in Mumbai last month was "created in the Tihar" area of Delhi.

The Delhi Police's Special Cell had approached the Tihar Jail administration on Thursday after the new angle emerged, according to official sources.

Director General (Delhi Prisons) Sandeep Goel said, "Based on the information shared with us by the Special Cell, a search operation was conducted inside the jail premises on Thursday."

Jail sources, however, said during the search operation, two mobile phones were recovered from the barrack in Central Jail No 8 of Tihar where Akhtar is also lodged along with other inmates.

"A search operation was conducted on Thursday night and two mobile

phones were recovered from the barrack where Akhtar is put up. He shares the barrack with other inmates.

"Both the mobile phones have been handed over to the special cell team of Delhi Police in connection with their probe. It is suspected that the phones were being used by the multiple prisoners, including Akhtar," the jail sources said.

Tehseen Akhtar, who is among the key suspects likely to be questioned in connection with the probe, was arrested in 2014 by the Special Cell of Delhi Police. He was then heading the Indian Mujahideen after the arrest of Yasin Bhatkal, co-founder of the terror outfit.

"Based on information provided by the Special Cell, Tihar Jail authorities

have seized a mobile phone from a jail where certain terror convicts are lodged. It is suspected that this phone has been used for operating Telegram channels used recently for claiming responsibility for terror acts/ threats," Deputy Commissioner of Police (Special Cell) Pramod Singh Kushwah said.

Earlier in the day, the officer had said further investigation and forensic analysis will be done after the mobile handset and details of the seizure are received from the Tihar Jail authorities.

The Mumbai Police took the help of a private cyber agency to track the location of the phone on which the Telegram channel was created, the senior Mumbai Police official had said.

During the investigation, the location of the phone was traced near Delhi's Tihar Jail, he had said.

A Mahindra Scorpio SUV with gelatin sticks was found parked near "Antilia", the multi-storey residence of Ambani, in south Mumbai on February 25.

According to police sources, the Telegram channel was created on February 26 and the message claiming responsibility for placing the vehicle outside Ambani's residence was posted on the Telegram app late in the night on February 27.

The message had also demanded payment in cryptocurrency and mentioned a link to deposit the same.

CONTD. FROM FRONT PAGE

Me'raj-e-Aalam Celebrated

during the Friday sermons and Ijtimas.

Officials said that it was expected that a huge gathering will be witnessed at Hazratbal shrine, but the congregation in view of the inclement weather conditions remained low.

A shrine management official said that they tried their level best to facilitate the devotees amid incessant rains. "Thousands reached the shrine and had the glimpse of holy relic. The holy relic was displayed after every prayer of the day. It will be displayed for devotees tomorrow also (March 13) after every prayer," he said.

Meanwhile, the traffic department had made arrangements for the smooth passage of the vehicular movement in view of the Shab-e-Me'raj. The department had also issued traffic advisory for smooth passage of the traffic.

The district administration besides appealing for following Standard Operating Procedures (SOP), had made special arrangements for the devotees—(KNO)

65 Media Persons

in Pakistan, Afghanistan and Somalia, as well as the intolerance of hardliners in India and the Philippines have contributed to the continued bloodshed in media," said IFJ General Secretary Anthony Bellanger.

For the fourth time in five years, Mexico topped the list of countries where the most journalists were killed, with 14 killings. It was followed by 10 deaths in Afghanistan; nine in Pakistan, eight in India, four each in the Philippines and Syria, and three each in Nigeria and Yemen.

There were also killings in Iraq, Somalia, Bangladesh, Cameroon, Honduras, Paraguay, Russia and Sweden.

In addition to the deaths, the IFJ said at least 229 journalists were in prison across the world as of March 2021 because of their work.

The federation said Turkey is the biggest jailer of journalists in the world" with at least 67 media workers in its cells. That was followed by 23 journalists detained in China, 20 in Egypt, 16 in Eritrea and 14 in Saudi Arabia.

"No democracy worthy of that name can jail messengers of freedom of expression," Bellanger said. (AP)

Basharat Bukhari

Vice President and former Chief Minister Omar Abdullah, Bukhari while referring to his decision of disassociating from the party, expressed his gratitude for his (Omar's) love and affection towards him during his brief stint as party member. He also termed the journey of two years, two months and 21 days with JKNC—as an interesting journey. While wishing Omar Abdullah good luck, Bukhari hoped that the people of Jammu and Kashmir shall get benefited from his (Omar's) intellect and politico-administrative experiences.

"Although 2 years-2 months and 21 days is less a time to be mentioned, that too when major portion (One year and three months) of it got consumed under detention (House arrest) and three months in post-Covid complications and ailments... but indeed for me, it was an interesting journey and a learning process as well. Thank you so much," wrote Bukhari to Omar Abdullah in his letter. "I wish you good luck and hope that the people of Jammu and Kashmir shall get benefited from / through your intellect and politico-administrative experiences," Basharat Bukhari wrote in conclusion of his letter.

Meanwhile, reacting to the resignation of Bukhari from the NC, former chief minister, Omar Abdullah wished him best for his political journey.

"It wasn't to be. I wish Basharat all the best for where ever his political journey takes him next," Omar Abdullah wrote on his twitter handle.

Bukhari while referring to his decision of disassociating from the party had expressed his gratitude for Omar's love and affection towards him during his brief stint as party member.

Rains Drench

drenched the Valley, officials said on Friday.

A meteorological department official said that Gulmarg, the world famous skiing resort, received 45 centimetres fresh snowfall in last 24 hours till 0830 hours. In past 5 days, the famed tourist destination in north Kashmir received 105.1cm of snow. It recorded a minimum temperature of minus 4.0 degree Celsius against minus 3.2 degree Celsius on the previous night, the official said.

Srinagar, the official said, received 27.2mm of fresh rain during the 24 hours even as it recorded a low of 2.2 degree Celsius against 3.7 degree Celsius on the previous night. The temperature was minus 1.5 degree Celsius above normal for this time of the year in this summer capital, the official said.

Qazigund recorded a low of 3.0 degree Celsius against 5.7 degree Celsius on the previous night and received 28.8mm of rain during the time.

The mercury settled at 0.3 degree Celsius against 1.6 degree Celsius on the earlier night at Pahalgam while the famous resort received 35.9mm rain and 1cm snowfall.

Kokernag, also in south Kashmir, recorded a low of 3.0 degree Celsius against 4.3 degree Celsius on the previous night while it received 16.4mm rain.

The minimum temperature settled at minus 0.7 degree Celsius in Kupwara against 2.6 degree Celsius on the previous night while the north Kashmir district received 66mm rain including 3cm snowfall, the official said. Some areas in the district received major snowfall with Sadnatop recording 2.6ft, Machil 1.9ft and Keran 2.6ft.

The weatherman has forecast erratic weather with rain with thunderstorm in plains and snow over higher reaches in the Valley till March 15.

"Widespread moderate to isolated heavy rain/snow (is expected) in Kashmir, scattered light rain (in) plains of Jammu and widespread moderate to heavy shower in Poonch and Rajouri" Sonam Lotus Director Meteorological department said.

"Current weather is likely to persists during day time. Expect gradual improvement from evening," he said, adding, "Thunderstorm with rain is most likely at some places of South Kashmir, hilly areas of Jammu region."

The weatherman has issued a warning, asking concerned to remain alert for landslide and avalanche in "vulnerable spots as land is fully saturated."

For March today, the weatherman has also issued a "yellow warning" for "isolated heavy rain/snow, thundershowers with lightning, hail and gusty winds" in Kashmir as well as Jammu divisions.

There are four types colour codes signifying the level of caution: green which means no action, yellow—situation to be watched), amber—government agencies need to be prepared for severe weather and red—action needed by the agencies. (GNS)

500 Vehicles

all-weather road linking Kashmir with the rest of the country, while men and machines are working to clear the highway and restore it for traffic, they said.

The landslide was triggered by a heavy downpour in the Jawahir tunnel-Nashri section, they said.

According to a traffic advisory, the highway is likely to remain closed on Saturday.

"No vehicular movement shall be allowed from either side on the Jammu-Srinagar Highway in view of the inclement weather prediction issued by the Met department for few days besides apprehension of landslides, shooting stones at several places and continuous raining," it said.

In case the weather improves at night, a decision will be taken on Saturday after assessing the road condition, it added.

The Mughal road, which connects Poonch district of Jammu region with Kashmir valley's Shopian district, will remain closed due to snow accumulation, it added.

People are advised to undertake journey on the highway only after confirming the status of the road from traffic control units.

PDD To Issue

schedule from March 15.

"If there is improvement in weather then we can issue new power curtailment schedule from March 15. As there was dry weather last week, the electricity demand had reduced to 1440 MWs. Now there is drop in temperature, the electricity demand has again gone up to 1550 MWs," Dar said.

Sources said that that peak unrestricted demand during the winter season was 2150 MW while peak demand met was 1495 MW.

However, peak unrestricted demand during the summer season was 1500 MW while peak demand met was 1435 MW.

Sources said that Rs 778.85 cr revenue was realized from various consumers by ending January, 2021. "The revenue collection was increased by 13.04% amounting to Rs. 89.83 cr more from previous year," sources maintained.

It is to mention here that the Advisor Baseer Khan recently appreciated officers for taking advance steps to tackle any issue of restoration of power supply during the winter. However, the Advisor had told officers not to lower guard as the duration of winter has not finished yet.

In a meeting the Advisor was also briefed regarding the ongoing projects including the Supervisory Control And Data Acquisition System/Distribution Management System (SCADA/DMS) in Srinagar city which envisages remote monitoring and operation of all 33kv /11kv receiving stations in Srinagar city, Real time Data Acquisition System (RT-DAS) in rural areas by way of remote monitoring of 348 feeders of 112, 33kv/11kv receiving stations, RAPDRP Part-A, Smart Metering; CCD-MDM integration and upcoming project IPDS IT Part-A.

The advisor Khan had also reviewed the status and augmentation of the Delina, Magam, Gopalpora, Mattan and other grid stations. He was informed that all the required transformers have been transported to Delina GS which would give huge relief to the consumers of Baramulla, Magam, Beerwah and other areas. (KINS)

Grameen Bank

Manhas said the claim seems to be "suspicious and fishy although we are ascertaining the veracity of the complaint".

The SSP said the branch manager claimed that he was away for Friday prayers when the robbery took place.

He added that there was no security guard deployed at the branch nor any CCTV camera was installed, which could have supported the manager's claim.

The SSP further said that the manager also claimed that the pistol carrying robber had fired in the air.

"There is no evidence of gunshots as nobody sustained any bullet injury, nor there was any bullet mark on the surface around," the officer added.

NIA Seizes Rs 91L

The four others arrested along with Kumar include Altaf Ahmad Shah of Ganderbal, Showkat Ahmad Parray of Bandipora, Mudasir Ahmad Dar of Shopian and Amin Allah of Anantnag, who were arrested from Srinagar.

A narco-militancy case was initially registered at Handwara police station in north Kashmir's Kupwara district on June 11 last year after police recovered 2 kg of heroin and Rs 20 lakh from the vehicle of another accused, Abdul Momin Peer, at Kairo Bridge.

The NIA had re-registered the case on June 23, 2020, and had so far arrested nine persons, including a branch manager of Central Cooperative Bank, Handwara, Afaq Ahmad Wani, and recovered 21 kg of heroin and over Rs 1.35 crore.

In December last year, the NIA had filed a charge sheet against six persons, Wani, Peer, Syed Iftikar Andrabi and Islam-Ul-Haq Peer (all arrested), and Saleem Andrabi and Muneer Ahmad Banday, who are still absconding.

The NIA said the investigation revealed that the accused persons, including Peer and Saleem Andrabi, were involved in cross-border smuggling and supply of the narcotic drug heroin in Jammu and Kashmir and other parts of the country after procuring the same from their associates based in abroad, including Pakistan. As per the charge sheet, accused Iftikhar Andrabi and Peer visited Pakistan several times during 2016-17 to meet the operatives of militant organisations Lashkar-e-Taiba (LeT) and Hizb-ul-Mujahideen (HM).

It said the amount generated from the sale of heroin was pumped by the accused to further the militant activities of LeT in the union territory.

DDC Members

Ms. Tazeem Akhter, Malik Aftab, Juhi Manhas, Dr. Shamshad Shah, TS Tony, Shah Nawaz, Suleman Mir, and Riyaz Bhat, who met the Lt Governor.

BVR Subrahmanyam, Chief Secretary; Rohit Kansal, Principal Secretary, PDD and Information Department, and Sheetal Nanda, Secretary, Department of Rural Development & Panchayati Raj were also present during the interaction. However, there was no word on revisiting recent orders including one on honorarium and better status.

Cutting across party lines, the newly-elected DDC members had on Tuesday boycotted a two-day training programme here and staged a protest in support of their demand for better status and monthly honorarium, forcing the Lt Governor to cancel his inaugural session.

The DDC members staged the protest after the administration amended its warrant of precedence, placing the DDC chairpersons at par with administrative secretaries, vice chairpersons to vice-chancellors of universities and the DDC members to district magistrates.

As per the government order, the DDC chairpersons would get monthly honorarium of Rs 35,000 including Rs 1,500 travel allowance and Rs 500 telephone charges. Vice chairpersons will get Rs 25,000 including Rs 1,500 travel allowance and Rs 500 telephone charges and members will get Rs 15,000 including Rs 1,500 travel allowance and Rs 500 telephone charges. (With GNS inputs)

BJP MLA Attempts

issue was raised in the House time and again, the state government did not pay heed to the plight of the farmers," Panigrahi told mediapersons.

Panigrahi alleged the government has failed to resolve farmers' issues like mismanagement at mandis and token system.

Earlier in the morning, the BJP MLA had threatened to commit suicide to mount pressure on the state government.

During the first phase of the budget session, he had staged a protest in the House and also threatened to self-immolate if all paddy is not procured from the farmers at the earliest.

‘An Obnoxious Move

most of them continue to fight for their basic rights, they are being watched, lectured and gas lit over their choice of clothing.

A Kashmiri pandit and a graduate in media and cultural studies, Vishruti Saraf said, "I honestly feel that an outfit being given this colour, of security, makes no sense. There are anyway only a few things left that keep me connected

to my Kashmiri roots. Even as a child, whenever I saw my mother or other family members wear this piece of garment it always invoked an innate sense of Kashmiriyat in me."

Strangely enough, Javid Qureshi, a self-proclaimed BJP sympathiser from north Kashmir's Kupwara, recently protested against the call and held a demonstration on his hometown streets.

Any form of ban in a democratic country, said Dhruv Sumbli, should be reserved as a last resort only, after all other available measures have been exhausted by the government.

"In this instance where politically motivated groups have called for a ban on pheran, the government must look for other alternative preventive measures to ensure peace and tranquillity in the Valley," Sumbli, a Kashmiri Pandit and lawyer, said.

"Banning of pheran would be a highly unpopular and inappropriate act to do and would set a very dangerous precedent for the rest of the country."

Strange ‘Security’ Claim

It isn't just in the Valley, but also the areas around it, like in Jammu where locals are not just fond of pherans but have worn it since years too.

A local journalist from Chenab region of Jammu, Anzer Ayoub said that Jammuites wear it too to protect themselves from cold.

"As Bajrang Dal recently said, 'Militants wear Pheran, so ban it' but I want to say that militants wear many things, it doesn't mean we will ban everything," said Ayoub.

He added that Kashmir where the winter cold is intolerable, a pheran is essential for the aged and the banning it under security reasons is just a pretence, like it was done for banning 4G.

Similarly, Firoz Bhat, a freelance journalist, also noted that majority in India need to understand that pheran is not just a mere piece of clothing for them.

"The ban call is in fact obnoxious, to say the least," Firoz says. "Militants have been wearing Pherans since the 90's. Why ban now? Ever since August 5, 2019, the Indian state is just finding ways to mass harass the entire Kashmir region from every corner. There must be some other ways of dealing with the situation but definitely not this."

Munawar Khan, a host of Talk Show, 'Taaruuk', termed the ban call just a political stunt.

"It's nothing to do with the security as well," Khan said. "You cannot ask somebody in Rajasthan or Northeast to remove or not wear a certain kind of attire that's a part of their culture."

A Politicised Tool

Uproar around pheran erupted last time in 2018. Social media was abuzz when the Jammu and Kashmir school education department had allegedly banned people from wearing the traditional outfit in its zonal offices. The order did not explicitly mention pheran, but since Kashmir's winter gown is considered a casual dress, and the order called for a "proper attire" making the insinuation clear. The order was withdrawn thereafter.

And now, again, the attention amplified by the sensationalist media is being diverted to the attire following the Srinagar shootout.

"The Indian mainstream media have been associating pheran to show characters associated with militants, gunmen or a criminal, but its more than that," said scribe Mustafa Amin. "For us it's about identity."

Adding to this, Majid Hyderi, a local journalist said, "Ban on Pheran is abuse of Kashmir culture." Robes, he asserted, cannot determine an act of aggression.

Bollywood and Pheran

Amid this renewed debate driven by rumours and reports, not much has been said and written about the depiction of pherans in Bollywood.

In some films like Haider and Bajrangi Bhaijaan, the pherans were a lot closer to those winter gowns worn in real life in Kashmir. However, many believe that Bollywood over the years has only glamourised the attire to suit their narratives.

"Bollywood's portrayal of Kashmir is mostly from a colonial prism," Geelani continued.

"Propaganda films depict Kashmiri as an unlettered Shikarwalla or a gun-wielding militant. And someone waiting for benevolence of an Indian tourist to change his/her destiny. This prism is problematic on multiple counts. Barring a couple of films like Haider and an odd web series, Bollywood is used as a tool to humiliate and insult Kashmiri women and men by showing them as uneducated, poor, and human beings without an agency to decide for themselves."

Majid seconds Geelani's take on the 'bizarre Bollywoodisation' of Kashmir and Kashmiris.

"Bollywood," he noted, "has restricted the image of Kashmiri to two pigeon holes. One of vintage era, where he is projected as ultra-humble and servant-like host who wears a pheran and skullcap only to appease guests. Or, second one, which is that of a militant carrying a gun. Much like elsewhere Kashmir has been evolving and

thus needs to be projected beyond this."

However, Sumbli feels that despite pheran being a regional outfit, Bollywood has played a vital role in its popularization.

"Today, many Indians recognise the outfit and others wear it too, deriving their inspiration from actors like Preity Zinta in Mission Kashmir or Salman Khan in Bajrangi Bhaijaan," he said.

Some Kashmiris, like Faiz feel that Bollywood has done less to show the pheran of the commons.

"I can only imagine a fair-skinned woman with silver jewellery on her head dancing to 'Bhumro Bhumro' or exquisite pherans with Tilla or Zariwork on them. Not everyone in Kashmir wears them or can afford them. Bollywood has failed to show the pheran of the commons, Pattyu pheran, which is largely worn by the middle and working class," he said.

There is still a matter up for debate and that is the origin of pheran.

While some believe it was Mughal emperor, Akbar who introduced it in the Valley, others say it was the Persians who did.

Munawar believes it was neither of the two. "There is a Persian touch," he said.

"But if you go to Leh, Ladakh and Northeast, they also wear similar long gowns. They have their distinctive styles, but our pherans have nothing to do with Akbar. It's only the tilla work that has Persian aesthetics."

In the growing virtual debates, people argue the way one sees a particular attire in a film—consciously or subconsciously—shapes minds and notions about a particular culture. In case of Kashmir, they say, the culture and traditions have always been used as tokenism in politics and media.

The call of ban thus, many say, seems like an attack on the culture and the support from the rightwing has only stoked fears of the embargo being institutionalised.

"With these repeated attempts, the only motive is to deny Kashmiris their agency and humiliate them by insulting their traditions," Geelani said.

"And also part of the larger design and motive to disempower Kashmiris through cultural aggression."

- Aliza Noor is freelance journalist from Lucknow, Uttar Pradesh. She worked with The Quint previously, and is mostly found indulging in books, news and cat videos.

Heart Attack Kills

was rushed to the emergency wing of the district hospital, officials said. At the hospital, he was attended by Dr Arjun and his ECG was done and other necessary protocols were followed.

Physician Dr Vinod and Anaesthesia consultants Dr Atri and Dr Kailu attended him but he could not be revived and was declared brought dead at 8.40am," they said.

Sumbria has also served as Block Development Officer (BDO) Mandi in Poonch.

Meanwhile, the Lieutenant Governor, Manoj Sinha has expressed grief over the sad demise of Sombieria.

In his condolence message, Sinha expressed sympathy with the bereaved family and prayed for eternal peace to the departed soul. (GNS)

2 Deaths, 73 New

J&K to 1971—729 in Jammu and 1242 in Valley.

Among the 73 fresh cases, they said, 59 were from Kashmir Valley and the remaining 14 from Jammu division.

Giving the district-wise details of cases, officials said that Srinagar reported 34, Baramulla 10, Budgam 5, Pulwama 2, Kupwara 3, Anantnag 3, Ganderbal and Shopian one each, Jammu 9, Udhampur and Rajouri one each new case of coronavirus.

Moreover, they said, 80 more patients have recovered and were discharged from various hospitals—six from Jammu Division and 74 from Kashmir Valley.

Soldier Dies After

high due to incessant rains, resulted in injuries to four Army men.

He added that they were shifted to Kulgam district hospital for treatment, however, one among them succumbed to his injuries on way to the hospital while the condition of other three was said to be stable.

Medical Superintendent DH Kulgam, Dr Muzafar Zargar said that one of the injured soldiers was brought dead to the hospital. He identified him as 27-year-old Sarosh.

The three injured soldiers were identified as Major Pushp Rajput, Captain Malla and Anil Dubai Royal.

Youth Found Dead

residence in the morning hours before he was found dead.

A senior police officer said that the body will be handed over to the family after medico-legal formalities.

Militant Arrested

apprehended from the house of Ghulam Ahmed Natnoo and three Chinese pistols, two magazines, 15 rounds and a silencer were recovered from there, the officials said.

Ladakh To Get All Weather Road Connectivity: LG

Observer News Service

LEH: Lieutenant Governor of Ladakh RK Mathur Friday said that the Union Territory administration is working tirelessly for all-weather road connectivity between Ladakh and the rest of the country.

Addressing a gathering at Polo-Ground Leh, Mathur said that to celebrate the 75 years of Azaadi (Freedom) series of programs will be underway for the 75 weeks up to the 15th of August.

Prime Minister of India, Narendra Modi Friday kickstarted the 'Azadi Ka Amrut Mahotsav' (India @75) virtually across India including J&K and Ladakh.

Mathur informed that the celebrations are underway in offices like BDO, Police, Ladakh Scouts, Indian Army and various other departments besides a cycle run was also organised.

"Till the forthcoming 15th August celebrations, a series of programs will be organised across Ladakh that includes, essay competition, symposium, and other activities," he said.

Mathur said Ladakh is the largest region in India with less population but even after many years of independence the development of this region has been very slow given the weather and other hindrances.

He said that Prime Minister Narendra Modi fulfilled an old desire of people by making it a Union Territory (UT) and this administration has taken several progres-



sive steps while and is committed to connecting the region with the rest of the country.

"The decision on other measure passes in Ladakh which connects it with the rest of India are in consideration and steps are underway," he informed.

He said that the five main segments of this occasion set by the Prime Minister, Narendra Modi are freedom struggle (The fight for the freedom of India), ideas at 75 (new developmental ideas), achievements at 75, action at 75 (what actions are being taken for economic development) and resolve at 75 (targets to achieve).

The LG said that the UT administration is committed in making the dream of carbon-neutral Ladakh of PM Modi come true and is working to take Ladakh forward on the path of development.

"We are going through the phase of the Coronavirus pandemic. The threat is still as there are still talks about the new strains, so we need to take all preventive measures," he said—(KNO)

J&K Administrative Services Association Expresses Grief Over Demise Of Somberia

JAMMU: The Jammu and Kashmir Administrative Services Association (KAS Association) on Friday expressed grief over the sad and untimely demise of Sajad Somberia, a young KAS Officer. The Officer was presently working as District Social Welfare Officer, Udhampur, with additional charge as District Information Officer.

After attending the funeral prayers at Krimchi, Udhampur, an official spokesperson of the association said that the untimely demise of Somberia has shocked the JKAS fraternity, besides leading to the loss of a devout officer and a friend. He added that the commitment of the officer towards services and his unrelenting efforts in the cause of public services will remain a part of our collective memory. He added that to hear about the loss of the officer is not only

shocking but also hurtful.

He further said that the association shares the grief of the family of the deceased officer and the collective heart of the association goes out to the family in this time of sorrow.

He said that fond memories of the deceased would be the source of peace and reflection in these tough times and his devotion towards the services shall be a source of inspiration for all of us.

On hearing the news, Officers from the JKAS fraternity rushed to Udhampur and attended the funeral prayers on Friday afternoon.

Besides paying tributes to the deceased, the officers "fraternized" expressed solidarity with the family.

Besides serving as District Social Welfare Officer and Block Development Officer, the deceased has also served as Private Secretary to the then Finance Minister, J&K.

CS, Adv Khan, Dir Info Condole Demise

Observer News Service

JAMMU: Lieutenant Governor, Manoj Sinha, Chief Secretary, B V R Subrahmanyam, Director Information and Public Relations, Rahul Pandey, Advisor to Lieutenant Governor, Baseer Ahmad Khan have expressed grief over the demise of young JKAS Officer, Sajad Bashir Somberia. In his condolence message, the Lt Governor expressed sympathy with the bereaved family and prayed for eternal peace to the departed soul.

The Chief Secretary, B V R Subrahmanyam expressed grief on the demise of Somberia and offered condolences to the bereaved family.

Advisor to Lieutenant Governor, Baseer Ahmad Khan expressed grief over the demise of young JKAS Officer, Somberia.

wDirector Information and Public Relations, Rahul Pandey along with the employees of the department also condole the de-

mise of Somberia, District Information Officer, Udhampur, who passed away today morning after suffering a massive heart attack.

In this connection, a condolence meet was chaired by Director Information here in which all the officers and employees of DIPR participated. The officers and employees expressed deep sorrow and grief over the demise of young officer.

The officers and employees on the occasion highlighted his contributions in the department and said that his death is a great loss to the department. They added that Sajad was an asset to the department who always performed his duties professionally and diligently.

The officers and employees also offered their deepest condolences to the bereaved family and prayed for eternal peace to the departed soul and courage for the bereaved family to bear this irreparable loss.

Govt To Introduce Brig Rajinder Singh's Story In Textbooks: LG



Observer News Service

SRINAGAR: The Jammu and Kashmir government will introduce story of Brigadier Rajinder Singh, who died fighting Pakistani tribesmen in Uri sector of Baramulla in 1947, in the textbooks.

"I have read the stories of Brigadier Rajinder Singh many times and have lived through the tales of his soldiers' gallantry at Uri in October 1947. Story of Brig Rajinder Singh will be included in textbooks to make the new generation aware about gallantry of our Martyrs and freedom fighters, who sacrificed their lives to protect our land," Lieutenant Governor, Manoj Sinha said Friday, as per the official spokesperson.

He made this announcement during while speaking at the 'Azaadi Ka Amrut Mahotsav' celebrations in J&K by visiting Bagoona, Samba, the birthplace of first recipient of Maha Vir Chakra Brigadier Rajinder Singh, where he inaugurated the curtain raiser event of the mega celebrations. He also flagged off a bike & cycle rally and tableau to mark the occasion.

According to the official spokesperson, the LG expressed his privilege of visiting the birthplace of Rajinder Singh Pura and observed that the culture of our country teaches us that one must visit a pilgrimage site before starting the festivities.

"Today my desire is fulfilled. I visited the holy birthplace of Brigadier Rajinder Singh, who is an epitome of unmatched valour and sacrifice. From his birth place, I extend my greetings to the people of Jammu and Kashmir on the launch of Azaadi Ka Amrut Mohatsav," Sinha said.

Paying tributes to Singh, the LG, as per the official spokesperson saluted the courage displayed by him and his soldiers while safeguarding the territorial integrity of Jammu and Kashmir. The LG, he said, further stressed on telling the story of courage of Subedar Parkash Singh, Subedar Major Swarn Singh, Sepoy Balak Ram, Havildar Khajan Singh, Nayak Balwan Singh Salathia and many more, who were the companions of Brigadier Rajinder Singh.

"The spirit with which Brigadier Rajinder Singh, Maqbool Sherwani and Women Self Defense Corps protected the composite culture of Jammu and Kashmir and every inch of the land by putting their lives at stake, with the same spirit, J&K government is making untiring efforts to develop every inch of the UT's land to the standards of mainstream," Sinha said, as per official spokesperson.

"J&K must strive to reach milestones set out by our founding fathers. The dream of Jammu and Kashmir foreseen by Brigadier Rajinder Singh, the land on which Shaivadarshan, Buddhist, Mimamsak, Naiyayik, Siddha, and Sufi philosophy flourished, that Sanatan tradition must reach every school, college, village, city in the 75 weeks to come," he added.

The official spokesperson said that the LG asked J&K Academy of Art, Culture & Languages and Information Department to collect details of our unsung Heroes, so that their valour could be highlighted during the grand festival. He said that the LG also called upon the

people to actively and enthusiastically participate in Azaadi Ka Amrut Mahotsav and renew their resolve to build a new India together.

"A New India - as Prime Minister Narendra Modi had called for in his address to the nation from the ramparts of Red Fort on August 15, 2017 should emerge on the 75th anniversary of Independence in 2022 from the joint strength of all," Sinha said, as per the official spokesperson.

The LG, he said observed that the mega celebrations should hold the spirit of freedom movement, express gratitude to the martyrs, and reflect the glory of Sanatan Bharat and Modern India, while displaying the spirituality of mystics and contribution of our scientists.

"In order to commemorate 75 years of India's Independence, we must demonstrate our shared commitment to fundamental values of harmony, Sarv Dharma Sambhav, freedoms and duties and work towards sustainable and inclusive development so that prosperity reaches to all," Sinha said.

Terming March 12 as a major milestone in India's freedom struggle, the LG, as per official spokesperson observed that the day is of great significance as it captures Mahatma Gandhi's another non-violent feat to achieve freedom through Dandi March from Sabarmati Ashram in 1930.

"Apart from this, inspiring stories of great personalities and women of J&K who led by example and contributed in different fields of society, need to be shared," the LG said.

He further said that the contribution of every class and section of the society must reach to the people through public participation programs under five pillars of this national festival that are Freedom Struggle, Ideas at 75, Achievement at 75, Actions at 75 and Resolve at 75, envisioned by Hon'ble Prime Minister.

Speaking on the present development scenario of Jammu and Kashmir, the LG, as per the official spokesperson observed that the last 2 years have seen an increased pace of development.

"Roads are being constructed at three times the earlier speed; efforts are being made to complete the power and water projects pending for years, so that people of the UT get all the basic facilities," Sinha said.

"Few vested interests hampered the development reaching the doorsteps of the people for decades. The temporary system that had been in place for years, the laws that pushed the people back, was not removed even after decades. Since 05 August 2019, hundreds of such policies have been changed and laws abolished. Now, the poor, the underprivileged, our farmers and the younger generation are being empowered," he added.

Highlighting the people centric measures taken by the Government, the LG observed that the population living in 973 villages will be connected with paved road for the first time after independence, now the child of a sweeper can become a doctor, and remote villages would see 20-22 hours of electricity in the next three-four years.

"The Lt Governor termed the

development work being done in a transparent way in every panchayat as a true tribute to Brigadier Rajinder Singh and his soldiers. While speaking on the importance of empowered grass-root democratic setup, the Lt Governor assured that the government will make every possible effort to make DDC institution strong, vibrant and transparent," the official spokesperson said.

He said that the LG also called upon the people to remember those freedom fighters who could not find a place in the pages of history.

"He urged both the administration, and the public to recognize the contributions of the people who have inspired the present generation to participate in the new ideas, industrialization and revolution happening in every field which is also the basic spirit of this Amrut festival.

According to the official spokesperson, the LG underscored the significance of empowering the younger generation and laid special emphasis on providing youth with prospects for the future, investing more in education & skills and strengthening the position of girls & young women in society.

"J&K has a glorious history of Women Empowerment. Along with social and economic freedom, they have to be provided equal opportunities in the workforce as well," said the LG, as per the official spokesperson.

"Keeping in mind 75 years of independence, the J&K Government has launched a Super-75 scholarship scheme to support the education of meritorious girls belonging to poor families. Besides, Tejaswini program has been launched under Mission Youth, to provide financial assistance to the girls to start their business aiming at strengthening Women Entrepreneur Ecosystem in J&K," he added.

The official spokesperson further said that the LG called upon all stakeholders to take a pledge to collectively work on Industry 4.0.

"In the next 75 weeks, we have to focus on policy, funding models, focus areas, key drivers, barriers and strategy implementation, so that when the nation celebrates 75th Independence Day next year, we should be fully ready for a radical change in both the economic and social sectors," the LG said.

"We have to put our efforts in the same direction so that when the new generation celebrates the 100th Independence Day of the country in 2047, it has a rich tradition that has been raised on the occasion of 75 years," he added.

Earlier, the Lt Governor inspected the Photo Exhibition on India @ 75- celebrating 75 years of India's Independence and displaying the life story of Brigadier Rajinder Singh.

Usha Parmar and Col Inderpratap Singh Parmar - Family members of Brig. Rajinder Singh, besides Jugal Kishore Sharma, Member Parliament; Rajeev Rai Bhatnagar, Advisor to the Lt Governor; BVR Subrahmanyam, Chief Secretary; Atal Dooloo, Financial Commissioner, Health and Medical Education Department; Administrative Secretaries; Vice Chancellors of various Universities; Divisional Commissioner, Jammu and Deputy Commissioner Samba were present on the occasion.

Shia Body Blasts Waseem Rizvi For Anti Quran Move Demands Arrest Of Self-Styled Shia Leader

Observer News Service

SRINAGAR: Taking strong exception to the 'outrageous and anti-Islam' move by the former chairman of UP Shia Waqf Board Waseem Rizvi, the Jammu and Kashmir 'Majlis-e-Ulma-e-Imamia' on Friday demanded arrest of the controversial self-styled Shia leader for hurting religious sentiments of Muslims across the globe.

In a statement issued to media here, a spokesperson of the recently formed Jammu and Kashmir 'Majlis-e-Ulmae Imamia' said that Rizvi's outrageous remarks of recommending omission of certain verses of holy Quran and his appeal in the court are 'not only condemnable but unpardonable as well.'

"This vile man has shown disregard to holy Quran and hurt sentiments of millions of Muslims across the globe. We condemn his acts and urge the government to put him behind the bars immediately," the Majlis spokesperson demanded.

Waseem Rizvi, recently approached the Supreme Court for elimination of 26 verses of the Quran.

"Rizvi should be arrested immediately for rabble rousing. He is an agent of anti-Muslim forces and with the CBI investigating corruption in the waqf board, he is doing all in his imagination to hold on to their support," the spokesman said.

"Quran is the word of Allah and the sacred book in Islam. And even if Muslims have different sects and schools of thought, all of them have firm belief that this is the final book revealed by Allah to his last Prophet (PBUH) and that not a single word has been altered or tampered with in the Quran since its revelation some 1400 years ago."

The Majlis spokesperson further said that for several years,

people like Rizvi were being installed and imposed on Muslim institutions to carry out agenda of groups like RSS.

"And members of Waqf board are also culprits who back Rizvi and maintain silence over such grave issues. Their silence is a candid confession of their involvement in such crimes," he said.

The Majlis spokesperson also alleged that the government is making attempts to create a separate Shia Waqf Board in Jammu and Kashmir and install Rizvi like men at the helm so that a communal atmosphere is created here.

"But we will never let that happen. We urge all Muslims, especially clerics and scholars to further strengthen the bond of brotherhood and defeat evil designs of people like Rizvi. We need to collectively fight an anti-Islam evil like him," the spokesperson said.

He further said that India's all prominent and responsible clerics have condemned Rizvi's statement and made it clear that he has no connection with the religion of Islam.

Meanwhile, Anjuman Sharie Shiayan President Aga Syed Hassan has urged the judiciary to book Waseem Rizvi under Section 295A of IPC and other relevant provisions for deliberately and maliciously hurting the feelings of Muslims by insulting their holy book and beliefs.

Itehadul Muslimeen President Maulana Masroor Abbas Ansari also condemned Rizvi. "We strongly condemn the recent statement of Wasim Rizvi of Lucknow, against the Holy Book Quran. This man has become a tool of conspiracies of the enemies against Islam & Shiaism. Indian Muslims have already kicked him out of their midst and he has been excommunicated from Islam", Masroor tweeted.

KU Charges 'Waived Off' Fee, Students Enraged

Observer News Service

SRINAGAR: The University of Kashmir has asked students to submit fee that was "waived off" in October 2020 in view of "arduous situation due to Covid-19" raising concern among students and "causing distress".

A group of students said that the university has come up with a notification asking them to submit the instalments of fee that was earlier waived off.

"The LG's intervention and direction least matters for the authorities at university and they keep on looting the students," the students said.

In September last year the fee was waived off after a delegation from Kashmir University Students Guild submitted a representation at the office of Lt,

Governor Manoj Sinha, seeking "waiving off of extra charges and concession in admission fee".

As such the Governor's office directed the university to look into the matter, to which the university brought up a circular on 07-10-2020 saying that "in view of arduous situation arisen due to Covid-19, the Vice Chancellor has been pleased that till the matter with regard to relaxation in the admission fee is resolved, only 50 percent of the admission fee prescribed for 3rd and 4th semester of PG programmes be realised from its first instalment".

Registrar of the varsity Dr Nisar Ahmad Mir said, "We have offered a 25% relaxation and the matter is still in consideration with the higher authorities."

"We'll look into the matter again on Monday," he added. (With inputs from KDC)

Inundated Water Seeps Into Residential Houses in Hajin Residents Blame Lack Of Drainage System

Agencéis

HAJIN: Residents of Hajin and its adjoining areas Friday demanded a drainage system in the area so that the area is inundated with even moderate showers.

Reports said that water has entered many houses in Hajin and Shahgund due to the lack of a proper drainage system in the area.

"We once again demand a permanent solution to the water logging in the area so we feel some relief."

Meanwhile, reports from Wa-

trina Bandipora said that lawn walls of a few residential houses collapsed due to incessant rainfall, however, there are no reports of human loss in the incident.

Meanwhile, Deputy Commissioner Bandipora Dr. Owais said, an SDRF team has been constituted and deputed to access the damage caused due to the landslide in the area.

Regarding water logging in Hajin area, he said, "our teams led by Tehsildar is on spot and we have pressed dewatering pumps into the service." (KNS)

AKAM: Dal Lake Hosts Shikara Rally

Observer News Service

SRINAGAR: In connection with celebrations of Azadi Ka Amrut Mahotsav, a Shikara rally was held at Dal Lake.

The rally was flagged off by the Advisor to Lieutenant Governor, Baseer Ahmad Khan from SKICC lawns on the banks of Dal Lake here.

As many as 100 Shikaras were part of the grand rally which culminated at Nehru Park.

Divisional Commissioner Kashmir, Pandurang K Pole; Deputy Commissioner Srinagar Dr Shahid Iqbal Choudhary; VC Lakes & Water Ways Authority, Director Tourism Kashmir, Director Rural Development Kashmir, Director Education Kashmir, Commissioner SMC and other senior officers were present on the occasion.

Mayor SMC, Junaid Azim Mattu, DDC Chairmen, members of District Development Councils and large



number of people also took part in the Shikara rally.

Later, a cultural event was organised at Nehru Park during which variety of

cultural programmes were presented to mark the first leg of the nationwide event India@75 for celebrating 75 years of Independence of India.

On the occasion, certificates of participation were also distributed among the Shikara wallas and performers.

KU Celebrates 'Azadi Ka Amrut Mahotsav'

Observer News Service

SRINAGAR: The University of Kashmir on Friday joined the 'Azadi Ka Amrut Mahotsav' celebrations, the 75-week commemoration of the country's 75th year of Independence.

At a ceremony held in the main campus, Vice-Chancellor Prof Talat Ahmad led the celebrations as chief guest, while Talat Pervez Rohella, Commissioner/Secretary, Higher Education Department and Prof Akbar Masood, Vice-Chancellor Baba Gulam Shah Badshah University Rajouri were the guests of honour.

The ceremony, held in line with the objectives of the 'Azadi Ka Amrut Mahotsav' celebrations, was attended by top administrative officers including Dean Academic Affairs, Dean Research, Dean College Development Council, Registrar, Controller of Examinations, Dean



Students Welfare besides Heads/Coordinators/Directors of various departments/centres of the main and satellite campuses.

Prof Talat threw light on the country's mega scientific, cultural, social and technological advancements as well as its journey to become atmanirbhar (self-reliant) in all aspects.

"The glory, diversity, democratic ideals, innovations and achievements of this country continue to remain

distinct to make it attain new heights with each passing day," the VC said.

He said the University of Kashmir will organise more and more events related to the Mahotsav celebrations in coming weeks.

During the ceremony, the participants joined the proceedings of the main 'Azadi Ka Amrut Mahotsav' celebrations led by Prime Minister Narendra Modi, in the virtual mode.

Bishan Singh Bedi Back Home After Spending 3 Weeks In Hospital

Press Trust of India

NEW DELHI: Legendary former India spinner Bishan Singh Bedi has been discharged after spending nearly three weeks at a city hospital here following a bypass surgery.

The 74-year-old former India captain had undergone a bypass surgery at the capital's Sir Gangaram Hospital last month after he complained of heart problems.

He subsequently also underwent an operation to remove blood clotting in his brain.

According to a close friend and a former Delhi captain, Bedi has recovered significantly and was discharged from the hospital on Thursday evening.

"He has been discharged after the doctors found him fit enough to go home. He has been advised complete rest," the source told PTI.

Bedi, a premier left-arm orthodox spinner in his playing days, represented India in 67 Tests and



10 ODIs between 1967 and 1979, scalping 266 and seven wickets, respectively.

In December last year, he had protested against the Delhi and District Cricket Association's (DDCA) decision to name the Feroz Shah Kotla stadium after its late ex-president and former union minister Arun Jaitley.

Bedi had demanded that his name be removed from a spectators' stand, named after him, if Jaitley's statue was to be installed. He had threatened to take legal action against the DDCA on the matter.

Mumbai City FC Take On ATK Mohun Bagan In ISL 7 Summit Clash

Press Trust of India

MARGAO: As many as 114 games, 295 goals, 87,811 passes and 7307 tackles later, the Indian Super League 7 will culminate with a heavyweight summit showdown between Mumbai City FC and ATK Mohun Bagan here on Saturday.

The match that lends meaning to every single touch taken so far, in what has been an exciting Hero ISL season, will be played at the Fatorda Stadium.

When Mumbai City FC take on ATK Mohun Bagan in the summit clash, there will be no more complex equations in play. The winner takes home the trophy. It's as simple as that.

Few would argue that there is a better candidate for the final than these two — both Bagan and Mumbai have been head and shoulders above the rest throughout the season.

Both the teams come into the final with identical records, 12 wins and just 4 defeats in the league stage.

Despite a nervy penalty-shoot-out win over FC Goa in the semi-final, it will be Mumbai who head into the final full of confidence.

They did the double over Bagan in the league stage, the latter of those victories handing them the League Winners Shield.

For Mumbai, this will be a first-ev-

er final, but coach Sergio Lobera, and a handful of his players have been here before when FC Goa lost to Bengaluru FC in 2018-19. The team though has looked confident under Lobera.

"They (ATK Mohun Bagan) are a very good team with good players and have the momentum. But the most important thing now is to put the focus on ourselves and try to do our best.

"We have no specific plan, only small details about the opponent. We need to work 100 per cent on our style of play," said Lobera.

There will be few selection dilemmas for Lobera, with the exception of figuring out Mandar Rao Dessai's replacement. The Goan will miss the final due to suspension.

In the other corner, there is Bagan, buoyed by Antonio Habas' almost superhuman record in knockout games. He has already tasted glory twice and has a chance to create history by winning his second straight title and third overall.

On the eve of the final, the Spaniard sounded as focused as ever.

"We have to compete and our idea is to win against our opponents. My team is prepared for winning," he said.

Habas dismissed that previous results had no bearing on the match but that his side was braced for a tough test.

50 Per Cent Crowd To Be Allowed For India-England T20I Series

Press Trust of India

AHMEDABAD: The Gujarat Cricket Association (GCA) has decided to allow 50 per cent spectators during the India-England T20 International series at the Narendra Modi Stadium in Ahmedabad owing to the COVID-19 pandemic.

The series, comprising five matches, is starting on Friday with the final fixture slated to be played on March 20.

"We are going to use only 50% seating capacity at the Narendra Modi Stadium for all the T20 International matches to be played here due to COVID-19 pandemic," Gujarat Cricket Association (GCA) vice-president Dhanraj Nathwani said in a media release.

Nathwani said that all COVID-19 guidelines are being followed, adding that special task force committees have been formed to ensure the safety of the fans.

"The entire stadium has been



sanitized considering safety of the spectators. All COVID-19 guidelines are being strictly adhered to and special task force committees have been set up to ensure that all required safety measures are implemented and followed," he added.

Apart from the first Test against

England, which was played behind closed doors in Chennai, the other three matches of the series were played with up to 50 per cent crowds allowed inside the stadiums.

After the T20Is, the two teams will engage in a three-match ODI series in Pune, starting March 23.

Mithali Raj Becomes First Indian Woman Cricketer To Score 10,000 International Runs

Press Trust of India

LUCKNOW: Veteran batter Mithali Raj on Friday became the first Indian woman cricketer and second internationally to complete 10,000 runs across all formats.

The 38-year-old Mithali, who leads the Indian ODI team, joins England's Charlotte Edwards in the elite club. Mithali achieved the feat with a boundary off Anne Bosch in the 28th over of India's innings during the ongoing third ODI against South Africa here.

"What a champion cricketer! First Indian woman batter to score 10K international runs. Take a bow, @M_Raj03," the BCCI tweeted.

But after reaching the milestone, Mithali departed on the next ball, flicking a Bosch delivery straight to Mignon du Preez at midwicket.

She made 36 runs off 50 balls and hit five boundaries.

Mithali has amassed 663 runs in 10 Test matches with a best score of 214, while she has 6,938 and 2,364 runs from 212 ODIs and 89 T20 Internationals



respectively.

Cricket great Sachin Tendulkar congratulated Mithali via Twitter.

"Heartiest congratulations Mithali on completing 10,000 runs in International Cricket. Terrific achievement...Keep going strong!" he wrote.

BCCI secretary Jay Shah called the India captain an "absolute legend".

"Take a bow, @M_Raj03! What an achievement to be the first Indian woman cricketer to

surpass the international 10,000-run mark. Absolute legend," Shah wrote on his Twitter handle.

Former India men's team batsman VVS Laxman said the seasoned player is an inspiration for budding players.

"Congratulations @M_Raj03 on becoming the first Indian Woman Cricketer to score 10K runs! You are not only a great ambassador and a legend of the game but you have inspired a generation of cricketers to take up our sport. Proud of you," he tweeted.

Sharjeel Named In Pakistan Squad For South Africa, Zimbabwe Tours



Press Trust of India

KARACHI: Pakistan on Friday named disgraced opener Sharjeel Khan, who served a ban for spot-fixing, in the national T20 squad for the upcoming away tours of South Africa and Zimbabwe.

Left-handed batsmen Sharjeel was banned for five years in August 2017 by the Anti-Corruption Tribunal of the Pakistan Cricket Board after being found guilty of corruption during the Pakistan Super League held in the UAE.

The tribunal, however, suspended two and half years sentence allowing Sharjeel to return to competitive cricket late last year when he appeared in the Pakistan Super League 5.

Besides Sharjeel, chief selector, Muhammad Wasim also announced a number of surprise exclusions and inclusions for the twin tour on which Pakistan will play three ODIs and four T20 internationals in South Africa and two Tests and three T20s in Zimbabwe.

The Pakistan white-ball players will leave for Johannesburg on March 26 on a chartered flight while the Test specialists will leave for Zimbabwe on April 12.

A total of 22 players have been named for the T20 and ODI matches on the twin tours with 14 players featuring in both squads.

Wasim said that experienced Test leg-spinner, Yasir Shah had not been considered for the longer format since he was not fit.

He said uncapped fast bowlers, Shahnawaz Dahani, Arshad Iqbal and Muhammad Wasim jr had been called up for the three formats as a reward for their performances in domestic cricket and the Pakistan Super League.

While Dahani is in the Test squad, Arshad and Wasim who was classified as an all-rounder by the chief selector are in the T20 squad.

Uncapped off-spinner, Sajid Khan and pacer, Tabish Khan, who were picked in the Test squad for the recent home series against South Africa but didn't get a chance to play, have also been retained in the Test squad.

In a major exclusion, the selectors have not picked seasoned all-

rounder, Imad Wasim for the T20 and ODI matches while continuing to ignore experienced batsman, Shoaib Malik.

Batsman, Abdullah Shafique who was initially picked last year for the T20 format but failed badly in New Zealand and was then dropped, has now been named in the ODI and Test squads.

Wasim also said that regular T20 players like Hussain Talat, Khushdil Shah, Aamir Yamin and Aammad Butt had also been dropped because of lack of form in recent matches.

The experienced left-arm pacer, Wahab Riaz has also been dumped for the twin tours but opener, Fakhar Zaman has also won a comeback in the ODI squad.

All-rounder, Shahdab Khan who sat out with an injury for the Test series in New Zealand is back in the white-ball squads while leg-spinner, Zahid Mahmood who made his debut against South Africa in the last T20 match has also been included in the Test squad.

Pakistan squads:

T20I: Babar Azam (Capt), Sharjeel Khan, Asif Ali, Haider Ali, Muhammad Hafeez, Danish Aziz, Faheem Ashraf, Muhammad Nawaz, Muhammad Wasim jr, Shadab Khan (VC), Muhammad Rizwan, Sarfaraz Ahmed, Arshad Iqbal, Haris Rauf, Hasan Ali, Muhammad Hsaini, Shaheen Shah Afridi, Usman Qadir.

ODI: Abdullah Shafique, Fakhar Zaman, Babar Azam (Capt), Danish Aziz, Imam ul Haq, Saud Shakeel, Haider Ali, Faheem Ashraf, Muhammad Nawaz, Muhammad Wasim jr, Shadab Khan (VC), Muhammad Rizwan, Sarfaraz Ahmed, Haris Rauf, Hasan Ali, Muhammad Hsaini, Shaheen Shah Afridi, Usman Qadir.

Test: Abid Ali, Abdullah Shafique, Imran Butt Babar Azam (Capt), Fawad Alam, Azhar Ali, Saud Shakeel, Salman Ali Agha, Faheem Ashraf, Muhammad Nawaz, Muhammad Rizwan (VC), Sarfaraz Ahmed, Haris Rauf, Hasan Ali, Shaheen Shah Afridi, Shahnawaz Dahani, Tabish Khan, Zahid Mahmood, Sajid Khan and Nauman Ali.

Shaken By COVID-19 Pandemic, Football Avoids Financial Collapse

Agencies

LIVERPOOL: Wandering around the concourses of the third tier of Anfield's main stand provides a glimpse into the past.

To the last day of normality in English football, before the world changed. One year later, the betting boards are still filled with the odds for Liverpool's Champions League meeting with Atletico Madrid.

That game, on March 11, 2020, was the last time an English stadium had a capacity crowd. That same day, the World Health Organization declared the COVID-19 outbreak a pandemic.

On the one-year anniversary, most games around Europe were still being played in empty stadiums. But after an initial total shutdown of football and fears that clubs may go bankrupt because of the loss of ticket revenues, the sport seems to have emerged largely intact. And with vaccine rollouts gathering pace across Europe, there is hope that fans will soon be back in the stands.

"We are no longer in full crisis," Andrea Agnelli, the Juventus chairman who leads the European Club Association, said this week.

But it's been a year where football became directly intermingled in the politics of trying to control the spread of the coronavirus.

The British government initially ruled out any restrictions on sports events, and the Liverpool-Atletico game went ahead with a capacity crowd of 52,267 fans. At that time, Spanish authorities had already imposed a ban on events in Madrid with more than 1,000 people.

In the end it was the Premier League itself that decided to pause for 100 days after prominent infections at Arsenal and Chelsea.

In France, the domestic league was abandoned entirely on government orders, while the other major leagues also took long breaks. The 2020 European Championship was postponed until 2021, as was the Copa America in South Amer-



ica. The Champions League wasn't completed until August in empty stadiums in Lisbon.

After the initial lockdown, fans were briefly allowed to return in pockets of Europe - Liverpool was allowed up to 2,000 supporters in December at Anfield but the second wave of infections and the spread of new variants sparked new lockdowns.

"Especially at Liverpool we missed (the fans) because we have the most special atmosphere probably in the world of football," Liverpool manager Jurgen Klopp said this week. So it's clear it makes a massive difference.

At least there was no second complete shutdown of football in Europe, which helped prevent the financial apocalypse feared at the start of the pandemic.

But there has been a significant impact caused by the loss of matchday and commercial revenue, and rebates owed to broadcasters due to the disruptions to the schedule.

Accountancy firm KPMG assessed the finances of 43 clubs in Europe and found that total revenue dropped 1.2 billion euros (1.4 billion) or 13% last season.

Agnelli, the ECA head, warned in January that European football teams face losing up to 10 billion

due the pandemic.

Juventus has already revealed that losses more than doubled year-on-year to 113 million euros in the final six months of 2020. The Italian champion was among leading clubs to convince players to waive parts of their salaries. Arsenal and Barcelona also got their millionaire stars to accept pay cuts.

Barcelona has still been one of the clubs hardest hit as the pandemic compounded its existing financial problems. The Catalan club currently has debts over 1 billion euros. The Premier League fears clubs are losing 100 million pounds (140 million) a month as long as the turnstiles remain locked.

The impact of the pandemic was noticeable in the January transfer window when spending across England, Spain, Italy, Germany and France dropped from almost 1 billion euros in 2020 to around 275 million euros this year.

"I don't think the market will ever go back to where it was because the business models were sometimes too stretched," said Andrea Sartori, KPMG's global head of sports.

"So I think the crisis has helped rethink the overall business model of football because it's hard to operate in an industry where many, many clubs are operating in a cost to revenue ratio which is well in

excess of 65% like Barcelona."

Postponing Euro 2020 has already cost UEFA hundreds of millions of euros. That's why the governing body is determined to have stadiums at least half-full when the tournament goes ahead across the continent in June and July.

The lingering financial damage caused by pandemic to the wider economy is also felt by football clubs, as it could have an impact on sponsorship deals and broadcasting revenue. The Premier League is in the midst of auctioning TV rights to the world's richest football competition and could be in for a shock.

"There's certainly going to be a rights correction and it may be seen and interpreted by many as rights deflation," said Simon Green, the head of BT Sport, which airs Premier League games in England.

But the overall outlook is a lot more optimistic than it was when football was largely shut down across the continent, and no one knew for sure when it might resume.

We are now starting to see the light at the end of the tunnel, La Liga President Javier Tebas said.

In spite of loss of income of 2 billion euros, it could have been 7 billion euros. Especially the large clubs have been able to cope throughout this crisis.

Undefeated Vijender Singh To Take On Russian Artysh Lopsan In Comeback Fight

Press Trust of India

NEW DELHI: India's professional boxing star Vijender Singh will fight Russia's Artysh Lopsan in his return to the ring after over a year disrupted by COVID-19 during which he relied on his amateur contemporary and former Commonwealth Games bronze-medallist Jai Bhagwan for training assistance.

Vijender and Lopsan will square off on March 19 in a super middleweight (76kg) showdown on the rooftop deck of the Majestic Pride Casino Ship in Panaji, Goa. Lopsan's name was revealed at a press conference in New Delhi.

"It wasn't the easiest year and initially it took a while for the body to respond. But the last two months have been fabulous for me. Jai Bhagwan (2010 CWG bronze-medallist) helped me with my training here in Gurgaon," Vijender told PTI on how he geared up for his return.

"I was also in touch with (my Manchester-based British trainer) Lee Beard for some online help," he added.

The 26-year-old Lopsan has fought six pro bouts, claiming four victories, including two knockouts. His last contest was in December 2020 against compatriot Yusup Magomedbekov, which he won via Technical Knockout.

Vijender, on the other hand, is unbeaten throughout his professional career. His record of 12-0 includes eight knockouts. The 2008 Beijing Olympics bronze-medallist defeated Ghana's former Commonwealth champion Charles Adamu in Dubai to claim his 12th successive win in November 2019.

"Lee couldn't be here because of COVID restrictions but he has been supportive and has been there online whenever I have needed advice. Jai,



you can say, is my coach right now," Vijender said about his longtime friend with whom he competed in the 2010 CWG in Delhi.

Lee has been Vijender's trainer ever since he took the professional plunge in 2015.

Jai is a serving police officer in Haryana and took leave to assist Vijender. He is a two-time Asian championship bronze-winner and has competed alongside Vijender in several international and national amateur events.

Vijender said the lockdown posed a few challenges with regards to finding sparring partners but in the last few months, he has got what he needed to be ready for the comeback. He is eyeing another knockout against the less experienced Russian.

"I didn't face any trouble finding sparring partners to prepare myself. The facilities were also very accessible thanks to my promoters (IOS Boxing Promotions). So I am in a good shape and raring to go," said the 35-year-old, who plans to compete in at least two more fights this year.

Lopsan, on the other hand, is aiming to end the Indian's unbeaten run

during which he picked up the WBO Asia Pacific and Oriental Super Middleweight titles.

"Vijender is a good fighter but I'm here to end his unbeaten streak. What better way to end his streak than knocking him down in front of his audience. I've trained hard for this fight and I'm rearing to go," he said.

Also, seasoned Indian boxer Neeraj Goyat will take on Sandeep Kumar (Super Welterweight) during the same fight night.

"(It) will be the co-main event for the night followed by Vijender's much-awaited return to the ring," said IOS Boxing Promotions. There will be six under-card fights as well.

"It is going to be a big fight in Goa. Vijender has the experience and unbeaten streak while Lopsan also has a good record under his belt. I'm expecting a really good fight between the two and fans will be able to witness something incredible," said IOS Boxing Promotions' Neerav Tomar said.

Owing to social distancing guidelines, only 50 per cent of the general tickets and a limited 150 high-end tickets have been put on sale.

I DIDN'T FACE ANY TROUBLE FINDING sparring partners to prepare myself. The facilities were also very accessible thanks to my promoters (IOS Boxing Promotions). So I am in a good shape and raring to go."