

KASHMIR OBSERVER

Monday 26 July | 15 Zil Hajj | 1442 Hijri | Vol:24 | Issue: 172 | Pages:08 | Price: ₹3

www.kashmirobserver.net • twitter.com / kashmirobserver • facebook.com/kashmirobserver • Postal Regn: L/159/KO/SK/2014-2016



P7 STATE

ONE KILLED ANOTHER INJURED IN RAMBAN ROAD ACCIDENT

One person was killed while another suffered injuries in a road accident on Kashmir highway at Ramban on Sunday. Officials said that the Conductor of a Truck

P4 A LAW IN LOCKS

The law of sedition has never failed to garner opprobrium from myriad quarters, ever since its enactment in the Indian legal system. Due to its iron-fisted nature, coupled with historical and socio-legal intricacies, it has been termed by many as



P6 NEWS

SHRINKING FORESTS CONCERN FOR SEED DISPERSAL BY BIRDS: STUDY

Do you know how does a forest re-generate naturally? Do you know the role played by frugivorous (fruit-eating) birds by way of bird-seeding in forest regeneration?



Quote!

Change the world by being yourself.

—Amy Poehler

NEWS DIGEST

Policeman's Rifle Snatched In Kulgam

SRINAGAR: Suspected militants on Sunday overpowered a policeman and snatched his rifle in Khudwani area of south Kashmir's Kulgam district, reports said.

According to reports, suspected militants overpowered a policeman near Shamsipora Khudwani crossing on Sunday morning and forcibly took away his AK-47 rifle before fleeing from the area. The policeman has been identified as [More On P2](#)

BSF Man Shoots Himself Dead

SRINAGAR: A Border Security Force (BSF) man on Sunday shot himself dead at Koil Airport in Pulwama district. Prem Prakash of BSF 33 battalion shot himself with his service weapon in Koil Airport in the south Kashmir district, officials said Sunday. Prakash's colleagues found him in a pool of blood and instantly shifted him to a nearby hospital for treatment. However, the doctors there declared him dead. Meanwhile, police have started an investigation in this regard.

Minor Drowns In Budgam Stream

SRINAGAR: A minor boy died after drowning in a stream in Wagora area of central Kashmir's Budgam district on Sunday. 6-year-old Faizan Ashraf drowned when he was taking a bath along with other children in the Wagora area of the district on Sunday afternoon, reports said. The locals rescued the boy and shifted him to a nearby hospital. However, the doctors there referred him to Srinagar's SMHS [More On P2](#)

Electric Shock Kills Man

SRINAGAR: A man died on Sunday after receiving an electric shock in Kunzer area of north Kashmir's Baramulla district. 32-year-old Farooq Ahmad Ganie was repairing an electricity line at his home in Kralweth village of Kunzer on Sunday when he received an electric shock, reports said. Ganie passed away due to the severity of electric shock even before he could be given medical assistance at the hospital.

4 IEDs Recovered In Kupwara

SRINAGAR: Police on Sunday recovered four Improvised Explosive Devices (IEDs) during a cordon and search operation (CASO) in Kupwara district. The four IEDs concealed under a boulder were found by a search team of police and army's 41RR in Nadernagh village of Avoora in the north Kashmir district on Sunday, officials said. They said a Bomb Disposal Squad has reached the spot to defuse the explosive devices.



A scooterist is stopped by guards at Dalgate as Boulevard has been closed for public traffic for four days beginning Sunday as part of security bandobast for President Kovind's stay here. KO photo Abid Bhat

President Kovind Arrives In Srinagar

Press Trust Of India

SRINAGAR: President Ram Nath Kovind arrived here on Sunday on a four-day visit to Jammu and Kashmir, and Ladakh.

Kovind arrived at the Srinagar airport here at 11:15 am and was received by Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha and senior officers of the police and the civil administration.

During the July 25-28 trip, the President will visit Drass in Ladakh to pay homage to those armed force personnel who laid down their lives for the nation at the Kargil War Memorial on Monday on the 22nd anniversary of the Kargil Vijay Diwas, the officials said.

In 2019, bad weather had prevented the President from visiting Drass to participate in Kargil Vijay Diwas, and instead, he paid his tributes by



laying a wreath at a war memorial at the Army's 15 Corps headquarters in Badamibagh here.

On Tuesday, the President will address the 19th annual convocation of the University of Kashmir here, they added.

BOULEVARD BLOCKED

As part of security measures for the President's visit, traffic on the two approach roads to Raj Bhawan where President Kovind will stay has been diverted between Sunday and Wednesday. A traffic department official said diversions have been placed in some areas of the city and no traffic is being allowed on Foreshore Road, along the famous Dal Lake from Dalgate and Nishat axis, as well as towards Gupkar for the next three days.

Youth Held Over Social Media Post

Observer News Service

SRINAGAR: Police in Kishtwar district have arrested a youth for allegedly sharing communally sensitive content on social media networking websites.

Manzoor Ahmad Raina of Khanan village of Ganderbal district was arrested by police after a video was in circulation in the social media showing a few persons slaughtering a bovine animal, Kishtwar Police posted on its official Twitter handle.

The police said that [More On P2](#)

CDS Rawat Reviews Situation Along LoC In Ladakh

Agencies

KARGIL: Chief of Defence Staff (CDS) Gen Bipin Rawat on Sunday visited the border town of Drass and reviewed the security situation and operational preparedness along the Line of Control (LoC) in the Union Territory of Ladakh.

An Army official said Gen Rawat took a firsthand review of the security situation and operational preparedness of the troops at the forward locations along the LoC in Drass, the second coldest place in the world.

Gen Rawat also interacted with the troops during his visit to the forward locations along the LoC. The General was briefed about various aspects of



the security situation by senior Army officials during his visit.

The Chief of Defence Staff complimented the troops deployed along the LoC for their high morale and exhorted them to remain resolute and steadfast.

Meanwhile, on Sunday morning a special event narrating the stories of Operation VIJAY was [More On P2](#)

Saudi To Resume International Umrah From Aug 10

Agencies

RIYADH: The Kingdom of Saudi Arabia on Sunday announced the resumption of Umrah service for pilgrims worldwide from 1st Muharram 1443 (August 10, 2021), following a successful Hajj season.

Umrah for Saudi citizens and residents in the Kingdom began again from July 25.

Umrah was suspended in the first week of Dhul Hijjah so as to make preparation for Hajj which began on July 17.

Beginning from July 25, Umrah agencies have been authorised to issue Visas for Umrah for entry beginning from 1st Muharram 1443 (10 August 2021). [More On P2](#)

Militant Killed In Kulgam Encounter

Observer News Service

SRINAGAR: An unidentified militant on Sunday was killed in an encounter with government forces in Munand area of south Kashmir's Kulgam district.

The encounter broke out on Sunday morning when the government forces launched a cordon and search operation (CASO) in Munand area of the district, officials said. In the encounter, one unidentified militant was killed.

"#KulgamEncounterUpdate: 01 unidentified #terrorist killed. #Search going on. Further details shall follow," Kashmir Police [More On P2](#)

Dil & Dilli Humoos Door Ast

'No Follow-Up Results' After Meeting With PM: Dr Farooq

Press Trust Of India

SRINAGAR: A month after Prime Minister Narendra Modi's outreach to mainstream leaders of Jammu and Kashmir, National Conference president Farooq Abdullah said on Sunday that there has been "no follow-up results" on the ground. Abdullah said this in reference

to the prime minister's remarks at the June 24 meeting in New Delhi that he wanted to win the hearts of the people of Jammu and Kashmir and remove "Dilli ki doori" (the distance from Delhi) and "dil ki doori" (distance between hearts).

"That was a welcome statement but there is no effort on the ground to [More On P2](#)

'Need Result Oriented India-Pak Dialogue'

The Jammu and Kashmir National Conference President and Member of Parliament Dr. Farooq Abdullah on Sunday asked both India and Pakistan to be consistent, coherent and serious in their engagement and ensure people of Jammu and Kashmir, and Ladakh live a life free from "unending miseries". Dr. Farooq said this while addressing [More On P2](#)



NIGHT CURFEW SHALL continue to remain in force in all districts from 8 pm to 7 am."

28 BSF Men Among 166 More Test Positive

Srinagar: At least 28 Border Security Force (BSF) personnel were among 166 new cases of coronavirus detected across Jammu and Kashmir on Sunday, even as no death due to the disease was reported from the Union Territory [More On P2](#)

Inkishaf

Why Public Service Guarantee Act Is In Deep Freezer In Jammu And Kashmir?

People are deprived of on time services inspite of legislation guaranteeing time bound public services. Much of this has to do with the frozen status of Public Service Guarantee Act (PSGA).

Watch to know more in this episode of **Inkishaf** on **KASHMIR OBSERVER** YouTube Channel



<https://youtube.com/c/kobserver>



Crackdown On Fake Gun Licence Holders; 2 FIRs Filed

Press Trust Of India

JAMMU: The Jammu and Kashmir Police on Sunday registered FIRs against two people, including an over-ground worker (OGW), for allegedly possessing fake gun licences in Reasi district, officials said.

Police launched verification of all gun licences issued from outside Reasi to unearth fake licences used for possessing arms by any person, they said.

Five fake gun licences have also been cancelled, the officials said.

During this process, police identified nine notorious criminals, habitual offenders and history-sheeters of Reasi district, who had on the pretext of self-protection managed arms licenses from different districts in their favour and a few of them even kept up to three weapons and ammunition in their possession since years, they said, adding that their licence cancellation process is underway.

Two of them were possessing fake licences and the record of one of them issued by the sub-divisional magistrate (SDM) Mendhar and investigation does not support any threat to them for which they needed self-protection, rather they are a threat to the peace of society by possessing arms and ammunition, the officials said.

It came to the notice of police that these criminals were allegedly using these weapons to harass innocent people of the area and had created a fear psychosis in their minds, they said.

Police facilitated cancellation of five licenses, besides registration of FIRs against two persons, including an OGW, in the fake gun licences case, they said.

Over-ground worker (OGW) Mohd Asghar of Mahore had managed a fake gun licence from Udhampur district in 1984, the officials said.

He remained involved in two FIRs for harbouring criminals and murder, they said, adding that his licence stands cancelled, among four others.

No space will be left in hospitals if COVID-19 cases keep rising: Bangladesh govt warns

Agenceis

DHAKA: Bangladesh's government on Sunday warned that there will be no space left in the hospitals for patients if the COVID-19 cases keep rising at the current pace, amid concerns over increasing number of deaths and infections after the Eid-ul-Azha holidays.

Bangladesh, which is currently facing a renewed surge in COVID-19 cases and deaths, registered 228 more fatalities and 11,291 new cases on Sunday.

The government had eased the strict lockdown in view of the Eid-ul-Azha festival last week. However, on Friday it reimposed a stricter 14-day nationwide shutdown to contain the spread of coronavirus.

Health Minister Zahid Maleque said that everyone should abide by the restrictions during the ongoing lockdown to reduce fresh cases, The Daily Star newspaper reported.

"We do not want the number of patients to increase. To reduce the number of patients, we have to reduce the infection," Maleque said after visiting the Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujib Medical University (BSMMU) Convention Centre here.

Expressing concern over the increasing infection rate in many cities across the country, he warned, if the infection continues to increase like this, there will be no place left in hospitals.

"If the coronavirus situation is not brought under control, it will harm the country's economy, which we do not want. Therefore, there is no alternative to following the health safety rules," the health minister said.

The BSMMU field hospital with 1,000 beds, including 200 intensive care units and high dependency units, will start operation from next Saturday, said the



report.

On Saturday, India sent a consignment of 200 tonnes of liquid medical oxygen on an Oxygen Express train to Bangladesh.

Giving details about the COVID-19 cases in Bangladesh, the Directorate General of Health Services (DGHS) said on Sunday that 228 people died from the contagion in the past 24 hours, taking the country's death toll to 19,274.

Dhaka counted 69 deaths, the highest among the eight divisions, followed by Khulna with 50 fatalities.

It said that 11,291 new cases were reported during the last 24 hours with an infection rate of 30.04 per cent, taking the national tally to 11,64,635.

The government had reimposed the lockdown on Friday and said everyone must stay indoors as offices, courts, garment factories and all other

export-oriented industries will remain closed. Junior minister for public administration Farhad Hossain said: "this lockdown will be stricter than the one imposed last time".

Army troops, paramilitary Border Guard Bangladesh and elite anti-crime Rapid Action Battalion personnel have joined hands with police in enforcing the shutdown on the streets of the capital Dhaka and other cities and their entry points.

The security personnel in uniform have set up makeshift checkpoints to restrict peoples' movement without emergency needs.

The health experts have said the lifting of the ban allowed millions to travel to their home, crowding public buses and ferries and warned it could heighten the toll and infection cases in the coming days.

66% Schools, 60% Anganwadi Centres In India Provided Tap Water Connections: Ministry



Agenceis

New Delhi: Tap water connections have been made available in 66 per cent schools, 60 per cent anganwadi centres and 69 per cent gram panchayats and community healthcare centres (CHCs) in villages across India, the ministry said.

The 100-day special campaign of the Jal Shakti Ministry to provide tap water connections in schools and anganwadi centres has been extended to March 31 after some states indicated that they need more time to complete the task.

Due to unsafe water, poor sanitation and hygiene, children are susceptible to waterborne diseases such as diarrhoea, dysentery, cholera, typhoid.

Repeated infections due to consumption of unsafe water and poor sanitation in formative years of children may lead to adverse health effects like stunting. In areas where water sources are contaminated with arsenic, fluoride, heavy metals, prolonged consumption of contaminated water may lead to serious health issues.

(66 per cent) schools, 6.80 lakh (60 per cent) anganwadi centres (AWCs) and 2.36 lakh (69 per cent) gram panchayats and community healthcare centres (CHCs) in villages across India, the ministry said.

On October 2 last year, a 100-day campaign was launched to make provision of tap water supply in schools, anganwadi centres and community healthcare centres. The campaign was part of the Jal Jeevan Mission which aims to provide tap water connections to all rural households by 2024.

"Since the launch of this campaign, provision of tap water has been made in 6.85 lakh

CONTD. FROM PAGE 3

Saudi To Resume

Saudi Arabia announced that it has reopened Islamic holy sites for performing Umrah from Sunday after the end of the Hajj season, according to the Saudi Press Agency (SPA)

"The Grand Mosque is ready to receive pilgrims and worshippers for Umrah" said the deputy head of the affairs of the Grand Mosque, Saad bin Muhammad al-Muhammid.

Pilgrims should note that specific prayer locations have been designated as per COVID-19 standards.

Pilgrims are also required to follow markings on the floor when performing Tawaf as was seen during Hajj and throughout the COVID-19 pandemic.

Eligibility and requirements

- All countries allowed to send direct flights except for nine countries which are India, Pakistan, Indonesia, Egypt, Turkey, Argentina, Brazil, South Africa and Lebanon which require quarantine of 14 days in a third country before arriving in the Kingdom.

- Mandatory requirement of being vaccinated against COVID-19 with complete doses of either Pfizer, Moderna, AstraZeneca or J&J.

- Complete doses of China's vaccines with booster shot of either Pfizer, Moderna, AstraZeneca or J&J.

- Age 18 and above will be allowed.

- Requirement to arrive via an accredited Umrah agency by Saudi Arabia's ministry of Hajj and Umrah.

Umrah is a voluntary pilgrimage that Muslims can perform at any time of the year. In February of 2020, it was suspended due to concerns about the ongoing COVID-19 outbreak.

However, later, in October 2020, the Saudi authorities reopened the Islamic holy sites for Umrah after a six-month hiatus. It was limited to Saudis and foreigners residing in the kingdom who were allowed to perform rituals in the Grand Mosque with a capacity of 30 per cent, i.e. only 6,000 people per day.

This year's Hajj received only 60,000 people from within Saudi Arabia's borders due to the ongoing risks from the COVID-19 pandemic.

A total of 58,518 pilgrims performed the Hajj this year. Of them 32,816 were male and the remaining 25,702 were females.

This was the second time in a row that the Saudi government had to reduce the number of pilgrims due to COVID-19. In 2020, only 10,000 pilgrims were able to perform Hajj due to the pandemic.

Authorities announced a "successful" end to the annual event, citing no cases of COVID-19 being recorded.

"I would like to announce that this Hajj was successful, with neither COVID-19 infection nor any other epidemic diseases reported," Saudi minister of health Dr Tawfiq Al-Rabiah said.

Militant Killed

posted on its official Twitter handle.

Govt Lifts Weekend

Government, Home; Divisional Commissioners, Deputy Commissioners,

Superintendents of Police and other officers of Jammu and Kashmir observed that as compared to the previous weeks, significant improvement has been made by all the districts in respect of the above parameters.

"However, there is a need to continue with some of the existing COVID containment measures in all the districts in view of the uneven trend in the daily COVID cases," the order reads.

"The guidelines / instructions on COVID containment in the Union Territory of Jammu and Kashmir already notified vide Government Orders 35 and 36 - JK (DMRRR) of 2021 dated 29-05-2021 read with Government Orders 51 - JK (DMRRR) of 2021 dated 18-07-2021 shall continue to remain in force till further orders. However, there shall be no weekend Curfew in any district," it added.

According to the order, the SEC also permitted the public and private educational institutions to seek personal attendance of limited vaccinated staff for administrative purposes. Also, the maximum number of people permitted to attend any indoor/ outdoor gathering shall be restricted to 25.

"Night Curfew shall continue to remain in force in all districts from 8 pm to 7 am," reads the order directing all Deputy Commissioners to focus on the positivity rates of the Medical-Blocks under their jurisdictions.

"Intensified measures, related to Covid management and restriction of activities, will have to be taken by the DCs in these Blocks. There shall be renewed focus on Panchavat level mapping of cases and micro-containment zones shall be constituted wherever unusual spike of cases is noticed," the order said.

"DCs shall keep active track of the positivity rates in the Blocks and consider implementing stricter control measures in closed clustered spaces like Public/Private Offices, Community halls, Malls, Bazaars etc., in case weekly positivity rate goes beyond 4 per cent in these Blocks," it added.

The three - "T" protocol of testing, tracking and treating, besides vaccination, needs to be strengthened in these Blocks, the order said. "The proportion of RT-PCR tests in the total mix should be scaled up, on best effort basis, to 70 % or more, excluding travelers."

"Positive cases so detected as a result of intensive testing need to be isolated/quarantined at the earliest and their contacts should also be traced at the earliest, and similarly isolated / quarantined and tested, if needed."

The government also ordered that quick isolation and treatment of COVID-19 patients shall be ensured in treatment facilities/hospitals/homes.

28 BSF Men Among

on the second consecutive day. While 132 new cases of Covid-19 were reported from Kashmir Valley, the remaining 34 were detected across Jammu division, taking the total number of people infected since the outbreak of pandemic last year in J&K to 320657.

Giving district-wise details, the

officials said that Srinagar reported 66, Baramulla 18, Budgam 9, Pulwama 10, Kupwara 5, Anantnag 4, Bandipora 1, Ganderbal 9, Kulgam 9, Shopian 1, Jammu 9, Udhampur 3, Rajouri 5, Doda 3, Samba 1, Kishtwar 5, Poonch 2, Ramban 1 and Reasi 5 new cases of Covid-19. No fresh case of Covid-19 was reported from Kathua district.

So far 4374 people have succumbed to the virus in J&K.

Also, the officials said, 197 more COVID-19 patients in last 24 hours have recovered—79 from Jammu Division and 197 from Kashmir, taking the number of people who have recovered in J&K to 314995. With this, there are now 1288 active cases—483 in Jammu and 805 in Kashmir.

There was no new confirmed case of mucormycosis (black fungus) reported today. So far 35 black fungus cases have been confirmed in J&K, the officials added. (With GNS inputs)

'No Follow-Up

win the hearts of the people. People continue to be locked up and dissent is not tolerated. We want to see the change on the ground, a visible effort to win back the people who went through the trauma of their state being dismembered, its special status removed in one sudden blow," the three-time former chief minister told PTI here.

"...we are yet to see any follow-up results even after a month," he said.

"Trust is something that has been missing from both sides (Delhi and Srinagar). Successive prime ministers — Jawaharlal Nehru, Narasimha Rao, Atal Bihari Vajpayee — made promises but the trust deficit has persisted," he added.

The 83-year-old veteran politician said that he and his party had attended the Delhi meeting because it was an invitation from the prime minister although he had no expectations from it. Yet, he had hoped for steps to win the hearts and minds of people but nothing had happened.

Abdullah insisted that restoration of "full, undiluted" statehood to Jammu and Kashmir should precede the elections to its Assembly. All major parties have demanded that and the Centre should prove its bona fide by agreeing to that.

Asked if his party would take part in the elections if the statehood was not granted before that, the NC president said, "We will decide at that time when the bugle is blown. We will then sit down and decide what we should do."

In reply to a question about the fate of the People's Alliance for Gupkar Declaration (PAGD), a conglomerate of six mainstream political parties including the NC and its arch rival PDP, Abdullah said the alliance stands and "we are together...we all are there. We haven't left."

He said the alliance was cobbled up together in a hurry when the special status of Jammu and Kashmir was abrogated on August 5, 2019. "We all are like-minded people who joined together to work for restoration, knowing fully well that under this

government it will not be restored."

"But we will continue to fight democratically and legally. People after us will also stand and try and work for the restoration of this," he said.

Abdullah also pointed out that earlier this month the Delimitation Commission came to Jammu and Kashmir and no members of Parliament, who are its associate members, were invited to sit and watch the proceedings.

Abdullah, who currently represents Srinagar in Parliament, urged the opposition national political parties to "forget" their plans and standings and get together to put the pillar of democracy far more strongly because the "time is running out".

"The tragedy with India is that the opposition is divided and unless they unite for restoration of democracy and forget their own party plans and party standings, we will never be able to get our democratic structure back.

"And I think efforts are being made, I see they are trying to get together and I hope it does happen soon because time is running out," he said.

The National Conference was part of a gathering at the residence of Nationalist Congress Party chief Sharad Pawar on June 22, two days before Prime Minister Modi chaired the meeting with leaders from Jammu and Kashmir.

The meeting at Pawar's residence was called "non-political" but an interaction of like-minded people by CPI(M) leader Nilotpal Basu who was among the participants.

To a question whether he would be playing a role in binding the opposition parties across the country together, Abdullah said, "...all, whether you are in south, east, west or north, we all have to get together, aim to strengthen democracy, to put the pillar of democracy far more strongly. This will happen because it is the need of the hour."

Abdullah, who was detained under the stringent Public Safety Act after the Centre abrogated special status of the erstwhile state and bifurcated it into two union territories, said the biggest problem today was the COVID-19 pandemic which shut everything down, bringing the political process "really to a naught".

Now that things have started to improve and Covid is under control, "you will see political activity on a much bigger scale.... I am sure as things improve the political parties will meet and draw strategies for the future."

He referred to the demand made by all leaders at the June 24 meeting for making a level-playing field allowing the political parties to perform their duties and ensuring security.

"Forget about reviewing the security. I can tell you that some more leaders have lost their security after the meeting. Whereas their people, who don't have any standing with the people, have all the security, all the vehicles and then they say we are just. Where is justice?"

"We have shown them even when we were locked up in the local body elections without getting to the people, still people voted for us in huge

numbers which has shaken them," he added.

Abdullah, his son Omar Abdullah, Congress leader Ghulam Nabi Azad and PDP chief Mehbooba Mufti — all former chief ministers — were part of the 14-member delegation from Jammu and Kashmir to attend the meeting with the prime minister.

'Need Result

party functionaries at two separate meetings at Laamad and Devsar, Kulgam, a party spokesperson said Sunday.

He said that the NC President emphasizing that there was no substitute to dialogue and said that the moves and the messages indicating a thaw in relations between both the neighboring countries has put brakes on the escalating tensions.

"For the entire chest thumping, both the countries cannot win a war against each other, it is sooner both the neighboring countries realize the ground reality; the more serious, coherent and consistent, both the nations are in settling all outstanding areas of disagreements, the better, he said, it would be for the early return of lasting peace and stability to Jammu and Kashmir and the entire region," the NC spokesperson said.

He said that the former Chief Minister necessitated on the need of having result oriented dialogue between India and Pakistan.

"The dialogue process will benefit the people of Jammu and Kashmir the most. Both the nations I have maintained all along, have to live side by side. It is up to them, if they want to live as enemies or supportive friends and partners in development. Both countries can achieve much by joining hands in progress," Dr Farooq said, as per the party spokesperson.

He said that the NC Patron also stated that if the ties between both the nations are to improve than both the nations have to come out of their shells and narrow down the space of their differences and source of conflict between them to get together on the table to work towards an environment that recognizes the concept of JK's historical individuality, uniqueness of its socio-political complexes and restoration of its political dignity and historical selfhood.

He further said that the Dr Farooq emphasized on NC's support to the peace and camaraderie between the two neighbours, saying that his party has all along been a strong votary of Indo-Pak dialogue.

"There is no substitute for dialogue. But the dialogue should result in JK centric CBMs including resumption of cross-LoC trade through a proper banking mechanism and doing away with the present barter system. Such JK centric CBMs will indeed help the two neighbouring countries solve their disagreements amicably and in an objective manner for the greater good of the people of JK, Ladakh and the entire region," Dr Farooq said.

As per the NC spokesperson, the former CM also asked his party workers to draw lessons from the worrying

disadvantages of disunity and impressed upon them to work towards strengthening the democracy and the party fortress.

"The last person out there in Jammu, Kashmir, and Ladakh is looking up to us with sheer optimism that we will salvage the entire region from murderous manifestations of communalism, and regionalism and to catapult the people from the prevailing economic distress, and instability," the NC Patron said.

Youth Held Over

considering the sensitivity of the video clip with regard to communal harmony in the area cognizance was taken and an FIR vide number 167/2021 was registered in Police Station Kishtwar under relevant sections of law.

"The cyber cell of the District Police was activated, teams constituted and deputed for the arrest of accused persons," the police said, adding that the accused was arrested within two hours and other legal proceedings are underway.

"After preliminary investigation, it surfaced that the video was shot in District Ganderbal and the accused has updated this video at his WhatsApp status on his mobile number," the police said in another Tweet.

The police also warned miscreants not to circulate any video which will disturb the peace and communal harmony of the area, otherwise action under law shall be initiated against them.

CDS Rawat Reviews

organized by the Army at Lamochen near Dras where an account of the epic battles on Tololing, Tiger Hill, Pt 4875 and other prominent features was narrated with these very landmarks visible to the audience in front of their eyes.

Lt Gen MV Suchindra, GOC White Knight Corps along with Kargil War Heroes Sub Sanjay Kumar, PVC, Sub Yogendra Singh Yadav, PVC, including the gallantry award winners and Veer Naris and NOs of Kargil War attended the event. The narration took everyone down the memory lane showcasing the daring feat achieved by the valiant soldiers of Indian Army.

On Friday, to mark the 22 years of the Kargil war victory, 25 bikers from Indian Army reached the Drass Kargil War Memorial from Udhampur. The two-day bike rally was flagged off by PVC Subedar Sanjay Kumar from Udhampur.

Policeman's Rifle

Mudasir Ahmad resident of Devsar. He was currently posted at police station Wanpoh.

Soon after the rifle snatching incident, police and central forces reached the area and launched a search operation to nab the assailants.

Minor Drowns

hospital where he was declared brought dead.

The body was handed over to his relatives for final rites after completing

Delhi-based Businessman Arrested For Passing On Fake ITC Of Rs 128 Cr

Agencies

Chandigarh: GST Intelligence officials have arrested a Delhi-based businessman here for allegedly fraudulently passing on input tax credit (ITC) worth Rs 128 crore, a senior official said on Sunday.

Investigations conducted by the officials of the Chandigarh zonal unit of the Directorate General of GST (Goods and Services Tax) Intelligence (DGGI) revealed that the accused was allegedly involved in issuing invoices without actually procuring goods and thus passing on the ITC to various beneficiaries at several places, including Delhi and Chandigarh.

ITC means that a businessman can reduce taxes already paid on input while paying tax on output.

The accused had set up six firms with an intention of passing on the fake ITC to multiple beneficiaries, the official of the

Chandigarh zonal unit of the DGGI said.

He said the accused had passed on fraudulent ITC worth Rs 128 crore.

The GST officials also conducted searches at the business premises and residential places of the accused in Delhi and Himachal Pradesh, he said.

Raids were also carried out at the premises of some of the suppliers, the official added.

Investigation further revealed that the items, which were shown as sales, were never bought and similarly some items which were shown as purchases were never sold by the firms.

The vehicles, which were shown for transporting the goods, were found to be operating in some other parts of the country.

The accused was into the business of readymade garments, chemicals, cigarettes, among other things.

Congress Leader, Cop Arrested For Killing Latter's Wife, Burning Body

Ahmedabad: A police inspector was arrested on Sunday for allegedly murdering his wife, who had been missing for over a month-and-half from Karjan in Gujarat's Vadodara district, and burning her body with the help of an associate, an Ahmedabad Crime Branch official said.

He said a man identified as Kiritsinh Jadeja, who had unsuccessfully contested the Karjan Assembly bypoll in 2020 on a Congress ticket, was also arrested in connection with the murder.

"Inspector Ajay Desai of Vadodara rural police was arrested for killing his wife Sweetie Patel on the intervening night of June 4 and 5. He burnt her body in Jadeja's under-construction hotel at Atali village on Dahej highway in neighbouring Bharruch district. Desai and Jadeja have been charged with murder and destruction of evidence among other offences in an FIR lodged with Karjan police," Inspector DB Barad of Ahmedabad Crime Branch said.

The case was transferred to the Crime Branch a week back and it was assisted in the probe



by the state's Anti Terrorism Squad.

A Crime Branch release said the woman was strangled by Desai after she had a fight with him on the intervening night of June 4 and 5.

"Desai, on the morning of June 5, covered the body in a blanket and transferred it in his four-wheeler. Thereafter, around 11:30 am, he informed her brother about her going missing after the fight. Desai then took the help of Jadeja to dispose of the body by burning it in the backyard of an under-construction hotel at Atali village on Dahej highway that belongs to latter," the release added.



Death Toll In Landslides, Floods Rises To 149 In Maharashtra

Agencies

Mumbai: The death toll in various rain-related incidents, including floods and landslides, in Maharashtra rose to 149 on Sunday with 36 more bodies being found in Satara and Raigad districts as rescue operations gathered pace, while 64 people remain missing, the state government said.

So far, 50 people have been injured in these incidents, it said in a statement.

A total of 2,29,074 people have been evacuated from the affected districts in the Konkan region and western Maharashtra, to safer places.

A statement from the state secretariat control room said 28 more deaths were reported from the Satara district in western Maharashtra and 8 from the Raigad district in the coastal region.

The government said 60 deaths were so far reported in

Raigad, 21 in Ratnagiri, 41 in Satara, 12 in Thane, seven in Kolhapur, four in suburban Mumbai, and two each in Sindhudurg and Pune.

A total of 875 villages in Kolhapur, Sangli, Satara and Pune were affected by the torrential rains, it said.

"Five relief camps have been set up in flood-hit Chiplun city in Ratnagiri district. 25 teams of the NDRF, four teams of the SDRF, two teams of the Coast Guard, five teams of the Navy and three teams of the Army are conducting the relief and rescue operations," the statement said.

As the bridge over the Vashishthi river connecting Chiplun to Mumbai has collapsed, the road remains shut for the traffic.

The state government has provided an emergency financial aid of Rs 2 crore each to Raigad and Ratnagiri districts. Satara, Sangli, Pune, Kolha-

pur, Thane and Sindhudurg, also affected by rains, were provided with a financial aid of Rs 50 lakh each, the statement said.

Earlier in the day, Chief Minister Uddhav Thackeray visited Chiplun, the site of severe flooding, and interacted with residents, businessmen and shopkeepers. He promised them all help from the state government to restore normalcy in the area.

Thackeray said they will require "central assistance for long-term mitigation measures", and added that he will tour western Maharashtra on Monday and comprehensive data of the extent of damages will be prepared.

Heavy rains earlier this week triggered landslides in some areas of Maharashtra including the deadliest one at Taliye village in the Raigad district

6-Year-Old Girl Strangled To Death In UP, Family Claims She Was Raped

Agencies

Baghpat: A six-year-old girl was strangled to death in a village here on Sunday, with the family members claiming that she was allegedly raped, police said.

The body has been sent for a post-mortem, police said.

Superintendent of Police Abhishek Singh told reporters that family members of the girl have expressed apprehension that she was allegedly raped, and added that after the autopsy, the actual picture will be clear.

He said evidence has been

collected from the spot. There were head injuries on the girl and her clothes were stained with blood, Singh added.

Police have detained a youth who had informed them about the incident, and are questioning him.

Centre Calls On Community Radio Stations To Dispel Vaccination Myths

New Delhi: The union health ministry, covid-19, covid myths, covid vaccine, vaccination drive, lav agarwal, vaccine, workshop, Union Ministry of Health and Family Welfare, MoHFW, UNICEF, awareness workshop, Community Radio Stations, vaccination myths, vaccination drive, ongoing adult vaccination drive, Centre calls on community radio stations to dispel vaccination myths

The radio stations were asked to constantly remind listeners about the importance of adhering to Covid-appropriate behaviour (File Photo)

The Union Ministry of Health and Family Welfare (MoHFW), in partnership with United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), on Sunday hosted a communication awareness workshop for representatives of Community Radio Stations (CRS) from 16 states.

The thematic session emphasised the importance of developing conscientious behaviour campaigns and dispelling vaccination myths, particularly among communities residing in remote and difficult to reach areas in the country.

In his opening remarks to the session, Lav Agarwal, Joint Secretary, Union Health Ministry, acknowledged the role of Community Radio Stations (CRS) in supporting the world's largest vaccination drive.

He added that the radio stations' sustained efforts to inform their discerning listeners about the Covid-19 vaccination



are reflected in increased community participation in the ongoing adult vaccination drive.

According to the report, vaccination uptake is increasing in many tribal districts as a result of programmes in regional languages aimed at educating communities about the importance of Covid-appropriate behaviour, dispelling myths and misinformation about vaccines, and raising awareness about vaccination progress.

"The radio stations were urged to highlight community-led positive initiatives and role models to strengthen vaccine trust among communities that they cater to. The issue of mental health linked to Covid-19 was also focused upon," the official statement said.

"The collective responsibility to address mental health issues in communities through informative programming in-

volving state and national subject experts was emphasised," the statement read.

The radio stations were asked to constantly remind listeners about the importance of strictly adhering to Covid-appropriate behaviour as the second wave is still ongoing. The virus can retaliate as soon as society disregards health warnings and relaxes its guard against Covid-19 safety protocols, it added.

The representatives were encouraged to produce innovative programmes and create 'Jan Andolan' (public movement) by featuring and acknowledging community role models.

The participants also discussed how they allayed their audience's apprehensions and concerns about Covid-19 vaccines and motivated them to get the vaccine.

PM Must Make Statement In Parliament, Clarify Whether Snooping Was Done: Chidambaram On Pegasus Row

Press Trust Of India

New Delhi: Senior Congress leader P Chidambaram on Sunday said the government should either call for a joint parliamentary committee probe into the Pegasus snooping allegations or request the Supreme Court to appoint a sitting judge to investigate the matter, and demanded that Prime Minister Narendra Modi make a statement in Parliament clarifying whether there had been surveillance or not.

The former home minister said he was not sure that one can go to the extent of saying that the entire electoral mandate of 2019 was vitiated by the "unlawful snooping" but added that it may have "helped" the BJP to score that victory which has been "tainted" by the allegations.

In an interview with PTI, Chidambaram also said a probe by a joint parliamentary committee (JPC) can be more effective than an investigation by the Parliamentary Standing Committee on Information Technology, asserting that the former would be more empowered by Parliament.

Asked about Parliament IT panel head Shashi Tharoor's remarks that the subject is "already on the mandate of my committee" and a JPC is not required, Chidambaram expressed doubts whether the IT panel with a majority of BJP members will allow a full investigation into the matter.

"The parliamentary committee rules are rather strict. For example, they cannot take



evidence openly but a JPC can be empowered by Parliament to take evidence in public view, to cross-examine witnesses, and to summon documents. So, I think a JPC will have far more powers than a parliamentary committee," he said.

At the same time, he said he is not diminishing the role of the parliamentary committee to the extent it can probe the matter and is welcome to do so.

Last Sunday, an international media consortium reported that over 300 verified Indian mobile phone numbers, including two ministers, over 40 journalists, three opposition leaders besides scores of businesspersons and activists in India, could have been targeted for hacking through the Pegasus spyware of the Israeli firm NSO.

The government has been denying all Opposition allegations in the matter.

On the government's response to the allegations, Chidambaram referred to IT and Communications Minister Ashwini Vaishnaw statement in Parliament, saying he is obviously a very "clever minister" and therefore the statement has been "very cleverly worded".

DIAL-EMMA

- TRAFFIC POLICE : 9419993745, 01998-266686
- PCR: 0194-2452092,2455883
- PDD: 0194-2450213
- FIRE AND EMERGENCY SERVICES : 2479488,245222,2452155
- CAPD: 18001807011
- SMC HEALTH OFFICER: 9469409081
- Ambulance: Kashmir EMS Service: +91 94841 00200



AIRPORTS

SHIEK UL ALAM AIRPORT: 01942303311



RAILWAYS

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



HIGHWAY STATUS

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



HIJRI
CALENDAR
15 Zil Haj
1442

PRAYERS

FAJR	3: 59
ZUHR	12:37
ASR	5:33
Magrib	7:40
ISHA	9:15

This Day In History

- 657- Battle of Siffin during the first Muslim civil war between Ali ibn Abi Talib and Muawiyah I beside Euphrates River
- 920- Rout of an alliance of Christian troops from Navarre and Léon against the Muslims at Pamplona
- 1469- Wars of the Roses: Battle of Edgecote Moor - Pitting the forces of Richard Neville, 16th Earl of Warwick against those of King Edward IV.
- 1678- England & Netherlands signs treaty: sending ultimatum to France
- 1803- The Surrey Iron Railway, arguably the world's first public railway, opens in south London.
- 1847- The Liberian Declaration of Independence is signed making Liberia a sovereign nation, independent from the American Colonization Society
- 1891- France annexes Tahiti.
- 1936- The Axis Powers decide to intervene in the Spanish Civil War.
- 1941- US embargo on oil-export to Japan
- 1944- Japanese suicide attack on US lines in Guam
- 1944- Russian troops arrive in Weichsel
- 1944- The first German V-2 rocket hits Great Britain (nicknamed "gasometer").
- 1945- Declaration of Potsdam: US, Britain and China demand the Japanese surrender during WWII
- 1945- Japanese government disregards US ultimatum
- 1945- US cruiser Indianapolis reaches Tinian with atom bomb
- 1945- Physicist Raemer Schreiber and Lieutenant Colonel Peer de Silva depart Kirtland Army Air Field to transport the plutonium core for the Fat Man bomb (bombing of Nagasaki) to the island of Tinian where the bomb is assembled
- 1947- President Truman signs National Security Act (1947), establishing Department of Defense, CIA, National Security Council and Joint Chiefs of Staff
- 1951- Netherlands ends state of war with Germany
- 1952- King Farouk I of Egypt abdicates [Black Saturday]
- 1956- Egypt seizes the Suez Canal
- 1957- USSR launches 1st intercontinental multistage ballistic missile
- 1963-Skopje, Yugoslavia, destroyed by earthquake, kills 1,000+
- 1963 -US Syncom 2, 1st geosynchronous communications satellite, launched
- 1963- The Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development votes to admit Japan.
- 1965- Republic of Maldives gains independence from Britain (National Day)
- 1971- Apollo 15 launched (Scott & Irwin) to 4th manned landing on Moon
- 1974- USSR's Soyuz fails to dock with Salyut 3
- 1975- Soyuz 18B returns to Earth
- 1982- Canada's Anik D1 Comsat launched by US Delta rocket
- 1993- Boeing 737-500 crashes in South Korea, 66 killed
- 1993 -Mars Observer takes 1st photo of Mars, from 5 billion km
- 2005- Space Shuttle program: STS-114 Mission - Launch of Discovery, NASA's first scheduled flight mission after the Columbia Disaster in 2003.
- 2012- At least 200 people are killed in a day of violence in Syria
- 2014- While Israel reject long-term ceasefire that does not include destroying the Hamas tunnels, they agree to 12 hour ceasefire; Palestinian death toll in the Gaza Strip now exceeds 1000.

From KO Archives

Protests, Clashes In Kupwara Over Trihgam Killings

Scores Of Students Injured In Police Action; Schools In 3 Zones Closed For 3 Days

Observer News Service

SRINAGAR - Over a score of protesting students were injured in Kupwara today after police used force and fired into the air to disperse a huge demonstration against yesterday's killing of three school-children in Trihgam by the security forces. In view of the continuing tension, authorities have ordered schools in some parts of the Kupwara district to be closed for three days. The killings have evoked strong condemnation from political parties cutting across ideological divides.

Students in Vilgam, Trihgam, and Kralpora took out a procession today to decry the killings, and shouting slogans against the army and the government, marched several kilometres to get to Kupwara town.

News of the procession brought students and public into the streets, swelling the numbers of the protestors to thousands.

"Shops closed down and govt employees out their offices as the procession shouting "stop the killing of innocents," "punish the guilty" and don't play with our lives," entered the town.

The demonstrators also shouted slogans against the deputy commissioner, Kupwara, for his purported statements about the killings yesterday. The protesting students alleged that the DC was trying to attribute the killings to cross-firing.

Refusing to disperse when the police blocked their way to the DC office, the demonstrators kept on repeating their demand of punishment to the guilty.

The police resorted to lathi-charge to scatter the protesters who retaliated with pelting stones at the police and government buildings.

The police swung into action once again on the orders of the SSP and the DC, using lathi-charge and dozens of teargas shells.

Army regrets killings
Portraying as accidental the killing of three Kashmiri youths and injury to another in Kupwara in North Kashmir, the Army today expressed regret over the incident and said an inquiry has been ordered into it. "The Army regrets this unfortunate loss of life and has ordered an inquiry into the incident."

(Kashmir Observer, 26 July, 2005)

KASHMIR OBSERVER

Printed & Published by Sajjad Haider on behalf of the
Kashmir Observer LLP
Published from: # 5- Boulevard, Srinagar-190001
Printed at: KT Press Pvt. Ltd, Rangreth Ind Area, Srinagar.
RNI Registration No: 69503/98
Postal Registration No-L/159/KO/SK/2014-16
Editor-in-Chief : Sajjad Haider
Legal Counsel: Tasaduq Khwaja
Switchboard: (0194) 2106304
Editorial: (0194) 2502327
Email editorial: editor@kashmirobsrver.net

K O V I E W

Elusive peace

Recent data on militancy in the Valley shows that around 27 militants have been killed in 11 encounters in the last 25 days. The number is huge. However, it is not the first time that the security forces have killed a large number of militants in a short span of time. Last year more than 200 militants were killed. But this didn't mean the end of militancy in the Valley. The reason for this is that the depleted numbers continue to be made up by more youth taking up arms and, in turn ending up getting killed. This cycle has been going on for the past three decades. And it seems unlikely that this would end anytime soon.

There's thus little hope of peace in the near to medium future. This hasn't happened over the past thirty years. And nor, if this long duration is any guide, would it in future. The militancy and the state's response to it will go on. True, the state tackles the unfolding violence institutionally, so will not tire of it, but this unrelenting state of affairs is taking a disastrous toll on the people of the union territory, our new and the future generation. The most rational and effective response to the lingering turmoil is to address the factors which keep it going. But this is something that is and has been last on the minds of the ruling leadership of this country.

This too at a time when the administration has long given up even the pretence of a soft approach towards the ongoing situation. If anything is going to make a redeeming difference, it is an empathetic understanding of the anger and sentiment sweeping the Valley and a meaningful political engagement to address it. Much like what the union government had started doing with Pakistan during early months of this year. A peace process that leads to some kind of an understanding between the two neighbours on Kashmir would be game-changing for the situation in the union territory.

But the chances of this happening remain bleak as always. Following the revocation of Article 370 that granted J&K its autonomous status under the constitution, the relationship between India and Pakistan has nosedived. The two countries have developed even more irreconcilable differences in their respective positions about J&K. Though, the re-affirmation of 2003 ceasefire had created a hope, the two neighbours seem to have drifted apart since then. Much would depend on how they deal with their current frostiness and get back to dialogue.

O T H E R O P I N O N

Cyberattack on rights

A COLLABORATIVE investigation into a data leak of software sold by the Israeli surveillance company NSO Group has led to some hair-raising revelations. The company has sold Pegasus, malware that is used to conduct cyber surveillance, to authoritarian governments who want to spy on journalists, activists, politicians and government officials.

The software can infiltrate iPhones and Androids, enabling the operator to record calls, retrieve photos, messages, and emails without the knowledge of the phone user. Though the company claims it only sells its software to those who want to use it against terrorists and criminals, a massive data leak from its records shows its clients may have used it against targets who fall into neither of those categories. The leak contains the phone numbers of 50,000 individuals, and a forensic analysis of some devices has shown traces of the Pegasus malware.

At least 10 governments are believed to be NSO clients, including Saudi Arabia, India and the UAE. The phone numbers in the leak span 45 countries — including Pakistan, where a number once used by Prime Minister Imran Khan was targeted for potential surveillance. The government is now investigating whether Mr Khan's device was in fact infiltrated.

Spyware like Pegasus facilitates human rights violations, especially when in the hands of authoritarian regimes. A government or intelligence agency can use the software to spy on dissidents and critics — a dangerous and worrying reality in countries where privacy and human rights are routinely flouted. It can also be used by hostile countries to spy on rivals in a new era of cyberespionage. The fact that the list of phone numbers in the data leak is linked to individuals who evidently do not have criminal or terror links speaks volumes for how this spyware is being abused. It is also a test for phone manufacturers and app developers to come up with improved protection. Although it is virtually impossible for any device to be totally bug-free or hacker-proof, both iOS and Android developers should invest in research to improve security.

It is important that the international community come together to regulate the use of such tools and curb the violation of human rights. Governments must pressure global rights bodies to monitor countries that develop and sell this software. The export of such surveillance technology should either be stopped or heavily regulated to prevent abuse. One step towards this is the consortium itself. Much like the Panama Papers investigation, a group of journalists shed light on Pegasus' clients and their requests. This story gives hope that countries can work together on the basis of a similar template to stop the abuse of fundamental rights when it comes to digital surveillance and cyberespionage. Until such companies can demonstrate that they can respect human rights and limit abuse of their software, their widespread sale should be restricted.

Dawn



A Law in Locks

Amjed Ashraf

“Interestingly, the voices that had fiercely been casting aspersions on this law, for long, have now once again been rejuvenated after the vociferous remarks of the Hon'ble Chief Justice of India, NV Ramana, on 15th July, this month, against it. While hearing a plea challenging the constitutional validity of the said law, the CJI termed it as a colonial law and strictly questioned its relevance in contemporary India

The law of sedition has never failed to garner opprobrium from myriad quarters, ever since its enactment in the Indian legal system. Due to its iron-fisted nature, coupled with historical and socio-legal intricacies, it has been termed by many as a colonial vestige; a draconian device that arms the government to cripple any fraction of dissent, hurled their way. Interestingly, the voices that had fiercely been casting aspersions on this law, for long, have now once again been rejuvenated after the vociferous remarks of the Hon'ble Chief Justice of India, NV Ramana, on 15th July, this month, against it. While hearing a plea challenging the constitutional validity of the said law, the CJI termed it as a colonial law and strictly questioned its relevance in contemporary India and termed the sweeping misuse of it by the authorities as unfortunate. Inarguably, the remarks of CJI serve as a banquet for all the defenders of free speech and ostensibly conjure up a picture of the times-devoid of the outmoded sedition law.

Nevertheless, it is a well-known fact that the Indian legal system is profoundly influenced by the British legal system. The roots of English rule are palpably embedded in the Indian legal arena. Sedition, inter alia, is such a law that continues to linger in the statute books in the post-colonial period with the same vehement intensity. Though Britain itself abolished the law way back in 2009, in India it continues to stand the test of time.

The history of sedition law in India dates back to the colonial-era. When the Indian Penal Code was introduced in 1860, on the recommendation of the first law commission headed by Thomas Macaulay, the sedition law per se, was not a part of it (although a similar kind of provision was present in the earlier draft of 1837). It was inserted later in 1870, under Section 124-A, with a view to unnerve the then rising Wahabi movement and to muzzle every form of dissent against the British rule. It had intrinsically stemmed from The Sedition Act of 1661, which penalized anyone who printed, published, or wrote anything against the King therein.

In British India, the first

case tried under the sedition law was of Queen-Empress vs. Jogen-dra Chunder Bose & Ors., (1892), wherein the editor of a Bengali magazine named, Bangobasi was held liable under this law, for mere criticism of the British policies. The Calcutta High Court in this case elucidated the meaning of the words 'disaffection' to mean, as 'a feeling contrary to affection' and 'disapprobation' to mean 'disapproval'. It was later in the famous case of Queen-Empress vs. Bal Gangadhar Tilak (1897) that the ferocious nature of the law attracted wide public attention. Afterwards, in the case of, Emperor vs. Bal Gangadhar Tilak (1916), the section was given a broader scope, by interpreting disaffection to mean disloyalty and all feelings of enmity or hatred, or hostility or contempt towards the government.

However, in the post-independence era, the Punjab-Haryana High Court struck down the law,

its ambit and made its language amply clear, the implementation at ground level has been in abeyance. The recent cases of Disha Ravi, the activist and Vinod Dua, the journalist, are vivid examples of it, whereby the courts had to remind the state about the guidelines laid down in the Kedar Nath Case, before invoking charges under Section 124-A of IPC. Notwithstanding this, the vague hollowness of it continues to consume the voices of activists, journalists, political rivals, and all those who dare to dissent, hitherto. Many times the fundamental rights of citizens enshrined under Article 19(1) of Indian Constitution, suffer an unreasonable casualty due to arbitrary and whimsical use of this law. Besides, it persists to strike at one of the vital pillars of Democracy, dissent, with a heavy hand. As revealed by the National Crime Records Bureau (NCRB) data, the number of cases registered under this section has in-

“The history of sedition law in India dates back to the colonial-era. When the Indian Penal Code was introduced in 1860, on the recommendation of the first law commission headed by Thomas Macaulay, the sedition law per se, was not a part of it (although a similar kind of provision was present in the earlier draft of 1837).

in the case of Tara Singh Gopi Chand vs. The State 1950, on the grounds of being in contravention with the fundamental right of freedom of speech and expression. Similarly, the Allahabad High Court, in the case of Ram Nandan vs. State 1958, declared the law as unconstitutional. Nonetheless, the Supreme Court in the landmark case of Kedar Nath vs. State of Bihar (1962) upheld the law, but concomitantly restricted its application as well. It held that only those acts are penalized under the section that involve intention or incitement or tendency to create public disorder or violence.

The law of sedition as today is a cognizable, non-bailable, and non-compoundable offence. It comes under Section 124-A of IPC 1860, under Chapter VI (offences against the State). The language of the section ex facie is open-ended, thus the interpretation is of the widest amplitude. It allows the government to cast the net too wide to suit their needs. Even after the apex court restricted

creased by 160% in 2019, while the conviction rate has been less than four percent. The CJI, in the same plea aptly described this plight as “...the enormous power of this section can be compared to a carpenter being given a saw to make an item, using it to cut the entire forest instead of a tree. That is the effect of this provision.”

At present, a bunch of petitions lie before the apex court, challenging the constitutional validity of the law. The ball is now in the court to either tone down the law or declare it entirely unconstitutional. I, unequivocally, cheer for the latter one.

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

Amjed Ashraf pursues law at Central University of Kashmir, and can be reached at amjed.ashraf20@gmail.com

Khaleej Times



OBSERVER
MAIL

All letters intended for publication must include the writer's name and address, even if a pseudonym is used. Letters are edited as clarity, space and accuracy of expression require. Our publishing a letter does not mean we agree with everything or even anything in it. -EDITOR

MAIL YOUR LETTERS

P.O. Box # 337, GPO, Srinagar-190 001
email: editpage.ko@gmail.com

No Female Technicians for ECG

This is in response to an article published in Kashmir Observer on July 16 titled, “The Dire Dearth”. The article has highlighted the plight of women who are asked to get an ECG done from male technicians. This is like a nightmare for women.

I myself went to Sub District Hospital Nagam with my pregnant wife on 18-06-2021

The doctor advised an ECG. However, I found it very unfortunate when a male technician asked my wife to take off her clothes for the procedure following which, she refused

to get it done.

It was not only my wife but many other women, especially young girls, who returned without an ECG because of the non-availability of female ECG technicians. Authorities have looked the other way instead of making health care safe and accom-

modating for women. Hope Kashmir Observer's efforts in highlighting the issue are addressed urgently and this issue is resolved.

*Mudaser Yatoo
Nagam
knovatic89@gmail.com*

Plagiarism: A Form of Identity Theft

Anamika Chatterjee

“Can plagiarism be born out of callousness or lack of knowledge on protocols for referencing? Certainly. But should it go unnoticed and unchallenged? Certainly not. If the Internet has made content easily available to us, it is only fair that a writer is held to greater accountability

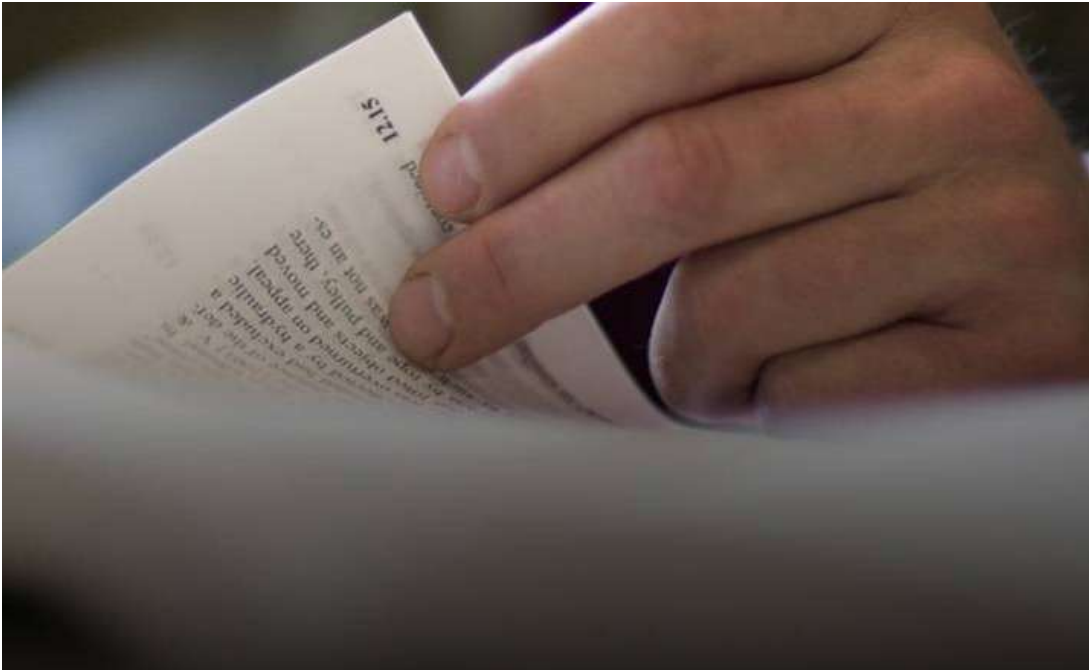
One of the ‘serious’ assignments in the journalism school I attended was proof-reading. We would scan five newspapers and encircle mistakes that went into the print edition. It was a tedious task, but one that instilled in us the importance of the role a desk plays in a newsroom. They’re the first readers of a copy, who also make it palatable for a wider readership once an issue is printed, I gathered. But it wasn’t until I joined a newspaper myself that I realised that the scope of the work exceeded beyond proofing and rewriting.

In my first role as a desk editor, I felt like a governess watching over a child’s mistakes. These would include reinstating the L in luck which the writer had substituted with an M, or sometimes taking notes from the reporter on what exactly happened at an event to basically write their copy for them. But one challenge that I wasn’t really prepared for was going through a piece line by line to check if the content was 100 per cent original. To my surprise, it wasn’t so always.

Journalism schools often infect you with an idealism that usually has no place in the real world. Why would a writer, who is getting a byline in a leading paper, think of plagiarising, I’d wonder. The reasons were aplenty. Tight deadlines, writer’s block and, sometimes, looking at a copy to get inspired and ending up pasting it as it is unconsciously. None of it made sense, until a controversy broke at an organisation I worked for when its Letter From The Editor had parts that were lifted from a piece in Slate.

Plagiarism is problematic. Writers not only own their words, but also the thoughts that inform the writing. And when this is reproduced without attribution, it amounts to intellectual and identity theft. The plagiarist then is selling a lie to the reader when s/he has them believe these are their own perspectives.

The Internet has enabled plagiarism unconsciously. When there is a plethora of reading material available online, it is easy to copy-paste and reproduce work. But even if this is the case, the individual onus cannot be overlooked. As for the question “why plagiarise?”, there are many in-



teresting perspectives. A few years ago, a Times investigation revealed that nearly 50,000 students across UK universities had plagiarised. The media was quick to give it a moniker of the plagiarism epidemic.

Following up on the story, The Guardian tracked the journey of a student who was accused of plagiarising, and ended up finding that it was a case of not being able to reference articles properly. Can plagiarism be born out of callousness or lack of knowledge on protocols for referencing? Certainly. But should it go unnoticed and unchallenged? Certainly not. If the Internet has made content easily available to us, it is only fair that a writer is held to greater accountability.

When we talk about plagiarism, we also assume it is limited to words. But outside the scope of language, ideas get plagiarised too. This is quite possibly a more heinous form of plagiarism be-

cause the intent is clear when a plagiarist very consciously sets out to rewrite a piece and reproduce it as his/her own idea. This is more acutely felt in the contemporary media scene, where the role of a news organisation is either to break news or offer views. At a time when news breaks on Facebook and Twitter all the time, most newspapers across the world have also had to redefine themselves as ‘views’ papers, i.e., entities that offer considered analyses and opinions on events.

In such a scenario, where the opinion defines the identity of a news organisation, reproducing the ideas without attribution costs us all dearly. What’s more, there are still no definite checks and balances in place to identify plagiarism of ideas.

So, is imitation really the sincerest form of flattery? Not when you are denied ownership of your words and thoughts.

To watch or not to watch? The Tokyo Games raises difficult questions for fans

Adam Karg | Emma Sherry | Kasey Symons | Sam Duncan

When the 2020 Tokyo Olympic Games officially begin on Friday night, they will do so with the host city under a state of emergency due to COVID-19.

For the first time in history, all Olympic events will take place in empty venues, with recordings of stadium noise from previous games and video celebrations among the innovations in place of crowds.

Meanwhile, sponsors, broadcasters and the host nation are all approaching the Olympics with less than the normal anticipation. What will this mean for fans?

How is this different from other sporting events?

Since COVID, sporting competitions, including European football leagues and the NBA in North America, have seen fans adapt to not being able to be there in person. This has included cardboard cut-outs in stadiums, apps to broadcast fans cheering from home into virtual audience walls, and supportive messages.

In this sense, fans showed an initial eagerness to participate in new forms of fan engagement and new rituals, embracing their connection to teams and fan identity.

This is something Olympics organisers will be hoping to capitalise on, despite polls showing fans find sport during the pandemic to be less enjoyable.

Normally, visible crowds provide points of connection and community, while crowd noise draws attention to what is happening on field and enhances excitement. Obviously, simulated crowd sounds and cardboard cut-outs are no substitute for the real thing.

The Olympic connection

At least for the Olympics, attendance for fans is the exception. The vast majority of the global audience would expect to rely on broadcast and digital media to experience the games anyway.

We also know sports fans place great importance on the games. This week, a new report by True North Research found of all our national teams, Australians had the highest emotional connection to the Olympic team — above the Matildas, cricket teams and Wallabies.

The Olympics normally stimulate immense levels of national pride and connection. One argument for those wanting to support the Olympics is that they showcase sports, teams, athletes and nations “who don’t otherwise enjoy the international platform that mega events afford”. They also showcase human achievement — and people striving and sacrificing to chase their dreams and represent their country. It is easy to be drawn to the story of the games.



This year’s team — our second-largest ever, with 472 athletes from 33 sports — provides plenty of scope for fans to connect. Fans may not just feel the usual obligation to support our national athletes, but an extra sense of duty given the with significant challenges and setbacks of a pandemic Olympics.

How can fans support the Olympics in a country that doesn’t want it?

Despite the hype and the history, the Olympics are not an essential service. The lack of atmosphere, ceremony and celebration, alongside the uncomfortable reality of the event oc-

curring in a pandemic, have the potential to complicate how fans enjoy and experience the games.

COVID-19 cases are growing once more in Japan and public sentiment in the host nation has been against the Olympics for months. The country has seen volunteers quit, hospitals display “Stop Olympics” messages on their windows and a petition in protest of the games.

However, despite many Japanese citizens calling for the cancellation of the games, Tokyo’s hands are tied. Under the terms of the contract, only the International Olympic Committee has

the power to terminate the Olympics. If Tokyo cancelled the games, Japan risks lawsuits, financial loss, as well as a damaged reputation.

The instability due to the pandemic has also allowed protesters to draw attention to broader societal, economic and environmental impacts of the games in hopes to shut down the Olympics beyond Tokyo.

There is already an established “NOlympics” campaign against the 2028 Olympics in Los Angeles, arguing the games exacerbate inequality and over-policing.

What does it all mean?

So, does victory in Toyko mean more or less than previous games?

For athletes, victory is victory. After a gruelling five years of training, qualifying and dreaming, it may in fact mean a whole lot more in a pandemic environment.

But for fans, the political distancing of key Japanese officials, citizens and brands and a global health crisis confronts them with a decision. Do they enjoy the Olympics as they usually might have, or do they turn away in support of issues that go well beyond sport?

There are no easy answers, but for fans it means Tokyo may be a more complex — and morally challenging — Olympics than they had anticipated. While Australia’s Seven Network has high expectations for broadcast numbers, it could prompt fans to re-evaluate how they connect with the Olympics beyond the pandemic.

By arrangements with the Conversation

“The instability due to the pandemic has also allowed protesters to draw attention to broader societal, economic and environmental impacts of the games in hopes to shut down the Olympics beyond Tokyo. There is already an established “NOlympics” campaign against the 2028 Olympics in Los Angeles, arguing the games exacerbate inequality and over-policing

Thousands Of Afghan Families Flee Fighting In Former Taliban Bastion Of Kandahar



Agenceis

More than 22,000 Afghan families have fled from their homes to escape fighting in the former Taliban bastion of Kandahar, officials said on Sunday, as authorities arrested four suspected insurgents over this week's rocket attack on Kabul.

Since early May, violence has surged across several provinces including in Kandahar after the insurgents launched a sweeping offensive just days after the US-led foreign forces began their final withdrawal.

The Taliban's deadly assault has seen the insurgents capture scores of districts, border crossings and encircle several provincial capitals.

"The fighting has displaced 22,000 families in the past one month in Kandahar," Dost Mohammad Daryab, head of the provincial refugee department, told AFP.

"They have all moved from the volatile districts of the city to safer areas." Fighting continued on the outskirts of Kandahar city on Sunday.

"The negligence of some security forces, especially the police, has made way for the Taliban to come that close," Lalai Dastageeri, deputy governor of Kandahar province, told AFP.

"We are now trying to organise our security forces."

Local authorities had set up four camps for the displaced people who were estimated to be about 154,000.

Kandahar resident Hafiz Mohammad Akbar said his house had been taken over by the Taliban after he fled.

"They forced us to leave ... I am now living with my 20-member family in a compound with no toilet," said Akbar.

Fears of fighting to increase Residents expressed concerns that the fighting might increase in the days ahead.

"If they really want to fight, they should go to a desert and fight, not destroy the city," said Khan Mohammad, who moved to a camp with his family.

"Even if they win, they can't rule a ghost town."

Kandahar, with its 650,000 inhabitants, is the second-largest city in Afghanistan after Kabul.

The southern province was the epi-centre of the Taliban's regime when they ruled Afghanistan between 1996 to 2001.

Ousted from power in a US-led invasion in 2001 after the September 11 attacks, the Taliban have spearheaded a deadly insurgency that continues to this day.

Their latest offensive launched in early May has seen the group take control of half of the country's about 400 districts.

Earlier this week, the chairman of the US joint chiefs of staff General Mark Milley said the Taliban appear to have "strategic momentum" on the battlefield.

But global rights group Human Rights Watch said there were reports that the Taliban were committing atrocities against civilians in areas they had captured, including in the town of Spin Boldak near the border with Pakistan they captured earlier this month.

"Taliban leaders have denied responsibility for any abuses, but growing evidence of expulsions, arbitrary detentions, and killings in areas under their control are raising fears among the population," said Patricia Grossman, associate Asia director at HRW said in a statement.

The authorities meanwhile announced they had arrested four men they said belonged to the Taliban, accusing them of carrying out this week's rocket attack on Kabul.

"A Taliban commander, Momin, along with his three other men, have been arrested. They all belong to the Taliban group," ministry spokesman Mirwais Stanikzai told reporters in a video message.

At least three rockets landed near the palace on Tuesday as President Ashraf Ghani and his top officials performed outdoor prayers to mark the start of Eidul Azha.

The attack was however claimed by the militant Islamic State group.

Violence Hit Pak Kashmir Election Records 60% Turnout

Agencies

MUZAFFARABAD: The counting of votes was underway for election to 45 seats of the Legislative Assembly in Pakistani controlled Kashmir (PCK), after the voting process was marred by violence and clashes in some areas.

Voters present inside polling stations were allowed to cast their ballots until after the polling time ended at 5pm.

At least two workers of Prime Minister Imran Khan's Tehrik-e-Insaf (PTI) party were killed in a clash with Peoples Party activists at a polling station in the Kotli district.

The two PTI activists were shot dead by unidentified persons at a polling station in the jurisdiction of Naarr police station in Charhoi, Kotli, according to police.

Police identified the victims as 40-year-old Zaheer Ahmed and 50-year-old Ramzan. He added that the clash erupted between PPP and PTI workers at about 9:15am at the Mithi Jand polling station. In the ensuing gunfire, Ahmed was killed on the spot and Ramzan died on the way to the hospital.

In a separate incident, five police constables were injured after Jamaat-e-Islami (JI) activists attacked them with batons at the Dhal Chakhyia polling station in AJK's LA-32 constituency, Jhelum valley police said.

Voting in some polling stations of other constituencies was also temporarily suspended due to incidents of violence. Several people were reportedly injured in clashes and a number of political activists were also detained by the police.



according to reports.

The elections come after weeks of a highly charged and divisive election campaign that saw politicians from the three mainstream parties — the PTI, PPP and PML-N hurl allegations at each other.

Officials said they expect up to 60 per cent voter turnout because all political parties were heavily involved in the buildup to the election.

Aggressive campaigns

In all, there are 3.22 million voters registered in the 45 constituencies. Among them, 2,817,090 voters are registered in 33 constituencies of the assembly. Of the remaining voters, 373,652 are registered in the six constituencies representing the refugees from Jammu on Indian side and 29,804 are registered in the six constituencies representing the refugees from Kashmir Valley. These 12 constituencies representing refugees from Jammu and Kashmir Valley have a total of 403,456 registered voters.

Previously, general elections

in PCK had predominantly been a contest between the local leaders of the contesting parties, with a low-profile support from their parent parties or like-minded governments in Pakistan.

However, of late these elections have become a do-or-die battle directly between the central leadership of the mainstream parties, relegating their local leadership as well as a few state-based parties to the background.

This year the pre-poll campaign has surpassed the previous records of aggressiveness towards their rivals. From June 25 when PPP Chairperson Bilawal Bhutto-Zardari took the lead over the opponents in launching the campaign of his party from Dadyal, followed by PML-N vice president Maryam Nawaz and federal ministers Ali Amin Gandapur, Murad Saeed and PM Khan, to July 23 when the campaign ended at midnight, the electorate in AJK heard nothing but allegations, counter-allegations and usual mudslinging in rallies.

Shrinking Forests Concern For Seed Dispersal By Birds: Study

Agenceis

NEW DELHI: Do you know how does a forest re-generate naturally? Do you know the role played by frugivorous (fruit-eating) birds by way of bird-seeding in forest regeneration?

Let us tell you a story about a rich cluster known for its remarkable biodiversity and contiguous tracts of lowland tropical evergreen forests from eastern Assam in northeast India, especially the Upper Brahmaputra Valley.

But that was about half a century ago. Now, for a multitude of reasons, including agriculture, conversion to tea plantations and extraction of natural resources such as oil and timber, these rich forests have undergone severe fragmentation.

Scientists tell us that as much as up to 90 per cent of plants in the tropical forests could be dependent on birds and animals for the dispersal of their seeds.

For this reason, frugivorous birds are particularly referred to as the gardeners of the forests. And the relation is mutual. While the birds benefit from the nutrition they get from the fruit pulp, plants benefit, as birds carry their seeds away from the mother plant before dispersing them. In fact, for some species, the treatment that seeds receive in the guts of animals enhances their ability to germinate.

Such mutually benefiting actions—called the ecological interactions—between plants and frugivorous birds facilitate the regeneration of plants, maintain biodiversity, and ensure good health



of the forests.

These are the forests that harbour a rich diversity of mammals such as the Asian elephant, Western hoolock gibbon (the only non-human ape species in India), capped langur, clouded leopard, Indian giant squirrel, and Malayan sun bear, to name a few.

And unfortunately, these tropical lowland forests in northeast India experiences among the highest rates of forest loss and habitat fragmentation in the world.

A recent study published in the journal Biotropica has now revealed how India's last remaining rainforest fragments harbour crucial ecological interactions and is of high conservation value.

"The scale at which forests are shrinking, it is crucial to find out how ecological interactions like the ones between plants and seed-dispersing birds are altered because of fragmentation. Our study looked at the differences in the plant and frugivo-

rous bird communities between forest fragments and contiguous forest and found that fragments harbour diverse sets of interactions, said Abir Jain, the lead author of the study.

Titled 'A comparison of plant-seed disperser communities between fragments and contiguous forest in northeast India', the study was carried out by a team of scientists from the Wildlife Institute of India (WII), Dehradun, and the Nature Conservation Foundation (NCF), Bengaluru.

The researchers collected field data between January and April 2019 by observing the feeding activity of frugivorous birds inside the forests and documented the diversity of fruit species they fed upon. They picked up sampling from two forest fragments experiencing degradation pressures -- Doom Dooma Reserve Forest and Kakojan Reserve Forest.

Samplings were also picked up from a less disturbed, better protected contiguous forest patch - Dehing Patkai National Park.

NEWSMAKERS

Runaway Kids 'Bored' With Online Classes Brought Back Home

MATHURA: In a bizarre incident, two children, aged 11 and 9 years, ran away from home because they were 'bored with online classes and upset at being scolded by parents'.

The children hitched a ride to Bawana in Delhi where a travel agent became suspicious of seeing the children unescorted. He questioned them about their family and then informed the police.

The children confessed that they wanted to go to a residential school for underprivileged children in Utarakhand's Rishikesh where "they would not have to pay fees".

The children packed their clothes and shoes and left home in the wee hours of Saturday.

Kolahar chowki Sub Inspector Arun Tevatia, said that the children's parents found them miss-

ing in the morning and an FIR was lodged at the Kolahar police station under section 363 (kidnapping).

The CCTV footage showed the children walking towards the highway. Mathura Superintendent of Police (rural) Shirish Chandra said that they got a call from an unknown number about the children and informed the parents.

A police team brought back the children from Delhi.

"The kids told us that they were getting bored with online classes. They were also scolded at home, so they decided to study in a residential school," said the SP.

The parents, who run two-degree colleges in Vrindavan, are now being counselled on how to identify signs of stress in kids during the lockdown.

Iraqi PM Al-Kadhimi: Iraq Does Not Need US Combat Troops



Agenceis

Iraq's prime minister has said his country no longer requires American combat troops to fight ISIL (ISIS), but a formal time-frame for their redeployment will depend on the outcome of talks with US officials this week.

Mustafa al-Kadhimi said in an interview with The Associated Press news agency that Iraq will still ask for US training and military intelligence gathering, but will seek a timeline for the withdrawal of combat troops, which was announced in April amid ongoing talks between Washington and Baghdad.

"There is no need for any foreign combat forces on Iraqi soil," he said in the interview published on Sunday before a planned trip to Washington, where he is slated to meet President Joe Biden on Monday for a fourth round of strategic talks.

"The war against IS [ISIL] and the readiness of our forces requires a special timetable, and this depends on the negotiations that we will conduct in Washington," he added.

Al-Kadhimi will visit the White House amid growing pressure, particularly from Shia political groups, for a reduced US role in the country. That sentiment has been stoked by the US-directed drone attack that killed powerful Iranian general Qassem Soleimani and Iraqi militia commander Abu Mahdi al-Muhandis on Iraqi soil last year.

Increased attacks by Iran-aligned militias in Iraq on US

installations has further underscored al-Kadhimi's limited control over powerful actors in Iraq.

Meanwhile, the threat of an ISIL resurgence remains ever-present in Iraq, with al-Kadhimi careful to stress Baghdad is not seeking a full withdrawal.

"What we want from the US presence in Iraq is to support our forces in training and developing their efficiency and capabilities, and in security cooperation," al-Kadhimi said.

"Iraq has a set of American weapons that need maintenance and training. We will ask the American side to continue to support our forces and develop our capabilities," he said.

The US troop presence has stood at about 2,500 since late last year when then-President Donald Trump ordered a reduction from 3,000.

Previously, former President Barack Obama had withdrawn US forces from Iraq in 2011, creating a security vacuum that aided the rise of ISIL. US troops were redeployed in 2014.

It remains unclear exactly how Washington and Baghdad are defining combat troops and how many troops would actually be redeployed under the plan.

US and coalition officials have maintained that US troops are no longer accompanying Iraqi forces on ground missions and that coalition assistance is limited to intelligence gathering and surveillance and the deployment of advanced military technologies.

Telangana's Ramappa Temple Gets UNESCO Heritage Tag; PM Modi Congratulates Nation



Agenceis

New Delhi: Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Sunday congratulated the nation as Kakatiya Rudreshwara (Ramappa) Temple in Telangana has been inscribed as a UNESCO World Heritage Site.

In a tweet, Prime Minister wrote, "Excellent! Congratulations to everyone, specially the people of Telangana. The iconic Ramappa Temple showcases the outstanding craftsmanship of great Kakatiya dynasty. I would urge you all to visit this majestic Temple complex and get a first-hand experience of its grandness."

Excellent! Congratulations to everyone, specially the people of Telangana.

The iconic Ramappa Temple showcases the outstanding craftsmanship of great Kakatiya dynasty. I would urge you all to

visit this majestic Temple complex and get a first-hand experience of its grandness. <https://t.co/muNhx4919jpic.twitter.com/XMrAWJao2>

A tweet by UNESCO today read, "Just inscribed as @UNESCO#WorldHeritage site: Kakatiya Rudreshwara (Ramappa) Temple, Telangana, in #India.Bravo!"

Telangana Minister KT Rama Rao also felt happy to hear about this news and tweeted, "Happy to share the good news that the 800-year-old Kakatiya Rudreshwara #RamappaTemple in #Telangana has been inscribed as a UNESCO #WorldHeritage Site. My compliments to everyone who was involved in the effort."

"This is the first world heritage site from Telangana Next aim is to get world heritage city status for our capital city #Hyderabad", read the tweet by KT Rama Rao.

Maharashtra: Death Toll In Landslides And Floods Rises To 149 As More Bodies Recovered, 64 Missing



Agenceis

MUMBAI: The death toll in various rain-related incidents, including floods and landslides, in Maharashtra rose to 149 on Sunday with 36 more bodies being found in Satara and Raigad districts as rescue operations gathered pace, while 64 people remain missing, the state government said.

So far, 50 people have been injured in these incidents, it said in a statement.

A total of 2,29,074 people have been evacuated from the affected districts in the Konkan region and western Maharashtra, to safer places.

A statement from the state secretariat control room said 28 more deaths were reported from the Satara district in western Maharashtra and 8 from the Raigad district in the coastal region.

The government said 60 deaths were so far reported in Raigad, 21 in Ratnagiri, 41 in Satara, 12 in Thane, seven in Kolhapur, four in suburban Mumbai, and two each in Sindhudurg and Pune.

A total of 875 villages in Kolhapur, Sangli, Satara and Pune were affected by the torrential rains, it said.

"Five relief camps have been set up in flood-hit Chiplun city in Ratnagiri district. 25 teams of the NDRF, four teams of the SDRF,

two teams of the Coast Guard, five teams of the Navy and three teams of the Army are conducting the relief and rescue operations," the statement said.

As the bridge over the Vashishthi river connecting Chiplun to Mumbai has collapsed, the road remains shut for the traffic.

The state government has provided a emergency financial aid of Rs 2 crore each to Raigad and Ratnagiri districts. Satara, Sangli, Pune, Kolhapur, Thane and Sindhudurg, also affected by rains, were provided with a financial aid of Rs 50 lakh each, the statement said.

Earlier in the day, Chief Minister Uddhav Thackeray visited Chiplun, the site of severe flooding, and interacted with residents, businessmen and shopkeepers. He promised them all help from the state government to restore normalcy in the area.

Thackeray said they will require "central assistance for long-term mitigation measures", and added that he will tour western Maharashtra on Monday and comprehensive data of the extent of damages will be prepared.

Heavy rains earlier this week triggered landslides in some areas of Maharashtra including the deadliest one at Taliye village in the Raigad district. PTI

'Mute' Servant Beats Uttar Pradesh Employer To Death, Starts Talking



KANNAUJ (UP): In a shocking incident, a young man working as a domestic help and posing as a deaf and mute person, beat his employer to death and critically injured an elderly relative who came to rescue him.

The incident took place in Bhuda village under the limits of Gursahaiganj police circle in Kannauj district on Saturday.

The alleged accused, aged 24, was thrashed by local residents, and he took everyone by surprise when he started shouting and talking.

The accused has identified himself as Dharmendra Kumar, a native of Rasoolabad area of Kanpur Dehat district.

The police said that the accused has been taken into custody and his interrogation is underway. According to reports, Dhar-

dra attacked him as well. Hearing their screams, other house inmates, neighbours and villagers rushed to the spot and admitted both the injured to a nearby private hospital.

The doctors referred Santosh to Agra for treatment, but he succumbed on the way. Pratap was referred to a Kanpur hospital.

Sarai Prayag outpost in-charge Pankaj Yadav said, "The accused Dharmendra Kumar has been taken into custody and is being investigated." However, the reason for the murder is yet to be ascertained as he had not yet disclosed the cause to us," police said.

SP Kannauj Prashant Verma said, "A case under relevant sections of IPC has been registered against the servant Dharmendra on the complaint of Santosh's wife Gomti Devi.

DC Samba Exhorts Upon Officers To Conduct Massive Plantation

Observer News Service

SAMBA: District Development Commissioner (Chairperson District Environment Committee) Samba Anuradha Gupta Sunday exhorted upon the District Environment Committee (DEC) to conduct massive plantation during the current Monsoon season to enrich the environment around.

She was chairing a meeting of the District Environment Committee held here to review the implementation of the District Environment Plan.

Additional Deputy Commissioner, Suram Chand Sharma gave a brief presentation on the role and responsibilities of various departments as per the District Environment plan prepared and submitted to JKPCB and CPCB as per the directions of National Green Tribunal and execution of works as per plan in a phased manner to comply

with the direction.

The Chairperson reviewed the progress achieved by various departments and exhorted upon the Dist Officers to workout strategies for execution of works like solid/liquid waste management, 100% Garbage Collection and its segregation in Urban as well as Rural areas, measures to check Industrial Pollution, Air Quality Monitoring and massive plantation in and around Industrial Estates by SIDCO/ SICOP and other departments in eroded and vulnerable areas.

Among others, Assistant Commissioner Revenue, General Manager, DIC, Assistant Commissioner Development, Assistant Commissioner Panchayats, Divisional Forest Officer, Chief Medical Officer, District Officer, PCB; Executive Officers Of all ULBs, Mining & other members of DEC were present.

DC Rajouri Launches Institutional Plantation Drive

Observer News Service

RAJOURI: As part of the Quami Bhavana initiative of District Administration Rajouri, Deputy Commissioner, Rajesh K Shavan Sunday launched the institutional plantation drive here at 72 CRPF Battalion HeadQuarter Sunderbani.

The team of 72 CRPF Battalion personnel under the command of Shree Ram Meena joined the Deputy Commissioner in the plantation drive. The families of the CRPF Personnel also participated with great zeal in the drive.

It is pertinent to mention

deepen civil-military liaison, the DM today visited 72 CRPF Battalion HQ Sunderbani.

The Deputy Commissioner, during the event, strongly appreciated the resolute dedication shown by the paramilitary forces for maintaining security and peace in the region and said that the paramilitary forces have always been at the forefront of ensuring the safety and welfare of mankind.

The Deputy Commissioner emphasized the need of realizing the importance of respecting and protecting our green wealth and the rich flora for our future generations.



here that the Rajouri Administration has started a unique initiative called Quami Bhavana wherein the District Magistrate visits the remote locations and interacts with jawans, officers and stays with them to take the first-hand appraisal of their workings and problems.

This initiative has been named Quami Bhavana to strengthen the civil-military liaison and to boost the morale of jawans and officers of both serving and ex-servicemen and also to display the national spirit for carrying out the mission of peace and development.

As part of the initiative, the DC spent one night with the unit at Lam and shared all experiences and discussed the roadmap for the development of the border areas with the officers. Continuing his efforts to

He appealed to the public to participate in the drive so that a good number of trees are planted to increase the green cover in the entire district which is important for a healthy society and also to avoid diseases.

The Deputy Commissioner urged upon the Military personnel to actively participate in such events and stressed the need for the harmonious functioning of the Government agencies.

The Deputy Commissioner said that the aim of conducting such activities is to enhance synergy, interaction and coordination between the civil and military agencies and these events provide opportunities for deliberation on important issues of mutual interest impacting security and development of the region.



: A policeman checks the bag of a woman in Srinagar on Sunday. KO Photo Abid Bhat

Govt To Set Up Industrial Estate In Kathua

Entrepreneurs Can Apply For Land, Registrations, NOCs Online

Observer News Service

SRINAGAR: The Administrative Council (AC) which met on 24th July under the chairmanship of the Lieutenant Governor, Manoj Sinha, gave administrative approval to the establishment of an industrial estate at Sahar Lodge, Kathua.

The project with a timeline of 3 years, envisages developing a land bank stretching over 900 kanals at an estimated cost of Rs. 63.30 crore by J&K SICOP with proper provisions for various commercial facilities and utilities.

The new industrial estate will also include common effluent plants on new pattern as per the norms of the National Green Tribunal and other facilities on modern state of art technology.

On completion, the industrial estate will stimulate industrial growth by attracting investment and generating employment especially for the locals.

The new industrial estate will be developed under the UT's broader industrial policy which envisages promoting dynamic competition for optimally exploring J&K's core sectors such as agriculture, food processing, tourism, handicrafts, handlooms,

health, and education as well as the new age technology-driven sectors like pharmaceuticals, IT, and skill development; towards economic vibrancy and optimum utilization of J&K's demographic dividend.

Recently, the Government has introduced various 'Ease-of-doing Business' reforms to establish a progressive industrial ecosystem in Jammu and Kashmir for sustainable, equitable, eco-friendly, and progressive industrial development of the region. The reform measures aim at maintaining.

Mission Youth Invites Applications For LG's Super-75 Scholarship

Observer News Service

SRINAGAR: Mission Youth, Jammu and Kashmir has invited applications for award of Lieutenant Governor's Scholarship for meritorious girl students.

The scholarship of Rs 1 Lakh shall be provided for post-graduate courses in universities and colleges.

CEO Mission Youth and Secretary, Tribal Affairs Department, Dr Shahid Iqbal Choudhary, informed that in line with announcement made by the Lt Governor for scholarship to support underprivileged girl students to pursue higher studies the Mission Youth society after obtaining approval from Finance Department has issued detailed guidelines for LG's Super-75 Scholarship and invited applications from meritorious girl students.

Dr Shahid further in-

formed that a scholarship of Rs One Lakh each will be awarded to 75 meritorious girl students for pursuing post graduation and advance studies courses in Government recognised and affiliated colleges and universities. The screening of candidates will be done based on the online applications received till the notified cut off date.

Pertinently, the LG's Super-75 scholarship is aimed at providing financial support to meritorious girl students belonging to marginalised sections of society for pursuing their academic aspirations. The eligibility criteria included domicile of J&K Union Territory, below 30 years of age, belonging to Below Poverty Line / Priority Household category. The scholarship will be provided to students for PG courses including studies and research. Only regular mode courses

would be covered under the scheme

Mission Youth has further notified that 10% scholarship quota has been reserved for girl students having lost any of the parent or bread-earner family member in insurgency related incidents subject to fulfilling other criteria of eligibility. Further, 4% scholarships have been reserved for specially abled girl students under PwDs (People with Disabilities) with physical disability of 40% or more regardless of family income.

The applicants can register on Mission Youth portal <http://www.jkyouthportal.in>. A special form has been created on the portal for filling online applications for uploading supportive documents related to qualification and eligibility. The last date for registering for the scholarship is 2nd August 2021.

Nine Injured In Kupwara Road Accident

Observer News Service

Srinagar: At least nine persons were injured after a passenger vehicle they were on board met with an accident in Chowkibal area on Sunday morning.

Reports said that a sumo bearing registration number JK-09 1093 skidded of the road and fell into a deep gorge along Budnamal road in Chowkibal. In the incident, nine persons sustained injuries and were evacuated to SDH Kralpora for

immediate treatment.

A police official concerned confirming the incident said that all the injured have been lifted from the accident site to a nearby hospital for treatment.

GMC&AH Rajouri Gets Additional 750 LPM Oxygen Concentrator Plant

Observer News Service

RAJOURI: District Development Commissioner, Rajesh K Shavan Sunday commissioned an additional 750 LPM capacity Oxygen Concentrator Plant here at Government Medical College & Associate Hospital Rajouri.

Among the others, Principal GMC, Dr Brij Mohan Gupta; Medical Superintendent DH, Dr Mehmoor; Assistant Executive Engineer Mechanical, Vinod Sharma besides the concerned officers and paramedical staff of the Health Department were present on the occasion

Speaking on the occasion, the District Development Commissioner said

LPM capacity each would be installed in the coming months to provide necessary relief to the COVID patients", the District Development Commissioner added.

He hailed the efforts of the executing agency for completing the work on the plant in a time-bound manner.

While inspecting the progress on the room being constructed for the CT Scan purpose, the District Development Commissioner asked the concerned to complete the work within the shortest possible time.

The District Development Commissioner also inspected the progress on 200 bedded capacity augmentation work in the GMC&AH



that the District Administration is committed to meet the medical oxygen supply in the district for providing best patient care service to Covid and other patients.

The District Development Commissioner further said that one oxygen concentrator plant of 1000 litres per minute capacity is already functioning in GMC&AH and with the commissioning of the additional oxygen concentrator plant, the capacity of medical oxygen of the GMC&AH has touched 1750 LPM.

"Two more oxygen concentrator plants of 750

and issued directions to the Executing Agency for the time-bound completion of the work.

The District Development Commissioner also directed the Health Authorities to put in place extra efforts to provide the best possible and quality health services to the patients so that they don't feel any inconvenience.

The District Development Commissioner also urged the public to keep following the SOPs regarding COVID19 and help the District Administration mitigate the pandemic.

Enforcement Teams Realises Over 39,000 Fine From Violators In Ramban

Observer News Service

RAMBAN: Continuing the enforcement drive to implement Covid protocol across the district Ramban, the Enforcement teams Sunday fined scores of violators for roaming without wearing face masks and not maintaining physical distance.

The enforcement teams, during the inspection in their respective jurisdictions, recovered a fine of Rs 39,200 taking the total amount fined since April 1, 2021 to Rs. 34, 78, 950.

The Enforcement officers urged the people to wear face masks and maintain physical distance besides taking Covid vaccination doses at their nearest CVC.

District Immunisation Officer, Ramban, Dr, Suresh in-

The Enforcement officers urged the people to wear face masks and maintain physical distance besides taking Covid vaccination doses at their nearest CVC.

formed that as many as 1360 persons were administered first and second Covid vaccine doses across Ramban district today.

As per daily bulletin issued by the Chief Medical Officer, Ramban, Dr. Mohammad Fareed Bhat, the Health Department has collected 938 samples including 199 RT-PCR and 739 RAT samples besides administering Covid vaccine to 1360 persons at dedicated Vaccination Centres in the district.

‘IAS Officers Involved In Arms Scam Given Time To Destroy Evidences’

CBI Probe In Arms Scam Eyewash: Apni Party

Observer News Service

Srinagar: Apni Party General Secretary, Vikram Malhotra Sunday questioned investigations of the Central Bureau of Investigation in India's biggest arms license scam in Jammu and Kashmir.

In a statement, Malhotra said that the CBI is conducting raids and searches in a scam which happened during 2012-16. After years of gap, the raids are being conducted at the official residences of the IAS officers shows how serious the investigating agency is.

"It seems that the investigating agency is trying to shield the culprits' officers who are

involved in this scam by providing them ample time to destroy evidence and manage escape routes," said Vikram Malhotra.

He further said that "In the ongoing investigation into the biggest gun racket, what CBI searches for in their residences. The CBI should enquire about the palaces these IAS officers have acquired from the ill-gotten money within the capital cities of Srinagar and Jammu. The source of funding of these palaces must be investigated."

He said if CBI is looking for documents in the gap of a few years, then they are mistaken. The investigation and subsequent raids seem to be an eyewash, he reiterated.

He said that the IAS officers who are involved in the scam are enjoying prime postings and no one is questioning their integrity.

"Such officers should immediately be attached by removing them from the prime posts. If the CBI is really wanting to unearth the scam, they should come out with full details and names of those IAS officers who have been involved in the scam," he added.

He said that instead of CBI which is probing the scam, it is surprising to see that an IAS officer is coming out with the details claiming that "nothing incriminating found" in the ongoing arms license probe from his residence.

He said that "It is disastrous to keep them on prime postings. We believe that there should be no place for the officers who have tented images in administration as they will not be able to deliver in public interest."

"This strong bureaucratic lobby has failed the Govt of India's developmental policies in J&K. From the last three years, bureaucracy has become more powerful and they have no accountability which has added to the suffering of the general public," said Apni Party's State General Secretary, Vikram Malhotra.

He demanded a transparent and in-depth investigation into the arms scam to root out the corrupt elements in the administration.

Government of Jammu & Kashmir Office of the Executive Engineer (R&B) Division Bandipora.

Sub: - This office NIT No.: e Nit (42) of 2021-22 Dt.: 17/07/2021

CORRIGENDUM

For the subjected NIT referred above, kindly read as under :-

1	Bid Submission End Date 26-07-2021 at 6:00 Pm (in Tender notice)	Bid Submission Date 25-07-2021 at 6:00 Pm. (in Tender notice)
2	Date & time of opening of Bids (online) 27-07-2021 at 10.30 A.M in the Office of the Executive Engineer (R&B) Division Bandipora. (in Tender notice)	Date & time of opening of Bids (online) 26-07-2021 at 10.30 A.M in the Office of the Executive Engineer (R&B) Division Bandipora (in Tender notice)

All other terms and conditions shall remain same.

No.: EE/R&B/Bandi/1722-26
Dated:24/07/2021

DIPK-5191/21

s/d
Executive Engineer
R&B Division Bandipora

Iran's Javad Foroughi's Journey From Nurse In COVID Ward To 10m Air Pistol Gold

Press Trust of India

TOKYO: He calls himself a soldier of his country and Iran's newly-crowned 10m air pistol men's Olympic champion Javad Foroughi certainly lives up to that proclamation, having served as a hospital nurse in COVID-19 wards in the run-up to the Games.

The 41-year-old Foroughi set an Olympic record of 244.8 points en route to gold on Saturday, the field also featuring India's Saurabh Chaudhary who finished seventh after topping the qualifications.

"I am very happy because I'm the first ever Iranian champion in pistol and rifle. Iran had never won a medal, even a bronze medal, in the history of the Olympics and I took gold," Foroughi said in the mixed zone after his triumph.

"I am very happy I could do well as a country's soldier..."

A lesser known aspect of his life is his work as nurse during the COVID-19 pandemic, because of which he even tested positive for the virus last year.

"I am a nurse and I work in the hospital, especially during the COVID pandemic. My COVID test was positive last year because I work in the hospital and after recovering I started my training again for the Olympics," he recalled.

He got infected once again after recovering the first time around and had to even give up



his training for a month.

"During preparations for the Olympics my test was positive again. I left training for more than one month and then again started training for the Olympics," he said.

The veteran shooter has been in fine form this year, winning gold at the ISSF World Cup that took place in Croatia in June to add to the gold he won at the World Cup in March in Delhi.

As the world continues to battle it out against the virus, he had just one message for all -- follow the health safety protocols advised by medical practitioners.

"As a nurse, I tell everyone if we follow the protocols, nobody will have COVID-19 and the whole world will be healthy.

"I tell all people, as a shooter and as a nurse, to support each other's health and I'm very happy that COVID-19 could not cancel the Olympics," he said.

Sania Mirza-Ankita Raina Pair Knocked Out Of Tokyo Games

Press Trust of India

TOKYO: Sania Mirza and debutant Ankita Raina were knocked out of the Tokyo Olympics despite dominating a large part of their women's doubles opener against Ukrainian twin sisters Nadiia and Liudmyla Kichenok, here on Sunday.

Sania and Raina were running away with the contest after dominating their opponents but in a dramatic turnround, the Kichenok sisters came back from the dead to pull off a 0-6 7-6(0) 10-8 win at court 11 of Ariake Tennis Centre.

Sania was serving for the match at 5-3 in the second set but perhaps nerves got the better of her and ended up dropping her serve.

From there on, it was not the same match, in which the Ukrainians looked out of sort, struggling with their serves and returns.

The Indians became the prey and Ukrainians pounced on them. Sania and Raina were down 1-8 in the Super Tie break but reeled off seven straight points to make it 8-8 but lost the next two points to make an exit from the Games.

The Indians broke the Ukrainians in the second game of the match to open up a lead. What followed was a sequence of holds for the Indians but drops for their rivals. In just 21 minutes, Mirza and Raina had claimed the first set.

The Kichenok sisters finally got on board when Raina's backhand return sailed over the baseline in the second game of the second set.

Raina went up 40-15 in the third game but buried a forehand return on the net and Mirza also fumbled at the net to get to deuce point. The young Indian held nerves to serve out the game with consecutive points.

Nadiia's two double faults put the Ukrainians in trouble but they came out unscathed with some solid net-play, making it 2-2.

Sania hit a crushing forehand winner to earn a break chance in the sixth game but Raina's backhand return was dispatched for a drop volley winner. Another chance came India's way but Raina netted her backhand from the baseline.

Sania's backhand service return winner earned the Indians another chance and they did not squander it this time to go up 4-2. Raina had an easy hold in the next and now they were one game away from the second round.

Serving for match, Sania went 15-30 but pulled off a well calculated lob to ward off the danger. However, she made two consecutive errors to hand the Ukrainians their first break, the second being a long backhand.

From there on, the match changed dramatically and the Ukrainians started calling the shots.

MI To Play CSK On September 19 When IPL Resumes In UAE



Press Trust of India

NEW DELHI: Defending champions Mumbai Indians will meet Chennai Super Kings in Dubai on September 19 when the IPL resumes in the United Arab Emirates.

The tournament was suspended in May after multiple Covid-19 cases were reported in its bio-bubble.

As reported earlier, the tournament is resuming on September 19 and the final will be played

on October 15 with the ICC T20 World Cup starting two days later.

"Yes, we have just received the mail from BCCI and CSK will play MI on September 19. The first Qualifier will be held on October 10 while Eliminator will be held on October 11 and second qualifier on October 13. The final will be held on October 15," a franchise official told PTI on conditions of anonymity.

It is learnt that the standard quarantine rules and health protocols of the UAE applicable to all who are entering the country will also be applicable for IPL teams.

The tournament once again is set to be conducted closed doors at least for the starting of the remaining 31 matches in Dubai, Sharjah and Abu Dhabi.

The Indian team members and all those English players who will take part in the IPL will be flying from Manchester to Dubai on a charter flight on September 15.

Tokyo Olympic Medallists Allowed 30-Second 'Maskless' Smile For Photo Op

Press Trust of India

TOKYO: The medal-winning athletes at the Tokyo Olympics will now be able to sport a wide smile for the shutterbugs after the IOC updated its protocol on Sunday, allowing them to remove their masks for 30 seconds during the podium ceremony.

The organisers have made masks mandatory for athletes, coaches and officials at all times to deal with the COVID-19 threat. The updated protocol, which allows athletes to remove masks briefly, came into effect on Sunday morning.

"It has been decided today, in line with the Tokyo 2020 Playbooks, to adapt the victory ceremony protocol in order to allow athletes to have a physically distanced image on the podium without their masks on for 30 seconds, and a group photo with masks on the gold-medal step," said the IOC in a statement.

"...the victory ceremony protocol has been adapted to allow athletes to have an image for the media that



captures their faces and their emotions during a unique moment in their sporting career, as well as to celebrate the achievements of all the medallists together."

The organisers have taken extreme steps to keep the Games safe in COVID times. Athletes are being presented medals on a tray and they have to wear those around their neck by themselves rather

than a dignitary doing it for them.

"At no point during this limited time (photo op) should the athletes be invited to join each other on the gold-medal platform. They must remain on their dedicated platform respecting the original distance.

"The athletes are invited to put their masks back on by a visual sign prior to any other photo opportunity," the IOC added.

Iranian 'Defector' Taekwondoka Barely Misses Refugee Team's 1st Olympic Medal



Agencies

TOKYO: Iranian defector Kimia Alizadeh barely missed out on the Refugee Olympic Team's first-ever medal, losing to Turkey's Hatice Kubra Igün in their bronze medal taekwondo bout at the Tokyo Games.

Alizadeh won bronze in Rio de Janeiro for Iran, becoming her homeland's first female Olympic medalist. After she defected to Germany early last year, she qualified for Tokyo as a refugee athlete and won her first three bouts to get to the brink of a historic medal, but was denied in two straight losses.

After beating Iran's Nahid Kiyani Chandel in her opening bout Sunday in Tokyo, the 23-year-old Alizadeh shocked two-time Olympic gold medalist Jade Jones in the round of 16, beating the British champion 16-12.

She beat Zhou Lijun of China 9-8 in the quarterfinals with a stirring final-minute rally, but lost to Russian opponent Tatiana Minina 10-3 in the semifinals of the women's 57-kilogram division.

Alizadeh had a narrow lead after the first round against Igün, but failed to score again until it was too late to catch up.

The refugee team has never won an Olympic medal in its two Games since its creation in 2016 to provide opportunities to victims of political persecution and war. Ten athletes competed in its inaugural Games in Rio, and it has three taekwondo competitors — all of them training in Germany — among its 29 athletes in Tokyo.

Alizadeh became an 18-year-old hero in Iran for her Olympic success, but she cited institutional sexism and the mandatory wearing of the hijab headscarf in her criticisms of the Iranian system when she decided to defect. She castigated Iran for using her for propaganda purposes in a passionate letter announcing her defection on social media, calling the decision "harder than earning Olympic gold."

Alizadeh hadn't competed between 2018 and this year due to injuries before her departure from Iran but the pandemic-caused postponement of the Tokyo Games helped Alizadeh to reach the Olympics again: She was granted refugee status in Germany last February, allowing her to compete in the European qualifiers.

Alizadeh opened her Tokyo run

by beating Kiyani, her close friend, who wore a headscarf for their bout. Alizadeh entered the Makuhari Messe convention center hall with her head uncovered and her hair free. She acknowledged the Iranian coaching staff afterward.

Alizadeh's finest moment in Tokyo was a massive upset of Jones, who was attempting to become the first three-time taekwondo gold medalist and the first British woman in any sport to win gold at three consecutive Olympics.

Their bout was tied 10-10 with just 30 seconds left, but Alizadeh scored a pair of two-point body kicks to take the lead before hanging on for the four-point victory. Alizadeh screamed and celebrated with her coach while the small crowd of Olympians and support personnel in the arena erupted with astonished roars at the biggest upset of the taekwondo tournament.

Zhou took a 6-4 lead into the third round of their quarterfinal, but Alizadeh tied it on a body kick with 90 seconds left. Alizadeh jumped three points ahead on a dramatic head kick with 40 seconds left, but Zhou replied with a two-point body kick moments later.

Alizadeh avoided trouble in the final seconds and hung on for a victory that left her flat on her back on the mat in celebration.

Alizadeh is very popular on social media, where she added several thousand more admirers to her Instagram account in the hours immediately after her victory over Jones. She made the latest in a series of high-profile defections from the Iranian sports system by athletes dissatisfied with the government's treatment and policies.

In April, the International Judo Federation suspended Iran for four years because the nation refused to allow its fighters to face Israelis. The IJF said Iran's policies were revealed when former Iranian judo competitor Saied Molaei claimed he was ordered to lose in the semifinals of the 2019 world championships in Tokyo to avoid potentially facing Israeli world champion Sagi Muki in the finals.

Molaei defected to Germany in 2019, and he is representing Mongolia at the Tokyo Olympics when he begins competition Tuesday. Alireza Faghani, a prominent international soccer referee, left Iran for Australia in 2019

Olympic Gold Medals Round Up From Sunday, July 25

Agencies

TOKYO: A round up of gold medals from Sunday, July 25, at the Tokyo Games:

ARCHERY

WOMEN'S TEAM

A contingent led by An San captured South Korea's ninth straight women's archery team gold medal at the Tokyo Games.

The country hasn't lost since the women's team event was added to the Olympic program at the 1988 Seoul Games. An is fresh off a win in the Olympic debut of the mixed team competition. She combined with Kang Chae Young and Jang Minhee to beat the Russian Olympic Committee by a final score of 6-0 in tricky wind conditions at Yumenoshima Park Archery Field, Jang secured the win with a "9" on her final arrow. The bronze medal went to Germany after a 5-1 win over Belarus.

CYCLING

WOMEN'S ROAD RACE

Anna Kiesenhofer of Austria pulled off one of the biggest upsets in the history of the Olympic road race, making an early breakthrough stick as the powerhouse Dutch team gave chase to win the gold at the Tokyo Games on Sunday.

The heavily favoured Dutch team, featuring the past two Olympic champions, nearly brought back Kiesenhofer on the final circuits at Fuji International Speedway. But the time difference proved too much and they were left racing for silver and bronze.

Annemiek van Vleuten bounced back from an early crash to escape a reduced pack in the closing kilometers to salvage a silver for the Netherlands. Elisa Longo Borghini of Italy won a sprint for the bronze medal.

DIVING

WOMEN'S SYNCHRONIZED 3M SPRINGBOARD FINAL

China won the first diving gold medal of the Tokyo Olympics.

Shi Tingmao and Wang Han romped to victory in the women's 3-meter synchronized springboard event with 326.40 points, starting what is expected to be another dominating performance by Chinese divers at these games. They have won 37 of 48 gold medals at the last seven Olympics.

Jennifer Abel and Melissa Citrini-Beaulieu of Canada took the silver at 300.78. The bronze went to Germany's Lena Hentschel and Tina Punzel with 284.97.

The United States duo of Alison Gibson and Krysta Palmer finished last in the eight-team field.

FENCING

WOMEN'S FOIL INDIVIDUAL

Lee Kiefer has earned the third gold medal for the United States at the Games by beating defending champion Inna Deriglazova of Russia 15-13 in the women's foil final.

Kiefer is a four-time NCAA champion at Notre Dame. She ripped off her mask after the final point and shouted "Oh my God!" She placed fifth at the 2012 London Games and was 10th at the 2016 Rio de Janeiro Olympics.

It's the third Olympic gold for the U.S. fencing team. Mariel Zagunis won in saber at the 2004 and 2008 Games.

Kiefer is also a medical student at the University of Kentucky.

MEN'S EPEE INDIVIDUAL

Romain Cannone won France's first gold medal of the Tokyo Games by beating Gergely Siklosi of Hungary 15-10 in the men's epee final.

Cannone led 14-9 after two periods in the first-to-15 match and ended it quickly in the third. The 24-year-old Cannone was born in France but grew up in the United States and attended Sacred Heart University. He returned to France in 2016 to boost his chances of qualifying for the Tokyo Olympics.

Igor Reizlin of Ukraine won the bronze with a 15-12 victory over Andrea Santarelli of Italy.

JUDO

WOMEN'S 52-KILOGRAM

Uta Abe won Japan's second judo gold medal at its home Olympics, beating France's Amandine Buchard by ippon in the women's 52-kilogram final at the Budokan.

Abe's gold-medal victory followed Nao-hisa Takato's on Saturday.

The 21-year-old Uta Abe is one of the biggest stars in Japan's homegrown martial art, and this Olympic victory will only increase her stature in the sport. She has won two world championships, including the 2019 title at the Budokan.

Uta qualified for the Tokyo Games over a year ago. Italy's Odette Giuffrida and Britain's Chelsie Giles won the bronze medals at women's 52 kg.

MEN'S 66-KILOGRAM

Hifumi Abe has won Japan's third judo gold medal at its home Olympics with an ippon victory over Georgia's Vazha Margvelashvili. He joins his younger sister among Japan's gold medalists in the country's beloved homegrown martial art.

Hifumi Abe triumphed in men's 66 kilograms shortly after Uta Abe claimed her own first gold medal in the women's 52-kilogram division at the Budokan.

Hifumi is a two-time world champion who had to win a grueling, 24-minute bout against teammate Joshiro Maruyama last December simply for the right to represent Japan at these Olympics. He won four straight bouts Sunday, including three by ippon.

Uta beat France's Amandine Buchard to win her own first Olympic gold. Brazil's Daniel Cargnin and South Korea's An Baul won bronze at men's 66kg.

SHOOTING

WOMEN'S 10-METER AIR PISTOL

Russian shooter Vitalina Batsarashkina won gold in women's 10-meter air pistol at the Tokyo Olympics, five years after taking silver at the Rio Games.

Batsarashkina shot an Olympic-record 240.3 points, finishing 0.9 ahead of Bulgaria's Antoaneta Kostadinova.

China's Jian Ranxin took bronze after matching Greece's Anna Korakaki's three-year-old record of 587 points to lead qualifying.

Georgia's Nina Salukvadze made history by becoming the first athlete to compete in nine Olympics and announced her retirement to Russian media after failing to qualify for the finals.

MEN'S 10-METER AIR RIFLE

William Shaner won gold men's 10-meter air rifle Sunday.

The 20-year-old Shaner qualified third and was steady in the finals at his first Olympics, finishing with an Olympic-record 251.6 points. Sheng Lihao, a Chinese 16-year-old with little international experience, took silver and countryman Yang Haoran earned bronze.

Shaner was one of the top youth shooters in the country and has already had a decorated career at the University of Kentucky, finishing second at the NCAA individual championships and team gold in consecutive seasons. He also was a first-team All-American as a freshman.

SKATEBOARDING

Japan's Yuto Horigome won the first-ever skateboarding competition at the Olympic Games, taking gold in men's street in the city where he learned to skate as a kid and where his sport is often frowned upon.

The first ever skateboarding silver went to Brazilian Kelvin Hoefler, who used to sleep with his board when he fell in love with skating as a kid.

American skater Jagger Eaton took bronze, the Arizonan adapting best among the Americans to the heat at the Ariake Urban Sports Park in Tokyo.

SWIMMING

MEN'S 400M INDIVIDUAL MEDLEY

Chase Kalisz won the first American medal of the Tokyo Games, taking gold in the men's 400-meter individual medley.

Jay Litherland made it a 1-2 finish for the powerhouse U.S. team, rallying on the freestyle leg to take the silver. Brendon Smith of Australia claimed the bronze. Kalisz, a protege and former training partner of Olympic great Michael Phelps, touched first in 4 minutes, 9.42 seconds.

Litherland was next in 4:10.28, just ahead of Smith (4:10.38).

MEN'S 400M FREESTYLE

Swimmer Ahmed Hafnaoui of Tunisia was the surprise winner in the men's 400-meter freestyle.

Australia's Jack McLoughlin settled for silver after leading much of the race, and Kieran Smith grabbed another Olympic medal for the Americans. It is the third swimming medal for the U.S. after Chase Kalisz won the first American medal of the Tokyo Games, taking gold Sunday in the men's 400-meter individual medley. Jay Litherland won the silver on the same race, rallying on the freestyle leg to take the silver.

WOMEN'S 400M INDIVIDUAL MEDLEY

Yui Ohashi won Japan's first swimming gold medal of the Tokyo Games at the Tokyo Aquatics Centre.

With a dazzling breaststroke leg, Ohashi romped to victory in the women's 400-meter individual medley, touching first in 4 minutes, 32.08 seconds.

Her performance made up for the disappointment of the previous night, when gold medal favorite Daiya Seto didn't advance to

the final of the men's 400 individual medley.

The United States continued to pile up medals, with Emma Weyant taking silver and Hali Flickinger the bronze. The Americans have earned five of a possible nine medals from the first three swimming finals, including a gold by Chase Kalisz in the men's 400 individual medley.

WOMEN'S 4x100M FREESTYLE RELAY

Australia has set the first swimming world record of the Tokyo Games in the women's 4x-100-meter freestyle relay. The Aussies touched in 3 minutes, 29.69 seconds, breaking the mark 3:30.05 that they set in 2018.

The winning team included sisters Bronte and Cate Campbell, who took the lead and anchor legs. They were joined by Meg Harris and Emma McKeon. Canada was second in 3:32.78, while the American took their sixth medal of the night with a bronze in 3:32.81. Simone Manuel swam the anchor leg for the U.S.

TAEKWONDO

57 KILOGRAMS

Anastasija Zolotic won the United States' first gold medal in women's taekwondo by beating Russian athlete Tatiana Minina 25-17 to claim the featherweight division title.

The 18-year-old Zolotic lets out a primal scream as she pulls on her helmet before each round. The Largo, Florida, native has been telling friends and family since early childhood that she would be an Olympic champion and she needed only one trip to the Games to make it happen.

Zolotic and Minina had a high-scoring first round and a tactical second but Zolotic picked apart her Russian opponent in the third with two-point body kicks after nursing a one-point lead into the final round. Zolotic was only the fourth American to reach an Olympic taekwondo final and only the second woman. Steven Lopez won the U.S. team's only two previous Olympic golds in taekwondo.