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P4 THINK

WILL THE TALIBAN SPILLOVER REACH KASHMIR? - PART 2

The official data indicates that not many Afghans had entered the Kashmir insurgency in early 1990s. Data on foreign militants who have been arrested or killed during the years when the...

P5

JOB SEEKING: THE RELIGIOUS PILGRIMAGE OF 21ST CENTURY

"It's the journey, not the destination" seems like a modern proverb, because it emphasises experiences over results and promises personal transformation. However, millennia ago, theologians like Saint Augustine



P8 SPORTS

HYDERYA SPORTS FC TO REP J&K IN I-LEAGUE QUALIFIERS 2021

Srinagar-based football club, Hyderya Sports FC was on Monday selected by the All India Football Federation (AIFF) as the only team from J&K to compete in the



Quote!

In great attempts, it is glorious even to fail.
—Vince Lombardi

NEWS DIGEST

Policeman Caught While Accepting Bribe

SRINAGAR: The Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) on Monday arrested a police officer in Kathua district of Jammu division for demanding and accepting bribe from a complainant. ● [More On P6](#)

Elderly Man Slips To Death

SRINAGAR: An elderly man died on Monday after slipping from a hillock in north Kashmir's Kupwara district. 65-year-old Abdul Qayoom Badan lost balance and fell into a deep gorge while ● [More On P6](#)

Landslide Damages 4 Houses

JAMMU: Four houses were damaged in a landslide in Ramban district of Jammu and Kashmir on Monday, officials said. There was no report of any death or injury to anyone. The houses were damaged at Kunfer village of Chanderkote ● [More On P6](#)

Cops Seize Century Old Sculpture

SRINAGAR: Police have recovered a century old sculpture from a local in Khanshab area of Budgam district before it could be sold in the market. An official said that the 100-year-old sculpture was recovered from the house of Nawaz Ahmad Sheikh son of Abdul Rashid ● [More On P6](#)

3 Injured In Lightning Strike

SRINAGAR: Three people were injured on Monday after a lightning struck remote Karnah area of north Kashmir's Kupwara district. Shakeel Ahmad Jatta, Sajad Ahmad Paswal and Mohammad Aamir Paswal were injured when lightning struck Kana-Gabra ● [More On P6](#)

Afghan Situation Raises New Questions: Rajnath Says Militancy In Kashmir Will End Soon

Press Trust Of India

CHANDIGARH: Defence Minister Rajnath Singh said on Monday that Jammu and Kashmir will soon see an end to militancy as Article-370 and Article-35 A fuelling separatism is over now.

"I believe that the remaining terrorism in Kashmir will also end. I have this belief because the strength and oxygen that the separatist forces used to get there due to Articles 370 and 35A are over now, said Singh.

He was addressing virtually the third Balamji Dass Tandon Memorial Lecture organised by Panjab University on the issue of national security.

He said the Modi government neither does politics nor allows it to happen on issues related to national security, and added that a free hand has been given to the security forces in performing their duties.

"How high the confidence and morale of the army and



security forces can be guessed from the fact that in the last seven years, they have not allowed a single major terrorist incident in the hinterland of India, he said.

India is not only taking action against militancy within the borders of the country, the brave soldiers of our army have done the work of destroying terrorist hideouts by crossing the border if needed, he said,

referring to the surgical strike after the Uri terror attack and the Balakot air strikes after the Pulwama attack.

"Today we can say that Pakistan-supported model of terrorism is getting demolished in India, he said.

Singh also said that there was a trust deficit between India and Pakistan and the country needed to be vigilant of this fact from the point of view of national security.

Singh said Pakistan had understood that they would not make any gains from violations of ceasefire agreements.

An agreement was signed between the Director General Military Operations (DGMO) of India and Pakistan to maintain ceasefire along the Line of Control in February this year, he said.

"We are also in wait and watch mode because the trust deficit between both the nations is a major problem, he said, adding that no ceasefire violation by ● [More On P6](#)



Janmashtami was celebrated in Srinagar with a procession passing through many areas of uptown and culminating at Lal Chowk. KO photo Abid Bhat

New Strategy Adopted To Promote Tourism: LG



Observer News Service

SRINAGAR: The administration is working on a multipronged strategy for the promotion of tourism in Jammu and Kashmir to attract more and more tourists to the region, besides generating employment avenues for the local population, Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha said Monday.

He made these remarks while interacting with former J&K Deputy Chief Minister, Dr. Nirmal Singh at Raj Bhavan here on Monday, an official spokesperson said.

Sinha, he said, submitted a charter of demands to the

LG related to development of unexplored tourism potential areas, expediting the work on Tawi Riverfront, besides widening of Dayalchak- Challan road and construction of Lakhampur-Mahanpur-Basohli-Dunera road.

He also thanked the government for developing water sports infrastructure in Basohli, and requested for expansion of the water sports facilities in the area to develop it as a major tourist hub.

While interacting with the former Deputy CM, the LG observed that the government is making concerted efforts to promote Basohli ● [More On P6](#)

2 Infiltrators Shot Dead On LoC

Press Trust Of India

JAMMU: Two militants were killed as Army troops foiled an infiltration attempt along the Line of Control (LoC) in Poonch district of Jammu and Kashmir early on Monday, a defence spokesperson said.

Jammu-based Defence Public Relation Officer Lt Col Devender Anand said the operation is still underway in the area.

"In the early hours of August 30, terrorists from across the Line of Control made an attempt to infiltrate in the Poonch Sector. Alert Army troops detected the infiltration bid by effective use of the integrated surveillance grid," he said.

"Two terrorists attempting to infiltrate across the LoC have been successfully neutralised by the troops of the Indian Army who remain ever-vigilant in discharging their duties," he said.

The body of one militant along with an AK-47 rifle has been recovered. The body of the second militant along with an AK-47 rifle was seen across the LoC, Lt Col Anand said. ● [More On P6](#)

Policeman Arrested For Killing Wife



Agencies

JAMMU: A policeman and his mother were arrested over alleged murder of his wife, a teacher, in the Poonch district of Jammu and Kashmir, officials said Monday. With the two arrests, the police claimed to have solved the murder case of 36-year-old Shahnaz Akhter at Keri Gulatta village last week, they said.

Akhter's body with visible injury marks was found 100 meters from her house on August 24 and a special investigation team was constituted to probe her death. "The blind murder case was solved within a week with the arrest of the husband and the mother-in-law of the deceased," Sub-Divisional ● [More On P6](#)

Panchayat Members Seek More Security, Vehicles

Press Trust Of India

PAHALGAM: In the wake of recent attacks on sarpanch in Kashmir, local panchayat leaders requested Lok Sabha Speaker Om Birla for additional security and vehicles on Monday.

Birla, who is on a four-day trip to the valley, visited Pahalgam on Monday and interacted with the panchayat leaders.

He assured them that the

government is fully committed to ensuring their security and said he will convey their concerns to the lieutenant governor of Jammu and Kashmir.

The Lok Sabha speaker also invited the panchayat leaders to visit Parliament to watch its proceedings.

District Development Council (DDC) Chairman, Anantnag, Mohammad Yusuf Gorsi expressed his gratitude to ● [More On P6](#)

J&K On Path Of Peace And Prosperity: Birla

Maintaining that Jammu and Kashmir is on a path of peace and prosperity, the Lok Sabha Speaker Om Birla on Monday urged Panchayat representatives for their greater involvement in making the democratic institutions more transparent and accountable. Birla, who arrived in Srinagar on Sunday, met with the ● [More On P6](#)

IT IS VISIBLE THAT THE PANCHAYATI RAJ institutions have strengthened grassroots-level democracy here and democratic institutions have become more answerable to people."

New Covid Variant May Evade Vaccine Protection: Study

Press Trust Of India

NEW DELHI: A new variant of SARS-CoV-2, the virus which cause COVID-19, has been detected in South Africa and many other countries globally which could be more transmissible and evade protection provided by vaccines, according to study.

Scientists from National Institute for Communicable Diseases (NICD) and the KwaZulu-Natal Research Innovation and Sequencing Platform (KRISP) in South Africa said the potential variant of interest, C.1.2, was first detected in the country in May this year.

C.1.2 has since been found in China, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Mauritius, England, New Zealand, Portugal and Switzerland as of August 13, they said.

According to the yet-to-be peer-reviewed study posted on the preprint repository MedRxiv on August 24, C.1.2 has mutated substantially compared to C.1, one of the lineages which dominated ● [More On P6](#)

Fail to Understand PAGD Agenda: Bukhari

Says Silence On Art-370 Indicate Alliance Has Given Up

Press Trust Of India

SRINAGAR: Former minister and Apni Party president Altaf Bukhari Monday asked the government to create an atmosphere conducive for parties to freely participate in the political process.

"As the political process is going to be started, an environment should be created so that people from every political party operating here move freely, convey their message freely so that people at the grassroots participate in the political process," Bukhari told

a press conference here.

The Apni Party chief expressed optimism that the Centre will restore Jammu and Kashmir's statehood.



"I am optimistic that the government of India will restore it. It is committed to Parliament, it is committed to the people of J-K, it is ● [More On P6](#)

Kargil Schools To Open For Classes 6-8



Observer News Service

SRINAGAR: The administration in the mountainous district of Kargil have announced re-opening of schools up to primary level from September 1.

The decision to reopen the schools for classes 6th to 8th from September 1 was taken by Santosh Sukhadeve, District Magistrate, Kargil, in view of the improved Covid-19 situation in the district and keeping in view the various representations received by the administration seeking the resumption of class work.

The concerned head of the institutions shall ensure that Covid-19 SOPs ● [More On P6](#)

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'Stress signals from fat cells can protect against cardiac damage caused by obesity'

Agencies

A stress signal received by the heart from fat could help protect against cardiac damage induced by obesity, a new study led by the University of Texas Southwestern Medical Centre researchers suggests. The finding, published online in Cell Metabolism, could help explain the "obesity paradox," a phenomenon in which obese individuals have better short- and medium-term cardiovascular disease prognoses compared with those who are lean, but with ultimately worse long-term outcomes. "The mechanism we have identified here could be one of many that protect the heart in obesity," said study leader Philipp E. Scherer, Ph.D., Professor of Internal Medicine and Cell Biology at UTSW who has long studied fat metabolism.

Study co-leader Clair Crewe, Ph.D., Assistant Instructor of Internal Medicine at UTSW, explained that the metabolic stress of obesity gradually makes fat tissue dysfunctional, causing its mitochondria - the cellular organelles that generate energy - to shrink and die. Eventually, this unhealthy fat loses the ability to store lipids generated by excess calories in food, poisoning other organs through an effect called lipotoxicity. Some organs, including the heart, appear to mount a pre-emptive defence to protect against lipotoxicity. But how the heart senses fat's dysfunctional state has been unknown. In their study, Dr Crewe, Dr Scherer, and their colleagues used a genetic technique to speed the loss of mitochondrial mass and function in mice. When these animals ate a high-fat diet and became obese, the researchers found that the rodents' fat cells

began sending out extracellular vesicles filled with small pieces of dying mitochondria. Some of these mitochondrial snippets travelled through the bloodstream to the heart, triggering oxidative stress, a state in which cells generate harmful free radicals. To counteract this stress, heart cells produce a flood of protective antioxidant molecules. This protective backlash was so strong that when the scientists injected mice with extracellular vesicles filled with mitochondrial snippets and later induced a heart attack, the animals had significantly less damage to their hearts compared with mice that didn't receive an injection. Further research using fat tissue sampled from obese patients showed that these cells also release mitochondria-filled extracellular vesicles, Dr Crewe said, suggesting that the effects observed in mice also take place

in humans. Eventually, she explained, the heart and other organs in obese individuals become overwhelmed by lipotoxic effects, leading to many of obesity's comorbidities. However, learning how to artificially generate the protective mechanism identified in this study could lead to new ways to buffer obesity's negative consequences. This knowledge could even suggest strategies to protect the heart against damage in lean individuals as well. "By better understanding the distress signal from fat," Dr Crewe said, "we may be able to harness the mechanism to improve heart health in obese and non-obese individuals alike." Other researchers who contributed to this study include Jan-Bernd Funcke, Shujuan Li, Nollwenn Joffin, Christy M. Gliniak, Alexandra L. Ghaben, Yu A. An, Hesham A. Sadek, Ruth Gordil-

lo, Yucel Akgul, Shihwei Chen, and Christine M. Kusminski, all of UTSW; Dmitri Samovski and Samuel Klein of Washington University School of Medicine in St. Louis; and Pamela Fischer-Posovszky of Ulm University Medical Centre in Germany. Dr Sadek holds the J. Fred Schoellkopf, Jr. Chair in Cardiology. Dr Scherer is the Gifford O. Touchstone, Jr. and Randolph G. Touchstone Distinguished Chair in Diabetes Research and the Touchstone/West Distinguished Chair in Diabetes Research. UT Southwestern, one of the nation's premier academic medical centres, integrates pioneering biomedical research with exceptional clinical care and education. The institution's faculty has received six Nobel Prizes, and includes 25 members of the National Academy of Sciences, 16 members of the National Academy of Medicine, and 13 Howard Hughes Medical Institute Investigators.

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Virtual reality reduces pain, anxiety in children

Agencies

Engaging in virtual reality can significantly reduce pain and anxiety in children undergoing intravenous catheter placement, suggest the findings of a new study. The findings of the study were published in the journal 'JAMA Network Open'.

It isn't a matter of one needle puncture. Many children coming through the doors of Children's Hospital Los Angeles are seen for chronic conditions and often require frequent visits. Painful procedures -- like a blood draw or catheter placement -- can cause anxiety and fear in patients. The study has shown that virtual reality can decrease pain and anxiety in children undergoing intravenous (IV) catheter placement. For nearly two decades, Jeffrey I. Gold, PhD, an investigator at The Saban Research Institute of Children's Hospital Los Angeles, has been investigating the use of virtual reality (VR) as a technique to help children undergoing painful medical procedures.

His research has shown that technology can have powerful effects. VR works so well that Children's Hospital Los Angeles now offers it routinely for blood draws. "Some patients don't even realize that their blood is being drawn," said Dr Gold, who is also a Professor of Clinical Anesthesiology, Pediatrics, and Psychiatry and Behavioral Sciences at The Keck School of Medicine of USC. "Compare that to a child who is panicking and screaming, and it's a no-brainer. We want kids to feel safe," added Dr Gold.

In his recent publication, Dr Gold's team reports the results of a study to test whether VR could prevent pain and distress for patients undergoing peripheral intravenous catheter (PIVC) placement. The game is simple but requires focus and participation. Patients in one group used VR throughout the procedure, while those in another group received standard of care, which includes simple distraction techniques and the use of numbing cream. The patients who used VR reported significantly lower levels of pain and anxiety.

"We can actually reduce pain without the use of a medication," said Dr Gold. "The mind is incredibly powerful at shifting focus and actually preventing pain from being registered. If we can tap into that, we can make the experience much better for our kids," added Dr Gold.

mately long-term health outcomes. If, on the other hand, the patient plays a virtual game while undergoing the procedure, she may relax and experience less pain, improving the overall experience for the child, the family, and the healthcare provider.

"Stress actually causes veins to con-



But the story is bigger than that. This is one of the first studies to analyse the effects of VR not only from the patient perspective but also from that of the clinician and the patient's family or caregivers. All three of these groups reported a more positive experience with the use of VR. Dr Gold calls this triangulation of data -- gathering information from three perspectives in order to improve the patient experience. "We started this as a way to mitigate pain and overall distress in children. But caregivers and healthcare providers are also reporting improved outcomes. Effectively treating the patient clearly has a ripple effect," added Dr Gold. Consider a typical scenario in which a child has a chronic illness and must routinely receive PIVC placement. A patient experiencing anxiety about her procedure may tense up, making it more difficult for the clinician to find a vein and insert the catheter. If multiple attempts are necessary, a child's fear may amplify, causing a snowball effect, which in turn may impact medical adherence and ulti-

strict, but you don't need to know the physiology to know that it's better to have a relaxed kid," said Dr Gold. The ripple effect goes further. A child's experience during a visit sets the tone for future visits. If the experience feels traumatic, the child and family may be less likely to adhere to scheduled visits or may feel more stressed coming back to the hospital. "We don't want a child's healthcare experience to be another adverse childhood experience," said Gold. Adverse childhood experiences, also called ACEs, can lead to poor health outcomes. "We care about the healthcare experience that children have," said Dr Gold. "By reducing the fear associated with routine procedures, we prepare the child to begin treatment with a more positive outlook, and this can affect their health for a lifetime," added Dr Gold. Additional authors on the publication include Michelle SooHoo, PhD, and Andrea M. Laikin, PhD; Arianna S. Lane, BA; Margaret J. Klein, MS, of The Saban Research Institute of Children's Hospital Los Angeles.

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Lecturers Forum Discuss Pending Issues

Agencies

Srinagar: A meeting of Jammu and Kashmir lecturers forum was held under the chairmanship of its president Syed Fayaz at Srinagar, wherein besides central body, district presidents of some districts also participated.

In a statement, a spokesperson said that the meeting was called to discuss the way forward for the resolution of long pending issues of the Lecturer fraternity, especially regularization of In-Charge lecturers, ACP, Charge Allowance, Look after system, filling of vacant posts and updating of Database of lecturers. The statement reads that while sharing his views, the president elaborated the role of Lecturer community in successful implementation of NEP-2020.

He stressed upon every lecturer to study the policy deeply and come-up with their concrete suggestions for successful implementation of the policy in the UT.

"The successful implementation of any policy is always a gigantic

challenge and the role of a teacher stands extremely critical."

It reads that to strengthen the organization, some important decisions were taken.

The statement reads that the chief organiser, Harpal Singh Pali was authorised to initiate the process of establishing the District Level bodies through an electoral collage.

"The process shall get completed by the end of September 2021. The General Secretary of the Forum Mir Fayaz in consultation with his counterpart in Jammu, shall work-out the strategy to strengthen the linkage between the two bodies so that the combined efforts could be put-up in resolution of the issues. There shall be monthly virtual meeting of the forum on every 2nd Sunday of the month," it reads.

It reads that district presidents have been advised to try to reach every lecturer, to understand their issues and gear-up their efforts in making organisation more stronger at grassroots level.

Notorious Drug Peddler Arrested

Srinagar: Jammu and Kashmir police on Monday claimed to have arrested a notorious drug peddler in Srinagar and recovered contraband substances from his possession.

In a statement, a police spokesman said that a police party of Police Station Zadibal at a checkpoint established near Mill Stop Zadibal intercepted a person identified as Dawood Shafat Mir, son of Shafat Mir of Nowshera Soura. During checking, the officers were able to recover contraband substances from his possession. He has been arrested and shifted to a police station where he remains in custody, police said. Accordingly, police said that a case under FIR number 32/2021 under relevant sections of law has been registered in Police Station Zadibal and investigation has been initiated.

'Mahindra First Choice Wheels' Store Opens In Srinagar

Observer News Service

Srinagar: Mahindra First Choice Wheels Ltd (MFCWL), India's leading multi-brand pre-owned cars retailer, launched 75 new state-of-the-art franchise stores across Tier I/II/III cities of India.

The addition of these new stores has now strengthened MFCWL's market leadership in the organized used car segment. Owing to the growing demand for private vehicles MFCWL has added stores in many states including Jammu & Kashmir. With the addition of these stores MFCWL has now a strong network of over 1100 stores pan India.

The newly launched stores are A B Automobiles in Qazigund, Gani Auto wheels in Baramulla and My Car Automobiles in Shopian. These new Mahindra First Choice stores will offer all the facilities and services that the MFCWL brand represents including certified used-car sales, warranty on Mahindra Certified used cars, easy finance, hassle-free RTO transfer and superlative customer experi-

ence. "It is our mission to make car ownership easy and accessible to customers across the country. The launch of 75 stores today is an important event for us, especially since it signals the huge interest in used cars amongst customers despite the pandemic. We are delighted to partner with entrepreneurs to organize this ecosystem through a combination of products, services, technology and power of the Mahindra brand," said Ashutosh Pandey, CEO & MD, Mahindra First Choice Wheels Ltd.

Over the years, MFCWL has built an organized ecosystem in the highly unorganized pre-owned cars sector, creating a circle of trust and transparency among franchisees, customers, dealers and institutional clients. All franchise owners have access to technology, training, software, branding and marketing. MFCWL has the largest collection of 5000+ certified vehicles sold through an omnichannel model to customers across the length and breadth of the country.



A protester on Monday sat on a protest demonstration in Srinagar's Press Colony on the eve of International Day of the Disappeared. KO Photo Abid Bhat.

Janmashtami Procession Taken Out In Srinagar After Two Years

Agencies

Srinagar: After a gap of two years, Kashmiri Pandits took out a Janmashtami procession to celebrate the birthday of Lord Krishna here on Monday.

Amid tight security arrangements, the procession started from the Ganpatyar temple in the Habba Kadal area of the city and passed through Kralkhud,

Barbarashah before reaching the clock tower at the historic Lal Chowk, officials said.

They said the procession crossed over the Amirakadal bridge, passed through the Jehangir chowk and returned to the temple.

The devotees, including men, women and children, danced alongside the chariot and distributed sweets among people.

A senior citizen among the devotees said it was after two years that they were allowed to take out the Janmashtami procession in Srinagar.

There was no procession in 2020 due to COVID-19 while the lockdown imposed in the wake of abrogation of Jammu and Kashmir's special status in August 2019 had led to the cancellation of the event.

300 Participants To Attend Intl Conference On Nanotechnology At NIT

Observer News Service

Srinagar: Around 300 participants are expected to attend 7th edition of the biennial International Conference on Nanotechnology for Better Living (NBL-21) at National Institute of Technology, Srinagar. The conference is being held under the aegis of Materials Research Society of India (MRSI) in association with Anna University, SKUAST-K, NIT Mizoram, SSM College of Engineering, IIT Madras, SKIMS, M G University Kerala, and in collaboration with Nanoscale Research Facility (NRF), IIT Delhi from 7th to 11th September.

Director NIT Srinagar, Prof (Dr.) Rakesh Sehgal said the scientific event is expected to provide a vibrant platform to present and discuss path-breaking research ideas in nanotechnologies.

"It shall be an interface between academia and industries. The scientific event is organized during the worst pandemic, which is our common sorrow and common pain will mostly focus on infectious and inflammatory diseases, he said.

Registrar NIT Prof. Kaiser Bukhari said the international conference will be a platform for

young researchers of the Institute and other participants from across the globe.

Convener of the International Conference and HOD Physics, Dr. Shah M A said around 300 participants are expected to attend the conference in a hybrid mode having 150 online and 150 offline.

Regarding the importance of summit, the Convener and Co-founder of NBL Series said that scientists and engineers are finding a wide variety of ways to deliberately make materials at the nanoscale to take advantage of their enhanced properties.

"It includes higher strength, lighter weight, increased control of light spectrum, and greater chemical reactivity than their larger-scale counterparts. NBL-2021 will be a fabulous fusion of such biological, chemical, physical, natural, agricultural and engineering sciences," he said.

Dr Shah said the convention is also an offshoot of an MoU of Ministry of Education under Ek Bharat Shreshtha Bharat scheme, both partner states -Jammu and Kashmir and Tamil Nadu are expected to take initiatives in science and technology for the benefit of our students and faculty,

by organizing such scientific events.

Prof J Kumar (Anna University) will give details of MoU during Valedictory and roadmap to move forward. He said during the five-day convention, around 20 keynote eminent speakers will address issues related to healthcare, agriculture, and engineering and about clean atmosphere.

"In addition, 50 invited talks, 100 oral and 100 for poster presentations are planned as an integral part of the conference. There are other scientific activities that will be covered in the convention," Dr. Shah said.

"Special three memorial lectures for three legends whom we lost in second wave of Covid-19. Prof. Pandaya from IIT Jammu will deliver Memorial Lecture on Padmashri Prof K L Chopra, Prof Sajad from JMI New Delhi will Deliver Memorial Lecture on Prof G M Bhat and Miss Meenakshi will deliver Memorial Lecture on Shri Shahi," he said.

Dr. Shah said the conference will bring together more than 300 researchers and scientists from around 20 countries including 28 from other states of India.

City Link Roads In Shambles, Locals Demand LG's Intervention

Agencies

Srinagar: Several interior and link roads in Jammu and Kashmir's capital city Srinagar have developed potholes due to administration not initiating repairs. The link roads in Lalbazar, Hazratbal, Saida Kadal, Rainawari are presenting a pathetic look, and are craving for the official attention.

"This is pathetic to see that the Government is not bothered in repairing the roads; it really gives us a tough time in commuting through the area," a commuter said.

The dilapidated condition of roads, not only gives the commuters a tough time, but it also consumes a lot of their time in reaching from one place to another.

Same is the condition of the road from Qamarwari to Noorbagh, Eidgah. The authorities have not bothered to repair the damaged road. Same can be seen in the localities

like Parimpura where the road is filled with huge potholes.

There is a whole patch of road from Qamarwari Chowk towards Eidgah where the road has developed severe potholes.

On the other side of the same road, in front of the CRPF Camp at Sekidafar, the road presents a pathetic look. The road from Padshahbagh to Saiteng is also in a bad condition. Big pot holes filled with water can be seen in the middle of the road, making commuting a daring job. "The administration seems to have forgotten this road, no work has been taken up for the last so many months," said Imran Ahmad, a local resident.

When contacted Chief Engineer Roads and Buildings Kashmir he said that he will look into the matter. "We have issued the tender for Bemina The locals have demanded the intervention of the Lt Governor to get the issue addressed.

City Parts Face Drinking Water Issues

Srinagar: The residents living of many localities of Srinagar city are complaining about the low pressure of the water supply due to which they are facing a number of hardships. The residents said that they used to receive a high-pressure water supply and did not require using the water pumps to get the effective supply, however, for the last 2 years, the supply has been affected.

"For the last more than 2 years, the residents living in Lalbazar, Botshah Mohalla, Kanitar and adjoining areas are facing erratic water supply coupled with the low-pressure water supply due to which we are facing multiple hardships," the locals said.

The residents said that they were never used to face issues concerning the water supply; however, for the last some time, they are facing a difficult situation as the supply of the water has been remaining affected.

DIAL-EMMA



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

AIRPORTS

SHIEK UL ALAM AIRPORT: 01942303311



RAILWAYS



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

HIGHWAY STATUS



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

This Day in History

- 1900 - British troops over run Johannesburg
- 1907 - Britain & Russia sign treaty with Afghanistan, Persia & Tibet
- 1907 - Britain, Russia & France form Triple Entente
- 1914 - German troops reconquer Soldau/Neidenburg East-Prussia
- 1915 - Brazil becomes a signatory to the Buenos Aires copyright treaty.
- 1917 - In China, Sun Yat-sen and his supporters' 'rump' parliament establishes a military government and elects Sun Yat-sen as commander-in-Chief
- 1923 - Mussolini orders the Greek Government to apologize for the deaths of an Italian general and his staff on the Greco-Albanian border
- 1929 - Committee chaired by Owen D. Young finalizes the "Young Plan" to reduce German reparations from World War I to 112 billion Gold Marks (\$US8 billion) paid over 59 years
- 1942 - Battle at Alam Halfa: German & Italians assault
- 1943 - Japanese occupiers intern Jewish Congregation of Sorabaja
- 1944 - Allied offensive at "Gothen-linie" Italy
- 1944 - French provisional government moves from Algiers to Paris
- 1944 - French troops liberate Bordeaux
- 1944 - Soviet & Romanian troops march into Bucharest
- 1957 - Federation of Malaya gains independence from Great Britain
- 1962 - Trinidad & Tobago gain independence from Britain (National Day)
- 1966 - "The Battle of Algiers", directed by Gillo Pontecorvo, starring Jean Martin, Saadi Yacef, premieres at the Vienna International Film Festival
- 1968 - 12,000 die in 7.8 quake destroys 60,000 buildings in NE Iran
- 1968 - Garfield Sobers becomes the first cricketer to hit 6 sixes in one over.
- 1976 - Trinidad & Tobago adopts constitution
- 1978 - Constitution adopted by Sri Lanka
- 1979 - Comet Howard-Koomur-Michels collides with Sun
- 1982 - USSR performs underground nuclear test
- 1990 - East & West Germany sign a treaty to join legal & political systems
- 1994 - Last Russian soldiers leave Estonia & Latvia
- 1994 - Pentium computer beats world chess champ Garry Kasparov
- 1998 - North Korea reportedly launches Kwangmyongsong, its first satellite.
- 1999 - The first of a series of apartment bombings in Moscow, killing one person and wounding 40 others.
- 1999 - A LAPA Boeing 737-200 crashes during takeoff from Jorge Newbury Airport in Buenos Aires, killing 65, including 2 on the ground.
- 2005 - A stampede on Al-Aaimmah bridge in Baghdad kills 1,199 people.

From KO Archives

India launching global media blitz on Kashmir

WASHINGTON: India is launching what has been described as "a global-scale media blitz" against Pakistan projecting the Indian interpretation of the 'reality' in Kashmir.

The multi-pronged campaign launched through print, electronic and cyberspace media in some 20 languages will coincide with the UN's millennium session. The idea is to embarrass Pakistan during General Musharraf's visit to New York and to help Indian PM Vajpayee plead India's case.

Full-page colour advertisements are being sought to be published in leading publications like The New York Times, The Washington Post, The Los Angeles Times, USA Today, The Wall Street Journal, The Chicago Tribune, The Times (London), The Straits Times (Singapore), The Bangkok Post, The Jerusalem Post, The Japan Times, The Sunday Times (London), The International Herald Tribune, the Economist, Time, Newsweek, The Financial Times and BusinessWeek, says a report in reidiff, an online newspaper. It claims that 1 funds for the campaign are being raised from Indians the world over through contributions. However, a multi-million dollar campaign at this level cannot be launched without the support of the India government, say observers.

The campaign is likely to accelerate the ongoing India-Pakistan conflict to feverish heights, extending it to cyber warfare. The advertisements will project the theme 'jehad' for Pakistan, agony for India' and portray /peace-loving' India's patience even in the face of increasing casualties on its side in J&K, says report. Also in the pipeline are advertisements in French, German, Swedish, Italian, Dutch, Portuguese, Spanish) Finnish/Turkish, Malay, Bahasa Indonesia, Russian, Chinese, Japanese, Bengali, Korean, Norwegian/Thai, Sinhalese and Arabic. The report says this will be complemented with campaigns in cyberspace via an exclusive Web site, agonyofindia.com & e-mails. The full-page advertisements quote the utterances of Pakistan's Chief Executive General Pervez Musharraf to prove Pakistan's involvement in Kashmir militancy.

Reportedly, The Financial Times has expressed reservations about publishing the advertisement. It is claimed that leading ad agencies have been hired in New York and other major cities of the world to handle the latest campaign in multiple languages.

(Kashmir Observer, August 31, 2000)

Dr Nazir Mushtaq's Book 'Tinkey' Released



KO News Desk

Srinagar: Dr. Nazir Mushtaq, a renowned physician, on Monday released his new book 'Tinkey'. The book was released on the occasion of Jammu and Kashmir Fiction Writers' Guild's 200th session celebration at Hotel Shahenshah. Mushtaq is a former president of the guild.

The book is in Urdu, and is a collection of a hundred fictional micro stories of one page each and will be available in 5 languages- Kashmiri,

English, Hindi, Bengali, and Persian.

Speaking of what inspired his latest book, Dr. Muhshtaq said, "I am a doctor, I see sufferings of people, social evils, and pathos of my patients that keep haunting me. And I started writing about them. These became short stories which took the shape of 'Tinkey'. I always show the mirror to society through my works."

Dr Mushtaq's body of work consists of writing for 60 TV serials, 4 films, multiple radio dramas, papers, magazines,

journals, and his first book was a novel called 'Paigam'. He is also the man behind the popular medical column in Kashmir Uzma 'Sahati Kamil' which is a known success.

The author's next book is slated to be launched next year, a collection of 100 micro stories which will illuminate the ordeal induced by the Covid-19 pandemic in Kashmir. He is also writing a book on his travels in Iran named 'Khush Guzar', and on mental health and depression in Kashmir.

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Switchboard: (0194) 2106304
Editorial: (0194) 2502327
Email editorial: editor@kashmirobsrver.net

K O V I E W

Taliban-led Afghanistan

On Sunday, US forces launched a drone strike in Kabul, targeting a suicide bomber in a vehicle who had been planning an attack on the airport. This was the second such strike since the Thursday suicide bomb blasts at Kabul airport which killed over 200 people - including 13 American troops - and came just two days shy of the US leaving Afghanistan. The Pentagon said that the strike killed two "high-profile" IS-Khorasan planners and facilitators and wounded another.

Taliban has said that after August 31, the US will have "no right" to carry out attacks in the war-torn country. Meanwhile, in a signal that the world is making a tentative effort to engage with the Taliban, the United Nations Security Council has dropped the Taliban reference from a paragraph in its statement on terrorist attacks near Kabul airport that called on Afghan groups not to support terrorists "operating on the territory of any other country".

Also in a reconciliatory signal to New Delhi, a member of the Taliban leadership in Qatar has said that India is very important for this subcontinent and that his group wants to continue Afghanistan's cultural, economic, political and trade ties with India "like in the past".

India would certainly like to test the Taliban's intentions. New Delhi's earlier attempt to reach out to the Taliban in Qatar didn't lead to any positive outcome. Indian current approach towards Taliban is still dictated by the group's previous rule in the country. In its new avatar, the Taliban has signalled it has changed. They have promised an "inclusive government" which respects the rights of women and the minorities. It also granted amnesty to enemies and promised that the people would be allowed to leave Afghanistan safely if they wanted to. The government staff has been asked to return to work. What is more, the Taliban even held a press conference. The spokesman Zabihullah Mujahid said the group won't allow Afghan soil to be used against any other country.

The situation will certainly change for the good if the Taliban translate their promises on running an inclusive government into reality. And if it convinces the world that it has changed. Pakistan, which is regarded as the benefactor of Taliban, is also approaching the issue with some caution. The Taliban is yet to form the government. It will take another few months for the Taliban to settle down. It also remains to be seen whether and what form the resistance to the Taliban will take. And until then, we can only keep our fingers crossed.

OTHER OPINION

Sharia — Nightmare or Ticket to Salvation? -1

In the Koran, the term sharia means something like "the way (paved by God)", "the way to the source". The term "sharia" encompasses the entire Islamic doctrine of norms. This has developed over 1,400 years - in diverse writings by scholars and institutions, and increasingly in the form of state regulations.

Sharia includes provisions on fundamental beliefs and religious practices, such as prayer rituals, dietary and dress codes, as well as legislation. It also includes aspects of religious ethics - for instance, how to treat the needy and the world around us. At its core, sharia is a very complex, sophisticated, yet flexible system of establishing and interpreting norms.

Due to the denominational split between Sunnis and Shias, as well as differences within the denominations themselves, various schools have emerged that differ considerably in their understanding of sharia. On the one hand, this creates uncertainty, but on the other, it allows for diversity of opinion. In a good tradition, scholars attempt - to the best of their ability and in all humility - to glean the right knowledge, without laying claim to exclusivity. In other words, they recognise the validity of each other's interpretations.

The insistence by extremists of all kinds, past and present, that they are the only ones to have recognised the divine truth points to a lack of education and excessive hubris. Often enough, extremists instrumentalise sharia for very superficial political purposes. Prominent examples can be found in the current religious regimes of Iran and Saudi Arabia.

Does anyone have interpretative sovereignty?
Sharia also draws a distinction between religion (the relationship between God and man in the afterlife) and law (the rules of human co-existence in this world). The religious components of sharia are often regarded as immutable, but they also require interpretation.

---Mathias Rohe in Qantara.de 2021



Will the Taliban Spillover Reach Kashmir?

- Part 2

Mohammad Tahir

While India has adopted a wait-and-watch policy, its media (at vast IT cell) has geared up propaganda war on the Panjshir, much to the chagrin of Taliban. But the Taliban seems to appreciate the game of international politics and diplomacy, and accordingly the group seeks recognition and legitimacy by making carefully crafted statements through its PR machinery

The official data indicates that not many Afghans had entered the Kashmir insurgency in early 1990s. Data on foreign militants who have been arrested or killed during the years when the Taliban was ruling Afghanistan (1996-2001) is hard to come-by. The South Asian Terrorism Portal (SATP) website used to feature a separate dataset on foreign militants in Kashmir, but that information is no longer available on the website, for unknown reasons.

Most commentators and analysts, therefore, have been using quantifiers instead of specifying the exact numbers or giving rough estimate. For example, journalist Barkha Dutt, in her recent Hindustan Times column (20 Aug) writes: "In the late 1990s and the early part of the 2000s, there was a graveyard in Srinagar, where only foreign terrorists were brought to be buried. As a reporter, I recall seeing the bodies of men from as far as Sudan; there were also a considerable number of infiltrators killed in military action who had come from Afghanistan." Lack (or disappearance) of data is one of the reasons why it is difficult to sift facts from the propaganda. Exaggerating number of foreign fighters suited a certain narrative that sought to elide over the indigeneity of the Kashmir insurgency.

The Taliban captured Kabul and consolidated its power over Afghanistan in September 1996. That year, according to SATP, 2903 persons were killed in conflict-related incidents in Kashmir. If we assume that Taliban takeover had a spillover in Kashmir, then the conflict-related fatalities must increase for the next few years because spillover often happens in the immediate aftermath of a momentous event. However, the data shows slight variation in yearly fatalities in Kashmir for the initial two years of the Taliban rule (1997, 1998). During these two years, a total of 4633 persons were killed in Kashmir, including 694 security personnel and 2222 insurgents. Comparatively, during the two years preceding the Taliban rule (1995, 1994), 5695

persons were killed in Kashmir, including 533 security personnel and 2995 insurgents. While the fatalities among the security forces had seen an uptick following the Taliban takeover, the insurgent (and overall) fatalities witnessed a downward trend. How is one to explain this data in relation to the claim that the Taliban takeover in 1996 had a spillover in Kashmir? Based on the parameters chosen (fatalities of security personnel or overall fatalities) the data can be interpreted either way.

Some analysts have correlated the increased conflict-related fatalities after 1989 to the advent of foreign fighters in Kashmir, but one of the main reasons for high fatalities among security personnel was that India's counter-insurgency grid was relatively weaker in the early phase of insurgency and the guerrillas had an upper hand. But since then, the situation has changed a lot. Indian security forces have developed a strong counter-insurgency grid within Kashmir and after the 2003 ceasefire agreement between India and Pakistan sealed and fortified the Line of Control with new technology under the project Comprehensive Integrated Border Management System.

What is Likely?

The US exit from Afghanistan has forced strategic recalibration among great powers. Russia and China have warmed up to the Taliban. The UK has also indicated willingness to work with the new regime based on certain conditions. While India has adopted a wait-and-watch policy, its media (at vast IT cell) has geared up propaganda war on the Panjshir, much to the chagrin of Taliban. But the Taliban seems to appreciate the game of international politics and diplomacy, and accordingly the group seeks recognition and legitimacy by making carefully crafted statements through its PR machinery.

On 28 Aug 2021, the Taliban's head of political office, Sher Mohammad Abbas Stanikzai, said in a televised statement broadcasted by the Independent Urdu: "India is an important country of this re-

gion. We want to have good trade and economic ties with them like in the past... We give importance to our political relations and want them resumed." This and other similar statements made by Taliban leaders indicate that the Taliban is seeking to engage India to gain recognition from the regional power.

If Taliban is behaving more pragmatically during its second stint, then it is unlikely that the group will try infiltrate into Kashmir. However, it would be difficult for a fledgling state to control its borders. So, despite the assurances to India, the Taliban won't be able to control its militant allies who are focused on Kashmir. While the fortified LOC and heavy military presence will thwart the large infiltration attempts, there is surplus of weapons with the Taliban and other groups operating in the Afghan theatre which could find their way into Kashmir. In the past four years, security forces in Kashmir have recovered newer weapons from slain militants, such as US-made M4 Carbine, armour-piercing steel bullets, sniper rifles, and Chinese grenades. Recovery of these foreign weaponry indicate that the armed groups operating in Kashmir have secret channels to import weapons from across the LOC. But supply of these weapons is not going to translate into bolstering of the insurgency.

The Taliban victory over the sole superpower will have more symbolic impact, infusing hopeful optimism among the dissenting population in Kashmir. On 21 August, PDP leader, Mehbooba Mufti, already tried to cash in on this narrative by warning New Delhi that patience of Kashmiris is wearing thin and if it continues with its oppressive policies against Kashmiris then similar fate awaits it. She made references to Afghanistan because it is politically resonant.

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

The author is an independent researcher



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

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Prevent the Surge

The daily case records have risen and the rise in numbers is worrisome. Unfortunately, this comes at a time when some semblance of normal life was returning.

The sudden rise in covid cases may prompt the government to impose stringent restrictions or perhaps a lockdown. A total lockdown will be devastating for the economy which has just begun to spring back

but it will be the only option left with the government if the situation becomes progressively worse. The government should not wait to take action when the push comes to shove. It will be prudent to impose some restrictions now, to prevent the situation from deteriorating. Non-essential travel has mainly contributed to the spike, while it is essential for restoring economic growth but some restrictions must be imposed to keep

the cases under control. The occupancy in hotels, cafes, and restaurants must be slashed to 50%. Restricting travel will eliminate the risk of a disastrous surge without crippling the economy.

It is important to understand this virus will not vanish into thin air, a complete lockdown is not an option, it will destroy livelihoods. A vaccine shot is not a remedy as well. Though it will play a huge role in mitigating

the severity of the virus, it doesn't eliminate the possibility of its contraction and transmission. As stated by the WHO chief António Guterres, we must learn to live with this virus, complying with the SOPs and refraining from carelessly venturing out will keep the virus at bay.

Maria Riveaz
Mriyeaz@rediffmail

Job Seeking: The Religious Pilgrimage of 21st Century

Tom Boland

A phrase that jobseekers often use to deal with rejection is: “It wasn’t meant to be.” This evokes a divine plan, where the invisible hand of the market echoes the hand of God.

It’s the journey, not the destination” seems like a modern proverb, because it emphasises experiences over results and promises personal transformation. However, millennia ago, theologians like Saint Augustine described life itself as a pilgrimage through the world, returning to God by purifying the self.

While many people still conduct religious pilgrimages, today that outlook can perhaps more commonly be found in a less obvious place: among those looking for work. From the “ranks of the unemployed” and the “dole queue” we’ve moved to the image of active jobseekers, polishing their CVs, always networking and discovering opportunities.

Of course, the reality is often more than the image, but in the face of uncertainty, we rely on models and metaphors. These stories shape how we interpret our experiences, and often come with a lot of historical baggage. Pilgrimage means more than the fairy-tale phrase “off to seek your fortune”; it implies suffering, doubt and self-transformation, making jobseeking into a trial of the soul.

For the last decade I have interviewed unemployed people about their experiences of looking for a job. My sociological approach combines qualitative interviews and historical illuminations of the present to find out how people view the process of job-seeking.

Join 160,000 people who subscribe to free evidence-based news.

What has become clear is that people don’t understand job-seeking as a simple labour market where supply meets demand. Instead, moral judgements surround unemployment, and all too often people internalise stigmatising ideas derived from politics about “skivers” or “spongers” – stereotypes repeatedly refuted by research.

Surprisingly, Christian pilgrimages provide an unacknowledged model for making sense of complex job-seeking experiences. Medieval people undertook pilgrimages individually, travelling to distant shrines as a penance to purify themselves of sin, to transform themselves through a trial of faith.

On the way, they interpreted the world as full of signs and symbols, tests and temptations which they struggled to overcome to ensure their salvation. Today, we interpret the labour market similarly. It is a place of pilgrimage, where people seek guidance, decipher clues and purify themselves until they reach the salvation of a job.

A religious quest

Modern society considers itself secular, with religious beliefs confined to matters of personal morality or community customs, or even derided as superstitions without rational founda-



tion. However, dismissing religion out of hand as antiquated and irrelevant may mean that we repeat it unbeknown to ourselves.

In my research I’ve interviewed dozens of jobseekers who describe their efforts at finding work in peculiar ways. A phrase that jobseekers often use to deal with rejection is: “It wasn’t meant to be.” This evokes a divine plan, where the invisible hand of the market echoes the hand of God.

Jobseekers are not fatalistic but re-apply themselves relentlessly to a pilgrimage of self-purification, where the difficulties of being unemployed are a test of faith. Beyond simply listing their qualifications and experience on a CV and slinging it into any relevant application, they struggle to interpret their experiences and reorient their efforts in complex ways.

I interviewed “Bob” several times since he was made redundant from a mechanical job and unemployed for several years after the 2008 financial crash. He carefully tailored each job application and noticed the manner of rejection – whether being ignored or issued a standard letter.

Once, he received a letter which was signed by hand and made reference to his long experience and volunteering as valuable – he took this as a sign that he was “on the right road”. Once he found a job, combining administrative and gardening work, he felt that everything had “come together”, even though he had often verged on despair while unemployed, but had never given up.

Businessman on sinking boat surrounded by sharks.

As a substitute teacher, “Rachel” experienced repeated rejection. Each morning she was ready to work from 7am and waited hopefully for a call until 9pm. From then until the next morning, when she would repeat the process, she looked for ways to improve herself – wrote other job applications, did web-based professional develop-

ment. Yet, when called to interview for a permanent full-time job, another applicant succeeded, and Rachel blamed her own lack of confidence and skills and resolved to gain more experience.

These stories reflect a pervasive narrative. Rather than a labour market where supply and demand meet, individuals tend to interpret the hiring process as a personal test. They look for clues, about the terrain ahead but also as feedback that tells them how to improve themselves. Rather than shrugging off repeated rejection as simply inevitable, it is taken as a form of suffering which purifies the individual. In short, the imaginary journey through the labour market is interpreted as a pilgrimage towards personal salvation.

Signposts on the pilgrim’s road

In the welfare office and beyond, job seeking is often presented in implicitly or even explicitly religious terms.

The author of the best-selling international guide to job seeking What Colour is your Parachute? was Episcopalian clergyman Richard Bolles. Notably, he positions job seeking as a job in itself, a vocation, deserving as much time, attention and hard work as any employment.

Rather than sticking to simply filling out job applications or handing in CVs to potential employers, Bolles vision of job seeking is all-consuming. Friends and family are considered a network, a resource for information or recommendations. At every waking moment, the jobseeker should be alert for clues and leads that might alert them to their opportunities.

Perhaps unsurprisingly, Bolles expresses his religious faith, saying that seeking work is not just hoping to gain a salary, but a search for a way of life. He acknowledges that becoming unemployed is difficult but suggests that it is a trial sent by God. Such suffering must be endured patiently, despite personal doubts. Having faith in one’s potential,

being willing to learn and trusting that the world will reward honest effort are supposedly bound to lead to success.

Bolles is not alone. Consider the title The Gift of Job-loss, which positions unemployment as an opportunity for personal transformation. While such religious language might well be expected from the US, where Christianity still plays a prominent role in public and political life, it can also be detected in Europe.

For instance, writer Christine Ingham’s self-help book Life Without Work describes unemployment as a test, for which the reader should consider themselves specially selected:

the difficulties we are given are there to help us grow, and that we are never given problems that are more than we can cope with. This is so hard to appreciate at first when we are being tested by the new challenges that face us.

Considering challenges as a means of refining character strongly echoes the test of individual faith in biblical epistles:

My Christian brothers, you should be happy when you have all kinds of tests. You know these prove your faith. It helps you not to give up. The man who does not give up when tests come is happy (James 1:2-5).

Whether the career advisor is familiar with these verses is less important than recognising that they have become commonplace advice for jobseekers.

Online sources have now largely replaced such books, with advice proffered by official government sites like Find a Job or companies like Monster. Whether the advice is actually useful or not is unclear; since it is available to everyone, it scarcely provides any strategic advantage.

Although very brief and technical, these guidebooks encode religious models. Readers are asked to examine themselves, to find their weaknesses and work upon them, akin to confession. Unemployment is positioned as a trial to be overcome by constant effort. The labour market is a mysterious world to be deciphered, searching for clues, even taking rejection and failure as a signal of how to transform oneself.

Religious hangovers like pilgrimage give meaning and coherence to difficult experiences, providing hope. However, they also reconcile individuals to inequitable systems and make the unemployed personally responsible for the lack of jobs. Culturally, and especially in terms of social policy, we need to stop presenting job-seeking as a personal test of finding yourself and focus on providing decent work, or real alternatives in education.

The Conversation

Let’s kick things off with a story:

It was back in secondary school. I was in the upper annex of the library talking with a few non-Muslim classmates about the Charlie Hebdo attack, which had only happened a matter of days ago and was still fairly fresh in the news cycles. Whilst emphasizing my disapproval of the attack I also contextualized the events; addressing the marginalization of Muslims in France – particularly Moroccans and Algerians – and my equal disgust with the cartoons the magazine had published, telling them about how dear the Prophet (PUBH) was to all Muslims... My thoughts were dismissed as an insensitive justification for the attack.

Fast-forward to the morning after the Paris attacks. In the school’s canteen, I found those same classmates of mine laughing incessantly at memes mocking the victims of that mass shooting... which somehow wasn’t insensitive?

One could go on about the double standards and inconsistencies of liberal ideals of free speech till judgment day. Time and again, the discussion around free speech proves to be fruitless and the romanticized notion of the subject is ever vapid and shallow.

The recent incident at Batley Grammar, and the sensationalized coverage of the peaceful protest by Muslim parents expressing their protective love for God’s final apostle (), sadly, seems a run-of-the-mill event by this point in the UK and Europe more broadly. Setting aside my own disdain for the act which set off the protests – which the regular readers of Traversing Tradition will undoubtedly share – there is a curious aspect of the scare-mongering by mainstream media outlets and the quixotic champions of laïcité in light of this and the wider cultural context in the digital age which is worth noting. Not only for the contradictory nature of free-speech discourse, but for a host of reasons, the least of which being how deep-seated these contradictions are in the public psyche. This is what I mean by schizophrenic.

The aforementioned story is just one personal anecdote, and with the rise of cancel culture in the years that followed, there is a galaxy of examples demonstrating similar inconsistencies. What began as a movement through which victims of sexual harassment and assault – disillusioned with the state’s ability to provide justice – turned to social media for support, has rapidly grown into an umbrella for a series of boycotts on public figures [for

their speech as well other actions]. These boycotts appear at once both disjointed yet oddly selective.

To take some examples from the literary world, comments by author Liu Cixin justifying the persecution of the Uyghurs, or Nobel Laurette Peter Handke’s denial of the Bosnian genocide, inspired a lukewarm response in the digital public. Contrast these, for instance, with J.K Rowling’s remarks on transgenderism which caused a social media storm from which her reputation amongst life-long fans is yet to recover. Whilst the first two cases weren’t exactly lauded or defended for their views/comments, their expressions clearly had little to no conse-

Despite several decades of significant presence in the country, the Muslim community is still faced with having to dilute its own expression in compliance with a Westphalian standard of what is and isn’t appropriate conduct. Our reverence for the Prophet (PBUH) and our offense at him being insulted needs to be filtered so as not to spoil the banner of free speech, that is, the banner of the cultural tastes and philosophical ideas of the pundit class and co.

quences for them (Cixin’s acclaimed novels are still slated for a Netflix adaptation by the producers of Game of Thrones).

A deeper irony of free speech trumpety is the elitist exclusivity with which the subject is valorized. More often than not, the most impassioned pundits for defending their free expression tend to be those who’ve never had said freedom hampered in any significant way. It’s the comedians who sell out stadiums, the celeb journalists, and the talk show hosts who have the largest soapboxes money can buy. It’s that same class of people and the institutions they represent who take the greatest offense to reactions such as what we’ve seen at Batley Grammar. All of the news and entertainment media wants to convince you that somehow, one group freely expressing themselves in a manner supposedly safeguarded by the legal system is an infringe-

ment upon your own civil liberty.

While one may well draw analogies to further highlight these hypocrisies and double standards; “would you defend the teacher’s freedom to use the N-word in class?” “would you defend their freedom to insult Jews?” etc., these analogies have been drawn before. The fact of the matter is that for such self-righteous pundits, those contradictions don’t matter. Recognizing them would mean recognizing the façade of their notion of free-speech. It would mean acknowledging that not all speech is equal and that moral frameworks and cultural sensibilities define what’s deemed acceptable. That even if

we tokenistically acknowledge the “right” to offend, that doesn’t mean we tolerate it from everybody.

Fundamentally speaking, there are certain types of speech that, one might observe, are almost universally discouraged. Should a news network, for instance, be allowed to publish lies under the banner of “free speech”? Whether or not some do is out of the question, but in principle, we expect honesty as a default courtesy from one another. Respect is another basic expectation, one which apparently bears no relevance in this ideal of free speech. What critics of the Batley protests – as well as all other instances of expressing offence on religious grounds – mean when they invoke “free speech” is that their right to insult you is more precious than your right to be respected.

More bluntly, “our speech matters more than yours”. These critics are often the last to show

any concern for the expression of Muslims being curtailed by the state and other forces. Where was the outrage from these partisans of liberty when a 4-year-old Muslim boy was referred to Prevent over a reference to the game Fortnite, or when a Muslim girl is sent home from school for wearing a long skirt? The pundit class that laments against the “tyranny” which dampens their free speech are not coming from a community that lives that reality. They speak from an ivory tower built on blind eyes turned away.

This is in fact quite run-of-the-mill for any paranoid majority; demanding conformity from a minority community in order to legitimize their presence, even if it be at the expense of said minority’s values. The UK’s pluralism is a conditional one, in that it only allows nominal differences to the status quo.

Despite several decades of significant presence in the country, the Muslim community is still faced with having to dilute its own expression in compliance with a Westphalian standard of what is and isn’t appropriate conduct. Our reverence for the Prophet (PUBH) and our offense at him being insulted needs to be filtered so as not to spoil the banner of free speech, that is, the banner of the cultural tastes and philosophical ideas of the pundit class and co. It’s a half-baked tolerance; we are expected to tolerate disrespect hurled towards us but shouldn’t respond in a way that might challenge the values that enabled such disrespect. To borrow from Sara Sherbaji:

You’re expected to live your life acquiescing to the moral standards of the West and they can’t spend a minute entertaining the legitimacy of yours without accusations of inferiority.

The champions of free speech choose to disregard understanding and chant the mantra of liberty instead of considering the fact that not everybody sees the world in the same way as they do. That not everybody has the same sensibilities as them, that they might not share the same paradigm and have different taboos altogether. But of course, asking to take such things into consideration would be ‘tyrannical’ and ‘P.C.’

Ibraheem Ali is a graduate of English from the UK. His interests include literature, film, and Islamic history. The article was originally published in Traversing Tradition.

MoS Jal Shakti And Food Processing Industries Inspects Rangil Plant; Interacts With Paani Samiti Members

Observer News Service

GANDERBAL: Union Minister of State for Jal Shakti and Food Processing Industries, Shri Prahlad Singh Patel today visited Ganderbal and inspected functioning of Rangil Water Treatment Plant here.

The Minister was accompanied by Commissioner Secretary Jal Shakti Department, M Raju; Mission Director Jal Jeevan Mission, Dr Syed Abid Rasheed Shah; Deputy Commissioner Ganderbal, Ms Kritika Jyotsna; Chairperson DDC Ganderbal, Ms Nuzhat Ishfaq; Chief Engineer PHE Kashmir, Iftikhar Ahmad and other concerned.

The Minister inspected various units of the plant and enquired about the functioning of each unit viz filtration, supplying of water to households, storage capacity, water reservoirs and water testing laboratories.

On the occasion, the minister was informed that the water treatment plants at Rangil



feed portable drinking water to a large population of Srinagar City through its 51.63 km long pipeline.

A detailed briefing was given to the Minister about the purification process and the source of

the water from Sindh River.

He was further informed that Ganderbal was the first district in Jammu and Kashmir where 100 percent tap water target was achieved.

Earlier, the Minister also

interacted with Paani Samiti members who informed him about the achievement of target of tap water in their respective areas.

Speaking on the occasion, Shri Prahlad Patel noted that the Union Government led by Prime Minister Narendra Modi is committed to provide all basic amenities of life.

He said that PM Modi has initiated numerous schemes with respect to housing, health, drinking water, gas connection, electricity etc so that the benefits trickle down to the last man standing in the queue.

He said that during his interaction with Paani Samiti members he took note of various issues flagged by the members which will be taken with the Government of India for redressal.

Earlier on his arrival, the Union Minister of State paid obeisance at Mata Kheerbhawani Temple at Tulmullah and prayed for happiness, prosperity and well-being of all.

Pakistan's Borders Are Secured, Prepared To Meet 'Any' Challenge: Gen Bajwa

Press Trust of India

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan Army chief General Qamar Javed Bajwa on Monday assured lawmakers that the country's borders are secured and his forces are prepared to meet "any" situation, amid the evolving situation in neighbouring Afghanistan.

Briefing members of parliamentary committees on internal and external security, including Kashmir, at the General Headquarters (GHQ) in Rawalpindi, Gen Bajwa also highlighted the importance of restoration of peace in war-torn Afghanistan for sustainable development of the region.

"Due to our timely steps for western zone border management, today despite challenges Pakistan's borders are secure and we are prepared to meet any situation," Gen Bajwa was quoted as saying by the Inter-Services Public Relations (ISPR), the media wing of the army.

The delegation comprising members of the Parliamentary Kashmir Committee, Defence Committees of the Senate and National Assembly was given detailed briefing on the security environment, including the situation on the borders and army efforts for

peace and stability. The delegation also had an exhaustive interactive session with General Bajwa.

It was the first security briefing by the military authorities to parliamentarians since the Taliban took over Afghanistan in mid-August and the deadly terrorist attacks carried out by the so-called Islamic State in Khorasan Province (ISKP) in the neighbouring country, Dawn reported.

The Taliban seized power in Afghanistan on August 15, two weeks before the US was set to complete its troop withdrawal after a costly two-decade war. This forced Afghan President Ashraf Ghani to flee the country to the UAE.

Gen Bajwa also said that peace without resolution of the Kashmir issue was not possible.

"The world must know that without a peaceful resolution of the Kashmir issue, peace and stability will remain illusive," Gen Bajwa said as he reiterated the army's support and commitment to Kashmir cause and people of Kashmir.

The briefing session concluded with resolve to continue the struggle against violent extremism through a synergetic, whole-of-the-nation approach, according to the ISPR statement.

Earlier in the day, Interior Minister Sheikh Rashid Ahmed had said that Pakistan Army is present along the border with Afghanistan to defend every inch of the country. "Around 2,690 kilometres of Pak-Afghan frontier has been fenced."

Pakistan People's Party (PPP) Senator Raza Rabbani had demanded that instead of the GHQ, the briefing should be held in the Parliament House.

On July 1, a similar briefing was given to parliamentary leaders of political parties at the Parliament House during which military and intelligence leaders had called for avoiding divisive politics on issues of national interest and cautioned that strategic challenges and related policy shift in external relations could have repercussions for the country.

The previous briefing was reportedly given by Inter-Services Intelligence (ISI) Director General Lt Gen Faiz Hameed to parliamentary leaders, including Opposition Leader Shehbaz Sharif, on the spectrum of possible threats and regional environment - the situation that was emerging in Afghanistan at that time in the wake of US troop withdrawal and the stalemate in peace talks.

CONTD. FROM FRONT PAGE

Afghan Situation

the neighbouring nation has taken place ever since the agreement was signed.

Pakistan understands that it is not in position to do much in Kashmir, especially after the nullification of Article 370, he said.

He said Pakistan had suffered defeats in 1965 and 1971 wars and these defeats completely proved that it was not in a position to launch a full scale war against India.

The minister said the inability to wage a direct war against India forced Pakistan to work on two policies -- on the one hand, the neighbouring nation took steps towards finding an atomic way and on the other hand, it started working on the policy of giving 'death by thousand cuts' to India.

Pakistan had commenced a proxy war against India, allowing their land for providing training to terrorists, money and weapons to target India, he said, adding that after 1980s Pakistan had become the nursery of militancy in the whole world.

Speaking about the Taliban takeover of Afghanistan, the Defence Minister said that the current happenings in the war torn country have raised new security questions, adding that the government is alert and no anti-national force should be allowed to encourage "terrorism" from across the border by taking advantage of the situation.

He also asserted the central government is capable of dealing with any situation.

"What is happening in neighbouring Afghanistan is raising new questions in terms of security and our government is constantly monitoring the developments there," Singh said.

Along with the security of Indians, he said, "Our government also wants that anti-national forces do not encourage terrorism from across the border by taking advantage of the development there."

"We have some more concerns which can become challenges from the point of view of national security," he added.

The Taliban took control of Afghanistan on August 15, capturing all major cities in a matter of days, two weeks before the US was set to complete its troop withdrawal after a vexatious two-decade war. Earlier this week, an Islamic State suicide attack outside the Kabul airport killed over 180 people.

Singh said that the Narendra Modi government was alert and capable of dealing with any situation.

"We are always prepared to deal with threats arising from anywhere -- air, water and land, he said.

The defence minister laid stress on continuously upgrading and updating the national security system to face new challenges and said that some new threats have emerged because of the development of modern technology.

He referred to the dropping of two bombs using drone at the Jammu air force station earlier this year.

"We have to continuously update and upgrade the national security system for new challenges, said Singh.

He said the government's aim is to make the country prosperous, strong and secure. Such an India that does not scare anyone but develops a sense of security among small nations and that India's growing power is not a threat to them," he said.

'Have Learnt A Lot

which the armies of both countries follow to conduct patrols. Referring to the clashes in eastern Ladakh last year, Singh said Chinese forces had ignored the agreed protocols.

We cannot allow the Chinese Army PLA to act on the LAC in a unilateral manner under any circumstances.

"That is what the Indian Army did that day in Galwan and bravely confronted the PLA soldiers and forced them to retreat, he said while terming it as a "historic" incident.

India wants a solution to the border dispute with China through dialogue, the defence minister said and asserted that the government will never compromise on issues of the "country's borders, its honour and self-respect".

We will never allow the sanctity of borders to be violated, he said.

Recalling the Galwan incident, he said the bravery, valour and restraint shown by the Indian Army are incomparable and unparalleled.

In the first deadly clash in the border area in nearly five decades, 20 Indian soldiers were killed on June 15 last year in the Galwan Valley in fierce hand-to-hand combat with Chinese troops, triggering a large deployment of troops and heavy weaponry by both armies at the friction points in eastern Ladakh.

In February, China officially acknowledged that five Chinese military officers and soldiers were killed in the clashes with the Indian Army though it is widely believed that the death toll was higher.

In a significant forward movement towards the restoration of peace and tranquility in the region, the Indian and Chinese armies completed the disengagement process and restored the pre-standoff ground position in Gogra in eastern Ladakh after 15 months.

The development came after the 12th round of military talks between the two sides on July 31 at the Chushul-Moldo meeting point in eastern Ladakh.

Earlier, the Indian and Chinese frontline troops had conducted the first synchronised disengagement at the south and north banks of the Pangong lake in February.

The Army is trained to press the trigger on seeing the movement of the enemy, but the Indian Army has shown both courage and restraint while working with great maturity, Rajnath Singh said.

He said despite this, questions were raised by some opposition leaders on the Army's capability.

The defence minister said India has learnt a lot from the 1962 war against China.

On improving infrastructure, he said that the Atal Tunnel project in Rohtang, which was on hold for a long time, was completed by the Modi government. This tunnel has strategic importance, he said.

The Border Roads Organisation is developing infrastructure projects and all-weather connectivity was being given to Ladakh, he said, adding work on several alternative roads has started.

The minister said it will also help the people who live in border areas as these people have strategic importance for us.

New Strategy

as a unique destination for water sports with state-of-the-art facilities.

"We are working on a multipronged strategy for the promotion of tourism in the UT to attract more and more tourists to the region, besides generating employment avenues for the local population," Sinha said, as per official spokesperson.

He said that on the development of Tawi Riverfront, LG said that the necessary impetus is being given for the speedy completion of the prestigious project and other important water projects.

"Directions have already been passed for completion of the Jammu Tawi Barrage within a time period of one year," Sinha said, while urging former Deputy CM to continue his sustained endeavours for promoting the welfare of people on all fronts.

Besides Singh, former Minister, Chowdhary Zulfkar Ali also called on LG at the Raj Bhavan here today.

Ali, according to an official spokesperson, submitted a memorandum of demands to the LG pertaining to operationalization of Eklavya Model Residential Schools and Tribal Research Institute; execution of Anas Irrigation project; construction of Kotranka-Khawas road, establishment of New Degree College at Peeri, construction of Degree College Kotranka etc.

He said discussion was also held on speedy implementation of Forest Rights Act.

"The LG observed that the government is implementing the Forest Rights Act in letter and spirit, and is making several interventions aimed at safeguarding the rights and interests of the tribal communities," the official spokesperson said.

"The Lt Governor assured the former Minister that the genuine issues and demands projected by him would be taken up for examination and their early redressal," he added.

2 Infiltrators

He said the action by the alert Army troops displays the resolve of the force to thwart any misadventure along the LoC.

Policeman Arrested

Police Officer (SDPO), Mendhar, ZA Jaffri told reporters.

He said an 11-member police team zeroed in on the accused persons who allegedly carried out the murder in a well-planned manner and also tampered with the evidence to escape arrest. Officials identified the arrested husband as constable Irfan Manhas who is posted with Indian Reserve Police Battalion in Srinagar.

They said the couple, married with three daughters and a son, were having some family dispute. They said the accused had reached his house around midnight on August 24 and allegedly strangled his wife to death with the active support of his mother.

He had left the house for his place of posting after dumping the body to evade suspicion, the officials said.

J&K Records 105

They said Srinagar district recorded the highest number of 48 cases, followed by 14 cases in Doda district.

The number of active cases rose to 1,264 in the union territory, while 3,19,582 patients have recovered so far, the officials said.

The death toll in the union territory due to the pandemic was 4,407 as no fresh death was reported in the past 24 hours.

Meanwhile, the officials said, there were 44 confirmed cases of Mucormycosis (black fungus) in the union territory as no fresh case was reported since Sunday evening.

New Covid Variant

the SARS-CoV-2 infections in the first wave in South Africa.

The new variant has more mutations than other variants of concern (VOCs) or variants of interest (VOIs) detected worldwide so far, the researchers said.

They noted that the number of available sequences of C.1.2 may be an underrepresentation of the spread and frequency of the variant in South Africa and around the world.

The study found consistent increases in the number of C.1.2 genomes in South Africa each month, rising from 0.2 per cent of genomes sequenced in May to 1.6 per cent in June and then to 2 per cent in July.

"This is similar to the increases seen with the Beta and Delta variants in the country during early detection," the authors of the study said.

According to the study, C.1.2 lineage has a mutation rate of about 41.8 mutations per year, which is about twice as fast as the current global mutation rate of the other variants.

Over half of the C.1.2 sequences have 14 mutations, but additional variations have been noticed in some of the sequences.

"Though these mutations occur in the majority of C.1.2 viruses, there is additional variation within the spike region of this lineage, suggesting ongoing intra-lineage evolution," the authors of the study noted.

About 52 per cent of the mutations in the spike region of the C.1.2 sequences have previously been seen in other VOCs and VOIs.

The spike protein is used by the SARS-CoV-2 virus to infect and enter human cells, and most vaccines target this region.

The mutations N440K and Y449H, which have been associated with immune escape from certain antibodies, have also been noticed in C.1.2 sequences.

"While these mutations are not characteristic of current VOCs/VOIs, they have been associated with escape from certain class 3 neutralising antibodies," the authors wrote.

They noted that these mutations together with changes in other parts of the virus likely help the virus evade antibodies, and immune response, including in patients who have already developed antibodies for the Alpha or Beta variants.

"While the phenotypic characteristics and epidemiology of C.1.2 are being defined, it is important to highlight this lineage given its concerning constellations of mutations," the authors added.

Fail to Understand

committed to us as Apni Party," he said.

Bukhari criticised the People's Alliance for Gupkar Declaration (PAGD) wondering if it has forgotten its promises with the people.

"The PAGD attended two meetings the all-party meeting with the PM and the opposition parties' meet. Did you see any word on Article 370? he said, adding, it indicates the alliance has

given up on its basic agenda.

He assured the people his party is committed to whatever it has promised.

The Apni Party president also demanded swift action against those involved in corruption, and said the government must start the process from the political class.

Kargil Schools

and guidelines issued by the district administration and the Chief Education Officer, Kargil are followed in letter and spirit," reads an order issued by Sukhadeve on Sunday.

"Any violation of these orders shall invite action under Section 188 of IPC, Disaster Management Act 2005 and Epidemic Diseases Act 1897," it adds.

Panchayat Members

Birla for meeting them and thanked him for visiting Anantnag.

"We are in south Kashmir, where the security threat is very high. We have been given only two security guards each who work on rotation. It is strange that our security level is the same as that of those in Jammu," he said.

Echoing similar sentiments, DDC member, Dashnepora, Nihar Ahmed Mir said the security situation in Jammu is different from that in Kashmir.

"We should be provided with more security as we are under a continuous threat. At the same time, we should also be given vehicles as the terrain is hilly," he said.

Some of the panchayat leaders also expressed apprehension of a heightened security threat in the wake of the Taliban's takeover of Afghanistan. However, officials dismissed any such possibility.

BDC Chairperson, Pahalgam, Zerena Akhtar (22) said all panchayat leaders have been instructed to stay in a hotel in Pahalgam.

"We can travel only after informing the Police Control Room two days in advance, but we have to come back and stay in the hotel," she said.

However, she added that all this is being done for their safety and security.

Responding to the panchayat leaders' concerns, Birla said the government is committed to ensuring their security and is taking all necessary steps.

He further said he will convey their concerns to the LG.

"It is visible that the panchayati raj institutions have strengthened grassroots-level democracy here and democratic institutions have become more answerable to people," Birla said.

Officials at the local administration said they are taking all necessary steps to ensure the safety of panchayat leaders.

One of the officials said the panchayat leaders have been asked to stay in a hotel as it is required for their safety, but their movement is not restricted provided they are accompanied by state police personnel.

The panchayat leaders appreciated the Centre's efforts in their training and seconded the Lok Sabha speaker that democracy has been strengthened in the valley with the panchayati raj institutions.

Pahalgam Development Authority CEO Masrat Hashim categorically said there is hardly any security threat and cited a National Crime Records Bureau (NCRB) report that said Kashmir is one of the safest destinations in the country for tourists, especially for solo woman travellers.

Anantnag District Commissioner Piyush Singla said that the district administration is taking all necessary steps to ensure the safety of panchayat leaders.

He further said the establishment of panchayati raj institutions has empowered people and made them a part of the development process.

J&K On Path

representatives of District Development Council (DDC), Block Development Council (BDC) and Sarpanches of Panchayati Raj Institutions of Anantnag District and other nearby areas at Pahalgam on Monday, an official spokesperson said.

He said that the Lok Sabha Speaker congratulated the newly elected local representatives and said that the Union Territory of Jammu and Kashmir is on the path of peace and prosperity.

"The Speaker added that Panchayati Raj Institutions in the UT have been strengthened

and appealed to the local representatives for their greater involvement in making the democratic institutions more transparent and accountable," he added.

Observing that the roots of Indian democracy are in our tradition, Birla, as per the official spokesperson urged the Panchayati Raj representatives to work towards fulfillment of hopes and aspirations of the people.

"Mentioning that decentralisation of power is the key to success of democracy and development, Birla called for greater coordination among administration and Panchayati Raj Institutions so that the fruits of development reach the intended beneficiaries," he said.

"In this regard, Birla stressed on the importance of consensus and dialogue and said that all democratic institutions must interact among themselves and they should also devise a set of rules and procedures for structured functioning. Birla also said that Gram Sabhas should meet regularly to address people's issues," he added.

According to the official spokesperson, the LS Speaker stated that J&K has tremendous potential for tourism and export and called for measures for boosting marketing and export of local handicrafts and artefacts in national and international markets.

He further said that the Panchayat representatives lauded the initiative of Birla for his historic visit and said that the visit of the Lok Sabha Speaker would boost democracy at the grass roots level.

Policeman Caught

In a statement, a CBI spokesperson said that a case was registered on a complaint against the accused on the allegations of demanding bribe.

"It was alleged that in the month of March 2021, complainant's Truck (Tralla) was seized by Police Station Kathua in which cattle were being transported and an FIR was registered in the matter. It was further alleged that the accused demanded a bribe of Rs.5,000/- from the complainant for not filing chargesheet against him in the said case," reads the statement.

It reads that the CBI laid a trap and caught the accused while demanding and accepting a bribe of Rs. 5,000/- from the complainant.

"Searches were conducted at the office and residential premises of the accused at Kathua," it reads.

The statement further reads that the accused was being produced before a competent court in Jammu today.

Elderly Man

traversing through a hillock in Amrohi village of Karnah on Monday, reports said. Badan, as per the reports, died on the spot.

Landslide Damages

along the Jammu-Srinagar national highway, the officials said.

The residents claimed the landslide was caused due to the ongoing work on the highway expansion project.

Ramban Deputy Commissioner Mussarat Islam visited the village to take stock of the situation following the landslide. He assured the affected people of every possible help from the district administration for their rehabilitation.

Islam directed the tehsildar to immediately submit a loss assessment report for grant of relief, according to an official spokesman.

He also assured the families that their demand for compensation for the damage will be forwarded to the National Highways Authority of India.

Cops Seize Century

Sheikh, a resident of Yarikhah Khansahab during the search. He said that police got reports that the local resident had recovered the sculpture probably while digging his field.

The official said that he was attempting to sell it but police recovered it from him before being sold. Senior Superintendent of Police (SSP) Budgam, Tahir Saleem said that they have called the Archaeological Survey of India officials who will ascertain its age and other related aspects. (KDC)

3 Injured In

village of Karnah on Monday evening, reports said. The trio, as per the reports, were removed to the Sub District Hospital (SDH) Tangdhar for treatment.

Govt Forms Committee To Resolve Dispute Over Grazing Land

Observer News Service

UDHAMPUR: Divisional Commissioner Jammu, Dr Raghav Langer and Additional Director General of Police, Mukesh Singh Monday chaired a meeting of Revenue, Forest and police officers of Udhampur and Ramban Districts to address the dispute erupted over grazing land Ladha Dhar, here at Conference Hall DC Office Complex Udhampur.

A dispute between two groups over grazing land at Ladha Dhar had come to the notice of the administration and keeping in view the seriousness of the issue, the Div Com convened the joint meeting to listen to the issues of both the disputing parties and know about the actual situation of the incidents which occurred recently over the grazing land falling in the jurisdiction of Ramban and Udhampur district.

Panchayat Representatives and prominent persons of both the sides flagged their issues and also put forth their suggestion for amicable solution of the dispute.

After listening to both sides and officials, the Divisional Commissioner constituted a

Committee headed by Chief Conservator of Forest, Jammu to sort out the issue among the tribal groups. It was decided that the Committee shall submit the report within the stipulated time frame by involving members of both sides.

Underlining the importance of the decision taken by the present Government regarding the implementation of Forest Rights Acts in UT, the Div Com stated that the initiative will go a long way to benefit the forest dweller nomadic population. The Divisional Commissioner Jammu appealed to both the communities to maintain peace and mutual brotherhood in the area. The Div Com also appreciated the efforts of the DCs and police Officers of twin districts for maintaining tranquility in the area.

The ADGP assured both the communities that action shall be taken against the persons found involved in the breach of the peace and mutual brotherhood in the region. He appealed to the members of both communities to abstain from creating any law and order situation.

Dilapidated Wachi-Babapora Road Irks Locals

Observer News Service

Shopian: The residents of several villages of Wachi hamlet in South Kashmir's Shopian district said that they are facing a lot of problems due to the dilapidated condition of the road from Wachi to Babapora.

The residents of Wachi, Zahidbagh, Darbagh, Safanagri, and its adjacent areas said that the road connecting to these villages with sub district headquarter Pulwama Zainapora is full of potholes due to which commuters as well as passersby are suffering.

Locals said that the road from Wachi-Babapora hasn't been macadamised for the past several years due to which even public traffic remains off the road.

"From last year, even minimal public transport services have also been closed due to which they are facing a lot of problems," they said.

Residents said that despite

bringing the issue in notice of higher ups several times nothing has been done on ground.

"Watchi being the main village has been ignored on all developmental fronts," said Manzoor Ahmad, a local resident. "The successive governments have ignored this village due to unknown reasons due to which Watchi is far behind in development."

The bumpy condition of the road often leads to accidents in the area. Locals requested higher ups to look into the matter and macadamise the roads at an earliest so that locals can heave a sigh of relief.

Meanwhile, Assistant Executive Engineer R&B Nisar Ahmad told KNO that the road is being widened and the construction work is already going on.

"It will take around one week more to complete the work on the drain near J&K bank Watchi after which the road will be macadamised," Nisar said.

Two Die After Vehicle Falls Into Gorge In Poonch

Jammu: Two people died after their vehicle skidded off the road and fell into a gorge in Poonch district of Jammu and Kashmir, officials said. The accident took place at Draba village in the Surankote area when the driver of the vehicle lost control over it at a turn, they said. Rescuers were immediately rushed to the spot of the accident and they retrieved two critically injured persons who succumbed while being taken to a hospital, the officials said. The identity of the deceased is being ascertained, they said.

Relief Distribution Camp Held At Yousmarg

YOUSMARG: Tourism Department along with district administration Budgam organised a day long camp for ponywallas for an on spot redressal of their issues and demands at tourist resort Yousmarg.

On the occasion, the tourism unit holders were made aware about the importance and procedure of getting registered with the Department for carrying out fair trade activities. Officers explained to them the requirements and formalities to be completed for getting registered with the Department as mandated under J&K Registration of Tourist Trade Act.

Speaking on the occasion, Director, Tourism, Kashmir, Dr. G N Itoo, said the Department has launched a drive to listen to the concerns and demands of local stakeholder, particularly ponywallas, at different tourist destinations so that they don't have to face any difficulties.

Govt To Set Up 'J&K Plastic Bank' At Tourist Resorts

Observer News Service

Srinagar: The Jammu and Kashmir authorities are starting community engagement and stakeholder consultations for establishment of a plastic bank aimed at eliminating plastic footprint at picturesque tourist destinations by involving local youths, a senior official said here on Monday.

"The concept of 'J&K Plastic Bank' is rooted in the wide-spread reporting of plastic waste being left by visitors at various tourist destinations which is a severe threat for the local ecology and environment," Chief Executive Officer of Mission Youth Shahid Iqbal Choudhary said.

He said the plastic bank will begin with the selection of a voluntary group of minimum 10 youths who will be imparted skill training.

"The group will be engaged

with local law enforcement authorities for implementation of ban on plastic and polythene usage in such areas," Choudhary said.

Under the scheme, infrastructure will be developed and made available to the groups for recycling of plastic waste into various products for which market linkages will be provided, he said.

The scheme also envisages making available infrastructure for eco-friendly packaging products. This model will also provide income-generation avenues to the youth apart from conservation of local environment, ecology and natural resources, he added.

The chief executive officer said the groups will be graded on "plastic score" based on their performance for various incentives.

The scheme will be implemented at 50 tourist destinations in two phases. It will be

expanded later to more destinations, he said.

Mission Youth is engaging with various organisations for capacity building of the youth and staff members of various organisations in these areas apart from focusing on public awareness about ill-effects of plastic waste, he said.

Apart from the infrastructure development, Mission Youth will also support linkages with financial institutions, he said.

The Governing Body of Mission Youth chaired by Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha had earlier approved a number of projects and schemes which are under active roll-out.

Choudhary said that in line with the decision, a number of schemes are being planned to engage youth clubs in various sectors, including public welfare, education, health, disaster management, sports and skill development.

Govt Initiating Steps For Forest Rights Act Implementation 'Budget Earmarked For Basic Infrastructure, Capacity Building'

Observer News Service

SRINAGAR: Government has initiated the process for implementation of The Scheduled Tribes and Other Traditional Forest Dwellers (Recognition of Forest Rights) Act 2006 i.e. Forest Rights Act and planning for post-claim support process including facilities.

Secretary, Tribal Affairs Department, Dr Shahid Iqbal Choudhary informed that General Administration Department earlier issued the order for constitution of District and Sub-Divisional Level Committees based on which Deputy Commissioners have been authorised by the government to select nominated members. More than 20,000 claims are under process in various districts and steps are being taken to strengthen the Forest Rights Committees at Gram Panchayat level.

The department has earmarked an amount of Rs 60 Lakh for a mass awareness and

capacity building programme to be launched in second week of September enabling the tribal communities and traditional forest dwellers to submit their claims as well as capacity of District Level Committees, Sub-Divisional Level Committees.

Tribal Affairs department is working on demand of public infrastructure viz hospitals, schools, anganwadi centres, water supply resources and other projects required to be developed in such areas. A budget of Rs 15 Cr has been proposed by the department to support the traditional forest dwelling scheduled tribes in various districts. The recently constituted Youth Clubs are being associated for awareness and information delivery in Panchayats apart from online and offline training modules. Tribal Research Institute is also developing modules of information in both Audio-Visual and print form in different languages for public information.

Under the Forest Rights Act both individual rights and community rights are under consideration of the committees constituted by the government.

Meanwhile, the Tribal Affairs Department has tied up with The Tribal Cooperative Marketing Development Federation of India (TRIFED), Government of India for signing an MoU aimed at establishment of collection points and mandis for Minor Forest Produce in coordination in Forest Department.

The Tribal Affairs Department has already written to Forest department and Deputy Commissioners for identification of minor forest produce to be notified for support under the Minimum Support Price (MSP) system to be introduced in J&K with support of TRIFED and Ministry of Tribal Affairs. The TRIFED has proposed to support the infrastructure building and MSP support with 75:25 financial support by it and the J&K UT administration respectively.

LG's Adv Inspects Health Facilities In Pahalgam

Observer News Service

SRINAGAR: Advisor to Lieutenant Governor, Rajeev Rai Bhatnagar Monday visited Sub-District hospital Pahalgam to review its functioning and the facilities being provided to public there. The Advisor was accompanied by Director Health Services Kashmir, Mushtaq Ahmed Rather, Executive Engineer and other concerned officers of the health department.

During the visit, Advisor Bhatnagar took a detailed round of the hospital and inspected all its sections. He also reviewed the status of Covid vaccination, sampling and other facilities being provided in the hospital.

The Advisor also interacted with the doctors and staff of the hospital. He enquired about the prevention measures and the treatment of the patients. He lauded the salutary work being done by the doctors and



staff. He also interacted with the staff. He noted the suggestions and requirements of the doctors and para medical staff there and gave on spot directions for the same.

The Advisor directed the officers of concerned executing agency that the work on the new building should be completed at the earliest keeping

in view the importance of Pahalgam being a favourite tourist destination and also the requirements of its inhabitants and those of adjoining areas.

The Advisor also discussed the COVID situation and other health and medical care related issues of district Anantnag with the Director Health services and other officers.

Precautions Necessary To Avoid Third Covid Wave: Experts

Agencies

Srinagar: Warning against not adhering to the COVID-19 appropriate behavior, experts on Monday said that all people, even those fully vaccinated must follow all the precautionary measures to avoid the third wave and save precious life.

With the positivity virus graph on decline, people across the Kashmir valley are seen roaming at the busiest places without masks and not adhering to the social distancing norms to keep the virus at bay.

Medical experts have warned against the possible third wave in Jammu and Kashmir and are continuously advising people to follow all the precautionary measures to avoid its intensity.

Notably, the government has started a vaccination drive in all the areas of the Kashmir valley including the door-to-door service to fight the deadly Coronavirus.

Valley's well-known pulmonologist Dr Khurshheed said that if

people don't follow the necessary precautions the virus will spread.

"Even though the vaccination is going on, people need to maintain appropriate behavior to avoid its further spread. Even those fully vaccinated need to adhere to all the necessary precautions," Khurshheed said. "We only have two pivotal things to fight against this virus which include vaccination and necessary precautions."

Another senior health official wishing not to be named said that it's very vital to follow the precautionary measures to fight the possible third wave and stop it from further spreading and consuming human lives.

He said that the virus has already left a huge impact on human life and mental health.

The health authorities in the valley have so far vaccinated a total of 4,001,041 individuals against the virus while the drive is ongoing across the valley even at the farthest places.

Erring Food Business Operators Fined In Anantnag

ANANTNAG: Additional Deputy Commissioner, Anantnag who is designated as Adjudicating Officer under Food Safety and Standards Act 2006 imposed a penalty of Rupees Four Lakh Thirty Three Thousand on various Food Business Operators (FBO) of the district for violating various provisions of the Act.

It was informed that 13 cases were filed by the Food Safety Officers against various FBOs for manufacturing and sale of sub-standard and misbranded products, not obtaining license for food registration besides violating Good Hygienic and Manufacturing Practices as mandated in Schedule 04 of the Act.

During the trial, the ADC directed the Food Business Operators to strictly adhere to the provisions of the Act and desist from such illegal acts in future. He also called for creating awareness among the stakeholders to implement the FSSAI in letter and spirit for benefit of both the FBOs and consumers.

BSF Seizes 10 KG Heroin In Jammu

Agencies

Jammu: The Border Security Force (BSF) Monday seized 10 kg heroin, worth crores of rupees, near the International Border in Akhnour sector here, a senior official said. The Inspector General of BSF, Jammu frontier, N S Jamwal said the forces conduct operations based on regular tip-offs and the seizure was result of such efforts.

"Troops were on vigil round the clock and this seizure is the result of their efforts," he said.

The consignment was found hidden in 'Sarkanda' bushes near the zero line by a search party,

Deputy Inspector General of BSF, S P S Sandhu said.

Sandhu, who is also Public Relations Officer for the BSF Jammu frontier, said the recovery was made around 1 pm when a BSF party found a suspicious black colour rucksack bag hidden in the wild grass.

"The bag was opened and 10 packets, each weighing one kilogram, of heroin was found inside, the officer said, terming the recovery a major success and the result of the relentless efforts of robust border domination.

He said the BSF Director General has lauded the efforts of the troops.

Jammu Bar Association Gets New Body

Agencies

Jammu: The Jammu chapter of the Jammu and Kashmir High Court Bar Association got a new body with advocate M K Bhardwaj elected as president on Sunday following an election that took place after a delay of two years due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

Mohinder Pal Singh (Palli) was elected as the vice president, Surjeet Singh Andotra as general secretary, Aditya Sharma as joint secretary and Amandeep Singh as treasurer.

Announcing the results after nearly 10-hour-long counting at the High Court Complex here on

Sunday night, returning officer Surinder Singh said a total of 15 candidates were in the fray, including four each for the posts of president and vice president.

The election was held at the High Court complex on Saturday and the counting of votes began around 1 PM on Sunday.

Of the 1,591 members, 1,413 took part in the elections to elect the new body, Surinder Singh said.

"I along with my team will work for the welfare of the lawyers and the people of the Jammu region," Bhardwaj told reporters after his election.

30 Senior KAS Officers Begin Capacity Building Training At LBSNAA

Agencies

SRINAGAR: After the adoption of "Good Governance-Behater Nizam-e-Hukmat Kashmir Alamia" resolution by J&K Government during Two Days Regional Conference on Replication of Good Governance Practices in the UT of J&K and MoU signed by J&K IMPARD with National Centre for Good Governance(NCGG) and Department of Administrative Reforms & Public Grievances & Pensions (DAR&PG) Govt. of India, first ever batch of 30 senior JKAS Officers of 1999 batch have started their Capacity Building Training at Lal Bahadur Shastri National Academy of Administration (LBSNAA) Mussoorie from today. Additional Secretary, DARPG and DG, NCGG, V.

Srinavas delivered the welcome address at the Inaugural ceremony of the programme for senior officers of JKAS.

DG IMPARD, Saurabh Baghat in his introductory address said it is a great achievement and first of its kind initiative taken in J&K that Mid-Career Training of JKAS Officers is taking place.

The DG IMPARD expressed gratitude to the Chief Secretary for bringing training of JKAS in line with IAS training.

Saurabh Baghat also complimented the exemplary initiatives taken by DARPG and NCGG, New Delhi for designing and rolling the programme.

Saurabh Baghat further informed that more such batches will be sent for training in future to update professional competence of JKAS officers.

This is for the first time since 1966 that the Mid-Career Training Programme has been designed for the senior JKAS officers as per the New Training Policy of J&K.

The training programme will focus on various issues like Public Policy, Ethics in the Administration, Health Governance, Land Acquisition, Climate Change, Electoral Reforms, Smart City and Urban Housing.

The course also focuses on exposure visits to best performing Districts, Good Governance Practices and visits to Bureau of Parliamentary Studies etc.

The inaugural ceremony of the Capacity Building Programme for JKAS Officers was concluded by a vote of thanks by Prof. Poonam Singh of NCGG.

Maj Gen Salaria Is New GoC Kilo Force

Agencies

Srinagar: Major General Sanjiv Singh Salaria, on Monday took over as General Officer Commanding, Counter Insurgency Force Kilo on Monday (Aug 30, 2021).

According to a defence official statement, Major General SH Sahi on relinquishing command, moves to Delhi on an important assignment in Army Headquarters. Maj Gen Sahi's tenure saw Kilo Force take distinctive steps towards 'peace and stability' in North Kashmir, the statement remarked.

Major General SS Salaria was commissioned into 10 Armoured Regiment in Jun 1990. An alumnus of National Defence Academy and the winner of the Sword of Honour at Indian Military Academy, the General Officer has attended Staff Courses at Defence Ser-

vices Staff College at Wellington, Command & General Staff College at Thailand, Higher Defence Management Course



at College of Defence Management, Secunderabad and the prestigious NDC Course at Mirpur, Bangladesh.

In his distinguished military career spanning over three decades, the General Officer

has held various prestigious instructor and staff appointments. He was instructor at Indian Military Academy, Dehradun and Directing Staff at College of Defence Management, Secunderabad. General Officer has commanded his own Regiment and later Armoured Brigade in High Altitude Area. He has held various important staff appointments prior to assuming the command of prestigious Counter Insurgency Force (Kilo).

Complementing his military career, General Officer also did his MSc from Madras University, M Phil (Strategic Management) from Osmania University and has cleared PhD NET exam from UGC, the statement concluded.

PUBLIC NOTICE

I have lost the RC of my Motor cycle bearing Regd No: JK05H-8100 somewhere. Now I am applying for the duplicate of the same if anybody having any objection in this regard he/she may file his/her objection in the office of the ARTO Sopore within a period of seven days from the date of publication of this notice. After that no objection shall be entertained.

Ziyakath Ramzaan Dar
S/O Mhamamd Ramzaan Dar
R/o Alamdar Colony
Chichilora Baramulla (BMG)



yusuf pathan

OUR MESSAGE TO THE YOUTH of J&K will be to come forward and motivate more youth to take part in sports activities. Taking part in sports will not only keep you fit but you will also learn discipline."

Tuesday | 31.08.2021
KASHMIR OBSERVER 08



Hyderya Sports FC To Rep J&K In I-League Qualifiers 2021

R. Elahi

SRINAGAR: Srinagar-based football club, Hyderya Sports FC was on Monday selected by the All India Football Federation (AIFF) as the only team from J&K to compete in the upcoming I-League 2021 Qualifiers.

The Qualifiers are set to take place at the Bangalore Football Stadium in Bengaluru, Karnataka, from October, 2021.

Ten teams, which include seven debutants in the competition, from as many states will participate in the Qualifiers.

The seven debutant football clubs include: Hyderya Sports FC (J&K), Corbett FC (Uttarakhand), Delhi FC (Delhi), Madan Maharaj FC (Madhya Pradesh), Rajasthan United FC (Rajasthan), Kerala United FC (Kerala), Rynthi SC (Meghalaya). Three teams that have played in the competition before include: ARA FC

(Gujarat), Kenkre FC (Maharashtra), and FC Bengaluru United (Karnataka).

The I-League Qualifiers will mark the beginning of Indian football season. The AIFF has also revealed that the Qualifiers will take place within a centralised Bio-Bubble in Bengaluru.

"The clubs have all gone through the process of nomination by their respective state FAs, and have successfully submitted the required documents for the league and club licensing on time," the AIFF said in a statement.

Hyderya Sports FC and Downtown Heroes FC were the two clubs nominated to play in the I-League Qualifiers from J&K by the Jammu & Kashmir Football Association (JKFA). The two nominations came owing to the teams' second and third place finishes in the recently concluded JKFA Professional League.

JK Bank FC, the winners of the Pro-

fessional League, weren't nominated because of their inability to fulfil the club licensing criteria.

The nominated teams were selected by the AIFF based on their final league position or on sporting merit. Out of 29 teams nominated by various Football Associations, only ten received the nod to compete in the Qualifiers.

"The 10 participating teams will be split into two groups of five teams each. The Group Stage will be conducted in a round-robin format, with every team playing their rival clubs within their respective group once. The top two teams from each group will proceed to the Final Round, which will be played in another round-robin format with each of the four teams playing against each other once. The team that finishes at the top of the pile in the Final Round, will earn promotion to the Hero I-League

2021-22 season by virtue of winning the Hero I-League Qualifiers 2021," the AIFF said in a statement.

"It's great to kick-off the Indian Football domestic season once again with the Hero I-League Qualifiers. What makes the tournament all the more special this season is that we will have double the number of teams that played in the competition last year, and seven of the 10 teams are debutants," said AIFF Leagues CEO, Sunando Dhar.

Hyderya Sports FC, also known as the Mountain Lions, will have to prove their mettle in the Qualifiers. With a talented squad of ballers, including their talismanic captain Shahnawaz Bashir, the Mountain Lions have set their aim high as they look to dominate J&K's football scene for years to come.

Downtown Heroes To Take On Real Kashmir (R) In Futsal Championship Final

Observer News Service

SRINAGAR: Downtown Heroes FC and Real Kashmir FC (Reserves) will go head to head in the JKFA Futsal Championship 2021 final.

The two teams defeated their respective opponents on Sunday at Gindun Ground, Rajbagh to book their spots in the 5-a-side tournament's final match. In the first semifinal match, Real Kashmir FC (R) took on Hyderya Sports FC. Real Kashmir dominated the match



from the start and defeated Hyderya Sports by 10 goals to 2. Shakir was the highest scorer for RKFC and scored six goals. The second semifinal match was played between Downtown Heroes FC and Syed Tajuddin FC. A high-voltage encounter, the match saw both teams play aggressive football. A complete opposite of the earlier semifinal match, this game proved to be a close one as both teams stayed neck to neck. Downtown Heroes scored four goals to edge out Syed Tajuddin who scored three. Downtown Heroes FC held the slender lead till the final whistle to set up the Futsal Championship final with Real Kashmir FC (R). The scheduled date for the final match will be released in a few days, the JKFA told Kashmir Observer. The championship is being organised by the JKFA in collaboration with JKSC.

JAVELIN THROWER SUMIT ANTIL

Clinches India's 2nd Gold In Paralympics With Stunning World Record Show

PTI

Javelin thrower Sumit Antil clinched India's second gold at the ongoing Paralympics, shattering the men's F64 category world record multiple times in a stunning Games debut performance here on Monday.

The 23-year-old from Sonapat in Haryana, who lost his left leg below the knee after he was involved in a motorbike accident in 2015, sent the spear to 68.55m in his fifth attempt, which was the best of the day by quite a distance and a new world record.

In fact, he bettered the previous world record of 62.88m, also set by him, five times on the day. His last throw was a foul. His series read 66.95, 68.08, 65.27, 66.71, 68.55 and foul.

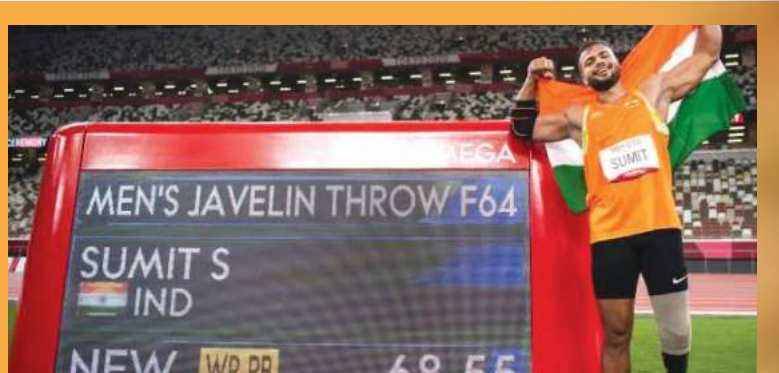
Australian Michal Burian (66.29m) and Sri Lanka's Dulan Kodithuwakku (65.61m) took the silver and bronze respectively. The F64 category is for athletes with a leg amputation, who compete with prosthetics in a standing position. A student of Delhi's Ramjas College, Antil was an able-bodied wrestler before his accident which led to the amputation of his leg below the knee. A para athlete in his village initiated him to the sport in 2018.

He also competed against Olympic champion Neeraj Chopra in the able-bodied Indian Grand Prix series 3 on March 5 in Patiala.

He finished seventh with a best throw of 66.43m while Chopra shattered his own national record with a big effort of 88.07m.

He won a silver in the F64 javelin throw at the 2019 World Championships in Dubai.

Shooter Avani Lekhara had claimed the women's 10m Air Rifle Standing SH1 event gold in the morning.



He finished seventh with a best throw of 66.43m while Chopra shattered his own national record with a big effort of 88.07m.



The 23-year-old from Sonapat in Haryana, who lost his left leg below the knee after he was involved in a motorbike accident in 2015

DFA Srinagar Super Division: Court Road FC Register Win, RKFC Draw

Observer News Service

SRINAGAR: Two matches of the Super Division were played on Monday in the ongoing DFA Srinagar Annual Football League Tournament 2021, at the Synthetic Turf TRC here.

The first match was played between Real Kashmir U-18

net. Both the team had a tough defensive set up and prevented their opponents' forward lines to penetrate. No one was able to score till the final whistle and the match ended as a goalless draw.

The second match of Super Division was played between Court Road FC and Fortview FC. The match started with a scintil-



and Etihad FC, Nowgam. Both the football teams played the match with an aggressive tone looking to dominate each other's halves. Both the teams, however, found it difficult to find the net. Etihad FC was offensive right from the start of the match and missed two to three one on one opportunities.

The young squad of Real Kashmir U-18 also played a good game and but failed to find the

lating display of attacking football, with Hyder of Court Road FC finding the net for his team in the 15th minute of the game.

Fotview FC also exhibited quality football and created some good chances but failed to find the net for an equalising goal. The match ended with 1-0 in favour of Court Road FC.

The Super Division League is being organised by the JKFA in collaboration with JKSC.

Yusuf Pathan Bats For Kashmiri Youth, Says They're Very Talented

Agencies

SRINAGAR: Former Indian cricketer, Yusuf Pathan on Monday said that there is a lot of talent in Jammu and Kashmir and youth must use their skills to make their country proud.

Pathan, who was chief guest at the inaugural match of Chinara Women's Premier League at Dooru Anantnag, said that this is a great initiative by the Indian Army as it will provide an opportunity to the talented to showcase their talent.

"There is no doubt that youth in J&K are very talented and engaging them in sport activities is a great initiative. It will provide a platform to the talented youth to make their spot at mega stages," he said.

On the lack of the infrastructure in J&K, Pathan said that the need of the hour is to engage youth in sports activities and once youth will participate, "authorities will come to know how



to improve the infrastructure."

"Our message to the youth of J&K will be to come forward and motivate more youth to take part in sports activities. Taking part in sports will not only keep you fit but you will also learn discipline," Pathan said.

Pathan said that once more people will get involved in sports activities, more infrastructure will be developed so that international or IPL match-

es can be played in the valley, according to a local news agency, KNO.

He said that engaging women in sports activities is a great initiative of the army and it will encourage youth and will definitely bear fruits.

Players on the occasion were also delighted and were hopeful that such sports events will make their way easier to play at national level.

IPL 2021: Washington Sundar To Miss UAE-Leg, Doubtful For T20 World Cup

Press Trust of India

NEW DELHI: Talented youngster Washington Sundar was on Monday ruled out of the second phase of the IPL starting in the UAE on September 19 as the finger injury he suffered in England has not healed completely and he could not clear the fitness test at the NCA.

Washington, who plays for Royal Challengers Bangalore in the popular T20 event, had travelled to England with the Indian squad but returned to the country after injuring his finger while playing in a County game that served as a practice game for the visitors.

The 21-year-old, who is an off-spinner and a useful batsman, had turned up for the County side and was hit by India pacer Mohammed Siraj, forcing the all-rounder out of

the tour.

"Royal Challengers Bangalore's all-rounder Washington Sundar has been ruled out of the remainder of the Vivo IPL 2021 due to an impending finger injury," the IPL Franchise said in a statement.

Bengal cricketer Akash Deep, who is net bowler with the franchise, has been named as replacement for the remainder of the IPL.

Sources told PTI that Washington appeared in a fitness test at the National Cricket Academy (NCA) in Bengaluru a few days back but could not clear that.

The World Twenty20 is slated to begin immediately after the conclusion of the IPL and it remains to be seen if Washington is picked in the Indian squad without playing a single IPL game.

Pakistan-New Zealand Series To Have 25% Crowd Capacity: PCB

Agencies

LAHORE: Pakistan Cricket Board (PCB) on Monday confirmed it had received permission from the government to allow spectators up to 25 per cent of the stadium's capacity in the upcoming ODI and T20I series between Pakistan and New Zealand starting Sep 17, 2021.

The decision to allow a limited crowd means around 4,500 specta-

tors will be able to attend the ODIs scheduled from Sep 17 to Sep 21, while approximately 5,500 spectators will be able to watch five T20s from Sep 25 to Oct 3.

This is New Zealand's first tour to Pakistan in 18 years wherein the guests will play three One-day Internationals and five Twenty20 Internationals from Sep 17 to Oct 3 at two venues — Rawalpindi and Lahore.

According to the PCB, only fully vaccinated spectators carrying proof of the vaccination will be allowed entry into the stadium.

Schedule:
Sept 11: Arrive in Islamabad.
Sept 12-14: Room isolation.
Sept 15-16: Training/practice/intra-squad match.
Sept 17: 1st ODI (Rawalpindi).
Sept 19: 2nd ODI (Rawalpindi).
Sept 21: 3rd ODI (Rawalpindi).

Sept 25: 1st T20 International (Lahore).
Sept 26: 2nd T20 International (Lahore).
Sept 29: 3rd T20 International (Lahore).
Oct 1: 4th T20 International (Lahore).

