



**P3 CITY**

## ATTACK ON OUR PANDIT BROTHERS ATTACK ON SOUL OF KASHMIR: DR FAROOQ

National Conference (NC) President and Member of Parliament Srinagar Dr. Farooq Abdullah on Saturday interacted with a delegation of Kashmiri Pandits led by the party Minority Wing

**THINK**

**P5 USA, THE FIRST IMPRESSIONS**

Our plane left Indira Gandhi International Airport in New Delhi on the 16th of March for Washington DC. We left Delhi at 2 AM and covered about 12000kms in 16 hours. Since Washington time is some 9 hours and 30 minutes behind Indian time, we reached the US capital at about 7.30 AM on 16th morning itself. If



**P7 STATE**

## HEAT WAVE GRIPS KASHMIR VALLEY AS MERCURY CROSSES 31°C MARK

Several areas of Kashmir including Srinagar, the summer capital of Jammu and Kashmir are reeling under severe heat wave as the temperature has



**Quote!**

Every action has its pleasures and its price

- Socrates

## NEWS DIGEST

### Soldier Shoots Self Dead In Ramban

Banihal: An Army man shot himself dead with his service rifle in Ramban district of Jammu and Kashmir, police said on Saturday. The deceased has been identified as Ravi Kumar (25), a resident of Haryana. He was on guard duty at Neel top post in Banihal on **More on P6**

### BSF Fires Shots At Pak Drone

Jammu- Border Security Force (BSF) personnel deployed along the International Border (IB) here fired several rounds at a drone coming from the Pakistani side on Saturday morning, forcing it to retreat, an official said. A massive search **More on P6**

### Lashkar Militant Held In Sopore: Police

Srinagar: Police on Saturday claimed to have arrested a Lashkar-e-Taiba (LeT) militant during a search operation in Sopore area of North Kashmir's Baramulla district. Acting on specific input about the movement of an unidentified militant, police, **More on P6**

### Zargar Gets Charge Of Cable Car Corp

Srinagar: The Union Territory government on Saturday ordered transfer of two Jammu and Kashmir Administrative Service (JKAS) officers and assigned additional charge to another. In an order issued by the General Administration Department (GAD), Mohammad Akbar Wani, JKAS, **More on P6**

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# Fear Stricken KP Employees Seek Relocation Outside Valley



KO Photo | Abid Bhat

**Press Trust Of India**

**SRINAGAR:** A group of Kashmiri Pandit employees staged a protest here on Saturday against targeted killings and demanding their relocation to safe places outside Kashmir Valley, days after a community member was killed by militants in his office in Budgam district.

Alleging that camps housing Kashmiri Pandit employees

have been locked following the killing of Rahul Bhat, the protesters demanded that the authorities remove such restrictions on them.

The community members are posted in Kashmir Valley under the prime minister's special employment package.

Such employees living in the Vessu transit camp threatened to march to the transit accommodations at Sheikpura in Budgam, where

Bhat lived along with others, and Veerwan in Baramulla if the authorities did not lift the restrictions by Sunday.

"We, the employees of Vessu transit camp, have decided to march to Sheikpura and Veerwan colony in solidarity with our brothers and sisters tomorrow morning," the All PM Package Employees Forum said in a letter to Divisional Commissioner P K Pole.

"The other day **More on P6**

## Protest Continues At Sheikpura Pandit Colony

Fear and anger were writ large on the faces of Kashmiri Pandit employees and their family members as they continued their protest on Saturday at the Sheikpura transit camp in Jammu and Kashmir's Budgam district against the killing of Rahul Bhat and demanding their relocation to safer places outside Kashmir Valley. A posse of security forces personnel stood guard outside the camp, ostensibly **More on P6**

## BJP Raises KPs Concern With HM Amit Shah

With the BJP facing the ire of Kashmiri migrant employees serving in the valley after their colleague was killed by militants, the party's J-K unit chief Ravinder Raina on Saturday said he has briefed Union Home Minister Amit Shah about their "concerns and problems". Raina said he had also spoken to Lt Governor Manoj Sinha and is again leading a party delegation to meet him at Srinagar **More on P6**

**In The Meantime..**

## Muslims Help Perform Last Rites Of Pandit Woman, Family Offers Gratitude



**AGENCIES**

At a time when Kashmir is under the grip of heightened tensions over the killing of a Kashmiri Pandit employee, Muslims and KP's in South Kashmir's Kulgam district demonstrated the age-old bond of brotherhood and communal harmony by performing the last rites of 80-year-old KP lady. The 80-year-old Pandit woman of Y K Pora, Kulgam, had gone to Mattan, Anantnag to attend the marriage ceremony of her relatives where her condition deteriorated | **More on P6**

## SIA Raids 12 Places In Militant Funding Case

**Press Trust Of India**

**Jammu:** The State Investigation Agency (SIA) of Jammu and Kashmir has conducted raids at 12 locations, including at the native house of the APHC Pakistan chairman in Bhadarwah, in connection with a "terror-financing" case, officials said. The case was registered at the Gandhinagar police station and subsequently transferred to the SIA for an in-depth investigation, they said. The sleuths of the investigating agency, with the assistance of the local police, carried out raids in Jammu, Kathua, Doda and Kashmir on Friday, the officials said. They also raided a house in Bhadarwah's Masjid Mohalla locality. **More on P6**

## Omar Takes Pot Shots At BJP Over Normalcy Claims

**Press Trust Of India**

**Jammu:** reiterating his stand that the abrogation of Article 370 in August 2019 was "un-constitutional and unlawful", National Conference vice president Omar Abdullah on Saturday said his party is not ready to accept defeat and will continue its peaceful struggle for the rights of the people of Jammu and Kashmir.

The former chief minister pooh-poohed the claims of the Bharatiya Janata Party leaders about normalcy in Jammu and Kashmir in the wake of the abrogation of Article 370 that gave special status to the erstwhile state, saying "except BJP-linked people, everyone else is disappointed".

"Some people are in a hurry to remove the word 'state' from



everything as if J&K was never a state or its statehood will not be restored. While coming from Srinagar through Mughal Road, I saw some State Road Transport Corporation (SRTC) trucks where the word state was removed using paint.

"They have changed the name of the company from JKSRTC to JKRTC **More on P6**

## NIA Begins Probe Into Jammu Bus Fire

**Press Trust Of India**

**Jammu:** A team of the National Investigation Agency (NIA) on Saturday inspected the passenger bus that was gutted in a mysterious fire incident near Katra town, the base camp for pilgrims visiting Mata Vaishno Devi shrine in Reasi district of Jammu and Kashmir, officials said.

Four persons were killed and 24 others injured when the moving bus, mostly ferrying devotees, caught fire near Nomai, about three kilometers from Katra, shortly after leaving for Jammu from the base camp on Friday.

Though the survivors and the people residing in the vicinity of the incident spoke about hearing an explosion in the bus, **More on P6**

# PAGD To Meet LG For KP's Security In Valley



**Agencis**

**SRINAGAR:** The People's Alliance for Gupkar Declaration (PAGD) has sought an appointment with Jammu and Kashmir Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha to raise the issue of safety and security of Kashmiri Pandits in the valley, a spokesperson said here on Saturday.

Briefing reporters outside the residence of the PAGD president Farooq Abdullah after a meeting of the group, spokesperson M Y Tarigami, said the killing of Kashmiri Pandit government employee Rahul Bhat in Budgam has shaken the Kashmiri society.

Bhat, who had got the job of a clerk under the special employment package for migrants in 2010-11, was gunned down by militants inside the tehsil office in Chadoora town on Thursday.

A delegation of Kashmiri Pandits wanted to place its concerns before the PAGD.

They met us and we told them that as far as we and the people are concerned, this painful story has now become a routine of the day here, but Rahul's killing has shaken us, Tarigami, who is also a senior leader of the CPI(M), said.

Tarigami said the killing has troubled the whole society and the people of Kashmir are with their pandit brethren in this time of grief.

We appeal all the people that it is our tradition in Kashmir that even when the whole sub-continent was burning in 1947, Kashmir was the only place where no one faced any difficulty. It is our misfortune that Kashmir has become a troubled place for the people living here," he said.

We appeal to everyone to keep Kashmir's traditions of brotherhood alive as our security lies with each other and whatever can be done from our side, we will **More on P6**

**FOR THAT, IT IS IMPORTANT** that Kashmiri Pandit employees get an opportunity to work in a secure atmosphere, at a safe place so that their fears get over and they become confident."

## Army Chief Visits Forward Areas In Ladakh

**Press Trust Of India**

**New Delhi:** Army Chief Gen Manoj Pande visited some of the most difficult and inhospitable forward locations in eastern Ladakh and reviewed India's overall military preparedness during his three-day tour of the region amid the lingering border row with China, officials said on Saturday.

They said the Chief of Army Staff interacted with the troops in multiple locations along the Line of Actual

Control (LAC) in the high-altitude region and took stock of the ground situation.

Gen Pande concluded his three-day visit to Ladakh on Saturday.

The Army chief, accompanied by senior commanders, visited some of the most difficult and inhospitable forward locations in eastern Ladakh to have first-hand knowledge about the prevailing situation, the officials said.

"General Manoj Pande #COAS visited forward areas in #Ladakh **More on P6**

# Modi Govt Giving Special Priority To J&K, N-E: Rijiju

**Observer News Service**

**Srinagar:** Union Law Minister Kiren Rijiju said on Saturday that the under the dynamic leadership of Prime Minister, special priority is being given to the development of Jammu Kashmir, Ladakh and North East regions.

Rijiju made these remarks while chairing a high level meeting with Lieutenant Governor, Manoj Sinha at the Raj Bhavan here to review the development of judicial infrastructure in the UTs of Jammu Kashmir & Ladakh, an official spokesperson said Saturday.

During the meeting, he said, the Minister was briefed on the present status of the infrastructure of the Judiciary under the purview of the High Court of

Jammu Kashmir and Ladakh.

"He was apprised on the budgetary allocation, utilization of funds for the development of infrastructure in court complexes during the previous years, future projects and major projects under execution," he added.

Joint Secretary, Ministry of Law and Justice also apprised the meeting about the status of works done under the Centrally Sponsored Schemes.

According to the spokesperson, Union Law Minister directed the concerned officers to identify all the gaps pertaining to the infrastructure development of Judiciary under the High Court of Jammu Kashmir and Ladakh.

He said that Rijiju further statured that under the dynamic leadership of **More on P6**

# 73% Children Below 6 Years In J&K Are Anaemic: Survey

**Zaid Bin Shabir**

**SRINAGAR:** The latest findings from the fifth round of National Family Health Survey (NFHS-5, 2019-21) have surprisingly brought into forth that an increasing number of people across all population groups, including men, women and children below six years, in J&K is being severely affected by anaemia.

According to the NFHS report, at least 73 percent of children between the 6-59 months age group, in J&K, have anaemia as compared to 53.8 percent in the last survey(NFHS-4) conducted in 2015-16.

Similarly, among adults , the report stated, 66 percent of women have been found anaemic. For females in J&K, anaemia's prevalence has shown a



drastic increase of 17.1 percent in the latest survey when compared to 48.9 percent recorded in 2015-16. As per NFHS, the prevalence of anaemia among women in J&K is among the highest rates recorded in the Union Territories across India. At least, 27 percent of men

(in the 15-49 group) in J&K have anaemia. Notably, anaemia is a condition which is strictly marked by low levels of hemoglobin in the blood.

However, the recent data finding of NFHS is itself a massive blow to the Government of India's "Anaemia Mukht Bharat

(Anaemia Free India)" strategy which had noted a target of three percent reduction in prevalence of anaemia per year among children and women in the 20-49 age group in four years (2018-2022).

"The prevalence of anaemia among children age 6-59 months was found highest among children in Gujarat (80 percent), followed by Madhya Pradesh (73 per cent), Rajasthan (72 per cent), and Punjab (71 per cent). The union territory (UT) of Ladakh, at 94 percent, was found to have the highest prevalence of anaemia. Other UTs with high anaemia prevalence included Dadra and Nagar Haveli and Daman and Diu (76 per cent), and Jammu & Kashmir (73 per cent)." NFHS report stated.

It must be noted here that several of J&K's nutritional indicators have worsened since the fourth round of the NFHS, which was held in 2015-16. However, it looks as if the erstwhile state has hit a major demographic milestone when the percentage of anaemia in J&K increased at an average of 17.1 percent in all the age groups especially among children (6-29 months) and women, according to the latest survey conducted by the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare between 2019 and 2021.

Another graph, which explains anaemia through levels of haemoglobin provided by NFHS, clearly shows that 43.6 percent of children in J&K have moderate anaemia, 25.1 percent has mild and 4.0 percent is battling severe **More on P6**





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# In One Giant Leap For Earth Plants, Seeds Are Grown In Moon Soil

Reuters

Scientists for the first time have grown seeds in soil from the moon- samples retrieved during NASA missions in 1969 and 1972- in an achievement that heralds the promise of using earthly plants to support human outposts on other worlds.

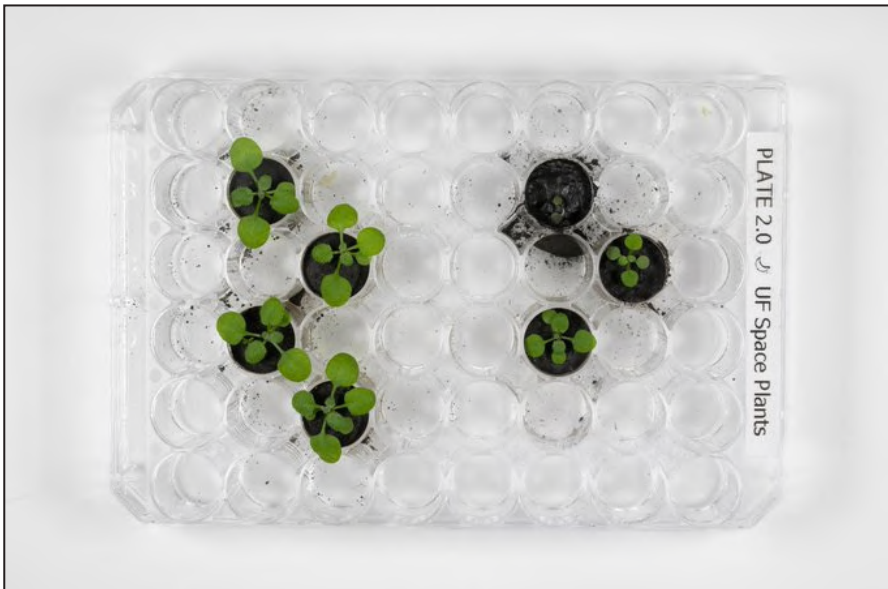
Researchers said on Thursday they planted seeds of a diminutive flowering weed called *Arabidopsis thaliana* in 12 small thimble-sized containers each bearing a gram of moon soil, more properly called lunar regolith, and watched as they sprouted and grew. Lunar regolith, with its sharp particles and lack of organic material, differs greatly from Earth soil, so it was unknown whether seeds would germinate.

"When we first saw that abundance of green sprouts cast over all of the samples, it took our breath away," said horticultural sciences professor Anna-Lisa Paul, director of the University of Florida Interdisciplinary Center for Biotechnology Research and co-leader of the study published in the journal *Communications Biology*.

"Plants can grow in lunar regolith. That one simple statement is huge and opens the door to future exploration using resources in place on the moon and likely Mars," Paul said.

Every seed germinated and there were no outward differences at the early stages of growth between those sown in the regolith-composed mostly of crushed basalt rocks - and seeds sown for comparative reasons in volcanic ash from Earth with similar mineral composition and particle size.

The regolith seeds, perhaps unsurprisingly, did less well than the comparison plants. They were slower to grow and generally littler, had more stunted roots and were more apt to exhibit stress-related traits such as smaller leaves and deep reddish black coloration not typical of healthy growth.



They also showed gene activity indicative of stress, similar to plant reactions to salt, metal and oxidation.

"Even though plants could grow in the regolith, they had to work hard metabolically to do so," Paul said.

To the researchers, the fact that they grew at all was remarkable. Study co-leader Rob Ferl, a University of Florida assistant vice president for research, said he felt "joy at watching life do something that had never been done before."

"Seeing plants grow is an achievement in that it says that we can go to the moon and grow our food, clean our air and recycle our water using plants the way we use them here on Earth. It is also a revelation in that it says that terrestrial life is not limited to Earth," Ferl added.

*Arabidopsis*, also called thale cress, is wide-

ly used in scientific research, including previous experiments in orbit, owing to its speedy life cycle and a deep understanding of its genetics.

NASA made available 12 grams- just a few teaspoons - of regolith collected during the Apollo 11, Apollo 12 and Apollo 17 missions. The researchers planted three or four seeds in a dozen containers moistened with a nutrient solution, and then placed them in a laboratory at about 73 degrees Fahrenheit (23 degree C) under LED lights giving off a pink hue.

The seeds sprouted within three days. After about a week of growth, the researchers removed all but one plant from each container. The one was left to grow until it was 20 days old, with its leaves then harvested to assess gene activity.

The researchers also determined that rego-

lith that had experienced longer exposure to cosmic rays and solar wind on the lunar surface was less hospitable to growth. Earth plants could help people establish outposts in places like the moon and Mars, as depicted in the 2015 film 'The Martian' when an astronaut grew potatoes on the Red Planet.

NASA's Artemis program envisions people returning to the moon's surface in the coming years.

"Plants are deeply embedded in the science of space exploration because of their life-support role, especially when we consider leaving the Earth for extended periods of time," Ferl said.

**The regolith seeds, perhaps unsurprisingly, did less well than the comparison plants. They were slower to grow and generally littler, had more stunted roots and were more apt to exhibit stress-related traits such as smaller leaves and deep reddish black coloration not typical of healthy growth. They also showed gene activity indicative of stress, similar to plant reactions to salt, metal and oxidation.**

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**Scholarships This Week**  
**Kashmir Observer in association with Buddy4Study.com presents scholarships available for the meritorious students of Jammu and Kashmir**  
**Scholarship Name 1: GEV Memorial Merit Scholarship 2022-23 for Law Students**  
observer/GMM4  
Description: GEV Scholarship Fund Trust invites applications from students pursuing law courses at undergraduate or postgraduate level in India. The scholarship aims to provide financial support to meritorious law students and help them pursue a quality legal education at premier Indian institutes.  
Eligibility: The scholarship is open for Indian nationals only. They must be already enrolled in any year of an LLB/LLM degree course at a recognized law institute in India or applying for CLAT, LSAT-India, AILET. The students are required to have scored a minimum of 60% in Class X and XII board exams. They must have an annual family income of not more than INR 10,00,000 (10 lakh) from all sources. Also, they must be willing to sign-up for scholarship fund's annual mentorship programs to assist and nurture the next batches of GEV Merit Scholars.  
Prizes & Rewards: INR 50,000 to INR 2,00,000 per year  
Last Date to Apply: 30-06-2022  
Application mode: Online applications only  
Short Url: www.b4s.in/  
**Scholarship Name 2: Tata Trusts Means Grant for College 2022-23**  
Description: Tata Trusts Means Grant for College 2022-23 is an initiative of Tata Trusts  
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Last Date to Apply: 31-01-2023  
Application mode: Via email only  
Short Url: www.b4s.in/observer/TMG7

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| 1    | Construction of Drain from H/O Abdul Gani Bhat to H/O Mushtaq Ahmad Bhat Ward No.5 at MC Awantipora.   | 2.02                     | 200/-             | 2% of Adv. cost                                 | 10 Working Days                    | DEE               | Normal Resources       | MC/AWP/ of 2022-03 Dated: 10.05.2022. |
| 2    | Construction of CC Drain from House of Abdul Qayoom Shah to H/o Nazir Ahmad Shah Ward No 2 Booh at MC Awantipora.  | 1.54                     | 200/-             | 2% of Adv. cost                                 | 10 Working Days                    | DEE               | IDMT                   | MC/AWP/ of 2022-01 Dated: 10.05.2022. |
| 3    | Construction of Protection Wall near H/O Bashir Ahmad Bhat to H/O Farooq Ahmad Wani Iqbal Colony at MC Awantipora.   | 2.99                     | 200/-             | 2% of Adv. cost                                 | 10 Working Days                    | DEE               | Normal Resources       | MC/AWP/ of 2022-02 Dated: 10.05.2022. |
| 4    | Construction of road by way of soling /metalling from filtration plant to corridor road via Pinjan Herpora at MC Awantipora.   | 3.05                     | 200/-             | 2% of Adv. cost                                 | 10 Working Days                    | DEE               | IDMT                   | MC/AWP/ of 2022-01 Dated: 10.05.2022. |
| 5    | Construction of Protection Wall from H/O Farooq Ahmad Khatroo to H/o Gh Mohi-ud-din Khatroo at MC Awantipora.  | 1.00                     | 200/-             | 2% of Adv. cost                                 | 10 Working Days                    | DEE               | IDMT                   | MC/AWP/ of 2022-01 Dated: 10.05.2022. |
| 6.   | Construction of Protection Wall from the H/O Javaid Ahmad Bhat to H/O Mushtaq Ahmad at MC Awantipora.  | 2.09                     | 200/-             | 2% of Adv. cost                                 | 10 Working Days                    | DEE               | Normal Resources       | MC/AWP/ of 2022-02 Dated: 10.05.2022. |
| 7.   | Construction of concrete path with tiles from H/o Mohd Abdullah Pandith to Masjid Sharief Umar and protection Bund from the H/o Abdul Hamid Pandth to Masjid Sharief Umar. | 1.31                     | 200/-             | 2% of Adv. cost                                 | 10 Working Days                    | DEE               | IDMT                   | MC/AWP/ of 2022-01 Dated: 10.05.2022. |
| 8.   | Construction of R/Wall from H/o Mohd Rafiq Bhat to H/o Nisar Ahmad Bhat.   | 1.50                     | 200/-             | 2% of Adv. cost                                 | 10 Working Days                    | DEE               | IDMT                   | MC/AWP/ of 2022-01 Dated: 10.05.2022. |
| 9.   | Construction of R-wall from Mohd Subhan Sheikh to H/o Parvaiz Ahmad Sheikh at MC Awantipora.   | 1.50                     | 200/-             | 2% of Adv. cost                                 | 10 Working Days                    | DEE               | IDMT                   | MC/AWP/ of 2022-01 Dated: 10.05.2022. |
| 10.  | Construction of Protection Wall near house of Mushtaq Ahmad Chowpan and others at MC Awantipora.   | 1.50                     | 200/-             | 2% of Adv. cost                                 | 10 Working Days                    | DEE               | IDMT                   | MC/AWP/ of 2022-01 Dated: 10.05.2022. |
| 11.  | Dredging/cleaning of Drain from Old NH to abdul hamid Bhat at MC Awantipora.   | 1.48                     | 200/-             | 2% of Adv. cost                                 | 10 Working Days                    | DEE               | IDMT                   | MC/AWP/ of 2022-01 Dated: 10.05.2022. |
| 12.  | Construction of covered Drain/lane from Town Hall to H/O Mohd Amin at MC Awantipora.   | 2.00                     | 200/-             | 2% of Adv. cost                                 | 10 Working Days                    | DEE               | IDMT                   | MC/AWP/ of 2022-01 Dated: 10.05.2022. |

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

|    |  |  |
|----|--|--|
| 1. | Date of Issue of Tender Notice             | 13 /05/2022  |
| 2. | Period of downloading of bidding documents | From 13 /05/2022 10:00 A.M.  |
| 3. | Bid submission Start Date                  | 13/05/2022 from 10.00 A.M  |
| 4. | Bid Submission End Date                    | 24/05/2022 upto 4.00 P.M   |
| 5. | Date & time of opening of Bids (Online)    | 24/05/2022 at 4.30 P.M in the Office of the Executive Engineer R&B Div.Pulwama   |
| 6. | Submission of Performance Security (PS)    | Within 3 days of receipt of LOA. (The First lowest successful bidder has to provide 3% of allotted cost as Performance Security in the shape of CDR/FDR/BG and EMD of 2% shall be released after receipt of 3% Performance security. |

- Bids must be accompanied with cost of Tender document in shape of Treasury Challan/Receipt (Debited to M.H.0059 PWD) showing clearly the name of work along with NIT No. & S.No. failing which the tender will be rejected out rightly and EMD in the shape of CDR/FDR/BG pledged to Executive Engineer R&B Div.Pulwama.
- The date and time of opening of Bids shall be notified on Web site [www.jktenders.gov.in](http://www.jktenders.gov.in) and conveyed to the bidders automatically through an e-mail message on their e-mail address. The bids of responsive bidders shall be opened online on same Web Site in the office of Executive Engineer R&B Div.Pulwama
- The bids for the work shall remain valid for a period of 120 days from the date of opening of bids.
- If first lowest bidder fails to deposit 3% as performance security within prescribed date the work will be put to fresh tenders at his risk and cost and the CDR/FDR/BG will be forfeited and shall be debared from participating the tendering process for the period of one year in this division.

All other terms and conditions shall be available in website [www.jktenders.gov.in](http://www.jktenders.gov.in)

Head Draftsman **DIPK-2003/22** Technical Officer Executive Engineer, R&B Division Pulwama





## Srinagar Records Hottest Day Of The Season

### Agencies

Srinagar: Srinagar, the summer capital of Jammu and Kashmir is reeling under severe heat wave as the temperature has crossed above 31 degree Celsius at many places.

According to the details, Srinagar, Qazigund and Pahalgam areas in Kashmir region recorded the hottest day of the season where temperature settled at 31.3 degree Celsius, 32.0 degree Celsius and 26.9 degree Celsius respectively.

Multiple places including Srinagar are presently reeling under severe heat wave, an independent weather forecaster, Faizan Arif Keng said, adding that the temperature has crossed above 30 degrees in most of the places here.

Keng said there is possibility of respite from the heat wave tomorrow as the cloudy weather is expected from Sunday in Kashmir.

However, the Meteorological (MeT) department here predicted that the prevalent weather conditions would continue till May 16.

The MeT officials said that there is 70 per cent possibility of rains at some places in Jammu and Kashmir from May 16 evening to May 18, adding that some higher reaches would also receive fresh snowfall.

"The widespread moderate rain/thunderstorm with hail storm at some places of Jammu and Kashmir and snow over higher reaches is mostly likely during May 16 evening to May 18," the MeT officials said.(KNO)

## Chief Justice Lays Foundation Stone For New HC Complex

### Observer News Service

Srinagar: Chief Justice of India (CJI) N. V. Ramana on Saturday laid the foundation stone for the new High Court complex at Rakhe Gund Aksha, Bemina Srinagar.

protected.

Highlighting the importance of making courts inclusive and accessible, the CJI said that the constitutional ideal of access to justice would stand defeated if justice delivery mechanism is



The new High Court Complex at Srinagar being constructed on 500 Kanals (62.50 acres) of Land is expected to meet twin objectives of strengthening the judicial infrastructure and housing diverse legal facilities at one place besides decongesting the Srinagar City.

Apart from the High Court Complex, the allied infrastructure like Mediation Centre, Arbitration Centre, Litigants Facilities, Food Court, Police and Security infrastructure, Staff accommodation for judicial administration, Utility Buildings, Convention Facilities, Parking Spaces and Spaces for fire station are also likely to come up in the proposed plan of construction. The upcoming infrastructure will have universal accessibility and will be equipped with all the modern gadgets including the latest ICT set-up.

During his address, CJI emphasized on the need for development and modernization of infrastructure to meet the demands and the growing needs of modern India. CJI maintained that peace shall only prevail, when people's dignity and rights are recognized and

not swift and affordable.

Commenting on the speedy resolution of issues he said that speedy adjudication of disputes is the hallmark of a healthy democracy. The CJI called upon the Judges, Judicial officers and Lawyers to play a significant role in making justice a reality.

Terming technology as a strong aid to the judiciary, the CJI said that the virtual courts are bridging the gaps of accessibility by reducing the time, cost and distance. The judiciary must be at its innovative best to ensure that the challenges to its working are met with just and constitutional measures, he added.

Sharing his experiences of visiting J&K, the CJI lauded the hospitality of the people and said that J&K has produced many eminent Jurists and Judges. "J&K is the confluence of religion that is at the heart of our plurality and needs to be sustained and cherished," he said.

Speaking on the occasion, Union Minister of Law & Justice, Shri Kiren Rijiju termed the occasion as a great day for Jammu & Kashmir and Ladakh.

## Gujarat Tourist Dies Of Cardiac Arrest

### Observer News Service

Srinagar: A female tourist from Gujarat died due to a cardiac arrest in summer capital Srinagar on Saturday.

The tourist identified as Salma Siddiqui, wife of Siddiqui Bhairu Mansoor, a resident of

Ahmedabad Gujarat, who was staying at a local hotel complained of chest pain and was shifted to SMHS hospital.

However, doctors, after examining the old lady at the facility, declared him dead with the reason cited of heart attack, the official said.



Kashmiri Pandit employees protest against targeted killing of their colleague at press colony on Saturday. KO Phot Abid Bhat.

## Attack On Our Pandit Brothers Attack On Soul Of Kashmir: Dr Farooq

Srinagar: National Conference (NC) President and Member of Parliament Srinagar Dr. Farooq Abdullah on Saturday interacted with a delegation of Kashmiri Pandits led by the party Minority Wing Vice President Amit Koul.

"Our stand is clear as crystal. Kashmiri Pandits, for that matter Sikhs and other minorities are part of our socio-cultural milieu. Every attack on

our Pandit brothers is an out and out attack on the very soul of Kashmir. I'm looking for times, when both Kashmiri Muslim and Kashmiri Pandits live side by side" Farooq said.

The visiting delegations discussed a number of issues concerning Kashmiri Pandits, particularly those living in Kashmir with the party President. The visiting delegations said that those KPs who

took up government jobs as the first step toward rehabilitation were now struggling for timely payment of earned wages, promotions and a decent quality of life.

They also stated that they do not feel safe and secure across Kashmir. They said the government has done little to provide them respite from cramped up quarters and discriminatory service rules.

Interacting with the

delegation members, Dr Farooq assured the delegation members that he will take up the issues with the LG and GOI as well.

He also reaffirmed the party's stand on the return of KPs to Kashmir.

"On ground no efforts are being taken to create an enabling environment for their safe and permanent return of the Kashmiri Pandits". (KNO)

## PUBLISHED IN PUBLIC INTEREST BY National Disaster Management Authority. Govt Of India

### PUBLIC NOTICE

The General Public is hereby informed that Hon'ble Supreme Court vide its Order (Reportable) dated 24th March 2022 in the Miscellaneous Application No. 1805 of 2021 in Writ Petition (C) No. 539 of 2021 has issued following key directions:

- Fixing of Outer Time Limit of 60 Days [w.e.f 24.3.2022, the date of the Hon'ble Supreme Court's Order] to file the claims for compensation in case the death occurred due to COVID-19 prior to 20th March 2022
- For future deaths ninety days' time shall be provided from the date of death due to COVID-19 to file the claim for compensation
- The earlier Order to process the claims and to make the actual payment of compensation within a period of thirty days from the date of receipt of claim shall continue to be enforced
- In case of extreme hardship where any claimant could not make an application within the time prescribed, it will be open for the claimant to approach the Grievance Redressal Committee and make the claim through Grievance Redressal Committee which shall be considered by the Grievance Redressal Committee on case to case basis and if it is found by the Grievance Redressal Committee that a particular claimant could not make the claim within the stipulated time which was beyond their control his/her case may be considered on merits
- In a bid to minimize the risk of fake claims, a random scrutiny of the 5% of the claim applications shall be made at the first instance. If it is found that anybody has made a fake claim, the same shall be considered under Section 52 of the Disaster Management Act, 2005 and liable to be punished accordingly

The Complete Order may be accessed on NDMA's Website <https://ndma.gov.in> The PUBLIC NOTICE is issued for information, compliance and necessary action for all concerned.

davp 19106/11/0004/2223

### DIAL-EMMA

- TRAFFIC POLICE : 9419993745, 01998-266686
- PCR: 0194-245092,2455883
- PDD: 0194-2450213
- FIRE AND EMERGENCY SERVICES : 2479488,245222,2452155
- CAPD: 18001807011
- SMC HEALTH OFFICER: 9469409081
- Ambulance: Kashmir EMS Service: +91 94841 00200



### AIRPORTS

SHIEK UL ALAM AIRPORT: 01942303311



### RAILWAYS

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



### HIGHWAY STATUS



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



HIJRI  
CALENDAR  
13 Shawwal  
1443

### PRAYERS

|        |       |
|--------|-------|
| FAJR   | 3: 54 |
| ZUHR   | 12:27 |
| ASR    | 5:20  |
| Magrib | 7:28  |
| ISHA   | 9: 02 |

## This Day In History

- 756 Abd-al-Rahman I becomes emir of Cordova, Spain
- 1213 - King John of England names Stephen Langton as Archbishop of Canterbury
- 1492 - Cheese & Bread rebellion: German mercenaries kill 232 residents of Alkmaar, Netherlands
- 1514 - Jodocus Badius Ascensius publishes Christiern Pedersen's Latin version of Saxo's Gesta Danorum, the oldest known version
- 1525 - The battle of Frankenhausen: German peasant army surrounded, 5,000 slaughtered ; ends the peasants' uprising
- 1572 - Louis van Nassau & huguenots occupy Valenciennes
- 1618 - German astronomer Johannes Kepler discovers the third of his three planetary laws his "harmonics law"
- 1648 - Treaty of Munster ratified by Spain & Netherlands
- 1701 - The War of the Spanish Succession begins
- 1718 - James Puckle, a London lawyer, patents world's 1st machine gun
- 1796 - France & Sardinia sign Peace treaty of Paris
- 1796 - First Coalition: Napoleon enters Milan in triumph with French troops
- 1862 - Battle of Drewry's Bluff (Fort Darling), Virginia
- 1864 - Battle of New Market, Virginia
- 1883 - Italy signs military treaty with Austria-Hungary & Germany
- 1897 - The Greek army retreats with heavy losses in the Greco-Turkish War.
- 1916 - Asiago, Italy, falls when Austrian troops attack the Italian front
- 1917 - The first officer's training camp is opened in the US, as the country prepares for war

From KO Archives

## Clamour For Jobs Intensifies; Govt Replies With Force, Jail

### Observer News Service

Srinagar: Overwrought by long years of unemployment, the jobless educated youth of the valley now feel increasingly compelled to take to the streets to give vent to their frustrations.

Contractual Rehbar-e-Taleem teachers, teachers of ICS centers, and jobless engineers, doctors and dentists have been holding demonstrations for the past several weeks to remind the government of its promises, but the government uses force asking the police to bundle them into vehicles and cart them off to jail. Contractual teachers dentists and electricians, all jobless, held a protest demonstration in the press enclave on Wednesday.

And when the police told them to end their agitation, they refused, determined as they were to air their grievances forcefully. Eventually scores of teachers were taken to the police lock-up. A large contingent of jobless dentists, too, was arrested when it made an unsuccessful bid to present a memorandum to the chief minister. The police said that all arrested agitators were later released.

But even the arrests did not stem the flood of protests. Jobless electricians assembled next to decry the policy of recruiting on the basis of crash courses, and asked the chief minister to "come to his senses."

Every protest features angry and indignant slogans against the chief minister, but the government appears to be unmoved. Qualified electricians have been protesting against "crash course appointees" for the past year. Observers make various interpretations of the intensifying clamour for jobs.

Sources close to the government claim that the protests are a part of a conspiracy, while public circles feel that the administration promised by the chief minister. Ghulam Nabi Azad, has not become a reality. They fed that to save their skins, ministers and bureaucrats are misleading the unemployed youth by making irresponsible statements.

On the one hand, the government harps on the "insufficiency of funds" tune, and on the other hand favoured candidates are being given jobs by creating suspect categories such as crash-course, the public feels.

There is intense anger, among the public in general and the jobless youth in particular, about the callous and arbitrary approach of the government.

A citizen, who did not want to be named, said that he, had stopped believing in any claim or promise the government makes, and having seen the condition of the government, had advised his children to sell second-hand clothes on the pavements. One of his sons is roaming around with an engineering diploma, while the other holding a master's degree in education, is earning the princely sum of Rs 1200 as teacher in a private school.

(Kashmir Observer, 15 May, 2007)



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OBSERVER

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Twitter Talks

"After remaining confined to their homes for three years, school kids in Kashmir can't go to Gulmarg on weekends. Why, tourists are priority. Small sacrifice for our poor kids to make I suppose. By June end, Pahalgam will be out of bounds too. Naya Kashmir?"

@gaamuk

"Watching the misreporting of the attacks on mourners at Shireen's funeral, thinking about how much history in our heads is completely skewed because there were no cameras"

@priyamvadaGopal

ADVENTURES IN ARCHIVES

Defeating Smoking

The deadly grip of smoking, right from the initial, experimental puffs to the full blown habit of never being at ease without a cigarette clipped between the lips, is impossible to shake off without a high level of determination, and often, professional help. Blessed are those who never start, for they do not burn a hole in their pockets, nor run the risk of contracting a plethora of dreaded diseases, cancer being just one.

A hard-hitting campaign to offset the feeling of machismo of a young novice with the grim and gruesome image of hollowed out skull-bones could keep a lot of youngsters off the habit, and compel many a confirmed smoker to kick the addiction, but the government agencies concerned do not pursue the idea to its full potential, perhaps out of respect for the billions of rupees earned from the sale of cigarettes.

Given the hundreds of thousands of smoking related deaths every year in the country, one would have expected the government to launch a war on the scourge on every possible front – the ban of smoking in public places is a good step, but incorrigible smokers will find their secluded refuge anywhere to have their surreptitious puff. It is these die-hard acolytes who have to be won over to an alternative lifestyle which does not require them to put their health and wealth at risk. It is a psychological battle with long-held notions that has to be won, and health companies, which are at the forefront of enumerating the evils of smoking, could do their bit by devising antidotes that could help “victims” reduce their dependence on the lethal puff. Even the ban on smoking in public places needs to be enforced with a zeal rivaling that of a crusade if the non-smoking public is to be spared the toxic effects of inhaling carcinogenic fumes.

The cost of preventive measures, including the admittedly expensive anti-smoking publicity campaign and medical antidotes to the curse, should be offset with the cost to the nation in terms of dealing with the deadly diseases spawned by smoking. The figures of the liability in financial terms have not been communicated forcefully enough if at all such a study has been conducted in the country. The facts on this count could persuade policy makers and planners to devote adequate funding to the various aspects of the anti-smoking drive.

Of particular use could be generating a stigma against smoking through all means possible to make the act unattractive to youngsters, large numbers of whom are falling into the habit by the day. The menace has to be tackled using the same techniques as for promoting a product, only the corporate wagon has to run in reverse in this case. A beginning could be made by highlighting the blessedness of good health and the limitless possibilities of a healthy person, and juxtaposing it with the severe limitations of a victim stricken by smoking related diseases. Ad gurus could go a bit further by identifying non-smokers with those most successful with the fairer gender, and smokers among unsatisfying performers. By portraying the smoker as the one who loses the race for the damsel because of his unattractive habit, a large dent could be made in the incidence of smoking. If it really sets its mind to it, the media can turn non-smoking into a fashion statement, one that comes without a hefty bill. The prettiest damsel in this case could go to the hunk who has never touched a cigarette in his life. If the dream-sellers could conjure up feminine disapproval for the habit, it would act as a powerful disincentive to those inclined to grab a pack just to impress the ladies. But the question is: Will the ad world play?

The article is an editorial from KO's archives as was originally published on Jun 12, 2010

Devious Pundits on  
Kashmir's Social Media

Stop Sectarian Divide Being Fueled by Social Media Molvis

Amir Suhail Wani

Social media has just provided an easily accessible platform to those enthusiasts whose sole ministry is to ignite the passions of people and to stir them against one another while they continue to enjoy the show from their pedestals of ignorance and arrogance. The consequences of this behaviour are not presaged properly and the outright anarchy that this might erupt into is rarely accounted for. But the dangers are not imaginary but very much near and palpable to those who have the foresight to peep into the consequences of events as they unfold

A strange phenomenon has taken social media in its grip and the phenomenon is such that it has shaken the soul and minds of conscious people. The phenomenon concerns deepening sectarian divide and the explicit dramatization thereof on social media by religious preachers across the sectarian spectrum. Social media has virtually been rendered a fight club where some of the preachers and speakers from different sects thwart arguments, allegations and even abuses against one another with a degree of shamelessness that was unheard of in Kashmir.

What takes off as a tiff and minor academic difference or a disagreement turns into a harangue of violence, character assassination and unending sequence of cacophonies, rebuttals and rivalries.

Result? Public discord, hatred and growing divide between people, scholars and organisations alike.

When people consume these hate-stuffed and inflammable visuals and speeches on social media, it makes people attuned to radicalism and their minds and patterns of thought are modified in ways beyond normal. What about the children and teenagers who consume this hatred and in doing so unconsciously learn it? The destructive effect these visuals have on the overall psychological and spiritual well-being of young and old alike is too deep and wide to be described in words.

The saga of inter-religious and intra-religious schisms is nothing new. The history of religious persecution, bloodletting for God's sake and conceptualising the religious other as enemy/lesser human/enemy of God and state has been a dominant historical leitmotif. The earliest and the fiercest battles between the Church and state and between different churches themselves characterize the history of ancient Europe. These battles and disagreements continued to augment as the world of Christianity encountered the world of Islam. With the Islamic ascendancy, the schisms between scholars gained new height as they battled for and battled against power. Behind the veneer of trifling scholarly disagreements, they covertly fought for personal interests. These disagreements and divisions were such that they continue to echo in the Islamic world to this date. People lost their lives, mosques were dashed to ground and the word of God was made a playfield for rhetorical gymnastics just to maintain personal stature and avoid conceding to truth found in traditions except theirs'. The sense of absoluteness and insulation from error are

the cornerstones on which stand the statues of intolerance and bigotry. To acknowledge that truth may be found in a tradition beyond one's own and to simultaneously leave the possibility of error in one's understanding open at all times safeguards one from sinking into arrogance and classifies others as creatures of lesser intellectual degree.

The intolerance and propaganda against one another that is now thriving on social media and elsewhere has its roots located at more than one place. Bias, which we inherit from familial upbringing, social influence, peer pressure and mostly from our teachers blinds us to perspectives other than ours. This monolithic vision of truth driven by the lions of bias steers man deep into hatred and antagonism. Something which then translates into active hate spewing in public life by them.

Bias is inevitably accompanied by ignorance and lack of knowledge and understanding, which augments the problem of reconciliation between different perspectives and points of view and escalates differences, divides and discord. Even a cursory look at the content published on social media in the name of religion shows that most of the speakers who keep the space aflame are in pursuit of self-assertion, victims of identity crisis and at times deliberately spark the debate with their fiery and controversial statements. Do we not see how people heckle each other, catch them by their collar and have street play demonstrations of their antagonism they hatch on social media? Mediocrity has become the norm, pulling down one another is seen as scholarship and proving one's opponent wrong is seen as an unparalleled service to the religion of God. These things haven't happened overnight, nor can these things be ignored.

Social media has just provided an easily accessible platform to those enthusiasts whose sole ministry is to ignite the passions of people and to stir them against one another while they continue to enjoy the show from their pedestals of ignorance and arrogance. The consequences of this behaviour are not presaged properly and the outright anarchy that this might erupt into is rarely accounted for. But the dangers are not imaginary but very much near and palpable to those who have the foresight to peep into the consequences of events as they unfold.

More serious than the noise and hue of these half-learned and self-acclaimed scholars is the deafening silence of those learned and serious people who understand the swing of time, are well versed in learning and wisdom and carry a vision transcending trifling sectarian and petty peripheral issues. Theirs was a responsibility to keep these maddening debates under check by categorically declaring them as devious and detrimental, by speaking explicitly against this nonsense and condemn it by word and action. What has happened to the contrary? These elders and rein holders have let and set the things loose and their silence has amounted to consent to these diatribes and venom spewing discourses. People's minds have been poisoned and the mantra of hating fellow humans for the love of God has become the tag line of almost all religious denominations. People need to sensitise themselves of the perils and ills of consuming this hate speech and being drunk of rhetoric rooted in zealotry.

They too must raise their voice, in whatever way possible, against the speeches and speakers that divide them and foist them against one another. We must rise to the occasion, to nullify and condemn these acts that thrive on and spread hatred and discord. United we stand, divided we fall.

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

The author is a Srinagar based columnist



Scrapping Sedition Law  
The Only Solution

Srikant Parthasarathy

Section 124A of the Indian Penal Code (IPC), the sedition law, was under question for the right reasons in the Supreme Court of India as it stands incompatible with international law. The SC wanted to examine the law's constitutionality, but the government said it would review the law.

This has led to many questions, including ones on fresh registration of cases under the Section. The SC rightly nipped it in the bud by ordering that there shall be no further cases registered under the sedition law.

The invocation of the 124 A of the IPC is summary in nature, and has multiple limbs and claws to catch hold of anyone who makes a seditious comment. The first such case in independent India was Ram Nandan v State of Uttar Pradesh (1958), and there has been a barrage of cases since.

The problem with sedition law in India is not just 124A, but the entire length and breadth of IPC Sections 121- 124A that relate to “waging war against the state”. Charges under multiple heads as laid out by these sections—so as to afford the public prosecutor enough leg room to indict a person under an ‘effective sedition’ charge—are not uncommon. The National Crime Research Bureau published statistics for 2010-2020 in which 168 cases of sedition were invoked in Bihar alone.

A meaningful stance on the question of criminalisation of ‘seditious’ activity is not another law, but scrapping of sedition law altogether. The SC has categorically said that it would not be entertaining any cases arising out of a sedition FIR. A natural inference can be that the apex court has made up its mind to strike down the law in whatever manner it stands today. The SC's intent is appreciable, but law enforcement, while not expressly invoking 124A, can resort to the additional limbs of the Section 121-124. Do those cases automatically stand barred by this order? Not likely.

The problem with sedition charges is not because of 124A alone, but also the add-ons made to a chargesheet, making it difficult for an accused to have protection because of the prohibition of invocation of 124A charges. This is analogous to cutting a branch of a tree that has produced a poisonous fruit but leaving the tree to more of the same through other branches.

Another question that needs considering is whether the SC has thrown a wrench in the consultative process that the government aspires for. The apex court duly recognised the delay tactics deployed by the government, but failed to provide relief in the context of the 324 cases of sedition registered between 2014-2019—with an acquittal rate of 99.98%, provided the cases progressed to a trial.

Again, acquittal was a six-year struggle. The restriction on 124A in FIRs would be impact perhaps a statistically coherent ~50 persons every year. The Supreme Court order thus effectively protects a small group of persons, but doesn't provide any reprieve to ~500 persons slapped with sedition charges, since they have charges other than 124A to battle with.

The problem with the SC order is also the trial of the sedition cases registered till date. If it were to strike down the law, it would not undo a past wrong. The Supreme Court must emphasise very clearly to the government that any law that the latter intends to legislate should have a clear mandate of forethought before registering sedition as an offence. This presents a paradox, and thus the only solution is scrapping of the sedition law.

There is international precedent for this. The United Nations General Assembly, on December 16, 1966, passed the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR). Article 19 of the said resolution reads “Everyone shall have the right of freedom of expression (sic) regardless of frontiers, orally, in writing or in print (sic). Such right is caveated by either breach of reputation of others or a question of public morality, national security, or public order.” The ICCPR now states that the onus is on the prosecution to prove beyond any doubt that alternative means were available (Shchetko v Belarus, 2006).

In Erbakan v Turkey, the European Court of Human Rights concluded that even if an activity doesn't promote secularism, it won't attract arbitrary dismissal of the freedom of expression, and upheld the Article 10 of The Human Rights Act (the EU equivalent of the Article 19 of ICCPR).

The court went on to further say that the onus lies on the state to satisfy the court that no other alternative remedies were available other than registering a criminal case against the person.

The restriction that the SC has placed on fresh cases is impulsive; it other means of charging a person still deployable by law enforcement agencies widely and at the drop of a hat.

Views expressed in the article are the author's own and do not necessarily represent the editorial stance of Kashmir Observer. The article was originally published by Financial Express

The author is Professor of International Law



# USA, The First Impressions

MYG Nairang

Our plane left Indira Gandhi International Airport in New Delhi on the 16th of March for Washington DC. We left Delhi at 2 AM and covered about 12000kms in 16 hours. Since Washington time is some 9 hours and 30 minutes behind Indian time, we reached the US capital at about 7.30 AM on 16th morning itself. If there had been no such difference of time, we would have reached on 17th.

Barring California and a few West coast states, the US is notorious for its cold and inclement weather, with winter extending to six months. Other than the cold weather, I was also wary of the treatment we would meted out by the immigration authorities. We had almost been sent back from the Delhi airport for our tickets had, "not been cleared by the customs department" and for not having ourselves tested for covid just 24 hours before departure. We feared the American immigration authorities might be harsher.

Unlike our experience at the Delhi airport, the Washington airport authorities and the immigration officers did not create any trouble. They behaved with civility and as such we came out of the airport within half an hour. Just outside the exit door, we were picked up by our son in law in his car and proceeded towards Pittsburgh, one of the main cities of Pennsylvania and the city where our son in law works and resides with our daughter and grandson. Much against our expectations, the day was quite sunny though the air had still the nip of chillai kalan (forty days period of harsh winter in Kashmir). The highway was wide, smooth, and clean. The traffic so orderly that despite many vehicles plying on the road, it seemed almost empty. No crowd, no jam, no checking, no security forces; no roadside halt points and not even

visible traffic police. Nobody was crossing the speed limit of 50 miles per hour and all the passengers were voluntarily and necessarily wearing their seat belts. No one was ignoring the red light and the pedestrians were crossing the road at fixed spots. Not to talk of dead dogs, garbage and piles of soil, stones, and dung-hills on the sidewalks. I could not find any such things along the 400 km road from Washington to Pittsburgh. There are also fixed spots for rest and refreshment. These spots are not like our Ramban, Banihal, Kazigund, or Udhampur where you find congested and dirty markets, unhygienic dhabas with open sewers, and walls for urination.

We stopped at a place called Breezewood Plaza, a secluded, beautiful, and clean building with a spacious lawn, parking slot, petrol

(which Americans call gas station), and a fine café. The café has several washrooms which are stink-free, and equipped with clean water, soap, sanitizer, and paper towels. Be in queue, get the token, self-serve and relax while eating and drinking. Every employee from the manager to the counter-girl welcomes you with a smile.

I strolled around and located a gift corner as well. If any visitor has forgotten to get a gift for his children, grandchildren or for the hosts, he or she can pick a beautiful toy, pen, book, or a garment and get it beautifully packed. Remember all these facilities are available at a petrol pump which in our state is often nauseating. In Srinagar, a pump owner at Sonawar had tried to create a similar facility but failed. I still remember the stink of the

urinal which the owner had put up. But he alone was not to be blamed; the customers too were responsible.

We reached home in the afternoon, the weather had deteriorated, and the leafless trees were trembling in the chilly winds. I thought of pheran and kangri but soon the desire vanished as the entire building of our sojourn was centrally heated and the heating arrangement was such that the warmth increases or decreases with the change in outside temperature. There was also an arrangement for humidity within the rooms.

After dinner, I relaxed in the bed for an hour about the Americans who minor rather colonized this seemingly inhospitable land have worked towards establishing the United States as the world's largest economy, strongest military force, and the most advanced country in the field of science and technology.

Nonetheless, it is not that everything in America is ideal and perfect, it has a gory history of colonialism which included the genocide of the native inhabitants. This history is also marked by slavery, racism and undue interference in the internal affairs of other countries. Although things have improved a lot they have not changed altogether.

However, reflecting on the positive features and developments of America, I think that Kashmir could be transformed into a wonderland, but we lack the will, determination, unity, discipline, and the spirit of self-sacrifice. These are tough blockades but not unsurmountable.

The author is IIS (retd.) Former News Editor/Correspondent AIR and Doordarshan



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## Amarnath Yatra: Faith Traversing Snow Clad Mountains

Jehangir Rashid Malik

Surrounded by lofty mountains, breathtaking landscapes, gushing water streams and picturesque meadows, the Kashmir valley of the union territory of Jammu & Kashmir has always been an abode of spirituality. The essence of spirituality has been a part and parcel of the region and over the years has bestowed the people with bountiful blessings.

One such place of great religious importance is Amarnath cave. The Amarnath cave is a revered shrine situated at an altitude of 12,756 ft, located about 140 kilometres from Srinagar, summer capital of Jammu & Kashmir. One has to go through the tourist resort of Pahalgam in South Kashmir so as to reach the Amarnath cave. The cave located in Liddar valley is surrounded by glaciers, snowy mountains and is covered with snow most of the year. It is the abode of the Mahamaya Shakti Peetha.

The Shiva Lingam is a stalagmite and it is formed due to the freezing of water drops that fall from the roof of the cave onto the floor resulting in an upward vertical growth of ice. There are different types of stalagmites. Here, the stalagmites considered as the lingam, a physical manifestation of Shiva, form a solid-dome-shape. Parvati and Ganesha are also present here as two smaller stalagmites. It is mentioned in the ancient Hindu texts of Mahabharata and Puranas that Lingam represents Shiva.

For this year's Yatra the Jammu & Kashmir administration is all geared up to welcome the pilgrims who are all set to visit the Kashmir valley. The Yatra is being conducted after a hiatus of two years since the same could not be held in 2020 and 2021 due to the global COVID-19 pandemic. This time around the Yatra is expected to break the previous records with respect to arrival of Yatris.

The civil administration, Jammu & Kashmir Police and the other security agencies are working in tandem in order to ensure that the Yatra passes off peacefully without any inconvenience to the Yatris. The registration for the Yatra has already begun and 566 branches of banks like State Bank of India, Jammu & Kashmir Bank, Punjab National Bank and YES Bank have been designated to register pilgrims for Amarnath Yatra 2022.



Feature Image Caption: Pilgrims are on their way to Amarnath cave | PTI

Adequate arrangements are being made by the administration so as to ensure that the Yatris do not face any difficulty while performing the religious obligation. Proper arrangements regarding food, healthcare, transportation and security are being put in place for the smooth conduct of the annual Amarnath Ji Yatra. Bhandaras are going to come up at different places en-route Yatra in order to meet the food requirements of the Yatris for the Amarnath Yatra 2022.

It would be in place to mention here that the annual Amarnath Yatra is conducted from two traditional routes in Kashmir valley. While the Pahalgam-Chandanwari route connects the Amanath cave with the rest

of the world from South Kashmir's Anantnag district side, the Ganderbal-Baltal route connects the cave from Central Kashmir's Ganderbal district. On both the routes three-tier security set-up would be in place so that the subversive elements do not pose any threat to the Yatra and the Yatris.

The Shri Amarnath Shrine Board (SASB) is working round the clock so as to ensure that there is no discomfort to the people undertaking the Yatra for the current year. It is expected that there would be a record inflow of Yatris for this Amarnath Yatra since the same is being conducted after a couple of years. It is expected that all the records with re-

spect to the arrival of tourists would be broken and as such the challenges would also increase for the people at helm. As the preparations are underway since March, one can expect that this year would witness hassle free Amarnath Yatra.

People who have affordability to spend can avail the helicopter services for undertaking the Yatra. The helicopter services are available from both the routes and it has been a hit among the people in the past as well. The helicopter services provide an opportunity for the business class people as well as senior citizens to have darshan of Shiv Lingam and return to the base on the same day. This year too one can expect that people

in large number would avail the helicopter services while performing the Yatra and having darshan.

The health department issued an advisory a few days back under which it is envisaged that Amarnath Yatra-2022 would be tobacco free. Necessary instructions have been issued in this regard and it is expected that the Yatris would follow the dos and don'ts in letter and spirit. At the same time it is expected that the staff deputed for the Yatra would also follow suit in this regard. It has to be ensured that the tobacco products are neither sold nor used by the Yatris and the staff deputed.

On the security front, higher-ups of Jammu & Kashmir Police along

with other security agencies like Army, Border Security Force (BSF) and Central Reserve Police Force (CRPF) have been carrying out meetings on regular occasions in order to ensure that there is no compromise on the security of the Yatris. All these professional security forces agencies are working in liaison with one another and this in all likelihood would lead to a successful Amarnath Yatra-2022.

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One can expect the Yatris to adhere to Covid Appropriate Behaviour (CAB) and in case of emergency they should report to a nearby health facility for assessment. At the same time the staff deputed for Amarnath Yatra should work in a professional manner since Yatris are our guests and they ought to be treated in a proper manner

Over the years the annual Amarnath Yatra has been boosting the economy of Jammu & Kashmir since many stakeholders are involved to provide services to the Yatris. Amarnath Yatra is a perfect example of pilgrimage tourism and it has been infusing a new lease to Jammu & Kashmir tourism. Transporters, dhaba owners, other eateries, pony wallas and porters provide varied services to the Yatris and in return they earn handsome amounts as service charges.

Amarnath Yatra-2022 is going to start from June 30 and it will culminate on August 11 on the occasion of Raksha Bandhan. One can expect the Yatris to adhere to Covid Appropriate Behaviour (CAB) and in case of emergency they should report to a nearby health facility for assessment. At the same time the staff deputed for Amarnath Yatra should work in a professional manner since Yatris are our guests and they ought to be treated in a proper manner.

The author is a Senior Journalist



## Commissioner Cum Secretary Visits Hokersar Wetland Conservation Reserve

**SRINAGAR:** Commissioner cum Secretary to the Government, Forest, Environment & Ecology Department, visited Hokersar Wetland Conservation Reserve, in order to review the progress made so far in launching a comprehensive cleanliness programme being observed from 7th to 21st May 2022 under the banner "TAWAZUN" and with the slogan "Save Hokersar - Save Srinagar" in joint collaboration with stake holding Departments, Civil Society Groups, N.G.O's, Educational Institutions and other participating agencies. Commissioner



cum Secretary directed the officers of the Wildlife Department to intensify such drives in other wetlands as well, in order to ensure that ecological characteristics of these very important Eco-systems is maintained for Biodiversity

conservation and for flood mitigation as well.

The Forest Commissioner Secretary was briefed by the Regional Wildlife Warden Kashmir Region regarding the approved programmes being implemented in

Hokersar and other wetlands as well during the current financial year. The Commissioner emphasized upon the need to expedite the implementation of these programmes so that objective to restore these wetlands is achieved in right perspective. The Commissioner also took a review of implementation of various directions of the worthy Chief Secretary during his recent visit to Hokersar especially with regard to the ongoing works being carried out for beautification and Eco-restoration of Hokersar Wetland Reserve as an Eco-Tourist Destination.

### CONTD. FROM FRONT PAGE

#### Fear Stricken KP

one of our honest brothers (Rahul Bhat) was killed, that too in day time and that too in his office where a magistrate sits," the forum said.

They said instead of getting solidarity and support, the protesting employees are facing teargas shells, baton charge, detention and arrests for expressing resentment against the killing.

Meanwhile, clashes broke out between the members of the community and the police in Baramulla, officials said.

The community members wanted to march outside the Veerwan Colony -- a transit camp for the migrant employees -- but the police did not allow them, resulting in clashes, the officials said.

They, however, said there were no reports of any injuries to anyone in the clashes.

At the protest at Press Enclave here, Kashmiri Pandit employees raised slogans against the Jammu and Kashmir administration and against the killing of Bhat.

Bhat was killed by Lashkar-e-Taiba militants in the Tehsil office at Chadoora in Budgam district on Thursday.

"We are protesting against the target killings of our brothers. The killings should stop and the government should provide a safe and secure environment where we can work peacefully," one of the protesting employees told reporters.

He said the transit camps for the employees have been "turned into lockup, detention centres", and demanded that their locks be opened so that the people are able to live their lives in a simple manner. The protesters said the employees were "feeling worried, tensed, insecure, frustrated, and dismayed".

In a press statement, they said the central government must admit in writing that the rehabilitation policy has "completely failed". "The UT administration, previous elected governments had completed failed in providing safe and secure environment to ill-fated minority employee section. We request the Hon'ble LG of UT (J-K), Prime Minister of India that it is the right time to accept the ground reality," according to the statement.

They also demanded "relocation to the safest, unhazardous, terror-free places outside Kashmir division."

#### Protest Continues

for their protection. The protesters, however, claimed that the security forces personnel prevented them from taking out a protest march.

The camp, which houses the families of Bhat and other Kashmiri Pandits who were employed under the prime minister's package in 2008, has become an epicentre of protests in the aftermath of the killing Bhat, who was shot dead by militants in his office in Chadoora on Thursday.

The protesters have been demanding their relocation to safe environments in the wake of a spurt in the attacks on the minority community members in the valley.

On Saturday, over a hundred employees -- men and women -- sat under a large makeshift tent, in order to protect themselves from the scorching heat prevalent across the valley, as they protested against Bhat's killing as well to press for the acceptance of their demands.

So far, they said, there were no visible signs of any resolution to the problems.

"This is the failure of both the central as well as the union territory governments. This is the ninth killing (of minority community members), we are facing huge problems, but there is no redressal, Vimal, a Kashmiri pandit employee, told PTI at the camp.

He said for the migrant employees to work freely, a safe and secure environment should be created.

"There has to have fool-proof security arrangements for us to work. We cannot work like this and so, we are planning to submit mass resignations,

Vimal said.

On Friday, there were reports of mass resignations by the employees, especially in the militancy-hit south Kashmir, but the government dismissed those. Instead, it said, their service-related issues were being addressed in a time-bound manner within a week.

Vimal, however, said the government's intentions were not clear.

While many paid tributes to Bhat -- a photograph of his was placed on a table -- several others raised slogans against the government and the Jammu and Kashmir Police. A tri-colour was also placed on the table.

The protesters got up and rushed towards the main gate of the camp which has been shut by the police since Friday night. The protesters tried to throw the gate open, but police prevailed. A police vehicle was also brought in front of the gate to stop the march of the protesters.

The employees -- who on Friday had sat on the main road connecting the district with Srinagar city as well as the airport -- said they were fooled by the police into vacating the road and were now caged inside the transit camp.

"We were removed from the dharna by the DIG (central Kashmir) on the assurance that the Lieutenant Governor will come to see us. However, the LG did not come. He sent his principal secretary, Nitishwar Kumar, instead around 11 pm, Vimal said.

He (Kumar) had no solutions, no redressal to our issues, one of the employees said.

Sanjay Kumar, another employee, said reports about providing the migrant employees arms licenses were fake.

The community has a solution to their problems -- the government should temporarily relocate them to safer places till a secure atmosphere is created in the valley.

"For the time-being, two years, three years, we should be relocated... till the time they control the situation. They are not doing anything except telling us that there is no provision to relocate them, another employee from the community", Aparna Pandit, said.

Aparna said Pandits have never come out on roads or raised their voice, but she said "Bhat's killing has shaken us".

"Do they want us dead? We will submit mass resignations as the government has totally failed because now employees are killed inside their offices. Where is the security? Why is there no provision for us to be transferred outside Kashmir? People can come from Bihar and Maharashtra to work here, but we cannot go outside", she said.

Protesting Pandits claimed their problems would continue as the government was making them "sacrificial lambs".

"Either accept our mass resignations or do something to secure our lives. Transfer us then...to any other state in India. The government said they can neither accept our resignation, nor transfer us", Aparna said.

Another Kashmiri Pandit, who did not wish to be named, said the government wants to create an atmosphere of fear.

"They do not want us to live happily here. We left our families, our children were living happily and studying well when they told us they would rehabilitate us. Is this what that rehabilitation is? Has Rahul Bhat been rehabilitated?" he asked.

"Why are we not being allowed to go to the press colony (in Srinagar) to protest Bhat's killing and to pay homage to him? Why are we being caged here? Are we stone-pelters? Are we anti-national elements, terrorists? We sat peacefully yesterday. The police are deliberately harassing us", he said.

While the protest continued near the main gate, the whole transit camp -- which houses about 300 families -- presented a gloomy picture.

Many Kashmiri Pandits, especially the elderly, were busy with their daily chores, but none of them seemed to be at peace. Their faces betrayed their

hearts which had, for so long, been longing to return to Kashmir. (PTI)

#### BJP Raises KPs

on Sunday as it is the responsibility of the government to provide a secure and safe environment to the nationalists, whether Muslims, Sikhs or Hindus who are upholding the tricolour.

The BJP leader along with his colleagues was heckled by the Kashmiri migrant pandit community at the cremation of Rahul Bhat here on Friday.

Bhat, who had got the job of a clerk under the special employment package for migrants in 2010-11, was gunned down by militants inside the tehsil office in Chadoora town of central Kashmir's Budgam district on Thursday.

Others who have got employment under the scheme are now holding protests, accusing the administration of failing to provide them adequate security and demanding that they be shifted to Jammu. They have also threatened to quit en-masse.

I spoke to the home minister on Friday and briefed him about the concerns and problems being faced by the Kashmiri pandits serving in the valley under the Prime Minister's employment package, Raina told reporters here.

He said it is the responsibility of the government to provide a "safe and secure" environment and provide all facilities to the nationalists who are keeping the tricolour aloft in the valley, whether they are Muslims, Sikhs or Hindus.

The latest killing of Bhat and Special Police Officer (SPO) Riyaz Ahmad Thokar (on Friday) shows the "barbaric face of terrorism" which needs to end, the BJP leader said.

Regretting the lathi-charge on Kashmiri pandit protestors during their march towards Srinagar airport from Sheikhpora camp, Raina said he held a series of meetings with political, religious and social leaders from the community and I am of the opinion that their concerns and problems are genuine.

I raised the issue with the Lt Governor (on Friday) and am again heading a high-level BJP delegation to meet him at Raj Bhavan in Srinagar on Sunday. We will discuss all issues of minorities living in the valley besides Gujjars and Bakerwals and Pahari speaking people, he said.

He said the Kashmiri pandits are grief-stricken and angry and we have to address all their genuine concerns and problems.

Raina said there is also a dire need to talk to the Kashmiri pandits and no need for the use of force.

It is our responsibility to meet their aspirations and make arrangements for their absolute security. It is our prime responsibility to ensure the security of every nationalist community and we will press with full force all the issues before the LG, he said. (PTI)

#### Muslims Help Perform

and she breathed her last. She was brought to her native village Y K Pora, Kulgam, where hundreds of Muslims especially neighbours and locals were waiting for her body.

Locals said that they have been living together for decades and shared a strong bond.

"The deceased was a great human being who would visit Muslims on the occasion of festivals and also whenever anyone among us would die. She was part and parcel of the composite culture and today, it is our duty to return the favour by ensuring her last rites are performed as per her religious rites," said village resident Altaf Ahmed.

The deceased, Dulari Bhat, 80, widow of late Janki Nath, spent all her life in the native village of Y K Pora.

Saja Bano, the friend of Dulari, said that the deceased was her close friend and they would spend days together. "Her death is a great loss for the entire village. It's a personal loss for me as I have lost my good old friend," she said.

Dulari's son Subash Bhat said that they are thankful to the Muslims of the area who stood with them in this hour of grief.

"We have been living together and we didn't escape from Kashmir despite the fact that our father was killed in the 90's. Since then, we have been living together with Muslims of the area, who are with us in time of this great loss," he said.

Chuni Lal Bhat, a relative of Dulari, while thanking the Muslims of Y K Pora, said that Kashmir is the best example of communal harmony, brotherhood and Pandits and Muslims share a great and strong bond that has been there since decades.

"Today, Muslims of the area stood with us and participated in the last rites of Dulari. They remained present till Dulari was cremated," he said, adding that "Muslims and Pandits are incomplete without each other." (KNO)

#### PAGD To Meet

surely do it. But, the responsibility lies with the government. They have created a narrative that there is normalcy in Kashmir even if ten people are killed, Tarigami said.

He said the amalgam has decided to meet Sinha and take up the issue with him.

As an immediate measure, we have approached Raj Bhavan for a meeting of the PAGD leadership Farooq Abdullah, Mehbooba Mufti, Muzaffar Shah and me with J&K's LG and we will tell him to resolve the issues. He says a lot on radio and TV, let him do something on the ground, Tarigami said.

We will tell the government to check in a mirror whether there is normalcy on the ground or not and see with your eyes open. We will also tell the government to provide security to the Kashmiri Pandits and others as well."

"For that, it is important that Kashmiri Pandit employees get an opportunity to work in a secure atmosphere, at a safe place so that their fears get over and they become confident, he added.

The PAGD spokesperson said the alliance will also tell Sinha that the use of batons on Kashmiri Pandits during a protest on Friday at Budgam was very unfortunate.

They had come out to mourn, they had come out with an appeal, they wanted to share their pain, but you lathicharged them as well. This is unfortunate. The use of batons in Kashmir should stop, Tarigami said.

#### SIA Raids 12

According to reports, raids were conducted at the residence and shop of a man selling electronic items.

The reports said the SIA raided the house of Zubair Khateeb in the Masjid Mohalla locality.

Zubair's father Hussain Khateeb is reportedly in Pakistan for more than 20 years. Khateeb is associated with Hizbul Mujahideen.

The reports said a Wifi router was seized from his shop.

#### Omar Takes Pot

even as the government is promise-bound to restore statehood... We are not ready to accept defeat. Let them try their best, we will continue our struggle in a peaceful manner for the restoration of our rights, respect, identity and honour," Abdullah said addressing party workers in the border district of Poonch.

He said the National Conference did not come on the roads and would not ask the people of Poonch to do that either to provide a handle for their arrest and firing of bullets and teargas.

"We will not take law into our own hands, disturb peace or make people fight each other. We will continue our struggle in a peaceful manner," he said.

Abdullah said the National Conference will knock every relevant door to ensure that the rights of the people are restored and they get justice.

Referring to the Supreme Court decision to consider listing after summer vacation the pleas challenging the Centre's decision to abrogate provisions of Article 370, the NC leader said, "We hope the hearing starts soon and the court gives its verdict".

"We are of the opinion that what happened (in August 2019) was unconstitutional and unlawful. There is delay in God's house but there is no darkness. It may take some time but we will wait," he said, adding "my heart says we will get justice and I have faith in it." Cautioning the people against attempts to divide them on the basis of religion and regions, he said "we have suffered a lot and need to stand united to pull out J&K from this quagmire." In an apparent reference to the BJP, he said, "They are trying to weaken us, divide us, suppress us and are playing with the future of our coming generations. You have to make a right decision on the right time (during assembly elections) to get rid of them and safeguard your future." Lashing out at the BJP-led government, he said it has failed to keep a single promise made to the people of Jammu and Kashmir while justifying its decision to revoke Article 370 and bifurcate J&K into the Union Territories of Jammu and Kashmir, and Ladakh.

"They claimed that Article 370 was the biggest hurdle in the restoration of peace and normalcy in Jammu and

Kashmir. Two-and-a-half years have passed, I do not see any peace prevailing. In Kashmir, the people are still being killed inside their homes and now even they started targeting people in government offices," he said, referring to the recent killing of a Kashmiri Pandit employee inside Tehsil office in Budgam and a Special Police Officer in Pulwama district.

He said the fear has increased as people lost the sense of security because the government had failed to provide them protection.

"We were told that Article 370 was the reason for creation of separatist ideology and its abrogation will change the minds and the separatist ideology," Abdullah said, adding adding there are some youths who want to take arms and tread the "wrong path" despite knowing the fact that they will be killed within a week, a month or six months.

They are misleading the people by saying that everything is alright, he said.

"The people were told that NC and others were the obstacle in the path of development. Where is that development? I left the chair of chief minister eight years ago and PDP's Mehbooba Mufti about four years ago. J&K is under central government rule since 2018 but the development is nowhere to be seen," he said.

Continuing his tirade against the central government, he said they are speaking about massive industrialization but the "fact is that not a new industry has come here over the past four years".

"Our industry is on the verge of collapse. Every six months, they are bringing in people from Arab countries and making them tour the valley for photo opportunities as nobody from our industrial sector in the country came forward for investment in Kashmir." He said tourists visiting Jammu and Srinagar is good but expressed concern that these visits "fail to benefit" the people living in the remote villages of Poonch and other districts.

"The tourists come and go but it is unfortunate that they failed to bring a new area on the tourism map over the past four years," Abdullah said.

#### NIA Begins

Additional Director General (ADG) of Police, Jammu zone, Mukesh Singh, who inspected the scene, said the initial probe does not point to use of any explosive.

"The bus caught fire on its way from Katra to Jammu. The cause of the fire is not confirmed yet," Singh had told reporters, adding a forensic team is looking into it.

A specially trained NIA explosive team visited the spot around 3.30 PM and collected samples during their one-and-a-half-hour stay there, the officials said.

They said the team was briefed by a senior police officer about the incident.

Expressing grief over the incident, Lt Governor Manoj Sinha has announced an ex-gratia of Rs 5 lakh each to the next of kin of the deceased and Rs one lakh to the seriously injured.

The National Conference and the Congress have expressed shock and grief over the incident and demanded a probe.

National Conference president Farooq Abdullah and vice president Omar Abdullah condoled the loss of and prayed for fast recuperation of the injured.

It is expected that the concerned departments will depute a team to ascertain the causes behind the tragedy," the former chief ministers said in a joint statement.

J&K Pradesh Congress Committee (JKPCC) chief spokesperson Ravinder Sharma termed the incident as heart-wrenching and said an in-depth investigation is needed to rule out any mischief.

#### Army Chief Visits

to review the operational preparedness. #COAS interacted with the troops & complimented them for their steadfastness & high morale," the Army tweeted.

On Thursday, senior commanders briefed Gen Pande at the Fire and Fury Corps headquarters in Leh about the overall security situation in eastern Ladakh.

The Fire and Fury Corps is responsible for guarding the LAC with China in the Ladakh region.

Gen Pande's visit to Ladakh came days after he said China's intention has been to keep "alive" the overall boundary question with India though it remains the "basic" issue between the two countries.

While referring to the eastern Ladakh border row, the Army chief had said the Indian Army's aim is to re-establish the "trust and tranquility" between the two sides but asserted that "it cannot be a one-way affair".

He also asserted that the Indian Army's aim was to restore the status quo ante prior to April 2020 in eastern Ladakh.

The eastern Ladakh faceoff began on May 4-5 in 2022. India has been insisting on the restoration of the status quo ante prior to the standoff.

India and China have held 15 rounds of military talks so far to resolve the eastern Ladakh row. As a result of

the talks, the two sides completed the disengagement process last year on the north and south banks of the Pangong lake and in the Gogra area.

India has been consistently maintaining that peace and tranquillity along the LAC were key for the overall development of the bilateral ties.

Each side currently has around 50,000 to 60,000 troops along the Line of Actual Control (LAC) in the sensitive sector.

#### Modi Govt Giving

Prime Minister Narendra Modi, special priority is being given to the development of Jammu Kashmir, Ladakh and North East regions.

"He assured that sufficient funding will be allocated for removing all the gaps in judicial infrastructure across the UTs of Jammu Kashmir and Ladakh," he added.

During the meeting, the spokesperson said that the LG maintained that the administration has to play a key role in overhauling the infrastructure development of court complexes across the UT.

Sinha, he said, stressed on making meticulous plans in collaboration with the representatives from the Judiciary.

"It was decided that public utilities shall be constructed and renovated in all courts across the region," the spokesperson said, adding "Directions were also issued to ensure that all court complexes which are having rented buildings will be provided with new complexes by the end of this fiscal. There shall be complete e-filing system in District Courts for which adequate funds would be released by the Central Government."

He said that the meeting also decided that the construction work of Jammu District Court Complex will be started soon.

#### 73% Children Below

anaemia. After Ladakh (93.9 percent), Gujarat (79.7 percent), Dadra & Nagar Haveli (75.8 percent), J&K has the fourth highest rate of anaemia among children across India.

For women (15-29) in J&K, mild anaemia was recorded at 25.3 percent, moderate anaemia stood at 37.8 percent while severe anaemia was recorded at 2.8 percent. While 28.5 percent men (15-29) in J&K have mild anaemia, 8.0 percent have moderate and only 0.2 percent have severe anaemia.

#### Soldier Shoots Self

Friday evening when he shot himself with his service rifle, a police official said.

He said the reason behind Kumar taking the extreme step is yet to be ascertained.

Police have initiated inquest proceedings. The body was sent to Kumar's unit after the completion of medico-legal formalities, the official said.

The mortal remains of the deceased are being handed over to his family for the last rites, he said.

#### BSF Fires Shots

operation was launched in the area to ensure no weapons or narcotics were dropped by the flying object, he said.

"Today in the morning, alert BSF troops observed a blinking light (in the sky) and immediately fired at it in the Arnia area, forcing the Pakistani flying object to return. A combined search operation is being carried out in the area," BSF Deputy Inspector General, Jammu frontier, S P Sandhu said.

Officials said the Pakistani drone was spotted by the border guards around 4.45 am and some eight rounds were fired by them to bring it down.

After hovering for a few minutes in the air, the drone flew back, the officials said, adding the search operation is going on in the area falling under the R S Pura sector.

This is the second such incident to take place within seven days. On May 7, the BSF had opened fired at a Pakistani drone in the same area shortly after it entered the Indian territory.

Drone activity from Pakistan has increased after the BSF detected an underground cross-border tunnel in the Chak Faqira area of Samba district on May 4. (PTI)

#### Lashkar Militant

army's 32 RR and the personnel of CRPF 92 battalion launched a cordon and search operation in the Rohama area of the district, a police spokesperson said Saturday.

During the search, he said, the joint team noticed the movement of a suspected individual and eventually apprehended him with a Pistol, one pistol magazine and five rounds.

The police identified him as Rizwan Shafi Lone of Magam, Handwara.

The spokesperson further claimed that with Lone's arrested a major incident has been averted in North Kashmir.

"He was assigned to plan an attack on security forces personnels and VIPs by his handlers sitting across the border. This individual was previously apprehended in the year 2017 & 2018 for stone pelting and militancy related charges," he added.



## No Weekend School Picnics To Gulmarg: GDA

Agencies

**SRINAGAR:** Citing “unprecedented flow of tourists” and threat to ecologically fragile environs of the place, Chief Executive Officer of Gulmarg Development Authority has written a letter to Director School Education Kashmir, urging him to ask educational institutions in the Valley not to plan excursion/picnic to the famous resort on weekend.

From last couple of weeks, Gulmarg has witnessed unprecedented flow of tourist which has caused frequent traffic jams and other inconveniences in the area,” reads the letter.

It is pertinent to mention here that phase 1st of the Master Plan- 2032 stands approved by the State Administrative Council (SAC) vide decision No. 140/20/2018, dated 22.11.2018, wherein some major threats have been detailed in view of the increased tourist influx,” the letter reads, adding, “the Increased tourist influx associated with the promotion of mass tourism to the area shall have serious

and adverse consequence.”

That maximum noise levels in the resort area slightly exceeded prescribed standards for daytime level of noise, it reads.

“This continued growth and development of the resort area will impact the community noise levels through the introduction of addition private and commercial traffic and intensification of tourism, and will impact wildlife behavior and human health,” the letter underlined, adding, “In addition to this there are some other issues like, Environment issues, biodiversity issues, pollution issues, flora and fauna issues, aesthetic issues, etc, which need to addressed in terms of Master Plan 2032.”

In view of it, coupled with the facts that most of the locals prefer to visits the area on weekend (Saturday and Sunday), the CEO requested the DSEK to issue necessary directions to all the heads of the schools of the valley, to plan their excursion/picnic to Gulmarg any day of the week, except Saturday and Sunday “so that eco fragile environment is maintained in terms of approved Master Plan.”

## SIA Files Chargesheet In Nagrota ‘Terror-Financing’ Case

Press Trust Of India

**JAMMU:** The State Investigation Agency (SIA) of Jammu and Kashmir has submitted its chargesheet in a court here in connection with a militancy-financing case, in which three associates of militant operatives were arrested from the Sidhra bridge area last year and cash amounting to Rs 43 lakh was recovered from their possession.

The money was being transported from Punjab to South Kashmir.

The case was transferred to the SIA from the Jammu and Kashmir police last year.

“State Investigation Agency, Jammu submitted a chargesheet in a terror-financing case in the court on Friday,” an officer said.

According to the case details, a consignment of cash was being transported to south Kash-

mir from Punjab. A special team was constituted which set up a checkpoint at the Sidhra bridge in the Nagrota area on the Jammu-Srinagar National Highway on November 17 last year and intercepted a vehicle, the officer said.

The passengers of the vehicle were questioned about their movement but they could not give a satisfactory reply and on a thorough search of the car, two bags containing Rs 43 lakh in cash were recovered.

Further questioning of the accused revealed that the money was being transported from Punjab to south Kashmir for financing the militant activities of proscribed outfit Jaish-e-Mohammed (JeM).

The arrested accused were in constant touch with their handlers across the border and militants based in south Kashmir.

## ‘Govt Working Towards Doubling Power Generation Capacity In 3 Years’

Observer News Service

**SRINAGAR:** To make Jammu and Kashmir power surplus in the next four years, Power Development Department is working earnestly towards doubling electricity generation capacity in the Union Territory in three years, an official spokesperson said Saturday.

He said that the J&K government has initiated a large scale capacity augmentation programme to address the current power deficit in the UT.

“Earlier, Jammu and Kashmir was able to harness only 3,500 MW of electricity in the last 70 years but the power generation capacity in the Union Territory is all set to be doubled in the next three years and trebled in seven years,” he said.

The spokesperson said that the J&K administration has launched various initiatives to strengthen and improve power infrastructure in the UT which had remained dilapidated for the last several decades.

He said Aggregate Technical and Commercial losses are being minimized to make power a self-sustaining, fast-growing sector of J&K.

“No serious efforts were made in the past so many years towards exploiting the power generation potential here,” he added.

Speaking after inauguration of 42 Transmission and Distribution projects executed by Jammu and Kashmir Power Development Department (JKPDD) worth Rs 357 crore in Anantnag, the official spokesperson said that the Lieutenant Governor, Manoj Sinha had said the Transmission and Distribution projects worth Rs 2000 crore are being completed and an additional amount of Rs 6000 crore has been allocated by the central government to strengthen the Sub-Transmission and Distribution network across the UT.

“This will help the administration to bridge the basic infrastructural gap between cities and villages,” the LG had said.

As per the spokesperson, the LG had said the aim of his administration is to provide quality electricity to all citizens and business houses and these augmented facilities will realize this purpose. Since August 2019, Sinha said, 3806 MVA has been added to the total capacity as compared to 8394 MVA capacity achieved in seven decades.

“LG expressed gratitude to Prime Minister and Union Power Minister for their continuous support in strengthening the power sector in J&K. The upcoming Rs 12,922 crore power projects for the UT will increase the total availability of electricity in the system, especially for the household, industries and agriculture sector,” he said.

The spokesperson said that J&K’s power infrastructure, which remained dilapidated for the last several decades, is being transformed at a fast pace.

We are firm in our resolve of a practical, pragmatic and viable solution to strengthen power infrastructure in every area, a senior official of Power Department said.

“To address the current power deficit and meet the needs of our expanding economy, the government is upgrading transmission and distribution infrastructure that will also enable generation of productive employment opportunities for youth,” he added.

Notably, the spokesperson said that the Ratle Hydroelectric Power Corporation Limited (RHPCL) and Megha Engineering & Infrastructure Limited (MEIL) recently inked a contract agreement for the turnkey execution of 850 MW Ratle HEP. This ambitious Power Project will provide massive direct and indirect employment opportunities to the local population.

“The agreement is a historic move and will go a long way to realize the goal of making J&K self-sufficient in power sector. The new power generation projects like Ratle, Pakal Dul, Kiru and others will bridge a major gap in the UT’s electricity requirements,” he said

## Heat Wave Grips Kashmir Valley As Mercury Crosses 31°C Mark

Agencies

**SRINAGAR:** Several areas of Kashmir including Srinagar, the summer capital of Jammu and Kashmir are reeling under severe heat wave as the temperature has crossed above 31 degree Celsius at many places.

Srinagar, Qazigund and Pahalgam areas in Kashmir region recorded the hottest day of the season where temperature settled at 31.3 degree Celsius, 32.0 degree Celsius and 26.9 degree Celsius respectively.

Multiple places including Srinagar are presently reeling under severe heat wave, an independent weather forecaster, Faizan Arif Keng said, adding that the temperature has crossed above 30 degrees in most of the places here.

Keng said there is possibility of respite from the heat wave tomorrow as the cloudy weather is expected from Sunday in Kashmir.

However, the Meteorological (MeT) department here predicted that the prevalent weather conditions would continue till May 16.

The MeT officials said that there is 70 per cent possibility of rains at some places in Jammu and Kashmir from May 16 evening to May 18, adding that some higher reaches would also receive fresh snowfall.

“The widespread moderate rain/thunderstorm with hail-storm at some places of Jammu and Kashmir and snow over higher reaches is mostly likely during May 16 evening to May 18,” the MeT officials said—(KNO)



## Jammu Records Season's Hottest Day At 43.5 Deg C

**JAMMU:** Jammu recorded its hottest day of the season so far with the mercury touching 43.5 degrees Celsius on Saturday as the heatwave intensified engulfing most parts of Jammu and Kashmir.

The maximum temperature in Jammu city was 6.6 degrees above season’s average, forcing people to stay indoors especially in the afternoon.

Jammu recorded a minimum temperature of 23.3 degrees Celsius which is almost near normal during this part of the season, an official of the Meteorological department said.

He said Katra, the base camp for the pilgrims visiting the Mata Vaishno Devi shrine, was the second hottest recorded place in the region with a high of 40.4 degrees Celsius and a low of 23.9 de-

grees Celsius.

The mercury is also on the rise over the past couple of days in Kashmir where Srinagar recorded a maximum of 31.3 degrees Celsius, which is 7.4 notches above normal, the official said, indicating a heatwave in different parts of the valley.

He said Srinagar recorded a minimum of 14.2 degrees Celsius 3.6 degrees Celsius above season’s average, he said.

The weatherman has predicted relief from the heat-wave from Monday evening owing to inclement weather.

“There is a possibility of continuation of the dry and clear weather till May 16. Widespread moderate rain or thunderstorm with hail storm at some places and snow over higher reaches is most likely during May 16 (evening) till May 18,” the official said. (PTI)

## Denial Of Justice Would Lead To Anarchy: CJI Ramana

Press Trust Of India

**SRINAGAR:** It is imperative for a healthy democracy that people feel their rights and dignity are recognised and protected, Chief Justice of India N V Ramana said on Saturday, stressing that denial of justice would ultimately lead to anarchy.

Addressing a function in Srinagar, the CJI urged lawyers and judges to create a congenial environment for litigants who are often “under a lot of psychological stress”.

He lamented that the justice delivery mechanism in India is very “complex and expensive” and the country is far behind in making courts inclusive and accessible.

“For the functioning of a healthy democracy, it is imperative that the people feel that their rights and dignity are protected and recognised. Expeditious adjudication of disputes is the hallmark of a healthy democracy.

“Denial of justice would ultimately lead to anarchy. Soon the institution of the judiciary would be destabilised as people will look for extrajudicial mechanisms,” the CJI said.

The Chief Justice of India was here to lay the foundation stone of the new complex for the High Court of Jammu and Kashmir and Ladakh.

“Peace shall only prevail when people’s dignity and rights are recognised and protected,” he said.

Chief Justice Ramana said in India, the courts have the constitutional duty of adjudication of rights and upholding the aspirations of the Constitution.

“One of the major challenges to the protection of rule of law and human rights is the inability of the formal justice system to deliver speedy and affordable justice to all. The justice delivery mechanism in India is very complex and expensive,” he said.

He said the judiciary must be at its innovative best to ensure that the challenges to its working are met with just and Constitutional measures.

“Technology has been a strong aid to the judiciary. Now, virtual courts are bridging the gaps of accessibility by reducing time, cost and distance. But in a country like India, where a vast digital divide still exists, much needs to be done in order to harness the full potential of technological innovations,” he added.



The Chief Justice of India expressed happiness after laying the foundation stone of the new high court complex here.

“Solving the problems of infrastructure is very close to my heart. I have consistently emphasised the need for the development and modernisation of infrastructure. Sadly, post-independence, judicial infrastructure has not been overhauled to meet the demands of the growing needs of modern India.

“We are far behind in making our courts inclusive and accessible. If we don’t attend to this urgently, the Constitutional ideal of access to justice would stand defeated,” he said.

He said the district judiciary is the foundation of the judiciary. “Only if the foundation is strong, the entire system can flourish. As I have mentioned earlier, the condition of judicial infrastructure across the country is far from satisfactory. Courts are operating from rented accommodations and under deplorable conditions.”

The chief justice began his over 20-minute speech with a famous verse by poet Ali Jawad Zaidi as he reminisced about his visits to Kashmir earlier.

“Muddaton baad jo aayaa hoon is vaadi mein

Ik naya hush, naya rang nazar aata hai

(I have come to this valley after ages.

I can see a new beauty, new colour.”

The CJI said, “I had the fortune to visit this paradise many times, but every time I have been amazed by its beauty and moved by its hospitality. It’s a land where one gets to experience four seasons.

“The kindness of the people here, and the enriching culture of Kashmir, transforms every soul that visits this scenic land.”

The chief justice touched on various issues facing the lower judiciary and asked the concerned to take advantage of the 100 per cent funding by the central government.

“The other aspect which I keep on highlighting is the need to fill

## Centre Committed To Ensure Durable Road Network For J&K: Jitendra Singh

Press Trust Of India

**JAMMU:** Union Minister Jitendra Singh on Saturday said the Centre’s firm commitment is to ensure a durable road network for Jammu and Kashmir to ensure its rapid growth and development.

He said roads are the lifelines of a developing nation that brings benefits in various sectors like education, health, marketing of agricultural produce and also brings other social benefits as well.

Singh, the Minister of State for Personnel, said in the last seven to eight years of the Narendra Modi government, India’s work has undergone a sea change and projects are now being cleared on need-based requirements, rather than on any other considerations.

In sanctioning new road projects, priority is given to views of sarpanches and other local elected representatives rather than to requests made by local MPs or MLAs, he said.

Singh highlighted the govern-

ment’s initiatives in boosting road connectivity in Jammu and Kashmir and said it is the firm commitment of the present dispensation that every part of the Union Territory gets a durable road network for rapid growth and development.

According to a Personnel Ministry statement, the minister reviewed 68 roads completed under the Pradhan Mantri Gram Sadak Yojana at Kathua in Jammu and deferred a formal inauguration due to state mourning on Saturday as a mark of respect following the passing away of UAE President Sheikh Khalifa bin Zayed Al-Nahyan.

Built at a cost of over Rs 547 crore, the all-weather roads measuring up to 526 kilometres is likely to benefit a population of over 1.2 lakh people, most of who live in far-flung hilly areas, Singh said.

Barring a few, all the projects were completed within a stipulated timeframe, despite the serious challenges posed by the COVID-19 pandemic, he said.

## Teenager Held For Stabbing Chadoora Resident: Police

Observer News Service

**SRINAGAR:** Police on Saturday arrested a teenager for stabbing a youth during a scuffle in Central Kashmir’s Budgam district.

Around 9:30pm Friday, teenager Mohammad Hussain Dar of Muqam Dadompura stabbed Mehrosh Parvaiz of Hanjoora in abdomen after a scuffle broke out between them, a police spokesperson said.

He said Parvaiz, who received

critical injuries in the stabbing attack was shifted to SDH Chadoora and later referred to SMHS hospital Srinagar for further treatment where his condition is stated to be not well.

“A Case FIR No 5/2022 under relevant sections of law stands registered at Police station Chadoora and investigation taken up. The accused teenager has been held in the instant case and investigation is going on,” the spokesperson said.

## Jammu Logs Eight Corona Cases, Kashmir None

Observer News Service

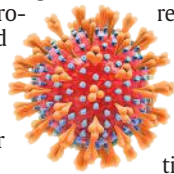
**SRINAGAR:** As many as eight fresh cases of novel Coronavirus were reported in Jammu on Saturday while no cases of infection were detected in the Kashmir Valley over the last 24 hours.

According to officials, all the eight new cases of Covid-19 were registered in Jammu district, taking the number of people infected since the onset of pandemic in the Union Territory to 454139—166394 in Jammu

and 287745 in Kashmir.

During the same time, officials said, five more Covid-19 patients recovered during the last 24 hours and two were from Jammu division and three from Kashmir. So far 449330 people have recovered, leaving the active case tally at 58—44 in Jammu and 14 in Kashmir.

There was also no death due to the pathogen reported in the last 24 hours, they said. So far 4751 persons have succumbed to the virus—2328 in Jammu and 2423 in Kashmir.



## Man Killed After Hit By Vehicle In Budgam

Agencies

**SRINAGAR:** A man was killed on Friday late evening after being hit by a vehicle in Chadoora area of Central Kashmir’s Budgam district.


However, family members of the deceased held protest and alleged that he was murdered.

Family members told a local news agency KNO that around 8:30 pm Friday he was at home when someone called him to come out. “But however he didn’t return home, instead he was found in a pool of blood by locals on a nearby road,” they said.

Identified as Farooq Ah Sheikh son of Gh Nabi Sheikh a resident of Kheerigund Chadoora was immediately shifted to Sub district hospital Nagam where he succumbed to his injuries.

Family members further said that those who brought the deceased to the hospital have found screwdriver marks on his face and head. They have appealed to the administration to probe all the aspects.

An official said that driver of a vehicle has been arrested and investigation has been started to find out whether it’s a murder or an accident.



### UNIVERSITY OF KASHMIR

OFFICE OF THE EXECUTIVE ENGINEER, CONSTRUCTION DIVISION

**NOTICE INVITING E-TENDER**

For and on behalf of the University of Kashmir, e-tenders (In Single cover system) are invited on **item rate basis** from approved and eligible Contractors registered with Govt. of J&K/ other union territories and CPWD, Railways and other State/Central Governments for the following works:-

| S.No | Name of Work   | Est. Cost (Rs. In Lacs) | Cost of T/Doc in shape of E-Challan (in Rs.) | Time of completion | Time and Date for Submission of E-Tender. | Date & Time of Opening of Bid | Class of Contractor |
|------|--|-------------------------|--|--------------------|---|-------------------------------|---------------------|
| 1    | 2  | 3                       | 5  | 6                  | 7   | 9                             | 10                  |
| 1.   | Maintenance/ Repair of Academic Cum Administration Block and Hostel Block at Kupwara Campus.                 | 8.25Lacs                | Rs.600/-                                     | 45-Days            | 13-05 -2022 to 25-05-2022 (6.00 PM)       | 26-05-2022 (11.30 AM)         | “CEE” & “DEE”       |
| 2.   | Construction of overhead roof top and other minor works at Data Centre, Allama Iqbal Library at main campus. | 3.87Lacs                | Rs.300/-                                     | 01-Month           | 13-05 -2022 to 25-05-2022 (6.00 PM)       | 26-05-2022 (11.30 AM)         | “DEE”               |

The bid forms and other details can be obtained from the web site [www.kashmiruniversity.net](http://www.kashmiruniversity.net) / [www.jktenders.gov.in](http://www.jktenders.gov.in).

NIT No. - FUCD(E.tend)/KU/09/22  
DATED:13/05/22.

Executive Engineer  
DIPK-NB-863/22



## YSS Cricket Tourney: Anantnag Face Baramullah in Summit Clash



Observer News Service

**SRINAGAR:** The ongoing YSS Inter District Level cricket tournament, Anantnag will lock horns with Baramulla on Sunday, May 15 in the finale of the sports extravaganza at Kashmir University ground here.

The tournament is being played on league cum knockout basis with 19 teams from 19 districts of the UT participating in the mega tourney.

At Kashmir University ground, the first scheduled semifinal was played between Anantnag and Srinagar. Anantnag after winning the toss elected to bat first and kept a target of 156 runs for the City boys. Trying very hard to chase the target, the team from Srinagar could not find the way and collapsed for 133 runs.

In the other semifinal match,

Bandipora played Baramulla at SP College ground, Baramulla after winning the toss elected to bat first.

It was Tanveer from Baramulla side who helped in dominating the opponent team by scoring 46 runs and Baramulla set a decent total of 132 all out in 18.2 overs. Bandipora couldn't make hold and lost wickets at regular intervals. The team from Bandipora were all out only at 61 runs on board in 16th over. Tanveer was declared man of the match for his magnificent 46 runs and 2 wickets contribution.

Both teams of Anantnag and Baramulla will now face each other in a do-or-die match on Sunday at KU ground. The game is a must-win for both teams.

The grand tourney is being organised by the Department of Youth Services and Sports (YS&S) J&K.

## Bandipora Admin Flags Off Bike Rally To Gurez



Youngsters ambassadors against drug addiction: DC Bandipora

Observer News Service

**BANDIPORA:** Deputy Commissioner Bandipora Dr. Owais Ahmed on Saturday flagged off a bike rally of 50 bikers to Gurez from Mini Secretariate Bandipora under "Nasha Mukht Bharat Abhiyan (Drugs-Free India)".

SSP Bandipora Mohammad Zahid, Assistant Regional Transport Officer Bandipora Bilal Ahmed, District Social Welfare Officer Bandipora (DSWO) Ubaid ul Khazir and other senior officers from District Administration were also present on the occasion.

DC Owais Ahmed said along with enjoying the beauty, such events promotes tourist destinations like Gurez. He said today's Bike rally has the dual purpose of promoting tourism activities in Gurez Valley as well as creating awareness regarding drug abuse.

DC said the bikers on the way will interact with the youth and children to create awareness regarding drug abuse. He said open discussion on such issues helps to eradicate the menace.

He urged the bikers to be aware people on the way to Gurez and conduct awareness at Dawar also.

Dr. Owais said all misconceptions regarding selective impacts of social evils need to be eradicated by educating the youngsters regarding the potential of these sins to engulf the whole society.

He also congratulated the team for conducting the rally in the district. SSP Bandipora Mohd Zahid in his address said youngsters have a great influence on society in building a well-developed nation.

He urged all participants to be an inspiration for youngsters in avoiding drugs and participate in various social friendly activities including sports.

Speaking on the occasion DSWO Ubaid ul Khazir said that last year district administration conducted a number of events to aware various stakeholders regarding Drug abuse and its ramifications.

He said in future administration will also organise awareness programmes in schools.

Speaking on the occasion, President Super Bikers Club Nasir Ahmad said the rally is purely conducted to promote tourism in Gurez valley and to aware people regarding drug abuse. He also thanked district administration Bandipora for organising the bike rally and lauded the efforts of Deputy commissioner for participating in such events which are meant for welfare of the whole society.

## Annual Sports Day Function Held At Polo Ground

Adil Hussain Khan

**SRINAGAR:** An 'Annual Sports Day 2022' event was held at the historic Polo Ground playfield in Srinagar on Saturday. Organised by Delhi Modern Public School, Pampore in collaboration with J&K Sports Council (JKSC) the occasion was graced by around 1200 students and parents, as well as staff members from the respective school and several authorities from the JKSC.

As the chief guest, Secretary JKSC Nuzhat Gull presided over the occasion and congratulated the event's participants, including the medallists from the recent 5th Pencak Silat Federation Cup 2021-22.

On the occasion, schoolchildren performed a variety of drills and sports skills that attracted the crowd.

While talking with participants, the Secretary Sports Council sought comments on what could be done to improve training and coaching at the



grassroots level. She also promised the institution her continued support in all athletic endeavours.

The Secretary Sports Council was flanked by Neelofar Mantoo, DMPS Administrator, S.N Geelani, Founder Delhi Modern Public School, Principal DMPS, Mohammed Iqbal, Manager Polo Ground Sports Complex Council, and other guests.

The event concluded with a Pencak Silat demonstration and a "say no drugs" oath taken by all attendees.

## Rohit, Rahul, Pant Likely To Be Rested For SA T20Is

Dhawan, Pandya in line for captaincy

Press Trust of India

**NEW DELHI:** Many seniors including captain Rohit Sharma and KL Rahul are all set to be rested for the upcoming five-match T20 series against South Africa, with an eye on the marquee tour of England in July. Besides, the national selection committee is also set to excuse Jasprit Bumrah and Rishabh Pant from the engagements against the Proteas.

It is understood that veteran opener Shikhar Dhawan and all-rounder Hardik Pandya, who has impressed one and all with his captaincy for Gujarat Titans in IPL-15, are in reckoning for the leadership role for both South Africa and the short two-match T20I series against Ireland.

Most of the players who recently played in the T20 series against Sri Lanka and the West Indies are likely to be retained, irrespective of their current IPL form. Obviously Suryakumar Yadav or Ravindra Jadeja's injury needs to be factored in and Deepak Chahar will also not be available.

The likes of Ruturaj Gaikwad, Ishan Kishan, Shreyas Iyer, Deepak Hooda along with Dhawan and Hardik are set to form the core of the batting unit. Sanju Samson could also be retained and there could be at the max one left field selection in the squad.

In the pace bowling unit, Bhuvneshwar Kumar, Prasidh Krishna, Harshal Patel, Avesh Khan are all certainties, along with the IPL's stellar spin duo of Ravichandran Ashwin and Yuzvendra Chahal. Kuldeep Yadav is also expected to make the cut.

The T20 rubber against the Proteas will start in the national capital on June 9 with the remaining matches being held at Cuttack, Visakhapatnam, Rajkot and Bengaluru respectively.



## Mohsin Khan Could Pip Umran Malik

While Umran Malik has generated considerable excitement with his 150 kmph plus pace, there is a feeling that he is too raw and time with the India A team could help him develop better. While he remains in the mix with death overs specialist Arshdeep Singh, the man who is emerging as a 'Dark Horse' is Lucknow Super Giants' left-armers Mohsin Khan.

"Our pace bowling department is set and selectors might not experiment too much," he said.

"But yes, Mohsin has impressed almost everyone with his pace, bounce and swing in this edition. He does have a chance. Having said that, not ruling out Umran or Arshdeep either, but Mohsin might just be slightly ahead," he added.

The squad for the SA series is likely to be selected on May

22 -- the last day of the league phase of this edition of IPL -- in Mumbai.

The PTI has already reported that an out-of-form Virat Kohli will also be given a much-needed break but it is understood that for the selectors as well as the BCCI, the tour of England starting early July is paramount.

"All the senior India players will get at least three and half weeks of complete rest. Rohit, Virat, KL, Rishabh and Jasprit will all directly go to England for the 'fifth Test' following the white-ball series. We need all our key players to remain fresh for the England series," a senior BCCI source privy to the development told PTI on the condition of anonymity.

As a part of workload management, all the senior all-format players will not be part of the next seven T20 Internationals.

Asked about captaincy, the source said: "The selectors have a couple of choices. Shikhar Dhawan, as he has already captained India in absence of Virat, Rohit and Rahul during last year's Sri Lanka series. But Hardik Pandya's impressive captaincy for Gujarat Titans hasn't gone unnoticed. So it will be a close call," he added.

## CBI Books 7 In Match Fixing Connection In 2019 IPL; Pak Angle Being Probed

Press Trust of India

**NEW DELHI:** The CBI has booked seven suspected punters in connection with two separate cases related to alleged fixing of 2019 Indian Premier League matches "based on inputs" from Pakistan, officials said Saturday.

The central agency has started a country-wide probe and was carrying out searches at seven locations in Delhi, Hyderabad, Jaipur and Jodhpur, they said.

The agency received inputs that "a network of individuals involved in cricket betting are influencing the outcome of Indian Premier League (IPL) matches based on inputs received from Pakistan", the FIRs alleged.

The CBI has named one Dileep Kumar, based in Rohini, Delhi, and Gurram Vasu and Gurram Satish based in Hyderabad in its first FIR as accused while Sajjan Singh, Prabhu Lal Meena, Ram Avtar and Amit Kumar Sharma, all from Rajasthan, have been named in the second.

The racket allegedly operating from Rajasthan is continuing since 2010 while another is on since 2013, they said.

The networks operating on the basis of inputs from Pakistan were also cheating the public by "inducing them for betting", they said.

The racketeers have bank accounts (mule accounts) using fake identities and know your customer (KYC) documents in connivance with the unknown bank officials, they said.

"These bank accounts have been opened by submitting forged details such as multiple dates of birth and without due diligence done by the bank officials."

"A part of the money received from the general public in India on account of such betting activities is also being shared with their associates based in foreign countries using hawala transac-



tions," the FIRs alleged.

The CBI has found that Dileep was operating a number of bank accounts in which domestic cash deposits worth Rs 4.55 crore (domestic) and Rs 3.05 lakh (foreign) have been made during 2012-20 and in the case of Gurram Vasu the amount is Rs 5.37 crore during the period.

The CBI has alleged there is no recognisable business rationale to explain transactions in the accounts.

"The information reveals that this network of individuals was involved in cricket betting during Indian Premier League (IPL) Matches held in the year 2019."

"The persons involved are running the racket of cricket betting, committing fraud by inducing betting by the general public and thereby deceiving public of their hard-earned money and also indulging in impersonating their identities in operating various bank accounts," the FIR related to Delhi-Hyderabad racket alleged.

The CBI has alleged that maximum cash transactions in these accounts are of pan-India nature which further substantiates the allegation of these unusual financial transactions being linked with cricket betting and other criminal activities, the officials said.

### UNREST IN CSK?

## Ambati Rayudu Announces IPL Retirement, Deletes Tweet Later



Press Trust of India

**MUMBAI:** The unrest in Chennai Super Kings camp once again came to the forefront after senior batter Ambati Rayudu announced his "IPL retirement" on social media, only to back-track within an hour after being talked out of it by the team management.

CSK are already out of play-off race with couple of matches left but already former skipper Ravindra Jadeja has gone home with a "bruised rib" but not before adding fuel to the speculations that he has had a fall-out with management after being told to relinquish captaincy.

On Saturday morning, the 36-year-old former India white-ball player took to Twitter to announce his decision.

"I am happy to announce that this will be my last ipl. I have had a wonderful time playing it and being a part of 2 great teams for 13 years. Would love to sincerely thank Mumbai Indians and Csk for the wonderful journey," Rayudu had tweeted.

But within an hour, the post was deleted as CSK owners and team management were completely caught unawares about Rayudu's decision which also raised questions about the communication channel in one of the most successful teams in IPL history.

"I can confirm that Ambati Rayudu is not retiring from IPL. Yes, he did tweet about it. May be it was in an emotional state he tweeted. He has been spoken to and subsequently deleted the tweet," CSK CEO Kasi Viswanathan told PTI.

It is not the first time Rayudu made U-turn from retirement decision. He made news following his "3 dimensional" tweet aimed at India selector MSK Prasad in the backdrop of his exclusion from World Cup 2019 squad.

Subsequently, Rayudu retired from international cricket in July the same year only to overturn his decision.

During his over-decade IPL career, Rayudu, an IPL legend, represented two franchises. He was first picked up by Mumbai Indians in 2010 after being granted amnesty by BCCI to return to the main fold following his stint in the de-recognised Indian Cricket League in 2007 and stayed there till 2017.

Rayudu is one of the most successful players in the IPL as he has been part of the title-winning sides on five occasions (2013, 2015, 2017 with Mumbai Indians and 2018, 2021 with Chennai Super Kings).



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