

## Climate Change Taking Toll On Kashmir's Fragile Ecosystem In July, Valley Witnessed Three Cloudbursts, A Dozen Flashfloods

Auqib Javed

**SRINAGAR:** Kashmir's fragile ecosystem seems to be bearing the brunt of rising global temperature and climate change, as at least three incidents of cloudbursts and a dozen flash-floods were witnessed in the month of July in the Valley, leaving as many as 15 people dead.

From last two months, the incessant rainfall threatened flooding only for the temperature to start rising again. At the same time the humidity remained high.

Climate change has also manifested itself in unseasonal snowfall, heavy or scanty rainfall and hailstorms in recent years.

It may be noted that Summer capital, Srinagar saw a major drop in the number of snow spells this

winter season compared to the previous four years, with the experts terming it as a weathervane of coming prolonged warmer months compared to colder months, unlike the past weather pattern.

Dr. Majid Farooq, Scientist at J&K Climate Change Centre Department of Ecology, Environment and Remote Sensing, argues that the valley is the victim of rising global temperature and climate change.

"You need to understand that it is a global phenomenon, you have to understand its global perspective. The temperature is rising due to industries, the valley doesn't have many industries," Majid said.

According to the data of the India Meteorological Department (IMD), November 2021 witnessed no major wet



spell or snowfall in Srinagar compared to the five wet spells in 2020, 11 in 2019, four in 2018. In the month of June and July, the heavy and moderate

rainfall triggered a number of flash floods in many districts of the Valley including the city, besides causing damage to the agricultural fields, private

### Flash Floods Hit Surankote, Schools Shut

Flash floods triggered by heavy rains hit areas of Surankote town in Jammu and Kashmir's Poonch district on Monday, prompting authorities to shut educational institutions and sound an alert, officials said. According to officials, heavy overnight rains in the hilly areas of Surankote belt triggered flash floods, with huge volume of water entering into houses and shops. The Army and police pitched in to help the aggrieved residents. Reports said many houses, shops and vehicles were damaged in the floods. Senior district officials reached out to the people of flood inundated areas. Authorities also issued advisories to people to | [More on P10](#)

property and also led to rivers brimming up.

On June 22, the ghost of 2014 devastating floods returned to haunt Kashmir after river Jhelum crossed the danger mark at different locations, following the four days of incessant rains.

Several low-lying areas of Srinagar and other parts of Kashmir were inundated after the water level in major rivers and tributaries rose sharply.

In many areas of Srinagar, people started shifting to second stories of their houses. However,

the rains stopped after four days subsiding the flood threat.

A weather department official told Kashmir Observer that flash floods will occur in the Himalayan region during the monsoon time.

"...However, the monsoon rainfall is okay for plain areas but for hilly ones, it creates problems like flash-floods," the official said.

He further added that the Valley witnessed at least a dozen flash-floods in the month of July only, while three cloudbursts were also reported.

He said that because of the peculiar topography, Kashmir will witness climate variability and hence cloudbursts, flash-floods etc.

On July 08, at least 15 Amarnath pilgrims died and over 55 were | [More on P10](#)

### Foul Play!

## Rs 43L Biryani Ghotala Hits J&K Football Association



### ACB Files Case, Find Funds Withdrawn With Fake Bills

Agencies

**Srinagar:** Jammu and Kashmir Football Association (JKFA) has landed in a controversy with Rs 43 lakh biryani scam, as the amount sanctioned for the development of sport was allegedly swindled by those sitting at the helm of the affairs.

The Anti-Corruption Bureau (ACB) has registered a case against the

JKFA for misappropriation of funds worth lakhs of rupees provided to them by the Jammu and Kashmir Sports Council for the promotion of football.

The case has been registered against JKFA president Zamir Thakur, treasurer Surinder Singh Bunty, chief executive S A Hameed and member Fayaz Ahmad besides other office bearers for misappropriation of funds worth lakhs of rupees withdrawn against false and fabricated bills.

"As of now, no person has been arrested. Further action will be taken only after completion of the investigation." | [More on P10](#)

**THE ACB FOUND THAT NO SUCH REFRESHMENT HAS EVER BEEN GIVEN TO ANY TEAM** in any district of Kashmir province. The bills were raised by the Association and placed on record before the ACB, have been found fake.

## 397 Test Covid Positive In J&K As Cases Dip

Observer News Service

**Srinagar:** After crossing 700-mark for several days, the daily Coronavirus cases in Jammu and Kashmir dropped to 397 on Monday, while

one more person succumbed to the deadly infection in the Union Territory during the last 24 hours.

According to officials, Kashmir Valley registered 275 fresh cases of novel Coronavirus | [More on P10](#)

## 2-Member Panel To Probe Illegal Promotions In SMC

Agencies

**Srinagar:** The Jammu & Kashmir Government has constituted a fact-finding committee to enquire into illegal promotions granted to engineering staff of the Srinagar Municipal Corporation.

The Housing & Urban Development Department (HUDD) has constituted a two-member panel comprising Ashish Gupta (special secretary, H&UDD) and Naseer Ahmad Kakroo (chief engineer, Urban Environmental Engineering Department) to look into the promotions granted from time to time pointed out by the inquiry officer in his report submitted to the Government on June 9, 2021.

According to an order issued by the administrative department, the panel has been directed to verify whether the promotions were in consonance with qualification and rules.

As per its terms of reference, the fact-finding committee will also identify the officers/ officials and their acts of omissions and commissions, leading to their promotions.

The committee has been directed to complete the inquiry and submit its report within a period of one month from the date of issuance of its order.

The government has directed Mudassar Ahmad, secretary, SMC to assist the committee in holding | [More on P10](#)



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# How To Make A Payment Button: A Complete Guide

Sponsored Article

As a merchant, your entire e-commerce business revolves around providing customers with quality products and services in return for payments. However, with the ongoing cutthroat competition in the marketplace, delivering quality products and services is not enough. You must also provide your customers with other comforts like a seamless payment process. Offering a smooth payment service can be a little tricky as there are numerous payment methods available in the market in today's time. Opting for a payment gateway requires a lot of technical expertise, so if you have a startup or a small/medium-sized enterprise, NGO, etc., it is preferable to make a payment button. Starting a business online has enough challenges, and accepting payments should not be one of them. Make a payment button to start accepting payments in less than 5 minutes. How to Use a Payment Button to Boost Sales?

1. The Right Placement is Important  
Once you make a payment button, it is important to place it at the right place on your website. The placement depends on the type of business you are undertaking. For instance, if your website is centrally an information hub, place it somewhere in the middle of the webpage. This way, you will not ruin the experience of customers who are still researching. Moreover, if your website is a full-blown product or service selling platform, place your payment button right on the top. This helps customers avoid unnecessary scrolling.

2. Choose a Striking Design  
A payment button should be attractive enough to catch customers' attention. This can be achieved by selecting the right color, shape, and size of your payment button. It is preferred that your payment button should be designed a little differently from the rest of your website. Using contrasting colors and fonts can make your payment button more appealing and hence would attract customers to buy your products or services.

3. Integrate Your Payment Button with Retargeting  
It is common these days for e-commerce businesses to use retargeting campaigns to engage



the consumers who did not convert. Various brands try to bring back prospective customers with exclusive offers and reminders for what has been sitting in their shopping carts.

8 Easy Steps to Make a Payment Button

1. With the increasing number of payment service providers in the market, each one is trying to win over with their unique services. However, it is important to indulge in in-depth research about various reputable options to pick the best one for your business.

2. Once you have selected a payment service provider, go to their dashboard to log in.  
3. Click on the "create payment button" option.  
4. Select the product or service you want to attach to your payment button. Remember that you can change the selected item at any point in time.  
5. Next, enter the necessary information such as item name, currency, ID, amount, tax, etc.

6. In case you do not like how your payment button looks, many reputable payment service providers give you a flexible service of customizing your payment button. You can change its color, shape, item description, and much more.

7. After you are done filling in all necessary details, you can select the option of "generate code." Copy the code once it is generated.  
8. Go to your web platform, paste the generated code, and you are ready to accept payments through a payment button.  
Make Checkout Simple with Razorpay Payment Button  
If you are a part of this competitive and fierce world of e-commerce, you need to ensure that you give your customers the utmost comfort while shopping. Razorpay is a leading payment solution that allows your customers to select a one-time or subscription plan with the same payment button. Visit their website to read more about how Razorpay clients use payment buttons to save money and improve conversion.

## PUBLIC NOTICE

I have lost all the documents of my vehicle bearing Regd No; JK03B- 0467 . Now I have applied for the duplicate of the same if anybody haivng any objection in this regard he/she may file his/her objection in the office of the ARTO Anantnag within a period of seven days from the date of publication of this notice. After that no objection shall be entertained.

Hilal Ahmad Wani  
S/o Mansoor Ah Wani  
R/o Keegam Shopian  
tlc

## CONDOLANCE

With profound grief and sorrow, we inform the sad demise of our beloved mother, Fatima Bano W/o Ali Mohammad Bhat, R/o Karipora, near DC Office Budgam. The deceased left for heavenly abode on Sunday, 31 July 2022. May Almighty grant her highest place in Heaven.

The Chaharum (Fateh Khani) will be held on 3rd of August 2022.

Bereaved Family:

1. Gulzar Ahmad Bhat (9419034125)
2. Showkat Hussain Bhat
3. Ghulam Hussain Bhat

inf

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**Horticulture Department, Jammu & Kashmir Government**  
Opposite Presentation Convent School, Rajbagh, Srinagar-190008, J&K

No: JKHPMC eNIT 98 of 2022  
Date: 30-07-2022

Subject: Corrigendum w.r.t e-NIT No. 98 of 2022, Dated: 29-06-2022.

In view of requests/observations made by prospective bidders, in respect of the 'e-Tender' (RFP), for the above mentioned eNIT for "Request for Proposal for Design, Supply, Installation, Testing & Commissioning of Equipment including construction work for new 5000 MT Controlled Atmosphere (CA) Store under Greenfield at Behrampora, Baramulla, J&K", few 'Amendments' have been done in the RFP document and the same are available on JK Govt. e-Procurement Portal and JKHPMC Website. The 'Amendments' shall take immediate effect and as such the connected stakeholders are advised to go through the "Corrigendum-3" on the said Website and submit their Bids (Proposal) accordingly.

Other Terms and Conditions shall remain the same unless notified otherwise.

**DIPK-NB-2886/22**

Sd/-  
Managing Director  
JKHPMC Ltd.

# AI promises to revolutionise medical research

One week social-media users are generating and sharing amusing images using AI, the next we hear AI can predict the structure of over 200 million proteins.

AI is particularly well placed to revolutionise medical research. The technology helps in two vital ways: it optimises research, and it can make discoveries that humans have not. AI is unshackled from the limitations that come with human researchers: it can trawl deep datasets exponentially faster, never needs to take a break, and never succumbs to illness or fatigue.

Taiwanese computer scientist, businessman and author Kai-Fu Lee recently spoke about his optimism for the future of AI.

We've surprised ourselves with how well machine learning algorithms work. It makes us focus on the things that AI cannot do, and it will probably either lead to a greater understanding of the human mystique of how we think or it will lead to more breakthroughs, leading to superintelligence. It took 40 years, but I think we're basically there.

None of this means the rise of the machines is imminent. Despite its advances, AI is still encumbered by technical limitations. AI pioneer Yosua Bengio said in 2021 that deep learning was not anywhere close today to the level of intelligence of a two-year-old child. A study by Pugliese et al. (2021) finds that more and more medical research is mentioning "machine learning".

But maybe we have algorithms that are equivalent to lower animals, for perception. And we're gradually climbing this ladder in terms of tools that allow an entity to explore its environment,

he said. Much more work needs to be done to perfect the technology, and there is no foreseeable date by which humans will be superfluous to the world of medical research. There is also the matter of ethics in AI, in which legislators will have to parse a minefield of questions about issues ranging from data collection to intellectual property and beyond.



In the meantime, leading minds continue to use machine learning and AI to innovate and expand the horizon of what's possible in medical research.

**REALITY CHECK**  
Between 2000 and 2019, the research community became much more interested in AI: the global output of AI research grew from 52,000 journal publications and conference papers in 2000 to roughly 403,000 in 2019.

AI is projected to contribute US\$15.7 trillion to the 2030 global economy. Nine in 10 of the 100 healthcare executives surveyed in 2020 said their hospital had an AI and automation strategy in place.

**BIG IDEAS**

"The goal and expectation is that in fully integrating AI into research about disease development, many unknowns will become known. What causes diseases to spread, worsen and change, and additional early signs or symptoms that research has yet to uncover, should reveal themselves with the new frontiers made possible by auto-

mated AI," Hiroaki Kitano, Okinawa Institute of Science and Technology.

"The use of AI in making medical decisions is still new and many barriers need to be overcome before it is used widely in clinical practice. For it to reach its full capacity, wider research and more rigorous approaches are needed to grapple with the ethical issues it raises. This is an ideal time for medical professionals, stakeholders and governments, as well as individuals and their families, to work together and seek a balance between the benefits and risks of the new technologies," Alexander Merkin, Auckland University of Technology.

## OFFICE OF THE EXECUTIVE ENGINEER R&B DIVISION KULGAM

Government of Jammu & Kashmir

NOTICE INVITING e-TENDER

FOR MACADAM WORKS

FRESH NIT No. 74/2022-23/RnB/Kul/e-tendering/5961-80 dated 28-07-2022

For and on behalf of the Lt. Governor, Union Territory of J&K-e-tenders are invited on %age basis from approved and eligible Contractors registered with J&K Govt. CPWD, Railways and other State/Central Governments for each of the following works:-

S.No	Name of Work	Adv. Cost (Rs. In Lacs)	Cost of T/ Doc. (In Rupees)	Earnest Money	Time of completion	M.H of Account	Class of Contractor
1	Upgradation of Badroo road by way of P/L of 75mm thick Wet Mix, 50mm Bitumenious Macadam with 25mm semidense and 6mm seal coat	22.00	800	44000	15 days	Pot Holes	AAY with HMPD/BEE/CEE
2	Upgradation of Frisal Awneera incld: Ziyarath Sharief and Hospital Frisal road way of P/L of 75mm thick Wet Mix, 50mm Bitumenious Macadam with 25mm semidense and 6mm seal coat	25.00	800	50000	15 days	Pot Holes	AAY with HMPD/AAY/BEE/CEE
3	Upgradation of Khudwani to Redwani and Khudwani Ganjipora road way of P/L of 75mm thick Wet Mix, 50mm Bitumenious Macadam along with 25mm semidense and 6mm seal coat	19.40	800	38800	15 days	Pot Holes	AAY with HMPD/BEE/CEE

Position of AAA: - Accorded

Position of T.S: - Accorded

1. The NIT Consisting of qualifying information, eligibility criteria, specifications, 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 as per schedule of dates given below:

1	Date of Issue of Tender Notice	29-07-2022
2	Period of downloading of bidding documents	29-07-2022 from 10.00AM to 04-08-2022 04:00PM
3	Bid submission Start Date	29-07-2022 from 10.00AM
4	Bid Submission End Date	04-08-2022 from 04:00PM
5	Date & time of opening of Bids (Online)	05-08-2022 from 10.00AM in the office of Executive Engineer (R&B) Division Kulgam

Bids must be accompanied with cost of Tender document in shape of Demand Draft/ Treasury Challan / Receipt credited to MH 0059-Rev: Misc: and Earnest money / Bid security in shape of CDR / FDR / BG pledged to Executive Engineer (R&B) Division Kulgam (tender receiving authority). -Refer Govt: order No: O.M. No. A/24(2017)-651 Dated:- 07-06-2018.

2. Earnest Monty (2% of the Advertised cost) from all the bidders in the shape of CDR / FDR / BG at the time of tendering and 3% performance security of the allotted cost in shape of CDR / FDR / BG by the Successful Bidder. The same shall be released after successful completion of the Defect Liability Period of the work. The EMD 2% of successful bidders shall be released after receipt of 3% Performance Security vide Chief Engineer (R&B) Kashmir, Srinagar's Circular No: CE/RBK/HD/32857-72 dated 01-01-2022

3. The date and time of opening of Bids shall be notified on Web Site 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 Division Kulgam

4. The bids for the work shall remain valid for a period of 120 days from the date of opening of Technical Bid

5. Instruction to bidders regarding e-tendering process.

a. Bidders are advised to download bid submission manual from the "Downloads" option as well as from "Bidders Manual Kit" on website www.jktenders.gov.in to acquaint bid submission process.

b. To participate in bidding process, bidders have to get 'Digital Signature Certificate (DSC)' as per Information Technology Act-2000. Bidders can get digital certificate from any approved vendors.

c. The bidders have to submit their bids online in electronic format with digital Signature. No Financial bid will be accepted in physical form.

d. Bids will be opened online as per time schedule mentioned in Para-1.

e. Bidders must ensure to upload scanned copy of all necessary documents with bid.

f. Bidders must ensure to upload scanned copy of all necessary documents including tender document fee in terms of soft copies with technical bid.

Note: - Scan all the documents on 100 dpi with black and white option.

6. The department will not be responsible for delay in online submission due to any reasons.

7. Scanned copy of cost of tender document in shape of Treasury Challan / Receipt in favour of Executive Engineer PWD(R&B) Division Kulgam (The Date of Treasury Challan should be between the date of Start of Bid and Bid Submission End Date) pledged to Executive Engineer PWD(R&B) Division Kulgam must be uploaded with the documents of the bid. The Original Treasury Challan (Cost of Tender Document) and other relevant bid documents shall be obtained from the lowest bidder before the fixation of the Contract.

8. Bidders are advised not to make any change in BOQ (Bill of Quantities) contents. In no case they should attempt to create similar BOQ manually.

9. Price escalation and taxes: The %age quoted by the bidder entirely in Indian Rupees, shall be deemed to include price escalation and all taxes upto completion of the work. Deduction on account of taxes shall be made from the bills of the contractor on gross amount of the bill as per the rates prevailing at the time of recovery.

10. Bidders are advised to use "My Documents" area in their user on R&B e-Tendering portal to store such documents as are required.

11. All other terms and conditions are as same as laid in PWD Form 25.

No: 5981-83

Dtd: 29-07-2022

**DIPK-7073/22**

Sd/-  
Executive Engineer,  
R&B Division Kulgam



## Out Of 20 Elecric Buses Introduced In City, 8 Lying Defunct At Workshops

### Agencies

Srinagar: Out of 20, at least 8 much-hyped Road Transport Corporation - erstwhile SRTC electric buses introduced in Kashmir capital Srinagar are defunct and lying at workshops for maintenance for months now.

The Government of Jammu and Kashmir introduced 20 electric buses through JKRTC in Srinagar city 3 years ago under the

routes, passengers are facing inconvenience. They blame the RTC administration for the mess.

“Much hype was given to these buses when introduced both in Jammu and Srinagar but no efforts were made to keep the engineers ready for the maintenance of these buses,” Nisar Ahmed, a local from Harwan Srinagar said.

Besides maintenance problems, these buses also



Smart City project. These environment-friendly electric buses ply on different routes of Srinagar and other parts including Harwan, Khrew, Narbal, Soura etc.

For the last several months, 8 out of 20 buses developed some snag and await maintenance.

RTC City Deployment Officer told news agency Kashmir News Trust that for every defect, they require an engineer from outside J&K. “It takes time in maintenance as we don’t have that skilled staff. We call engineers from outside to maintain these buses,” he said.

Due to suspension of these buses from several

lack critical backup which could render these vehicles defunct in coming months.

The charging point at city centre Lal Chowk is virtually defunct while the Bemina charging point witnesses a heavy load.

“It takes a minimum of two hours for a bus to get charged and every vehicle has to return to the depot to prepare for the next journey. The lack of charging points adversely hamper the operations of these buses,” an employee said on condition of anonymity.

Pertinently, these 40 buses were procured at a whopping cost of Rs 40 crore by Jammu and Kashmir administration. (KNT)

## Washroom Facilities Remain Closed At SKIMS, Patients Suffer

### Agencies

Srinagar: The patients and attendants at OPD of Kashmir premier healthcare institute of state, Sher-e-Kashmir Institution of Medical Sciences (SKIMS), are suffering as toilet facilities have been closed since last two weeks.

Patients and attendants said that washrooms inside OPD have been closed from the last two weeks and not a single washroom is open there to use due to which patients and attendants are suffering.

“We don’t have any other option other than to urinate in the open as we have to be with patients and even patients suffer as washrooms are closed,” said an attendant at the SKIMS.

“Male attendants are somehow managing it but where would a female attendant or fe-

male patient go in such circumstances,” he said.

A female attendant said: “There is a huge rush of patients and attendants in OPD but washrooms are closed which causes inconvenience.”

She said that authorities should have made alternative arrangements for it before closing down the washrooms there.

“Patients and attendants requested authorities to look into the matter at an earliest and make washrooms functional there so that patients won’t suffer anymore,” she said.

Meanwhile, Medical Superintendent SKIMS Dr Farooq Jan told KNO that one facility is functional there while two more are being repaired.

He added that one more such facility is coming there and presently it is at tendering stage. (KNO)

## DC Administers Oath To Newly Appointed Members Of DCDRC

### Observer News Service

Srinagar: Deputy Commissioner (DC) Srinagar, Mohammad Aijaz Asad Monday administered Oath of Office and Oath of Secrecy to Farah Deeba and Shabnum Munshi as members of District Consumer Disputes Redressal Commission (DCDRC) Srinagar established under Consumer Protection Act 2019.

Additional District Development Commissioner, Srinagar, Zahoor Ahmad Mir, Additional Deputy Commissioner, Faz Iul Haseeb, Assistant Commissioner Revenue, Raies Ahmad, AD FCS&CA, South Srinagar Mush-taq Ahmad, AD FCS&CA, North, Mohammad Yousuf and other concerned were present during the oath ceremony.

On the occasion, the DC congratulated the newly appointed members and apart from administering the Oath of Office and Oath of Secrecy, he sensitised them about the importance of effective implementation of the Act in light of the changing scenario of consumer markets. He stressed on protecting the interests of the consumers by ensuring time bound and quality redressal of public grievances.

It is worth mentioning here that the Department of Food Civil Supplies and Consumer Affairs (FCS&CA) vide notification dated March 17, 2022, has appointed Farah Deeba and Shabnum Munshi as Members of District Consumer Disputes Redressal Commission for redressal of consumer disputes.



Srinagar is draped in black with the onset of Muharram to mourn the massacre of the family of the Prophet of Islam in the deserts of Karbala. Ko Photo Abid Bhat

## Police Arrests Three For Carrying Liquor At Nishat

### Observer News Service

Srinagar: Police on Monday said that they have arrested two NIT students and a Biryani seller after a video went viral in which these youths were seen caught by Nishat locals with liquor in Srinagar.

Police said that today a video surfaced on social media wherein a few locals of Nishat claimed to have caught a few drunkards/drug abusers in the higher reaches of Nishat area. The video was purportedly of 31/07/22 evening.

The police spokesman further stated that the matter was discussed with the locals and after hectic efforts the boys were identified & held.

Two among them were identified as students from NIT Srinagar, who were carrying 3 bottles of liquor while the third one has been identified as a biryani seller at Lal Chowk, he said.

Police said that its men at Nishat have already been working with the locals of the area from the last 3-4 months, with special focus on this area known

as ‘Laila Majnoon’ hillock which has become a hub of immoral activities according to the locals, he said.

“Due to persistent efforts of the police station a lot of change has been witnessed in the recent past with over there with the youth being counselled, sent to rehabilitation coupled with relevant legal action as well”, Police said.

Srinagar police reiterated its pledge against social crimes and urged cooperation of the general public in bringing such issues to their notice.

## SKIMS To Conduct Scientific Conference On ‘Pediatric Pulmonary Update’

### Observer News Service

Srinagar: The department of Pediatrics SKIMS in association with IAP-NRC, J&K Chapter is organizing a one day scientific conference on “Pediatric Pulmonary Update” on 3rd August.

Pediatric Pulmonologists of National and International

repute from all over country to present research papers on varied topics.

Director SKIMS & EOSG, Prof. Parvaiz A. Koul congratulated the organizing team for organizing the mega event. He said scientific conferences provide a wider platform and constitute social spaces for re-

searchers and academicians to present their scientific work. It is an important venture for scientists for brainstorming which can lead to new initiatives. I hope this major scientific program organized by Pediatrics will prove beneficial to the students and academicians, he added.



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- BARAMULLA: 0194-102029
- BIJBHERA: 01932-228243
- PAMPORE: 01933-294132
- PATTAN: 01954-293507
- QAZIGUND: 01951-296153

HIGHWAY STATUS



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



HIJRI

CALENDAR

03 Muharram

1444

PRAYERS

FAJR	4:06
ZUHR	12:37
ASR	5:31
Magrib	7:35
ISHA	9:07

### This Day In History

- 338 BC - Macedonian army led by Philip II defeats combined forces of Athens and Thebes in the Battle of Chaeronea, securing Macedonian hegemony in Greece and the Aegean
- 216 BC - Second Punic War: Battle of Cannae - Carthaginian army lead by Hannibal defeats numerically superior Roman army under command consuls Lucius Aemilius Paullus and Gaius Terentius Varro
- 257 - St Stephen I ends his reign as Catholic Pope
- 1057 - Frederik van Lotharingen elected as 1st Belgium Pope Stephen IX [X]
- 1100 - King William II of England (William Rufus) is killed by an arrow shot by Sir Walter Tyrell while hunting in the New Forest
- 1542 - French troops leave Flanders
- 1552 - Treaty of Passau: Emperor Charles V accepts Lutheran religion
- 1701 - Great Peace of Montreal signed between New France and North American Indian nations at urging of Huron chief Kondiaronk
- 1718 - Austrian joins Triple Alliance
- 1798 - Battle of the Nile: British Royal Navy under Admiral Horatio Nelson further decimates the French fleet
- 1858 - Government of India transferred from East India Company to the British Crown
- 1903 - Unsuccessful uprising of Macedonians against Turkey
- 1914 - Germany & Turkey sign secret treaty of alliance
- 1914 - Russian troops invade Eastern Prussia
- 1916 - World War I: Austrian sabotage causes the sinking of the Italian battleship Leonardo da Vinci in Taranto.
- 1918 - Japan announces that it is deploying troops to Siberia in the aftermath of World War I.
- 1922 - China, hit by a typhoon; about 60,000 die
- 1928 - Benito Mussolini signs peace treaty with Abyssinia (Ethiopia)

From KO Archives

Officer Shifted For 7th Time, Goes On Leave

Observer News Service

Srinagar - The principal secretary, revenue, Sonali Kumar, has proceeded on leave following the recent transfers and postings in the state administration.

The high-ranking bureaucrat has been transferred for the seventh time in the changes announced yesterday.

During the two-and-a-Half year tenure of the coalition government, Kumar has been shifted \$ax times from her posts.

Before the coalition government‘ came to power, Sonali Kumar had been made the commissioner secretary, education, on May 1, 2002.

Soon after the new government took over, she was transferred to the technical education department as commissioner secretary in November

2003. In February the next year, she was transferred to industries and commerce, and four months later, in July 2003, to the higher and technical education department

After serving on that post for one year, she was transferred again in July 2004, and made the principal secretary of the forest department. The government shifted her again in April 2005, this time to the health and medical education department.

Yesterday’s revamp, which made her the principal secretary of the revenue department, was the sixth time she was transferred in 2-and-a-half years.

Fed up with the repeated transfers and postings, Sonali Kumar, has gone on leave in protest, sources told the KNS. She has asked the government to grant her leave till October.

(Kashmir Observer, 02 August, 2005)



## India Records 16,464 Covid Cases, 24 Fatalities In A Day

Press Trust of India

**New Delhi:** India added 16,464 new coronavirus infections taking the total tally of COVID-19 cases to 4,40,36,275, while the active cases increased to 1,43,989, according to the Union Health Ministry data updated on Monday.

The death toll climbed to 5,26,396 with 24 new fatalities, the data updated at 8 am stated. The active cases comprise 0.33 per cent of the total infections, while the national COVID-19 recovery rate was recorded at 98.48 per cent, the health ministry said.

An increase of 313 cases has been recorded in the active COVID-19 caseload in a span of 24 hours. The daily positivity rate was recorded at 6.01 per cent while the weekly positivity rate was at 4.80 per cent, according to the health ministry.

he number of people who have recuperated from the disease surged to 4,33,65,890 while the case fatality rate was recorded at 1.20 per cent.

According to the ministry, 204.34 crore doses of Covid vaccine have been administered in the country so far under the nationwide COVID-19 vaccination drive.

India's COVID-19 tally had crossed the 20-lakh mark on August 7, 2020, 30 lakh on August 23, 40 lakh on September 5 and 50 lakh on September 16.

It went past 60 lakh on September 28, 70 lakh on October 11, crossed 80 lakh on October 29, 90 lakh on November 20 and surpassed the one-crore mark on December 19. India crossed the grim milestone of two crore on May 4, three crore on June 23 last year and four crore on January 25 this year. PTI

## Iran Can Make Atomic Bomb But It's Not On Agenda, Says Its Nuclear Head



Agenceis

**Dubai:** Iran has the technical capability to produce an atomic bomb but has no intention of doing so, Mohammad Eslami, head of the country's atomic energy organisation, said on Monday, according to the semi-official Fars news agency.

Eslami reiterated comments made by Kamal Kharrazi, a senior adviser to Supreme Leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei, in July. Kharrazi's remarks amounted to a rare suggestion that the Islamic Republic might have an interest in nuclear weapons, which it has long denied seeking.

"As Mr. Kharrazi mentioned, Iran has the technical ability to build an atomic bomb, but such a program is not on the agenda," said Eslami.

Iran is already enriching uranium to up to 60 per cent fissile purity, far above a cap of 3.67% set under Tehran's now tattered 2015 nuclear deal with world powers. Uranium enriched to 90 per cent is suitable for a nuclear bomb.

In 2018, former US President Donald Trump ditched the nuclear pact, under which Iran curbed its uranium enrichment work, a potential pathway to

nuclear weapons, in exchange for relief from international economic sanctions.

Iran has responded to top European Union diplomat Josep Borrell's proposal aimed at salvaging the nuclear accord, and seeks a swift conclusion to negotiations, the top Iranian nuclear negotiator said on Sunday.

Borrell said he had proposed a new draft text to revive the deal.

"After exchanging messages last week and reviewing the proposed texts, there is a possibility that in the near future we will be able to reach a conclusion about the timing of a new round of nuclear negotiations," Iranian foreign ministry spokesman Nasser Kanaani said.

The broad outline of a revived deal was essentially agreed in March after 11 months of indirect talks in Vienna between Tehran and US President Joe Biden administration.

But talks then broke down over obstacles including Tehran's demand that Washington should give guarantees that no US president will abandon the deal, the same way Trump did.

Biden cannot promise this because the nuclear deal is a non-binding political understanding, not a legally binding treaty.

**AFTER EXCHANGING MESSAGES LAST WEEK** and reviewing the proposed texts, there is a possibility that in the near future we will be able to reach a conclusion about the timing of a new round of nuclear negotiations."

NEWS MAKERS

## Pak Man Chops Off Cop's Ears, Lips For Having Affair With His Wife

Agenceis

**Lahore:** A police constable's nose, ears and lips were chopped off by a man who accused him of black-mailing his wife and forcing her to have illicit relations with him, police in Pakistan's Punjab province said on Monday.

Constable Qasim Hayat was subjected to severe torture before the main accused named Muhammad Iftikhar along with his accomplices cut off his nose, ears and lips on Sunday in Jhang district, some 200 kms from Lahore, police said.

"Iftikhar, who suspected Hayat of having relations with his wife, in connivance with 12 accomplices abducted him on his way back home and took him to a deserted place where they subjected him to severe torture before cutting off his body parts with a sharp-edged weapon," a police official said.



The constable was rushed to the district headquarters hospital Jhang where his condition is stated to be critical. Last month, Iftikhar had got a case registered against constable Hayat under sections 354 (assault on woman), 384 (extortion) and 292 (pornography) of the Pakistan Penal Code (PPC).

Iftikhar claimed that Hayat had

## First Ship With Ukraine Grain Leaves Odessa After Deal To Ease Food Crisis



Agenceis

**Ankara:** The first shipment of Ukrainian grain since the Russian invasion in February left the port of Odessa on Monday morning under a landmark deal to lift Moscow's naval blockade in the Black Sea.

United Nations chief Antonio Guterres, who brokered the plan along with Turkey, welcomed the announcement while Kyiv said it would bring "relief for the world" if Moscow held up its side of the accord.

The five-month halt of deliveries from war-torn Ukraine -- one of the world's biggest grain exporters -- has contributed to soaring food prices, hitting the world's poorest nations especially hard.

Officials said the Razoni cargo ship, registered in Sierra Leone, was making its way through a specially cleared corridor in the mine-infested waters of the Black Sea with 26,000 tonnes of maize on board.

"It is expected in Istanbul on August 2. It will then continue its journey after it has been inspected in Istanbul," the Turkish foreign minister said in a statement.

Other convoys would follow, respecting the maritime corridor and the agreed formalities, the statement said. Last month, Ukraine and Russia signed the breakthrough pact -- the first significant accord involving the warring sides since the invasion -- with Turkey and the United Nations aimed at getting millions of tonnes of trapped Ukrainian grain to world markets.

But Russian strikes on the

Odessa port the day after the deal was signed sparked outrage from Ukraine's allies and cast doubt over the accord. Guterres, according to a UN statement, "hopes that this will be the first of many commercial ships moving in accordance with the initiative signed, and that this will bring much-needed stability and relief to global food security, especially in the most fragile humanitarian contexts".

Ships 'waiting to leave' "Ensuring that existing grain and foodstuffs can move to global markets is a humanitarian imperative," he added.

Guterres also said that the World Food Programme was planning to "purchase, load and ship an initial 30,000 metric tons of wheat out of Ukraine on a UN-chartered vessel," and there would be further details in the coming days.

Ukrainian Foreign Minister Dmytro Kuleba said Monday marked a "day of relief for the world, especially for our friends in the Middle East, Asia, and Africa, as the first Ukrainian grain leaves Odessa after months of Russian blockade."

The Kremlin on Monday hailed it as a "very positive" development and a "good opportunity to test the effectiveness of the mechanisms that were agreed during talks in Istanbul".

The long-awaited consignment however is just the beginning of a backlog and Ukraine Infrastructure Minister Oleksandr Kubrakov said 16 more ships were already "waiting for their turn" to leave Odessa.

"These are the ships that were blocked from the beginning of Russia's full-scale invasion," he said, adding that new requests for ships to dock and load were coming continuously.

"We are planning to reach full efficiency at of shipments of agricultural products during the following weeks," he added.

The departure of the Razoni comes one day after Ukrainian agricultural magnate Oleksiy Vadatursky, 74, and his wife Raisa were killed when a missile struck their house in the battle-scarred city of Mykolaiv in the south.

Vadatursky owned major grain exporter Nibulon and was previously decorated with the prestigious "Hero of Ukraine" award.

Mykolaiv -- which has been attacked frequently -- is the closest Ukrainian city to the southern front where Kyiv's forces are looking to launch a major counter-offensive to recapture territory lost after Russia's February invasion.

The governor said Monday that three people had been injured in "massive" Russian shelling overnight that damaged homes and damaged humanitarian supplies.

Despite progress on the grain exports, there was also Russian shelling in the war-scarred east of the country, where Russian troops have been fighting deeper into the Donbas region.

The head of the industrial Donetsk region, Pavlo Kyrylenko said Russian shelling over the past 24 hours had killed three people.

## 4 Gujarat Youths With High IELTS Score Fail To Speak In English; Police Begin Probe

Agenceis

On the request of American authorities, police in Mehsana district in Gujarat have launched a probe to unearth an alleged racket in which ineligible students are getting help to acquire high International English Language Testing System (IELTS) score to obtain admission in colleges in Canada so that they can be then smuggled into the US, an official said on Monday.

The probe so far has revealed no transparency was maintained by the agency which took the exam, as CCTVs of the hall were turned off during the exam held in September last year, said Inspector Bhavesh Rathod of the Mehsana police's Special Operations Group (SOG), who is leading the probe here.

In March this year, US border authorities had arrested six youths from Gujarat during a failed attempt to get them unauthorised entry into the country from Canada.

"These six Indian nationals from Gujarat, in the 19-21 age group, were apprehended from a sinking boat in the Saint Regis river in Akwasne, US, close to the Canadian border. Four are from Mehsana, and two are from Gandhinagar and Patan," said Rathod.

"When they were produced before a court in the US, they failed to answer in English the questions asked by the judge. The court had to take the help of a Hindi translator. The court was baffled as these students had scored 6.5 to 7 bands in IELTS, an English proficiency test," Rathod said.

Later, citing a news report on the incident, the criminal fraud investigation unit of the U.S.

Consulate General in Mumbai sent a mail to Mehsana police to conduct an inquiry to find out how these four students from Mehsana received very high scores and which agency or agents were involved, Rathod informed.

The IELTS is an international standardized test of English language proficiency for non-native English language speakers, with a good score being necessary for admission in good colleges in several countries.

"Even brilliant students need to work hard to get 5 or 6 bands in the IELTS. These four students, residents of different villages of Mehsana, managed to score between 6.5 and 7, and yet could not communicate in English," Rathod said.

Primary probe has revealed the four students, identified as Dhruv Patel, Neel Patel, Urvis Patel and Savan Patel, appeared for the IELTS exam at a centre in south Gujarat's Navsari town on September 25, 2021, and went to Canada on student visa on March 19, nearly two weeks before they were caught at the US-Canada border.

"The manager of the banquet hall in Navsari, which was hired for the exam, said the exam supervisors had turned off CCTV cameras before the exam. This proves there was no transparency and something was definitely suspicious. The agency which was authorised to conduct the exam is based in Ahmedabad," said Rathod.

Owners of the agency, located in Sabarmati area of Ahmedabad, have been directed to appear before Mehsana SOG within 48 hours with related documents as part of the probe.

## After Death Threats, Salman Khan Gets A Gun License



Agenceis

The Mumbai Police have granted a licence for a personal gun to Bollywood star Salman Khan following death threats in June against him and his father, veteran writer Salim Khan, official sources said in Mumbai on Monday.

In late July, Salman Khan had called on Police Commissioner Vivek Phansalkar with a request for the gun licence, though the police had vehemently denied the same.

The application was routed

through the proper channel, and after all formalities were completed last week, the licence papers were handed over on Sunday.

Following a hand-scrawled death threat to the father-son duo, the Mumbai Police had tightened security at their Bandra west residence and initiated other measures, while the actor moved for a weapon licence.

In early June, a note was recovered with a threat to the Khan celebs, "you will meet the same fate as Moosewala", the Punjabi singer who was killed in May.

## You Are All Alive Because Of PM Modi: Bihar Minister Asserts In Viral Video

Agenceis

**Bihar** minister Ram Surat Rai, a BJP leader, is in the spotlight for his effusive praise of Prime Minister Narendra Modi's handling of the COVID-19 pandemic.

A purported video has gone viral on social media in which the minister for revenue and land reforms can be seen holding forth before a small crowd, under a thatched roof.

"If you all are alive today, it is because of Narendra Modi," the minister, apparently not a believer in moderation of speech, can be heard as saying in the video.

"Look at the devastation wrought by Covid in Pakistan and elsewhere. We were saved by Modi's vaccine and his deft handling of the economy," he said.

The video was likely shot



last week in Muzaffarpur district to which Rai belongs.

The minister has been in news for his lack of restraint on more than one occasion in the recent past. In the heat of the anti-Agnipath protests, he had dubbed the arsonists as "aatanki" (terrorists), much to the annoyance of Chief Minister Nitish Kumar's JD(U), which had taken a sympathetic view of the agitation.

Last month, his outbursts against the CM's veto on transfers and postings of more than 100 officials he had cleared, also made headlines.

## PM's Brother Prahlad Modi To Protest At Jantar Mantar



Agenceis

Prime Minister Narendra Modi's brother Prahlad Modi, who is also the vice president of All India Fair Price Shop Dealers' Federation, will stage a dhama in New Delhi Tuesday with various demands of the organisation.

He will sit for the dhama at the Jantar Mantar with other members of the AIFPSDF.

The dhama will be followed by submitting a memorandum addressed to the prime minister, the AIFPSDF said in a statement, adding

the members also plan to meet Lok Sabha Speaker Om Birla Wednesday.

The AIFPSDF has nine demands, including the one on compensation for loss on rice, wheat and sugar, and also for edible oil and pulses to be supplied through fair price shops.

They have also demanded that the 'West Bengal Ration Model' of free distribution be implemented across the country.

"We demand all due margins for all the states, including Jammu and Kashmir, should be reimbursed immediately," the AIFPSDF statement said.



## Delegations, NIT Innovator Calls On LG



Observer News Service

**SRINAGAR:** Delegations of All J&K Pasmanda Tabkajat Federation, Dalit Janjagrat Mission and Innovator from NIT Srinagar on Monday called on Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha here at Raj Bhavan.

The Delegation of All J&K Pasmanda Tabkajat Federation led by Mohammad Maqbool Sheikh submitted a memorandum of demands pertaining to the welfare of members of various communities coming under the umbrella of OBC, an official spokesperson said.

"They raised the demand for a special employment drive for members of the OBC community with poor economic conditions, special schools and hostels for children of economically downtrodden OBC families, besides other demands," he said.

Similarly, the spokesperson said, a delegation of Dalit Janjagrat Mission led by Suhail Ahmad Mir met the Lt Governor and put forth the demand of inclusion of eligible people left out in the PMAY.

He said that the LG while in-

teracting with the members of the delegations assured them that their genuine issues and demands would be taken up with the concerned authorities for early redressal on merit.

Earlier, Sheikh Inayat Ullah, CEO Move Beyond and Career Innovator NIT Srinagar also met the Lt Governor. He apprised him of the developments vis-à-vis innovative career guidance model designed by him. He informed that the model aims at reaching out to the youth and helping them in their employability.

Sheikh Inayat Ullah expressed gratitude to the Lt Governor for proactive support from the Government to the start-ups in J&K. He also discussed the overall socio-economic position of the UT of J&K and innovative initiatives needed to be taken in the UT on the level of growth and prosperity.

The Lt Governor assured the young Innovator of all support from the UT administration. He also issued directions to the Department of Mission Youth for providing support and assistance to the startup for taking this model to its logical conclusion.

## AAP Leader Harsh Dev Singh Demands Early Assembly Polls

Press Trust Of India

**JAMMU:** AAP leader Harsh Dev Singh targeted the BJP government on Monday over what he called "uncertainty" about holding of assembly elections in Jammu and Kashmir.

"While the conduct of assembly elections in Gujarat and Himachal Pradesh by the end of this year is a known fact and repeatedly highlighted in the media and elsewhere, the restoration of democracy in J&K con-

tinues to remain mired in uncertainty," Singh, a former minister of Jammu and Kashmir, said.

He alleged that the continuation of the BJP's "proxy rule" in Jammu and Kashmir for the last four years was "undemocratic and amounted to subversion of constitutional guarantees" to the people of the Union territory.

The Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) leader sought early conduct of assembly polls in Jammu and Kashmir.

## Daily Wagers Of Jal Shakti Dept Stage Protest, Demand Regularization

Press Trust Of India

**JAMMU:** Hundreds of daily wagers of the Jal Shakti Department staged a protest and blocked a highway in Jammu on Monday to press their demand for regularisation of services.

The Jal Shakti (PHE) Employees and Workers Association, which organised the protest, said the daily wagers have been struggling for over two decades for regularisation of their services.

Waving national flags, the workers assembled outside the office of the Jal Shakti Department and raised slogans against the Jammu and Kashmir administration and in support of their demand. They also blocked a highway.

The protesting workers, who

ensure drinking water supply across Jammu, threatened to intensify their protest if their demand was not met.

"We want to warn the government that there will be a massive agitation of hundreds of daily wagers if it fails to fulfil the demand for regularisation of services," Ravi Hansi, a union leader, told reporters here.

He alleged that the lieutenant governor's administration was not paying any heed to their demand.

Jal Shakti (PHE) Employees and Workers Association president Som Nath said many of the workers have rendered services to the department for over two decades, but they are still waiting for justice. They are the worst example of exploitation in the country, he added.

## MeT Department Predicts More Rain In J&K



Observer News Service

**SRINAGAR:** Rains continued to lash Jammu and Kashmir, causing waterlogging in many areas, even as the weatherman on Monday predicted more spells and thundershowers in next 24 hours.

The rains also brought down minimum temperature to below normal at most places with popular tourist resort Gulmarg recording a low of 8.6°C against 11.0°C on previous night and it was 3.9°C 'below' normal for the north Kashmir place.

Reports said that spells of rain and thunderstorms caused waterlogging at several places, more so in low-lying areas of Srinagar and elsewhere. Several roads have turned into virtual pools, causing inconvenience to the commuters, reports said.

There was also a slight rise in the water level in Jhelum and it was flowing at 9.16ft (half of the flood alert mark) near Sangam at 9 a.m. today, recording an increase of nearly 3-ft from 6.25ft in the last 24 hours.

At Ram MunshiBagh here,

the water level was 11.69ft at 9 a.m. compared to 10.54ft at the same time on July 31.

Regarding rainfall in the last 24 hours till 0830 a.m., a meteorological department official here said Pahalgam received 31.4mm followed by Banihal (21.9mm), Qazigund (12.8mm), Kupwara (13.4mm), Kokernag (13.0mm), Kathua (10.8mm), Srinagar (9.2mm), Gulmarg (8.8mm), Bhaderwah (7.5mm), Jammu (6.8mm), and Batote (2.2mm).

The minimum temperatures also recorded a drop at most places, and barring Katra and Bhaderwah, all observatory stations saw mercury settling below normal for the season.

Srinagar, the MeT official said, recorded a low of 17°C against 18.8°C on the previous night. The temperature was 1.9°C below normal during this time of the year for the summer capital, the official said.

Qazigund recorded a low of 16.2°C against 16.7°C on the previous night. The temperature was 1.2°C below normal there, he said.

In Pahalgam, the mercury settled at 13.2°C against 14.4°C on the previous night and it was 0.4°C below normal for the south Kashmir resort.

Kokernag recorded a low of 15.2°C against 16.8°C last night and it was 1.5°C below normal for the place, he said.

Kupwara town saw a low of 15.9°C against 17.9°C on previous night and it was 1.5°C below normal for the place during this time of the season, the official said as per news agency GNS.

Jammu recorded a low of 24.5°C, same as on the previous night. It was 0.3°C below normal for J&K's winter capital, he said.

Banihal recorded a low of 16.8°C, Batote 17.6°C, Katra 22.2°C and Bhadarwah 17.8°C, the official said.

"There is possibility of scattered to fairly widespread light to moderate rain/thundershower over Jammu & Kashmir Divisions in next 24 hours," the meteorological department said, adding, "There is possibility of isolated to scattered light rain and thunder for subsequent two days."

## Fire Damages 14 Shops, Seminary In Anantnag

Observer News Service

**SRINAGAR:** At least fourteen shops and a seminary were damaged in two fire incidents, last night, in South Kashmir's Anantnag district.

News agency GNS quoting official sources reported that fire broke out at Khah Bazar Anantnag which involved a three-storeyed building, by the name 'Shiekh Complex' belonging

to one Ghulam Mohi-ud-Din Sheikh. In the incident, they said, fourteen shops sustained damages before fire tenders doused off the flames. The enormity of damage to the stuff inside the shops is being ascertained, the sources said.

In another incident, a fire broke out at Dar-ul-Uloom Pindar at Aishmuqam during which the seminary got partially damaged. The fire was

put out after sustained efforts by the Fire and Emergency Department assisted by locals. In the incident however, a seminary student Suhail Ahmad Karson of Ghulam Nabi, resident of Kokernag Anantnag received minor injury and was given immediate treatment.

The cause in both the incidents was yet to be ascertained -- when this report was being filed.

### Amarnath Yatra

## 450 Pilgrims Leave Jammu Amid Tight Security

Press Trust Of India

**JAMMU:** The 32nd batch of over 450 pilgrims left Jammu for the twin base camps of the 3,880-metre-high cave shrine of Amarnath in south Kashmir Himalayas, officials said on Monday.

A total of 458 pilgrims left Bhagwati Nagar Yatri Niwas here in a convoy of 21 vehicles amid heavy security this morning, they said.

They said 164 pilgrims heading for Baltal were the first to

leave the camp in eight vehicles followed by the second convoy of 13 vehicles carrying 294 pilgrims for Pahalgam.

The number of pilgrims visiting the cave shrine is drastically falling as the yatra is inching towards its conclusion and also due to bad weather conditions, officials said.

The annual 43-day yatra commenced from the twin base camps -- traditional 48-km Nunwan-Pahalgam in south Kashmir's Anantnag and 14-km shorter Baltal in central Kash-

mir's Ganderbal -- on June 30.

A total of 143,123 pilgrims have left from the Bhagwati Nagar base camp for the Valley since June 29, the day the first batch of pilgrims was flagged off by Lt Governor Manoj Sinha.

The yatra is scheduled to end

on August 11 on the occasion of Raksha Bandhan.

A total of 36 people, mostly pilgrims, have died during the on-going Amarnath yatra so far, excluding 15 people, who died in the flash floods at Amarnath cave shrine on July 1.

### Amarnath Yatra

## CBC J&K Organises Around 300 Theme Based Cultural, Devotional Programs

Extends Activities Till August 7 At Jammu

Observer News Service

**JAMMU:** Central Bureau of Communication (CBC) J&K and Ladakh Region has so far organised more than 300 theme based cultural and devotional programs for Shri Amarnathji Yatra 2022.

According to regional head CBC Ghulam Abbas keeping in view the relevance and importance of the program, it has been further extended till August 7, 2022.

The media unit had planned the publicity activity as per the decisions taken during the meeting between the Secretary, Ministry of Information and Broadcasting, Government of India, Apurva Chandra with the Chief Secretary, Government of Jammu and Kashmir, Arun Kumar Mehta regarding various publicity activities to be carried out by the media units of the Ministry of Information and Broadcasting in Jammu Kashmir during the Shri Amarnath Yatra, 2022. CBC, Ministry of Information and Broadcasting, Government of India, Regional Office, Jammu, J&K and Ladakh organized various cultural and devotional programmes at Base Camp, Bhagwati Nagar Jammu from the very beginning of the Yatra.

Other than the Cultural Programmes carried out, the publicity of various themes like Azadi Ka Amrit Mahotsav, Ek Bharat Shreshthta Bharat, Covid

Vaccination, Beti Bachao Beti Padhao, Sukanya Samridhi Yojana, Swachh Bharat Abhiyan, Har Ghar Tiranga, Skill India, and other welfare schemes of Government of India were also carried out on daily basis.

Further, through the cultural programmes, CBC artists created awareness and sensitized the yatris regarding the do's and don'ts during the pilgrimage, procedure to be followed for the registration process, RFID cards, toll free numbers, Shri Amarnathji Yatra (SASB) Mobile Application and other important advisories regarding pilgrimage.

On daily basis, about ten cultural items are being performed on stage by the artists of CBC, Jammu, J&K including the Sarswati Vandana, Shiv Sutata Dance, Shiv Bhajan, Ram Bhajan and other spiritual performances.

A team of about six artists including Neeraj Kumar, Ram Lal, Virender Kumar, Ritu Sharma, Sunita Atri, Sunil Kumar Sharma and Durga Prakash, Stage Decorator are taking part in the performances.

Keeping in view the importance of Shri Amarnath Yatra Ji Yatra and the demand put forth by the pilgrims, the cultural programmes carried by CBC, Regional Office, Jammu have been extended till August 07, 2022. Earlier the programmes were scheduled only up to July 31, 2022.

## ACB Arrests Engineer While Accepting Bribe

**SRINAGAR:** The Anti Corruption Bureau (ACB) on Monday arrested an Assistant Executive Engineer of the Rural Development Department (REW) from Baramulla district for allegedly demanding a bribe from a contractor to release his CDR.

The anti-graft body received a complaint by a contractor alleging that AEE Ravinder Singh, REW, Boniyar was demanding a bribe of Rs 4000 from him to release his CDR deposited for the development related work of "Upgradation & Extension of Javind Link Road I Panchayat Halqa Nowshera (B) of Block Boniyar", an ACB spokesperson said.

On completion of the work, he said, the complainant applied for release of CDR and his application was endorsed to Assistant Executive Engineer Concerned by Block Development Officer, Boniyar.

"But concerned Assistant Ex-

ecutive Engineer demanded bribe of ₹4000/- for processing his application for release of CDR," he said.

Acting on the complaint, the Bureau spokesperson said a Case FIR No 23/2022 was registered at PS ACB Baramulla and investigations started.

"During the course of investigation a trap team constituted. The trap team arrested Assistant Executive Engineer (REW) Boniyar namely Ravinder Singh while demanding & accepting bribe of ₹4000/- from the complainant in presence of independent witnesses outside the office of Executive Engineer (REW), Baramulla," he said.

He further added that the bribe amount and the documents of complainant were recovered from the possession of the accused.

"Further investigation is going on," the spokesperson said.

## Module Of Burglars Busted

Press Trust Of India

**SRINAGAR:** A module of burglars involved in multiple theft incidents, including at religious places, was busted by arresting five accused in Pulwama district of Jammu and Kashmir, police said on Monday.

The module was busted in Tral, in Awantipora area of the south Kashmir district, a police official said. Five persons have been arrested, the official said.

With their arrest, recent incidents of burglary in Tral area of Awantipora, including burglary in Gurdwaras, has been solved, he said.

## Cop Injured In Ganderbal Road Accident

Observer News Service

**SRINAGAR:** A policeman was injured in a road accident in Kangan area of Central Kashmir's Ganderbal district on Monday morning, officials said. News agency KNO quoting an official reported that an accident took place near Thune area of Kangan, when a truck collided with a scooter. He said that in the incident, scooter rider Khurshid Ahmad Rather S/o Mohammad Abdullah of Bonizil Haripora, a police personnel, who was performing duty at police station Gund, suffered injuries. The official said that he was shifted to SDH Kangan for treatment, where doctors referred him to SKIMS Soura for further treatment.

# Digital J&K Initiative Aimed At Fair Governance: Mehta

## Says Move Is Aimed At Making Office Visits Obsolete

Observer News Service

**JAMMU:** Jammu and Kashmir Chief Secretary, Arun Kumar Mehta on Monday cautioned officials of penalty if they fail to provide services to the people in stipulated time under the Public Service Guarantee Act.

Mehta made these remarks at the Digital J&K Week 2022 that concluded with valedictory function here at Convention Centre Jammu on Monday. He was the Chief Guest on the occasion.

From Government of India,

Union Secretary MeITY, Alkesh Kumar Sharma and President and CEO NeGD, Abhishek Singh also participated in the event through video conference. They lauded the distinct efforts being made by the UT government in providing digital services to the public.

The Chief Secretary said that during the ongoing digital revolution, feedback from thousands of people can be gathered in a minute which can efficiently reveal true face of our services. People can easily learn about development works being done anywhere in Jammu & Kashmir through Jan Bhagidari online platform, he informed.

"Digital governance ensures fair governance. We must do away with the necessity to visit government offices altogether

with digital services. Digital services are truly transparent and nondiscriminatory in nature, besides free from corruption', he continued.

The Chief Secretary said that under the Public Service Guarantee Act, officers failing to provide services in stipulated time would be penalised. The Deputy Commissioners were also asked to spread awareness about the Act in this regard.

He informed that the Aapki Zameen Aapki Nigrani Land Record Information System is the most visited digital service of the UT government. He also called upon the public for linking mobile numbers with their land records for getting prompt updates regarding their land.

He directed Revenue Department to ensure effective digital



on-boarding of all their services. Ensure that the people's rights are protected through digital services, he remarked and urged all to encourage others to acquaint themselves about more than two hundred

online services being provided by the government.

The Chief Secretary instructed the School Education Department officers to ensure biometric attendance system in all schools of the UT besides giving provision of submitting online feedback, to the students, about the quality of education being provided to them.

While the Jal Shakti Department was asked to ensure maintaining a robust billing, feedback and grievance redressal system, the Health & Medical Education Department was directed for routinely publishing hospital rankings achieved through the Mera Aspaatal (My Hospital). It is an online service through which public can give feedback about government hospitals.

He called for maintaining pre and post monsoon cleaning record of nallahs in digital format and asked all Urban Local Bodies of J&K to have individual websites of their own.

Speaking to Deputy Commissioners, the Chief Secretary asked them to start issuing Land Passbooks and for immediate implementation of PM Gati Shakti and Digital India GENESIS initiatives. The respective SP offices were also instructed to get onboard e-office completely.

Dr Mehta also called for providing intractable videos alongside online services to educate people about procedures to avail online services. The departments also asked to upload their legacy data online as early as possible. Our efforts won't

successful until all records and services are online, he remarked. Integration of various online services with DigiLocker was also underlined by the Chief Secretary.

Heads of departments and senior officers gave PowerPoint presentation about the digital services being provided by them and on-boarding of various other services in near future by them.

Awards were later given away to best performing departments, heads of departments and districts in adoption and promotion of digital services platforms.

The event was attended by Administrative Secretaries, Deputy Commissioners among various heads of departments personally and virtually as well.



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K O V I E W

Elusive Talks

Pakistan foreign minister Bilawal Bhutto Zardari has said that the dialogue with India has become difficult following the withdrawal of special status of Jammu and Kashmir in 2019. Bilawal also said that there were no plans for any meeting between Pakistani and Indian Prime Ministers on the sidelines of the annual SCO summit to be held in Samarkand, Uzbekistan on September 15-16. He, however, said that Pakistan has no option but to get used to living with India as no one can change their neighbours, mouthing a line made famous earlier by the former prime minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee. Bilawal didn't make clear what living with India for Pakistan meant. For Vajpayee, this became a rationale for instituting one of the most durable dialogue processes with the then Pakistan president, Pervez Musharraf that nearly pulled off a Kashmir solution.

Vajpayee had begun the negotiations with his then Pakistani counterpart Musharraf which were later followed up by the former Prime Minister Manmohan Singh. The process had nearly culminated into a solution to Kashmir by the end of 2007 when Musharraf sudden loss of power and later on the Mumbai attacks aborted it. The proposals unveiled by Musharraf in 2006 had set out a four stage incremental process for Kashmir resolution. The steps were: identification of the regions in Kashmir for solution, demilitarization, self governance and a joint management or a consultative mechanism between India and Pakistan on the state.

However, there is a lot that has happened since then. The dynamics that had made the engagement possible then no longer obtain. After revocation of Article 370 in August 2019, the complexion of Kashmir issue has changed beyond recognition. Several new factors are at play in the regional geo-politics and in the relations between the two countries that have made it increasingly difficult to go back to the formula. New Delhi has also taken Kashmir off the table in future discussions with Pakistan, considering the issue settled once and for all. The only issue that New Delhi wants to discuss now are terrorism and the return of Pakistan-controlled Kashmir. The refrain in India is that it desires normal neighbourly relations with Islamabad in an environment free of terror, hostility, and violence. But Pakistan wants to only discuss Kashmir and also seeks a reversal of the withdrawal of Article 370 which is not going to happen. The positions of the two countries have thus become too irreconcilable to make it easy for them to re-engage. But, in the interest of regional peace, the two neighbours need to transcend their differences and talk to each other. This alone will change the situation in the region for the better.

O T H E R O P I N O N

Core constraints

Based on June's core sectors' data, economists reckon industrial production to rise anywhere between 9% and 13% in June. These high numbers are a tad misleading because the first quarter of 2020-21 was marred by national lockdowns, and though output did not suffer as much during the second COVID-wave in Q1 of 2021-22, economic conditions were not ideal either. In any case, these base effects will start fading from July. For better context to assess where the economic recovery stands, industrial output in May was 1.7% over pre-pandemic levels and core sectors' output in June is 8% over 2019.

What should cause concern is that the recovery is still fragmented and dissonant. Moreover, the rebound momentum seems to be flagging as core output declined 4.08% in June over May 2022. Just four infra sectors drove most of the growth in June, led by coal output jumping 31.1% and cement rising 19.4% from 2021 levels. Crude oil output tanked again in June after a positive blip in May, while natural gas grew a mere 1.2% and steel 3.2%. Refinery products grew 15.1%, driven by higher global oil prices making exports attractive, and electricity rose 15.5%, signalling domestic demand. The monsoon would dampen coal production, pressuring generators to import more coal if electricity demand sustains. The only two sectors to record a month-on-month growth in June — cement and fertilizers — also face headwinds. Cement production is expected to taper off on the same meteorological account as coal, even as an uneven monsoon could hurt fertilizer demand. The good news is that the Centre's capital spending, critical to sustain the recovery, bounced remarkably in June to 68,000 crore from an underwhelming 28,000 crore in May — ensuring that a quarter of the year's target has been met in Q1. With private capital still shy, global turmoil and local inflation playing spoilsport with the recovery, it is vital that the Centre keep the pedal pressed on this front and cajoles more States into availing the 1 lakh crore capex loan window soon.

The Hindu

Uncontrolled Rates  
of Construction Material

It has become a routine for Govt to issue rate lists , notifications but they are hardly enforced on ground

Dr Raja Muzaffar Bhat

Jammu & Kashmir is the only state where Government issues rate lists for different food items, essential commodities, construction material and the likes of it but the same is never enforced on the ground. Such rate lists are rare in other states. Our Food Civil Supplies & Consumer Affairs Department (FCS & CA), I believe, is the only Govt organisation that notifies rates for availing service of a barber. Unfortunately, these rates are never enforced on the ground. Rates are fixed by the same department for mutton, Kashmiri tandoor bread and even bakery items but these rates are seldom followed on the ground.

Exorbitant rates of Sand , Bricks

Last year, the Geology and Mining Department issued several public notices to enforce its rate list of minor minerals and processed minerals used in construction work. The District Mineral Officer (DMO) Budgam, on April 1st 2021, issued a public notice wherein rates for different riverbed materials especially sand, nallah bajri, crushed bajri (gravel), nallah boulders and other things were said to have been fixed. In addition, rates for bricks were also specified in the notice. The said notification reads as:

“On the direction of Worthy Deputy Commissioner Budgam, the general public is hereby informed to contact following phone numbers for redressal of their grievances with regard to sale of minor minerals and processed minerals (sand , nallah bajri , crushed bajri, clay , bricks etc) in district Budgam beyond the rates fixed by District Magistrate Budgam”

The contact numbers and names of the officials were provided in a tabulated form followed by rates of different construction material. The rate of bricks was fixed @Rs 21,000/3000 bricks, Sand @Rs 4200/150 Cu feet (1 tipper), Crushed bajri @Rs 3450/ 150 Cu feet (1 tipper), Quarry stone (Rubble) @Rs 1125/150 Cu feet (1 tipper) , Nallah Boulders @Rs 900/ 150 Cu feet, Nallah Muck @Rs 600/150 Cu Feet Clay @Rs 450 / 150 Cu Feet.

For instance, if the material is carried to a place 10 kms away from the source, we can add a fare of Rs 3000 approximately which means a tipper (truck) of bricks has to be sold for Rs 25000 and sand @Rs 7200 but on the ground these items are sold @Rs 32,000 and between Rs 13000 to Rs 15000 per truck respectively. What explains this?

Riverbed Mining Contracts

With an aim of streamlining the riverbed mining (RBM) in J&K, Government auctioned several mining blocks in different rivers, nallahs and streams through e-auctioning last year. From district Kathua to Kupwara and Kishtwar to Kangan and Poonch to Pulwama riverbed mining contracts have been allotted to different contractors also called project proponents (PPs). Earlier, the Geology & Mining Department would only take royalty from the people involved in mining trade including truck drivers carrying the riverbed material like sand, boulders, nallah bajri etc . In 2016, Govt came up with new mining rules known as Jammu and Kashmir Minor Mineral Concession, Storage and Transportation of Minerals and Prevention of Illegal Mining Rules 2016 also known as J&K Minor Mineral Rules 2016. These rules were framed to counter illegal mining in rivers , nallahs and streams. If we analyse anything that has changed after the Govt invoked new rules or e-auctioned the mining blocks in different water bodies (rivers, streams, nallahs), I personally believe that the situation has deteriorated.

My analysis is not hypothetical but it is based on in-depth research and analysis that I have been doing for almost 1 year now. I have been writing extensively on this issue. On many occasions, I reported the issue live from the mining sites as well. Until 2019 -2020, sand was sold @Rs 6000 to 7500 per tipper (150 Cu feet). For the last 18 months or more, the riverbed mining contracts have increased and more material is available in the market. I know at least five riverbed mining blocks have been allotted in Budgam in Doodh Ganga and Shali Ganga rivers. In these areas, no mining was allowed 2 years back. Now, huge JCBs excavate



Picture for representational purposes only

The department has fixed rates for fruits , vegetables and mutton as well as lots of other commodities. On ground nobody is bothered to abide by these orders. These rate lists, notifications and circulars are issued just for a formality

minor minerals like sand , nallah muck , nallah bajri , boulders and the rates of these items has doubled or gone up 3 times also. As on date, sand is sold @ Rs13000 per tipper in areas located just 6 to 10 kms from the mining blocks.

On the other hand, Specific Guideline No 5 of J&K State Environmental Impact Assessment Authority (SEIAA) makes it clear that riverbed mining material has to be sold on a 50% discount to local population within 2 kms radius of mining blocks. Ironically, the material is not even sold at Govt rates in the villages located just 500 meters away from mining blocks. When I spoke to some residents of villages Sogam, Badipora, Panzan, Lalgam, Lalgund, Gudsathoo, they told me that in spite of being located 500 meters to 1 kms away from mining site , they get sand @Rs 12000 to 13000 per tipper and rate of other material is also double or even more. These villages are located around Doodh Ganga and Shali Ganga streams in Budgam. In the upper reaches of Chadoora Budgam, the mining material is sold @Rs 15000 to 16000 per tipper.

Chief Secretary J&K Arun Kumar Mehta in a meeting held in December last year, officers took a strong notice of unfair trade practice of construction material. In addition to being sold on highly exorbitant rates at source (mining blocks, brick kilns), the building material is sold on retail at small kiosks in Srinagar and other towns. The customers are fleeced as rates are further high.

I want to ask the State Environmental Impact Assessment Authority (SEIAA), why they aren't acting, if the contractors/project propo-

nents are not abiding by their guidelines which paved a way for issuance of environmental clearance (EC).

Many other guidelines are also violated which I have explained in my previous articles and the same have now been put before National Green Tribunal (NGT) as well through an appeal against grant of EC to M/S NKC Projects Pvt Ltd who are doing mining for personal use in the Ring Road project while as the mining contract is given only for local consumption in an area of 2 kms radius. Even JCBs can't be used for riverbed mining as the work is to be done manually or using semi mechanized machines that will help generate employment for local population on the pattern on MG-NGREGA. The J&K Minor Mineral Rules 2016 , SEIAA guidelines lay special emphasis on it.

Conclusion

Recently, the Food Civil Supplies and Consumer Affairs (FCS & CA) Department fixed rates (service charges) for barbers. The department has fixed rates for fruits , vegetables and mutton as well as lots of other commodities. On ground nobody is bothered to abide by these orders. These rate lists, notifications and circulars are issued just for a formality.

We sacrificed our water bodies, rivers and streams as many mining contracts were allotted in the last few years for a very paltry sum. On an average, a mineral block is auctioned for mere Rs 1.30 crores for 5 years while the contractors / PPs earn crores in months through illegal ways like excavating minerals at night time, using JCBs, selling material at exorbitant rates, not giving 50% discount to locals.

What has a poor taxpayer gotten in return ? We used to get a sand truck for Rs 6000 two years back and the same is sold @ Rs 13000 now. The bricks were sold @ Rs 25000 / truck and they are now sold @ Rs 32 ,000 per 3000 bricks.

This situation reminds me of the famous urdu couplet Na Khudaa hi Milaa Na Wisaal e Sanam , Na hum Idhar ke Rahai Na Udhar key. Which means I could attain neither God nor union with my beloved. I am neither here nor there (or, I am left high and dry). We lost our natural resources , destroyed our environment and biodiversity and got nothing in return.

Views expressed in the article are the author's own and do not necessarily represent the editorial stance of Kashmir Observer  
Dr Raja Muzaffar Bhat is an Acumen Fellow.  
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OBSERVER  
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Children Health and Breastfeeding Week

Every year the world celebrates breast-feeding week from August 1 to 7. To improve the status of breast-feeding globally, World Health Assembly, the forum through which the World Health Organization is governed by its 194 member states, had set a target of increasing the rate of exclusive breastfeeding in the first 6 months to at least 50 per cent by 2025,

as compared to the prevailing rate of 38 per cent.

One of the major benefits of breastfeeding is protection against illness. Breast Milk is the perfect food for a new-born, and the nutrition it offers is unparalleled. Feeding infants with breast milk has proven a lot of health benefits for the mother and the baby as well, and it can have a profoundly positive effect on the

emotional well-being of both.

Breastfeeding offers a sense of comfort, as the baby adjusts to a new environment. Also, the skin-to-skin contact of breastfeeding boosts the levels of oxytocin (the calming hormone) for the mother. WHO and UNICEF state that breastfed children perform better on intelligence tests, are less likely to be overweight or obese, and less prone to diabetes

later in life. It may be recalled that 4 years ago hundred odd mothers from Philippines made their nation proud when they nursed their babies in a government-backed mass breast-feeding event aimed at combating child deaths.

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# Shudder to Stealth: How Kashmir's Progressive Prose Lost Its Plot

Maheen Sajjad

Ghulam Nabi Shahid is everything an ideal writer has to be—keen observer, textbook struggler, drifting ramblar... But above all, he's living by his name: witness.

This other Shahid of Kashmir may not be a beloved poet, but as a native observer he's a chronicler of Kashmir's conflict change.

Adjusting glasses over his deep-set eyes and furrowed-flustered face, the man-of-letters recalls the time when he would rub shoulders with the jola-slinging comrades inside a celebrated café sparking erudition and eloquence in now capitalist-crammed city.

Those vibes are no longer coming from the Sun City's current café corpus. "You don't find that old flame anymore," Shahid strikes a poetic contrast. "Much water has already flown in Jhelum. But certain things do make you nostalgic, like Srinagar's bygone literary atmosphere."

The jovial writer in his late-fifties turns grim over the contemporary literature driven by an obsession of creating cults out of adolescent authors. This rat race of sorts—seen as a badge of honour and a shot to some make-believe glory—is only fading the literary Midas touch of the place, Shahid reflects with his curated tone and tenor.

"Back in the day," he recalls, "prose writing would pass through a litmus test in the form of critical reviews. Some literary heavyweights of the times would hold detailed discussions on the emerging literature from the valley and take pains to shape storytelling skills."

Fall of those community reading-rooms aka informal academies has created a self-implicit delusional literary scene, reckons Shahid, whose anthology, Ailan Jaari Hai, is being hailed for detailing the discord-dented change in the society. "Those literary spaces of past would help authors to produce a trove of tales capturing dilemma in the society."

Years later, as some writers are trying to capture that "dilemma" in their tomes, Shahid names Akhtar Mohiuddin's prophetic writing as the fountainhead of that literary lineage.

In one of his famous short stories—Fixture—Akhtar prophesises the events: "... Neither camera nor photograph is a fixture but yes, time is! 1,750,000 years! Now you only understood my meaning, not the essence. You can't get the essence for I too don't have words to express in it. However, let us both assume that time is a fixture..."

Evidently, the evolution of short story writing in Kashmir has made the change brought about by time conspicuous. For instance, in Fixture, Akhtar enunciates how the whole caboodle reconditions with time.

"Time amends how belles-lettres are perceived," Shahid continues. "And what that has brought home is an exigency of meaningful literature, adding to the overall lack of production of time-specific short stories that should have been based on real-life events but are most likely based on a framework fuddled with obscure symbols."

However, some contemporary literary organizations, like the J&K Fictional Writers Guild, takes a certain pride in fostering "a sense of community" to develop a modus operandi and "resurrect the lost meaning of literature and its symbols" in order to advance writing in all of its forms and facets.

But then, what makes Kashmir chronicles so sui-generis is apparently their unrestricted ability to not only be a faction of the realist genre but also accost with plausibility.

In fact, a long time ago, the sages adumbrated future women riding iron horses and seasonal fruits ripening together. And today, that vision has come true.

That prophetic prose, it's believed, comes from writer's uncanny ability to map the mood and its possible ramifications in the society. For instance, it took nightmarish nineties for Akhtar Mohiuddin to pen down an imagined dystopia and deadly din in the woeful vale.

Many of those stories were also driven by the writer's personal loss. The harrowing strife in his homeland consumed his son and son-in-law—the twin losses fuelling his grim and grave expression.

One of his stories of that era was about a boy, pleading and crying for a gun. A video recently seethed on the internet, where a similar incident came to light on the streets of Srinagar.

"It's all prophesied," quips a scribe covering Literature and its evolution in Kashmir from last 15 years now. "It's a step ahead of realism, a progression into reality."

The change that swept literary landscape of the valley over the years only vindicates the newsmen's views. And much of this change, Shahid states, comes from



“The jovial writer in his late-fifties turns grim over the contemporary literature driven by an obsession of creating cults out of adolescent authors. This rat race of sorts—seen as a badge of honour and a shot to some make-believe glory—is only fading the literary Midas touch of the place, Shahid reflects with his curated tone and tenor

short story's evolved style due to a variety of factors, including the knowledge that the form has changed as a result of the change in the reception of this genre.

"Form is fluid," Shahid muses. "Kashmiri language is a result of aging, and with that senescence, the way things are understood has changed—adding that the way the language is spoken has also changed—and with that, there is of course a transition in the form. This change, however, should not be viewed negatively because it is a result of time and is referred to as adaptability."

Camaraderie — the novitiate of which was a radical movement led by a group of learned individuals.

The PWM, a movement that sought people to produce gratis, unrestricted literature, inspired writers, following decades after, to join the drive and create the authentic literature that was free, radical, and realistic, based on people's real-life experiences. Short stories were one of the attributes that burgeoned significantly.

The short story first appeared in Kashmir as a literary form distinct from the

ries in Kashmir is difficult," Rumuz says. "In fact, the transition from Dastangoi to radical writings like that produced in PWM was abrupt in Kashmir. The outside world was the source of the influence. This is why the lineage is also known as the bastard lineage."

During and immediately after the PWM, the writings produced in Kashmir were heavily influenced by Russian literature. It was an era when writers were influenced by Leo Tolstoy, Dostoevsky and others. And by that standard, Rumuz says, "what the writers in Kashmir did was im-



Among the new-age conveyor belts of this change are wordsmiths who've already shown streaks of brilliance. They've this consensus—that writing has something to do with stories and poems and clutching onto hopes and promises that can't come true in reality but can be experienced in the alternate world that brings in the hex.

"Writing comes with an understanding of the ambience and flavour of the place, and that stands particularly true for Kashmir," says a poetess from Kashmir, who goes by the romantic moniker Rumuz-E-Bekhudi. "Writings tell us about history. It's about people and their experiences, and it's about culture. Kashmir is rich in culture and writing is a part of that richness."

The beginning of this chronicle culture started as Dastangoi, Rumuz says, a tradition of passive storytelling at nukads.

People would come together at tea-stalls, rickshaw or bus stands, or at the kandur shops, and they would discuss the happenings of life or share a story or two.

"That's how the culture was cultivated," the poetess says. "However, if we've to track the academic lineage of this culture, we need to know how the Progressive Writers Movement (PWM) penetrated the system."

“That prophetic prose, it's believed, comes from writer's uncanny ability to map the mood and its possible ramifications in the society. For instance, it took nightmarish nineties for Akhtar Mohiuddin to pen down an imagined dystopia and deadly din in the woeful vale

centuries-old folktale, fable, and parable. As a part of prose literature, it accepted the influence of all experiments in the technique of the shorter fiction over the last forty-six years.

"Tracing the proper lineage of short sto-

bibed the technique and converted it into Kashmiri."

The quintessence writers of this generation—Rahman Rahi, Rafiq Raaz and Dinanath Nadim—wrote about the subjective reality of individuals as well as the social environment that surrounded them through a variety of characters and events, and many authors in subsequent years attempted to produce something comparable or roughly comparable.

"The works of many of these authors are read outside of Kashmir, have been translated into many languages, and are well-liked everywhere," Shahid continues. "It was an era when writings in Kashmir would reflect with the emerging literature in the world."

In Kashmir literature, the 1960s to 1980s are referred to as an unconventionally exploratory eon. The stories that were written during this time period viewed trivial, puzzling, or traumatic events from a surrealist perspective. Focusing on regional, rural, and trivial issues with irony, Koshur wit, and astute observations was a tendency.

But as the 20th century came to an end, the subconscious and inner psyche started to take centre stage.

In the 90's, the picture changed dras-

tically. The period saw loss, not only in terms of lives and material wealth but also in terms of literature. This age witnessed authors writing about Kashmir, its traditions, its languages, its people and envisioned a utopian, and at times dystopian, society that became a reality in later years.

The use of symbols was prevalent in works from this time period. "Historically," Rumuz reflects on the literature produced during that troubled timeline, "the word rose has been associated with love and romance in writings and poems in general. But as time went on, the understanding evolved. Rose meant something entirely different to conflict chroniclers. For instance, I refer to rose as emptiness ('ye kyuth cxezar chu dazan') in my works (here, 'cxezar' refers to rose)."

The poetess's prose-projection evokes Amin Kamil, Kashmir's foremost ghazal writer, who believed that the growth of any language stemmed from its prose writing tradition — something that got lost in the overtones and tensions.

Post-90s, the literature mainly concentrated on strife manifestations. Kashmir underwent a fundamental change and the youth started speaking out about their lived experiences in a way that was very personal to them and was layered with words and symbols that clearly reflected fracas.

The short stories written by people in the late 1990s or early 2000s mostly dealt with their experiences as individuals during curfews and crackdowns. While being raised in a conflict-ridden environment, authors wrote about changes that occurred during their formative years.

"Short stories during that period had a striking effect," Shahid says. "And the writers employed language in such a way that it appeared as if they were shrieking but were not. It was done with pens."

This was a sort of change that was welcomed at a time when the protracted strife had created a craving for some passive alternative.

But the façade of that so-called "healing touch" literary atmosphere created among others by some foreign-returned young Kashmiris ended once the watershed years of 2010's began.

The literature produced during that decade was much different from that of the late 90's and early millennia. The boom of writers that emerged in this age were the ones that wrote best-selling books on Kashmir, made it in name and recognition, but were largely diasporic. It was the start of when the native voice started getting hushed.

"There are writers from this time that wrote pieces that could resonate and relate with any place around the world," says Shahid. "But there's a lack of attachment in the works from this era, visibly evidenced by the use of symbols."

The literature produced in this time was termed disturbing as the imagery used and the symbols presented were very raw and dark, where the writers gave expression to their suffocations and observations that they had accumulated over time. The works produced were Kafkaesque, as elements and experiences were described with sardonic attitude.

The 2010-epoch saw many prominent writers who did not begin their careers as professional writers but rather as journalists who later turned to writing and became household names.

But with the stifling of the native voice during this time period, there were also works produced that made it seem like writers had changed the meaning in order to avoid trouble.

"There are writings from post-2010 that make it seem like the writers wrote pieces with knives held to their throats, as this was the advent of writing that was termed politically right," says Shahid.

The differences between short story writing produced today and that produced before 2010 or 2000 or in the 1990s are so pronounced that the form itself appears to have changed.

The short stories that are currently being produced use cryptic language and symbols, which make it challenging to understand the required meaning. The speech contains politically correct subjects and subjugations, and all of the references are constrained and this changes how short stories are written, perceived, and propagated.

"As of late," Shahid says, "there've been publications written on generally ordinary meetings, occasions that individuals haven't been a part of. Because of that kind of writing, there has been deterioration in the quality of literature produced of the fact that what happens is that individuals wind up obscure symbols that are difficult to unravel."

Clearly, in this day and age, individuals fear retaliation, and yet, Shahid says, "writers who know how to write, know what to write, and write what they want to write."



**“There was almost no** rainy season this year, so the hot days came early, and in that sense, I think we developed a product that is right for the market

Associated Press

Yet while monkeypox is much harder to spread than COVID-19, experts warn that if the disease spills over into general populations - currently in



Experts suspect the monkeypox outbreaks in North America and Europe may have originated in Africa long before the disease started spreading via sex at two raves in Spain.

Just asking countries to share is not going to be enough, said Sharmila Shetty, a vaccines adviser for Medecins Sans Frontieres. The longer

The company declined to specify which countries it was allocating doses for.

I feel reassured it is a way to stop the spread, he said. We (gay men) are a group at risk. (AP)

Associated Press

USD 83.3 billion in climate financing was given to poorer coun-

The pledge, which was originally set up as an annual commitment from its inception until 2020, has never been fulfilled.

Who pays for tackling and adapting to climate change has been a key sticking point between richer nations and poorer ones since international climate negotiations began 30 years ago.

# SRINAGAR MUNICIPAL CORPORATION

## OFFICE OF THE EXECUTIVE ENGINEER LEFT RIVER WORKS DIVISION

Ph. No. 0194-2458118 Email: lrwdsmc@gmail.com

### SHORT TERM TENDER NOTICE

#### INVITING E- TENDERS

NIET NO: 26e-Tendering/2022-23

Dated: 27-July-2022

For and on behalf of the Srinagar Municipal Corporation, e-tenders are invited on Percentage Basis from approved and eligible Contractors for the following work:-

Sl. No.	Name of work	Est. Cost (In Lacs)	Cost of Tender Document (Non-refundable)	Earnest Money (CDR)	Time of Completion in days/ Weeks	Class of Contractor (Civil)	Technical Sanction	Head of Account
1.	Aluminium / Glass partition wall for Health Officer's Room at SMC, Srinagar.	Rs. 02.53	Rs. 127/-	Rs. 5060/-	7 days strictly	DEE	528 Dated: 12-05-2022	Internal Resource

- AAA Order No. 590 of 2022, Dated: 10-05-2022.
- Other details can be seen/downloaded from the departmental website [www.jktenders.gov.in](http://www.jktenders.gov.in) as per schedule of dates given below:-

#### CRITICAL DATE SHEET

1	Publish date	27-07-2022
2	Document download date	28-07-2022 04:00 PM To 03-08-2022 04:00 PM
3	Bid submission/uploading date	28-07-2022 04:00 PM To 03-08-2022 04:00 PM
4	Bid Opening date	04-08-2022 11:00 AM
5	Submission of hardcopy for successful bidder	05-08-2022 10:00 AM To 04:00 PM

#### TERMS & CONDITIONS:

- The Earnest Money (EMD) in respect of the advertised Cost of the work should be 2% in shape CDR/FDR pledged to Executive Engineer LRWD SMC and must be made after the date of publication of e-NIT failing which the bid shall not be accepted.
- The contractor shall have to furnish the performance security @ 3% in shape CDR/FDR pledged to Executive Engineer LRWD SMC of the value of contract valid till DLP before issuance of LOA / LOI. In case of 1-1 failing to provide performance security @ 3% for the work within 7 days after being notified, his bid shall be cancelled and work shall be executed through other sources U/R at the risk, cost and responsibility of 1-1.
- In case of Holidays/office happens to be closed on the date of opening of bids. Bids will be opened on the next working day at the same time and venue.
- The intending tenderer/bidder should attach sales tax clearance certificate with upto date validation without which no tenders/bids will be entertained.
- The bid shall be opened online in the Office of Executive Engineer LRWD, SMC at Old Funds office Building Karan Nagar near National School Municipal Park on 04-08-2022 11:00 AM.
- Bids must be accompanied with cost of tender document in shape of Bank Receipt pledged in favour of Chief Accounts Officer SMC in the Municipal Account No: 0216010200000007 payable at J&K Bank Branch Balgarden. Scanned copy of the same with mention of NIET No. & Serial no. to be uploaded along with all other documents. The bidder shall be barred / black list as per law for tender fee in form of Bank Receipt. Tender fee receipt and other relevant documents including Bid Security (CDR/FDR) duly filled up, if found with any ambiguity or unattested, correction / overwriting for any work, such tender / bid shall be considered as invalid bid and shall be out rightly rejected and action U/R shall be initiated. The Bid shall remain valid for a period of 120 days from the Bid due date.

B) There shall be no Escalation Clause.

Sd/-

Er. Sajad Ahmad Kawoosa,  
Executive Engineer,  
Left River Works Division,  
Srinagar Municipal Corporation.

DIPK-NB-2862/22

No.SMC/EELRWD/1174-1183

Dated: 27-May-2022.

# OFFICE OF THE EXECUTIVE ENGINEER (R&B) DIVISION CHADOORA

## NOTICE INVITING FRESH E-TENDER

**E-NIT No. 92 of 2022-23/3994-4003 dated 30/07/2022/CHADOORA**

Executive Engineer PW (R&B) Division Chadoora on behalf of Governor of J&K State invites percentage rate bids in electronic tendering system for the following works from the eligible and approved contractors registered with J&K UT Govt. CPWD, Railways and other State Governments.

S.No	Name of Work	Adv. Cost (Rs. In Lacs)	Cost of T/Doc. (In Rupees)	Earnest money CDR/ FDR/BG (Rs)	Time of Completion (days)	TS STATUS	Class of Contractor
1	2	3	4	5	6	8	9
1.	Anand Dham Shah Lane at Hushroo b.w.o P/L of WMM and 25mm thick Semidense bituminous concrete with 6mm thick seal coat in patches/ stretches. Machine mix to be laid with paver	4.63	200	9260	05	SEPWD(R&B) Sgr-Bud/ 143 of 2022-23 dt 04/07/2022	DEE
2	Link Road at Hushroo near Gousia Masjid b.w.o WMM and 25mm thick Semidense bituminous concrete with 6mm thick seal coat in patches/ stretches. Machine mix to be laid with paver	5.00	200	10,000	05	SEPWD(R&B) Sgr-Bud/ 139 of 2022-23 dt 04/07/2022	DEE
3	Link Road Opposite Masjid Sharief near Khyber School Repora b.w.o P/L of 75mm WMM and 25 mm thick Semidense bituminous concrete with 6 mm thick seal coat in patches/ stretches. Machine mix to be laid with paver	4.50	200	9000	05	SEPWD(R&B) Sgr-Bud/ 146 of 2022-23 dt 04/07/2022	DEE

Note: - Civil contractors A/B/C/D shall mandatorily upload an undertaking as per Clause 13 (vi) of this NIT.

Position of AAA:      Accorded

Position of funds:   Available

MH: 3054 M&R

1. The bidding documents, which would include qualifying information, eligibility criteria, specifications/drawings, a bill of quantities (B.O.Q), a set of contract terms and conditions, and other details, can be viewed/downloaded from the departmental website [www.jktenders.gov.in](http://www.jktenders.gov.in) on the dates listed below:-

1	Date of Issue of Tender Notice	30/07/2022
2	Period of downloading of bidding documents	30/07/2022
3	Bid submission Start Date	30/07/2022
4	Bid Submission End Date	06/08/2022 upto 4.00 PM.
5	Date & time of opening of Bids (Online)	06/08/2022 4.10 PM in the office of Executive Engineer R&B Division Chadoora

2. Bids must be accompanied by a Treasury Challan (dated between the bid start date and the Bid Submission End date) deposited in M.H. 0059 in the name of Executive Engineer R&B Division Chadoora (tender inviting authority) as the cost of the tender document.

3. At the time of tendering, all bidders must upload earnest money/bid security equal to 2% of the Advertised Cost in the form of CDR/FDR/BG pledged to the tender receiving authority, i.e. Executive Engineer R&B Division Chadoora. Besides that, the successful bidder will have to provide Performance Security @ 3% at the time of contract award, strictly in accordance with the Government's circular instructions from time to time. The earnest money/bid security of 2% will be released to the successful bidder only after the submission of a Performance Security of 3% of the total cost, which will be released after successful completion of the DLP/Maintenance Period.

Note:- The Bidders shall mention the name of the advertised work/ reference to NIT & S. No. on the EMD / Bid security (CDR/FDR/BG) while submitting the bidding documents, in order to avoid using the same multiple times for multiple works.

4. The date and time of bid opening shall be notified on the Web Site [www.jktenders.gov.in](http://www.jktenders.gov.in) and automatically communicated to bidders via an e-mail message sent to their e-mail address. Responsive bidders' bids will be opened online on the same Web Site in the Office of the Executive Engineer R&B Division Chadoora (tender receiving authority).

5. Bids for the work shall be valid for 120 days from the date of opening of Technical bids.

No: 3994-4003

**DIPK-7130/22**

Executive Engineer  
R&B Division Chadoora

Dated: 30/07/2022



## Verification Of ITR Timeline Reduced To 30 Days From 120: I-T Dept



Press Trust Of India

**NEW DELHI:** The Income Tax department has reduced the time limit for e-verification of hard copy submission of the ITR-V, post filing of returns by taxpayers, from the current 120 days to 30 days, beginning August 1.

The department issued a notification on July 29 announcing the change in the timeline.

E-verification of an ITR completes the return filing process and if it is not done within the stipulated time, an ITR is treated as invalid.

"It has been decided that in respect of any electronic transmission of return data on or after the date of this notification comes into effect, the time-limit for e-verification or submission of ITR-V shall now be 30 days from the date of transmitting/uploading the data of return electronically," the notification said.

It said the order comes into

effect from August 1.

Till now, the time period to e-verify the ITR or send the ITR-V through post, after filing of an Income Tax Return (ITR), was 120 days from the date of the uploading of the ITR.

The notification clarified that in case the e-verification of the ITR or hard copy ITR-V is sent through post beyond the time-limit of 30 days, the return shall be treated as late or beyond the due date.

Those who wish to send the ITR-V in a hard copy can send it through the usual address through "speed post only" to: Centralised Processing Centre, Income Tax Department, Bengaluru-560500, Karnataka.

"The date of dispatch of speed post of duly verified ITR-V shall be considered for the purpose of determination of the 30 days period, from the date of transmitting the date of Income-tax return electronically," it said.

## 5.83 Crore Income Tax Returns Filed For FY22

Press Trust Of India

**NEW DELHI:** The Income Tax Department has received about 5.83 crore tax returns, largely from salaried and individual category taxpayers, by the end of the financial year 2021-22 filing season on July 31, officials said Monday.

The latest numbers are about the same as the last fiscal (2020-21).

The due date for filing of income tax returns (ITRs) by salaried class and individual category taxpayers, who do not have to get their accounts audited for the fiscal ending March 31, 2022, was July 31 (Sunday).

"We have received about 5.83 crore returns by the end of July 31. Data is being reconciled to state the actual figures," a senior officer said.

The officer said during the last

fiscal, the due date for which was extended till December 31, 2021, around the same number of returns -- at 5.89 crore -- were filed.

More than 72 lakh ITRs were filed on the last day (Sunday) this time, the officer said.

According to latest rules, a late fee of Rs 5,000 would be payable by those (with an annual income of over Rs 5 lakh) who file their ITR by December 31 of the assessment year 2022-23.

Individuals with an annual income of below Rs 5 lakh will be liable to pay a late fee of Rs 1,000 for delayed return filing.

Besides, those who have outstanding unpaid tax will have to shell out an additional 1 per cent interest per month for delayed filing.

The late fee will not apply to those taxpayers whose income is below the taxable limit.

## India Facing No Risk Of Recession Or Stagflation: Sitharaman

Press Trust Of India

**NEW DELHI:** India is facing no risk of recession or stagflation as macroeconomic fundamentals of the economy are strong, Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman said on Monday.

Replying to a debate on price rise in the Lok Sabha, she said the GST collection and Purchasing Managers' Index (PMI) are indicating that the Indian economy is getting more robust.

The GST collection rose 28 per cent to touch the second-highest level of Rs 1.49 lakh crore in July. GST, introduced in July 2017, touched a record high of Rs 1.68 lakh crore in April 2022.

This is the sixth time that the monthly GST collection crossed the Rs 1.40-lakh-crore mark since the inception of Goods and Services Tax and the fifth month at a stretch since March 2022, she said.



She also said that the banking sector in the country is also healthy compared to other countries.

Gross NPAs of scheduled commercial banks have reached a six-year low of 5.9 per cent, she said, adding that government debt to GDP ratio has come down to 56.29 per cent in FY22.

Efforts are being made to bring down retail inflation below 7 per cent, the minister said.

Prices of edible oils have corrected sharply following steps taken by the government, she added.

Not happy with the reply of the Finance Minister on the price rise, Congress members walked out of the House.

## RBI Likely To Raise Key Policy Rate By At Least 35 Bps To Check Inflation: Experts

Press Trust Of India

**MUMBAI:** Days after the US Fed raised the interest rate, the RBI may go in for its third consecutive policy rate hike by at least 35 basis points to check high retail inflation, experts said.

The central bank has already announced to gradually withdraw its accommodative monetary policy stance.

The Reserve Bank of India's rate-setting panel -- the Monetary Policy Committee -- will meet for three days from August 3 to deliberate on the prevailing economic situation and announce its bi-monthly review on Friday.

With retail inflation ruling above 6 per cent for six months continuously, the RBI had raised the short-term borrowing rate (repo) twice so far this fiscal -- by 40 basis points in May and 50 basis points in June.

The existing repo rate of 4.9 per cent is still below the pre-Covid level of 5.15 per cent. The central bank sharply reduced the benchmark rate in 2020 to tide over the crisis created by the pandemic.

Experts are of the view that the RBI would raise the benchmark rate to at least the pre-pandemic level this week and even further in later months.



"We now expect the RBI MPC to raise the policy repo rate by 35 bps on August 5 and change the stance to calibrated tightening," BofA Global Research report said.

The possibility of an aggressive 50 bps and a measured 25 bps hike cannot be ruled out either, it added.

A research report by Bank of Baroda said that while the US Federal Reserve raised the rate by 225 bps in CY22, the RBI has hiked the repo rate by 90 bps. An aggressive rate hike by the Fed is feeding expectations that the RBI may also front load its rate hikes.

However, conditions in India do not warrant an aggressive stance by the RBI, it added.

"... in the absence of any fresh shocks, India's inflation trajectory is likely to evolve in line with the RBI's projections. Hence, we expect that the RBI may hike rates by only 25 bps in

Aug'22, followed by another 25 bps rate hikes in the next two meetings," it said.

The government has tasked the RBI to ensure consumer price index-based inflation remains at 4 per cent with a margin of two per cent on either side.

Dhruv Agarwala, Group CEO of Housing.com, said while other banking regulators across the world, including the Fed, are raising rates aggressively, the situation in India does not warrant that kind of approach yet.

"In our estimate, it is expected to be in the range of 20-25 basis points," he said.

In a report, Radhika Rao, Executive Director and Senior Economist at DBS Group Research, said the RBI monetary policy committee is expected to stay focused on price stability over the next two quarters.

Factoring in peak inflation in the July-September quarter, "we now expect a 35 bps hike in August, followed by three 25 bps for the terminal rate to level off at 6 per cent by end-FY23", she opined.

The retail inflation based on Consumer Price Index (CPI), which RBI factors in while arriving at its monetary policy, is above 6 per cent since January 2022. It was 7.01 per cent in June.

## GST Collection Rises 28% To Rs 1.49 Lakh Cr; 2nd Highest Ever

Press Trust Of India

**NEW DELHI:** GST collection rose 28 per cent to touch the second-highest level of Rs 1.49 lakh crore in July on the back of economic recovery and steps taken to curb tax evasion, the government said on Monday.

Goods and Services Tax (GST) collection stood at Rs 1,16,393 crore in the same month a year ago.

GST, introduced in July 2017, touched a record high of Rs 1.68 lakh crore in April, 2022.

This is the sixth time that the monthly GST collection crossed the Rs 1.40-lakh-crore mark since the inception of GST and fifth month at a stretch since March 2022, the ministry said in a statement.

During July, revenues from import of goods were 48 per cent higher and the revenues from domestic transactions (including import of services) were 22 per cent higher than the revenues from these sources during the same month last year.

Of the Rs 1,48,995 crore GST collected in July, Central GST is Rs 25,751 crore, State GST is Rs 32,807 crore, Integrated GST is Rs 79,518 crore (including Rs 41,420 crore collected on import of goods) and cess is Rs 10,920 crore (including Rs 995 crore collected on import of goods).

The government has settled Rs 32,365 crore to CGST and Rs 26,774 crore to SGST from IGST. The total revenue of Centre and the States in the month of July 2022 after regular settlement is Rs 58,116 crore for CGST and Rs 59,581 crore for the SGST, it said.



During June 2022, 7.45 crore e-way bills were generated, which was marginally higher than 7.36 crore in May 2022.

The growth in GST revenue till July 2022, over the same period last year, is 35 per cent and displays a very high buoyancy, according to the statement.

"This is a clear impact of various measures taken by the GST Council in the past to ensure better compliance. Better reporting coupled with economic recovery has been having a positive impact on the GST revenues on a consistent basis," it said.

Commenting on GST numbers, ICRA Chief Economist Aditi Nayar said the collections reported a healthy trend, rising for the second month in a row, with a 28 per cent year-on-year increase.

"With the headline GST collection in July 2022 exceeding the monthly average forecast of Rs 1.45 lakh crore for this year, we foresee an upside of Rs 1.15 lakh crore relative to the FY2023 BE for CGST collections," she said.

According to Abhishek Jain, partner Indirect Tax, KPMG in India, these consistent high collections indicate recovery from the pandemic hit slowdown and can also be attributed to inflation and tight check and balances implemented by the government.

## Reliance Jio Top Bidder With Rs 88,078 Cr Bid For 5G; Adani Acquires Airwaves Worth Rs 212 Cr

Press Trust Of India

**NEW DELHI:** Billionaire Mukesh Ambani's Reliance Jio on Monday emerged as the largest bidder for the 5G spectrum, acquiring close to half of all the airwaves sold in the latest auction for Rs 88,078 crore.

According to Telecom Minister Ashwini Vaishnaw, the Adani group bought 400 MHz, or less than one per cent of all spectrum sold, for Rs 212 crore.

While Adani group bought spectrum in the 26 GHz band, which is not for public networks, Jio acquired spectrum across several bands, including the coveted 700 MHz band that can provide 6-10 km of signal range and forms a good base for fifth generation (5G) in all 22 circles in the country.

A single tower can cover more area if 700 Mhz is used.



Telecom tycoon Sunil Bharti Mittal's Bharti Airtel bought a 19,867 MHz airwave across different bands for Rs 43,084 crore.

Vodafone Idea Ltd bought spectrum for Rs 18,784 crore.

In all, Rs 150,173 crore of bids were received, Vaishnaw said.

Of the 72,098 MHz of spectrum offered across 10 bands, 51,236 MHz, or 71 per cent, was sold.

The government, he said, in the first year will get a Rs 13,365 crore payment for the spectrum.

He also said the 5G services could be launched by October.

## Equity Investors Richer By Over Rs 12.74 Lakh Cr In 4-Day Rally

Press Trust Of India

**NEW DELHI:** The four-day rally in equities made investors richer by over Rs 12.74 lakh crore with the benchmark Sensex jumping 5.15 per cent to reclaim the 58,000-mark.

The 30-share BSE benchmark climbed 545.25 points or 0.95 per cent to finish at 58,115.50 on Monday. The benchmark ended above the 58,000-level for the first time since April 13 this year.

In four days, the BSE benchmark has jumped 2,847.01 points or 5.15 per cent.

Helped by the ongoing optimism in equities, the market capitalisation of BSE-listed firms jumped Rs 12,74,885.77 crore to Rs 2,70,29,915.21 crore in four days to Monday.

"Strong global cues and optimistic vehicle sales numbers from select frontline automobile companies fuelled another round of rally in domestic equities," said Shrikant Chouhan, Head of Equity Research (Retail), Kotak Securities Ltd.

Moreover, the return of foreign institutional investors to the local equity markets has also brought back some amount of cheer amongst the investors, Chouhan added.

Foreign institutional investors remained net buyers in the capital markets as they bought shares worth Rs 2,320.61 crore on Monday, as per exchange data.

Deepak Jasani, Head of Retail Research, HDFC Securities, said, market rose for the fourth consecutive session aided by positive global cues and foreign inflows.

On Monday, Mahindra & Mahindra topped the Sensex gainers' pack, climbing 6.15 per cent after the company posted a 33 per cent increase in domestic passenger vehicles sales in the previous month.

Reliance Industries, Maruti Suzuki, Kotak Mahindra Bank, Bharti Airtel, NTPC, PowerGrid and UltraTech Cement were among the other gainers.

In the broader market, the BSE midcap gauge jumped 1.51 per cent and the smallcap index climbed 1.47 per cent.

All the BSE sectoral indices ended in the green, with power rallying 3.43 per cent, followed by utilities (3.38 per cent), auto (3.23 per cent), telecom (2.49 per cent), industrials (2.31 per cent) and energy (2.10 per cent).

## Interaction Held With Representatives Of Various Trade/ Artisan Associations

Observer News Service

**SRINAGAR:** Director, Industries & Commerce (I&C), Kashmir along-with Director Handicraft & Handloom (H&H), Kashmir Monday held a detailed interaction with the representatives of various Associations / Stake holders representing Artisans, Craftsmen Trade and Tourism sector at Sanat Ghar, Bemina here.

This was the first meeting in the series of monthly meetings to be held in the first week of every month as follow up action to the decision taken by LG during his interaction meeting with the various Industrial organizations held at SKICC recently

During the interaction, Director, I&C, Kashmir informed the participants about Single Window Portal wherein all the services provided by various Departments have been made online to ensure time bound disposal of cases/ issuance of NOCs/ clearances from various Government departments under 'Ease of Doing Business', 'Business Reforms Action Plan' & PSGA which was followed by a run through the single window portal.

During the interaction a demonstration was also given by PMU engaged under the BRAP program.

During the interaction, representatives of associations raised various concerns/ issues being faced by them. Directors of I&C and H&H assured the representatives that both the Departments will strive to address their genuine issues/ concerns on priority as per the provisions formulated by the Government.

Among others, the interaction was attended by Presidents, Chairpersons and office bearers of KCCI, FCIK, CII, MEERAS, PEMA, TAHAFUZ, KPO, KPKU, KHARA KHAROF.

## JKRLM, OYO Organise 2 Day Training Workshop For Homestay Owners

Observer News Service

**SRINAGAR:** Jammu & Kashmir State Rural Livelihood Mission (JKRLM) Monday conducted a two day workshop on homestay management for homestay owners in collaboration with the global travel technology company, OYO at Sher-e-Kashmir University of Agricultural Sciences and Technology (SKUAST) Shalimar here.

The workshop aims to enable SHG members to learn about the processes involved in setting up home stays and to impart the skills to SHG members related to homestay management.

A total of 200 Homestay owners would be trained in the mega workshop by the Senior Trainers from OYO, Delhi. The trainee homestay owners will be trained in different spheres of Hospitality like Behavioural Skills, Marketing & Sales, Potential responsibilities, and Destination Promotion Skills.

The training programme was attended by Mission Director JKRLM, Indu Kanwal Chib, Additional Mission Director, JKRLM, Riyaz Ahmad Beigh, Senior project Managers, District Programme Managers, Block programme Mangers and SHG members of Umeed.

Speaking on the occasion, Indu Kanwal Chib, said "This initiative of JKRLM will create new entrepreneurs, provide gainful employment to the rural women and strengthen the rural economy. It will also open up several new avenues of employment for people with different skill sets".

Giving details MD added that the Mission is already identifying homestays in 8 Districts of J&K under the Tourist Village Network, The Missions collaboration with OYO will not only

generate jobs for the SHGs ,but it will also improve the local economy and infrastructure. She assured that the Mission will provide all the necessary support and assistance to the homestay owners.

MD urged upon the SHG members to take maximum benefit from the training programme and to make the homestay intervention of JKRLM a unique experience for the Guests.

On the occasion various success stories of existing homestays in Kashmir were shared with the participants and the training program ended with the question answer session.

Ritesh Agarwal, Founder, OYO said 'We are delighted to be a part of this initiative and reaffirm our commitment to strengthen tourism in the state by helping local homestay owners. This will help promote sustainable, responsible travel and offer a unique travel experience to the tourists'.

Since entering Jammu & Kashmir in 2015, OYO has hosted thousands of guests at the hotels on its platform, while ensuring higher earnings for 140+ hotel and home-owners. The company has further created direct and indirect economic opportunities for 500+ people. Many such patrons have started multiple hotels since joining the OYO family.

It is to mention that Homestay is a form of hospitality and lodging where in the guests have the opportunities to interact, gain knowledge, and experience the life style and culture of the host family as well as the local community. The idea of the homestay program is to accommodate tourists with a local family, thus enabling the tourist to learn about local lifestyle, culture, nature etc.

## Dir Agri Visits Agrostology Farm Aru

Observer News Service

**SRINAGAR:** The Director Agriculture Kashmir, Chowdhary Muhammad Iqbal Monday visited Agrostology farm Aru Anantnag.

During the visit, the Director inspected different blocks of the multiplication farm and interacted with the concerned technical experts regarding various latest interventions adopted by the farm this year.

Speaking on the occasion, Iqbal said that the departmental farms must focus on the development and multiplication of high yielding varieties of fodder crops and appropriate production of good quality seed.

He said the departmental farm has to play a pivotal role in achieving the ambitious goal of self-reliance in the field of seed requirement. He assured the concerned officers of every possible support for strengthening the farm on modern scientific lines.

The Director said that from the last two years the department is diversifying the departmental farms in terms of crops and other agriculture activities. "We have achieved good results vis-à-vis farmers' satisfaction over the quality of planting material but still there is a great scope for improvement", he added.

He emphasised upon the concerned officers to invite farmers and agripreneurs from the concerned areas to these departmental farms and hold demonstration sessions with them so that the modern trends and technologies in this trade could be imparted to the grass roots level in a comprehensive manner.

The Director was accompanied by Deputy Director Planning and other officers of the department.



## Row Over Islamic Verses During All-Faith Prayers, Kanpur School Backs Down

### Agenceis

Kanpur : A private school here has stopped the recitation of religious prayers during the morning assembly after right-wing protests over the inclusion of some Islamic verses in the decade-old practice followed by the institution.

The Florets International School announced a holiday Monday after Vishwa Hindu Parishad and BJP workers held a demonstration, claiming that students were being compelled to recite the 'Kalma Tayyab'.

According to a local VHP leader, the activists also purified the school premises.

The school management said the Gayatri Mantra and the Gurbani are also recited during the morning assembly as part of its 'Sarva Dharma Samman' (all religions are equal) philosophy.

From today, we have stopped reciting these prayers and started singing only the national anthem," school's managing director Sumeet



Makhija said.

The controversy erupted after a parent tweeted that students at the two-decade old institution were being "compelled" to recite the 'Kalma Tayyab'.

Assistant Commissioner of Police (Seesamau) Nishank Sharma told PTI that the district magistrate and other senior officials were directed to look into the matter when the tweet went viral on social media.

Sharma along with Additional City Magistrate-III Jiyalal Saroj reached the school and the issue was sorted out amicably, authorities said.

We questioned the school managing director Sumeet Makhija who clarified that prayers from four religions were recited at the school during the morning assembly as part of the

'Sarva Dharma Samman' ideology," the ACP said.

Makhija said the school had been encouraging the recital of the 'Gayatri Mantra', 'Gurbani' and 'Dua' at the morning assembly to teach students that all religions are equal.

The practice had been going on for over a decade, but suddenly some parents and people affiliated with right-wing groups objected to the practice, ACM Saroj said.

The school diary contains verses of all major religions, including Hinduism, Sikhism, Christianity and Islam, Makhija said.

There was surely no intention of promoting any one religion, he said, adding that from now onwards only the national anthem will be sung at the assembly.

VHP district president Anurag Dubey said activists gathered at the school demanding stringent action against the management for compelling students to learn Islamic beliefs.



The school premises have been purified with Ganga water, he said.

Police were deployed outside the school to prevent any untoward incident, an official said.

City's Additional District Magistrate Atul Kumar told reporters that a written complaint had been filed and police asked to investigate the matter and take action as needed.

Kanpur DM Vishak G said that the Basic Shiksha Adhikari and an additional city magistrate have been directed to look into the matter and submit a report on the facts as soon as possible.

The officials have been asked to visit the school and meet teachers, parents and students, he added.

## Kerala Confirms India's 1st Monkeypox Death; 6th Case Reported In Country



### Agenceis

New Delhi/Thiruvananthapuram: India reported its sixth monkeypox case on Monday -- a Nigerian man living in Delhi with no recent foreign travel history -- as the Centre formed a task force to monitor the emerging situation.

The Kerala government, meanwhile, confirmed that samples of a 22-year-old man, who died on July 30, tested positive, making him India's first monkeypox-related fatality.

His 20 contacts including family members, friends, a helper and others who played football with him are in the high-risk category and are under "self-observation".

Rajasthan also reported its first suspected case of the disease Monday with with a 20-year-old man being admitted to a government hospital with a fever for the past four days and rashes on body.

In the national capital, official sources said the 35-year-old Nigerian man who tested positive -- becoming the city's second and the country's sixth case -- is admitted to the Delhi government's LNJP Hospital, the nodal facility for treatment of the infection.

He has blisters and a fever for the last five days.

His samples were sent to the National Institute of Virology (NIV) in Pune. The report which arrived Monday evening showed he was positive, an official source said.

Two suspected patients of monkeypox, who are of African

origin, have also been admitted to the LNJP Hospital, the sources added.

Kerala Chief Minister Pinarayi Vijayan told reporters in Thiruvananthapuram the samples of the 22-year-old man who died on July 30 were sent to the National Institute of Virology, Pune, and they returned positive for a West African variant of monkeypox.

Vijayan said the man, who reached the State on July 22, had earlier tested positive for monkeypox on July 19 in the UAE.

State Health Minister Veena George said in a release, "He was admitted to a private hospital at Thrissur on July 27 after his health deteriorated but his relatives informed the hospital authorities about the test result from UAE on July 30."

George said there are 20 contacts under the high-risk category including his family members, friends, a helper and others who played football with him.

Chief Minister Basavaraj Bommai of neighbouring Karnataka called an "important meeting" of the Health Minister and department officials on Tuesday regarding control measures and treatment facility to be put in place.

The World Health Organisation (WHO) recently declared monkeypox a global public health emergency of international concern. Globally, over 16,000 cases of monkeypox have been reported from 75 countries.

According to the World Health Organization, monkeypox is a viral zoonosis -- a virus

transmitted to humans from animals -- with symptoms similar to small pox although clinically less severe.

Monkeypox typically manifests itself with fever, rash and swollen lymph nodes and may lead to a range of medical complications. It is usually a self-limiting disease with symptoms lasting for two to four weeks.

With new confirmed and suspected cases being reported, the Centre formed a task force Monday to monitor the situation and decide on response initiatives.

Official sources said in Delhi the task force will also provide guidance to the government on expansion of diagnostic facilities and explore emerging vaccination trends.

The decision to constitute the task force was taken at a high-level meeting held on July 26 at the level of the principal secretary to the prime minister to review the ongoing public health preparedness in the country.

The task force will be headed by Dr V K Paul, NITI Aayog member (health).

The National Aids Control Organisation and the Directorate General of Health Services in the Health Ministry have been asked to work on a targeted communication strategy to promote timely reporting, detection of cases and management of cases, an official source said.

Instructions were given to operationalise the Indian Council of Medical Research (ICMR) network of labs and make arrangements for requisite diagnostics of monkeypox disease.

### BABRI DEMOLITION

## HC Allows UP Govt, CBI To File Objections To Plea Against Acquittal Of Accused

### Agenceis

Lucknow: The Allahabad High Court on Monday allowed the Uttar Pradesh government and the CBI to file their objections to the maintainability of a criminal appeal against the acquittal of all 32 accused, including BJP stalwarts L K Advani and M M Joshi, in the Babri mosque demolition case, and fixed September 5 as the next date of hearing.

A bench of Justices Ramesh Sinha and Saroj Yadav passed the order.

During the hearing in the Lucknow bench of the high court on Monday, CBI counsel S P Shukla and government advocate Vimal Kumar Srivastava raised a preliminary objection regarding the maintainability of the appeal on the ground that the appellants were not victims of the case, hence, they did not have any right to challenge the acquittal of the accused persons.

witnesses in the trial against the accused and that they were also the victims of the violence.

The Babri mosque was demolished by karsevaks on December 6, 1992. After a long legal battle, a special CBI court on September 30, 2020 pronounced the judgment in the criminal trial and acquitted all the accused, including Advani, Joshi, former UP chief minister Kalyan Singh, senior BJP leaders Uma Bharti and Vinay Katiyar, Sadhvi Ritambhara and Brij Bhushan Sharan Singh.

The trial judge had refused to believe newspaper cuttings, video clips as evidence as the originals of the same were not produced, while the entire edifice of the case rested on these pieces of documentary evidence.

The trial judge also had held that the CBI could not produce any evidence that the accused had a meeting of mind with



Ayodhya residents Haji Mahmood Ahmad and Syed Akhlaq Ahmad had filed a revision petition against the acquittal, but Justice Dinesh Kumar Singh had held last month that it was not maintainable and directed that it be treated as a criminal appeal.

Accordingly, the revision petition was converted into a criminal appeal and listed before the appropriate division bench.

The two petitioners have alleged that they were

karsevaks who demolished the structure.

Assailing the findings of the trial court, the petitioners had pleaded that the court committed error in not convicting the accused as ample evidence was on record.

"The trial judge did not appreciate the evidence of conspiracy in the right perspective," the petitioners claimed.

The petition sought setting aside of the judgment of September 30, 2020.

## Goa Bar Row: Delhi HC Says Smriti Irani, Daughter Not Owners Of Restaurant, No Licence Ever Issued In Their Favour

### Agenceis

**New Delhi:** The Delhi High Court has held that Union Minister Smriti Irani and her daughter are neither owners of a restaurant-cum-bar in Goa at the centre of a controversy nor a license was ever issued in their favour, and said statements by three Congress leaders against them seem to be "bogus with malicious intent."

Further saying that even the show cause notice issued by the Government of Goa was not addressed to Irani or her family members, the high court said the three Congress leaders Jairam Ramesh, Pawan Khara, Netta D'Souza along with others conspired to "launch a tirade of false,

scathing and belligerent personal attacks" against them. The Congress has alleged that the senior BJP leader and her daughter had links with the upmarket restaurant - 'Silly Souls Caf and Bar'.

The high court said the statements made by the three Congress leaders are in the "nature of slander and seem to be bogus with malicious intent" to intentionally subject Irani to a "great public ridicule" and "to injure the moral character and public image" of the minister and her daughter.

The remarks were made by Justice Mini Pushkarna while perusing the documents placed before it in a civil defamation suit filed by Irani, the

Minister for Women and Child Development, against the three Congress leaders.

The court order, in which it had on July 29 issued summonses to the three Congress leaders on the civil defamation suit, was uploaded on the court's website on Monday.

The court had also asked them to take down tweets and other social media posts on allegations levelled against the union minister and her daughter.

"I have perused the various documents on record, particularly, the show cause notice dated July 21, 2022, issued by the Government of Goa, office of Commissioner of Excise, which has been addressed to one Anthony Dgama, and not to the plaintiff (Irani) or her family

members.

"Considering the documents on record it is clearly seen that there was no license which was ever issued in favour of the plaintiff or her daughter. The plaintiff or her daughter are not the owners of the restaurant. It has also been established by the plaintiff prima facie that the plaintiff or her daughter never applied for license.

"Neither the restaurant nor the land on which the restaurant exists is owned by the plaintiff or her daughter. Even the show cause notice issued by the Government of Goa is not in the name of the plaintiff or her daughter. All these facts have also been affirmed in the affidavit by the plaintiff," Justice Pushkarna

said in her 14-page order.

Irani has filed a defamation suit against the Congress leaders for allegedly making baseless and false accusations against her and her 18-year-old daughter.

The high court said since the plaintiff commands an esteemed position as a minister in the Government of India and considering the nature of her public office, there is immense public glare and scrutiny of any information about her in the public domain.

It noted that there is an imperative need to protect the reputation of an individual, least to say, that of the plaintiff who is a respected member of the society and esteemed member of

the Union Ministry.

"Defendant nos.1 to 3 (Congress leaders) have conspired with each other and other individuals and organisations to launch a tirade of false, scathing, and belligerent personal attacks on the plaintiff and her daughter with a common motive to malign, defame and injure the reputation, moral character and public image of the plaintiff and her daughter," it said.

The court said it was of the considered view that the statements made by the Congress leaders are in the "nature of slander and seem to be bogus with malicious intent, only to garner the highest amount of viewership thereby intentionally

subjecting the plaintiff to a great public ridicule."

It added that "Plaintiff (Irani) has made out a prima facie case and balance of convenience lies in favour of the plaintiff and against the defendants".

Passing an interim injunction directing the Congress leaders to remove from social media the allegations made against Irani and her daughter, the court had on Friday said in case the defendants fail to comply with its directions to remove tweets, retweets, posts, videos, and photos from social media concerning the allegations within 24 hours, social media platforms Twitter, Facebook, and YouTube shall take down the material.

## CONTD. FROM FRONT PAGE

### Climate Change

injured after a cloudburst hit the hills near the holy cave triggering off flash floods.

Similarly, On July 27, a cloudburst hit Chakwali Nallah in Tulail area of Gurez in north Kashmir's Bandipora district which led to an overflow of a nearby stream.

However, Dr. Majid Farooq says that the cloudbursts used to happen in Kashmir earlier as well but now it is being reported more with the advent of technology.

Dr. Mohammad Muslim, Assistant Professor, Environmental science, Kashmir University argues that there has been drastic change in terms of land use in the watersheds of Jhelum basin ( Kashmir valley) rivers since last three decades.

"...as a result hydrologic response of the watersheds of Jhelum basin has changed," Muslim said.

While explaining it further, Muslim said trees and the associate vegetation cover intercept the precipitation and improve hydrological conditions of watershed by enhancing retention of water.

"This phenomenon is critical in determining resident time of water. Thus significant change on land-use change soil hydrological conditions and is culprit behind the peak in discharge with extreme precipitation events in watersheds of Jhelum basin, Muslim added.

He further blamed "climatic extremity" for the flood threat and flash-floods in the valley.

"Earlier, there would be five days or ten days of rainfall but not now you witness five days of

rainfall in one day. We call it an extreme event, which together with poor catchment conditions has made us more vulnerable," he added.

It may be noted, that post 2014 devastating floods in the valley, devastating floods of 2014, the Government of India sanctioned the plan for comprehensive flood management of river Jhelum and its tributaries.

An amount of Rs 399 crore was sanctioned for the first phase which was completed recently. The government claimed that it will enhance the discharge carrying capacity from 31,800 cusecs to 41,000 cusecs.

However, even after completion of Phase I of the project, the flood threat still looms large. "The flood channels and rivers have lost the carrying capacity, even the dredging is not helping out," said Danish Farooq, a resident of Srinagar.

Earth scientist Shakil Romshoo, the Vice-Chancellor of the Islamic University of Science and Technology (IUST), however argues that the dredging should be an annual affair as the soil erosion has filled the major rivers and its tributaries in the valley and needs annual debilitation.

"Over 70% of the land in the valley is prone to soil erosion," Ramshoo said.

He further argued that the valley has natural mechanisms for the dispersal of floodwaters. "The largest flood basin in Kashmir is Wular Lake, and besides the scores of the wetlands on the left and right side of the Jhelum," Romshoo said.

### Flash Floods Hit

stay at home and not venture close to rivers and 'nallahs' in the wake of threat of flash floods.

"All schools and educational institutions have been closed," an official said.

Meanwhile, traders of Beopar mandal protested over the authority's failure to build a new sewerage system in the region. Officials said exact details of the loss is being ascertained. (PTI)

### Rs 43L Biryani

The case has already been registered after the initial investigation in which some fraud was detected.

According to ACB, some football lovers lodged a written complaint through one Mushtaq Ahmad Bhat against bungling in JKFA. It was alleged that funds allotted by the J&K Sports Council and other Government and semi-Government agencies, for conducting football activities across J&K were misused and the funds sanctioned by the Government through J&K Sports Council to organize tournaments like Khelo India and Mufti Memorial Gold Cup were not utilized properly.

The preliminary investigation found that members of the Association showed an amount of Rs 43,06,500 paid to Restaurant Mughal Darbar, Polo View in Srinagar for the purchase of Biryani as refreshment for the teams.

However, the ACB found that no such refreshment has ever been given to any team in any district of Kashmir province. The bills were

raised by the Association and placed on record before the ACB, have been found fake.

The ACB has also found that an amount of Rs 1, 41,300 was shown paid to Hindustan Photostat for various activities. It was during inquiry found fake and prepared by resorting to forgery.

The probe found that Rs 43,06,500 has been drawn out of the Rs 50 lakh budget released for the Kashmir division by the J&K Sports Council which upon inquiry has been found drawn based on fake and forged bills or documents.

According to ACB, it has also been found that the J&K Sports Council released these funds to the JKFA before the commencement of the events without ensuring account for on-ground utilization and follow-up thereupon.

The probe conducted revealed that all these bills are forged as they bear the handwriting of the same person.

The ACB found that the amount had been found drawn by preparing false and fabricated bills by the J&K Football Association members including JKFA president Zameer Ahmad Thakur, Treasurer S S Bunty, Chief Executive S A Hameed, District president JKFA Fayaz Ahmad, and others.

A case (vide FIR No 30/22 under Section 5(1) (c), 5(1) (d) read with Section 5(2) of the JK PC Act Svt 2006 and Section 465, 467, 468, 471, and 120-B of the Ranbir Penal Code) has been registered in Police Station ACB Srinagar. (KNT)

### 397 Test Covid

while 122 others were detected from various districts of Jammu division, taking the number of people infected since the onset of pandemic in J&K to 465163.

In the Valley, officials said, Srinagar reported the highest 105 new cases of virus, Baramulla 88, Anantnag 21, Kupwara 18, Budgam 13, Pulwama and Kulgam 10 each. No new cases were reported from Ganderbal and Shopian districts.

In the winter capital, they said, Jammu registered a maximum of 80 new cases of virus, Ramban 8, Rajouri and Samba 7 each, Udhampur and Kathua six each and two each in Poonch and Doda. The twin districts of Reasi and Kishtwar reported no new cases of Covid-19.

Also, the officials said, one more person succumbed to the deadly infection in Jammu division during the last 24 hours. So far, 4772 people have died in the pandemic in J&K --2343 in Jammu division and 2429 in the Valley.

"Moreover, 704 more COVID-19 patients have recovered and been discharged from various hospitals including 287 from Jammu division and 417 from Kashmir division," they added.

### 2-Member Panel

the enquiry.

It is worthwhile to mention that in the month of May this year the government ordered enquiry into the illegal promotions granted and posts created in Srinagar Municipal Corporation in 2016 by the then SMC Commissioner--(KNO)



## Aqsa Gulzar Clinches Bronze In World Pencak Silat Championship



Observer News Service

**SRINAGAR:** J&K's Aqsa Gulzar has won a Bronze medal at the recently concluded World Pencak Silat Championship 2022 in Malaysia.

The Indian Pencak Silat team comprising of 36 players both men and women, including eight players from J&K, remained among the top ten at the world level by clinching seven bronze medals in the 19th World Championship Pencak Silat which concluded in Malaysia on Sunday.

The national Pencak Silat contingent comprising of 42 members both men and women, coaches and staff from across the country including 8 players and 3 coaches from J&K was flagged-off by Manoj Sinha, the LG Jammu and Kashmir, on 24th of last month from Raj Bhawan Srinagar. The national team had trained un-

der battery of coaches in a 21 days long coaching camp in Srinagar.

The players who bagged the medals for the country include Suraj Sharma (Delhi) securing bronze in solo creative male, Disha Reddy (MP) securing bronze in solo creative female in Artistic category while in Tanding (fighting) category Rahul Saini (Rajasthan) (Class C), Arti Kumari (Bihar-SSB) (Class G), Madhu Kumari (Himachal Pradesh-SSB) (Class E), G. Shantilaxmi (Puducherry) (Class H), Aqsa Gulzar (J&K) (class open 2) secured one bronze medal each.

Mohammed Iqbal and Irfan Aziz from J&K accompanied the national team as coaches and Mufti Hamid Yasin was the team manager.

Secretary YSS and Secretary Sports Council while congratulating the national team said everyone is excited on the performance of national Pencak Silat team.

## 2 Matches Played In Srinagar A-Division League



Observer News Service

**SRINAGAR:** In the ongoing Annual League Football Tournament, two matches of the A-Division League were played on Monday at the Synthetic Turf TRC, here.

In the first match between Shunglipora FC and Ali Jana FC 'B', both the teams started with an aggressive note. However, the half time score remained 0-0. In the second half, Ali Jana B tried to consolidate their position and made certain good moves but could not penetrate

the solid defences of Shunglipora FC. The match ended in a goalless draw.

The second match was played between Flying Kashmir FC and Alamdar FC in which Alamdar FC defeated Flying Kashmir FC 2-0. Ishfaq Ahmad opened the account for the Alamdar FC in 22nd minute. The second half also witnessed some aggressive play by both the teams. Alamdar FC players were trying to double the lead, and Khalid Hameed made the score 2-0. The scoreline remained the same till the final whistle.

## Aharbal Summer Festival Witnesses Adventure Activities



Observer News Service

**KULGAM:** To further promote adventure tourism and off-beat tourist destinations, Tourism Department and Aharbal Development Authority in collaboration with District Administration Kulgam on Monday organised a summer festival at the famed tourist destination of Aharbal.

During this summer festival multifarious activities and events were carried out which include trekking expeditions upto Kongawattan and Kounsarnag, heritage walk with fossil talk, angling competition and bicycle rally etc.

The events were flagged-off by Director Tourism, Kashmir, Dr. G. N. Itoo.

Additional Deputy Commissioner Kulgam, Showkat Ahmad, CEO, Aharbal Development Authority, Galib Mohiuddin, officers from Tourism Department and District Administration and a number of nature enthusiasts were present on the occasion.

An important feature of today's adventure activities was the participation of a trekking group comprising professionals from different fields from outside UT which was also flagged-off for a trekking expedition to Kounsarnag by Director Tourism Kashmir.

The Director Tourism said that due to the efforts of the Department and stakeholders this year the valley remained abuzz with tourists.

## 2022 Commonwealth Games Top 10 Teams on August 1

Rank	Nation	Gold	Silver	Bronze	Total
1	Australia	22	14	18	54
2	England	12	16	7	35
3	New Zealand	10	5	4	19
4	South Africa	4	1	1	6
5	Canada	3	6	10	19
6	India	3	2	1	6
7	Scotland	2	7	8	17
8	Malaysia	2	1	1	4
9	Nigeria	2	0	1	3
10	Wales	1	2	6	9

## Luggage Problem Delays Start Of India-West Indies T20



Agencies

**ST KITTS:** Cricket West Indies pushed back the start of the second Twenty20 international with India on Monday by two hours because of "significant delays in crucial team luggage" arriving from Trinidad. "CWI regrets any inconvenience caused

to our valued fans, sponsors, broadcast partners and all other stakeholders," it said Monday.

Monday's match was originally scheduled to start at 10:30 a.m. local time. In a later update, the BCCI stated that the match will begin at 10:30 p.m. IST.

India beat the West Indies by 68 runs on Friday in Tarouba,

Trinidad, in the first of five T20s. "Due to circumstances beyond CWI's control, there have been significant delays in crucial team luggage arriving into St. Kitts from Trinidad," the organization said.

The last two matches of the T20 series will be played at Lauderdalehill in Florida. (AP)

## Saudi Arabia Among Nations Interested In Women's Asian Cup



Agencies

**KUALA LUMPUR:** Australia, Jordan, Saudi Arabia and Uzbekistan have expressed interest in hosting the 2026 Women's Asian Cup, the Asian Football Confederation said on Monday.

The AFC "will now work with

all bidding member associations on the delivery of the necessary bidding documentation in accordance with the bidding process".

The winning bid will be announced next year and the AFC hailed the growing popularity of the tournament.

India hosted the 2022 Women's Asian Cup, which was won by China and was expanded from eight to 12 teams.

The 2026 edition "is expected to build on the solid foundations of the tournament's celebrated legacy", the AFC said.

## Asia Reworks Qualifying Format For 48-Team World Cup In 2026

Agencies

**BRISBANE:** The Asian Football Confederation has confirmed a new qualifying format to factor in its expanded number of direct entries for a 48-team World Cup in 2026.

The governing body for soccer in Asia issued a statement Monday saying a four-round qualifying system has been designed in preparation for the eight direct spots and single intercontinental playoff slot allocated to the AFC following the expansion of the World Cup.

Under the new system, the



third round, which will be divided into three groups of six competing in round-robin format.

The first and second teams in each of those groups will get direct entries for the 2026 World Cup in the United States, Canada and Mexico.

The third- and fourth-place teams will go into a playoff round that will be divided into two groups of three. The winners of those groups will secure spots at the World Cup; the runners-up will go into a playoff for Asia's spot in an intercontinental playoff for a last-ditch chance at qualifying.

## Bangladesh Levels T20 Series Against Zimbabwe



Agencies

**HARARE:** Mosaddek Hossain took five top-order wickets to help restrict Zimbabwe to 135-8 before opener Litton Das belted 56 from 33 deliveries to usher Bangladesh to a series-leveling seven-wicket win on Sunday in the second Twenty20 cricket international.

Zimbabwe won the toss and elected to bat but was in trouble early when Mosaddek took a wicket with the first delivery of the match and another with the sixth.

Mosaddek picked up his third wicket and the hosts slipped to 6-3 midway through the third over when he had Zimbabwe skipper Craig Ervine caught at slip after mis-timing an attempted reverse sweep. The right-arm offspinner added the

wickets of Sean Williams, caught and bowled, and Milton Shumba as Zimbabwe slumped to 31-5 in the seventh over. Mosaddek returned 5-20 from his four overs.

Sikandar Raza scored 62 from 53 deliveries and Ryan Burl posted 32 from 31 to bolster Zimbabwe's innings.

In reply, Bangladesh reached 136-3 in 17.3 overs, with Das sharing a 37-run opening stand with Munim Shahriar (7) and 41 for the second wicket with Anamul Haque before he was trapped lbw by Williams.

Afif Hossain (30) and Najmul Shanto (19) combined in an unbeaten 55-run fourth-wicket stand to secure the win to level the three-match series after Zimbabwe won the opener by 17 runs.

The deciding third T20 will be held Tuesday in Harare. (AP)

## Barcelona Sells Part Of Its Production Hub For \$102M



Agencies

**BARCELONA:** Barcelona has sold part of its production hub for 100 million euros (\$102 million) to boost its finances in a bid to use its newly signed players right away.

Club president Joan Laporta announced Monday the club sold a 25% stake of Barça Studios to Socios.com, a blockchain provider in the sports and entertainment business.

The club said the sale will "accelerate" the club's strategies related to audiovisual, blockchain and online products.

The money should also allow Barcelona to meet Spanish league financial requirements and sign the players it has ac-

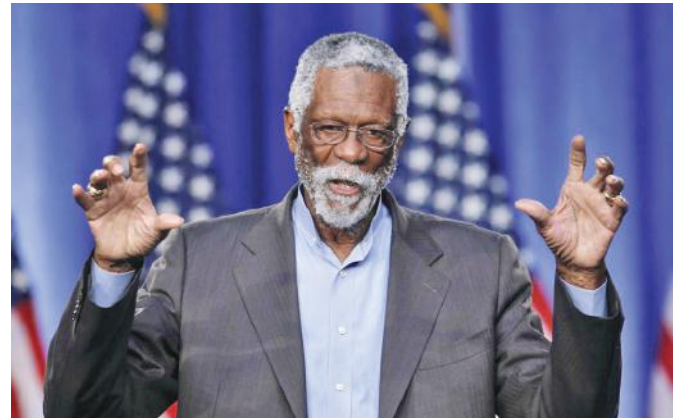
quired recently, including Robert Lewandowski, Raphinha and Jules Koundé, who was officially introduced on Monday.

The club spent more than 160 million euros (\$163 million) on the three players, becoming Europe's leading spender in the offseason despite being mired in financial difficulties until recently.

Laporta has been criticized for burdening the club's future with its current tactics to find new cash. Barcelona had already sold 25% of its Spanish league TV rights for the next 25 years for 667 million euros (\$682 million).

"The risk is under control," Laporta said. "We need to save the club and have the possibility of bringing in new players."

## Bill Russell, NBA Star & Civil Rights Pioneer, Dies At 88



Agencies

**BOSTON:** Bill Russell redefined how basketball is played, and then he changed the way sports are viewed in a racially divided country.

The most prolific winner in NBA history, Russell marched with Martin Luther King Jr., stood with Muhammad Ali and received the Presidential Medal of Freedom from President Barack Obama. The centerpiece of the Boston Celtics dynasty that won 11 championships in 13 years, Russell earned his last two NBA titles as a player-coach — the first Black coach in any major U.S. sport.

Russell died Sunday at the age of 88, with his wife, Jeannine, at

his side, his family said in a statement posted on social media. No cause of death was immediately available; Russell, who had been living in the Seattle area, was not well enough to present the NBA Finals MVP trophy in June due to a long illness.

A Hall of Famer, five-time Most Valuable Player and 12-time All-Star, Russell in 1980 was voted the greatest player in the NBA history by basketball writers. He remains the sport's most decorated champion — he also won two college titles and an Olympic gold medal — and an archetype of selflessness who won with defense and rebounding while others racked up gaudy scoring totals.





*Famous Irani  
Chai of Bombay  
now in Srinagar*

**IRANI CHAI**  
**PINEAPPLE TEA**  
**BUN MASKA**  
**BUN MASKA WITH JAM**

**SANDWITCHES**

**TURKISH BURGER**  
(BUN MASKA SPECIAL)  
**CHICKEN CRISPY BURGER**  
**CHICKEN PERI PERI**  
**MEXICAN BURGER**  
**BARBECUE BURGER**  
**CHILLI GARLIC**  
**ZINGER BURGER**  
**KINGSIZE BURGER**

**VEG BURGERS**

**ALOO TIKKI**  
**CRISPY PANEER**  
**PERI PERI**  
**CHILLI GARLIC**  
**TANDOORI**  
**BARBECUE**

**QUICK BITES**

**DRUMSTICKS 2 Pc**  
**CHICKEN STRIPS 4 pc**  
**CHICKEN WINGS 2pc**  
**CHICKEN POP CORN 15 Pc**  
**CHICKEN CHEESY POPCORN**  
**CHICKEN PERI PERI POPCORN**

**FRENCH FRIES**

**DRINKS**

**REGULAR**  
**PERI PERI**  
**CHEEZY**

**COLD COFFEE**  
**MOJITO**  
**FRESH LIME SODA**



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