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Suicide Rate Witnessing Sharp Rise In Kashmir Valley, Report Reveals

Last Year, 586 People Attempted Suicide In Kashmir; 20 In Jammu

Augib Javeed

Srinagar: In a disturbing trend, the suicide rate has risen sharply last year, with close to 600 people attempting to end their lives in the Kashmir Valley. In Jammu 20 such cases were reported during that period.

According to the Crime Gazette 2021 recently released by Jammu and Kashmir Police, the valley is witnessing an increase in attempted suicide cases with Central Kashmir district Budgam and North Kashmir's Baramulla topping the tally with 73 cases each with crime rate



4.36 per lakh population.

Mental health experts in Kashmir describe the attempt

to suicide as "intention to end one's life" but "he/she may or may not die" because of the act.

According to the data, a copy of which lies with Kashmir Observer, the Valley witnessed 586 attempted suicide cases in 2021 while the number was at 472 in 2020. At the same time, the winter capital Jammu witnessed only 20 cases of suicide attempts.

The data in 2021 clearly shows that there has been noticeable increase in the attempt to suicide cases as compared to the year 2020.

It further revealed that 41 cases of abetment to suicide were registered in 2021 and while the numbers were at 35 in 2020

The data noted that over 586

cases were registered in the year 2021 out of which the investigation of over 320 cases are pending.

After Budgam and Baramulla, South Kashmir's Anantnag district witnessed 67 cases while Srinagar reported 51 cases of attempt of suicide.

A top police official told Kashmir Observer that most of the people couldn't survive in these cases.

He said a number of cases were marriage-related issues, unemployment, depression, dowry-related issues, extramarital affairs and failure in examinations.

Since abrogation of special

status three years ago and the back to back due to COVID-10 pandemic, the erstwhile state's economy has been badly hit.

Doctors say people are experiencing financial stress, employment issues, emotional stressors, change in family ties, domestic abuse, experiencing helplessness.

Dr. Yasir Rather, a noted psychiatrist and professor at the Institute of Mental Health & Neurosciences (IMHANS) in Srinagar told Kashmir Observer that there is a rise of suicide cases post Covid-19 pandemic which started in the year 2020.

"Because of **More on P6**

16 JKAS Officers Inducted Into IAS

Observer News Service

Srinagar: The Government of India on Wednesday inducted 16 Jammu and Kashmir Administrative Service (JKAS) officers into Indian Administrative Service (IAS).

The formal notification in this regard was issued by the Department of Personnel and Trainings, Ministry of Personnel and Public Grievances and Pensions, Govt. of India on Wednesday, an official spokesperson said.

Among those inducted into IAS include, Talat Parvez Rohella, Rukhsana Gani, Rehana Batul, Mir Tariq Ali, Amit Sharma, Nazim Zia Khan, Shakeel -Ul -Rehman Rather, Pradeep Kumar, Rahul Sharma, Narinder Singh Bali, Aijaz Ahmad Bhat, Hashmat Ali Yatoo, Majid Khalil Ahmad Drabu, **More on P6**

1.06 Cr Tourists Visited J&K In 6 Months: GoI

Press Trust Of India

New Delhi: An estimated 1.06 crore tourists have visited Jammu and Kashmir from January to July 3 this year, Union Minister of State for Home Nityanand Rai said in the Rajya Sabha on Wednesday.

Responding to questions in the House, the minister also said nearly 30,000 people have been recruited in the public sector in Jammu and Kashmir since 2019.

"During the current calendar year i.e. from January 2022 till July 3, 2022, the tourist footfall in UT of Jammu and Kashmir increased significantly and estimated to be around 1,06,24,000," he said replying to a written question.

Rai did not **More on P6**

Special Status Abrogation Anniversary

J&K Govt, BJP Plans Mega Events In Srinagar

Zaid Bin Shabir

Srinagar: The Jammu and Kashmir administration has made all necessary arrangements to mobilize a massive crowd of over 15,000 people to celebrate the third anniversary of the abrogation of erstwhile state's special status at the inauguration ceremony of the recently renovated Bakshi Stadium in Srinagar.

As per sources privy to the development, the event will be presided over by J&K Lieutenant Governor, Manoj Sinha, who will also inaugurate the stadium on the morning of 5 August. "Besides youth and sports persons, top officials of civil administration and police will also participate in the event," sources told Kashmir Observer.

Notably, in March, the authorities said that restoration work of Bakshi Stadium was in its final stages and an International stadium at par with FIFA standard will be

ready for the sports enthusiasts who are eagerly waiting for its inauguration.

The restoration of the Bakshi stadium started in 2016 after it was damaged in the floods of 2014. National Projects Corporation Limited (NPCC) and the Government of India were jointly getting the stadium restored with a whopping cost of 50 crores.

Sources said that following New Delhi's directions, the UT Government is looking at all possibilities to make Srinagar city wear a "festive look" on August 5. "J&K Administration is all set to host a show in Dal Lake and an event at Ghanta Ghar[clock Tower], to show how peaceful Kashmir has turned post-2019," sources said.

If sources are to be believed then a Union Minister is also expected to arrive in Kashmir on August 5.

Besides this, Noida based media group **More on P6**



Mourners wave flags inscribed with 'Labbaik Ya Hussain' during a procession on the fourth day of Muharram in Srinagar on Wednesday. KO Photo, Abid Bhat

8th Muharram Procession

HC Puts Ball In Govt's Court, Says Take Call In 3 Days

Agencies

Srinagar: The J&K and Ladakh High Court on Wednesday asked the government to take a call on Muharram procession from Guru Bazar to Dalgate here, observing that it's the "domain of the administration, security agencies and other stakeholders to take a call on it."

A registered Trust of Shia community of Srinagar through its Secretary Ag

Syed Mujtaba Abbas had filed a Public Interest Litigation, seeking direction upon the State authorities to allow the Shia Community to take out the religious processions especially on the August 8th from Guru Bazar to Dalgate. The Trust had also sought directions to provide necessary security for the procession.

"Taking out the religious procession especially in Kashmir depends upon the law-and-order **More on P6**

ASHURA, I-DAY

DGP Calls For Increased Patrolling, CASOs In J&K

The Director General of Police J&K, Dilbag Singh on Wednesday asked his men and central forces to increase patrolling, area domination and Cordon and search operations (CASOs) to ensure that anti-peace elements are not given any chance to create any disturbance during Ashura and Independence day **More on P6**

Srinagar Records Highest Rainfall In June-July In 122 Years

Press Trust Of India

Srinagar: Srinagar recorded the highest rainfall for the months of June and July in 122 years with the city receiving 107 per cent more precipitation than average, a private weather forecaster said on Wednesday.

"It was the wettest 61-day period in Srinagar, the summer capital of Jammu and Kashmir, since at least 1901," Faizan Arif, who operates 'Kashmir Weather' on Twitter, said.

He said the observatory located at Ram Munshi Bagh in Srinagar recorded a total rainfall of 230.0 mm in the first two monsoon months against an average rainfall of 110.9 mm, which

is 107 per cent above average.

"In the first monsoon month, June, the summer capital recorded a total rainfall of 107.9 mm against an average rainfall of 42.0 mm. In July, the city recorded a total rainfall of 122.1 mm against an average rainfall of 68.9 mm," Arif said.

The highest total rainfall in the month of June is 142.1 mm recorded in 1996, while in July it is 182.6mm recorded in 1988, he said.

In 2015, the city had received a total rainfall of 226.8 mm, between Jun 1 and Jul 31, of which 139.3 mm fell in July and 87.5mm in June, he said.

"So far, Jammu and Kashmir has seen 28 per cent excess rainfall in the first **More on P6**



AUGUST 5 IS NO LESS THAN A FESTIVAL FOR PEOPLE OF KASHMIR.

And BJP will be organizing events across J&K on August 5 to mark the peace brought to the valley after abrogation of Article 370."

S H O R T T A K E S

Militants Attack Police Vehicle In Srinagar

Unidentified militants on Wednesday fired upon a police vehicle in Aloochoibagh area of this capital city, officials said. The attack, according to the police, was carried out by militants at the Aloochoibagh bund on Wednesday evening, before fleeing from the spot under the cover of darkness. "In Aloochoibagh bund area of Srinagar, terrorists fired upon a vehicle bound small police party. This was effectively retaliated by the police party. Terrorists took advantage of darkness & ran away towards built up area. No injury or other damage took place. CASO launched in area," Kashmir police posted on its official Twitter handle. (ONS)

J&K Adds 739 New Covid Cases

Coronavirus surge continues in Jammu and Kashmir as 739 more people tested positive for Covid-19, even as no fatality was reported from the Union Territory during the last 24 hours. According to officials, 543 cases of novel Coronavirus were reported from Kashmir Valley and 196 others from Jammu division, taking the total number of people infected since the onset of pandemic in J&K to 466643. In the Valley, they said, Srinagar detected the highest 235 new cases of virus followed by Baramulla with 165, Budgam 57, Kupwara 28, Anantnag 21, Bandipora 16, Kulgam 11, Ganderbal 5, Pulwama 3 and Shopian 2. In the winter capital, **More on P6**

Youth Dies While Raising Muharram Banner

A youth died of electrocution on Wednesday while installing a Muharram banner at his house in Mirgund area of central Kashmir's Budgam district. 22-year old Syed Ajaz Moosvi, son of Syed Mustafa of Mirgund sustained serious burn injuries when he came into contact with a live wire while installing a banner atop his house, reports said. The injured youth, reports said, was shifted to District Hospital Budgam for treatment. However, the doctors there referred him to SMHS hospital Srinagar for advanced treatment. The youth later succumbed to severe burn injuries at the Srinagar hospital. (ONS)

Misfire Injures Soldier In Kulgam

An army trooper was injured after his colleague's rifle went off accidentally in Frisal area of South Kashmir's Kulgam district on Wednesday. News agency GNS quoting a senior police officer reported that due to accidental fire, one army soldier received injuries in a finger and was immediately shifted to nearby hospital for treatment. Meanwhile, a police spokesperson refuted news reports claiming that the soldier was injured in a militant attack. "A fake news is being circulated by rumor mongers on social media platforms that militant incident happened in Nagbal, Frisal which is totally fake and baseless. **More on P6**

Five IPS Officers Transferred In J&K

The Jammu and Kashmir Police on Wednesday ordered transfer and posting of five police officers in the interest of administration with immediate effect. According to a government order, B. Srinivas, IPS (RR:90), Director General of Police, Prisons, J&K, holding additional charge of Director, Fire & Emergency Services, J&K, has been transferred and posted as Commandant General, HG/CD & SDRF, J&K vice H. K. Lohia. "The post of Commandant General, HG/CD & SDRF, J&K, is declared to be equivalent in the rank and status to that of DGP, till held by the officer," reads the order. H. K. Lohia, IPS (RR:92), ADGP, Commandant General, **More on P6**

750 In J&K Held Under UAPA In 3 Yrs: GoI

A total of 4,690 people were arrested under the anti-terror law UAPA between 2018 to 2020 but just 149 were convicted under it in the three year period, Union Minister of State for Home Nityanand Rai said on Wednesday. Rai said 1,321 people were arrested under the Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act in 2020 while 80 people were convicted in that year. In 2019, 1,948 people were arrested under the UAPA and 34 people were convicted in that year and in 2018, 1,421 people were arrested while 35 people were convicted, he said replying to a written question in Rajya Sabha. The minister said the highest number of people arrested **More on P6**

Global Forest Area Decreased By Over 60% In Six Decades: Study

Press Trust Of India

The global forest area per capita has decreased by over 60 per cent over the past 60 years, a loss that threatens the future of biodiversity and impacts the lives of 1.6 billion people worldwide, according to a study.

The research, published in the journal Environmental Research Letters, found that the global forest area has declined by 81.7 million hectares from 1960 to 2019, with gross forest loss outweighing gross forest gain.

The researchers from the Forestry and Forest Products Research Institute (FF-PR) in Japan used global land use dataset to examine how global forests have changed over space and time. They found that decline in global forests combined with the increase in global



population over the 60-year period has resulted in a decrease of the global for-

est area per capita by over 60 per cent, from 1.4 hectares in 1960 to 0.5 hectares

in 2019.

"The continuous loss and degradation of forests affect the integrity of forest ecosystems, reducing their ability to generate and provide essential services and sustain biodiversity," the researchers said.

"It also impacts the lives of at least 1.6 billion people worldwide, predominantly in developing countries, who depend on forests for various purposes," they said.

The results also showed that the change in the spatiotemporal pattern of global forests supports the forest transition theory, with forest losses occurring primarily in the lower-income countries in the tropics and forest gains in the higher-income countries in the extratropics. "Despite this spatial pattern of forest loss occurring primarily in the less developed countries, the role of more developed na-

tions in this said forest loss also needs to be studied more deeply," said Ronald C. Estoque, the lead author of the study.

"With the strengthening of forest conservation in more developed countries, forest loss is displaced to the less developed countries, especially in the tropics," Estoque said.

The researchers noted that monitoring of the world's forests is an integral part of various global environmental and social initiatives, including the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), the Paris Climate Agreement and the Post-2020 Global Biodiversity Framework.

To help achieve the goals of these initiatives, there is a profound need to reverse, or at least flatten, the global net forest loss curve by conserving the world's remaining forests and restoring and rehabilitating degraded forest landscapes, they added.

iPhone 14 Models To Feature Different Grades Of OLED Panels

IANS

Tech giant Apple is planning to use different OLED panel grades for the upcoming iPhone 14 and iPhone 14 Pro, media report says.

According to TheElec, Samsung Display will be applying different grades of materials on the OLED panels it will manufacture for the upcoming iPhone 14 series depending on the model tiers.

It will use its latest and most advanced material set for the higher tier iPhone 14 models, while it will use its prior generation set for the lower tier ones. The move is being made to save costs.

Samsung Display will be supplying OLED panels for all four models of the iPhone 14 series; rival LG Display will be supplying for two models, citing sources, the report said.

An OLED material set comprises dopant, host, prime and others used to form the red, green and blue pixels.

Samsung Display calls its material sets used on Samsung's Galaxy and Apple's iPhones the M series.

The South Korean display maker used its LT sets in 2017 for Apple's first OLED iPhone, the iPhone X and in 2018 iPhone XS. But starting in 2019 it began using its M series for panels supplied for Galaxy smartphones and iPhones.

Samsung Display will use its M11 material set for the standard 6.1-inch and 6.7-inch models in the iPhone 14 series.

These phones will have low-temperature polycrystalline silicon (LTPS) thin-film transistor (TFT) OLED panels, which are less advanced than the low-temperature polycrystalline oxide (LTPO) TFT OLED panels used in the higher-tier models.

The two higher-tier models in the iPhone 14 series will use Samsung Display's M12 material set.

This same OLED material set is being used for the OLED panels on Samsung's upcoming foldable phones Galaxy Z Fold 4 and Galaxy Z Flip 4.

AI In The Pharmaceutical Industry Promises Cheaper, Faster, Better Drugs

360info

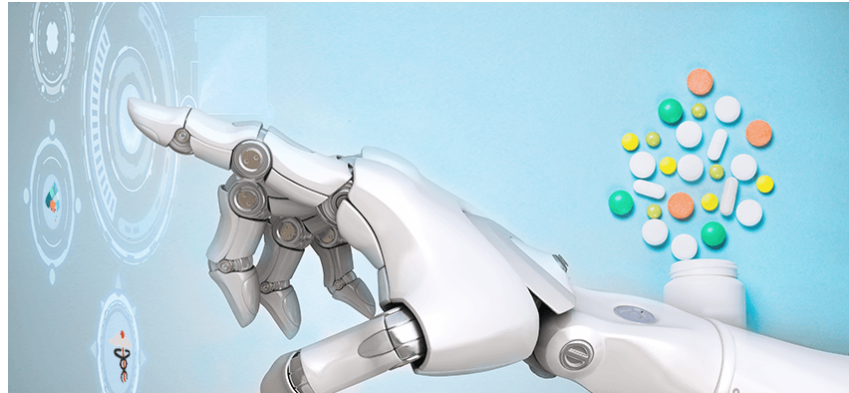
Finding potential new drugs is becoming faster and cheaper, thanks to artificial intelligence, but challenges remain.

AI was the hottest ticket in town for predictions during the pandemic. Highly sensitive and specific in identifying objects, quick to summarise information, and consistent in producing results, it seemed to be a panacea for our medical research troubles. However, COVID-19 also exposed the limitations of modelling. Computer models for virus spread are either very complex or, conversely, simplified to be practical on available computers.

The truth, as ever, is somewhere in the middle: while it's not a solution in itself, AI can assist in diagnosis, treatment, prediction, and drug and treatment discovery, and can increase human ability to fight this and future pandemics.

Long before AI technology evolved, drug discovery and development was the work of medicinal chemists working together in a laboratory, testing and validating their syntheses. The process was long, expensive and slow; estimates are US 2.6 billion and 10 years on average for a new drug.

The emergence of artificial intelligence (AI), both machine learning (ML) and deep learning (DL), have helped accelerate the drug discovery and devel-



opment process. The massive biological datasets around the world have become the raw material for drug manufacturing processing with an ML/DL-based approach. ML/DL can identify biologically active molecules with less time, effort, cost and more effectively.

Drug discovery requires a long and complex process which can be broadly divided into three main stages: object selection; compound screening; pre-clinical studies and clinical trials.

Those stages must be able to be transcribed and tested in an AI-based intelligent computing systems. If the drug candidate passes the safety phase and the efficacy has been confirmed in the clinical phase, then the compound is reviewed by agencies such as the United States Federal and Drug Administration (FDA) for approval and commercialisation.

AI-based drug discovery generally involves the computer in the first two of those stages, through drug design; automated synthesis; or drug screening - predictions on its bioactivity, toxicity, or chemical properties. Most diseases are associated with dysfunction of proteins in the body. The three-dimensional structure of proteins is hugely important and it is here that computer-assisted techniques can play an important role in the simulation and evaluation of protein structures.

Neural network-based algorithms to synthesise drug component molecules is expected to help scientists avoid failure and predict bad reactions.

Meanwhile, virtual drug screening is an advantageous computational approach to screen for molecules containing inappropriate ingredients in the early stages of drug development

and efficiently find new hits.

But artificial intelligence faces some significant challenges, such as data diversity and uncertainty. The datasets available for drug development and discovery can involve millions of compounds. Traditional machine learning approaches may not be able to handle this amount of data. Deep learning with its neural network is considered a model that is much more sensitive to the prediction of complex biological or medical properties on random and huge time-series data sets.

However, the intelligent computational models also face the problem of experimental data errors when performing training sets and lack of experimental validation. That's why, in some recent trends, many experts around the world are trying to develop adaptive learning approaches and hybrid methods that are enhanced by big data analytics. Several aspects of the drug discovery process have not been well explored.

Drug manufacturing requires close observations of the binding between potential drug molecules and their target proteins. Often it's a challenging matter because the amount and quality of data to feed into the AI ??model may sometimes be insufficient. Sometimes a compound is tested using different methods which can produce completely different results, upsetting the algorithms.

محمد شفیع بٹ انتقال کر گئے



یہ خبر انتہائی دکھ کیساتھ دی جاتی ہے کہ محمد شفیع بٹ ولد مرحوم غلام رسول ساکنہ نوشہرہ بتاریخ 03 اگست 2022 بروز بدھوار کو اس دنیا فانی سے رحلت کر گئے۔ مرحوم انتہائی شریف انفس، ملنسار اور انسان دوست شخص ہونے کے ساتھ ساتھ صوم و صلوٰۃ کے پابند تھے۔ مرحوم کی فاتح خوانی سنہ 1066 گشت 2022 آبا کی مقبرہ پائندہ بخش پر چرچ 10:30 انجام دی جائے گی۔

نوٹ: مستورات سے گزارش ہے کہ میوہ وغیرہ ساتھ نہ لائیں۔

منظور احمد بٹ، اشفاق احمد بٹ

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CITY

Woman Killed, Another Injured After Car Plunges Into Stream At Barzulla

Agencies

Srinagar: A woman was killed and another injured after a car they were travelling in plunged into Doodh-ganga stream in Barzulla

Emergency Department personnel swung into action and rescued two women on board the car. The duo, they said, was taken to a nearby health facility where the doctor declared one of them



area here on Wednesday evening, officials said. They told GNS that a 'K10' car bearing registration number JK01AJ-0760 fell into the water body near Bulbul Bagh Barzulla, following which Fire and

as brought dead on arrival. The official identified the deceased as Bilkees Begum, wife of Mukhtar Ahmad, resident of Old Barzulla and injured as Shareefa Begum. "They duo is related to each other", the official added.(GNS)

DC Holds Public Grievance Redressal Camp At Noorbagh

Observer News Service

Srinagar: In order to listen to the public grievances and take appraisal of local issues at their door steps, the Deputy Commissioner (DC) Srinagar, Mohammad Aijaz Asad on wednesday undertook an extensive tour of Noorbagh area in Eidgah Tehsil of Srinagar district and presided over a Public Grievance Redressal Camp at Community Centre as part of weekly Block Diwas. The programme witnessed large participation of people from Noorbagh, Qamarwari, Pamposh Colony, Palpora, Sheikh Colony, Gatta Colony, Gonipora, Bagwan Pora and other adjoining areas.

Besides local representatives, the Public Grievance Redressal Camp was attended by Programme Officer, ICDS, Chief Planning Officer, Tehsildar Eidgah, Chief Agriculture Officer, Lead Bank Manager and other Zonal and Sectoral Officers of the District.

During the Grievance Redressal Camp, Public delegations and scores of individuals projected various developmental issues before the DC including augmentation of water supply, infrastructure upgradation of Health and Education, construction of Marriage Hall,

augmentation of drainage system in the area, repairs of lanes, drains and street lights, macadamization of roads, establishment of Anganwadi Centre, Posting JE Jal Shakti and other developmental and jurisdictional issues in the area.

Addressing the gathering, the DC said that the purpose of holding such grievance redressal Camps is to take appraisal of local issues from the general public for precise and on-ground assessment for their time bound redressal.

Responding to the public demands, the DC assured the people of Noorbagh and other adjoining areas that all genuine demands and issues projected by them will be looked into on priority for their speedy redressal.

The DC urged the local youth to come forward and avail the benefits of different welfare schemes of the Government launched for hand-holding of the youth so that they earn livelihood with dignity and honour.

On the occasion, the DC asked for holding a joint mega awareness camp in the area this coming Saturday for mass awareness of the local people especially youth of the areas so that they are sensitized about the different government sponsored welfare schemes.

Dilapidated Road Condition Irks Natipora Residents

Agencies

Srinagar: Residents of Sector-F Iram Lane Natipora Srinagar on Wednesday expressed serious concern over the dilapidated road conditions and accused authorities of turning a deaf ear to the "sufferings" faced by them.

A delegation of people from the area said that they have been demanding authorities to give them at least something "which can be called a road". "If they have paucity of funds or for any other reason they cannot lay a concrete road or black topped-one, at least they should give us a road worth name," the delegation said.

The residents claimed that the locality comprises about 400 households, and said that in absence of the proper road, they are facing numerous

problems, more so when it rains or there is snowfall.

"Every time it rains, the natural or muddy road turns into a pool. Even a motor-cycle gets stuck into it, let alone light motor or heavy vehicles etc," they said, adding, "We are facing immense problems to take patients to hospital owing to the lack of a proper road. Transportation of goods to the area also gets hampered."

The residents said that a number of representations were made by them to the concerned authorities but to no avail.

"We made representation to Commissioner Srinagar Municipal Corporation as well as other concerned authorities but nothing concrete has happened on the ground," they said and urged the authorities concerned to lay a road to alleviate sufferings facing the people. (GNS)

5 of Family, 'Involved In Murder' Of Woman At In-laws House Arrested

Observer News Service

Srinagar: Police on Wednesday said to have arrested five members of a family alleged for their involvement in murder of a woman at Bemina locality here.

"On 27-06-2022, Police Station Batamaloo Srinagar received information through reliable sources to the effect that at Nundresh Colony-B Bemina one lady namely Tasleema Bano (38), wife of Shah Nawaz Ahmad Dar, resident of Nundresh Colony B Bemina Srinagar has died at her In-laws house in suspicious condition and was taken to SMHS Srinagar where doctors brought her dead", said a police spokesperson in a statement said.

"Upon reception of this in-

formation, a report has been entered into the daily dairy of Police Station Batamaloo vide GD No.30 dated 27-06-2022 and proceedings under section 174 Cr.PC initiated", the statement reads.

"During questioning, some suspects, particularly her in-laws were brought to this P/S for questioning. However report from Pathology department received and has been submitted that after the perusal of complete postmortem examination, the doctors team are of the opinion that the findings are consistent with death due to Asphyxia (Smothering)", maintains the statement adding upon this Case FIR No. 109/ 2022 under section 302 stands registered and investigation was set into motion.

The statement adds that, upon this five suspected persons including 03 females and 02 males identified as; Hafeeza Begum wife of Ghulam Qadir Dar, Sumiyaa wife of Parvaiz Ahmad Dar, Siaqa wife of Yasir Ahmad Dar, Parvaiz Ahmad Dar son of Gh Qadir Dar and Shahnawaz Ahmad Dar son of Gh Qadir Dar, all residents of Nundresh Colony Bemina were arrested in the instant case and further investigation in the instant case is still going on.

"General public is requested to come forward if they have information about this case and thereby cooperating and fulfilling their civic duty, this will greatly help in investigation of this heinous crime against woman", the statement concludes.

MMU Holds Deliberations To Foster Shia-Sunni Unity

Observer News Service

Srinagar: In connection with the holy days of Ashura in the ongoing month of Muharram-ul-Haram, the Muttahida Majlis-e-Ulema (MMU) Jammu and Kashmir on Wednesday held an emergency and extraordinary meeting of the Shia-Sunni Co-ordination Alliance at the office of the Central Jama Masjid Srinagar, which was presided over by the MMU district president Islamabad (Anantnag) and scholar Dr Peerzada Muhammad Sameer Shafi Siddiqui.

Among the scholars and personalities who participated and expressed opinion during the meeting included, Haji Ghulam Muhammad Nagoo, Bashir Mohsin of Jammu and Kashmir Shia Association, Haji Muhammad Amin, Muhammad Yusuf Wani, Sajid Hussain Mir, Moulana Khurshed Ahmed Qanungo of Anjuman Himayat-ul-Islam, Peer Rehmatullah of Bazme-Tawheed Ahle Hadith, Moulana Syed Waris Shah Bukhari, the head of the Markazi Raabta Aima Wa Masaajid Jammu and Kashmir (Central Coordinator of the Imams of the mosques of Jammu and Kashmir), Mufti

Ghulam Rasool Samoon of Anjuman Auqaf Jama Masjid Srinagar, Civil Society Kashmir's Syed Shakeel Ahmed Qalandar, social leader Haji Showkat Ahmad Khanyari, Qari Muhammad Aslam Raheemi, Syed Ghulam Nabi Bukhari Trali, renowned

was made clear that there is no option but to rein in such unrestrained elements and called for moral action against those elements who from time to time are seeking to create divisions and sow the seeds of disunity between the Kashmiri nation.

The speakers stressed the consolidation and promotion of unity between the two major sections of Muslims – Shia and Sunni, and in this context, they strongly condemned the uploading of offensive and seditious statements by some evil elements on social media

journalist Imdad Saqi, Abdul Qayyum Wani, Muhammad Ashraf Dar, Tariq Ahmad Zagar, Tariq Ahmad Khan, Farooq Ahmad and the MMU Secretary Moulana M S Rehman Shams and others.

The speakers stressed the consolidation and promotion of unity between the two major sections of Muslims – Shia and Sunni, and in this context, they strongly condemned the uploading of offensive and seditious statements by some evil elements on social media. It

"In the meeting, the distinguished speakers presented several concrete and important suggestions to strengthen the cause of inter-Muslim unity in Jammu and Kashmir at all levels, which will be followed in the near future."

The speakers in the meeting emphasised that during Ashura, Muslims must keep the torch of unity among them lit at all costs and thwart the plans of the anti-unity elements with their thoughts and actions.

DIAL-EMMA

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- BIJHERA: 01932-228243
- PAMPORE: 01933-294132
- PATTAN: 01954-293507
- QAZIGUND: 01951-296153

HIGHWAY STATUS

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



PRAYERS

FAJR	4:09
ZUHR	12:37
ASR	5:30
Magrib	7:33
ISHA	9:04

This Day In History

- 1914 - US declares neutrality on the outbreak of WWI
- 1916 - Denmark cedes Danish West Indies, including the Virgin Islands, to the US for \$25 million
- 1918 - Adolf Hitler receives the Iron Cross first class for bravery on the recommendation of his Jewish superior, Lieutenant Hugo Gutmann
- 1919 - The Communist Bela Kun comes to power in Hungary
- 1943 - Soviet units reach suburbs of Orel
- 1943 - USAAF bombs Germans in Troina
- 1946 - An earthquake of magnitude 8.0 hits northern Dominican Republic. 100 are killed and 20,000 are left homeless.
- 1947 - The Supreme Court of Japan is established.
- 1956 - Indonesia says it will not pay debts to the Netherlands
- 1960 - Rocket propelled USAF research aircraft sets record at 2,150 MPH
- 1962 - Nelson Mandela captured by South African police
- 1964 - Civil rights workers Michael Schwerner, Andrew Goodman & James E Chaney, bodies discovered in an earthen Mississippi dam
- 1964 - North Vietnam torpedos US ships Gulf of Tonkin
- 1971 - US launches 1st satellite into lunar orbit from manned
- 1979 - USSR performs nuclear test at Eastern Kazakh/Semipalatinsk USSR
- 1983 - France performs nuclear test
- 1983 - Revolution in Burkina Faso
- 1990 - European community proposes a boycott of Iraq
- 1993 - Rwandan Hutus & Tutsis sign peace treaty in Arusha
- 2007 - NASA's Phoenix spaceship is launched.
- 2012 - 45 people are killed by a suicide bombing in Abyan, Yemen

From KO Archives

Vaishno Devi Board Snaps Ties With J&K Bank

Observer News Service

JAMMU - The Shri Mata Vaishno Devi Shrine Board has snapped its 20-year-old ties with the Jammu and Kashmir Bank in what appears to be a fallout of the bickering between Governor S.K. Sinha and the state government. The board - which controls the popular Hindu shrine of Vaishno Devi in Jammu and of which Sinha is the chairman - has withdrawn all its money from the bank and transferred it to the ICICI Bank, sources said.

Sinha, whose bickering with Chief Minister Mufti Mohammed Sayeed over a host of issues is only too well known, directed the board to withdraw all accounts from the Jammu and Kashmir Bank, the sources said.

The state government is a major shareholder in Jammu and Kashmir Bank Ltd.

The shrine board had a Rs.1 billion deposit with the bank, the source said. It had been rendering several services to the shrine board free of cost,

The shrine board had had its deposits with the bank since 1986, when the former was set up. The Vaishno Devi shrine attracts more than 5.5 million pilgrims.

The governor and chief minister have earlier sparred over the duration of the pilgrimage to the Hindu cave shrine of Amarnath in Kashmir. While the governor wanted it to last for two months, the chief minister insisted on one month.

Sinha, who also heads the Shri Amarnath Shrine Board, finally had his way.

The chief minister was worried over the impact of a longer pilgrimage on the security of the state, as a large number of troops and police forces are committed to guard the pilgrimage route.

He had also pleaded that the fragile ecology of the routes to the Himalayan shrine, located at a height of 13,500 feet, could not withstand the rush of pilgrims.

More than 200,000 pilgrims have visited the shrine so far this year, (IANS)

(Kashmir Observer, 04 August, 2005)

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K O V I E W

Pelosi’s Taiwan visit

The US House Speaker’s visit to Taiwan has angered China, ratcheting up tensions between the two superpowers. China has banned the import of fruit and fish from Taiwan and halted shipments of sand to the island. China has also announced live-fire military drills encircling Taiwan. In the run up to the visit, China had warned the US of having to “pay a price” for Pelosi’s visit to Taipei. Even though there was uncertainty about the visit until the last moment, the US chose not to give in to Beijing’s threats.

China claims Taiwan as part of its territory and views foreign visits as recognition of Taiwan’s sovereignty. Though the US has a ‘One-China policy’ whereby it sees Taiwan as a part of China, Washington has maintained diplomatic and defence ties with Taipei. Now the high-profile visit of Pelosi to Taiwan, first such of its nature in 25 years, is making Beijing doubt the sincerity of Washington’s One-China policy. It has warned of consequences and the ongoing economic curbs and the military maneuvers are a part of this reaction. Whether this will snowball into a major confrontation between the two superpowers is difficult to predict. Can we expect China to militarily act against Taiwan just like Russia did against Ukraine? Nothing can be said with certainty. But the visit certainly has deepened the bitterness between the US and China.

At the root of the visit is the growing rivalry between Washington and Beijing. It is the fight for the control of the new world order. On a grander scale, the visit has come as the latest twist in the ongoing great power duel as America faces one of its severest tests as the world’s sole superpower. Some western experts have already written the epitaph of America’s unipolar moment. In that sense, it would be interesting to see who blinks first in this great power war of nerves. And that could decide the new superpower of the world.

But America, despite its recent setback in Afghanistan, its failure to have its way in Syria, and its difficulties in pushing Russia out of Ukraine, remains the world’s No 1 power. Its GDP and defense expenditure remains several times higher than its nearest competitor China. That said, we are at an interesting moment in history. The outcome of the current maneuvering by the US and China - two superpowers - will determine the new global geopolitics if not the new superpower of the world.

O T H E R O P I N O N

The Economy Reality Check

Sitharaman, who marshalled a range of data to make her point, asserted that there was “no question” of the economy stumbling into a recession or stagflation. Sitharaman is correct — it is unlikely that India will slip into a technical recession. But the Opposition is right too — the economy is going through a difficult period.

Take inflation, for instance. Recent data showed that retail inflation continues to remain elevated, coming in at 7.01 per cent in June. While this means that inflation has remained well above the central bank’s target, it is lower than levels observed in much of the developed world. In fact, some analysts now expect inflation in India to trend lower in the second half of the year — global commodity prices have softened, and the government has taken steps across sectors to ease price pressures. However, there are risks. For instance, if grain production, especially rice, falls, it will pose upside risks to inflation. The knock-on effects on the economy via lower rural demand are likely to be significant. Contrary to these concerns, as per the RBI’s assessment in June, the recovery in domestic activity was “gathering strength”. The central bank has projected the economy to grow at 7.2 per cent in 2022-23. This is in line with the IMF’s recent assessment which has pegged growth at 7.4 per cent. However, even going by the central bank’s own projections, growth is expected to slow down to just about 4 per cent in the second half of the year. Even so, the country could emerge as one of the fastest growing economies in the world during these tumultuous years.

However, the global macroeconomic environment is fast changing. In its latest update of the world economic outlook, the IMF has lowered its forecast for global growth in 2022 by 0.4 percentage points, while cutting projections for world trade volume (both goods and services) by 0.9 percentage points. It is likely that these forecasts will be pared down further. Slowing global output and slower world trade are likely to have a bearing on India’s exports. Coming at a time when there are questions over the capacity of the other drivers of growth to spur economic activity over the medium term, this will make the task of returning to a higher growth trajectory more difficult.

The Indian Express

Role of Regional Powers in
Afghanistan’s Development



Feature Image Credits: VOA

Asad Mirza

Observers in
Tashkent report
that delegations
were diverse in
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but all credited the
host, Uzbekistan,
for urging the world
to engage with
Afghanistan’s
challenges

The Tashkent Conference on Afghanistan has highlighted the need for the regional players to play a constructive role for reconstruction of Afghanistan, in collaboration with the West

Tashkent Conference

Uzbekistan hosted an international conference in Tashkent last week (27 July) to garner support for the economic and social revival of Afghanistan. The Ambassador-at-Large of the Kazakh Ministry of Foreign Affairs Talgat Kaliyev invited participants of the “Afghanistan: Security and Economic Development” conference in Tashkent to make joint efforts to ensure peace and stability in Afghanistan calling the country a “bridge between Central and South Asia”. Kaliyev said that Kazakhstan is ready to strengthen trade and humanitarian ties with Afghanistan.

The socio-economic reconstruction of Afghanistan along with the implementation of infrastructure and humanitarian projects designed to bring the long-awaited peace to the Afghan people were key points on the conference agenda. More than 100 delegations from nearly 30 countries and international organisations attended the conference.

President of Uzbekistan Shavkat Mirziyoyev urged the interim government of Afghanistan “to demonstrate strong will” to take decisive measures to counter terrorism, and break ties with all international terrorist organisations. According to Mirziyoyev, such measures will help to build confidence for the interim government and open real prospects for Afghanistan’s sustainable development with its immediate neighbourhood and the international community.

IEA’s stand

The head of the Afghan delegation, Taliban-appointed acting Foreign Minister Amir Khan Muttaqi harped on the old demands of unfreezing Afghan assets and international recognition but also opined that the majority of the delegations were in a supportive mood, which showed a positive development in relations with his country. He described unfreezing of Afghan reserves and removal of sanctions as “a fundamental step towards normalisation of relations” between Kabul and Washington.

Another positive point was that the participants understood the message related to the real situation in Afghanistan, which will hopefully lay the ground for political and economic engagement, he was reported as saying.

Muttaqi also assured everyone that Afghanistan will “no longer

be a source of instability in the region,” but overall the international community seems unconvinced about this promise.

In his address he said that, we stand ready to establish positive relations with all world countries in the framework of mutual respect and legitimate bilateral interests, we also call on other world countries to begin official engagement with the Islamic Emirate of Afghanistan (IEA) to secure long-term legitimate bilateral interests.

This conference came days after the United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan (UNAMA) released a report outlining the human rights situation in Afghanistan over the 10 months since the Taliban takeover.

The report summarises UNAMA’s findings with regards to the protection of civilians, extrajudicial killings, torture and ill-treatment, arbitrary arrests and detentions, the rights of women and girls, fundamental freedoms and the situation in places of detention in Afghanistan. The report also contained recommendations to both the de facto authorities and the international community.

Despite an overall, significant reduction in armed violence, between mid-August 2021 and mid-June 2022, UNAMA recorded 2106 civilian casualties (700 killed, 1406 wounded).

USA’s Approach

Representatives of the United Nations, the European Union, the U.S. and other Western officials interacted with the Taliban, which is not unprecedented since Washington negotiated with them in Doha, Qatar, for years. In Tashkent also, Taliban’s reiterated their demands and sought concessions from the U.S. delegation, led by Thomas West, Biden administration’s special representative for Afghanistan. West held further bilateral talks with the Taliban following the conference on 28 July.

Emphasising that America remains the largest donor for Afghanistan, West pointed to four sectors that Washington specifically backs – agriculture, health, livelihoods and education. He said the international community prevented starvation in Afghanistan last winter; the U.S. spent nearly a billion dollars in humanitarian aid since August 2021 and that the U.S. is not blocking any aid or business from assisting the Afghan people.

West also addressed the issue of restrictions on women and girls’ education in Afghanistan and said “we are concerned about human rights abuses, including restrictions on journalists and women’s ability to contribute to the country’s economic growth.”

Observers in Tashkent report

that delegations were diverse in approach and at times quite critical of each other in their statements, but all credited the host, Uzbekistan, for urging the world to engage with Afghanistan’s challenges.

President Mirziyoyev challenged the international community to create “real prerequisites for Afghanistan to become a peaceful, stable and prosperous land - free from terrorism, wars and narcotics.”

Federick Starr, an American expert who attended the conference, observed that the key issue is not recognition but “trade and economic ties that actually test Taliban’s intentions.”

Uzbekistan showcased several infrastructure projects, including a proposed trans-Afghan railway running from Termez at the Uzbek-Afghan border through Mazar-i Sharif and Kabul to Peshawar in north-western Pakistan and a planned Surkhan-Puli-Khumri power transmission line running from Uzbekistan to north-central Afghanistan. Uzbekistan also presented projects in energy, railway development and education sectors to help neighbouring Afghanistan to build its social-economic infrastructure.

Though the Taliban delegation stuck with its old demands of unfreezing of assets and recognition of the IEA, and in reality the international community remained sceptical of its claims. Much work lies ahead for the Taliban to convince the international community of their sincerity. They should try to improve the situation by taking small steps towards fulfilling the aspirations of both the Afghan people and the international community, and if Afghanistan can’t achieve stability then we should also forego looking for lasting peace in central Asia.

The international community, at the moment, is preoccupied with the Russian-Ukraine war, but the manner in which the regional players showed their determination to help Afghanistan’s reconstruction, bodes well for the future of the country, but to make it a success the Taliban will also have to temper their stand on a lot of issues, besides reconciling their attitude.

Views expressed in the article are the author’s own and do not necessarily represent the editorial stance of Kashmir Observer
Asad Mirza is a political commentator based in New Delhi. He was also associated with BBC Urdu Service and Khaleej Times of Dubai.
He writes on Indian Muslims, educational, international affairs, interfaith and current affairs.
www.asad-mirza.blogspot.com



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Unchecked Prices of Construction Material

This refers to a weekly article by Dr Raja Muzaffar titled, “Uncontrolled Rates of Construction Material”. I fully endorse the

views of the author. The Government rates are not followed on the ground as they are merely restricted to papers. The sand is sold @Rs 15000 per Tipper and Bricks @

Rs 32000 in our area. The Ferozpur Nallah has dried up as illegal mining has plundered it. Huge amount of material is excavated from steams and rivers but that is sold

to construction companies.

Syed Muzamill Shah
muzamil1000@yahoo.com

Wrath of Climate Change

“

The increasing disasters speak for themselves. Policymakers, humanitarian and development organizations alike need to address, prevent and lessen the fatal impact of climate change before it's too late



IN THE MONTH OF JULY ALONE, Kashmir Valley Witnessed Three Cloudbursts And A Dozen Flash Floods.

File Photo

Bilal Bashir Bhat

As scientific predictions become reality, the emergency is becoming palpable, indisputable, and widespread, with dramatic weather events reported with an ever-increasing frequency. Such patterns have disastrous, far-reaching effects on the natural world, global food supplies, health, infrastructure, and more. The climate disaster is here with soaring heat across Jammu, erratic weather phenomenon with increasing and devastating cloud bursts, and flashfloods in Jammu and Kashmir leading to deaths and damage to property worth lakhs. Scientific studies indicate that extreme weather events

such as heat waves and large storms are likely going to become more frequent or more intense with this human-induced climate change.

J&K is a mountainous area, which is very susceptible to global warming and climate change. Climate change and warming are global trends, and their impact on Jammu and Kashmir is significant. In the last few months, especially in July 2022, we have witnessed increasing cloud bursts and Flash Floods. Devastating cloud bursts hit the Balthal (Songmarag), Doda, Poonch, Kathua, and many other districts in Jammu and Kashmir leading to deaths, injuring many, and damaging

property. Erratic rainfall, snowfall patterns, and unusually warm winters are some of the characteristics of climate change in Jammu and Kashmir.

According to a report, the temperature in Jammu and Kashmir has risen by an average of 1.2 degrees Celsius against a global increase of 0.8 to 0.9 degrees Celsius over the last 100 years. The increasing average temperature has resulted in melting glaciers and greater precipitation, which could lead to disaster in the state. The early snowfall, heat waves in winters, cloud bursts, and Flash Floods in summers are indicators of Climate change in Jammu and Kashmir and the ef-

fects of climate change are already being felt in the Kashmir valley. The 2014 devastating Flood caused by the cloudburst was the first indicator of global warming in Jammu and Kashmir.

According to a report prepared by the State Disaster Management Authority, since 2010, many flash floods and cloudbursts which have hit J&K resulted in the killing of 300 people. In 2022 alone cloud bursts killed almost 40 people and injured many in Jammu and Kashmir. The revenge of Climate change is increasing and we should act to prevent this increasing wrath.

As climate change continues, it will likely

lead to more frequent and severe natural hazards. The impact will be heavy. Climate change causes poverty and food shortages and forces even higher numbers of men, women, and children to flee their homes. The increasing disasters speak for themselves. Policymakers, humanitarian and development organizations alike need to address, prevent and lessen the fatal impact of climate change before it's too late.

The author is an Environmental Specialist J&K, State Climate Centre J&K (DEERS)

Exalted Sacrifice

Qasim A. Moini

THERE is debate in Muslim societies about the need to project 'true' Islam. Considering the abominable acts carried out by militants and terrorists in the name of religion — which make the average believer recoil — this is a valid concern.

Rather than the gruesome violence being perpetrated in many parts of the world, particularly in the Middle East and in our very own backyard by the self-declared champions of religion, the enlightened among the believers prefer to highlight the devotion, compassion and sense of community that lies at the heart of Islam. And perhaps few events in Islamic history embody these noble attributes than do the events that transpired in Karbala on Ashura, 61AH. Perhaps to find the 'true' face of Islam, we need to focus our attention towards Karbala, and the valiant stand of Imam Hussain.

Two major characteristics can be witnessed in Karbala: the heroism of the Hussaini camp, and the cruelty of the Syrian horde. Far from being a battle for power — as some short-sighted revisionists have described it, between the Banu Hashim, the clan of the Holy Prophet (PBUH), and the Banu Umayya, the clan of Yazid — Karbala was a battle of values. Imam Hussain epitomised the values of nobility, courage and strength of character, while the Imam's Kufan and Syrian opponents, especially their masters in Damascus, adhered to the 'values' of treachery, brute force and subterfuge.

And amongst the best examples of Hussaini values in the field of Karbala was none other than the Imam's half-brother and the alamdar or standard-bearer of Karbala, Hazrat Abbas bin Ali.

Hazrat Abbas stayed true to Imam Hussain till the last moments of his life. He exemplifies the height of Islamic and indeed human values, in



“

Indeed self-sacrifice, faith and devotion — characteristics that were found in abundance in Hazrat Abbas — are the truly sublime and spiritual traits that make man eligible for the title of ashrafal makhluqat, the crown of creation

the face of unimaginable adversity and cruelty. A few instances from the battlefield would suffice to illustrate his noble character.

As is well known, the Hussaini camp was outnumbered many times

over by the Syrian legions. There are various accounts detailing the number of fighting men in Imam Hussain's camp, with most putting the number between 70 and 100. Confronted with the full, brutal might of

the Umayyad imperial force — some historians have stated that four fully-fledged lashkars had arrived from the garrison town of Kufa — it indeed required unparalleled courage to take a stand at Karbala. But that is

exactly what Imam Hussain and his followers did; a stand that has gone down in the annals of history.

As recounted in Nafasul Mahmum, one of the more authentic accounts of Karbala, compiled by master traditionalist Shaikh Abbas Qummi, in the midst of this show of military muscle, one of the Umayyad commanders called out to Hazrat Abbas, appealing to his tribal affiliation from his mother's side. The Syrian offered him amnesty if he were to switch sides. Hazrat Abbas scoffed at the offer,

replying that he would never leave Imam Hussain alone.

Another example of Hazrat Abbas's lofty character can be seen in the way he was martyred. An expert swordsman and rider, he was never one to retreat from the battlefield. However, on the day of Ashura, he was immensely moved by the thirst of the women and children of the Hussaini camp, as the Syrian forces had cut off access to water.

Requesting Imam Hussain to let him fetch water, he fought his way to the banks of the Euphrates, and despite the scorching heat of the Iraqi desert and the toll the battle had taken on him, he refused to drink until the women and children were satiated. However, as he was returning to the Hussaini camp, Hazrat Abbas was ambushed by the Syrians, who were under orders to prevent water from reaching Imam Hussain. The enemy cut off both his hands, and upon finding Hazrat Abbas wounded Imam Hussain is quoted to have said, "My spine is broken".

Indeed self-sacrifice, faith and devotion — characteristics that were found in abundance in Hazrat Abbas — are the truly sublime and spiritual traits that make man eligible for the title of ashrafal makhluqat, the crown of creation. Hazrat Abbas stayed devoted to Imam Hussain even when he was offered amnesty; he risked his life to fetch water for others and was mercilessly martyred while trying to do so. Due to his love for the Imam one of his titles is "Bab al-Hussain", or the Gate of Hussain, and his mausoleum lies not too far from that of Imam Hussain in Karbala.

As the Almighty says in Surah Rahman (verse 60): "Is the reward for good [anything] but good?" Today the memory of Hazrat Abbas's acts of valour lives on across the world, wherever the alam or Hussaini standard is unfurled, announcing the victory of Imam Hussain.

—Dawn

Security Infra For BSF Along India -Pak Creek Area In Gujarat To Be Strengthened

Agenceis

New Delhi, Aug 3 (PTI) Security infrastructure for BSF troops deployed in the marshy creek areas of Kutch along the India-Pakistan international maritime border in Gujarat will be upgraded amid an increase in the number of apprehensions of Pak fishermen, official sources said on Wednesday.

They said all-weather border posts, improved systems for power and water supply and installation of surveillance equipments will be done in the area which faces harsh weather and geographical conditions in the about 100-km tidal estuary of Sir Creek and the 'Harami Nalla' areas.

The Union Home ministry has sometime back approved a BSF proposal to develop border infrastructure in this area for its troops and the subject was also taken up by Home secretary Ajay Bhalla when he reviewed the operational preparedness of the force last month.

The number of apprehensions of fishermen and their boats in the creek area in Kutch has risen. While nothing incriminating has been seized from these Pakistani citizens in the recent past, it is essential to man the area 24x7 to check infiltration of terrorists and weapons, a senior security officer said.

He said the BSF wants to establish modern infrastructure for its troops so that they face less difficulties while doing their routine administrative tasks, patrolling and surveillance of the area.

While Indian fishermen are barred from entering the creek area, Pakistani fishermen enter the Indian side to catch fish. A number of times, such fishermen escape towards the Pakistan side after abandoning their boats once they spot BSF patrol boats.

In July, the BSF caught four fishermen from the

neighbouring country and seized 10 boats and this was preceded by apprehension of three more Pakistani fishermen with nine Pakistani boats in June.

In May, the force had seized nine Pakistan fishing boats near Harami Nalla in Bhuj and caught three fishermen.

The Union Home secretary, while holding a meeting with top BSF brass on July 16, directed the force to expedite the work to develop better border infrastructure in the 'Harami Nalla' and creek areas, they said.

Bhalla, during the same meeting, also asked the force to "expedite" the cadre review of Group 'A' (general duty) officers of the force so that timely promotions can be granted to them, especially up to the rank of Commandant.

The cadre review of the force, which once approved by the government leads to better promotion avenues for the officers of the force to an extent, officials said.

The cadre review is also expected to take into consideration a recent home ministry directive that said 15 deputy inspector general (DIG) posts meant for Indian Police Service (IPS) officers in BSF be "temporary diverted" for the cadre officers of the paramilitary force (for vacancy year 2022).

The timely approval of cadre review will help ease the issue of stagnation and lack of promotion avenues for the officers of the force to an extent, officials said.

The pending issue of granting non-functional financial upgradation (NFFU) and organised group 'A' cadre categorisation to BSF and other CAPF officers, as declared by the central government in 2019, would also be part of the discussions before the cadre review proposal is sent by the force to the MHA for final approval, officials said.

J&K RAIL PROJECT

Northern Railway Achieves Milestone Of Breakthrough In Escape Tunnel T-13



Agenceis

Srinagar: The Northern Railway achieved a milestone of breaking through the Escape Tunnel T-13 in Jammu and Kashmir.

Ashutosh Gangal, General Manager Northern Railway, informed that Northern Railway has achieved a major milestone in the USBRL project on 02.08.2022 by executing break-through of Escape Tunnel T-13 between Dugga and Basindadhar Station on the ongoing Katra-Banihal Section. Breakthrough of Escape

Tunnel, T-13 having a length of 9.1 kms and 4.6 metre diameter in a modified horseshoe shape was achieved on 2nd Aug 22, making it completely through from both portals. The breakthrough of this 9.1 km long rescue tunnel has been successfully achieved in 5 years' time by winning over all sorts of challenges.

As per International railway standards, an Escape tunnel is provided in parallel and having size relatively smaller than the main tunnel having length more than 3 kms. The breakthrough of this escape tunnel has been

seen as an achievement of another milestone for this National project in making the dream of connecting the valley to the rest of India a success.

The major challenges faced during the construction of this escape tunnel were hostile terrain & remote location, weak and fractured geology embedded with surprises in lower Himalayas, inclement weather conditions and last but not the least social problems.

This tunnel break-through will be a key milestone for the entire USBRL Project.

HDFC Bank Parivartan Signs MoU With IISc Bangalore

Agenceis

Bangalore: HDFC Bank Parivartan signed a memorandum of understanding with the Indian Institute of Science (IISc) Bangalore. As per the MoU, HDFC Bank Parivartan has pledged Rs.107.76 Crore to support three wings of Bagchi-Parthasarathy Hospital, IISc Bangalore. The three wings to be supported by the Bank are the Cardiology Wing, Radiology wing, and Emergency Medicine wing.

IISc Bangalore is setting up a multi-specialty, not-for-profit, 832-bed hospital, called the Bagchi-Parthasarathy Hospital along with a Postgraduate Medical School within its Bengaluru campus. The hospital is expected to be fully functional by end of 2024 while the first batch of MD/PhD students will be admitted in the year 2025.

HDFC Bank has partnered with IISc Bangalore for the first time with the aim of improving the healthcare infrastructure in the region.

"HDFC Bank's partnership with IISc Bangalore is aligned with our commitment to

improve healthcare and medical infrastructure across the country," said, Ms. Ashima Bhat, Group Head, ESG & CSR, Business Finance & Strategy, Administration and Infrastructure, HDFC Bank.

"The new hospital and the medical school will not only bolster the healthcare needs of the entire region but will also provide a new generation of physician-scientists."

Prof Govindan Rangarajan, Director, Indian Institute of Science said, "After pursuing excellence in science and engineering research for 113 years, IISc has embarked upon a new frontier of clinical research through the establishment of the Bagchi-Parthasarathy Hospital and IISc Medical School. We are thankful to HDFC Bank for being a major partner in this new initiative and providing support for the establishment of three important wings: Cardiology, Radiology, and Emergency Medicine at the Hospital. We look forward to expanding this engagement with HDFC bank in transforming the future of healthcare in this country."



CONTD. FROM FRONT PAGE

Suicide Rate

the pandemic, people had financial, domestic and other issues, which are prospecting factors of suicide," he said.

Pertinently, the unemployment graph in Jammu and Kashmir has shot up considerably over the past several years.

The unemployment rate jumped to 20.2 percent in July, as compared to 17.2 percent in June, data released by the CMIE on Monday revealed. The July jobless rate is the second highest since January when it was 15.2 percent.

As per the data available, the unemployment rate (UR) in March had hit a new record with 25 percent unemployment in the first quarter of 2022. The UR had astronomically risen since last year and has touched its worst value in 2022, when compared to the past five years.

While describing the suicide as the symptom of underlying mental health problem, Dr. Rather said "90 percent of the suicide cases have underlying major depression disorder, which leads them to suicide"

He said there are three factors of committing suicide, when there is helplessness, hopelessness and worthlessness or if you feel the guilt of anything. These factors increase the risk of suicide."

According to data, there were 287 suicides in J&K in 2017, which rose to 330 in 2018. In 2019 however, the number dropped marginally, but the region still recorded 284 suicides during that year.

Notably, the pandemic year of 2020 witnessed 457, the highest number of suicide cases in last decade. Since 2010 to 2020, the valley has witnessed 3024 cases of suicide.

Mufti Azmatullah of Darul Uloom Rahimia, Bandipora told Kashmir Observer that it is the joint responsibility of the society towards the person who has tendency to commit the suicide.

"Everyone is having issues at home but you need to channelise them and sort-it out. It is the job of family and society to look after the person who is under depression," the Mufti said.

He said Islam doesn't allow suicide and it is considered a major sin.

"The person who commits suicide will be questioned on the day of judgment instead of sharing your grief with your relatives and friends you committed suicide so, you will be punished to commit it again and again," he added.

Suicide has many convocations—economic, social, political and psychology maintains, Dr. Mir Suhail, a research scholar at Kashmir University's Sociology department.

"Suicide is not just an act but it is protest against injustice and suppression from society," Suhail, who has completed his research on suicide in Kashmir.

He further added that the community and religious leaders need to develop an indigenous mechanism to address this issue.

He said society starts from the family and they should develop a scientific temper to bring up their kids.

"You can't restrict the kids, humiliate them and there is a need for scientific parenting," Dr. Suhail said.

16 JKAS Officers

Mohammad Akbar Wani, Sheikh Arshad Ayub and Rajesh Sharma.

"This is for the first time in last 12 years that the JKAS officers have been inducted into IAS. 16 serving JKAS officers have been inducted into IAS for the years 2013-2018. Three officers have been appointed against vacancies of 2013, two against vacancies of 2016, three against vacancies of 2017 and 08 vacancies have been filled up for the year 2018," the spokesperson said.

He further said that 1999 batch JKAS officers are the major beneficiary of the inductions which have been carried out purely on seniority basis after the seniority list was finalized by the GAD.

"Many IAS Officers were presently holding charge of twin departments and the promotions are likely to lessen their burden besides boosting the moral of local officers," the spokesperson said

"With inductions becoming a regular feature, more JKAS Officers are likely to be benefited by getting inducted into the prestigious India Administrative Service," he added.

The spokesperson further said that the exercise for induction of JKAS officers into IAS was delayed because of seniority disputes and certain other issues.

"However, the General Administration Department headed by Manoj Kumar Dwivedi, initiated the exercise last year, which finally culminated in today's notification," he said.

"This has been made possible due to the tireless efforts of Arun Kumar Mehta, Chief Secretary, J&K and Manoj Kumar Dwivedi, Principal Secretary, GAD under the guidance of Lieutenant Governor," he added.

1.06 Cr Tourists

specify whether the number of tourists includes pilgrims visiting Vaishno Devi temple and Amarnath Cave.

He said 75 offbeat destinations have been identified for tourism across Jammu and Kashmir.

In order to attract private investors from across the country to invest in tourism infrastructure, the Jammu and Kashmir Tourism Policy, 2020, has been notified and tourism given the status of industry to encourage investment, he said.

Replying to another question, the minister said special recruitment rules were made and various departmental rules amended to accelerate the recruitment process in a transparent and time bound manner.

"Recruitments in the public sector have been carried out from the year 2019 onwards totalling 29,806," he said.

On August 5, 2019, the central government abrogated Article 370, which gave special status to Jammu and Kashmir, and bifurcated the erstwhile state into the union territories of Jammu and Kashmir, and Ladakh.

J&K Govt, BJP

ITV Network has also sought permission from J&K Police to organize a televised conclave from Lal Chowk in Srinagar to mark the third anniversary of abrogation of special status.

As per a letter, a copy of which lies with Kashmir Observer, forwarded to ADGP Kashmir Zone, Vijay Kumar, ITV Network's Group Head in North, Rana Dhillion has sought permission "to hold a televised conclave from Lal Chowk in Srinagar".

"The event will feature important voices via video-link including Jitendra Singh, Hon'ble Union Minister, Dilbag Singh DGP J&K, SP Vaid, Former DGP J&K, Gen JJ Singh former Army chief and others. These above will be joining via video-link remotely, there will be other guests including our national anchors from India News who will be moderating live debates from the podium.

The theme of the event is 'Sabse Pehle Dosh' and will include conversations on business, entrepreneurship, development, growth and politics. The event will mark the 3rd Anniversary of the abrogation of Article 370 on Aug 5," reads the letter.

Sources within BJP confirmed to Kashmir Observer that the party is also organizing individual events in each and every district of J&K to "mark the biggest day in the history of Kashmir".

"August 5 is no less than a festival for people of Kashmir. And BJP will be organizing events across J&K on August 5 to mark the peace brought to the valley after abrogation of Article 370," a senior JK BJP politician told Kashmir Observer.

HC Puts Ball

situation," a bench of Chief Justice Pankaj Mishal and Justice Wasim Sadiq Nargal said.

"This court is unable to assess the law-and-order situation as well as the involvement of the security of the nation in taking out such religious procession," the Bench said, adding, "It is in-fact the domain of the administration/security agencies and other stake holders to take a call on it and to form an opinion depending upon the law-and-order situation, religious harmony and security of the nation."

The petitioner, the court said, has filed a representation in this regard to the Commissioner Secretary, Home, on 25 June this year.

Advocate General D.C. Raina submitted that the Commissioner Secretary will consider the representation in light of the observations made by the court.

"In view of the aforesaid facts and circumstances, we dispose of this writ petition with a direction to the Commissioner Secretary, Home or any other competent authority to consider the above representation of the petitioner most expeditiously preferably within a period of three days as the month of Muharram has started," the court said as per the order, adding, "The Commissioner Secretary or any other competent authority after taking inputs to the maintenance of religious harmony and the law-and-order situation from all security agencies of the nation consider the above representation as directed." (GNS)

Srinagar Records

two months of the southwest monsoon season. Budgam recorded highest excess rainfall of 147 per cent. The lowest came from Shopian district with 35 per cent deficient rainfall," Arif

said.

Of 20 districts in the union territory, seven have recorded large excess rainfall, six excess rainfall, five normal rainfall and two deficient rainfall, he said.

J&K Adds 739

officials said, Jammu reported a maximum of 129 new cases of infection, Rajouri 13, Udhampur 11, Kishtwar 12, Samba 9, Doda, Kathua and Ramban six each and Poonch 4. No new cases were detected in Reasi district.

Also, the officials said that the death toll in the pandemic remained unchanged at 4773 in J&K—2344 in Jammu division and 2429 in the Valley, as no fresh fatality was reported during the last 24 hours.

"Moreover, 645 more COVID-19 patients have recovered and been discharged from various hospitals including 220 from Jammu division and 425 from Kashmir division," they added. (ONS)

DGP Calls For

in the Union Territory.

Singh passed these directions while chairing a high-level meeting at the police control room (PCR) Kashmir to review the overall security scenario and arrangements regarding the Independence day and 10th Muharram-ul-Haram, martyrdom of Imam Hussain (AS), his family and companions in the battle of Karbala, a police spokesperson said Wednesday.

At the very outset of the meeting, he said, the DGP sought reports from the officers about security arrangements and deployment plans put in place for the smooth and peaceful conduct of 10th Muharram and the Independence Day in twin capital cities and all district headquarters across J&K.

"The DGP discussed in detail all the arrangements to be made for smooth conduct of these functions and directed to ensure all the necessary arrangements are in place well in time," the spokesperson said.

"Emerging challenges and their counter measures were threadbare discussed during the meeting. The national campaign, Har Ghar Tiranga was also discussed during the meeting," he added.

Referring to the "continuous attempts by sponsored elements to create disturbance" in Jammu and Kashmir, Singh, as per the spokesperson said that extra vigil is required to be maintained for the forthcoming 10th Muharram and Independence Day celebrations.

Singh, he said, directed the officers for ensuring implementation of joint mechanisms chalked out at different levels.

The DGP, according to the spokesperson stressed for further strengthening the coordination among all sister agencies and the civil administration and said to foil any attempt by troublemakers a close liaison should be maintained at every level.

"He directed for increased patrolling, area domination and CASOs etc to ensure that anti-peace elements are not given any chance to create any disturbance," he said.

Singh, he said, also stressed on maintaining alertness on the borders of the twin cities and on the national highway for which he

advised placement of 'nakas' and joint patrolling to check the movement of anti-social/anti-national elements. The DGP also appreciated the work of Police, CAPFs/Army for ensuring peaceful conduct of SANJAY-2022.

The DGP directed for making smooth traffic arrangements during the Independence Day celebrations, particularly routes leading to venues of functions in Srinagar and Jammu. Parking slots should be identified so that people participating in these functions should not face any inconvenience, he said.

The senior officers representing different units, agencies briefed the meeting about the required steps to be taken to ensure peaceful conduct of the Independence Day celebrations. They also apprised the DGP regarding the overall security scenario and counter/preventative measures in place in the areas under their command. The officers also briefed about the security arrangement regarding the peaceful conduct of Muharram-ul-Haram functions.

Among others, the meeting was attended by ADG CRPF, J&K Daljit Singh Chodhary, Spl. DGP CID, J&K R.R. Swain, IG CRPF Ops Kashmir, Manvinder Singh Bhatia, ADGP (Coord) PHQ Danish Rana, IG CRPF Srinagar Ops Sector, Charu Sinha, ADGP Kashmir Zone, Vijay Kumar, IG BSF FTR, Hqrs Kashmir, R.B. Singh.

Misfire Injures

No such incident has taken place. General Public is requested not to pay heed to rumors. Rumour mongers shall be dealt with strictly under law," Police said.pital. (ONS)

Five IPS Officers

HG/CD & SDRF, J&K, has been transferred and posted as Director General, Prisons, J&K, vice B. Srinivas.

Garib Dass, IPS (RR:97), IGP (Hqrs) PHQ, upon his promotion to the grade of Additional Director General of Police (ADGP), has been transferred and posted as Commissioner, Civil Military Liaison, Home Department, against an available vacancy. "The post of Commissioner, Civil Military Liaison is declared to be equivalent in the rank and status to that of ADGP, till held by the officer, the order reads, adding, "The officer shall be headquartered at PHQ, Jammu."

Alok Kumar, IPS (RR:97), IGP (CIV), PHQ, upon his promotion to the grade of Additional Director General of Police (ADGP), has been transferred and posted as Director, Fire & Emergency Services, J&K, against an available vacancy. The post of Director, Fire & Emergency Services, J&K, is declared to be equivalent in the rank and status to that of ADGP, till held by the officer.

Bhim Sen Tuti, IPS (RR:04), awaiting posting in Police Headquarters, has been posted as IGP (Hqrs), PHQ, vice Garib Dass. "The officer shall also hold the additional charge of the post of IGP (CIV) PHQ," (ONS)

750 In J&K Held

under the UAPA between 2018 and 2020 was in Uttar Pradesh -- 1,338, followed by Manipur -- 943 and Jammu and Kashmir -- 750.

Among all those arrested, 2,488 people belonged to 18-30 years of age group and 1,850 belonged to 30 to 45 years age group, he said. (PTI)

Mehbooba's New Twitter DP Shows Tricolour, Old J&K Flag



Mehbooba Mufti
@MehboobaMufti

President JKPPD
Translate bio

Press Trust Of India

SRINAGAR: PDP president Mehbooba Mufti Wednesday put a new Twitter display picture showing her late father Mufti Mohammad Sayeed and Prime Minister Narendra Modi with the national flag and the now-derecognised flag of Jammu and Kashmir.

In his Mann Ki Baat radio broadcast this Sunday, PM Modi had said the "Azadi Ka Amrit Mahotsav" is turning into a mass movement and urged people to put "tiranga" as the profile picture of their social media accounts between August 2 and 15.

Putting the new display picture, Mehbooba said the flag of Jammu and Kashmir might have been "snatched", but it cannot be erased from the collective conscience of the people.

The photograph was taken at

a rally addressed by the prime minister during his Kashmir visit in November 2015 when Mufti Sayeed was chief minister of the erstwhile state. Mehbooba's previous profile picture was her own photo with the party's logo.

"Changed my dp since a flag is a matter of joy & pride. For us our state flag was irreversibly linked to the Indian flag. It was snatched thus breaking away the link. You may have robbed us of our flag but cant erase it from our collective conscience," Mehbooba tweeted.

The Twitter post by the former chief minister also comes two days ahead of the third anniversary of revocation of Article 370 of the Constitution that gave special status to Jammu and Kashmir. With the revocation of the special status, the Jammu and Kashmir flag was also derecognised.

226 Pilgrims Leave For Amarnath Cave Shrine From Jammu

Press Trust Of India

JAMMU: A batch of 226 pilgrims left the Bhagwati Nagar base camp here on Wednesday to pay obeisance at the 3,880-metre-high cave shrine of Amarnath in south Kashmir Himalayas, officials said.

The 43-day yatra commenced on June 30 from the twin base camps — traditional 48-km Nunwan-Pahalgam in south Kashmir's Anantnag and 14-km shorter Baltal in central Kashmir's Ganderbal district.

The 34th batch left in a convoy of nine vehicles amid heavy security of the Central Reserve Police Force (CRPF), they said.

According to officials, 74 pilgrims heading for Baltal were the first

to leave the Jammu base camp in three vehicles followed by the second convoy of six vehicles carrying 152 pilgrims for Pahalgam.

Officials attribute the fall in the number of pilgrims visiting the cave shrine to twin factors — poor weather conditions and the yatra inching towards its conclusion.

A total of 1,43,919 pilgrims have left from the Bhagwati Nagar base camp for the Kashmir valley since June 29. The yatra is scheduled to end on August 11, coinciding with Raksha Bandhan.

A total of 36 people, mostly pilgrims, have died during the ongoing Amarnath Yatra till now. Additionally, 15 pilgrims had died in the flash floods at the cave shrine on July 1.

NABET Rankings

KIIT Polytechnic Adjudged Odisha's Best

Observer News Service

BHUBANESWAR: KIIT Polytechnic has been ranked as the best polytechnic in Odisha among all the state and private-run polytechnics by National Accreditation Board for Education and Training (NABET), a constituent Board of Quality Council of India (QCI). The results were declared today.

This is the first time that the rankings of the polytechnics in Odisha were carried out. The exercise came against the backdrop of the State Government's enhanced focus on improving the quality of technical institutes

and identifying the best ones that adhere to quality teaching. The rankings were carried out by NABET-QCI and State Council for Vocational Education and Training.

The announcement was met with jubilation by the students, teachers and staff of KIIT Polytechnic. KIIT Founder Dr. Achyuta Samanta lauded the efforts of KIIT Polytechnic Principal, Dr Tanmay Mohanty, the teachers and staff, saying, the ranking was a big achievement as the institute was adjudged the best among all government and private Polytechnics. He especially extended his greeting to the students for their success.

Govt Working To Touch New Levels Of Dev, Prosperity: LG



Observer News Service

SRINAGAR: Jammu and Kashmir Lieutenant Governor, Manoj Sinha said on Wednesday that his administration is fully committed to continuously working for touching new levels of development and prosperity in Jammu Kashmir.

Sinha made these remarks while interacting with former legislator Surinder Ambar, and President J&K Janta Dal United (JDU), GM Shaheen at the Raj Bhavan here on Wednesday, an official spokesperson said.

He said that Ambar, accompanied by Mrs Dil Afroza Qazi and Shabbir A Qazi of SSM College presented a book on Prime Minister Narendra Modi to the Lt Governor.

"He also discussed various initiatives and developments made in the J&K's education and Industrial sectors, besides other matters," he said.

Shaheen, according to the spokesperson, expressed gratitude to the LG led UT Government for the progressive policies and unprecedented reforms brought for rapid development and growth in J&K.

The JDU leader, he said, also discussed with the LG various matters pertaining to better connectivity, development of tourism and power sectors, and the progress on Jal Jeevan Mission.

"The Lt Governor while interacting with the former legislator and JDU leader observed that the UT administration is fully committed to continuously working for touching new levels of development and prosperity in Jammu Kashmir. He urged the public representatives to remain dedicated to the welfare of people of J&K," the spokesperson added.

Announce Statehood On Aug 15: J&K Cong To PM

Press Trust Of India

JAMMU: The Jammu and Kashmir Congress on Tuesday urged Prime Minister Narendra Modi to announce statehood for the union territory and holding of assembly elections during his Independence Day speech from the Red Fort on August 15.

J-K Congress leader G A Mir said the party will hold 75-kilometer-long padayatra' in every district of the country in connection with the 75th year of Independence.

He said the tiranga yatra' will cover also several areas in Jammu and Kashmir from August 9 to 14.

Mir chaired a preparatory meeting of senior leaders in which the schedule of programmes from August 9 to 14 was discussed, a party statement said.

The Congress will hold a strong protest on August 5 throughout the country and gherrao the prime minister's house against unprecedented price



hike of all items of everyday use, Mir said.

He said the Congress has asked Prime Minister Modi to announce statehood to Jammu and Kashmir on August 15 from the Red Fort besides holding of assembly elections at the earliest.

The people's rights were taken away unilaterally and now when the government claims normalcy in J-K, it should announce statehood with consti-

titutional safeguards for land and jobs for the UT besides a clear roadmap for conducting assembly elections, Mir said.

Replying to questions about the sale of national flags at the BJP office here, he said the saffron party has sold all assets of the country and now it's the turn of tiranga.

He also said daily wage workers deserve all benefits after decades of service.

Search Ops In Rajouri, Poonch After Suspicious Movement

Press Trust Of India

JAMMU: A joint search operation was launched in the forests of Budhal in Rajouri and Surankote in Poonch district on Wednesday after locals reported suspicious movement of unidentified people, officials said.

Village defence group guard Subash Chander opened fire in the air late on Tuesday night after some unidentified persons

pelted stones on his house in the Budhal area, they said.

Chander, who suffered minor head injuries in the stone-pelting, claimed that he was also fired upon by the attackers.

The police, assisted by the Army and CRPF, launched a search operation in the entire forest belt immediately after getting the information, officials said.

The operation is underway

and nothing incriminating has been found so far, they said, adding the security forces are also engaged in a search operation in the forest area of Surankote since Wednesday morning.

The operation by the police and Army was started following information about the suspicious movement of some people in the forest area, officials said.

—KOIMPACT—

Director Geology & Mining Issues Circular To Stop Mining During Monsoon

Syed Mohammad Burhan

SRINAGAR: The Director of the Geology and Mining Department has issued a circular vide No.59/MCC/DGM/CIRCULAR/15/3575-81 on 2nd August, 2022 in which the director has impressed upon all minor mineral mining lease holders to refrain from undertaking any mining activities.

"In reference to the Enforcement & Monitoring guidelines for sand mining issued by Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate change January 2020, para 8.1 VII(Pre-requisite for starting mining operation), it is impressed upon all minor mineral mining lease holders to refrain from undertaking any mining activities" the circular states, a copy of which lies with Kashmir Observer.

The monsoon period has been defined by the Indian Meteorological Department IMD Nagpur, vide letter no NAGPUR RMC/CS-312 dated 18th January 2016 for each state and UT.

"The date for onset and with-

drawal for south-west monsoon in respect of Jammu and Kashmir UT has been notified as 1st July to 15th September respectively" the circular further states.

"Any violation of the aforementioned guidelines would invite penal action and penalty as provided under rules shall be imposed upon the violators"

The circular also directs all mineral officers to ensure strict implementation of the said guidelines and take strict action against the violators as warranted under norms.

The circular comes after Kashmir Observer did a series of stories on how illegal mining activities were being carried out at Doodh Ganga (a tributary of river Jhelum) despite monsoon season.

Locals from a Budgam locality had alleged that mining is ongoing at Doodh Ganga Nallah during the monsoon season which is in defiance of the mining regulations.

Despite repeated attempts the Director Geology and Mining Department did not respond to phone calls.

Mehta Chairs Second Meeting Of J&K Wetland Authority

Rs 150 Cr Integrated Management Plan For Conservation Of Wular Lake Approved



Observer News Service

JAMMU: The Chief Secretary, Dr. Arun Kumar Mehta on Wednesday chaired the second meeting of the Wetland Authority for the Union territory of Jammu and Kashmir.

Principal Secretary, Jal Shakti Department, Principal Secretary, Housing & Urban Development Department, Commissioner/Secretary, Forest, Ecology & Environment Department, and Commissioner/Secretary, Tourism Department along with Principal Chief Conservator of Forest and concerned HoDs participated in the meeting.

The Chief Secretary approved the proposal of the Forest, Ecology & Environment Department to designate Wular Lake as Wetland in terms of the Environment (Protection) Act, 1986. The Wular lake is spread over 13,000 ha of area with an additional 486.12 ha area as its zone of influence.

On completion of the procedure of declaring the water body as a protected wetland, various degradation-causing activities will be prohibited in the area. These activities include encroachment of the wetland, setting up of industries, disposal

of construction waste, discharge of untreated waste, release of invasive species, feeding of migratory birds etc.

Further, various activities will be regulated within the wetland as well as in its zone of influence which include withdrawal of water, harvesting of resources, construction of pontoon bridges, aquaculture, agriculture, horticulture and eco-tourism.

The J&K Wetland Authority also approved the Integrated Management Plan for Conservation of Wular lake to promote an integrated and multi-disciplinary approach for conservation and management of the water body.

The Chief Secretary advised the Forest Department to engage scientific methods for dredging, de-silting and de-weeding for restoration and rejuvenation of Wular lake.

Under the Integrated Management Plan, various activities worth Rs. 150.00 crores will be undertaken for scientific management of the wetland. The proposed activities include extensive survey and demarcation, catchment conservation, water management, biodiversity conservation, sustainable livelihood generation, and institutional development.

Observer News Service

SRINAGAR: The road projects being executed across the length and breadth of Jammu and Kashmir are revolutionizing the connectivity and bringing economic prosperity across the UT, an official spokesperson said Wednesday.

With the construction of new roads, he said, the travel time from Jammu to Kishtwar has been reduced from 7.5 hrs to 5hrs and travel time from Jammu to Srinagar has been reduced from 7-12 hours to 5.5 hours for LMVs.

Similarly, he said the travel time from Srinagar to Gulmarg has been reduced from 3 hours to 1.5 hours and layover of Trucks reduced from 24-72 hours to 12 hours.

"The statistics are reflecting that macadamization is being done at record level with average road macadamization in J&K increased to 20.6 km per day in last three years as compared to 6.54 km per day before 2019, which reflects the progressing development happening here," the spokesperson said.

Road Infra Projects Revolutionizing Connectivity, Bringing Economic Prosperity Across J&K: Govt

According to official data, road length in J&K has increased to 41,141 kilometres and the percentage of blacktop roads has reached to 74 percent as compared to 66 percent in 2019.

Under Pothole free road programme, a target of 5900 kilometres was made for 2021-22 of which 4600 kilometres of road length has been made pothole-free till date.

Remarkably, Jammu and Kashmir has once again been ranked among top three performing States/UTs at national level for construction of road length per year under Pradhan Mantri Gram Sadak Yojana (PMGSY).

J&K Maintained its rank for the second consecutive year as the Public Works Department (R&B) constructed PMGSY road length of 3284 kms during the year 2021-

22 and connected 114 habitations through road networks by executing 427 schemes in the year.

Under PMGSY, an average 9 kms of road length was constructed per day, which was slightly higher than the achievement for the year 2020-21 with an average of 8.67 kms per day and 119 habitations were connected under PMGSY with 3167 kms of road length constructed.

Nearly after 15 years, inner roads of Nihalpora village in Baramulla district are being repaired and macadamized. Home to 1500 families, the village was never on the priority list of the successive popular governments. Potholed roads, traffic gridlocks and waterlogging were commuting nightmares.

Similarly, the people of Darui Panchayat started celebrating and

dancing with joy after the road construction work was taken up in their village for the first time since Independence. As soon as the JCB machine was installed, the people of the village started dancing to the beats of the drum and exchanged sweets among themselves. The construction work on 2.50 kilometer road has been started at an estimated cost of Rs 2.29 crore.

Vimla Devi, the Sarpanch of the Panchayat had played very important role in getting the road built. Vimla Devi said people were engaged in trying to get this road constructed since 2009 but finally the work started in 2022. "People were trying to get this road constructed since 2009 and finally the work has been started in 2022. This road is being built under the NABARD

scheme", she said.

Similarly, Ashok Kumar, Sarpanch Sial Chadda thanks Public Works Department for fulfilling the long pending demand of people for construction of road as they were suffering in absence of a road.

Moreover, four National Highway projects are being completed during 2022. Execution of Delhi-Amritsar Katra Expressway is being taken up. Under Bharat Mala, 10 new road/tunnel projects are being executed. All habitations with over 1000 population (as per the 2011 census) have been provided road connectivity. The provision of road connectivity for the habitations with 500 population by 2022-23 is also being taken up.

Public Works Department of J&K has embarked on a mission to reach out to unconnected habi-

tations with road connectivity, strengthen and expand the intra UT road network, especially in rural & remote areas.

Public Works (R&B) Department has achieved considerable targets and achievements under various schemes /programmes implemented for Construction, improvement/ upgradation of roads & bridges, for providing connectivity with special focus on rural areas like Pradhan Mantri Gram Sadak Yojna (PMGSY), Bridge Programme, Central Road & Infrastructure fund (CRIF), NABARD, Road Sector, Cities & Towns (Macadamization), Languishing Projects, Pothole Free Road Programme, NHAI/NHIDCL/BRO, and other departmental works.

For the J&K administration, road connectivity is not only a key component of Rural Development by promoting access to economic and social services but generating increased agricultural incomes and productive employment opportunities is also part of their implementation strategy.

National Anti-Doping Bill Gets Parliament Nod



Press Trust of India

NEW DELHI: The Parliament on Wednesday passed a bill which seeks to provide a statutory framework for the functioning of the National Anti-Doping Agency and the National Dope Testing Laboratory.

The National Anti-Doping Bill, 2022 was passed by a voice vote in Rajya Sabha. It was cleared by Lok Sabha last week along with certain official amendments.

Sports and Youth Affairs Minister Anurag Thakur while responding to debate on the bill said that currently India can carry out only about 6,000 tests a year, and the law would help in increasing the testing capacity significantly.

He said for holding any large international championship, the number of tests required could be as high as 10,000 a month.

Thakur also said that with passage of this bill, India will join the club select countries like, the US, China, Japan, and France, which have their own laws related to check doping in sports.

Several amendments moved by the Opposition were negated.

The bill is intended to provide a "statutory framework for the operation of the National Anti-Doping Agency (NADA), the National Dope Testing Laboratory (NDTL) and other dope testing laboratories, and for the creation of a National Board for Anti-Doping in Sports to strengthen anti-doping activities in sport".

It seeks to give NADA powers of "investigation, levying sanctions for anti-doping rule violations, the disciplinary procedures to be adopted and the powers of inspection, sample collection and sharing and free flow of information."

Anantnag Lift Under-19 Boys Volleyball Title



Observer News Service

SRINAGAR: The Anantnag Under-19 Volleyball team on Wednesday won the Provincial Level Inter District U-19 Volleyball tournament which was played at Pulwama.

The team remained undefeated throughout the tournament and managed to defeat all teams by a scoreline of 2-0.

The Department of Youth Services and Sports also issued a statement congratulating the players, field staff, DYSS Officer Anantnag Mushtaq Ahmad Pampuri and the selectors for the team's success.

The team from Anantnag defeated Bandipora 2-0 in the finals to extend a six match winning streak in the tournament. The team was led by captain Shadab Shamim.

Schedule For India's Series Against Australia & South Africa Revealed



Agencies

NEW DELHI: The BCCI on Wednesday announced the schedule for two limited-over home series against Australia and South Africa in September and October, ahead of the T20 World Cup. The schedule will see the Men in Blue play three T20Is against Australia, before facing South Africa in a T20I and ODI series.

Mohali hosting the first T20I against Australia on September

20. Nagpur and Hyderabad will be hosting the second and third on September 23 and September 25 respectively.

The home series against South Africa will begin in Thiruvananthapuram. The second T20I will be played on October 2 Gandhi Jayanti, to mark the birth anniversary of Mahatma Gandhi at Guwahati, followed by the last T20I at Indore.

The action will then shift to Lucknow on October 6 where the ODI series will get under-

way. Ranchi and Delhi will host the second and third ODI respectively.

T20Is vs Australia: Mohali (September 20), Nagpur (September 23), Hyderabad (September 25).

T20Is vs South Africa: Thiruvananthapuram (September 28), Guwahati (October 2), Indore (October 4).

ODIs vs South Africa: Lucknow (October 6), Ranchi (October 9), Delhi (October 11).

Suryakumar Yadav Closes In On Top Spot In ICC T20I Rankings



Press Trust of India

DUBAI: India's Suryakumar Yadav has moved three spots up to the second position in the latest T20 rankings for batters.

Suryakumar, who scored a 44-ball 76 in the third T20 International against the West Indies on Tuesday, moved within two rating points of top-ranked Pakistan captain Babar Azam.

Suryakumar, who now has 816 rating points, leads the batting chart with 111 runs from three matches in the five-match series, which India lead 2-1.

Meanwhile, South Africa batter Reeza Hendricks, who notched half-centuries in all three matches against England, has moved up 16 slots to 15th position.

South Africa spinner Tabraiz Shamsi, who grabbed eight wickets in the series against England, has made remarkable gains in the T20 bowlers ranking and advanced to the second spot.

Shamsi, who was top-ranked for most of the period from April to October last year, has advanced one slot but remains 64 rating points adrift of top-

ranked Josh Hazlewood, who is on 792 rating points.

West Indies spinner Akeal Hosein (up three places to sixth), England's Chris Jordan (up one place to 16th), New Zealand spinners Mitchell Santner (up three places to 17th) and Ish Sodhi (up two places to 19th) are among the others to move up.

In the ODI rankings, India opener Shikhar Dhawan has moved up one slot to 12th position after getting a half-century in the last match of their series in the West Indies.

Pakistan Announces Squad For Asia Cup, Netherlands Tour



Agencies

THE Pakistan Cricket Board (PCB) on Wednesday announced squads for the ICC World Cup Super League ODI matches against the Netherlands and the T20 Asia Cup.

The PCB unveiled a 16-member squad for the three-match series against the Netherlands starting from Aug 16, and a 15-member squad for the Asia Cup which will commence from Aug 27.

According to Chief Selector Muhammad Wasim, the management had made only necessary changes to the squad.

"Both the competitions are important for us and we have picked our best available players

in consultation with the captain and head coach."

Netherlands ODIs: Babar Azam (captain), Shadab Khan (vice-captain), Abdullah Shafique, Fakhar Zaman, Haris Rauf, Imam-ul-Haq, Khushdil Shah, Mohammad Haris, Mohammad Nawaz, Mohammad Rizwan, Mohammad Wasim Jr, Naseem Shah, Salman Ali Agha, Shaheen Shah Afridi, Shahnawaz Dahani and Zahid Mehmood.

T20 Asia Cup: Babar Azam (captain), Shadab Khan (vice-captain), Asif Ali, Fakhar Zaman, Haider Ali, Haris Rauf, Iftikhar Ahmed, Khushdil Shah, Mohammad Nawaz, Mohammad Rizwan, Mohammad Wasim Jr, Naseem Shah, Shaheen Shah Afridi, Shahnawaz Dahani and Usman Qadir.

PL Teams Won't Take The Knee Before Every Game



Agencies

LONDON: Premier League players will no longer take the knee ahead of every match, but will do so at "significant moments" during the upcoming season in a gesture against racism.

The gesture, which started in June 2020 to show support for the Black Lives Matter campaign, will now be used more sparingly in order to "amplify the message that racism has no place in football or society."

Premier League captains agreed that teams will take the

knee ahead of this weekend's opening round of games, for dedicated "No Room for Racism" matches in October and March, on Boxing Day, the final round of the season and the FA Cup and League Cup finals.

The Premier League captains, who met last week, said in a joint statement: "We have decided to select significant moments to take the knee during the season to highlight our unity against all forms of racism and in so doing we continue to show solidarity for a common cause."

10 Young Football Players To Watch In Europe's Five Leading Leagues

Agencies

PARIS: A look at 10 young players who could stand out this season in Europe's five major leagues:

ENGLAND

HARVEY ELLIOT, Liverpool

Harvey Elliot started in the Liverpool team last season until a serious ankle injury against Leeds in September sidelined him for several months.

The 19-year-old Elliot plays on the right side of a midfield three and could make a push for England's World Cup squad if he gets enough games under manager Jürgen Klopp. That could well be the case with James Milner and Jordan Henderson advancing in years.

CARNEY CHUKWUEMEKA, Chelsea

Eighteen-year-old midfielder Carney Chukwuemeka emerged from Aston Villa's strong youth team and made enough of an impression last season to earn a move to Chelsea.

The London club announced it has agreed a deal to sign Chukwuemeka after Villa manager Steven Gerrard, who knows about playing in the middle, brought him in for the final games of last season. Chukwuemeka helped Eng-

land win the Under-19 European Championship last month, with a goal in the final against Israel, and made it into the team of the tournament. Last year, Chukwuemeka played in Villa's FA Youth Cup victory and finished the competition as the leading scorer with six goals.

SPAIN

MOHAMED-ALI CHO, Real Sociedad

Like France star Kylian Mbappe, 18-year-old Mohamed-Ali Cho started out as a winger. Real Sociedad signed him from French club Angers on a five-year deal for about 12 million euros (\$12.3 million).

Cho is strong with both feet and can play wide — cutting inside to shoot — or in a central role.

He was the youngest player in France to be given a professional contract and made his league debut at 16 years, 7 months — four months younger than Mbappe when he made his Monaco debut.

After a few years spent in PSG's junior teams, Cho joined the youth ranks of Premier League club Everton for five years before once more returning to France to join Angers. He scored four league goals for Angers last season.

EDUARDO CAMAVINGA, Real



Madrid

This is a big season for 19-year-old Eduardo Camavinga, who needs to impress at Real Madrid to stand a chance of getting back into the France squad for the World Cup.

Camavinga did well in spells last season as Madrid won the Spanish league and the Champions League. But he was mostly a substitute and found it hard to break the midfield stranglehold of Toni Kroos and Luka Modric.

Camavinga has quick feet, strong technique, reads the game well and is also a strong tackler. A superb athlete, Camavinga is equally adept at breaking quickly and turning from midfield into attack.

A good passer, Camavinga

needs to add a few more goals to his game, having only scored eight in 141 games for Madrid and his previous club, Rennes.

ITALY

NICOLÒ ROVELLA, Juventus

Nicolò Rovella spent last season on loan to Genoa but returns following the club's relegation to the second division and with an opportunity to claim a place in coach Massimiliano Allegri's midfield following Paul Pogba's knee injury.

Juve have high hopes for the 20-year-old Rovella, who is an established member of Italy's under-21 team and hopes to push for a first call-up to the senior squad.

The right-footer is a versatile

player, too, who can operate as a holding midfielder or lend himself to the attack thanks to his first touch and passing.

LORENZO PIROLA, Salernitana

Lorenzo Pirola is a technically strong and versatile central defender with good passing ability. The 20-year-old Italian came through Inter Milan's youth academy and has been loaned out to Salernitana this season.

The move could be timely because he will get the chance to make a name for himself in what could be another difficult season for the unheralded southern club, which only just avoided relegation last season.

Pirola's tackling, aerial ability and positional sense should all serve Salernitana well against bigger clubs, although his one weakness is that he struggles against skillful players who attack him at speed.

GERMANY

KARIM ADEYEMI, Borussia Dortmund

Borussia Dortmund has sold one young star and might just have found another one in 20-year-old Karim Adeyemi, who joined from Austrian club Salzburg on a five-year deal after Erling Haaland left for Premier League champion Man-

chester City.

Adeyemi distinguished himself with Salzburg last season, when he earned a remarkable four penalties in two Champions League games. His combination of trickery, quick feet, great balance, reading of the game and direct running make him a handful.

ADAM HLOZEK, Bayer Leverkusen

Bayer Leverkusen's return to the Champions League will have a Czech feel up front as Adam Hlozek teams up with striker Patrik Schick — whose 24 league goals helped Leverkusen finish third last season. The 19-year-old Hlozek joins from Sparta Prague, where he scored 40 goals in 132 games after making his debut at 16.

He follows in the footsteps of Schick, who also broke through with Sparta. Hlozek is an imposing forward who can also play on the wing and could prove a good provider for his international teammate.

FRANCE

HUGO EKITIKE, Paris Saint-Germain

Paris Saint-Germain beat another cash-rich club in Premier League team Newcastle to sign 20-year-old forward Hugo Eki-

tike. He joined from Reims on a season-long loan with an option to buy for 35 million euros (\$36 million).

Although Ekitike scored a modest 10 league goals last season, he was one of the most efficient finishers, scoring with 32.3% of his shots. His ratio of one goal for every 3.1 shots was better than new teammates Neymar and Kylian Mbappe, and second only to Monaco forward Wissam Ben Yedder's ratio of 2.88.

RAYAN CHERKI, Lyon

Eighteen-year-old Rayan Cherki is another product of the prolific youth academy at Lyon that produced Real Madrid great Karim Benzema, Hatem Ben Arfa, Corentin Tolisso and Alexandre Lacazette.

Two years ago, Cherki produced a remarkable performance in a French Cup game when he was only 16, scoring two goals and providing two assists.

Opportunities have been somewhat limited since then but this could be a breakthrough season for the attacking midfielder under coach Peter Bosz. Like so many of Lyon's technically gifted academy players, Cherki has it all: quick feet, close control, astute passing, great skill and an eye for goal. (AP)