

Ashura Observed With Reverence Across Kashmir

Observer News Service

Srinagar: Youm-e-Ashura was observed on Tuesday with reverence and religious fervour throughout Jammu & Kashmir to pay tributes to Hazrat Imam Hussain (AS) and his companions for their supreme sacrifices.

Every year, this day is observed on 10th of Muharram to commemorate the supreme sacrifice rendered by Imam Hussain and his 72 companions at Karbala to uphold the truth.

Alam and Zuljanah processions were taken **More on P6**



Restrictions Imposed In Parts Of Budgam

Authorities in Budgam district of Jammu and Kashmir on Tuesday imposed restrictions in some areas to maintain law and order as members of the Shia community observed the tenth day of Muharram, officials said. The officials said restrictions on the movement and assembly of people were imposed as a precautionary measure to maintain law and order on the occasion of Ashura, **More on P6**

PM Recalls Sacrifices Of Imam Hussain

Prime Minister Narendra Modi recalled the sacrifices of Hazrat Imam Hussain on the occasion of Muharram on Tuesday. Muslims observe the day in remembrance of the martyrdom of Hussain, grandson of the Prophet Mohammad, in the battle of Karbala. Modi tweeted, "Today is a day to recall the sacrifices of Hazrat Imam Hussain (AS). He is remembered **More on P6**

Committed To Equitable Development Of All Regions: LG

Observer News Service

SRINAGAR: Jammu and Kashmir Lieutenant Governor, Manoj Sinha said on Tuesday that his government is committed to the inclusive and equitable development of all the regions of the Union Territory.

"The welfare of every section of the society, especially empowering the minorities & the underprivileged is the priority of the government, which is also reflected in the development policies," Sinha said.

He made these remarks during his interaction with various deputations at Raj Bhawan



here on Tuesday, an official spokesperson said.

Sinha, he said, observed that the UT Government is committed to the **More on P6**

Jammu Saw 16 Dowry Deaths In 2021, Kashmir None

Zaid Bin Shabir

Srinagar: Despite the alarming rise in dowry deaths that claims lives of 20 women everyday in the country, Kashmir valley has registered zero cases of dowry deaths in 2021 against a single case a year earlier, reveals Crime Gazette recently released by Jammu and Kashmir Police.

According to the data, a copy of which lies with Kashmir Observer, the region witnessed zero cases of dowry deaths in 2021 while one case of dowry related death was reported in 2020 in the region.

The data has also shown a marginal increase in dowry deaths in Jammu where 16 cases of dowry death were reported in 2021 against eight dowry deaths in 2020.

Pertinently, as per law, dowry deaths include Dowry related harassment—either murdered, or compelled to commit suicide.

As per data, Jammu city alone witnessed the highest number of dowry deaths in 2021 when numbers stood at 7.

3 dowry deaths were reported in Kathua, 4 in Samba and 2 in Rajouri. However, as per data, in 2020, Jammu had reported only 6 dowry deaths and 1 each in Kathua and Udhampur. In the same year, Awantipora district's lone case accounted for Kashmir's total dowry deaths.

As per National Crime Records Bureau's (NCRB) 2019 and 2018 report, J&K had reported 8 incidents of dowry deaths, claiming lives of 8 victims with a crime rate of 0.1 percent which itself substantiates that there has been a noticeable increase in cases of dowry deaths in J&K as compared to previous years. In 2016, the numbers were as low as six dowry deaths across J&K.

Notably, J&K had recorded a 15% increase in cognizable crimes in 2020 compared to **More on P6**

626 More Test Positive As Cases Spike

Observer News Service

Srinagar: The daily Coronavirus cases witnessed another spike in Jammu and Kashmir on Tuesday, as 626 more people tested positive for Covid-19 while no fresh fatality was reported from the Union Territory during the last 24 hours.

According to the officials, Kashmir Valley with **More on P6**

detected 512 fresh cases of novel Coronavirus while 114 others were registered from various districts of Jammu division, taking the total number of people infected since the onset of pandemic in J&K to 470827.

In the Valley, they said, Srinagar reported the highest 167 new cases of virus followed by Baramulla

with **More on P6**

Srinagar Acid Attack

Survivor Identifies Kingpin, Records Statement

Press Trust Of India

Srinagar: A Srinagar woman, attacked with acid for rejecting a marriage proposal on February 1, has identified the main accused in the case Sajjad Ahmed Rather in a court here and recorded her statement, officials and her lawyer said on Tuesday.

Accompanied by her parents and friends, the woman appeared before the court on Monday at 11.30 am and was subjected to exhaustive cross-examination by the defence lawyers which continued till 4.30 pm, her lawyer Mir Naveed Gul said.

The woman was undergoing treatment at an eye hospital in Chennai. She appeared before the court to record her statement as a witness and identify Rather as the person who threw acid on her face, the officials said.

Gul said the woman was one of the prosecution witnesses mentioned in the charge sheet, filed by the police within three weeks of the incident that took place in downtown Srinagar city.

"We plan to get some more witnesses mentioned in the charge sheet, after which the prosecution will place its final argument. We have been hoping for speedy justice," the lawyer said.

The Jammu and Kashmir Police had filed a 1,000-page charge sheet against three people -- Rather and Mohammad Saleem Kumar, alias Tota, and a juvenile. The police have prayed for the juvenile to be treated as an adult as per the amended Juvenile Justice (Care and Protection of Children) Act, wherein youngsters in the age group of 16-18 can be tried under the Indian Penal Code (IPC) if they **More on P6**



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(through Video Conference)

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Minister of Petroleum and Natural Gas & Housing and Urban Affairs, Govt. of India

Shri Rameswar Teli
Minister of State for Petroleum and Natural Gas & Labour and Employment, Govt. of India

Shri Sanjay Bhatia
Member of Parliament

Wednesday, 10th August 2022, 4.30 pm

To watch the live webcast please log in to

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The above program's live telecast can be watched on 'DD News channel'





Study Finds Education With Goal-Oriented Activities Encourages Students To Opt Fruits And Vegetables



ANI

Consuming fast food and meals away from home is linked to an increase in adult obesity; this unhealthy eating habit is frequently formed during the crucial period of early adulthood. According to a study, weekly food challenges and cooking demonstration videos helped college students feel more confident about making healthy food choices and consume more fruits and vegetables. The findings of the research were published in the 'Journal of Nutrition Education and Behavior'. College students comprise a large portion of the young adult population, and national data suggest that college students' diets are high in overall fat intake and inadequate in key food groups such as low-fat dairy, whole grains, fruits, and deep yellow and green vegetables.

"Barriers to healthy eating for this group include a lack of nutrition and culinary knowledge, financial instability, inadequate access to healthy food options, and time," according to Carol O'Neal, PhD, Department of Health and Sports Science, University of Louisville, Louisville, KY, USA. Traditional college nutrition programs tend to focus on knowledge acquisition and nutrition assessment skills. Studies found that traditional nutrition classes increased nutrition knowledge but did not change dietary behaviour. Research shows that knowledge and nutrition assessment skills should be supplemented with behavioural self-efficacy to prompt lifestyle changes. "Nutrition education programs grounded in Social Cognitive Theory are particularly effective in changing dietary behaviour because of their focus on self-efficacy and behaviour-oriented programmatic elements," said Dr O'Neal.

The pilot study examined a 15-week intervention incorporating food challenges and instructional cooking videos into a nutrition course that promoted changes in cooking attitudes, cooking and nutrition self-efficacy, and college students' fruit and vegetable consumption outcomes. Course enrollment included both in-person and online students who were taught by the same instructor. Students participated in at-home food challenges that aligned with each week's instructional topic. Guided goal setting, instead of self-set goals, was used as a pedagogical tool to support course learning outcomes and to help students learn how to translate general goals into specific and measurable goals. Students tracked their progress by writing weekly reflections.

By comparing surveys taken at the start and end of the semester, the intervention was associated with increased confidence in using fruits and vegetables in cooking and increased consumption of fruit and vegetables. Cooking attitudes remained positive throughout the study, suggesting that students signing up for a college nutrition course may already be interested in healthy cooking.

"The study's outcome, which incorporated both in-person and online learning, demonstrates the ability to successfully connect with students attending an online course and has important implications for nutrition educators," Dr O'Neal concluded.

Penguins Adapt Their Voices To Sound Like Their Companions: New Study

The Conversation

We've all known a friend who came back from holiday with a French lilt in their accent. Or noticed an American twang creeping into our voice during dinner with a friend visiting from Texas.

One of us (Luigi) recently moved back to Italy from the UK, along with four-year-old daughter Emma who could barely speak Italian.

Over the months she spoke more in Italian. But to our surprise, her accent and intonation sounded like those of her school friends rather than her family.

She wasn't trying to sound more like her friends. Her voice became similar to theirs simply as a result of chattering away with them so often.

Our recent study showed penguins do this too and that the ability to vary your voice is more widespread across the animal kingdom than scientists thought.

This phenomenon, known as social accommodation, is common in humans. The more two people talk with each other, the more alike aspects of our voices can become.

Their voices accommodate each other. The ability of our voices to change in response to our environment is vital for learning new sounds, words, and languages at any age.



The way Luigi's young daughter's voice could change quickly and unconsciously got us thinking about whether other animals do the same. We study the cognitive abilities of a variety of animals, and in the last couple years Luigi has been working a lot with African penguins.

They are an ideal animal for researching social accommodation. African penguins form large colonies and have different types of relationships (with partners, colony-mates).

They also have a variety of calls which they use to communicate with each other constantly, including one that sounds like a braying donkey. Some animals such as parrots, whales, elephants and bats learn new sounds and songs from their parents, other members of their species, other species entirely, or even non-living sources of noise. Blackbirds do an uncanny im-

pression of a lorry reversing. The vast majority of animals can't learn new sounds and are born with a limited range of noises they can make.

However, growing evidence suggests some animals' call change in response to who they most interact with and that more animals can vary their sounds than previously thought.

African penguins' evolution split off more than 60 million years ago from all other birds that can learn new calls by observation. Penguins cannot learn new sounds and their vocalisations are genetically determined.

In our recent study, we analysed nearly three thousand penguin calls from three different colonies in zoos around Italy.

We first compared the calls of penguins that belonged to the same colony, including partners and colony-mates, versus those from different

colonies. We also studied the same penguins three years later.

Finally, we compared the closeness of partners' calls versus non-partners' calls. In all cases, we found that penguins who heard each other's calls more often had similar voices.

Our study suggests that the more penguins experience each other's calls, the more alike their calls become. And it shows even animals incapable of vocal learning can have flexible acoustics.

Penguins' calls were closer to those of their partners than to those of their colony mates three years before. This may be because of the special relationship between partners.

Knowalski, a male in the Zomarine Roma colony, lost his partner Marietta few years ago and we noticed that he was depressed for a while. Now he is cheekily trying to steal a female from other

males.

Emotions have a huge impact on voice and it can drive some convergence in animals. When partners call directly with each other, they may be in a special heightened emotional state, which could affect their voices.

African penguins also use a range of calls in different contexts. For example single penguin make contact calls when they can't see the colony.

Another study we carried out recently highlighted the remarkable cognitive skills of these seabirds. It showed penguins can not only recognise their partner from the sound of their voice but also could recognise their partner on sight even when the call of a different penguin was played.

We've really enjoyed working with these birds. They spend most of their time outside the water, and they seem absolutely unfit for dry land. Although they are excellent swimmers, they wobble so cutely and fall over their own feet often.

Worldwide, we have 18 species of penguins, some with millions of individuals. Others, like the African penguins have just a few thousand.

This species is in the red list of the IUCN (The International Union for Conservation of Nature) and classified as endangered. Their world population decreased by 98 per cent since 1900. Rapid action is needed to save them.

85% Of Indian Children Have Experienced Cyberbullying: Survey

Press Trust Of India

Around 85 per cent of Indian children have reported being cyberbullied as well as having cyberbullied someone else at rates well over twice the international average, according to a McAfee Cyberbullying report. Cyberbullying includes racism, trolling, personal attacks and sexual harassment, among others.

The survey was conducted between June 15 to July 5 covering 11,687 parents and their children across 10 countries. "Cyberbullying in India reaches alarming highs as more than 1 in 3 kids face

cyber racism, sexual harassment, and threats of physical harm as early as at the age of 10 - making India the number 1 nation for reported cyberbullying in the world," McAfee Chief Product Officer Gagan Singh said in the report. Indian children witness and experience the maximum cyberbullying on almost every social media and messaging platform.

"85 per cent of Indian children reported being cyberbullied as well as having cyberbullied someone else at rates well over twice the international average," the report said. "Indian children said that they are more likely to be cyberbullied by strangers

compared to other children around the world, at 70 per cent in India versus 45 per cent worldwide," it added. Besides, 45 per cent of Indian children said they hide their cyberbullying experiences from parents, perhaps due to the relative absence of conversation, the report said. According to Indian parents, 42 per cent of children have been the target of racist cyberbullying, strikingly 14 per cent higher than the rest of the world at 28 per cent.

"Extreme forms of cyberbullying reported besides racism include trolling (36 per cent), personal attacks (29 per cent), sexual harassment (30 per cent),

threat of personal harm (28 per cent) and doxing (23 per cent), all of these at almost double the global average," the report said.

India also reported prominent acts of cyberbullying such as spreading false rumors at 39 per cent, being excluded from groups and conversations (35 per cent) and name calling (34 per cent). "Indian children reported cyberbullying up to 1.5 times more than children in other countries across fourteen surveyed platforms, ranging from Facebook and Instagram to Snapchat and WhatsApp. The one exception is TikTok, which remains banned in India," the report said.

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Electrical-Operation & Maintenance of sub-station	12.08.2022 14.00 Hrs.
ARC – Supply of Hydrochloric Acid	16.08.2022 14.00 Hrs.
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Omar Visits Refreshment Camp At Alamgari Bazar

Observer News Service

Srinagar: Vice President of National Conference and former Chief Minister of J&K Omar Abdullah visited the refreshment distribution camp at Alamgari Bazar here on Ashura.

The camp was organised by JKNC. Omar lauded the efforts of the party's local unit functionaries led by Chief Spokesperson Tanvir Sadiq for the service to devotees.

On the occasion he participated in voluntary services at the camp and distributed water and other edibles to mourners. He said that the

best tribute to Hazrat Imam Aali Maqam (AS) is to keep his message of social justice alive at all levels. "Hazrat Imam Hussain (AS) practiced courage in standing up against evil and never gave up his human virtues for the sake of furthering his cause based on very fundamental principles of humanity, justice, and equality. Imam Hussain (AS) and his revered companions displayed the greatest morals. This unwavering patience of Imam Aali Maqam (AS), his revered companions and associates displayed their desire for honour and dignity," he said.

ADGP Kumar Joins Ashura Procession



Observer News Service

Srinagar: Paying tribute to Karbala martyrs, Additional Director General of Police (ADGP), Vijay Kumar, said that all the security related arrangements were already put in place for Ashura. "I appeal to the people to follow the path of Karbala martyrs," he said.

About providing water and other stuff during Ashura, Kumar said that it is the duty

of police and as such has been taking part in such activities and will continue to do so.

"ADGP Kashmir Shri Vijay Kumar along with SSP Srinagar & other officers participated in the 10th Muharram procession marking the martyrdom anniversary of Hazrat Imam Hussain (AS) & also held the Shabih e Zuljanah of Imam Hussain (AS) today in Zadibal Srinagar," Kashmir Zone Police tweeted



Thousands of people participated in the Ashura procession in the Zadibal locality of the city on Tuesday. KO Photo Abid Bhat.

Tertiary Care Hospitals In City Overburdened

Agencies

Srinagar: Despite multiple efforts from the authorities, tertiary hospitals in Srinagar continue to be overburdened with patients who can be treated at primary health centres.

Doctors working at tertiary hospitals in Srinagar said that there is a surge in patients as people directly reach tertiary hospitals instead of following a procedure of going to primary health centre or sub-district hospital.

A senior doctor at GMC Srinagar said that with almost everyone in Kashmir having their own vehicle, patients rush to tertiary care hospitals for

treatment. According to him, the majority of these patients can be easily managed at a PHC, SDH or district hospital.

He said that it puts pressure on infrastructure as well as manpower and often delays treatment to patients in need.

Another doctor from GMC Srinagar said that whenever they ask them about referral slips, they say they came on their own.

"The need of the hour is to develop more infrastructure and deploy more doctors at peripheral health institutions so that it can develop trust among patients so that they can prefer treatment for minor ailments there," he said.

Meanwhile, an official at SMHS Hospital Srinagar said that over 82,000 new patients were seen in OPDs in July 2022. He said that with revisits ranging around 40% (35-45%), the OPD footfall reaches over 1.20 lakh in a month.

Among new patients, around 33 thousand patients visited General Medicine OPD and 17,600 attended General Surgery, around 11500 patients had consultation in ENT OPD while over 11000 new patients consulted the dermatology department, 3400 patients attended Ophthalmology OPD and rest visited Oncology, Pain Clinic, SPM Clinics (Anti Rabies, Under Fives and UPHC). (KNO)

Admin Rolls Out Public Participation Programme As Part Of Azadi Ka Amrit Mahotsav

Observer News Service

Srinagar: With an aim to inspire the young generation to march towards nation building activities, the District Administration Sringar has rolled out a massive public participation programme as part of Azadi ka Amrit Mahotsav to celebrate the 75 years of Independence of the country.

In this regard, the Deputy Commissioner Srinagar, Mohammad Aijaz Asad has asked all the District and sectoral Officers to showcase the achievements and contributions of their respective Departments towards public welfare and nation building to commemorate 75 years of Independence.

The DC has enjoined upon the officers to make open before public major achievements in the nation building from August 10 to August 15, 2022 by highlighting glorious history, culture and other achievements. This will

involve several public outreach events.

The officers were also asked to kickstart the activities on a massive scale as per the schedule during the AKAM week and submit the action taken report regarding the activities held by August 16.

All the Departments including Education, ICDS, PHE, R&B, UEED, I&FC, RDD Health, Revenue, Agriculture, Horticulture, Social Welfare, SMC, Employment and other Departments were asked to highlight 75 major achievements, public services and development projects besides identifying 75 beneficiaries under different schemes being carried out for public Welfare during August 10 to August 15, 2022.

The DC said Azadi ka Amrit Mahotsav is being celebrated as a public festival (Jan Otsov) in the spirit of Public participation (Jan Bhagidari) with an aim to infuse nation building enthusiasm among the masses.

PUBLIC NOTICE

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HIGHWAY STATUS

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



HIJRI CALENDAR

11 Muharram
1444

PRAYERS

FAJR	4 :14
ZUHR	12:37
ASR	5:26
Magrib	7:29
ISHA	9: 00

This Day In History

- 610 - In Islam, the traditional date of the Laylat al-Qadr, when Muhammad began to receive the Qur'an
- 1461 - Alfonso ed Espina, bishop of Osma urges for an Inquisition in Spain
- 1500 - Portuguese sea captain Diego Diaz is first European to sight Madagascar
- 1664 - Austria and the Ottoman Empire sign the Peace of Vásvár
- 1678 - Netherlands & France sign peace treaty in Nijmegen
- 1774 - 1st Surinam newspaper (1st Wednesday Suriname) begins publishing
- 1776 - American Revolutionary War: word of the United States Declaration of Independence reaches London.
- 1809 - Ecuador declares independence from Spain (National Day)
- 1822 - Antioch Syria, hit by Earthquake; about 20,000 die
- 1869 - O B Brown patents moving picture projector
- 1913 - 2nd Balkan War ends, Treaty of Bucharest, Bulgaria loses
- 1914 -German battle cruiser Goeben reaches Dardanelen/Turkey joins Germany
- 1914 - German troops reconquer Mulhouse in Elzas
- 1914 - WWI: French fall back at Alsace
- 1916 - Turks annex Persian city Hamadan from Russia
- 1920 - Allies recognize Poland, Czechoslovakia & Romania
- 1920 - Treaty of Sèvres (Allies & Turkey)
- 1920 - Turkish government renounces its claim to Israel, recognizes British mandate
- 1926 - Italian-Spanish peace treaty signed
- 1943 - Hitler watches lynching of allied pilots
- 1944 - Battle for Guam ends, US troops recapture Guam from the Japanese
- 1945 - Japan announces willingness to surrender to Allies provided status of Emperor Hirohito remained unchanged
- 1960 - Discoverer 13 launched into orbit; returned 1st object from space
- 1961- UK applies for membership of the European Common Market

From KO Archives

Police 'Captures' Militant In 'Reel' Life Drama

Observer News Service

Srinagar- The police was today accused of having staged action-packed drama, complete with heavy aerial firing in a busy market in Bandipora to convey an impression that it had arrested a dreaded militant. Reports from the area said that the two police Gypsies screeched to a halt near the Royal Sweets Hotel in Gulshan Chowk at around 2: 45 p.m., and their uniformed and armed occupants leapt out and began to shoot their weapons into the air. The gun fire created commotion in the market, with people rushing for cover. Locals said that the policemen brought an armed youth out of one of the Gypsies, set him on the run, and began to pursue him. After a "respectable" distance had been covered, the cops pounced on the youth, and put him back in the vehicle. A satisfactory day's work done, the policemen drove away from the scene. Locals said that the youth Bilal Ahmad Dar of Lankreshpora is a militant and the police took him away, adding that the farce about his arrest was played for the benefit of the public. The police, however, said that a squad was passing through the Bandipora market when it came across a Hizb commander, Bilal Ahmad Dar and opened fire on him. According to the police, several personnel chased the militant and managed to collar him. They said that a weapon had been recovered from him.

(Kashmir Observer, August 10, 2000)

KASHMIR
OBSERVER

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K O V I E W

Kashmir's
changing weather

Kashmir weather has been erratic this spring and summer. Beginning March, which was exceptionally hot with temperature crossing 29 degrees, the summer has been warm. In between the temperature has plunged steeply, creating uncertainty about the ripening of crops. The rainfalls, hailstorms and flash floods have been on the rise. Fifteen Amarnath Yatra pilgrims lost their lives in July after a cloudburst hit near the Holy Amarnath cave triggering flash floods. Now a recent study has indicated that changing precipitation pattern may have a negative impact on the environment that will have a deep impact on the Valley's food security and ecological sustainability.

Last week, the Reconstituted Committee of Climate Change Program of the Department of Science and Technology (DST) held a dialogue on climate change at the University of Kashmir to take stock of the changing weather in the Valley. Scientists who attended the event stressed the need for climate change adaptation and climate change mitigation. Mitigation, they said, is possible if we take measures such as reducing the emission of greenhouse gases into the atmosphere. At the same time, the creeping climate change has left us no option but to adapt to it.

In recent years, the Indian subcontinent has experienced the detrimental fallout of climate change. India, Pakistan and Bangladesh between them are home to around 1.7 billion people and any disruption in the climate pattern could severely impact them. So, the three countries, as well as other countries in the region need to wake up and work toward a global response to the looming catastrophe.

To be sure, India has supported global action and initiatives to combat climate change. Addressing the COP26 summit at Glasgow earlier this year, Prime Minister Narendra Modi said 'one sun, one world, one grid' can be crucial to re-establishing the environmental balance.

The COP26, in turn, followed the grim report by an UN-appointed panel that warned of the far-reaching effects of climate change if no immediate measures were taken to remedy the damage already done. The report caused a global alarm after its release.

There is thus an urgent need for the world to come together and take remedial measures to pre-empt the catastrophe. In Kashmir too, climate change has led to considerable changes in weather patterns. Triggering alarm bells is the slowly shrinking glaciers that are the source of the Valley's water bodies. But the factors causing climate change are global in nature and so any effort to reverse the damage has to be backed by the world. And this should be done sooner than later. Time is running out fast.

O T H E R O P I N O N

Centre with States

While the ruling dispensation repeatedly declares its commitment to cooperative federalism, it is hard to dispute the notion that increasing political centralisation over the years has widened and deepened the faultlines in Centre-state relations. The manner in which the PM's recent comments over subsidies framed the debate — juxtaposing the Centre's model of "new welfarism" against "freebies" given by states — illustrates the deepening of fissures.

There is an element of half-truth in the government's assertions. Take, for instance, the Covid vaccination programme. During the early days of the second wave of the pandemic, the Centre shifted the onus of procurement and distribution of vaccines onto the states. It was only after much criticism, and a nudge from the Supreme Court, that the central government reversed its earlier decision. Similarly, during the early days of the pandemic, there was considerable disagreement between the Centre and the states on GST compensation — the issue remains a sore point between the two. It was only after considerable pushback from the states that the Centre relented, borrowing to ensure that the promise made to states to protect their revenues was kept.

At the same time, it is also true that on several, critical economic policy issues, despite much prodding by the Centre, states have stuck to status quoist positions. For instance, over the years, the Centre has not only helped ease the financial stress on state-owned power distribution companies, but has also repeatedly incentivised states to fix the mess in the distribution segment, to turn around the financial and operational position of discoms. However, across states, not much headway has been made. Similarly, on various other critical reform areas which lie in the domain of the states, labour reforms for instance, progress has been glacial. And on GST, notwithstanding public posturing for political gains, all decisions are taken by the Council where states can openly voice their concerns, and put forth their demands. States, when making other demands on the Centre, such as a legal guarantee for minimum support prices, must also realise their fiscal implications and consequences for the larger economy. Be that as it may, at this critical juncture in Centre-state relations, it is incumbent upon both to widen spaces for dialogue and negotiation.

Indian Express

Countering Headwinds
Against Democracy



Newly-appointed USAID Administrator Samantha Power. (Photo| AP)

Asad Mirza

In meetings with civil society representatives, she stressed the need to discuss freedom of expression, speech, identity, and the importance of protecting the rights of minority groups

On her recent visit to India, USAID Administrator Samantha Power observed that "headwinds" against democratic rule are "strong" across the world currently, and that there are forces in India and the United States "who seek to sow division... pit ethnicities and religions against one another... bend laws and abuse institutions".

During her three-days visit to India last week, the USAID Administrator Samantha Power met with civil society representatives in Delhi besides External Affairs Minister S. Jaishankar, Principal Secretary to the PM, P.K. Mishra and Foreign Secretary Vinay Kwatra.

In meetings with civil society representatives, she stressed the need to discuss freedom of expression, speech, identity, and the importance of protecting the rights of minority groups. Commenting on the meetings, acting spokesperson of USAID Shejal Pulivarti said that Ms Power underscored the United States' continued commitment to work with civil society organisations around the globe to advance human rights and fundamental freedoms.

Ms Power addressing an event at IIT-Delhi opined that the headwinds against democratic rule are growing strong the world over. She further said that within the United States and India, there are forces who seek to sow division, who seek to pit ethnicities and religions against one another, who wish to bend laws, abuse institutions and wield violence against those who stand in their way; we saw this, of course, on January 6 in the United States last year... How the United States and India rise to meet these injustices, how fiercely we protect our hard-won pluralism, how insistently we defend our democracy and individual rights will determine not just our own trajectory, but also that of the world that we inhabit.

US-India Development Model

She also said that USA and India together, can offer the emerging countries, the emerging economies of the future a new development model, one rooted not in debt traps and dependence but in economic trade and integration, one that supports and celebrates individual and national agency, and one that aspires to see all countries move beyond the need for assistance.

Elaborating the model, she described it as a model predicated on

engaging with a country's citizens and civil society, just as willingly as it does with its government. One that treats others as equals and collaborates on solutions without preconceptions or stereotypes, which recognises that democracy, inclusivity and pluralism offer the surest path to sustainable progress, where dignity is not reserved for the few but endowed to us all, one that is rooted in cooperation, not small-minded but big-hearted, which at its core, believes that we are all one family.

In a reference to highlight the growing importance of India for the US, particularly in the Indo-Pacific region, she said that the US sees India not just as a leader in the Indo-Pacific but a leader throughout the world. She further said that India, with its talent, resources and technological expertise, could contribute massively to the development trajectory of many countries. Also, what has positioned India, as a future development leader has not been its assets but its values. It has been India's multi-ethnic, multi-party democracy that has allowed it to withstand the challenges it has faced and come out ahead stronger and more resilient. It has been its support for free expression over decades that has allowed injustices to come to light. It has been its tolerance for diversity and dissent that has allowed reforms to take hold and institutions to progress. India's trajectory has been so strong because of its democracy.

India as a Regional Leader

Power also lauded India's help to Sri Lanka, and contrasted it with China. She mentioned how India wrote off debts of poor countries like Ghana, Mozambique, Tanzania, Uganda and Zambia in 2003. Perhaps nowhere is India's commitment to those in peril more on display than right now in Sri Lanka. India has reacted really swiftly with an absolutely critical set of measures, facilitating \$3.5 billion in lines of credit to the government of Sri Lanka, in its hour of abject need.

Contrasting the Indian approach with China, she said that China has been an increasingly eager creditor of the Sri Lankan government since the mid-2000s, offering often opaque loan deals at higher interest rates than other lenders and financing a raft of headline-grabbing infrastructure projects with often questionable practical use for Sri Lankans, such as a massive port that generated

little income and was barely used by ships, an equally massive airport, dubbed the emptiest in the world because it attracted so few passengers, and the country's tallest tower that was built as a tourist attraction, but has never, unfortunately been opened to the public.

Sri Lanka's economic crisis and pressing global challenges such as food security and climate change figured prominently in Power's talks with her Indian interlocutors.

Ms. Pulivarti said the aim of the meetings was to reinforce the U.S. and India's long history as strategic partners and collaborators across development issues, including food security, climate change, and adaptation through mechanisms such as the Coalition for Disaster Resilient Infrastructure and digital development.

Ms. Power also joined Indian agricultural experts and private sector leaders to learn how the U.S. and India can apply climate-smart and sustainable solutions to address the global food security crisis, which is further "exacerbated" by Russia's invasion of Ukraine.

All countries including India and the U.S. need to hold Russia to the terms of the grain exports deal, she said. The grain agreement, brokered by the U.N. and Turkey and aimed at averting a global food crisis, was signed on 22 July to primarily facilitate the export of around 20 million tonnes of wheat, maize and other grains from Ukraine.

In toto, Ms Power's visit touched upon all those issues which India wants to engage on with the U.S. administration, in addition to issues like human and minority, to which continuing U.S. administrations have attached great importance and kept an eye on. However, most important is the action to get these details reflected in the talks between political leaders of the two countries and if they are reflected and acted upon even half way through the U.S.-India ties can be transformed, with both countries benefiting from each other's support and efforts.

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 M.lims, educational, international affairs, interfaith and current affairs



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Welcome Suggestions on Ring Road

This refers to suggestions made by Dr Raja Muzaffar through his article published on 8.08.2022 in Kashmir Observer. Raja Muzaffar has given a practical solution to the National Highways Authority of India and LG Administration to use waste plastic for construction of Srinagar

Ring Road. The plastic material is already used across India and more than 1 lakh kms of roads have been constructed in different states which includes 750 kms of highways as well. He has also suggested excavating the Muck & Silt from the flood spill channel from Rambagh to Narbal and Wular lake area. This material can be

used to fill the highway surface.

As of now the Wodder (Karewas) of Budgam and Pulwama are being looted by an organised mafia who sell the material to contractors given the Ring Road project. A huge amount of clay is carried in huge trucks on a daily basis in Khanda, Kuzvera areas of Budgam. The muck is also exca-

vated from Doodh Ganga and many other water bodies. If the suggestions are given a thought by experts we can definitely decongest the Achan landfill site and Karewas and nallahs will also be safeguarded.

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SOCIAL MEDIA

DISSOCIATION NOT ADDICTION

Jo Adetunji

In the early days of the COVID-19 pandemic, I had an unfortunate Saturday routine. I would wake up in my studio apartment and immediately turn to my phone, telling myself that I would get breakfast after quickly checking Twitter.

An hour or so later, I would look up and realize what time it was – and how ravenous I’d become. I had become totally absorbed in looking at memes, snark and the 24 hour news cycle.

This experience sparked an idea: What if, instead of people becoming “addicted” to social media – as users often characterize their excessive engagement – they’re actually dissociating, or becoming so engaged that they lose track of time?

I’ve researched people’s social media use for four years as a Ph.D. student at the University of Washington, and my collaborators and I decided to design a study to test this theory.

What is dissociation?

Many researchers think dissociation occurs on a spectrum. On one end, there is the kind of dissociation that is spurred by trauma and associated with PTSD flashbacks.

Then there are common, everyday experiences of dissociation, which involve attention being limited to a narrow range of experience. Everyday dissociation can be passive or active. Spontaneous daydreaming is a form of passive dissociation, while reading a book is an example of active dissociation. In both cases, you can become so immersed in a fantasy or story that time falls away and you lose track of your surroundings. You might not be able to hear someone calling your name from another room.

Dissociation is part of healthy cognitive functioning, as mind-wandering helps you learn, and combating stress through deeply engaging in hobbies can boost your mood.

What does dissociation look like online?

When online, however, dissociation can reflect zombie-like behavior – scrolling for hours without realizing it, not being aware to one’s



surroundings while scrolling, or scrolling on autopilot and then realizing you haven’t actually paid any attention to what you’ve read. Have you ever seen someone so absorbed in their phone that they start walking across a street, oblivious to oncoming traffic? They’re likely dissociating.

Typically, behavior like this is classified as smartphone or internet addiction.

However, researchers have begun to push back against the narrative of addiction to describe excessive smartphone use, explaining that the behavior – even if it’s a source of distress – should not be considered addiction if it’s better explained by an underlying disorder, is a willful choice, or is part of a coping strategy.

I am of the belief that choosing to play Candy Crush for three hours a day is not necessarily “addiction.” I do, however, think that the complete disconnect people experience from their surroundings and sense of time passing is an

interesting phenomenon to explore. Therefore, I wanted to understand if people are dissociating during their phone use.

In our study, we recruited volunteers to use a custom mobile app alternative to Twitter, called Chirp. Forty-three people used Chirp for four weeks, cycling through four different design interventions, coupled with in-app surveys. We then selected 11 of them to interview about the experience.

We found dissociation occurred in nearly half of our participants, and they often expressed a sense of disappointment afterwards, saying that they would have rather have engaged in a different activity with the amount of time they had spent online. However, some said their time on social media was meaningful to them, and the fact that they were connecting with real people was valuable, even as they dissociated.

Cultivating online agency

“WHEN ONLINE, HOWEVER, DISSOCIATION CAN REFLECT ZOMBIE-LIKE BEHAVIOR – scrolling for hours without realizing it, not being aware to one’s surroundings while scrolling, or scrolling on autopilot and then realizing you haven’t actually paid any attention to what you’ve read. Have you ever seen someone so absorbed in their phone that they start walking across a street, oblivious to oncoming traffic?”

Understanding social media overuse as a by-product of dissociation, rather than addiction, can help destigmatize social media use while empowering users. This framing also helps explain why social media sits in a paradoxical position: people have frustrating relationships with social media platforms that they are simultaneously unwilling to quit.

Seeking escape from the present moment through deep absorption – including absorption in social media – is a natural, common, and often beneficial thing to do. However, when users spend much more time dissociating online than they would have consciously chosen for themselves, they become frustrated and conflicted. And many social media platforms exploit this tendency by keeping people “on the hunt” for new content through algorithmic design.

This suggests that it is possible for users to have healthy and satisfying relationships with social media – even when dissociating is

involved – if the platforms can also help their users disengage.

How design can reduce dissociation

In our study, we deployed several interventions to help pause or reduce dissociation while scrolling on Chirp. One intervention that was particularly effective was requiring our participants to sort their content into lists by topic – say, news, sports and reality TV – rather than having all subjects appear as an avalanche of information on one main feed. People could then click different tabs to view their lists. We found that many users would only scroll through one or two tabs before exiting the app.

We paired this intervention with a “reading history” label that informed our users when they were “all caught up” with previously viewed tweets. Participants said that this helped them feel more in control and less likely to lose track of time.

Of course, many current social media companies, such as TikTok, rely on algorithmically-determined, constantly updating content. Similarly, on Instagram and Twitter, popular and trending content gets inserted into a feed of followed content. This makes it impossible to ever get “all caught up.”

In these cases, past research shows that many people would appreciate reminders to log off before 30 minutes of use. Otherwise they become disappointed with the time they’ve spent. These reminders could be inserted into regular content, which is something TikTok already does.

Users can do this for themselves by becoming familiar with the suite of digital well-being tools at their disposal. Viewing usage page statistics and setting timeouts is already available across many sites, although many of these settings are turned off by default.

However when more people use these tools, it signals to the companies that they should continue to invest time and resources into developing them.

By arrangements with The Conversation

The American Scam

Tim Kreider

Ten years ago, I wrote an essay called “The Busy Trap,” about the curse of “busyness” that seemed endemic at the time. The treadmill had been imperceptibly increasing its speed for a while, and people were nervously starting to notice. As happens with a lot of unavoidable evils, they tried to rebrand their frantic busyness as a virtue. “Busy – so busy, crazy busy,” was the answer you got whenever you asked how they were. I came out, in my essay, as anti-busy; I advocated idling, daydreaming, hanging out and goofing off. My conclusion: “Life is too short to be busy.”

I guess a lot of other people had been thinking the same thing. For a few days, that essay was the thing everyone linked to, reposted and emailed. Other writers got paid to write responses to it. Someone even “debunked” it, as though it were a fake Bigfoot film. Entrepreneurial self-help gurus cited it and invited me to conferences. “The Colbert Report” even called, but I was unreachable in the Idaho panhandle at my friend Carolyn’s anniversary party, for which my agent has never really forgiven me. (Meg, I am sorry; Carolyn, I blame you; Mr. Colbert, I am still available.)

A decade later, people aren’t trying to sell busyness as a virtue anymore, not even to themselves. A new generation has grown to adulthood that’s never known capitalism as a functioning economic system. My generation, X, was the first postwar cohort to be downwardly mobile, but millennials were the first to know it going in. Our country’s oligarchs forgot to maintain the crucial Horatio Alger fiction that anyone can get ahead with hard work – or maybe they just dropped it, figuring we no longer had any choice. Through the internet, we could peer enviously at our neighbors in civilized countries, who get monthlong vacations, don’t have to devote decades to paying for their college degrees, and aren’t terrified of going broke if they get sick. To young people, America seems less like a country than an inescapable web of scams, and “hard work” less like a virtue than a propaganda slogan, inane as “just say no.”

The pandemic was the bomb cyclone of our discontents; it not only gave all us non-essential workers an experience of mandatory sloth – which, for many, turned out

to be not altogether unpleasant – but also dredged up a lakeful of long-submerged truths. It turns out that millions of people never actually needed to waste days of their lives sitting in traffic or pantomime “work” under managerial scrutiny eight hours a day. We learned that nurses, cashiers, truckers and delivery people (who’ve always been too busy to brag about it) actually ran the world and the rest of us were mostly useless supernumeraries. The brutal hierarchies of work shifted, for the first time in recent memory, in favor of labor, and the outraged whines of former social Darwinists were a pleasure to savor.

Of course, everyone is still busy – worse than busy, exhausted, too wiped at the end of the day to do more than stress-eat, binge-watch and doomscroll – but no one’s calling it anything other than what it is anymore: an endless, frantic hamster wheel for survival.

You’ve seen all the headlines about the Great Resignation – “Gen Z and Millennials Would Rather Be Unemployed Than Unhappy in a Job,” Business Insider reported, nervously. Even the youth of China are embracing the virtues of sloth, with the lying-flat and sang movements. On YouTube, the faux guru Self-Help Singh exhorts, “Do nothing.” Millions are now pursuing what a punk guitarist I know called “the C-minus lifestyle.” And it’s no longer just a subcultural rumble: Companies in Britain are now experimenting with a four-day workweek.

I think people are enervated not just by the Sisyphean pointlessness of their individual labors but also by the fact that they’re working in and for a society in which, increasingly, they have zero faith or investment. The future their elders are preparing to bequeath to them is one that reflects the fondest hopes of the same ignorant bigots a lot of them fled their hometowns to escape. American conservatism, which is demographically terminal and knows it, is acting like a moribund billionaire adding sadistic codicils to his will.

More young people are opting not to have kids not only because they can’t afford them but also because they assume they’ll have only a scorched or sodden wasteland to grow up in. An increasingly popular retirement plan is figuring civilization will collapse before you have to worry about it. I’m not sure anyone’s composed a more eloquent epitaph

for the planet than the stand-up comedian Kath Barbadoro, who tweeted: “It’s pretty funny that the world is ending and we all just have to keep going to our little jobs lol.”

Midcentury science fiction writers assumed that the increased productivity brought on by mechanization would give workers an oppressive amount of leisure time, that our greatest threats would be boredom and ennui. But these authors’ prodigious imaginations were hobbled by their humanity and rationality; they’d forgotten that the world is ordered not by reason or decency but by rapacious avarice.

In the actual dystopian future we now inhabit, the oligarchs have realized they can work everyone harder, pay them less, eliminate benefits, turn every human institution from medicine to corrections into a racket, charge far more for basic rights and services than people in any other nation would stand for without revolting, and get rich beyond the penny ante dreams of a Carnegie or Astor.



In the past few decades, capitalism has exponentially increased the creation of wealth for the already incredibly wealthy at the negligible expense of the well-being, dignity and happiness of most of humanity, plus the nominal cost of a mass extinction and the destruction of the biosphere – like cutting out the inefficient business of digestion and metabolism by pouring a fine bottle of wine directly into the toilet, thereby eliminating the middleman of you.

Everyone knows how productive you can be when you’re avoiding something. We are currently experiencing the civilizational equivalent of that anxiety you feel when you have something due the next day that you haven’t even started thinking about and yet still you sit there, helplessly watching whole seasons of mediocre TV or compulsively clicking through quintillions of memes even as your brain screams at you – the same way we scream at our politicians about guns and abortion and climate change – to do something.

I once watched in awe as my girlfriend, who’d been lying inert on the couch, hypnotized with dread of whatever she had to do next, roused herself by intoning, “One, two, three” – and on “three,” immediately got up and swung into action.

I have a shameful confession to make: Secretly, I am not lazy. I’ve learned that if I do literally nothing for more than a year, two at most, I start to get depressed. I’m not recanting my old manifesto. I still hope to make it to my grave without ever getting a job job – showing up for eight or more hours a day to a place with fluorescent lighting where I’m expected to feign bushido devotion to a company that could fire me tomorrow and someone’s allowed to yell at you but you’re not allowed to yell back.

But once I become genuinely engaged in a project, I can become fanatically absorbed, spending hundreds of hours on it, no matter how useless and unremunerative. As a teacher, I edit my students’ writing with a nit-picking precision and big-picture ambition they may likely never experience again. And I don’t believe most people are lazy. They would love to be fully, deeply engaged in something worthwhile, something that actually mattered, instead of forfeiting their limited hours on Earth to make a little more money for men they’d rather throw fruit at as they pass by in tumbrils.

It’s no coincidence that so many social movements arose during the enforced idleness of quarantine. One important function of jobs is to keep you too preoccupied and tired to do anything else. Grade school teachers called it “busywork” – pointless, time-wasting tasks to keep you from acting up and bothering them.

Enough with the busywork already. We’ve been “productive” enough – produced way too much, in fact. And there is too much that urgently needs to be done: a republic to salvage, a civilization to reimagine and its infrastructure to reinvent, innumerable species to save, a world to restore and millions who are impoverished, imprisoned, illiterate, sick or starving. All while we waste our time at work.

OK: one, two, three –

NYT Opinions

Hope Special Meeting On Counter-Terrorism To Be Held In India In October Further Strengthens Multilateral Efforts: UN official

Agenceis

United Nations: As India prepares to host UN Security Council members for a special meeting on counter-terrorism in October, a top UN official has expressed hope that the event will help further enhance and strengthen multilateral and multi-dimensional counterterrorism efforts.

India is currently the Chair of the Security Council Counter-Terrorism Committee for the year 2022 and will host diplomats of the 15-nation UN body, including the US, China and Russia, in October for a special meeting on counter-terrorism.

I would like to inform the Council of the forthcoming special meeting of the Counter-Terrorism Committee on the use of emerging technologies for terrorist purposes to be held from October 28th to 30th, 2022 in New Delhi and Mumbai, India, Acting Executive Director of the Counter-Terrorism Committee Executive Directorate Weixiong Chen said.

Speaking at the UN Security Council briefing on Threats to international peace and security caused by terrorist acts' Tuesday, Chen said it is my hope that this event will serve as a forum to further enhance and strengthen our multilateral and multi-dimensional counterterrorism efforts.

India is halfway through the second year of its two-year term as an elected non-permanent member of the 15-nation UN Security Council. India's tenure at the Council will end in December this year when the country will also preside as President of the powerful UN organ for the month.

Current members of the Security Council are Albania,

Brazil, Gabon, Ghana, India, Ireland, Kenya, Mexico, Norway and UAE, along with five permanent members China, France, Russia, the UK and the US.

Mindful of the increasing threat posed by the misuse of new and emerging technologies, the United Nations Security Council Counter-Terrorism Committee (CTC) has decided to hold a special meeting on this theme, with the support of its Executive Directorate (CTED), in India on October 29, 2022, according to information on the Committee's website.

It said the special meeting will specifically focus on three significant areas where emerging technologies are experiencing rapid development, growing used by Member States (including for security and counter-terrorism purposes), and the increasing threat of abuse for terrorism purposes, namely Internet and social media, terrorism financing, and unmanned aerial systems (UAS).

It is not very frequent that the Counter-Terrorism Committee meets outside of New York but the meeting in India will be the seventh time that this is happening. The most recent special meeting of the CTC outside of United Nations headquarters took place in Madrid, Spain, in July 2015, focusing on foreign terrorist fighters (FTFs).

The Committee said further that with the prevalence of technology and rapid rise in digitisation, the use of new and emerging technologies to counter-terrorism is a topic of growing interest among the Member States, policymakers and researchers, particularly in the context of the increasing role played by technology in terrorism and counter-terrorism.

Politician Who Abused, Assaulted Noida Woman Arrested, Sent To 14-Day Judicial Custody

Agenceis

Noida: Absconding politician Shrikant Tyagi was arrested Tuesday from Meerut and sent to 14-day judicial custody, officials said, days after he was seen in a video abusing and assaulting a woman for objecting to his alleged illegal constructions at a housing society here.

Three aides of Tyagi (34) were also arrested who provided support to him since he fled Noida Friday evening after the incident, and local police had announced a reward of Rs 25,000 on his arrest.

Additional Director General of the Uttar Pradesh Police (Law and Order) Prashant Kumar on the controversy surrounding security given to Tyagi by police said he had no such protection after February 2020.

In a press conference in Noida Tuesday evening, Police Commissioner Alok Singh said Tyagi along with his three associates was held around 10.30 am from Meerut bypass over an information about his possible movement to Gautam Buddh Nagar to surrender in the local court.

"Police had taken cognizance of the episode after the video surfaced on social media and has been pro-active in it. After an FIR was lodged in the case, a manhunt was launched to nab the accused," Singh said, stressing that the police have zero tolerance for crimes against women and children.

He said while escaping Tyagi first went to the airport in Delhi but by that time his video had gone viral and accordingly he changed his course of action.

After that he went to

Meerut, Muzaffarnar and then to Rishikesh and Haridwar in Uttarakhand over the next two days as he kept changing his locations, cars and devices, including mobile phones, to evade being tracked.

"Initially eight police teams were formed to nab Tyagi under the supervision of the nodal officer (woman safety) Additional DCP (Ankita Sharma) but later four more teams added to accomplish the task," Singh said.

"He even went outside UP borders to escape but our teams used human intelligence, technical intelligence to track him," the officer said.

"The main accused cleverly kept hiding and from time to time maintained radio silence, electronic silence in order to escape being tracked. But the police continued its efforts and the Noida police today arrested him from Meerut along with other support teams," he added.

The commissioner said five cars belonging to Tyagi and his wife have been impounded.

One of the cars even had a sticker which is given to MLAs of UP and had the symbol of the state government, all being illegally used by him.

"He also had a sticker on one of his vehicles which is given to honourable MLAs. Tyagi told police during questioning that this sticker was provided to him by his associate Swami Prasad Maurya," Singh said.

Maurya, who was a minister in the previous BJP government in the state, had quit the party just ahead of the Assembly earlier this year and joined the Samajwadi Party. Currently, he is a member of the state

legislative council from the Samajwadi Party.

On Tuesday evening, Tyagi was produced before remand magistrate Pradeep Kushwaha as the local court in Surajpur was closed on occasion of Muharram, according to a police official.

The remand magistrate sent him to 14-day judicial custody, the official added.

The official said police did not apply for the custody of Tyagi, who has been booked under the stringent Gangsters Act, among several other charges including assault, criminal intimidation and cheating.

Joint Commissioner (Law and Order) Love Kumar said Tyagi expressed remorse over the episode and admitted that his behaviour towards women was not good.

The other three accused have been identified as Rahul, who hails from Hapur, Nakul Tyagi from Baghpat, and Sanjay, a native of Firozabad.

Meanwhile, the DGP UP police announced a reward of Rs 1 lakh and the additional chief secretary (home) announced a reward of Rs 2 lakh for the Noida police team involved in the case.

Before the arrest, Tyagi's wife was once again detained for questioning, according to officials.

Tyagi, who was at large since Friday evening, had Monday moved a court in the Gautam Buddh Nagar district with a plea for surrender-related procedures. The hearing in the matter has been listed for August 10.

He moved the court plea soon after the Noida police declared him "absconding" and announced the reward on his arrest.

Taiwan Warns China Drills Show Ambitions Beyond Island

Agenceis

Pingtung (Taiwan): Taiwan warned Tuesday that Chinese military drills aren't just a rehearsal for an invasion of the self-governing island but also reflect ambitions to control large swaths of the western Pacific, as Taipei conducted its own exercises to underscore it's ready to defend itself.

Angered by U.S. House Speaker Nancy Pelosi's recent visit to Taiwan, China has sent military ships and planes across the midline that separates the two sides in the Taiwan Strait and launched missiles into waters surrounding the island. The drills, which began Thursday, have disrupted flights and shipping in one of the busiest zones for global trade.

Ignoring calls to calm tensions, Beijing instead extended the exercises without announcing when they will end.

Taiwanese Foreign Minister Joseph Wu said that beyond aiming to annex the island democracy, which split with the mainland amid civil war in 1949, China wants to establish its dominance in the western Pacific. That would include controlling of the East and South China Seas via the Taiwan Strait and imposing a blockade to prevent the U.S. and its allies from aiding Taiwan in the event of an attack, he told a news conference in Taipei.

The exercises show China's geostrategic ambition beyond Taiwan, which Beijing claims as its own territory, Wu said. China has no right to interfere in or alter Taiwan's democracy or its interactions with other nations, he added.

Wu's assessment of China's maneuvers was grimmer than that of other observers but echoed widespread concerns that Beijing is seeking to expand its influence in the Pacific, where the U.S. has military bases and extensive treaty partnerships.

China has said its drills were prompted by Pelosi's visit, but Wu said Beijing was using her trip as a pretext for intimidating moves long in the works.

China also banned some Taiwanese food imports after the visit and cut off dialogue with the U.S. on a range of issues from military contacts to combating transnational crime and climate change.

Pelosi also dismissed China's outrage as a public stunt, noting on NBC's Today show that nobody said a word about a Senate delegation a few visit months ago. Later on the MSNBC news network, she said Chinese President Xi Jinping was acting like a scared bully.

I don't think the president of China should control the schedules of members of Congress, she said.

Through its maneuvers, China has pushed closer to Taiwan's borders and may be seeking to establish a new normal in which it could eventually control access to the island's ports and airspace. But that would likely elicit a strong response from the military on the island, whose people strongly favor the status quo of de-facto independence.

The U.S., Taipei's main backer, has also shown itself to be willing to face down Beijing's threats. Washington has no formal diplomatic ties with Taiwan in deference to Beijing, but is legally bound to ensure the island can defend itself and to treat all threats against it as matters of grave concern.

CONTD. FROM FRONT PAGE

Ashura Observed

out in all districts across Kashmir.

The main Zuljanah procession in Srinagar which used to be taken out from Abi Guzar upto Zadibal before the outbreak of militancy remains banned ever since.

Biggest Ashura procession this year was taken out in downtown Srinagar in which thousands of mourners took part. The procession started from Gulshan Bagh, Madin Sahab and passed through different localities before culminating at the shrine of Mir Shams-uddin Araki in Zadibal interiors in the evening.

Mourners were seen carrying banners and chanting slogans in praise of Imam Hussain (AS) and his companions who sacrificed their lives at Karbala, some 1,400 years ago after refusing to give oath of allegiance to tyrant Umayyad ruler, Yazid.

Several volunteer groups had set up camps along the route of procession where hot and cold beverages were being served to mourners.

Besides, the Sunni Muslims also organized Ijtimas on the occasion in local Masjids here, during which the clerics threw light on the teachings of Imam Husain (AS) and also narrated the events of Karbala.

However, except near Abi Guzar locality, no restrictions were imposed anywhere in Srinagar today.

Senior officers of administration and police, including the Additional Director General of Police Kashmir Vijay Kumar along with SSP Srinagar Rakesh Balwal also participated in the procession in Zadibal.

"ADGP Kashmir Vijay Kumar along with SSP Srinagar & other officers participated in the 10th Muharram procession marking the martyrdom anniversary of Hazrat Imam Hussain (AS) & also held the Shahid e Zuljanah of Imam Hussain (AS) today in Zadibal Srinagar," police said in a tweet.

Former Chief Minister and National Conference (NC) Vice-President Omar Abdullah also visited Zadibal.

"Former Chief Minister of Jammu & Kashmir and @JKNC_Vice President @OmarAbdullah along with party Chief Spokesperson @tanvirisadiq distributes food items among the Shia mourners during the Ashura (10th Muharram) procession, at Zadibal in Srinagar," NC posted on its official Twitter handle.

In Valley, the Shia Muslims used to take out processions from several parts of uptown Srinagar on 8th and 10th Muharram that would culminate at Dalgate and the historic Zadibal Imambargah. However, after the onset of militancy, these two processions were banned in 1989 by the then Governor Jagmohan. Only small mourning rallies and processions are allowed in a few areas with sizable Shia populations since.

Authorities maintain that the ban on traditional processions has been taken in the larger public interest and

to foil attempts of numerous groups "to hijack the processions to advance their objectives"

Meanwhile, after Zadibal in Srinagar, the second major procession was taken out at Imambara of Mirgund and after passing through various lanes and by-lanes, it ended at the historic Imambargah of Budgam in central Kashmir.

A large procession was also taken from Babapora Magam which culminated at Ahmadpora in the Budgam.

Reports of Zuljinnah and Alam processions were also received from all districts of the valley including Dab Wakora (Ganderbal), Pattan, Qazipora in Baramulla district, Gongwa, Wakhwarwan, Chhatargul, Sallar and Devsar in South Kashmir.

Reports of Ashura processions were also received from Jammu including Pir Mitha Imam Bada and after passing through Lakhadata Bazar, Kanak Mandi, Rajinder Bazar and Shaheedi Chowk.

Ashura processions were also taken out in Ladakh's remote Turtuk, Partappora and Chushut. The biggest Ashura procession was reported from Kargil town where thousands of mourners participated in the procession.

Thousands assembled in Imambargah of Poyeen and took out a procession which moved through the main market of Kargil town with one ending at Islamia school Kargil and another at Youth Park Kargil.

PM Recalls Sacrifices

for his unwavering commitment to truth and his fight against injustice. He also placed great importance on equality and brotherhood." (PTI)

Restrictions Imposed

the tenth day of mourning in the Islamic month of Muharram.

The officials said there were no restrictions on the movement of the people anywhere else in the valley, including in Srinagar city.

Government forces personnel were deployed in strength to prevent any untoward incident.

The city had witnessed curfew-like restrictions in several areas on Sunday.

Committed To Equitable

inclusive and equitable development of all the regions of J&K.

Earlier, the spokesperson said that Javed Ahmed Rana, former Deputy Chairman, J&K Legislative Council and President JKNC Pir Panjal Zone called on the LG.

Rana, he said, expressed gratitude towards the Lt Governor-led UT Government for initiating revolutionary reforms and various welfare measures for the tribal community, including establishment of tribal hostels, Eklavya Model Residential Schools; model villages; smart schools etc.

"He also apprised the Lt Governor about various issues of public importance of his area pertaining to strengthening of PWD divisions; grid

stations; outdoor stadium; creation of land bank; establishment of Dana Shastar university campus & model school Pathanteer; funding for completion of approved cluster model villages; additional sessions court; relief to the people who have suffered due to flood etc," he added.

Similarly, the spokesperson said, Manzoor Ahmad Khan, Secretary, BJP Minority Morcha J&K also called on LG and submitted a memorandum of demands and issues of minority communities in the UT, besides the issues related to Rambirpora-Mattan Water Supply Scheme; special package for unemployed non-migrant Sikh youth; representation of Sikh community in Public Service Commission and issuance of Pahari Speaking People certificates in favour of Pakhtoons, Pathans, Khan sub castes of Pahari Community.

Later, he said, the members of Shri Alakh Sahiba Trust called on the Lt Governor and apprised him of the repairs and renovation related issues of Mata Shree Roop Bhawani Taposthal at Cheshmasahibi.

"The Lt Governor gave a patient hearing to the deputations and assured them of appropriate action on the genuine issues put forth by them," the spokesperson added.

Jammu Saw 16

2019, a report by NCRB had revealed last year.

626 More Test

105, Budgam 81, Kupwara 64, Ganderbal 24, Anantnag 22, Kulgam 19, Pulwama 15, Bandipora 14 and Shopian 1.

Similarly, the officials said that Jammu detected a maximum of 72 new cases of virus, Ramban and Kishtwar 9 each, Doda 8, Udhampur 5, Poonch and Kathua 3 each, Rajouri and Samba 2 each and Reasi 1.

Also, the officials said that the death toll due to the pandemic remained unchanged at 4776 in J&K—2346 in Jammu division and 2430 in the Valley, as no fresh fatality was reported on Tuesday.

"Moreover, 525 more COVID-19 patients have recovered and been discharged from various hospitals including 122 from Jammu division and 403 from Kashmir division," they added.

Survivor Identifies

are accused of heinous crimes. The accused were charged under sections 120-B (criminal conspiracy) and 326-A (voluntarily causing grievous hurt by use of acid) of the IPC.

The charge sheet was filed within three weeks of the incident to ensure swift and exemplary punishment to the accused and to deter those who may be having such "barbaric" tendencies, the officials

said.

The maximum punishment under these sections is life sentence and the minimum is 10 years' imprisonment,

but the prosecution is pressing for the maximum so that it acts as a deterrent, they said.

The woman, along with her family

members, shifted to Chennai for specialised treatment. The expenses were met by a businessman-turned-politician, who prefers anonymity.



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J&K Govt Failed To Submit UCs For Grants Worth Over Rs 10,000 Cr: CAG

Press Trust Of India

Jammu: The Jammu and Kashmir government has failed to submit utilisation certificates for grants worth more than Rs 10,000 crores to the Centre till March 2021, the Comptroller and Auditor General of India (CAG) said.

Non-submission of the UCs means the authorities have not explained how funds were spent over the years in the Union territory, the apex auditing body said.

The CAG on Monday released a fresh report on finances of Jammu and Kashmir for the year ending in March 2021. It recommended the government to hold into account those responsible for submission of UCs in a timely manner.

"As many as 3,215 number of Utilisation Certificates for grants paid up to 30 September 2019 amounting to Rs 10,076.58 crore were outstanding up to 31 March 2021," the CAG report said.

It said 1,461 UCs are awaiting submission for

grants worth Rs 5,725.99 crore in 2018-19, followed by 345 UCs for Rs 1,248.21 crore in 2019-20 and 3,215 UCs for Rs 3,102 crores in 2020-21.

A department-wise breakup of outstanding UCs shows that 83.90 per cent of these pertain to four departments, of which 57.07 per cent pertain to the education department only, CAG report said.

In its conclusion and recommendations, the CAG said the non-submission of the UCs means that the authorities have not explained as to how funds were spent over the years.

"There is also no assurance that the intended objectives of providing these funds have been achieved. This assumes greater importance if such UCs are pending against grants-in-aid meant for capital expenditure," it said.

The report said that since non-submission of UCs is fraught with risks of misappropriation, it is imperative that the government should monitor this aspect closely.

Commissioner Secy, RD&PR Department Visits Baltal

Inspects Waste Management Facilities, Sanitation Works

Observer News Service

Ganderbal: Commissioner Secretary, Rural Development and Panchayati Raj, (RD&PR)



department, Mandeep Kour Tuesday visited Baltal and inspected the waste management facilities and sanitation works going there for declaring it as a Zero Landfill zone.

The Commissioner Secretary was accompanied by Deputy Commissioner Ganderbal, Shymbri, ACD Ganderbal, ACP Ganderbal, Camp Director Baltal, BDC Kangan and officers from Rural Development Department during the visit.

During the visit, the Commissioner Secretary visited Swahaa's Organic Waste Management facility at Baltal and

took stock of its functioning and procedure used to treat the collected waste to turn it into organic fertilizers. She also inspected the compost beds used

to dry up the organic fertilizers.

The Commissioner Secretary directed the officers to chalk out the plan for doing convergence with agriculture department for making this organic fertilizer available to local farmers.

Appreciating the good work already done to keep the yatra camps and track clean, Kaur directed ACD to keep a close watch to ensure cleanliness and sanitation in all camps and along the track so that Yatra Base Camp Baltal and track must be totally free from any waste.

Weather Likely To Remain Dry In J&K: MeT

Agencies

Srinagar- Weatherman has predicted mainly dry weather with possibility of isolated light rain and thunderstorm over Jammu and Kashmir in next 24 hours.

A meteorological department official here said that in the last 24 hours till 0830 hours, Bhaderwah received 8.1 mm of rain followed Pahalgam with 5.6 mm, Gulmarg 2.8 mm while Srinagar had traces of it.

Regarding minimum temperature, he said, there was increase in mercury at most places in Kashmir and Jammu division.

Srinagar, he said, recorded a low of 20.3°C against 19.8°C on the previous night. The temperature was 1.7°C above normal during this time of the year for the summer capital.

Qazigund recorded a low of 17.7°C against 19.0°C on the previous night. The temperature was 1.2°C above normal there, he said, as per news agency GNS.



In Pahalgam, the mercury settled at 16.0°C against 15.8°C on the previous night and it was 3.0°C above normal for the south Kashmir resort.

Kokernag recorded a low of 17.6°C against 17.3°C on the previous night and it was 1.8°C above normal for the place, he said.

Popular tourist resort Gulmarg resort recorded a low of 11.0°C against 10.2°C on the previous night. However it was 1.1°C 'below' normal for the north Kashmir place.

upwara town saw a low of 17.6°C same as recorded on previous night and it was 0.3°C above normal for the place during this time of the season, the official told Global News Service.

Jammu recorded a low of 27.0°C against 26.4°C on the previous night. It was 1.9°C above normal for J&K's winter capital, he said.

Banihal recorded a low of 19.0°C, Batote 19.5°C, Kathra 24.6°C, Bhadarwah 18.8°C and Kathua 24.4°C.

Cong Takes Out Padyatra' In Jammu, Demand Statehood

Press Trust Of India

Jammu: The Jammu and Kashmir Congress on Tuesday took out Azadi Ki Gaurav Padyatra' from Bhour camp to Satwari chowk here with its working president Raman Bhalla reiterating the demand for restoration of statehood to the erstwhile state.

The Padyatra' was organised as part of the 75th anniversary of India's independence to recollect the sacrifices of martyrs and spread the message of communal harmony, Bhalla, who was leading the foot march, said.

He said the Padyatra will conclude on August 15 and the party will hold 75-km-long marches in ev-

ery district to celebrate the country's 75th Independence Day.

Launching a scathing attack on the BJP-led central government, Bhalla accused it of trampling democracy, violating the Constitution and misusing the institutions besides harming the social fabric of the society

Look what they did to Jammu and Kashmir, he said referring to the August 5, 2019 development when the erstwhile state was bifurcated into Union territories and deprived of its special status under Article 370.

He reiterated his party's demand for immediate restoration of the statehood to Jammu and Kashmir and holding of assembly elections to pave the way for a

popular government.

Bhalla said the Congress leadership has made a huge contribution in the independence movement and provided constitutional governance for 60 years.

An impression is being created that every development in the country happened only after 2014, when the Narendra Modi-led dispensation assumed office..It is not true as former prime ministers Jawaharlal Nehru, Indira Gandhi and Rajiv Gandhi had laid the foundation and contributed a lot for infrastructure development in the country, he added.

The former minister also alleged that some forces in the country were trying to distort history.

Falling Stones Kill Two Truck Drivers

Srinagar: Two tipper drivers were crushed to death after coming under falling stones at a stone quarry in Drangbal area of North Kashmir's Baramulla district this afternoon.

News agency GNS quoting official sources reported that the duo was near the stone quarry when several stones fell over them, resulting in their on-spot death.

The deceased duo has

been identified as Hilal Ahmad and Zaffar Ahmad Gojri.

Confirming the incident, a police official said that a police team was on spot to collect more details.

Shahid, Baseer Visit Various 'Dhoks' For Firsthand Assessment

Observer News Service

Pulwama: Secretary, Tribal Affairs Department, Dr Shahid Iqbal Choudhary and Deputy Commissioner, Pulwama, Baseer-Ul-Haq Choudhary visited various 'Dhoks' in Sangarwani area for firsthand assessment of assistance to migratory tribal families camping in these areas.

More than 5000 migratory tribal families camp at various Dhoks or highland pastures during summer including Rangtaar, Dalepathri, Gogapathri, Saidpathri, Kehrot, Shidak, Pathri, Sangam, Chorkhal, Kattar, Walakhain, Manniwala, Gaddar, Nambalan, Hamkhal, Mariwala, Nandalal, Walakhai and Kolipathri. These families migrate from various areas of Reasi, Ramban, Poonch and Pulwama.

The 1st Survey of Transhumant population i.e migratory tribal families was conducted in 2021 by the tribal affairs department in coordination with district administration and planning & statistics organisation which included the analysis of socio-economic indicators and access to various essential facilities including healthcare, education and livelihood. Based on

the survey a number of new initiatives have been rolled out by the Government.

Dr Shahid interacted with representatives of various tribal hamlets and women groups. It was decided that women self-help groups will be constituted with support of districts administration and National Rural Livelihood Mission. Each SHG of tribal women will be provided Rs 1.00 Lakh revolving fund by the dept and Skilling courses will be conducted by the district Administration.

Deputy Commissioner, Baseer Choudhary redressed various issues and grievances raised by the people which included demand for sanction of a bridge connected nearly half a dozen Dhoks. The administration has recently provided tents to hundreds of migratory families and relief to the families affected by untimely snowfall.

A number of points related to tribal welfare including the efforts for access to healthcare and preservation of culture and traditional Knowledge were also discussed apart from opportunities in eco-tourism in consonance with sustainability and conservation norms involving tribal youth.

J&K Govt Keen To Make Kashmir Willow Bat A World Class Product

Observer News Service

Srinagar: J&K Government is keen towards promotion of cricket bat industry of Kashmir enabling the Kashmir willow cricket bat to become a world class product.

In order to revive Kashmir's cricket bat manufacturing and other wood-based industry, a team of Union Ministry of Medium, Small and Micro Enterprises officials had also visited valley to find ways for extending support.

In this direction Common Facility Centre, Sethar was established at an estimated cost of Rs 4.61 crore with plant and machinery installed by PPDC, Meerut incurring an expenditure of Rs 2.46 crore.

The objective of this CFC is to facilitate seasoning of willow clefts and provide all facilities to the Cricket Bat Unit holders under one roof. This will enable the unit holders to use modern techniques in production of world class cricket bats.

There are 7 villages – Bijbehara, Charsoo, Hallamullaha, Sangam, Pujteng, Mirzapor and

Sethar – in South Kashmir where cricket bats are manufactured, providing bread and butter to hundreds of villagers. Moreover Sethar Sangam in Anantnag has been notified as an industrial cluster for cricket bat manufacturing.

Meanwhile, Govt has also given registration certificates to bat manufacturing unit owners of Anantnag and Pulwama, which would enable them to avail all benefits from the government, aimed at strengthening the industry.

A team of officials from Meerut-based Process-cum-Product Development Centre (PPDC) also visited the valley to explore ways for hand-holding of MSMEs in wood-based industry'. The team visited cricket bat cluster in Sethar village at Sangam area of Anantnag district to assess how the bat industry there could be revived. This cluster has been earlier funded by the Union MSME Ministry and now they are keen to provide an impetus to the cluster.

Pertinent to mention here that Kashmir willows are famous



for their quality across the world and have gained huge attention from the cricketers. A study on sports goods titled 'Indian Sports Goods Industry: Strategies for Tapping the Export Potential' conducted by the Export-Import Bank of India (EXIM BANK) says that Kashmir willow bat is one such product, which holds significance as it is made from some of the best quality wood (willow) in the world.

The government is creating awareness and provides hand-holding amongst the bat makers with regard to GI tagging through field officers. The Directorate of Industries and Com-

merce has taken up the issue of granting Logo and GI tagging with the Director, Craft Development Institute (CDI), Srinagar.

Presently there are more than 400 cricket bat manufacturing units generating employment to about 8000 people directly, said an official. It was also revealed that Under the World Bank-funded Jhelum Tawi Flood Recovery Project (JTFRP), Faculty of Forestry SKUAST Kashmir has been engaged for the identification and propagation of the best quality willow (Salix Alba varcaerulea) being used for the manufacture of cricket bat. In SKUAST Kashmir, superior quality willow saplings were distributed for the manufacture of cricket bats among the beneficiaries associated with Sethar cricket bat cluster.

He added that it is expected that with the use of superior willow the quality of cricket bats being manufactured in the Valley would be comparable to those manufactured in the rest of the World thereby increasing their demand exponentially.

Budha Amarnath Yatra concludes

Chari Yatra taken out in Poonch

Agencies

Rajouri: The annual pilgrimage of Baba Budha Amarnath Ji concluded on Tuesday while Chari Yatra was taken out amid tight security arrangements in which thousands of devotees participated.

Officials said that the Chari Yatra that marks culmination of Baba Budha Amarnath Yatra was taken out on Tuesday morning from Dashnami Akhada in Poonch.

Pithadishwar Swami Shri Vishwatmanand Sarswati Ji Maharaj led the yatra in which thousands of devotees from across Jammu and

Kashmir participated.

The Chari Yatra was taken out amid tight security arrangements with heavy deployment of police, army and paramilitary forces.

Officials added that after passing through Chandak, it concluded at Poonch Mandi temple of Baba Shri Budha Amarnath where prayers were offered and pious annual pilgrimage of Budha Amarnath Ji was closed.

Officials stated that although devotees will keep coming for paying obeisance at temple till the festival of Raksha Bandhan but the official pilgrimage has been closed from today—(KNO)

TRI Organises Webinar, Cultural Programs On World Tribal Day

Preservation Of Tribal Culture And Indigenous Heritage Is Need Of The Hour: Shahid

Observer News Service

Srinagar: International Day of the World's Indigenous Peoples (World Tribal Day) was observed here on Tuesday.

The theme for this Year's World Tribal Day was "The Role of Indigenous Women in the preservation and transmission of traditional knowledge". On the occasion, Tribal Affairs Department and the Tribal Research (TRI) Institute organised a webinar in which Tribal Research Fellows, subject experts and students participated.

The role of indigenous women in preserving tribal culture, developing and promoting uses of natural products, integration of traditional knowledge and practices of indigenous women was highlighted during the programme. Tribal Research Fellows who participated in the discussion include Tushita Pandey, Abdul Aadil Pararay, Sayed Hamid Mehmood, Dr. Annie Jamwal, Abrar Qadir Mir, and Tariq Abrar.

Speaking on the occasion, Dr. Shahid Iqbal Choudhary, Secretary Tribal Affairs Department also holding the charge of Director Tribal Research Institute J&K informed that every year, 9th August is celebrated as World Tribal Day for the upliftment of tribal society and to preserve their culture.

He stressed upon the need to raise awareness about various Rights available to the indigenous communities and as enshrined in the constitution



of India. He said that Tribal Research Institute is working as a body of knowledge for preservation of tribal cultural heritage, evidence based planning and appropriate legislation, capacity building, dissemination of information and generation of awareness. Indigenous women are vital to the preservation of ancestral knowledge and also protect the traditional natural resources besides promotion in a sustainable manner, he said.

Further, it was informed that an MOU has been signed for establishment of Tribal chair at IIT Jammu and BGS-BU Rajouri and they have been entrusted with the task to document tribal culture, folk songs, folk tales, folk dance, rituals, customs, traditions, artifacts, indigenous health practices etc.

Around 200 students from various hostels of the Tribal Affairs Department actively participated during the programme. Debate competition, quiz, speeches, talk shows, and other talent-based activities related to the theme were organised. Prizes were also announced for the participating students based on their performance.



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