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On the occasion of Independence Day we extend greetings to people of India, especially to our esteemed readers.

J&K Is Scripting History In Every Sector: LG

'Unprecedented Performance In Various Parameters Is Being Recorded'

Observer News Service

Srinagar: Union Territory Lieutenant Governor, Manoj Sinha said on Sunday that Jammu and Kashmir is scripting history in every sector and an unprecedented performance in various parameters has been recorded, improving the standard of living of every citizen with equality and social justice.

"It's a new dawn of hopes and dreams," Sinha said, while addressing a gathering at a walkathon held from Lalit Ghat to Botanical Garden as part of the 'Har Ghar Tiranga' campaign, an official spokesperson said.

The LG, he said, congratulated the organizers and participants of the Walkathon which saw a massive participation of people from all walks of life.

On this occasion, he said, Sinha recalled the words of Mahatma Gandhi delivered at the Tank Maidan, Mumbai on August 08, 1942



which inspired the people all across the country to overthrow British rule.

"Today our walkathon is a symbol of the resolve and struggle of Mahatma Gandhi, it is a symbol of penance and supreme sacrifice of the brave soldiers of our army, police, paramilitary forces," the LG said.

"Azadi Ka Amrit Mahotsav provided us with an opportunity to inspire future generation by making them aware of the invaluable contribution of our heroes and martyrs," he added.

Addressing the veterans of 1971 war present during the walkathon, the LG, as per the spokesperson said "I salute all those who have laid the path of progress and prosperity of Jammu & Kashmir and are keeping the nation safe and secure."

"Remembering our heroes ignites new ideas and rekindles the spirit of public awakening. This Walkathon is a tribute to our security forces, freedom fighters, and also a symbol of our resolve to build a self-reliant

Jammu and Kashmir," he further added.

According to the spokesperson, the LG said that we have to take the story of our freedom fighters to the new generation and bring alive the memory, the ideals of the personalities who made significant contributions in the freedom struggle and also pay our tributes to the unsung heroes of India's Independence.

The LG, he said, urged all to take inspiration from our forefathers. **| More on P10**



Investor Education and Protection Fund Authority
Ministry of Corporate Affairs
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PUBLIC ANNOUNCEMENT

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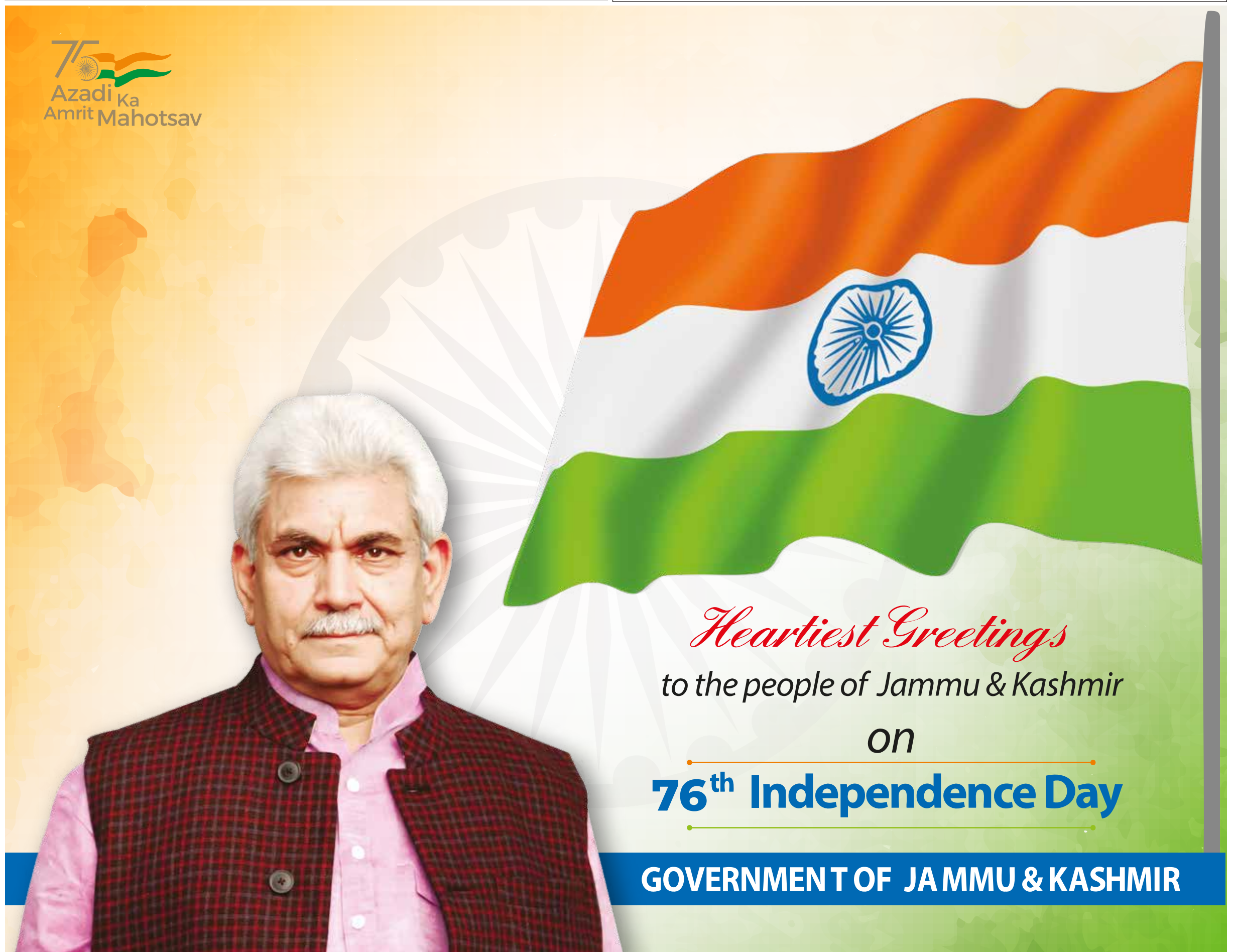
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CBC 07110/12/0001/2223





The world's biggest ice sheet is more vulnerable to global warming than scientists previously thought

The Conversation

The eastern two thirds of Antarctica is covered by an ice sheet so large that if it melted the sea would rise by 52 metres. Most scientists had once thought this ice sheet was largely invulnerable to climate change, but not any more. And our new research, published in Nature, reveals the dire consequences if we were to awaken Antarctica's sleeping giant. Almost 70 per cent of the Earth's fresh water is frozen in vast continental ice sheets that cover Greenland and Antarctica. Together, they store the equivalent of around 65 metres of sea level rise. Hence, even relatively small changes in the volume of these remote polar ice sheets will have a global impact. An estimated one billion people live within 10 metres of sea level, including 230 million within one metre. Scientists measure changes in the volume of these ice sheets by estimating the mass input, mostly via snowfall, and the mass output, mostly melting snow and ice along with icebergs that break off and float away. The difference between input and output is known as the ice sheet's mass balance, which is highly sensitive to climate change. The most recent efforts to measure ice sheet mass balance paint a very worrying picture. The Greenland Ice Sheet, which contains around 7.4 metres of sea level rise, lost 3,900 billion tonnes of ice between 1992 and 2018, causing global sea level to increase by 11 millimetres over this period. A similar story emerges from the western part of Antarctica, known as the West Antarctic Ice Sheet. It holds around 5.3 metres of sea level and lost more than 2,000 billion tonnes of ice between 1992 and 2017, adding around 6 mm to the sea level.

More sensitive than we thought



Perhaps surprisingly, much less work has focused on the East Antarctic Ice Sheet, which is by far the world's largest but was thought to be a lot less vulnerable to global warming. This is because large parts of the ice sheet have persisted through natural climate changes across millions of years, and because recent measurements indicate that it has been in equilibrium or has maybe even gained mass (a warmer atmosphere can hold more moisture, which means more snow).

In fact, the ice sheet may have even slightly reduced sea level rise over the past century. However, over the past two decades or so, observations suggest that the East Antarctic Ice Sheet may be far more sensitive to climate warming than previously thought. Major outlet glaciers like the Totten and Vanderford are thinning and retreating. And there are clear signals of mass loss in Wilkes Land, the ice sheet's weak underbelly, so-called because it rests on land that lies well below sea-level and so is particularly unstable.

Lessons from the past

There is also evidence that parts of East Antarctica retreated quite dramatically during warm periods in the past, when carbon dioxide concentrations and atmospheric temperatures were only slightly higher than present. It is likely that East Antarctica contributed several metres to global sea level during the mid-Pliocene warm period, around

3 million years ago, with ice loss concentrated in Wilkes Land. Recent work has also suggested that ice in Wilkes Land retreated 700 km inland from its present position around 400,000 years ago, when global temperatures were only 1 or 2 degrees Celsius higher than present. A key lesson from the past, therefore, is that the East Antarctic Ice Sheet is highly sensitive to relatively modest warming, even if it is currently stable.

Don't wake a sleeping giant

So what will actually happen over the next few decades and centuries? We recently analysed projections from various computer simulations to answer this question. Our results were alarming, but also offered some encouragement. We found the ice sheet will probably remain broadly in balance in the short-term, because any mass loss due to global warming will be offset by increased snowfall. Although there are large uncertainties, we concluded that the ice sheet will only raise the sea level by about 2cm by the year 2100, which is much less than the contribution projected from melting ice in Greenland or West Antarctica. Over the next few centuries, however, the sea-level contribution from East Antarctica will depend critically on whether we manage to curb our emissions. If warming continues beyond 2100, sustained by high emissions, then East Antarctica could contribute around 1 to 3 metres by 2300 and around 2 to 5 metres by 2500, adding to the substantial contributions from Greenland and West Antarctica and threatening millions of people who inhabit coastal areas. Crucially, however, our analysis suggests that if the Paris Agreement to limit warming to well below 2 degrees Celsius is satisfied, then East Antarctica's sea-level contribution would remain below 0.5 metres, even five centuries from now. The fate of the world's largest ice sheet remains in our hands. Understanding ba-

'Understanding baby's cries of pain is not an innate ability'

ANI

A new study has found the answer to whether adults understand when a baby is in pain as opposed to being mildly uncomfortable. The findings of the study were reported in the journal Current Biology. "We found that the ability to detect pain in cries--that is, to identify a pain cry from a mere discomfort cry--is modulated by experience of caring for babies," says Nicolas Mathevon, University of Saint-Etienne, France. "Current parents of young babies can identify a baby's pain cries even if they have never heard this baby before, whereas inexperienced individuals are typically unable to do so." The findings show that humans' ability to interpret babies' cries isn't innate but learned from experience. Parenting young babies shapes our ability to decode the information conveyed by babies' communication signals. Mathevon and his University of Saint-Etienne colleagues including David Reby and Roland Peyron made this discovery as part of a broader research program investigating how information is encoded in babies' cries and how human listeners extract this information. In the new study, they wanted to find out how prior caregiving experience with babies shaped the ability to identify when they were in pain. They recruited people with different amounts of experience caring for babies, ranging from people with no experience at all to current parents of young children. They also included people with occasional experience babysitting and non-parents with more extensive professional experience in caregiving. Next, they gave everyone in the study a short training phase in



which they heard eight discomfort cries from one baby over a couple of days. Next, their ability to decode the cries as discomfort or pain was put to the test. And it turned out that experience was everything. People with little to no experience couldn't tell the difference between cries any better than chance. Those with a small amount of experience performed slightly better. Current parents and professionals did better than chance. But parents of younger babies were the clear winners. They were able to identify the crying contexts of babies even when they'd never heard the cries of that youngster before. Parents of older kids and those with professional experience didn't do well with unfamiliar cries. "Only parents of younger babies were also able to identify the crying contexts of an unknown baby they had never heard before," says first author of the study Siloe Corvin.

"Professional pediatric caregivers are less successful at extending this ability to unknown babies," says study co-author Camille Fauthon. "This was surprising at first, but it is consistent with the idea that experienced listeners may develop a resistance that decreases their sensitivity to acoustic cues of pain." The findings show that babies' cries contain important information that's encoded in their acoustic structure. While adults are attuned to that information, our ability to decode it and identify when a baby is in pain gets better with exposure and experience. The researchers hope that learning more about how babies communicate pain may help parents learn how to recognize and respond to it even better. They're now conducting neuroimaging studies to further explore how experience and parenthood shape brain activity when babies cry.

And it turned out that experience was everything. People with little to no experience couldn't tell the difference between cries any better than chance. Those with a small amount of experience performed slightly better.

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– Shri Narendra Modi
Hon'ble Prime Minister of India

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Independence Day Greetings to All Fellow Citizens on Completion of **75 Years** of Freedom

Ministry of Information
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Government of India

75
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**Coming 25 years of 'Amrit Kaal' to be 'Kartavya Kaal' of every citizen
Let us build together India of our freedom fighters' dreams**

“

On the occasion of the Independence Day, grateful Indians bow to their countless freedom fighters. As the champion proponents of freedom had joined hands for the cause of independence, in the same way, we have to unite for the development of the country. ”

– Narendra Modi

Watch live telecast of the Independence Day ceremony from the ramparts of the Red Fort on Doordarshan from 6:25 a.m. onwards

#HarGharTiranga



CBC 22201/13/0101/2223

Dozens killed in Cairo church fire



Agencies

More than 40 people were killed when a fire ripped through a Coptic Christian church in a working-class district of greater Cairo during Sunday mass, church officials said.

The blaze, blamed on an electrical fault, hit the Abu Sefein church located in the densely populated Imbaba neighbourhood west of the Nile river, part of Giza governorate.

Witnesses described how people rushed into the burning house of worship to rescue those trapped but were soon overwhelmed by the heat and the deadly smoke.

"Everyone was carrying kids out of the building," Ahmed Reda Baioumy, who lives next to the church, told AFP.

"But the fire was getting bigger and you could only go in once or you would asphyxiate."

The Egyptian Coptic Church and the health ministry reported 41 dead and 14 injured in the blaze before emergency services

said they had brought the blaze under control.

Egypt's President Abdel Fattah al Sisi declared on his Facebook page in the morning: "I have mobilised all state services to ensure that all measures are taken."

He later said he had "presented his condolences by phone" to Coptic Pope Tawadros II, who has been the head of the denomination in Egypt since 2012.

The interior ministry later said that "forensic evidence revealed that the blaze broke out in an air-conditioning unit on the second floor of the church building".

Father Farid Fahmy, of another nearby church in Imbaba, told AFP the fire was caused by a short circuit.

"The power was out and they were using a generator," he said. "When the power came back, it caused an overload."

Copts are the largest Christian community in the Middle East, making up at least 10 million of Egypt's 103 million people.

Author Salman Rushdie off ventilator

Agencies

Author Salman Rushdie has been taken off a ventilator and is able to talk, a day after he was stabbed as he prepared to give a lecture in upstate New York.

Rushdie, who penned a controversial book in 1980s drawing criticism from across the Muslim world, remained hospitalised with serious wounds, but fellow author Aatish Taseer said on Saturday evening that he was "off the ventilator."

Rushdie's agent, Andrew Wylie, confirmed that information without offering further details. **SUSPECT PLEADS NOT GUILTY**

Earlier in the day, the man accused of attacking him on Friday at the Chautauqua Institution, a non-profit education and retreat centre, pleaded not guilty to attempted murder and assault charges in what a prosecutor called a "preplanned" crime.

An attorney for Hadi Matar, 24, who is accused of attacking Rushdie, entered the plea on his behalf during an arraignment in western New York on Saturday.

A judge ordered the suspect to be held without bail after District Attorney Jason Schmidt told her Matar took steps to purposely put himself in position to harm Rushdie, getting



an advance pass to the event where the author was speaking and arriving a day early bearing a fake ID.

"This was a targeted, unprovoked, preplanned attack on Mr. Rushdie," Schmidt said.

Public defender Nathaniel Barone complained that authorities had taken too long to get Matar in front of a judge while leaving him "hooked up to a bench at the state police barracks."

"He has that constitutional right of presumed innocence," Barone added.

RUSHDIE COULD LOSE EYE

Rushdie, 75, suffered a damaged liver and severed nerves in an arm and an eye, and was on a ventilator and unable to speak, his agent Andrew Wylie said on

Friday evening.

Rushdie was likely to lose the wounded eye.

Rushdie, who was born in Bombay, now known as Mumbai, before moving to the United Kingdom, has faced death threats for his fourth novel which Muslims say contain blasphemous passages.

Rushdie moved to New York in the early 2000s and became a US citizen in 2016.

The book was banned in Iran where the late Supreme Leader Ruhollah Khomeini issued a 1989 fatwa, or edict, calling for Rushdie's death.

Iran's government has long since distanced itself from Khomeini's decree, but anti-Rushdie sentiments linger in the country.

PM Modi Pays Homage To Those Who Lost Their Lives During Partition



NEW DELHI: Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Sunday paid homage to all those who lost their lives during partition, and applauded the resilience as well as grit of those who suffered during that tragic period of history.

Prime Minister Modi had announced last year that August 14 will be observed as Partition Horrors Remembrance Day in memory of the struggles and sacrifices of people.

"Today, on Partition Horrors

Remembrance Day, I pay homage to all those who lost their lives during Partition, and applauded the resilience as well as grit of all those who suffered during that tragic period of our history," PM Modi said in a tweet.

Pakistan was carved out as a separate country after the division of India by the British in 1947. Millions of people were displaced and many lakhs of them lost their lives in the communal violence that followed.

To Curb Copying In Exams, Uttar Pradesh's Lucknow "War Room" Plan



MATHURA: A war room will soon be set up in Lucknow to curb the menace of copying in exams, Uttar Pradesh Higher Education Minister Yogendra Upadhyay said on Saturday.

"All the examination centres will be connected to the Lucknow-based war room for ensuring transparency in examination," Yogendra Upadhyay said.

He said the condition of lecturers in self-financing colleges

is miserable as they are not getting adequate pay.

To overcome the anomaly, a meeting of representatives of lecturers and management committees would be called in September in Lucknow, he added.

Yogendra Upadhyay said the new National Education Policy will change the education scenario since it blends ancient Indian culture with modern developments in education.

Imran Khan Plays S Jaishankar Video In Rally, Praises India Foreign Policy

ISLAMABAD: Former Pakistani Prime Minister Imran Khan has once again commended India for its independent foreign policy as he slammed the West for being critical of India for buying Russian oil.

Addressing a huge gathering in Lahore, Imran Khan played a video clip of Foreign Minister S Jaishankar from Bratislava Forum held in Slovakia and praised him for standing firm to the US pressure over buying cheap oil from Russia.

"If India which got independence at the same time as Pakistan and if New Delhi can take a firm stand and make their foreign policy as per the need of its people then who are they (Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif government) who are towing the line," Imran Khan said at the gathering, a video of which was shared by several media outlets.

"They (US) ordered India to not buy oil from Russia. India is US' strategic ally, Pakistan is not. Let us see what India's Foreign Minister said when the US asked them not to buy Russian oil."

Imran Khan then played out



External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar's video clip.

"Jaishankar is telling them who are you? Jaishankar said that Europe is buying gas from Russia and we will buy it as people need it. This is what an independent country is ('yeh hoti hai azad haqumat')," he said while praising India.

He also slammed the Shehbaz Sharif government for bowing down to US pressure on buying Russian oil.

"We had spoken to Russia about buying cheaper oil but this government has no courage to say no to US pressure. Fuel prices are skyrocketing, people are below the poverty line. I am against this slavery."

Liz Truss Leads Race To Become Britain's Next PM: Poll Of Party Members

LONDON: Britain's Foreign Secretary Liz Truss is 22 percentage points ahead of her rival Rishi Sunak in the contest to become the country's next prime minister, a poll of Conservative Party members by Opinium Research showed on Saturday.

Among a sample of 450 party members who had decided how they would vote in the ongoing leadership election put Truss, who other polls have also shown to be the clear front-runner, on 61%, with former finance minister Mr Sunak on 39%, Opinium said.

The roughly 200,000 members of the ruling Conservatives are voting to decide on a replacement for Prime Minister Boris Johnson, who after a series of scandals and a parliamentary rebellion said in July he would step down once the party chooses a replacement.

The overall sample size, including those who did not express a voting preference, was 570. Less than a third of them,



29%, said they had already voted and a further 47% said they had made up their mind. Only 19% said they might still change their mind.

The leadership vote is taking place by postal ballot, with a winner due to be announced on September 5. The poll was conducted between August 8 and August 12.

The poll shows that the top

three reasons for supporting Ms Truss were a dislike of Mr Sunak, the perception that she was more trustworthy, and that she had remained loyal to Mr Johnson. Mr Sunak's resignation helped trigger Mr Johnson's downfall.

Mr Sunak supporters said he was better on the economy and the most competent or intelligent of the two candidates.

Free Period Products' Access In This Country, A First In The World



EDINBURGH: Scotland will on Monday become the first country in the world to ensure universal access to free period products following the passing of landmark legislation in 2020.

Councils and education providers will be legally required to make period products available free of charge to anyone who needs them, the Scottish government said in a statement issued Sunday.

"Providing access to free period products is fundamental to equality and dignity, and removes the financial barriers to accessing them," said Social Justice Secretary Shona Robison.

"We are proud to be the first national government in the world to take such action," she added.

The Scottish parliament vot-

ed unanimously in favour of the Period Products Bill, which made it a legal right to have free access to sanitary products in public buildings, in November 2020.

Sanitary products were already free for pupils and students, but the bill placed a legal duty on ministers to ensure anyone can get access to them.

Schools, colleges and universities must also make a range of period products available for free in their toilets.

Scotland's First Minister Nicola Sturgeon welcomed the decision at the time.

"Proud to vote for this groundbreaking legislation, making Scotland the first country in the world to provide free period products for all who need them," she wrote on her Twitter account.

Rakesh Jhunjhunwala, 'India's Warren Buffet', dies at 62

Colourful stock market billionaire Rakesh Jhunjhunwala — dubbed by local media India's Warren Buffet — has died, his office said on Sunday, just a week after he launched the country's newest airline.

"Rakesh-ji passed away surrounded by his family and close aides," a family member told Reuters, using a term for respect. The cause of death was not immediately announced.

Calling the 62-year-old "indomitable", Prime Minister Narendra Modi echoed tributes from other senior officials, tweeting that the death of the tycoon was "saddening."

"We are deeply saddened," Akasa Air, which Jhunjhunwala co-founded, said in a statement. "We at Akasa cannot thank Jhunjhunwala enough for being an early believer in us and putting his trust and faith in us to build a world class airline."

Uday Kotak, the chief executive of Kotak Mahindra and a friend from school days, said Jhunjhunwala had "believed stock India was undervalued" and that he was right.

"Amazingly sharp in understanding financial markets," Kotak tweeted. "We spoke regularly, more so during Covid. Will miss you Rakesh!"

The "Big Bull of Dalal Street" — the Wall Street of Mumbai — had a net worth of \$3.5 billion with significant holdings in more than 30 Indian blue chip stocks.



Jhunjhunwala's excellent communication skills helped small investors understand the stock market, said businessmen and bankers based in India's financial capital, Mumbai, who had interacted with him for over 30 years. His insights on the economy and companies made him a popular TV celebrity.

Jhunjhunwala's bets include a number of companies run by Tata Group, one of India's largest conglomerates.

These include Tata Motors, watch maker Titan, Tata Communications and Indian Hotels Co, which runs the Taj hotels. Other investments include Indiabulls Housing Finance, Star Health In-

surance and Federal Bank

He had invested \$35 million for an estimated 40 per cent stake in Akasa Air which made its maiden flight in the Asian country's crowded aviation market last Sunday.

Having made his money betting on stocks and lacking any experience in the airline industry, the decision to enter the capital-intensive sector raised eyebrows.

"A lot of people question why I've started an airline. Rather than answer them, I say I'm prepared for failure," he told an industry event in February.

"It's better to have tried and failed than not tried at all," he said. "I hope to prove people wrong. Now it's become a matter of ego."

Comedian Raju Srivastava Remains On Life Support: Report

NEW DELHI: There has been no improvement in the condition of popular comedian-actor Raju Srivastava as he remains on life support in the intensive care unit of AIIMS in New Delhi, hospital sources said on Sunday.

The 58-year-old stand-up comic was admitted to the All India Institute of Medical Sciences (AIIMS) here after suffering a heart attack on Wednesday. He underwent an angioplasty the same day. "Mr Srivastava remains critical and on life support. There has been no improvement in his condition. He continues to be unconscious. He suffered brain damage after heart attack," the source told PTI.

On Friday night, Mr Srivastava's family released a statement on his official Instagram page, saying the comedian's condition is "stable".

"Raju Srivastava ji's condition is stable. We are praying for his speedy recovery. The doctors are treating him and are doing their best. Thanks to all the well wishers for continued love and support," the family said in the statement.

The family also requested people to "ignore any rumour/fake news being circulated". The comic had a heart attack while exercising at a hotel's gym here.

Mr Srivastava, who has been active in the entertainment industry since late 1980s, received recognition after participating in the first season of stand-up comedy show "The Great Indian Laughter Challenge" in 2005.

He has featured in Hindi films such as "Maine Pyar Kiya", "Baazigar", "Bombay to Goa" (remake) and "Aamdani At-thani Kharcha Rupaiya". He was one of the contestants on "Bigg Boss" season three.



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FROM DELHI TO KASHMIR

Heavy Security Blanket For 76th Independence Day Celebration

Press Trust Of India

New Delhi: India has not only been decked in tricolour hues in the lead up to the 76th Independence Day celebrations, but also put under a heavy security blanket, right from Delhi, the epicentre of the mega celebrations, to Jammu and Kashmir.

The police machinery across states has been put on vigil to ensure that the celebrations are not hampered in any way.

In Delhi, where Prime Minister Narendra Modi will be addressing the nation from

the ramparts of the historic Red Fort, security has been stepped up with Delhi Police deploying more than 10,000 personnel to guard the Mughal-era monument.

From facial recognition system (FRS) cameras installed at the entry point of the Red Fort to multi-layered security cover and deployment of over 400 kite catchers and fliers on rooftops and other sensitive locations in the fort area to counter any threats from sub-conventional aerial platforms -- the area is under hawk-eye vigil.



With nearly 7,000 invitees expected to attend the event at the Red Fort, a five-kilometre area

around the monument has been marked as "no kite flying zone" till the tricolour is hoisted.

Dependra Pathak, Special Commissioner of Police (Law and Order), had said provisions of Section 144 have already been instituted in Delhi.

Anti-drone systems from Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO) and other security agencies have also been installed, police said.

In the financial capital of the country, Mumbai, several law-enforcing units have been deployed to man the streets of the metropolis along with anti-drone systems, an official said.

According to the official, while there was no specific input in view of Independence Day, as a matter of routine, security of vital installations had been increased and officials have been asked to conduct spot visits.

"We are conducting anti-sabotage checks. Since Wednesday, 'operation all out' is underway comprising checking of hotels, vehicles and road barricading. Action is being taken against history-sheeters and those extorted," the official added.

The official also anticipated crowding as the **| More on P10**

Situation In J&K Much Better Now: DGP

Press Trust Of India

Srinagar: Situation in Jammu and Kashmir is much better than before and the graph of militancy is coming down, Union territory's police chief Dilbag Singh said on Sunday.

However, he said the launchpads across the Line of Control (LoC) were intact and there was a huge pressure to push militants into the Valley.

The situation in J-K is much better. The atmosphere is much better than before and I want to give its credit to the people and express my gratitude to them, the director general of police (DGP) told reporters on the sidelines of an event here.

Singh said the people of Kashmir have helped the security forces and the administration with a great understanding.

Today, students **| More on P10**

J&K Govt Scarps 'Discriminatory' Rules

Brings All Employees On Equal-Footing In Terms Of Salary, Other Benefits

Observer News Service

Srinagar: The Jammu and Kashmir administration on Sunday the Probationer (Condition of Service, Pay and Allowances) and Fixation Rules, 2020, to bring all employees being appointed on equal-footing in terms of salary and other benefits.

The decision in this regard was taken in the Administrative Council (AC) meeting held under the chairmanship of the Lieutenant

Governor, Manoj Sinha, an official spokesperson said.

"The Administrative Council (AC) approved the scrapping of Jammu and Kashmir Probationer (Condition of Service, Pay and Allowances) and Fixation Rules, 2020, notified vide S.O. 192 of 2020 (successor of S.O. 202 of 2015); with effect from 1st of August, 2022," he said.

The decision, he said, will bring all Government employees being **| More on P10**



THE ADMINISTRATIVE COUNCIL (AC) APPROVED THE SCRAPPING of Jammu and Kashmir Probationer (Condition of Service, Pay and Allowances) and Fixation Rules, 2020, notified vide S.O. 192 of 2020 (successor of S.O. 202 of 2015); with effect from 1st of August, 2022."

Encounter In Downtown Srinagar, Cop Killed in Kulgam

Agenceis

Srinagar: An encounter broke out between militants and security forces in Nowhatta area of Srinagar on the eve of the Independence Day celebrations Sunday, police said.

"Chance #encounter started in Nowhatta area of #Srinagar," Kashmir Zone police wrote on Twitter.

Police said the exchange of firing was going on and further

details were awaited.

Earlier on Sunday a policeman was killed in a grenade attack in South Kashmir's Kulgam district.

The incident took place in Qaimoh area on Saturday night.

"A grenade incident was reported yesterday night in Qaimoh #Kulgam. In this #terror incident, 01 police personnel namely Tahir Khan R/O Mendhar, Poonch got injured," Kashmir Zone Police wrote on Twitter. **| More on P10**

PM Pays Homage To Those Who Lost Lives During Partition

Press Trust Of India

New Delhi: Prime Minister Narendra Modi and other senior BJP leaders on Sunday paid homage to those who lost their lives during the Partition as the Congress accused the ruling party of using the traumatic events as a "fodder" for its political battles.

On the 'Partition Horrors Remembrance Day', Modi paid tributes to all those who lost their lives during the Partition violence and applauded the resilience and grit of those who suffered during the tragedy.

He had announced last year that August 14 will be observed as 'Partition Horrors Remembrance Day' in memory of the struggles and sacrifices of people.



Union Home Minister Amit Shah said the "inhuman" chapter of India's history can never be forgotten.

The Congress, however, alleged that the real intent of PM Modi to mark August 14 as 'Partition Horrors

Remembrance Day' is to use the traumatic events as "fodder" for his current political battles.

Congress general secretary, communications, Jairam Ramesh said the tragedy of Partition cannot be misused to fuel hate and prejudice.

"The tragedy of Partition cannot be misused to fuel hate and prejudice. The truth is Savarkar originated two-nation theory and Jinnah perfected it. Sardar Patel wrote, 'I felt that if we did not accept Partition, India would be split into many bits and would be completely ruined'," Ramesh said.

In his tributes, Shah said the 'Partition Horrors Remembrance Day' will remind the younger **| More on P10**

Govt Extends Ex-Gratia Relief To DDC Members

Assistance Of Rs 25L To Be Provided For Death In Militancy-Related Incidents

Observer News Service

Srinagar: The Administrative Council (AC) which met here under the chairmanship of the Lieutenant Governor, Manoj Sinha, on Sunday approved the extension of ex-gratia relief of Rs. 25 lakhs to all Chairmen, Vice-Chairmen, and members of District Development Councils of Jammu and Kashmir in case of death due to a militancy-related incident.

Earlier, the Government has provided similar relief for all elected BDC Chairmen, Sarpanches, Panches and all elected members of Municipal Bodies of Jammu

and Kashmir.

Rajeev Rai Bhatnagar, Advisor to the Lieutenant Governor, Dr. Arun Kumar Mehta, Chief Secretary, J&K and Nitishwar Kumar, Principal Secretary to the Lieutenant Governor attended the meeting.

The decision aims at strengthening the grass roots democracy by providing a sense of security to the elected members of local bodies facing threat from anti-state elements.

The ex-gratia relief will act as a guarantee for the subsistence of the family members of the elected representatives who are killed in militancy-related incidents.

108-Foot High Flag Installed In Baramulla

The Army on Sunday inaugurated a 108-foot high national flag in Baramulla district of Jammu and Kashmir. The tricolour was installed at Hyderbaigh in Pattan in the north Kashmir district, PRO Defence Col Emron Musavi said. He said General Officer Commanding, Counter-Insurgency Force (CIF) (Kilo), Major General S S Slaria, dedicated it to the people of Kashmir. The installation of the high mast was completed in a record time of 30 days, he said. The flag, constructed in collaboration with Flag Foundation of India, not only instills a sense of pride and honour among the people but also honours all the bravehearts who have laid down their lives towards eliminating **| More on P10**

J&K Logs 563 New Covid Cases



Jammu and Kashmir recorded 563 new Covid cases that pushed the infection tally to 4,73,782 on Sunday, officials said. Of the new cases, 505 were reported from Kashmir and 58 from Jammu, they said. The death toll remained unchanged at 4,777. There are 4,463 active cases, while the overall recoveries stands at 4,64,542, officials added. (PTI)

Govt Forces Locate Militants In Rajouri

Security forces on Sunday located some terrorists in a forest area of Jammu and Kashmir's Rajouri district, officials said. The forces were tracking the militants operating in the forest belt of Rajouri, they said.

"Today at about 1930 hours, operational contact has been established by troops of Indian Army, Rashtriya Rifles and SOG with terrorists at Kandra Hill in district," a public relations officer (defence) said, adding further details are awaited.

On Thursday, two terrorists had attacked an Army camp in Rajouri killing four soldiers in a pre-dawn suicide strike that marked the return of 'fidayeen' to Jammu and Kashmir after more than three years. **| More on P10**

Govt Renames 199 Schools, Colleges; Roads After 'Martyrs'

Observer News Service

Srinagar: The Jammu and Kashmir administration on Sunday announced to rename public infrastructure, including schools, colleges and roads after the fallen soldiers and policemen besides eminent personalities across the Union Territory.

According to a government order, 199 public infrastructure assets, including schools, colleges and roads have been renamed after the soldiers and policemen killed in the line of duty.

Among them, 132 have been renamed after the policemen for their exceptional contributions towards the security and development of the Union Territory, a police spokesperson said.

He said as per the order, two schools have been named after DySp, 1 after Inspector, 8 after SIs, 4 after ASIs, 7 after HCs, 21 after SgCts, 47 after constables, 3 after followers, and 41 after SPOs who laid down their lives while protecting and safeguarding the interests of the people.

The spokesperson said that the

Director General of Police, J&K, Dilbag Singh extended his gratitude to Government of India, Lt. Governor Jammu & Kashmir Manoj Sinha and his administration for naming the government schools/colleges and roads in Jammu and Kashmir after the martyred J&K police personnel and CAPFs personnel.

"The DGP said that it is a wonderful initiative by the government which would serve as the "morale booster for the forces fighting terrorism here," he said. **| More on P10**

S H O R T T A K E S

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Twitter Talks



“People are angry about what happened to Salmam Rushdie in New York but they don’t want to talk about a 9 yr old dalit child who was beaten to death for touching a pot in their own country. Just change the caste identity of the child and the whole nation will came out with candle”

@mustafeez26

“It is important to realize that change in mental health can take a while. We are undoing decades of conditioning. We have to be patient with ourselves and repeat the healthy behaviours until they slowly become more entrenched. Healthy changes cannot happen fast”

@bazzapower

Let Action Speak

The state government has embarked on stage-managing the ritual of holding development board meetings in various districts with a view to undertaking a half-yearly review of the pace on implementing the annual plans in various sectors. Addressing the one at Kupwara on Tuesday, the chief minister said the responsive administration with accountable work culture was imperative to push through development works and the policies aimed at the betterment of the people. He announced that senior officers right from the district to the commissioner / secretary level would be responsible for the judicious utilization of the allocated funds as also for the functioning of the subordinate administrative units. In an obvious departure from the traditional rhetoric, he underscored physical verification of various schemes indicating that a mechanism needed to be evolved to monitor execution of the works on the ground level. This, he said, would ensure a vigil on the quality of the material used. And, to give the suggestion a practical shape, the chief minister asked for initiating consultation process with public representatives for the formulation of the next year’s development plans. Perhaps alive to the limited working season that restricts most construction activity in the valley to less than nine months, unlike Kerala or Maharashtra where it goes on almost round the year, his directive to spend the major share of the funds by the end of December each year needs to be pursued in letter and in spirit. But, save for the winter-related needs like snow clearance and maintenance of essential services, it is an open secret that most public spending during winter months is suspect. With the valley remaining snow-bound for at least three months, not much can be expected from January to March-end. The figures revealed at the Kupwara board meeting on Tuesday speak for themselves. Against a plan allocation of Rs 66.64 crore, only Rs 30.20 crore have been utilized by November end indicating a poor achievement of 45 per cent, both in financial as well as physical performance. Obviously, if it frittered away the peak working season, what wonders can the administration play now when most implements and tools would be lapsing into a 3-month hibernation.

By the same token, it explains the huge gap between the government’s claims, in most cases exaggerated, and its performance at the ground level, to which the chief minister, perhaps rightly pointed out. Small wonder that a sizeable chunk of the scant resources mobilized either through central assistance or through local generation is siphoned off to the pockets of corrupt officials. To illustrate the point further, the government claims to have invested hundreds of thousands of crores into water supply schemes all over the state over the past four or five decades. Who would believe there would be a public outcry against the scarcity of drinking water even in the capital cities of Jammu and Srinagar? Recently, this writer had the occasion of driving on Sumbal-Tarzoo-Sopore road, a major district road in north Kashmir’s Baramulla. Even after about half a century, the condition of the road is horrible in that it looks like having been strafed. One cannot deny enough money must have certainly gone into upgrading and annual maintenance. Where has all that money gone? Given the new-found zeal of the government to root out corruption, one would wish the chief minister made the department at least publish the details of the money spent on the road from the ’60s. Likewise, a bridge has been coming up over the flood spill channel at Bemina to connect hundreds of villages in Budgam district with the city. Even as more than a decade has passed by, its completion is nowhere in sight. These instances should serve as an eye opener for the government, more so the chief minister, to find out what has gone wrong and why? The way he has preferred to target the big sharks, one would expect the concerned planners and engineers to account for this living shame which has quite often found its reflection in media reports without causing any ripples in the corridors of power.

One is reminded of the late ’70s, when Sheikh Abdullah decided to decentralize the administration and introduced the process of planning and development at grassroots levels. Unless it was yet another of his populist vote-bank gimmick, the half-yearly or annual board meetings being held ever since have often been inconsequential betraying the proverbial taunt, “nishastand, guftand wa barchastand” (they sat, they talked and they dispersed”.) In the process, they consumed sumptuous full course “wazwan” (the highly expensive Kashmiri feasting”,) mind you, by debit to the public exchequer, in the nature of a living tribute to the memory of the self-proclaimed stalwart. One need not remind the worthy participants of these meetings that the money they spent to satiate their itch for an occasional wazwan certainly does not belong to them and they have absolutely no right to waste it that too when countless people are yet to have safe drinking water, good trafficable roads, irrigation facilities, schools and healthcare facilities. Will Ghulam Nabi Azad take note of this, let’s see. We wish his action should speak louder than his words.

The article is an editorial from KO’s archives and was originally published on Wednesday, Dec 12, 2006

M Ahmad

India’s Independence Day marks the end of the British rule in 1947 and the establishment of a free and independent Indian nation. It also marks the anniversary of the partition of the subcontinent into two countries, India and Pakistan, which occurred at midnight on August 14–15, 1947.

British rule in India began in 1757 when, following the British victory at the Battle of Plassey, the English East India Company began exercising control over the country. The East India Company ruled India for 100 years, until it was replaced by direct British rule (often referred to as the British raj) in the wake of the Indian Mutiny in 1857–58. The Indian independence movement began during World War I and was led by Mohandas K. Gandhi, who advocated for a peaceful and non-violent end to 200 year British rule.

The British Prime Minister Attlee appointed Lord Louis Mountbatten as India’s last viceroy, giving him the task to oversee British India’s independence by 30 June 1948, with the instruction to avoid partition and preserve a united India, but with adaptable authority to ensure a British withdrawal with minimal setbacks. Mountbatten hoped to revive the Cabinet Mission scheme for a federal arrangement for India. But despite his initial keenness for preserving the centre and repeated talks, the mainly Hindu Indian National Congress and the Muslim League could not agree on the shape of the new state. The tense communal situation caused him to conclude that partition had become necessary for a quicker transfer of power. Britain’s Parliament passed in July 1947 the Indian Independence Act. It ordered that the dominions of India and Pakistan be demarcated by midnight of August 14–15, 1947, and that the assets of the world’s largest empire—which had been integrated in countless ways for more than a century—be divided within a single month. Accordingly Lord Mountbatten confirmed the date for independence as 15 August 1947. As soon as this was announced, British troops were withdrawn to their barracks. In the weeks leading up to independence, responsibility for maintaining law and order was handed over to the Indian Army.

India was formed mostly of Hindu regions, while Pakistan was mostly Muslim areas. The partition of India forced millions of people to leave their homes to move to the other state. The India-Pakistan partition is regarded as one of the “largest” and “most violent” political migrations in human history. The horrors of partition in 1947 will always be a terrifying, blood-stained blot.

Partition meant that millions of people found themselves on the ‘wrong’ side of the borders. Ten million became refugees in what was the largest population movement in history. Muslims travelled to Pakistan; Sikhs and Hindus to India. Up to a million of these refugees were killed in a series of horrific massacres in the border regions. The partition displaced between 10



Image credit: Wikimedia Commons

and 20 million people along religious lines, creating overwhelming calamity in the newly-constituted dominions. It is often described as one of the largest refugee crises in history. There was large-scale violence, with estimates of the loss of life accompanying or preceding the partition disputed and varying between several hundred thousand and two million. The violent nature of the partition created an atmosphere of hostility and suspicion between India and Pakistan that affects their relationship to this day.

It is estimated that millions of people were killed and millions displaced. They lost everything overnight. They were uprooted and forced to become penniless refugees, hundreds of miles from what had been home for generations. Nearly 6.5 million Muslims moved from India to West Pakistan and 4.7 million Hindus and Sikhs moved the other way. The Partition brought with it many uncertainties, where violence, pain and distress seemed to be the only certainties. This period in history witnessed gendered violence inflicted on women where they were kidnapped, raped, publicly humiliated and had their genitalia mutilated. Women were also killed in the name of honour by their families, and many were forced to die by suicide in an attempt to protect their chastity. Across the borders, while villages were plundered and burnt, women were mutilated and sexually tortured, and trains of migrants crossing in opposite directions were found full of dismembered bodies.

The partition was a highly controversial arrangement, and remains a cause of much tension on the Indian subcontinent even today. Many British leaders including the British Viceroy, Mountbatten, were unhappy over the partition of India and he had not only been accused of rushing the process through but also is alleged to have influenced the Radcliffe Line in India’s favour. The commission took longer to decide on a final boundary than on the partition itself.

Thus the two nations were granted their independence even before there was a defined boundary between them. The boundary line between India and Pakistan, also known as the Radcliffe Line was demarcated by British barrister Sir Cyril Radcliffe on August 3, 1947. It was officially published only on August 17, 1947, two days after India got its independence from the British. On the day of partition, people of Bengal’s Muslim-dominated districts- Murshidabad and Malda- had put Pakistani flags on their houses, but they later came to know that were part of India. Chittagong, with only 2 percent Muslim population went to Pakistan

On the other hand, this day is also an occasion for celebration. On this day, the first Prime Minister of India Jawaharlal Nehru raised the Indian national flag above the Lahori Gate of the Red Fort in Delhi. In his famous Independence Day speech, he said, “Long years ago, we made a tryst with destiny and now that time comes when we shall redeem our pledge. At the stroke of today’s midnight hour, when the world sleeps, India will awake to life and freedom.”

However, a bitter memory lingers in history along with celebration. This was summed up by Mahatma Gandhi’s remark, “From tomorrow (15th August), we shall be delivered from the bondage of British Rule. But from midnight today, India will be partitioned too. While, therefore, tomorrow will be a day of rejoicing, it will be a day of sorrow as well. It will through a heavy burden of responsibility upon us”

Views expressed in the article are the author’s own and do not necessarily represent the editorial stance of Kashmir Observer
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How India Can Sustain Rapid Economic Growth

BARRY EICHENGREEN
POONAM GUPTA

NEW DELHI – One country stands out from the gloomy overall tone of the International Monetary Fund’s recent update of its World Economic Outlook. Against the backdrop of tepid 3.2% global growth in 2022, the IMF expects India’s GDP to expand by 7.4%. This is the fastest growth of any large economy except Saudi Arabia, which is the incidental beneficiary of upward pressure on global oil prices from Russian President Vladimir Putin’s war against Ukraine. India may be buying Russian crude at a discount, but, as the world’s third largest oil importer, it is still burdened by high oil prices.

One might quibble that India had an exceptionally difficult pandemic, so it now has exceptional scope for bouncing back. But other countries hit hard by COVID-19, such as Mexico, are not doing nearly as well. One might also note that, with India’s still-rapid rate of population growth, per capita incomes are rising more slowly than the aggregate GDP figures. But a population growth rate of 1% doesn’t fundamentally change the story.

India’s annual GDP growth in excess of 7% is in fact the continuation of an ongoing acceleration, from roughly 5.7% in the 1990s, to 6.2% from the turn of the century to the 2008 global financial crisis, and then to 6.9% from the crisis to the eve of the pandemic. The country has benefited from a buoyant tech sector, surprisingly robust agricultural productivity gains, and decent manufacturing growth. With the worst of the pandemic now be-

hind it, the economy is firing on all cylinders.

The question is whether this can last. Unfortunately, there are good reasons to believe that, given current policies, the answer is no.

To maintain its growth momentum, India needs to export more. The country has never been an export powerhouse, to put it mildly.

In the future, Indian exporters will face a less favorable external environment. China’s economy has slowed. The United States may not be able to avoid recession, and Europe is already in one. So it is not clear whence demand for India’s exports will come. Every Asian economy that has successfully expanded its manufacturing sector has scaled up by exporting, but this avenue may no longer be available to India

Exports of services help, but the outsourcing of back-office and customer-facing services is now poised to slow, as firms “friend-shore” more of their operations. The current government’s commitment to investing in logistics seems promising, but only time will tell how investment projects pan out. Rupee depreciation can make merchandise exports more competitive and limit consumption of imports. But the Reserve Bank of India, treating exchange rate stability as an important totem, has been reluctant to let the rupee fall.

In the future, Indian exporters will face a less favorable external environment. China’s economy has slowed. The United States may not be able to avoid recession, and Europe is already in one. So it is not clear whence demand for India’s exports will come. Every Asian economy that has successfully expanded its manufacturing sector has scaled up by exporting, but this avenue

may no longer be available to India.

The country can of course borrow abroad to finance its current-account deficit and domestic investment. But India continues to underperform as a destination for foreign direct investment, which is deterred by bureaucratic obstacles to doing business. Having discarded suggestions that it issue

turn limits the banks’ ability to provide essential investment finance to the private sector. Meanwhile, much of what the government takes in as revenue goes to entitlements and interest payments. Additional capital spending will therefore have to come from the private sector. And private savings are low by international standards.

Most fundamentally, the government seems to have found it hard to implement structural reforms. Having experienced push-back from vested interests, it has basically taken significant reforms of labor and product markets off the table.

Given its favorable demography, democratic polity, and large and diversified economy, India can in principle grow at 7% or higher for years to come. But the only route to such growth that remains open runs through structural reforms that relax all of the aforementioned constraints at a stroke.

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

Barry Eichengreen, Professor of Economics at the University of California, Berkeley, is a former senior policy adviser at the International Monetary Fund. He is the author of many books, including In Defense of Public Debt (Oxford University Press, 2021). Poonam Gupta, Director General of the National Council of Applied Economic Research, is a member of the Economic Advisory Council to the Prime Minister of India.

Book Review

How Modi's Art of Politics Is Propelling His Party

The book gives an insight into how PM Modi reinvented BJP without compromising the home-grown way of party-building.

Shadab Hassan

When Narendra Modi arrived in Jammu at the fag-end of 2013 to address his 'Lalkar' rally, he brought home the sweeping political change that would propel his parent party to ascent on the Delhi throne in a matter of months.

Behind his nationalist party's sharp gains, reveals a new treatise, was the man who wooed massive investments in his hometown Gujarat despite bad press and cutting activism.

Much of what premier Modi has achieved as the Bharatiya Janata Party leader has now become a new political tome—The Architect of the New BJP: How Narendra Modi Transformed the Party.

Authored by veteran political scribe Ajay Singh, the book was released this June by Penguin Random House India.

The paperback is inked with the insightful details about the BJP's top gun and his strategies to sweep some tough political battles of recent times.

Before his political advent in 2014, the author argues, the political reality of India was different. Hindus would vote on caste lines, while minorities lined up enbloc. At the same time, coalition politics was ruling the roost.

In this political backdrop, the party which had just two seats in 1984, came to power twice since 2014. Behind the massive mandate, the author argues, were the organisational skills of Narendra Modi.

"It's naively assumed that Modi's rise has solely to do with Hindutva plus economic development — often called 'Moditva'," Singh argues in the new Modi biography.

"But this view ignores the methods he deployed to broaden the base of his organisation, the BJP, and helped to connect it with more and more people. His ways are often old textbook methods, applied with more tenacity and conviction, and even his rivals have started imitating his innovations, albeit unwittingly."

With 35 years of reporting experience, Singh has deep insights about Modi and his methods. He constructs the chronology of how BJP as an organisation and party grew under Modi's leadership.

Singh details the grassroots and ground politics that Modi touched in the states other than Gujarat.

The thread of the political profile remains



“A part from giving an interesting account of a BJP's rise from piggybacking on the socialist group, the architect of the New BJP offers excellent details about the social psychology and political events.

riveting as the scribe details Modi's growth from his home state to a national level on the basis of his decision-making skills and cadre-creation.

Singh writes about Modi's organisational feats resulting into a paradigm shift for the BJP—the party that began to look at politics as the art of the possible. "He [Modi] realised the efficacy of trained cadre, sustained positive narratives of change and of charting new territories," Singh writes. "Because he looks at electoral demographics with a bold new standpoint and shakes up traditional structures and processes, Modi had made the BJP as a huge machine at granular levels."

Apart from giving an interesting account of a party's rise from piggybacking on the socialist group, the architect of the New BJP offers excellent details about the social psychology and political events.

Among other things, Modi's tactical feats forged an alliance—the watershed event in contemporary Kashmir politics—with the

valley-based party in the early 2015.

The fractured mandate that the post-2014 flood politics of Jammu and Kashmir threw on the political chessboard saw some shrewd dices being tried in a long-drawn political drama driven by parleys. The thumping majority in Jammu majorly being credited to his Lalkar rally rhetoric simply checkmated the shrewd politician like Mufti Mohammad Sayeed and forced him to sign the pact for the so-called "unholy" alliance.

Despite offers of grand-grouping from his Kashmir nemesis, the former home minister of India chose BJP to respect "people's mandate and sentiments". The move was dismissed as a "political suicide", but it eventually proved a win-win situation for the top BJP man who not only forced the rigid regional party on the table, but later walked away with the cake of Article 370.

But how did this Modi-led BJP achieve its 70-year-long Mission Kashmir?

Singh credits PM Modi's strategic acumen for influencing thoughts and actions of people to achieve the tough political task.

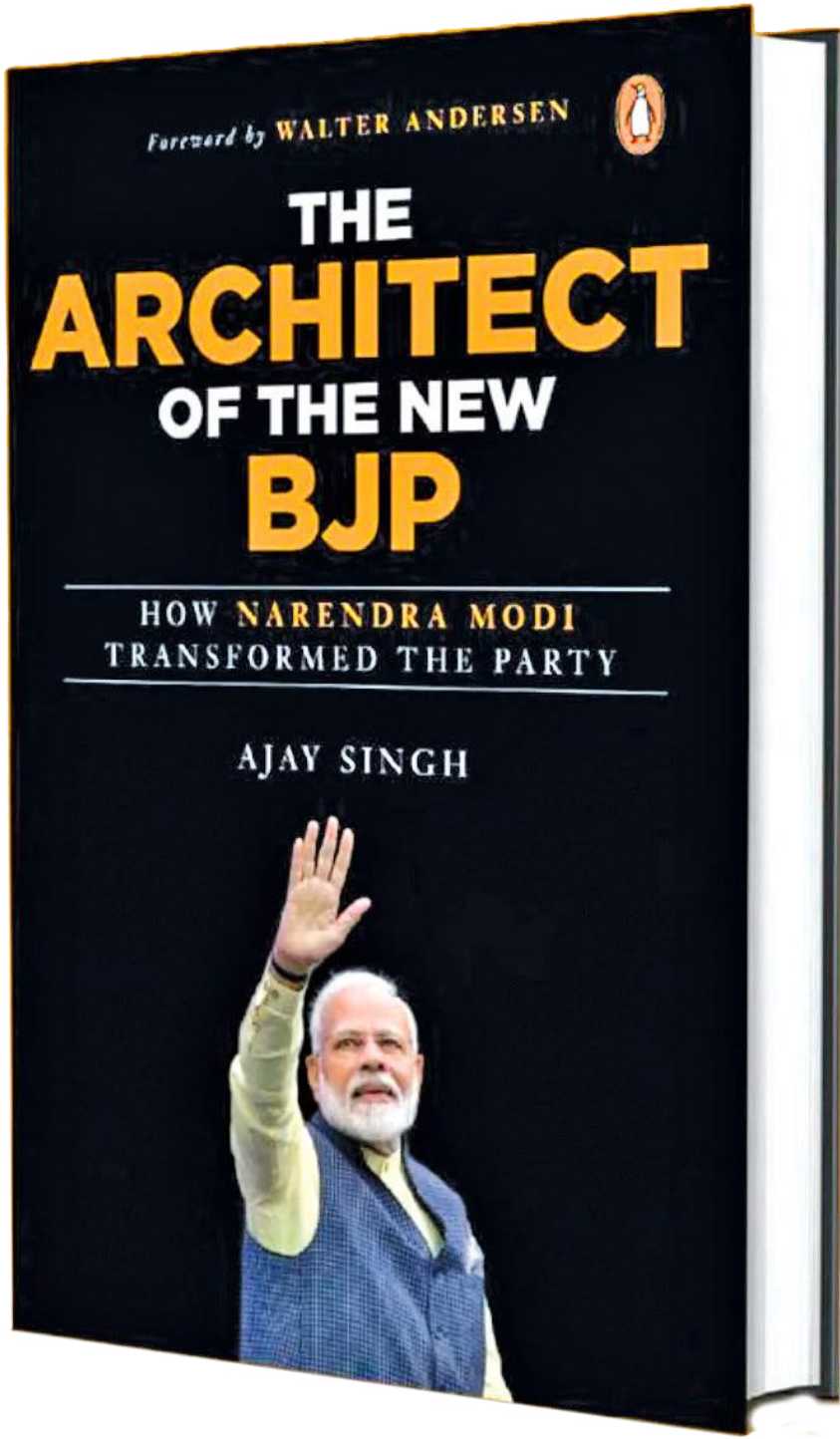
He heavily relied on a superstructure of the party that he built to forge the internal unity and external influence. The biographer details how the man charmed "outsiders" to join the caravan and went on to challenge the established norms.

Singh mentions his first meeting with Modi in 1996, when the premier was BJP's National General Secretary. While deconstructing Modi's Gujarat years and the 2014 political methods, Singh argues that a flurry of poll wins that the party achieved under his leadership essentially required an institution-creation ability, than a mere charisma.

While covering 40 years of Modi's political journey, Singh gives some rare insights into the work and manner of India's prime minister from a reporter's angle.

The scribe started working on this book in 2017 and went on to examine the past and the future of the party based on extensive interviews with workers, leaders and observers.

Giving a detailed account of Modi's courage to experiment and innovate, Singh dishes out a simple and interesting story, leaving the analytical depths for the readers who choose to look at them.



“Because he looks at electoral demographics with a bold new standpoint and shakes up traditional structures and processes, Modi has made the BJP as a huge machine at granular levels.

“The fractured mandate that the post-2014 flood politics of Jammu and Kashmir threw on the political chessboard saw some shrewd dices being tried in a long-drawn political drama driven by parleys. The thumping majority in Jammu majorly being credited to his Lalkar rally rhetoric simply checkmated the shrewd politician like Mufti Mohammad Sayeed and forced him to sign the pact for the so-called “unholy” alliance.

LONG HISTORY OF METAVERSE

Tom Boellstorff

Nattie's metaverse romance began with anonymous texting. At first "C" would admit only to living in a nearby town. Nattie eventually learned "Clem" was a man with a solitary office job like hers. For Nattie "lived, as it were, in two worlds" — the world of office tedium and an online world where "she did not lack social intercourse."

Texting drew them closer: "annoyances became lighter because she told him, and he sympathized." Nattie soon realized "she had woven a sort of romance about him who was a friend 'so near and yet so far.'" Their blossoming relationship almost failed when Clem's co-worker visited Nattie's office pretending to be Clem, but the deceit was exposed in time for their "romance of dots and dashes" to succeed.

With that last sentence I gave away the ending to "Wired Love," source of the quotes above. Published in 1879, Ella Thayer's novel of "the telegraphic world" makes remarkable predictions. Yet "Wired Love" is planted firmly during the time of what journalist Thomas Standage aptly termed the "Victorian Internet." Many aspects of the current metaverse were already familiar 143 years ago.

WHAT'S OLD IS NEW

History is more than fun facts: It deeply shapes ways of thinking and acting. As an anthropologist who's been studying virtual worlds for almost two decades, I've found that the metaverse's rich past shapes what too often appears unprecedented.

This isn't accidental. The contemporary metaverse is over-



whelmingly owned and developed by corporations whose profit models demand focus on the Next Big Thing. This typically sidelines history — with massive financial and social implications.

At its core, the metaverse is defined by the concept of the virtual world. As "Wired Love" illustrates, the telegraph and later the telephone constitute early virtual worlds.

Multi-user dungeons, or MUDs, arose in the second half of the 20th century. These virtual worlds appeared on local computer networks in the late 1970s, and entered dial-up internet services in the 1980s and 1990s. Richard Bartle, co-creator of the first MUD, noted that by 1993 over 10% of all internet traffic was on MUDs. Virtual worlds with graphics, including avatars, date back to Habitat, launched in 1985.

With advent of broadband in the 2000s, many key aspects of the contemporary metaverse became established. Longtime metaverse observers like Wagner

James Au have repeatedly emphasized how many "new" developments have reshaped long-standing debates.

REAL ESTATE AND THE LAWS OF VIRTUAL PHYSICS

Consider what metaverse history reveals about virtual real estate. Pundits enthuse about the virtual "land rush" and emphasize location. For instance, virtual world The Sandbox sells plots for around \$2,300, but in December 2021 someone paid \$450,000 to purchase land next to a virtual mansion owned by rap star Snoop Dogg.

Why the price spike? Co-founder Sebastien Borget explained that The Sandbox has a finite number of plots, and people can access only adjacent plots. Thus, only a few people can own virtual land next to Snoop Dogg.

I believe that The Sandbox is deeply indebted to the virtual world Second Life, where spaces to practice building have been termed "sandboxes" since its

2002 launch.

Second Life originally had "point-to-point teleportation" (P2P). You could arrive anywhere in an instant. But in 2003 Linden Lab, the company that owns Second Life, disabled P2P. Residents trying to reach a destination would appear at the nearest "telehub."

This had implications for real estate. Valuable for businesses and entertainment, plots of land near telehubs sold for top dollar — until 2005, when Linden Lab suddenly announced the end of telehubs and the return of P2P.

Land near former telehubs no longer had special value; some people lost thousands of dollars. The most powerful landlord can't change the laws of physics, but Linden Lab could literally recode scarcity out of existence.

Fast-forward almost 20 years. Land next to Snoop Dogg's virtual mansion is scarce: A plot could cost \$450,000 because The Sandbox doesn't have P2P. But were the company to suddenly add P2P,

“Fast-forward almost 20 years. Land next to Snoop Dogg's virtual mansion is scarce: A plot could cost \$450,000 because The Sandbox doesn't have P2P. But were the company to suddenly add P2P, that \$450,000 investment could become nearly worthless. That pundits have tended to ignore this fact reveals the danger of forgetting metaverse history

that \$450,000 investment could become nearly worthless. That pundits have tended to ignore this fact reveals the danger of forgetting metaverse history.

IMMERSION — SENSORY OR SOCIAL?

Another example of metaverse history's importance concerns the idea of virtual environments. Virtual worlds don't just connect places; they're places in their own right.

People played chess using the telegraph 150 years ago; those virtual chessboards weren't located on either end of the wire. In 1992 Bruce Sterling noted that telephone calls don't take place in your phone or in the other person's phone. They take place in a virtual environment: "The place between the phones. The indefi-

nite place out there, where the two of you, two human beings, actually meet and communicate."

In 1990, Habitat's founders concluded that the metaverse is defined more by the interactions among people within it than by the technology that creates it. They were particularly skeptical of virtual reality technologies, noting "the almost mystical euphoria that currently seems to surround all this hardware is, in our opinion, both excessive and somewhat misplaced."

At issue isn't VR's potential, but the Matrix-like idea that sensory immersion is necessary to the metaverse in every instance. The key distinction is between sensory immersion and social immersion. The idea that virtual environments require VR misunderstands "immersion." It's also ableist, since not everyone can see or hear. The metaverse's history indicates that social immersion is the metaverse's foundation.

LEARNING FROM HISTORY

The metaverse has a long way to go, but it already has a long history. Proximity and immersion are just two examples of crucial topics this history can demystify.

This is important because the current, rampant mystification isn't accidental. The emerging version of the metaverse is overwhelmingly owned and developed by Big Tech. These companies seek to manufacture the perception that the metaverse is new and futuristic. But metaverse histories are real; they can reveal past mistakes and contribute to better virtual futures.

By arrangements with The Conversation

Multi-Specialty Medical Camp Held At Noor Bagh

Observer News Service

Srinagar: Directorate of Health Services Kashmir on Saturday organized a multi-specialty medical camp at Health Centre Noor Bagh Srinagar under the aegis of Azadi Ka Amrit Mahotsav.

The medical camp was organized by the DHSK, team CMO Srinagar, NGO Art of Living Bangalore and 105 Rajputna Rifles BB cantt Srinagar.

During the medical camp, specialist consultation was given to 800 patients by Dr Uffage MD obstetrics and gynecology, Dr Majid Shafi psychiatry and addiction treatment, CMO Srinagar Dr Jameel Mir (Orthopaedics).

During the medical, RBSK and NCD teams also screened the general patients. Free medicines were provided by the medical team Zone SR Ganj.

Har Ghar Tiranga Campaign

Srinagar Admin. Displays 1850 Meters Long Tricolour At Bakshi Stadium

Observer News Service

Srinagar: To mark the celebrations under 'Har Ghar Tiranga' campaign as a part of ongoing 'Azadi Ka Amrit Mahotsav', the District Administration Srinagar Sunday established a National record by displaying 1850 Metres long National Flag at Bakshi Stadium to celebrate 75 years of Independence.

The first ever largest flag holding ceremony in Jammu and Kashmir was presided over by the Chief Secretary, Dr Arun Kumar Mehta.

The Deputy Commissioner Srinagar, Mohammad Aijaz Asad and all District & Sectoral Officers, besides 5000 citizens gathered together at the venue to take part in the National Flag holding ceremony to mark 75 years of Independence under Har Ghar



Tiranga campaign as a part of Azadi Ka Amrit Mahotsav.

On the occasion, the Chief Secretary took a round of the stadium to inspect the 1850 metres long flag held/displayed by thousands of citi-

zens to mark the celebrations under 'Har Ghar Tiranga' campaign.

Speaking on the occasion, the Chief Secretary lauded the efforts of the District Administration Srinagar for or-

ganizing such a grand event of displaying the 1850 meters long National Flag that instills the spirit of nationalism, sacrifice and fraternity amongst the citizens.

Deputy Commissioner, Srinagar also spoke on the occasion and appreciated all the participants for making the event a grand success.

It is pertinent to mention that around 500 persons were engaged to roll and unroll the 1850 meters long Flag as per the National Flag Code. Besides, it took 10 days to stitch the record 1850 meter long national flag.

It is also worth mentioning that the 1850 Metres long national flag unfurled today at Bakshi stadium is one of the longest national flags of its kind displayed in the country. The Flag was made of Khadi Fabric.

Teenage Girl From Srinagar Set To Publish Her Second Book

Agencies

Srinagar: An 18-year-old girl from Srinagar is set to publish her second book, Esoteric (Poetry) and is going to be released on Amazon, Kindle, Kobo, Google Play books and Flipkart.

The book is being published by JEC Publication.

Zabrain Wandroo, a resident of Khanyar who is student of Psychology at Amar Singh College Srinagar published her first book "Her Suicide Note" in 2021.

Zabrain said that she has been writing poetry for 2-3 years and described her passion.

Wandroo said that in her 64 page second book, she has written 47 poems which were mainly her thoughts and memories that she has been unable to share with anyone.

The author has received an appreciation award from India Book Of Records for her first book at the age of 16.

She is a naturalist and a firm

believer of Islam and she finds solace in gaining and sharing knowledge.

Wandroo said that she is an avid reader which has induced the passion of writing in her and her aim in life is to work for society and become a successful author.

"My main motive behind publishing this work is to show people that writing is a way to empty your mind from stress and share the thoughts which we are usually unable to speak about," she said, adding "A lot of people usually find it difficult to share their problems with others and this stress eats them up from inside and writing it down can possibly help one to stress less and feel better."

A person should share his/her knowledge because if a person leaves this world, their knowledge will stay alive," she said, adding that she strongly believes that culture defines a person and one should always entertain it's culture no matter how low or high they are in life.

KU's NSS Organizes Mega Cleanliness Drive To Celebrate Azadi Ka Amrit Mahotsav

Observer News Service

Srinagar: Kashmir University's office of National Service Scheme (NSS) on Sunday organized a mega cleanliness drive at the main campus in connection with the ongoing celebrations related to Azadi Ka Amrit Mahotsav in the University.

Top officers of the University including Registrar Dr Nisar A Mir, Controller of Examinations Dr Majid Zaman, Provost (Boys) Prof Aijaz Ahmad Wani and NSS Coordinator Dr Mussavir Ahmad led the cleanliness drive under the banner of 'Swachhata Abhiyan'.

Scores of students and NSS volunteers picked up brooms to clean the main campus premises and raise awareness on the importance of clean environs for people's well-

being.

Speaking on the occasion, Registrar Dr Nisar A Mir said the commemoration of Azadi Ka Amrit Mahotsav at the University of



Kashmir has seen active involvement of University faculty, students and non-teaching staff in various events which highlighted the country's glorious past and its journey of 75 years since the Inde-

pendence.

"Our NSS office, Department of Students Welfare, Law Department, Directorate of Physical Education and Sports, Sheikh-ul-Alam Chair and other departments have organised very important events in the last 15 days. More events are in the pipeline," he said.

The cleanliness drive was also attended by Hostel Wardens Dr Javiad Sheikh and Dr Mehraj Ahmad besides NSS programme officers Dr Henna Basharat and Dr Shazia Malik.

NSS Coordinator Dr Mussavir Ahmad gave a brief about the activities being conducted by NSS in the University and its affiliated colleges. He thanked the University administration for its support to NSS programmes.



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'Chhari-Mubarak' Puja Marks Ritual Culmination Of Amarnath Yatra

Press Trust Of India

SRINAGAR: 'Chhari-Mubarak', 'Pujan' and 'Visarjan' was performed on the banks of Lidder river in Jammu and Kashmir's Pahalgam on Sunday, marking the ritual culmination of the annual Amarnath yatra.

The annual pilgrimage of Chhari-Mubarak the saffron-robed holy mace of Lord Shiva -- culminated at Pahalgam with its last rituals 'Pujan' and 'Visarjan', its custodian Mahant Deependra Giri said in a statement.

Group of seers and pilgrims who had come from various parts of the country joined the puja. Later, 'Karri-Pakouri' 'bhandara' was organized and

'dakshina' was offered to them.

Addressing the gathering, Giri congratulated and thanked the Indian Army, BSF, CRPF, J-K Police, Health Department, people and all the agencies involved with making arrangements, for the successful yatra.

He appreciated the services rendered by all the voluntary organizations for providing langar, medical and other facilities to the pilgrims. He also expressed happiness over the cleanliness at the camps.

Giri appreciated the efforts made by Shri Amarnath Ji Shrine Board, Jammu and Kashmir as well as Anantnag administration for making annual pilgrimage a success.

Private Unaided B.Ed Colleges Hold Working Body Polls After 16 Years



Sajad Ahmad Wani
Elected President, Syed
Athar Treasurer

Observer News Service

SRINAGAR: Sajad Ahmad Wani, the founder of Sheikh-ul Alam College, was elected as the President of the Kashmir private unaided B. Ed Colleges Association in an election held after a gap of sixteen years, reports said Sunday.

The elections for the eight posts of the working body were held under the supervision of the Chairman Election Committee (CEC) Advocate Peerzada Abid at Adhaan Hotel Lawaypora in the city outskirts on Saturday.

Abid said that elections were held using a secret ballot box to choose a democratically elected body that will look after the day to day affairs of the private unaided B.Ed colleges running across the Valley.

The decision to hold elections was taken in the backdrop of general body meetings held on

July 2 and July 28 at Lake City College of Education, Shalimar and Dr Iqbal Training College, respectively.

Besides Wani, 7 more members were elected to the various posts of the working body.

Dr A R Khadim Of Green Valley College, Lethpora, Pampore was elected as Chief Organizer, Prince Parvez of Wular Valley College, Bandipora was elected as Vice President North, Faroze Ahmad Sheikh of Maxwell College Pulwama as VP For South, Arshid Gul Baber of Afarwat College Of Edu, Janbazpora Baramulla as General Secretary, Manzoor Ahmad Khosa of Kashmir Paradise College, Parihaspora, Pattan as Joint Secretary, Syed Athar Of Lake City College, Shalimar as Treasurer and Mohammad Shafi Lone of Islamic Discovery College, Kulgam as Assistant Treasurer.

Pertinently, the last elections were held in 2006, in which prominent educationist and the founder of Caset College Prof C.L Vishen was elected as the President.

Info Dept Auditorium Named After Santoor Maestro Bhajan Sopori

Press Trust Of India

SRINAGAR: The auditorium hall of Jammu and Kashmir's information department building has been named after Santoor maestro Pandit Bhajan Sopori, an official statement said on Sunday.

The maestro, who was a native of north Kashmir's Sopore district, passed away in June. "Sanction is hereby accorded to

the naming of Auditorium Hall, Information Department, Polo ground, Srinagar in the memory of Late Pandit Bhajan Sopori," the J-K government said in an order.

A Padma Shri, Sopori had received multiple awards throughout his career including the Sangeet Natak Akademi Award in 1992 and the Jammu and Kashmir State Lifetime Achievement Award.

Security Beefed Up In Jammu Ahead Of I-Day



Press Trust Of India

JAMMU: Ahead of Independence Day, security has been beefed up and frisking of vehicles has increased here to ensure an incident-free celebration, police said.

The Independence Day celebration will be held at M A Stadium here on Monday.

Police said in-charges of Border Police Posts are directed to keep a vigil on infiltration routes used by anti-national elements in the past. Members

of Village Defence Committees and defence personnel will co-ordinate with each other to ensure security, they added.

Amid heightened vigilance, Jammu witnessed scores of rallies by government and non-government organisations, including political parties, army, police and schools in the last two days, they said.

On Sunday, a walkathon was organised under 'Har Ghar Tiranga' campaign to mark the celebrations under 'Azadi Ka Amrit Mahotsav' on Sunday.

The walkathon started from Gulshan Ground Jammu and culminated at Maharaja Hari Singh Park via Jammu University.

Rajeev Rai Bhatnagar, advisor to Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha, Additional Director General of Police Mukesh Singh and president of Chamber of Commerce Arun Gupta participated in the walkathon.

Speaking on the occasion, Bhatnagar urged people to hoist the national flag on Independence Day.

LG Launches 2nd Phase Of Skill Dev Training Program

5000 Youth To Be Trained In BFSI Sector

Observer News Service

SRINAGAR: Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha on Sunday launched the second phase of Skill Development Training Program for women and youth in Banking, Financial Services & Insurance (BFSI) Sector, here at SKICC.

In the second phase, 5000 youth from UT will be trained to tap the employment avenues in the flourishing Banking & Financial Services sector.

Speaking on the occasion, the Lt Governor appreciated the efforts of Mission Youth, Bombay Stock Exchange (BSE) and State Bank of India for coming together to provide a vibrant medium to train and empower 5000 J&K youth in BFSI Sector.

Emphasizing on equal participation of girls in the BFSI training programme, the Lt Governor asked the Mission Youth and BSE to ensure that 2500 young girls from the UT are enrolled in the training.

He further called for ensuring minimum participation of 200 youth from every district and focusing on those from underprivileged sections of the society, followed by systematic facilitation for starting their professional career.

Highlighting the initiatives taken by Mission Youth to transform the youth into ambassadors of peace, prosperity and development, the Lt Governor said that the various programmes aimed at Livelihood Generation, Education, Skill Development, providing systematic financial assistance has led to opening new vistas for our enterprising youths, besides connecting them with various development oriented initiatives of the government.

Mission Youth has partnered



with reputed institutions of the country including BSE Institute, ICICI Foundation, Ashok Leyland, Wipro etc. with an aim to facilitate skilling of youth in various high employability potential sectors, said the Lt Governor.

Despite Covid pandemic, more than 30,000 youth, including 11,600 girls, have been provided with direct livelihood means during 2021-22, he added.

Stressing that Financial Inclusion is the key to achieving sustainable development and improving the quality of life, the Lt Governor said that the recent reforms and initiatives of the government have made banking and credit facilities accessible to all.

Earlier, J&K lacked a solid mechanism for providing financial and banking literacy to the youth as banking facilities were limited to a few, he further observed.

The talented youth of J&K are playing an instrumental role in making UT a star performer in startup ecosystem. We are making dedicated efforts to impart financial and banking education to our youth, harnessing their potential by creating an enabling environment and equipping them with skills as per requirements of the changing

global market, the Lt Governor said.

The Lt Governor observed that the administration will continue to run institutional and employment oriented training programs in the UT through 'Mission Youth' to empower the youths of J&K.

The industrial revolution taking place in the UT and the massive private investment coming to J&K will provide 5 to 6 lakh employment opportunities to the youth, the Lt Governor further added.

A number of customized livelihood generation schemes including Mumkin, Tejaswini, Spurring Entrepreneurship, Rise Together, Avasar, Re-defining Paradise and Home Stay Development have already been designed for the youth of Jammu and Kashmir wherein the government is acting as facilitator for the youth to establish a sustainable livelihood in various economic sectors, it was informed.

The Lt Governor also made special mention of the youth who have successfully established their ventures, and are not only earning livelihood for themselves but are also providing employment to many others.

Max Gallantry Medals To JKP, CRPF For Anti-Militancy Ops

Press Trust Of India

NEW DELHI: The CRPF and Jammu and Kashmir Police were decorated with the maximum gallantry awards for undertaking counter-terrorist operations in the Union Territory as the Centre announced various service medals for a total of 1,082 personnel on the occasion of Independence Day.

The Union Home ministry issued the roll of honour on Sunday, the eve of 76th Independence Day, for the personnel of all the state police forces as well as the Central Armed Police Forces (CAPFs).

The decorations include a total of 347 police medal for gallantry (PMG), 87 President's police medal for distinguished service and 648 police medals for meritorious service.

Under the PMG category of medals, 204 personnel are being awarded for their gallant action in Jammu and Kashmir, 80 for displaying bravery in Left Wing Extremism or Naxal violence-affected areas and 14 personnel for showing bravery in North-East Region, the home ministry

said.

In all, 30 PMGs were given posthumously. A number of personnel were decorated with the gallantry medal for the second or third time with CRPF Assistant Commandant Loukrakpam Ibomcha Singh getting it the sixth time.

The maximum gallantry medals at 109 have been received by the Central Reserve Police Force (CRPF) followed by 108 to the J&K Police, 19 to the Border Security Force (BSF) and six each to the Indo-Tibetan Border Police (ITBP) and Sashastra Seema Bal (SSB).

The CRPF, according to officials, got 83 bravery medals out of the 109 in its kitty for operations in J&K.

The paramilitary is the largest central force deployed in the UT and undertakes combat against terrorists along with the JKP and its special squad SOG (special operations group) and the Army.

Among the state police forces, 42 gallantry medals have been given to Maharashtra, 15 to Chhattisgarh among others forces and Central Armed Police Forces (CAPFs).

Human Resources Management Vital For Efficacious Health Care Across J&K: Govt

Observer News Service

SRINAGAR: The Government of Jammu and Kashmir apart from establishing a robust healthcare delivery system also focuses on effective human resource management being vital for efficacious health care is provided to public across J&K, an official spokesperson said.

During the period of COVID-19 pandemic, he said, when everything in the country came to standstill, it was health system and its dedicated staff members along with front line workers which worked round the clock to provide all possible assistance to patients affected with virus.

"With the constant and dedicated duties during the pandemic, the morale of the staff members like Medical, paramedical, technical, ministerial and other allied supportive staff, had to be encouraged. The timely resolution of service issues of these employees with regard to career progressions/ promotions, among others was need of the hour," he added.

In the backdrop of this, the spokesperson said, an underlying issue regarding non-availability of updated Service Recruitment Rules of J&K Health & Family Welfare (Subordinate) Service, which obstructed the existing staff members from their rights to avail promotions from the last more than 03 decades, has been resolved on fast track basis.

"This initiative paved the way towards removal of stagnation of staff members (Ministerial/

Para-medics) and also introduced a new series of academic and technical qualifications in the updated Recruitment Rules," he said.

The updated cadre strength of existing categories of employees along with newly created/upgraded posts will definitely prove a step forward towards employment generation as well as career progression for all such in-service manpower whose morale was low due to undefined career progression in the old Recruitment Rules.

With the issuance of these Rules, the Health & Medical Education Department has been able to clear promotions of 1093 posts of in-service employees belonging to different categories within a record spell of one month.

The process of conducting Departmental Promotion Committees (DPCs) for the purpose will continue till the backlog position is cleared. Besides, regular DPCs are also being conducted concurrently in other subordinate wings of the H&ME Department like Government Medical Colleges of UT of J&K, Government Dental Colleges and Department of Ayush.

The H&ME Department extends best wishes to all such employees who have been recently promoted/regularized including those whose cases are being considered by the Department on priority for assuming new positions with higher responsibilities and will ensure that desired level of expectations are achieved towards the delivery of better health care services.

Finance Ministry Plans To Review Exemption-Free Tax Regime To Make It More Attractive

Press Trust Of India

NEW DELHI: The finance ministry is proposing to soon review the exemption-free new tax regime with a view to making it more attractive for individual income taxpayers, sources said.

Eventually, sources said, the government aims to establish a system where there are no exemptions and the complex old tax regime with exemptions and deductions is terminated.

The Union Budget 2020-21 introduced a new tax regime. Taxpayers were given the option to choose between the old regime with various deductions and exemptions and the new tax regime that offered lower tax rates without exemptions and deductions.

The intention behind the move was to provide significant relief to the individual taxpayers and to simplify the income-tax law.

Asked about the experience of the new tax regime, sources said, there are clear signs that people who have finished their home and education loans are



willing to shift to the new tax regime as they have no exemptions to claim.

Sources further said that lowering of taxes in the new regime would make the new tax regime more attractive.

A similar tax regime for corporate taxpayers was introduced in September 2019 by significantly lowering rates and removing exemptions.

The government had announced a cut in base corporate tax for then existing companies to 22 per cent from 30 per cent; and for new manufacturing firms, incorporated after October 1, 2019, and starting operations before March 31, 2024, to 15 per cent from 25 per cent. Companies opting for these new tax rates will have to forego all exemptions and incentives.

Lic Keen To Re-Enter Mediclaim Segment, Awaiting Regulatory Clarity: Chairman

Press Trust Of India

MUMBAI: Insurance behemoth Life Insurance Corporation (LIC) is keen to re-enter the mediclaim segment as and when the regulator provides clarity on the issue, its chairman has said.

"We are already doing a lot of long-term health protection and guaranteed health products. And we are evaluating the suggestion that the regulator Irdai made recently," LIC Chairman M R Kumar told PTI when asked about the same during its earnings call over the weekend.

The chairman further said, "I don't think it will be difficult for us as we already offer some of the health products."

Mediclaim policies, which are indemnity-based health plans, are the best-selling health insurance products in the country.

However, in 2016, the Insur-

ance Regulatory and Development Authority of India (Irdai) had asked life insurers to withdraw indemnity-based health plans from the market.

Life insurers since then have been allowed to offer only fixed benefit health plans.

Under indemnity-based health insurance plans, the insurer provides reimbursement for the money spent on medical treatment up to the sum insured.

For fixed benefit health insurance plans, a fixed amount is paid out of the sum insured for pre-determined illnesses or medical conditions.

Recently, the new Irdai Chairman Debasish Panda had said it was time life insurers re-entered the health vertical as he had given a mandate to the industry to ensure that every citizen has a health insurance policy by 2030.

However, Panda later clarified



that the regulator was only evaluating the pros and cons of allowing life insurers to sell health insurance policies and that no decision has been taken yet.

Globally, in most markets, life insurers sell health policies.

Currently, there are 24.50 lakh life insurance agents in the country, while there are only 3.60 lakh agents in the general and health insurance category.

If life insurers are allowed into the health insurance sector, the

number of agents will jump by 600 per cent, increasing health insurance penetration significantly in the country.

However, according to industry watchers, there are some difficulties in the proposal.

For instance, the claims department in a life insurer is oriented towards payment of the claim on death or policy maturity but health insurance claims are logged by around 7 per cent of the insured during the year.

But others counter that life insurers already have the necessary infrastructure in terms of distribution and policy servicing to offer these plans.

In fact, this is an opportunity to further elevate the experience from what it was before 2016 when these policies were being offered by life insurers.

Though regulations vary from country to country, the concept

Cumulative COVID-19 Vaccine Doses Administered In India Cross 208.21 Crore-Mark: Health Ministry

Agenceis

New Delhi: The cumulative number of COVID-19 vaccine doses administered in the country crossed the 208.21 crore-mark on Sunday, with over 20 lakh doses administered till 7 pm, the Union health ministry said.

The daily vaccination tally is expected to increase with the compilation of the final reports for the day by late night.

With 16,24,241 precaution doses administered to those aged 18-59 years till 7 pm, the total number of precaution doses given in this age-group has reached 6,68,15,334 so far, the ministry data said.

Those aged 60 years and above have been administered 3.65 crore precaution doses so far.

Over 3.97 crore children in the age group of 12-14 years have been administered the first dose, while more than 6.14 crore adolescents in the age group 15-18 years



have been given the first dose.

The countrywide vaccination drive was rolled out on January 16 last year with healthcare workers getting inoculated in the first phase. Vaccination of frontline workers started from February 2 last year.

The next phase of COVID-19 vaccination commenced on March 1 last year for people over 60 years of age and those aged 45 and above with specified comorbid conditions.

Vaccination for all people aged

more than 45 years began on April 1 last year. The government then decided to expand the ambit of the vaccination drive by allowing everyone above 18 years to be inoculated against Covid from May 1 last year.

Inoculation of adolescents in the age group of 15-18 years commenced on January 3. India began administering precaution doses of vaccines to healthcare and frontline workers and those aged 60 and above with comorbidities from January 10.

India, China Must Not Allow Their Politics To Interfere In Internal Affairs Of Neighbours: Bhutan's Former Premier

Press Trust of India

New Delhi: India and China must "not allow their politics to interfere in the internal affairs" of their neighbouring countries, Bhutan's former prime minister Tshering Tobgay said on Sunday.

Responding to a question by former foreign secretary Shyam Saran at an event here, he said as long as there is interference in their internal affairs, the countries sandwiched between India and China will find it exceedingly difficult to grow.

I think both countries India and China must not allow their politics to interfere in the internal affairs of the neighborhood.

"As long as there's interference in the internal affairs in the neighboring countries, I do believe that these countries will find it exceedingly difficult to grow, he said at a lecture organised by think tank Centre for Policy Research.



China is going to grow, they've already been growing, they're going to keep going, India is growing and because it has the largest population and the youngest population, its growth trajectory is going to be unstoppable.

"The question is for the neighborhood, those countries that are sandwiched are we going to grow or not, he added.

The former Bhutan prime

minister said India has demonstrated its commitment to its neighbours but they have failed to capitalise on the opportunity for meaningful regional cooperation. He also said that India should be given a permanent seat in the United Nations as the world has much to gain from it.

The Bhutanese leader recalled how in 2014, Prime Minister Narendra Modi

invited the leader of all SAARC countries for his inauguration.

No other country outside the SAARC membership was extended that honour. Modi's gesture of goodwill was aimed at bringing together and strengthening all the countries in the neighborhood, he said. That message of uniting and fulfilling such potential has somehow not been accorded the urgency and importance it deserves, he said.

We must do more. Similarly in 2019, after coming to power for a second term Modi ji invited the BIMSTEC leaders for the inauguration ceremony.

"Once again, we are demonstrating India's resolute commitment towards its neighbours. But once again, our neighborhood has failed to capitalise on the opportunity for meaningful regional cooperation. Like SAARC, BIMSTEC too has a long way to go, he said.

CONTD. FROM FRONT & 5WTH PAGE

J&K Is Scripting

who had made significant sacrifices to provide us a free and independent nation, while fulfilling our obligations towards the future of the golden Jammu and Kashmir of 2047.

Sinha, he said, further stated that the Prime Minister started world's biggest Jan Abhiyaan and every part of the nation including Jammu Kashmir is witnessing Har Ghar Tiranga Utsav.

"We are citizens of a great nation where every inch of the pious land is filled with ancient values, culture and traditions," the LG added.

The spokesperson said that the LG observed that Amrit Mahotsav of Azadi is being celebrated in Shopian, Kulgam, Jammu, Kishtwar, Rajouri, Poonch, and in every district, every village and 1 crore 30 lakh people are walking on the path of progress and peace envisioned by the Prime Minister.

The LG, he said, also asserted that J&K is scripting history in every sector.

"Unprecedented performance in various parameters has been recorded, improving the standard of living of every citizen with equality and social justice," he added.

Heavy Security Blanket

country is celebrating Azadi ka Amrit Mahotsav to mark 75 years of Independence.

In Kashmir, where the main function will be held at the Sher-e-Kashmir Cricket Stadium with Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha presiding over it, drones, snipers and policemen in plain clothes have been deployed for surveillance.

Vehicle checking has been intensified, according to officials, while police and paramilitary forces have been deployed in strength at many places in the city and elsewhere in the Valley to thwart any attempts by militants to disrupt the celebrations.

Random search of vehicles and frisking of people is also being carried out at several places in the Valley, they said.

Sharp shooters have been deployed at all high-rise buildings around the stadium to prevent any untoward incidents.

Human and technical surveillance is being used to ensure that the day passes off peacefully.

"Aerial watch is being maintained in major markets of Srinagar city, looking for miscreants, criminals and subversive elements. Such elements should know that there is an eye above looking for them," the Srinagar police said on Twitter.

Following a call by banned militant groups United Liberation Front of Asom (Independent) (ULFA(I)) and National Socialist Council of Nagaland (NSCN) to "boycott" the Independence Day celebrations and "total shutdown" in five states of the Northeast, security has been tightened.

In Agartala, additional forces have been deployed in strategic areas, while dog squads have been put into service to thwart any untoward incident, officials said.

A senior BSF officer said the 856-km international border has been put on high alert to ensure peace during the celebrations.

In Assam, a multilayer security arrangement has been put in place across parade grounds and other sensitive places, a top police officer said, adding that that they have information on some movements of the insurgent groups in a few districts, mostly in those along the inter-state border with Arunachal Pradesh.

"We have got inputs of militant movements in a few districts, mostly in Upper Assam along the inter-state border with Arunachal. The district SPs have been asked to deploy

a multi-layered security system in and around the parade grounds in the state," he said on condition of anonymity.

The main Independence Day function in Assam will be held at the Veterinary College Playground in Khanapara in Guwahati.

On August 5, ULFA(I) and NSCN issued a joint statement calling for a "boycott" of the Independence Day and a "total shutdown" from Sunday midnight till 6 pm on Monday.

The police forces in Punjab and Uttar Pradesh (UP) also made some key arrests of suspects linked to terror groups, ahead of the Independence Day.

In UP, the police has arrested a 19-year-old man for allegedly having links with terror group Jaish-e-Mohammed and being in touch with handlers in Pakistan and Afghanistan through social media, officials said on Sunday.

The Punjab Police on Sunday claimed to have busted a Pakistan ISI-backed terror module and arrested four persons. The operation was carried out jointly by the Punjab Police and the Delhi Police.

Punjab Chief Minister Bhagwant Mann will unfurl the tricolour in a state-level function in Ludhiana on Monday, while his Haryana counterpart Manohar Lal Khattar will unfurl the flag in Panipat's Samalkha amid tight security.

Situation In J&K

are going to their schools without any fear, employees are attending their offices without any fear, the businessmen are doing their businesses without any fear. Daily life is going on normally.

There is no obstruction in any way today and everyone, people, security forces, are working together for that. So, the security situation is much better and we will further better it, he said.

Singh said the anti-infiltration grid has been made stronger which has resulted in almost zero infiltration along the borders.

There were attempts, and they succeeded in a few, but in total, the situation along the border is much better than before and there is a much better control. Now, since it has become difficult to come via the ground, they are using drones to transport weapons as the neighbour continues its sinister designs, he said.

The use of drones has become a challenge, but we are fighting it very well. Huge modules involved in this in the last two years have been busted and the majority of the items like weapons and narcotics have been seized. We will take stronger action on it and will overcome this challenge, the DGP said.

Singh said the graph of militancy is coming down but Pakistan's conspiracies have not stopped yet

Small, young boys, who are not yet to mature, are being radicalised one way or the other and involved in the new form of hybrid terrorism. A common boy who till yesterday was studying and living his life normally is radicalised and suddenly involved in some terror act and the road to his return is closed, he said.

Singh said he was happy that several of such youths have returned to the mainstream with the help of police, security forces and their families.

The recruitment has come down, but there is a need to stop it and bring it totally down and we are working on it. The way infiltration is down, the recruitment is coming down, the graph of militancy will come down as well, he said.

Asked about the presence of militants across the LoC, he said the launchpads were intact.

In fact, there is a huge pressure to push those, including from Kashmir,

who have been staying there for long, he said, adding security forces will continue to act on stopping them from sneaking into the valley.

To a question about the security measures taken for the smooth conduct of the Independence Day functions, Singh said all the security arrangements have been put in place.

Preparations have been done. Where there is a need for technology, it has been used. Every measure, which is needed, has been taken to make the security stringent, he said.

LG Grooms People

All of us must strive for the realization of the dream of making a peaceful, progressive and prosperous Jammu Kashmir," the LG said, as per an official spokesperson.

In this "Amrit Kaal Khand", he said, let us all strengthen our resolve to build a fear-free, corruption-free and terrorism-free Jammu and Kashmir, a J&K which our forefathers had dreamt of; where violence has no place, where social and religious harmony form the very core of the society; where women, children, youth, aged, poor, underprivileged have equal rights, live a quality life and are equal partners in India's developmental journey.

J&K Govt Scarps

appointed in the Union territory of J&K on an equal footing with their earlier appointed counterparts who may be occupying the same/comparable posts in the cadre.

"Further, a significant number of grievances from the newly appointed employees and in-service candidates who apply for higher posts but are not given pay protection, will also be alleviated," he added.

Earlier, the spokesperson said, the Establishment-cum-Selection Committee (ECSC) headed by the Chief Secretary had found these rules to be discriminatory in nature facing several impediments in their implementation, and had recommended their scrapping.

Rajeev Rai Bhatnagar, Advisor to the Lieutenant Governor, Dr. Arun Kumar Mehta, Chief Secretary, J&K and Nitishwar Kumar, Principal Secretary to the Lieutenant Governor attended the meeting.

Encounter In Downtown

The police said the injured personnel was shifted to the GMC hospital in Anantnag where he succumbed to injuries.

(Inputs from PTI)

PM Pays Homage

generation the torture and pain suffered by the countrymen and will inspire citizens to maintain peace and harmony "forever".

"The partition of the country in 1947 is that inhuman chapter of Indian history, which can never be forgotten. The violence and hatred claimed millions of lives and displaced innumerable people.

"Today, on 'Partition Horrors Remembrance Day', I bow to the lakhs of people who suffered the brunt of the Partition," he said in Hindi.

While announcing his government's decision to observe the 'Partition Horrors Remembrance Day', Modi had noted that millions of people were displaced and a huge number of people lost their lives due to the mindless hate and violence.

BJP president J P Nadda remembered those who paid an unbearable price during the Partition. "We must never forget how politics of selfishness & personal interests led

to the Partition & pain," he said.

The BJP also hit back at Ramesh for his swipe at Savarkar over two-nation theory, with its IT department head Amit Malviya saying that it was first propounded by AMU founder Syed Ahmed Khan way back in 1876, much before Savarkar was even born.

Savarkar and the Hindu Mahasabha had, in fact, opposed the idea of the Partition till the very end, he claimed.

Congress leader Ramesh also asked, "Will the PM also recall today Shyama Prasad Mookherjee, the founder of the Jan Sangh, who championed the partition of Bengal against the wishes of Sarat Chandra Bose, and who sat in free India's first Cabinet while the tragic consequences of the Partition were becoming evident?"

To this, Malviya said, "Hussein Suhrawardy, responsible for the Direct Action killings in Bengal, Sarat Chandra Bose and Kiron Shankar Roy demanded a united sovereign Bengal

which would neither go to India nor Pakistan but remain independent with Muslim League Govt and remain a Muslim majority province."

Pakistan was carved out as a Muslim country after the division of India by the British colonial rule in 1947. Millions of people were displaced and lakhs of them lost their lives in the communal violence that followed.

India will celebrate its Independence Day on Monday.

Govt Renames

As per the spokesperson, Singh said that by this initiative the school children would learn about the supreme sacrifices of the martyrs.

"He said that it would immortalise the brave hearts who sacrificed their lives while protecting sovereignty and integrity of the Nation. He said that initiative would give some special feeling to the family members of the martyrs and would act as an everlasting tribute

for the martyrs," he added.

108-Foot High

terrorism, the PRO said.

The project is a part of Har Ghar Tiranga' campaign under Azadi Ka Amrit Mahotsav' initiative of the central government.

Major Gen Slaria appreciated the efforts of all those involved in the completion of the project.

The people of Hyderbaigh Pattan also appreciated the district administration and the Army for this unique initiative, which will remain etched in the history of the area, the PRO Defence said.

Govt Forces Locate

Later, both the militants, believed to be from the Pakistan-based Jaish-e-Mohammed (JeM), were gunned down after an over four-hour gun battle. The attack came five days ahead of India's 76th Independence Day. (PTI)]

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3 Kashmiri Judokas In J&K Team For National C'ship



Observer News Service

SRINAGAR: Three Kashmiri judokas, including two girls Tazeem Fayaz, Tamleek Shah and one boy Basit Rafiq, have been selected in the J&K Judo team for participation in Senior National Judo Championship to be held at Lucknow, Uttar Pradesh.

After selection trials cum J&K UT Senior Judo Championship held at Jammu, 17 members of J&K Senior Judo Team were selected for their participation in the Senior National Judo Championship which will be held at Lucknow from 16th to 20th August, 2022.

The Women's team include Khushi Thakur, Jimmo Devi, Tamleek Shah, Tazeem Fayaz, Shweta Thakur, Pala and Anmol Devi, while as the Men's team

include: Virbhadr Singh, Akshay Sharma, Shashank Baru, Rajat Singh, Danish Sharma, Basit Rafiq and Rajesh Singh.

Team coaches are Vikas Dogra and Ritika Slathia, Manish Chaturwal as Team Manager. Team screening was done by Satish Gupta Manager Indoor Sports Complex, Anil Sharma Manager Green Field and Dalbir Singh of J&K Sports Council.

Prominent among others present on the occasion were Vikas Gupta Sr Vice President & Suraj Sharma Gen Secretary, Abdul Hamid Khan, Vice President, J&K Judo Association, Gowhar Khan, Joint Secretary, J&K Judo Association and Senior Judo Coach Shafkat Shafi and others congratulated all the players and wished the team for best performance.

District Admin Ganderbal Organise River Rafting



Observer News Service

GANDERBAL: District Administration Ganderbal in collaboration with Tourism Department and Adventure Tourist Operator Association of Kashmir organised a Rafting event in Sindh Nallah on Sunday.

The event was flagged off by Deputy Commissioner Ganderbal, Shyambir and SSP Ganderbal, Nikhil Borkar here at Wussan.

The rally commenced from rafting point near Tourism Cafeteria Wussan and culminated

at Wail bridge.

The DC along with SSP boarded the Raft and rowed together along with other rafts in the gushing water of Sindh Nallah with tricolor flying proudly instilling the spirit of nationalism.

The Rafting was organised as a part of ongoing HarGhar Tiranga campaign to mark the celebration of India's glorious 75 years of Independence.

SDM Kangan, Tehsildar Kangan, Dy. SP HQ, Tourism Officer SDA, president ATOAK and other officials.

Zimbabwe ODIs: Rahul To Open, Gill To Play At No. 3



Press Trust of India

NEW DELHI: The ODI series against Zimbabwe will be KL Rahul's dress rehearsal before the Asia Cup and hence he is all set to replace Shubman Gill at the top-of the order alongside Shikhar Dhawan for the upcoming games.

With T20 World Cup being paramount and Gill not exactly in the scheme of things as far as shortest format is concerned, he might be handed a number 3 slot in order to ensure that his captain gets enough game-time before the continental championship in

the UAE, starting August 27.

This provided all three are fit and available for all the games in the series.

While there will be no Rahul Dravid heading the team of support staff for the short three-match series, starting August 18 in Harare, NCA head VVS Laxman is almost certain to follow the blue-print set by the head coach.

Rahul's comeback also creates problems for young Gill, who has had a stellar 50-over series in the West Indies, where he scored 64, 43 and 98 not out in three games to win the 'Player of the Series' award.

So will Rahul allow Gill to continue his good form at the top of the order or perch himself out there at the onset with one eye on the Asia Cup?

In the 50-over set-up since the home series against England in 2021, Rahul was being seen as a middle-order anchor rather than an opener but once he was the skipper in the ODI series in South Africa, he had promoted himself as an opener.

But the last ODI that he played was against West Indies in Ahmedabad, where with both Rohit Sharma and Dhawan present, Rahul was back in the middle-order.

IOA Felicitates CWG Medal Winners With Cash Awards



Agencies

NEW DELHI: The Indian Olympic Association felicitated Team India's Birmingham 2022 Commonwealth Games medal winners at the Ashok Hotel, in Chanakya-puri, New Delhi, on Saturday

evening and presented cash rewards of Rs 20 lakh, 10 lakh, and 7.5 lakh to the gold, silver and bronze medallists respectively.

Several dignitaries, including IOA General Secretary Rajeev Mehta, Acting President Anil Khanna, Treasurer Anan-

deshwar Panday, Team India's Birmingham 2022 Commonwealth Games Chef de Mission Rajesh Bhandari, General Team Manager Maninder Pal Singh, and former IOA president N. Ramachandran graced the occasion and felicitated the medallists.

Vettori, Arnold To Play Legends League Cricket S2



Agencies

NEW DELHI: Daniel Vettori, Russel Arnold, and Vernon Philander on Sunday were among the former international players who committed themselves to Legends Cricket League (LLC) Season Two.

The tournament further announced that about 80 international and Indian players committed their availability for participation in the second season of the league. "They will be available for pick up by the franchisees for the drafting event to be held in Mumbai soon," stated an official release from the LLC.

Others who have committed to LLC season two are Fidel Edwards, Ricardo Powell, Tino Best, Nick Compton, Ryan Sidebottom, Phil Mustard, Jade Dernbach, Richard Levi, Hamilton Masakadza, Dimitri Mascara-

enhas, Samit Patel, John Mooney, Nawroz Mangal, Manvinder Bisla, Amit Bhandari, Rajat Bhatia, and Sudeep Tyagi.

Earlier, the league had announced that a special match between India Maharajas and World Giants will be played at Eden Gardens on September 16.

Former India captain and current BCCI president Sourav Ganguly will lead India while the World Team will be captained by 2019 World Cup-winning skipper and England's former white-ball captain Eoin Morgan.

Players from across 10 countries will be participating in this special match. After this, the second season of LLC will commence from September 17 till October 8. Overall, 15 matches will be played in this season with all the players and teams travelling to each of the six cities in caravan style.

SA Seamer Olivier Out Of England Tests



Agencies

South Africa fast bowler Duanne Olivier has been ruled out of the three-match Test series against England after injuring his hamstring in the warm-up defeat to the England Lions this week.

"Duanne presented with significant discomfort involving his right hip flexor muscle. After clinical assessment, he was referred for an MRI scan, which revealed a grade 2 tear involving the right pectineus muscle," team doctor Hashendra Ramjee said in a media release from Cricket South Africa.

South Africa will not call up

a replacement despite fellow seamer Kagiso Rabada being in a race to recover from an ankle problem.

Lungi Ngidi, Anrich Nortje, Marco Jansen, Lutho Sipamla and Glenton Stuurman are the other seamers in the squad. The first Test starts at Lord's on Wednesday.

South Africa squad: Dean Elgar (captain), Sarel Erwee, Marco Jansen, Simon Harmer, Kes-hav Maharaj, Aiden Markram, Lungi Ngidi, Anrich Nortje, Keegan Petersen, Kagiso Rabada, Ryan Rickelton, Lutho Sipamla, Rassie van der Dussen, Kyle Ver-reynne, Khaya Zondo, Glenton Stuurman.

'ROCK BOTTOM': Former Players Tear Into Manchester United

Agencies

Manchester United came in for heavy criticism from former players after they crashed to a chastening 4-0 defeat by Brentford in the Premier League on Saturday, their second loss in as many league games under new boss Erik ten Hag.

The result left United bottom of the table as Dutchman Ten Hag became the first manager since John Chapman in 1921 to lose his opening two games in charge of the club.

BBC pundit Chris Sutton said United had "hit rock bottom" while his former strike partner Alan Shearer put down the debacle to years of mismanagement at Old Trafford.

"It is an absolute mess. Years of failure... there is a lack of leadership and the recruitment has been terrible," Shearer said on BBC's Match of the Day.

"It will take time and an unbelievable amount of money to get things right, and a lot of patience from the Manchester United fans. They are miles away from where they want to be."



Brentford scored four goals within 35 minutes in the first half against a woe-ful United side, who have now lost seven straight games on the road stretching back to last season.

Former United defender Gary Neville, who has been critical of the owners, the Glazer family, said we were witnessing the "annihila-

tion of the club".

"I thought United would do better but they have been mauled, bullied, messed about with like you wouldn't believe, and there's nowhere to hide," he said on Sky Sports. "I have been watching United for 42 years and I can't think of a moment when I have thought things have been as

bad as that in the first half."

The Sunday Times went to the headline "Rock bottom" while The Sun described it as "Ten Green Bottle Jobs", referring to the colour of the new third kit that United were sporting.

United, who finished sixth last season to miss out on the Champions League, host Liverpool next Monday.

Out Of Your Control: Sunil Chhetri Tells Players On FIFA Ban Threat

Press Trust of India

BENGALURU: Seasoned striker Sunil Chhetri on Sunday advised fellow players to continue giving their best on the pitch and not worry about FIFA's threat of suspension on Indian football.

Earlier this month, world football governing body FIFA had threatened to suspend the AIFF and strip off its right to host the women's U-17 World Cup in October due to a third party "influence", the warning coming just days after the Supreme Court's directive to hold elections of the national federation.

The SC-appointed Committee of Administrators (CoA) has since, though, started the electoral process. The elections are slated for August 28.

"I've spoken to the boys and my advice is to not give it too much attention because it is out of your control," Chhetri said during a virtual media interaction organised by his club Bengaluru FC in the build-up to the new season.

"People who are involved are doing their best to make sure that we are go-



ing to come out with the best results possible. Everyone is working hard towards it. As far as players are concerned we are going to make sure that we do our work properly. We have to make sure you better yourself as a player. Whenever you get an opportunity to represent your club or your country, put your best foot forward. All other verticals in the AIFF are trying to fix as much as

possible to make sure that they come out with flying colours," he said.

India is to host the FIFA women's U-17 World Cup from October 11-30 and the Union Cabinet last month approved the Signing of Guarantees for Hosting the women's age group show-piece in Bhubaneswar, Goa, and Mumbai.

The Durand Cup will kick off the season in Kolkata on August 16 and Bengaluru

FC will take on Jamshedpur FC on the second day of the tournament.

Having won every major national title since the team came into existence in 2013, the Blues will be desperate to add the missing Durand Cup to their trophy cabinet.

For Chhetri too, it's "very, very special" as he also has not won the oldest football competition in Asia, whose 131st edition will be held this year.



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SALUTE THE BRAVEHEARTS



AMIT KUMAR
ASSTT.COMDT



SHAHEED CONSTABLE
SUNIL KALITA



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SHARMA L. SUDARSHAN



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(1ST BAR TO PMG)



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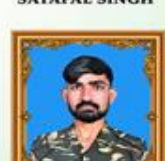
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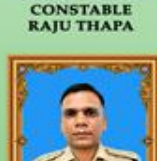
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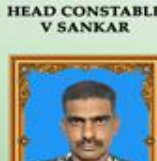
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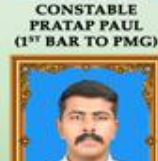
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SATENDRA PRATAP SINGH
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COMMANDANT



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SABZAR AHMAD BHAT



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INSPECTOR
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